

VOL. 6 | FALL 2020

# ANACRUSIS

*The Newsletter of the Graduate Musicology Society  
at the University of Colorado Boulder*



## OVERVIEW:

### President's Message

Dear GMS members and supporters,

Let's get the bad stuff out of the way: the pandemic rages on, CU's student organizations are in a funding deadlock, homes and livelihoods have been destroyed in the recent wildfires, and you're probably fighting with your mother-in-law about politics.

Here's the good news: GMS is making lemonade out of (rotten) lemons. We've embraced the new reality of Zoom events by hosting a virtual Database Night where we consolidated publication, funding, and professional development information for use by our members. We hope that the database can continue to grow and serve many cohorts in the future!

In addition, we're pleased to announce that Charles Wofford will be spearheading a new YouTube channel project (read more on p.3) where we can share research and facilitate discussions within our community. In general, this time has allowed the leadership team some time to look at the bigger picture. We've been able to reflect on our organization's past and plan for the future, and we've got some exciting new ideas in early planning stages. Stay tuned, and stay well!

Lydia Wagenknecht

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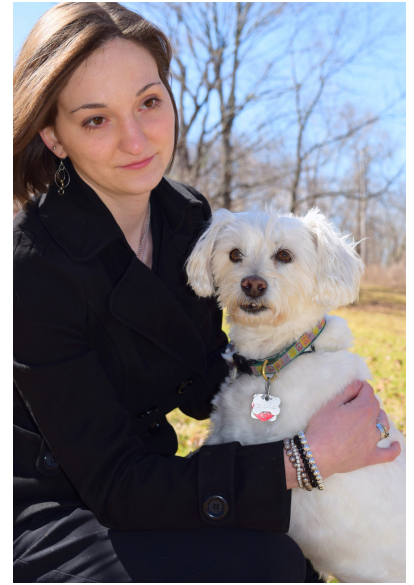


## Alumni (or almost) Check-in

As we strike off into a new school year, GMS wants to take a moment and reconnect with some of our alumni (or almost-alumni). We bring you some updates on what our former members have been up to over the past few months.

On July 21st, **Melanie Shaffer** successfully defended her doctoral dissertation titled "Re-assembling the "St. Victor" Manuscript: Rhetorical and Ovidian contexts for the Music in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 15139." Melanie also accepted a position as a research postdoc at Radboud University (in Nijmegen, the Netherlands) that will begin in January 2021.

On September 30th, **Teresita Lozano** successfully defended her doctoral dissertation titled "Songs for the Holy Coyote: *Cristero Corridos* and Immigration Politics on the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands." Teresita is continuing her position as a teaching fellow at West Virginia University.



On October 23, **Kelsey Fuller** successfully defended her doctoral dissertation titled "Sounding Sápmi in Multimedia: Gender, Politics, and Indigenous Solidarity in Contemporary Sámi Music."

**Please join us in congratulating Dr. Shaffer, Dr. Lozano, and Dr. Fuller!**

*We love to hear from our alumni!  
Contact [gmsociety@colorado.edu](mailto:gmsociety@colorado.edu)  
if you have a career update to share.*



## Ruth Opara Announced as Mellon Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow

Congratulations to alumnus Ruth Opara who was named as a Mellon Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow at the Department of Music at Columbia University!



## VIDEO REVIEW: ADAM NEELY'S "MUSIC THEORY AND WHITE SUPREMACY"

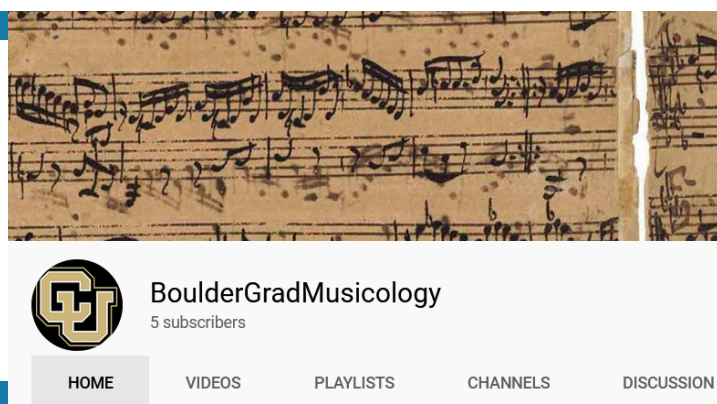
by Charles Wofford

Adam Neely is one of the most popular music educators on YouTube with over 1 million subscribers, and his recent video "Music Theory and White Supremacy" is his most incisive video yet. Drawing on theorist Philip Ewell's recent paper "Music Theory and the White Racial Frame," (MTO, 2020), Neely demonstrates that the pedagogical framework inherited from Heinrich Schenker maintains a latent white supremacy in music theory education. This latent white supremacy manifests in the over emphasis of the same dozen-or-so German-speaking composers: Bach, Händel, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wagner, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern...occasionally one gets an example from Vivaldi, Chopin, Debussy, or Tchaikovsky, and toward the final stretches of the theory course one gets Stravinsky and some American minimalists.

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## YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The GMS YouTube channel has gone live! Although there is no content as of this newsletter's release date, there are projects in the works that will be airing soon. If you would like to be notified of future posts to the channel, please subscribe to BoulderGradMusicology on YouTube.



## MEMBER UPDATES

### Talks & Papers

**Ben Cefkin** - Paper titled "Regional Identity in Thai Rap/Hip Hop as a Musical Reflection of Thai Society," accepted to the Council on Thai Studies 2020 conference to be held online through Northern Illinois University November 13-15

**Kelsey Fuller** - Paper titled "Music, Commercialized Ethnicity, and The Politics of Inclusion in Disney's Frozen." accepted to Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting October 22

### Grants & Awards

**Lydia Wagenknecht** - Awarded CHA GPTI Guest Lecture Award and the POD Network Career Development Grant

### News & Upcoming Events

**New GMS Database** - Several GMS members got together in October and began the work to create a database of societies, conferences, jobs, language resources, and things to do around town. If you are interested in accessing the database, please contact [gmsociety@colorado.edu](mailto:gmsociety@colorado.edu).

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The paper and the complementary video do not argue that there is a conspiracy of music theory educators to maintain a Eurocentric pedagogy (although there may be some who do desire that). The point is that the legacy of Schenker, a man sympathetic to National Socialism despite being Jewish himself, carries through the entire edifice of theory understanding. Schenker is responsible for us learning figured bass, Roman numeral analysis, and all of those things which we treat as “music theory” in the university. But he was explicit that his approach only applied to Great Works of Genius™, by which he meant almost exclusively 19th-century works by German-speaking men. That means that there is a white racial framing in theory education, irrespective of the intentions, and often even the awareness, of individual instructors.

Neely’s video may mislead in what it does not say, however. Music theory (“the harmonic style of eighteenth-century European composers”) is a central part of a university music education, but it is not the only part. Many universities including CU Boulder encourage or require students to take world music ensembles where they are taught non-western musics using indigenous methods. World music classes are a standard part of many university music programs, and disciplines like musicology have been offering critical perspectives at least since the 1980s. My first semester at CU Boulder we hosted Rajeev Taranath, a legendary Hindustani musician who hosted workshops where he taught us his music using his own methods. Of course, Neely’s video is not titled “Music Education is Racist Root, Branch, and Leaf;” it is focused merely on theory, not history, performance, or other aspects. But it’s admirable depth may create the illusion of comprehensiveness, intentionally or not. Nevertheless, Neely’s video is an excellent introduction to the issue and complement to Philip Ewell’s paper in Music Theory Online.

#### References:

Adam Neely, “Music Theory and White Supremacy.” Youtube.com. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kr3quGh7pJA>

Philip Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame,” Music Theory Online.



## **New Student Welcome - Jessica Quah**

Originally from Penang, Malaysia, and recently from Houston, TX, Jessica Quah is a first-year PhD student in the musicology department. She holds a BA in piano performance and English, and a MM in musicology from Rice University. In recent years, she has worked as an adjunct music instructor and creative writing tutor. Her research interests include music and colonialism, national identity, mysticism and music, linguistics, and popular music. When not studying or writing, Jessica still loves practicing the piano, spending time on the phone with her loved ones across different time zones, and reading sci-fi/fantasy anthologies.