



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

**Music, Arts, Health, and the Environment Network
Music and Sound in Narratives of Healing
16 December 2022, 3.30pm - 7.30pm
Abstracts and Biographies**

Dr Jillian Rogers

Sound Science? Sonic Technologies, Medicine, and Power in France's Long Nineteenth Century

Between the French Revolution and World War I, doctors, scientists, acousticians, and instrument makers in France became increasingly invested in considering sonic vibrations as well as the human ear. In this paper, I trace the historical and geographical lineage of French physician-scientists' use of sound instruments, sonic vibrations, and otological research with a particular emphasis on how the tools and techniques that harnessed vibrations in order to ostensibly help people were intertwined with national constructions of disability and citizenship. Through examination of French medical guides; medical and scientific treatises; instrument catalogues and patents; and the scientific, medical, and musical press, I demonstrate how French doctors' and scientists' interests in becoming innovators in sonic-medical technology were bound up with institutional power.

Bio:

Jillian Rogers is Assistant Professor of Musicology at Indiana University. Jill's research on relationships between music/ sound and how people have historically experienced and coped with trauma appears in *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, *Music & Letters*, and *Transposition*. Her interests in French modernism, affect and psychoanalytic theory, and sound studies, as well as trauma studies and performance studies, coalesce in her book *Resonant Recoveries: French Music and Trauma Between the World Wars* (OUP, 2021).

Dr Erin M. Brooks

Listening to Polio: Music, Sound, Trauma, and Healing

From Peg Kehret's lyrical descriptions of singing in the dark with her ward mates to Clara Yelder's memory that "the center of our day was listening to the radio" to formally organized orchestras and piano-based therapies, America's midcentury polio wards reverberated with sound and music. Yet despite extensive scholarship on polio—particularly the race to develop the vaccine—sound's connection to polio has received little critical attention. Weaving together testimonies of polio survivors, midcentury medical, psychological, and music therapy publications, this talk analyzes the echoes of America's midcentury polio epidemic. Ultimately, I demonstrate how polio's soundscapes were intimately connected with the body, medicine, traumatic memory, and healing.

Bio:

Erin Brooks is Associate Professor in Music History at SUNY, Potsdam. She is a musicologist specializing in multimedia genres such as opera, incidental music, and film music. Her research focuses on musics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with interests in transnational reception history, memory, gesture, the voice, embodiment, and gender. Erin has published articles on the operas of Camille Saint-Saëns and the relationship between theater music and early film; she is currently completing works on memory and performance in Tosca and stage music and trauma during World War I.

Dr Michelle Meinhart**"Sounding Empathy, Sounding Silence: Narratives of Maternity, Motherhood, and Digital Community Building during COVID Lockdowns"**

Modern delivery and maternity wards present numerous human and technological sounds, but the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent global lockdown of hospitals in 2020 and 2021 variegated these soundscapes. While beeps and blips of medical equipment – and certainly, the cries of babies – remained, patients and staff were largely silenced. Building on my recent article in *Women & Music* about mothers' use of sound technology in maternity wards during Covid, this talk examines an additional way that new mothers have harnessed technology to sound and en-voice their experiences: social media. Such sharing of traumatic testimonies in communities of mutual understanding and compassion has been an important means of not only recovery for new mothers but also for impacting change within the NHS and in garnering greater public recognition of birth trauma and post-partum depression.

Bio:

Michelle Meinhart has joined the faculty of Trinity Laban in 2017. Her research focuses on music and memory in Britain from the nineteenth century to today, with special attention to trauma, gender and print culture. Currently she is completing a monograph titled *Music, Healing, and Memory in the English Country House, 1914-1919* (Oxford University Press), and her edited collection *A Great Divide? Music, Britain and the First World War* is forthcoming with Routledge. She is also working on a project on the soundscapes of maternity, including an article titled 'Contractions, Calls, and Cries during COVID: The Traumatic Soundscapes of Lockdown UK Hospital Maternity Wards' for a special issue of *Women and Music*, which she is co-editing.

Victoria Hume**Environments of care**

A brief overview of the work of the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance to amplify and support creative and cultural work that takes a holistic approach to health in relation to community and environment, and a closer look at music composition that seeks to challenge models of hospital care.

Bio:

Victoria Hume Director of the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance. She was an arts manager in the NHS for 15 years before pursuing arts in health in South Africa for 5 years, including setting up a new module in hospital-based performance for the University of the Witwatersrand and managing a three-year, Wellcome-funded drama and diabetes programme with Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto. She is also a composer and researcher specialising in culture, health and wellbeing, and

has a Masters in Music and Health Communication focused on hospital-induced delirium. She is a Research Associate in the Medical Humanities at WiSER (Wits Institute for Social & Economic Research), and continues to write and release music through Lost Map Records, based on Eigg.

Nina Kraus

The hearing brain is vast, engaging how we think, feel, move and integrate our senses. Dr. Nina Kraus, Northwestern University professor, director of the renowned Brainvolts Lab, and author of recently published, *OF SOUND MIND: How Our Brain Constructs a Meaningful Sonic World* (<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/sound-mind>) examines the partnership of sound and brain, showing that the processing of sound drives many of the brain's core functions and leaves a fundamental imprint on who we are as human beings. Kraus explores the power of music for healing as well as the destructive power of noise on the nervous system. She describes why musicians—defined here as anyone who has played an instrument regularly at any point in their lives—have measurably better sound minds for decades. The sounds of our lives shape our brains, for better and for worse, and help us build the sonic world we live in.

Bio:

Nina Kraus is Hugh Knowles Professor of Communication Sciences, Neurobiology, and Otolaryngology at Northwestern University. As a biologist and amateur musician, she thinks about sound and brain health.

Her research has found that our lives in sound, for better (musicians, bilinguals) and for worse (concussion, hearing loss, language disorders, noise), shape how our brain makes sense of the sounds we hear. Her book *OF SOUND MIND - How our Brain Constructs a Meaningful Sonic World*, was written for the intellectually curious.

Kraus advocates for biologically informed choices in education, health, and society. See www.brainvolts.northwestern.edu

Dr Jessica Allison Holmes

Whisper Singing, ASMR, and Mood Regulation: The Representation of Depression the Music and Reception of Billie Eilish

This talk analyzes the representation of depression in pop singer Billie Eilish's music and reception relative to the deeply charged status of depression in the West as an increasingly prevalent clinical diagnosis and lived socio-cultural experience that divides sharply along gendered, racial, class-bound, and generational lines. By naming, claiming, and musicalizing depression amid a polarizing and oftentimes misogynist reception, Eilish departs from foregoing expressions of feminine psychological disturbance in mainstream pop, challenging the longstanding stigmatization of "madness" in women and current generational panic around the prevalence of depression among Generation Z, a transgressive platform made easier by the implicit privilege her whiteness affords. Eilish's semantic, visual, and musical strategies work to demystify an invisible inner turmoil that her fans explicitly identify as "depression," just as they frame her signature "whisper" singing – its sound, intimacy, and affect – as a coherent marker of and antidote for depression. Further, widespread links between Eilish's voice and the feminized auditory triggers of ASMR (a popular genre of homemade YouTube sound effects-based performance) and the immersive, solitary listening that headphone and earbud use entails strengthens her music's appeal as a form of "mood regulation." In these ways, I reveal that Eilish's voice and body are the locus onto which fans and detractors project fantasies and anxieties about the intersectional logics of depression that often exceed the singer's stated intentions, and crucially, psychiatric definitions of clinical depression in ways that ultimately

point to the increasing prominence of pop music as a viable creative, albeit unregulated site of public mental health discourse.

Bio:

Jessica A. Holmes is an Assistant Professor of Musicology in the Department of Arts & Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen. Jessica's scholarship attends to the relationship between identity and the body in contemporary popular and avant-garde music, with emphasis on the intersections of disability with gender, sexuality, and race. Under contract with the University of Michigan Press for its Music & Social Justice series, her first book project, tentatively titled *Music at the Margins of Sense* engages with the first-hand accounts of d/Deaf musicians and listeners from across the audiological and cultural spectrum to challenge the primacy of hearing in Western music discourse and the misconception that deafness is antithetical to music, offering a multi-sensory account of musical experience in the process. Her next monograph project analyzes the centrality of depression and anxiety in contemporary pop music, situating pop culture as a creative, albeit unregulated site of public mental health discourse.

Dr Alexander Khalil

It Takes Two: relocating mental disorder affords insight into healing and music

Over thirteen years teaching music at an inner city school in the US, I had many opportunities to witness first-hand music's potential for healing in the context of mental disorder. The narrative that commonly underlies such experiences—and research that attempts to understand them—is that disorder exists as an internal phenomenon, a deficit or perhaps difference in some individuals. Some elements of music from the technical, such as rhythmic entrainment to the social, such as formation of group identity, lessen the experience of disorder, affording improved (or at least more typical) cognition, a deeper social life, and higher level of acceptance. I propose that these narratives overlook the primacy of interpersonal and intersubjective aspects and experiences both of disorder and of music. If we simply adjust our understanding of where, disorder, healing, and music take place, we can begin to grasp not only music's potential power for healing but also its centrality in our lives.

Bio:

Alex is a Lecturer in Music at University College Cork, an ethnomusicologist, and cognitive scientist. He investigates the temporal dynamics involved when people make music together. He also specialises in Byzantine chant, music of the Middle East, and music of Southeast Asia. Currently, he leads a UCC Creative initiative that he developed called "the Lullaby Exchange", which seeks to collect and make available the world's lullabies.

Stephanie Loveless

Prescriptions for Listening

Deep Listening -- which encompasses bodywork, sonic meditation, and performance -- is a creative listening practice developed by the pioneering composer, Pauline Oliveros. In this talk, Stephanie Loveless (sound artist and director of the Center for Deep Listening) will consider what this practice contributes to narratives of both individual and collective healing. She will consider her own creative project, *Prescriptions for Listening*, in which individualized scores for listening are written in response to audience-identified ailments, as well as a range of projects that bring Deep Listening practices into social service and healthcare settings.

Bio

Stephanie Loveless is Lecturer and Director of Centre for Deep Listening at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Stephanie is a sound and media artist whose research centers on listening and vocal embodiment. Her recent projects include a mobile web-app for geo-located listening, and sound works that channel the voices of plants, animals, and musical divas.

Lucinda Jarrett

Brain Odysseys: Participation and Co creation

How do we co create music with vulnerable groups and what is the impact of co creation programmes? Is developing agency useful? And how is it distinct from sound therapy and listening programmes?

Bio:

Lucinda is an award winning cultural leader, and founder of Rosetta Life. She has a lifelong interest in transforming and democratising the cultural landscape; providing access to and participation in transformative creative experiences that provide audiences with the chance to shift their perceptions of what performance can offer and how illness is seen in our communities.

After a career as associate producer at the BBC for three years she founded Rosetta Life in 1997. She founded Rosetta Life in 1997 to give voice to people living with serious illness whose voices are often unheard. Managing a budget of £2.5m in 2001, she pioneered digital life stories in hospice care and created a network of 20 hospices sharing stories online. In 2006, funded by Culture Online for DCMS, she led Rosetta Requiem, partnering leading songwriters with hospice users to create an online platform that became a government case study of best practice. 2007 – 2013 she led national and regional campaigns to raise awareness of death and dying through digital and performance platforms including a programme of online songmaking with children's hospices. She currently leads an international network of fourteen partners who have created seven partnerships creating, poetry and song exchanges leading to a 360immersive film that is headlining the FullDome festival in Plymouth before touring international network of planteriums and domes.