

Registration

Please register (no participation fee) for the conference by contacting conference.musictheatre.musik@unibe.ch.

Organisation

The conference is organised by Lena van der Hoven, professor for Music Theatre at the Institute of Musicology at the University of Bern, and Dr. Luis Velasco-Pufleau, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellow at the University of Bern and McGill University.

Contact

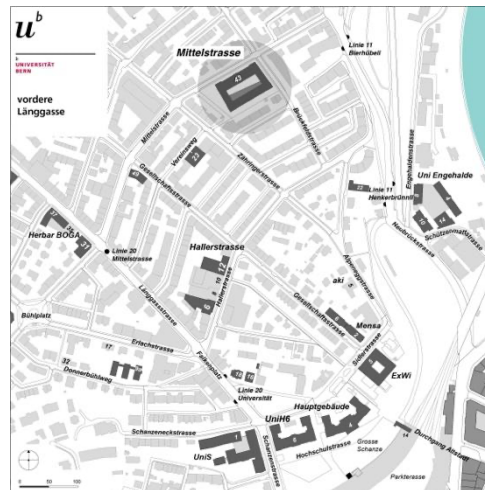
Prof. Dr. Lena van der Hoven
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Location Wednesday, 6th March

Universität Bern
Mittelstrasse 43
3012 Bern
Room 220

Location Thursday, 7th March

Universität Bern
Mittelstrasse 43
3012 Bern
Room 224



Cover image

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Conference
Exploring Gender-based Violence and
Femicide in Twentieth and Twenty-First
Century Music Theatre
6/3/24 - 7/3/24

Programme

Wednesday, 6th of March 2024

09.30 Welcome and Introduction
Lena van der Hoven and **Luis Velasco-Pufleau**

10.00 **Keynote Kordula Knaus:** Beating the Poor Girl: Intersectional Perspectives on Violence Against Women in the Operatic Repertoire

11.00 Coffee break

11.15 **Marianne Chauvin:** *Carmen cour d'assises / The Carmen Case* (2023) – The trial of a femicide in opera

Jay Marchand Knight: Carmen, Colonialism, and Killing of Women of Colour on Stage

12.15 Lunch break

13.45 **Eva Rieger:** Was Brünnhilde raped? Richard Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* Act 1 in the analysis of music authors and stage directors today

Philipp Lojak: Intergender power dynamics and their signifiers in *Written on Skin* (2012) by George Benjamin

14.45 Coffee break

15.00 **Jessica Sipe:** "I am gonna fix you again": Prolonged Vulnerability as Stunting Recovery in *prism*

15.30 **General discussion**

16.00 Apéro

17.30 End

18.30 **Kino Reitschule**

Opera screenings: *La tierra de la miel* (2013) by composer Hilda Paredes and *Romeo's Passion* (2018) by Umculo, followed by a panel discussion with Hilda Paredes and Shirley Apthorp founder/director of Umculo (NPC)

21.00 End

Thursday, 7th of March 2024

09.30 Introduction
Lena van der Hoven and **Luis Velasco-Pufleau**

09.45 **Louisa Martin Chevalier** and **Makis Solomos**:
A sound/musical environment for
representing a femicide. Hildegard
Westerkamp's *école polytechnique*

Julia H. Schröder: *Lelele* by Lotta
Wennäkoski: A composer's perspective on
global crimes against women

10.45 Coffee break

11.00 **Jennifer Campbell** and **Jessica Bayne**:
Staging *Susannah* on a University Campus in the Post
- Covid-19 and #MeToo Era: A Case Study

Priska Seidl: Making Excuses For Don
Giovanni. Program Booklets and Their Genre
-Specific Approach to Gender-Based Violence

12.00 Lunch break

13.30 **Ryan Thomas Green**: *SWEET TOOTH*: Feminist
Brutality in British Jamaican Music Theatre

Meebae Lee: Gender Issues Representing Tale
Cheoyong in Opera *Cheoyong*

14.30 Coffee break

14.45 **Violeta Nigro**: Dido without Æneas.
Interpreting operas through the prism of
gender in Buenos Aires

Kylie Constantine: Song, Silence, and
Violence: What the myth of Philomela can tell
us about the nature of violence in music

15.45 Coffee break

16.00 **Felisa Mesuere**: "Ma place n'était pas
marquée dans ce monde qui me fuyait, qui
m'avait maudit". Gender-based violence and
intersexuality in Raquel García-Tomás'
Alexina B. (2023)

Breanna Stewart: Motherhood and Wartime
Sexual Violence in Kaija Saariaho's *Adriana
Mater*

17.00 Coffee break

17.15 **Final discussion**

18.00 End

19.30 **Dinner at Restaurant Rosengarten**

Abstracts

Kordula Knaus, University of Bayreuth (Germany):

Beating the Poor Girl: Intersectional Perspectives on Violence Against Women in the Operatic Repertoire

Violence against women and femicide became omnipresent in operatic plots from the 1870s onwards. The operas often use the narrative of the lover or husband who wants to dominate and possess his object of desire. The unruly woman not obeying to feminine virtues is punished by violence, and ultimately murdered. Prominent examples of such plots include George Bizet's *Carmen*, Ruggiero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, or Richard Strauss' *Salome*. In my presentation I argue how deeply embedded this narrative of violence against women is in discourses of classism and racism. Such issues have been extensively discussed for canonic operatic characters like Carmen whose status as a 'bohémienne' is directly connected to her supposed moral and sexual deviation that needs to be exterminated. Social aspirations of women are often sanctioned in opera by arguing that their sexuality is a threat to male bourgeois life plans. Alban Berg's *Lulu* drives this narrative almost ad absurdum by putting several demanding men into the living room of Dr. Schön who had picked up Lulu as a child from the gutter and murders her in the end in the figure of Jack the Ripper. The broad association of violence against women from lower social classes, however, can be much more subtle. Examples such as Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, where the father almost casually threatens to beat the mother with a broom, present violence in an everyday context of a poor family. In Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* social oppression is a more obvious framework for gendered violence—almost justifying Wozzeck's murder of Marie with his deplorable situation.

An examination of these narratives within broader social contexts will show how the upper-class genre of opera perpetuates a violent system of class, race, and gender differences by broadly assuming that violence against women is either a lower-class phenomenon or mostly appears when women achieve social advancement. A final section will discuss where we stand today in the art form opera regarding these intersections between violence against women, classism and racism.

Kordula Knaus is Professor of Musicology at the University of Bayreuth. She has published monographs on Alban Berg's *Lulu* and *Cross-gender Casting in Baroque Opera*, and co-edited volumes on music in society, gender and intersectionality as well as an introductory handbook for students of musicology. She was principal investigator of the DFG-funded project „Opera buffa as a European Phenomenon. Migration, Mapping and Transformation of a New Genre“ (2017–2020), and currently is principal investigator of the DFG-project “Materiality and Aesthetic Transformation. The Festa teatrale *L'Homme* at the Margravian Opera House Bayreuth“. She has recently finished the edition *Alban Berg. Aufsätze, Vorträge und andere Texte* for the Alban Berg Critical Edition and a monograph about Baroque Music History.

Marianne Chauvin, Université Paris-Sorbonne (France):

Carmen Cour d'assises / The Carmen Case (2023) – The trial of a femicide in opera

Opera reflects, conveys and contributes to the construction and trivialization of social norms – gendered, heteronormative, relating to bodies and relations of domination – through librettos and role typologies, the choice of performers, staging and music. In this way it functions as a technology of gender (Lauretis, 1987), a notion according to which "the representation of gender is its construction", the visual arts contribute to "producing [...] and 'implanting' representations of gender", but "the conditions [...] for a different construction of gender exist [...] on the margins of hegemonic discourses". With this in mind, it is interesting to note the emergence in opera in recent years of artistic approaches that seek to denounce gender-based violence – rape, femicide, harassment, coercion – and to provoke public reflection by using the operatic stage as a lever for social transformation.

I propose to explore how this phenomenon is manifesting itself in France, linking it to both the #MeToo movement and the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world of opera. After showing the diversity of approaches and strategies present on the French lyrical scene, and evoking the collaborations between European and non-European creators that characterize them, I will take a particular interest in *Carmen, Cour d'assises / The Carmen Case* (2023), an opera co-written by librettist and director Alexandra Lacroix and Singaporean composer Diana Soh based on Bizet's

masterpiece to stage the trial of José, perpetrator of one of opera's most famous feminicides. I will also look at the repercussions of this radical change of perspective on performers' working conditions and how it was received by the public and the press.

Marianne Chauvin is winner of the Sorbonne University Gender Initiative competition 2021. She is preparing a PhD thesis on 'Feminist politics on the opera stage today'. Her research is carried out in a multidisciplinary perspective that brings together gender studies, musicology, sociology, and theatre studies. She collaborates with actors in the field of musical creation on issues related to equality, parity and the fight against sexist and sexual violence and harassment. Her experience in communication, music therapy, teaching and the implementation of artistic projects within a contemporary music ensemble brings a range of insights to her reflections on music.

Jay Marchand Knight, Concordia University (Canada):

Carmen, Colonialism, and Killing of Women of Colour on Stage

This paper draws upon various 20th, and 21st century versions of *Carmen*, specifically engaging with *Carmen: a Hip Hopera* (2001) and Opéra Queens' 2023 *CarWoman*, which reimaged Carmen as a trans woman of colour. In Bizet's opera, the collision of French Orientalism, the German *Fach* System, and the fetishization/abuse of racialized women in 18th and 19th century travel journals created the perfect storm for the birth of the *Carmen* trope. Interestingly, the original purpose of Merimée's novella, as colonialist tool, is obscured in modern versions (such as *a Hip Hopera*, loosely based on the 1943/1954 musical *Carmen Jones*) which remove the French-Basque-Roma-Spanish juxtapositions, leaving only a story of domestic tragedy. Meanwhile, Merimée's novella constructs the Roma people, through the hypersexualization of women (in particular, Carmen), as dangerous and unrefined and Bizet's happy 'Habañera' hardly hints at the surface context of misogyny or the deeper framework of colonial violence.

The *Fach* System, a means of categorizing singers according to voice and body type, here reinforces systemic prejudices about brown people through archetypes in opera. Though practical in some ways, 'Faching' has led to the typecasting of singers of colour, who for sundry reasons and with disregard to the acoustic properties of their voices, are often placed in the low/dark voice categories, coincidentally, the *Fach* to sing the roles of "witches,

bitches, and britches." In combination with the 19th Century French musical trend of Orientalism, 'Faching' led directly to the creation of roles like Carmen, scored, not surprisingly, for low mezzo-soprano and often portrayed by women of colour. Opéra Queens opted to lean into the story of domestic violence by recasting Carmen as a transwoman of colour, the group at highest risk of intimate partner violence. In this way, they used the misogynistic message to shed light on a very relevant problem.

Jay Marchand Knight (they/them//iel) is a Frederick Lowy Fellow at Concordia University, where they study vocal timbre and gender perception in the Deroche Laboratory for Hearing and Cognition. Jay is active in research-creation with RISE Opera, an experimental project exploring human relationships to crises. Passionate about equity in formal singing, their musical creations explore ways to make engagement with music accessible to those who have been traditionally excluded from these spheres. Jay teaches voice at The Voice Lab, Inc., a Chicago-based school that works with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Upcoming operatic performances include the title role in *Carmen* with Jupiter Opera.

Eva Rieger (Bremen/Liechtenstein):

Richard Wagners *Götterdämmerung*, Act 1: Was Brünnhilde raped?

In his later years, Richard Wagner, married to Cosima von Bülow, was known as a sweet, happy family man. However, as a man newly in love, he threatened his lover Minna Planer with a knife and his jealousy led to violent scenes, which he later regretted. The imperialist 19th century appealed to him, and he found the subjugation of "lower races" justified. In 1848 he wrote: "Wherever the mighty foot of the goddess Revolution steps, what was built in vain madness for thousands of years falls into ruins..." (XII, 243f.) His language sometimes takes on brutal traits: "Whoever is unable to rejoice, beat him to death!! - He is not worthy of life for whom it has no charm" (XII, 271). He sought the downfall of "the last glimmer of aristocracy" (XII, 218) (years later he represented the monarchy and praised Ludwig II). In particular, his *Ring* is full of violent events: the Valkyries kill men, one giant kills another, Sieglinde's husband wants to kill Siegmund, Siegmund is ready to kill anyone who threatens his beloved, etc.

Wagner wrote a violent scene in *Götterdämmerung*, Act 1, Scene 3, which some directors of the 20th and 21st centuries defined as rape (e.g. Dorst 2006

in Bayreuth), or suggested it through a film (Paede 2023 in Kassel), and to which numerous authors of books on Wagner agree. The ambiguity in the analysis is encouraged by Wagner himself, as he describes an act of violence in his stage directions and also uses brutal-sounding motifs in the music. However, at the end of the scene a sword is placed between Siegfried and Brünnhilde, which can be interpreted as either a phallic object or a symbol of separation. The musical motifs he uses have psychological significance. Although Wagner attests to Brünnhilde's strength, she remains exposed to paternal power, exerted on her by Siegfried. For Wagner, the systemic difference in gender roles that gave men the privilege of leading was God-given, a steel framework. Nevertheless, the scene is designed with empathy for Brünnhilde. It depicts her suffering vividly and is shockingly dramatic.

Brünnhilde's being attacked by Siegfried, disguised as Gunther, will be analysed to show what Wagner wanted to say. A video depiction of this scene in 2023 at the Kassel Opera House, Germany, will be shown. The rape is seen as an event desired by the composer, in all its cruelty, without concealing the potential for violence. The magic hood plays a crucial role in the video, which is shown to the opera audience parallel to the action, in order to exonerate Siegfried.

Today, in the 21st century, it is known that when the female body is raped, exposed and kidnapped, this is often an act of violence and revenge. Women thus become objects, their bodies a faceless trophy. The question will be asked whether there is a greater awareness of this crime today and whether music directors are increasingly registering and implementing this.

Eva Rieger studied musicology, English and music education in Berlin and did her doctorate with Carl Dahlhaus. From 1978 she worked as an Academic Councilor [Akad. Rätin] at the University of Göttingen. From 1990 to 2000 she was a professor of musicology at the University of Bremen. Today she lives in Liechtenstein.

Philipp Lojak, Folkwang University of the Arts (Germany) / Yale University (Connecticut):

Intergender power dynamics and their signifiers in *Written on Skin* (2012)
by George Benjamin

When *Written on Skin* by British composer George Benjamin premiered in 2012 at the Aix-en-Provence festival, it achieved resounding success. Since

then, this opera has been staged almost 20 times, a rarity in the realm of contemporary music. One possible explanation for its popularity lies in its depiction of intergender power dynamics. This opera, set in the medieval period, deals with masculine, unmitigated power attempting to control femininity. The male subject, referred to as the "Protector", loses control over his wife, Agnès, whom he calls "property" (Part I, No. 1). To the audience it remains ambiguous, to what extent this power imbalance implies sexual abuse. His way to compel her obedience - to break her - is coercing her to eat the heart of her lover, the boy who the Protector commissioned to create a book extolling his life. At the end, Agnès professes her love for the boy and commits suicide. According to Elisabeth Bronfen, the female body is a representation of death and "otherness". Its undoing in 19th century art is—in Freudian terms—a failed repression of inevitable death in life (Bronfen 2006, 165). In scope of contemporary opera, Agnès's suicide can be seen as an attempt to reclaim self-authorship within patriarchic society which makes the success of *Written on Skin* as an allegory in times of #MeToo plausible. In the following, the intergender dynamics, gender representation and its poetical-musical signifiers shall be examined. Librettist Martin Crimp based his text on poems and (biographical) prose by Guillem de Cabastaing. Although Benjamin and Crimp, assumingly, had a deep understanding of troubadour lyricism, it did not affect the music on the level of musical tropes which remain within the avantgarde music language.

Elisabeth Bronfen (2006): *Over her dead body*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Philipp Lojak (b. 1994) studied composition in Düsseldorf (BMus 2018) under the tutelage of Prof. Manfred Trojahn, and Musicology and Media Cultural Studies in Cologne (BA in 2022). Since April 2022 he pursues a part-time Master's degree in Musicology with a focus on dramaturgy at the Folkwang University of the Arts while being a dramaturg and project manager for Duisburg Philharmonic Orchestra, presenting concert introductions. In Fall semester 2023 he will attend Yale University as a visiting student, funded by the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship. His music is published by Edition Gravis, and his articles appear in publications like *Neue Musikzeitung*.

Jessica Sipe, Yale University (Connecticut):

“I am gonna fix you again”: Prolonged Vulnerability as Stunting Recovery in *prism*

“Every survivor matters. Every story matters. Yet our work over the last 25 years has often centered the lives and stories of those who benefit from power and privilege. This has resulted in the further marginalization and erasure of survivors with marginalized identities.” McCauley et al.’s 2019 remarks on the status of *Violence Against Women* could be similarly applied to the much longer history of opera. It is only within the past few decades that opera creators have begun a concerted effort to compose new works that uplift the voices of the marginalized and center the stories of sexual violence survivors. One such opera, Ellen Reid and Roxie Perkins’s *prism*, illustrates how opera can effectively represent the need for intersectional approaches to sexual assault recovery.

prism tells the story of a mother (Lumee) and daughter (Bibi) struggling to survive the traumatic aftershocks of Bibi’s childhood rape. Lumee’s impassioned cry, “I am gonna fix you,” speaks to Bibi’s physical and psychological dependence on her mother in the wake of overlapping obstacles to her recovery, stemming from Bibi’s disabling symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, her inability to receive medical treatment to her lower class status, and the familial power imbalance of a mother-daughter relationship. This paper combines theories of intersectionality (Hill Collins 2015; Kessel 2022; Engle 2022) and survivor-centered approaches to sexual violence (Stavrevska 2019; Palm and Le Roux 2021) with musical and performance analysis. In doing so, I argue that the intersection of age, class, and disability not only increased the opportunity for Bibi’s sexual assault but also combined to elongate her period of victimization afterward into a “prolonged crisis” (Armstrong et al., 2018). Examined along these lines, *prism* fills a representational hole in opera and, more importantly, demonstrates the affordances of intersectional analysis to understanding potential barriers to sexual assault recovery.

Jessica Sipe is a music history Ph.D. student at Yale University with research interests in contemporary opera, performance studies, queer theory, and constructions of gender and sexuality through staged works. Her proposed dissertation, “Monstrous Trauma and Traumatic Monstrosity in 21st-Century Opera,” asks how contemporary opera reflects and influences how society understands, processes, and legislates

trauma. She has presented her research at regional and international conferences, including the Feminist Theory and Music Conference and the Transnational Opera Studies Conference. Jessica holds a Master’s degree in musicology from Pennsylvania State University and a Bachelor of Music in classical voice from Rutgers University.

Opera screenings: *La tierra de la miel* (2013) and *Romeo’s Passion* (2018) and panel discussion with Hilda Paredes & Shirley Apthorp:

As part of the conference "Exploring Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Music Theatre" at the institute of Musicology of the University of Bern, we will welcome Mexican composer Hilda Paredes and director Shirley Apthorp from the NGO Umculo, which commissions and produces music theatre as an applied theatre in South Africa.

We begin with a screening of the two chamber operas *La tierra de la miel* (2013) by Hilda Paredes, which explores human trafficking, rape and femicide on the Mexico-US border, and *Romeo’s Passion* (2018) by Umculo, which focuses on gender-based violence against homosexual men in South Africa. In the following panel discussion with Hilda Paredes and Shirley Apthorp, chaired by Prof. Dr. Lena van der Hoven and Dr. Luis Velasco-Puffleau, we will discuss both the international significance of the issue of gender-based violence and femicide and the perspective from the Global South, particularly in light of the recent increased awareness of gender-based violence against women through phenomena such as the #MeToo movement and the COVID-19 pandemic. We will ask: Are there differences and challenges in producing, staging and narrating these issues? What are the advantages and disadvantages of presenting these themes through new compositions compared to the canonical repertoire?

Shirley Apthorp was born in Cape Town, South Africa, and grew up in Australia. She studied music, works internationally as a music journalist and has taught courses in music journalism in Australia, France and South Africa. In 2000 she founded Umculo, an organisation dedicated to social change through music in South Africa. Umculo’s work has won numerous international nominations and awards. Shirley Apthorp is an opera critic for the Financial Times and the English-language publications editor for the Berliner Philharmoniker.

Firmly established as one of the leading Mexican composers of her generation, **Hilda Paredes** has been based in London for almost 40 years. Her music has been recipient of important international awards, such as the Ivors composers award, MT Now, PRS for Music Foundation, the fellowship from Sistema Nacional de Creadores (Mexico) and the J.S. Guggenheim. After studying composition at the Conservatoire in Mexico City, she graduated from the Guildhall School of Music, obtained her Master of Arts at City University in London and her PhD at the University of Manchester.

Louisa Martin Chevalier, IReMus, Université Paris-Sorbonne and Makis Solomos, Musidanse, Université Paris 8 (France) :

A sound/musical environment for representing a feminicide. Hildegard Westerkamp's *école polytechnique*

"On December 6, 1989, fourteen women were shot to death by Marc Lépine at the École Polytechnique, University of Montreal. A few months later I was invited to write a composition for New Music America 1990 in Montreal. The resulting composition, *école polytechnique*, is dedicated to the fourteen women", writes Hildegard Westerkamp (1990) in her concert notes for this piece, which has one of the longest durations of her compositions proper (excluding installations) and uses a larger group of instruments than any of her other pieces (8 bells, mixed choir, bass clarinet, trumpet, percussion and 2-channel audio).

Our paper will analyze the dramaturgical aspects of the piece: although *école polytechnique* is a concert piece and not an incidental music, it is strongly dramaturgical in character. The instrumental writing is simple but effective (for example, in the second part, the choir cries out 14 times, corresponding to the 14 deaths). The audio part uses sounds from an earlier composition by Westerkamp, *Breathing Room* (the regular pulsation representing a heartbeat and breathing accompanied by various sounds) and plays radio broadcasts of the attack alongside other sounds. The distribution of the musicians on stage is very important, as is the spatialization of the audio part. The piece is divided into five very explicit parts: 'Life' (0'-5'59"), 'Death' (6'-8'22"), 'Aftermath' (8'23"-12'59"), 'Mourning' (13'-16'10"), 'Healing and new life' (16'11"-19'39").

This analysis will show how the ecofeminist musician Westerkamp (Westerkamp, 1988; Solomos, 2023) tackles the issue of feminicide – it should be noted that the concert notes for the piece don't include the word

'feminicide', which attests to its late entry into common parlance – by replacing what is usually called 'representation' with the creation of a 'sound/musical environment' (Westerkamp, 1990) conducive to the inner journey of mourning and revolt.

- Andra McCartney, Marta McCarthy (2012) : « Choral, Public and Private Listener Responses to Hildegard Westerkamp's École Polytechnique », *Music and Arts in Action* vol. 4 n°1, p. 56-72.
- Makis Solomos (2023), *Exploring the Ecologies of Music and Sound. Environmental, Mental and Social Ecologies in Music, Sound Art and Artivisms*, translation Jennifer Higgins, Londres, Routledge.
- Hildegard Westerkamp (1988): *Listening and soundmaking: a study of music-as-environment*, master thesis, Simon Fraser University.
- Hildegard Westerkamp (1990): Notice pour *École polytechnique*, <https://www.hildegardwesterkamp.ca/>.

Louisa Martin Chevalier is associate professor at Sorbonne University, where she teaches music history and the analysis of twentieth-century works, as well as thematic courses such as "music and politics" and "musical creation in Eastern Europe". Her current research extends the work she began on her doctoral thesis on the Soviet avant-garde composer Nikolay Roslavets. It provides keys to understanding contemporary artistic creation in Eastern Europe. She is co-director of the 'Institutional and Social Frameworks' research team at IReMus and coeditor of the journal *Filigrane. Musique, esthétique, science, société*. She is initiating a wide-ranging research programme to examine the impact of exile on women's artistic creation.

Professor of musicology at the University Paris 8 and director of the research team Musidanse, **Makis Solomos** has published many books and articles about recent music. His main fields of research are the focus on sound, the notion of musical space, new musical techniques and technologies, the ecology of sound... He is also one of the main international specialists of Xenakis' music. His recent books include *From Music to Sound. The Emergence of Sound in 20th- and 21st-Century Music* (Routledge, 2019), *Exploring the Ecologies of Music and Sound. Environmental, Mental and Social Ecologies in Music, Sound Art and Artivisms* (Routledge, 2023), and *Habiter (avec) Xenakis* (forthcoming).

Julia H. Schröder, Technical University of Berlin (Germany):

Lelele by Lotta Wennäkoski: A composer's perspective on global crimes against women

In 2010 the music theatre *Lelele* by Lotta Wennäkoski on sex trafficking and forced prostitution was premiered. The composer compiled the libretto herself from "Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery" (2009) a book by Siddharth Kara. In the proposed contribution, it will be shown how the composer assembled the libretto and composed the monodram on a different type of text, as well as the resulting dramaturgical consequences. Conventionally, an opera stages emotions. How does this work, if there is no conventional story-telling but an academic study for the composer to work with? Are the women victimised or empowered? Are they sheer numbers or narrators? How is violence expressed in art music of the 21st century? What is the perspective of the Finnish composer on global crime against (mostly) women from poorer countries? The solutions in the music by Wennäkoski could be collectively compared to the screened contemporary music theatre composition by Hilda Paredes.

Julia H. Schröder holds a doctorate in musicology with a research focus on contemporary art music, sound art, music and dance, sound design in theatre, sound studies, concert situations and harp. She has published books and essays on these subjects. After research work at the Free University of Berlin and the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, she is currently completing her habilitation project "Theatre Sounds" at the Technical University of Berlin, Department of Audio Communication and teaches on the Master's programme Sound Studies and Sonic Arts at the Berlin University of the Arts.

Jennifer Campbell, University of Kentucky (Kentucky) and Jessica Bayne:

Staging *Susannah* on a University Campus in the Post - Covid-19 and #MeToo Era: A Case Study

The authors of the 2018 *Journal of the American Musicological Society's* colloquy "Sexual Violence in Opera: Scholarship, Pedagogy, and Production as Resistance" laid bare the complications of continuing to teach and stage operas that suggest or depict sexual violence against women. In that publication, a call to action was articulated, specifically with consideration given to best practices for contextualizing these works and the traumas

therein when presenting them in the college campus environment, whether that presentation be in the classroom or on the stage. Musicologist Bonnie Gordon emphasized the imperative need to name and address the violence, noting, "In my experience, students who are well versed in Title IX training find it frustrating when faculty do not acknowledge rape in the works of art they study." (235) One such work, Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, continues to be staged on college campuses in the post-Covid, #MeToo era, and as musicologist Monica Hershberger points out, "*Susannah* is poised to address campus rape culture and histories of erasure—to encourage performers and audiences to contemplate the prevalence of acquaintance rape, the long road to recovery afterward, and our tendency to doubt and blame the victim, particularly when the victim is marked as "other" in some way. The continued college campus presence of *Susannah* could prove illuminating...." (232) Even so, there has been little to no recent scholarship on how university music programs are handling the staging of this work. This paper offers The University of Kentucky Opera Theater's 2023 production of *Susannah* as a case study. The co-authors of the paper, a music theorist who works in 20/21st century American opera and a DMA voice student who will be singing the title role, specifically pose the following questions: What are the implications of asking members of the university community to portray fictional events that may cause them to relive sexual aggression or trauma that has either occurred to them or someone they know? What type of care should be taken or offered to the university students involved with performing and staging this work? Who is advocating for this care? The authors will share quantitative and qualitative data collected from university performers during the various efforts of care surrounding the before, during, and post-production of the opera.

Jennifer L. Campbell is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Kentucky. She specializes in twentieth and twenty-first century American music and undertakes interdisciplinary projects, exploring connections between music, dance, art, politics, and cultural identity. Her dissertation, "Shaping Solidarity: Music, Diplomacy, and Inter-American Relations, 1936-1946" (2010) and article on the Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (OIAA) in *Diplomatic History* (2012) offer seminal insight into the formalization of United States musical diplomacy during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Select other national/international presentations and publications address music by U.S. composers, including ballets by Paul Bowles, Aaron Copland, and Virgil Thomson, and operas by Missy Mazzoli

and Kevin Puts. Campbell is also currently working on a critical edition of Alex North's *Revue for Clarinet*.

Jessica Bayne, soprano, is a versatile artist comfortable in a range of repertoire. She has performed with UK Opera Theatre, Opera Maine, Lyric Opera Studio Weimar, Bay View Music Festival, and The Lexington Theatre Company. Performance credits include the title role in *Susannah*, *La Traviata* (Violetta), *Die Zauberflöte* (Pamina), *La Bohème* (Mimi), *Sondheim on Sondheim*, and *Songs for a New World*. She is also a member of the prestigious touring company The American Spiritual Ensemble. In October 2023, she debuted with the Lexington Philharmonic as soprano soloist for *Carmina Burana*. Ms. Bayne, a second-year DMA candidate at the University of Kentucky, continues to study with Dr. Angelique Clay Everett.

Priska Seidl, University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (Austria):

Making Excuses For Don Giovanni. Program Booklets and Their Genre-Specific Approach to Gender-Based Violence

“Opera features a parade of dying women” - The fact that operas tend to end fatally for female protagonists was postulated by Catherine Clément as early as 1979. Since this publication, neither the canon of music theatre nor the plots of its works have changed significantly, but there has been a shift in societal interest regarding violence against women, abuse of power or femicide. Insight into current attitudes towards these subjects within the hierarchically shaped classical music industry can be gained not only from scandals *behind the scenes*, such as renowned opera stars being held accountable for sexual harassment, but also from products intended to teach about the events *on stage*: manuals, opera guides, and textbooks; podcasts and YouTube clips by opera houses providing introductions to the plot; or, of course, the classic program booklet. Through a discourse analysis of music-educationally relevant introductions to selected Austrian opera productions after #metoo, conclusions can be drawn about the norms and value systems concerning power and violence held by knowledge and discourse communities.

The analysis does not focus on the fact that violent content is reproduced on opera stages, but rather on the question of how discourse actors and institutions treat this topic linguistically in specially produced accompanying material. Is Don Giovanni, as in a program booklet of the Salzburger Festspiele 2021, framed as a pleasure-seeking and freedom-loving person

who is thus automatically relieved of all his guilt towards Donna Elvira, Donna Anna and Zerlina? The intertextually analyzed text corpus sheds light on possible discrepancies between the public representation of opera houses and deeper beliefs found in the narratives of the program booklets. Finally, it will be discussed whether the linguistic concealment of (symbolic) violence represents a genre-specific feature of the text type program booklet.

Priska Seidl, scientific staff (pre-doc) at University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (Department of Music Education Research, Music Didactics and Elementary Music Education). After studies in music education, instrumental pedagogy and German philology in Vienna and Stockholm she worked as a music and German teacher in Austrian secondary schools and as a lecturer at the Linguistic Department at University of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her research interest is focused on the representation of power concerning female opera characters in materials of music pedagogy.

Ryan Thomas Green, University of Plymouth (UK):

SWEET TOOTH: Feminist Brutality in British Jamaican Music Theatre

SWEET TOOTH, is a music theatre work produced in 2017 by British Jamaican composer Elaine Mitchener, is an exceptional piece of art that portrays the inhumane treatment of slaves during the sugar-trade era. The work stands out as one of the most important pieces of music theatre ever produced in Britain, and its relevance has only increased with the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement across the country.

Mitchener's work is a powerful tool that evokes empathetic pain in its audience, making them reflect on the atrocities inflicted upon slaves. Her approach to representational art highlights the particular agony of female slaves, and this is further accentuated by her identification as female. Her vivid depictions of rape and assault manage to make the audience empathise without feeling guilty. With this, her work takes on a cautionary tale-role rather than one which aims to criticise or accuse the audience.

This paper delves into the feminist brutality within *SWEET TOOTH* and explores relevant aspects of my doctoral research. Although my research primarily focused on investigating audience psychological responses to the work, the results are still highly pertinent to the present discussion.

The paper concludes with a discussion of music theatre's current and future function in British society, addressing the questions that emerged from my doctoral research. Sweet Tooth is a compelling example of how music theatre can serve as a tool to explore complex themes and evoke empathetic pain in audiences, and why it is essential to keep producing such works of art.

Ryan Thomas Green is an Associate Lecturer of Music and PhD Candidate in the Psychology of Music Theatre at the School of Art, Design and Architecture at University of Plymouth. Ryan's research is currently investigating emotional responses to music theatre performance and how audiences' reactions have the potential to influence the development of the field.

Meebae Lee, Jeonbuk National University (South Korea):
Gender Issues Representing Tale Cheoyong in Opera *Cheoyong*

'Cheoyong' is a famous Korean tale from the Silla period, which is transmitted through *Samguk Yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, compiled in 1281). Contemporary South Korean media has continually recreated and rearranged in various forms (fiction, dance, theater, TV drama, etc.). Young Jo Lee's opera *Cheoyong*, with a libretto by Eui-Kyoung Kim, was commissioned by the Korea National Opera and premiered there in 1987; it was revised and restaged in 2013. The commission and recent promotion of the opera is part of the Korea National Opera's attempts towards the modernization and globalization of traditional Korean culture. However, a performance of the finale in May 2020 raised question regarding gender issues, as the finale was nothing but an insensitive theatrical representation of rape and femicide.

That rape, in which Cheoyong's wife is assaulted by a disguised god of plague, while Cheoyong is onlooking the event, is the key event in Cheoyong tale. Oddly, however, what controversy has emerged in recent decades relates to the story's glorification of adultery; that is, even the newfound criticism resolutely reads the event within the frame of adultery, rather than acknowledging that a rape has occurred. This take is particularly glaring in the opera *Cheoyong*, which, having been dramatized for the nationalistic goal of 'modern re-creation of traditional tales', ignores the issues of gender

intrinsic to the story. The lack of serious reflection on gender issues – which, well beyond Lee's opera, characterizes Korean approaches to gender and misogyny generally -- makes it difficult for this work to be accepted by contemporary domestic and global audiences.

In this paper, I trace the problems of adapting the traditional tale of Cheoyong for new media by approaching the opera *Cheoyong* from the perspective of gender, critically analyzing the construction of stereotypical gender-binary characters, its uneasy gender-biased narrative structure, and the music elements supporting these features.

Meebae Lee is associate professor in the music department at Jeonbuk National University, South Korea. She received her Ph.D. from the City University of New York, United States. Building on her doctoral dissertation concerning Schumann's rediscovery of Bach, her main interest area largely encompasses Robert and Clara Schumann's music. She also works to interpret the unique art music scenes in South Korea through a socio-historical perspective, such as Korea's art music archival culture, Korean art song in the Japanese colonial period, K-Classical in an era of globalization, and cultural implication of classical music used in K-Drama.

Violeta Nigro, Université des Antilles (Guadeloupe):

Dido without Æneas. Interpreting operas through the prism of gender in Buenos Aires

The vibrant new music scene in Buenos Aires has experimentation in music theater and operas at its center. The return of democracy in 1983 began a new wave of new music composers, interpreters and new performance spaces for new works – which increased after the turn of the 21st Century. The topics often stem from recent Argentine history, politics, religion, sexuality and gender. They are often intertwined with the public sphere, as shown by the scandal of *Carmen* at the Teatro Argentino in 2015 – with images depicting a woman being killed as a bull in a *corrida* – which found its way to the orchestra pit, when the musicians published pictures on social media holding signs that read #NiunaMenos¹.

Dido (2022) is the interpretation Purcell's opera by the Compañía Sol Lírica – where Æneas is taken out of the title to focus on Dido's choice, on her role as protector of her people and questions of femininity and masculinity when it comes to women in power. An exhibition, *Mujeres de las artes* (2022), follows a similar logic, exhibiting historical costumes of the great women

characters of Catherine Clément's pioneer study² – in dialogue with explanatory texts that invite the spectators to consider their fates through the lens of gender violence. Opera *Triptychon. Multimedia poem* (2022) is a performance by Argentine soprano Natalia Hurst³, putting forward new interpretations of opera arias through the lens of new gender categories and notions such as feminicide, gaslighting, psychological violence, and teenage pregnancy – Verdi heard through the lens of the Argentine *green tide* and postcolonialism. The performance is followed by an open discussion with the public about the degree of *machismo* in opera – in a city of "opera fanatics"⁴. Finally, the case of *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* by the group Opera Periférica (also active providing sex education in schools) brings together opera singers and boxers, focusing on gender identity and violence, considering, for example, all characters as non-binary.

In this presentation, I propose an analysis of these case studies to answer the following questions: how are these representations of canonical operas linked to local and regional activist movements? What are the social functions of these creations? How do they achieve a critical perspective on gender? Ultimately, it will be a question of considering how, or to what degree, each generation of listeners is responsible for the interpretations of these works.

¹ Spanish for "Not one more (woman) dead": a phrase from Mexican poet and activist Susana Chávez that became the symbol for a collective, grassroots, fourth-wave feminist movement, which started in Argentina in 2015 and spread across several Latin American countries.

² Catherine Clément (198):, *L'Opéra ou la défaite des femmes*, Paris: Ed. Grasset.

³ N. Hurst herself an activist and founder of NiUnaMenos-Austria, where she resides.

⁴ Claudio Benzecry (2012): *El fanático de la ópera. Etnografía de una obsesión*. Buenos Aires: Siglo veintiuno editores.

Violeta Nigro Giunta holds a PhD from the EHESS Paris for her thesis *Transformations in New Music in Buenos Aires. Works, actors, institutions (1984-2014)*. She presented her research at international conferences and co-organized, among others, *Instrumental Theatre: Music and the Stage in Latin America, 1954-2006* (Buenos Aires, 2018). Her most recent publications are "Defining Audible Democracy: New Music in Post-Dictatorship Argentina" (*Finding Democracy in Music*, London, Ashgate, 2020) and "The Sound of the 2001 Argentine Crisis" (*The Bloomsbury Handbook of Sonic Methodologies*, London, Bloomsbury, 2020). She taught at the EHESS, SciencesPo and, since 2021, is a research and teaching fellow (ATER) at the Université des Antilles in Guadeloupe.

Kylie Constantine, University of Melbourne (Australia):

Song, Silence, and Violence: What the myth of Philomela can tell us about the nature of violence in music

Greek and Roman myth is a popular topic in music, with depictions of sexualised violence often romanticised on the operatic stage. A prominent resource for these stories can be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (c. 8 c.e.), which has provided endless inspiration for the generations of artists and musicians that followed him. Among Ovid's tales is the story of Philomela, a young girl abducted, raped and brutally silenced by her brother-in-law. Ovid's depiction centres on the violence of silencing and Philomela's ability to transform her voice into new forms of expression. The story continues devolving further into violence until Philomela finally transforms into the Nightingale, a bird whose melancholic song is a well-established theme in music. Like the bird she embodies, Philomela is a pervasive trope in art and music, however, she has been, until more recently, largely obscured by her avian counterpart. Over the past century, Philomela's human story has become more prominent in music, literature, and film, often invoked as a champion for the rights of women and victims of sexual violence. Indeed, more recent depictions of Philomela have become unflinching in their representations of violence, employing creative and experimental musical systems to achieve this. Using musical examples that include Milton Babbitt's *Philomel* (1964), James Dillon's *Philomel* (2006), Richard Mills's *For the Love of the Nightingale* (2007), and Justine Chen's *Philomel* (2010), this paper explores the violence of silencing and the nature of resilience in creativity in music through the lens of Philomela. Drawing upon the ideas outlined by the social critic Slavoj Žižek in *Violence* (2008) and Kristeva's theory of the abject, I argue that the systemic silencing of women in music is itself a violent act, but a silenced voice can still be heard in exploring new forms of vocal and musical expression.

Kylie Constantine is a PhD candidate in musicology at the University of Melbourne, Australia. She has a Bachelor of Music with Honours (Class 1), a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Classics and Ancient History, and an Associate Diploma in Performance (Singing) from the Australian Board of Musical Examinations. Her doctoral thesis is a cross-disciplinary examination of Philomela's relationship with voice and music in twentieth and twenty-first century music. Kylie is a soprano soloist and a member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus.

Felisa Mesuere, Research Centre for Music and Gender in Hanover (Germany):

"Ma place n'était pas marquée dans ce monde qui me fuyait, qui m'avait maudit". Gender-based violence and intersexuality in Raquel García-Tomás' *Alexina B.* (2023)

»J'ai vingt-cinq ans, et, quoique jeune encore, j'approche [...] du terme fatal de mon existence. J'ai beaucoup souffert, et j'ai souffert seul! [...] Ma place n'était pas marquée dans ce monde qui me fuyait, qui m'avait maudit.«¹

Commissioned during the COVID-19 pandemic and premiered in Barcelona in 2023, *Alexina B.* is an emphatically collaborative opera by librettist Irène Gayraud, composer Raquel García-Tomás, and stage director Marta Pazos. Based on the autobiographical account² by Herculine Barbin (1838–1868), also known as *Alexina B.*, the French libretto reflects the memoirs of an intergender person born in 19th-century France. Barbin was assigned the female sex at birth, and later worked as a teacher at a boarding school for girls where she fell in love with a female colleague. Pressured by a heteronormative society, Barbin's inner identity-conflict came to the fore, culminating in a re-definition as a man. After several painful and humiliating medical examinations, an expert opinion led to a change in the natal register. Considered a man, Abel Barbin was forced to leave the boarding school and moved to Paris to work as a railroad employee. Yet, having been socialised exclusively within female spaces, Barbin found himself unable to adapt to his new living conditions, and, ultimately, committed suicide aged 30, impoverished and lonely.

In this paper, I inquire into representational issues regarding intergender-based violence in this sensitive autobiographical account on the contemporary operatic stage. In order to reveal narrative strategies and ethical considerations, I draw from heterogeneous source material consisting of score, libretto, performance-recording, as well as self-conducted qualitative interviews with key participants. By taking a decisively multi-perspectival approach, I argue, the opera's activist moment comes to the fore, letting Barbin emerge as desiring as well as desired subject rather than mere victim of traumatic circumstances.

¹ Adélaïde Herculine Barbin, *Mes Souvenirs*, Paris: Éditions du Boucher 2002, p. 5.

² The memoirs were first edited by sexual pathologist Ambroise Tardieu in his *Question medico-légale de l'identité dans ses rapports avec les vices de conformation des organes sexuels*, Paris, 1874.

Felisa Mesuere studied Liberal Arts and Sciences (BA) at Freiburg University and University College London. For her bachelor thesis on gender ambiguity in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* she received the Erasmus Prize for Liberal Arts and Sciences 2018. She went on to pursue a master's degree in musicology at Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media. Since 2021, she holds a position as lecturer in historical musicology and research assistant at the Research Centre for Music and Gender in Hanover. Her dissertation project focuses on biographical approaches towards gender fluidity in contemporary opera.

Breanna Stewart, McGill University (Canada):

Motherhood and Wartime Sexual Violence in Kaija Saariaho's *Adriana Mater*

The UN Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court defines wartime rape as an "invasion" of the body of a person.¹ While described literally, as sexual violence is so often politically and legally described, the concept of "invasion" also evokes the fundamental, and most damaging, experience of physical and mental violation. Kaija Saariaho's 2006 opera *Adriana Mater*, centers around the victim of a wartime rape, *Adriana*, who becomes pregnant and agonizes over the nature of her son. While violence provides the context, I argue that motherhood forms the core conflict of the opera. *Adriana Mater* is fundamentally a psychological drama. It is set in an intentionally unnamed war-torn village, and thus rather than articulating real historical particularities, the opera explores the aftereffects in coping with such personal and communal violence.

In this presentation, I will analyse the significance of how *Adriana Mater* articulates the dual themes of violence and motherhood psychologically. First, I will discuss the decision to have the rape take place off-stage, shifting focus from the visual reproduction of physical brutality and onto the complete violation fundamental to such violence. Specifically, the music and the production elements force the audience to experience auditory and visual violation themselves, creating a sense of visceral sympathy. Secondly, I will analyse the sociopolitical implications of these dual themes. *Adriana Mater* evokes the image of the *Mater Dolorosa* – the mother through whose suffering the world is saved. In so doing, it articulates the hegemonic systems of power that enforce the paradoxical and highly damaging expectation that women simultaneously absorb violence and construct a better world by nurturing "good." Throughout, I will compare the production and reception

of the Paris premiere and of recent re-stagings in 2023, from the Swedish NorrlandsOperan and the San Francisco Symphony. The re-stagings suggest the ongoing importance of the opera in making visible not only the lived experiences of people coping with such violence, but also the hegemonic power structures that allow for its perpetuation.

Breanna Stewart is currently a PhD student in Musicology at McGill University, with a master's degree from McGill, as well as a BMus and BA in Music Honors from Acadia University. Stewart's past research has centered on issues of modernism, innovation/tradition dichotomies, and historiography in post-1945 French music, particularly the music of Henri Dutilleux. Her current research interests include music of the later-twentieth and twenty-first centuries, especially electroacoustic and Canadian music; gender and sexuality; maternal theory, motherhood, and theories of care; subjectivity; posthuman and new materialist theories; and musical environmentalism.

¹ "Elements of Crimes," in *The United Nations Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*. International Organizations, 2001. Web Archive.
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