

SOAS WORLD MUSIC SUMMER SCHOOL

SEMINAR HOSTED BY
MUSICIANS *WITHOUT BORDERS* AND SOAS MA *MUSIC in DEVELOPMENT*

WAR, FEAR, EMPATHY AND MUSIC

Saturday 22nd – Sunday 23rd July, 9am – 5pm

Venue: **SOAS Russell Square / Brunei Gallery, Room B102**

Seminar Fee: £200

Student Concession: £180

One-day only Fee: £90

Musicians without Borders (MwB) is a pioneer in the use of music for reconciliation, community building and healing for people suffering from the effects of war and armed conflict. The organisation has implemented successful long-term projects in the Balkans (Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina), the Middle East (Palestine), Central East Africa (Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania) and Europe (Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy), training more than 350 musicians and talented youth to work with fragile communities as music workshop leaders.

Musicians without Borders and the MA Music in Development at SOAS, University of London, have partnered to organize a weekend seminar that will introduce the philosophical, theoretical and experiential basis for MwB's work and mission in using music to connect communities, bridge divides and heal the wounds of war. MwB's founder and director, Laura Hassler, project manager and music therapist Chris Nicholson (Rwanda), music educator and assistant trainer Amanda Koser-Gillespie (Northern Ireland), and researcher and MwB trainer Marion Haak-Schulenburg will speak on how community music and music therapy is applied within their projects in current and post-conflict regions. They will be joined by Angela Impey (Convenor, MA Music in Development) and other researchers and practitioners who will speak to the relevance of cultural listening and explore how music is used in different contexts as a medium for self-representation, as political testimony, and as a catalyst for social change.

The seminar will be followed by 4-day's training for musicians in practical uses of community music for peacebuilding and social change. These are separate programmes, but their content is complementary.

For details on how to register for the seminar, see

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/music/summermusicschool/22jul2017-seminar-on-war-fear-empathy-and-music.html> or <https://www.soas.ac.uk/music/summermusicschool/timetable/>

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Saturday 22nd July

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION AND INTRODUCTORY CONCEPTS

09h00-10h00

Opening, Introductions, Ice breaker with Darren Abrahams

Tea/coffee

10h30-11h30

Laura Hassler: War, fear, empathy and music.

Music as a shared human property, a fundamental human need and a basic human right. Music as the primal connector. Music as a tool to address the ravages of war. Musicians as peace makers. Laura Hassler, founder and director of Musicians without Borders, tells the story of how a particular mix of peace activism, community building and musicianship led to the birth of Musicians without Borders, and explains its core identity and mission. How does MwB define 'peace' and 'peace building'? How do we understand the relationship between war, fear, empathy and music? Where do we stand in the world of charities, NGOs and cause organisations? Why do we claim that our projects and activities give people and communities a better chance at recovery from war? How can musicians in all societies contribute to a just and peaceful world? And some thoughts about holding on to our hope and vision in discouraging times.

Key question: How do we hold on to our hope and vision in discouraging times?

11h30-12h30

Chris Nicholson: Shifting meaning and identities towards a peaceful future.

This session will present a broad spectrum of musical approaches within Musicians without Borders' programs in East Africa, including clinical music therapy; therapeutic music groups facilitated by professional musicians; and peer-led community music-making. Focus will be given to how meaning and sense of identity develop for individuals who participate, and how this may affect hope for a peaceful future.

Key question: Can therapeutic interventions be framed as peace-building?

LUNCH 12h30-13h30

Lunch will not be provided but may be purchased at the SOAS canteen or from various outlets close by. We do encourage people to bring lunch with them so that we can eat together on the SOAS lawn - weather permitting!

SESSION 2: LISTENING TO VOICES THAT MATTER

13h30-14h30

Marion Haak-Schulenburg: “Music changes lives” - A short history of ideas about the impact of music for social change

This paper examines the ways in which public discourse and academia argue for social change through music and the arts. Which histories of ideas are behind it? To attempt an answer, this presentation focuses on two different approaches to music and music education: Classical music education on one hand, which embraces ideas from philosophy of aesthetics, and community music practice, with its links and roots in political activism and music ethnology on the other hand. Different understandings of “music” emerge and along with it, so issues of power and hierarchy come into sight.

Key Question: What does an understanding of frameworks provide when advocating for projects based on community music? In what ways could this understanding help us to secure a valued place in the landscape of music projects?

14h30-15h30

Angela Impey: “Song, truth-telling and transitional justice in South Sudan”

This presentation considers how ethnomusicological research may contribute to the development of new frameworks for transitional justice in post-conflict and fragile states, and reflects on the opportunities that *traditional* justice mechanisms present for many of the assumptions that underlie post-conflict rule-of-law work. Focusing on South Sudan, a country that has only recently emerged from half a century of civil war with (the previously north) Sudan, yet remains deeply destabilized by internecine violence, I will consider how songs amongst Nilotic pastoralists function as judicial instruments of truth-telling, inspiring particular kinds of listening and promoting peacebuilding through empathy and “feelings of justice”. The presentation will conclude with a discussion about the challenges involved in accommodating local ecologies of communication within an international transitional justice framework that remains dominated by Northern top-down mechanisms of international law and human rights practice.

Key Question: How do we build strategic partnerships with public organizations that may not subscribe to the communicative or evidential value of song and ritual performance?

Tea/coffee

16h00-17:00

Samantha Dieckmann: Voices of Difference, Songs of Change: Community Choirs in Sydney and Melbourne

This paper explores how community music projects in Sydney and Melbourne have been used to address experiences of war for people who have fled conflict in their home countries, and the related politics of fear around immigration in their society of resettlement. Findings from three choirs demonstrate how group singing is instrumentalised to develop empathy amongst choir members, as well as between the choir and the broader Australian community represented by audiences. *Choir of Love*, an ensemble of Assyrian, Chaldean and Syriac Iraqi singers, *Sevdalinka Women’s Choir*, a multilingual, interfaith choir whose members migrated from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and *Lullaby Choir*, an intercultural choir brought

together through the universal musical form of their namesake, constitute this paper's case studies. The different organisational structure of these community music projects – some of which are led by musicians of the same background as the choristers, and others which have been implemented by external organisations – illuminate how the frameworks within which we 'listen to the voices that matter' determine what is ultimately heard.

Key Question: t.b.c.

17h00- 17h30

Reflection/wrap-up Darren Abrahams

EVENING CONCERT AND RECEPTION: 19h00-21h00

Sunday 23rd July

9h00-10h00 - Group exercise with Darren Abrahams

SESSION 3: FRAGILE COMMUNITIES - DEALING WITH THE PAST AND MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE

10h00-11h00

Darren Abrahams: Understanding trauma in times of crisis

What is trauma and how does music, culture and creativity help to alleviate its symptoms? In this talk we'll go through an experiential journey of the effect of trauma on the nervous system and share stories of interventions from Bosnia to Calais and beyond.

Key Question: How can we as practitioners be effective role models to those we serve?

Tea/coffee

11h30-12h30

Amanda Koser-Gillespie: Music Bridge Project: Community Music Making in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland

This presentation explores the development of the Music Bridge Project, a multi-year community music training partnership programme between Musicians without Borders and Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Our long term and short term workshops with local single identity and mixed identity primary schools have opened conversations of using Mwb's principles of community music making as a means of 'early intervention' in a post-Troubles Derry/Londonderry; working in communities coping with peace and reconciliation terminology fatigue and the impact that has on the identity of community music making; and how the very structure of Music Bridge aims to focus on the present situation rather than examine the past in a post-conflict context.

Key Question: How do we reshape the standard roles of community music making from a presentation format to a process-based frame of work?

LUNCH 12h30-13h30

SESSION 4: MUSICIANS WITHOUT BORDERS TRAINING TASTER SESSION

13h30-15h30

An experiential session on MwB's community music leadership training, with Chris Nicholson, Amanda Koser-Gillespie and Marion Haak-Schulenburg

Tea/coffee

16h00-17h00

Wrap up session: Laura Hassler

These are challenging times for optimists. If musicians are to be change-makers and peace-builders, how do we stay connected, support each other, keep our visions visible and our actions vibrant and relevant? What are the take-aways from these two days?

Biographies

Laura Hassler is founder and director of Musicians without Borders. Born and raised in New York, she was active in US civil rights and peace movements. She studied cultural anthropology and music, then worked for social change organizations in the US and Europe. After moving to the Netherlands in 1977, she built a career as a musician and cultural activist, focused on celebrating the musics of many cultures and promoting social inclusion. In 1999, Laura mobilized a large network of musicians to found Musicians without Borders.

Chris Nicholson is music therapist and Project Manager for Musicians without Borders in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region. His work involves music therapy practice with teenagers and adolescents at a clinic for people living with HIV, and he has developed a training course in "Music & Health" at the University of Rwanda. Chris studied classical guitar in Spain with maestros José Tomas and Alex Garrobé, and at the Royal Academy of Music, UK. In 2016 he was awarded the honour of Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

Marion Haak-Schulenburg is a musician, music educator and researcher in the field of community music. Based on her experiences in over three years as choir conductor and voice teacher for the music school of the Barenboim-Said Foundation in Ramallah, (PoT), in her PhD she researches the work of two international music projects working in Palestine in regards to their goals, procedures and their reception. Marion studied music education at the University of the Arts, Berlin with a focus on voice and choir conducting. She is engaged as

choir conductor, workshop leader, vocal coach and trainer in the field of community music in various projects in and outside Germany. Since 2016 she is a trainer for Musicians without Borders.

Darren Abrahams is a coach, therapist, trainer and edupreneur and is the creator of many programmes designed to expand the potential of individuals and groups. He works internationally as a facilitator and project leader in the fields of creativity, music and trauma, arts and community, social entrepreneurship and personal development. He is a qualified trauma therapist, a Certified High Performance Coach and a professional singer. He is co-founder of The Starr Trust which supports young people to fulfil potential, and Crisis Classroom which trains volunteer and professional teachers to work in crisis situations.
www.darrenabrahams.com

Amanda Koser-Gillespie is a musician, music educator, ethnomusicologist and an assistant trainer with Musicians without Borders living in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. She is the founder/director of Second Line (NI), a jazz-based music education charity with the focus on community music making through New Orleans jazz and 'second line' street performances as a way of introducing new forms of inclusive parading in Northern Ireland. Her work in community music includes conducting the Britannia Jr. Band, a mixed community youth wind band, one-to-one lessons on woodwind and brass instruments, performing in cross-community ensembles and delivering music workshops to various youth/adult organisations throughout Northern Ireland.

Angela Impey is Associate Head of Music at SOAS University of London. She is a Senior Lecturer in Ethnomusicology and convenes the MA Music in Development. Her research is concerned primarily with the role of music as oral history and testimony as it pertains to social and environmental justice and citizenship in southern Africa and the African Horn.

Samantha Dieckmann is a postdoctoral research fellow at The University of Melbourne. Her research project represents a collaboration between the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions and the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts and Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. Working together with Professor Jane Davidson and the directorship of CHE industry partner, Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV), Samantha's research explores the deployment of music in conciliation as it relates to personal, religious and political areas of conflict, and the processes of emotional community and empathy that lead to resolution.



Musicians without Borders: <https://www.musicianswithoutborders.org>

SOAS MA Music in Development: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/music/programmes/ma-music-in-development/>