

16th July

Concert Hall, Affiliated Music Middle School of SHCM

Opening Film

9:30-10:45

Minzu Wansui (Long Live the Nations)

/ Zheng Junli, Director

Long Live the Nation is a major documentary about the War of Resistance, written and directed by the renowned Chinese actor and director Zheng Junli. The film documents the stories of ethnic minorities from China's northwest and southwest regions supporting the war effort.

Among its deeply moving scenes are people from various ethnic groups donating grain for the soldiers on the front lines, and the Miao people carving roads through treacherous mountains. In fact, much of the historical footage of the Burma Road's construction, which was later shown in Western countries like the UK and the US, was also taken from this documentary. Additionally, the film captures scenes of the daily lives, religious customs, and folk songs and dances of the Hui, Mongol, Tibetan, and Tu peoples.

Filmed in 1939, the master tape was lost after its premiere in Chongqing in 1940 and did not resurface until it was digitally restored in 2017. As a pioneering work and China's first representative documentary to feature multiple ethnic groups, the film holds value both as wartime propaganda and as a socio-historical archive. It provides invaluable material for the study of visual representations of Chinese ethnic minorities during the Republican era, as well as for research in anthropology and ethnomusicology.

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the Victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War, the screening of this film is of great significance.

Concert Hall, Affiliated Music Middle School of SHCM

Keynote Speak 1

10:55-12:25

The City as Sound: Experimental Techniques in the Contemporary City Symphony

/ Benjamin J. Harbert, Georgetown University (USA)

The city symphony film, with classics like Berlin: Symphony of a Great City (1927) and Man with a Movie Camera (1929), initially celebrated the grandeur of urban life and then seemed to cede to narrative films and documentaries by the mid-century.

This talk argues for a revival of the genre with an expanded definition of the city symphony, demonstrating its continued relevance as a critical and evolving tool for

examining the complex relationship between the body, technology, and the urban landscape. While classic works captured the city's visual rhythm, subsequent films explore urban social and political tensions (like *Do the Right Thing*), use experimental forms to address the technological age (*Koyaanisqatsi*), and embrace fragmented narratives (*Symbiopsychotaxiplasm*). This expanded definition ensures that the city symphony remains timely, offering urgent insights into the changing nature of cities and our place within them using musical structures to offer critical perspectives. As urban life rapidly transforms, keeping this genre alive provides a way to feel, understand, and question the trajectory of our future cities.

MYL 301

Session 1

14:00-14:30

From Archival Documentation to Curatorial Practice: The Evolution of Musical Ethnographic Films in China / Zhiyi Qiaoqiao Cheng, Shanghai Conservatory of Music

This study investigates the development of Musical Ethnographic Films (MEF) in China by combining archival research, film analysis, and curatorial practice. Through an extensive review of historical audiovisual archives, I trace how MEF has evolved from early 20th-century colonial documentation to state-led projects emphasizing cultural preservation and, later, independent productions shaped by global influences. By analyzing films from different eras in terms of audiovisual language, political context, and ethnographic intent, I identify shifting paradigms in how music and cultural representation have been framed.

Beyond historical analysis, this research examines contemporary MEF practice by situating myself as both a scholar and a curator in the China Musics Ethnographic Film Festival (CMEFF). Drawing from firsthand curatorial experience, filmmaker interviews, and festival programming strategies, I explore how MEF is being reshaped through curation, institutional engagement, and transnational discourse. Unlike traditional academic productions, festival platforms encourage collaborative storytelling, cultural-holder participation, and alternative modes of knowledge transmission.

By bridging historical inquiry with curatorial analysis, this study argues that MEF in China is undergoing a methodological and epistemological shift, moving beyond documentation toward a multi-sensory, socially engaged discipline. It highlights not only how MEF has been shaped by various forces over time but also its future possibilities as a dynamic form of ethnographic and artistic practice.

Keywords: Musical Ethnographic Film, audiovisual archive, global history, curatorial innovation, film festival

14:30-15:00

Documentary as Unavoidable Cultural Intervention: Issues in the Counter Positioning of Historic Images to Contemporary Performance Practice of the Dance of the Marimba in Western Nicaragua

/ T. M. Scruggs, University of Iowa

From 1985 to the present day, I have continually documented the folk-rooted music of the marimba de arco trio and the dance it accompanies in the Masaya region in western Nicaragua. My dissertation project centered on the music, but I became aware that the intense national argument over the valid reproduction of the tradition ignored musical changes and focused on dance. Accordingly, I moved from still photography and audio recording to filming with newly available Video 8 technology. Masaya dance, especially the footwork has been promoted as a touchstone of "authentic", unique Nicaraguan cultural heritage. The Masaya-based dance moves have continually been counterposed to regional variations and especially the interpretations created by 1980s national "folk ballets".

With the turn to neo-liberal economic policies in the 1990s the dance in Masaya has undergone a gradual transformation and a new debate over authenticity has emerged. Local Masaya performances have moved from a more religious-based expression with serious performer countenance and near silent audience observation to a more raucous, deliberately loud crowd participation with rhythmic shouts, rackets and whistles throughout the performance. As my video material is the only historical evidence of what many consider the "roots" of the current tradition, how can their inclusion in a documentary in progress navigate their inevitable sociocultural impact? How to repatriate this unique and potentially powerful cultural material to best serve the community's differing social actors? This paper discusses these and other issues inherent to researchers' privileged access to the means of audiovisual documentation.

Keywords: dance as social marker, long term research, repatriation, research ethics, Central America

MYL 302

Session 2

14:00-14:30

Audiovisual Media and the Cultural Transmission of Daoist Music: The Evolution of Liturgical Practices at Baiyun Guan/ Zhuang Canyi, Chinese University of Hong Kong

This study explores the intersection of audiovisual media and Quanzhen Daoist music, focusing on the Examination of Daoist Merits liturgies at Baiyun Guan, Beijing. It highlights the role of audiovisual documentation in preserving and transmitting the

musical traditions of one of China's most significant Daoist temples, central to the Quanzhen school. The paper examines how audiovisual materials enhance the understanding of complex chants and rhythms integral to Daoist rituals, offering insights into their evolving practice.

The Examination of Daoist Merits features chants such as Dengqing yun, Ju Tianzun, Shuang Diaogua, Da Qiqing, and Xiao Qiqing, each playing a significant role in the liturgical practice. By comparing various editions of musical scores and recorded performances, this research delves into the rhythmic structures, melodic variations, and liturgical functions of these chants. This analysis highlights the pivotal role of audiovisual media in not only documenting these practices but also in facilitating critical reflections on their ongoing evolution and cultural significance.

Through audiovisual documentation, this study sheds light on the transmission of traditional knowledge and the adaptation of liturgical practices over time, exploring how these practices have been shaped by cultural, social, and historical influences. The integration of audiovisual media in ethnomusicology not only helps contextualize the complexity of Daoist liturgies but also offers valuable insights into how these rituals evolve in response to broader cultural changes.

Keywords: Daoist Music Preservation, Audiovisual Documentation, Ritual Music Analysis, Cultural Transmission, Evolution of Ritual Music

14:30-15:00

A Dual Perspective of Oral History and Audiovisual Ethnomusicology in the Study of Jinhua Daoqing / Zhuang Yunxiao & Cui Zhijin, Southeast University

In intangible cultural heritage (ICH) protection, the audiovisual record of folk performing art demands breaking through the text-centered paradigms. This study investigate Jinhua Daoqing, a solo narrative singing tradition from Zhejiang, China where artists accompany themselves with a yugu (fish-drum) and jianban (bamboo clappers). Drawing on two years of fieldwork informed by ethnomusicological approaches, this interdisciplinary research develops an integrated methodology combining oral history and ethnographic film. Oral history interviews unveil artists' memories, supplementing the transmission lineage of Jinhua Daoqing and tracing the art form's historical evolution. Audiovisual ethnography captures multi-sensory dimensions of performance practice, constructing immersive soundscapes that interweave musical structures with their sociocultural environments. Combining these methods, the research achieves dual objectives: "rescue recording" and "multidimensional interpretation" of traditional music. In this article, I provide a methodological reference for the living preservation and research of similar non-verbal arts.

Keywords: Oral History, Audiovisual Ethnomusicology, Jinhua Daoqing, Intangible

Cultural Heritage, Folk Art

***This film will be included in the CMEFF schedule**

Concert Hall, Affiliated Music Middle School of SHCM

14:00-14:25

Voices Gathering in the Homeland: A Visual Narrative of the Spring Festival Musical Memories of the Dedu Mongol Ethnic Group / Ao lunna, Minzu University of China (MUC)

This documentary uses the Spring Festival customs of the Dedu Mongol ethnic group in Haixi Prefecture, Qinghai Province, as an observational lens. Through the ethnographic approach of musical ethnographic film, it systematically records the emotional interactions, cultural inheritance, and reconstruction of social relationships centered around folk songs during the festive period. The film focuses on the complete cycle of the Dedu Mongol's Spring Festival, from preparation to ritual performances, including scenes such as the 'Weisang' ritual, family banquet songs, and long-tune singing. By integrating music sociological theory and the perspective of music's social integration function, the film reveals the multifaceted significance of folk songs in the context of contemporary nomadic culture. It vividly presents the melodies, lyrics, singing styles, and the close integration of folk songs with folk activities, providing rich material for in-depth analysis of the interrelationship between ethnic music and social culture.

MYL 303

Film 1

14:30-15:00

Nixi Pae Chants of the Peruvian Huni Kuin

/Andrej Kocan, Institute of Ethnomusicology-Centre for Studies in Music and Dance (INET-md)

Nixi Pae Chants of the Peruvian Huni Kuin follows the search for nixi pae (ayahuasca) chants among the Peruvian Huni Kuin (Cashinahua) people. About a hundred years ago, a group of Huni Kuin fled Brazil to escape the violence of the rubber boom and settled in Peru, where they remained isolated until the 1940s. As descendants of those who left Brazil, they are often seen as more traditional than their Brazilian relatives, who have become well known for their role in ayahuasca shamanism. However, what many Western visitors believe to be "traditional" ayahuasca rituals may actually be performances shaped by outside expectations. During my research, I tried to find original ayahuasca chants among the Peruvian Huni Kuin, but I discovered that chanting has almost disappeared. The film questions the idea that they are more traditional and challenges the belief that rituals must follow fixed traditions.

15:00-15:45

MANNOI: Passing on the Bells Sound
/ Irene Coni, University of Cagliari, Italy

The bells of the Church of San Nicola ring through the historic streets of the village of Irgoli, in the heart of Sardinia. On the island, church bells have historically functioned as a structured acoustic system for religious and civic life. In Irgoli, local bellringers still play an important role in major religious events such as Holy Week and saints' days. This documentary explores the cultural and musical significance of bell ringing in Irgoli, focusing on the bell tower and its four ringers. It explores the ritual, communicative and musical dimensions of the bell strokes (arrepicos), which are perceived by the community as a local cultural heritage. Based on ethnographic research carried out between 2023 and 2024, with a collaborative approach that deeply involved the local musicians, the film Mannoi (Grandfather) documents the knowledge of older bell ringers, their techniques and practices, as well as the efforts of young ringers to keep this practice alive.

MYL 301

Session 3

15:50-16:20

Integrity in Focus: Selection and Audiovisual Practice in The Traditional and Folklore Music and Dances of Chinese Ethnic Minorities / Yan Dujiukun, Shanghai Conservatory of Music

The Traditional and Folklore Music and Dances of Chinese Ethnic Minorities (Series, Japanese title Tenchigakubu), a 1990s Sino-Japanese documentary TV series by China Audio-Visual Publishing House of Nationalities and JVC, documented music and dance across China's 55 minority groups. This study, using shot-by-shot analysis and fieldwork revisits, examines challenges to its integrity (Heider, 1976) in audiovisual techniques, genre selection, and regional-ethnic choices. Focusing on the filming of 15 Yunnan minorities, it probes: Are lens angles, framing, and synchronous sound constrained in crafting a musical cultural field? How do regional and ethnic selections affect comprehensive coverage? Does genre selection favor emblematic forms over diversity? To address these, I digitized 20 Series VHS tapes, revisited Yunnan sites, and cross-referenced director notes with local testimonies, uncovering how technical limits impede cultural portrayal.

Keywords: audiovisual integrity, Chinese minority music, audiovisual techniques, cross-cultural fieldwork, genre selection

16:20-16:50

Repatriating, Cataloging and Digitalising: A Community Experience from Malabar / Mohamed Haseeb & Shibinu S, University of Calicut, India

Mappilas, the Muslim community of the southwest coast of Kerala evolved as a result of pre and post-Islamic Arab trade contacts. The literary contributions of the Mappilas are often called as Mappilappattu or Mappila songs. Malabar Heritage Digital Archives recognizes the importance of these endangered sources and has established a digital documentation and Archival Centre, to document its severely threatened Mappila manuscripts and to consolidate the research scholarship on Malabar. As a part of Archive for future project we identified large collection of Mappila songs, and videos in the audiovisual archival collection of Dutch ethnomusicologist Arnold Adrian Bake (1926-1939). He visited Malabar in 1938 recorded many songs and performing arts of the Mappila community using tefi recording technology. We examined the archival recordings, rerecord the songs with translations into English, and repatriated them back to the Mappila Muslim community of Malabar, where the memory of these old songs has been lost. Subsequently, we identified the team members who took part in the Mappila songs and stick dance in the recordings with the help of marriage documents kept at the local mosques. This paper looks into how Malabar Heritage Digital Archives employs the regional resources, technologies and community based archival standards to ensure that endangered Arabi-Malayalam manuscripts, oldest collections of Mappila songs, and recorded performances of Mappila performing arts are kept available for the long-term to enhance scholarship, creativity, and safeguarding Malabar's intangible cultural heritage for future generations.

Keywords: Arabi-Malayalam, Digital Archive, Malabar, Mappilappattu, Repatriation

MYL 302

Panel 1

15:50-17:20

Triple Narratives of Ruyuan Guoshan Yao Folk Songs: An Ethnomusicological Perspective through Audiovisual Ethnography / Zhang Ludan & Pan Yingtong & Huang Sirui & Liu Jiaxin & Gao Zhe, Xinghai Conservatory of Music

As a national-level intangible cultural heritage, Yao Folk Songs embody the historical memory and social functions of the Ruyuan Guoshan Yao community. This panel employs audiovisual ethnography, integrating fieldwork, oral history, and musicological analysis to explore three dimensions: ritual performance, oral tradition, and stage innovation.

The first section examines the musical tradition of the Panwang Festival, employing audiovisual documentation to vividly capture the “Worship of Panwang” ritual while analyzing the interaction between sacred and secular elements. The second section focuses on the oral history of Yao Folk Songs inheritor Zhao Xinrong, integrating audiovisual materials to investigate personal memory and mechanisms of cultural reproduction in ICH transmission. The third section explores the contemporary

dissemination and transformation of Yao folk songs through Live house performance, analyzing how traditional music adapts and evolves within urban cultural settings.

This panel offers a multidimensional perspective on the expression of Yao folk songs while demonstrating the scholarly value of audiovisual ethnography in ethnomusicological research. By engaging with new theoretical and methodological approaches, this study provides fresh insights into the contemporary transmission of Yao folk songs.

Keywords: Yao Folk Songs, Audiovisual Ethnography, Ritual music, Oral History, Intangible Cultural Heritage

Paper1: Cultural Memory in Audiovisual Ethnography: A Living Documentation and Ethnomusicological Study of the Yao Ethnic Group's Panwang Festival

The Panwang Festival of the Yao ethnic group is a national-level intangible cultural heritage that serves as a vital medium for preserving Yao cultural memory and identity. Centered around the “Worship of Panwang” ritual, the festival integrates sacrificial rites, singing, and dancing, reflecting the interplay between tradition and contemporary practice.

This study employs audiovisual ethnography, integrating fieldwork and musicological analysis, to document the complete ritual process of the Panwang Festival and examine the characteristics and functions of its ceremonial music. By comparing musical expressions in ritual and performative contexts, this research explores how Yao music operates across different cultural settings and navigates between sacred and secular domains.

Throughout the study, audiovisual documentation functions not only as a recording and analytical tool, but also as a means to deepen the understanding of the multidimensional expressions of ritual music. By combining ethnomusicological and audiovisual approaches, this research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Yao musical culture and examines the role of audiovisual ethnography in the study of intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Panwang Festival of the Yao Ethnic Group, Audiovisual Ethnography, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Ritual music, Cultural Transmission

Paper 2: Echoes of Sound and Image: Oral Memory and Audiovisual Documentation of Zhao Xinrong, Cultural Bearer of Ruyuan Yao Folk Songs

Yao Folk Songs, a distinctive form of mountain ballad from Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County in Guangdong, represent a rich musical heritage deeply embedded in local cultural identity. As the first national-level intangible cultural heritage inheritor of

Ruyuan Yao Folk Songs, Zhao Xinrong's journey of learning, teaching, and performing embodies evolution and continuity of this tradition.

This study employs audiovisual ethnography in conjunction with oral history methodology, focusing on Zhao's personal narrative to examine the transmission patterns, contemporary development, and challenges facing Yao Folk Songs. Moving beyond traditional text-based oral history approaches, the research leverages the immediacy of visual representation to enhance the authenticity of interview settings. Through multi-layered audiovisual storytelling, it captures the artistic expressiveness and cultural depth of Yao folk songs.

By constructing a composite archival system integrating sound, image, and text, this study offers a dynamic framework for understanding cultural memory, musical practices, and the mechanisms of cultural reproduction. In doing so, it highlights the potential of audiovisual ethnography as a tool for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, bridging ethnomusicology, media studies, and heritage documentation.

Keywords: Yao Folk Songs, Zhao Xinrong, Oral History, Audiovisual Ethnography, Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission

Paper 3: From the Yao Mountains to Live house: Audiovisual Ethnographic Perspectives on the Evolution and Cultural Innovation of Yao Folk Songs

From the field sites of the Yao Mountains to the urban stages of Live house, the dissemination and performance of Ruyuan Yao folk songs illustrate the multifaceted transformations of traditional music in contemporary society. In recent years, driven by China's rural vitalization initiatives, Yao folk songs have gradually moved beyond their original ecological contexts, expanding into diverse cultural spaces and demonstrating remarkable adaptability and innovation within urban environments.

This study employs audiovisual ethnography to examine how Yao folk songs manifest across different performance contexts, using cinematic language to capture the fluid interplay between tradition and modernity. Through documentary-style visual narratives, this research documents the evolving semiotic landscape of traditional music, illustrating how its contemporary staging not only reconfigures its cultural symbolism but also fosters cross-cultural dialogues among different musical communities.

By situating Yao folk songs within a dynamic framework of performance and reinvention, this study explores new pathways for the transmission and innovation of traditional music in the modern era.

Keywords: Yao Folk Songs, live house, Theatricalization, Audiovisual Ethnography, Innovative Approaches to Intangible Cultural Heritage

MYL 303

Film 2

16:20-17:30

Nggayuh Indhang: Religious Syncretism, Music and Dance in the Ebeg of Banyumas, Central Java / Daniele Zappatore, Sapienza University of Rome, Wenner-Gren Foundation

‘Nggayuh Indhang’ is a work-in-progress ethnomusicological documentary that invites viewers into the intricate world of the ébég hobby-horse trance dance of Banyumas, seen through the eyes of Rachmat Basuki, an 82-year-old Muslim educator and expert in Javanese kéjawen animism. The film creatively intertwines private and public ritual activities, reenactments of everyday life, and a dynamic performance with autobiographical storytelling, offering a multifaceted exploration of the socio-cultural significance and distinctive musical and choreutic elements of the ébég banyumasan. The documentary's ethnographic significance is rooted in its dedication to presenting cultural practices from an insider's perspective, prioritizing the voices of local participants. By consciously omitting the filmmaker's visual presence and utilizing on-screen captions for commentary, the film allows the vibrant spirit of the ébég to take center stage, enhancing the immediacy of its representation.

17th July

MYL 301

Session 4

9:00-9:30

“Sensing” the Aural and Visual Changes of “Folk” Music in West Bengal / Aishik Bandyopadhyay, Independent researcher

Audiovisual methods convey thick narratives attached to a place, space, sound, actors, and circumstances of distinct sociocultural relevance. In ethnomusicological scholarship, the material obtained through audiovisuals is precise and, at times, even encyclopaedic. By lending a sharper focus to the interconnections among every animate, symbolic, and material entity in a single scene or a montage, it offers the visual experience of a storyline that integrates the lifeways, situational complexities, tools, events, expressions, and concerns of people, inhabiting and engaging with their larger sociocultural environments. In West Bengal (WB), a state in Eastern India, the increasing cultural interest among urbanites, particularly in ‘folk’ music, has fostered diverse influences that collectively shape a dynamic and economically viable ‘culture production’ space. It has been ongoing through several aural and visual changes and related complexities that could only be perceived through deploying audiovisual methods in ethnomusicological research. This study explores recent cultural-political

challenges faced by the ‘folk’ music of WB (such as Tusu, Baul) while noting the ways in which audiovisual approaches identify the processes of change in and degradation of soundscapes and visual landscapes. Furthermore, it attempts to address how far the audiovisual methods maintain a critical distance from the globally acclaimed ‘safeguarding’ and ‘preservation’ approach for regional cultural practices.

Keywords: Audiovisual method, folk music, culture production

9:30-10:00

Hearing the Colonial Gaze: Mozart, Ethnographic Film, and Sonic Irony in Cannibal Tours

/ Yang Hao, City University of New York

A tourist cruiser drifts along the Sepik River, its passengers—Western tourists armed with cameras—gaze upon the indigenous villagers lining the shore. As their boat cuts through the water, Mozart’s Cassation in B-flat Major (K.99) swells in the soundtrack, overlaying the scene with an air of refinement and tranquility. The contrast is striking: European classical music scoring a moment of visual and tourist consumption, where indigenous bodies and artifacts become objects of curiosity and commerce. This ironic juxtaposition of sound and image in Dennis O’Rourke’s Cannibal Tours (1988) is no coincidence—it is an incisive critique of touristic exoticism, colonial nostalgia, and the Western gaze. Unlike traditional ethnographic films that rely on intra-diegetic indigenous soundscapes, Cannibal Tours repeatedly inserts Mozart’s K.99 into its soundtrack, disrupting ethnographic soundscape with a sonic marker of European civilization. Through an audiovisual ethnomusicological analysis of the film’s “Mozart Moments,” this paper examines how extra-diegetic music functions as a sonic extension of the colonial gaze—both reinforcing and subverting the power dynamics between Western tourists, indigenous subjects, and the film’s audience. I situate O’Rourke’s musical choices within broader histories of ethnographic film scoring and the politics of extra-diegetic music, drawing comparisons to the use of music in Jean Rouch’s ethno-fictions and Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson’s Balinese film projects. By foregrounding the ironic and ideological dimensions of sound in ethnographic film, this study contributes to discussions of postcolonialism, the interpretation of film music, and the ways in which sound mediates cross-cultural critique.

Keywords: Cannibal Tours, Mozart, Colonial Gaze, Extra-Diegetic Music, Postcolonialism

10:00-10:30

Thai Music in Los Angeles: Renewing Cultural Heritage

/ Helen Rees, University of California, Los Angeles

A collaboration among an ethnomusicologist, a documentary filmmaker, and the

curator of UCLA's World Musical Instrument Collections (WMIC), this film-in-progress documents the repair of three magnificently carved Mon gong circles from the university's Thai collection, two of them dating back to the 19th century. Organized by the WMIC curator, herself a professional Thai musician, the project brought two leading Mon gong circle exponents from Bangkok to Los Angeles in May 2024 to assess the instruments, when preliminary filming was undertaken, and in May 2025 is bringing them back to work with her on the repair. Their collaboration will culminate in a community concert at North Hollywood's Wat Thai Buddhist temple, centre of Los Angeles' large Thai diasporic population, to celebrate their renewal. The film uses observational cinema techniques to show aspects of these instruments' lives that go beyond just performance to include their physical condition, repair processes, documented histories, present status as revered items of cultural heritage, and the webs of relationships that connect them to the human and spiritual realms. This paper will address the questions the team had to consider as we discussed how to create a film in which three musical instruments are the main characters around which the action revolves, with their performers and repairers as the supporting cast; how to involve the local Thai community in this project of cultural renewal; and how to integrate the instruments' long lives and cultural significance into the story via textual documents preserved in the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive.

Keywords: Thai musical instruments, musical instrument repair, observational documentary, cultural heritage renewal, Thai diaspora

MYL 302

Panel 2

9:00-10:30

“An Open-Air Laboratory”: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation and Imagination Development—A Case Study of the “Evogen” Field Landmark Scientific Expedition Camp and Audiovisual Ethnography in Western Yunnan

/ Xiang Li, Yunnan University & Ouyang Qiuyue, Central Academy of Fine Arts & Gao Yuan, Shanghai Conservatory of Music & Zou Zhimin, Kunming Media College

The Evogen Scientific Expedition Camp in Western Yunnan integrates research methodologies from audiovisual ethnography, aesthetic anthropology, cognitive neuroscience, artificial intelligence, and education. Through multimodal documentation of indigenous ethnic minority Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) music, perceptual intelligence experimental analysis, interdisciplinary collaboration, and human-machine symbiotic imagination development training, the camp has established a “cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational” co-creative learning ecosystem. Based on the contemporary transformation of audiovisual ethnography, the camp transcends the limitations of single-mode visual documentation and dissemination paradigms. Moreover, biological perception

experiments reveal that ICH music exhibits significant efficacy in art therapy, cross-cultural understanding, and value identity reconstruction. The activation and sustainable transmission of ICH music are facilitated through an ecological approach integrating “heritage transmission, functional expansion, and interdisciplinary support.”

Keywords: Audiovisual Ethnography, Intangible Cultural Heritage Activation, Artificial Intelligence, Imagination Development, Art Therapy

Paper 1: The Art Therapy Potential of Intangible Cultural Heritage Music: An Empirical Study Based on Ethnographic Film

The Evogen Scientific Expedition Camp in Western Yunnan constructs a three-dimensional framework—“cultural interpretation – biological perception – technological transformation” to explore the art therapy potential of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) music. By using the ethnographic filmmaking method, this study documents the multimodal features of music from minority ethnic groups, including the Bai, Dulong, Lisu, and Nu communities. It further integrates biological perception technologies to capture real-time emotional responses of participants, examining ICH music's psychological therapy potential and its application value in the wellness industry. The findings provide scientific evidence for the psychological effects and therapeutic functions of ICH music, contributing to its modernization and sustainable development.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage Music, Art Therapy, Biological Perception, Emotion Recognition, Cross-Cultural Research

Paper 2: The Innovative Research on Music Ethnography Based on Interdisciplinary Practice

The Evogen Scientific Expedition Camp in Western Yunnan, grounded in the Complementarity Principle and practices of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) digitization, explores and validates the significant efficacy of interdisciplinary music ethnography innovation in ICH revitalization. By integrating artificial intelligence (AI) and bio-sensing intelligence technologies, the project employed AI composition tools to collaborate with Naxi native singers. This practice demonstrates the feasibility of "bidirectional knowledge flow" mediated by technology, underscores the critical role of imagination development in ICH revitalization, and offers vital insights into the creative evolution of ethnic music.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary Practice, Music Ethnography, Bidirectional Knowledge Flow, Imagination Development, intangible cultural heritage (ICH) digitization

Paper 3: Soundscape Without Boundaries: A Cross-Disciplinary Study on the Living

Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage Music

The Evogen Field Scientific Expedition Camp in Western Yunnan adopts a “boundary-free laboratory” model to innovate intergenerational collaboration in the transmission of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) music. Teenage participants engage in ICH transmission through a digital-native perspective, reconstructing traditional symbols via AI and indigenous contextual music. This approach transforms Dongba scripture chanting into immersive audiovisual narratives and extends the ritual rhythms of “Re Mei Cuo” through algorithmic generation techniques, establishing a bridge for dialogue between tradition and modernity within digital media. This intergenerational symbiotic transmission model surpasses the limitations of traditional unidirectional teaching, forming a dynamic chain of “perception-reconstruction-dissemination” that offers an innovative paradigm for ICH music’s sustainability, from local identity to global sharing.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage Music, Audiovisual Ethnography, Intergenerational Collaboration, Digital Creativity, Boundary-Free Laboratory

A2-1

Keynote Speak 2

10:50-12:20

Interperspectivity and the Emergence of the “Neo-Others”: A Case Study of Audiovisual Documentation of Qiang and Yi Belief-Based Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) / Liu Guiteng, Shanghai Conservatory of Music

The dramatic transformation of contemporary fieldwork relationships has posed significant challenges to the preservation and transmission of traditional Chinese culture, while also presenting urgent methodological dilemmas for ethnomusicological ethnography and audiovisual discourse construction. A notable phenomenon in this context is the emergence of the "Neo-Others". This paper employs two belief-based Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) audiovisual documentation case studies by ethnomusicologist Liu Guiteng as primary exemplars: *On the Clouds: A DV Narrative of Qiang Shibi Investigation* (Gong Daoyuan, cinematographer; Puxi, Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, 2018) and *Shi Tou Ji: An "Insider" Interpretation of Liangshan Yi Suni by a Neo-Others* (Wang Yifan & Jiang Yu, cinematographers; Zhaojue, Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, 2024). Proceeding from an academic stance that respects and acknowledges the cultural interpretative authority of local elites, this study discusses participation and observation method in ethnomusicology and visual narrative strategies in ethnographic filmmaking. Building upon “Rouch’s Question” as an analytical entry point, it explores strategies for constructing audiovisual ethnographic text focused on the “Neo-Others” through transforming unidirectional catalyst (interview) techniques into bidirectional interperspective (dialogue) approaches within fieldwork praxis.

MYL 301

Session 5

14:00-14:30

Narratives of Identity in Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission: A Case Study of Hu Qingxue, National Inheritor of Jing Music at Beijing's Zhihua Temple / Yu Shuailing & Hao Yongguang, China Conservatory of Music

In contemporary contexts, the identity of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) inheritors exhibits dynamic and pluralistic characteristics. The methodology of visual ethnography provides multi-layered narrative pathways for identity studies, further highlighting the subjective agency of ICH inheritors in audiovisual practices.

Focusing on Hu Qingxue, a national-level ICH inheritor of Jing Music at Beijing's Zhihua Temple, this study integrates audiovisual materials—including fieldwork recordings, Kuaishou livestream archives, music performances, and documentation of instrument-making processes—to explore the construction logic and narrative expression of his multifaceted identities. Hu Qingxue's multiple identities, symbolically and contextually manifested through audiovisual media, reflect both the institutionalized discipline imposed by the "state presence" on ICH and the individual's agency in reshaping cultural communication ecosystems through new media technologies.

Keywords: ICH inheritors, visual ethnography, identity narratives, Hu Qingxue, audiovisual media

14:30-15:00

Constructing a New Third space in Audiovisual Ethnography: Reinterpreting Cultural Inheritance in the Post-Ethnic Era through Dynamic Yunnan / Li Ruxin, No. 2 High School of East China Normal University

When the curtain rises on Dynamic Yunnan, the dancers' barefoot vibrations and the Yi people's Haicaiqiang (a traditional style of singing characterized by its unique vocal techniques and melodic expression) transform the stage into a vibrant, grounded portrayal of ethnic and rural life. This type of "authenticity" has helped sustain the production's appeal since its 2003 premiere. Widely acclaimed as a "living museum" that merges modern stage aesthetics with ethnic traditions, Dynamic Yunnan raises essential questions about approaches, especially with regard to audiovisual ethnography for cultural inheritance in China. Should the heritage, preserved through approaches (set up by Tian Feng, the composer and founder of the Yunnan Ethnic Cultural Inheritance Center, who championed a closed conservation model), maintain cultural continuity, or should it be dynamic? Can Dynamic Yunnan serve as a template for such innovation?

Moreover, drawing upon Homi Bhabha's Third Space theory, this study posits that Dynamic Yunnan creates a third form—presenting ethnic dances through universal choreography while emphasizing minority identity, thus forming a new cultural paradigm that is neither purely authentic nor fully commercialized.

Through performance analysis and a review of 20 years of audience data, research revealed that the production marks a dramatic shift in China's post-ethnic cultural inheritance: performative ethnicity replaces geographical roots, with audiovisual technology serving as a mediator between preservation and innovation. This study explores how focusing on cultural performance, rather than cultural origins, transforms the notion of preserving heritage into a dynamic form of artistic expression, inspiring new possibilities for audiovisual ethnography.

Keywords: Audiovisual ethnography, cultural inheritance, Dynamic Yunnan, performative ethnicity, post-ethnic era

15:00-15:30

Original Ecology Folksongs, Myth and Showbiz: A Case Study of Musical Sustainability among the Bulang in Yunnan / Leonardo D'Amico, Independent scholar

In 2008, 'Bulang's traditional singing and instrument playing' (Bulangzu tanchang) was listed for protection under China's intangible cultural heritage regulatory measures. This paper explores a community-based cultural protection project among the Bulang ethnic group in Menghai village, located in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan province, southwest China. Drawing on some research audiovisual material, this paper offers insight into Bulang musical heritage, explores the link between mythology and their emic musical taxonomy (made visible through visual material), and analyses whether modern social changes endanger musical traditions or give rise to new aesthetics. This study adopts an ethnomusicological perspective, focusing on sustainability amid the commodification of ethnicity for showbiz through staged performances for tourists. Fieldwork in Menghai village examines how the Bulang people represent themselves in media, stage performances, and social networks, negotiating and reshaping their musical identity. This study emphasises the relationship between the stage performances of 'original ecology folksongs' in media and the sustainability of Bulang music.

Keywords: Audiovisual ethnomusicology, intangible cultural heritage, musical sustainability, original ecology folksongs, Bulang ethnicity

MYL 302

Session 6

14:00-14:30

An Exploration of Nuo Theatre in Chizhou, Anhui: An Audiovisual Study and

Practice

/ Wu Xiaohan, Shanghai Conservatory of Music

Chizhou Nuo Theatre, It features clan-based organization, mask usage, and integrates Taoist rituals with local opera. It serves multiple functions including exorcism, clan unity, and entertainment. It is unique for its combination of singing, speaking, and complete storylines. In 2006, it was recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage.

Since the reform and opening-up, the video documentation of Chizhou Nuo Theatre has expanded significantly with the advancement of media platforms. Governmental departments and academic institutions have produced various videos, such as the "Chizhou Nuo Theatre National Intangible Cultural Heritage Application Film" and the documentary "Nuo, Nuo!" which documented the theatre's development in Maotan Village. In the era of self-media, the "Xiang Nuo Family" TikTok account has played a key role in promoting Chizhou Nuo Theatre.

This article categorizes the evolution of Chizhou Nuo Theatre video history into three phases: 1. The collision between audiovisual technology and videos for Chizhou Nuo Theatre; 2. the comprehensive growth of the Chizhou Nuo Theatre video production in the 21th century; 3. the diversification of the Chizhou Nuo Theatre video narratives in the present. It examines the production background, audiovisual language, and narrative structure of representative videos from each phase. The research explores the evolution of Chinese audiovisual media through the archive study of Chizhou Nuo Theatre, while offers a insight into the current state of Chizhou Nuo Theatre and contributes to its video documentation.

Keywords: Chizhou Nuo Theatre, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Audiovisual Documentation, Media Evolution, Cultural Transmission

14:30-15:00

Graphic Narratives in Ethnomusicological Film: A Case Study from Sardinia, Italy
/ Marco Lutzu, University of Cagliari, Italy

The integration of graphic elements—such as illustrations, comics, and drawings—into anthropological research and ethnography has a longstanding history, with scholars increasingly recognizing their value in recent years. These visual methods offer unique avenues for conveying complex cultural narratives, capturing nuances that traditional textual descriptions may overlook. The rise of graphic ethnography exemplifies this trend, blending visual storytelling with ethnographic inquiry to produce engaging and insightful representations of cultural phenomena (Theodossopoulos 2022). In ethnomusicology, however, this approach remains largely unexplored. In particular, the use of illustrations in ethnographic documentary filmmaking has received little scholarly attention, leaving a significant gap in

understanding how visual elements can enhance the representation of musical traditions and performances.

Building on the presentation of the documentary T505, this paper discusses the strategies and benefits of incorporating animated graphic elements in ethnomusicological filmmaking. T505 is a work-in-progress documentary that narrates a case of repatriation of historical recordings to the community of Aggius, a village in northern Sardinia. These recordings were made a century ago by the musician and ethnomusicologist Gavino Gabriel. The film follows a collector searching for Gabriel's old recordings with the aim of returning them to the community while simultaneously portraying Gabriel's pioneering interest in the use of recordings for ethnomusicological research in Italy. T505 is produced by the author of this paper in collaboration with a professional illustrator.

Keywords: Graphic Narratives, Graphic Storytelling, Audiovisual Ethnomusicology, Sardinian music, Gavino Gabriel

15:00-15:30

A Feasibility Study on the Application of Audiovisual Materials in Musical Instrument Museums

/ Xu Ke, Universiti Putra Malaysia

In the process of inheritance and development of Chinese national music culture, the application of audio-visual materials in musical instrument museums plays a key role. This paper focuses on musical instrument museums, taking the Chinese National Music Museum as a typical case, and deeply explores the forms, effects, difficulties and innovative strategies of its audio-visual materials application. By analyzing the application forms such as multimedia display, digital archives, and virtual interactive experience, it reveals its remarkable achievements in cultural communication, deepening education and academic support. At the same time, facing the difficulties of technological updates, copyright quality, and talent shortage, it proposes innovative paths such as multi-party cooperation, copyright management optimization, and talent training and introduction, aiming to provide comprehensive and targeted theoretical and practical guidance for improving the application level of audio-visual materials in musical instrument museums and promoting the prosperity of national music culture, promoting the continuous innovation and development of Chinese National Music Museums in the digital age, and better promoting the treasures of national music culture.

Keywords: Musical Instrument Museum, Audio-Visual Materials, Digital Applications, Multimedia Display, Audience Engagement

MYL 303

Film 3

15:00-15:50

Performing the Kyrgyz Epic Manas in Contemporary Times: An Endeavor to Preserve the Oral Tradition / Aibek Baiymbetov, University of Central Asia

The performance of the Kyrgyz epic Manas represents as a vivid example of a living oral tradition that continues to be practiced among performers and their audiences in contemporary Kyrgyzstan. However, the perception of traditional performance art, both by the performers and their listeners, is evolving under the influence of modern contexts. The central figure of the ethnographic documentary film is a manaschy (epic storyteller). Manaschy received the gift of storytelling from the spirits of the epic's heroes in his youth through a visionary dream. In this way, ancestral spirits select individuals and bestow upon them the blessing to become storytellers. The film's hero recounts his unique journey of becoming a manaschy, as well as the challenges, responsibilities, and obstacles he faces in practicing his art. The storyteller believes that the epic is a living embodiment of the spirits of the epic heroes, who continue to serve the people through the art of the epic performance. Recognizing the importance of this mission, storyteller perpetuates the old tradition by mentoring a new generation of young storytellers.

15:50-16:40

Pirai: Songs of Enchantment from the Akroá-Gamella

/ Magda Pucci, ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Latin America and the Caribbean (LatCar)

In the western lowlands of Maranhão, Brazil, the Akroá-Gamella people transform resistance into chants. Their struggle for territory and identity resonates through improvised verses of cantoria (sung poetry) and nightly dialogues with the encantados—ancestral spirits who whisper through the forests. At the heart of this spiritual frontline stands João Piraí, the mythic guardian whose presence echoes in the rivers, guiding their land reclamations. Fusing with this people's ancestral songs rise the sacred Mina drums and the Bumba Meu Boi party-living traces of the African diaspora in Northeast Brazil that forged a dynamic cultural synthesis. This immersive audiovisual project reveals how sound weaves together the past and insurgent present of the Akroá-Gamella. The lens becomes an ear: capturing sacred chants that assert existence, ritual invocations defying state violence, and the eloquent silences of a forest that holds memories. A collective creation that asks: can song reclaim stolen ground?

MYL 303

Film 4

17:00-17:40

Performing with Shadow Puppetry: Puppet Manipulation, Production, and Percussion

Notation

/ Wang Hsing-Yu & Chen Hsin-Yu & Feng Pi-Ying, Graduate Institute of Ethnomusicology at the Taiwan Normal University

This film explores the traditional shadow puppetry in Taiwan and examines how digital media and innovative teaching methods facilitate its adaptation to contemporary education and performance contexts. Through interviews with preservation groups, the film delves into puppet manipulation, craftsmanship, and the luogujing (Chinese percussion notation) as well as the presentation of luogu music (Chinese percussion ensemble), which is performed backstage yet serves as the rhythmic backbone of shadow puppetry. Interweaving the narratives of master artists with the experiences of learners, the film showcases the exceptional artistry of puppeteers in skillfully manipulating figures and delivering dialogue behind the shadow screen, alongside the intricate craftsmanship of puppet-making. It underscores the vital role of luogu music in shaping the immersive storytelling experience. Through an analysis of rhythmic variations and performance practices, the film examines the interplay between oral transmission and notation-based teaching in the preservation of musical heritage, offering insights into how traditional arts can be sustained and evolved in modern society.

17:40-18:30

It's So Nice to be Dancing. Stories of the Baile Chino of Valle Alegre in Central Chile / Pablo Villalobos & Claudio Mercado, Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art

In 2019, we worked on preserving and donating materials from Argentine musicologist Isabel Aretz (1913-2005), who recorded Mapuche and peasant music in rural southern and central Chile during a 1940 trip. Among her materials, we discovered a treasure: a 3.35-minute video of a “baile chino” group, accompanied by flutes and the songs of the “alférez”. This is the oldest known audiovisual record with sound of this important music-religious tradition, deeply rooted in pre-Columbian culture. Inspired by this, we traced the origins of the group and found their successors in Valle Alegre, Calle Larga. Descendants still practice the baile chino in a local school. In 2021, we returned to Valle Alegre to share these archives with the current chinos and the community. We spoke with new and elder chinos, who recounted stories spanning 80 years of tradition. These conversations deeply enriched the reconstruction of the tradition’s history, highlighting its evolution since at least 1936 and its cultural resilience as a bridge between past and present.

***This film is specially invited for screening at CMEFF**

A2-1

17th July 19:00-20:10

Sinan Mansions

18th July 13:00-14:10

Root-Seeking -- Visiting 100 Inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage / Dong Jilan & Wang Yang, Dancer & School of Film and Television, Yunnan Arts University

This documentary follows Bai ethnic dancer Dong Jilan as she journeys through ethnic villages across Yunnan Province, engaging with inheritors of intangible cultural heritage to trace the cultural roots and contextual fabric of traditional music and dance. Through learning these art forms directly from the inheritors, the film re-examines the interconnected relationships between land, nature, and selfhood. Adopting Dong's first-person perspective and an auto-ethnographic narrative approach, the work investigates the embodied significance of traditional music and dance while exploring possibilities for intermedial expression in dance film. To date, the project has documented thirty inheritors and produced twenty-one short films, with this feature-length work synthesizing these preliminary works into a cohesive cinematic exploration of cultural continuity and corporeal memory.

18th July

A2-1
Workshop
8:30-10:30
Body Perception and Camera Control
/ Wang Yang, Yunnan Arts University

I. Background and Purpose:

Research based on embodiment suggests that the body is the foundation of our cognition. In other words, bodily activities, sensory perceptions, and anatomical structures determine how we perceive and understand the world. Human cognition is not disembodied; it is deeply intertwined with the physical attributes of the body. Our cognition and thinking are shaped by our body's structure, neural architecture, and the functional dynamics of sensory and motor systems. This cognitive framework is termed "embodied cognition" or "body perception."

Therefore, authentic bodily perceptions—such as auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile experiences during fieldwork—become another medium of expression, serving as the experiential foundation for observing and understanding the field. Additionally, the use of a camera itself can act as a new guiding pathway for fieldwork and a powerful tool for discovering perspectives. There exists an invisible "field effect" among the subject (filmmaker), the camera, and the object. Thus, the purpose of this workshop is to train participants in body perception sensitivity and physical control of the camera, enabling the camera to become a natural extension of the filmmaker's body and senses. This integration aims to help documentary creators achieve a state of "human-machine unity" and "mind-object harmony" during fieldwork.

II. Content and Methodology

Part 1: Body Perception Training (1 hour)

1. Non-verbal mental perception
2. Activating the five senses
3. Walking and running
4. Memory and imagination

Part 2: Camera Control (1 hour)

1. Body-based camera movement techniques
2. Non-edited filming

III. Required Tools

1. Dance studio for body training (or outdoor lawn if the group is small). While nature is the ideal setting for sensory training, a secluded area is preferred to minimize distractions for participants.
2. Bluetooth speaker (high-power recommended, especially for outdoor use).
3. Portable outdoor amplification system (wearable).
4. Participants are encouraged to bring their own lightweight cameras.

MYL 303

Film 5

9:00-10:30

Bulang Melodies of Manxi Village

/ Lu Fangfang & Ma Qiuchen, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences & Minzu University of China

In the early 1980s, to improve the production and living conditions of the Bulang ethnic group in mountainous areas, Menghai County's Daluo Town in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province relocated Bulang villages such as Manxi and Manshan from the mountainous areas between Daluo and Mengzhe to near-dam regions. Bulang folk songs can be categorized into three traditional melodic systems: "Zai", "Zhuai", and "Suo", alongside dozens of related subtypes such as "Zai Beng", "Zai Zhong", and "Tong Ma" that share musical kinship with these core systems. Notably, the modernized "Suo" has emerged over the past two decades as the primary vehicle for transmitting Bulang folk music in geographically open communities. Recognized as the most influential and developmentally promising genre today, it has been inscribed on China's National List of Representative Intangible Cultural Heritage Items under the name "Bulang Instrumental Singing". Deeply embedded in Manxi villagers' daily life, Bulang folk songs function as cultural ligaments that weave social bonds, foster community cohesion, mediate human-divine relationships, and sustain ecological harmony.

A2-1

Keynote Speak 3

10:50-12:20

Ethnographic Filmmaking as Art, Science, and Social Act: An Ethnomusicologist's Perspective / Richard K. Wolf, Harvard

Dai Vaughan, the influential documentary editor and writer, once defined “documentary” as “mode of response to film material...in which the image is perceived as signifying what it appears to record” (1999, 48). Visual anthropologist and filmmaker Jay Ruby, in differentiating among the many films claiming to document something, reserved the term “ethnographic” for films made by trained ethnographers and meant to convey anthropological knowledge. In doing so, he also noted anthropologists’ longtime recognition of artists as “trained observers” with “significant insights into human behavior” (2000, 63). Ethnomusicologist-filmmakers, as artists, may also have access to such insights.

Although many ethnomusicologists have had training and experience as artists—in composition, creative writing, sound art and film—many other ethnomusicologists are nonplussed by the creative work—worried that it is somehow less true to reality, less reliable, less intellectual, and less serious as work, as compared with conventional genres of academic writing.

As an ethnomusicologist I’ve encountered skepticism around my own creative experimentation. Writing in a creative mode is not just making things up. I’ve used my writing to set up evidence-based, plausible scenarios that allow the reader to approach a subject from more than one angle. Ethnomusicological filmmaking as artistic practice too holds emotive as well as denotative possibilities well beyond merely those of illustrating a book’s musical examples on a companion website.

A confusion persists inside and beyond our field about music’s value as an aesthetic object, and the value of what can be said or filmed about it—as if the merit of the book or film lies in the (culturally biased) aesthetic merit of the musical object. For me, an ethnomusicological film places music and sound on equal footing with other kinds of (mainly) human activities in a given cultural-historical moment. It should do something: carry a message, make an argument, tell a story, pose questions about its subject; it should leave room for viewers to insert themselves—to take away different possible messages. Viewed externally, so-called ethnomusicological films may seem merely to “celebrate the rich heritage of music and sound,” as the RAI (Royal Anthropological Institute) film festival put it in 2023. In contrast, films up for RAI’s Richard Werbner award are supposed to be “made by an academic anthropologist” and “based upon extensive fieldwork by the film-maker among the film’s subjects.” RAI’s rubrics that year set up false dichotomies, clearly.

In this keynote lecture, I will reflect on two of my films that grew out of long-term

fieldwork, one along the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan (10 years), and the other in the Nilgiri Hills of South India (35 years). I will focus on my artistic and musically trained moves as an editor and fieldworker, the narrativity of the films as films, the value of documenting others speaking to one another in their own language, and the act of filmmaking as a necessarily social one.

MYL 301

Session 7

14:00-14:30

From Sofa to the Field (and Back): Rethinking Accessibility of Knowledge through Audiovisual Ethnomusicology / Annabelle Bulag, Yonsei University Korean Language Institute (KLI) & King's College London (KCL)

I have always loved the polka-dot rug under the sofa in my friend's living room. Late one night, curled up on the sofa, we lamented how our blood, sweat, and tears would likely never reach beyond the boundaries of academia. It was during this conversation that the inspiration for my project emerged: how could ethnomusicological research be democratized and made accessible beyond academic boundaries?

Drawing on fieldwork conducted with the London Korean Seniors Choir, this paper explores how collaborative filmmaking transformed participants from research subjects into co-creators, offering unique access to the emotional and embodied dimensions of musicking (Turino, 2008). Yet, through this process, I encountered challenges, including balancing participation with observation and translating visual and sensory data into academic insights. These challenges raise questions about the role of film—not just as documentation but as a medium for knowledge dissemination and public engagement. Film's accessibility potential lies in its ability to surpass traditional academic limitations by delivering emotionally resonant, multisensory experiences and fostering broader audience engagement (Pink, 2006). Moreover, its interpretative flexibility invites audiences to construct their own meanings, broadening its reach beyond predefined academic conclusions.

By reflecting on both successes and limitations, this paper argues that accessibility in ethnomusicology demands more than visibility. It requires rethinking how we create, interpret, and share knowledge through a multimodal ethnographic approach designed to foster both public engagement and academic impact.

Keywords: Accessibility, Collaborative Filmmaking, Multimodal Ethnography, Musiking, Public Engagement

14:30-15:00

The Audiovisual as Expression and Evidence in Ethnomusicological Study with Participants with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities / Kate Adams, SOAS,

University of London

This paper explores the use of audiovisual ethnographic material when researching with participants with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities (PIMD), many of whom are non-verbal and marginalised. Arguing that a normative language-centred approach profoundly inhibits understanding of non-verbal musical experience, it builds on emerging discourses in disability studies and ethnomusicology which seek to demonstrate how bodily musical experience communicates complex, nuanced knowledge-exchange. My research positions non-verbal participants as co-researchers, building on the conviction that their means of communication must be not only accepted but celebrated.

As we are employing alternative modes of communication to verbal or written, an audiovisual approach is an ideal conduit to create and witness individual and collective identities as well as cultural experiences.

I believe that my co-researchers are experts in their lived experience, and so alongside my own recordings, will lean on participant-generated audio-visual data, using go-pros and body cameras and also involving co-researchers in the editing processes.

The films produced will be used in my thesis, but also in the wider sphere to celebrate this different kind of music practice and to encourage a wider community participation. Just as the ethnomusicologist does not go into the field to showcase impairment or lack of ability in the cultural practices of a group, neither should we when working with people with PIMD. Indeed these films may suggest that the deep listening evident allows for an even superior musical experience from which mainstream practice can benefit.

Keywords: Learning Disability, non-verbal, marginalised, PIMD, expert

15:00-15:30

“Time to Feed the Algorithm”: Audiovisual Circulation in Japanese Environmental Music

/ Matthew Stefanyszyn, SOAS, University of London

Building on Brian Eno’s newly established genre of Ambient Music, Japanese composers in the late 1970s and early 1980s embraced a new style of composition designed to work in harmony with the architectural environment. This so-called ‘environmental music’ (kankyō ongaku; 環境音樂) quickly became popular with Japanese corporations looking to enhance their cultural reputation. Soon, albums were being commissioned by brands as a way to soundtrack their shops and retail outlets, or even to accompany the launch of new products like perfume and air conditioners. However, following Japan’s economic crash of the early 1990s, environmental music fell out of favour, and gradually drifted into obscurity. Over thirty years later,

Japanese environmental music has surged to a newfound global popularity, thanks in large part to algorithmic recommendation by video streaming sites. Once almost unknown even in its home country, today the genre boasts a global audience of millions, with a recent compilation reissue being nominated for a Grammy award.

This presentation will examine how the audio-visual nature of online videos has been instrumental in reviving this once forgotten genre, allowing new audiences to coalesce around online comments sections. The digital medium has spurred entirely new developments in listener discourse, pointing the way to an exciting future for the genre and opening up space for a critical conversation about the role of digital platforms in contemporary music consumption, one extending far beyond environmental music alone.

Keywords: Circulation, Environment, Streaming, Digital, Economics

MYL 302

Session 8

14:00-14:30

“Summoning the Ancestral Spirits”: Behind the Scenes of a Participatory Documentary Project

/ Daniele Zappatore, Sapienza University of Rome & Wenner-Gren Foundation

The paper explores the collaborative and participatory methodology underlying the realization of the film ‘Nggayuh Indhang: Religious Syncretism, Music and Dance in the Ebeg of Banyumas, Central Java,’ currently in the editing phase and supported by a Wenner-Gren / Fejos Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Ethnographic Filmmaking (NY, USA). The film examines the ébég hobby-horse trance dance and its intricate nature as a form of 'ritual entertainment,' viewed through the lens of Rachmat Basuki, an 82-year-old Muslim educator and custodian of the Javanese Kejawen animistic tradition.

Drawing from extensive fieldwork conducted between 2018 and 2024, the paper emphasizes the importance of local engagement and co-creation throughout the filmmaking process. By empowering community members as active participants in the production, including both the performance and narrative development, this project challenges conventional hierarchies often found in ethnographic representation, contributing to efforts to decolonize ethnomusicological research and promote forms of ethically shared knowledge.

The paper underscores how such dialogic collaborations can enhance cultural appreciation for local participants, facilitate the dissemination of their artistic heritage, and promote economic sustainability through direct remuneration, the allocation of grant funding, and the retention of copyrights by the local association of ébég

practitioners (PAKUMAS). This approach ensures their intellectual rights concerning the ownership of the film and any potential earnings from its distribution and circulation.

Keywords: ébég Banyumasan, Javanese syncretism, Music, dance and spirit possession, participatory research and film-making, community engagement

14:30-15:00

Fragmented Media and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Music Short Videos as Autonomous Segments / Li Naixin, Shanghai Conservatory of Music

With the development of internet and digital technologies, as well as the rise of intangible cultural heritage preservation movements, short videos focusing on ICH music have proliferated on mass cultural communication platforms. Characterized by low technical requirements for recording equipment, rapid production, and ease of dissemination, such videos have quickly become a popularized method for the reproduction of cultural heritage. While short videos are generally perceived as "fragmented" audiovisual texts, many ICH music short videos contain audiovisual discourses capable of conveying relatively complete meanings and functioning as autonomous segments. This paper focuses on the construction of meaning in these "independent semantic segments" within ICH music short videos. Through comparative analysis of audiovisual texts, it explores the forms and methods of meaning expression in such videos, aiming to offer a new possibility for the documentation of Musical Ethnography Film texts.

Keywords: Intangible cultural heritage Music, Short videos, Fragmentation, Autonomous segments, Discourse analysis

15:00-15:30

Opera 2.0: Rethinking the Role of Audiovisual Media in the Digital Survival of Chinese Opera Through Vocaloid Technology / Li Shijie & Liu Yixing & Song Liuyan, Universiti Putra Malaysia

The integration of Vocaloid technology into Chinese opera has sparked critical discussions on the continuity and transformation of traditional performing arts in the digital era. Undoubtedly, Vocaloid presents innovative audiovisual possibilities for revitalizing opera, yet it raises concerns about cultural authenticity, artistic integrity, and shifts in young audiences' perceptions of the genre. This study examines the role of audiovisual media in the digital survival of Chinese opera, focusing on the reinterpretation and adaptation of operatic performances through Vocaloid technology. Grounded in ethnomusicology and employing audiovisual analysis alongside digital ethnography, this research explores audience reception of Vocaloid-enhanced opera performances on live streaming and digital media platforms. It further investigates the interaction and convergence between traditional operatic aesthetics and contemporary

digital aesthetics. Additionally, this study examines how opera practitioners and digital audiences negotiate the boundaries between tradition and innovation in the opera's digital transformation by critically reflecting on whether virtual idols can serve as new carriers of cultural memory.

Keywords: Vocaloid technology, Chinese opera, Audiovisual media integration, Cultural memory, Virtual idols

MYL 303

Film 6

14:00-14:25

What's Going On with Suona Gang?

/ Hsieh Chia-chi, Graduate Institute of Ethnomusicology at the Taiwan Normal University

Suona is usually considered funeral-related or other traditional ceremonies in Taiwan, so it is often treated in a biased and unfair manner. Suona Gang (same pronunciation with “those guys” in Chinese) was founded in 2020 and became Taiwan’s first crossover suona-based band. On the premise of retaining the national characteristics of suona, they use funny and innovative elements to create a unique portrayal of Taiwan’s traditional folk music scene, and undoubtedly create a stage for their own also. This ethnomusicological film shows the team’s original intention, interaction among group members, the efforts they have made or tried for the performance, and their goal of advocating Taiwan’s folklore and culture. Through presenting part of behind-the-scenes clips, this film aims to reveal the story behind these guys, Suona Gang. Let people know what they have been doing, what was going on with them in the show. Then people may actually listen to the suona, or this kind of music in a new way, and arouse the interest or curiosity about Suona Gang and get to know Taiwan culture.

14:25-14:55

Sulkary, half a century later

/ Miguel Angel García Velasco, National Museum of Music of Cuba

Eduardo Rivero Walker (1936-2012) created “Sulkary”, an iconic piece of Cuban and Caribbean modern dance. The director takes as a pretext to pay tribute to the creation of this piece on the 50th anniversary of its premiere (13.05.1971) using the narrative of the original dancers who not only premiered it but also participated in its creation process, putting at the service of the choreographer Rivero their bodies as molding clay of the same. It is the first Cuban choreography that employs the new technique of modern Cuban dance woven note by note, touch by touch, song by song on the sacred music of the Afro-Cuban religion of Yoruba origin, the instrumental ensemble known as the bata drum set, as one of its dancers points out.

In Sulkary are integrated the Cuban technique of folkloric dance, the masks of the African kingdoms of Ife in Nigeria and the ancient Dahomey. It is a piece that pursues a symbolic power and invites to discover its details, among them the songs, attributes, the language of the movements, the baroque arms, the hips, the power of sensuality, the fertilization and rituality of man on earth.

14:55-16:00

Lost Keys of China: The Works of Tian Jinjin

/ Justin Scholar & Bai Mengwei, NYU Shanghai & Independent Musician, Producer

This documentary, 'Lost Keys of China: The Story of Tian Jinjin' illuminates the pioneering role of Tian Jinjin who has dedicated his life to synthesizing traditional Chinese musical heritage with electronic innovation. In the 1970s, Tian, a self-taught inventor, developed the Electric Qin—a tactile, fretless electronic instrument inspired by the structure and expressive techniques of traditional Chinese string instruments like the guqin and erhu. His work uniquely translated the glides, vibrato, and timbral nuances of ancestral music into electronic interfaces, driven by a profound reverence for China's sonic traditions. Although he faced limited local support and a plethora of obstacles in Taiyuan, where technology is underdeveloped, Tian Jinjin has dedicated decades of his life to continuous experiments with, and the refining of portable string-controlled instruments through various innovative approaches. By incorporating multiple filters and acoustic gate circuits, combined with specialized playing techniques, he has successfully simulated the acoustic characteristics of traditional ethnic musical instruments. The film employs audiovisual storytelling, primarily a length interview supported with demonstrations of his inventions throughout the years to document his technical ingenuity, showcasing how his inventions bridged analog musical practices with emerging technologies.