

## Call for Papers

### **Multiculturalism and Music in Britain: Ethnography, Empiricism and Everyday Lives**

Department of Music, King's College London

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012

*Seminar conveners:*

*Carolyn Landau (King's College London) & Thomas Hodgson (University of Oxford)*

Over the past decade and a half, multiculturalism has experienced a strong backlash from politicians, the media and in academia (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010). Whilst liberal multiculturalism as a concept was introduced as a way of regulating diversity during a time of increased migration to the UK, often at the centre of the multiculturalism debate today are Muslims. Critics of multiculturalism as a state policy have blamed it for (self)segregating communities, lack of integration, extremism and terrorism. Much less heard, however, are the views and everyday experiences of those at the centre of the debate. Within these negative discourses, music finds little room, despite the increasingly 'multicultural' nature of music making and listening within contemporary Britain. Recent academic studies, for example, have shown that, for migrant communities in 'the West', music is a crucial way of understanding and negotiating new surroundings whilst retaining ties to a homeland (e.g. Baily 1995; Gazzah 2008; Gross et al 1996; Sharma et al 1996; Solomon 2005). Bound up within the practices of music and music making are complex and discursive interactions between 'here' and 'there', 'now' and 'then'. These transnational and historical connections, often embodied and expressed through 'musicking' (Small 1998), are important not least because they carry deep senses of identity and belonging, but also because they present what is arguably the most fluid, contextual and current picture of what it means to live in an increasingly multicultural society.

This seminar aims to move beyond anti-multiculturalism discourses by looking more broadly at how different social, ethnic and religious communities (broadly defined) experience living in a multicultural society like Britain. In a society that is becoming increasingly diverse—to the extent that the term 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007) is now being employed to describe it—how do existing, new and 'post migrant' groups experience it? What is their understanding of it? How do different groups understand 'Britishness'? Where and how do recent studies of folk music and ideas of nation (Brocken 2003; Gammon 2008; Sweers 2005) intersect with discourses on 'non-indigenous' music making in Britain, the World Music industry, globalisation and empire (Banfield 2007; Zuberi 2001)?

This seminar will offer snapshots of how various groups of people in the UK use music to understand and experience living in a multicultural society. By looking at some of the intra-communal debates, the seminar will build a more broadly inclusive picture of multicultural Britain from the perspectives of those who live there. The result will not simply be to build up a patchwork of how various groups of people use music, but also to see how the stories and experiences of people on the ground, expressed through and by music, might more effectively inform and shape multicultural policy as well as contributing to ongoing academic discourses on the nature and role of music in society. As such, participants are encouraged to address one or more of the following themes (but are not limited to these):

#### **Untangling Terminologies: 'Britishness', 'Multiculturalism', 'Integration'**

What does research on 'musicking' in Britain reveal about the nature of 'Britishness', 'multiculturalism' and 'integration' in contemporary British society?

#### **The Big Society**

To what extent can different examples of 'musicking' in Britain be understood to play a role in the outworking or unpicking of Cameron's Big Society?

#### **[Trans]nationalism, Place, Segregation**

How does 'musicking' in Britain connect or segregate communities across Britain with 'here' and 'now', or 'there' and 'then'?

#### **Everyday life**

What does an examination of the musical compositions, processes of music-making and listening of diverse communities reveal about the everyday experience of life in Britain and the role of music within society?

#### **Education**

How is music education (in theory and/or practice) in Britain reflecting or responding to multiculturalism as either a fact of cultural diversity or principle of public policy?

## **Submissions**

### **Scope**

We welcome contributions from researchers from across a wide range of disciplines, including (but not limited to): (ethno)musicology, sociology, anthropology, cultural and media studies; who work on any area/type of 'musicking' across Britain, including (but not limited to): community and amateur music, in/formal music education, 'institutionalized' music, and cultural policy.

### **Deadline & format**

Please email abstracts of up to 300 words for 20 minute papers, together with a short biographical statement & AV requirements, to [carolyn.landau@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:carolyn.landau@kcl.ac.uk) and [thomas.hodgson@sjc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:thomas.hodgson@sjc.ox.ac.uk) by **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012**.

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