



# Urban Nostalgia: The Musical City in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Centre de Recherches sur les Arts et le Langage  
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales  
96 boulevard Raspail, Paris  
5 – 7 July 2020

# Urban Nostalgia: The Musical City in the 19th and 20th Centuries. Programme (Central European Summer Time)

SUNDAY JULY 5	MONDAY JULY 6	TUESDAY JULY 7
<p><b>16:00 &gt; 16:30 Welcome and Introduction</b> Lola San Martín Arbide, EHESS, Paris</p> <p><b>16.30&gt;18.45</b> <b>From Fin-de-siècle to Retromania</b> Chair: Jonathan Hicks</p> <p><i>Part One.</i> Beirut--Rome: The Written Discourses of Urban Modernity</p> <p>—Beirut in the musical discourse Diana Abbani, Freie Universität Berlin</p> <p>—In memory of Rome. Topographical and musical proofs in <i>Il piacere</i> by Gabriele D'Annunzio Raffaella Carluccio, Università di Parma</p> <p>(15 minute pause, 17.30 &gt; 17.45)</p> <p><i>Part Two.</i> Beirut–Japan in the 1960s</p> <p>—Beirut the Ancient City of the Future: On Hauntology, Vaporwave, and the Sounds of Nostalgia for Lost Futures Ali Jaber, Lebanese University of Fine Arts / American University of Beirut</p> <p>—From Rustic Hometowns to Dazzling Skylines: Nostalgia, Healing and the Negotiation of Identity in the Urban Cityscapes of Japanese New Music (<i>nyū _myūjikkū</i>) Anita Drexler, independent scholar</p>	<p><b>16.00&gt;17.30</b> <b>The City's Rural Idyll</b> Chair: Justinien Tribillon</p> <p>—<i>Heimatsmusik</i> in Prague: Rural nostalgia in the capital? Ondřej Daniel, Charles University Prague, and Jakub Machek, Metropolitan University Prague</p> <p>—The transposition of the musical landscape of the Brazilian <i>sertão</i> to the urban environment through Armorial music Cecília Pires, CRAL – EHESS (Paris)</p> <p>—‘Those Old Melodies Touch Home’: Nostalgia and Rurality in Old-Time Music’s Urban Audience (United-States, 1920-1945) Manuel Bocquier, EHESS, Paris</p> <p><b>17.45&gt;19.15</b> <b>Paris: Old, New and Déco</b> Chair: Gascia Ouzounian</p> <p>—Nineteenth-Century Popular Song and the Invention of <i>Le nouveau Paris</i> Jack Blaszkiewicz, Wayne State University</p> <p>—<i>Mal de Paris</i>: Singing and dancing nostalgia in the late nineteenth-century city Tristan Paré-Morin, University of Pennsylvania</p> <p>—Paris, art déco, and the spirit of Apollo Jonathan Cross, University of Oxford</p>	<p><b>16.00&gt;17.30</b> <b>Musical Palimpsests</b> Chair: Christabel Stirling</p> <p>—‘Deine alten Melodien von der schönen Stadt Berlin’. Popular Song and Urban Nostalgia in Berlin, 1880-1930 Daniel Morat, Freie Universität Berlin</p> <p>—Longing for a Disappearing City: Urban Transformation and Nostalgia in Costumbrista Music Theatre in Late Nineteenth Century San Sebastian Asier Odriozola Otamendi, Universidad Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona)</p> <p>—The production of urban nostalgias. Montevideo and Buenos Aires’ shared histories of tango Daniel Richter, University of Maryland</p> <p><b>17.45&gt;18.45</b> <b>Keynote lecture by Richard Elliott</b></p> <p>Respondent: Esteban Buch</p> <p>Revisiting Old Haunts in a Time of Lockdown: Holiday Records, Virtuality and the Nostalgia Gap</p> <p><b>19.00&gt;19.30</b> <b>Concluding thoughts</b></p>

## Registration details

The conference will take place on Zoom.

Panelists and attendees must register to receive an invitation containing the link and password to join the sessions. You will only need to register once to attend any of the three webinars.

In order to register, please go to:

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## Beirut in the Early Musical Discourse (1900s-1930s): a Cultural Centre and an Entertainment Hub

**Diana Abbani**

EUME Fellow, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

**Diana Abbani** received her doctorate in Arabic studies from the Sorbonne University with a thesis entitled 'Music and society in Beirut at the time of the Nahda'. She holds double masters in history and political science from the Sorbonne University and the University of Saint Denis in Paris. Since 2018, she is a post-doctoral fellow at the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin, within the framework of its research group Europe in the Middle East - The Middle East in Europe. She is currently preparing a book focusing on the emergence of the music and the entertainment industries in the Levant.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Ottoman city of Beirut (in Lebanon today) became more and more considered as the reflection of Ottoman and Arab modernity. It was also the place where this modernity would be constantly threatened, by the 'uneducated' masses and confessional conflicts, as well by the extreme westernisation (*tafarnuj*). To counter the dangers of imitation, the local intellectual elite searched for "alternative modernities" (Japan and especially Egypt). Throughout the Beirut journal *Lisan al-Hal*, journalists discussed questions of modernity while criticising or commenting on the musical scene, using concepts of civilisation (*tammadun*), taste (*dhawq*) and culture (*tathqif*, *tahdhib*). Under the French mandate (1920-1943), this discourse became more recurrent. On the one hand, the denunciation of *tafarnuj* (the consumption of alcohol, excess of freedom, easy pleasures) was accentuated: it was a golden subject for many singers like 'Umar al-Z'enni or Laure Daccache. On the other hand, several journalists, like Karam Bustani and Kamil Chehab, argued that local musicians should distinguish their music from the Egyptian one and find modern musical forms more adapted to Beirut's modern life. This paper focuses on the construction, through music production and musical criticism, of an image of Beirut in the first three decades of the twentieth century. It follows how Beirut became gradually perceived and presented in the musical discourse, as a cultural centre and an entertainment hub, competing with Cairo or Alexandria and eclipsing other Levantine cities, like Damascus or Aleppo.

## In memory of Rome. Topographical and musical proofs in *Il piacere* by Gabriele D'Annunzio

**Raffaella Carluccio**

Università degli Studi di Parma, Italy

**Raffaella Carluccio** is a Phd student in Literary, Philosophical and Artistic Sciences at the University of Parma where she was a teacher-researcher at the Department of Musicology. Since 2011 she cooperates with the Cirpem (International Center for Research on Musical Periodicals) based in Parma, where she studies the critical reception of the synesthetic relationship between the arts (from literature to painting) in the national periodical press between the end of the 19th century and the second post war period. Her Phd research project focuses on the critical reception of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* concept in the second half of the 20th century.

'That Gabriele D'Annunzio raised from nature a prodigious musical sensibility is a fact so obvious that one cannot think that there is a reader who does not admit it and does not recognize it as such': with these declamatory words, Mario Giannantoni introduces in the pages of *the Italian Musical Review* of 1939 his bibliographical study of D'Annunzio's relationship with music. Since the first narrative works, the poet has constantly sought a presence and a sound reason that parallel the elaboration of a new aesthetic of the novel; he is the spokesperson of a synesthetic musical imagination of extreme semantics.

It is in particular in *Il piacere*, the first D'Annunzio's novel entirely written in 1888, that D'Annunzio makes the musical language functional not only to the state of mind of the characters but also to the landscape that surrounds them: Rome.

From an examination, through unpublished letters written by the poet to some musician friends, on the reception in the main musicological magazines born between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century (from the *Rivista Musicale Italiana* to *La Rassegna Musicale*) of the link between D'Annunzio and music, the present contribution will analyse the topographical mapping of the end of century of Rome in *Il piacere*.

These are precisely the sets of Rome to which Andrea Sperelli, the refined protagonist of the D'Annunzio's novel, addresses a melancholic veneration. A city that remains in the eyes of the aesthete 'of great beaut' because his memories of place grow in his soul as vehicles of an inexpressible sense of loneliness, emptiness, and nostalgia.

## Beirut the Ancient City of the Future: On Hauntology, Vaporwave, and the Sounds of Nostalgia for Lost Futures

**Ali Jaber**

Lebanese University of Fine Arts /  
American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Lebanon is intrinsically ‘hauntological;’ a country haunted by ghosts that are absent/present, dead/alive. Derrida’s hauntology finds its currency in cultures not only haunted by unquiet pasts, but also by ghost-futures– the *no longer* and the *not yet*: the capitalist-utopia that never arrived, and the progress promised by the post-war consensus that never materialized. Unable to manufacture new memories, what prevails is out-of-synch political imaginary, cultural-aporia, and futile nostalgia for dead artifacts- that *remain* the only future signifiers- and as such, signs that the anticipated future never arrived, and perhaps never was.

The emergence of Vaporwave signifies that Lebanon can no longer escape temporal disjunctions constituting its present. Vaporwave is quintessentially postmodern, relying on VHS-glitch, retro-art, visual-and-sonic fragmentation, and simulation, it is based on repetition, and loss of affect. Vaporwave is the symptom that we’ve abandoned history-production beyond the relics of our past. We exist in a ‘perpetual’ dream haunted by what is absent, the unachieved past-utopias and their politico-ideological ghosts that refer to nothing but themselves.

Analyzing the music and visual-art of the nostalgic internet-based Vaporwave alongside Jameson’s postmodernism and Derrida’s hauntology, this paper argues that Vaporwave attempts to aestheticize and map the affective and nostalgic climate clutching to the Lebanese present, like a ghost, indexing it in a perpetual loop. Moreover, through its hyper-saturation with retro-futuristic aesthetics from the Lebanese 1960’s and present-day, Vaporwave spectrally superimposes the past onto the present, suggesting a different relationship between cultural representation and the historical Real; of presence and absence, while enacting a nostalgia for alternative futurity ‘outside the imprisonment of the past.’

**Ali Jaber** is a lecturer in film studies and Visual Arts at both the Lebanese University of Fine Arts (ALBA) and American University of Beirut (AUST). He earned an M.A in Film Studies from Kingston University London and currently conducts a research project that aims to develop a hauntology of Lebanon through its film, music, and art. He has participated in several seminars via writings on music and film-related topics such as the lo-fi Black Metal scene in West Beirut, Vaporwave and the commodification of nostalgia, as well as Shadi Abdel-Salam’s cinema of immanence.

## From Rustic Hometowns to Dazzling Skylines: Nostalgia, Healing and the Negotiation of Identity in the Urban Cityscapes of Japanese New Music (nyū \_myūjikku)

**Anita Drexler**

Independent scholar, Austria

**Anita Drexler** received her B.A. and M.A. in Japanese studies from the University of Vienna. Her research interests include popular music, theatre and cultural importations. She is currently in transition to her PhD and works as a freelance writer.

In recent years netizens around the world became mesmerised by the bubbly sound of Japanese city pop (*shitī poppu*), a genre that gained a broader following via platforms such as YouTube and Spotify. City pop unapologetically celebrated the affluence of the urban lifestyle in the 1970s and 1980s, thus providing a projection screen for an audience—in and outside of Japan—that continues to nostalgically long for the bygone days of stability and economic growth.

However, city pop is part of a bigger phenomenon that remains largely unknown: new music, a movement that from the late 1960s on sought to reform the Japanese music industry by incorporating innovations in content, production and performance.

Central to new music was the motif of the cityscape that would either be glamorised or vilified by a highly diverse set of actors and thus served as a device for the negotiation of national identity in a country that after its defeat in WWII had been forced to undergo dramatic social and cultural adaptations.

In my talk I would like to elaborate on different approaches towards the cityscape in new music. By framing it within discourses on healing, nostalgia and national identity, I hope to give a fuller picture of a global phenomenon and its cultural implications.

## **Heimatsmusik in Prague: Rural nostalgia in the capital?**

**Ondřej Daniel** and **Jakub Machek**

Charles University Prague and Metropolitan University Prague, Czech Republic

**Ondřej Daniel** earned his PhD from the Institute of World History at Charles University's Faculty of Arts, with a dissertation later published as *Rock or Turbofolk: The Imagination of Migrants from the Former Yugoslavia* (2013). In 2016, he published several works that brought together his research on subcultures and violence in the construction of post-socialist mainstream Czech culture and DIY subcultural practices. His current work examines topics at the intersection of class and xenophobia in contemporary Czech society. He is a founding member of the Centre for Study of Popular Culture. He is also active in the Seminar of General and Comparative History in the Department of Global History at Charles University's Faculty of Arts.

**Jakub Machek** lectures in the Department of Media Studies at Metropolitan University Prague. He is also a research fellow at Charles University, Prague where he received his PhD in social history in 2012. His research covers Czech popular culture from the late 19th century through the socialist period to the present day. He is the author of the monograph *The Emergence of Popular Culture in the Czech Lands* (2017) and has co-edited several essay collections.

A performance of traditional folk-style music in a pub in the heart of Prague's "cool" Letná neighbourhood? It may come as a surprise to some but this is a regular event. Better known for its popularity with older audiences in predominantly rural areas, the genre is typically performed at family or village parties, reinforcing its homely associations.

Drawing on ethnographic and historical research, our work explores the history of *šlágr* (Schlager) and *lidovka* (folk-style music) performances. These genres are rooted in folklore and imbued with a highly sentimental nationalism. During the first half of the 20th century, brass bands specialising in *šlágr* and *lidovka* produced music that at once expressed nostalgia for a mythical rural life and mixed local traditional forms with global music trends from tango to jazz. As a result, *šlágr* and *lidovka* remained the two most popular genres among Czech audiences while breaking through on the world scene. The advent of rock and pop in the 1960s reduced the appeal of brass orchestras to urban audiences and these genres became symbols of rural life.

Highlighting the different roles that music performance has played in the city of Prague, this article addresses issues around symbolic capital. We examine a niche of urban music performers and fans whose values seem to oppose dominant ideologies of liberalism, progressive politics, globalism and rapid capitalist development.

## The transposition of the musical landscape of the Brazilian *sertão* to the urban environment through Armorial music

**Cecília Pires**

Centre de Recherches sur les Arts et le Langage – EHESS, France

**Cecilia Pires** is a doctoral student in history, music and social sciences at the École des Hautes Études en sciences sociales. Director of the Association of Brazilian Researchers in France (Apeb-FR) and Secretary of the Association for Research on Brazil in Europe (ARBRE).

For this communication we propose to show the transposition of a rural music for the creation of an urban musical aesthetic, in this case, the Armorial Music, in the northeast of Brazil. In 1970 the writer Ariano Suassuna launched a cultural movement whose main proposal was the idea of creating a Brazilian artistic and classical identity, taking elements of the folklore of the northeast of the country as raw material. Among the arts that make up the movement, music is the most representative. Suassuna writes that in the most populated urban centers of the coast it is difficult to find traces of the primitive music that he intended to use as a starting point for the creation of a classical music of the Northeast. Armorial music is, in this sense, a classical music of rural inspiration that developed in the city of Recife, the capital of Pernambuco. The motivation to go to the *sertão*, a rural environment in the northeast, for a musical source is, according to the writer, because of the tradition that would be much more preserved. Almost all the music of this area is the result of the fusion of Iberian music with the melodies of the autochthonous people. From his point of view, it was necessary to highlight this tradition. We are going to present how Suassuna used elements of a rural culture, one of the oldest in Brazil, to build this new aesthetic created in an urban center.

## **‘Those Old Melodies Touch Home’: Nostalgia and Rurality in Old-Time Music’s Urban Audience (United-States, 1920-1945)**

**Manuel Bocquier** is a second-year Phd candidate at EHESS, Paris, under the supervision of historian Romain Huret and anthropologist Sara Le Menestrel. His work focuses on the segregation of ‘old-time music’ and ‘race music’ in the Twenties and Thirties in the United States. He studies the role of consumers, listeners, dancers, and spectators in this process, and also teaches history, epistemology and social sciences to EHESS master’s degree students.

**Manuel Bocquier**

EHESS / Mondes Américains / Centre d’Études Nord-Américaines, France

This presentation focuses on the experience of rural music in American cities in the Interwar period. It compares letters sent by listeners to different radio programs broadcasting ‘old-time music’ (a musical category evolving into ‘country music’ in the 1940s) and promoting it as the authentic expression of Southern rurality, strictly distinguished from the urban way of life. This study shows that ‘old-time music’ was listened in cities and not exclusively by Southern rural men and women migrating to urban areas in the Twenties and Thirties.

Focusing on the broadcasters’ claim of southern distinctiveness, recent scholarship describes the function of ‘old-time music’ as a vehicle for southern migrants’ nostalgia for the region they had left behind. However, these works do not consider the audience’s heterogeneity and the diversity of appropriations the listeners could make of ‘old-time music’ on the air. Instead, I argue for the necessity of shifting the focus to the audience’s perspective and to non-southern-born and urban listeners. Through a cartographic method and a qualitative analysis of listeners’ writings, I articulate the distribution of the audience in the US, the regional identification of music and the personal narratives associated with ‘old-time music’.

Indeed, urban listeners, both new comers and long-time city residents, had an active role in the development of nostalgia for this rural and regional space in a national context. The analysis of the audience’s correspondence shows that nostalgia for the Southern countryside helped transform the social and cultural relationship between migrants and their native region, but also between urban audiences and stereotypes of American rural way of life.

## Nineteenth-Century Popular Song and the Invention of *Le nouveau Paris*

**Jack Blaszkiewicz**

Wayne State University, USA

**Jack Blaszkiewicz** is Assistant Professor of Music History at Wayne State University in Detroit. His current book project, *Fanfare for a City: Music and the Urban Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, bridges music history, urban history, and sound studies to uncover how urbanization shaped musical life during the Second Empire. Articles and chapters appear in the *Journal of Musicology*, *Current Musicology*, and the edited volumes *Musical Theatre in Europe* and *Berlioz 1869-2019*. Awards include a Fulbright Fellowship the AMS-50 Fellowship from the American Musicological Society. Jack holds a Ph.D. in musicology from the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester.

Baron Haussmann's infamous urbanization of Paris (1853-69) left two profound imprints on the city's historiography. The first was physical: the new boulevards created monumental vistas that dwarfed the city's remaining medieval infrastructure. The second was ideological: authorities attributed "Haussmannization" to a new, conservative moral order and to economic prosperity, adopting *le nouveau Paris* as a slogan of Second-Empire monumentality. Although historians have long viewed popular culture of the period as symptomatic of modernity, musicologists have yet to fully explore popular music's role in forging a Second-Empire urban identity.

My paper deploys theories of mythmaking and nostalgia (e.g. Boym 2001) to reveal what I call the "city myths" of nineteenth-century Paris: narratives linking urban reform to moral order. I argue that *chanson populaire* mediated the new social norms of *le nouveau Paris*, indicating how to walk, gaze, and interact across socioeconomic lines—in short, how to be both modern and individual. Songs such as Léo Delibes's "Le Flâneur" and Antoine Elwart's "Paris" reached both middle- and lowbrow markets thanks to instructional lyrics and approachable accompaniments. At the same time, the ballooning popularity of nostalgic songs about working-class street life was deemed a moral plague by Bonapartist commentators. These diverse songs raise a key question about urban modernity: to what extent is urbanization an attempt to overhaul the aesthetics of a city? *Chanson populaire*, I conclude, offered what Guy Debord would call a "drift" away from a singular, imperial urbanism, resulting in an alternative *nouveau Paris* open to multiple perspectives, temporalities, and subjectivities.

## ***Mal de Paris:* Singing and dancing nostalgia in the late nineteenth-century city**

**Tristan Paré-Morin**  
University of Pennsylvania, USA

Tristan Paré-Morin completed his PhD in Musicology at the University of Pennsylvania. His research addresses the musical institutions and listening practices of twentieth-century Europe and North America from the combined perspectives of musicology and nostalgia studies, with a particular attention to media and technologies, cultural politics, and French music. His dissertation, titled *Sounding Nostalgia in Post-World War I Paris*, was funded by a competitive Chateaubriand Fellowship in the Humanities and Social Sciences. It considers the involvement of musical institutions, musicians, audiences, and media in the construction of nostalgic narratives of the prewar past that developed after the end of the First World War in Paris.

Nostalgia's origins as a longing for a geographical sense of home were initially bound by nature, either in its early association with the Swiss Alps and the *ranz-des-vaches*, or to nineteenth-century sensibilities toward the pastoral and the picturesque. In the late nineteenth century, when nostalgia gained in popularity as a topic in musical compositions, Parisians shifted its meaning in a new form of longing for the urban city, its institutions and what it represented. The dynamic friction of nostalgia between here and there was reformulated as the tension between Paris and the exterior world, be it regional or national. This development is closely tied to the rapid proliferation of the term nostalgia across various media, at a time when the mediatization of public and cultural life increased. In this presentation, I will trace the gradual shift in this understanding of Paris as a locus of nostalgia in music and media from the 1850s to the turn of the twentieth century. I will examine how musicians portrayed Paris in their music, paying close attention to the recurrence in their works of poetic, visual, and musical tropes associated with nature and urbanity. Rather than forming a unified depiction of the city, this group of compositions, comprising songs and light instrumental dances titled "nostalgia" (or deliberately referred to as such in their own time) offer a range of sonorous and thematic ideas that provide a more comprehensive understanding of the place Paris played in the imagination of a population increasingly conscious of the value and impact of nostalgia.

## Paris, art déco, and the spirit of Apollo

**Jonathan Cross** is Professor of Musicology at the University of Oxford. He is also chercheur associé in the “Analyse des pratiques musicales” team at Ircam, Paris. His published work on Stravinsky includes *The Stravinsky Legacy* (1998), *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky* (2003), and a biography *Igor Stravinsky* (2015). He has written, spoken and broadcast widely on a range of issues concerned with modernism in music, from Debussy to Birtwistle. His current work is concerned with musical spectralism, including a forthcoming book project on Murail and nature.

**Jonathan Cross**

University of Oxford, UK

When Igor Stravinsky made his first visit to Paris in 1910, it was to the Palais Garnier that he headed – grand symbol of the *belle époque*. There the Ballets russes company gave the premiere of *Firebird*. Impresario Diaghilev had judged the enthusiastic mood of Paris perfectly. With hindsight, however, it is clear that *Firebird* marked a colourful culmination to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the end of a golden age. It was fitting, therefore, that it was presented at the Opéra. But Paris was already changing: it was modernising rapidly. The first *métro* line had opened in 1900 and the network expanded quickly, inevitably altering not only individuals’ perceptions of urban space but also their attitudes towards modernity. And at just the same time, a new kind of opera house was under construction on Avenue Montaigne, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, embodying modernity with its framework of reinforced concrete, and anticipating the more austere *style dépouillé* that was to spring up across Paris in the inter-war years. It was, of course, also in this space that Stravinsky announced a new kind of musical modernism with *The Rite of Spring* (received by certain critics as representing a new kind of classicism).

After the War, many buildings appeared in the resolutely modern “art déco” style to serve and shape modern life: *métro* stations, stores, cinemas, and entertainment venues such as the Salle Pleyel. The “classical purity” of this urban language was echoed in Stravinsky’s new post-War neoclassical style. There is thus a striking kinship between the formal modernism of Stravinsky’s music, exemplified by *Apollon musagète*, and the new built environment of Paris in which he moved. In reconfiguring the classical past for a new age, Stravinsky’s “art déco” music is a poignant expression of the spirit of 1920s Paris.

## ‘Deine alten Melodien von der schönen Stadt Berlin’. Popular Song and Urban Nostalgia in Berlin, 1880-1930

**Daniel Morat**

Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

**Daniel Morat** is a lecturer in modern history at Freie Universität Berlin and works as a freelance curator for the City Museum of Berlin. He has received his Dr. phil. from Göttingen University in 2006. His areas of specialization include sound history, urban history, and public history. He is the co-author (with Tobias Becker, Kerstin Lange, Johanna Niedbalski, Anne Gnausch and Paul Nolte) of *Weltstadtvergnügen. Berlin 1880-1930* (V&R: Göttingen 2016) and the co-editor (with Hansjakob Ziemer) of *Handbuch Sound. Geschichte – Begriffe – Ansätze* (Metzler: Stuttgart/Weimar, 2018).

When Berlin grew into a metropolis in the last decades of the 19th century, a particular genre of popular song, the so-called *Gassenhauer*, functioned as a medium for negotiating urban identity. Songs dealing with *Alt- und Neu-Berlin* thematized the rapid urban change and helped to foster an idea of what it meant to be a Berliner and to live a big city life. Already before the First World War, these songs often romanticized ‘old Berlin’ in contrast to the modern metropolis. This tendency to produce a sentimentalized image of Berlin increased in the 1920s, after the war had been lost.

By drawing on examples of songs by popular singers such as Claire Waldoff and Otto Reutter, this paper will analyze the role these songs played for the mental adaptation to the urban living conditions in Berlin. It will particularly focus on the compensatory function of the nostalgic picture these songs painted of Berlin in the 1920s. At the same time, it will address the ways of dissemination and circulation these songs took on their way through the city, from revue stage to record disc to barrel organ. Thus, the urban nostalgia expressed in these songs does not only reveal itself to be a reaction to and compensation for urban change, but also to media change.

## Longing for a Disappearing City: Urban Transformation and Nostalgia in *Costumbrista* Music Theatre in Late Nineteenth Century San Sebastian

**Asier Odriozola Otamendi**

Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain

**Asier Odriozola Otamendi** is currently completing a PhD research about Basque opera and its relationship with Spanish musical nationalism between the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. His research interests include the study of musical milieu of late nineteenth century Basque Country, transnational cultural transfers between Basque Country/Spain and turn-of-the-century Paris, the making of Basque opera, as well as the reception of Basque music and operas in Spain. Between May and July 2019, he carried out a research stay in the CRIMIC (Centre des Recherches Interdisciplinaires sur les Mondes Ibériques Contemporaines), affiliated to Université Paris-Sorbonne IV (Paris, France).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Basque city of San Sebastian, in Northern Spain, experienced a dramatic transformation of its urban landscape that affected the way locals felt and represented themselves. The demolition of the defensive walls and the subsequent construction of the elegant Ensanche, as well as the settlement of railway connection with both Madrid and the French border, were cornerstones of a profound modernizing transition towards an urban model that privileged touristic exploitation; a transformation that provoked the gradual but relentless disappearance of the old San Sebastian lifestyle. It is thus necessary to see the city as a multi-layered urban framework. Under the glimmering cosmopolitan and aristocratic surface, a more traditional and popular art was being cultivated, rooted to local cultural tropes that achieved considerable success. The refined staging of quotidian life (often, in a comic manner) combined with a soundtrack that included well-known tunes contributed to the making of a so-called 'traditional' image of an 'authentic' cityscape and collective identity of San Sebastian.

Understanding *costumbrista* music theatre as an iridescent mirror that reflects, reproduces and recreates the city's social, ideological and cultural reactions towards urban transformation, I propose an analysis of a case-study, Marcelino Soroa's (1848-1902) *Iriyarena* (1876), that will focus on how nostalgia operates to produce images of the past according to present anxieties and aspirations. It will also highlight the way local music theatre was a repository of ideological concerns regarding the loss of an emotional urban geography that, henceforth, could exist only within the boundaries of imagination.

## The Production of Urban Nostalgias: Montevideo and Buenos Aires's Shared Histories of Tango

**Daniel Richter**

University of Maryland, USA

**Daniel Richter** is a Lecturer in the History Department at the University of Maryland where he received his doctorate in 2016. He is revising his manuscript "Mirrored Cities: Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Mass Urban Culture, 1910-1960" and working on a new project about gated communities in metropolitan Buenos Aires in the recent fin de siècle. He has been awarded a Fulbright Faculty Award in Argentina in 2020 and has also received support from the Uruguayan Fulbright Commission in 2012. He has published various articles about the urban and cultural histories of Argentina and Uruguay.

In 2017, the municipal government of Montevideo, Uruguay, organized various public events to mark the "centennial" of the tango "La Cumpersita" written by Uruguayan Gerardo Matos Rodríguez and performed by the orchestra of Argentine Roberto Firpo at the Montevideo cafe La Giralda in April 1917. The celebrations were part of Uruguayan efforts to reinforce Montevideo's foundational place in tango's history which had been long overshadowed by neighboring Buenos Aires. Uruguay's national government supported these efforts to promote public memory and tourism along with the opening of its Museo del Tango in early 2017 in the city's iconic Palacio Salvo skyscraper at the former site of La Giralda. In this paper, I explore the intertwined histories of tango in Montevideo and Buenos Aires through various snapshots about the productions of meaning around tango during its history. I begin in the early 20th century by examining Uruguayan and Argentine periodicals from the era as well as memoirs and subsequent histories. Subsequently, I analyze various Uruguayan efforts in the late 20th and early 21st century to frame Montevideo's place in tango's global history as part of a shared cultural history with Buenos Aires. I also examine how state-backed initiatives have constructed nostalgic histories of tango in both Uruguay and Argentina over several decades to coincide with democratization and democratic policies. The paper's final aim is to explain how Montevideo and Buenos Aires's intertwined histories of tango have helped to reflect national political contexts and local and global urban imaginaries throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries.

# Revisiting Old Haunts in a Time of Lockdown: Holiday Records, Virtuality and the Nostalgia Gap

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Richard Elliott is Senior Lecturer in Music at the International Centre for Music Studies, Newcastle University. He is a cultural musicologist who works mostly in the discipline of popular music studies. He is the author of the books

[\*Fado and the Place of Longing\*](#) (2010), [\*Nina Simone\*](#) (2013), [\*The Late Voice\*](#) (2015) and [\*The Sound of Nonsense\*](#) (2018). He has also written articles, essays and reviews covering popular music, literature, consciousness, memory, nostalgia, place and space, affect, language and technology. In addition to his academic publications, he has written about music and popular culture for the websites [PopMatters](#), [Tiny Mix Tapes](#) and [The Conversation](#).

In [an article published in 2014](#), I argued that the representation of remembered or imagined spaces through the genre I call 'holiday records' provided useful ways of reflecting on the 'nostalgia gap' that exists between present and past, between here and elsewhere, and between representations and what they represent. These records (mostly dating from the 1950s to the 1970s but never quite extinct as a genre) promised to reduce temporal and spatial gaps for their listeners by providing them with virtual trips to faraway places. In 2020, with so much of the world currently experiencing a forced turn to virtual connections, this topic resonates in new ways. In this talk I will use my reflections on holiday records and the nostalgia gap as a starting point for considering broader questions of nostalgia, distance and the virtual. Thinking of music as a form of virtuality, I want to ask questions about the virtual as the dream of the future (and the past) as well as a forced reality of the present. As we long for a return to the 'real', does music's virtual conjuring offer a promise of escape or a reminder of our restrictions? How do we understand music's summoning and destruction of presence and absence? How do we manage, lose or waste time (and other resources) through music?

Urban Nostalgia:  
The Musical City  
in the 19th and 20th Centuries  
5 – 7 July 2020

International conference organised by Lola San Martín Arbide, with the support of the Centre de Recherches sur les Arts et le Langage at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS, Paris), funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No.750086”.

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