

## Call for papers

***Musical Heritage: Movement and Contacts***  
International Conference - October 29<sup>th</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup> 2009  
Faculty of Music, Université de Montréal

The transformations experienced by numerous societies have repercussions on musical traditions and heritage at various levels of their creative and interpretive process. Broadening of conceptual fields, new areas of research (tourism, musical scene), disintegration of boundaries, new media landscapes, folk revival: all these phenomena require researchers to reconsider their investigative methods and tools. The discipline of ethnomusicology, no less than the societies it encounters and studies, and, like other disciplines, finds itself at a crossroads. The increased speed at which all of these changes occur led to the idea of reassessing present-day research activities through an international conference organized in collaboration with the *Laboratoire de recherche sur les musiques du monde* (LRMM), the *Observatoire international de la création et des cultures musicales* (OICCM) and the Canadian Society for Traditional Music (CSTM).

Four main themes have been selected:

1. Staging musical culture: tourism as an identity issue
2. Territoriality and nomadism
3. Forms, performances, construction of identity
4. Musical heritage: cultural and social issues

### **1. Staging musical culture: tourism as an identity issue**

An increasingly important space for the staging of traditions, tourism tends to privilege living heritage such as music and folk tales. This scenario is likely to play a key role in the definition of cultural and social identities. Indeed, the diversity of means of communication, easier access to the Other's culture via technologies such as discs, broadcast media or the Internet, and an increase of personal mobility are all elements that have contributed to a desire to meet this Other. Moreover, some developing countries consider that tourism constitutes a financial manna not to be disdained and that therefore it is in their best interest to value and promote their cultural heritage. Musical heritage is of particular interest since it often accompanies dances, mask ceremonies or other visual presentations which appeal to the public, especially in touristic areas. The choice of what will appear and how it will be presented or listened to is not neutral. Who decides what will be seen by the tourists? The UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) programme, with its "Urgent Safeguarding Lists" and "Proclamation of Masterpieces", now plays a major role in determining which aspects of many countries performing arts receive priority financing. Why are these choices made? Besides the spectacular effect that their value creates, their emblematic nature and the issues of identity that they convey will necessarily result in multiple consequences. We can then wonder if staging music in a touristic context contributes to cultural erosion of traditional societies already weakened by numerous globalizing economical and political factors or if, on the other hand, it constitutes a culturally satisfying solution for resistance.

## **2. Territoriality and nomadism**

The process of cultural identification is inseparable from the relationship that the keepers of a tradition maintain with their territory. In our discipline, this relationship is called musical territoriality. However, many traditions are not enclosed within a specific territory. It is the case with jazz or creole musics where the territory is fragmented, and also with tango (Pelinski 2005) among others. This theme is also related to the issue of diasporic musics and their dynamism. How should one approach the sphere of influence of musical practices in the mechanics of the construction of identity?

Another factor that favours movement and contact among different musical heritages is related to the acceleration and the increase of their movement. In light of this, it is important to reflect on the impact, at several levels, of the globalization phenomenon; more precisely, the possible standardization of cultural reference canons and, consequently, the weakening of the diversity of cultures.

## **3. Forms, performances, construction of identity**

All the above-mentioned issues necessarily imply the question of identity and its manifestation through musical expressions, its forms and its performances. Here, the term “performance” takes on an ontological scope that refers primarily to a precise level of experience, that of the musical practice (Lacasse 2006, Desroches 2008). It may be a matter of staged performance (concert, show), questioning the part of “representation” in the musics performed. The term sometimes refers to a “practice” observed and recorded live and which comprises performance-specific processes such as interaction with the public. In this perspective, it questions elements of observation and analysis (Desroches 2008). By taking into account the performance as a whole, how does it challenge the analysis? Are the usual parameters of the score (rhythm, melody, dynamics, scales, etc.) enough to show the stylistic and esthetic signature of a musical practice? We need to ask not only how musicians treat music as an object that represents them and allows to identify or situate them culturally, but also how listeners, by the way they listen, influence the construction of performances. In this way, many formal parameters may or may not be relevant.

## **4. Musical heritage: cultural and social issues**

This theme refers to the “folk revival” process. It notes and examines the continuity and the transformations of musical expression (form, instrumentation, methods of expression, etc.) in various areas of musical interpretation, and examines the type of musical heritage put forward by revivalists. Are we witnessing the crystallization of music or, on the other hand, its revitalization? How does the musical heritage phenomenon contribute to the construction of cultural identity?

## Abstract submission

Proposals for single papers, workshops, performances or other forms of presentation can be submitted. The abstract, of 300 words or less, should clearly identify the questions raised in the first paragraph. Five keywords identifying the subject of the paper should follow the proposal. Each abstract must include a short biography (100 words) of the author (or the first two authors if there are more than two) including the institutional affiliation and email address of each author. Please submit your abstract in French or English, depending on the language in which the paper will be presented, as a Microsoft Word email attachment **by February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 at the latest** to the following address:

marie-helene.pichette@umontreal.ca

Papers will be limited to a standard 20-minute length whereas other presentations to 60 minutes. Each participant must be a member of the Canadian Society for Traditional Music to take part in the conference. Membership information is available on the Society's website:

[www.yorku.ca/cstm/memberships.htm](http://www.yorku.ca/cstm/memberships.htm)

Successful applicants will be contacted by March 11<sup>th</sup> 2009.

### Programme Committee:

Monique Desroches, Professor, Faculty of Music - Université de Montréal  
Director of LRMM

Nathalie Fernando, Associate Professor, Faculty of Music - Université de Montréal  
Chair of ethnomusicology

Judith Cohen, Adjunct Professor, Music Department - York University

Regula Qureshi, Professor Emerita, Department of Music - University of Alberta  
Director of the Canadian Centre for Ethnomusicology

For additional information, please contact:

Marie-Hélène Pichette  
Conference Coordinator  
Laboratoire de recherche sur les musiques du monde  
Faculté de musique, Université de Montréal  
C.P. 6128, succ. Centre-ville  
Montréal, Québec  
Canada H3C 3J7

marie-helene.pichette@umontreal.ca  
lrmm.musique.umontreal.ca

Telephone: (514) 343-6921  
FAX: (514) 343-5727



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