**Music, Migration, and the City**

**Danpop seminar #5**

**Friday, 4 March 2022 1:15 – 4 pm**

**Via Zoom**

Modern cities are meeting places for musicians, audiences, and media industries from all over the world. They have for long been hubs of musical exchanges because of traveling musicians, and as extensive migration and ubiquitous media have slowly become common and worldwide phenomena migrant musicians have contributed extensively to changing city musicscapes. Such changes may be acknowledged in many ways, for example through studying the variated musical encounters as they unfold among musicians and in musical forms; through musical cartographies and other analyses of the relations between music and place; through discussing the practices of inclusion and exclusion via discourses of legitimacy around music that often unfold when migrant communities establish themselves musically.

In this seminar we would like to facilitate conversations about how the music of migrants interact with and in the cities in different parts of the world.

**Presenters:**

Katie Young (Brock University): Sensing the Urban Night through Drill Music

# Kristine Ringsager (University of Copenhagen): Ghetto Plan Governance and the Gangster Wave in Danish Hip Hop

Klisala Harrison (Aarhus University): Human Rights in Musical Moments

Derek Pardue, facilitator

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Schedule:

13:15-13:20 **Welcome**

13:20-13:50 **Katie Young (Brock University): Sensing the Urban Night through Drill Music**

This presentation follows Drill artists based in Cork, Ireland, as they move through, sense, and explore their city at night. Cork’s Drill artists are attuned to different ‘types of night’ in their city and draw on these nocturnal variations in their music, including ‘gloomy’, ‘dull’, and ‘pitch dark’ spaces found in suburban streets, abandoned hospitals, shopping centres and petrol stations. While the majority of musicians featured in this presentation come from so-called ‘migrant’ backgrounds – in the sense that they were born in one country and currently live in another (Pardue 2022), I suggest that Drill artists’ ‘intimate sensing’ (Pinder 2005) of the night frames urban migratory experiences differently. For Cork’s Drill artists, the night reconfigures the urban spaces they traverse, affording moments to feel ‘unseen’, to ‘let loose’ and ‘go mad’ in ways not possible during the daytime.

13:50-14:20 **Kristine Ringsager (University of Copenhagen): Ghetto Plan Governance and the Gangster Wave in Danish Hip Hop**

In Denmark, during the past few years, a new wave of rap music has emerged that is characterized by extended links to and expressions of delinquency. This so-called “gangster wave” in Danish hip hop has attracted considerable attention from politicians as well as the media, which has reported on inappropriate lyrics, violent music videos and young musicians’ involvement in serious crime. In this presentation I will discuss this new wave in Danish hip hop in light of the Danish Government’s integration policies, in particular the controversial “ghetto plan”, that involves the physical demolition and transformation of low-income, largely Muslim urban areas. How does this plan affectively produce the racialized “non-Western” figure living in these areas as a threat to Danish (white) society? Can the new wave in Danish hip hop be interpreted in relation to such an affective production of the racialized Other? And how does this latch on to a wider (historical) context of consumption of the (dangerous) Other within the commercialization of hip hop?

14:20-14:35 **Break**

14:35-15:05 **Klisala Harrison (Aarhus University): Human Rights in Musical Moments**

Because culture is fundamental to how human rights are engaged, promoted and weakened, scholarly understandings of culture-human rights relationships are becoming increasingly important to law and UN treaty processes (Wiesand et al. 2016). How human rights circulate via music in and as culture, however, is little understood. My paper argues that music scholars can better inform human rights implementation if we comprehend, more completely, how human rights operate in and through music. I discuss how music scholars can analytically frame (after Merry 2006) human rights in musical expressions, and how doing so relates with activists’ framings of human rights as well as critiques of academic activism. Drawing on my 20-year ethnographic study of music in urban poverty, a context infamous for its human rights deficits (Pogge 2002), I consider how rights may co-occur, conflict, be strengthened and be violated even at the same time, in musical moments. Within popular music events organized by NGOs for urban poor of Vancouver, Canada’s Downtown Eastside, I investigate the rights to culture, and health and security of the person as well as women’s rights, educational rights, economic rights, and civil and political rights. In this way, I extend the study of human rights and music beyond its main focus so far (the right freely to participate in the cultural life of a community and to enjoy the arts, e.g., Weintraub and Yung 2009) in order to offer analytical strategies and insights on the interplay of diverse kinds of human rights in musical moments.

15:20-16:00 **Conversations**