
AND CEREMONIES

Extended report: 2017 UM Campanology Symposium

by Tiffany Ng

The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (U-M) hosted *Resonance and Remembrance: An Interdisciplinary Campanology Symposium* from March 31 to April 2, 2017. This three-day conference, a joint endeavor of the U-M Bicentennial Festival, Organ Department, Performing Arts Technology Department, and School of Information, brought together scholars and applied practitioners spanning the fields of acoustics, art history, comparative literature, computer music and audio technology, creative writing, engineering, English, film, history, Japanese studies, and the musicologies.

Co-organizers Tiffany Ng and John Granzow, Assistant Professors of Carillon and Performing Arts Technology, respectively, recruited this cohort to explore how recent modes of critical thought, technological innovation, and artistic practice are influencing campanology. The symposium sought to intervene in an ongoing challenge: despite the existence of robust networks in North America for information sharing in specialized areas of campanology such as the carillon, most other scholars and artists dealing with bells rarely meet or become aware of each other's work.

We coined the symposium theme, "Resonance and Remembrance," to encompass approaches to knowledge creation ranging from quantitative to qualitative, from ethnographic analysis to poetry, and from compositional tools to audience-driven interactive concerts. The theme also referenced U-M's two carillons and other bells, which have sonified the passing of time and created spaces of collective listening on campus for two centuries. By the conclusion of the symposium, participants spoke positively of the radically interdisciplinary dialogue, and some hoped to take a similar approach to organizing their own events.

New directions in the scholarly arena emerged for work in postcolonial and gender studies approaches to campanology, in the artistic arena for digital manipulation of bell sounds and alongside a productive return to analog storytelling, and in the performance arena for audience-interactive analog and networked possibilities. Steven Feld's playful keynote, addressed (after anthropologist Gregory Bateson) as a dialectical parent-child "metalogue" to imaginary child Clochanda/o, richly unfolded additional areas of exploration. Regrettably, Feld's co-artist Rahim AlHaj, distinguished Iraqi-American oud musician, could not appear for their planned

improvisation with Feld's sampled bells due to a flight cancellation.

Postcolonialism and gender studies are slowly gaining traction in historical musicology, where scholars employing those frameworks still encounter resistance. Their late arrival to the musicology of bells heralds a potential turn in a discipline thoroughly entangled in issues of political, military, economic, and social power, and it remains to be seen whether this arrival will inspire widespread buy-in or pushback.

In "The Message of the Carillon: The Peace Tower Carillon and Indigenous-Settler Relations in Canada," Patrick Nickleson juxtaposed the divergent meanings of bell sounds to government supporters and First Nations subjects. While Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King lauded Ottawa's new Peace Tower carillon as a symbol of democracy and freedom in 1927, the tower's bells evoke the regulatory bells of residential schools, reminding residential school survivors that they were stripped of their families, cultures, and languages in a cultural genocide that lasted until at least the 1990s. Nickleson's reading of survivor testimonies illustrates that a listener's position in hegemonic relations is crucial to the sonic interpretation of bells. Randolph Jordan's short film *Bell Tower of False Creek* (2017) likewise explored echoes of indigenous culture in Vancouver through the metaphor of a bell's sonic horizon over the former Kitsilano Indian Reserve.

Reginald Jackson used the bell to complicate gender roles in medieval and contemporary Japanese society in his paper "Recasting the Bell in Noh Dance-Drama: On Desire and Discipline's Resonance in *Dojoji*," a famous play in which lust and violence erupt at the rededication of a Buddhist temple's central bell. Mariane Stanev's poster "Bells as Instruments of Sonic Ecstasy and as Materialization of Colonial Gender Discourse" outlined her work to trace the gendering of bell sound in Brazil to colonial discourse, noting that women's bodies have come to be perceived as threats to bells.

Ethnomusicology provided a complementary power analysis framework. Emilie Coakley's "The Bells of St. Paul: Nostalgia, Memory, and Change in a City Soundscape" traced a contemporary shift in public perceptions of St. Paul Cathedral's bells in Oakland,

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Pennsylvania. Members of the city's changing population have come to perceive the religiously-coded sound of the bells as secular, a site of individualized association within their privatized negotiation of city sound, in a reversal of hegemonic codings of bell ringing.

Donna A. Buchanan charted the reception of a late-socialist-era monument in "Lyudmila Zhivkova's Harmony of the Spheres: Bulgaria's 'Bells' Monument and Resonant Postsocialist Remembrances of Times Past." "Kambanite" was erected in Sofia in 1979 by Lyudmila Zhivkova with 100 bells of various nations around a central tower holding 19 "singing" and 7 "planetary" bells. Following years of vandalism, "Kambanite" has been reclaimed as a popular family destination. Its campanarian, numerological, and musical symbolism and origins in peace and humanitarian initiatives contrasts with its signification for many Bulgarians of the excesses of late socialism and post-communist nostalgia.

Finally, art historian Godfre Leung explored an artist's intervention into the regulatory function of bells in "Christian Marclay's Other Clock: Rhythm, Synchronization, and Habit from Bells to CD." Considered together, these seven presenters focused on the reception and interpretation of bell sounds under changing political, social, and religious regimes, indicating a new critical moment in scholarship and creative work.

A textual current was also evident. Suzanne Hancock read from her book-length poem *Cast From Bells* (2010), taking the history of bell requisitions for munitions during World War II as a metaphor for the disintegration of a romantic relationship. Madeleine Smith examined the bell as textual object in "Sacred Time and Secular Power: The Bell in French Medieval Arthurian Romance." In "Punishment, an Index," Tung-Hui Hu discussed his research on inanimate objects punished for political reasons, focusing on tales of a Russian bell and several Parisian clock towers as case studies. These presenters highlighted that violence is wrought via the material of bells, the textual metaphor of bells, and upon bells themselves.

The topic of memory ("remembrance") and identity was a clear through-line in the poster session, particularly in Michelle Herbelin's research on the Alamo, Jonathon Smith's work on the bells of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Kartik Nagaraj Sunku and Rohit John Varghese's project to restore the bell tower of the Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani (India).

This overview of the symposium devotes fewer paragraphs to the artistic presentations, but I wish to emphasize their equal importance in our approach to curating the program. The challenges of communicating their affective impact in words limit what I have endeavored to detail. Digital sound, virtual environments, audience-driven interactive concerts, analog storytelling, and sonic mapping all staged productive encounters within and beyond the belfry.

For example, two approaches to composing with bells and the digital were advocated. In "Two Fists + Two Feet: Concretist Experiments in Algorithmic Composition for Carillon," Jeffrey Treviño discussed his algorithmically-composed works for carillon, realized using the Abjad API for Formalized Score Control (Baca, Oberholtzer, Trevino; 1997-present), an extension of the programming language Python that enables the generation of notated scores. His compositions (each an algorithm) enable him to generate individualized scores of each piece for carillons of any compass, thus reconciling the abstraction of pattern with the physical realities of human carillon performance.

On the other hand, two new open-access resources for composers focused on de-physicalizing the bell. Romain Michon and Sara Martin's "Faust Physical Modeling Toolkit" is downloadable software that allows musicians to prototype physical models of bells without advanced DSP knowledge (<http://stanford.io/2ova4DB>). These can be turned into virtual instruments for platforms and tools such as Max/MSP and mobile apps. Elliot Kermit Canfield-Dafilou and Kurt Werner's downloadable modal resynthesis of U-M's Lurie Carillon (<http://stanford.io/2Cg6Eh6>) invites composers to explore spectral transformations of the Lurie bells through their virtual counterparts, and has since been used by Davor Vincze in his 6th Laibach Concerto for the Slovene Philharmonic Chamber String Orchestra.

The two teams' synthesized sounds did not quite approach the realism of Pierre Schaeffer's field recordings of bells as discussed on the same panel by musicologist Alexander Stalarow, but the creative (and convenient) potential of manipulating virtual bells may indeed spur compositional activity. All three of these recent tools are bringing increased visibility to carillon composition in disparate spheres.

The audience-interactive electroacoustic carillon concert performed by Tiffany Ng and Isaac Levine featured works developed by Greg Niemeyer, Chris Chafe, Perrin Meyer, Laura Steenberge, Rebecca

The First Florida Carillon Festival

by Wylie Crawford

The Venice Carillon Foundation, in celebration of the arrival of the Andrew W. Crawford Memorial Carillon, has announced the creation of the Florida Carillon Festival. For the first time in history, Florida's four carillons are coordinating a tour up and down the state's west during the winter months of 2020. (Since winter in Florida is just as pleasant, or even nicer, than summer in the north, why not have an "off-season" season?)

Four carillonneurs have been invited to give recitals between January and April, each coinciding with certain holidays: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Tax Day. Each performer will give one recital at each of the four carillons, starting first in Venice, and working up through Lake Wales and Gainesville, before concluding in Clearwater.

The schedule of performers for the inaugural Festival in 2020:

Gijsbert Kok, Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 16 (Venice), 17 (Lake Wales), 18 (Gainesville),
and 19 (Clearwater)

Roy Kroezen, Valentine's Day

February 13 (Venice), 14 (Lake Wales), 15 (Gainesville),
and 16 (Clearwater)

Austin Ferguson, St. Patrick's Day

March 12 (Venice), 13 (Lake Wales), 14 (Gainesville),
and 15 (Clearwater)

Elisa Tersigni, Tax Day

April 16 (Venice), 17 (Lake Wales), 18 (Gainesville),
and 19 (Clearwater)

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Fisher, and Alex Miller that sought to challenge the passive relationships of listeners to the mass communication of belfries. However, the gendered nature of music technology is often reinscribed through its application to bells, and this became evident at the male-dominated indoor multimedia concert "Multichannel Ringing." Mastery and control of technology sometimes contrasted sharply along gender lines with empathetic, open-ended engagement with bells. A post-concert discussion would have been productive for putting the event in dialogue with gender issues raised in the scholarly forums.

Niall Atkinson's closing talk, "Mapping Acoustic Itineraries in Renaissance Florence," presented his collaborative work towards mapping the temporal and spatial dynamics of the soundscapes of late medieval and Renaissance Florence. Perhaps because his presentation occurred in the wake of so many other conversations, the audience's responses were the most opinionated. Some scholars interested in the senses considered resonance in the city to be so complex that a mapping project would provide misleadingly simplified information, while some with technical expertise argued against that critique as an unnecessary mystification of acoustics.

"Resonance and Remembrance" illuminated a critical turn in campanology, a more global conception of the field, an explosion of digital practices exploring either the physicality or virtualization of bells, the tensions that arise from the gendering of bells and the gendering of disciplines that use bells as creative material, and the tensions and new knowledge that arises when humanities scholars, artists, and technologists respond to projects that bridge their disciplines.

The symposium program and abstracts may be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/2sMAOVe>