

Ethnomusicology at the University of Manchester

Ethnomusicology at Manchester is fully integrated into the degree programmes offered by the department of Music. Through a range of core and optional modules, students have the opportunity to explore the enormous diversity of sounds produced by the world's peoples, from ancient folk and tribal music through sophisticated classical traditions to contemporary popular music scenes. Along the way they engage with key issues such as globalisation, nationalism, censorship, gender politics and techno-culture. Performance options are available for gamelan and klezmer. The city itself offers a vibrant multicultural music scene, with visiting world music artists and local musicians from Manchester's many diasporic communities appearing regularly at its many venues, from the flagship Bridgewater Hall to the legendary Band on the Wall.

Currently ranked as the number one place to study music in the UK in both the Sunday Times University Guide and the Complete University Guide, the Music Department provides academic excellence combined with what is arguably the liveliest performance culture of any university. The 2008 Research Assessment Exercise placed us among the top three Music departments in the UK. We enjoy consistently high satisfaction ratings in the National Student Survey; our satisfaction rating was 96% in the 2012 results.

Types of programmes

Undergraduate: MusB and BA Music and Drama

Several modules in Ethnomusicology and World Music (as detailed below) form part of the MusB and BA.

Postgraduate taught: MusM

Under the umbrella of the MusM in Musicology, it is possible to take a full complement of modules in Ethnomusicology. The MusM consists of four 30-credit modules and a 60-credit dissertation and may be taken on a full-time or part-time basis.

Postgraduate research: MPhil and PhD

Supervision is available for MPhil and PhD (full-time and part-time), subject to staff specialisms. Joint supervision involving a co-supervisor from another subject area (e.g. Drama, Social Anthropology) is also possible.

Description of individual modules

Undergraduate

Approaches to Musicology (level 1, 20 credits)

This core module includes an introduction to ethnomusicology and the study of world music cultures.

Music and its Contexts (level 1, 20 credits)

This core module consists of three teaching blocks united by a common theme (e.g. voice, music and politics). One of these blocks is typically devoted to ethnomusicology.

World Music (level 2, 20 credits)

This module furthers students' engagement with ethnomusicological and anthropological approaches to the study of traditional and popular musics. Special case studies focus on a selection of genres and traditions from diverse parts of the world while also addressing themes such as music revivals, music and gender, music and censorship, music and the land, and the politics of world music. Representative topics range from 'Classical Music and Dance in India' and 'The Journeys of the Didjeridu' to 'Music and Socio-political Movements in Chile since 1960' and 'Polyphonic Singing in Corsica: Revival and Transformation'. Each week students attend a two-hour lecture and a one-hour seminar.

Advanced Study in Ethnomusicology: World Music in Africa (level 3, 20 credits)

Focusing on traditional, popular and world music genres in different parts of the African continent, this module aims to analyse a cross-section of contemporary musical output and to foster a deeper understanding of the aesthetic, political, economic and ethical questions associated with the phenomenon of world music as it impacts on African musicians. Special case studies include: the careers and output of a selection of international world music stars from different parts of Africa; popular music, censorship and resistance in Zimbabwe and South Africa; BaAka music culture and its survival in the modern world. Themes explored along the way include the traditional roots of the genres/styles under consideration; the tensions between African and Western elements in the music, between local and global frames of reference, and between heritage and artistic freedom; processes of professionalisation, commodification and internationalisation; and issues of sustainability when traditional habitats are under threat. Each week students attend a two-hour lecture and a one-hour seminar.

Dissertation (level 3, 40 credits)

An independent study, often including primary research/fieldwork: free choice of subject with one-to-one supervision.

Ensemble Studies (level 2, 20 or 40 credits)

Practical, performance-based options available as part of the Ensemble Studies module include Gamelan and Klezmer. The department has its own Sundanese *gamelan degung*. The klezmer ensemble enjoys close connections with the local Jewish community and performs regularly outside the university.

Postgraduate taught: Masters

Current Issues in Ethnomusicology and World Music Studies (30 credits)

This module offers students the opportunity to extend their knowledge and understanding of issues relating to the theory and practice of ethnomusicology and

the study of world music cultures. Topics typically include: the history of ethnomusicology and its development as an academic discipline; concerns and methodologies of contemporary ethnomusicology; applied ethnomusicology; music and gender; music and conflict; censorship and resistance; music revivals and socio-political movements; the aesthetics, politics and economics of world music; cultural appropriation; globalisation and cosmopolitan identities; post-modernism and post-colonialism.

Ethnomusicology: Fieldwork and Ethnography (30 credits)

This module offers an in-depth study of fieldwork methodology and ethnographic writing, with particular reference to ethnomusicology, and a critical exploration of related issues such as: historical perspectives on fieldwork practice; fieldwork ethics; fieldwork and gender issues; ethnographic style; the politics of ethnographic representation.

Research Skills (30 credits)

This module offers advanced training for both musicologists and ethnomusicologists in the areas of literary and primary sources, bibliography, and critical reading, writing and communication, together with professional skills such as producing research outlines and funding applications.

Core Study (30 credits)

This module consists of an independent research project, supported by one-to-one supervision. The submission will usually be essay-based but might include an analysis portfolio or other mode of presentation. The project may also involve original fieldwork.

Free choice

Students may take modules totalling up to 30 credits from other subject areas (subject to availability and the approval of the programme director).

Dissertation (60 credits)

The dissertation (up to 15,000 words) is based on a topic or fieldwork project chosen in conjunction with a supervisor and supported by one-to-one supervision.

Postgraduate research: MPhil and PhD

PhD and MPhil supervision is available in accordance with staff specialisms. Projects concerned with the Mediterranean, music revivals, singing communities, or aspects of world music or heritage are particularly welcome. Research may focus on localised musics of oral tradition, on more popular/commercial contemporary genres and their associated markets and performance cultures, or on the interface between these and other scenes or contexts. At a broader theoretical level we are especially concerned with questions of gender; nationalism, ethnicity and identity; the cognitive, experiential, psycho-physiological and psycho-social dimensions of polyphonic singing; music and resistance; and representation and cultural appropriation.

Student numbers

Undergraduate

Total annual intake is normally between 70 and 90. Class sizes for the lecture-based ethnomusicology modules listed above typically range from 90 at level 1 to 20 at level 3, with the larger lectures also supported by work in smaller seminar groups.

Masters

The relatively small intake for our MusM programmes, together with their flexible structure, means that they can be tailored to meet individual interests while providing all students with a solid theoretical and methodological foundation in their chosen discipline and engaging them in the latest debates and developments. Ethnomusicology modules may be audited (i.e. attended on a non-assessed basis) by students from other subject areas, who contribute useful dimensions from their own disciplinary perspectives. Masters students may also audit the undergraduate taught modules as a way of supplementing their broader knowledge of world music cultures. Formal study is further complemented by regular meetings of the Musicology Forum, Composers' Forum, and Manchester Network for Music in Culture.

MPhil and PhD

The total number of research students across our programmes (Musicology, Ethnomusicology, Composition and Electroacoustic Composition) is typically c. 50.

Performance options

Gamelan; Klezmer; World Music Choir.

Special resources

One of the largest universities in the UK, Manchester has benefited in recent years from an extensive new building programme. The department of Music is housed in the Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama, which is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for performance, composition, teaching and research and includes a 350-seat concert hall and a 150-seat theatre. The adjoining NOVARS Centre houses a suite of electroacoustic music studios. The new Graduate School provides additional facilities for postgraduate students across the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, allowing students from different subject areas to meet together and share resources. Library resources for music are among the best in the country. Manchester's numerous theatres, concert halls, museums and galleries, together with its many festivals, have helped secure its reputation as one of the UK's most exciting and cosmopolitan cities. Accessibility is greatly aided by the city's excellent transport systems, including an ever-expanding tram network.

Staff

Dr Caroline Bithell (Senior Lecturer): Caroline's many publications on Corsican music include her monograph *Transported by Song: Corsican Voices from Oral Tradition to World Stage* (2007). She is also co-editor of the new *Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*. Another recently completed book, entitled *A Different Voice, A Different Song: Reclaiming Community through the Natural Voice and World Song*, is also forthcoming with OUP. Her most recent research has taken her to the Republic of Georgia. Her wider research interests include Mediterranean music, vocal polyphony in oral traditions, political song, the health benefits of singing, intangible cultural heritage and cultural policy, and cultural tourism.

<http://staffprofiles.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/Profile.aspx?Id=Caroline.Bithell>

Dr Katia Chornik (Leverhulme Early Career Fellow): Katia is working on a three-year research project entitled 'Sounds of Memory: Music and Political Captivity in Pinochet's Chile (1973-1990)'. She is also completing a book on the Cuban writer and musicologist Alejo Carpentier.

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/research/katia.chornik/>

Dr Rachel Swindells and Simon Steptoe: as guest tutors, Rachel and Simon provide practical instruction in gamelan and also contribute to the World Music lecture programme.

Dr Richard Fey and Ros Hawley: as guest tutors, Richard and Ros provide practical instruction in klezmer and also contribute to the World Music lecture programme.

Financial support

Postgraduate applicants may be considered for a variety of scholarships and bursaries. These include AHRC studentships, President's Doctoral Scholarships, bursaries offered by the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, and Music bursaries. Overseas applicants may also be eligible for specific bursaries such as the North American Scholarships.

Further information

Undergraduate: MusB and BA Music and Drama

<http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/music/undergraduate/courselist2014/>

Postgraduate taught: MusM

<http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/music/postgraduatetaught/>

Postgraduate research: MPhil and PhD

<http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/music/postgraduateresearch/>

Contacts

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