

foundations of anti-
Indigeneity in music zine



by jacquelyn
deshchidn, the
ŁŁoroNnee



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as a surviving member of the Nnēē, i honor and hold space for
my relatives whose lands i reside upon, and whom i have the pleasure of
aiding in stewardship.

i also want to hold space for and thank the Indig QTBPOC from regions
outside of the US, as well as our Black Native/Afro-Indig kin for taking the
time to hear and hold space for these words wherever you are now.

may we be led by compassion and celebrate our
continual growth, and live long joyous lives.



disclaimer: this is a collection of works created during '19-'21 at my MM candidacy--I acknowledge we are all in a continual state of growth and renewal, particularly when recovering from collective trauma as many of us are now--even reading my works from a one to three years ago, so much has changed and we should celebrate the ability to grow as people when we are challenged with new information. My approach has always been rooted in compassionate, trauma informed community work, and I always look forward to further discussion and expansion on these thoughts, which are presented as models then broken down from a Nnēē (Chiricahua of San Carlos Apache) perspective.





Abstract: This written lecture discusses the phenomenon of cultural appropriation in western classical music, and its foundations in the fear-fascination of “savagery” and “otherness”. This history of misappropriation can be traced back to Dvorak’s Amerikkkan Nationalist writing period, which drew upon both Indigenous and Black musical traditions without consideration of inherent power dynamics or foresight of the harm that would become essential within the western musical canon for non-Indigenous and non-Black composers.

With this context, I explore how American (Neocolonialist) Nationalist music and White Shamanist music are ultimately rooted in the inherent fear of otherness which has been a driving force of the colonial mindset. These appropriative practices are an integral part of Pauline Oliveros’ repertoire which have been handed down through generations of composers appropriating Indigenous culture while removing all cultural context and cultural autonomy of the Indigenous peoples in question.

Ultimately, these musicks are rooted in the destruction and subjugation of the culture and music of the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island, and further the efforts of white settlers to dismantle and decimate Indigeneity over the past 500 years. Beyond this, these structures are inherently tied to other aspects of racism, anti-Indigeneity, and anti-Blackness which the reader and author share equal responsibility in actively addressing.





Amerikkka: places the emphasis on white supremacist founding of America & causes intentional discomfort when reading (a typical approach used by BIPOC activists to disrupt complacency in relation to non-action and normalization of white/ western entities being the norm)

Neocolonial-capitalist: emphasizes the systemic aspects within "American Democracy" which are weaponized against BIPOC and other marginalized communities within Amerikkka



Inherent Listener Bias & Notation

To begin our discussion on inherent listener bias and violence enacted through musical notation, we must first agree upon a definition of bias.

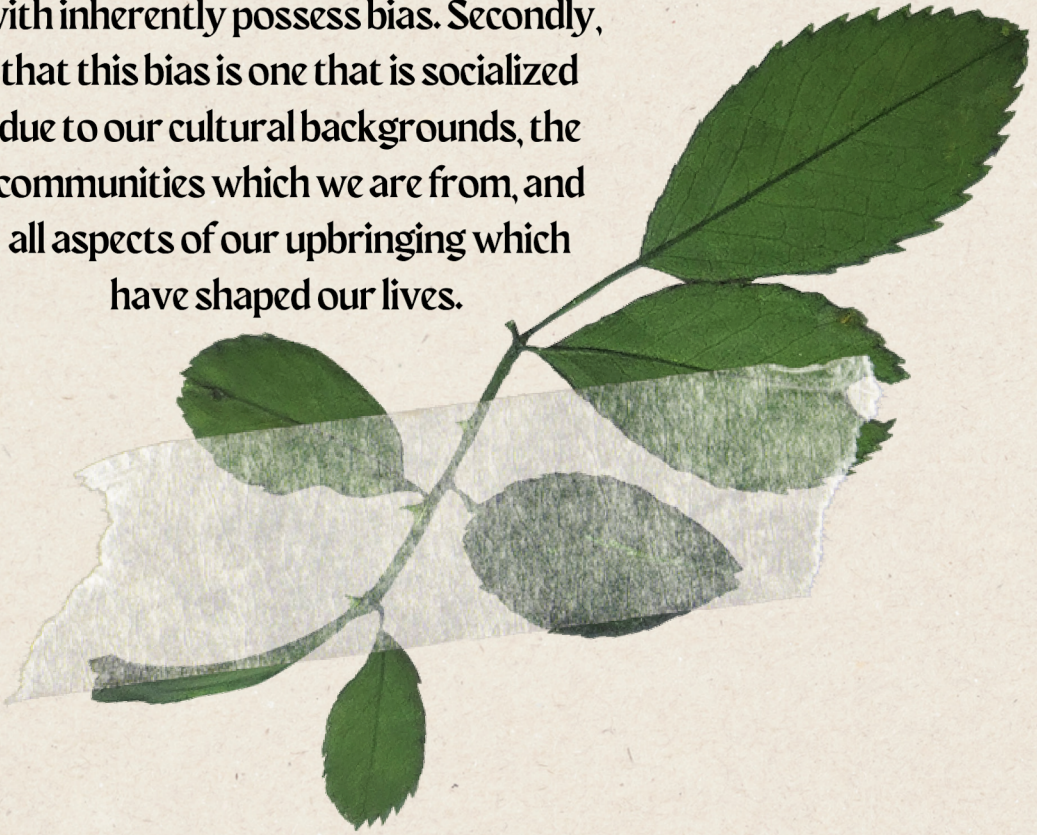
For this conversation, I found myself reflecting upon the criteria and definition of bias present in Pasquier's *Investigating Listener Bias Against Musical Metacreativity*, which focuses on inherent listener bias specifically in relation to presented sound samples which were written by AI/computers. I would like to offer the following definition of bias from Pasquier's work:

Explicit biases are consciously held attitudes or preferences, that can be directly reported by individuals. Implicit biases—also referred to as “cognitive” biases (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974)—on the other hand, are unconsciously held beliefs or attitudes that are not directly accessible to subjects, and thus influence behaviours and choices without the individual's awareness. A typical example might be a CEO who verbally states (and may consciously believe) that applicant gender should not influence hiring strategy, yet whose hiring patterns show a strong gender preference.

In this case study, participants had a minimal but negative reception to the musical examples when informed that the excerpt they were presented were not composed by humans. While the outcome of this case study is not our focus today, it is notable that participants skewed positively in favor of what they perceived as human creativity based upon their biases.



I would like to suggest the following two concepts which are essential to inherent bias: The first is that all matters which humans are involved with inherently possess bias. Secondly, that this bias is one that is socialized due to our cultural backgrounds, the communities which we are from, and all aspects of our upbringing which have shaped our lives.



Furthermore, Eidsheim's extensive study on racialization of the voice and inherent listener bias states that "Voice is not unique. Vocalization and the resulting timbre are as encultured as is self-expression through fashion. Akin to the ways we are habituated to dress, walk, or throw a ball "like a girl," each vocal engagement is connected to a collective practice that depends on habituated micro-vocal maneuvers. "This daily vocalization practice habituates flesh, muscles, and ligaments, leading to an altered vocal apparatus that, in turn, leads to altered sounds. Finally, the source of the voice is not only the vocalizer, because any statement about a voice arises from a listener's assessment" (42).

Additionally, it should be noted that the notion of "unbiased field recordings" is inherently impossible as there are a number of variables and human decisions which can alter the outcome of a final recording, beyond the bias of the transcription from an intangible cultural practice to a physical document:

"The very notion of the field sounds exciting: somewhere far off, exotic, known, different, or other. Many phonographers are attracted to this lack of predictability, an experience far from the controlled environment of the modern studio. What is heard on a conventional studio recording is entirely unlike what would be heard in an acoustic space filled with natural ambience, and often overwhelming sounds of urban and industrial activity. [...] Recording in an environment outside of an acoustically treated studio often means that the sound field is full of ambient noises; objects heard moving through the acoustic space, and effects of varying volumes and proximities. Whether it is a recording of a music video in a live setting with a single handheld camera adding an air of authenticity to a performance, or a recording made in a historic site with unique acoustical qualities, listeners in popular music have fetishised field recording (Lyonblum 16)."

It should also be noted that in the case of First Person Recordings, the same bias is possible due to human manipulation of the singular recording device and the technological constraints of the equipment at the time of the recording (in contrast to the human auditory system).

For our discussion to further progress, I invite you to review to the two field recordings and compare to the notation below:

Track 1 - <https://open.spotify.com/track/2cHgbL5ehEJfrawa0e9Dim>

Track 2 - <https://open.spotify.com/track/5xZ08o07Mlm7oMrRYBmTNj>



Songs of the Arapaho¹

[Father, have pity on me]²

Moderato.

A - ni' - qu ne' - cha - wu' - na - ni', a - ni' - qu ne' - cha - wu' - na - ni';

a - wa' - wa bi' - qā - na' - ka - ye' - na, a - wa' - wa bi' - qā - na' - ka - ye' - na;

i - ya - hu'h ni' - bi - thi' - ti, i - ya - hu'h ni' - bi - thi' - ti.

Father, have pity on me,
 Father, have pity on me;
 I am crying for thirst,
 I am crying for thirst;
 All is gone—I have nothing to eat,
 All is gone—I have nothing to eat.


[When I met him approaching]³

He! Nā-ne'th bi'shi - qa' - wā, He! Nā-ne'th bi'shi - qa' - wā, Nā' - ni - sa' - na

nā' - ni - sa' - na, Nā' - i - na' - ha't - dā' - bā' - naq, Nā' - i - na' - ha't - dā' - bā' - naq.

TRANSLATION

He! When I met him approaching—
 He! When I met him approaching—
 My children, my children—
 I then saw the multitude plainly,
 I then saw the multitude plainly.




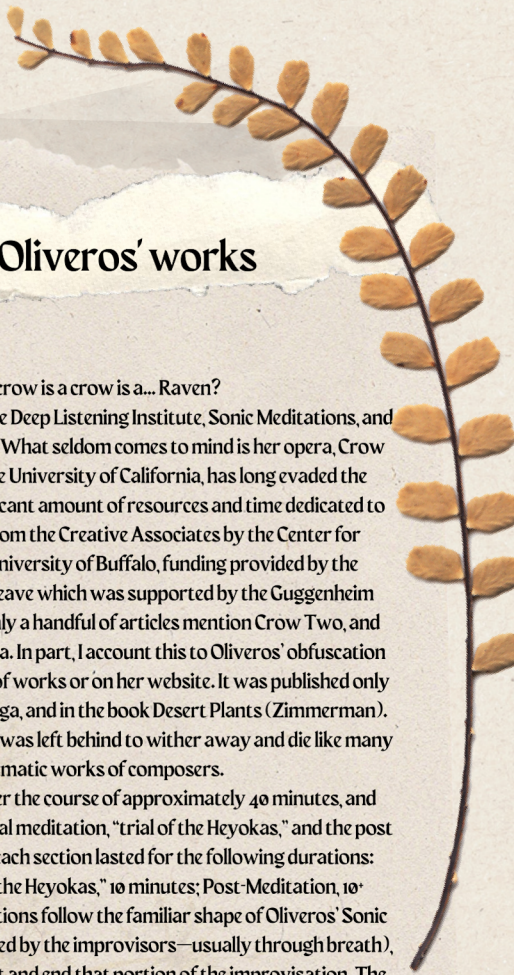
If we as the listener are inherently biased through our interpretation of field recordings—a phenomena that was championed by predominantly white institutions in a last ditch attempt to “preserve” marginalized cultures by Neocolonialist archivists—then how are we able to produce notation that serves marginalized and oppressed communities from which these pieces have emerged? Without adequate representation of each culture, and without granting autonomy to the communities in question, Neocolonialist industries such as the Western Music Industry continue to exact the very same violence of their ancestors.

In the above recordings and transcriptions we are able to witness a form of this violence coming to fruition through superimposed standardized notation typical to western classical music. While I shall speak further about the topic of ancestral practices belonging to an entire community, and these musical practices having their own autonomous lifecycle, the recording, notation, and widespread distribution of ancestral practices is commodification and abuse of the marginalized communities in question.

Ultimately, while the methodology and realization in which genocide, oppression, and enslavement may have changed over the past 500 years, the violence enacted upon these communities has not. Rather than prioritize community initiatives, grant autonomy to artists of marginalized communities, and destroy the Neocolonial-Capitalist structures which enact this violence, the focus has shifted to preserving the metaphorical and physical bodies of these communities as if they have already died.

We are not dead, but this violence cannot continue.





Exploring Pauline Oliveros' works

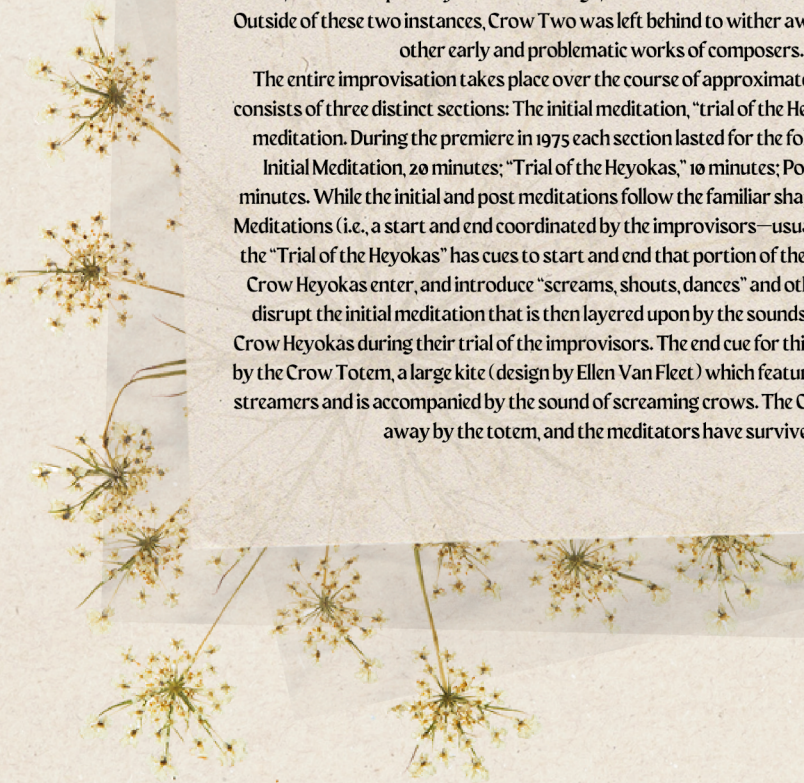
Corvid Confusion: A crow is a crow is a... Raven?

When we talk about Pauline, we think of the Deep Listening Institute, Sonic Meditations, and her impact on the new music community. What seldom comes to mind is her opera, *Crow Two*.

This work, premiered in 1975 at the University of California, has long evaded the critical lens of academia despite the significant amount of resources and time dedicated to *Crow Two*—including a commission from the Creative Associates by the Center for Creative and Performing Arts, State University of Buffalo, funding provided by the National Endowment of the Arts, and a leave which was supported by the Guggenheim foundation. Despite all of this support, only a handful of articles mention *Crow Two*, and there are even fewer analyses of said opera. In part, I account this to Oliveros' obfuscation of the piece as it is not included in her lists of works or on her website. It was published only twice, in the ethno-poetics journal *Alcheringa*, and in the book *Desert Plants* (Zimmerman). Outside of these two instances, *Crow Two* was left behind to wither away and die like many other early and problematic works of composers.

The entire improvisation takes place over the course of approximately 40 minutes, and consists of three distinct sections: The initial meditation, "trial of the Heyokas," and the post meditation. During the premiere in 1975 each section lasted for the following durations:

Initial Meditation, 20 minutes; "Trial of the Heyokas," 10 minutes; Post-Meditation, 10 minutes. While the initial and post meditations follow the familiar shape of Oliveros' *Sonic Meditations* (i.e., a start and end coordinated by the improvisors—usually through breath), the "Trial of the Heyokas" has cues to start and end that portion of the improvisation. The Crow Heyokas enter, and introduce "screams, shouts, dances" and other antics meant to disrupt the initial meditation that is then layered upon by the sounds and actions of the Crow Heyokas during their trial of the improvisors. The end cue for this section is triggered by the Crow Totem, a large kite (design by Ellen Van Fleet) which features large shimmering streamers and is accompanied by the sound of screaming crows. The Crow Heyokas are led away by the totem, and the meditators have survived.





Cast:

Crow Poet—center
Crow Mother—west
Crow Stepmother—east
Crow Grandmother—south
Crow Godmother—north
Crow Family—4 or more
Crow Friends—as many as
circle will accommodate

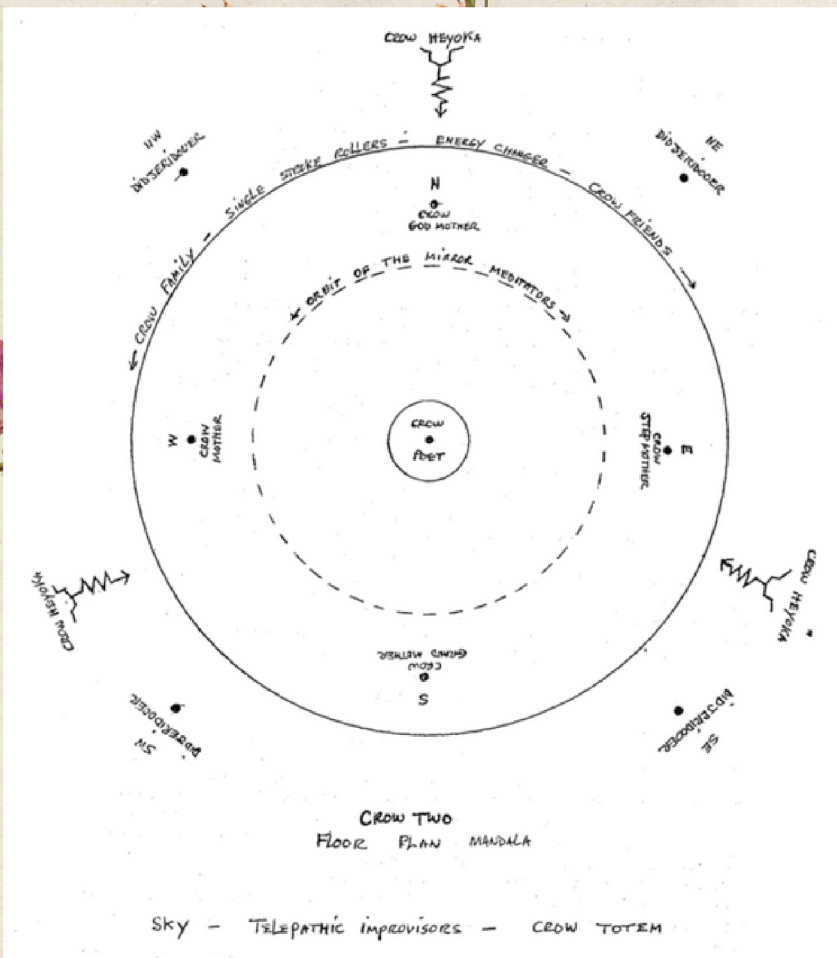
Didjeridooers—4
Mirror Meditators—2
Energy Changer—1
Single Stroke Rollers—7
Telepathic Improvisors—7
Crow Heyokas—3
Crow Totem—1
Luminic Meditator—2

Fig. 1, from Alcheringa

In Crow Two, Oliveros' calls for vast instrumentation (see figure 1) to weave together a meditation that takes on the shape of a three dimensional "human mandala." The left column of figure 1 consists of the roles in the opera, and the right column makes up the rest of the improvisors—generally consisting of instrumentalists, as well as improvisors who join the mandala based upon predetermined musical events. In Figure 2, we can observe the placement of each role, as well as the implied importance in the opera based upon their positioning. The entire improvisation centers upon the Crow Poet, portrayed by Margaret Porter, and the Crow Heyokas are furthest from the center. Floating above everything are the Telepathic Improvisors armed with flutes, and Crow Totem, placed above the mandala on cat walks.



Fig. 2, from Alcheringa



Sky - TELEPATHIC IMPROVISORS - CROW TOTEM



Crowlogue

A crow is not a crow is a crow. A crow, bright black, flashes through a sun-crazed field of Van Gogh or, raven, intones “nevermore” in the chamber of Poe from the bust of Pallas, as Athena’s sacred bird, for whom, when needed, she would utter an omenous word. Messenger, bird of beginnings, it was crow who emerged first of all from the ark. Three legged, crow sits before the sun-disk — yang emblem of the Chinese Emperor. Crow is chess-piece, the rook; also, is seen to soar in the constellation Corvus of the skies down-under. To the Absaroke, “bird-people,” the bird of thunder, crow, is symbol of earth, of spirit, of maternal night. Her caw makes part of the divination rite. “As the crow flies” you go for the most direct flight. What he steals he hoards and hides, and you never know what havoc this omnivorous creature, as a pet, will sow. Yet only a human being can be said to “eat crow.”

—Margaret A. Porter

Fig. 3, from Alcheringa

The publication of *Crow Two* in *Alcheringa* also goes on to detail the lighting and staging for the performance, as well as provides a poem by Margaret Porter which was distributed at the premiere—which is little more than a pastiche of literary references that completely lack any sort of substance or greater meaning (see figure 3).

Pauline, the Ethnopoet

The ethnopoetics journal *Alcheringa* is where I shall begin our autopsy of Oliveros' long forgotten work—Ethnopoetics, the offspring of “settler-colonial art history”, took shape in the late 1960's at the hands of Jerome Rothenberg and Dennis Tedlock. While, in theory, Ethnopoetics encouraged interest in the poetry and literary works or transcriptions of non-western cultures, in practice it quickly became a platform for white-shamanism and exclusion of indigenous voices from the very publications that sought to amplify this movement. The majority of ethnopoetics publications at the time would have only one or two, if any, authentic or translated works from indigenous sources. In contrast, these platforms became spaces for white people to take on “tribal personas” that had little to no basis in traditional indigenous teachings, art, or language, and present the romanticization of indigenous art and culture as authentic. *Alcheringa* is no exception: both the first series, and new series (published by Boston University), had little to no authentic sources in each publication. Works from *Alcheringa* include “songs, chants, prayers, visions and dreams, sacred narratives, fictional narratives, histories, ritual scenarios, praises, namings, word games, riddles, proverbs, sermons. These take the shape of performable scripts [...], experiments in typography, diagrams, and insert disc recordings” (Rothenberg, via Jacketz). By simply examining the language used in *Alcheringa* to describe the types of work to be presented, one can note the objectification and romanticization inherent within these publications—walking the line between romanticization and fictitious representations of indigeneity. The emphasis in *Alcheringa* is not upon authenticity and embracing indigenous voices, rather, it is upon the idea of what it means to be indigenous and how artificial indigeneity can be repackaged and consumed. Of twenty-two individual pieces that accompanied Oliveros' work in the New Series Volume 1, Number 2, only two selections are of scant authenticity—be it a translation from an indigenous text, or from transcription directly from speaking with an indigenous person—from this, we can observe a microcosm of the values of ethnopoetics. Oliveros' choice to publish the score and description of *Crow Two* within an ethnopoetics journal directly feeds into the New Age and White-Shamanism movements which actively erased and displaced indigenous voices.

During Oliveros' fellowship in 1974 with the Guggenheim Foundation, she focused on ceremony and rituals of American Indian music. But rather than actually engaging with indigenous communities, Oliveros relied on anthologies of “primitive poetry” to inform her work *Crow Two* (Gunden 121). While this was common practice during the New Age and White Shamanism eras, Browner raises questions as to the authenticity of sources Oliveros' was drawing from, as well as informs the way her interactions with indigenous culture should be perceived (253). Oliveros' focus on indigenous culture, and specifically Lakota culture, is purely transactional and lacks any sort of sensitivity or respect towards the people and culture she is appropriating.



Three crow heyokas appear during the course of the meditation. "Heyoka" is a Sioux Indian word meaning sacred clown. According to John Fire Lame Deer: "It is very simple to become a heyoka. All you have to do is dream about lightning, the thunderbirds. You do this and when you wake up in the morning you are a heyoka. There is nothing you can do about it." The crow heyokas are personifications of natural disturbances. Their purpose is to test the meditators through mockery and distracting behavior. "He is an upside down, backward-forward yes-and-no-man, a contrary wise." They appear at will 15 to 20 minutes after the meditation has begun. The human mandala is taken over as their playground. They cannot actually touch a meditator, but may try in any way to break the meditation. When the heyokas have thoroughly tested the meditation they are lured away by the shiny, mylar crow totem. It is a kite with long shiny, crackly streamers. It floats slowly, accompanied by many loud crow calls. The heyokas leave reluctantly but cannot resist the totem. (The crow totem was made by Ellen Van Fleet.) In this performance the crow heyokas were Al Chung Liang Huang, Julius Eastman and Philip Larsen.

Fig. 4

The role of the Heyókh̄as is exclusively to create chaos in Oliveros' interpretation of the sacred role, and is grossly oversimplified in Lame Deer's presentation of how one "becomes a Heyoka." In a transcript from 1918 by Desnmore of Lone Man, a Heyókh̄a, he describes the dream mentioned in Lame Deer's interpretation:

"One day when I was on the warpath I sat down to rest and was at some distance from the other members of the party. I looked up at the sky and the rolling clouds. I fell asleep, and while I slept I had a dream. My face was toward the west, and I heard thunder in that direction. There was a sound of hoofs, and I saw nine riders coming toward me in a cloud, each man on a horse of a different color. Then I heard a sound in the north and saw nine riders coming toward me from that direction, each on a white horse. They joined the riders from the west and came toward me. One of them spoke to me, and said they had appointed me to make the first attack upon the enemy. He said the man to be attacked was painted red and was standing in the water, and he said that if I could conquer that man I would gain something which would be useful to me all the rest of my life. Then a voice from among the company of riders said that, having been appointed to make this attack, I would be considered part of their company and could always call on them for help in time of need.

In my dream I found the enemy as they had described. I ran at him, thrust him through with my spear, and was bearing him away when he was transformed into a reed standing in the water. The same voices spoke again, hailing me as one of their number and saying that ever after I would be able to do things which no ordinary man could do, because I had obeyed them. [...]

After my return to the camp, I wanted to do something to show that I realized my unworthiness of the honor given me by the thunderbirds. No one told me that I ought to do this, and yet all who dream of the thunderbirds in any of their manifestations have a deep sense of their own unworthiness. I knew that I was only an ordinary mortal and had often done wrong, yet the riders in the air had disregarded this. By appearing to me they had given me a chance to redeem myself. I wanted to make a public humiliation to show how deeply I realized my unworthiness." (Desnmore 159-160, 164)

Lone Man's description of the dream which Lame Deer alludes to is far from the simplistic statement "All you have to do is dream about lightning, the thunderbirds. You do this and when you wake up in the morning you are a heyoka. There is nothing you can do about it" included in the score of Crow Two. Lone man goes on to describe how after the dream, a ceremony of public humiliation took place in order to show humility to the thunderbirds and express unworthiness for the gift of knowledge that they have bestowed. Browner states that:

Crow Two's "heyokas" attempt to "disrupt" the meditation of the "Crow Mothers." In contrast, the Lakota Heyo'ka, through personal humiliation and invocation of metaphorical tribal knowledge, teaches the people to recognize and acknowledge the connections between themselves and the natural world. At the core of Lakota religion is the concept that individuals must make themselves pitiable before the Creator in order to be given gifts of knowledge and special power, and to become a Heyo'ka is one path to this pitiable state. Crow Two's "heyokas" bear only a surface resemblance to the tribal Heyo'ka; their disruptive acts teach nothing and gain nothing. (Browner 255)


As personifications of natural disturbances, the Crow Heyokas are in stark contrast to the crow mothers who embody natural order. This is shown during the trial of the Crow Heyokas, when they introduce a new texture of screams, dances, and all other kinds of antics in an attempt to break the initial meditation which has been established. While some believe that the role of the Heyók has embodied the conflict between men and women, with men being in the position of oppressors and tormentors, I would argue that the true implication behind this is one of fear—specifically, fear of traditional indigenous culture and ceremony.

Crow poet sits in the center of the mandala smoking and dreaming.


The crow mothers sit inside the largest circle at the points of the compass facing the crow poet. Crow grandmother and godmother have white hair. Crow mother and stepmother have jet black hair. Each mother wears what makes her feel most comfortable. Their meditation is simply being. They personify natural order.

Fig. 5

In figure 5, above, we can observe Oliveros' objectification of the crow mothers and crow poet, which is in stark contrast to the way she writes about the Heyókhas in figure 3—emphasizing their disruptive behaviors and cultural significance. She focuses almost exclusively on physical traits of the mothers—drawing attention to the color of their long hair—rather than their behaviors during the improvisation. Oliveros even feels the need to specify that the Crow Poet is smoking a pipe and dreaming—prime examples of gross romanticization of indigenous people and ceremony. Her description of the Heyókhas continues:



The over all sonic result was a complicated, space-filling drone of many layers. The drone was paralleled by the stationary human mandala and the slow continuity of the mirror meditators. The crow heyokas articulated the drone with their opposing shouts, screams, noises and by the mobility of their antics and dances. The crow poet at the hub, though serenely still seemed occasionally to jump about because of the shimmering light. The performance lasted approximately forty minutes. The meditators survived the tests of the heyokas and continued some ten minutes or so after their exit.

A pressed red flower with a brown center and green stems with small white flowers. The flower is the central focus, with its petals spread out. The stems are thin and have small, delicate white flowers. The background is a light, textured paper.

Oliveros goes back and forth, emphasizing both stereotypes of the “Civilized Indian” and the “Merciless Savage.” We can see the duality of her views of indigenous people—both her fear and fascination is at the foreground of Crow Two.



When talking about Ethnopoetics, as well as the traditional role of the Heyók̄ha, we must keep in mind the ongoing fight of indigenous peoples for their right to practice their own culture and spirituality. Crow Two was premiered and published in 1975, three years prior to AIRFA, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, being implemented in 1978. Prior to that time, it was illegal for the indigenous people of Turtle Island to practice their traditional sacred rites. However, it was legal, and encouraged, for non-indigenous people to take upon tribal personas and appropriate indigenous culture, language, ceremony, and music.

Similar to the ways that exoticism and discrimination manifested in Europe towards non-western cultures, non-indigenous people reaped the benefits of stealing and selling what little they could get their hands on of indigenous culture, and then made up the rest. The literary market is saturated with inauthentic indigenous sources that have long outlived the white-shamanism and New Age movements—although, many people still actively engage with each of these movements today. Along with this, the ongoing genocide of indigenous peoples including forced removals of children who were then placed into homes with white families, or sent off to residential schools, was in full swing until 1996 when the last residential school closed. These schools, with the famous slogan of “kill the indian, save the man” served a number of purposes: to wipe out indigenous culture and ceremonial teachings in the younger generations; to indoctrinate the children with western-centric education and christianity; to kill off the next generation of indigenous children.



"Overall, some 100,000 children passed through the network of 125 schools that operated from the 1880s to the 1970s. Children were forced to attend and live at the schools for ten months each year. Beatings, verbal, physical and sexual abuse were common. Indian languages were forbidden, as was the practice of any traditional beliefs. The destruction of indigenous religion, language and culture was a clear goal. As deputy minister of Indian Affairs Duncan Campbell Scott argued in 1920, epitomizing the attitudes of the time, "I want to get rid of the Indian problem ... Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politics and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department."

In ridding Canada of its "Indian problem," indigenous cultures were destroyed and personal lives shattered. As Hare and Barman put it, "the Department of Indian Affairs was ensuring the inability of Aboriginal people to compete socially or intellectually with their white neighbours, while also attempting to remove any traces of their culture that would ensure their survival within their own communities." (MacDonald 1001-1002)

To date, there is no definitive count of how many indigenous children were murdered at these residential schools, or in their adoptive families—similarly, there is no count for how many indigenous people were the victims of genocide in North America spanning the last 500 years, however estimates of deaths are in the 90-95 percent range of the entire indigenous population in North America (McKenna 375).

Additionally, there was mass reforestation of North America which caused a drastic decline in CO₂ levels due to colonization and genocide in the 15th century through the 17th century (Koch)—is often referred to as the "little ice age" and "the great dying [of indigenous people]".

Fear and hatred of indigenous people has always been systematic and ubiquitous. Oliveros' fear (and fascination) fall in line with a mentality so deeply ingrained in the American public and history of America that it is impossible to discern where one begins and the other ends.

In light of this, there is now a need for further examination of the glorification of Oliveros' works, and how these works have engaged in systematic oppression during the periods they were created, and the aftermath of this appropriation. Settler-colonial societies have frequently been "characterized by a profound engagement with indigenous cultural practices" (Skinner 142), and all too frequently, "New Age practitioners, lacking or critiquing aspects of their own lives, have been drawn to such romanticism, and in doing so have sought images, artifacts and spiritual knowledge from Indigenous peoples" (Waldron 79). Crow Two is a prime example of this appropriation and how not to engage (or completely lack engagement) with indigenous culture and communities.

Ghost Dance, Otherness, and Amerikkkan Fairytales

Cultural Oppression & Religious Persecution

Fear of indigenous ceremony and culture, while it may seem trivial in pieces such as Crow Two, is ultimately what led to instances such as the Wounded Knee Massacre. General hysteria and a desire to wipe out the indigenous population were ever present:

The strongest demands for military intervention came from Pine Ridge Agency, where Daniel E Royer, a physician with absolutely no experience, had assumed the position of agent in early October as a reward for his political services to the South Dakota Republican party.


Almost immediately, Royer began advising the Office of Indian Affairs that troops would be necessary to quiet the Ghost Dance, and as the weeks went by, his requests for troops grew more urgent. By November 15 Royer was near hysteria and dispatched this oft-quoted telegram:

“Indians are dancing in the snow and are wild and crazy. I have fully informed you that employees and government property at this agency have no protection, and are at the mercy of these dancers. Why delay by further investigation. We need protection and we need it now.” (Ostler 226)



Indian dances and ceremonies became objects of formal government attack in 1883, with the issuance of Secretary of the Interior Henry Teller's annual report that provided the basis for the banning of the Scalp, Sun, and War Dances, as interpreted by Washington, DC. Teller particularly opposed the "debauchery, diabolism, and savagery" that he believed to be an integral part of many Native dances. Bureau justifications of dance oppression in the 1880s and 1890s point to alleged "savagery," as represented by the self-scarification elements of the Sun Dance and the martial associations of the War and Scalp Dances, coupled with the knee-jerk demonization of the Ghost Dance following the Wounded Knee Massacre.

For example, a Washington Post article on an Apache girls' "coming out ceremony" sufficiently alarmed then-Assistant Commissioner Edgar B. Meritt that he wrote the superintendent at Mescalero in 1915 to inquire "as to the sufficiency of the clothing worn by participants during this dance, and any other information pertaining to the morality of the custom. And especially as to whether steps are necessary to modify or stop the practice." The debacle now dubbed the "Pueblo dance controversy" centered ostensibly on the BIA's ill-fated attempt, in conjunction with some Protestant missionary groups, to smear Pueblo ceremonies as occasions of orgiastic public fornication. (Treglia 148)



This hysteria and general lack of understanding of indigenous culture, paired with the “army’s objective of demonstrating the superiority of military solutions in order to advance claims [of] broader authority over Indian affairs. [...] Western army officials saw South Dakota as a land of opportunity. In pursuing these opportunities, the western army made Lakota country a place of fear and death” (Ostler 248). This similar portrayal of Indigenous ceremony—as violent, disruptive, and a threat to the lives of white people—occurred simultaneously to the Buffalo Bill Wild West shows that inspired Dvorak, but was still 85 years ahead of Oliveros’ Crow Two.

A summary of the events occurring at Wounded Knee: “On November 17, 1890, General Nelson A. Miles, acting under the authority of President Benjamin Harrison to take ‘such steps as may be necessary’ to suppress an anticipated ‘outbreak’ of Lakota Ghost Dancers, ordered troops to the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations in South Dakota. Over the next two weeks, soldiers from as far away as California were summoned, as the largest concentration of U.S. troops since the Civil War surrounded these and two other Lakota reservations—Standing Rock and Cheyenne River. The eventual consequence of this massive mobilization of armed force was the infamous massacre at Wounded Knee Creek on December 29” (Ostler 217).

Firstly, religion as it occurs in BIPOC communities is drastically different than the way which it appears in the western world. Rhodes further explains this cultural difference in his article *An American Tradition: The Religious Persecution of Native Americans*: "In their traditional languages, Native Americans have no word for religion.⁶ This absence is very revealing. Unlike the Western world, which isolates religion as a discrete aspect of social and individual life, religion permeates the lives of American Indians. [...] Native Americans perceive themselves as caretakers of the earth, not as developers. This notion of stewardship permeates Native American religions throughout the continent." (18-19). The invalidation of Indigenous religion is an essential part to colonial attempts to forcefully subjugate and assimilate BIPOC, because severing these communal and ancestral ties prevents future generations ability to uphold undesirable practices as per the standards of the oppressive culture. One of the many ways which this was done was through the Bureau of Indian Affairs who oversaw different reservations (i.e. internment & prison camps for Indigenous peoples of turtle island):

"The assimilationist association of Native dances and traditional customs with idleness and imprudence was nothing new by 1900. In 1890 Commissioner Thomas J. Morgan (1889-1893) urged agents to "impress upon the Indians the importance of their remaining at home and devoting their time and energies to establishing comfortable homes, cultivating farms, building houses, and acquiring thrifty, industrious habits and surrounding themselves with the comforts of a worthy type of civilization." In other words, avoid dancing, Wild West shows, and the lures of nomadism. [...] In 1909 an annoyed Commissioner Robert G. Valentine (1909-1913) directed the superintendent of the Standing Rock Reservation, William Belden, to "make it clear to the Indians that this Office is strictly opposed to any old time practices which help to keep them in ignorance and poverty, and that if they cannot hold a dance or celebration without neglecting their homes, farms, and stock, giving away their goods and money, etc., the Office will be compelled to forbid their continuance." (Treglia 149)

The determination of Duclos and Burke to curtail Pima dances is evidenced by their recourse to the capitalist work ethic; a commissioner or superintendent only had to point to the miserable economic conditions facing many reservations and lay the blame on dances rather than natural disasters or BIA policy failure. Thus, the capitalist work ethic not only came very naturally to officials reared on Protestant concepts of good citizenship and industriousness, but it proved to be a lucrative weapon in the anti-dance crusade. The BIA significantly justified dance oppression throughout the period from 1900 to 1930 on the seemingly secular grounds of alleged crop neglect and extravagance." (Treglia 154)

While the government backed a capitalist work ethic which it imposed upon Indigenous communities in place of banned traditional religious practices, these attempts to eradicate Indigenous culture had minimal success.

"Wounded Knee dramatically illustrates the government's persistent suppression of Lakota religious beliefs. In 1883, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs "distributed a set of rules designed to stamp out 'demoralizing and barbarous' customs. The directive defined a number of 'Indian Offenses.' It was an offense to hold feasts and dances, including the Sun Dance."^{64 65} This government's effort at suppression was systematic: "with the proscription of the Sun Dance, the social and religious framework of the Sioux began to give way." When the Lakota turned to the Ghost Dance for religious salvation, the government not only proscribed it, but also resorted to unleashing military power to prevent the Indians from practicing their religion. The government misunderstood the motivations of the Lakota. Rather than recognizing its religious basis, most white observers perceived the Ghost Dance as a militaristic uprising. Because this misunderstanding motivated the government actions, the suppression of the Ghost Dance cannot be explained simply as a shrewd and instrumental maneuver by the government to destroy Lakota culture. Instead, the invasion of the Lakota lands and subsequent massacre are more completely understood as a reflection of the government's ethnocentric inability to correctly perceive the Ghost Dance as a religious movement." (Rhodes 33)

Secondly, and as mentioned above, the perception and documentation of Indigenous sacred practices during the 19th and 20th century is drastically skewed due to the complete lack of firsthand accounts on the practices occurring. At the time during which Ghost Dance was emerging as a modern religion, the only accounts are from bystanders that did not speak the same language and were not welcome into the cultural practice of Indigenous peoples. Simultaneously to the BIA imposing religious and cultural bans upon Indigenous communities, papers across the nation were publishing articles which effectively demonized Indigenous communities. This monopoly on the media utilizing faulty secondhand descriptions of Ghost Dance and Indigenous Ceremony in the 19th and 20th centuries radically skews the portrayals of Indigenous culture, further empowering the systemic Xenophobia present in Neocolonialist culture.

The only Amerikkkkan Fairy Tale



To fully understand how deeply rooted Xenophobia is in the Amerikkkkan consciousness, we should look no further than the American horror genre and its cornerstone authors—Edgar Allan Poe, HP Lovecraft, and Steven King.

Poe, often referred to as the father of the American Horror Genre, is ultimately the quintessential American writer who has remained a household name and in the public consciousness nearly 200 years after his death. The Raven, one of his most emblematic tales, is where I shall place the founding of Xenophobia within the American horror genre that began it all. The fear and paranoia depicted within the famous verses:

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain Thrilled me—
filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before; So that now, to still the
beating of my heart, I stood repeating, "Tis some visitor entreating
entrance at my chamber door— Some late visitor entreating entrance at
my chamber door;— This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer, "Sir," said I,
"or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore; But the fact is I was napping,
and so gently you came rapping, And so faintly you came tapping,
tapping at my chamber door, That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I
opened wide the door;— Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before; But
the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token, And the only
word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?" This I whispered,
and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"— Merely this and
nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning, Soon again
I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before. "Surely," said I, "surely
that is something at my window lattice; Let me see, then, what thereat is,
and this mystery explore— Let my heart be still a moment and this
mystery explore;— 'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter, In there
stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore; Not the least
obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he; But, with mien of
lord or lady, perched above my chamber door— Perched upon a bust of
Pallas just above my chamber door— Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling, By the grave
and stern decorum of the countenance it wore, "Though thy crest be
shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven, Ghastly grim and
ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore— Tell me what thy
lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!" Quoth the Raven
"Nevermore."

While I shall not linger upon Poe for long, his masterful use of suspense in the 19th century continues to inspire young macabre and horror writers to this day, and we can see much of the same stylistic approach found in the Raven within Lovecraft's larger body of work.

HP Lovecraft, a prolific writer of the 20th century, created a vast wealth of literary archetypes which continue to shape the American horror genre. Best known amongst them is his Cthulhu Mythos, an intricately detailed fictional universe of which the literary canon had scarcely seen by the 1900's. Additionally, HP Lovecraft is responsible for a large body of work consisting of several short stories, including Medusa's Coil. Published in 1939, the work features many of Lovecraft's own fears which are represented throughout his collection. It has been well documented that Lovecraft was an ardent racist, sexist, and homophobic person, who constantly felt in danger due to his held beliefs that he was constantly surrounded by the "other", and one so frightening that his own mythos containing all numbers of horrific otherworldly beasts could not compare. Furthermore, "Lovecraft's real boogymen are the people who aren't white [...], and people of good family who mix with said immigrants. As author Allan Moore has commented, 'It is possible to perceive Howard Lovecraft as an almost unbearably sensitive barometer of American dread' (Mondschein). We can observe this directly in several excerpts of Medusa's Coil:

Marceline's English, always academically correct, was rapidly improving in accent; but it was plain that she relished dropping back into her mother-tongue.

I had to exterminate her—she was the devil—the summit and high-priestess of all evil—the spawn of the pit. Surpassing all in horror was the streaming black hair—which covered the rotting body, but which was itself not even slightly decayed. All I had heard of it was amply verified. It was nothing human, this ropy, sinuous, half-oily, half-crinkly flood of serpent darkness. Vile, independent life proclaimed itself at every unnatural twist and convolution, and the suggestion of numberless reptilian heads at the out-turned ends was far too marked to be illusory or accidental.

The blasphemous thing held me like a magnet. I was helpless, and did not wonder at the myth of the gorgon's glance which turned all beholders to stone. Then I thought I saw a change come over the thing. The leering features perceptibly moved, so that the rotting jaw fell, allowing the thick, beast-like lips to disclose a row of pointed yellow fangs. The pupils of the fiendish eyes dilated, and the eyes themselves seemed to bulge outward. And the hair—that accursed hair! It had begun to rustle and wave perceptibly, the snake-heads all turning toward de Russey and vibrating as if to strike!

She and that hair will come up out of their graves, for God knows what purpose!

If anyone was to blame for the trouble at Riverside it was the woman, Marceline. She was not suited to Missouri ways, I said, and it was too bad that Denis had ever married her.

It would be too hideous if they knew that the one-time heiress of Riverside—the accursed gorgon or lamia whose hateful crinkly coil of serpent-hair must even now be brooding and twining vampirically around an artist's skeleton in a lime-packed grave beneath a charred foundation—was faintly, subtly, yet to the eyes of genius unmistakably the scion of Zimbabwe's most primal grovellers. No wonder she owned a link with that old witch-woman Sophonisba—for, though in deceitfully slight proportion, Marceline was a negress.

This piece, published two years posthumous, highlights Lovecraft's deepest fears of the other, and his deepest held fear of Blackness. Indeed, Lovecraft's deepest fear is not of an otherworldly reanimated woman's corpse with monstrous hair, but of the idea that a Black woman could rise above what he believed to be their lot in life. Additionally, it should be noted that anti-Indigeneity and anti-Black rhetoric are rooted in the same fear of otherness which is present in Lovecraft's body of works. Unfortunately, this deeply held fear of otherness which is essential to functioning within Neocolonialist society is also what allowed him to create a dark, sinister, and all-consuming American horror tradition.

Following HP Lovecraft, of course, is none other than Steven King. To this point, I would add that the same fears which tormented HP Lovecraft in his life are also found within King's work—this fundamental fear of other, of something which cannot be understood or reasoned with, is essential to the Amerikkkan horror genre. Without it, there are no American Horror stories, and at the same time these horror stories are the one and only American fairytales—founded in Xenophobia, anti-Blackness, anti-Indigeneity, and every phobia imaginable. In light of the religious persecution Indigenous peoples faced publicly during this time, paired with both Dvorak's founding of the Amerikkkan tradition of musical cultural appropriation and HP Lovecraft's body of works coming to life, and considering the fact that the USA is a fictitious and illegally formed Neocolonial-Capitalist state upon unceded Indigenous territories, I propose that the only American fairytales that will ever exist are those based in Horror, Homicide, and Xenophobia. To that point, the push to define Amerikkkan Nationalist music in the 20th century can only be described as a push to further the hold that NeoColonialism and Capitalism has upon marginalized communities which it subjugates.

Are you afraid of Ghosts?

Welcome to the interactive portion of this lecture! Here, I invite you to reflect upon the topics we have discussed and journal about your own experiences and perceptions of Western Classical music:

What are some of the images or associations which come to mind in discussing Indigenous peoples? How has media influenced your perception of Indigenous peoples?

When was the first time you became aware of inherent bias and cultural appropriation in relation to the music industry?

What are your personal experiences with appropriation and fetishization in the music industry?

What is your personal experience with mysticism and the idea of "the other"? And, what constitutes "human"? What constitutes "other"?

What about the supernatural is disconcerting to you? How do you consider your own experiences with the supernatural?

Think about the stories told in your family--what are the major themes? Who are the protagonists? Who are the antagonists? How does the story resolve? Are you saved by an outside force, or are you the principal actor?

Within your sphere of influence, what is your role? How will you employ your power on behalf of those traditionally viewed as "other"?

RoT: Roomful of Teeth

Now, with all of this historical context in mind, I shall present a recent example: the existence of Partida, and Caroline Shaw/ROT's twitter storm with Tanya Tagaq. Firstly, I would like to say that if you are unfamiliar with Tagaq's work then checking out her works should become a priority immediately. Secondly, while I could discuss Shaw's work through theoretical analysis of the score, I am uninterested in this because doing so provides the rhetoric of appropriation and illegal plagiarism of Inuit throat singing [katajjaq] with validity. So, I invite you to engage with me in the following discussion about Shaw's response, Tagaq's points, and the idiosyncrasies inherent in discussion of copyright.

To the later point, I would like to introduce the following concept when discussing copyright in relation to cultural autonomy:

As we attribute autonomy and a lifecycle to both human and inhuman existence [personal/human autonomy and lifespan; the lifespan of information], I would also like to add the perspective of a culture that provides autonomy to oral traditions. While generally speaking, this information must be engaged with on a human capacity to remain alive, oral traditions—and certainly, cultural musical practices—in BIPOC communities have their own lifecycle and autonomy through a symbiotic relationship within the communities that they are a part of. This can be observed in the traditional musicks of Black and Indigenous communities through the generational knowledge and engagement which naturally occurs in each of these communities all throughout the natural human lifecycle. In contrast, western classical music has introduced an idea of individual artistic licensing, ultimately implying that intergenerational and cultural knowledge does not exist beyond the capacity of the intellectual property of each individual which engages in each aspect of musicking.

From this perspective on knowledge and information lifecycle we can conclude the following:

1. Outside of the western classical music lens, we must acknowledge that the existence of cultural knowledge and autonomy exists in a multitude of cultures, and
2. that no singular individual speaks for the entirety of this community and can sign away the rights to a cultural practice passed down from generation to generation.

"In their statement issued on Tuesday, Oct. 22, Wells and Shaw said they would "immediately" do the following:

Credit their teachers and coaches more explicitly in public and in print.

Find opportunities to amplify and support performing artists of kataajjaq, and other indigenous musicians with whom they work, "in concrete and monetary ways."

Read aloud a source acknowledgment at the beginning of every Roomful of Teeth concert, "honouring explicitly named traditional cultures' essential contributions to our music."

"Be alert to and proactive" about these issues in all their future work.

Continue to listen to and learn from other members of the musical community, and take seriously concerns such as those raised recently.

Explore new or alternative ways of performing their repertoire.

Other Nunavut performers and artists had also joined in the social media discussions about the use of Inuit throat singing, including Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, Alethea Arnaquq Baril and Kelly Fraser" (Arctic Today).

From our perspective, and in light of the historical context which we have discussed prior to this, it is easy to observe that Shaw's responses come from a place of fragility and defense, while Tagaq is forced to provide emotional labor and educational labor in the face of a woman refusing to admit her wrongdoings. Furthermore, in the response that we see from ROT there is little to be gained for the communities which have been harmed by this further perpetuation of violence.

In spite of all of this, the question remains: what about the money? Because ultimately, in western society that is what it all comes down to. And here is where things get tricky:

To fully understand this, we must look further into modern activists advocations for reparations and "Land Back" movements which center those who have been harmed. What is ultimately missing in Shaw/ROT's response is the sense of responsibility for the harm that they have directly caused and further enabled due to this works. Ultimately, without monetary reparations and return of land to indigenous stewards, these words of apology (or lack thereof) are meaningless in any further pursuit for equity and social progress in situations similar to these within our profession.

While we may hold space for others to grow, we must also readily examine systemic inequities that are created and exploited, and ask ourselves if behaviors reflect the values we ask from those in our communities and professions to embrace.

I would include that this above recommendation however comes from a non-artic based Indigenous person focusing exclusively on the societal implications, and is in no means intended to or should be utilized in place of thorough engagement with your local communities and Indigenous leaders or musicians. Additionally, the indigenous examples I have spoken of also are not of Nnee origin and therefor my intent is to focus on a community based approach towards addressing anti-Indigeneity within the classical music industry as a greater whole, and in particular the further colonization of our Indigeneity occurring in real time.

My Soul for a Culture

Now, my question to the readers of my ramblings is this: what would you be willing to give up in order to obtain a standing amidst a culture which you admire?

When faced with the option to escape, be fully immersed in another world, and to learn the ways of another culture, we often forget our own privilege which has been weaponized against each community for hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

My lesson for you is this: you cannot abandon these power dynamics which you were born into. Despite how we have seen white folks sell their empty souls to obtain validity in cultures which have not tossed aside or sold out their traditions in order to rape, pillage, and plunder non-white cultures, that emptiness will always be there. No amount of stolen cultural practices, dreamcatchers, locks, and katajjaq will be able to fill a void created of genocide, oppression, and enslavement of Black and Indigenous communities.

Ultimately, the most compassionate choice that we can make is to allow for these marginalized communities to hold their own and champion how their music, sounds, and art will be engaged with by others.

Efforts to document, repackage, and sell a culture without the consent of the people being harmed will only further rifts which have been created through 400-500+ years of harm.

So, how do we heal this hurt?



How do we begin to move forward?

How do we move forward?

The question now is: How do we begin to reconcile the inherent appropriative aspect of Classical Western Music? How do we show appreciation of other musicks, and how do we do so mindfully and respectfully?



My answer for you is this:

Until these horrible foundations of racism, sexism, transphobia, queerphobia, antisemitism, ableism, anti-Blackness, and anti-Indigeneity in western music and neo-colonialist societies as a whole are reconciled through representation, reconciliation, and reparations led by each community in question, we cannot authentically incorporate the musicks of marginalized cultures into our own without adequate representation of each culture.



Our first step must be to allow artists of diverse backgrounds to champion their own cultural musicks while we create spaces and provide access to make this possible. We must create spaces within the circles that we have access to, and utilize our voices for those who are not heard. And, as musicians of the 21st century, we must approach our future endeavors with radical empathy and compassion for other cultures, identities, and especially for other humans.

This is your invitation, because without these actions it is impossible for us to move forward.



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Jacquelyn Deshchidn (alt. the ŁŁoroNnēē) is a Two-Spirit Chiricahua Apache and Isleta Pueblo soprano, composer, poet, public speaker, and indigenous rights activist from the San Carlos Apache Nation—Their work as a composer and vocalist focuses predominantly on freeing the voice and returning autonomy to the performing artist, with special emphasis upon emotional and musical convergence as a means of ceremony and communication.

As a performer, Jacquelyn is trained originally in the Roy Hart vocal method, and from this technique they form their foundations of post-colonial vocalization, venturing to the brink of human capacity and holding space for the beauty of all sounds possible made by our bodies and lived experiences.

When not performing their own works, Jacquelyn specializes in music of the 20th and 21st centuries, with particular focus on solo vocal works, extended vocal techniques, improvisation, performance art, and contemporary opera. Most recently, they have ventured into both film and horror podcast work, and eagerly embrace art forms centering physical/ sensory or shared experiences such as movement, sculpture, speech or breath.

Jacquelyn holds a graduate degree from Peabody Institute where they studied vocal performance with Tony Arnold. Their significant teachers and mentors include Marcos Balter, Phyllis Chen, Nathan Davis, Jeffrey Gall, Chris Opperman, and Imani Uzuri.

Currently, Jacquelyn is pursuing a second graduate degree, this time in Library and Information Sciences at the University of Denver, where they are focusing on serving urban-Indigenous populations, undocumented and unhoused folks, QTBIPOC folks, and disabled/ND individuals with a special interest in children/youth literature and programming.

Post-graduation, they are looking forward to becoming a performing arts librarian and serving the local community while pursuing and premiering all things weird in the new music scene, while continuing to work towards decolonial sound practices and the development of empathetic vocal expression that holds space for the complexities, pain, and capacity for growth that each of us holds within ourselves.

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