BULLETIN

OF THE

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

FOR

TRADITIONS OF MUSIC AND DANCE

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Message From the Secretary General

by Marcia Ostashewski



Dear Members of the ICTMD,

I write this message to reflect on our journey together and to share important updates about how we are modernising our operations, strengthening our financial foundations, and building a shared and sustainable future for our global community through a practice of service and care. In these particularly complex and challenging times across the world, the need to remain connected, collaborate across borders, and offer one another meaningful care and support feels more essential than ever.

Organisational Transition and Secretariat Operations

The Secretariat has been actively reviewing and updating our policies, practices, and infrastructure to ensure they serve the needs of a modern, international Council—one that enables us to stay resilient and closely tied to one another globally. Historically, ICTMD operations were anchored within university infrastructures that provided built-in policies for financial and administrative governance. Since transitioning to an independent non-governmental organisation in 2011, our work has been sustained through the care and commitment of dedicated volunteers and staff and contractors working with them, although operating largely without formal operational guidelines. While this stewardship has served our community well in many ways over the past fifteen years, the growth of our Council and our long-term sustainability now require a thorough review and the renewed development of our organisational infrastructure.

As we continue navigating this transition, our updates are specifically designed to build long-term capacity, streamline administrative services, and enhance member experience. In these efforts, we are working closely with the Executive Board. For further context and background on this organisational review, we invite you to read the message from the Secretary General in the May 2026 Bulletin.

I wish to express my warmest thanks to Meg Kwasnicki, Executive Secretary, and Peter Verdin, Bulletin Editor, for their dedicated work within the Secretariat through our first year of transition.

Meg stepped into the role of Executive Secretary and took on this vital work without there being formal organisational infrastructure and operational guidelines within the Secretariat. With incredible resolve, and while working tirelessly to maintain essential operations, she has also assessed our day-to-day operations and helped to build a clear picture for Council leadership of our organisation's administrative needs. This work has directly informed the strategic development of the new roles for which we are currently hiring. Meg has also been preparing foundational documentation that will help us to establish operational guidelines to strengthen the Secretariat in its service to the Executive Board and our membership moving forward.

At the same time, Peter's meticulous editorial care, clear communication, and dedication to the Bulletin have kept our global community connected and informed—reminding us of the strength we draw from staying grounded in shared purpose and mutual support. We are immensely grateful to both of them for their steadfast commitment, expertise, and deep care for our shared community during this pivotal phase.

Effective 15 October 2026, Executive Secretary Meg Kwasnicki has significantly reduced her hours for health reasons. Meg will support the transition for a limited period but is no longer managing daily Secretariat operations. To ensure continuous service and ongoing care for our membership, we are making swift interim adjustments. During this period, a dedicated team of temporary staff will support Secretariat operations. As we navigate this transition with care for our incoming and outgoing staff, responses may take slightly longer than usual. We deeply appreciate your patience, understanding, and continued support.

To sustain and elevate our service for the long term, we recently invited applications for two core and part-time roles within the Secretariat: Operations Manager and Administrative Assistant. The search process is moving forward smoothly, and I look forward to introducing our new team members in the coming

weeks! We welcome you to direct your inquiries as follows:

- **Membership matters:** membership@ictmd.org
- **General inquiries:** secretariat@ictmd.org
- **Bulletin submissions/questions**: bulletin-editor@ictmd.org

Strengthening Our Foundations and Mobilising Support

As our Council has expanded—now proudly boasting thirty active Study Groups worldwide—we are taking clear, proactive steps to align our financial and operational systems with our vibrant growth and international reach.

Because ICTMD is a self-sustaining membership organisation with no endowment, our ability to innovate, deliver publications, support Study Groups, and host international gatherings relies directly on our collective participation and mutual contributions. In recent years, the Council drew down heavily on reserve funds and supplemental donations and grants; these funds were nearly depleted. Since stepping into the role of Secretary General in July 2025, our focus has been on creating a clear, transparent financial model and establishing formal policies that will allow us to seek external funding and launch targeted fundraising initiatives with confidence. This vital foundation will help ensure the Council's long-term financial sustainability and strengthen our capacity to deliver services, collaboration opportunities, and care to our global membership moving forward. **Here is how every member can actively participate and mobilise for our shared success:**

- **Renew Your Membership:** Ensuring your annual membership dues are up to date keeps our core day-to-day operations running. We recognise that navigating both the legacy, outdated technology system alongside the tiered membership structure introduced in early 2025 has brought challenges. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we work to implement updates and resolve technical issues; we will be assessing the membership model with the Executive Board in 2027 after its initial two-year application period. If – after you have attempted to complete your membership online through the step-by-step process as prompted – you experience difficulty, please contact the membership email (membership@ictmd.org).
- **Register for Upcoming Events:** Timely payment of registration fees, such as the upcoming World Conference in Santiago , ensures that conference funds can be collected and deployed effectively. Please note that all inquiries regarding registration for the World Conference are being handled by the Local Arrangement Committee in Santiago (lac2027santiago@gmail.com).
- **Engage with Your Study Groups:** We are working with the Executive Board and alongside Study Group Chairs to develop equitable, sustainable models for member support and global participation across nearly thirty Study Groups.

For my part, I am deeply grateful for the support accessed through Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and other sources, my host university, and my global research networks, which enabled me to directly secure and mobilise resources for ICTMD over the past several years. For example, over the past year alone, toward ICTMD operations within and beyond the Secretariat, I have secured well over $15,000 CAD cash funding. We recognise and deeply appreciate that so many of our members are generously giving their time and energy to do exceptional, vital work around the world.

Journal Updates

- **New TMD Editor:** We are excited to welcome Georgia Curran as the new Editor of *Traditions of Music and Dance* (*TMD*, formerly *Yearbook for Traditional Music*)! An ethnomusicologist and anthropologist at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (University of Sydney), Georgia brings extensive research expertise in Indigenous languages, music, and performance ethnography. We invite you to read her greeting and statement later in this issue.
- **Heartfelt Gratitude:** We extend our deepest thanks to Lonán Ó Briain, the entire editorial committee, and guest editors who have worked with them for their dedication and scholarly leadership for our flagship journal over the past three years.



Programme Committee co-chairs, Andrea Chamorro, Jesse Vallejo, and Mayco Santaella; Local Arrangements Committee member, Miloska Valero; the ICTMD Secretariat team, Marcia Ostashewski and Ulises Figueroa; Local Arrangements co-chair, Jacob Rekedal; and ICTMD Vice-President and Executive Board World Conference Support Committee Chair, Brian Diettrich, meet in the courtyard of Universidad Alberto Hurtado. Photo courtesy of Marcia Ostashewski.

International Service and Leadership

- **2027 World Conference Support**: During our June meeting in Santiago, Chile, the Secretariat joined the Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) and Program Committee Co-Chairs to share best practices for these convenings and explore how to best serve, support, and care for ICTMD members attending from around the world. We also collaborated with LAC Co-Chair Jacob Rekedal to deliver the Council's second pre-conference symposium, which focused on Indigenous perspectives across disciplinary boundaries. Recordings of the symposium are available online via the Centre for Sound Communities—a key partner, which also brought support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada to this June conference and planning meeting. We are also grateful for the teamwork of Ulises Figueroa, who joined us from Newfoundland to coordinate with local tech teams and provide logistical assistance for the Secretariat, and who will continue providing support for the Secretariat during the World Conference. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the LAC for their hospitality and warmly invite all members to join us in January 2027 for what is sure to be an extraordinary 49th World Conference during the Council's 80th anniversary year.
- **Global Presence:** In September 2026, ICTMD was proudly represented at the 6th World Nomad Games and associated scientific conference in Kyrgyzstan, highlighting our ongoing commitment to international partnership, field research, and cross-cultural dialogue. I had the privilege of traveling alongside a group of ICTMD colleagues to represent our Council at this significant gathering; readers are invited to explore a special photo essay contribution by Razia Sultanova and Svanibor Pettan featured later in this issue for a vivid glimpse into the event. By working together and upholding our shared practice of care, we are building relationships and laying the foundation for a stronger, more resilient ICTMD around the world. Thank you for your vital contributions, your passion for our field, and your collaborative spirit as we move forward together through these times.



Members of the Secretariat team, Local Arrangements Committee co-chairs, and Programme Committee co-chairs meeting with leadership and staff at Universidad de Los Lagos, 14 June 2026. Photo courtesy of Marcia Ostashewski.

Looking ahead to our 50th World Conference

We have secured a location and hosts for our milestone event coming up in 2029! Thanks to the dedicated committee volunteers Daniel Avorgbedor, Brian Diettrih, Svanibor Pettan, and Susana Sardo, who worked in close collaboration with the Secretariat to review expressions of interest from around the world. Now that the location has been formally approved by the Executive Board, we will be officially introducing the host institution and sharing preliminary plans during the Closing Ceremonies in Santiago this coming January. We strongly encourage all members to join us for the Closing Ceremonies to celebrate this reveal and catch a first glimpse of what lies ahead!

Watch for further updates in the coming weeks—and we look forward to coming together in Santiago at the 49th World Conference!

Message From the President

by Tan Sooi Beng



We are pleased to invite you to the 49th ICTMD World Conference that will be held 14–20 January 2027, at Universidad Alberto Hurtado (UAH) in Santiago, Chile. This is a landmark occasion as we celebrate the 80th anniversary of ICTMD, as well as the 30th anniversary of the Universidad Alberto Hurtado and the 20th anniversary of the UAH's Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades. This event also marks the World Conference's return to Latin America after 26 years, with the last being held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2001.

Through plenaries, panels, roundtables, workshops, film screenings, and performances, the conference program highlights the intersections of multiple sonic and dance knowledges from around the world. Diversity, inclusivity, and the decentring of research methods, approaches, theories, and histories are all important themes in ICTMD's efforts to decolonise music and dance studies.

Significantly, the program offers spaces for innovative presentation formats to explore how dance and music expressions play critical roles for navigating interconnected challenges such as community resilience and cultural regeneration during times of conflict and environmental crisis. There will also be opportunities to present alternative histories of knowledge production that have been left out of colonial music and dance historiography and to critically examine performative practices through a queer reading.

Under a special theme, Latin American and Caribbean members of ICTMD will discuss how the complex intersections of colonisation, struggle, displacements, and cultural interactions have shaped the region's varied musical and dance traditions. Equally important, the impact of new technologies and digital media on our fields will be covered.

You are welcome to register for the 49th ICTMD Conference here.

As a sneak preview to the World Conference, the ICTMD Dialogues Committee will hold a session on the ethics of care in times of war, conflict, and violence before the end of this year. Keep an eye out for further information.

As 2026 draws to a close, we have much to be grateful for. We are indebted to the Program Committee of the 49th World Conference for a notable and meaningful program. We thank the Local Arrangements Committee for organising the venues, registration, hotels, tours, and technical assistance and look forward to joining the World Conference at Santiago.

Heartfelt thanks to Lonán Ó Briain for his invaluable contributions as the General Editor of *Traditions of Music and Dance (TMD)*, formerly known as *The Yearbook for Traditional Music (YTM)*. He liaised with Cambridge University Press, spearheading important changes such as the journal's name change and the creation of two issues annually. We also thank his editorial team members for their support.

We extend a warm welcome to Georgia Curran, the new General Editor of *TMD*, and anticipate her new insights.

On a final note, we wish to express our gratitude to the Executive Secretary, Meg Kwasnicki, who will be decreasing her working hours due to health reasons. We sincerely appreciate her dedication and hard work over the past year, as well as her ongoing support during the transition period.

Message from the Executive Secretary

by Meg Kwasnicki



As most of you know, I am stepping away from the administrative side of the Executive Secretary role, which will be replaced by two part-time positions. I will now focus on supporting the Secretary General and the Board in evaluating ICTMD's organisational infrastructure. Thank you for your patience and goodwill during this period of transition.

Over the last ten months, while learning ICTMD's processes and working with an aging IT infrastructure, we kept our focus on a longer-term goal: assessing the current state of the organisation so we can build new policies and practices. That means looking at the past and present (the formal structure, the practices that have been maintained, and what members need) to decide what will carry ICTMD forward. Every organisation should do this work on an ongoing basis, however changing an entire administration at once makes even simple questions complicated.

My contribution to the policy work will be a view of the wider systems that affect our membership. The global economy is changing and academic institutions are facing significant shifts themselves. This affects our members and our volunteers directly through job security and project funding. ICTMD is unique in the scope of scholarly councils in that its membership includes many scholars working outside of academia, who have long since and are continually facing similar challenges. This diversity of membership is essential to the organisation's sustainability and growth. It keeps ICTMD dynamic and furthers the overall mission of promoting diverse music and dance practices globally.

ICTMD has grown considerably over the last decade. A major reason are digital technologies and the global interconnectivity provided by the internet, which has made it easier for our communities to connect. The main technical change ahead is moving from systems we built and maintained ourselves to pre-built applications. To move our systems forward, the Secretariat needs to be a small but mighty team, with a range of skills that go beyond core administration. At the same time, we need to be clear about what we must sustainably offer. This will mean that we will be asking for your feedback while we work on improving the organisation.

At its core, ICTMD is a volunteer-run organisation—the Secretary General, the Executive Board, Study Group executives, World Conference leadership, and many others—are all volunteers. We have been gathering information about the support, alignment, and role clarity these volunteers need to provide what ICTMD's community needs. As institutional support for academics reduces, the volunteer commitment we have come to think of as normal will change too. For ICTMD, this is a structural issue. The new model is still emerging, and we have begun making changes, starting with the new roles we are recruiting for now.

Please give the incoming team the same patience you gave me. Thank you again for the support over the past year.

Message from the *Bulletin* Editor

by Peter James Verdin



Dear Wondrous Members of the ICTMD,

I hope these words find you well and in good and productive spirits! It would seem that the ICTMD membership has been quite busy over the past few month, evidenced by the many submissions I received for this October *Bulletin*. I invite readers to peruse the both the "Reports" and the "ICTMD in Photos" sections in this edition to get a sampling of the diverse range of research and projects that ICTMD members are involved in. I would also like to take a moment to extend my warmest welcome to Kai Tang and Joseph Kunnuji, who joined the *Bulletin's* Editorial Board over the break. Additionally, my congratulations to all the 2026 ICTMD Prize winners! This year has certainly yielded a bounty of new and inspiring research and endeavors.

Keen-eyed readers will notice that this edition of the *Bulletin* has a different layout than previous editions. Over the past few months, I took the opportunity to migrate the materials for the *Bulletin* to different word-processing software as part of the Secretariat's efforts to modernise certain operational aspects of the ICTMD. I have tried to keep the aesthetic spirit of previous editions while also making the publication more accessible to both the readers, as an electronic document, and to streamline production for the editorial team. If you have any suggestions for how

the *Bulletin* can improve, please contact: bulletin-editor@ictmd.org.

Finally, I would like to extend my most heartfelt thanks to Meg Kwasnicki for her guidance and support over the past year. My transition to the role of the *Bulletin* editor would have been much more trying had I not had her support along the way.

Looking forward to 2027!

Letter of Thanks to Lonán Ó Briain, Outgoing Editor of *Traditions of Music and Dance*

by Kendra Stepputat



If you have ever edited a peer-reviewed book or journal volume, you will surely have experienced the fluidity of time perception of printing houses, authors, reviewers, and editors. Time is always running towards a deadline, yet it seems to creep by when waiting for a review, submission, feedback, edit, or permission. Those different states of time (perception) overlap, commingle, and likely threaten to delay a publication. It is the General Editor who must keep the balance of temporal pushes and pulls while staying organised, optimistic, and last but not least, friendly, to have a publication in print within the expected timeframe. In fact, Ruth Stone's "expandable moments" in music performance seem an apt way to think about editorial time (Stone 1985:201).

Now imagine having to go through expandable editorial moments for two volumes a year—certainly not a task for everyone! We would therefore like to express our sincere gratitude to Lonán Ó Briain for having done exactly this as general editor of *Traditions of Music and Dance* for four years. Before that, he had been part of the editorial team since 2017, starting as review editor (so he knew what was coming and nevertheless took on the task) and being appointed general editor in 2023.

Throughout his time as General Editor, Lonán has overseen the completion of eight volumes. Under his editorial leadership the journal continued to develop as a valuable forum for ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological research. Lonán has helped guide and strengthen the journal's academic quality and international profile while also leaving his own distinctive mark on its development. In his role as editor, he oversaw the renaming of the journal from *Yearbook for Traditional Music* to *Traditions of Music and Dance* in 2025 and furthered the addition of more dance scholars into the editorial team. Lonán's contribution to the journal has been much more than the fulfilment of an editorial role. We are especially grateful for the time, care, and energy he has devoted to supporting authors, reviewers, and colleagues.

It is with real appreciation that we say thank you, Lonán, for the time and energy you have given to *Traditions of Music and Dance* and all its expandable moments of editing. Your work and dedication have made a lasting difference, and you leave behind an important legacy for the journal and the ICTMD community.

Message from the Incoming General Editor of *Traditions of Music and Dance*

by Georgia Curran



It is a great honour to be the incoming General Editor of *Traditions of Music and Dance*. I am delighted to have the opportunity to steer the future directions of ICTMD's flagship journal which represents the diverse research of our global membership. I look forward to engaging with many of you and bringing my energy, passion, and subject matter expertise to this role. My own research background is in Indigenous Australian song and dance traditions, specifically those from Central Australia. I am based at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (Australia) and have strong interests in Indigenous and minority musics globally. Under my leadership, I aspire for the journal to deepen its commitment to geographical equity and inclusive scholarship. The journal's focus on research articles and reviews on music and dance traditions significantly benefits from opening a space which centres a plurality of voices and emphasises varying modes of knowledge production including through applied, collaborative and creative approaches. I aspire to build on the current strengths established through traditional ethnomusicology to also actively champion the perspectives of underrepresented scholars, practitioners and custodians of music and dance traditions, including those who may be

politically or geographically marginalised. With these emphases, I hope for the journal's outputs to continue to broaden in their representation of the diversity of the regions, peoples and traditions central to the ICTMD.

I wish to thank the outgoing General Editor, Lonán Ó Briain, for his years of dedication to the journal (2023 –2026), and his generosity with guidance as I transition into this role. I also thank Ai Mei Luo for her service as Assistant Editor and all the review editors who have now finished their terms – Damascus Kafumbe as Music Book Review Editor, María Gabriela López-Yánez as Dance Book Review Editor, Neol Lobley as Audio Review Editor, Yuri Prado and Michael B. MacDonald as Film/Video Review Editors, and Cassandre Balosso-Bardin as Multimedia Review Editor. During this period, the journal has experienced significant growth, since 2022 publishing two issues per year through Cambridge University Press. Significantly, the journal name change in 2025 to *Traditions of Music and Dance* (previously *Yearbook for Traditional Music*) reflecting the wider desires of the ICTMD membership to include "dance" as a central focus, has a strong presence in the issues published in recent years.

As I begin my General Editor term officially in 2027, I am looking to establish a new editorial team and would like to take this opportunity to call for applications for the review editor roles (book, audio, film, and multimedia). Review Editors are required to proactively identify relevant content for review, identify, and liaise with appropriate authors and work alongside authors to bring the reviews to production stage. Applicants will need to have relevant academic qualifications (a PhD or equivalent) and an active research background matching the subject matter scope of the ICTMD. I am seeking to establish a diverse team that represents the plurality of voices of the ICTMD including representation from different regions of the globe, different approaches to the study of music and dance traditions, as well as applicants with varying perspectives, positionalities and career stages. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have subject matter expertise and can work to publication schedules. If you are interested, please send a short statement of your interest in the role and a CV (3-page max.) to georgia.curran@sydney.edu.au by 15th November 2026. Please also feel free to contact me on this email if you have any questions.

In 2027, the first issue of *Traditions of Music and Dance* will be an open issue, and the second is a special issue based on papers from the Chile World Conference in January (guest-edited by Conference Programme Committee co-Chairs, Mayco Santaella, Jessie Vallejo, and Andrea Chamorro). Further information and a call for papers will be announced in coming months. I plan to have a table set up in the common area of the conference with information about the *Traditions of Music and Dance* journal and examples of previous journal issues. Additionally, during conference breaks I will be available for discussion of future article submissions and other journal related matters. I look forward to seeing many of you in Santiago in January!

The 2027 Election of the ICTMD Executive Board

by Sylvia Bruinders, with Mohamad Hamami, and Pedro Acosta, 2027 Election Nomination Committee



In May 2026, the Nominations Committee of the 2027 Election requested proposals for nominations to fill positions on the Executive Board which will become vacant at the time of the 48th General Assembly of Members, to be held in Santiago, Chile, in January 2027.

At this time, Samual Araújo (Brazil) will complete his term as Vice President. Daniel Avorgbedor (Ghana), Marie Agatha Ozah (Nigeria), Silvia Citro (Argentina), Susana Sardo (Portugal), Kendra Stepputat (Austria), and Jasmina Talam (Bosnia and Herzegovina) will complete their terms as Ordinary Members, Consequently, the vacant positions to fill in the 2025 election are:

- 6 Ordinary Members
- 1 Vice President

Araujo, Avorgbedor, Sardo, Stepputat, and Talam are eligible for nomination, as is Jacob Rekedal (Chile) who will have completed his co-option to the Executive Board.

The Nomination Committee of the 2027 Election is formed by Sylvia Bruinders (South Africa, convener), Mohamad Hassan (Syria), and Pedro Acosta (Brazil).

CANDIDATES

The following candidates were selected by the Nomination Committee from proposals made by ICTMD National Committees and by individual ICTMD members from at least two different countries for each proposal. All members of the Executive Board are elected for a term lasting until the second General Assembly of Members after their term has begun (typically four years) and are eligible for re-election only once (see Statute 7.2 for details).

Candidates for Ordinary EB Members (2027–2031)

There are six vacancies among the Ordinary Members of the Executive Board. Out of the list of 13 candidates, you will be able to choose up to six candidates.

- Abdullah Akat (Türkiye)
- Daniel Avorgbedor (Ghana)
- Chunbin Chen (Taiwan)
- Cenk Güray (Türkiye)
- Ana Hofman (Slovenia)
- Fatima Nurlybayeva (Kazakhstan)
- Jacob Rekedal (Chile)
- Susana Sardo (Portugal)
- Elina Seye (Finland)
- Kendra Stepputat (Austria)
- Jasmina Talam (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Yuh-Fen Tseng (Taiwan)
- Minako Waseda (Japan)

Candidates for Vice President (2027–2031)

There is one vacancy for Vice President. Out of the list of two candidates, you will be able to choose one candidate.

- Samuel Araújo (Brazil)
- Marie Agatha Ozah (Nigeria)

You can read all the candidates' statements on the ICTMD website.

VOTING PROCEDURE

The voting will be conducted via Election Runner (hyperlinked), the third-party voting platform the Council has been using since 2019.

On 8 October 2026, all ICTMD members in good standing will receive an email that will allow voting with a unique username and password. Voting will be open until 8 January 2026 at 23:59:59 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). The results of the election will be announced during the 47th General Assembly of Members in January 2027.

All members are urged to participate in the election, as a large turnout is a clear indication that members want to engage in the governance of the Council.

ALICA ELSCHEKOVÁ (1930–2026)

by Philip V. Bohlman

It was with great sadness that the ICTMD received the news that its friend and colleague, the Slovak ethnomusicologist, Alica Elscheková, had passed at the age of 95 on 26 July 2026 in Bratislava. Alica's life as a scholar has in many ways mirrored the history of the ICTMD, from its foundational years after the Second World War through its decades of transformation until the present. Her life and work reveal the ways in which she had her finger on the pulse of an international field of scholarship that sought to encompass music and dance research in its most expansive dimensions, while at the same time attending to its meanings and functions in the life of the individual and the community. In every way, Alica Elscheková's legacy will be that of a life in ethnomusicology well-lived.



Alica Elschekova. Photo courtesy of Philip Bohlman.

Alica Elscheková was born on 21 November 1930 in Bratislava, which would remain her home throughout her life. Upon completing her gymnasium studies, she undertook university studies in musicology and ethnology at the Comenius University of Bratislava, taking her MA in 1953 with a thesis on Slovak folk music instruments. Concurrently, she was also studying voice and piano at the State Conservatory of Bratislava, from which she took a performance degree in 1954. She assumed a research position at the Slovak Academy of Sciences in 1953, a position she would develop throughout her career, establishing ethnomusicology and folk music research as critical disciplines for the study of modern Slovakia. In 1978, Alica was awarded a doctorate (CSc.) from the Slovak Academy of Sciences, with a dissertation on ethnomusicological analysis and classification.

It would be too easy simply to describe Alica's life in ethnomusicology as interdisciplinary, even as we recognise that its impact on the field is one of crossing disciplinary boundaries. Critical to her approach to music and dance studies was fieldwork, not just an extractive study of specific sites, but as an analytical and archaeological approach that realised the ethnography field as growing and changing around a matrix of complex levels, which she called strata and, in German, *Schichten*. In her concept of a stratigraphy of folk music, the levels did not abide blurred boundaries, but rather they afforded analytical models in which different phenomena could be coterminous though not coexistent. The material and the ephemeral, the performative and the archive, therefore, form the complex whole together, whether consonant or dissonant.

For Alica's vision of ethnomusicology, it was critically important that she was a researcher at the Slovak Academy of Science. That position was especially important for her employment of documentary film for fieldwork. Already in the 1950s, she began to employ filmmaking in her fieldwork, and, as always throughout her career, it inspired Alica to expand her vision for ethnomusicology and folk music research. Film provided a way of connecting the landscape of the primary areas of her research, Slovakia (and Czechoslovakia prior to 1993), the Carpathian Mountains, the trans-Danubian or Pannonian plain, and, increasingly in later studies, the city as a site of folk music. At the same time she was producing scientific documentaries, she also began film projects that could be used for educational and other public functions. Throughout her career scientific scholarship lived alongside public-facing ethnomusicology.

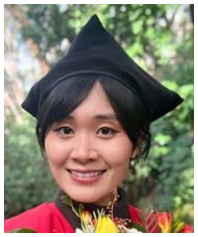
The richness and far-reaching influence of Alica Elscheková's scholarship is abundantly evident in her many publications, both in Slovak and in German. I could hardly do justice to them in this obituary, even

as I sketch the possible throughline and theoretical evolution they represent. In her publications from the 1950s, Alica planted the seeds for the modern study of folk music in Slovakia, laying the foundations for a modern field. In the 1960s, she made a deliberate turn in a more analytical direction, identifying the specific elements of structure in folk music and charting the ways they accrued and changed through history of folk music forms. In the 1970s, studies of material culture, especially of folk music instruments, appear, but even more significantly, her studies of classification and systematisation of folk music move to the centre of her published work. Classification studies continue to appear in the 1980s, but Alica also clearly launches a new direction in her ethnographic work as she embarks on a series of local, regional, and genre microstudies. These accumulate through the years of growing Slovak national independence, theoretically converging with the field of music and minority studies that distinguishes ethnomusicological study in Slovakia, Austria, and Hungary (and across the ICTMD) in the twenty-first century. I think it appropriate to summarise this sketch of Alica's published work to say that it is high time that plans are made to translate some of her finest work and gather them in anthologies, thereby making it available more widely and internationally to the field she thought of as her own.

For those of us who had the privilege of knowing and working with Alica Elscheková, the richness of her life in ethnomusicology is especially evident also because of its human side. To know Alica as a scholar was to know her as a mentor and model. To know her was to sit with her in Vienna or Bratislava, amazed at her infectious love of learning. To know her was to understand why one of the great collaborations of our field, her lifetime of work with her husband, Oskár Elschek, who preceded her in death this year, inspires us to work together and seek moral purpose. To know Alica Elscheková is to understand.

Early Career Scholars Network (ECSN) News

by Xiaotong Yang, on behalf of the ECSN Committee



The Early Career Scholars Network Committee has facilitated a range of discussions and events since the last bulletin report.

On 15 May 2026, the online dialogue "Regrounding in Flux: Navigating the Post-PhD Transition" took place, moderated by committee member Dilyana Kurdova with discussants Ann R. David, Jon Bullock, Noramin Farid, and Shuo Niki Yang. The conversation revolved around strategies for early-career scholars negotiating the challenging phase immediately after their PhD completion. Insights such as how to stay connected and visible in academic spaces were also shared. The committee is happy to report that the discussion, inviting and warm, was appreciated by participants and discussants alike.

On 30 May 2026, committee member Xiaotong Yang hosted the ECSN's first meet-and-greet via Discord, joined by fellow scholars who generously shared their views about the challenges they face and how the ECSN could be of better help in their academic journeys. Conference networking was raised as one major challenge, and many agreed that events such as the World Conference can be rather intimidating for first-time participants.

This issue was subsequently discussed at the committee meeting in June 2026. As a result, and in light of the 49th World Conference in Santiago de Chile this coming January, the committee is planning a pre-conference online meet-and-greet party via Zoom, so as to offer early-career participants the opportunity to establish contact with colleagues whom they could meet in person at the conference. This is designed to make the conference space less alienating and intimidating.

In addition to this, three sessions tailored for early-career scholars but open to all will be held at the upcoming World Conference:

1. "ECSN Fishbowl: General Meeting of the Early Career Scholars Network" will use an innovative fishbowl-style room layout to foster interaction and conversation.

2. "ECSN Workshop: Ctrl-Alt-Ethno—Uses and Functions of AI in Music and Dance Research" is a workshop designed to help early-career scholars critically engage with large language models in research. Through hands-on exercises, it aims to provide strategies for prompt engineering and bias mitigation, and encourage reflection on ethics and sustainability.

3. "ECSN Open Discussion: Ctrl-Alt-Ethno—Where to from Here?" continues the "Ctrl-Alt-Ethno" workshop, allowing space for deeper conversation about ethics, sustainability, and the impact and challenges LLMs bring to academic work.

The committee extends its appreciation to all the discussants and participants in these past events. The invitation to join the pre-conference party, as well as more information about the above-mentioned ECSN sessions at the World Conference, will be distributed on the ECSN webpage and mailing list in due time.

49TH ICTMD WORLD CONFERENCE

14–20 January 2027, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Santiago, Chile



Main campus of Universidad Alberto Hurtado, the host of the 49th ICTMD World Conference.
Photo by Extensión y Comunicaciones de la Facultad de Filosofia y Humanidades, Universidad Alberto Hurtado.

UPDATES FROM THE PROGRAMME AND LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEES

By Andrea Chamorro, Mayco A. Santaella, and Jessie Vallejo, Programme Committee Chairs, and Jacob Rekedal and Ignacio Soto Silva, Local Arrangements Committee Chairs







Greetings from the Programme Committee and Local Arrangements Committee!

We are delighted to invite you to the 49th ICTMD World Conference, taking place 14–20 January 2027 at Universidad Alberto Hurtado in Santiago, Chile. The ICTMD World Conference continues to be a leading international venue for the presentation and exchange of new research on traditions of music and dance.





The Programme Committee has been working hard to coordinate the conference programme and accommodate the many requests and preferences received from participants. We are pleased to have shared the programme draft, which has been circulated for review. If you identify any necessary revisions, please submit them using this Google Form. To help us manage the process efficiently, please do not email the Programme Committee regarding programme changes; all requests should be submitted through the form (https://forms.gle/MaqQ4m5ULEfBGL3o7).

We will review all submissions and, where appropriate, incorporate requested changes before preparing the final programme. At the same time, the Local Arrangements Committee is working to develop the many activities and initiatives that will take place alongside the academic programme. In addition to the conference sessions, we are pleased to announce that a number of workshops and performances will be offered during lunch breaks and in the evenings, providing further opportunities for participants to engage with music, dance, and artistic practices of Chile specifically and South America at large.

We are also committed to making the conference as accessible and inclusive as possible. Through the implementation of a tiered registration system alongside a tiered ICTMD membership system, we have managed to make participation significantly more affordable and accessible to colleagues from different economic contexts and regions. In some cases, these measures reduce the usual costs of attending an international conference by more than half. This approach reflects our commitment to the principles of decolonisation, greater equity in international scholarly exchange, and responsiveness to the current geopolitical and economic situation. We hope that these measures will enable a broader and more diverse range of ICTMD members and colleagues to participate in Santiago.

For those attending the conference in January, please note that all members presenting or co-presenting must pay the registration fee and be ICTMD members in good standing prior to the conference. To renew your existing membership or join ICTMD as a new member, please visit the ICTMD website.

The Programme Committee and Local Arrangements Committee are working closely together to prepare a conference that brings together rigorous scholarship, artistic practice, meaningful exchange, and opportunities for community building. We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to Santiago and to sharing an exciting and memorable 49th ICTMD World Conference with you.

Programme Committee

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Conference Themes

The conference themes for the 49th ICTMD World Conference have been developed in both English and Spanish, in recognition of the large number of Spanish-speaking members across Latin America, and in consideration of participants from the host country and the broader region. The conference aims to adopt bilingual approaches wherever possible to foster greater inclusivity and accessibility.

1) Latin America and the Caribbean in the Region and Beyond

Latin America and the Caribbean encompass diverse musical and dance traditions shaped by complex histories of colonisation, resistance, migration, and cultural exchange. From Afro-Caribbean music and Indigenous ritual dances to mestizo genres, contemporary urban forms, and diasporic reimaginings, music and dance in this region serve as powerful tools for identity, memory, political expression, and social transformation. This theme invites scholars, artists, and practitioners to explore Latin American and Caribbean music and dance both within the region and in transnational and diasporic contexts, including ones that may often be overlooked, such as Asian music in Latin America and Latin American music in Asia. It encourages reflections on how these expressive forms are practiced, studied, preserved, adapted, and contested across local, national, and global landscapes. How do regional aesthetics and social meanings shift as genres move across borders? What roles do migration, tourism, digital media, and global markets play in shaping these traditions? How are institutions—academic, governmental, religious, or grassroots—engaged in their transmission and transformation?

2) Digital Media

As digital technologies continue to rapidly transform the cultural landscape, music and dance practices across the world are undergoing profound shifts. From AI-generated compositions and choreographies to online dance challenges, virtual reality performances, and digital archives of intangible heritage, the integration of digital media into the expressive arts is reshaping how music and dance are created, experienced, transmitted, and theorised. This theme invites critical engagement with the intersections of music, dance, and digital media, foregrounding the implications these technologies hold for ethnomusicology, ethnochoreology, and related disciplines. How do digital platforms affect traditional forms of musical expression as social and artistic practices? How can traditional forms of authority and cultural rights be managed with rapid and wide-scale digital sharing? What ethical and epistemological questions arise when AI becomes a co-creator or interpreter of music and movement? How are digital tools enabling new forms of embodiment, improvisation, and community? How are digital platforms improving and impacting music distribution, promotion, and consumption? Conversely, how might they contribute to cultural homogenisation, surveillance, sustainability concerns, or the commodification of expressive forms? How are the recent processes of political control, platforms concentration and decay affecting existing digital scenes and cultures?

3) Power, Conflict, and Planetary Health

This theme explores how sound and movement respond to and shape the interconnected challenges of political struggle, environmental crisis, and community resilience. From protest songs and national anthems to climate activism, post-disaster recovery, or critiques of sonic weapons and the legislation of bodies, music and dance practices act as powerful tools for expressing resistance, negotiating power, and rebuilding both societies and ecosystems. We invite contributions that examine these modes as sites of contestation, cultural memory, and ecological engagement highlighting how it reflects and influences the complex dynamics between social, cultural, and environmental systems. Topics may include music in conflict and reconciliation, sonic responses to ecological degradation, and the role of performance in (re)organising communities and imagining more just, sustainable futures. This theme also encourages innovative presentation formats and interactive sessions. It approaches music and dance as

community, social and cultural practices as sites of contestation, and as sources for (re)imagining, (re)conceptualising, and (re)organising society.

4) Spiritual and Religious Performativities

The spiritual and the spirit world are often believed to exist independently of religion, society, and belief systems that typically claim authority and generate various orthodoxies. Spirituality as personal belief and religion as institutionalised organisation can be either complementary or adversarial (e.g., internal reformation or external evangelisation). Notably, performances associated with rituality, spirituality, and religiosity can be distinguished from their performativity in the original Butlerian sense—for example, the non-ecclesiastical Missa Solemnis, subscription concerts of Bharata Natyam, or Papantla's Palo Volador as a UNESCO-designated tradition. This theme opens itself to considerations (and reconsiderations) of gender, colonial complicities and resistances, shifts between restricted, private and public forms, secularisation, tourism, cultural conservation, ecologies, and subject positionality—including that of the researcher.

5) Queering the Field

Queer approaches, queer topics, and not least queer researchers have gained momentum in contemporary ethnomusicological discourse. Ethnomusicological gender studies currently focus widely on sexuality, with queer theory forming a central theoretical impulse. Recent publications discuss the position of queerness within our field, including critical reflections on how "queering" has gained academic currency and may also lose its initial disruptive qualities as it becomes an apolitical buzzword in the humanities. Nonetheless—or perhaps especially now—it is vital to provide spaces for critically interrogating music and dance practices through a queer lens, encompassing both normative and queer expressive forms, as well as the positionalities of queer researchers. The theme also invites discussions of Indigenous non-binary genderings and reconceptualisations of local gender constructs informed by global/glocal(ised) LGBTQ+ categories.

6) Alternate Histories

The proposed theme seeks to highlight previously unwritten or erased intellectual histories within music and dance studies, especially as Western methodologies and theories continue to dominate global music-dance scholarship. This theme offers scholars the opportunity to present on topics such as alternative research methodologies (including collaborative or applied approaches); increased diversity in researcher positionalities; varied approaches to fieldwork notation; the histories of local, self-taught, or otherwise marginalised scholars and practitioners (e.g., women, queer, Indigenous); overlooked theoretical insights; and histories of knowledge production and dissemination that extend beyond written texts. It builds on recent pedagogical movements toward global music history, historical turns in Latin American ethno/musicology, and the emergence of traditional music studies in Chile as a distinct ethnomusicological sub-discipline.

7) New Research

In addition to the themes above, we welcome papers on new areas of research not addressed within the conference themes.

Timeline

*~~First notice: April 2025~~

*~~Second notice (themes): July 2025~~

*~~First call for proposals: October 2025~~

*~~Second call for proposals: November 2025~~

*~~Deadline for submission of proposals: 31 December 2025~~

*~~Extended deadlines for submission of proposals: 5 February 2026~~

*~~Notification of acceptances: 31 March 2026~~

Actualizaciones de los Comités de Programa y de Organización Local







por Andrea Chamorro, Mayco A. Santaella, y Jessie Vallejo, Copresidentes del Comité de Programa, y Jacob Rekedal y Ignacio Soto Silva, Copresidentes del Comité de Organización Local

¡Saludos de parte de los Comités de Programa y de Organización Local!

Nos complace invitarles a la 49.ª Conferencia Mundial del ICTMD, que se llevará a cabo del 14 al 20 de enero de 2027en la Universidad Alberto Hurtado, en Santiago de Chile. La Conferencia Mundial del ICTMD continúa siendo un espacio internacional de referencia para la presentación y el intercambio de nuevas investigaciones sobre las tradiciones musicales y dancísticas.

El Comité de Programa ha estado trabajando intensamente para coordinar el programa de la conferencia y atender las numerosas solicitudes y preferencias recibidas por parte de los participantes. Nos complace haber compartido el borrador del programa, que ya ha sido distribuido para su revisión. Si identifican alguna modificación necesaria, les solicitamos que la envíen a través del siguiente formulario de Google. Para ayudarnos a gestionar este proceso de manera eficiente, les pedimos que no envíen correos electrónicos al Comité de Programa para solicitar cambios en el programa; todas las solicitudes deben presentarse a través del formulario.

Revisaremos todas las solicitudes y, cuando corresponda, incorporaremos los cambios solicitados antes de preparar la versión definitiva del programa. Paralelamente, el Comité de Organización Local está trabajando en el desarrollo de las numerosas actividades e iniciativas que tendrán lugar junto con el programa académico. Además de las sesiones de la conferencia, nos complace anunciar que se ofrecerán diversos talleres y presentaciones artísticas durante las pausas del almuerzo y en horario nocturno, brindando oportunidades adicionales para que los participantes se acerquen a las expresiones musicales, dancísticas y artísticas de Chile en particular, así como de América del Sur en su conjunto.

También estamos comprometidos con hacer que la conferencia sea lo más accesible e inclusiva posible. Mediante la implementación de un sistema de tarifas de inscripción diferenciadas, junto con un sistema de membresías del ICTMD con cuotas diferenciadas, hemos logrado que la participación sea considerablemente más económica y accesible para colegas de distintas realidades económicas y regiones del mundo. En algunos casos, estas medidas reducen en más de la mitad los costos habituales de participación en una conferencia internacional. Este enfoque refleja nuestro compromiso con los principios de descolonización, una mayor equidad en el intercambio académico internacional y una respuesta sensible a la situación geopolítica y económica actual. Esperamos que estas medidas permitan que una comunidad más amplia y diversa de miembros del ICTMD y colegas pueda participar en Santiago.

A quienes asistirán a la conferencia en enero, les recordamos que todos los miembros que presenten trabajos, ya sea como autores o coautores, deberán abonar la cuota de inscripción y tener su membresía del ICTMD vigente y al día antes de la conferencia. Para renovar una membresía existente o incorporarse al ICTMD como nuevos miembros, les invitamos a visitar el sitio web del ICTMD.

Los Comités de Programa y de Organización Local están trabajando en estrecha colaboración para preparar una conferencia que reúna la excelencia académica, la práctica artística, el intercambio significativo y las oportunidades de fortalecer los vínculos comunitarios. Esperamos dar la bienvenida a tantos de ustedes como sea posible en Santiago y compartir una 49.ª Conferencia Mundial del ICTMD enriquecedora, estimulante e inolvidable.

Con nuestros mejores deseos.

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Miloska Valero
Katherine Zamora Caro

Temáticas

Las temáticas de la 49ª Conferencia Mundial del ICTMD han sido desarrolladas en inglés y en español, en reconocimiento del gran número de miembros hispanohablantes en América Latina y en consideración con los participantes del país anfitrión y de la región. La conferencia tiene como objetivo adoptar enfoques bilingües en la medida de lo posible, con el fin de fomentar una mayor inclusión y accesibilidad.

1) América Latina y el Caribe en la región y más allá

América Latina y el Caribe abarcan diversas tradiciones musicales y de danza, moldeadas por historias complejas de colonización, resistencia, migración e intercambio cultural. Desde músicas afrocaribeñas y danzas indígenas hasta los géneros mestizos, las formas urbanas contemporáneas y las reinterpretaciones diaspóricas, la música y la danza en esta región funcionan como poderosas herramientas de identidad, memoria, expresión política y transformación social. Esta temática invita a académicos, artistas y practicantes a explorar las músicas y las danzas latinoamericanas y caribeñas tanto dentro de la región como en contextos transnacionales y diaspóricos, incluidos aquellos menos estudiados, como la música asiática en América Latina o la música latinoamericana en Asia. Se alienta la reflexión sobre cómo estas formas expresivas se practican, estudian, preservan, adaptan y cuestionan en paisajes locales, nacionales y globales. ¿Cómo cambian las estéticas regionales y los significados sociales cuando los géneros cruzan fronteras? ¿Qué funciones juegan la migración, el turismo, los medios digitales y los mercados globales en la configuración de estas tradiciones? ¿Cómo participan las instituciones—académicas, gubernamentales, religiosas o comunitarias—en su transmisión y transformación?

2) Medios Digitales

A medida que las tecnologías digitales continúan transformando rápidamente el panorama cultural, las prácticas musicales y dancísticas en todo el mundo experimentan cambios profundos. Desde composiciones y coreografías generadas por inteligencia artificial (IA) hasta competencias de baile en línea, presentaciones en realidad virtual y archivos digitales del patrimonio intangible, la integración de los medios digitales en las artes expresivas está redefiniendo cómo se crean, experimentan, transmiten y teorizan la música y la danza. Esta temática invita a un compromiso crítico con las intersecciones entre música, danza y medios digitales, destacando las implicaciones que estas tecnologías tienen para con la etnomusicología, la etnocoreología y disciplinas afines. ¿Cómo afectan las plataformas digitales a las formas tradicionales de expresión musical como prácticas sociales y artísticas? ¿Cómo pueden gestionarse las formas tradicionales de autoridad y los derechos culturales ante la rápida y masiva difusión digital? ¿Qué preguntas éticas y epistemológicas surgen cuando la IA se convierte en co-creadora o intérprete de música y movimiento? ¿Cómo están permitiendo las herramientas digitales nuevas formas de corporeidad, improvisación y comunidad? ¿Cómo están mejorando e impactando las plataformas digitales en la distribución, promoción y consumo de música? Y, en contraste, ¿cómo podrían contribuir a la homogeneización cultural, el monitoreo, las preocupaciones de sostenibilidad o la mercantilización de formas expresivas? ¿Cómo afectan los recientes procesos de control político, concentración y decadencia de plataformas a las escenas y culturas digitales existentes?

3) Poder, Conflicto y Salud Planetaria

Este tema explora cómo el sonido y el movimiento responden y dan forma a los desafíos interconectados de la lucha política, la crisis ambiental y la resiliencia comunitaria. Desde canciones de protesta e himnos nacionales hasta el activismo climático, la recuperación post-desastre o las críticas a las armas sónicas y la legislación de los cuerpos, las prácticas musicales y dancísticas actúan como poderosas herramientas para expresar resistencia, negociar el poder y reconstruir tanto sociedades como ecosistemas. Invitamos contribuciones que examinen estas prácticas como espacios de confrontación, memoria cultural y compromiso ecológico, destacando cómo se reflejan e influyen en las complejas dinámicas entre los sistemas sociales, culturales y ambientales. Las propuestas pueden abarcar temas como la música en contextos de conflicto y reconciliación, respuestas sonoras a la degradación ecológica y el papel de la performance en la (re)organización de comunidades e imaginarios hacia futuros más justos y sostenibles. Este tema también fomenta formatos de ponencia innovadoras y sesiones interactivas. Aborda la música y la danza como prácticas comunitarias, sociales y culturales, como espacios de disputa y como fuentes para (re)imaginar, (re)conceptualizar y (re)organizar la sociedad.

4) Performatividades Espirituales y Religiosas

Lo espiritual y el mundo de los espíritus a menudo se consideran independientes de la religión, la sociedad y los sistemas de creencias que típicamente reclaman autoridad y generan diversas ortodoxias. La espiritualidad como creencia personal y la religión como organización institucionalizada pueden ser complementarias o conflictivas (por ejemplo, reforma interna o evangelización externa). Las performances asociadas con la ritualidad, la espiritualidad y la religiosidad pueden distinguirse de su performatividad en el sentido butleriano original—por ejemplo, la Missa Solemnis no eclesiástica, los conciertos por suscripción de Bharata Natyam, o el Palo Volador de Papantla como tradición designada por la UNESCO. Esta temática se abre a consideraciones (y reconsideraciones) sobre género, complicidades y resistencias coloniales, cambios entre formas restringidas, privadas y públicas, secularización, turismo, conservación cultural, ecologías y posicionamientos subjetivos, incluido el del propio investigador.

5) Queerizando al Campo

Los enfoques queer, los temas queer y, no menos importante, lxs investigadorxs queer han cobrado impulso en el discurso etnomusicológico contemporáneo. Los estudios de género en etnomusicología actualmente se centran ampliamente en la sexualidad, con la teoría queer como un impulso teórico central. Publicaciones recientes discuten la

posición de lo queer dentro de nuestro campo. Reflexiones críticas sobre cómo "queerizar" han ganado aceptación académica, y por lo tanto podrían también perder su carácter disruptivo original al convertirse en un termino apolítico y "de moda" en las humanidades. No obstante—o precisamente por eso—es vital crear espacios para interrogar críticamente a las prácticas musicales y dancísticas desde una perspectiva queer, abarcando tanto formas expresivas normativas como queer, así como las posiciones de investigadorxs queer. La temática también invita a discutir las identidades de género no binarias indígenas y las reconceptualizaciones de construcciones de género locales informadas por categorías LGBTQ+ globales o glocales.

6) Historias Alternativas

Esta temática propone resaltar historias intelectuales inéditas o borradas dentro de los estudios sobre música y danza, especialmente mientras las metodologías y teorías occidentales continúan dominando la investigación global. Esta temática brinda la oportunidad de presenter temas como metodologías de investigación alternativas (incluyendo enfoques colaborativos o aplicados), mayor diversidad en los posicionamientos academicos; enfoques variados de notación etnográfica; historias de investigadores y practicantes locales, autodidactas o marginados (por ejemplo, mujeres, personas queer, indígenas); perspectivas teóricas ignoradas; e historias de producción y difusión del saber que trasciendan la palabra escrita. Esta temática se apoya en movimientos pedagógicos recientes de cara a una historia global de la música, giros históricos en la etno/musicología latinoamericana y la emergencia de los estudios de música tradicional en Chile como una subdisciplina etnomusicológica distintiva.

7) Nuevas Investigaciones

Serán bienvenidas contribuciones en nuevas áreas de investigación no cubiertas por las temáticas arriba citadas.

Línea de tiempo

~~Primer aviso: abril de 2025~~

~~Segundo aviso (temáticas): julio de 2025~~

~~Primera convocatoria: octubre de 2025~~

~~Segunda convocatoria: noviembre 2025~~

~~Fecha límite (deadline): 31 de diciembre de 2025~~

~~Plazo ampliado para la presentación de propuestas: 5 de febrero de 2026~~

~~Notificaciones de aceptaciones: 31 de marzo de 2026~~

ICTMD Prizes for the Year 2026

collated by Urmimala Sarkar Munsi, Chair, 2026 ICTMD Prize Committee



ICTMD Prizes for the Year 2026

Book Prize for 2026

Best Book:
Sensational Rhythms of the Ineffable: Ethical Affects in Sikh Sabad Kīrtan, by Inderjit Kaur and published by Oxford University Press.

Honourable Mention:
Journeys of Love: Kashmiris, Music, and the Poetics of Migration, by Thomas E. Hodgson and published by the University of Chicago Press

Article Prize for 2026

Best Article:
"Ethnographing TikTok. Toward an E3thnomusicological Approach to a Multimedia Musicking" (2025) by Juan Bermúdez published in *Musicologica Austriaca*.

Honourable Mention:
"Vietnamese Aspirational Values, Morality, and Virtues Evident in the Continuing Tradition of Chèo Folk Opera" (2026) by David R. Crowden, Đỗ Kiên Cường, Andrew D. Creek, Nguyễn Ngọc Linh (Karin Iwashiro), and Kim Yu Hyeon for their co-written article published in *Asian Music*.

Film Prize for 2026

Best Film:
We Are Not Afraid: Music and Resistance in Apartheid Prisons, Janie Cole and Shameela Seedat, dirs.

Honourable Mention: *Nggayuh Indhang: Religious Syncretism, Music and Trance in the Ébég of Banyumas, Central Java*, Daniele Zappatore, dir.

Note from Urmimala Sarkar Munsi

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate all winners and also the people who have received Honourable Mentions. It has been an exciting experience to organise the processes of selection for the three categories of ICTMD prizes for the year 2026. Working with the subcommittees has been stimulating, and I would like to thank the ICTMD for giving me the opportunity to serve as Chair of the 2025 ICTMD Prize Committee.

I would like to thank all the Prize Subcommittees and their Chairs, Sean Williams (Chair, Book Prize Subcommittee), Marko Kölbl (Chair, Article Prize Subcommittee), and Nicola Scaldaferri, (Chair, Film Prize Subcommittee) for their reports, which are published below. The committees have dedicated precious time and effort for the evaluation of all submissions, which have grown substantially in number over the years. The process required hard work and dedicated time from all of us, but it was immensely pleasurable and smooth because of the great effort put in by all the members. The submissions were evaluated with the greatest of care and sensitivity, keeping in mind the ICTMD's mission: "to promote research, documentation, safeguarding, and sustainability of music, dance, and related performing arts, taking into account the diversity of cultural practices, past and present, and scholarly traditions worldwide." We waited until all the subcommittees submitted their unanimous decisions before compiling and announcing the results. These results will be published on the ICTMD Website.

Report by Sean Williams, 2026 ICTMD Book Prize Subcommittee Chair

The ICTMD Book Prize Subcommittee—consisting of Frank Gunderson, Shayna Silverstein, and Michael Iyanaga, and myself as the Chair—is pleased to award the 2026 prize to Inderjit Kaur for her book, *Sensational Rhythms of the Ineffable: Ethical Affects in Sikh Sabad Kīrtan*, published by Oxford University Press. This remarkable work foregrounds the centrality of physical and spiritual embodiment in the practice of Sikh worship. She presents rhythms of music in collaboration with rhythms of the body rather than a "force acting unilaterally on it." Kaur's interdisciplinarity—drawing on phenomenology, metaphysics, ethics, and religious studies—broadens the reach of this book and engages the ideas of our colleagues in related fields. Her use of Sikh epistemology to frame a musicological approach expands the boundary of the field in exciting and inventive ways. We offer our warmest congratulations to Inderjit Kaur, and to the people with whom she works.

The Book Prize Committee is also delighted to award an Honourable Mention to Thomas E. Hodgson, for his book, *Journeys of Love: Kashmiris, Music, and the Poetics of Migration*, published by the University of Chicago Press. Focusing on the experiences of the Kashmiri people from the Mirpur district who relocated to England, Hodgson elegantly traces the many ways in which a nineteenth-century collection of Sufi poetry serves as a uniting force for members of the diasporic community and at home in its explorations of faith, home, loyalty, and community connection across borders and through migrations. The members of the committee congratulate Thomas E. Hodgson, together with the Kashmiri communities with whom he works. Our decisions were unanimous and immediate because the winners were so clear. My gratitude goes out to members of this year's Book Prize Subcommittee.

Report by Marko Kölbl, 2026 ICTMD Article Prize Subcommittee Chair

The committee for this year's ICTMD Article Prize comprised Marko Kölbl, Brett Pyper and last year's prize winner Jessie M. Vallejio. Committee members carried out a thorough evaluation of a considerable number of ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological articles published between autumn 2024 and spring 2026 and selected two articles for recognition. Assessment criteria include the originality of contribution; theoretical and methodological rigour; argumentation and structure; diversity, decentring, and inclusion; engagement with literature; scholarly competence and vision; as well as impact and relevance.

The committee 2026 awards Juan Bermúdez the ICTMD Article Prize 2026 for his text "Ethnographing TikTok: Towards an E3thnomusicological Approach to Multimedia Musicking," which was published in the journal *Musicologica Austriaca* in 2025. This article is a very timely piece that reflects on the meaning of ethnographic work in the era of digital musical practices, while re-evaluating major streams of ethnomusicological theory in relation to TikTok. Juan Bermúdez combines convincing theorising with personal storytelling and references to original fieldwork. The text suggests new understandings of methodological possibilities within our discipline and establishes discourses on online spaces and social media as field sites. Given the emergence of smartphone apps in recent decades as spaces for music and dance practice, as well as spaces for ethnographic inquiry, this text is indeed directional and trend-setting.

The committee has also given an honourable mention to the article "Vietnamese Aspirational Values, Morality, and Virtues Evident in the Continuing Tradition of *Chèo* Folk Opera," which was written collaboratively by David R. Crowden, Đỗ Kiên Cường, Andrew D. Creek, Nguyễn Ngọc Linh (Karin Iwashiro), and Kim Yu Hyeon, and published in the journal *Asian Music* in 2026. This article provides insights into the current practices of *Chèo* folk opera in Vietnam while correcting Eurocentric approaches in Anglophone ethnomusicology, re-centring knowledge in communities of practice, and decolonising the very terms for research. This is achieved through a collaborative setup between authors with various backgrounds, including community members, researchers, students and teachers. The article prize committee thus regards this collaborative piece as relevant to ICTMD's attempts to decolonise ethnomusicological research practices like ethnographic fieldwork and publishing. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Prize Committee and the members of the Article Subcommittee for making a smooth process possible.

Report by Nicola Scaldaferri, 2026 ICTMD Film Prize Subcommittee Chair

As the ICTMD Film Prize Subcommittee for the year 2026 we have enjoyed working together. Our Subcommittee consisted of Noor Al Qassim, Noriko Kanemitsu, George Murer, Nalini Souza, and me, Nicola Scaldaferri. It was a pleasure to work as the Chair of this Subcommittee.

The Prize for the best Documentary Film or Video for the year 2026 goes to Janie Cole and Shameela Seedat, for *We Are Not Afraid: Music and Resistance in Apartheid Prisons*. The film explores the critical importance of music as a form of resistance among political prisoners held in South African prisons during the apartheid era over a period of three decades. It successfully integrates multiple musical traditions while situating them within broader social, political, historical, and cultural contexts. The realities of prison

life emerge clearly, as does music's power as a source of vitality and resistance.

The Honourable Mention goes to Daniele Zappatore, for *Nggayuh Indhang: Religious Syncretism, Music and Trance in the Ébég of Banyumas, Central Java*. This collaborative documentary explores the *ébég*, a hobby-horse trance dance tradition from Banyumas, Central Java, which combines music, dance, and spirit possession in staged dramatic performances. Beautifully executed and rich in ethnographic detail, the documentary offers a comprehensive exploration of the interconnected dimensions of music, dance, spirituality, and ritual practice.

REPORTS FROM ICTMD NATIONAL AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

CHILE

by Ana Maria Díaz Pinto, Chair of the National Committee



In 2026, the ICTMD National Committee for Chile experienced significant developments. The community is preparing to host the 49th ICTMD World Conference in Santiago in January 2027, and member engagement has increased both nationally and regionally. This report outlines the principal activities of recent months and articulates key objectives for the coming years.

A New National Committee

In 2026, ICTMD Chile conducted elections to renew the committee's leadership. The new National Committee comprises Ana María Díaz Pinto (Chair), José Velásquez Arce (Vice-Chair), and Javier Silva-Zurita (Secretary). We express our sincere appreciation to the previous committee, chaired by Ignacio Soto-Silva, for their dedicated service. Their efforts enhanced the visibility of Chilean ethnomusicology within the Council and established the groundwork for hosting the World Conference. The current committee is committed to advancing and expanding upon this legacy.

Our 2026 and the Future

A major event in 2026 was the ICTMD Pre-Conference Symposium in June, "Indigenous Perspectives and Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries: Music, Education and Cultural Astronomy." The symposium convened scholars, educators, and practitioners to examine Indigenous knowledge and the intersections of music research, education, and cultural astronomy. In addition to its academic program, the symposium provided ICTMD boards and the Chilean World Conference organising committee with a forum for strategic planning and dialogue. These interactions were crucial for coordinating upcoming tasks and reinforcing connections between the local community and the Council's international bodies.

The primary challenge facing national members is organising the 49th ICTMD World Conference, scheduled for 14–20 January 2027 at Universidad Alberto Hurtado in Santiago. This event represents a significant milestone for both Chile and Latin America. A dedicated team is working diligently to ensure its success. Comprehensive information is available at the official website.



ICTMD Pre-Conference Symposium, "Indigenous Perspectives and Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries: Music, Education and Cultural Astronomy." (left to right): Geoff Baker, Marcia Ostashewski, Christian Spencer, and Jacob Rekedal.

The National Committee extends its sincere gratitude to all individuals contributing to the organisation of the conference:

Programme Committee: co-chaired by Andrea Chamorro, Jessie M. Vallejo, and Mayco A. Santaella, together with its members from around the world.

Local Organising Committee: co-chaired by Jacob Rekedal and Ignacio Soto-Silva, with Katherine Zamora Caro, Javier Silva-Zurita, Leonardo Díaz-Collao, Samuel Araújo, Silvia Citro, Juan Carlos Poveda, Daniela Fugellie, Ariel Reyes, Natalia Bieletto, Christian Spencer, Franco Daponte, Alberto Díaz, Lina Barrientos, and Rosario Mena.

As a national committee, we are also supporting the "II Simposio Musicología ULagos 2026: The Role of Communities in Musical Research and Creation," held 28–29 October 2026 at Universidad de Los Lagos in southern Chile. The symposium will bring together researchers, composers, performers, and community members to discuss how local actors take part in musical research and creation. Supporting initiatives outside the capital is a priority for us, because it helps spread academic activity beyond Santiago and recognizes the vibrant musical life of the regions.

As a new pre-conference initiative for January 2027, members Leonardo Díaz-Collao and Ana María Díaz Pinto are organising a round table and discussions with Latin American ethnomusicologists and students at the Music Institute of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (IMUC). These sessions will foster open dialogue between established scholars and emerging students. Participants discussed research, exchanged experiences, and explored the diverse trajectories of ethnomusicology in Latin America. The positive response underscores the need for additional forums of this nature.

Participation at ICTMD Regional Symposium for Latin America and the Caribbean

Chilean members played a significant role at the ICTMD LAT-CAR, **"Imaginación política, transformaciones y futuro: música y danza en América Latina y el Caribe,"** [Political imagination, transformations, and the futre: music and dance in Latin America and the Caribbean] held from 7 to 11 September 2026 at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in Lima. Notably, Laura Jordán (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso) delivered the opening keynote, "Casete, pasado presente," which provided a historical analysis of cassette cultures in Chile during the Popular Unity government and the military dictatorship. Additional Chilean members presented their research as well:

1) Andrea Chamorro Pérez (Universidad de Tarapacá), "Danzar, escuchar, reparar: pasos a una ecología de la cura."

2) Ignacio Soto-Silva (Universidad de Los Lagos), "Escenas musicales autogestionadas: circulación, mediación y territorialidad en la música popular del sur de Chile."

3) Ana María Díaz Pinto (University of California, Davis), with Juan Diego Díaz, "'Quítate tú pa' ponerme yo': Relaciones entre Clave Riddim, Salsa y Reggaetón Puertorriqueño."

Andrea Chamorro Pérez and Ignacio Soto-Silva also served as moderators for panels and round tables during the symposium.

Looking Ahead

The committee anticipates that the World Conference will serve as more than a memorable event in January 2027. After our global meeting, several initiatives are planned for the coming years: 1) organising workshop sessions where members can share ongoing research and methods; 2) strengthening our collaboration with the Chilean Musicology Society (Sociedad Chilena de Musicología); 3) keeping a constant presence at national, regional, and global conferences in our discipline.

The committee cordially invites all Council members to participate in the World Conference in Santiago in January 2027. We look forward to welcoming our entire ICTMD community to Chile.

GERMANY

by Dorit Klebe, Outgoing President of German National Committee



Report on the General Meeting and Annual Meeting of the National Committee of ICTMD-Germany, 19–20 June 2026, in Berlin

The general assembly and annual meeting of the ICTMD National Committee for Germany took place 19–20 June 2026 at the Institute for Musicology at the Humboldt University in Berlin, which was kindly available to host it. We would like to thank very warmly our member Tiago de Oliveira Pinto and Sebastian Klotz.

The conference was opened by the Executive Board of ICTMD Germany—Dorit Klebe, Edda Brandes, and Klaus Näumann—and by Stefanie Alisch for the Institute of Musicology at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Everyone present was warmly welcomed. The

main focus of the Berlin conference was – in addition to free contributions – the subject of "urban ethnomusicology," a branch of ethnomusicology. This became, on the basis of ethnological studies, increasingly of interest to ethnomusicologists in urban areas from the 1970s onwards, and was initially reflected in a variety of ways by pioneers such as Bruno Nettl and Adeleida Reyes. Ethnomusicological aspects in various urban spaces include soundscapes and musical practices, as well as musical behavior and their meanings. Furthermore, diversity and minority research are focal points in large urban areas. The example of Berlin shows how special field research developed on communities from the following supra-regional areas—influences and interactions from ethnic groups and cultures in the Balkans and the Mediterranean, as well as Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. There are also numerous smaller ethnic groups, caused by various global conflicts and immigration movements.

The symposium included a keynote and three sections, with a total of seven lectures. Ethnomusicologists came from Austria, Spain, Türkiye, Iran, Venezuela, and Germany. In addition to the lectures held in German, two were presented in English. In his keynote, Bernhard Bleibinger (Barcelona) first discussed the prehistory of urban ethnomusicology, then focused on the work of Bruno Nettl and Adeleida Reyes. He illuminated the idea of living heritage and showed developments in cities and rural sites influencing each other, from Germany and South Africa.

The keynote was followed by a section with three contributions on research in countries/cities in the Middle East, Africa, and Türkiye, that have connections with the German diaspora. In the first article, Sean Prieske (Cologne) presented a historically oriented approach to the role of music and cultural connections between Germany and Egypt from 1945–2000, also using archival sources for the first time. He also showed how cultural institutes (e.i. the Goethe Institute) and embassies functioned as urban centres of "music diplomacy" between Germany (FRG and GDR) and Egypt. Mitra Behpoori (Weimar) then examined the *radif* of Persian art music—recognised as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO since 2009—how it is constituted, transformed, and re-located in the context of urban diaspora spaces. For this purpose, she demonstrated corresponding microtone intervals in a live performance on her string instrument, the *tar*, in various improvisation passages, each with a different intonation. Behpoori noted "I will never play what you just heard the same way again." Third in this section, Alper Can Çelik (Weimar), presented his current investigations on the transcultural metamorphosis of the *Aşık Ozan* tradition within the Turkish diaspora in Germany, with a focus on urban spaces. He examined the orientation of the post-diaspora generation and hybrid practices for a redefinition of the intangible cultural heritage of "urban" culture within the framework of UNESCO with terms such as dynamic and transcultural.

The second section was opened by Matthias Lewy (Weimar) who thematised the "museum as an urban sound space." He spoke about the concept of "*l'instauration*" (the act of producing) developed by Étienne Souriau and in this context he emphasised the importance of ethical protocols regarding the curative power of interpretation and placing them in Indigenous hands. He illuminated his remarks with numerous audiovisual examples. Jörgen Torp (Hamburg) dealt with interconnected cities and networked spaces in both historical and comparative scientific studies. The first day ended with a very impressive concert of traditional Persian music in various genres, e.g. *reng*.



Musicians performing at the Exploratorium Berlin, Berlin-Kreuzberg. In the photo there are two percussion instruments, the dombak *and* bendir, *and two string instruments, the* kamancheh *and* oud, *listed left to right. Photo by Dorit Klebe.*

On the morning of 20 June 2026, the general meeting was opened by Dorit Klebe. The first item on the agenda was the Presidium Report. The Executive Board meeting had taken place online on 23 February 2026. The second item on the agenda was the election of the Presidium. Matthias Lewy was appointed chair, Mitra Behpoori and Sean Prieske were elected as first and second Vice-Chairs. On the third agenda item,

Publications, Näumann reported on a publication in progress on the topic of "Music Cultures in Focus." Prieske mentioned the publication of the ICTMD-DE conference in Weimar 2023, which is currently in progress. Klebe (co-editor and author) presented the publication *Autoritätsbildungen in der Musik* (Authority formations in music) (2024), the result of the ICTM Joint Symposium 2016 in Lucerne. Klebe pointed to three publications by the Study Group Mediterranean Music Studies (F. Fabbri, St. Aubinet, D. Klebe) on the Internet, resulting from a conference in Marseille in 2023. There were no motions for the fourth agenda item.

In the fifth agenda item, Pinto recalled the 2027 World Conference in Chile. Based on the experiences with "joint conferences," a discussion arose about the organisation of future meetings of the National Committee. Pinto and Bleibinger emphasised the need for networking among young researchers from the very beginning. The minutes of the general meeting by Edda Brandes and Dorit Klebe were sent to the members on 31 August 2026.

The third section began with a contribution by Chae-Lin Kim (Vienna), who pointed to a very interesting perspective on a primarily visual art form: sign language. This topic has so far only been marginally addressed in the German ICTMD. Chae-Lin Kim described the sign choir founded in Berlin in 1999, of which she has been a member since 2017. Because many deaf migrants live in Berlin, this fit nicely into the context of urban ethnomusicology. She described her work from manual and non-manual aspects and how music notes don't play a role, because of a different grammar. Katrin Lengwinat (Venezuela) described her experiences with the project from Venezuela to produce a Latin American repertoire suitable for promoting transnational and intergenerational ties. The focus was on very beautiful audiovisual recordings.

This conference was the last conference of the outgoing president, who is ending her task after eighteen years. For this work, as well as many other tasks, she was supported by the vice presidents Edda Brandes, Gisa Jänichen, and Ulrich Morgenstern and, from 2014, Edda Brandes and Klaus Näumann. The latter two also resigned from office. Klebe owes them a lot of thanks and patient cooperation. Three joint symposia (2016 in Lucerne, 2020 in Halle, 2024 in Nuremberg) also required a larger team.

Of the twelve annual conferences, contributions from seven conferences have been published so far; three of them are still in progress. From the three joint symposia, one edition of the Lucerne Conference has been published in Switzerland. The organisation of the annual conferences and joint symposia resulted in collaboration with colleagues from many universities/music colleges, editors, and peer reviewers. My big thanks go out to all of them!

My sincerest words of thanks go to the Board of the ICTMD, the co-operation with Svanibor Pettan, Ursula Hemetek, Carlos Yoder, Salwa el-Shawan, Tan Sooi Beng; the Editorial Board and the Chairs of the ICTMD-Study Groups, whose symposia I have attended and will continue to attend.

Let us now warmly welcome our newly elected Executive Board of ICTMD Germany:



(Left to right) Matthias Lewy, President, Mitra Behpoori, Vice-President cand., and Sean Prieske, Vice President Junior. Photo by Edda Brandes.

We wish you a good start to your new tasks. The next annual meeting is already being planned. It is scheduled for autumn 2027 in Regensburg, at the Sudeten German Music Institute, which works with the University of Regensburg and its Institute for Musicology.

With very kind regards.

IRELAND

by Susan Motherway, Chair ICTMD Ireland



ICTMD Ireland's twentieth anniversary year brought reflection on the national committee's history alongside collaborations in research, performance, and archiving. The anniversary programme began in September 2025 with *Irish Harping: Legacy and Living Traditions*, organised with Harp Ireland and the University of Galway. Researchers and practitioners explored harping's history, pedagogy, communities, and collections through papers, an exhibition, and performances.

On 21 November, ICTMD Ireland marked twenty years with *Tradition and Transformation* at Munster Technological University in Cork. Thérèse Smith reflected on the establishment of the first Irish committee; Catherine Foley traced the development of ethnochoreology in Ireland; and Ann-Marie Hanlon and Anna Falkenau examined the organisation's changing activities. Other sessions addressed popular music, intercultural identities, Javanese gamelan, sustainability and access to Irish-language song collections. The programme included launches of *Essays on Music, Politics and Resistance: Sounding Empowerment*, edited by Adrian Scahill and Helen Lawlor, and Joanne Cusack's *Women in Irish Traditional Music*. Helen Phelan and pianist Cormac McCarthy paid tribute to Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin.

In his keynote, Huib Schippers traced the growth of applied ethnomusicology, drawing on examples in cultural sustainability and post-disaster settings to consider its ethical and practical demands. A roundtable on sustaining the traditional arts, chaired by Adrian Scahill, brought Jessica Cawley, Deirdre Moynihan, Carthach Ó Nuainain and Toner Quinn into discussion. It recognised the strength of traditional arts education in Ireland while considering opportunities for cultural exchange, particularly in rural communities, and the relationship between research, arts organisations and policy.

ICTMD Ireland continued its partnership with the Society for Musicology in Ireland through their joint postgraduate conference at MTU Cork School of Music on 14–15 January 2026. It featured a keynote by Joanne Cusack, a careers forum and presentations by emerging researchers.



Cormac McCarthy Interpreting the work of Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin. Photo by Joanne Cusack.

The committee's twenty-first annual conference, Broadcasting Music and Dance, took place at RTÉ's Donnybrook campus on 17–18 April. Held as RTÉ marked one hundred years of public service broadcasting in Ireland, it examined broadcasting's role in shaping musical and dance traditions and the archives through which their histories can be studied. Papers addressed audiences, identity and music's circulation across changing media. Christina Baade's keynote asked whose work and experiences become visible in broadcasting archives and how researchers might tell more inclusive histories from them. Delegates also toured RTÉ's Donnybrook campus. A special recording of RTÉ Radio 1's *The Rolling Wave*, presented by Aoife Nic Cormaic, featured performances and interviews with conference participants and brought the event to a wider audience.

In June, ICTMD Ireland published *Ethnomusicology Ireland* 11, a special issue on "Broadcasting Music and Dance" edited by Rebecca Draisey-Collishaw and Helen Gubbins. Its articles and reviews extend the conference theme across Irish and international settings, from early radio and folk theatre to broadcasting archives and new media.



Panel members at an RTÉ broadcasting event. Photo by Helen Gubbins.

Looking ahead, ICTMD Ireland plans to jointly host both the postgraduate and annual conference with the Society for Musicology in Ireland in January and June 2027 respectively and to support the ICTMD Study Group on Ethnochoreology in June 2028. Both collaborations will strengthen connections between researchers and practitioners in Ireland and the wider ICTMD community.

ITALY

by Fulvia Caruso, Chair of Italian National Committee



CarpitellaCentouno: A Living Legacy. *Report on the Conference in Prato (30 September – 2 October 2025)*

The Prato Campus of the University of Florence was the vibrant epicentre of Italian ethnomusicology from 30 September to 2 October 2025, hosting the conference "CarpitellaCentouno: Ethnography, Musicology, Audiovisual Anthropology."

Marking one hundred and one years since the birth of Diego Carpitella (1924–1990), a pioneering figure and one of the founding fathers of ethnomusicology in Italy, this initiative brought together forty-five speakers for three intense days of reflection, academic dialogue, and artistic performances. Almost all the Italian ethnomusicologists in Italy were in attendance; certainly, all the ones holding permanent positions in the universities were present.

Organised by the University of Florence within the framework of the PRIN PNRR 2022 project "ACTAR–Active Archives and Contemporary Media: Repatriation, Participation, Valorization of Sound Heritage and Community Memories," the event aimed not only to celebrate the scholar's multifaceted legacy, but also to discuss the most up-to-date perspectives in Italian ethnomusicological research. The success of the conference was ensured by the collaboration with the Tempo Reale research centre, which assisted with the musical programme, and the PIN Foundation, which provided logistical support.

The scientific programme was divided into eight sessions that deeply explored the broad spectrum of Capitella's interests and their resonances in contemporary research, gathering the forty-five speakers into moments of close, multidisciplinary discussion. Four of these sessions were entirely dedicated to presenting accounts of what has been accomplished so far by the Research Units (RU) of the ACTAR PRIN project, highlighting the topicality of Capitella's thought as a methodological and theoretical framework.

The first day combined direct memory with the presentation of fieldwork.

The session "To Remember: Histories of Diego," chaired by Francesco Giannattasio (Sapienza University of Rome), focused on direct experiences and specific contributions by Carpitella; Sergio Bonanzinga (University of Palermo) offered a "Return to Pantelleria," analysing the CNSMP 110 collection (1967), unveiling his fieldwork methodologies; Marco Lutzu (University of Cagliari) illuminated Capitella's figure as an audiovisual ethnomusicologist through the analysis of the documentary film *Is Launeddas* (1982), emphasising his pioneering sensitivity to the use of cinema; Nicola Scaldaferri and Shan Du (University of Milan "Statale") discussed research on traditional Arbëreshë music, tracing a line of continuity between Capitella's studies and subsequent investigations; Giovanni Vacca (University of Roma 3) explored the scholar's activity and influence in the Campania region with the presentation "Carpitella in Naples".

The other session of the day was devoted to the RU Florence of the ACTAR project, coordinated by Maurizio Agamennone (University of Florence). Presentations by Agamennone, Giulia Sarno, Daniele

Palma, Pino Gala, Costantino Vecchi, Antonella Moriani, Elisa Boffa, and Roberto Kenofsky Paris illustrated the work of reactivating the sound archive created by Carpitella during his fieldwork in the Arezzo province between 1965 and 1967. The report highlighted how the ACTAR approach, aimed at making archives not just memory repositories but active tools for participation and valorisation (exemplified in the concept of "active archives"), perfectly aligns with Capitella's focus on the social, communicative dimension aspects of fieldwork.

The second day was crucial for discussing and rethinking the theoretical nodes inherited from Carpitella, interweaving them with the reports from the ACTAR research units.

In the opening session, the University of Roma "Tor Vergata" Research Unit—along with Serena Facci, Giuseppe Giordano, Federica Mucci, Giuseppina Colicci, Alessandro Cosentino, Vanna Viola Crupi, Alberto Annarilli, Maria Costanza Solazzo, and Simone Tagliaferro—presented the work carried out on the projects "Lazio devozione" and "Musiche migranti" within the LADEM archive.

The report illustrated the challenges and methodologies adopted for archiving and disseminating music in contexts of migration and contemporary devotion. The focus on "migrant music" represented an updating of Capitella's open vision, who already in the 1960s and 1970s sensed the importance of studying ongoing cultural transformations and the music of minorities.

Session 2.2, "To Discuss, Evaluate, end Rethink about Popular Music," chaired by Giorgio Adamo (University of Roma "Tor Vergata"), addressed the complex and elusive concept of popular culture in an age of globalisation. Contributions by Ignazio Macchiarella, Jacopo Tomatis, Guido Raschieri, and Girolamo Garofalo ranged from a re-reading of the relationship between "learned" and "popular" in Capitella's work to its new expressions in contemporary musical contexts.

In the session 2.3, the ACTAR RU of Pavia University in Cremona (comprised of Fulvia Caruso, Thea Tiramani, and Maria Giuliana Rizzuto) highlighted the work of digitisation and accessibility of archive material and the commitment to the participatory repatriation of results to the communities, following Capitella's ethical ideal of moving beyond mere documentation toward active involvement.

The closing session of the day "To Observe, Listen and Ask on Fieldwork" chaired by Giancarlo Palombini (University of Perugia) featured four interventions which explored Capitella's legacy in the field of Audiovisual Anthropology (Giovanni Cestino), multi-sited fieldwork (Silvia Bruni), and new fieldworks in Italy (Ilaria Meloni) and in Türkiye (Giovanni De Zorzi)

The second of October, the concluding day, was opened by the Sapienza University of Rome ACTAR RU led by Giovanni Giuriati, Grazia Tuzi, Gianluca Chelini, Francesca Billeri, Vathanak Sok. The core of the intervention was "The Master's Archives: Life Paths, Shared Memories, Repatriation" and illustrated the process of digitisation and valorisation of two personal archives in Italy and Cambodia.

The following session was devoted to preservation, restitution, and interpretation of musical heritage. Chaired by Pier Giuseppe Arcangeli (Conservatorio di musica of Terni), Ilario Meandri, Giulia Ferdeghini, Alessandro Bratus, and Vincenzo Caporaletti discussed new models for archiving, analysing, and valorising musics through technology,

The last session, chaired by Maurizio Agamennone, gave space to accounts about how to mediate, confront, and narrate intercultural practices from Ofer Gazit, Lorenzo Chiarofonte, and Nico Staiti: from the audiovisual migrations of Mariano Gil, to the recomposition of *Orfeo* by Monteverdi, and the online didactic tools created by the Istituto di Musiche Comparate of the Cini Foundation.

A distinctive element of the conference was the rich evening program, curated with the Tempo Reale research centre, which made Carpitella's legacy not only a subject of study but also a living and shared listening experience. The musical programme took place at the Teatro Francesco Nuti of the Manifatture Digitali Cinema.

The first evening offered a double concert focused on the recovery and re-elaboration of Carpitella's archive recordings:

- "Sopra i tetti di Firenze: per Caterina" (Above the Roofs of Florence: for Caterina): a performance by Alessandra Giachetti (sound design and sound direction, ACTAR / Tempo Reale commission), which re-elaborated sound materials related to the territory and the acoustic imagination dear to Carpitella.
- Maurizio Geri (voice and guitar) and Riccardo Tesi (diatonic accordion), two leading figures in Italian popular and singer-songwriter music, performed a tribute that skillfully merged the echo of the past with contemporary sensibility.

The second evening was dedicated to contemporaneity and migratory flows, a highly relevant theme that Carpitella, albeit in different times, had already intercepted with his open vision of the world. It featured:

- "Zighirinetta!" a sound creation by Francesco Vogli (sound design and sound direction, ACTAR / Tempo Reale commission), which explored the theme of migrant music and the redefinition of repertoires in new social and geographical contexts.
- "A veglia con i 'Suonatori della Leggera', dalla Valdisieve" (Keeping vigil with 'The musicians of the Leggera', from Valdisieve), a popular music performance with Ilaria Danti, Pietro Gheri, Silvia Falugiani, Marco Magistrali, Filippo Marranci, Fabio Soldati, and Cecilia Valentini. The performance brought back to life the sense of the "veglia" (vigil) and the oral transmission of music, a fundamental element in Carpitella's research.

A moment of great impact and the closing of the first day was the "Contrasto in ottava rima" (Contrast in octaves), one of the most typical and ancient forms of oral Tuscan poetry. The performance by David Riondino and Fabrizio Ganugi embodied the encounter between erudition and living popular culture, an intersection that Carpitella always sought to valorise. It was a moving experience of continuity with local traditions.

The "CarpitellaCentouno" conference achieved the goal of celebrating Diego Capitella's legacy while making it fertile for the future. It clearly demonstrated how the core principles of Capitella's thought—ethnographic rigor, awareness of the audiovisual medium, and the ethical importance of archiving—are the foundation upon which the Italian ethnomusicology is based.

ACTAR itself is configured as the natural methodological heir to Carpitella, committed to transforming archives from mere repositories into dynamic tools for repatriation and valorisation, a process that Carpitella had anticipated with his vision of ethnomusicology serving communities and not just the Academy.

The success of the conference testifies to the vitality of studies on sound cultures in Italy and consolidates the Prato Campus as a centre of excellence for the debate on ethnography, musicology, and audiovisual anthropology.

KAZAKHSTAN

by Zakiya Sapenova, Liaison Officer for Kazakhstan



Today, Kazakh musicology is truly developing at the intersection of multiple contexts.

Firstly, there are the geographic and geopolitical contexts, which include research within the Central Asian region, Kazakhstan's deep historical ties to the Russian academic school system, and the study of the musical culture of the Kazakhs in China and cross-border interactions. Then there is the research into Turkic influences on Kazakh linguistic and cultural roots, which studies the shared Turkic musical stratum, epic traditions, and instrumentation (e.g., *kobyz*, *dombra*, *sybyzgy*, *shankobyz*, and their counterparts) that emerge through cooperation with countries in the Turkic world. Additionally, there are other cross-cultural dynamics, which examine Kazakh music as part of the oral professional music traditions of the East (e.g., *maqām* traditions, spiritual chants, and Sufi *dhikr*). Finally, there are the international-institutional trends, which encourage the cataloging and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage under UNESCO auspices, and participation in the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance (ICTMD) study groups.

In practice, both the preservation and development of traditional Kazakh musical culture are the main

concerns for contemporary Kazakh musicologists. For example, Saida Elemanova of the Islamic World Educational , Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) addresses the significant issue of preserving Kazakh epic traditions within the work of the Karmakshy *zhyrau*—or the Karmakshy *zhyrau* tradition—which refers to a famous school of traditional Kazakh epic poetry, storytelling, and singing rooted in the Karmakshy District of the Kyzylorda Region, in southern Kazakhstan. The preservation of the Kazakh *kyui* phenomenon (a traditional instrumental solo musical composition performed on national instruments, such as the two-stringed *dombyra*) is a subject of great interest to researchers, particularly in the papers of Saule Utegalieva.

Over the past two years, Kazakh musicologists have expanded the scope of their research activities in several directions. Notably, they participated in two research group symposia: one was the 4th Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Global History of Music and Dance, held 17–22 September 2025 at the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, Germany; the second was the 10th Symposium of the Study Group Music and Dance in the Turkic World, which was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 18–22 May 2026.

In short, the significance and role of Kazakh music within Turkic studies generates considerable scholarly interest, with a substantial number of studies dedicated to different figures including: Korkyt-Ata, the legendary Turkic poet, musician, and philosopher who occupies a central place at the intersection of history, mythology, and music in the cultural memory of Turkic peoples; al Farabi, a renowned early Islamic philosopher, logician, and scientist known in the medieval Islamic world as the "Second Master," after Aristotle; or Bukhar Zhyrau, a famous 18th-century Kazakh poet at the court of the Middle Horde. Another area of focus is the musical and cultural connections within the Central Asian countries. A third area of research interest concerns the scholarly and pedagogical contributions of prominent Kazakh musicologists, such as Akhmet Zhubanov, Yevgeny Brusilovsky, Bolat Sarybaev, Bolat Karakulov, Bazaraly Muptekeyev, and Fatima Balgaeva. Equally relevant are topics regarding the implementation of information and communication technologies, such as the use of computers to analyse the sounds of musical instruments, or the integration of artificial intelligence, as seen in the work of Saule Utegalieva. The study and preservation of archival audio recordings related to Kazakh musical traditions form the research focus of the renowned musicologist Fatima Nurlybayeva. Additionally, various aspects of intercultural connections between Eastern and Western countries are also topics of research. These include the work of: Saule Utegalieva, who examines the interactions between Kazakh and Russian musical traditions; Zakiya Sapenove, who examines three different kinds of intercultural communications, including Kazakh music viewed of French orientalism, potentials for Kazakh-Turkmen links, and Kazakh-Kyrgyz related traditions; and Bayan Igilik, who studies Kazakh-Chinese relations. This current era of Kazakh musical scholarship can be characterised as fruitful, charting new paths in scientific research.

KYRGYZSTAN

by Kanykei Mukhtarova, Liaison Officer for Kyrgyzstan



Over the past three years (2023–2026), the cultural landscape of Kyrgyzstan has undergone significant changes with the state taking a more active role in supporting arts and culture. The emergence of new venues and festivals has strengthened cultural institutions, Kyrgyz music and cultural heritage have gained broader international recognition, and nomadic cultural identity is being reimagined through the lens of contemporary musical practice.

Rukh Sanat World Festival of Traditional Music (August 2025)

The Rukh Sanat World Festival of Traditional Music was held on 1–3 August 2025 at the Rukh Ordo complex in Cholpon-Ata, with performers and researchers from many countries taking part. It combined an international competition for traditional music performers, a scientific congress, and a fair of cultural practices. The congress addressed the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, the digitisation of traditional music, and the role of cultural minorities.

World Nomad Games (August 2026)

Kyrgyzstan hosted the sixth World Nomad Games in the summer of 2026. The games opened in Bishkek on the 35th anniversary of Kyrgyzstan's independence. Alongside the sports and a rich cultural programme, the games included the "Nomadic Heritage" International Festival of Traditional Music and the International Scholarly Conference "Nomadic Civilizations: Heritage, Paradigms and Prospects." The conference was held on 3–4 September 2026 at the Kurmanjan Datka Centre of Nomadic Civilization (Ornok, Issyk-Kul) and the Chyngyz Aitmatov Rukh Ordo Centre (Cholpon-Ata). One of its sections, "World Cultural Heritage of Nomadic Peoples: Safeguarding, Research and Development," brought together scholars of traditional music and heritage, including ICTMD members. Reflections on the conference by Razia Sultanova and Svanibor Pettan are presented in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

Cultural Infrastructure and State Support

Recent years have seen a marked expansion of the state's investment in the material infrastructure of cultural life. After decades in which no support existed that was comparable with the former Soviet system of centralised cultural subsidy, cultural organisations are now benefiting from a substantial renewal of their facilities and resources. New theatres, arenas and other cultural buildings have been constructed, and musical instruments have been supplied to state institutions and music schools.

The Manas Theatre, which opened in 2024, supports epic reciters, *manaschi*, and traditional *akyns*, and provides these living traditions with a permanent institutional base, dedicated to preserving, teaching and basing performance on Kyrgyz epic traditions. In 2026, a new building for the Bubusara Beishenalieva Kyrgyz National University of Culture and Arts was completed, and the Bishkek Arena was opened.

Bishkek Arena

The Bishkek Arena was inaugurated on 31 August 2026 at the opening ceremony of the sixth World Nomad Games. Designed in the form of a yurt, the stadium—which drew international attention—has a dome fitted with a large LED video-mapping system, allowing the entire ceiling to become part of a digital visual production. With a capacity of about 51,000 it is the largest stadium in Central Asia, and it is now expected to serve as the region's main stage for large-scale concerts. The first major test is an upcoming performance by Shakira as part of her world tour, scheduled for 18 October 2026 and announced as her first appearance in Central Asia. The concert has generated considerable interest both in the region and abroad, and may mark the beginning of concert tourism in Kyrgyzstan.



Bishkek Arena. Photo by Gulmira Abdrakhmanova/ Kazinform.

Ethnomusicology and Music Research

While new buildings and a stronger material base are improving conditions for cultural organisations, a gap in musicology still remains. Many of the large state-supported events depend largely on the efforts of individuals, notably Roza Amanova, who recently established a music department at the Kyrgyz National Academy of Sciences (2024).

Through her dedication to developing knowledge of traditional music, she has brought international scholars to the country and raised scholarly interest in the musical heritage of the region. There is still a shortage of young scholars ready to continue this work.

Encouragingly, two young researchers have recently completed their master's degrees and begun doctoral studies in ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University, with research on the revival of Kyrgyz traditional instruments and the Manas epic.

Closing Note

A final development worth noting is the return to the stage of Askhat Zhetigen, a well-known *akyn*, *komuz* player, and composer, who was released in August 2026 after three years in prison, following his conviction for expressing his views in video messages. In mid-October he will give three concerts at the Toktogul Satylganov Kyrgyz National Philharmonic, presenting new music, both traditional songs accompanied by *komuz* and bard songs accompanied by guitar. His return reflects a notable phenomenon in contemporary Kyrgyz musical expression, as the *akyn* tradition evolves in new forms and may give rise to a new generation of *akyns*.

NIGERIA

by Christian Onyeji, ICTMD Liaison Officer for Nigeria



The International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance, a global council of scholars and researchers on various aspects of Indigenous music and dance, as well as all other components of Indigenous music and dance performances and presentations, has made significant inroads in Nigeria in recent times. With about five persons on the membership in 2018, the Council now has seventy-five members in Nigeria who are actively motivated and engage in various discourses of the chapter. The chapter also has the privilege of having a member on the Executive Board of ICTMD in the person of Marie-Agatha Ozah. She has been very wonderful in motivating and supporting members to key into the programs and activities of ICTMD. We are indeed grateful to her for her commitment. Our collaboration and strong motivation resulted in the improved membership in the chapter at the moment.

The chapter also has a member who is the Vice Chair for the Study Group on Traditions of African Music and Dance, following its recent renaming. She is Rita Sunday Kanu, an Associate Professor at the Department of Music, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. While some of the members have attended ICTM conferences, particularly in Thailand in 2019 and Accra Ghana in 2023, others were actively involved and contributed significantly to the ICTM Online Dialogues on Decolonization of Music and Dance Studies globally. Three panels made up of more than twenty persons featured in the Dialogues. The three panels discussed issues relating to high-impact journal publications, art music composition and music education challenges in Nigeria. A panel also presented a session at ICTMD Dialogues in 2024 on ecomusicology. The Dialogue sessions provided needed opportunities for the presenters to spotlight major challenges faced by music practitioners, composers, researchers, and educators on addressing the hegemony of Western educational contents and practice in the country. The Dialogues gave hope on the universality of the desire to make a shift and to acknowledge or accommodate other forms and methods of music and dance studies deliveries that have been relegated over the years. It was a great success and provided the needed platforms for people to connect with challenges of practitioners globally.

ICTMD-Nigeria boasts a very excited membership made up mostly of young scholars that are poised to explore and engage in research and scholarship. There is a strong sense of motivation and involvement of members as has been noted so far. Nigeria is known to have very vibrant and motivated scholars who have continued to grapple with very minimal institutional/governmental support, poor funding, and research facilities to make their contributions globally. It is quite exciting to note the vigour with which traditional music and dance research is undertaken in the country by music scholars. There are two main bodies engaged in the promotion of music research, education, and performances. These are the Association of Nigerian Musicologists, of which I was the President of 2021–2015, and the Society for Music Educators in Nigeria. These two bodies hold annual conferences regularly. Music is taught in Nigerian schools, both public and private, but needs to be deepened and supported with facilities. Research activities leading to various publications in journal articles, book chapters, and books are actively pursued by music lecturers and students. There are more than five active music journals in the country at the moment. The Association of Nigerian Musicologists is also in the process of getting the first dedicated Library of Nigerian Music. The library building, which is nearing completion, is being constructed through the generous support of the immediate past Vice Chancellor of Nnamdi Azikiwe

University Awka, Anambra State, Charles Okechukwu Esimone FAS, who made the contribution of the building to the Association while he was the sitting Vice Chancellor of the institution. When completed, the library will have physical and digital sections with various collections of Nigerian music materials, documents, and data. More details will be provided on this in the future. As the President of the association, I was personally and directly involved in negotiating and attracting this project based on my conviction of the extreme benefits it would have on music studies and practice in Nigeria.

ICTMD-Nigeria is indeed very grateful to ICTMD Executive Board for considering an application by me to waive the one year membership fee for Nigerian members owing to very dire economic situation in the country. We are happy that this was given speedy consideration and waived for the year 2024. Unfortunately the economic situation is still very bad in the country, and it is doubtful that many members can pay their renewal fees for the year 2026. I strongly appeal for another special consideration especially for the fact that I applied for two-year consideration then. The Executive Board may look into this to support the participation of those from countries with very weak economies, while we pray for a better economic situations.

From 10–11 September 2024 we held the first online symposium for ICTMD-Nigeria on the theme "Safeguarding the Nigerian Traditions of Music and Dance." With the growing number of members in the country, it was found necessary to hold a two-day symposium. This, we believed, would consolidate on the gains already recorded and bring in more members. It would also give members opportunity to focus on discourses on Nigerian traditional music which we believe require some attention. It would be possible to look into the idea of developing a framework for teaching and practice of traditional music and dance from the perspective of Indigenous practices in support of the outcomes of the ICTMD Dialogues during such symposia. ICTMD was duly notified about the symposium. The then President of ICTMD, Svanibor Pettan gave an opening speech while Marie-Agatha Ozah and I handled the opening and closing formalities. Ukeme Udoh of University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom Sate, was the organising Chair. The keynote paper was delivered by Tan Sooi Beng, now ICTMD President, while Carlos Yorder provided IT support for the two-day symposium. The symposium witnessed paper presentations, discussions, and participants from different parts of the globe.

Unfortunately for ICTMD-Nigeria, no member attended the last world conference in New Zealand in person due to lack of funding. This was a great setback for us as we did not have the opportunity to witness the events and ceremonies live in New Zealand. The cost of registration for the conference was also high for many members due to the economic situation in the country already mentioned, and so many people could not participate online too. It was a great disappointment for many of us who looked forward to the conference. Going by the economic situation in the country, it is unlikely that the 2027 World Conference in Chile would have Nigerian participants attending physically. Some may join virtually, if they are able to raise the registration fee required. It is our wish that many of us would have the opportunity to attend future conferences of ICTMD in person.

In March 2026, ICTMD-Nigeria hosted the 5th Sympsoium of the Study Group on Traditions of African Music and Dance (TAMD), from 13–19 March 2026, under the auspices of the ICTMD, which was hosted by the Department of Music, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. This featured members who attended in person from different countries and institutions, as well as many others who joined virtually. Several papers were presented and very critical discourses were elicited from the presentations. It was indeed a very successful symposium, rich in scholarship and quality interactions. ICTMD-Nigeria is grateful to ICTMD for granting us the opportunity to host the symposium and for the support extended to us. We are also grateful to the leadership of ICTMD Study Group on Traditions of African Music and Dance (TAMD) for the great support we received.

In general, Nigerian members engage in research and publications of articles related to traditional music in difference journals, books, and media. Many of such publications enrich the knowledge base of researchers and provide resource for teaching and learning in different institutions. Members have continued to

participate actively in national conferences in Nigeria where papers are regularly presented on different aspects of Nigerian/African music. We are quite happy and excited that discourses on Nigerian traditional music are available through various media, providing needed access to traditional music knowledge globally. ICTMD is thus a strong platform to strengthen these efforts.

We thank ICTMD for the generous support to Nigerian members and we are glad to note that the chapter is growing stronger as more and more people are informed about the opportunities that abound in ICTMD.

Thank you and remain blessed.

PAKISTAN

by Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Liaison Officer for Pakistan



The Nature of Music Scholarship in Pakistan

Building on the existing discussion of the historical decline of North Indian classical music in Pakistan and the need for its revival, this report turns to the scholarly dimensions that shape musical understanding in the country. The challenges identified earlier are not only institutional and artistic, but are also closely linked to the frameworks through which music has been studied, documented, and interpreted. In the absence of sustained methodological rigor and institutionalised research training, music scholarship in Pakistan has largely remained descriptive rather than analytical, with limited engagement in field-based and interdisciplinary inquiry.

This report therefore examines the nature of music scholarship in Pakistan, focusing on its historical development, prevailing intellectual orientations, and structural limitations, while also identifying emerging possibilities for research growth. It situates these developments within broader international ethnomusicological discourse, in alignment with the objectives of ICTMD.

The purpose of this report is to provide a concise scholarly overview of existing research practices in Pakistan, establishing a baseline for future inquiry. It further highlights the country's rich and diverse musical traditions as an underexplored field of study, offering significant potential for original research, fieldwork, and interdisciplinary engagement by both national and international scholars.

Pakistan's relatively short history as a nation-state reflects an ongoing effort to define a distinct cultural identity, particularly through music, often shaped by the dual dynamics of distancing from Indian associations and affirming a Muslim cultural framework. Within this context, music scholarship has developed along diverse lines, addressing history, theory, performance practice, religion, and ethnomusicology. However, despite this thematic breadth, the literature remains predominantly descriptive, with limited engagement in sustained analytical, critical, and methodologically rigorous research.

A dominant feature of music scholarship in Pakistan is its descriptive orientation. Much of the literature consists of narrative accounts of music theory, historical developments, performance practices, and musical instruments. This descriptive tendency has been critiqued by scholars and musicologists who point out the absence of systematic and scientific research, arguing that descriptive writing represents the lowest level of scholarship. Consequently, a significant portion of the literature serves an informative rather than investigative purpose.

Historical inquiry constitutes another major strand of music scholarship in Pakistan. Scholars have shown a strong interest in tracing the origins and development of Indian classical music. A distinguishing feature of Pakistani historiography is its tendency to begin with the arrival of Muslims in the subcontinent. Authors often prioritise older sources and focus on the evolution of musical genres, patronage systems, and prominent figures. Despite the abundance of material, historical writing often suffers from inconsistency, weak referencing, and contradictory interpretations.

The relationship between music and religion represents another central concern in Pakistani music scholarship. Music is frequently examined through Islamic thought, leading to an ongoing debate about its permissibility. Scholars adopt varying positions ranging from rejection to conditional acceptance.

Much of the literature attempts to justify music within religious frameworks, emphasising moral and spiritual dimensions.

Within this context, the contribution of Muslims to Indian classical music has received considerable attention A recurring theme is the emphasis on Muslim influence in shaping the tradition. Legendary figures are frequently highlighted, and many attributions such as the creation of ragas and instruments are repeated without historical verification or critical examination.

Biographical writing forms another important component of music scholarship in Pakistan. These works document the lives of prominent musicians and provide insights into their artistic development. Autobiographical accounts and memoirs further contribute by offering personal perspectives on musical training and socio-cultural environments.

In contrast to the predominantly descriptive and historical literature, a smaller body of work adopts a more analytical approach. Scholars critically evaluate and question long-held assumptions established narratives. Works by Rasheed Malik and Muhammad Zafar Iqbal highlight issues of misinterpretation, lack of evidence, and weak methodological grounding. Despite these contributions, analytical scholarship remains limited.

Ethnomusicology represents another significant area of research in the study of regional folk traditions. Scholars document musical cultures in relation to social, cultural, and geographical contexts, highlighting regional diversity. However, such studies often remain region-specific and lack broader comparative frameworks.

Theoretical and performance-based studies constitute another important dimension of music scholarship. Although Indian classical music is primarily transmitted orally, attempts have been made to codify theory and practice. A continuing debate exists between the importance of theoretical knowledge and practical performance experience.

The study of musical instruments is another prominent feature of scholarship covering classification, structure, historical development, and performance techniques of instruments such as *sarangi*, *sitar*, *tabla*, and *sarod*.

One of the most promising developments is thesis-based research in musicology, which demonstrates improved methodological rigor, referencing, and analytical depth across topics such as aesthetics, cultural policy, and regional traditions.

An analysis of the corpus of 150 works on music scholarship in Pakistan reveals that this work is heavily concentrated in the province of Punjab (76.35%) with minimal representation from the province of Baluchistan (1.35%). Authorship is predominantly male (95.95%), and the principal languages are Urdu (60.14%) and English (35.14%). Thematic emphasis remains on “classical music” (51.35%) and “musical instruments” (34.46%), while methodological orientation is overwhelmingly qualitative (99.32%) with dominant historical-philosophical analysis (80.41%). Most works lack research questions (75.68%), hypotheses (75.68%), and theoretical frameworks (73.65%). Books (79.73%) significantly outnumber theses (20.27%). Chronologically, the highest output appears in 2009–2015 (46.62%). Overall, the corpus reflects a regionally concentrated, male-dominated, descriptive-historical research tradition with limited methodological rigor and theoretical engagement (see Fig. 1 and 2).

A primary factor underlying the underdeveloped nature of music scholarship in Pakistan is the systemic marginalisation of music within higher education structures. With the exception of the National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore, which introduced formal undergraduate-level music education only in 2002, Pakistan has historically lacked sustained degree programs in music across universities and colleges. This delayed and limited institutionalisation has significantly impeded the emergence of a stable academic tradition in musicology.

As a consequence, music remains largely excluded from mainstream academic frameworks, resulting in a persistent shortage of professionally trained musicologists. In the absence of formalised academic pathways, musical knowledge has continued to be transmitted primarily through oral performance traditions, particularly the *guru–shishya* and *baithak* systems, rather than through structured research

training. This has constrained the development of methodological rigor and limited engagement with contemporary theoretical and analytical approaches in musicology.

This institutional deficit is further reinforced by weak state patronage, limited private-sector support, and the absence of viable academic and professional career structures in music research. Consequently, music has not developed as a recognised research discipline, and scholarly output has remained predominantly descriptive, with minimal application of critical, comparative, or hypothesis-driven methodologies.

The absence of an established institutional and methodological framework has fundamentally shaped the trajectory of music scholarship in Pakistan, resulting in a predominantly descriptive and historically oriented research tradition with limited analytical and theoretical sophistication. Music scholarship in Pakistan reflects a complex interplay of descriptive, historical, religious, biographical, and ethnomusicological approaches. While the field has produced substantial literature, it remains constrained by methodological limitations, lack of originality, and weak analytical frameworks. However, emerging analytical and thesis-based research offers a promising direction for future academic development.

Briefly, in this report I have focused on the nature of music scholarship and addressed only one fundamental reason underlying its current form; the remaining contributing factors have not been discussed here and may be explored in detail in a subsequent report.

PHILIPPINES

by José S. Buenconsejo, Liaison Officer for the Philippines

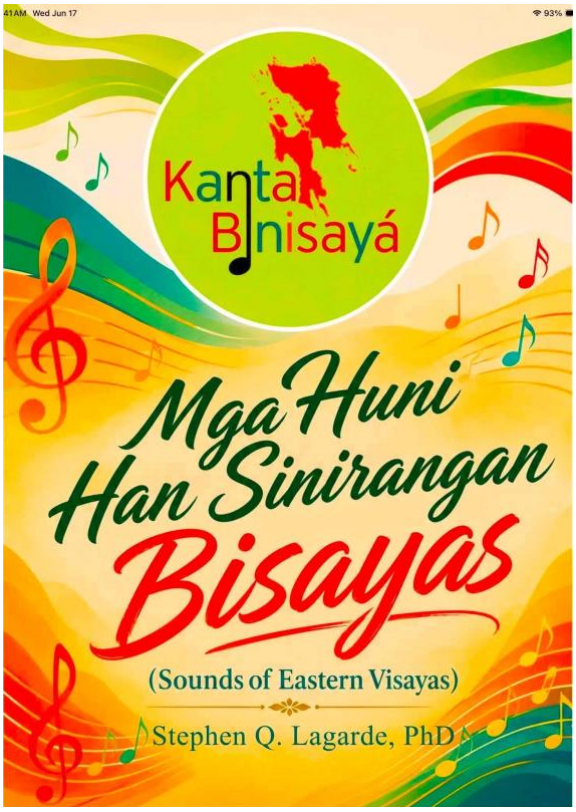


Publishing folk music collections in the Philippines can all be traced back to the last quarter of the 19th century under Spanish colonial rule (e.g., Diego Perez's 1887 *Recuerdos de Filipinas,* a piano potpourri of nineteen traditional songs and dances that was exhibited as *musica notada* in the Philippine Exposition in Madrid, or Manuel Walls y Merino's 1892 *La Musica Popular de Filipinas*). The category of "folk songs" in the Philippines is a colonial hybrid of local elements (such as versification and meanings) that incorporated Hispanic forms and harmony. During the succeeding American occupation of the country (1902–1946), collections were published by Norberto Romualdez (1875–1941) for singing in public schools (the Philippine edition of *Progressive Music Series* was started in 1914 by Silver Burdett Company) and independently by Emilia S. Cavan (1896–1961), with the assistance of Francisco Santiago (1889–1947) in 1924. Cavan and Santiago's work was arranged for mixed choir. Both these 20th century collections made a huge impact in disseminating regional songs to the national repertory in the following hundred of years. They inspired many efforts (too many to mention) by composers and teachers to compile and propagate arranged folk songs for many musical ensembles (classical singers, choirs, rondalla, brass bands, and so on) in diverse platforms of circulation (recorded sounds, radio, TV, and so on).

In 2024, Stephen Q. Lagarde published a collection of choral arrangements titled *Kanta Binisaya*, which featured select Eastern Visayan traditional songs. Lagarde is a cultural worker from Eastern Visayas, whose mother tongue is Waray, and a retired development communication professor from the University of the Philippines Tacloban (email: sqlagarde@gmail.com). His 2024 collection contains around seventeen pieces, a number of which had been performed live in choral festivals, recorded by choirs from the surrounding islands, and now distributed by MUZIKSEA, a digital marketplace based in Singapore. The eminent Philippine Madrigal Singers had included some of the songs from Lagarde's collection in their concert stage repertoire. Since 1963, under the direction of Andrea Veneracion, this national choral group has been an important pioneer in the development of arranged folk songs for the concert in the archipelago.

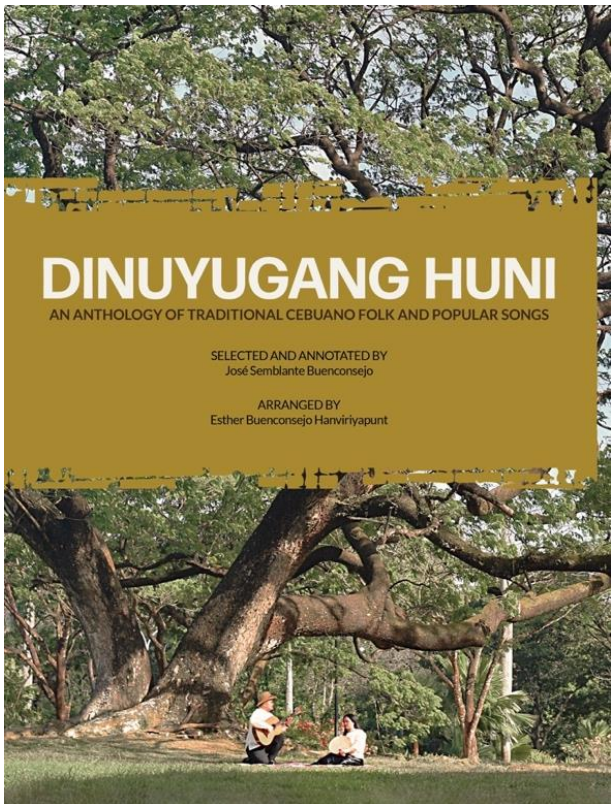
Another collection titled *Dinuyugang Huni: Anthology of Traditional Cebuano Folk and Popular Songs*—which will come out of the University of the Philippines Press in December this year—is by Jose S. Buenconsejo (email: jose.buenconsejo@gmail.com) and follows the paths of (1) Priscilla Magdamo's collection of Visayan folk songs published by Silliman

University in 1958–59, and (2) Cebuano songs in *Handumanan*, also arranged for concert stage, by Rudy Villanueva in the 1990s. Cebuano is the language spoken in Central Visayas.



Kanta Binisayá *by Stephen Q. Lagarde.*

The selection of the contents in this anthology is auto-ethnographic documentary of sorts, remembered by Jose S Buenconsejo and his cousin, Esther B. Hanviriyapunt (a.k.a. Ester Hana), who are both culture bearers of the song tradition. In piano and vocal score, the arrangements are done in diverse contemporary art music harmonies but retain the traditional essential idioms of the music. The pianistic idiom is made from a point of view of a practising translocal (diasporic) Filipina pianist: Esther B. Hanviriyapunt is in Chicago, where she has been a musician for the past forty years or so. Eighty pieces in all, the songs in the collection are thus an embodiment of the individual memories of the annotator and arranger. The anthology is introduced with essays on the history of anthologising Philippine music in prints, a transparent note of sources utilised, a history of music creolisation of Hispanic rhythms such as *fandango* and *bolero* in the islands, and an overview of Cebuano music characteristics. The arrangements are accessible, done with simple to medium-difficult piano technique, but always in keeping with the perceived nature of each individual music's style. Over forty of the pieces have been recorded by the Cebuano musicians Rudolf Golez, of Liceo de Cagayan University; associate concert master of the Manila Symphony Orchestra and violinist, Sara Gonzales; and, collaborating pianist Michelle Nicolasora, of the University of the Philippines College of Music. The recordings can be listened to through the project's Bandcamp page.



Dinuyugang Huni: Anthology of Traditional Cebuano Folk and Popular Songs *by Jose S. Buenconsejo.*

TURKMENISTAN

by Jamilya Gurbanova, Liaison Officer for Turkmenistan, with Guljan Nobatova



Cultural Cooperation for Peace

Musical culture occupies a significant place in the artistic heritage of the Turkmen people, reflecting their history, spiritual experience, and aesthetic values. In Turkmenistan, music and dance are integral parts of many rituals and festive ceremonies.

December is traditionally associated with important national events for Turkmen citizens. This year, the country celebrates the 30th anniversary of the declaration of permanent neutrality—a key principle of foreign policy and a significant element of modern

diplomacy. Neutrality defines Turkmenistan's model of international behavior, based on respect for the sovereign choice of states, openness, and a commitment to cooperation. Having received international legal status, it has become a recognised instrument for supporting peace, sustainable development, and humanitarian cooperation.

12 December, the day the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality, is one of the central dates in the national calendar. Cultural and scientific events marking this date are expanding each year.

This year, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Department of the Ministry of Culture of Turkmenistan and the National Commission of Turkmenistan for UNESCO celebrated Neutrality Day with a scientific and practical conference, "Turkmenistan – UNESCO: Cultural Cooperation for Peace," held at the Turkmen State Institute of Culture. Art historians, cultural specialists, teachers, and students participated in the conference. Participants presented materials documenting the development of Turkmenistan's cooperation with UNESCO, highlighting the results already achieved and planned areas of cooperation.

Turkmenistan's cultural partnership with countries around the world, including the United Nation's Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is developing across a wide range of areas. In the context of the new era of national development, additional opportunities are being created to present Turkmenistan's rich cultural heritage at international venues. Cooperation with UNESCO plays a significant role in this, strengthening intercultural ties and expanding professional contacts.

The conference programme included not only poster presentations but also vibrant musical performances. The richness of Turkmen musical culture is reflected in the sounds of folk instruments and the expressive songs of Turkmen *bakhshis*. Students from the Institute of Culture presented amazing folklore compositions that flexibly combined the figurative poetics of oral heritage with the natural rhythms of the Turkmen people and their rich spiritual world.

The forum concluded with a vibrant performance of the *Kushtdepdi* dance, a recognised element of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its performance became a symbolic highlight of the event: the dance, rooted in ancient ritual practices and uniting participants with shared movement and a common emotional rhythm, seamlessly underscored the conference's main theme—cultural cooperation for peace. Embodying collectivity, continuity, and unity, the *Kushtdepdi* dance became a vibrant artistic expression of the values that underlie international cultural dialogue.

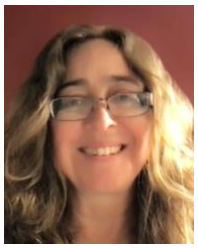


Dancers at the conference "Turkmenistan–UNESCO: Cultural Cooperation for Peace." Photo courtesy of Jamilya Gurbanova.

The musical art of Turkmenistan is presented as a rich and dynamically developing tradition, uniting ancient forms, the poetics of oral heritage, and contemporary creative reinterpretation. This multifaceted nature of the country's national culture is vividly embodied in state and international cultural initiatives.

REPORTS FROM ICTMD STUDY GROUPS

MEDITERRANEAN MUSIC STUDIES (MMS)



by Vanessa Paloma Elbaz, Study Group Chair

Online Preview and 16th Symposium at the State Conservatory of Turkish Music, Ege University, in İzmir, Türkiye

The ICTMD Study Group on Mediterranean Music Studies held its 16th Symposium 1 to 4 June 2026 at the State Conservatory of Turkish Music, Ege University, in İzmir, Türkiye. The symposium, entitled "The Mediterranean as Sonic Tourbillon: Interventions of Connection and Disconnection," was preceded by an online preview session on 28 May 2026 and included the formal Study Group meeting on 3 June 2026.

The İzmir symposium was particularly significant because it was the Study Group's first gathering in the Eastern Mediterranean since its foundation by Tullia Magrini at the Ugo and Olga Levi Foundation in Venice in 1992. It followed previous meetings in Palermo, Marseille, Tangier, Essaouira, Malta, Lisbon, Naples, Venice, and Cambridge.

Online Preview Session

The online preview took place on Zoom for a full day on 28 May 2026. The programme comprised ten presentations representing research on Algeria, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Spain, Türkiye, and Arab musical diasporas. The papers explored censorship of *rebetiko* and *tekke* music in Türkiye and Greece; prison experience, political repression, and songs of revenge; the transformation and sustainability of traditional musical genres; documentary filmmaking and Judeo-Arab heritage in Morocco; and, the ethics of archival listening and stewardship. The preview provided an introduction to the intellectual themes of the İzmir symposium while enabling the participation of scholars who could not attend in person.

The İzmir Symposium

The main symposium took place from Monday, 1 June, to Thursday, 4 June 2026 at Ege University and other cultural locations in İzmir. Its programme included forty-one presentations, discussion sessions, concerts, performances, museum visits, and a historical city excursion.

The academic sessions examined Armenian-Turkish song and diaspora, Mediterranean dance traditions, digital music circulation, Judeo-Spanish archives, ritual and sacred sound, migration, cultural memory, prison songs, internment, political silencing, and the movement of repertoires between Mediterranean communities. The programme brought established scholars, independent researchers, performers, and doctoral candidates into the same discussions.



Attendees of the 16th Mediterranean Music Study Group Symposium in Izmir. Photo by Ali Anbarli.

The four-day event combined academic presentations with performance and engagement with İzmir's cultural institutions. The opening day included a chamber concert by Ten Duo and an evening Turkish folk music concert entitled Voice of Mesopotamia. Other events included a military band performance, a *rebetiko* performance at Teras Kafe, and a concert of Turkish art music. Participants also visited the İzmir Ethnography Museum—founded and curated by Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, who served as symposium co-chair—and the Müziksev Instrument Museum. Additionally, there was an excursion through the old bazaar of İzmir and a guided tour through the

excavations of Izmir's ancient city. These activities connected the symposium's discussions of circulation, memory, cultural encounter, and sonic heritage with the city's institutions and performance traditions.



Study group members at the Agora Open Air Museum, learning about Roman Izmir. Photo by Vanessa Paloma Elbaz.

İzmir was an important step for the Study Group because of the significance of meeting in the Eastern Mediterranean. The symposium was an opportunity to connect to Bornova and nearby Yeşilova Höyük, one of the oldest known settlements in the Mediterranean basin. Shaped by economic, linguistic, cultural, and interreligious exchange, it seems a counterpart to Tangier at the western edge of the Mediterranean. The theme of the "Sonic Tourbillon" invited participants to examine the forces that connect and divide Mediterranean communities. The programme addressed borders and thresholds, prison songs and their echoes, cultural rupture and silencing, ritual and cohesion, digital mediation, and methodological questions.

Study Group Meeting

The formal Study Group meeting took place in person on 3 June 2026, with additional participation through Zoom. Vanessa Paloma Elbaz chaired the hybrid meeting. The voting body comprised twenty-five participants: fourteen attending in person, nine participating online, and two voting by email proxy. A major outcome was the unanimous adoption of the Study Group's bylaws. Voting took place through a QR code for those attending in person and an online link for Zoom participants. All twenty-five votes, including email proxies supported the bylaws. The discussion emphasised the value of staggered leadership terms so that all executive positions would not change simultaneously. This arrangement will allow experienced officers to support incoming members. The bylaws also clarified executive mandates and formalised the use of subcommittees. The meeting formalised a Publication Subcommittee. Its role is to coordinate proceedings, develop groups of related papers for journal submissions, and ensure that publications follow ICTMD guidelines. Its initial membership included Vanessa Paloma Elbaz as Chair, Salvatore Morra as Vice Chair, symposium chairs in an *ex officio* capacity, and active publication editors. An open call for additional members will be circulated by email.



Study group members at the Agora Open Air Museum, learning about Roman Izmir. Photo by Vanessa Paloma Elbaz.

The Study Group meeting ended with an act of hospitality and remembrance from local host Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin. Following the recent death of his mother, he invited participants to share commemorative *halva* and prayer. This gesture connected the administrative work of the meeting with the symposium's wider concerns with memory, ritual, community, and human connection.

The İzmir programme brought the Study Group's scholarly, artistic, and organisational work into one connected sequence. The online preview prepared the discussion; the symposium tested the "Sonic

Tourbillon" theme through research, performance, and encounters with İzmir's cultural institutions; and the 3 June meeting translated that activity into decisions about governance, publications, digital communication, funding, and future gatherings. The result was both a substantive symposium and a clearer basis for the Study Group's work between biennial meetings.

Study Group on Music and Dance in Latin America and the Caribbean (LATCAR)

by Katharina Döring and Javier Silvestrini, Co-Presidents of LATCAR





Report from the 4th Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in Latin America and the Caribbean (ICTMD LATCAR)

The Study Group on Music and Dance in Latin America and the Caribbean (ICTMD LATCAR) held its 4th symposium entitled "Political Imagery, Transformations, and the Future: Music and Dance in Latin America and the Caribbean" at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP), in Lima, Peru. The symposium was coordinated by the ICTMD LATCAR board, the PUCP Institute of Ethnomusicology, Gisela Cánepa Koch from the ethnomusicology program, Renato Romero Cevallos, dean of the performing arts faculty, and César Vega Zavala, director of the musicology master's programme. The study group received support from Peruvian ethnomusicologist Julio Mendívil (University of Vienna) and several PUCP institutes that contributed to the organisation and submission of papers and research. The programme committee was headed by Beatriz Herrera Corado and Gisela Cánepa Koch. The ICTMD LATCAR Study Group symposium exceeded all expectations with a rich five-day programme featuring sixty-two presentations, grouped by thematic sessions, as well as three roundtables discussing proposed topics, two panels, six workshops, four performances, three documentaries, three keynote lectures, and one book presentation. The keynotes were presented by Laura Jordan, Gérard Borras, and Robin Moore.

The musical and performance component was featured in six workshops on musical and dance practices, as well as in a screening of three documentaries, and in the four performative and musical presentations that enriched the cultural and musical experience, fostering the exchange of knowledge, aesthetics, and artistic experiences among countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and expanding knowledge and research on traditional and popular music and dance across the most diverse regions of this continent.



Attendees at the 4th symposium for LATCAR. Photo courtesy of PUCP.

In the international call for papers (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese), the following thematic areas were highlighted, in accordance with the symposium's overall themes:

- Music and dance as expressions of social transformation, with regard to processes of identity formation and resistance—including dimensions of rights and political polarisation — in the face of the rise of the far Right and its authoritarian agendas, as well as the expansion of digital technologies and all the conflicting and intergenerational factors involved;
- Ecological and economic challenges, highlighting forms of resistance, community and territorial dynamics, as well as participatory methodologies that value local, ecological, artistic, and cultural activism;
- Embodied experiences in music and dance, which critically examine issues of gender and sexualities, bodily diversity in relation to racial representation, disabilities, and dissident bodies in general;
- Pedagogical, musical, and performative policies that incorporate decolonial aspects into the development of new curriculum proposals, as well as case studies in applied ethnomusicology and ethnochorelogy.

Over the course of five days, we had the opportunity to be part of an event that brought together people, research and musical projects from various Latin American and Caribbean countries. Notably, many Peruvian researchers and students took part in the event and were deeply involved. This engagement extended beyond the presentations in the thematic sessions, leading to several roundtable discussions that highlighted their cultural heritage and memories. One such discussion was the roundtable titled "Quechua Song, Orality, Resistance, and Memory in Transformation," featuring Luis Alberto Medina (PUCP), Valentina Ritter Choquehuanca (Vienna), Julio Mendivil (Vienna), and the Quechua singer and independent researcher Consuelo Jerí.



Roundtable discussion. Photo courtesy of PUCP.

It was also very interesting to learn more about the importance and detailed mapping of archives of traditional Andean music during the presentation "Listening to Create: Socialization and Collaborative Appropriation of Sound Archives from Cajamarca" by Gisela Cánepa (PUCP) and María Del Pilar Ramírez Calderón (PUCP).

We had approximately eighty participants from all over Peru (speakers, organisers, students, and researchers presenting papers), as well as researchers from Latin America, including twenty-four from Brazil, eleven from Chile, three from Colombia, two from Puerto Rico, and one representative each from Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Uruguay. From the Northern Hemisphere, we highlight the participation of five people from the United States, five from Austria, and one representative each from England, France, and Spain. The keynote lectures were made possible thanks to the generosity of our guests, who volunteered to deliver their talks and actively participated throughout the conference in the presentations, roundtables, and informal conversations during the lively coffee breaks!

On the first day of the symposium, researcher Laura Jordán from the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso in Chile gave a presentation on cassette tapes in the past and present, moderated by Puerto Rican ethnomusicologist Javier Silvestrini from the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. It started with questions about how cassette tape technology was introduced in Chile and how the characteristics of the turbulent political context of the long 1960s intersected with the adoption of this audio format. Still within this aggravated political context of the dictatorship in Chile, and considering how its popularisation during the 1980s influenced its role as a tool for listening and political participation—based on a documentary study, a compilation of oral sources, and an analysis of sound archives—this paper thus proposes a local interpretation of the circulation of this technology against a backdrop of precariousness, community projects, and dreams of change.

On the second day of the symposium, we attended the lecture "Record Productions During the Peruvian Armed Forces Government of Juan Velasco Alvarado (1969–1975)" by Gerard Borras of the University of Rennes in France, which was moderated by ethnomusicologist Magda Pucci (Mawaca). Borras emphasised that the emergence of the vinyl record in the 1960s did not merely represent a change in terms of recording length and improved sound quality. The lecture focused on record production during the administration of J. Velasco Alvarado (1969–1975), also analysing the artistic record production of social sectors that identified with the revolutionary government's radical shifts and proposals.

On the third day of the symposium, we welcomed researcher and professor Robin Moore from the University of Texas at Austin, who presented his lecture "Between the Violin and the Drum: Colonialism, Creolization, and New Ontologies of the Acoustic in Afro-Cuban Religions," also the topic of his latest book. The lecture, moderated by ethnomusicologist Renato Romero (PUCP), highlighted historical and contemporary aspects of religious music of African descent in the Caribbean and Latin America. Moore explored a more recent form of worship, called *violino* or *toque de violino*, which prioritises the violin alongside the guitar, electric piano, bongos, and other

instruments, reflecting on its relationship with colonialism, processes of resistance and transculturation, and understanding these rites as practices that developed in contexts of oppression with possible interpretations: as a concession to Eurocentric and secular tastes, as the "blackening" or "creolisation" of these practices, or both tendencies, enabling the integration of the sacred with so-called secular repertoires, as well as new Afro-diasporic "ontologies and epistemologies of the acoustic."



Photo by Katharina Döring.

The closing session of the ICTMD LATCAR Symposium reflected the intensity, depth, and joy that we forged and experienced over the course of five days, and featured the active participation of everyone present, transcending all generations and academic hierarchies! The current ICTMD LATCAR board of directors, present at the symposium in Lima, introduced itself and, above all, presented its report covering nearly three years. The group reviewed the reports and actions carried out over the past three years, presenting figures and data in terms of participation, reporting with satisfaction that these years have been marked by significant growth and, above all, greater practical and theoretical engagement with the field of music and dance studies throughout Latin America and the Caribbean—with special emphasis on Brazilian participation, which has overcome historical and linguistic barriers and sought integration into the networks of musical and cultural *Latinidad*! During the assembly, the dossier "Sounds, Memory, and Territoriality—Performances in Motion in Latin America and the Caribbean" was officially launched, coordinated by Katharina Döring and Magda Pucci (from the ICTMD LATCAR Board), in partnership with the *Revista Música e Cultura* (Brazilian Association of Ethnomusicology-ABET), and which arose from the desire to create spaces for publication and wider dissemination of so many incredible research studies and projects presented at the symposia of the ICTMD LATCAR Study Group (Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay), comprising twenty articles in Spanish, Portuguese, and English!

After the other board members expressed their gratitude for the years of learning, collaboration, and organisation, many stated that they would not continue in their board positions, due to other academic, professional, and personal priorities, but offered to remain available to assist with all processes and to recruit new candidates to take on the responsibility of organising future events and exchange opportunities. Magda Pucci and Beatriz Herrera expressed their interest in remaining on the board and took it upon themselves to encourage and welcome new candidates—with a particular focus on the areas of dance and performance—and committed to facilitating the process of electing a new board soon!

Thus, we said our goodbyes in an atmosphere of euphoria, camaraderie, and a sense of mission accomplished, and we wish the ICTMD LATCAR Study Group a long life and new paths ahead!

Study Group on Music and Dance in the Turkic World

by Galina Sychenko, Music Liaison; Sashar Zarif, Dance Liaison; and Anna Oldfield, Co-Secretary







The ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance in the Turkic World, established twenty years ago in 2006, celebrated this anniversary with its 10th Symposium, co-organised with the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan and with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Uzbekistan, the Union of Composers of Uzbekistan, the Institute of Variety Arts named for B. Zokirov, and the State Academy of Choreography of Uzbekistan. It was in this country, rich in musical

and dance traditions, that our Study Group met for the first time.

The symposium was held from 22 to 25 May 2026 in lovely green Tashkent in conjunction with the 90th Jubilee of the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan, the country's premier institution for higher music education. This led to the choice of a topic on the role of institutions in sustaining and transmitting music and dance traditions. Our main theme—Institutions, Masters, and Apprentices (*Ustod – Shogird*) in the Safeguarding, Transmission, Research, and Transformation of Turkic Music and Dance Traditions—encompassed several lines of inquiry, examining the issue from various perspectives: 1) Conservatories, Archives, and Other Institutions: Their Role in Teaching, Study, Preservation, and Reinterpretation of Turkic Intangible Cultural Heritage; 2) Modal Music in the Turkic World as Living Heritage: Makam, Mugham, Maqom, Muqam, and Related Traditions; 3) Epics in the Turkic World: Transmission, Preservation, and Transformation of Turkic Epic and Bardic Traditions; and 4) Dance Traditions: Belonging, Memory, Ritual, Expression, and Embodiment in the Turkic World.

This agenda attracted more than 100 scholars, musicians, and dancers from sixteen countries, including Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Netherlands, Russia, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the USA, and Uzbekistan, who participated in the symposium. Over four days of intensive activity, study group members presented and discussed more than twelve plenary papers and about seventy sectional presentations, as well as five presentations on new publications. Please visit our website to see the programme and the book of abstracts.

Meeting in the halls of the conservatory—echoing with student musicians preparing for exams—evoked our theme of transmission. In his keynote speech, Feza Tansuğ discussed music education in the Turkic world from an anthropological perspective, setting the tone of thinking about how traditional music is moving into the future. The symposium highlighted new research, publications, recordings, and initiatives of Study Group members, and a special session was dedicated to innovative views of fieldwork filmmaking and the first OBA Film & Video Festival, which is set to launch in November 2026 in Çanakkale, Türkiye (more information on this can be found on the Study Group website).



Members of the Study Group for Music and Dance in the Turkic World at the Study Group's 10th Symposium, held 22 to 25 May, 2026 in Tashkent. Photo courtesy of the authors.

This year, in order to bring people together into a dynamic common space and encourage dialog between scholars and artists, the symposium was held in-person only. Daily master classes were presented by professionals who actively engaged symposium participants and students in their traditions including the Azerbaijani art of *khananda* and *tar*, the Kyrgyz *kyl-kyyak* tradition, Tuvan *khoomei* throat singing, and the Turkish Sivas Halay. Dance master classes were conducted by artists of Tuvan, Andijan, and Bukharan dance. Music masterclasses and concert performances took place at the concert hall of the B. Zokirov Institute of Variety Arts, while the dance-related masterclasses took place at the State Academy of Choreography of Uzbekistan, increasing the diversity of student participants across institutions.

The symposium also hosted a rich concert programme on the theme Listening Across Generations, highlighting Mugham as living dialogue in performances. These included the Azerbaijani mugham ensemble of Gochag Askarov and Malik Mansurov, "*Ustod–Shogird* in Encounter: Makam, Memory, and Improvisation for Double-neck Divan *Saz* and Fretless Guitar," The Fer Bağlama Trio, "Echoes of the Mountains: A Solo Journey through the Zeybek Traditions of Western Anatolia," and the art of

the Kazakh epic. For the event "Together Ensemble," Azerbaijani mugham musicians joined the Mavreghi Ensemble of the Bukhara State Philharmonia in an improvised, living dialogue on stage; later, the Mavreghi musicians and the Bukharan dance ensemble joined the final concert, which developed into a jam session on stage. At the closing dinner, participants also had an opportunity to make music, dance, and sing together. The masterclasses and concerts in the context of the academic symposium brought to life the diversity of the Turkic world while creating new shared experiences for the Study Group.

A particular strength of the event was the creation of a space of encounter for artists with scholars and students, as well as artist-scholars who combined papers with practice. This created valuable opportunities for different forms of knowledge and experience to meet within the symposium, in both music and dance. The symposium was also instructive in revealing the continuing work needed to integrate music and dance arts and practices within academic and institutional contexts. Greater attention to movement as an integral part of musical practice and to the role of the body in music-making may offer an important area for future dialogue within the Study Group. Other challenges the study group discussed as vital include differing epistemologies, pros and cons of technology, future directions for traditional music, dance, and epic, changing methods of transmission, and new directions in ethnomusicology.

Thanks to our generous hosts in Uzbekistan, the symposium offered a forum for the goals of the Study Group to promote scholarship and dialog in conjunction with traditional music and dance artists across the Turkic world and the diaspora.
The Symposium was a site of flexibility and collaboration, exciting discussion, and informal moments of shared music, dance, singing, and conversation that demonstrated the value of creating spaces in which participants from different practices and backgrounds could connect.

At the business meeting, the study group discussed creating more possibilities for connections for members between our symposia as well, including online topical seminars to start this year, more social media connection, and an enhanced website with member activities highlighted. In addition, the Executive Board has opened two major initiatives, the first OBA Film & Video Festival, and the edited volume *Music and Dance in the Turkic World: Contemporary Studies*, to be published in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Study Group. This volume will reflect both the scholarly legacy of the Study Group and the contemporary state of research in the field. It is currently in process to be published.

At the closing session, study group founder Razia Sultanova and chair Abdullah Akat reminisced over the past twenty years. There were moments to reflect on how this study group has grown and developed, to remember and honour those who have been lost, and to look forward to our new and continuing activities in the future.

Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania

by Michelle Ladwig Williams, Study Group Chair



This was a transitional year for the Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania (SGMDO) as our former chair, Georgia Curran, completed her four-year term. Our members are incredibly thankful for Georgia's leadership and vision which facilitated study group symposia, online seminars, performances at the World Conference in Wellington, and the development of a book proposal representing our group's scholarship - amongst many more accomplishments! Ngā mihi nui, Georgia, for everything you have done for us as our chair.

With the support of the Secretariat and Vice-President Brian Diettrich, an election for a new chair was held in April this year. I am honoured to have been elected by my colleagues and friends in the SGMDO, and will take this opportunity to introduce myself to the wider ICTMD membership.

I am a music educator and researcher based in Aotearoa (New Zealand), originally from Northern Virginia in the United States of America, and of Welsh and German descent. After completing my Bachelor of Music degree at Arizona State University, I taught primary school classroom music and choirs at the International School of Prague, Czech Republic. A consuming interest in world musics motivated my Master's studies in Music Education at University of

Hawai'i at Mānoa. This experience introduced me to ethnomusicology research approaches and offered the opportunity to participate in Hawaiian and other Pacific music and dance ensembles. It also introduced me to fellow graduate students and professors who are SGMDO members today.

I completed my PhD in Ethnomusicology at the University of Auckland. Here, I leveraged my interests in music education and transnational Pacific communities to undertake a study of individual and community cultural construction through participation in the ASB Polyfest, a secondary school performance competition for Māori and Pacific youth (for more information please see: www.michelleladwigwilliams.com). After completing my PhD fieldwork, I was appointed education manager for the New Zealand Music Commission, a non-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of New Zealand popular music. Through the Musicians Mentoring in Schools Programme I trained and placed popular music artists into schools to support a nationwide culture of original songwriting.

I am currently a research education development specialist at the Auckland University of Technology. AUT has a strong reputation as a supportive environment for Pacific students and Pacific-led research, and is the home of the interdisciplinary and international Moanaroa Pacific Research Network. I aim to facilitate new connections and exchanges through this network for our study group members.

A small but enthusiastic number of our group are presenting at the World Conference in Santiago including myself, Georgia Curran and Susan Jacob, and some members will be traveling to Rapa Nui for the start of the Tapati Festival.

In 2027 we will continue our online research seminar series, with plans to hear from Meri Haami about her post-doctorate research fellowship at Yale University on Māori *waiata* in their archives, and Andrew Gumataotao on Micronesian Interventions in Museum Spaces. I encourage other study group chairs to reach out about shared interests and collaborations within our online seminar series.

We look forward to seeing many of you in Santiago!

Study Group on Music and Minorities

by Kai Tang, Study Group Chair; Tatevik Shakhkulyan, Vice Chair; and Ioannis Christidis, Secretary







The 13th Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Minorities was held in Yerevan, Armenia, from 7 to 12 September 2026. The symposium, jointly hosted by the Institute of Arts, the Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory, and Kayt Cultural Hub, brought together more than ninety scholars, researchers, performers, and cultural practitioners from more than thirty countries across all continents. Five days of academic and cultural programming were followed by a final-day excursion. The Programme Committee comprised Svanibor Pettan, Andriy Nahachewsky, Tatevik Shakhkulyan, Mayco A. Santaella, Ioannis Christidis, and Kai Tang (Chair), while the Local Arrangements Committee comprised Ararat Aghasyan, Anna Asatryan, Koriun Davtyan, Lilit Harutyunyan, Tsovinar Movsisyan, Lusine Sahakyan, Ruzanna Stepanyan, and Tatevik Shakhkulyan (Chair). The symposium was primarily an in-person event, with online participation arranged for several scholars who faced difficulties travelling to Armenia, while the academic sessions were also livestreamed. Special appreciation is due to the Kayt team for its dedicated technical support and documentation throughout the event.

The symposium opened with a roundtable chaired by Svanibor Pettan, reflecting on the study group's past, present, and future. The roundtable brought together perspectives on the study group's intellectual and organisational evolution, revisiting its achievements and experiences over the past quarter-century while also considering its future directions and priorities. Deborah Wong's keynote lecture set a stimulating tone for the ensuing discussions and dialogues. Presentations spanning a wide range of topics were organised around four main themes of this symposium:



Participants in the 13th Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Minorities. Yerevan, Armenia. September 2026. Photo provided by Gurgen Dalyan.

The first theme was Music, Dance, and the Conceptualization of Minorities. The term minority carries various meanings in different contexts—it may refer to a social status, a lived condition, a contested label, or a constructed identity. Researchers from twelve countries delivered papers on the role of music and dance in processes of minoritization, as well as on how minority communities use music and dance to imagine their collective past and present, negotiate power relations, and exercise agency.

Sacred Music and Dance among Minorities and Diasporas was a theme deeply rooted in Armenian cultural and scholarly traditions. Presenters from different continents were invited to join this dialogue and explore how faith-based music and dance practices are preserved, transformed, and reimagined across diverse social and cultural settings. Contributions examined the intersections of religion, migration, displacement, memory, identity, and community formation, highlighting how sacred performance traditions serve as important resources for cultural continuity and collective belonging.

Under the theme of Popular Music and Dance among Minorities, fifteen papers examined a wide range of genres, repertoires, and performance traditions, and offered new perspectives on topics such as hybridity, representation, belonging, political resistance, and social change. By engaging with both local experiences and transnational processes, these papers demonstrated the richness and complexity of contemporary popular music and dance practices among minority communities.

New Research accommodated the sixteen excellent submissions that did not fit neatly within the three themes above but demonstrate the breadth, vitality, and diversity of research conducted by members of the study group.

Hosting the 13th ICTMD Symposium on Music and Minorities in Yerevan was particularly meaningful as it marked the first international ICTMD event held in Armenia. From the perspective of the Local Arrangements Committee, the symposium provided an opportunity to bring local and regional scholars, researchers, performers, and cultural practitioners into closer contact with the wider ICTMD community.

The opening day of the symposium was held at the National Academy of Sciences, while the main academic programme took place at the Komitas State Conservatory. These venues connected the symposium directly with Armenia's principal institutions of music research and higher music education, while Kayt contributed its experience in cultural and educational heritage work.

An important aspect of the symposium was the involvement of the Armenian professional community. For many Armenian colleagues, this was their first participation in an ICTMD event, providing an introduction to the organisation and its international network. The symposium also generated considerable interest in ICTMD membership among Armenian scholars and researchers, opening possibilities for their continued participation in study groups, conferences, publications, and other activities.

Particular attention was given to the cultural program, which was conceived not simply as an accompanying element, but as an extension of the symposium's central themes. The opening reception featured the Tagpar Band and the Karin Song and Dance Ensemble. Following a performance of dances from the Armenian diaspora, Karin invited participants to join its dance circle, offering a direct experience of diaspora traditions as expressions of minority identity. The concert "Many Voices, One Stage" brought together inclusive ensembles and representatives of national minorities in Armenia, including Kamq Folk Dance Ensemble, Sun Bells Ensemble, Paros Chamber Choir, and Assyrian and Greek dance groups. Their participation highlighted different experiences of cultural belonging and inclusion, including disability and minority identity. The special guest, Yerakhosutiun (Trilogue), presented the tradition of Armenian *ashugh* music.



Paros Chamber Choir, conducted by Raffi Mikaelyan, performing at Many Voices, One Stage, a concert bringing together ensembles representing different minority communities and forms of inclusion in Armenia. Photo provided by Gurgen Dalyan.

The programme also included Aram Khachaturian's Gayane ballet at the Armenian National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, selected in part for its engagement with cultural identity and minority life. Croatian pianist Eva Kirchmayer-Bilić presented a concert devoted to works by Armenian and women composers. Participants encountered the music of Karabakh through the singing of displaced blind singer Marat Harutyunyan and the Nairyan Vocal Ensemble presented its approach to performing choral works for deaf audiences. During the final-day excursion organised for symposium participants, Kayt Band presented repertoire from the Armenian diaspora, and Khazer Choir performed Armenian sacred music.

The symposium included a visual and material heritage component. A guided picture exhibition by Katarina Bogunović Hočevar offered a visual exploration of the musical lives and cultural experiences of Romani and Sinti musicians in Slovenia. An exhibition space in the courtyard of the Komitas State Conservatory presented materials related to the cultural heritage of different communities, including Yezidi heritage, Karabakh, the Syrian Armenian community, and the embroidery traditions of Ottoman Marash. It also included a book exhibition featuring publications from Armenia and several of the countries represented at the symposium.

Together, these activities extended the symposium beyond the academic sessions, allowing participants to encounter music, dance, visual materials, and heritage practices in different social and cultural contexts. The programme thus complemented the scholarly discussions of music, identity, belonging, and minority cultures with opportunities for direct cultural experience.

Alongside the academic and cultural programme, the symposium also provided an important occasion for members to reflect on the activities, leadership, and future direction of the study group during its 27th Welcome Meeting. This included the proclamation of the results of the Vice-Chair election, which completed the transition to the Study Group's new Executive Committee. Mayco A. Santaella—who had served as Vice-Chair since 2021 and continued in the position following the 2025 election of Kai Tang as Chair and Ioannis Christidis as Secretary—concluded his term in 2026. The election was conducted by a Nomination Committee comprising Tom van Buren, Greta Schwörer-Kohl, and Svanibor Pettan (Convener). Two candidates, Tatevik Shakhkulyan and Evrim Hikmet Öğüt, stood for election. Tatevik Shakhkulyan was elected Vice-Chair. Both candidates were thanked for their participation, with appreciation expressed to outgoing Vice-Chair Mayco Santaella for his work and contributions to the Study Group and a warm welcome extended to Tatevik Shakhkulyan in her new role.

The meeting also provided an occasion to recognise, in a warm atmosphere of gratitude and appreciation, the contributions of two figures central to the history of the study group. Certificates of recognition were presented to Ursula Hemetek, founding Chair and long-serving Chair, and Svanibor Pettan, founding Vice-Chair and later Chair, in acknowledgment of their longstanding dedication and contributions to the Study Group.

Finally, several other matters were addressed during the Welcome Meeting, including new publications, the Study Group's online presence, updates from the Music and Minorities Research Center, proposals for hosting the next symposium, and the initiation of a discussion concerning the Study Group's name. Plans for publications arising from papers presented at the Yerevan Symposium were also considered, with participants invited to submit contributions by 1 January 2027 to: 2026proceedings@gmail.com. The publication format and editorial arrangements remain to be determined. These and other matters will be taken forward at the 28th Welcome Meeting, to be

held during the 49th ICTMD World Conference in Santiago, Chile, from 14 to 20 January 2027.

Photographs and videos from the symposium are available here.

Study Group on Musics of East Asia (MEA)

by HSU Hsin-Wen, outgoing Chair of the MEA Executive Committee (2024–2026)



The 9th Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Musics of East Asia was held 2 to 5 July 2026, at National Taiwan Normal University and the Taiwan Music Institute of the National Center for Traditional Arts in Taiwan. A total of 135 individual papers (including six lightning papers) and eight panels were submitted, resulting in a final programme of ninety-eight individual papers organised into twenty-three paper sessions and seven panel sessions. The Programme Committee included Anna YATES-LU (Chair), Naoko TERAUCHI, Sheryl Man-Ying CHOW, Mengtze CHU, Hyelim KIM, and Niki Shuo YANG. In addition, the symposium featured a 20th Anniversary Forum, one keynote address, two performances, two demonstrations, and one special event called the Music on Screen Film Festival, organised by the host institute, the Graduate Institute of Ethnomusicology of National Taiwan Normal University.

The symposium proceeded smoothly thanks to the efforts of the Local Arrangements Committee, led by Chun-Zen Huang of the Graduate Institute of Ethnomusicology and Shih-Che Lai, director of the Taiwan Music Institute. It attracted more than 150 participants from thirteen countries and regions, including the major regions represented within MEA—China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan—as well as Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the and United States. Topics covered included Buddhist music, *guqin* culture, music in religious and ritual contexts, the historical formation of musical cultures, cross-cultural encounters, migration and diasporic agency, cultural revival, the heritagisation of music, digital methods, and embodiment in music. These topics reflected the interdisciplinary and diverse landscape of East Asian music studies.

This symposium marked the twentieth anniversary of MEA. Following initial discussions about forming a study group on musics of East Asia at the 38th World Conference of the ICTM in Sheffield, UK, in August 2005, a conference on "East Asian Music and Modernity" took place in Yilan, Taiwan. During this event, participants in a roundtable meeting agreed to submit a proposal to the ICTM to establish the study group. The proposal and mission statement prepared by the Interim Executive Committee were soon approved by the ICTM Executive Board, officially establishing MEA (Wang, Terauchi, and Rees 2022). Twenty years later, the 9th Symposium of MEA returned to Taiwan. To commemorate this historic milestone, the Local Arrangements Committee organised the MEA 20th Anniversary Forum alongside the biennial symposium, expanding the traditional three-day event into a four-day academic gathering held across two venues.

On 2 July, following the opening performance of the Miaoli Chen Family Beiguan Bayin Ensemble and the opening ceremony, the MEA 20th Anniversary Forum was held, moderated by the outgoing chair, HSU Hsin-Wen. He invited all former chairs of the MEA Executive Committee—including Ying-fen WANG, Lawrence J. WITZLEBEN, Frederick LAU, Naoko TERAUCHI, Helen REES, KIM Heesun, and YANG Yuanzheng, as well as founding members SHEEN Dae-Cheol, TOKUMARU Yosihiko, and XIAO Mei—to participate either online or in person and share their reflections on pivotal turning points over the past twenty years and to address the designated themes of: changing intellectual agendas in MEA; shifting contexts and challenges for music and dance practitioners and scholars; and, transnational networks, emerging technologies, and the future of research. The panelists responded to questions and comments from the audience and concluded with a discussion on how MEA could better support early-career scholars, foster collaboration, and contribute to broader studies of music, culture, and society.

On 3 July, keynote speaker Jonathan Stock of University College Cork delivered an address titled "Rethinking Cosmopolitanism in East Asian Musical Contexts," offering fresh perspectives on East Asian musical cultures in broader global and transnational contexts. That afternoon, the National Center for

Traditional Arts' GuoGuang Opera Company presented an engaging lecture accompanied by a *jingju* makeup and movement demonstration. The Taiwan Music Institute also shared its research projects supporting the collection and transmission of traditional songs among various indigenous communities, providing participants with deeper insights into Taiwan's preservation, research, and promotion of traditional arts. In the evening, ticketed attendees enjoyed the GuoGuang Opera Company's performance of *Mr. Goodman Dumps His Wife* at the Main Theatre of the Taiwan Traditional Theatre Center.

On 4 July, the Music on Screen Film Festival, organised by the host institute (the Graduate Institute of Ethnomusicology at National Taiwan Normal University), screened eight films: six produced by faculty and students of the Graduate Institute of Ethnomusicology at National Taiwan Normal University, and two award-winning works from the 4th China Musics Ethnographic Film Festival organised by the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. The festival highlighted the integration of music research and media representation, offering attendees new avenues to engage with musical cultures through audiovisual work.

At the closing ceremony on 5 July, participants expressed their appreciation for the careful organisation and hospitality provided by the staff and students from National Taiwan Normal University and staff of the Taiwan Music Institute throughout the four-day event. The incoming Executive Committee for 2026–2028, consisting of four continuing members—Matthew GILLAN (Chair), LI Ya (Vice-Chair), LAW Ho Chak (Secretary), and Adam KIELMAN—and three incoming members—Joys H. Y. CHEUNG, Yoonhee CHANG, and Jeremy LEONG—was also announced. The outgoing committee members, HSU Hsin-Wen (Chair), Jocelyn CLARK, and WASEDA Minako, received recognition for their dedicated service during their terms.

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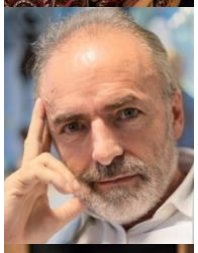
Wang, Ying-fen, Naoko Terauchi, and Helen Rees. 2022. "ICTM Study Group on Musics of East Asia." In *Celebrating the International Council for Traditional Music: Reflections on the First Seven Decades*. Edited by Svanibor Pettan, Naila Ceribašić, and Don Niles, 369–376. University of Ljubljana Press.

Study Groups on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia (PASEA), Indigenous Music and Dance (IMD), and Applied Ethnomusicology (AE)

by Made Mantle Hood, Chair of PASEA; Yuh-Fen Tseng, Chair of IMD; Huib Schippers, Chair of AE and Co-Chair of Programme Committee; and Nattapol Wissutipat, Co-Chair of Programme Committee









From 2 to 8 July 2026, the Study Groups on the Performing Arts of Southeast Asia (PASEA), Indigenous Music and Dance (IMD), and Applied Ethnomusicology (AE) held a joint symposium in Chiang Mai, Thailand, under the broad theme Ways of Knowing, Performing, Connecting, and Sustaining: Music and Dance Research in South-East Asia and Beyond. It was the first-ever three-Study-Group joint meeting in the history of ICTMD, co-hosted by Chulalongkorn University, Chiang Mai University, and commercial partner Kansadaeng Wattanatham Co.

Clearly, our initiative to bring together three Study Groups with overlapping agendas resonated with the ICTMD community. The response to the call was substantial. The programme committee considered 250 submissions for panels, roundtables, individual presentations, audiovisual presentations, workshops, and performances, and selected 180. We were delighted to see scholars, practitioners, and activists from the Study Groups on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia, Applied Ethnomusicology, and Indigenous Music and Dance come together for this historic joint symposium.



Participants of the 2026 ICTMD Study Groups Joint Symposium in Chiang Mai, bringing together members of the Performing Arts of Southeast Asia, Applied Ethnomusicology, and Indigenous Music and Dance Study Groups, along with scholars, practitioners, performers, and students from around the world. Photo courtesy of the Local Arrangements Committee (LAC).

For the programme committee, the task was exciting but far from simple: creating a programme that preserved the identity of each Study Group while exploring common themes and passions, and leaving sufficient room for the impromptu exchanges that make ICTMD Study Group meetings so memorable. We were greatly helped by the three keynote speakers—Vilawan Svetsreni, Deborah Wong, and Ricardo Trimillos—who all touched upon topics, opportunities, and challenges shared among the three Study Groups.

Three overarching themes provided initial points of intersection: changing approaches to music and dance as intangible cultural heritage; music and dance interventions in the contexts of human-made and natural disasters; and the challenges and possibilities facing new generations amid rapidly changing technologies, policies, and social realities. While each Study Group had its own focus, we tried to weave the programme around issues that connect us: heritage, communities, agency, and identity; technology and artificial intelligence (AI); ethics and integrity; and developing methodologies for complex settings, to name a few. In this spirit, we tried to ensure that the symposium provided not just a platform for sharing new ideas and contemplating existing ones, but also a place to foster cross-pollination across the Study Groups.

One of the most significant outcomes of the symposium was precisely this interaction across Study Group boundaries. The depth of exchange between cosmologies, ideologies, methodologies, and approaches crystallised in the individual paper sessions and a number of panels that explored specific themes and concerns more deeply, including Indigenous ways of knowing, music interventions in times of crisis, and the potential benefits and dangers of AI in relation to living traditions.

These intersections showed that PASEA, AE, and IMD, while approaching music and dance from different starting points, in fact have much in common. Questions of cultural agency, heritage, sustainability, intergenerational transmission, displacement, technological change, and researchers' relationships with the communities with whom they work repeatedly crossed Study Group boundaries. The joint format thus provided opportunities not only to present research but also to consider how regional, Indigenous, and applied perspectives might inform and challenge one another.

This question was addressed explicitly on the final morning in the plenary roundtable, "PASEA, AE, and IMD: Synergies and Differences in Focus and Approaches." Representatives of the three Study Groups and the local hosts reflected together on what had emerged during the preceding days and on both the common ground and distinctive perspectives represented by the three groups. The discussion underscored an important lesson of the symposium: collaboration need not diminish the particular identities of individual Study Groups. Rather, their different histories, regional orientations, methodologies, and intellectual priorities can become resources for dialogue.

And then there was music and dance: co-hosts Chulalongkorn University and Chiang Mai University presented more than 100 emerging and seasoned artists on stage, with a world-conference-worthy opening ceremony performance and a number of music and dance workshops, some of which culminated on stage in a surprise performance on the final day of the programme. Finally, the symposium also hosted a vibrant exhibition, *Melodies and Motifs in the Mountains: Traditional Music and Textiles of the Golden Triangles*, by Victoria Vorreiter. Her exhibition brought to the fore the rich musical diversity of Southeast Asia, illuminated an applied and engaged dimension of music and dance scholarship, and evoked a distinctly Indigenous resonance. In doing so,

it connected the three Study Groups in ways that were both tangible and deeply moving.



Students and faculty from Chiang Mai University and Chulalongkorn University following one of the symposium performances. The rich programme of music and dance presented by the host institutions was warmly received by symposium delegates. Photo by Yuh-Fen Tseng.

In the evaluations, most delegates expressed delight at the opportunity to connect and discover so many similarities across the three Study Groups, while others were insistent that the intimacy of single-Study-Group meetings offers a platform that should never be sacrificed. We agree: meetings involving more than two Study Groups at once are rewarding, but the resources and energy needed to realise them suggest that such gatherings might best occur once a decade, leaving ample room for each individual Study Group to thrive.



The final-day plenary roundtable "PASEA, AE, and IMD: Synergies and Differences in Focus and Approaches" chaired by Svanibor Pettan. From left to right: Made Mantle Hood (PASEA Chair), Huib Schippers (AE Chair and Programme Committee Co-Chair), Yuh-Fen Tseng (IMD Chair), Svanibor Pettan (roundtable convenor), Nattapol Wisuttipat (Programme Committee Co-Chair), Thitipol Kanteewong (Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University), and Paphutsorn Wongratanapitak (Kansadaeng Watthanatham Co., Ltd.). Photo courtesy of the LAC.

Ultimately, what was appreciated by most, if not all, participants was that the 2026 joint symposium demonstrated the value of bringing distinct scholarly communities into sustained conversation. The knowledge exchanged, performances shared, and professional and personal connections established in Chiang Mai provide a foundation for continuing dialogue among PASEA, AE, and IMD—and, more broadly, for further collaboration across the diverse Study Groups that constitute ICTMD.

Study Group on Sound, Movement, and the Sciences (SoMoS)

by Filippo Bonini Baraldi, Study Group Chair; Stella Paschalidou, Vice-Chair; and Rafael Caro Repetto Secretary







The 4th Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Sound, Movement, and the Sciences (SoMoS) took place at the Instituto de Etnomusicologia – Centro de Estudos em Música e Dança (INET-md) at Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, NOVA University of Lisbon (NOVA FCSH), Portugal, on 23–25 September 2026. The three-day schedule included twenty oral presentations in seven sessions, one keynote talk, the Study Group's business meeting, and a social dinner. The symposium was held in hybrid format: eleven of the presentations were given in person and nine online, while the keynote was delivered in person.

The opening sessions, on embodied knowledge and interaction, brought together ethnographic and quantitative approaches to musical practice. Papers addressed: gender and musical authority among women jazz musicians in Italy; a mixed-methods study of moshing as participatory sense-making; the combination of ethnographic interviews with Likert-scale questionnaires in the study of listening; and, sonic empathy in deity possession during *Jāgar* rituals in the Garhwal Himalaya. The session on transmission and learning explored pattern knowledge and embodied cognition in the Italian *tarantella*; the synchronous online teaching of Hindustani *Dhrupad*;

the role of algorithms and artificial intelligence in music pedagogy; and, controller affordances in a global online world-music composition classroom.

The keynote was given by Luiz Naveda (Minas Gerais State University, Brazil), who addressed the relationship between science, technology, and traditional knowledge in a talk entitled "The Intangible as a Disputed Territory: Science, Technology, and Traditional Knowledge in Music and Dance." A session on wellbeing followed, with contributions on: Milpirri as a culturally grounded approach to Indigenous youth wellbeing; queer Asturian traditional dance classes as spaces for self-expression and the construction of local identities; and, on mindfulness for musicians.

On the final day, the programme turned to musical and choreographic structure. The session on melodic and rhythmic frameworks combined work on the ergonomics of Trinidadian steelpans, computational modelling of coarticulation in Karnatak music, and a corpus-based analysis of text–rhythm alignment in *pansori*. The session on synchrony and coordination presented studies of timing and breath in Japanese *Noh* chant, of dancer–drummer synchrony in a Sri Lankan ritual, and of emergent choreography in generative dance. The final session, on dance, addressed the affordances of "danceability," the embodied philosophy of Nahuatl dance as offering, and an anthropological analysis of Nureyev's *The Nutcracker.*

During the business meeting on the last day of the symposium, the Secretary of the Study Group communicated the results of the elections for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. Filippo Bonini Baraldi (INET-md) was elected the new SoMoS Chair and Stella Paschalidou (Hellenic Mediterranean University) as the new SoMoS Vice-Chair, in both cases unanimously. Rafael Caro Repetto continues as Secretary until 2028. Several expressions of interest in hosting the 5th Symposium, to be held in 2028, were also discussed. Finally, it was unanimously decided that the proceedings of the 4th Symposium will be edited following the same format as those of the three previous symposia, and published in open access on the online platform Zenodo. Programme Committee Chair Samuel Horlor accepted to act as editor of the proceedings, possibly forming a team of co-editors.

The SoMoS Executive Committee warmly thanks the outgoing Chair, Kendra Stepputat, and Vice-Chair, Lara Pearson, for founding our Study Group, and for their engaged service along the last eight years. We would also like to thank all of those who contributed to this successful symposium, including the Programme Committee, the Local Organising Committee, the host institution, INET-md and NOVA FCSH, and most importantly, all presenters and other attendees who engaged so fully with the symposium.



Participants of the 4th Symposium of the Study Group on Sound, Movement, and the Sciences. Oslo, Norway. 25 September 2026. Photo provided by Filippo Bonini Baraldi.

Study Group on Traditions of African Music and Dance (TAMD)

by Susanne Fürniss, Study Group Chair



The 5th Study Group symposium took place from 9 to 13 March 2026. Following two symposia held entirely online, this was the first to allow in-person attendance again. The event was hosted by the Department of Music at the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, under the leadership of its Head of Department, Rita Adaobi Sunday-Kanu. However, the majority of speakers delivered their papers online. Presenters were from nine African countries (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa) and eight from European and American countries (Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Finland, France, Germany, UK, and USA).

Jean Kidula gave the keynote-lecture entitled "Calibrating the 'Normative Ear': (Re)Newing Music Traditions in Disposable Time in Africa" and George Dor delivered the lead paper "Natural Amplification

and Ambivalences in Borborbor Dance-Drumming of Today's Ghanaian Ewe Youth." See the complete programme here. Four topics were treated in thirty-three papers and one panel:

1) The first topic, Sustainability of African Indigenous Music and Dance in Modern Society, was discussed by most of the speakers in six sessions and divided into several sub-themes:

- Questioning Heritage, with three papers by Papa Kow Agyefi, Brett Pyper, and Ukeme A. Udoh;
- Sustainability Through Teaching, with three papers by Sonkanise ka Nkosi, Daouda Dao, and Bernard Bangoura;
- Creative Reinterpretation / Innovation, three papers by Nana Amowee Dawson, Francis Yao Kouame, Rick Deja and Thabisa Dinga;
- Transmission Through Writing, with the panel "Representing Sounds and Texts in Cameroonian Musical Traditions," with Byron Dueck, Kisito Essele Essele, Maxime Manifi Abouh, and Emmanuel-Moselly Makasso;
- Indigenous Music in a Modern Social Context, four papers by Ijeoma Iruka Forchu, Ketty Jackline Maina, Christian Onyeji and Elizabeth Onyeji, and Ouologo Jonathan Ouattara;
- Music in the Traditional Setting, with four papers by Amos Darkwa Asare, Blessing D. Adeleke, Albert Atchory Djedjess, and Bassirima Koné.

2) One session was dedicated to "The Ethics of Ownership in African Music and Dance" with five papers delivered by Paul and Charity Angya, Sisa Calapi and Rémy Jadinon, Jason Buchea, Omotolani E. Ekpo, and Joyce Mudengani Mochere.

3) Another session treated the topic "Archives of African Traditional Music and Dance" with four papers by Dion Malcom Eaby-Lomas and Vuyisani Mkwambi, Susanne Fürniss, Mickael Kouakou, and Christiano Tsope.

4) Finally, four papers dealt with "African Music and Dance Outside of Africa"; they were by Linda Cimardi, Elina Seye, Talieh Wartner-Attarzadeh, and Ailton Mario Nascimento.

The symposium showed again how important it is to bring together scholars from African countries and to maintain the dialogue between different academic traditions.

It also brought to the light the many difficulties the organisers had to face in terms of agenda, budget, and administration. The University of Port Harcourt offered the location and refurbished facilities for the symposium.

Although the ICTMD Secretariat still was in transition, it awarded the symposium a small grant, but many expenses had to be financed by the registration fee, the collection of which was a near to impossible task due to incompatibilities of bank systems and currencies. Moreover, security issues and the war in the Middle East made it impossible for several participants to come in person. However, despite these obstacles, the symposium was a real success, due to the superhuman efforts of the local organising committee, especially Rita Sunday-Kanu and Marie-Agatha Ozah who deserve our heartfelt gratitude. Amongst a large group of students, fifteen participants from close by universities managed to be in Port Harcourt, as well as one presenter from South Africa. Different groups and musicians offered a diverse cultural programme.

During the symposium, the Study Group on Traditions of African Music and Dance held a business meeting during which the decision was made that the acronym be TAMD.



Participants at the ICTMD symposium Nigeria. Photo provided by Susanne Fürniss.

Asian-European Music Research Journal (AEMR) No. 17

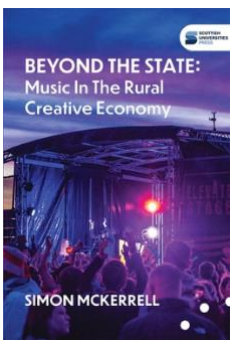


Xiao Mei and Gisa Jähnichen, eds. 2025. Berlin: Logos. English. 162 pp. p-ISSN: 2701-2689; e-ISSN: 2625-378X
www.logos-verlag.de/AEMR

This *Asian-European Music Research Journal (AEMR)* comprises eleven highly interesting articles and two short review essays. All are chosen according to the review outcomes and recommendations by EB members. History is crucial to all of them, whether long-term (Xu Duo, Akmaral Baikuatova, and Nurtaza Raushan Sabyrzhanovna), midterm (Olena Shemiakina, Chinthaka Prageeth Meddegoda, Kiswanto, Sasinut Phongnil and Tat Amaro, or Gisa Jähnichen) or recent (Xiao Mei, Xing Yuan, Zaure Smakova Nigmetkyzy, Gulnara Kuzbakova Zhanabergenovna, and Aigul Imasheva Tillyabekovna). Future visions are strictly embedded (Thongbang Homsombat, Tingting Tang, and Ameeta Fernando and Siluvaj Raja) and made accessible to a broad readership. We are extremely thankful to all authors and their contributions.

In the meantime, we have renewed the author guidelines for styles and reviews to expedite future submissions. Thanks for the ideas and concepts of many EB members, of which over 50% of the contributors are ICTMD-members. Further inquiries, comments, or suggestions are welcome and should be directed to the official email address of *AEMR*: AEMRC@shcmusic.edu.cn!

Beyond the State: Music in the Rural Creative Economy



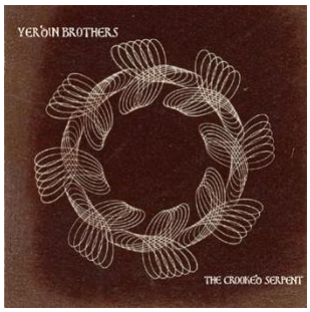
by Simon McKerrell. Scottish Universities Press. 2026. DOI: doi.org/10.62637/sup.fdpo4783.

In a major new study of music, this book establishes a nuanced model of sustainability that re-imagines the relationship between music, place, and capital in the rural creative economy. Based on detailed ethnographic research across the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the author rethinks the importance of place-based innovation and people's desire to participate in the arts to our understanding of economic, social and cultural sustainability in the rural creative economy.

This book takes an ethnographic approach to understanding music in the rural creative economy of the Highlands and Islands and brings a fresh understanding of sustainability in regional policy and creative lives. Drawing upon ethnographic evidence from over seventy interviews with musicians, venue operators, musical instrument makers, luthiers, music teachers, festival organisers, arts promoters, public officials, charity officers, police and educators, the book reveals the ingenuity, creativity and place-based innovation across the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

This book is published open access under a CC BY-NC Licence.

The Crooked Serpent

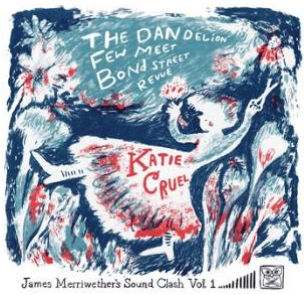


Verdin Brothers. Debacle Records, DBL 137. 2026. Digital/LP.

The Crooked Serpent moves through a wide territory of American roots music, bluegrass, blues, New Orleans and creole sounds, older string band forms, with a post-rock sense of when to build, when to hold still, when to let a phrase rotate and accrete until it means something different. Fingerpicked guitar and hammered dulcimer carry most of the record, light touch snappy drums, upright bass and field recordings alongside, bright enough on its face to draw you in, growing stranger the longer you stay.

Running underneath is "The Great Work," a separate piece the brothers recorded alongside the album, then ran through a tape machine until it turned sinister. It threads through the record throughout, surfacing and retreating, the sound of an awakening working its way up. The brothers built the record as a set of scenes leading somewhere: a coastal town, a glyph that calls something to it, and a hall full of folks dancing the dark away.

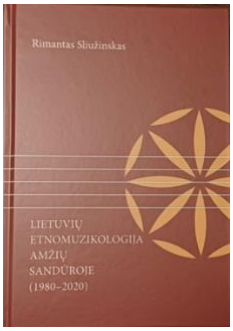
James Merriwether's Sound Clash Vol. 1: The Dandelion Few Meet Bond Street Revue



The Dandelion Few, James Merriwether, Bond Street Revue, Bond Street Rockers. Gnostic Recordings for PAN GRP-19. 2026. Digital/vinyl EP.

The Dandelion Few Meet Bond Street Revue (James Merriwether's Sound Clash Vol. 1) is a new collaborative recording project between the Newfoundland-based folk duo, The Dandelion Few, and enigmatic producer James Merriwether. This split 7" vinyl release is a sonic mash-up of North Atlantic traditional folk melodies and South Atlantic rhythms. On it, the Dandelion Few are accompanied by a motley cast of musicians in a danceable rendition of the traditional folk ballad "Katie Cruel" (Roud 1645). The flip side, "Basura Callejera," sees the Bond Street Rockers let loose with an Augustus Pablo inspired melodica dub intertwined with field recordings of street sounds that conjures images of heavy machinery amidst palm trees. The sleeve art by Chloe French Nelson strikes a note that perfectly suits the whimsy of the collaboration. Support for this project was provided by the City of St. John's.

Lietuvių etnomuzikologija amžių sandūroje (1980–2020) [Lithuanian ethnomusicology at the turn of the century (1980–2020)]
by Rimantas Sliužinskas. Klaipėda University Publishers. 2025. 352 pp. ISBN 978-609-481-263-7].



In 2025, Klaipėda University Press published the scholarly study and bibliographic compendium *Lithuanian Ethnomusicology at the Turn of the Centuries (1980–2020)* by Rimantas Sliužinskas, ICTMD National Representative for Lithuania. The 352-page volume offers a distinctive overview of the development of Lithuanian ethnomusicology.

The first part of the book presents a panorama of the scholarly activities of as many as thirty-nine Lithuanian ethnomusicologists representing different generations, from the patriarchs of the discipline to younger scholars.

The greatest practical value of the publication becomes evident in its second part. The bibliographic compendium is organised into six principal thematic groups: general publications on ethnic music; vocal folklore; traditional instrumental music; traditional choreography; traditional music of a religious nature; and the dissemination of musical folklore. Each group is further divided into six categories: scholarly publications, source editions, scientific articles, reviews, personalia, and other reference literature. In total, the bibliography contains 3,980 numbered entries.

When Nomadic Heritage Sounds: Music at the 6th World Nomad Games

by Razia Sultanova and Svanibor Pettan

The 6th World Nomad Games, held in Kyrgyzstan from 31 August to 6 September 2026, brought traditional sport, cultural performance, and scholarship into one international gathering. Against the setting of the Tian Shan Mountains and Lake Issyk-Kul, athletes competed while musicians, other artists, and researchers explored the living heritage of nomadic peoples. For those of us concerned with traditions of music and dance, this event marked a particularly welcome development: music became a substantial part of the games' programme, with its own international competition, opportunities for exchange and a closely connected scholarly forum.

The mountain setting was integral to that heritage. Kyrgyzstan's high alpine meadows, glaciers, and forests form the landscape in which pastoral traditions developed. Many Kyrgyz families continue to move their livestock to summer pastures known as *jailoos*, living there seasonally in felt-covered *yurts*. The Games thus celebrated practices that remain part of contemporary life.

More than 3,000 athletes took part in the Games, with competitors registered from 104 countries. Equestrian contests, wrestling, archery, and other traditional sports attracted considerable public attention. Yet the games were also a cultural meeting place. Music accompanied public ceremonies and performances, while the wider programme included dance, storytelling, crafts, dress, and exhibitions. Together, these activities presented nomadic heritage as something people continue to practise, adapt, and share.

At the centre of the music programme was an international traditional music competition involving seventy-seven musicians from thirty-eight countries. Its three categories—storytelling, instrumental performance, and vocal and instrumental performance—gave distinct forms of oral artistry a prominent place within the games. The geographical reach of the competition made it much more than a showcase of Central Asian traditions: it offered a rare setting in which performers could encounter one another's approaches to narrative, voice, and instrument.

The Grand-Prix winners were the young storyteller Nurzhan Tumenbaeva from Kygyzstan, *kamancheh* virtuoso Mehri Asadullaeva from Azerbaijan, and throat singer and instrumentalist Damdyn Dalai from Tuva, Russia, whose performances embodied the artistry at the heart of the gathering. Other prizewinners included singer Osei Korankye Abena Serwaa from Ghana; Nurmetova Dilfuza, a blind *dutar* player and singer from Uzbekistan; Horomona Horo, a Māori multi-instrumentalist from Aotearoa/New Zealand; and Marifat Sufi Band from Pakistan. Together, these artists reflected the international breadth of the competition. Encounters with musicians remind us that a tradition lives through particular people: through their skills, choices, teachings, and relationships with audiences. The scale of the Games was impressive, but it was these moments of attentive listening that made its musical contribution memorable.

The competition also raised questions familiar to ICTMD members. What happens when an art traditionally learned through listening, participation, and relationships between generations enters an international contest? How can a jury recognise excellence across traditions whose purposes and standards differ? Competition can bring visibility and support to artists, but its lasting value depends on the conversations it encourages about transmission, context, and the knowledge performers carry. These questions deserve continued attention as music develops its place in future Games.

Roza Amanova, People's Artist of Kyrgyzstan and Head of the Research Center for Traditional Culture and Art under the National Academy of Sciences of Kyrgyzstan, played a leading role in the traditional music festival and its scholarly activities. Her work, together with that of the wider organising team, helped give music a presence that extended beyond the stage. A recording studio set up in a yurt, Nomad Heritage, offered a place to document performers, researchers, and bearers of tradition. Workshops and informal music making created further opportunities to listen, learn, and meet. Such encounters are especially valuable at a large international event: they allow musicians to exchange knowledge directly, in

ways that a scheduled performance alone cannot provide.

The scholarly programme strengthened this connection between performance and research. The international conference, “Nomadic Civilisations: Heritage, Paradigm and the Future,” formed part of the Games. In its section on the cultural heritage of nomadic peoples, more than forty researchers from twenty-three countries participated in person, with over thirty others joining online. Discussion addressed the study, preservation, and future development of nomadic cultures, including their musical traditions. It was especially good to welcome ICTMD Secretary General Marcia Ostashewski, Vice President Brian Diettrich, Executive Board Member Daniel K. Avorgbedor, and several National Representatives and Study Group Chairs, alongside other ICTMD colleagues, who actively contributed to panels and discussions. Bringing scholars and performers into the same event created possibilities for research grounded in artistic practice and for collaborations that may continue long after the Games.

For visitors moving between performances, academic sessions, and sporting venues, the breadth of the Games made clear that nomadic heritage cannot be contained within any single discipline. Its forms of knowledge include movement, craft, oral expression, music, and the skills through which communities sustain them.







Photos by Razia Sultanova. To the right: Roza Amanova (top); Celebrating through dance, with traditional Kyrgyz yurts in the background (middle); The winner of competition Kyrgyz singer and komuz player Nurjan Tumenbayeva (in green) (botton). Below: Kyrgyz girls serving as cultural ambassadors through a traditional ritual of hospitality.









Photos by Razia Sultanova. On the left: Chair of the National Committee of Sri Lanka Lasanthi Manaranjanie Kalinga Donar "Receiving Certificate of Appreciation at the 6th World Nomad Games, 2026" (top); Daniel K. Avorgbedor and Alireza Shahini (middle); Galima Lukina, Evgeny Kononenko, Roza Amanova, and Razia Sultanova) (botton).







Photos by Razia Sultanova. On the right: Resting between sessions (top); Waiting for the bus on our journeys to and from the conference—smiling, chatting, and enjoying a moment to relax together (middle); When the Conference at the Ruh Ordo Cultural Centre is over (botton).

The 6th World Nomad Games provided a valuable international platform for traditional music and for the people who perform and study it. The task now is to build on the relationships formed in Kyrgyzstan: to support performers beyond the moment of competition, make recordings useful and accessible to the communities concerned, and continue dialogue between artists and researchers. We are grateful to Roza Amanova and to her assistants Ainura Sultanbayeva, Zhainna Sadykbekova, Gulmira Borubayeva, and Lera Nedlin for their invaluable work on the performance and research programmes. The Games were a memorable celebration, and their musical legacy offers much to carry forward.

Photos by Svanibor Pettan.











Post Script: While the international conference as part of the 6th World Nomad Games was not an ICTMD-hosted event, ICTMD members participation in and support for the artistic and scholarly engagements in Kyrgyzstan testify to the council's beneficial collaborations across regional and global events.

On the left: ICTMD Secretary General Marcia Ostashewski, Vice President Brian Diettrich, and Executive Board Member Daniel Kodjo Avorgbedor (top); Jury members rest with colleagues in a portable felt-covered yurt (bottom).
On the right; Horomona Horo performing in the competition (top); ICTMD Ambassador Dusen Kasseinov and Roza Amanova (middle); The main concert stage was a showcase of efficient use of modern technology (bottom).

The Thread of Memory: Romances and Rituals in the Highlands of Mérida

by Rosa Iraima Sulbarán Zambrano
photos by Rosa Iraima Sulbarán Zambrano and Karen Torres

Romances in the state of Mérida (Venezuela) are not static pieces; they are acts of cultural resistance and community identity. In a fast-paced and homogenising world, sustaining the practice of the *romancero* in the *paraderas de Niño*, *velorios de angelito*, and devotional festivities is a form of cultural re-existence. This photo essay documents the Fiesta a San Benito in El Valle (Libertador municipality, Mérida, Venezuela), where sung poetry, community organisation, and improvised word weave a bridge between peninsular origin and Andean geography. This research proposal is part of the project "Romancero and Our-American Sonic Re-Existence: Decolonial Practices of Traditional Singing in the Metropolitan Axis of Mérida," funded by the Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe Rómulo Gallegos (CELARG). José Carlos Mariátegui Program for Research Stimulus. Research Unit: Sonic Identities of Our America. Caracas, Venezuela.

The *romería* of San Benito travels through the sectors of El Valle over several days, carrying the image of the saint from house to house. The procession is a physical movement where the community redefines its ties with space and with the divine. The General and the Captains of the Brotherhood lead the procession, surrounded by vassals and musicians who accompany with musical pieces and the burning of gunpowder that announces the celebration. The *romería* turns the streets into a ritual space, where sound and movement articulate collective memory.

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On the right, from top to bottom: The Captain carrying the Saint; Musicians and vassals accompanying the procession; The romeria *travels through the community of El Valle; Musicians and vassals during the procession.*

***Novena*: The Word That Is Sung**

The sung *novena* to San Benito is the heart of the festival. In the Las Cuadras sector, musicians and vassals gather to sing chants dedicated to the saint (*romances a lo divino*), accompanied by *cuatros*, violins, *maracas*, *charrasca*, and *tamboras*. The traditional polyphonic structure —lead voice, *falsa*, and tenor— remains alive, evidencing the persistence of devotional forms that combine Hispanic heritage, local organology, and community participation. The *novena* is a devotional prayer that sustains memory and identity.









On the left: Vassals asking permission from the saint to begin the novena *(top)*; *Musical instruments accompanying the* novena: charrasca *(on left),* cuatros *(in centre and on far right), and violins (centre, behind one of the cuatros) (bottom).*

On the right: Altar (top); The community gathered during the devotion of the Captian and the vassals (bottom).

***Danza* : The Body as Ritual Language**

The dance to San Benito is a form of embodied knowledge. The dancers, by wearing the yellow capes characteristic of the Brotherhood of Vassals, become San Benito during the celebration, as stated by Captain Melinto Avendaño. The couples take niches with the image of the saint and move to the rhythm of the music, establishing a bodily and spiritual link with the revered figure. The steps, turns, and spatial arrangement express a worldview that articulates devotion, community, and territory. The dance is not decoration: it is the ritual itself.





On right: General of the Brotherhood dancing with the espuntón, *a ritual spear (top);* Promeseros *dancing with the niche and the* espuntòn *of the saint (bottom).*

Top left: Intergenerational participation in the dance to San Benito.



***Rostros*: The Guardians of Memory**

Behind every chant, every step, and every prayer there are faces that sustain the tradition. The culture bearers, from the children learning to dance to the elders guiding the ritual, are the true guardians of memory. The women, organisers, and cooks, sustain the logistics and community life that make the celebration possible. This section pays homage to those who, with their time and knowledge, keep the tradition alive.



Pedro Avendaño, General of the Brotherhood.







The musical practice of the new generation (top);.
Girl with the niche of the saint (middle);
Child vassals (bottom).

The Fiesta a San Benito in El Valle is a living example of how Andean communities negotiate the permanence of memory in the face of urban transformations. The *romería*, the *novenas*, the dances, and the faces documented here are not vestiges of the past, but living archives of identity and cultural resilience. Documenting these practices is not only an academic exercise: it is an act of recognition and a commitment to intergenerational transmission. The tradition remains alive because there are those who sustain it with their voice, their body, and their faith.

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As of January 2026, the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance is officially represented in 128 countries or regions. The most current version of the ICTMD World Network can be found at ictmd.org/world-network.

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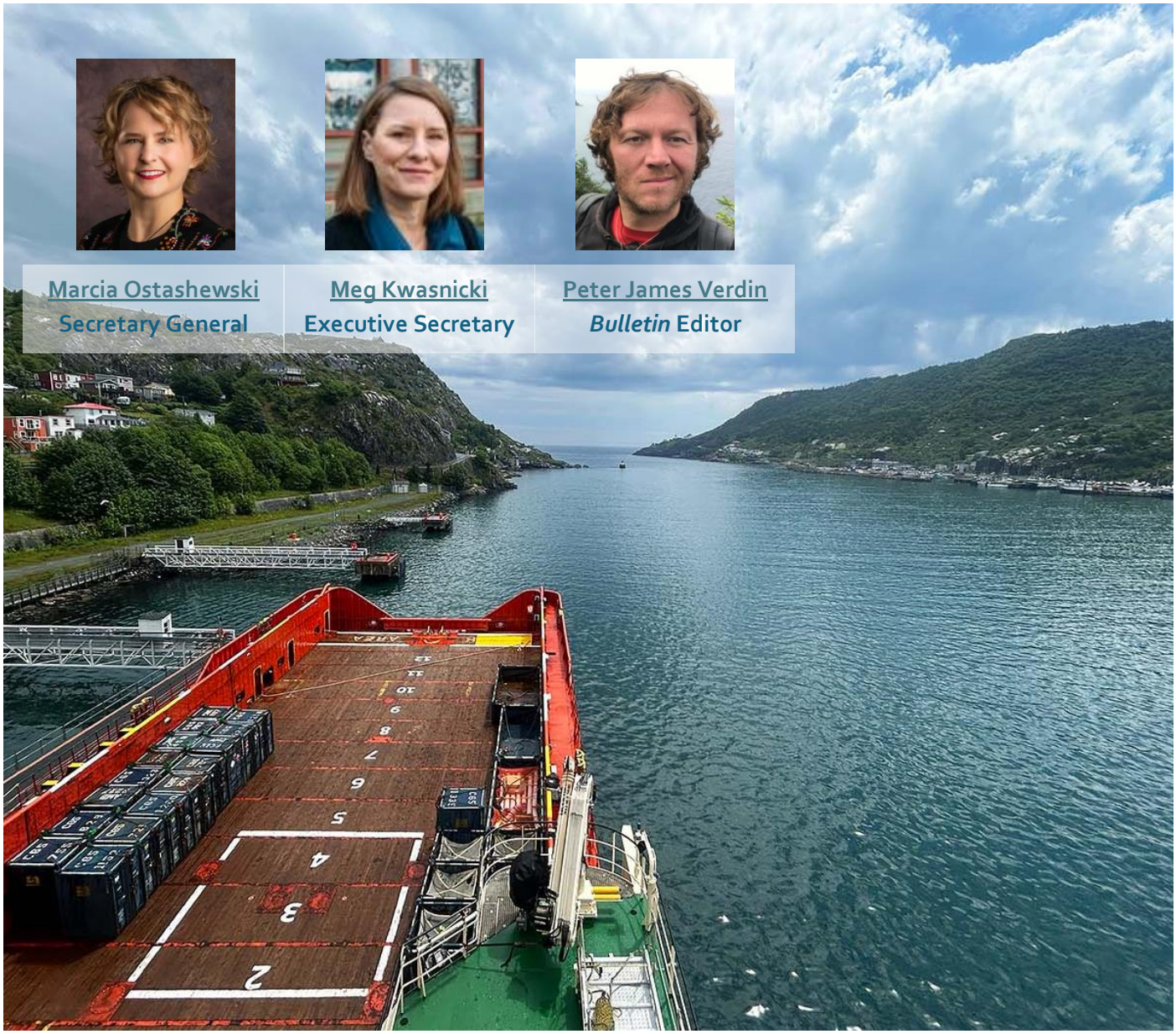
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The Secretariat is the body responsible for the day-to-day operations of ICTMD, and is the main channel of communication between the Council's governing body—the Executive Board—and its members, subscribers, partners, and affiliates.

The current Secretariat comprises the Secretary General, an Executive Secretary, and a Bulletin Editor who are appointed by the Executive Board.

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View of "The Narrows" taken by the Bulletin *Editor from a vessel berthing in St. John's harbour before a performance for the 2026 St. John's Harbour Symphony. The Narrows is the only access to St. John's harbour from the Atlantic Ocean and the surrounding cliffs provide a natural amphitheatre within which the Harbour Symphony is held.*

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance is a scholarly organisation that aims to further the study, practice, documentation, preservation, and dissemination of music and dance of all countries. To these ends the Council organises World Conferences, Symposia, Colloquia, and Fora, and publishes the *Traditions of Music and Dance* and the online *Bulletin of the ICTMD*.

As a non-governmental organisation in formal consultative relations with UNESCO and by means of its wide international representation and the activities of its Study Groups, the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance acts as a bond among peoples of different cultures and thus contributes to the peace of humankind.

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By becoming a member of ICTMD, you will join the largest international community of music and dance researchers, and will be entitled to:

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Our members hail from every corner of the world, and we strive to make membership fees as fair as possible to all who wish to join the Council.

In 2025 a new tiered membership system was implemented, that matches membership fees with members' gross annual income. Limited numbers of both discounted and waived memberships will also be available every year.

Please visit www.ictmd.org/membership to learn more.

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For any questions regarding memberships, please write to: secretariat@ictmd.org.

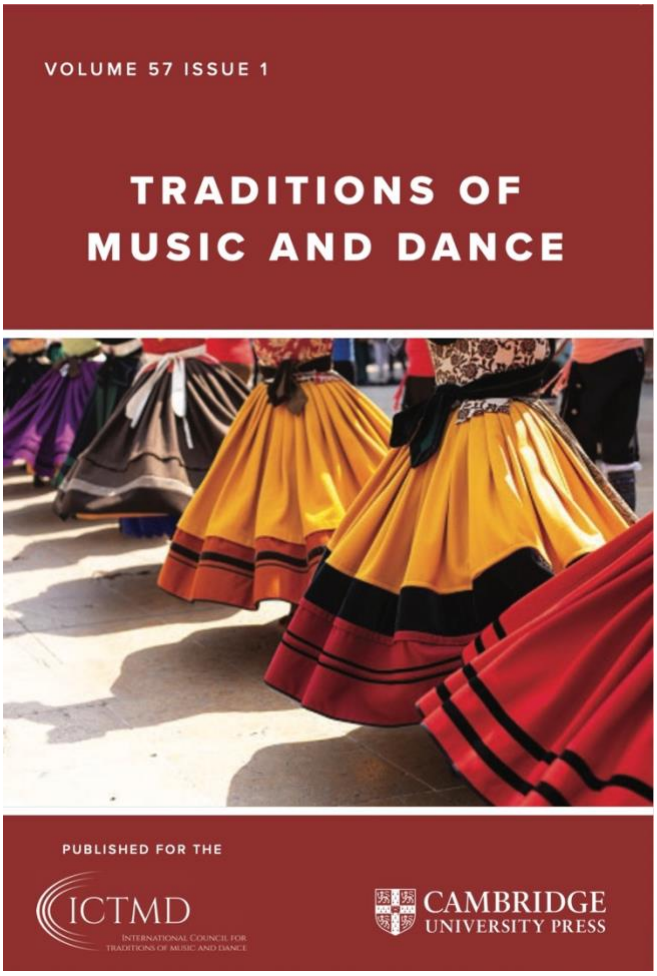
PUBLICATIONS BY ICTMD

Traditions of Music and Dance

Traditions of Music and Dance (TMD) is a refereed scholarly journal which carries essays, reviews, and reports in the area of traditional music and dance research. Since 2019 it is published on ICTMD's behalf by Cambridge University Press.

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TMD was established in 1949 as the *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*. Since 2022 it is published twice a year, in July and December. All ICTMD members in good standing have access to *TMD* issues online and/or in printed form.

The entire run of *TMD* and its predecessors is accessible via Cambridge Core.

For more information about submissions to *TMD*, and how to get back issues (both in print and electronic form), please visit *TMD's* home page.

Traditions of Music and Dance

The *Bulletin of the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance* carries news from the world of music and dance research, a calendar of upcoming events, and reports from ICTMD Study Groups and ICTMD National and Regional Representatives.

ISSN (Online): 2304-4039

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