

Call for Submissions

Harvard Graduate Music Forum Virtual Conference, Feb. 19-20, 2021

Conference Website: <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/gmf21>

To Begin Again: Music, Apocalypse, and Social Change

In the midst of a pandemic, environmental disasters, post-truth politics, and glaring social injustices, the global atmosphere feels apocalyptic. As we doomscroll our way through “unprecedented times,” music moves along with us, enabling individual expression, collective response, or momentary distraction in the face of impossibly challenging circumstances.

If an apocalypse is an “end of times,” apocalyptic events serve as new beginnings and catalysts for massive change. On varying scales, apocalypses have happened and will continue to happen. Intersectional analyses of phenomena such as chattel slavery, colonization, and climate change reveal the disproportionate effects of these ongoing apocalyptic processes on marginalized communities. Recent calls for abolition and reconstruction – change that dismantles old systems while creating new ones – have rung out nationwide, and echo beyond US borders. And throughout these world-ending and world-beginning events, music participates and persists.

The 2021 Harvard Graduate Music Forum Conference seeks to examine how music, musicians, sound, and musical objects address apocalyptic concepts and theories, broadly construed. We welcome proposals from graduate students in historical musicology, ethnomusicology, music theory, music composition, performance, and anyone interested in music beyond these sub-disciplines. Presenters are invited to submit a proposal for papers, lecture-recitals, or other scholarly presentations on any subject of musical interest.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- sonic or musical objects specifically addressing apocalypse or large-scale disaster
- post-apocalyptic futures and abolitionism
- music and spiritual/religious apocalypse
- musically-oriented speculations about alternative or post-apocalyptic realities (e.g. Afrofuturism, magical realism, etc.)
- music and (social) revolution
- historical discourses on music, time, and the future

Abstracts should be limited to **200 words** for presentations; those seeking to offer a lecture-recital or other alternative format may exceed these limits if warranted.

Please submit your abstract via this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/6GvaWcSW6Lb1ZgAk7> by **Monday, November 23rd**. If you have any questions, please email the co-chairs of this conference, Cana McGhee and Siriana Lundgren at gmfconference2021@gmail.com