

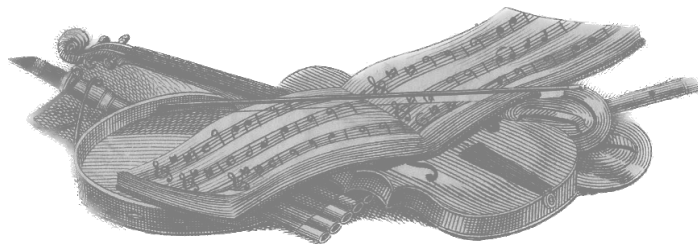
Abolitionism and the Arts in the Long Eighteenth Century

An Interdisciplinary Symposium & Concert

Saturday, May 6, 2023
Columbia University

10:00 am to 5:00 pm Symposium
at the Heyman Center for the Humanities

5:30 to 8:30 pm Concert & Panel
at the Columbia Maison Française



Opposition to slavery and the slave trade permeated the art worlds of literature, music, and visual art in the long eighteenth century. Europeans and Americans composed poetic critiques of the slave trade, sang songs of sympathy for enslaved people, and engraved images that asserted the common humanity of Africans and Europeans. This interdisciplinary symposium brings together musicologists, literary and theater scholars, art historians, and historians to think through connections between the arts and the history of abolitionism in the Atlantic world. Symposium participants will present research that is grounded in their own disciplines but that speaks to wider historical questions, e.g.:

- *What approaches did writers, musicians, and artists take to the problems of slavery and the slave trade?*
- *In what ways did their creative activities subvert or reinscribe stereotypes about Africans and African-descended people?*
- *How did the materiality of the objects they produced—musical scores, teapots, broadsides—affect the types of abolitionist messages they promoted?*
- *Did these political artworks complement or stray from the official strategies of organizations such as the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade?*

We hope the conference will create connections between scholars of different fields and inspire new scholarship on the theme of abolitionism and the arts.

Symposium Schedule

The Heyman Center for the Humanities at Columbia University, 10 am to 5 pm

10:00 am Coffee

10:15 am Welcome

Julia Hamilton (Music, Columbia University)

10:30 am Opening Remarks

Atesede R. Makonnen (English, Columbia University)

CHAIR: **Stephanie Hershinow**, English, Baruch College, CUNY

11:15 am Panel 1: "Staging Abolitionism"

Callum Blackmore (Music, Columbia University), "The Limits of Anti-Slavery Messages on the Operatic Stage in Colonial Saint-Domingue: Enlightenment, Representation, and the Code Noir"

Shruti Jain (English, Binghamton University, SUNY), "Caste-ing Abolition: Race and Caste in Mariana Starke's *The Sword of Peace*"

Scott M. Sanders (French, Dartmouth College), "An Uneasy Republican Marriage: Bordeaux's Afro-French Community with the Jacobins"

CHAIR: **Christopher Leslie Brown** (History, Columbia University)

Q&A with all three panelists begins at 12:15 pm

12:45 pm Lunch Break

1:45 pm Panel 2: "Abolitionism in Literature and Art"

Frank Felsenstein (English, Ball State University), "An Ekphrastic Interlude: From Mainland Liberty to Island Enslavement in the Story of Inkle and Yarico"

Srividhya Swaminathan (English, St. John's University), "Anti-blackness, Caricature and the Tropes of Abolition"

Kaushik Tekur (English, Binghamton University, SUNY), "'Wonder': An Abolitionist Aesthetic Category"

CHAIR: **Kathleen Alves** (English, Queensborough Community College, CUNY)

Q&A with all three panelists begins at 2:45 pm

3:15 pm Coffee Break

3:30 pm Plenary Dialogue

Adrienne L. Childs (Art History, The Phillips Collection)

Patricia A. Matthew (English, Montclair State University)

5:00 pm Walk Break (walk to Maison Française)

Concert & Panel Schedule

Columbia Maison Française

5:30 to 8:30 pm

5:30 pm Concert

Awet Andemicael (Soprano, Yale University)

Magdalena Baczewska (Piano, Columbia University)

With remarks by **Julia Hamilton** (Music, Columbia University)

6:30 pm Post-Concert Panel

Awet Andemicael (Soprano, Yale University)

Magdalena Baczewska (Piano, Columbia University)

CHAIR: **Berta Joncus** (Music, Goldsmiths, University of London)

Note: the concert and post-concert panel will be filmed by **Stuart Breczinski**, edited by **Abi Sinclair** and **Mariano Nuñez West**, and posted to the conference website after the event:
abolitionism.universityseminars.columbia.edu

7:00 pm Reception

Concert Program

Columbia Maison Française, 5:30 pm

“The Negro’s Lamentation” (1800) William Howard
(d. 1834)

“Forc’d from Home and all its Pleasures” (ca. 1797) John Wall Callcott
(1766–1821)

“The Hapless Negro Boy” (ca. 1790) Thomas Hamly Butler
(ca. 1755–1823)

“The Negro Girl” (ca. 1801) William Carnaby
(1772–1839)

“The Negro’s Complaint. The Words by a Gentleman; inscribed to Granville Sharpe [sic] Esq. Music by a Female Correspondent—an Amateur,” in *The Lady’s Magazine* (1793) Miss Greenwood
(? – ?)

“Am I Not a Man and Brother?” to the tune of Thomas Williams’s “The Bride’s Farewell,” in W.W. Brown’s *The Anti-Slavery Harp: A Collection of Songs for Anti-Slavery Meetings* (ca. 1848) Anonymous,
selected by William Wells Brown
(ca. 1814–1884)

Cotillions &c. (1776) Ignatius Sancho
“The Runaway”
“The Feathers”
“Minuet” (ca. 1729-1780)

“Vive le Roy”
“Shandy Hall”
“Tant mieux”

Twelve Country Dances (1779)
“Lord Dalkeiths Reel”
“All of one Mind”
“Mungo’s Delight”

Selected Spirituals
“Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child”
“Go Down, Moses”
“Steal Away”
“De Gospel Train”
“Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho”

Ignatius Sancho
(ca. 1729-1780)

By enslaved Black musicians of the C19,
Arranged by Harry T. Burleigh (1866–1949)

Performers

Joy is the hallmark of Awet Andemicael’s artistry. A critically-acclaimed concert and recording soprano, she has sung across North America, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, with ensembles including the Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Handel and Haydn Society, and Bach Collegium Japan. She holds degrees from Yale University, Yale Divinity School (YDS)/Institute of Sacred Music (ISM), the University of Notre Dame, UC Irvine, and Harvard University. Dr. Andemicael has published articles and chapters on Christian theology, music and faith, and other topics, and is currently Associate Dean for Marquand Chapel and Assistant Professor (adj) in Theology at Yale.

Magdalena Baczewska [pronounced ba-CHEV-ska] is a pianist, harpsichordist, recording artist, speaker, and an educator. She is a Senior Lecturer and the Director of the Music Performance Program at Columbia University. Baczewska has appeared internationally with the world’s leading orchestras,

among them the San Francisco Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, and China National Symphony. She has toured extensively with the Grammy and Oscar-winning composer Tan Dun. Her critically acclaimed discography spans many genres, from pre-Baroque keyboard music to collaborations with techno and hip-hop artists. Embracing the dual role of an educator and administrator at Columbia, Baczewska directs a program that gathers over 400 student musicians, including members of the elite Columbia-Juilliard Exchange.

Symposium Speakers and Chairs

Kathleen Tamayo Alves is Associate Professor and Deputy Chair of English at Queensborough Community College of The City University of New York where she teaches literature and composition. Her research centers on eighteenth-century literature and culture, medicine, and literary history, and she has recently published for *Journal for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*, *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, *Aphra Behn Online*, and *The Rambling*. Her book-in-progress, *Body Language: Medicine and the Eighteenth-Century Comic Novel*, currently under review at Bucknell University Press, explores how medicine shaped and is shaped by comic language through fictional dramatizations of female-specific medical phenomena, such as menstruation, hysteria, and pregnancy.

Callum Blackmore is a graduate student in historical musicology at Columbia University in the City of New York studying French opera in the long eighteenth century. His dissertation, “Opera at the Dawn of Capitalism: Staging Economic Change in France and Its Colonies from Rameau to Cherubini,” explores representations of economic life on the operatic stage in the lead-up to the French and Haitian Revolutions. His research has been supported by the Barker Fellowship and the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life.

Christopher Brown is a historian of Britain and the British empire, principally in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with special emphasis on the comparative history of slavery and abolition, and with secondary interests in the Atlantic Slave Trade and the Age

of Revolutions. His current research centers on the history of European experience on the African coast at the height of the Atlantic slave trade, and continues early commitments to the rise and fall of slavery in the British Empire. Published work has received prizes in four distinct fields of study – American History, British History, Atlantic History, and the history of Slavery, Abolition, and Resistance. Completed projects include *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* and, with Philip D. Morgan, *Arming Slaves: Classical Times to the Modern Age*.

Adrienne L. Childs is an independent art historian and curator and adjunct curator at The Phillips Collection. Childs is co-curator of *The Colour of Anxiety: Race, Sex and Disorder in Victorian Sculpture for the Henry Moore Institute*. She was awarded the 2022 Driskell Prize by the High Museum for scholarly work in African American art. She curated the exhibition *Riffs and Relations: African American Artists and the European Modernist Tradition* at the Phillips Collection. She has held fellowships at The Hutchins Center at Harvard University, The Clark Art Institute and CASVA among others. Her current book project is *Ornamental Blackness: The Black Figure in European Decorative Arts*.

Frank Felsenstein is the Reed D. Voran Distinguished Professor of Humanities Emeritus at Ball State University. He is author of *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes, 1660-1830* (1995), *English Trader Indian Maid: An Inkle and Yarico Reader* (1999), and co-author of *What Middletown Read: Print Culture in an American Small City* (2015). He has prepared editions of works by Tobias Smollett (*Travels through France and Italy*), John Thelwall (*Incle and Yarico*), and Peter Aram. He is completing *No Life Without You: Refugee Love Letters from the 1930s*, which recaptures his parents’ flight from Nazi Germany. Felsenstein previously taught at the University of Leeds.

Shruti Jain is a PhD candidate at Binghamton University (SUNY). Her research is interested in networks between caste and race in the global eighteenth century. She is also the co-host and co-producer of the podcast “Immigrants Wake America,” which helps her explore the role that podcasts play in digital archiving in the Eighteenth century and beyond.

Atesede Makonnen investigates the impact of racialized visibility on British culture at the turn of the nineteenth century, exploring how the approaching end of slavery sparked new consideration and wariness of black subjects and gave birth to persistent forms of anti-blackness centered on the concept and act of seeing. This work has received support from organizations including The American Trust for the British Library, The New York Public Library, and the Folger Shakespeare Library and her work has been published in *Studies in Romanticism*, *European Romantic Review*, *Symbiosis*, *The Keats-Shelley Journal*, and *Victorian Studies*.

Scott M. Sanders is an Associate Professor of French and affiliated faculty of Music at Dartmouth College. His research investigates British and Caribbean influences on French performance culture. His first book, *Voices from Beyond: Physiology, Sentience and the Uncanny in Eighteenth-Century French Literature*, won the 2021 Walker Cowen Memorial Prize for outstanding scholarship in eighteenth-century studies. In it, he investigates eighteenth-century French conceptions of the voice across scientific, philosophical, and literary texts. His second book project, entitled *An Uneasy Marriage: Reflections of the Black Atlantic on French Stages*, examines the influence of the Black Atlantic on eighteenth-century French theater, especially in theatrical works produced across the naval admiralties in Metropolitan France, including the slave trading ports Bordeaux and Nantes.

Srividhya Swaminathan is the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies in St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at St. John's University. Her field of scholarship is eighteenth-century social movements with a focus on the rhetoric around the British transatlantic slave trade. She is the author of *Debating the Slave Trade* (2009) and has co-edited two collections on topics relevant to the period. Her current focus has shifted to contemporary issues that are the legacy of slavery, specifically antiblackness and critical race and ethnic studies.

Kaushik Tekur is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of English, Binghamton University (SUNY). His research interest lies in studying the intersections of the long 18th century, its literary forms, and the British Empire's evolving policing and surveillance practices. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Eighteenth-Century*

Fiction, *Keats-Shelley Review*, and *The LA Review of Books*. He tweets at @kaushik_tekur.

Organizing Committee

Julia Hamilton is a Lecturer in Music at Columbia University, where she received her PhD in 2021 with a dissertation entitled "Political Songs in Polite Society: Singing about Africans in the Time of the British Abolition Movement. ca. 1787 to 1807." She has published an article and a forthcoming book chapter on British women's abolitionism and domestic music-making and is currently writing a book entitled *Abolitionism at Home: Women, Music, and Material Culture in Britain, 1760 to 1838*.

Stephanie Insley Hershinow is associate professor of English at Baruch College, City University of New York. She is co-editor of *Digital Defoe: Studies in Defoe and His Contemporaries* and chair of the Columbia Seminar in Eighteenth-Century European Culture. Stephanie is the author of *Born Yesterday: Inexperience and the Early Realist Novel* (Johns Hopkins, 2019) and the editor of *Jane Austen's Emma* (Norton, 2022). Currently, she is at work on two books: one on legal and literary personhood in the long eighteenth century, and another on Jane Austen's storytelling.

A Reader in Music at Goldsmiths, University of London, **Berta Joncus**'s specialisms include 18th-century musical celebrity culture, the role of the performer in creating musical works, and computational music editorship. Her monograph *Kitty Clive, or The Fair Songster* (2019) is a bold re-reading of Clive's music as a medium of the star singer-actor's onstage artistry. Berta's 2020 edition for *Bärenreiter* of the 1762 pastiche opera *Love in a Village* is the first-ever critical hybrid score – that is, a bound publication with notes and digitized primary sources online – of an English work. Since 2019, Berta has been researching transatlantic Black music of the long 18th century.

Patricia A. Matthew is associate professor of English at Montclair State University. She is the editor of *Written/Unwritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure* (2016) and special issues of *Romantic Pedagogy Commons*, *European Romantic Review*,

and Studies in Romanticism. Her work has been published in refereed journals including *The Keats-Shelley Journal*, *PMLA*, and *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. She has written about race and regency-era culture for *The Atlantic*, *Lapham's Quarterly*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books* and *The Times Literary Supplement*. She is co-editor of the series *Race in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture* (Oxford University Press). The 2022-2023 Anthony E. Kaye Fellow at the National Humanities Center, she is writing a book about sugar, gender, and British abolitionist culture for Princeton University Press.

Co-Sponsors

The organizing committee would like to thank the following institutions for their support of this symposium:

- The University Seminar in Eighteenth-Century European Culture, Columbia University
- The Center for Ethnomusicology, Columbia University
- The Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities at Columbia University
- The Columbia Maison Française, Columbia University
- The Department of Music, Columbia University
- The Music Department, Goldsmiths, University of London
- The Royal Musical Association
- *Music & Letters*

Resources for Future Research

We are compiling a list of resources for students and scholars interested in connections between abolitionism and the arts. If you would like to share a link to a piece of scholarship, a recording, or a primary source that has been particularly useful for your own work on abolitionism and the arts, please email Julia Hamilton at jmh2273@columbia.edu. These resources will be posted to our website: abolitionism.universityseminars.columbia.edu

Thank you

The organizing committee would also like to thank the following individuals for their help and support of this symposium:

Audrey Amsellem
Susan Boynton
Giran Ceballos
Gareth Cordery
Erin Fae
Jane Forner
Aaron Fox
Sylvia Gindick
Andras Gipp
Fanny Guex
Pamela Guardia

Velia Ivanova
Erica Lockhart
Johanna Lopez
Kathleen Lubey
David Newtown
Shanny Peer
Elliott Powers
Beth Pratt
Lindsey Schram
Lilith Todd
Sonja Wermager
Grant Woods

