

2-26-2018

Neumann Lecture on Music: Dr. George Lipsitz

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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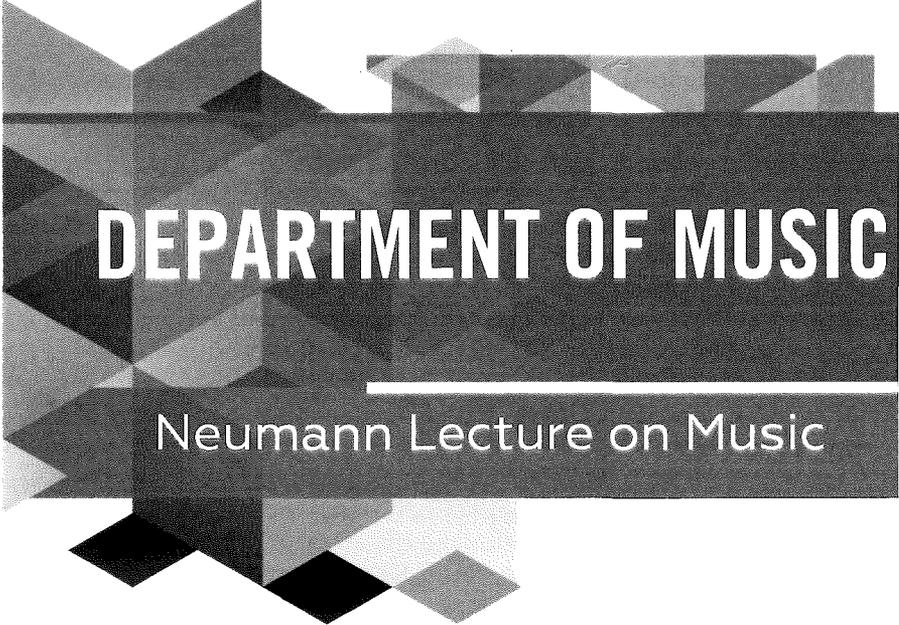
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DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Neumann Lecture on Music

Dr. George Lipsitz

*Music as Preparation for Life:
Practice, Accompaniment, Improvisation*

Monday, February 26, 2018 | 7:30pm
Brown-Alley Room, Weinstein Hall

*Please silence all electronic devices before the performance begins.
Recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.*



ABOUT THE NEUMANN LECTURE ON MUSIC

What do protest songs, madrigals, Mozart, cognitive neuroscience, and the Civil Rights era have in common? They've all been topics presented at the University of Richmond Neumann Lecture Series. The Department of Music started the series in 2003 to remember former music faculty member Frederick "Fritz" Neumann, who taught violin and started the University Symphony. Neumann held a Ph.D. in music education, as one might expect of a music professor. But his career was hardly a conventional one. Though he had trained as a violinist in childhood, he earned his first Ph.D. (in 1934 at the University of Berlin) in economics and political science, writing a dissertation on the stock market crash of 1929. After spending a few years working as an export-market analyst in Prague, he decided to take up the violin again—this time, more seriously. His studies took him to several major European capitals—Berlin, Paris, Basel—and finally to New York, leading him to apply for United States citizenship. During the Second World War, he served in U.S. Army Intelligence for three years before resuming his music studies at Columbia University, where he earned his second Ph.D.

Starting in his late fifties, Neumann pursued yet another career with great dedication and vigor: the study of performance practices in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music. During the next few decades, he published over forty articles and three books that challenged performers and scholars to revisit long-held beliefs about how to execute musical ornaments and rhythms. He became a scholar of international renown, receiving grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Council of Learned Societies. In 1987, the American Musicological Society awarded his book, *Ornamentation and Improvisation in Mozart*, one of its highest honors: the Otto Kinkeldey Award, given annually to a book of "exceptional merit." After living for more than five decades in the United States, he had planned a trip to Prague in the spring of 1994, which would have been his first return visit since 1939. But he died that year in March at age 86, after a life overflowing with accomplishment.

The Neumann Lecture Series kicked off in 2003 with Christoph Wolff, a German-educated scholar who teaches at Harvard University and studies the music of J.S. Bach. Wolff and Neumann were cut from similar cloth: both were educated in Germany and interested in eighteenth-century music, reflecting a branch of music-historical study that centered on Austro-German repertoire from centuries ago. But the scholarly interests of Neumann lecturers rapidly diversified:



ABOUT THE NEUMANN LECTURE ON MUSIC

Susan McClary (2004) applied feminist methods of scholarship in her talk, while Kay Kaufmann Shelemay (2005) spoke about Syrian Jewish music from an ethnomusicological perspective. Guthrie Ramsey (2007) is the only speaker to date who brought his own band with him to illustrate his lecture on music in the Civil Rights movement. Opera scholar and native Londoner Roger Parker (2008) talked about a 1930 production of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* at the famed La Scala opera house. Later that year, Suzanne Cusick introduced research on the use of music as a form of torture in the U.S. "global war on terror," which she discovered through unclassified military documents and interviews with detainees and interrogators. Craig Wright (2013), who started out as a scholar of medieval music, discussed a new project in which he applied current neuroscientific knowledge of the brain to Mozart's compositional processes. Anthony Seeger (2014), nephew of folk singer Pete Seeger, talked about protest music in the 1960s, singing a few songs and accompanying himself on the guitar. In 2015, Jessie Ann Owens discussed how the Italian Renaissance composer Cipriano de Rore turned a well-known literary lament (that of Dido from Virgil's *Aeneid*) into a small-scale musical drama. In 2016, J. Peter Burkholder spoke about Charles Ives's practices as a church organist and their impact on the compositional process behind works such as his Third Symphony. This past year ethnomusicologist Deborah Wong investigated contemporary social politics with her talk titled "Listening to Pain."

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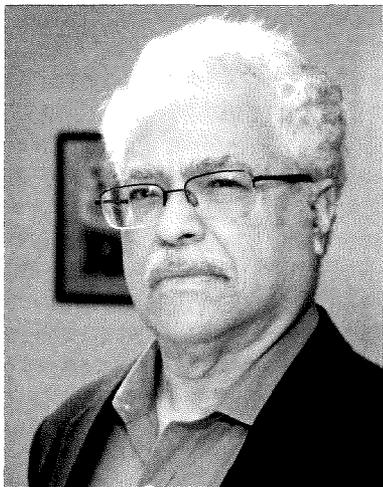
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28 | 6pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

**FREE
EVENT!**

Sponsored in part by the Cultural Affairs Committee.



ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Dr. George Lipsitz

Dr. George Lipsitz is Professor of Black Studies and Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His publications include *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Improvisation, Rights and the Ethics of Cocreation* (with Daniel Fischlin and Ajay Heble) 2013, *Midnight at the Barrelhouse: The Johnny Otis Story* (2010), *Footsteps in the Dark: The Hidden Histories of Popular Music* (2007), and *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place* (1994). He serves as editor

of the ethnic studies journal *Kalfou* and the *Insubordinate Spaces* book series at Temple University Press, as co-editor of the *American Crossroads* series at the University of California Press, as a member of the Executive Committee of the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation, and as editorial board member of *Popular Music and Society*. Lipsitz was awarded the American Studies Association Angela Y. Davis Prize for Public Scholarship in 2013 and the Carl Bode-Norman Holmes Pearson Prize for Career Distinction in 2016. He chairs the board of directors of the African American Policy Forum and the Advisory Board at the Center for Black Studies Research (Santa Barbara), and is vice chair of the board of directors of the Woodstock Institute.

His lecture is titled "Accompaniment as Social Practice."

Accompaniment is not just a formal musical practice. It is a disposition, a sensibility, a pattern of behavior, and a cultivated capacity with enormous social significance. In music and in social life, accompaniment can produce an ethical practice of co-creation and improvisation that is sorely needed in this historical moment saturated with hate, hurt and fear.