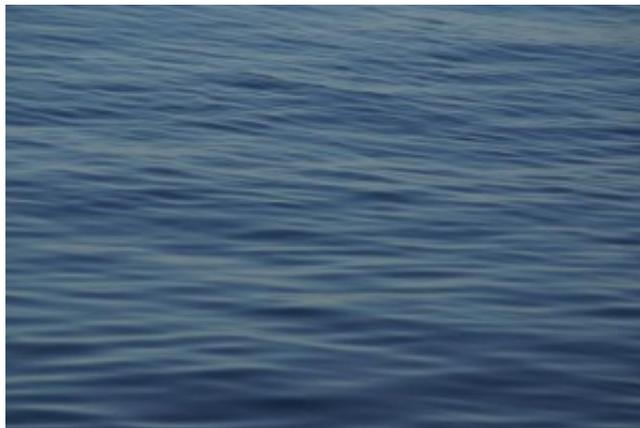


## CFP: Music Flows, IASPM-US Annual Conference

**Date :** November 8, 2013



University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Submission Deadline: Friday, 15 November, 2013

Music flows. Evocative metaphorically while directing our attention to the global circulation of songs, the theme for the 2014 IASPM-US Annual Conference takes its inspiration from the UNC campus-wide Water initiative. Water in its many forms is a ubiquitous subject of pop songs. Whether as metaphor or literal reference, water imagery as a theme in popular music has been used to celebrate identity, express emotions, address environmental issues, convey pleasure, pay homage to spiritual beings, and shape communities of resistance. Here we take up notions of fluidity and flow to address not only what many deem our most important natural resource, but to consider the ways in which water's qualities may yield productive insights into the present and future of popular music.

Fluidity suggests smoothness and flow, as well as uncertainty, indefiniteness, and mutability. This tension is felt across global capital, ecology, and the business of music, as money, energy, and sounds flow around the world, their movement unevenly enabled and restricted by a range of economic, political, and cultural forces. From the licit or illicit circulation of songs to the melting of glaciers, popular music – and the world in which it exists – faces a future in which the status quo is quite literally in flux. With seemingly solid foundations melting away, we face a moment of productive instability, in which new potentialities emerge even as life as we know it may be dramatically transformed.

The 2014 IASPM-US Annual Conference will take place from March 13-16, 2014 at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The Center for the Study of the American South (CSAS) will be our host on campus, in collaboration with the Department of Music and the Southern Folklife Collection. Papers related to popular music and southern culture are especially welcome. Look for a featured panel on southern music and enjoy a lively reception hosted by the Center.

Papers may focus on one of the following aspects of the theme, on other aspects of the conference theme, or – as always – any other issue in the study of popular music.

### 1. Liquidity and flows

Zygmunt Bauman suggests that ours is an era of “liquid modernity,” in which subjectivities and social life have been transformed. Liquidity indeed seems fundamental to current configurations and imaginaries of everything from capital to the music industry and identity. Yet these flows are rife with contradiction. Financial institutions circulate money through increasingly intricate channels of risk while class inequality increases globally. With digital audio files circulating widely and streaming internet radio providing us with a flood of music for every mood and desire, musical labor, intellectual property, and revenue is newly in flux. On the high seas of international exchange, piracy, alternately lauded and critiqued, threatens the fixed interests of global culture industries.

How have the infrastructures that bridge, dam, or contain spaces of fluidity (of music, capital, or water) figured in popular music? What of their futures? How are flows managed, in ways that both enable and restrict circulation? How are subjectivities shaped or expressed by the flows of technology and sound? How does popular music speak to the volatility and indefiniteness of our current condition?

### 2. Waterways, mobilities, and cultural encounters

Fluidity also suggests movement and mobility. Waterways figure in songs as metaphors, while serving as important spaces for the development of musical styles or religious transformation. As historical sounds from “the Delta blues” to “the Black Atlantic” suggest, popular music has long traveled over oceans and rivers, connecting communities across continents even as cultural encounters yield new hybrid musical styles. Water can also isolate, challenging dreams of a return home for diasporic communities or fueling sentiments of insularity across the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans.

What sounds emerge when we take waterways as spaces of mobility or geographic foci, rather than land? What spaces of exchange or conflict open when we consider music (and culture) in motion, rather than located in discrete spaces? Papers might engage with transoceanic mobilities and diasporas, historically and in the present; sounds of crossings, hybridity, and friction; port cities as rich spaces of cultural exchange; and transformative experiences through water.

### 3. Ecology and embodiment

Water in its many forms, from ice to ocean to rain, is crucial for the ways in which humans live on and with earth. With glaciers melting, sea levels rising, and potable water supplies diminishing, this relationship is shifting in ways whose consequences are yet unknown. These changes reflect global interconnections, cycles, and flows of resources and energy that again affect people and sounds in diverse ways. While North American singer-songwriters coin songs about pressing environmental issues, elsewhere, indigenous peoples struggle to maintain rights to land and ways of life in the face of massive infrastructure projects or pollution, or are forced into exile as island homes are immersed by rising sea levels.

In considering relationships between music and environment, we might consider the human and nonhuman stakes of musical research. As the Anthropocene witnesses an ongoing wave of extinctions, climate change radically disrupts life, and clean fresh water becomes a scarce resource, how do musicians, audiences, and music researchers react? Do environmental crises call for a change in theory and method or are environmental exigencies merely a new set of questions to be dealt with in the same ways as past emphases? Papers taking up concerns of ecomusicology and of human/non-human relationships are especially welcome.

### 4. Sonic metaphors and materialities

The congruities between the materiality of sound and water as a medium are expressed in the terminology of acoustic science: sound waves, sound pressure, ultrasound, and so on. Air and water share the quality of being “immersive” (Helmreich) mediums, while techniques of “sounding” bring sonic technologies to bear on domains of communication, information, and mapping. More literally, water and its infrastructures are used to make music, and synthesizers are programmed to make “watery” sounds.

What do we learn from thinking across fluid materials and sound? How do congruities and incongruities between the two domains register, represent, or embody wider global flows? How are such materialities heard and felt in and through bodies? We hope this sub-theme will inspire a range of subjects related to materiality, from sonic ontology to the “matter” of voice and objects, as well as the ways in which water evokes literal, affective, or imagined meanings of music.

Deadline for proposals is Friday, November 15, 2013. Please submit proposals to [iaspmus2014@gmail.com](mailto:iaspmus2014@gmail.com). Proposals may be made in the following categories: (1) individual paper, (2) panel, or (3) alternative format. Specify in the subject heading of the email the category in which you are submitting.

(1) Individual presenters should submit a paper title, 250-word abstract, AV needs, and author information including full name, institutional affiliation, email address and a 50-word bio.

(2) Panel proposals, specifying either 90 minutes (three presenters) or 120 (four), should include both 125-word overview and 250-word individual proposals (plus author information) as well as AV needs.

(3) Alternative format events may include lecture-demonstrations, round-tables, discussion of a pre-circulated text, or documentary film screenings. Proposals for alternative format events should stay within a 2-hour timeframe. Send a 250-word overview, author information for all participants, and AV needs. The program committee reserves the right to adjust alternative events to suit the overall program needs.

Submissions should be attached as a single Word document. You will receive an email confirming receipt of your submission. All conference participants must be registered IASPM-US members. For membership information visit <http://iaspm-us.net/membership/>. For more information about the conference, go to <http://iaspm-us.net/conferences/> or send email inquiries to Marina Peterson, program committee chair, at [petersom@ohio.edu](mailto:petersom@ohio.edu).

This year's program committee consists of Jerome Camal (University of Wisconsin–Madison), Benjamin Court (UCLA), Mark Katz (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Ali Colleen Neff (College of William & Mary), Josh Ottum (Ohio University), Mark Pedelty (University of Minnesota), and Marina Peterson (Ohio University).