

Marie Comuzzo

ACLS/MELLON DISSERTATION INNOVATION FELLOW | MUSICOLOGIST | ECOFEMINIST | PERFORMER

EDUCATION

PhD in Musicology

Expected completion 2027

Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Dissertation: “A Sonically Reimagined Silence: How the Discovery of Whale Songs Inspired an Environmental Commitment to the Ocean,” and the digital common

listeningwithwhales.com

MA in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

2024

Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Thesis: “The Pure Musical Vessel: Shaping Beauty Standards for Young Women and Genderqueer Instrumental Performers.

MM in Music History

2021

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

Thesis: “The Voice of The Other: The Influence of Capitalism on The Representation of Gender and Race in Western Classical Music”

Graduate Performance Diploma in Violin

2018

Boston Conservatory at Berklee, Boston, MA

Violin Diploma (B.M. Equivalent)

2015

Arrigo Boito Conservatory, Parma, Italy

PUBLICATIONS

“Erosic Attuning and Grieving with Whales: Towards Ecosystemic Comradeship,” co-written with Marianna Ritchey. *TRACE: Journal of Human and Animal Studies* (Fall 2026).

“Listening with Whales: From Silence to Song.” In *Listening to the Swan Song: More-than-Human Beings and Sounds in Literature and Culture Through the Ages*, edited by Piotr Kociumbas and Joanna Godlewicz-Adamiec. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlag, 2026 (BRILL).

“Singing with Whales: Exploring Human and Non-Human Connections,” *Society of Ethnomusicology Student News* (Summer 2023), <https://www.semsn.com/191-comuzzo>.

ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS IN PROGRESS/UNDER REVIEW

“A Collaborative Timeline: Fostering Student Agency in the Music History Survey,” co-written with Sarah Koval, *The Journal of Music History Pedagogy*. Under Review.

“The Pure Musical Vessel and the Aesthetic Regime of Classical Music: Fatphobia, Musical Hierarchy, and Embodied Discipline,” R&R at the *Journal of the Royal Music Academy*

“Between Whale and Shark: The Afterlife of African Bearings in *The Deep*,” in *Water’s Ways: Liquid Methods in the Arts and Humanities*, edited by Keyvan Allahyari, Katharina Fackler, Jennifer Leetsch, and Tyne Daile Sumner (Bloomsbury Academic, 2027). *Forthcoming*.

Chapter for *Political Ecology and Perception: Approaches in Philosophy of Religion*, edited by Josephine Kaiser, Barbara Müller, Michel Steinfeld (Fink-Brill, 2027).

“Dressing Up, Stripping Down: Fatphobia, Gender Conformity, and Aesthetic Labor in Western Classical Music,” in *Music and Fashion*, edited by Sarah Kirbi (Bloomsbury Academic).
Forthcoming.

“From Whale Songs to Soundwalks: A Path Forward Against Music Exceptionalism,” co-written with Luca Gambirasio. *Ecomusicology Review*. In progress.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Visiting instructor at Mount Holyoke College 2024
Visiting scholar at the [Kinney Center for Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 2024-2025
as part of the [Renaissance of the Earth Project](#)

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

WGSS Pilot study Research Award, Brandeis University 2026
WGSS Conference Award, Brandeis University 2026
GSA Conference Award, Brandeis University 2026
DHSI Scholarship Award 2026
[ACLS/Mandel Dissertation Innovation Fellowship Grant](#) (\$52,000) 2025
PhD Conference Award, Brandeis University 2025
Mandel Dissertation Innovation Grant. Brandeis University 2025
GSA, PhD Research Award, Brandeis University 2025
GSAS Travel Grant 2024
[SeaBASS 2024](#), Summer Institute for Marine Bioacoustics Grant 2024
GSA PhD Research Award, Brandeis University 2024
Provost Doctoral Research Award, Brandeis University 2024
Grant for Pilot Program for the Brandeis Interdisciplinary Writing Cohort 2023-2024
(Co-leader with Anna Valcour. Supported by the Office of Graduate Affairs, Mandel Center for the Humanities, and Graduate School of the Arts and Sciences, Brandeis University)
WGSS Travel Grant to present at SEM Conference 2023
PhD Conference Award, GSAS, Brandeis University 2023
Tuition Scholarship, Digital Humanities Summer Institute 2023
Student Experience Grant for “Professional Development in Digital Humanities,”
Supported by Connected Ph.D., Brandeis University 2023
Mandel Center for the Humanities Writing Retreat Grant, Brandeis University 2023
Music Department Conference Travel Grant, Brandeis University 2023
Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Department Travel Grant, Brandeis University 2023
Sagan Family Graduate Research Grant, WGSS 2023
Music Department Travel Grant, Brandeis University 2022
PhD Conference Travel Grant Award, GSAS 2022

Higher Education Administrative Internship, Brandeis University	2022
Summer Grant for Professional Development, Brandeis University	2022
Grant for Expanding the Horizon of Doctoral Education in the Humanities, Brandeis University	2021
Mandel Career Diversity Skill Grant, Brandeis University	2021
Harry and Mildred Remis Fellowship, Brandeis University	2021 - present
Student Travel Award, University of Massachusetts Amherst	2020
Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Waiver, University of Massachusetts Amherst	2019-21
Scholarship Awarded, Boston Conservatory at Berklee	2015-18

INVITED TALKS

“Singing and Listening with Whales: Exploring Human and More-Than-Human Musicalities,” Brandford Land Trust, Blackstone Library, February 2026.

“What does it mean to listen musically to whales? Notation, Embodiment, and Collective Improvisation,” with Heather Woodson-Gammon, at the University of Nevada, Reno & at the New Jersey Technology Institute, November 2025.

“Whales, Moths, and the Scales of Life and Death,” with Rachel Mundy, at Wesleyan University, Middletown, October 2025.

"Whalesong, Warsong: Cetaceans, Conflict, and Cooperation," for the "Peace Notes series" hosted by the Environmental Building Peace Association, online presentation, September 2025.

"Singing and Listening with Whales: Exploring Human and More-Than Human Musicalities," University of Bologna (UNIBO), Ravenna, May 2025.

“Listening to Whales: Exploring Ecocentric Activism and Reciprocity through Song," at the BIOME TRUST in Wellington, Aotearoa (New Zealand), January 2025.

“A Sonically Reimagined Silence: How the Discovery of Whale Songs Inspired an Environmental Commitment to the Ocean,” for the ELEMENTS project at the Kinney Center for Interdisciplinary Renaissance Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, September 2024.

“Queering Whale Songs: Making Waves Through the Anthropocene,” Invited Talk at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, April 2024

“Reflections on the Roots of Gender and Race Discrimination in Western Classical Music: A Vignette,” Academic Conventions and Social Issues in Music at MDEG, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 2021.

“Women in Music: Towards Wider Inclusion,” Invited Talk at the International Students & Scholars Office's International Women's Day Event, Brandeis University, March 2024.

CONFERENCE TALKS

“Training ‘Pure Musical Vessels’: Fatphobia and Body Policing of Classical Instrumentalists” in our organized panel “Fatphobia in Western Classical Music: Historic and Contemporary

Perspectives” presented online alongside Anna Valcour and Emma Jensen, American Musicological Society (AMS), November, 2026.

“Listening into Transcendence: Gender, Genius, and the Cultural Politics of Whale Song” in our panel “Listening Beyond Ourselves: Meaning-Making in the More-than-Human Sonic Worlds,” sponsored by SIG at the Society of Ethnomusicology, Bloomington, November 2026.

“The Whale in the Room: Music, Language, and Meaning,” shared panel with David Rothenberg, Finley Woodson-Gammon, and Alex South, “Environmental Pasts and Futures: Beyond Dualism—Thinking Creatively Across Worlds,” at the Rachel Carson Center For Environment and Humanities, July 2026.

“Sounding Change: Whales, Environmental Activism, and Politics of Listening,” Fourth International Conference on Environmental Peacebuilding, Ottawa, Canada—the Environmental Peacebuilding Association, June 2026.

"Listening with Comrade Orca: Becoming Better Animals Through Multispecies Solidarity" at the 11th Biennial EASLCE Conference “Join the Orca Uprising!” Nonhuman Resistance and Multispecies (In)Justice, at the Utrecht University, April 2026.

“On the Edge of Music and Language: Whale Songs as Epistemic Compass,” co-presented with Mason Youngblood. Graduate Music Conference at Yale University, February 2026.

“The Pure Musical Vessel and the Aesthetic Regime of Classical Music: Fatphobia, Hierarchy, and Embodied Discipline,” Grainder Symposium, “Music and Fashion,” University of Melbourne, presented online, December 2025.

“Listening with Whales: Becoming Better Animals Through Human-Whale Connections,” at the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance (ICTMD) Study Group, online workshop, November 2025.

"Grieving with and for Whales" co-presented with Alex South at The International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance (ICTMD), Multispecies Sound and Movement Study Group, online business meeting, September 2025.

“Listening to Grief, Singing into Birth: Mother Whales, Women Mothers, and Sonic Practices of Healing,” annual meeting of the Northeast Chapter of the Society of Ethnomusicology (NECSEM), presented online, May 2025.

“Listening to Whales: Exploring Ecocentric Activism through Sonic Entanglements,” 48th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music and Dance, Wellington, New Zealand, January 2025.

“Echoes of Change: Humpback Whale Songs as Catalysts of Activism in the Anthropocene,” annual meeting of the Northeast Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology (NECSEM), Boston University, May 2024.

“Singing with Whales: Exploring Human and Non-Human Musicalities,” Lightning Talk at American Musicological Society (AMS) and Society of Music Theory Annual (SMT) Conference, for the Ecocriticism Study group, Chicago, November 2023.

“The Ideal Traumatized Body: Shaping Beauty Standards for Young Women and Genderqueer Performers” within the co-led panel “Surviving Dreams, Living Trauma: The Invisible Barriers That Stand Between Performers and Their Success,” at the Society of Ethnomusicology Annual Conference, October 2023. Panel sponsored by the SEM Section Status of Women (SWW).

Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition, “Fatphobia In Western Classical Music: How Body Discipline and Beauty Standards Shape the Career of Women and Gender Queer Performers,” Brandeis University 2023.

“The Voice of the Humpback Whale: Music, Language, or Sound?,” University of Connecticut, at the annual Graduate Music Conference, presented online, May 2023.

“‘It’s about damn time’: Body Liberation in Lizzo’s Music,” Themus (The Music Society at Temple) and at the Conference of the International American Society of Popular Music, presented online, Minneapolis, 2023.

“Finding Freedom in Music Analysis: Positionality and Triple Consciousness,” Lighting Talk at AMS/SMT/SEM 2022 Conference in the “Intersectionality and Analysis” Panel, New Orleans, 2022.

“Beyond Anthropocentrism: Music and Sound as Acts of Care between Humans and Other Animals,” University of Connecticut, at the annual Graduate Music Conference, presented online, 2022.

“The Gendered ‘Other’: Female Erotic Sublimation in Ferrara’s Court” presented at the Brandeis University Graduate Conference “Illness and Healing: An interdisciplinary Symposium,” Boston 2022.

“Dark Like Me: Meaning and Metaphor in “Dream Variations,”” University of Toronto Graduate Music Conference, presented online, 2021.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Research

2022 – present

Department of Musicology/Ethnomusicology; Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality, Studies; Environmental and Animal Studies; Brandeis University

- Conducting historical interdisciplinary research on primary and secondary sources
- Qualitative research in forms of interviews
- International field work

Master’s Research

2020-2021

Department of Music History, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

- Conducted historical and interdisciplinary research on the underrepresentation of women and BIPOC in Western classical music, and its relationship to the establishment to capitalism in Early Modern Europe and colonialism.

Research Assistant in Music and the Humanities

2020

Department of Music Theory, UMass Amherst

- Assistant to Professor Miriam Piilonen, assisting with reading, scholarly writing, and discussion support

Research Assistant for “Tasso in Music Project” 2020
Department of Music History, UMass Amherst

- Assistant to Professor Emiliano Ricciardi, proofreading text underlay of musical editions (www.tassomusic.org)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Primary Instructor

Western Music: 1950 to Today at Mount Holyoke College 2024
Performing and Visual Arts, Residential Academic Program, 2020
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Teaching Assistant, Brandeis University 2022 - 2024

- Exploring Music (Prof. Ackley)
- Global Soundscapes (Prof. Lee)
- The Beginner’s Toolbox: Fundamentals of Music Notation and Performance (Prof. Desiato)
- Music in Western Culture: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (Prof. Koval)
 - Presented three guests lectures on the canon, gender, and 17th century Italy
- Music in Film: Hearing American Cinema (Prof. Ackley)
 - Presented two guests lectures, “2001: A Space Odyssey” and “Entr'acte & Dadaism”

Teaching Assistant, University of Massachusetts Amherst 2019 - 2021

- Music in History of Music, 1900 to Present (Prof. Knyt)
- Music Appreciation (Prof. Yunker and Prof. Ricciardi)
- Music Appreciation (Prof. Lehmborg) and String Quartet (Prof. Chang)

PRIMARY ACADEMIC SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Ecocriticism Group at the American Musicological Society

- Website Manager 2026-28
- Secretary 2024-26

Indigenous Representation Subcommittee of the Society for Marine Mammalogy 2025-26

Student Board Member of the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 2024-26

Member of the editorial board for *The Journal of Undergraduate Research in Music* 2022

- Peer-reviewer

**Society of Music Theory (SMT) Scholars for Social Responsibility
Interest Group** 2021

- Event-organizing and committee member
- Abstract reviewer

- Fundraising Concert for the Amazon Forest and Indigenous Activist Sonia Guajajara** 2020
(the concert was cancelled because of Covid-19 but we raised \$2000)
- Organization of concert in support of Extinction Rebellion with UMass, Orchestra** 2020

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- Peer review for *Future Humanities* for a special issue on *Climate Fiction and the Limits of Representation*.** 2025
- Pilot Program for the Brandeis Interdisciplinary Writing Cohort** 2023-2024
Co-leader with Anna Valcour. Supported by the Office of Graduate Affairs, the Mandel Center for the Humanities, and Graduate School of the Arts and Sciences, Brandeis University
- Women’s Studies Research Center’s Scholar in Music, Brandeis University** 2024
- Graduate Department Representative (Musicology)** 2023
- Graduate Conference “The Home-Place: Mapping Spaces of Belonging”** 2023
Interdisciplinary Conference, Brandeis University
- Main organizer of the conference
 - Abstract reviewer
 - Designer of promotional material and the program
- Graduate Conference “Illness and Healing: An interdisciplinary Symposium”** 2022
Department of Musicology, Brandeis University
- Main organizer of the conference
 - Abstract reviewer
 - Designer of promotional material and the program
- Bach Festival & Symposium, University of Massachusetts, Amherst** 2021
- Organizer and logistic support
- Service for the recruitment of the musicology and violin student body** 2020-21
- Meeting with incoming students to share about the experience at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

- Publishing Associate & Website Designer at Brandeis University Press** 2023 – present
- Acquisition in Environmental Studies, Gender, and Music
 - Re-design and maintenance of the website and the title management system
 - Manager for social media and marketing efforts
 - Creation of book trailers that have been featured on *Shelf Awareness*.
 - Design of pamphlets, leaflets, tablecloths, and other promotional material
 - Organizing events and book talks
- Graduate Intern at Brandeis University Press** 2021-23
- Social media, email marketing, and publicity content for author events and titles

- Update Press website with current content on the WordPress platform
- Input and maintain accurate metadata for backlists and forthcoming titles on internal Press databases
- Preserve and organize files for day-to-day operations, including author manuscripts, peer reviews, book reviews, promotional data, sub rights documentation, and art
- Prepare materials for and support Editorial and Advisory Board meetings
- Prepare promotional material with InDesign and Photoshop
- Event organizer collaborator

Writing Consultant at Brandeis University Writing Center

2021-22

SELECTED PERFORMANCES

Forecast Festival in Berlin, alongside Pablo V. Cazares and Margot St. Finch	2026
Fourth International Conference on Environmental Peacebuilding with Austin Wallacy	2026
Improvisation workshop listening to/with whales, University of Reno	2025
Concert in support of Extinction Rebellion with UMass Orchestra	2020
“Evening at Carnegie Hall” with the New York Chamber Player Orchestra	2019
Opus One Chamber Orchestra Concert	2019
“I am the Baron” summer intensive at Double Edge Theater	2019
String Quartet concerts at UMass and Five Colleges	2019-20
String orchestra concerts at UMass, Amherst	2019-20
“Cliffhanger” premier with Victoria Senko, by Daniel Schneider	2019
Solo Violin recital at Boston Conservatory at Berklee	2018
Improvisation workshops with Pierre Hurel, Boston Conservatory	2018
Spontaneous composition with Alison Wedding at Berklee School of Music	2017
Horn quintet by Schuller at New Music Festiva, Boston Conservatory	2016
Collaboration with composer Daniel Choi in writing and performing	2016-2018
Violin recital at Boston Conservatory	2016
Honor concert at Boston Conservatory	2016
Concertmaster for “La Traviata” by Verdi at Rockport Theater, MA	2016
Concertmaster for the Boston Conservatory Orchestra	2018
Orchestra performances with Boston Conservatory Orchestra	2015 to 2018
Phelegra by Xenakis at CME Boston Conservatory	2015
Voice Workshop with WorkCentre Grotowsky in Venice	2015
Violin recital at "Rocca di Luna" festival, Montefiore Conca	2014
Opening festival “La Ciaccona di Bach” Parma Conservatory	2014
Chaccone by Comuzzo at "Il testo tradito: la Ciaccona di Bach" Parma, IT	2014
Orchestra Senza Spine at Teatro Manzoni, Teatro Comunale Bologna	2014 to 2015
Tourné with Orchestra of the Arrigo Boito Conservatory of Parma	2012 to 2015
Baroch orchestra’s performances conducted by Petr Zejfart	2011 – 2013
Operatic concerts in Parma, Italy	2012 - 2015
Tourné with Orchestra Posticum Iuventutis Internationalis	2011
European Musical Festival	2011 to 2014
Classical choir in Parma under the guidance of Ugo Rolli	2010 – 2015

MASTERCLASSES

Eugene Friesen, Tony Arnold, Pierpaolo Maurizzi, Yves Savary, Hugo Ticciati, Judith Eisenberg, Rhonda Rider, Marco Fornaciari, Giacomo Scarponi, Kathryn Lockwood, Cookie Segelstein, Alexander Mandl, Tracy Silverman, Alison Wedding, Katy Lansdale.

PRIMARY VIOLIN INSTRUCTORS

Markus Placci, Giacomo Scarponi, Luigi Mazza, Luca Fanfoni, William Bignami, Luca Fornaciari, Fiorenza Rosi. **LANGUAGES**

Italian: native

English: fluent

German: fluent reading and basic speaking skills

REFERENCES

Bradford Garvey, PhD (Advisor)

Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology

Department of Music, Brandeis University

Waltham, MA

bradfordgarvey@brandeis.edu

Marianna Ritchey, PhD (Mentor)

Associate Professor of Music History

Department of Music, University of Massachusetts

Amherst, MA

mritchey@umass.edu

David Rothenberg, PhD (ACLS/Mellon External Mentor)

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and Music

Department of Music, New Jersey Institute of Technology

Cold Springs, NY

david.b.rothenberg@njit.edu

AFFILIATIONS

American Musicological Society

Society of Ethnomusicology

Society of American Music

Royal Music Association

Society for Marine Mammalogy

Environmental Peacebuilding

International Council of Traditional Music and Dance