

MAYA CUNNINGHAM

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Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

Doctoral Student (PhD)
Afro American Studies/Ethnomusicology
W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro American Studies
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

University of Massachusetts, Amherst
MA Afro American Studies (2021)

University of Maryland, College Park
MA Ethnomusicology (2019)

Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College, CUNY, New York
MA Jazz Studies (2008)

Howard University, Washington DC
B. Mus. Jazz Studies (2001) *Cum Laude*

Dissertation: Understanding the Africanness of African American Jazz Through the Lens of the South African Jazz Tradition (Working Title)

Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Stephanie Shonekan
Former Chair, WEB Dubois Department of Afro American Studies
Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Science and Professor of Music
University of Missouri

MA Thesis: The Black Power Classroom: An Ethnomusicological Approach to Teaching African Heritage Awareness through Music Education in Botswana and African America

UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Cambridge, MA.
(Spring 2022/ 2021)

Responsible for teaching Music of Africa course Spring 2021 and Spring 2022. Research based syllabus development, leading course sessions, and creating and assessing projects. Taught course that introduces undergraduate and graduate students to select African musical traditions from Mali and the Mande World, Ghana, Botswana, Nigeria, South Africa, and African America through an ethnomusicological perspective to engage in-depth case studies. Multiple learning modalities engaged through listening, reading, written assignments, performance and class discussions.

Graduate Teaching Assistant. AfroAm 133: African American History, Civil War to 1954 I WEB Dubois Department of Afro American Studies

University of Massachusetts, Amherst. (Spring 2021)

Responsible for assisting with lectures and leading two discussion sections for undergraduate course that provides an overview of the major issues and actions in Afro-American history from the beginning of the Civil War to the beginnings of the modern Civil Rights struggle. Responsible for grading essay exams and conducting advising meetings with students.

Graduate Teaching Assistant. AfroAm 117: Intro to African American Literature I WEB Dubois Department of Afro American Studies

University of Massachusetts, Amherst. (Fall 2021)

Responsible for assisting with lectures and leading discussion sections for course on nineteenth century African American orality and literature with Dr. A-Yimesi Jimoh. Responsible for grading essay exams and conducting advising meetings with students.

Producer. Du Bois Black Music Project, W.E.B Du Bois Institute of Afro-American Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (2020-2021)

Responsible for developing and leading the Du Bois Black Music Project. Responsibilities include developing and executing a strategic development plan, in addition to creating and hosting programming that focuses on African American music, hosting podcast/radio shows, planning concerts, conferences, symposia and K-12 curricula and teacher professional development for Black music.

Graduate Teaching Assistant. AFROAM390 Race and the American Story.

WEB Dubois Department of Afro American Studies

University of Massachusetts, Amherst. (Spring 2020)

Responsible for assisting with lectures and class discussions for *Race and the American Story* course with Dr. Stephanie Shonekan.

Graduate Teaching Assistant. MUSC210 The Impact of Music on Life.

University of Maryland, College Park. (2016 to 2018) Responsible for teaching discussion section component of Impact of Music on Life course to seventy - five undergraduate students offered by the Department of Ethnomusicology and Musicology at the University of Maryland, College Park. Responsible for facilitating discussions on course content and reinforcing course concepts. Responsible for grading all term papers, tests, and for conducting other student assessments. Responsible for giving ethnomusicology lectures on African music.

Fall 2020: Introduction to Ethnomusicology “Music and National Identity In Botswana” (Lecture)

Introduction to Ethnomusicology Course

Center for Ethnomusicology, Department of Music, Howard University
Washington DC

Spring and Fall 2018: “Music and National Identity in Botswana” (Lecture)

MUSC 210 Impact of Music on Life

Division of Musicology/Ethnomusicology, School of Music
University of Maryland, College Park

April 11 & August 3, 2018: “Music of Mali in the Classroom” (Lecture)

Center for African Studies and School of Education, Howard University
Washington DC

March 2018: “Jazz Wisdom and the Africanity of Jazz” (Lecture)

African and African American Music History Course
Center for Ethnomusicology, Department of Music, Howard University
Washington DC

November 2017: “Botswanan Traditional Music and National Identity” (Lecture)

MUSC 210 Impact of Music on Life
Division of Musicology/Ethnomusicology, School of Music
University of Maryland, College Park

October 2016. “Inspired Ethnomusicology” (Lecture)

Introduction to Ethnomusicology Course
Center for Ethnomusicology, Department of Music, Howard University
Washington DC

September 2016: Sub-Saharan African Music Overview (Lecture)

MUSC 210 Impact of Music on Life
Division of Musicology/Ethnomusicology, School of Music
University of Maryland, College Park

PUBLICATIONS, RESEARCH, CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Book Chapters

“The Hush Harbor as Sanctuary: African American Survival Silence During British/American Slavery.” *Sonic Histories of Occupation: Sound and Imperialism in Global Context*. Edited by Russel Skelchy and Jeremy Taylor. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. (2022). <https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/sonic-histories-of-occupation-experiencing-sound-and-empire-in-a-global-context/?fbclid=IwAR2IT3qYH4kivlfDIKllkZ2zW9K2wP1UQNwDSSO3iA4OhhKrrdArsFjBPX0>

“Singing Power/Sounding Identity: The Black Woman's Voice from Hush Harbors and Beyond.” *The Routledge Companion to Black Women's Cultural Histories*. Edited by Janell Hobson. New York: Routledge, 2021.

Articles

"The Sound World of Harriet Tubman" *Ms. Magazine*. February and March 2022.
<https://msmagazine.com/2022/02/17/harriet-tubman-music-sound-slavery-underground-railroad/>

“Fishbowl Colonialism: The White Colonial Gaze on the Sound of Black America in Education.” *Voices in Urban Education*, Vol 50 no 2. New York University, 2021.
(Forthcoming 2022)

“Does it Pay to Play?: Musings on the Economics of Music Theory Training.”
(Foreword). Volume 8 (2022), *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy* "Beyond Western Musicalities."

“Marie and Rosetta Four Times Through.” September 28, 2018. *Beyond the Stage*. Mosaic Theater.

Conference Papers and Presentations

- October 28, 2021: “Jazz Improvisation as African American Male Gendered Code in Mid- Twentieth Century New York City: A Historical Study”**
Society for Ethnomusicology 2020 Annual Meeting
- June 24, 2021: “Jazz Improvisation as African American Male Gendered Code in Mid-Twentieth Century New York City: A Historical Study”**
Documenting Jazz Conference, University of Edinburgh, Scotland
- October 29, 2020: “Conversations: Reimagining Ethnomusicology – Towards a More Equitable Ethnomusicology”** (Presenter and Panelist).
Society for Ethnomusicology 2020 Annual Meeting
Online
- March 13, 2020: “The #BAM Movement: Decolonizing and Reclaiming the African American Music Known as Jazz”**
National Council of Black Studies 44th Annual Conference
Atlanta, Georgia
- November 10, 2019: “The Black Power Classroom: Using the Ethnomusicology in Action Curriculum Project to Teach African Heritage Awareness to Black American Students”**
World Music Pedagogy Workshop Presentation
Society for Ethnomusicology 2019 Annual Meeting
Bloomington, Indiana
- November 9, 2019: “The #BAM Movement: Decolonizing and Reclaiming the African American Music Known as Jazz”**
Society for Ethnomusicology 2019 Annual Meeting
Bloomington, Indiana
- October 11, 2019: “Developing Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Strategies for Students of African Descent”**
Inclusive Pedagogy, Deeper Practices
St. Olaf College 2019 Teaching Summit
Northfield, Minnesota
- October 4, 2019: “The #BAM Movement: Decolonizing and Reclaiming the African American Music Known as Jazz”**
Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASLAH)
104th Annual Meeting and Conference
Charleston, South Carolina
- May 11, 2018: “The Hush Harbor as Sanctuary: African American Survival Silence During British/American Slavery”**
Resonating Occupation Conference, University of Nottingham
- April 27, 2018: “The Hush Harbor as Sanctuary: Black Women’s Song, Survival Silence and Resistance During Slavery and Jim Crow”**
University of Albany, Imagining Slavery, Envisioning Freedoms: A Symposium on the 30th Anniversary of Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*
Albany, New York.

February 16, 2018: “Hush Harbors as Sanctuary: African American Survival Silence During Slavery Times”

New York University Graduate School Conference, School of Music
New York, New York

February 3, 2018: “The Africinity of Jazz”

Sandy Spring Slave Museum, Sandy Spring, Maryland

August 2017: Teaching the Empire of Mali through Music Workshop for Educators

Department of African Studies, Howard University, Washington DC

CURATED EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLIC ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

February 2022: A People in Flight: African Americans in Movement, Smithsonian Folkways Records 2022 Black History Month playlist and Essay.

Curated and wrote essay and playlist that guides public audience through the movement, motion, and remapping of African America in geographical and mental spaces. This sound chronicle shows the relationship between African American migration and ideological and social movements using music, poetry, interviews and archival footage.

<https://folkways.si.edu/playlist/a-people-in-flight/african-americans-in-movement>

February 2021: Smithsonian Folkways Black History Sound Collage

Curated a playlist and wrote an accompanying essay about African American history through Black music, poetry, historical figure interviews, protest songs and political speeches that was published by Smithsonian Folkways Records.

<https://folkways.si.edu/news-and-press/a-black-history-sound-collage-playlist>

November 15, 2020: Interview with Wynton Marsalis

The Democracy Suite with the Jazz At Lincoln Center Septet, Fine Arts Center,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

<https://youtu.be/cubKnSYQ2VQ>

August 28, 2020: Special Broadcast of Music In Culture: Sounds of the Black Experience Radio Show. 89.3 FM WPFW Washington

Four-hour long radio broadcast of “Samba, Soul and Civil Rights: A Treatise in Revolution” for the March On Washington 57th Anniversary that explored through music the history of the African American Civil Rights Movement and the parallel Black Movement in Brazil, as a manual for moving forward the contemporary Black Lives Matter/Anti-Racist Movement.

**2018 to 2020: Music In Culture: Sounds of the Black Experience Radio Show
94.3 WQOW FM Tacoma Radio**

Launched monthly radio show that uses the approach of ethnomusicology to present sound documentaries, music presentations and interviews about the cultural experiences of African America, Africa and the African Diaspora that are reflected through music. Prior shows include: *Roy Hargrove and the Trumpet Kings* (December 2, 2018), *Winston Ngozi and the Cape Town Coltrane Lineage* (November 4, 2018), *Caiphus Semyana, Letta Mbulu and the Black Power Epitome* (October 7, 2018), *Music, Marriages and the Transnational Conversation Between Black America and South Africa Part II* (September 2, 2018), *Music, Marriages and the Transnational Conversation Between Black America and South Africa Part I* (August 5, 2018), *Hugh Masekela: Jazz Warrior* (July 1, 2018). Archives at

<https://soundcloud.com/musicinculture>

September 2019: Post Show Discussion Panelist, Say Amen, Somebody Gospel Music Documentary.

Black Music and Democracy Project, WEB Dubois Department of Afro

American Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

2018-2019 Ethnomusicologist-In-Residence, Mosaic Theater, Washington DC.

July 14, 2019. “Donny Hathaway: The Sacred and the Secular.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Twisted Melodies* (Musical about Donnie Hathaway). Mosaic Theater.

June 27, 2019. “HBCUs: A Home for Black Artists.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Twisted Melodies* (Musical about Donnie Hathaway). Mosaic Theater.

April 27, 2019: “More Sounds of Resistance: From Blues to Hip-Hop, Part Deux.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Les Deux Noirs (Notes on a Native Son)*. Mosaic Theater.

Apr 13, 2019 "Sounds of Resistance: From Blues to Hip-Hop." Post-Show Discussion Panel. Richard Wright's *Native Son*. Mosaic Theater.

September 23, 2018. “Gospel and the Blues: Where the Sacred Meets the Secular in African American Music.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Marie and Rosetta* (Musical about Sister Rosetta Tharpe). Mosaic Theater.

September 22, 2018. “Women Trailblazers in Popular Music.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Marie and Rosetta* (Musical about Sister Rosetta Tharpe). Mosaic Theater.

September 16, 2018. “Guitar, Piano and Voice — the Musical Dynamics of Rosetta and Marie.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Marie and Rosetta* (Musical about Sister Rosetta Tharpe). Mosaic Theater.

September 15, 2018. “Race and Rock ‘n’ Roll: Whitewashing of Black Musical History.” Post-Show Discussion Panel. *Marie and Rosetta* (Musical about Sister Rosetta Tharpe). Mosaic Theater.

June 23-24, 2018: *Quilting: An African American Heritage* Sandy Spring Slave Museum, Maryland.

Created an interactive exhibition that engaged elementary school aged children, adults and families in creating a community quilt. Researched, wrote and compiled exhibition materials about the African roots of visual and music practices associated with the Black American quilting tradition, the quilting tradition in Gee’s Bend, Alabama and how quilts were used on the Underground Railroad.

2015 - 2016: *The Drinking Gourd Festival and Follow the Drinking Gourd Music Map Murals Art Exhibition.* Francis Gregory Library Washington DC.

Facilitated arts residency on African American history and code songs with children’s book illustrator Adjoa Burrows for second and third graders at two schools that culminated in the Drinking Gourd Festival that featured student performances of African American code songs and an exhibitions of collage murals that illustrated the Follow the Drinking Gourd song.

AWARDS, GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS AND MEDIA

2022: Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship

2019-2023: Graduate Fellowship, WEB Dubois of Afro American Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Received full tuition fellowship to pursue PhD degree in Afro American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and to assist with teaching undergraduate courses and developing the Du Bois Black Music Project.

2019 – 2023: Research Enhancement and Leadership (REAL) Fellowship

Received highly competitive fellowship that supports dissertation research for four consecutive summers, accompanied by a mentoring and professional development program throughout the year.

April 2017 and April 2015: Summer Scholar Fellowship: National Endowment for the Humanities

Received fellowships to participate in Gullah Voices workshop, University of Connecticut and The Most Southern Place on Earth: Music, Culture, and History in the Mississippi Delta, Delta State University.

October 2016: Featured on WJLA News Channel 7 “Spotlight on Education”

News story on Fulbright Fellowship to Botswana and blending cultural and music education for African American students. <https://wjla.com/features/spotlight-on-education/southeast-music-teacher-heads-to-africa-to-improve-education>

September 2016: Featured in Washington Post article “Teachers Travel Abroad to Bring Lessons Back Home” about Fulbright Fellowship

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/teachers-travel-abroad-to-bring-lessons-back-home/2016/09/25/44103158-80d7-11e6-a52d-9a865a0ed0d4_story.html

August 2016-2018: Graduate Assistant Fellowship, Department of Ethnomusicology, University of Maryland, College Park

Received full tuition fellowship to pursue MA degree in Ethnomusicology at the University of Maryland College Park and to assist with teaching undergraduate ethnomusicology courses.

April 2016: Fulbright Fellowship, US Department of State (Botswana)

Awarded prestigious Fulbright Fellowship to travel to Botswana in Southern Africa to study how traditional Botswanan music is used to teach national identity to Botswanan primary school students.

April 2016: Fund for Teachers Fellowship (Ghana)

Awarded competitive research fellowship to study traditional music and culturally responsive music education pedagogy in Ghana, West Africa.

October 2015: Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms Fellowship, IREX, US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (India)

Received fellowship to participate in intensive global education program that included researching culturally responsive music and arts education in India and a graduate level Global Education Course.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Artistic Director. Heritage Music Institute, Community Music School of Springfield.
Springfield MA (2021 – Present)

Lead consultant in developing a comprehensive culturally responsive music education program for African American and Latin American young people. Responsible for using ethnomusicological theories and research to develop pedagogical approaches, instructional content and curricular approaches that draw from Black music research.

Director. Ethnomusicology in Action Curriculum Project, Themba Arts and Culture, Inc
Washington DC (2017 – Present)

Responsible for coordinating culturally responsive music education curriculum and professional development workshops and curricula that equips music educators who serve high populations of African – American students with culturally responsive educational strategies.

Project Director. Ghana Summer 2021 Educators Fellowship (2020-2021)

Responsible for directing a unique and immersive master course that is focused on traditional Ghanaian music and dance, culturally responsive pedagogy and arts integration education tailored for educators who teach students of African descent. On site coordinator in Ghana in partnership with Nunya Music Academy. Responsible for designing and facilitating internet-based professional development course and leading US based team of presenters.

Song Advisory Board (Consultant). Music Together, LLC. (2020)

Responsible for conducting ethnomusicological research on origins of curricular songs and to assess if they are appropriate for diversity and inclusion goals for early childhood music education program.

Arts Curriculum Consultant. District of Columbia Public Schools. (2018-2019)

Responsible for revising arts cornerstones to integrate cultural authenticity, African American expressive culture, and ethnomusicology when appropriate. Also responsible for leading professional development workshops for arts educators.

Music Educator. District of Columbia Public Schools

Washington DC (2014 – 2019)

Responsible for music instruction and curriculum development for almost four hundred students from pre-kindergarten to fifth grades. Implemented hands – on music curricula that emphasize vocal music, global education, and cultural studies. Units of study incorporate music reading, music history, instrument making, performance and other projects.

Director. Little Lights Arts New York (2006 to 2015)

Responsible for managing in-school artist residencies, recruiting teaching artists, evaluating work performance, designing the programs, implementing assessments, and coordinating logistics for the program. Managed the Little Lights Arts Workshop that served over one hundred and fifty children with multi-modal music and arts instruction. Designed the curriculum, planned participant recruitment drives with public schools and managed the logistics for final performances. Produced two professional recording sessions.

Professional Service and Memberships

2021 – Present: Founding Co-Chair, Jazz Special Interest Group

Society for Ethnomusicology <https://www.semjazz.org/>

2021: Member, Conference Committee and Programme Committee, Documenting Jazz Conference, College of Art, University of Edinburgh, June 23-26, 2021

2018 - 2021: Council Member, Society for Ethnomusicology

2020 - Present: Secretary, African and African Diasporic Music Section, Society for Ethnomusicology

2016 - Present: Co-Chair HBCU Outreach Committee, Gertrude Robinson Network for Black Ethnomusicologists, Society for Ethnomusicology

2020 - Present: National Council For Black Studies

2019 - Present: African Studies Association

2019 - Present: Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora