

Online Symposium

Music and Cats

November 28/29, 2025
11:00–19:00 CET



Day One (Friday, November 28, 2025 / 11:00 – 19:00)

11:00 – 11:05 Welcome Remarks

11:05 – 12:05 Panel 1 (Feline Symbolism)

1: 11:05 – 11:20 Cats and Codices: Unveiling the Symbolic Role of Felines in Historical Music Manuscripts

(Madlen Poguntke / University of Music and Theatre Munich, Seoul National University)

2: 11:20 – 11:35 The Cat in the Box: Schrödinger's Cat and Musical Metaphors of Uncertainty

(DJ W. Hatfield 施永德, Stanley S. Chang / GIM National Taiwan University, Wellesley College)

3: 11:35 – 11:50 The Cat as Artistic Cipher: Exploring Feline Symbolism Across Twentieth-Century Modernism and Artistic Musical Identity

(Clare Wilson / Dublin City University)

11:50 – 12:05 Discussion

12:10 – 12:50 Panel 2 (Ethics and Spectacle)

4: 12:10 – 12:25 The Paradox of the Cat Organ: Music, Madness, and Nonhuman Ethics in Early Psychiatry

(Shang Gao / Communication University of China)

5: 12:25 – 12:40 “Magic, Music and Big Cats”: Spectacle and the Use of Music in the Magic Shows of Performing Duo Siegfried & Roy

(Roxane Lindlacher / Paris Lodron University Salzburg)

12:40 – 12:50 Discussion

12:50 – 13:20 Coffee Break

13:20 – 14:20 Panel 3 (Cats as Listeners)

6: 13:20 – 13:35 Sounds of the Seaside: A Multi-Species Sonic Ethnography of a Cat Colony on the Costa del Sol

(Kristine Hill / University of Hradec Králové)

7: 13:35 – 13:50 Do Cats Entrain to Music?

(Tom Solomon / University of Bergen)

8: 13:50 – 14:05 Sonic Catnip: Composing Biphonation Through Pure Data

(James Edward Armstrong, Akira Brown, J. Harry Whalley / University for the Creative Arts)

14:05 – 14:20 Discussion

14:25 – 15:05 Panel 4 (Pedagogy)

9: 14:25 – 14:40 Multimodal Narratives and Affective Triggers: A Study of the Roles of Cat Memes in Music History Education

(Beini Liu / Universiti Utara Malaysia)

10: 14:40 – 14:55 The Cat and the Fiddle: Feline Imagery in String Pedagogy

(Ivan Tan, Lisa Sailer / Brown University, Community MusicWorks)

14:55 – 15:05 Discussion

15:10 – 16:10 Panel 5 (Historical Perspectives)

11: 15:10 – 15:25 Modal Tomcatting and Catcalling: Analysis of Orlando di Lasso's "O Lucia, miau, miau" (1560)

(Camilo Lozano Velasquez / Case Western Reserve University)

12: 15:25 – 15:40 Cat Songs and Singing Cats in the Seventeenth Century

(Katherine Butler / Northumbria University, UK)

13: 15:40 – 15:55 Sounding the Cat: From Meows to Metaphor in Musical Representation

(Chenyu Xiao / University of Leeds)

15:55 – 16:10 Discussion

16:40 – 17:20 Panel 6 (Cats as Musicians)

14: 16:40 – 16:55 Zoosemiotics, Zoomusicology and Musical Creation

(Iván Alhucema / Composer, Independent Scholar)

15: 16:55 – 17:10 An Analysis of CATcerto, a Concerto for Cat and Chamber Orchestra by Mindaugas Piečaitis

(Christine Boone / St. Olaf College)

17:10 – 17:20 Discussion

17:25 – 18:05 Panel 7 (Music Theory)

16: 17:25 – 17:40 “Das ist höhere Katzenmusik”: Feline Metaphors and Sexual Anxiety in Music Criticism

(Ross Hagen / Utah Valley University)

17: 17:40 – 17:55 Cat Music and Ataraxía: A Reconstruction of Michael Rother’s Album *Katzenmusik* (1979)

(Oliver Zöllner / Stuttgart Media University)

17:55 – 18:05 Discussion

18:10 – 19:00 Panel 8 (Composers and Their Mewses)

18: 18:10 – 18:25 Creation and Appreciation: The Cat as Image and Metaphor Between Feng Zikai’s Painting and Musical Writing

(Xinyun Zhao / University of Cologne)

19: 18:25 – 18:40 The Organ Stop Cats: Twentieth-Century Composer Connections in the Work of Jean Langlais

(Emma Wimberg / University of North Texas)

18:40 – 18:55 Discussion

18:55 – 19:00 Closing Remarks

Day Two (Saturday, November 29, 2025 / 11:00 – 19:00)

11:00 – 11:05 Welcome Remarks

11:05 – 12:05 Panel 1 (Musicians and Their Cats)

1: 11:05 – 11:20 The Cat-Mother is Mothering: The “Childless Cat Lady” Aesthetic in Taylor Swift’s Musical Persona
(*Samantha Marley / University of Western Australia*)

2: 11:20 – 11:35 The Role of Cats in the Image of Taylor Swift: A Feminist Perspective
(*Zu Brykalska / University of Warsaw*)

3: 11:35 – 11:50 My, My, My, Delilah: Freddie Mercury’s Tribute to His Favourite Cat
(*Marie Josephine Bennett / Independent Scholar*)

11:50 – 12:05 Discussion

12:10 – 13:10 Panel 2 (PAW-litics)

4: 12:10 – 12:25 “They’re Eating the Cats”: Music, Humour, and the Nonhuman Animal in The Kiffness’s Response to Trump Vs Harris
(*Jack Harrison / University of Warsaw*)

5: 12:25 – 12:40 “Cats for Trump”: The Dark Side of Musicalization and Ailurophilia in Audiovisual Online Content
(*Ed Katrak Spencer / Utrecht University*)

6: 12:40 – 12:55 ACAB – All Cats Are Beautiful. Popular Music, Cats and Subversiveness
(*Tessa Balser-Schuhmann / University of Vienna*)

12:55 – 13:10 Discussion

13:10 – 13:40 Break

13:40 – 14:40 Panel 3 (Film, Games and Gear)

7: 13:40 – 13:55 Scales and Arpeggios – Perspectives on Cats and Music in Animation
(*Charlotte Doesburg, Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi / University of Oxford, University College London, Uppsala University*)

8: 13:55 – 14:10 Sounding Felinity in Video Games
(*Chris Hill, Sam Pollacco / University of Birmingham, Royal Holloway, University of London*)

9: 14:10 – 14:25 #Studiocats: Gear Ornamentation, Sentience, and the “Humble Assistant” in Gear Cultures
(*Samantha Bennett, Eliot Bates / The Australian National University, City University of New York*)

14:25 – 14:40 Discussion

14:45 – 15:30 Panel 4 (Animal Advocacy)

10: 14:45 – 15:00 The Life of Stray Cats, Street Punk and DIY
(Oskar Szwabowski, Piotr Zańko, Dominika Gruntkowska / Pomeranian University in Słupsk)

11: 15:00 – 15:15 Successful Musicians Because of Their “Mewses”
(Anne Leighton / Writer)

15:15 – 15:25 Discussion

15:30 – 16:15 Panel 5 (Meme Culture)

12: 15:30 – 15:45 To Purr-tect and Serve: Online Cat Videos, Music, and Copaganda
(Michael Austin / Edge Hill University)

13: 15:45 – 16:00 Paw-Some Synths: Memetic Gesture, Experimental Sound Play, and the Cats at the Synthesizer Interface of Audiovisual Meme Culture
(Kate Galloway / Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)

16:00 – 16:10 Discussion

16:40 – 17:20 Panel 6 (Feline Metaphors)

14: 16:40 – 16:55 Feline Metaphors for Female Empowerment in 1920s-30s Blues
(Dani Wilde / BIMM University Brighton)

15: 16:55 – 17:10 Hepcats and Canaries: Cats and Birds in American Swing Era Slang and Music
(Sarah Caissie Provost / University of Hartford in Connecticut)

17:10 – 17:20 Discussion

17:30 – 19:00 Panel 7 (Gender)

16: 17:30 – 17:45 Pussy Power? Cats, German Rap, and Intersectional Animal Studies
(Benjamin Burkhart / Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media)

17: 17:45 – 18:00 “I Am a Kitten” Married and Managed: Momus, Kahimi Karie, and Personal Ownership Contra Authorship in 1990s Cosmopolitan Pop
(Davindar Singh / Harvard University)

18: 18:00 – 18:15 Between Agency and Objectification: The “Feral Feminine Feline” in Ariana Grande’s 2024 Music Video for the Song “The Boy Is Mine”
(Lara May, Fynn Wörth / Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media, Leibniz University Hanover)

19: 18:15 – 18:30 Amplified Meows: From Josie and the Pussycats to Poison Ivy Rorschach
(Aline V. Fagundes, Giulia Calloni / University of Caxias do Sul)

18:30 – 18:50 Discussion

18:50 – 19:00 Closing Session