Introduction

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Almost 250 years ago, French naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc proclaimed that "the entire face of the Earth bears the imprint of human power."[1] Having sustained six "epochs of Nature," the world had entered a seventh phase, the "Age of Man." Leclerc described this "epoch" as marked by intentional, directed climatic alteration and geoengineering: the reinvention of global environmental conditions would, in his estimation, "set the temperature" for the proliferation of factions of white, European men across the surface and into the depths of the Earth.[2] About a century later, Italian geologist, Antonio Stoppani, would make a similar proclamation. In 1873 Stoppani celebrated the advent of the "Anthropozoic era" and transformation of industrial, European humanity into a "new element, a new telluric force that, for its strength and universality, does not pale in the face of the greatest forces of the globe."[3] But the "Age of Man" or "Anthropozoic era" was not only marked by environmental invention and re-invention at the hands of a singular, steam- and carbon-powered *Anthropos*. From the start, this period was equally defined by imbricated processes of dispossession and enslavement of Black, brown, and indigenous bodies, extractive fossil economies, and ecological imperialism.[4] By the end of the nineteenth century, what we now know as the "Anthropocene" (geologists

[1]Mark A. Maslin and Simon Lewis, *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 29.
[2]Maslin and Lewis, *The Human Planet*, 29; Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg, "The Geology of Mankind?" *Anthropocene Review* 1, no. 1 (2014): 62–69.
[3]Antonio Stoppani, "First Period of the Anthropozoic Era," in *Making the Geologic Now: Responses to Material Conditions of Contemporary Life*, ed. Reg Beatty, Elizabeth Ellsworth, and Jamie Kruse (Brooklyn: Punctum Books, 2013), 36.
[4]Malm and Hornborg, "The Geology of Mankind?" 62–69.

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Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer's 2002 term for the geological era during which humanity has had a significant impact on the global environment) had already been observed, named, and even celebrated as a geophysical index of European sovereignty and agency.[5]

Mark A. Maslin and Simon Lewis have suggested that two of the most significant obstacles to combatting the ecological consequences of the Anthropocene are the misconceptions that the climate crisis is a new phenomenon, and that it transpired accidentally—we, humans, never meant to get our planet into such trouble.[6] Of course, this is not true: the Anthropocene and attendant changes to the global climate were no mere accident, and were pursued with conviction by some historical actors. Dipesh Chakrabarty has most visibly asked what the Anthropocene with its extreme vision of human agency demands of historical research; this volume asks what it demands of music-historical thinking, particularly in the long nineteenth century.[7] This collection of articles exposes just how deeply enmeshed nineteenth-century musical thought and practice were in the Anthropocene's carefully directed, deeply intentional matrix of intellectual and material impulses.[8] Contributors show that music routinely acted as a site for celebrating or, at least, registering Anthropocenic treatment of nature, from increased anthropogenic dynamism with the natural world to the ascendency and control of Western industrial humanity over the global environment, its spiritual, intellectual, and material resources, and those "not-quite-human" others who did not qualify as *Anthropos*.

The articles in this volume explore the nineteenth-century Anthropocenic enframement of music and offer the beginnings of a new approach to thinking across the histories of music, human identity, and the natural world. Contributors depart from conventional protocols and politics of ecomusicology. Jim Sykes has suggested that musicology and ecomusicology alike tend to obfuscate the involvement of creative labor, agency, and products in the "production and maintenance of the Earth system," as well as their relationship to the intellectual impulses of the Anthropocene.[9] Reflecting the aims of this volume, Sykes shows not only that music and music-making have long been entwined in planetary processes, but also that the discipline's most conventional eco-musical thought patterns are more closely aligned with historical Anthropocenic thinking than they may seem: (eco)musicology tends to glorify Western historical actors' privileged access to nature's alleged surfeit of creative, intellectual, and spiritual capital, their ability to render it musically, and the rarified creative products that seem to emerge from such privilege.[10] As James Q. Davies and Peter McMurray demonstrate in this special issue, these conventional ideas of music and nature bear an uneasy, Anthropocenic ethics and unarticulated "racial frame"; they might be understood as inadvertently affirming core intellectual conceits of the Anthropocene as they celebrate Western creative agency, art, and nature, and they obscure the visibility of the material impact of such exclusionary thinking on the planet and its most marginalized populations. These common eco-musical ideations might, therefore, be read as unintentionally perpetuating the "exclusionary humanism," unmarked whiteness and Eurocentricity, and racialized structures of knowledge, power, and value native to the metaphor of the Anthropocene and its broader geological realities from the start.[11]

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[5]Paul J. Crutzen, "The Geology of Mankind," *Nature* 415 (2002): 23.

[6]Maslin and Lewis, *The Human Planet*, 5.

[7]Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Climate of History: Four Theses," *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 2 (2009): 197–222. See also Robert Emmett and Thomas Lekan, "Whose Anthropocene? Revisiting Dipesh Chakrabarty's 'Four Theses'," *RCC Perspectives: Transformations in Environment and Society* 2 (2016).

[8]Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming* (London: Verso, 2016).

[9]Jim Sykes, "The Anthropocene and Music Studies," *Ethnomusicology Review* 22, no. 1 (2020): 1–2. See also *Current Directions in Ecomusicology: Music, Culture, Nature*, ed. Aaron Allen and Kevin Dawe (London: Routledge, 2016), 4–6.

[10]Sykes, "The Anthropocene and Music Studies," 1–2.

[11]Janae Davis, Alex Moulton, Levi Van Sant, and Brian Williams, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene?: A Manifesto for Ecological Justice in the Age of Global Crises," *Geography Compass* 13, no. 5 (2019): 1–17.

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The articles in this special issue suggest, as Alexander Rehding's contribution puts it, that "this kind of nature was never the only game in town." The Anthropocene demands that we learn to think about nature—and about the *ways* we think about nature—anew. Adopting this challenge, this volume aims to uncover signs of awareness, contrition, and celebration of global environmental anthropogenesis in nineteenth-century musical texts and practices, produced as "human beings [were] becom[ing] a geophysical force capable of determining the course of climate for millions of years."[12] Contributors show that nineteenth-century creative actors' Anthropocenic operations were intellectual and cultural as well as material. In keeping with Sykes's appeal that musicologists register creative labor and products as deeply entwined in the "production and maintenance of the Earth system," this issue shows that historical actors both meditated upon humanity's shifting relationship with the natural world and positioned music athwart environmental anthropogenesis and the rapid expansion of the Western world's base of fossil fuels—often at the expense of those deemed "less-than-human."[13] Through distinct archival lenses, each article shows that, in the long nineteenth century, music and aurality were planetary phenomena.

This issue's six articles transport readers from the "triumph of steam" in mid-century Birmingham and the sonic refuge of the Louisiana bayou to resonant, subterranean worlds of oil, precious metals, gas, and the laborers responsible for extracting them. It begins with Alexander Rehding's reimagining of core precepts of his and Suzannah Clark's *Music Theory and the Natural Order* (2002) around the intellectual demands of the Anthropocene and the climate crisis, which complicate normative musicological thinking about nature by introducing new forms of extreme human agency into the equation. In particular, he is concerned with the Anthropocene's rendering of nature as a self-regulating system of interdependent human and nonhuman agents, an interspecies paradigm that underwrites James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis's 1979 theory of the Anthropocenic Earth as all-encompassing "Gaia." Rehding's article explores Gaia's potentialities as a framework for music and sound analysis, focusing on J. G. Kastner's music theory. The two articles that follow continue to explore nineteenth-century musical thought and practice as enjoining Anthropocenic forms of environmental invention and intervention. Fanny Gribenski's article conjures a chaotic Gaia, as she considers music-making in musically uncooperative climates. Gribenski demonstrates how European attempts to systematically standardize tuning and pitch were disrupted by unpredictable climatic conditions and temperature variation, both indoors and out. Music-making in the colonies, particularly by British brass bands, became "sites of negotiation between Western ideas of aesthetics, science, and social order." She goes on to trace attempts at "manufactur[ing] weather" within musical venues as a means of ensuring pitch unity, even under the most extreme ambient atmospheric conditions. Jonathan Hicks continues to explore the protocols of environmental control within musical venues. His article advances a new approach to understanding the interpenetration of aesthetic and civic spaces that marked London's promenade concerts, which often took in "hitherto open spaces" amid greenery, water features, and air-conditioning. Anchoring his study to the life and death of the indoor fountain—the "lungs" of some concert halls—Hicks shows how the Victorian promenade concert supported a unique form of the built environment and indoor climate control, enduring motifs of the Anthropocene.

The next two articles explore music and sound as media of the extractive fossil economies that defined the beginnings of the Anthropocenic age. James Q. Davies's article exposes the steam- and carbon-powered fossil economy that fueled the production and reproduction of Felix Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah* at the 1846 Birmingham Festival. *Elijah*, he shows, was born out of Anthropocenic apotheosis and can be viewed cosmologically: it functions for him as an industrial "airscape" that rendered

[12]Emmett and Lekan, "Whose Anthropocene?" 7.
[13]Sykes, "The Anthropocene and Music Studies," 1–2. See also Kyle Devine, *Decomposed: The Political Ecology of Music* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019).

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Nature's "dark subterranean matter" as both the source of apocalypse and as a site of "industrial healing." Where Davies dwells on the sooty air of Birmingham and its modes of technical and musical ventilation, Kirsten Paige's article transports readers below ground to vibrating, subterranean veins of coal and oil. She explores the early history of the microphone, which grew popular among Italian, British, and Japanese seismologists in the immediate aftermath of the popularization of the concept of the "Anthropozoic era." Asking why these phenomena were coterminous, this article shows that the microphone figured an exclusive standard of anthropogenic aurality fit for the "Anthropozoic era." The device was used by seismological representatives of emerging empires and nation-states to assert control over global geophysical knowledge, the underworld's resonant veins of fossil fuels, and the "less-than-human" laborers not only responsible for resource extraction, but supposedly in possession of "lesser" aural faculties.

Peter McMurray's article concludes this volume and looks ahead to potential future studies of ecomusicology's "white racial frame."[14] McMurray proposes a "Black ecomusicology" that de-centers and "re-maps" modes of ecocritical aurality. He proposes shifting away from white, male authors, such as Henry David Thoreau, who tend to dominate ecocritical scholarship on ecological listening. He instead seeks to generate an interpretive framework for engaging nineteenth-century aural ecologies of enslavement, environmental and sensory refuge, and their entrenched presumptions about human and nonhuman identity and value.

[14]Philip A. Ewell, "Music Theory and the White Racial Frame," *Music Theory Online* 26, no. 2 (2020). Online: https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.2/mto.20.26.2.ewell.html, accessed 22 September 2020.

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