

# 39<sup>th</sup>

# ESEM

## European Seminar in Ethnomusicology

Zagreb, 19—25 September 2024

## call for papers

[abstract submission form](#)[conference website](#)[ESEM website](#)

**abstract submission deadline:**  
**1 April 2024**

**conference venue:**  
University of Zagreb Academy of Music  
Trg Republike Hrvatske 12  
Zagreb, Croatia

## Themes

### 1. Excluded Musics

Throughout its history, ethnomusicology collected, archived and interpreted numerous musical practices creating subsequent representative academic knowledge. Inevitably, some practices have been excluded. Beyond mere pragmatic reasons, the processes of selection of particular music and dance styles to be studied and/or performed have regularly been immersed in current politics. These selections also influenced the future understandings of (national) cultures, as well as affected different communities and their identity formations. The selection processes were again repeated by the state cultural politics, school curricula and heritagization processes.

Could inclusion or emphasis on certain “unwanted” musics shift our perception of particular cultural practices, communities or the general role of music and sound in society? As ethnomusicologists, what can we do to recognize the hegemonic policies of omission in our discipline and work against them? Can these excluded musics be reached, researched and reintegrated into the canon today? Or how can they help us unlearn the notion of the canon and its interpretational and representational hegemony altogether? What music and dance practices are being excluded right now and what does it tell us about them and those who exclude them? Aside from our research, in our teaching, what can we do to avoid repeating these omissions?

Within this thematic stream, we are looking for examples of different “unwanted” or excluded music and dance styles and repertoires, the specificities of their contexts, changes in paradigms or cultural politics that resulted in shifts between wanted and unwanted musics and opening of the discussion on how to work on selection without creating hegemonic structures. We invite scholars to present on topics such as:

- Canon formation and canon critique in ethnomusicology

- Traditional and folk music and dance and its relation to nationalism and processes of “national culture” formation
- Heritagization and Intangible Cultural Heritage policies
- Selection processes in music and dance research and artistic practice (repertoire in stage ensembles, repertoire in traditional music education, teaching canon in ethnomusicology, habits in research topic choices)
- Choice-making in field recording and archiving

## 2. Sounds of Confinement and Isolation

The Covid-19 pandemic urged the ethnomusicologists world-over to reexamine their understandings of complex conditions of physical and social isolation and reflect on the role music and dance played as one of the mechanisms of navigating the everyday experience of imposed confinement and isolation. We were able to observe firsthand the myriad of creative ways people used music and dance to cope with mobility restrictions, while at the same time we witnessed music-making activities being forced to move online or stop altogether because they were deemed to be one of the most "dangerous" forms of social gathering. As we are slowly moving back to "business-as-usual" we are inviting participants to (re)consider other (past and present) instances in which music and sound are deeply ingrained in the experiences of confinement and to reflect on the ways that thinking through music and sound can help us to arrive at more nuanced understanding of different forms of forced and/or self-imposed isolation.

Most obvious spaces to think through about the topic of music, confinement and isolation are undoubtedly different places of forced confinement. Difficult to access and intentionally removed from the flows of everyday life, these spaces are often characterized by specific sound regimes and controlled conditions in which music is allowed to appear. Isolation, however, could also be understood in terms of geographically isolated spaces—in particular islands and other insularised spaces—in which the sense of isolation is at times strongly felt and as such potentially reflected in music. Despite numerous instances in which it is forced upon individuals not in position to resist the oppressive conditions of confinement, isolation is also increasingly becoming a tool of self-care and a sort of a "luxury" form of distancing from the accelerated pace of everyday life in societies consumed by speed, profit, information-overload and dictate of being "always-on". In such instances of self-imposed isolation music and sound very often have a special role to play.

We invite scholars and practitioners to contribute their works that concern sounds and music in relation to confinement and isolation through (but not limited to) the following topics:

- Experience of isolation and music-making in island communities and other insularised spaces, including linguistic enclaves and other secluded minority settings
- Music and sound regimes in spaces of forced confinement (such as prisons, detention centres, closed hospital wards)
- Music and experience of confinement in cities/areas under siege in armed conflict
- Music and experiences of isolation/non-belonging in the context of contemporary migratory movements
- Music as a technology of self-imposed isolation (self-distancing, self-seclusion, self-retreat)
- Music and solitude
- Methodological challenges of research on music and confinement

## 3. Free papers

Even though proposals related to the Seminar's themes will be prioritised, submissions about other topics of interest for ESEM will be also considered.

## Modes of Presentation

A variety of presentation modes are possible and applicants are encouraged to carefully consider which mode of presentation might work best to present their research. You may only present once during the seminar.

**Individual Paper:** The length of an individual paper presentation will be 20 minutes, with 10 minutes discussion time. Co-authorship is allowed and encouraged.

**Film Screening:** Film presentations aim at screening your own work, followed by a discussion of the presented film. Please submit a written abstract of the content including general data about the film and its length for the program committee's consideration.

**Panel (90 minutes)** is planned, coordinated, and prepared by a group of people, one of whom is the responsible coordinator. Proposals may be submitted for panels consisting of three or more presenters and the structure is at the discretion of the coordinator. The proposal should indicate the overall purpose and the role of the individual participants. Each panel proposal will be accepted or rejected as a whole. Please note that you have to submit only one abstract for the whole panel. All the individual abstracts will be required for the book of abstracts at a later stage if the panel is accepted.

**Roundtable (90 minutes)** is planned, coordinated, and prepared by a group of people, one of whom is the responsible coordinator. The aim is to generate discussion between members of the roundtable, each of whom presents questions, issues, and/or material for 3-5 minutes on the preselected unifying theme of the roundtable. The following discussion may open into more general discussion with the audience. The proposal explains the overall purpose and the role of the individual participants. Each roundtable proposal will be accepted or rejected as a whole.

## Language

**English is the official language of the Seminar.**

## Submission

Deadline for proposals is **1 April 2024**. Please submit your proposals via Google Form available at [this link](#).

**Evaluation of proposals** will be done anonymously, and presenters will be notified of the program committee's decision by mid-April 2024.

## Symposium Registration Fee

**Early Bird Registration** (Deadline: **31 July 2024**)

- regular 50 € — reduced 30 €

**Registration** (Deadline: **1 September 2024**)

- regular 70 € — reduced 40 €

The registration form will be available online starting **May 2024**.

## Contacts

### Local Arrangements Committee:

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Questions regarding the programme can be addressed to any member of the

### Programme Committee:

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Questions related to ESEM membership should be directed to:

**ESEM president** Ewa Dahlig-Turek (edahlig@gmail.com) and

**ESEM Secretary General** Ignazio Macchiarella (macchiarella@unica.it)