

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for enquiring about our NEH Summer Institute *Voices Across Time: Teaching American History Through Song*, being held at the Music Building of the University of Pittsburgh, July 7 – August 8, 2008. Songs are like time capsules, filled with messages from a moment in history. They're also fun to sing, making them an appealing and effective tool for the classroom.

We're glad to know of your interest in putting these resources to work in your own teaching. Textbook publishers have recognized the importance of including original source documents in art and literature that speak from the periods they represent, but music is almost absent. We created the *Voices Across Time* project to design classroom materials and select songs that will help students understand history and language, within the framework of standards-based education. We're deeply grateful to the NEH for funding this Summer Institute based on our project, and to the We the People initiative for recognizing the potential of *Voices Across Time* to strengthen teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture.

The following description should give you a comprehensive overview of the institute and the application process, as well as answer many questions you may have about where the institute is being held.

Overview

Voices Across Time is a five-week institute for 25 secondary-school teachers, hosted by the Center for American Music at the University of Pittsburgh. Each week we will focus on a broad theme related to American history, utilizing popular songs as primary source documents. Lectures and discussions led by historians and musicologists will help you strengthen your knowledge of particular historical topics and develop insights into the dynamic interaction of popular music and society. Carefully selected field trips and performances will offer uniquely engaging evocations of an historical context. Throughout all five weeks, we will help you identify appropriate resources—books, articles, recordings, and performances.

The first week, "Moving Along," will introduce you to the major issues involved in approaching music as an artifact in talking about migration, transport, and expansion in American history. The first two days will be spent introducing everyone to the campus and the city, while we begin to understand how music works as an important factor in our lives and histories—not just shared histories, but also our personal histories. We will first focus on nineteenth-century European immigrant populations, particularly those represented in Pittsburgh; we'll discuss their experiences with assimilation and how they translated those experiences into popular and folk songs. By way of example, we will visit local ethnic neighborhoods and participate in the lively rhythmic complexity of music at the Bulgarian-Macedonian Club, one of the oldest ethnic centers in Pittsburgh. This tour will acquaint you with the city where you will be spending the next five weeks; it will also provide first-hand evidence of different ethnicities, and how music defined and portrayed them. The week will also include a lecture on German and Latin American immigrant populations, and a performance/lecture by Mike Seeger on American "roots" music of many ethnic groups. We will end the week with a pedagogical demonstration of one of the techniques for integrating music into the classroom.

The second week, "Work," will concentrate on labor, from early colonial work aboard ships, on railroad trains, and in textile mills, to American industrialism and the labor reform movement. Songs of work are perfect examples of music's role in helping people at all economic levels cope with hard labor, inhumane conditions, and unjust practices. During this week, Bill Schustik, noted troubadour and sailor, will perform work songs heard aboard nineteenth-century ships, as he demonstrates how sea chanteys

kept crews working together to a beat, and also discuss how he introduces songs in the classroom. We will also be joined by Norm Cohen, author of *Long Steel Rail*, the authoritative work on music of the railroad, who will present examples of songs related to railroad history and its impact on the expansion and industrialization of the United States. Timothy Lynch, author of *Strike Songs of the Depression*, will discuss how songs, such as “Solidarity Forever,” helped to rally workers and document the major events of the strikes of the 1920s and 1930s. We will also explore the dire situation of working mothers in nineteenth-century textile mills and the more recent songs of working men and women, particularly those which express the challenges of migrant and day workers.

The third week, “War and Peace” will apply the insights of the previous weeks to the important military conflicts in America's history. During wartime, songs become documents of patriotism, propaganda, and protest, inviting us to ask questions like: “What is peace?” “What is war?” “Why is the nation fighting?” “What am I fighting for?” and “How does it feel back home?” We will begin our discussion of songs of war at the end of week two with a trip to Gettysburg, where we will have the opportunity to tour the cemetery and parts of the battlefield with Mark Snell, Director of the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War at Shepherd University. Songs were important to the soldiers at Gettysburg, helping them to pass the time and deal with the horrors and hardships of the war. While there we will examine the Civil War through its music, singing songs like “Children of the Battlefield” and “Jenny Wade” that would have been known to the soldiers. A live performance by the Federal City Brass Band, a group notable for their authentic performances of Civil War era music, will add to the experience as we explore the role trumpet calls and band music served on the battlefield.

We will continue our discussion on Monday of the following week by examining songs from the Revolutionary War with Kate van Winkle Keller, noted independent scholar of colonial music. With its clarion call for freedom, the music of this era initiated a tradition of rebellious or protest songs, starting with John Dickinson’s “Liberty Song” and “Free Amerikay.” We will trace how songs have documented our major conflicts, including the French and Indian War and the two World Wars. The week will culminate with the Vietnam War, which resulted in a significant expression of social unrest and divisiveness as exemplified in contrasting songs like “Feel Like I’m Fixin’ to Die Rag” and “Ballad of the Green Berets.” The week will end with an examination/demonstration of another teaching strategy and a discussion of national anthems.

The fourth week, “United/Divided,” includes the sub-themes of politics, civil rights, and diversity. This theme explores the many consequences of being a nation of diverse people with varying backgrounds and opinions. Music has allowed even the most disenfranchised to speak up and be heard—that peaceful dissension at the heart of the democratic process. The week will begin with a day devoted to the music of the Harlem Renaissance, an important cultural movement reflecting the assertion of African-American expression through art, literature, dance, and music. In particular, the poems of Langston Hughes inspired several songs, like “Marching Down Freedom’s Road,” that provide a glimpse into the pre-Civil Rights era. The following day, noted scholar Barbara Tischler (Columbia University) will join us to examine how songs, most of them appropriated from spirituals, like “We Shall Overcome,” were utilized to unite and inspire the most emotionally-charged social movement of the twentieth-century: the Civil Rights movement. We will continue the week with a presentation related to the struggle for equal rights for women, a movement that is sung about as early as 1795 in the song “Rights of a Woman.” The week will conclude with a visit to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, where we will examine the ways in which popular music during the 1960s encapsulated the significant social upheaval of the era and how rock music has been a driving force in the larger culture, inspiring reform and reflecting change.

The fifth week will turn everyone’s thoughts towards “Home,” as we examine how everyday life has had a musical soundtrack from the days of singing away long winter evenings around the hearth to today’s world of the iPod. Not just for entertainment alone, songs can reveal much about relationships and values in the home and the drudgery of keeping them, as well as providing a means to teach children

moral and academic lessons. The week's discussion will begin with musicologist Dale Cockrell (Vanderbilt University) who will discuss how early settlers filled their few leisure hours by making music at home and what this music tells us about their lives, a topic he will illustrate through the music documented in Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* books. Songs like "The Blue Juniata" and "The Gum Tree Canoe" echo the experiences of the early settlers as they paint a picture of what they saw on the prairie.

Bridging the discussions of nineteenth and twentieth century music at home will be a consideration of the impact of technological advances on popular song. Developments in musical dissemination, from tin foil to wax to vinyl to compact discs and the Internet, have affected how we create, acquire, and listen to music, stimulating wider changes in our social and cultural interactions. That general discussion will provide a framework for the remainder of the week, which will include a lecture by independent scholar Ken Emerson, well-known author of works on popular music. His overview of popular music of the 1950s and 60s will examine how these songs have reflected changes in our lives as well as our social consciousness. From the socially insignificant "I Love How You Love Me," to marginally controversial songs like The Crystals' "Uptown," popular songwriters Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil anticipated the impending changes in popular music and society.

Before you return to your own home, we will spend a day examining what most students are listening to on their iPods: hip hop. One way to engage students' attention in the "old" music is to relate it to music they are already familiar with, such as rock and hip hop, thus providing a connection that can help students understand the correlation between current and historic events. Perhaps as controversial as the introduction of rock and roll, hip hop embodies the rebellious spirit of youth as it serves as a conduit for social and political statements. It is a potentially effective teaching tool but requires an informed, sensitive approach. We have asked the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's resident ethnomusicologist, Susan Oehler, and musicologist, Jason Hanley, to assist us in introducing you to hip hop, its history and its cultural implications, through a distance-learning link.

Faculty

The *Voices Across Time* institute will feature a diverse roster of important historians and subject experts, master teachers, and educators to establish the historical foundation for discussion of related musical topics. The institute will be co-directed by Deane Root and Mariana Whitmer, musicologists with research interests in American music. Drs. Root and Whitmer have been actively involved in the creation of *Voices Across Time* for several years and have worked together on conference presentations and teaching workshops. They are strong advocates of the importance of keeping alive traditional American music and the notion that music, as an important mirror of American culture, can be used to invigorate the teaching of history. Dr. Root, founder of the *Voices Across Time* project, is Professor of Music and of History, Director of the Center for American Music, and Curator of the Foster Hall Collection at the University of Pittsburgh. He has brought the Center, one of the largest repositories of musical Americana, into the mainstream of academic life through research, teaching, interpretive performance, and conservation of music in the context of its cultural and social roles in the history of the United States of America. Mariana Whitmer is currently Executive Director of the Society for American Music. As Project Coordinator at the Center for American Music at the University of Pittsburgh she is responsible for initiatives using the Foster Hall Collection to bring American music to scholars and educators. Dr. Whitmer has consulted on *Voices Across Time* since early 1999, assisting in the selection of songs, completing the historical research of individual songs, and contributing to the essay and discussion materials. She also has worked with the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh in integrating *Voices Across Time* into Social Studies curriculum development. Rounding out the core faculty is Mark Albright, a secondary-school history teacher who utilizes music frequently in his classroom, and a participant in the first *Voices Across Time* Institute (2004). He will act as liaison between the teachers and the faculty, ensuring that activities meet your needs, advising on your work during the institute, and

assisting in your evaluations. He will help to keep our discussions focused on realistic teaching goals and ensure that the Institute provides practical information that can be integrated into your classroom.

In addition to the core faculty, we have arranged for a varied slate of visiting lecturers and performers to participate in the Institute. Among the visiting lecturers are independent scholar Ken Emerson, author of *Doo Dah! Stephen Foster and the Rise of American Popular Culture* and *Always Magic in the Air: The Bomp and Brilliance of the Brill Building Era*; Dale Cockrell (Vanderbilt University), author of *The Happy Land Companion: Music from the World of Laura Ingalls Wilder* and producer of its companion CD, *Arkansas Traveler: Music from Little House on the Prairie*; John Koegel (California State University–Fullerton), author of *Music in German Immigrant Theater: New York City, 1840-1930*; Scott Sandage (Carnegie Mellon University), author of *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America*; and Alexander Bloom (Wheaton College), author of *Long Time Gone: 60s America Then and Now*. The performers, including Bill Schustik, Mike Seeger, and the Federal City Brass Band, are nationally recognized specialists in authentic performance. They will be demonstrating and discussing the use of live music in the classroom. While visiting faculty will be primarily responsible for expanding our knowledge on particular musical or historical topics, the core faculty will serve as facilitators during subsequent discussions concerning specific songs. There will be ample opportunities for listening to and singing a wide variety of songs, as you are invited to expand your knowledge of history and American music.

Applicant Qualifications

While a practical knowledge of music is not required for *Voices Across Time*, the enjoyment of music is absolutely necessary. You will not be asked to read music or play an instrument, but we will be singing (and possibly dancing). We encourage participation especially from middle- and high-school teachers of social studies or related disciplines, including history, geography, and language arts; other grade levels and disciplines will also be considered, and music teachers are welcome. We would love to see colleagues from complementary disciplines at the same school apply to the institute to foster collaborative teaching.

The Work of the Institute

Voices Across Time: Teaching American History Through Song will take place five days per week from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, except for the days when we are on field trips. Weekends and evenings will be free, with the exception of those evenings when we have planned “Movie Nights.” Related activities with optional attendance may be scheduled during the course of the Institute. For instance, you might be interested in participating in casual music-making, or visiting other museums and historical sites.

You will study songs and share in the discussions. We will provide you with recordings along with lyrics and background information of all the songs for this purpose. Short readings, such as research articles on music in popular culture, will be assigned before the Institute and throughout its five weeks to facilitate and reinforce the connection between music and history. You will be expected to read selected non-technical articles and chapters that deal with popular songs as they relate to cultural and social history. Additional readings may be assigned by visiting lecturers; these will be provided prior to or at the Institute but with sufficient time to complete them.

You will also complete an institute project to synthesize the content and strategies you have learned throughout the Institute. You will choose a topic from an era that personally interests you but has not been addressed by our lecturers; for that topic, you will select one or two songs and develop learning activities that you can use to incorporate the song(s) into your curriculum at your grade level. You will be required to research the songs, write backgrounds, and develop discussion questions that will guide students toward an understanding of the intended concept. Your work must address the academic standards and diverse learning styles, make effective use of songs as primary sources, and provide

assessment strategies. The teachers attending the Institute will be divided into groups of five to allow for peer review and collaboration with other teachers at the same grade level, and these groups will meet periodically throughout the five weeks. To ensure that your work attains a level of scholarship and educational effectiveness, these groups will work with the Institute faculty, and will have ample time for research and consultation with scholars, advisors, and peers. Successful lesson plans will facilitate the application of the Institute's theories and activities into the classroom. You will present your finished project to the Institute in the final week, and we will post it on the *Voices Across Time* website so other teachers can access it and make further comments and suggestions.

Please include a sentence or two in your application essay about a potential historic topic that interests you.

Housing

Teachers at our two previous institutes have enjoyed the housing accommodations, and written glowingly about the benefits of living together at the Shadyside Inn. Rooms will be available at the Shadyside Inn at a special low rate for all participants: comfortable, spacious studios (at \$1796.00 per month, \$59.87 per day) and two bedroom suites (at \$2336.00 per month, or \$1168 per person per month, \$38.94 per day) with a full living room, dining room and kitchen (all utilities are included). Located exactly one mile from the Music Building where the Institute will be held, the Shadyside Inn provides weekly maid service, air conditioning, telephone (with answering machine), TV with cable, all linens and kitchenware, as well as other amenities at no additional cost. The Shadyside Inn is adjacent to restaurants, shopping, and nightlife, within an attractive residential area. Although it is an easy, almost flat walk to campus, the Shadyside Inn offers a complimentary shuttle. You will likely want to share these wonderful accommodations, and we will be happy to assist with these arrangements. We can also assist participants who wish to bring their families, or seek alternative accommodations.

Stipend

You will receive a \$3,600 stipend to cover expenses associated with travel, housing, and meals. You will not be asked to pre-pay for housing before you arrive, and all reading items (bibliographic material) will be included in the Institute. The Institute will not provide writing materials (pens, paper).

Continuing Education Credit

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (Act 48) will provide continuing education credit. Participants from other states may inquire about interstate reciprocity in advance of the Institute and we will assist you with that process.

Cultural and Recreational Resources

The University of Pittsburgh is situated in the Oakland section of the city, where there is a readily available assortment of cultural and recreational opportunities in an attractive urban environment. Across the street from the campus, The Carnegie complex contains the region's main public library, a music hall, a fine arts museum, and a natural history museum (which contains the world's largest dinosaur collection). Also nearby is the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. An assortment of restaurants offers an ethnically varied menu for those with adventurous tastes, although there are many offering traditional fare as well. There are also three Starbucks within walking distance, as well as other coffee establishments. Retail shops, including new and used bookstores, banks, and a post office are all conveniently located within easy walking distance. Abundant running or walking trails are found within close proximity at Schenley Park. Religious services are held at various sites near campus. Information concerning the City of Pittsburgh can be found at www.pitt.edu/pittsburgh/index.html, and we recommend the online tour of the campus and surroundings at <http://www.umc.pitt.edu/tour/>.

Application Information

Application information is included with this letter. Please be sure to fill out the online application cover sheet completely, according to the instructions. Your completed application should be postmarked no later than March 3, 2008, and addressed to me at the Center for American Music, Stephen Foster Memorial, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA 15260. The most important part of the application is your essay, which should include any personal and academic information that is relevant; reasons for applying to *Voices Across Time*; your interest, both intellectual and personal, in the topic; qualifications to do the work of the project and make a contribution to it; what you hope to accomplish by participation; and the relation of the study to your teaching. **Please include a sentence or two describing a possible topic for your institute project.** Don't hesitate to contact us at amerimus@pitt.edu (please put *NEH Summer Institute* in the subject line) with any questions.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Mariana Whitmer, Ph.D.
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