

# Dr. Shayna M. Silverstein

## Curriculum vitae

Northwestern University  
Department of Performance Studies  
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### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor of Performance Studies, Northwestern University (2014-present)  
Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum, University of Pennsylvania (2013-14)

### EDUCATION

Ph.D. University of Chicago, Ethnomusicology, 2012  
B.A. Yale University, History (with distinction), 2000

### FELLOWSHIPS and AWARDS

2018-19 Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities Faculty Fellowship  
2017 Woodrow Wilson Career Enhancement Fellowship  
2017 Buffett Institute Book Manuscript Workshop Award, Northwestern University  
2010-11 Franke Dissertation Fellowship, University of Chicago  
2007-08 Fulbright-IIE Fellowship for Syria  
2007 Critical Language Scholarship Award for Arabic study in Syria  
2004, 2007 Foreign Language Area Studies Summer Award for Arabic study in Syria  
2003-09 Century Fellowship, University of Chicago

**Research Interests:** Dance, Embodiment, Ethnomusicology, Gender and Sexuality, Middle East and North Africa, Performance, Popular Culture, Race and Ethnicity, Social Class, Sound, Syria

### PUBLICATIONS

(forthcoming) "The 'Barbaric' Dabke: Masculinity, Dance, and Autocracy in Contemporary Syrian Cultural Production." *Journal of Middle Eastern Women's Studies*.

(forthcoming) "An (Un)Marked Foreigner: Race-Making in Egyptian, Syrian, and German Popular Cultures," co-authored with Darci Sprengel, in special issue "Cultural Constructions of Race and Racism in the Middle East and North Africa" of *Lateral*, edited by Rayya El Zein.

2020. "Mourning the Nightingale's Song: The Audibility of Networked Performances in Protests and Funerals of the Arab Revolutions," *Performance Matters*, 6.2.

2019. "Disorienting Sounds: A Sensory Ethnography of Syrian Dance Music" in *Remapping Sound Studies*, edited by Jim Sykes and Gavin Steingo. Duke University Press.

2019. "On Sirens and Lampposts: Sound, Affect, and Space at the Women's March," *Music & Politics*, Volume XIII, No. 1.
2019. "Syrian Bodies, Sonic Ruptures," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image*, 6.2. (Audiography/Sound Art)
2016. "The Punk Arab: Demystifying Omar Souleyman's *Techno-Dabke*." In *Punk Ethnography: Artists and Scholars Listen to Sublime Frequencies*. Edited by Michael Veal and E. Tammy Kim. Wesleyan, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
2016. "Public Pleasures: Negotiating Gender and Morality through Syrian Popular Dance." In *Islam and Popular Culture*. Edited by Karin van Nieuwkerk, Martin Stokes, and Mark LeVine. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
2015. "Cultural Liberalization or Marginalization? The Cultural Politics of Syrian Folk Dance during Social Market Reform." In *Syria from Reform to Revolt: Culture, Society and Religion*. Edited by Leif Stenberg and Christa Salamandra. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
2013. "Transforming Space: The Production of Contemporary Syrian Art Music." In *The Arab Avant-Garde: Music, Politics, Modernity*. Edited by Kay Dickinson, Thomas Burkhalter, and Ben Harbert. Wesleyan, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
2012. "New Wave Dabke: The Stars of *Musiqa Sha'biyya* in the Levant." *Out of the Absurdity of Life*. Edited by Theresa Beyer and Thomas Burkhalter. Solothurn, Switzerland: Traversion Press.
2012. "Syria's Radical Dabke." In "The Art and Culture of the Arab Revolts," a special issue of *Middle East Report* 263 (Summer).

### **Works under review**

"Singing Impassability: Song, Seas, and Syrian Migration," contribution for *Encounters in Ethnomusicology: Essays in Honor of Philip V. Bohlman* (essay)

"*Raqṣ al-samāḥ wa-al-dabkah : tāriḥ wa-tadwīn (Samah and Dabke Dance: History and Styles)*. By 'Adnān ibn Dhurayl. Manuscript Editor. In *Ethnomusicology Translations*. (translation)

### **Works in progress**

*Syria's Fraught Balance: Bodies, Power, and Difference in Dabke Dance Music* (book manuscript, revisions in progress)

"Weighted Rhythms: The Politics of the Syrian Body in the Choreography of Mithkal Alzghair" (journal article), accepted for inclusion in special issue on "Choreography, Epistemology and the

Body” in *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, edited by Tarik Sabry and Rachid Belghiti

“Virtuous Movements: Staging the *Fellaha* Peasant Woman in Syrian Folk Dance” (journal article)

“Processional Politics: Sound, Sect, and Public Space in the Syrian Conflict” (journal article)

“Bread Lines, Green Screens, and Memes: The Politics of Disavowal in Anas al-Maghrebi’s Digital Music” (journal article)

### Reviews and Reference Entries

2019. Review of “Listening for Religion” by Lauren Pond / American Religious Sounds Project. *In-Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image*. 6.2.

2018. Review of *Sensing Sound: Singing and Listening as Vibrational Practice* by Nina Sun Eidsheim and *Sound: an acoulogical treatise* by Michel Chion. *TDR: The Drama Review*.

2017. Review of *Noise Uprising: The Audiopolitics of a World Musical Revolution* by Michael Denning. In “Tape,” a special issue of *twentieth-century music*.

2016. Review of *Modernity’s Ear: Listening to Race and Gender in World Music* by Roshanak Kheshti. *Sounding Out! The Sound Studies Blog*.

2015. Review of *My Voice Is My Weapon: Music, Politics, and Nationalism in Palestine* by David A. McDonald. *Political and Legal Anthropology*. 38:2, November.

2015. Review of *The Politics of Love: Sexuality, Gender, and Marriage in Syrian Television Drama* by Rebecca Joubin. *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 11:2, Spring.

2015. Review of *Popular Culture in the Middle East and North Africa*, edited by Mounira Solimon and Walid El Hamamsy. *Contemporary Islam*, 9:3.

2014. Review of *Palestinian Music and Song: Expression and Resistance since 1900*, edited by Moslih Kanaaneh, Stig-Magnus Thorsen, and David McDonald. *Journal of Folklore Research Reviews*, September.

2012. Review of *Women, the Recited Qur’an, and Islamic Music in Indonesia*, by Anne K. Rasmussen, *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 8:2, Spring.

2010. *Encyclopedia of 21st-Century Anthropology*. “Music and Dance.” Edited by Jim Birxh. UK: Sage Press.

2009. Review of *Maqam and Liturgy: Ritual, Music, and Aesthetics of Syrian Jews in Brooklyn*, by Mark L. Kligman, *Syrian Studies Association Newsletter* XV:1.

2008. "Local Meets Global at 'World Music Nights' in Damascus." *Syrian Studies Association Newsletter* XIV: 1.

### **General Readership Publications**

2007. "Sound of Resistance;" "Iran;" "Iraq;" "Lebanon;" "Palestine." *Cultures of Resistance*.

2007. "Music Travels the Silk Road." *Calliope: Exploring World History*. January.

2002. "Sentinels of Arrival: Performing Arts." In "The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Bridging Trust," a special issue of *Smithsonian Talk Story*. Fall.

2002. Glossary and Liner Notes. *The Silk Road: A Musical Caravan*. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

### **TEACHING and ADVISING**

**Teaching Areas:** Ethnographic Methods, Ethnomusicology, Middle Eastern Performance, Performance Studies, Popular Music, Social Theory, Sound Studies

*\*unless otherwise noted, all courses developed independently*

#### **Northwestern University, Undergraduate**

Contemporary Middle Eastern Performance

Syria: History, Society, Culture

Critical Yoga: History, Practice, Pedagogy

Sound Cultures

Sonic Practices of the Middle East and North Africa

Translating the Arab Spring

Sounding Bodies

World Music Cultures

#### **Northwestern University, Graduate**

Performance and Everyday Authoritarianisms

Sound Ethnography

Popular Culture: Methods and Issues

Listening: Methods and Issues

Critical Performance Ethnography

Doctoral Prospectus Workshop

#### **University of Pennsylvania**

Violence and the Aesthetics of Sound (graduate workshop series)

#### **Dartmouth College**

Ethnomusicology: Improvisation and the Middle East

## **University of Chicago**

Modal Analysis

B.A. Honors Seminar

Media Aesthetics: Sound\*

Music of the Middle East

Popular Culture and Postcoloniality in the Middle East

Introduction to the Social and Cultural Study of Music

Introduction to World Music

Preceptor for Mellon Mays Research Program

Academic and Professional Writing\*

## **Doctoral Advising**

Tarek Benchouia, Performance Studies, Northwestern (as Chairperson)

Nathan Lamp, Performance Studies, Northwestern (as Chairperson)

José R. Álvarez-Colón, Performance Studies, Northwestern (committee)

Meiver de la Cruz, Performance Studies, Northwestern (committee)

Stephen Sullivan, Anthropology, Northwestern (committee)

## **M.A. Advising**

Joshua Hudelson, Digital Musics, Dartmouth College

## **Pedagogical Training**

Fellow, Searle Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning, Northwestern University (2016-17)

Workshop for Teaching in the College, University of Chicago (2009)

Humanities Core Course Internship Program, University of Chicago (2006-07)

## **Outreach**

Newberry Library Seminars (2018, 2020), Evanston Township High School (2018), College of Charleston (2019)

## **PRESENTATIONS**

*Convener*, “Listening In: Sonic Interventions in the Middle East and North Africa.”

Northwestern University. Evanston, IL. 12-13 May, 2016.

## **Invited Papers and Talks**

2020 Invited talk, Arts Research Center, University of California, Berkeley

2020 “Revolutions in Sound” Symposium, University of Maryland College Park

2019 “Touching Sound: Passion and Global Politics.” Conference hosted by the Aga Khan University. London, UK.

2019 “The Impossible Dance.” Talk given at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Lund University. Lund, Sweden.

- 2019 “Syrian Arts,” and “Syrian Dabke workshop.” Charleston College. Charleston, South Carolina.
- 2017 “Embodying *Saltanah*: Intercorporeality, Flow, and Selfhood in Syrian *Dabke*.” Middle East and Central Asia Music Forum. City University of London. London, UK.
- 2017 “Teaching Sound as Action.” Great Lakes Association for Sound Studies. Chicago, IL.
- 2016 “Remapping Sound Studies.” Workshop hosted by Duke University. Durham, NC.
- 2014 “The Revolutionary Public Sphere: Contention, Communication, and Culture in the Arab Uprisings.” Conference hosted by the Project for Advanced Research in Global Communication. University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, PA.
- 2013 “Islam and the Performing Arts.” Symposium hosted by University of Nijmegen. Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- 2011 Deutsch-Französische Sommerschule. Centre Marc Bloch. Berlin, Germany.
- 2010 “Bashar al-Asad’s First Decade: A Period of Transition for Syria?” Conference hosted by Lund University. Lund, Sweden.

### **Conferences, Colloquia, Forums**

- 2020 “Intersectional Listening Positionality.” Panel for Society of Ethnomusicology. 22 Oct.
- 2020 “Revolutions in Sound.” Panel for American Studies Association. 12-15 Nov.
- 2019 “Racialization and Publicness in Africa and the African Diaspora.” Conference convened by the African Studies Centre, Oxford University. Oxford, UK. 27-28 June.
- 2019 “Dance, Movement and Sound: Methodologies and Frameworks across and between Performance Worlds.” Panelist for roundtable at Northwestern University.
- 2018 “The Racial Diacritics of MultiKulti Music in Syrian Berlin.” Society for Ethnomusicology. Albuquerque, NM. 17 November.
- 2018 “Embodying Hope: Syrian Dancers as ‘Deserving Refugees’ in Berlin.” World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies. Seville, Spain. 18 July.
- 2017 “This is What Democracy Sounds Like: Sound, Music, and Performance at the Women’s March on Washington and Beyond.” Society for Ethnomusicology. Denver, CO. 28 Oct.
- 2017 “Tracing Syrian Folk Dance: A Critical Assessment of Ibn Dhurayl’s Anthology of *Raqs al-Samah* and *Dabke*.” Middle East Studies Association. Washington, DC. 19 November.
- 2017 “Tracing Syrian Folk Dance: A Critical Assessment of Ibn Dhurayl’s Anthology of *Raqs al-Samah* and *Dabke*.” Congress on Research in Dance + Society of Dance History Scholars. Columbus, OH. 19-22 October.
- 2017 “Syrian Bodies, Sonic Ruptures.” Lecture/Performance. Performance Studies International Association. Hamburg, Germany. 11 June.
- 2016 “The Presence of Connection: Sound, Affect, and Digital Ethnography.” At “Listening In: Sonic Interventions in the Middle East and North Africa.” Northwestern University. Evanston, IL. 12-13 May.

- 2016 *Discussant*, “Anthropology of Sound Forum Roundtable 1: Acoustic Methodologies.” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Washington, DC. 10-13 December.
- 2016 “Popular Class Dynamics in Syrian Alternative Music.” Symposium on “Towards a Sociology of Arab Popular Music.” Westminster University. London, UK. 8 April.
- 2015 *Panel organizer/presenter*, “What do the people want? Popular music and Arab uprisings.” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Austin, TX. 4-6 December.
- 2015 “Student Presentations: Assessing Student-Generated Content and Peer-Led Feedback.” Single-author presentation for the annual conference hosted by the Searle Center for Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. Northwestern University. Evanston, IL. 18 November.
- 2014 Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities New Faculty Colloquium, Northwestern University
- 2014 Program in Middle Eastern and North African Studies Faculty Forum, Northwestern University
- 2012 “Political Movements: The Revolutionary Aesthetics of Syrian Dabke.” Panel on “Aesthetics, Politics, and Religion: The Role of Arts in the Arab Uprising.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. 14-18 November.
- 2012 “Public Bodies: Syrian Dabke and the Politics of Belonging.” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA. 1-4 November.
- 2012 “Music of the Middle East” for Introduction to Islamic Studies, University of Chicago
- 2012 “Staging *Dabkeh*: The Emergence of a Levantine Folk Art.” Public lecture for “So You Think You Can *Dabkeh*” series. Alwan for the Arts. New York, NY. 13 October.
- 2012 Musicology Colloquium, Northwestern University. 5 January.
- 2011 “New Movements, Old Forms: Contesting Youth and Belonging in Syrian Popular Culture.” Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC. 1-4 December.
- 2011 “Microrhythms and Metric Variation in Groove-Based Dance Music of the Arab East.” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA. 17-20 November.
- 2011 “*A’la Raasi!* Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Popular Syrian Dance Music.” Lecture-Workshop. Alwan for the Arts. New York, NY. 9 June.
- 2011 “Return With Me: Popular Cultural Expression and the Construction of Sectarian Belonging in Contemporary Syria.” Middle East History & Theory Conference, University of Chicago. 12-15 May.
- 2011 *Discussant*, “Lebanon Faces the Future” Colloquium. University of Chicago. 30 April.
- 2010 *Panel Chair*, “The Built Environment and the Writing of History,” and “Explorations in Medieval Music Traditions.” Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. 18-21 November.
- 2010 “Islam, Gender and Dance.” World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) Meeting. Barcelona, Spain. 19-24 July.
- 2010 *Discussant*, “Gender, Education and Ideology,” Middle East History & Theory Conference, University of Chicago. 15 May.
- 2010 “*Min al-Balad*: Heritage, Place and *Dabke* Performance in Syria.” British Forum for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Oxford University, UK. 8-11 April.
- 2010 “*Dabke*: Popular Culture in the Levant.” Brandeis University. 26 February.

- 2009 “Intimate Paternalisms: Masculinity and Popular Dance in Syria.” Ethnoise Workshop and the Middle East History & Theory Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL. 2 and 17 April.
- 2009 “*Dabkat Rajuliyya*: Popular Culture and Nationalism in Contemporary Syria.” Middle East History & Theory Annual Conference, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL. 16 May.
- 2009 “Between *Awwal* and *Tanni*: The Performance of Masculinity in Syrian *Dabke*.” International Council on Traditional Music Biannual Meeting. Durban, South Africa. 1-8 July.
- 2009 “Hip Hop in the Middle East.” Arab Language Institute, University of Chicago.
- 2008 Reloading Images Artist Residency. Damascus, Syria. 14 October.
- 2007 “*'am dh 'audni, Ali*” (“You are melting me, Ali”): Constituting Publics through Song and Dance in *al-Mashriq*.” Invited speaker, Human Rights and Social Movements Workshop. University of Chicago. 24 May.
- 2007 “‘New Wave’ *Dabke*: Popular Music and Media in Lebanon and Syria.” British Forum for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Newcastle, UK. 18-21 April.
- 2006 “Memory Under Siege: Loss, Trauma, and Music in Lebanon.” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Honolulu, Hawaii. 16-19 November.
- 2005 “Sounding the Mediterranean: Reimagining Nationalism through Musical Style in Beirut and Jerusalem.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting. Washington, D.C. 30 November – 4 December.
- 2005 “Folklorization in the Present-Tense: Transnational Networks and the Production of Culture in ‘The Silk Road’ Smithsonian Folklife Festival.” Conference on Music and Cultural Politics, University of Chicago. 21-22 May.
- 2004 “Responding to Terror: The Politics of Meaning in John Adams’ Opera ‘The Death of Klinghoffer.’” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting. Tucson, AZ. 4-7 November.

## SERVICE and OUTREACH

### Professional and Community Service

Manuscript Reviewer for *Journal of Arabic Literature*, *Asian Music*, *Dance Research Journal*, *Ethnomusicology*, *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies*, *Journal of Folklore Research*, *The Public Historian*, Sage Press, Indiana University Press, Rutgers Press, Palgrave Macmillan, Anthem Press, Intellect Press

- 2019-20 Taskforce Member, New Neighbor Arts Entrepreneurship project
- 2016-18 Co-Chair, Dance, Movement, and Gesture Section, Society for Ethnomusicology
- 2013-15 Co-Editor, *Norient Academic Journal*
- 2006 *Editor*, VoiceXchange: Journal of Graduate Music Studies, University of Chicago
- 2006 *Resident Scholar*, The FireWire Ensemble for New Music, Chicago
- 2005 *Consultant*, The Silk Road Project

### Departmental/University Service (at Northwestern University unless otherwise indicated)

- 2020- Core Faculty, Middle Eastern and North African Studies Program
- 2019-20 Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Performance Studies
- 2019- Faculty Advisory Board, Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program



- 2015- Coordinator, *Sound Cultures* Module, School of Communication
- 2015- Steering Committee, SoundTank Initiative, School of Communication
- 2014- Executive Committee, Department of Performance Studies
- 2014-16 Luce Scholarship Review Committee
- 2012 Doctoral comprehensive exams committee, (University of Chicago)
- 2011-12 *Coordinator*, Middle East History & Theory Workshop/Conference (University of Chicago)
- 2006-7 *Coordinator*, Ethnoise! The Ethnomusicology Workshop (University of Chicago)

### **Professional Memberships and Affiliations**

Performance Studies International, Society for Ethnomusicology, Congress on Research in Dance, International Association for the Study of Popular Music, Middle East Studies Association, Syrian Studies Association, Great Lakes Association for Sound Studies, Yale Arab Alumni Association

Visiting Scholar, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon (2006, 2007-08)

Visiting Scholar, Institut du Proche-Orient, Damascus, Syria (2007-08)

### **Language and Performance Skills**

Colloquial Syrian Arabic (spoken knowledge)

Modern Standard Arabic, French, German (written knowledge)

Instruments: violin and *'ud* (Arab lute)

Movement/Dance: certified yoga instructor, *dabke* (Arab folk dance), martial arts