



Canadian Society
for Traditional Music

Société canadienne pour
les traditions musicales

CSTM'S CALL TO ACTION: Challenging Systemic Racism and Colonialism in Ethnomusicology in Canada

• Ratified by the CSTM Executive on Monday, Feb 22, 2021, after consultation with the CSTM Membership and Board of Directors

We, the Canadian Society for Traditional Music, condemn racism in all its forms. We reaffirm our commitment to fight for equal opportunity and to eradicate barriers of race, class, language, culture, gender, sexuality, appearance, ability, background, and other mechanisms of marginalization or discrimination within our scholarly society. Racism and police brutality against Indigenous, Black, and racialized people are an ongoing, alarming, and devastating reality across Canada and around the world. As a scholarly society, we recognize that the structures and practices of ethnomusicology, and that of folk music and traditional music studies, are deeply embedded in global histories of colonization and white supremacy. During the period when many Canadian institutions of learning were founded, the Indian Act of 1876 actively banned Indigenous music and dance practices. Many of the Canadian politicians who legislated quotas on the migration of Black and Asian people were trained at the very institutions in which we now teach. These histories have enabled ongoing, intergenerational exploitation and discrimination of Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, artists, and scholars.

The CSTM stands in solidarity with racialized scholars, students, artists, and with all individuals and communities who have suffered discrimination. We recognize that CSTM members who hold privilege have a particular responsibility to be stronger allies and fight for an inclusive, just, and compassionate society for all. At the same time, we recognise that a statement of solidarity is not enough and that concrete actions are the only way to move toward meaningful, systemic change.

We are committed to listening and acting, and to fostering change. As a start, we commit to the following near-term actions as we work with our membership and colleagues to transform the culture of our Society and racist structures of post-secondary education in Canada more broadly.

- Issue a Call for Papers for a special issue of *MUSICultures* that invites Indigenous, Black and racialized scholars to address anti-racist pedagogy in ethnomusicology and curricular planning (including inclusive syllabi and bibliographies), and to facilitate critical conversations regarding racism in Canadian ethnomusicology.
- Integrate policy and practices to foster greater inclusivity and diversity in the operations of *MUSICultures*.
- Address troubling aspects of CSTM's history on the website, including the harmful ways in which our founding member Marius Barbeau engaged Indigenous communities.
- Invite Round Tables in conferences and other activities in other fora (e.g., online reading groups and syllabi course design workshops that engage more diverse scholarship), which will focus on:
 - ✦ scholarship, issues, and experiences of Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities;
 - ✦ themes related to anti-racism and decolonization in ethnomusicology;
 - ✦ and scholarship addressing the concerns of other marginalized groups.
- Amend CSTM by-laws to state CSTM's commitment to diversity in the organization's leadership roles. ...2

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- Open a dialogue with ethnomusicology and music programs in Canada to find out how CSTM can support efforts for more diverse hiring practices and student recruitment.
- Initiate mechanisms to help CSTM include more diverse perspectives and voices. This will include establishing a fund to support the participation of students and scholars of diverse racialized backgrounds in CSTM conferences; as well as other means of improving access to CSTM activities for other socially, politically and economically marginalized groups.
- Foster the use of CSTM's online forums to engage a greater diversity of voices and audiences.
- Establish a mentorship program to support students and early career scholars, particularly those of Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities.

Respectfully,
The CSTM Executive Committee and Board of Directors