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Mark Joseph Lomanno

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The Dissertation Committee for Mark Joseph Lomanno Certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Improvising Difference: Constructing Canarian Jazz Cultures

Committee:

Veit Erlmann, Supervisor

Sonia Tamar Seeman, Co-Supervisor

Meta DuEwa Jones

Karl Hagstrom Miller

Robin Moore

Improvising Difference: Constructing Canarian Jazz Cultures

by

Mark Joseph Lomanno, B.A.; M.A.

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Improvising Difference: Constructing Canarian Jazz Cultures

Mark Joseph Lomanno, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

Supervisor: Veit Erlmann

Co-Supervisor: Sonia Tamar Seeman

This dissertation is a performance of and around borders, emphasizing how physical and virtual boundaries impact members of a community on the global periphery. More specifically, it interrogates the ways in which Canarian jazz musicians encounter and interact with the multiple types of actively produced *aislamiento* (isolation). As an autonomous community of Spain, the vestiges of colonialism are quite present in everyday Canarian life, despite many inhabitants' self-identification as African. This project traces three main lines of inquiry: the historical construction of the Canary Islands as exoticized periphery; the eradication of the Afro/Canarian subject through the ongoing ideological and physical violence; and the ways in which Canarian populations are re-asserting their identities—as Afro/Canarian, diasporic, and trans-Atlantic—through critical performance against trenchant stereotypes and the dominant paradigms that propagate them. Throughout the dissertation, I examine how surfaces—architectural, cartographic, scholarly and sonic—act to frame (and mask) cultural and musical identity. The ideological seams of these surfaces can function as interstitial spaces from which critical resistance can be performed through improvising musical and discursive acts.

Just as Canarian jazz musicians play against and across dominant paradigms to subsist, I will demonstrate how interstitial research methodologies can break open the

potentially obscuring surfaces that these paradigms construct. I extend David Sudnow's notion of the "articulational reach" and his phenomenologically informed exploration of piano performance into ethnographic research, emphasizing how my own subjectivity as researcher/pianist impacts and shapes the project. Crucial to Sudnow's "reach" is its inherently improvisatory emergence and the uncertainty of its outcome. In short, the ways in which Canarian musicians must improvise performances in musical and social environments will be examined and resonating with an approach imbued with the same improvising, subjective unfolding—both in terms of research methodology and of writerly perspective. The dissertation could be read as an unfolding, improvised construction that is constantly accruing new meanings: its chapters are not so much driven by an overarching or individual theses so much as by the spinning out of possible responses to the questions surrounding the project's initial premises.

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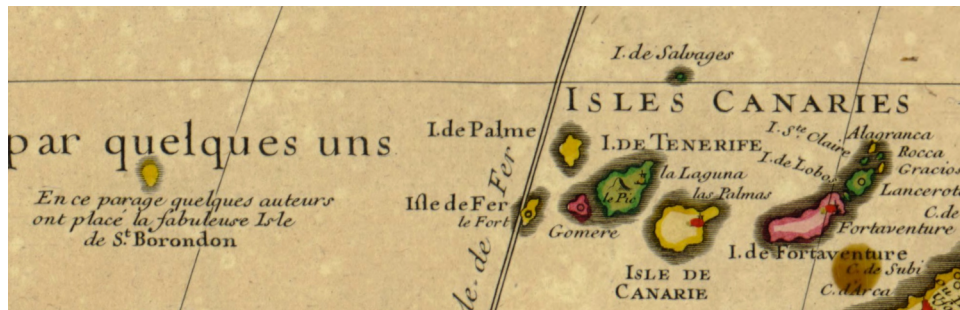
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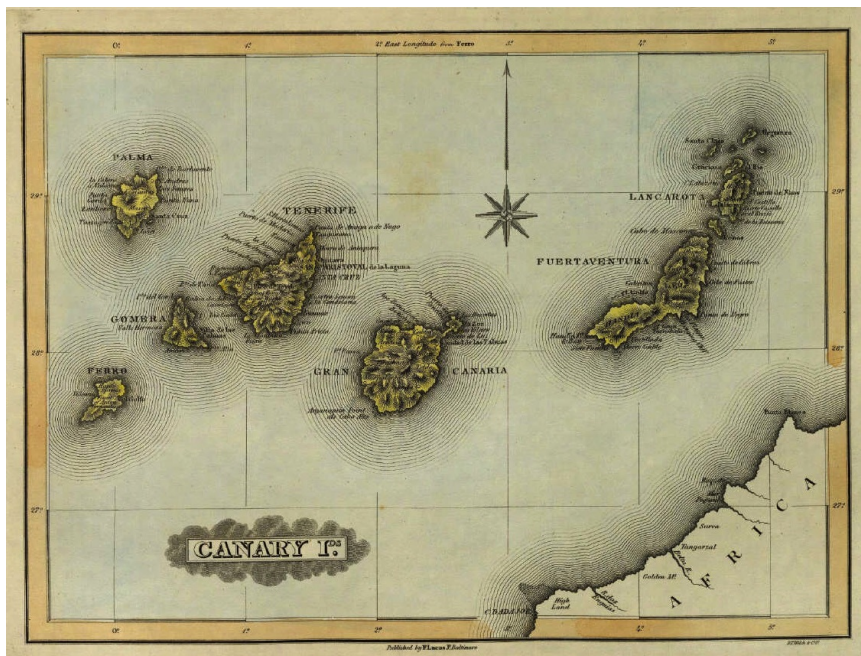
Map of Western Sahara,
(University of Texas at Austin)



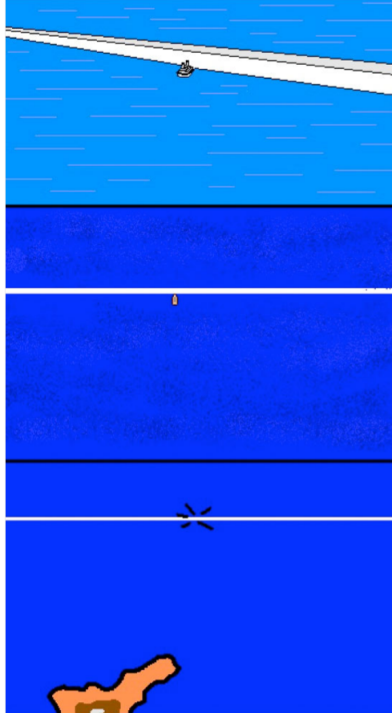
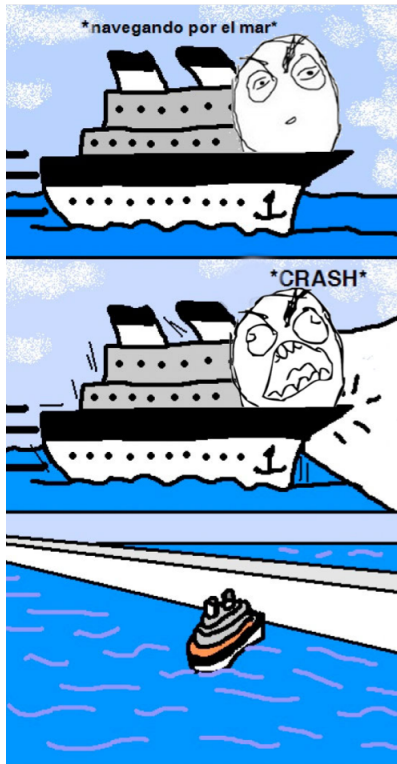
Section of 1707 map by
Guillame Delisle



Map of Spain (University of Texas at Austin)



Map of the Canary Islands (Memoria Digital de Canarias)



"El rectángulo de Canarias"
(cuantocabron.com)

Section Two: Introduction—Rehearsal

I. Assembling Repertoires

During the afternoon of April 15, 2011, the quartet with which I play when I'm living in La Laguna, Tenerife, rehearsed for the second time. The group, formed at the suggestion of saxophonist Kike Perdomo, also includes drummer “Churchi” Méndez and bassist Ruiman Martín. We gathered at Perdomo's house, in the control room of his home recording studio, joined by a friend, saxophonist, and journalist Franklin Hernández, who came to listen, record, and photograph the rehearsal in the hopes that some viable demo material might emerge from the session.

About three weeks prior, I had attended a concert of these three musicians—under the name Buenavista Trio—at the Hotel Bambi Astoria in Puerto de la Cruz, a city known as the hub of the once vibrant tourism industry on the north side of Tenerife. That night the hostess introduced the band and addressed the audience in three languages—Spanish, German, and English—from a circular, grotto-like stage around which sat the audience observing from all sides both from above and down below the stage.



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2011)

After the performance, I was talking with the musicians, Franklin, and journalist Héctor González, with whom I had traveled from La Laguna for the performance. At their invitation, I played an impromptu duet with Ruiman while the band packed up.¹ I called John Coltrane's "Bessie's Blues" in E-flat (the key where my fingers have always landed most comfortably) and we managed to fit in a few choruses before one of the hotel staff came by and asked the band to finish cleaning up so that they could close the hotel lobby for the night. Although I had known these musicians, Franklin, and Héctor for more than seven months, this was the first time any of them had heard me at the piano. The next day, when Héctor posted the video on my Facebook page, I wrote about it, jokingly alluding to the dearth of pianos and keyboards I had encountered in the Islands. I had

¹ A video of this duet can be seen here: Mark Lomanno, "Un pequeño blues en el Centro Bambi-Astoria (Puerto de la Cruz)," recorded by Héctor González (March 27, 2011), <http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=10100368685677829>.

been receiving invitations to jam sessions for months at which there were almost never any keyboard instruments. These invites were usually appended with a statement like “*y lleva un melódica*” (and bring a melódica), a common practice for Canarian jazz pianists who have adapted to this particular restriction of local performance spaces that, at least on this night, did not impede us so that I could finally introduce myself as pianist to my friends, colleagues and would-be collaborators and consultants.

Kike, one of the most well-known jazz musicians on the Islands and one of only a handful to ever successfully reach an international career, stood just over my shoulder, listening intently...and noticeably. I could tell he was there—in my peripheral vision and engaged in my solo—and the excitement of playing for these musicians, of playing a quality instrument for the first time since I had left Austin almost eight months prior, of playing in the Canaries, was quickly mitigated by the nerves of this auditioning. In the fourth chorus of my solo, over the third and fourth bars of the blues form, I arpeggiated an A7 harmony—a common tritone substitution approaching the IV chord—but with some dissonant upper-structure extensions that caught his attention. He exclaimed...*¡eje!*...and I responded by repeating the gesture—a whole-tone-like C-F#-G#-C run in my right hand—a second time. My nerves abated and feeling as though I had successfully navigated the initial auditioning, another, more collaborative performance ensued.

Over the last eight measures of that chorus, I played one of my characteristic “licks,” a sequenced five-note pattern built around the #4 scale degree that kept our dialogue going. Kike began listening not just with his voice, but with his hands, legs, and

feet, marking the 6/8 metric superimposition that the lick was implying and goading me on to develop and extend the sequence even further. The phrase was punctuated with a pair of sympathetic smiles, resolved at the top of the chorus...and then abruptly cut short by the hotel staff. And so we continued the emerging, collaborative performance a few weeks later during these rehearsals.

Since it was our second rehearsal and we were discussing the possibility of finding some venues for future performances, the question of what to call the quartet began circulating. I had already noticed that Canarian band names tended to revolve more around particular projects rather than personnel: it is important to establish a repertoire, work out arrangements, and present a name which was indicative not only of the personnel in the group, but also *this* personnel performing *this* repertoire at *this particular time*. Perdomo and Méndez have been performing on the Islands for thirty years, much of that with the same musicians. Distinguishing the groups—marking them in temporal and sonic space—is accomplished primarily in a linguistically metonymizing fashion through the band or project name.

One of the first suggestions came from Perdomo—“Markdonald’s”—a derisive pun on my U.S. citizenship that elicited the intended riffing jokes and jibes. This allusion to food was picked up by Franklin, who then relayed a story about a meal he, his partner Olga, and I had shared a few days ago. I had been in Tenerife’s capital and primary port city, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, waiting for a ferry to the neighboring island of Gran Canaria. Faced with a wait of several hours, I called Franklin, who lives in Santa Cruz, to

ask whether he might be available for lunch. He met me in the center of the city and we drove out to one of his favorite restaurants, which specializes in Canarian cuisine. Along the route, he asked me if I had tried “*tortilla de papa*,” a staple Spanish casserole-type dish made with eggs, potatoes, and other meats and vegetables, which was one of my new, favorite discoveries. We arrived at the restaurant and Franklin introduced me to the waiter by offering that I was from the United States and would probably enjoy some of the restaurant's *comida típica*.

Shortly after, the waiter covered the table in dishes that offered a culinary map of the Islands, providing a detailed description of each dish, including from which region of Tenerife—or from which Island—each dish had come. However the *tortilla* was nowhere in sight. When I asked Franklin about this, he looked bewildered, thought for a minute, then laughed hysterically:

“*Costillas con papas...¡costillas con papas!*”

I had misheard, mistaking the very basic Spanish *tortilla* dish for a rather specialized *Canarian* preparation of “ribs with potatoes.” And, once the story had been recounted to my equally amused bandmates, this mis-hearing became the quartet’s name...“Mojo Ribs.” (*Mojo* is a typical Canarian sauce made with either red peppers—*mojo rojo*—or parsley—*mojo verde*—that is served with cheeses, meats, and vegetables.) The musicians liked the word “ribs” (in English) because it alluded to the *costilla* misunderstanding, but also to the Texas barbecue I had told them about previously, a reciprocal discursive gesturing toward cuisine just as important to where I had come from as the *costillas* are to where I had traveled.

The name decided—our discussion serving in part to pass time while Churchi set up the drumset—we turned our attention to the music, and I pivoted on the piano bench toward the keyboard. As I mentioned, this afternoon was our second rehearsal, which meant it was also the second time I had ever played Kike’s Petrof baby grand—the first attempt leaving my tendonitis-ridden arms sore for days. Kike had warned me of the piano’s hard touch and he had not exaggerated: this piano had by far the hardest action I had ever encountered. A totally different experience than playing the piano at the Bambi Astoria, Perdomo’s Petrof required mental preparation and forethought—tactics for playing—utilizing different bodily postures: shoulders down and back, lowered bench, right leg behind and planted *firmly* on the floor, bracing my whole body for the substantial force needed not only to get *to* the sound of the Petrof, but to sound *at* the instrument—*over* (for myself) and *in* the ensemble (for them)—cramped as we were in that control room reverberating loudly with too much sound.

I had been experimenting with these different postures and rehearsing these performance tactics in my apartment on the old, rusted-out-of-tune 1973 Fender Rhodes that Perdomo had lent me. The metal interior, oxidized by decades of exposure to La Laguna’s storied humidity, was so completely rusted that it could not be tuned without its particular tuning wrench, which Perdomo couldn’t find (although he thought he knew someone who...). Ordinarily, this forked wrench guides the small metal tuning coils easily along the metal tines of each of the of the Rhodes’s interior. Stuck as they were and without that wrench, I tried moving them with my fingers, rewarded only with scored cuts on my fingertips—to go along with my sore arms. So here I was, only partly healed,

rehearsing these new postural tactics in my head as I limbered up out on Perdomo's patio, waiting to try them out, waiting to continue the performance, hoping to *really play*.

Our performance repertoire consists almost exclusively of latin jazz, culled together from our past projects, and compositions by U.S. jazz musicians arranged collectively by the group. I wrote out many of the arrangements for my "Shared History" project—an ongoing set of performances featuring Afro-diasporic music from Brazil, Cuba, United States, and now, the Canary Islands—which I am continuing with these musicians. This particular afternoon we rehearsed two of my arrangements (the jazz standards "Caravan" and "Night in Tunisia") and two pieces that we were playing through for the first time, searching for a collaborative, consensus-driven arrangement: "Ojos de Rojo" and "Bolivia," both composed by African American pianist Cedar Walton. The latter has a two-part, 32-measure form: the first half of which features a bass ostinato over single harmony (G7) with no melody (just improvised comping and/or melodying), and the second half a composed melody over faster chromatic chordal movement with a rhythmic feel that oscillates between "straight-ahead" swing and an interpretationally flexible Latin groove. Toward the end of our playing-through, after statement and recapitulation of the melody with improvised solos intervening, we arrived where the piece should end, stuck in a repeating holding pattern of the first half of the tune—the ubiquitous "vamp out." That G7 chord happens to be the same as the introduction of an arrangement of "Drume Negrita" that I had been working out, so I took the unscripted moment to experiment with a superimposition of harmonies over the bass ostinato that I had been considering for that

other arrangement. Kike mostly listened, but then began talking through possible endings with Churchi, who was still playing along with Ruiman and I. The two elder members came to an agreement—the music stopped briefly while they shared their ideas with us—we quickly resumed, adding a much more punctuated closing, and moved on to the next tune.

The three-hour rehearsal went well. We were all pleased, leaving with a feeling that the group—Buonavista Trio re/sounded with new compositions and me at the piano—was moving closer toward “Mojo Ribs.” By the next time we got together, Franklin had sent video and still photography to Kike, but the sound on the recordings was not viable for a demo. However, I provided another option: I had also recorded the rehearsal, and that had very clear audio. I had brought the recorder for the sole purpose of self-critique, listening back for those spots in my own playing that could be pedagogically constructive. I called Kike excitedly the day after the April 15th rehearsal, sharing with him the news of the good recording quality and that, for the first time in ten years, I had woken up the morning following an intense performance or rehearsal without any pain in my arms whatsoever.

II. Situated Emergence

In listening back, though, I heard so much more than just my own playing. Actually, given the piano I was playing, I was surprised that the piano track was actually *me* playing. Usually, in recordings of my playing I can hear the tendonitis—the tightness of my arms, the tension in my back, the lack of breathful phrase structures—in the notes

themselves: the failed turn-arounds and turns of phrase cut short, tripped over, poorly executed, mismanaged, and pathologized as the embodied sonic traces of this physical disability. Yes, there were still attempted phrases, rhythms, and melodies viewed as failures by my aesthetic, re/listening judgments. But those had more to do with a lack of well attuned sync with the other members of the quartet than physically inhibited soundings. Besides my recollecting memory though, there was one other way in which this track was unmistakably marked as *me*—my voice. Not the jazz musician's aphoristic “voice” that refers to my piano “licks,” harmonizations, etc.—that is, the collaborative work that the Petrof and I accomplished that day—but rather my physical voice...singing, groaning, exhaling, calling, complaining...non-linguistically but in a syntactically functional way on the recording.

This singing has been a part of my playing for a while. At first it was very subliminal, but once I realized the connection between the tendonitis and my abnormal breathing patterns while playing, I became aware of how consciously I was squelching that voice, and resolved to let it go, to release it from imagined strictures of performance practice in the hopes of achieving a healthier (more fully embodied) way of playing that better connected my pianistic phrasing with my breath, since I still *need* to find some way to consciously *keep* breathing while I play. I had become used to hearing my voice present in recordings in this way, but my listening-back as newly contextualized in my apartment in La Laguna completely changed my perception of the voice and its situatedness in the recording. I had been spending all day, every day, listening to voices, including my own, as I sought to carve out a functionally linguistic space for myself not

only as friend or acquaintance, ethnographer, and musician on the very basic level of (Canarian) Spanish language acquisition, but also dialogically with the people with and around whom I was living. In the same way that one Spanish word (be it vocabulary, verb form, or idiom) newly learned after sentences of context could elucidate the meaning of an entire conversation, on this recording I was hearing the utterances of my jazz pianist's voice as imbued with meaning both in relation to the work being accomplished with the Petrof and to the dynamically emergent, musical collaborations with the other members of Mojo Ribs. That is, I was hearing and comprehending my piano track with the ear of an ethnographer in the process of becoming a linguistically functional subject.

This is not to say that there was a conscious shift in my listening practices, nor a conscious acknowledgement of the separate subject positions between and among which I was consciously shifting. Rather, this new way of listening emerged from my experiences, and the realization of its presence surfaced through the process of listening. Just as tactics for playing the piano without exacerbating my tendonitis came out of practicing on that rusty Fender Rhodes and facilitated a successful, pain-free rehearsal, these new, embodied listening competencies became mapped onto my in-process self-conception of subjecthood through a new, aural awareness emerging from my ethnographically-informed experiences on the Islands. And just as the Petrof and my new, improvised, mindfully-singing performing tactics were inseparable from my performance of "Bolivia," this new embodied listening necessarily entails my collective experiences—as pianist, ethnographer, U.S. citizen, near functional Spanish-speaker, ethnomusicology-Ph.D. candidate, etc. (where the "other things" are performative

identities, other people, but also objects, contexts, *and even still* other things)—which constantly inform one another in polyvalent, multiply reflexive ways.

But what does this new hearing hear?

I already mentioned my voice, its relevance to/as my piano playing, and its inseparability from the embodied processes of my fingers interacting with the sounding Petrof, but what about its “syntactically functioning way”? This kind of singing pianism is not novel nor is the idea that non-linguistic speech can have semantic and syntactical meaning.² But in terms of what my listening-back heard, the emergent forms, meanings, and subjectivities arose, intertwined, and interacted at every juncture:

At 0:20 in the recording, Kike can be heard counting the band in—“*dos*, one, two, three”—in Spanish and English; his present voice (not, again, that of Kike with/through his saxophone) serves as a marker of form and direction throughout the rehearsed piece. This action is repeated at 0:50 before a restatement of the B section melody. Given that the B section is marked internally both by a clear melody and more frequent chord changes, Kike’s entrance as directing voice serves as a reference to ensure that the rest of us have not miscounted or mis-felt the sixteen bars of G7 in the immediately preceding A section...or simply just to make sure we’re all entering together.

At 1:12, my pianist’s voice first appears as my solo improvisation begins. It follows closely (but not exactly) with the contour and range of my piano-playing, alternating between mirroring the right and left hands individually and, thirdly, singing a

² Jazz pianist Oscar Peterson was the first whose voice I heard as a young teenager in this way.

composite, dual-handed articulation. By 2:12—the third time I’ve improvised over the A section—I can hear that I’m experimenting with the superimposition of different structures over the open vamp of the A section, with varying success. The short hiccups in my repeated montuno-like figures serve as recalibration within the context of what the other musicians are performing. Churchi’s (speaking) voice enters right after the recalibration at 2:19, possibly an acknowledgment of my corrective displacement, perhaps once again as a marker of the impending move to the B section. A problem of internal sync in my repeated octave figures at 2:28 is immediately followed by a moment of perfect collaborative sync between Churchi and I at 2:32. Between 2:34 and 2:41, I am playing completely “on top” of the composed form, but only for half of the A section; my reaching fails and I stumble through the last half of the section, grasping for figures placed firmly within the groove in order to re-orient myself. *Someone’s* (it’s not clear whose speaking) voice signals the start of the next B section at 2:49. I play a short melodic motive at 2:56 that my ear picks up and, with the help of my voice, I continue the motive sequentially for a few more iterations. At 3:02, the last A section of my improvisation, I begin—and complete over the whole sixteen bars—what I was reaching for at 2:12 and 2:34 but could not execute—a highly syncopated, but uniform, superimposed structure on top of the A section groove. And we proceed immediately into the saxophone solo. (In actuality, on my first listen to the recording, I repeated this last sixteen bars of my solo several times in astonishment—again, “is that actually *me* playing?!” Like I have so many times on subsequent listening-backs, I’ll return to this section shortly.)

Between 3:31 and 3:45, Churchi and I are playfully interspersing syncopations within the A section. When comping (accompanying chordally) I often like to focus on the drummer and work through some rhythmic displacements such as the ones heard here. After the success of these experiments during my piano solo, I'm more attuned to Churchi's receptiveness to this tactic and so more inclined to elaborate on it, given that the only role I'm playing here is as comper, rather than both improviser and comper. At 3:53, Kike and I have a similar synching experience, trading a quick melodic motive between us. This happens again at 4:27, but the roles have been reversed: with a very overt B-C stated in the right hand, I insert a melodic motive into Kike's solo and imply a G7sus harmony, on which we both elaborate for the next few measures. This moment also marks the beginning of the next A section, and accordingly Churchi and I begin our cross-rhythmic reachings. We are not in sync, but we're both improvising and not necessarily trying to "sync up" (after all, this is not orchestrated in the sense of a written score) as much as "play around" (in the critically deconstructionist, "we're hard at work with ears, hands, and eyes" kind of way). And it's not especially comfortable in the same way that my internal sync was off around 2:14 of the piano solo. Accordingly, the same sort of re-calibration to the groove happens at 4:37, marked by a sort of moan—my pianist's voice. This moan-as-re/calibration happens again at 4:50, acknowledging an emergent melodic sequence in Kike's solo and the realization that my comping is between, rather than on, the accents he is playing. It can be heard *again* between 5:10 and 5:20, but in a much more functional way: during these ten seconds, Kike plays another short motive. The calibrating moan comes out at 5:14, after which the two of us continue

the now collaboratively synched motive through to its end. Taken in the context of just my comping, this calibrating moan that is inextricably linked to my pianism serves no purpose to the actual notes I'm playing here: the comping sounds the same before and after the moan. However, the moan plays a substantial role in the comping as collaborative, ensemble performance: what was noticeably out-of-sync before this moan at 5:14 is completely changed afterwards. And so it would appear that my pianist's voice—my embodied pianism—is constitutive not just of my personal experience in performance, but also of my experience as situated in the contexts of my surroundings, including the dialogic improvisations of group interaction.

Shortly after this moment occurs, the group restates the melody, and the aforementioned “vamp out” begins at 5:53. The remaining 2:42 of the recorded rehearsal unfolds as I have already described. However, there is one other moment that catches (and caught) my ear: at 7:32, I can be heard speaking (linguistically, that is). My imprecise accent—the slippage between *ahí* (“there,” where Churchi is in the music; the correct use) and *allí* (“over there, yonder,” or where neither of us is)—mirrors the inexactitude with which the musicians have been rehearsing the melody of the B section just now in order to indicate where they would like to end the piece. In contour and rhythm, we can infer a *clearly* understood meaning from the context of the conversationally traded, quasi-songful melodic phrases. Were anyone trying to transcribe the melody of the composition from these referentially clear but interpretationally flexible mis/singings, they would assuredly miss constitutive pitches and rhythms as written by the composer Cedar Walton. However, just like we could understand these

mis/singings in the context of the conversation, implying and inferring our ideas through similarly-contoured vocal approximations of the written melodies, the other musicians (the native Spanish speakers) could understand my mis/Spanish despite its imprecision, as they did so many other times.

III. Improvised Concludings

Returning to the final A section of my improvised piano solo on “Bolivia” (3:10-3:16), with my ears, in these six seconds, I can hear my project—this dissertation—in its entirety. However, it’s a matter of a particularly situated hearing—one that is attuned to all the people, contexts, objects, and processes that gave rise to those six seconds, as well as to how those six seconds are continually reconstituted by my ongoing interactions with these musicians and by my listenings-back, contextualized as they are in their own presents of space and time, and with the accompanying, intervening objects, too. In the same way that this piano solo is both metonym for and a constitutive moment of my project, the emergent, improvised, multiply referential constructs that this project outlines include the dissertation itself as necessarily implicated in the representation of this emergence. More succinctly, from my attempts to answer the question “how did these six seconds of music sound?”, the whole project unfolds.

This focused type of re/contextualizing listening-back is inherently indebted to the technological phenomena that continue to make such processes possible. The kind of listening analysis I have just done—or even recognizing the conditions of potential importance I’m grafting on to those six seconds, such that I might want to listen to them

again (and again...)—would not be possible without the recording devices that Franklin and I brought to the afternoon rehearsal of April 15. And so, it would seem that Franklin must be included as the fifth member of the quartet Mojo Ribs, at least on this day, and that we must add our recording devices to the list of objects that play a constitutive role in the rehearsal (along with the Petrof, Kike’s saxophone, my arrangements, etc.) These recording and playback technologies allow for play within/on temporality that re/contextualizes the sounds and facilitates a re/iterability in which, while listening back, we can reflect on the embodied moments of individual and collective subject formations as they emerge. Part of this re/contextualization occurs in the approximating, mapping, and transcribing of the once-inaudible, or at least, not-recalled. “Hearing the project” now in the rehearsal of “Bolivia” required that I (have) left the recording (and my listening-back of it) on continuous play-back. This has allowed a shift in focus that brought to my ears the surrounding contexts around the performance of the composition—the normative object of ethno/musicological and jazz studies analysis. In the same way that I could elaborate on my activities as comper once I relinquished the role of improvising soloist during our rehearsal of “Bolivia,” the temporal and spatial shift that these playback technologies facilitate allow me to redirect my attention in new ways toward this embodied listening. In shifting from listening to writing, I am also re/considering the ways in which deconstructive play of the time-space and the technologies that facilitate them can be worked into this document such that new subjects and discursive formations can arise.

With an ear particularly attuned to these re/contextualized listenings, Jairo Moreno points out in his critique of the reception of Keith Jarrett's pianism how Jarrett's voice and body movements are often depicted as distracting, corrosive elements of his piano performance.³ Moreno makes much of the same argument I've made here: that these seemingly distracting movements and sounds are inextricable from the ways in which just Jarrett's fingers interact with the piano's keyboard. Moreno and I are both calling for the re/consideration of what has traditionally been cast out as "noise" in piano performance. However, my project is not just about pianism. This opening Section addresses the inherently intertwined reflexivity of my roles as pianist, ethnographer, language-learner (, etc.) not just in my piano-playing, but in all aspects of my lived experience of this project. These new embodied, re/contextualized listening practices led me to the questions: "where is the 'noise' of my pianist's voice in the performances of ethnography, language-learning, and research and writing? and what/how can I hear in it?" How do re/calibrating moans and tendonitis-ridden arms impact, direct, and mediate these equally embodied, collaborative performances?

I have already alluded to several instances of "noise" for the partially formed linguistic subject—the confusions of *ahí/allí* and *tortilla/costilla*, for example. But we could also include here the mis/singings of the musicians' rehearsal of the "Bolivia" B-section melody. The relational contexts of these apparent miscues (or inexactitudes) lead me to re/consider the camaraderie of a shared joke and the naming process of "Mojo Ribs," as if steps away from "proper" language or music led to steps toward improvised

³ Moreno 1999.

moments of collective group formation. The sociologist/pianist David Sudnow alludes to the creative potentiality of uncertainty in his book, *Ways of the Hand: The Organization of Improvised Conduct*.⁴ Casting an improvisation move as contingent, conditional, and generative for both its “instigations and payoffs” suggests that boundaries (physical, mental, linguistic, geographical, etc.) contain within them the potential for both impeding and facilitating emergent acts and associations.⁵ It seems to me that an integral step toward writing a pianist’s improvisation on ethnography (or improvising an ethnographer’s pianism on writing) is acknowledging and, in fact, emphasizing this polyvalent potentiality when discussing how an improviser encounters and negotiates these boundaries through constantly re/focusing on the forms, meanings, and subjectivities as they constantly and emergently arise, intertwine, and interact.

As I stood out on Kike’s patio, stretching my arms, back, and shoulders—scored fingertips almost healed—in preparation for the rehearsal, I mentally reviewed the postural tactics I had been rehearsing in preparation for playing the Petrof. This type of embodied rehearsal is not unlike the repetitions of piano finger exercises and Spanish language recall I would also perform on a daily basis: that rusted Fender Rhodes was a completely different instrument than Kike’s Petrof; that D7-Ab7 progression does not lay in my fingers the same way Eb7-A7 does, but here come those changes; an expression learned from my roommate (“which I think means...”) might need a little modification when talking to a senior faculty member at the Universidad de La Laguna. The process of

⁴ Sudnow 1993. Those familiar with Sudnow’s work will have already noticed his influence on this Section, both in methodology and (a very conscious mimesis of) linguistic phraseology.

⁵ *ibid.*, 135.

resituating rehearsed musical, linguistic, and somatic turns in the performance of new temporal, spatial, and interpersonal contexts requires improvisation. My writerly performance of this ethnomusicological dissertation is no exception and will include this resituating (*re/placing...re/locating...re/siting...re/listening...re/telling...re/sighting...re/working...re/writing...re/citing*).

So how does one situate the moaning “noise” of the performing/listening/writing ethnographer/pianist? First, I think dispatching the word “noise” is a good start. David Borgo refers to the “analytic noise” of scholarly methodology that can potentially obscure results or observations on jazz music.⁶ I think maintaining this type of coded language inherently reifies the very hierarchies between text and context, the boundaries of which I am actively seeking to render porous and place in play. How I read Sudnow, Borgo, and all other scholars affects the way I listen, speak, write, improvise—before, during, and after my time on the Islands. Acknowledging that influence does not introject “noise” into my experiences, it demonstrates how grounded theoretical understandings can emerge from and influence improvised everyday acts. Furthermore, *not to acknowledge* this influence strikes me as akin to ignoring the absolutely constitutive role my right-leg-braced-firmly-behind-me played in me (yes, *me*) sounding at the Petrof of the afternoon of April 15. Is it possible not to hear my right leg (or years of practice,

⁶ Borgo 2005, 103. Moreno suggests that “noise is separate from music because [of the faulty assumption that] the performer is considered to be separate from the composer and composition,” a position clearly refuted in his article; *cf.* Moreno, 83. I will continue to elaborate on this position throughout the dissertation, extending the scope of the argument to ethnographic writing and research. *Cf.* Sections Three and Six.

ethno/musicological study, etc.) in my pianism? Absolutely. That does not mean I shouldn't listen for it, though.

To this end, I am striving toward what Leon Anderson called “analytic autoethnography”: research that “is grounded in self-experience but reaches beyond it as well...to a spiraling refinement, elaboration, extension, and revision of theoretical understanding.”⁷ In the next Section, I will outline some of the writerly strategies I have been rehearsing for this project in attempting to articulate this type of autoethnographic position. I would like to re/focus this introduction by revisiting some of the research already mentioned here—to show how assembling these different scholarly repertoires achieves a performance greater than any one could accomplish, but also how their collective theories have an intertwined, but yet still incomplete, relationship to the project.

David Sudnow's phenomenological discussion of becoming a jazz pianist has been highly influential in my conception of the project. Critiques of this work, including the one by Will Gibson, highlight the lack of sociality in Sudnow's work.⁸ Sudnow's focus on the relationship between the hand and mind provides important, revelatory looks into the embodiment of musical practice; however, musical practice happens socially, as well, as the application of what is rehearsed in private re/contextualized into collaborative performance. I would add that this lack of social awareness relates to another shortcoming in Sudnow's work: his focus on the hand and mind as the *only* meaningful

⁷ Anderson 2006, 386 and 388.

⁸ Gibson 2006.

sites of embodied pianism. The hand/mind paradigm replicates the myopic potential of his sharply focused research on embodiment in the same way that his paradigm of pianist as autonomous, self-contained sounding/musicking subject glosses over the sociality of music-making.

Although he does not state it outright, Gibson alludes to another deficiency in Sudnow's work: the lack of attention to the instrument. There are graphs and pictures of keyboards and of Sudnow's hands at the keyboard in *Ways of the Hand*, but "Sudnow's piano" has no presence in the work, not in the roles that Kike's Petrof, his rusty Rhodes, or the Bambi Astoria pianos assume in this project, actually *affecting* my ability to sound from a viable subject position.⁹ While Gibson compensates for this in part, he misses an important fact: pianists do not get to travel with *their own* instruments in the same way that saxophonists, or even drummers, can. As a result, the process of "learning one's instrument" to which Gibson refers is not nearly as constitutive of artistic subjectivity or "voice" (in the aphoristic sense) for the pianist. Yes, consideration of the instrument-as-technology is important in analysis of music, but Gibson implies that the only music that ought to be analyzed happens only after one has mastered her/his own instrument to such a degree that the mental energy required for the physical performance of music is deeply submerged or forgotten completely.¹⁰ As a pianist, I am constantly having to learn *other* instruments, developing postural tactics to make each particular piano sound, to *get to a*

⁹ Another important point is here how this articulation of instrument-category must be locally grounded. For example, while keyboards serve as a functional replacement of the piano in both the United States and the Canary Islands, the melodica would only be considered a viable alternative (through which the pianist-as-musical-subject can sound) in the latter.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, 176-77.

sounding “me.” Rather than an undifferentiated, always completed, embodied competence (which Sudnow suggests also), I am constantly and immediately re/learning at an instrument—both because of characteristic differences in the pianos themselves and because of the necessary, constant, self-reflexive, embodied awareness that working around and with my tendonitis demands. This project refuses to gloss over or liminalize this type of awareness: for example, consider what could have happened if the Bambi Astoria piano and Kike’s had been switched. I needed a painful practice and recovery process in order to develop tactics for growth and becoming at Kike’s Petrof. I had only about fifteen seconds to acclimatize myself to the Bambi Astoria piano, and only then 90 seconds (not a three-hour rehearsal) to successfully perform the audition that eventually led to the formation of Mojo Ribs, the loan of the rusty Rhodes, and an ongoing collaboration that continues today. This is not suggest that these results of the Bambi Astoria performance would not have arisen had the Petrof been there instead, but it certainly problematizes the notion that the pianist (/ethnographer/writer) arrives fully formed and need only apply previously learned skills and ideas in order to perform successfully. I am suggesting that mediated, technologically-dependent reaches of (musical, cultural, somatic, scholarly) improvisation play—in the critically deconstructionist, “we’re hard at work with ears, hands, and eyes” kind of way—a *vital* role in making up the differences.

Both Sudnow and Jairo Moreno speak about the pianist’s voice as constitutive of meaningful performance (and/or learning) and inextricably linked to the construction of pianist as (aesthetic) subject. Both, however, miss the potential syntax embedded within

the pianist's voice. That is, rather than just a necessary inclusion of the pianist's pianism, the pianist's voice (recalling the moan-as-re/calibration) can serve other meanings not necessarily directly related to pianistic acts. In my writerly execution of this project, I am listening for this voice of the pianist, too. Shaping the performative moments of "Bolivia" rehearsed on April 15 are particular technologies (microphones, instruments, languages) and contexts (historical, social, personal) which are inherently tied up in the music that we performed, as is the process of listening/thinking/writing back on that afternoon. The inherently embedded nature of my (musical, ethnographic, writerly) performances among and about these Canarian musicians calls for a narrative infused with an acute transparency of the interrelationships of the multiple voices and technologies influencing its unfolding.

IV. Post Scriptum: Direct Address

On reflecting and re/considering this introduction now (after the complete dissertation has been drafted and discussed), I have made the following notes to readers past and future, which I have culled from scraps of paper, dissertation defense notes, and email correspondences. As an introduction to some of the writing technologies to be unfolded in the document (about to be read, but long since having been written), I am dispatching with the artifice of a singular, teleological flow of time and embedding the process of re/working the writing in its text:

A critical eye/I: I should note that, in aligning myself with the above scholars and others to be cited herein, I do not wish to position this work squarely within their structures, which, along with so many of their prior and future colleagues, glanced over the Canary Islands in their work. The constant and ubiquitous lack of work on the Islands compelled me to elaborate on the emergence of my process through my experiences in the Islands. To articulate the relationship between site, sight, and cite.¹¹ While others may have come to similar conclusions in other locales, the lack of research on the Islands has prompted me to slow down, re/consider, and re/write the document with a critical eye/I toward the possible causes of this persistent and ever-present myopia. And so, while a deftly placed citation might speed up the reader's progress through the work and provide a similar, (slightly less than) parallel situation rooted in other's case studies and reflections thereof, I have opted to write with more waiting, to hang back and let who- and whatever to emerge as it might.

A critique of cartography, not the map: In re/presenting the "six seconds" of my "Bolivia" solo from several different viewpoints and corresponding narratives, I am aiming to problematize the preferential use of a single mode of inscription and to demonstrate metaphorically how new understandings (of phenomena, subjects) can emerge by varying the scope, focus, and re/iterative elements of any singular transcription. In this way, the dissertation is a critique of cartography, not the individual map that one preferential

¹¹ I should point out that poetics of this statement may suggest to some an ocular-centrism that I do not intend: "sight" should be read interpretatively across all the embodied senses of perception.

methodology might produce. As a product of a process destined to fall short of a totalizing, all-encompassing representation, the map's flaws lie in uninterrogated use of cartography as methodology. By including several different transcriptions of the "six seconds" here, I am attempting to arrange them critically so that the failures of methodology, along with omissions of each particular iteration (the spaces for re/consideration) will emerge in the varying time-spaces of reading.

Reading to hear the chord changes: I would invite the reader to engage with the dissertation text as if listening for harmonic form—i.e. hearing my improvisation from the Mojo Ribs rehearsal tape and recognizing the composition "Bolivia" from focused, improvising consideration of the repeated cycles of the composition's harmonic progression without recourse of its melodies. This is also comparable to listening to a musical contrefact without knowing the melody or harmonic progressions of the composition on which it might be based—and discovering the contours and characteristics of the text only from subjective, improvised consideration of the repeated iterations from which new understandings could emerge. This type of listening is very common among practiced jazz musicians, and as I am trying to bring these embodied competencies to bear on my scholarship, I am actively writing in the dissertation's harmonic progressions with the hopes that new understandings can emerge for the reader. This is not scholarship that tells, but rather scholarship that suggests. Scholarship of the conditional.

An unfolding, improvised construction: As the document progresses, new, alternative, and contrasting viewpoints will be introduced, unfolding along with the shifting foci of the case studies. My reach is towards an unfolding, a document fully (and yet always subjectively) realized only through reading and further analysis: a reach toward dialogisms about-to-be-realized and suggestive of the dynamic processes that continue to inform the project, rather than a reach toward an authoritative summation of them. The dissertation, then, could be read as an unfolding, improvised construction that is always accruing new meanings: its Sections are not so much driven by an overarching or individual thesis so much as by the spinning out (through constantly shifting foci) of possible responses to the questions surrounding the initial premises of the project. In knowingly, purposefully, and continually failing in my writing to reach that authoritative summation that can never be reached, I wish to explore where these failures can compel my thinking and writing about the project and what the implications and contributions to ethnomusicology and jazz studies research might be.

Arranging the surpluses: The generative potentiality of failure is the emergent, improvised understandings that can arise through critical, embodied perceptions of a surplus of inevitably incomplete and subjective representations of the everyday, aesthetic, and political acts performed in unique spatial, temporal, and interpersonal contexts. In consciously and critically arranging these surpluses, not only is the inevitable failure of each individual and collective representation more obvious, but so too are the surfacing

spaces along the fissures, lines of rupture, and constitutive gaps of these representations in which those left out and marginalized within each and all could emerge.

Section Three: Reaching for Articulation: Toward Improvising Constructs in Jazz Research

“The job of the ethnographer is to wait.”¹²

I. On the Dissertation's Title

Alexander Weheliye's juxtaposition of writing and the phonograph seeks in the proximity of the terms not equivalence or elision, but articulation of the divergences that simultaneously distinguish them from and bind them to each other. Weheliye lingers amid "the coupling of the graphematic *and* the phonic," highlighting the potential of writing as a technology through which lost subjects can perform.¹³ The careful parsing of sensorial mediation and perceptions of phonographic information reflects back on writing, and, revising several prior theories, Weheliye posits both as re/iterative technologies that perform

not repetition with a difference so much as the repetition *of* difference, wherein the original/copy distinction vanishes and only the singular and *sui generis* becomings of the source remain in the clearing. This repetition of difference does not ask how 'the copy' departs from 'the source' but assumed that difference will indeed, be different in each of its incarnations....[T]he source is always (re)produced as an (anti)origin while also appearing as a differently produced occasion in each of its singular figurations.¹⁴

Whereas Weheliye posits the liberating potential of writing-as-technology for the marginalized, he also elaborates on the political imperative of critical scholarship, championing its re/combinatory performance practices that can "articulate what exceeds

¹² Veit Erlmann, personal communication with author.

¹³ Weheliye 2005, 38.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, 31.

the scopic as it has been formed in Western modernity."¹⁵ In his own "mix," Weheliye acknowledges the degradation and interference produced from overlaying disparate theories and modes of expression, the mediation of the improvisatory reach toward articulation. Nonetheless, he suggests that it is only through disruption of established channels and signal paths—"this 'failure,' or scratching, wherein noise intrudes into *the temporal architecture of the linguistic text*"—that new understandings and identities can emerge.¹⁶ This suggestion situates the potentiality for re/creation not just within art, but within scholarship as well—and more so at the intersection of aesthetics and socio-cultural critique—and it reinforces this project's drive toward a stance in which, "situated at the intersection of text...and words..., these sonorous residues noisily implode the linguistic utterances that frame them and thus launch the structural moment of the mix."¹⁷

Like Perdomo's Petrof piano, the writerly technologies Weheliye employs outline and direct the *frame* of representationality, providing a space of "augmentation of words with sounds, of adding back into the mix what gets left out in the equation of language and speech with linguistic structures."¹⁸ Weheliye's focus on critical writing as a re/iterative technology relies on a re/writing that emerges from the self-critical repetition of failed representations. Sudnow attempts to reach between the same failures of representation by revisiting the same material and generative thought processes from the

¹⁵ *ibid.*, 82-3.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 83. emphasis added.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 96.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 101.

pianistic and typographical keyboards in his 1979 memoir, *Talk's Body: A Meditation between Two Keyboards*. In it he writes,

Complexities of the naming process seem to compel a view of the complexities of the generator, and vice versa. Then the attempt is made to simplify everything back into a beautiful model of thinking and linguistic competence. Yet the whole construction is nothing but a sheer invention of the language, which invention seeks to analyse itself while staying immune from itself.¹⁹

Sudnow and Weheliye are both arguing for attention to the representationality of language and writing systems. Both agree that writing that challenges the assumptions of its own methodologies produce critical texts that can at least render those assumptions less constricting, if not neutralize them completely. Here, Giorgio Agamben's metaphor of writing as a death mask is quite apropos:

The essence will not have any meaning unless it is violated by art and reconstituted by interpretation. But this must be a particular kind of interpretation, one that does not talk about the work, one that does not paraphrase it. It is rather an interpretation that rewinds the work, that is exactly the work going back in time. It is indeed a translation that searches for the essence by stripping the work bare, going back to the origin and to the infancy of the work. It might seem a paradox, but the work of art can only find the essence by banning the essence. "The work is the death mask of its conception," said Benjamin in *One Way Street* (*Reflections* 81). I believe that Giorgio Agamben articulates something similar when in the "Introduction" to *Infancy and History* he argues that: "Every written work can be regarded as the prologue (or rather, the broken cast [*cera persa*]) of a work never penned, and destined to remain so, because later works, which in turn will be the prologues (*preludi*) or the moulds (*calchi*) for other absent works, represent only sketches (*schegge*) or death masks (*maschere mortuarie*). The absent work (*l'opera assente*), although it is unplaceable in any precise chronology, thereby constitutes the written works as *prolegomena* or *paralipomena* of a non-existent text; or, in a more general sense, as *parerga* which find their true meaning only in the context of an illegible *ergon*....For Agamben the actual work is nothing other than a "death mask" which represents the *imago* of a non-existent work, in other words, of a work that has never been written and will never be written. This is, Agamben argues, the destiny of all

¹⁹ Sudnow 1979, 35.

written works whose ultimate essence will never be fully revealed because it is inscribed, it belongs, to their illegible counterparts. The *ergon* Agamben speaks of cannot be read simply because it cannot be written. As soon as the attempt to write it is undertaken, the *ergon* is transformed into its death mask and its essence is disfigured by the act of writing it.²⁰

The surface structures of this dissertation will bear traces of the embodied gestures and interactions that inform it, but its accounts and analyses will be inherently incomplete. Confronted with the impossibility of conveying the project in print, the suggestion of a totalized, objective text that transmits perfectly the experiences in "the field," from the archive, or at the writer's desk would promise only disappointment for the reader and reveal mis/guided pretenses of the author. Death masks became an important research tool in 19th-century phrenology, whose practitioners extrapolated (pseudo-)scientifically-informed socio-cultural observations about those whose faces had been imaged. Rather than presuming authority over the lives and events recorded herein, this project explores writing as a process of constructing particular structuring surfaces through which experience is referenced and elaborated: writing as technology through which conceptual space can be formed and, through reading and further analysis, inhabited, and re/worked. This intention foregrounds two main critical points: first, rooting the analysis in *representationality*, rather than on the *representation* or the *represented*; and second, advocating for critical re-consideration of those texts that have glossed over or attempted

²⁰ Bartoloni 2003, 4. For the rest of the citations in the quote, *cf.* the bibliography.

to skirt around the inevitable failure of the text to completely circumscribe any subject or situation.²¹

Lest this position suggest radical defeatism, I should clarify that I am not proposing the inevitable failure of *writing as constructive*, but rather the inevitable failure of *writing as constitutive*. The writerly tactics employed herein are technologies—much like the Petrof piano and digital recorder used to capture the Mojo Ribs rehearsals—that direct and mediate these steps in the process of ethnographic research. This Section outlines some tactics used in previous scholarship affecting the project and how performing with them—through the acts of scholarly research and writing—entails creative, improvisational, and constructive work that can produce fluid, open spaces for critical action and analysis.

Far from inevitable failure, writing as constructive technology of representation creatively structures subjective, unfolding, surfaced spaces open to critical interpretation and reworking. In these spaces, ethics and aesthetics inform one another: creativity, improvisation, action, and advocacy are mutually referential and influential. Unpacking the constructions of scholarly writing entails sensitivity to narrative structures, webs of citation, and the con/texts that buttress the research. By acknowledging the theoretical braces of scholarly argument, as well as its aesthetic ornaments and other design elements—all equally constitutive of the writerly construction—we can understand the

²¹ Cf. Section Four for an elaboration of the cartographic and historiographic failures of the Afro/Canarian and Canary Islands. These are critiques of cartography's methods and conventions (for example), not necessarily of the practitioners or singular maps produced by them. These, in fact, are the cites/sights from which critique could be re/formed: by layering and repeating surpluses of these singularities, the failure of each, the collective failure of all, as well as the means for overcoming them, emerge.

ways through which scholarly research performs its inevitable acts of circumscription. In this dissertation, I plan not to delegate this analysis solely to the reader, but rather to lay bare some of the process of writing so that, in folding back the finishing artifices of scholarship, I can expose the frame of the work, the structures that bind it together, and in so doing, potentially leave space for the embodied, interpersonal actions and actors in which the realized project is continually and constantly rooted. To begin, I wish to introduce a series of questions implied in the title of the dissertation—the metonym under which this project ought to be subsumed—after which I will preview a series of writerly technologies that might assist in addressing them, and conclude by outlining the writerly (dissertating) space in which these questions and technologies will be interrogated.

In the previous Section, I introduced the band name as a metonymizing trope through which certain personnel and repertoire—situated in time and space—have been understood. I would suggest that one way to begin answering these questions about the dissertation-as-potentially-imposed/ing-structure would be to understand the text—as represented through its title—in the same way that the band name "Mojo Ribs" signifies my coming-together with Perdomo, Méndez, and Martín, with our instruments, a particular repertoire during our rehearsals in Perdomo's house, our few public appearances in Tenerife, and future plans to perform and record. The document "Improvising Difference: Constructing Canarian Jazz Cultures" acts as a surfacing structure—a construction with braces and supports that efface—and as a structuring surface—a veneer that, though defining and covering, can be folded back—whose composition, characteristics, and critiques correspond to particular processes of

interaction, informed by individual histories, virtuosities, and actions situated in time and space.

Inasmuch as the title's colon implies an ordinal relationship between "improvising difference" and "constructing Canarian jazz cultures," I suggest that the former relates to the latter not in a hierarchical fashion of title/subtitle, but rather as an elaboration—a forecasting—which does not imply equivalency, but rather a space in which the interrelationship between the two phrases is open for interpretation. In such a formulation, a number of pairings emerge: improvising/constructing (gerunds), difference/cultures (objects of the gerunds), and Canarian/jazz (adjectival qualifiers). Beginning with the last pairing, I chose to treat "*canario*/Canarian" and "jazz" as qualifiers for a very particular reason: to maintain open and fluid conceptions of these two words throughout the dissertation. Using them syntactically as nouns/objects invites a host of questions pertaining to concretized meanings and identities that have plagued jazz and ethno/musicological studies for decades. I am much more interested in exploring how the qualifiers "jazz" or "*canario*" accrue meanings and how and why those meanings are deployed than in providing clearly demarcated meanings that objectified usage might imply. For example, an earlier version of the dissertation title objectified "*canario*" in space—"Constructing Jazz Cultures in the Canary Islands"—in a way that may have precluded discussing the Canarian diaspora or Canarian musicians living outside the islands. Presenting either "jazz" or "*canario*"—both of which have myriad, disparate denotative and connotative meanings—in nominal form would invite a whole set of questions for which concise, bounded answers would be both impossible to provide and

antithetical to the project's aims. And so the question becomes: what technologies might one employ to unpack the host of meanings accrued and metonymized in the words "jazz" and "*canario*/Canarian"?

Given my apprehension to objectify "jazz" and "*canario*," I could (and will throughout) extend the same critique on the title words "difference" and "cultures." Including them as nouns in the title was both syntactically necessary—as objects of the gerunds and of the qualifiers—and rhetorically convenient because of the plurality—implied and actual—in the words. "Difference"—which, for my intentions, could have also been written "*différance*" here too—implies a presence of multiplicity (of degrees, spectra, and scopes, including similarity); and including the plural form of "culture" suggests a political act of scholarship, eschewing notions of totalized or bounded culture, that I plan to unfold throughout the dissertation.

As concerns the last pairing (improvising/constructing), I would like to return to David Sudnow's work in *Ways of the Hand*, which painstakingly records the intricate, calculated processes through which jazz piano improvisations are constructed. For now, I wish to focus on his phrase "articulational reach," which he uses to describe the already practiced process of moving his right hand along the keyboard toward some improvised melodic fragment. Crucial to Sudnow's "reach" is its inherently improvisatory emergence through time and the uncertainty of its outcome. As a novice, Sudnow describes his out-of-sync articulational reaching as

the new walker [getting] across the room by lunging first for the leg of the coffee table, then his mother's, then to the bottle at the end of the couch. They were securely targeted reaches but not soundful, in both being of an unfolding

melodicity, and for the chords to become part of a melody in their own right, courses of interchordal melodying would be required for them to receive soundful status.²²

As I mentioned in the previous Section, Sudnow's attention to detail slips in its glancing past the rest of his body and the instrument he is playing. I have suggested that these also "would be required...to receive soundful status." Adapting Sudnow's work to more socially-interactive contexts, such as ethnographic research, suggests a slight, but important, revision to this phrase from "articulational reach" to *reaching for articulation*. This shift better emphasizes the relationship between the unfolding action and its context, and also problematizes its inevitability by implying a subject's intentions toward the action are necessarily mediated (/redirected/obstructed): one may reach but not arrive, and the reach, whether it arrives or not, is always directed. The same mediations that Sudnow can comfortably ignore (because he is playing *alone* at *his* piano) could be potent constraints or enablers to a more socially-situated action.

Sudnow's word choice for playing a melodic phrase—*articulation*—is also key to the discussion of the constructing/improvising pairing. To *articulate* a phrase suggests both the performance of a sentential phrase (musical or discursive), but also the constructed separation of that phrase into its constituent elements: the elements of the phrase are both unified in their composed meaning ("the line"), but also discreetly marked off from one another ("the licks"). In describing the process by which melodic jazz improvisation unfolds at the piano, Sudnow has both called our attention to the individual conceptual and theoretical trusses of this embodied practice and elaborated on

²² Sudnow 1993[1978], 100.

the improvised manner in which individual elements can be incorporated into constructed phrases. By elucidating the *frame* of jazz piano improvisation in his own reaching for articulation, Sudnow demonstrates the potential for ongoing, embodied action as simultaneously improvisational and generative.

The final question I wish to pose here is: how does *reaching for articulation* in ethnographic research and writing allow space for the impossible-to-write, the collected embodied knowledge and experiences of the person or object *behind* the death mask, what Bartoloni calls the *res amissa* (the lost thing)?²³ To start, I'll posit *reaching for articulation* as both constructed improvising and improvised constructing, and suggest that articulation for/of the *res amissa* arises through oscillating between the conceptual space of the two processes and interrogating the gaps and slippages that emerge.

Translating Sudnow's exposition and exposing of the *articulating frame* into this project suggests: ethnographic work as improvisatory actions that draw from repertoires of interviews, performance notes, and previous scholarship; sensitivity to and awareness of the *frames* in which these repertoires are enacted; and effacement of the time- and space-contingent processes through which these *frames* are constructed. Inasmuch as the writing process allows for acts of revision conducted out-of-time, by allowing for the intertwined nature of these repertoires to perform against one another, I am attempting as much as possible to bring the text closer to performance in-time and on-the-ground. And so, in discussing the music and musicians of this project, its writing must also reflect my own process of "reaching for articulation," contextualized within my experiences with

²³ Bartoloni 2008, 51.

networks of friends and colleagues, obstacles and admittances, and technologies and spaces—not just in the Canary Islands, but throughout each stage of the project's development. In short, the ways in which Canarian musicians must improvise performances in musical and social environments must be examined (/resonating/echoing/mirroring) with an approach imbued with the same improvising, subjective unfolding—both in terms of research methodology and of writerly perspective.

II. Schema/Suite One: Writing Technologies/Performing Scholarship

"I found something in writing that resonated with my playing."²⁴

Exposition and Exposing the Articulatory Frame: Like the two phrases in the dissertation's title, the paralleled phrases in this section's heading are not arranged to suggest an equivalency. I will not suggest that the musical act is the same as scholarly writing. Nor am I suggesting that they ought to be (that they already are or should be reconsidered as such); nor am I providing a model through which the two can become more like one another. Rather, here I posit both as performative, and highlight some of the ways in which these performativities have informed one another in some scholars' published works that have impacted this project.²⁵ These already established paths—some more trodden than others—have traversed the thickly tangled and enfolded terrains of improvising research and writing, of reaching for the *res amissa*. They are arranged here as a "schema/suite," a un/mapping construction to be repeated throughout the

²⁴ Karl Hagstrom Miller, personal communication with author.

²⁵ Cf. Brody 2008, 22: "the virgule [the slash] performs the interactivity and intersubjectivity of making/seeing that is a central tenet of postmodernism, poststructuralism, performance studies, and even psychoanalytic thought."

dissertation, inspired by Weheliye's call for elaborating (anti)origins through repetitions (with difference). My purpose here is not to trace out a cartographically compliant or geographically exact overview of the parameters of each in theoretical and discursive spaces, but rather to rehearse some constitutive phrases so that, in answering the questions just proposed, "as I...reach into a familiar routing had at hand for a long stretch, finding its availability at hand for a long stretch in ways indicated, I could...come now to set out fast up the line in new ways."²⁶ Given that this project explores a particular group of people and contexts—unique among all the work of the scholars to be discussed herein—my reaching for unfolding the veneers and laying bare the constructing processes of the project should proceed not along already established paths, but rather "set up the lines" in the new ways that present themselves as they are emerging from my grounded, contextualized, citationally-informed observations.

Dense Erotics of Arrangement: In his working out of Duke Ellington's music via Sigmund Freud's *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, Fred Moten compares the members of the Ellington Orchestra and their musical parts to the faculties of the body and the sexual drives of Freud's text, developing "out of successive contributions, out of the asymmetrical differences of individual players, pictures, metaphors that are also sounds and bodies."²⁷ The virtuosic maneuvers here and throughout *In the Break* all derive from the author's inspired performance of the aesthetic politics he discusses: Moten's text

²⁶ Sudnow 1993, 139.

²⁷ Moten 2003, 130.

unfolds in successive waves of artfully choreographed textual reachings that push toward "a kind of lyricism of the surplus—invagination, rupture, collision, augmentation."²⁸ In his attempts to bridge the gap between writing-as-representational(/death mask) and that which it seeks to represent, Moten is compelled to explore and divulge the "rhythmic architecture of [his] text," the musicality and interplay that it can present.²⁹ The inherent, latent potential for "the aural rewriting of grammatical rule that is not simply arbitrary but a function of the elusive content he would convey" results from the endemic symbiosis of writing's inability to represent *and* its fundamental representationality.³⁰ Given that the success of my ethnographic research was realized only through my performances as musician—and that each positionality informed the others—I find Moten's tactics of narrative technology (and technological narrativity) particularly resonant with my reaching for a re/structured text that reflects the interrelationship of positionalities such that the "restructuring could be seen, then, as the process by which structure is placed into play, which is to say into narrative, into the circularity and tension of a narrative that is composed of and that turns on elements or events."³¹ Laying bare this restructuring—perhaps akin to writing my compositional sketchbook into the score that is this dissertation text—embraces the *dense erotics of arrangement* and "the beautiful distance between sound and the writing of sound."³² Lingering in this in-between, articulated space "marks the unprecedented present within which the aesthetic is 'ongoingly'

²⁸ *ibid.*, 26.

²⁹ *ibid.*, 43.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 44.

³¹ *ibid.*, 54.

³² *ibid.*, 60.

reconfigured and reconfiguring, bent and bending; within which the illusion of any immediacy of sound is re/written and the overdetermined and deferred fixity of writing is un/written by the material and transformative present of sound."³³

Analytic Autoethnography: Through the work of Leon Anderson, the technological potency of densely arranged critical text takes root in the processes of ethnographic writing where new critical theorizing emerges from embodied, self-reflexive work. Anderson's 2006 article in the *Journal of Critical Ethnography* presents arguments on the intersection of aesthetics and rigorous scholarship like those of Moten and Weheliye, but from the vantage point of work based on social interaction and dialogue—constitutive elements of ethnography that are de-emphasized in the discipline of literary criticism in which Moten and Weheliye are writing. The scholarly approach for which Anderson advocates, which he terms *analytic autoethnography*, is proposed in contradistinction to what he calls "evocative autoethnography," proponents of which argue "that narrative fidelity to and compelling description of subjective emotional experiences create an emotional resonance with the reader that is the key goal of their scholarship."³⁴ While lauding the advocacy and critiques that characterize this scholarship, Anderson cautions against creating a new scholarly paradigm in which self-reflexive fidelity to empirical data occludes theoretical exegesis. In truth, a self-reflexive, ethnographic stance in which the technologies and embodied actions of the writing academic scholar are not discussed

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ Anderson 2006, 376.

measures far short of the ideal set forth in evocative autoethnography. The implications of Anderson's call presage self-reflexive scholarship which is not bound by capturing personal experiences having occurred during some period "in the field" (most assuredly an outmoded, crumbling construction by now), but which *extends* and *augments* this self-reflexivity to all stages and interactions of the scholarly processes, while at the same time eschewing mis/conceptions of "narrative fidelity," in favor of research "grounded in self-experience but reach[ing] beyond it as well...to formulate and refine theoretical understandings of social processes."³⁵ Even if evocative autoethnography reaches for textual fidelity to purely subjective ethnographic perceptions and perspectives, Agamben's writing-as-death mask predetermines that any such reaches will never arrive, falling well short of "faithful representation." While Anderson's approach in the article is motivated in part by conservatism—to show that methodological goals of autoethnography have historical precedents and very much fit within established research paradigms—there exists great potential in its further elaboration. Grounded in everyday experience, an elaboration of Anderson's autoethnographic methodologies could reach beyond bounded notions of researcher/informant identity and of "the field" toward dialogic spaces of ethnographic work that cut emergent paths for new, elaborating, embodied, theoretically-informed research and advocacy where these distinctions are blurred and troubled by this emergent, critical stance.

³⁵ *ibid.*, 386-7.

An Engineer of Words: Anderson's suggestions for self-reflexive *analytic autoethnography* in the context of this dissertation invite rather stark and daunting questions: how will the language of the dissertation look/read? how does (the dissertating) one reconcile the drive toward a dialogically emergent text informed by the aesthetics of *scratching failure* with the structures of expectation and evaluation of mastery built into the dissertation process? Philosopher and literary theorist Paolo Bartoloni relates a story in which Italian poet Giorgio Caproni nearly turns down a commission to translate the complete dramatic works of Jean Genet, daunted by the scope of the project and prior overwhelming challenges of translating others' works. According to Bartoloni, a letter from one of Caproni's friends provided the reassurance necessary to inspire Caproni to accept the work and publish the translation. In the letter, this friend insisted that it must be Caproni to translate the work, adding "*sei un ingegnere della parola* (you are an engineer of the word)."³⁶ Bartoloni locates this predicate compliment for Caproni in the poet's ability to "[break] the syntax and flow of language by assembling words paratactically...stress[ing] their individuality and their being together, not only with other words but also, and more importantly, with the silence of the blank space, and with words' resounding emptiness."³⁷ Parataxis as articulation in the mix.

In reaching for scholarship that creates performative space, Caproni's parataxical para/tactics highlight the potential for "poetic language as the shelter of things," to provide through improvised play within established forms (and the articulated spaces

³⁶ Bartoloni 2008, 143.

³⁷ *ibid.*, 144.

therein) an opportunity to glimpse that which writing and language cannot represent directly: to create space, pause, re/consideration, where language and writing fail in their scratching representationality.³⁸ In this space—marked off by the blank silences—"what resonates is nothing other than the object as it disappears, as it departs."³⁹ Bartoloni suggests that it is around the spaces of the writerly performance that the marginalized, the failingly represented subject-as-object can sound: "it is by removing the singularity of the object through speaking it that the other can be reached and experienced."⁴⁰ Poetics are continually "clothing the object of inquiry, hiding its essence under layers of words"⁴¹ and, in its indirectness, a language of poetics "inhabits the space of indistinction and potentiality in which myriad possible meanings and images are intertwined and tightly connected, to the extent that no clear image or meaning can be disentangled."⁴² Bartoloni suggests that "the language *through* which we speak can be disoriented by piling upon it sentence after sentence, whose communicative and representation value is unclear. The result is still a language that speaks in sentences, whose grammar and syntax are clear and correct, but whose meanings have crossed the threshold of indistinction."⁴³ This threshold of indistinction articulates a "zone between representation and essence,"⁴⁴ to where Bartoloni believes philosophy (the targeted discipline for his critique) must move:

³⁸ *ibid.*, 143.

³⁹ *ibid.*, 144.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 138.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 137.

⁴² *ibid.*, 134. Cf. Weheliye's (anti)origin.

⁴³ *ibid.*, 133.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 131.

must renounce the rhetorical techniques of ordering and clarifying *by constructing complex architectural structures* in which visibility and knowledge are intrinsically intertwined. Philosophy has to question the limitations of human language from within [...] It is the realization of this necessity that has...generated the first examples of literary and philosophical convergence in the zone of poetic and linguistic indistinction.⁴⁵

The spaces of indistinction—where the mix happens, where elaborative writing covers and constructs in excess—are only constructed from *within*. Improvising Difference [colon—here!] Constructing Canarian Jazz Cultures. It is in the manipulation of the *frame* through which these spaces of indistinction are rendered inhabitable. This dissertation must perform within the frame, but it will inhabit the spaces *on the frame*, and the articulated spaces therein—compelled by and compelling towards re/consideration and the generative potentiality of the blank spaces of silence. In one silent, contemplative pause, the same re/consideration inspired this section, *An Engineer of Words*—one note scribbled on a bookmark months ago that prompted a re/reading, re/organizing, and re/writing of the Bartoloni starting at the page-turn between pages 143 and 144 *backwards* for fifteen pages (for which the preceding footnotes could provide verification).

Ex/nomination and Coded Qualifiers: While explicating a Heidegger citation on translation, Bartoloni suggests that the linguistic distance between representation and "this apparently invisible trace [of sentiment] can only be predicated upon a careful and

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 130-1. Emphasis added.

rigorous analysis of the semantic and semiotic content of what is left..."⁴⁶ Having posited for this dissertation a writerly tactic of piling on sentences into the mix informed by and inclusive of a self-reflexivity toward the entire scholarly process, I should suggest a means by which such rigorous analytical re/consideration could be performed. How might one read back to parse writerly structures? How might I peel back the folds of linguistic fabric, such as the myriad, disparate denotative and connotative meanings entangled around the words "jazz" and "canario" to which I alluded above?

In the very first pages of *Drifting on a Read: Jazz as a Model for Writing*, Michael Jarrett outlines the boundaries of his text, "foreground[ing] writing, the 'logic' of the signifier: how the discourse of jazz models or projects jazz music to this culture by granting jazz a voice and organizing it on a highly abstract level."⁴⁷ On the first read, I was compelled to break the syntax and flow of this clearly articulated statement of intent. I find points for critique in the *lack* of words here: which *one* discourse? which culture is *this* culture? and how could *one* discourse grant *one* voice to jazz (*singular?!?*)? Above, Bartoloni provides the critique of the faulty logic of discourses that organize, so I want to focus here on explicating the linguistic *lack* and the questions it inspired.⁴⁸ By using the singular nominative forms for "discourse," "jazz" and "culture," Jarrett implies unified, bounded concepts where personal experience counters with a surplus of possible meanings. Jarrett's neatly arranged language, in its simplicity and polish, flattens out difference, occludes the possibility of counternarratives, and enacts a dominant paradigm.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 138.

⁴⁷ Jarrett 1999, 2-3.

⁴⁸ Lest my questions seem hasty, I should say that Jarrett does not anticipate nor address them directly.

Inasmuch as qualifiers can be imbued with meaning-to-be-parsed, the *lack* in writing—the silences and blank spaces—must also be read. With the singular nouns of that introductory sentence, Jarrett has affirmed the exnominating potential of a dominant jazz canon, reinforcing the boundaries that prevent other sounds, people, and discourses from entering into writing.⁴⁹

Citation, Quotation, and the Aesthetics of Rupture: The political impact of ex/nominating, writerly reaches establish rigid boundaries that, in their fixity, imbue written language with the very same potential for representation I have suggested it can never possess. When Jarrett writes "*this* culture" without providing the antecedent for the demonstrative pronoun, he implies that the parameters of the cultural milieu are so implicitly understood that they need not be named, and locates himself squarely inside those boundaries. So too with "jazz." Rather than covering with words, he leaves them out and this *lack*—this "inclusive exclusion"—at once precludes the annexation of difference and establishes the frame in which critique must be placed.⁵⁰

Agamben, like Bartoloni, believes that critiquing language must occur within it. Given that the boundaries of writing this dissertation have already been set, reinforced, and fortified, any attempt to render them problematic must begin from within a focused analysis of prior work, coupled with a critical improvisationality that writes in piles. This performance includes elaborating on the theoretical precursors of the project,

⁴⁹ Barthes 1973, 140-56.

⁵⁰ Agamben 1998, 8.

demonstrating the ability to construct arguments and applying critique to their precursors referenced through citational movements that fill out the mix. Agamben refers to the signal degradation inherent in the act of citation and its effect on the written structures from which quotes are culled: "Citation appears as an eminently destructive procedure whose task is 'not to shelter, but to purify, to rip out of context, to destroy.' Its destructive force, however, is that of justice; to the very degree to which citation tears speech from its context, destroying it, it also returns it to its origin."⁵¹ To rupture narrative—to break open established forms and arguments—in a generative fashion. To re/arrange densely. To articulate paratactically. These are performative moments *on* the frame. The extraction and suturing re/placement of textual fragments inherent in this scholarly aesthetic suggest recasting writerly performance as an improvising construction that resonates with the emergent "sonorous residues noisily implod[ing] the linguistic utterances that frame them and thus launch the structural moment of the mix."⁵²

Potentiality and Waiting: Amid the piles of fragmented citations and paratactical articulations, at the intersection of theoretical exegesis and re/iterative aesthetics, lie traces of the embodied experiences in which I have participated during this project. The invisible silences—those omissions and elisions that do not accompany my textual reachings—are *constitutive* elements of the experience that cannot be written. The

⁵¹ quoted in Bartoloni 2008, 13. In light of Weheliye's arguments and the context of his (and to a degree, my) work, I might revise Agamben's "returns it to its origins" in the statement to read that citation destroys speech and "augments it through elaborating on its (anti)origin."

⁵² Weheliye 2005, 96.

structures and strictures of this document's *frame* direct my writing toward pre-established paths. However, in calling attention to these silences—best identified as blank spaces, the (line and character) breaks⁵³—I am attempting to generatively rupture that *frame* and place it into deconstructive play, to allow new, inhabitable structures to emerge. To provide space for the silences and the silenced. Articulating the break.

On the potentiality within the poetic break (the caesura), Jacques Derrida says, it "does not simply finish and fix meaning. [...] But, primarily, the caesura makes meaning emerge. It does not do so alone, of course; but without interruption—between letters, words, sentences, books—no signification could be awakened."⁵⁴ The silent space does not necessarily erect boundaries so much as provide the opportunity for new structures to emerge. These new structures can only arise when the language of representation—that writing that refuses to call itself a death mask—moves aside: "the pure word, the anti-rhythmic interruption, in meter called *caesura*, becomes necessary so as to block the enchanting succession of representations at its height in such a way as to make manifest no longer the alternation of representation, but representation itself."⁵⁵ Weheliye's repetition *of* (not *with*) difference can only occur once the repeating representation gives way to a new mix. Again, Bartoloni translating gestures toward Heidegger offer that "language and subjectivity simultaneously move in search of one [an]other and simultaneously *pause to hear each other's proximity*. One's own silence is the other's

⁵³ Starting with what Microsoft Word calls "non-published characters"

⁵⁴ Derrida 2002, 87

⁵⁵ Agamben 1995, 44.

voice and one's own absence is the other's presence. We can only hear language if we stop speaking language, if we cease to 'merely follows [*sic*] language constantly."⁵⁶

Writing in the spaces—that is, engaging them inclusively and creatively—“is not a discourse that annihilates and negates presence or cognition. It is rather a discourse that locates presence and cognition in a space in which they must be rediscovered...What I am stressing here is that the area of indistinction, realized by language which speaks nothing, is a tangible and experiential zone; a potentiality which ceases to be hypothetical in order to be.”⁵⁷ Sudnow composes the silences, too: “In jazz and language sayings, smoothness must be formulated in terms of that fine internal pacing structure of the articulations that furnishes their recognizable cogency. It was to permit nonstuttering and nontripping disengagements from the terrain when a saying was not at hand, *disengagements that would not make the music stop but would be silences of the music.*”⁵⁸ Any reaching for articulation must wait for the silences to sound.

It is in this sense that Bartoloni's waiting—*acconsentire*—inspires this project and its writing in its “listen[ing]...to echoes and sounds resonating throughout.” In “allow[ing] myself to listen and feel with,” I wish “to remain open—*acconsentire*—to an experience that is simultaneously complete (an encounter with the singularity of a given voice) and unfinished (a coming into the presence of traces). As such, it is about the preparedness not so much on the threshold of the indeterminate as on that of the interdeterminate:

⁵⁶ Bartoloni 2008, 17-8. emphasis added.

⁵⁷ Bartoloni 2005, 243.

⁵⁸ Sudnow, 103-4. emphasis added.

between closure and openness, concealment and unconcealment, wholeness and partiality."⁵⁹

The job of the ethnographer is to wait...for the silence of the blank space...for the something that resonates. Parataxis as the mix.

⁵⁹ Bartoloni 2008, 7.

III. Translating in the Break: An Improvising Ethnographer Pianist Writes

"If the *ergon* cannot be written, it can perhaps be observed
in the process of breaking open its death mask."⁶⁰

What does writing that waits look and sound like? Where will the silences emerge amid the piles of sentences so densely arranged? I wish to place all the structures in deconstructive play. To imbue every writerly gesture with the potential for destabilizing critique. To acknowledge that each gesture exists as a *performative* opportunity to be realized through writing and re/writing, reading and re/reading. To arrange and manipulate this performative potential for troubling the written lines that frame. To rupture and break syntax, grammar, and flow through repetition of difference. To wait in proximity to. To pause *parata(x/ct)ically*. To wait *performatively*.

The well-manicured histories that actively produce these silences (and those silenced) accomplish this glossing-over in part through a myopia that obscures potential movements away from well-trodden paths. As with Sudnow's piano, we must pause to alert the senses to what—and whom—may have been missed. There is most assuredly a difference among: Afro-Canarian, (Afro-)Canarian, *afrocanario*, "Afro-Canarian," and Afro/Canarian. An inability to articulate that or an indifference to it does not render it immaterial or inconsequential. Rather, failure to engage with this difference ignores the constitutive role of performativity in the writerly act. As an improvising rhythm section player and a classroom educator, I look with familiarity to *the break* for this space of potential (for the) silence(d) to perform. It is here where we are told to wait: to pause the

⁶⁰ Bartoloni 2008, 13.

repeating harmonic cycles and lines of lectures to let those who have been silent emerge. To allow time for consideration before the act. In the break lies the caesura, the pause; it's the threshold *of the structure* and *on the frame*. It is here at *the break*—this interstitial, emergent, and fluid conceptual space in which potentiality and silence give rise to improvising critique and actuating identities—where the project's subjects, themes, methodologies, and performances will intersect.

In the last section, I briefly introduced some concepts and scholars whose works have impacted this project. In moving forward *in the break*, I wish to place this project in dialogue with them, to acknowledge the dialogic nature not just of my ethnographic fieldwork in the Canary Islands, but also of the study, research, performance, and writing that have occurred both before and after that period of the 2010-2011 academic year. In putting into deconstructive play all of the writerly gestures in this document, I wish to extend this critical explication to the processes of scholarly research and writing, including those of the already written and the about-to-be-read.

French literary theorist Gerard Genette provides a potent template for critiquing the writerly gesture.⁶¹ His work on the *paratext* provides both a vocabulary and methodology for critical analysis of those elements surrounding the main text of a document that can direct the reader. Genette forces his readers to confront the epigram, footnote, sub/title, and citation by drawing these into the main text where they must be acknowledged. I plan to do the same. A more literal translation of Genette's title, *Seuils*,

⁶¹ Lest we gloss over the importance of the interpersonal dialogues of *reaching* for the dissertation, I should say that I am grateful to Professor Meta DuEwa Jones for directing me to Genette.

is *Thresholds*, which suggests paratexts as just *on the frame* of the writerly work, but constitutive of it nonetheless.⁶² In acknowledging the politics of the *paratext*, Genette questions the frame of the text and its con/texts in a most fundamental way, rupturing their imposed and assumed boundaries, and allowing for new interpretations, new meanings, and new texts to emerge. This is the power of Genette's paratext: by rendering porous the binding structures of the text—the walls dividing text and context—he expands the "zone of indistinction" to the whole written document. Realizing the potential of the break/threshold becomes less a matter of a particularly targeted readerly or writerly reach—an adeptly executed cartographic re/tracing—and more an awareness of this potentiality inscribed into every textual gesture, singularly and collectively.⁶³

We should not get so mired in the piles of textual technology to overlook the fact that I am discussing *silenced subjects*: people who have been written out of history and the perpetuation of academic and socio-political canons that continually reproduce *with difference* this writing-out.⁶⁴ In a fascinating study on Josephine Baker, architecture, and the modern surface, English and African American Studies scholar Anne Anlin Cheng suggests that Baker lies "at the threshold where human skin morphs into modern surface" and that "by actively engaging with the synthetic and covered status of skin, Baker's body as text and performance requires that we reread how we read race. Her reputedly primitive nakedness must be understood within a larger philosophical and aesthetic

⁶² It is especially ironic that the translator chose to change the title so drastically, relegating Genette's title to the subtitle. Here the slippage between translated languages actually moves *Seuils/Thresholds* in physical space.

⁶³ Cf. Agamben, 1993, 68: "The threshold is not, in this sense, another thing with respect to the limit; it is, so to speak, the experience of the limit itself, the experience of being-*within* an outside."

⁶⁴ Cf. Section Four

debate about, and desire for, the 'pure surface'...[which] in turn looks to black skin, not for disavowal but for *articulation*."⁶⁵ Cheng's phrase "epidermal inscription" reminds us how writerly acts are mapped onto bodies, which are just as performative, improvised, and imbued with potentiality as the texts which seek to represent them. One of the most empowering aspects of *the break*/threshold is the potentiality to re/inscribe meaning: in the space where the boundaries between subject and object become blurred, the subjected-to can emerge as subjects-of.

Insofar as writing (in its inherent representationality) interrupts (ends) the caesura, forces movement across the threshold, and fills in the break, we must problematize that movement and, if possible, find means to impede it or slow it down so that we might maintain through writerly technologies a lingering outside of language *within the break* and *on the frame* for the improvising subject. This drive toward writing-that-is-not-writing is related to Cheng's discussion of "the pure surface" and the *tabula rasa*. Understanding writing as the means through which *the break* is both construction and deconstruction—as the drive toward representation and away from it—means admitting that the politics and poetics (the ethics and aesthetics) of the page are one and the same. Graphesis is the generative, aesthetic rupture "wherein action becomes possible, one in which it is our duty to linger."⁶⁶

Lingering in the break—our reaching for the threshold—is writing *back* to the *tabula rasa*, where the *frame* of representational writing is illuminated and inhabited. In

⁶⁵ Cheng 2010, 12-13. emphasis added.

⁶⁶ Moten 2003, 99.

the beginning of *The Idea of Prose*—in a section entitled "Threshold"—Agamben writes that "the uttermost limit thought can reach is not a being, not a place or thing, no matter how free of any quality, but rather, its own absolute potentiality, the pure potentiality of representation itself: the writing tablet!"⁶⁷ So, we linger in the break—with writerly reachings toward the *tabula rasa* that un/writes representation(al)ity—actively waiting for the silence(d) to emerge. Simultaneously conveying and deferring. *Translating*.

Melodies I sing in my head do not have the real-world qualities that singing aloud has—and if I try to match up an imagined tone with one at the piano, I find that imagined sounds have no pitch at all. In order to effect a match, I pretend to dredge up a sound from imagination to hear its pitch, while in fact I give it a pitch it never had when it was silent. For thinking, the essential structure of the movements is quite enough. It may at least be suggested that we derive the truncated and miniaturized inner voice of thinking from our body's power to abstract a course of real movements.⁶⁸

Du Bois's use of the spirituals and poetry, rather than providing a simple act of repetition, appears as a form of Benjaminian translation in which these artifacts resound and disperse the originals, all the while (re)producing their sonic after/life.⁶⁹

While content and language form a certain unity in the original, like a fruit and its skin, the language of the translation envelops its content like a royal robe with ample folds...The language of a translation can—in fact, must—let itself go, so that it gives voice to the *intentio* of the original not as reproduction but as harmony, as a supplement to the language in which it expresses itself, as its own kind of *intentio*.⁷⁰

The search for the pure surface is also...the function that Benjamin ascribed to the philosopher. Both art critic and philosopher assumed that the essential and purest form of interpretation is that which ultimately deletes the work being interpreted. [...] This equates with appropriating the work and re-writing it backward, from the end to the beginning. Thus, the interpreter becomes author, or perhaps more

⁶⁷ Agamben 1995, 34.

⁶⁸ Sudnow 1993, 99. *Cf.* the mis/singings of Mojo Ribs in Section Two.

⁶⁹ Weheliye 2005, 104.

⁷⁰ Benjamin 2007, 75 and 79.

appropriately, the translator whose task is to undo the work in order to retrieve the essence hidden behind layers and layers of words and colors, in order...to reach the depth that lies at the surface of things.⁷¹

Breaking the syntax, un/folding the piles, mixing the parataxes, and constructing improvisations are all *translating* reaches. In allowing space for the emergent gaps and scratchiness—the silence(d), the pre-actuating, un-representable *intentio*—I am articulating (in all senses of the word) the embodied traces of the project. Rendering porous the boundaries of this document through translating the paratexts, contexts, subtexts, main/texts—not to suggest equivalency, but rather performativity. I wish to highlight, through densely arranged writerly constructions, some of the ways in which these performativities have informed one another in *translating* the improvised, embodied events of the project.

Translating in the break. Benjamin tasks me with "liberat[ing] the language imprisoned in a work in [my] recreation of that work," which, according to Agamben, must be carried out through language, for "the eye must see its blind spot. The prison must imprison itself. Only thus will the prisoners be able to make their way out."⁷² Having arrived at *translation* as the means of lingering critically in the break, how can I translate my way out of the imposed and imposing boundaries of the prior scholarship that perpetuates the silence(d) and also the strictures of academic, institutionalized dissertation-writing that compel me toward repeating these strictures only *with difference*? In part, as mentioned

⁷¹ Bartoloni 2008, 11.

⁷² Benjamin 2007, 80; Agamben 1995, 99.

above, I can accomplish this through laying bare the process of dissertation-writing, turn the critique toward the *representationality* of the *representation*, rather than to the *representation* or *represented*. This locates "narrativity...precisely 'in' the moment-to-moment act of making the changes. [...] For what one hears is necessarily the result of much effort, time, and process."⁷³ In pausing the writing in the break, perhaps we can hear the embodied traces of the interpersonal, dialogic events that this document mis/represents.

This active pausing in scholarship is what Agamben refers to as "a suffering and an undergoing, the messianic legacy it contains drives [the scholar], on the other hand, incessantly toward closure. This *festina lente*, this shuttling between bewilderment and lucidity, discovery and loss, between agent and patient, is the rhythm of study."⁷⁴ My improvising pianist's attention to the rhythm of study influences my written scholarship just as it does my ethnographic interviews. In the scratchy slippage between modes of being, in my effort to facilitate passionately and patiently the mapping of this project into *the break* and onto *the frame*, I can mark the unfolding of dissertating, eschewing the artifices of academic polish that flatten out the temporality and agentive interdependency that animate this project. I can translate *performatively*.

In considering this mode of performative transcription and the imaginative, creative use of writing, I am reminded of an undergraduate course at the University of Richmond in which I participated, "East Asian Poetry & Calligraphy," led by Professor

⁷³ Iyer 2007, 395.

⁷⁴ Agamben 1995, 64.

Stephen Addiss, one of the foremost scholars and practitioners of Japanese calligraphy in the United States. This was my introduction to embodied writing: the focused attention to the technologies through which a single character was realized now resonates strongly with this work. As Bartoloni says about imaginative translation, "memory is not so much interested in recalling for the sake of recalling as in recalling for the sake of discovering."⁷⁵ How then can my memory of Professor Addiss's course act generatively here? What compels my imaginative recall toward the course? Perhaps it is this: "imagination and translation build something new from something old, erecting the unknown on the solid foundation of the known."⁷⁶ In *performative translation*, I see a potent positionality with which to bring together the brush strokes of the *enso* I studied in Professor Addiss's course, the bebop contrefacts I have (deconstructively) played, the reading and archival research I have undertaken, the paragraphs and arguments I have written, and the experiences among Afro/Canarians I have shared:

In other words, these lines are expressive gestures shaped as traces on paper, just as 'the musical phrase is an expressive gesture shaped in sound' (Ingold 2003: 7). As Ingold suggests, the physical trace is 'an almost incidental by-product, since it is the movement of forming it that counts' (ibid: 9). To possess and utilize the brush technique means that the calligrapher knows how the movements of the body, hand and brush result in different kinds of ink traces. Consequently, to understand this piece of work one needs to visualize the gesture rather than viewing the graphic outcome.⁷⁷

In a recent conversation with Professor Addiss—ten years after we worked together in a classroom—we discussed this project (and this Section in particular). After my attempts

⁷⁵ Bartoloni 2008, 27.

⁷⁶ Bartoloni 2008, 24.

⁷⁷ Nakamura 2007, 85.

to present as coherent my disjointed thinking about this yet-to-be-written Section, Professor Addiss suggested that, in calligraphy, one could find one of the only art forms in which temporality—the time-contingent process of the labor which produces—is visible in the final product. In Jennifer DeVere Brody's fascinating study of punctuation, she cites a critic who, in his discussions of artist Richard Artschwager's sculpture of a question mark, suggests that "the bristles render vague the boundaries of the forms they constitute, and so the work, which is a question, raises questions about itself."⁷⁸ The work that un/does itself. And how like my studies with Professor Addiss, in which all the prior training (the embodied histories of dialogic learning), kinetic energy, and velocity are bound up in the calligraphic work! So too are the viscosity of the ink, the absorption of the paper, and the constitution of the brush's bristles, as well as the individual paths through which each of the bristles traces its own singular approximation of the character the calligrapher performs. Could not the time-indexed topographies of sound waves outlined in music production software be read the same way? And the pixalated font-images produced on word processors? Given a proper level of attention ("zoom"), like my contextualized re/listenings in La Laguna discussed in the previous Section, one could see how a *boundary* is less an inherent quality of the embodied gesture and much more an assumed imposition of systems that organize. The potential for critique of these systems *already* exists within these inscriptions; *translation* provides the process through which this potential can be glimpsed and sounded. But...

⁷⁸ Brody 2008, 171, n.47. I discovered the Brody in the citations of Professor Meta DuEwa Jones's monograph, *The Muse is Music: Jazz Poetry from the Harlem Renaissance to Spoken Word*.

[h]ow do you recognize a phenomenon that gives no visible trace? Miners working deep under the earth have long been aware that lethal gasses they can neither see nor smell might spell sudden death. Their solution? *The hapless canary*. For if the caged bird they brought along into the mine succumbed to the silent killer, the miners knew to evacuate immediately. Only by the aftermath—the canary's demise—was the presence of danger established. [...] What does punctuation have to do with shifting balances between speech and writing in the history of English? *Punctuation is the canary*.⁷⁹

Punctuation is the canary. The canary is *Serinus canaria (domestica)*, indigenous to the archipelagos of Macaronesia, consisting of the Canary Islands, Madeira, and the Azores. This project suggests that the Afro/Canarian subject is also "the canary" and, like Brody's study of punctuation, will performatively translate for this project her suggestion that "much literary criticism, especially that of the new critical variety, for all its attention to close reading of texts has overlooked the value of punctuation by reading print...as if punctuation were insignificant if not transparent."⁸⁰

In this preceding paragraph, we glimpse an important aspect of the improvising constructs for research *in the break*. In footnote twenty-two (on page 233) of Professor Meta DuEwa Jones's monograph, *The Muse is Music: Jazz Poetry from the Harlem Renaissance to Spoken Word*, Jones mentions Brody's work on the "expressivity and performativity of punctuation," but I had to turn to the bibliography for the whole citation. And now Brody's text is an important citation in this Section; the short anecdotal, interlud(e/ic) metaphor "Commas and Canaries" in her introduction now provides a potent riff—one she could not have anticipated—and constitutive element in this document. The paratext, imbued with generative potentiality, becomes the text

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, 23. emphasis added.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

realized through an imaginative reach and the kinetic energy of fingers at the typographical keyboard. Calling out this amazing happenstance that facilitated such a creative and imaginative moment performs a central function of dissertating *in the break*: tracing the embodied citational webs, writing-in the serendipitous occurrences of reading, recording the improvisations of ethnographic and archival work. These actions are the embodied traces of the project's collaborative dialogism, often glossed over as insignificant (if not transparent), which must be recorded in order to trouble the boundaries of the document. And again, even the actual inscription of con/textual markings on the page/screen must be included: translation as critique is rooted in acknowledging the *representationality* of the *representation*.

Helene Shugart employs just this method in her critique of the aesthetic conventions of cultural studies scholarship, where she warns that "the casual and cursory inclusion of cites as a means to boost legitimacy and credibility seems contrary to a critical aim to deconstruct discourses of power."⁸¹ Just as with any other paratext, the citation directs the reader, enacts political agendas, and imposes structure. It is through imaginative, creative work and study that I performatively translate the citation into *the break*, where I densely arrange these ruptured para/texts and employ them as generative elements in "reframing conclusions as sites of suggestions," calling attention to the acts of suturing and the scars (the scratches in the mix) they produce.⁸² These scars are the

⁸¹ Shugart 2003, 289.

⁸² *ibid.*, 300.

embodied traces of the project rendered as textual fragments. For parata(x/ct)ical

example(s)...

Translation is the quintessential detritus of literature: *the ruins of a work undone*. We usually turn a blind eye to the ugliness of the unfinished, incomplete, or ruined, without realizing that perhaps it is precisely in the apparently unsettling state of potentiality that the essence lies.⁸³

But this performance gestures toward a performance that its medium— language— cannot capture and therefore improvisationally records...rupturally augments...[but i]t only *scars its object*. [...] It is rather, a *resonance* in language of what is essential to its object. [...] The dissemination occurs by way of open analytic failure (the breakdown of the breakdown) and by way of a kind of recapitulative improvisation (*a lingering in the iconic break of this double breakdown*). This resistance to analysis that is carried out in and by the complexity of the object is everything. It occurs in the break, the sexual cut, between simple naming and complex description, both of which are rendered impossible by the object in its complexity. The distinction between the object that would be named and the musical— which is to say organized— compound no longer performs. This performatively induced nonperformance occurs within and as *a chain of differences and modalities*—totalizing systems and exclusionary singularities— that are embedded...as both name and description.⁸⁴

Infusing techniques of close textual reading and historical contextualization, for instance, with the much more vague, but nonetheless useful, parameters of DJing that are a potential of experience but often *resist the explanatory strictures of critical discourse*, opened up and reinvented the function of the literary in *Phonographies*. [...] Appropriating DJing for or translating DJing into the languages of literary studies implies not so much its wholesale importation— pretty much an impossibility— as an embrace of certain forms of chaos or entropy in which *lacunae, fractures, and inconsistencies are allowed to spawn their own skewed logics and velocities, generating their becoming only in the milieu of the between...*[T]hinking sound *unearths the singular potentialities* of both the literary and the sonic, which, as opposed to affirming and perpetuating their institutionally sanctioned being, exalts their becoming. Process, not structure, is the rule of this game.⁸⁵

[The life of creativity] is rather a life whose productivity depends on incessantly

⁸³ Bartoloni 2008, 25. emphasis added.

⁸⁴ Moten 2003, 139-40. emphasis added.

⁸⁵ Weheliye 2005, 203-4. emphasis added.

meeting other voices and presences which *often remain unseen and unheard, lost and yet securely hidden in the folds of life*. Translation...may well be the place where a possible experience with the missing thing eventuates, and *where the splinters of our originality might, even if only for a moment, resurface*. This emergence is also a process of a distillation through which different voices—the bits and pieces—are allowed to speak as one by remaining many.⁸⁶

Right across the street from a sandwich shop that my roommate Kino and I frequented in La Laguna, a dilapidated house waits. *Calle Maya* is narrow and there's not much to see, so, while we waited for our food, we spent most of our time smoking and engaging in the kind of patient conversation that smoking facilitates, but, in my waiting, I kept looking back to that house—it was either *Calle Maya* 54 or 56, presumably each at one time or another.



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2011)

⁸⁶ Bartoloni 2008, 155. One wonders whether those splinters could in fact be the smashed pieces of the death mask.

The crumbling stucco and the slow decomposition of the wooden door and its frame belied an abandonment of some time ago. Presumably, someone had tried to re-inhabit the space, as evidenced by the "*alejate*" ("keep away") painted by the door. But that translation doesn't quite fill out the suggested action. The reflexive pronoun, *te*, invites me, the trespasser, having arrived at *Calle Maya 54/56*, to "move myself away."

Agamben reflects on a similar Spanish expression, *pasearse*:

In Ladino (that is, in the archaic Spanish spoken by Sephardim at the time of their expulsion from Spain), "to stroll" or "to take a walk" is expressed by the verb *pasearse* ("to walk-oneself," which in modern Spanish is instead expressed as *pasear* or *dar un paseo*). As an equivalent for an immanent cause, which is to say, an action that is referred to the agent himself, the Ladino term is particularly felicitous. It presents *an action in which agent and patient enter a threshold of absolute indistinction*: a walk as walking-oneself....*Pasearse* is an action in which it is impossible to distinguish the agent from the patient (who walks what?) and in which the grammatical categories of active and passive, subject and object, transitive and intransitive therefore *lose their meaning*. *Pasearse* is, furthermore, an action in which means and end, potentiality and actuality, faculty and use enter a zone of absolute indistinction. This is why Spinoza employs expressions such as 'to constitute oneself as visiting,' 'to show oneself as visiting,' in which *potentiality coincides with actuality and inoperativeness with work*. The vertigo of immanence is that it describes the infinite movement of the self constitution and self-manifestation of Being: Being as *pasearse*.⁸⁷

In walking, in waiting, in moving away lies the potentiality of this project—the rhythm of scholarship. To be (a) patient in the "hanging-back, this sublime hesitation between meaning and sound [that] is the poetic inheritance with which thought must come to terms."⁸⁸ In hanging back, I can notice the inscribed subject embodying some silenced music that wraps around the cracking ruins of the threshold into that old Spanish house through which new Afro/Canarian plant life emerges. Somewhere amid all those layers inscribed on the surface of the house—whose presence breaks the syntax of its pure

⁸⁷ Agamben, 1999, 234-5. Emphasis added.

⁸⁸ Agamben, 1995, 41.

surfac(e/ing) architecture—lies the potential for the silence(d) to emerge. While I walk (myself) back, I'll wait for it. That's my job, after all: to wait for and remain open to the resonant traces in the mix that noisily implode the utterances that frame them.

Section Four: *Instrumentum canariensis*: Erasure and Colonial Constructions of the Canary Islands

I. St. Brendan's Island and *San Borondón*: Rupture, Translation, and the Map

Bassist Luismo Valladares, one of the first musicians I met in La Laguna, lives with his girlfriend Nuhr, a performance artist and dancer, a few blocks away from the apartment in which I stayed. I first met them at a festival of collaborative music and improvisation outside of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, where their performance featured Nuhr, improvisationally dancing to a short film, accompanied by Luismo on the electric bass. In subsequent conversations with Luismo, I learned more about he and Nuhr, their work and lives together, including a recent vacation to La Graciosa, one of the Canary Islands of which I had never heard. After so much background preparation and research, I could not imagine making such a basic error as not knowing the number and names of the islands of the archipelago; however, I later discovered that, along with Isla de Alegranza, Isla de Montaña Clara, Roque del Este, Roque del Oeste, and Isla de los Lobos, La Graciosa is not one of the *main* Canary Islands. Not all of these Canarian un/islands contain human inhabitants, which, along with their small size, are presumably reasons for their exclusion from popular and institutional discourses (weather forecasts, maps, trade books, transportation routes, and my study that far). They are unique in their peripheral status among the already peripheralized Islands as spaces that are often exnominally displaced in local and global, linguistic and cartographic formations of "Canary Islands." Mentioning them requires additional qualifiers, exceptions that allow them into

conversation, but simultaneously situate them outside normative discourses on the Islands.

This Section addresses the historical creation of the Canary Islands as spaces of isolation and that isolate, extending discussions of the politics of representationality in prior Sections into the realms of historiography and cartography. In the same way that critiquing the inherent mis/representations of writing can only happen within its structures, I will outline here some episodes through which we can critique the agendas buttressing the actively produced elisions that confine the Canary Islands and their inhabitants to the periphery, and perhaps glimpse opportunities for their emergence from within these boundaries. That is, I will, for example, elucidate the historical gaps in Afro/Canarian historiography and the geographic gaps in Afro/Canarian cartography, unfolding how the politics of the cite can gloss over the site. However, rather than moving forward with these identified Islands that are constantly excised from area maps, I would like to continue with an always unidentifiable Island that was included on maps of the area for centuries—St. Brendan's Island.

As recorded in many sources, St. Brendan's Island is the mythical arrival point of a journey undertaken in the 6th century CE by Brendan of Clonfert, an abbot who set out from Ireland to find an island of blessed saints. The legendary tale chronicles the travails of his journey, including combating sea monsters, performing a Catholic Mass on the back of a whale, and arriving at these Blessed Islands at the edge of the world.⁸⁹ The story of religious pilgrimage was widely dispersed and celebrated, in part because of its

⁸⁹ Cf. Benito Ruano 1978; and Babcock 1919.

correlation with ancient texts that situate paradisiacal environs in the vicinity of the Canary Islands. The journey was so well catalogued that it inspired subsequent journeys toward St. Brendan's Island, and, in fact, was located on maps up into the Modern Era.⁹⁰

Before the advent of trans-Atlantic navigation, Ireland and the Canary Islands represented the farther western lands of the Western world. At the threshold of the known world, discourses mapped onto these islands were steeped in mythology, wonder, and anxiety of the unknown. The journey of St. Brendan is now often seen as part of the Irish literary genre of *immrama*, an epic narrative form of Christian pilgrimage that maintains tropes of Irish mythology.⁹¹ However, because of the translational slippage among cultures and texts, the magical rhetoric and discursive performances on St. Brendan's Island, known in the Canary Islands as *San Borondón*, remain and continue to play a constitutive role in Canarian cultural geography and discourse.

Speculation surrounding the Canary Islands has always mitigated but never impeded inscription on the Islands, which have been recorded in mis/mapped, mis/placed, and mis/characterized forms since the epochs of Ancient Greece and Rome. The area around the Islands and the Islands themselves were considered the gateway to the Elysian Fields and the Hesperides.⁹² The Roman historian Pliny the Elder based his account of the Islands on an expedition conducted by the Mauretanian king Juba II.⁹³ Renowned for their abundant flora nurtured by an eternal Spring, the Islands became known as the

⁹⁰ Cf. Bruquetas de Castro and Toledo Bravo de Laguna 1995-1996; Reguiera Benítez and Poggio Capote 2007; and Bonnet y Reverón 1927, 1929a, 1929b, 1929c, and 1929d.

⁹¹ Benito Ruano 1978, 19. For more on the relationship between the mythology of St. Brendan and Irish *immrama*, cf. Mackley 2008 and Sobecki 2003.

⁹² Cf. Pinto de la Rosa 1954, 38-60.

⁹³ Cf. Álvarez Delgado 1945 and Leal Cruz 2007.

Insulae Fortunatae (Latin, "the Fortunate [or Blessed] Islands"), while reports of feral dogs earned the Islands their current name:

Canaria īnsula a canibus quibus abundat s̄c dicta in oceanō orientālī sita una ex Fortunatīs Īnsulīs dē quibus infrā. In hāc canēs māximē fortitūdinis admirandeque magnitūdinis oriuntur quōrum duō, ut Solīnus prōdit, Iūba rēx habuit.

"The Canarian Island, named for the dogs with which it abounds, situated in the Western Ocean, [is] one of the Fortunate Islands about which [I will write] below. On this island dogs of the greatest strength and of astonishing size are born, two of which, as Solinus records, King Juba had."

La isla Canaria se denomina así por los perros que tiene en abundancia, situada en el Océano oriental. Es una de las Islas Afortunadas, de las que hablaremos más adelante. En esta isla nacen unos perros de muchísima bravura y de un tamaño digno de admiración, de los que el rey Juba llegó a tener dos, como refiere Solino.

"The Canarian Island is named this way for the dogs that it has in abundance, situated in the Western Ocean. It is one of the Fortunate Islands, the ones about which we will discuss later. On this island are born dogs of much fierceness and of a size worthy of admiration, those of which King Juba came to have two, as Solinus told."⁹⁴

While it has been suggested that the dogs were quite possibly Mediterranean Monk Seals, the Latin adjective *canariae* mis/labeled the Islands as "full of dogs."⁹⁵ Each record of the Islands is informed by actual encounters but heavily mediated by mythologies (Christian, Irish, Greek, Roman, etc.), mis/interpretation of information, and the failing scratchiness of technological mediation, such that it is impossible to construct an "actual" history for

⁹⁴ Martínez 1994, 252. The Latin passage is an excerpt of the text by Domenico Silvestri, about which Martínez wrote this article, which is followed here by Martínez's translation. For the sake of comparison, I interpolated my translation of each directly underneath it. I also added macrons in the Latin passage to distinguish pronunciation and case function. Cf. Martínez's explication of the cited passage on the following page of his article.

⁹⁵ While the Canary bird is indigenous to the Canaries, as well as other islands of Macaronesia, the bird is named after the Islands, not *vice versa*.

the Canary Islands. The boundaries among history, myth, mythology, and historiography are blurred beyond recognition, and heavily influenced by interpretative authorial biases on religion, intercultural communication, and economic power.⁹⁶ Brief trade encounters (to which archaeological research attests⁹⁷) become only part of the basis for Western understandings of the Canary Islands, the gaps and slippage filled in by supposition, stereotype, and pseudo-science.

The storied existence of St. Brendan's Island thrived in this environment of proliferating, generative mis/information to such an extent that, as mentioned, in addition to its well-documented inclusion in cartographic representations of the Islands, *San Borondón* has been adopted as local mythology and a generative element of Canarian identity. St. Brendan's/*San Borondón*—the historiographically mis/identified eighth island of the (seven, not thirteen) Canaries—signifies a fluid, discursive realm onto which Canarians are continually re/mapping autochthonous conceptions of identity.⁹⁸ The scratches of the translating cartographic and historiographical mixes present potential spaces in which inhabitants of the Islands can write back their identity and history against the millennia of mis/information and mis/recording propagated through Western scholarly thought.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ My goals for rendering porous the boundaries of the text and authority of the dissertation address directly the falsely claimed authority propagated by this citationally-isolationist body of work that re/produces itself without allowing space for difference or revision.

⁹⁷ Cf. Rodríguez Rodríguez González Marrero 2006.

⁹⁸ The subtitle of Benito Ruano's book on *San Borondón* is "octava isla de Canarias," the eighth—not thirteenth— island of the Canaries.

⁹⁹ Cf. My discussion of Afro/Canarian musicians' reappropriation of *San Borondón* in Section Seven.

Each of these recordings played out variations on the exact location and characteristics of St. Brendan's Island, embellished with tropes of hard-fought nautical adventures threatened by sea monsters but promising idyllic repose and vast riches to those who reached it.¹⁰⁰ These variations truly made St. Brendan's/*San Borondón* an *īnsula improvīsa* (Latin, “unforeseen island”) to those who wrote or traveled in search of it. The historiography of the island demonstrates the power of mythology in the Western imagination about the Canary Islands. In tracing the translating shift and slippage between *īnsula improvīsa* and *isla improvisada* (Spanish, “improvised island”), this Section outlines a critical, cultural history of the Canary Islands as a process in which colonial mythologies, histories, and mythico-historiographies converge to create a conceptual space of continual and repetitious erasure and lack to which the Islands and their inhabitants have relegated.

This storied liminality survives in contemporary Canarian discourse as the concept of *aislamiento* (Spanish, “isolation,” from the verb *aislar*, “to separate or isolate”).¹⁰¹ The suffix *-miento* is derived from the Latin *-mentum*, meaning “the instrument, result, or product of action.” And so *aislamiento* literally means “the instrument, result, or product of isolating,” or “of placing on an island” (in Latin, *ad + īnsula + -mentum*). Moving forward from this etymological discussion, I wish to pose the questions: “what is the relationship of the *isla* (“island”) to *aislamiento*?”, “with what

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Daly 1904.

¹⁰¹ I learned this word only through the context of conversation, the frequent recurrence of which compelled me to consider not only its denotative meaning, but its possible connotative meanings contextualized as they were among my consultants and friends on the Islands. For my discussion of *aislamiento* and its impact on the ethnographic aspects of this project, cf. Section Six.

technologies is this island/isolating space created?”, and “what are the effects of these technologies-in-island/isolating-space?” Just as written accounts of St. Brendan’s Island/*San Borondón* have created a mythology around this imagined island, in this Section I will explore how historical events and their recordings have shaped contemporary Canarian identity and how these histories impact Canarian society providing the context for subsequent Sections which focus on how individuals work with and against these phenomena in their everyday experiences. I would suggest that the cartographic movements of St. Brendan’s Island mimic the unfolding discourses about the Canary Islands as island/isolating/isolated space. As I will describe, just as the cartographic reaches for the unforeseen island of St. Brendan’s/*San Borondón* float amid the Atlantic without firm grounding in actual geography, so too have the historiographical and scholarly reaches for the *afro/canario* continually fluctuated—floating qualifiers without clear antecedents—as discourses open to mis/interpretation whose proponents reveal more about themselves and the politics of their cites/sites than of any fixed, unified culture or history.

Western scholarship’s failed reaches for the Canary Islands have been marked in local discourse through *aislamiento*: lost in millennia of near approximations, cursory glossings-over, and glaring elisions, *aislamiento* encodes Canarian identity through an actively produced lack that continually reifies the boundaries within which the Islands, their history, and inhabitants are circumscribed. Through the act of inscription, the speculation of the cartographer—historian, scientist, ethnographer, *et al.*—is concretized and canonized as intentional acts whose inked lines, now buttressed with the edifying

mirage of authorial intention, can represent embodied actions of political and epistemological conquest. In (re/un)tracing these acts, we can critically glimpse not only the actively producing of eliding lacks, but also the process through which they have been and are created. In the same way that nautical reachings for the unforeseen St. Brendan's Islands entailed improvisatory maneuvers toward an unforeseen destination, so too do the critical reachings of Afro/Canarians who seek to write back against these journeys and their recorded histories so that they might inhabit the isolating elisions.

Inasmuch as the last Section highlighted the inherent lack of writing *per se* as representation, this Section situates that lack among episodes of Western thought about the Canary Islands. Before elaborating on how Canarians are resisting and re/forming subjectivities within and around these failures in subsequent Sections, I will unfold here some of the gaps left behind by these failed scholarly reachings that nonetheless form constitutive elements of Afro/Canarian identity. The next Section (Section Five) will begin to place these histories in play on the ground—during ethnographic research—in an extended case study on one particular songform. I will then layer on shifting, critical explorations of how improvisation, creativity, and embodied awareness might heighten the researcher/scholar's sensitivity to the inevitable mis/translation within writing and might suggest a methodology that at least allows both the writer and the reader to productively acknowledge the inevitability of this failure. And so this Section introduces historical and discursive tropes that frame not only my research on and understanding of the Afro/Canarian musicians with whom I am working, but also their critical reaches toward re/sounding and re/vising to be discussed throughout the dissertation.

II. Travelogues of Circumscription: Inscribing the Colonial Project

The early encounters informing the non-native written histories of the Islands usually were predicated on exchange, cataloging commercial activity, or the potential for future transactions. The ancient cartographic projects of (circum/in)scribing the known world were originally motivated by the search for knowledge; however, as navigational technologies developed, speculative cartography became accounts of exploratory travel, and exchange value shifted from intellectual knowledge to commerce, consumption, and conquest. Travel literature preserved the mythological histories and historical mythologies of earlier accounts, building on the tropes of St. Brendan's Island and the *Insulae Fortunatae*.

The eternal Spring attributed to the Elysian Fields by ancient Greek mythology and to the *Insulae Fortunatae* by Pliny the Elder were recast as the promising, potential agriculture yields for prospecting colonial powers. Starting again with the rediscovery of the Islands in the late 13th century, Europeans were building on ancient trade routes and returning from the Canary Islands with agricultural products (including dyes), indigenous people, and written accounts of their experiences.¹⁰² The Islands became the site of the nascent colonial project, and, throughout the centuries, the tropes of verdant utopia, now reinforced through an ever-expanding corpus of travel literature, have continued to present day.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Cf. Platero Fernández 1969; and Blázquez Martínez 2004.

¹⁰³ For example, Corbella Díaz 1991; Edwardes 1888; Eldridge 1959; González Lemus 1998; González Pérez 2006; Hernández Socas 2008; Leclerq 2006; Morales Lezcano 1986; and de Uriarte 2006.

One of the first was written by Giovanni Boccaccio, a Genovese explorer, whose 1341 expedition to the Canaries produced one of the first major ethnographic accounts of the Islands. *De Canaria et Insulis Reliquis Ultra Ispaniam in Occeano Noviter Repertis* provides a cataloging of tradeable goods, local economy, and possible future wealth to be accrued: this accounting serves not only to demonstrate how the cost of the expedition (funded by the Portugal crown) would be met, but also how profitable subsequent journeys might be. Also in the work were Boccaccio's impression of Afro/Canarians that he encountered, including four young men who swam out to greet the Boccaccio's entourage and were subsequently brought back to Europe. Boccaccio makes special reference to their singing and dancing, which, when he compares them to European music, suggests that the Afro/Canarians exhibit not so much a Spanish, but rather "modo Gallico," a Gallic style. As David Wallace points out, Boccaccio's fixation on the Afro/Canarians' physical features through descriptions of their embodied music-making presages the language featured on bills of sale in the slave trade.¹⁰⁴ Even still, for Boccaccio, sonic *afrocanariedad* still maintained dangerous power of the unknown. Describing the approach to Tenerife (according to Cachey), upon hearing the supposed sounds of volcanic eruption, Boccaccio writes "*Quod monstrum cantātīs fierī carminibus arbitrantēs, in eandem insulam descendere ausī nōn sunt.*"¹⁰⁵

Among these early colonialist accounts of the Islands, it is clear that earlier writings influenced the writer/explorer's perception of the Islands and their inhabitants;

¹⁰⁴ Wallace 2007, 209. Cf. Martínez 2001.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Cachey 1995, 108. My translation: "Because the witnesses thought it a monster with chanted prayers [i.e., magic spells], onto that same island they did not dare to go down [from the ship]."

moreover, these earlier writings also became constitutive elements of the new texts themselves. The mythologies of the *Insulae Fortunatae*, the Blessed Isles, form a canonical undercurrent that runs through these writings, the forms of which recast myth as documented account, reinscribing ancient imaginings as contemporary actualities, suppositions as observations, speculations as conclusions. Petrarch, Domenico Silvestri, and Domenico Bandini all wrote early accounts of the Islands in the 14th century.¹⁰⁶ *Le Canarien* (c. 1420) describes the earlier crusades of Jean de Bethencourt and Gadifer de la Salle, both of Normandy, in conquering Lanzarote, one of the easternmost Islands of the archipelago.¹⁰⁷ Throughout the 15th century, Lanzarote and rights of conquest to the other Islands were sold among the English, Portuguese, and eventually Spanish.¹⁰⁸ Colonial conquest fueled trade and travel, the written accounts of which provided not just financial justification for each successive way of invasion, but also the political discourse in which the Afro/Canarian was continually cast as the uneducated, pre-modern native. The Islands themselves were celebrated for their natural beauty, pleasing climate, and abundance of agricultural resources, all of which were systematically subjugated, manipulated, and commodified by colonial powers.

The wonder surrounding the Canaries was metonymically directed at *El Teide*, the volcano at the center of Tenerife, and, until the late 18th century, the highest mountain known to Western European populations. As early as the 16th century, British aristocrats

¹⁰⁶ All of these sources are discussed in Cachey 1995. Cf. also Martínez 1994; and Wallace 2007.

¹⁰⁷ Bontier 2010 [1872].

¹⁰⁸ The Spanish conquest in the 15th century did not signal the end of the fight for control over the Islands. English attempts to retake the Islands in the 18th century were fought off, while pirate attacks on the Islands were common through the colonial period. For a definitive source on the history of pirates in the Canary Islands, cf. Rumeu de Armas 1947-1950.

were traveling to Tenerife to ascend *El Teide*, escaping in search of paradisiacal repose, then exercising the colonial cartographic impulse toward totalizing inscription by seeking out a privileged vantage point from which they could consume the space through circumspection.¹⁰⁹ Though now easily within the touristic/colonial reach, associations of the Canary Islands as a liminal in both time and space persisted due to trenchant myths and the politics of citational writing, in which the earlier exoticist accounts of Ancient and Western European (re)discovery were augmented with contemporary accounts that sought to realize and re/visit, rather than critique and revise, those mythologies.

As the project of Modernity progressed into the 18th and 19th centuries, the history of the Canary Islands as far-off paradise took on new meanings as colonial powers entrenched and tourists arrived *en masse*. The eternal Spring which produced vast crops of sugar and wine, also promised renewal and rebirth to visitors who needed escape from the machinations of Modern life. Medical tourism became a thriving industry for the Islands through which wearied Westerners could escape the unyielding, continuous grind of Time to an idealized, pre-modern paradise—a glimpse of the Elysian afterlife available whenever the everyday pathologies of the Modern subject needed treatment. This trope was reinforced through autochthonous ecology unique to the Canaries: the topographical spaces as well as the flora and fauna within them signaled an other-worldly habitat to

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Bourguet 2003; González Lemus 2004. On page 12 of the latter, Nicolás Estévanez writer of *La Ilustración de Canarias* in 1882, is quoted: "*Muchos extranjeros han subido han la cima del Teide; y cuando en el verano llegan a Tenerife barcos de guerra ingleses, puede asegurarse que sus oficiales organizarán excursiones.*" My translation: "Many foreigners have climbed to the summit of Teide; and when in the summer English warships arrive at Tenerife, one can be assured that their officers will organize excursions [there]."

visitors, well versed in the mythology of the Canary Islands, thanks to their travel guides which invoked these myths as historical background and advertising slogans.

One such publication, written by Englishman A. Samler Brown, was revised through several editions spanning a period of at least thirty years, beginning in the late 19th century. *Madeira, Canary Islands, and Azores: A Practical and Complete Guide for the Use of Tourists and Invalids* features detailed accounts of local weather patterns—including precipitation, wind currents, and topographical maps—with precise instructions on where sufferers of certain ailments might find the best relief:

In the Canaries bronchitis sometimes does well, but laryngitis or a tendency to severe haemorrhage would generally do better in Madeira. Rheumatism, neuralgia, Bright's disease, gout, scrofula, venereal and other diseases find the climate most suitable, and are greatly helped by the constant supply of fresh fruits and vegetables common to all the islands.¹¹⁰

For Brown, the chief appeal of the Canary Islands lay in their potential as a burgeoning medical tourism destination, where the efficacy of recuperation and healing normally experienced in the Alps is situated in a much more hospitable climate. So that visitors are well informed, in all the editions of his book, Brown included historical information about the Islands, wherein many of the earlier expeditions and even ancient myth/history were recounted.

A central figure of this Canarian idyllic mythology is the Guanche, in which the legacies of Afro/Canarian indigenous populations have been popularly metonymized. The Guanche functions as a romanticized historicization of the indigenous people of Tenerife that exnominally stands in for all other indigenous populations and permanently fixes the

¹¹⁰ Brown 1898, 57.

Afro/Canarian subject in the past. Inasmuch as new, critical, archaeological technologies can write back against centuries of myth surrounding indigenous Afro/Canarians, the ubiquity of the Afro/Canarian subject as pre-modern Guanche persists due in large part to its importance in framing the Canary Islands as an ex-temporized retreat.¹¹¹ As with phrenological studies of death masks, throughout Western historiography of the Guanche, much (pseudo-)scientific study has relied on mis/understood or mis/applied quantifiable evidence of indigenous populations to buttress these mythologies—as retro-active justification for the necessity of exerting colonial power and influence over "less civilized" populations and as elaboration on mythico-historical accounts of indigenous populations as idealized, pre-linguistic and pre-Modern subjects.¹¹² This characterization of the Canarian subject had been well established in the Western imagination by the 16th century and continues today, relegating the Afro/Canarian to the peripheries of time and space amid surfacing, colonial Spanish architecture and infrastructure that has written over local history, marking the murderous dawn of the colonial project as the beginning of Canarian life.¹¹³ The Guanche fits perfectly in this construct, in that the history of indigenous populations has been flattened out by centuries of Spanish inscription into an

¹¹¹ Farrujía de la Rosa 2003.

¹¹² Estévez González 2008, 1: "*Las Islas Canarias, sus indígenas, son también, en consecuencia, un resultado de la mirada imperial con la que Europa fue construyendo sus islas utópicas y sus paraísos perdidos al tiempo que clasificaba, jerarquizaba y sometía a los 'otros', genericamente a los de piel oscura y, más específicamente, a los negros.*" My translation: "The Canary Islands, their indigenous population, are also, therefore, a result of the imperial gaze along with which Europe was constructing their utopian islands and paradises lost to time that was classifying, hierarchizing, and subjecting the 'Others,' generically those of dark skin and, more specifically, to the blacks."

¹¹³ Cf. the conclusion of Section Five for an anecdote about the effects of the Spanish colonial project.

ahistorical phenomenon relegated to the mythological realm along with the sea monsters and pre-Colombian conceptions of Elysium, the *finis mundi*.

In the same way that the geographic liminality of the Canary Islands, at first due to the limits of ancient cartographic technology, have been perpetuated through the politics of citation, the ongoing mis/translations of history re/presents hegemonic, colonial discourses that actively produce *aislamiento*, continually relegating the Afro/Canarian subject to the spatio-temporal margins of Western modernity. In this configuration, the Afro/Canarian represents the place and time *from which* the history of the Canary Islands proceeds. This teleological progression—at the center of the colonial mentality—has been supported by evidentiary science and scholarship that has accepted the assumptions of the Afro/Canarian as necessarily *from which*: mis/identifying the Mediterranean monk seal as a canine, mis/placing St. Brendan's Island, and mis/taking the Guanche are all indicative of the economic, epistemological, ideological, and physical acts of violence perpetuated against the Canary Islands and its inhabitants. These elisions continue today where academic theories of postcoloniality, diaspora, and area studies often overlook and marginalize the Canary Islands by positing Columbus's arrival in the Caribbean and Americas as the time-space *from which* the colonial moment begins, one of the "Atlantic Aporias" that Charles Piot suggests remains glanced over in the falsely assumed teleologies of Atlantic cultural flows that these disciplines can espouse.¹¹⁴ Only in

¹¹⁴ Piot 2001, 156: "This omission not only silences a major entity in the black Atlantic world but also leaves unchallenged the notion that Africa is somehow different—that it remains a site of origin and purity, uncontaminated by those histories of the modern that have lent black Atlantic cultures their distinctive character—and thus risks reinscribing a conception of culture that Gilroy, Hall, and many of the new diaspora scholars otherwise spend much of their work critiquing. This ellipsis also suggests, of course, that

destroying the indigenous Canarian environs and inhabitants—repeatedly (mis/un)writing them into the past—could Western European colonial powers reach the eternally vernal Elysium they had always envisioned for and mapped onto the Islands.

III. Embodied Performances of Conquest: The *canario* in European Courts

As repayment for commissioned voyages to the Canary Islands, contracted explorers returned to the governments that funded them with written reports that became formative in Europe's understanding of the Islands and consumable goods representative of the potential wealth to be extracted should subsequent voyages be funded. As noted above regarding Boccaccio's expedition, among the first exports were Afro/Canarians who performed a characteristic dance noted by several explorers and still performed (in some related form) seven centuries later. Interpretations of that performance were adopted by European court culture as the *canario*, an export (re/mis)interpreted, (re/mis)named, and (re/mis)performed. Whereas the governments of these countries violently imported their economic and political power into the Canary Islands, along with the travel literature discussed above, this dance—interpreted through European eyes and enacted by European bodies—provided the framework through which Western Europeans perceived the Canary Islands from the 14th century onward. As with other aspects of colonial culture, the *canario* was imported to the Islands and, in recent decades, has been reappropriated by Canarian musicians who wish to re/assert their subjectivity and

Africa has played little role in the development of black Atlantic cultural production, other than as provider of raw materials—bodies and cultural templates/origins—that were then processed or elaborated upon by the improvisational cultures of the Americas."

indigenous identity by re/writing back against colonial mis/interpretations, layering on new historically- and citationally-informed meanings onto *afrocanariedad*.

As described in period literature, despite its purported origins in the Islands, the *canario* owes much of its particularities to contemporary 16th century European dances, including the *jota* and *gigue*.¹¹⁵ José Carlos Delgado Díaz describes the dance as "*dos filas enfrentadas de danzantes que se acercaban y alejaban entre sí, dando pequeños saltos, lo que dio en llamarse el Canario*."¹¹⁶ The syncopated rhythm, jumping, and costuming that became associated with the dance were products of European exoticism, in which associations of sexual licentiousness and abandonment were mapped onto the Afro/Canarian. Like the accounts of the *Insulae Fortunatae* and *San Borondón*, the cultural assumptions and speculations of the early accounts of this dance—including Fabritio Caroso's *Il Balarino* (1581), Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchesographie* (1588), and Cesare Negri's *Le Gratie d'Amore* (1602)—were codified through centuries of repeated inscription:

*Los movimientos del canario eran audaces, bizarros y exóticos. La combinación del saltillo y el pateo y el alternar del tacón y la suelta en el pateo, eran característicos. [...] En su época esta danza era considerada muy difícil, y solo las personas de mucha práctica y de pies muy ágiles se atrevían a ejecutarla.*¹¹⁷

Because of the approximate dates when these performances were first witnessed in Europe, Maximiano Trapero suggests that those first Afro/Canarians brought to Europe

¹¹⁵ Subirá 1955, 23.

¹¹⁶ Delgado Díaz 2004, 19. My translation: "Two lines of dancers facing one another who approach and move away from each other, making small jumps, which came to be called the *Canario*."

¹¹⁷ Querol Gavaldá 2005, 116-7. My translation: "The movements of the *canario* were audacious, bizarre, and exotic. The combination of the little jump and the kick and the alternating of the heel and the release of the kick, were characteric [steps]. [...] In its era this dance was considered very difficult, and only the well-practiced persons with agile feet dared to execute it."

were from either Lanzarote or La Gomera.¹¹⁸ Both those islands have folkloric dances related to the *canario*, but Trapero notes that there is no form named *canario* practiced on the Islands.¹¹⁹ It is impossible to know whether the *tajaraste* of Lanzarote or the *baile del tambor* of La Gomera are Canarian interpretations of the imported *canario* or re-interpretations of the exported dance. In fact, some even dispute the Canarian origins of the *canario*.¹²⁰ However, Trapero's larger point that the *name* of the dance is most definitely an import from Western Europe demonstrates a larger point. With the *canario*, Western Europe reduced the Islands and their cultures into an easily navigable performance that flattened out all difference, imposing from outside a uniformity that facilitated the colonial performance of a uniquely foreign interpretation of the Islands.¹²¹ This embodied, subsuming act is metonymically represented by the name *canario*, onto which associations imagined within Europe were mapped onto the Islands. Through codified choreography and musical composition, European aristocrats of the Renaissance and early Modern courts could literally perform their complete conquest of the Islands as entertainment—a flippant *divertissement* of the centuries of murderous pillaging enacted against Afro/Canarian populations.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Trapero 1993, 51. Cf. Trapero 2007.

¹¹⁹ Trapero 1993, 77.

¹²⁰ Cf. Alonso, 1985.

¹²¹ The basic choreography can be seen in Trapero 1993, 73.

¹²² For a modern-day reconstructed mapping of the *canario*, cf. von Straßburg 1993-96. An excerpted performance of a *canarie* by Lully can be heard at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaEZ-QWRGNM>. Trapero makes the point that the *canario* was already a popular dance even before conquest had been completed; cf. Trapero 1993, 50. Of the approximately 70,000 inhabitants prior to Spanish colonization, Martín Fadrugas estimates that 55,000 were either murdered or enslaved during the century-long war of conquest; cf. Martín Fadrugas [n.d.], 72.

Throughout the Renaissance and Baroque eras, the *canario* became a staple of court dance not just in Spain, but also in England (the *canary*), France (the *canarie*), and Italy (the *canario*). On to the dance (and the name) were mapped associations of wild savagery and exoticism, typified by the jumps and rhythmic footwork characteristic of the dance. These tropes of exoticism also carried over into costume. In his *Orchesographie*, Arbeau suggests the *canario* is well suited for masquerades in which dancers wear costumes reminiscent of either Mauretanian royalty or savages ("sauvages") with dyed feathers of many colors ("*avec plumaches teintés de diverses couleurs*").¹²³ As stated above, dyes had been an important export and trade commodity from the Islands for more than a millennium, and, given the genealogical and cultural connections between the Islands and North Africa (*cf.* below), Arbeau's suggestion that the dance has precedents in Mauretania, although impossible to corroborate, seems plausible. The *canario* was especially popular in France, where Jean Baptiste Lully, included the dance quite prominently in his works for the court of Louis XIV. Arbeau's costuming suggestion was reportedly adopted by the King, who during one performance, dressed as an indigenous Canarian to perform "with bare legs, a skin mantle, and a royal wand."¹²⁴ The choreographed performance of the exoticized Afro/Canarian became a highly stylized ideological re/writing of "*canario*" that had no reference to the Islands themselves. However, the use of the name *canario* encouraged the mapping of these exoticist associations onto the mis/named Islands and their inhabitants, reinforcing the

¹²³ Arbeau 1888 [1588], 95.

¹²⁴ Carter Cook 1900, 469. *Cf.* Leoncio Rodríguez, cited in Trapero 1993, 72-74.

view of Canarians as pre-modern and circumscribable/consumable only through such teleologically-motivated European "modernization" as the self-professed refining effects of aristocratic choreography.

Trapero's assertion that the European *canario* shares a Canarian precedent with several other Canarian dances—the *tajaraste*, *baile del tambor*, and perhaps the *sirinoque* of La Palma—suggests an important point that critically de-historicizes the Islands. Insofar as the *canario* represents a historical process of local mis/stylization and mis/translation among Western European countries, attention to these additional Canarian dances forces us to acknowledge that dances local to the Islands were *contemporaneously* undergoing a similar process of development there: even though, with conquest, the histories foreground the European *canario*, the Canarian antecedent of the *canario* continued (and continues) to develop in the Islands themselves, a process largely written out of history, save a few researchers' work on folkloric dance undertaken only within the last few decades.¹²⁵ And so, when discussing the *canario* dance, one must be sure to recognize its European genesis and development—a dance that, because of hegemonic naming practices, reflects necessarily back onto the Canary Islands, despite its lack of relevance there. To discuss the *separate* dance practices developed from the Canarian proto-*canario*, we must engage with the Afro/Canarian names (*tajaraste*, etc.). As with many other aspects of historiography, the imposing associations of the *canario* mapped onto the Islands and their cultures from outside reflects and amplifies the Islands' marginality, signaled in this case by their lack of control over their own (admittedly also

¹²⁵ Cf. Delgado Díaz 2004; Eddy 2009; and Trapero 1993 and 2007.

imposed) name and by their powerlessness to prevent conflation of the dance's discursive qualifiers with Afro/Canarian culture.

Though the *canario* as dance was practiced into the 19th century, its circulation continued through derivative forms, including in the Americas, where Delgado Díaz suggests the *zapateado* and *malambo* are forms of the *canario*.¹²⁶ E. Thomas Stanford suggests that the *negrilla*, a Mexican blackface minstrelsy song form that depicts slaves from the African continent, is a direct adaptation from the *canario*.¹²⁷ The *canario* also developed as an instrumental form: Gaspar Sanz composed a version in 1674 that is widely performed, viewed as a canonical piece of both the composer's oeuvre and this genre of instrumental Baroque dances.¹²⁸ Similar developments have occurred with the *folía*, still performed widely in the Canary Islands, and other Spanish and European dances.¹²⁹ I have chosen to focus here on the *canario* primarily because of its name: a wide range of embodied, choreographed, consumptive performances of colonial conquest that speak directly to the violence enacted on the Islands and their inhabitants are metonymized in the name "*canario*," while endless numbers of composers, dancers, scholars and government omissions who propagated these acts have each individually contributed some interpretative reaches toward the *canario*.¹³⁰ And, although

¹²⁶ Delgado Díaz 2004, 19.

¹²⁷ Cf. Stanford 2007.

¹²⁸ A recording of the piece can be heard at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyhF9KEiDsc>.

¹²⁹ Cf. Siemens Hernández 1965. For a general overview of Western European classical appropriations of Canarian music, cf. Pérez Díaz 2003.

¹³⁰ American composer Elliott Carter wrote a piece titled "Canaries," based on the *canario*, for solo timpani, which can be heard at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5higMujfeA4>. Cf.

Afro/Canarian musicians are re/writing and re/moving the *canario* (as I mentioned and will continue to discuss, especially in Section Seven), Western classical music—including the *canario* and European colonialist appropriations of Afro/Canarian culture—continues to receive the most institutional support, the widest distribution, and the most active promotion of all musical performance in the Islands.¹³¹ The Canarian government's modern valorization of Western classical music reifies the Afro/Canarian as peripheral to even non-linguistic expression:

*Si ya en estas fechas (1561) la palabra canario está en las Islas como denominación específica de un tipo de baile, es para sustituir a la denominación de sirinoque que, con toda probabilidad, designaba al mismo baile. Curioso trueque: pues siendo el baile canario de origen, recibe el nombre de canario de los que vienen de afuera (de España y de Europa), mientras que se silencia el nombre que previsiblemente tenía dentro de la isla, el de sirinoque, nombre que, por otra parte, es el que ha pervivido popularmente en aquella isla hasta hoy.*¹³²

IV. *Ida y Vuelta* and the Legacies of Afro/Canarian *esclavitud blanca*

European accounts of Canarian culture and geography, along with the impact of colonialization, influenced not only Canarian conceptions of self, but also European conceptions of the Atlantic world. As navigational technologies continued to develop and trans-Atlantic travel became possible, explorers built on their understanding of the colonial project as deployed in the Eastern Atlantic to newly discovered territories,

Schiff 1995, 134, in which the author references the "wild men" of the Islands as inspiration for the composition.

¹³¹ Pérez Díaz 2003. Tenerifan composer Teobaldo Power wrote *Cantos Canarios*, a symphonic setting of several Afro/Canarian traditional music forms in 1880, one of which has become the official anthem of the archipelago; cf. Sections Five and Seven.

¹³² Trapero 1993, 59. My translation: "If already at this time (1561) the word *canario* is in the Islands as a specific denomination of a type of dance, it is substituting for the denomination of *sirinoque* which, with all likelihood, was designating the same dance. A curious exchange: then being the originary dance *canario*, it receives the name of *canario* from those who came from outside (from Spain and Europe), while the name that it presumably had within the island was silenced [muted], that of *sirinoque*, a name which, on the other hand, is that which has survived popularly on that island up to the present day."

translating the Caribbean through their embodied histories in the Canary Islands. In this particular regard, the most well-documented of these translational conquests is that of Christopher Columbus, who visited the Islands four times before embarking on his trans-Atlantic expedition. Familiar with prior literature on the Islands and having lived there himself, Columbus's journals provide a glimpse into how he generated new texts and new tactics based on these experiences:

As soon as it dawned, many of these people came to the beach – all young as I have said, and all of good stature – very handsome people, with hair not curly but straight and coarse, like horsehair; and all of them very wide in the forehead and head, more so than any other race [*geraçion*] that I have seen so far. And their eyes are very handsome and not small; and none of them are black, but the color of the Canary Islanders [*dla color dlos canaries*]. Nor should anything else be expected since this island is on an east–west line [*so vna linea*] with the island of Hierro in the Canaries.¹³³

Wallace makes an important point about the publication of these writings: because technologies of book-making had progressed along with those of navigation, Columbus's logs and journals of his trans-Atlantic journeys were more rapidly reproduced and more widely distributed than those of Boccaccio and the other explorers who had written about the Canary Islands a century earlier.¹³⁴ As a result, by the end of the 15th century, the Canary Islands became permanently inscribed in the past—once again, the place, time, and cultures *from which* the historical narrative of the colonial project in the Atlantic proceeded—and relegated to the paratextual realm of the prologue, understood only as read backwards through the new conquests of the Caribbean. In the publications of Columbus's travel journals, the pre-modern, pre-technology characterization of the

¹³³ Quoted in Wallace 1996, 224. Cf. Tejera Gaspar 2000.

¹³⁴ Wallace 1996, 225.

Islands and their indigenous inhabitants was permanently inscribed in the Western mind by the re/iterative technologies of book-making. So the question remains, if the Canary Islands were already a historical construct *from which* the narrative of the Atlantic World proceeded forward, what was left written out and unwritten—not only from the pre-Colombian Canary Islands, but also from the Canary Islands after 1492—as the trans-Atlantic colonial project unfolded through time? Liminalized in the margins of Atlantic world, its history *and* historiography, the Islands and their inhabitants offer much that disrupts the narrative flows of all three, critically writing back on that marginalization.

Though maintaining ties to England, Ireland, Portugal, and other Western European countries, cultural connections to Spain and the Spanish-speaking world run much deeper than all others in the Islands. As the “training ground” for the Spanish colonial project, the Canary Islands have been under the aegis of Spain since the late 15th century. Though earlier attempts at colonization subjugated several islands (most notably those of Jean de Bethencourt in Fuerteventura and Lanzarote¹³⁵), the Spanish needed one hundred years to total conquest of the entire Canarian Archipelago, finally subduing the Guanches of Tenerife in 1496.¹³⁶ The widespread slaughter of indigenous populations—genetically and culturally related to the Amazigh of North Africa—left the newly formed colonial governments without a workforce, and so, enslaved populations, also from North Africa, were forcibly relocated to the plantations of the Canary Islands, where locally

¹³⁵ *Cf.* above.

¹³⁶ *Cf.* Glas 1764; Martinez 2002; Porlier 1941 [1755]; and Torres Campos 1901.

self-sustainable agriculture was converted to a single-crop export agriculture, most especially sugar.¹³⁷

One key to understanding Afro/Canarian (also referred to as *ínsuloamazig*, Amazigh-Islander) identity—as marginalized from historical accounts of the trans-Atlantic slave economy and scholarship on it—lies in the problematizing the conflation of Africanness with blackness: as stated, the Canarian-as-African has been identified as North African Amazigh, from whence came the Islands' indigenous inhabitants. Known locally as *esclavitud blanca*, this newly imported slave population—and the resources of the Spanish government—were re-allocated to the Caribbean and Latin America once trans-Atlantic journeys became possible. The Spanish plantation economic model failed in the Islands because of the extremely variable topography of the Canary Islands—and the arid conditions of the more easterly Islands—and so the resources of Islands and their workforces were re-assigned.¹³⁸ The Islands became major naval ports for ships preparing to travel across the Atlantic with West African slaves. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the major port cities of the Islands, especially Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, became international hubs of trans-Atlantic populations, including emergent lower- and middle-class freed Afro/Canarians and black Africans.¹³⁹ But, whereas during earlier centuries of post-conquest life in the Islands when many slaves were imported to bolster decimated indigenous populations, by the late 18th century onward, large numbers of slaves and free,

¹³⁷ Cf. Lobo Cabrera 1993a, 1993b; Luxán Meléndez 2006; and Rivero Suarez 1991.

¹³⁸ The mountainsides of the Islands are lined with the deteriorating remnants of terraced agriculture, the ever-present scars of the failed colonial attempts to conquer Afro/Canarian land.

¹³⁹ Cf. Lobo Cabrera 1983 and 1993c; Lobo Cabrera, López Caneda, and Torres Santana 1993; Marrero Rodríguez 1966; and de Paz 1992.

indigent Afro/Canarians were emigrating, compelled either by force of enslavement or lack of subsistence to the Americas where the Spanish government had been establishing new colonial governments, building (as Columbus had) on prior experience in the Canaries.

To assist in the further conquest and settlement of the Americas, the Spanish government forced some enslaved Afro/Canarian families to migrate to the Americas in order to establish colonies for the Spanish in Cuba, the United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and other countries. Once again, the Afro/Canarian fell victim to the violence of the colonial project: this time by rupturing the cultural and personal ties of these emigrant families to the Islands, and even more so through their relocation to unsettled and inhospitable locales. However, encapsulated in the Canarian idea of *ida y vuelta* (“going and returning”), connections to these cultures of the Americas—through historical imagination, but also through familial ties—now provide the foundation of Canarian diasporic culture and of local Canarian identity as linked to the world beyond the Islands themselves.¹⁴⁰ These ties are maintained and exhibited in every facet of Canarian life (including cuisine, language, visual arts and music), in which people self-identify much more with the Americas and Caribbean than with mainland Spain, the Iberian peninsula or continental Europe.¹⁴¹ The discourses around Canarian *ida y vuelta* perform critically against *aislamiento*: preserving these embodied, historical connections

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Section Seven

¹⁴¹ For language, cf. Lipski 1985 and MacCurdy 1975. For migration and *ida y vuelta* culture, cf. Ascanio Sánchez 2002, Ascanio Sánchez and Cabrera (eds.) 2008, Carnero Lorenzo and Barroso Ribal [n.d.], Díaz Sicilia 1990, Din 1988, Guanche 1992, Margolies 1995, Márquez Moreno 1980, Mérediz 2004, and Rodríguez Campos 1989. For music, cf. Section Eight.

through creative and consumptive acts allows Afro/Canarians to perform alternate identities not affiliated with Europe or Spain. These emergent alliances form the basis of resistant and alternate cultural ties that supply the potential conditions for the Canarian subjecthood so deftly written out of the histories of the Atlantic world.

As the colonies of the Americas and the trans-Atlantic slave trade grew, as the *conquistadores* established settlements in the Americas, the Canary Islands became a purely historical phenomenon: from *from which* to *before which*. Having begun new histories in the Americas, subsequent re/writings of the colonial project passed over the Canary Islands. With few exceptions, mentioning the Islands in research on the Americas became more a well-researched gesture toward historical context than a viable topic for a rigorously researched text *per se*. The development of research on the Americas has reflected the teleological narratives accompanying the development of (ship- and book-making) technology. Like Boccaccio's *De Canaria*, the actual (not imagined, romanticized) Guanche, the proto-*canario* dance, and Isla de La Graciosa, the machinations of Western scholarship have glanced over, written out, and forgotten the Canary Islands, their histories and presents/presence.

V. *Lenguas cortadas* and the Linguistic Eradication of the Afro/Canarian Subject

No narrative better captures the peripheral placement of the Afro/Canarian subject in Western historiography than the myth of the *lenguas cortadas* ("severed tongues"), which reaches toward an origin myth for the Islands' original inhabitants. While ongoing work in archaeology and genetics has provided some information about the indigenous

populations' culture, language, and economic life, speculations and theories about how and when the Islands were first inhabited abound.¹⁴² Qualitative differences among indigenous populations of the Islands — suggesting each island's people lived somewhat isolated lives—have puzzled researchers who have constructed many arguments attempting to explain how sea-faring people (those who arrived at the Islands) or their descendents would have chosen or could have been unable to communicate with other islands.¹⁴³ Much attention has been devoted to how such knowledge could have been lost, and how the apparent lack of inter-island navigation affected each island's historical development.

One such reaching explanation is the myth of the *lenguas cortadas*, which documents the exile of rebellious North Africans from the Roman colony of Mauretania to the Canary Islands.¹⁴⁴ The single Roman legion tasked with enforcing imperial law in North Africa was dispatched to Mauretania when an uprising could not be quelled locally. After restoring the Roman government's control of the country, the leaders of the uprising were exiled to the Canary Islands, but not before their tongues were removed. This myth has been used to explain the theorized "land-locked" isolationism that each Island's population maintained, and also to explain the use of the whistle language in La Gomera, *silbo gomero*:

Otros dicen que descenden (los naturales o guanches) de ciertos pueblos de Africa, que se levantaron contra los Romanos y mataron al pretor o juez que

¹⁴² Cf. Álvarez Delgado 1977; Farrujía de la Rosa 2003 and 2005; and Rodríguez Rodríguez and González Marrero 2006.

¹⁴³ Cf. Farrujía de la Rosa and del Arco Aguilar 2002.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Álvarez Delgado, 1977; and Farrujía de la Rosa and del Arco Aguilar 2002.

*tenían, y que en castigo del hecho, por no matarlos a todos, les cortaron las lenguas, porque en algún tiempo no pudiesen decir del levantamiento...y los embarcaron en unas barcas sin remos, dejándolos y encomendándolos al mar y a su ventura. Y éstos vinieron a estas Islas y las poblaron.*¹⁴⁵

*La Crónica Betancuriana Canarien en sus dos versiones (II, 239 y III, 127-129) escribe en el año 1404, poco antes de abandonar Gadifer las Islas, al tratar de la Gomera lo siguiente: "Esta tierra (Gomera) está habitada de mucha gente, que habla el lenguaje más extraño de todos los países (islas) de por acá, y hablan con los bezos (labios salientes), como si no tuvieran lengua. Y aquí se cuenta que un gran príncipe, por algún crimen, los hizo poner allí y les mandó cortar la lengua, y según su manera de hablar parece creíble.*¹⁴⁶

Although archaeological evidence demonstrates that the Islands were visited by Romans, the timeline of the *lenguas cortadas* myth renders impossible its viability as an originary account for the Islands' populations.¹⁴⁷ As noted above, before the Romans visited and traded with populations on the Islands, others from the Middle East and North Africa had already done so.¹⁴⁸ Some of the evidence for these earlier accounts were not verified until after the *lenguas cortadas* myth began appearing in literature about the Islands; however, I am more interested in how and why this myth was suggested in the first place, and why, after this contrary evidence had been introduced, the myth still persisted.

¹⁴⁵ Fr. Alonso de Espinosa, quoted in Álvarez Delgado 1977, 3. My translation: "Others say that they descended (the natives or Guanches) from certain peoples of Africa, who rose up against the Romans and killed the praetor or judge whom they had, and the punishment for the deed, was not to kill them all, [but] to cut off their tongues, because at that time they could not say speak of the uprising...and they were cast out on boats without oars, leaving them and committing them to the sea and to its fortune. And they came to these islands and populated them."

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 6. My translation: "The Betancurian Chronicle in its two versions Canarien (II, 239, III, 127-129) writes in the year 1404, shortly before Gadifer left the Islands, dealing with La Gomera as follows: "This land (Gomera) is inhabited by many people, who speak the most strange language of all the countries (islas) from here, and talk with protruding lips, as if they had no tongue. And here it is told that a great prince, for some crime, was put there and it was ordered that them cut his tongue, and accordingly this way of speaking seems plausible."

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Farrujia de la Rosa and del Arco Aguilar 2002.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Atoche Peña 1995.

It suggests to me the colonial importance of locating the Afro/Canarian subject outside the history and historiography of Western civilization. By casting those who originally inhabited the Islands as unlawful—i.e., actively resistant against the imposition of Western order—the colonial powers justified their claims to the Islands first by asserting the criminality (a history of civil disobedience, plus a lack of property claim given their foreignness to the Islands) of the indigenous inhabitants, and second, by buttressing the narrative of Western progress that "modernizes" the Islands' inhabitants. Also, the severed tongues play an important role: it locates the indigenous Canarian as literally outside of—unable to enter into—language.¹⁴⁹ Casting the Islands' inhabitants as unable to communicate, to commemorate, and to make history, the colonial re/writing of Canarian history now begins not just with the arrival of the colonial armies, but with the arrival of a discernible, able-to-be-inscribed language through which history can begin. Excised out of language by the swift and violent judgment of Roman law, the indigenous Afro/Canarian is defined by linguistic lack and can enter back into language only through the intervention and inscription of the Western conquerors. "*Canario*" is yet again defined by—and brought from—outside the Islands.

This isolation in space—this alinguistic, ahistorical mode of existence within *aislamiento*—is perpetuated by historiographical and mythological narrative technologies that continually write out the Afro/Canarian. The persistence of these narratives—and the uncertainties that they seek to explain—imposes *aislamiento* onto the Afro/Canarian subject. Even in their failures of representation, these narratives generate the isolating

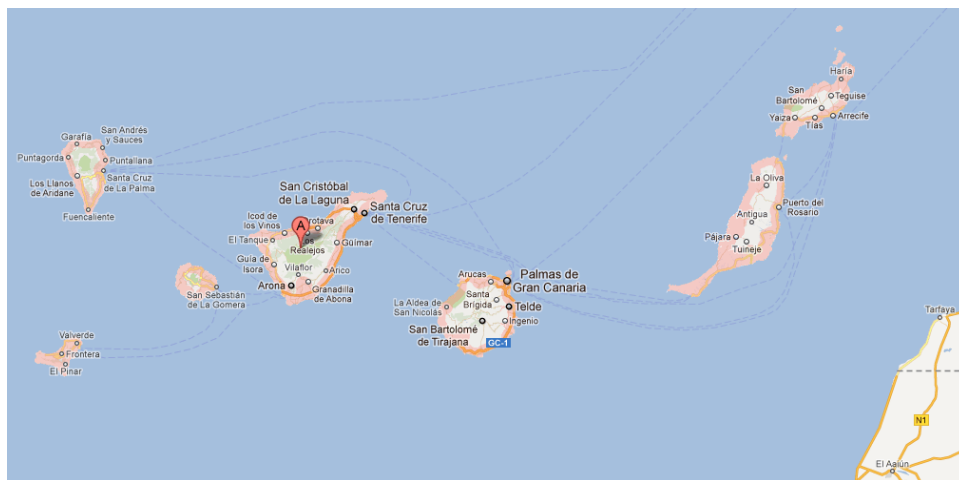
¹⁴⁹ Cf. Section Five.

space in which the Afro/Canarian must actively resist in order to enter into language. How does one start to question when instructed from the youngest age that history in the Canary Islands begins in the 15th century? That it begins with the arrival of the Spanish colonists? Which words—Spanish words, of course—could the Afro/Canarian student speak in the face of such authoritatively framed, circumscribing arguments?

It is for this reason—the lack of linguistic recourse for the Afro/Canarian—I believe many of the alternate, individual, and collective identities being asserted in the Islands rely on the extra-linguistic, critical potential of language found in visual arts and instrumental music. In the same way that I am reaching in this text for a critique of the scholarly conventions that have written out the Islands, Afro/Canarians use language critically in everyday speech and writing. However, non-linguistic forms provide a creative and a constructive lack that facilitates a potent maneuverability and an openness to interpretation that achieves wide dispersal while enacting a potentially more covert and incisive critique. This is the reappropriation of the silent space by the silenced who manipulate and question the conditions and characteristics of speech in order to critique the conditions of silencing. It is the collective, creative, constructive potential of *aislamiento*, that constricting space defined by lack and absence.

Recently, an update to the Google Earth website corrected earlier "glitches" that incorrectly mapped many areas of the world. Among the un/written mappings was an area of the Atlantic Ocean near the Canary Islands and Madeira that eager, imaginative cartographers had been speculating was perhaps the lost city of Atlantis—yet another

origin myth for the Canary Islands.¹⁵⁰ There are still those who would map these unforeseen islands, like St. Brendan's, as there have been those who sought to recreate his journeys inscribed in the Irish *immrama*.¹⁵¹ While this upgrade to Google Earth re/erases Atlantis/*San Borondón* from the global map, it still falls short of its efforts to represent: the Roque Islands—part of the *Chinijo* archipelago of which La Graciosa is one—are glossed over completely. The seven-island archipelago of the Canaries is there, but the thirteen-island archipelago is not.



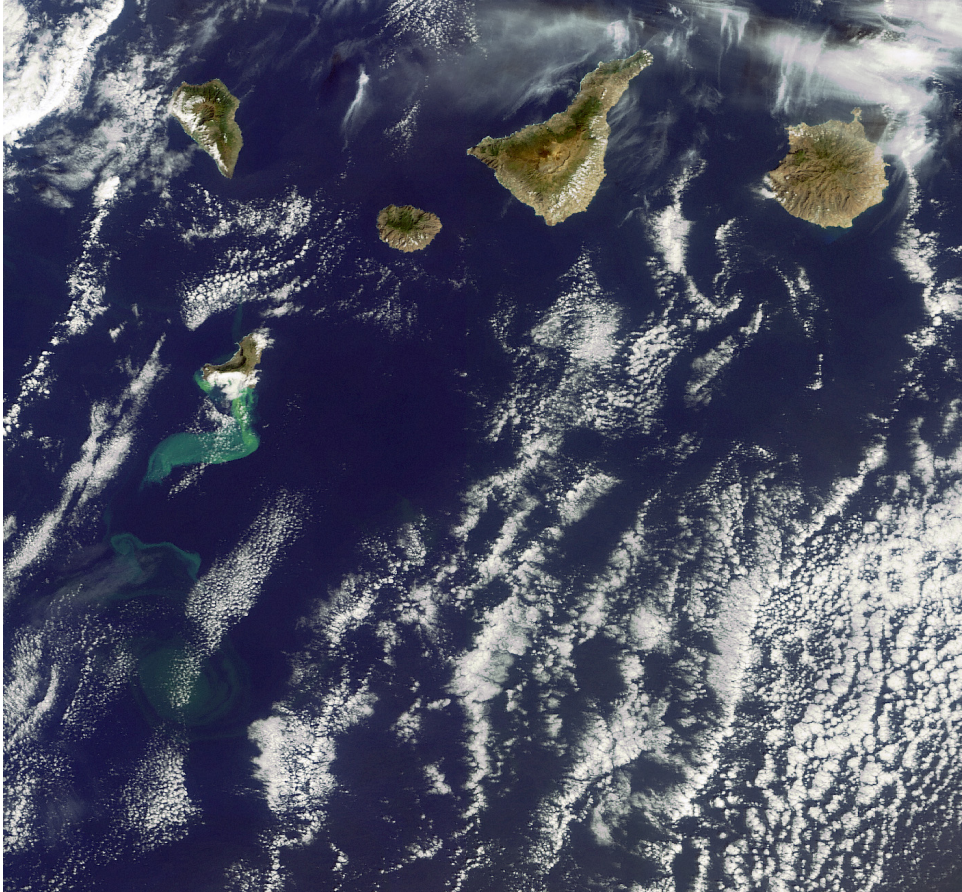
(Photo: Google Maps, 2012)

Meanwhile, an underwater volcano located off the coast of La Restinga, El Hierro, has been erupting since July 2011, and talk of an eighth (twelfth? fourteenth?) Canary Island has surfaced.¹⁵² Emergent geography ruptures and evades the surveying, surfacing cartographic imagination that generates continuous failure in its attempts to represent *las Islas Canarias*.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Derbyshire 2009 and Emerson 2012.

¹⁵¹ Severin 2000 [1978].

¹⁵² "Daily Mail Reporter" 2011.



(Photo: Agencia Espacial Europea, 2011)

Section Five: The *arrorró* and Sounding Canarian Subjects

“Never is the infant so untouched, so remote and so without destiny as when, as the word suggests, he stands without words in the face of language.”¹⁵³

I.

One of the tracks on David Quevedo’s 2011 recording *Coda’s Collection* is “Arrorró, abuela,” an arrangement of the Canarian *canción de cuna*, or lullaby, called *arrorró*. Quevedo, a classically-trained pianist living in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, teaches in a conservatory and has released several albums, including one on the very prestigious, Barcelona-based jazz recording label, Fresh Sound.¹⁵⁴ In one of our first communications—his comments in response to a survey I drafted as the first research for this project in 2009—Quevedo surprised me by stating quite definitively, “*no me considero pianista de jazz*” (“I don’t consider myself a jazz pianist”).¹⁵⁵ Given his selection of repertoire and his improvisational and harmonic embodied competencies, there is sufficient evidence to contradict his self-perception. But, as I understand it, for Quevedo, the genre label “jazz” plays a prescriptive role on performance practices and consumption in local and global societies, carrying with it expectations that run counter to his aesthetic and political goals. He also objects to the economic power behind these expectations—one reason why he wanted (and, in fact, needed) to self-produce *Coda’s Collection*.

¹⁵³ Agamben 1995, 48-49.

¹⁵⁴ For more on Fresh Sound and Canarian drummer Ramón Díaz, *cf.* Section Seven.

¹⁵⁵ Email correspondence with author, April 4, 2009.

Like Section IV's discussion of the *canario*, for Quevedo, expectations of genre (e.g., "jazz") and cultural identification (e.g., "*canario*") pre-empt and mis/direct perception and enact political agendas that preclude personal choice and freedom of expression.¹⁵⁶ Quevedo has repeatedly intimated to me and on his Facebook page his dislike of the labels as strictures unnecessarily binding identity formation and musical expression. His compositions and recordings bear this out, as he foregrounds narratives of self-formation and personal developments over associations along established categories:

*Me considero ciudadano del mundo. El hecho de que naciera aquí es un mero accidente. También es cierto que un músico debe buscar y exaltar de alguna manera sus raíces, pero es que las mías no las encuentro en Canarias... así que considero todo en mi vida como un mestizaje, incluida la música.*¹⁵⁷

*El repertorio [of Coda's Collection]: recopilé ideas antiguas, añadiendo cosas nuevas y dando forma al conjunto. Quise rescatar básicamente tres facetas de mi pasado: la época del conservatorio y la necesidad de romper las reglas con Suite Macabra, mi momento más étnico con "Mestizarama" y la etapa más fusionera y de desafíos rítmicos con "Planeta Océano."*¹⁵⁸

When I met him at his apartment on October 31, 2010, Quevedo was engrossed in listening to two tracks for "Arrorró, abuela" emailed to him by Jorge Pardo, a flautist from Madrid, who frequently collaborates with Canarian musicians.¹⁵⁹ Pardo had

¹⁵⁶ For wider consideration of this point vis-à-vis more Afro/Canarian jazz musicians, cf. another discussion of Quevedo in Section Eight, and that of Ramón Díaz in Section Seven.

¹⁵⁷ Email communication with author, April 4, 2009. My translation: "I consider myself a citizen of the world. The fact that I was born here is a mere accident. Also it is true that a musician should look for and exalt their roots in some manner, but it's just that I do not find mine in the Canaries... so I consider everything in my life as a mixture, including music."

¹⁵⁸ Email communication with author, April 24, 2011. My translation: "The repertoire [of *Coda's Collection*]: I collected old ideas, adding new things and giving form to the whole. Basically I wanted to recover three areas of my past: the time of conservatory and the necessity of breaking the rules with *Suite Macabra*, my more ethnic moment with "Mestizarama" and the more fusion-y time of challenging rhythms with "Planeta Océano."

¹⁵⁹ A live recording of the track can be viewed here: <https://www.facebook.com/>

recorded two different, improvised tracks based on a “dummy” piano track Quevedo had sent him previously—also via email—from which Quevedo would select one for inclusion in the final version of the track. Having eagerly awaited Pardo’s recorded responses, Quevedo was thrilled at the results. Though he had composed the piano part, he intended to revise and re-record it after hearing Pardo’s improvisations with alterations to the piano score that would tailor it more closely to the flute track. As we sat together and weighed the merits of each, Quevedo dropped his intention to revise, adding excitedly that Pardo’s performances were so closely integrated with the piano that he feared any subsequent changes might lessen the quality of the track.

By October 2010 I had been on the Islands long enough to recognize the ubiquity of the *arroró* and its historical importance to Canarian culture. Quevedo’s track bore striking resemblances to a widely known arrangement of the *arroró* by Teobaldo Power, a 19th-century composer from Tenerife. Besides melodic quotations, Quevedo’s piano part references classical piano aesthetics and performance practice, which also suggested some correlation to the *arroró* as classical repertoire, of which Power’s arrangement represents the most canonically sanctioned.¹⁶⁰ When I asked him about this apparent correlation, he refuted the idea almost as quickly as he had disavowed any personal resonance with the moniker “jazz musician.” Quevedo emphasized that the melody was based not on the Power version, but rather on the version he had heard sung to him as a child by his grandmother. The composition and its inclusion in the recording were an

[photo.php?v=2072345090165](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2072345090165). The video's description includes a dedication "*dedicado a mi abuela Consuelo, DEP [Descansa en paz]*" (dedicated to my grandmother Consuelo, Rest in Peace).

¹⁶⁰ For more on Power, especially the canonical weight attributed to his composition *Cantos Canarios*, cf. Sections Four and Seven.

homage to her and "*variaciones sobre esta letanía con la que ella me dormía.*"¹⁶¹ A few days later, Quevedo emailed me the mastered track, just after uploading it to an online music store. When I later asked Quevedo about working in this hyper-mediated fashion, he told me he always prefers to record live, but that the distances to be traveled and the costs to be paid for a "traditional" live jazz recording of "Arrorró, abuela" were simply out of his reach.

II.

"In this configuration, written records, historical narratives in particular, are wrested from the sphere of totality and self-evident truth as they fail and/or violently resist to record histories of marginalized subjects."¹⁶²

Western accounts of the Canary Islands date back to Antiquity, when they marked the edge of the known world. This storied liminality roots Canarian identity squarely within a romanticized view of utopic isolation—an object of the Western gaze fueled by millenia of mythology and exoticism. As discussed in Section Four, Western accounts of the Canary Islands date back to Antiquity, when they marked the edge of the known world. This storied liminality roots Canarian identity squarely within a romanticized view of utopic isolation—an object of the Western gaze fueled by millenia of mythology and exoticism. Having been repeatedly and exnominally sited (and cited) outside of dominant discourses, Afro/Canarian identity is fundamentally informed by a sense of lack—*aislamiento* ("isolation")—that encapsulates the failing reaches of and toward the Afro/Canarian. The historically physical and ongoing ideological violence enacted

¹⁶¹ Email communication with author, April 24, 2011. My translation: "variations on this litany with which she put me to sleep."

¹⁶² Weheliye 2005, 76.

against the Afro/Canarian relegates her/him to a peripheral status from which, amid the gaps and scratches in the historiographical/political mixes, space for a emergent positionality must be forcibly written/sounded in. This can be accomplished through highlighting the glossings-over and mis/mappings of the Islands, but their continued status as colonial entity (re/mis/namings notwithstanding) necessarily locates any such reach firmly within the very systems and structures that have and would repress them. Left isolated—outside even the realms of linguistic signification—in their own spaces, the Afro/Canarian must resort to the assertion of subjectivity through sound, culling together a viable, shifting, performative identity from the wide range of local, diasporic and transcultural signifiers that have and could constitute a Canarian identity constantly in flux.

As both a signifier of local childhood and a songform integral to maintaining Canarian traditional culture, the *arrorró* is suffused in the Canarian consciousness through constant performance and discursive debate among the general public and institutional populations. As Quevedo suggested, the *arrorró* can carry with it strong personal identifications, and, as the *canario* has been multiply interpreted and performed throughout the Western European world and on the Islands, the *arrorró* songform subsumes many local variants with and among all of the Canary Islands.¹⁶³ Within this surplus of lullabies, the melodies are hierarchically related as some are more well-known

¹⁶³ Cf. Cabrera and Santos 2001a, 30-32: "*podemos destacar que existen tantas variantes melódicas del arrorró como madres hay que cantan a sus hijos para dormir, aunque las melodías más comunes...están relacionadas con las más conocidas de las interpretadas en Andalucía.*" My translation: "we can note that as many melodic variants of the *arrorró* exist as mothers who have to sing their children to sleep, although the most common melodies...are related to those most well known interpreted in Andalucía."

and more widely performed and recorded than others.¹⁶⁴ In their arrangements of the *arrorró*, Canarian musicians tactically perform against notions of “authentic” cultures and “traditional” musics, tracing individual paths toward viable subject positioning and re/inscribing the uncircumscribable Canarian subject through sound.

The socio-political importance of the *arrorró* to Canarian culture can perhaps best illustrated by its adoption as official anthem of the Islands. The particular arrangement chosen is based on a setting composed by the aforementioned Teobaldo Power. In its time, Power's composition was highly praised for its setting of traditional musical themes in a late Romantic classical compositional style. Among local populations, Power's arrangement both in his suite and as the official hymn represents an archetype of the European modern community.¹⁶⁵ However, its adoption was not received without criticism.¹⁶⁶ Opposition to the adoption of Power's *arrorró* as anthem includes allegations that the lullaby was chosen for specific metaphoric reasons—to lull the populace into a sense of complacency and detachment from the worsening living conditions on the islands, perpetuated by the peninsular government's indifference to them and the current local government's apathetic acquiescence to peninsular policies of neglect: “[La] *Coalición Canaria enarbola la bandera de los independentistas de los años setenta y*

¹⁶⁴ Cf. descriptions of other Afro/Canarian songforms in Section Seven.

¹⁶⁵ A performance by Los Gofiones of Power's *arrorró*, as re/written with nationalist lyrics by *timplista* Benito Cabrera (cf. Section Nine), can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uY-LOGSoUYQ>.

¹⁶⁶ As J. Martin Daughtry shows, the anthem can be a site of great contention, the discourses around which reveal the fractured and contentious nature of collective identity—in stark contrast to the presumed unity the adoption of an “official hymn” can imply. Cf. Daughtry 2003.

potencia el arrorró como himno y alimenta los Cantos Canarios como inyecciones para mantener un pueblo sumiso y adormitado."¹⁶⁷

In contradistinction to the stately Europeanized version of the *arorró*, Canarians also revere the recordings of Valentina la de Sabinosa, a folkloric vocalist from El Hierro, an island particularly renowned for the relative constancy and self-contained nature of its folk traditions.¹⁶⁸ Born Valentina Hernández in 1889, the vocalist is celebrated for her popularization of folklore of El Hierro in the Canary Islands and beyond, especially later in her life:

*Es posible decir que gracias a esta mujer, de ochenta y cinco años, el folclore herreño conserva toda su pureza y todos sus misterios. Doña Valentina continua en la brecha con su tambor, su voz cascada y sus discípulos de Sabinosa, para mantener pujante y vivo uno de los folclores más singulares del Archipiélago. De ahí la admiración que todos los canarios profesamos a esta mujer, todo un ejemplo de vocación y de amor por la tradición de su pueblo, la isla de El Hierro.*¹⁶⁹

These recordings represent an archetype of local, indigenous culture—of sonic *afrocanariedad*—the likes of which have been continually appropriated by Spanish colonists since the Islands' conquest. Those who regard Valentina in this way usually speak to her unique manner of approaching and leaving key melodic pitches, her

¹⁶⁷ Cándido Quintana, [n.d.] "Tribuna abierta," <http://www.telefonica.net/web2/bentayga56/126.htm>. My translation: "The Canarian Coalition [the governing, majority political party] flies the flag of the Independents of the 1970s and promote the *arorró* as a hymn and serve up [i.e., feed] the *Cantos Canarios* [of Teobaldo Power] like injections to maintain a submissive, sleeping people."

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Section Seven.

¹⁶⁹ Elfidio Alonso, quoted in liner notes to *La gran antología de la música popular canaria*, 8. My translation: "It is possible to say that thanks to this woman, 85 years old, the Herrenian folklore [of El Hierro] has kept all of its purity and all its mysteries. Doña Valentina continues in the gap with her drum, hoarse voice and her students of Sabinosa, to maintain as bright and alive one of the most singular folklores of the Archipelago. Hence the admiration that all of we Canarians profess to this woman, an outstanding example of vocation and love of tradition for her people, the island of El Hierro." Alonso published this quote in 1974, two years before Valentina's death.

expertise in the oral traditions of the island, and her vocal timbre as characteristics of her exemplary ability and individualistic sonic signature, as Alonso did.¹⁷⁰ Whereas Power's ubiquitous arrangement plays on tropes of civilized constancy and commemorates an already achieved ascension to Western modernity, the aesthetics of the Valentina recordings are understood as representative of the wide range of local variants of the *arrorró*, which, while traditional, continue to change and adapt, emblematic of the contingent and brittle nature of the Afro/Canarian subject.¹⁷¹

I do not intend to foreground the *arrorros* of Power and Valentina de la Sabinosa as sonic archetypes of Canarian identity in order to set up a binary opposition or a canonical formation that flattens out the aforementioned variations. Rather, I intend to show how, given that Afro/Canarian identity lies outside the realm of linguistic signifiers, musicians' recourse to sound—particularly in their manipulations of these and other sonic archetypes—suggests possible alternate pathways toward viable subject formation. That is, by elaborating and re/sounding these archetypes Afro/Canarian musicians reach toward articulation through arrangements of pre-existing soundings already within the discursive boundaries of *canariedad*—critically re/mapping surplus meanings onto the *arrorró* to re/present Afro/Canarian identity in contradistinction to the codified and isolating reductions of the songform.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Valentina's performance of an *arrorró* from El Hierro viewed at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AS61fMLZFNQ>.

¹⁷¹ Common practice among artists is to distinguish among these variants by assigning signifiers of place, such as the name of the town, community, or island from which the *arrorró* came.

¹⁷² For discussions of musicians' critical re/mappings of cartographers' reach for St. Brendan's Island and of aristocratic choreographers' reach for the *canario*, cf. Section Seven.

III.

*La canción de cuna nace cuando una madre, frecuentemente
sin habilidades lingüísticas especiales, improvisa una pequeña historia
adaptándola al compás del movimiento de sus brazos...*¹⁷³

Framing subject formation through a sonic lens suggests what psychoanalysts have termed the acoustic mirror—the figuration that posits music performance as a reach back toward a pre-linguistic state in which an infant first learns of its subjectivity through sonic difference between its and its mother’s voices.¹⁷⁴ The acoustic mirror is often conflated with the psychoanalytical tropes of the “sonorous envelope” and “oceanic fantasy,” both of which resonate with collective music listening practices.¹⁷⁵

However, the discursive assumption that subject formation only occurs in infancy—and that sonic reachings for subjectivity necessarily hark back to this state—flattens out important socio-cultural differences particularly for those populations to whom structures of power—of which language is one—are not available.¹⁷⁶ Both Schwartz's work and Silverman’s critique of it problematize the efficaciousness of this fantasy “prior to the inception of subjectivity,” but both assume that such a fantasy is possible across *all* subjectivities.¹⁷⁷ In his discussion of Ralph Ellison’s *The Invisible Man*, Alexander Weheliye recasts the notion of the acoustic mirror for minority populations, adding that, while African American subject formation has been intimately

¹⁷³ García Romero 2007, 7. My translation: “The lullaby [cradle song] is born when a mother, often without special linguistic skills, improvises a short story [a small history], adapting it to the beat of the movement of her arms.”

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Silverman 1988, 72.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*; also, for an incisive summary and application of this paradigm, cf. Weheliye 2005, 57-59.

¹⁷⁶ Seshadri 2009, 69; cf. also, Agamben 1993.

¹⁷⁷ Silverman 1988, 73; cf., Schwartz 1997, 8.

associated with the sonic, the acoustic mirror paradigm does not adequately attend to the technologies of sound (re)production and the “mechanical and electric iterability” through which subjects overlooked by dominant histories can be realized and asserted.¹⁷⁸ Sensitivity to technologies also problematizes Kaja Silverman’s notions about the temporality of the subject’s “listening back,” in that Weheliye demonstrates how the iterability which these technologies facilitate breaks open the small temporal window in which Silverman says the subject hears its voice, creating a space in which identity and subject formation can unfold—repeatedly and constantly—through performance.¹⁷⁹

In his discussion of the potential for technologically facilitated subject formation, Weheliye rightly emphasizes the importance of networks of distribution. “One might suggest,” he states, “that recorded blues gains its power as a major location for black history precisely because it is widely disseminated.”¹⁸⁰ However, unlike these constructions of African American identity, Afro/Canarian culture does not enjoy the same mobility. The ocean in which the Canary Islands is situated constitutes a major, isolating component of cultural existence: the Canarian experience of the Atlantic Ocean is far from “fantasy-like,” in which boundaries “separating the body from the external world [seem] dissolved.”¹⁸¹ Instead, the Atlantic introjects boundaries, a continual process metonymized in the concept of *aislamiento*, an acute awareness of being separated geographically, ideologically, and culturally. However, Canarian musicians’

¹⁷⁸ Weheliye 2005, 81.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Silverman 1988, 79; Weheliye 2005, 61.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 227.

¹⁸¹ Schwartz 1997, 7.

incorporation of the various diasporic and extra-island influences in Canarian cultures functions as re-articulating of *aislamiento*-as-impedance as reaching for viable, transcultural positionalities.

As I will discuss at length in Section Seven, the Canarian group Jazz Borondón represents one of the first and most influential ensembles in Afro/Canarian jazz history. Formed in the early 1980s, the group features saxophonist Kike Perdomo (also of Mojo Ribs), bassist José Carlos Machado, guitarist Ruskin Herman, drummer Alfredo Llanos, percussionist Jose Pedro Pérez, and others. The group's two recordings—*Borondón* and *Botaraste*—represent an early and well-documented fusion of Afro/Canarian traditional music and jazz aesthetics. The group modeled their compositional and performance practice after jazz fusion groups like Weather Report, Return to Forever, and the Mahavishnu Orchestra.

On their album *Borondón*, the group's arrangement of an *arrorró* exemplifies the Afro/Canarian critical re/appropriation of cultural identity through performed arrangement of pre-existing phenomena. In addition to their U.S.- and U.K.-influenced jazz fusion aesthetic, the group's concept consciously incorporates traditional Afro/Canarian melodies, rhythms, and instruments. The track "Arrorró" exemplifies this fusion especially well: along with these elements, the ensemble begins the track with a sampled folkloric recording. The sampled *arrorró* is not that of composer Teobaldo Power, but one of several recorded by Valentina la de Sabinosa. As the track begins the sampled recording sounds alone, by itself through a highly produced, heavily layered reverb that simultaneously casts Valentina's voice at a great distance and creates the sense

of a large auditory space for the ensemble to occupy. However, the sample ends abruptly, at which the ensemble enters—but with Power's melody. Thus, within the first thirty seconds, Jazz Borondón has orchestrated a polyvalent range of coexistent sonic signifiers and performance aesthetics in their rendition of the *arrorró*.

While Valentina sampled sounds soloistically, the group adopts a critical stance toward Power's *arrorró*, treating it as a text to be continually and thoroughly re/sounded and un/sounded through reharmonization, modal manipulation, and fragmentation. Power's *arrorró* is deconstructed and elaborated, re/sounded through multiple instruments in the ensemble, reduced to a motivic fragment, halved, and joined to various counter-statements that Jazz Borondón composed as a surplus of possible responses to Power's initial call. One of these is a keyboard improvisation that begins where the listener expects another rephrasing of Power's melody but instead re/listens to the ensemble's arrangement of the *arrorró*. This time, though it follows the formal structure of the arrangement including changes in rhythmic and groove aesthetics, the keyboardist Luis Fernández's improvisation exercises a critical reading of Power and audience expectations for it. The solo concludes with the second half of Power's initial melodic phrase, re/joined to the excised and truncated call, creating a large space of one complete minute in between the two halves which Jazz Borondón has critically re/written through constructed improvising and improvisatory constructing. The piece ends with a final statement of Power's reach for the *arrorró*, once again fragmented and re/written by Jazz Borondón through a percussion break and long fade.

Recalling the last Section, Canarian maintenance of their historical and ongoing ties to the Americas is realizing through the concept of *ida y vuelta*. Afro/Canarians' insistence on these cultural and familial histories critically writes against myopic, historiographical elisions and creates space for emergent re/imaginings of identity in contradistinction to the condition *aislamiento* propagated locally and globally. As I mentioned, part of this isolation comes from the Islands' ties to North Africa and the legacy of *esclavitud blanca*, both of which run counter to dominant depictions of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the cultural appropriations and interactions between the Americas and the African continent. These cultural histories, coupled with those of the indigenous Afro/Canarians (e.g., the Guanche) are re/worked as resistance against the marginalization within economic, historical, political, and socio-cultural realms. Canarian musicians and artists actively explore the ongoing presence of the Amazigh, African, and Afro-diasporic connections in Canarian culture. One such proponent of this critical re-engagement has been a fixture in Canarian popular music for more than twenty years and one of the longest active ensembles in the Islands: multi-instrumentalist and ethnomusicologist Roberto Cabrera, leader of the Gato Gótico.¹⁸² This group employs traditional and folkloric song forms, rhythms and performance practices regarded as African, as well as the Tamazight language as their particular, iterative reachings toward re-appropriating indigenous cultures and exploring the African elements of contemporary Canarian culture. Aside from their recordings, the group also employs connections to North African cultures through live performances and collaborations with musicians from

¹⁸² Cf. Sections Seven and Eight.

the African continent. Their musical tours to North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Cuba buttress their continued work in tracing the vast extra-island influences on and diasporic travels of the Canarian people.

From their 1991 recording *Música para namu*, the track "Tajaraste y arrorró / Taxarazt d arew-arew" fuses two traditional forms: the *arrorró* and the *tajaraste*. The *tajaraste* can be identified by the rhythmic pattern played by the *cháracas* at the beginning of the piece.¹⁸³ Power's *arrorró* melody is referenced briefly as a melodic fragment once again sounded with its composed counter-statement at the beginning of track by Cabrera on the trombone, and then given a fuller treatment, including an elaboration and improvisation by the trumpet player Mariano Luis. The track also includes a more overt performance of a *tajaraste*, including a melody performed by the *pito herreño*, an end-blown flute from El Hierro. Despite Gato Gótico's omnipresence over the last twenty years, Cabrera remains, mostly by choice, separated from the rest of the jazz musicians in Tenerife, preferring to explore this music as part of his family dynamic—his wife, Olga Rivera, is the saxophonist, and the group's trumpeter, Mariano, is her father. Nonetheless, the group is highly regarded as a fixture of Canarian jazz and, in its isolation, seen as an important self-contained aesthetic in which past and present Canarian cultural connections with African communities are maintained.

Founded in 2005, the Bimbache openArt Festival (formerly, the Bimbache Jazz y Raíces Festival) on the island of El Hierro celebrates the historical connections of the Canary Islands to other cultures through trade, commerce, and migration through

¹⁸³ Cf. Section Seven.

imagining new connections driven by environmental auto-sustainability, ecotourism, improvisation and fusion of musical traditions, and the concept of *convivencia* as an inhabitable space of global communion.¹⁸⁴ Organized by German immigrants Sabine Willman and Torsten de Winkel, the festival features a week of performances of various media, health workshops, and collaborative living. In an effort to memorialize the occasion, advertise the festival, and produce capital for future instantiations, several of the 2008 performances were recorded and issued on a compact disc entitled *La condición humana*. The *arrorró* included on the album is in two parts: a “traditional,” solo a capella performance by octogenarian vocalist María Mérida, followed immediately by an *arrorró* with same melody performed by a group, featuring an improvisation by de Winkel on guitar.¹⁸⁵ Once again, as in the Jazz Borondón example, the sonic archetype is presented first and unaccompanied, only after which the elaborations proceed. Even still, the traditional melody and lyrics dominate the ensemble re/working of this *arrorró herreño*: vocalist Angélica Pérez continues for more than half the entire track (3:51 of a total 6:18). Guitarist de Winkel provides elaborating embellishments underneath this foregrounded melody before layering an improvised melody on top of the already articulated harmonic form. Pérez re-enters to conclude the performance, at which point the listener is introduced to the once-live audience, sounded on the recorded track through their applause.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Section Seven.

¹⁸⁵ An excerpt of this performance can be heard at the following link:
<http://www.myspace.com/bimbache/music/songs>.

The Bimbache *arrorró* introduces a traditional setting as a theme from which elaborating, improvised variations can proceed. This treatment, like the festival itself, embodies the notion of tradition as a continual, adaptive change informed by historical imagination.¹⁸⁶ On the home page of the organization's website, Willman and de Winkel echo my earlier discussion of the im/possibility of the Afro/Canarian subject with a wider scope reaching toward a global living-together (*convivencia*):

How to achieve the impossible, / change the conditions which cause the impossibility. / How to achieve the possible, / attempt the impossible.

...The substance of the proven meets, mingles and toys with the urgency of the new, the yet illegitimate.¹⁸⁷

Through a historically-informed remembrance of the once self-sustained Canary Islands, the Bimbache Festival re/works and re/presents Afro/Canarian identity as im/possibility in play, on which new emergent sonic identities can be mapped and elaborated. Through presentation of historical precedents, these Afro/Canarian musicians move forward, transforming conceptions of cultural identity and creating new spaces of potentiality among the cracks and fissures of layered, polyvalent surpluses. Recognition of such a quotation when it surfaces is one trigger Schwartz posits as a potential horizon shift into the “oceanic fantasy.”¹⁸⁸ As already discussed, this fantasy is inaccessible to the Afro/Canarian subject—for the imposed isolation that lack of linguistic recourse and the Atlantic Ocean itself present to the Islands’ inhabitants. Nonetheless, as subject formation can potentially unfold through sonic performance, attention to the ways in which these

¹⁸⁶ For a similar re/composition of the *tango herreño* on the Bimbache recording, cf. Section Seven.

¹⁸⁷ Bimbache openArt, 2005-2012, "A Global Initiative for Human Sustainability," <http://bimbache.info>.

¹⁸⁸ Schwartz 1997, 8.

quotations emerge can allow us to trace back the paths of identity construction from which subjectivity can break forth, and highlight how these sounds rupture existing ideological and discursive structures. In other words, “the ‘mix’...highlights the amalgamation of its components, or rather the process of this (re)combination...provid[ing] us with a model of modern black temporality and cultural practice rooted in and routed through the sonic.”¹⁸⁹

IV.

“No matter how it is conceptualized, the image of the infant contained within the sonorous envelope of the mother’s voice is a fantasy of origins—a fantasy about precultural sexuality, about the entry into language, and about the inauguration of subjectivity.”¹⁹⁰

On an evening in early April 2011, I sat at the dinner table in the home of Rogelio Botanz.¹⁹¹ From the Basque Country in Spain, Botanz moved to Tenerife in the 1970s and has built a career as a most important Canarian popular musician due in large part to his exhaustive study and incorporation of Afro/Canarian music in his compositions and performances. Just a few days before this dinner, Botanz had staged a very successful concert in Teatro Leal, the most highly regarded performance venue in La Laguna, where we both lived.¹⁹² Guest artists from peninsular Spain, North Africa, and the other Canary Islands had flown in for a week of rehearsals, recordings, and the culminating concert. Also sitting at the table for this meal were: Kino, my aforementioned roommate, a

¹⁸⁹ Weheliye 2005, 73. The author later posits this type of cultural practice within a wider range of minority and marginalized cultures. See *ibid.*, 80.

¹⁹⁰ Silverman 1988, 74.

¹⁹¹ For more on Botanz, *cf.* Section Seven.

¹⁹² I mention this same concert again in the conclusion of Section Seven.

musician and engineering graduate student from Rif in Northern Morocco; Esther, Rogelio’s wife, a musician and an English teacher from Tenerife; and Mikel, a guest artist and musician also from the Basque Country. Our conversation turned to the peninsular Spanish government’s treatment of these three marginalized communities—the Canary Islands, the Basque Country and Rif (a former Spanish colony)—and impassioned stories of resistance against centuries of systematic oppression and neglect. Esther, who had been listening intently, put the whole conversation in perspective when she added, “*Pero ustedes tienen sus propias lenguas* [But you have your languages].” It was a stark reminder that the Afro/Canarian identity is literally isolated outside the boundaries of language and linguistic systems. Whereas the cultures with which Rogelio, Mikel, and Kino identify can maintain cultural cohesion in part through communication in their respective languages, there is no such recourse for the Afro/Canarian subject, who embodies Agamben’s state of *infancy* (from the Latin “*infāns*,” meaning “non-speaking”).¹⁹³ Isolated from entering into language, these musicians reach for subjectivity through sound—improvising performances of individualized, embodied subjecthood—by critically re/working and re/presenting the binding strictures and structures of *aislamiento* so that the im/possibility of the Afro/Canarian subject emerges from the reiterative, deconstructive play of and in the mix.

* * *

¹⁹³ Agamben 1995, 48.

Concerning what little scholarship exists on the *arrorró*, the majority focuses on lyrical analysis of the Spanish texts.¹⁹⁴ However, despite this preference for the linguistic, fairly little attention is given to the etymology of the word itself. Standard among explications is a reference to the lulling effect of a repeated syllable; sometimes the Spanish verb *arrullar*—meaning "to lull to sleep"—is espoused as a possible precedent, although it is impossible to prove which term came first. The term *arrorró* and variants are also found in Andalucía, where one author attributes its origins to animal sound: “...voz que imita el arrullo de la paloma y que sirve para dormir a los niños pequeños.”¹⁹⁵ While still others posit that the term has no linguistic meaning.¹⁹⁶ However, as with many aspects of Canarian culture, possible connections to African influence are seldom discussed and even less frequently published. To help me in this line of inquiry, at Kino's suggestion, I contacted Professor Ignacio Reyes, a philologist and expert in hybrid Amazigh and Canarian Spanish vocabularies. His work is part of a small but growing movement in Canarian scholarship that is re/examining all aspects of the archipelago's culture with particular attention to influences of indigenous populations and ongoing cultural ties with the African continent. His response to my inquiry was all the more revelatory for its concise and matter-of-fact phrasing:

¹⁹⁴ The research on the *arrorró* by historian José Pérez Vidal describes the localized forms of the genre through comparative textual analysis, while the only musicological or ethnomusicological work remains unknown—the lone exception being an unpublished doctoral dissertation by musicologist Professor Carmen Nieves. Intra- and inter-island performance practices and the variations of the song form are much more articulated than scholarship on the *arrorró* would suggest. Professor Nieves told me that, in her research, she has uncovered no less than 300 distinct versions of the *arrorró* in the island of Tenerife alone. Email communication with author, November 4, 2010. Cf. Pérez Vidal 1986.

¹⁹⁵ Alcalá Venceslada quoted in Díaz Martín 1997, 24. My translation: “A voice that imitates the cooing of a dove and that helps little children to sleep.”

¹⁹⁶ For example, cf. Tejero Robledo 2002, 230, and Cerillo Torremocha 2005, 53.

*La realidad es que no tiene mucho misterio, pues se refiere al 'niño' (bebé o de corta edad), literalmente: "mi niño-niño."*¹⁹⁷

Below his reply he posted the entry he wrote for *arorró* in his *ínsulo-amazig* dictionary:

[R-W] *arrawraw, m. sing. lit. 'niño o niña recién nacidos'¹⁹⁸

"R-W" refers to a region in Rif in which the term occurs, presently and historically, and its literal translation in that dialect, "a recently-born child." I am not suggesting that the Amazigh term "*arrawraw*" necessarily preceded *arorró*, nor am I suggesting that Reyes's claim should be adopted without question.¹⁹⁹ However, I am suggesting that Afro/Canarian culture has historically been a culture of fusion, the influences of which can be ascertained in all aspects of society, including music and etymology. As a way of life, Canarian musicians have forged their identities through individualized and improvised constructions, drawing from this history of interaction, re/working and re/presenting pre-existing phenomena in layers of surplus meaning and interpretation.

This etymological excursus reflects an ongoing de-Africanization carried out in the Canary Islands since their conquest in the 15th century. The act of overlooking the African linguistic roots of *arorró* in favor of a host of hypothetical scenarios that relate first instead to pre-linguistic or non-human sound demonstrates very clearly how, as Weheliye says, minority subjects can be "actively and oftentimes ferociously 'recorded

¹⁹⁷ Email correspondence with the author, November 3, 2010. My translation: "The reality is there's not much mystery; it refers to a "child" (a baby or of a young age), literally, "my child-child."

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.* For the dictionary page, *cf.* <http://www.ygnazr.com/awal.htm>. *Cf.* also Reyes García 2005-2007.

¹⁹⁹ In fact, Roberto Cabrera's transliterates *arorró* as "*arew-arew*," which he understands to mean mean "milk," suggesting the term was used to suggest a gift to the sleepless baby, a lyrical trope common among *canciones de cuna*.

out' of [history]."²⁰⁰ In reading through this scholarship—as in listening to the music discussed here—we can discover the ways in which the Afro/Canarian subject inhabits the interstices between linguistic, musical, and political systems. Outside of language, history, and the “oceanic fantasy,” the Western imagination surrounding the Canary Islands has relegated the Afro/Canarian to the extreme periphery from whence the only recourse back toward subjectivity is sonic performance across and between these boundaries.

* * *

Despite his disavowal of direct influence, David Quevedo does include a small reference to Teobaldo Power's *arrorró*. Quevedo co-opts a transitional theme Power composed for his setting (which also functions as the introductory material for the entire suite) and uses it as new melodic material introduced in the coda of his recording. The quotation occurs after several seconds of silence and is stated quite clearly, rupturing the listener's space as an unexpected “fade in” for the mix, after which Pardo re-enters with another improvised line.²⁰¹ By repositioning the quote and stating it so clearly, Quevedo acknowledges the presence of the listener and grounds the Canarian listener through reference to a widely known version of the *arrorró*. This acknowledgement lays bare the structure of the composition by so overtly placing Power's hierarchically preferred melody in deconstructive play. At the same time, buttressed by an open silence on one end and an improvisation on the other, Power's theme (and by extension the modern

²⁰⁰ Weheliye 2005, 80.

²⁰¹ See Schwartz 1997, 31. *Cf.* Section Three, especially note 43, citing Agamben 1995, 44, in which he posits caesura and its attendant silence as “necessary so as to block the enchanting succession of representations at its height in such a way as to make manifest no longer the alternation of representation, but representation itself.”

Western idea of the Canary Islands) is isolated in a circumscribed way and moved to the periphery. Through Quevedo's improvised construction, his embodied compositional processes and the technologies he used to produce and circulate his music, a Canarian subject sounds.

Section Six: Emergence and Ethnographic Pianism in Laguneran Spaces

En referencia a las preguntas que me haces debes tener en cuenta que yo no me considero un músico de jazz. Así que he contestado algunas de tus preguntas desde una perspectiva musical más cercana al flujo global del tiempo presente, híbrido, fluctuante e impreciso en cuanto al no contener fronteras evidentes que lo delimiten. Quizá mi pensamiento musical se identifique más con la idea de la música como un lugar privilegiado para promover una articulación simbólica de realidades socioculturales también un lugar donde provocar contactos múltiples entre gentes y situaciones diversas. Me interesa mucho la idea de negociación entre identidades colectivas y me entusiasma el poder vivir esa realidad transcultural de traspaso de información como algo dinámico desde mi propia óptica como isleño, como canario nacido en una isla muy cerca de África y muy conectado históricamente con America de Sur y el Caribe, y a su vez como un europeo de la perifería, del límite, donde llegan turistas de toda Europa...pero donde las relaciones sociales son diferentes.²⁰²

I. On Failure and/in Translation

Dr. José Ángel López Viera, a musician and ethnomusicologist, and I have been corresponding since 2008. I contacted him through his research website, tamboralidad.es, which includes some of his music but features his ethnographic fieldwork on the island of La Gomera. José Ángel's emails have always been thick in description and generous in content, challenging my language comprehension skills at first, as I struggled to engage with the theories and concepts of our shared background in ethnomusicology in another language. Already having established a relationship via online communication, he was

²⁰² José Ángel López Viera, email communication with author, April 13, 2009. My translation: "In reference to the questions that you gave me, you should keep in mind that I do not consider myself a jazz musician. And so I have responded to some of your questions from a musical perspective closer to the overall flow of the present, hybrid, fluctuating, and imprecise time in terms of not containing obvious borders that delineate them. Perhaps my musical thinking identifies more with the idea of music as a privileged place for promoting a symbolic articulation of socio-cultural realities and also a place to encourage multiple contacts between diverse peoples and situations. I am very interested in the idea of negotiation between collective identities and I am excited to be able to live that transcultural reality of information transfer as something dynamic from my own viewpoint as an *isleño* [(Canary) Islander], as a Canarian born on an island very close to Africa and historically very connected with South America and the Caribbean, and in turn as a European of the periphery, of the boundary, where tourists arrive from all of Europe...but where the social relationships are different."

one of the first people I met in the Islands, where our conversations continued and developed through long afternoon chats and late night post-performance revelry. We had met several times before he visited my apartment, which he was eager to do, mostly because of his desire to meet and talk with my roommate Kino Ait Idrissen, because of his knowledge of Amazigh music. We spent several hours together, discussing music over Tenerifan wine and cheese. I struggled to keep up as José Ángel and Kino talked excitedly about their respective musical experiences, often missing the opportunity to contribute because my linguistic skills lagged behind the speed of the conversation. Inasmuch as understanding José's emails were a challenge in 2008, in 2010 my language skills had progressed significantly but still I had trouble coping with the velocity of conversation and dialogic interplay between my two friends. Our conversation turned to the *rancho de ánimas*, a Canarian folkloric songform used in funerary rites. The *rancho de ánimas* is an elusive topic of discussion, not much practiced but highly revered among cognoscenti for its uniquely Canarian performance practice.²⁰³ We listened to a youtube video of a 1970s recording and Kino surprised José Ángel and me by playing a remarkably similar performance by Mauritanian singers.²⁰⁴ In the process of trying to understand the vocal polyphony of the Canarian clip, I ventured a rhythmic transcription, notating a composite line of triplet-eighth notes in a duple meter, which José Ángel—admittedly more knowledgeable and studied about this songform—quickly countered by

²⁰³ For the most comprehensive published research on the *rancho de ánimas*, cf. Sánchez Rodríguez et al. 2008. Also cf. Nuez García 2010, for the book's website and the researched community.

²⁰⁴ The *rancho* performance can be seen at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8pYg0kh4Ms>. One clip from Mauretania in which Kino sees/hears similarities with the *rancho* can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A08rnilmvJM>.

notating both vocal parts separate from one another, more clearly demonstrating the duple/triple metric dichotomy.

Por ejemplo hace veinte años, cuando realizaba una investigación etnomusicológica en la Isla de La Gomera encontré ritmos muy interesantes pertenecientes a un substrato de los géneros musicales más antiguos de Canarias—estos patrones llegaron a América tras la colonización española—punto guajiro, etc. (como pervivencia Leonard Bernstein lo usa en el tema "América" de West Side Story) procedentes del mundo árabe-andaluz—y que encadena 3/4:6/8 a voz y tambor, este fenómeno rítmico de origen hispano le interesó al Pr. Peter Manuel y lo menciona en un artículo suyo publicado en Texas—(2004, Peter Lamarche Manuel – The Guajira between Cuba and Spain) así creé una composición para mi grupo Alfarabi de título "Saltitante" (guitarra, percusión y piano).²⁰⁵

From my conversations with López Viera it was clear to me that, as a scholar from outside of the Islands, I was given a level of access to people and resources that he has been routinely denied throughout his career. López Viera's monograph, *Tambor gomero y oralidad: Diálogo con los herederos*, stands among the most rigorous and probative ethnomusicological research ever conducted and published in the Islands; and yet, the work has been coldly received by his peers and colleagues. He cannot even obtain an

²⁰⁵ José Ángel López Viera, email communication with author, June 8, 2009. My translation: "For example twenty years ago, while I was conducting ethnomusicological research on the island of La Gomera, I encountered very interesting rhythms belonging to a substrate of the oldest musical genres of the Canaries—these patterns arrived to America during the Spanish colonization—*punto guajiro*, etc. (as a survival Leonard Bernstein used it in the song "America" of *West Side Story*) coming from the Arab-Andalucian world—and that chained [together] 3/4:6/8 to the voice and drum, this rhythmic phenomenon of Hispanic origin interests Professor Peter Manuel and he mentioned it in his article published in Texas [in the journal *Latin American Music Review*, published by the University of Texas Press]—(2004, Peter Lamarche Manuel—"The Guajira between Cuba and Spain) so I created a composition for my group Alfarabi titled "Saltitante" ["Jumpy"; a Canarian appropriation of Portuguese] ([for] guitar, percussion, and piano)." Cf. the dissertation's bibliography for the full citation López Viera mentions. This message, emblematic of many other such communications between José Ángel and I is included in part to complicate the relationship as one that unfolds continually as we exchange dialogically the roles of teacher, student, colleague, friend, collaborator, consultant, et al.

interview for a teaching position in higher education: his research topic, traditional Canarian musical culture, lies outside the boundaries of acceptable scholarship for university professors. Equipped with the requisite embodied competences for such a position, the politics of Canarian academia nonetheless introjects unique *aislamiento* for José Ángel that relegates him to a subordinate position among university scholars and researchers. The access and welcoming reception I was afforded—but which has been repeatedly denied to José Ángel—was bestowed on me many times over throughout my fieldwork experiences—even when in the presence of López Viera. We both observed the stark contrast—the immediate shift in comportment—in the ways each of us was received as ethnomusicologists and scholars among colleagues. Our longstanding friendship is in part fueled by the common education, study, and methodologies we share, but also by the commiseration over obstacles encountered in the same space: even though the boundaries we faced were different, José Ángel and I were both performing ethnographers whose reaches were mediated and sometimes failed, although for different reasons. Born in Tenerife, López Viera speaks Spanish as his native language, and yet, in certain academic contexts, he and his work are very much outside of discourse, denied access that my trippingly cadenced novice Spanish (my fourth language) secured on many different occasions. However, once "inside," my level of linguistic in/competence often impeded my ability to articulate questions and comments that would elicit the kinds of probative responses and incisive analyses that characterize José Ángel's work in the Islands.

On a number of occasions in recent years I have heard interest expressed in the idea of this journal publishing translations of significant foreign-language articles, partly in order to encompass more international perspectives. Publication of such

articles, of course, involves their coming or being brought to the editor's attention, and might also necessitate some flexibility in the journal's customary policy of not printing previously published material. A few years ago in Tenerife I had the opportunity to meet local scholar José Ángel López Viera. After hearing of his research in the Canary Island of La Gomera, I encouraged him to write an article distilling aspects of his self-published and inadequately distributed Spanish-language monograph. That article, translated by myself, appears in this issue.²⁰⁶

The failing ethnographic reach still maintains generative potentiality. Awareness of failure contextualized fuels this potentiality: during my time in the Islands and still ongoingly, José Ángel and I both have practiced *ethnography that waits*. In moving between conversations, venues, and groups of people, we continually resituate ourselves seeking opportunities to expand on and dialogue about our research. The unpredictable mediations that we encounter require improvisational stances in which the only constant is the continually impending and impeding mediation *out of* the break: while we wait to act (to speak, to be heard, to teach, to play), we must still act. As I actively listened to José Ángel and Kino discussing the *rancho de ánimas*, I waited for points of confluence at which my aural comprehension, linguistic knowledge, and sensitivity to the conversational flow came together at opportune moments for making functional, relevant, and productive contributing reaches. Understanding and contextualizing these moments is ethnography as performative waiting, an important part of this project that seeks to expose and critique imposing structures from within. In Section Three, I outlined the imperative for performative scholarly writing that reaches for the dialogic nature of ethnographic work and attention to the politics of the aesthetic writerly act. In Sections Three and Four, I highlighted how individual acts once committed become directed (i.e.,

²⁰⁶ Manuel 2006, vi.

facilitated, impeded, etc.) through embodied actions informed by historical, political, and aesthetic conventions. In this Section, I wish to shift the focus slightly to accommodate the socially embedded nature of ethnographic work suggested by the extended case study of the *arrorró* in Section Five: to expand this call for multi-sensory, performative analysis to the ethnographic act, to connect the mediating potential of writerly and historiographical structures to ethnography, to push toward an aesthetic, ethical, improvising ethnography *in the break*.

Rather than providing in this Section a full overview of past ethnographic scholarship as it might pertain to the entire project documented here—a totalizing, cartographic reach destined to fail—I will concentrate on some beginning movements and gestures in La Laguna, outlining a few possible ways of understanding them. Throughout my time in the Islands, my perceptions were buttressed by emerging realizations of past experiences as a pianist, scholar, and student that re/represented my interactions as citationally- and historically-informed reachings. As I have to continued to converse and perform with Afro/Canarian musicians and to study in archives there (especially at the Guajara campus of Universidad de La Laguna), these newly contextualized understandings have mapped new meanings—surplus and sometimes disjunct meanings—onto the Islands. As I inscribe some of these here within the dissertation, I will take time and space to unfold and contextualize some of these past experiences—especially the written citations—that have directed and mediated my thinking about the project and the people with whom I am working. One important aspect of this unfolding was my discovery of past, failed scholarly reaches for the Canary

Islands and their inhabitants, and the emergent, resonating ethical obligations to critique and lay bare some as-of-yet unacknowledged reasons for these failures that have amplified and perpetuated the Canarian sense of *aislamiento*, enacting agendas that reify political and economic isolation. And so, moving forward, I also wish to contextualize my writerly reach and goals for advocacy and ethical research among others who are engaged with these issues. By adding onto these mapped surpluses of failed re/presentations of the Islands from within these same isolating and circumscribing schemata, I can only hope that foregrounding the scratches and gaps in my own mix will allow sufficient room for the silenced Afro/Canarian subject to sound.

II. Performing Introductions and Improvising Appositives

*Quiero mostrar mis disculpas por no tener un dominio académico del inglés, sin embargo, tú puedes escribirme en tu lengua, leo algo en inglés, aunque no todo lo que quisiera y no me viene mal practicarlo. De todas formas, las dudas que surjan las podemos resolver en castellano y prefiero escribir y contestar a tus preguntas en castellano.*²⁰⁷

*Hey Mark, Primero, por favor tutéame... Segundo, tu español no está nada mal. Tan solo cambia <para> por <por> en algunas frases.*²⁰⁸

When I arrived in La Laguna, I introduced myself once—to my roommate Kino. Kino does not speak English, and, while at the time I could read Spanish quite well, I had very

²⁰⁷ José Ángel López Viera, email communication with author, March 31, 2009. My translation: "I want to offer my apologies for not having an academic command of English, that notwithstanding, you can write me in your language, I will read a bit in English, although not as much as I would like to and it won't hurt me to practice. In any case, we can resolve the doubts that arise in Spanish [Castilian] and I would prefer to write and respond to your questions in Spanish."

²⁰⁸ David Quevedo, email communication with author, March 19, 2009. My translation: "Hey Mark, First, please use 'tú' with me [i.e., address me informally]...Second, your Spanish is not bad. Just change 'para' for 'por' in a few sentences."

little, prior conversational experience. My first few weeks in La Laguna then were filled with failing linguistic reachings, as I tried to cobble together functional, quasi-intelligible statements from my years of experience reading, speaking, and teaching Latin and my once-fluent, spoken Italian. The failures were always patiently received, but often times among new company, my friends and companions would redirect my statements toward more grammatically correct paths. Of all those who re/spoke my failing intentions along with me, Kino was the most active. His experience learning Spanish as a third language endowed him with a particular sensitivity to failed linguistic reachings: he could intuit my course from my mis/steps, re/direct them, and then explain the differences so that nearly every statement became an opportunity for a more expertly aimed future reach.

My friends helped me through these weeks of reaching for communication in part by introducing me. So I introduced myself once to Kino in the airport, and, for quite a while after, people were introducing me to each other, using the phrase "*te presento a Mark*" ("I present to you Mark"). This construction accurately captures the objectified nature I had assumed in this interaction: of the three participants—the presenter, the presented-to, and the presented—I was the farthest from subjecthood, a position exacerbated, of course, by my novice ability for speaking Spanish. One such introduction, which happened on the first full day after my arrival on Tenerife, was to the drummer Alfredo Llanos, a highly influential figure in Canarian popular music and member of Jazz Borondón, one of the first and most highly regarded jazz ensembles in the Canary Islands. All at once, I was presented with the immediacy of "the field": for three years, I had been scrounging for nearly impossible-to-find information on Canarian jazz, and in

one moment I was presented to one of its most seminal figures. The accumulated potential energy and my well-studied background preparation was so completely stifled by ungrammatical Spanish that our initial encounter was characterized more by his waiting for me to reach subjecthood (as a Spanish-speaker and as ethnographer) than by any exchange of information. My reach toward ethnography could still not traverse the literal and figurative distances I had traveled in an articulate, well-cadenced, and productive way. Once again, time lag and cognitive disjuncts between thought and utterance isolated me from language, as all I managed in my communicating failure was to thank him for his music, his willingness to talk, and extend an invitation to meet again once I had managed to rehearse and refine the necessary embodied competencies. And yet, from those failures, arose new beginnings and new understandings.

After only one week in La Laguna, I met myself-as-object in the field for the first time. While walking down the street with a friend, I was introduced to another jazz musician whom a mutual friend thought I might like to know. During the introduction, the presented-to musician, whom I was meeting for the first time, replied that he had already heard of me. Immediately the resonant halo of past studies—particularly, Michel Foucault's author function—emanated from that well-studied background preparation I had brought with me: after one week, I was already not in control of my project, the re/presentations of my intentions, nor the yet-to-be-expressed hopes for my residence. I was the ethnographic object—introduced, not introducing. And it was in that moment, walking through the city streets of La Laguna that I came to understand all my prior study as newly contextualized, not knowing when and where certain resonances from already

read scholarship might arise, nor how or when they would come to mind in particular, everyday moments. From then forward, citation became much less about understanding lived experience through particular models or modes of thinking and entirely about understanding those models or modes in new ways that were/are necessarily grounded in my lived experiences. The improvisatory, embodied, and now sited emergence of the cite as unfolding re/contextualization. Further still, I saw all prior citations (and the composition of the cited works) as resultant from lived experiences different from my own, and accepted that, in walking forward, I should let the unfolding everyday direct any conceptual mis/understandings and listen particularly for those scratches and gaps of the everyday mix among the temporal, spatial, social (etc.) resonances in my lived experiences. That is not to say that my steps were not citationally-informed—the opposite is in fact the truth—but rather that my citationally-informed steps emerge only in the time of walking and re/tracing of those steps through reflection and performance. Like the improvised reachings at the piano bench, my prior study accompanies me, but does not necessarily pre-determine or prescribe where I move on the ground in La Laguna, at the researcher's archive, or at the writer's desk.²⁰⁹

My introduction to grounded theory began with Michael Titlestad's monograph *Making the Changes: Jazz in South African Literature and Reportage*, which introduced me to influential scholarship by David Sudnow and Michel de Certeau. The close and focused reading I worked through was facilitated by a contracted book review published

²⁰⁹ Cf. Sudnow 1993, 122: "It was that in just lifting off, getting an undulating time into the fingers, I then found myself able to do a path-switching maneuver in ways I had previously never attempted. A means to get from way to way began to show itself, I learned from it, and began doing springboarding as an instructable maneuver."

in the journal *African Music*.²¹⁰ In particular, Sudnow's phenomenological research, de Certeau's walker, and Titlestad's applied translation of these and other scholarship as *embodied competencies* and *theoretical repertoire* continue to impact this project.²¹¹ The latter speaks to my observation above: *theoretical repertoire* suggests an acquired knowledge of citable work to be employed and applied in improvisationally emergent ways. The former references a phenomenon I watched as others introduced me.²¹²

The appositive that followed "*a Mark* [re/sounded as 'mah-ehr-cah']" demonstrated to me not only indications of how the introducer chose to re/present me and my project, but also which aspects of both they thought most important to present to the presented-to. Whether I was presented as an "*etnomusicólogo*," "*músico*," "*profesor*," "*estadounidense*," and so on was wholly contingent on context: these different identities and the skills associated with them are Titlestad's *embodied competencies*. My ability to perform them, as well as my ability to recognize which identities or skills might be most important in any one moment, have been hugely influential to this project. And, as I was introduced, my presenting friends were simultaneously emphasizing certain aspects of these competencies and emergently mapping them onto to my objectified, improvised and improvising identity. (Only much, much later did certain friends ask me how I might like to be introduced.) "*Mark*" became a metonym for all of these competencies, understood differently by each individual with whom I interacted, and also for the performances of

²¹⁰ The review was published in 2010, in volume 8, number 4 of the journal.

²¹¹ Cf. Titlestad 2004, 5: "For de Certeau's pedestrians should not be elevated to a transcendental trope. If an alternative to cartography is proposed, our embodied contraries (and the very metaphors of their making) must be acknowledged as wanderers along the thoroughfares and detours of discursive history. What follows, then, is one walk across the densely inhabited terrain of pedestrian possibilities."

²¹² On theoretical repertoire, cf. *ibid.*, xii and 63.

these referenced roles that were at times wholly separate from my physical actions and presence.

Titlestad names this mapping of embodied competencies onto individuals *transmigrated nomenclature*; but he writes only about proper names, the prime example of which is South African saxophonist Kippie "Charlie Parker" Moeketsi.²¹³ What I am referring to could more accurately be termed *para/nomenclature* or the *ekename* (the etymological predecessor of "nickname"), that is, the appellation that does not rename by substituting or superimposing others' identities, but rather by adding on to the presented/named embodied competencies untethered to a particularly named individual. The excess of meanings implied in possible interpretations of "*músico*" highlights an important aspect of *transmigrated nomenclature* that is still apropos to this discussion of introductions: in her discussion of interviews with Moeketsi, Gwen Ansell briefly mentions a cognitive disjunct between canonical understanding of Parker's performances and Moeketsi's. Ansell's interviews describe a musician who, while simultaneously garnering Parker-esque prestige among local communities and displaying performative similarities with Parker, nonetheless asserted a sonic individuality that at times solicited contrary opinions as to whether "Eric Dolphy" (as opposed to "Charlie Parker") may have been a more auditorily accurate genealogically associative moniker.²¹⁴ This important point helps the reader understand the differences between discursive and musical references to canonical jazz figures, a crucial distinction not always articulated

²¹³ For Moeketsi and the re/mapping of Charlie Parker's embodied competencies, *cf.* Titlestad 2004, 160; for his initial discussion of transmigrated nomenclature, *cf.*, *ibid.*, 63.

²¹⁴ Ansell 2004, 121ff.

and too often overlooked. The slippage in translating Parker to Moeketsi is further amplified when considering the *para/name*: in its lack of specificity, the *para/name* "músico" entails a much wider range of meanings than "Charlie Parker" (or "Mojo Ribs" or *Improvising Difference: Constructing Canarian Jazz Cultures*). The surplus of meanings of each of these *para/names*, these floating embodied competencies, infinitely augments (through densely arranged piles of sentences) any slippage Titlestad and Ansell may have identified in the case of Moeketsi. The imminent and inevitable failure of representation has never been so pronounced as in the introduction in which I participated so many times—*"Te presento a Mark"*—while at the same also laying bare the necessarily dialogic performativity of representation.

And so these appositives—the qualifying epithets that accompanied "Mark" in these presentations—represent embodied acts of improvising, aesthetic appellation: *embodied* not only because they occur among touching, kissing, looking, listening bodies, but also because of the lived histories of empirical knowledge that inform each participant's understanding of each (and any) *para/name*; *aesthetic* because of the creative and political choices the presenter makes when selecting the *para/name*; and *improvising* because of the sounding selections' dependence on con/texts of space and interpersonal interaction, as well as their emergence in time. The importance of these appositives—these emergent rupturings of identity—is partly derived from their generative potentiality: as the beginning of conversation, these re/namings, steeped in easily mistranslatable excess, re/presented the beginning of relationships emerging through dialogue. A common response to the call of presentation was a question so

typical of my conversations that it became the central theme of this dissertation:

"¿Porque vienes aquí? a las Canarias?" ("Why did you come here? To the Canaries?")

Were it not so prevalent—the response not so recurrent—I might have mistaken this question for small talk, an amicable display of interest in my presence there. Rather, I continue to hear it as an everyday, conversational instantiation of the *aislamiento* explicitly introduced in Section Four: a self-denigrating acknowledgement of the imposed sense of lack and absence that the colonial project has reinforced in the Canaries for the last five hundred years.²¹⁵ In the context of other interactions, I came to understand this question as a not-so-tacit acknowledgement of the canonized, historically-informed looking-over that breeds this sense of *aislamiento* and an auditioning from which the questioner could ascertain whether I might be employing a similarly isolating strategy in my project. My response to this question was, therefore, all the more important as the moment immediately preceding my entrance into the conversation. The interstitial space before entering into language affected a shift from presented ethnographic object to mis/speaking subject. My ethnographer's break. And, though my responses were citationally-informed, those citations did not dictate my moving forward into language in that moment when well-studied, background preparation yields to the uncertainty of the

²¹⁵ About his research on the inhabitants of La Gomera, José Ángel once wrote me: "*desde un punto de vista social se había vivido en esa isla históricamente después de la llegada de los colonos europeos SXV, algo cercano al sentimiento común de los sectores de población marginal, los excluidos del sistema que se refugiaban en su propia música. Allí me hizo pensar muchas cosas ese estado de introversión aprendido culturalmente por ellos desde la infancia (enculturado).*" López Viera, email communication with the author, April 21, 2009. My translation: "from a social point of view they have lived on that island historically after the arrival of European colonists in the fifteen century, something close to the common feeling of the sectors of marginal population, those excluded from the system that were fleeing in their own music. That state of introversion learned culturally by them from infancy (enculturated) made me consider many things."

present—when the cite fails the site/sight. As a professor of mine, Karl Hagstrom Miller, told me, "So, yes, you understand Barthes and the coded qualifier. Good. But what happens after that? Where will you go from there?"

III. Reaching for Jazz Ethnography: Mobility, Access, and Slippage

La marginalidad, en su extremo creativo. Los bordes o límites de lo cotidiano en la noche. Los marginales subalternos... estos epígrafes corresponden a textos escritos por mí hace más de ocho años. Ahora tras la experiencia de ayer-tarde y noche-, tal vez, tú, los has hecho revivir rescatándolos del disco duro del ordenador. Has conseguido reactivar las ilusiones de todos los que por aquí andamos entre la música urbana, en definitiva, entre la MÚSICA como parte de la vida. Anoche, de broma, te comentaba que tú, aquí, con tu proye, estás actuando como un auténtico catalizador, o elemento reactivador de la reflexión, mejor dicho, de la autoreflexión del propio músico en su "aislamiento" insular. Ahora has provocado que nos miremos en el espejo y comencemos a pensar en grupo, como colectivo disperso que se mira a sí mismo y que comienza a unirse dando importancia al hecho de existir "reafirmando" la objetividad autocrítica y consciente de una realidad, tal vez, adversa, pero muy potente importante desde lo que se puede considerar una perspectiva local creadora e ingeniosa. Aquí te envió dos fotos junto al gran maestro y amigo Polo Ortí, creo que ellas reflejan eso de lo que estoy hablando. A la noche es muy posible que vaya al concierto. Ahora estoy escribiendo algo y trabajando. Gracias por todo. Ha sido un placer poder hablar contigo de la vida y la cultura desde la música y las contradicciones.²¹⁶

²¹⁶ José Ángel López Viera, email communication with author, October 24, 2010. My translation: "Marginality, at its creative extreme. The borders and limits of the everyday at night. The subaltern marginalized ones...these epigraphs correspond to texts written by me more than eight years ago. Now after yesterday's experience—the afternoon and evening—maybe, you, you have revived them, rescuing them from the hard drive of the [my] computer. You have found a way to reactivate the illusions of all of us who are active in urban music, and definitely, through MUSIC as a part of life. Last night, as a joke, I was telling you that you, here, with your project, are acting like a true catalyst, or reactivating element of reflection, better said, of the self-reflection of each musician in [her/]his insular 'aislamiento.' Now you have caused us to look into the mirror and begin to think as a group, like a dispersed collective that looks at itself and that begins to coalesce, giving importance to the fact of 'reaffirming' being, the self-critical objectivity and conscience of a reality, maybe an adverse one, but very potent [and] important that from which can be regarded as a local, creative, and ingenious perspective. Here I am sending you two photos [of you] together with the great master and [our] friend Polo Ortí, I think that those reflect that about which I am talking. It's very possible that I will go to the concert at night. Now I am writing a bit and working. Thanks for everything. It has been a pleasure to be able to talk with you about life and the culture of music and their contradictions." The "yesterday" to which José Ángel was referring was the occasion of a

In moving forward from the writer's desk, the pianist's bench, and the historian's archive, extending my reach toward critical, phenomenologically informed, dialogic, improvising ethnography in the break, I want to add into the mix Titlestad's *transmigrated para/nomenclature* and refocus all of the diverse theories, citations, and positionalities through the frame of *embodied competencies*. As already mentioned in regards to scholarly writing (Section Three) and history and cartography (Section Four), movement across and within all of these elements is marked by gaps of interference, scratching, and slippage. Translating the frame of the document as mapped out so far into ethnography entails acknowledging the performative representationality of ethnography: what are the contours of ethnography's *death mask*? how does one break it apart? and what does that creative, generative rupturing reveal?

The answer I would like to foreground lies at the threshold of the ethnographic process: an anti/method that undercuts any data collection or utterance in conversation or interview, and focuses on the ethnographic reach not toward a desired or anticipated end, but toward the potentiality of the reach itself.²¹⁷ Ethnography as everyday failing. Not in

recorded conversation between us (an invitation that I sheepishly accepted for self-doubt over my *dominio académico* of Spanish) in which we discussed our perspectives on ethnomusicological research and theory, including José Ángel's questions about my project and some of the cited sources on which I planned to draw. (I wish to thank to Professor Michael O'Brien for his suggestions with this translation.)

²¹⁷ In this anti/method, the products would inevitably contain detours, re/routings, and mis/steps all generated from "the ongoing event of an antiorigin and an anteorigin, replay and reverb of an impossible natal occasion, the performance of the birth and rebirth of a new science, a phylogenetic fantasy that (dis)establishes genesis, the reproduction of blackness in and as (the) reproduction of black performance(s). It's the offset and rewrite, the phonic irruption and rewind, of my last letter, my last record date, my first winter, casting of effect and affect in the widest possible angle of dispersion." (Moten 2003, 14) As I have already mentioned in Sections Three and Four, translating Moten and Weheliye into Afro/Canarian involves a critique of Afrodiasporic identity as necessarily black, allowing for the emergent *afrocanario* and *afrocanariedad* as anti/copies of the Black Atlantic. "What I am suggesting here is not repetition with a

failing to speak or to listen or to write, but rather the inherent, circumscribing failure of ethnography to represent the un/sayable, un/hearable, and un/writeable. By aligning this answer negatively, I risk reinforcing the same structures whose *a priori* (and often uninterrogated) lacks have circumscribed the Canarian subject throughout history. However, this *anti/method* is intended to place the methodological and epistemological structures of ethnography in deconstructive play from within, not to negate them outright: to affect a generative rupture of the boundaries of ethnography so that I might trouble the inevitable objectification of those with whom I have lived and worked during this project.

What are the para/texts of—the peripheral structures that direct—ethnography? Having observing with failure in mind, I believe some can be located among the scratches in the ethnographic mix: the moments when the ethnographer becomes objectified, when communicative dialogue occurs through not speaking, waiting to speak, or mis-speaking (as with listening, writing, researching, etc.). Thinking of the "competency" in *embodied competency* not necessarily only as the successful reach or the already completed reach, but rather as the reach in process, contingent, mediated, and perhaps incomplete or unsuccessful opens up space for improvising, emerging relationships that redefine and trouble the boundary between ethnographic subject and

difference so much as the repetition *of* difference, wherein the original/copy distinction vanishes and only the singular and *sui generis* becomings of the source remain in the clearing. This repetition of difference does not ask how 'the copy' departs from 'the source' but assumed that difference will indeed, be different in each of its incarnations. Here, the phonograph emerges as a machinic ensemble (to cross-fade Fred Moten and Deleuze and Guattari's idioms) that accents the eventness of the (re)production of the source; the source is always (re)produced as an (anti)origin while also appearing as a differently produced occasion in each of its singular figurations." (Weheliye 2005, 32) Perhaps I could suggest the aesthetic politics of the cite/site as the dissertation's response to Weheliye's call expressed via the phonograph. Cf. below for Halberstam's translation of Moten and these politics sited/cited in academia.

ethnographic subjected-to.²¹⁸ These failing competencies are smoothed over by the re/iterative technologies that produce and affirm the ethnographic subject: in rehearsing ethnographic writing, the everyday missteps, by virtue of their having been inscribed, can be recast as purposeful, authoritative moves. The shift that occurs in the "writing up" elevates the ethnographer from a grounded space of fragmented, failing, dialogic processes to one of cohesive, successful, solitary products. Again, we confront writing's failure to represent. If this elevating shift and the technologies which facilitate it are not troubled, my writing on failure will succeed in being written but fail in un/writing that which cannot be written—one of the main impetuses behind this project and the means by which the ethnographic subjected-to could emerge.

One of my closest friends in La Laguna, Jose Maria Moreno Méndez, intimated to me one night a sense of the ethnographic gaze to which he and other Canarians had become accustomed. What I heard was that he and others were used to the inquisitive searching with which researchers have approached the Islands and their inhabitants. My translating, distancing memory recalls a statement like *we wait until after someone arrives here, and we can talk and look him in the eye before we open up and share*.²¹⁹

Just then, I was congratulating myself for the potentiality of the moment, privileging the

²¹⁸ I am thinking of an augmentation and application of Anne Rasmussen's thoughts of bimusicality to the entire ethnographic process, including everyday interaction, archival research, and the writing process. Cf. Rasmussen 2004, 224, where she states, "[Although] a culturally specific sense of musicality may certainly be developed through the process of being native to that culture...musicians' musicalities are also collections of encounters and choices: pastiches of performances they have experienced, the lessons they have taken, the people with whom they have played, the other musicians they admire, other musics that they play or enjoy, and the technical and cognitive limitations of their own musicianship."

²¹⁹ A written record of this unrecorded conversation in any language would most certainly be a mis/recording. My faithful inscription of his exact words would no more be accurate (nor provide a means by which Jose could actually speak in this document) than my recollecting approximation of what he said in Spanish, or my translation in English thereof.

access my "being there" promised. What I came to understand later of Jose's statement is that the historically-informed understanding of themselves as objects targeted in the cites/sites/sights of Western researching technologies magnifies perceptions of *aislamiento* as a everyday, immediate experience of lack. As I referenced above, my "being there" did not privilege my vantage point, hampered as it was by linguistic failure, general unfamiliarity, and a host of behaviors and statements grounded more in my reaching toward "being there" than actually authoritatively inhabiting any space (doomed to fail as any such inhabitation would necessarily be). Access (to what? in which ways?) neither presupposes nor necessarily grants subjecthood. Actually, I spent my first few weeks misnaming Jose, whose name is pronounced "*HO-seh*," not "*ho-SEH*," as might be expected. When I asked my roommate Kino about the difference in pronunciation, I was told only that it named a Canarian identity in contradistinction to the alternative pronunciation, with no other apparent explanation. I countered with the names of several mutual Tenerifan friends who pronounced their names the second way (José Ángel, for example), to which Kino suggested that it was an aesthetic (but I suspect also political) decision. In either case, *Jose* is regarded as a different name than *José*—not a mis- or alternate pronunciation. Our friend *Jose* was appositively named *El Gomero* (the Gomeran man) to distinguish him from others we knew with the same name. I suspect ethnography's death mask can be glimpsed somewhere in the slippage between translating the name and naming of *Jose/José*.

Addressing the embodied histories of *Jose* and bringing these histories into dialogue with those of *José* exceeds the realm of the linguistic signifier, or, alternately,

exceeds the linguistic realm of the signifier: any attempt at translation reaches toward (but falls short of) the *para/name* as an aesthetic, cultural, political, social, and, most importantly, unable-to-be-circumscribed excess. Textual reachings that translate the un/named and un/nameable should highlight singularity and the inherent slippage between them, as well as the conditions surrounding the emergent singularity. This document does not move toward *translating* the un/nameable (in ethnography, cartography, history, writing, etc.), but rather moves within the *continually reaching, improvisatory performance of translating*, inhabiting the in-between, the meanwhile, the conditional:

In order for this interstitial zone to emerge one needs to reconceptualize the idea of movement by denucleating it from the tension towards something other than itself, from a movement interested in erasing and deleting itself as it proceeds towards a preconceived and authentic "home," from a subjectivity that denies itself from belonging to the community of language and culture. The very existence of the interstitial zone of translation, and its process of bringing together two cultures and languages away from the discourse of authenticity and inauthenticity, is predicated upon a movement that does not go anywhere outside but that keeps on moving within the inherently dynamic borders of the interstices. It is from within the time of the "meanwhile" and the space of the "in-betweenness" that I believe a new theory of translation and cross-cultural encounters and exchange can commence. Paraphrasing Bartleby's experience, one could say that it is not that translation does not want to be the original or that it does not want to become it: it simply would prefer not to. This is also the shift from the must—the will—to the could—the potential—and from a literature of perfect tenses to a literature of the conditional.²²⁰

In reaching for research and writing that is not "interested in erasing and deleting itself as it proceeds," there are definitely historical precedents and epistemological models on which I could re/create citationally-informed structures in which to site/cite/sight my

²²⁰ Bartoloni 2003, 4.

work. Some of these—Leon Anderson's analytic auto-ethnography and David Sudnow's articulatory reach, for example—I have already outlined in previous Sections. Moving forward, I would like to fold in several more, especially because of this Section's focus on ethnography and/as the failing reach. These sources have informed and inspired my thoughts and actions in the field, in the archive, and at the desk in varying intensities and at different times during the project. In searching for improvisatory scholarship, I am trying to lay bare some of the process by which citations unfolded for me in unforeseen ways and how writing re/presents these citations to the reader out-of-time (*ex tempore*, not extemporaneously) such that following the trail of citations in the dissertation presents a wholly different chronology at times than what I experienced.

Manipulating multiple timeframes is one way I am attempting to cite/site/sight the document in "time of the 'meanwhile'" and the conditional mood. In turning the critical gaze more toward the ethnographic writing than the ethnographic subjected-to, I am augmenting and elaborating on others' work, most especially the 1986 volume, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by James Clifford and George C. Marcus, in which the authors outlined new pathways for work that "decodes and recodes, telling the grounds of collective order and diversity, inclusion and exclusion...[that] describes processes of innovation and structuration, and is itself part of these processes."²²¹ Within ethnomusicology, Kenneth Gourlay's essay "Towards a

²²¹ Clifford 1986, 2. In another essay in this volume Talal Asad offers this thought on translation and ethnography: "the process of 'cultural translation' is inevitably enmeshed in conditions of power—professional, national, international. And among these conditions is the authority of ethnographers to uncover the implicit meanings of subordinate societies. Given that that is so, the interesting question for enquiry is not whether, and if so to what extent, anthropologists should be relativists or rationalists, critical

Reassessment of the Ethnomusicologist's Role in Research" raised similar issues, critiquing the ethnomusicologist's "cloak of invisibility": the author suggests that the individual scholar "attempt to formulate a method which resolves the dilemma, not by suppression or abstraction, but through an approach which, by including the fact of contradiction, enables it to be superseded."²²² .

Of the work written about the Canary Islands, the vast majority is published by local scholars and housed in university libraries on the Islands with little circulation outside.²²³ José Ángel's work stands out as a singular achievement in that most prior anthropological, musicological, and ethnomusicological work about the Islands has focused on either local appropriations of Western European music or the lyrical content of traditional Canarian music.²²⁴ Beth Shally, Donald MacLeod, and Martha Davis have all published on the Islands in English, and Duke literature professor Francisco-J. Hernández Adrián, a native of Tenerife and graduate of Universidad de La Laguna, has begun publishing on the Islands with a new monograph to be published soon.²²⁵ Samuel Charters recently published *A Language of Song: Journeys in the Musical World of the*

or charitable, toward other cultures, but how power enters into the process of 'cultural translation,' seen both as a discursive and as a non-discursive practice." (Asad, 163) My focus on the aesthetic politics of the cite/site and/as isolating structures throughout this dissertation is a direct exploration of the question Asad poses. Cf. Section Eleven.

²²² Gourlay 1978, 5.

²²³ Counteracting this fact is one main inspiration behind the *Memoria Digital de Canarias*, an online multimedia database of sources about the Islands. The site can be accessed here: <http://mdc.ulpgc.es>.

²²⁴ A portion of José Ángel's book was translated and published in the journal *Ethnomusicology*; cf. López Viera 2006 in the bibliography for the complete citation.

²²⁵ Cf. Davis 1992 (including for cites of her other work); MacLeod 2004; and Shally 1985. All three of these English-speaking scholars chose La Gomera as their research site (although Davis has worked in Tenerife as well). For Hernández Adrián's work, cf. bibliography. Research in the fields of the "hard" sciences is much more available, as the Islands present singular specimens and environments for scholars in ecology, geology, and vulcanology, to name a few.

African Diaspora, a monograph in which he begins his work with a chapter on the "canario." Charters's anecdotes about the Islands—buttressed with asides on sociocultural history such as *San Borondón*, a brief etymological discussion of "Islas Canarias," and a few talking points about colonization and the Islands' history of slavery—include cited interviews with musicians and scholars in a search for "an African-derived reshaping of a European musical dance form," first inspired by hearing Sanz's "Canarios" on the radio.²²⁶ Charters's narrative, though, is informed by the same trope of the Canary Islands as historical *from which*. Charter's chapter as well-documented English-language research on music of the Canary Islands retains value *per se*; however, his attempt at cramming the Islands (once again via only the "canario") as a his newly discovered, lost antecedent into the established narrative of the trans-Atlantic African Diaspora glosses over many important details and compels him to essentializing statements that reinforce the canonizing power of this narrative that subsumes and erases particular difference in favor of unified narrative cohesion.²²⁷

Scholarship and research about the Islands is so limited that those who have published are commemorated with a fair amount of renown. I believe this idea of self-validation via outside research is indicative of the imposed colonial mindset forced onto generations of Afro/Canarians. Local popular press and scholarship treat moments of visiting scholars as formative moments in Canarian history: in anthropology, there is

²²⁶ Charters 2009, 20.

²²⁷ For example: "Also, like so much of the music that has Africa as one of its sources, the *canarios* have an infectious swing" (27); and "By the end of its [the *canario*'s] long reign of popularity, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the dance had been stylized into something like a jig" (28)

Bronislaw Malinowski; in literature, Ernest Hemingway; in music, Antonio Scarlatti, Camille Saint-Saens, Ernesto Lecuona, and the Beatles.²²⁸ The "Fab Five" best illustrate the power of this trope in Canarian history: their visit to the Canaries was only for vacation, not for performance. And yet, their presence—like the visits and performances of the others mentioned—is commemorated, celebrated, and imagined as evidence for the Canary Islands as momentarily overcoming the *aislamiento* and peripheral space to which they have been relegated.²²⁹ This general sense of veneration for the Outsider is, I believe, the primary impetus behind the stupified "Why the Canaries?" question I encountered from many with whom I spoke in the Islands.²³⁰

It is this constant and relentless writing-out that compelled me toward failure as a potentially productive space in which to explore my project. Confronted with the lack of rigorous, extant research to account for the Afro/Canarian, I looked critically toward the conditions of these failures, searching for them in my own writing and research, and ultimately resolving to explore them in the text of the document itself. After discovering Jack Halberstam's monograph *The Queer Art of Failure* recently, I see this project as an augmenting, grounding application of Halberstam's work that is more in line with the sociality of my project—an application similar to my re/workings of Moten, Sudnow, and Weheliye outlined in the dissertation. It is impossible to provide a clear picture of

²²⁸ On Malinowski, *cf.* Lema Quintana 2004; on Saint Saens, Scarlatti, and Lecuona, *cf.* Pérez Díaz 2003; and on the Beatles, *cf.* González Lemus 2010. Hemingway's main connection to the Islands is through Gregorio Fuentes, a fisherman born on Lanzarote, who was believed to be the inspiration for protagonist for Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea* and personal acquaintance of the author while he lived in Cuba.

²²⁹ *Cf.* the discussions of space and belonging in Sections Eight, Nine, and Ten.

²³⁰ In truth, I encountered this attitude from colleagues in the United States as well, but with the more insidious insinuation that lack of prior publications might suggest lack of viable or worthwhile research topics.

Halberstam's important work here, but to begin I should say that: as I am writing and thinking alongside Steven Feld in his search for writerly tactics that articulate the particular intersections of his grounded experiences as listener, scholar, and performer, so too do I wish to place myself along side Halberstam in eschewing "a reevaluation of these standards of passing and failing" in favor of work that "dismantles the logics of success and failure with which we currently live."²³¹ For "under certain circumstances failing, losing, forgetting, unmaking, undoing, unbecoming, not knowing may in fact offer more creative, more cooperative, more surprising ways of being in the world."²³² This work is motivated by a desire "to confront the gross inequalities of everyday life," particularly those that are reproduced in the academic disciplines that, for all their self-professed rigor, have left little recourse for the Afro/Canarian.²³³ Halberstam cites Moten and Harney's call for adopting a critical stance toward academia, inhabiting the peripheral zone of interdisciplinarity where ethics and aesthetics meet, siting and citing work that includes a self-aware contingency that allows for revision, collaboration, and dynamic emergence. This is "the path of the subversive intellectual" and a conscious choice for "allowing subjectivity to be unlawfully overcome by others, a radical passion and passivity such that one becomes unfit for subjection, because one does not possess the

²³¹ Feld's work in this regard has most recently been published in his 2012 monograph *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra: Five Musical Years in Ghana*.

²³² Halberstam 2011, 2.

²³³ *ibid.*, 4. For further discussions of scholarly rigor, *cf.* Sections Three and Eleven.

kind of agency that can hold the regulatory forces of subjecthood."²³⁴ This is a translating move from "literature of the conditional" to "scholarship of the conditional."

On April 29, 2010, José Ángel and I attended the presentation of *La música tradicional en Icod de Los Trigos: Tiempo de juegos, rezos y entretenimientos*, a two-volume collaborative research document, supervised by Professor Carmen Nieves Luís García (also discussed in conjunction with her research on the *arrorró* in Section Five). Promotion material for the publication describes the project as:

*El estudio, ilustrado con un DVD y un CD, de la música tradicional conservada por esta comunidad en los repertorios de los juegos, rezos y entretenimientos, así como de su evolución a lo largo del pasado siglo XX, como consecuencia de las transformaciones socioeconómicas y culturales que han tenido lugar en esta comarca y, en general, en el conjunto del Archipiélago Canario. Va precedido de un estudio histórico sobre Los Alzados, cuyo principal objetivo consistió en descubrir las posibles relaciones entre una familia existente en esta zona, conocida por Familia Los Alzados, y los Guanches Alzados que aparecen en la historia de Tenerife a finales del siglo XV. Justifica la inclusión de este estudio en esta obra el que, precisamente, en esta familia figura la Parranda Los Alzados, un grupo de tocadores y cantadores de música tradicional que entraron a formar parte, como maestros, del proyecto educativo. En el marco de este proyecto, precisamente, se formó una agrupación de música tradicional que, en su honor, recibió el nombre de Grupo Los Alzados.*²³⁵

I was eager to go because most of the researchers were professors, musicians, and ethnographers whom I knew well. These researchers, well-known and highly regarded for

²³⁴ Moten and Harney, 100 and 103.

²³⁵ Nieves García, 2012. My translation: "The study, illustrated with a DVD and a CD, of the traditional music preserved by this community in the repertoires of games, prayers, and entertainments, as well as its evolution over the past century, as a result of the socio-economic and cultural transformations that have taken place in this region and, in general, in the whole of the Canarian Archipelago. It comes preceded by a historic study about Los Alzados, the principle objective of which consisted of discovering the possible relationships between an existing family of this area, known as the Los Alzados Family, and the Guanche of Alzados who appeared in Tenerife's history until the end of the fifteenth century. What justifies the inclusion of this study in this work is precisely that in this family includes the Parranda Los Alzados, a group of instrumentalists and singers of traditional music that joined to form part of the educational project as teachers. Within the framework of this project precisely was formed a group of traditional music that, in their honor, received the name Grupo Los Alzados."

their three decades of work studying traditional Afro/Canarian culture, could only carry out this work because they each held separate jobs: these research pursuits were not seen as "viable or worthwhile research topics" *per se*, but acceptable as secondary research areas.²³⁶ And yet, José Ángel informed me that some of these same researchers were those who had been actively isolating him from university lectures and other events in which his work is, in methodology and subject matter, quite apropos: even in this small circle of marginalized researchers, *aislamiento* is re/worked and re/produced.²³⁷ The event, held in the main hall of the Guajara campus at Universidad de La Laguna, featured speeches and demonstrations of research and music surrounding the collaborative project of which the two-volume tome with accompanying audio and video media was just published. Near the end of the evening, a representative from the community from Los Alzados offered his comments, thanking the researchers for their hard work, dedication to the community and commemoration of its cultural heritage. After the event, José Ángel and I discussed the event for several hours at a restaurant over a bottle of wine and some excellent *guachinche*, a meal of traditional Afro/Canarian foods. José Ángel was lamenting the lack of self-critique in the Icod de Los Trigos project and specifically

²³⁶ This is my rephrasing of comments by this group with whom I met personally several times in the Islands.

²³⁷ When I asked him about this Section, José Ángel offered this elaboration in response to my glossing of this situation: "*Ellos' jamás entenderían una crítica fundamentada, tampoco participarían de un pensamiento reflexivo con el que dialogar o contrastar opiniones, simples, sencillas que fomentaran mayor riqueza académica... Esto es un problema 'endémico.'*" José Ángel López Viera, email communication with author, June 25, 2012. My translation: "They' would never understand a sustained critique, nor participate in reflective thought with which to dialogue or exchange simple or sensible opinions that would foster greater academic richness....This is an 'endemic' problem." In this way, I believe José Ángel views this endemic problem as a failure of "cartography, not the individual map that one preferential methodology might produce." Cf. Section Two and the discussion of Ramón Díaz's re/workings of *Cantos Canarios* in Section Seven.

mentioned the community member's comments about the cultural value of this research as support. He saw these comments as a byproduct of the researchers refusal to remove the ethnographer's "cloak of invisibility" and of methodologies that fixed the community of Los Alzados in the past—an ethnographic subjected-to, isolated from "*la autoreflexión...en su "aislamiento" insular*" by the researchers' failure to confront the inherent contradictions of their work. In an email recalling our evening after many months, José Ángel wrote me:

Yo también tengo muy buenos recuerdos de nuestras charlas informales sobre alteridad y autodefinición del individuo insular: la Otredad isleña, esa alteridad atlántica que nos sitúa, a los isleños, fuera de nosotros mismos sin saber bien quien somos: la autocrítica que no funciona en estas islas—la bipolaridad académica y sus extrañezas: la negación del presente - ...el otro día estaba recordando la presentación del libro en ULL...y la cena tan recurrente que prosiguió al evento: una charla sobre el mito del guanche frente a la posmodernidad y la sobremodernidad...y aquellos autores que siempre quisieron ser “el Otro” sin poder serlo jamás, a pesar de transfigurar o, mejor dicho, manipular la realidad... tal vez habría que empezar a hablar en Canarias de etnoficción...²³⁸

IV. The Sensorial Moan: Awareness and Generative Failure

A poststructural autoethnography might embrace multidimensionality, might aim to construct texts that are not easily ingested, that turn around and around so that we are encouraged (or forced or led) to a place of thinking differently and with more complexity about the world and our places within it. [...] A differently structured...(anti)autoethnography might be a "messy text [that] says 'yes'

²³⁸ López Viera, email communication with the author, February 3, 2012. My translation: "I also have good memories of our informal conversations about alterity and self-definition of the insular individual: the *isleño* Other, that Atlantic alterity that situated us, as [Canary] Islanders, outside of ourselves without knowing well who we are: the self-critique that does not function on these islands—the academic bipolarity and its oddities: the negation of the present - ...the other day I was recalling the presentation of the book [on Icod de Los Trigos] at ULL...and the recurrent dinner that continued the event: a chat about the myth of the Guanche against postmodernity and supermodernity...and those authors that always wanted it to be "the Other" that it can never be, in spite of transforming, or, better said, manipulating reality...maybe we should start to talk in the Canaries of ethnofiction."

to that which interrupts and exceeds and renounces its own force toward a stuttering knowledge."²³⁹

If ethnography fails in its ability to represent, I am reaching for a text in which that failure critically writes back against the criteria by which failure is constituted, calling into question the imposed (e)valuative structures that direct research and establish the normative performativities that reinforce and perpetuate them. By bringing these ~~structures~~ structures into the interstitial zone of translation, I am forcibly writing in the unwritten, political potential buttressing the poetics of ethnographic scholarship: its naming-by-not-naming encodes the conditions of ex/nomination in this and every other document. This encoding should not go unwritten nor could it ever be unwritten; however, perhaps I can write along its side so that its inevitable being-written can be glimpsed and critiqued, rather than just tacitly accepted and uninterrogated. Of this conundrum, but in reference to Barthes's thoughts on photography, Fred Moten poses the question that must be answered:

And perhaps whatever speech and writing that comes after or over a photograph or a performance should deal with this epistemological and methodological problem: how to listen to (and touch, taste, and smell) a photograph, or a performance, how to attune oneself to a moan or shout that animates the photograph...²⁴⁰

So what of this embodied ethnographic pianism that produces stuttering knowledge through listening, touching, tasting, and smelling? In the same way that my tendonitis-ridden arms necessitated alternate modes of performance at the piano keyboard, I am reaching with technologies of repetitious mis/speaking and un/writing so that they might

²³⁹ Gannon 2006, 488. The cited quotation is from Lather & Smithies, 214.

²⁴⁰ Moten 2003, 208.

cut against the surfacing structures that pathologize them. The moan, the extra-linguistic utterance, traces this embodied, improvising action: its having-been-recorded lends it a contingent presence, sonically marking the time and place of its emergence. However, this sonic marking eludes textual inscription: it is still un/sayable and un/writeable because of its existence outside the realm of language. And its echo—and my translating memory of its death mask—informs this writing in the same way that the citations of prior study accompanied my ethnographer's walks in La Laguna.

I am situating my document in the emergent, improvisatory time-space of the walker's mapping, the archivist's uncovering, and the ethnographer's st/uttering, laying bare the performative process of research in translation because the written product necessarily elides and writes all of these out. In the folds of its repetitions, I am orchestrating the document to reach toward an active stasis —that "radical passion and passivity" of scholarship of the conditional—that, in recording the improvisational coming together of all the participants and technologies of the project, prefers not to go anywhere else:

It is the function of the *lag* to slow down the linear, progressive time of modernity to reveal its "gesture," its *tempi*, "the pauses and stresses of the whole performance." This can only be achieved...by damming the stream of real life, by bringing the flow to a standstill in a reflux of astonishment. When the dialectic of modernity is brought to a standstill, then the temporal action of modernity—its progressive, future drive—is *staged*...²⁴¹

²⁴¹ Bhabha 1994, 364.

Into our already motive mix, Paolo Bartoloni folds in Homi Bhabha's cultural translation during *time lag* in the Third Space, citing the imperative of research of/on *the in-between*, sited in the breaks:

our role should be that of plunging ourselves into the "potential" zone and experience the interaction of cultures and languages as they fluidly intermingle, their dialogue still in progress and undamaged by the purposefulness of finality...²⁴²

...[for] translation could be used to reclaim the profound meaning of art's incompleteness and vagrancy through emphasizing, indeed, organizing and clarifying [*cf.* Moten's "dense erotics of arrangement"!] its epiphanic errancy, ultimately restoring art to the originality of its multilingualism and polyculturalism. This is translation as theory and not as practice, translation as the contemporary hermeneutic of language and culture. It is translation working its epistemological method and purpose through its inherent and tremendously relevant status as "halo," as the interim and interstitial par excellence in a world of believed originals which are there waiting and hoping to be deconstructed. And this is also translation as an ideological and existential home and habitus for those who, by choice or necessity, are physically living in-between and who for many years have thought and lived their interstitiality as a loss, of home, the self, their traditions.²⁴³

This lingering, lagging plunge produces emergent, mis/translated (anti)copies that, in revealing their constructedness, move away from teleological time-space and rather within themselves: an improvising, un/translatable ethnography that is continually mis/introducing itself. Because of its inherent and constant engagement with difference, a critique of the exnominating structures of scholarship is well sited/cited/sighted in this type of conceptual ethnographic space:

A dimension devoid of a tension towards something ahead of itself and of a linear understanding of time in which the process towards the future is natural if not altogether expected and demanded, must have a different grammar and language.

²⁴² Bartoloni 2003, 9.

²⁴³ *ibid.*, 6.

In his last unfinished novel, *Further Confessions of Zeno* (1969), Italo Svevo thought of a "mixed tense" and a different grammar to narrate a story that takes place in-between authenticity and inauthenticity, or, more conveniently, fiction and reality. But there are other examples of a language of the "waiting," perhaps even more pertinent to a piece on translation owing to its inherent in-betweenness, that is bilingualism.²⁴⁴

In the aforementioned introductions, my silent or mis/spoken Spanish was continually moving toward subjecthood; in writing up the project, I wish to linger errantly in this movement and in the similar, historically- and citationally-informed movements others made. Bartoloni continues on, citing Agamben's discussion of a unique example of this coming toward bilingualism:

In 1499 an anonymous incunabulum was printed in Venice with the title of *Hipnerotomachia Poliphili* (*Polifio's Dream*). As Agamben remarks, "the effect of estrangement that its language produces so disorients the reader that he literally does not know what language he is reading, whether it is Latin, the vernacular, or a third idiom." [Agamben 1999, 44]. Agamben explains further: "it is not simply a matter of the intrusion of purely Latin (and at times Greek) words into the vernacular lexicon, according to a process of growth that certainly characterized the history of the vernacular in the fifteenth century. Rather, here innumerable new linguistic formations are made through the separate transportation of Latin roots and suffixes, which lend life to words that are grammatically possible but that in reality never existed." [ibid., 45] This is an intriguing meeting of two languages in the interzone of the "waiting" where there is no attempt to develop and unfold a process of linguistic and grammatical cleansing and polishing but where the "suchness" of the meeting is presented as such.²⁴⁵

For what Agamben and Bartoloni describe as the generative rupture that the text of the *Hipnerotomachia Poliphili* accomplishes for the translation between languages, I wish to amplify for all of the elements in this project—the resonating and re/sounding subjects, their sensory technologies, and the dimensionally-contingent processes through which

²⁴⁴ Bartoloni 2003, 5.

²⁴⁵ ibid.

they come together. The language of this document waits on the periphery, and compels the reader to acknowledge how this waiting informs all the processes and products of its writing. The citations continue to wait. And the reading waits, too. By following the unfolding citations and anecdotes, re/tracing them in the writing, the reader is also enlisted in the task of translation: inasmuch as this writing gestures toward un/writing, it is only through reading that it might actually come to inhabit that un/writing space. Continually moving between these modes—layering on heaps of notes and words in the socialized mix of improvising bodies—produces reverberations that perhaps could sound the language and music of waiting.

Section Seven: Making the Break: *Jazz canario* in/of the Canary Islands

[Creanous.es]: *En este momento de la entrevista, Rogelio Botanz hace una pausa para hacer una demostración de silbo gomero con sus hijos, el equipo de Crea Nous asiste fascinado a aquel evento, en el que los niños son capaces de seguir instrucciones silbadas en varios idiomas. Fue una situación que no puede transmitirse con palabras. Solo la mirada de asombro de un niño que acaba de ver de cerca el mayor truco de magia que puedan imaginarse, se asemeja a lo que sentimos en aquel momento. Después de esta pausa la entrevista continúa con total naturalidad.*

"¿Qué es para ti la creatividad?"

[Rogelio Botanz]: *"Yo soy un hombre creativo, pero nunca invento nada, la creatividad es la capacidad de establecer nuevas relaciones con elementos preexistentes. Los elementos preexistentes están siempre. Intento aprovechar todo aquello que está en mis manos y transformarlo hasta darle una utilidad."*²⁴⁶

I. Un/canonical Origins of Canarian Jazz

Cellist Miguel Jaubert was born in Santa Cruz de Tenerife in 1960. His formal musical education on Tenerife and, later *en la península* (in Spain), was on cello studying repertoire and performance practice of the Western classical music tradition. Like many Canarians of his age, though, his informal education and consumptive listening habits were centered on mostly British rock and inspired him to teach himself the guitar, the instrument on which he now performs most often. As we sat together in his home in Santa Cruz in Spring 2011, he recounted for me a musical history I had heard and read

²⁴⁶ [n.a.], 2011, "Entrevista Rogelio Botanz," *Crea Nous* (October 15), <http://creanous.es/index.php/reportajes2/reportajes-y-entrevistas/entrevista-rogelio-botanz>. My translation: "[Crea Nous]: At this moment in the interview, Rogelio Botanz paused to demonstrate *silbo gomero* with his students, the Crea Nous team present was fascinated by that event, in which the children are able to follow whistled instructions in various languages. It was a situation that cannot be transmitted in words. Only a child's look of wonder who has just seen up close the greatest magic trick that you all can imagine, is similar to what we felt at that moment. After this pause, the interview continued completely naturally. 'What is creativity for you?' [Botanz]: 'I am creative man, but I never invent anything, creativity is the capacity to establish new relationships with pre-existing elements. The pre-existing elements have always been there. I try to try everything that is in my hands and transform it to give it a usefulness.'"

about many times already in my work on jazz in the Canary islands: that his interest in improvisation and jazz harmonies grew out of British Rock—specifically for him the jazz rock of Mahavishnu Orchestra—only after which he discovered U.S. jazz. Jaubert's musical interests compelled him first to contemporary U.S. jazz-rock/fusion groups like Weather Report, Return to Forever, and then the Rippingtons, and Spyro Gyra, and then—much later—to what are usually considered incipient, canonical U.S. jazz genres, like swing and bebop. Jaubert belongs to the first generation of *canarios* that has performed and studied jazz music collectively, and, while Jaubert's musical tastes and career choices have kept him aligned in the jazz-rock/fusion aesthetic, like so many other Canarians musicians, out of both economic necessity and artistic interest, he has explored many other influences and genres of music, collaborating widely among the musicians in the Islands, but achieving little success beyond them.

During our discussion, Jaubert asked me how the aforementioned bands and the genres of jazz-rock and fusion were regarded in the United States. He was shocked to hear my response that both the groups and the genres were largely excluded from canons of jazz music there, relaying the valorization of bebop, the "cool" aesthetics of the 1950s, and the liminal placement of fusion and jazz rock in written histories and documentary movies. While these more U.S.-canonical styles have now taken root in the Canary Islands, their consumption (through listening and performance) is motivated by a reach toward other canons and communities to be explored in the next Section. This current Section addresses local traditions of the Canary Islands, beginning with Jaubert's emblematic experience with jazz rock and the use of musical improvisation and jazz

music to address and critique some of the historical conditions explored in Section Four. There I outlined the historical construction of the Canary Islands and the Afro/Canarian subject as perpetually silenced and liminal, while suggesting that "many of the alternate, individual, and collective identities being asserted in the Islands rely on the extra-linguistic critical potential of language found in...music." Here, and in the next Section, I will unfold some examples of "the collective, creative, constructive potential of *aislamiento*," re/focusing and re/working with some musicians already mentioned and adding more into the mix.

As Jaubert and I discussed his youth and early musical education, he told me stories of friends and acquaintances returning to Santa Cruz from England after trips *especially for* buying records. Existing tourism routes—dating back to the 16th century when English aristocrats traveled to Tenerife to climb *El Teide*—have encouraged constant and continual movement between these two locales, such that English rock music of the 1950s and 1960s developed audiences and inspired musicians in the Islands *directly*, rather than through indirect or imported influences from the peninsula or other European countries.²⁴⁷ As tourism from the United Kingdom grew throughout the 20th century, demand for popular music in tourist venues rose. Apart from this influence, though, young musicians such as Jaubert began studying and performing both covers of British rock and their own compositions in similar styles. These records—and later live performances—were the instructional curricula with which Jaubert taught himself. In his

²⁴⁷ On rock music in the Canary Islands, *cf.* Domínguez 2006; Fuentes 1999; Martín Abreu 2002; Pardellas 1993; Ramos 2010; and Reyes 2011. For the history of British tourism in the Canary Islands, *cf.* Section Four and also González Cruz 1995; and González Lemus 2007. *Cf.* also Tascón Trujillo 2005, 23-48. Tascón-Trujillo also mentions Jaubert's group, *Imago*, on page 53 of his book.

early popular music endeavours, Jaubert began a career of musical fusion based around, but not exclusively within, the jazz rock genre. One of his first groups was the band Imago, which toured the islands, recorded, and collaborated with one of Jaubert's teachers, Argentinian pianist Luis Vecchio, the first jazz instructor in the Canary Islands:

Me gustaría añadir datos importantes que te ayuden a comprender mejor lo que ha sucedido en el contexto musical de las islas, sobre todo a partir de 1974, momento clave en la hecha del jazz en Canarias, en el que Luis Vecchio—pianista y compositor argentino graduado en Berklee, Boston—junto a otros músicos latinos, se instalan en Las Palmas de Gran Canaria y en Tenerife creando un centro de estudios de jazz y música moderna que va a influir en muchos jóvenes que desean un cambio cultural en un momento clave de transición política, justo al final de la dictadura military del general Franco...corren aires nuevos y el jazz es sinónimo de libertad de expression y apertura hacia una nueva conceptualización de la música en los ambientes más progresistas de la sociedad canaria...²⁴⁸

By the mid 1970s, Vecchio relocated to the Islands, having already performed there several times—primarily on Gran Canaria and Tenerife with colleagues invited from Europe and the Americas. Vecchio began teaching on the Islands, founding schools for jazz and improvisation studies first in Las Palmas de Canaria and then in La Laguna, Tenerife, in which Miguel Jaubert was one of his first students. By the late 1970s, Vecchio had hired Argentinian saxophonist Bebe Martín to run the school on Tenerife and had promoted some of his first students (again, including Jaubert) to teach at the

²⁴⁸ José Ángel López Viera, email communication with the author, April 1, 2009; emphasis added. My translation: "I would like to add some important information that will help you to better understand that which has occurred in the musical context of the Islands, especially around 1974, a key moment in the facts of jazz in the Canaries, [that moment] in which Luis Vecchio—an Argentinian pianist and composer graduated from Berklee [in] Boston—together with other Latin musicians, settled in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and on Tenerife creating a center for jazz studies and modern music that would influence many young people who were desiring a cultural change in a key moment of political transition, right at the end of the military dictatorship of General Franco...new airs were flowing and jazz is synonymous with liberty and *the opening to a new conceptualization of music* in the more progressive environments of Canarian society."

Schools. Remembered by friend and bandmember, saxophonist Jorge Sylvester as "the Argentinian Sun Ra," Vecchio's music at this time evoked "electric modal funk and jazz, combined with open free improvisation."²⁴⁹ Vecchio taught many students who are still actively performing in the Canaries today, including saxophonist Kike Perdomo, who remembers Vecchio's lessons focusing on developing individualized, improvisational competency and listening to a wide range of recordings.²⁵⁰ Despite Vecchio's training at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Perdomo told me that there was little mention of the so-called U.S. jazz canon, including study of bebop, for example. Perdomo, like Jaubert and many of Vecchio's students, was conservatory trained, but lacked any formal instruction in jazz harmony, history or improvisation.²⁵¹ Vecchio's success on the Islands led to government-sponsored appearances and ensembles, including an appearance as a representative group of Spain at the 1980 Montreax Jazz Festival.²⁵² He continued teaching up until his death, the exact date of which is not known. Pianist Ricardo Curto, one of his last students, remembers Vecchio as anxious about a worsening illness, treatment of which he sought in his native Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he died most probably in November 2002.²⁵³

Inasmuch as Vecchio's schools represented the first coordinated assemblage of musicians studying, socializing, and performing jazz music, these sites are often viewed

²⁴⁹ Sylvester 2010.

²⁵⁰ Keyboardist Juan Belda, another student of Vecchio's, corroborates this information. Cf. "F-MHop" 2009.

²⁵¹ Personal communication with author, October 24, 2010.

²⁵² Martín 1980.

²⁵³ Sylvester 2010.

as the beginning of Canarian jazz. There are, however, documented accounts of earlier performances, both on and outside the Islands. Ethnomusicologist and musician Roberto Cabrera has written about (and discussed with me in person) jazz mentioned in the Islands as early as 1930.²⁵⁴ Both Cabrera and Tascón-Trujillo mention *Orquesta Minerva Jazz*, identified in a 1940 photograph taken in Fuencaliente, La Palma, although the latter describes their repertoire as "*músicaailable no incluía ninguna pieza de algo parecido a jazz, solamente fox-trot, pasodobles, valeses, boleros.*"²⁵⁵ Both Cabrera and Tascón-Trujillo make special mention of José Manuel Cabrera (1927-1982), a multi-instrumentalist, composer, and arranger, from Icod de los Vinos, Tenerife, who achieved international success with dance orchestras (the subject of the second Section in Tascón-Trujillo's book).²⁵⁶ In recounting Cabrera's career throughout the Americas, the author suggests

*Descubre el "blues canario" mientras tocaba blues y lo compara con el duende flamenco y la música sudamericana. Comprobando todo esto mientras hablaba en USA con el saxofonista argentino Leandro "Gato" Barbieri, que perseguía las mezclas en la música improvisada desde esos años 50. Hay que explicar que este blues canario es referido al sentimiento cercano al blues que percibió José Manuel Cabrera con base en la música de las islas, no a un invento musical que sigue el tiempo por el que se desliza el blues.*²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Cabrera 2004.

²⁵⁵ Tascón-Trujillo 2005, 10. My translation: "danceable music including not one composition of anything resembling jazz, only foxtrot, pasodobles, waltzes, boleros." Despite this record of repertoire, we ought not discount the *Orquesta's* use of the word "jazz" in their band name, a fact verified by the photograph published on the same page in Tascón-Trujillo's book: the band's stage fronts spell out "Minerva Jazz."

²⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 19-21.

²⁵⁷ *ibid.*, 20. My translation: "He discovers the 'Canarian blues' while playing the blues and compares it with the *duende* [inspiring emotiveness] of flamenco and South American music. [He was] testing this out while talking in the U.S. with Argentine saxophonist Leandro 'Gato' Barbieri, who had been pursuing mixings in improvised music since the 1950s. It should be explained that this 'Canarian blues' refers to a sentiment similar to the blues that José Manuel Cabrera perceived as having a base in the music of the Islands, not as a musical invention that follows the times as a development of blues."

Although he doesn't explicitly say so or cite his source, it seems from context that Tascón-Trujillo is paraphrasing from José Manuel Cabrera's journal. (I look forward to discussing this further with Cabrera's widow who still lives in Icod de los Vinos.) However, uncorroborated veracity notwithstanding, the comment about "*blues canario*" having a basis in music of the Canary Islands brings us back to fusion. As mentioned in Section Four, cultural fusion is a hallmark of Canarian historical identity, as much as dominant colonial narratives attempt to erase it. That Cabrera might simultaneously perceive Canarian music as both fusion and rooted in Island culture suggests an attitude of the next generation of jazz musicians as well, including Jaubert, Luis Vecchio, and Kike Perdomo.

One of the first performances of the Cebolla Jazz Band, a group with which Perdomo performed in the early 1980s, earned high praise in the Peninsula, where they played at a rock festival in front of a crowd of thousands. Even though the musicians "just starting out" and had little background in jazz, they earned second place, a source of great pride and surprise for the young musicians, according to Perdomo.²⁵⁸ When I asked him about their familiarity with U.S. jazz music, he intimated that they knew very little, but, when they did begin to study and listen to the music, "*empezamos con Wayne Shorter ni Charlie Parker.*"²⁵⁹ Among the many people I have spoken with, Cebolla Jazz Band is commonly regarded as one of the first groups—in the Islands, but especially on Tenerife—that established a level of professionalism and high aesthetic value among

²⁵⁸ Perdomo, personal communication with the author, October 24, 2010; cf. Tascón-Trujillo 2005, 63.

²⁵⁹ Personal communication with author, October 24, 2010. My translation: "We started with Wayne Shorter, not Charlie Parker."

local jazz audiences and practitioners. As I mentioned above, the historical influence of recordings on the development of jazz in the Canary Islands (today continued via social media and internet technologies) often times substituted for the constant interpersonal interaction of colleagues and more advanced musicians as might be gleaned from a larger, more populous "scene." As collectivities of Canarian jazz musicians emerged, the historical consciousness of fusion, the influence of British rock, as well as contemporary consumptive habits compelled them to explore that to which José Manuel Cabrera had alluded: improvised music with *"un base en la música de las islas."* This Section unfolds some of many experiments, fusions, and creative reachings for *jazz canario* as a reflection of local cultural identities, as critique of dominant histories and politics, and as a contestation of ongoing *aislamiento*.

II. Resiting Indigeneity

*Errante, viajera, voy siguiendo su reflejo sin llegar
disfraz en la marea, contraste que revela lo tribal,
oculta entre las brumas, resurge desde un fondo abisal,
exuberante isla, renace como un fénix desde el mar.
viajeros que vararon en sus playas sin pensar, en regresar,
legado de reyes, que perdieron su futuro y libertad.*

San, San, San Borondón, renace desde el mar...

*Aicá maragá, aitutü aguahae
maicá guere, demacihanineigá haruuiti alemakai.²⁶⁰*

²⁶⁰ Julio González, lyrics to "San Borondón," *Montaña Blanca—Folkcommunication*. My translation: "Wanderer, traveler, I am following your reflection without arriving. / Disguised in the tide, show what the tribal reveals. / Hidden among the mists, emerge from the abysmal depths, / lush island, be reborn like a phoenix from the sea. Travelers who were stranded on your beaches without thinking, on their return, about the legacy of kings, who lost their future and liberty. San Borondón, be reborn from the sea [...] Oh, guest, we share your pain. Your mother is dead / and we are defeated. / We should make a marriage covenant." The section after the ellipsis is from an Afro/Canarian inscription referring to emergent inter-island

San Borondón—the mythic island constantly reached for, but never reached—represents one of the strongest discursive tropes in Canarian culture. Its survival, as a foremost testament to colonial failures of circumscribing the Islands, is perpetuated now in large part because of Afro/Canarians re-inscribing tropes of local authenticity—expressed but unable to be articulated, improvised but unable to be codified. The *Centro de la Cultura Popular Canaria* (Center for Popular Canarian Culture) runs a digital magazine and radio station named *San Borondón*, which are appositively named "*voz del pueblo*," the voice of the people. Invoking *San Borondón* (that un/locateable place, un/actuated place of the improvising cartographic imagination) grounds Afro/Canarian performance among the gaps of historical time-space into which the Canary Islands have been located—in the break in which rupture can become potentially generative. When I asked Miguel Jaubert about *San Borondón*, he referred to it as "*la isla adentro*" (the island inside), perhaps a universalist understanding of the limits and promises of isolation. The concept(ual space) of *San Borondón* as improvised through music is a perfect exemplar of this idea: in the constant reworkings and reconfigurations of *San Borondón*—all of which fail to bring about its (re-)emergence—we can glimpse the Afro/Canarian subject in the representationality of the performance.

Jaubert collaborated with poet Francisco Bontempi and percussionist Jose Pedro Pérez (*cf.* Section Eight) on a publication titled "*Cantos de San Borondón*" (Songs of San

Afro/Canarian alliances born out of the mutual suffering of colonial violence, as recorded by Leonardo Torriani in 1590. My translation is based on Professor Ignacio Reyes's Spanish translation and analysis of the text. *Cf.* Reyes 2007; Álvarez Delgado 1944, 113-21; and Cabrera 2010, 56-7.

Borondón), a multi-media (prose, poetry, and music) reflection on the Island. In the prosaic introduction, the poet Bontempi confronts the evidence-fetishizing audience member living in "*el tiempo concreto y asfáltico*" (the concrete and asphaltic moment) by un/naming the un/nameable, circling around the un/circumscribeable:

*Si alguien me preguntara ¿Y qué es San Borondón? Yo le diría: "San Borondón es un lugar en alguna parte y en ninguna. Al mismo tiempo es un tiempo, un tiempo bueno. San Borondón es el espacio-tiempo donde el amor se hace consciencia de ser, donde el amor unifica su materia de orilla a orilla. [...] San Borondón es el Paraíso, un cierto estado de la Realidad. San Borondón es un espejismo para la percepción ordinaria, para el pensamiento condicionado: un quiebre en el espejo del espíritu, pero un quiebre útil: a través de esa grieta se asoma, vastísima, la ola sin tiempo ni lugar que abarca todas las existencias. [...] San Borondón es San Borondón. San Borondón es un cuento. San Borondón es música. San Borondón es la aventura del magma convertido en buscador de sí mismo."*²⁶¹

Bontempi's evocative preamble unfolds so many aforementioned themes discussed in this document, and serves as a useful catalyst—grounding past theories and gestures among the musicians with whom I have been working—for our discussion of "making the break." Bontempi's cracked mirror suggests Bartoloni's broken death mask from Section Three: a surfacing structure that encapsulates and frames, the visible scratches in which compel re/viewing and re/listening in the mix. The surplus of meanings and associations Bontempi graphs onto *San Borondón* resonates with the many cartographic reaches for *San Borondón*. Confronted with these co-existing surpluses that have continually failed in

²⁶¹ Bontempi and Jaubert 2004, 11. My translation: "If someone were to ask me, 'And what is San Borondón? I would tell them: 'San Borondón is a place somewhere and nowhere. At the same time, it's a time, a good time. San Borondón is the space-time where love becomes conscience of being, where love joins one's matter from shore to shore. [...] San Borondón is the Paradise, a certain state of the Reality. San Borondón is an illusion for ordinary perception, for the conditioned thought: a break in the mirror of the spirit, but a useful break: through that crack peers out, [that] most vast [one], the wave without time or place that washes over all existences. [...] San Borondón is San Borondón. San Borondón is a story. San Borondón is music. San Borondón is the adventure of the magma converted into a searcher for itself."

re/presenting the Island, we must re/consider the conditions of failure, allow these differences to play deconstructively with and among each other, and wait for emerging identities to peer out.

As elaborated in Section Four, the un/history of the *canario* dance in the Canary Islands leaves the name open to many interpretations: in the same way that the *canario* came to represent many, disparate views and sounds on and of the Islands, so too does Afro/Canarian identity, in its lack of fixity, remain open to interpretative slips and re/forms. In bringing together the local Canarian jazz traditions of fusion and improvisation with those of Canarian traditional music, many musicians have realized the potentiality of self-expression and mobility around imposed structures. This section outlines some of those potentialities as musicians engage with particular Canarian folkloric genres. These improvising re/soundings of the Afro/Canarian often lie in the interstices among codified genre boundaries—with musical characteristics, as well as personnel, moving quite freely among performances and projects.

This continual accruing of surplus mappings characterizes "*canario*" (the qualifier, song form, and/or cultural identity) as an uncircumscribable whole—a host of attendant, disparate meanings. And yet, the collective discursive cohesion (as wide a range of interpretations as could describe such a condition as cohesive) that forms around "*jazz canario*" usually begins with the group Jazz Borondón.²⁶² When I first arrived in Tenerife and told people of my project about "*jazz canario, y jazz hecho en Canarias*"

²⁶² Jazz Borondón included Luis Fernández (keyboards), Ruskin Herman (guitar), Alfredo Llanos (drums), Jose Carlos Machado (bass), Jose Pedro Pérez (percussion), and Kike Perdomo (saxophones).

(Canarian jazz, and jazz made in the Canaries), people spoke to me of this group in near mythic terms of local authenticity—as in, "*el primero verdadero*," "*el principio*," and "*la canariedad auténtica* (the first true, the beginning, authentic canarian-ness).

The group's two records—*Borondón* (1990) and *Botaraste* (1992)—mark what are widely regarded as the first attempts of fusing jazz with traditional and folkloric Afro/Canarian music. Compositions invoke certain local musical forms through names ("Arrorró,"²⁶³ "Berlina,"²⁶⁴ "Tango,"²⁶⁵ as well as the "Paraiso" Bontempi invokes), compositional elements, and performance techniques culled from Afro/Canarian music, and yet are very much aesthetically contemporary with the U.S. and British jazz-rock fusion bands mentioned above. Like the *canario*, the Canarian songform called *tango*, on which I will elaborate further below, deceptively subsumes many different performance practices, theorized origins, and artistic interpretations in the Islands. Jazz Borondón's fusion aesthetic and its use of samples and quotations (*cf.* the discussion of the group's *arrorró* in Section Five) translate, articulate, and improvise on the history of mapping(-)surplus associated with *San Borondón* and the Canary Islands into a musical mode. Jazz Borondón's arrangement of the *tango* (from their album *Botaraste*) features a binary form that oscillates between a vamp in which the bass and drums perform a traditional Canarian *tango* rhythmic figure and a jazz rock setting of a traditional *tango* melody, performed by guitarist Ruskin Herman.²⁶⁶ The ensemble cycles through this structure

²⁶³ *Cf.* Section Five.

²⁶⁴ *Cf.* Díaz Reyes and Pérez 2004.

²⁶⁵ *Cf.* Jordán Hernández and Machín Jiménez 2006.

²⁶⁶ *Cf.* Valentina la de Sabinosa's performance of this melody cited in note 62 below.

several times, elaborating each time: the first establishes the foundation, synthesizing elements of Afro/Canarian musical history; the second re/views this foundation, adding a keyboard improvisation onto this foundation; the third and final iteration re/states the first iteration, but augments it with a choir singing along with Herman's melody. As the melody and track fades (back) into silence, Herman further elaborates, superimposes, and improvises soloistic embellishments above the choir whose sung melody lacks lyrics, performed as composed, "scatted" non-linguistic phonemes. Once again, the Afro/Canarian sounds *outside, around, and in spite of* its linguistic isolation.

Jazz Borondón serves as a historical origin for the Afro/Canarian jazz community on the Islands. This sense of inter-island community—referenced in another historical moment by the *aicá maragá* inscription—survives in Canarian concepts of *canariedad* (canarian-ness) and *insularidad* (island-ness), the latter being a more general understanding of the former. Both grapple with imposed *aislamiento* and the distancing lack associated with isolation. Musical examples of *canariedad* will appear throughout, but two invocations of *insularidad* stand out in their differing portrayals of the impeding and facilitating potentialities of the island space. On their 2010 recording, *Lejanía* (Remoteness), brothers Eduardo and Enrique Fernández-Villamil present a series of original compositions, leading an ensemble they name the Fermez Quartet. The brothers from Gran Canaria own and operate the studio from which the album was issued. In my discussions with guitarist Enrique about the album's reception, he lamented the lack of audience on the island for their original compositions, adding that the harmonic language, complex time signatures (as in the track titled "3+3+4=7+3"), and improvisation styles of

the quartet further alienated audiences. In his composition work, as well as music production, and marketing of this recording, Enrique utilizes virtual technologies to reach larger audiences, but cautions against a utopian vision of such technologies, hinting at certain embodied competencies without which he feels these technologies will not necessarily extend one's reach: "*el soporte de las nuevas tecnologías aportan muchas facilidades a los músicos de hoy, pero también suponen un riesgo para todos aquellos que las emplean sin fundamento.*"²⁶⁷ Fermez Quartet's album accentuates the multiple forms of *aislamiento* at work against the Afro/Canarian jazz musician: by foregrounding compositional elements that compel him artistically while further driving him away from popular audience consumptive habits, Enrique Fernández-Villamil strikes at the dissonances of *aislamiento*. While satisfied with the music as a manner of self-expression, Enrique felt it was at the expense of the album's potential distribution even with the island, in addition to the seemingly impossible task of circulating the recording to the Peninsula and beyond.²⁶⁸ The audience he can reach is not interested in his work, while those audiences that would be lie beyond his technologically-facilitated net/working.

In contrast, the bassist Charlie Moreno, also from Gran Canaria, explores the generative possibilities for *insularidad*. Published in 2007, *Island Style*, plays on popular

²⁶⁷ n.a., 2005a. My translation: "The support of new technologies affords many conveniences to the musicians of today but they also pose a risk for all those who utilize them without proper training."

²⁶⁸ Personal communication with author, November 1, 2010.

tropes of island tourism (as in the *playa y sol* tourism of the Canary Island beaches²⁶⁹), aiming at drawing connections to the trans-Atlantic world and beyond. Moreno—whose success has afforded him relocation out of the Islands to Barcelona, internationally produced and distributed recordings, as well as trans-Atlantic performances—pays homage to bassist Richard Bona, a well-known Cameroonian bassist and global performer, whose soloistic style Moreno emulates. Moreno also communicates his reaching toward the generative potential of the insular and wider dispersion of his recordings through his use of English titles. Moreno's artistic vision situates him in the jazz-rock/fusion tradition (among others, especially funk), with particular influence from bassist Jaco Pastorius. In a 2008 interview with *La Provincia*, Moreno addresses his reaching for international audiences and his tactics of musical fusion:

- La Provincia*: [Island Style] es un disco de amplio espectro en cuanto a estilos.
Moreno: *Hubo que desechar bastante material del que tenía preconcebido para el disco. La decisión de Chuck Loeb a este respecto me pareció acertada. Sobre todo, porque si algo me caracteriza es procurar llegar al mayor número de público posible, y en mi música se juntan diferentes lenguajes, ya sea el del jazz, world music, o funk, un estilo por el que tengo una gran debilidad. Todo ello con un trasfondo jazzístico que hace que sea un producto asequible para todo el mundo. Cuando escucho música nunca pongo etiquetas y no quiero que lo que hago se encasille de una manera o de otra, porque lo único que consigue es cerrar puertas.*
- La Provincia*: *Habla de fusión como la pauta en la que descansa toda su música. ¿No cree que se tiende a abusar de este concepto con el riesgo de banalizar la calidad y originalidad de la música?*
- Moreno: *En la fusión está la riqueza de la música, y ahora mismo no hay nada puro. ¿Cómo podemos decir que alguien en concreto interpreta un estilo de música puro? Todo es fusión, y a veces se exagera con este concepto. No le doy tanta importancia, pero sé que juega un tremendo papel a la hora de desarrollar cualquier género, hay que alimentarse de cosas*

²⁶⁹ For more on touristic surfaces, particularly the imported sand that covers the Canarian beaches, cf. Section Ten.

*nuevas que generalmente vienen de la necesidad de mezclar cosas para que suene a lo que tú quieres, tu propio estilo, que es lo que hace que te identifiques como artista, el encontrar un camino distinto al que está marcado, al fácil. Un músico busca su propia voz.*²⁷⁰

In a later interview (a series of questions submitted by readers), Moreno discusses the unique *aislamiento* he experiences as an artist whose native home literally cannot place (site/cite) his music:

*O las grandes salas para hacer conciertos o presentaciones de disco como la que ahora promociono donde a veces parece no haber cabida ni presupuesto para los proyectos de los músicos canarios, cuando después ves que esas mismas salas siguen programando espectáculos 20 veces más caros que el proyecto de uno. ¿Suficiente? Creo que se podría hacer mucho más por los músicos en Canarias.*²⁷¹

In the interview, this statement immediately precedes Moreno's response to his question of why he did not stage the release for his 2011 recording, *Subway to Venus*, in a larger auditorium: "*el proyecto de presentación de disco se ofreció a las salas más importantes*

²⁷⁰ [n.a.], 2008a. My translation: "[La Provincia]: '[*Island Style*] is a disc of broad spectrum in terms of styles.' [Moreno]: 'There was enough material to put aside that had been pre-conceived for the disc. Chuck Loeb's decision in this respect seems right in this respect. Above all, because if something that characterizes me is to try to get to the larger public possible, and in my music different languages are brought together, it would be either jazz, world music, or funk, a style that for me I have the greatest weakness. All that with a jazz background that makes the product available to the whole world. When I listen to music I never assign labels [to it] and I do not want what I make to be pigeon-holed in one way or another, because the only thing that follows is the closing of doors.' [La Provincia]: 'You talk of fusion as the standard in which all your music rests. Don't you believe that people tend to abuse this concept at the risk of trivializing the quality and originality of the music?' [Moreno]: 'In fusion there is a richness in the music, and now at the same time there is nothing pure. How can we say that someone particularly interprets a style of pure music? Everything is fusion, and sometimes it's exaggerated in this concept. I don't give it too much importance, but I know that it plays a tremendous role when developing whichever genre, one must feed one new things that generally come from the necessity of mixing things to sound like what you want, your own style, that is what makes you identify yourself as an artist, to encounter a distinct path to that which is marked, to ease. A musician searches for his/her own voice.'"

²⁷¹ [n.a.] 2011a, "Entrevista-chat: Charlie Moreno, bajista," *La Provincia* (April 5), <http://comunidad.laprovincia.es/entrevista-chat/2341/Encuentro-digital/charlie-moreno-bajista/entrevista.html>. My translation: "'Or the great halls to stage concerts or presentations of discs like that which I am promoting now where sometimes there seems to be no room nor budget for the projects of Canarian musicians, when after you see that those same halls have been programming spectacles twenty times more expensive than the proposed one. [Is that] enough? I think that much more could be done for the musicians in the Canaries.'"

entre las que están las que mencionas. Tristemente, todas dieron la negativa por respuesta y tuve que buscar por mi cuenta un espacio en el que hacer llegar mi nueva música al público canario."²⁷² Though Moreno reaches toward larger audiences by appealing to "global sounds" and popular conceptions of "island-ness," he finds the same lack of support for his music in the Canaries that stifles the Fermez Quartet. In fact, these two different artistic depictions of *insularidad* and *aislamiento* presented by Fernández-Villamil and Moreno resonate with and are replicated in many other aspects of Canarian life:

*Sin embargo, lejos de constituir una característica exclusiva de la geografía, la insularidad ha definido también la cultura y la idiosincrasia de los isleños. En el caso de Canarias, aislamiento y cosmopolitismo, emigración y presencia extranjera, tradición y vanguardia, son algunas de las dimensiones que, en una relación de difícil equilibrio, han contribuido a definir nuestra insularidad.*²⁷³

La insularidad, la naturaleza física fragmentada de Canarias, tiende a atomizarnos anímicamente, a introducir en nosotros un virus de dispersión. Se trata de combatir esa tendencia y de articular un discurso cultural y político superador de las inconveniencias geográficas: o nos convertimos en los siete pecados capitales o en las siete maravillas del mundo...

*La insularidad es una condición geográfica; el insularismo es una ideología. Al ser un archipiélago dependiente de poderes estatales ajenos a él, el canario ha sido siempre manipulado desde el exterior y enfrentado en su propio territorio repartido. Es nuestro sino. También es nuestro mayor reto cultural y político el vencer ese hándicap.*²⁷⁴

²⁷² *ibid.* My translation: "The project of the disc release was offered to the most important venues among those that you mentioned. Sadly, all of them gave a negative response and I had to look myself for a space in which to bring my new music to the Canarian public."

²⁷³ Martín Hernández 1997. My translation: "Without a doubt, far from constituting a characteristic exclusive to geography, insularity also has defined the culture and particularity of Islanders. In the case of the Canaries, isolation and cosmopolitanism, emigration and the presence of foreigners, tradition and vanguard, are some of the dimensions that, in relation to a difficult equilibrium, have contributed to defining our insularity."

²⁷⁴ García Ramos [n.d.]. My translation: "Insularity, the physical, fragmented nature of the Canaries, tends to separate us emotionally, to introduce among us a virus of dispersion. One should attempt to combat that

On the Canary Islands, *insularidad* determines international economic policy, political legislation, and many other aspects of everyday life; however, like *aislamiento* it is both actual and conceptual, presenting multiple types of isolation to be engaged creatively and critically.

As with the myth of *San Borondón*, *canariedad*, *insularidad* and *aislamiento* are constantly re-appropriated for their generative potential. By focusing on the characteristics of indigeneity, Afro/Canarians build communal belonging that reframes lack and absence as local particularity and authenticity. I alluded to this in the Section Five and will develop further in Section Nine; however, here I would like to introduce the notion of consumption as critique: that is, production, valuation, and consumption of local products as buttresses for local authenticity. Jazz Borondón, Miguel Jaubert, Julio González, the Fermez Quartet, and Charlie Moreno are all fusing elements of *insularidad* and *aislamiento* with individual and collective musical aesthetics to re/view and augment *canariedad* as an uncircumscribable whole inherently resistant to the cartographic gaze and critical of the structures of power that have and continue to marginalize and isolate them. By elaborating on the critical potentiality of improvised, embodied action, these musicians re/write the everyday phenomena that comprise *canariedad* as fusion, surplus, and open to revision.

tendency and to articulate a cultural and political discourse overcoming of those geographic inconveniences: either we convert ourselves into the seven deadly sins or the seven wonders of the world...Insularity is a geographic condition; insularism is an ideology. Being in an archipelago dependent on state powers foreign to him[/her], the Canarian has always been manipulated from the outside and confronted in his[/her] own divided territory. It is our fate. Also it is our major cultural and political challenge to overcome this handicap."

On his recording *Ropa Vieja*, bassist Jose Carlos Machado explores fusion of cuisine and traditional Afro/Canarian through improvised jazz music. Machado's work, like many of these creative re-framings, can be considered programmatic to the degree that liner notes, or at least song titles, suggest certain extra-musical phenomena intended to resonate with local audiences. While performing and recording widely with groups on the Islands, Machado—one of Luis Vecchio's first students and a member of Jazz Borondón—only recorded his first album as leader, *Azul Marina*, in 1996. *Ropa Vieja* (Old Clothes), a popular Canarian dish, is also a local staple in Cuba, where I had first eaten it. (My first meal of *ropa vieja* on Tenerife was a lesson in culinary translation: whereas shredded meat is the main protein in Cuban *ropa vieja*, garbanzo beans are featured in the Canarian version.) Each track on Machado's album is titled for Canarian cuisine, the few exceptions being for personal acquaintances. Moreover, each track is labeled as a particular music form on which the composition and improvisations are based. The first is "Borondongo," "*dedicado a los increíbles músicos que han participado en este disco y al grupo 'Jazz Borondón,' sin duda una de mis mejores experiencias musicales,*" is a play on word fusion: Borondón and *sorondongo* are joined in a song whose form Machado describes as "*coplas de la purísima Lanzarote.*"²⁷⁵ Machado dedicates "Arepa," named for the Venezuelan street food very popular in the Canaries, to "*todos los emigrantes canarios que huyeron a Venezuela buscando su futuro, como mi*

²⁷⁵ Machado, liner notes to *Ropa Vieja*. My translations: the track, "dedicated to the incredible musicians who have participated on this disc and to the group 'Jazz Borondón,' without a doubt one of my favorite musical experiences," is based on "*coplas* of the most pure Lanzarote." The *sorondongo* is regarded as one of the pre-colonial survivals of Afro-Canarian culture. Cf. Pérez 2005, and below, in the sub-section titled "Melodic surplus and reaching for the *sorondongo*."

abuela 'Tata' que murió allí."²⁷⁶ The epigram associated with the title track deserves special mention for its lack of formal association: "*Este tema no tiene relación directa con nada en concreto. Es una suma de ideas dispares. Dedicado a grupos que intentaron mezclar con otras tendencias: Taburiente, Taller Canario, Rogelio Botanz.*"²⁷⁷ Regarding his own reaches for fusion, Machado is quite articulate in his thoughts on the project:

Con estos temas me he intentado dar forma a una de mis mayores obsesiones como músico: encontrar un puente entre el folclore canario y la "fusión" del jazz y el rock. He escogido algunas cosas que me han llamado mucho la atención para intentar crear "algo" que tuviera la esencia de lo "antiguo" y combinara con las tendencias actuales (de la música popular) que más me atraen.

*En todos los temas (salvo en "Ropa Vieja" y "Sopa de Ajos") existen elementos extraídos de algún "toque" o danza canaria (claves rítmicas, recursos melódicos, etc.) y se mueven con un "groove" o acompañamiento de bajo y batería construido sobre la base de la pieza original. Aunque se que mi objetivo es extremadamente ambicioso espero estar en el camino adecuado e ir perfeccionándolo en el futuro.*²⁷⁸

For this particular album, the path Machado travels brings the Canarian traditions of musical and cultural fusion to critical engagement of and at the Afro/Canarian table—in

²⁷⁶ Machado, liner notes to *Ropa Vieja*. My translation: to "all the Canarian emigrants who fled to Venezuela searching for their future, like my grandmother 'Tata' who died there."

²⁷⁷ *ibid.* My translation: "This track does not have a direct relation with anything concrete. It is a collection of disparate [articulated?] ideas. I dedicate [it] to groups that have tried to mix with other tendencies: Taburiente, Taller Canario, Rogelio Botanz." These are three of the most important groups in Canarian popular music history. For more on Botanz, *cf.* the conclusion of this Section, and Sections Five and Eight.

²⁷⁸ *ibid.* My translation: "With these tracks I have tried to give form to one of my greatest obsessions as a musician: to find a link between Canarian folklore and the 'fusion' of jazz and rock. I have selected certain things that caught my attention to try to create 'something' that had the essence of the 'ancient' and combine it with the current trends (of popular music) that attract me the most. In all the tracks (except 'Ropa Vieja' and 'Sopa de Ajos') there are elements extracted from some Canarian 'rhythm' or dance (rhythmic claves, melodic resources, etc.) and they move with a 'groove' or bass and drum accompaniment constructed on the basis of the original piece. In that my objective is extremely ambitious, I hope to be on an adequate path and to continue perfecting it in the future."

much the same way the naming of my quartet Mojo Ribs has— where Machado makes citationally-informed reaches and elaborations on this base/base of Afro/Canarian culture in order to continue re/working (*perfeccionándolo*) into the future.

Multi-instrumentalist Roberto Cabrera, mentioned above in reference to his historical research, has similarly spent his career constructing and exploring the *puente* of which Machado writes. Cabrera's main group, Gato Gótico (Gothic Cat), has been active since the 1980s and has explored many facets of Afro/Canarian culture through musical projects. As it pertains to "resiting indigeneity" and critique through consumption, I would like to begin with Gato Gótico's re/placing and reciting the diversity of Afro/Canarian languages onto the Islands' spaces, also accomplished, like Machado's *Ropa Vieja*, through the con/texts of album liner notes. As I'll discuss in the next Section, the repertoire covered by Gato Gótico spans traditional Afro/Canarian, North and West African, Macaronesian, South American, Caribbean, North American, and trans-Atlantic cultures. In an effort to more clearly demonstrate the linguistic plurality of Canarian culture, Gato Gótico (and Cabrera specifically) lists the compositions on *Nagwa* (1989), *Makaronesia* (1992), *Música para Namu* (1992), and *Ahul fell-awen* (1999) in both Spanish and Tamazight. The written commentary published in *Nagwa* demonstrates the group's interest in re-imagining the Afro/Canarian culture through fusion:

El presente trabajo, Nagwa, especialmente dedicado a las atmósferas norteafricanas, hace alusión al trayecto de búsqueda de identidad artística de un grupo canario de creadores que bajo el rótulo lezamiano de Gato Gótico, ha vendido cubriendo más de una década con frutos de sus progresivas investigaciones en la fusión de ritmos y estilos. Asimismo es un reconocimiento al viaje de ida y vuelta de músicas exóticas que desde el espacio makaronésico y

*africano partieron hacia América, para desembocar en la experiencia multiétnica del jazz.*²⁷⁹

This statement draws a clear connection between the intercultural dialogue of North Africa and the Canary Islands and the formation of jazz in North America—to be discussed in depth in the next Section—but Cabrera signals this through language as well. Composition titles such as "Afrocubano/Ifrikukuba" (Afrocuban), "Islas Salvajes/Tigzirin Tiduzin" (Salvage Islands) and "El Mismo Océano/Agaraw Iman-is," (The Same Ocean) emphasize the interconnectedness of musical cultures by presenting a multilingual name. As in Section Three, I would argue here that the virgule (/) articulates the linguistic/cultural plurality in every sense. By binding the two language structures together while clearly demarcating the difference between the two, I believe Gato Gótico is not suggesting one as translation *in lieu* of the other (as I did with parentheses), but rather the co-presence of two different languages moving back and forth *with* the other. The language of the Afro/Canarian is not one or the other, it is both, represented by the

²⁷⁹ Liner notes to *Nagwa*. My translation: "The present work, *Nagwa*, especially dedicated to North African atmospheres, alludes to the course of searching for artistic identity of a Canarian group of creators who, under the Lezaman name Gato Gótico, has been meeting for more than a decade with fruits of their progressive research in the fusion of rhythms and styles. At the same time it is a recognition of the voyage of *ida y vuelta* of exotic musics that left from the Macaronesian and African space for America, and led to the multi-ethnic experience of jazz." Claiming a connection to the historical development of jazz in the United States is a powerful authenticating trope in Afro/Canarian jazz discourse; *cf.* Section Eight. For an example of Gato Gótico's performance of Afro/Canarian connections to North Africa, *cf.* the live collaborative performance in Algeria posted here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7Bjmqc1KMM>. Also *cf.* the music video for their composition "Bejaïa," named for a gulf in Kabylia, a northern region Algeria long considered part of the Amazigh nation, posted here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2TsAwFEUyQ.

articulated juxtaposition of both in a creative display of continuously failing representations of language.²⁸⁰

III. Schema/Suite Three: Re/sounding Music

"Propósitos y azares":

Este trabajo ha sido el resultado de una mezcla de propósitos y azares, en el particular camino hacia la 'reidentificación' con nosotros mismos y con lo que nos rodea. Los músicos que han participado en este proyecto son propietarios de ese sentimiento de búsqueda y sin ellos este disco sólo hubiera sido un sueño irreal, una evocación imposible.²⁸¹

The album for which guitarist Juan Carlos Martín wrote these liner notes, begins with a "canario," an incipient gesture rooting his reachings for personal, cultural, and musical identities in an unfolding elaboration of this densely packed qualifier.²⁸² The arrangement, written by my friend, pianist Julio Tejera, features periods in which aerophones and membranophones alternate with an ensemble of keyboards, guitar, percussion and bass. The first section begins prominent percussion with a call and response of melodying between the flute and Martín's guitar, which transitions after a minute, fading into the introduction of the "canario" melody and the second ensemble. Short improvisations by the keyboardist and Martín provide a transition into the third section of the piece: where the two ensembles (and their concomitant settings of the

²⁸⁰ In Section Ten, I will discuss how similar critiques of cartography are enacted through invocations of Afro/Canarian ecological and architectural spaces.

²⁸¹ Liner notes to Juan Carlos Martín, *Evocaciones*. My translation: "This work has been the result of a mix of certainties and chances, in the direct path toward 'reidentification' with our own selves and with that which surrounds us. The musicians that have participated in this project are proponents of that feeling for searching and without them this disc would only have been an unreal dream, an impossible evocation."

²⁸² Cf. Sections Four, Eight, and Nine.

canario) merge. The arc of the arrangement echoes Martín's words written in the liner notes: individual histories and embodied competencies come together improvisationally, from which new understandings of the *canario*—as songform and individual—emerge. This reach toward new soundings is the Afro/Canarian reach that introduces into the mix contextually- and citationally-informed (sited and cited) critical improvisations (*una mezcla de propósitos y azares*) that break the silence/ings.

Cháracas and Citing the tanganyillo: Unlike the *canario*, the *tanganyillo* is considered one of the pre-colonial Afro/Canarian music/dance forms to have survived in practice through the present day.²⁸³ Musicologist Lothar Siemens Hernández describes it as "*un tipo de seguidillas caracterizado por un período melódico más amplio, en el que el texto cantado se extiende en reiteraciones de ciertas palabras.*"²⁸⁴ Based mainly in Tenerife, this dance is usually considered separate from the importations of European music and, in folkloric performances, can often be paired with the *santo domingo* and *tajaraste*, two other pre-colonial Afro/Canarian dances.²⁸⁵ However, as the short quote from Siemens Hernández and the discussion of the *arorró* in Section Five suggest, scholarship and analysis of traditional Afro/Canarian music is often text-driven, characterizing and defining

²⁸³ Cf. Cabrera 2010, 88; and Lefranc 1942.

²⁸⁴ Siemens Hernández 1977, 52; excerpted online at Siemens Hernández [n.d.]. My translation: "a type of seguidilla characterized by a larger melodic period, in which the sung text is extended with reiterations of particular words." For the etymological origins of the *tanganyillo*, cf. García González, 2008, 135.

²⁸⁵ An example of such a performance can be seen at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F98BZu8XhhA>. Martín performs the *tanganyillo* on *Evocaciones* with this arranged pairing. *Timplista* Germán López performs a *tanganyillo* on his recording, *Silencio roto*, discussed in Section Nine. Here I wish to re-emphasize the importance of following the provided links for listening; only through listening, coupled with reading and thinking through whatever additional analysis or con/text I might provide, can the text be realized.

songforms by their lyrical content. As I have continued to demonstrate throughout this Section and the whole document, the citationally-informed reaches of and toward Afro/Canarian culture draw from and are employed in every aspect of everyday life. One way in which Canarian music is marked as Afro/Canarian is through instrumentation, particularly through the *cháracas*, Afro/Canarian castanets, that are "*utilizadas en las danzas tradicionales de mayor arcaísmo, fundamentalmente de las islas occidentales.*"²⁸⁶

Jose Carlos Machado describes the third track of his album, *Ropa Vieja*, entitled "Condumio" as a "*tanganillo o tajaraste de Teno.*" *Condumio*, a stewed dish usually made with rabbit, is served in the north of Tenerife, the same region known for the *tanganillo*; Teno is the point most northwest of Tenerife, also located in this region. Toward the end of the track (at 3:06 in a track lasting 3:57), Machado introduces the *chácaras* into the ensemble that consists of piano, bass, and drums. It is at this point that the listener realizes that the melody as expressed by the piano throughout the composition is a translation of a *tanganillo* rhythm usually played by the *chácaras*. The re/contextualization of the *chácaras* as melodic source pronounces an alternate, critical re/sounding of the *tanganillo* as a songform driven by text.

Although she uses text, vocalist Luisa Machado, also of Tenerife, performs "Tanganillos en Flor" on her highly regarded album, *Más por menos*, with original lyrics emphasizing the singular subjectivity of a citationally-informed pronouncing. Machado is

²⁸⁶ López Izquierdo 1996; my translation: "used in the most ancient traditional dances, mainly of the western islands [Tenerife, El Hierro, La Gomera, and La Palma]." The *cháracas* are almost as widely recognized as the *timple* and are imbued with similar iconic discursive potentiality. Cf. Section Nine. For additional information on *chácaras*, including an indepth discussion of their use in La Gomera, cf. López Viera 2003, 174-192.

well known as a former member of the aforementioned Taburiente, one of the most important 20th century folk popular music groups in the Canary Islands, known for its celebration of Afro/Canarian culture and politicized lyrics that advocate for Canarian independence from the Peninsula. Machado's lyrics to "Tanganillo en Flor" convey a similar sentiment:

*Es nuestra la suerte, es nuestra la suerte / Cariñosos los ritmos y también /
Las cercanas fuentes, las cercanas fuentes / Que a las cumbres del alma sólo se
sube / Sólo se sube, sólo se sube / Siempre y cuando tu entiendas y que te
pronuncies / Y que te pronuncies y que te pronuncies / Porque todo en el arte es
muy guerrero / Es muy guerrero, es muy guerrero [...] Nuestra la historia,
nuestra la historia / Si la quieres seguir es otra meritoria.²⁸⁷*

Machado sings about the cite/site of local particularity and ushers *los ritmos*, non-linguistic sources of self-invention, into the discussions from which they have been isolated. This *aislamiento* of "*nuestra historia*" is what makes Afro/Canarian art so warlike (*guerrero*). "Tanganillo en flor"—the *tanganillo* in bloom—presents the emergence of Afro/Canarian identity as singularity in a narrative and call to action that re/forms linguistic lack as potentiality with which the silenced subject can pronounce herself.

As a Canarian studying and working in the Netherlands, saxophonist Jose Ángel Vera is staging his re/framing of Afro/Canarian history in a unique forum—at university. Challenging the Spanish repudiation of studying popular music at the postsecondary level, Vera has been working and studying in The Hague, Netherlands, on a new project,

²⁸⁷ Luisa Machado 2009. My translation: "It's our luck, it's our luck / they're our loving rhythms and also / nearby sources, nearby sources / that one alone rises to the soul's summit / one alone rises, alone rises / always when you understand and pronounce yourself / and that you pronounce yourself and that you pronounce yourself / because everything in art is very warlike / it's very warlike, very warlike [...] It's our history, our history / if you want to follow it, that's also praiseworthy."

titled "Manao" that explores the topic of this Section: the re/working of Afro/Canarian identity through jazz and improvised music. Even though they are only now (as of the writing of this dissertation in Spring 2012) recording the project, Manao has been performing for several years. All the group's compositions are arranged by Vera and the group features Danish and Spanish musicians improvising Afro/Canarian music. The group's arrangement of the *tanganillo*, as performed at the 2009 WOMAD festival in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, has been posted on youtube in three parts.²⁸⁸ At the beginning of the first video, the drummer, Francesco de Rubeis, is playing two traditional percussion parts: the three long strokes correspond to striking the head of a drum, and the subsequent five shorter are played either by sliding the drum mallet between the drum's frame, striking alternating sides, or by another percussionist playing the part on the *cháracas*, as Vera does.²⁸⁹ The musicians encourage the audience to participate the performance, staging a collective pronouncement of Afro/Canarian identity through Machado's *ritmos y cercanas fuentes*. This emergent collective is buttressed by stage lighting that pulses the performed rhythm in unison with the musicians and audiences. For a more recent concert, Manao was described as offering:

un trepidante recorrido a través del folclore isleño con savia de jazz. La identidad de los diferentes y arraigados ritmos (tanganillos, aires de lima, polkas) se

²⁸⁸ "Perlujito," "Manao – WOMAD 2009 – 'Tanganillo.'" (February 14, 2010)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMLLvsMGcKc> (part one),
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aeiKnCQH48> (part two), and
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yI627mMK-5s> (part three).

²⁸⁹ I learned this rhythm and performance technique on *tambor gomero* (drum from El Gomero) and the *tambor herreño* (drum from El Hierro) from Rogelio Botanz. A video from a more traditional setting, the procession for the *Fiesta de Las Rosas* (Festival of the Roses), can be seen at the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mb7OBiy1zfQ>.

*proyecta con una joven ambición dando lugar a la posmodernidad de la tradición. Todo ello con cuidados arreglos y combinado con composiciones propias dotadas de una fuerte personalidad que encuentra su punto fuerte en la apertura de sus improvisaciones.*²⁹⁰

Here again Canarian ecology provides the roots and routes for the Afro/Canarian subject emerging through the crack in the mirror: the scratchy slippage in the mix through a constructed surplus of improvising differences. The rooted rhythms sited and cited in the non-linguistic openings of their improvisations, re/sounding through *chácaras*, drumsets, handclaps, piano licks, light displays, and guitar riffs.

*Melodic Surplus and Reaching for the sorondongo: "Dentro del conjunto de canciones y danzas folclóricas del Archipiélago Canario existen algunos géneros que se han resistido hasta hoy a su clasificación y al estudio de sus orígenes."*²⁹¹ The folklore scholar, Professor Manuel González Ortega, begins his book on the *sorondongo* with this sentence, siting the songform on the musical periphery of the Canarian traditional music canon. The *sorondongo*, he suggests, suffers from "*marginalidad nacida de su antigüedad*" ("marginality borne from its ancient-ness"), in which centuries of unfolding performances have mapped onto the songform a wide range of sometimes markedly

²⁹⁰ Canarias Jazz Showroom 2011. My translation: "an exciting journey through *isleño* folklore with the sap [lifeblood] of jazz. The identity of the varied and rooted rhythms (*tanganillos*, *aires de lima*, *polkas*) casts itself with a youthful ambition siting the postmodernity of the tradition. All this combined with careful arrangements and their own compositions endowed with a strong personality that finds its strong point in the opening of their improvisations."

²⁹¹ González Ortega 1995, 11. My translation: "Within the group of songs and folkloric dances of the Canarian Archipelago there exist some genres that up to today have resisted classification and the study of their origins." Notice that González Ortega imbues the songform with an agency that *actively* resists against the surveying eye of scholarly attention.

different characteristics.²⁹² While González Ortega and other sources maintain that the *sorondongo* has cultural, historical, and musical precedents (e.g., the peninsular *jeringonza*, the Andalusian *zorongo*, or the *baile de pámpano roto* from pre-colonial Gran Canaria),²⁹³ he suggests that especially because of these uncertain origins and a wide range of interpretative performance practices and variations, the *sorondongo* occupies a peripheral space among both performance and research practices. Historically associated most often with Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura, and Lanzarote, the *sorondongo*, like the *tanganillo*, receives much attention in modern re-conceptions of Afro/Canarian music, yet another reason for the marginalization within the Canarian folklore communities that González Ortega suggests, where normative performance practice and repertoire emphasize Canarian appropriations of peninsular Spanish culture. For its perceived longevity, particularly as a pre-colonial survival, the *sorondongo* appeals to those reaching for alternate musical and cultural identities.²⁹⁴

Juan Carlos Martín, Luisa Machado, and Jose Carlos Machado all include *sorondongos* on their albums mentioned above. The melodies for all three examples are based on the version transcribed on page twenty of González Ortega's text, where he suggests that a recording of this version made in the 1950s on the Peninsula helped to

²⁹² *ibid.*

²⁹³ *Cf.* Garcia González 2008, 137-8, for the *jeringonza*; Pérez 2005 for the *zorongo*; and Cabrera and Santos 2001a, 34, for the *baile de pámpano roto*. Subirá provides Cabrera a precedent for the *zorongo* as a peninsular importation to the Canary Islands, but does not specifically mention it as an antecedent of the *sorondongo*; *cf.* Subirá 1955, 257.

²⁹⁴ *Cf.* Section Nine for versions recorded by *timplistas* Beselch Rodríguez and Gérman López.

establish its popularity.²⁹⁵ Martín's recording of the *sorondongo* is grouped together with the *baile del vivo*, *tanganillo*, and *santo domingo*, a common performance practice in folkloric performances; however the melodies predominate and Martín utilizes improvisation and percussion breaks only as transitions between the melodies of the different song forms. The composition presents multiple layers wherein each of the Afro/Canarian melodies are developed thematically with the grounding of interlocking rhythmic play between percussionists. Here the improvisation unfolds mainly from listening wherein the audience encounters an oscillation of well-known melodic themes, re/worked as an in a suite—a singular, interpretive approximation culled from the many sources among the surplus of sonic *afrocanariedad*.

The lyrics in Machado's version allude to lullabies, another influence on the *sorondongo*, particularly in Tenerife, Machado's native and current residence.²⁹⁶ Machado's lyrics encode the everyday performance of a lullaby with cultural knowledge and critical action: "*la cuna repleta de tantos recuerdos*" en que "*hace posible todo lo imposible*."²⁹⁷ The performance aesthetic of Machado's "Sorondongo del mundo"—particularly the percussive *palmas* handclaps, virtuosic guitar soloing, and harmonic minor chords—references Andalusian influence, which is also mentioned by González

²⁹⁵ González Ortega 1995, 20. A modern-day performance of this melody can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prQs1wxLnIA>.

²⁹⁶ A live performance of this track can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3JFn5qJld4>.

²⁹⁷ Machado 2009, *Más por menos*. My translation: "the crib full of so many memory" that "makes everything impossible possible."

Ortega as a possible influence on the *sorondongo*.²⁹⁸ These sonic imaginings, coupled with the implied harmonic progressions of the guitarist's improvisations and the effects-laden, treble-saturated, electric bass timbral signature of Machado's husband, Alberto "Naranja" Méndez, continue to elaborate on memories of the *sorondongo*, casting still more sonic and discursive associations onto this dynamic songform. Machado invites listeners—via her address to the song's protagonist—to see what she wants us to see ("y mire usted que la quiero ver"): the potentiality of all those memories (not just of childhood, but those imparted to us during childhood) as inspiration and impetus to render the impossible past a possible present and future.

While these arrangements explore the myriad historical influences and performance practices that have informed and re/formed the *sorondongo*, for an alternate path to emergent subjectivity, drummer Ramón Díaz continues to expand the sonic mapping of the *sorondongo* into new musical cultures. On his recording, *Sketches*, Díaz includes an arrangement of the *sorondongo* he titles "Soronsong," performed in a contemporary, "post-bop" aesthetic. The recording features two saxophonists who perform the above-mentioned melody in "free time," without a clearly demarcated pulse; however after one minute and forty-five seconds, Díaz begins to play a swing eighth note pulse in the 6/8 time signature (the same meter as the arrangements mentioned above). The saxophones then enter with an originally composed melody, written over the standard blues chord progression, before performing both the original and *sorondongo*

²⁹⁸ González Ortega 1995, 41. For documented influence between Andalucía and the Canary Islands in the *arroró*, cf. Section Five.

melodies again over the blues progression. Díaz punctuates the composition with a drum solo over a vamp played by the rest of the ensemble. Of all the re/framings of Afro/Canarian music mentioned thus far, Díaz's is worth special mention, as it is placed squarely within the "straight-ahead" jazz performance aesthetic.²⁹⁹ In an interview about his album *Díaleg*, Díaz responds to a question about the many different types of moments on the album:

Georgina Castillo: *En el disco hay de todo: momentos melancólicos, momentos más enérgicos, muchos juegos rítmicos...*

Ramón Díaz: *Sí, a mí me gusta hacer cambios, incluso dentro de un mismo tema, como si fueran suites clásicas. También hay temas sencillos de corte más clásico, que no varían, son más como estándares, pero en general me gusta que los temas tengan un desarrollo, vayan transformándose.*

Castillo: *Como si fueran una historia.*

Díaz: *Exacto, como si estuvieran apoyándose en un guión, no como una sucesión de temas sin ningún tipo de conexión.*³⁰⁰

Díaz's commitment to development, variation, and rhythmic play (in the hard-at-work, deconstructive sense) within and among his compositions resonates with the surplus of ancient origins in González Ortega, the crib full of memories in Machado, and the literal suite (to Díaz's figurative one) of Martín. Each and every performance culls from the uncircumscribable surplus of the *sorondongo* new and emergent soundings that critique marginality, making the impossible possible.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Section Eight. Díaz, like Charlie Moreno, has achieved a level of access and success that has afforded him the opportunity to relocate to Barcelona, where he continues to work with the prestigious Barcelona-based recording label Fresh Sounds, well-known for its European, "straight-ahead" catalog.

³⁰⁰ Castillo 2006. My translation: "Castillo: 'On this disc there's a bit of everything: melancholy moments, more energetic moments, many rhythmic games...' Díaz: 'Yes, I like making changes, including within a song itself, as if they were classical suites. Also there are simple songs of a more classical cut, that do not vary, they are more like standards, but in general I like that the songs have development, that will move forward being transformed.' Castillo: 'As if they were a story.' Díaz: 'Exactly, as if they had been relying on a script, not like a succession of songs without any kind of connection.'"

The Repetitious Revisions of Cantos Canarios: Díaz has explored some of the most famous Canarian music, Teobaldo Power's *Cantos Canarios* (1880), in a similar style.³⁰¹ A native of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Teobaldo Power (1848-1884) composed this suite based on Afro/Canarian traditional music arranged in the Western European classical tradition in which he was trained in Barcelona and Paris. Power's work is still praised in lofty terms such as these:

*...lo que Teobaldo Power quedó inscrito para siempre como el músico canario por excelencia, como nuestro insigne músico nacionalista, como el adelantado a este tipo de música popular si lo comparamos con los Falla, Albéniz, Granados, Tárrega..., demostrando con esta magna obra que la música folklórica y popular, que las canciones de nuestras islas, las cantadas por las gentes del pueblo, eran aptas para realizar composiciones sinfónicas de alto nivel, constatando su condición de canto no sólo popular sino también culto, con las que autores y compositores pueden realizar obras orquestrales, polifonales, corales y orfeonísticas.*³⁰²

The praise bestowed on the *Cantos Canarios* and Power are befitting of the colonial model in which the "modernization" and "elevation" of indigenous elements are viewed as both highly desirable and inevitable. Through this composed suite, Power's reach aimed toward peninsular Spain and Europe, a mimetic representation from the isolation of a colony back toward its governing mainland that sought validation through adept

³⁰¹ For Power's work in the context of Western classical music, *cf.* Section Four. For the adoption of the *arrorró* from Power's suite as the anthem of the Canary Islands, and the concomitant canonical weight attributed to the composer because of it, *cf.* Section Five.

³⁰² García García 1997, 250, emphasis added. My translation: "that which Teobaldo Power had written for eternity as a Canarian musician *par excellence*, as our signature nationalist musician, as the pioneer of this type of popular music if we compare it with Falla, Albéniz, Granados, Tárrega..., demonstrating with this great work that folkloric and popular music, *that the songs of our islands, sung by the common people, were apt for realizing symphonic compositions of the highest level, confirming their status not just of popular song, but also classical song*, with which authors and composers could realize orchestral, polyphonic, chorale, and choral works."

navigation of stylistic and cultural maneuvers practiced there. In the Canary Islands, this sentiment has lasting effects on musicians and cultural life, as the majority of governmental and institutional support (for education, performance, and distribution) is provided for Western European classical music even today to further encourage and reward such Europeanized reaches. Power's successful reach toward Europe vis-à-vis 19th century Romantic nationalism further embedded cultural ideals that flowed and continue to flow toward Europe: here the cartographic norms chart clear, exnominating paths toward a particular sounding of *canariedad* coded as normative and most valued. By drawing from the surpluses of Afro/Canarian history, jazz musicians improvise new paths, resistant to these cartographically sanctioned routes. In addition to his "straight-ahead" reconstitutions (are they still "straight" here?) of liminal Afro/Canarian traditional music, drummer Ramón Díaz extends these paths over and across Power's *Cantos Canarios*. The critical potential of Díaz's re/arranging reaches for and over Power's suite unfolds in part because of their re/iteration. Díaz has recorded the Suite *twice*, offering several paths toward and around Power via different arrangements of the Suite on his albums *Unblocking* ("Suite Canaria") and *¿O sí no qué?* ("Cantos Canarios"). Once again the power of the critique lies in its plurality, its surplus:

On *¿O sí no qué?* (Fresh Sound, 1998), the suite (here titled in excess as "Cantos Canarios/Arrorró/Cannis") begins with a single voice: the bassist "Curro" Gálvez gestures freely across the wide timbral and registral ranges of his instrument, periodically returning to a low G that establishes an early tonal center. Through his soloistic elaborations he progressively introduces fragments of Power's melodies—a thematic

exposition that waits. Moving to an ostinato at 2:06 of the track, Gálvez ushers in Díaz and tenor saxophonist Victor de Diego with an overt, in-time statement of Power's melody. Alto saxophonist Mikel Andueza enters shortly after, embellishing above but in the background of the tenor saxophonist, then shifting to the primary melodic voice at 2:56. At 3:37, de Diego begins his improvisation with a cry—an articulated low moan that develops and crescendos through motives inflected with a harmonic minor aesthetic to a higher screech a minute later. Ever searching more insistently, de Diego climbs higher, adopting the screeching, high moan as a motive itself through the 5:15 mark, buttressed underneath by Andueza whose riffs are introduced with a moan of similar timbre. At the beginning of the next chorus—the next re/voicing of Power's newly re/arranged harmonic form—both saxophonists return to the moan, signaling a climactic apex in the solo, now having thoroughly ruptured the aesthetic established by the quiet introduction and delicately phrased melody. At 6:15 de Diego's instrument squeaks—a momentary disjuncture in the instrument's technology and the instrumentalist's embodied competencies—signaling a melodic failure that nonetheless articulates sonically the Afro/Canarian voice, still supported by the moaning alto saxophone and the Díaz's rhythm section. The solo subsides gradually over the next forty seconds, giving way to a recapitulation of Power's melody as performed and arranged by Díaz's group, now thoroughly and completely re/contextualized, but serving now primarily as transition to the next movement of Díaz's take on *Cantos Canarios*.

"Suite Canaria," on Díaz's *Unblocking* (Fresh Sound, 2007) begins in a similar fashion, as pianist José Alberto Medina (from Gran Canaria) orchestrates the entrance of

the entire ensemble in an out-of-time unfolding of reaching voices that converge on a form and tempo, first established by a bass ostinato. The arrangement follows a similar trajectory as the first of Díaz's versions, but differs primarily in the group's instrumentation, which now features the aforementioned Medina and trumpeter Idefe Pérez (from La Palma, *cf.* Section Ten). By beginning with the same Power melody (one of several in Power's *Cantos Canarios*) as on *¿O sí no qué?*, Díaz calls attention to his re/iteration and re/working not only of Power's work, but also his own. Re/recording and re/performing—and the surplus of soundings that result—are coded positively here, as the further elaboration of/on the Afro/Canarian subject. By returning to and elaborating on his 1998 arrangement, Díaz has created more space for improvising musicians to emerge and re/form Power's original, canonically dominant, but thoroughly ruptured suite, *Cantos Canarios*. However, this time Díaz chooses to re/name the arrangement; whereas his first and Power's original title are plural, this one is singular: "Suite Canaria." This is not a reduction or codification of sonic *canariedad* into established forms, but rather a complication of both the "suite" and "canaria" that includes new aesthetics, new ruptures, and new subjects.

By re/naming the suite, authoring different arrangements, and allowing space for different improvisations, Díaz un/writes the canonical fixity of Power's suite—a critique more of the systematic machinations of canon formation than of the composer, the composition, or the arrangements of the traditional Afro/Canarian music contained

therein.³⁰³ His elaborative, expansive reach over and around the classical suite—as an imposition of colonializing canons—continues to re/map the Canary Islands and the Afro/Canarian through improvisatory, emergent surplus.

Elaborative Unfoldings of the tango (herreño): Like the *canario*, the name *tango* deceptively subsumes many different performance practices, theorized origins, and artistic interpretations in the Canary Islands. The *tango* from Tenerife is a variation of the *tajaraste*. Further confusion ensues when discussing uses of *tango* outside of the Islands, where forms on the Peninsula, and the most well known form, the Argentinean tango, differ from all forms of the *tango canario*. Of all the versions, the *tango* popularized from El Hierro, the *tango herreño*, is the most commonly performed and widely known.³⁰⁴ The traditional performance features paired dancers, a drummer, flautist, and vocalist.³⁰⁵ Of the aforementioned musicians, Juan Carlos Martín ("Tango herreño con sirinoque" on *Guadá*), Jose Carlos Machado ("Arepa" on *Ropa Vieja*), and Gato Gótico ("Tango de la molienda / Atangu n yizid" on *Música para Namu*) have all recorded *tangos*. Martín's adds a *sirinoque* to his and Machado a *tajaraste* (discussed above) to his version. Many of the same themes of fusion of styles and allowing space for improvisatory emergence

³⁰³ For more on Power, canon formation, and the flattening out of Afro/Canarian musical difference, cf. Section Five.

³⁰⁴ Cabrera and Santos 2001a, 37-8.

³⁰⁵ Valentina la de Sabinosa, also mentioned in Section Five, remains (after her death) one of the most revered vocalists in the Canary Islands; one of her recordings of the *tango herreño* can be heard here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0CJenIyddo>. A live performance, with choreographed dancers, can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djk5NtsqSno>.

are repeated *with difference* throughout all the traditional Canarian musical forms and their improvising re/interpretations. I would like to focus on two different ensembles with in this short section.

On the island of El Hierro (*cf.* Section Three), I stayed with Sabine Willman, organizer of the Bimbache Jazz y Raíces Festival (now the Bimbach openArt Festival), an annual gathering of improvising musicians, wellness experts, and arts advocates that promotes auto-sustainability, ecological consciousness, and global awareness realized through collaborative, multi-media artistic endeavors. To help raise awareness and funding for future festivals, Sabine Willman and her partner, guitarist Torsten de Winkel, oversaw the production of an album, *La condición humana* (The Human Condition). Among other tracks, the recording includes in succession a *tango herreño*, a sampled recording of Valentina la de Sabinosa performing a *tango herreño*, and a short track entitled "Pitos, chácaras y tambor" (Flutes, Chácaras and Drum), the three main instruments used in *tango herreño*.³⁰⁶ The first and third of these tracks feature de Winkel on guitar ushering in punctuations in the music as it oscillates among traditional and more jazz-inflected aesthetics.

In the first, vocalist Angélica Pérez sings traditional lyrics that site/cite the performance on the island of El Hierro through naming local geography and performing a vocal aesthetic from within the island's traditional musical culture. The vocalist's performance is interrupted by the eager entrance of trumpeter Audun Waage, who begins

³⁰⁶ Portions of each of the tracks can be heard at this link: <http://www.myspace.com/bimbache/music/songs>.

his improvisation before the formal iteration has re/cycled. A brief interlude driven by de Winkel and percussion prefaces the recapitulation of the vocal melody, with intermittent guitar riffing, that ends the live performance, signaled on the recording by applause. Hearing the applause immediately re/contextualizes the performance as a "live recording" for the listener, but is just as quickly interrupted by the eager entrance of an eleven-second sample of Valentina la de Sabinosa performing the same *tango herreño*. Post-production continues to jar the listener into re/hearing as the album then proceeds immediately into another live recording, "Pitos, Chácaras, y Tambor," another rendition of the same songform performed with the traditional percussion and flute ensemble, though without the vocalist. De Winkel then enters laying on his improvisation that interlocks with and, at times, over/writes on this foundational aesthetic. His elaborations expand the *tango herreño* through superimpositions of alternate harmonies, meters, and aesthetics, including a blues-inflected riffing that matches the rhythmic accents of the rest of the ensemble while introducing new and disjunct sonic timbres on it.

A similarly orchestrated translating occurs on "Tango del Hierro," recorded by the Big Band de Canarias on their album, *Atlántida*.³⁰⁷ On the recording, drummer Ramon Díaz performs the percussion parts of the *tambor herreño* and the *cháracas* on drumset, while improvised soprano saxophone solos by Kike Perdomo (of Jazz Borondón, Cebolla Jazz Band, Mojo Ribs, etc.) and Jose Ángel Vera are interspersed with a *tutti* hybrid melody fusing newly composed material (by the arranger Miguel Blanco) with the same

³⁰⁷ A live performance of this composition can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBKSULGqyqA>.

iconic traditional melody heard on the other recordings (of Bimbache and Valentina la de Sabinosa, for example). Blanco also wrote ensemble figures that re/sound the traditional rhythms of the *tango herreño*'s percussion as melody. A return to this melody signals the re/contextualization of the soloist, having just improvisationally re/sounded the *tango herreño*, back within the entire ensemble that continues to move forward, adding each successive, improvisatory emergence into the ever-expanding elaboration on this Afro/Canarian songform.

Successive iterations of the *tango herreño* yield continuous re/formations of the songform, punctuated by Blanco's ensemble figures. From a dynamic climax in the middle of the track, a sudden rupturing change yields the quiet entrance of pianist José Alberto Medina whose developing improvisation re/constructs the composition, once again re/building the performance from the singular, improvisatory voice. The ensemble re-enters musician-by-musician, then section-by-section, until the traditional percussion of the *tango herreño* is re-introduced, signaling a re-capitulation of the *tutti* melodies and movement toward the final third of the composition. Near its conclusion, Perdomo and Vera emerge again as improvisers, oscillating between shorter improvisations, expanding the soloistic space for exchanging and overlaying dialogue. The ensemble re-enters and emphatically re/states the *tutti* melody, ending with an expansive unresolved, tension-filled harmony (E-dominant 7, flat 13th, over an A bass) that re/frames the generative rupture of the *tango herreño* as space of potentiality to be further transformed moving forward, as when several musicians (including Ramón Díaz) emerge soloistically from within this newly re/sounded harmonic foundation. The arranger Blanco has transformed

the repeating melody and canonical folk form into an episodic unfolding, realized by the Big Band de Canarias, in which individual soloists emerge amid aesthetics of fusion, bridging repertoires and traditions. Each repetition of the *tango herreño* melody signals a new space—a new break—in which a new Afro/Canarian improvising subject can emerge.

IV. Conclusion: Making the Break

*Nuestra alma retumba cuando suena una malagueña, una folía, una isa...esto nos envuelve musicalmente ofreciéndonos una identidad como pueblo. Esta cuestión nos hace reflexionar ya que estamos en continuo movimiento. No podemos olvidar que el folklore tal como lo conocemos hoy en día es el resultado inequívoco del paso de otras culturas por nuestras islas. Montaña Blanca surge de esta ecuación, que forma parte de los herederos de la tradición canaria. Fusionando nuestros instrumentos más típicos con otros más vanguardistas aportando un nivel de expresión completamente diferente, abriendo un nuevo camino a otros jóvenes músicos que quieran experimentar conceptos.*³⁰⁸

On March 29, 2011, I was sitting in the home recording and rehearsal studio of Rogelio Botanz, talking with Botanz during a brief quiet minute in what had been a frenzied week of preparations for a concert and live video/audio recording of Rogelio's music in La Laguna's famed Teatro Leal. I was asking him about the large number of collaborators he had invited to the concert, in particular the rapper Tinguaro Hernández Franchy "Mensey" and the Amazigh vocalist from Rif, Khalid Izri, whom my roommate Kino had suggested to Rogelio as a possible collaborator on Rogelio's arrangement of "Aicá

³⁰⁸ Julio González, liner notes to *Montaña blanca*. My translation: "Our soul resounds when it hears a malagueña, a folía, an isa...this envelops us musically, offering us an identity as a people. This issue makes us reflect still that we are in continuous movement. We cannot forget that folklore as we know it today is the unmistakable result of the passage of other cultures through our islands. *Montaña blanca* [White Mountain] emerges from this equation, and forms a part of the ancestry of Canarian tradition. Fusing our more traditional instruments with others more avant-garde, offering a level of expression completely different, opening a new path for other young musicians that want to experiment with concepts."

Maragá."³⁰⁹ It was also Kino who recited/resited the Aicá Maragá inscription in aforementioned recording of "San Borondón" by Julio González on González's album, *Montaña Blanca—Folkcommunication*. The implications of the performance were a little overwhelming: Rogelio's ensemble included keyboards, electric guitars, electric bass, electric violin, and a chorus of singers who played traditional Afro/Canarian instruments—*tambores gomeros y herreños, pitos herreños, chácaras, litófonos* (volcanic lithophones), frame drums, and still more. This ensemble would be performing in Spanish and Tamazight, Rogelio's lyrics about the imagined encounters that produced the *aicá maragá* inscription and then his setting of the inscription. The piece, performed with a traditional Afro/Canarian *tajaraste* rhythm, would end with a call-and-response between Rogelio, speaking in *silbo gomero*, and Izri, speaking in Tamazight. All of this in a hall renowned as one of the best venues for acoustic performances of Western European classical music. The disjunct between the imposing space and what Rogelio was bringing into it was enormous.

This was not an improvised performance, but fully composed and long rehearsed. In the video, Botanz is seen carefully conducting the ensemble through the various sections of the piece, while some of the musicians monitor and execute pages of music notation closely. Labeling the music "jazz" would be a difficult argument, but several of the musicians here do self-identify as "jazz musicians" and have played on jazz recordings and with jazz groups mentioned in the dissertation: bassist and producer

³⁰⁹ This performance can be seen at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-qr3sJPLJs>.

Alberto "Naranja" Méndez (Luisa Machado's partner and collaborator on *Más por menos*) and drummer Alfredo Llanos (of Jazz Borondón and many other groups) have been fixtures of the Afro/Canarian music scene for the last thirty years; guitarist Ernesto Hernández has recorded several albums of his own and also played on Machado's *Más por menos*; and keyboardist and producer Julio Tejera's credits include many jazz and crossover albums.

The performance's critical improvisation and improvisatory critique does not lie in labeling it as "jazz," but rather can be found in the mix, in Botanz's creative layering of musical cultures, personnel, languages, performance techniques, and instrumentation. Culling together all of these—most of which have been discussed above exclusively in the context of jazz performance—into a potent mix that enacts musically the pact for which the "*aicá maragá*" inscription calls, Botanz ruptures the boundaries of genre and performance practice, as well as the expectations of many listeners, generating a new understanding of sonic *afrocanariedad*. All of this is situated in *Teatro Leal*, a venue long known for re-enforcing the very boundaries that Botanz seeks to tear down. To my question of his compositional and personnel choices and the potential socio-political backlash they might cause, Rogelio responded with a wry smile, "*Hay que hacer el hueco*." You have to make the break.

He continued, elaborating on his career during which he has continually and consciously been making breaks. Of the upcoming collaborations, he seemed to think at the time that the audience would like it but that they would think, "*eso es peligroso*" (that is dangerous)—particularly dangerous because Teatro Leal the most highly acclaimed

concert hall in La Laguna. It is a space that sanctions, that codifies, and that replays, but not necessarily refreshes. Rogelio was saying that the traditions would resound with the audience, that they would hear his re/soundings of musical tradition, but not necessarily that they would like that their traditions were being re/sounded. On that night, Botanz and his ensemble opened a new potential space—to be filled with music and occupied by the Afro/Canarian who seeks to move forward, transforming along the way.

A few nights later, during a conversation I re/wrote with difference in Section Five, Rogelio was retelling a story of his youth. During a geography class, he asked his teacher about the layout of the map they were using—a typical map of "Spain," which includes the Iberian Peninsula and surrounding European countries and the Canary Islands, but not the African continent. This type of map is very familiar to Afro/Canarians: they see one every time they watch a televised weather forecast.



(Photo: travelintospain.blogspot.com, 2008)

On these maps, little, if any, of the African continent is displayed; instead, in order to include the Canary Islands on the map of "Spain," they are excised from their geographical location and placed closer by the colonial peninsula. Young Rogelio's question to his teacher pertained to a large blank space on the map *underneath* Spain, in which there was ample space to include Africa. Evidently, as Rogelio tells the story, his teacher did not respond well to Rogelio's insinuation that the map was incorrect or deficient and he was reprimanded. At this point in the re/telling, Rogelio broke into an impassioned present(ive): "*¿Porqué si hay espacio, no hay África? ¿Es que el mapa es para crear una realidad, no para reflejar la realidad!*"³¹⁰ Embedded within the slippage between the indefinite and definite articles is the break in which that space is created. The cartographic gaze creates only a reality, in which silences and omissions are actively reproduced and reinforced. In order to work through the myopic reflections, you have to make the break.

The musicians discussed here have not been on the map; they have been historically written out of cartographic conventions within the Canary Islands, across the Atlantic Ocean, and throughout global milieus. In the search for space for reflecting their realities, they have to re/write the breaks into the mix in order to make them. They have compile and arrange a surplus of words and sounds to be repeated with difference in the hopes of overcoming any number of actively silencing silences. As Julio González wrote

³¹⁰ Author's notes. My translation: "Why, if there's space, isn't Africa there? It's because the map is for creating a reality, not for reflecting the reality."

and sounded, fusion opens a new path...on which to walk...to re/map, re/write, and re/sound.

Section Eight: Sonic Inscription and Canarian Memory: Tracing Transcultural Movements through Jazz Performance

Según mi opinión el sentido insular del canario se presenta fuertemente territorializado en la isla de procedencia y a su vez se admite el sentido doble y triple de lo insular, de lo regional (Islas occidentales e islas orientales) y de lo nacional de estado. Es decir, se convive sin mayor problema con estas tres identidades, claro que existen casos menos frecuentes de un sentido solo canario o solo español, en ambos extremos...En líneas generales podemos decir que la población canaria a lo largo de su historia ha sido muy hospitalaria y permeable, abierta a otras culturas sobre todo a las latinoamericanas. Es más, creo que culturalmente estamos más cerca de América que de Europa, existiendo mucha afinidad generacional con América Latina como consecuencia de la emigración canaria.

Así nos encontramos por ejemplo muchos fenómenos musicales curiosos como los que nacen en los Carnavales de Tenerife en el que se entremezclan géneros caribeños y brasileños reelaborados y tratados por el pueblo de Santa Cruz. Muchas orquestas de salsa, de merengue, etc.

Hoy las identidades musicales en Canarias son otras—diferentes a las que yo viví en mi infancia con mis abuelos—y pienso que la fusión de ideas en continua transformación están dando lugar a nuevos conceptos culturales repletos de sentido quizás por sus orígenes isleños, atlánticos...creo que aquí el contexto proporciona al individuo unas variables diferentes y por tanto produce fenómenos un tanto distintos a los presentes en otras zonas del mundo continental.³¹¹

³¹¹ José Ángel López Viera, email communication with the author, June 9, 2009. My translation: "In my opinion the insular sense of the Canarian presents itself as strongly territorialized on the island of origin and at times allows a double and triple sense of the insular, of the region (the western and eastern islands) and of the national of the state. That is to say, one lives without much problem with these three identities, of course there exist less frequent cases of a sense of only Canarian or only Spanish, in both extremes...In general we can say that the Canarian population for the large part of their history have been very hospitable and permeable, open to other cultures especially to Latin America. Even more, I believe that culturally we are closer to America [i.e., the Americas] than to Europe, there being much generational affinity with Latin America as a consequence of Canarian emigration. Thus for example we encounter many, curious musical phenomena like those that are born at Tenerife's Carnivals in which Caribbean and Brazilian genres are intermixing, reworked and developed by the people of Santa Cruz. Many orchestras of salsa, of merengue, etc. Today there are other musical identities in the Canaries—different from the ones that I experienced in my youth with my grandparents—and I think that the fusion of ideas in continual transformation is creating new cultural concepts full of meaning perhaps for origins [of the Canary] Islander [and of] the Atlantic...I think that here the context provides to the individual some different variables and therefore produces very distinct phenomena to those present in other areas of the continental world."

I. Introduction: *En continua transformación*

Any Afro/Canarian collective identity emerges from the acknowledgement that influence of other cultures—no matter how distant, how tangential, how historical—has directed its unfolding. These transcultural engagements are diffuse and of varying efficacy in their reaches, so much so that the implied unity of *la gente*—or *un género*—is an imagined construction of retrospective framing that remembers and forgets in an articulated, socio-culturally singular ways. This Section plots some points on the musical map of Afro/Canarian transcultural collaborations, tracing some of the vectors marked through improvisatory, embodied, and historically informed performances.

Exploring the transculturality of Afro/Canarian historical identities manifests with inward and outward directionalities; that is, in articulating the cultural influences in Afro/Canarian cultures, musicians highlight those influences by reaching through Afro/Canarian musical repertoires and through the repertoires of those other cultures.

II. Schema/Suite Four: A Tradition of Fusion:

*"La cultura canaria es una cultura mezclada en principio que incluye muchas influencias de afuera y es constituido de la migración de ida y vuelta, y un conocimiento [sic] histórico de eso."*³¹²

Articulating Africa/África: Just as written and discursive Canarian engagements with Africa differ widely, so too do the musical ones. While some foreground Canarian-as-

³¹² Author's personal notebook, October 18, 2010. My translation: "Canarian culture is a culture of mixture *in principle* [in the *a priori* sense] that includes many outside influences and is constituted by the migration of *ida y vuelta* and a historical understanding of it."

African (i.e., *afrocanario* or *ínsuloamazig*), others explore collaborative fusions between musical cultures as distinct from, but in conversation with, each other. Musical engagement with the African continent, for example, is highly diverse: some examples, like many of those discussed in the past Section, re/write Afro/Canarian traditional and folkloric music—critiquing the Europeanization of local culture by re/framing musical performance—while others look to the present, forging new alliances with groups historically influential to Afro/Canarian cultures. For its part, the collective work of Roberto Cabrera and Gato Gótico re/forms the *afrocanario* in a surplus of historically- and citationally-informed compositions and projects, articulating the *afrocanario* in all senses and sites/cites. The group's recordings such as *Música para Namu, Nagwa*, and *Ahul fell-awen* oscillate between re/framings of Afro/Canarian music (e.g., "Tajaraste y Arrorró / Taxarazt d Arew-Arew," "Sirinoque progresivo") and compositions either named after research and performance tours in Africa or recorded collaborations with African musicians (e.g. "Melodia nagwa," "Kabilio & Siboney / Azwaw Siboney," "Petit Kora / Ukura Tamctuht"). The prime example of the latter is their documentary and performance film, *Euráfrica Project*, that catalogues their trips to North and West Africa, most especially Algeria and Senegal and presents new recordings of past repertoire performed with musicians there.³¹³

Cabrera—ethnomusicologist, poet, journalist, and leader of Gato Gótico—has also written on and studied Afro/Canarian music during his entire career. His research

³¹³ Unfortunately there is little documentation of the *identities* of these musicians, which presents its own potential for silenced Afro/Canarian to also silence at the same time and complicating the demarcation between canon as consumption and canon as critique. Cf. Section Five.

and published writings act as re/framing elaborations of the musical work accomplished by Gato Gótico. Of the ongoing relationship between the group and collaborations in Africa, Cabrera writes,

*la música contenida aquí parece proceder de la vida imaginada o intuita de un sentir común, más que de la intelectualidad o del puro individualismo, quizá por acercarse a un cierto primitivismo en temas como La Meda, Nagwa, Trance, Nómada, o Sirinoque progresivo, donde ningún fenómeno sonoro se halla separado de las tensiones colectivas y los instrumentos ancestrales actúan como cajas de resonancia de un poético universo remoto (Ud marroquí, Darbuka sahariana, Chácaras, o Busio.)*³¹⁴

His book, *Apuntes para una reflexión etnomusicológica*, includes thoughts about the relationship between past scholarship, its attempts at parsing the relationships between Africa and the Islands, and about future work to be done:

*Como hemos observado y haciendo caso a estas recomendaciones es conveniente que nuestra investigación etnomusicológica se acerque a despejar las incógnitas existentes en nuestra cultura musical, ciñéndose en lo posible a estos descubrimientos de la lingüística y la etnociencia, lo que permitirá desde nuestra órbita comparativa, trazar mejor el mapa de nuestros futuros trabajos de campo, que nos movamos hacia evidencias e hipótesis más viables, lo que hará más resolubles nuestros difíciles problemas.*³¹⁵

When I asked him about the relationship between his ethnomusicological and musical work, Cabrera wrote "*Está todo interrelacionado, pero mantengo mi trabajo*

³¹⁴ Cabrera, liner notes to *Nagwa*. My translation: "The music contained here seems to proceed from the imagined or intuited life of a common feeling, more than of intellectuality or pure individualism, perhaps to approach a certain primitivism in songs like 'La Meda,' 'Nagwa,' 'Trance,' 'Nómada,' or 'Sirinoque progresivo,' in which no sonic phenomenon is separated from the collective tensions and the ancestral instrumental act as resonance boxes of a remote, universal poetic (Moroccan oud, Saharan darbuka, *chácaras*, or *busio*)."

³¹⁵ Cabrera 2011, 83. My translation: "As we have observed and heeding these recommendations it is appropriate that our ethnomusicological investigation approaches solving the existing unknowns in our musical culture, adhering to those discoveries from linguistics and ethnosience, that which will permit from our comparative orbit to chart a map of our future fieldwork, that moves us to most viable evidence and hypotheses, that which will make our difficult problems solvable." *Cf.* my parsing of *nuestra/o* in Section Nine.

etnomusicológico al márgen, ya que me muevo como intérprete y compositor con el grupo, la esfera creativa es la que manda en estos casos."³¹⁶ As he intimates in his written work, a multiply-sited/cited investigation of *afrocanariedad* articulates the particularities of the Islands' historical and current engagements with Africa and moves closer to productive hypotheses for sounding *afro/canariedad*.

Though he concentrated on musical performance, influential composer and multi-instrumentalist Enrique Güimerá (1954-2004) enjoyed a productive, but tragic career that featured many, varied experiments in fusing Western European classical, jazz, and popular music. His composition *Tajazzraste* for string orchestra and piano expressed all of these influences through the conceptual lens of the Afro/Canarian *tajaraste* (cf. Section Seven). Güimerá also led two influential jazz-pop groups, Euterpe and Almárgen, the latter of which produced the recording *África* in 1993. On the second track, "Dónde estamos," a composition by Güimerá and Manuel China, featuring percussionist Jose Pedro Pérez and saxophonist Kike Perdomo, Güimerá prefaces the song in the liner notes with the line "*es una reflexión abierta sobre nuestra relación con lo africano.*"³¹⁷ The composition's lyrics outline the group's reach for articulating the Afro/Canarian throughout time-space:

Hay un África azul / de pasado intenso / y memoria secreta. / Y nosotros, / ¿dónde estamos? / ¿Dónde está nuestro pasado? / Hay un África bronce / de anchos caminos / y largos horizontes. / Y nosotros, / ¿dónde estamos? / ¿Dónde está

³¹⁶ Cabrera, email correspondence with author, March 31, 2009. My translation: "It is all interrelated, but I maintain my ethnomusicological work on the margin, since that which moves me as a performer and composer with the group, the creative sphere is what instructs [me] in those cases."

³¹⁷ Güimerá, liner notes to *África*. Perdomo's recording, *Baba Djembe* (1998) is a prime example of collaborations with contemporary African musicians and culture. The album is co-composed and produced by Perdomo and Senegalese musician Ismael Sane.

*nuestro camino? / Hay un África verde / de gente altiva / y lunas dilatadas. / Y nosotros, / ¿dónde estamos? / ¿Dónde está nuestra gente?*³¹⁸

In these lyrics Güimera wrestles with the disjunctive conceptions of Africa as it relates to *afro/canariedad*. Isolated from dominant histories of the African Diaspora and trans-Atlantic slave trade, "Dónde estamos" literally cannot place the Afro/Canarian in time or space, having fallen victim to centuries of Spanish colonial violence. The song articulates the fundamental questions of this dissertation and those that motivate the improvising reaches toward *afro/canariedad*.

Re/viewing Andalucía and flamenco: One of the ways in which Afro/Canarians assert their identity is through empathetic connections and collaboration with other subaltern cultures, as in the conversation at Rogelio Botanz's dinner table described in Section Five. The Islands' historical connections to Andalucía are quite distinct from the colonial Spanish government, the current government and the rest of "the Peninsula." Documented influence in folklore and traditional culture (*cf.* Sections Four, Five, and Seven), coupled with a shared sense of marginality—as with those from the Basque country (*cf.* Section Five)—creates an affinity that translates in part to frequent collaborations between Afro/Canarian and Andalusian musicians. As with other cultural influences, these collaborations can take multiple forms: re/compositions written as

³¹⁸ Güimera and China 1993. My translation: " There is a blue Africa / of an intense past / and secret memory. And us, / where are we? / Where is our past? / There is a bronze Africa / of wide paths / and lengthy horizons. / And us, / where are we? / Where is our path? / There is a green Africa / of proud people / and ample moons. / And us, / where are we? / Where is our people?"

homage, recording projects that diversify an artist's portfolio, interpersonal collaborations with Andalusian musicians, and ensembles whose work engages specifically with Andalusian music.³¹⁹

The group Ziriab, named for a renowned 9th century Persian musician from the Córdoba Court in Islamic Iberia, and led by guitarists Pedro Sanz and Alexander Spath, specifically performs Andalusian and flamenco music.³²⁰ In addition to collaborating with musicians from the Islands, such as Kike Perdomo and Carlos Costa, they frequently work with noted flamenco musicians from the Peninsula, including bassist Carlos Benavent and flautist/saxophonist Jorge Pardo.³²¹ Pardo, along with pianist Chano Domínguez, perform often with musicians from the Islands, in Canarian-Andalusian fusion projects, but also in other contexts as well. While I was in the Islands I saw performances of both musicians with pianist Polo Ortí. Though written by an U.S. composer, Afro/Canarian jazz musicians frequently perform and record the composition "Spain" by Chick Corea as an expression of this connection to Andalusia. Again, the breadth of variations written onto this jazz standard reflect the wide range of associations and critiques mapped onto Canarian conceptions of the Peninsula.³²²

³¹⁹ Cf. Section Seven. On his recording, *Blues del anochecer*, guitarist Ernesto Hernández, who also works with Luisa Machado and Rogelio Botanz, recorded "Paisaje andaluz" (Andalusian landscape), a homage to one of his greatest influences, Paco de Lucía. Another track from Hernández's album, "Autopista 69" (Highway 69), can be heard at this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edOaOoTVNK0>.

³²⁰ Cf. below. Live performances of Ziriab can be seen at the following links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yua8Xm9x1Y>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIXIZ3sGwIc>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6z5F3dkiV8>, and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Y-ZS9TucTE>. For another of Spath's projects, cf. Section Ten.

³²¹ For more on Pardo as collaborator with Canarian musicians, cf. Section Five.

³²² Among others, *timplista* Beselch Rodríguez recorded "Spain" on his first album, *In-diferente*, while Henna Hito Trio recorded it on their 2010 eponymous album. A live performance of Rodríguez's

Ma(c/k)aronesia: Macaronesia—the islands of the eastern Atlantic Ocean—includes the Canaries, Azores, the Madeira archipelago, Salvage Islands, and Cape Verde; its name comes from the Ancient Greek "makárōn nêsoi" (The Blessed Islands, *Insulae Fortunatae, Islas Afortunadas*).³²³ Compared to the Caribbean, regional identity is just as, if not more, important for the *aislamiento* in which Macaronesia is situated in economic and academic circles, for example. Though Afro/Canarian culture has strong ties to the Caribbean, it is still isolated from it, by distance and historical circumstance (*cf.* Section Four). In the liner notes to their album *Makaronesia*, Gato Gótico writes that the region has its own identity ("*posee identidad propia*"), while emphasizing the history of transcultural music exchange in Macaronesia of the musical predecessors of the *punto cubano* and *guajira*, like the Afro/Canarian *sirinoque*. Ramón Díaz, Jose Carlos Machado, Kike Perdomo, Jose Pedro Pérez, José Antonio Ramos, and other musicians recorded a project titled *Macaronesis* in 2001. The musicians tied the unique identity of the region based on "*la mezcla de elementos mediterráneos y atlánticos*" (a mix of Mediterranean and Atlantic elements). The recording's compositions include cultural references to the Caribbean, Canaries, and Scotland; while others engage directly with music forms such as calypso, *folía*, *joropo*, rumba and *sirinoque*.

Both groups emphasize Macaronesia—through their compositions and the liner notes about the recordings—as a region in flux, characterized by the trans-Atlantic

arrangement, including pianist Polo Ortí, can be seen here:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVoZilQZ2W8>.

³²³ *Cf.* Martinez 2002, 96-97.

movement of histories, populations, and music. Rather than subsuming all of the particular elements of this varied elements into a totalizing pan-Macaronesian muddle, each group articulates singular particularities of this liminally-placed region, emerging and interacting with each other "without separating the collective tensions" through the unfolding of their albums.

III. *Atlantidad* and Improvising on *ida y vuelta*

*Por la mitología, la historia, la literatura y la cultura en general, Canarias pertenece a una comarca cultural no estrictamente española, sino atlántica. [...] La geografía los aísla, pero les abre las puertas de infinitas conexiones y entendimientos. La geografía también los marca: vulcanismo, oceanidad, permeabilización cultural, emigración y dependencia económica y política. [...] Una vez más queda demostrado que las matrices culturales canarias no se encuentran al margen de la influencia española peninsular, pero sí van mucho más allá en su diversidad.*³²⁴

Macaronesian identity captures well the tension within Afro/Canarian identity: through historical consciousness of *ida y vuelta*, Afro/Canarians have formed regional and trans-Atlantic alliances for confronting the *aislamiento* that their geographic placement in the Eastern Atlantic amplifies. This connection is also discussed as *atlantidad*, envisioning the Atlantic as an aquacentric focal point for shared communal bonds articulated locally

³²⁴ García Ramos 1997, 347 and 350. My translation: "In its mythology, history, literature, and culture in general, the Canaries belong to a cultural region not strictly Spanish, but Atlantic. [...] Geography isolates them [the Canary Islands], but it also opens for them the doors of infinite connections and insights. Geography also brands them: volcanology, ocean-ness, cultural permeability, emigration and economic and political dependency. Once more it is demonstrated that the Canarian cultural matrices are not found at the periphery of peninsular Spanish influence, but rather they reach much farther out in their diversity."

rather than as a large, unconquerable expanse that isolates the island cultures from one another.³²⁵

García Ramos's quoted cite alludes to the "instigations and payoffs" of *aislamiento*: their particular, liminal geographic placement supplies both catalysts for and countermeasures against isolation and the external dependencies that characterize the Islands. Musical collaboration provides an important means of emergent collectivity that re/forms this isolation as improvised transcultural and extra-national affiliations that critique the imposition of the colonial peninsular Spanish government through conquest and continued control. Informed by the legacies of *esclavitud blanca* and the generational movements of *ida y vuelta* culture, Afro/Canarians employ the trope of *atlanticidad* (Atlantic-ness) as a critique not just on Spain, but also on governments, scholars, and would-be cartographers whose assumptions about "Latin America," "the Black Atlantic," etc. reinforce the isolation they experience so palpably.

A major tenet of *atlanticidad* in Afro/Canarian music emphasizes connections among the Islands and Latin America through the history of the Canarian diaspora, set into motion by the forced emigrations detailed in Section Four. As one expression of this history, the arrival of latin jazz and salsa in the 1970s revolutionized Canarian popular music to such a degree that a complete overview of the diverse influences and interpretations of Caribbean and trans-Atlantic Latin music far exceeds the scope of this section. Among Afro/Canarian jazz discourses, this importance is metonymized in the history of Luis Vecchio's arrival with Bebe Martín in the mid to late 1970s (*cf.* Section

³²⁵ *Cf.* Big Band de Canarias 2011; García Ramos 2002; and Rodríguez Martel 2006.

Seven), although those Latin jazz musicians were not known for performing latin jazz *per se*. In regards to latin jazz performance aesthetics, the other musics that accompanied the personal migrations of Vecchio and Martín and others can be heard in current groups like the Arenque Jazz Quartet and the Gran Canaria-based Atcheré.

Vocalist Moise González, from Tenerife, brother of Julio González (*cf.* Section Seven), leads a salsa orchestra, and began his 2010 album, *Relatos*, with his composition "De Canarias a La Habana."³²⁶ The album's recording and production occurred in both Miami and Tenerife: the process of the album's realizing echoes the lyrical allusions of the first track, recalling the *ida y vuelta* diasporic culture of the Canary Islands and a central trope of Afro/Canarian understandings of *atlanticidad*. The aesthetics of the composition invoke the pan-Latino identity of *salsa dura*, while the lyrics are rooted in Canarian diasporic movement, referring to González's birth in Tenerife and his subsequent movements in Miami, New York, and Havana—the trans-Atlantic urban centers of *salsa* culture.³²⁷ Although these performance aesthetics and pan-cultural alliances are not necessarily unique to the Canarian diaspora, they play particularly important roles in facilitating Afro/Canarian reaches across the Atlantic divide that isolates the Islands from the Americas, the Caribbean, and the musical cultures to which they are so inextricably linked.³²⁸

³²⁶ The track can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeVJySRgP0U>.

³²⁷ In contrast, González's first album, *Archipiélago* (2008), emphasizes his music, including its trans-Atlantic aesthetics and references, as situated within the Canary Islands.

³²⁸ Venezuelan guitarist Larry Jean Louis, now based in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, included a similarly titled composition, "De Caracas a La Habana," on his 2001 album, *Reaching the Promise*. A live performance of the track can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kddqq0wgEVO>. Within

Common among both of these is the reference to Havana, Cuba, which acts as an authenticating trope for latin jazz and *salsa*. In the Canary Islands, this trope plays out in music discourses through connections to the island of La Palma, the easternmost of the archipelago, and viewed as the most directly influenced by the *vuelta* of Afro/Canarians from Cuba.³²⁹ Moise González pays homage to this trans-Atlantic island connection in his composition, "Senderos de La Palma," also on his album *Relatos*. This track elaborates on the ecology of La Palma, explored visually in the video through images of ecotourism and movement along the paths (*senderos*) through Palmeran spaces, which buttress the lyrical and sonic paths reaching for pan-Latin and global pop music.³³⁰

As Havana does for Afro-Latin music, references to New Orleans provides a potent trope of authenticity for jazz in the Canary Islands. However, these references are more particular to the Canary Islands than a general invocation to "the birthplace of jazz." The Canarians who founded St. Bernard Parish, a community southeast of New Orleans, were forcibly relocated there by the Spanish government. Among their descendants was Alcide "Yellow" Nunez, a musician featured on what is widely considered the first

these pan-Atlantic associations, asserting Afro/Canarian identity—situating themselves among a more dispersed cultural identity—is still important, Orquesta Guayaba's "Sabor Isleño" being the perfect example. This composition was recorded on Orquesta Guayaba's album, *A ver si me entiendes*. A live recording of the composition, performed by the Orquesta Golosina (based in Teror, Gran Canaria) at the 2009 *Festival de Salsa del Atlántico* (Salsa Festival of the Atlantic) in La Laguna, Tenerife can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTQeMQMQSlw>.

³²⁹ Cf. Cano Castro 2007; Hernández Cabrera and Santos Cabrera 2005; and Manuel 2004.

³³⁰ A performance of this song can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDsX1hIq51Y>. In addition to his own group, Moise's brother, Julio, performs with the Tenerife-based ensemble, Troveros de Asieta, which is composed of Tenerifan and Palmeran musicians. Julio intimated that Canarian groups that play Afro-Latin music, especially Cuban music, are often viewed as more authentic if they are comprised at least in part by musicians from La Palma, one of the factors to which he attributes the long-standing success of the ensemble.

recording of jazz by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in 1917.³³¹ For Canarian jazz musicians today, invocations of Nunez reaffirm diasporic connections in the Americas and provide historical precedent for their attempts to increase the local support of jazz. Alabama Dixieland Jazz Band, an ensemble from the island of Tenerife performs repertoire from Nunez's era in New Orleans, as well as arrangements of traditional and folkloric Canarian music in a "Dixieland" style.³³² Canarian musical references to New Orleans and "Dixieland" carry particular weight among local audiences, where they are received not only as an important part of the canonical, global jazz repertoire, but also of culturally specific histories of diasporic success and perseverance in the Americas.³³³ Establishing these connections are especially important to Canarian jazz musicians, given the multiple forms of isolation they must confront (within the Islands and among larger, global communities). As such, the ADJB emphasizes the "authenticity"—their situatedness within the tradition of both Canarian and global jazz cultures—in their

³³¹ His family changed their name from "Nuñez" to "Nunez" in order to transition more deftly into U.S. culture. With regard to the *isleño* community of St. Bernard Parish, Canarian references often invoke the aforementioned linguistic similarities and the *décima*, a folkloric musical form with a rich poetic tradition, the evocative texts of which have been ripe for textual analyses. While the *décima* represents an important cultural archive and precedent for other musical forms of the Americas, the preference for research of this form is facilitated by a scholarly preference for words over sounds (lyrics over notes) and, yet again, reifies the Canary Islands and their cultural influences as necessarily *in the past*—the *décima* as either a historical archive of earlier times or as antecedent to later musical forms.

³³² The Canarian filmmaker Manuel Mora Morales has produced documentaries and recordings for the ADJB. His videos can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDA399EC600C801CC>. Mora Morales's writings on the Canarians in Louisiana can be read here: <http://manuelmoramorales.wordpress.com/los-islenos-los-acadianos-y-la-identidad-canaria-en-luisiana>. For more information on the *isleños* of Louisiana, cf. Alvar 1998; Din 1988; MacCurdy 1975; Santana Pérez 1992; and Villeré 1997.

³³³ In the liner notes of their 2010 album, *Gofio y Jass*, appears the phrase "*Desde Canarias a Luisiana 1920-2010*," from the Canaries to Louisiana 1920-2010.

performances, media and promotion.³³⁴ They—and the surrounding discourses around the ensemble—view their performances as active remembering of Canarian diasporic connections to New Orleans, celebration of Nunez and his contributions to one of the most widely known U.S. cultural exports, and the history of Canarian emigrants in the Americas. Within this performance aesthetic, the band produces new material, arrangements of U.S. jazz repertoire and Afro/Canarian traditional and folkloric musics.

On their compact disc *Gofio & Jass*, the band performs arrangements of several canonical U.S. jazz pieces, as well as three Canarian themes, including an *arrorró*, a traditional Afro/Canarian lullaby, arranged in a New Orleans style (*cf.* Section Five). The album title performs the transcultural influence I mentioned earlier by bringing together two formative elements of Afro-Canarian-diasporic culture: *gofio*, a toasted milled grain, has been the center of Afro/Canarian food culture since pre-colonial time; with *jazz*, understood as connected to Nunez and the ongoing Canarian diasporic culture of *ida y vuelta*. The arranged and improvised music situates the band within multiple discourses, designed to engage with multiple forms of *aislamiento*, but once again emphasizing movement between places, musical traditions, languages, and times. The juxtaposition of *jass* and *jazz* is an intentional authenticating move, attempting to tie their music recorded and performed within the last few years to the earlier forms performed by Nunez and others, during which time the name oscillated between the two spellings.

³³⁴ *Cf.* Perdomo 2003 and 2009, on which Perdomo's composition "New Orleans" appears. Gato Gótico has published two recordings specifically addressing music of the Southern United States; *cf.* Gato Gótico 2008 and 2009.

III. Re/forming Canons: Standards, Covers, Contrefacts, and Re/composing

*"Jazz es un género—una manera de tocar más útil por la gente que quieren hacer una mezcla...una cosa nueva."*³³⁵

Local connections to New Orleans and the "birth of jazz [in the United States]" account for only some of the canonical histories in play in the explorations and critical improvisations of Afro/Canarian jazz. Emphasizing uniquely Canarian connections to the British Islands (*cf.* Sections Four and Seven) have been particularly important for Canarian rock and popular musicians. However, given that jazz in the Canary Islands developed in large part from proponents of jazz rock like Mahavishnu Orchestra, led by British-born guitarish John McLaughlin, the boundaries between rock and jazz among Afro/Canarian musical practices and discourses are a lot more fluid than those in the United States. This is also true because Afro/Canarian musicians move among musical styles and genres with relative ease and out of economic necessity. Confining oneself to performing in a one particular, fixed musical genre only works in the Canary Islands for select folk musicians (*cf.* Section Nine) and musicians who work for the government in state-run ensembles—of which those performing Western European classical music are the only option.³³⁶

Given this history of musical and cultural crossovers, rock covers are prevalent in Afro/Canarian jazz recordings. In Sections Five and Seven, I discussed groups like Jazz Borondón that perform jazz rock and fusion. As I stated, these earlier groups have

³³⁵ Jose María Moreno, personal communication with author, October 18, 2010. My translation: "Jazz is a genre—a way of playing most useful for a people that wants to create a mixture...something new."

³³⁶ Some musicians of the latter group, like Antonio Hernández, the leader of the Alabama Dixieland Jazz Band, still choose to pursue other musical ventures. In fact, Hernández told me it is particularly because of his state job that he has so much time to devote to research, arranging, and performance for the ADJB.

established and perpetuated local musical canons that continue to exert great influence on young artists.³³⁷ Covers of rock, specifically British rock, and references to the British Isles (including Ireland) function as a remembrance and continuation of the historical connections among the Canarian archipelago and Great Britain and Ireland. Groups like Sohnora Delté and Paganus celebrate the connections between Ireland and the Canaries, first established through the myth of St. Brendan.³³⁸ Covers of compositions by the Beatles, who visited but did not perform in the Canaries in 1963 (*cf.* Section Six), are particularly popular, including bassist Mario Rivera's "Blackbird" on his album *Mi espíritu en el bajo* and Kike Perdomo's "Drive My Car" on *A/C Funk* and "Long and Winding Road" on *Transición*.³³⁹

Pianist David Quevedo's recent albums, *Addictive Rock* and *Alzheimer* provide more examples of re/tracing transcultural influences through the performance of canonical repertoire. On his recording *Addictive Rock*, Quevedo arranges "Dazed and Confused" and "No Quarter" (by Led Zeppelin), "Manic Depression" (by Jimi Hendrix, who launched his career in Great Britain), "Heaven on their Minds" (from *Jesus Christ Superstar*, written by British-born Andrew Lloyd Webber) and "Paranoid" (by Black

³³⁷ Recent evidence of continuations of this genre can be seen in the recordings of saxophonist Llibert Fortuny and pianist Eduardo Rojo; *cf.* the discography.

³³⁸ Paganus is new duo, based in La Laguna, Tenerife, comprised on Kino Ait Idrissen and Ruskin Herman, the guitarist from Jazz Borondón. More information for the group as they continue to develop will be posted at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Paganus/210362489054369>. *Cf.* the group Union, discussed below, especially their composition "Afrocelta" on *Union*.

³³⁹ For more information on the Beatles in the Canary Islands, *cf.* González Lemus 2010. Charlie Moreno and José Antonio Ramos (with pianist Polo Ortí) both recorded covers of Sting: Moreno's "Message in a Bottle" appears on his recording *So Lonely*, and Ramos's "Englishman in N.Y." on the recording *Para timple y piano*.

Sabbath). About the album, Quevedo writes "*este trabajo es un homenaje a los músicos de rock de la década de los 70 que nos hicieron vibrar con riffs que aún se mantienen aferrados a nuestras visceras.*"³⁴⁰ Quevedo also covers "Heaven on Their Minds" on *Alzheimer*, the "straight-ahead" album he released the same year as *Addictive Rock*. In his description of the album's title, Quevedo explains,

Esto está siendo muy largo. Un día me despierto y vomito las viejas ideas. Luego lo olvido. Luego sueño que vuelvo a despertar pero resulta que ahora toco de otra manera.

A veces todo es mentira, y eso es lo más real que te puede pasar. Te conoces en detalle aunque desde fuera solo se oigan algunos pocos armónicos. Así que terminas poniendo el foco en tu interior. Tu única realidad, tu gran mentira.

*Tu gran verdad.*³⁴¹

The album, which begins with "Alzheimer (reprise)" and ends with "Alzheimer," is a unfolding of the un/forgetting Afro/Canarian subject who must improvise in order to break through the omissions and restrictions that *aislamiento* presents. Within the reversal of time that Quevedo creates in his album, he engages with various canons, including U.S. jazz ("Caravan" by Juan Tizol [and Duke Ellington, who goes unnamed in Quevedo's album credits], "Giant Steps" by John Coltrane), U.S. ("The Day I Tried to Live," by Soundgarden) and British ("Heaven on their Minds") pop/rock, and traditional Canarian music ("Sombra del nublo"). The two other selections on the album are

³⁴⁰ Quevedo, liner notes to *Addictive Rock*. My translation: "This work is an homage to the rock musicians of the 1970s who made us reverberate with riffs that are still clinging to our guts."

³⁴¹ Quevedo, liner notes to *Alzheimer*. My translation: "This is still very long. One day I wake up and vomit old ideas. Then I forget. Later I dream that I wake up again but with the result that I play in a different way. Sometimes everything is a lie, and that it is the most real that you can encounter. You recognize yourself in the details but from the outside only a few harmonies are heard. So that you end up putting the focus on the inside. Your only reality, your great lie. Your great truth."

originals: "Blues from Where?" and "Todos quieren ser Brad Mehldau" (Everybody Wants to Be Brad Mehldau) are ironic perspectives on the constrictions of musical canons. Quevedo's criticism lies in part in re/framing these canonical re/tracings and their critiques within the generative potential of un/forgetting that continually un/sounds as it re/writes.

On one of my trips to visit Quevedo in Gran Canaria, I spent an afternoon on *Playa Las Canteras*, the beach in the middle of the capitol city, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. At one of the restaurants, a latin jazz group led by pianist Rayko León played for several hours, shaded under the restaurant's awning and playing out in the direction of the (covered, whitened) beach. After the show ended, I had an opportunity to talk with the band, all of whom I had not known previously. I had corresponded with Rayko via email, but we met for the first time that day. We talked for a while as he packed his equipment and, upon leaving, he handed me a CD, *Memorandum*, on which he is co-leader with guitarist Reinaldo Rivero. He told me that the recording contained all standards, but, as I reviewed it, I saw that only the band members were listed as authors and none of the song titles were recognizeable. When I asked him for clarification, he told me that the CD was in fact an album of contrefacts, compositions with original melodies but based on the chord progressions of jazz "standards." As he left, he challenged me to decode the album: to try and determine which standard each composition uses as its basis.³⁴² The contrefact is a particularly potent metaphor for Afro/Canarian musical and cultural improvisations

³⁴² For example, "Sombras y Luces" uses the same chord progression as Cole Porter's "Night and Day" and "El Apache" the same progression as Ray Noble's "Cherokee."

against *aislamiento*, as it allows space for re/writing but predetermines the structures within which that re/writing can happen. At the same time, it troubles the borders between composition, arrangement, and re/composition inherent in the slippery question of identifying a contrefact's author. As with Quevedo's *Alzheimer*, this type of re/writing of canonical materials happens across multiple canons in Afro/Canarian jazz.³⁴³ The critiques and sanctions of these canons unfold in disparate and sometimes conflicting ways contingent not just on the performer, but the contexts of time, space, and community.

Amid these various ensembles, traditions, and shortage of opportunities, Afro/Canarian women encounter particularly difficult *aislamiento* in their reaching for self-expression and/in performance. In 2005, Tenerifan vocalist Esther Ovejero published her first recording, *Rompiendo el silencio* (Breaking the Silence), an apt title for naming the marginality female jazz musicians encounter in the Islands. During my time in the Canary Islands, and over the last five years of this project, I have encountered fewer than ten professional or semi-professional female jazz musicians, the vast majority of which are vocalists. When I asked Olga Luis Rivera, the saxophonist for Gato Gótico, why she studied and performed on that instrument, she responded that she would have preferred to have been a singer, but was not satisfied with her voice. My initial shock to that response

³⁴³ Other recorded examples of U.S. jazz standards in recent Afro/Canarian jazz recordings include albums by Jose Alberto Medina's trio (*First Portrait* and *3*), and Henna Hito Trio, which introduces sampling into its renditions of "Inner Urge," by Joe Henderson and "Night in Tunisia," by John "Dizzy" Gillespie on their self-titled album. Other examples include original compositions written for canonical U.S. jazz figures, such guitarist Eliseo Lloreda's composition "Remember Wes," written for guitarist Wes Montgomery. The composition is recorded on Lloreda's album with fellow guitarist Iván Rojas, *Dara*, and saxophonist Fernando Barrios's album, *En el mato*.

has not abated, but I now understand it in the context of the silencing of female jazz musicians—in part one of the most insidious, canonical traditions of the U.S. and global jazz communities—in which the only viable performance space is accessed through one's physical voice—that particularly sited, embodied performance usually eschewed as para/text (at best) or signal interference to the actual performance of instrumentalists.³⁴⁴

Within this context, Afro/Canarian women improvise against particularly gendered types of global and local *aislamiento* in which their breaks are especially circumscribed, reinforced in part by the local performance practice of singing jazz *in English*. I encountered very few English speakers on the north side of Tenerife where I lived—it was not an option for viable communication—so at first I found this performance practice very odd. Once at a jam session at Tocoa, I asked a friend who was attending the performance with me, why, if no one in the audience was understanding the vocalist singing in English, vocalists continued to do so. His response was... "*tradición*." This tradition plays on tropes of U.S. jazz canonical repertoire particular to vocal performance: my perception of the tradition is that the Spanish-language would mark the performance as particularly *inauthentic* and so phonetically pronounced English lyrics are

³⁴⁴ Cf. Section Two. I did not observe this gendered *aislamiento* amid other populations of Canarian musicians, such as folkloric and Western European classical performances. Even more confounding is the divide between amateur and professional Afro/Canarian jazz musicians. While it is common and widely accepted for female children and young adults to study jazz instrumental performance through secondary schools, there is a disjunct—an imposed *aislamiento*—that interrupts their development and prevents a great majority of them from pursuing professional careers. This particular phenomenon is one of the most important emergent paths in my project, and needing more research, which I plan to continue in the next phase of this project.

expected.³⁴⁵ However, this maintains a particularly trenchant and restrictive *aislamiento* for female jazz musicians: relegated to a particular role that denies them intelligibility, they are isolated from subject formation through linguistic means (a gendered, violent, contemporary riff re/inforcing the Afro/Canarian history of *lenguas cortadas*), reduced to the *alinguistic* phoneme that sounds uncommunicatively. Just before I departed from the Islands in May 2011, Ovejero published another record, *The Lady Is Still Alive*. In the liner notes—for her, the only Spanish para/text in or on the recording—she pays homage to other female musicians:

Hay canciones que forman parte de una época de nuestras vidas y que cuando vuelven a nuestros oídos nos llenan la mente de recuerdos y el pecho de sensaciones. Canciones que se tatúan en la memoria y nos acompañan siempre, canciones atemporales. Este trabajo es para los que lo hemos hecho, un compendio de ellas.

En el año 1959, moría Billie Holiday, y Frank O'Hara, uno de los máximos exponentes de la generación de los "Beat Poets," escribía el poema "The Day Lady Died." Con él quería rendirle homenaje a una de las voces más importantes e influyentes de la historia del jazz. Tomando el poema como punto de partida, este disco se llama: "The Lady is Still Alive."

Billie Holiday, probablemente debido a los excesos, fue la primera, de entre las grandes en morir. Por eso este disco es un homenaje a todas las damas del jazz que no han llegado hasta nosotros y que, sin embargo, continúan llenándonos la vida cada vez que escuchamos sus canciones.

Este es un disco dedicado a Billie, por supuesto, pero también a Ella Fitzgerald, a Sarah Vaughan y a una de las grandes de la música brasileña: Elis Regina. Gracias a todas ellas por su influencia, por su trascendencia, pero sobre todo, por llenar la historia de canciones sin tiempo con las que poner banda sonora a nuestras vidas.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ Incidentally, this restriction is not in place for Ovejero's album *Breaking the Silence*, more identified with rock and pop genres. So, she breaks the silence in Spanish, but only *outside* of jazz performance. Vocalist Beatriz Alonso has realized two albums of Afro/Cuban repertoire, recorded with jazz musicians, for which the linguistic restrictions of jazz also do not apply; cf. Alonso 2010 and 2011. Two of Ovejero's live jazz performances can be seen at the following links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9V3zRwUGfiI> (with the AM Big Band) and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bP9z2WqvF_M (in the Teatro Leal; cf. Section Six).

³⁴⁶ Ovejero, liner notes to *The Lady Is Still Alive*. My translation: "There are songs that form part of an era of our lives and when they come back to our ears, they fill our minds with memories and sensations in our

This dedication re/sounds Quevedo's in *Alzheimer*: by emphasizing the timelessness of her performances, Ovejero critically writes back against the canon that has written an end to the narrative of female jazz musicians. It is important to note that Ovejero is an English teacher—I do not doubt that the definite article in her title is intentional. Even though "Lady" (Billie Holiday) died, *The Lady Is Still Alive*. The resonances these songs provide to Ovejero's life—as a soundtrack embedded within her embodied memory and accompanying her in her everyday life—echo the constant, embodied presence that music plays in her life, and, by extension, in the lives of other female Afro/Canarian jazz musicians who must constantly assert their presences. Breaking the silences of multiple forms of *aislamiento*, the Afro/Canarian jazz lady is still alive.

V. Schema/Suite Five: The Glocal Afro/Canarian

Satomi Morimoto: Multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Satomi Morimoto is from Ota-ku, Tokyo, Japan, but lives now in La Laguna, Tenerife, after meeting her partner Tomás L.P. Cruz (of Henna Hito Trio) at a program for the study of Western European baroque music in England. She performs regularly with the jazz group ST Fusion with Cruz, and

core. Songs that are tattooed in one's memory and always accompany us, timeless songs. This work is for those that we have done, a compendium of them [those songs]. / In 1959, Billie Holiday died, and Frank O'Hara, one of the greatest exponents of the generation of "Beat Poets," wrote the poem "The Day Lady Died." With him I wanted to pay homage to one of the most important and influential voices in jazz history. Taking the poem as a starting point, this album is called *The Lady is Still Alive*. / Billie Holiday, probably due to excesses, was the first among the great women to die. For that this album is a tribute to all the ladies of jazz that have not reached us and that, nonetheless, continue filling our lives every time we hear their songs. / This is an album dedicated to Billie, of course, but also to Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and one of the greats of Brazilian music: Elis Regina. Thanks to all those women for their influence, for their transcendence, but above all, for filling the history of timeless songs with those that provide a soundtrack to our lives."

just released a duo piano album with Polo Ortí (*Fuga Dos*).³⁴⁷ Her performances traverse Western European classical, jazz, fusion, and Japanese traditional and popular musics. On her Myspace page, she posts the following in Spanish, English, and German under the heading "bio":

*Tal vez sea uno de esos ejemplos de cuando una prenda de ropa nos lleva de camino hacia el espejo para sentir el tierno abrazo de la belleza. Su luz nos permite imaginar paisajes musicales derramándose en colores orientales, en tonos líricos, en trazos clásicos y en alas jazzísticas. Su increíble capacidad de adaptación nos hace pensar en un camaleón que entiende de armonías. Con una humildad innata parte hacia las más altas cimas apoyándose en el bastón de la fe, creer para aprender, haciéndonos parecer así que todo es posible.*³⁴⁸

Satomi searches among genres, traditions, instruments, and ensembles, reaching for identity formation through repetition with difference. The adaptation of which she speaks is a necessary condition for those not firmly established with the boundaries and strictures of dominant positionalities. The first recording of ST Fusion, *Occidental* is an exploration of the intersection of Afro/Canarian and Japanese cultures performed in jazz, bossa nova and samba, pop, and traditional Japanese musical aesthetics. The ninth track, "Syunju" oscillates between a Japanese composition "Sakura Yokochō" (Cherry Blossom) and "Autumn Leaves," a U.S. jazz standard written by Johnny Mercer. By re/naming the composition, Morimoto and Cruz mark the emergent result of the realized

³⁴⁷ In another example of the silencing *aislamiento* female Canarian musicians face, all of the interviews I found about the release of the album feature on Ortí. Morimoto is cast as a peer, and portrayed as such by Ortí, but still not provided the opportunity to speak.

³⁴⁸ Morimoto 2009-2012. My translation: "Maybe it's one of those examples when an item of clothing leads the way to the mirror to feel the tender embrace of beauty. Its light lets us imagine musical landscapes pouring out in oriental colors, in lyrical tones, in classical shapes and jazz wings. Its incredible ability to adapt makes us think of a chameleon that understands harmonies. With an innate humility toward the highest peaks leaning on the staff of faith, believing for learning, making us look such that anything is possible.

fusion of their personal histories. As Jose Moreno states in the epigram quoted above, jazz performs for Morimoto and Cruz a crucial role in facilitating the fusion of these various traditions, performance practices, and organologies.³⁴⁹

Javier Infante: Inasmuch as Las Palmas—and the Canary Islands in general—has served as a trans-Atlantic port, regional commerce and exchange has also been important to local economies and identity construction. Along with ties to Great Britain and because of Britain's colonial presence in India, since the middle of the 19th century there has been a sizeable Hindustani presence in the Canary Islands.³⁵⁰ Although the population is not as high as it was in the 19th century, the historical influence of Indian culture in the Canaries remains present through musical fusion. Guitarist Javier Infante's recording *Las Palmas-Ciudad de Mar* highlights the historical and current transculturality of Canarian port cities through its evocation of many different musico-cultural influences.³⁵¹ Infante treats this transculturality in an eclectic fashion, likening the compositional process to gastronomic improvisation:

La apertura a las músicas del mundo tiene que ver con el jazz, y partiendo de la base de que la música yo la entiendo como la cocina en la que se pueden utilizar, con criterio, todos los ingredientes que uno pueda imaginar. En este caso, trabajar con músicos de jazz es hacerlo con músicos del mundo, y de alguna

³⁴⁹ An interview with both Morimoto and Cruz, where they expound on this point can be seen at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoOf54dlsJ0>. A video montage of live performances of repertoire from *Occidental*, also featuring Jose Pedro Pérez and Kike Perdomo, can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voC7jglDnoQ>. Morimoto also performs with her sister, Emiko, an example of which can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1HKC4cio24>.

³⁵⁰ Cf. López Sala 2007.

³⁵¹ The title track from this recording can be heard at the following link: http://web.mac.com/javierinfante/www.javierinfante.com/VIDEOS_English.html.

*manera todo esto me ha influenciado.*³⁵²

Infante's acknowledgement of jazz as a "world music" highlights the transculturality of what can be viewed as a very circumscribed, nationally codified "genre," as perhaps Jose María Mendez (as quoted above) understands it. Shifting the conception of "world music" from a genre label bound in sonic space and historical time to an open category throughout and among those space-times mirrors Afro/Canarian understandings of their own culture as not necessarily bound within similar categories but having been and continuing to be a signifier open to interpretation and influence.

Infante explores this world music/indo-jazz fusion through collaboration. Percussionist Nantha Kumar is a frequent collaborator on musical projects, having worked often with Infante, as well as with Torsten de Winkel and the Bimbache festival, Kike Perdomo, and Beselch Rodríguez. Perdomo and Infante collaborated together with Kumar on the 2007 album titled *Union*. In the liner notes, the ensemble writes, "thanks to all people who makes [sic] their own music in a world where globalization makes everything to be the same."³⁵³ Throughout the album, the ensemble traces various transcultural influences from Afro/Canarian history, but also the embodied competencies of each musician—making their own world through music. All of the compositions are original, except "Elm" by U.S. jazz pianist Richie Beirach. As with many Afro/Canarian

³⁵² Infante, quoted in Hernández 2008. My translation: "Openness to the musics of the world has to do with jazz [also], and leaving from that basis of the music as I understand it like a kitchen in which all the ingredients that one can imagine can be used, with discretion. In this case, working with jazz musicians is accomplishing it with world music musicians, and in some way all that has influenced me."

³⁵³ liner notes to *Union*.

compositions, their titles and aesthetics reference natural elements— "Aire" (air), "Agua" (water)—and cultures present in the Canary Islands— "Afrocelta" (Afroceltic), "Yoruba."

Infante's own invocations of Indian music have compelled him toward instrument construction, working with luthiers to produce chordophones that can more easily perform among musical systems of Western Europe, the Middle East, and India.³⁵⁴ As the band's movement among musical cultures suggests, there is no real division between enacting the histories of transcultural influence in the Canaries and performing the interpretations of the globalized world to which Union refers. While all of the cultures discussed in this Section have historical ties to the Canary Islands, it is true that, due to virtual technologies, access to media and information of cultures not necessarily associated to the Canary Islands as a place or culture can serve as the foundation of new, emergent collaborations and ties not necessarily affiliated at the level of collective cultures, but interpersonally—the embodied, improvised performances of contingent, interpersonal identities.

José Ángel López Viera and Jose Pedro Pérez: Of all the musicians I met, performed, and worked with in the Canary Islands, Jose Pedro Pérez is the most widely recorded in regards to number of albums (he estimates over 100) and genres and styles of music.

³⁵⁴ Cf. Hernández 2008. This kind of emergent organology is also practiced by Tenerifan Francis Hernández, leader of the group Ghandara. The group's 2006 album, *Taqsim*, references Turkish, Indian and Afro/Canarian cultures through instrumentation, song titles, and musical aesthetics. A promotion video for the group can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKTj9qqhdzk>; and a performance of repertoire from *Taqsim* here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDVP2XgJB8g>.

Pérez frequently works with José Ángel López Viera, including in two, important ensembles whose performances I attended several times (each) while I was in the Islands.

I first learned of Al Farabi (*cf.* Section Seven) during my initial conversations with José Ángel who referenced the group, which also includes pianist and composer Fernando Ortí (*cf.* Section Ten), in our early email exchanges. Like the discourses around Afro/Canarian musical interpretations of the Americas, the group's music is described in terms of subjective, transcultural reaches that foreground individualistic re/presentations of cultures rooted in and historically influencing the Islands:

*Entre toques de jazz, frases ambientales y melodías con aroma árabe y flamenco y tomando como base la fusión para crear una música altamente descriptiva e intimista. Las composiciones son de vivo impresionismo, gran balanza armónico y colorido instrumental.*³⁵⁵

*Aguaviva es un paseo por las diferentes culturas musicales, reinterpretadas de una manera personal y original.*³⁵⁶

El folclore y el impresionismo, tanto musical como pictórico, se entremezclan para crear una música repleta de simbologías y emociones, una música con elementos étnicos que intenta incluir raíces de otras culturas, como la oriental o andaluza, y en la que predomina la guitarra, el piano acústico, la flauta, sin descartar los sintetizadores. Al Farabi sigue evolucionando, sigue sorprendiéndonos con su original planteamiento musical. Parece que a pesar de las circunstancias de cada uno de sus miembros, existe un hilo conductor por donde fluye una música cargada de emotividad, de estructura musical completa, original y única. Única porque sus componentes han conseguido un sonido propio y original. Sin duda estamos ante una formación completa que no necesita grandes instrumentaciones porque el resultado es altamente descriptivo en cada

³⁵⁵ Azel Producciones, "Reflejos—Al Farabi," http://www.azelproducciones.com/?com=Az_MuestraDisco&Az_autor=AlFarabi&disco=Reflejos, 2010. My translation: "Among touches of jazz, ambient phrases, and melodies with Arabic and flamenco aromas, and adopting fusion as its foundation to create music highly descriptive and intimate. The compositions are lively impressionism, a great balance of harmony and instrumental color."

³⁵⁶ Azel Producciones, "Aguaviva—Al Farabi," http://www.azelproducciones.com/?com=Az_MuestraDisco&Az_autor=AlFarabi&disco=Aguaviva, 2010. My translation: "Aguaviva is a walk through different musical cultures, reinterpreted in a personal and original manner."

*tema. El verdadero espíritu que mueve este proyecto es el amor a la música, a una filosofía de vida, una música que fluye por necesidad vital, sin forzarla, un sentimiento que aparece como por arte de magia y que se manifiesta libre y puro.*³⁵⁷

In contrast, the two musicians' work with the group Madera de Choro (which also includes guitarists Jorge Hernández and Naudo Rodríguez) foregrounds a reaching for Afro/Canarian and diasporic cultures through a distinctly and exclusively Brazilian vantage point. Rodríguez, like Satomi Morimoto, relocated from his native country to the Canary Islands and has co-founded Madera de Choro in part to perform and educate Afro/Canarians about Brazilian music. The group's first album, *Canarinho* ("Canarian," in Portuguese), names the project for this process in which Afro/Canarian culture is re/viewed through other influences.³⁵⁸ Their second album includes an homage to *timplista* Jose Antonio Ramos—via Ramos's composition "La Retamilla"—performed with a demonstration of their "*capaz de 'abrasileirar' temas*."³⁵⁹ It is important to note that in these cross-cultural, transcultural, and (post/nano/un?)cultural collaborations that

³⁵⁷ Azel Producciones, "Noviembre—Al Farabi." http://www.azelproducciones.com/?com=Az_MuestraDisco&Az_autor=AlFarabi&disco=Noviembre, 2010. My translation: "Folklore and impressionism, as much musical and pictorial, intermingle to create music full of symbols and emotions, a music with ethnic elements that tries to include the roots of other cultures, like Asian or Andalusian, and in which the guitar, acoustic piano, and the flute demonstrate without the synthesizers ruling. Al Farabi continues to evolve, continues to surprise us with its original musical approach. It seems that despite the particularities of each of its members, there exists a common thread through which flows a music charged with emotion, of comprehensive, original, and unique musical structure. Unique because its components have achieved an original sound all its own. Without a doubt we have before us a well-rounded group that does not need large instrumentations because the result is highly descriptive in each song. The true spirit that moves this project is love for music, for a philosophy of life, a music that flows through vital need, without forcing it, a feeling that appears as if by magic art and which is manifest freely and purely."

³⁵⁸ An early rehearsal of this composition can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pkb0n7CKQ0I>.

³⁵⁹ Carmen María Saenz Coopat, liner notes to *Santacruzando*. My translation: "ability to 'brazilify' compositions. For more on Ramos, cf. Section Nine."

influence travels in both directions: the Afro/Canarian is not just historically, but presently and continually, open to (and subjected to) influence.

Jose Pedro affirmed this when I spoke to him about his musical career and the wide range of musical styles and cultures among which he moved. "*La cultura canaria siempre ha sido una cultura mezclada*" (the Canarian culture has always been a mixed culture), he told me—as José Ángel also suggested in the quoted citation that opened this Section ("*que la población canaria...ha sido muy...permeable, abierta a otras culturas*"). Jose Pedro's break—*el hueco que hace*—is to repeatedly (with difference) ask the question, "why can't I use a *pandeiro* in Canarian music?" This is the reach of the emergent Afro/Canarian who confronts *aislamiento*, who introduces new elements into the mix, who re/sounds through excess.

VI. Escape Velocity: Sound(-)Mapping the Afro/Canarian-in-Space

Just as interpersonal collaborations do not always move within cultural spaces, the search for the situated reach does not always occur in or move towards a culturally delimited space. For the Afro/Canarian so accustomed to positioning on the periphery and to the emptiness of an exnominated existence, imagined spaces sometimes provide more secure refuge and stable anchoring than any other. In the liner notes of their 2010 album, *Verdad o consecuencia* (Truth or Consequence), the group Tricústico—consisting of Jose Pedro Pérez, guitarist Miguel Jaubert (*cf.* Section Seven), and bassist Alberto Méndez (*cf.* Section Seven)—quotes the poet Rumi: "*Estaba muerto y ahora vivo...la música que*

*siguen las estrellas conduce al átomo que baila. ¿cómo podría no danzar?"*³⁶⁰ On the album, the group performs tracks that confound, critique, and suggest alternative spaces: "*Amanecer negro*" (Black daybreak), "*Helio fuga*" (Helium escape), "*Triángulo de las Bermudas*" (Bermuda Triangle). The "*Canario en libertad*" (Canarian in liberty) is immediately preceded by a/the "*Futuro roto*" (Broken future). The electronic, atmospheric phasing of musical sounds in and out of the mix that trace but do not inscribe sonic space-time, alluding and eluding.³⁶¹

The group describes itself as "*unidos por el lenguaje y la vocación, con un denominador común que viene casi a explicarnos por qué una propuesta tan arriesgada como honesta: la experiencia.*"³⁶² Whereas ensembles and projects discussed above reference specific cultural influences, it is the individual and collective personal experiences of each member of Tricústico that provide the basis for the group's compositions and improvisations. This world of sonic *afrocanariedad* defies circumscription, constantly moving forward transforming itself, as the group invites plurality, excess, and welcomes differing and deferring interpretations from their audience:

Definir el grupo es difícil, musicalmente es arriesgado...es un viaje. En fin, lo mejor es escucharlo para embarcarse en nuestro mundo musical, una aventura,

³⁶⁰ Liner notes to *Verdad o consecuencia*. My translation: "Music that follows the stars moves toward the atom that dances. How could I not dance?" Tricústico is comprised of Miguel Jaubert, Jose Pedro Pérez, and Alberto Méndez "Naranja."

³⁶¹ A 2010 live performance by Tricústico can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZ-w41ggfpU>.

³⁶² Tricústico, "Biografía," <http://www.myspace.com/tricustico09>, 2009. My translation: "unified by a language and calling, with a common denominator that explains us through a proposition as risky as it is honest: experience."

*nuestra aventura que queremos compartir.*³⁶³

In its reaching, Tricústico acknowledges that it is possible to cite—but not necessarily sight and site—the diverse, disparate experiences of a group bound together by affinities that do not have recourse in national, transnational, or diasporic identities. It posits through sound alternate spaces defined by complication and contradiction, but also collaboration and cohesion—collective re/framings of Afro/Canarian identity that, in their refusal to be contained, articulates and critiques the conditions of circumscription. The group imagines these new spaces that, though rooted in personal, embodied, grounded histories, lie between and among the gaps and fissures of an improvised mix.

Central to these alternate spaces is its dependence on and propagation of plurality and excess. In the liner notes for *Índigo*, this is once again signaled by polylinguism (Spanish, English, and French), wherein Jaubert's text and the accompanying commentary by Francisco Bontempi (*cf.* his collaboration with Jaubert and Pérez discussed in Section Seven). Bontempi's text discusses the generative potential of deconstructive play, describing the group as "*explorando, sin otro objetivo que descubrir*" (searching, with no other objective than discovering), and suggests programmatic allusions that direct the invitation to individual experience but do not necessarily prescribe it:

La intranquilidad de nuestras preguntas, o de antiguos olvidos. La búsqueda comienza a cada instante. [...] Volamos en medio de estrellas. [...] Nunca

³⁶³ Miguel Jaubert, liner notes to *Índigo*. My translation: "To define the group is difficult, musically it is risky...it is a journey. Finally, it is best to listen to it to embark toward our musical world, an adventure, our adventure that we want to share." Because of the individualistic representation of the group's journey, this use of "*nuestro*" is quite the opposite of the exnominating use of the word discussed in the following Section.

*serán un consuelo suficiente. Pero quedará la música, el eco fugaz de un instante sin partitura.*³⁶⁴

Bontempi describes the music of Tricústico as the sonic death mask of the unscripted, uncircumscribeable search that continually re/forms itself moving forward.

Guitarist Manolo Rodríguez (*cf.* Section Nine) describes his music as filled with risk as well. One of Rodríguez's earlier projects, Dr. Bacteria, plays on the pathology of the marginalized Afro/Canarian, naming its album, *Freak*, and commands its audience "*arriesga o muere*" ("risk it or die").³⁶⁵ The group casts its reaching for Afro/Canarian subjecthood as a violent encounter waged sonically through free jazz and improvisation:

*Como si de una guerra medieval se tratase, perdimos guerreros incluso antes de comenzar a luchar. Algunos salieron heridos o maltrechos y otros nuevos se fueron incorporando a filas, todo con la finalidad de ganar la BATALLA DE LOS SERES SALVAJES. Nuestra mejor arma, la más peligrosa, la IMAGINACIÓN que manipulada por nuestros luchadores defendieron hasta las últimas consecuencias nuestro lema: Arriesga o muere.*³⁶⁶

In this sonically waged war that fights for consideration, for the space and time to sound Afro/Canarian identity, the casualties mentioned in this call-to-imagining-arms are those of *esclavitud blanca*, the *lenguas cortadas*, of the generations of *ida y vuelta* culture whose histories have been erased, forgotten, and actively and ex/nominally written out.

³⁶⁴ Francisco Bontempi, liner notes to *Índigo*. My translation: "The uneasiness of our questions, or of ancient forgetfulness. The search restarts at every instant. [...] We are flying among the stars. [...] Never will there be sufficient consolation. But the music will remain, the fleeting echo of an instant without a score."

³⁶⁵ The composition "*Nana para brum brum*" can be heard on Manolo Rodríguez's website: <http://www.manolo-rodriguez.com/live/>. Dr. Bacteria also consists of drummer "Churchi" Méndez (also of Mojo Ribs, among others), bassist Felu Morales, and saxophonist Fernando Barrios.

³⁶⁶ Dr. Bacteria, liner notes to *Freak*. My translation: "As if it were a medieval war, we lose warriors even before the beginning of the fight. Some were injured or battered and new ones were incorporated into the army, all with the goal of winning the BATTLE OF THE SAVAGE BEINGS. Our best weapon, the most dangerous, IMAGINATION, which wielded by our fighters, they fought back until the last consequences. Our motto: risk it or die."

When I spoke with Manolo Rodríguez in late March 2011 about performing, he told me that *space* is always a present concern for him.³⁶⁷ As a practitioner and proponent of free improvisation, he is among the most isolated and marginalized jazz musicians in the Islands—without spaces that allow him to enter with his music. He and long time collaborator have recently begun a festival for free improvisation and continue to reach for *Espacios* (Spaces, the title of Costa's 2005 album). This liminal placement is used creatively, although more for self-preservation than financial gain.

One space that free improvisation has been able to create for itself arrives in the temporary transposition of the cultural center *El Generador* (The Generator) in Santa Cruz de Tenerife during the monthly free improvisation jam sessions.³⁶⁸ There is no demarcation between rehearsal and performance: every performance is always emergently finished. Multi-media presentations abound and *ad hoc* ensembles re/sound forming collectively for just a few minutes. Constantly shifting, re/mixing, and re/moving. To create space, escape the binding, peripheralizing cartography of *aislamiento*, the Afro/Canarian must adopt the position of Rodríguez and Costa—a position they perform continually, constantly, and recorded once on their album *Dos caras del mismo moneda*—"Translate."³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ Cf. Section Nine.

³⁶⁸ A performance featuring Carlos Costa, Jose Pedro Pérez, and others at El Generador can be seen in two parts at the following links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7h9NFizwLJw> (part one), and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUgD5TAoCzo> (part two).

³⁶⁹ This track can be heard on Carlos Costa's myspace page, <http://www.myspace.com/carloscostabass/music>.

Section Nine: The *timple*: Canon as Consumption, Consumption as Critique

I. José Antonio Ramos and the Tradition of Fusion

A *romería*, a traditional Canarian festival celebrated in Spring, features a procession of carts carrying food and wine and the people who prepared them parading through a village's or town's main roads. Onlookers line both sides of the street, partaking of the mobile feast, and singing along with the musical groups interspersed between the carts. At the end of one such celebration in Teguise, Tenerife, that I attended with friends in May 2011, all of the onlookers walked the parade route after the last carts had passed by and everyone met to continue the *romería* in a large square, where a stage was set for continued musical performances (live bands and DJs) and dancing late into the evening. Whereas the walking musicians had earlier performed traditional Canarian music, these groups were performing more popular music for social dancing, such as *salsa*, *bachata*, *reggaeton*, and *timba*, which—thanks to the large amplification system—could be heard well before my friends and I actually were in sight of the stage. The route we had taken walking to the square brought us along the back side of the stage, so that, as we turned a corner, we approached the square from back stage right. To accompany the music I had already been hearing, this is the first image I saw of the square and the continuing celebration:



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2012)

Aside from the aural associations of pan-Latin and Caribbean cultures that this *salsa* band was conjuring, two visual associations marked the scene as decidedly Canarian. First the red *fajines* (traditional sashes)—an essential part of the traditional Canarian dress worn during the *romería*—that some of the group were wearing; and second, the giant *timple* used as backdrop on the stage. The *timple* had played a constitutive role in the aural realization of the earlier music of the *romería*, and, while silenced now, its extraordinary size—towering over all the musicians on stage—communicated its equally constitutive role in realizing the visual aspects of this later performance. This chapter explores the

ways in which the *timple* functions as both technology through which discursive space is created and as an actant within that space.³⁷⁰

Certainly more than any musical instrument—and more than many other images and phenomena—the *timple* signals local identity to Canarians both visually and sonically: within Canarian society, the *timple* is valued as "*sin duda...[el] más representativo instrumento tradicional, presente siempre en el corazón de los canarios y protagonista en los últimos años de un auge singular.*"³⁷¹ For both autochthonous and extra-insular phenomena, the *timple* marks the spaces they inhabit and, through its being played, re/sounds them as Canarian, functioning as a technology through which worldviews can be realized. However, its potential for critique is mitigated by its canonical status within the Islands, where the *timple* and *timplistas* (*timple* performers) enjoy a mobility among audiences and spaces not usually available to those performing other musical genres and with other instruments. In addition to the *timple's* active role in Canarian society, this chapter also explores performative consumption of the *timple* as imbued with potential for both canon and critique.

When discussing the *timple* as an important cultural symbol and canonical musical instrument with a friend in La Laguna, he asked me to recall the sound emitted

³⁷⁰ Cf. Latour 2005, 72, in which the author states that considering the role of objects as actants highlights the "many metaphysical shades between full causality and sheer inexistence. In addition to 'determining' and serving as a 'backdrop for human action,' things might authorize, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on." The embodied, interactive histories surrounding the *timple* are woven into present-day discursive understandings of the instrument and its role in Afro/Canarian society. These understandings can prescriptively influence and direct future events and actions in much the same way that my first encounter with Kike Perdomo's Petrof grand piano affected my future performance tactics and the music I would perform; cf. Section Two.

³⁷¹ Cabrera Hernández 1997, 285.

over the loudspeaker before and after announcements on the light rail train running between La Laguna and Santa Cruz de Tenerife: "*un timple—tocando un acorde de Do mayor*" ("a timple—playing a C-major chord"). By this, my musician friend implied that the *timple*—its timbre and image—had so completely suffused everyday Canarian life as to suggest exnomination that defines normative sonic structures to the exclusion of nearly all other instruments. The *timple*—related to the *guitarra española*, *cavaquinho*, and ukulele—has not always been featured so prominently and soloistically; its traditional role in Canarian folkloric music is of accompaniment in larger ensembles like *parrandas*.³⁷² Within the last few decades, though, the *timple* has been reappropriated as a vehicle for solo careers among traditional and folkloric music genres, but also in popular music styles and fusions.³⁷³ This crossover potential is possible in large part due to the success achieved and precedents established by the late *timplista* José Antonio Ramos (1969-2008).

On his album *Los Cuatro Gigantes* (The Four Giants), Ramos recorded a track titled "*Canarios de hoy*," written by Paco Marín, which Ramos co-arranged with Marín

³⁷² Cf. Bermudez 1991, 84 and 334. Cf. also Cabrera 1999 and 1997, 288, in which the author quotes a local aphorism, that despite its primary role as accompaniment, "*la parranda el timple manda*," (the timple drives the parranda).

³⁷³ *Timplista* Toñín Corujo is quoted in Arias Couce 2011: "*Todos esos instrumentos se han adaptado a la música que hacen los músicos jóvenes, y el timple está atravesando por el mismo proceso. El timple es un instrumento con personalidad propia y cada vez es más conocido fuera de Canarias.*" My translation: "All those instruments [of other countries and local repertoires] have adapted to the music young musicians make, and the timple is undergoing the same process. The timple is an instrument with its own personality and all the time it is becoming more well-known outside of the Canaries." Also in this article, Corujo links the same process of globalization and maturation to the music of Lanzarote and views the development of both as mutually referential. Cf. below sub-section four of this current Section, as well as Sections Six, Seven, and Ten.

and Joan Valent.³⁷⁴ In the liner notes, Ramos describes the *canario* as "*una danza que al parecer se origina en nuestro archipiélago pasando a España y al resto de Europa por medio de esclavos aborígenes, siendo muy extendida... como danza cortesana.*"³⁷⁵ As I demonstrated in Section Four, the elaborating process of translating the *canario* has undergone suggests hegemonic framing of Canarian identity through Western European eyes (and feet). Ramos's re-appropriation of this songform is similar to those discussed in Sections Six through Eight, as well: in re-sounding the *canario* as Afro/Canarian, Ramos reaches toward mapping local identity back on to this colonial mis/interpretation.³⁷⁶ What differentiates Ramos's work from those other musicians and genres already discussed is the renown he earned for the instrument and himself as one of the foremost *timplistas* in Canarian history. The central importance of the *timple* to Canarian culture augments the popular credibility of Ramos's musical politics, opening a larger, more widely dispersed discursive spaces for debating these politics. Ramos's commitment to fusing genres, technologies, and cultures unfolded improvisationally in diverse and emergent ways, and, in his constant reaching for articulated identities, reflects the transcultural history of the Islands as focal lens through which many historical, intercultural encounters can be seen.

³⁷⁴ José Antonio Ramos, *Los Cuatro Gigantes*, CRIN Records 11018, 1998. The composition is also recorded on Ramos's compilation album, *15 Años de Timple* (Irina, 2005). For more on the *canario*, cf. Sections Four and Six.

³⁷⁵ Ramos, liner notes to *Los Cuatro Gigantes* (CRIN Records 11018, 1998). My translation: "a dance that seems to have originated in our archipelago, passing through Spain and the rest of Europe by means of aboriginal slaves, having been very elaborated... as a court dance."

³⁷⁶ According to the liner notes, Marín's composition is based on a melodic motive from "Canarios" by Gaspar Sanz, a 17th century piece which has become a modern canonical staple for the genre (17th century court music), the composer, and the country in which it was written. For more on Sanz and his interactions with the Canary Islands, cf. Charters 2009, in which the author discusses hearing Sanz's composition as the impetus for an exploratory research trip to the Canary Islands. Also, cf. Pérez Díaz 2003.

Once called "*el profeta de fusión*" (the prophet of fusion),³⁷⁷ Ramos extended his reach from musical genres to the instrument itself: his ongoing exploration of the *timple* in new contexts precipitated advances in *timple* organology, first with the incorporation of amplification, and then of synthesizers. These developments, including the augmentations and alterations made to the timple, prompted in Ramos hugely influential shifts in his perceptions of the instrument, its repertoire, and roles in Canarian society: "*Lo importante es que el concepto del instrumento y de mi música cambia totalmente a partir de ahora.*"³⁷⁸ As collaborator and teacher, Ramos's legacy of constant experimentation and fusion compels many of the musicians with whom I have been working (including his former students) to continue his expanding reach for Canarian music beyond established frameworks and performance practices.

A prominent trope regarding these paths Ramos has newly carved out references the historically and citationally-informed steps that accompany the expanding sonic and discursive associations that are being mapped onto the *timple*:

*Propuestas diversas y enriquecedoras que—sin duda—abren nuevas posibilidades estéticas y sonoras para el timple que, sin perder nunca su carácter popular, deberá ver en un futuro su inclusión en los planes de estudio en los Conservatorios, como un proceso necesario que asegure la evolución de este instrumento, del que esperamos nunca deje de ser el máximo exponente de la cultura musical canaria.*³⁷⁹

³⁷⁷ From the *Guía del Ocio de Madrid* (January 14, 2001), quoted on Ramos's website.

<http://www.joseantonioramos.com/prensa.cfm>

³⁷⁸ "Nueva revolución en el timple," *Bienmesabe* 47 (April 6, 2005),

<http://www.bienmesabe.org/noticia/2005/Abril/nueva-revolucion-en-el-timple>. My translation: "What's important is that the concept of the instrument and of my music totally changes from now on."

³⁷⁹ Cabrera 1997, 288. My translation: "Varied and enriching propositions that, without a doubt, open new aesthetic and sonic possibilities for the *timple* that, without losing any of its popular character, should see in the future its inclusion in the curricula of the Conservatories, as a necessary process that ensures the

In the same way that "*canario*" has continued to accrue meaning as both musical form and cultural qualifier, through musical, discursive, and iconic deployments the "*timple*" is constantly re/mapped and re/mapping through subjective, context-specific reachings. The career and work of Jose Antonio Ramos provide important historical precedents from which newly emergent improvisations can re/form the *timple* and perceptions of it within Afro/Canarian culture.

II. Benito Cabrera and Consumptive, Critical Canonization

Sitting in the *Plaza de la Candelaria* in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, I was attending a Spring concert of *Timpluras* (the *Orquesta de Timples de Canarias*), an ensemble led by Benito Cabrera that also includes my friend, Yone Rodríguez Monzón. I had been conversing with Yone for several years but only met him for the first time at this concert. He introduced me to Sr. Cabrera, one of the foremost authorities on Canarian traditional and folkloric musics, who also serves as musical director of *Los Sabandeños*, an all-male choir and *parranda* that tours the world performing repertoire from the Canary Islands and the Canarian diaspora.³⁸⁰ The *Orquesta's* program began with "New York, New

evolution of this instrument, of which we hope never ceases to be the greatest exponent of Canarian musical culture."

³⁸⁰ This group, active for over forty years, performs and travels widely throughout the Islands and Latin America, featuring repertoire that re/presents "*no sólo...el variado repertorio folklórico canario sino que, paralelamente...el rico cancionero latinoamericano*" ("not only the diverse Canarian folkloric repertoire but also, in parallel, the rich Latin American songbook"). While providing "*un valioso archivo sonoro que recoge parte del legado tradicional*" ("a valuable sonic archive that contains part of vernacular expression"), like Cabrera and Jose Antonio Ramos, Los Sabandeños "*continúan hoy mirando al futuro*" ("continue today looking toward the future"), exploring new pathways and collaborations that constantly re/work Canarian identity. Like the *timple*, however, the group, their recordings, and surrounding discourses also enjoy more fluid mobility, wider dispersion, and greater potential for canon formation specifically because of their status as a "*máximo exponente de la cultura musical canaria*." For the source

York," made famous by Italian American vocalist Frank Sinatra, which, given the *Orquesta's* complement of instruments and my expectations for the concert, came as quite a shock. With his opening selection, Cabrera was consciously problematizing notions of the Canarian self and cultural identifications through programming, while qualifying his own written statement that the *timple* represents "*la exponente máximo de la cultura musical canaria*" by forcibly conflating the seemingly foreign "New York, New York" with that very culture. The visual images juxtaposed on stage were just as jarring and further amplified this sonic and discursive conflation of identities:



(Photo by Mark Lomanno, c. 2012)

of these quotes and more information on the group, *cf.* Los Sabandeños 2010. For another account of the Sabandeños, *cf.* Martín 1995.

The stage—set up in the square for Fiestas de Mayo, an annual festival of concerts and events, and therefore not unique to this one performance³⁸¹—featured a romanticized, bucolic vision of the Canary Islands, an arrangement of agricultural products and drums suggestive of percussion from El Hierro and La Gomera. Instead of the *traje canario*—the traditional costume seen at the *romerías* and typical for performances of folkloric music—the musicians were dressed in all black clothing: the singular gesture toward traditional clothing was the *cachorros* (brimmed hats) they were wearing. The stage was framed on either side by two large projection screens that amplified the con/texts of the songs by showing images more associated with each composition than with the imagery of the constructed stage; in this case, the screen was flashing images of the Manhattan skyline juxtaposed with those of Ellis Island immigrants.³⁸² Cabrera had chosen to open the show by situating Canarian culture as participant in a global milieu, juxtaposing the idyllic, pastoral imagery of the stage construction with a more geographically expansive view that, while demonstrating competency with more globalized musical repertoire, still maintained its *canariedad* through the *cachorro* and most especially the sonic timbre of the *timple*. Just as the Canary Islands were being re/framed by the architecture of Manhattan, Manhattan (i.e., "New York, New York") was being re/sounded through the *timple*, which was acting as a multi-sensory framework through which the outside world could be understood and re/interpreted.

³⁸¹ I had seen a performance of *Troveros de Asieta*, an orchestra that performs Cuban and Latin American music, also mentioned in Section Seven, on the same stage a few nights prior to this concert.

³⁸² This use of the projection screen as visual augmentation of staged performance is also discussed in Section Ten, where I elaborate more fully on its use in a concert of the jazz manouche group, Nicotine Swing.

The cognitive disconnect engendered by the composite arrangement of such seemingly dissonant images and sounds ruptures discursive assumptions about performance practice and locality: it forces us—the audience—to reconsider how each of these images and sounds directs our understanding and what new paths might be produced through their collective co-presentation. Through the performed consumption of these images, the *Orquesta de Timples de Canarias* critiques the canons that have relegated the *timple* only to particular musical genres and performance contexts, and the implied isolation of those contexts from more globalized, more networked environments, sonically and visually signaled here by "New York, New York."³⁸³ Cabrera is one the most revered and widely recognized musicians on the Islands: his musical and written publications are widely dispersed and promoted. He frequently works for and with the Canarian government, including writing the lyrics for the new Canarian anthem (*cf.* Section Five) and he presides over two of the most mobile and iconic ensembles on the Islands.³⁸⁴ This stature affords him—more than most *timplistas* who already enjoy more local success relative to other musicians—a position of power to shape local perception of the *timple* and Canarian music, a potentiality that carries implications of totalizing canon formation, but also of critical re-appropriation. For example, in the quote above, Cabrera's reference to Conservatory curricula and the *timple* as the greatest exponent of

³⁸³ *Cf.* de Certeau 1988, xii-xiii, where the author introduces consumption as production with potential for critique that "does not manifest itself through its own products, but rather through its *way of using* the products imposed by a dominant economic order." Cabrera's *Orquesta* performed within the constructed space of the Spanish colonial square, the temporary but firmly grounded staging, countered only by video screens, their costumes, and the very fleeting musical architectures of sound waves.

³⁸⁴ Cabrera literally "wrote the book" on the *timple*: *El Timple* was published by Centro de la Cultura Canaria Popular in 1999. The title, admittedly, frames the text as exnominating.

Canarian culture hints at a process of authentication and canon formation that can re/produce the same hierarchical structures that isolate Afro/Canarian *timplistas* and other musicians whose particular musical genres or instruments are not afforded the same financial and institutional support. And yet, through the programmed repertoire of *Orquesta de Timples*, Cabrera clearly demonstrates a desire to expand the reach of the *timple*—and Canarian culture by extension—beyond the local hierarchies that simultaneously preference the instrument as a "cultural exponent" and restrict the musical contexts in which the instrument—and performing musician—can sound. In other words, Cabrera's position within Canarian cultural politics is in (critically deconstructive) play, debated and criticized because of his notoriety. Inasmuch as his ensembles re/form popular conceptions of the *timple* and Canarian music by presenting repertoire that celebrates "*nuestra mestizaje y tricontinentalidad*," it also reinforces trenchant views of the *timple* as a powerful instrument of *canariedad* through performing Canarian folkloric repertoire.³⁸⁵ In fact, to Cabrera:

[El] timple es el instrumento más representativo de la música canaria. No dudamos en colocarlo en el altar de símbolos que, con más o menos fortuna, viene a traernos la semblanza de una tierra, una cultura, una forma de expresar. La fiesta está íntimamente ligada al jolgorio colectivo, al rito de comensalidad, a la romería y la parranda. La presencia de un timple en cada uno de estos entornos sociales parece imprescindible y se no presenta como el más tierno acompañante del canario, que no sale de "parrandeo" sin su timple. [...] el timple hace de santo y seña para adentrarnos en el universo sonoro de la tradición de Canarias. Aunque el timple no es el instrumento más antiguo que tenemos en el Archipiélago, ni siquiera es el único que se toca en todas las islas, sí que ha

³⁸⁵ Cabrera used this phrase ("our mixing/mixture and tri-continentality") in addressing the audience at the concert, emphasizing Canarian history as embedded within the histories of three continents, understood as Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Notice, however, that, although Cabrera is referencing cultures outside the Islands, the histor(iograph)y and the ways in which those cultures have interacted is still inherently Canarian—*nuestra mestizaje y canariedad*.

*llegado a convertirse en el símbolo sonoro de esta tierra.*³⁸⁶

Thus, Cabrera's career and politics can be read both ways—as canonizing and critical—sometimes articulated, sometimes conflated. Recently, in protest of Canarian government cuts of nearly 65% to 2012 arts funding, Cabrera adopted a strong and controversial stance against the government with which he has worked so closely: he denied the government the right to use his music in promotions around the holiday 2011 season. In a demonstration of solidarity, a call of "*Todos somos Benito Cabrera*" ("We are all Benito Cabrera") began circulating across internet magazines, newspapers, and social media.³⁸⁷ The critical act of consumption as practiced by the *Orquesta de Timples* becomes the canonical act of consumption as practiced by the Canarian government, whose consistent and vociferous support of Cabrera has elevated him to a position of renown and stature that problematizes his placement as either critic or canonizer. In dissent of the solidarity movement centered around Cabrera, *timplista* Totoyo Millares wrote a pointed critique, titled "*Benito Cabrera y la falsa solidaridad*" ("Benito Cabrera and the False Solidarity") in which he catalogued myriad occasions in which Cabrera's acceptance of financial and professional support from the same government he was now disavowing.³⁸⁸ Millares

³⁸⁶ Cabrera and Santos 2001b, 120-121, emphasis added. My translation: "The timple is the instrument most representative of Canarian music. We do not hesitate to set it on the altar of symbols that, with more or less success, come to bestow on us a semblance of a land, a culture, a form of expression. The *fiesta* is intimately tied to collective revelry, to the rite of fellowship, to the *romería* and the *parranda*. The presence of a *timple* in each one of these social environments seems essential and does not present itself as the most tender companion of the Canarian, who cannot go out "*parranda-ing*" without his[her] *timple*. [...] The timple provides the password to enter into *the sonic universe of the tradition* of the Canaries. Even though the timple is not the oldest instrument that we have in the Archipelago, nor even the the only one that is played in all the Islands, it has grown into *the sonic symbol of this land*."

³⁸⁷ Mateu 2011; also, *cf.* Santiago Toste 2011.

³⁸⁸ *Cf.* Millares Sall 2011.

infers that Cabrera has only expressed interest in the larger community of Canarian musicians after the government cut its funding for the arts, of which he has been a frequent recipient, often to the exclusion of others.³⁸⁹ Media outlets dubbed the publicly aired dispute "*La Guerra del Timple*" (The War of the *Timple*), noting:

*La tensa relación entre ambos intérpretes no es nueva precisamente, aunque ahora, a cuenta de la crisis, adquiera nuevos tintes. Cuatro manos parecen demasiadas para tan sólo cinco cuerdas. [...] Dos generaciones, dos formas de entender el timple y el folclore, hasta dos formas de relacionarse con las administraciones que reparten los dineros, enfrentadas.*³⁹⁰

Four hands may be too many for playing *one timple*, but this is only true because the author invokes "the single" rather than "a singularity." The tactics and shifting viewpoints of "*La Guerra del Timple*" resonate with larger ideas of cultural performativity where every performative act (/actor/actant) maintains its potentiality as canon or critique,

³⁸⁹ In the article, Millares writes "*Si Benito Cabrera fuese solidario con otros compañeros timplistas y músicos de Canarias—los más veteranos o los que comenzaban—hubiese renunciado a favor de estos, al menos, a la mitad de los numerosos viajes, libros, exposiciones, cursos en los conservatorios públicos, contrataciones de conciertos, encargos de campañas institucionales, subvenciones de discos propios o producidos por él con los que ha sido agraciado desde hace más de quince años, y en cada uno de esos años, por numerosos departamentos gubernamentales que van desde Turismo a Cultura pasando por Patrimonio Histórico o cualquier despacho oficial en el que se diera curso al deseo de los gobernantes de varias legislaturas que fuera el músico popular más protegido por los impuestos de los canarios desde que Canarias es autonomía.*" My translation: "If Benito Cabrera were in solidarity with fellow *timplistas* and other musicians of the Canaries—the older ones or those who were just beginning—he would have given up to these people at least half of the numerous trips, books, expositions, courses in the public conservatories, concert contracts, orders for institutional campaigns, subsidies for his albums and those produced by him with which he has been graced for more than fifteen years, and in each one of those years, by numerous government departments ranging from Tourism to Culture through Historical Patrimony or whichever official dispatch which gave way to the desire of the leaders of various legislatures such that he would be the most popular musician, protected by Canarians' tax revenue from which the Canaries is autonomous."

³⁹⁰ Zabaleta, 2011, emphasis added. My translation: "The tense relation between both practitioners is not new precisely, but now, on account of the [economic] crisis, is acquiring new colors. *Four hands seem too many for only just five strings.* [...] Two generations, two forms of understanding *the timple* and *the folklore*, to two forms relating to the administrations that disperse monies, face off." The author's use of the definite article "*el*," as well as his poetic inference that there is only *one timple* that sounds for the Canary Islands is indicative of the instrument's potent, canonical force on Canarian cultural identity.

realized in part through—but not without—the consideration, consumption, and context of its audience.

III. Yone Rodríguez and Siting the Break

During a live performance in 2004—as catalogued on youtube³⁹¹—José Antonio Ramos joined one of his protégés, Yone Rodríguez Monzón, for a performance of a track from Rodríguez's debut CD, *La otra orilla* ("The Other Shore," Jesiima, 2001). The track is a fusion of the jazz standard "Mack the Knife" and the Canarian folkloric song, the polka "Los Enanos" ("The Dwarves"), and was performed both on the record and live as a medium swing composition unfolding on each successive formal repetition in oscillating waves between the two songs' the melodies, chord progressions, and improvisations.³⁹²

"Mack the Knife" is a U.S. jazz standard with international origins: a translated composition, originally titled "Die Moritat von Mackie Messer," that was excerpted from the German drama work, *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Threepenny Opera*). Canarian *timple* jazz fusion that sets out from such an international vantage point suggests that, like the *tricontinentalidad* of the Canary Islands, other genres and cultures (even canonical and imposing ones) can be rooted in border-crossings. In this way, claims to indigeneity and belonging can be troubled: at the break between choruses of "Mack the Knife/Die Moritat von Mackie Messer" and "(Danza de) Los Enanos," in which cultural framework is the music best situated? The movement *from* (memory) and the movement *to*

³⁹¹ timplebanda, "Mack the Knife. Yone Rodríguez con J.A. Ramos Live!" (October 23, 2007), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7cZBmuXKFo>.

³⁹² The "Danza de Los Enanos" is the final event of an important, popular religious festival on La Palma. For a history of the dance and its relationship to the festival, see Rodríguez Escudero 2005. For a performance of the dance, *cf.* miguelbratu 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s05mwbeYf7U>.

(intention) are articulated in this moment where cognitive and kinetic energies pull in both directions. Movement out of the break (in either direction) could force an associative form to emerge, where any one participant could hear either or both and make deductive (and/or reductive) associations about the performance, the musicians, or the compositions in play. While the audience and musicians in the live performance moved forward between the two songs of the composed fusion, no one did so without the prior knowledge of where they had just been. This subjective, citationally-informed listening also informs perceptions of the musical contrefact, where participation is inextricably linked to concentrated and conscious perception of formal structure.³⁹³ Additionally, upon successive iterations of the two-song cycle, the memory of both informed future listenings. In the same way that mediated re-listening on youtube can facilitate emergent, polysemous understandings, in this particular con/text the same sort of understanding emerged in the live moment: boundaries between content and form disintegrate in this context-driven, subjective listening "in the break."

On his second album, *Colores* (Marble Records, 2010), Rodríguez recorded an original composition titled "Jacío," a Canarian word that translates (roughly) as "a break or pause." The *Academia Canaria de la Lengua* (Canarian Academy of Language) suggests several definitions including "*calma momentánea del mar, que se produce en las proximidades de la orilla tras un continuado oleaje,*" which is followed by the sample usage, "*Había que esperar a que hubiera un jacío para poder meter el barco en la*

³⁹³ Cf. Section Seven.

playa."³⁹⁴ This definition resonates with the explanation Rodríguez provided during one of our conversations: "*Jacío es un término marinero. Yo sé de un pueblo de costa; cuando hay torme[n]ta en el mar, hay un momento que se queda en calma y es cuando los pescadores vuelven a la tierra. Ese momento de calma se llama jacío.*"³⁹⁵ Using local vocabulary and habitat in the composition firmly sites it within Canarian culture; however I would like to emphasize the kind of "break" that *jacío* describes. It is a break (to be waited for) in which action occurs, where the waiting facilitates action: not only do the emergent conditions of the storm's momentary subsiding prompt the reactive moment from the fishermen but the context of the fishermen's movement—the storm—is inextricably tied to those movements. In the same way that listening in the break to Rodríguez's "Mack the Knife / Danza de los Enanos" reveals a myriad number of citationally-informed, subjective, and contingent perceptions in which form and content are equally in and at play, the concept of *jacío* demonstrates how everyday, improvised, embodied action operates contingently in space and time, dependent on the contextual frames in which it is situated—sited sailing that waits in the break.

³⁹⁴Academia Canaria de la Lengua, "Jacío," <http://www.academiacanarialengua.org/palabra/jacio/>, 2010. My translation of the definition reads: "a momentary calm on the sea, which occurs on the nearby shores after a continuous wave surge" and the sample usage as "I had to wait until there was a break so that I could put the boat on the beach."

³⁹⁵ Yone Rodríguez Monzón, online communication with author, August 12, 2010 [punctuation, diacritics, and capitalization added]. My translation: "*Jacío* is a marine term. I know from a town on the coast; when there's an ocean storm, there's a moment when a calm settles and that's when the fishermen return to the shore. That moment of calm is called *jacío*."

IV. Toñín Corujo and Asserting Locality

The island of Lanzarote is revered for its history with the *timple*—for its traditions of both instrument-making and performance. The *timplista* Toñín Corujo is a member of one of the island's most celebrated families: his father, Antonio Corujo, and uncle, Domingo Corujo, are heralded throughout the Islands for their knowledge of folklore and traditional music, as well as their proficiency in performance. Toñín lives in the capital of Lanzarote—Arrecife—where he runs a music production and publication company, Tocoyma Records, a music school for children, and performs widely.³⁹⁶ During my stay with Toñín in Arrecife (also the title of his first recording), it was clear to me from the number of greetings exchanged on our walks that he is received as a valuable member of the community who enjoys both political clout and social mobility.

A large part of Toñín's recorded oeuvre could be called program music. The majority of the tracks on his three recordings have titles that reference particular locales or people, the vast majority of which refer to the locations, natural phenomena, and influential inhabitants of Lanzarote. From our conversations, I understand each composition to be motivated by a personal relationship, but this naming tactic also serves important commercial and aesthetic goals. In contrast to his father and uncle (and earlier ancestors), Toñín's music might be assigned to genres such as "easy listening," "fusion," and "smooth jazz"—in other words, *not* the Canarian traditional and folkloric music for which his family and the island of Lanzarote have been so well known. Toñín amplifies

³⁹⁶ When the *Museo de Timple* opened in March 2011, Toñín Corujo gave the premiere concert there. Also featured in the museum's inaugural performances were Benito Cabrera and Yone Rodríguez Monzón. Cf. Cliffe-Jones 2011.

claims to authenticity in his music by appealing to local culture and indigenous ecology. In elaborating on the canon of *timple* music, he invokes other—extramusical—authenticating phenomena to buttress his sonic reachings for a more individualized fusion of musical styles and traditions.

On his most recent recording, *Lanzarote Music* (Tocoyma, 2011), the tracks are named for and references to the island and its inhabitants, including "Malvasía volcánica" ("Volcanic Malvasia"), a celebration of a local wine made from the Malvasia grape that proliferates throughout the Mediterranean and Macaronesia. Unique to the Lanzarotean wine is the volcanic soil in which it is grown, and the climate in which dry air and low precipitation predominate, affected more by African weather patterns because of the island's proximity to the continent. These characteristics imbue the grape and wine produced from it with unique, local flavors, which inextricably link the place of production to the product and its consumption. Corujo concretizes these associations in a promotion video for the composition.³⁹⁷ In it, fragments of Corujo's live performance of the composition are interwoven with images of local viticulture, including the black volcanic sands, aging and bottling of the wine (labeled "*Malvasía Lanzarote*"), statues of vintners in traditional clothing, and, most importantly, the vines themselves. Because of the low precipitation on the island, the vines are grown in shallow recesses so that the moisture in the air will run down toward each vine's base as it condenses. Toñín pointed

³⁹⁷ tonincorujo, "Malvasía volcánica" (December 31, 2011), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LEyWOUmRp0>.

out this type of viticulture to me as we were driving around the island, which is how I came to know him, his music, and his island—in the passenger's seat of his car.

On a night during my visit with Toñín, he offered to drive me to the nearby town of Puerto del Carmen to watch a performance by a friend of his. Toñín knew the approximate location of the venue, but we had to walk around and ask for directions to Mulligan's Bar and Restaurant once we arrived in Puerto, which Toñín told me was a tourist town built right on a coastal beach. As we walked along the boardwalk, we had difficulty finding someone to help: not for lack of people, but for lack of *Spanish-speaking* people. In one of the most profound experiences of that visit, I became translator for Toñín; we were no more than twenty minutes from his house, but we could not navigate that beach (with sands imported especially for those tourists who prefer their beaches white and not volcanic black) in his native (colonial) language.³⁹⁸ After we arrived at Mulligan's and I ordered (in English) for both of us, we watched the performance of his friend's band, led by a male Irish vocalist who sang covers of alternative and canonical rock, including U2 and the Beatles. During the performance, I stepped away to the restroom where I encountered this poster:

³⁹⁸ For a more in-depth discussion of the importation of beach sand to the Canaries, *cf.* Section Ten.



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2011)

Unbeknownst to me Toñín had talked with his friend and Collie Farrell, the vocalist of the rock cover band who also performed repertoire associated with Frank Sinatra for the show advertised above, and they invited me on stage as I was coming back to the table. I was especially tentative to join them onstage because they had announced me as "a special guest from the United States, Mark Lomanno on guitar." Once I pointed out the

error and sat down at the keyboard, I suggested we play "Mustang Sally," popularized by African American vocalist Wilson Pickett, but known first to me from the soundtrack of the movie *The Commitments*, about an Irish rock cover band. At the end of the night, Collie thanked me and extended an invitation to Big Band Night, in particular to the late set, where the band switched repertoires yet again—to bebop, jazz rock, and "some Chick Corea tunes" in which he thought I would be particularly interested.

This was not Toñín's Lanzarote, but an importation of anglophile culture well arranged and catered to current touristic tastes. Ironically, though, it *is* Toñín's Lanzarote in that the revenue tourism contributes to the island's economy is vital to the livelihood of its inhabitants. Toñín credits the Lanzarotean architect Cesar Manrique (*cf.* Section Ten) with the development and construction of touristic spaces that have revitalized the local economy. Corujo's high esteem for Manrique is also commemorated on his latest CD with a track that Corujo also performed as part of a 2010 live concert. This performance, which has been recorded and posted on youtube, takes place in *Cueva de Los Verdes* (The Greens' Cave), a major tourist destination in Lanzarote that features labyrinthine underground trails through a lava tube, the end of which has been converted into a performance hall.³⁹⁹ In this video, once again the use of extramusical phenomena for local authentication amplifies the intent of the composer. The site of the performance acts as a constitutive con/text that directs and joins audience members' perceptions of the

³⁹⁹ attenerportalatino, "Manrique by tonin Corujo Cueva de los Verdes 2010).mov" (September 20, 2010) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jRq7ljo-M8>. I toured the *Cueva de los Verdes* with Toñín, who arranged for me to perform there as well.

music (featuring Toñín's *timple*) to the constructed Canarian spaces of the architect and the improvised structure of the naturally-constructed performance venue.⁴⁰⁰

The stark contrast of the multicultural anglophone Puerto del Carmen with the nearby hyper-local *Cueva de Los Verdes* presents a much more articulated version of *geografía lanzaroteña* than Corujo would have us believe. As important as the ecology, geography, and history of Lanzarote are to his music, Toñín must also contend with the necessary cultural contradictions entailed in the local tourist economy. Toñín's tactic of musical fusion situated in local spaces appeals to wider audiences, but also invites the potential for writing back and un/writing of the touristic reach for/in these spaces:

*El cd [Lanzarote Music] estaba plagado de cosas relativas a la isla y yo pretendía que fuera mi particular banda sonora a Lanzarote, una especie de tributo que también participara en la proyección de la isla en el exterior. [...] Las vivencias y los sentimientos me inspiran, me llenan de imágenes y de situaciones de todo tipo. Me pongo a soñar despierto y navego por universos sonoros y me desplazo por territorios imaginarios. Todo esto me inspira y me llena de emociones. Entonces me siento a intentar canalizar esas 'audio-visiones' con mi voz o con los instrumentos y pruebo cosas y las grabo.*⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. Section Ten

⁴⁰¹ Martín González, 2012. My translation: "The CD [*Lanzarote Music*] was full of things related to the island and I intended that it would be my particular soundtrack to Lanzarote, a kind of tribute that would also participate in the projection of the island to the outside world. [...] Experiences and feelings inspire me, filling me with images and situations of every kind. I start daydreaming and I navigate through sonic universes and move through imaginary territories. All of this inspires me and fills me with emotions. Then I sit down and try to channel those audio-visions with my voice or with instruments, and I try things and record them." Note Corujo's use of similar nautical metaphors that inform Yone Rodríguez's "Jacío" as he describes entering into multiple—not Cabrera's one—sonic universes, perceptions of which are "being re-sounded through the *timple*, which was acting as a multi-sensory framework through which the outside world could be understood and re-interpreted." For more on invocations and inhabitations of imaginary (and outer) spaces, cf. Section Eight.

V. Beselch Rodríguez and *Hábitat...y de silencio*

*Hábitat es la isla. Es la isla de lava y silencio.
Es la isla de lava, de luz...y de silencio.
Es la isla de lava, de luz, de agua...y de silencio.
Es la isla de lava, de luz, de agua, de sal...y de silencio.
Es la isla donde canta el viento.
Habitemos la isla como el alisio cuando acaricia el suelo.*⁴⁰²

This recitation begins *timplista* Beselch Rodríguez's latest recording, *Hábitat* (Multitrack Records, 2012), which features repertoire representative of each of the (seven) Canary Islands. The track titles reference the names of the islands, certain song forms associated with individual islands, and natural phenomena therein, in much the same way that Toñín Corujo has used local signifiers as song titles. Also like Corujo, Rodríguez engages in stylistic fusion within and among songs on the album. His attention to local surroundings carries a political statement with it:

*Vivimos en un mundo extremadamente globalizado...y a veces nos olvidamos de mirar para los lados. [...] Y llegamos a creer que ese mismo mundo se encuentra de puertas para afuera y que las Islas Canarias se encuentran en la frontera entre el mundo y lo que no es mundo. [...] Hábitat solo quiere emitir un mensaje de apreciación y conservación hacia nuestro entorno, hacia nuestra idiosincrasia, hacia nuestras costumbres, hacia nosotros mismos, sin olvidarnos de que también somos parte del universo y de que tenemos un papel que cumplir.*⁴⁰³

⁴⁰² The following translation and the typographically implied rhythm and groupings are my interpretations of this text by Fernando Senante: "*Hábitat* is the island. It's the island of lava and silence. / It's the island of lava, of sunlight...and of silence. / It's the island of lava, of sunlight, of water, of salt...and of silence. / It's the island where the wind sings. We'll inhabit the island as the trade wind does when it caresses the ground."

⁴⁰³ Beselch Rodríguez notes to *Hábitat*. My translation: "We live in an extremely globalized world...and sometimes we forget to look alongside us. [...] And we start to think that that very same world seems outside and that the Canary Islands seem at the threshold between the world and that which is not the world. We forget that we are also part of that world. [...] *Hábitat* only wants to send a message of appreciation and conservation to our environment, to our uniqueness, to our customs, to us ourselves, without forgetting that we also are a part of the universe and that we have a role to fulfill."

When added to the poem at the beginning of the album's first track ("Laurisilva"), these two statements present a vivid picture of Canarian cultural consciousness:

*Hábitat es la isla...de silencio...donde canta el viento...
en la frontera entre el mundo y lo que no es mundo...
[que] quiere emitir un mensaje...sin olvidarnos
de que también somos parte del universo.*

The island, full of natural phenomena, is never not silent. Even when the wind sings, the island's inhabitants remain ever-silen(t/ced). This perpetual silence relegates them to the threshold of worldly existence, recognizing that they are part of the *universe*, but not necessarily the *world*, even a world that is *extremadamente globalizado*. So, what are those phenomena that inhabit the silences, that testify to the worldly existence of the silenced? "Our environment, our [self-pathologizing?] idiosyncrasy, our customs, and we ourselves," which must be conserved and appreciated especially against those searchings and reachings that would (but ought not to) glance over them. Those glancings-over are the *locally* produced *aislamiento* that continues to relegate the Afro/Canarian subject to the threshold alongside the world. One way to counteract this type of *aislamiento* is to recognize the presence of the *world* in the Canaries, acknowledging the histories of mutual influence between the Afro/Canarian subject on the threshold and those thought to be *in the world*.⁴⁰⁴ Rodríguez recognizes that the local can in fact be diverse: his track referencing Gran Canaria is a *bulereña*, a fusion between an Andalusian *bulería* and a (Gran) Canarian *malagueña*. The latter form, widely accepted as an importation from the

⁴⁰⁴ Cf. Sections Four and Eight.

continent has nonetheless been appropriated as a local variant.⁴⁰⁵ Rodríguez sees this composition as an important fusion, not just as a musical collaboration, but as a potential way through which the marginalized positionality of the Islands can be counteracted. This potential can be realized through everyday, personal interactions and experiences that critically re/write dominant, cartographically and politically exnominating moves:

*A nuestro regreso a Tenerife empezamos a maquinar lo que más tarde se convertiría en esta fusion canario-andaluza, que conjuga la malagueña con la bulería, por supuesto desde nuestros respectivos puntos de vista. Y así surgió esta Bulereña, uno de los pocos precedentes (quizás el primero) de la fusion del timple con la guitarra flamenca, de la fusion de la música que se hace en Canarias con la que se hace fuera de sus fronteras. Música sin fronteras.*⁴⁰⁶

VI. Germán López and *Silencio Roto*

The reach for music without borders is a mediated reach contextualized by imposed and imposing structures. Like Rodríguez, Gran Canarian *timplista* Germán López, a former student of José Antonio Ramos, recognizes the situated isolation of the Canary Islands but emphasizes how everyday actions maintain critical potential to contest these imposing mediations. On his 2010 recording *Silencio Roto* ("Broken Silence," Irina Records) López sounds out his personal history of intercultural interactions, once again through musical fusion. His comment about the title suggests to me a sensitivity to the contingent nature of these interactions and the individual silences (to be) broken: "*Lo de*

⁴⁰⁵ Rodríguez also cites a recording of the *malagueña canaria* by the Canarian folkloric group Los Gofiones as a primary influence for the piece. Personal communication with the author, March 4, 2012.

⁴⁰⁶ Beselch Rodríguez, footnotes to *Hábitat*. My translation: "Upon our return to Tenerife [from a musical festival in Barcelona] we began to work out that which much later would be converted into this Canarian-Andalucian fusion, that joins the malagueña with the bulería, obviously from our own respective points of view. And thus emerged this Bulereña, one of the few precedents (perhaps the first) of the fusion of the *timple* with the flamenco guitar, of the fusion of the music made in the Canaries with that which is made outside of its borders. Music without borders."

'Silencio roto' puede dar a entender eso, y me gusta esa ambigüedad en estos casos y que cada uno haga la interpretación que le parezca."⁴⁰⁷ López also links this focus on individual journeys to the *timple* itself, inferring that, while he focuses on his path—a musically critical remapping of imposed cartography—he recognizes his influence on larger conceptions of the *timple* as actant and as possessing its own collective discourse:

*Comienza aquí un nuevo viaje por el entramado sonoro del timple. Esta vez, las melodías de nuestro instrumento se unen a la tradición jazzística...un timple deseoso de nuevos horizontes, de nuevos colores con los que seguir dibujando su silueta en el mundo. [...] Sin más...dejemos que la música habla por sí sola...Bienvenidos a esta aventura Sonora. Te invito a un nuevo viaje por el timple...*⁴⁰⁸

The *timple* speaks for itself, reaches for new horizons, draws its silhouette: López's evocative language decenters his role in the music's realization appealing in part to a larger social consciousness, acknowledging that part of his individual re/mapping of the discourses around *timple*—and, by extension, his music and life in general—are undertaken by others. He cannot speak for the *timple*, the music, or the journey (as Benito Cabrera attempts to do above) because it is impossible to circumscribe that which would un/write the silenced. His is "un viaje," not "el viaje," for the *timple* in the same way that recording *Silencio Roto* is "un viaje," not "el viaje," for López, while discussing it, re/playing the record, re/performing the repertoire present still more *viajes*. Adding the

⁴⁰⁷ López quoted in Hernández 2010. My translation: "'Broken Silence' can imply that [a loss of voice], and I like that ambiguity in these cases and that each person has an interpretation that seems [appropriate]."

⁴⁰⁸ Germán López, liner notes to *Silencio Roto*. My translation: "A new journey for the resonating framework of the *timple* begins here. This time, our instrument's melodies join with the jazz tradition...a *timple* eager for new horizons, for new colors with which to continue drawing its silhouette in the world. [...] Without more [to say or write]...we're leaving the music to speak for itself...Welcome to this new sonorous journey. I invite you to a new journey for the *timple*...". The last three sets of ellipses are included in the original text.

audiences into the mix presents a uncircumscribable whole of times, spaces, and actants that *per se* resists the cartographic gaze. López gestures toward the contingent formation of these un/writings when he describes what *Silencio Roto* might sound like: "*este Silencio Roto sonará a...tantos afectos cotidianos de saberse ciudadano del mundo viviendo en una latitud y longitud geográfica determinada.*"⁴⁰⁹ López does not say whether this exact situatedness is liminally placed, as in Rodríguez's threshold, but his attention to place demonstrates an awareness of the articulated, localized identity of the global subject.

Through López's use of the perfect passive participle "*roto*" to qualify *silencio*, we could surmise that the *silencio* that Beselch Rodríguez references is less a *silence* and more a *having been silenced*, a historically informed condition of *aislamiento* perpetuated by continuous acts of elision and writing out. López's use of the word *roto* has particular importance here: rather than *breaking silence*, he infers that the silence *has already been broken*. López signals this sensitivity to verbal tense and mood by contrasting the album's title (and the eponymous composition on the recording) with other compositions' titles. The track that immediately precedes "Silencio Roto," "Imaginando Folías" (Imagining Folías), is López's interpretation of the *folía*, a Canarian appropriation of a European (most likely Portuguese) dance popularized in the 16th century.⁴¹⁰ The title suggests an active pursuit—exposing the silence as broken through imagining and improvising

⁴⁰⁹ n.a., "Germán López da a conocer su ultimo disco en Tegueste," *El Día* (May 5, 2011), <http://www.eldia.es/2011-05-05/CULTURA/3-German-Lopez-da-conocer-ultimo-disco-Tegueste.htm>. My translation: "This *Broken Silence* will resound with all those everyday feelings of the knowing worldly citizen living at a geographically determined latitude and longitude."

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Siemens Hernández 1965.

reaches. Alternately, the title of "*Sorondongo Influenciado*" (Influenced Sorondongo), suggests a past/passive relation once again, while the music itself continues the unfolding of contingent influences.⁴¹¹ López's live recordings of this composition bare this contingent, continuing unfolding out: by varying instrumentation and improvisations, López suggests that the history of these past influences are still in play. Like Rodríguez cautioning against glancing over the everyday and the local, López suggests that part of overcoming *aislamiento* is recognizing that its repetition is sustained in part through a conditioned myopia that fails to see the already-present diversity, "*nuestra mestizaje y tricontinentalidad*," and potential for counteraction *within* "*una latitud y longitud geográfica determinada*." The conditions for the generative rupture of this silencing can be found within existing, imposed structural strictures.

VII. Manolo Rodríguez, the laúd, and Performing *aislamiento*

Manolo Rodríguez, who was born and currently lives on Tenerife, does not perform on the *timple*: if the *timple* is "*nuestro instrumento*," he would be exnominally excluded from the "our." He is, in many ways, situated in the same "*latitud y longitud geográfica determinada*" as López, Beselch and Yone Rodríguez, Corujo, and Cabrera, and yet that location does not articulate properly the extent to which Manolo is continually and constantly isolated *from within*. For his soloistic performance on the *laúd canario*, Rodríguez is collocated in—but exnominally excluded from—the Canarian traditional

⁴¹¹ Cf. González Ortega 1995. Cf. performances seen at the following links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJvUNPBN3R0>; and <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=3262254197149>.

and folkloric canons in the same way that his focus on free improvisation positions him liminally vis-à-vis local jazz canons, venues, and audiences. These multiple forms of *aislamiento* impact Rodríguez in ways that lay bare the *timple*, its practitioners, and its surrounding discourses as imposing canonical structures that re/produce *aislamiento* even as they seek to un/write it.

The first note of Rodríguez's album *Energy* (the first track shares its title with album) breaks the already broken silence with jarring conviction. Rodríguez's aggressive electric guitar chords confront the listener, forcing acknowledgement and engagement. The initial strike lasts twenty-one seconds, but Rodríguez provides the listener with only a split second of resolution—which can only be rest, silence, the absence of what just was—only to repeat the gesture immediately with the entrance of the two other members of the ensemble (Machuca Trio), bassist Carlos Costa and drummer "Churchi" Méndez (also of Mojo Ribs). At 0:43, the gesture sounds for a third time until 1:06, after which the echo of this assertive opening rings for five seconds and the band proceeds to a new musical idea. After guitar and bass improvisations, Rodríguez returns to this incipient gesture—again repeating it three times—ending the track with newly introduced, more rounded electronic sounds that do not so much refer listener back to what was just heard, but rather refresh and relax their ears.

The next track on the album, entitled "The Astronaut" ties in a critical and critiquing theme of Rodríguez work—(outer) space.⁴¹² Recently, Rodríguez collaborated on a live free improvisation record with bassist Costa. He played me some of the rough

⁴¹² Cf. the concluding sub-section of Section Eight.

cuts in March 2012, including one track that will not be included on the soon-to-be-released recording. "*Folías marcianas*" (Martian folías) features Costa on acoustic bass and Rodríguez playing the *laúd canario*. Rodríguez's musical education began with traditional Canarian music—on the *laúd*—after which he switched quickly to the electric guitar and relocated to Los Angeles and then New York City for instruction. "*Folías marcianas*" re/presents a return to Rodríguez's musical beginning, while re/sounding it as a citationally-informed present moment of his ongoing development. The *laúd* is not necessarily marginalized within Canarian traditional music compared to the *timple* so much as it is exnominally isolated from the *timple*'s new discursive space as a soloistic instrument—the space that all the other musicians named here are inhabiting. As a result, the space in which Rodríguez must place his music is of the *universe*, but not necessarily the *world*. However, Rodríguez and the *laúd* are further isolated in that both are left out of Benito Cabrera's "*el universo sonoro*" of Canarian identity and the technology (the *timple*) by which that and other sonic universes (those of Corujo and Beselch Rodríguez?) can be entered. In situating his music, Rodríguez forces the acknowledgement of the exnominating potential in *aislamiento*—in "*nuestras costumbres*," "*nuestro instrumento*," "*nuestra mestizaje y tricontinentalidad*," "*nuestro archipiélago*," and even "*nuestros mismos*." Rodríguez's music—the slippage in the mix—slips the mix...slips the mix...slips the mix...

The *nuestra/o* discussed by these *timplistas* does not fully articulate the conditions and contexts of the situated, isolated, influenced, broken. The inferences of unified community belie lived contingency, suggesting both that the break in which the

silence can potentially be broken exists, but also that the breaking (and the silencing) unfolds in a uniformly articulated way. Manolo Rodríguez and his music demonstrate an effective counterargument, namely that "the cognitive disconnect engendered by such an arrangement of seemingly dissonant images and sounds ruptures discursive assumptions about performance practice and locality: it forces us—the audience—to reconsider how each of these images and sounds directs our understanding and what new paths might be produced through such an arrangement."⁴¹³ And the silence...of the break...

⁴¹³ *Cf.* above, sub-section 1.

Section Ten: *Espacios tecnológicos*—Spatial Technologies: A Para/textual Aside

I. Introduction: Re/mapping Mis/translated Cartography

Walking around La Laguna with my roommate Kino Ait Idrissen, an engineering graduate student from Rif in Northern Morocco, always lends ample opportunity for conversation. Kino, an accomplished self-taught Amazigh musician, shared with me his great interest in jazz, particularly for learning more about its harmonic language and scalar improvisation. Kino's knowledge of Amazigh culture, its music, its historical roots and current presence in the Islands have offered me a distinct perspective into understanding Canarian culture in ways not so directly tied to peninsular Spain. Walking down *Calle General Franco* one day in the Spring of 2011, I asked him about the street's overabundance of commercial shops and banks, occupying the ground floors of buildings built as early as the 16th century, and the reception of the city's Spanish colonial architecture. After several months already in the Islands, I had a sure enough sense of local identity and of the Spanish language to ask how, since most Canarians identified themselves not with the peninsula government or culture, the constant presence of architecture of colonial power and suppression affected daily life. I'm not sure which Spanish word meaning "veneer" he used—whether "*enchapado*," or "*apariencia*," or some other word—but his meaning was absolutely clear to me in the context of the conversation. I was not in the habit of transcribing our conversations anyway.

Word choice aside, his response to my question was that Canarians often saw this architecture as just a veneer on top of local culture. Again, I understood from the context that Kino was suggesting that the landscapes and urban spaces, like other aspects of

Canarian culture, were permeated—but not overrun—with colonial Spanish influence. I thought back to an outdoor wall of a friend's home in El Hierro I had visited the previous Fall. She and I would sit out on her patio in the morning, drink coffee, and share conversations like the one Kino and I were having walking through La Laguna. I took many pictures of the wall, and in particular, a small plant that had grown *through* it.



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2010)

On further reflection, the apparent contradiction of those solidly constructed and firmly buttressed buildings on *Calle General Franco*—some of them nearly 400 hundred years old—as a mere architectural veneer of that Laguneran urbanscape and Canarian culture in general incited a seismic shift in my conception of this project. Throughout centuries of occupation, Afro/Canarian identities—rooted and sustained locally—have been framed as alternate and critical from affiliations with colonial Spain, continually emerging from

binding and bonding, imposing and imposed structures. A few days after this walk, Kino and I were walking back from that favorite sandwich shop of ours—twenty minutes' travel on foot from our apartment, during which we passed up many other (more expensive and lesser quality) opportunities for food, passing through several sections of La Laguna along the way. In the block of *Calle San Antonio* between the shop on *Calle Maya* and *Plaza Doctor Olivera*, there is a row of particularly run down houses, the properties so dilapidated that only a few of the houses' outer walls (and pieces of their roofs) remain, at least enough on which to post real estate contact information for potential buyers. Struck by the scene, I was compelled to photograph one of those houses as well.⁴¹⁴



(Photo: Google Maps, 2009)

⁴¹⁴ Subsequent searches for this photograph among my collection did not turn up; however, since I remember the area, the "street view" feature of Google Maps provides instant access to the same from across the Atlantic Ocean, albeit from a different date (April 2009).

Once again the vegetation has pierced through and over the walled-in spaces whose exposure to the natural elements belie their being called "buildings." As I walked through La Laguna, the added perspective of Kino's comments on the veneer of Spanish architecture recontextualized my passings-by spaces such as these—in which the aromas of plantlife and the arresting painted strokes of graffiti (artistic and commercial) reinscribe new layers onto constructed surfaces—and provided everyday examples of the mutability of even the most cartographically and architecturally circumscribed spaces.

So the question remains, if the persistence of colonial surfaces masks Afro/Canarian culture and the Canary Islands, what lies behind, beyond, and *in spite of* these surfacing constructions and constructed surfaces? Liminalized to the margins of their own spaces and the entire Atlantic world, its history *and* historiography, the Islands and their inhabitants could offer much that pulls at the seams of all three, disrupting their narrative flows and critically writing back on that marginalizing covering-over.

From this realization, more questions follow: what other structures might have been circumscribing Canarian culture in general and lives of those with whom I have been living and working during the project? In what ways might this dissertation reinforce these bounding and binding structures? What might be the imposed and imposing veneers of this text? And, what are the ways to leave enough space within the structures of the dissertation for the emergent sounds, smells, sentiments, and subjects to thrive not *in spite of* the writing but *along with* it?

Addressing these questions compelled me to the writing para/tactics and parataxis I have employed throughout the dissertation, outlined in depth in Section Three. Sections

Four and Six translated these questions into the disciplines of cartography, ethnography, ethnomusicology, and historiography. In Section Seven, "Making the Break," I traced some of the paths with which Afro/Canarian musicians are critiquing dominant, isolating representations of the Islands and its cultures through musical performance—by re/sounding traditional music forms in disparate and contingent ways. Section Eight explored these same critiques from a wider vantage point of the Canarian diaspora and the Islands' nearby cultural influences. At the end of that Section and in the subsequent one, I suggested that, even from within this critical stance, some of these musicians face unique types of *aislamiento* given certain qualifying characteristics, such as gender (e.g., Esther Ovejero), nationality (e.g., Satomi Morimoto), and genre (e.g., Manolo Rodríguez), further articulating the highly liminalized Afro/Canarian identity as potentially ex/nominating and isolating itself. In short, just as the critical musical performances are contingent on time and space, so too are they contingent on gender-in-space, culture-in-space, genre-in-space, and so—as further articulated through a particular song form (*cf.* Section Five) and through a particular instrument (*cf.* Section Nine). Here, in Section Ten, I would like to briefly gesture in another direction: to articulate and extend this particularization of Afro/Canarian musical and cultural improvisation by laying out space for space. I want to take the second element of those linguistic constructions (-in-space) and in which all these other characteristics are contextualized, and shift and question its placement as (con/para)text.

By demonstrating the potential critique inherent in *siting*, I would also like to reflect on the relationship between technology and space. Although music performance is

the main text and medium through which the musicians with whom I have been working communicate these critiques and stage their contesting, alternative identities, it is not the only text—as I have already alluded in my *citing* of interviews, liner notes, websites, and personal correspondence as sites imbued with the same ideologies and aesthetics of the sonic texts themselves. Just as liner notes and composition titles direct listening—slipping into the sonic mix—so do the spatial and technical (spatio-technical) contexts of music also. My prior discussions of program music—re/soundings of indigenous and autochthonous Afro/Canarian ecology—demonstrate how spatially-marked sounds direct consumption and perception. In this Section, I will explore how musicians performing (in) sonically-marked spaces can enact the same critical positionalities.

II. Resi(s)ting Colonization: Improvising in/against the State



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2011)

On March 25, 2011, I attended a performance of the jazz manouche group Nicotine Swing that was part of the *Festival de Músicas Alternativas de Canarias* (Festival of Alternative Musics of the Canaries). The venue for the evenings concert was *Castillo San Felipe* (St. Philip's Castle), a 17th-century Spanish fort built right on the beach in Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife. Renowned for its ability to withstand frequent pirate attacks, the Castle was converted to a hospital in the 19th century, then eventually maintained as a cultural heritage site and tourist destination.⁴¹⁵ Around the castle are *Loro Parque* (Parrot Park) and the stadium in which a local soccer plays its matches. The boardwalk that allows passers-by to easily navigate all of these attractions is littered with bars and restaurants—the tourists' walking cartography of consumption.

Approaching the castle, lit as night (as shown above) presents an imposing contrast to the tourist kiosks and patio restaurants. I attended the concert with friend, journalist, and concert promoter Héctor Martín González, who recorded a portion of the concert with his iPhone and posted the video online the next day.⁴¹⁶ The band was performing in one of the larger inner chambers of the Castle, which still is maintained by the State government. The Festival was in large part funded by the Canarian government, and, as such, state-owned spaces were offered up as festival venue sites. The band performed well to an attentive and appreciative audience, using the opportunity to promote and sell their new recording. The band had begun their performance off stage,

⁴¹⁵ Pirate attacks presented centuries of grave danger to the inhabitants of the Canary Islands. *Cueva de los Verdes*, in Lanzarote, was once used a refuge for pirate attacks; cf. Section Nine. For further information on the history of pirate attacks in the Islands, cf. Rumeu de Armas, 1947-1950.

⁴¹⁶ That video can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc1bi988SNY>.

choosing to first show the audience a new music video they had just finished for their arrangement of "La Mitad," included on the album and projected onto a large screen set up on stage next to the band's instruments.⁴¹⁷

In the video, the band moved through open, natural scenes with great ease—in automobiles, on a bicycle and on foot, through wide fields and down long dirt roads. The video—shot with a frame and editing effects intended to suggest film technology of an earlier era—highlights the slippage between technologies, spaces, and performers as each of the instrumentalists in the group are filmed performing indoors and outdoors, where the natural elements sometimes impede their execution. Ultimately, the band each individually successfully navigates the open spaces and unites at the end of the film, all performing together outdoors. This mobility is further accented by the director's constant oscillation between scenes—switching among repeating locales throughout (and sometimes in the midst of) musical phrases.

However, the video's portrayal of the spaces in which Nicotine Swing performed presented a great contrast to the images of the band-on-stage. Circumscribed by colonial, military architecture, and marked with a sponsorship banner of the Canarian government, this Afro/Canarian group had few means to visually counteract such an imposing, circumscribing spatial framework, except their instruments and their clothing.

⁴¹⁷ The band's video can be viewed here: "nicotineswing," "Nicotine Swing – La Mitad" (March 3, 2011) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfTwlOtV5dA>.



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2011)

As the concert progressed, Nicotine Swing continued to utilize the projector screen on which they had shown the video at the beginning of the performance, having prepared photo and video montages to accompany each musical selection. At one point during the performance, an image of Django Reinhardt was included in one of the montages—an image that was repeated in that montage like a visual trope, emerging into the music at regular intervals, when the band's membership increased by one timed (out-of-time, un/timely?) guitarist. Having my smartphone—an HTC Desire Z (T-mobile G2)—close at hand, I was able to capture a view of "Nicotine Swing, plus one."



(Photo: Mark Lomanno, 2011)

The band utilized this projector screen not just to buttress the visual aesthetics of their performance by showing images more associated with the musical cultures they invoked than the frame *Castillo de San Felipe* provided for the concert.⁴¹⁸ By introducing Reinhardt into the mix, Nicotine Swing reached for counteracting and resisting that frame by re/presenting one of the most iconic figures of the jazz manouche genre. The weight and heft Reinhardt's flattened (unsounded and frozen-in-time) image lends to the stage—in particular appearing with the musicians as they performed—offers a counter-balance

⁴¹⁸ Cf. the discussion of a similar use of video technology in a concert by Timpluras in the previous Section.

for re/sounding and re/placing the canonical force exerted on the group by the Canarian government.

The group reads Reinhardt as metonym and source for this music that resonates with them and they market as a fusion comparable to *flamenco*, a genre much more familiar and ubiquitous in Afro/Canarian culture:

*Se considera a Django Reinhardt como el fundador de este tipo de música que es, al fin y al cabo, una adaptación lógica a las necesidades de los gitanos. Eran nómadas y, por lo tanto, prescindían del piano y la batería por las evidentes dificultades de traslado. El ritmo lo marca la guitarra, de ahí los golpes de caja.*⁴¹⁹

The group considers the defining musical characteristics that typify jazz manouche as "a logical adaptation of the necessities of the *gitanos*," suggesting that confluences of subaltern and diasporic understandings that transcend the boundaries of national culture.

They are not so much proposing equivalences among Jewish and Afro/Canarian diasporas as confluences among the musical cultures of different subaltern groups. In that the Afro/Canarian public—which the group attests is relatively unfamiliar with

⁴¹⁹ Cruz 2009. My translation: "Django Reinhardt is considered the founder of this type of music that is, after all, a logical adaptation of the necessities [necessary conditions] of the Jewish people. They were nomads, and, therefore, dispensed with the piano and drums for the evident difficulties of shipment. The guitar drives the rhythm, hence the strikes of the [guitar] body." This quote, attributed in the article to group members Daniel Morales and Nacho Martínez, glosses over some essential cultural politics surrounding Reinhardt and the articulated parsing of Jewish identity: by using the word "*gitano*" to identify Reinhardt and the culture with which he aligned himself, these band members are conflating Roma groups of different nation-states and communities of belonging. Whereas the Romani Manush are primarily located in France, Belgium, and Germany, whereas the Calé, the Roma associated with flamenco, are called *gitanos* in Spanish. In this usage then—and perhaps in their efforts to translate the musical discourses to local Canarian audiences, Nicotine Swing has conflated articulated cultural groups under the term "*gitano*" (which is also used locally to describe the Jewish culture in general) much like "*canario*" has in the Islands themselves. As I have already suggested, further research in this project will help elucidate and articulate the relationships among the Canary Islands vis-à-vis the cultures of the Jewish diaspora, the Roma cultures, the term "*gitano*," and the musical collaborations and fusions in which all of these phenomena intersect. I would like to thank Professor Sonia Seeman for her insightful commentary and assistance with this particular aspect of the project.

Reinhardt's music and jazz manouche in general—recognizes the influences and history of Andalusian music in the Canary Islands, Nicotine Swing is relying on this knowledge as a bridge toward understanding and appreciating the music of another cultural group of the Jewish diaspora sited in France, rather than Spain, while admitting "*las evidentes dificultades de traslado*."⁴²⁰

In the 2009 article by Almenduna Cruz cited above, the members of Nicotine Swing seem particularly concerned with audience reception not necessarily for commercial gain, but rather for the subsistence that will facilitate the continuation of the project. "*Que sepamos, somos los únicos que tocamos este tipo de música en Canarias,*" and while "*no tenemos aspiraciones comerciales, queremos tocar cada día mejor y, si surge, pues mejor.*"⁴²¹ Despite the disavowal of commercial aspirations, presumably this surge would come from a commercial *subsistence* through increased attendance at live shows and modest sale of recordings. This subsistence is presupposing of "*escuchar mucho, repetir y ensayar*" because "*nos queda mucho por mejorar porque hay mucha gente en esto que lleva toda la vida tocando.*"⁴²² The work to be done is part of overcoming the musicians' struggles with "*las evidentes dificultades de traslado.*"

⁴²⁰ In the larger context of Afro/Canarian culture, a connection may exist between Canarian invocations of jazz manouche and the North African Amazigh with which many Afro/Canarians identify. Nicotine Swing does not self-identify with the Amazigh, although interviews with the group members at a later stage of this project could yield some individual associations between these two cultures that I might render plausible given the group's translating moves between *flamenco* and jazz manouche.

⁴²¹ *ibid.* My translation: "So far as we know, we are the only ones that play this type of music in the Canaries," and while "we do not have commercial aspirations, we want to play better every day and, if it catches on, all the better."

⁴²² *ibid.* My translation: "to listen a lot, repeat it, and rehearse" because "we have a lot to improve on because there are many people who spend their whole lives playing this [music]."

III. The Big Band on/and the Festival Stage: Improvising Canonical Constructions

One way in which the Canarian government and institutions have attempted to overcome economic downfall is through tourism, its main industry since the early 20th century. For Afro/Canarian musicians, tourism and performance opportunities mainly consist of hotels and festivals. The WOMAD festival has been staged in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria since the early 1990s and offers opportunities—like that given to Jose Ángel Vera and Manao in 2009.⁴²³ Capitalizing on this interest, Afro/Canarian musicians have sought out world music audiences and performance venues with their own global music projects such as: the Bimbache Festivals; Rogelio Botanz's April 2011 concert (*cf.* Sections Six and Seven);⁴²⁴ Kike Perdomo's 2008 project, *A World of Music*;⁴²⁵ and the Global Perfussion project in which Ismael Sané (of the aforementioned *Baba Djembe* project) and Jose Pedro Pérez participated in 2008.⁴²⁶

In contrast to the solid framing of *Castillo de San Felipe*, these temporary festival stages nonetheless impose stricture on musicians—not defining the performance space so much through visual image and architecture, but rather through discursive frameworks that erect sonic and aesthetic boundaries that musicians must navigate. Throughout the dissertation, but particularly in Sections Seven through Nine, I have discussed how

⁴²³ Javier Infante and *timplistas* Yone and Beselch Rodríguez have also performed at WOMAD Las Palmas. A collaboration between Yone Rodríguez's band and Infante at the 2009 WOMAD festival can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmVSURtHQfw>.

⁴²⁴ My roommate, Kino Ait Idrissen, who participated in the concert, referred to Botanz's concert as "*nuestro womad casero*," our homemade WOMAD.

⁴²⁵ A recording of Perdomo's "La Rumbita," as performed at the "World of Music" concert can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak-WAOwTlpM>.

⁴²⁶ A portion of this festival's rehearsals, workshops, and performance can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrmYeJvuL4I>.

trenchant ideas of traditional Canarian music can prevent access to important venues for musicians who perform alternate and critical expressions of *afrocanariedad*. Many of these important venues involve festivals of varying genres, scopes, and audiences. However, given few other opportunities to perform (such as in clubs, restaurants, or on commercially successful recordings), the festival stage is a vital component to the career of the Afro/Canarian jazz musician, as constricting as it can be.

In Section Eight, I discussed the WOMAD Festival in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria as a potential site for critique, in that jazz musicians— isolated by genre marker from the "world music" festival— accentuate certain cultural aspects of their music to gain access to the performances which offer large audiences and diffuse publicity. However, given the international commercial interests of WOMAD and the relative anonymity of Canarian culture, Afro/Canarian performers are relegated to the periphery of the performance program, if they are included at all. Unwilling to compromise in this way and unable to procure sufficient government funds for sponsoring festivals like *FMAC*, saxophonist Kike Perdomo has taken his festival— *La Muestra de Jazz* (The Jazz Showcase)— to the street, securing temporary permits for outdoor performances. So, in the same way that the pedestrian re/writes cartography by walking through the city, Perdomo and the musicians featured in *La Muestra de Jazz* re/sound sonic conceptions of Afro/Canarian culture by improvising jazz performances on/in La Laguna's colonial and state-owned architectural spaces.

The Bimbache openArt Festival (*cf.* Sections Five and Seven) provides another prime example of the re/appropriation of the constricting/erasing festival stage— through

the relationships that develop and the musical performances that accompany them. Their festival programs each year feature artists and organizers who can attend and who are interested in promoting the ideals of the non-profit organization. The festival's musical performances then present new collectivities that are united through ideologies, but also through access and mobility of financial and technological means that facilitate these alliances. Although Bimbache does pay visiting artists—in part through government grants and in part through revenue generated by de Winkel and Willman's rural boarding houses and de Winkel's musical career—transportation costs to El Hierro can be restrictive because of its remoteness. The geographical liminality of the Canary Islands—and the *aislamiento* it produces for its inhabitants—can in some ways be mitigated by virtual technologies, but economic *aislamiento* can also impede the Afro/Canarian's reach.

Just as allusions to Canarian ecology, the Islamic court of Córdoba, or a globally-informed *tricontinentalidad* provide authenticating tropes to Afro/Canarian transcultural fusions, the Big Band ensemble carves out an important performing space in which repertoire and cultural influences from the U.S. jazz canon unfold. This is particularly crucial for gaining access to the very profitable and internationally renowned Heineken Jazz Festival, staged annually in the Islands and based on Gran Canaria. In Section Seven, I outlined in detail an example of *afrocanariedad* as translated through the Big Band (the Big Band de Canarias's arrangement of the *tango herreño*). In the Canary Islands, the Big Band ensemble space offers multiple kinds of *emergent* collective Afro/Canarian identity: the Gran Canaria Big Band, the aforementioned Big Band de

Canarias, as well as the Santiago del Telde, AM Big Band, and Foró Big Band represent collectives at the level of archipelago, island, and town.⁴²⁷ Inasmuch as the Big Band represents a canonical jazz ensemble, in the Canary Islands it is also related to the local traditions of municipal bands, community based, state run musical ensembles consisting of semi-professional and amateur musicians that have preserved musical traditions and performed in public spaces since the 19th century.⁴²⁸ The Big Band propagates this tradition, offering informal and alternate professional opportunities for musicians who must constantly create new possibilities for performance, overcoming the more internationally-minded festival programs who look past Afro/Canarian groups toward ensembles with more potential for economic profit.

Though these festival spaces are only subjected to these critiques temporarily, they are not impervious to the rupture produced in the narrative—the addition of critical meanings mapped onto them, recorded and replayed through phones, computers, and texts. In attempting to overcome "*las evidentes dificultades de traslado*" between their singular interpretations of *afrocanariedad* and expectations of festival organizers, Afro/Canarian jazz musicians are continually searching for creative, improvisatory stances from which they might break out.

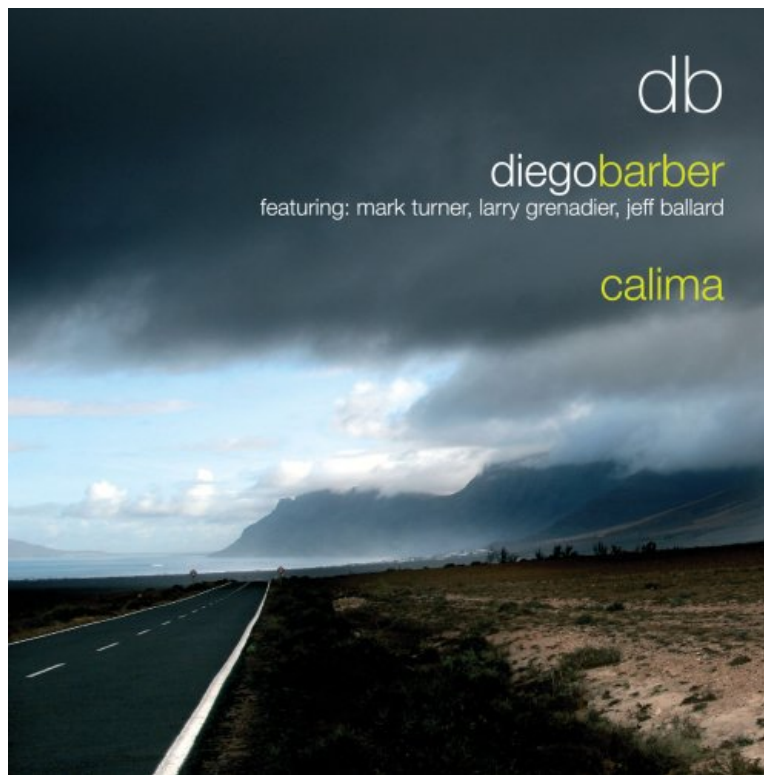
⁴²⁷ An entire concert from 1994 of the Big Band de Foró can be seen at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qP7fj6cGLPw>. Performances of the Gran Canaria Big Band posted online include the Count Basie composition, "Basie Straight Ahead" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xkm71M0ZK6o6cGLPw>), and a "Calles Vacías," a tribute to the late José Antonio Ramos composed by Rayko León (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_mxhzmXANw). In addition to the performance of "Tango del Hierro" by the Big Band de Canarias, more performances can be viewed on the band's youtube channel, <http://www.youtube.com/user/BBCanarias>. Cf. discography.

⁴²⁸ For more information on the municipal bands of the Canary Islands, cf. Cabrera (ed.) 2008.

IV. Structuring *afro/canariedad* and Performing Architecture

Guitarist Diego Barber, from Lanzarote, now lives in New York City; surprisingly he is not so well-known among Canarian jazz musicians, but highly regarded in New York, having recorded with Larry Grenadier and Jeff Ballard (known for working with pianists Brad Mehldau and Chick Corea, among others). Both Grenadier and Ballard joined Barber on Diego's second recording, *Calima*, released in 2008. *Calima* ("haze") is a well-known, documented, and researched meteorological phenomenon in the Canary Islands: it refers to large clouds of sand that blow in wind currents from the African continent to the Islands—especially the easternmost islands, Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, where Barber was born and lived during his childhood. The album cover provides a stark image of cloud cover—not necessarily *calima*—over an open road that disappears into a typical Canarian horizon where the ocean rises drastically and immediately into volcanic mountains.

The album's tracks—all instrumental—are given programmatic names, again, invoking certain places, including "Lanzarote," and ecological phenomena like "Desierto" (Desert) and "Air." There are no arrangements of Afro/Canarian music on this album—in fact, the only musicians Barber mentions in the liner notes are Miles Davis and J.S. Bach—nor is there any explanation of what and where *calima* might be. The culturally particular associations of Afro/Canarian *calima* are most probably lost on many who are not familiar with this site-specific weather pattern.



(Image: Diego Barber, 2009)

Local discourses on *calima*, though, are quite varied: meteorologists, climatologists, agricultural scientists, surfers and many others use words like "*intrusión*" (intrusion) and "*invasión*" (invasion) to describe *calima*.⁴²⁹ The sand suspended in the air is not "*arena*" —the word used to describe beach sand— but "*polvo*." "*Polvo*," on one hand, means "dust" or "dirt," but has a whole other range of bawdy meanings, including "fuck" and "screw." When joined with verbs, "*polvo*" becomes violent: to be "*hecho polvo*," (literally "to be made into dust") colloquially means "to be beat, worn down, or ruined";

⁴²⁹ A time-lapsed video of "*la invasión de calima*" can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5S3GO9PIOY>. Cf. Millares and Gelado Caballero [n.d.].

"*echar polvo*" (to cut, produce, throw dust) is "to fuck"; and "*hacer polvo*" (to make dust) is "to ruin or destroy." Quite the contrary to the celebrated Afro/Canarian climates that brought sickly European tourists for centuries, *calima* infects, degrades, wears down, and spoils.⁴³⁰ Ironically, the *arena* of the Canarian beaches is African, as well: Afro/Canarian beach sand is volcanic and black, but for over a century, the government and private businesses have been importing white sand from Africa for tourists who carry with them associations of what the surface of the beach ought to look like. This importation that covers over Afro/Canarian environments is the Canarian government's reach toward more profitable touristic surfaces of the *sol y playa* economy that, in its directionality, moves away from the actual toward an imagined *insularidad* (islandness) that wipes away and occludes any *afro/canariedad*. The whitening of Afro/Canarian beaches—via the continent of Africa and the sands of the Sahara—re/cites, re/sites, and re/plays a trope of Canarian tourism that markets to tourists an idyllic escape that references and employs very little of Afro/Canarian culture and creates a divide among those that work in the culture industries and those that work in the cultures, such as I experienced in Mulligan's Irish Bar with Toñín Corujo in Lanzarote (*cf.* Section Nine).

I first learned about *calima* from Roberto Cabrera of Gato Gótico. Cabrera lives outside of La Laguna, elevated a little further and set off more rurally in Los Naranjeros, near Tacoronte, Tenerife. The first time I visited him at his home, Cabrera and I sat with his partner, Olga Luis Ramos, and my roommate, Kino Ait Idrissen, in the back yard amid fruit trees and flowering bushes. Cabrera told me that he preferred to live among

⁴³⁰ *Cf.* Acuña Elvira 2009; Carrasco et al. 2001; and Dorta et al. 2002.

nature rather than more densely populated areas such as La Laguna or Santa Cruz. Cabrera spoke of *calima* in generative terms: as pollinating currents that contribute to the diversity and singular particularity of so many Afro/Canarian autochthonous plant species. *Calima* is fluid and mobile—it produces, covers, and surfaces—marking space as African and Afro/Canarian. It is temporary architecture that re/covers the spaces of the Islands—constrained and conscripted amid the imposing, seemingly impervious constructions of colonial power—as Afro/Canarian.

In a review of Barber's album *Calima*, the writer casts *calima* in a positive light, drawing parallels among Afro/Canarian musical ecologies:

"Calima" es el nombre que recibe el viento que viniendo del desierto del Sahara suele soplar en las Canarias aportando calor, arena y recordando que África no esta lejos.

Diego no se mete en grandes complicaciones; su música suena refinada, cristalina, tranquila algunas veces crees escuchar a Ralph Towner y otras se oye la voz propia de Barber en esos pasajes más flamencos, más enraizados que despiden un aroma distinto al de otros guitarristas.⁴³¹

To the album reviewer, *calima* suggests only the generative, pollinating potential that Roberto Cabrera assigns to it. Of course, within the context of jazz literature, proximity to Africa carries a cache that it lacks within Spanish and some Canarian "nationalist" discourses. Nonetheless, as with *Nicotine Swing* and discourse around their translations of jazz manouche, Barber and his music are cast in terms familiar to Canarians: that of transcultural fusion, cross-pollination, and the reach toward "*la voz propia*" that

⁴³¹ "bosquesonora" 2011. My translation: "'Calima' is the name given to the wind that coming from the Sahara usually blows in the Canaries carrying heat, sand, and recalling that Africa is not far away. Diego does not get into grand complications; his music sounds refined, crystalline, and tranquil—at times you will think you are listening to Ralph Towner and at others Barber's own voice is heard in those more flamenco[-like] passages, those more rooted that give off an aroma different from other guitarists."

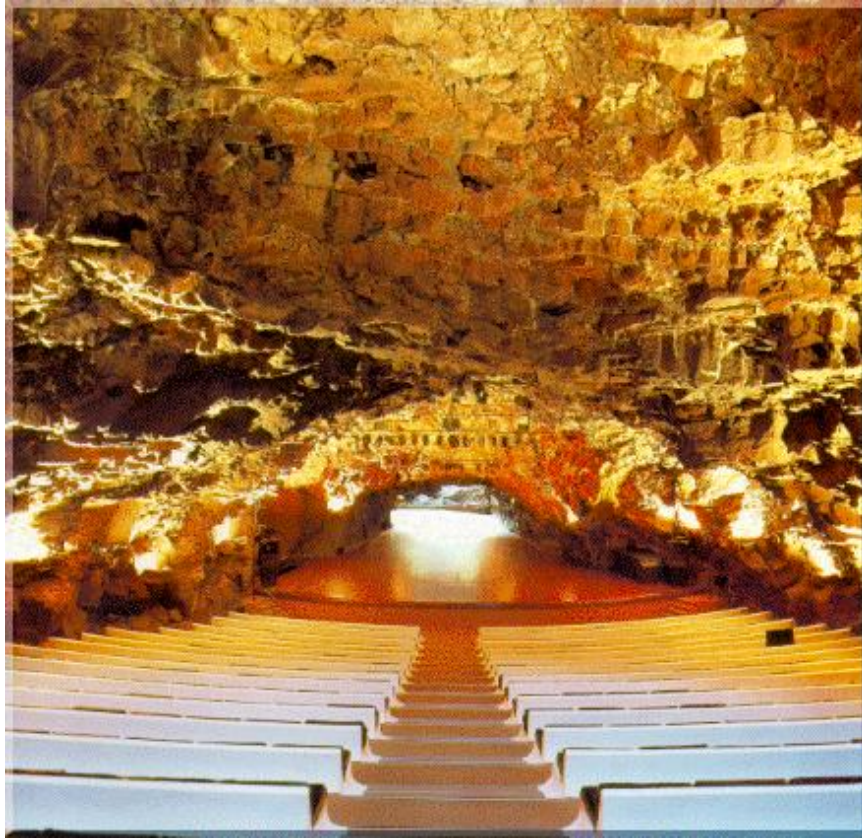
distinguishes the Afro/Canarian subject. Interestingly, the reviewer conflates Barber's distinctive and distinguishing "aroma" with *flamenco*, a personal, studied influence of Barber's to which he alludes in the liner notes for the album:

*Este trabajo de comienzo incierto y poco preciso, quiere ser la resolución al dilema que me acompañó desde niño; etapa en la cual me generaba la misma emoción escuchar a Bach que a Miles Davis. Tal vez en este proyecto hayan cristalizado años de ilusión y de estudio. Muchos momentos compartidos con profesores y compañeros que, con su apoyo, impulsaban en mí el ferviente deseo de forjarme como músico.*⁴³²

The re/casting of *calima* as generative re/iterates this dissertation's focus of re/working already encoded and mapped phenomena through singularity and critical engagement with those processes of encoding. The colonial Spanish and contemporary Canarian governments have continually sought to deny and write over the Islands their *afro/canariedad*—excising the legacy of *esclavitud blanca* from their history while covering over the black Afro/Canarian sand/subject with white African *arena*, welcomed because of profitable economic exchange, while simultaneously pathologizing its entrance into the Islands as *calima*.⁴³³ Barber's reach toward subjecthood presents a dilemma that must be worked out: its confounding surplus arises from a voice that cannot be contained with encoded (genre) boundaries but emerges collectively. The surfacing constructions that occlude the Afro/Canarian are overcome through embodied histories of collaborative work and improvisation.

⁴³² Diego Barber, liner notes to *Calima*. Barber includes his own translation of the passage: "This album, of imprecise and uncertain beginning, is an attempt to resolve a conflict that I have faced since childhood; when listening to Bach or Miles Davis evoked from me the same intense emotion. Perhaps this work has crystallized years of excitement and study, as well as many shared moments with professors and colleagues who, by their support, encouraged my fervent desire to become a musician."

⁴³³ While outside the scope of the dissertation, this *arena/calima* dichotomy is a powerful metaphor for the Canarian government's stance of illegal immigration from Africa as well.



(Photo: lanzarotexperience.com, 2012)

In contrast to the fleeting nature *calima*, the work of architect Cesar Manrique (also from Lanzarote), represents the re/construction and re/clamation of Afro/Canarian space.⁴³⁴

Across from the *Cueva de Los Verdes*, is a compound built by Manrique on a commission from the Canarian government; it includes this concert hall, a restaurant, pool, and outdoor seating area designed to reflect and amplify the natural ecology of the space. The concert hall is constructed in the same series of volcanic lava tubes that produced the

⁴³⁴ The photo above shows one of Manrique's spaces—the Auditorium of Jameos del Agua—which is very nearby *Cueva de Los Verdes*, where *timplista* Toñín Corujo recently performed an homage to Manrique. Cf. Section Nine.

Cueva.⁴³⁵ Performing here, the musicians' re/sounding of Afro/Canarian identity are amplified by the space in which they perform. Manrique's buildings are discursively imbued with a vigor similar to that professed for composer Teobaldo Power's work (*cf.* Sections Five and Seven) with one great exception: whereas Power is celebrated for translating Afro/Canarian musical culture into Western European structures, Manrique is celebrated for edifying Afro/Canarian culture amid the centuries of forceful Western European attempts to translate it into—or cover it up with—something else.

Of Manrique's work, Ruiz Gordillo writes: "*Aquí se constituye un perfecto ejercicio de síntesis de valores constructivos tomados de la tradición local y de la modernidad, en armonía con el entorno. Síntesis que el artista cimienta en la naturaleza, a la que no oculta, sino que, por el contrario, exalta, la hace partícipe de la vivienda.*"⁴³⁶ Of the auditorium of *Jameos del Agua* pictured above Gordillo writes "*Aquí es la propia naturaleza la que modela el espacio interior, convirtiéndose ella misma en arquitectura.*"⁴³⁷ Manrique's spaces amplify *afrocanariedad*, re/encoding it as itself—*la voz propia, la naturaleza propia*—while critically reading back against the imposition of those surfaces and surfacing constructions that attempt to occlude it.

⁴³⁵ Along with *Cueva de Los Verdes*, these two spaces, both designed by Manrique, are two of the most important performance venues in Lanzarote.

⁴³⁶ Quoted in Guijarro 2002, 67. My translation: "Here is constructed a perfect exercise in the synthesis of constructed values drawing on local tradition and modernity, in harmony with the environment. Synthesis that the artist builds on nature, to that which does not occlude it, but, on the contrary, exalts it, and makes it part of the home."

⁴³⁷ *ibid.*, 68. My translation: "Here is nature itself that models the interior space, converting it into itself through architecture."

V. Conclusion: Re/appropriating Surfaces

After a concert of the group Al Farabi in the Fall of 2010—at which I also met the bassist Luisimo Valladares for the first time (*cf.* Section Four)—I was talking with José Ángel Lopez Viera and his colleague in Al Farabi, pianist and composer Fernando Ortí, while driving to the dinner that followed the festival performance. The afternoon preceding the concert and the celebration afterwards were important moments in my fieldwork, facilitated by José Ángel. I had been wanting to talk with Fernando, an internationally successful musician from a well-respected Tenerifan family of musicians, for years preceding my arrival in the Islands. During our drive, we discussed the history of jazz in the Canary Islands and Fernando related to me a particular aspect of that history that I am eager to expand on in future re/iterations of this project: jazz performance in tourism spaces, specifically in this case, the south of Tenerife, a zone particularly known for the occluding *sol y playa* tourism discussed above.

In Section Nine, I related some of my experiences with Toñín Corujo on Playa del Carmen where Anglophone tourism completely covered and impeded Corujo from a maintaining a linguistically-functional subjecthood twenty minutes from his home. Fernando's anecdote related one Afro/Canarian creative and critical re/appropriation of this linguistic occluding: *chapurrear* is the Spanish verb meaning "to speak (English) poorly" or more generally, "to attempt to speak a language." Ortí described to me a thriving hotel scene in south Tenerife populated by Anglophone jazz aficionados who were entertained by non-English-speaking Canarians singing entire shows of feigned lyrics. Approximating the English vocables of popular jazz standards, these Canarian jazz

vocalists provided passively engaged listeners with the surface architecture of familiar compositions.⁴³⁸ This creative improvising performance practice re/appropriates the touristic space that violates builds over its locales' Afro/Canarian particularities.

Earlier in the day, José Ángel, Fernando, and I were discussing Fernando's choice to move back to Tenerife in the midst of a successful career based in Madrid and Barcelona. In my mind, Fernando possessed singular insight to the "instigations and payoffs" of Afro/Canarian *aislamiento*. In my approximating memory of the conversation, Fernando related that the isolation of the Islands afforded him as an artist a certain freedom of anonymity—the creative potential of *aislamiento* lie directly within the empty space to which the Afro/Canarian subject had been relegated. Ortí performs a particular translations of a critical re/appropriation seen throughout Afro/Canarian spaces—on and in the festival stage, the performance hall, the colonial fortification, and the ecological landscape—re/framing and re/working the appearances, vestiges, and surfaces of the Islands, moving improvisationally toward *la voz propia convirtiéndose ella misma*.

⁴³⁸ As I alluded, Fernando's anecdote was the introduction to a performance practice that I will continue to research. By way of corroboration, I can offer my own experiences listening to local vocalists performing at the weekly jam sessions at Tocoa in El Sauzal, Tenerife (*cf.* Section Eight).

Section Eleven: Outro—Holding (for) Patterns

I. Concluding Improvisations

All of the Mojo Ribs rehearsals so far have been at the home of saxophonist Kike Perdomo. Set off from the main house is a small two-room recording studio, the larger of which contains the Petrof grand piano and recording console with just enough space left for a drumset and a bass amp. Crammed into this small space, Mojo Ribs rehearsed, listened to music, smoked up, traded jibes and gig stories. In such tight quarters, reverberating with sonic excesses, I would have to clear piles of recordings, instruments, and music books off the top of the piano to prop it open, gaining access to the inner technologies of my sounding and releasing them into the space of the emergent, collective dynamic. I recorded the rehearsals with an iTouch—the equivalent of an iPhone without the phone functionality—and a small microphone, the Blue Mikey. More than any one piece of equipment or anecdote about New York City I brought with me from the States, this small mic elicited the strongest reaction from the musicians I knew. They marveled at its compact size in proportion to the quality of unedited recording it produced. The recording of “Bolivia” from these rehearsals I mentioned in Section Two was not mastered; it’s the raw audio. So any sense of group balance—any audible emergence—that might be heard is due solely to the physical placement of the iTouch and Mikey in the rehearsal space.

The siting and citing of this recorder has facilitated the contextualizing, re/forming, contingent listening-backs and interpretative moves. In moving forward toward a conclusion, I wish to re/situate (/site/cite/sight) the dissertation's singular and

particular performances vis-à-vis previous scholarship, rather than to propose a summation and theorization of a single, general model for future scholarship. Having argued against the imposition of any type of totalizing or essentializing framework throughout, to suggest that this dissertation represents a methodology to be universally adopted or applied—rather than acknowledged and re/considered for all its contingent emergence—would prove antithetical to its overall goals. Returning to the idea of improvisation as collaborative, deconstructive play, my concluding remarks reference a performative act—an articulation reach—inherently subjective and singular, whose words are just as potentially totalizing and susceptible to be misconstrued as they are to be sanctioned and embraced. Like the Afro/Canarian jazz musicians whose performances have shaped this work, its own reception is just as contingent on the venues in which it is performed and the expectations of its audience—the paths in which it will travel—as it has been on my positionality as doctoral student, scholar-performer, participant-observer and American citizen. The act of translation is always happening: not just in the bringing back of this project from the Canary Islands and transmutation of interviews and fieldnotes from Spanish into English, but also in the individual acts of –graphy, interpretation, and quotation it will continue to accrue over time. The boundaries of this text will continue to stretch, eventually problematizing the seemingly authoritative particularities of the text as highly contingent and contested singularities.

As I finish writing this—in early March 2012—it is with news two days' old that Kike Perdomo is coming to New York City, where I've been staying intermittently over the last school year for archival and ethnographic research. While he is here, he wants to

re-record some of those Mojo Ribs arrangements with some other musicians—including my arrangements.⁴³⁹ So, rather than re/treading the anecdotes and citations of the past ten Sections, I am concluding the dissertation with another performance...of writerly arrangement. Bringing the process to light in order to call into question the structures of the text, I am laying bare here some of the texts that have informed my moving forward, transforming myself and my work. Arranged parata(x/ct)ically, these con/texts have shaped my understandings of this project so far, but, in performing them here and adding still more textual layers into the mix, I am hoping that the reader will re/consider what was already read and remain open to walking oneself toward a new path. My only direction here is the arrangement of the cited texts, making the break/caesura signaled by ellipses and line breaks, and, hopefully, constructing some spaces for improvising laden with the potentialities of emergence.⁴⁴⁰

II. Para/tactics of Arrangement: Ethics and Aesthetics of Scholarship of the Conditional

...an understanding of intertextuality that operates not merely at the level of text, nor simply at the level of immediate social context; rather, I argue that intertextuality needs to be understood as a fundamentally historical phenomenon, in which questions of meaning and value remain constantly in flux—revisited, reinterpreted, and reassessed as

⁴³⁹ As I finish revising this—in July 2012—I am currently listening to the rough cuts of this recording session, looking forward to introducing this additional text into the mix.

⁴⁴⁰ As I did when I first read them, I will mark the passages that resonate most strongly with me only through underscoring potential correlations and interrelationships.

an understanding of the complex interrelationship of texts and contexts is broadened and deepened.⁴⁴¹

If human identity is in general characterized by latent self-difference, and if being is in fact a becoming, an exfoliating potential for realizing new meanings in time, then an ethical poetics is one that propels us to reveal, through experiment, through a set of evolving techniques, the "old and new possibilities" embedded in our linguistic formations as well as our selves.⁴⁴²

The fragments of (anti)autobiographical work by Barthes, Derrida, and Cixous ...demonstrate a wide range of writing strategies for both writing and destabilizing the self at the same time. These authors write themselves as unreliable and contradictory narrators who speak the self—the multiple selves that each of them is and have been—in discontinuous fragments informed by memory, the body, photographs, other texts, and,

⁴⁴¹ Stanbridge 2004, 105. Cf. Bartoloni 2004, 4, quoted in Section Three: "The essence will not have any meaning unless it is violated by art and reconstituted by interpretation. But this must be a particular kind of interpretation, one that does not talk about the work, one that does not paraphrase it. It is rather an interpretation that rewinds the work, that is exactly the work going back in time. It is indeed a translation that searches for the essence by stripping the work bare, going back to the origin and to the infancy of the work."

⁴⁴² Noland and Watten 2009, 11. Cf. Section Six: "The failing ethnographic reach still maintains generative potentiality. Awareness of failure contextualized fuels this potentiality: during my time in the Islands and still ongoingly, José Ángel and I both have practiced *ethnography that waits*. In moving between conversations, venues, and groups of people, we continually resituate ourselves seeking opportunities to expand on and dialogue about our research. The unpredictable mediations that we encounter require improvisational stances in which the only constant is the continually impending and impeding mediation *out of the break*: while we wait to act (to speak, to be heard, to teach, to play), we must still act. As I actively listened to José Ángel and Kino discussing the *rancho de ánimas*, I waited for points of confluence at which my aural comprehension, linguistic knowledge, and sensitivity to the conversational flow came together at opportune moments for making functional, relevant, and productive contributing reaches. Understanding and contextualizing these moments is ethnography as performative waiting, an important part of this project that seeks to expose and critique imposing structures from within."

most importantly, other people. In different ways, they displace the speaking self that is the subject, object, and the (im)possible production of autoethnography. They provide exemplary textual strategies that we might take up and improvise on in poststructuralist autoethnography. This autoethnography will emphasize performance of the self in embodied social space in (con)texts that promote an ethics of care...and that foreground the limits and fragilities of self-knowledge.⁴⁴³

Rendering is not simply about art or text that “stands for” a particular concept or research finding; rather, it is a possibility of creating meaning, a possibility of what it is, is not, and what it might be. Thus, renderings are not simply static images or words captured on a page; they are visual, aesthetic, and textual performances that dance and play alongside each other, reverberating in excess and as openings.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴³ Gannon 2006, 491-492. *Cf.* Section One: "Rather, this new way of listening emerged from my experiences, and the realization of its presence surfaced through the process of listening. Just as tactics for playing the piano without exacerbating my tendonitis came out of practicing on that rusty Fender Rhodes and facilitated a successful, pain-free rehearsal, these new embodied listening competencies became mapped onto my in-process self-conception of subjecthood through a new aural awareness emerging from my ethnographically-informed experiences on the Islands. And just as the Petrof and my new, improvised, mindfully-singing performing tactics were inseparable from my performance of “Bolivia,” this new embodied listening necessarily entails my collective experiences—as pianist, ethnographer, U.S. citizen, near functional Spanish-speaker, ethnomusicology-Ph.D. candidate, etc. (where the “other things” are performative identities, other people, but also objects, contexts, *and even still* other things)—which constantly inform one another in polyvalent, multiply reflexive ways."

⁴⁴⁴ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 908. *Cf.* Section Seven: "The ensemble re-enters and emphatically re/states the *tutti* melody, ending with an expansive unresolved, tension-filled harmony (E-dominant 7, flat 13th, over an A bass) that re/frames the generative rupture of the *tango herreño* as space of potentiality to be further transformed moving forward, as when several musicians (including Ramón Díaz) emerge soloistically from within this newly re/sounded harmonic foundation. The arranger Blanco has transformed the repeating melody and canonical folk form into an episodic unfolding, realized by the Big Band de Canarias, in which individual soloists emerge amid aesthetics of fusion, bridging repertoires and traditions. Each repetition of the *tango herreño* melody signals a new space—a new break—in which a new Afro/Canarian improvising subject can emerge."

Lives full of curiosity punctuated by questions searching for deeper understandings while interrogating assumptions. Asking oneself questions that linger between, amid, and/or within visual/textual, theoretical/analytical, and pedagogical/curricular matters is to live a life committed to inquiry, active engagement, and dis/comfort. It is often an anxious life, where the a/r/tographer is unable to come to conclusions or to settle into a linear pattern of inquiry. Instead, there is a nervousness, a reverberation within the excess of the doubling process. Living inquiry refuses absolutes; rather, it engages with a continual process of not-knowing, of searching for meaning that is difficult and in tension. Tension that is nervous, agitated, and un/predictable. When fabric is distressed it is said to be "marked" or "treated."...Thus nervousness as living inquiry distresses art and text, calling forth new meanings and knowledges. Nervousness is also relational, reverberating between art and text, a living inquiry that is in continuous movement.⁴⁴⁵

The separateness of textual and visual media is maintained, and yet this separateness is an intimate dialogue that simultaneously sustains difference and distinction while enabling connections. In living inquiry, research is subjectively informed and subjectively

⁴⁴⁵ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 901-902. Cf. Section Eight: "Young Rogelio's question to his teacher pertained to a large blank space on the map *underneath* Spain, in which there was ample space to include Africa. Evidently, as Rogelio tells the story, his teacher did not respond well to Rogelio's insinuation that the map was incorrect or deficient and he was reprimanded. At this point in the re/telling, Rogelio broke into an impassioned presen(t)ce: "*¿Porqué si hay espacio, no hay África? ¿Es que el mapa es para crear una realidad, no para reflejar la realidad!*"⁴⁴⁵ Embedded within the slippage between the indefinite and definite articles is the break in which that space is created. The cartographic gaze creates only a reality, in which silences and omissions are actively reproduced and reinforced. In order to work through the myopic reflections, you have to make the break."

coproduced; viewers/readers take up where the artist(s)/author(s) left off, continuing the complex and multifarious act of meaning making.⁴⁴⁶

It is the nature of excess as an activity of the sublime, the horrible, and the magnificent intertwined and moving that is central to...claims about excess' generativity. It is the motility of touch, the reverberation that folds back on itself, that allows excess to un/ravel, un/write, and re-image in a continual process of exploration. Excess provides opportunities for complexity and deeper understanding; It is open, pliable, and in constant change. Excess, thus, questions not simply material substances but also how things come into being, the philosophical nature of existence and meaning making.⁴⁴⁷

This entails moving beyond the use of existing criteria that exists for qualitative research and toward an understanding of interdisciplinarity not as a patchwork of different

⁴⁴⁶ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 903. *Cf.* Section One: "My reach is towards an unfolding, a document only fully (and always subjectively) realized through reading and further analysis: a reach toward dialogisms about-to-be-realized and suggestive of the dynamic processes that continue to inform the project, rather than a reach toward an authoritative summation of them. The dissertation, then, could be read as an unfolding, improvised construction that is always accruing new meanings: its Sections are not so much driven by an overarching or individual thesis so much as by the spinning out (through constantly shifting foci) of possible responses to the questions surrounding the initial premises of the project."

⁴⁴⁷ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 908. *Cf.* Section Five: "Having been repeatedly and exnominally sited (and cited) outside of dominant discourses, Afro/Canarian identity is fundamentally informed by a sense of lack—*aislamiento*—that encapsulates the failing reaches of and toward the Afro/Canarian. The historically physical and ongoing ideological violence enacted against the Afro/Canarian relegates her/him to a peripheral status from which, amid the gaps and scratches in the historiographical/political mixes, space for a emergent positionality must be forcibly written/sounded in. This can be accomplished through highlighting the glossings-over and mis/mappings of the Islands, but their continued status as colonial entity (re/mis/namings notwithstanding) necessarily locates any such reach firmly within the very systems and structures that have and would repress them. Left isolated—outside even the realms of linguistic signification—in their own spaces, the Afro/Canarian must resort to the assertion of subjectivity through sound, culling together a viable, shifting, performative identity from the wide range of local, diasporic and transcultural signifiers that have and could constitute a Canarian identity constantly in flux."

disciplines and methodologies but as a loss, a shift, or a rupture where in absence, new courses of action unfold. Loss, shift, and rupture are foundational concepts or metonyms for *a/r/tography*. They create openings, they displace meaning, and they allow for slippages. Loss, shift, and rupture create presence through absence, they become tactile, felt, and seen.⁴⁴⁸

III. Cf.: Rigor, Scholarly Writing, and the Citational Politics of the *confer*

Interdisciplinarity needs to focus on the “unnamed something”...through close attention to the un/said and un/known...This condition of without is paramount in understanding and shaping aesthetic inquiry, where encounters within the visual and textual are imbued with dis/comfort and struggle that allow one to conceive of possibilities unthought of before. ...It is this activity, the in/betweenness of living inquiry, that emphasis needs to be placed. Bal (2002) argued that this shift in methodology is not predicated on binary oppositions or formulaic methods of criteria but rather, on a model of interactivity where rigor is achieved through deep inquiry and mediation. Concepts need to be evaluated by their ability to provide access to phenomena not otherwise attainable; the new organization needs to be compelling and yield new and relevant information (Bal, 2002).

⁴⁴⁸ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 898. Cf. Section Six: "Addressing the embodied histories of *Jose* and bringing these histories into dialogue with those of *José* exceeds the realm of the linguistic signifier, or, alternately, exceeds the linguistic realm of the signifier: any attempt at translation reaches toward (but falls short of) the *paraname* as an aesthetic, cultural, political, social, and, most importantly, unable-to-be-circumscribed excess. Textual reachings that translate the un/named and un/nameable should highlight singularity and the inherent slippage between them, as well as the conditions surrounding the emergent singularity. This document does not move toward *translating* the un/nameable (in ethnography, cartography, history, writing, etc.), but rather moves within the *continually reaching, improvisatory performance of translating*, inhabiting the in-between, the meanwhile, the conditional."

A/r/tographical renderings are just that. They are conditions of aesthetic discovery and inquiry, they constitute a field of study or a methodology, and they rupture evaluative processes so that living inquiry, enactment, art, and graphy cannot be separated out into criteria. A/r/tography dislocates complacency, location, perspective, and knowledge.⁴⁴⁹

Although problems attendant to representation and insularity of the practice of cultural studies remain relevant, I argue that this is also a problem of aesthetics. This new ideological, critical focus must nonetheless conform to and accommodate the aesthetic codes and hallmarks of traditional scholarship, and those generic demands ultimately function, ironically, to reify power dynamics via objectifying, essentializing, and fetishizing the marginalized communities whose rhetoric is the subject of analysis. In this way, the scholarly aesthetics to which critical rhetoric remains beholden function inadvertently to appropriate the critical project.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁹ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 909. Cf. Section Three: "Insofar as writing (in its inherent representationality) interrupts (ends) the caesura, forces movement across the threshold, and fills in the break, we must problematize that movement and, if possible, find means to impede it or slow it down so that we might maintain through writerly technologies a lingering outside of language *within the break* and *on the frame* for the improvising subject. This drive toward writing-that-is-not-writing is related to Cheng's discussion of 'the pure surface' and the *tabula rasa*. Understanding writing as the means through which *the break* is both construction and de-construction—as the drive toward representation and away from it—means admitting that the politics and poetics (the ethics and aesthetics) of the page are one and the same. Graphesis is the generative, aesthetic rupture 'wherein action becomes possible, one in which it is our duty to linger.'"

⁴⁵⁰ Shugart 2003, 285. Cf. Section Ten: "From this realization, more questions follow: what other structures might have been circumscribing Canarian culture in general and lives of those with whom I have been living and working during the project? In what ways might this dissertation reinforce these bounding and binding structures? What might be the imposed and imposing veneers of this text? And, what are the ways to leave enough space within the structures of the dissertation for the emergent sounds, smells, sentiments, and subjects to thrive not *in spite of* the writing but *along with* it?"

Even if we agree that we ought to render as "provable propositions" our analysis of these transformations—or of the ways in which they are locally inhabited, experienced, narrated, acted upon—we find it hard to see *how* to do so without resorting to reduction *ad absurdum*. But we do *not* believe that this is what we should be doing; indeed, we resist the positivist reflex that would encourage us to do so. After all, if they were held to the demands of empiricist validation, or subjected to the blinding lights of western science, some of the most enduring insights of modernist social thought would not pass muster.⁴⁵¹

"Roaming" and "tries" as forms of experimental writing acknowledge the researcher's presence in the experience and representation of local epistemologies and cultural forms, at least to the extent that the learning process in the field is acknowledged as a viable, indeed necessary, subject of discourse. My presence in this text, then, where it intrudes, is a type of print-through, mediating my own learning about, experiencing, and subsequent representations of the building of collective and individuated we-nesses of internal and external discursive and musical time.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵¹ Comaroff and Comaroff 2003, 158. *Cf.* Section Six: "It is this constant and relentless writing-out that compelled me toward failure as a potentially productive space in which to explore my project. Confronted with the lack of rigorous, extant research to account for the Afro/Canarian, I looked critically toward the conditions of these failures, searching for them in my own writing and research, and, ultimately resolving to explore them in the text of the document itself."

⁴⁵² Porcello 1998, 500. *Cf.* Section One: "The process of resituating rehearsed musical, linguistic, and somatic turns in the performance of new temporal, spatial, and interpersonal contexts requires improvisation. My writerly performance of this ethnomusicological dissertation is no exception and will include this resituating (*re/placing...re/locating...re/siting...re/listening...re/telling...re/sighting...re/working...re/writing...re/citing*)."

Autoethnographic writing within a poststructuralist frame leans toward the ancient imperative to care for the self in a constant practice of reflexive attention to the past, present, and future moments of subjectification within complex and contradictory discursive arenas. Autoethnographic performance texts are dialogic rather than self-contained. They demand "active and reflexive reader," and they produce "accountable and vulnerable" writers (Denzin, 2003, 137). The truths of autoethnographic writing are liminal, dynamic, and contingent, as are the selves we bring to writing...Poststructural autoethnography would emphasize discontinuities, search for disjunctures and jarring moments. It would commit to "personal writing that is scandalous, excessive and leaky...based in lack and run rather than plenitude" (Lather 2000, 22) and eschew seamless linear stories of coming to "know" our hidden selves.⁴⁵³

A/r/tographers rerepresent their questions, practices, emergent understandings, and creative analytic texts as they integrate knowing, doing, and making through aesthetic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts. A/r/tography is not a formulaic-based methodology. Rather, it is a fluid orientation creating its rigor through continuous reflexivity and analysis. It is a contiguous methodology where interweaving threads of

⁴⁵³ Gannon 2006, 480. *Cf.* Section Six: "after one week, I was already not in control of my project, the re/presentations of my intentions, nor the yet-to-be-expressed hopes for my residence. I was the ethnographic object—introduced, not introducing. And it was in that moment, walking through the city streets of La Laguna that I came to understand all my prior study as newly contextualized, not knowing when and where certain resonances from already read scholarship might arise, nor which would come to mind in a particular moment."

theory, practice, and poesis are not separate and distinct but contiguous (Irwin 2004), allowing for deeper understandings to emerge with time.⁴⁵⁴

In the dialectic of the concept and the concrete, it is the latter that sets methodology in motion, serving as the *fons et origo* of the operations by which we set out to apprehend the existential processes of everyday life. Our ethnography, in other words, takes off *not* from theory or from a meta-narrative, but from the situated effects of seeing and listening. Of course, the *way* in which we see, *what* we pay attention to, and *how*, is not empirically ordained; that, ineluctably, depends on a prior conceptual scaffolding, which, once the dialectic of discovery is set in motion, is open to reconstruction.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁴ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 903. *Cf.* Section Three: "And so, in discussing the music and musicians of this project, its writing must also reflect my own process of 'reaching for articulation,' contextualized within my experiences with networks of friends and colleagues, obstacles and admittances, and technologies and spaces—not just in the Canary Islands, but throughout each stage of the project's development. In short, the ways in which Canarian musicians must improvise performances in musical and social environments must be examined (/resonating/echoing/mirroring) with an approach imbued with the same improvising, subjective unfolding—both in terms of research methodology and of writerly perspective."

⁴⁵⁵ Comaroff and Comaroff 2003, 164. *Cf.* Section Four: "It is for this reason—the lack of linguistic recourse for the Afro/Canarian—I believe many of the alternate, individual, and collective identities being asserted in the Islands rely on the extra-linguistic critical potential of language found in visual arts and instrumental music. In the same way that I am reaching in this text for a critique of the scholarly conventions that have written out the Islands, Afro/Canarians use language critically in everyday speech and writing. However, non-linguistic forms provide a creative and a constructive lack that facilitates a potent maneuverability and an openness to interpretation that achieves wide dispersal while enacting a potentially more covert and incisive critique. This is the reappropriation of the silent space by the silenced who manipulate and question the conditions and characteristics of speech in order to critique the conditions of silencing. It is the collective, creative, constructive potential of *aislamiento*, that constricting space defined by lack and absence."

*El periodo en Grecia... supone la adquisición del rigor, la capacidad de "ver." Fue para mí de una ayuda inestimable.*⁴⁵⁶

IV. The Difference, Deference, and Defense of Failure

Thus, contrary to the presumed “authoritativeness” of much textualist scholarship, the advocates of a contextualist, historicist approach must note the sometimes conjectural nature of their conclusions, while continuing to acknowledge the often-profound insights to be gained from a detailed analysis of the symbiotic relationship of texts and contexts.⁴⁵⁷

Like jazz improvisation, the success of participant ethnography is a matter of interaction and communication, shifting patterns of strangeness and familiarity, and even practice. This very play across sameness and difference is perhaps the most instructive aspect of ethnographic work, revealing much about what is being researched and about the research process itself. Adopting the wrong mix of subject positions described above

⁴⁵⁶ Barber, liner notes to *Calima*. Barber's translation: "The time I spent in Greece ... meant the acquisition of rigor and the capacity to 'see.' His help was invaluable to me."
My translation: "The period in Greece... entailed the acquisition of rigor, the capacity to 'see.' It was for me of invaluable help."

⁴⁵⁷ Stanbridge 2004, 106. *Cf.* Section Six: "For what Agamben and Bartoloni describe as the generative rupture that the text of the *Hipnerotomachia Poliphili* accomplishes for the translation between languages, I wish to amplify for all of the elements in this project—the resonating and re/sounding subjects, their sensory technologies, and the dimensionally-contingent processes through which they come together. The language of this document waits on the periphery, and compels the reader to acknowledge how this waiting informs all the processes and products of its writing. The citations continue to wait. And the reading waits, too. By following the unfolding citations and anecdotes, re/tracing them in the writing, the reader is also enlisted in the task of translation: inasmuch as this writing gestures toward un/writing, it is only through reading that it might actually come to inhabit that un/writing space. Continually moving between these modes—layering on heaps of notes and words in the socialized mix of improvising bodies—produces reverberations that perhaps could sound the language and music of waiting."

often led me to the research equivalent of an improvisation with no groove, that is, a tension-filled, frustrating day in the field. But as with a good performer, the key is to learn from one's mistakes, to replay the tape of the gig and decipher which conditions are being violated and preventing the successful establishment of the groove.⁴⁵⁸

To explore a poetics of difference by challenging assumptions is not to make *difference* a neutral term, either aesthetically or culturally: difference is a condition we live, suffer with, thrive on, and reproduce in our work.⁴⁵⁹

...living inquiry is an aesthetic encounter, where the process of meaning making and being are inextricably connected to an awareness and understanding of art (Rose, 2001).

For the sake of our specific arguments, this means that living inquiry is an embodied encounter constituted through visual and textual understandings and experiences rather than mere visual and textual representations.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁸ Porcello 1998, 490. Cf. Section Nine: "His is '*un viaje*,' not '*el viaje*,' for the *timple* in the same way that recording *Silencio Roto* is *un viaje*, not '*el viaje*,' for López, while discussing it, re/playing the record, re/performing the repertoire present still more *viajes*. Adding the audiences into the mix presents a uncircumscribable whole of times, spaces, and actants that *per se* resists the cartographic gaze. López gestures toward the contingent formation of these un/writings when he describes what *Silencio Roto* might sound like: '*este Silencio Roto sonará a...tantos afectos cotidianos de saberse ciudadano del mundo viviendo en una latitud y longitud geográfica determinada.*'"

⁴⁵⁹ Noland and Watten 2009, 11. Cf. Section Three: "Given that this project explores a particular group of people and contexts—unique among all the work of the scholars to be discussed herein—my reaching for unfolding the veneers and laying bare the constructing processes of the project should proceed not along already established paths, but rather 'set up the lines' in the new ways that present themselves as they are emerging from my grounded, contextualized, citationally-informed observations."

⁴⁶⁰ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 902. Cf. Section Six: "Halberstam cites Moten and Harney's call for adopting a critical stance toward academia, inhabiting the peripheral zone of interdisciplinarity where ethics and aesthetics meet, siting and citing work that includes a self-aware contingency that allows for revision, collaboration, and dynamic emergence. This is 'the path of the subversive intellectual' and a

Jazz, as cultural style as well as aesthetic idiom, preserves numerous forms of self-erasure as self-continuation, seen as constituting a community of practice and a reproduction of larger communities. ...the deep historicity of jazz is a phenomenology of displaced subjectivity that reverses or inverts the intentional self, deliberately cast out as "other."⁴⁶¹

But how—given that the objects of our gaze commonly elude, embrace, attenuate, transcend, transform, consume, and construct the local—do we arrive at a praxis for an age that seems...post anthropological? Of an age in which we are called upon not to study *in* places at all, indeed not to trust "anthropological locations" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997), but rather to study the *production* of place (Appadurai 1996)? If we are not sure where or what "the field" is, or how to circumscribe the things in which we interest ourselves, wherein lie the ways and means by which we are to make the knowledges with which we vex ourselves?⁴⁶²

conscious choice for 'allowing subjectivity to be unlawfully overcome by others, a radical passion and passivity such that one becomes unfit for subjection, because one does not possess the kind of agency that can hold the regulatory forces of subjecthood.' This is a translating move from 'literature of the conditional' to 'scholarship of the conditional.'" Cf. this passage in Section Six for the quoted citations.

⁴⁶¹ Noland and Watten 2009, 17. Cf. Section Four, note 94: "My goals for rendering porous the boundaries of the text and authority of the dissertation address directly the falsely claimed authority propagated by this citationally-isolationist body of work that re/produces itself without allowing space for difference or revision."

⁴⁶² Comaroff and Comaroff 2003, 151. Cf. Section Nine: "Like Rodríguez cautioning against glancing over the everyday and the local, López suggests that part of overcoming *aislamiento* is recognizing that its repetition is sustained in part through a conditioned myopia that fails to see the already-present diversity, '*nuestra mestizaje y tricontinentalidad*,' and potential for counteraction *within* '*una latitud y longitud geográfica determinada*.' The conditions for the generative rupture of this silencing can be found within existing, imposed structural strictures."

Such "tries" are not mere artifacts of the postmodern fragmentation of experience, to be read as a cultural text of pastiche, leaving in their wake a shallow surface of free-floating social signifiers glued together only by a publicly displayed historical narrative of what their significance once was. Rather, they are strategic, intentional, deeply felt forms of performed cultural activity, and living embodiments of multiple local epistemologies enacted in the flow of internal and external time in and out of the recording studio.⁴⁶³

A poststructuralist autoethnography would proceed in part from the understanding that memory is enfolded in the body but, as Barthes points out, the lived body is a discursive and multiple but very present space where we do not go looking for any "sacred originary" but for traces and unreliable fragments. Memory writing is not a veridical act that reproduces the original experience as it was lived but is necessarily always constituted from a particular time and place and discursive frame.⁴⁶⁴

Such research is situated as a conversation for understanding, as an act of negotiating meaning, and as an ongoing exchange between Self and Other, and between texts and

⁴⁶³ Porcello 1998, 500. *Cf.* Section One: "Usually, in recordings of my playing I can hear the tendonitis—the tightness of my arms, the tension in my back, the lack of breathful phrase structures—in the notes themselves: the failed turn-arounds and turns of phrase cut short, tripped over, poorly executed, mismanaged, and pathologized as the embodied sonic traces of this physical disability."

⁴⁶⁴ Gannon 2006, 483. *Cf.* Section One: "Casting an improvisation move as contingent, conditional, and generative for both its 'instigations and payoffs' suggests that boundaries (physical, mental, linguistic, geographical, etc.) contain within them the potential for both impeding and facilitating emergent acts and associations. It seems to me that an integral step toward writing a pianist's improvisation on ethnography (or improvising an ethnographer's pianism on writing) is acknowledging and, in fact, emphasizing this polyvalent potentiality when discussing how an improviser encounters and negotiates these boundaries through constantly re/focusing on the forms, meanings, and subjectivities as they constantly and emergently arise, intertwine, and interact."

images. Therefore, the intention of the imaging/writing is not to inform—as in to give information—but to open up to conversations and relationships as “a researcher conducts research with, through, and in the company of others” (Neumann & Peterson 1997, 1). Threading together the exchange between a/r/tographer and viewer/reader, the image/text becomes an active space, echoing and reverberating in communion.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁵ Springgay, Irwin, and Kind 2005, 906. *Cf.* Section Three: "In acknowledging the politics of the *paratext*, Genette questions the frame of the text and its con/texts in a most fundamental way, rupturing their imposed and assumed boundaries, and allowing for new interpretations, new meanings, and new texts to emerge. This is the power of Genette's paratext; by rendering porous the binding structures of the text—the walls dividing text and context—he expands the 'zone of indistinction' to the whole written document. Realizing the potential of the break/threshold becomes less a matter of a particularly targeted readerly or writerly reach—an adeptly executed cartographic re/tracing—and more an awareness of this potentiality inscribed into every textual gesture, singularly and collectively."

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Additional Sources

note: The following sources on the Canary Islands are related to the dissertation project, but not directly cited in its text. These include suggestions for further reading and listening, as well as a compilation of important sources not otherwise compiled elsewhere. Some entries lack information that could not be obtained by the time of publication.

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