MUSIC 477/577 - Topics in Musicology: Editing Music
Winter 2025 F 9:00-11:50 am

Instructor: Dr Fabio Morabito

What does it mean to prepare an edition of music (that is, of music that exists already in some form elsewhere)? How does one do it? And why? Such initial questions prompt even bigger, more foundational ones: what is a musical text or, indeed, what could it be? What is the role of a composer in handling it, compared to that of a musicologist preparing an edition, or that of a performer? Approximately half of the course takes the format of a seminar: a directed, focused debate based on readings, to consider several answers to these questions.

European-colonial musicology started off, one might sum up, with monumental projects making available the music of selected Western composers in critical (or scholarly) editions. But creating such monuments in print meant also marginalizing musics that this particular tradition of scholarship deemed unfit for, or unworthy of, a scholarly edition. So the other half of the course takes the format of an “edition lab” in which each of us will be preparing an edition and receiving regular feedback in dedicated workshop sessions. The lab will be an opportunity to reflect on how, in practice, we might remediate past historical erasures, and work with music more inclusively and sustainably.

Prerequisite: consent of the department or the instructor. (This effectively means “go ahead and enroll on Bear Tracks.” If you have questions, reach out to the instructor).

This course is open to both undergraduate and graduate students.