

RYAN THOMAS SKINNER

Curriculum Vitae

Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Music
Ethnomusicology
Columbia University
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EDUCATION

Columbia University – New York, NY

2003-Present: Ph.D. Candidate in Ethnomusicology

- Ph.D. Thesis: “*Artistiya*: Popular Music and Personhood in Postcolonial Bamako, Mali” (anticipated defense in May 2009)
- M.Phil., Ethnomusicology (2006)
- M.A. Thesis: “*Jeliya* in New York City: An Ethnography of Space, Travel, and Practice in Urban America” (2005)

Institut des Sciences Humaines & Institut National des Arts – Bamako, Mali

2006-7: Wenner-Gren Foundation and SSRC-IDRF Scholar

2000-1: Fulbright-IIE Scholar

- Wenner-Gren/SSRC sponsored dissertation research project: “Sound and Subjectivity: Music, Modernity, and *Môgôya* in Postcolonial Bamako”
- Fulbright project: “Verbal Art and Musical Performance: Oral Pedagogy in Contemporary Kora Apprenticeship”

Carleton College – Northfield, MN

1996-2000: French and Francophone Studies Major

- Senior Thesis: “*Visions de l’Enfant Noir à l’École Blanche: Une étude méthodologique des perspectives historiques, anthropologiques, et littéraires de l’enseignement colonial français*”
- B.A., *magna cum laude*

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

2008-9: Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Writing Fellowship (Woodrow Wilson Foundation)

2008-9: Whiting Dissertation Writing Fellowship, Columbia University*

2008: Columbia University Summer Research Grant, Dept. of Music

2007-8: Columbia University Dissertation Writing Fellowship, Dept. of Music

2006-7: Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Research Fellowship

2006-7: Social Science Research Council International Dissertation Field Research Fellowship

2006-7: FLAS Fellowship for Arabic language study, Columbia University†

2005-6: Columbia University Graduate Study Fellowship, Department of Music

2005: Columbia University Summer Research Grant, Department of Music

2005: Institute of African Studies Leitner Family Summer Travel Grant

* This fellowship was declined.

† This fellowship was declined.

- 2004-5: Columbia University Graduate Study Fellowship, Dept. of Music
 2003-4: FLAS Fellowship for Bamana language study, Indiana University[‡]
 2000-1: Fulbright-IIE Fellowship for research in Mali
 2000: Departmental Honors in Francophone Studies, Carleton College
 2000: Distinction for Senior Thesis, Carleton College

PUBLICATIONS: ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

- “*Faso and Jamana: Provisional Notes on Mande Social Thought in Malian Political Discourse, 1946-1979*,” co-authored with Brandon County, in *Mande Mansa: Essays in Honor of David Conrad*, eds. Stephen Belcher, Jan Jansen, and Mohamed N'Daou (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2008)
- “Celebratory Spaces Between Homeland and Host: Politics, Culture, and Performance in New York’s Malian Community,” in *Migrations and Creative Expressions in Africa and the African Diaspora*, eds. Toyin Falola, Niyi Afolabi, and Adérónké Adésolá Adésànyà (Carolina Academic Press, 2008)
- “Bamako Grooves,” *Mixed Magazine* Nr. 2: 68-69 (2007)
- “Determined Urbanites: Diasporic *Jeliya* in the 21st Century,” *Mande Studies* 6: 139-162 (2004)
- “Civil Taxis and Wild Trucks: The Dialectics of Social Space and Subjectivity in *Dimanche à Bamako*,” *Popular Music* 29/1 (2010), in press
- Sound Review of *Bush Taxi Mali* (Sublime Frequencies 2004), *The Journal of American Folklore*, in press

PUBLICATIONS: BOOKS

- *Sidikiba’s Kora Lesson*, a children’s book written and illustrated by Ryan T. Skinner (Beaver’s Pond Press, 2008), in press

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- “The Ethics of *Ambiance*: Sound, Sociability, and the Global Imagination in Bamako, Mali,” to be presented for the panel “Public Sounds, Public Spaces,” at the 2008 meeting of the American Anthropological Association in San Francisco, CA, 21 November 2008
- “Artists, National Belonging, and State Patronage in Postcolonial Mali,” presented at the “1968: A Global Perspective” conference at the University of Texas at Austin, TX, 11 October 2008
- “*Nyamakalaw* and *Dabakalaw*: Labor and the Meanings of ‘Independence’ in Mali’s Première Région Économique, 1953-1968,” co-written with Brandon County and presented at the Seventh International Conference on Mande Studies in Lisbon, Portugal, 24-27 June 2008.
- “Making *Mali Kunkan*: Performance, Piracy, and the Production of Musical Liveness in Contemporary Bamako,” presented for the panel, “Who’s Listening? The Politics of Auralty in Urban Spaces,” at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology in Columbus, OH, 27 October 2007

[‡] This fellowship was declined.

- “Living (or ‘Getting By’) in Bamako: An Ethnomusicological Encounter,” presented for faculty and students in the Center for Ethnomusicology at Columbia University, NY, 21 September 2007
- “The Aesthetics of *Malidenya*: Popular Music and Nationalist Narratives in Mali and the Soudan Français (1946-2006),” co-written with Brandon County and presented at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association in San Francisco, CA, 17 November 2006. This paper was presented again at the New York Historians of Africa Workshop at Princeton University, NJ, 29 January 2007
- “Between Home and Host-Country: Politics, Culture, and Performance in New York’s Malian Community,” presented at the Movements, Migrations, and Displacements in Africa conference at the University of Texas at Austin, TX, 24 March 2006
- “Celebratory Spaces between Homeland and Host: Memory, Work, and Play in New York’s Malian Communities,” presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology in Atlanta, GA, 20 November 2005.
- “Civil Taxis and Wild Trucks: The Political Poetics of Personhood in *Dimanche à Bamako*,” Paper presented for faculty in the Center for Ethnomusicology at Columbia University, NY, 14 October 2005
- “*An Ka Wuli Ka Fasobaara*: Migrant Communities and the Aesthetics of Malian Nation-Building, 1960-2005,” presented for an honorary colloquium at Carleton College, MN, 16 May 2005

WORK EXPERIENCE

- 2006: French Instructor, Austin International School in Austin, TX
- 2005-6: Assistant Director, Center for Ethnomusicology, Columbia University
- Maintenance of audio-visual archives and media lab
 - Organized and prepared program activities: colloquia, guest lectures, class events
- 2004-6: Private Kora (21-stringed West African harp) Instructor, Columbia University
- 2003-6: Guest Lecturer for *African Civilizations*, Columbia University
- Taught classes on music and nationalism in Sub Saharan Africa
- 2005: Teaching Assistant, *Music and Language*, Columbia University
- Assisted class lectures and held office hours
- 2004: Teaching Assistant, *Music Humanities*, Columbia University
- Assisted class lectures and held office hours
 - Planned and taught classes and prepared midterm and final exams
- 2002-3: Board member of the Society of Folk Music and Dance in Stockholm, Sweden
- Organization and development of local, national, and regional concert events
 - Production of the 2003 Jalibengo Kora Festival
- 2002-3: Created and administered the non-profit organization Lebån? Lupen!
- A group sponsoring traditional West African storytelling and music in Sweden
- 2002-3: Kora instructor, Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan in Stockholm, Sweden
- 2002-3: French and English Teacher at Tallbohovskolan in Jakobsberg, Sweden

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Scholarly guide for Afropop Worldwide’s nationally syndicated *Hip Deep* radio program, “Mande music in New York City,” to be broadcast in 2009

- Member of the group *Two Rivers* (Ryan Skinner: kora; Dov Stucker: guitar) whose self-produced album “Bafilabèn” is due out in November, 2008

LANGUAGES

- English: fluent
- French: fluent
- Swedish: fluent
- Bamana: advanced proficiency
- Arabic: beginner

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2008: Ethnographic and archival fieldwork on popular music, postcolonial history, and personhood in Bamako, Mali
- 2007: Documentary Research with *La Symphonie de la Kora*, on tour with Festival Mundial, The Netherlands
- 2006-7: Ethnographic and archival fieldwork on popular music, postcolonial history, and personhood in Bamako and Kita, Mali
- 2005: Preliminary fieldwork on popular music and urban cultural identity in Bamako and Kita, Mali
- 2005: Arabic Language Study at the Arabic Language Institute in Fez, Morocco
- 2003-4: Fieldwork among Malian and Guinean communities in Harlem and the Bronx, New York City
- 2002-3: Research among Senegambian communities in Stockholm, Sweden
- 2000-1: Study of kora pedagogy and performance in Bamako, Mali

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Urban African Culture
- World Music, Popular Music
- Ethics and Aesthetics
- Subjectivity, Personhood
- Anthropology of Sound and Listening
- Postcolonial African History
- Diaspora, Cosmopolitanism

AFFILIATIONS

- Society for Ethnomusicology
- American Anthropological Association
- African Studies Association
- Mande Studies Association
- Institut des Sciences Humaines (Mali)
- Institut National des Arts (Mali)

WEBSITE

www.ryanskinner.org