

# Anaar Desai-Stephens

## Curriculum Vitae

183 Barrington St  
Rochester, NY 14607  
ADesai-Stephens@esm.rochester.edu

### EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Music (Ethnomusicology) – Cornell University (August 2017)  
Dissertation: “Singing through the Screen: *Indian Idol* and the Politics of Aspiration in Post-liberalization India”  
Graduate Minors: Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; South Asian History
- M.A., Music (Ethnomusicology) – Boston University (2009)  
Thesis: “Kala Ramnath and the Hindustani Violin: Status and Strategy in the Hindustani Musical World”
- B.M., Violin Performance – Manhattan School of Music (2004)

### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2017-2018 Visiting Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology, Eastman School of Music,  
Department of Musicology

### PUBLICATIONS

- [2017] “The Age of Aspiration: The Limits of Gendered Self-Transformation in Mumbai Music Classes.” *MusiCULTURE* (Forthcoming)
- 2016 “Tensions of Musical Re-animation from Bollywood to Indian Idol” in *Music in Contemporary Indian Film: Memory, Voice, Identity*, ed. Jayson Beaster-Jones and Natalie Sarrazin (New York: Routledge)
- 2015 Review Essay of The Songs of Khayal, *World of Music (New Series)* (solicited). February 2015
- 2010 Review Essay of Hindustani Music: Thirteenth to Twentieth Centuries in *South Asia Program newsletter*, Cornell University (solicited). April 2010

### HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2016 Randel Dissertation and Teaching Fellowship, Cornell University Music Department
- 2016 T. Temple Tuttle Prize for Best Student Paper, Niagara Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology
- 2015 Howard Mayer Brown Diversity Fellowship, American Musicological Society
- 2015 Randel Dissertation and Teaching Fellowship, Department of Music, Cornell University [Declined]

- 2015 Humanities Dissertation Writing Group Member, Society for the Humanities, Cornell University
- 2014 Research Travel Grant, Graduate School, Cornell University
- 2013 Graduate Student Travel Research Grant, Society for the Humanities, Cornell University
- 2012 Research Travel Grant, Einaudi Center for International Studies, Cornell University
- 2011 Critical Language Scholarship (Hindi), US Department of State
- 2011 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Hindi), Cornell University
- 2011 Foreign Language and Area Studies Summer Fellowship, Cornell University [Declined]
- 2011 “Indian Modernities” Reading Group Member, Institute for Comparative Modernities, Cornell University
- 2009 Sage Academic Year Fellowship, Cornell University
- 2009 Foreign Language and Area Studies Summer Fellowship (Hindi), South Asian Summer Language Institute, University of Madison, WI.
- 2009 James Koetting Prize for Best Graduate Student Paper, Northeast Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology
- 2008 Boston University Summer Research Grant

## **CONFERENCES**

### **Papers Presented**

- 2017 Roundtable participant, “Forming Musical Feelings: Subjectivity, Circulation, and the Political Efficacy of Affect.” American Anthropological Association 116<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (Washington DC: November 2017)
- 2017 “Consuming the Self, Producing the Future on Mumbai Social Media,” New York Council on Asian Studies Annual Conference (Geneva, NY: September 2017)
- 2017 “Becoming a Feeling-ful Subject: Bollywood item numbers and a pedagogy of affect in neoliberalizing India,” Mid-Atlantic Chapter Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (Ithaca, NY: March 2017)
- 2016 “Corporations, Aspiration, and Ethnographic Anxiety,” Society for Ethnomusicology 61st Annual Meeting (Washington, DC: November 2016)
- 2016 “Failing through the Voice, Knowing through the Body.” American Anthropological Association 115th Annual Meeting (Minneapolis, MI: November 2016)
- 2016 “All that matters is talent:” Indian Musical Discourse in the Neoliberal Cultural Economy, Niagara Chapter Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (Brockport, NY: March 2016)
- 2015 “Making the Song Your Own: Fidelity, Innovation, and Contestations Over Vocal Style on Indian Idol,” Society for Ethnomusicology 60th Annual Meeting (Austin, TX: December 2015)
- 2015 “Shaping the Body, Learning How to Feel: Practicing Subjectivities through Hindi Film Song,” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI: October 2015)
- 2015 “Gendered Work and Imagined Futures,” Musical Economies: Work and Play,

- Harvard University (February 2015)
- 2014 “Aapka Brand Mar Jayega:” Musical talent, global brands, and disruptive viewers in “Indian Idol,” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI: October 2014)
- 2014 “Between Fidelity and Innovation: Television and Vocal Style in Liberalizing India,” International Ethnomusicology Doctoral Dissertation Workshop, University of Hildesheim (Hildesheim, Germany: June 2014)
- 2014 “An Overview of Reality Music Television Shows and Their Impact in Contemporary India,” Indian Musicological Society Annual Conference (Mumbai, India: January 2014)
- 2012 “Productive Embodiments: Dancer, Camera, and Viewer in ‘The Guide’,” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI: October 2012)
- 2012 “Dancer, Camera, Viewer: ‘The Guide’ as Embodied Archive,” New York Council of Asian Studies (New Paltz, NY: September 2012)
- 2011 “Skype Music Lessons and the Work of the Body,” Music, Gender, and Globalization conference, Cornell University (March 2011)
- 2010 “Playing Their Part: Respectability and the Role of Professional Female Instrumentalists in Hindustani Music,” National Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (Los Angeles, CA: October 2010)
- 2009 “Playing Their Part: The Changing Role of Professional Female Musicians in Hindustani Music,” Northeast Chapter Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, (New Haven: March 2009)

### **Panels Organized and Chaired**

- 2017 Roundtable co-organizer: “Forming Musical Feelings: Subjectivity, Circulation, and the Political Efficacy of Affect.” American Anthropological Association 116<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (Washington DC: November 2017)
- 2017 Panel co-organizer: “Musical Feelings: Affects, Desires, Politics.” Mid-Atlantic Chapter Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (Ithaca, NY: March 2017)
- 2016 Panel co-organizer: “Music-Industrial Complex(es)? Methods and Implications of Music Corporation Research.” Society for Ethnomusicology 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting (Washington, DC: November 2016)
- 2016 Panel chair and organizer: “Vocal Failures and the Production of Knowledge.” American Anthropological Association 115<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (Minneapolis, MI: November 2016)
- 2015 Panel co-organizer: “Materializing Musical Selves in Contemporary South Asia.” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI: October 2015)

### **INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS**

- 2016 “The New Voices of India,” New Scholars lecture series (Reed College: April 2016)
- 2014 “Waiting for Production: A Year of Caprice and Luck in Mumbai’s Music-Media Industry,” Cornell Musicology Colloquium.
- 2014 “Transmission,” Fundamentals of Music (undergraduate lecture at Cornell University). Instructor: Annie Lewandowski.

- 2012 “Ethnographic Approaches to Music,” Proseminar in Musicology (undergraduate seminar at Cornell University). Instructor: Prof. Neal Zaslaw.
- 2011 “Introduction to the Hindustani Violin,” Fiddling around the World (graduate seminar at Cornell University). Instructor: Prof. Neal Zaslaw.
- 2011 “The role of the drone in Indian music,” Fundamentals of Music (undergraduate lecture at Cornell University). Instructor: Annie Lewandowski.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### Cornell University

- Spring 2017 “Music Appreciation: Elements of Music,” Instructor of record, Cornell Prison Education Program
- Fall 2016 “Bollywood Songs and South Asian Culture,” Instructor of record (cross-listed with Asian Studies)
- Fall 2014, Spring 2015 “Reality Music TV Shows in the Age of Global Culture,” Instructor of record, Cornell First-year Writing Seminar Program.
- Fall 2012 “Music of the 1960s,” Teaching Assistant, Professor Ben Piekut
- Spring 2011 “Music of the African Diaspora,” Instructor of discussion section, Professor Steve Pond
- Fall 2010 “History of Jazz,” Instructor of discussion section, Professor Steve Pond

### Boston University

- 2008 “Music and Politics,” Teaching Assistant, Professor Brita Heimarck

## PROFESSIONAL AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- 2016 Elected co-chair of the South Asian Performing Arts Section of the Society for Ethnomusicology (term starting November 2018)
- 2016 Founder, Critical Pedagogy Working Group
- 2016 Organizer, “Universal Design for Learning: Accessibility in Course Design” workshop through the Cornell Center for the Integration of Teaching and Learning
- 2016 Graduate Student Member, Cornell Concert Series Faculty Board
- 2012 Moderator, “Instruments and Soundscapes” panel at Music: Cognition, Technology, Society conference, Cornell University
- 2011 Panel Coordinator, Section on the Status of Women, Society for Ethnomusicology
- 2011 Graduate Student Representative, Ethnomusicology job search committee, Music Department, Cornell University (September 2011 - April 2012)
- 2011 Co-organizer, Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Professionalization Series, Cornell University
- 2011 Chair of Musicology Colloquium Committee, Cornell University
- 2009 - 2011 Co-Organizer, Music, Gender, and Globalization conference, Cornell University
- 2007 - 2009 Web Coordinator and Editor, Boston Ethnomusicology and World Music Consortium, Boston University

## **FIELDWORK**

- 2014 - 2015 Mumbai, India: Follow-up research on Bollywood and playback singers (two months).
- 2013 - 2014 Mumbai, India: Fieldwork researching Indian Idol, Indian Idol Academy, Indian Television Academy, YouTube in India and professional Indian classical and commercial musicians (eighteen months).
- 2009 - 2010 Mumbai, India: Ongoing fieldwork studying women in Hindustani music and classical violin technique.
- 2004 - 2005 Mumbai, India: Fieldwork studying women in classical Hindustani instrumental traditions; studied classical Hindustani violin (2 months).

## **RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

- 2013 Group Leader, Community Service Study Abroad with Putney Student Travel, Rajasthan, India
- 2008 - 2009 Writer, "The Concert," Classical music podcast for the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Concert Series, Boston, Massachusetts
- 2005 - 2008 Founder and Co-director, The Seedlot Project, new music ensemble, commissioning body, and educational organization, New York

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 2016 - 2017 Reading Group Facilitator, Ithaca Community Read on racism and mass incarceration, Multicultural Resource Center, Ithaca, NY
- 2014 - 2016 Co-founder, Badal Ja!, grassroots gender advocacy organization, Mumbai
- 2012 Participant, Talking circles on Race and Racism, Multicultural Resource Center, Ithaca, NY

## **MUSICAL PRACTICE**

### **Select Training**

- 2014 - 2015 Voice lessons with Anna Coogan
- 2008 - Present Hindustani classical voice studies with Warren Senders
- 2013 - 2014 Studies in Hindustani classical voice with Rajeshree Pathak
- 2005 - 2010 Studies in Hindustani classical violin with Kala Ramnath
- 2000 - 2008 Advanced studies in Western classical violin with Bayla Keyes (Boston University); Mitchell Stern, Patinka Kopec, and Burton Kaplan (Manhattan School of Music)

### **Select Experience**

- 2013 - Present Violinist with Maati Baani, Mumbai-based world music band
- 2014 - Present Violinist with Palonegro, Latin American ensemble, Cornell University
- 2009 - 2013 Violinist, Les Petit Violons baroque ensemble, Cornell University
- 2008 Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute (Full scholarship), Oberlin OH
- 2007 - 2008 Violin instructor, private lessons, Adams Waldorf School, MA

2005 Ostrava New Music Institute (Full scholarship), Ostrava, Czech Republic  
2004 - 2005 Violin instructor, Mehli Mehta Music Foundation, Mumbai  
2004 Bang on a Can Summer Institute (Full scholarship), MassMoca, MA.  
2003 Violin instructor, Harlem Academy charter school  
2003 Faculty and Guest Artist, Apple Hill Chamber Music Festival

### **Select Performances and Recordings**

2016 Palonegro, Barnes Hall, Cornell University: April 2016  
2016 YouTube Video, "Moko Kahaan," Maati Baani  
2014 Maati Baani, YouTube Fanfest, Mumbai, India: February 2014  
2014 YouTube Video, "Dhai Aakar Naam," Maati Baani  
2014 "The Glass Menagerie," Prithvi Theatre, Mumbai, and Tour, Rage Productions:  
Fall 2013 - Spring 2014  
2013 Concert: Maati Baani  
NH7 Weekender Festival, Pune, India: October 2015

### **LANGUAGES**

Hindi: Advanced proficiency in writing, reading, and speaking  
Gujarati: Intermediate proficiency in speaking  
Italian: Intermediate-Advanced proficiency in speaking and reading.

### **MEMBERSHIPS**

Society for Ethnomusicology  
South Asian Performing Arts Section  
National Women's Studies Association  
American Anthropological Association