

CLIVE DAVIS INSTITUTE OF RECORDED MUSIC

POP CONFERENCE 2021 BRINGS TOGETHER WORLD'S LEADING POP MUSIC WRITERS, SCHOLARS, AND MUSICIANS FOR THREE DAYS OF VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING, APRIL 22-25

NYU's Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music hosts the conference's 20th anniversary edition featuring Devonté Hynes, Róisín Murphy, Rostam, Tamara Lindeman (The Weather Station), D-Nice, and more.



Pop Conference 2021—the longest running music writing and pop music studies conference of its kind—will bring together the world's leading pop scholars, journalists, writers, musicians for three days of virtual events exploring pop music's role in mirroring and shaping one of the most chaotic and disruptive moments in modern global history, from April 22 to 25. The conference is hosted by NYU's Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music, Tisch School of the Arts, and is free and open to the public.

This year's Pop Conference theme is "Turn and Face the Change: A Pop Convergence On Music and Flux" and will kick-off Thursday, April 22 at 6 p.m. ET with a keynote conversation panel featuring musical polymath Devonté Hynes (aka Blood Orange), singer-songwriter and producer Róisín Murphy, musician and record producer Rostam (who was a founding member of the band Vampire Weekend), and singer-songwriter and producer Tamara Lindeman (of The Weather Station). The keynote address, "Fluxed: Making Popular Music in the Midst of Change and Transition," brings together artists thriving within the highly volatile environment of contemporary popular music to discuss how the spirit and realities of change both challenge and inspire them. The keynote will be moderated by NPR Music critic and author Ann Powers.

Friday, April 23rd will feature 13 events including conversations examining the intersection of race, music criticism, and transformation. At 7 p.m. ET, "South Gotta Change: Southern Music in a Moment of Transformation" will form a panel of artists, scholars and writers discussing how the various musical styles associated with the South have formed a sonic bedrock of U.S. pop styles while also standing in for larger conversations about race, region, history and "tradition" on a changing cultural and political landscape. Journalists and culture critics Wesley Morris (New York Times), Danyel Smith (ESPN), and Greg Tate (founding member of the Black Rock

Coalition) will focus on the indispensable role that Black critics have played in telling the story of Black music in the roundtable “Black Critics Matter,” also at 7 p.m. ET.

Friday programming continues at 9:15 p.m. ET with a conversation between Jason King, Chair of NYU’s Clive Davis Institute and co-producer of Pop Conference 2021, and DJ, rapper and producer Derrick “D-Nice” Jones, marking the first collaboration between the Pop Conference and the Kennedy Center’s Hip Hop Culture Program. In the midst of widespread global pandemic lockdowns and social restrictions, D-Nice launched Homeschool at Club Quarantine: a nightly DJ party on Instagram Live designed to bring people together. Club Quarantine became an instant sanctuary and runaway success, virtually uniting people from all walks of life, including many prominent celebrities, to dance “together” and socialize online. This conversation will explore the connections between music, flux, change and the enduring ‘connective’ power of the DJ.

The nine events on Saturday, April 24th include “Pop Musicking and Survivance in Native North Pacific Communities” at 2:30 pm. ET in which a growing community of scholars working with, by, and for Native North Pacific communities rethink the role of pop musicking in ongoing Indigenous-led self-determination movements, and “Listening Queerly: Sounds of the Asian/American Diaspora in Flux,” a critical karaoke session bringing together Asian American musicians and artists to reckon with the violence of the present, also at 2:30 pm. ET.

Sunday April 25th is a day of writing mentorship culminating with “Finding Your Voice: A Writing Workshop with Joan Morgan and NYU Students of The Collective Blive Recorded Music Chapter” (a club for rising Black multidisciplinary artists at NYU), at 5 p.m. ET.

“We’re living through a time marked by political conflicts, demographic shifts, technological interventions and other social upheavals, all under the cloud of a pandemic whose impact will likely reverberate for generations,” said Jason King.

“We find ourselves in a constant state of flux, one that can simultaneously feel terrifying and regressive yet also inspiring and transformative. As with earlier eras of tumult, pop music will emerge as both as a mirror that reflects these changes but also as a hammer to help shape them,” he continued.

Pop Conference is known as one of the foremost venues for discussion of music in the world. The conference has resulted in multiple publications, including three collections of essays: This Is Pop: In Search of the Elusive at Experience Music Project, Listen Again: A Momentary History of Pop Music, and Pop When the World Falls Apart: Music in the Shadow of Doubt.

This year's programming committee includes Oliver Wang (Chair, CSU Long Beach), Timothy Anne Burnside (Smithsonian), Martha Gonzalez (Quetzal/Scripps College), Alisha Lola Jones (Indiana University), Jason King (New York University's Clive Davis Institute), Michelle Habel-Pallan (Univ. of Washington), RJ Smith (Writer), Brittany Spanos (Rolling Stone), and Melissa A. Weber (Loyola University New Orleans, WWOZ FM).

This year's Pop Conference is supported by Critical Minded, a granting and learning initiative cofounded by The Nathan Cummings Foundation and The Ford Foundation to support cultural critics of color in the United States, where they are underrepresented in the coverage of all artistic disciplines.

To register and see the full schedule, please visit <https://www.popconference.org/>. For any questions about the conference, please email popcon2021@popconference.org.

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