



SYMPOSIUM MUSICKING COMMUNITIES AND LABOR

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Saturday, February 14th
Butler School of Music – MRH 2.614
2406 Robert Dedman Dr., Austin, TX 78712

Sunday, February 15th
Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex
1156 Hargrave Street, Austin, TX 78702

Presented in collaboration with the **University of Texas College of Fine Arts** and **Prosper XO**, with **Professor Sonia Seeman** (Butler School of Music, UT Austin) serving as Lead Curator, this two-day symposium examines the realities of musical labor in the contemporary “gig economy” and the structural conditions shaping the lives of working musicians today.

This symposium brings together academic research and lived experience to deepen that dialogue. **Academic panels and paper presentations will take place on Saturday, February 14**, followed by **community-centered sessions on Sunday, February 15**, featuring musicians, organizers, and activists. Participatory musical offerings will be interwoven throughout the program, reinforcing music’s role as both cultural expression and labor.



George Lipsitz, KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Research Professor Emeritus of
Black Studies and Sociology,
University of California,
Santa Barbara



Sonia Seeman, LEAD ORGANIZER
Associate Professor of
Ethnomusicology, Butler School of
Music & Center for Middle Eastern
Studies, UT Austin

On **Sunday, February 15**, the symposium will feature a panel titled **From Gig Economy to Cultural Infrastructure: Rethinking Musical Labor, Value, and Community Power** brings together artists, organizers, educators, and technologists to examine how musical labor is structured today; and how it might be transformed. The panel features Grammy-nominated artist and producer **Terrany Johnson**, whose work centers community building and the lived realities of musicians navigating the gig economy; **Kyle Evans**, co-founder of Dadalab and UT Austin lecturer, whose practice explores experimental music and alternative cultural economies; **Kay Cote**, founder of Amplify EDM, whose advocacy focuses on equity and sustainable pathways for electronic music artists; **Nagavalli Medicharla**, Chair of the Austin Music Commission and Board Chair of EQ Austin, who bridges music, civic leadership, and technology in her work on cultural policy; and **Gabriel Phoenix**, Chief Product and Technology Officer of Prosper XO, whose work centers ethical, artist-first technology and data infrastructure. Moderated by **Lauren Bruno**, Founder and CEO of Prosper XO, the session connects academic research on musical labor with applied, community-rooted strategies for building more equitable and sustainable cultural ecosystems.