

# Séminaire du GREAM

Misha - Salle Europe  
Vendredi 19 octobre 2018  
9h30 - 11h00

**Michael Spitzer**  
**(University of Liverpool)**

## *A Very Short History of Fear*

Since its coming of age in the wake of 9/11 2001 (according to Jan Plamper), the discipline of the history of emotions has made giant strides. Less so in musicology or music theory, which has yet to absorb the ideas, facts, and methods opened up by Juslin & Sloboda's seminal collection (coincidentally also from 2001). My own approach, exemplified in this talk, is to bring historical and theoretical approaches together from the standpoint of music analysis: i.e., the analysis of compositional language and style.

The basic emotional category of fear is a useful 'red thread' to guide us through the history of musical emotion, both in the common-practice period, 1650-1910, and earlier through the pre-modern era, when our modern concept of 'emotion' did not apply. Starting with a stereotypical model of musical fear in the nineteenth century, this 'very short history' outlines a genealogy of fear, peeling back the layers of successive stylistic and intellectual paradigms, through classical, baroque, renaissance, and medieval. In the course of this journey, I shall question some basic assumptions about music-emotion research, such as the centrality of the psychology of expectations.



A graduate of the Universities of Oxford and Southampton, **Michael Spitzer** taught at Durham for twenty years before becoming Professor of Music at Liverpool in 2010. Chair of the Editorial Board of Music Analysis, he is a past President of the Society for Music Analysis. His many publications explore the interactions between music theory, philosophy, and psychology. He has published two monographs: *Metaphor and Musical Thought* (Chicago, 2004); and *Music as Philosophy: Adorno and Beethoven's Late Style* (Indiana, 2006). He inaugurated the series of *International Conferences on Music and Emotion* at Durham in 2009; and co-organized the *First International Conference on the Analysis of Popular Music* (Liverpool, 2013). He has two new books forthcoming. A monograph, titled *A History of Emotion in Western Music*, which covers more than a thousand years of music from Gregorian chant to contemporary pop, will be published by Oxford University Press. Another book, *The Musical Human*, will be published by Bloomsbury in six languages (including Chinese and Russian) and is an experimental essay on music and evolution. His most recent publications are on *Arcade Fire's Funeral* (Popular Music) and on *musical emotion and conceptual blending* (*Musicae Scientiae*).