

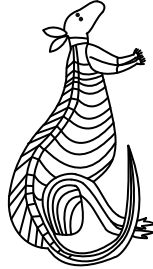


Università  
Ca'Foscari  
Venezia

Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici

## Laboratorio demo-etno-antropologico

Lab



Dea

**Mercoledì 21 febbraio 2018**  
**ore 14.30-16.30**

**Palazzo Marcorà Malcanton, I piano, Sala Geymonat**

**OFER GAZIT**

(Tel Aviv University),

terrà una conferenza su:

**SOUNDS LIKE HOME**  
**ECHOES OF MIGRANT MUSICIANS IN NEW YORK CITY**

## **Abstract**

Echoes have a funny, unpredictable quality to them. They return to us different than how they originally sounded, but still similar enough to recognize ourselves within them. As Walter Benjamin has it, echoes allow us to test an unfamiliar terrain for resonance, for familiarity: “An echo is able to give, in its own language, the reverberation of the work in the alien one.” Benjamin is talking about the task of the translator, but he might as well be talking about migrants. Migrants, after all, are tasked with perpetual translation. In ethnomusicology, migrants are often seen as echoing the culture of their homeland in the new country through song, dance, rhythm and prayer. But there are other ways to make a strange new place into a home, ways not often accounted for in the literature. In this talk I’d like to think through echoes as a way for migrants to hear themselves in the stories of others, to find familiarity in the music, language and poetry of cultures others than their own. Listening to the music of Egyptian singer Um Kulthum with Syrian, Palestinian, and Israeli migrants in New York City, we share the echoes of each others’ music. Ultimately, the ways in which migrants of different origins echo each other has much to tell us about the volatility and precarious condition of home as an emotional and conceptual category. Perhaps, I suggest, it is more productive to think of home not as an emotional attachment to a place, but as a sound: At times safe, familiar and joyful, at others foreign and foreboding, always shifting, always becoming, always in flux.

## **Nota biografica**

Ofer Gazit is a Lecturer at the Samuel Rubin Musicology Program of Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University, where he teaches Ethnomusicology and American musics. Dr. Gazit’s research investigates how changing social attitudes towards immigration influence American musics, particularly jazz and Afro-diasporic musics. His article “Sound at First Sight” was published in *Jazz Perspective* in 2016 and he is currently preparing book manuscript comparing the influence of migration in the New York jazz scene in the 1920s, 1960s, and 2000s.