

Ted: So our primary, ah, speaker here is all the way from all kinds of places. Boston, Baltimore...where, where are you coming from, Eric?

Eric: From New Jersey.

Ted: From New Jersey (laughter).

Close enough (laughter).

Eric: (unintelligible)

Ted: You know, ah, I did put a bio on the, ah, flier, of this, but I think most people may not have seen it, so I'll just read it very quickly so that we have a good introduction of somebody who is, ah...we're honored to have you here! So let me read this while we're making sure that that works. Alright. So, Eric Hung is the Executive Director of the Music of Asian American Research Center, and he's an adjunct lecturer in Information Studies at the University of Maryland.

He is currently working on a book entitled "The Sounds of Asian American Trauma." Is that right?

In Asian American Trauma, a textbook, on Asian-American music. An activist pianist, who has performed in Germany, Austria, Thailand, Australia, Hong Kong, and throughout North America, Eric holds a PhD in Musicology from Stanford University, and an MLIS in Archives and Digital Curation from the University of Maryland.

Prior to co-founding the Music of Asian America Research Center, he was a tenured professor in music history at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. And he's, ah, a bit of a background is that Allie and I kind of just ran into Eric (laughter) at some place

Eric: We searched each other out.

Ted: Yes (laughter). So, this is sort of like had us just wandering around conferences and so forth, trying to network and meet a few people.

And it's just wonderful for you to know so much talent and so much interest in Asian-American heritage, and our history.

So many different angles and we're very appreciative to have you come all the way down here. Thank you so much. It's all yours (applause).

Eric: (unintelligible)

Host: If you could take one step to your left, that would be great. Just so that we can (unintelligible). Thank you.

Eric: I will come here (laughter).

I'm much more happy in front of lecterns than I am

behind them. So thank you, ah, very much for inviting me. And maybe I should turn this down a little. Okay. Can you still hear me?

Audience: If you speak up.

Eric: Let's try this.

Audience: (murmur of approval)

Eric: This is good? Okay.

Um, so, ah, first thing I want to do is just to say a little bit about our center.

Uh, this is our research center, uh, you can go to asianamericanmusic.org. Ah, our mission is to empower our communities through collecting, promoting, and teaching music created by Asian Americans.

We seek to advance knowledge about and social justice for Asian Americans through music.

So our goal is really to teach the Asian American experience, and we're gonna do it through music. And so what I want to do is really have a listening party today, uh, and to really think about the different ways that we can think through music and talk through music.

Um, so what we want to be is a first stop on the internet about Asian American music. There is currently no such place.

If you know something about Asian American music already, it's easy to find a lot of information. If you don't know anything, any name to look up or anything like that, it's actually very difficult to find any information about Asian American music on the internet and so we want to be the first stop. Um, the other things that we do, we're working a lot on educational programs. We're working on a series of podcasts that will be released in November. Um, we're working on a textbook. We're writing it with Neil (unintelligible last name) at Arizona State University, and Christine (unintelligible last name) at Cornell University. Ah, we also have quarterly playlists, of which I will talk about onetoday. Um, another thing that we do is that we're a post-custodial digital archive, which means that we borrow and return. We think that these materials are better placed with the people who really can use them.

Family members, things like that. So, we digitize what you are willing to lend us, and we return the materials back to you, ah, if you allow us to put it on our website.

Um, the major initiative that we just started, ah, just a few days ago, ah, is our Documenting Asian American Community Music Ensembles initiative. This is a four year initiative, ah, in which we are trying to document 17 community music ensembles around the country. Ah, and the reason we're picking music ensembles is because, ah, professionals are well documented. They're in newspapers, you

know, you'll find information about them. Ah, university ensembles tend to be pretty well documented by the university. But community ensembles come and go, and, ah, very often after they go, ah, they disappear. Nobody can find them on the web, even a lot of active groups you cannot find on the web. But community groups are very often the place where you work out your identity. So these groups are really important for many different reasons. So we would like to document them in our archives as well. We also organize conferences, um, lectures like this one, performances. We have, uh, a performance coming up in, ah, Louisville that I'm playing in, um, in October. So, this is an introduction to our center.

Anyone with any questions about what we do, or...?

Okay.

Feel free to interrupt at any time, but I'm gonna make you talk a little bit (laughter). So, here is a quizzical cat to help you think (laughter).

The question is: what is music for?

So I'll give you 15 seconds to think and then we can have a conversation.

(laughter).

Five seconds.

Audience: Listening pleasure.

Eric: Listening pleasure! Okay. Someone else.

Audience: Self expression.

Eric: Self expression. Good. What else?

Audience: Relaxation.

Eric: Relaxation. Good. Okay.

Audience: Protest!

Eric: Protest! Good. Okay, what else?

Audience: Dance.

Eric: Dance! Yes.

Audience: (unintelligible).

Eric: Storytelling, yes! Sorry?

Audience: (unintelligible)

Eric: Stress management, yes (laughter).

Audience: Tradition.

Eric: Tradition. Okay, great. What else?

Audience: Worship.

Eric: Worship. Okay. Good. What else?

Audience: Entertainment.

Eric: Entertainment. Great.

Anyone have anything quite different from what we have said so far? I'm sorry?

Audience: Company stance.

Eric: Uh-huh, company stance. Right.

Well, I have put up a list of things I could think of yesterday when I put this together. Right.

Enjoyment, dancing, worship/ritual, information is something we haven't talked about. Music as a way to transmit information. Establishing place, right? So when you listen to certain types of music you think of a certain type of place, right? Memory device, right? Sometimes music can trigger memories that you have. Maybe the music might have nothing to do with what you did, it's just the music that was playing when you were at a certain place, right? And every time that piece plays, you think of that place where you originally heard this piece. Maintaining order, right? National anthems. Healing, inflicting pain, I'll talk more about that. Music can hurt people, too, right (murmurs)? The US Army, one of the ways that they try to interrogate people is to blast music very loud in a metal box for 24 straight hours (murmurs). Marker of identity, music that identifies us. Friendship, escape, protest, making money, no one said that yet (laughter). Setting a mood, right? For like movies, or television shows, or things like that. Opening difficult conversations. So these are things I came up with yesterday, as I said when I was making this slideshow. Ah, I'm putting the ones, I'm putting certain ones in bold because those are the issues that I'll talk about in this particular talk, okay? Any reactions? Feel free to interrupt at any time.