

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
School of Music, Theatre & Dance

Nathan Martin, assistant professor of music, Department of Music Theory, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of music, with tenure, Department of Music Theory, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2009 McGill University, Musicology, Schulich School of Music  
B.M. 2000 University of Victoria, Cello Performance

Professional Record:

2015 – present Assistant Professor, Department of Performing Arts Technology, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, University of Michigan  
2014 – 2015 Lecturer in Music Theory, Yale University  
2013 Lehrbeauftragter für Musiktheorie, Hochschule für Musik Freiburg  
2012 – 2015 Post-doctoral Fellow, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
2011 – 2012 Post-doctoral Fellow, Harvard University  
2009 – 2011 Mellon Post-doctoral Fellow in Music, Columbia University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Martin is an enthusiastic and organized teacher who excels at teaching music theory at all levels, from first year core courses through doctoral seminars. He takes a collaborative approach to learning in the classroom that embodies his view that “thinking is a collective endeavor,” which derives from his research in intellectual history and Enlightenment philosophy. Professor Martin endeavors to connect not only the substance of historical approaches to theory to his teaching, but also their practices. The result is an engaged classroom where students have significant agency and embark on collaborative discovery. His syllabi are detailed and thoughtful and he adapts his courses to the types of students that are enrolled in his classes, whether musical performance majors or liberal arts majors. At the doctoral level, he seeks to enable students not simply to learn about music theory but how to engage with the subject and understand how scholars develop original work in the field. He serves as an advisor to two PhD students, something that is not normally done by junior faculty in the department. As evidence of his thoughtful and reflective approach to teaching, Professor Martin’s essay about his first-year theory class, “Dispatch from the Front: A Harmony Lesson,” was published in a major journal. Professor Martin’s approach in the classroom has students not only analyzing music and reading theoretical analyses, but also composing, writing, and translating. These kinds of experiential activities help students gain a more solid understanding of and fluency with the material as they think about and engage with it more deeply. He consistently receives high marks from students.

Professional Activities: Professor Martin is widely regarded as one of the most promising junior scholars of the history of music theory, with a specific focus on music theory of the French Enlightenment, and its central figure, Jean-Philippe Rameau. He has also made important contributions to other scholarly discussions, including those on musical form, particularly as it pertains to Mozart’s vocal and instrumental music, and the music and musical writings of Rousseau. Professor Martin has an exceptionally strong record of peer-reviewed publications that includes two co-edited books (one published in 2015, the first year of his appointment, and one accepted), 14 refereed journal articles

(well above the norm in the discipline), eight book chapters, four invited journal articles, six book reviews and review articles, plus encyclopedia articles, bibliographies, translations, and the aforementioned pedagogical article. He has much more work in the pipeline including three articles under review and a book manuscript in progress.

Professor Martin has delivered three or four invited talks at universities in the US and abroad since 2017, and has presented almost 50 conference papers, including at some of the most prestigious and competitive venues such as the Society for Music Theory and the American Musicological Society. He has already made an impressive impact internationally, having presented in 16 countries. He has been recognized for his work as the recipient of a fellowship at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study, a National Endowment for the Humanities summer stipend, along with several U-M grants from ADVANCE, Center for World Performance Studies, and UMOR. He was also a co-investigator on a Michigan Institute for Data Science grant for \$75,000. His track record of professional activity is nothing short of spectacular and there is every indication that this trajectory will continue well into the future.

Service: Professor Martin's impressive record of service extends from his home department to international professional organizations. For the department, he has served on the general preliminary examination committee, the lecture committee, and the most recent search committee. He has provided valuable service to the school as a member of the SMTD Awards Committee. Nationally and internationally, he has served on the program committee for the Society for Music Theory 2021 Annual Conference, the editorial board for *Music Theory Spectrum* (the premier journal in the discipline, published by the Society for Music Theory), and as colloquium director for the 2021 Rousseau Association Conference, board member of the Rousseau Association, editorial board member for the *Revue musicorum*, and co-editor of *Music Theory & Analysis*, a peer-reviewed international journal focusing on recent developments in music theory and analysis. His service to the school and the university will certainly grow in the coming years, as he is an exceptionally thoughtful and conscientious contributor. He is already well-established in the profession, and is on track to assume a leading role in the coming years.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Professor Martin is unusually accomplished as a candidate for Associate Professor, and he is more accomplished than many music theorists ever get to be."

Reviewer B: "More and more, as I have students looking at graduate schools, I find myself giving them a nudge towards Ann Arbor: it seems to me that it is now one of the most exciting places to be a graduate student. Nathan Martin is a large part of this."

Reviewer C: "Martin's dossier of research is imposing, one of the largest and most consistently outstanding collections of writings that I have ever encountered when writing reports for this particular promotion..."

Reviewer D: "Dr. Martin is on his way to taking his place in the forefront of his subfield, alongside the leading North American and European scholars."

Reviewer E: "He has the potential to become one of the most highly regarded scholars in his areas of interest, taking on a role as senior scholar sooner than one might expect...One should celebrate the extraordinary quantity and depth of his scholarly accomplishment to date and relish the potential for even greater impact in the decades ahead."

Reviewer F: “I had numerous fruitful discussions with him on musicology and the history of science. He presented two well-received lectures.”

Reviewer G: “I see Nathan Martin as the leading [junior] scholar on the intellectual foundations of music theory in eighteenth-century France...Nathan Martin’s position at a meeting-point of several disciplines (a meeting-point that he has done much to define and locate) gives an unusually strong echo to his work, which will interest not only musicologists, but intellectual historians, literary scholars and philosophers. The interdisciplinary is home to him.”

Reviewer H: “In terms of quality and impact, Nathan’s work far surpasses the work of his peers—and, in fact, it stands shoulder to shoulder with the best work in the field by scholars of all ages.”

Reviewer I: “...the scholarship is on a par with the best in the field...In addition, his dossier supplies substantial evidence of the practical application of these form theories in the classroom; the increased appreciation for pedagogy in our field ensures a positive scholarly reception for this work.”

Reviewer J: “In short, I have seen very few PhD graduates in music theory who have so quickly moved to the front of their field as Nathan has. And I say that as a faculty member who has taught and advised many dozens of graduate students who have gone through my own institution...Certainly, the ample dossier he provides of his teaching impresses for its attention to detail and clarity.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Martin meets and exceeds all relevant criteria for promotion and the granting of tenure. He is a prolific and influential scholar, an effective and innovative teacher, and generous contributor to the life and development of the institution, and his profession. With the unanimous support of the school’s Executive Committee, I enthusiastically recommend and support Nathan Martin for promotion to the rank of associate professor of music, with tenure, Department of Music Theory, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.



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David Gier  
Paul Boylan Collegiate Professor of Music  
and Dean, School of Music, Theatre & Dance

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