

Upcoming call for applications for a predoctoral contract (4 years) on the project:

ORIENT/ALT **Orientalism and Sexual Otherness** **in Spanish Musical Modernism (1898-1939)**

Reference: PID2025-175366NA-I00

Department of Art and Musicology. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)

Principal Investigator and thesis supervisor: Diego Alonso Tomás (diego.alonso@uab.cat)

Brief project description (detailed description below)

ORIENT/ALT examines musical orientalism as a means of expressing sexual difference in Spanish-French musical modernism between 1898 and 1939. Our hypothesis is that the new sexual and gender identities that emerged from the late nineteenth century onwards played a fundamental role in shaping the musical modernism of the period, which had a significant impact on orientalism of a specifically Spanish stamp. The project aims to renew the musical historiography of the Silver Age through the analysis of a broad corpus of musical works composed between 1898 and 1939, applying analytical methods from historical musicology, gender studies and queer theory. Related literature: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478572226100310>

Predoctoral contract

A predoctoral contract is offered to develop a PhD thesis under the supervision of the project's PI, [Diego Alonso](#). The selected candidate will study aspects of early twentieth-century Spanish-French musical modernism by combining methodologies from historical musicology, gender studies and queer theory. The specific topic will be adapted flexibly to the interests of the doctoral candidate. The work will be carried out within the "Music and Gender" strand of the [Doctoral Programme in Art History and Musicology](#) at the UAB, and within the framework of the "Sound & City" research group. There is also the possibility of a postdoctoral orientation period of up to 12 months, provided that the thesis is defended during the term of the contract.

The training activities planned to develop the selected candidate's research skills include participation in national and international workshops, seminars and conferences; at least two research stays at leading international centres; collaboration in organising the scientific events linked to the project; and participation in the training activities run by the UAB Doctoral School. The contract may also include collaboration in teaching activities on the UAB's degree in Musicology. Given that the UAB offers the [Degree in Sociocultural Gender Studies](#), significant synergies are expected between the doctoral candidate and the research staff linked to this degree.

The supervisor will pay special attention to the selected candidate's professional development and to their progressive autonomy and independence as a researcher, helping them build their own academic profile and providing them with tools and support to prepare competitive applications for postdoctoral funding in regional, national and international calls.

People of all nationalities, ages and linguistic backgrounds are encouraged to apply for the position.

Requirements:

- Degree / Master's in Musicology, Gender Studies or related areas within cultural studies and the Humanities (Art History, Spanish Philology, etc.)
- Oral communication skills in English.
- An intermediate-to-advanced level of knowledge in music theory, musical language and analysis will be positively valued.

Contract details:

- Funding programme: [Knowledge Generation Projects 2025](#), funded by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (MICIU) through the [State Research Agency](#).
- Type of contract: 4 years. Full-time (100%)
- Expected start date: The project has received funding under the provisional award proposal and is awaiting publication of the final award resolution, expected in November 2026 (see the [AEI Calls Calendar](#)). In accordance with AEI regulations, the contract must begin within a maximum of nine months from the first day of the month following publication of the award resolution on the AEI website (expected to be November 2026).
- Application period: The call is expected to open in October or November 2026. Please note that the application window will remain open for only a few days (generally two weeks), so applicants are advised to contact the PI beforehand. All predoctoral contracts funded under this programme must be published simultaneously. For reference, see the 2025 call: [UAB FPI Call 2025](#)

Funding and employment conditions

As set out in the [call for applications \(Article 14.3\)](#)

- Total individual amount to fund the predoctoral contract: EUR 134,615.00
- Annual grant for the contract: EUR 31,100, co-financed by the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)
- The gross monthly salary will be published in the open call.
- The amount may not be lower than 75% of the salary set for the [Professional Group M3 of the General State Administration](#).
- End-of-contract compensation allowance: EUR 3,215
- Allowance for research stays and tuition fees: EUR 7,000

Selection and recruitment process

In the selection process, a committee made up of the PI and two further specialists will assess candidates' academic/scientific-technical track record and their suitability for the project's activities. The process will follow the OTM-R policy (Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment), ensuring the vacancy is publicised, clear communication at every stage, and objective, transparent rules for the selection committee. The call will be issued by the UAB and published on [EURAXESS](#). The selection and evaluation criteria are set out in [Article 12.2 of the call](#). **IMPORTANT: Due to UAB regulations, the call will remain open for very few days (probably 1-2 weeks). Interested candidates are strongly advised to [contact the PI](#) in advance to discuss their eligibility, research interests and any questions about the position or the application process.**

Indicative documentation for the application (to be specified in the call)

- Valid identity document: DNI, NIE or passport (for non-resident foreign nationals).
- Curriculum Vitae
- Academic transcript issued by the home institution, showing grades. (If issued in a language other than Spanish or English, a sworn translation must be included. Foreign transcripts must indicate the maximum and minimum grades of the grading system and the minimum pass mark).

About *ORIENT/ALT: Orientalism and Sexual Otherness in Spanish Musical Modernism (1898–1939)*

Following the pathologisation of homosexuality in the late nineteenth century and the consequent formation of various homosexual identities as deviations from the norm, the heterosexuality/homosexuality binary came to occupy a fundamental place in Western culture. As the cultural theorist Eve K. Sedgwick has argued, our understanding of many key aspects of twentieth-century Western culture and art remains incomplete, and fundamentally impaired, without a critical analysis of the modern definition of homo/heterosexuality (*Epistemology of the Closet*, 1990: 11). Building on this premise, *ORIENT/ALT* studies orientalism as a fundamental means of expressing sexual difference within Spanish musical modernism between the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the Francoist period. Our focus is on a broad corpus of musical works in which several Spanish and French composers, among them Manuel de Falla, Adolfo Salazar, Gustavo Durán and Ernesto Halffter, sublimated ancient “oriental” cultures as Arcadias onto which to project forms of masculine sexuality and subjectivity considered illicit in the West for not conforming to the heterosexual paradigm. Our acronym, *ORIENT/ALT*, reflects this dimension of orientalist otherness as a resource for expressing forms of *otherness* in the realm of sexuality.

The music of the “Silver Age” has been widely studied from perspectives including national identity, (self-)exoticism and various transcultural and sociopolitical dimensions, but hardly ever from approaches that foreground aspects related to sexuality and, in particular, non-normative forms of sexuality. *ORIENT/ALT* aims to address this gap by studying the corpus of Spanish modernism in relation to Spanish musical tradition and identity, and also as part of [a significant transnational current of homoerotic musical orientalism](#) that manifested strongly in the context of French-influenced symbolist and neoclassicist modernism, with prominent representatives including Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Reynaldo Hahn, Karol Szymanowski, Aaron Copland, Francis Poulenc, Benjamin Britten, Colin McPhee, Henry Cowell, and many others.

Our aim is to shed light on the connections, still largely unexplored, between Spanish musical modernism and different forms of sexual, gender and national identity in the early twentieth century, as well as their links with analogous phenomena developed in other international contexts, especially in France. Drawing on the new epistemologies that emerged in the late twentieth century in the context of *New Musicology* and, more recently, queer musicology, *ORIENT/ALT* seeks to renew our understanding of Spanish musical modernism in the first third of the twentieth century, integrating dimensions of sexuality and gender subjectivity that have so far occupied a marginal place in its historiography. The project thus proposes a perspective that allows us to reconsider the important relationships between musical modernism and sexuality, bringing new historiographical perspectives in line with some of the main concerns of contemporary society.

Further reading: Diego Alonso Tomás, “Musical Orientalism and the Sublimation of Homosexuality in Early Twentieth-Century Spain,” *Twentieth-Century Music*, 2026 (First View), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478572226100310>.

About Sound & City

The “Sound & City” research group, which the selected candidate will join, brings together a dynamic, international and interdisciplinary team of specialists at different stages of their academic careers. One of its main lines of research is the study of nineteenth- to twenty-first-

century music from gender perspectives. Sound & City is based at the UAB's Department of Art and Musicology, which pursues an active policy of promoting and disseminating research internationally and hosts several major research groups and projects in Musicology, including the R&D project POPQUEER-XXI (PI: Silvia Martínez), the ERC Advanced Grant project "Sound and Space in the Performance of Urban Ritual" (PI: Tess Knighton) and the MSCA project "Fado between Tradition and Market: Rethinking Heritage Music in Iberia's Cultural Economy" (PI: Olga Kakosimou).