

ERICA CAO
erica.cao@yale.edu

EDUCATION

- 2023 M.D., Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons, NY
- 2021 Ph.D., Music, Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge, UK
Dissertation: “Common Time: Music, Empathy, and a Politics of Care”
- 2014 M.Phil., Music, Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge, UK
- 2013 A.B., Psychology, Princeton University, NJ
summa cum laude
Certificate Program in Musical Performance
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PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- 2026 – Postdoctoral Scholar, Yale School of Public Health, Yale Dept of Psychiatry
“Soundvoice: Music in the Identification of Housing Needs”
Resident Psychiatrist, Yale University
- 2025 – 2026 Lecturer in Music, Stanford University
Music in Psychic and Social Life - Winter 2025, Spring 2026
- 2023 – 2026 Resident Psychiatrist, San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery
Services
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PUBLICATIONS

Articles

- 2021 Cao EL, Blinderman CD, Cross I. Reconsidering empathy: an interpersonal approach and participatory arts in the medical humanities. *J Med Humanit.* 2021;42:627-640.
- 2018 Cao EL, Gowda D. Collaborative songwriting for health sciences interprofessional service learning. *Med Educ.* 2018;52(5):550.
- 2014 Cao EL, Lotstein M, Johnson-Laird PN. Similarity and families of musical rhythms. *Music Percept.* 2014;31(5):444-469.

Works in Progress

- In Progress Cao EL, Schumann EJ. A musical adaptation of photovoice in youth mental health (article manuscript).

AWARDS AND HONORS

2026	Yale Center for Clinical Investigation Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Award
2025	Franklin Research Grant, American Philosophical Society
2024	Cardinal Course Grant, Stanford University
2024	Community Engaged Teaching Fellowship, Stanford University
2017 – 2021	Gates Cambridge Fellowship (Ph.D.), Gates Foundation
2015	Steve Miller Fellowship in Medical Humanities, Columbia University
2015	Global and Population Health Grant, Columbia University
2013	Gates Cambridge Fellowship (M.Phil.), Gates Foundation
2013	Phi Beta Kappa Society
2013	Sigma Xi Research Society
2013	Howard Warren Crosby Senior Prize in Psychology, Princeton University
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PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks

2025	Creativity and medicine panel. University of Georgia – Torrance Festival of Ideas
2025	“Music in psychic and social life.” Stanford University – Mental Health Equity and Advocacy Roundtable.
2023	“Participatory arts and a capabilities approach.” Yale Child Study Center – QUALab
2023	“Participatory music and social recovery.” New York University – Psychiatry Department Research Day.
2018	“How music heals us.” University of Cambridge – TEDxCambridge.

Conference Presentations

2025	“Collaborative songwriting in US social service and community mental health settings.” Music and Trauma session. Talk at Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting – Atlanta, GA.
2025	“Music in lifestyle mental health: Impact of community songwriting on social connectedness.” Poster at American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting – Los Angeles, CA.
2018	“Collaborative songwriting and civic engagement.” Talk at Harvard University – Northeast Music Cognition Group Conference.
2015	“Music in interprofessional service learning.” Talk at Brown University – Northeast Group on Educational Affairs Conference.

Departmental Talks

- 2024 “Psychoanalytic case conference: Racial melancholia and co-creative arts.” San Mateo County Psychiatry Residency.
- 2018 “A proposal and plan for the Music Corps.” Poster at University of Cambridge – Music, Selves and Societies Workshop.
- 2015 “A songwriting intervention project for Bronx VA community living center patients.” Bronx Veteran Affairs Hospital – Quality Improvement Session.
- 2015 “Share-a-song: Collaborative songwriting with children in foster care.” Columbia University – Steve Miller Day.

OTHER TEACHING

Supervisor

Internship in Civic Service, Princeton University (2018)

Supervisor (Teaching Assistant)

Music and Health Psychology, University of Cambridge (2017 – 2018)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Co-Founder, President

Humans in Harmony, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, humansinharmony.org
Collaborative songwriting programs in clinical and social service settings (2016 –)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Member

American Musicological Society
American Psychiatric Association

Contributor, *Synopsis Health Humanities Journal* (2019-2020)

Education Officer, Lucy Cavendish College Union (2017 – 2018)

Editor-in-Chief, *The Scholar Magazine*, Gates Cambridge Trust (2013 – 2014)

Graduate Representative, Cambridge Music Department (2013 – 2014)

MUSIC & PERFORMING ARTS

2014 – 2023: Columbia University Medical Center Symphony Orchestra

2013 – 2014: Cambridge University Symphony Orchestra

2009 – 2013: Certificate Program for Musical Performance, Princeton University

2009 – 2013: Choreographer & dancer, Triple 8 Dance Company, Princeton University

2006, 2007, 2008: Winner, Missouri MMTA State Piano Competition for four-hand piano