

Pop conference to focus on Southern roots

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A free [EMP Pop Conference](#) at Tulane University April 19-21, “Due South: Roots, Songlines, Musical Geographies,” will present dialogue on the sound of specific Southern sites: the music of Muscle Shoals, the rap scene in Memphis, Tenn., the blues of the Chitlin' Circuit, the “Creolization” of Cajun and zydeco, and the politics of Washington, D.C., go-go music.



At the EMP Pop Conference, Matt Sakakeeny, assistant professor of music, will present a paper on the issue of noise ordinances in New Orleans. Sakakeeny, second from left (back row), is guitarist and bandleader of Los Po-Boy-Citos, which will play at a record debut party coinciding with the conference. (Photo from Los Po-Boy-Citos)

The event is organized by [Joel Dinerstein](#), who holds the James H. Clark Endowed Chair in American Civilization and is the director of the [New Orleans Center for the Gulf South](#) at Tulane, along with Karen Celestan, senior program manager of the [Music Rising Initiative](#).

It is one of five regional events in conjunction with Seattle's [Experience Music Project \(EMP\) Museum](#), which holds the annual conference to bring together academics,

critics, performers and fans for a collective discussion. Dinerstein and Celestan worked with the conference's national office to organize the New Orleans event.

Live interviews by renowned journalists will be featured, including Gwen Thompkins, Jason Berry, Alex Rawls and Nick Spitzer, a Tulane professor who is celebrating the [15th anniversary of NPR's "American Routes" radio show](#) that he hosts.

There also will be panel discussions about genres such as hip-hop and bounce, Cajun and zydeco, country music and the blues.

Two musical performances will feature Jason Isbell (400 Unit, Drive-By Truckers) and a Sunday brunch event, "The Banjo in the African Diaspora," featuring Don Vappie and Carl LeBlanc of New Orleans with [Demma Dia of Senegal](#). The event will be moderated by historian Laurent Dubois of Duke University, who is writing a cultural history of the banjo.

The conference will be held on the second floor of the Lavin-Bernick Center on the Tulane uptown campus on Friday (April 19) and Saturday (April 20) from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., and Sunday (April 21) from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Admission to the conference is open to the public and [registration](#) is encouraged.