

# Brian McFee

Center for Data Science  
New York University  
726 Broadway  
7th floor  
New York, NY 10003

Email: [brian.mcfee@nyu.edu](mailto:brian.mcfee@nyu.edu)  
Homepage: <http://bmcfee.github.io/>  
Phone: +1 212 998 3067

## Research interests

Music information retrieval, machine learning, recommender systems, multimedia signal processing

## Education

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO La Jolla, CA

Ph.D. in Computer Science, 2012.  
Dissertation: *More like this: Machine learning approaches to music similarity*  
Advisor: Gert Lanckriet.  
C.Phil. in Computer Science, 2009.  
M.S. in Computer Science, 2008.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ Santa Cruz, CA

B.S. Computer Science with Highest Honors, 2003.

COLLEGE OF MARIN Kentfield, CA

A.A. Mathematics, 2001.

## Employment

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY New York, NY  
*Data science fellow, 2014–present.*

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY New York, NY  
*Postdoctoral research scholar, 2012–2014.*

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO La Jolla, CA  
*Graduate research and teaching assistant, 2004–2012.*

SOCIAL SOURCE FOUNDATION San Francisco, CA  
*Software engineer, 2005.*

GROUNDSPRING.ORG San Francisco, CA  
*Software engineer, 2004.*

TKO SOFTWARE Santa Cruz, CA  
*Quality assurance engineer, 2003.*

VA LINUX SYSTEMS Sunnyvale, CA  
*Artist, Linux.com, 1999–2001.*

## Awards and honors

**ISMIR Best oral presentation award**, for **Analyzing song structure with spectral clustering**, Taipei, TW, 2014.

**ISMIR Best poster presentation award**, for **mir\_eval: a transparent implementation of common MIR metrics**, Taipei, TW, 2014.

**NIPS Reviewer Award**, Neural Information Processing Systems, Lake Tahoe, CA, 2013.

**Music Hack Day — Soundcloud prize**, for **Mend-a-break**, Philadelphia, PA, 2013.

**Music Hack Day — Echo Nest prize**, for **Auto-chip-tune**, Boston, MA, 2012.

**ISMIR Best poster presentation award**, for **The natural language of playlists**, Miami, FL, 2011.

**Qualcomm Innovation Fellowship**, for **Location-, Demographic-, Preference- and Content-Based Music Search and Recommendation**, 2010–2011. (With L. Barrington.)

**ISMIR Best presentation award**, for **Heterogeneous embedding for subjective artist similarity**, Kobe, JP, 2009.

## Invited seminars

**The role of structure analysis in music discovery**, Machine Learning for Music Discovery Workshop, ICML, Lille, FR, 2015.

**Music information retrieval: challenges in jazz**, Jazz and Technology Forum, New York, NY, 2013.

**Modeling playlists by context**, Fifth Recommender Stammtisch, Berlin, DE, December 2012.

## Publications

### *Journal articles*

Y. Vaizman, B. McFee, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Codebook based audio feature representation for music information retrieval. *IEEE Transactions on Audio, Speech, and Language Processing*, 22(10):1483–1493, 2014.

C. Galleguillos, B. McFee, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Iterative category discovery via multiple kernel metric learning. *International Journal of Computer Vision*, pages 1–18, 2013.

B. McFee, L. Barrington, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Learning content similarity for music recommendation. *IEEE Transactions on Audio, Speech, and Language Processing*, 20(8), 2012a.

B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Learning multi-modal similarity. *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, 12:491–523, February 2011.

B. McFee, C. Galleguillos, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Contextual object localization with multiple kernel nearest neighbor. *IEEE Transactions on Image Processing*, 20(2):570–585, Feb 2011. ISSN 1057-7149.

*Peer-reviewed conference publications*

- B. McFee, E.J. Humphrey, and J.P. Bello. A software framework for musical data augmentation. In *16th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2015a. To appear.
- B. McFee, O. Nieto, and J.P. Bello. Hierarchical evaluation of segment boundary detection. In *16th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2015b. To appear.
- B. McFee and D.P.W. Ellis. Analyzing song structure with spectral clustering. In *Proceedings of the 15th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2014c.
- C. Raffel, B. McFee, J. Salamon, E. Humphrey, O. Nieto, D. Liang, and D.P.W. Ellis. mir\_eval: a transparent implementation of common MIR metrics. In *Proceedings of the 15th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2014.
- Z. Chen, B. McFee, and D.P.W. Ellis. Speech enhancement by low-rank and convolutive dictionary spectrogram decomposition. In *Interspeech*, 2014.
- B. McFee and D.P.W. Ellis. Learning to segment songs with ordinal linear discriminant analysis. In *International conference on acoustics, speech and signal processing, ICASSP*, 2014b.
- B. McFee and D.P.W. Ellis. Better beat tracking through robust onset aggregation. In *International conference on acoustics, speech and signal processing, ICASSP*, 2014a.
- D.K. Lim, B. McFee, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Robust structural metric learning. In *Proceedings of the 30th annual International Conference on Machine Learning, ICML*, June 2013.
- B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Hypergraph models of playlist dialects. In *Proceedings of the 13th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2012.
- J. Urbano, J.S. Downie, B. McFee, and M. Schedl. How significant is statistically significant? The case of audio music similarity and retrieval. In *Proceedings of the 13th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2012.
- B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. The natural language of playlists. In *Proceedings of the 12th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, pages 537–541, 2011b. Winner of the best poster presentation award.
- B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Large-scale music similarity search with spatial trees. In *Proceedings of the 12th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, pages 55–60, 2011a.
- C. Galleguillos, B. McFee, S. Belongie, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. From region similarity to category discovery. In *IEEE Computer Society Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition, CVPR*, 2011.
- B. McFee, L. Barrington, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Learning similarity from collaborative filters. In *Proceedings of the 11th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2010.
- N. Koenigstein, G.R.G. Lanckriet, B. McFee, and Y. Shavitt. Collaborative filtering based on P2P networks. In *Proceedings of the 11th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, August 2010.
- B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Metric learning to rank. In *Proceedings of the 27th International Conference on Machine Learning, ICML*, pages 775–782, Haifa, Israel, June 2010a.
- C. Galleguillos, B. McFee, S. Belongie, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Multi-class object localization by combining local contextual interactions. In *IEEE Computer Society Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition, CVPR*, pages 113–120, 2010.

B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Heterogeneous embedding for subjective artist similarity. In *Proceedings of the 10th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference, ISMIR*, 2009a. Winner of the best presentation award.

B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Partial order embedding with multiple kernels. In *Proceedings of the 26th International Conference on Machine Learning, ICML*, pages 721–728, 2009b.

### *Demos, workshops, and other work*

Markus Schedl, Peter Knees, Brian McFee, Dmitry Bogdanov, and Marius Kaminskas. Music recommender systems. In *Recommender Systems Handbook*, pages 453–492. Springer US, 2015.

B. McFee and F. Upham. Interpreting musical taste through playlists. In *Meeting of the Society for Music Perception and Cognition, SMPC*, 2015.

B. McFee, C. Raffel, D. Liang, D.P.W. Ellis, M. McVicar, E. Battenberg, and O. Nieto. librosa: Audio and music signal analysis in python. In *14th annual Scientific Computing with Python conference, SciPy*, July 2015c.

B. McFee and D.P.W. Ellis. DP1, MP1, MP2 entries for MIREX2013 structural segmentation and beat tracking, 2013. Ninth Music Information Retrieval Evaluation eXchange.

B. McFee, T. Bertin-Mahieux, D.P.W. Ellis, and G.R.G. Lanckriet. The million song dataset challenge. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Workshop on Advances in Music Information Retrieval, AdMIRE*, 2012b.

B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Audio music similarity via metric learning, 2011c. Seventh Music Information Retrieval Evaluation eXchange.

B. McFee and G.R.G. Lanckriet. Integrating multi-modal data by metric learning, 2010b. 11th ACM SIGMM International Conference on Multimedia Information Retrieval.

## Professional activities

Panelist, National Science Foundation (Information & Intelligent Systems division), 2014.

Program committee member, *International Society for Music Information Retrieval (ISMIR) Conference*, 2014.

Co-organizer of the Million Song Dataset Challenge, with T. Bertin-Mahieux, D.P.W. Ellis, and G.R.G. Lanckriet, 2012.

Reviewer, *International Conference on Machine Learning*, 2012–2015.

Reviewer, *Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS)*, 2011–2014.

Reviewer, *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, 2011–2014.

Reviewer, *International Society for Music Information Retrieval (ISMIR) Conference*, 2009–2015.

Reviewer, *IEEE Transactions on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence*, 2012–2014.

Reviewer, *IEEE Transactions on Multimedia*, 2012–2013.

Reviewer, *IEEE Transactions on Audio, Speech and Language Processing*, 2010–2014.

Program committee co-chair, *Second Workshop on Music Recommendation and Discovery (WOMRAD)*, with A. Anglade, Ò. Celma, B. Fields and P. Lamere, 2011.

Program committee member, *International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, 2011.

Co-organizer of the Understanding Multiple Kernel Learning Methods Workshop, with F. Bach, G.R.G. Lanckriet, and N. Srebro, NIPS 2009.

Manager of the UC San Diego Multiple Kernel Learning Repository, <http://mkl.ucsd.edu>, 2009–.

## Teaching experience

*Co-instructor*, EECS E6891, Reproducing computational results, Columbia University, 2014.

*Guest lecturer*, CS5660, Signal and image processing, Cornell Tech, 2013.

*Guest lecturer*, CS5785, Modern analytics, Cornell Tech, 2013.

*Teaching assistant mentor*, Computer Science & Engineering, UCSD, 2010–2012.

*Teaching assistant*, ECE 30, Introduction to computer engineering, UCSD, 2010.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 21, Mathematics for algorithms and systems, UCSD, 2009.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 20, Discrete mathematics, UCSD, 2008.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 100, Advanced data structures, UCSD, 2008.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 101, Design and analysis of algorithms, UCSD, 2007.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 151, Introduction to artificial intelligence, UCSD, 2006.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 105, Theory of computation, UCSD, 2006.

*Teaching assistant*, CSE 3, Fluency in information technology, UCSD, 2005.

*Lab tutor*, CMPE 12C, Computer organization, UCSC, 2002.

*EOPS tutor*, Computer science and mathematics, College of Marin, 1998–2001.