Maisie Sum is Associate Professor of Music at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo. Her research and teaching combine a variety of fields, including ethnomusicology, anthropology, psychology, music analysis, performance, improvisation, ritual studies, peace and conflict studies, and community music. Her scholarly work - focused primarily on the music of Morocco (Gnawa) – has been disseminated in prestigious journals and presentations at national and international conferences. In 2014, she received the Society for Ethnomusicology's Jaap Kunst Prize in recognition for an article published in African Music, which investigates the interactive network between music, dance, and ritual experience. Recent work includes an experimental research project that explores rhythm and repetition in community healing rituals from a psychological and cross-cultural perspective. Drawing on ethnographic research in Morocco, Sum's current book project investigates music and performance of a Black diaspora community called Gnawa. Her research has been generously supported by the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Graduate Studies Doctoral Grant, Conrad Grebel University College's Academic Research and Development Fund, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada and the UWaterloo/SSHRC Seed Grant.

Active in the community, Sum is member of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM), Canadian Society for Traditional Music (CSTM), and British Forum for Ethnomusicology. She has presented at and attended conferences since 2006, published in scholarly journals and served on editorial boards since 2010, including the AAWM Online Journal, reviewed grant applications and articles since 2012, supervised honours theses, and served on program and prize committees since 2015. This year she completed a term on the Society for Ethnomusicology Council (2021–24). As performer and general director of two Balinese bronze percussion gamelan ensembles at the University of Waterloo since 2013, Sum has been sharing her passion for Bali's music with a wide audience, performing in concerts, bringing it to public schools, academic conferences, and community festivals, and through open access recordings.