

This was initially demonstrated by Nada Kolundžija's *Kaleidoscope (for Children and Grown-ups)*, with direct allusions, in terms of timbre and sound, to music boxes, and then in a series of performances where the music box was used as a conceptual source of creative potential (the performance by the Swedish ensemble *Themus*; Vladimir Gligorić's concert and those of *Movement Trio*, *Construction Site*, *Metamorfosis*, and *Mixed String Quartet*). Another peculiar feature of this Review was that two concert evenings were devoted to two national musical scenes: the Romanian, presented by *devotioModerna*, and Lithuanian, presented by *LENsemble*.

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#### **Back to the Future: Popular Music and Time (18<sup>th</sup> Biennial IASPM Conference in Campinas, 2015)<sup>1</sup>**

The International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) is the main in-

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ternational professional society for popular music research. As an interdisciplinary organization, it gathers researchers mainly from areas of ethnomusicology, musicology and media studies who are interested in various problems of popular music (mainly Western/global music). IASPM held its 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial conference in Campinas (São Paulo, Brazil) at Universidade Estadual de Campinas from 29 June to 3 July 2015. The organizers claimed that approximately two hundred participants of various academic levels came from all over the world to present and discuss issues of “sonority, styles, performances, contents, production contexts and consumption”.

The conference topic was “Back to the future: Popular music and time” which included the sub-themes such as: ageing times (memory, archiving, ageing, recycling), historical and social times (history, genealogy, revitalization, timelessness), modern times (contemporary, new, future time), and phenomenological times (creative process, performance, listening). In addition, several papers were devoted to structural times (rhythm, tempo, ‘groove’, flow, periodicity, repetition, synchronization). Such themes provided enough breadth for scholars devoted to various materials and simultaneously, directed them to the extremely important topic for music research in general – temporality.

The symposium was organized in parallel sessions (five to eight sessions), which was challenging to follow, especially because some of the sessions were in the Portuguese language. Surprisingly, the sessions were not chaired, but luckily, on most occasions that enabled equable discussions among the participants. My listening schedule consisted of following the leading

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trends in popular music studies (several relevant authors appeared as speakers), and topics related to my own research which I presented at the Conference — ‘old urban music’ (*starogradska muzika*) performances in Skadarlija (Belgrade, Serbia), as the constructors of a nostalgic soundscape.

Several interesting papers regarding the topic of ageing times were presented. Adam Behr dealt with the topic of rock performance and ageing, and according to his material, the rock genre shifted from a youth genre to heritage or even a canon. Leonieke Bolderman researched the experience of music tourism, pilgrimage and fandom, demonstrated on the case of Bayreuth, Stockholm and Dublin, while questioning nostalgia as a marker of identity (interestingly, in her cases, it is interpreted as a negative discourse in terms of general popular music). Grant Olwage presented four vignettes about historical recording, using the case of Paul Robeson, tracing the changes in the sound of his voice made possible by the developments of audio technology. Olivier Julien analytically presented the results of research on four-track recording and the sound of the 1960’s, trying to answer the question “how does a recording format come to embed a sound in an era”.

My attention was mostly focused on the sessions about historical time. Richard Elliot gave a presentation on excavating the *fado*, which as a nostalgic music phenomenon corresponds to *starogradska muzika* in some aspects. In the first part of his paper, he talked about the song *Coimbra* and its later versions while in the second, he reversed the chronology, so he explored music as a tool for place creation, emphasizing the materiality of the archive

as crucial in nostalgia production. His presentation was followed by Ian Biddle’s presentation which problematized the Yiddish song revival in Europe parallel with the movement which claimed *klezmer* authenticity, and he focused on a critique of correlationism and ethnography. The panel “Music and Translation” was interesting, too. Sergio Mazzanti dealt with a descriptive analysis of translations of musicals (on the example of several national versions of *Jesus Christ Superstar* from 1970). Each variant has semantic, tonal and rhythmic differences, due to the local context and language, thus depicting the levels of “cultural borrowings”. Isabel Campelo was interested in translations and adaptations of pop-rock songs in English for the recording industries of Portugal and Brazil, especially problematizing the agency of language in the shaping of popular music. Also, there was a special panel (Detlef Siegfried, Michael Rauhut) devoted to the historical research of jazz, i.e. its promoters in early postwar Europe. Apart from that, Ádám Ignác’s paper revealed an interest in this part of Europe. He talked about the concept of national popular music under the communist regime in Hungary (1949–1989) and questioned the extent to which the Soviet cultural pattern (beyond the Western) played the global role.

A good panel of UK researchers, dealing with the topic of phenomenological time was devoted to timing in popular music. Matt Brennan gave an interesting presentation about the relationship between drummers and musical time, emphasizing syncopated, machine and bad time concepts. Mark Doffman presented his research on groove breakdown in endings of jazz performances. He dealt with the cogni-

tive ethnography of the jam session on the British jazz scene and analyzed timing through the musicians' discursive and bodily practice. Sara McGuinness, as a researcher and performer, compared Cuban *son* and Congolese *rumba*, focusing on the structure and creation of groove. Simon Zagorski-Thomas (winner of the IASPM book prize for 2015) gave a lecture on gestural consistency vs. timing accuracy in contemporary performance and production practices. He used variables such as tempo (overall and within bars), rhythm (consistency and coincidence), dynamics (performed and processed) and timbre (same and different objects, and processing) with an 'ecological approach to perception and the notion of embodied cognition', to examine whether the other parameters affect/mirror the perception of rhythmic consistency.

Modern time was actually the topic for researchers dealing with various contemporary issues in popular music, and some of them are highly relevant for popular music studies nowadays. Jan Hemming (organizer of the conference to be held in Kassel in 2017) gave a well-structured presentation about 'mediamorphosis' in the light of possessing music as a commodity. Relying on the term of the sociologist Kurt Blakopf (from 1989), he adopted five levels of mediamorphosis (graphical, repro-

graphical, chemical-mechanical, electronic, digital) and added the level of immaterial. Hemming's distinction between digital and immaterial was illustrated through the shift from downloads to streaming music. In this session, a presentation given by Franco Fabbri was very important. He was dealing with one of the major problems in popular music studies — labelling/tagging. His topic was "What if big data are wrong?" i.e. are computer classifications of genre, style, form, mode, etc., unreliable, because they are user-generated usually without musicological expertise.

Despite some organizational shortcomings, my impression as a first-time attendee at a IASPM conference is that it is a vibrant society for exchanging experiences regarding the approaches, critical interpretations and information related to the phenomena of contemporary popular music. At this moment, methodologies in popular music studies are dominantly borrowed from the other music research traditions (therefore, there are structural analyses of scores, sound field recording, statistics, description, reception questioning, etc.). However, they are enriched with larger media knowledge. What is interesting is that this interweaving became obvious even at distinguished congresses of musicologists and ethnomusicologists.