

# ICSI

4TH BIENNIAL

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



17-20 JUIN 2019

LIEU UNIQUE - NANTES - FRANCE

**ISMMS IV**  
**Book of abstracts**

**Nantes, France, 2019, June 17-20**

## **ISMMS - 4th Biennial International Conference**

Voilà plus de 5 ans maintenant qu'a vu le jour l'ISMMS (International Society for Metal Music Studies), association internationale cristallisant une dynamique collective de recherches en sciences humaines et sociales sur le hard rock, le heavy metal et le metal par des rencontres et échanges réguliers. Après les États-Unis, la Finlande et le Canada, la France accueillera donc cette année le quatrième colloque de référence des metal studies. Rendez-vous du 17 au 20 juin 2019 au Lieu Unique, scène nationale de Nantes pour cet événement d'ampleur qui regroupera des chercheurs venus de 25 pays différents et issus de disciplines aussi diverses que la sociologie, la musicologie, l'histoire, le droit, la littérature ou les *gender studies*. À partir de la thématique « *locating heavy metal* », l'idée est de discuter des analyses situées, réalisées à partir d'enquêtes de terrain ou d'études de corpus.

**Abstracts are presented  
following the schedule**

*In italic, papers given in French with English translation and Powerpoint support in English.*

## Schedule (short version)

**Monday, June 17**

**Venue: Le Lieu Unique**

**2, rue de la Biscuiterie, 44000 Nantes**

- 1:30 pm Welcome word  
2:00 pm Keynote - The Location of Metal's Culture of Opposition  
3:15-4:45 pm Session 1 - Local Metal Scenes Characteristics, Room 1  
Session 2 - Body Techniques. On Stage/In the Pit, Room 2  
4:45-6:15 pm Session 3 - Norms & Identities, Room 1  
Session 4 - Artists & Albums, Room 2  
6:30-7:00 pm A Presentation of the Hellfest by Yoann Le Nevé (Hellfest Prod & Cofounder of the Event)

**Tuesday, June 18**

**Venue: Le Lieu Unique**

**2, rue de la Biscuiterie, 44000 Nantes**

- 9:00 am Session 5 - Metal & Gender (1), Room 1  
Session 6 - Local Metal Scenes Characteristics (2), Room 2  
10:30 am Session 7 - Metal Music Genres, Room 1  
Session 8 - Local Metal Scenes Characteristics (3), Room 2  
1:30 pm Keynote - Thirty Five Years Later: Coming Back to Metal Studies  
2:45 pm Session 9 - Metal Media & Culture, Room 1  
Session 10 - Norms & Censorship, Room 2  
4:30 pm Session 11 - Live Music & Places, Room 1  
Session 12 - Metal Music & Esthetics, Room 2  
6:15 pm Debate, Room 1  
Black Metal Theory, Room 2

**Wednesday June 19**

**Venue: Le Lieu Unique**

**2, rue de la Biscuiterie, 44000 Nantes**

- 9:00 am Session 13 - Music & Religion, Room 1  
Session 14 - Metal & Gender (2), Room 2  
10:30 am Session 15 - Metal & Education, Room 1  
Session 16 - Local Metal Scenes Characteristics (3), Room 2  
1:30-3:00 pm Special Panel on Latin America  
3:00-4:30 pm Session 17 - Black Metal: Tradition and Transgression, Room 1  
Session 18 - Internet & Metal 2.0, Room 2  
5:00-6:30 pm Session 19 - Mysticism & Neo-Romanticism in Extreme Metal, Room 1  
Session 20 - History, Room 2

**Thursday June 20**

- 9:00-11:00 am Special Panel: Local Metal Scenes Within an International Perspective (Bryan Bardine [dir.])  
Venue: Le Lieu Unique, 2, rue de la Biscuiterie, 44000 Nantes  
2:00-3:30 pm Special Talk: Heavy Metal and Soft Power Venue: Tremplino, 6 boulevard Léon Bureau,  
44200 Nantes

**Limited seats and registration needed**



## **Session 21 - Sound & Image. Metal Aesthetics & Techniques**

**Carlos Arenas/Universitat de València (Spain)**

**Title: Heavy Metal Album Cover Graphic Design and Aesthetics in the 1970s and 1980s through the Work of HR Giger**

Right from the outset heavy metal has always had an indisputable and compelling aesthetic aspect. Heavy metal is also image. Before the advent of MTV and music videos in the 1980s, album covers were one of the key components in the development and evolution of the genre's iconographic armoury. Besides the musicians' appearance, they were the object that embodied a band's image and the first thing fans had in their hands before even listening to the record.

Musicians had been aware since the pop and rock explosion in the 1960s about the importance of their work's visual identity and the creation of their own codes. Thus a cover was not only an object which physically protected the record and presented an image but was also something more complex: firstly it was a statement of the band's intentions, a significant prelude to the music that would be listened to, while secondly it was also an essential tool for communication between the music and fans. And of course it needed to have marketing hook to trigger people's interest through the appeal created by the image, the controversy it aroused or its narrative concept. Striking graphic design resulting from the creative work of an artist was needed to achieve all these objectives. Hence some of the leading artists in mass culture pop art including Andy Warhol, Robert Crumb, Robert Mapplethorpe and Vargas accepted the challenge and created celebrated covers which straight away turned into pop culture icons. To follow the aesthetic evolution of heavy metal album cover art during the 1970s and 1980s we will take as an example some of the works by Swiss artist HR Giger due to his [U1] impact on the popular culture of the time and especially because of his [U2] influence on numerous heavy metal bands. Some musicians commissioned a new design for their forthcoming album cover directly from the artist while others opted for a previous painting by him. Yet although Giger is renowned for the designs he produced for sci-fi film *Alien* and other fantasy genre movies, his graphic designer side is less well known.

This paper's purpose is to examine the significance of heavy metal album covers in the 1970s and 1980s as a relevant artistic object but also as a marketing item whose spread and development ran in lockstep with the emergence of the musical genre. Accordingly it seems expedient to specify the features of the covers and look at the state of play in the topic since existing academic literature is by no means copious. Furthermore, information in specialised journals, blogs, social media and interviews enables us to build an initial methodology to address the issue and find the most relevant examples in the 20 years encompassed by our study while focusing on HR Giger's covers.

**Bojana Radovanović/Institute of Musicology SASA (Serbia)**

**Title: Monstrous Voice? Extended Vocal Techniques in Extreme Metal Music**

Extended vocal techniques, such as scream and growl, are an essential puzzle in the sonic transgression picture of extreme metal music and other subgenres. The distorted sound result produced by the usage of these techniques—often described as scary, monstrous, “from hell”—is intriguing in itself, while also being the point of intersection for several problems concerning voice, body, and technology. Assuming the voice is heard from speakers, with Michel Chion's notion of acousmatic voice in mind, the first instinct is to presuppose the source of the voice, that is, the body from which it comes from. This “hellish” acousmatic voice leads the listener to

vivid images of bestiality behind the sound. What is pictured is something inhuman, something monstrous. Bojana Kunst's notion of the monstrous body can be understood as something other than human, as well as the indicator and the symptom of re-thinking the human. In line with this thought and Jelena Novak's definition of monstrous voice which is based on Kunst's hypothesis, I will try to examine and locate the position of the monstrosity of voice and body in extreme metal music.

When speaking of the "terrifying friction of inhuman noise", Novak argues that "human identity is problematized when monstrous voice is heard from the human body". In this presentation, I intend to examine the monstrous voice in extreme metal genres that is created not by technology, but primarily by extended vocal techniques, and afterward enhanced through the technological means—microphones, speakers, headphones. The methodology of this paper will follow several steps and stages. Firstly, I intend to define *the monstrous* in reference to the aforementioned Bojana Kunst's and Jelena Novak's studies. Expounding the monstrous will inevitably bring out the theoretical debate on the subject of "human vs. monstrous". Whether the body and the voice are considered "normal" or "monstrous" is a rather political question. Throughout the history of Western civilization, this question was revisited and reconsidered many times, in many different contexts. In this regard, Giorgio Agamben's construction of *monstrous werewolf* serves the purpose of confirming the "normal" in his society. His body, the monstrous body, which Bojana Kunst writes about, is a body with an anomaly or difference. The monstrous voice has the same features (anomaly, difference) and serves the same, inherently political, purpose.

After pinpointing critical issues in the theoretical debate, I will proceed to locate the monstrous in the realm of extreme metal genres. Heavy metal was from its beginnings often inspired by horror movies and literature. Musicians in extreme metal genres play "the horror card" especially in their imagery (corpse paint make-up, album covers, logo designs), song themes (vivid and unambiguous themes of death, torture, suffering...), and sound. Likewise, the extreme vocals/extended vocal techniques are supposed to guarantee the monstrosity. The final stage of this research includes an examination of the relation between *the monstrous voice* in extreme metal genres and extended vocal techniques. Vocal emissions such as *growl* and *scream*, which are, as mentioned, some of the most distinctive traits of genres such as death metal, black metal, doom metal, accentuate the sonic transgressions of this genre group. As Keith Kahn Harris has noticed, "far from being a chaotic noise, extreme metal systematically offers transgressive alternatives to the principal elements of Western music". In that sense, the abandonment of melodic singing in favor of vocal distortion and extended vocal techniques can be viewed as one rather *monstrous* alternative to "normal" voice in music, and as such is positioned as a central theme of this paper.



# PRESENTATION

FIVE YEARS AGO, THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR METAL MUSIC STUDIES WAS CREATED. THE ISMMS IS AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS DEDICATED TO THE STUDY OF HARD ROCK, HEAVY METAL AND METAL. AFTER THE UNITED STATES, FINLAND AND CANADA, FRANCE WILL BE GREETING THE FOURTH EDITION OF ITS CONFERENCE, FROM JUNE 17TH TO JUNE 20TH, 2019. IT WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE LIEU UNIQUE, NANTES'S MAIN POPULAR MUSIC VENUE, WITH 25 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES REPRESENTED, AND FROM A GREAT VARIETY OF ACADEMIC FIELDS, INCLUDING SOCIOLOGY, MUSICOLOGY, HISTORY, LAW, LITERATURE OR GENDER STUDIES. CONSIDERING THE ISSUE OF "LOCATING HEAVY METAL", WE WILL DISCUSS SITUATED ANALYSES, BASED ON FIELDWORK OR SPECIFIC (CANNIBAL ;) ) CORPUSES.

## Conference Convenor

Dr G r me Guibert

Ma tre de conf rences en sociologie   l'Universit  Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle

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## PARTNERS



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