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# EDITORIAL

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As part of the evolution of our editorial structures for Volume 6 we were delighted to be able to establish a post on our Editorial Board for a representative of the International Computer Music Association (ICMA). We hoped to support the ICMA in a fruitful way, and I am now delighted once again to be able to announce that *Organised Sound* will be devoting its third issue annually to an ICMA theme and the work of the association's members (from Volume 7 Number 3). We hope that this will provide an additional dissemination vehicle for the organisation, allow its conference papers to be developed and expanded, provide an opportunity to publish work based upon the ICMA special interest groups and the association's affiliates. A representative of the ICMA will become a Guest Editor alongside the *Organised Sound* team of Editors and international referees for the third issue in each year.

This is an extremely exciting development for us and we hope that the forum of *Organised Sound* will enrich the portfolio of the association's activities. We look forward to an exciting and rewarding partnership.

This issue of *Organised Sound* features work and writings of artists, critics and commentators working largely outside of academia in electronic and technologically enabled music. I freely admit that, some three years ago, I was unaware of work that is broadly categorised as *electronica*. Discovering works of so many experimental sound artists, installation artists and computer musicians working as professionals in a commercial environment was a revelation. It shouldn't have been, in a post-modern and post-structuralist age, but I think that the environment of academe and an interaction with the canons of the musical world can become a preoccupation and, certainly in my case, make it difficult to recognise developments which are not reported in the standard literature, conference proceedings, publications or broadcasts.

In the dissolution of boundaries between high art and popular art it should be no surprise that musical forms and artworks develop which have their influences equally in electroacoustic music, computer music, techno culture and the margins of music. Nor should it be surprising that innovative and fascinating applications of the machines, tools, processes and mechanisms of our times form the primary means of its production. Given debates in literature, visual and other arts related to the

influence of media and the means of expression on art works, it could almost be seen as a prerequisite that structures should be incorporated into music which are directly related to the processes used in software applications or the digital representations of audio. What was surprising to me (rather naively, I guess) was that all these developments could take place within a commercial environment and that a work's performance in this arena could also be a significant measure of its success.

There is a potential for academic journals to misrepresent developments which occur outside of their traditional economic means of support. The recognition of publications as a means of generating income for university departments, the commitments from academic employers to provide a stable working environment, the conference circuits, the competitions, the concert call-for-works (without fees) all establish canons related to development and experience of work within these economic boundaries. Artists and professional practitioners operating in a commercial environment receive little kudos from documenting their work or writing commentaries within an academic context; the time and effort required to produce a journal contribution, in simple terms, reduces their income.

If the academic world seems idyllic in this context, then most of us who are academics know that the reality is far from that; the pressures to administer courses, resources, facilities, . . . etc., and the many other activities associated with teaching usually see research and publication activities squeezed into late nights and the margins of working life.

No one is getting a free ride here, but the systems which are in place to disseminate work and information should not in themselves preclude an interaction or sharing of ideas between people working in different arenas and in different circumstances – particularly in the use, development, context, artistic application and philosophical implications of computers in contemporary art.

There is an interesting dialogue to be had between the academic world and the world of the professional artist at this point in time. The commercial world inhabited by artists on the margins of pop music is not the commercial world of the music industry and is not permeated by contracts for back catalogues or the high volume trading of *units* (CDs). By and large, these artists' primary concern is the generation of work and the ability to generate

income to support themselves and provide start-up funds for their next project. No one would, I imagine, turn down the chance of being well paid for what they do, but the market place for innovative audio art is not large in our fragmented and increasingly specialist audio world – but it does exist.

There are, of course, many commercial publications which provide vehicles for any professional writer or artist, but the market and agenda of the publication can preclude in-depth, serious discussion. A technological cross-over exists between academic researchers and artists and those operating outside of institutions, but there are significant differences in their approach and attitudes towards the creative use of technology. My notion in instigating this issue of *Organised Sound* was that it might be possible to initiate a coming-together, an openness, to share ideas and to influence and progress developments and discussions about the technical, artistic and philosophical implications of music and technology.

For the first time, *Organised Sound* has directly addressed its economic boundaries by providing some

assistance to contributors where they have no other means to support the creation of work suitable for publication in the journal.

I was extremely fortunate to be introduced to this area of work by Mark Fell, a sound and installation artist whose work is released through the Frankfurt-based label *Mille Plateaux*. Mark is currently working at the Creativity and Cognition Research Studios in the Dept of Computer Science at Loughborough University, and I am delighted to welcome him as Guest Editor for this issue. Mark approached a number of artists, critics and commentators for potential contributions to this issue, which has resulted in the thought-provoking collection of discussions, histories, deconstructions, appraisals and art works which appear in the following pages.

I would like to thank Mark for his efforts in helping to realise this project, and all of the contributors for presenting their work in this academic context.

Tony Myatt