STM–SJM

Swedish Journal of Music Research **2017**

Musical Materiality and Digitization

Call for abstracts

Digitization has changed music and the conditions of music research. Music itself may seem both more available and intangible than ever, and the same is true with the many manuscripts, sketches, prints, journals, newspapers and other documents that music scholars have previously had to dig out in archives but that are now available on the Internet. Large databases allow overviews that were previously unthinkable. Indeed, the change is so obvious that one may sometimes forget that music, and the study of it, still have a profoundly material basis.

The sheer presence of a sketch or another kind of document makes history tangible, and the access to old instruments, and to copies of them, is essential for the understanding of their sounds and playing techniques. Musical education and musical performance still usually take place as interplays between persons physically present in a room, and they are normally concerned with the exploration of material objects (musical instruments) or of the voice as part of the body. Musical notation may be regarded as instructions for physical action. Even digital recordings, which in a sense remove the music from its material basis, are dependent on hardware and manual labour.

The next issue of *Swedish Journal of Music Research* (*STM–SJM*) will be devoted to discussions on how the materiality of music matters in the contemporary, digitized landscape, and on what the implications are for music research. Digitization brings immeasurable quantities of information within reach, but how does this affect our relation to the materiality of music? How can the musical dialectic between digitality and materiality be described? We now invite abstracts for articles on this theme. The theme allows for different definitions of the concepts involved, and we encourage contributions from music history, organology, music archaeology, artistic research, aesthetics of music, music education, ethnomusicology, sociology of music, music theory, music analysis, music therapy, and the various other disciplines of music research. We welcome case studies as well as theoretical reflections.

A few suggestions (in order to be concrete):

- The materiality of the musical work: The question of the material or immaterial status of the musical work has been debated since the work concept emerged in music. Has digitization in any way affected the notions involved?
- The material sources of music: investigations of sketches, manuscripts and prints, with regard not only to what is written in them but also to their material aspects (i.e., the irreducible aspects of materiality).
- The physical body in performance: what can the body of the performer say about the past that is absent from early recordings, now easily available in digital form?
- The materiality of musical media: investigations and comparisons of analogue (from piano rolls to tape recorders) and digital equipment for the recording, storing, distribution and reception of music.

- The use of digital technique for the recreation in virtual reality of ancient instruments and soundscapes.
- The search for material authenticity in the music media of the digital age: the growing interest in the LP, and the use of recording techniques such as the 'direct to disc process' recently applied by the Berliner Philharmoniker Recordings.

The issue is planned to be published on the journal's website in late 2017 and in a print version in early 2018. Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words via email to Erik Wallrup (erik.wallrup@music.su.se) by 29 January 2017. A month later, *STM-SJM* will respond and invite a selection of the proposals to be written. These articles will then be peer-reviewed in due course.

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