a journal of the Society for Music Theory

Volume 5, Number 1, January 1999

Report on the First Symposium On Computer and Music in Corfu, Greece (23–25 October 1998)

Panos Vlagopoulos

KEYWORDS: computer music, electroacoustical music, artificial intelligence and music, aesthetics, artifact, atonal, analysis, computation

---

[1] The Symposium on Computer and Music took place in the island and city of Corfu, Greece, on 23–25 October 1998. The symposium was hosted by the Music Department of the Ionian University (http://www.ionio.gr/music/index_e.html) and reflected the intense activity of its five-year-old Computer Music Studio and its people, Andreas Mniestris and Anastassia Gheorghaki (ex-IRCAM researcher), working under the creative stimulation of the Head of the Department, composer Charis Xanthoudhakis, a student of Xenakis.

[2] The Symposium's three-day program was divided into the following sessions: Compositional Methods and Artificial Intelligence, Signal Processing and Musical Applications, Electroacoustic Music and Performance, Aesthetics on Computer Music, and Music and Computers in Greece. The Symposium was flanked by a series of concerts: 1) three concerts with works for tape by G.P. Jimenez, G. Caminhoto, G. Gobeil, F. Ekeberg, F. Dhomont, R. Dal Farra, T. Ward, P. Fretwell, D. Doherty, H. J. Fredrics, G. Berger, J.P. Oliveira, E. Lillios, F. Giomi, L. Camilleri, M. Ainger, W. Jentzsch, G. Patella, R. Averill, Th. Lotis, H. Tutschku, J. Dashow, N. Barrett, B. Robindore; 2) a concert with works for "mixed media and interactive systems" by J.-C. Risset, A. Deniozos, T. Mays, C.C. Chen, and C. Moschos; 3) an homage to Luc Ferrari and J.-C. Risset; and 4) an homage to Michael Adamis and Ch. Xanthoudhakis (the former being the founder, the latter the head of the Ionian University's Music Dept).

[3] Jean-Claude Risset prologued the Symposium with "Why do I use the computer in my music?," and Gerard Assayag (Head of Music Representation Group at IRCAM) opened the first session with "Computer Assisted Composition: Problems and Methods;" Geraint Wiggins (School of AI, University of Edinburgh) warned in his "Music, Syntax and the Meaning of Meaning" that it is a mistake to import the notion of meaning from linguistic to musical context and referred to the Psycho-Adaptive Listening Machine (PALM, a conceptual framework for composition and the study of musical cognition using information-processing concepts and perceptual control theory); PALM was also the subject of the presentation of Erik Gottesmann (R.K. Browne scholar in Acoustics, University of Michigan); John Doerksen (Department of Theory and Composition, University of Western Ontario, Canada) proposed a solution founded on contextuality to the problem of atonal music analysis; Emilios Cambouropoulos (AI research, King's College, London) showed possible benefits of

constructing an interaction framework of the musical and the computational domain, focusing on computational melodic aspects such as pitch interval, local boundaries, accent and meter, musical segmentation, musical similarity and categorization.

[4] Gerard Eckel (Visualisation and Media Systems Design of the German National Research Centre) opened the second session with "Technological Musical Artifacts," introducing the generic term "musical artifact" to describe the different kinds of representations used by composers in order to communicate their music; John Mourtzopoulos's (Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, University of Patras) technical presentation focused on the new optical disc and multichannel audio format technologies (MPEG-2, Dolby AC-3, DTS, Ambisonic, etc.) and considered the possibilities of data conversion within a computer audio workstation; Anastassia Gheorghaki (Music and Acoustics, Ionian University, Corfu) outlined the applicability of current models of the singing voice in musical research and creation, presenting three sung-phonemes producing models; YeeOn Lo (composer) and Dan Hitt (mathematician Ph.D., Stanford) reported on their experiments, whose results illustrate perceptual properties relevant to the articulation of timbre.

[5] The third session started with Peter Nelson (Computer Music Studio, University of Edunburgh) arguing "Against Method: The Computer as A Tool for Musical Creativity;" Thodoris Lotis (Greece and Belgium-based composer) underlined the importance of "Space As a Basic Parameter in Music Composing and Diffusing Musical Space;" Douglas Doherty (composition; Ph.D., University of Birmingham) and Don Berry (audio design; Music Department, University of Durham) developed multi-channel and multi-loudspeaker systems creating three-dimensional soundfields "in which the listener can move and gain varying perspectives on the sound image."

[6] Makis Solomos (Musicology, University of Montpellier) and Peter Ho ffman (preparing Ph.D. on Xenakis' electroacoustic music) deliverd the first paper of the fourth session and tried to outline the originality and importance of the few electroacoustic works by Iannis Xenakis; Mladen Milicevich (Media Arts, University of South Carolina) applied Evolutionism and Memes theory (Dawkins) in an attempt to foresee "The Future of Computer Music According to Darwin;" Frank Pecquet (composition, University of Paris I-Pantheon-Sorbonne) highlighted the indepedence to the performer gained by the composer thanks to the new possibilities of "Interactive Composition: Writing/Transcribing/Listening: From Respect of Written Text to Exploring Sound;" Joao Pedro Oliveira (composition and electronic music, University of Aveiro, Portugal) focused on music education and spoke on "Teaching and Learning Electronic and Computer Music."

[7] During the fifth and last session the work of the following institutions active in Greece was presented: the Institute of Research for Music and Acoustics (IRMA; see also my report in MTO 4.3) by its co-founder Kostas Moschos; the Electronic Music Studio at the hosting Ionian University, by lecturer Andreas Mniestris; the ElectroAcoustics, Technology and TV Systems Lab (School of Music Studies, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece) by Professor George Papanicolaou; and the Institute of Psychoacoustics (IPSA) of the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece, by George Papadellis.

Panos Vlagopoulos
Music Library L. Voudouri and Ionian University
44 Ephesou Street
Athens, 17123 Greece
biancopoli@usa.net

---

[2] Any redistributed form of items published in *MTO* must include the following information in a form appropriate to the medium in which the items are to appear:

> This item appeared in *Music Theory Online* in [VOLUME #, ISSUE #] on [DAY/MONTH/YEAR]. It was authored by [FULL NAME, EMAIL ADDRESS], with whose written permission it is reprinted here.

[3] Libraries may archive issues of *MTO* in electronic or paper form for public access so long as each issue is stored in its entirety, and no access fee is charged. Exceptions to these requirements must be approved in writing by the editors of *MTO,* who will act in accordance with the decisions of the Society for Music Theory.

Prepared by Jon Koriagin and Rebecca Flore and Tahirih Motazedian, Editorial Assistants