

HKB

Hochschule der Künste Bern
Haute école des arts de Berne
Bern University of the Arts

Call for abstracts (e/g)

Symposium
Bern University of the Arts (HKB): Research

30 November – 3 December 2017, Bern, University of the Arts, Ostermundigenstr. 103

The Future Sound of Pop Music

Lectures, discussions and side programme

New technologies, new interfaces and controllers have significantly altered the sound world of pop music in recent years. In current pop songs, electronic sounds and effects are dominant. The sound aesthetic of pop music has also undergone a major shift from the 1960s to the present day. Initially, pop music invested in a few distinctive distinguishing features such as distortion, but today it features complex electronic constructions based on samples, virtual instruments and effects.

The significance of individual sounds – their origins, their development and their future – has until now rarely been an object of research in popular music. This symposium will discuss how the sound aesthetic of popular music has changed over the past decades. It will debate how sounds have been created, how they are employed, and how they are constantly being renewed and replaced by new sounds. Last but not least, the symposium will discuss the future of sounds in pop music by addressing the following questions:

- How are sounds modified, manipulated and transformed today, and how will this be done in the future?
- What role do new interfaces and controllers play in the development of new sounds?
- What do current sound generators offer?
- What new sound generators might we expect in the future?
- How will pop music sound, 10 or 20 years from now?

The following keynote speakers have been invited:

- Prof. Dr John Chowning (San Francisco)
- Prof. Dr Lippold Haken (Illinois)
- Prof. Dr Edmund Eagan (Ottawa)
- Dr Wayne Marshall (Boston)
- Bruno Spoerri (Zurich)
- Annie Goh (London)



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Bern University of Applied Sciences

This symposium is part of the HKB research project “Cult sounds” of Immanuel Brockhaus and Thomas Burkhalter (Norient), which is supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation. For more information, see: www.cult-sounds.com

We are herewith issuing a call for abstracts in the following subject fields:

1. Technological aspects

The development of new synthesis procedures, editors, controllers and management software for auditory events seems to have reached a point at which the possible fields of application in music have been optimised and are both highly developed and user-friendly. Music technologies are future-oriented, but also process and transform past accomplishments. We wish to determine what virtual settings can offer, both within DAW systems and outside them. More and more developers and users are turning to physical systems (especially modular systems) that offer a great degree of openness and haptic characteristics. We aim to discuss this field of development.

2. Socio-cultural aspects

Innovations in music technology and the renewal and expansion of sounds have often taken place in experimental settings or through unconventional approaches adopted by those involved. We can often observe that new sounds develop in subcultures and are later adopted by the mainstream. What is the approach of those who develop, use and consume these sounds? What networks exist and emerge around the idea of a new sound? Do small teams of developers determine what happens? In what environments do sonic innovations occur? And what are the impact and significance of specific sounds in different social and cultural contexts?

3. Sound aesthetic aspects

Innovative sounds that are used excessively in the mainstream for aesthetic or commercial reasons can divide the production and listening communities. Current preferences such as auto-tune, filtering, sidechain compression, stutter effects and bandstop effects are omnipresent but are not necessarily new, nor even genuine pop sounds.

How are “new” sounds perceived and evaluated? How do individual sounds change the overall aesthetic of pop songs?

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We are inviting speakers for panel discussions (for a total of 60 minutes, with 3–4 papers in each panel), individual papers (20 minutes) and poster sessions. We are also open to suggestions for other formats (impulse papers, workshops, film screenings, performances or discussion sessions). We also intend to offer research newcomers a platform to present their current topics.

Proposals for individual contributions (in German or English) will comprise: title, abstract (max. 300 words) and a brief biography (max. 90 words). Proposals for panel discussions should include an outline text and an abstract (max. 300 words in total). We are happy to receive proposals for session chairs. Sessions with individual contributions will as a rule be chaired by the organisers.

Please send your application by **1 May 2017** to:

daniel.allenbach@hkb.bfh.ch

Organisation:

Dr Immanuel Brockhaus and Dr Thomas Burkhalter, HKB (lead)

Assistants: Sabine Jud and Daniel Allenbach

Conference website

<https://www.futuresoundofpopmusic.net/>