

Agency and Identity in Music

IMS Intercongressional Symposium Lucerne, July 7–10, 2019

Rooted in socio-cultural research, the concept of *agency* is central to the understanding of human beings as individuals who actively shape their *identities* while acting within determined social and cultural structures. As such, *agency* emphasizes the temporary nature of identity as unfinished and in process, and underlines the ability of human beings to make decisions and to form, perform, and delineate *identity* within contextually given socio-cultural opportunities and constraints. Alfred Gell defined *agency* in his seminal study *Art and Agency* (1998) as a point where the possibly infinite chain of causality is broken and a “beginning” is attributed to a certain entity.

Musical products and practices, as output of the human achievement, are embedded in and shaped by the interaction between individual and societal *agencies* and *identities*. Music also acts as agent, shaping experiences, defining identities, and affecting human beings in their everyday life as well as in extraordinary life situations. The interplay between *agency* and *identity* plays roles in the creation, performance, communication, and reception of music. To articulate and operationalize the many ways in which *agency* and *identity* define themselves in and through music, the symposium invites proposals that explore the acting and identifying through music, the construction of identity in music, and the interconnectedness of these phenomena in the performance, perception and mediation of music of all cultures and periods.

The aim of the symposium is to bring together theoretical and empirical research, promoting dialogue between scholars of different music research branches. Papers from any discipline are encouraged, including, but not limited to: music performance studies, music education studies, traditional and post-modern musicology, ethnomusicology, music iconography, sound studies, and cultural studies.

Researchers and practitioners are invited to submit proposals for individual papers (20 min + 10 min for questions). Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Identity and agency in music education, aesthetics, and consumption
- Composition and interpretation as output of agency and identity
- Canon development, musical practices, and traditions
- Music, gender, and agency



- Musical impact on everyday life
- Musician as agent, mediator, and communicator
- Music and identity in culture and society
- Music and non-human agency

The language of this symposium is English.

Important Dates

Deadline for abstract submission: February 28, 2019

Program committee decision: April 15, 2019

Conference registration: April 16–June 15, 2019

Conference: July 7–10, 2019

Abstract Submission Guidelines

Authors are invited to submit original and unpublished research. All paper submissions should be written in English. Abstracts should be no longer than 2,000 characters (including spaces) and contain information on research background, aims, methods, as well as results and implications, as long as these are known at the moment of application. All abstracts will be reviewed by the program committee and judged on originality, significance, and relevance to the conference subject.

Please fill in the application form (www.musicology.org/pdfs/events/ims2019_app_form.docx) and send it as a Word document to ims2019@hslu.ch.

Program Committee

Jen-yen Chen (chair), associate professor, National Taiwan University

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Klaus Pietschmann, professor, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

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