

## Editor's Note

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THE range of topics of this issue of *Empirical Musicology Review* spans from ethnomusicology to opera studies, from Portuguese Fado music to Elliott Carter. The issue opens with a diachronic study of Western orchestration by Chon, Huron and DeVlieger which is accompanied by a commentary by Reuter. The study shows how different instruments are associated with dynamic levels, different tempos, pitch class doublings, and other musical features. The results reported provide a solid empirical basis for some common knowledge regarding major principles of orchestration in Western art music. But the authors also identify a number of previously unrecognized patterns of instrument use. The target paper by Poole provides a detailed account of the similarity relationships of rhythmic timelines common with different African population. Poole shows how geographically distant populations nonetheless use timelines with a high degree of similarity and provides a tentative statistical model of these relationships. The corresponding commentaries by Grauer and London represent good examples of how aspects of the same target paper can be perceived in very different ways by different scholars in the same field and thus make for an interesting and comprehensive discussion of whether and how larger anthropological relationships can be discovered through music. The paper by Polak also makes use of African music and investigates the question whether there could be an absolute limit for the shortest metrical subdivision, i.e. the shortest duration that humans can handle in music. He arrives at an estimate of about 85ms and together with commentator Anders Friberg agrees that, together with the evidence from recorded jazz performances, this limit could be a candidate for a musical anthropological constant.

The target paper by Videira and Rosa describes a new corpus of Fado transcriptions that is now available for research together with suggestions for the use of techniques from music information retrieval (MIR). The commentary by Savage points out some interesting issues that the MIR community is facing when investigating corpora that are not mainstream popular or art music. In his target paper Neumann tackles the question what constitutes a musical object and in particular the identity of an opera. He demonstrates the benefits of shifting from the traditional score-based approach to approaches that are process-based and shows how the analysis of performance features can contribute to the identify of operatic works. The commentaries by Barolsky and Volioti take up his central question, but also discuss limitations of performance centred approaches.

Poudrier's study is a good example of the challenges that arise with using complex and interesting music as stimuli in music perception and production experiments. However, her paper also demonstrates the potential benefits one can reap from music that is rich and complex in the domain that is studied psychologically. The commentary by Fischinger and van Dyck-Hemming point out several important issues that are not only relevant to the target paper but can generally arise from the complexity of using ecologically highly valid stimuli for psychological experimentation that yield very relevant details.

The paper by Sun and Cuthbert is a very good example of how computer-aided analysis of a large music corpus can reveal associations between musical features and features of the corresponding lyrics. The authors not only support previous assumptions of musical features that are associated with certain types of affects transported by the lyrics but they also challenge a number of stereotypes, especially regarding affects that are believed to be associated with the major/minor dichotomy. A commentary on this target paper is to follow in the next EMR issue.

