

Focusing on hearing: sound, music and communication

In this edition we present the Music and Sound dossier, meeting a growing demand in our area. In the last few years, we have seen a significant increase in research on popular music in Communication Graduate Programs all over the country. Internationally consolidated as an area of interdisciplinary research and with a history spanning over three decades, pop music has been the subject in various disciplines in Brazil, particularly in History, Literature, Sociology and more recently, in Music and Communication.

This phenomenon occurs at a time of reflection on mediatized cultural practices which seem to increasingly lead to interpretation of “sound” generally speaking and of “music” more specifically. In studies conducted all over the world on cinema and audiovisual media, researchers increasingly discuss the “soundtrack”, which in addition to music itself, involves the whole universe around sound design, a professional activity that is required and valued in large and medium-sized productions.

At a time of transition and uncertainties, the audiabilities that cut across the movement of cultural artifacts by means of various platforms and technologies guide the way of being, sharing and socializing. Several research studies conducted

today point to the listening technologies as fundamental elements for the establishment of this process.

The opening article of this dossier, entitled *Media Revolution on 14th Street: Immigration, Vaudeville and the Nascence of Electronic Media in New York City at the Turn of the 20th Century*, authored by North American researcher Robert Albrecht, analyzes the foundation of the entertainment industry from the vaudeville at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century in New York. According to the author, vaudeville created a cultural synthesis that would be a matrix for the development of new technological artifacts in the entertainment industry in the early 20th, such as pop music, radio and cinema.

Leaping over one hundred years forward and to the other side of the Atlantic, researchers Luis Alfonso Albornoz and Juan Ignacio Gallego discuss in the text *The popular music industry in Spain: independent record labels in the digital era* the strategies developed by independent Spanish labels and distributors to expand their market, focusing on the analyses on their participation in digital networks and services.

With the suggestive title *New Orleans is not here?* Cíntia Fernandes and Micael Herschmann discuss the consolidation of a jazz scene in Rio de Janeiro with the work of the Nova Lapa Jazz band. In this study, they develop the idea of a “musicability” based on the occupation of streets with music, a phenomenon that is recurrent in this city. The urban sonority is also the subject of an article by Fernando Morais da Costa, who analyzes movie productions at two different periods: the contemporary cinema and the transition from silent to sound cinema. Entitled *Urban sounds and their hearings through cinema*, the paper discusses how the hearing of films could make viewers reflect on their relationship with sounds that surround them in their daily lives.

About the possibility to listen to the Other: voice, world music, interculturality is the title of the paper by Simone Luci Pereira on the hearing of mediatic songs as a form of cultural consumption. The author highlights the debate on voice use in this process, pointing out hearing as an agent that can enable the knowledge of the Other.

Next Herom Vargas looked into the 1970's to analyze the production of singers and songwriters relating to the so-called "experimental song". The text *Three Forms of Experimentation in Brazilian popular music (MPB) in the 1970s* aims at discussing aspects of these songs from the time marked by the military dictatorship and by the expansion of the media industries linked to pop songs.

Another international contribution for this dossier is the text by Carolina Spataro, who discusses the role of music in the configuration of modern feminilities from a case-study of the fans of romantic Argentinean singer Ricardo Arjona. The paper entitled "*Lady of the four decades*": a study on the link between music, women and age focuses particularly on age and generational splits related to the link between songs and feminilities. The paper section of the dossier ends with the contribution by José Cláudio Castanheira who introduces the "analog" vs "digital" theme in his paper *Binary Faust: the natural and the artificial in analog and digital sounds*. In this paper, the author discusses the complex relationships between today's digital culture and contemporary technological thinking guided by the Information Technologies (IT) framework.

Closing the edition we present an unpublished interview with Canadian researcher Will Straw, who is a world reference in studies on pop music. In a long conversation with Jeder Janotti Junir, Straw revisits the notion of "music scene", which was

made famous by him in a 1991 text and revisited by him in a 2006 paper, published in E-Compós. With the development of the social media dedicated to music, the notion of scene has been through changes, acquiring new possibilities and significance in music and communication studies. Regarding this issue, Straw shows how his proposal tries to account for the relationships established in the global circulation of mass pop music, also considering possible fits with restricted circulation and region-wide references.

We are convinced that this edition presents an excellent overview of the research work around music and sound in the field of communication. Hearings in the noisy modern world reveal debates and clashes regarding belonging, moral codes, shared behaviors and individual and group experiences.

Keep your ears open and have a good reading!

The Editorial Board