



# Newsletter

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International ISMN Agency • Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz

## THIRTEENTH INTERNATIONAL

## ISMN PANEL MEETING

## ZAGREB, 19–20 MAY 2005

### PARTICIPANTS

Biljana Bilbija, Narodna i univerzitetska biblioteka Republike Srpske, Local ISMN Agency

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Lois Clark, Music Publishers Association, UK ISMN Agency

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Antonín Jeřábek, Národní knihovna ČR, Czech ISMN Agency

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Sally McCallum, Network Development and MARC Standards Office, Library of Congress

Montserrat Morato, Centro de Documentación de Música y Danza, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, Spanish ISMN Agency

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Shukrije Rama, The National and University Library, ISMN Agency of Kosova

Breza Šalamon-Cindori, National and University Library, Croatian ISMN Agency

Dr. Sauliah Saleh, National Library of Indonesia, Indonesian ISMN Agency

Dalia Smoriginienė, Martynas Mažvydas, National Library of Lithuania, Lithuanian ISMN Agency



*Visiting the Music Department of the National and University Library in Zagreb*

Orsolya Szabó, National Széchényi Library, Hungarian ISMN Agency

Dr. Hartmut Walravens, Director, International ISMN Agency

Dr. Ulrich Wegner, International ISMN Agency

Hanna Zawado, Biblioteka Narodowa, Polish ISMN Agency

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### AGENDA

- Opening
- Status Report of the International ISMN Agency
- Progress Reports From the National/Regional ISMN Agencies
- ISMN Finances
- The ISMN Revision: Discussion of the Draft of the Revised Standard
- The Scope of Printed Music
- Miscellaneous



*The entrance hall of the National and University Library in Zagreb*

The Thirteenth International ISMN Panel Meeting took place in Croatia on May 19–20, 2005, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Croatian ISMN Agency. The venue was the National and University Library in Zagreb.

## ■ OPENING

The Director General of the National and University Library, Dr. Josip Stipanov, welcomed the participants:

“[...] For us this is a very special meeting because we are celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Croatian National ISMN Agency. The Agency was established in November 1995 and has been collecting data and registering music publishers ever since. Today there are a total of ninety-seven publishers. ISMN is well known and used among Croatian music publishers, and the coverage in the database is about ninety-five percent. [...]”

The history of the NUL is a long one: in two years time we will celebrate

our 400th anniversary. It dates back to the year 1607 when the library of the first public gymnasium in Zagreb was established, to later become later the library of the Croatian Academy of Sciences, and in 1874 the Library of the University of Zagreb, a status which it still holds.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Library started to function as a national library. Over time, this function started to dominate over the scientific and research one, especially over the last fifteen years since Croatia became an independent sovereign state.

During its 400 years, the Library has been situated in four buildings at four locations. The building, which we left for this one nine years ago, was built in 1913 especially for the National and University Library. The house is considered to be the most beautiful art nouveau building in Zagreb. The construction of the present building took place mainly during the war and aggression on Croatia. It is a modern library, in terms of its functions and programmes as well as by its architecture.

As the national library, the NUL collects, preserves and gives access to all kinds of library resources – from Croa-

tian manuscript heritage to electronic publications. The Library holds two of only eleven existing copies of the first Croatian printed book *Missale Romanum*. It was printed in 1483, only 28 years after Gutenberg’s Bible, and was written in the Old Slavonic language of Croatian Recension or Version and in Croatian Glagolitic script. I would also like to mention the Statute of Vinodol, the manuscript from the end of the 13th century, written in Croatian language and Glagolitic script, and the second legal document to be written in Slavonic countries.

The Library cooperates with a number of national libraries and other institutions on different programmes and projects including for instance ISBN, ISMN and ISSN, and is a member of several international associations like IFLA, LIBER, CDNL, IAML and CENL. The latter has recently invited us to join The European Library as a full member, an invitation to which we answered positively.

And to conclude, dear guests, I wish you a successful and fruitful meeting, and a very pleasant stay in our library, as well as in Zagreb and Croatia.”

Dr. Hartmut Walravens, the Direc-

tor of the International ISMN Agency, referred to the eminent book and manuscript collections which are archived at the library and thanked the organizers for their excellent preparatory work. Finally, Jasenka Zajec, representing the local organizers as head of the

MPIID was making communication across borders easier in a branch of business which was marked by international trading potentials. A major effort in preparing the data for print was to check up on Internet suppliers of printed music, 1800 corresponding websites

lively roundtable discussion reflecting on the past, present and future of the ISMN. At the 2004 Panel Meeting, an important decision was made with far-reaching consequences for the future of the standard: The participants voted unanimously for a revision of the ISMN, i.e., for a change from the ISMN-10 to an ISMN-13 format.

With the publication of the ISMN Newsletter (No. 14), the preparation of a new set of leaflets in three languages and an updated version of the ISMN CD-ROM, the International Agency continued its efforts to supply information about the standard and its benefits. Comprehensive information material about the ISMN was sent out to all ISBN agencies running an office in countries where the ISMN was not applied yet. This mailing campaign met with a considerable interest among ISBN representatives and established contacts which helped and will help working towards one or the other future ISMN membership.

As Dr. Walravens pointed out, forty-six national or regional agencies were administering the International Standard Music Number at the end of 2004. Three countries signed new contractual agreements with the International Agency in 2004: Azerbaijan, Iran, and Macedonia. Negotiations about a future membership took place with Belgium, the Netherlands, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Kenya, Uganda, Benin, Palestine, Kuwait, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the People's Republic of Korea. Japan, as one of the non-member states with a considerable market of printed music, was still, as Dr. Walravens explained, to be addressed by the International ISMN Agency. Japanese librarians were principally open-minded, but did not see the potential benefits of this music standard. Organizing a seminar in Japan was generally considered a good idea, but limited financial resources of the International ISMN Agency prevented them from offering workshops and presentations on the spot.

The International Agency has for many years been trying to integrate the USA into the ISMN system, so far with only partial success. Only Bowker, a large north-American provider of bibliographic information running the U.S.



*Dr. Josip Stipanov,  
Director of the  
National and  
University Library  
in Zagreb, welcoming  
the attendants of the  
Thirteenth International  
ISMN Panel  
Meeting*

Croatian ISMN Agency, addressed the audience with warm words of welcome thereby opening the panel meeting.

## ■ STATUS REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISMN AGENCY

Dr. Walravens reported about the activities of the International ISMN Agency during the past year. One of the major objectives of the Agency's work in 2004 was to encourage smaller countries to join the ISMN system. In these countries, Dr. Walravens underlined, there was a wealth of publications of printed music which were very difficult to track. Some of the more specialized publishers or author publishers were not known even in their home country.

The Music Publishers' International ISMN Directory (MPIID) was well received during recent years. The function of the directory was to bring to the public's attention all music publishers with assigned prefixes, but at the same time to supply contact information about all publishers of printed music on a worldwide scale. In doing so, the

being listed in the last edition of the directory.

The Agency is grateful to a number of institutions like the British Library, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and other legal deposit libraries for providing regular updates of their data for the MPIID.

It is uncertain at the moment whether it will be possible to continue this effort as the sale of the MPIID does not cover the costs of data compiling and editing anymore. The Agency and the publisher might therefore be forced to cease the publication of the directory. Dr. Walravens announced that he would bring the subject up at the next conference of IAML in Warsaw in July 2005 in an attempt to enlist practical support from other institutions in preparing the data. IAML had been instrumental not only in the process of creating the ISMN, but also later on supporting the standard in many respects.

The Twelfth ISMN Panel Meeting took place at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the ISMN standard in December 2003, members of the music trade and music libraries joined in a





*Martine Lemoine-Vonner and Berit Holth (French and Norwegian ISMN Agency)*

ISBN Agency, could be talked into giving support to the ISMN. Only loosely linked to the music business, Bowker decided to assign ISMN publisher IDs to music publishers in the framework of an interim solution, but declined to become the official ISMN Agency for the U.S. Dr. Walravens underlined that finding a new respectable partner in the USA was unavoidable. One should keep in mind that, as past experiences have shown, an international standard is best maintained by a national institution.

A major change in the institutional affiliation of the International ISBN Agency will affect also the institutional setting of the International ISMN Agency. The president of the Prussian Culture Foundation decided to withdraw the support for the International ISBN Agency the work of which will therefore be passed on in March 2006 to another institution. The ISMN office will however stay with the Foundation profiting as in the past from its institutional, but not financial support. Yet, the close linkage between the ISMN and the ISBN offices on the one hand and K. G. Saur publisher on the other will have to be discontinued due to these changes.

In the past, the International ISMN Agency had not had the status of a legal entity, an unfortunate situation which called for a critical investigation. Dr. Walravens suggested that the ISMN community should discuss the establishment of a formal organisation or company providing an appropriate setting for a membership organisation.

An alternative solution would be to integrate the office of the International ISMN Agency closer into the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin as one of the library's departments. The international administration of the ISMN has long been acknowledged by the Council of the Foundation as one of the official services of the Staatsbibliothek.

Dr. Walravens pointed out, that due to a narrow time frame, the changes in the institutional setting of the International ISMN Agency will have to be put into action before the next panel meeting takes place.

## ■ ISMN FINANCES

As in previous years, the International ISMN Agency, being financed by the

annual contributions from the national or regional agencies, had to face considerable financial problems. Over one third of the ISMN agencies were not in a position to pay any membership fees. While the French agency once again proved to be the ISMN's main financial supporter and the British agency paid a larger fee covering several membership years, large music producing countries were not able to grant a comparable support or any financial aid at all. Dr. Walravens stressed the fact that the ISMN system was deeply indebted to the French ISMN agency which generously supported the work of the International ISMN Agency financially.

## ■ PROGRESS REPORTS FROM THE NATIONAL/REGIONAL ISMN AGENCIES

► Biljana Bilbija (Republic of Srpska) reported that during a meeting with the local publisher association the standard had been introduced and discussed and that parts of the ISMN Users' Manual had been translated.

► Breza Šalamon-Cindori (Croatia) referred to the tenth anniversary which the ISMN in Croatia is celebrating, and Dr. Daniela Živković (former Croatian ISMN Agency) recalled how the ISMN had been introduced in Croatia ten years ago.

► According to Dr. Joachim Jaenecke (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin) the ISMN is now much better accepted by the music trade due to the dissemination of the music-in-print database IDNV. He would welcome more practical applications like the IDNV which soon prove themselves to be beneficial for the market and its economic development.

► Shukrije Rama (Kosova) reported that the ISMN had been becoming part of the library law in Kosova; applying the ISMN was therefore mandatory by law.

► Dalia Smoriginienė (Lithuania) looked back on ten years of ISMN assignments in Lithuania. She clinked glasses with the participants of the meeting celebrating this anniversary, together with the audience, and proposed a toast to the future of the standard!

► Richard Chesser (British Library) underlined the usefulness of the ISMN for libraries, the legal deposit institutions in particular, which should closely involve into the ISMN matters. Lois Clark (U.K. ISMN Agency) reported that Oxford University Press regrettably had decided to continue assigning ISBNs instead of ISMNs to editions of printed music; a quick change to ISMN-13 would have caused the publisher to change its assignment policy, but the revision process was only in its first stage and no strict timetable could be offered. Clark announced that the U.K. Music Publishers Association would soon come up with a new database of music in print published on CD-ROM.

► The Progress Report of the Spanish ISMN Agency was presented by Montserrat Morato and found general acclaim. Her contribution ran as follows:

“The year 2004 has been very interesting for the Spanish ISMN Agency. The office has been collaborating with the Statistics Department of the Ministry of Culture, the objective being to prepare the statistical use of data concerning the ‘Edition of Printed Music with ISMNs in Spain,’ which is part of the National Statistical Plan, as approved by the Cabinet. The work was laborious, not only in terms of definition of variables, but also of the necessity of the normalization and classification of the terminology used in more generic concepts. The volume of ISMN records is still limited, two thousand numbers having been allocated in three years; yet, with this project, we intend to foster a better understanding of the ISMN and its application in Spain, gaining statistical information that can be aimed at the general public. The first data was sent to the Statistical Department for evaluation and the results will be available online as soon as possible.

We believe that this project and the publication of its results are important in aiding the diffusion of the ISMN in Spain. The office of the Spanish ISMN Agency is still receiving calls from people asking: ‘What is that number, is it an ISBN or something similar? I have never heard of it before. What is it for?’

These questions arise because the application of the ISBN is obligatory in Spain. On publication of a book, a



*Montserrat Morato (Spanish ISMN Agency)*

number of copies must be submitted to the State in order to comply with the relevant legal procedure. There, the item will obtain a legal deposit number which can only be assigned to this item if an ISBN has been assigned before. Such an obligation to number items which is bound by law makes a particular standard better known.

In the beginning, the introduction of the ISMN in Spain was led by the Association of Music Publishers which is still cooperating with the ISMN office. However, neither do all the publishers of printed music belong to this association nor do all the single publishers know about its existence. The Spanish editorial market has been dominated by a few companies, the majority of which know about the importance of the barcode in the business context, which helps to increase the circulation figures of their products. But there are some publishers whose public relation and distribution strategies are based on the name of their publishing house and on excellent catalogues only, and at the same time on the use of an in-house numbering system and the Internet for distribution and public relation matters in order to make their products known

to a broader public. Is it really necessary for these publishers to apply the ISMN?

Medium and small publishers are the ones who really believe in the ISMN system. In addition, many music schools publish their own methods and exercises for their students, creating small editions of printed music for their schools, editions which are relevant for an ISMN assignment as well. The problem that the ISMN is facing in the world of such small publishing initiatives of music schools is that the schools do not look beyond their own little world as far as distribution is concerned, probably because they do not need to. They easily reach at a full coverage of their tiny ‘market,’ and they don’t know what else to expect.

The production of printed music is located mostly in the eastern part of Spain where deeply-rooted musical traditions exist (especially in the form of band music), and in the north where there is a great tradition of vocal music; Madrid as a cultural, economic and political centre encompasses all different facets of music practice and business in Spain. Several questions are still awaiting an answer: Why are the editors of

printed music located in these areas first and foremost? Because of the sheer quantity of material located there? Because of the developed musical education system in these areas? Are the publishing houses in eastern and northern Spain and in Madrid the only enterprises that publish printed music in the country?

The Spanish ISMN Agency still has a lot of work to do. The ISMN still needs much promotion in Spain although it is making considerable progress. The total number of items of printed music which have received an ISMN in Spain is 1980. Eighty-two publishers are applying the ISMN; thirty-three ephemeral publishers registered for an ISMN with reference to single items. [...]

May 17, 2005”

## ■ THE ISMN REVISION: DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT OF THE REVISED STANDARD

In February 2005, the International ISMN Agency drew up a first draft of the revised edition of the ISMN standard text in order to initiate a revision

*Looking out for the new ISMN-13?*



process. This revision aims at extending the ISMN from its ten- to a thirteen-digit format. In 2004, at the Twelfth ISMN Panel Meeting in Berlin, participants had voted unanimously for a shift from the ISMN-10 to the ISMN-13. With the ISBN and its change from ten to thirteen digits having set the path, the ISMN revision should ensure that in the future commercial ordering and distribution systems will be able to process ISMNs without problems. In addition, the increasing amount of digital sheet music offered by Internet publishers and distributors should be taken into account in the revised standard text.

The first version of the text as drafted by the International ISMN Agency had been sent to the ISO TC 46 / SC 9 secretariat in February and was now brought to the attention of the participants of the Panel Meeting in order to allow a discussion about the regulations laid down in the document, terminological details, questions of wording etc. In a discussion lasting several hours and covering even the morning session of the second day of the Panel Meeting, a sentence-by-sentence evaluation of the text of the first draft was undertaken. Several important questions were raised, constructive criticism brought

forward and semantic subtleties weighed out. The results of these discussions can be summarized as follows:

► It was suggested that the term “printed music” be substituted by “notated music,” and “publication” by “edition.” This proposed change takes into account the fact that digital musical notation is not printed music in the strict sense of the term. The term “notated music,” on the other hand, if used in connection with “edition,” does exclude musical autographs which, if not published in an analog or digital format, are not eligible for an ISMN.

“Editions of notated music,” therefore, should be the wording describing appropriately what the ISMN is aiming at.

► In the paragraphs providing concise definitions of core concepts mentioned in the standard text, the addition of explanations of the terms “notated music”, “edition”, “Musicland prefix” and “EAN. UCC” was recommended.

► Furthermore, it was suggested that the prefix “M” should be substituted by the EAN.UCC “Musicland” prefix 979 0 which was already used as part of the 13-digit bar code of the ISMN. The meeting declared itself in favor of an interpretation of the string 979 0 as a “two-element prefix” bringing the number of elements in a full ISMN up to five, as in the following example:

ISMN 979-0-123-45678-3  
1 2 3 4 5

It was pointed out that this five-part structure of the ISMN would correspond with the five-part structure of the ISBN-13.

► A paragraph was added to the draft text specifying the exact position where an ISMN shall appear on an online item of notated music or any other item involving the display of content stored in digital form. In all these cases, the ISMN should appear close to the title or to its equivalent.

► For the “Guidelines for the use of ISMN” of Annex A, it was proposed to add a paragraph specifying that different formats of an electronic item should receive an individual ISMN provided that they are made available separately.

► Furthermore, it was proposed to add “Implementation Guidelines” as



Annex B dealing with the retrospective conversion of ISMNs in ten-digit format to the new 13-digit format. The information given in this Annex should make clear that this conversion will change the prefix while the check digit will stay the same.

▶ Another suggestion referred to the collection of the metadata of an edition of notated music. It was agreed that the appropriate metadata should be collected by the regional or national ISMN agency after the assignment of an ISMN to this item has taken place.

In the context of metadata recording, the plan to add another appendix informing about ONIX (ONline Information eXchange), an industry standard which was released in 2000, was discussed. ONIX is applied by a grow-

ing number of book publishers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers and bibliographic agencies as ONIX for Book, and will have some impact in the future on the market of printed music as well. Yet, as the revision process of the ISMN has to follow a very strict timetable heading for a release date of January 1, 2007, it seemed to be wise to avoid any further delays. Such delays might have occurred in the process of developing ONIX specifications/recommendations for those who will apply the ISMN-13.

▶ The next steps in the revision process will be as follows: The discussions among the participants of the Panel Meeting resulted in a Working Draft (TC46/SC9 document N409) which is currently being evaluated and voted

upon by the members of TC46/SC9. With the approval of the standard revision as a new ISO Work Item, an ISO Working Group will be established which should discuss and agree upon a Committee Draft (CD). With the acceptance of the CD by the voting members of TC46/SC9, a Draft International Standard (DIS) will be reached. The DIS will be submitted for voting to the ISO member bodies. If the voting results approve the DIS, it will become a Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) which, after a final two-months vote, will be ready for publication as the new ISMN standard text.

It is hoped that it will be possible to follow a relatively tight schedule during this complex revision process declaring the ISMN revision as a fast-track project. The fact that the conversion from ISMN-10 to ISMN-13 is easily done and that, during the Panel Meeting in Zagreb, the ISMN representatives were already able to pass a first draft of the revised standard, might speed up the revision process.

*Sally McCallum (Library of Congress) and Berit Holtb (Norwegian ISMN Agency)*



## ■ THE SCOPE OF PRINTED MUSIC (BY ULRICH WEGNER)

Reflections on the scope of printed music touch on central issues of the administration of the International Standard Music Number. The ISMN refers to a product in print, “uniquely identifying printed music publications” according to the standard text describing ISO 10957 (ISO 1993:1). Yet the document does not specify what the term “printed music” implies in the context of standard music numbering. The standard text offers definitions for the terms “check digit” and “item,” but, for some strange reason, it does not define “printed music.”

The scope of printed music might be put into focus from different angles:

## ■ CAN SOUND BE PRINTED?

Does printed music (or sheet music) represent “the musical analog of a book” (anon. 2005)? Music is essential-



Notation 1: Frederic Rzewski's "No Place to Go But Around" (1974). Page 2 of an autograph offered for download in the Internet<sup>1</sup>

print or are scanned and converted into graphic formats in order to offer them over the Internet for downloading (cf. Notation 1). Digitalization turns the autograph in both cases into a printable and thereby reproducible piece of notated music. An ISMN assignment seems to be appropriate here.

The autograph itself might be an item sold by the composer acting as the copyist and music trader in one person. The German composer Hans-Joachim Hespos stated in a roundtable discussion about "Music Publishers Between Music Engraving and Data Flow": "I belong to the group of those who prefer drawing the notation by hand. This means that I write my scores, and these scores cannot be produced by any technical means. Thus, manual handwriting prevails" (Hespos 2001). Hespos rewrites his compositions "on demand" and sells the complex autographs; they are trading units. Yet, I doubt that an ISMN would be applicable here.

This is true even more so for autographs which composers deposit in archives and libraries without any intention to sell them, as well as sheets of music that contain musical transcriptions of folk song melodies being part of large folk song collections. ISMN, yes or no? The answer I think must be in the negative.

#### ■ DIFFERENT GRAPHICS, DIFFERENT SOUNDS

Although most of the ISMN assignments will refer to publications in which music is written on a five-line staff system, printed music extends far beyond the realm of Western staff notation. New modes of notating music have been developed in order to facilitate the exchange of musical notations over the Internet, contemporary composers have conceived radical new forms of pictorial descriptions of their musical ideas, and we have to take into account the fact – encouraging as it is – that more and more non-Western countries with their own traditional notation systems enter the world of the ISMN. Indonesia, applying the ISMN since 2002, is a good case in point (cf. Notation 2b).

ly aural, it exists in time to be perceived by an audience, not by a readership – even in cultures which have developed a musical script. The target group of the printed item is basically different in both cases. "Music was originally, and is essentially, sound and not paper" (Krummel 1970:15); sound waves are the material reality of a musical work, not something written down or printed (Nattiez 1990:69). Musical print at best enables the musician to act as a mediator between the composer and the audience in converting the musical idea into sound. This is the essential nature of printed music, which in this respect is not comparable to a printed book. Ongoing attempts to use the ISBN as an appropriate number standard for printed music as well should among others be contradicted on the basis of this essential distinction.

#### ■ VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL ENTITIES AS PRINTED MUSIC?

Internet publishers do not trade printed music in the strict sense of the term, but virtual entities containing music notations in digital formats like PDF, TIFF, GIF and even ASCII text (cf. Notations 4 and 8). This allows not only new efficient ways of publishing and trading notated music using the data transfer possibilities of digital networks, it also enables the musician to post-edit the downloaded file by adding fingerings, slurs, agogic signs, etc.,

it also leaves the decision to turn the digital item into printed music completely up to this musician. Many notations – easily downloaded in large quantities – will rest on the hard drive in a kind of private digital archive; they will not be printed unless one decides to use them for practical music making, albeit after several rounds of post-editing have changed the downloaded "original" considerably.

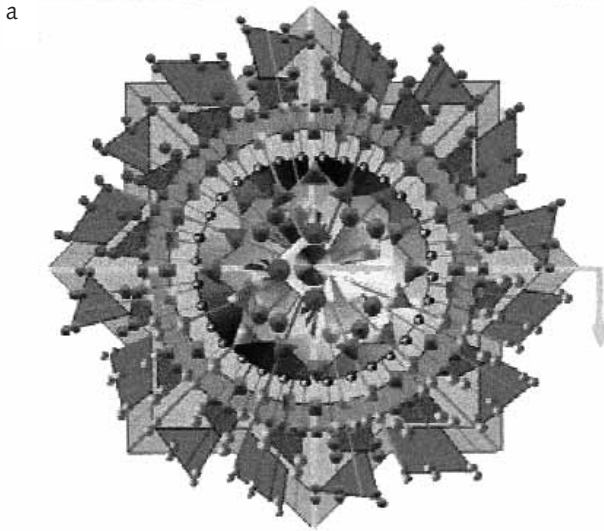
Is the term "printed music" appropriate for these items offered by Internet publishers? The term "notated music" and "editions of notated music" as suggested by the participants of the ISMN Panel Meeting in Zagreb for the revised standard text, indeed, seems to be more appropriate here (cf. above, "The ISMN Revision").

#### ■ MUSICAL AUTOGRAPHS AND PRINTED EDITIONS

Considering the scope of printed music, one inevitably touches the question of where the borderline between print and autograph can be drawn. Music written on sheets of paper, creating unique specimens or a musical print made available "whether for sale, hire, gratis or for copyright purposes only" (ISO 1993:1) seem to represent different areas of music publishing. Yet, the areas of print and autograph are not as neatly separated as one would expect.

It is quite common that handwritten musical notations are reproduced in





Notation 2: The Javanese gamelan composition "lancaran ricik-ricik" in two different graphical representation. Top: Circular notational arrangement of all playing parts of the orchestral instruments; bottom: Javanese cipher notation of the core melody<sup>2</sup>

Lancaran **Ricik-Ricik**, laras sléndro pathet manyura

Buka

6 . 3 5 6 . 5 3 2 . 3 5 ⑥

[ . 3 . 5̇ . 6̇ . 5̇ . 6̇ . 5̇ . 5̇ . ⑥  
 . 3 . 5̇ . 6̇ . 5̇ . 6̇ . 5̇ . 5̇ . ⑥  
 . 3 . 2̇ . 3̇ . 2̇ . 3̇ . 2̇ . 5̇ . ⑥  
 . 3 . 2̇ . 3̇ . 2̇ . 3̇ . 2̇ . 5̇ . ⑥ ]

There is an impressive variability of formats that "printed music" might take on. Not all cases are as unambiguous as a sheet of music printed in a five-line staff system. The ISMN standard text does not state that the ISMN should be exclusively applied to Western staff notation. Any kind of musical graphics in printed form is eligible for an ISMN.

At different times in musical history, in different parts of the world, and reflecting differently structured musics, people have developed very distinctive ways to write down music – even for print. Notational systems vary in what they show and what they keep unrepresented in their visual presentation; they stress certain musical parameters, excluding others from the eyes of the music reader. They reflect in their own way implicit or explicitly stated musical concepts inherent in a musical culture or a single tradition thereof.

The examples of musical print given below are of a very different nature in another respect as well: Some of these graphical systems are fairly widespread, others are used only by a limited group of composers and musicians, and some might even be a singular notational ap-

proach developed only for one specific composition by one specific composer. What all of the examples have in common, is the simple fact that they all are printed music publications, and as editions of notated music they are available in a format appropriate for assigning an ISMN.

#### ■ EXAMPLES

■ Notation 2a looks like anything but a musical notation. Yet it was designed by the French musicologist Catherine Basset in order to visually describe a Javanese composition for gong orchestra in all its different playing parts. It is a full score, so to speak, which was published by the Cité de la Musique in Paris.

In Java, the notation of the same musical piece looks quite different and more basic (Notation 2b). Cipher notations like the one shown here are collectively published in printed music publications, small booklets used for teaching purposes.

Contrary to the first example, the Javanese notation does not intend to

give a full picture of the composition, but limits itself to the very basic part, the core melody which is notated with the help of the ciphers 1 to 5. Both notations of one and the same piece of music exemplify the two sides of one coin: forms of "prescriptive" and "descriptive music writing" (Seeger 1958). There is no doubt that even plain cipher notations are eligible for an ISMN.

■ Notation 3 shows another very rudimentary form of printed music. Notated are the so-called "changes," the harmonic progressions and their correlation to the song text. Here not ciphers, but letters are used. Letters above text syllables indicate a new harmony. It is not necessary to be able to read music in the traditional sense in order to know which harmonies to play.

■ The same is true for Notation 4, which again is exclusively text-based and exemplifies what is known as "ABC notation." It was developed in 1991 by Chris Walshaw, primarily in order to be able to write down English, Irish, Scottish and other Western Euro-

#### Come Let Us Worship

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| D A/C# | Bm A  
Come let us worship

| Em F#m  
Let us kneel before the Lord our God

| G A/G A  
The maker of the uni-verse

| D A/C# | Bm A  
Come let us bow down

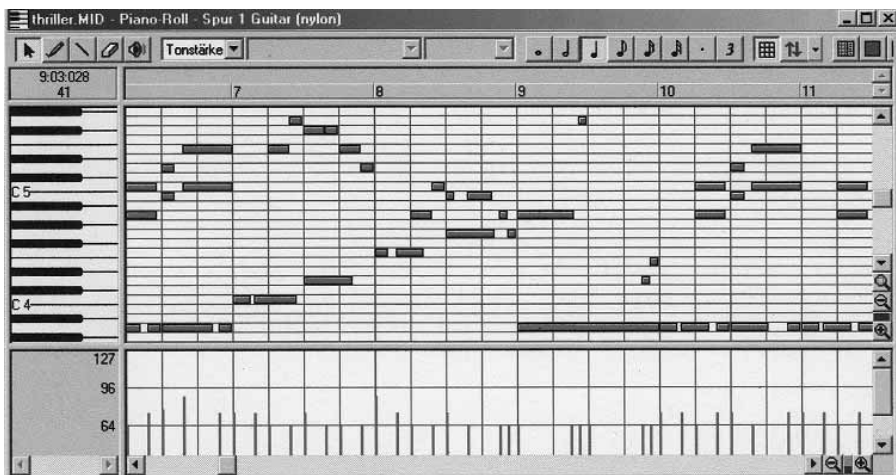
| Em F#m  
Let us kneel before the Lord our God

| A/G A  
Crea- tor

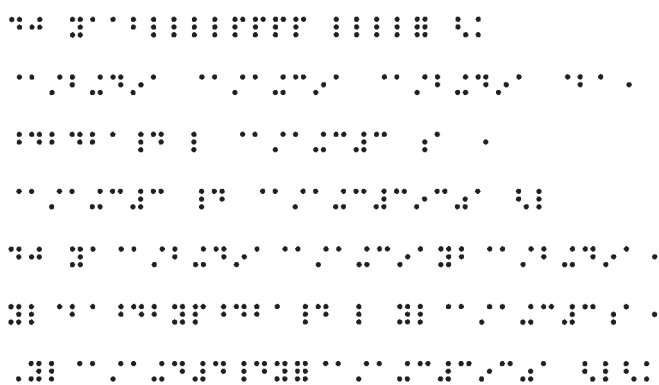
Notation 3. Notation (beginning) of the harmonic progression in relation to the text downloaded from a "Praise and Worship Music" Internet site<sup>3</sup>

Notation 4: ABC notation of the hornpipe "The Dusty Miller"<sup>4</sup>

```
O:E % mark all tunes with an E
(English)for the index
X:1 % tune no 1
T:Dusty Miller, The % title
T:Binny's Jig % an alternative title
C:Trad. % traditional
R:DH % double hornpipe
M:3/4 % meter
E:8 % note spacing
I: speed 300 % speed for playback
K:G % key
B>cd BAG|FA Ac BA|B>cd BAG|DG GB AG:|
Bdd gfg|aA Ac BA|Bdd gfa|g GB AG:|
BG G/2G/2G BG|FA Ac BA|BG G/2G/2G BG|DG GB AG:|
W:Hey, the dusty miller, and his dusty coat;
W:He will win a shilling, or he spend a groat.
W:Dusty was the coat, dusty was the colour;
W:Dusty was the kiss, that I got frae the miller.
```



Notation 5. Musical notation as generated from a MIDI file: The “piano-roll” display of a musical piece indicating pitch height, pitch duration and loudness for the timbre “Guitar (nylon).” Software: Cakewalk (Hochweber 2005).

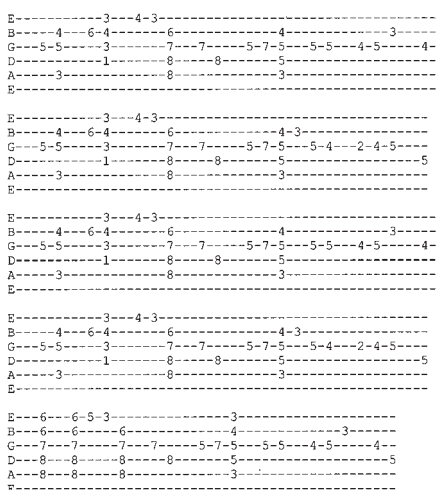
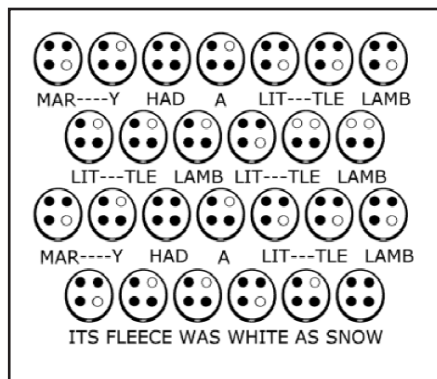


Notation 6. LUTAB tablature code using Braille music notation. Excerpt of Ferrabosco’s “Fantasia” for the lute (Williams 2004)

pean folk tunes. As ABC notation uses simple ASCII text, it was easy to send whole song collections over the Internet in times when the Internet still suffered from slow data transfer speeds. And it is indeed easy to read the ABC notation: The tone c is represented by the character c, the tone f by the character f, and so on.

Nowadays, ABC notation has become very popular and is available for Windows, UNIX and Mac platforms. It can be converted into staff notation or sent to the loudspeakers of the computer. Chris Walshaw writes on his website: “One of the most important aims of abc notation, and perhaps one that distinguishes it from most, if not all, computer-readable musical languages is that it can be easily read by humans. In other words, with a little practice, it is possible to play a tune directly from the abc notation without having to process and print it out” (Walshaw 2005).

Notation 4 shows the typical three-partite structure of a piece of ABC notation: The first eleven lines make up the header containing basic informa-



Notation 8. “Greensleeves” in guitar tab notation. The horizontal lines indicate the strings.<sup>6</sup>

tion about the piece, its title, the rhythms and key, followed by the musical notation proper (next three lines). Song texts are given at the bottom.

■ If ABC notation allows us to export the notation into sound, this works equally well in the opposite direction with MIDI. Notation 5 shows the “piano-roll” display of a musical piece indicating pitch height, pitch duration and loudness for the timbre “Guitar (nylon).” This musical graphic was generated from a MIDI source (Software: Cakewalk).

The acronym MIDI stands for “Musical Instruments Digital Interface.” MIDI is a code that had been developed at the beginning of the 1980s in order to allow electronic musical instruments to exchange data with each other. MIDI files are not sound files like .WAV or .MP3 files. They rather represent a series of commands transferred to a machine which is supposed to produce sound on the basis of this sequence of commands (cf. here and in the following: Hochweber 2005). If you consider a string of instructions such as, “Now play the tone B, with the loudness level 56, using the timbre for church organ, and let the sound last for 4 seconds,” this comes very close to a staff notation which tells the musician how to produce the next sound.

But as MIDI addresses machines, not humans, it does not seem to be relevant for the ISMN. Yet, the ISMN definitely comes into play if you consider the fact that MIDI allows one to export MIDI code into staff or any other kind of graphical notation (as in Notation 5). The two areas of sound and notation – traditionally nicely separated – coincide: There is one digital source that might be turned into sound or into graphical notation, depending on which key to strike. In the first case, the assignment of an International Standard Recording Code might be appropriate, in the second case an International Standard Music Number could be assigned.

Yet, it is difficult to figure how ISMN assignments should work with automatically generated musical notations where a few keystrokes might change the music and will instantly produce a new notation.

Speaking of digital matters, it seems to be appropriate to mention Braille Music Code. Literary Braille has been one of the earliest, if not the earliest, digital code used. And literary Braille has been extended to musical notation. Louis Braille had developed his code in 1825 for visually impaired persons. There are Braille versions for mathematics and chemistry, and there is one for music.

Shown in Notation 6 is a small excerpt of Ferraboscio's "Fantasia" for lute from the 16th century. Braille Music Code is based on the six-dot cell with two vertical rows of three dots each, as it is known from literary Braille. Sixty-three combinations of dots are possible. Yet, the meaning linked to each cell layout in music notation is totally different from what literary Braille offers. Almost any kind of music can be written down in Braille Music Code. Printing here actually means punching dots into a sheet of paper from behind in a mirror-image layout. One might wonder whether Braille music notations would be eligible for an ISMN. I cannot see any reason why this should not be the case.

Notation 7 conveys a similar graphical impression using dots in a pre-defined spacial array. The character of this notation, though, is a completely different one, showing a tablature notation for ocarina clay flute. Indicated is the sequence in which the fingerholes of the ball-shaped flute have to be closed or kept open. Following the playing instructions as shown in Notation 7, it should be possible – even for somebody who is not able to read music – to play the song.

Tablatures are fingering scripts; they do not describe the music itself, but tell the musician when to do what on a specific musical instrument. Tablatures can only be understood with the specific physical layout of the corresponding musical instrument in mind. The ocarina notation is printed music; fonts that allow you to typeset this music as shown on the screen can be downloaded from the Internet from different sites.

While the community of ocarina players might be fairly small, the oppo-

## Suite pour la Luth par J.S. Bach (BWV 995)

### Prelude

Lute version by Clive Titmuss, © 2004

Notation 9. Lute tablature (excerpt). The signs, although printed, try to mirror French tablature writing in its handwritten appearance<sup>7</sup>

Notation 10. Excerpt of "Die Himmelsmechanik" ("The Sky Mechanics") by Mauricio Kagel, 1965<sup>8</sup>

site is true for the world of lute and guitar playing. The most popular of musical notational systems other than staff notation are probably the guitar tablatures. Thousands of them are offered on numerous websites. A breathtaking number of 850,000 guitar and bass tabs, for example, are downloadable from <http://www.tabrobot.com>. Shown in Notation 8 is the fretboard with the strings (six horizontal lines) and the fingering. The frets are indicated by numbers. For amateur players of

the folk guitar, these websites are the prime source for tracing musical notations. They are 100 percent ASCII text, and they are first choice for all those who are not able to read music, but who want to play music on the guitar.

Between the 16th and 18th century, lute music was already written down in tablature format without exception. Even nowadays a considerable number of lute players prefer to read music from tablatures instead of staff nota-



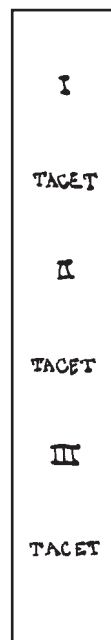
tions. Notation 9 of a lute tablature again is printed music, although it looks like it was written by hand. The printed signs try to mirror French tablature writing in its typical handwritten appearance. Yet, this example has been typeset. The lines – six in number – again are not staff lines, but represent the six strings or string courses of the lute. Each fret on the fingerboard is indicated by a letter from the alphabet. The cloud-shaped signs above the array of horizontal lines specify tone durations.

The remaining examples shed light on a totally different area of printed music. There is no doubt that traditional concepts of musical notation as they are represented in Western staff notation are radically challenged by Western contemporary composers and their musical works. Part of the compositional process might be left to chance, and chance might become the main aesthetic principle. Often the quality of the sound material and its combination are only loosely defined. Here printed music loses its prescriptive character in favour of a musical presentation in which the performance aspect gains primary importance.

■ One might argue whether the publication of “Die Himmelsmechanik (“The Sky Mechanics”). A Composition With Stage Settings,” published by the Argentinean composer Mauricio Kagel in 1965, is printed music at all (Notation 10). The stage settings show weather scenes. The caption of the image in the lower left corner, for example, reads: “1. cloud: appears in light grey and pink on top left and sinks slowly down almost to the ground.” This is of course not a musical instruction, and, in the preface, Kagel discusses stage decorations and effects, but he refrains from any remarks concerning the musical settings of this piece – except that noises which refer to the weather scenes should be produced with common theatrical noise producers. Is the publication of these stage settings printed music? I would doubt it. The publisher, Universal Edition, decided this question in the affirmative. Of all items of printed music that are presented in this paper, this is presum-

ably the only one which indeed has received an ISMN!

■ Again, nothing musical seems to be expressed in Notation 11. Yet, this composition by John Cage – it was given the title “4 Minutes, 33 Seconds” –



Notation 11. John Cage's instructions for the three sets of “Four Minutes and 33 Seconds”<sup>9</sup>

is considered as one of the most influential compositions of the 20th century. Nothing sounds, all three sets are headed by the word “tacet” in the print. Cage states in a preface-like text: “For any instrument or combination of instruments.” During the première in 1952, a piano player entered the stage with a stopwatch and left the stage after exactly 4 minutes and 33 seconds without having touched the piano except for opening and closing the lid. Silence can be very musical, and Cage wants the listener to discover its inherent acoustical sensations. Edition Peters has not yet allocated an ISMN to the edition of 1960. Regrettably, the sound of silence as expressed in the edition of this masterpiece of music is still awaiting its International Standard Music Number.

#### ■ NOTES

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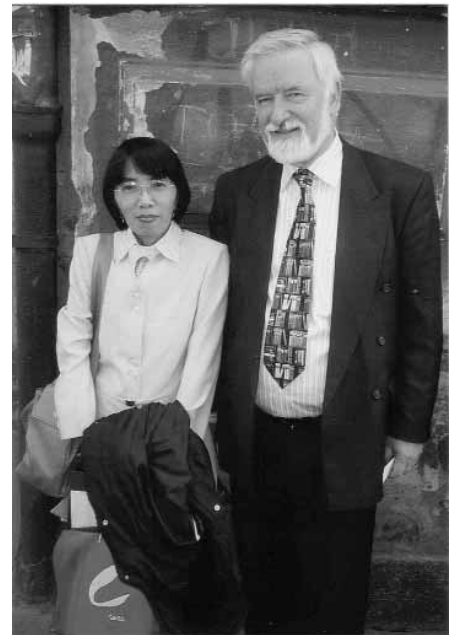
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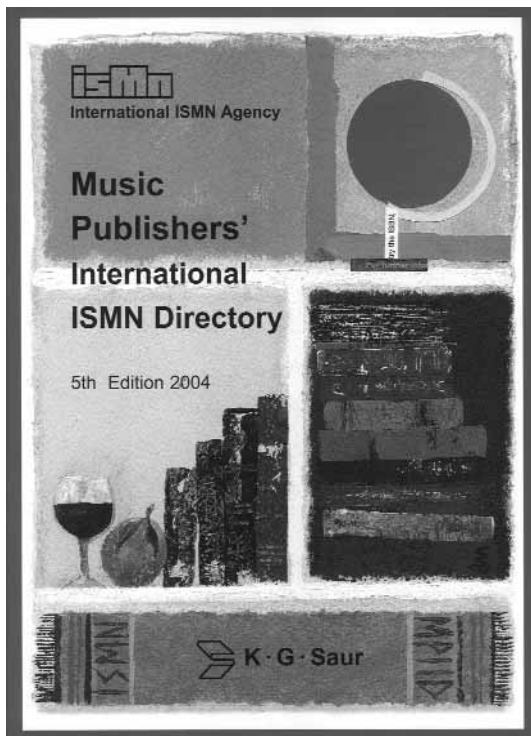
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