

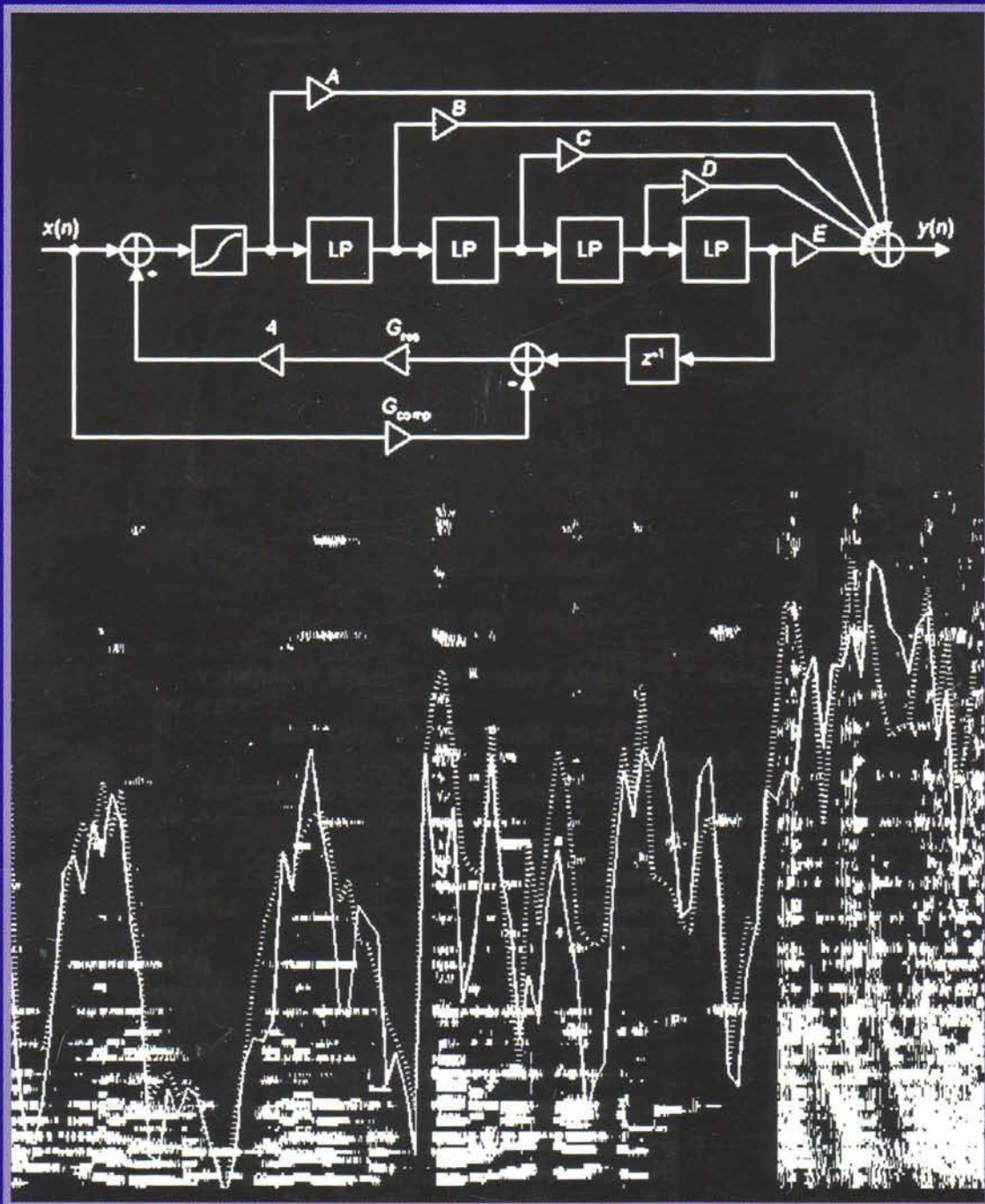
Computer Music Journal

Volume 30, Number 2

ISSN 0148-9267 \$15.00

Summer 2006

Subtractive Synthesis and Musical Signal Characterization



gestures articulated by

September 7.

Concert, L'Auditori

zan's *Styal* for tape took its
the location of an old mill,
vided much of the source
r this very enjoyable work.
nical, and sometimes
qualities of the source were
through various fragmen-
ques but at the same time
contrasted with sustained
nes the composer was able
rom the space. Lars Graue-
cealed Behaviours for bass
l interactive computer es-
ome hypnotic textures in
mbre of the bass clarinet,
by Naüm Monterde, was
trol the rhythmic qualities
space. Ioannis Kalantzis's
iseis for string quartet and
so particularly enjoyable as
like many works before,
ic contrasts between real
ic sounds with the latter so
inguish at times from the
that the work almost ap-
e form of a double quartet.

September 8.

Concert, ESMuC

all

fternoon provided another
enjoyable concert, notable
e display of instrumental
Gabriel Brncic's . . . *que no*
a cap murmuri and Elsa
de Sable both received
y subtle performances by
tuoso Joan Izquierdo.
ade evocative use of the
breath, very soft pedal
various multiphonics in
synthetic sound world
ed by gestural precision
c activity. Ms. Justel's

work used a variety of instruments
from the recorder family, exploring
the timbral space of each. Particu-
larly interesting were the growl-like
qualities of the rarely heard bassett
recorder, and the wonderful skittering
electronic textures that seemed to be
comprised of short recorder samples.

Chikashi Miyama's *Density* for
harp and computer was also most en-
joyable. Using a granular technique
developed by the composer, the vari-
ous nuances of the harp were arpeg-
giated and spectrally processed in
various ways. The contrast of harp
harmonics against sustained granular
textures was especially effective.
William Kleinsasser's brief $(HO)_2$
 $C_6H_3 - CHOH - CH_2NHCH_3$ (*Adrena-*
line), for trombone quartet and com-
puter provided a complete contrast in
sound quality. With dynamic, fanfare-
like bursts, the sounds of the quartet
were imitated, and transformed by
the computer into background reso-
nances and sound masses which
evoked the equally transformative
effects of memory.

Thursday, September 8. Evening
Concert, L'Auditori

Arturo Parra and Francis Dhomont's
Sol y sombra . . . L'espace des spec-
tres for guitar and tape employed var-
ious extended techniques including
taps, scrapes, and detunings, as well
as making some overt reference to
idiomatic guitar techniques. In what
appeared to be a carefully improvised
performance against an electronic
texture that made extensive use of
transformed resonances and other
guitar sonorities, Mr. Parra's perfor-
mance was powerful and musically
compelling. Panayiotis Kokoras's
Shatter Cone for violin and tape was
a very enjoyable piece. With subtle
timbral transformations achieved by
various different bow pressures and
positions, the natural violin sounds

were complemented by a tape part
that seemed to extend these spectra
in the delineation of new forms.

Mention should also be made of
saxophonist Xelo Giner who deliv-
ered wonderful performances of Ya-
suhiko Takenaka's *Séparé et invisible*,
Stefan Klaverdal's *Prayer of a King*,
and Alfonso Garcia de la Torre's *Un*
caracol manchado.

Friday, September 9. Afternoon
Concert, ESMuC Concert Hall
and Evening Concert, L'Auditori

I was unable to attend the Friday con-
certs. The following works were pro-
grammed: *Machine Game* by Jun
Mizumachi, *Trois moments précé-*
dant la genèse des cordes by Eduardo
Polonio, *Taedet Animam meam* by
Colby Leider, *O que a menina ouve*
by Diego Garro, *Reflections* by Petra
Bachratá, *Studies for BoSSA: The*
Lobster Quadrille and Tetha by Dan
Trueman, *Octant* by Jean-Claude
Risset, *Flute Melt* by Robert Mackay,
Annotations by Marc Ainger, *Dubh*
Bringlóid (Black Dream) by Troy
Rogers, *Swallow* by Haruka Hi-
rayama, *Treno* by Carlos Duque, and
Tiento by Roberto Mosquera.

Listening Room

An enormous variety of work was
presented in the conference's listen-
ing room sessions. There was one ses-
sion during which DVD works were
presented, but the remainder of the
works heard were either tape pieces
or recordings of works for instrumen-
tal resources and electronics. I partic-
ularly enjoyed Kyoko Kobayashi's
Wish for DVD, where simple graphic
transformations and acrostics were
supported by whispered vocal enun-
ciations; Mario Verandi's *Klang-Film*,
which explored the concept of exits
with some well-known footage in-
cluding Lumière's seminal "Workers

Leaving the Factory"; Dmitri Voudouris's *L22P08M02 [Scene 1 + 3]*, a politically engaged work with a variety of voices and shouts emanating from full sonic textures; Thomas Gerwin's *Computer Music* in which the sounds of computer hardware was used as source material; and Kari Besarshe's quietly meditative *Signs*.

Conclusion

For a European ICMC, it was perhaps not surprising that a large number of acousmatic tape works were programmed. It was pleasing, though, that these works, which, however musically rich, are often not as engaging in concert as works requiring live performers, were counterbalanced by a variety of pieces for a diverse assortment of instruments with electronic processing.

Andres Lewin-Richter, Xavier Serra, and the rest of the organizing committee are to be congratulated for putting together a stimulating six days of music. Kudos should also be extended to the technical team for their seamless production on programs that were often complex and demanding. I hope that the tradition will continue at ICMC 2006.

The 6th International Conference on Music Information Retrieval (ISMIR 2005)

Centre for Digital Music, Queen Mary, University of London; Centre for Cognition, Computation and Culture, Goldsmiths College, University of London, London, UK, 11-15 September 2005.

*Reviewed by David Gerhard
Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada*

ISMIR 2005, the Sixth International Conference on Music Information

Retrieval, took place at Queen Mary, University of London, and Goldsmiths College, University of London, from 11-15 September 2005. The paper sessions and poster sessions took place at Queen Mary, while introductory tutorials took place at Goldsmiths on Sunday. The event was sponsored this year by Microsoft Research, Sun Microsystems, the British Library, Hewlett-Packard, Philips Research, the British Computer Society, the Digital Music Research Network, and the Multimedia Knowledge Management Network. Apple Computer provided an Internet Cafe consisting of six iMacs set up in the lobby of the Centre for Digital Music building where the paper and poster sessions took place.

Although the conference did not have an official theme, several topics of prominence did emerge: MIREX, the Music Information Retrieval Evaluation eXchange; annotation of ground truth for training data; the maturing of the ISMIR research community; the role of ISMIR in both the wider Computer Music and Information Retrieval communities; and the utility of Music Information Retrieval (MIR) research to musicologists and information analysts. This was in addition to the spectrum of excellent technical papers and posters. One of the main topics of conversation outside of the sessions was the interpretation and classification of genre.

Compared to other conferences I have attended, ISMIR is still relatively new, and remains small. Rather than being a detriment, this serves many advantages. There were only two parallel sessions, so it was possible to attend almost every paper in the conference. The subject area of the conference continues to be tight and specific, while being neither stifling nor predictable. One hundred thirty-eight submissions were re-

ceived, a record for ISMIR. Viewers maintained a high level of quality in the acceptance of the 103 oral presentations. Of the 103 oral presentations, 56 were accepted for presentation and given 8 page proceedings, and 29 were accepted for poster presentation with the proceedings. Of the demonstration submissions, 56 were accepted and given 4 page proceedings. In addition, three excellent invited speakers: Nicholas Cook, Steven D'Esposito, and Thomas Dolby.

Nicholas Cook, a Professor of Music from Royal Holloway, University of London, began his conference with an invited talk, "Towards the Complete Musicologist?" in which he details the typical work musicologists do and how music information retrieval techniques may be employed to fit musicology. Mr. Cook's talk, "What will be critical for the future of musicology?" is a point of view on the trickling down of research into practical usable environments. He noted that professional musicologists are often reluctant to embrace new techniques and technologies, that even if a musicologist, for example, the Humdrum Toolkit, it is unlikely that they will be able to use it frequently enough to become comfortable with the interface. This is a problem for many technical fields, those building tools for other technicians. The people who build the tools are, by necessity, often not familiar with what goes on "under the hood," as Mr. Cook puts it. Therefore, often produce an interface which is usable to the technicians, but not as usable for the non-technicians. Many of the issues brought up in Mr. Cook's talk were examined in detail over coffee and a meal. The MIR community