

## Fora

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The forum is the most recent of the four types of scholarly meetings that gradually emerged throughout the decades of the Council's existence, following the world conference, study-group symposium, and colloquium.<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Executive Board meetings refer to it as such for the first time as late as 2016 (EB minutes, 114th meeting, 28 Jun 2016:§6447). Non-existent in earlier versions of the Council's by-laws, it was incorporated in the thoroughly revised Statutes, ratified by the General Assembly of Members in 2017. Statute 10.4 defines it as an event "organized by the ICTM in collaboration with other national, regional, and international scholarly organizations on a theme of common concern." The "Memorandum on the Organization of ICTM Fora" specifies that

it is designed to provide an environment conducive to overcoming disciplinary and other barriers that often interfere with the recognition and appreciation of differing systems of thought ... A Forum is proposed by ICTM members after consultations with members of the envisioned participating scholarly organizations and is subject to approval by the ICTM Executive Board.<sup>2</sup>

### History of the idea

Even though the forum became formalized as a standard ICTM event as late as the second decade of the twenty-first century, the notion about the benefits of cooperation with sister societies emerged already in the Council's formative years. Appendix C – Point 13, titled "Relationship with International Organisations," in the amended original constitution reads, as: "The

Council may establish co-operation with international organisations concerned with folk art and may seek affiliation with such organisations" (*BIFMC* 5, Nov 1951:25). Indeed, it became affiliated with the International Music Council (IMC) for some time, contributing scholarly symposia "in conjunction with" the IMC's gatherings named Radio/Television Rostra. IMC, established in 1949 by UNESCO, is the largest global network of organizations and institutions in the field of music.<sup>3</sup> As an example of their cooperation, the 6th Asian Music Rostrum was held in Pyongyang, Democratic Republic of North Korea, 13–15 October 1983, and ICTM organized its first such symposium there, "Traditional music in Asian countries: Its inheritance and development." A lengthy anonymous report on the event appeared in *BICTM* 65 (Oct 1984:9–13).<sup>4</sup>

Other relevant relations in this context, considered or materialized, included the International Commission on Folk Arts and Folk Lore (CIAP; see Don Niles's chapter on the Council's by-laws in this volume), Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale (RILM; see later in this article), Society for Ethnomusicology (Pettan 2021), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO; see Wim van Zanten's chapter in this volume).

The events directly leading to the establishment of fora started in 2013. After the ICTM world conference in Shanghai, China, in July 2013, Beverley Diamond, who would become president of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) a few months later, informed Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, the newly-elected president of the ICTM, and me as secretary general since 2011, about the wish of bringing together in a single scholarly gathering the two leading associations

1 I would like to thank Naila Ceribašić and Don Niles for their helpful comments on an initial draft of this chapter.

2 In the past of the Council, the term "forum" was used and understood as a type of presentation at its world conferences and sometimes also at its other types of scholarly meetings, usually together with the term "roundtable," e.g., forum/roundtable. "Forum/Roundtable sessions provide opportunities for participants to discuss a subject with each other and with members of the audience" (*BICTM* Oct 2011:15). The programme of the 43rd World Conference in Astana in 2015 is the last one where such a notion of the term "forum" can be found.

3 The International Music Council's website suggests that "through its members and their networks, IMC has direct access to over 1000 organisations in some 150 countries and to 600 million persons eager to develop and share knowledge and experience on diverse aspects of musical life" (<https://www.imc-cim.org>).

4 I am grateful to co-editor Don Niles for bringing this evidence to my attention.

of ethnomusicologists. The two presidents led this plan to the first forum in 2015, which is presented later in this chapter.

In October 2013, while teaching a term at the Tainan National University of the Arts in Taiwan, I took the opportunity to attend the 2nd Biennial Conference of the East Asian Regional Association of the International Musicological Society (IMSEA) in the capital Taipei. There I had fruitful conversations with the International Musicological Society (IMS) executives: President Dinko Fabris, Vice Presidents Malena Kuss and Ryuichi Higuchi, and Secretary General Dorothea Baumann. The idea about the Council's continuous shared events with different sister societies received a strong impetus there (*BICTM* 124, Jan 2014:4).

In November 2013, Huib Schippers hosted a multi-society conference at the Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia. ICTM President Castelo-Branco and I were there, and we took the opportunity to discuss further the idea of shared meetings with various societies. Particularly fruitful were the conversations with the executives of the International Music Council (IMC), President Frans de Ruiter and Secretary General Silja Fischer, and of the European Music Council (EMC), President Stef Coninx and Secretary General Simone Dudt (*BICTM* 124, Jan 2014:4).

In March 2014 I was invited to represent ICTM at the conference "Latin America and the canon," organized by the International Musicological Society Regional Association for Latin America and the Caribbean in Havana, Cuba. This provided an opportunity for making plans for a joint event with the International Musicological Society (President Fabris, Vice President Kuss) and the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centers (President Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie, member Zdravko Blažeković). The plan of a joint scholarly event with these two societies led to the second forum in 2017, which is presented later in this chapter (*BICTM* 125, Apr 2014:2–3).

As senior executives of Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale (RILM), Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie and Zdravko Blažeković continuously supported cooperation among IAML, ICTM, and IMS, the three societies whose representatives form the advisory body of RILM known as Commission mixte. Thanks to them and to the presence of the executives of all four "R-projects" at the conference in Cuba, communication was established also with Répertoire International des Sources Musicales (RISM), Répertoire International de la Presse Musicale (RIPM), and Répertoire International d'Iconographie Musicale (RIDIM).

In November 2014, I organized and chaired the roundtable "ICTM and SEM: Ethnomusicology in the interna-

tional arena" at the SEM annual meeting in Pittsburgh. The participants were Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, Marie Agatha Ozah, Margaret Sarkisian, and John Lawrence Witzleben.

In July 2015, I organized and chaired the roundtable "ICTM and its sister societies" at the 43rd ICTM World Conference in Astana, Kazakhstan. The participants were: Zdravko Blažeković for the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML), Goffredo Plastino for the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM), Tatjana Marković for the International Musicological Society (IMS), Donald DeVito for the International Society for Music Education (ISME), and Urmimala Sharkar Munsu for the World Dance Alliance (WDA). The idea of bringing together representatives of a larger number of societies inspired the third forum, presented below.

It is important to note that the growing interest for cooperation among sister societies was reflected in the agendas for ICTM Executive Board meetings, where "Relations with international organizations" became a standard item in 2016. In the same year, an Executive Board Committee "for liaising with national and international organizations" was formed. Its first chair was Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, with Ursula Hemetek and me as members.

### The first three fora

The **1st Forum** took place on 13–16 September 2015 at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance of the University of Limerick, Ireland. The originally envisioned participating sister societies were the ICTM and the SEM. Immediately after the forum, the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) was to have its symposium at the same venue, so the forum was enriched by a shared day with ESEM as the third sister society. The event was co-chaired by the presidents of ICTM and SEM Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco and Beverley Diamond, respectively, later joined by ESEM President Britta Sweers. It was co-hosted by Colin Quigley and Aileen Dillane. The theme "Transforming ethnomusicological praxis through activism and community engagement" was defined by Samuel Araújo and Gage Averill. The organizers selected and invited 56 presenters from 15 countries on all continents.

It is probably not common knowledge that this was not the first attempt to bring ICTM and SEM together for a single conference event. According to the oral histories in both societies, differences in duration, accommodation standards, and even parts of the year in which ICTM world conferences and SEM annual meetings



**Figure 1.** Participants of the 2nd Forum. Abu Dhabi, 15 March 2017 (photo courtesy of Svanibor Pettan).

take place were among the obstacles encountered in the past. Organizing a special event in 2015 proved to be a winning formula. Initially envisioned as a smaller event with a limited number of sharply-focussed presentations, with no call for papers, it proved to be a major and memorable gathering: the first in a series named fora that ICTM decided to define and maintain.

The event was announced as follows:

This first collaboration between the two largest academic organizations for ethnomusicology endeavours to bring some of the finest thinkers and social activists within the global academy of music scholars together with public sector actors/advocates/activists who understand the relevance of sound and movement studies in addressing social, political and environmental issues of urgent importance. (*BICTM* 126, Oct 2014:14)

An event with high expectations, the forum raised considerable interest in the participating societies and ethnomusicological circles in general. Detailed reviews were published in both the *SEM Newsletter* (Diamond 2015) and the *Bulletin of the ICTM* (Sorice Keller 2016). The forum's homepage is <http://www.ictmusic.org/joint-sem-ictm-forum-2015>.

The most comprehensive outcome of this event is the resulting edited publication in two volumes under the title *Transforming Ethnomusicology* (Diamond and Castelo-Branco 2021).

The **2nd Forum** took place on 13–16 March 2017 at the New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The participating sister societies were the ICTM, IAML, and IMS. The event was co-chaired by the presidents of the three societies Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie, and Dinko Fabris, respectively. The principal host was Virginia Danielson, ethnomusicologist and director of NYUAD's library, who at that time represented ICTM at Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale (RILM) and chaired the Commission Mixte, RILM's advisory body consisting of ICTM, IAML, and IMS representatives. The theme was "Music as cultural heritage: Problems of historiography, ethnography, ethics, and preservation." Each society selected its own presenters, contributing to the total of thirty from fourteen countries on four continents (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America). **Figure 1** shows many of the active participants.

This forum succeeded in bringing together scholars, performers, librarians, and heritage practitioners, who reported on and demonstrated various disciplinary perspectives from different parts of the globe on the safeguarding of music as cultural heritage in the twenty-first century. Specialists active in the Gulf region and in the Middle East enriched the forum with valuable local perspectives. The Council's report was published in the *Bulletin of the ICTM* (Pettan 2017). IAML's report is



**Figure 2.** A scene from the final roundtable of the 3rd Forum: Jonathan Stock (moderator) and representatives of the six participating societies. Beijing, 14 July 2018 (photo by Svanibor Pettan).

available at <https://www.iaml.info/de/news/iaml-update-iaml-ictm-ims-joint-conference-abu-dhabi>. The homepage of this forum is not available any more.

The **3rd Forum** took place on 11–14 July 2018 at the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM) in Beijing, China. The participating sister societies were ICTM, the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM), International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML), the International Musicological Society (IMS), Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM), and Association for Traditional Music in China (ATMC). The three co-chairs (Zhang Boyu, Jonathan Stock, and myself) were assisted by a committee composed of Razia Sultanova and Xiao Mei (ICTM), Silvia Martinez (IASPM), Stanislaw Hrabia (IAML), Frans Wiering (IMS), Gregory Barz (SEM), and Qiao Jianzhong (ATMC).<sup>5</sup> The hosts were the CCOM President Yu Feng and Zhang Boyu. The theme was “Approaches to research on music and dance in the Internet era.” This forum, for which each of the six participating scholarly societies selected up to twenty presenters, was obviously the largest one so far, involving more than a hundred

active participants from forty countries on all continents. **Figure 2** depicts the final roundtable, chaired by Jonathan Stock.

This forum provided a well-structured encouragement for leaving the comfort zones of our respective societies and their specific disciplinary foci and joining forces in exploring worldwide theoretical, methodological, and practical challenges that affect our research on music and dance in the era marked by the Internet. A report written by Zhao Jioandi was published in the *Bulletin of the ICTM* (Zhao 2018). The homepage of this forum is <http://www.ictmusic.org/3rd-ictm-forum-approaches-research-music-and-dance-internet-era>.

## Conclusion

The results of the ICTM Survey from 2019 show that members accepted and recognized the fora as an additional valuable type of scholarly meetings. All three fora that have taken place so far testify to a considerable enthusiasm among the participants and the shared wish for continuation. The last report of Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco in her capacity of the chair of EB Committee for Liaison with National and International

<sup>5</sup> At the forum, IASPM was represented by Dean Vuletic, IMS by Egberto Bermúdez, and SEM by Huib Schippers.

Organizations from 2020 ends with the following recommendation: “This committee should continue and intensify its work with national and international organizations.” While inheriting the chairmanship from her, the committee is further strengthened by the addition of Marcia Ostashevski and Tan Sooi Beng.

The COVID-19 pandemic started in the period of major planning of new shared events featuring ICTM and its sister societies. While waiting for the end of the pandemic to organize the next forum, some societies continue to cooperate on a smaller scale, but in important new ways. For instance, IMS agreed to prepare a shared roundtable for the ICTM world conference in Lisbon, and ICTM will prepare a shared roundtable for the IMS’s quinquennial congress in Athens, both scheduled for 2022.

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