

Interactions: Studies in Communication & Culture



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Special Issue:

'Dream Factories: Prince, *Sign o' the Times*, Box Sets and Cultural Artefacts'

Deadline for abstracts: **Friday 28 May 2021.**

Deadline for final submission: **Friday 8 October 2021.**

The guest editors – Dr Kirsty Fairclough (Manchester Metropolitan University) and Professor Mike Alleyne (Middle Tennessee State University) – are seeking abstracts for papers that examine the expansive super deluxe *Sign o' the Times* 2020 box set.

The essays will explore its multiple levels of musical and cultural significance, while critiquing the value of its presence as a commercial artefact and a signifier of Prince's creative legacy in the context of previous posthumous deluxe edition reissues. Following Prince's death in 2016, his estate embarked on a series of reissued albums and new compilations, inclusive of previously unreleased material. In its original form in 1987, *Sign o' the Times* became one of Prince's most critically acclaimed records while also being his second double album and a major commercial success. In this Special Issue, the 2020 box set with eight discs of music and a live DVD provides multiple opportunities for critical reassessment of both the album and its posthumous inclusion of rare and/or previously unreleased items.

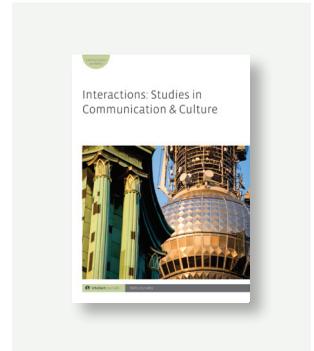
This issue will explore the ways in which the box set has become part of a parallel Prince career, which allows fans and critics to reassess his output and provides a new lens through which to understand the album as cultural artefact. With this central focus, the specific analytical angles will be left to the individual contributors, defining what they perceive as the key characteristics of this deluxe edition compilation and its comparative relationships to earlier catalogue reissues.

Such discussion will primarily incorporate the following:

- The extent to which the 2020 deluxe *Sign o' the Times* box expands and/or enhances our understanding of Prince's creative process and compositional evolution.
- The relationship of the release to the estate's ongoing reissue series.
- The resonance of the album's musical, cultural and other artistic statements several decades later.
- The explicitly commercial transaction integrated into the sale and marketing of previously released or unreleased material.

While authors may theorise across the range of the full range of official posthumous Prince album releases since 2016, each essay must provide comparison and contrast with the *Sign o' the Times* album collection as the analytical axis of the project.

The scope of these releases facilitates discussion of compilations, live performances, demos and customized recordings not originally intended for general commercial issue. To varying degrees, the deluxe *Sign o' the Times* boxed set also contains all of these elements and serves as an ideal fulcrum for critical evaluation of the overall existing body of Prince reissues.



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Contributor analysis may also consider the status of Prince albums not yet included in the reissue series, contemplating artistic, cultural and commercial matters potentially surrounding their absence to date.

We welcome contributions from academics, practitioners and practice-based researchers. Joint proposals and proposals from emerging scholars are encouraged. The maximum article length is 6000 words.

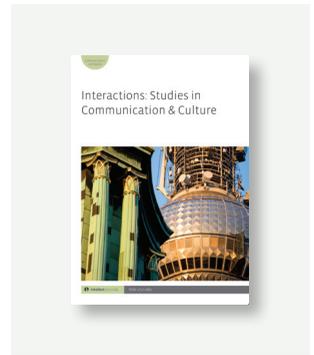
This journal edition is scheduled for publication in late February 2022.

In the first instance, abstracts of 250 words with a 100-word biography should be sent to Dr Kirsty Fairclough at Manchester Metropolitan University, K.Fairclough@mmu.ac.uk and Professpr Mike Alleyne at Middle Tennessee State University, mike.alleyne@mtsu.edu no later than Friday 28 May 2021.

Potential contributors will be contacted by Friday 18 June 2021 and are required to submit the first version of their completed contributions, in full, by Friday 8 October 2021.

The guest editors of the special issue may be contacted for further information as follows:

Dr Kirsty Fairclough: K.Fairclough@mmu.ac.uk
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