

Metal Music Studies

Background

From a few scholars working in isolation in parent disciplines (such as musicology and sociology), metal music studies has grown in the last ten years in conjunction with the international growth of metal music itself. The first global conference on metal music – Metal, Music and Politics – was held in Salzburg in 2008. It was clear to many of those who attended this first conference that metal music studies was an emergent multidisciplinary subject field in its own right, with the potential to be as interdisciplinary as a subject field such as leisure studies. The International Society of Metal Music Studies (ISMMS) was launched in September 2011 at the Home of Metal Conference in Wolverhampton (<http://www.homeofmetalconference.com/>). It is now a fully recognized international learned society with members around the world. The journal is the official journal of ISMMS.

Aims and scope

The aims and scope of the journal are as follows:

1. To provide an intellectual hub for the International Society for Metal Music Studies and a vehicle to promote the development of metal music studies;
2. To be the focus for research and theory in metal music studies – a multidisciplinary (and interdisciplinary) subject field that engages with a range of parent disciplines, including (but not limited to) sociology, musicology, humanities, cultural studies, geography, philosophy, psychology, history, natural sciences;
3. To subject all journals to a double-blind peer-review and publish high-quality, world-class research, theory and shorter articles that cross over from the industry and the scene;
4. To be a world leader in interdisciplinary studies and be a unique resource for metal music studies.

The rationale

This journal fills a gap in the market – there is no other journal that has the sole focus of publishing research and theory that uses metal music as its subject matter. This is an anomaly, as the number of scholars working on metal music is large, and getting larger, as heavy metal becomes a legitimate focus of postgraduate study and scholarly activity. Metal music is a global phenomenon, with thriving scenes in every region. It is ubiquitous in popular culture and a form of music closely associated with modernity. Intellectual inquiry into metal music, then, is very relevant and timely – and this journal will be the only one of its kind, bringing together the metal music research that is currently otherwise published across a wide range of journals: in musicology, in cultural studies, in sociology and in other disciplines. As metal music studies grows as a truly interdisciplinary subject field, this journal will be in a position to nurture and develop the discipline. The number of the former, and the boom in postgraduate research on metal music studies, will ensure a steady supply of high-quality submissions and a healthy and sustainable journal. The journal will therefore fit neatly and coherently into Intellect's existing music journal portfolio.

Editorial structure

There will always be an Editorial Advisory Board (EAB) of approximately thirty-three (subject to the additions of Assistant Editors, see below), and a smaller Editorial Board (EB) of six, on which sits the Principal Editor and the Second Section Editor. The EAB will be a mixture of early career academics and leading names in their parent disciplines. Their purpose will be to engage in peer review and to work with the EB to promote the journal. The EB will be the group of editors who do most of the operational editing work, commissioning book reviews and short pieces for the journal, liaising with reviewers on the EAB. The EAB will reflect the different parent disciplines of metal music studies, and will also reflect the discipline's international diversity. There is a strong commitment to ensuring proper diversity across the EB and EAB, both in terms of career position, subject field, specialisms across metal sub-genres, gender and regionality – while maintaining a minimum level of expectations about ability and academic rigour.

The EB will be responsible for electing new members onto its Board, and also for approving recommendations on the EAB, which will come from the Executive Committee of ISMMS.

The peer review process for full papers will begin with an application to the journal email address or a preferred on-line system. The Principal Editor will appoint two post-graduate or early career Assistant Editors who will work with the Principal Editor and the Second Section Editor to ensure the integrity of the peer-review process. The Second Section Editor will also be the book review editor, or will delegate the role to one of the assistant Editors, or someone from the EB or EAB. Assistant Editors will be offered places on the EAB when they step down, subject to the agreement of the EAB.

The five-volume election cycle

The EAB, EB and the roles of Principal Editor and Second Section Editor will become technically vacant at the end of the fifth volume of the journal, and new people will take over for the next five years.

1. The incumbent Principal Editor must step down, but they will be offered a place on the new EAB. Before they step down, the Principal Editor needs to ensure there are elections for the new Principal Editor, the Second Section Editor, and the EB and the EAB.
2. Applications for the Editor roles will take place in the first half of the final year to ensure continuity. Both Editors will be members of ISMMS. Both Editors will need to demonstrate commitment to ISMMS and the journal, so they will need to be on either the existing EAB or EB, or they will be able to demonstrate that commitment through other roles.
3. The incumbent EB will make the decision with the Executive Committee of ISMMS.
4. Existing members of the EAB and EB will be canvassed before the elections for the two Editors to find out if they want to stay on in their roles, or whether they wish to step down or cross from one Board to another. The Principal Editor will also liaise with the EB and EAB to remove individuals who, for one reason or another, are no longer closely involved with the journal.

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5. Further elections will take place once the new Editors are duly elected, with the new Editors-in-waiting working with the incumbent Editors to ensure the new EB and revised EAB meet the aims of the journal and the commitment to diversity.
6. Elections to newly vacant posts in the EAB may happen at any time