

IASPM Canada Book Prize

The association's bylaws are unclear on the possibility of an "honorable mention" category, but the Book Prize Committee would like to recognize the achievement of Brian Fauteaux's new book, ***Music In Range***, which tells the story of the emergence, naturalization, and codification of campus/community radio in Canada. Fauteaux's discussion of locality extends wider discourse about the relationships between music scenes and the spaces and places in which they are produced. He poses and pursues crucial questions about how "local" is defined, opening up larger discussions about how radio stations conceive "Canadian-ness" as well as the development and logics of government policies looking to protect such an ambiguous designation. The standout strengths of *Music In Range* are its detailed examinations of the transformations of and innovations in CRTC policy, its rich interviews with past and present participants in important campus and community radio scenes, and its excellent account of the co-constitution by campus radio and other institutions and actors of distinctive music scenes in Sackville, Vancouver, and Winnipeg.

The Book Prize Committee awards this year's prize to Jeremy Morris' ***Selling Digital Music, Formatting Culture***, published by the University of California Press. Jeremy's been an active member of IASPM Canada for many years, earning his doctorate in the Department of Art History and Communication Studies at McGill in 2010. Many IASPM members (and International Communication Association members, for that matter) have followed his work on socio-technical phenomena in popular music.

Selling Digital Music is an analytical account of the transformation of the digital music commodity over the last 20 or so years, with each chapter focused on a particular moment in that (ongoing) transformation: the development of systems of metadata, whereby digital files can be coupled by the kinds of information that used to appear in the packaging of analog media; the attempts by companies to "make digital music behave" (almost as if it were still analog), for the purposes of control of circulation and capture of revenue; the singular role of Napster in building a market for digital music files—a black market at first, but one which Jeremy shows enabled the legitimate market; the singular role of iTunes in the refinement and naturalization of digital music's purchase online; and a more prospective look at streaming and the cloud and burgeoning modes of music circulation and profit-generation. Core to the first half of the book is a very interesting "unintended consequences" thesis: early users of systems for the creation of metadata and the unauthorized sharing of digital music were directly contributing to the commodification of digital music even as they believed themselves to be participating in anti-capitalist activities.

The book's great strengths are 1) its careful and rigorous elaboration of the practices of persons, collectives, and institutions in conceptual contexts, gracefully maintaining connections between details of evidence and analytical frames, 2) the frequent appearance of surprising analytical approaches from

fields well outside of popular music studies and communication studies, that Jeremy employs to provide valuable new questions and perspectives to popular music studies, and 3) the book's generously lucid writing and exquisite storytelling. Fascinating anecdotes help to contextualize the history of digital media and add an element of personalization through individuals' stories. Among the most interesting (and sometimes quite droll) are accounts in which artists have made attempts to challenge our conception of an 'album', or to re-materialization music such as packaging it into clothing, tote bags, pins, and so forth.

One adjudicator predicts that for some years to come, no scholar in the world will be able to credibly research the digital music industry without citing this book. For its crystal clear and often entertaining prose, for bringing into dialogue such a huge range of literature otherwise disparate from communication and music studies, and for the sheer density of interesting ideas on every page, it is an extraordinary book. It made members of the committee think in new ways about our everyday interactions with music. In other words, it's a *tour de force* and essential reading.

Another adjudicator observed that this book will become standard reading in the field of music technology. *Selling Digital Music* will encourage wider discussions of the cultural definition of the commodity, and how cultural commodities function in our digital society. Morris' book is thorough and engaging. It was a pleasure to read, and a text that members of the committee will come back to again and again, as will many of us for a long time to come.