

“Directions and Aesthetics of the Digital Era”

Annual conference of the IMS Study Group ‘Music and Media’

School of Music, University College Dublin, June 11-12 2026

The seventeenth meeting of the ‘Music and Media’ study group of the International Musicological Society will take place in-person on June 11-12 2026 in the School of Music at University College Dublin. The theme of this year’s conference is “Directions and Aesthetics of the Digital Era” and will feature a keynote address hosted at the Irish Film Institute.

Since 2000 and the increasing dominance of digital film, music for screen media has experienced substantial changes. With the waning of the “classical” scoring style, the popularisation of composition on Digital Audio Workstations, the arrival of Dolby Atmos, the increasing prioritisation of sound over score, and the rise of streaming services, shifts in music and sound have distinguished digital-era aesthetics from those of the twentieth century. This conference invites proposals that consider these aesthetics, the directions of arising trends, or precursors foreshadowing contemporary practices. Papers may consider, but are not limited to, the following:

- Divergent trends in the treatment of music and sound in screen media since the dawn of the digital era
- The blurred lines between sound design and score
- The changing role of the composer, and the increasing influence of music supervisors, sound editors, sound mixers
- The influence of film score companies (such as Hans Zimmer’s Remote Control Productions) on the direction of audio aesthetics
- Screen media case studies from around the globe representative of recent phenomena, or of pre-digital media that predicts future sonic aesthetics
- The place and influence of AI on contemporary practice and aesthetics

We seek proposals for 20-minute papers or three-paper panels from scholars of music and sound in screen media, graduate students, and industry practitioners. All papers will be 20 minutes in length, followed by 10 minutes of discussion.

Abstracts for all individual papers should not exceed 250 words. In the case of themed panel sessions, there should be an abstract for the whole session (maximum 250 words) plus an abstract for each individual speaker (maximum

150 words each), and should be submitted as a single document. Abstracts should include:

- A title for the paper and/or session
- The name, contact details and affiliation (where applicable) of the speaker(s) and, in the case of themed panel sessions and round-table sessions, the panel convener
- Brief biography of the speaker(s) (maximum 100 words per speaker)

Proposals should be sent, as a PDF, to Conor Power at [conor.power1\[at\]ucd.ie](mailto:conor.power1@ucd.ie) by December 5 2025

The Organizing Committee for the conference is:

- Conor Power (University College Dublin), Conference Chair
- Emile Wennekes (Utrecht University), MaM Chair
- Laura Anderson (University College Dublin)
- Anika Babel (Northumbria University)
- Ciaran Crilly (University College Dublin)
- Julin Lee (Hochschule für Musik und Theater München)

The Programme Committee for the conference is:

- Chloé Huvet (Université Évry Paris-Saclay/IUF)
- Julin Lee (Hochschule für Musik und Theater München)
- James Denis McGlynn (Trinity College Dublin)
- Jessica Shine (Munster Technological University)
- Emile Wennekes (Utrecht University)

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