Editor’s Message to Special Issue of Increasingly Developing Music Informatics

TETSURO KITAHARA¹,a)

When I was a young researcher, senior researchers said to me, “in the past, we had to explain why we study music.” Because objectivity, quantitativity, reproducibility, and universality are essential in research on science and technology, music, a subjective and artistic human activity, might look strange as a target domain for such research. However, music has undoubtedly developed in conjunction with technology development. Music production without any synthesizers or computers is unimaginable. Popularization of portable music players and electronic music distribution has changed the way in which people enjoy music. In addition, the culture in which non-professional musicians publish their own musical works on Internet-based video hosting services has been widely disseminated. For these reasons, music has been widely recognized nowadays as one of the main target domains for research concerning information technologies.

In light of the above circumstances, the Information Processing Society of Japan (IPSJ) has published special issues concerning music informatics every few years since 2002. In the last special issue, entitled “Special Issue on Extensions and Advances in Music Information Processing” (published in May 2016), seven papers, including both Japanese and English papers, were published. We planned the present special issue to live up to many researchers’ expectations since more than three years have passed since the last special issue. We invited submissions concerning all areas of music informatics, and 20 papers (including technical notes) were submitted (four of which were English papers). Some submissions were made by researchers who do not regularly attend the IPSJ SIGMUS meetings; thus, this special issue has contributed to some extent to the extension of the community.

The editorial committee assigned two reviewers to each submission and requested them to peer-review the submissions strictly but with an open mind. We carefully checked the reviewers’ comments and corrected them to avoid the authors misunderstanding the comments and inappropriately rewriting the papers. As a result, nine papers (including technical notes) were accepted (i.e., the acceptance rate was 45%). Out of the four English papers, two were accepted. The accepted papers contain a wide area of topics ranging from automatic music composition/arrangement and music information retrieval to voice perception and intelligent robotics. We believe that we have successfully edited an exceptional special issue worthy of the extensive research area of music informatics. Some submissions were rejected because of inadequate descriptions and/or insufficient evaluations even though they included interesting ideas. We hope the authors revise and resubmit them.

As with the last special issue, this special issue encouraged attachment of multimedia content (videos) to submissions in order to enhance their understanding. Multimedia content was attached to two submissions, one of which has been accepted. The number of submissions having multimedia content attachments were less than expected. We would like to review the reason for this low attachment rate in order to promote this trial.

Finally, we would like to thank all the authors for their contributions and the reviewers for short-term peer-reviewing. We would also like to thank the editorial committee members and secretaries of IPSJ.

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¹ Nihon University
a) kitahara@chs.nihon-u.ac.jp