

## **RIPM Annual Report IAML 1986 (Stockholm)**

In this brief report we shall outline RIPM activities over the past twelve months. Before doing so however we wish to state that it is our firm intention and, of course, our responsibility to organize regular RIPM sessions at the IAML meetings as frequently as is possible and, in any case, to present a RIPM report at the annual meeting of the Society. It is only the great expenses incurred this year that prevent us—much to our regret—from participating in Stockholm.

At the RIPM session in East Berlin, a meeting was planned for members of the RIPM's Indexing Norms Commission to be held the following November, in Vancouver, during the first joint congress of the four principal North American music societies. Maria Calderisi Bryce, Lenore Coral, Barry S. Brook, and H. Robert Cohen attended the RIPM meeting in November during which several decisions were made; (1) RIPM's cataloguing and indexing norms were approved; (2) the format of the Keyword-Author Index was altered to align entries at the left hand margin; (3) the RIPM manual, prepared in Vancouver, would serve as RIPM's Procedural guide, codifying the RIPM methodology; (4) a Guide to Contributors would be written which would include cataloguing instructions and computer entry codes in a single volume.

It will probably be useful to recall here that the RIPM system was conceived to allow data to be entered into a personal computer in any location, with the data thereafter being sent to North America for entry into a mainframe computer which, in conjunction with a laser printer, would produce a two-part volume, namely, a catalogue or calendar, and a Keyword-Author Index, in a camera-ready format.

With the RIPM procedure approved, H. Robert Cohen and Diana Snigurowicz—a research assistant at the Vancouver Centre—traveled to the RIPM Centre in Parma in order to instruct our collaborators there in the appropriate method for entering RIPM data into a computer. As mentioned last year, the Italian Centre has purchased and installed both appropriate computer equipment and a full microfilming laboratory to pursue the filming of Italian music journals. Within 48 hours our Italian colleagues were entering the data with little difficulty. Thereafter, Ms. Snigurowicz traveled to Mainz, Germany to give the same type of instruction to the RIPM assistant working under the direction of Professor C. H. Mahling at Johannes-Gutenberg Universität. Floppy disks containing data entered on the personal computers in Italy and in West Germany were then transported to Vancouver, and loaded into the mainframe computer at the University of British Columbia without difficulty. We can report, therefore, that the idea of entering RIPM data into an IBM compatible personal computer anywhere in the world, and shipping the data on floppy disks to North America for the computerized preparation of the volumes, works perfectly. Once this was confirmed, the preparation of RIPM volumes began in both Italy and West Germany and continued, of course, in Vancouver.

Three problems remained to be resolved: (1) the preparation of a Guide to Contributors based on the *Manual of Procedures* and the *Computer Coding Guide*; (2) the length of the Keyword-Author Indexes; and (3) the fact that

contributors entering data outside the North American centre cannot generate a graphic representation of a RIPM Calendar and Keyword-Author Index on their personal computer, which makes proofreading the data before sending it to Vancouver somewhat ponderous. I shall attempt to describe, in a succinct manner, how we are dealing with each problem.

In order to obtain an indication of the work required to transform the Procedures Manual and Coding Guide into a Guide for Contributors, a copy of the two volumes were sent to Mlle H el ene Garceau, a student completing a Ph.D. dissertation at Universit e Laval dealing with writings on music in 19th-century journals published in Qu ebec. Mlle Garceau was asked to study the RIPM methodology as presented in the Procedures Manual and apply the methodology to a 19th-century Canadian music journal. The result of this experiment was most interesting. Mlle Garceau made suggestions for transforming the Procedures Manual into a Guide for Contributors, and at the same time furnished us with a computer disk of cataloguing data. Once again, the disk worked perfectly. When entered into the mainframe computer it automatically generated a Calendar and a Keyword-Author Index. Thus we gained valuable information about preparing the Guide for Contributors and at the same time verified once again that the system was viable.

In order to attempt, in a collaborative manner, to develop a method that would allow us to reduce the size of the Keyword-Author Indexes and to determine the extent to which post editing of the computer generated indexes would be necessary, Marcello Conati traveled to Vancouver in February to work intensively with us during a two and a half-week period. It is always difficult to determine at which point a so-called quick and dirty indexing system is too dirty—and to balance the extent to which human intervention is necessary in light of cost and productivity. Anyone dealing with automated indexes is aware of this problem which RIPM shall deal with in two ways: (1) by employing a coding symbol developed for RIPM that allows us to link together in single index entries, full titles of works, institutions, societies etc. and thus to avoid a great deal of unnecessary repetition; and (2) by “manually” editing the computer-generated indexes before publication.

The third problem cited above concerned our inability to allow a collaborator to produce a working representation of the Calendar and Index for editing at the location where the work had been undertaken. In seeking a solution to this problem we discovered that because programming languages previously used exclusively on mainframe computers were being developed for personal computers, we could easily develop a system to allow the Calendar and Index to be compiled on a personal computer. However, the programming language employed for printing RIPM catalogues was not available for personal computers, and more than likely would never be. Thus, we made a major decision: all RIPM printing programs are being translated into an internationally accepted programming language known as TeX which now functions both on mainframe and personal computers. When we complete this work over the next 12 to 18 months, we will be able to generate both a working copy of an RIPM Calendar and Index at any location where an IBM compatible personal computer and printer are available, as well as the final camera-ready professional copy on a mainframe computer. While the working copy will not, of course, approach the clarity and quality of that produced by a high powered laser printer, it will be of sufficient quality to allow proofreading and editing where the data is entered. Moreover, translating the printing programs now being employed into TeX, also

offers RIPM much greater freedom to use other even more sophisticated printing devices as they come on the market. This is a costly undertaking but one that is clearly worthwhile.

Three other issues must be addressed: First, *Periodica Musica* IV—a number devoted in large part to 19th-century Eastern European music journals and specifically Russian, Hungarian and Croatian periodicals—was recently printed. RIPM has therefore respected its yearly publication schedule and its mandate to reflect scholarship on an international scale. Second, a rather important piece of news: the North American RIPM Centre is now in the process of being transferred from the University of British Columbia to the University of Maryland. While some cataloguing work will continue in Vancouver, the principal center will be located at the University of Maryland which, as you know, is in the Washington, D.C. area. It is important to underscore here that important resources are being made available to the Centre in its new location. At the same time it is important to acknowledge the significant contribution made to the establishment of RIPM by the University of British Columbia. The RIPM Centre will continue to be directed by H. Robert Cohen who has also become Chairman of the Music Department at the University of Maryland.

In the interest of limiting the length of this report we shall not give a list of those scholarly events at which RIPM was the focus of attention during the past year. However we should point out that scholars in other disciplines have begun expressing serious interest in applying the RIPM system to areas other than music.

Finally, I am pleased to report that three RIPM volumes have been completed and are now being proofread, and that several others have already been undertaken. We shall display these at next year's meeting.

H. Robert Cohen  
Marcello Conati