

Application to host the IASPM 2017-conference in Kassel, Germany (public)

Proposal overview

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Application to host the IASPM 2017-conference in Kassel, Germany (public).....	1
Initial Proposal letter from IASPM Branch member.....	2
IASPM-branch support	3
Information about what Kassel offers IASPM	3
Kassel.....	4
University of Kassel	4
Accommodation and transportation.....	7
Myself	8
Review for Poptech 1999 "Are you experienced?"	9

March 23, 2012

Dear Chair of the IASPM Executive committee, dear Martha,

I hereby apply as organizer of the IASPM international conference at the University of Kassel, Germany, in 2017. Kassel is a mid-sized city (pop. 200,000) located centrally in Germany. A train ride from Frankfurt International airport takes about 1h30 (Berlin can be reached within 2h45, so even day-trips are possible). In its visual appearance, Kassel is typical for a German city that was rebuilt after a severe destruction of its centre during WW2. Kassel University was founded in 1971 and has very successfully developed, especially in the past decade. The music department received a new building in 2009 which could serve as the main conference location (Concert Hall holds 210), other and bigger auditoriums are available on the campus next door. Please find attached a letter of our president in support of my application.

I'm not applying for 2015 to stick to the Europe – elsewhere – Europe – system of IASPM. In addition, Kassel features its renowned International Art exhibition DOCUMENTA every five years, 2012 is about to begin, 2017 will be the next one. I estimate this will make Kassel more attractive as the conference location for IASPM.

I was a member of the executive committee from 2001-2003 and took part in the organisation of the conference in Montréal in 2003. I have attended many IASPM-conferences (starting with Sydney 1999) and am quite familiar with its general procedures.

Please forward this application to the other members of the executive committee. Nothing needs to be fixed, yet. We will all meet in Spain and can discuss things in detail.

Many greetings from Germany

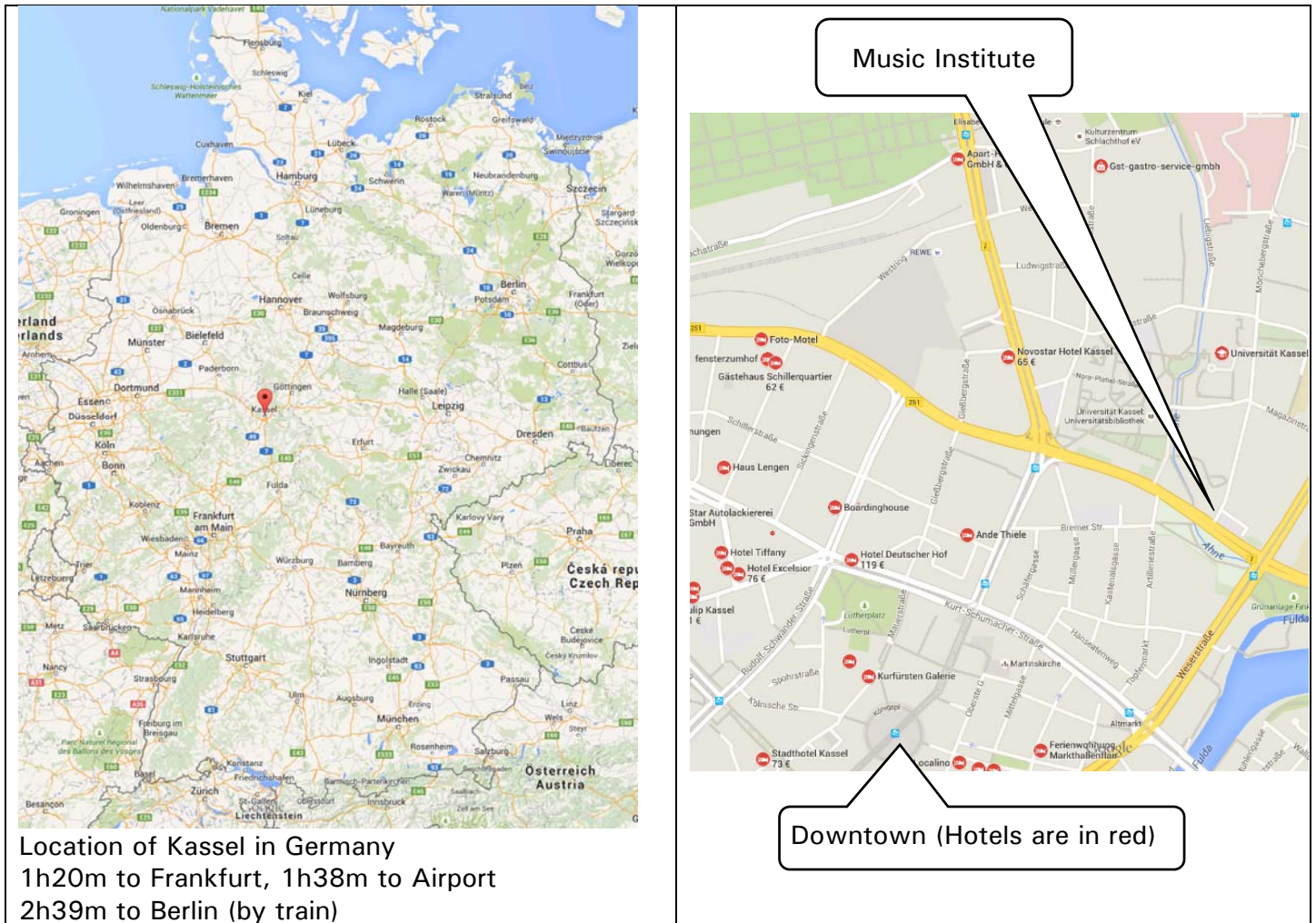
- * Jan Hemming
- * Professor for Systematic Musicology
- * Kassel University
- * FB 01, Music Institute
- * Moenchebergstr. 1
- * 34109 Kassel
- * Deutschland / Germany
- * tel +49-561-804-4341
- * fax +49-561-804-4267
- * mob +49-177-3508106
- * www.uni-kassel.de/~hemming

IASPM-branch support

It was after the initial proposal to host the conference that the German-speaking branch IASPM-D-A-CH could be re-established – myself being on the advisory board. Its president Susanne Binas-Preisendörfer and all other members of the EC support the existing application of Kassel. I will be very happy to include everyone interested in the planning and ongoings of the actual conference if Kassel gets selected.

Information about what Kassel offers IASPM

Here is some information regarding the application to host IASPM 2017 at the University of Kassel.



Location of Kassel in Germany
1h20m to Frankfurt, 1h38m to Airport
2h39m to Berlin (by train)

Music Institute

Downtown (Hotels are in red)



Herkules and Mountain Park (Bergpark)



University Campus

Kassel

Kassel (Pop. 200000) is located at the very center of Germany, approximately 200 km north of Frankfurt. The city is 1100 years old and most famous for its Bergpark (Mountain Park) which was declared UNESCO world Heritage in 2013. The historical city center was completely wiped out during World War II. Kassel is internationally known for the Documenta art exhibition, which takes place every five years. It lasts for 100 days and will be on in June 2017 (!), which – as I believe – will greatly add to the attractiveness of Kassel as a conference location. Kassel has a very vivid cultural and musical scene, ranging from underground punk-gatherings in dilapidated factory buildings, jazz and cabaret up to a symphonic orchestra. Metal and electronica are the current trends in the clubs. We will include guided tours at day and night...

University of Kassel

University of Kassel was founded in 1971, nowadays accommodates approximately 24000 students and covers all major areas of science excluding medicine. The main campus is a former industrial site (Henschel steel and locomotion factory) with many of the historical brick buildings still remaining. It is within walking distance to the city center where many hotels and restaurants are located (see map). The Music Institute is in a new building from 2010 situated at the south-east corner of the main campus. Graduates typically become music teachers at German public schools (elementary, intermediate and high-school-level), but quite a few PhDs were completed in popular music studies in the past years. The Music Institute is the base for a great variety of cultural activities and research in Music Pedagogy as well as Historical and Systematic Musicology. Right next to the Music Institute is the historical Giesshaus (casting house) which will be included in the conference. The concert halls seats 200, the seminar rooms from 25-40 people. All are equipped with data projectors, various music playback-options as well as a piano. Our studio and band-room can be used for more practically related presentations.



Music Institute



Entrance Hall (coffee area)



Concert Haal (empty, seats 200)



Concert Hall in action



Giesshaus (casting house, seats 130)



Giesshaus from inside



Seminar room 0012



Seminar room 1012



Seminar room 3012



Seminar room 4003



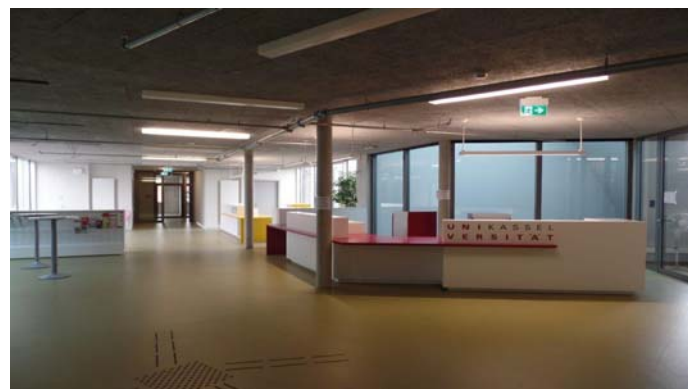
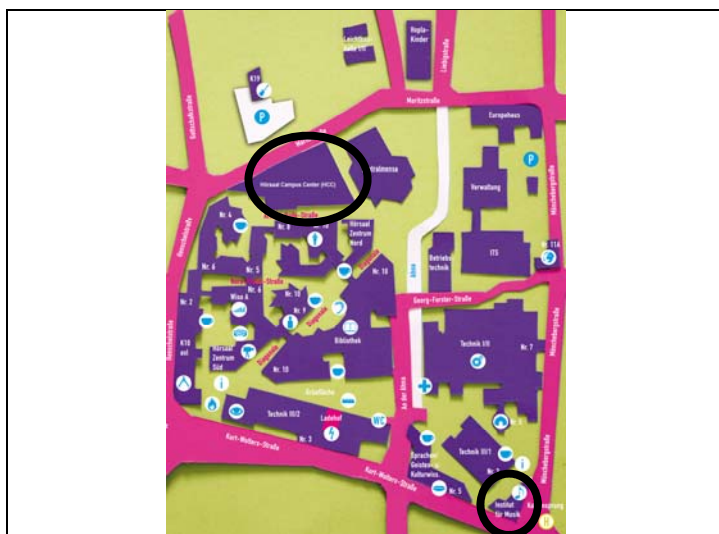
Band room



Studio

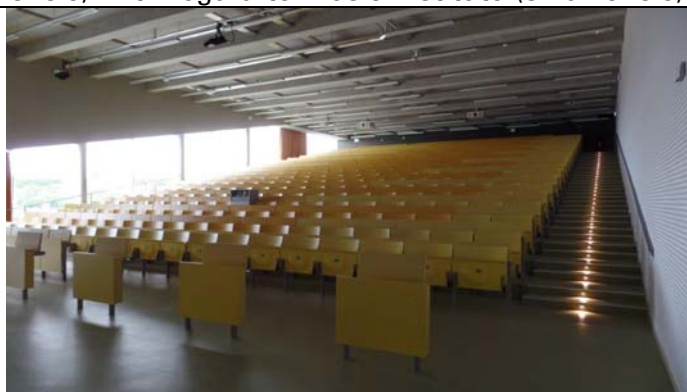
As I am aware this might be a bit too small for hosting an IASPM-conference in Europe, plans are to either include the Kongress-Palais Kassel (nice: <http://www.kongress-palais.de/en/home/>; depending on funding) or the new "Campus Center Lecture Hall" just completed. It offers seminar rooms and auditoriums of all sizes. However, as the conference will take place in June, this will mean that it is in the middle of Germany's summer term. I inquired with facilities management and it will not be possible to reserve a larger number of auditoriums for a whole week, so we might end up with a mixture of locations between the institute and the campus center. Both are within walking distance and this can be

very well planned ahead. The advantage of having the conference during the semester is that all the campus infrastructure is fully available, so there are various student-priced restaurants and almost a dozen of cafeterias to choose from for catering. This would in turn enable us to focus on organizing the conference content.



Campus Center Lecture Hall

Location of Campus Center Lecture Hall (large circle) with regard to Music Institute (small circle)



Campus Center Lecture Hall



Campus Center Lecture Hall

It is one of my central ideas to stream the complete conference sessions into the internet and to enable virtual, active participation including asking questions etc. Kassel University has a special dedication to e-learning and specific facilities providing this kind of service for conferences. This would mean a person sitting in the back of each room, monitoring picture and sound for streaming as well as taking questions after the presentations. Find attached a conference report I wrote in 1998 (!) which gave me the idea.

Another idea for handling the demanding organizational tasks is to suggest to include volunteering students and junior-scholars. This is a common practice in conferences of the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music (ESCOM) which I have frequently attended. These volunteers receive free accommodation in the youth hostel and free conference-participation, and in turn serve in assisting the speakers, setting up various sessions, running the conference-office or helping out in coffee breaks.

Accommodation and transportation

There are not too many hotels right next to the campus, but a lot of them are located in the city center (walking distance) and spread out from there by the Kongress-Palais (tram-distance, see below) all the way to the Wilhelmshöhe train station. Prices start from around EUR 50.-, but reservations will have to be made early due to the Documenta art exhibition. For those who need low-cost accommodation, there is a youth hostel (around EUR 30 per night including breakfast).

Kassel has a well-working system of public transport including trams, buses and a very popular bike-rental-system. The city can be reached via a high-speed ICE-trains running north and south (Frankfurt 1h20m, Hanover 0h55m, Hamburg 2h13m, 2h39m Berlin, 5h34 Paris), trains going east and west (Cologne 2h36m, Leipzig 2h45) take somewhat longer. Train-tickets are affordable if booked early in advance. Kassel can equally well be reached by car as it is located near a large autobahn-intersection (A7/A44). We even have an international airport which was an investment failure however, so hardly any international aircrafts ever touch ground here.

Myself

I have been a member of IASPM since 1999 and attended the international conferences in Sydney (1999), Turku (2001), Montréal (2003), Grahamstown (2011), Gijon (2013) and (upcoming) Campinas (2015). I was on the international EC from 2001-2003 and took a part in organizing Montréal 2003. Also, I've hosted the national conference of the German Society for Music Psychology (DGM) in 2009.

Finally, I would like to mention that it is my turn for a research leave in the summer term 2017, which would become a "conference leave" in case a decision is made in favor of Kassel. This means, I will be able to devote my full attention to the conference organization. In addition, a number of (former) Ph.D. students of mine will be present in Campinas (Holger Schwetter, Tobias Marx), who would be keen on becoming part of the organizing committee in 2017.

Hope this gives you a more precise picture of what we have to offer over here!

Many greetings

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Henning". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

working with literary, social and cultural theorists. This nexus of music and social science has a great potential to complement and inform the present state of music research and cultural studies in this country. To this end, it seems that the conference was worthwhile. As an immediate spin off a music study group is to be set up at the Centre. This group is inviting scholars from any discipline who have an interest in, or are undertaking, music research. The group is to be set up by Lakshmi Subramanian (University of Calcutta) and Adrian McNeil (Monash University).

Adrian McNeil
Clayton, VIC/Australia
[\[amcneil@arts.monash.edu.au\]](mailto:amcneil@arts.monash.edu.au)

PopTech online: Are you experienced?

(Virtual) Salford/UK, 3-4 April 1998

I still remember the fascination I experienced when a WWW-page first appeared on my screen after a night of configuring in 1995. Thanks to Salford University's Music Department I now felt like discovering the Internet for a second time on April 3/4, 1998, as a RealAudio participant of the "Popular Music and Technology Conference". Although I had been aware this should theoretically be possible, I was struck by this being as easy and working as reliably even over an international distance. I'm using Internet-telephony with my brother who is at a University about 100km away from mine and therefore my computer was already equipped with a sound-card, speakers and microphone. At first, however, the effect is not much different from Radio.

After the RealAudio-player was installed the conference's soundscape was transferred to my office. Thanks to thorough mixing, I could clearly understand the speakers and also catch an impression of the environment in the auditorium, e.g. if the audience was quiet or if there was a constant whispering. In the beginning, however, I did not know which speaker was on because I did not consider the one-hour time difference between Great Britain and Continental Europe. While I continued to listen, I downloaded and installed the IRC-client and got connected the two channels "poptech-discussions" and "poptech-questions". Since I never before wanted to risk wasting my time chatting, I was not familiar with IRC (Internet Relay Chat) up to that day. But I quickly understood who else was online and was also informed about the day's curriculum. At the end of Yrj Heinonen's presentation, I tried to ask a question and was quite thrilled to hear it being read to the auditorium as well as to hear the reply, of course. I almost felt as if I was there myself. What a great way to participate if one can't afford the time or the money to attend a conference in person!

So I stayed online almost until the end of the day, especially to hear my former colleague Susanne Binas from Berlin, benefiting of course from the permanent Internet (LAN) connection here at my office. The next day, I tried to connect again, this time by dial-in from at home. Although the modem-performance (28.8 kbit) should theoretically be able to handle a (16 kbit) audio-stream I could not establish a connection without permanent drop-outs. Later inquiries showed this was due to general technical problems at the dial-in-server and it should be working next time. Also, I understood that Mark Grimshaw, who was trying to participate from South Africa had serious audio problems,

whereas Steve Jones was listening for a long time without complaints. Too bad, however, that all the remaining participants seemed to be students from Salford who stayed at home to try out technology. Accordingly, about half the chat on the channels was about technical stuff and not much concerned with subject matters of the presentations. But we sure witnessed the birth of a new medium as tomorrow's conferences will most likely all be offering this kind of service. And I'm also sure there will be more participants from all over the world next time.

In the meantime, I talked to Susanne Binas and she told me that the Internet-questions seemed quite annoying to her as a speaker. This is due them "appearing out of nowhere" (she did not pick up it was me asking) and also, they can hardly be precise once they've been read. At the same time, it would have been helpful to have a WWW-reference for the RealAudio-participants with a picture of the current speaker and an abstract of the paper - this would make it easier for those joining in. A little photograph is common with Internet-telephony and the effect is quite stunning. Maybe soon, we'll be able to ask our questions with Internet-phone anyway. I only have a 486-PC by the way, which is absolutely sufficient. The problem is that sound-cards and speakers or a headset are mostly regarded as game accessories and Universities do not support their acquisition, especially for student-accessible computers.

I bought mine on my private expense and would like to encourage you to do the same - 25 Euro should be enough nowadays. And if you want to try it out - call me with Netscape (4) Conference: direct dial my IP 134.102.48.104.

Jan Hemming
University of Bremen, Germany
[\[jan.hemming@uni-bremen.de\]](mailto:jan.hemming@uni-bremen.de)

Black American Music in Europe: Past and Present

Utrecht/Netherlands, 15-16 May, 1998

Unfortunately, I could only make it to the second day of the 'Black American Music in Europe' conference, so I was absent when papers relating to the 'present' part of the conference subtitle were being discussed on Day One. Fortunately, I did manage to get to the bit on the 'past' (Day Two), and this alone made the conference well worth attending. The organisers had taken the decision to allow speakers 45 minutes each for their slots (a welcome change from the short amounts of time - 20 minutes at most - which are often allocated to speakers at academic conferences these days), which leads me to a disclaimer: there was a lot of content to the presentations and I am not pretending that this review gives a comprehensive report ...

Paul Oliver, in a presentation entitled "Great expectations: The reception of the first blues singers in Europe", argued that there was a strong ideological basis to the enjoyment of blues music in Britain during the 1940s and 1950s, with the earliest writings on the blues appearing in communist and anarchist journals. The music had great appeal to idealistic, middle-class young Europeans. Raising the issue of whether or not the earliest European magazines devoted exclusively to blues music (first in Belgium and later in the UK) could be said actually to have invented categories such as the 'Mississippi blues' style, Oliver suggested that these publications were part of what he termed the 'image-building and realisation process' re-