



W3C Music Notation Community Group Meeting

January 25, 2019



W3C Music Notation Community Group

- Founded in July 2015
- Develops and maintains format and language specifications for notated music used by web, mobile, and desktop applications
- Maintains and updates the MusicXML and Standard Music Font Layout (SMuFL) specifications
- Developing new MNX spec to handle new use cases and technologies
- Community group membership is free of charge and does not require W3C membership
- <https://www.w3.org/community/music-notation/>



Changes in 2018

- Adrian Holovaty is now co-chair, replacing Joe Berkovitz
- Competing priorities from Joe's art career and family obligations led him to step down from both W3C Music Notation and Web Audio
- MNX thus has not progressed as far as we would have liked
- However, we are very close to a draft Final Community Report for SMuFL 1.3
- Let's discuss our status and plans for SMuFL, MusicXML, and MNX



SMuFL Status

- SMuFL 1.3 draft community report about to be published
- Some new character ranges and glyphs added since 1.2 draft published in April 2016, including:
 - New ranges for Kahnnotation (dance notation) and German organ tablature
 - Extensions to existing ranges for fingering, clefs, vocal techniques, percussion beaters
 - New ranges of optional stylistic alternates added to Bravura for time signatures and chord symbols
- Some minor specification clarifications for specific metadata key/value pairs



SMuFL Fonts

- Bravura (Steinberg, SIL Open Font License)
 - Complete coverage of all glyph ranges, reference implementation for spec
- Petaluma (Steinberg, SIL Open Font License)
- Gootville (MuseScore, SIL Open Font License)
- MuseJazz (MuseScore, SIL Open Font License)
- Leipzig (Verovio, SIL Open Font License)
- November 2 (Robert Piéchaud, commercial)
- MTF-Cadence (Music Type Foundry, commercial)



SMuFL Plans

- Proceed from draft community report to final community report for SMuFL 1.3 as soon as possible
- Still receiving proposals for new glyphs and ranges, with around 30 issues currently outstanding
- New proposals are also always welcome – just open an issue
- Another minor update, perhaps version 1.4, seems a realistic possibility within 2019



MusicXML Status

- No changes have been made to MusicXML 3.1 since its release in December 2017
- However, we are starting to see new issues that could lead to a new 3.2 release in 2019 or 2020



MusicXML Plans

- Start work on a new MusicXML release in parallel with our ongoing work on MNX
- MNX is a longer-term project for the next generation of music notation standards
- There is still room for improvement in MusicXML's core use cases of music notation exchange and archiving
- Working on MNX does not make MusicXML obsolete
- There is still lots of work to do on MusicXML to MNX transition and co-existence



MusicXML 3.2 Feature Ideas

- Better handling of score and parts
 - When scores are exchanged between programs, support differences between score and parts such as page sizes, page breaks, system breaks, cues, and multi-measure rests
 - One possible implementation: include a full score and full copy of all parts within the zip archive of a .mxl file
- Better handling of concert scores and transposed parts
 - Can we bring some MNX ideas (e.g. realizations) into MusicXML in a way that's compatible with older MusicXML versions?
- What are other pressing problems for current MusicXML usage?



MNX Status

- Initial draft specification at <https://w3c.github.io/mnx/specification/>
- Addressed 8 GitHub issues during first half of 2018
- Little MNX development in second half of 2018
- We believe we have a solid technical foundation but still a lot of work ahead
- Adrian Holovaty is now co-chair with primary responsibility for MNX



MNX Plans

- Ramp up during 2019 with the co-chair transition
- Plan to discuss key issues regarding pitch representation, written and sounding pitch, and realizations at Musikmesse
- No need to wait for co-chairs
 - If you have proposals for MNX solutions for issues, please let us know
 - Start or join issue discussions on GitHub
 - For developers, write up a pull request if you have an implementation proposal after group discussion



Next Steps

- Dinner 7:30 tonight at Thai Nakorn – 12532 W. Garden Grove Blvd. in Garden Grove
- We plan to meet at Musikmesse in Frankfurt – new dates are Tuesday through Friday, April 2 – 5
 - This depends on Musikmesse providing a conference room; no date set yet
- SMuFL 1.3 draft community report should be available very soon
- Collect MusicXML 3.2 ideas this year
- Resume work on MNX draft specification