W3C TPAC Music Notation Community Group Meeting

15 September 2022
Agenda

• Introduction to the Music Notation Community Group
• Project Status
  • MNX
  • SMuFL
  • Instrument database
  • MusicXML
• Community Group leadership change
• Questions and answers
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
• The 8th largest W3C Community Group and in the 10% most active
• https://www.w3.org/community/music-notation/
The most popular music notation software standards

- **MusicXML**
  - Supported by over 260 web, mobile, and desktop applications
  - Notation editors, digital audio workstations, scanning, practice, analysis, ...
  - MusicXML 4.0 released in June 2021

- **SMuFL**
  - Supported by most major notation editors including Dorico, MuseScore, Finale, capella, and Soundslice
  - Also supported by Logic Pro X, MaxScore for Max, and Verovio
  - Most new music notation fonts are now SMuFL compliant
  - SMuFL 1.4 released in March 2021
### MusicXML app support as of 9 September 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Products Shipping Now</th>
<th>Beta/Prototype Software</th>
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### Additional Software

- A-Pro Music Composer
- Audioslave Notes
- bach
- Canorus
- CMME Editor
- Haskell Library
- Heudini
- Humdrum
- KGear
- Mahonia
- MusicJot
- MyScript Music SDK
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MNX: Multimeasure rests (284)
Other MNX progress

- Moved MNX specification and “By Example” to our new docs system (223)
- Also addressed:
  - Direction locations (251)
  - Distinct element names for global directions and measures (265)
MNX next steps

• Finalize list of V1 features, using V1 GitHub milestone
• Implement each remaining V1 feature with an example-first approach
• Continue implementing mnxconverter open-source utility
MNX: how you can help

• Follow the MNX GitHub issue tracker
• Post your opinion, even if it’s just a thumbs up
• Follow the community group blog and mailing list
SMuFL 1.5

- Work on SMuFL 1.5 is now in progress
- Will add a few dozen new symbols
- Focus on font-specific metadata, to enrich data about optional glyphs
  - Define categories of optional glyphs (e.g. optical variants at different sizes, historical period, etc.)
  - Allow grouping of optional glyphs into sets (cf. OpenType stylistic sets)
  - Make it easier for applications to use (or present to the user) optional glyphs as alternates
- Rework specification of fonts for text-based applications
SMuFL 1.5: how you can help

• Providing translated human-readable descriptions for glyphs and ranges
  • Project has been set up on Transifex
  • Looking for translators for German, French, Spanish, Italian, Japanese
  • Just over 3,000 strings, containing nearly 12,000 words

• Follow the SMuFL GitHub issue tracker
  • Look at the SMuFL 1.5 milestone to see what is in scope
  • Look for issues with label Awaiting feedback, and see if you can help
  • Particularly important to get feedback from software developers working with SMuFL and font-specific metadata files
Instrument data: problem

• Most music notation applications have data about instruments
  • Basic data, e.g. default clef(s), number of staves, transposition, playable ranges
  • Specific idiomatic data, e.g. tunings for stringed instruments, number of frets for fretted instruments, sounds/playing techniques that can be produced

• This data is not secret, but it can be time-consuming to research and encode
  • Every developer does this research from scratch every time
  • Errors and omissions are different in every data set
  • Massive duplication of effort
• We discussed a new specification for instrument data at our last meeting, and updated the group charter to include this in January
  • Develop one or more simple data formats (JSON? XML?) to allow easy conversion or consumption of this data by notation applications
• We will need someone to lead this project to make progress
  • This leader / specification editor need not be a co-chair
• If you are interested, please contact the co-chairs
MusicXML status

• MusicXML 4.0 was released in June 2021
• We have been collecting suggestions for future versions on GitHub
• No current plans for a version 4.1
• We likely would not start this until MNX 1.0 is completed
• But plans are subject to change based on our next topic...
Leadership changes

• Michael Good will be retiring on January 6, 2023 and stepping down as Community Group co-chair at that time

• We have been in touch with several candidates to succeed Michael as Community Group co-chair and MusicXML specification editor

• If you would like to be considered, please contact the co-chairs by Friday, September 23
Planning for in-person meetings

• We plan to continue online meetings for their greater inclusiveness
• But we want to resume in-person meetings too
• Here are some of the upcoming events next year:
  • TechChill: Riga, February 2023
  • The NAMM Show: Anaheim, 13–15 April 2023
  • TENOR conference: Boston in 2023?
  • Joint Music Encoding / TEI Conference: Paderborn, September 2023
  • Music Austria is every two years, so not until 2024
• Or a special meeting hosted by an organization with meeting space
Questions and answers

• Any questions for the Community Group?
• If you are not already a member, join the Music Notation Community Group
  • Membership is free of charge
  • Sign up at the [Community Group home page](#)
    • Click on the JOIN OR LEAVE THIS GROUP button to get started
    • If you work for an organization in the area of music notation, please join as a representative of that organization

• Technical work largely happens in our GitHub repositories for [MNX](#), the [MNX Converter](#), [MusicXML](#), and [SMuFL](#).

• We post co-chair meeting minutes on the blog, usually every 2 weeks