

## From the Editor | Arthur N. Popper



One of the things I like best about attending meetings of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) is that I get ideas for new articles for *Acoustics Today* (*AT*). I get these ideas by attending sessions, networking in the halls and at social events, and from the presentations at the awards session. Of course, I also greatly value the opportunity to attend sessions in the areas that interest me, meet with current and potential *AT* authors, and participate in a number of committee meetings. Indeed, I don't consider the meeting a complete success unless I can get ideas for enough articles for several future issues of *AT*. So I consider the San Diego meeting a very great success.

Although normally the article ideas are for *AT* issues perhaps a year later (to give authors time to write for *AT*), this meeting was an exception. On Wednesday evening, I attended a special ASA session that was a concert by the Hutchins Consort (see [hutchinsconsort.org](http://hutchinsconsort.org)), a group that uses instruments designed and built by legendary ASA member and past Silver Medal in Music recipient Dr. Carleen Hutchins. Sitting at the concert next to Dr. Murray Campbell, the current winner of the Silver Medal in Music, I realized that many members of the ASA, including myself, know little or nothing about Hutchins. This led to the idea of doing an *AT* article about her. Getting such an article turned out to be rather easy because the author of a Hutchins biography and winner of the ASA Science Writing Award this year, Quincy Whitney, opened the concert, and so I talked with her. The outcome is that the first article in this issue of *AT*, adapted from the biography, is about Hutchins. I think anyone who knew Dr. Hutchins will find the article a wonderful addendum to their knowledge. And those who do not yet know of Hutchins and her instruments are in for a real treat. I thank Quincy Whitney and the Hutchins Consort for their cooperation. It has been a delight to work with them.

(As an aside, the concert had the added bonus that when I sat with Dr. Campbell, I invited him to write about the physics of musical instruments, and he quickly agreed to do that in a future issue of *AT*. So, the "bottom line" is that

if you see me at an ASA meeting, beware. I may be about to invite you to do an article for *AT*!)

Of course, this issue of *AT* has many other articles of interest. In the second article, Scott Hawley, Vasileios Chatzioannou, and Andrew Morrison write about the synthesis of musical instrument sounds. However, even though the article focuses on instruments, the ideas discussed could pertain to any of us who need special sounds in our work.

The third article by Walt Jesteadt is about the history of hearing research at the fabled Boys Town (Omaha, NE). Of course, many of us primarily know Boys Town from the classic movie starring Spencer Tracy and Mickey Rooney. However, as Walt shares with us, the institution has made and continues to make important contributions to hearing research, and its membership includes many members (past and present) of the ASA.

Frank Russo shares ideas about how we perceive music in the fourth article. Frank points out that although there are portions of the human brain that are primed to respond to music, how we perceive music is more than as sound. It also has input from several other senses.

Continuing with the theme of how we perceive the world, the fifth article by Michael Vorländer is about virtual reality. Starting with a description of Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Michael shares with us the issues of bringing sound to virtual reality. Although we are not quite at the point where we can replicate the Holodeck from *Star Trek*, there is great progress in this technology that Michael explains. (And, as an aside, do the Trekkies reading this editorial know when the Holodeck was first introduced into the *Star Trek* universe? If you don't know and cannot find the answer, drop either Michael or myself a note.)

Finally, the sixth article is by Peter Worcester, Matthew Dzieciuch, and Hanne Sagen. The authors talk about the Arctic and issues related to how one measures changes in that changing environment. Of course, they focus on an array of fascinating acoustic measures and point out that with climate change, everything in the Arctic is changing, including the acoustics.

*Continued on next page...*

This issue of *AT* also has a number of “Sound Perspectives” essays. As usual, the first is “Ask an Acoustician,” a feature that is organized by our associate editor Micheal Dent. The essay in this issue is about Jennifer Miksis-Olds. Besides being an active academic, Jen is very involved in the ASA. It was really good to learn more about Jen and how she has been so successful in balancing a wonderful personal life with a very productive career.

In the second essay, ASA Student Council leaders William Doebler and Kali Burke interview two former Student Council chairs to get their insights into the importance for students to participate in activities of the ASA beyond just coming to meetings.

This is followed by an essay by L. Keeta Jones, education and outreach coordinator for the ASA. In her essay, Keeta talks

about an issue of considerable importance: the value of our doing outreach to bring our science and technology to the public. Keeta provides some valuable guidance and ideas for ASA members interested in starting an outreach program.

One committee on which I serve is Publications Policy. The committee has a significant impact on ASA publications including *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, and in this issue, committee chair Vladimir Ostashev and past chair D. Keith Wilson talk about some of the issues that the committee has addressed and is addressing.

The last essay is about the ASA Standards Program. There have been a number of very important changes in the business model for Standards, and these are described by ASA Standards Director Christopher Struck. I recommend this to every ASA member.

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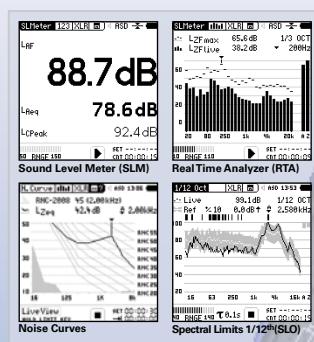
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