

From the Editor

Arthur N. Popper



I start this column by pointing out two items in this issue of *Acoustics Today* (*AT*) that I think may be of particular interest to all Acoustical Society of America (ASA) members. First, although I normally do not point members to the “From the President” column, I am doing so for this column since ASA President Stan Dosso (see page 10) presents very important, interesting, and useful information about the ASA budget that every member might want to read.

Second, with three scholarly journals and a magazine, it can be hard to keep up with the many things going on with ASA publications! To help readers “navigate” this plethora of useful information, *AT* is now providing a “guide” (see page 12) for finding out about new articles in ASA journals, activities of ASA authors and editors, and other information for and about the acoustics community. And, as web offerings from ASA publications increase and change, we will provide updates both in the magazine pages and on the *AT* website (acousticstoday.org/asa-publications).

This issue of *AT* includes articles on several “themes” that have “evolved” since I assumed editorship of *AT*. I have not wanted special issues on one topic because I want readers to always be able to find at least a few articles in every issue that would interest them. In fact, the only single-topic issue was one to honor Leo Beranek, one of the great giants of our Society, on his 100th birthday (see bit.ly/3F76eZ2). And because of the amazing diversity of Leo’s life, I suspect that almost everyone found some article in that issue that was engaging.

But, over the many issues that I have edited, I have tried to incorporate informal themes, and these are exemplified in our online feature “*AT* Collections” (see bit.ly/AT-Collections) where we group articles from the 19 years of *AT* into various topics.

One of the topics that I have thought as the most interesting has been on the acoustics of musical instruments. As a nonmusician, I have found the diversity in instruments, how they work, and their acoustics quite fascinating. To

date, we have probably covered most groups of Western instruments. But we broaden a bit in this issue when Jonas Braasch and James P. Cottingham discuss both Western and Asian reed instruments. Jonas and Jim teach us a good deal about the similarities and differences of the instruments and their reeds, and they delve into the evolution of these instruments.

Our second article is by Joseph Haxel, Christopher Bassett, Brian Polagye, Kaustubha Raghukumar, and Cailene Gunn. I first met Joe Haxel several years ago when we collaborated on a project that led to a recent article in *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* (see doi.org/10.1121/10.0020150). The topic of this *AT* article is likely to be very new to many members, offshore energy sources that are not wind farms or oil and gas platforms. It turns out that many interesting devices are being developed to capture energy from the movements of the oceans, and Joe and his colleagues give a broad and interesting overview of many of these new technologies and their acoustics.

The third article switches to how computers understand speech. In his article, Douglas O’Shaughnessy first talks about how humans understand speech but then takes on interesting questions about how our devices, using things like Siri and Alexa, understand what we say. Of course, with the tremendous rise in interest in artificial intelligence (AI), the issues Doug raises become even more timely, and he provides insight into very important issues for all of us.

Another topic that we have covered a good deal in *AT* is architectural acoustics (see bit.ly/3Q57qIT). This issue has two such articles, and by chance, they are very complementary in the discussion of concert halls.

The fourth article is by Paul H. Scarbrough who shares a fascinating story of the acoustics of what is now known as David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center in New York, New York. At its beginning, the hall, originally named Philharmonic Hall, had, as Paul shares, very substantial acoustic issues. But over the decades and with the help of a great

deal of work (and money), the hall has evolved to have what critics are saying is outstanding acoustics. Paul was one of those most involved in the design of the acoustics of the latest iteration, and so he brings a very personal perspective to the story.

The related article, the fifth in this issue, is by E. K. Ellington Scott. Ellington also discusses the acoustics of concert halls but from the perspective of the musician. This is rather personal for Ellington because besides being a new PhD in architectural acoustics, he is an accomplished jazz musician (bit.ly/AT-Scott). Thus he “views” the acoustics not only from his perspective in the design of spaces but also from working in those very spaces.

As usual, we have several “Sound Perspectives” (SP) essays. The first SP is part of our “Conversation with a Colleague” series (see bit.ly/ATC-CWC), edited by Micheal Dent. This essay is a conversation with Andrew Piacsek. Andy has a diverse interest in physics and in education, and he marries these interests in very interesting ways that are definitely worth reading and thinking about.

In the next SP, James H. Miller provides his annual report about the ASA Foundation (see bit.ly/ATC-Foundation). The Foundation is a very important part of ASA, and it makes substantial contributions to many of our activities and members. I hope everyone will read Jim’s informative column and perhaps consider donating to the Foundation.

Another very important part of the ASA is the Women in Acoustics (WIA; see bit.ly/AT-WIA) Committee. In this essay, WIA members Tracianne B. Neilsen, Kathleen E. Wage, Arezoo Talebzadeh, and Anna Diedesch introduce us to two amazing woman leaders of the ASA and then talk about leadership. In particular, I want to point out that this piece and its focus on leadership is something that should be read by every ASA member because it provides insights that not only benefit individuals during their careers but also in some of the ways they can contribute to the ASA.

The final SP is by ASA member Gail Scowcroft. I invited Gail to share her career with us because she has made unique and very important contributions to acoustics that involve ASA members from many technical committees.

In particular, Gail is cofounder of the Discovery of Sound in the Sea website (see www.dosits.org), and she has led this group for over two decades (see bit.ly/ATC-DOSITS for more information about DOSITS). DOSITS does an amazing job in science education for everyone, from students to journalists to educators to regulators, and it is used by individuals from around the world, getting over 12 million hits a year.

Finally, please remember that the SPs are essays that have the goal of sharing interesting and useful information about the ASA, its members, special ASA projects, and most anything else about acoustics. The essays in this issue reflect that diversity of information and ideas.

My intent in mentioning this is to remind readers that if any ASA member or group has ideas or information they think would be of broad interest to ASA members and they would like to share it in an SP, please contact me (apopper@umd.edu) and we can discuss the idea. The lead time for essays is far shorter than for articles, and the essays themselves are substantially shorter. I would particularly like to invite ASA technical committees (see bit.ly/AT-TC) and ASA committees (see bit.ly/ATC-Committees) to consider updating members about activities since their essays were published quite a while ago.



The graphic features a dark blue background with a glowing, grid-like pattern of white dots and lines, resembling a sound wave or a digital network. At the top, white text reads "PARTICIPATE IN DEVELOPING AND VOTING ON ASA STANDARDS PROJECTS". In the center, the ASA logo is displayed, consisting of a stylized circular pattern of dots to the left of the letters "ASA" in a large, white, serif font. Below "ASA" are the words "ACOUSTICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, and "STANDARDS" in a red, sans-serif font. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "Become an Organizational Standards Member!" in white, bold, sans-serif font, with the website address "www.ASAstandards.org" in a smaller white font below it.