

From the Editor

Arthur N. Popper



The Future of *Acoustics Today*

As my tenure of *Acoustics Today* (*AT*) Editor comes to an end (with the winter 2024 issue), I look back on 241 articles published since I started (and 370 since the start of *AT*), and the many other pieces we have included in “Sound Perspectives.” One of my goals as editor has been to have articles that reflect the diversity of our very broad discipline that, hopefully, help all of us learn about, understand, and appreciate the breath of disciplines within the field of acoustics. But the role of *AT* is not only to provide interesting articles but also to inform Acoustical Society of America (ASA) members about our Society, our members, and other issues that members might find of interest.

Of course, turning over *AT* to anyone else is hard, and so I have been very concerned that we find the right person. But with the selection of D. Keith Wilson as the new *AT* editor, I am convinced that we did find the right person. I say this not only because Keith has great credentials as a scholar and an ASA member, but also because he shared with the search committee insightful and interesting ideas for the future of *AT* that I wish I had thought of! What makes Keith even more qualified is that he has written a number of excellent articles for *AT* during my tenure as editor; he understands the purpose and goals of *AT*, and he understands our very broad audience. I look forward to working with Keith so that the transition to our new editor is seamless and he is able to move the magazine forward in new and exciting ways.

This Issue

Following our “tradition” of having a broad array of topics, this issue has six articles that run the gamut from the acoustics of a famous cathedral to the structure and function of harps to communication in hospitals, and to many other things.

The first article is by Melissa Michaud Baese-Berk, Tessa Bent, and Erica Ryherd who write about the interesting

difficulties of communication between health professionals and patients in hospitals. Problems arise not only because of the language that the health professionals use but also result from hospital noise, wearing of masks, and many other factors that may not be present in other settings.

The second article deals with autism and indoor sounds, with a particular focus on issues in classrooms for autistic children. In their article, Fernanda Caldas, Samuel Underwood, Bruno S. Masiero, and Lily M. Wang share insights into overall issues for autistic individuals in communication and then relate them to classrooms and their design to make learning easier for the autistic individuals. (For more articles on classrooms and acoustics, see <https://bit.ly/AT-Classrooms>.)

This is followed by an article by Jordan Cheer and Felix Langfeldt who talk about active sound control. Although Jordan and Felix spend a good deal of their article discussing modern approaches to active sound control, they also provide an interesting historical perspective on the field, which is well over 100 years old.

The fourth article by Lauren A. Freeman discusses the aquatic soundscape. Lauren takes two overlapping approaches in her piece. First, she discusses the importance of the soundscape to aquatic animals and then she talks about the nature of the soundscape itself. Both topics are related and share a story that nicely parallels earlier articles on both terrestrial and marine soundscapes. (For earlier articles, see bit.ly/3vGswzI)

The fifth article is another that I found while reading *The New York Times*. It discusses the acoustics of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, France, both before and after the devastating 2019 fire. The authors, Sarah S. Mullins and Brian F. G. Katz, share a bit of the fascinating history of the cathedral as well as how they have been analyzing the sound and its changes. (For articles about the acoustics of other built spaces, see bit.ly/AT-BuiltSpaces.)

Our final article by Chris Waltham adds to our collection of articles about the acoustics of musical instruments (see bit.ly/AT-Instruments) where he discusses the sounds of the pedal harp. I must admit that I knew absolutely nothing about the sounds of harps, and I found Chris' article a fascinating introduction not only to modern harps but also to the history of the instrument.

Although I don't normally point out the "From the President" column, I do want to urge all members to read this one by Stan Dosso who presents a very interesting and useful overview of ASA programs for students. The column is not only a "must read" for our students and younger members but also for more senior members who might, at some point, have their students participate in one or more of these exciting programs or perhaps host a student who participates in one of our programs.

"Sound Perspectives" starts with "Conversation with a Colleague." This month, *AT* Associate Editor Micheal Dent interviews Eleanor Stride. Eleanor is a bioengineer

whose interests are in developing methods to improve drug delivery to patients using bubbles. (For all of our past Conversations, see bit.ly/ATC-CWC.)

We also include a new "Student Challenge Problem in Acoustic Signal Processing" by Brian G. Ferguson, R. Lee Culver, and Kay L. Gemba that should appeal quite broadly.

Finally, as we do after each ASA meeting, we provide a list of members who have been recognized by the Society with various awards.

I am pleased to present links to the sites of two wonderful artists who have each done several very imaginative covers for *AT*. Mark Weinberg, a retired attorney, has posted his *AT* covers at bit.ly/3vrkWJe. Alex Tolstoy, a retired acoustician and ASA member, has posted her covers at bit.ly/43IVPhr. I thank Mark and Alex for truly imaginative and magnificent contributions to *AT* and for being so great to work with.

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