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NJMEA CONFERENCE
February 21 - 23, 2013
East Brunswick, NJ

**2013 NAfME EASTERN DIVISION
CONFERENCE**
April 4-7, 2013
Hartford, CT

**2013 NAfME NATIONAL
CONFERENCE**
October 27-30, 2013
Nashville, TN

The New Jersey TI:ME Tech Expo: First In The Nation
by

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During a discussion at the 2009 NJ TI:ME in-service, the NJ TI:ME membership struck upon a new idea: to shift the chapter's focus from teachers to students. While the chapter has continued to partner with NJMEA to provide technology in-service support at both the February conference and August in-service, the primary chapter event has become the Student Music Tech Expo. Following the successful opening acts of the 2011 and 2012 Expos, the 3rd Annual New Jersey Music Tech Expo will be held on May 17, 2013.

The Music Tech Expo is a science fair style event, focused upon student works. The day also includes guest presenters, a performance showcase for electronic music ensembles, and hands-on music technology playgrounds. While the festival is adjudicated, the primary focus of the event is sharing and celebrating students' creative work in a supportive environment. The development of this type of event represents a maturing step for the technology-based music class movement, as we seek to support student work, much as we do for student in performing ensembles through festivals and honor ensembles. The extensive participation in New Jersey each year, as well as the development of events in other states based upon the New Jersey model, demonstrates the need for this style of event.

One major thrust of the event was to allow students to showcase their individual creative efforts and receive critical feedback regarding their submissions. Five categories were created for student submissions that were received through the NJ TI:ME online portal a few weeks before the event. When the submission time concluded, professional musicians and educators from NJ served as adjudicators by logging into the site and providing individual feedback for each project submission which involved, in most cases, listening to audio recordings, or viewing videos. The projects received numerical grading and comments within several categories including *Creativity* and *Craftsmanship*. They were then ranked according to the grades, and award certificates were created for the top three creative works in each category. The project categories and criteria for submission were:

1-Original Composition

Original compositions were created using technology including works for traditional and/or electronic instruments. Compositions prominently illustrated creative use of technology. Projects incorporating use of prerecorded loops were not considered in this category.

2-Covers, Remixes & Loop-Based Projects

This category included arrangements/recordings of pre-existing songs, song samples, and projects incorporating a combination of original material and prerecorded loops. Projects demonstrated originality in musical choices and creative use of technology.

3-Multimedia

Works in this category demonstrated the convergence of music with more than one discipline. This may have included art/photography, video, broadcast journalism, digital storytelling and so on. Works did not need be original compositions, but should have reflected creative use of technology.

4-Applied Technology

The projects were distinctive projects that utilize technology for a specific purpose. Works may have included the creation of new electronic musical instruments, interactive music systems, software projects to aid in composition, performance, and music instruction, and more. Projects were asked to be self-contained for a simple demonstration within the showcase.

5-Production/Engineering

Students entering this category demonstrated their skills in production or engineering created within a digital audio workstation (DAW). This category was adjudicated on-site during the expo with students being provided prerecorded stems from a recording that they were asked to create, mix and engineer into a finished creative work. Individuals and teams of up to 4 students were permitted to enter this category.

As a result of the project submissions, an integral component of the tech expo was to showcase these works in a gallery of sorts. As students arrived at Montclair State University (MSU) on the day of the

expo, they were grouped according to their school, and given a schedule of the activity grid for the day which included presentations, workshops, and, of course, the showcase of student projects. Through the course of the day, groups moved with their teachers through several rooms in which NJ TI:ME members volunteered to give lectures and presentations, hands-on workshop activities, and provide individual feedback to students regarding their projects. The event culminated in MSU's Leshowitz Recital Hall with each student and their teachers celebrating the adjudicated results for each project submission.

Since the goal of the Student Music Tech Expo is to showcase student creativity, student submissions reflect the students' ages and grade levels. Elementary and middle school projects can be original compositions intended as ringtones, sampled-sounds remixes, and original compositions created and recorded by small groups rather than individuals. High school students' projects typically are created by pairs and individuals. These projects tend to be greater in length and structural sophistication. Many high school multimedia projects are cross-curricular, using video and music to represent historical events as well as artistic and literary figures.

Student submissions to the Music Tech Expo are all uploaded to a central website. Submissions can be as short as 15-30 seconds (ringtones), and as long as 5 minutes for original compositions and remixes. Audio files are compressed to mp3's, and multimedia projects are encoded as .mov or .m4a files.

Projects are adjudicated in advance of the event. Our slate of adjudicators includes professional composers, performers, and college professors. Projects are rated on structural and creative elements. At the Expo, students are awarded certificates for their work reflecting Gold, Silver and Bronze ratings, and receive their scores and comments from the adjudicators. Best-in-Show awards are granted within each submission category. Especially fun for the students is the "Overall Best Project" award—student attendees cast their votes after their time at the exhibits.

Important information for the 2013 Student Music Tech Expo:
Friday, May 17, 2013 9:30 -1:30 at Rowan University
Open to students in grades 3-12
Project Categories:
Original Composition
Covers, Remixes & Loop-Based Projects
Multimedia, Applied Technology
School Sounds Remix
Production/Engineering

Email marjorielopresti@gmail.com to receive registration information and detailed instructions.

We hope to see your students there!