Back to the Future: Popular Music and Time

29 June – 3 July 2015

18th Biennial IASPM Conference
Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Unicamp
São Paulo, Brazil

18iaspm.wordpress.com
Abstracts

09:30
**You gotta move: duration, systems theory and musical creativity**
Matthew Banniister (WINTEC)

In this presentation I offer a critique of the kind of intellectual frameworks typically used to explain creativity in music (for example the kind of research questions typically asked of a student commencing a music project at postgraduate level). These questions are typically analytical, say around the conventions of a genre and how they can be used to produce new work, but they fail in my view to acknowledge creativity as a process, analytical questions being more suitable to assess a finished work, not one that hasn’t even started yet, or is in process. The conventional academic wisdom is that the “new” is a revoicing or recombining of the familiar, but in this formulation, the “new” remains essentially unheorised. I use concepts around creativity as novelty from Henri Bergson, such as duration and movement, to offer a critique of systems theories of creativity (Toynbee, McIntyre and Csikszentmihalyi) that seek to reduce the creative process to a series of “choices” between different pre-existing creative possibilities. In its place I propose a focus on novelty, duration and movement as aspects of creative process.