

Pamela Z Award for Innovation - NIME 2019

My name is Isabel Nogueira, I am a sound artist and researcher at UFRGS in Porto Alegre. My role this year at NIME has been chair of installations and consultant of diversity.

In order to be a more inclusive conference, it is important to notice that it is not only important to have women participating, the community must know their work and value their expertises occupying representative roles, as keynote speakers, authors, oral session chairs and performers.

Also, we must consider some formative activities to the whole community about how to produce conditions to women feel more included, supported and safe. We hope that in the forthcoming NIMEs there will be a space for discussing these issues as a community.

A successful workshop on diversity was held in the last NIME at Virginia Tech initiated by Astrid Bin, Anna Weisling and Sarah Schoemann from Women in Music Tech at Georgia Tech. The Pamela Z Award for Innovation was born out of this conversation about gender diversity and intends to recognise researchers who are positively contributing to diversity in the NIME community.

This award recognizes a person who is doing significant work that improves the discussion about diversity in NIME - either through their research, connecting people or through actions such as organisation and awareness.

It was named after Pamela Z because she was a keynote in the founding year, because she is a pioneer in this field and an extraordinary artist, and because spending time each NIME thinking about an award named after a prolific African American woman is a way of continually highlighting the value of her work, and representing voices that are often invisible in the community.

We are happy to continue this important initiative and we created a jury for the Pamela Z award this year.

This award is not just about a paper but also considers the researcher's body of work. For this reason, we would like to recognize Margaret Schedel's work for the co-authored paper "Women's Labor: Creating NIMEs from Domestic Tools" which brings the labour of women into the spotlight through an innovative musical instrument. Where women's work is often invisible, this instrument makes it unmissable, which is a powerful artistic and social statement to make in a community that is historically dominated by male perspectives. It is strong by virtue of its description of novel embedded acoustic instruments which are well made and technologically innovative, and it also showcases interesting work being done by other women in the field. Most importantly, this work is actualizing important issues in a boots-on-the-ground manner, with performances, expert panels, and outreach to the community being extensions beyond the publication of a paper. So, in this paper we see novel instruments being developed and used, interesting incorporations of technology into musical contexts, increased representation for women in the field, and actual outreach to the community.

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In addition, Margaret Schedel is a prolific cellist, a researcher, an instrument designer, a performer, a teacher, a technologist. She is currently Associate Professor of Music at Stony Brook University, New York, with a double appointment at the Institute for Advanced Computational Science. Her research interests include gestures in music and the sustainability of technology in the arts. She is also involved in data sonification, particularly in biomedical informatics, where she seeks out physiotherapeutic methods for patients with Parkinson's disease through sonification.

The award includes a copy of the next album compilation by the keynote speaker Ana Maria Romano Gomez named "Mujeres que suenan y truenan". Sonya Yuditskaya will collect the award on her behalf.

(Pause)

We would like to also give a mention award to Ximena Alarcon Diaz's work related to her paper "INTIMAL: Walking to Find Place, Breathing to Feel Presence". Ximena Alarcon has worked on migration issues. She has helped to connect women's voices who are unheard and have suffered from migrating to other countries involuntarily. The gift is kindly provided by Margaret Schedel and is a copy of the book "Artful Design" by Ge Wang.

The Jury of Pamela Z Award 2019

Isabel Nogueira
Astrid Bin
Anna Weisling
Ana Maria Romano Gomez
Anna Xambó

Porto Alegre, 6 June 2019