



# InterPARES 2 Project

International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems

## Characterization of Case Study Validated

### Case Study 13: *Obsessed Again...*

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Version 2, January 2006

#### Relevance of the Case Study to InterPARES 2

The purpose of this case study is to examine the creation and management of a “musical composition which combines a traditional instrument with electronic sounds.”<sup>1</sup> The piece is considered both interactive and experiential as the electronic sound elements are produced in real-time according to input provided during the performance. The relevance of the case study is therefore to enable InterPARES to meet its goals in relation to the study of artistic activities that are conducted using experiential, interactive and dynamic computer technology.

#### Information about the Creator

The creator of *Obsessed Again...* is an individual, Dr. Keith Hamel. Dr. Hamel is a Canadian composer, music software developer, professor of composition, and Director of the Computer Music Studio at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Dr. Hamel lives and produces work in Canada and as such is subject to various Canadian legislation, such as the *Copyright Act*. Dr. Hamel receives funding for the creation of his works through commissions received by the various bodies for which he creates works. The particular piece of work examined in this study, *Obsessed Again*, was commissioned by bassoonist Jesse Read, and was premiered on May 9, 1992 at De IJsbreker, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

The mission of the creator is to create music. Dr. Hamel’s mandate would depend on the contract under which he is working and would be very specifically defined according to each individual contract he entered into. Furthermore, one could postulate that Dr. Hamel’s interest in computer technology has had a significant influence upon his

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<sup>1</sup> Case Study 13 Proposal, pg. 1.

work. And, the fact that the piece is “performer-focused”<sup>2</sup> may also signify elements of an underlying philosophy, although this is not explicitly indicated within the available documentation and would require further exploration.

The creator is associated with a number of professional societies and other organizations such as the Canadian Music Centre (CMC), the Canadian League of Composers, the Computer Music Association, and the Canadian Electroacoustic Community.

The primary function of the creator in relation to the creation of *Obsessed Again...* would appear to be the composition of the work, with performance carried out by Dr. Read. The creation process appears to be somewhat governed by the commissioning agent and performer Dr. Read, although primarily by the creator. The funding for works such as *Obsessed Again...* are provided for by the commissioning agent. The creator has been awarded a number of academic awards and distinctions for his various works in both acoustic and electroacoustic music, although none could be found pertaining to *Obsessed Again....*

### **Information about the Administration / Management Function**

The creator, as an individual, must administer his own activities. The documents produced in the administrative function are not detailed within the available documentation, but would in all likelihood include correspondence and contracts. The work of the creator is kept, stored on disks and within his computer. Although the creator retains the digital entities under study, there is no formal recordkeeping system in place. As well, although “the composer feels a moral obligation to ensure future existence of his work, [he feels] no real compulsion towards preservation for archival purposes.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Information about the Digital Entity Being Studied**

The digital entities of interest are those related to the process of composition for *Obsessed Again...* This process of composition includes the initial sketching of ideas using pencil and paper, the creation and testing of the interactive elements using the computer and the Proteus (which acts as a virtual performer), and the creation of a final version in digital format using NoteWriter music notation software. There are a total of three digital entities identified, including a representation of the musical score, a software patch that contains a digital description of the computer instrument and additional sequencer data, and a Proteus Editor/Librarian file which describes sounds to be used by the Proteus 1 synthesizer.

Dr. Hamel has sole possession of all the digital elements under study, and through him maintains control over their distribution. Legal obligations include those surrounding copyright and authorship, although it is stated in the final report that these “do not constitute a pressing concern for Dr. Hamel.”<sup>4</sup> Additional legal requirements would also include any stipulated in the contract between Dr. Hamel and Dr. Read as well as any terms of agreement stipulated between the creator and the publisher.

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<sup>2</sup> Case Study 13 Final Report, pg. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pg. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pg. 11.

The digital entities are stored within a computer, with an additional computer used as back up. At the time of the writing of the final report, the creator has translated many of the original entities into forms accessible by current technology, although, some elements will be impossible to update due to software obsolescence and will need to be recreated. In terms of any normative influences upon the work of the creator, the final report states that there are no generally accepted rules or schemes for the composition, performance or preservation of musical entities.