



Cross-Disciplinary Interplay
between the Humanities,
Technology and Musical Practice

**Thursday,
April 26, 2012,
2:15-4 p.m. in U73.**

Guest lecture in the seminar
series

**Topics in the Aesthetics
of Music and Sound,**

<http://soundmusicresearch.org/seminarsspring2012.html>.

Is Narrative in Music Possible?

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Abstract: In the 1980's, a "narrative turn" took place, and as a result, narrative began to be perceived as a primary act of the mind, transferred from life to art and all human artifacts. Owing to that turn, narratology also permeated music theory where a debate on the possibility of narrative in music has recently been quite lively. Questions have been posed: Is the term "narrativity" in music used in a metaphorical sense derived from literature? Is narrative possible in music – especially in instrumental music without a text or literary program? There are two extremes: the proponents of the literal transfer of particular histories (plots) to the music

to which we listen, and the autotelists, who think that music can only be syntactic – without semantics. Yet, there exists an entire spectrum of attitudes between these two extremes. We can also ask: if analytical tools for examining musical pieces are taken over from the theory of literature, what elements of the systems are then analogous for literary and musical utterances? And what makes musical "narratives" specific? I will consider these questions, trying to shed some light on the relationship between narrative and music.

ALL ARE WELCOME!