Greetings

Michael D. O'Dell Editor-in-Chief

I have been anxiously awaiting this issue for almost a year. Herewith we present for your enjoyment "A Musical Offering," complete with a compact disk containing all the musical illustrations associated with the papers in this issue. This is the first of what we hope will be a not-too-infrequent occasion over the coming years. UNIX and Music have had an ongoing relationship for many years, going back at least as far as Lycklama's LSX system for the Bell Labs digital synthesizer designed by Alles.[1] This issue shows that this relationship is, in the words of Edgar Winter, "Still alive and well!"

Those of you who attended the Summer 1986 Conference in Atlanta will recall the opening talks by Peter Langston and Mike Hawley. Continuing in the spirit of the Summer of '89 when one could see "revival tours" of acts such as The Rolling Stones, The Greatful Dead, The Who, and Bob Dylan, the duo of Hawley and Langston are back as well. Langston shows off his latest composition software and spotlights Eddie and Eedie, the two famous DECtalk personalities, in a return engagement.

Hawley's work considers the broad and thoroughly delightful implications of a "personal orchestra" sound generator coupled with a large, machine-readable collection of music. The grand finale is an ultravirtuoso performance on the ultimate MIDI[2] piano: a 1400 pound, 96 key, Bösendorfer Imperial Grand Piano fitted with a recording computer which speaks MIDI. Accompanyment is provided by an impressive, and synthetic, backup symphony orchestra. The capabilities Hawley describes and

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1. See his article in the *Bell System Technical Journal* 57(6) July-August 1978.
2. Musical Instrument Digital Interface.

demonstrates are a dream come true for those of us who secretly wish we could have been conductors instead of programmers.

Highstepping right along is Tim Thompson discussing Keynote, a language for algorithmic composition and sequencer programming. This software is notable for several reasons, not the least of which is a level of capability and power rarely seen in commercial offerings, but also because the source code for the software is available from the AT&T Toolchest, again, rather unlike commercial offerings.

Last, providing a contrapuntal coda, we have an interesting Controversy piece by Stu Feldman and Morven Gentleman. The thesis of their essay is that software portability is a problem which was once considered to be largely solved, but which has, in fact, lately come unstuck for various technological and evolutionary reasons. They discuss their reasoning as to why this is true and provide some thoughts on how we might be able to begin to put Humpty Dumpty back together again. (Cynics should note that all the King's Men didn't have the benefit of modern cyano-acrylate adhesives.)

Finally, we'd like to thank Peter Langston for supervising the mastering of the tapes. Without his time at the studio, there'd be no CD.

That does it for this issue. We hope you enjoy the music as much as we enjoyed putting the issue together.