# DIVERSITY STATEMENT

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Academia in Europe and North America has a problem with diversity and inclusion, computer science, music composition and technology, a particularly severe one. Approaching this problem by inviting and recruiting non-white, non-male, non-cisgender, non-heteronormative people to participate in structures that were designed to oppress and silence their voices is an approach that does not work now and will continue to not work.

In order to begin to address the issues at hand, the knowledge that defines our field must be questioned in addition to its relation to power. It is not enough to ask in what ways the knowledge of our field subjugates, and silences the voices of minorities. We need to look more carefully at the ways in which the knowledge of our discipline acts as a technology that *constructs* and *delimits* what underrepresented categories of people *are* and *can do.*

In what seems like a paradox, the fight for inclusion can easily become a construct that reinforces processes of exclusion by instating assumptions about what and whom should be included. This is by no means to suggest that we should back down from the efforts to involve all people in our community, indeed, we should increase those efforts. Until we are willing to approach the construction of disciplinary knowledge from a basis of difference—difference without respect to an originary sameness—these disciplines and structures will continue to act as technologies of oppression. Disciplines need to go far beyond accepting and tolerating difference with respect to their norms. Disciplinary practices need to be reshaped to require difference qua difference in order to thrive.

An important pedagogical technique that supports and requires care for the differences that come to matter in a given community is to actively engage students in the process of co-constructing knowledge. This involves continually and relentlessly encouraging dialogue that makes explicit the value systems that underlie the production of knowledge, and the cultivation of difference as an essential part of the discourse of the discipline. Destabilizing techniques such as those described in my Research and Teaching statements are integral to help draw assumptions based in old norms into the light for examination.

To be clear, this is not a call to reject current disciplinary knowledge. This is not a call for experts and expertise to be rendered irrelevant due to changing norms. It is a call to engage with knowledge and its production differently.

We also must approach the use and design of technology differently. Technology always carries traces of the value systems of its designers as well as those of the disciplines for which it was intended to be used. This is not a problem, in fact, I believe it is unavoidable, however, it is important to interrogate those value systems in order to understand how they affect practice.

The process of bringing awareness to the value systems latent in the design of technology through discourse and destabilizing practices is what Teoma Naccarato and I refer to as "critical appropriation." It is a provocation to consider the provenance of technology and the knowledge and know-how that shape its use, as well as the way those things shape understandings of what can be done with it.

Recent examples of artificial intelligence systems displaying blatantly racist, homophobic, and sexist tendencies demonstrate unequivocally the importance of including a broad spectrum of voices in design processes. Music technology is not different; going forward, we must consider the ways in which the technologies of control and classification that are pervasive in our field reinforce discourses of white male patriarchy, and encourage the exploration of music making with machines from radically different frames of reference.