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Dear Ken,

First, I want to tell you how much I enjoyed having dinner with you, Mr. Suzuki, and Mr. Hirano in November. I hope that you will allow me to reciprocate should you be in the Bay area at some time.

I had intended to send this proposal to you much sooner than I have, however, I wanted to be sure that CCRMA would have the 68000 based work stations before I made the proposal. As I imply in the proposal, the work stations are on order and should be operational in a couple of months.

The time schedule which I propose is to some extent arbitrary and if you and NGK are interested in this proposal the timing could be changed according to your requirements.

I look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely,

John Chowning

Proposal: to NGK for the use of digital keyboard instruments in a work to be composed by John M. Chowning.

With the development by NGK of digital keyboard instruments which have a performance "feel" similar to that of the piano, I believe there to be new possibilities for the inclusion of such instruments in contemporary music composition. Until the present, electronic keyboard instruments (synthesizers, electric pianos, etc.) not only produced somewhat inferior sound when compared with natural instruments, but had keyboards whose "feel" did not respond to the performer's piano trained gestures. For this reason it was often difficult to persuade virtuoso pianists to learn music which depended on such instruments. The GS1 and the prototype DS1 developed by NGK have to a large extent overcome the above-mentioned deficiencies.

I propose, therefore, to compose a major work which would use three GS1 instruments and one DS1 synthesizer. I propose to substitute a Motorola 68000 micro-processor based computer work station for the voice data range of the GS1s in order to have a large voice data field which can be accessed instantaneously and be developed under program control. The composition will be performed by four well-trained pianists and three 'computer-musicians' controlling the voice data at each of three work stations associated with each of the GS1s. My intention is to relieve the three performers of the GS1s of any responsibility beyond that of keyboard performance. All voice data changes will be noted in the score and implemented by the 'computer-musicians'. The performer of the DS1 must have additional experience playing synthesizers.

While last at NGK I discussed the technical feasibility of the work station as a control for the GS1 with Mr. Suzuki, Mr. Hirano, and Mr. Yamada. Mr. Yamada indicated that if the GS1s were of the type intended for use with the GS1 programmer, interfacing to the work station would be easily achieved.

I believe that the composition of this work, of about 20 to 30 minutes duration, will take me approximately one year. As we expect the CCRMA work stations to be operational by the end of April, I suggest the following time schedule.

March 1, 1983

GS1 with programmer shipped to CCRMA in order that I can begin developing timbre data. My assistant (Robert Shannon, graduate student in Electrical Engineering) will begin the preparation for interfacing to work station.

May 1, 1983 Interface GS1 to workstation, begin program development, and continue the process of composition.

October 1, 1983

DS1 shipped to CCRMA for experimentation and inclusion in composition.

March 1, 1984

Completion of the work. Return GS1 programmer to NGK.

Spring 1984

Premiere of work either in San Francisco, New York, or ?.

Approximately one month before the first performance two additional GS1s to be shipped to CCRMA for rehearsal as ensemble. (N.B. the performers will have already learned their parts first on any piano and then on the GS1 work-station already at CCRMA. Therefore, there is no need to have all four instruments until just before the performance.)

Following performance

All four instruments returned to NGK.

Note that there is no need to have new GS1s, any used instruments which are available will suffice.

I would agree, of course, to share with NGK all voice data which will have been developed in the course of composing the work as well as all

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technical information regarding the workstation interface and software.

I believe that such a work would have significant performance opportunities both in this country and abroad.