

8. History

John Chowning, Director
Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics
Department of Music
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

September 1987

Overview of the CCRMA Digital-Audio Facility

The Stanford Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA), serves as one of the major new music resource centers in the world. Other centers include IRCAM in Paris; CME at the University of California, San Diego; the Experimental Music Studio at MIT; UC Berkeley; the University of Toronto; Colgate University; STEIM in Amsterdam; and the Swiss Center for Computer Music in Geneva.

Since 1966, members of the CCRMA community have been dedicated to the development of the computer as a new musical and artistic medium. In June of 1975, the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics was formed with funding provided jointly by the National Science Foundation for research and teaching in computer techniques of interactive sound production and the perception of timbre, and by a one-time grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for computing equipment for musical purposes. As a part of the Music Department at Stanford University, the academic programs and production of concerts at the Center are supported by the University. The Center also receives support from private gifts, corporations, NEA, NSF, the California Arts Council, the Rockefeller Foundation (for visiting US composers), and the System Development Foundation (for research). The Center has formed a consortium with U.C. Berkeley, IRCAM, Paris, and CCRMA.

CCRMA's main goal is to maintain an interdisciplinary, technologically advanced facility where composers, musicians, researchers and students can work together using the computer as a musical and artistic medium, and as a research tool, to create new works of art. The facility is capable of serving a number of composers and researchers simultaneously, providing a direct control over the medium to a degree not possible before. As technology moves forward in new directions, and as the medium become more and more accessible to the artistic community, CCRMA will strive to integrate these new technologies to provide an environment where artistic experimentation and ideas can be realized.

Currently there are 50 active "users" at CCRMA including: 12 faculty, staff, and research associate/composers, 21 graduate students, and 20 foreign and domestic guest composers/researchers. Activities at CCRMA include teaching, research, composition, interactive performance, workshops, presentations, concerts and digital recording, and music transcription.

Many composers working at the center have received fellowships from NEA and have also received Guggenheim, Fulbright, Harkness, and DAAD grants. CCRMA has also received a Rockefeller grant to support visiting American composers.

Works produced at the Center have been presented in concert and broadcast on radio throughout the U.S. and in Europe, Japan, Australia, and South America and have won numerous awards. They have been represented at major new music festivals including the International Electroacoustic Music Competition of Bourges, the Venice Biennale, the Warsaw Autumn Festival, the New Horizons Festival in New York, the Cologne Festival, the International Computer Music Conference in Paris, and the Aspen Festival the Cabrillo Music Festival, Triplex in New York City, the International Computer Music Conference in Holland, the Darmstadt Festival in Germany, the Roro Festival in Sweden, and at Tanglewood.

This year CCRMA will be represented at the Warsaw Autumn Festival, New Music America, the Gadeamus Festival in Amsterdam, the International Computer Music Conference in Illinois, at Tanglewood, and at the San Francisco Symphony New and Unusual Music Series.

Current works at the center include a collaboration with composer Dexter Morrill and jazz musician Wynton Marsalis for a piece for saxophone and computer generated tape; a musical theater by composer Janis Mattox; a work for computer and digital keyboards by composer John Chowning; a work commissioned by the Kronos String Quartet for string quartet and computer tape by composer David Jaffe; a commission for a choral work with tape by composer David Jaffe; a commission by the Kronos String Quartet for a work for string quartet and computer tape by composer Ira Mowitz; a work for bass clarinet and

tape by composer Amnon Wolman for Heinz Holliger; a work for musician Stan Getz for saxophone, and computer by composer Stanislaw Krupowicz; a work for harp and harp synthesizer by composer Chris Chafe, and an opera theater piece by composer Amnon Wolman.

CCRMA also holds annual workshops in computer music open to the public and presents demonstrations of ongoing work and concerts in the SF Bay Area.

Interviews and presentations of the work at CCRMA have been presented on Public Television, National Public Radio, in National Geographic Films, on NBC, in documentary films in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and the U.S. and on recordings.

CCRMA Staff

John Chowning, Director
Patte Wood, Administrative Director
Chris Chafe, Technical Coordinator, Composer/Research Associate
Max Mathews, Professor, Research
Bernard Mont-Reynaud, Sr. Research Associate
John Pierce, Visiting Professor Emeritus
William Schottstaedt, Composer/Research Associate
Earl Schubert, Professor Emeritus
Julius Smith, Research Associate
Tovar, Systems Programmer