

Pauline

SAN DIEGO: DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA

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A FEW WORDS ON THE CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION
from Pauline Oliveros

A Center for New Music Research and Documentation necessarily must include personnel capable of the design and fabrication of new equipment for the production and performance of electronic music. As the state of the art advances it becomes more and more clear how personal the nature of this equipment can be. There is a wide gulf between the composer of this music and the audio industry which is concerned with reproduction of existing music. The sounds which enter the audio engineer's systems as unwanted noise are very often the sounds which the composer is concerned with manipulating as the material of his work.

Musical instruments have gone through continual metamorphosis through the ages as musical horizons have expanded. It is possible that this present period in history will witness an acceleration of change as performance practice moves from muscular extension to extensionsof the nervous system.

Many characteristics of music can be manipulated via voltage control in electronic music systems, but the most pressing problem for the composer/performer is how to generate and manipulate control voltages in real time. Much research is necessary into kinesthetic musical response, and the nature of sound in order to find the most satisfactory solutions. Performers may in the future use such resources as brain waves, galvanic skin response, eye movements, etc. to augment the mostly digital control he concerns himself with now.

The development of such equipment means that composers and performers must have the opportunity to work directly with engineers, acousticians, technicians, carpenters and mechanics to try out many different possibilities in a sympathetic atmosphere.

Each step in the design of new music electronic equipment seems to uncover new problems about the nature of sound. The interdisciplinary approach to the solution of such problems is a natural.

Pauline Oliveros

(to Will Ogdon, Chairman
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cc: PO and file