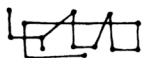


mances is improving, and concerts play (unprecedentedly in recent years) to packed halls—up to our 175 capacity. The first annual “Contemporary Group Performance Competition” for students has elicited some fine performances, some by performers not previously involved. Student and faculty performers and composers have been working together more closely and more often. A vast reservoir of student responsibility, ingenuity, and energy has been tapped and is flowing ever more freely through the ditches, or ditch (at one time rumored to be the last), to irrigate our Contemporary Music crops.

John Rahn & William Bergsma  
September 1978



Perspectives of New Music, Fall-Winter, 1978

## CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

### UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

The University of Iowa's Center for New Music (CNM) was formed in 1966 under a three-year Rockefeller Foundation grant. University funding began immediately and has been continuous following the initial period. Continuity was assured when a large rehearsal room labelled “CNM” appeared on blueprints of the new (1971) music building.

CNM inhabits the School of Music. The director and the music director (William Hibbard) are both professors in the School, and responsible to its Director (administratively, not artistically). A nucleus of seven to ten Associates in Performance are stipended to rehearse and perform in five CNM concerts, in five concerts of student works and, as needed, with the University Symphony Orchestra. Extra performers receive modest fees to perform in larger works (*Varèse, Déserts*; London, *Poebells*).

Appointments are for one academic year, renewable at the discretion of the directors. Associates receive the same benefits as Graduate

Assistants, may take courses, and become candidates for degrees; but neither registration nor degree candidacy is a condition of appointment or renewal. Academic credit is not given for CNM performance. CNM is, therefore, both in and free from the academic situation. Though most Associates are degree candidates, tenure in CNM is not contingent on "satisfactory progress toward a degree"; persons without a degree may be appointed.

We regard the Center as an arm of the Composition area; composer/performers, for obvious reasons, receive preference. (The relation of composers to performers at Iowa has always been one of mutual respect.) CNM also maintains an intimate relationship with the Electronic Music Studios (Peter Tod Lewis, director).

Concerts are well attended if advertised; people don't go to concerts they don't know about. It was evident from the outset that there is no single "audience", but many "audiences", and the audience for New Music (a 1912 piece is still New), is one of them. I used fondly to believe that modern music would eventually take its rightful place on the standard repertoire, but am now content that CNM is regarded as one among the performing organizations making up Iowa City's rich musical life.

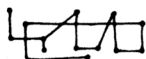
One does miss the hectic of earlier years—the "alternative" concerts in a church basement, products of percussionist Will Parsons' astonishing imagination; the hostile reviews and impassioned replies; the clicking carousels and sweet smell of pot at "media" concerts—respectability and excitement perhaps aren't always compatible.

Programming still presents difficulties; our record with regard to the classics (e.g., Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Ives, Varèse) is excellent, but lack of ready access to new works by colleagues is a problem. For example, few works by West Coast composers have been performed, a situation we are now correcting; but given the scope of creativity in this country there will always be some gaps. An unsolved problem is that of the repeat performance, which, though generally agreed to enhance the presentation of a new work, usually takes second to other also praiseworthy demands (new pieces, regional works, works by Iowa composers, including promising students, etc.).

As to positive results, the increased competence, variety and originality of student works have been remarkable. This seems part of a national maturation process for which the Center is of course not solely responsible; but consistently professional and sympathetic performance encourages and rewards professionally competent composition. This

seems appropriate—we are an educational institution, and the Center's function is both educational and artistic. In music, how can one not be the other?

Richard B. Hervig  
September 1978



## CONTEMPORARY PLAYERS

### UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The University of British Columbia Contemporary Players was formed in the fall of 1977 by faculty-composers Stephen Chatman and Eugene Wilson. From its inception it has enjoyed an excellent rapport with faculty and has received support from the University in the form of a grant under the University Programmes for Excellence. The Contemporary Players originated ostensibly for the benefit of composers as a way of providing a pool of experienced performers from which composers could draw, therefore ensuring competent performances of new works. The ensemble embraces an implied philosophy which encompasses broader intentions. Its direction derives from four interacting aspects: as a vehicle for pedagogy, as a composer's forum within the community, as an instrument of communication, and as a creative reflection of the community in which the university is situated.

In the first instance, an organized outlet for contemporary music has obvious educational importance. Actually hearing new works is ultimately the only experience by which an informed and discerning audience for contemporary music will evolve. The Contemporary Players, besides providing a vital experience for students, attempts to reach audiences beyond the campus. To this end, in May 1978, a production of *L'Histoire du Soldat* was taken on tour through small communities in the interior of British Columbia.