Mexican Center for Music and Sonic Arts /CMMAS

Origin.

Created in September of 2006 at the initiative of the National Council for Culture and Arts (CONACULTA), and through the National Center for the Arts (CENART) and the Secretariat of Culture of the State of Michoacan (SECUM), the Mexican Center for Music and Sonic Arts (CMMAS) is a unique technological-musical space in Latin America.

It is formed by internationally recognized specialists, and has the support of an Academic Committee that gathers several prestigious personalities in the field of musical composition with new technologies.

Mission:

To foster the creation and development of music and sonic arts in Mexico and internationally.

Vision:

To become an international benchmark for the positioning of sound and music as expressive vehicles and means of social transformation.

The CMMAS has established itself as the main space in Latin America for the creation, reflection and the teaching and learning of contemporary music, with and without new technologies. It is a unique Center for the research, experimentation and the development of sound and musical projects that places Mexico in a privileged place as a link with the rest of the world.
WORK AREAS

The activities of the Center are based on five interrelated areas of work: continuous training; creation; research; production, and promotion. In this way, the Center is able to provide students, teachers, researchers and artists, at different stages of their artistic and professional development, with options for specialization and renovation of knowledge. It is also able to provide work environments that would allow them to develop new works and projects within a framework of critical and constructive reflection.

1. Continuous Training

Through the teaching of new technologies applied to the music and sound, the CMMAS develops this area in the following academic offerings:

a. Certification in Sound Creation with New Technologies: Using a permanent open call format, this Certification (Diploma) offers an intensive program of study, that using multiple perspectives (musical, technological, artistic and creative), complements the knowledge and experience of the students, allowing them to gain experience and develop professional links in a high level. (www.cmmas.org/diplomado)

b. Strengthening Program for Young Composers in the Area of Electroacoustic Music “Flight Practices”: With annual editions, this program offers a space for the generation of creative projects, reflection and professional development, including the use of new technologies in musical creation. Since 2006, and based on a nation-wide call, the scholarship recipients of this program attend classes and tutoring with outstanding artists that guide their creative process, and have their creations presented in important concerts and forums in Mexico.

c. Regular Classes: the CMMAS teaches the subjects of Music and Technology I and II to students from a Degree in Composition program offered by the University from Michoacan San Nicolás de Hidalgo (UMSNH) and by the Conservatory of Las Rosas.

d. Special Classes: specialists, guests and residents of the CMMAS, teach non regular open classes to the public, based on the needs of the academic community of the Center, or the specific needs of the institutions that request them.

e. Master Classes: taught by invited specialists of national and international prestige, such as Javier Álvarez, Christophe Desjardins, Francis Dhomont, Ana Lara, Mario Lavista, Philippe Manoury, Gabriela Ortiz, Åke Parmerud, Miller Puckette, Denis Smalley, Alejandro Viñao, Trevor Wishart and Wojtek Pilichowski, among others.

f. Lectures and Talks: The Center participates in different spaces for the promotion and study of music, such as festivals, congresses and forums, both national and international. In these spaces the Center participates through presentations on various topics and interests, and with the products of the research conducted at the institution. Outstanding among these, the significant number of conferences made within the frame of the International Festival of Music and New Technologies "Sonic Visions" (www.visionessonoras.org).

g. Open Classroom: the Center has started a series of seminars with the purpose of addressing issues of interest related with the new projects in progress. With the aim of promoting dialogue in topics related to the arts and the creative processes, these activities are free and open to the public.

h. Postgraduate Tutorials: in cooperation with National School of Music (UNAM) and other national and international institutions, the Center offers academic support to students pursuing Masters and Doctorate degrees. Additionally it offers a program that invites and houses foreign students.
A fundamental part of the Continuous Formation of the CMMAS is its Honorary Academic Council. Integrated by experts in different areas, its main function is to support, evaluate and validate selection processes of candidates for scholarships; supervising the effectiveness and relevance of programs and academic activities; as well as to propose and foment vital strategies of work. The following are the members of the Honorary Academic Council:

### National Members:

- **Dr. Javier Álvarez Fuentes**
- **Dr. Pablo García Valenzuela**, National School of Music (UNAM)
- **Dra. Gabriela Ortiz**, National School of Music (UNAM)
- **Dr. Manuel Rocha Iturbide**, National School of Music (UNAM)
- **Dr. Alejandro Sánchez Escuer**, National School of Music (UNAM)
- **Dr. Hebert Vázquez**, Michoacan University of San Nicolás de Hidalgo (UMSNH)

### International Members:

- **Dr. Juan Campoverde**, Ecuador / United States
- **Dr. Ricardo Climent**, University of Manchester, United Kingdom
- **Dr. Francis Dhomont**, France
- **Dr. Cort Lippe**, University at Buffalo, United States
- **Dr. Michael Matthews**, Canada
- **Dr. Tae Hong Park**, New York University, United States
- **Dr. Miller Puckette**, University of California in San Diego, United States
- **Dr. Robert Rowe**, New York University, United States
- **Dr. Denis Smalley**, United Kingdom
- **Dr. Alejandro Viñao**, Argentina / United Kingdom
- **Dr. Joseph Waters**, San Diego State University, United States
2. Creation:

As the main option in Mexico for music and sound production with new technologies, the CMMAS provides the spaces, human support and the technical resources necessary for those who use sound as the main material for their works, providing the adequate environment for the development and consolidation of individual and/or group projects. The offerings in the area of the creation are:

a. Residences: different support structures for Mexican and foreign artists are available with the purpose of fomenting the creation through residencies and commissions. The Center can even offer accommodations with around the clock access to its studios.

b. Calls for Festivals and Academic Programs: in order to encourage and contribute to the increasing quality of the creative works developed in the field of the music and sound arts, the CMMAS permanently opens calls for its festivals and academic programs.

c. Commissions of New Works: commissions are solicited to relevant creators in cooperation with different institutions, ensembles, and performers, both national and international, with the intention of fostering the composition of new works to be included in the programs organized by the Center, and to promote more learning opportunities for its students.

d. Creators Networks: Being a nodal point linking Mexico with the rest of the world in all matters related with music and the sound arts, the Center collaborates with the development of networks of creators through international programs as the Latin American Network of Sound Arts (www.redasla.org), and the Mexican Association of Sound Arts.

e. Support and Scholarships: the Center, in partnership with the Secretary of Culture of the State of Michoacan (SECUM); the National Fund for the Culture and Arts (FONCA), and in collaboration with several other institutions, provides different types of support and scholarships for Mexicans and foreigners such as the support given for the International Festival of Music and New Technologies “Sound Visions,” the program for young composers in the Area of Electro-acoustic Music “Flight Practices,” and the Certificate of Sound Creation with New Technologies, among many others.

3. Research:

In the constant pursuit of innovation and the implementation of recent technologies, as well as the generation of new knowledge and the reflective practice about it, the CMMAS not only supports residents and external researches, but also constantly generates its own research projects. The objective is to promote theoretical and practical research about topics related to the creation, interpretation of new works, sound analysis, as well as pedagogy and new technologies, among many others.

The following are some of the research activities currently supported by the Center:

a. The development of theoretical work for later broadcast in different physical and virtual spaces in Mexico and abroad, as for instance the works published in the Center’s own specialized journal Sonic Ideas (www.sonicideas.org).

b. The development of interactive applications for education, visual and sound communication, which particularly favor the creation of active publics through high technology resources.
The Center makes unique, high quality creative projects such as books, magazines, CDs and DVDs, as well as online productions like downloads, applications for mobile devices, tutorial videos, podcasts and conferences. These are some of the products generated, edited and published by the CMMAS:

a. CDs and DVD’s which present new ways of using sound and new forms of contemporary expression. These CD’s and DVD’s promote the work of some of the leading artists in the field, and in several instances are the result of our own programs of creation and research.

b. Academic publications that allow students, artists, and the general public to become familiar with new ideas and points of view about sound and about musical works from different perspectives (historical, aesthetic, philosophical, technical):

- **Sonic Ideas**: biannual publication dedicated to electroacoustic music and to the sound arts. The magazine aims to stimulate, generate and disseminate information on the activities and developments in the area, promoting the interaction among composers, singers, researchers and sounds, both in English and Spanish.

- **Book “Max/MSP, Programming Guide for Artists”**: the first text in Spanish that facilitates the understanding of this essential tool from a detailed and yet creative perspective, offering clear solutions for projects of any level of complexity.

- **Book “Compositional Strategies in the Electroacoustic Music”**: which addresses one of the main challenges of the current sound creator, the systematic investigation of the multiple relationships between materials and their constructive potential in the frame of the electroacoustic composition.

All the productions of CMMAS, as well as some additional materials produced by institutions or artists associated with the Center are available online in the store of CMMAS (www.cmmas.org/store.php).
5. Promotion:

The Center disseminates innovative proposals in music and sound arts through festivals, concerts, publications, productions, recordings, encounters and various other activities, with the aim of publicizing the artistic production and the investigation in Mexico and abroad, and making it available to the whole community. Among the more relevant activities we can mention the following:

a. **International Festival of Music and New Technologies “Visiones Sonoras”**: since its first edition in the year 2005, this event aimed at establishing links among artists and students; encouraging the creation of works that integrate the use of new technologies; fomenting an enriching network between specialists; disseminating new works and research, and generating new audiences.

b. **Concerts**: regular recitals open and free to the public, which aim to expose the community to a wide esthetic and artistic variety.

c. **Sound Encounters**: a program which aims to create audiences through the involvement of children and youth with electro-acoustic music, its processes, perceptions and results as they are offered directly from professional artists.

d. **Open Spaces for Connectivity**: through these, the Center offers services that aim to connect the general public to information and educational materials through the approach to contemporary music, sound art and the appreciation of their own environment. These spaces aim to the professional development of the local arts and the community (academics, creators, viewers and cultural managers, among others).

e. **Podcasts**: audio format, to listen online (www.cmmas.org) with the aim of publicizing specialized content.

f. **External Activities**: since 2006, as a result of research and experiments carried out in the CMMAS, different the theoretical and practical works (in various areas) of at least 20 Latin American countries (and from other parts of the world) have been presented in different venues.

g. **Web Portal** (www.cmmas.org): strategically designed to offer easy access to all information of the Center (activities, classes, research, etc.), this site includes an important collection of visual and sound materials with a great education potential and direct access to the Center’s media library. In the site it is possible to find the updated version of the news, activities, and national or international calls in the topic. It is also able to receive individual and/or group projects and texts for the magazine Sonic Ideas (www.sonicideas.org).
Among the biggest competitive advantages of CMMAS are its facilities, which are specially designed and equipped to ensure that the work is performed smoothly and efficiently. They have cutting edge equipment, high technical quality, and are constantly updated. These facilities include:

**Training Room**

**Media Library:** It has one of its kind dedicated collection, of physical and digital materials, like books, magazines, articles, music sheets, CDs and DVDs, bringing together the major works of the most important artists and thinkers in the field of music with new technologies. This collection, which is constantly expanding, allows students, teachers, residents or interested researchers, to access the most essential and updated information in the area.

**Auditorium:** specially designed for and ideal and immersive environment, a unique auditorium in Mexico, allows the listeners to experience the most innovative music and sound arts. 5 multichannel and stereo studios for composers with digital and analogue equipment, recording, mastering and other equipment also available (detailed lists at www.cmmas.org).
A PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
MUSIC AND SOUND ARTS IN MEXICO

The reputation and national and international connections that the CMMAS has forged since its inception with numerous public and private institutions, have significantly contributed to strengthening the education opportunities for our students, both in Michoacan as other states of the country, offering unique and priceless possibilities to gain knowledge and experience, through academic and artistic programs, residences, that encourage links with artists and teachers from Mexico and from the rest of the world.

The permanent support received by the Federal and State government, as well as other national and foreign institutions, foundations and corporations have been fundamental for the growth, consolidation and development of the Center.

Mexico is undergoing a period of cultural activities that celebrates the innovation and creativity of its people, and the CMMAS, the only institution of its kind in the country, is proud to contribute to its development.
Mexican Center for Music and Sonic Arts

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