

Introducing CsoundForLive

Richard Boulanger
rboulanger AT berkeley.edu

CsoundForLive brings virtually all of Csound into the production and performing framework of Ableton Live.

In this workshop you will see how, through Max/MSP and MaxForLive, we have been able to make Csound more productive, more intuitive, more playable, more spontaneous, more dynamic, and significantly increased the "user friendliness" and general "usability" of Csound.

Ableton Live is the most popular cross-platform music production and performance suite today. Some of its key features include: Multitrack recording up to 32-bit/192 kHz; Nondestructive editing with unlimited undo; Powerful and creative MIDI sequencing of software and hardware instruments; Advanced warping and real-time time-stretching; Support for AIFF, WAV, MP3, Ogg Vorbis and FLAC files; A comprehensive selection of built-in audio and MIDI effects; Built-in instruments; VST and AU support; automatic plug-in delay compensation; REX file support plus built-in audio to MIDI slicing; Video import and export for scoring, video warping; Simple MIDI mapping plus instant mapping for selected hardware; Full ReWire support; runs as Slave or Master; Single-screen user interface for simple, creativity-focused operation; Multicore and multiprocessor support and much much more. It is incredibly powerful, quite intuitive, and promotes great creative flow... when writing and performing.

Another incredibly powerful and popular computer music program is Cycling '74's Max/MSP/Jitter toolkit which empowers musicians to program incredibly sophisticated interactive multimedia systems simply by patching together synthesis, processing, control, and interface modules - called "externals".

Several years ago... all of Csound5 was compiled as a Max/MSP "external" by Matt Ingalls. This work has been continued by Davis Pyon and today it provides the means for Csounders to integrate the power of Csound into the visually powerful and media-rich world of Max.

Over the past few years, Cycling '74 and Ableton have teamed up to make a version of Max that would run within Live - as an "instrument" or an "effect". Thus, all of Max/MSP, including csound~ (the Csound5 external) is integrated into Live and CsoundForLive takes full advantage of the unique capabilities and strengths of Max, and Live, and now adds Csound - the world's most powerful synthesis and signal processing system into the mix.

Much of the music played in my keynote "speech" and, all of the Radio Baton pieces that I play on the concert that follows the keynote, will be "performed" using CsoundForLive. At this workshop, you will see the insides of how these systems work together, and how CsoundForLive makes "playing" with Csound incredibly easy and fun.