

Electronic Music Adds New Sound At UT Department

S. A. Express

JAN 1 4 1968

SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS-NEWS
AUSTIN — Electronically produced "bleeps," "gronks," "whirs," "bangs" and "bo-n-ags" are adding new dimensions to the sound of music at the University of Texas.

Recently installed in the UT Music Department is an electronic tape studio which provides facilities for basic research into new sounds.

Why electronic music?

Dr. Lothar Klein, composer and assistant professor of music who was instrumental in establishing the electronic studio, explains:

"Some composers feel that the conventional resources of music have been mined so thoroughly that new ways must be explored to extend the boundaries of sound. Electronic music offers a different direction for their investigations."

Housed in a portion of the Music Department's quarters in the University Junior High School, the electronic studio is an assemblage of hi-fi gadgetry composed of three parts:

- A keyboard controller with a standard organ keyboard of 61 keys.

- An electronic sound-producing console that resembles a telephone switchboard complete with plugs and jacks.

- A recording device for playbacks.

"The electronic equipment produces an almost infinite number of sounds that may be shaped according to the composer's wishes," Dr. Klein says, adding that to the average listener the sounds may recall some of the "overweight static" one used to hear in tuning early radio sets.

Drawing upon an analogy in art, Dr. Klein said that having at one's fingertips the technical equipment for producing many kinds of sound is like giving a painter hundreds of palettes of paint to mix.

"In essence, this equipment will, allow us to explore sounds for their own sake," he noted.

"We are not interested in composing, say, an electronic polka," he continued. "It might be, however, that through experimentation a composer of talent can come up with something."

In addition to research, the electronic studio will be used in various Music Department theory classes to illustrate aspects of acoustics. A young doctoral student of composition and musicology, Thomas H. Wells of Austin, who formerly studied electrical engineering and who assisted Dr. Klein with the installation of the complex equipment, plans to offer informal instruction in the studio during the spring semester to "student Thomas Edisons who also believe they are Mozart."

Television viewers in the Austin-San Antonio area may see and hear the University's electronic studio in operation in January on a KLRN-TV (Channel 9) program, "Sounds of Our Times." The program will be broadcast on Jan. 15 at 12:03 p.m., on Jan. 18 at 11:23 a.m. and on Jan. 19 at 10:43 a.m.