



Inside the CPR Performance Studio: A Window Into Colorado's Music Community

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For more than a decade, the Colorado Public Radio (CPR) Performance Studio has hosted a wide array of musicians, and provided a space to build a catalog of exclusive performances and live interviews that support CPR's service to the Colorado community. These recordings offer a window to experience Colorado's vibrant music scene.

Built in 2005, the 1,000-square-foot studio is a state-of-the-art gathering space for both local and national musicians who represent the broadest spectrum of musical genres. From independent artists performing folk, garage-punk, rock and Americana, to world-class classical and contemporary musicians who give new life and meaning to great works from the last millennium—the CPR Performance Studio has seen it all.

If These Walls Could Talk

Over the last decade, visitors to the CPR Performance Studio have included the likes of Joshua Bell, Sir James Galway, Marin Alsop, Eugenia Zukerman and Olga Kern. International artists like **Trio con Brio Copenhagen** have also recorded in the studio, as well as members from Colorado's own cultural institutions like the **Colorado Symphony**, the **Boulder Philharmonic** and **Bravo! Vail**. With such an expansive library of interviews and recordings, CPR Classical can provide thoughtful context to help listeners explore the world of classical music.



The Denver School of the Arts Orchestra

(Photo: CPR / Michael Hughes)

While the history of the CPR Performance Studio has roots in classical music, the arrival of OpenAir in 2011 significantly increased the number of studio recordings as independent musicians visited to unleash their creativity and share their craft. Perhaps the best example of this is the fact that in 2015, the **1,000th song** from OpenAir studio sessions was recorded with Snake Rattle Rattle Snake. Other OpenAir sessions have included **Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats, Paper Bird, Ian Cooke, DeVotchKa, itchy-O Marching Band** and **Tennis**.



The Congress

(Photo: CPR / Daniel Mescher)

Whether it's an energetic rock n' roll set with heavy percussion or a melodic harp solo, the studio can accommodate just about any mix of musicians. It was originally designed with an isolation booth to segment the space for added flexibility,

which is critical since CPR showcases such a diverse range of artists. One of the largest groups to perform in the studio is soul/funk/hip-hop collective **The Other Black**, which featured a 14-member band.

Picture This...

The studio's south-facing wall is made entirely of glass, letting in natural light and a view of the mountains (on clear days). It's spacious, but intimate with a vibe that feels more like a living room where you'd lounge than a broadcast studio where you'd record. Listening to a session, you can tell the sound is clear and crisp; they're playing just for you. And that's the goal of CPR's Performance Studio: to create high-quality recordings of performances that provide an exclusive and intimate listening experience.

Everything about the studio—from the shape of the room to the materials covering it—is designed to enhance sound quality. Wall and ceiling panels, as well as the carpet, can be manipulated to make the sound more or less lively depending on the musician(s). Even the floor is custom-made with this in mind: it's separated from the rest of the building by a one-inch gap to minimize vibrations that would affect the quality of sound. Another impressive feature is the \$90,000, nine-foot Steinway Concert Grand Piano, which was gifted to Colorado Public Radio by the **Bonfils-Stanton Foundation**. To keep the piano in tune, the studio is even equipped with a humidifier to maintain an ideal humidity level.



Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats

(Photo: CPR / Mark Coulter)

Watch Radio In The Making

The vast library of recordings from the CPR Performance Studio also includes videos that offer a virtual window into the studio and the recording process. Many of these have been featured in "**OpenAir Live & Local**," an ongoing collaboration with **Colorado Public Television** to celebrate Colorado's vibrant music scene. Take a peek inside the studio and watch some of our favorite sessions.

- **Alessio Bax performs Scriabin's Prelude for Left Hand**
- **Ark Life, "Some Unheroic Hill"**
- **The Black Angels' Alex Maas, "I'd Rather Be Lonely"**
- **Carpe Diem String Quartet, "Cherry Blossom" and "Peasebottom"**
- **Denver School of the Arts String Orchestra, "Reverie"**
- **Flobots, "Stand Up"**
- **Land Lines, "Help"**
- **Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats, "I Just Want to Thank You"**
- **PINS, "Molly"**

- **Roomful of Teeth, “Allemande (1st movement) from Partita for 8 Voices”**
- **Shakey Graves, “Dearly Departed”**
- **Victor Wooten, “The Lesson”**
- **Zachary Carrettin performs Bach's cello suites**
- **Zuill Bailey with Michael Butterman, “Kol Nidrei”**

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CPR Performance Studio.

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