



Composing with Algorithms <a href="http://www.bjarni-gunnarsson.net">http://www.bjarni-gunnarsson.net</a>

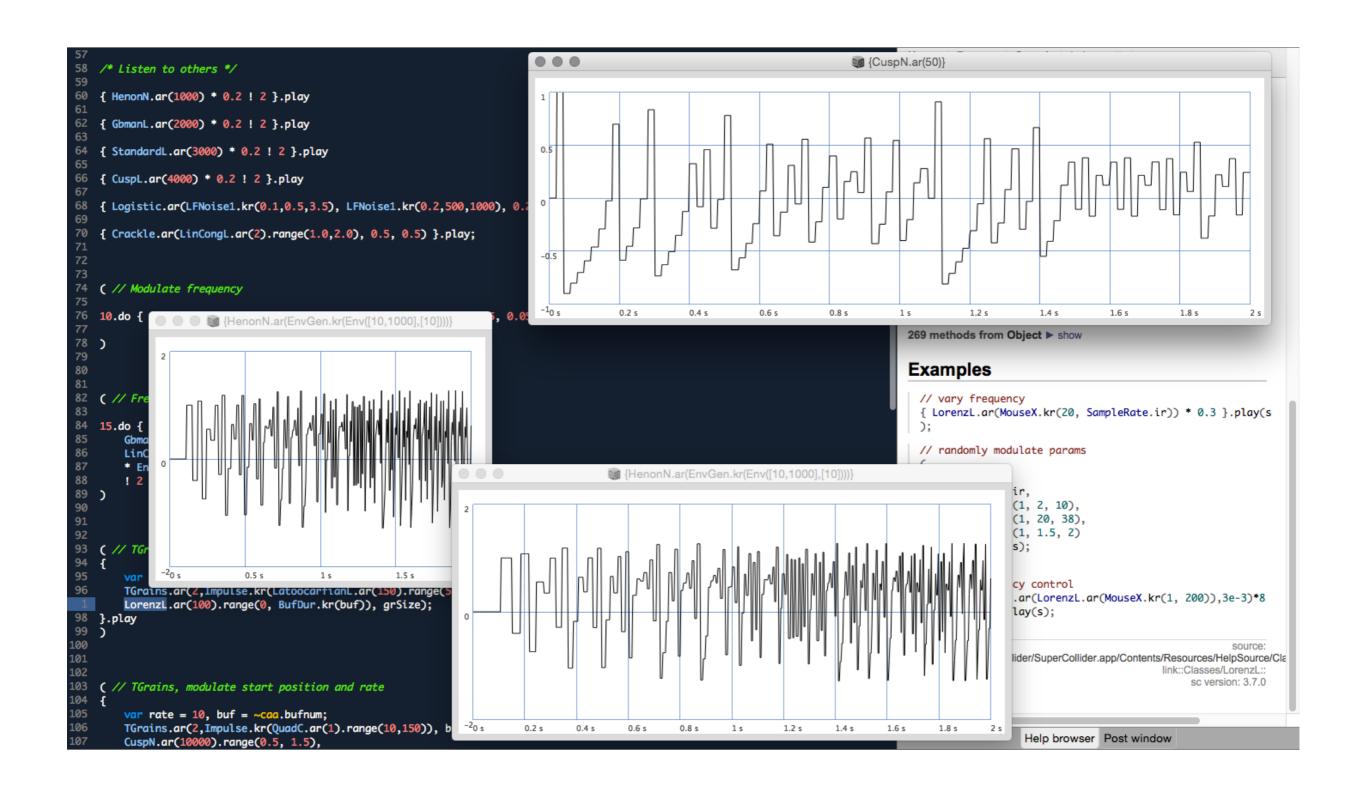


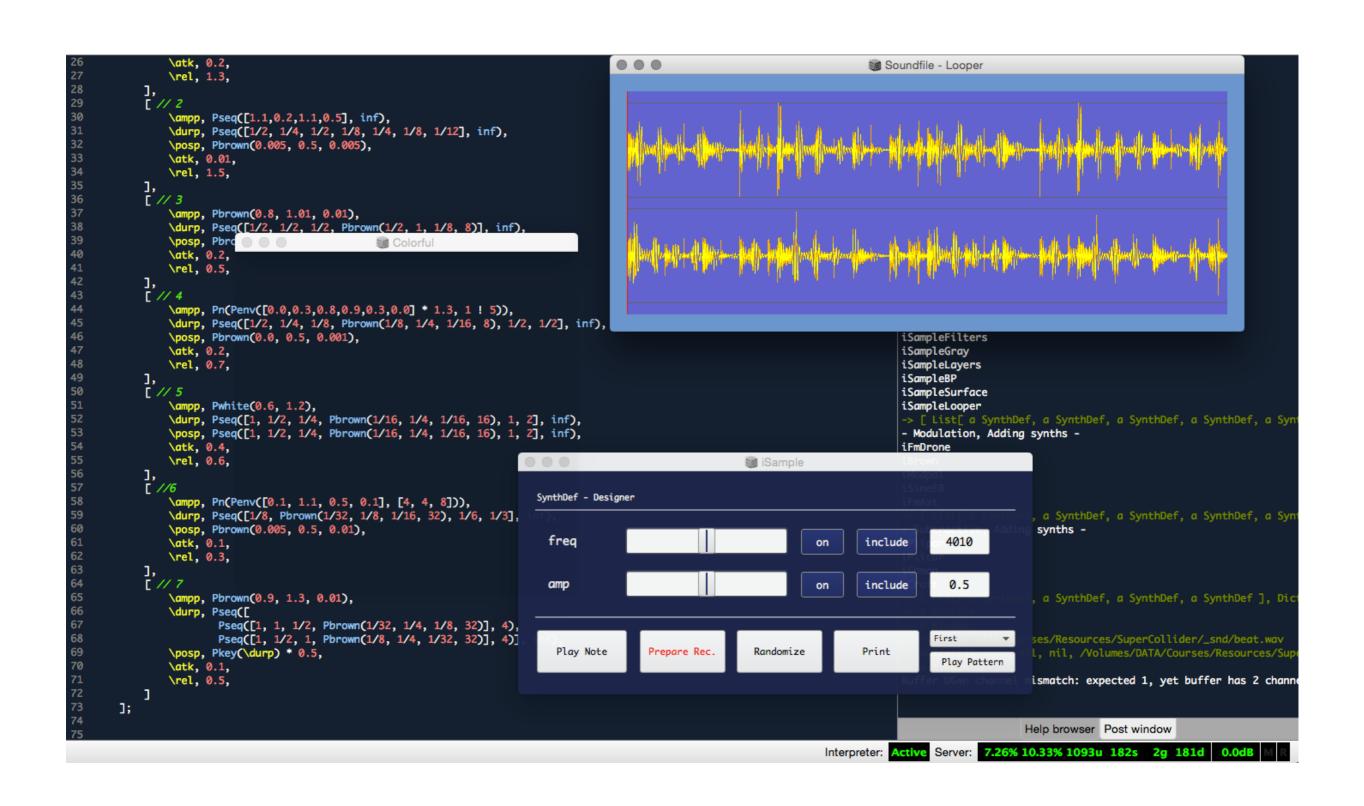
SuperCollider is an environment for real time audio and composition.

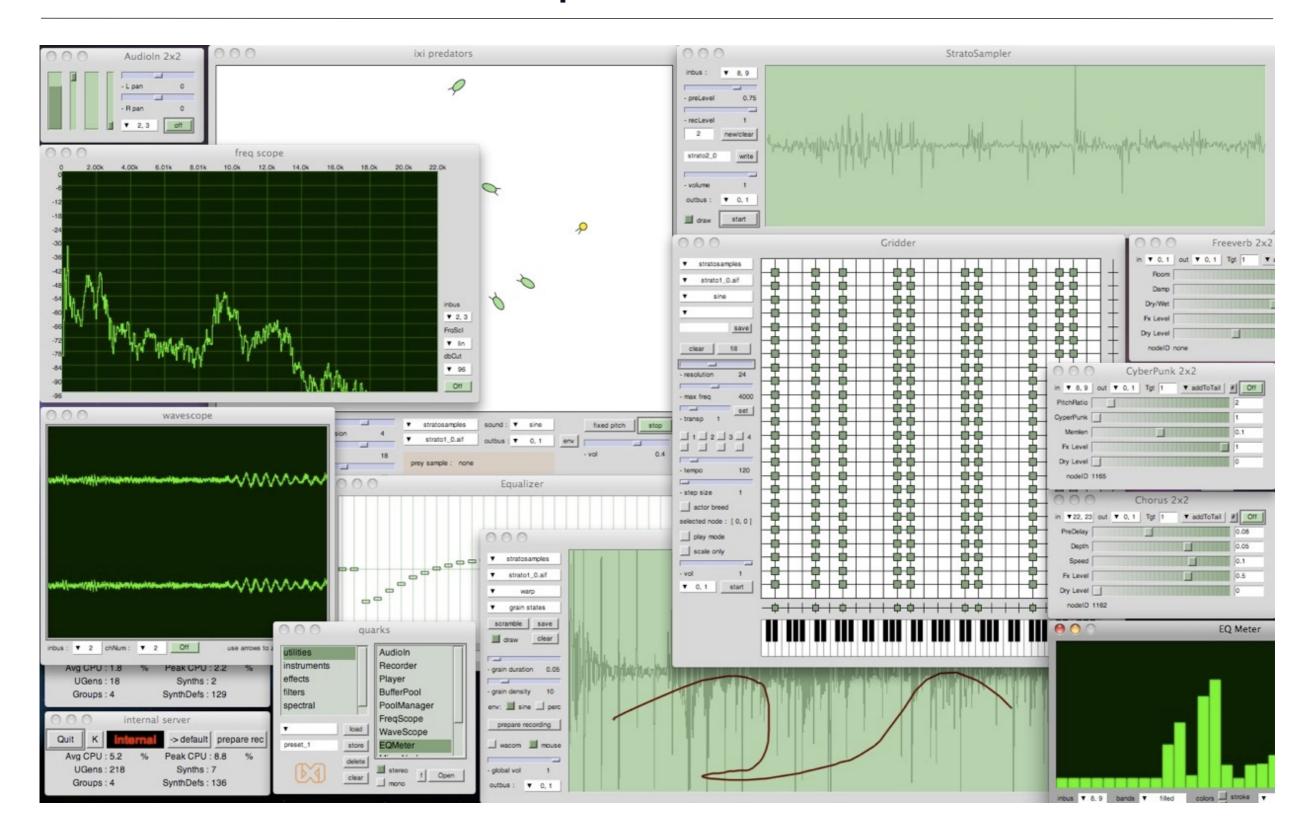
SuperCollider consists of an interpreted **object-oriented language** and a state of the art **realtime sound synthesis server**.

<u>SuperCollider</u> supports different activities such as sound synthesis, digital signal processing, algorithmic composition, live electronics and live coding.

SuperCollider is open source and free software, released under the terms of the GNU General Public License









SuperCollider is a platform for audio synthesis and algorithmic composition, used by musicians, artists, and researchers working with sound. It is free and open source software available for Windows, macOS, and Linux.

SuperCollider features three major components:

- scsynth, a real-time audio server, forms the core of the platform. It features 400+ unit generators ("UGens") for analysis, synthesis, and processing. Its granularity allows the fluid combination of many known and unknown audio techniques, moving between additive and subtractive synthesis, FM, granular synthesis, FFT, and physical modeling. You can write your own UGens in C++, and users have already contributed several hundred more to the sc3-plugins repository.
- sclang, an interpreted programming language. It is focused on sound, but not limited to any specific domain. sclang controls
  scsynth via Open Sound Control. You can use it for algorithmic composition and sequencing, finding new sound synthesis
  methods, connecting your app to external hardware including MIDI controllers, network music, writing GUIs and visual displays,
  or for your daily programming experiments. It has a stock of user-contributed extensions called Quarks.
- scide is an editor for sclang with an integrated help system.

SuperCollider was developed by James McCartney and originally released in 1996. In 2002, he generously released it as free software under the GNU General Public License. It is now maintained and developed by an active and enthusiastic community.

#### **Examples**

Code examples

```
// modulate a sine frequency and a noise amplitude with another sine
// whose frequency depends on the horizontal mouse pointer position
{
    var x = SinOsc.ar(MouseX.kr(1, 100));
    SinOsc.ar(300 * x + 800, 0, 0.1)
    +
        PinkNoise.ar(0.1 * x + 0.1)
}.play;
```

# http://supercollider.github.io

# Design Goals

To realize sound processes that are different every time they are played.

To write pieces in a way that **describes a range of possibilities** rather than a fixed entity

To facilitate **live improvisation** by a composer/performer.

(McCartney, Rethinking the Computer Music Language: SuperCollider)

### About

The SuperCollider **language** is based on <u>Smalltalk</u> and is used for creating **programs** that communicate with the **synthesis server** in order to make sounds.

**Unit Generators** (UGens) are used for generating and processing audio signals within the synthesis server. Interconnected <u>UGens</u> are packaged into a **SynthDef** that describes which UGens are used and how they connect.

The **objects** of the SuperCollider language objects together data and methods that act on that data.

### **About**

Classes describe <u>attributes</u> and <u>behavior</u> that objects have in common.

Sounds that are played or transformed are stored in **buffers** that exist inside the synthesis server.

<u>Audio channels</u> that SuperCollider synths use for sending their sound through are called audio **buses**.

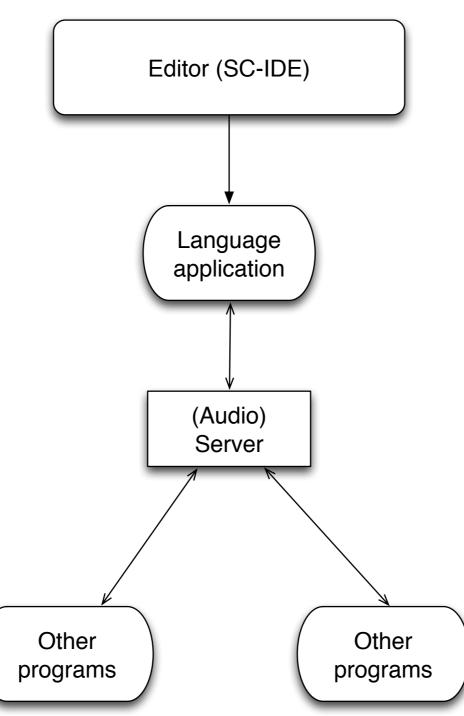
Compositional logic and scheduling is implemented with **routines**, **tasks** and **patterns**.

# **Architecture**

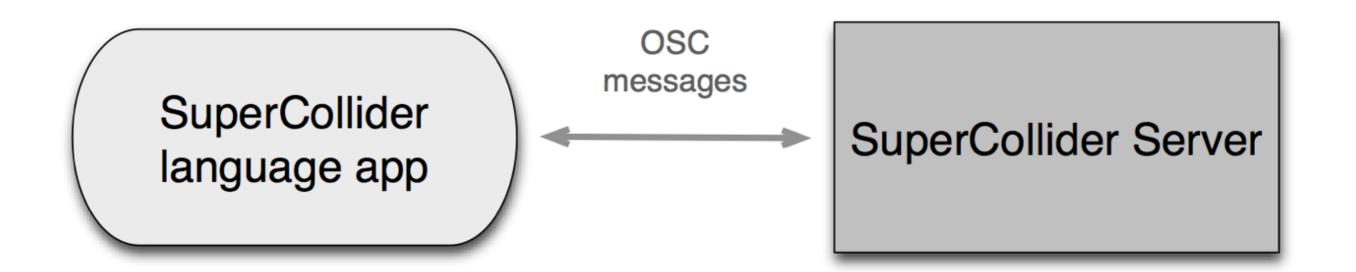
# SuperCollider

supercollider.sourceforge.net

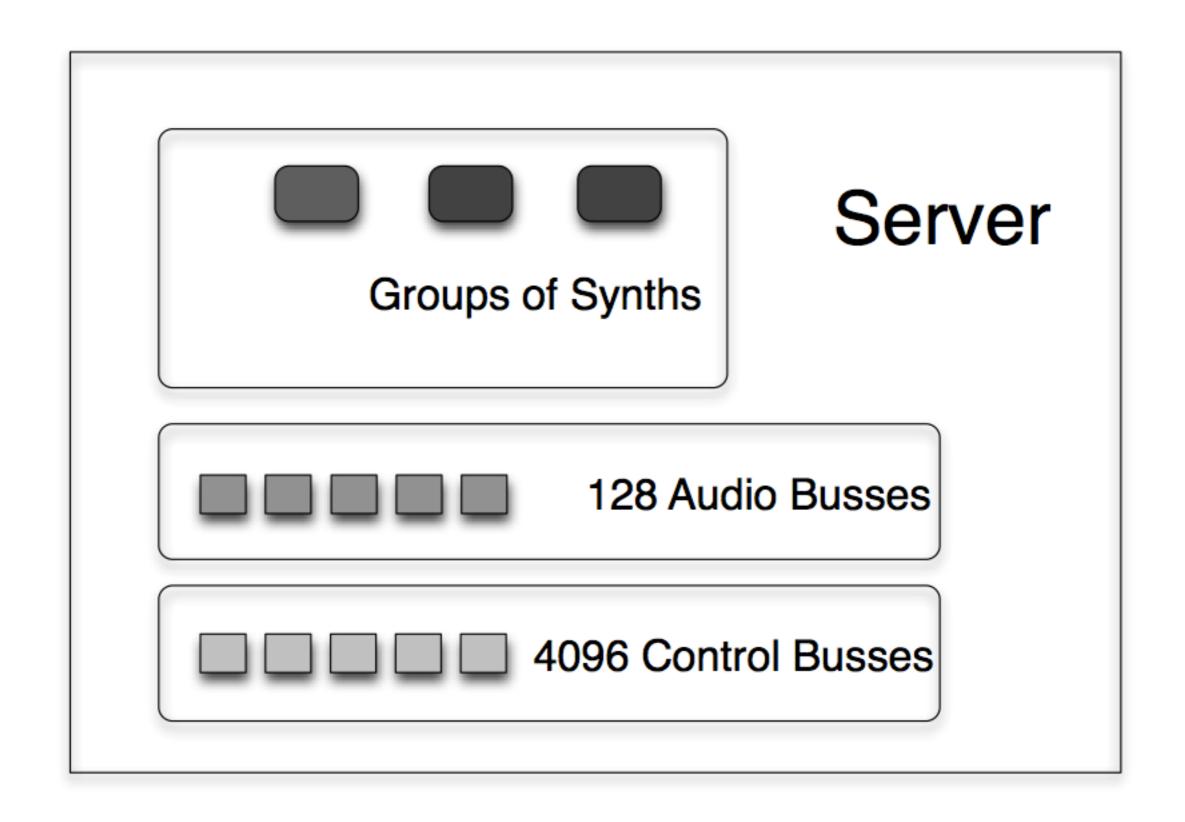
Version 3.6



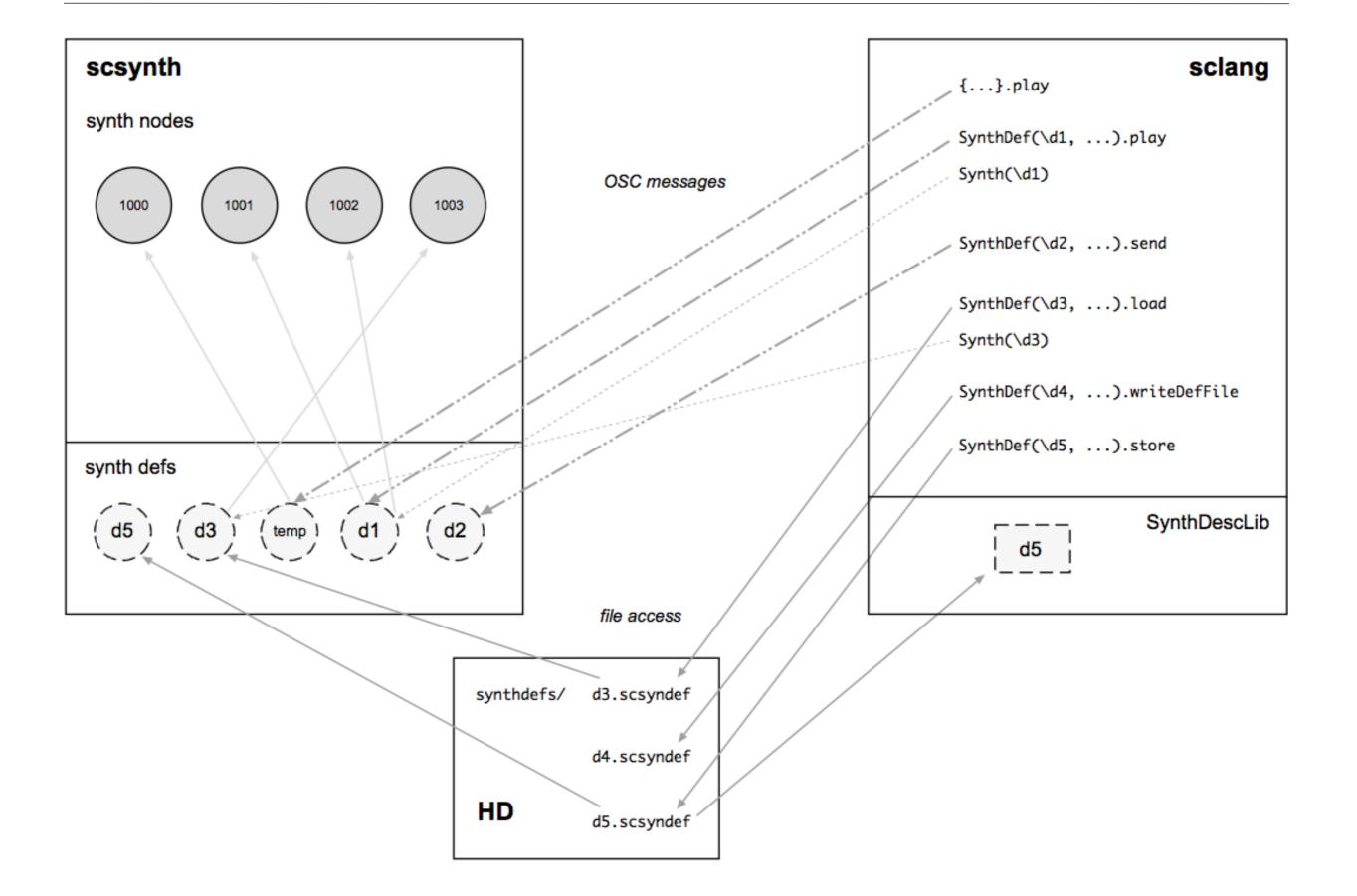
# Messaging



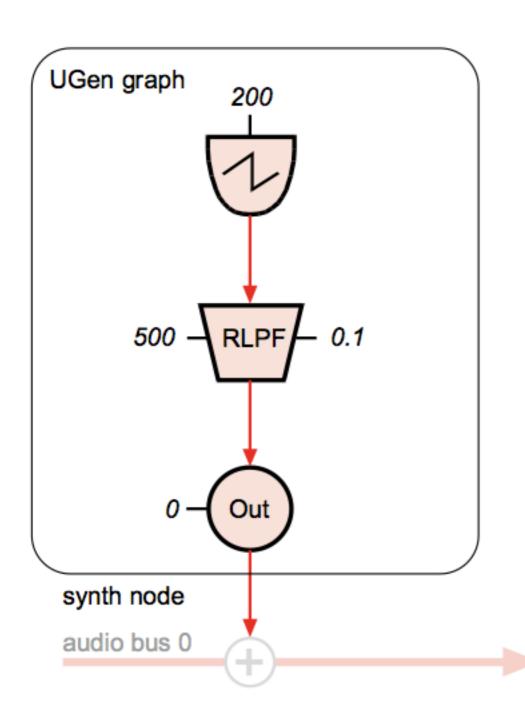
### **Architecture**



# **Architecture**



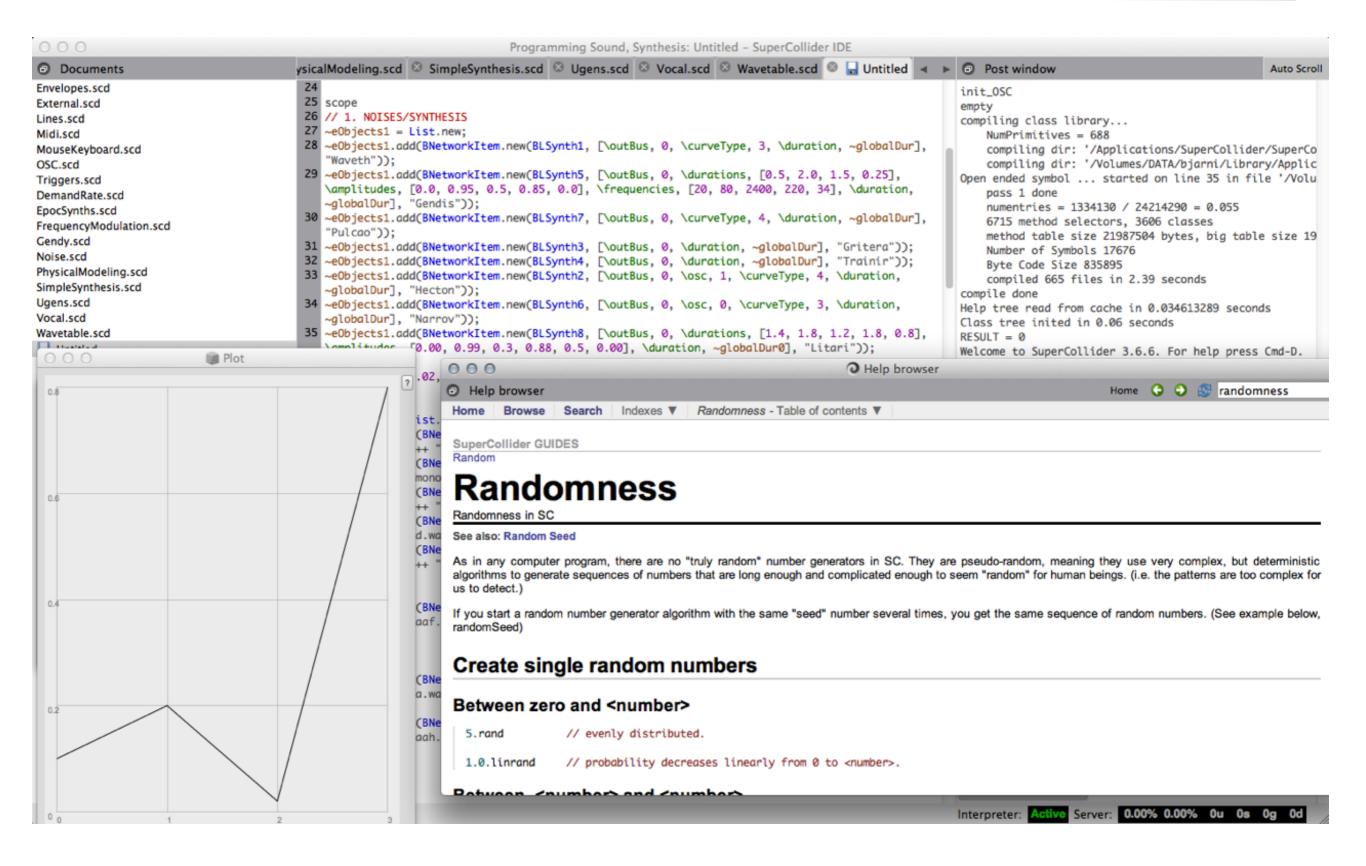
# Synthesis Graphs



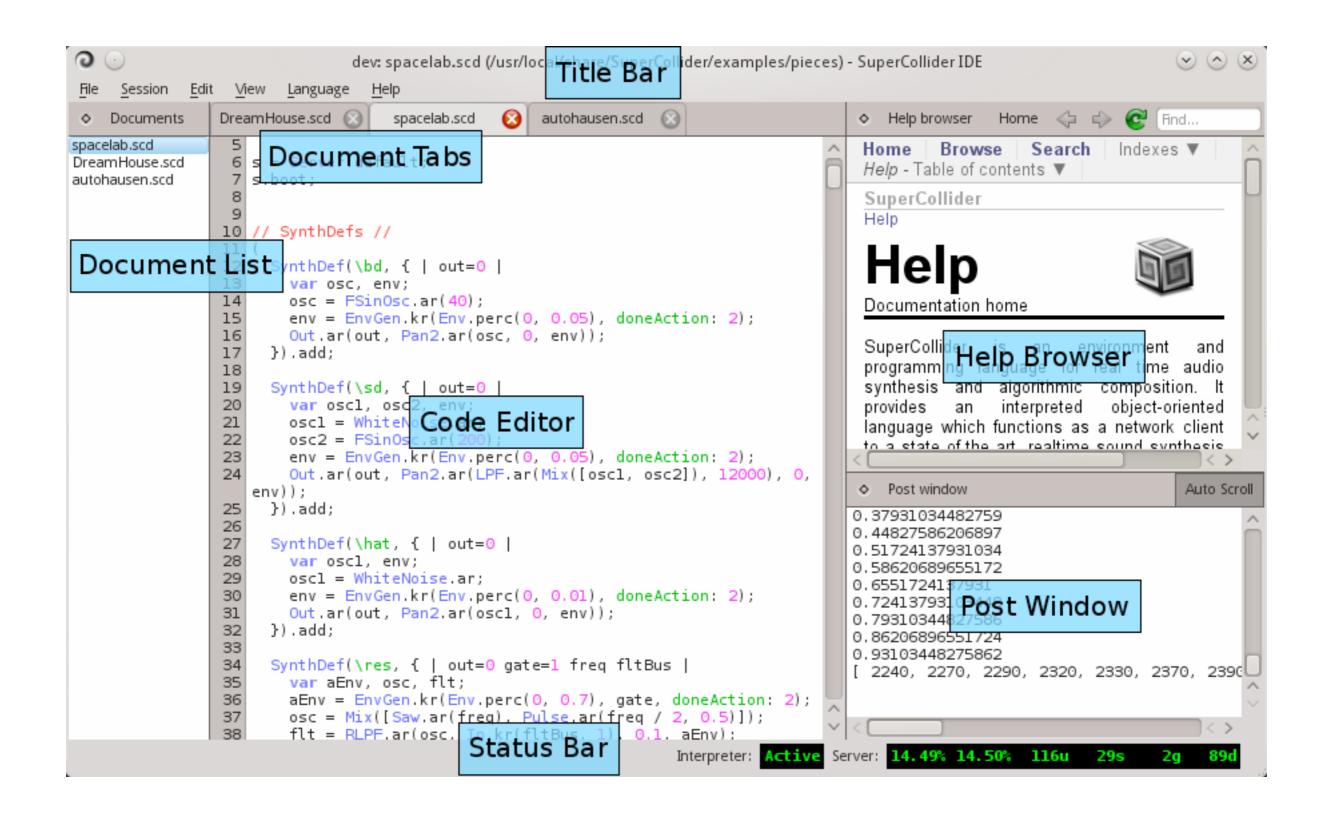
### Synth Nodes and UGen graphs

```
(
SynthDef("simple", {
  var sig;
  sig = Saw.ar(200);
  sig = RLPF.ar(sig, 500, 0.1);
Out.ar(0, sig);
}).play;
)
```

### IDE



### IDE



### Pulsar

•••	Project — ~/Works/Adapt/Holding-Pattern
Project	PMA02 - Syntax.scd
∨ 📮 Holding-Pattern	
→ <b>i</b> ii _	// fixed object slot creation with 'new' omitted
> 🛅 .git	e = Env([0,1], [1])
→ imacts	
> Averse	
✓ <b>P</b> Collated	// dynamic object slot
✓ 🛅 code	a = [1,2, "this is an array"]
c-binaries.scd	
c-covities.scd	
c-wfmult.scd	// r is a rectangle, top an instance variable and moveTo a method.
c-wfmult2.scd	r = Rect(2, 4, 6, 8)
collated-01.scd	
collated-02.scd	r.top
collated-03.scd	r.moveTo(10, 12)
Collated.States.01.scd	
non-standard.scd	//
> in live	// messages are used to interact with an object
DS_Store	"this is a string".scramble
> in Illusive > in Protean	
> Totali	// messages can be chained
.DS_Store	"reverse it and convert to upper".toUpper.reverse
> in code	reverse it and convert to apper .coopper.reverse
> <b>iii</b> mix	// major is a class method, degrees an instance method
> 🖿 recycle	m = Scale.major()
> 🛅 snd	m.degrees()
DS_Store	m·degrees()
gitignore	
	////////////// Arguments ////////////////////////////////////
	// no arguments specifed
~/Courses/Classes/_/2022-2023/PMA/02 - Syntax/code/PMA02 - Syntax scd 21:1	

### Resources

#### Supercollider home page

https://supercollider.github.io/

#### **Original Supercollider home page**

http://www.audiosynth.com

#### **Code examples**

http://sccode.org

#### **Forum**

https://scsynth.org

#### The Supercollider book

https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/supercollider-book

#### Eli Fieldsteel's video tutorials

https://www.youtube.com/user/elifieldsteel

#### Reflectives

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCypLRZiSIIQjsT\_7J4Vz35Q

### Resources

#### A Gentle Introduction to SuperCollider - CCRMA

https://ccrma.stanford.edu/~ruviaro/texts/

A\_Gentle\_Introduction\_To\_SuperCollider.pdf

### Mapping and visualization with SuperCollider

http://marinoskoutsomichalis.com/mapping-and-visualization

#### **Nick Collins tutorial**

https://composerprogrammer.com/teaching/supercollider/sctutorial/tutorial.html

### Thor Magnússon tutorial

http://www.ixi-software.net/content/body\_backyard\_tutorials.html

#### **Stelios Manousakis course**

http://modularbrains.net/portfolio/supercollider-real-time-interactive-course-sc-code/

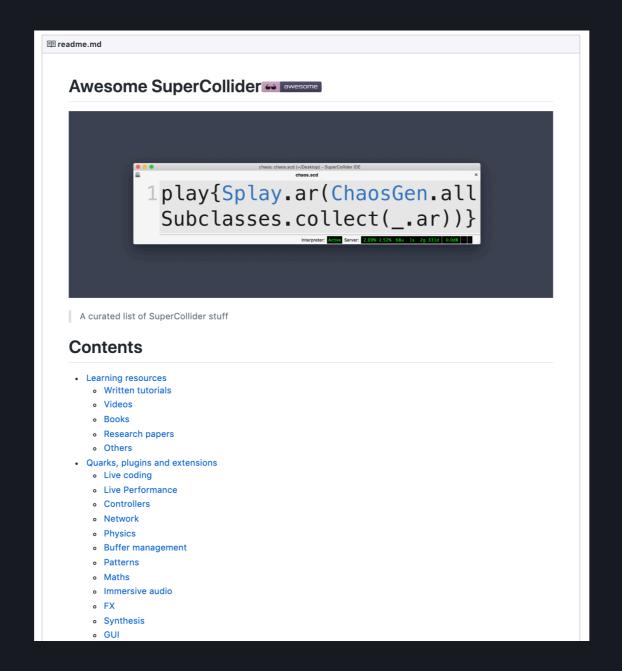
#### **Fredrik Olofsson tutorials**

http://www.fredrikolofsson.com/pages/code-sc.html

### Resources

### **Awesome SuperCollider**

https://github.com/madskjeldgaard/awesome-supercollider





# **Objects**

SuperCollider is a pure *object-oriented programming* (OOP) language, meaning all entities inside the program are some kind of objects.

Objects are the basic entities of the language, they bundle **data** and and **methods** that act on that data.

Two basic types of objects exist, objects with a *fixed* slot of data and object with a *dynamic* slot of data (collections).

Objects belong to a *class* which is a of blueprint of the object, it describes its attributes and methods.

Objects belonging to a class are called *instances* of that class.

# **Objects**

A class can *inherit* properties and methods from another class (its *superclass*) and then becomes its *subclass*.

To interact with an object one sends it a message.

The *receiver* is the one receiving the message. It looks up its own *implementation* corresponding to the message and then produces a *return value* executing that implementation.

There exist instance methods and class methods (such as new).

Instance methods are more common in SuperCollider.

# **Arguments**

Messages to objects come with *arguments*, these are either instances of other objects or literals.

If there are several arguments provided, they are separated by commas.

**Default values** for arguments can be set so that one does not have to set all arguments each time a message is passed.

The *argument keyword* can be used to target a specific argument in the list of all possible ones.

### **Objects**

```
p = Point.new(1, 2)
e = Env([0,1], [1])
a = [1,2, "this is an array"]
r = Rect(2, 4, 6, 8)
r.top
r.moveTo(10, 12)
"reverse it and convert to upper".toUpper.reverse
m = Scale.major()
m.degrees()
```

### **Objects**

```
{ SinOsc.ar }.play
{ SinOsc.ar(200, 0, 1, 0) }.play
{ SinOsc.ar(freq: 200, mul: 0.1) }.play
Array.series(10, 5, 2)
Array.series(*[10, 5, 2])
10.do({'programming'.postln})
10.do{'programming'.postln}
```

# **Expressions and Statements**

An expression consists of values and operators for example: 1 + 2.

Expression are *evaluated* for making calculations and producing a *value* that is a result of the evaluation.

A **statement** is the smallest standalone element expressing an action to be carried out.

Programs are created by **sequences** of one or more statements.

Statements in SuperCollider are separated by semicolons;

# **Expressions and Statements**

```
2 * 4
"sono" ++ "logy"

["composing", "music"].choose

x = [1, 2, 3, 4].rotate(1);

if(1.0.rand >= 0.5,
{"0.5 or higher"}, {"lower than 0.5"})
```

# **Variables**

A variable is a storage location and an associated identifier containing a value used in a program.

Variable *names* usually consist of letters, digits, and the underscore symbol.

Variables usually contain values or result of evaluated expressions.

Variables can be thought of as boxes with labels.

**Several** variables can be created in one statement.

Variables must be declared at the beginning of a function.

An empty variable has the value nil.

# Variables

Different kind of variables exist in SuperCollider such as:

- \* Global variables (available everywhere)
- \* Function variables (available within a function)
- \* Class variables (available to a class)
- \* Instance variables (available with an instance of a class)
- \* Pseudo variables (provided by the compiler, this or this Process)

In addition to value variables, *reference variables* also exist which reference a variable container.

# **Assignments**

Variables are assigned valued with assignment statements.

### Single assignment

The value of an expression on the right hand side is assigned to a variable on the left hand side. <variable> = <an expression>

### Multiple assignment

Assigns the elements of a Collection which is the result of an expression on the right hand side, to a list of variables on the left hand side. < list of variables > = < expression >

### Series assignment to a list

A syntax for doing assignments to a range of values in an ArrayedCollection or List. <variable> = (<start>, <step> .. <end>)

# Variables and Assignments

Point(1, 2).x

OSCresponder.all

 $\sim$ myNumber = 666

### this

$$c = 2 + 4;$$

$$\#$$
 a, b, c = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6];

$$a = (0..10);$$

# **Operators**

An *operator* is a program element that is applied to one or more operands in an expression or statement.

Operators that take one operand, such as the inversion operator (neg) are referred to as *unary* operators.

Operators that take two operands, such as arithmetic operators (+,-,\*,/), are referred to as **binary** operators.

# **Operators**

Operator precedence is determined by order and parentheses.

SuperCollider supports operator overloading.

Operators can thus be applied to a variety of different objects for example: *Numbers*, *Ugens* and *Collections*.

### Comments

To describe code it is helpful to write *comments* so that when one reads it again, all explanation and detail is available and easy to grasp.

SuperCollider supports single and multi line comments.

// single line comment

```
/*
multi
line
comment
*/
```

# **Operators and Comments**

```
[1,2] ++ [3,4]
((1 + 2).asString)
1 + (2 * 2)
0.444.neg
(1.0.rand).min(0.8)
// single line comment
    multi-line
    comment
```

# Literals

Every value in SuperCollider has a specific object type.

A type determines what operations can be applied to the value.

SuperCollider is dynamically typed so variable types are usually determined during run-time.

Variables having a direct direct syntactic representation are named *literals*.

# Literals

# The following literals exist:

- \* *Integers*: 8, -1, 666
- \* *Floats*: 0.25, -25.89
- \* Strings, "Hello Sonology"
- \* Symbols, 'lecture'
- \* Characters, \$a
- \* Special, true, false, nil
- \* Literal Arrays, #[1, 2, 'abc', "def", 4]

# Boolean expressions

A boolean expression is an expression that results in a **boolean value**, that is, in a value of either **true** or **false**.

Complex boolean expressions can be built out of simple expressions, using the following boolean operators:

& (and, true if and only if both sides are true)

| (or, true if either side is true (or if both are true))

not (not, changes true to false, and false to true)

**Parentheses** can be used for grouping the parts of complex boolean expressions.

### Boolean evaluations

Arithmetic *tests* that can be used to create boolean values. These compare two or more objects and the *evaluation* returns a boolean value used for program logic.

- <, less than
- <=, less than or equal to
- ==, equal to
- !=, not equal to
- >=, greater than or equal to
- >, greater than

# **Conditionals**

Conditional statements are used to test values and perform different actions depending on the result of the test.

The test condition must result in a **boolean expression** with only an option of true or false checked for in the test.

The most commonly used conditional is the *if statement* which tests an input and if it passes the test an action is executed.

# **Conditionals**

The if statement usually has an *else branch* which specifies actions to take if the test fails.

Related conditionals are **switch** and **case** that offer many branches as well as those used for iteration on collections (while, for).

# Brackets, Braces, and Parentheses

SuperCollider uses brackets, braces, and parentheses in its language syntax.

Brackets [] are used to define arrays of objects (or literals).

**Braces** { } are used to define function or class bodies.

**Parentheses** () are used to express events, separate expressions or define function argument lists.

# Boolean logic & Types

```
(1 == 1) \mid | (1 == 2)
1 != 2
1 <= 2
if(0.5.coin, {"true it is"}, {"false sometimes"})
a = #["array", "that", "can't" "be", "changed"]
Array.dumpInterface
a = 'something'
b = "anything"
a.class
b.dump
a.isKindOf(Symbol)
```

