



Press Release

Erlangen,
August 3, 2007

Suzanne Vega at Fraunhofer IIS: Singer meets mp3 Inventors

Further information on:
www.iis.fraunhofer.de
www.mp3-history.com
www.suzannevega.com

Suzanne Vega's hit „Tom's Diner“ played a vital role in the development of the audio format mp3, world's most popular audio format. The a cappella version of this song has been a true challenge for the researchers and by overcoming the difficulties, the mp3 algorithm became a real breakthrough. That's why the American Pop- and Folksinger will always remain a memorable part of the development for the mp3 team. Now artist and scientists met for the first time at the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS.

The a cappella version of Tom's Diner from 1986 was well known in the audio world as a critical test item for loud speaker testing. Because of the total absence of any accompanying instruments the focus is only on voice and every little discrepancy in the playback is clearly noticeable. When the song was coded with an mp3 predecessor for the first time in 1988, the result was humbling for the Fraunhofer researchers.

But Tom's Diner uncovered even more surprises: Until then all the research was done with a mono version of the song. The stereo version turned out to be very sensitive for the smallest discrepancies

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when processing the left and right channel. Only with lessons learned from this experience, the team was able to develop an improved algorithm that people know as mp3. For today's mp3 coding Tom's Diner is no challenge anymore.

In 2007, the 20th Jubilee of Audio Coding at Fraunhofer IIS in Erlangen, Germany, Suzanne Vega visited the home of mp3 in the run-up-to her concert in Nuremberg on August 3rd. She met the key researchers Harald Popp, Juergen Herre, Bernhard Grill and Karlheinz Brandenburg that represented the large mp3 inventor team. Suzanne also took the chance to enjoy the latest version of the mp3 format - mp3 Surround. She was very impressed by the success of the scientists at Fraunhofer IIS: "I was very thrilled to come to the home of mp3 and meet the inventors. It is very interesting to see how it all was done and how the new technologies are working."

Photos can be sent on request. Further information on the mp3 development is available from www.mp3-history.com.

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Founded in 1985 the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS in Erlangen, today with 480 staff members, ranks first among the Fraunhofer Institutes concerning headcount and revenues. With the development of the audio coding method MP3, Fraunhofer IIS has reached worldwide recognition.

It provides research services on contract basis and technology licensing. The research topics are: Audio and video source coding, multimedia realtime systems, digital radio broadcasting and digital cinema systems, integrated circuits and sensor systems, design automation, wireless, wired and optical networks, localization and navigation, imaging systems and nanofocus X-ray technology, high-speed cameras, medical sensor solutions and communications technology in transport and logistics.

The budget of 58 million Euro is mainly financed by projects from industry, the service sector and public authorities. Less than 20 percent of the budget is subsidized by federal and state funds.