

STANFORD LAPTOP ORCHESTRA (SLOrk)

presents

SLOrk: LIVE IN BEIJING 2014

Featuring Cong Zhao 赵聪, Chris Chafe, and Gina Gu

Thursday, July 3, 2014, 6:00 p.m.
Stanford Center at Peking University



Stanford Laptop Orchestra (SLOrk)

Ensemble

Alex Chechile | Liang Chen | Wang Chen | John Granzow
Madeline Huberth | Romain Michon | Chryssie Nanou | Zhengshan Shi
Hana Shin | Song Wang | Ju Yaolong | Fan Ziye

Ge Wang, Director

Spencer Salazar and Rob Hamilton, Co-directors

Beijing (2014)

Madeline Huberth and Ge Wang

"Beijing" is an exploration of everyday sounds sampled from Beijing, specifically in the area close to Bei Da and the Stanford Center at Peking University. It is written in three parts: subway, food, and traffic sounds. Nothing is synthesized from the ground-up; every sound has a recording from Beijing as its source. The sounds are sent to many of the hemispherical speakers - while recognizable, they are processed in real-time to various degrees, forming harmonic chords and rhythmical patterns.

Telematic Improvisation (2014)

Cong Zhao 赵聪, Chris Chafe, Gina Gu,
and the Stanford Laptop Orchestra

Non-Specific Gamelan Taiko Fusion (2005)

Perry Cook and Ge Wang

This piece is an experiment in human controlled, but machine synchronized percussion ensemble performance. Various percussive sounds are temporally positioned by SLOrk members, and the piece gradually transitions from tuned bell timbres to drums as the texture and density grows.

Doors (2014)

Hana Shin

tinnitus (2014)

Liang Chen

When a soldier wakes up in the battlefield, what would be in his mind?

Astrobballad (2014)

Song Wang

This is a piece composed for the two instruments designed during the seminar. There are four Beattones instruments and one PluckMic instrument. This piece is organized as an informal concerto with the PluckMic's solo. The experimental and accidental elements inside will help you find out the mysterious ballad.

Exchange (2014)

Alex Chechile

A feedback system is established with the microphone on the laptop and the six-speaker output of the hemispherical array. Each performer tunes the feedback with attention towards the composite sound of the ensemble.

on the way (2014)

Ju Yaolong

What you hear will be a song I wrote one year ago, right after I graduated from undergraduate university, feeling that I still have my youth--having a lot of possibilities and chances in hand and have the right to dream about the splendid future. I am using CCRMA's gametrak technology to control each piece of my song. Hope u will like it~

Scenes (2014)

Fan Ziyue and Wang Chen

This piece includes a simple melody and several sound scenes.

In C (1964)

Terry Riley

arranged by Madeline Huberth, Ge Wang, Rob Hamilton

In C is a semi-aleatoric musical piece composed by Terry Riley in 1964 for any number of performers. It is a response to the abstract, academic serialist techniques used by composers in the mid-twentieth century and is often cited as the first minimalist composition.

In C consists of 53 short, numbered musical phrases, lasting from half a beat to 32 beats; each phrase may be repeated an arbitrary number of times. Each musician has control over which phrase he or she plays: players are encouraged to play the phrases starting at different times, even if they are playing the same phrase. The performance directions state that the musical ensemble should try to stay within two or three phrases of each other. The phrases must be played in order, although some may be skipped. A repeated C played by one player functions as a metronome. In the case of the laptop orchestra, one player plays a piano tone repeated on loop. In C has no set duration.

SLOrk's history with In C began in 2008, when Rob Hamilton, Chris Chafe, and Juan-Pablo Caceres performed a networked performance between Peking University and Stanford. This current arrangement extends the performance to the use of gametraks.

The Search for Life | 探索生命 (2014)

John Granzow and Zhengshan Shi

Mundane objects are brought to the sonified rotating table. We play to awaken them, extending their voices through Chuck. Samples are processed by the central duet. These near field sounds are in contrast to the surrounding laptop orchestra that samples the same sounds, now diffuse with the room's reverb. An improvisation unfolds seeking lively morphologies in the noise.

A Moment of Peace (2014)

Jerry (Xiao) Lu

The initial and basic idea of this piece was inspired by a pentatonic-scale Chinese instrument called Gu Zheng. When the player holds the joysticks and swipes in the air, which is a gesture imitating the swiping motion on Gu Zheng's string, the sound will be just amazing! The piece also uses other sounds like big drum, wind, etc. to create the atmosphere of the music. Some other scales might be employed to present different feelings at some points.

There is a sentence in Chinese aesthetics called "Da Yin Xi Sheng (大音希声)" which means the greatest sound is hard to hear or the greatest sound exists within "no sound". Based on this kind of philosophy, the piece is going to give a lot of blank spaces and let audience to feel a moment of peace and quiet. As the performer, I seldom play such a Chinese-style piece though I am a Chinese, so this could be an enjoyable exploration for both me and the audience.

SLOrk in China (2014)

Romain Michon

This short concerto is divided into two sections. In the first one, the sound of the main instrument, a live electronic guitar, is used by the different performers to create an accompaniment. This technique allows us to obtain a nice fusion between the sound of the soloist and that of the orchestra.

The second section is inspired by different Chinese words that the members of the Stanford contingent of SLOrk had to work with during their first days in Beijing.

Stanford Laptop Orchestra

The Stanford Laptop Orchestra (SLOrk) is a large-scale, computer-mediated ensemble that explores cutting-edge technology in combination with conventional musical contexts - while radically transforming both. Founded in 2008 by director Ge Wang and students, faculty, and staff at Stanford University's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA), this unique ensemble comprises more than 20 laptops, human performers, controllers, and custom multi-channel speaker arrays designed to provide each computer meta-instrument with its own identity and presence. The orchestra fuses a powerful sea of sound with the immediacy of human music-making, capturing the irreplaceable energy of a live ensemble performance as well as its sonic intimacy and grandeur. At the same time, it leverages the computer's precision, possibilities for new sounds, and potential for fantastical automation to provide a boundary-less sonic canvas on which to experiment with, create, and perform music. Offstage, the ensemble serves as a one-of-a-kind environment and classroom that explores music, computer science, composition, and live performance in a naturally interdisciplinary way.

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