
Somaya Langley

University of Canberra
University Drive
Canberra, 2617
Australia
somaya@criticalsenses.com

Artist Talk - Sonic Gesturing: Utilising a Wearable Interface in Live Electroacoustic Performance

Abstract

Gestural/wearable interfaces provide a means for producing a more rewarding and integrated live electroacoustic performance and artistic experiences. There is emerging an increasingly popular trend in electroacoustic and new media performance based around the development of alternative human computer interfaces (HCIs) as a means to bypass the traditional "laptop performance" aesthetic. Sensor technologies coupled with microcontrollers are becoming the common means of implementation. Custom-built interfaces provide new ways of exploring and performing the "sonic landscape", however there are a range of associated advantages and disadvantages. New interfaces bring with them the potential freedom to discover new possibilities, yet, like any instrument; these interfaces require certain amounts of learning and practice to develop a familiarity and control, ultimately resulting in an engaging live performance.

Discussed will be the current work practices (spanning the period 2002 to 2006), which have become increasingly focussed around wearable interfaces, sensor technology and alternative HCIs and their role in live electroacoustic performance and wearable sonic experiences. Of particular interest is the implementation and integration of these tools and the creation of new immersive experiences and performance languages. It is necessary to examine how tools of this nature can be utilised to better explore concepts of a particular sonic artwork or performance. Addressed will be the associated benefits and issues of these technologies with reference to the projects ID-i/o (www.criticalsenses.com/idio/) and HyperSense Complex and a new work-in-progress, the Suspect Backpack (suspectbackpack.blogspot.com).

Biography

Somaya Langley is a sound and new media artist (www.criticalsenses.com) and has presented work in events such as Liquid Architecture 6, the Adelaide Festival (2006), the Melbourne Fringe Festival (2005), Sound Lab Channel III, Electrofringe and Skylounge (2004). She has completed commissions for Experimenta's *New Visions* and the National Film and Sound Archive's *Ten Minutes of Passion*, for which her piece

Passion in the Protest received a finalist's award. In addition she has received funding support from the Australian Network for the Arts and Technology, artsACT and the Australia Council for the Arts.

Somaya performs as ID-i/o and was a member of the sensor-trio *HyperSense Complex* as well as comprising one half of the duo *MetaSense*. She hosts a radio programme, *SubSequence*, broadcast across the Australian Community Radio Network. In addition, she is currently the National Library of Australia's Digital Preservation Manager. Her work has included development of MusicAustralia (www.musicaustralia.org) and the Library's Digital Collections.