
About This Issue

Volume 38 of *Computer Music Journal* opens with this special issue on live coding. The guest editors—Alex McLean, Julian Rohrhuber, and Nick Collins—will be familiar to any readers who have even a passing acquaintance with that field, as these three helped pioneer live coding near the start of the millennium, and all have been immersed in its promulgation since then.

Live coding fuses the role of the musical improviser with that of the computer programmer. Compared with much performance of music on laptops, live coding is typically both abstract and revelatory. Its abstractness (especially from the audience's perspective) consists of the performers' reaching down deeper into the technology, creating sound in real time by typing text in a programming language rather than by manipulating the graphical user interface of a commercial software application. On the other hand, its revelatory nature is embedded in the dictum "Show us your screens": The programmers' laptop screens are often projected for the audience to observe every keystroke. Not all audience members may understand the code, but they will understand that the

performers are not (as the well-worn joke goes) checking e-mail. As for technically knowledgeable observers, they may appreciate a coder's technological dexterity in the highly exposed context of live performance, just as traditional concertgoers appreciate a virtuoso.

Seven articles reveal a variety of perspectives on live coding. See the Editors' Notes following this issue's Table of Contents for the guest editors' overview of each article, as well as for their insightful ruminations on the field as a whole. Our thanks go to the three guest editors for proposing the special issue, calling for submissions, managing the peer-review process, and selecting these seven representatives of this flourishing area of computer music.

The reviews were edited as usual by Ross Feller and are unconnected with the theme of the special issue. Feller himself reports on a CD by composer Barry Schrader, the founder of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States. Annea Lockwood evaluates a biography of another fixture of American electroacoustic music, Larry Austin.

Margaret Cahill contributes her regular Products of Interest section, covering a range of items but starting with two software environments designed explicitly for live coding: Gibber and Overtone.

Finally, a few notes on staffing: We wistfully bid farewell to Rebecca Fiebrink, an expert on human-computer interaction and machine learning who, for close to four years, skillfully edited the News section of the *Journal* but whose professional obligations no longer afford her the time to continue in that role. There is no News section in this issue, which is already brimming with articles, but the News will reappear in the future. For similar reasons, Christopher Ariza resigned his position as manuscript editor following Volume 36, Number 3; but we were gladdened by Peter Castine's assumption of that role as of Volume 37, Number 1. We also welcome Doug Van Nort, who has been helping Lonce Wyse and George Tzanetakis with the management of the peer-review process. Articles he has been shepherding through peer review will begin appearing within a year.

—Douglas Keislar

doi:10.1162/COMJ_e.00224

Front cover. Shelly Knotts and Alo Allik performing at live.code.festival 2013, held 19–21 April at the Hochschule für Musik (HfM) in Karlsruhe, Germany. (Photo by Daniel Bollinger. Courtesy of Institut für Musikwissenschaft und Musikinformatik, HfM Karlsruhe.)

Back cover. Sam Aaron performing at Live Notation, held 27 July 2012 at Arnolfini in Bristol, UK. (Photo: Farrows Creative.)