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Live Coding

A User's Manual

By: Alan F. Blackwell, Emma Cocker, Geoff Cox, Alex McLean, Thor Magnusson

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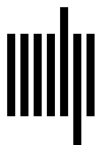
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Acknowledgments

This book is a product of slow development. The idea was first discussed by the authors at the Dagstuhl seminar “Collaboration and Learning through Live Coding,” organized by Alan Blackwell, Alex McLean, James Noble, and Julian Rohrerhuber in 2013, and has subsequently been developed over many years with different levels of intensity. The seminar reflected on the emerging practice of live coding at that time to better understand the potential of live coding for informing cross-disciplinary scholarship and practice and connecting the arts, cultural studies, and computing. Importantly, from the outset, discussions and ideas were grounded in practice (including that of the authors), and ongoing dialogues with the live coding community have been crucially important throughout the development of our writing.

Many of the ideas first discussed at the seminar—including the way we think about programming and wider cultural concerns around notation, liveness, and temporality—have made their way into the book and have been further developed through various publications, events, and conferences over the years, including, most notably, the International Conferences on Live Coding held in Leeds, UK (2015), Ontario, Canada (2016), Morelia, México (2017), Madrid, Spain (2019), Limerick, Ireland (2020), and online from Valdivia, Chile (2021). Further early inspiration derived from research projects such as *Live Notation: Transforming Matters of Performance* (2012), led by Alex McLean and Hester Reeve working in dialogue with an international network of live artists, coders, and theorists. Thanks go to Arnolfini in Bristol for hosting the first Live Notation Unit event in 2012, and the connection to performance research was emphasized in Emma Cocker’s essay “Live Notation: Reflections on a Kairotic Practice” (2013). The UK Arts and Humanities Research Council funded the Live Coding Research Network between 2014 and 2016, led by Thor Magnusson and Alex McLean, which ran three symposia on topics such as live coding and embodiment, live coding in the arts, and live coding and education. The network also launched the International

Conference on Live Coding series. We are also grateful to individuals who engaged with the research project *Weaving Codes/Coding Weaves* (2014–2016). Ellen Harlizius-Klück and Alex McLean led this project, working with Dave Griffiths alongside Emma Cocker as critical interlocutor, through workshops and residencies including the Centre for Textiles Research, Copenhagen (October 2014); Centre for Participatory IT, Aarhus University (October 2014); Museum für Abgüsse Klassischer Bildwerke (Museum for Plaster Casts of Classical Sculptures), Munich (May 2015); FoAM Kernow, Cornwall (October 2015); Institute for Music and Media, Dusseldorf (January 2016); *Threads and Codes* symposium, Goldsmiths, University of London (March 2015).

These are a few of the many interconnections that have brought the authors of this book together and the range of fields of expertise and practice they embody across diverse fields—which broadly include computer science, critical design, software studies, computer music, performance writing, cultural studies, contemporary art, and artistic research. Yet, of course, this collective effort extends beyond the authors alone to the many conversations with the broader community of live coding, the interviewees who informed chapter 2, and the contributors to the expositions of practice in chapter 3. The TOPLAP blog, wiki, mailing list, and forum, first established in 2004, is key to the wider exchange of ideas, and more on this and the history of live coding are discussed in chapter 2. Undoubtedly, the thoughts expressed in this book would not be possible without this broader exchange of ideas across various international networks, and we hope this is sufficiently acknowledged given the impossibility of tracing their origins as such. In this connection we are especially grateful to the following: Sam Aaron, Robert Biddle, Andrew R. Brown, Maria Chatzichristodoulou, Luke Church, Nick Collins, Alberto de Campo, Giovanni Fanfani, Yuen Fong Ling, Thomas Green, Dave Griffiths, Mark J. Guzdial, Janis Jefferies, Jan Kees van Kampen, Shelly Knotts, Adrian Kuhn, Annapurna Mamidipudi, Brigid McLeer, David Ogborn, Jochen Arne Otto, Roly Perera, Hester Reeve, Julian Rohrerhuber, Juan Gabriel Alzate Romero, Uwe Seifert, Kate Sicchio, Andrew Sorensen, Andre Stitt, Giuseppe Torre, Renate Wieser, Matthew Yee-King, and Ellen Harlizius-Klück. We would also like to thank again all the live coders who contributed their expositions to chapter 3.

Many of the chapters are in some parts derived from our previously published papers, reworked and revised as part of the collaborative writing process. We have acknowledged these in the footnotes, and again key texts by the authors can be found in the full bibliography. We also acknowledge funding from the following sources that supported our research toward this book: PENELOPE project, European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No. 682711); Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Live Notation Network

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The book is dedicated to the international community of live coders.

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