

My Favorite Supplement: The Joy of the Gizmo

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Keywords

Sound art, music and technology, instrument design

Abstract

Selected artists from the *Leonardo Music Journal* community present examples of their favorite pieces of equipment — some homemade, some off-the-shelf — within the contexts of their sound art practices.

For the 2007 issue of *Leonardo Music Journal* (LMJ) entitled “My Favorite Things: The Joy of the Gizmo,” Editor-in-Chief Nicolas Collins sent out a call for papers entreating sound artists, performers and instrument designers to join in a special session of “show and tell.” A wide variety of folks came forth, eager to share their secrets. The response to Nic’s call was so tremendous [1] that this spin-off special issue of LEA was made possible, providing an opportunity for a select group of artists to present their discussions online alongside sound samples.

This special issue of LEA features J. Anthony Allen (on virtuosity and longevity in electronic instrument design), J.R. Ferguson and Paul Bell (on the role of ambiguity in musical creativity), Jason Freeman (on *Glimmer*, a composition for chamber orchestra and audience participation), Simon Katan (on his use of “junk” instruments), Han-earl Park (on his work with the interactive, semi-autonomous, non-human musician “io”), Martin Parker (on his adaptation of an inexpensive gaming interface to a sound-making tool), John R. Richards (on the appropriation of found objects and do-it-yourself [DIY] electronics in creation of “the Mincer”), Paul Stapleton (on a new series of musical instruments and his approach to the instrument-performer relation in improv) and Mario van Horrick (on his fascination for acoustic feedback).

We thank the artists, composers, instrument-makers and performers whose enthusiasm for the topic has made these publications possible.

About Leonardo Music Journal

The LMJ series is devoted to the aesthetic and technical issues in contemporary music and sonic arts. Currently under the editorship of Nicolas Collins, each thematic issue features artists/writers from around the world, representing a wide range of stylistic viewpoints, and includes an audio CD or CD-ROM. LMJ is available by subscription from the MIT Press at <http://mitpressjournals.org/lmj>

References

1. See Nicolas Collins, "My Favorite Things: The Joy of the Gizmo," *Leonardo Music Journal* **17** (2007). This issue of LMJ features objects "as varied as hearing aids, weather stations, heat engines, Dictaphones, clip-leads, Y-cords, mobile phones, fuzz tones, bent toys, laptops, equalizers, synthesizers, electric guitars, tape delays, contact mikes, radios, mechanical gears, violin bows, mixing bowls, drums and woven circuits." The CD accompanying the journal, is entitled "The Art of the Gremlin: Inventive Musicians, Curious Devices," and was curated by Sarah Washington.