

Developing a PureData Instrument

Lundrim Alla

a12244059@unet.univie.ac.at

University of Vienna

Vienna, Austria

Abstract

This seminar paper explores the development of a musical instrument using Pure Data (PD) and the Syntien app, focusing on personal experiences, user interaction, technical aspects, and future directions. Initially, the project involved familiarizing myself with Pure Data through experimentation with provided patches, sparking creativity for designing a custom musical instrument. The instrument utilizes five distinct sound samples sourced from everyday sounds, chosen for their potential to create diverse and captivating auditory experiences. Techniques such as cutting, reversing, speed adjustments, and looping were employed to manipulate these samples creatively. The interface, designed for accessibility via tablet or smartphone using the Syntien app, emphasizes simplicity and clarity. Users interact with controls including a power switch, individual sound sample triggers, volume adjustment, speed control, precise sample editing, tempo modulation, and looping functionality. Reflecting on this journey, the project not only expanded technical skills in sound manipulation but also highlighted the transformative potential of everyday sound recordings. Future work includes enhancing interface intuitiveness, integrating advanced sound processing algorithms, and exploring collaborative and networked features to further enrich creative possibilities in musical composition and performance.

Keywords: puredata, sound samples, sound manipulations techniques, interface design, pd, instrument, synthesis, osc, syntien.

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1 Introduction

The intersection of digital technology and musical creativity has paved the way for innovative developments in instrument design. This seminar paper delves into the realm of musical instrument creation using Pure Data (PD) in conjunction with the Syntien app. Central to this exploration is the manipulation of sound samples sourced from everyday environments, aimed at transforming mundane recordings into dynamic and expressive musical elements. The project not only entails technical experimentation with PD patches but also underscores the importance of intuitive interface design and user interaction. By leveraging advanced sound manipulation techniques such as cutting, reversing, and speed adjustments, coupled with sophisticated features like looping and tempo modulation, the instrument offers a platform for creative exploration and composition.

2 Instrument Construction


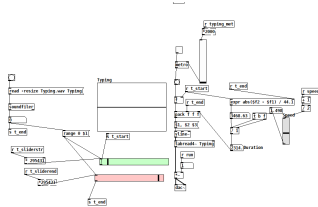
Because it was my first experience with PureData, I took the time to get acquainted with the program and understand its features before recording sound samples and starting synthesis. I experimented with the PD patches provided in the book, gaining valuable insights and ideas that sparked my creativity for designing my own musical instrument. By studying and assessing these patches, I developed a clearer vision of how my instrument could be structured and function

2.1 Sound samples

I wanted to make an instrument using five short sound samples, each about five seconds long, taken from everyday sounds around us. It was important to me that these sounds were interesting and could be changed in different ways to create many exciting sounds. By choosing rich and versatile sounds, I could modify and transform them into unique and captivating sounds with my instrument.

I chose specific sounds for my instrument: elevator door, the sound of a chair scratching on the floor, rhythmic typing on a laptop keyboard, the opening and closing of a pen, and the sound of a coffee machine. I picked these sounds because they are unique and have great potential to create diverse and interesting audio experiences when used with my instrument. These sounds were carefully selected to ensure they could be modified in many ways, making my instrument both fun and creative to play.

There are numerous techniques for modifying recorded sound samples, each providing unique creative possibilities.



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iennet/udpreceive 9000
osc/unpackOSC
print

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Figure 2. Connection

3 Instrument Interface

When designing the instrument interface, my primary goal was to create a user-friendly and intuitive experience. To facilitate this, I enabled interaction with the instrument through a tablet or smartphone. I utilized the "Syntien" app to control the instrument, ensuring the interface was straightforward and accessible.

Using the Syntien app is simple. Users need to grant permission to send OSC messages and establish a connection by entering the correct IP address. It's crucial to ensure that the port in the app matches the port configuration in PureData to enable seamless data transfer.

Syntien provides pre-built interface options, but it also allows for custom interface creation. I chose to design a new interface specifically for my instrument, focusing on simplicity and clarity. This custom interface includes only essential elements to avoid overwhelming users and maintain a clean, user-friendly experience.

Interface Features:

Sound Sample Controls: Five green buttons, each assigned to one of the sound samples, offer users independent control over sound selection and manipulation.

Adjust volume with a dedicated button.

Sample Editing: Each sound sample section allows users to set precise start and end points using sliders, facilitating detailed sound segment selection for further processing.

Looping Functionality: Increment boxes on the interface toggle looping on or off for each sound sample. When activated, the selected sample plays continuously until manually paused or stopped.



Figure 3. Interface

4 Reflection

Creating this instrument using Pure Data (PD) and crafting a custom interface with the Syntien app has been a transformative journey for me. Through experimenting with sound modifications like cutting, reversing, adjusting speeds, and looping, I've delved deep into the creative potential of sound samples.

This project has not only broadened my knowledge of sound manipulation techniques but has also been incredibly fulfilling. It's fascinating to see how ordinary recordings of everyday sounds can be reshaped into a diverse array of intriguing and distinctive auditory experiences.

Exploring these possibilities has not only enhanced my technical skills but has also sparked personal growth, allowing me to appreciate the boundless creativity inherent in audio manipulation.

5 Potential Enhancements and Future Directions

Looking ahead, there are numerous possibilities to elevate the instrument and interface developed using Pure Data (PD) and the Syntien app. Firstly, refining the user interface is paramount to enhance usability and aesthetic appeal. This includes simplifying navigation with intuitive graphical elements and icons that clearly represent sound manipulation features. Additionally, integrating advanced sound processing algorithms within Pure Data could offer users more sophisticated real-time effects and intricate sound manipulation techniques such as spectral processing and granular synthesis. Expanding the diversity and quality of sound libraries will broaden creative options, allowing for a richer musical palette and accommodating various genres and preferences. Moreover, enhancing the instrument for live performances by incorporating MIDI controller support and responsive effects triggering would cater to musicians seeking dynamic and expressive capabilities on stage. Collaborative features, including networked sessions and shared presets, could foster a community-driven approach to music creation, enabling multiple users to interact and collaborate seamlessly. Embracing machine learning for automated sound analysis and intelligent parameter adjustments stands to revolutionize user interaction and workflow efficiency. Ensuring cross-platform compatibility and accessibility features, such as screen reader support, will make the instrument accessible

to a wider audience, regardless of their technological background or physical abilities. Finally, continuous feedback-driven development will be crucial, refining the instrument based on real-world user experiences and technological advancements, ensuring it remains at the forefront of sound manipulation and music production tools.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the journey of creating and refining this instrument using Pure Data (PD) alongside the Syntien app has been both enlightening and rewarding. Through experimenting with various sound manipulation techniques like cutting, reversing, speed adjustments, and looping, I have not only expanded my technical proficiency but also explored the boundless creativity inherent in audio transformation. This project has deepened my understanding of digital signal processing and interface design, showcasing how humble recordings can be transformed into captivating auditory experiences. Looking forward, the potential for future enhancements is promising, including advancements in user interface design, integration of advanced sound processing algorithms, and the incorporation of machine learning for intelligent automation. By continuing to iterate based on user feedback and technological advancements, this instrument has the potential to evolve into a versatile tool that empowers musicians, sound designers, and creators to explore new realms of sonic expression and creativity.