

The Battle of Barcelona

We Gang vs. Click Nilson
Chuck vs. SuperCollider

a report by Robert F. Nesting

"Welcome to the 2005 Live Coding Championship Final for the disputed World Programming Federation Fingerweight Belt (hosted under the kind auspices of off-ICMC and Metronom). Plato vs Aristotle, Mozart vs Clementi, Kasparov vs Deep Blue, Cause vs Effect...all of these are nothing compared to what you will witness tonight..."

The match broke loose barely after the adversaries had been introduced royally by the grand master of all inlets and outlets, Gregory Taylor. After a first vain attempt to beat We with boxing gloves on, this burden was removed only to engage even deeper in the opponents' psychological warfare. But before Click Nilson could articulate even a first deathly line of code, We Gang had made the first special glitch score for making the classic mac os x user error notification sound (I think it was a Sosumi). The audience boiled. From there on, the psycho-thriller went its way, Click using the ancient trick of livecoders to discourage both enemies and audience by announcing that he will implement now one of the oldest algorithms of mankind (the babylonian square root algorithm). Teasing Click, We Gang set off in the opposite direction: quickly, without anyone noticing, he produced an impulse series that no-one could possibly resist. In the most gratifying ease he made the audience believe that he was producing the beat soundtrack for a documentary about the first steps in the algorithmic evolution of mankind. Smashing waterfall diagrams was only one weapon, deadly for almost any enemy. Severe weaknesses, even occasional "slips" did not matter. There it came: the multipliable, dancing, white, holy missionary of chuck, the dancing agent, the next incarnation of the slub ascii-dancer! Making the most "encouraging" commentaries about the silently programming Click, beating him with irritation, pretending to cheerlead him to reach the acoustical age. But then, suddenly, Click wrote the one important one line comment: "// this bit makes sound". And from there on, the optimization routines of a multiplied babylonian square root algorithm, tuned down below the threshold of human melodic and rhythmic perception went their way, and Click was on his own way again, raised like the phoenix from the ashes of typing latency! What could We do? There is no antidote to the revitalized presence of ancient mathematical knowledge, as we all know, especially when expressed in an elegant computer language. No antidote but the power of low level fight! Ge set out to implement a new feature in his system on-the-fly, trying to pull away the carpet under Click's feet: Restricted only by the fact that he had to compile just about his whole operating system, the audience was taken into a psychedelic travel into the intestines of strong coding, in the hallucinatory beauty of reasoning. This made Click's knees shake visibly. The only desperate way to save himself was, we have seen it all, a big bang of prepared secret weapons, crystallized memory of past live coding activities, sprouting and making music. Thus, an impressive fireworks of sound algorithms completed the mutual stalemate. The typing was over, and so was the battle. It was a cruel battle. But it was a beautiful fight.

more info: see <http://www.wwe.com> and <http://toplap.org>