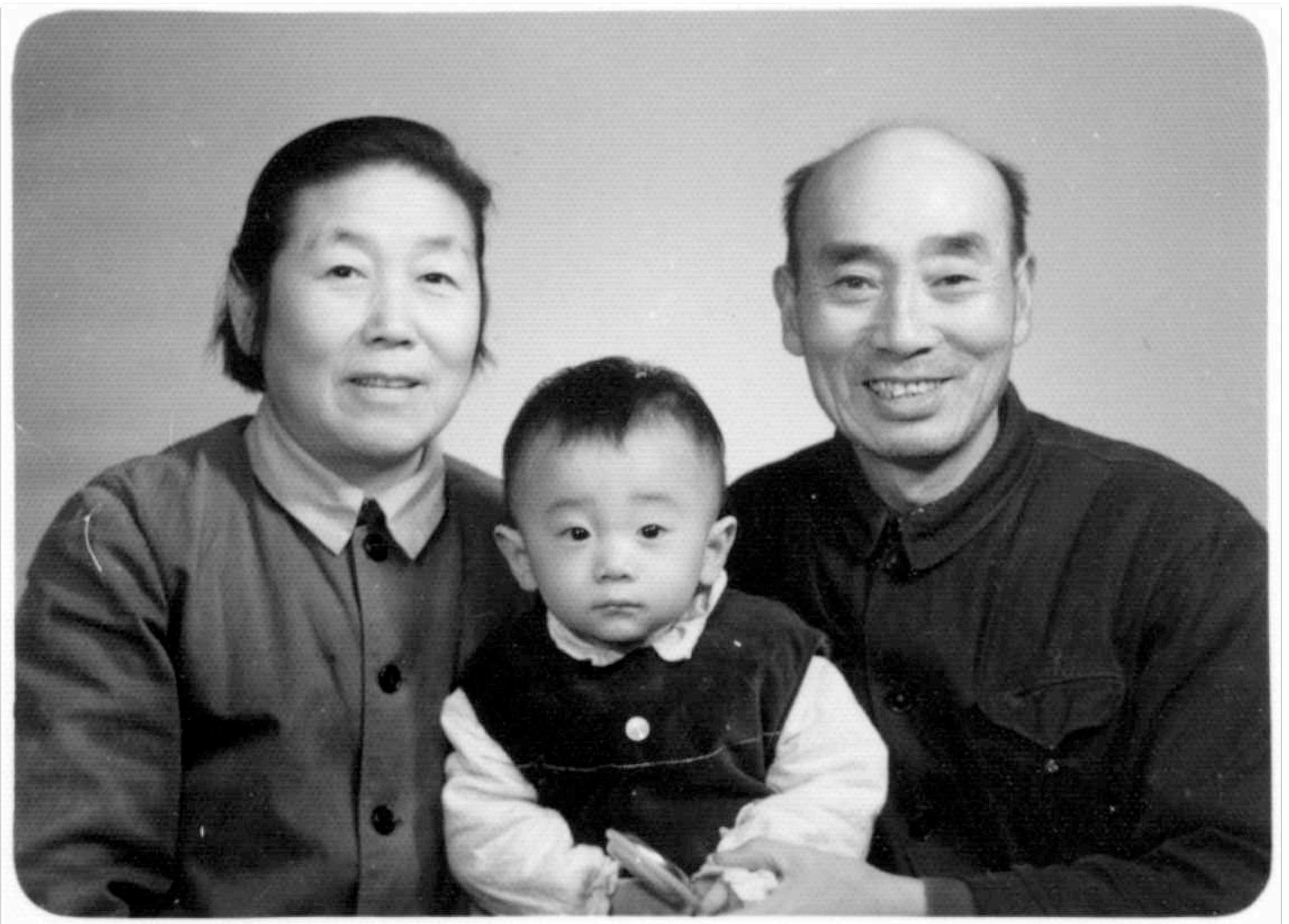


Ge Wang

Assistant Professor, Stanford University | CCRMA
Co-Founder + Chief Creative, Smule

@gewang





The Machine that Makes You Musical

Is everyone musical? One sonic pioneer thinks so. And he has the technology to prove it.

By ROB WALKER

In a dimly lighted conference room in the Palo Alto, Calif., offices of Smule, a maker of music apps, Ge Wang was sitting in a meeting with his colleagues, humming, singing and making odd whooshing noises into the microphone of an iPad, checking the screen, and then pounding fugues of code into an attached laptop. Poking at his devices, he reminded me of a child obliviously amusing himself while the grown-ups natter on around him. Nobody else in the meeting seemed to notice Wang's behavior as they listened to a debriefing about recent updates to Smule's Mini Magic Piano app.

When the guy at the head of the table mentioned that the graphics on the welcome page now subtly pulse, Wang looked up. "Yeahhhh," he said. "Classic Smule," he added in a mutter to nobody in particular. "Everything needs to pulse." Then he blew into his iPad mic and banged some more code.

Wang, who is 34 and a founder of the company, often leaves an impression of childlike distract edness. But in fact he's distressingly productive. He was coding in someone else's meeting in July because he had just two hours to prepare for a presentation on a new Smule product, code-named "Project Oke." His company has been remarkably successful, but the app-o-sphere is more competitive than it used to be, and there was a lot riding on his coming up with another hit — ideally by year's end.

Wang likes to say that he has two full-time jobs,

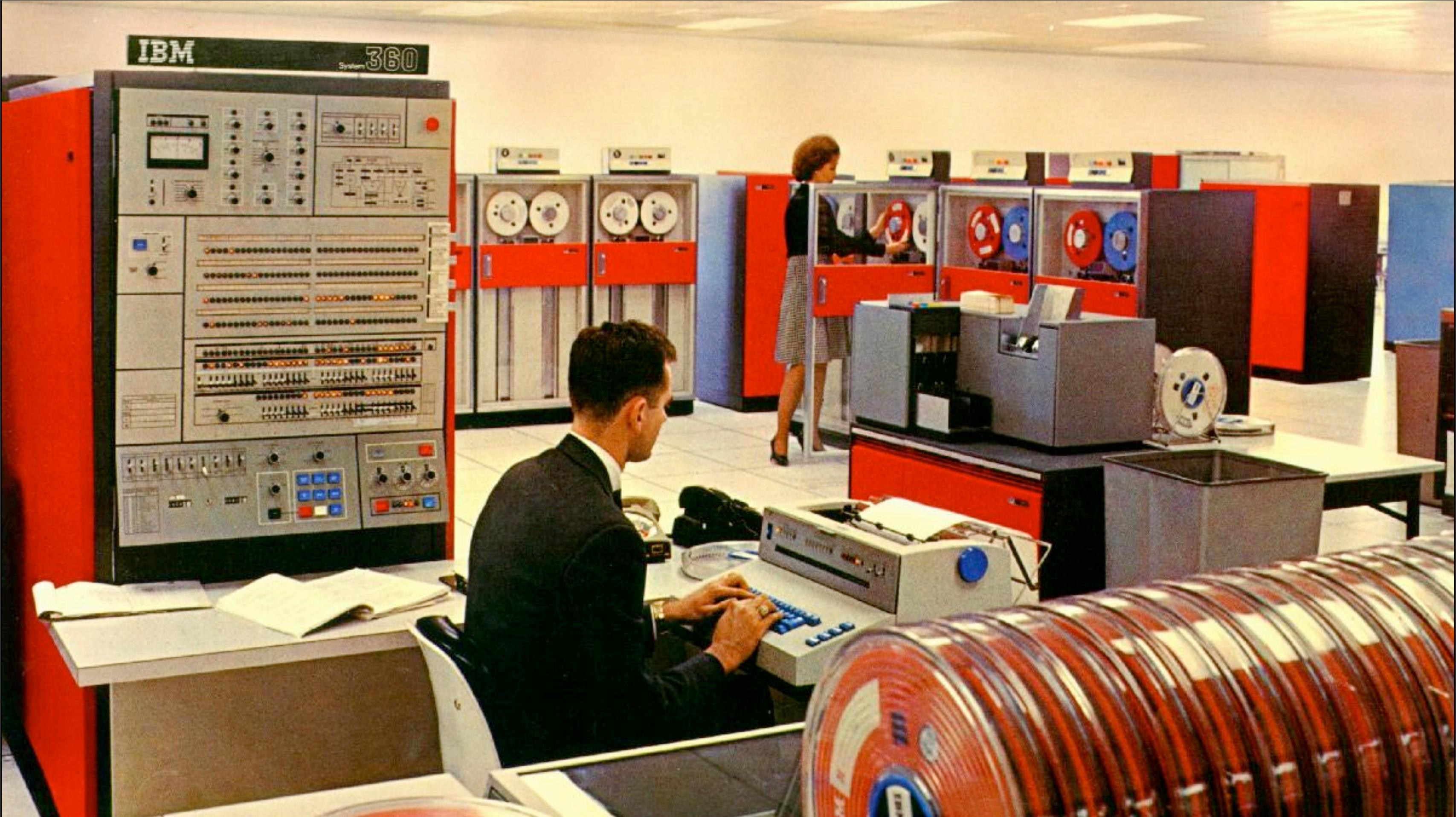
and they seem wholly distinct. At Stanford University, where he is an assistant professor, he teaches a full course load through the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (usually referred to as CCRMA, pronounced "karma"), presiding over a highly experimental "orchestra" that performs with cleverly customized laptops, cell phones and other electronics. It's very cutting edge and, in terms of audience, very rarefied. At Smule, a profit-driven, private company that recently raised its second round of venture-capital financing, he devises applications bought by millions.

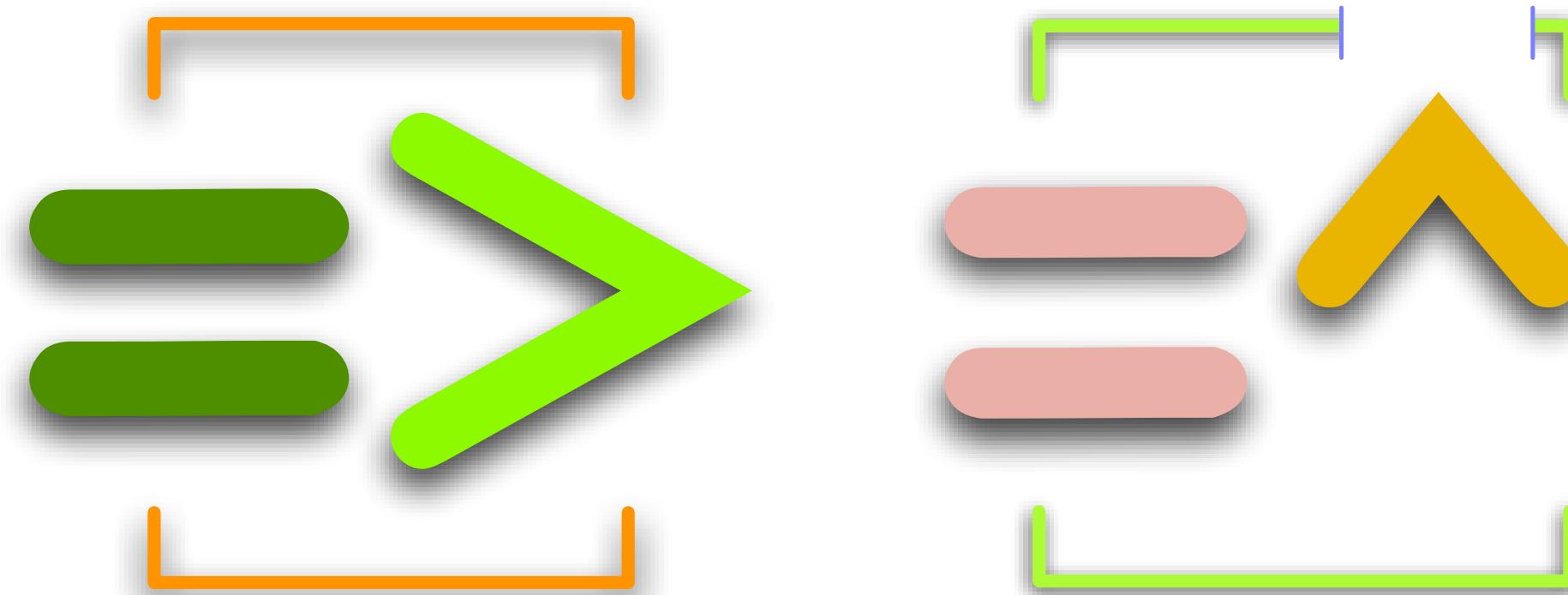
Founded in 2008, Smule released several apps in rapid succession, but its breakthrough was the Ocarina. Exploiting the iPhone's microphone as well as its touch-screen interface, Wang converted the device into an easy-to-play flute-like instrument. In what has become a Smule signature, the app also included a representation of the globe, with little dots that light up to show where in the world someone is playing the app at that moment. With a tap, you can listen. It's also possible to arrange a duet with an Ocarina user thousands of miles of way, whom you've never met. The Ocarina was downloaded half a million times, at 99 cents a pop, in its first couple of months, making it the top-selling app for three straight weeks; a new artist selling that many downloads of a single today would probably end up on the cover of Rolling Stone.

The common aim of Smule's products is to prod nonmusicians into making music and to



IBM
System 360





Chuck

a music programming language

<http://chuck.stanford.edu/>



Princeton Laptop Orchestra



Stanford Laptop Orchestra













[video]

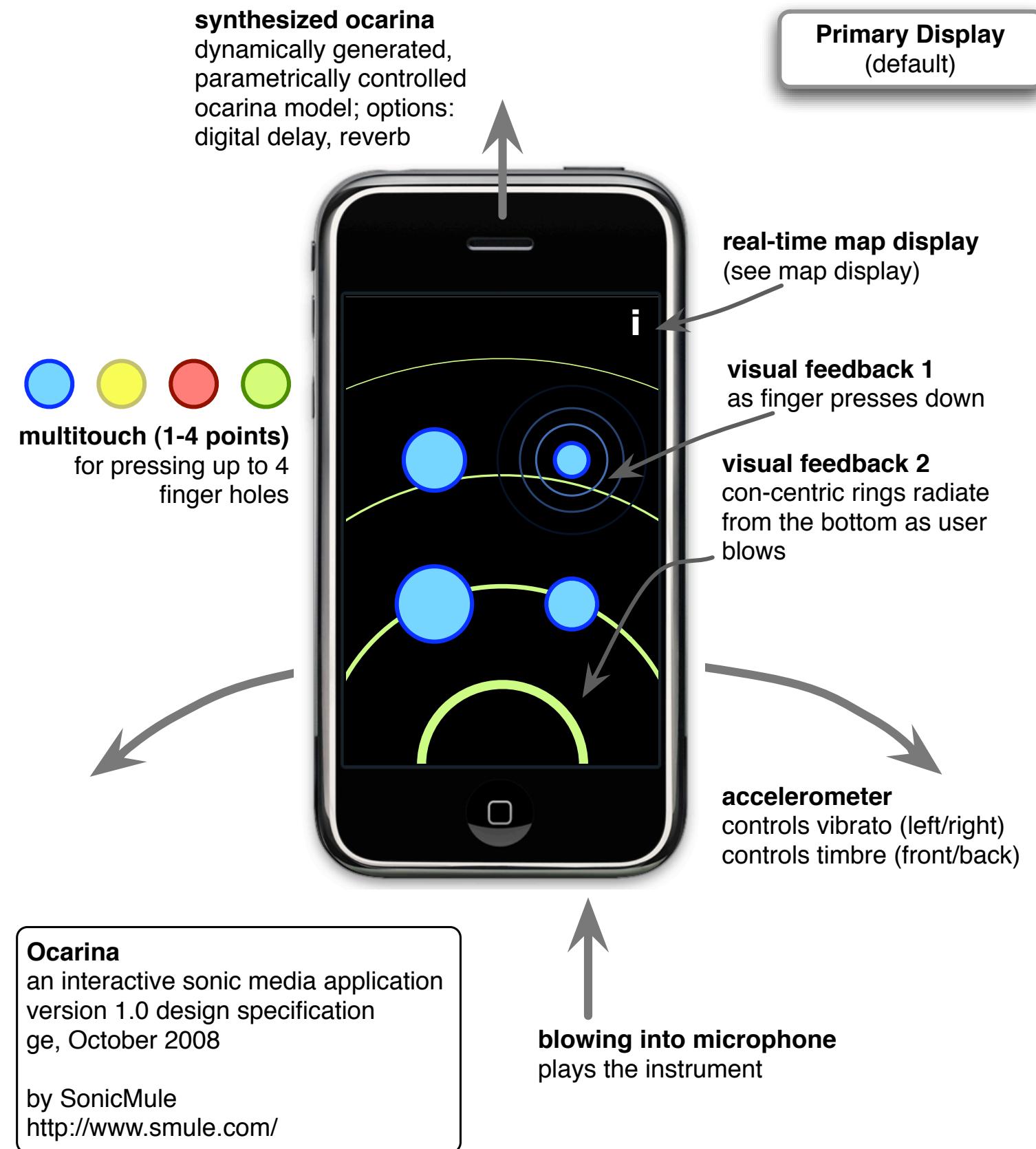
what is an instrument?

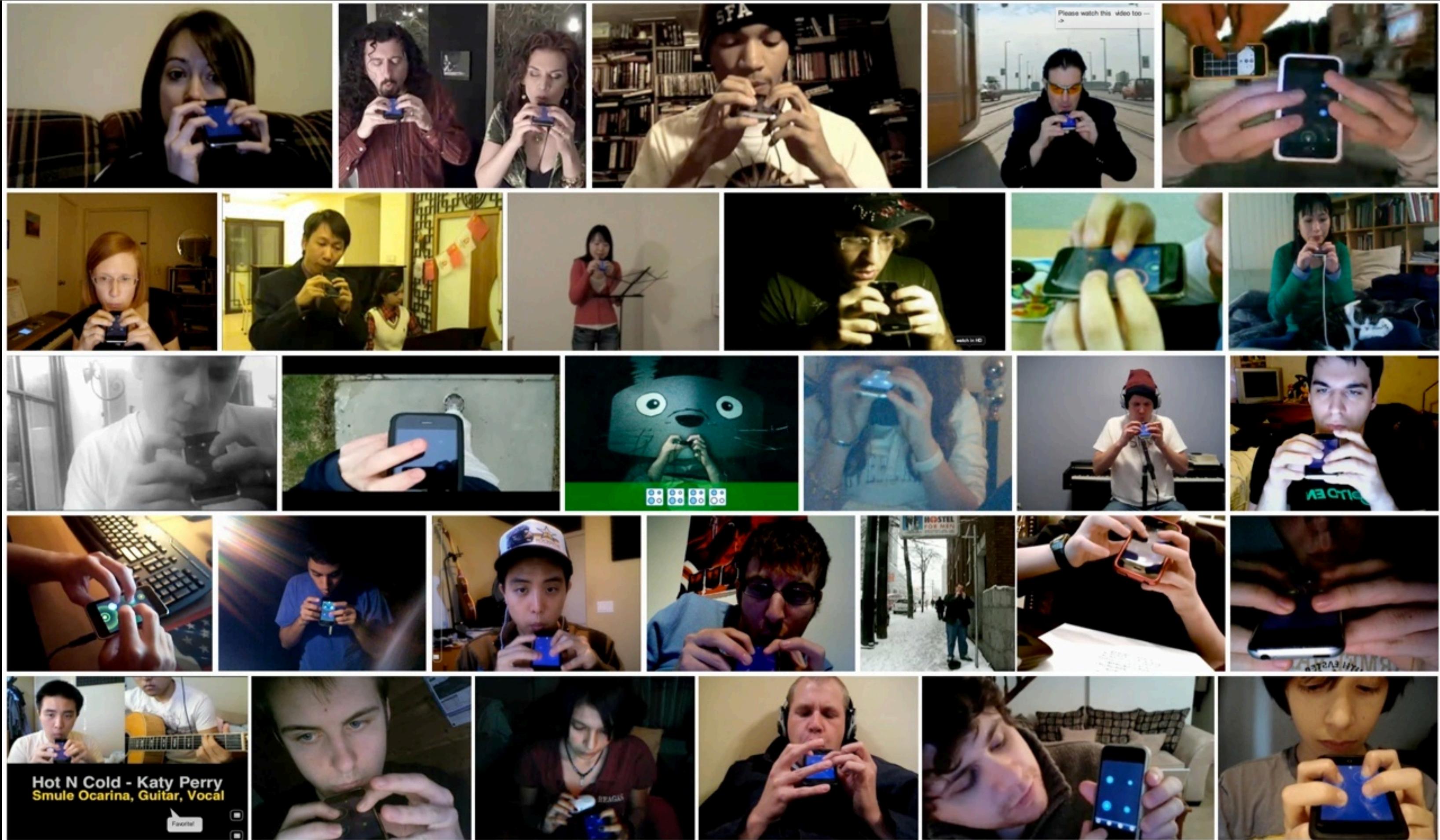


Ocarina

video:

Ocarina [Stairway to Heaven intro]







technology should create calm.

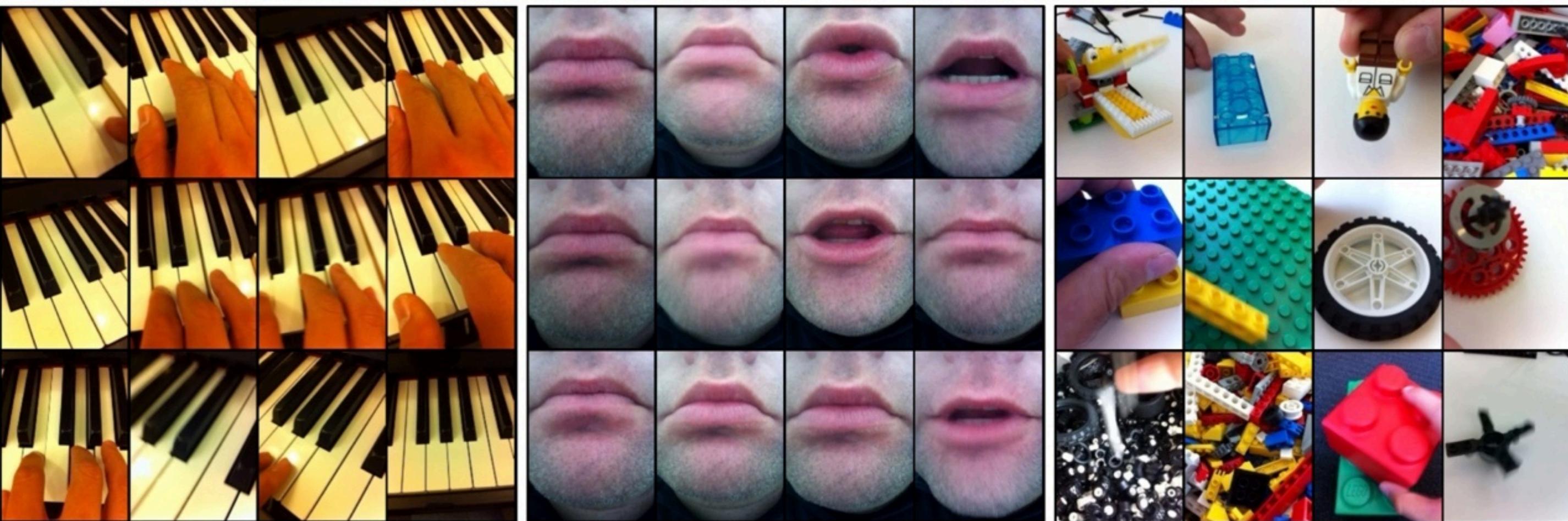
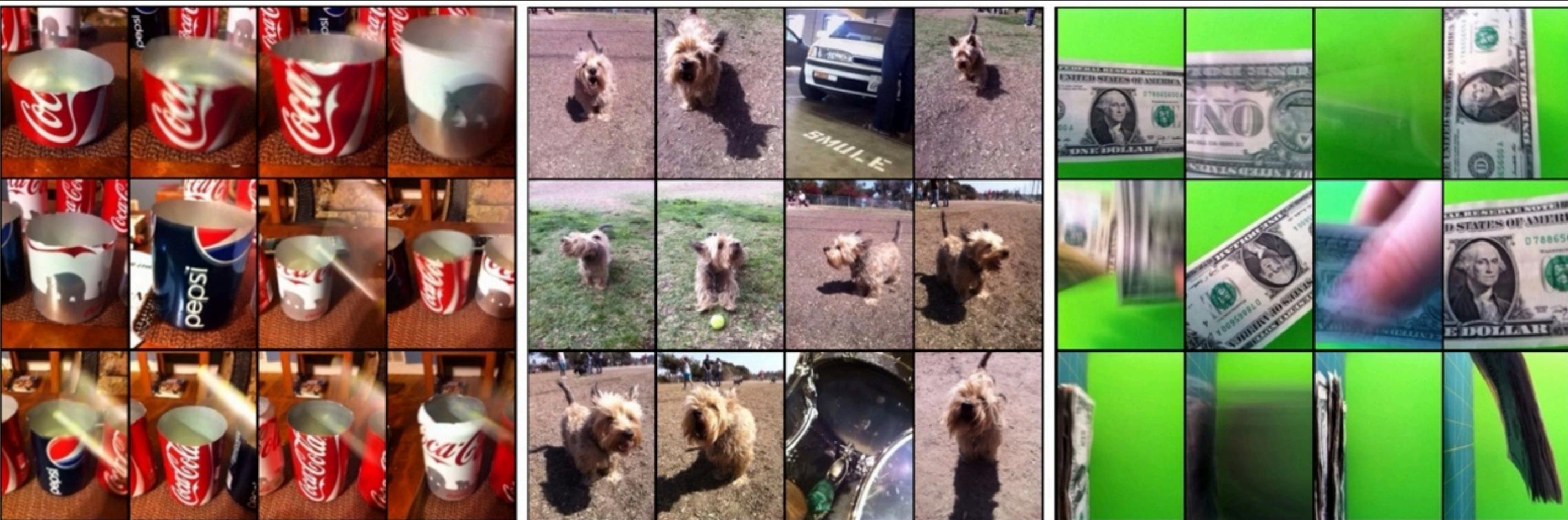


This is my peace on earth. I am currently deployed in Iraq, and hell on earth is an every day occurrence. The few nights I may have off I am deeply engaged in this app. The globe feature that lets you hear everybody else in the world playing is the most calming art I have ever been introduced to. It brings the entire world together without politics or war. It is the EXACT opposite of my life.

- Deployed U.S. Soldier.

The most profound technologies are those that disappear.
They weave themselves into the fabric of everyday life...

- Mark Weiser



video:

MadPad - Remix Your Life [car]

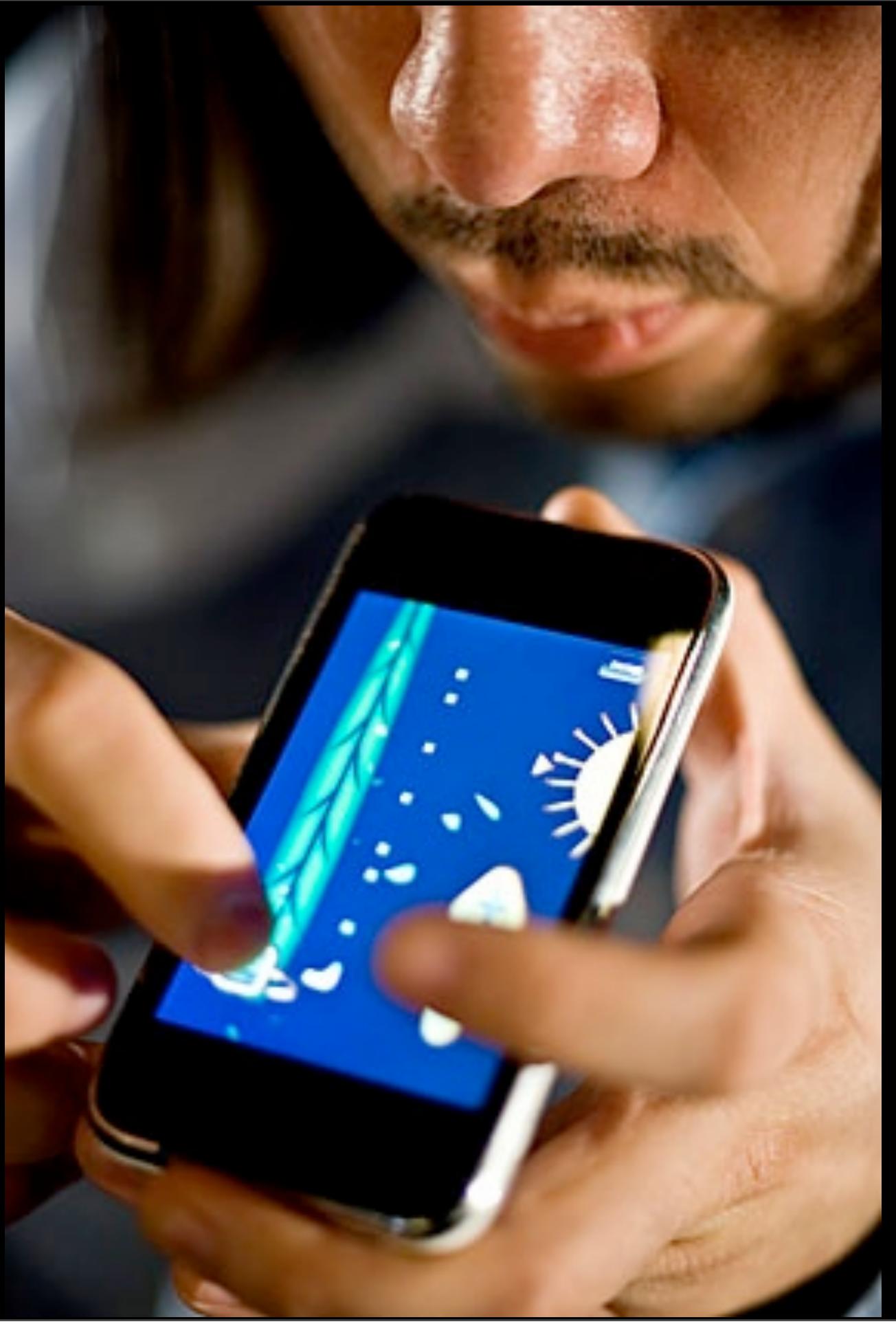


passive

interactive

social





Certain tasks are inherently
difficult for computers
and
easy for humans.

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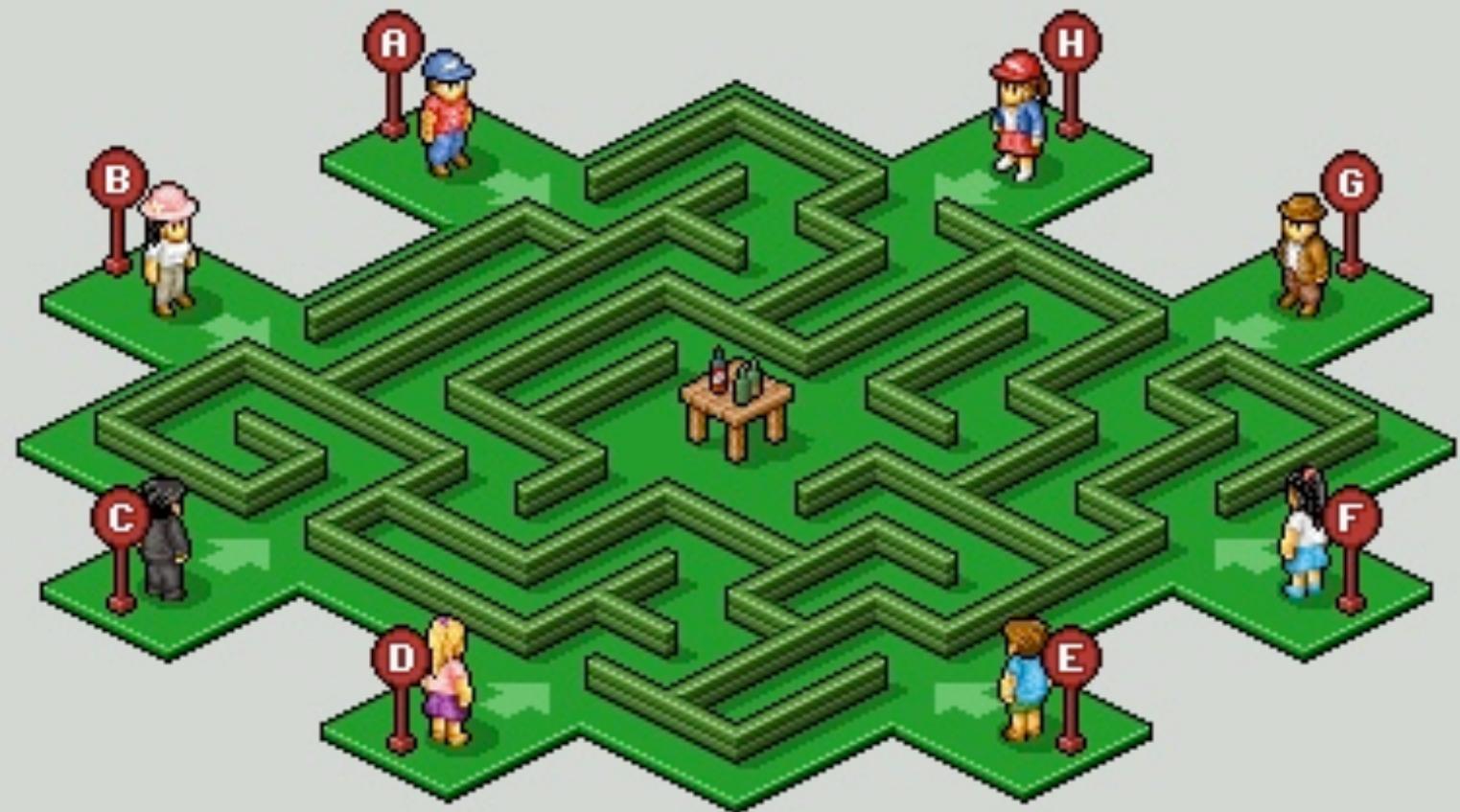
restsas

simwim

NBEVNNQ

mark

exulaw



Please prove you are more than a mindless
spam-bot by identifying who gets the beer!



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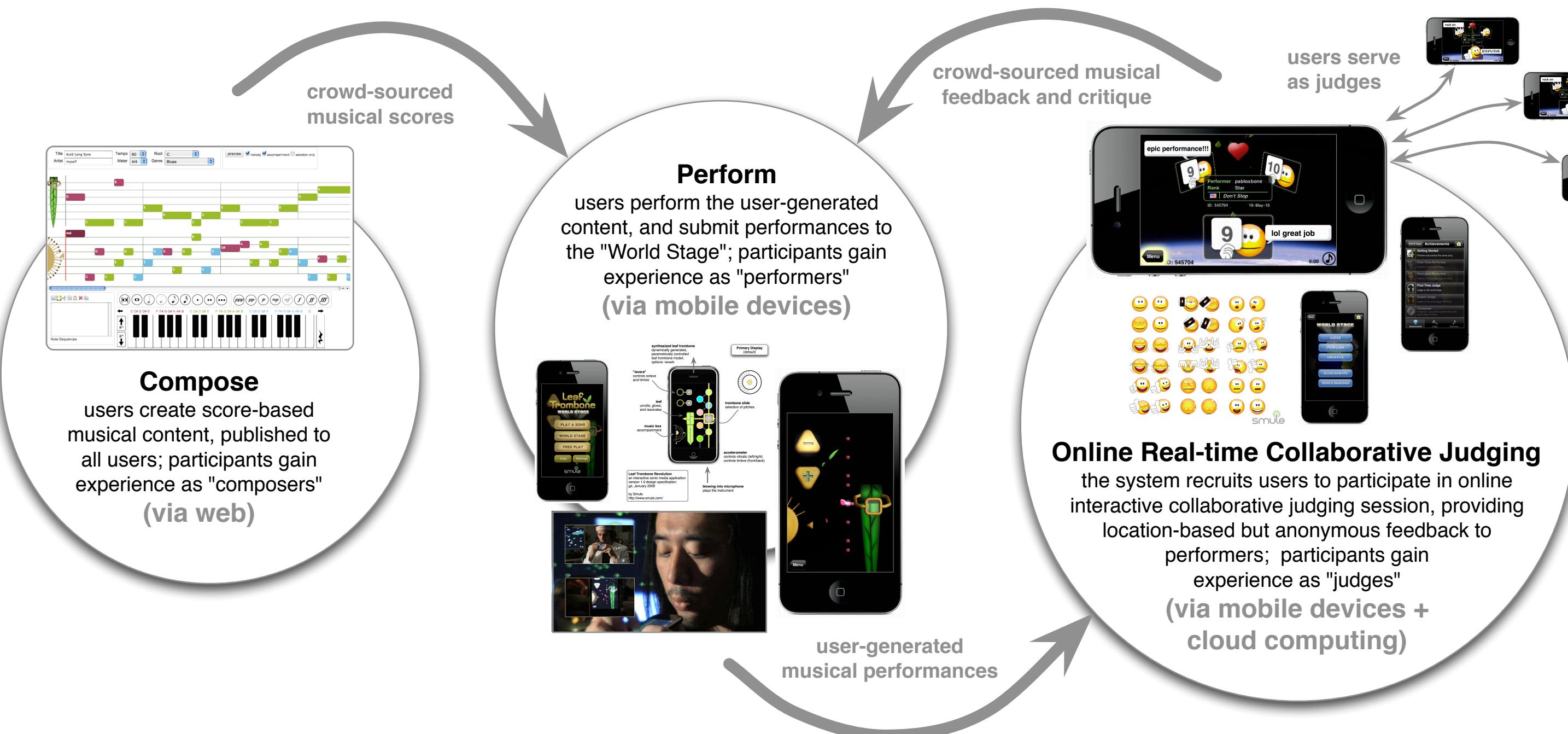
As a Mechanical Turk Requester you:

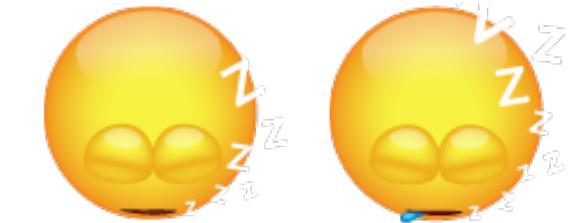
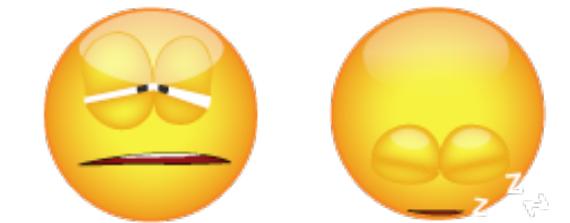
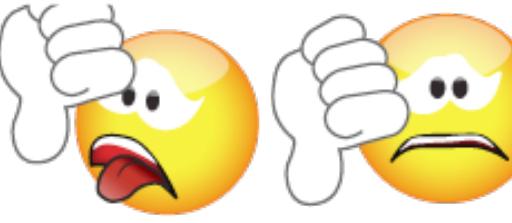
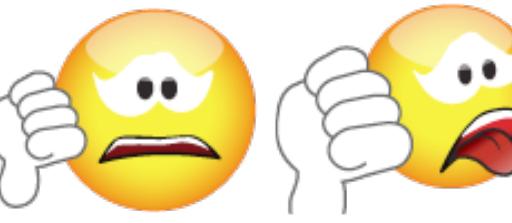
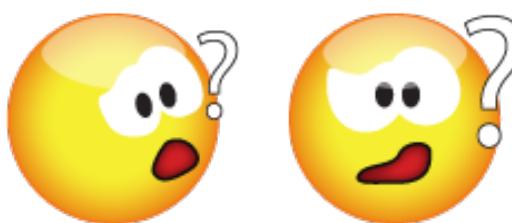
- Have access to a global, on-demand, 24 x 7 workforce
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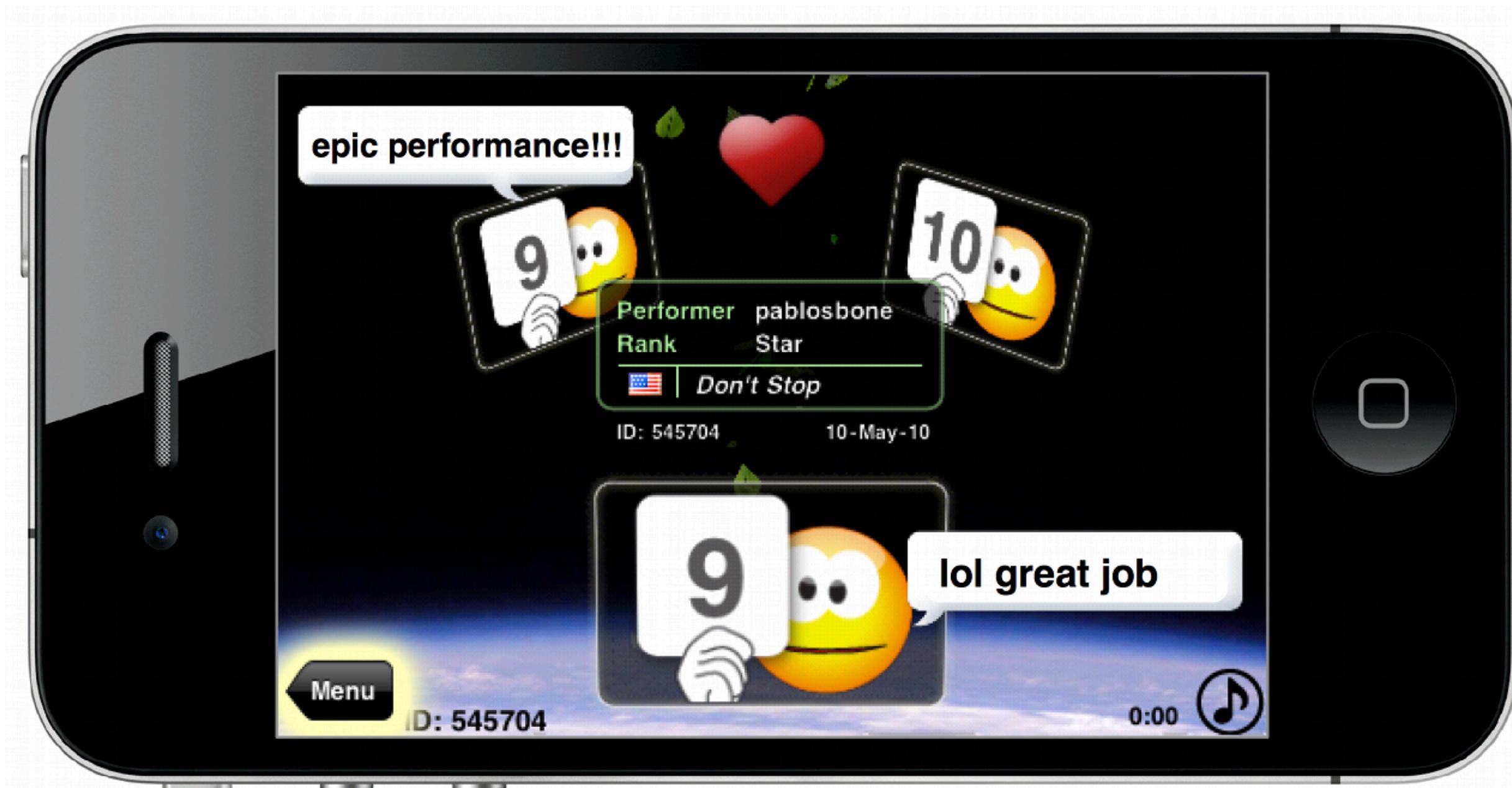


“All the world’s a stage, and all the
men and women merely players...”
- Shakespeare









- 6,000+ user-generated songs
- 700,000 performances judged
- 800,000+ users
- most played & judged:
 - Amazing Grace
 - Yesterday
 - Hallelujah
 - Don't Stop Believin'
 - Ode to Joy

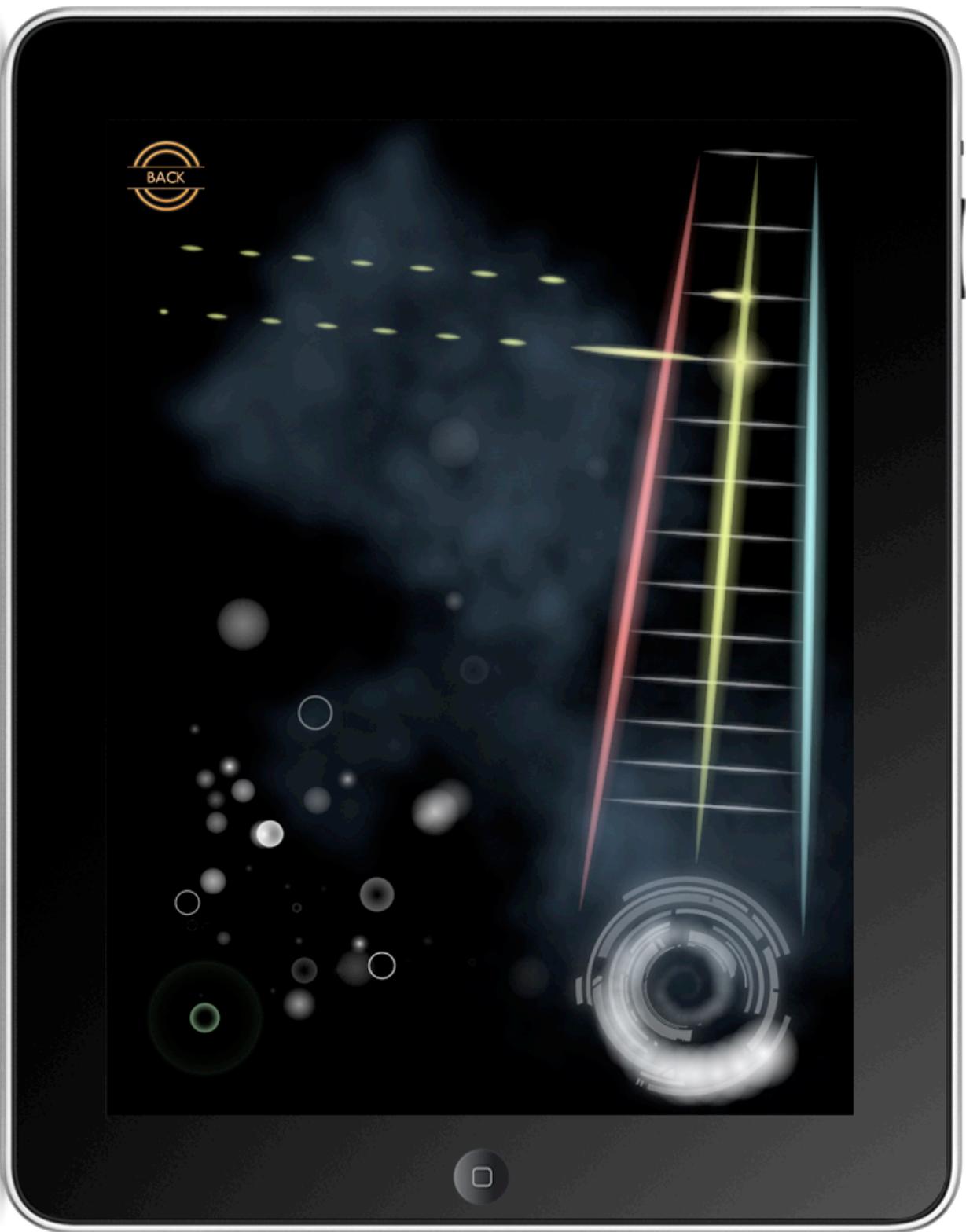
- most prolific composer:
 - 177 songs published (next is 98)
- most prolific performer:
 - 2639 performances (next is 1414)
- most prolific judge:
 - 10537 sessions (next is 4494)

Stanford Mobile Phone Orchestra





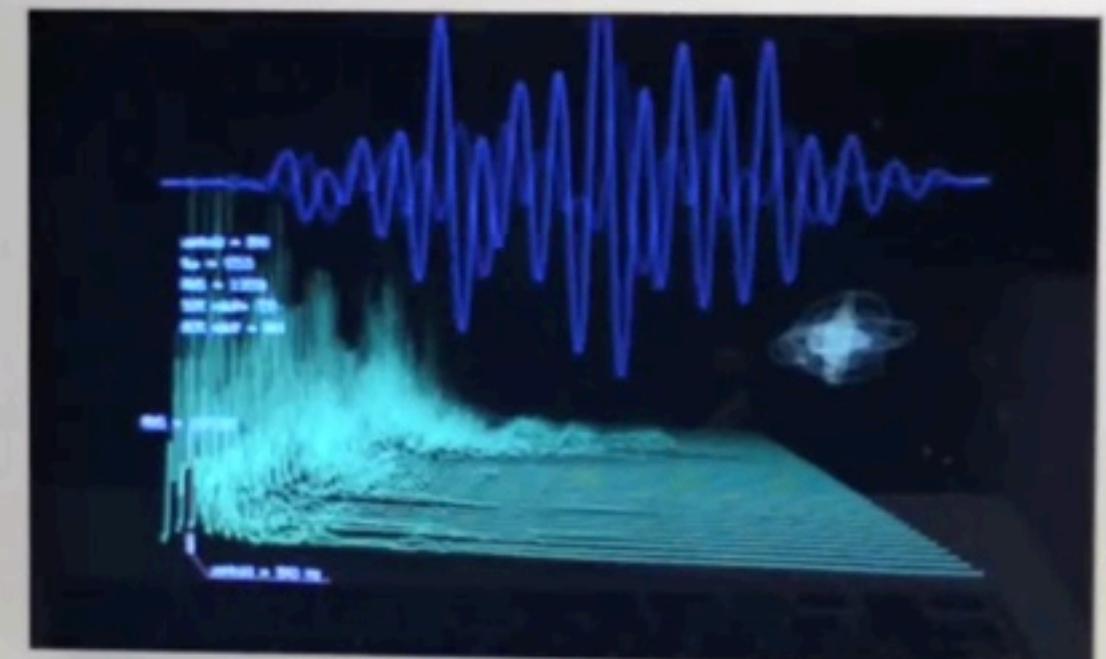






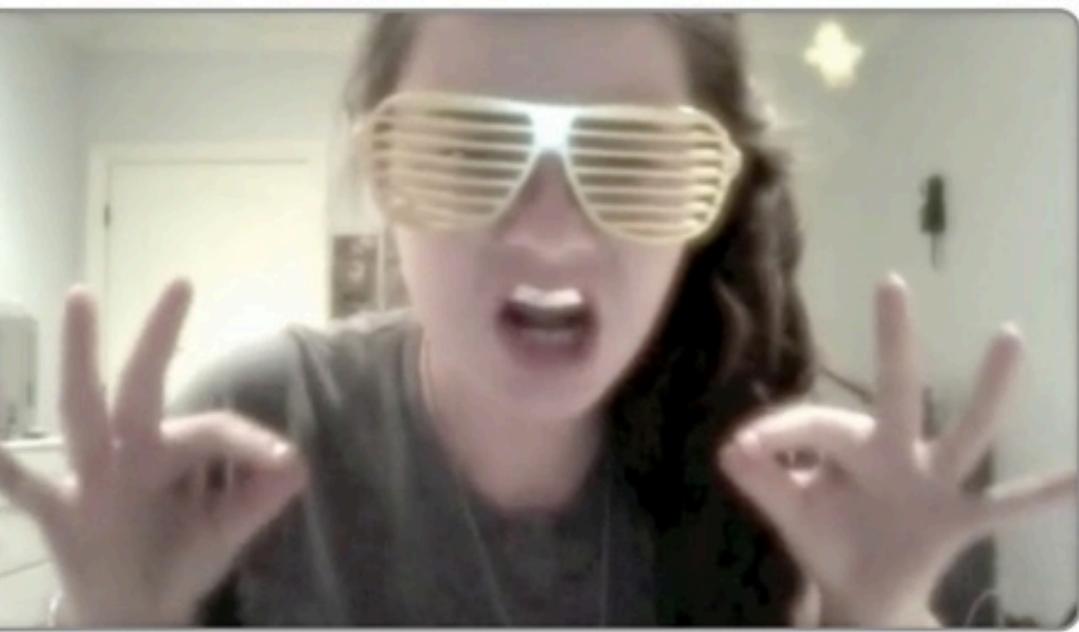
Ge Wang
Stanford University + Smule

AutoRap
stress test



MacBook Air





video:

I Am T-Pain [I'm on a Phone]

the old computing is about what computers can do,
the new computing is about what **people** can do.

- Ben Shneiderman

Sing!



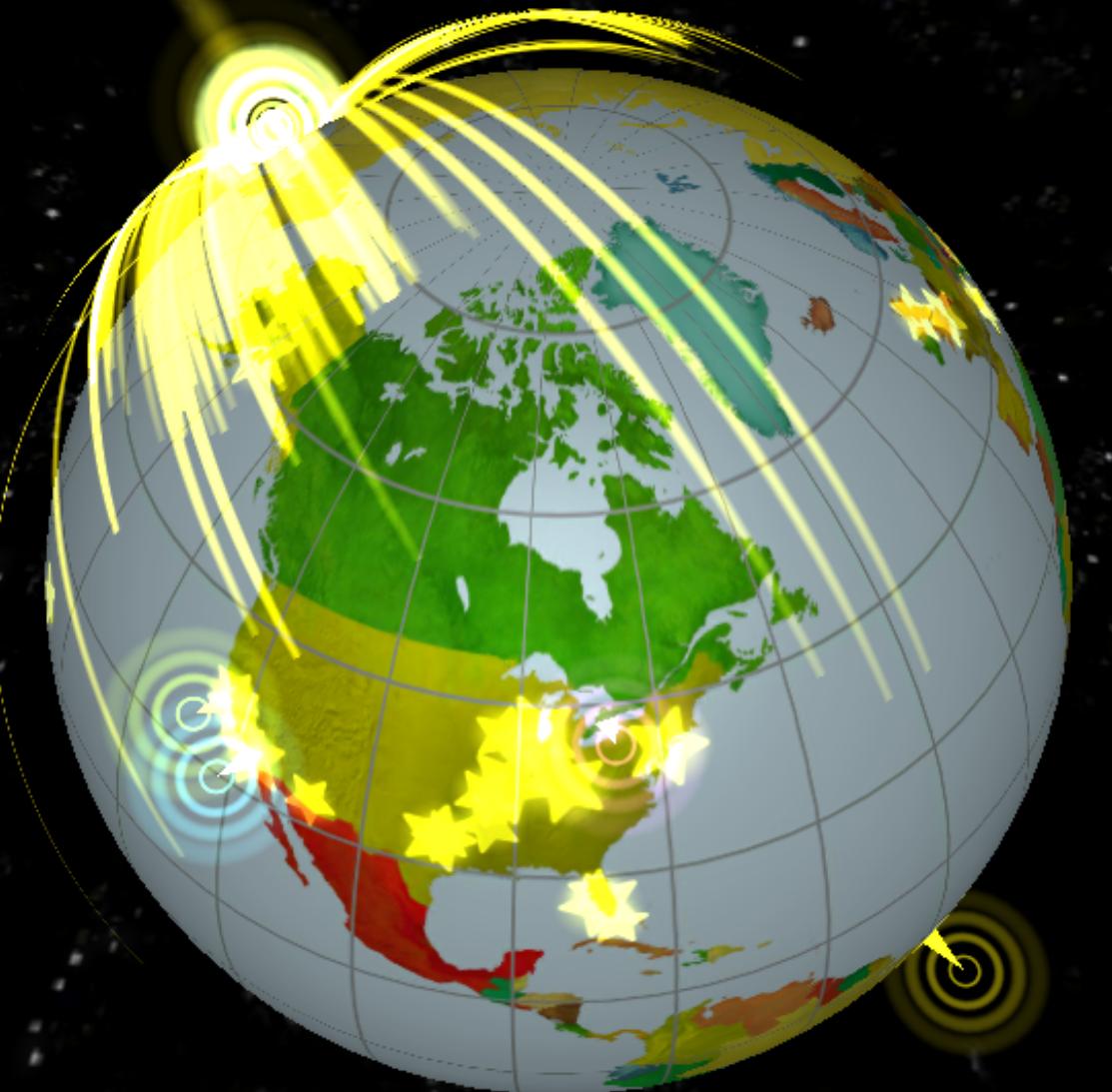


Mayo Hashimoto

Hi everyone, it's from Japan. In Japan, there are still earthquakes and people are really scared. So, I'm trying to cheer them up by the song "Lean on me." Please join, sing and pray for Japan. If you'd like to join, comment here or on my songs, I'll send you request. Thanks!!

100 comments

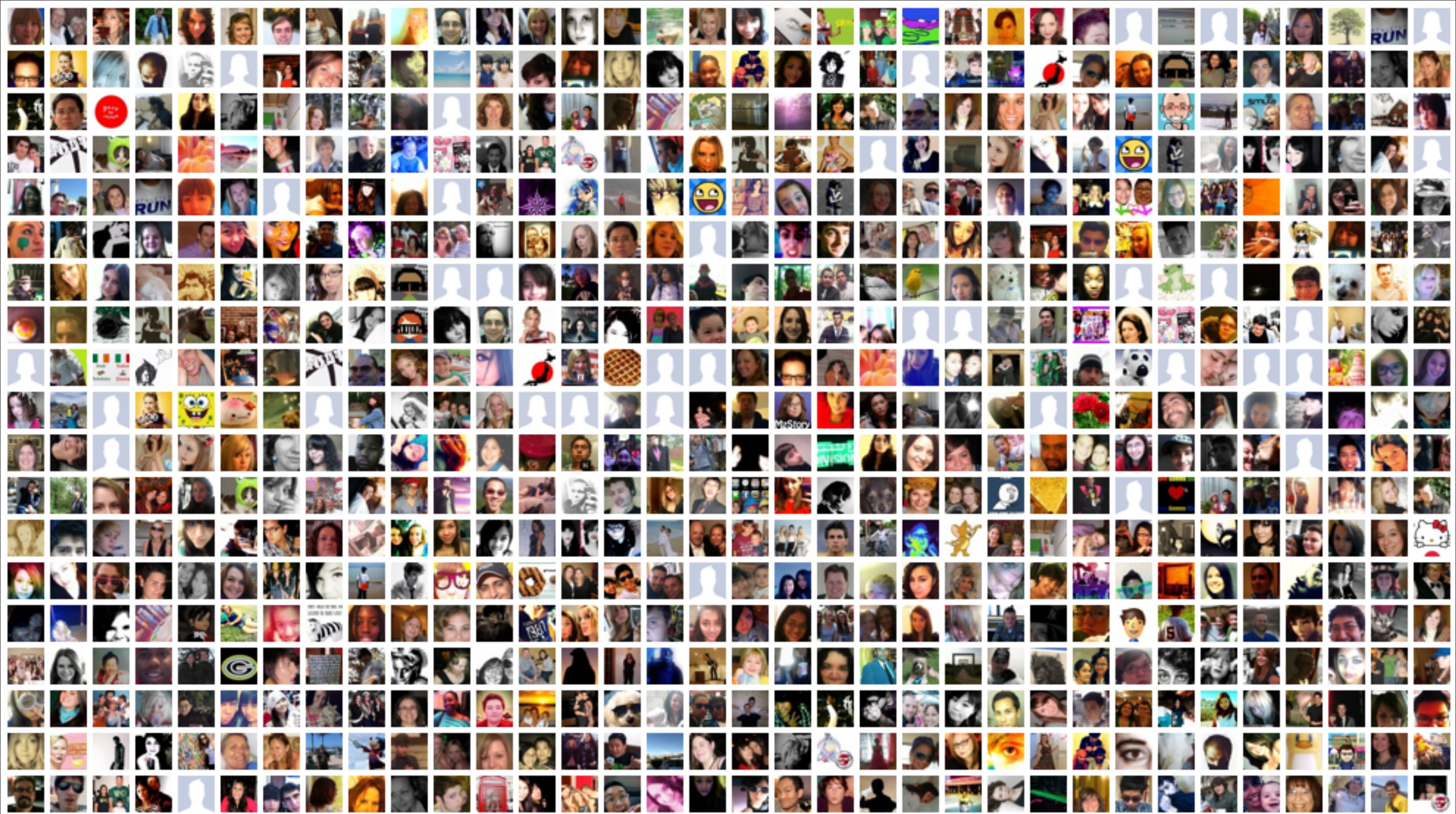
Anonymous says:
this is amazing



mayo57
2:11

plz join and PRAY...

Singers: 3...
Gleeks: 4...





Ge Wang

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