Concert for Smartphones

Andrey Bundin
Herzen State Pedagogical
University of Russia
Russia, St. Petersburg
iBundin@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The performance involves audience participation with their mobile devices. Connected to a wireless network and organized into one polyphonic multichannel synthesizer, those devices reproduce different noises, samples, and synthesized sounds from random locations in the hall. In addition, loudspeakers complement the phone choir to add dynamic climaxes and low-frequency effects. The name of the performance refers to academic music traditions. The author emphasizes the similarity in musical nature of the Concert for Smartphones and any classical concert for soloist and orchestra. The performance is an experiment in exploring possible ways of using an audience's mobile devices as a medium for sound diffusion in the context of a traditionally composed electroacoustic musical piece.

TECHNICAL BACKGROUND

By connecting to a specific wireless network, audience members automatically load a guest page, which acts as a software synthesizer controlled by the performer. Server-side software includes a Node.JS server and several Max/MSP patches handling messages from MIDI controllers, Microsoft Kinect, and audio input. Real-time communication is achieved by direct connection between the server and a device browser, without any additional software. Minimum system requirements for the client devices: iOS 8, Android 4, or Windows 10 Mobile; 100 MB of free space; and a modern browser compatible with Web Audio API and Websockets.

WEB LINKS

Concert for Smartphones at the Herzen University, 2015 June 18, St. Petersburg, Russia**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtf4I1yB46c

Concert for Smartphones at Cross Art festival, 2015 October 3, St. Peterburg, Russia: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my9LvyrcET0

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS