Project Year
2004

Project Team
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Project Title
Technology and Improvisation

Audience
Peabody musicians and the musician community at large

Pedagogical Issue
There is a lack of collaboration between the various departments of the conservatory, especially between the improvising and non-improvising music students. There is also a need for more exploration of the possibilities of technology in performance.

Solution
We propose to use existing electronic resources at Peabody to facilitate the creation and development of a small ensemble which explores the possibilities of electronics and improvisation. The goal of this project is to use technology for the purpose of promoting cooperative projects, such as sampling acoustic instruments, creating interactive environments for improvising, and integrating multimedia into a performance.

Technologies Used
Max/MSP, Pure Data, MOTU, Digital Performer

Project Abstract
Through the formation of a small ensemble at Peabody, we will create an environment in which musicians of all instruments and disciplines will be encouraged to participate, fostering collaboration between performers from different disciplines, with different instrumental backgrounds, and with varying degrees of familiarity with technology. Participants will be recorded to build a library of sampled material, both improvised and non-improvised. (At present, there is a lack of useable digital material for use in a technology-based improvisational performing and recording ensemble.) The material will then be catalogued and filed for use at a later point, for further recordings and performances involving live improvising and non-improvising musicians. Each student in the ensemble will have the opportunity to use the sampled raw material to create his or her own projects. We expect that the students will learn to improvise with the technology as they would on their instruments.

We will be able to assess the success of the project by looking at the number of students that we are able to interest in the project and get to contribute in a tangible way, either in the material-gathering phase, the organizational phase, or the performance and recording phase. The faculty member will review the material as it is gathered, and make suggestions as to what other areas should be addressed. The budget will be devoted to building, editing, and organizing the library of raw materials which will be initially used in this specific ensemble, and eventually

be made available to the other departments at Peabody that could benefit from them, including the computer music department, the composition department, and any others that wish to utilize them. This project has the potential to foster cooperation between the Jazz and Computer Music Departments at Peabody, and will be open to participation by students from other departments as well. Web space will be maintained to promote the project, and to serve as a resource for interested students.