SLOrk – Stanford Laptop Orchestra

Samir Sharma
April 26th, 2011

What is SLOrk?

• computer-mediated ensemble that includes:
  – more than 20 laptops
  – human performers
  – controllers
  – custom multi-channel speaker arrays

SLOrk ensemble
SLOrk founder

Ge Wang, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Music
Stanford University

History
• inspired by Princeton Laptop Orchestra (PLOrk)
  — founded in Fall 2005

Pre-laptop Orchestra
• one-time class in 2008 at CCRMA to build SLOrk
• over 30 students enrolled in the class
  — speaker array design
  — software architecture
  — logistical aspects
Software and logistics

• Software
  — ChucK (developed by Wang during PhD)
    • audio programming language for real-time synthesis, composition, and performance

• Logistics
  — IKEA breakfast tray (for laptop)
  — meditation mats and pillows (for sitting)
  — additional peripherals
    • recently using iPhone/iPad
Making music

• tilt the notebook and use built-in accelerometer to control sound

• use trackpad as a kind of violin bow

• can also integrate USB game pads/Wii remotes

Performances

• began in Spring 2008
  — “Composing, Coding, and Performance for Laptop Orchestra” course

• Sonic SLOrk Sculptures
  — 1st official concert on 4/26/2008
  — New Guinea Sculpture Garden (outdoors)

• Pacific Rim of Wire
  — part of 2008 Pan-Asian Music Festival
  — performance with China in real-time

Sonic SLOrk Sculptures
Rehearsal: Pacific Rim of Wire

Upcoming events

• April 28th, 2011, Thursday 8pm
  SLOrkastic Chamber Music 2011
  CCRMA Stage, Stanford University

• June 1st, 2011, Wednesday, 8pm
  SLOrk 2011 Spring Concert
  Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University

Video

ABC7 News Coverage
NBC11 News Coverage
MediaCinema