

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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### INTERVIEW #2

<b>Date</b>	10 September 2021	<b>Duration</b>	01:11:11
<b>Interviewer</b>	Principal researcher	<b>Informant</b>	Informant B

Interviewer (00:00): Hello. I cannot hear you.

Informant (00:10): Can you hear me now?

Interviewer (00:11): Yes, I can hear you now.

Informant (00:15): I think have my microphone set up because I'm already teaching.

Interviewer (00:20): Oh. How are you doing?

Informant (00:25): Yeah, I'm good [and] you?

Interviewer (00:26): Yeah, no. No complaints. It's sunny here in South Africa.

Informant (00:31): Here it's also sunny and the weather is getting better. I don't really deal well with hot, humid weather.

Interviewer (00:45): Where are you right now?

Informant (00:47): I'm in Hamilton, Canada.

Interviewer (00:51): Oh, okay.

Informant (00:53): First of all, it is nice to talk to you. It seems like we don't really have too many online face-to-face interactions. It's nice just to talk to people.

Interviewer (01:07): Yeah. I was actually at another interview the other day with someone else and it was just nice to really start building more relationships with you [all]. It's really fun [and] I'm enjoying it. Also, learning from you [all] has just been amazing.

Informant (01:26): No, it's great. I'm really excited to go back to the ensemble.

Interviewer (01:34): Yes, it will be great. We've been doing some really fun [explorations] recently. Are you going to join for ICLC as well?

Informant (02:54): You're going to apply to ICLC? Oh, I didn't know.

Interviewer (02:02): Yes, but to get back to what you said just now - about the face-to-face [interactions] - I do [a similar thing] with [the] ensemble here in South Africa, so I'm used to talking to them on video and on Discord [text channels]. We use the [Discord hangout feature] to talk to each other. I really [enjoy using] Discord. I'm not sure [if you do].

Informant (02:26): I was using Slack before and then I changed to [Discord]. In the beginning I wasn't really [charmed by] it too much, because I was really getting used to Slack. But yeah, I think it's great. I like it right now and I'm actually using it for my class. The students are also very [interested in] using Discord. Yeah, that's exciting. I don't know [how busy you are] right now, but I always wondered why we never met through video call, in the orchestra.

Interviewer (03:02): Did you guys do that before? Earlier? Or not really?

Informant (03:08): No, [not with SuperContinent], but we did with the [university orchestra]. I'm not really part of the [group] anymore, [but] we [used to] talk at the beginning, in the middle we played and then we [would] talk about what we just [played]. So, it's weird that we haven't really talked. Our communication is just through Estuary, which is [great]. At the same time there's no time to [talk]. I [tend to] miss [some things] because before, when I started here at [my university], I was part of the [laptop orchestra] since the beginning. Pre-Covid we used to meet at [the university] for two hours every week. It was great because even though [some were] very "don't waste your time", [it was a] space in which you [could] talk to people about random things, or joke about the code. When we [moved] online we [met for] one hour instead of two, because it [was] online and [so, we were stricter] in our communication. If we [started] talking about something else, [some individuals in the group would] be just like "No, no. Let's just play. Don't waste time." It was a couple of people in the ensemble. For me, being in an ensemble is both of [those things]. I understand that people have pretty busy schedules [right now] and nobody wants to be online, but what happens with online

communication is that you miss those parts in which you [fully] interact with people.

Interviewer (05:12): Yes, I absolutely agree with you. Although, that's not something I really experienced, because we went online [soon after] we started. We weren't a laptop orchestra in the traditional sense, where we were at venues [with each member at a self-contained station with speakers]. [We only had the opportunity to perform twice and only with speakers surrounding the ensemble and the audience, and so] there wasn't a very long period of time for us to [experience] that. [By now] we're used to [being] online. I have prepared some questions for you, but I want this [interview] to [take the form of a discussion]. I'll ask you a few things around network music performance, but more specifically live coding. I'm interested in understanding your what your perspective is of [network music and live coding]. [Please continue to] use the language you normally would. If something does come up that I'm not too familiar with, I might ask you to explain it bit [further], so I am [able to] understand what you mean. Most of the questions [should be] really simple. [Speak] as much as you'd [like] and don't [worry about] feeling as though you're talking too much. The more information you [provide] the better. [My] hope [is] that there will be some questions that might [emerge]. [In terms of] how I want to structure the [interview], we're going to [start with] a few general questions about yourself. The first one I want to start with is, what would you define your current job or career title as?

Informant (07:07): Yeah, that's difficult. No, I've been joking about how I present myself as a wannabe PhD candidate, because I'm not sure what I'm doing right now. But officially [and] professionally, I do present myself as a designer, as a visual artist, [and] a researcher. Those are the three words that I use. I do a lot of things with sound, but I'm very hesitant of having that as [a] professional tag. I'm not really a musician, or didn't really study anything related to sound. It's more [the case that] through practice, through my life and my work experience that I have been experimenting with sound. I'm always hesitant to have that as a main description of myself. It's just a risk to be criticised.

Interviewer (08:20): I hear you. You mentioned that you are a researcher as well. What would you say is your main area of research?

Informant (10:51): It's about the way we use technology [with art]. I have different papers I have [completed for] my PhD, and recently I've been involved in writing about coding and art, but not necessarily [exclusively] about live coding. I'm also interested in electronic literature. [Specifically] the way we use code, [how] we [display] code [on] the screen [and how the code] can also communicate with the audience. [I also look at whether code] can also have a poetic layer embedded in the way it is designed. I also I collaborate a lot with my dad. He studied pedagogy, and so we write about [educational practices and] sometimes we implement [what we write about]. We have implemented some [educational] programs with [children], and the use of do-it-yourself technologies, visual art and storytelling. I'm really interested in education in general, mostly [involved] with education [for children]. I really [enjoy] teaching [children].

Interviewer (09:56): How did you discover live coding?

Informant (10:04): It was when I was in [my undergraduate studies]. [Perhaps] around 10 years ago. I was doing visual arts and I started to work in this music centre called CMMAS in Morelia, Michoacán. I forget [what] the [full] name [is]. They have a very well-known festival [called] Visiones Sonoras. Hernani Villaseñor. I don't know if you have met him. He's from Mexico and he was there for [Visiones Sonoras and] presented a piece and a workshop. That's how I started getting involved in live coding. At the beginning it was more research [orientated]. My thesis for my [undergraduate studies] is about the use of code for creative processes [with] one portion about live coding. I went to Mexico City, and I was interviewing people [and continued to do so] for my masters. I also interviewed a lot of people that use code. At least half of them do live coding or use code creatively in Mexico.

Informant (11:38): I was more like a researcher [and not] really working with code. I was very hesitant at the beginning, just because I think the learning curve is

[quite high] when you want to [incorporate] some of your aesthetics. [It becomes challenging to avoid] the aesthetics of the code imprinting on your work or [even] the aesthetics of the platform. I was really hesitant, because the work that I was doing back then didn't really require for me to show the code or use live coding. I could produce the same result with other platforms [for visual art]. I have always been very critical of the way that we use certain software or technology, thinking [of the] need [for certain technology]. I first think [of] what I want to portray, and then I just choose the tools based on that, instead of choosing the tool and then [deciding] what I can do with that tool.

Informant (12:51): For that reason, I wasn't really interested in producing [art], but I was into researching because I thought [live coding platforms are] a very good [tools]. Although for me, I didn't really have the [need] to use it. Then, I think a year before coming into the PhD program, I started to get a little bit more involved in electronic literature [again]. That's where it kind of clicked [for] me. Again, I do collaborate with my dad and we also perform together. He reads [poetry] live while I'm doing visuals and other people are doing [the] sound [element]. In the first years of our collaboration, I didn't really experiment too much with text [on] the screen. Connecting text or any text [on] the screen [at all]. It was more abstract images. There was a point in which I wanted to explore more with how to visualize the poetry in different ways, and that's when I started to get more involved in electronic literature. Since then, I [started] improvising in both practices; live coding and electronic literature. This [may be] a spoiler, but I don't really [enjoy] live coding [since] you share a process. For the pedagogical benefits of live coding, it's more about how can you can [combine] natural languages and computer languages to create poetry.

Interviewer (14:41): Wow. That is so interesting.

Informant (14:45): Yeah, that's kind of like our view. This is one part. The other is that, five years ago, I wanted to make something for a piece. [It was for] flute and [also] I wanted to have some interaction. [Someone] was playing the

flute live, [while the] code runs sets of videos. With the tools that I was using, that was not really possible the way I [wanted the piece] to be. For that reason, I also partnered with [a co-member of SuperContinent] and we started working [on] a very early version of CineVivo. [They also collaborated with me in] that performance in Colombia. I think that's also the valuable part of [coding]. [If] you want to create your own [interface to] do various specific things [that are] useful to [live] code [with, it's possible that you can be a part of] designing and implementing them. [I've really improved] doing that. You see that's what you need to achieve what you want to do.

Interviewer (16:08): I have so many questions [about] everything you just said. I'm very interested to know about all the kinds of platforms you use. You mentioned you use other platforms? What would you say those are?

Informant (16:27): Those that you don't [live] code? I usually use the normal video and sound editing platforms like Final Cut Pro, Photoshop and Illustrator. For live video I was using Arena. I don't remember the full name, [but I use it] for VJ'ing. It's similar to Ableton Live. I was using [Arena] for that and also for mapping. It's a very intuitive platform, but obviously, has a cost and is expensive. Obviously, I never really [paid] for it.

Informant (17:17): I get that. Things are quite expensive here in our country. If I get the chance [to], I save up a then buy [equipment] little by little.

Interviewer (17:31): In Mexico it's really common to share the [cracked] version. To be honest, I was just doing that. But those were the platforms that I used to use. I still use the Adobe suite for my work in general and even if I'm working with live coding, I always prepare my video or audio recordings. I use Reaper for audio now and I still use Final Cut for normal editing of videos. Once I tried with VDMX [which] is also a platform that used to be free for VJ'ing, but then it had [added costs] and the learning curve was longer than [with] Arena. If I'm going to learn [VDMX], I [would] rather learn code because at least I have more possibilities. I can just create my own platforms, right?

Interviewer (18:44): Right. I want to ask you another question that I just thought of now. Speaking [about] the learning curve you mentioned with some coding and live coding languages, [I was wondering if] you use MiniTidal a lot? I noticed that in a lot of our [rehearsals and performances] that we did together, you tend to use Punctual quite often. It [is] a visual language, but I am really interested in MiniTidal specifically. How would you, in comparison to some of the other stuff that you do, [describe] the learning curve for you [with MiniTidal]?

Informant (19:22): It seems in general with TidalCycles and Hydra [that] it is a little bit tricky, because you may think the learning curve is really short. You can create really interesting things almost right away. The problem with those two [languages] is that it's easy to create things, but usually when you create it has the aesthetics of the tool, right. For that reason, it's very common to see the same sonic styles and visual styles when people use TidalCycles and Hydra. If you do want to do more than that, then you do have to go to JavaScript directly and just integrate that into your Hydra code. With TidalCycles, you also have to [incorporate] more musical knowledge. Although, I think Alex McLean did say that he didn't want to implement [a lot of] musical knowledge, but [TidalCycles] does [require a] certain kind of musical knowledge to understand what's happening with some of the more complex functions. On the other side you have Punctual and SuperCollider, for example, [where] the learning curve is longer because it's very difficult to make something interesting at the beginning. But again, for me, I think [it takes] the same [amount of] time it takes you to create something interesting in either Tidal or Punctual. The only difference is that it will create things faster in these other languages, like [in] Tidal and Hydra. With Arena, the one similar to Ableton - I have used Ableton before it's not really that easy, or it's not really that intuitive to use it. Arena is even more intuitive than Ableton Live so it's easier to do things faster [in Arena]. Although obviously, if you want to do mapping or create more specific effects, you do need to obviously learn a little bit more. I think all programs, for me, have that learning curve. Even if you may think

they don't have them, as with Hydra right? Every everyone thinks that Hydra is super easy and you can create things [really] fast. [It's often the case where] you get bored in the concerts because everything looks the same.

Interviewer (22:28): That's interesting. Does live coding performance intertwine with your profession in some way? And if so, how?

Informant (22:42): With my professional work currently, yeah. I'm really not into editing film too much lately. I've been working more with performance and changing things live. But that [was] very stressful at the beginning, because the information that I [had was] more [along the lines of] a fixed video, a [photograph] or a painting. Then you worry during the process, but when you present it, it's already presented, so you don't have to worry. There's no errors really. The first time that I [tried] to work with live coding there were a lot of errors. I was playing with [inaudible] in Mexico City. I was using [an early] version of CineVivo and everything crashed in the middle. I was super stressed. The performance was forty minutes long and I [even] had back pain after that. I was stressed because even though I used [CineVivo for] performance before, it was more like an [instructional] performance in which everything was already planned. Nothing was improvised or [rather] there [were] moments of improvisation. It really was very stressful, but now [I'm] used to [it]. Typically, you always have everything working well, but when you're performing live something [crashes].

Interviewer (24:41): We had our first live stream in July and thankfully, everything went smoothly but I was stressed as well. I wanted to stream it but my laptop isn't fast or strong enough to handle it [so] I had to ask someone else to do it. [In that situation] you definitely hope that everything runs smoothly.

Informant (25:04): When you also have to do the streaming part, you have to perform [while looking] at the [stream and still] checking the messages. Also, if [the performance] is going well and hope that your internet doesn't go [off]. My partner is always laughing because sometimes [I'll cry] before the



performance because the internet is not working. Nothing is working. His computer [runs] better than mine. Mine [computer is a] Mac, but it doesn't run really well with Estuary sometimes. So, I was using his computer. But then one time, his computer [ran] out of battery 10 minutes before the performance. Everything was already set up. He has Linux but I was using Windows because he also has windows [on] the computer. I didn't know that in Windows when you run out of battery the computer [shuts down] completely. So, when I connected it back to the electricity [I wasn't sure] what's happening. Why is that happening? Why was it opening like [it did at the] start? He [said] that [that] happens in Windows [and that my] Mac that does [not do] that. I got super stressed and [I was] not going to perform like [that]. He has learned to ignore me a little bit, because even if he gives me options I'll [tell him] no, no, that's going to work.

Interviewer (26:43): It sounds a lot like me in a lot of ways. You did mention [that] you [don't] have you have any musical training, you studied a visual arts degree, and you're a bit more hesitant to get into the audio side of [live coding]. Seeing as that is the case I'm really interested to understand a bit more about visual [live] coding. As you know, I don't really have a lot of experience [with] it and I definitely want to explore that in terms of how [the] ensemble [I work with] could [tap into] that in the future. You also mentioned that you structure your performances beforehand. How would you go about that? Visual performance is something that I can't really relate to because I've never done anything like that before, so I'm interested to know what some of your processes are. If you could walk me through some of those it would be really cool.

Informant (28:10): With the visual aspect I don't really like the visualisation of forms [or shapes], for example [in] some parts of Punctual. I don't really like it when you create lines and everything. I use it but I don't really like to work with those textures. I don't really like to draw things. It's more like processes with video and photography. I think that's also the reason I didn't work with live coding before because back then we just [used] Fluxus, [another visual live coding environment]. I've seen some

visualisation with SuperCollider. In general, most of the languages are more [focused] on drawing with the browser and using these [inaudible] shaders and everything. I don't really like that approach to my work. I think it's interesting, but what I like to do is more texture based. I think that's also the reason that I started to collaborate with Celeste to create CineVivo [and] also including a version of CineVivo in Estuary [which] I was also involved in. That's usually [how] I work. For example, when I use Hydra, I usually use the functions [relating to] screenshare and then I modify that image. Or uploading videos or photos. [I do] the same with Punctual. I don't use Punctual too much anymore, but I started using it and [forgot] the syntax. I had to relearn it. For my PhD I'm actually working on creating a computer language for videos. The idea is that you will work with videos and also with visualizing texts similar [to] CineCer0, the [version of CineVivo] that we have in Estuary, but with a [stronger] connection to audio. The idea is to have an audio-visual [live coding] language that [produces] visuals with sound [as the] input. I'm very interested in that part. Although obviously, there are a lot of options. A lot of people are very interested in creating their own drawings with most of the live coding options that we have.

Informant (31:25): About how I plan my performances - I didn't really learn that from [attending] visual arts school. It was more from just watching my music composer friends. They [create a] draft on a score, [and] so I [make a similar] score every time I perform live. If I improvise I don't do that, but if I perform live or if I am editing a video, or a film or anything I [create] a score based on time. [I'll] describe the texture that I want in each section [and] I actually have a notebook [for that]. I make notes [about] videos that will work in this section, videos [that] will work in this other section and I also add effects I want to produce [in a] section. At the beginning videos will be more abstract, [but] it depends on the piece. I usually do that; this [visual] score [approach] for [planning] my pieces. I'm not really good [at] improvisation because that [stresses] me too much. I do have to plan so when I perform I have my score there and I know what's happening. Again, sometimes I do collaborate with my

dad, with my other friends from Mexico and I have another friend from Argentina that I collaborate with a lot. They also [use] the same [approach]. I have a piece called *Memorias* that [uses] six mini-languages that I created for visuals and sound. Six of them are in Spanish and six of them are in English. They are actually esolangs [or esoteric languages]. Three of them are [written] over Tidal, one of them is [written] over Punctual, another over CineCer0, and the other one is [written] over Hydra.

Interviewer (34:07): Sorry, can I stop you right there? There's something you mentioned that [I'd like] to know what [it] means. What is an esolang?

Informant (34:18): An esolang is a syntax that you build over already existing computer [languages], but that syntax has either a poetic tone, or intends to play more with language in general. It can be anything. For me that is poetry. I do include parts of my poetry. Let me show you. I actually have my GitHub [open] here. But it can be anything, even jokes. You can rewrite the syntax of some computer language in a way that creates a joke, and also play something with the computer or do something to the computer.

Interviewer (35:19): That's really cool. I'm learning so much.

Informant (35:27): I just sent you the link.

Interviewer (35:50): Great. I'll go check it out. There we go.

Informant (35:36): So, I have six languages. You can go to esolangs, then to the first one, which is Escribir. You can see I have some information there. So basically, what I did for this project [was] that I created six stories. [They] were originally written in English, and then I [wrote] a Spanish version that is not really a translation [but] another version inspired by the things that I say in the English version. Then the question was what if I create another version [of the story] that is code? For example, [on] the screenshot that I have here in the first language, Escribir, there's a full sentence that you can read in Spanish with obviously, some interventions of the numbers and symbols. Then that creates something.

I think these create [vocal samples recorded] in English [that] work with speech patterns. This is the one that is building over Tidal.

Interviewer (37:02): When you say building over Tidal, what does that mean?

Informant (37:07): I know you can do that in different ways. For example, right now in Estuary that can be done with jsolangs. I don't know if you know [about that].

Interviewer (37:24): I have seen the article and the demonstration so I know what you're talking about.

Informant (37:30): Yeah. But right now, I have to convert all of my languages into jsolangs because that's how they really wanted to do things [at the moment]. Originally, I had to use Haskell code and a library called Parsec to make these [kinds] of translations. There are some basic translations, for example, instead of `gain` [I'll] use another word. Instead of `rand`, `irand`, or [any similar] function, [I'll] use words. Before Punctual the translations [involved] a complete sentence. For example, one word can involve a sine wave with a parameter, or with a set of parameters, or [some of] the parameters. I have the documentation here. If you go, for example, to the cheat sheet, I have the dictionary. The syntax is in Spanish, but it actually runs samples [of] a voice in English reading the poems that I told you I wrote. [The code essentially] auto-references itself. You can see some of the words here that will be said at some point when [the] audio [samples] play.

Interviewer (39:12): So then are you saying that some of the words that are said somehow triggers that function? Is that what happens?

Informant (39:21): Yeah. I made six of these, each one with different functions, and I was performing with all of them. But originally, it was an installation. I was making changes over time, which was easier. For that reason, I really like Estuary because I was projecting this in [inaudible] in the gallery while I was here making changes remotely. Then I had the idea to also present it [as] a performance. It's interesting. I really like it, but it's very difficult because I need to remember the syntax of all of [these]

languages. Sometimes I do have my notes [and] my cheat sheets here. It's like, how do I write this? This year, I was doing these performances with my dad and my two friends. We have an artistic project that is called Andamio. So, I [asked] do you want to perform with me and they [said] yes. I had to teach them how to use one of the languages, so we divided [them between us]. They were using one each and I was using three of them. We were just gathering together and we were performing with these languages. We had an ensemble for a while. Although, it was a mess, because my dad was always asking me the same questions. "How do I do this? I already told you." But I was very patient [with him].

Interviewer (41:29): We've spoken quite a bit about yourself. I'm definitely going to go check out some of these languages when we're done here. You have got me interested in [this idea]. I had no idea this even existed. It's really cool. I'm going to go mess around with some of these things later. I [want] to [discuss] a bit more [about] what we do with SuperContinent. Obviously, you as an individual [in the ensemble] is important. That's why we spent so much time talking about you, but what I'm really interested in is how we, as an ensemble can come together and create those moments. Sometimes they aren't great moments, but sometimes when there's a moment, there's a moment and we all know about it. It's very interesting for me to see how that happens. I'm just going off on a tangent. There's no question there. I'm just trying to give you a bit of background about why I want to get into this. I know that you have re-joined SuperContinent, but for how long more or less have you been in the ensemble?

Informant (42:51): [I've been] in this ensemble, since I came here, less than four years. This is my fourth year [here] so less than three years. I belonged to the [university orchestra] for five terms. Then I was in the SuperContinent ensemble for a year. I think it was a year or something then I just stopped going. We can talk more about that because I think that's related to the interactions. When you have these kinds of ensembles I think everybody has to have the sense that you're [on] the same level. If there's some

power dynamics then it's difficult to propose or even try to do things. It becomes really unbearable to be there, even if it's [for] half an hour. To be honest, at the end I was just there for [the sake of] being there. I didn't want to [do it] and I wasn't really doing anything at the end. I was just playing some very subtle sounds in the background, because I didn't want to participate anymore. I was afraid to participate even. I don't know how you work with your ensemble, but when I was working with my dad and my friends in the ensemble [and] we had to play *Memorias* [I had to be aware of that dynamic]. Even though I wasn't liking the result, because it was my piece and I [knew] how I [wanted it] to sound. I [tried] to ignore what I [had] already done with the piece, because it was affecting me, mostly. So, I just [accepted] that this is a new piece [and that] they can use language as they want to. We [could] talk about it, but I wasn't really making notes during the rehearsal. It was more like a conversation afterwards. That's something [that's] very tricky; just to recognize that maybe you do have a power over [others] or what your position [is] in the ensemble. [It's important to] try to acknowledge [and] not ignore it. [It's] a problem when you ignore it. [If you don't] then you cannot do anything about it.

Interviewer (45:45): I really hope that your role changes a bit now that things are different and that the experience is more enjoyable for you. That's very interesting to me, because that's not something we really explore, or have explored in our ensemble as of yet. At the moment, it's not as collaborative as what we do with SuperContinent. There's more input coming from me than other people because they've never done this before so [I agree] that [it is] really important to talk about those power dynamics. I definitely think that it is because it's not something that's come up yet in [conversation]. It probably will eventually and it's good to be aware of those things as you say. You've also explained to me that your experiences are quite different with your friends and your family to [those with] SuperContinent. In what way are those experiences different for you?

Informant (47:17): For me, as I was telling you, I really like it when you talk about what you just did. Obviously all conversations [were] just online, so you cannot read it completely. You can read it, but [you can't] really read the tone [of the messages]. I think just having the conversation afterwards and just [being] open with just talking about anything. Keep in mind, obviously, that you cannot take more than an hour and a half or something if people don't have time. [With my own work] I think that it was more relaxed. The conversation was more relaxed. At the beginning it wasn't. To be honest, I was just [telling everyone] what to do. I was like, yeah, I have to calm down. I [also] see your point in what you were saying about your ensemble. I think there are different ensembles in which maybe you have to have more [of] a leading role, because that is how it is set up. I think that's also nice. But I think those are the expectations that you set at the beginning. They [have to be] very clear. For example, in SuperContinent, for me at least, I didn't understand that that was a dynamic. I think, for me, the dynamic is that we are all professionals.

Interviewer (48:50): Yes.

Informant (48:51): Even though some of us don't know how to use some [of the coding] languages, or some others use [specific] languages more than others, we are [on] the same level. So, we can discuss everything together. Again, with the ensemble [I have] with my dad and my friends, we already know each other for a very long time, and we have [collaborated] for a very long time. In SuperContinent we didn't really [meet] each other [face-to-face] until a year after we got together. So obviously, I really know [some of the members], but the rest of us we don't really know each other. For that reason, it's more difficult, because in the beginning it's like, okay, how do I know this person through their code and through their interaction with the code? Not even [through] interaction with me. For example, [Mynah] Marie asked me to do [a podcast] and it was great to talk to [them]. It was nice to meet [them] in that sense, and also obviously right now with you. I think that adds to the conversation [for] when I come back again, but it's difficult. For example, in

SuperContinent what I also feel is that [some members] know a lot of TidalCycles and they get very excited [about it]. For me, sometimes they were overwhelming the performance. It's like, I cannot do anything else. I would just be oversaturating here. Sometimes it's very difficult [to tell someone]. I know [one member], so I [know I] can tell [them]. I will try to tell [them], but I will never tell [the others] because I don't really know them that well. For that reason, it is more difficult. I think for SuperContinent, we should [create] some dynamics in which we can know more [about] each other so we are in that space in which we feel comfortable [where] we [can] say [to them] don't overwhelm the performance.

Interviewer (52:03): Yeah, I get you. I think maybe we should talk about it sometime with them and be like, hey, guys, why don't we meet up on video once a month or every second month. That would be really nice.

Informant (52:22): Yeah, because I think that bonding is very important for ensembles.

Interviewer (52:31): Definitely. How would you describe your role in SuperContinent, previously? Obviously [you can't reflect on that] right now, because you're not completely back yet, but when we were working together previously?

Informant (52:52): Well, I think at the beginning my role was making visuals. I think I did complain about it, because that's the other thing; I was trying to explore more with sound. It was kind of frustrating for me that I was the one making visuals all the time. It'd nice, but it's also nice to do something else. Yeah, I think at the beginning I was making visuals and when I moved to sound, to be honest, it was difficult to find my role because of the interactions. I was very self-conscious. Sometimes I didn't know where to enter, or if [anyone] will like it. I don't know. That was the problem I didn't know about my role anymore. I wanted to explore more things other than visuals. I thought I [didn't] really [have] a position anymore. It was very hard for me to express that. That also happened to me in the orchestra. Many times, last year I wanted to [ask] you if you wanted to do something with electronic literature, because we work a lot



with techno music. I wanted to propose to make a piece in which we were just working with a speech environment [that is] poetry driven. But I wasn't really comfortable. I [didn't want to say] it.

Interviewer (54:59): I definitely would be open to do something like that. I have to tell you that the people in South Africa are very different to everyone that I've spoken to in SuperContinent. I experienced [you all] as being very open and welcoming and very willing to share your knowledge. That's not very much a thing here in South Africa. People are very closed off and keep to themselves. I don't think that's really healthy, to be honest with you. I really like sharing and making things with other people. If ever, you have an idea or if I have an idea, we must have a discussion about it. Or see who we can involve. I am loving everything that we are doing, [not just] with Supercontinent, but with what I'm getting to do with [UPLorc] as well. If I can take on more projects that could really build up my reputation but also [to] get a good standing in live coding and in the community. This might be a very general question, but interpret it in whatever way you wish. What does participating in SuperContinent mean to you as a performer, live coder [and] network musician. I don't know if [the] term [network musician] really applies [exclusively] to the [musical aspect] of network music, but I'm going to include it here as well. [Simply] because the different ways of doing things are so closely related. Just to repeat the question again - what does participating in SuperContinent mean to you?

Informant (57:01): What I really like about SuperContinent [is that], because some of you have more experience with Tidal, for example, I was always noticing [the] new functions. I [would go and] explore them later on. That worked a lot for me when I was working on the *Memorias* project. And so, I tried to borrow those functions that otherwise I wouldn't really have encountered [on my own]. I think that's something that I really like about [SuperContinent]. But in general, I [enjoy being] able to explore different kinds of music because obviously, we are from different places. Again, we mostly play techno music which is nice, but at the same time [we have other members from other regions as well]. Why don't we play

something [from other regions] or propose other influences in the music we play? I think that's the only thing that I find useful; is to learn from others in the way that they were using code. I think [if] we had some more interaction between us, it will also be great seeing that we are people living in different geographical and political situations. It's also great to learn from them. I guess it must be super awesome for you just to hear all these stories, and how different people get into code. Those are the interactions that I think will be very useful for us to create [a bond] and [an understanding of] how people use [code]. I think it's reflected in the way you use [or] you create your code, and [how] you interact with those languages.

Interviewer (59:26): I don't know if you were and if it's not the case, that's fine. But I'm curious to know. We, as an ensemble, came up with a few strategies - those live coding strategies spreadsheet - do you know what I'm talking about? Were you there and we were busy doing all of that?

Informant (59:30): I wasn't at the end but again, I wasn't really present mentally so I cannot say too much about it. If I had been [able to] be more present mentally, I would have realised that. I think it's [about] exploring different ways of interacting [with] each other and just creating music. I know it's not just about style. One thing that I didn't really talk too much about [was] the visuals. That always happens when you collaborate with musicians. [The visuals are] always just cool. [Inaudible] collaborative part of the visuals. That's kind of missing. I hope that [when] I come back I will [be able to] propose like some visual-related strategies.

Interviewer (1:00:55): I think you should I really think you should. I think those ideas would be amazing and we could really do so much more. So, you can't really speak [about] given a particular strategy, [how] you [would] interpret that in a specific way. You can't really talk about that because you weren't really, as you say, present at that stage.

Informant (1:01:23): Yeah, I wasn't mentally present. I was mentally [broken]. After the meetings I would just [be] depressed for two days. Rehearsal [lasted] 30 minutes last year [inaudible], and then I [would be] depressed for two

days. It was affecting me too much. Yeah. I'm sorry that I started talking about that.

Interviewer (1:01:56): No, that's okay. I really am interested to see what you end up doing with what we have currently have. I'm actually exploring some of [these strategies] with [the UPLorc] ensemble as well and it seems to be working pretty well for us. We want to try and take, not take the idea, but run with it in the same sense [and] we want to focus more on the sound palette that we [are using]. I think I pretty much have all I need. I just have one more question for you. Going back to performance as a whole, [keeping] in mind [your experiences] with SuperContinent and your own personal stuff, how has your collaborative experiences influenced or impacted your life? In which ways?

Informant (1:02:57): That's a tough question.

Interviewer (1:03:00): Yeah, it can be positive [or] it can be negative. Not just that, obviously, but is there something that you take with you on a daily basis that I [might not] know [about]?

Informant (1:03:22): First I would talk about we just [said about] the physical exertion [you feel] after you perform. We were saying that when you perform alone it [can be very stressful]. [I] still [get] very stressed even though [there's] less [of it] now. When you do collaborative performance it's [far] less [stressful than performing solo]. I do enjoy it more, because I don't have to worry about everything. If I stopped modifying my code [it's because] I rely on others. I think that makes it more enjoyable to perform. [Solo performance] totally kills me [and creates] physical stress [in me]. I have less physical stress when I collaborate. I've also been saying [that] when you don't really like the environment of these collaborative spaces, that can create a really big burden [for] you. Again, since I was involved in both orchestras - SuperContinent and the [university orchestra] - I was feeling that I was always judged and that I couldn't do anything or propose anything. There was a time where everything that I was proposing in SuperContinent, and the [university orchestra], they were

saying no [to]. Maybe it wasn't personal [and] it was just a no, but for me it became - I feel like - personal. Maybe I don't fit [in] here.

Interviewer (1:05:23): Or that your ideas didn't feel good enough, almost?

Informant (1:05:25): Or the interests of the people are not really the same as mine so I have to compromise my own ideas. It affected me a lot. And again, I was kind of depressed - I wasn't depressed by all the things, but it affected the way I was feeling mentally. For that reason, I needed a break. Before that I really used to enjoy the orchestra. When I was doing the visuals I was really feeling like I was really important. Although again, everything [was messed] up when I wanted to try something else. I think it's always good to try new things in general. I was feeling I was contributing to the overall performance. I was feeling great about that. About the negative aspects, which are the ones that are more recent I struggled with. To be honest it wasn't just [during] fall term this year. It was throughout the whole year, because I also had some [experiences] with the [the university laptop orchestra]. Even though that was not happening too much in SuperContinent, it did [affect] me [in] the same [way as it did with the university laptop orchestra].

Interviewer (1:07:09): I think I have everything I need. I'm going to throw this out there, but it might not be necessary. If I do want to have a follow up interview with you, would you be [interested] to do that?

Informant (1:07:30): Yeah.

Interviewer (1:07:31): Like I said, it might not be necessary, because I think I will have enough from everyone that's already participating. But I'll let you know. Obviously, I'll let you know well beforehand like I did with this one and everything. I really enjoyed talking to you, learning from you about you and some of your experiences. [It was] very interesting. A lot of them to which I can relate to, especially in the ensemble environment. I experienced what you did in some ways with my jazz ensemble, but not [in] the [exact] same [circumstances]. There were also things that affected me negatively, and that's why when I found live coding, it [was] as if a mountain was lifted off my shoulders, because it's [perfect for

me]. It [involves both] technology [and] music. It's everything in one. And so, I found it quite surprising to hear that you didn't have great experiences, and I think it's important that we talk about that because it's definitely [is a] reality [for some people]. You can't always expect everything to be perfect. That's not realistic.

Informant (1:09:03): Yeah. I've heard that [about] music ensembles. I have friends that are musicians and they have told me. Amazingly, in the live coding community even though most people will criticize the way academic music is taught, how you feel overall, and how new things are rejected. I feel that happens in the live coding community. For example, at the beginning when I was researching about live coding, I was criticized because I was using paid software. I even have a term [for it]. I will write a paper someday in the future [called] software shaming. I was receiving software shaming.

Interviewer (1:10:11): I know exactly what you're talking about. In the audio field there's this whole thing about which DAW you are using. Are you using Studio One, Logic, [etcetera]? Everyone is always comparing their software with one another.

Informant (1:10:30): It happens in the best families. That's [what] we say in Mexico.

Interviewer (1:10:37): Thank you so much for your time. I really, really appreciate it. I will be sending out my first draft to everyone so you can get to read what I say. If there's something that I that you feel I have misrepresented and you want me to change it, I will happily do so. With that, I will chat to you soon.

Informant (1:11:07): Okay, see you.

Interviewer (1:11:09): Bye.

Informant (1:11:10): Bye. Thank you

**\*\*END OF INTERVIEW\*\***