

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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### INTERVIEW #1: PART ONE

<b>Date</b>	08 & 22 September 2021	<b>Duration</b>	00:57:52
<b>Interviewer</b>	Principal researcher	<b>Informant</b>	Informant A
<b>Notes</b>	A significant portion of part one was not recorded (the record button was not enabled when the interview started). Also see minute (12:16). This interview was conducted on two separate occasions due to an unstable internet connection. Part two continues immediately after.		

### QUESTION 1

Interviewer (00:01): Does live coding performance intertwine with your profession in some way, and if so, how?

Informant (00:44): Yes. The fact that I'm an artist, so in that sense it does. [When] I started [my act], and started adding machines into what I do, I wanted to have a faculty of playing shows that [sounded] big. I didn't want to be just a singer-songwriter with a guitar or a piano. I wanted this capacity of filling in a space with a big audience. Live coding definitely allows me to do that. It's [similar to] having an orchestra in the laptop. So, in that sense [live coding] very much influences my profession. As a teacher, [and] as someone who [has] also taught programming, it does [so as well], because you understand you have a really powerful tool for teaching people problem solving and critical thinking skills. I've used [live coding] in that context, which I feel is really powerful. Also, I believe it's a great tool when you're teaching for teaching people skills. I've taught in environments that are complicated, culturally. I've taught people that don't necessarily have the same kind of education that we have in the West. People that have very little self-esteem [and] very little confidence, that were never really allowed to voice an opinion of their own. When you put them into a context that they need to learn [a] skill like programming or web development, there's this right way of doing things and there's this wrong way of doing things. They [often] get all caught up [in that, where] they're so scared of doing something wrong

[that] issues with self-confidence [come] in to play. When you take that [sense of right and wrong] away and [you're working] with programming [that has a] creative and [artistic element to it], that sense of right or wrong isn't there. You can say [that] this music is bad, [that] music is good, but someone else will say [that] this music is bad, and that music is good, right? There isn't that clear definition. With taking out this definition you can really work on eliminating fear of failure and building confidence, which are also really important to teach to people if you want them to get into the job market. In that sense live coding helped me for that. [When I] teach the curriculum [I'll have participants] install Sonic Pi [and experiment with making] some beeps. [We look at] variables and functions and things like this on different [levels]. [We're] not [necessarily motivated] to build something that does something, [but we want to] explore it and hear what it does if you do this instead of that. There's not one [approach] that is better than the other. In that sense, as an educator, it helped a lot.

## QUESTION 2

Interviewer (04:17): You [mentioned earlier] that you had musical training that you didn't complete. That is definitely a reality for a lot of people here as well [who drop out of music and pursue other avenues of study]. What would your advice be to other people who want to explore other avenues [similar to] live coding, even if they don't have any music experience at all?

Informant (04:50): I don't believe that music experience is something that you need at all. A lot of the times people come to me and [they] really want to [learn how to live code], but have no musical training. I always tell them [that] I spent many years unlearning everything [what] I learned in school. It's almost an advantage not to have so much musical training. I think one of the most important things, when you want to develop something creative, is to find your true identity as a creator, whether it's as a musician or [to do with] your art form. School is something that strips you away from that a lot of the times, because it gives you those very clear frameworks. If you want to have a clear identity, you kind of need

to forget all of the things that you learn. It's good to learn the rules, but ultimately you want to learn how to break them. Breaking the rules is what is going to give you a personality as a creator. It's going to give you a sound that no one else has. I think there's two ways to go about it. It's either you learn the rules really well until you figure out ways that are good to break them. Or, you just work to be really in tune with who you are, what you like, how you feel things, hear things, see things, and express that without being concerned [whether it's] right or wrong. It doesn't matter. If it feels right to you, it's right. Not everyone is going to like you, but you'll sound like no other. You'll sound truly like you. That would be my advice. [Also, to] pay attention to your weaknesses in the sense that weaknesses are our biggest strengths. This is something that I truly believe. For example, I was never a virtuoso player. Some people had way more technique than I had. As [many] hours [as] I spent on my instrument, I could never play as fast. That was one of my weaknesses. I couldn't necessarily play as fast. I could have spent - and I did - spend years breaking my head over trying to do something that was not my strength that I could never really fully achieve. Until at some point I said I'll take that weakness and I'll exploit it to the max. Then I started to play as slowly as possible [to] discover the beauty of one note [I asked myself] "what are all the things that I can do with one note." You take that weakness, and you put it to the other extreme and learn to use it. You develop something that is a sound that is proper to you. [Don't] be afraid of weaknesses. Learn how to look at them head on, and see what you can do with them instead of fighting them all the time. A lot of the times they're the key to your true identity because these are the things that you have the easiest time doing, so why not use them.

Interviewer (08:29): [That] really [resonates] with me. It can be exhausting for some people who tend to focus on that specific thing all the time. That little inner voice [that] always just tries to get you down.

Informant (08:47): Yeah, totally. It's a pain.

### QUESTION 3

Interviewer (08:52): This is a two-part question. How many hours per week would you say you spend live coding and what kind of activities would you engage [with] in live coding?

Informant (09:57): It depends how many gigs I have. Consistency is not the best for my creativity. Sometimes I feel, because I get into too many habits, I get a little bit bored [and] then I get to the point where I'm not discovering anything else. I need to switch it up a little bit. If I have many gigs I'll live code every day. At least two, three hours maybe, sometimes even more depending [on] the [stage] of preparations. Also, I have periods where it's full on exploration [when I'm] testing a concept. I'm not really playing or building something. It's [similar to] practicing I [suppose]. This is our way of practicing as live coders, where sometimes I want to experiment with a particular algorithm [to] see what can [be done] with [it]. I'll just break it up and [go from there]. Sometimes [I'll explore] with different sounds, samples or structures. Whatever it is [I'll] explore [that] concept. All these explorations become things that I can [place] in my toolbox [for later]. Then when I get into the next stage where I know I'm performing, I've got to have some idea of what I'm going to do for that performance. [That's when] I go back [to] all these exploration sessions that I did [to see if] there [is] anything in there that was interesting that I want to develop into a full performance. That's pretty much my process. I can't be playing all the time [and] I can't be exploring all the time. I need to switch it up between [the] technical and [the] creative [aspects of live coding]. Usually, [in] the days before a performance I'll do [what I call] "runs," especially if someone tells me [I have to] play for half an hour or 40 minutes. I'll do [this] to see [if] my ideas [are] stitched together. I take it that way or that way, and then I practice running through my ideas. These are the stages I go through; exploration, development, and then [practicing] running through [the ideas I've stitched together].

Interviewer (11:28): To try [and] solidify those ideas [into] something that's a bit more structured and would fit in a 30-minute [performance]?

Informant (11:36): Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer (11:39): That's very interesting. I [enjoy learning] how other people strategies [for live coding].

**\*\*Disrupted internet connection\*\***

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## **INTERVIEW #1: PART TWO**

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Interviewer (12:18): Hey.

Informant (12:20): How are you doing?

Interviewer (12:21): Good and you?

Informant (12:24): Good. Good.

Interviewer (12:25): I just want to say that I am recording this time.

Informant (12:28): Okay cool. Yeah, it's a bummer, but sometimes it happens.

Interviewer (12:34): Yeah. The first [interview] I do [I don't record it], but it's [alright]. I learned a lot from it. I also feel way more relaxed this time, because I've done three other [interviews] already. How was your trip?

Informant (12:50): Oh, it was awesome. It was so much fun. The show went really well, and then I got to meet [one of the ensemble members]. It just so happened [that they were] giving a workshop and a performance the next day so I went to both. I had a super nice introduction to SuperCollider with [them]. [It was] so much fun. I think [they] gave me the [SuperCollider] bug.

Interviewer (13:34): That's so cool. I wish I could do that.

Informant (13:40): It's so much fun [when] we can meet each other in different places.

Interviewer (13:45): I [suppose] you are a bit closer together now, anyway. I have never travelled outside of the country. I really want to.

Informant (13:58): Oh, you have to. We'll organise something for you to come [here].

Interviewer (14:02): That will be so cool.

Informant (14:08): I'll come. It'll come. Where were we in the interview?

Interviewer (14:16): I did go back [to] make sure what the last question was that I asked you. What kinds of live coding activities do you engage with?

Informant (14:31): In terms of how I practice, I think I told you how I practice. In terms of activities, well I [suppose there are] a few different things. I think it's different if I'm performing for programmers [than] if I'm performing for [a] more general audience. When I'm performing for programmers I'll do more improvisational live coding, or I'll [perform something] that develops more over time. I don't mind starting from scratch as much because I know that people are going to be more into reading the code and following along with me [as it develops]. When I'm performing for a more general public, then I know that for them, they're more after changes with less [emphasis on] things that develop over time. [That's when] I'll usually prepare code. Within Sonic Pi, that means a lot of the times I'll write a series of functions, and I'll just call [them]. Each function is a block of code that does something that I can reuse in different contexts. Then I can just call that function with different parameters that I give it [in order] to customise it. Then it will do something really quickly with just one line of code. That makes it more interesting. I'll code something in a way that I can have different sections [where] I can change the variable. Then [there'll be] different [sections] of the code [where] I have more [song-like] structures. I can have more [of a] verse-chorus-bridge kind of thing going on.

#### QUESTION 4

Interviewer (16:22): I've never thought about it that way. You mentioned that you make functions that you then call. There's something [of] an equivalent [within TidalCycles] as well, which I've started [experimenting with], but I don't really understand [it] that well yet. There were quite a few important things that we missed, because I didn't record it. [Instead], I wrote [down] a few of the most memorable things that you said and I was wondering if you could speak to some of those things again. If you could try and reflect back on what you said the last time so I can capture at least some of it. The first thing I wrote down [was that] I found it very interesting that you also tend to use Google a lot to figure out [a problem you're having]. How did that become a thing? Did you just start doing it, or did someone else tell you that you should start [doing that]?

Informant (17:40): I think that it was a last resort. The way that it started was because I come from a background with no high tech [or technological experience] at all. All my friends were [a] bunch of hippies living in the forest playing music, [so] nothing to do with computers and programming. When I started [incorporating] technology [into my practice], I think the only thing I could do was to turn to Google really, because I didn't have anyone around me that was even remotely interested in answering my questions. I started like that and because I didn't know what to Google at the beginning, I started Googling random [things]. Then I realised that you can [easily] find [what you're looking for] even if you really don't know how [or] what to Google. Just type it [into Google] the only way that you can and it will lead you to something. I just started doing that organically. Also, I think that I'm a self-taught person in a lot of the things that I've done, [including] music. Once you've taught yourself one thing, I think it's easier to teach yourself a whole [range] of other things, because it's about learning how to learn, mostly. I think I've [also] done that with music.

## QUESTION 5

Interviewer (19:29): You mentioned that you don't believe a person who wants to get [involved with] live coding needs a musical background? Is there something more you could say about that or reflect back on what you said last time?

Informant (19:50): Yeah, I think that what I said last time was more about whether I feel like there's an advantage in having studied music, which I really don't think is [the case]. It took me so many years to undo what I learned in school, even when I was working as a musician. I don't really believe in the school approach in terms of learning music. In the context of live coding specifically, I see that with students when they come to my workshops. [Those] that have no background in music, usually have an easier time learning how to live code than the people that have a background in music. The reason for that is, that people with a background in music tend to come with a very specific idea of what they want to hear. They're [often focused on] trying to find ways to have the computer do that. When you don't know the language, [that's] really [challenging to do]. Then, [when] you get frustrated because what your computer is giving back to you is not the idea that you had in mind, you keep banging your head [figuratively] against the computer to get that idea through. What I always tell them is to let go of their idea. Instead of starting from a preconceived idea, to start with a process. Just start with a process. Start with an idea of a process and give that process to your computer in the form of a line of code or a function that you want to call. You're not sure what it does, but you just want to explore it and then see what it does. Let go of wanting to hear that specific result back. That's why people that don't do music at all, have an easier time because they don't know. They don't come with any preconceived idea. They just type things. [They'll say]: "Let's see what this does, if I type this. Oh, this is what it does." [That allows them to] play around [and experiment] with [their code]. That's a much better approach with live coding [and is very similar to] playing with another musician. Your computer becomes another musician. If you play with another musician, and I want you to



play that note that way specifically at that time during your solo, it doesn't work. Whatever you communicate to the musician, there's always going to be translation on [their] side. And it's a little bit the same with the machine, I feel.

## QUESTION 6

Interviewer (22:44): Would you say then that there has to [be] some sort of mental shift within a person who has had that training and [that] you have to approach it in a way [that allows you to think differently] about it?

Informant (22:57): Yeah. They have to relinquish creative control to the machine [similar to interacting with] another musician [or] giving the other party space to breathe and do its thing. It's not like producing music on a DAW. It's not the same process where you just tell your machine everything [that] you want it to do. It's a collaboration. As long as you're not learning or mastering the language, it is not going to be understood the way that you want it to be understood. You've got to respect that learning process and be surprised by it also. If I say it that way, well, this is how it's understood.

## QUESTION 7

Interviewer (23:58): This [one is] pretty important to me, and I think it is to you too. I think we can connect on this in a lot of ways, because we both feel that it's such an important thing, and that's educating others and sharing your knowledge with others. Could you speak about that a bit more? How you feel about education, specifically [related to] live coding. What I want to find out is, in which ways have live coding practices benefited you in educational [contexts]?

Informant (24:38): Well, in a more formal educational space, I haven't had [as many opportunities] to write out my ideas, unfortunately. If I'm talking about when I was teaching people web development, I didn't have the chance to [introduce those ideas]. I've done a couple of workshops with them here and there, but I didn't have the chance to introduce [live coding into] the curriculum [in] the way that I really believe it could be

beneficial. Even though I do believe that [it could work] in [these kinds] of [spaces, it has its challenges]. Especially when you're dealing with people that have specific personal challenges [such as] fear of failure, self-judgment issues, insecurities, self-criticism and things like that. Which [are] not challenges. Everyone has that, [or something they're dealing with]. I think that the whole education system around technology is really based on the Western way of thinking. I've worked in cultural contexts that were a lot more complicated. [For example], I was teaching groups of women that come from very religious background[s]. I think that in these kinds of contexts live coding can be really beneficial because you take away this notion of right and wrong. [You're able to] take programming and [shift the focus away] from achieving a specific result. You bring it to the realm of expressing something, exploring something, or achieving a result that is subjective - that is, not right or wrong. I think that notion of right or wrong in education, when it's understood well of course, [is] beneficial. [Apart from that], in [some] contexts you're dealing with people that are not able to take this in a constructive and positive way. I wish I could have included a lot more live coding, even in more professional curriculums, to work on these things.

Interviewer (27:14): It's a shame.

Informant (27:17): It is a shame. I think it comes with the stigma that we have around art. To a lot of people, art is something that you do for fun. Which it is, but we forget the benefits of art as well. The benefits to our culture. The benefits to having it as a tool for human growth and for the growth of our society as a collective. That is really a shame. This is something I'm really passionate about [and is] mostly what I talk about when I'm invited [to] conferences to talk about my work. It's the integration of that creative expression within education, technology and computer science.

## QUESTION 8

Interviewer (28:13): Did you get into Sonic Pi first and then go to Tidal?

Informant (28:19): Oh, yeah. Sonic Pi was the first thing that I discovered actually. It was in [the] very beginning of discovering programming when I still was Googling random [things] and I didn't [really know] what to look for. I Googled something like coding music, or coding with music, or something [similar]. Sonic Pi was the first thing that popped up. Then I [watched] the talk with Sam Aaron and he was talking a lot about education and things like that. It just blew my mind. That was it. I had found my life's purpose.

## QUESTION 9

Interviewer (29:03): When you are in a collaborative setting, what are some of the ways that you think about either the rehearsal or the performance that you're busy with at any given time? What are some of the things that you think about [when you are live coding]?

Informant (29:22): When we are playing all together?

Interviewer (29:24): Yes.

Informant (29:25): Usually my approach in any kind of music, whether it's playing an instrument or live coding with people, is to try and be as sensitive as I can to what's going on and [finding] a place [where] I can fill a certain gap. Most of the time it's listening to the overall soundscape and just being sensitive to, not necessarily what I feel is missing - I don't think missing is the right word - but where there's gaps and there's room there for something to fill in that space. Sometimes, if it's [a] performance context, I'll go [into] safer zones. For example, I'm not the best for making crazy beats. I know that [a specific person in the ensemble] is the [person] that [can make] crazy drum [patterns]. I'll maybe give an idea, but I know that this is the [person] for that [task]. My comfort zone is more in textures and in spaces and melodies. This is more the zone [I operate in]. I'll stick to my zones, that I know I can deal with, when it's a performance context. When it's a rehearsal context, sometimes I'll try look at [other people's] code and I'll I want to try [to do something

similar], and so I'll see how [they go about doing] this. I'll copy and try to do that because this is what rehearsal is for. It's for exploring and trying to grow and things. Sometimes this is what I'll do and, of course, if I feel it's completely saturated in the percussions, I'm not going to add to it. If there's still space, [I'll] have a go [at it] or look at other people's code. [They are] one of [those people] that I don't know how [they do] it. [They also make] those harmonic soundscapes and bass lines, so I'll copy [their code] quite a lot, just because I want to figure [it] out. It's cool because we're all on the same instrument. In a way it's not like a band where one person plays guitar, one person plays this [and] one person plays that. We all [have] the same instrument so we can all learn from each other a lot more than when we're playing with individual [instruments].

## QUESTION 10

Interviewer (33:00): I have [a] follow up question to that. One thing [I've noticed] is that from time to time - I'm not saying you do it, but I'm saying that sometimes someone in the group will - [a] person will stop coding and just sit back. How do you feel about that? What does that entail for you?

Informant (33:35): That's totally fine.

Interviewer (33:37): Is that something you do a lot?

Informant (33:40): Oh yeah, definitely. I think the mark of a true musician [is] to know when to stay silent. That is true professionalism. You'll hear amateurs. They can't shut up. They'll play whatever just to play something because they feel they have to, but once you've been in that situation [and] you've experienced the stage so much, the group [and] playing with different people, then you can truly understand the moments where it's time for you to stay silent. That is a true professional to me. Of course, there's balance. You can feel it if someone is too shy to do anything, but that's not what's happening there. I think that we all have our moments where we feel we can truly express ourselves. Then we have our moments

where we feel like this is my time for listening - to absorb - because we're not inspired. Sometimes I listen and I don't hear that gap where I can add something. If there's nothing for me to add, I'm not going to throw the whole balance of the music off just because I want to do something. It's not serving the music. It's not serving the sounds that we're creating [or] the experience we're creating.

Interviewer (35:32): Something you just said [reminded me] that I did that “sitting back” thing last week. Remember, I was [saying that] I [couldn't participate and decided to sit back and listen]. I've had a couple of weeks where I [have] not [been] in the best frame of mind. When I [experience] that, I don't feel very inspired and that's why I just decided to enjoy it and see what you [all were] doing.

Informant (35:58): Yeah, it's important to take [the] time to get inspired from one another also. Creativity is not an on and off thing. [You can't just] press the button [and be] creative. It doesn't work like that. [We should] respect ourselves in the process.

## **QUESTION 11**

Interviewer (36:15): Absolutely. 100% agree with that. In terms of gaining skills, what kind of things can you speak to that you have picked up from live coding?

Informant (36:28): I think one of the main things is a deeper understanding of audio and how sound works, especially digital sound. That was something really interesting for me. To dive a lot more into sound design and sound synthesis, and understanding how that happens. What the aesthetic concerns are related to that and the finer exploration of sound that I had never really thought of when I was playing [exclusively on] acoustic instruments. [With live coding] I was thinking of the sound [on a] much higher level. [Whether I want it to sound like it's in] a room [or] space. [What it would sound like] within a sound system [and] whether you have enough reverb. Knowing the effects that would make my instruments sound good, [or] if [what I was playing needed a

microphone]. Things like this. That was kind of the depth of how I was approaching sound. With live coding it's so much more [about] the wave of the sound and adding sounds together, subtracting elements of the sound, [how] the sonic space becomes wider. That for me [is], I think the main thing that I love and really fascinates me. I want to dive deeper into that. I'm still a beginner [and] by [no means] an expert, but it's really interesting for me to dive deeper into that.

Interviewer (38:15): Well, I have to say, some of your YouTube videos state otherwise. There was this one video that I can't for the life of me remember which one it was, but I just remember watching you display yourself on the screen and being so into it [and focused]. It was so cool. I watched that whole thing from start to finish, because it was just really awesome.

Informant (38:37): Thank you.

## QUESTION 12

Interviewer (38:41): How would you describe your identity as a performer?

Informant (38:48): I think my identity as a performer now is not very far from my identity in real life. I've stopped fighting who I am in real life, for the sake of giving myself a different identity, because I feel I have to when I'm performing. I'm a natural introvert, and I'm naturally drawn to storytelling and soundscapes. I do have this spiritual life that is very much alive [as well]. I'm someone who meditates. I'm someone who is concerned about personal growth, and this is something I was shy to show before. I was trying to be cool. I was trying to do cool music that people would like, [or would] want to get drunk to, but it's just not me. It's not the kind of music that I listen to. I've learned to integrate that and to be less afraid of that side of myself that I know like[s] weird stuff. I don't [enjoy] music that is sugary and beautiful. I like this deep contrast between the very beautiful and the very cringy. I like to explore zones. Whether it's with my voice, or with live coding, or even with my instruments. I like to explore these grey zones that are not necessarily

beautiful. They're not meant to be beautiful. They're imperfect. For me, imperfection in music is a relief. When I hear someone singing slightly out of tune, [and] it's done in such a sensitive way, to me it opens [up] that space to allow us to be imperfect as well. That will touch me a lot more than the [perfectly] trained pop voice. That doesn't touch me so much. I'm more [interested in] the vulnerability of who someone really is. I think my identity is very much close to that now. Daring to be imperfect, vulnerable and sensitive and not [being] this [show-off type of] person. Doing music that tells a story over time rather than a fast three minutes, getting drunk, [type of situation].

### QUESTION 13

Interviewer (42:12): I want to talk a bit about our collective strategies as an ensemble in Supercontinent. [I'm not sure if] that's something [one particular person] started [or not]. I don't know. Are there some that you contributed as well?

Informant (42:34): Oh, no. It was a period of time where I [think I] was very absent from the rehearsals. I think I was crazy busy or something. But I did give the initial idea. I remember there was this chat, where [one member] was talking about how we should structure the rehearsals more and the parameters that we would [discuss]. I'm the one who came up with the idea that said, why not just give [an] "aliens are landing on Earth" kind of idea. Then it's not so restrictive as to say 180 [beats per minute] in E minor. It's a creative direction, but at the same time it's not too restrictive and we can each interpret it in our own way. So then [someone else] said [they] think this high-level kind of direction could work.

Interviewer (43:50): Open to interpretation.

Informant (43:53): Yeah, [open] to interpretation where you don't have a general direction. If I tell you "aliens landing on earth," [you've] got some kind of [reference of] what it means you. [After that] I wasn't there for a week or two and [when] I came back there was that list of strategies. I

remember it was after roulette. We were doing that for a few weeks. At some point, we were talking [about if] we want to continue to do roulette. I think I brought it up and then that's when I brought up the idea of higher levels.

Interviewer (44:45): I remember now, yeah. There's so much that happened over the last nine months. It's impossible to remember everything. It's cool because I'm curious to know how it came to be.

Informant (45:01): How it evolved?

Interviewer (45:03): Yeah, [because] right now it's pretty central to what we're doing in rehearsal every week. Although, for the last couple of weeks, we haven't really used the strategies. Sometimes we wing it and we just do our thing.

Informant (45:17): Yeah. I think we're going to find our balance. There [are] moments where we feel very creative as an ensemble, and it's okay to let loose and see what happens. [Then] there's other moments where we feel we're kind of becoming redundant, then strategies can help [us keep] pushing the boundaries a little bit of what we've already done.

Interviewer (45:50): Yeah it's hard. [Especially] for a person who's never live coded before. They come into this whole new thing that they've never done in their life before. How do you explain to them [that they should] just start jamming? They don't really know where to start, first of all. I've experienced that quite a few times before. We don't really have a score [to refer to]. A lot of people that I've worked with struggled to improvise as well. I don't know how other people in other backgrounds, whether that's musical or not, feel about [an] improvised way of working.

Informant (46:36): Well, I think for every musician free form improvisation, free form in all senses - I'm talking [about] free from anything - is the hardest form of improvisation there is. For people to start [with improvising], it's always easier when you have certain parameters. Creativity needs certain parameters. When I'm leading musical projects, and if I'm playing with other musicians, even if they're really experienced



musicians, if I just tell them [to] do anything, they don't know what to do. [If] I give them a set of chords, no problem. They will improvise until tomorrow morning. [If] I give them a direction of aesthetic, they will do something [with what] I give them. Anything I give them, no problem. But if I just tell them [to] just play [it probably won't happen]. In order to get there, where you can just play, you need to have a very firm identity as a musician. If you tell me [to] just play, I'll play something, but I will put myself [in] the parameters according to the identity that I know I have as an artist. If I was a session musician, that has no real identity, my job is mostly [to] play on other projects all the time. I'm playing other people's music all the time. This is what I do. Sometimes I'll play in my bedroom. If I was someone like that and you would tell me to just play, I wouldn't know what to do. I wouldn't have any parameter[s]. If you're an artist that has an identity - someone who knows] your own internal parameters of what it means to you to just play - [and] you have the confidence to affirm that identity, [you'll be] fine. A lot of musicians, even very good musicians, have an incredibly hard time with that. Just because they've never developed it. Musical identity is not something you learn in school. Developing your own sound, [or] your own personality, is not what they teach you to do.

#### **QUESTION 14**

Interviewer (49:42): I think I've got everything I need, but I have an ending off question that [I've] asked everyone. In what ways, if any, have your experiences with collaborative network music performance influenced or impacted your life? Whether that's live coding or not. It doesn't have to be.

Informant (50:07): Can you repeat the question again?

Interviewer (50:09): In what ways have your experiences with collaborative network music performance influenced or impacted your life? It can be positive or negative.

Informant (50:19): Well, because we're talking [about] the context of being networked, it will for me, [be] live coding related. There is an interesting project I did with [a co-member of SuperContinent], and with another musician from Montreal, for a festival. [We sent audio data to one another using a] one direction chain [network architecture]. That was an interesting one. I think that for me, it's the magic of being able to connect with other people without them physically [being] there. There's just something so magical about tuning [into] a platform and being able to make music with a whole bunch of people around the planet. It sounds so surreal when you think about it. I love explaining it to people [and] I love the reaction I get. That Algorave we did at some point when [a member of SuperContinent] was there - it was pre-pandemic - and [they were at that event]. We were all waiting to know when we were [supposed to start] and [they were updating] us [in] the chat. I remember talking to some friends about it and [telling them] I played in [another country] this morning.

Interviewer (52:22): Yes! I did the same thing when we did that event in Montreal. I told my parents [that I was] playing in Montreal [that] week. They were [slightly confused at first].

Informant (52:23): There's just something magical about it. For me, this is the essence of what technology can bring [to] our lives. To me that's reminding ourselves of all of the ideologies - the good ones - that were part the computer world when it started in the 60s, 70s, 80s. Which is not so present in high [technology] anymore. I feel [that] we can still [sense these ideas] and [use it to] inspire it in other people. People do crazy [things] with technology all day long without really caring about it, but then you tell them [you're] playing with a group of people through the internet and we're playing shows across the world from our living room, people are [very surprised]. [People] talk on Skype and on Zoom every day, and they have complex algorithms running on their phone that tell them what to buy, where to go and whatever. That doesn't bring in that [same] sense of magic. Technology related to art somehow does and that's something really precious. I love that aspect - the sense of magic

that it keeps alive for me. It's important. Supercontinent is, to me, this All Stars live coders [band of people].

Interviewer (54:22): For me, it's a big thing in our community. If you don't have a certain qualification you haven't made it yet. I feel a little bit like [an] imposter, in a way, to the people here.

Informant (54:35): Me too. Totally.

Interviewer (54:41): When I'm with [SuperContinent] it doesn't feel like that. It doesn't feel like you are [all] far away.

Informant (54:52): Yeah, because everyone is so welcoming.

Interviewer (54:55): Yeah, exactly. We're still communicating with each other through the code that we [write], and the very short discussions we have, but that's still a big part of it.

Informant (55:09): Yeah and no one is judgmental. Everyone is super open. I remember the first rehearsals I was in; I was so intimidated. [One member] is this SuperCollider master [who] plays with [the creator of TidalCycles], Alex McLean, and [other well-known individuals in the community]. [Another] is [the organiser of a node of] TOPLAP [and also does] all these gigs. [We also have a] developer that created [their] own libraries for this live coding engine. [Their] music is unbelievable, by the way. [It's] out of this world. [Another member] is doing [their] doctorate and [has also] released an album [about] a year ago that is also out of this world. Really freaking good. I [asked myself] what the hell I [was] doing [there].

Interviewer (56:28): I've felt like that in a lot of ways too. One thing you [mentioned] to me earlier [was] that as a creative you need restrictions and constraints. I think that's something I have been missing in my own creative output. I always try and take on the world. [I] try and do the most and it never gets done. I have always asked myself why this happen[s]. I feel like that's my answer. I need to restrict myself in more ways, I [suppose], is what I [should do].

Informant (57:20): Doing the most with less is a really good [lesson]. Limiting what you have and just try to do the most [with] it. It's a really good way to learn, for sure.

Interviewer (57:31): Thank you so much. This was [so cool].

Informant (57:36): Thank you. That was a lot of fun.

Interviewer (57:36): Awesome. We'll chat later then. Enjoy the rest of your day.

Informant (57:47): Yes, you too Melandri. Okay.

Interviewer (57:59): Bye!

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