

Title: Returns and Simulacra

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1. PROGRAM NOTES

Returns and Simulacra combines sound and projections of video onto a screen with the performer's body on stage. It uses mini bee accelerometers and touch-sensor attachments as an instrument called *Piano Hands*. The digital score is the *Piano Hands* instrument which the pianist controls to communicate wirelessly to a max/MSP patch interface. The piece addresses the performer's multiple identities on stage, playing the line between the real and virtual performance while incorporating different footage from filmed videos of the pianist and archived cabaret performances of the British queer performers of the past. The digital score relies on the pianist's embodied gestural behaviour and his reaction to audio and video material.



Fig. 1. Zubin Kanga in *Returns and Simulacra*.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Returns and Simulacra is a new iteration of my previous piece *Simulacra Studies* for solo pianist/performer. Like *Simulacra Studies*, it deals with the physical

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absence of the piano interface where all of the focus is placed on the body of the performer and their physical presence through gesture movements and performance. Unlike the previous piece, *Returns and Simulacra* introduces videos from archived cabaret performances of the British queer performers of the past as well as the filmed footage of the current performer with different filmed characters.

The performance uses idiomatic piano gestures performed by the pianist-performer where the output is processed audio and video. The actions influence the effects of triggering synthesizer sounds, sampling and processes that are affected by the continuous data from the movement of the performer's arms and touch gestures. The instrument through which the performer executes the performance is the *Piano Hands*. The instrument consists of two accelerometers one on each hand with three pressure sensors. The instrument tracks the velocity of the pianist's arm movements as well as a touch from pressure sensors (Figure 2)



Fig. 2. The *Piano Hands* Instrument.

3. PERFORMANCE NOTES

For the performance, a laptop receives data from wireless mini bees via a mini bee receiver attached to the laptop, it uses Python shell script to convert and send data to Max/MSP which then sends this to Resolume Arena. In *Returns and Simulacra*, the output is in stereo as well as projected to a video which is mapped to a single screen split into two (see Figure 1). For the performance, the pianist will follow a video monitor to follow the video narrative and gestural behavior of filmed characters projected on the screen (see Figure 3 for complete setup).

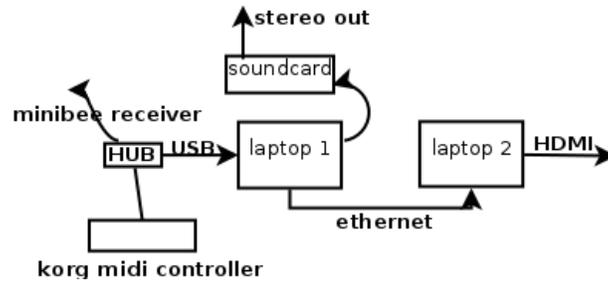


Fig. 3. *Returns and Simulacra* performance setup.