

Not-the-L8Nite Performance

**The creative process and performing xylophone solo and live looping:
Affordance and sonic expansion**

This presentation proposal explores the impact of combining the sonic possibilities of the xylophone and live looping (LL) technology, within the framework of the concept of affordance concept (Gibson, 1971). The creative and artistic research process was developed through collaborative work involving the pieces *Xyloops* (by the author, Alex Duarte and Cesar Traldi, 2018), *Quasitude* (Samuel Peruzzolo, 2022) and *Under the Wood* (George Alveskog, 2023).

The research questions were: What are the artistic possibilities that arise from a sonic and collaborative exploration of the xylophone? How do the LL technological tools contribute to a sonic expansion of the xylophone, an instrument with a recent history as regards its contribution to contemporary creation?

The sonic exploration was developed in a lab context, aiming to achieve unusual or uncommonly used xylophone timbres, through the experimental use of varied materials and performing techniques. The sounds obtained were described, classified and stored in a database, and applied through the collaborative creation process of the pieces. Regarding LL technologies, the research was centred on acquiring and developing the required skills to master the devices, namely the Loop Station pedal, the DAW Ableton Live and the app Garage Band, which integrated the MIDI pedal with the instrument.

Applying Chaib's (2012) intellectual gesture concept, the work on percussive gestures was developed in 4 stages: the attention stage, which ranges from a technical understanding of how the device works to the analysis of movements and interaction with the set-up; the intention phase, related to the mapping of gestures; the decision stage, concerning the rationalization of the execution; and the precision stage, which coordinates gestures and performance in a coherent manner.

The process involved interpretative challenges for the performer, since it requires a gestural and postural adaptation and the development of LL technology skills, as well as a thorough collaborative participation of the composers and the performer during the creative process. This sonic exploration also led to the creation of an expanded set of timbre resources for the xylophone, which complements current and conventional xylophone uses.

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Helvio Mendes is a percussionist and researcher at the Institute of Ethnomusicology – Center for Studies in Music and Dance (Inet-MD), and a PhD candidate at the University of Aveiro. He holds a master's degree from the Universidade Estadual de Campinas/UNICAMP, Brazil, and a bachelor's degree in percussion from the Universidade Estadual Paulista/UNESP, Brazil. He has performed with several symphony orchestras and ensembles in the USA, Brazil, Canada, Portugal, Morocco, the Netherlands, and Spain. In addition to being a founding member of the Clube do Choro de Aveiro and member of the Strings+Bars Duo, he is also developing pioneering research on the xylophone. Helvio's research aims to find new artistic and expressive approaches to the instrument, which propose sensorial experiences through sound experimentation of the xylophone in interaction with technological tools.

Link 1 - Xyloops: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMOWkuLHAhU>

Link 2 – Quasitude: [Vídeo 4 - Quasitude.MOV](#)

Link 3 – Under the Wood: [Vídeo 5 Under the Wood - estudo.mp4](#)

