



## News

[Press Releases](#)  
[Event Announcements](#)  
[CCT Weekly](#)  
[Grants and Funding](#)  
[Student News](#)  
[Archived News](#)

## LOL like you've never seen it

(Source: [Ledger-Enquirer](#))

Stephen David Beck is not the first person to think to blend musical instruments with laptops.

"There is a history," Beck said. "In the mid-1980s, it was popular in academic and experimental music circles."

In fact, the hub of computer-generated music composers was the League of Automatic Music Composers.

Those music composers used micro computers to create music.

"We wanted to test this to see if this was worth doing," Beck said. "There is nothing more boring than watching people sitting at a computer."

So the original point of the research seminar in the computer music program was to see if "we could do things to make up a visual component."

And the Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana (also known as LOL) was born.

With live video feeds, that has broken up the sight of five people using laptops to create music. Future plans call for using pre-recorded videos to synchronize with the live music.

The live feed uses lighted balls that make sounds and the musicians hold them up in various positions to make the sounds. The webcams on the laptops are used to track the balls.

"All four of those images are merged together on another computer that projects it on a screen," Beck said. "We figured out a few things."

And now, LOL is on a four-city tour in four nights.

The tour includes nine musicians.

"Some are primarily composers; some are primarily instrumentalists," Beck said. "Some are both."

Beck is the professor of composition and computer music in the Louisiana State University College of Music and Dramatic Arts.

Much of what this ensemble produces is improvisational in nature, Beck said. For that reason, it's almost impossible to notate and put on paper to use in future concerts.

The tour begins at the University of South Alabama in Mobile then continues to Georgia State University, CSU and the University of Georgia.

"I'm kind of wondering why we're doing four back-to-back shows," Beck said with a laugh.

"But we're very excited about this. The response has been so great. We want to plan a tour for next year as well. We're evangelists for this music."

**Publish Date:**  
01-27-2011

