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News

LSU's Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana Set to Perform and Lecture in Alabama and Georgia Jan. 25-28

(Source: LSU Office of Communications & University Relations)

BATON ROUGE – The Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana, an LSU-based group which uses computer technology to create musical performances, will take their talents on the road for appearances in Alabama and Georgia at the end of January.

The orchestra will be performing and giving lectures during a four-city tour during the last week of January. Performances and lectures will take place in Mobile, Ala., as well as in Atlanta, Athens and Columbus, Ga.

The concert schedule is as follows:
  • Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 7:30 p.m. at the Recital Hall of the Laidlaw Performing Arts Center, on the campus of the University of South Alabama in Mobile;
  • Wednesday, Jan. 26, at 7:30 p.m. in the Kopleff Recital Hall on the campus of Georgia State University in Atlanta;
  • Thursday, Jan. 27, at 7:30 p.m. at the River Center for the Performing Arts' Studio Theater on the campus of Columbus State University in Columbus, Ga.;
  • Friday, Jan. 28, at 6:30 p.m. in Dancz Hall on the campus of the University of Georgia in Athens, Ga.

"The Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana explores new modes of creating sounds with technology and is defining new kinds of musicianship and virtuosity," said LSU School of Music Professor Stephen David Beck, who directs the orchestra. "Objectively, we look to engage audiences with exciting and unusual sounds while challenging the very notion of ensemble music, whether chamber or orchestral. Members of the orchestra are performers, composers and computer scientists, each contributing to these explorations through their individual expertise and strengths. At the same time, all members of the group are expected perform, compose and develop software to broaden the repertoire of music and related technologies.

The orchestra's focus on the concert performance is the means to an end of a larger process of creativity, technological advancement and improvisation, Beck said.

"The group is constantly asking, 'what happens if we do this?' and then seeing what actually happens," he said. "Sometimes things work, sometimes they don't. Regardless, we use the lessons of these experiments to constantly improve our software, our repertoire and our capability, and to rethink the entire process of musical creativity in the age of information technology.

The Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana is a project of the LSU Center for Computation and Technology's Lab for Creative Arts & Technologies, the AVATAR Initiative in Digital Media and the LSU School of Music. It is a research and performance ensemble dedicated to the exploration of real-time computational technologies and digital media for the purpose of group music making. Inspired by ensembles at both Princeton and Stanford, the group looks to bring the same excitement and virtuosity to the Gulf South, but with its own individual flair.

The orchestra's research is focused on time synchronization, creating tangible interactions, developing new tools for managing orchestral software and composing new works for laptop ensembles. It is also exploring the adaptation of distributed computing technologies for management and control of a scalable ensemble from as few as five members to as many as the orchestra can envision.

Along with Beck, members of the orchestra include LSU Center for Computation and Technology Associate Professor Jesse Allison and students Jeff Albert, Lindsey Hartman, Nick Hwang , Corey Knoll, Andy Larson, Yemin Oh and Brandon Thomas. Contributing researches include Chris Branton, Shantenu Jha, Sharath Maddineni, Jeff Modell, Cornelius Toole, Brygg Ullmer and Ole Weidner.

For more information on the tour, contact Beck at sdbeck@lsu.edu.

To learn more about the Laptop Orchestra of Louisiana, visit http://laptoporchestrala.wordpress.com.

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