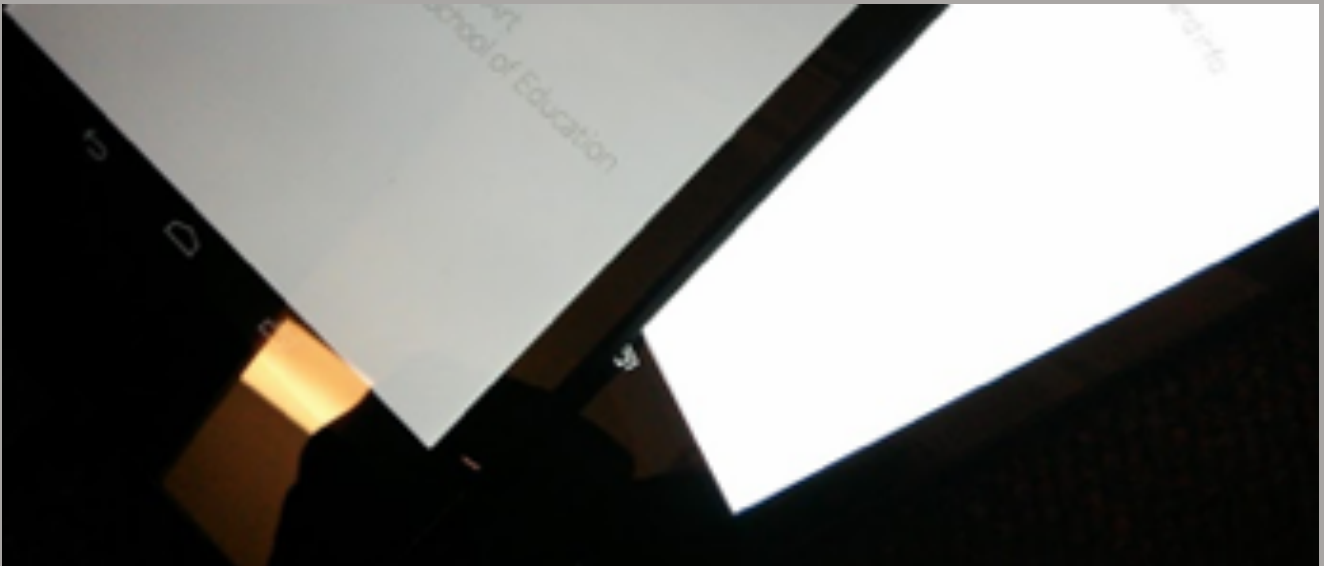




THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

UOA D33

MUSIC, DRAMA, DANCE, PERFORMING ARTS,
FILM AND SCREEN STUDIES



RESEARCHER

Martin Parker

OUTPUT TITLE

journeyMan

OUTPUT TYPE

Composition

DATE OF PREMIERE:

January 2015

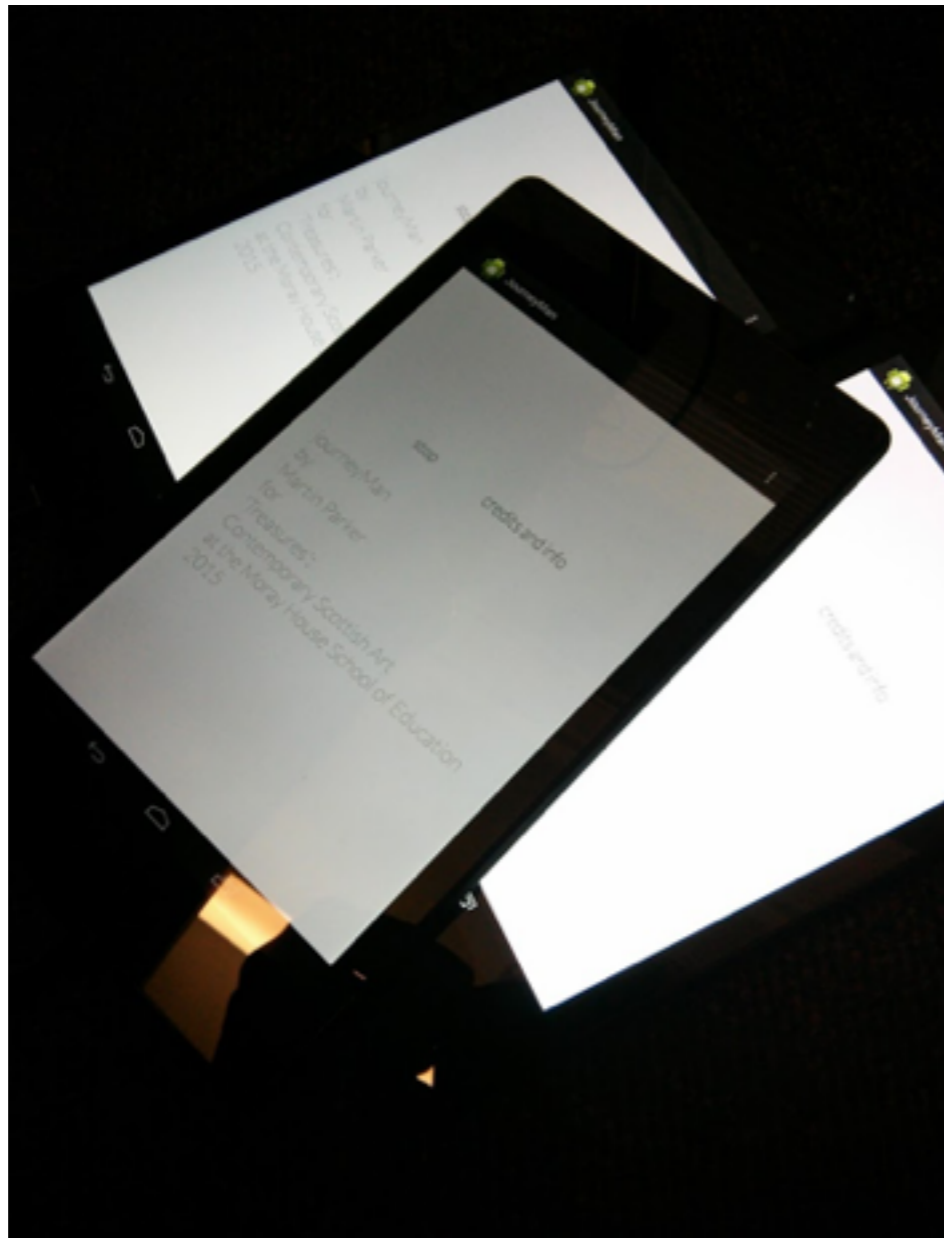


FIG. 1
journeyMan tablets configured to accompany an exhibition of contemporary Scottish art, Moray House, Edinburgh, March 2015.
 Photo Martin Parker.



Research output: video documentation of *journeyMan* for archives:
https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/journeyMan+-+Conference+on+World+Affairs+2015+-+concept+compass-125050981/1_gztnaboz

Research output: audio, *unsettled and oversensitive* live performance, Edinburgh, February 2018:
https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/t/1_hplrlnin7

01 / STATEMENT

journeyMan is a collection of three compositions for mobile phone and ambulant listener. The *journeyMan* system uses the sensors on contemporary smartphones to propel the piece forwards, turning the listener into an active performer of the piece.

The first piece (*journeyMan* for galleries) was created for use in art galleries and was specifically composed to accompany an exhibition of paintings by Christopher Orr in January 2015, hosted at Talbot Rice Gallery in Edinburgh. The piece mapped the listener's heading to paths through the work and detected whether the listener was walking or not. As people moved to each painting, the piece would move along with them. It would then hover in-place when standing still and looking at images.

The second piece (*journeyMan* for archives) was commissioned by the *Conference on World Affairs* and used segments of the conference's extensive archive as source material. This important record of public and political opinion spans the entire history of the conference which began in 1948. Lectures and panel discussions that could have mobile-phone related themes were selected. Valerie Plame Wilson's session on spying for the CIA finds itself juxtaposed against Tom Imboya talking about Africa's nationhood. Questions about the future of art are pitted against panels where the role and responsibility of the media is challenged. Using these speeches makes a general reference to surveillance capitalism and may remind the listener how smartphones run free with our personal information.

The final piece is called *unsettled and oversensitive*. This title helps explain a response to the potentially pernicious nature of some of the apps and operating systems that sustain our mobile phone economy. The piece was designed both as an application for solo listener but also works as a performance piece. It was first presented in Edinburgh in February 2018 at St Cecilia's Hall.

02 / RESEARCH DIMENSIONS

journeyMan is suite of compositions by Martin Parker that explore contemporary smartphones as devices for the performance of live, digital music.

As such it spans the disciplines of composition, live electronic music and adaptive systems and involves the crafts of creative coding, app development and explores new forms and formats of musical listening and performance. Three versions of the work exist:

- *journeyMan for galleries*
January – February 2015
- *journeyMan for archives*
April 2015
- *journeyMan unsettled & oversensitive*
February 2018

03 / ORIGINALITY

Much work has been done in the development of live sound processing for mobile phones in the last decade.

New music in this area has been made possible thanks to innovations in, and improvements to, the accessibility of sound-based code that smartphones can use. *LibPD*, then *Enzien Audio*, and more recently, *Faust*, *JUCE* and consequent integrations for major game engines such as *Unity* have made it possible for composers to create custom DSP in familiar languages and making it available for compositional use on smartphones.

journeyMan developed alongside these innovations both as an exploration of the technology, but more centrally to examine the compositional opportunities that have emerged thanks to its development. The intimacy of headphone-based listening has been combined with a bodily / physical connection to the sonic material and gives the listener some command over how it changes over time.

Unlike the early innovations made in the area of digital instrument design such as the Stanford mobile phone orchestra (2009), this work doesn't try to convert the phone into an instrument (such as a digital ocarina). Instead, *journeyMan* deliberately aims to give instrumental control over a specific piece of music with a pre-conceived aesthetic, form and aim.

Importantly, these works have been designed for contexts where a listener may naturally be moving, such as gallery spaces, commuting to work or exploring a virtual archive of sound-based material.

04 / RIGOUR

There are multiple versions of this piece, each one exploring a different sound generation and processing technique. Each piece also examines a different performance/listening mechanic.

The first version of the piece 'for galleries' took the idea of a gallery audio-guide, which is usually fixed in both time and content, to something that adapted itself directly to the listening and looking behavior of each visitor to the gallery. Tests were made to explore how people move in galleries and the data gathered was used to calibrate sensors on the tablets.

The results of the work were first exhibited for a month at Talbot Rice Gallery as part of an extensive residency called *Gap in the Air*. The piece was subsequently adapted for use by partially sighted visitors to the Moray House School of Education Gallery in March 2015.

The spatial audio systems required for placing sound around the head in a convincing binaural context was developed in close collaboration with University of Edinburgh startup *Two Big Ears*, led by a postgraduate student in Parker's Sound Design MSc programme. Their software tools were developed while Parker was supervising their time as resident entrepreneurs at the University of Edinburgh. *Two Big Ears'* work now forms the basis of the Facebook 360 Spatial Workstation.

05 / SIGNIFICANCE

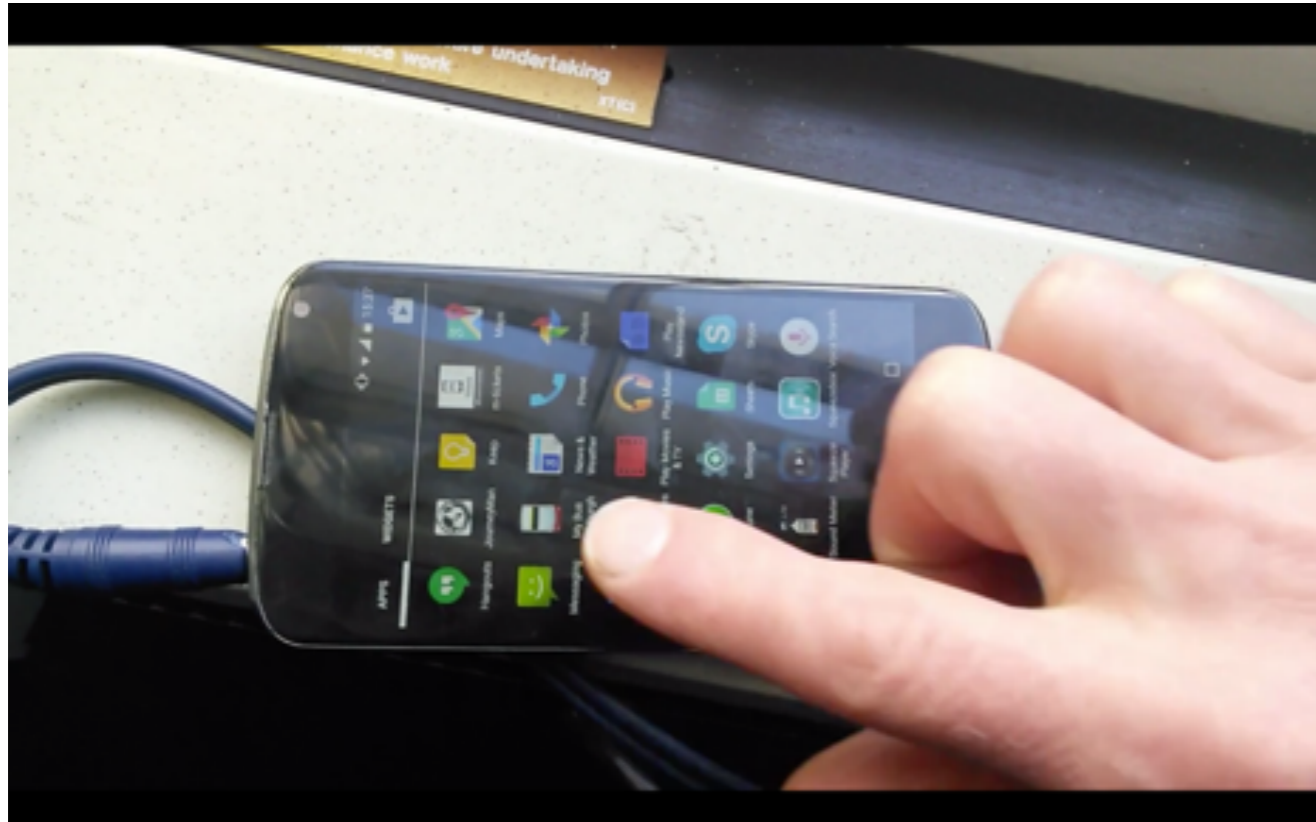


FIG. 2
journeyMan in use. The heading of the listener and whether they are walking or not is used to push the parameters of live electronic sound processing along.

journeyMan for archives was a very important step for Parker in developing a compositional approach for sampled-based material on a mobile phone.

It also formed an important outreach element for the Conference on World Affairs in Boulder, Colorado, in 2015.

The conference organisers worked closely with Parker and the data analytics company SAS to scan thousands of panel discussions recorded across more than 60 years of the conference. The tool was able to tag discussions and allowed text-based searches. This meant that trends in discussions over particular periods could be mapped against other events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Iran-Iraq war or WMD.

Parker used the tool to gather phone and privacy-related panels and keynotes as the source material for the piece. He also led a performance-based panel at the conference, which explained the musical potential of non-musical material to a lay audience and demonstrated how the sensors of phones could be used to create nuanced and expressive musical performance.

06 / APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: Exhibitions

January – February 2015

Gap in the Air,

Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh.

https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/t/1_hplrnn7

March 2015

Treasures – Contemporary Scottish Art,

School of Moray House,

University of Edinburgh.

APPENDIX 2: Performances

April 2015

Introducing journeyMan,

Conference on World Affairs,

Atlas Black Box,

University of Colorado, Boulder.

February 2018

unsettled and oversensitive,

St Cecilia's Hall, Edinburgh.

APPENDIX 3: Funding and support

University of Edinburgh

Digital development grant

£2,500



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