

Alex Danson

The Jonah Project

for a laptop performer

PERFORMANCE NOTES

REQUIREMENTS

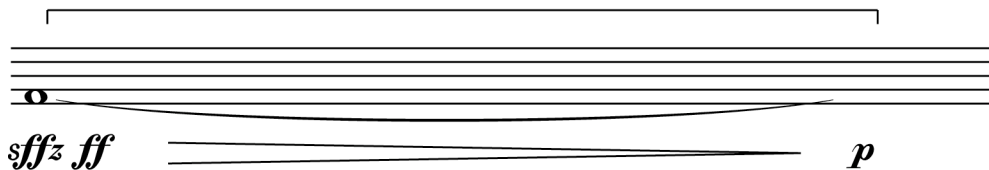
Computer system: a IBM-PC or Mac, 1GHz processor speed, 1GB internal memory, 100GB hard drive space

A sound recording and editing application such as Audacity (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>)

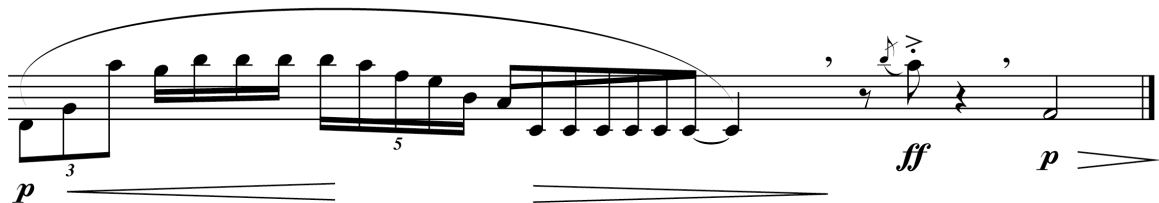
The Max/MSP provided application

RECORDING THE SOUNDS: Guidelines

- Record six sounds, in separate sound files
- Use a close proximity microphone when recording
- Record in mono (one channel) all the sounds
- Each sound, except sound #4 and #6, will be one long tone produced by your instrument, lasting as long as a full breath, or as long as the natural decay of the instrument permits (in case of a piano or guitar, for example)
- The duration of each sound, except sound #6, should not exceed 20–25 seconds.
- The dynamics of sounds #1, #2, #3 and #5 should be like so:
20-25 sec.



- Grace notes can be used before the long note
- Sound #1 is the lowest on the instrument
- Sound #2 - a tone in the low register
- Sound #3 - a tone in the middle register
- Sound #4 - the melodic line below

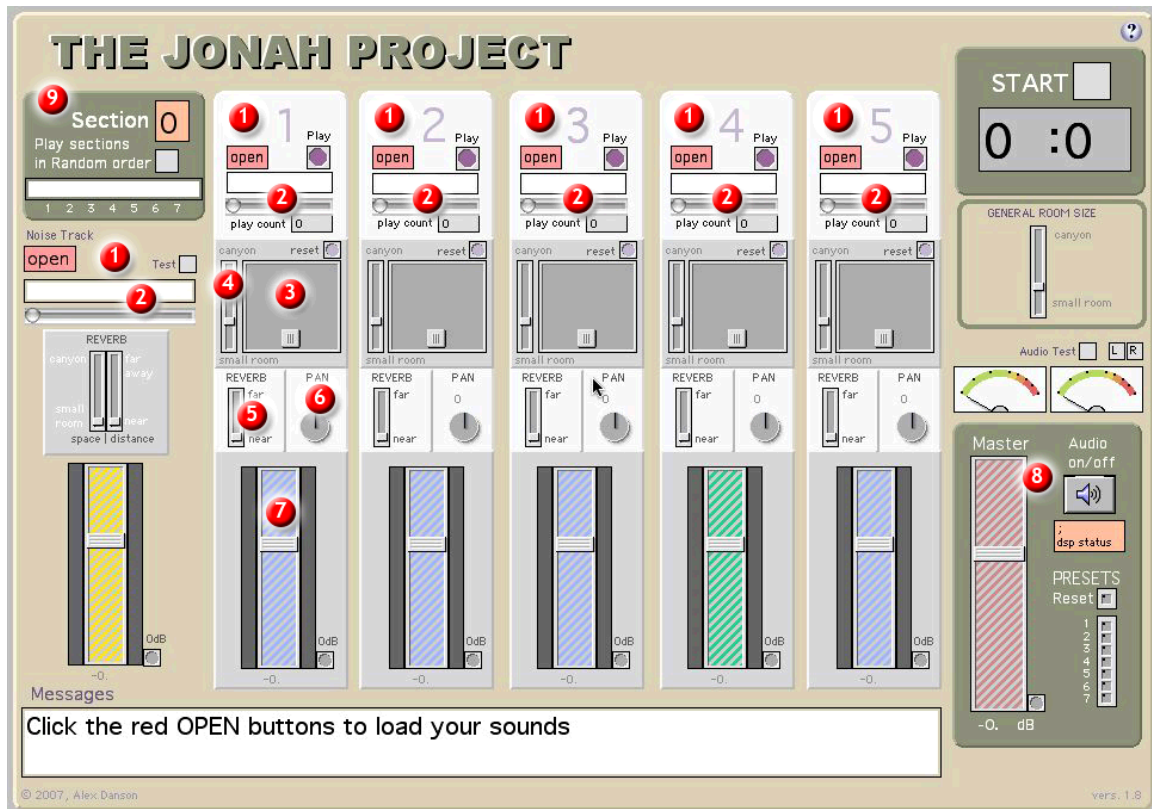


- o Start in your instrument's normal clef
- o If your instrument usually reads in different clefs, you may change them at the *respiro* signs
- o Octaves can be changed also, if your instrument range permits it
- o Some of the phrases may be doubled in octaves
- o The total duration of this melodic line should not exceed 20–25 seconds
- Sound #5 - the highest on the instrument
- Sound #6 - Record about 2 minutes of noises that you and your instrument would naturally do when playing, like pads/valves noises, breath intake, mouthpiece failure, string squeaks, action and pedal noises, etc. Keep on repeating the same things at comfortable speed for the duration of the recording. Place the microphone on the body of the instrument if possible, to pick up all the sounds.

SOUND EDITING

- Prepare the 6 sounds one by one the same way:
- Trim the endings so they start right when the sounds starts, and end when it ends. (In Audacity, Zoom in (under the View menu), to see exactly where to cut the sound. Select with the mouse the part you don't want, then press the [delete] key)
- Normalize each sound (Select the whole sound file and choose "Normalize" from the Effects menu; set the normalize value at 0 dB)
- Save each sound as a separate file in WAVE or AIFF file format, giving them appropriate names, like "noises", "sound1", "sound2", etc. (In Audacity, choose "Export as..." under the File menu)

PERFORMING INSTRUCTIONS



Interface elements

- [1] Channel strips for each sound (1 through 5) plus the Noise Track
- [2] Sound play buttons, filenames, play progress and play count
- [3] The virtual 3D room, where sound can be placed Left/Right and Near/Far
- [4] Determines the size of the virtual room; the "General Room Size" slider on the right changes values for all channels at the same time
- [5] Individual slider for Reverb (Near/Far)
- [6] Individual button for Pan (Left/Right)
- [7] Volume sliders
- [8] Master Volume section
- [9] Section number and order of performance

- Start by clicking the red "open" buttons to load your sounds
- Make a sound test: press the "Audio on/off" button, then click the Play buttons for each sound. Click the Test checkbox for the Noise Track
- You may use the 1-2-3-4-5 keyboard keys for the Sounds and 0 for the Noise Track
- Determine if you want to play the piece in normal order or random. If the latter, click the

- “Play sections in Random order” checkbox to make the program generate a random order.
Click it again to revert to normal order
- Start the piece by clicking the Start checkbox in the top right corner
 - While playing, follow the instructions in the Message box in the bottom
 - Each section starts with a set of Preset setting of Volume/Pan/Reverb; Presets can be altered by Shift-clicking in the boxes corresponding to the section numbers, after changes had been made to the sliders.

PROGRAMME NOTES

This work is exploring 3D spacializing of sounds, using only a 2-speaker stereo system. The performer has both the role of the "recording talent" and the "producer/mixing engineer", who, ultimately, is responsible for the outcome of the piece.

The performer starts by recording and preparing his/hers own sounds, all coming from one instrument source, then load them in the provided application and play them by following the instructions on the screen.

The piece is divided into seven sections that can also be played in a random order. During the performance, some of the sound filtering capabilities of the Max/MSP application are explored, while the performer is called upon to place the sounds in a virtual 3D environment by adjusting the Pan and Reverb values.

Palm Springs, fall 2007