

NIME Performance & Installation: Sonic Pong V3.0

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Biographical information

B.F.A. Carnegie Mellon; M.P.S. New York University. Andrew Milmoe currently divides his time between large information architecture projects and creating his own interactive art works in his Brooklyn art studio.

His background includes information architecture, art curation, industrial design, graphic design, software development for content delivery systems, technology research, and systems integration. His artwork is about developing platforms to enable creative expression between strangers in public spaces.

Description of Piece

Pong was the first video game most people came in contact with. Simple directions, intuitive interfaces, and yet game play was engaging enough to entertain for hours.

In creating a sonic project for visually impaired people I considered games that were easy for first time players. Pong was chosen because of the limited cast of characters whose trajectories could be represented though sonic "pixels".

The platform provides a rewarding means of improving dexterity by coordinating hand movements with the physical locations of sounds. By challenging participants to rely on their hearing to succeed, sighted players have less of an advantage.

Interaction

The original Atari Pong is electronic table tennis where a ball passes between players. You hit the ball to the other player, or miss and score a point for them. This audio version is played in a circle with two platforms. When you hear the ball coming closer, you hit it by moving your paddle to meet the ball, and then it moves out away from you toward the other player... moving like a comet.

By using our greater ability to resolve the spatial position of sounds in the left-right (stereo) axis the instruments around the player's head allow the game to "POP" around the player in a radial space.

