

Yaxu Feedforward

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Abstract

Feedforward is a text editor designed for the TidalCycles¹ live coding environment. The feedforward project began in February 2018 and is under active development. It forms the basis for experiments in pushing the limits of text-based live coding interfaces, including through in-line visual feedback, keyboard shortcuts into the transformation of pattern, and the live manipulation of edit history, both from past and present performances. This is a continuation of work begun with my first live coding interface ‘feedback.pl’ from 2003 until around 2009, when I first began work on TidalCycles. Feedback.pl supported live self-modification of code, in order to provide in-line visual feedback to the user. Feedforward is also heavily inspired by work of others in this area, including on the SuperCollider History Class by Alberto Campo et al,² of Charlie Roberts et. al on the Gibber family of live coding environments,³ and the work by Thor Magnusson on Ixi Lang.⁴ It also intends to draw from experiments in intelligence augmentation, most famously Douglas Engelbart in his 1968 ‘Mother of all demos’ and more recently the Dynamicland project.

¹ For information on TidalCycles please see <http://tidalcycles.org/>

² For information on the History class, see [http://www.wertlos.org/~rohrhuber/articles/Purloined Letters and Distributed Persons.pdf](http://www.wertlos.org/~rohrhuber/articles/Purloined_Letters_and_Distributed_Persons.pdf)

³ Gibber may be found at <http://gibber.cc/>

⁴ For information on Ixilang, see Magnusson, Thor (2011) *ixi lang: a SuperCollider parasite for live coding*. In: International Computer Music Conference, 31 July – 5 August 2011, University of Huddersfield, UK.

The performance itself will consist of broken techno, where from-scratch improvisations are built, deconstructed and then looped and layered up. This will use the abilities of the Feedforward editor, which records timestamped keypresses, allowing past history to be brought back to life and manipulated live.

One wider aim of this piece is to challenge 'from-scratch' improvised live coding, and in particular its stance on anti-commodification. Inspired by the writing of Mark Fisher on red plenty, rather than throwing code away at the end of a performance in order to reject repeatability, the opposite approach is taken, of recording as much as possible, and immediately and automatically sharing it.