Music 490/590I Spring 2010: Max/MSP Programming II: “Max for Live” Projects
Description and Guidelines for the Course

This is a seminar-style independent study course in advanced design and programming for computer music. It follows from the prior semester, which introduced Max/MSP programming and produced unique digital musical instruments and processors focused on sound synthesis, performance, and automation. The goal of this semester’s seminar is to design instruments and processors that operate as plug-in applications for commercially available digital audio workstations, the overall aim being to build unique functions that coordinate with those of host software that has an existing and broad user base. We will use Ableton Live as the host software, and design using the Max for Live toolset.

To midterm we will study the tutorials provided for Live and the APC40 control surface, and will study examples of pre-built Max for Live patches. There will be no a priori schedule for working through tutorials, rather we will collectively determine the next assignment each week. In addition to our weekly meetings we will share resources and findings via an invited-membership Google Group created for this seminar.

Following midterm each participant will develop an independent project to produce a collection of Max patches that run as instruments and processors within Live. At the start of this phase each participant will submit a project proposal and then demonstrate progress each week in seminar meetings. As in our first semester of study, weekly discussions and demonstrations of individual projects are meant to provide feedback and contributions to the ideas and knowledge of all participants.

Term Projects will be presented to the seminar no later than May 7, as arranged. A descriptive paper will be distributed to all participants and should take the form of an abstract of the project followed by a User Manual for the instrument/processor.