Odalys Sanchez

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For my culmination project I decided to try and create my own version of singing bowls that create healing frequencies, with the use of Arduino and Max/MSP. Not many people know what a singing bowl is. A singing bowl is a bell that vibrates and produces healing frequencies. I try to recreate the same concept when it comes to playing with a singing bowl which is by striking the side of the bowl with a mallet, in this case with my project it was using a flashlight over a photocell. As soon as the flashlight will go over the photocell it will send those values to Max/MSP which will trigger the oscillators. This just gives the audience a bit of a sneak peek on how the singing bowl works. While designing the sound on Max/MSP I saw myself struggling in trying to get it to sound like a healing frequency since I was using a program to try and replicate those sounds. Starting this project, I had very little knowledge on how Max/MSP worked, and it was definitely a challenge trying to figure out how I was going to send the values from Arduino to Max/MSP because I would create just patches in Max/MSP.

I had to do my research online and looked at numerous of YouTube videos on how I would send the values over. While coming across numerous of YouTube videos I tried to find most recent videos because throughout the years it’s obvious that there has been updates on Max/MSP. I felt myself getting stuck most of the time because I would try to use the same patches as on the YouTube videos, but it wouldn’t work so I got to a point where it was time to ask one of my technical advisors for help which was Professor Wilson. He mentioned that is not the best to try and mimic the same patches as the videos because there might be somethings, they had that I don’t which is the reason why it didn’t work. He also set the expectation of I might not get the right sound that I will like which are these healing frequencies because they come from an object which sounds more natural while in this case I’m creating sound through a software. The challenging part about this had to be to get as close as I could to mimic those healing frequencies. There was a lot of playing around with filters, asdr, pitch, and oscillators too.

When creating this project, I had to also think about how I was going to present this because it’s intended to be an interactive installation. I had very limited spacing at home that one of my options was to setup a room at school with my project but when it came to the point of going that route, I ended up getting sick and I wasn’t going to risk anything. That my last option was to setup my project in a blank wall at home so it can look and feel like it was in a gallery, made it my best to look that way. Looking back at the video it is a bit hard to see the photocells and there was not enough lighting as I wish it would look like. Even though I did had my family tryout my project it would’ve been a good idea to get other people’s perspective, see their reaction and see how they felt after they have done playing around with my project, I could’ve gotten good feedback on what things to change or add.

Things I would’ve done differently will have to be add more RGB lights and make the wires long enough so they can light up the room a bit better. When I installed my project, I put the Arduino and the breadboard under the table but since the wires weren’t long enough for the RGB lights you could only see them on one side of the table. Having a mental calendar is one thing I’m working on because is definitely not the most efficient way to be productive. In my opinion having to write down and have a calendar on how my week will be like and stick to it would’ve been a good way to keep on track and not fall behind, overall time management was a big factor here. I hope to continue with this project and hope to bring something new into the music industry because there’s also something new within the industry that who knows I’ll probably be the first to bring a popup into the industry to have an artist fan come and listen to their new music before it gets release to the public, it will be a fun interactive installation. This can be a way an artist can connect with their fans. I truly appreciate all of my professors that have taught me all about Arduino and Max/MSP because learning the skills I know today has giving the opportunity to create a project like this.