

Alex MacLean

New Media Artist and Computer Programmer
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Artist Statement

Alex MacLean, also known as Sunntack, stands at the crossroads of art and technology. A New Media Artist and Live AV Performer, Alex ventures into the unexplored territories of experimental electronic music, shaping auditory landscapes that push the conventional boundaries.

His performances blend audio-reactive video projections, merging sound and visuals into an immersive experience. With a deep-seated curiosity for human ecology, alternative futures, and science fiction, Alex's work revolves around exploring these themes through the lens of sound

Alex's contributions have graced renowned stages at international conferences and festivals such as ICLC, NIME, and the Network Music Festival. His creative endeavours garnered recognition through the 2022 City of Hamilton Arts Awards Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize, along with an invitation to serve as a featured artist for Ocean Week Canada 2024.

Through Alex's hands, technology becomes a tool for expression, and sound becomes a conduit for storytelling, crafting experiences that engage and resonate with audiences, offering glimpses into the uncharted territories of art and innovation.

Education

Jan 2024	AV Production using Bitwig and TouchDesigner, Stanislav Glazov - Hou2Touch, Online
Feb 2023	BioData Sonification & Beyond Human Musical Entanglements, Tosca Teran - Interaccess, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Jan 2023	Handheld and Pervasive Media for Artists & Activists
2021	Algorithmic Composition and Sound Design, Thomas Echols - Dadageek Academy, Online
2020	Deep Learning Specialization, Andrew Ng - Coursera, Online
2019-2020	MA in Communication and New Media - McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
2019	Machine Learning for Musicians and Artists, Rebecca Fierbrink - Kadenze, Online
2012-2017	HBSc in Computer Science - Western University, London, Ontario, Canada
2010-2012	Diploma in Music Industry Arts - Fanshawe College, London, Ontario, Canada

Scholarships, Grants, and Awards

2022	Hamilton Arts Awards – Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize Awarded to an emerging artist in Hamilton to create a piece for the 2023 awards night
2021	Research and Creation Grant Awarded by the Canada Arts Council for \$10,000 of creative research
2019	Entrance Scholarship Awarded upon acceptance to McMaster's MA program in Communication and New Media
2014	Laurene Patterson Estate Scholarship Awarded in November 2014 to a Western Science student who has shown outstanding academic merit
2012	Best Audio Product Awarded upon graduation from Fanshawe College in April 2012 for a recording of an original song

Performances

Feb 2024	Hear Here - Ambient Avant-Garde Sounds, Forest City Gallery, London, Ontario, Canada
July 2023	Synth Syntax: a concert of live coding and synthesizer performances, The Casbah, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
July 2023	AUTO{}Construcción: Algorithmic Concert, Factory Media Centre, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
Oct 2022	Chirping Circuits, Factory Media Centre Opening, Hamilton, Ontario Live-coded performance with recorded samples and hardware synth as well as audio-reactive shader graphics
Jul 2020	Oceanic "Datanimism", Networked Music Festival, Remote Web-based installation featuring an audio composition based on a data sonification of rising sea-level data
Feb 2020	Bionic March, International Conference on Live Coding, Limerick, Ireland Live coding performance with voice and machine listening

Exhibitions

Nov 2023	ARound Town: An Interactive AR experience, Pier 8, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada (w/ BluHeron Collective)
Dec 2019	Immersive Dreams, Imaginary Landscapes, McMaster University, Canada Interactive virtual reality sound installation
Dec 2019	Scrap Focus, Sensorium of Things, McMaster University, Canada Multi-channel sound installation

Teaching

- 2021-2022 Instructor, Dadageek Academy, Online
Developed online, asynchronous workshop and course content for collaborative live coding
- Jul 2020 Electronic Literature + Live Coding Jam/Workshop, ELO, Remote
(w/ David Ogborn, Alex McLean, Alejandro Franco, Luis N. Del Angel, and Jessica Rodriguez)
- Jul 2020 Practices and Techniques for Networked Live Coding Bands, Networked Music Festival, Remote (w/ The Cybernetic Orchestra)
- Feb 2020 Multi-lingual audio-visual collaboration, ICLC, Limerick, Ireland
(w/ David Ogborn, Jamie Beverley, Alejandro Franco, Luis N. Del Angel, and Jessica Rodriguez)
- 2019-2020 Teaching Assistant, McMaster University
Supervisor: Dr. David Ogborn
Lead weekly tutorials, held office hours, and marked student assignments for the department of Communication Studies and Multimedia
Fall 2019 - MMEDIA 2G03: Intro to Digital Audio
Winter 2020 - MMEDIA 1A03: Multimedia and Digital Society

Research

- 2023-Pres. Digital Arts Strategy Development, Waterlution
Supervisor: Christopher Mcleod
Together we are developing a digital arts toolkit to assist other artists and arts organizations understand and make use of digital tools
- 2019-2020 Master's Thesis, McMaster University
Supervisor: Dr. David Ogborn
Research and development of a software system called Switch Jockey - an intelligent, automated video switcher for WebGL shaders
<https://www.alexmaclean.ca/switch-jockey/>
- 2019-2020 Research Assistant, McMaster University
Supervisor: Dr. David Ogborn
Assisted in the development of the Estuary, a platform for collaboration and learning through live coding
<https://estuary.mcmaster.ca/>

Public Speaking

- May 2023 Eco-Inspired Art with Technology, Virtual Seed Conference, Ocean Memory Project, Online
- March 2023 Modular Grove: A VR Forest Exploration Through Sound and Space, Ready Avatar One, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- Jul 2020 Immersive Dreams, New Interfaces for Musical Expression, Remote
Demo presentation of an interactive virtual reality sound installation

Professional Experience

- 2020-Pres. Applied Machine Learning Engineer, Evertz Microsystems
Development and deployment of state-of-the-art ML/AI algorithms for the benefit of the broadcast industry
- 2022 AR Technical Artist, Factory Media Centre
Assisted with the development and deployment of 6 works of art made for augmented reality, now on exhibition until the end of 2023
- 2017-2019 DevOps and Cloud Engineer, Evertz Microsystems
Participated as a member of the Deployment Strategy Team to automate software delivery on AWS, VMWare, and bare metal
- 2015-2016 Biocloud and Data Grid Project Intern, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Planned, deployed, and maintained multiple private cloud environments for testing bioinformatics applications

Organized Community Events

- Mar 2024 Patch & Play: A Synth Enthusiast Exchange, Poacher's Arms, London, Ontario, Canada
- July 2023 Synth Syntax: a concert of live coding and synthesizer performances, The Casbah, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- August 2022 Live Coding Pub Night, The Pheasant Plucker, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- July 2022 Live Coding Pub Night, The Pheasant Plucker, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Affiliations

- 2024-Pres. Volunteer, Forest City Gallery, London, Ontario, Canada
- 2022-Pres. Board member, Factory Media Centre, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 2022-2024 Board member, Hamilton Arts Council, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada