

To Whom It May Concern,

3 August 2005

Having been actively involved in the annual international conference "New Interfaces for Musical Expression" since its inception and having spent many years both in academia and industry as sound engineer, interactive installation artist and composer, I have both built and examined a lot of experimental designs for musical instruments and interfaces. However, of all of the musical interfaces that I have seen, I think that the Thummer - the new musical instrument from Thumtronics Ltd - has the most potential for broad adoption as an outstandingly expressive instrument.

I have written widely on new interfaces for electronic music performance, including as guest editor of Organised Sound, a pre-eminent international journal on music technology published by Cambridge University Press. I am internationally regarded as an innovator in the field, often being invited to run international workshops on interactivity for musical performance and commissioned to develop realtime systems for interactive dance and theatre performances. My work has been exhibited in Australia, Europe, Japan, USA, Hong Kong and New Zealand, being selected as one of ten creative professionals internationally for exhibition in the 10th New York Digital Salon; Florida's DesignX Critical Reflections, and as a millennium leader of innovation by the German Keyboard Magazine in 2000. I am a member of the advisory panel for the Electronic Music Foundation, New York and one of 17 advisors to the UNESCO funded Symposium on the Future, a project focused on formulating an evolving set of principles (theory), that describes a taxonomy / design space of electronic musical instruments.

I am currently undertaking an Industry Partnership research project - co-funded by UWS and Thumtronics - of which the major outcome is the measurement and comparison of the factors influencing the control of performance features on a suite of musical instruments, including the Thummer.

I have examined many new interfaces for electronic music performance, each interesting in its own way, but idiosyncratic and without a common standard. The Thummer promises a standard platform, defined by two main things, its expressive potential and its ease of learning. By providing intimate real time control over up to ten different continuous variables in addition to key velocity and polyphonic after-touch, the Thummer has the potential to be among the most expressive - and perhaps the single most expressive - polyphonic musical interface in electronic music.

Full mastery of the Thummer's vast expressive potential, will require a level of virtuosity, however, its logical keyboard layout makes it uniquely easy to learn. Each musical interval has its own unique shape on the keyboard, making the association between interval, fingering, and sound consistent in every key, including alternative tunings, making these more accessible to mainstream musicians - thus opening "new frontiers" to musical creativity.

In summary, I have one of the world's only prototypes, and think that the Thummer is the most interesting new instrument design I have seen, in terms of artistic and commercial potential.; I encourage you to get one as soon as you can, too.



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