

## YomeciBand x Audio Mostly 2022

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YomeciBand is a temporary urban play intervention where the footpath becomes a track, playable with your feet. Tunes and compositions are activated in a serendipitous and improvised exchange with passers-by as they move across clusters of pavement drawings of imaginary entities and creatures, the act of playing blending the visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and bodily modalities of the work. First commissioned by Playable City Melbourne to explore how music, games and creative technologies could be connected to activate new forms of community-driven and open access public space, YomeciBand has been staged in multiple sites and contexts across Melbourne. The work demonstrates a model for understanding how utilising sonic interactivity in public space can be harnessed for play and social well-being, ultimately engaging people with place.



Fig 1. YomeciBand (2021-22)

## **AUDIO MOSTLY 2022: MODALITIES IN SOUND AND MUSIC INTERACTION**

Inspired by street and pavement games, YomeciBand temporarily transforms a footpath into a track that is played with your feet. Passer-bys are presented with clusters of imagined entities and creatures drawn in a path-like design on the pavement in chalk, the drawings marking the space to invite and accommodate play. As walkers move across these street drawings, tunes and compositions are activated by a performer using a portable synthesiser, sampler and controller, the sounds played relating and responding to participants steps, movements and locomotion. The inconspicuous performer observes participants from afar as they move over the track of chalk drawings, playing from a set of programmed designed sounds which correlate to the various entities and creatures that the participant interacts with. The sounds compose a kind of invented ecology of creature-like whirrs, chirps, squeaks and pings composed in different permutations live. Sounds play through concealed speakers positioned along the length of the pavement, giving a sense that the sound ‘follows’ people’s traversal of the YomeciBand track. This improvised playful sonic exchange with the players movements evokes a festive atmosphere, a community event that attracts both spectators and participants.

People predominantly use pedestrian spaces to get from one place to another. However, YomeciBand temporarily shifts pedestrians conventional movement or intention in public space, inviting passer-bys to have a chance encounter through play. Sicart (2014) describes a play space as a “a location specifically created to accommodate play but does not impose any particular type of play, set of activities, purpose, or goal, or reward structure.” Spaces for play are often indicated through props, however in the case of YomeciBand, it’s the chalk drawings that define this. These interconnected clusters of various creatures and entities are abstracted from what we might know, remember or even imagine urban life to be or become. Although invented, many of these unusual creatures are based on the specificity of the surroundings and context in which the work is situated in, taking their visual cues from nearby physical features and referencing historical, social or cultural points of interest in the site.

Drawn on the pavement suggesting a type of track or path, the placement of the creatures suggests possible directions and flows for players to be guided by. One can hop, jump, leap, trace, run, walk, roll and crawl in ways that the drawings might suggest but do not determine. For example players tend to skitter along longer creatures with tighter feet movements or leap and place their feet separately on the smaller creatures. Although acting as cues, players are free to move how they wish. ‘Play Start’ is written at the beginning of the YomeciBand track with guiding directional arrows and signs interspersed with the creatures to indicate these entities are to be walked on.

The appearance and sounds of each creature indicate ways in which this play space can be engaged with. For example, a player may change from hopping to doing a swimming-like dance when hearing a deep melodic change. Players enact a social performance through their embodied improvisations, hopping, jumping, rolling, running, skipping and so on – often changing this moment to moment as the sound is performed and composed live in relation to their movements. A playful improvisation is established between the players moving along the track, the performer playing the sounds and the audience observing the event. YomeciBand is a confluence of play, sound, place and performance – we would be extremely excited to stage this work at Audio Mostly 2022

## **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

YomeciBand is a low tech, relatively simple interactive sound work. All the equipment will be supplied by the artists.

- Chalk
- 3 small portable speakers and cables
- Bluetooth hub
- Synth

YomeciBand needs a dry, flat surface (concrete or asphalt pavement, courtyard) that takes chalk drawings to be installed. YomeciBand also needs a table and chair for the synth performer as their sound workspace. The performer may position themselves slightly out of view. The chalk drawing ‘track’ varies in size depending on the site – although it is generally around 5 metres or so.

## **REQUIRED STAGE LAYOUT**

YomeciBand is installed in an outdoor location and is generally composed in a track-like design along a pavement (please see images)

## **DURATION**

The duration of YomeciBand can vary, however generally it is performed for about 2 hours.

## **INSTRUMENTATION AND NUMBERS OF PERFORMERS**

YomeciBand at Audio Mostly 2022 would have two performers – one artist playing the synth and the other inviting players to engage with the work.

## **DOCUMENTATION OF YOMECIBAND**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7u0depsxmj9bhnp/AAA4Jtvgsx4sJWAVeVGPvqy3a?dl=0>