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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

When was the last time you fell in love with a statistic? Walked hand in hand down the street with an outlier? Binge watched Netflix, your arms and legs intertwined with your nearest and dearest spreadsheet or database? Last night, you say? Never? The current cultural obsession with collecting macro amounts of micro data on all of us, in many ways, turns us into these very things. Or at least tries. Vast columns of data with titles such as 'Gender', 'Race', 'Age Range', 'Sexuality', 'Nationality', 'Annual Income' and others collect us into easily analyzed categories for the sake of trend prediction, targeted micro-marketing, gerrymandering, and other social manipulations. Outliers are edited out as if they didn't exist because they skew the results, 'normal' is identified by a line or a curve, and we are reviewed to see how far we stray and why. How many standard deviations away from 'normal' are YOU?

Responding to these trends, my current compositional work focuses on two main ideas: data sonification and interactivity. In data analysis and statistics, numbers rule the day. Even textual categories are ranked numerically for the sake of study. In the field of music, notes, volumes and other sonic attributes are regularly identified by either physical frequencies or assigned integers. By merging these two notions it becomes possible to listen to the data around us; the fluctuating speed of a river's flow can become an automated volume control, and shifting latitude and longitude coordinates of someone's location can become audible frequencies in a duet of information.

In the music that I compose and program I am attempting to expose the trends of depersonalization and reduction, their processes, and their results by reclaiming the data around us and transforming it into something we can relate to on a more visceral level. Using freely available online information and interactive data from installation sites, I take the numbers and categories of our existence and algorithmically transform them into musical representations of the world in which we live. In doing so, statistical reductions of the personal are reverse-engineered and expanded to create pieces that I hope reveal something to us about us. We can hear that we exist beyond the spreadsheet or database because the music moves when we move. We can hear that the river is something we are connected to because the music coming from its existence responds to and immerses us. We experience these things physically. Emotionally. And we can react to them out of the unique and individual contexts from which we all come. Out of the existence from which our identities are actually composed.

Be Well,
Aaron