

The performance was more than two and a half years in the making, the culmination of a project that Heap first became interested in after seeing the beginnings of such technology at MIT. In an interview with *Mashable* afterwards, Heap told me she wanted to use body movement to create music so she could “communicate the hidden 50% of the performance.”

Those movements include, for example, the ability to record a loop by opening her hand, filtering sound by bringing her hands together and panning by pointing in the desired direction. Volume can also be manipulated with some fitting gestures — a “shh” movement initiates quiet mode and a horn sign prompts “rock out mode.” The sensors that Heap’s gloves are equipped with send the movement data back to a computer that then blends it all together to create a relatively robust piece of music in real-time.



Seeing is most certainly believing in the case of Heap’s gloves, and the artist now plans to start using the gloves with some regularity during performances. Ultimately, however, she wants to be able to add features that would enable her to create an entire 60-90 minute performance “walking on stage with nothing but the gloves,” she said.

Enhancements that would enable that to become a reality include the ability to play a wider variety of instruments using hand gestures, let multiple musicians performance simultaneously (like a drummer) and the ability to let the audience participate in song creation. Thinking even further out, Heap told me she wants to be able to, “invite fans on stage ... and let them be a part of the performance from their own bedroom,” by leveraging connected gloves and hologram technology.

Of course, that would require the gloves to become more than a one-of-a-kind item, but Heap says she’s been thinking about how to do that in the wake of the response so far. Commercializing them isn’t her primary goal, but she says she’d be very excited to see how it

can empower other artists.

“I love the idea that you can buy a pair of these gloves ... be connected to an iPhone app ... and capture sound on the street and start making beats while you’re waiting at the bus stop ... and upload that to a database,” she said.

*Image courtesy of James Ducan Davidson / TED*