The Moodswinger

Compiled By Nazia Ahmed

CREATED by Yuri Landman, the Moodswinger is a custom-mad string instrument. Although it closely resembles an electric guitar, it is actually a zither - an electric 12-string 3rd bridge overtone zither. The tuning of this instrument is E-A-D-G-C-F-A#-D#-G#-C#-F#-B, arranged in 3 clusters of 4 strings each. The pickup and electronics are built into the neck instead of in the body like usual electric guitars.
The 3rd bridge divides the strings into two segments with different pitches. Depending on where the string is played, a bell-like harmonic second tone is created. The string resonates more or less when the backside is struck, depending on the position of the 3rd bridge along the string. This can be explained by acoustic resonance and micro tonality. At harmonic nodal positions, the string resonates more than at other positions. For instance, dividing the string 1/3 + 2/3 creates a clear overtone, while 24/33 + 9/33 creates an indistinct overtone.

The fret board has 3 different scales:

- The normal guitar (equal-tempered) scale
- An inverse scale (large steps between the frets at the top of the neck, small ones at the body bridge)
- A microtonal scale which shows "logical" string divisions in the following colour-coded groups (with added notes on the E-string):

o White dot: 1/2 (overtone E/undertone E)
o Red dot: 1/3+2/3 (overtone B/undertone B)
o Orange dot: 1/4+3/4 (overtone E/undertone A)
o Yellow dot: 1/5-4/5 (overtone G#-/undertone G#-)
o Green dot: 1/6+5/6 (overtone B/undertone G+)
o Blue dot: 1/7-6/7 (overtone D-/undertone G-)
o And a smaller subscale for the higher-pitched overtones near the body bridge in coloured lines:

§ Grey line: 1/8 (overtone E/undertone F#+)
§ Red line: 1/9 (overtone F#/undertone F#)
§ Orange line: 1/10 (overtone G#/undertone F#)
§ Yellow line: 1/11 (overtone A+/undertone F#-)
§ Green line: 1/12 (overtone B/undertone F#-)
§ + Blue line: 1/16 (overtone E/undertone F)

The microtonal scale is similar to the common Chinese scale being used on a Guqin.

