Air drums pioneers Aerodrums launch second model of their instrument

Tuesday 30 May, 2023

Liverpool based Aerodrums is a 3-person bootstrapped company who make the first air drums that play at a musical instrument standard.

They are launching Aerodrums 2, a new model of their instrument that doesn't require a computer.

The launch is happening on Kickstarter.com at 2pm BST on Tuesday May 30. The Kickstarter campaign ends on June 29.

Aerodrums 2 is a first-of-its-kind instrument that rivals the best electronic drums, at a fraction of the size, weight, noise and cost. Aerodrums 2 features a full curriculum of drum lessons. It offers an optional virtual reality mode enabling users to create a fully playable drum set in their surroundings using the Meta Quest 2 "Pass-through" mode.

The Kickstarter launch page is at: www.kickstarter.com/projects/aerodrums/aerodrums-2-a-new-way-to-drum-from-home-to-the-stage

Please contact Yann Morvan at yann.morvan@aerodrums.com, +44 7749 143 034 for more information.

Visual assets are available at https://www.dropbox.com/s/wvj69kzzzl392wj/press-files-aerodrums2.zip?dl=1

General interest

The general public still understands air drums in the same way they do air guitar: as miming.

So most people are surprised and inspired when they discover that an air drumming musical instrument actually exists.

There is now a community of thousands of people who drum by air drumming using Aerodrums.

Aerodrums 2 will contribute to popularising the concept by removing the need for a computer to air drum.

"When I first saw it online I thought it was a scam. It's only when I saw a video of Richard on YouTube that I decided to try it." says Wolfgang Piroth, drum teacher and Aerodrums user

Drumming / music interest

Many more people express an interest in the drum set than go on to learn how to play it. The instrument is just too large and loud to fit in most people's lives. Electronic drums help, but they are still large and still make noise. Aerodrums 2 is an air drumming instrument that fits in a drawer and is silent with headphones.

It is true that there is no rebound off a drum in air drumming. But in fact, air drumming can provide a tactile feeling like hitting a physical drum. This is done by letting the stick collide with your palm to stop it. Doing this feels very natural and enables you to play very fast and with great finesse.

"As a teenager my neighbours only agreed for me to play my drum set one hour each day. Later when I moved into an apartment, I couldn't play at all. This is why I began researching Aerodrums." Says Richard Lee, co-creator of Aerodrums

Tech interest

Aerodrums 2 uses passive marker optical motion tracking technology. We tried using inertial motion units (IMU) in a collaboration with Intel (Intel Curie). But this does not work because a drummer's stick moves so fast and is so light that existing IMUs cannot accurately track its acceleration.

Where Aerodrums 1 required a computer to process the sensor frames into sounds, Aerodrums 2 is an embedded "internet-of-things" object: You can plug your headphones or amplifier straight into it. And you

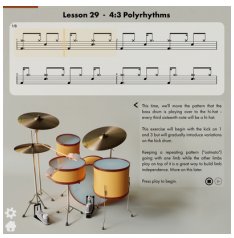
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can visualise and configure your drums wirelessly with any mobile device or PC.



Aerodrums 2 also offers a virtual reality mode with support for Meta Quest headsets. With the “Pass through” mode available on Quest 2, you can superimpose a fully playable drum set into your environment.

Aerodrums 2 is built on NXP Semiconductors’ i.MX 8 platform.

“I was amazed that I could not perceive any latency between hitting a drum and hearing it, and at how accurate the 3D tracking is. There is some serious computing happening in this tiny box.” Says Mitch Deighton, professional drummer and tech enthusiast

Education interest



The drum set is a very popular instrument with children. But it is under represented in schools because of how large and loud it is.

Aerodrums 2’s small size and quietness makes it easier for schools to offer drum set practice.



It is the nature of acoustic or electronic drums that you hit them to play them. Breaking cymbals or pads. Not so with Aerodrums 2. This makes it practical for schools or public libraries to offer it as a loan instrument for home use.

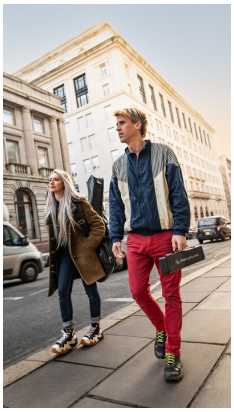
Aerodrums 2 offers a full curriculum of drum lessons, as well as drumming exercises presented as minigames.



“One third of my students drop out because of not being able to play at home: they just loose motivation. I now introduce them to Aerodrums and have seen great results.” Says Wolfgang Piroth, drums teacher and Aerodrums user

Entrepreneurship interest

The Aerodrums company was started in 2011 with $30,000 of personal savings by its co-founders Richard Lee and Yann Morvan. The company has not sought investors in its 12 years history.



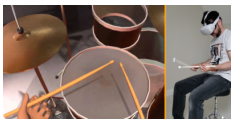
Richard and Yann have played the venture capital game on TV (BBC Dragons’ Den, season 13, episode 13, 24 January 2016). But the aim was to publicize Aerodrums 1.

The company had positive cash flow immediately upon launching that instrument at the 2014 NAMM show.

The Aerodrums 1 instrument piggy-backed on third party commodity hardware: Sony’s Playstation 3 Eye camera, and the end user’s computer.

For Aerodrums 2, the company developed its own sensor and embedded system, removing the computer requirement. This was funded by retained earnings and research & development grants by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 programme and the Liverpool City Region’s High Growth Innovation Fund.

Aerodrums’ bootstrapping has enabled the company to realise its vision without the compromises that might have occurred due to investors’ short-term interest. It has also enabled the co-founders to spend time with their young children without feeling pressure from investors.



“Air drumming is one of those ideas whose time has come. These don’t need capital. Just patience. Like revolutions really.” Says Yann Morvan, co-founder of Aerodrums

Environment interest

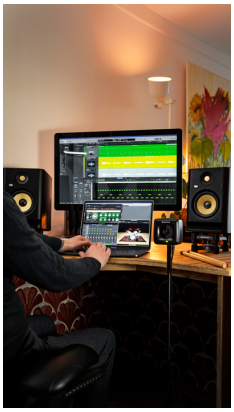


It takes over 60kg of wood and metal to make an acoustic drum set. And over 20kg of plastic and metal to make an electronic drum set. The vast majority of drum sets are made in the far east and travel long distances to the end user. They also require a car to transport.

By contrast, Aerodrums 2 weighs under 1.5kg and fits in a backpack. It is made in Liverpool, UK.

The Aerodrums 2 instrument is a durable “internet-of-things” object that can be updated “over-the-air”. Unlike other electronic drums manufacturers, the company’s business model is to offer digital goods and upgrades on this platform. Not to regularly release new hardware models.

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