

THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

Golan Levin, *AVES*

MIT Media Lab graduate Golan Levin inherited his mentor John Maeda's penchant for perverting the keyboard. By translating the placement and cadence of keystrokes into percussive patterns, Levin's *Dakadaka* reminds us that whenever we are typing, we are also drumming. But Levin parts company with Maeda stylistically, especially in his later works based on **click-and-drag**. Maeda is tight, Levin is loose; where Maeda's geometries tend to be Euclidean, Levin's are organic tendrils and nebulous clouds.

Like Maeda's reactive graphics, Levin's interfaces are more instrument than tool, leaving their user with memories of fleeting sensations rather than 'museum-quality' prints. In no work is this more evident than his *Audiovisual Environment Suite* (*AVES*), a set of five interfaces for producing visual gestures and sounds animated in real time. Each instrument allows its player to deposit a different inexhaustible 'substance' across the screen by clicking and dragging. In *Aurora* this substance appears to be a shimmering cloud that disperses with time; in *Floo* it's soft-edged, growing tendrils; in *Yellowtail* it's brushlike strokes whose placement on the screen becomes a visual score for synthesized music.

Below: Levin's *AVES*.

