

REAL-TIME GUITAR STRING DETECTION FOR MUSIC EDUCATION SOFTWARE

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we present a novel approach to real-time detection of the string number and fretboard position from polyphonic guitar recordings. Our goal is to assess, if a music student is correctly performing guitar exercises presented via music education software or a remote guitar teacher. We combine a state-of-the-art approach for multi-pitch detection with a subsequent audio feature extraction and classification stage. Performance of the proposed system is evaluated with manually annotated chords recorded using different guitars.

Index Terms—multiple fundamental frequency estimation, string classification, fretboard position, fingering, electric guitar, inharmonicity coefficient, tablature

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, there have been several new software products that promise to enhance learning a musical instrument by means of assistive software. Acoustic or electric guitars are often the main supported instrument due to their popularity among starters. On the one hand, there are gaming oriented applications such as RockSmith¹, RockProdigy², GuitarBoss³, Songs2See⁴, Jamstar⁵, and BandFuse⁶. They rely on game mechanics inspired by popular music video games such as GuitarHero⁷ or RockBand⁸. That means, the user plays along to a song while playing instructions are presented on screen in sync to music. In contrast to GuitarHero and RockBand, the above mentioned applications allow the user to play real acoustic or electric guitars instead of guitar-shaped plastic controllers. The opposite is done in applications such as FretLight⁹ or GTar¹⁰. Here, the user has to play along to a given song or short exercise on a modified guitar with LEDs lighting up the sequence of strings and frets that are to be played. In the case of FretLight, the playing instructions are usually generated in real-time by a remote guitar teacher. Moreover, there are online services like SoundSlice¹¹ and YouTab¹² that enable users to create and publish so called guitar tabs synced with the corresponding song or video. Guitar tabs are short for tablature notation, which is probably the most popular music notation



Fig. 1. Score and tablature representation of the first bars from Eric Clapton's Layla. The six horizontal lines in the tablature correspond to the six strings with the tuning E2, A2, D3, G3, B3, E4 (from bottom to top). The numbers correspond to the fret numbers on the strings that are to be played.

format among guitarists. The tablature is based on the geometry of fretted string instruments. It specifies the string and fret number for each note and thus resolves the ambiguity between note pitch and fretboard position. The guitarist can immediately see where he has to place his fingers on the strings and frets (so-called fingering). Figure 1 illustrates the correspondence between common music notation and tablature for the guitar. Large amounts of guitar tabs are already available on the internet. However, since most of them are created by amateurs, these tablatures are often incomplete and erroneous. The first application scenario for the method presented here is the semi-automatic extraction of tablatures by means of automatic transcription and string detection from guitar recordings. Secondly, for a remote guitar teacher, it would be helpful to have his playing on a real instrument translated in real-time to corresponding playing instructions for the student. The third application scenario is to assess, if the guitar student is truly following the given playing instructions by means of real-time detection of played notes and strings.

2. GOALS & CHALLENGES

As introduced in Section 1, our goal is to estimate the notes and string number α_i from monophonic and polyphonic (monotimbral) recordings of electric guitars. Based on the note pitch and the string number, we can apply knowledge about the instrument tuning in order to derive the fret number α_f . The first challenge is to get a good real-time estimate of the notes being played. Since we focus on the electric guitar, frequencies between 82.40 Hz and 659.25 Hz need to be investigated as potential f_0 -candidates¹³. The second challenge is the selection of suitable audio features that allow to discriminate between different strings. The automatic classification of the played string poses a challenging task since the physical differences

¹<http://rocksmith.ubi.com/>

²<http://www.rockprodigy.com/>

³<http://ovelin.com/guitarboss/>

⁴<http://www.songs2see.com/>

⁵<http://jamstar.co/>

⁶<http://bandfuse.com/>

⁷<http://ubi.guitarhero.com/>

⁸<http://www.rockband.com/>

⁹<http://www.fretlight.com/>

¹⁰<http://www.incidentgtar.com/>

¹¹<http://www.soundslice.com/>

¹²<http://www.you-tab.com/>

¹³This corresponds to the most common guitar string tuning E2 to E4, and a fret range up to the 12th fret.

Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education

Ensheng Dong



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Performance Gary McPherson, 2022 The two volume Oxford Handbook of Music Performance provides the most comprehensive and authoritative resource for musicians educators and scholars currently available It is aimed primarily for practicing musicians particularly those who are preparing for a professional career as performers and are interested in practical implications of psychological and scientific research for their own music performance development educators with a specific interest or expertise in music psychology who will wish to apply the concepts and techniques surveyed in their own teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students who understand the potential of music psychology for informing music education and researchers in the area of music performance who consider it important for the results of their research to be practically useful for musicians and music educators **A NIME Reader** Alexander Refsum Jensenius, Michael J.

Lyons, 2017-03-06 What is a musical instrument What are the musical instruments of the future This anthology presents thirty papers selected from the fifteen year long history of the International Conference on New Interfaces for Musical Expression NIME NIME is a leading music technology conference and an important venue for researchers and artists to present and discuss their explorations of musical instruments and technologies Each of the papers is followed by commentaries written by the original authors and by leading experts The volume covers important developments in the field including the earliest

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Table of Contents Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education

1. Understanding the eBook Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education User Reviews and Ratings
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education Free and Paid eBooks
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education Public Domain eBooks
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education eBook Subscription Services
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education Budget-Friendly Options

6. Navigating Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education Compatibility with Devices
 - Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Interactive Elements Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
8. Staying Engaged with Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Setting Reading Goals Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Real Time Guitar String Detection For Music Education
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements

- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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