What is claimed is:

1. A system for remotely accessing real and/or virtual instruments, the system including:

    a user terminal for virtually connecting with one or more real or virtual instruments, the user terminal including:

        a user input device configured to receive user input data;

        a display device configured to receive display data and, in response, project images visible to the user on a display of the display device;

        an internet enabled computer in communication with the display device and user input device, the internet enabled computer configured for communicating with an instrument server to send the user input data and receive the display data;

    an instrument server configured to host software associated with a plurality of real and virtual instruments, the software including:

        virtual instrument software configured to virtually represent one or more virtual instruments;

        remote instrument access software configured to allow the user to remotely access real instruments through one or more sensors and/or actuators embedded within or mounted to the instrument;

    wherein the instrument server is further configured to:

        remotely control the real and/or virtual instruments based on the user input data;

        in response to the user input data, generate instrument data indicative of a current state of the real and/or virtual instruments as modified by the user input data;

        generate display data associated with the instrument data; and

        send the display data to the internet enabled computer to allow the user to view data indicative of the real and/or virtual instruments in real-time thereby to simulate the user using one or both of the real and virtual instruments in real-time.

2. The system according to claim 1 wherein the one or more sensors includes a camera mounted on or relative to a real instrument.

3. The system according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the one or more sensors includes sensors native to an instrument.

4. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the one or more actuators include instrument control mechanisms native to the instrument.

5. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the one or more actuators include a robotic arm mounted to or adjacent a real instrument.

6. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the software includes an educational module for educating the user how to use the instrument.

7. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the instrument server is further configured to store instrument information obtained during use by the user in a cloud database.

8. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the instrument server is configured to communicate with a learning management system to integrate the educational module with a structured assessment of the user.

9. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the instrument server uses instrument data indicative of a current state of a real instrument to update the virtual instrument software.

10. The system according to claim 9 wherein the instrument server is configured to execute a machine learning process to update the virtual instrument software of a virtual instrument associated with a real instrument based on received instrument data from the real instrument.

11. The system according to claim 10 wherein the virtual instrument software includes a static model of the virtual instrument and the machine learning process is configured to build a dynamic model of the virtual instrument based on the received instrument data from the associated real instrument.

12. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the data indicative of the real and/or virtual instruments includes a visual representation of the instrument(s).

13. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the data indicative of the real and/or virtual instruments includes operational parameters of the instrument(s).

14. The system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the remote instrument access software includes a central application programming interface (API) that is separate to a real instrument’s dedicated API to allow the user to remotely access a real instrument via the central API.

15. The system according to claim 14 wherein the central API is hosted by the instrument server.

16. The system according to claim 14 or claim 15 wherein the central API allows a user to bypass an instrument's dedicated API to control the instrument.

17. A method for remotely accessing real and/or virtual instruments, the method including the steps:

    receiving user input data from a user input device in relation to operation of a real and/or virtual instrument;

    sending the user input data to an instrument server;

    hosting, on the instrument server, software associated with a plurality of real and virtual instruments, the software including:

        virtual instrument software configured to virtually represent one or more virtual instruments;

        remote instrument access software configured to allow the user to remotely access real instruments through one or more sensors and/or actuators embedded within or mounted to the instrument;

    remotely controlling the real and/or virtual instruments based on the user input data;

    deriving instrument data indicative of a current state of the real and/or virtual instruments as modified by the user input data;

    deriving display data based on the instrument data;

    representing the display data on a display of a display device thereby to enable the user to view data indicative of the real and virtual instruments in real-time.

18. A method of generating a virtual instrument based on operation of a real instrument, the method including:

    generating a static virtual instrument model representing a digital version of a corresponding real instrument, the static virtual instrument including a digital model of the real instrument, predefined inputs and outputs, and instrument operating functions;

    receiving operational data of the corresponding real instrument, the operational data including user inputs and instrument outputs;

    passing the operational data to a machine learning algorithm to determine relationships between the user inputs and instrument outputs; and

based on the determined relationships, updating the instrument operating functions of the virtual instrument model to generate a virtual instrument.

19. The method according to claim 18 wherein the operational data includes data indicative of a current state of the corresponding real instrument and wherein the machine learning algorithm also determines relationships between the current state of the corresponding real instrument and the instrument outputs to update the instrument operating functions of the virtual instrument.

20. The method according to claim 18 or 19 wherein, in response to the determined relationships, the machine learning algorithm transmits notifications to a server hosting the virtual instrument to update operating software for the virtual instrument.