# Audio source separation using snakes, crabs and torches

**GStreamer Conference 2025** 

23 October 2025

Sebastian Dröge <sebastian@centricular.com>





### **Audio source separation**

- Split an already mixed audio stream into its individual logical sources
- Obviously a probabilistic approach
- Use cases: karaoke, music practice, improving text-to-speech, ...





#### demucs

- NN model for audio source separation
  - Developed by Facebook research
- Reference implementation (MIT) in Python using PyTorch
- Various pre-trained models on music available
  - Different sources (e.g. vocals, drums, bass, other)
- Good performance & fast





#### **GStreamer element**

- Written in Rust (of course)
- Can use demucs in 2 ways
  - WebSocket-based Python service
  - In-process usage of Python via PyO3
  - Both use custom streaming Python class around demucs
- Configurable chunk sizes and per-chunk overlap
  - Quality / latency trade-off
  - Default: 3s + 25% overlap => 9s latency





## PyO3

- Rust crate for Python interop
  - Much more convenient than Python C API
- Can be used for
  - Calling / embedding Python code from Rust
  - And for writing Python modules in Rust
- Provides control over GIL, or using free threading





## PyO3

Used here to embed a Python class

```
o include_str!() and PyModule::from_code(s)
```

Call its methods

```
pyobj.call1(py, ("foo", 123))
```

- Provide a Rust closure as Python callable
  - Custom Python class defined in Rust
  - Provides a \_\_call\_\_ method to Python





### Example karaoke pipeline

```
gst-launch-1.0 uridecodebin uri=file:///path/to/music/file ! audioconvert ! tee name=t ! \
queue max-size-time=0 max-size-bytes=0 max-size-buffers=2 ! demucs name=demucs model-name=htdemucs \
demucs.src_vocals ! queue ! audioamplify amplification=-1 ! mixer.sink_0 \
t. ! queue max-size-time=90000000000 max-size-bytes=0 max-size-buffers=0 ! mixer.sink_1 \
audiomixer name=mixer ! audioconvert ! autoaudiosink
```





#### **Questions? Comments?**

Code available at

https://gitlab.freedesktop.org/gstreamer/gst-plugins-rs/-/merge\_requests/2554



