Documentation for project - Secret Place (0.9)[1]

Human Computer Interfacing (HCI) installation with the use of four IR SHARP sensors to detect audience movement. The audience participation changes the sonic environment available from four speakers.

'This installation is very site specific, and in my opinion all are, except the ones which do not exist, or perhaps those also, as they can only be exhibited in "never-ever-land", or I do not know where ... and I do not even know how "never-ever-land" looks or sounds like, but perhaps this should not really matter for now, as here I want to explain how this installation can save you, the room, the town, the country ... and so on, and so on... and of course, while you watch and listen carefully, how it can save itself as well, or maybe now I am going again a bit too far again, again, again and again, ... Steve Reich was into repetition and some say his music is good and this is why you will hear me drumming in the background on a cajon,[2] but, I am afraid I am not there... well, I am not there physically, but it is me who is drumming... oh, I just want to finish writing and enjoy the nice whether.
 I do not even know whether you kept on reading or not, I must admit you probably did, but it does not really matter, as your act is far away from the time and space where I am, here and now... and here, I would like to ask you to stop for a moment and think about it, please ... think about what? ... no, no, no, wait! Do not think about it... watch your thoughts, focus and pay attention to them in another way... get further away from them, see them as if there was good punctuation, see them as nodes in a cocoon... sure, I meant walking on legs or flying on wings, but now I should stop for a minute as well and talk about something else later... I do not know whether this will work, but now I do not mind, maybe later...'

        This installation has been mainly influenced by the works of John Cage, Steve Reich and Aldous Huxley. Human Computer Interaction (in this project four infrared sensors controlling Max/MSP settings) help to involve the participants in the artwork. Changing the sound environment requires attention, that can lead to a more engaged participation and to better understanding of the artwork.
        The artworks' aim is contemplation. The maximum of four people can use the sensors. The participants can learn how to interact with each other and explore possibilities of sound combinations. Of course, all artwork wants to receive attention. The intention here, is to use the participants experiencing 'sound-control', that can attain a more focused state of mind. A state of mind, ("top of the castle") where the person is able to distinguish, filter or group thoughts, in order to understand how the mind processes information. [3]

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1   The information in this paper, except self-evaluation and video demonstration section would be a part of the installation (documentation printed on A4 paper).
2   '... this kind of activity turns out to be very useful physically & psychologically as it focuses the mind to a fine point.' Reich (1968), "Music as a Gradual Process" on p. 35 in Reich, Steve (2002) "Writings of Music", Oxford University Press
3   More information about John Cage, participation and attention can be read in the attached essay (Attention, attention! - The use of 'focus & attention' in sonic art, 2010)

<u>Self-evaluation after the first presentation</u> (11/05/10)

The installation is site specific.

     I.   One way of doing it: A room with white walls, where there is nothing else just the (1) installation, (2) four speakers in the room's four edges, (3) an A4 paper with the poem and information and (4) the computer – sound card (preferably hidden in a black box)[4] or, ...

     II.   ... in a room that looks like 'my living room'. This room should have books, many colours, a TV, general household equipment and furniture. This environment would indicate, that paying closer attention to everyday happenings and matters or objects can help to achieve a other state of mind. The importance is on the presence, on the now, where people choose what they want to listen an pay attention to.[5]

Mirrors, with small phrases extracted from the poem written on (that relate to the sound effect its sensor generates) shall be placed on the doll's chest, in order to help the audience to find the sensor ranges.

To support the installation with better sound quality I am planning to rewrite the Max/MSP patch in SuperCollider.

<u>Video demonstration folder</u> (attached CD)

[01 - 06]   difficulties with noise in the analogue pins of Arduino
[07 – 08]   comment on site specific issues and an explanation of the use of the software
[09]   demonstration of performance orientated use of the installation

<u>Hardware - Software</u>

Hardware:	4 IR Sharp infrared sensor (range 80cm) Arduino board with breadboard and capacitors Regulated DC power supply M-Audio sound-card
Software:	Max/MSP 4.6 Arduino Alpha 0016 Logic Studio (record the sounds examples)
Max/MSP Externals:	110.dekamix (4 files) prc_rev~.mxo
Audio samples:	12 voice recordings (Hungarian) + 1 English/Hungarian drums.aif - (trance like drumming on the Cajon + DSP)

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4   For example like the Chisenhale Gallery (London)
     http://www.chisenhale.org.uk/support/gallery_hire.php (last accessed 12/05/10)
5   An example of how I imagine an engaged audience is demonstrated in "New spaces/new places: a Sound
     House for the performance of electroacoustic music and sonic art" by Simon Emmerson
     'Music Without Walls' Conference, De Montfort University, Leicester, June 2001

The poem:

Secret Place	Titkos hely
I waited at the top of the castle for my owl eyes to take shape.	A vár tetején vártam. Bagoly szemére vágytam.
In the middle of Som and Berek stood my three humped camel Desk, table and altar: Diametrically crossed shoulder burden.	Som és berek közepén, ott áll az én hárompúpú tevém. Pult, asztal és oltár köszön felém, Szöges vállsúllyal keresztezvén…
An idea of liberation: Acidic sea memories preserved unfolded on the tip of my tongue,	… hol a felszabadító gondolat emlékét őrző savas tenger terült el nyelvem hegyén,
there You can find	ott megtudhatod,
where the I (you-he-she-we-you-they, who are all in the making) now rooted in me.	hogy az én (te-ő mi-ti-ők, akik mindent-tévők) miért eresztett gyökeret belém.
(Scissors and quarters)	(Zoltánékkal ollós negyedében)
In a white creamed stilled image, an owls nest where we secretly rested.	Fehér krémben pihenő képben, bagoly fészkén pihentünk észrevétlen.
A message crawled into our eyes this winter: Don't fall before noon! You have yet to discover all that you are.	Üzenet kúszott szemünkbe ezen a télen: Nehogy eless délben! Még nem láttál mindent velejében.
(2010)	(2005)

A part of Janow's comment for Secret Place on http://poet.hu[6]

' It's a challenge to describe what one likes in this type of poetry. It is true for other forms of art that involves the abstract. There is a saying: I dreamt nonsense. We also know that the pictures in our dreams, even wild ones are based on real experiences. Moreover, they focus our minds on new thoughts we otherwise would have discarded. Some could say that I'm a snob and I'm praising something that's a mish-mash.
However, the way these poems differ is that you can't just ignore them. You can criticise them, you can praise them but you can't just read the first two lines then leave them.'[7]

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[6]   Poet.hu is the biggest Hungarian forum where people post their poetry. Janow is one of the main characters on the site.
[7]   http://www.poet.hu/vers/27294