

SOUNDTOYS / INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION

VINST

VIRTUAL VOCAL INSTRUMENT

A PROPOSAL BY

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conceived and designed by Emmanuelle Waeckerle
programed in MAX/MSP and Jitter by Sebastian Lexer

project funded by an Arts Council London R&D bursary and Surrey Institute of Art and Design research fund.

ARTISTIC CONCEPT

VINST is a multimedia installation and interactive sound performance exploring the interplay between music language and the body – **attempting to offer alternative modes of human interaction and communication** – happening outside language and translation.

VINST is a virtual vocal instrument that uses the body image of the artist as a kind of **cyborg displaying points of sonic sensitivity that are triggered and played by the viewer**. The sounds are pre- or non-linguistic, and are somewhat anatomically appropriate: for example, low frequency sounds such as 'UUUU' or 'OOOO' resonate in the lower part of the body, and so are sited accordingly on the instrument. VINST non verbal vocabulary has its own system of an-notation. see VINSTVOC

Passing the cursor or applying (wacom) pen pressure over the VINST body triggers a variety of sonic responses. Certain audio effects, such as reverb, volume control and granular synthesis can be also induced by pen movement and pressure. Users will find, however, that VINST is capable of reacting unexpectedly. see VINSTMAP

The programme offers three modes: PLAYER MODE, COMPOSER MODE (in which the viewer-composer can archive his or her compositions on VINST) and ARCHIVE MODE (in which those compositions can be accessed).

I am currently developing VINSTVOC the system of annotation as a series of interactive sonic drawings for internet display/use (in Flash).

1/ INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION

screen projection of VINST, plinth with wacom pad and pressure-sensitive pen, four speakers in each corner of a darkened space, computer and video projector (concealed). The audience are invited to interact with the instrument or simply view and experience the spectacle.

At the centre of a darkened space a double-sided screen stands opposite a plinth supporting a wacom pad and a pressure sensitive pen. These are connected to external speakers and a video projector. On the screen is VINST, silent, but for an occasional sound from its repertoire. VINST awaits any member of the public to approach and activate it by stroking its instrumental body via the pressure-sensitive pen on the wacom pad.

If space is an issue VINST can be displayed and played on a conventional computer station with screen or plasma screen (the bigger the better) and headphones can be used, limiting the sonic experience to the player/composer.



2/ TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

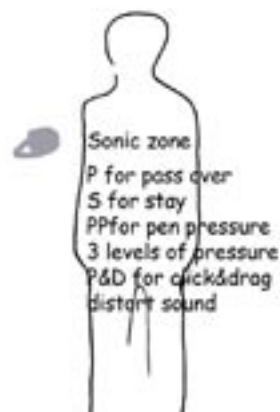
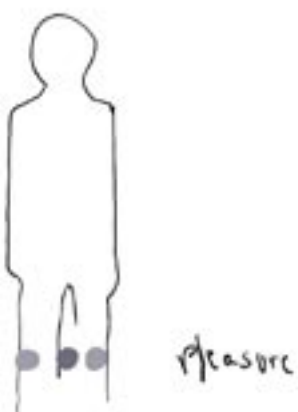
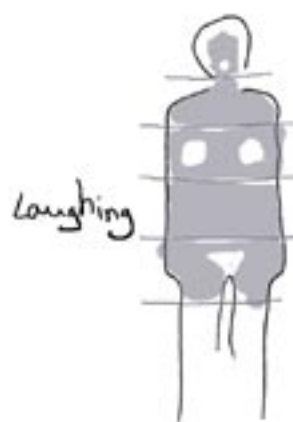
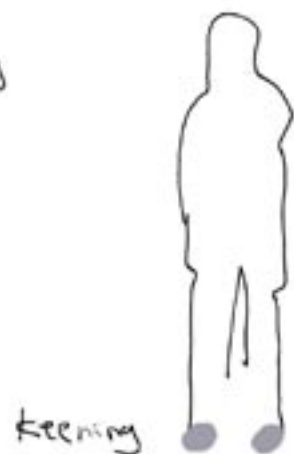
- 1 Mac G5 (DUAL PROCESSOR) with 1GB ram
- 1 WACOM tablet with pen (CAN BE PROVIDED BY THE ARTIST)
- 1 Video or Data projector (ADC, DVI, VGA or sVHS connector)
- 1 Small PA system (or good stereo system) consisting of amplifier and 4 speakers
- 1 small plinth and 1 free standing screen or wall for projection

3/ THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY in realisation of work

The concept of VINST has been realised in Max/MSP/Jitter and Flash utilising the sound and video capabilities to generate an intuitive user interface.

Implementing a dynamic trigger system which follows the body movements has been the biggest challenge and was solved by synchronising colour coded video clips (optionally displayed on the projection).

The trigger system in combination with the pressure sensitive WACOM tablet and pen controls the entire response and behaviour of VINST by selecting the appropriate sound and video files as well as mixing in real time sound and video effects.



4/VINST the instrument

VINST, is a cyborg with a complete fusion between the body and its automated systems of communication. a vocal instrument for others to play (with) and listen to.

- The voice and the body are connected not in language or discourse, but before words start taking over
- VINST vocabulary is based on vowels used as pure tones combined with consonants as percussive and rhythmic interventions, the natural sounds of emotions (laughing, crying, sighing,....) and sensations (pain, pleasure...) and a few phonemes. Around 40 different sounds.
- Via VINST one may release emotions and sensations thus transforming them into (non) melodic sound works. (according to one's musical abilities taste and sensibilities) .
- One plays VINST with a pressure sensitive pen. Applied pressure (gentle or hard, continuous or staccato) triggers appropriate sonic and bodily reactions

VINST has predictable and unpredictable reactions. VINST is very sensitive. VINST resembles me. An instrumental body activated by and waiting for the touch of the other,

5/ VINST short biography so far

Past outcomes

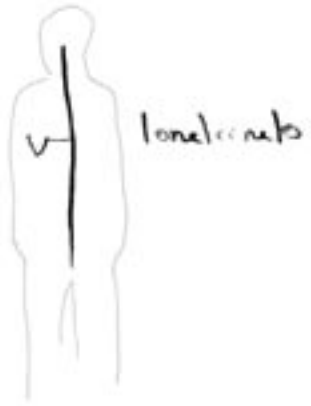
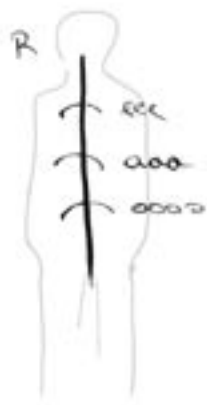
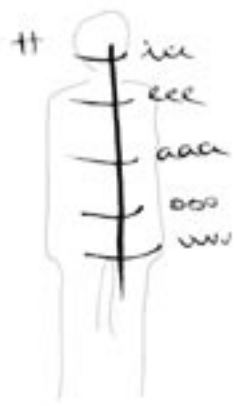
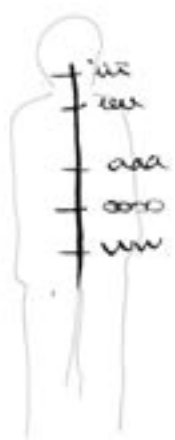
- "The birth of VINST" took place on the 20th of November 2004 during a performance lecture at Toynbee studios, London (part of Performance; strategy and process, a series of events around Adrian Piper's exhibition and talk, curated by Adelaide Bannerman). see *powerpoint slide show*.
- The birth of VINST II performance lecture - 3rd March 2005. Music department, Metropolitan University, London
- VINST1 (or Vinstenstein as I like to call it) appears in Performance Research magazine volume 9 no. 2, Routledge - June 2004, "on the page" issue.

Future - confirmed outcomes

- VINST first utterances (videos) will appear in the next issue (spring 2005) of How2 internet contemporary creative writing magazine (multimedia section). http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/stadler_center/how2/index.shtml
- The birth of VINST III performance lecture and workshop 3rd May 2005 - Dartington College, Totnes Devon.
- VINST installation part of London Symphony Orchestra St Luke's festival, London July 2005
- VINST installation part of EXPO966 Sonic art network annual exhibition/festival in June 2005 in Scarborough-

VINST performance and installation in spring 2006 – at theatre museum covent garden London - curated by the performance salon series @ HOME www.Lgihome.co.uk

VINST
VOC



all sounds



6/ THE STORY of VINST - one way of looking at it anyway
The voice as energy and the Body as machine.

The PROJECT represents a resolution of personal conceptual and theoretical concerns, concluding around 12 years of quest/gestation in and around Language and connecting issues of cultural and social Identity.

A continuous process of deconstruction (of identity and language) lead to a dissolution of the self into virtuality and cyberspace (VINST) and the creation of a Language reduced to its most basic components.

- In constant identity crisis, not belonging anywhere, I decide to go virtual and move to Cyberspace.
 - Stuck in(between) languages I create my own, one that I can share with everybody.
 - Escaping mind / body struggle, hypersensitivity, and a sense of complete inadequacy with the real world, I chose a conceptual and virtual life - deferred and remote living.
- Limited romantic and sexual activity due to very high standard, shyness and limited choice is resolved by offering my virtual emotional self to everybody – deferred loving.
- I am a control freak learning to let go by choosing to become a tool activated by the control and the touch of the other. Deferred thinking



7/ Emmanuelle Waeckerle bio

The project is an outcome of my multi-faceted but conceptually consistent exploration into the material properties of language, whether as written sign or vocal utterance.

My interdisciplinary practice evolves between sound language and the body, exploring their performative intersections - via performance, video, installation, drawing and photography.

The idea of fluidity and flux in identity and space has been central to modernity and often at the heart of my concerns - Perhaps due to my own experience of a mixed cultural background (from Morocco to France to England).

I am currently exploring new technologies of interactivity in relation to using, hearing and seeing the voice and the possibilities of a vocal but non-verbal communication. Research partly funded by Surrey Institute of Art and Design, where I am a senior lecturer in Visual Communication. I am based in London and exhibit/perform regularly nationally and internationally.

As Derrida said of what he calls undecidables, the neither/nor, as a constant outsider, always being in between (communities, languages, minds, moods and mediums), I am an undecidable.

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Sebastian Lexer bio

After moving to London in 1995, Sebastian completed his studies in 2001 with an MMus in Performance and Related Studies at Goldsmiths College, University of London. During this time he had been studying composition with Roger Redgate and piano with John Tilbury. In 2003 he has commenced his studies with a PhD thesis on Live Electronics in Live Performance.

Over the last five years a growing interest in the application of electronic elements in performance settings and free improvisation has inspired a focus on the development of interactive music systems. The developments been frequently applied in live performances in various ensembles and collaborations with John Tilbury, Eddie Prevost, Michael Parsons, Jonathan Impett and many other many other musicians from the London improvising scene. He is organising the acclaimed concert series INTERLACE at Goldsmiths College presenting free improvisation, electronics and interactive compositions.

Sebastian is currently working as a Visiting Tutor at Trinity College of Music, Thames Valley University and teaches summer and weekend courses of Max/MSP at Goldsmiths College.

8/ supporting material

www.ewaeckerle.com as archive of past and current work . currently being updated

- VINST9999 quicktime movie – representing the first recorded utterances of VINST during the first performance birth of VINST.

