

# CYBER-BIRDS

mobile multimedia screens



## **AUDIO PEACOCK:**

a wearable electronic instrument constructed out of polycarbonat (plexi-glass) equipped with loudspeakers, amplifier, battery and different sound-making devices (microphone, sampler, radio receiver, interactive sensors).

As **VIDEO PEACOCK** the costume functions also as a mobile screen onto which theme-specific visualizations (movies, pictures, internet blogs, interactive computer images, webcasts and closed circuit camera views) are projected.



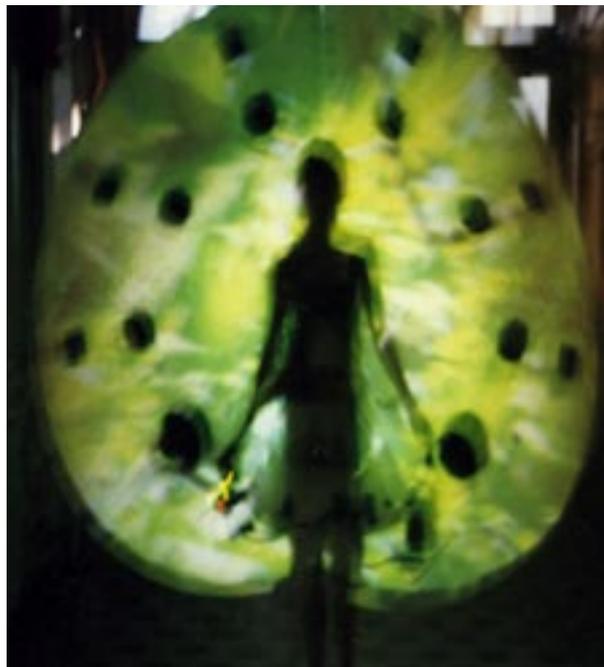


**Project description:** a multimedia environment in a public space.

This wearable electroacoustic instrument is shaped into a peacock's fan-like plumage and is highly directional -- projecting the sound into a space like an oversized radar dish. Much in the same way that the courtyard peacock "strutts his stuff" in front of a pea-hen and imposes with his awesome cry, so does the Audio Peacock stalk his architectural domain -- using sound as a scalpel that cuts through air and sculpts it, transforming it into his new realm.

An Audio Peacock can either amplify and alter its own voice or electronic instruments using a microphone, sampler, and filters (loop + pitch), play pre-recorded sounds, or receive live sounds via transmitter/receiver.

As VIDEO PEACOCKS (wearing white plexiglass „skins“) 4 of these electroacoustic birds patrol a darkened environment. Their audio costumes double as mobile projection screens: whenever their paths intersect the light of a video projector the costumes metamorphose into multi-colored screens. Colorful visualizations (movies, pictures, internet blogs, interactive webcasts, closed-circuit cameras) are "beamed" onto them as they play their sounds. As a site-specific and multi-phonetic installation the parcours of these "cyber-birds" is choreographed vis-a-vis to the emplacement of the projectors in the architectural space.







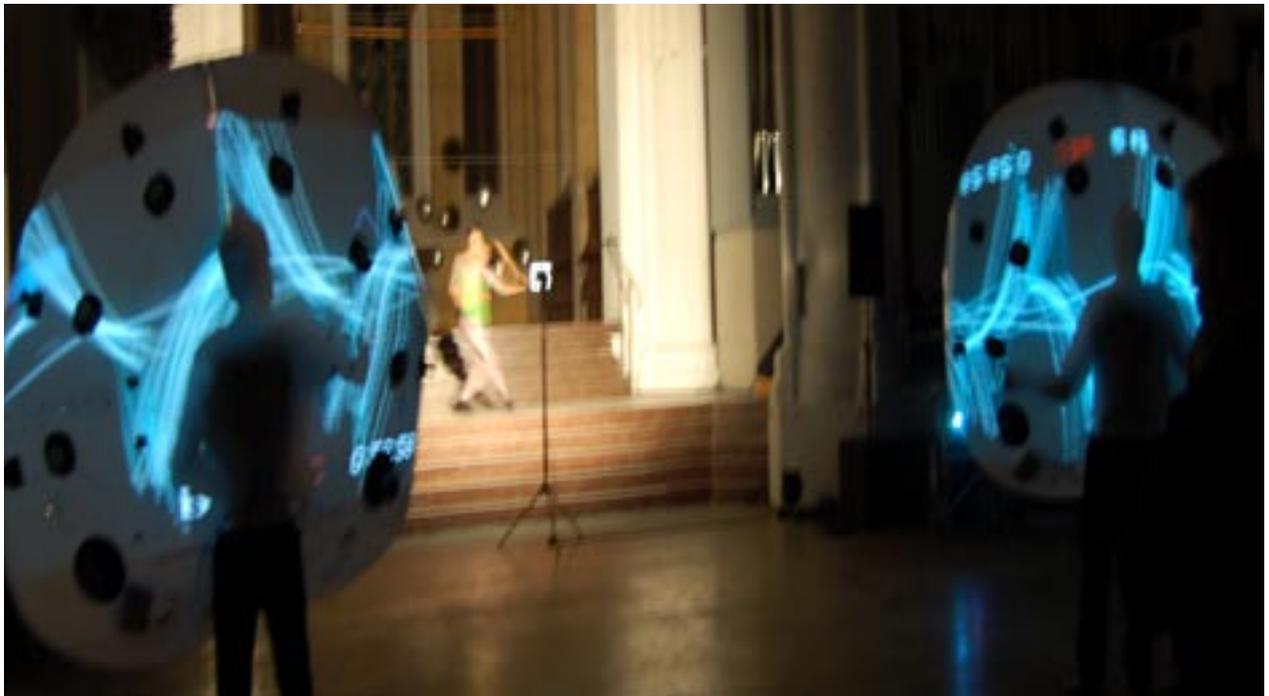
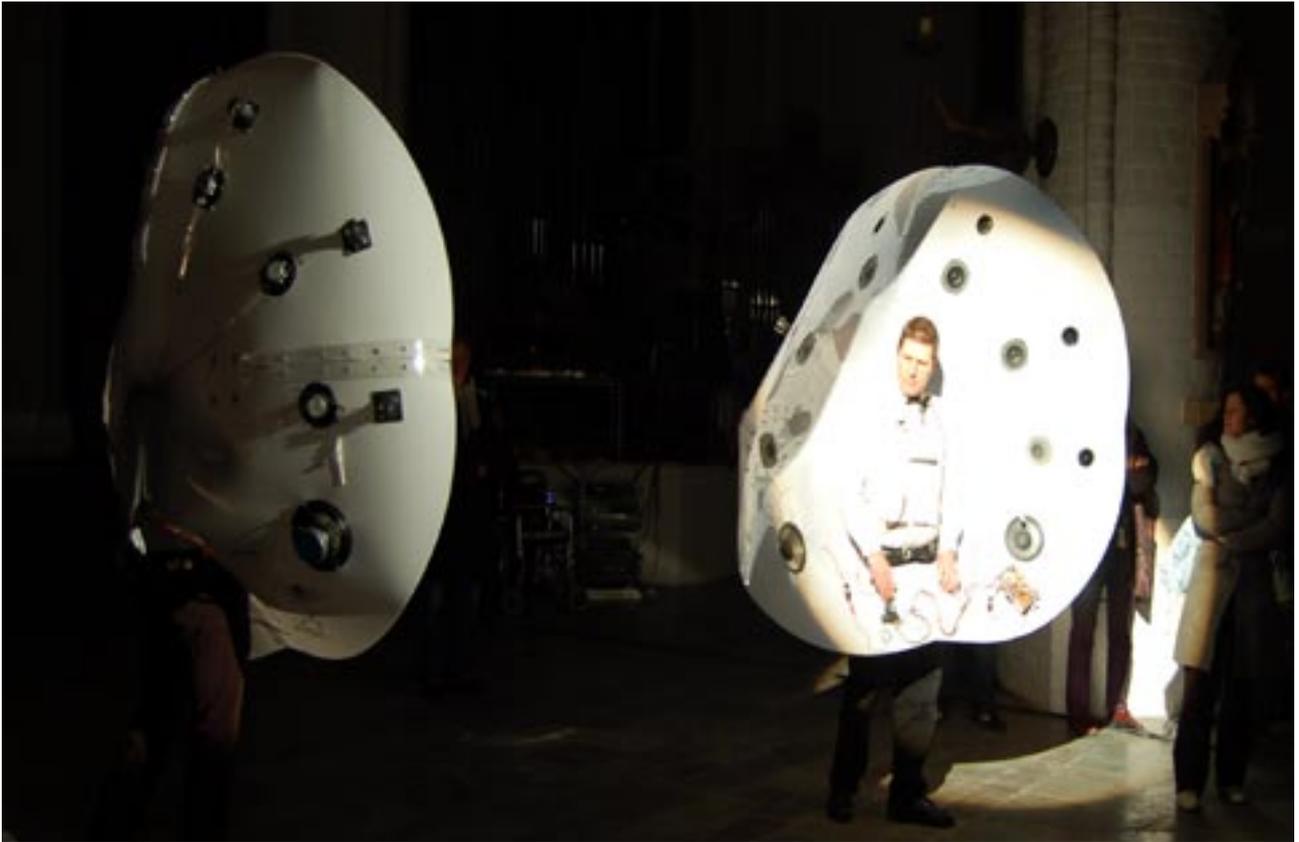
### Past work

Benoît Maubrey is the founder and director of DIE AUDIO GRUPPE a Berlin-based art group that build and perform with electroacoustic clothes. Basically these are electronic clothes and dresses (equipped with amplifiers and loudspeakers) that make sounds by interacting with their environment. The first prototypes in 1982 and 83 were created from second-hand clothes fitted with loudspeakers, batteries, and a small amplifier that played pre-recorded cassettes via portable cassette decks (also known as "Walkmans"). In 1985 during an outdoor arts competition for the BundesgartenSchau in Berlin I developed the idea of "audio uniforms": custom-build suits and costumes that combine various thematic articles of clothing with site-specific electroacoustic equipment. The costumes are worn by performers who interact with the environment as mobile and multiacoustic sculptures.

In 1989 I started building the first "audio tutus" for the Ballerinas. At this point the Walkmans were replaced with samplers chips (from the surplus electronic supply catalogs) which enabled the dancers to spontaneously record, play back and manipulate sounds from their environment (the DIGITAL MEMORY piece). Eventually I also equipped the costumes with an assortment of electronic instruments that allowed me to orchestrate/choreograph them into various interactive musical compositions or "audio ballets" -- for example light sensors that enable them to produce sounds through the interaction of their movements and the surrounding light (PEEPER choreography). Via movement sensors they can also trigger electronic sounds that are subsequently choreographed --or "orchestrated"-- into musical compositions as "audio ballets" (YAMAHA choreography). A variety of other electronic instruments (mini-computers, samplers, contact microphones, cassette and CD players, and radio receivers) allow them to work with the sounds, surfaces, and topographies of the space around them in a variety of solo or group choreographies.

Primarily Die Audio Gruppe's work is site-specific: the main emphasis of the work is to adapt electronics into entirely new "Audio Uniforms" or "sonic costumes" that reflect local customs, themes, or traditions (AUDIO GEISHA/Japan, AUDIO CYCLISTS/France, AUDIO STEELWORKERS/ Linz, AUDIO VACUUM CLEANERS/Berlin, AUDIO JEANS/ USA).





Equipped with a light-to-frequency-sensor, the Audio Ballerina (Rachel Brooker) creates sounds via the interaction of her movements and a spotlight. These sounds are amplified and visualized „live“ (as oscilloscope patterns and transmitted sounds) via the two CyberBirds at her side.

CV : Benoît Maubrey

Benoît Maubrey was born of French parents in Washington DC in 1952.

He graduated in 1975 with a Bachelor of Arts Diploma from Georgetown University.

In 1979 he moved to West Berlin and after the collapse of the former East Germany moved to the state of Brandenburg where he and his partner Susken Rosenthal founded the non-profits arts organization Kunstpflug e.V. His performance and installation work has been presented in many international art festivals, Since 1990 he lives and works in the village of Baitz (near Belzig, Brandenburg/).

Since 1983 numerous performances and exhibitions (a selection):

Ars Electronica (1985), SONAMBIENTE/ Academy of Arts Berlin(1996), Tokyo City Opera/ NTT-ICC (1997), International Symposium of Electronic Arts/Chicago (1997), The Kitchen /NYC, Monaco Dance Danses Forum (2000), Seoul Performing Arts Festival, Location One/NYC, Gracia Territoria Sonor/Barcelona, (2003), Thailand New Media Art Festival/Bangkok, Sitelines Festival/NYC (2006), Schloss Moyland/ Joseph Beuys Archive. (2007), Mostra des Artes/ Sao Paulo (2008).

Awards and Honors

European Award for Street Theatre/Holzminden 1995,

Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance NYC 2006.

Grants\ residencies:

1999 Hull Time Based Arts/UK,

2006 KuenstlerSchloss Wiepersdorf, Brandenburg/Germany.

Selected Bibliography:

-- LEONARDO, Vol.28, No.2, pp.93-97,1995, Audio Jackets and Other Electroacoustic Clothes.

-- BENOIT MAUBREY/ DIE AUDIO GRUPPE, catalog 1985.

-- Die Audio Gruppe 1982-1998, catalog 1989.

-- PERFORMANCES WITH ELECTROACOUSTIC CLOTHES, DVD 2007.

-- KLANG und BEWEGUNG, Berichte aus der Musikwissenschaft, Shaker Verlag ISBN 3-8322-2270-7

Miscellaneous:

Workshop/ presentations (selection) at the MIT Media Lab, Oberlin College, Johns Hopkins University.