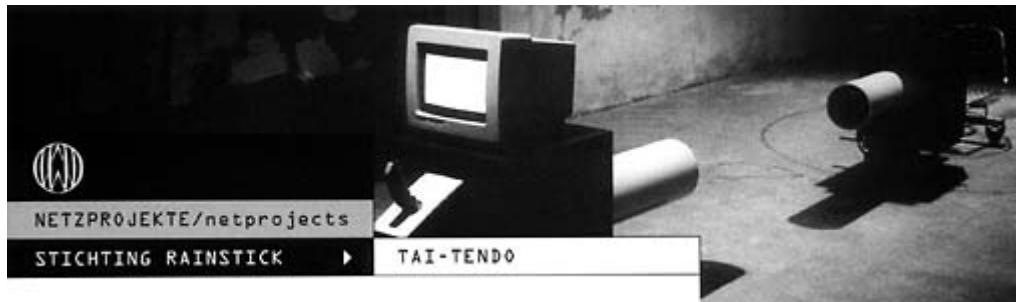# TAI-TENDO
STICHTING RAINSTICK

A nice auditive fighting-game for the entire family

Tai-Tendo is an interactive sound installation in the form of a game. Two carts with a seat, a monitor and a "sound-cannon" designed to shoot sounds by means of joystick control. What seems to be just a war game turns out to have quite another effect. After playing for a while, you'll get the impression that you are sitting on a musical instrument.

Based on what we refer to as "the Nintendo Effect", the game challenges the players to investigate. After playing for a while, someone might say: "I just found out what a tree sounds like." Referring to the fact that joystick-movements are being drawn on the monitor, which could challenge you to draw a tree and listen to the auditive outcome represented by the musical instruments residing in the system. Clearly Tai-Tendo was designed to stimulate another approach to sound, somewhat closer to the feeling we all had when we first tried to play the piano at age three, for playing the game requires no musical experience, though every individual experience can be made audible.

The joystick provides each player with the ability to control the type of sound (horizontal), its pitch (vertical) and direction (linked to horizontal). When shooting the sound, the monitor will draw the joystick's current position so pictures develop while playing, and sounds can be traced by going back to the same spot on the screen. The direction however, is a little tricky. The cart just turns left or right on horizontal joystick movements. So retracing a sound doesn't always mean that you end up in the same direction. This adds something to the unpredictability of the game.

The sounds that are in the system consist of three types:
— The first type contains musical instruments coming from two electronic sound modules. The two sound cannons have their own set of instruments. One is western based, the other oriental. Though depending on the musical input of the player the result will not always be recognised as such.
— The second type contains fragments of famous speeches. This type is played through the speakers in the ceiling, at the start and end of the game.
— The third type is a very soft level of musac ("once upon a time in the west") also coming from the ceiling, which can sometimes be heard during playing or in pauses between games.

This sound (and the previous) add to the spatial awareness and at the same time critique the 'war for space' to draw you into or out of the game, just like musac in elevators and supermarkets.

One of the players is just virtually present by playing the game from a remote location via Internet. Anyone who downloads the required software can log in to the game. The physical site of the game consists of two carts, one of which belongs to the remote player somewhere on the net.

This cart moves and plays its sound under the command of this remote player, and is done by sending midi-commands for the game via the net.

The software for the remote player is doing a parallel process of the game-brain at the game site. It shows up dates of the carts position and drawing of both players and plays sound on a midi-module. (stereo; you: left, other: right) These provisions in the remote software are to compensate the fact that the remote player is lacking the environmental information of the game site. It therefore also uses an internal voice to speak to the remote player.

Normally two musicians would benefit from the physical presence of each other. It is known to be of importance to the quality of playing together, due to invisible wiring between the two somewhere in the unconscious. The effect this could have on the musical experience in this case, if the absence of physical presence may lead to the lack of such meta-connections, is one of the possible questions Tai-tendo might raise. What space do we have to be in to 'make love or war'?

Peter Jongetie, Ed Bezem

STICHTING RAINSTICK

Stichting Rainstick is a group that is especially concerned with spatial sound. The group started working on this two years ago, after a period of joining several art projects by other people. The general conclusion was that if these efforts concerning space were to go any further, K needed to be dealt with in a more independent way. The first idea for a project that was taken in development is based on a musical instrument called "rainstick", which is a nice example of a tiny but very complex world of spatial sound information. This ongoing project provided the group with its name and a model for research.

The group now presents the various aspects of research in interactive art-projects, or sculptures if you like, which give visitors the opportunity to investigate. New computer technologies are currently being offered in various fields. These developments enable us to widen our horizons even before we have even encountered the already existing boundaries. 'Space is one of these matters open to new interpretations. The growing lack of space (physical as welt as spiritual) may welt be the reason for the present quest for new territory.

The developments going on in music are no exception to this rule. Today, many composers are implementing space in their works. In itself, this is not new at all. Intentional use of space can already be found in Gregorian antiphons as well as in the works of Gabrieli and Berlioz. Composers like Stockhausen and Boulez are well known current examples. It is remarkable however, that 'space' in today's music is being used and perceived very literally. Although many people are dealing with 'music in space', the question as to whether the composer's intentions are likewise being perceived by the audience, remains unanswered. The literal approach in music is even more remarkable when compared to the development of virtual space, using computer networks like Internet, where the 'spaceproblem' is being dealt with quite differently. Since this approach is new to the musical world it asks for yet another investigation. The combination of the two spaces (real and virtual) confronts people with contrasts and parallels. These may well turn out to be of vital importance to the consequent implementations in music thereof.

In order to gain new insights, we have to pay attention to the modern technologies being offered. At the same time we have to relate these to our daily life.

Interaction could offer a solution by involving people in the ongoing technological developments. So providing an opportunity for people with less experience or involvement to play around with the material might change their attitude towards so called dangerous changes as well as the way the creator will go about the material.

This exchange of experience results in new ideas, which are beneficial to both creator and audience. If the audience is enabled to develop along with the creator, a healthy path to spiritual enrichment will unfold, which may take away the lack of understanding. The music audience is still getting a product without having had a share in it, while other disciplines show that there is a need for having one.

Stichting Rainstick wants to encounter the dialogue with the public by means of interactive sound sculptures. These are 'spaces' in which the visitor himself can search for auditive experiences. The installation invites the visitor to meet technologies concerning sound manipulation and interaction in a conscious way, as well as the possible musical implications.

Tai-tendo, as presented here, is an example of a possible approach towards exchanging ideas concerning the 'space-problem'.