

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

# Body Movies

Relational Architecture No. 6

## Hauptplatz, Linz



Photos by Jan Sprij

*Body Movies* is a "relational architecture" installation presented at the Hauptplatz Square in Linz. The piece entails over 1,000 square metres of interactive projections activated by passers-by. Thousands of portraits taken on the streets of Linz, Rotterdam, Madrid, Mexico and Montréal are projected on giant screens, using robotically controlled projectors located on towers around the square. However, the portraits are completely washed out by powerful xenon light sources placed at ground level. When people cross the square their shadows appear on the screens and the portraits are revealed within them. The shadows and portraits generate a play of reverse puppetry and embodied representation. Silhouettes measure between 2 and 20 metres high, depending on how far people are from the screens.

A camera-based tracking system monitors the location of the shadows in real time. The computer vision interface, which is shown and explained on the square, triggers feedback sounds when a shadow and a portrait match in scale. When the shadows have revealed all the portraits in a given scene, an automatic command is issued to change the scene to the next set of portraits, frustrating a totalizing representation. This way the people on the square are invited to match different representational narratives. Up to 60 people may take part at any given time, creating a collective experience that nonetheless allows discrete individual participation.

*Body Movies* is the sixth in the series of "relational architecture" installations that Rafael Lozano-Hemmer (CDN/MEX) has designed for cities in Europe and America for the past seven years, usually in collaboration with Will Bauer, Conroy Badger and others. These interactive interventions in Madrid, Linz, Graz, Mexico City, Havana, Istanbul and Rotterdam have been exploring the intersection between new technologies, public space, active participation and "alien memory".