

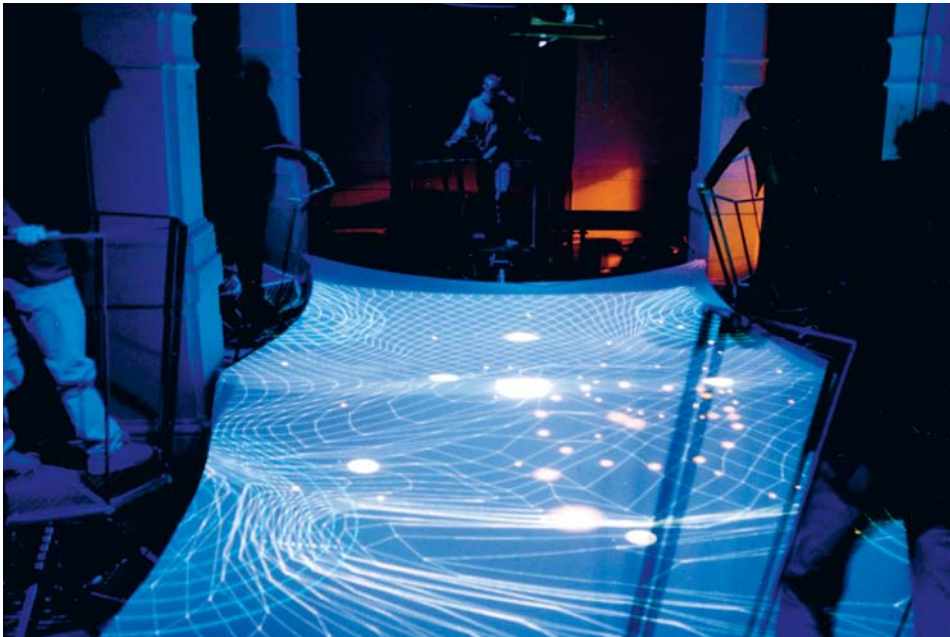
..... Sensory Circus

A Proto-cognitive System to Move Along Within

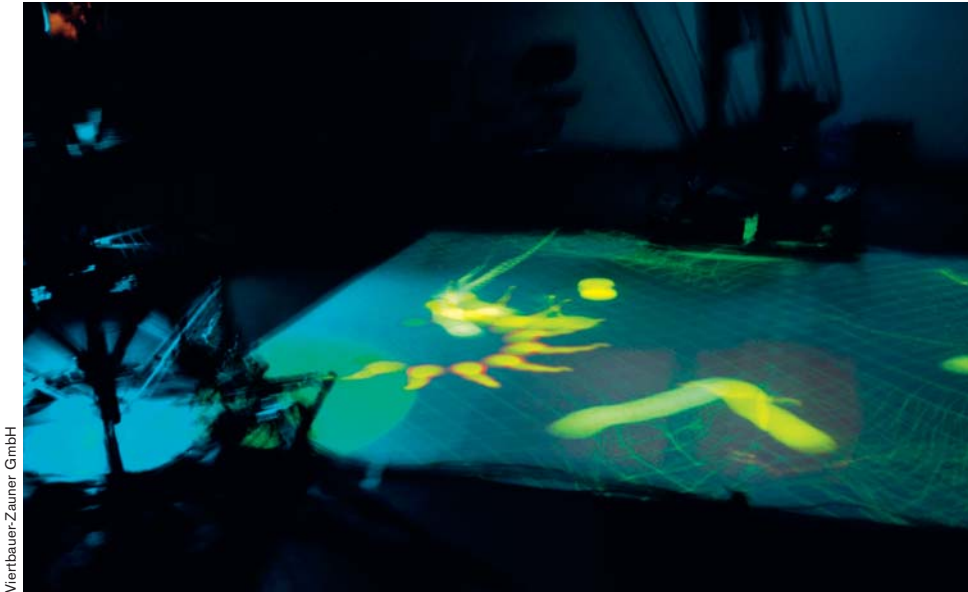
"With a big ball of string I can do anything, anything, ANYTHING!" The cry from the children's book *Big Ball of String*, the story of a child who collects strings, cords, lines from all over, from packages and fishing gear, mobiles and blinds, and rolls them all into a big ball. Then the process starts; from bed, the blinds are rolled up and down, the door is opened to let the dog in or out; the train set is connected to the cupboard, the kite to a tree and a fishing line in a pond. Everything is connected to everything else in a finely balanced maze of obscure and ridiculous proportions.

Such books, along with *You will go to the moon* and *To think I saw it on Mulberry Street* set up a constellation of possibilities and fantasies where anything and everything is possible, where the technologies of influence and control are as simple or absurd as needed. The composition of environments where such things are not unbelievable, experimental situations or real virtualities, as one might say, is the goal we set for ourselves. Creating environments that lie in the continuum between S. Pearl Andrews' "The Dinner Party" and Andreas Broeckmann's "Über das Festival" where the richness of spatial absurdities and possible distractions allows a free, yet controllably heightened set of actions, is the goal we aim at.

The *Sensory Circus* is an environment embedded within, yet strictly removed from, the basic banalities of everyday life. The situation demands the removal of the visitor from the absurdities of *Alltag* into the absurdities of a space with very different yet not completely incompatible sets of rules and influences. It is a machine that is simultaneously built out of Balance, yet perpetually falling out of Balance; the devices populating its systemic inte-



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rior demand the use of the visitor's entire body, not just the flick of a joystick hand or a choreographical wave gesture. The devices are built to handle the actions of whole humans, humans perpetually balancing as they fall from one step to the next, humans balancing on platforms as they control their surroundings.

A balance between the excesses of chaos and the banality of cyclic repetition, an environment in which too many interpretations are possible and none is completely wrong. The imbalance of the entire space beginning to feel like the mood swings of a pseudo-conscious creature arising from a halfslumber where it has dreamed of all its toys strung together, to find itself in a bed holding all the strings, trying to keep the cat playing, the kite flying and the fish biting. This proto-consciousness is trying to hold the entirety of this system together, as we stroll around inside of it, mounting platforms, swinging hips, twisting our bodies to balance ourselves as the system slowly pitches itself from the peak of one wave to the next; pulling, pushing and trying to keep all of the balls in the air at the same time.

A machine out of balance, a proto-cognitive system to move along within, a sensory circus. All of these, yet none of the above. The composition of a space rich enough to be interesting, loose enough to be invigorating, simple enough to be comprehensible yet complex enough to engage for extended periods of time; physically, socially and intellectually. Yes, you *will* go to the moon. Where's my string?



Sensory Circus: A Proto-Cognitive System to Move Along Within has been a co-production of Ars Electronica and Time's up.

Supported by the City of Linz, Province of Upper Austria, BKA .Kunst, Silver Server, Cycling74, Vierbauer & Zauner GesmbH, servus.at, Kunstuniversität Linz, Sommertheater Schwanenstadt

The Participation of Ines Krasic has been made possible thanks to a residency grant of KulturKontakt Österreich