



Dash Macdonald

In Your Hands

In Your Hands is a performance and accompanying video where remote-controlled roller skates place the artist's fate in the hands of the audience, creating a situation where ethical parameters are challenged. Humor and spectacle are used to lure the participants into the thrill of the event while distracting them from what is really happening, namely a subversive social experiment that questions how far people are willing to go to seek their own enjoyment. The skates are custom-made and work on a similar principal to a remote-control car. Each skate is attached to a machined aluminum body which houses a DC motor that drives the rear wheels and a servo motor that steers the front trucks. Both are connected to a remote controller offered to the audience, allowing them complete control over the direction and speed of the artist. For each performance, the artist wears a customized costume and helmet and constructs an obstacle course, encouraging the participants to conform to a set of rules while providing incentive to deviate. The action of the participants is then documented on video.

The project was inspired by social psychology experiments such as the Stanford Prison and Milgram experiments that took place in the 1970s, which exposed human weakness in the face of authority through a concealed steering process. The project employs a similar approach but is set in the public domain and uses humor and spectacle to lure the audience into unknowingly participating in the experiment.

The results, as demonstrated in the video, show the majority of participants diverging from the instructed task and subverting the performance, gaining pleasure from endangering the artist by making him fall or crash. The result is a unique, spontaneous social drama that publicly exposes subtle contradictions in human behavior.