

## Borut Savski – The Dancer Suite

### The Dancer



The original Dancer was the third of three miniatures from the series Sound as Metaphor. Dancer was presented at Kapelica Gallery/ Ljubljana on 17th of February 2005.

One comment though: It came to my mind that the description of the object as "robot" was not originally mine. It was also called "android", which is little better denotation, since it alludes that a moving object is a metaphor of human. But here is the most precise term: a moving metaphorical object. Why not robot or android? Because these terms define the object's functionality to that of a machine.

Dancer is an autonomous moving object that tries to present itself as an artistic subject. It functions on the principle of movement through the sound field in the gallery space. It's communication channel (-> the meaning, sense; -> the motive) is therefore the sound. The sound takes the object here & there across the space. But the sound as motive is already an abstraction (-> a human translation/ intervention). Primary motive is the motion, the secondary (-> higher) motive is transformed to sound (since we want it to be so...). Somewhere in-between was a moment of estrangement - a change of evaluation system. Since the sound is (non-linearly) linked to movement, this change is not very big, but it should allow the object to achieve the "artistic purpose".

The process of forgetting the basic reasons opens a space for new understanding. This is how the fragmentation of the (human) world works. New meaning is born out of erasure of old meaning. (Metaphorical) objects start to multiply like cells.

This logic is similar to what happens with myths. A myth can be viewed as (imaginary) object, that becomes identifiable/complete = self-contained (and credible; real), when it loses its causal connections to the "past". We no longer know what are the reasons that "construct" the myth. If we did it would fall apart (lose the body) - the word for this method is demystification.

The Dancer affected the sound, because it was an active element of the acoustic feedback system - it changed it in every moment with its every move. But instant changes are impossible for the various subsystems of the coupled system (including the object and the space). This is inertia - the physical properties cannot change instantly. Inertia is closely linked with the idea of mass (weight) - in the physical world - and to something else in the metaphorical world of "lighter" bodies (ideas, dreams ...).

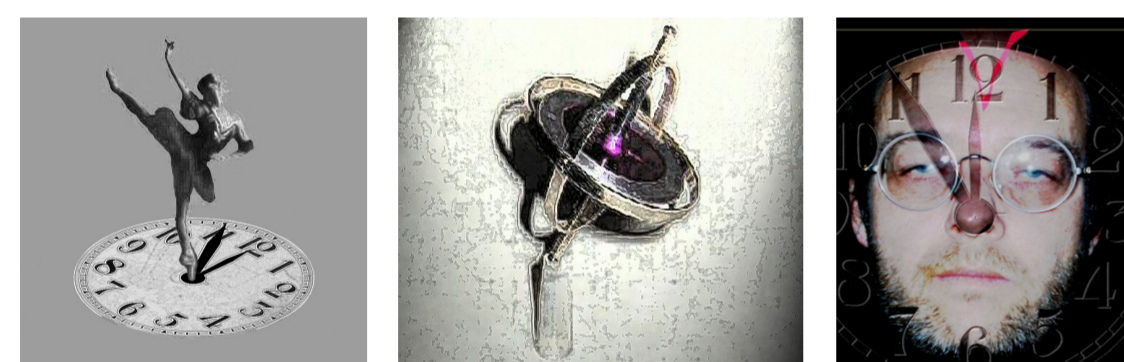
Of course, Dancer is a metaphorical installation. The question now is: is it possible that the subjectivity in human has something to do with the movement (with dynamics, in general) and not (just) the language? Here is the connection:

### Movement = motion = motive

One woman, after a serious accident, when she had a total amnesia, told that she had a lot more problem with the learning of walking (balancing), then with the language. The above question is more feasible, if we broaden/transfer the idea of physical balancing to the balancing of psyche (-> the "lighter" material), where in everyday life we experience much less control.

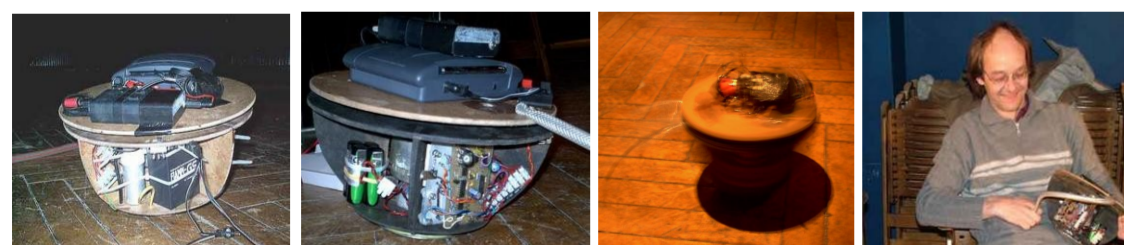
The split, in psychoanalysis called "lack" (fr.: manque) - the incompleteness, prohibits the static stable state (everlasting happiness, everlasting misery...). This is the motor (-> a motivator), the generator of changes for human beings. It is linked with the psychodynamics (early Freudian term), the "unconscious" and the (symbolic) "castration". In the case of such "psycho-motors", any decisions (-> the rationalized changes) become quite arbitrary (dependent upon the inertias - of each individual system - and the collective - the culture).

Since with humans it is all about giving sense/ meaning to the past and the future moment, the necessary human category is the time-line (-> the linearized time) that opens up the space of cause and effect. It seems to me that time may be the primary human domain. Alongside with the (unconscious; non-visible) split (-> the blank spot): the real-time = now.



The question about the Dancer is therefore the real-time dynamic balancing - probably also the falling down. The Dancer balances in the manner of a gyro; to change the direction it uses the change of vectorial position of object's gravitation from the balanced (-> null) position. For the relative stable position of the gravitation vector I planned to use the gyro - which is the movement inertial system. The spin (-> rotation) keeps it balanced and the slope makes it move... It's main property is precession - when it turns fast it is able to balance on its pivot. The spinning mass of the gyro presents an inertia to any turning. The successful act of such dynamic balancing was to be the necessary attribute for an emergence of a music composition.

The poetic idea of human self-balancing with a view of "wholeness" linked with the (human) concept of time, opens the space for many questions of motive and motion... A ballet dancer - balancing on the tips of her toes - a classical (19th Century) ballet ideal - the art of balancing. Human psyche is a self-balancing system. The absolute is (always) just around the corner ... A clock - a symbol of (linear) time. The subjectivity is a projection forward & backward in time... A clock centered on the nose gives a funny clown-like look. A comment: who is in control?



First version of object was unable to spin on its own, because of the weight of lead accumulators. The frame was not very well balanced ... a prematurely born ... The second version was lighter, smaller and stronger. It was fitted with a tail (as seen on the right), dragging on the floor. Tail helped to keep the upper part relatively fixed, so that all the spin was transferred to the lower part. The tail was partly used instead of gyro. New ideas came to mind concerning tail. Still: the tail will eventually have to go, if any kind of "subjectivity" is to emerge (I guess). Humans balance themselves with abstract counterweights - not with a tail ...

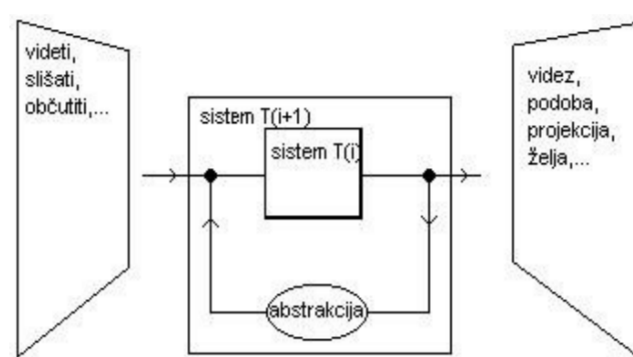
### Borut Savski



Born in 1960, Ljubljana Slovenia. Joined **Radio Student Ljubljana** in 1984, worked as technician, producer, music critic, chief coordinator, took part in and organized many new projects arising around Radio Student and internationally. Quit this job in 1997, started coordinating **Ministry of Experiment**, a platform for media research. Co-organized web and radio based Xtended Live Radio in 1997. During 1997-99 made about a hundred of direct radio broadcasts from clubs, homes, events, ... with portable transmitter to airwaves of Radio Student. Started a radio broadcast "**Huda ura**" (Heavy Weather) in 1999 presenting sound art within the concept of algorithmic-improvised. In 1999 created a sound installation "**Sound Biotope**" at **Kapelica Gallery** in Ljubljana.

object as concept - space as context  
formation of an object (construction of conceptual body)  
object = body = a space (object as context)  
story as (geometric) object translated (back) to time(-line)  
Myth = meat  
God = good  
Man = mean  
...

### The Logic Space



Prior to any cognition there is a process of differentiation of qualities to opposing values. The curved, spiral space flattens (becomes rectangular) - to the oppositely positioned meanings, subjects, entities (-> dual values). It is only from this moment on, that we can operate (-> measure; evaluate) this space. Bad is opposed to good (-> within the space of Ethics and Quality), black is opposed to white (-> within the space of Color and Physics). Thus created multi-dimensional space is a reduced space of metaphors - of course, itself being an abstracted metaphor also -> a rationalized model of the world. The structure is clear, but only an idea, an image, a shadow, a reflection of the original curving.

Such forcibly flattened space, where there used to be Nature, is a space of Human. Contemplation (-> the individual point of view) and communication (-> the collective point of view; the culture) as processors of information create an ordered logic space (-> a structure), which can also be a space of Ethics & Aesthetics.

Logic is the method (-> algorithm, mechanism, automata, machine, ...) that provides us with the final decision - from a number of input values - the presuppositions - to the output value - again the presupposition. The result is an abstraction (-> a reduction, simplification, a non-conforming translation) of the many input values to a smaller number output values. Of course, there is never infinite number of decisions, since the basic motive for "calculating" with the logic machines is exactly the reduction of the number of input values/variables. Abstraction thus becomes its own entity, body - seemingly without the past (giving no possibility for back-calculation to the more basic set of previous input variables) - with no possibility for total understanding (-> of translation, of communication). Even more: the abstraction itself becomes an undistinguished (and unrecognizable) part of the system. The newly constructed body (-> system, abstraction, ...) "doesn't know" anymore, whether the motivation for the decision-making was its own (-> of the previous "body"), or the consequence of some previously incorporated calculation (-> abstraction).

The circular (-> cybernetic, autopoietic) law in such systems (-> the auto-referential systems), causes complex feedback loops, since the structure (-> the quality) of new input values differs from the previous input values. For example: famine causes misery and despair, which causes anger, which causes revolution. Every result is of a different nature. Since each is an abstraction - an entity with its own (complex) body - with no direct connection to the input values (information, data) that gave them birth, they can no longer be differentiated or separated from the system - only if we find out about their exact genealogy (-> all the combinations of causes that led to the embodiment of these abstractions). Because of the erasure of its causes (and the erasure of clear causal relations) such abstractions/bodies are universalized. Abstractions/bodies can be called archetypes, stereotypes, patterns, habits, culture, identity, etc ...

Any further level of abstraction can be added to the system on arbitrary/random basis. More - in a manner of associative thinking - any possible interconnecting feedback loops (also the hierarchic ones) can be produced - including the basic body (-> system T(i)). A system/box remains "black" - we only deal with "not entirely" understood actions and reactions of a complex system - the system provides us only with an idea of self (-> an image). For (partial) understanding (-> cognition of system's identity) we need analysis (of the most) of included systems' "abstractions". The statistic analysis of complex (-> non-algorithmic) systems (of which we spoke above), introduces yet another abstraction. Like the system described above, the statistics also reduces a great number of input data to a couple of representative values. We cannot talk about statistics in any other way as an abstraction.

We (the observers) can say that we know the system, when we know it's reactions to input data (-> the translation function). With the complex (-> autopoietic) systems this method does not work. In other words: these are immanently non-solvable (-> unpredictable, non-algorithmic) systems. The result is always a reduced/abstracted outcome (-> an idea, an image, a representation, abstraction) of the inner processes. These can be very dynamic (-> the search of motivation, rationalization) - all with the purpose to of reasoning (finding the reason=giving the meaning) even the simplest decision. So: is then any point in giving any kind of weight to different decisions? The focus of observation is transferred to the inner processes: on the associatively momentary recombination (construction) of ever new algorithmic (-> procedural, cognitive) structures, the series (-> the sequence) of causal decisions and - as an idea / an image: the identity of such system. The identity exists only as descriptive (-> imaginary, poetic) property of the system. Of course: an abstraction ...



The four participants performing Aesthetic Machines: The Logic Space Metaphor at the Kapelica Gallery Ljubljana in January, 2003.

<http://www.3via.org/borut>, <http://www.3via.org/records>, <http://www.3via.org>, <http://www.3via.org/cirkulacija>

### Bowlfuls of Sound



### Construction = composition:

Two spherical bowls have simple motorics and a bit more complex sensorics. The are susceptible to the sound they hear, but they also co-produce the sound (compressed microphony). This is why the bowls are full of sound. They can see each other (infrared sensor) and then they make a difference in their movement. This should allow for the bowls to slowly zigzag closer to each other, which doesn't really interests us very much, but for the bowls this may be defined as a motive (with human it could be called - the sense). A simple auto-referential algorithm produces / gives birth to a kind of autonomy of the machine.

The primary idea of the two moving, mutually correlated spheres (-> bowlfuls of sound), is linked with some ideas of mine about a fluid space, which I would like to achieve at most of the events and maybe, because of the very personal experience for the observer, take it as a kind of doors to achieve a kind of catharsis.

The fluidity is (here) of course measured in the field of sound (since we are sound artists). Fluidity means, that the present masses can relatively easily move one past another, they can spiral together, circulate at will, but almost never hit hard on each other. Because of the softness of materials there is no hard confrontations. The dynamic changes in one object / sound are softly transferred to the edge of space - at some points exhibiting resonance, at other points they die out. Of course this is the metaphorical language - of a world softer and more open.

In opposition to any fluidity stands - the hardness of material. The hardness of fixed relations, of immense inertia - the inert space. In such a space nothing ever happens, all is known, all questions have answers. The measure of inertia are inertias of relations between the objects / entities in a given space. The relations change slower than we can observe - so they seem unchanging. The fluidity of space means shortening of the reaction time of such relations, to provide the ability to observe the passing of time. But it is only from a fixed viewpoint that we can observe what we measure - to see the changes. Therefore we need a construction of the situation - the space, the context - an event.



### The fluidity of space /about the hardness of materials.../

Fluidity of Space is a poetic title for the holistic approach in building up interactive installations. The key is in translations between the various physical entities - sound, vision (light, color), electronics and mechanics - and in creating a system that acts as a whole and is able to envelope the visitor (the observer) as an immanent part of installation. The system is responsive on the level of it's sensory equipment - the microphone for sound, the camera (or light) for vision. A system such as this can be called a balanced complex system: the elements are interconnected and act as translation objects for the outputs from other elements. A number of such interdependent subsystems produces a number of feedback loops that make up the system into one - and extremely complex. I call it a body.

Often I use the computer's physical inputs as sensors. A microphone as the Ear, the video camera as the Eye. Computer audio output is the Mouth speaking, and the video projector output is the ... Hm? What kind of output do we have that the light could correspond to? Softer than metal, lighter than wood, lighter than sound? The material the dreams are made of? The Mind, the Soul...

Light is a pointed / projected physical property. It is directive - it is coming from a precise energetic point in space, bumps into materials and changes direction by the so-called reflection on the materials. In this sequential way it fills up the space in a much different way than sound.

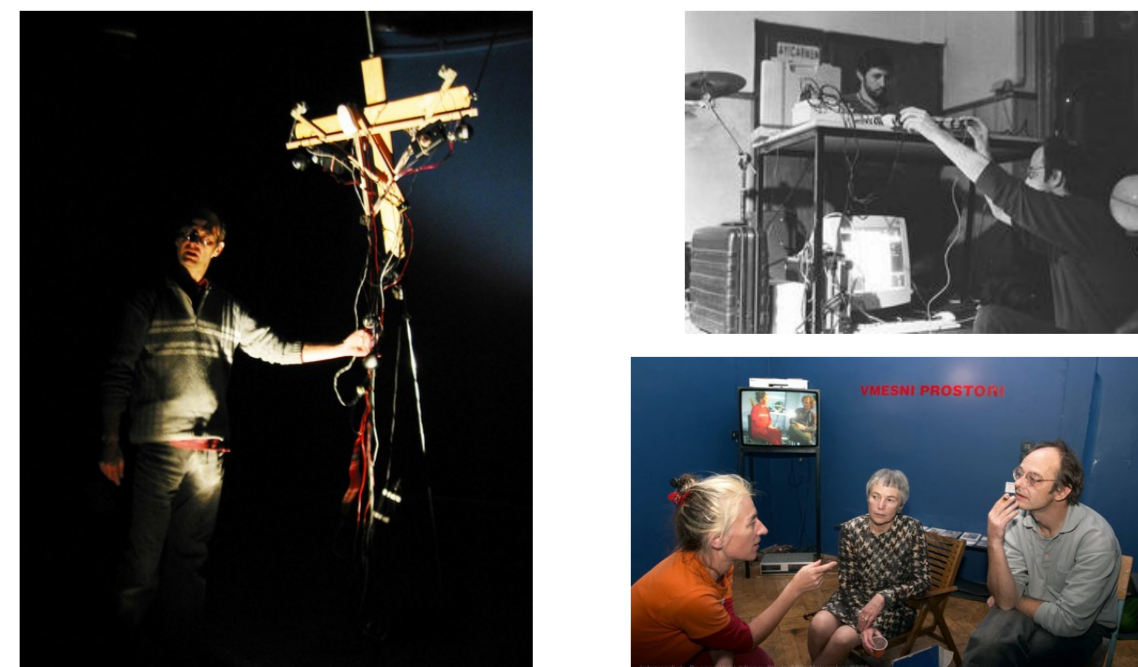
Contrary to the light, the sound is the property of material - it spreads in the materials. Materials are physical entities - usually hard, but they can be lighter or heavier, harder or softer - the iron, the wood, the water, the air. The materials get permeated with sound. They are soaked with sound. Therefore I talk about fluidity.

Sound in a closed space reflects and makes resonating patterns - standing waves. The structure of space defines the structure of sound.

The computer data has no mass, but the computer still needs time to make the translations ready. Therefore it has inertia. Inertia is the impossibility of a system to make a change from one value to another in infinitely short time. The idea of inertia is for me the link between the analogue and digital. The digital is the representation on the level of numbers that can easily jump from 00000000 to 11111111 in one step. Analogue is the representation that has to do all the steps between 00000000 and 11111111 sequentially. A lot of steps. The analogue is the property of mechanical world (the world of "harder" materials) and can be implemented on the level of computers. But digital computers are used to handle discrete logic - as in associative thinking - therefore modeling the relationships of the "softer" materials - ideas and thoughts. Or as in objects bounding them together with the sequential / analogue / material logic into new objects, systems.

Fluidity as metaphor for soft material. Maybe I could swim in such a space? Or move in slow motion, as in outer space? But it should also be responsive and soft and warm. What kind of sounds are soft and warm. The round ones? The return of psychedelia? The return of mysticism? Is Art the keeper of the Mystical?

I seem to explore the hardness of materials - especially the lighter materials. Dreamlike materials. They have no value - they usually just take time. To make such images of mind touchable, I use sound and vision. These images are projection of ideas but they protrude into physical space. They can be touched and they can touch you ...



Some other projects: Electric Jesus II (2006), Problemless Orchestra (2006), Intermediate Spaces / Zwischenräume festival (Graz / Ljubljana, 2006)