

MindBox information [2010 Aug 25th]

Humatic RPMC (Humatic Re-Performing Musical Characters) are always in a move.

Please check for updates at <http://mindbox.humatic.net/>

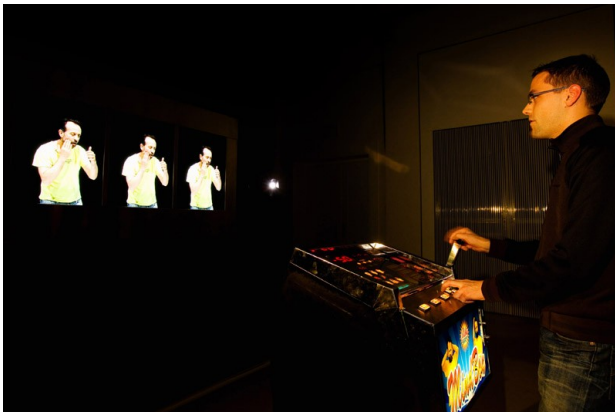
Abstract

With the audio-visual triptych MindBox Christian Graupner & partners created an audience reactive installation which leans in form toward the paradigm of a slot machine.

The installation attracts the visitors' senses offering a gambling-game based around musical, choreographical and cinematographical elements such as dance & beat-boxing. The latter expression describes a form of vocal percussion from which the installation derives its title.

MindBox is a triple-channel 'media catapult' to be touched. The arm and buttons of a modified fruit machine function as a tactile interface to the actions of a filmed character whose vocal & movement clusters can be re-composed and re-performed by the audience.

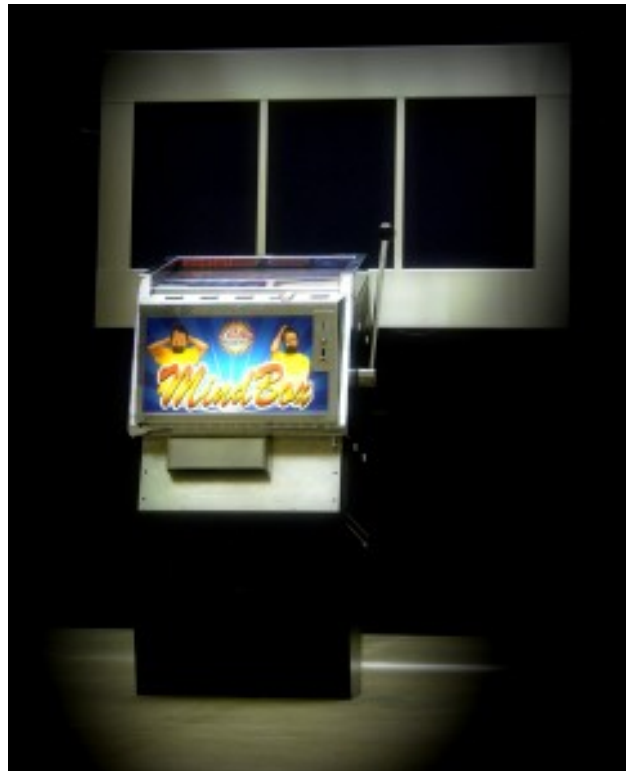
The MindBox re-stages gambling as the addictive involvement of the player in the performance of dance and music.



MindBox found new friends at the UVA grapes contemporary festival in Aug 2010 in Catania (I) and soon will be shown in other places around the globe and ZKM Media Museum is interested. Follow up RPMC projects are in the pipeline.

MindBox

Christian Graupner describes real-time control as an indispensable, content defining level of the triptych installation. MindBox's materiality and physical dimensions, coupled with the necessity of a player to complete the feedback system, convert the slotmachine into a headstrong media sculpture. Devoid of menus, sub-screens and scrolling icons, the visitor easily finds direct contact to the man in the box.



In times where sociologists warn of the increasing dangers of gambling addiction and dependency on computer games and the internet, Zappalà holds up a mirror to us. In a passionate, occasionally disorderly looking performance of an uncompleted but continuously re-inventing play of gestures and beatbox styled vocals, Zappalà confronts us with themes such as good & bad luck, coherence & friction and lust & doom on which we can react by pressing one of four buttons (as in a millionaires TV quiz show) before mastering the use of the metal lever to either breathe life into the weird character or let him go.

Through a series of working sessions Graupner and Zappalà have created a vocabulary of movements and sounds which Zappalà performed in front of Graupner's camera unperturbed by changes of environment from the studio or stage to the public spaces of Catania, Sicily. After inserting 50 cents worth of credits the player is drawn into a game of push and pull. The lever gives the feeling of body-contact with Zappalà and the opportunity to choose the development in the encounter. The complex technology and the cinematic medium occur in the background while instantaneous contact with performer and performance develops with the increasing involvement of the player. drawing an idiosyncratic regenerative portrait of Zappalà in the visitor's mind.

Not least because of the input from software artists and developers Nils Peters (Humatic) and Norbert Schnell (IRCAM), the MindBox triptych turns out to be a highly dynamic music machine that always produces new rhythmical audio-visual clusters that form the base

material for a re-performance of Zappalà's moves. The body and surface design of MindBox follows the concepts of re-performing, re-engineering and re-cycling. The metal designers (stabil-berlin.de) and electronics hackers (Jo Frgmt & Christian Günther) helped to turn the disused gambling machine into an unconventional operating instrument for the body-contact-music of Zappalà. Its intermittent fluorescent letter- and light sequences also mimic the continuous self-completing and counterpointing broken-beat loops and spirals of the video-dance-jukebox.

Former graffiti activist Dirk Behrend, who was responsible for the re-design of the graphical surface, matched the face of the pimped-up machine to its (Break)beatbox content whilst retaining its original 'Bally Wulf' aesthetics. In keeping with the one-armed-bandit context details such as a live stock price ticker entitled 'Recent Players', the control display 'State of Mind' and the money insert slot speak for themselves.

The soundtrack was developed to take advantage of both Zappalà's beatbox styled movements and the randomized real-time variation processes inherent in slot machine gaming. The music is centered on percussive noises generated by Zappalà's mouth, teeth and other body sources. The fricative, impulsive and extensive sound vocabulary is spliced and arranged into a tempo-locked time frame adding a distinctive groove element to the sound flow. The processing of the material plays with audio-visual morphologies by freely recombining visual elements (movements, postures, situations) and musical elements (rhythm, melody, timbre) into a unified choreography.

Background /History / Technique

Back in 2000, Roberto Zappalà was developing ideas of repeating and amplifying environmental noises alongside the rhythmic vocal patterns that formed part of his dance performances. He became fascinated by the notion that a Jukebox could repackage this sonic experience with greatly enhanced possibilities for audience interaction. After C.Graupner met Zappalà's managing partner in the gambling Metropole Monaco (where both showed their work at 'Monaco Dance Forum') Zappalà and him teamed up in 2006 to plan and realize the slot machine project. They started in collaboration on several video shoots that yielded an extensive library of choreographed gestures and sound-patterns that became the base material for MindBox.

The bones of the technical system were already in place as Graupner's production company Humatic had previously developed real-time software for interactively transforming and orchestrating audio-visual material.

In summer 2009, Norbert Schnell from the Real-Time Musical Interactions Group at IRCAM in Paris joined the team to collaborate on the interaction design for some of the MindBox scenarios and to develop the involved audio technology. The scenarios integrate the HUMA system with some of the IRCAM Max/MSP signal processing libraries and embody the synergy of the joined know-how concerning interactive audio-visual production and real-time interactive audio processing.

Humatic's approved reactive screen technology, the HUMAsystem, and the new IRCAM processing modules were unified for the first time in forging a powerful new template for inter-media connectivity with great potential for future variants.

Add. article: **Why young visitors like the MindBox**
http://mindbox.humatic.net/MB_young_audE.pdf



[alternative RPMC physical \(indoor/ outdoor\) setup : Statue replaces slotmachine:](http://www.humatic.net/art/p/mindbox/mb1005.html)
<http://www.humatic.net/art/p/mindbox/mb1005.html>

MindBox Artists & Collaborators

Christian Graupner (DEU) Humatic, Media artist
Director, Composer, Producer

Roberto Zappalà (ITA) Performer , Choreographer

Norbert Schnell (FRA) IRCAM — Centre Pompidou ,
Interactive Music & Sound Design.

Nils Peters (GER) Humatic, System Developer &
Software Artist.

Dirk Behrend (Madeye Productions): Graphics &
Interface Design; **Christian Günther & Jo Frgmt**:
Electronics & Electromechanics; **Gobi Hofman &
Jochen Liedke**: Metal Works, 'Slot Machine Pimpin';
Gwendaline Bachini: Team Assistant; **Maria Inguscio**:
Management in Italy; **Simon Harris**: Text Editor.

Produced by **Humatic** GmbH in Collaboration with **TMA**
Hellerau, **VOOV**systems & Compagnia **Zappalà** Danza.

About the Artists

Christian Graupner is a Berlin based artist, film composer, guest artist at ZKM Karlsruhe and the creator and developer of real-time media playback systems. His wide ranging earlier works were made up of drawings, paintings and experimental electronic music, mostly published on records, CDs as well as in movies and radio plays under the pseudonym VOOV. Lately he has developed a series of reactive media installations in which characters appear significantly in the foreground. With his works such as '2Lives Left' and newest projects 'MindBox' and 'Don't Dance', he is keeping alive his conceptual platform 'Automatic Clubbing'. In 2000 he formed the independent artist group and production company **Humatic Ltd.** together with **Nils Peters** with whom he develops software tools for artists working in a variety of media forms.

In 1989 **Roberto Zappalà** founded the Compagnia Zappalà Danza to widen and deepen his own research in choreography whilst extending the possibilities for the training of young contemporary dancers. Since then he has created more than 25 pieces that have been presented throughout Europe, South America and the Middle East. He is currently the artistic director of the Scenario Pubblico performing arts centre in Catania, Sicily.

Norbert Schnell studied Telecommunications & Music and worked at the Graz Institut für Elektronische Musik (IEM) as a developer and advisor for projects with composers such as Beat Furrer and Robin Minard. In 1995 he joined the Real-Time Systems team at IRCAM which he has since continued to coordinate. He and his team are involved in scientific and artistic projects focusing on real-time interaction. Besides his engagement in artistic productions with composers such as Boulez, Manoury, Nunes and Stroppa, his team participates in a diversity of international research projects. In June 2006 he organized and chaired the 6th International Conference on New Interfaces for Musical Expression at IRCAM.

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