

Statement of Research and Artistic Development

Over the course of my initial career (as an architect), I became increasingly interested in the fundamental question of how space takes form in a world that is in constant shift, and is increasingly dynamic and participatory. This dialectical problem (in that it addresses the constitutive “static” parameters of the discipline) led me to rethink design processes and to reevaluate architectural qualities. I arrived at a definition of space that included both its emerging and dynamic qualities, which I described as a field of action that can be played, rather than planned. My personal practice then shifted from design to art and from designing blueprints to developing scripts that initiate the processual transformation of, and interaction with, environments. Since this shift, the live strategies catalyzing the process of my artistic research have combined improvisational and performative techniques and interactive and generative technologies. Enactive art, and the integration of contingent live processes into the fabric of performance and technology-based work is my current artistic engagement. The contexts within which I create are always transdisciplinary and mostly collaborative, facilitating technology-based production schemes, and supporting processes during which temporary events, experiences, and knowledge transfer can take place.

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Improvisation and Performance

The motivation to expand my skill set by undertaking studies in contemporary dance and choreography came out of my exposure to movement research, improvisational approaches to space and performative spatial concepts such as those found in the 1960's New York dance avant-garde, or the fabric of relationship between space and movement presented by choreographer William Forsythe in *Improvisation Technologies*. The analysis of movement and the development of improvisational and action-based structures is an essential component of my collaborative work practice. It allows me to interact performatively onstage, and to develop technology-inspired scenarios for theatre and performance contexts. My analytical knowledge of movement systems carries over into computer programming and system design, and leads to my interest in machine movement and machinic behavior. The vitality of these relationships between space, movement and technology has led to my belief that technology in performance and installation art reveals itself not only in the machines themselves but in their modes of action and interaction, their ability to continuously repeat. Machines' capacity to re-perform ensures their capacity to be active creators of a reality.

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Interactivity and Generativity

The development of interfaces, including that most challenging question: how to engage the visitor/viewer, requires the application of a doubled strategy. It requires opening up the artwork to temporary experiences and contingent processes, while simultaneously conceptualizing precisely all of its spatial, temporal, and technical parameters. To accomplish this duality of requirement, I advocate taking a heterogeneous approach to interactive media. In other words, to gather diverse aspects of artistic expression into a shared context of action. This shared context must include interactive moments of action, as well as processes of generativity and performativity. What this means in practice is that I use both analog and digital media and information technologies, ranging from the use of lighting elements, live cameras, and digital projection technology at different scales and with carefully composed levels of dynamic engagement, to fully interactive and sensor-based scenarios. I studied multimedia systems while completing my MA in Media Technology at Leiden University, NL (2005). Following this course of study, I continued to investigate and build multimedia scenarios in collaborative artistic research contexts such as with *In Serial*, in my work with Canadian media artist and electrical engineer Jim Ruxton, through

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participation in workshops, such as the *Laboratory on Interactive Media and Communication Technologies* and residencies, such as the *European Mobile Lab for Interactive Artists*.

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Fields of Action

Opening a field of action, whether in interactive environments, in performance situations, or within the public domain, implies addressing the actor or, as to use Bruno Latour's more radical term, the *actant*. Who interacts with whom under what conditions? Who, or what, has the agency and the potential to act? A prominent thread of my artistic research involves looking at the compositional dynamics of a work of art in terms of what things do and what they do to whom—thus approaching systems in terms of their agential capacities and their mutual effecting and distracting relationships. This interest in an enactive perspective is present in all three projects submitted with this application. *Never Stand Still* relates to the ecologies of gameplay. *Animate* investigates the interaction between humans and machines. *On Track* explores the coincidental entanglement of autonomously acting machines. These projects are explained in greater detail in the attached project documentation.

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My doctoral dissertation ("Material Agency and Performative Dynamics in the Practices of Media Art," completed this year at Brunel University, London under the supervision of Professor Johannes Birringer), similarly researches the active linkages between material, performative, and technological processes that "act" within works of media art in constructive or deconstructive ways. The link I have tried to develop with current discourse on agency and materiality is that of broadening the scope of action by taking it into the domain of unintended, accidental, and contingent (yet productive) effects, drawing material's agential capacities into the complex relationships of the alive world. My academic research at Brunel was linked to a four-year funded research position at the Amsterdam School of the Arts in the Netherlands which provided me the means of developing a series of practical scenarios. In these performance/installation situations, complexity was determined by the conflicting interactions taking place. For example (NEED TO EXPLAIN WHAT YOU MEAN).

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Collaborative Practice

Since 1997 I have developed interactive/experimental installations and scenarios for theatre and performance contexts. The three projects described elsewhere in this application reflect the range of my artistic engagements with interactive environments, machine agency and, currently, game scenarios. In these as well as in most of my other projects, collaboration with artists, engineers and scientists was essential and as a result I have established an extended international network of artists and engineers. A project series that provides as an example of how I integrate and "perform" technology in performance contexts is my long-term collaboration with choreographer Nadja Raszewski, a dance pedagogue in demand internationally for her skill in developing stage dances with large groups of young non-professionals from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. I created the scenography for her award-winning project at the Saarbrücken State Theater (2010) and for an earlier project at the Bavarian State Opera, Munich (2008). I invented a technique utilizing image animation and large-screen projections that I drew live during the performances, ad hoc in response to the movements and actions onstage. I believe that these community-orientated projects call for an artistic vision and technological infrastructure that meet the participants' risk-taking at their level of openness and performative flexibility. These youth projects are communal contexts wherein I work "live" and with contingent technology because I want to put democratic values into practice—values that take the work beyond the barriers of professional vs amateur, or dancer vs design. For 2013 we are invited by the State Theatre in Heilbronn to develop a project with prisoners. This will be presented in the "Tanz Heilbronn" festival.

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Comment [LB2]: This community engagement is great – now, you need to tie up the whole statement saying: I've used my interest in the interaction of space and form and materials (or whatever you want to say) in the service of architecture, interactive media, and applied in the service of facilitating successful community engagement performances. At this point, my interest is to expand this line of research by.....

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