

Acousmeaucorps

sound installation
by Tom Mays

created : 2005

expected visitor attention : 3 to 8 minutes

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description of the work 1

technical requirements 2

technical setup 3

bio 4

more images 5

description of the work

Acousmeaucorps (pronounced « acous-mo-cor ») is an interactive sound installation which creates an *acousmatic body space* using a video camera, a computer and 4 speakers.

The video camera (situated above the space and facing downward) is connected to a computer running Max/MSP/SoftVNS which uses movement and position data to generate spatialized sound.

The human body thus becomes a performance instrument, generating and triggering sounds which build musical sequences through walking, running, making arm movements, or even just flexing one's fingers.

For the current version of *Acousmeaucorps*, the sounds are played on two levels. One is a resonant « mass » that seems to move like water in a wading pool – favoring different pitches depending on the area of movement. The other is the triggering of different « found objects » that seem to jump out of very specific locations within the space.

Both sound types combine to encourage people to move in such a way that they can't help but forget to be self-consciousness and enjoy searching around with movements that become fluid and questioning, the idea of « body » and « space » taking on new significance.

The visitors moving freely within this space defined by the four corner speakers become the creators and performers of their own simultaneous music and dance.



technical requirements

(Setup and rehearsal/fine-tuning time = approx 4 to 6 hours)

space

A square or slightly rectangular space of at least 12 m² with the possibility of installing a small camera and a diffused light source directly above at a height of 4 to 5 meters.

The space could be closed (a room) or open (part of a larger space), and could possibly adapt itself to other kinds of spaces not yet foreseen, as long as the space is fairly quiet and well-lit, and that the camera can be placed high enough to make an appropriate interactive space.

computer

1 computer G4 1.5 GHz minimum or a G5

1 soundcard with 5 outputs (4+1sub)

1 camera of type « firewire webcam »

(preferably a *UniBrain*, <http://www.unibrain.com/home/>)

2 good quality 10m firewire cables with 1 firewire repeater.

(one 20m cable might work, but it would have to be verified)

camera mount for the webcam 4 to 5 meters above the installation space, facing directly down.

(The *UniBrain* contains a standard camera mount which simply requires a reducer to connect to a standard tripod head)

PA

4 discrete speakers mounted on speaker stands or else on the walls in the four corners of the space, plus a sub-woofer. Amplification at least 250W.

lights

A diffused lighting source, as close to the camera as possible to minimize shadows.

misc

220v supply and multistrip

1 space in proximity to the installation for the computer and amplifiers.



technical setup

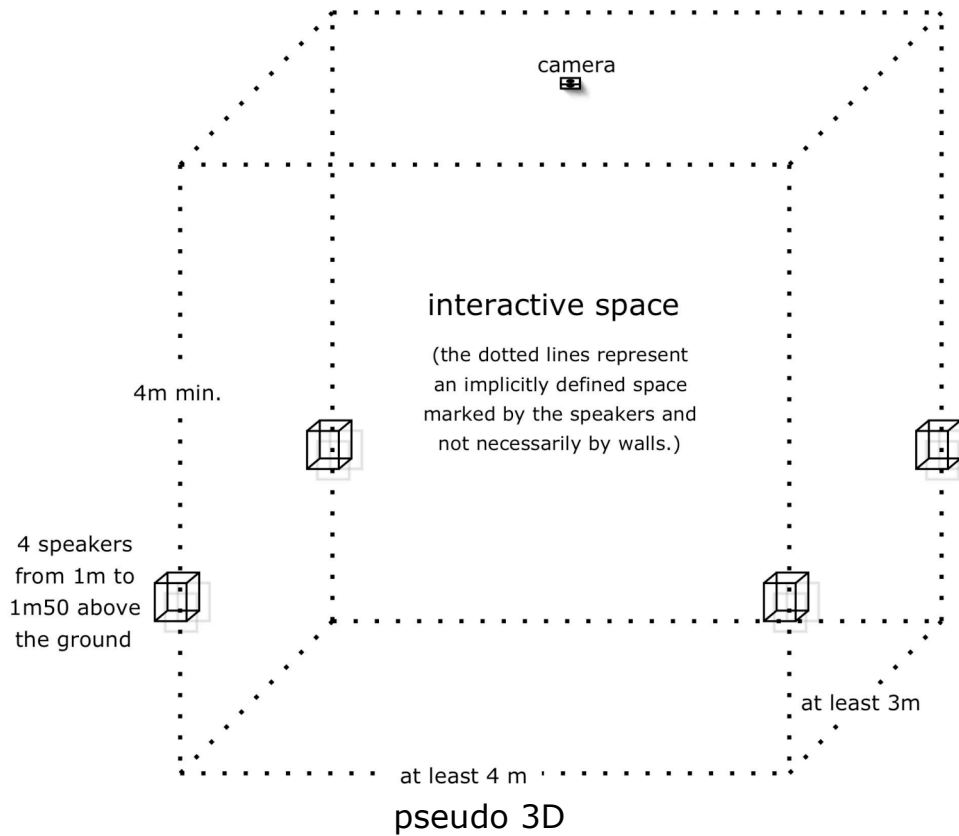
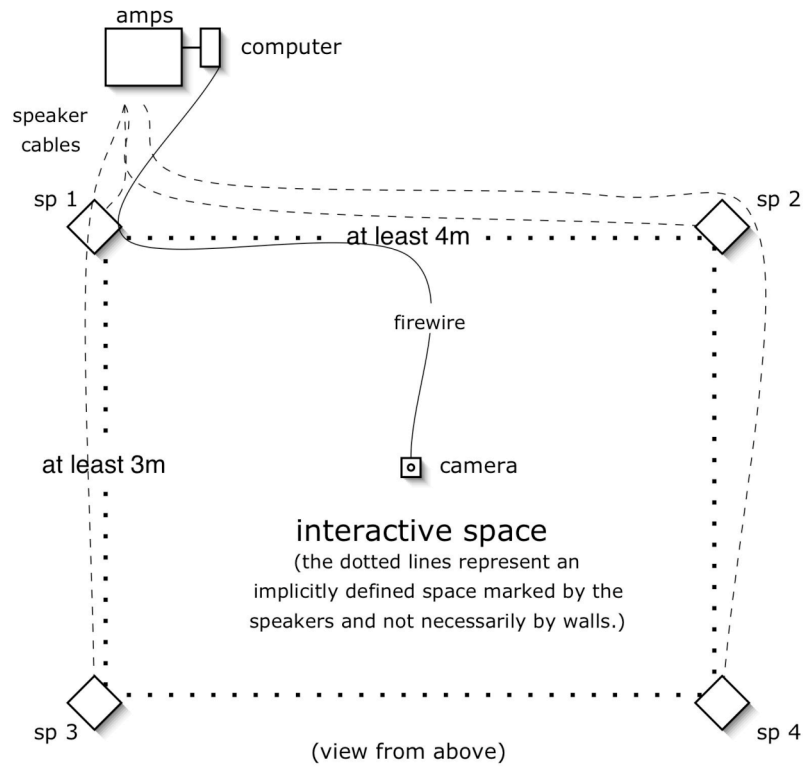




photo : Paul Bonmartel

Tom Mays

<http://www.tommays.net>

Composer, performer and teacher – specialized in computer music.

Associate professor of *new technologies applied to composition* at **the Superior National Conservatory of Music in Paris**.

After earning his B.A. degree in composition and electro-acoustics **from San José State University** in California with Allen Strange, he founded **Studio Césaré** in Reims with Christian Seville, realized musical environments for composers at **IRCAM** as an *assistant musical* and participated in numerous experiences as a composer or performer, his works being commissioned and supported by various studios and organizations such as **La Muse en Circuit, Le Cirm, Césaré, La Grande Fabrique, le G.E.P.S** and **Radio France**.

He is especially interested in instrumental performance of real-time computer systems for both written and improvised music, as well as in interaction between music and video.

more images

For QuickTime videos of the *acousmeaucorps* at the Opéra Comique in Paris on the 17-18 September 2005, please visit :
<http://tmays.free.fr/acousmeaucorps/pages/amc-videos.html>

