



# /STEVE GIBSON DIGITAL MEDIA

Steve Gibson is an interactive media artist, audio-visual performer and Associate Professor in Innovative Digital Media at Northumbria University, Newcastle. He is interested in transdisciplinary collaborations between art, design and computing, and has concentrated his research work on tactile and physical interfaces and applications that enable a healthier relationship with technology. He works as lead-beta tester of the Gesture and Media System motion-tracking system and has produced a number of significant body-based pieces using this technology. Steve has also had immediately publicly facing roles as Curator and Director for the Media Art event Interactive Futures (2002-07), and as Co-owner and Creative Director of Limbic Media Corporation (2007-14).

Steve Gibson studied with well-known contemporary composers such as Louis Andriessen and Frederik Rzewski. His experimental electronic collaborative CDs include *SPASM: The Sound of Virtual Reality* and *Hacking the Future*. His current research and practice explore the formal, theoretical and practical implications of live and real-time audio-visuals. This work culminated in a co-authored book *Live Visuals: History, Theory, Practice*, published by Routledge in 2022. His current work revolves around issues of media mapping using synaesthesia as a metaphor, transparent “no-screen” performance using only performance devices on stage, and micro performance in support of sustainable audio-visual arts. He is currently working on a new co-authored book on Audio-Visualism to be published by Routledge in 2026.

Steve has been involved in multi-screen audio-visual events, including several with Swiss VJ collective Scheinwerfer in Zurich, Vancouver, San Francisco, Chicago, Shanghai and Singapore. He also performs as a body-based performer using motion tracking and gestural interfaces to control sound, lights, and video by movement in 3D space and has exhibited these projects in Xi’an China, Mexico City, Zurich, Stockholm, Seoul and Vancouver. Over the course of his 25-year career he has presented at many world-leading venues including Ars Electronica, 404 Festival Mexico City, Banff Centre for the Arts, Digital Art Weeks, the European Media Arts Festival, the National Museum of Scotland and Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich.

Personal Website: <http://www.telebody.ws>  
Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/room101studio>  
Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/steve-gibson-101>



# /STEVE GIBSON DIGITAL MEDIA

Your *VRitual AV* performance—awarded the Best Music Performance Award—was truly inspiring and had a significant impact on the Audio Mostly community.... Your work demonstrated a remarkable level of curation across musical and visual dimensions, brought together through an outstanding interaction with the medium via gesture-based control.... Among the nine performances presented, yours distinguished itself through its artistic depth, audience engagement, and compelling demonstration of high-resolution real-time audio and video processing.

**Balandino DiDonata, Director, Audio Mostly 2023**

“Few people have managed to sustain and accompany music in the unconquerable air as Steve Gibson does.... As a worthy and committed witness to the hinge that unites the last two centuries, his tireless work positions him as one of the great artists representing twenty-first-century art.”

**Gina Valenti, Director, 404 Festival**

“*OPK* demonstrates rich synthesis between the live embodied modalities of the performer and the mediated technological states/scenes. The interplay, afforded through the use of GAMS, between the embodied and the mediated, facilitates a unique immersive performance experience... serving as a novel methodology for performers....

**Solomon Lennox, Northumbria University**

[*VRitual AV* is] a combination of Michel Waisvisz’s *The Hands* and *Electronic Body Music*.

**Louis-Philippe Demers, Robotic Artist**

Steve Gibson's ongoing extensive experimentation, testing, and resultant suggestions continue to shape our innovations.

**Will Bauer, P.Eng. President, Moment Research Corporation**

Steve Gibson] is revolutionizing the accepted idea of performance, art and musicianship – a sort of improvisational conductor of our times.

**Darren Stewart, Victoria Times-Colonist**

[Virtual DJ] could forever change the dance floor.

**Vivian Moreau, The National Post**

Steve Gibson is at the forefront of experimentation in deconstructing, reconfiguring and ultimately composing the future.

**Dee, Futures lab on-line**

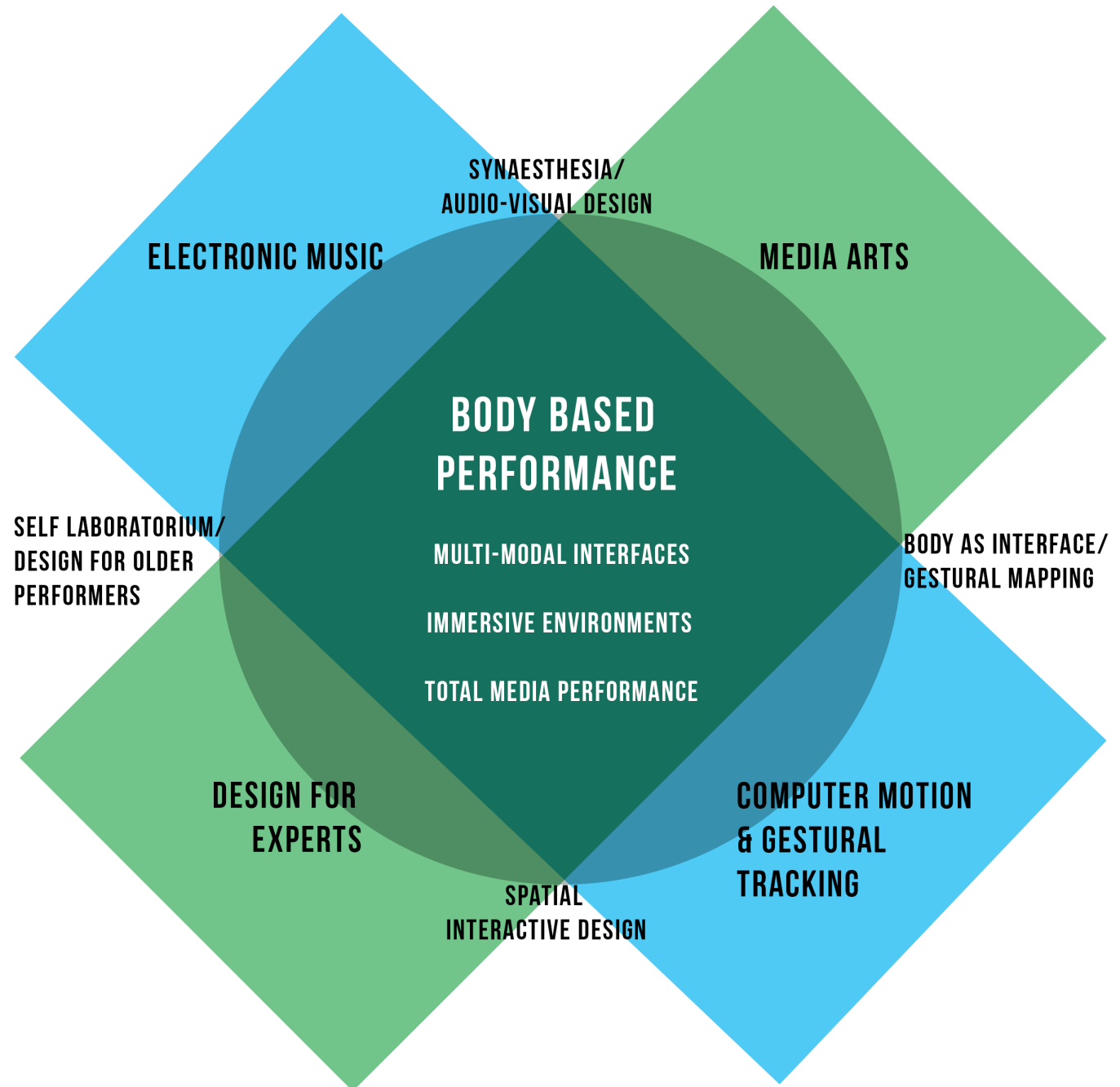
# CONTEXT AND INFLUENCE

Steve Gibson's work is multi-disciplinary, mixing influences from **electronic music**, fine art, **media arts**, and design.

Informed by studies of **synaesthesia** as well as **body-based performance** and **design for experts** his pieces involve physicality, movement and **media synchronicity**.

Steeped in the history of **audio-visual performance** his works reference movements from the past and present including montage, IDM, **immersive installation**, game art, liquid light shows and **total-media performance**.

Thematically Gibson's work is concerned with our **bodily relationship** to technology, the influence of science fiction on technological developments, and the **state of the human form** in digital culture.



# VRITUAL AV: TACTILE MICRO INTERFACE (2022-25)

By Steve Gibson

Audio, Visuals, Gestural Programming, Light Design - Steve Gibson

Camera – Liam Hardy

Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/VirtualDJ/virtualvj/virtualvj.html>

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/9966326>

Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/steve-gibson-101/sets/vritual-av>

**VRITUAL AV** uses the Leap Motion 3D controller, as well as a multi-touch iPad interface to enable small-area gestural control of sound and light. It deliberately uses as few technological resources as possible in a limited spatial area, while retaining the complexity of interaction required for an expert (as opposed to a general) interactive performance. The interface is a model for portability, and in addition serves as a solution for older body-based performers (including myself), who may physically struggle with larger-area interaction.

*In VRitual AV* my gestures are measured using an app called Glover and programmed to audio-visual effects. The sound of *VRitual AV* is deeply steeped in the history of electronic music, with influences from the Berlin-school of electronic music, 90s idm and newer experimental electronic. The visual world of *VRitual AV* is informed by my interest in synaesthesia. All visuals and lights have matching colours as well as matching effects related to the audio interactions. *VRitual AV* enables the performer to move his or her hands and draw to perform and mix music, lights and visuals in real-time with relative precision. The ultimate in tactile audio-visual interfaces!

Steve's performance was both engaging and inspiring, resonating strongly with our audience. We would be delighted to host Steve again in the future should the opportunity arise.

*Lowell Smidteboom, TELUS Spark Science Centre, Calgary*



*VRitual AV* at ISEA2025 Seoul. Photo Credit Sarah Kim, Yong-Shin LEE. Courtesy of art center nabi



Top: VRitual AV at ISEA2025 Seoul. Photo Credit Sarah Kim, Yong-Shin LEE. Courtesy of art center nabi.

Bottom: VRitual AV at 404 Festival, National Arts Center, Mexico City, Oct. 2023. Photo by Jean-Philippe Côté.



Winner of Best Music Performance at AudioMostly Sept. 2023. Photo by Lucy Middleton.

# OPTO-PHONO-KINESIA (2017-19)

By Steve Gibson

Audio, Visuals, Motion-tracking, Light Design - Steve Gibson

Performers – Steve Gibson & Solomon Lennox

Software – Conroy Badger, Moment Research

Camera – Liam Hardy, Northern Dance

Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/VirtualDJ/virtualvj/virtualvj.html>

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/5176262>

Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/steve-gibson-101/sets/opk>

**OPTO-PHONO-KINESIA (OPK)** is a body-based audio-visual performance piece.

The title is a play on the possible synesthetic state involving connections between vision, sound and body motion. Theoretically, for a person who experiences this state, a specific colour could trigger both a sound (i.e. a particular note) and a body action (i.e. a flick of the hand). *OPK* employs a simulation of synaesthesia as a model for matching of movement to sound, light and image. Each sound placed in space is assigned a light effect and at times a specific video. Different notes of a melody or bass line will be matched to specific light and/or video colours.

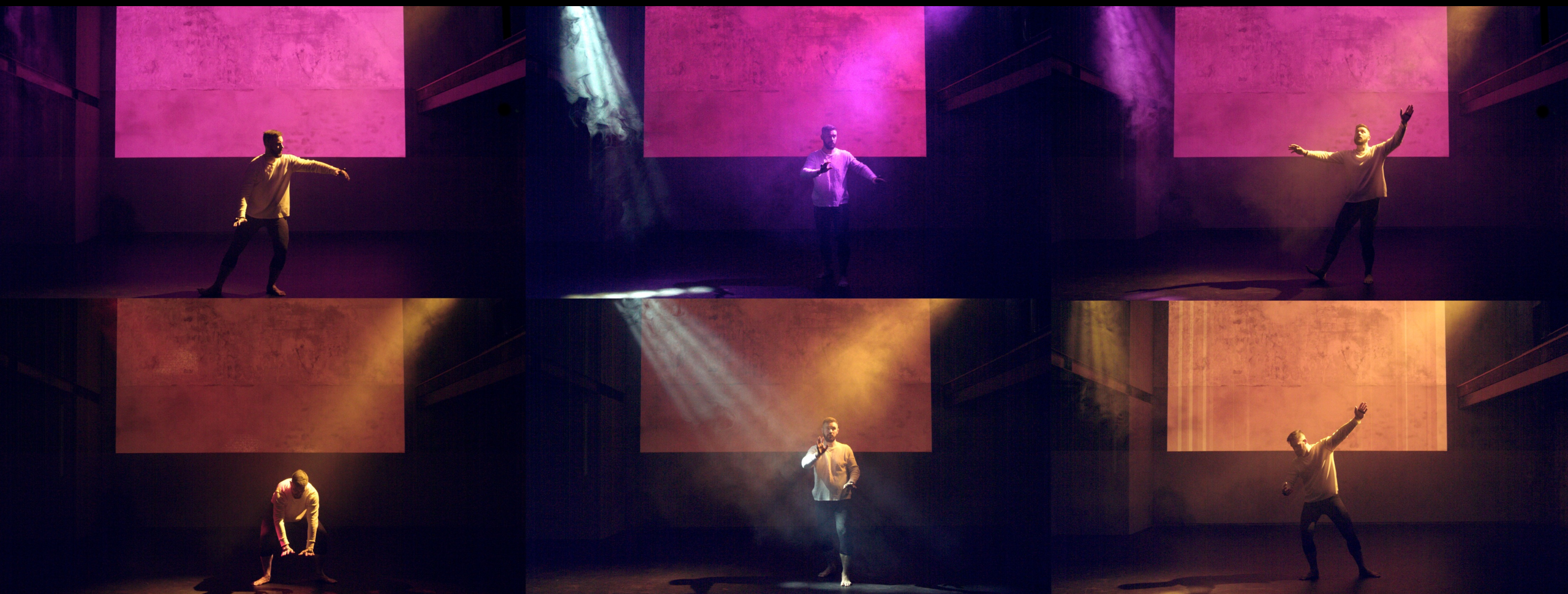
In *OPK* all audio-visuals are performed in virtual space through body movement. By moving the hands and the body, music, video, special effects, robot lights, and even a smoke machine can be brought to life as if by magic. Motion-tracking allows the performer to be a virtual conductor, conjuring an immersive environment with the body itself. Conceptually *OPK* makes a case for physically-engaged interaction in response to much of present-day 'lazy media', while at the same time the piece subtly references possible damaging uses of those technologies.

*Opto-Phono-Kinesia* by Steve Gibson from Northumbria University was very impressive.

Simran Chopra, NorSC Lab



*Opto-Phono-Kinesia*, Northern Dance, Newcastle, 2019, Photo by Liam Hardy.



Solomon Lennox's *OPK* performance at Northern Dance, January 2020. Photos by Liam Hardy.

# VIRTUAL VJ (2011-15)

By Steve Gibson & Stefan Arisona

3D tracking, sound, programming - Steve Gibson

Video, programming - Stefan Arisona

Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/VirtualDJ/virtualvj/virtualvj.html>

**VIRTUAL VJ** takes the concept of *Virtual DJ* one step further and unites the role of the DJ and VJ into one interface: 3D space. The concept of *Virtual VJ* is to allow two or more users to control different aspects of the sound and video environment with their movements. One tracker is set to trigger sound and video and the other is set to manipulate the sound and video initiated by the first tracker. The focus of the media integration is on the development of observable connections between the audio and video mediums in order to assist the users with ease of interaction.

The key conceptual idea that is explored in *Virtual VJ* is the idea of cooperation and the sense of personal space in ephemeral, virtual systems. This is achieved by programming the trackers so that dramatic events happen when the two trackers are close together or far apart. For example, the environment has been programmed so that the trackers apply distortion to the audio when they are proximate to each other. At the same time video effects are added when the same proximity of the two trackers is observed.

This can result in a game of cat and mouse where the users determine whether they will choose to closely follow the movements of the other participant or decide whether they wish to pursue a more individual experience. Audience members are allowed to interact in whatever manner they chose, but at the same time noticeable results will be produced as they inhabit similar spaces, encouraging them to cooperate with each in order to produce dramatic audio-visual results.



*Virtual VJ* at CHI Vancouver, 2011, Photo by Stefan Arisona.

# GRAND THEFT BICYCLE (2007-17)

By Steve Gibson, Justin Love and Jim Olson  
Concept, Sound, Image editing - Steve Gibson  
Programming and Sensors – Justin Love  
Graphics and Design – Jim Olson  
Web: <https://grandtheftbicycle.com/index.html>

Experience the excitement, glamour, fear, violence and mayhem of a genuine Middle Eastern battle! Better yet, get your fat shooter-playing ass off the console and onto the revolutionary Borgcycle™, a sensor equipped bike that allows / forces users to get a heart-pounding workout while hunting down some baddies. Mount the Borgcycle™ and suddenly you are riding through a 3D recreation of a desert city. Choose between the roles of an insurgent, an invader or an onlooker. Change sides if you feel the urge! Ride through the chaos and join in on the hunt for the main targets: George Bush, Tony Blair, Steven Harper, Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, Kim Jong Il (among others). Kick some lying white boy ass or take out some fascist terrorist woman haters! Your choice. Won't it feel good to nail those bastards; and with the endorphins pumping hard on the Borgcycle™ you'll experience the physical thrill of really being there. *Grand Theft Bicycle is coming to a venue near you. Prepare to ride your way to victory!*

“GTB [Grand Theft Bicycle] inverts established paradigms of wreaking havoc from the vantage point of a powerful motorized vehicle and enables the humble cyclist to appear impervious to both vehicular and firefight assault. Further, this project spans the world of media arts and digital technology –sometimes considered the realm of gizmo art — with installation art and theoretical constructs such as relational aesthetics.”

Dick Averbs, Akimblog



Grand Theft Bicycle at ISEA 2012, Albuquerque, Photo by Rasmus Vuori.

# EXPLODING, PLASTIC & INEVITABLE (REDUX) (2006-12)

By Steve Gibson & Stefan Arisona (with Guests)

Performers have included:

Steve Gibson, Stefan Arisona, Scheinwerfer, Yazid Dyz, Tom Kuo, Love&Olson, Utah Saints, Alan Dobson, Jackson 2Bears and Adam Tindale

Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/Exploding/>

A digital aberration on the scale of it's 1960s namesake, this circus of light and sound presents itself for your explicit enjoyment. "Exploding, Plastic & Inevitable" (EPI) is a pop explosion of electronic music, hallucinogenic video and free improvisation featuring multiple screens of visual excess equally mashed with the adulterated beats of Stefan Arisona (aka DJ robot\_mixeur - Zurich, CH / Singapore), the electro-techno of Steve Gibson (aka DJ Nord - Victoria, BC, CAN / Edinburgh, UK) along with many special guests. A glut of technology, an overload of the senses, an immersion in an audiovisualscape.

**"Exploding, Plastic & Inevitable Redux** utilizes multiple projectors, a barrage of laptop computers, custom software, live vocals, keyboards and live video processing to create an immersive audio-visual experience which mimics the psychedelic atmosphere of the original EPI event, while at the same time updating the audio-visual language to the 21st Century."

Luc Meier, [Swissnex San Francisco](#).



*Exploding, Plastic & Inevitable (Redux)* at Digital Art Weeks, Zurich, 2007, Photo by Ruedi Kuchen.

# WHEN GHOSTS WILL DIE (2005)

Concept - Steve Gibson & Dene Grigar

Script - Dene Grigar & John Barber

Video editing, Director Programming, Music & Sound Design, Light Design, Motion Tracking - Steve Gibson

Voices - Marilouise Kroker & Jim Andrews

Director Behaviors - Jim Andrews

Tracking Technology - Will Bauer of APR Inc.

Network Programming - Conroy Badger & Chong Zhang of APR Inc.

Network Support - David Broome, University of Victoria

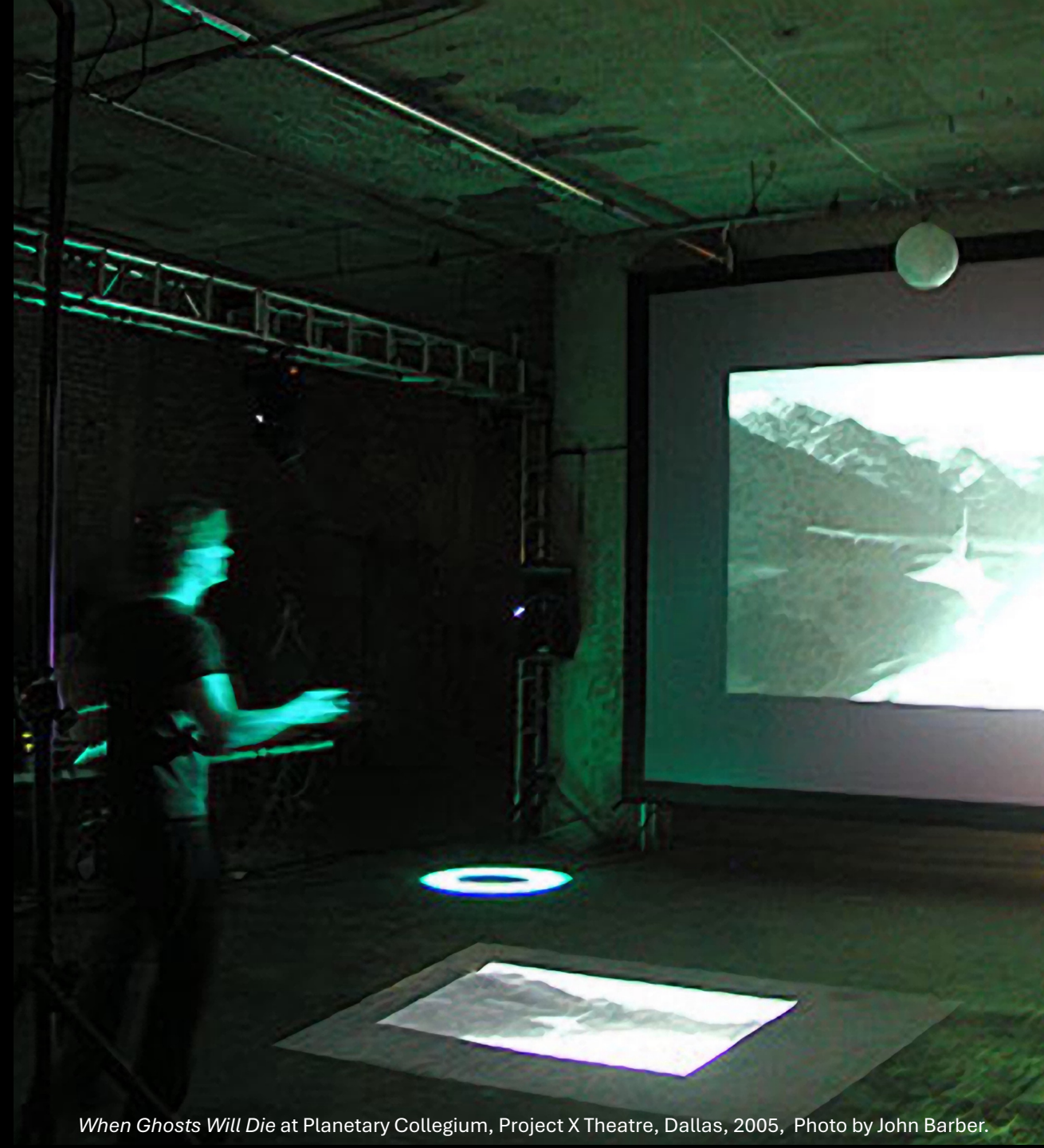
Technology, Infrastructure, Support - Canarie, Canadian Foundation for Innovation

Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/VirtualDJ/>

**WHEN GHOSTS WILL DIE**, a performance-installation that utilizes multi-sensory elements such as sound, video, light, and text controlled by motion-tracking technology, tells the story about the dangers of nuclear proliferation. Inspired by the play, "Copenhagen", by Michael Frayn, it explores the use of non-linguistic elements in the service of making poetry and telling stories.

*When Ghosts Will Die* involves one-two performers and envisions the space as a 3D grid simultaneously within a central computer and a physical performance space. The performers move through this environment and evoke the multi-sensory elements with hand-held tracking devices and in so doing interact with these elements through three potential phases of nuclear proliferation: 1) Disharmony, 2) Destruction, and 3) Disintegration. These three phases are intended to evoke the first nuclear explosion, the "Trinity" test in New Mexico on July 16, 1945, that took place just weeks before the nuclear bombs exploded over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan

Finalist, The First Annual Drunken Boat Panliterary Awards in the Video category, 2005.



*When Ghosts Will Die* at Planetary Collegium, Project X Theatre, Dallas, 2005, Photo by John Barber.

# VIRTUAL DJ (2002-05)

Music, lighting design, interactive programming by Steve Gibson.  
Networking software by Chong Zhang and Conroy Badger of APR, Inc.  
Project Supervision Will Bauer of APR, Inc.  
Produced by CANARIE, as a part of their ANAST program.  
Special thanks to The Interactive Institute, Stockholm for support.  
Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/VirtualDJ/>

**VIRTUAL DJ** uses the tracking capabilities of the Gesture and Media System to allow one or more users to use space as an audio remix or performance tool. Users literally wave their arms, and as if by magic new audio loops are accessed, synthesizer filters are opened, samples are played, and drum loops are started. Simultaneously robot lights follow the users, dynamically changing in relation to their position and the audio.

The piece can be performed by one or two local users in a large space, but with the help of CANARIE, a version with one local performer and one remote performer can be performed over the internet at two geographically-removed sites. In this scenario, two identical presentations can be held, each with the ghostly presence of a remote interactor moving sounds and lights in tandem with the local performer. *Virtual DJ* is a prototype for a new type of club- and network-based performance and can be used by anyone from absolute musical neophyte to the expert performer.

“**[Virtual DJ]** could forever change the dance floor.”  
Vivian Moreau, The National Post.



*Virtual DJ* at Digital Art Weeks, Zurich, 2006, Photo by Simon Schubiger.

# TELEBODY (1998-2000)

Written And Conceived by Steve Gibson.

Programmed by Jonathan Griffiths & Steve Gibson.

Performed by Steve Gibson, Bert Deivert, & Jonathan Griffiths.

Based On An Original Idea by Steve Gibson & Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.

Produced by Karlstad University and the Banff Centre for the Arts.

Web: <https://www.telebody.ws/telebody/>

**TELEBODY** is a large-scale piece for two music and video "performers." Using digital music instruments, the players have real-time control over an audio environment and images of two entire bodies.

The central theme of TELEBODY revolves around man-machine relations, and more specifically the man-machine interface and the human body. Digital image capturing, 3D scanning, and effects processing of the human figure provide a metaphorical description of a potential digital human. In TELEBODY the performers act as metaphorical bio-geneticists, perfectly controlling and manipulating images of the human body.

TELEBODY IS the altered human figure in the digital world.

"**TELEBODY** is not so much new media performance art as a sonic blast off into the gene-time and space-time of recombinant culture. It is as if the universe of electronic visuality with its images recombinant of animated screens and distorted human figures release the ink black filter of the electronic eye, falling under the spell of music deeply informed by the rhythms of new biological discourse."

Arthur Kroker, *The Will to TechnOlogy and the Culture of Nihilism*, Chapter 8, [Digital Dirt](#)



*Telebody at Open Space, Victoria, 2001, Photo by Rachel Kiers.*