

The Involuntary Dance Machine

Have you ever dreamed about losing control over your own body? With the Involuntary Dance Machine you get the chance. A special dance suit containing medical electrodes is strapped to your body. By stimulating muscles in the arms and legs with electricity that is sent in impulses, the Dance Machine makes you move involuntary. Connected to a sound source, the spasms and twitches of your body occur to the beat of the music/sound. You become an electrical puppet, an automaton, a vessel for the current. You will dance to the rhythm whether you want it or not.

Peter Hansén
Robert Nyberg
Monica Richter
Ossian Sunesson

School of Arts and Communication, K3
Malmö University
kit03017@stud.mah.se
kit03016@stud.mah.se
kit03042@stud.mah.se
kit03004@stud.mah.se

INTRODUCTION

The Involuntary Dance Machine is a project made by four Interaction Design students at K3, Malmö University. The concept is to make a person that is connected to the machine “dance” involuntarily to a sound input.

The feeling we want to deliver to the observer is the feeling you would get from a 50’s mad scientists laboratory: massive electronics with big dials and primitive monitors. A huge red lever controls the power to the dancer and throughout the display you will hear the distinct sound of high voltage electricity.

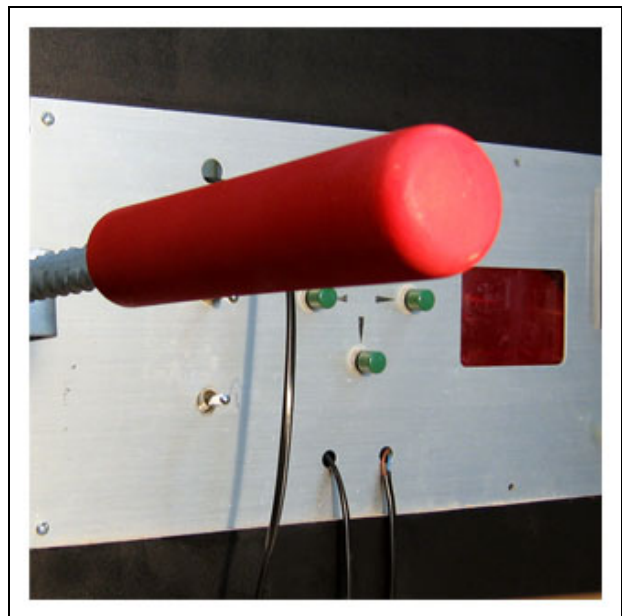


Figure 1: The Involuntary Dance Machines main interface

Exhibition parts

There will be two parts of the exhibition. The main part is a live show that will last for about 15 minutes on each occasion.

The second part is a permanent exhibition that consists of something we call “Shock Boxes”. They are small handheld prototypes that can provide a subject with a shock on one limb, similar to the ones in the Involuntary Dance Machine. There is also some video material featuring previous exhibitions.

The live show

The live show will start with a brief introduction of the Involuntary Dance Machine and then a person will be put into a suit containing electrodes for the arms and legs. The subject will then be suspended a few centimetres in the air to prevent him or her from falling. The main part of the show will start when the red lever is pulled; the music will begin and in its turn produce electric impulses that are sent to the suit, making the subject “dance”.



Figure 2: The Suit of the Involuntary Dance Machine

After the show there will be a limited opportunity for the audience to experience electric impulses provided by the Shock Boxes.

The hardware as well as the software, the suit, the Shock Boxes, all accessories and video material are produced by the project members.