

Water Bell project

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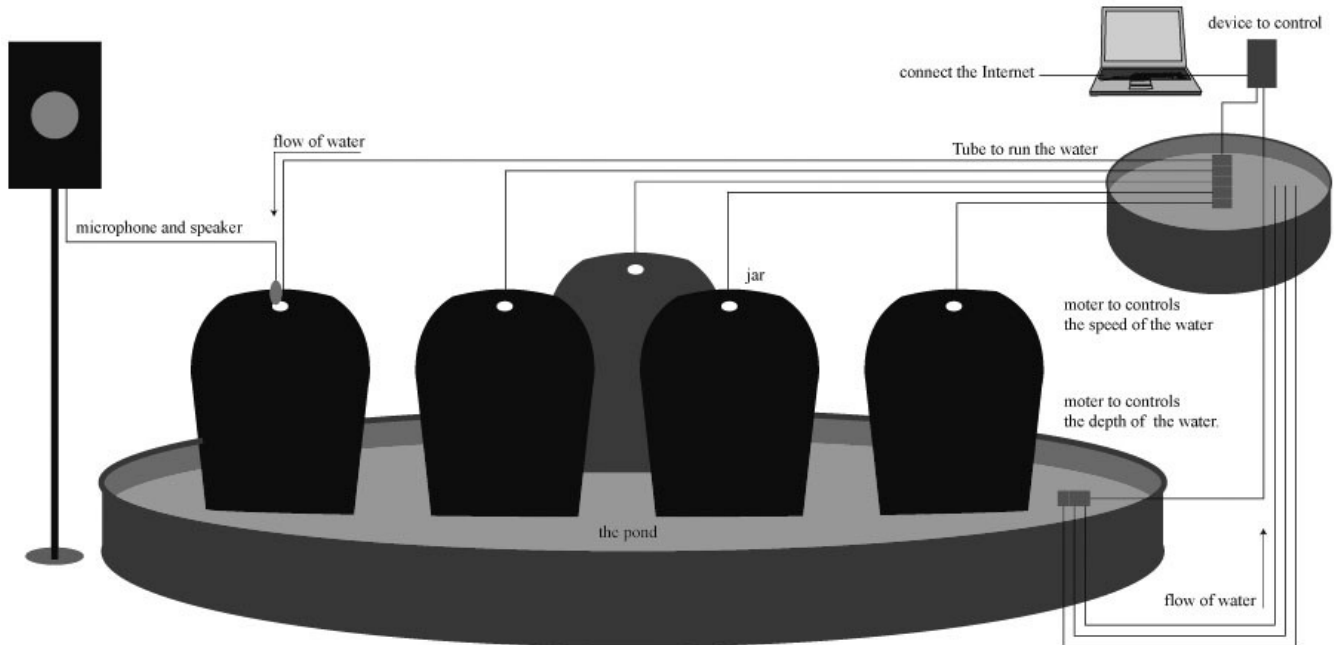


Figure 1. Water Bell

ABSTRACT

"Water Bell" project is a sound installation based on the Japanese 'Suikinkutsu'. The "Water Bell" project consists of five vessels standing in a basin. A tube directs drops of water to the top of each of these vessels. When they drip into the Water inside the Vessels a sound can be heard. The frequency of the drops and the amount of water in the basin is controlled by a computer. At the same time this computer gathers realtime data from the Internet: The price of oil in japan and the temperature of the ocean. The frequency of the water drops dripping into the vessels corresponds with the temperature of the ocean, the water in the basin rises and drops with the price of oil, hence changing the quality of the sound made by the drops.

BACKGROUND

Suikinkutsu is a drainage system that is a rare and unique feature of Japanese gardens which creates a mysterious but beautiful sound of dripping water: A large earthen jar with a hole in the bottom is buried upside down in the ground next to a water basin. When someone washes his hands in the basin, water will drip through the hole in the buried jar and fall into a shallow pool, making a clear sound. It is believed that the Suikinkutsu were developed during mid-Edo period (beginning of 18th century).

The Suikinkutsu enjoyed a period of popular revival during the Meiji period (1868-1912) before almost disappearing.

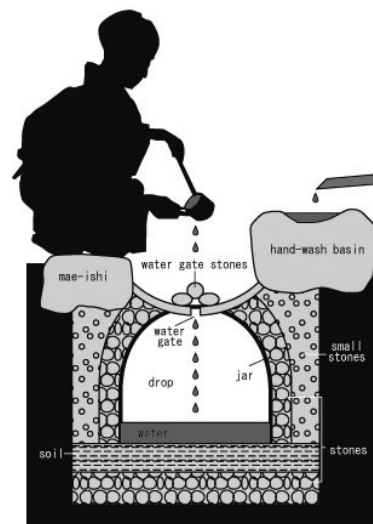


Figure 2. Suikinkutsu

Japan is strongly exposed to the forces of nature due to its geographic location. Therefore Japanese culture has always attached a lot of importance to nature's sounds. Many attempts have been made in to imitate or modify the sounds of wind, water and the singing of insects.

For example water has not only been used for drinking but also as means for cooling or cleaning. In many Japanese gardens sounds of water can be heard, coming from ponds, waterfalls or Suikinkutsu. In so called "dry gardens", water has even been imitated with stones and sand. Gardens seem to be spaces which capture and preserve natural phenomena.

There are "Water Sprinklers" that water roads and gardens to cite a more contemporary example. Especially in summertime, they water storefronts and entrances or gardens in order to cleanse dust and to soften the heat. These sprinklers produce a kind of "perceived water" that provides a feeling of coolness.

Water can be heard, seen and felt. It is common sense that water is essential for living, but I wonder whether the importance attached to the elegance and the emotional dimension (now "emotional dimension" is really not good, but i can't come up with something else right now...) of water is not peculiar to Japanese culture.

CONCEPT

In spite of this, the Japanese seem not to mind that nature on Sakhalin is destroyed by the oil industry in order to feed the Japanese market. Sooner or later the effects of this exploitation will be felt worldwide. Each drop in "Water Bell" could be the one that's too much.

The Suikinkutsu were not set up in gardens as simple musical instruments just to enjoy their sound. They are meant to be a means of experiencing water audibly. The pictures evoked by these sounds remind us of nature being a part of our life. The Suikinkutsu were designed as opportunities to tune in with nature. Just as our body can perceive the nature surrounding us, the Internet lets us perceive a distant environment. This work is an attempt to make us aware of the world extending outside of us and of our dependency on distant environments.

SYSTEM

The flow of the dripping water and the amount of water in the Vessels are controlled by a pump and a number of valves. These devices are operated by assembler scripts. Java scripts gather environmental data from the Internet in real time.

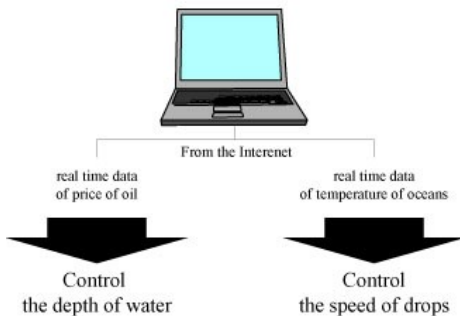


Figure 3. System

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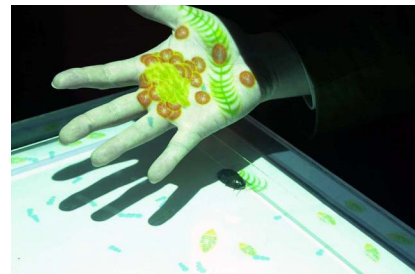
was born in Japan. After graduating from Kanazawa College of Art in the Department of Visual Design I studied media art at the Institute of Advanced Media Arts and Sciences (IAMAS) and have been studying new media art at the Hochschule fur Gestaltung und Kunst Zurich (hgkz) since 2005.

ABOUT ARTWORK

Bug??? 1

"The series Bug???" is an installation artwork that puts cockroaches, which are usually hidden, into a box.

21.Feb. -07.Mar. 2004 Ogaki Biennale 2004



Bug??? 2

02.Sep.-07.Sep.2004 Ars Electronica 2004/IAMAS: Progressive Media Art Education from Japan



LoveLetter

An installation artwork uses the ability of a cockroach to remember a route.

24.Feb.-27.Feb.2005 IAMAS 2005: Graduation Exhibition

