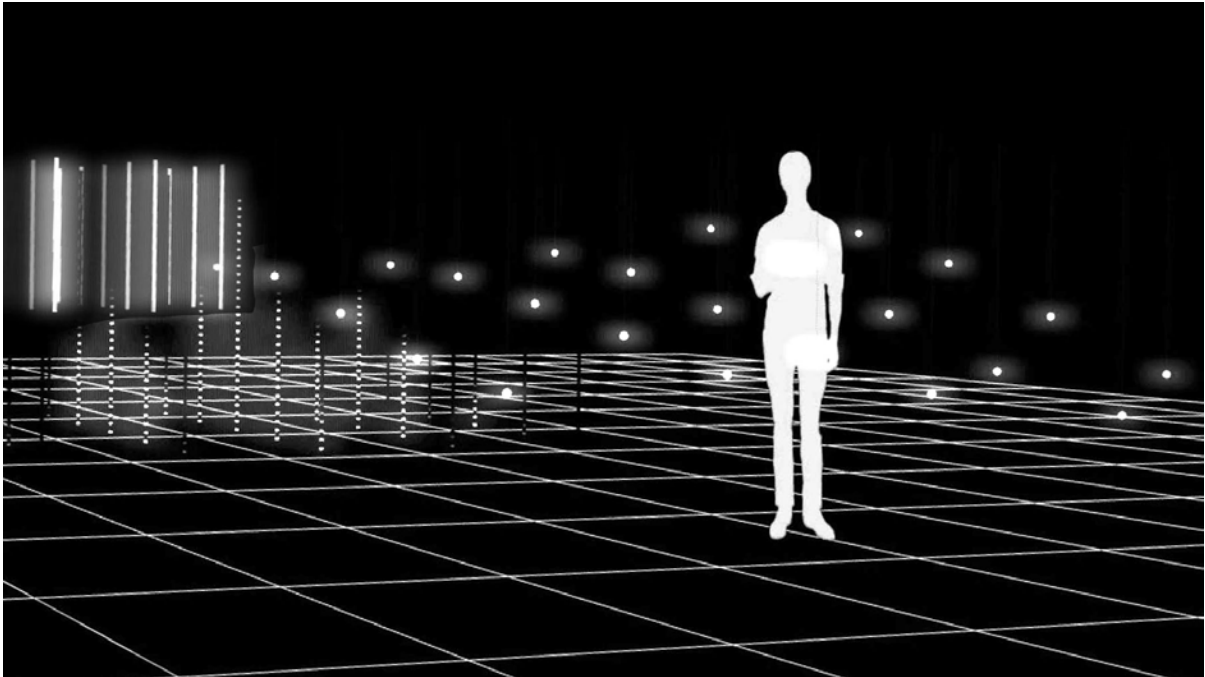


Ghost

MULTIMEDIA OPERA:
LIGHTS, VOICE & ELECTRONICS

Duration: 30 min

Kotoka Suzuki (music) & Christian Ziegler (light sculpture)



About the work

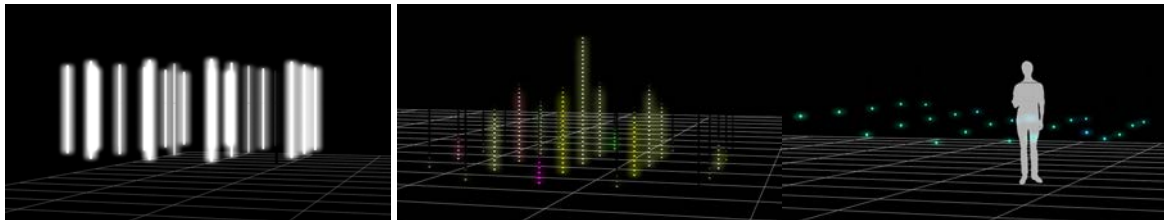
Ghost is a multimedia opera for voice, electronics and light. The work is a philosophical investigation of the various beliefs and associations humanity holds concerning death. In this work, the stage (defined by the light structures) becomes a living, transforming, and mutating architecture that responds to the sounds and the physical movement of the singer and music; music and stage (architecture) become a fluid metamorphosis of one another.

Our ideas about death vary depending on individual beliefs and one's culture, but it is universally expressed through ritual and ceremony, often accompanied by music. Through intimate, delicate and often ghostly expressions, the work aims to musically portray interpretations of the rituals of death. The project employs the narrative frame of the ghost story. In many cultures, ghosts and ghost stories are often thought of lost souls that are unable to transcend to the next cycle of life. The social tool of the story is often used as a psychological coping mechanism in dealing with death. In this work, the singer wandering through space, becomes a protagonist in this ghost story. The work aims to represent these relationships between the protagonist and death both acoustically and visually through space, shape, and movement.

Stage & Setup

Four three-dimensional light/sound structures will be created in the space as the main stage for the work, each representing a different philosophical state associated with death: mortality (physical), transformation (being to non-being), ephemerality, and transcendence (perceiving the unknown). These structures breathe and move, at times kinetically, according to the physical movement of the singer walking within it and music generating on stage. The physical presence and movement of the singer directly influences the work: the way the signer navigates through space affects the shape, color and movement of both the sound and light, creating new narrative structures. Hence, music becomes the physical architecture of the stage and vice versa. Lights – often associated with spirituality, hope, purity and mortality – serves as a visual libretto, providing context to music.

In addition to the eight speakers surrounding the space and the audience, small speakers will be installed directly above each light structure to create a localized sound projection of the movement of the singer, providing more spatial depth.



Tracking System & Sound Projection

The work will investigate how to accurately track the orientation of the singer on stage. This tracking information will not only enable close interactions between the singer, lights and sounds, but will also help map the sonic components of the performance.

Taking this idea a step further, the work will also investigate the psychological effects of sound projected against the natural direction of the orientation. For instance, sound of the voice projected only from behind the body of the singer could be made to represent a ghost shadowing the singer. Additionally, these sounds will be manipulated and transformed and projected from various directions to enhance the illusion of the voice floating in space in a form of a ghost. This idea of the ghost story will be incorporated into the choreography between the singer, sound and light on the stage.

Work Plan

During our residency at EMPAC, our goal is to complete the construction of the installation and the realization of the work in a performance. It is our hope that the work can be installed as a public presentation or performance at the end of our residency at EMPAC.

Time Frame:

June 2016	Begin composing (audio & score)
August 2016	Begin building the light structures
December 2017	First system test
February 2017	Completion of sketch of the work (audio & score)
March 2017	Second system test / workshops with voice
May 2017	Assemble & testing of the system (1 week)
	Rehearsals (2-3 weeks)
June 2017	Public performance