

ARS ELECTRONICA

NEWS

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## Messa di Voce

**After the audiovisual installations *RE:MARK* and *Hidden Worlds of Noise and Voice* Golan Levin and Zach Lieberman once more realize a project focusing on the visualization of sound and voice. *Messa di Voce* is a concert performance with the vocal artists Joan La Barbara and Jaap Blonk.**

*Messa di Voce* is a concert performance and creates a fascinating symbiosis of sound and image, real voices and virtual graphics. A software that has been custom-designed for this project converts every vocal nuance into highly expressive real-time graphics with which the singers, in turn, can play. A cycle of interaction that fully integrates the performers and singers into an ambience consisting of sound, virtual 3-D graphics and real-time processing.

The software in *Messa di Voce* combines a motion tracking system and a speech analysis and projects graphic objects in real-time. Every noise – long and short, high and low notes, shouting, barking, coughing – sound level and intensity have a visual correspondence. The result is the illusion that language and sound are visible.

*Messa di Voce* does not use any elements of a concrete language; instead, it is completely abstract. The vocal artists Joan La Barbara (US) and Jaap Blonk (NL) will experiment with all possibilities of vocal expression and thus create a space full of sound poetry. In the interaction with the real-time graphics it is possible to tell stories in which reality and virtuality melt. The result is a technically complex and nevertheless enormously playful audiovisual narrative.

The term "messa di voce" ("placing the voice") describes one of the most difficult exercises for singers. One note is sung in a steady *crescendo* and *decrescendo* and in *piano* and *forte* without leaving the pitch. This as well as intonation and resonance have to stay constant. The difficulty is not to change the tone by altering the sound quality.

Golan Levin: Artist, composer, engineer interested in developing artifacts and events which explore subtle new modes of interactive expression. Levin is primarily engaged in the development of technical systems and software to realize audiovisual installations. He was represented in the Ars Electronica 2001 with his *Dialtones Telesymphony*. His installations *RE:MARK* and *Hidden Worlds of Noise and Voice* (2002) are to be seen in the Ars Electronica Center. He is given an Award of Distinction in the category Net Vision in this year Prix