

Sound Gallery

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The **Sound Gallery** is a series of site-specific sound installations in *Bruuns Galleri*: one of Denmark's largest and busiest shopping malls located in the civic center of Aarhus, Denmark. The goal is to involve the general public through the use of intuitive interaction designed to arouse the visitors' curiosity, playfulness and attention. Due to its great number of visitors and free public access, *Bruuns Galleri* is an ideal test site and display window for adaptive music: computer-generated music that can be controlled, advertently or inadvertently, by a listener or audience. The purpose of this project is to test and implement the artistic idea.



Site for *Listen Up!*: skylight on level 5 of *Bruuns Galleri*.

"But interaction is not an end in itself, it is necessary to stipulate that the quality of the interactivity depends upon the extent to which the work of art can encourage both critical reflection and creative engagement."
Graham Coulter-Smith,
Deconstructing Installation Art, 1986-2006

The artistic idea behind the Sound Gallery was awarded a prize by the Danish State Arts Foundation in October 2009 in the category "art in public spaces." The project is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2012 and for presentation to the general public in the summer of 2012. The project has received generous financial support from the Danish Arts Foundation, The Society of Danish Composers and The Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus. The Sound Gallery is produced in collaboration with *Bruuns Galleri*.

Wayne Siegel has written music in many genres ranging from electronic music to orchestral works, from chamber music to a full-length science fiction opera. Leading international artists, including the Kronos Quartet, Singcircle, Safri Duo and Harry Sparnaay, have commissioned works from him. His music has been performed widely throughout Europe, the Americas and Japan. Many of his works fall between genres, combining diverse cultural elements and compositional techniques, encompassing influences from folk music, rock and minimalism. He often uses computers with live musicians, and he has explored the possibilities of interactive sound installations. In 1986 he became director of Denmark's national electronic music center, DIEM, and in 2003 Siegel was appointed professor of electronic music at the Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus.

Sound often plays "second fiddle" in relation to visual elements in motion pictures, multimedia performances and even music videos or concerts. Sound art that is intended to be heard but not seen offers the potential to whet the visitor's appetite for pure listen. The idea is to create unusual and surprising audio experiences that, just for a moment, draw the visitor out of a well-known daily routine and train of thought. The focus of the project is to examine the potential of adaptive music for establishing social interaction, critical reflection and creative involvement on the part of the general public in an every day situation.

Whispering Sidewalks

In the central hall of the shopping mall there are four large moving sidewalks connecting the various levels of the mall with the parking complex below. Because of the rather long distances that these moving sidewalks cover, a visitor might spend up to two minutes moving from the lowest level of the parking complex to the central hall. *Whispering Sidewalks* is a group of sound installations that offer audio surprises en route.

Several small directional speakers discretely placed along the moving sidewalks create a close and intimate audio experience. Short audio snippets are activated when a visitor passes by one of the speakers. These sounds can only be heard by a person located very close to that particular speaker. The idea is to introduce small sonic surprises on an otherwise monotonous journey on the moving sidewalk. Different visitors will have very different experiences.



Site for *Whispering Sidewalk*: moving sidewalk at *Bruuns Galleri*.



Site for *Listen Up!*: skylights on level 5 of *Bruuns Galleri*.

Listen Up!

On the top floor (level 5) of *Bruuns Galleri* there are several round skylights in varying sizes ranging from 3-6 meters in diameter. These skylights are constructed as large tubes between the ceiling and glass windows on the roof of the building. *Listen Up!* is a sound sculpture that utilizes these skylights to create a new audio experience. The sound is activated when one or more people walk directly under one of the skylights. The sound sculpture changes in relation to the visitor's movement. Each skylight has its own "sound" or identity. Visitors experience different sound worlds under each of the various skylights.

The technical implementation consists of a small computer connected to a digital camera. The sound system consists of discrete speakers placed within the skylight. The hardware is concealed above the ceiling. A computer program designed by the composer translates motion into sound.