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SoundScapes and Martin team up at Sydney Paralympic Games 2000

New invention incorporates automated lighting to help disabled persons develop and communicate through technology

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SoundScapes and Martin team up at Sydney Paralympic Games 2000

17/11/2000

New invention incorporates automated lighting to help disabled persons develop and communicate through technology



PRODUCTS INVOLVED

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SoundScapes, a Danish-based company that develops personal, interactive communication systems, was invited by their sponsor IBM to present a patent pending project at the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games.

The project combines Martin automated lighting fixtures with technically advanced sound instruments into a comprehensive system, which can be used as a rehabilitation tool by disabled and injured persons, as well as therapists around the world.

A lecture on the system's merits was presented by Anthony (aka Tony) Lewis Brooks, SoundScapes founder and CEO at the 5th Scientific Paralympic Congress in Sydney by invitation of the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Committee. The final product will have broad applications in several different markets upon completion of the developmental phase.

"This is the culmination of around 12 years of experimentation and development," says Tony. "The result is a new form of human interaction and communication using the tools of technology, art and the human potential. These methods of interaction and multimedia gain particular importance and

worldwide attention when used as a tool for aiding disabled or injured persons to develop and communicate on their own terms."

The SoundScapes interactive event was held within the IBM pavilion, on the grounds of the Sydney Games. The pavilion was a showcase for technology with high visibility and public access for athletes, officials and spectators.

"Lighting is very important as it can give visual clues whilst colors and patterns can indicate expression," said Tony. "Imagine someone who is having difficulty with muscle control - we synchronise the robotic lights to give visual clues as to how they can correct themselves. We've worked a lot with people who have had strokes or a head injury and have trouble with their balance afterwards. We set up our noninvasive invisible 3D sensors to capture their body movement and cue the lights to the body movement so that they can see a visual clue as to what their balance actually is." The system has also been used artistically for dance and musical events, as well as interactive installations in art galleries.

"It was really good to discover the Martin moving lights as they can give us the movement cue which is quite important in our work," said Tony.

SoundScapes designed the Sydney installation together with its event partner Martin Professional A/S. "We have an electronic development partner who is based just down the street from Martin in Aarhus," said Tony. "Martin in Denmark have supported my grass roots effort for the last six years. They've always lent me lights to experiment with and the MiniMAC is quite a good application for us because you can pick it up and take it to a clinic easily. Plus their movement makes a very good cue. Martin also lent us some studios to prepare for the Paralympics; they've really been very helpful."

When Martin called their Australian distributor Show Technology to tell them about SoundScapes at the Paralympics, Show Technology didn't hesitate to provide whatever was needed.

"They've been truly generous with their support," said Tony. "We couldn't have showed what we have here today if they hadn't supplied the equipment and helped with the production set up. Show Technology has provided a platform which really shows the benefits of both our equipment and the Martin equipment."

Show Technology supplied the five Martin MiniMacs plus they contacted Lots Of Watts who happily supplied the staging equipment and audio required. "It's really been quite an effort from the Sydney crew," said Tony.

The SoundScapes concept is now being developed as a complete product for therapeutic use, in cooperation with the Center for Brain Injury at Copenhagen University.



Paralympic Congress demo, Sydney



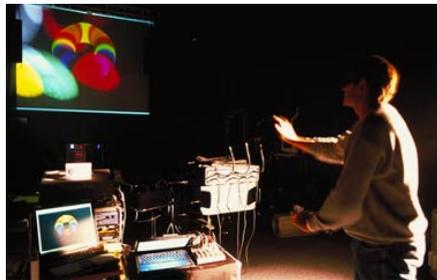
SoundScapes Tony Brooks



SoundScapes Tony Brooks



System demo, Aarhus, Denmark



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