

# Host Your Ghosts: Recontextualizing the Ouija Board as a Communal NIME for Music Performance

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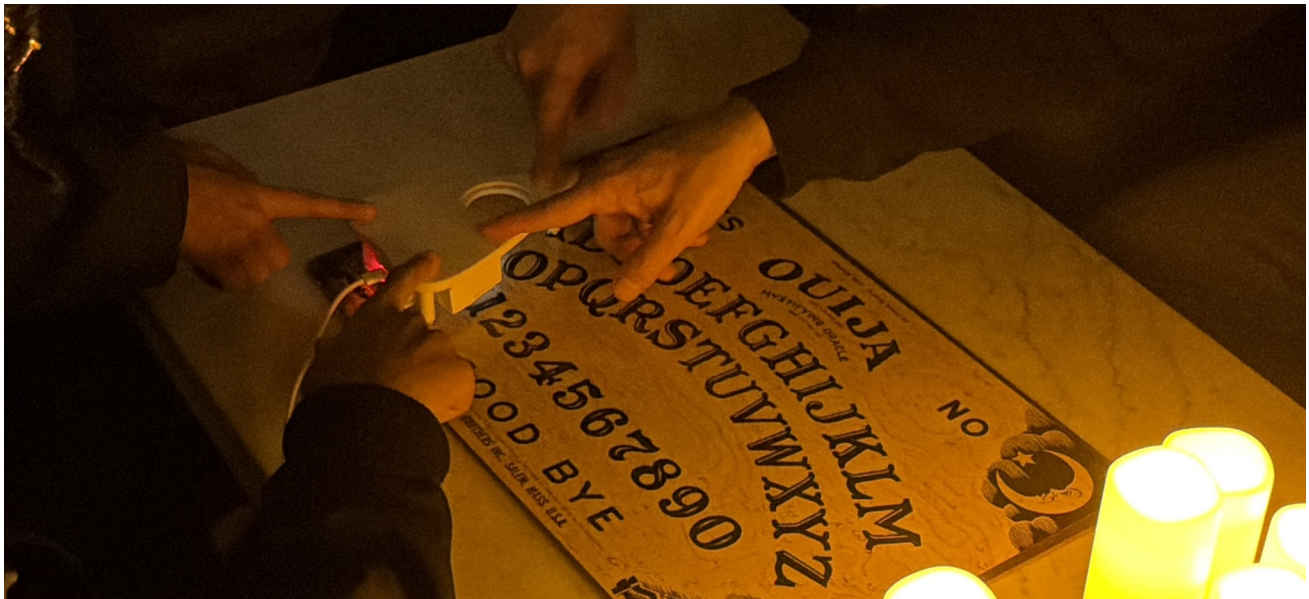


Figure 1: The motion-tracking planchette interface and Ouija board used in *Host Your Ghosts*.

## Abstract

*Host Your Ghosts* is an interactive sound art installation that explores communal musicking through audience-provided statements, a repurposed Ouija board, and a custom-made motion tracking planchette interface. At its core, the installation examines Ouija's multifaceted legacy and asks participants to recontextualize the device's inherent cultural and anthropological scripts. This paper details our approach to de-scripting the Ouija board, exploring its potential as a collaborative NIME that enables participants to collectively compose soundscapes built from statements about the things that haunt them.

*Host Your Ghosts* features two distinct opportunities for participant interaction: one isolated from the main installation space and designed to be experienced independently, and the other designed to bring people together to perform as a group in a colocated space. The piece's performance ecosystem uses machine learning tools to analyze spoken word recordings made by individual participants, building a series of descriptor-driven corpora. The planchette's movements across the Ouija board by groups of performers conjure musical material from a series of

concatenative synthesizers and a multichannel speaker array, creating a community-driven sonic tapestry made from the "ghosts" of the unseen prior contributors.

We begin by discussing connections between our work and prior projects that focus on communal activities while reframing well-known objects and practices. We follow this with a breakdown of the installation's different interactive phases and the programmatic inspirations behind them before outlining the technological design and implementation of the installation system.

## Keywords

Collaborative Music Performance, Community-driven NIME, Machine Learning, Repurposed Objects, Interactive Sound Art

## 1 Introduction

The past decade has seen an expansion of NIME research centering on repurposing and recontextualizing preexisting hardware as a tenet of the digital musical instrument (DMI) design process. Projects and studies on the environmental and artistic benefits of circuit-bending and recycling hardware put a spotlight on what Masu et al. define as "the O in NIME": a push against the inherent drive to produce DMIs that feature new, cutting-edge technologies in favor of resurrecting older systems and components [25]. Beyond the act of saving items from the local scrap heap, DMI development practices rooted in the reuse and revitalization of preexisting and genre-specific tools help to open the doors of the NIME community to new creators and artists by addressing a wide range of sociological and anthropological topics that could



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not be addressed through the use of contemporary technology alone.

Continuing the work being conducted in these areas, we introduce *Host Your Ghosts*, an interactive sound art installation that explores communal musicking with recontextualized, pre-existing objects. Our project expands upon the practice of DMI development through the adaptation of quotidian objects by creating a new performance ecosystem and interactive sound art installation centered around the Ouija board.

## 1.1 The Art of De-Scripting

*Host Your Ghosts* serves as a spiritual successor to participatory works such as *Chorus for Untrained Operator*, a 2016 installation and a profound example of the impact of shared, repurposed interfaces on collaborative musical performance. Created by Peter Bussigel and Stephan Moore, the work surrounds participants with a collection of repurposed everyday objects such as tape players, mechanical toys, spinning lights, and sewing machines (examples of what Marcel Duchamp referred to as *readymades* [12]) either hanging suspended in the air or sitting on shelves and tables around the space. At the center of the room stands an antique telephone operator patch bay which serves as a shared performance interface for reanimating the dormant readymades. When connections are patched along the grid of jacks, each familiar item whirs to life, blaring and adding a new sonic contribution to the vintage chorus [6].

Bussigel and Moore's choice of a mid-20th century tool (one originally designed for forging lines of communication across vast distances) as their performance interface telegraphs the benefits of group play to the audience through an embrace of what Madeline Akrich describes as the item's inherent script: a collection of understood uses for a preexisting object inscribed by its designer and reinforced by its role in society and in our own personal lives [1]. Embracing Akrich's vision, *Chorus for Untrained Operator* asks its participants to simultaneously acknowledge and rewrite the default scripts of each readymade in the choir, giving them the opportunity to play the dual roles of media archaeologist and author of each item's new story. This piece and others like it help to broaden the definition of what a NIME can be by expanding the DMI toolset for creators.

## 1.2 De-Scripting the Ouija Board

First introduced in the 1890s, Ouija boards emerged from the long lineage of tools and practices undertaken during séances for the purpose of communicating with spirits. Sitting at a table surrounding of a board adorned with the letters of the alphabet, the digits 0–9, and the words “Yes,” “No,” and “Goodbye,” Ouija users gather in groups, placing their hands upon a small wooden or plastic moveable indicator known as a planchette. The group asks a question of the spirits out loud in the hopes that supernatural influence will guide them to move the planchette across the board, selecting symbols and gradually spelling out a message from the beyond [14]. The words spelled out are, as described by Ouija scholar Brandon Hodge, a result of involuntary movement of the planchette known as the ideomotor response, described as an “unconscious muscular action caused participants’ light touches to influence the table’s movements in nearly imperceptible ways [17].” Anthropological research around the Ouija board ties its rise in popularity to multiple factors, notably the widespread impacts of the Civil War and World War I on American families who lost loved ones in combat and the proliferation of tragic

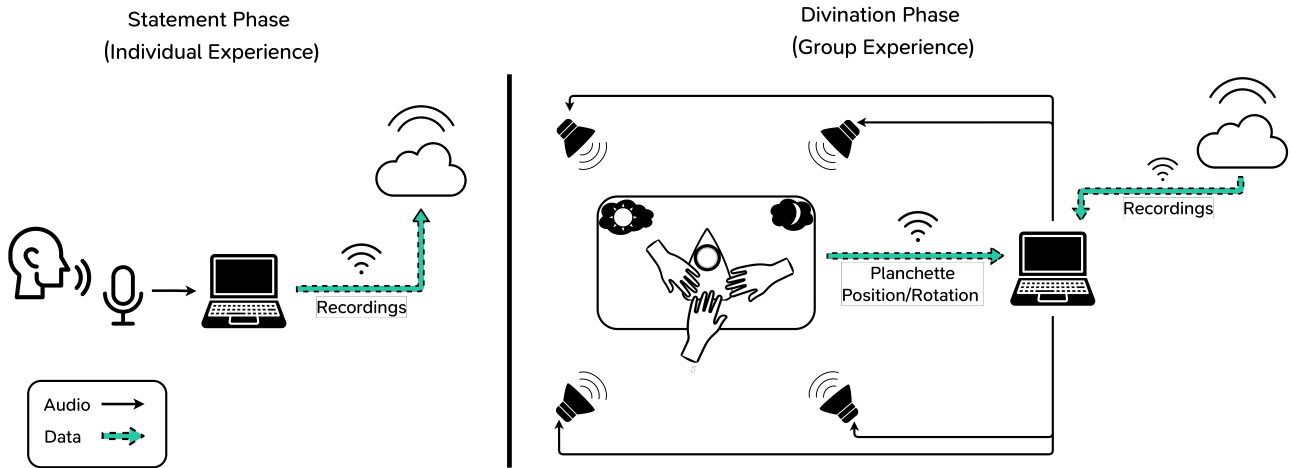
deaths attributed to disease, famine, and systematic violence during the turn of the century. A revitalization of Ouija board usage occurred when board game manufacturer Parker Brothers introduced what is today the most well recognized version, cementing its status in popular culture through its appearances in literature and films such as 2014's *Ouija* and 1971's *The Exorcist* [17].

While it originated as a communal tool for divination, the modern production of Ouija boards by a board game manufacturer indicates the existence of an inherent game-like nature to its use. In her work “Spirited Play: Analyzing the Ouija Board’s Gamification,” game theorist Sara Evans comments on the cultural classification of Ouija as a board game and the mental conflict this produces when comparing its game-centric script to its supernatural-centric script:

Downplaying Ouija’s cultural and spiritual dimensions inadvertently emphasizes its role as a product and, thereby, its commodification. That is the reality; Hasbro Ouija is ultimately a product you can buy, and its continued popularity over time is a testament to the free marketing it receives as a somewhat taboo cultural object. Ouija’s deeply spiritual roots contribute a distinctive layer of mystery and metaphysical intrigue to the gameplay experience. Most players approach the game from a curious perspective, wondering where messages originate. In terms of the pure gameplay experience for those involved, how it works doesn’t matter as much that it works. When players decipher the messages, mixing their own perceptions and understandings with the prompts of the board, a collaborative storytelling game about ghosts and/or your future is the result. In other words, Ouija might be described as a collaborative storytelling game [10].

At its core, *Host Your Ghosts* examines Ouija’s multifaceted legacy which has seen it play the roles of a collaborative mediation tool for those seeking to communicate with otherworldly forces, a taboo toy marketed to adventurous young adults, and even as the subject of fury for members of conservative religious movements during the Satanic Panic of the 1970s and 1980s [4]. The installation’s structure acknowledges Ouija’s preconceived scripts and asks participants to investigate how those scripts connect to collaborative music performance procedures.

This paper details our approach to de-scripting the Ouija board, exploring its potential as a collaborative NIME that enables participants to collectively compose a soundscape built from spoken statements about the things that haunt them. Viewing the Ouija board through the lens of Akrich’s treatise, we set out to create an artwork where users can confront and examine the many scripts imbued within Ouija across its history while also turning them on their head, placing the board at the heart of a tailor-made DMI performance ecosystem. We begin by discussing connections between our work and prior projects centered on communal activities as well as those that recontextualize well-known objects and practices. We follow this by breaking down *Host Your Ghosts*’s different interactive phases and the programmatic inspirations behind them before outlining the technological components of the installation system and our observations on how participants interacted with them in performance.



**Figure 2: Participant performance/interaction scenarios, audio routing, and data transmission topologies in each phase of *Host Your Ghosts*.**

## 2 Related Artworks and Research

Research and art centered on recontextualizing readymades through a conversion into DMIs has gradually become a prominent portion of the NIME archives [9, 20, 22–25]. Notable work that inspired our project includes Gaster et al.’s study on the reemergence of magnetic tape as a modern method of composing through a nostalgic practice [11], Preece et al. and Ho et al.’s creation of instruments made from repurposed domestic labor tools as a vehicle for challenging gender inequality [15, 16, 27], and Bin’s journey of bringing a fictional alien musical instrument from the “Star Trek” franchise to life, emphasizing a new perspective on the traditional DMI design process that balances the technocentric focus of NIME research with one informed by the instrument’s role as a storytelling device in the show [5].

The broader sound and digital art communities contain a litany of artists whose work highlights the importance of building communities through the use of shared experiences, interfaces, and instruments. Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer’s 2006 work *Pulse Room* served as a significant inspiration on the design of *Host Your Ghosts* due to its emphasis on multiple tiers of participation, each of which include varying layers of engagement and contributions by its participants separated by time. In the piece, participants enter the installation space to see a collection of light bulbs suspended from the ceiling flashing in asynchronous patterns. By gripping a set of heart rate-sensing handles placed in the room, audience members can visualize their own pulse through the flashing of a single bulb suspended in front of them at eye level before having their pulse-turned-flash added to the array of bulbs above, revealing the chaotic light show to be a collected record of previous visitors’ heartbeats [2].

The time-displaced realization of the impact of one’s contribution in *Pulse Room* is also explored in musical compositions like Treya Nash’s *Whisper* (2023) and Tate Carson’s *A More Perfect Union* (2017). Carson’s piece gives performers agency to contribute their personal musical tastes to the features of a slowly-evolving, crowd sourced melody line distributed across each person’s mobile device [8], while Nash’s work features a performance ecosystem that emphasizes communal connections between participants through the importance of personal contributions, asking participants to record themselves whispering spoken text into their phones. These recordings are then heavily

processed through audio effects that help to obscure identifying vocal traits of the participants before being distributed through a multichannel speaker array in the concert hall [26].

## 3 Host Your Ghosts

*Host Your Ghosts* was created as part of a public art show organized by the Michigan State University Arts Living Learning Community. The event featured works that took a more measured and serious tone towards pop culture-centric and conventional preconceptions of horror and supernatural experiences. As of the time of writing, *Host Your Ghosts* has been installed twice. The premiere performance took place on November 5th, 2025 at the Turner-Dodge House in Lansing, Michigan, USA. A second performance was held on January 23rd, 2026 at the (Scene) Metrospace Gallery in East Lansing, Michigan, USA<sup>1</sup>.

*Host Your Ghosts* features two distinct opportunities for participant interaction organized into phases: one occurring separate from the main installation space and designed to be experienced independently (known as the Statement Phase), and the other designed to bring people together to perform as a group in a colocated space (the Divination Phase). Participants can choose to experience the phases in any order that they please.

In the Statement Phase, individual users approach a station containing a microphone, an audio interface, and a laptop that displays a set of instructions encouraging them to record a spoken statement in response to the prompt “What Haunts You?” Once captured, these recordings are uploaded to a remote web server and transferred to a second computer housed in the Divination Phase space. Participants are informed that any statements recorded in this phase will be used to create sonic material elsewhere in the piece, and that recordings are deleted at the end of each performance. When they are finished recording, they are encouraged to leave the room and participate in the Divination Phase.

The Divination Phase is designed for group interaction and performance, taking place in a second, larger room containing a multichannel speaker array. Participants enter this new space to see a station containing a Ouija board and a custom-made motion tracking plchette interface in the middle of the array

<sup>1</sup>Media examples are available at <https://tinyurl.com/HYG-Media-Playlist>

(with a second computer and audio interface hidden from sight). A placard asks participants to independently think to themselves about the things in their lives that haunt them before joining together to move the planchette across the board as they feel compelled.

The planchette's movements trigger a series of concatenative synthesizers to play audio from multiple sample datasets, each of which are derived from the recordings collected in the Statement Phase. Building a sonic tapestry from the "ghosts" of the unseen prior contributors, the samples are processed with delays, resonators, and ring modulators to create a sound world that is both eerie and resonant where words emerge with varying degrees of intelligibility. Just as Ouija users in traditional contexts must actively interpret the visual "message" spelled out when the planchette stops at symbols and words on the board, participants in *Host Your Ghosts* are incentivized to create their own sense of meaning from the aural output. Sample volume, delay feedback, and the amount of ring modulation applied to each synthesizer vary according to the planchette's direction and velocity, while the location of the planchette on the board both determines the samples that are played and that spatialization of those sounds throughout the speaker array. Depending upon which sample bank is triggered, participants hear sonic elements ranging from short, percussive sounds to complete words and phrases. Figure 2 shows a stage layout diagram along with information detailing participant performance/interaction scenarios, audio routing, and data transmission topologies in each phase of *Host Your Ghosts*.

The dual structural phases and the solo-to-group participation pathway experienced in *Host Your Ghosts* draws a direct parallel to what Merete Carlson and Ulrik Schmidt describe as multiple "perceptual relations between the visitor and the work, which accordingly will affect his or her sense of space and time" in Lozano-Hemmer's *Pulse Room* [7]. Furthermore, our work provides participants with the chance to investigate the effect of their contributions—be they spoken, mental, or physical—on a shared musical environment in a manner similar to the aforementioned works by Carson and Nash. Building on Evans' assessment, we created our own sense of clashing scripts and purposes around use of the Ouija board, combining the "searching" and discovery-laden nature of interaction in the Divination Phase while also encouraging users to use the installation ecosystem as a novel mediation method for self reflections on the notion of fear. The use of the word "haunts" instead of synonyms such as "scares" or "frightens" as the inciting prompt in the Statement Phase was designed to broaden the subject matter that participants might feel comfortable speaking about and, in turn, deepen the meaning of the audio environment created during performances in the Divination Phase. Focusing on a hauntological approach, we intentionally give no definition of the word "haunts", and the ambiguity inherent in the term gives the speaker the freedom to choose their own meaning to influence what they'd prefer to talk about, ranging from supernatural subjects like monsters, ghosts, and unexplained phenomena to real-world concerns, traumatic events, or lingering anxieties [13, 28, 30].

Our observations on participant interactions in the installation have matched our expectations of users acknowledging the Ouija board's inherent scripts while also reacting to our newly-imposed, de-scripting features. In the Divination Phase, participants tended to work in pairs, with some groups containing up to four people moving the planchette simultaneously as seen in Figure 1. In some instances, we observed groups attempting to

make connections between the series of letters the planchette guided them to and the looped syllables and full words produced through the speaker array as if both elements were instructions on where to move the planchette next. In other moments, we noticed that participants reacted more to either the visual components of the board or the sonic output from the concatenative synthesizers to guide their experience. In the Statement Phase, the length of audience member's spoken contributions ranged from single word responses to the prompt to longer monologues. As more users participated in the Statement Phase over time, the variety of audio content analyzed and added to each sample dataset grew, and performers in the Divination Phase were less likely to re-encounter the same phases or words multiple times across longer sessions.

## 4 Designing the Performance Ecosystem

*Host Your Ghosts* features a performance ecosystem comprised of custom hardware and software components used to turn an off-the-shelf Ouija board into a communal NIME. This section provides details on the inner workings of the system. We also break down the ways in which our early observations during the first performance informed our redesign decisions for the piece's current iteration.

### 4.1 Software

Participants interact with two pieces of software created with Max<sup>2</sup> in the installation. In the Statement Phase, spoken contributions are recorded and stored by the Collector patch. Once captured, these recordings are uploaded to a remote web server and transferred to the main performance computer housed at the site of the Divination Phase. The user interface of the Collector patch consists of a single toggle button which participants use to start and stop the recording process. The patch implements a noise gate and a ducker to help with isolating the text in each statement by minimizing ambient noise from around the performance space.

The computer stationed at the Divination Phase runs the Ouija patch, which serves as the multi-voice corpus-based concatenative synthesis (CBCS) engine communally performed by participants. Incorporating objects from the FluCoMa package [31, 32], the Ouija patch compiles the recordings transferred from the Collector patch and concatenates them into a single file. The file is analyzed with a Mel-frequency cepstral coefficients (MFCC) algorithm and sliced by onset changes representing 91 values related to spectral and volume differences, forming a starting corpus. This file is processed four times using different set of metrics for length and sensitivity, producing four separate sample datasets (with resulting samples ranging from a few milliseconds to several seconds in length) and distributing those samples across individual plotters. Each sample bank maps similar sounds together, resulting in some collections that consist entirely of short, percussive samples (e.g. vocal clicks or portions of syllables) and others where complete words or phrases could be heard. The output of each synthesizer is passed through an effects chain as described in Section 3.

Participants perform the Ouija patch's CBCS engine by moving the planchette across the surface of the Ouija board. In the Ouija patch, we map the corpora datasets to virtual representations of locations on the physical board using Max's "node" object, placing four nodes (one to represent each sample dataset) at coordinates

<sup>2</sup><https://cycling74.com/products/max>

across the object’s graphical user interface. As seen in Figure 3, the position of each node matches a corresponding position on the physical Ouija board (represented here by the large orange dot), with the center point of the nodes located at coordinates that align with prominent icons and symbols.



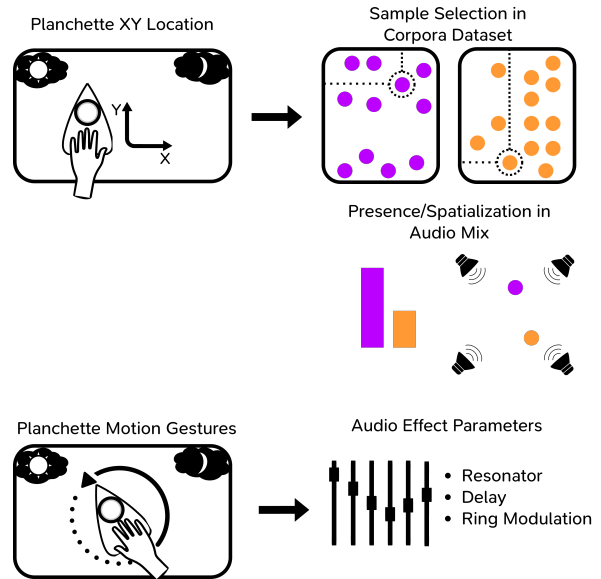
**Figure 3: The Ouija patch’s node interpolation UI showing virtual locations of corpora audio samples are mapped to locations on the physical Ouija board.**

As seen in Figure 4, correspondence between the planchette’s location on the physical board and the virtual node triggers the playback of samples from the corpora. This position data also sets the spatial location of samples triggered by the associated synthesizer(s); in the installation’s default quadrophonic setup, landing at the outer edge of a virtual node assigns the sample to just one of the four speakers in the room, while landing at the center of a node pans the triggered sample to be spread across all speakers evenly. When the planchette passes locations where nodes overlap, multiple synthesizer voices are triggered and samples from each corresponding corpus are heard simultaneously and spatialized accordingly. Participants are instructed to press a button mounted on the side of the planchette when they are finished performing which “resets” the Ouija patch manually, concatenating and reanalyzing the collection of participant recordings made in the Statement Phase as a new set of participants approach the board.

In the premiere performance, we observed that some participants would move the planchette quickly between adjacent points around the board where short, percussive samples were currently placed, resulting in significant silences between sonic content. To contrast with the continuous breaks in sound, we added a feature to the Ouija patch that toggles a sample looping mode on and off at different rates based on the amount of time participants spend engaging with the planchette during their performance session. This allowed us to create alternating moods and musical textures in subsequent performances no matter the content contained in each sample bank; looping the samples creates a more urgent affect to match quick movement of the planchette, while hearing each sample once creates a more reflective, spacious soundscape during slower explorations.

## 4.2 Hardware

*Host Your Ghosts* features a custom-built planchette as the communal performance interface for the CBCS engine, and its movements across the two dimensions of the Ouija board serve as a method of using a 2D space for exploring the sound space of each dataset [29]. The use of a physical planchette was vital to our ability to connect with users’ preconceived notions and nostalgia around Ouija boards. During our early prototyping, we

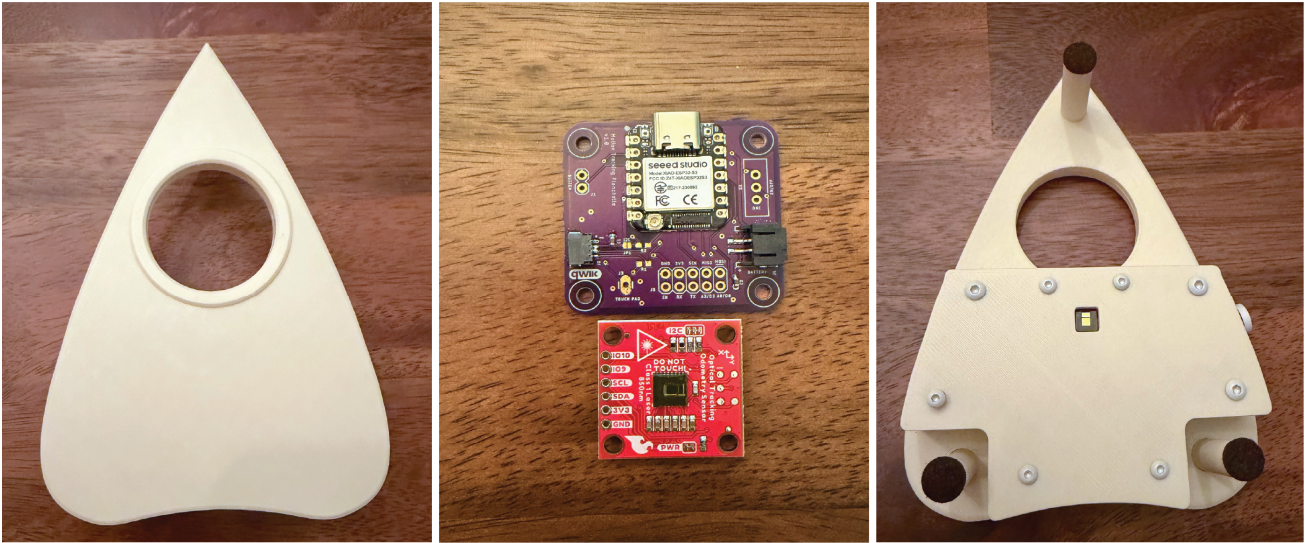


**Figure 4: Mapping of the planchette interface position and motion gestures**

tested several possible techniques for tracking the planchette position across the surface of the board to assess their pitfalls and affordances. Our primary goals were to accurately match the visual aesthetic of a post-1960 Ouija board and to replicate the physical motion of moving the planchette around our board as close to the original experience as possible so as not to interfere with participants’ natural ideomotor response. A camera-based tracking system akin to the setup explored by Kaltenbrunner et al. in their creation of the reacTable [21] was ruled out early on; while accurate, a camera tracking system would have altered the look of the Ouija board (if we used an under-the-board upwards-facing placement option on a transparent board, for example) and would visually distract from participants focusing on the Ouija board or each other during the Divination Phase if the camera were visible.

To satisfy our design conditions, we chose to feature an original unmodified Ouija board and create a 3D-printed planchette made from plastic (shown in Figure 5) that employs an optical flow sensing method to track its movements. Commonly used in computer mice and unmanned aerial drones, optical flow sensors measure the displacement of objects moving in front of the sensor’s lens (or, in our use case, the sensor being moved past a stationary object) to measure an apparent motion vector by comparing the changing location of pixels in successive high frames-per-second (FPS) pictures [3]. In addition to the optical flow sensor, our planchette interface includes a custom carrier board containing an ESP32-S3 microcontroller, a rechargeable LiPo battery, a slide switch for turning the planchette on and off, and a pushbutton. The planchette transmits its position data to the Ouija patch wirelessly over a local WiFi network using the Collab-Hub framework [18].

Our first iteration of the planchette used a PAA5100JE-Q optical flow sensor. The PAA5100JE-Q is designed to operate at a short working height of 15-35 millimeters above a surface making it ideal for low profile traversal on the flat terrain of the Ouija board. Our firmware for this version of the planchette interface



**Figure 5: Components of the planchette interface: custom carrier board (center top), optical tracking odometry sensor (center bottom), and 3D-printed body (left and right).**

used an open-source Arduino library by Matej Bozic<sup>3</sup> to calculate the odometry of the planchette as participants move it in a performance.

During our first performance of the installation, we found that participants had an inclination to rotate the planchette around its Z axis, using its pointed front to indicate the direction of their next movement. Teams of performers were also interested in seeing what sonic changes in the soundscape would occur if they quickly alternated the speed of the planchette’s movements. These actions led to inaccuracies in position tracking over long performance sessions due to the PAA5100JE-Q’s inability to compensate for rotational optical flow in its delta measurements and its comparably slow FPS rate. To improve position accuracy, we designed a new iteration of our planchette around an optical tracking odometry sensor breakout board and an accompanying library<sup>4</sup> that combines a PAA5160E1-Q-driven laser optical system with a 6-axis IMU and an STM32C011 microcontroller for high-speed sensor fusion. This combination of tools led to improved motion tracking accuracy in our second airing while also allowing us to capture more accurate acceleration and velocity readings. As discussed in Sections 3 and 4.3 and shown in Figure 4, we’ve mapped these data streams to synthesis parameters in the Ouija patch in an effort to sonically reward users’ natural inclinations for moving the planchette based on Ouija’s embedded cultural scripts and entice them to explore both slow and rapid planchette movements.

### 4.3 Additional Planchette Interface Mappings

In addition to mapping the planchette’s coordinates and heading as discussed in Section 4.1, the Ouija patch makes use of the gestural movement data produced as participants move the device through 2D space to adjust the parameters of audio effects applied to the selected CBCS voices. A complete list of the mapping schemes used in the installation is compiled in Table 1.

## 5 Future Directions

Future updates to the hardware and software components of the installation system will provide more variety in the work’s sonic collages, incorporating features that deepen the sense of a community’s impact on the sound world created in the Divination Phase. We plan to build an alternate version of the planchette that includes a capacitive touch pad on its top, enabling us to determine if the interface is being moved by a single user or a group. This will allow us to build a collection of sensor mapping presets and tie the selection of the configuration used in performance to the amount of participants working together at the Ouija board, resulting in some compositional states that can only be achieved through communal interaction. To enhance the spatial audio component of the piece, an ambisonic version of *Host Your Ghosts* for periphonic loudspeaker array is currently in the works.

Each new analysis of Statement Phase audio resets the location of samples across the 2D plotters, so our method of virtually mapping the location of corpora-based sound spaces to corresponding locations on our physical Ouija board can result in large sonic dead spaces where participants’ movement of the planchette to certain symbols results in no sound being triggered from the CBCS engine. While we enjoy the indeterminate and chance-based nature of corpus distribution that the Ouija patch presents us with in each new Divination Phase, we have also begun to explore methods of adjusting the clustering scheme of the samples prior to their plotting through the use of an intermediate algorithm like those explored in prior projects by Diemo Schwarz and Ianis Lallemand [19, 29]. This will give us greater control over how our samples are virtually distributed to align with important spots on the physical board.

To expand upon the concept of time-displaced contributions of audio collected in the Statement Phase, we plan to introduce a web-browser-based portal built using the p5.js<sup>5</sup> and Tone.js<sup>6</sup> as an alternative to the recording station and Max patch set-up. In addition to minimizing the installation’s physical foot print, this

<sup>3</sup><https://github.com/zic-95/PAA5100JE/tree/main/src>

<sup>4</sup>[https://github.com/sparkfun/SparkFun\\_Qwiic\\_OTOS\\_Arduino\\_Library](https://github.com/sparkfun/SparkFun_Qwiic_OTOS_Arduino_Library)

<sup>5</sup><https://p5js.org/>

<sup>6</sup><https://tonejs.github.io/>

**Table 1: Planchette Interface Mappings**

Motion Property	Synthesis/Effect Parameter
X Position	X Position on Node UI/Corpus Plotter
Y Position	Y Position on Node UI/Corpus Plotter
Heading	Resonator Pitch Modulation Amount
Velocity	Choose Resonator/Ring Modulation Preset
Speed	Delay Feedback Amount

change would allow users to contribute audio to airings of the piece from remote locations and further separate the perceived relationships between the different sections of the work across a larger temporal space. We also plan to include an option for those recording statements to choose if the audio file made from their participation is automatically deleted at the end of the installation airing or if it can be preserved for use in a future performance.

## 6 Conclusion

*Host Your Ghosts* invites participants to experience the Ouija board as a communal instrument for music performance. By simultaneously embracing and eschewing our preconceived notions of Ouija and its purpose, users can meld their differing perceptions of everyday objects from across historical and cultural record to form new hybrid understandings of an item's purpose and power. It is our vision that the performance ecosystem experienced in *Host Your Ghosts* encourages audiences, artists, and researchers to forge new relationships with old devices—especially those that facilitate community-focused interaction and collaboration—in order to revive forgotten methods of creativity for new artistic voices.

## 7 Ethical Standards

This project adheres with the NIME ethical standards. All users of the NIME documented in this paper interacted with it voluntarily as audience attendees of public art performances. Participants were made aware that the recordings of their statements spoken as part of the installation's Statement Phase would be used to form the sound design heard in the Divination Phase before they choose whether or not to participate. All audio recordings collected during the airings of installation discussed in this paper were deleted following the end of the performance and were not shared or used for other purposes. Participants attending the premiere performance of the installation were made aware that pictures and video documentation were being collected throughout the event before they chose to participate.

## Acknowledgments

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