

# 50-Man-Machine

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Approved:

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# CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	iii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. THE STORY .....	5
3. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENTATION .....	13
4. THE PERFORMANCE.....	21
5. THE INSTALLATION .....	32
6. USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE <i>50-MAN-MACHINE</i> .....	35
7. THE MUSIC.....	42
8. THE SITE AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE THEME .....	51
9. COLLABORATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHOREOGRAPHY .....	54
10. ANALYSIS OF PROCESS.....	56
WORKS CONSULTED.....	62
APPENDICES	
A. APPENDIX DIAGRAMS .....	
B. APPENDIX PERFORMERS 23.10.98 .....	
C. APPENDIX FORMS.....	
D. APPENDIX LYRICS .....	
E. APPENDIX THE ENHANCED COMPACT DISC .....	IN SLEEVE.

## LIST OF TABLES

1	Placement of musical works with in <i>50-Man-Machine</i> .....	43
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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.1	The promotional graphic for <i>50-Man-Machine</i> . It is a summary of the performance installation environment and is taken from the <i>50-Man-Machine</i> animation. ....	4
2.1	Cover of <i>The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit</i> , an American icon. ....	5
2.2	A promotional card for Lang’s classic film <i>Metropolis</i> . ....	8
2.3	Actress Uma Thurman playing the role of a “Valid” genetically engineered corporate worker in Andrew Niccol’s futuristic film <i>Gattaca</i> . ....	9
2.4	A scene from <i>Brazil</i> in the laboratory of a “social” doctor. ....	10
2.5	The evil assassin in <i>Wizards</i> . ....	10
2.6	One of <i>Wizards</i> army. ....	11
2.7	Three guises of the illusive Wizard of Oz: the Wizard, Professor Marvel and the Gatekeeper. ....	11
3.1.1	Disney’s <i>It’s a Small World</i> promo shot. ....	13
3.1.2	A scene from the Thai <i>Ramakien</i> epic made of gold leaf and lacquer on wood. ..	14
3.1.3	<i>Ramakien</i> bas-relief on Thai temple walls. ....	14
3.1.4	Khon masks. ....	15
3.1.5	A Lakhon performance. ....	15
3.1.6	Nang shadow puppets in action. ....	15
3.1.7	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> , recently restored and re-released, 1998. ....	16
3.1.8	Figure 3.1: <i>Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory</i> promo. ....	17
3.1.9	Figure 3.2: During “the sell” in <i>50-Man-Machine</i> ’s carnivalesque environment. There are four performers selling compact discs in this scene. ....	18
3.1.10	Figure 4.1: The “underwear suit” just prior to “main gear” process. ....	23
3.1.11	Figure 4.2: Performer marching trance-like through the audience. ....	24

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## ABSTRACT

*50-Man-Machine* is a performance installation environment which adopts elements of dance, satirical performance, gallery exhibition, corporate presentation, sales tactics, a product for sale, and theme parks. *50-Man-Machine* examines the nature of education, life preparation, the job, and a role in life for the young adult in the United States.

This work is manifested as: this thesis document; an installation; an interactive performance; a set of welded metal sculptures which include disassembled computer hardware and programming enabling interactive multimedia presentation; and an Enhanced Compact Disc (ROM) containing a multimedia presentation of the *50-Man-Machine* body of work and a set of songs in the standard Redbook audio format of commercial music compact discs. As a whole, the work is meant to create an immersive experience that the audience can enjoy both as viewer and participant.

*50-Man-Machine* was presented in Building One at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MassMoca) in North Adams, Massachusetts as an opening and live performance on 23 October 1998 and as an installation exhibit in the same space 24 October through 30 October 1998.

The *50-Man-Machine* experience is technically designed to be self-contained and to travel with relative ease. It is flexibly structured, and may be adapted to a variety of spaces including museums, galleries, performance spaces, corporate spaces, public spaces and cyber cafés. The work is also structured in such a way that given the opportunity to

travel it would be possible to incorporate new recruits for the performance roles of host, hostess, security guard, location dancer/actors and choreographer, and other crewmembers.

This paper will offer background on the work, dissect its technical facets, discuss the artistic process and product, place the work in a historical context, and discuss its successes and weaknesses.