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## VIA: Video-dance, computer-assisted composition and mobile technology

**Daniella Aguiar**

daniella.aguiar@gmail.com

Federal University of Uberlandia, Brazil

**Joao Quieroz**

queirozj@gmail.com

Federal University of Juiz de Fora, Brazil

**Luiz Casteloes**

lecasteloes@gmail.com

Federal University of Juiz de Fora, Brazil

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VIA is a mobile art project combining video-dance, computational music and architecture. Its main goal is to endow public locations of downtown Rio de Janeiro with video-dance and music, accessed through locative media (smartphones or tablets). The VIA website is the main way of learning about the project, as it provides all the necessary information, including a map that indicates the specific locations where users are able to access the multimedia pieces of the project. Two “Vias”, or routes, can be selected on the map, “Via 1” or “Via 2”. Each of them is a distinct route on the map linking specific locations according to landscape features (as we shall explain in the next section). Although the project suggests experiencing the work according to these two routes, each viewer can decide how and when they are going to do so. There is not only one precise route to experience the project: some may decide to access the content in a single location and then leave, whereas others might want to visit all the locations creating their own routes from one point to another. Besides the website, the public can also learn about the project through printed maps distributed in Rio de Janeiro’s downtown areas where VIA is located. The distributed maps are the same as the website’s, except for the fact that there is not a distinction between Vias 1 and 2. It also includes the addresses of the locations in order to guide viewers through the project. The main technology employed to access the project is the QR Code. QR Code is a specific two-dimensional barcode target that can be read by barcode readers and phone cameras. Once viewers

decide on a location to start, they must walk to it, where they will find QR Codes on walls, utility poles, litter bins and others. With a QR code reader application, they must frame the QR barcode and wait for the content to be loaded. Summarily, any user equipped with a tablet or smartphone with an Internet connection has free access to experimental multimedia pieces of video-dance and music while moving through specific points of Rio de Janeiro. The multimedia content resulted from the collaboration between João Queiroz (artistic director), Daniella Aguiar (dancer and choreographer), Luiz E. Castelões (music composer), Adriano Mattos Corrêa (architect), Guilherme Landin and Claudia Rangel (video-makers), and Alfredo Suppia (video editor). Each multimedia product was the result of artistic investigation taking place between dance, music, and the architectural richness of Rio de Janeiro urban space, providing pedestrians with an experience that superposes “navigation” through the city and contemporary dance and music. The sounds/music accompanying these videos derive from CAC (Computer-Assisted Composition), CGA (Computer-Generated Assistance), and Sonification – related approaches. They consist of image-to-sound conversions using patches developed in OpenMusic. These conversions employ, as input images, a collection of photographs previously taken from the locations where the dancing took place. The compositional action involved consists mainly of normalizing the xy axis data extracted from the contours of these images within audible ranges. There has been no further compositional manipulation of the input data – such as displacement, editing, looping, etc. Two types of location were chosen to create the “vias”. In the first type, the chosen locations, although varying from open spaces, as squares, to narrow streets, share the property of being places with ongoing movement of people. The second type is characterized by building interspaces, independent of other architectural characteristics. The dance movements were developed in strict relation to the chosen spots. In this way, the dance is created in relation both to the buildings and to the passing people. The audio-visual language is based on discontinuous approaches and withdrawals from the “theme” (performer), which irregularly repeats short, alternated and cyclic movements. The video editing is rigorously metric and based on the organization of parts in regularly juxtaposed sequences. This method fixates and highlights invariant properties of the landscape algorithmically translated by the music. One of the project’s main features is that viewers can access the pieces at the

exact same location where the video and the music were created. As a result, mobile technology users connected to the Internet are able to access the multimedia pieces of the project, experiencing environments in which information and virtual objects “overlap” physical reality.