

# Radical Atoms



**Hiroshi Ishii**  
Tangible media Group  
**MIT Media Lab**

# PopTech 2014 in Camden, Maine

 **Hiroshi Ishii** shared his album: 2014-10-25 POPTECH 2014 Closing Talk.  
October 26 at 11:34pm · Edited · 

Thanks to John Maeda and amazing PopTech crew for the opportunity of my closing talk on October 25th at Camden. Great honor! Thanks are also due to my colleagues of Tangible Media Group & MIT Media Lab.

▶ Video: [http://fora.tv/2014/10/25/session\\_xi](http://fora.tv/2014/10/25/session_xi)



**Hiroshi Ishii** added 182 new photos to the album 2014-10-25 POPTECH 2014 Closing Talk.

PopTech 2014 - Rebellion - Camden, Maine <http://poptech.org/rebellion>  
Hiroshi Ishii's Closing Talk on October 25th, 2014  
Photo Credit: Akira Himei & Ryo Kikuchi from Morisawa Inc.  
Video: [http://fora.tv/2014/10/25/session\\_xi](http://fora.tv/2014/10/25/session_xi)

 **Hiroshi Ishii** added 13 new photos to the album PopTech 2014 - Rebellion - Closing Talk in Camden, Maine, October.  
October 25 at 7:48pm · 

PopTech 2014 - Rebellion - Camden, Maine <http://poptech.org/rebellion>  
Photo Credit: Asa Mathat <https://www.flickr.com/photos/poptech/> — at Camden Harbor.



Like · Comment · Share

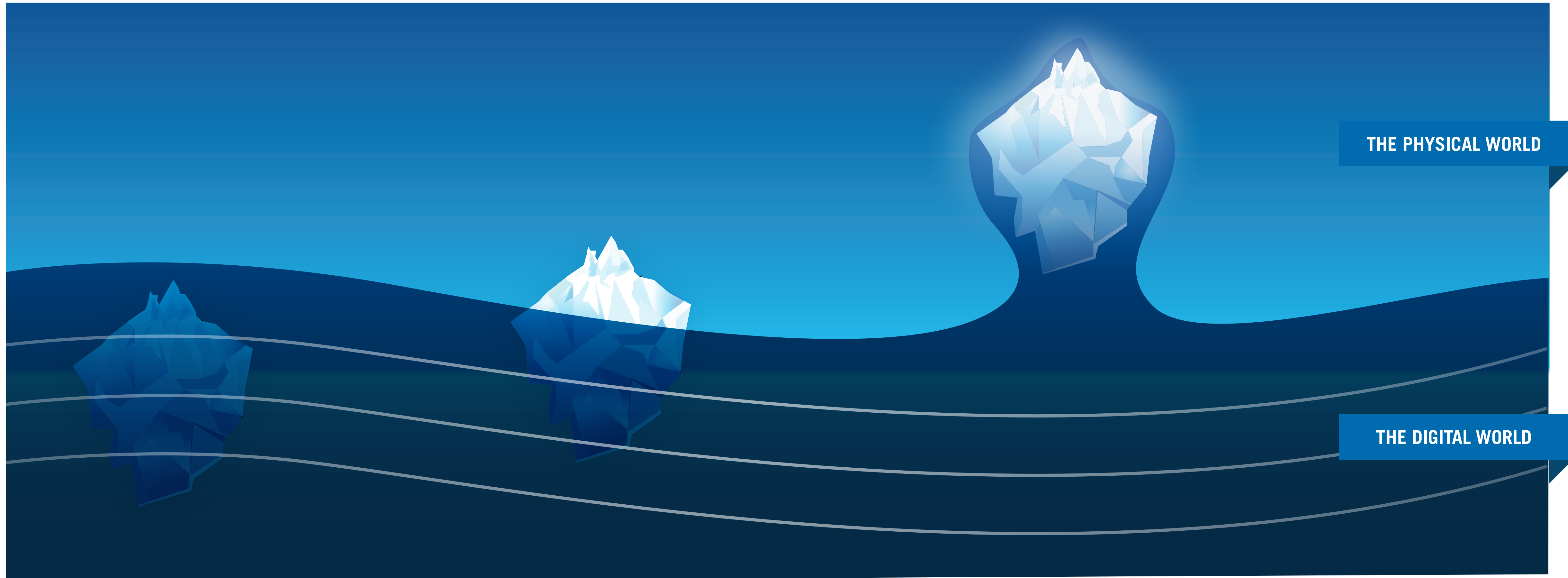
# GUI

PAINTED  
BITS

# TUI

TANGIBLE  
BITS

# RADICAL ATOMS



*A Graphical User Interfaces only let users see digital information through a screen, as if looking through a surface of the water. We interact with the forms below through remote controls such as a mouse, a keyboard or a touch screen.*

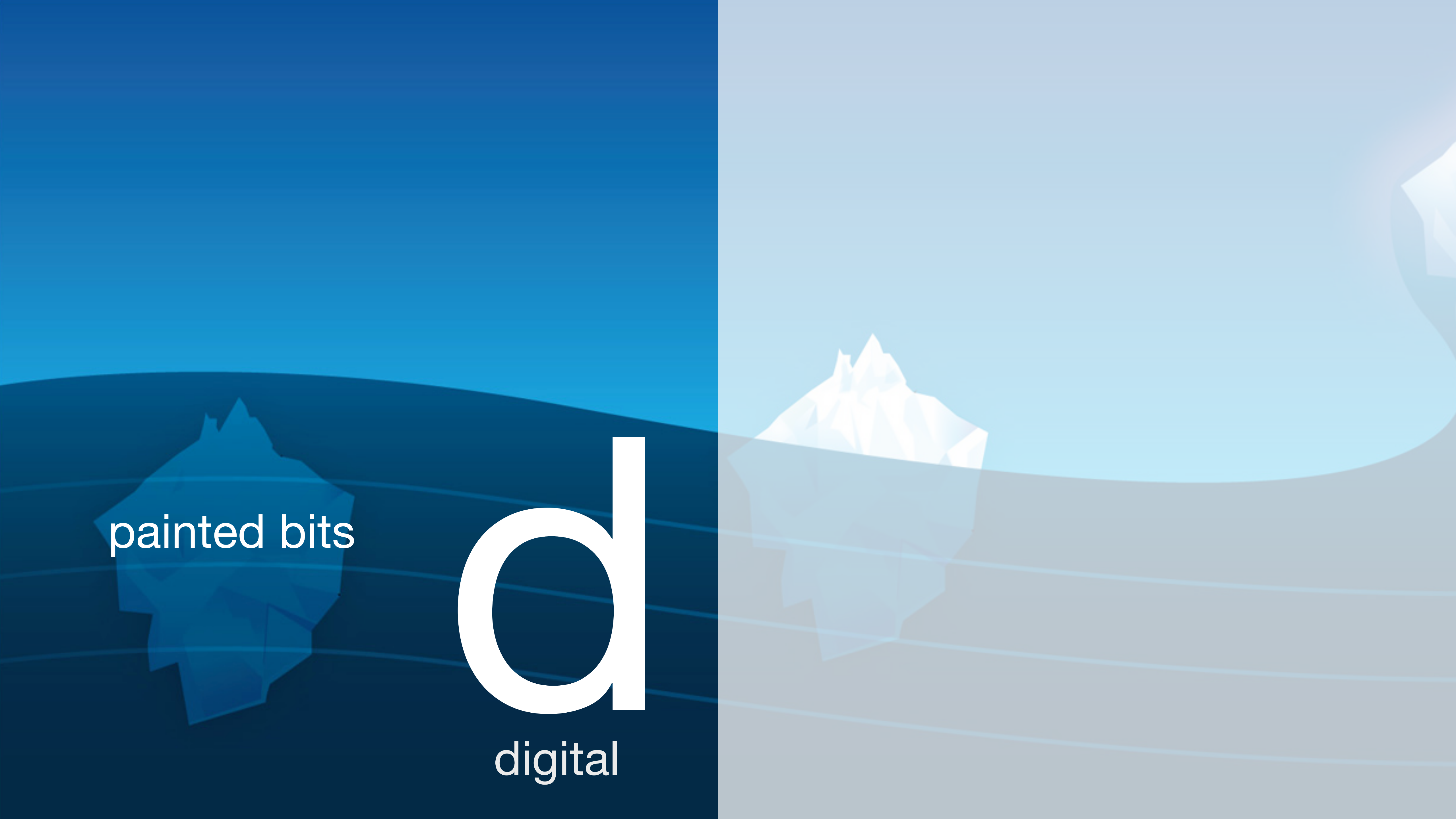
*A Tangible User Interface is like an iceberg: there is a portion of the digital that emerges beyond the surface of the water - into the physical realm - that acts as physical manifestations of computation, allowing us to directly interact with the 'tip of the iceberg.'*

*Radical Atoms is our vision for the future of interaction with hypothetical dynamic materials, in which all digital information has physical manifestation so that we can interact directly with it - as if the iceberg had risen from the depths to reveal its sunken mass.*

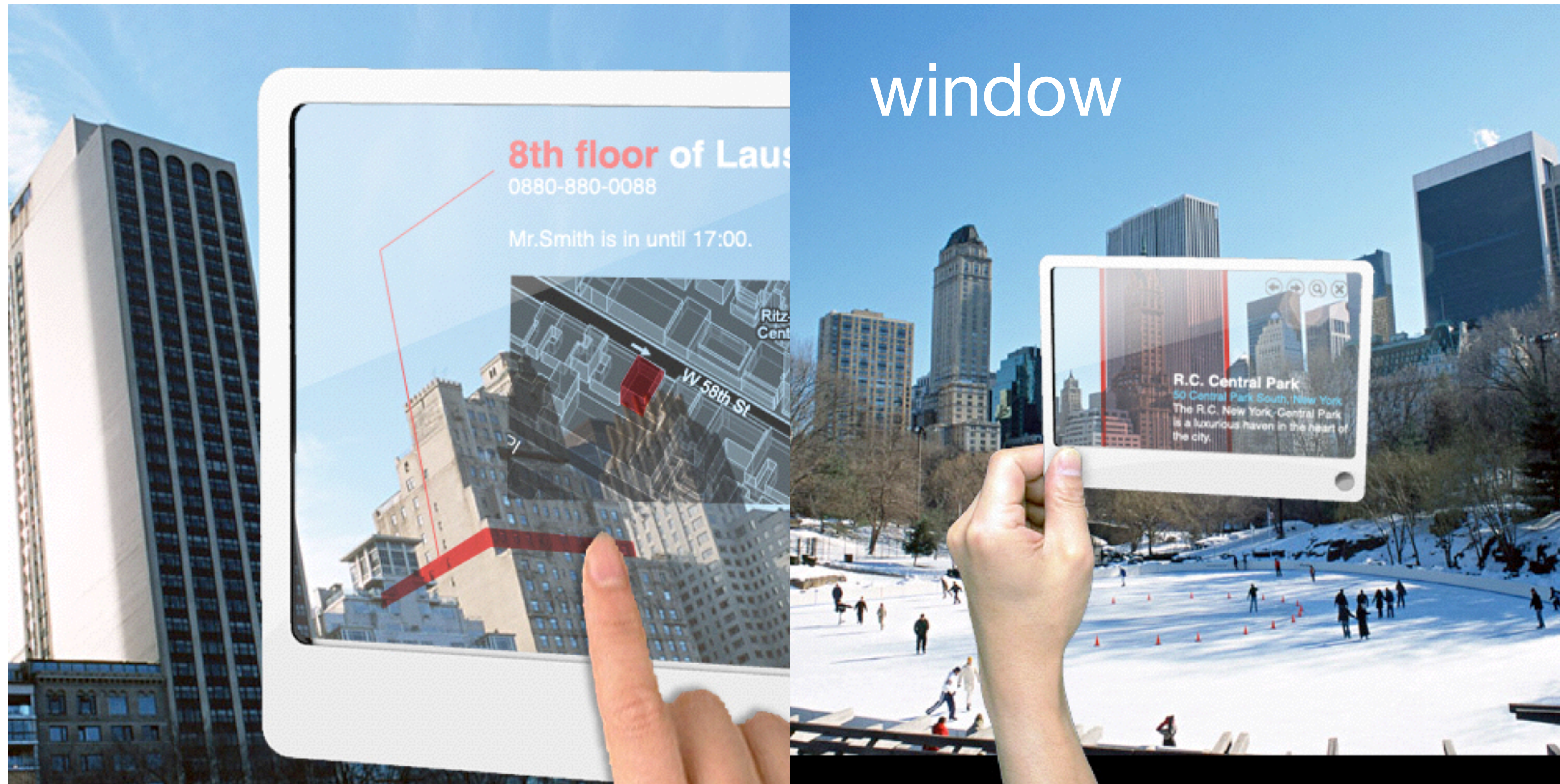
Painted bits

d

digital



# digital augmentation viewer & glasses



<http://petitinvention.wordpress.com/2008/02/10/future-of-internet-search-mobile-version/>

(c) Mac Funamizu "Looking Glass"

A large, white iceberg with a rounded top and jagged, textured sides floats in a deep blue ocean. The iceberg's reflection is clearly visible in the calm water below, creating a mirror-like effect. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The overall scene is serene and majestic.

mirror

digital reflection

A photograph of a white ceramic cup on a white surface. The cup is positioned in the upper right quadrant. The surface is a white, slightly textured material. The lighting is soft and directional, coming from the upper left, which creates a distinct shadow of the cup on the surface. The shadow is dark and well-defined. The overall scene is clean and minimalist, focusing on the interplay of light and shadow.

object

digital light

**digital shadow**

surface

# Embodiment

digital information to  
interact with directly

1980s  
GUI  
painted bits

GUI

1990s  
TUI  
tangible bits

1997

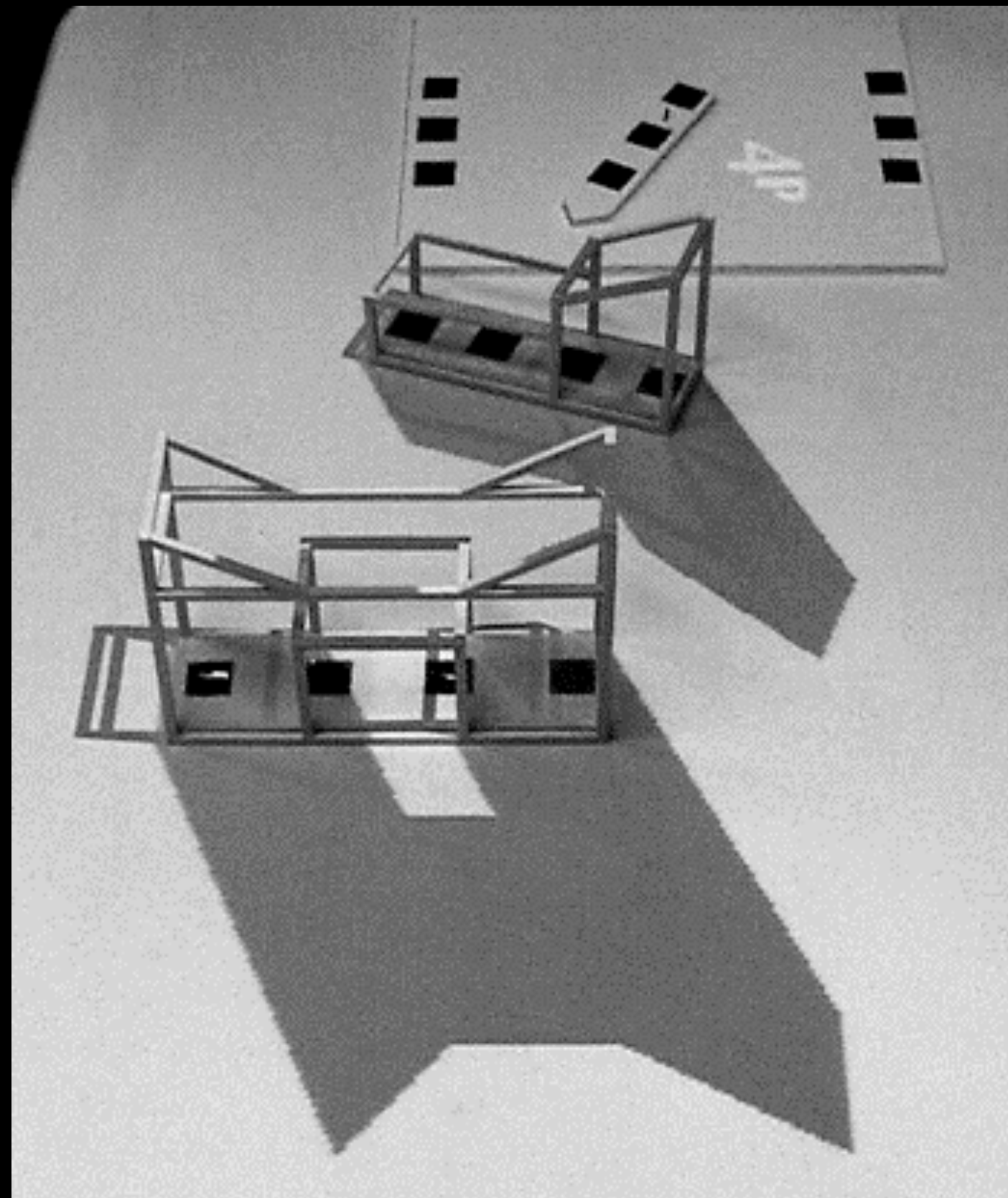
TUI



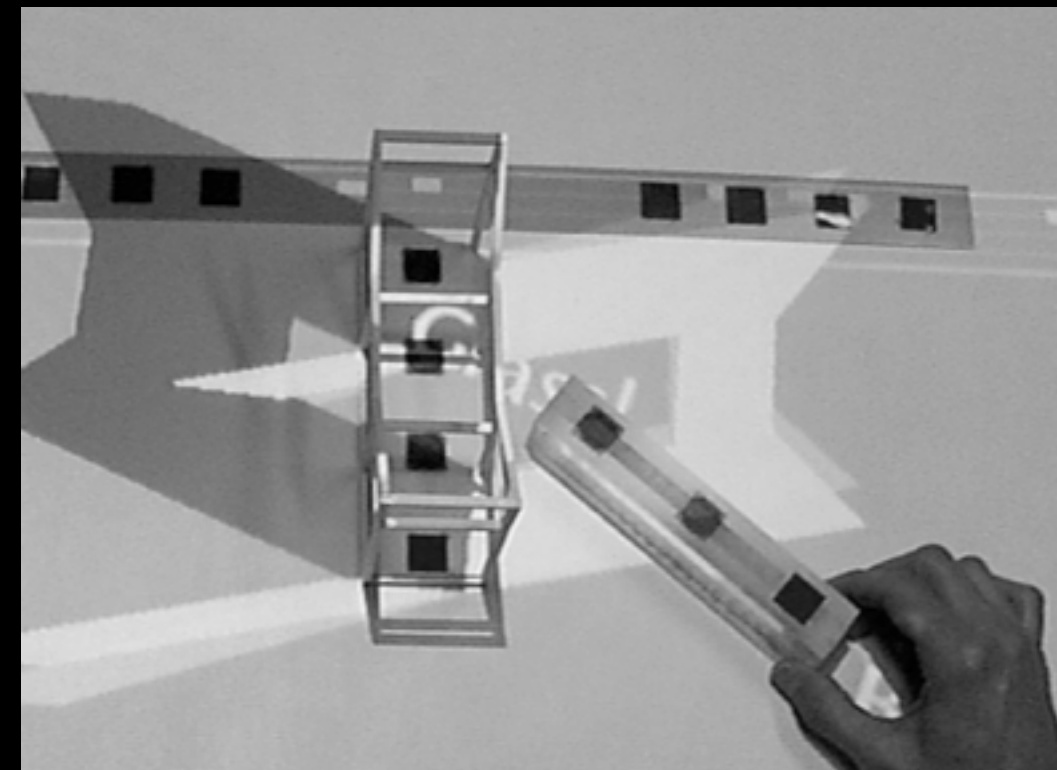
# Urp:

## Urban Planning Workbench

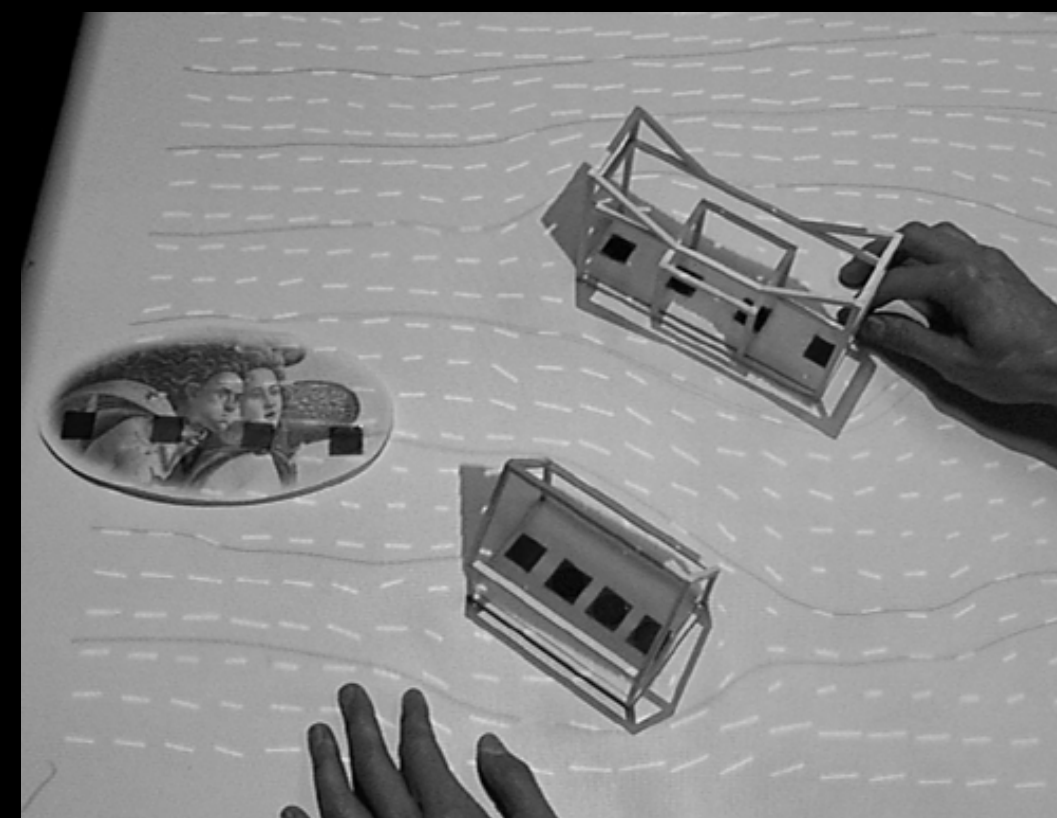
John Underkoffler and Hiroshi Ishii, 1997 - 1999



digital shadows



light reflections

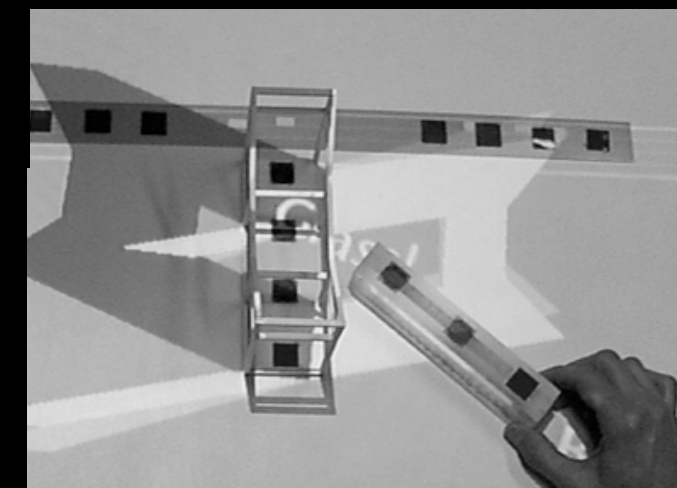


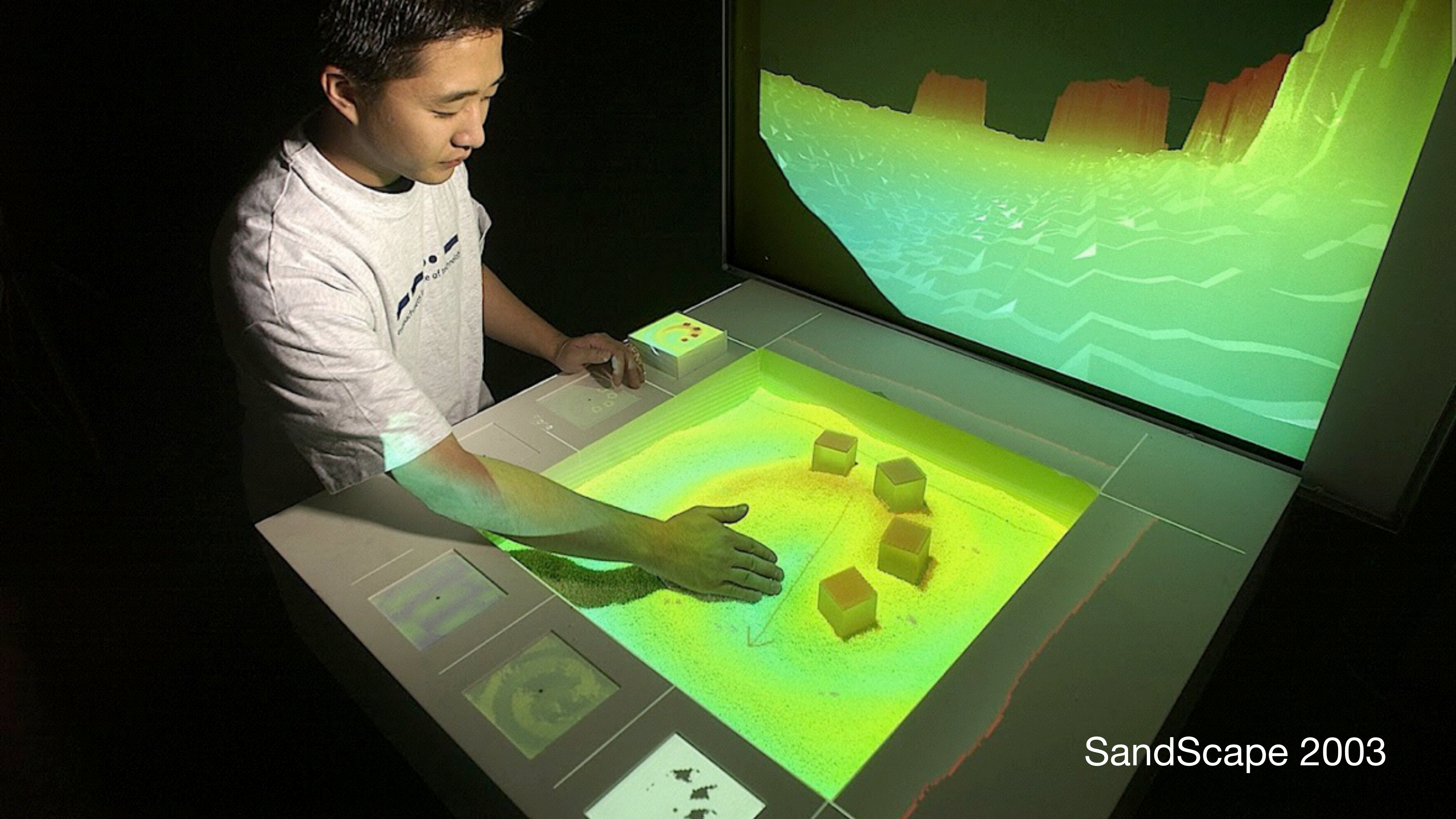
wind

# Urp:

## Urban Planning Workbench

John Underkoffler and Hiroshi Ishii, 1997 - 1999





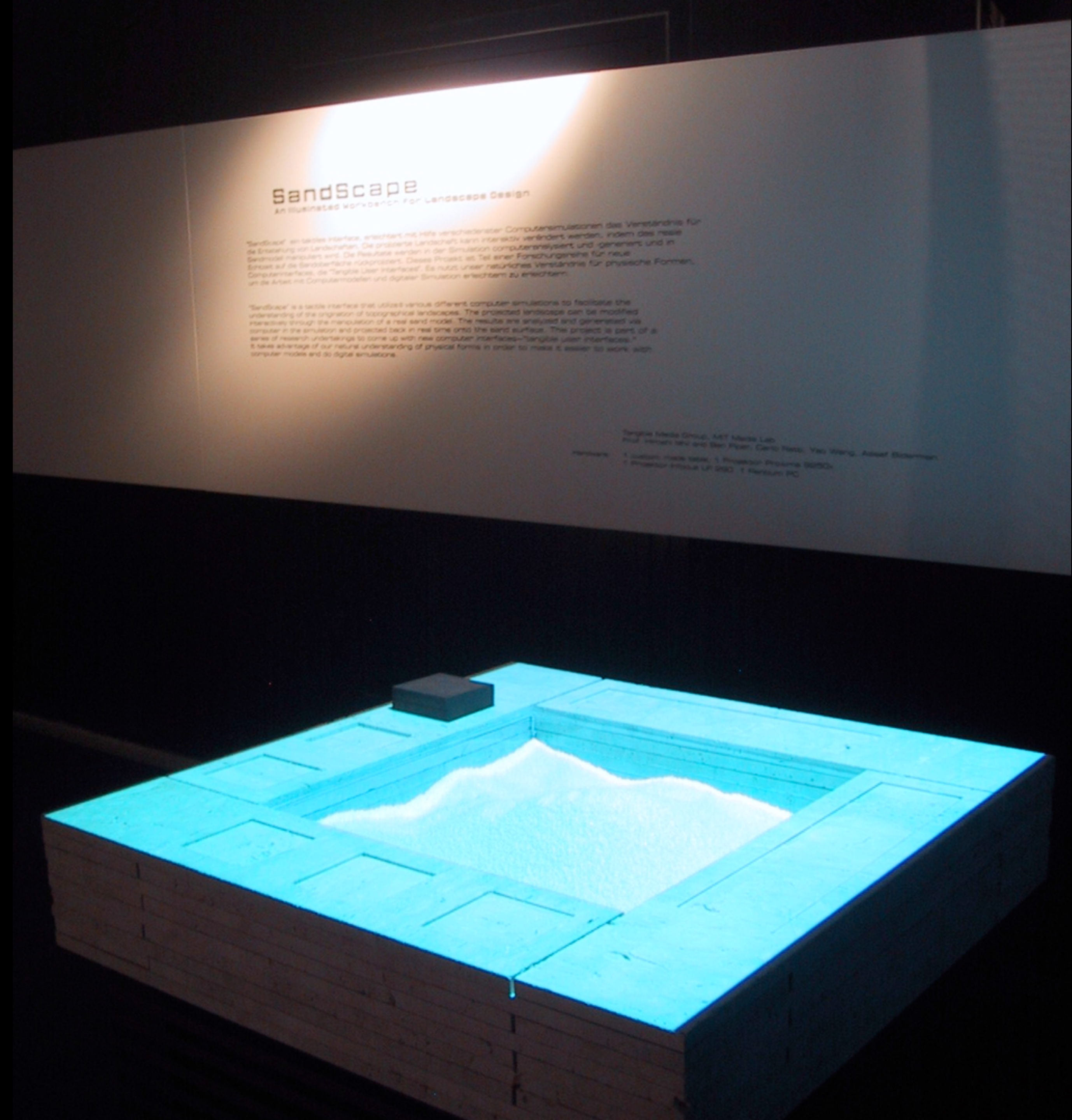
SandScape 2003

# SandScape

Ars Electronic Center

Hiroshi Ishii,  
Carlo Ratti,  
Ben Piper,  
Yao Wang, and  
Assaf Biderman

Tangible Media Group  
MIT Media Laboratory



# **SandScape**

**Ars Electronic Center**

**Hiroshi Ishii,  
Carlo Ratti,  
Ben Piper,  
Yao Wang, and  
Assaf Biderman**

**Tangible Media Group  
MIT Media Laboratory**



tangible bits  
1997

radical atoms  
2012



# Radical Atoms

Dynamic Future Materials that  
Transform, Conform & Inform

VOLUME XIX.1 | JANUARY + FEBRUARY 2012

# interactions

EXPERIENCES | PEOPLE | TECHNOLOGY



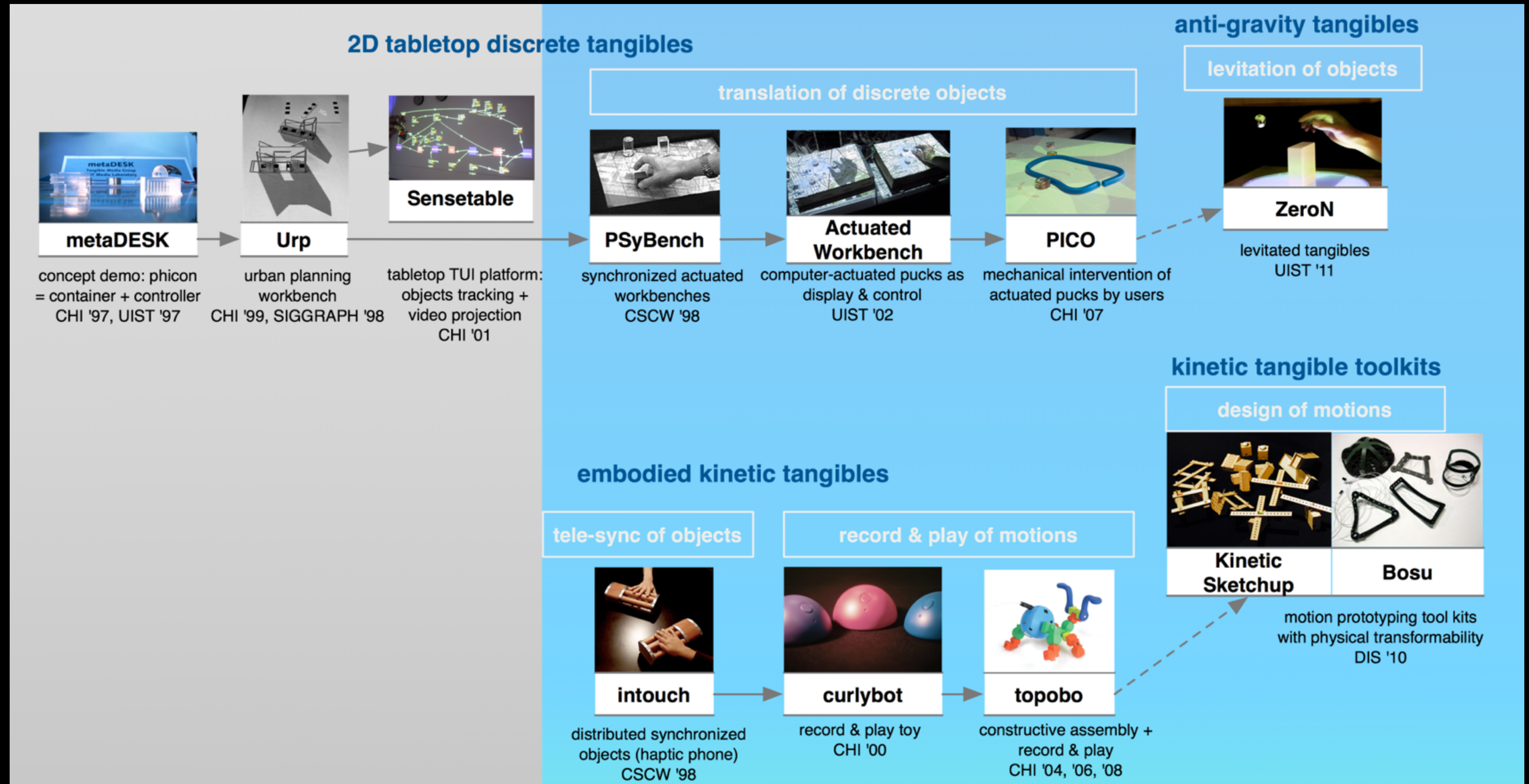
## Radical Atoms: Beyond Tangible Bits, Toward Transformable Materials

*Cover Story by Hiroshi Ishii, Dávid Lakatos,  
Leonardo Bonanni, and Jean-Baptiste Labrune*

MIT  
Media  
Lab

# Evolution of Tangibles Bits Towards Radical Atoms (1)

static / passive  $\Rightarrow$  kinetic / dynamic

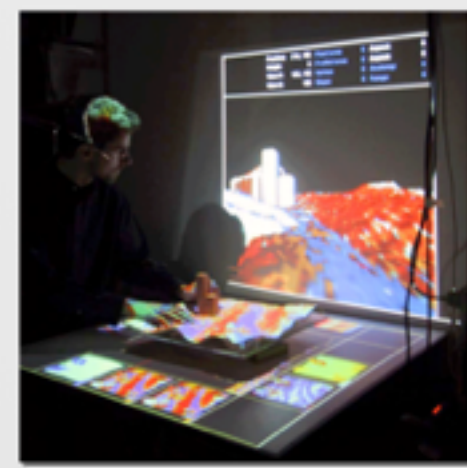




# Evolution of Tangibles Bits Towards Radical Atoms (2)

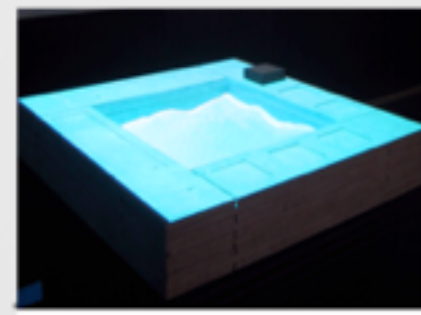
static / passive  $\Rightarrow$  kinetic / dynamic

## 2.5D deformable and transformable tangibles



**Illuminating Clay**

landscape design tool using augmented clay  
CHI '02



**SandScape**

landscape design tool using augmented sand  
Ars Electronica '02



**Relief**

2.5D interactive shape display  
TEI '09, UIST '11



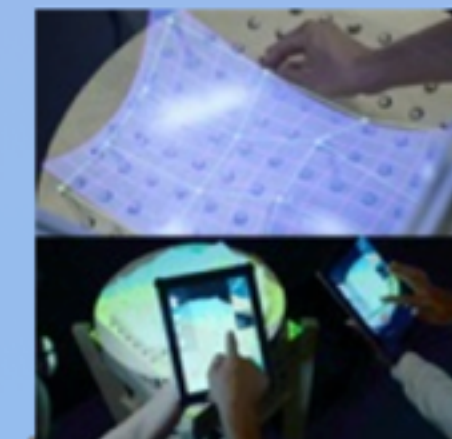
**Recompose**

gesture-controllable 2.5D shape display  
UIST '11



**inFORM**

dynamic physical affordance & tele-operation  
UIST '13 & '14



**SUBLIMATE**

virtual & physical rendering  
CHI '13



**TRANSFORM**

transformative table with 3 inFORM engines for Milano Design Week 2014

artistic expression

transformation with shape display

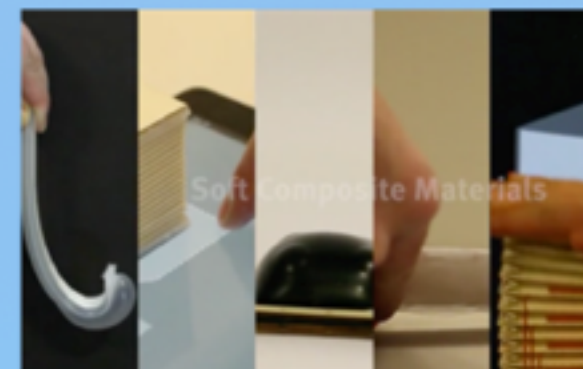
## programmable materials

transformation and property changes with augmented tangible materials



**Jamming UI**

deformable stiffness changing UI using particle jamming  
UIST '12



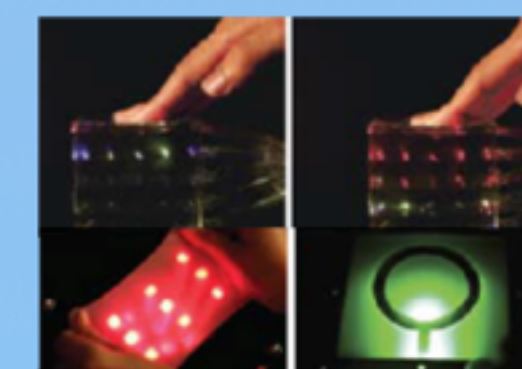
**PneUI**

shape-changing pneumatically actuated soft materials  
UIST '13



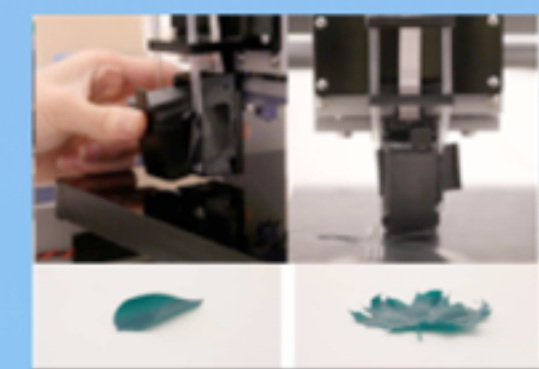
**jamSheets**

deformable stiffness-tunable thin sheet interfaces  
TEI '14



**OptiElastic**

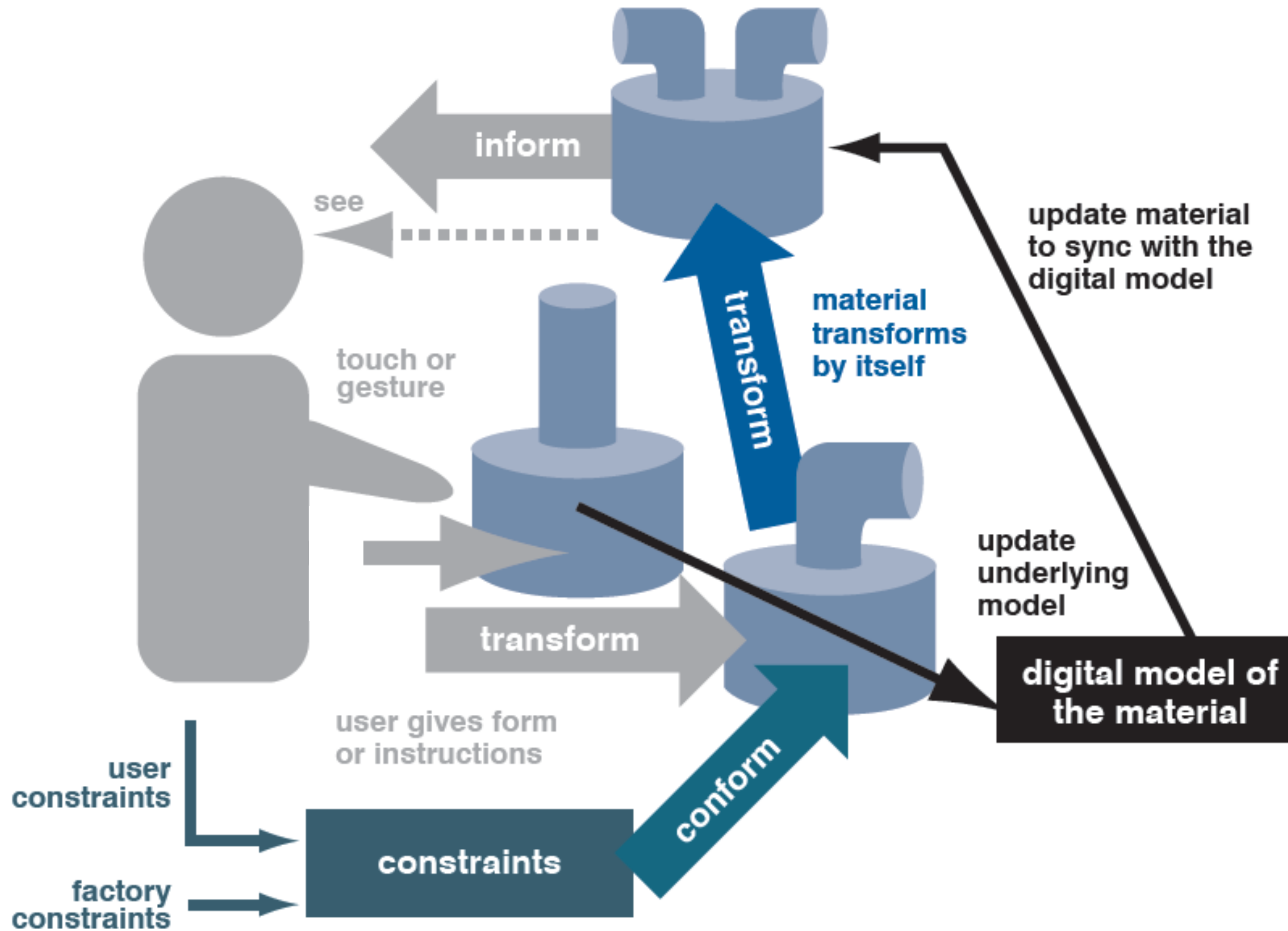
illuminating and sensing soft material using optical fiber or elastic waveguide  
UIST '14



**bioPrint bioLogic**

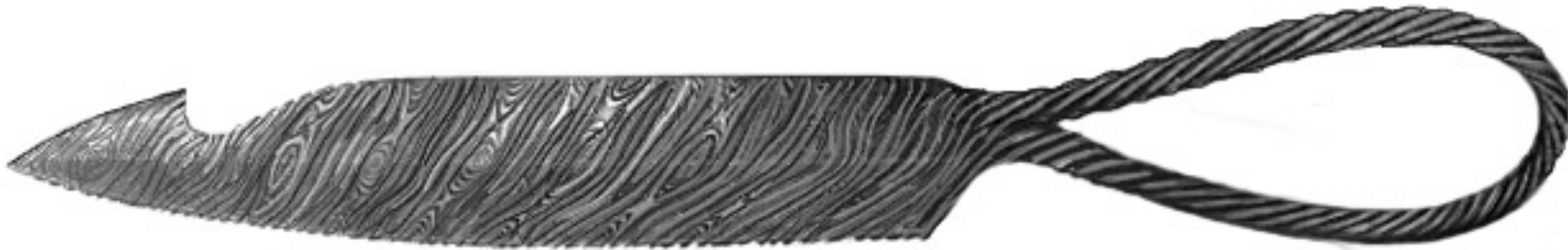
automatic deposition system for bacteria spore actuators  
UIST '14 & CHI '15

# Interactions with Radical Atoms



# Radical Atoms

Forging Atoms to Conform,  
Transform, and Inform



Damascus Steel Knife [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Damascus\\_steel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Damascus_steel)

**Our Vision of Interactions with  
Dynamic Physical Material**

# Radical Atoms



- **Vision-Driven Design Research on Interactions with Dynamic Physical Material that can**
  - **Conform to structural constraints,**
  - **Transform structure & behavior, and**
  - **Inform new abilities.**

# Dynamic Materials

## Conform / Transform

- **Material**

Shape Memory Alloy

**NiTiNoI**

- **Robotics**



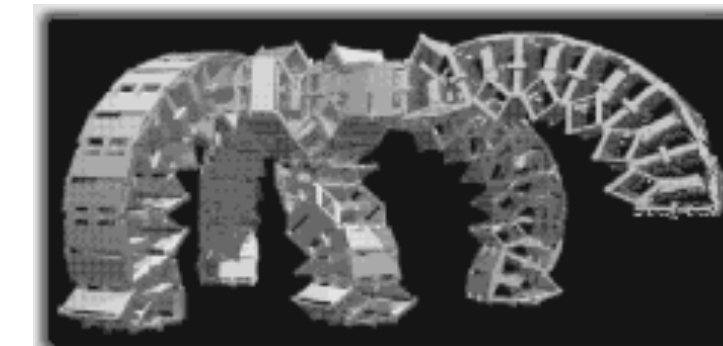
**BOSU**  
Amanda Parkes



**Surflex**  
Marcelo Coelho



**topobo**  
Raffle & Parkes



**Polypod**  
Mark Yim

# Dynamic Materials

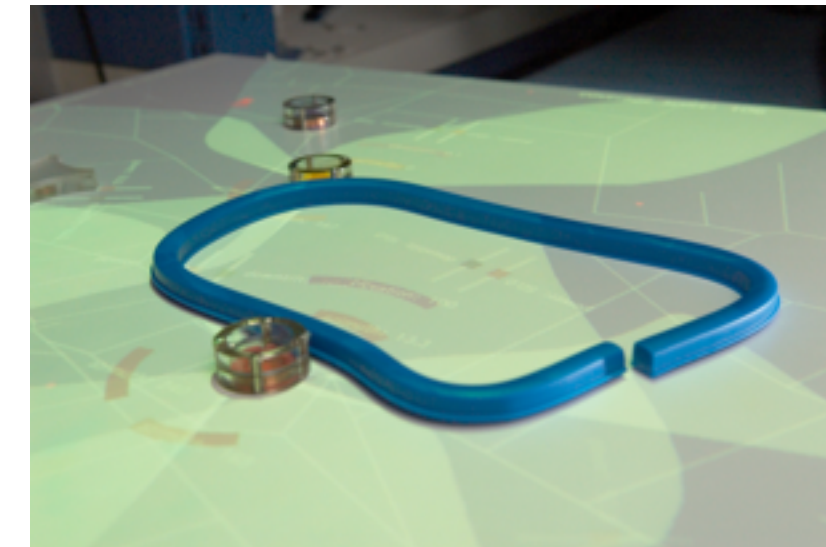
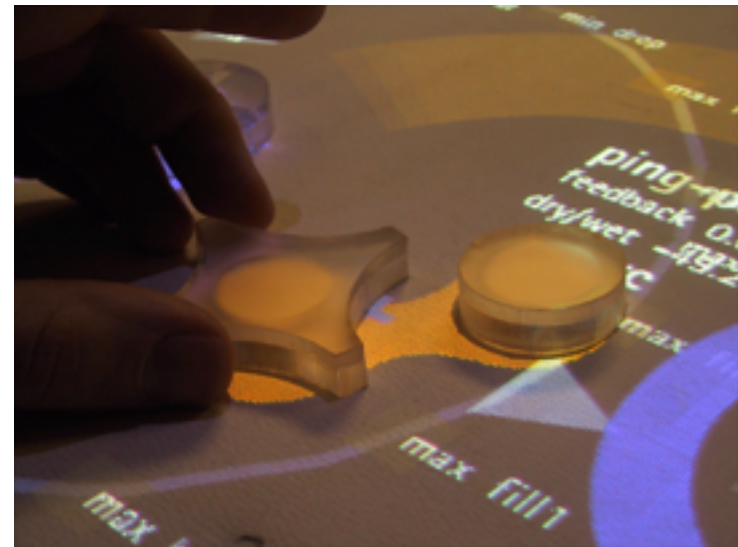
## Programmable Matters

- Nanotech
- Computer Science
- Robotics
- Biology
- Material Sciences

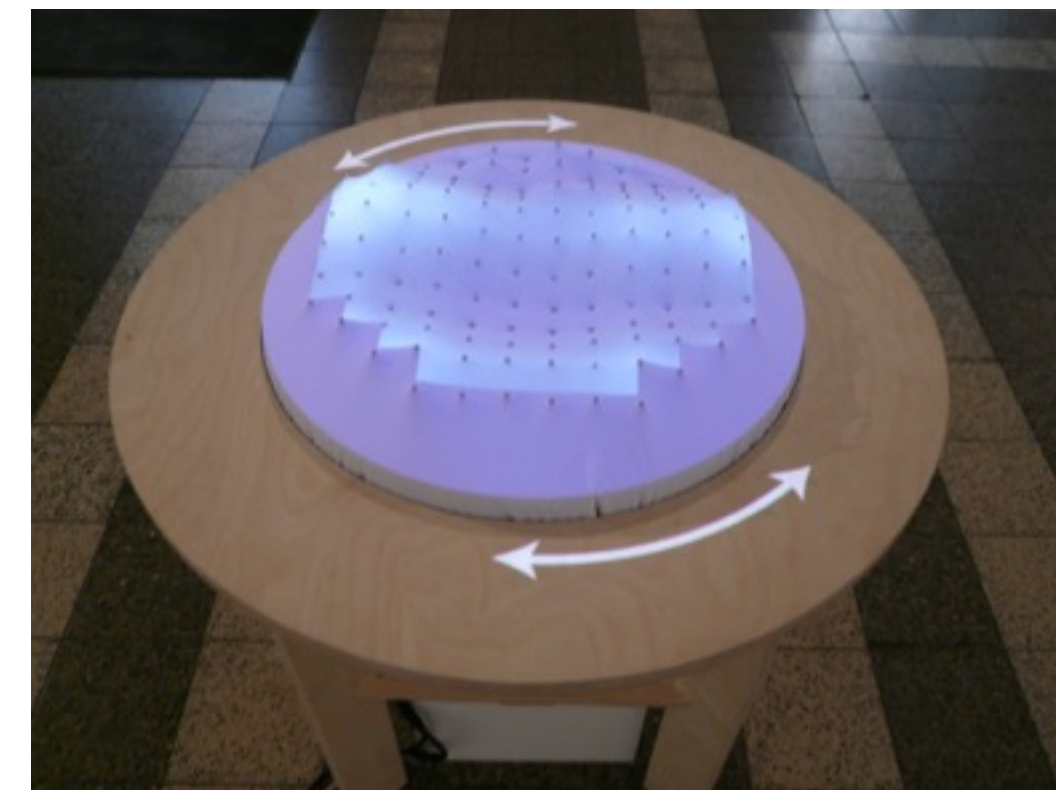
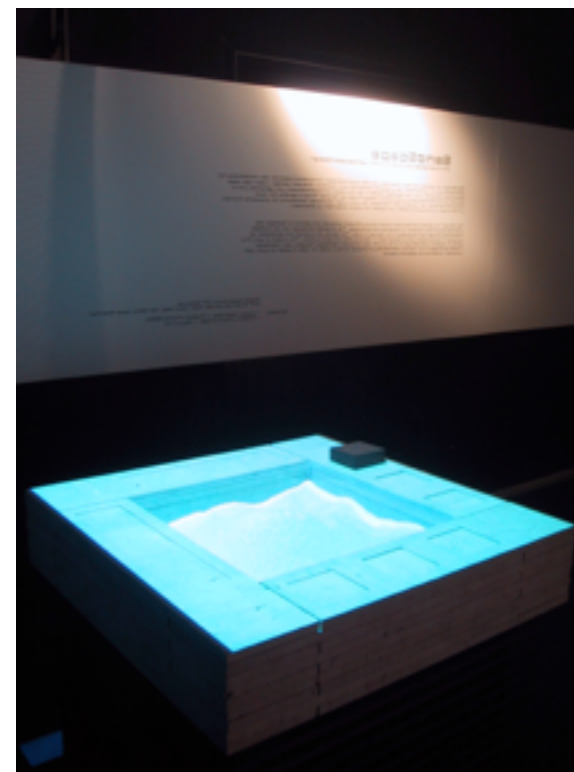
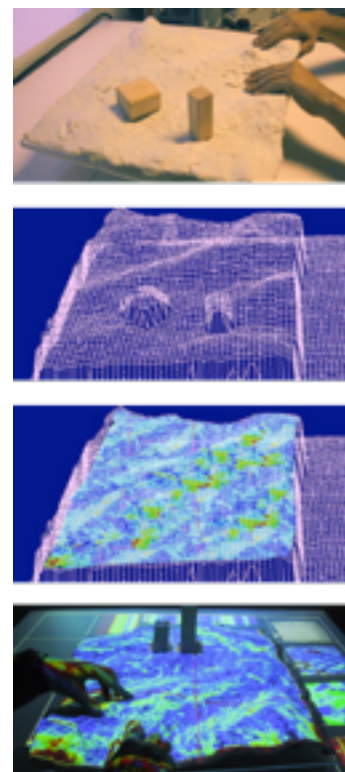
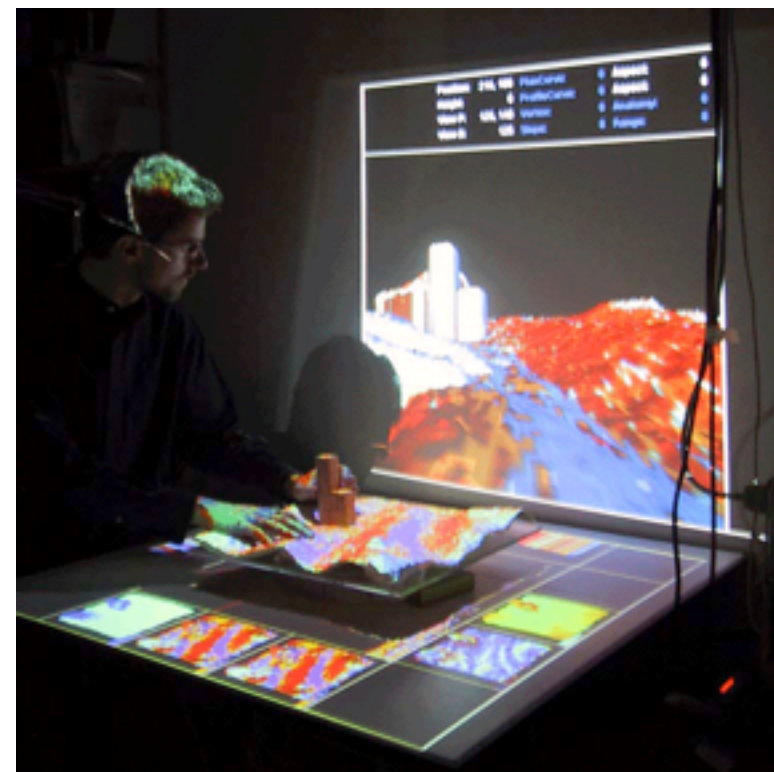
# Tabletop Tangibles

## Tangible Media Group

- Sensetable – Actuated Workbench – PICO

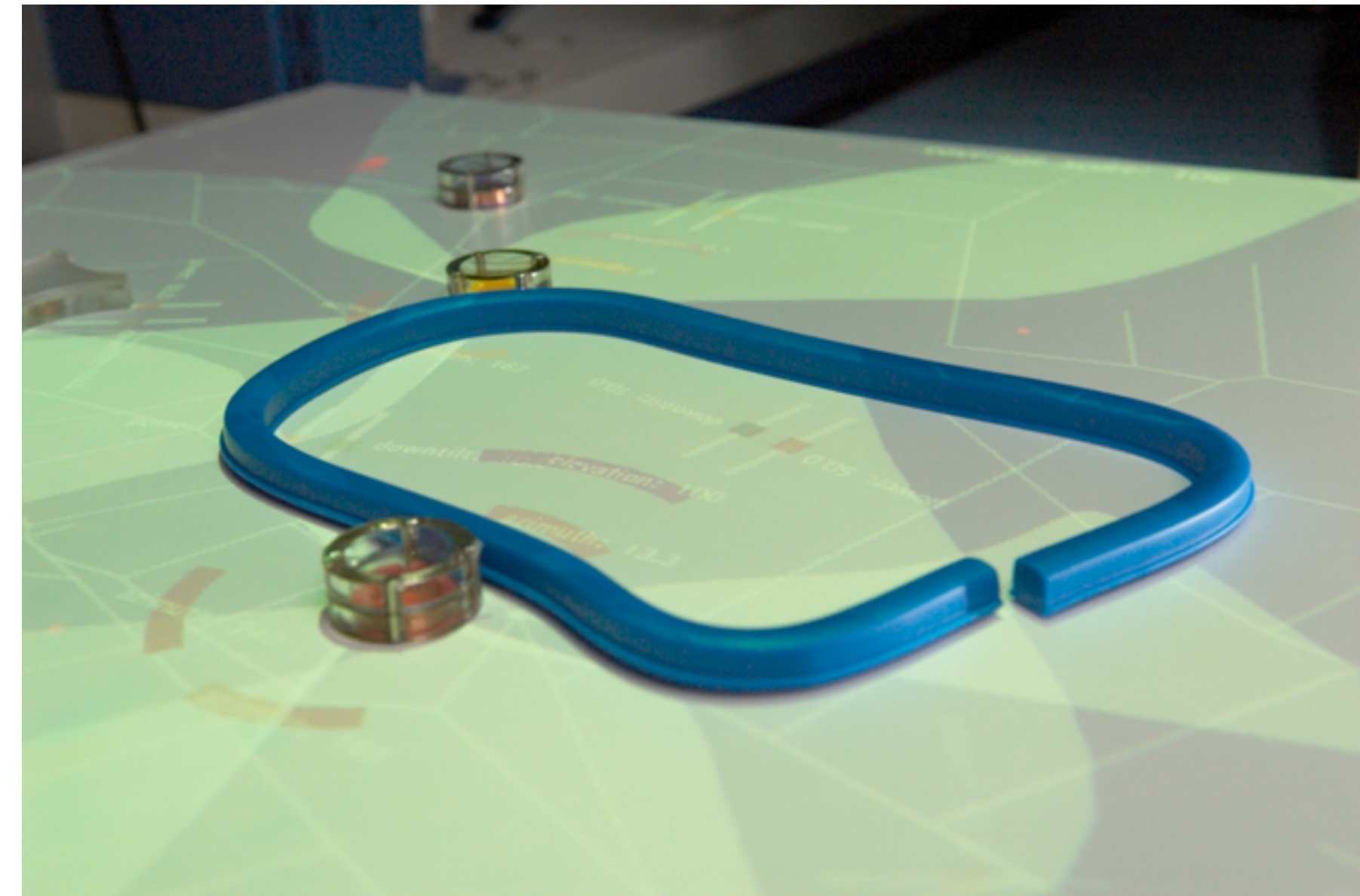
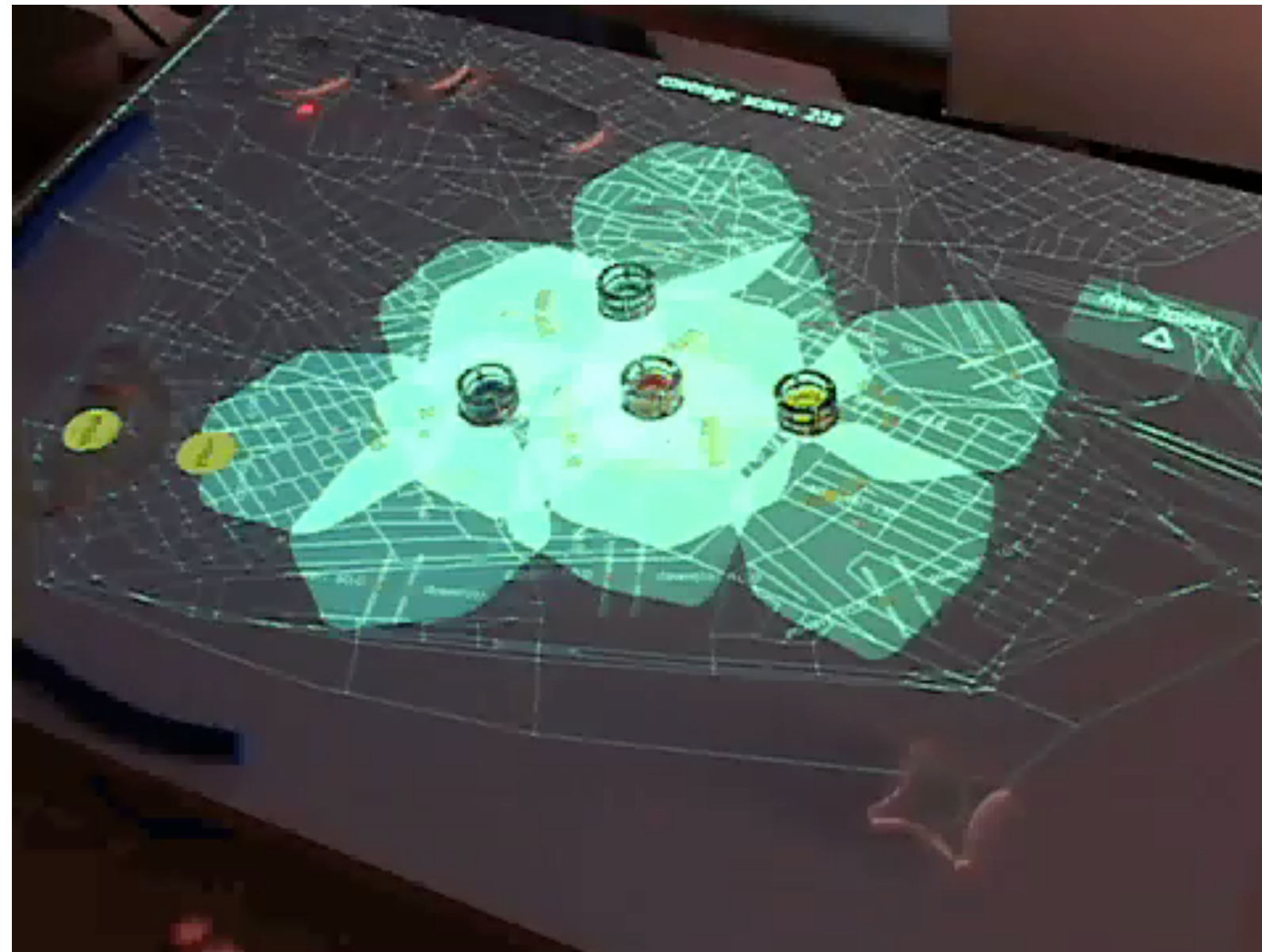


- Illuminating Clay / SandScape => Relief (dynamic clay)



# PICO: Tabletop Tangibles

James Patten and Hiroshi ISHII CHI 2007



- **Mechanical constraints, coupled with computer-controlled actuation, provide a novel and effective way to interact with computers.**



# Kinetic Tangibles

## Tangible Media Group

- inTouch – Curlybot – Topobo

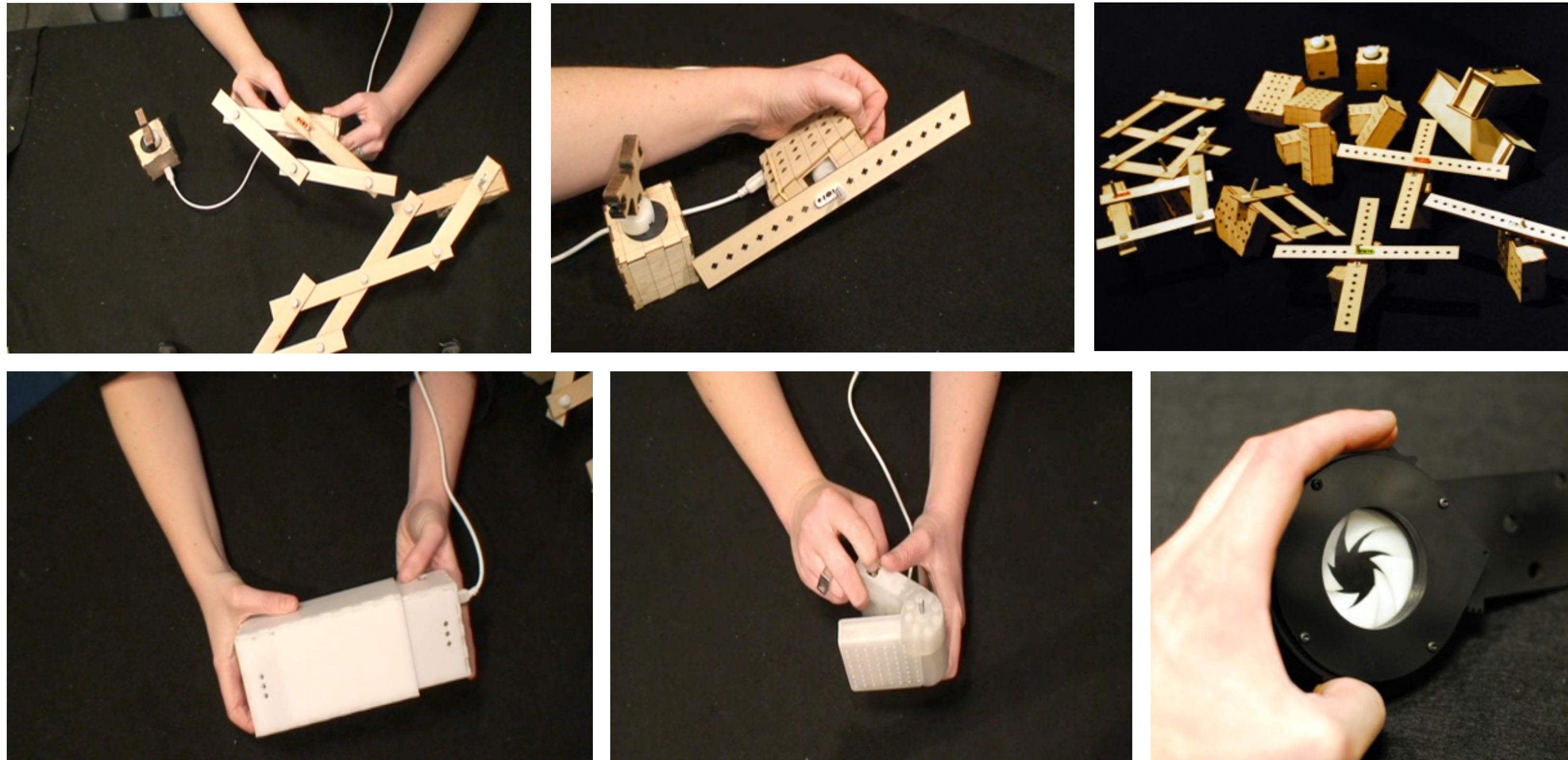


- Kinetic Sketchup – BOSU



# Kinetic Sketchup

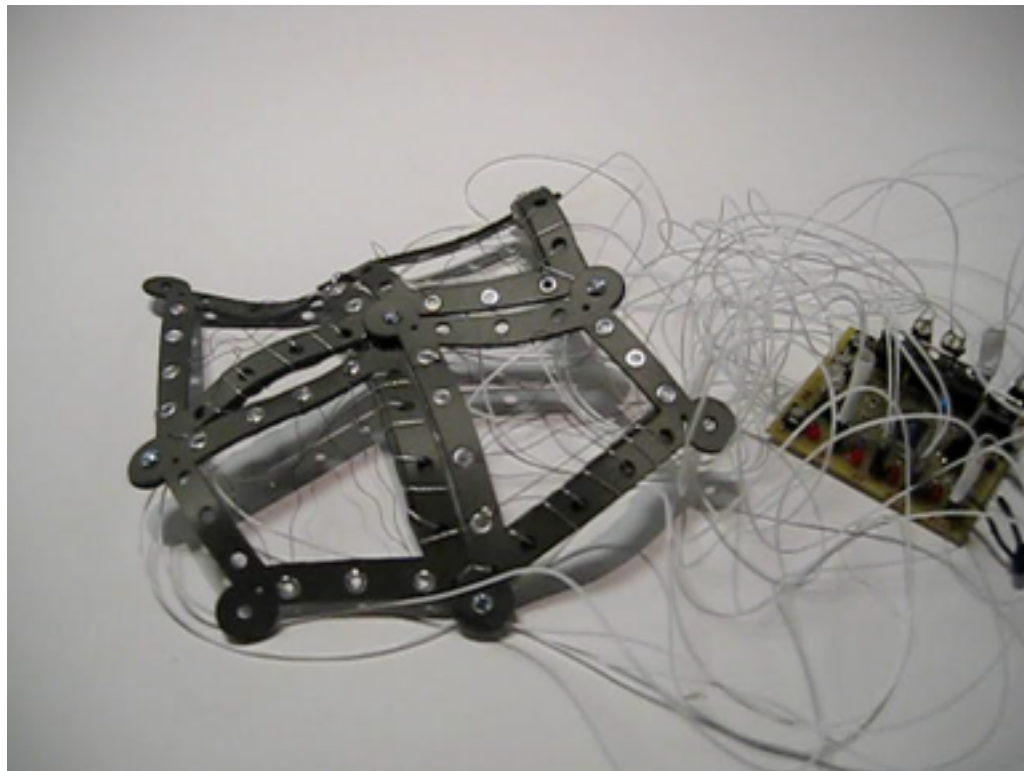
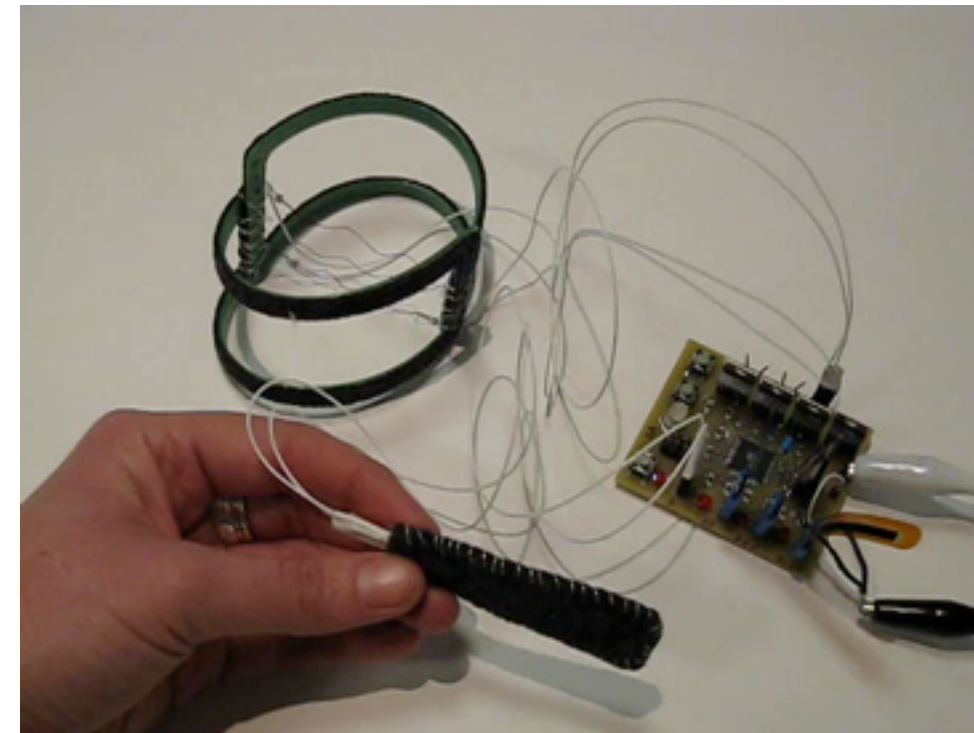
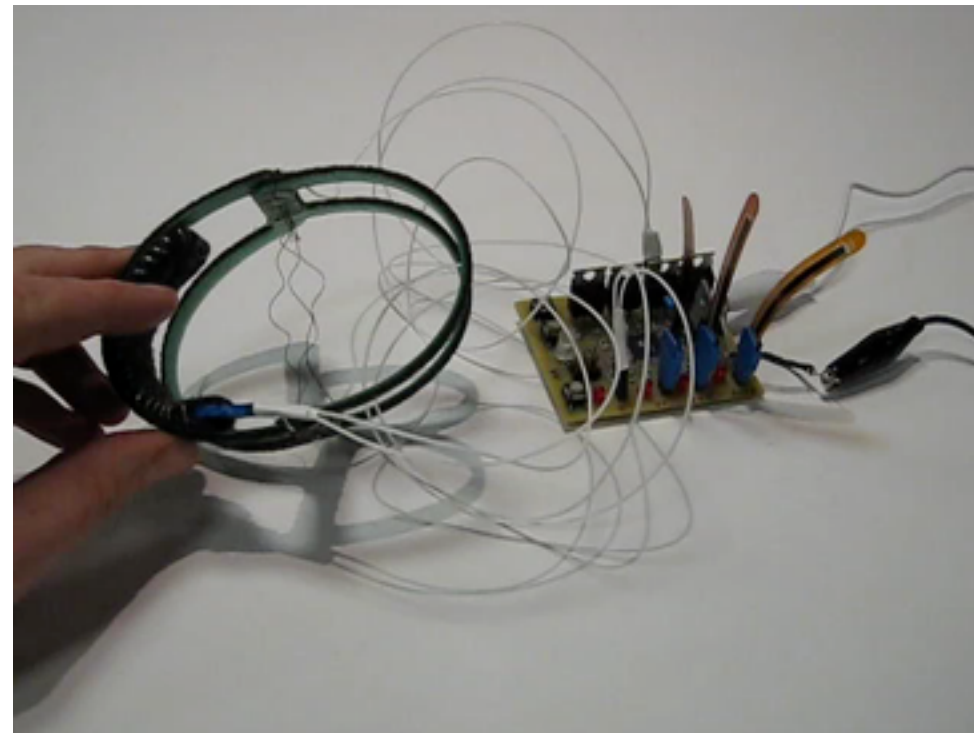
Amanda Parkes and Hiroshi ISHII 2009



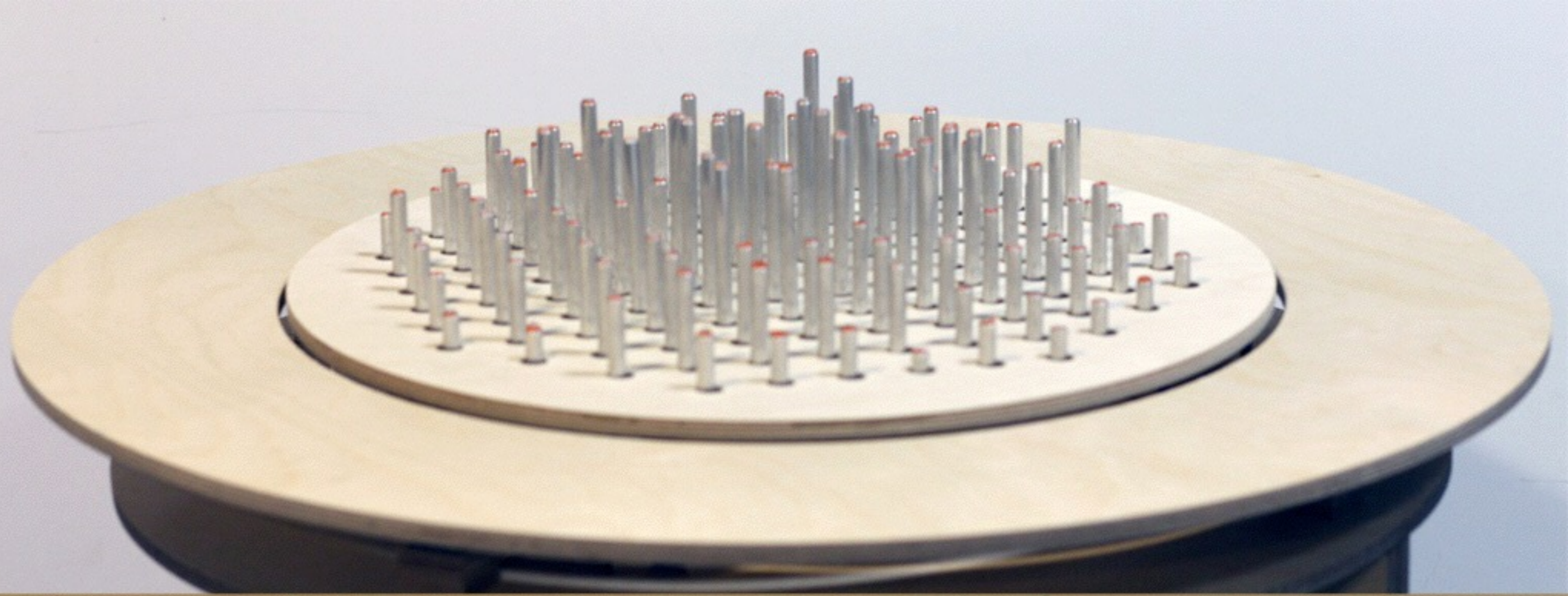
- **Gestural recording functionality with varying mechanical and behavioral controls**

# BOSU: Kinetic Tangibles

Amanda Parkes and Hiroshi ISHII 2009



- **Dynamic modeling tools offering kinetic memory in soft materials**



## **KeiIET: A 2.5D Shape Display**

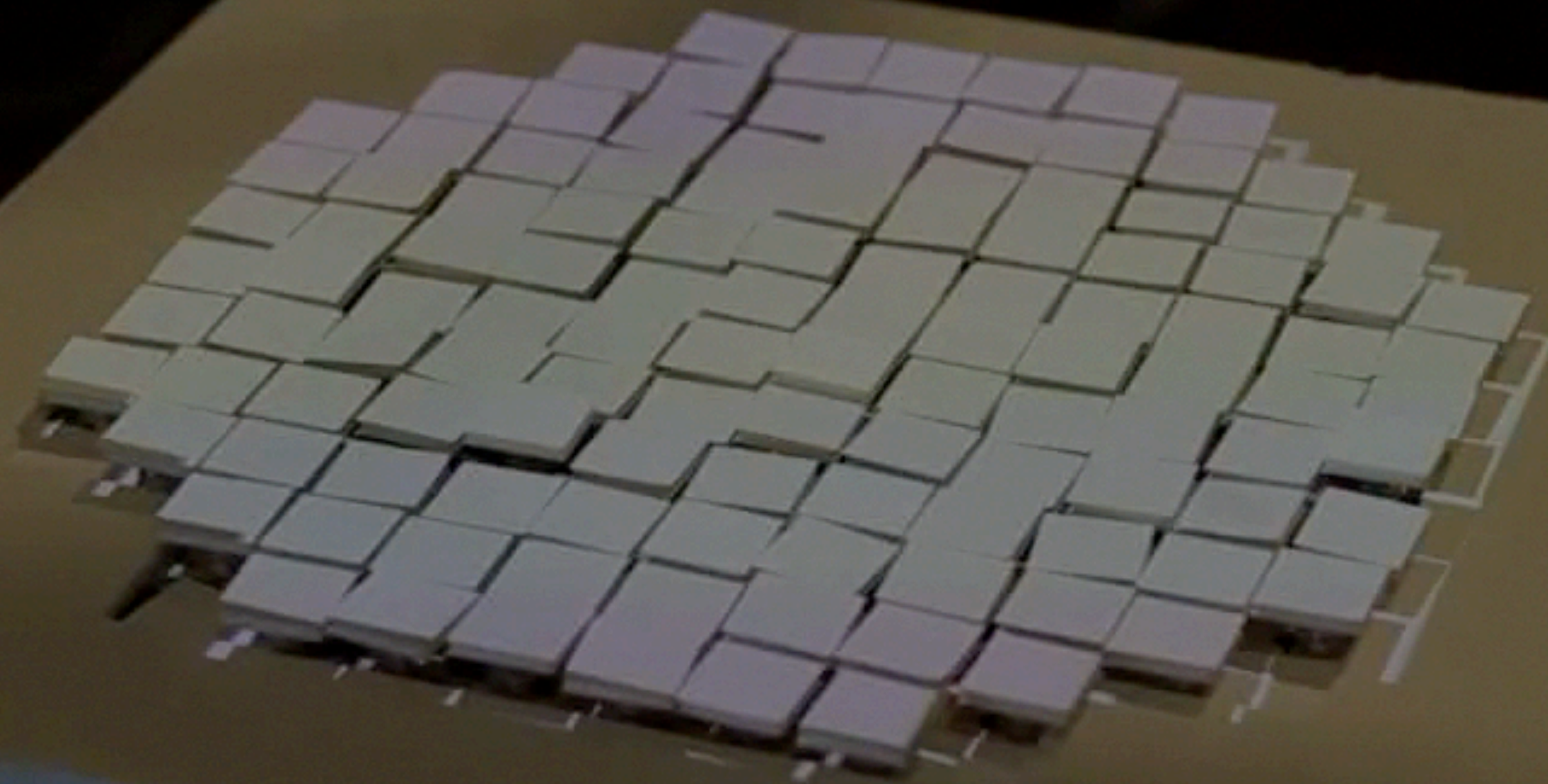
Daniel Leithinger & Hiroshi Ishii



# Recompose

based on Relief

UIST 2011



Anthony DeVincenzi, David Lakatos, Matthew Blackshaw, Daniel Leithinger & Hiroshi Ishii

# TimeScape

based on Relief



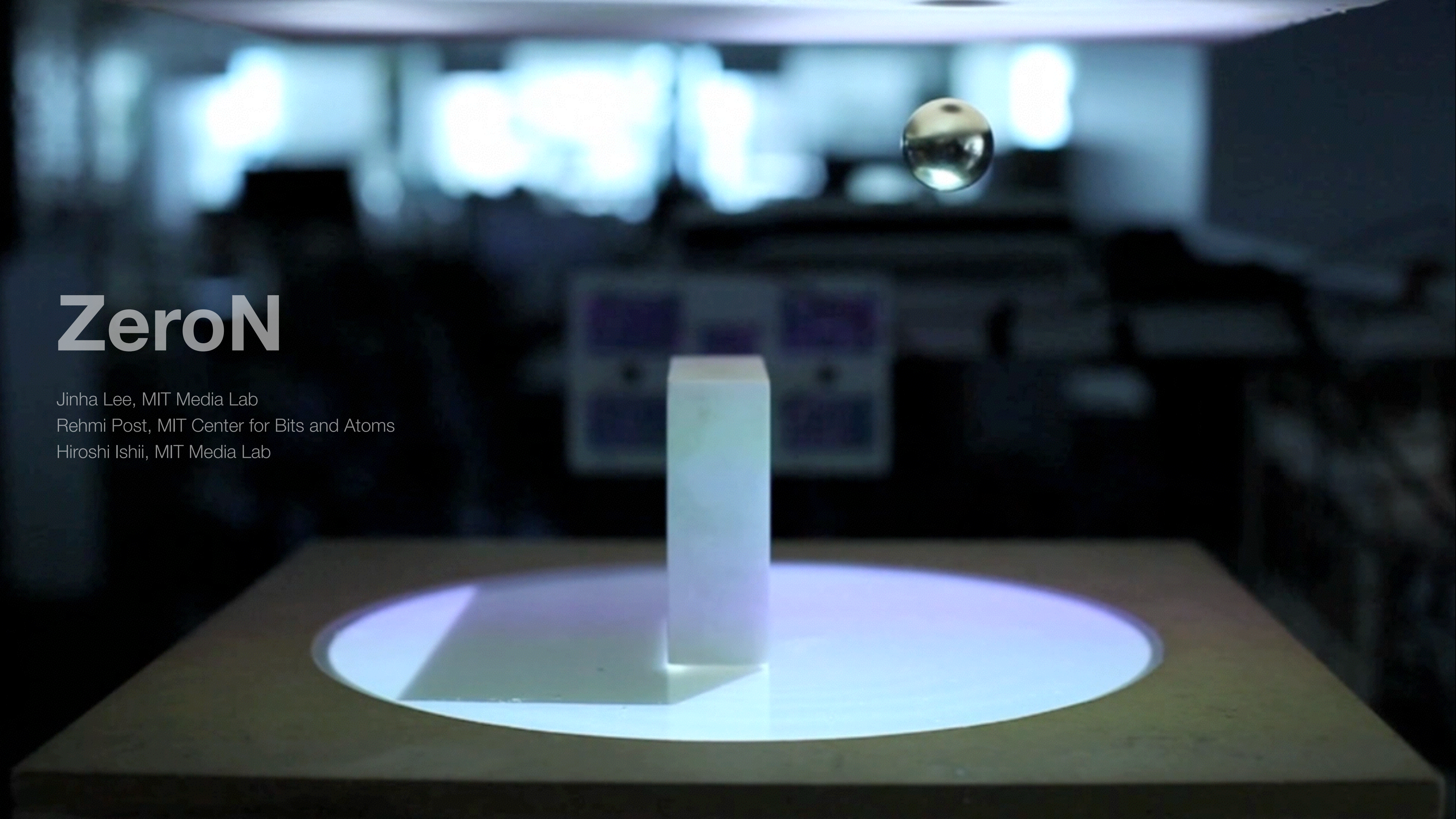
Daniel Leithinger, Jinha Lee, Sean Follmer, Austin Lee, Matthew Chang & Hiroshi Ishii

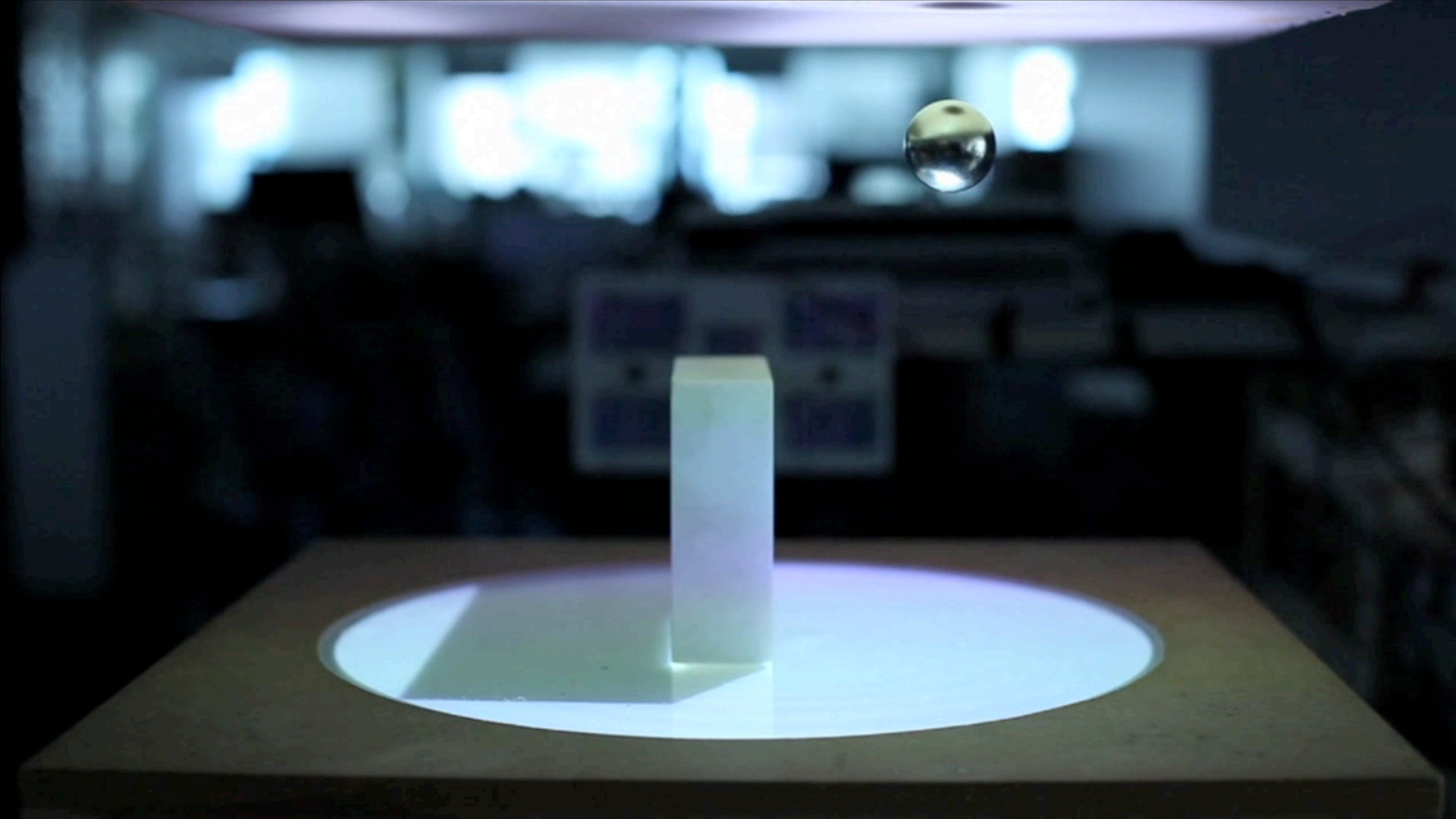
# ZeroN

Jinha Lee, MIT Media Lab

Rehmi Post, MIT Center for Bits and Atoms

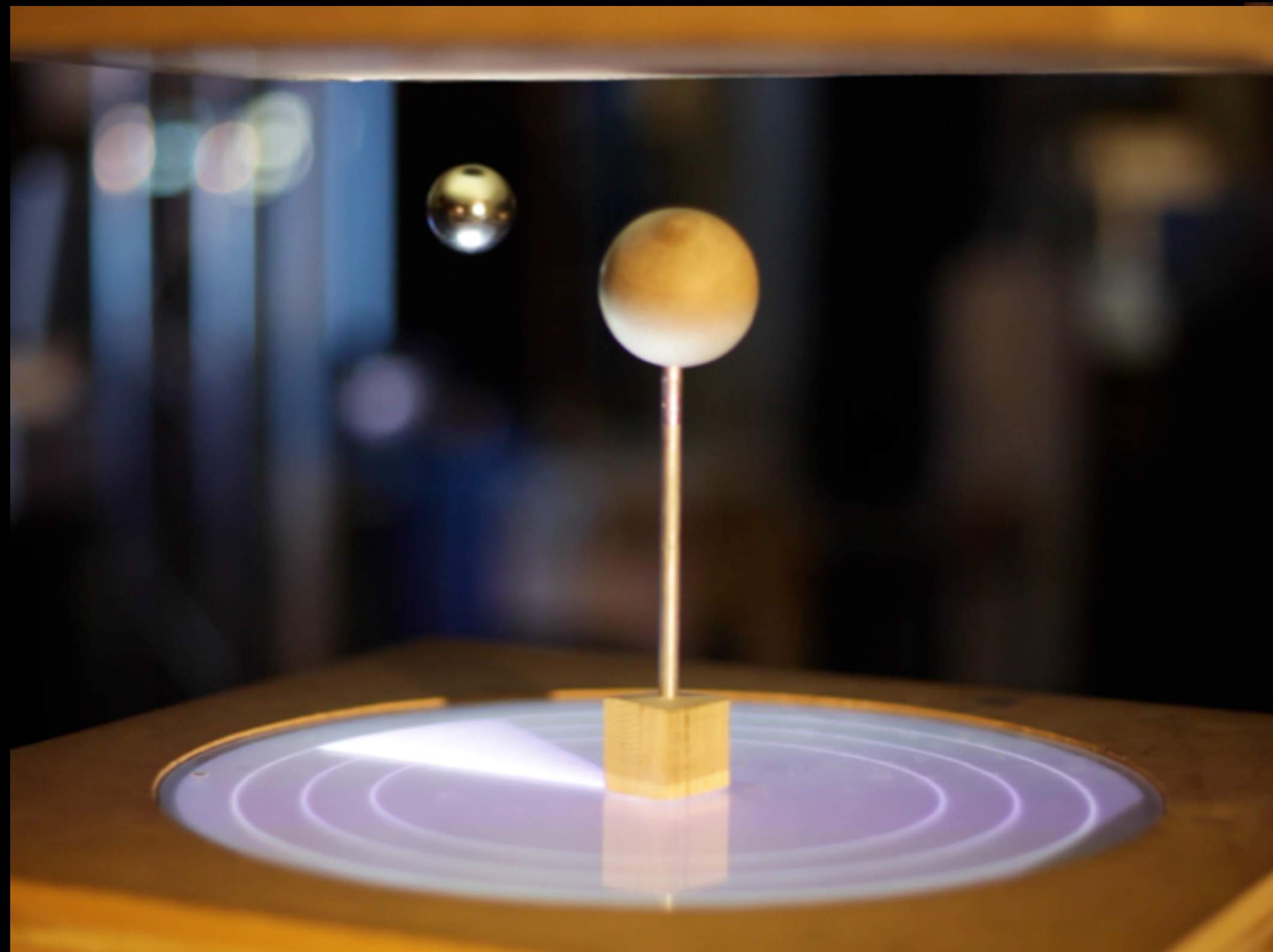
Hiroshi Ishii, MIT Media Lab



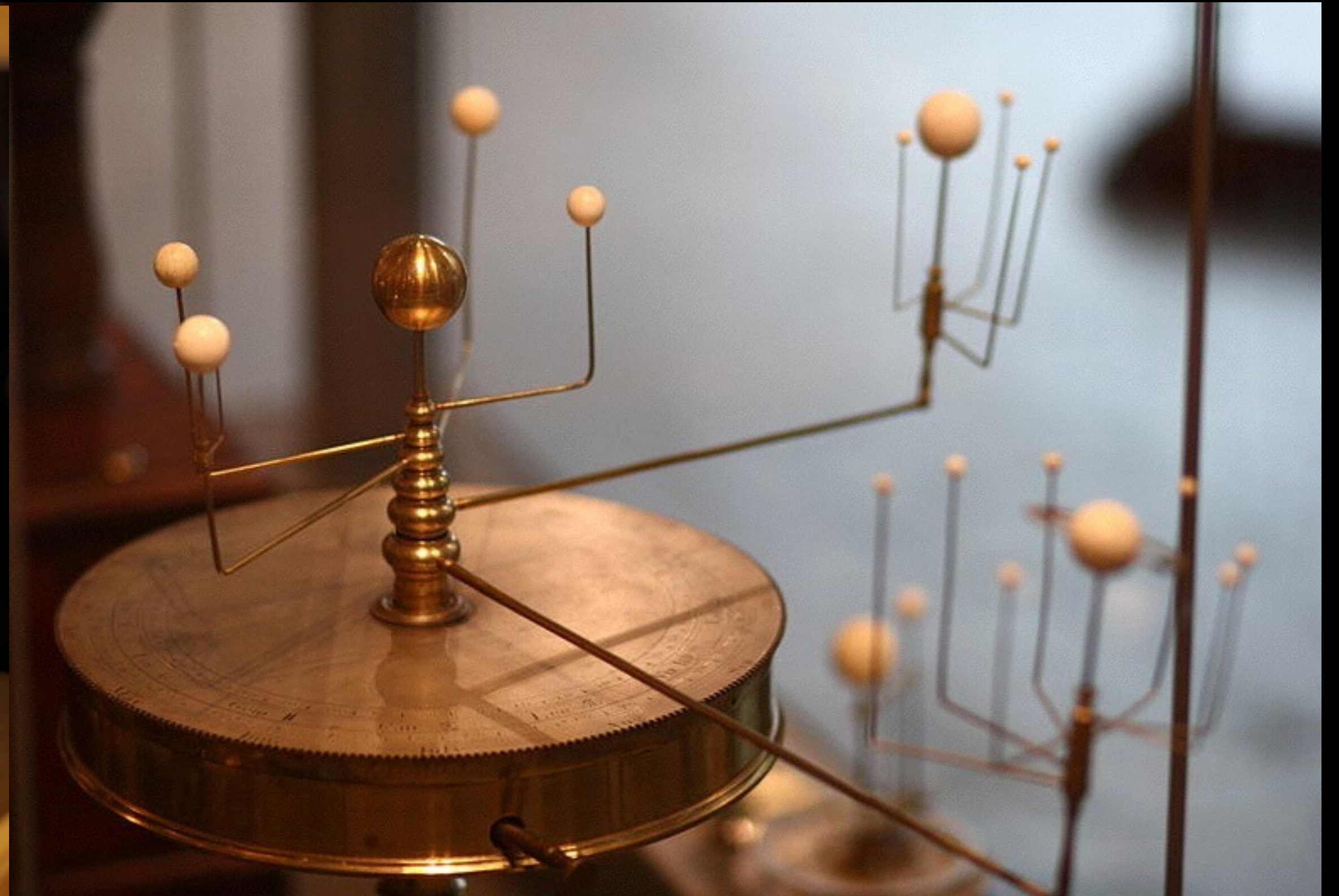




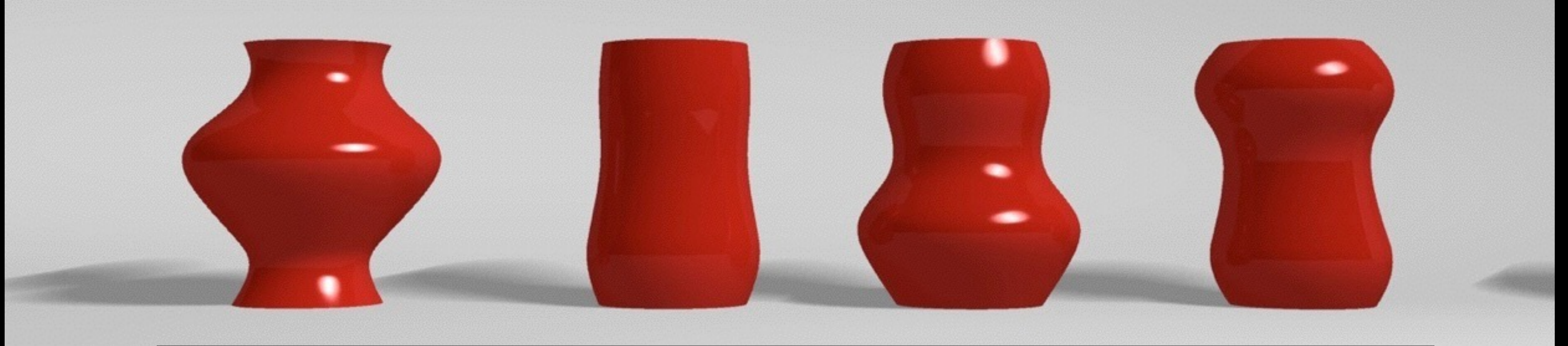
# ZeroN



# Orrery



Q: affordance / legibility



# Amphorm

Dávid Lakatos &  
Hiroshi Ishii

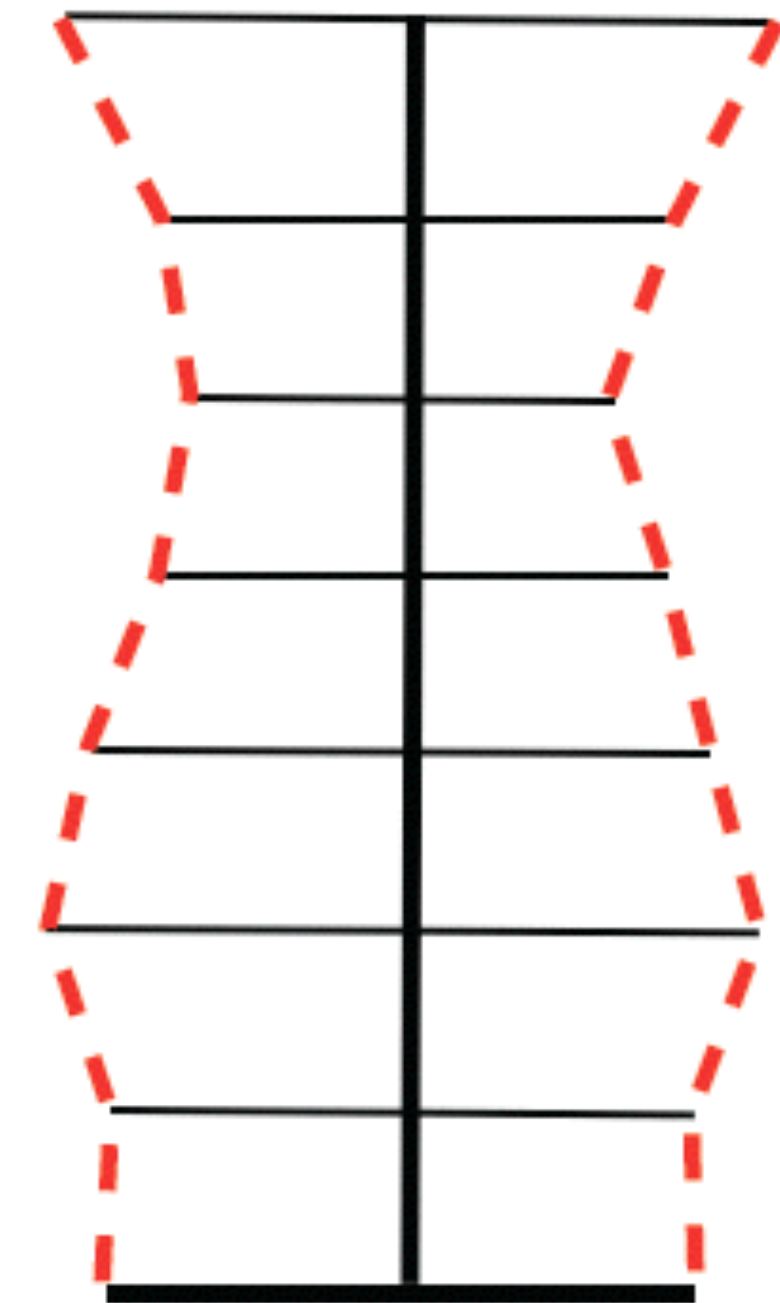
(Amphora + Form)

Vase that uses kinetic elements to transform its shape in sync with a digital model



**How will we interact with future dynamic materials  
in our environment?**

**How can we experiment without these materials?**



**Material**

**Interaction**

**Interpolation**

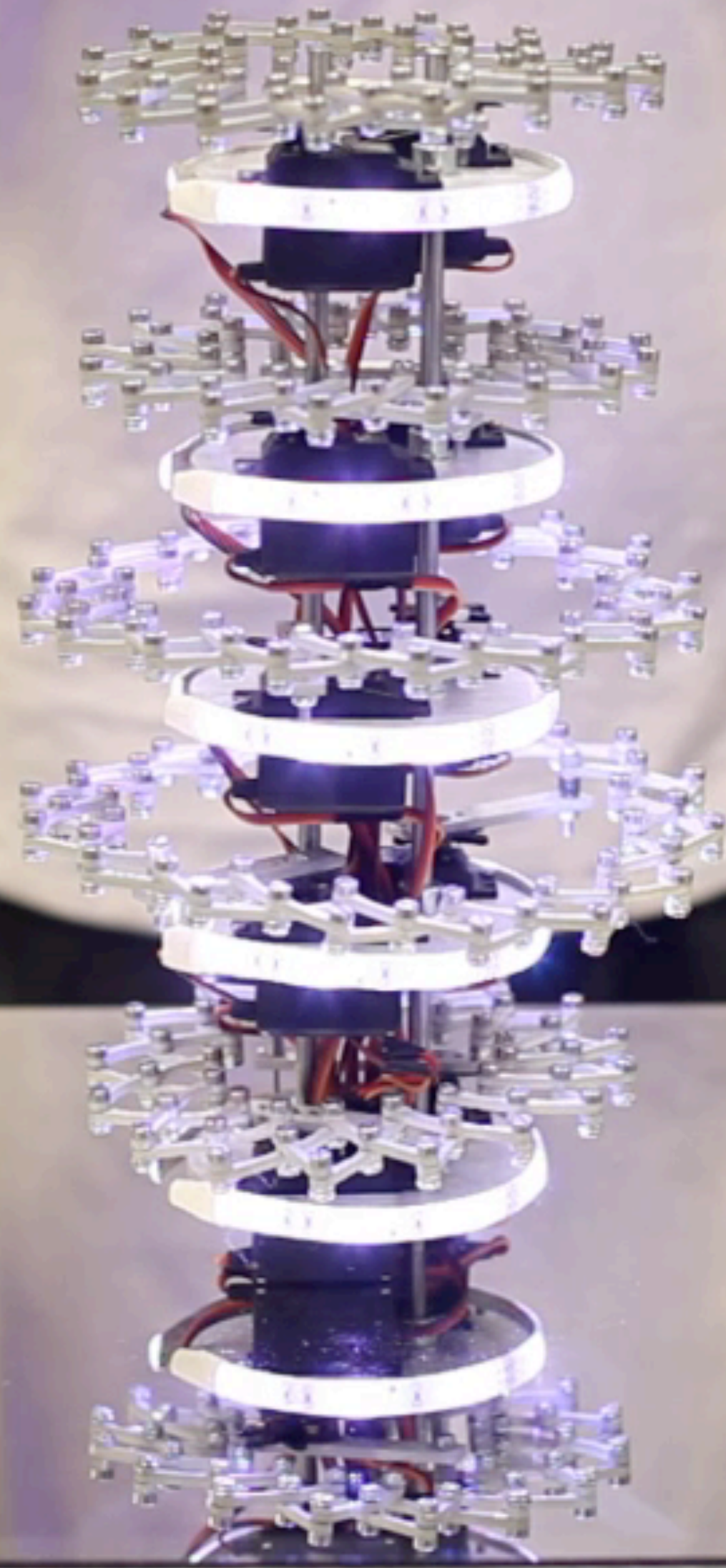


**“Conform”**

**Direct manipulation**

**Gestural input**

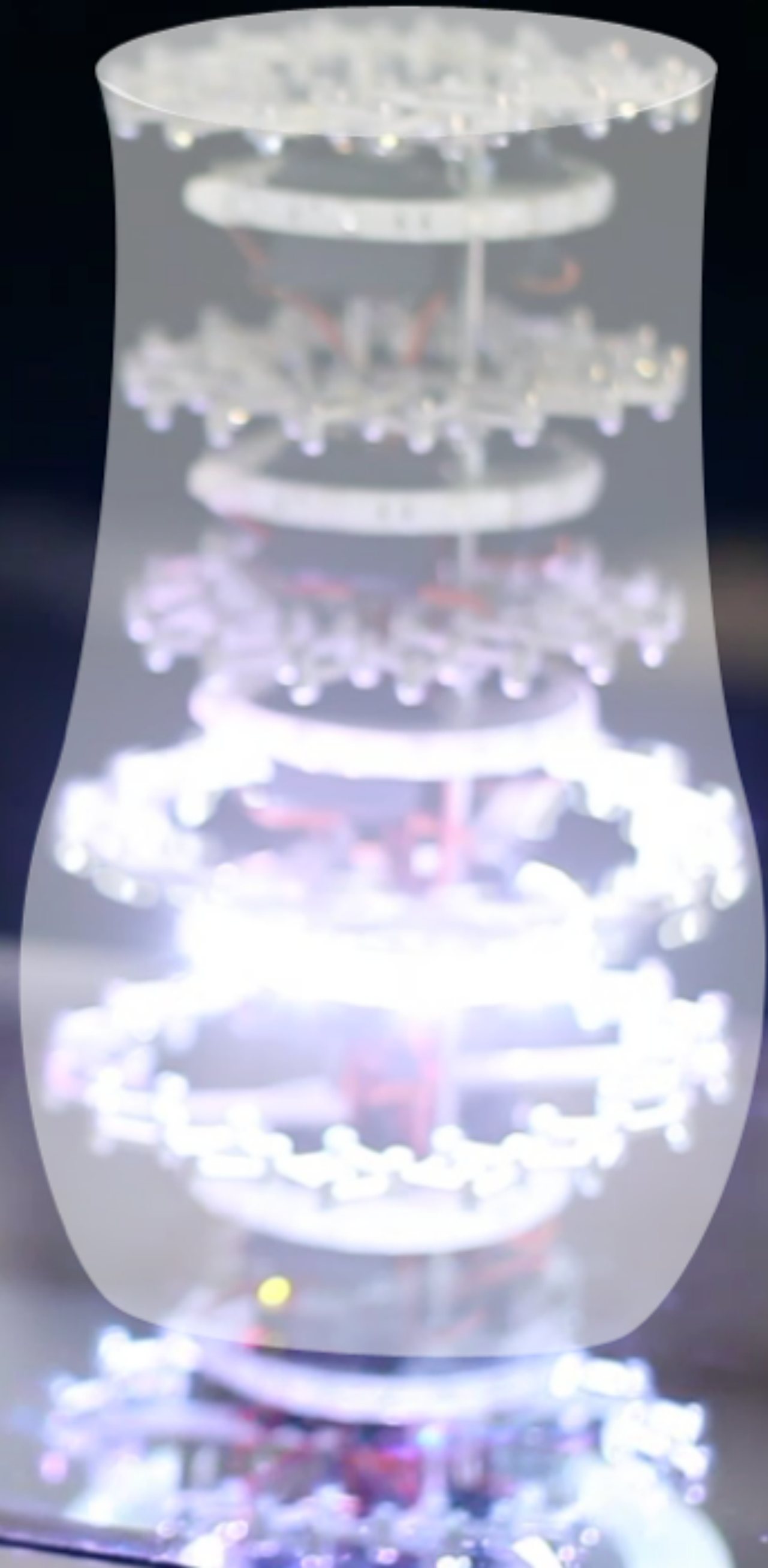
# Amphorm



# Amphorm

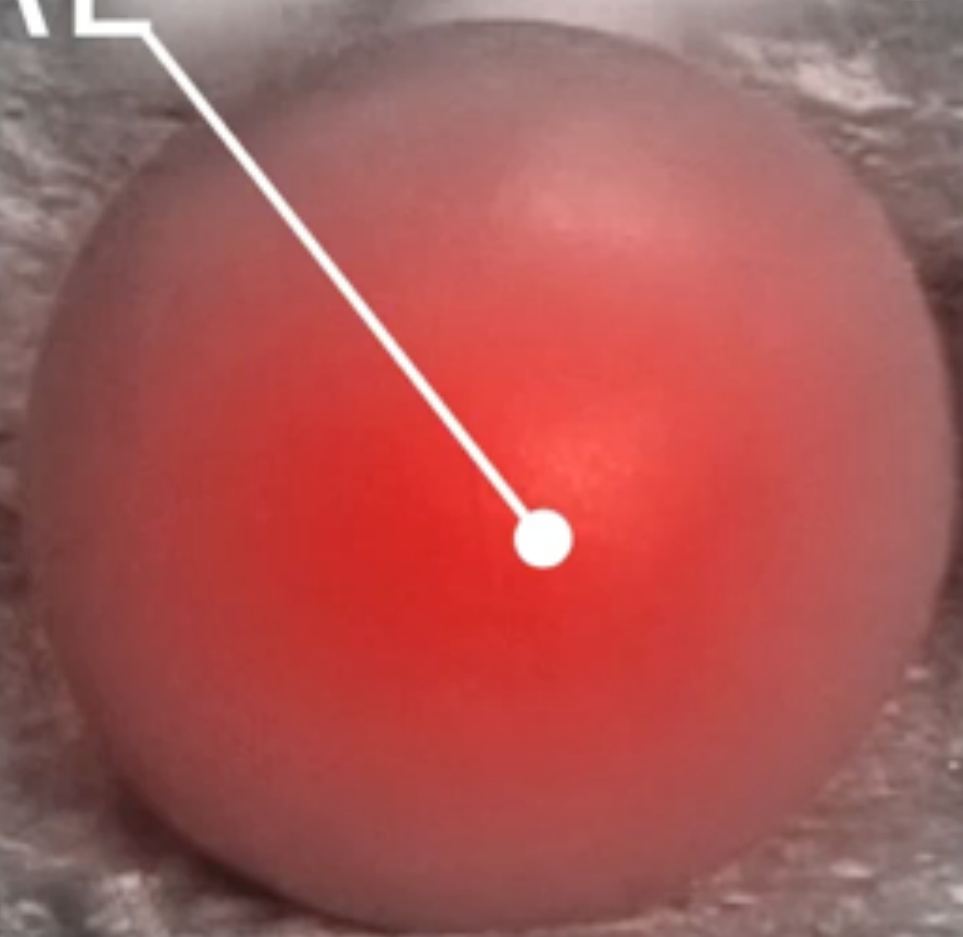


# Amphorm

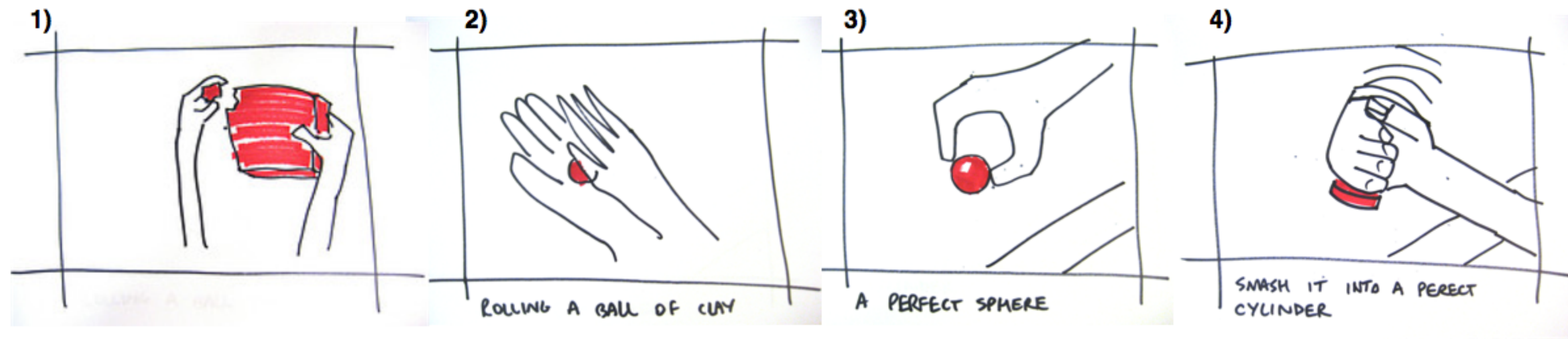




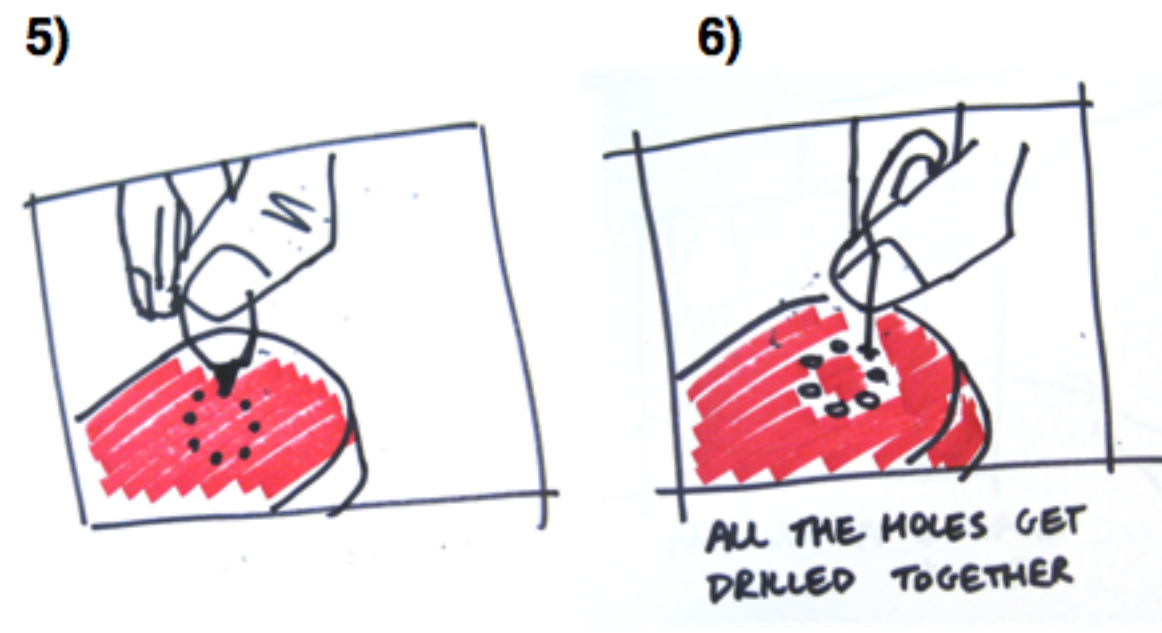
ROLLING **PERFECT RED**  
MAKES A PERFECT SPHERE



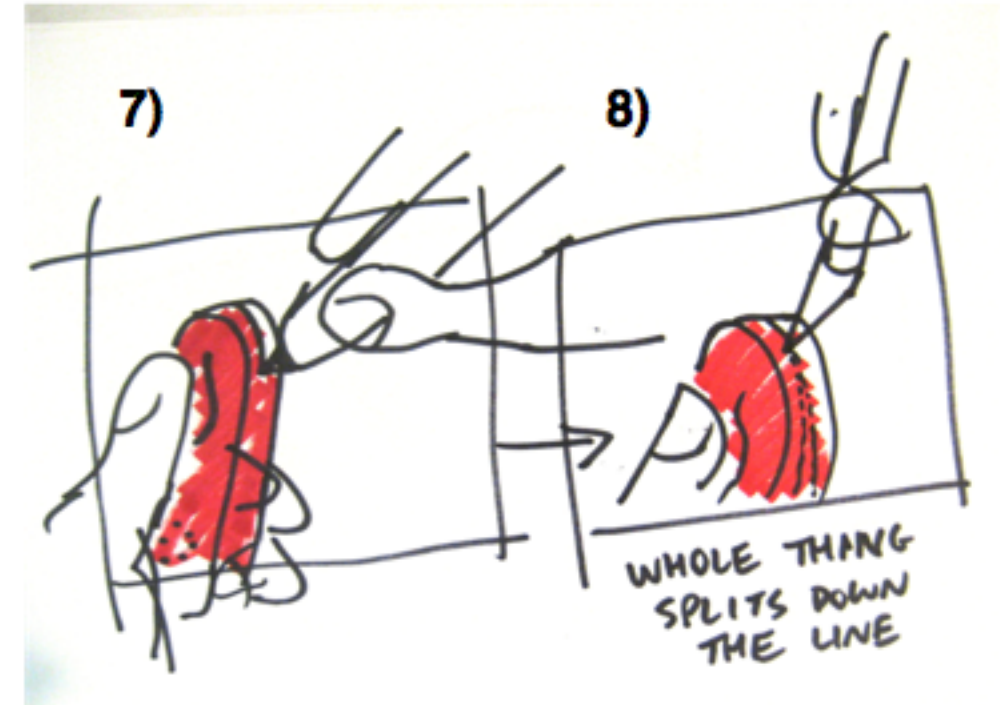




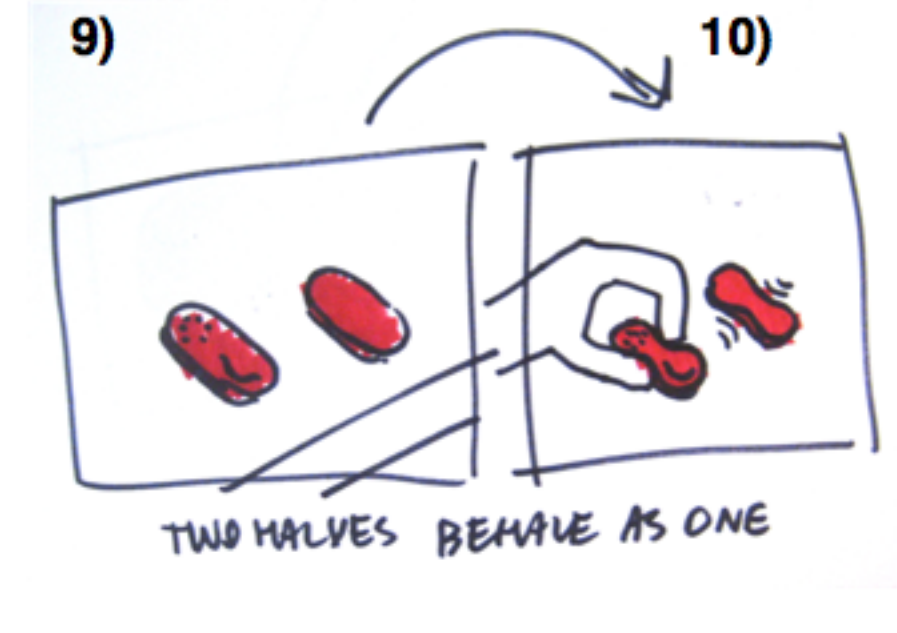
1) Tear off a piece of perfect red      2) & 3) Roll a ball of clay to let it snap to a perfect sphere      4) smash a ball into a perfect cylinder



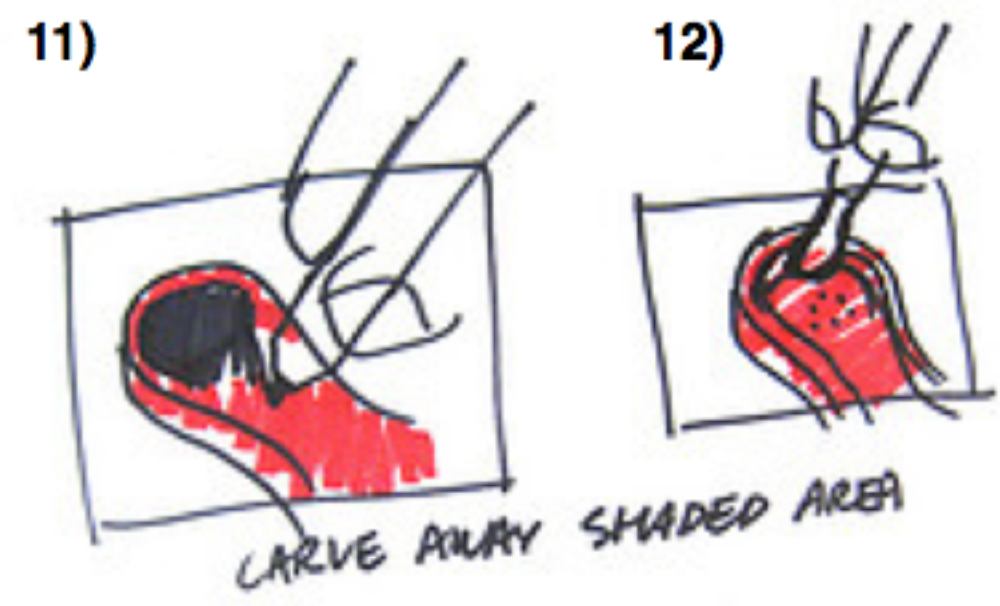
5) & 6) Draw 8 dots and stick a pin into one of them to drill 8 holes



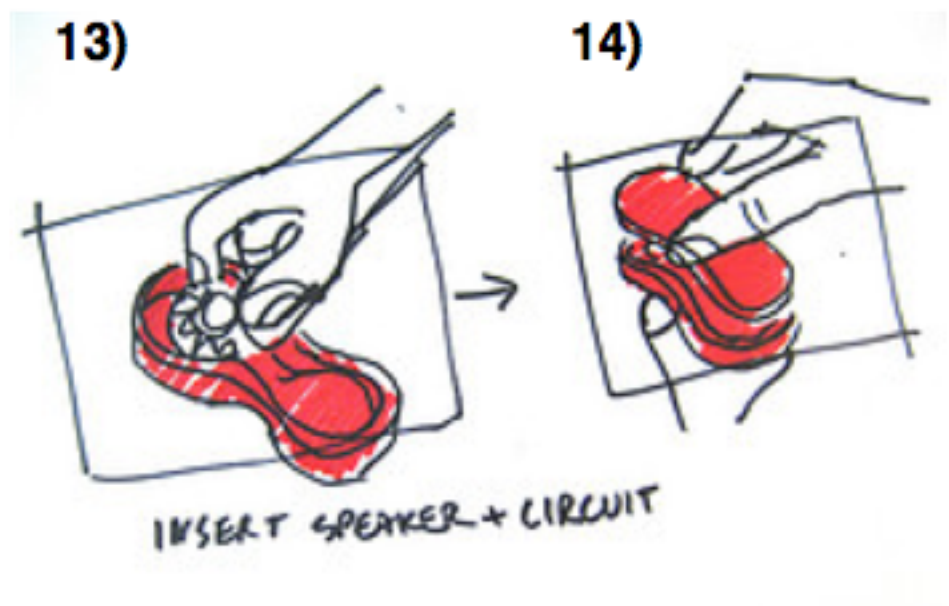
7) & 8) Draw a line along the cut and tap it with a knife



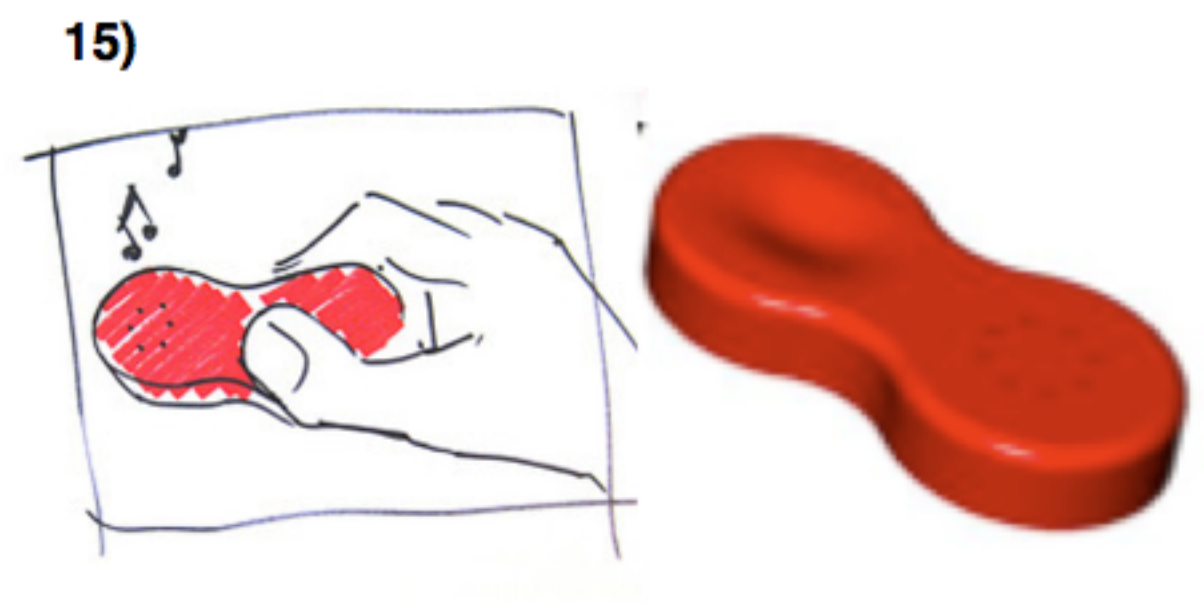
9) Split a piece in two even halves, then the operations performed on one part are mirrored in the other



11) & 12) Carve away shaded area with chisel and mirror it another piece



13) & 14) Insert materials and put two mirrored pieces together



15) final rattle created with Radical Atoms

# Making a Rattle with Perfect Red - Story Board by Leonardo Bonanni

# PERFECT RED

towards **Radical Atoms**: exploring form-giving with shape memory clay



# phase transition



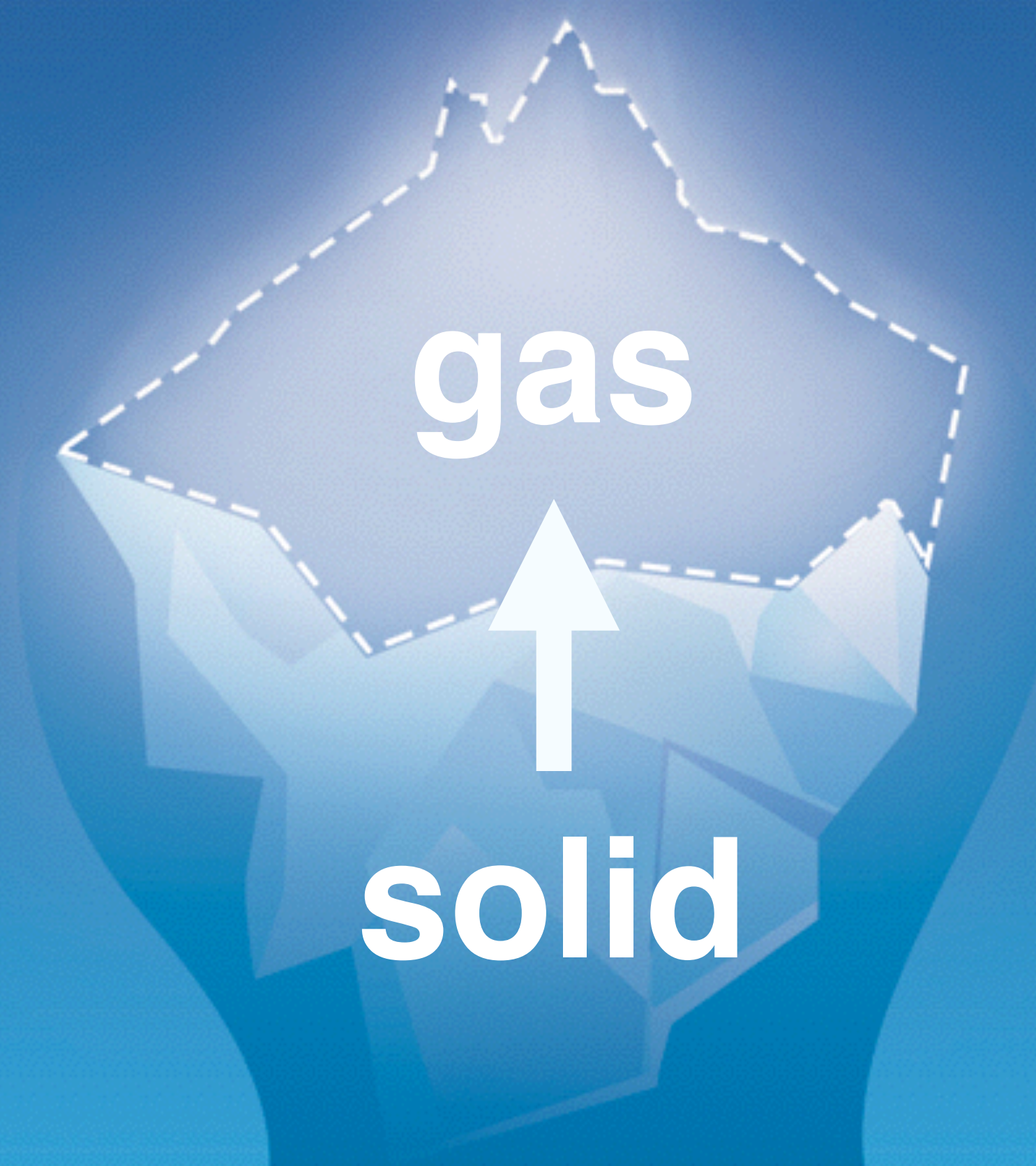
**solid**

**sublimation**



**solid**

**sublimation**



**gas**

**solid**

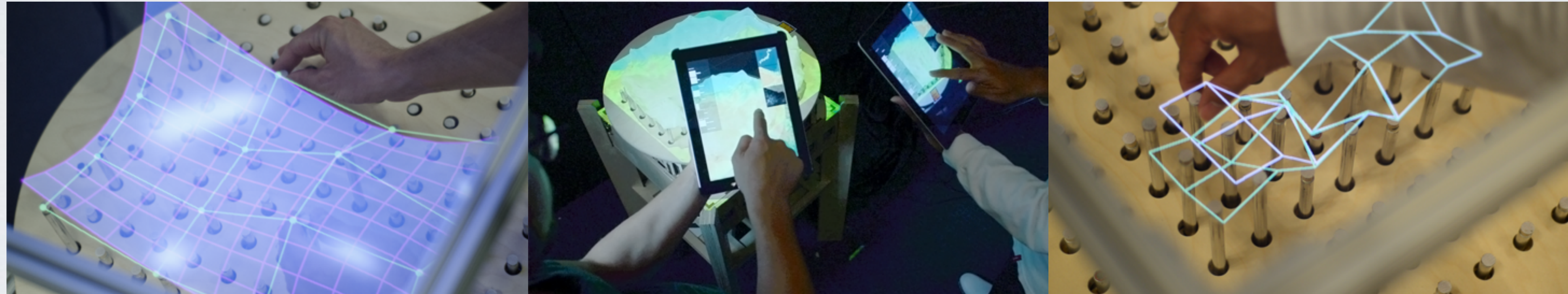
**floating pixels  
in 3D space**

**tangibles**

**sublimation**

# SUBLIMATE:

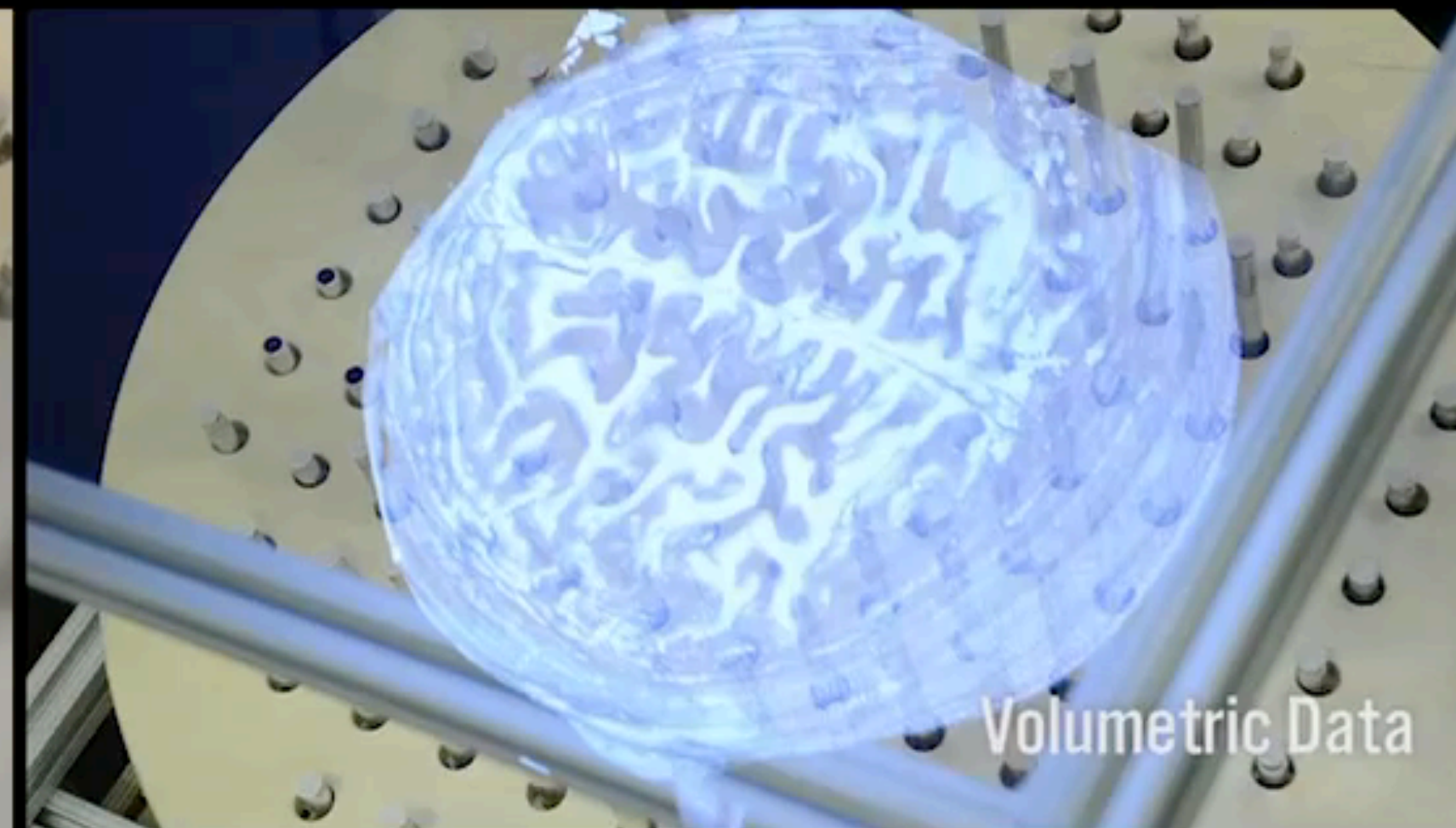
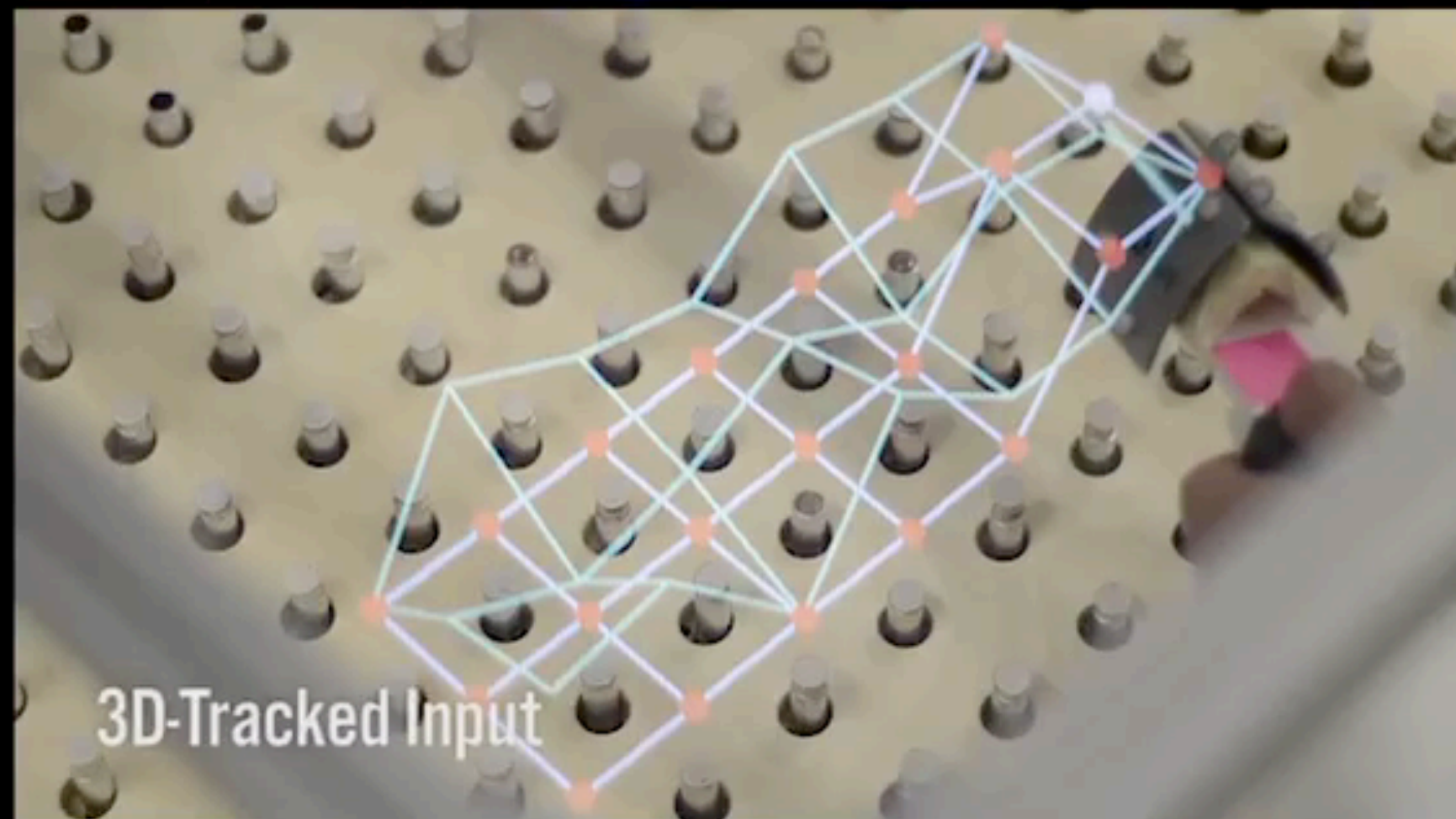
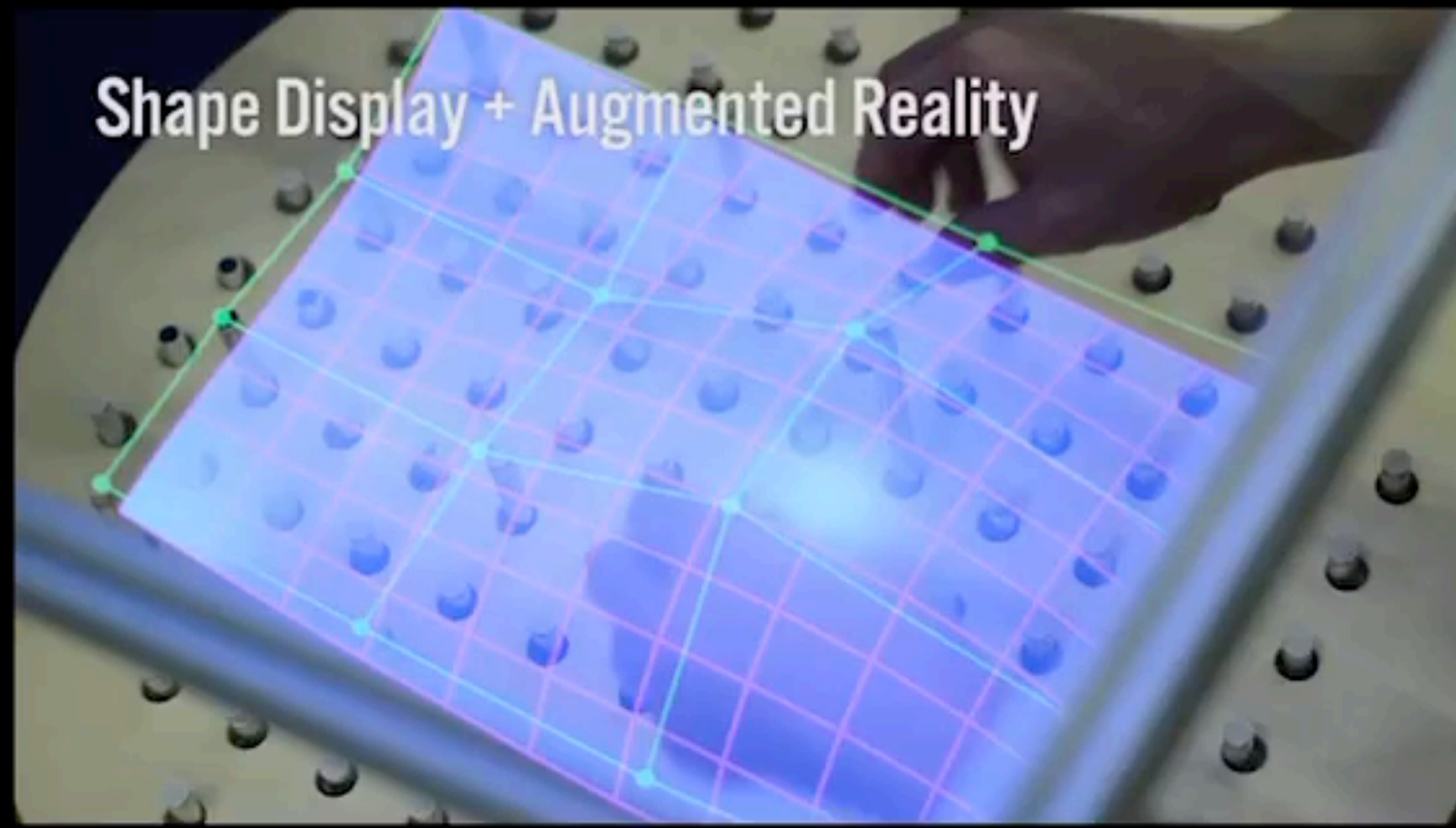
STATE-CHANGING VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL RENDERING  
TO AUGMENT INTERACTION WITH SHAPE DISPLAYS



Daniel Leithinger, Sean Follmer, Alex Olwal,  
Samuel Luescher, Akimitsu Hogge, Jinha Lee, Hiroshi Ishii

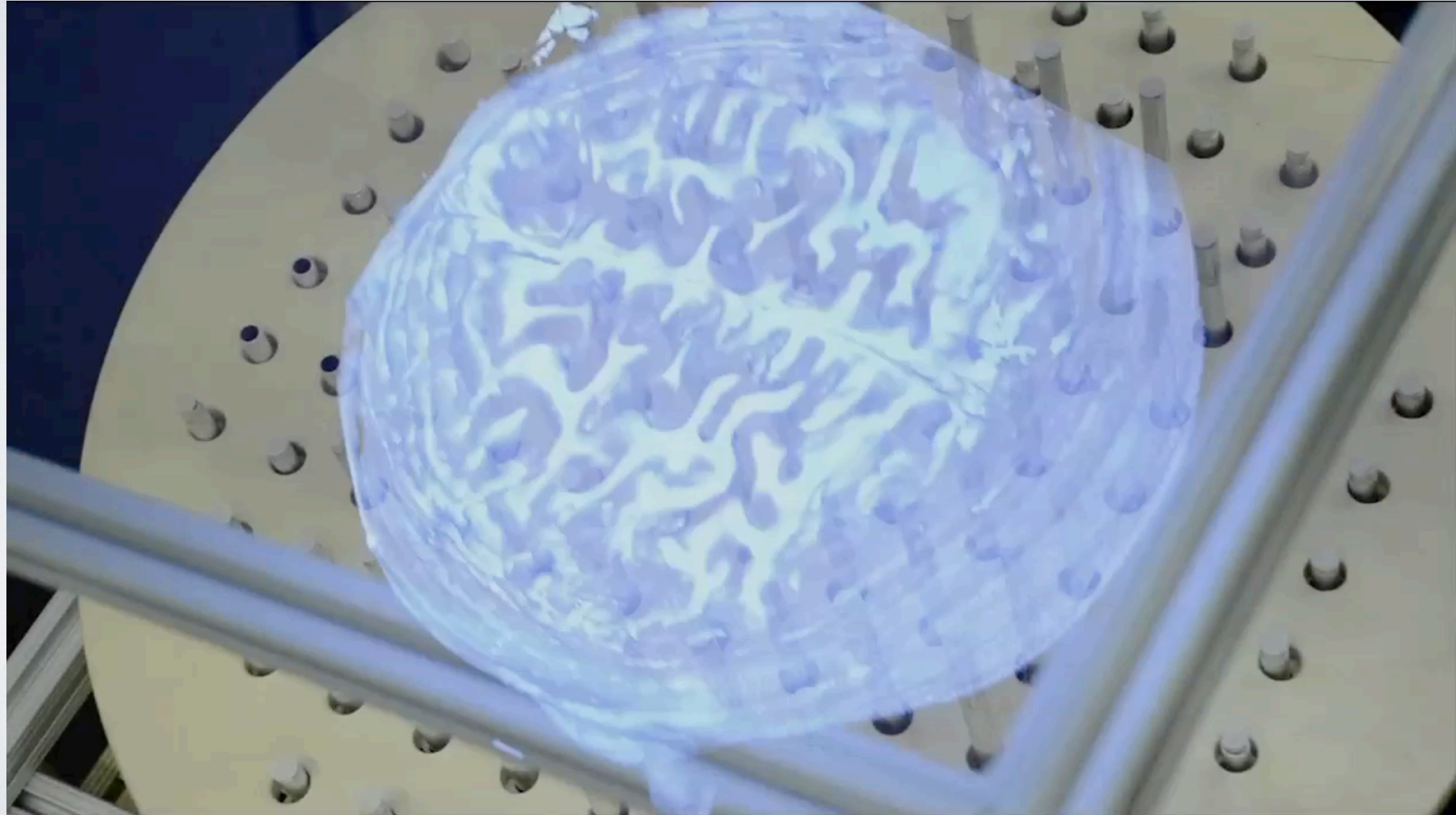
Tangible Media Group, MIT Media Lab  
<http://tangible.media.mit.edu>

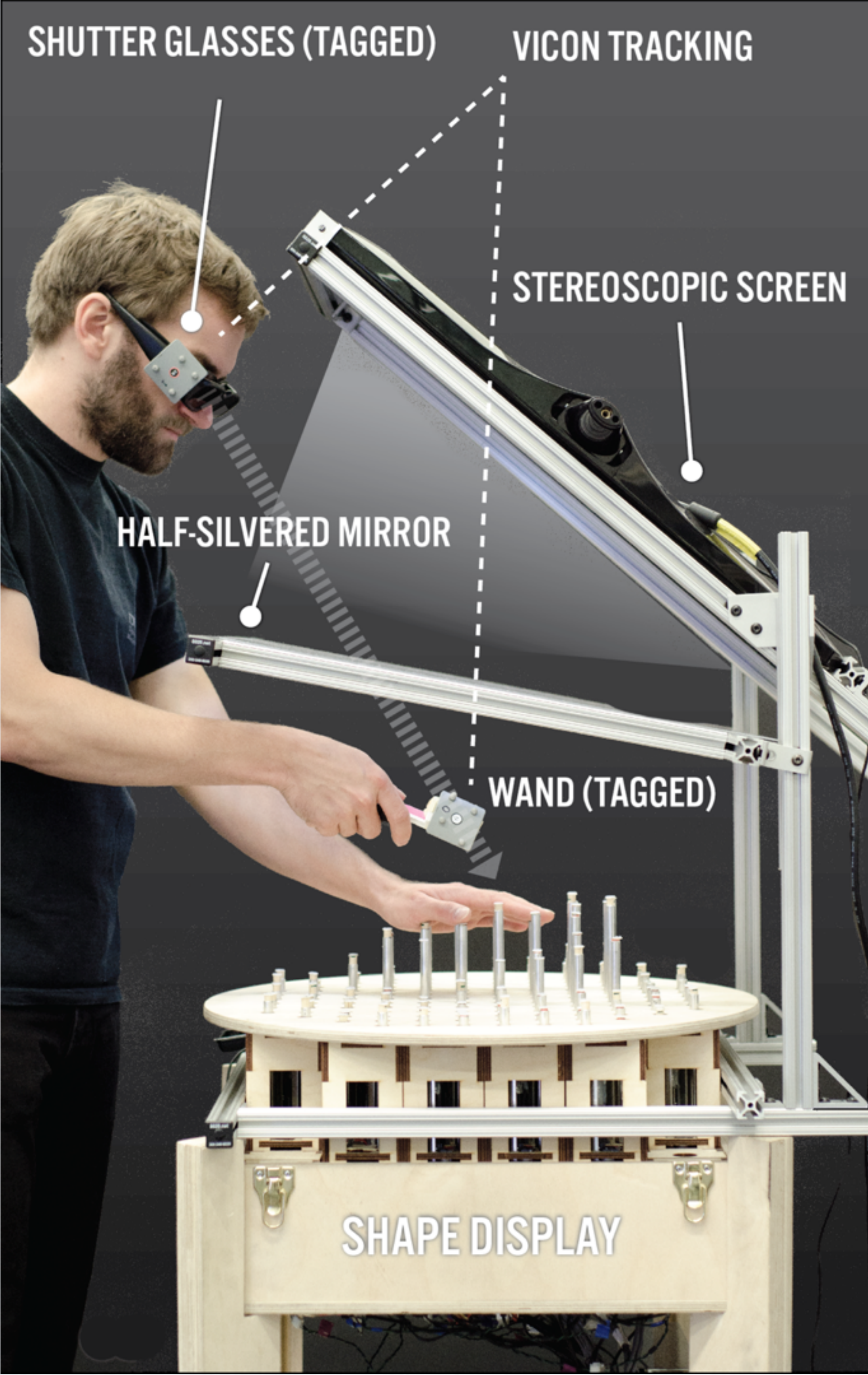
# SUBLIMATE





# VOLUMETRIC





# Radical Challenges

- Designing with **dynamically controllable material**
- Challenging static **affordances** with dynamic **abilities**
  - Identify dynamic material
  - Understand material abilities
  - Predict range of abilities
- Redefining human **cognitive invariants**

# Dynamic Abilities

- **Shape-shifting**
- **Color-changing**
- **Rapid solidification**
- **Rapid liquefaction (melting/  
freezing)**
- **Rapid sublimation/deposition**
- **Anti-gravitational**

# Radical Atoms: Challenges

## Materials, Tools, and Applications

- **How to Inform Atoms?**
  - **Direct Manipulation (with touch & gesture)**
  - **Special Tools (“RA oven”)**
  - **Context Aware (semi-automatic)**
  - **Programming**
    - » **Tangible Programming**
    - » **3D CAD (GUI) & download**
    - » **Programming by Examples**
- **Killer Applications**

# Radical Atoms



**Thanks!**

**Hiroshi Ishii**  
**MIT Media Lab**