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## MOTHER TONGUE

Interactive installation: custom electronics, video, 2010

*When people don't share a language, their communication is a precious thing. Both parties must exert extraordinary effort if the ideas are going to make it across the language divide... Often it is the act of communicating, rather than the content of what is being communicated, that is important<sup>1</sup>*

On the floor is a circle of light, a metaphor for a universe, a heart, a magical world in a fairy tale. Once in the circle, one is immersed in a multilingual letter shadow dance, projected on the body; Hebrew, Arabic, English, and Japanese letters. Letters and words are mystery. With a mesh-like aesthetic, the work suggests alphabets as a code, a prerequisite to understanding and deciphering of language, emphasizing the power of unity through diversity. Wind-chime sounds, universal and language-independent, associate the participants with their intimate, intuitive world. Once out of the circle, one is back to reality, a world full of partitions, definitions and boundaries where identity is no longer fluid and free. The fable of Babel becomes a living metaphor; "a century of splinters of language and subsets of communication". [1]

Mother Tongue is installed in a public space, either indoor or outdoor. Location and space requirements are flexible. Some kind of roof is needed for the projector to be mounted to. The installation includes a projector, computer and custom electronics. The installation was redesigned and rebuilt in 2010.

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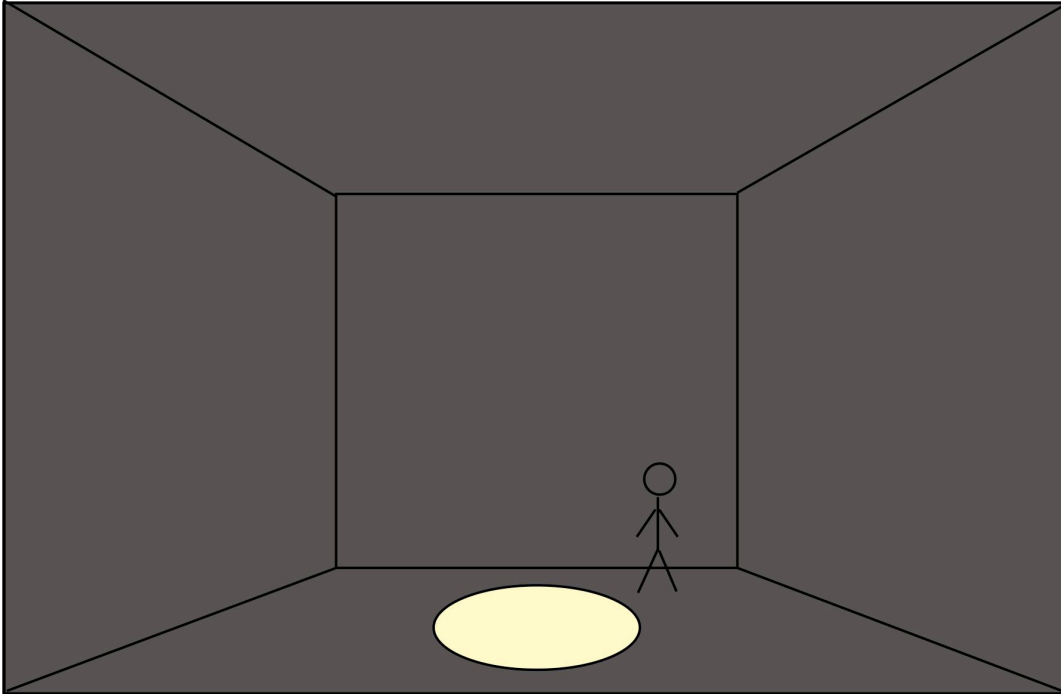
1

Britta Erickson, <http://www.xubing.com/>

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Interactivity:

When nobody is in the circle, one only sees a circle of light



Entering the circle triggers the letter projection and the wind chime sound

