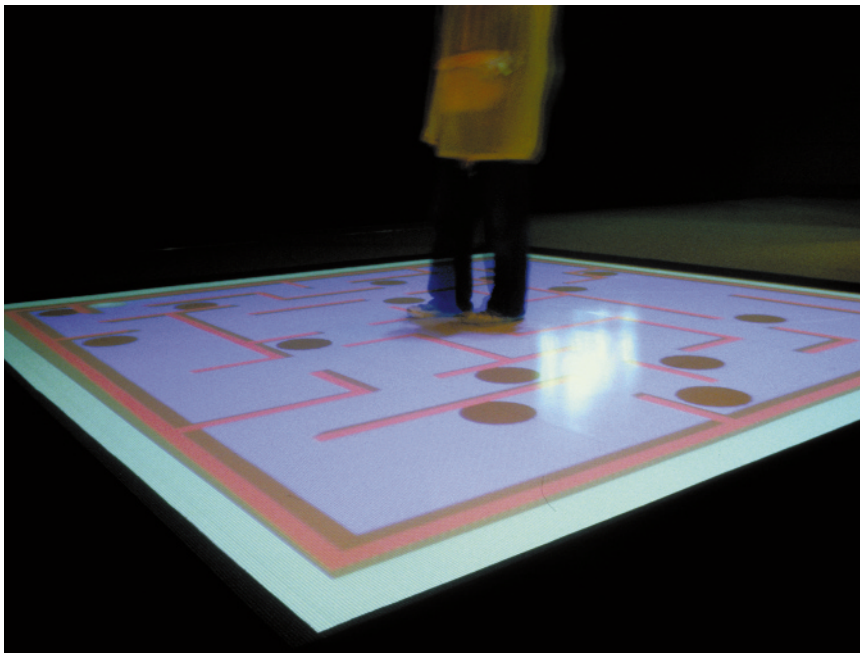


In this familiar maze game, a marble rolls on a flat surface, its direction determined by two knobs that control the level on perpendicular axes. The surface is crisscrossed with a network of passages separated by shallow barriers and is accented here and there with the dreaded holes that swallow the marble and end the game. The conventional version of this game, which sits on a table top or precariously on your lap, prompts the question: What are the ideal dimensions and controls for engaging in this activity?

A 3D model of the maze is projected onto a human-scale interactive projection floor with an imaginary pivot point at the center. The model tilts, seemingly under the weight of the players, according to where they stand on the game surface. As the projected surface tilts, the marble moves through the maze and appears to obey the laws of gravity.

Human-scaled interactive systems succeed when a tight feedback loop is established between the actions of the player and computer-generated images and sounds. The metaField Maze achieves this by providing a fast-paced, continuous activity that demands skillful initiative. A game strategy is developed intuitively, and the player's entire body is used to express it by moving frenetically over the full surface without any specific orientation. This ambi-directional, kinetic quality hints at the elusive feeling of being inside a computer application and is enhanced by the slight tilting of the computer-generated model. The uncanny effect of challenging the player's sense of balance further contributes to a heightened sense of immersion.



Maze