

# Bumper Ballet



Bumper Ballet is a bumper car track with the world's first self-driving bumper cars, created by Dutch new media art collective DROPSTUFF MEDIA.

Initially, the bumper cars function as normal as participants can drive the cars around the track. After a few minutes, the system takes over and both the steering wheel and the gas pedal no longer work. From that point on the cars perform a dance: a bumper car ballet in which the cars perform a choreography of movements. A self-learning system in combination with location tracking ensures that the cars always return to their original starting points. They move, collide and dance to the music and images of the dancing cars: an adaptation of a video from the '70s by the famous Dutch car company 'DAF'.

Bumper Ballet playfully tackles the implications of current emerging autonomous technology. As participants become a direct subject to the cars, they experience first hand what it means to 'lose control' when the system takes over.

The installation is available in two set-ups. The full edition is a bumper car track about 6 x 12 m across that is suitable for outdoors and contains four bumper cars. The 'gallery version' is a smaller variation consisting of a 5 x 5 m floor and two bumper cars that is more suited for indoor purposes.

## The Fair Grounds

Bumper Ballet is the latest addition to 'The Fair Grounds', an artistic project consisting of multiple installations where traditional amusement rides have been enriched with new artistic or social narratives. The result is a truly new fairground, where every ride has been modified or enhanced and tells a surprising new story.

**DROPSTUFF.nl**

**THE FAIR  
GROUNDS**

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**Colliding and dancing  
bumper cars**

**a project of  
DROPSTUFF MEDIA**

**concept**  
René van Engelenburg and Gijs ten Cate

**realised in collaboration with**  
Peter de Man, Thomas van den Berg  
and Douwe Hibma

**project partner**  
Eindhoven Museum

**size full edition:** 6 x 12 meter  
**size gallery-edition:** 5 x 5 meter

**weight:** 1000 kg (full edition, ex cars)  
**weight per car:** 100 kg

**power requirements:** 2 x 230 V

**transport:** by small truck (BE)  
total length: 12 meter  
parkingplace needed 5 x 2,5 m)

**assembly and disassembly:**  
1 day each

**daily set-up time:** 1 hour

**on site crew required:**  
2 people continuously,  
preferably locals that speak the  
local language

**General requirements:**  
-Local parking near the event site

-Good accomodation near the event site  
and food and drinks  
for 2 DROPSTUFF (technical) supervisors.  
(basic and clean separate rooms)