Analyzing music which includes realtime computer processes or interactions between humans and computer creates several problems: The source material – predominantly primary sources, reviews, and technical descriptions – is difficult to classify in an historic approach, as it cannot be examined from a critical distance. The technical realization requires special knowledge on technology and usually also programming skills. Furthermore, the set-up used to create the music can be individually designed or serve for different purposes. At this point it is often impossible to draw the line between individual (personal) set-up, instrument-like set-up, newly designed instrument, performance environment or a basic technical solution in order to perform a composition. Therefore, traditional musicological methods are often not sufficient for the analysis of this compositions or set-ups.

We present a short analytical approach to the MotionComposer system. The analytical approach is musicology-based, that means the focus is set on what the sources provide, how this correspond with the result and what context is created or linked. After examining the sources from different points of views – analytical methods from other disciplines can be integrated if necessary –, the results are linked by a common timeline or time-based context. Here new questions emerge: What can be seen from one point of view but cannot be seen from a different perspective? What does this tell us regarding the analyzed work?

The MotionComposer system consists of a motion tracking technology on which sounds can be mapped. The set-up was initially designed along the needs of handicapped people.

The analytical approach focusses especially on two aspects: Is the (basic) approach of the creators comprehensible when analyzing the system? How is the system used in artistic context and what does that mean for its classification?