



TRUST

Editors Herausgeber
Andreas Broeckmann, Stefan Riekes, Thomas Munz

KEHRER







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Andreas Broeckmann, Stefan Riekeles, Thomas Munz

An exhibition on the occasion of
Eine Ausstellung anlässlich der

ISEA
2010
RUHR

16th
International
Symposium on
Electronic
Art

Preface

Vorwort

Inke Arns

Hartware MedienKunstVerein

We are glad to host the exhibition TRUST in the spaces of Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV) at Dortmunder U as the pre-opening event of ISEA2010 RUHR.

The exhibition contains works by fourteen international artists and deals with the trust that we put in people, in media and in machines – out of a desire for security, for entertainment, or for comfort.

TRUST is made possible by the generous support of the Kunststiftung NRW, the Art Foundation of North Rhine Westphalia. We are grateful to the Foundation's general secretary, Regina Wyrwoll, for the confidence and interest that she has given to this project. TRUST takes place in the framework of ISEA2010 RUHR, the 16th edition of the most important conference for media art worldwide, which happens annually, each time in a different part of the world. We can confidently say that we are proud to have brought ISEA to Germany for the first time. The symposium is officially hosted by medienwerk.nrw, an association of different media art institutions in North Rhine Westphalia, which was founded exactly 10 years ago, in October 2000.

ISEA2010 RUHR is a project of the Cultural Capital of Europe, RUHR.2010, and is made possible by funding from RUHR.2010 GmbH, the Minister President of North Rhine Westphalia, and by the City of Dortmund.

I would personally like to thank the curators of the TRUST exhibition and their team for the good cooperation which always followed the principle of 'Control is good, trust is better'.

Put your trust in us!

Dr. Inke Arns

Artistic Director, Hartware Media Art Association

Wir freuen uns sehr, dass wir mit der Ausstellung TRUST in den Räumen des Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV) im Dortmunder U den Auftakt zur ISEA2010 RUHR machen können.

Die Ausstellung umfasst Werke von vierzehn internationalen KünstlerInnen und befasst sich mit dem Vertrauen, das wir Menschen, Medien und Maschinen entgegenbringen – aus Sehnsucht nach Sicherheit, Unterhaltung und Komfort.

TRUST wird ermöglicht durch eine großzügige Förderung der Kunststiftung NRW. Wir danken insbesondere Regina Wyrwoll, Generalsekretärin der Kunststiftung NRW, für das uns entgegengebrachte Vertrauen und das Interesse an diesem Projekt. TRUST findet statt im Rahmen der ISEA2010 RUHR, der 16. Ausgabe der weltweit wichtigsten Konferenz im Bereich der Medienkunst. Wir sind – ganz im Vertrauen – stolz darauf, die ISEA, die alle ein bis zwei Jahre auf einem anderen Kontinent stattfindet, zum ersten Mal nach Deutschland geholt zu haben. Das im Oktober 2000 gegründete medienwerk.nrw, ein Zusammenschluss verschiedener Medienkunstinitiativen im Land NRW, ist offizieller Gastgeber der ISEA2010 RUHR.

Die ISEA2010 RUHR ist ein Projekt der Kulturhauptstadt Europas RUHR.2010 und wird gefördert durch die RUHR.2010 GmbH, den Ministerpräsidenten des Landes NRW und die Stadt Dortmund.

Bedanken möchte ich mich für die gute Zusammenarbeit auch bei den beiden Kuratoren der TRUST Ausstellung sowie ihrem Team. Die Kooperation folgte ganz dem Prinzip ‚Kontrolle ist gut, Vertrauen ist besser‘.

Vertrauen auch Sie uns.

Dr. Inke Arns

Künstlerische Leiterin, Hartware MedienKunstVerein

Introduction
Einführung
11

Konrad Becker

Trusted Realities

34

HC Gilje

blink

64

Sophie Bélair Clément

Choir Piece for 24 Voices
Attuned to the Spectrum
of Frequencies of a Sodium
Lamp Powered by 60 Hertz

44

Verena Friedrich

ENDO

52

knowbotic research

macghillie_just a void

102

Ariel Guzik

Nereida

76

Joyce Hinterding

Loops and Fields:
Induction Drawings
Series 3

90

Table of Contents Inhaltsverzeichnis

Naeem Mohaiemen

Otondro Prohori, Guarding
Who

146

Joan Leandre

*LONELY RECORD
SESSIONS*

In the Name of Kernel!
Series

112

Carsten Nicolai

rota

160

Julien Maire

Memory Cone

122

Milica Tomić

One day, instead of
one night, a burst
of machine-gun fire
will flash, if light
cannot come otherwise

182

Antoine Schmitt

TIME SLIP

172

Seiko Mikami

Desire of Code

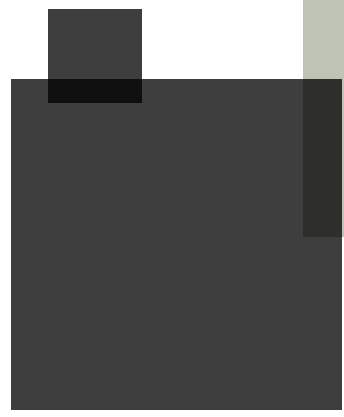
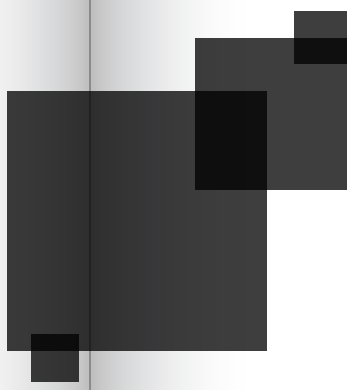
134

Imprint
Impressum

196



Introduction
Einführung



TRUST

Trust in rugged terrain Vertrauen im unwegsamen Gelände

Andreas Broeckmann
Stefan Riekeles

The exhibition *TRUST* presents works from fourteen artists and artist groups that focus on different aspects of trust. The works make it possible to grapple with the contemporary meaning of trust and to explore its boundaries.

We distinguish between different forms of trust such as *personal trust* (in other people), *system trust* (in institutions and technical systems) and *media trust* (in images, media and presentation techniques). Communication and social action are unthinkable without trust – it forms the foundation for the functioning of complex societies, especially when they are not driven by the threat of violence. Trust is the retainer and the goodwill that we bring to a relationship: it embodies the expectation that the other will behave in a reliable manner although no explicit assurances have been given. Placing trust in someone means leaving him or her with a precious gift in the hope that it will be carefully treated and eventually returned.

Die Ausstellung *TRUST* präsentiert Werke von vierzehn Künstlerinnen, Künstlern und Gruppen, die sich mit unterschiedlichen Aspekten des Themas ‚Vertrauen‘ beschäftigen. Die Werke laden ein, sich mit der zeitgenössischen Bedeutung des Vertrauens auseinander zu setzen, und seine Grenzen auszuloten.

Wir unterscheiden verschiedene Formen des Vertrauens, wie etwa *Personenvertrauen* (in andere Menschen), *Systemvertrauen* (in Institutionen und technische Systeme), *Medienvertrauen* (in Bilder, Medien und Darstellungsverfahren). Kommunikation und soziales Handeln sind ohne Vertrauen nicht denkbar. Vertrauen bildet auch die Basis für das Funktionieren komplexer Gesellschaften – wenn sie nicht stattdessen durch die Androhung von Gewalt angetrieben werden. Vertrauen ist ein Vorschuss, den wir in eine Beziehung einbringen, ein Entgegenkommen: Es verkörpert die Erwartung, dass der Andere sich verlässlich verhalten wird, ohne dass es eine Gewissheit hierüber geben könnte. Vertrauen in jemanden zu setzen bedeutet, ihm oder ihr eine wertvolle Gabe zu überlassen in der Hoffnung, dass sie sorgsam behandelt und erwidert wird.

Das Vertrauen in Institutionen, in gesellschaftliche Strukturen und Systeme richtet sich beispielsweise auf das Geld und dessen Gebrauch, auf gerechtes Verwaltungshandeln, auf eine zuverlässige Wissenschaft, oder auch auf legitime politische Macht. Medien vertrauen wir, dass sie als technische Apparate und als Darstellungs- und Kommunikationsmittel zweckgemäß funktionieren und die Art von Kommunikation und Formen des Ausdrucks tatsächlich ermöglichen, die man von ihnen erwartet.

Nur allzu oft sind all diese Formen des Vertrauens weitgehend unbegründet: Die Massenmedien erweisen sich als Instrumente der Propaganda; Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technik sehen sich regelmäßig außer Stande die Folgen ihrer Errungenschaften abzuschätzen und zu kontrollieren; ökonomische und politische Systeme versagen unter dem Druck von Korruption und Partikularinteressen.

Wenn in der Natur, zum Beispiel bei Tieren, das Verhalten gegenüber anderen von Instinkten geleitet wird, braucht es kein Vertrauen, denn dann funktionieren die artgemäßen Verhaltensmechanismen. Dies ändert sich, wo Intelligenz und Berechnung ins Spiel kommen und man sich bewusst wird, dass das eigene Verhalten wie auch das des anderen von Überlegungen und Wünschen bestimmt ist, die man selber vom anderen nicht kennt, wie auch der andere nicht unsere Beweggründe kennt. Das ist der Moment, von dem an soziales

Faith in institutions, societal structures and systems is aligned with, for example, money and its usage, equitable governance, reliable science and legitimate political power. In media, we trust that technical devices and presentation and communication aids will function properly to enable the kinds of communication and forms of expression that are expected of them.

For all of these forms of trust there is often little reason; the mass media prove to be instruments of propaganda. Science, research and technology are regularly seen to be unable to gauge or control the consequences of their actions, and economic and political systems fail under the pressure of special interest groups and corruption.

When behaviour towards others, for instance between animals, is guided by instinct, no trust is required for the characteristic mechanisms of behaviour to function. This changes once intelligence and calculation come into play and people realise that their own behaviour is defined by thoughts and desires that are unknown to others, just as their motives are unknown to us.

That is when social actions begin to be guided by inner motivations such as fear of violence, needs, desire and gratification – or by trust in another person. When we know their motivations, we can evaluate our expectations of future conduct – trust is the medium of placing such hopes in another person.

The origin of any social situation is the encounter with others. In his project *Nereida*, Ariel Guzik endeavours to forge a positive relationship with his counterpart and enter into a dialogue. *Nereida* is an instrument through which Guzik hopes to communicate with cetaceans (whales and dolphins) for which he has, as intelligent and social creatures, the highest respect. The work is the result of a search for common ground and a medium to communicate with the whales. Trust in communication and its media is always accompanied by uncertainty about the awareness of the 'other'. Only with the greatest caution, respect and the perspective of hope can such communication be attempted at all. *Nereida* is a monument to the longing for contact with another species through music. Given the finely-tuned senses of whales and the instruments through which Guzik interacts with them, the work marks a high degree of responsibility that is necessary in every relationship characterised by trust, and so points to the ethical dimension of communication.

Handeln durch innere Motivationen gelenkt wird: Durch die Angst vor Gewalt, durch den Wunsch nach Bedürfnis- und Lustbefriedigung, oder eben durch das Vertrauen in eine andere Person. Wenn wir sie kennen und ihre eigenen Motivationen einschätzen können, dann können wir auch unsere Erwartungen an ihr zukünftiges Verhalten abschätzen; das Medium dieser in eine andere Person gesetzten Hoffnung ist das Vertrauen.

Die Ur-Situation des Sozialen ist die Begegnung mit einem Anderen. Ariel Guzik unternimmt in seinem Projekt *Nereida* den Versuch, sich positiv auf einen solchen Anderen, auf ein solches Gegenüber zu beziehen und mit ihm in einen Dialog zu treten. *Nereida* ist ein Instrument, mit dem Guzik in einen Dialog mit Meeressäugern zu treten hofft, vor denen er als intelligente und soziale Wesen höchsten Respekt hat. *Nereida* ist das Ergebnis einer Suche nach Gemeinsamkeiten, nach einem Medium für die Kommunikation mit Walen und Delfinen. Das Vertrauen in Kommunikation und deren Medien ist dabei stets von der Ungewissheit über das Bewusstsein des Anderen begleitet. Nur mit größter Vorsicht, mit Respekt und in der Perspektive der Hoffnung lässt sich eine solche Kommunikation überhaupt eröffnen. *Nereida* ist ein Monument der Sehnsucht, durch Musik mit einem Anderen in Kontakt zu kommen. Angesichts des sehr empfindlichen sensorischen Apparats der Wale, auf den Guzik mit dem Instrument einwirkt, markiert das Werk das hohe Maß an Verantwortung, das in jeder von Vertrauen geprägten Beziehung notwendig ist, und verweist so auf dessen ethische Dimension.

Eine vertrauensvolle Beziehung ist nur möglich zwischen Partnern, die einander kennen. Hier setzt das Projekt *macghillie_just a void* der Künstlergruppe *knowbotic research* an, in dem man sich mit einem Tarnanzug durch die Stadt bewegen kann. Die Figur des *MacGhillie* zieht diese Identität ab, weder das Gesicht des Trägers noch sein Körper sind zu erkennen. *MacGhillie* ist eine vage Präsenz, eine anonyme Figur ohne Identität, eine Leerstelle im gesellschaftlichen System der Identität. Das Projekt macht das Angebot, sich der normalen Subjektposition zeitweilig zu entziehen und 'MacGhillie zu werden', und stellt so eine prinzipielle Frage über die zwischenmenschliche Grundlage von Vertrauensbeziehungen. Dabei ist *MacGhillie* nicht einfach eine tragische Figur des Scheiterns, als die sie erscheinen mag: Der Tarnanzug ist auch ein hinterlistiges Instrument der Selbstermächtigung und der Kontrolle über die eigene soziale Identität durch deren Negation.

A trusting relationship is only possible between two parties that know each other. This is what the project *macghillie_just a void* by the artist group *knowbotic research*, in which one can move through the city in camouflage, taps into. The figure of *MacGhillie* subverts this identity; neither the face of the wearer nor their body can be seen. *MacGhillie* is a vague presence, an anonymous figure without identity, a void in the social system. The project offers the chance to temporarily withdraw from the normal subjective position and 'become *MacGhillie*,' and so represents a fundamental questioning of interpersonal relationships based on trust. *MacGhillie* is not, as it seems, simply a tragic figure of failure: camouflage is a cunning instrument of self-empowerment and control over one's social identity through its negation.

In her video performance *One Day, Instead of One Night, a Burst of Machine Gun Fire Will Flash, If Light Cannot Come Otherwise* *Milica Tomić* presents herself 'as herself,' a trustworthy and seemingly harmless person. We see a woman in everyday clothes who roams calmly through the city of Belgrade, holding a simple white plastic bag in one hand and a gun in the other. Along the way she visits unmarked locations where important events in the Yugoslav resistance to German occupation took place in the Second World War. *Tomic* seems completely casual about the gun – an item that, because of the inherent threat of violence, deserves mistrust. She overrides the intuitive distrust of weapons and manages to bring a dangerous object into a public space without it being able to exert its power and absolute dominance. In the attempt to build trust where there really is suspicion, this resonates with the impression of false confidence in someone who seems harmless but conceals dangerous potential. Through her performance *Tomic* succeeds in capturing this ambivalence of trust.

Milica Tomić präsentiert sich dagegen in ihrer Videoperformance *One Day, Instead of One Night, a Burst of Machine Gun Fire Will Flash, If Light Cannot Come Otherwise* als sie selbst, als eine vertrauenswürdige und harmlos erscheinende Person. Im Video beobachten wir eine Frau in Alltagskleidung, die ohne jede Aufregung die Stadt Belgrad durchstreift. In der einen Hand hält sie ein Gewehr, in der anderen eine simple weiße Plastiktüte. Auf ihrem Weg besucht sie nicht näher markierte Orte, an denen im Zweiten Weltkrieg wichtige Aktionen des jugoslawischen Widerstands gegen die deutsche Besatzung stattfanden. *Tomic* stellt das Gewehr – ein Gegenstand, der wegen der inhärenten Gewaltdrohung tendenziell unser Misstrauen verdient – völlig indifferent zur Schau. Sie überspielt das intuitive Misstrauen gegenüber Waffen und schafft es, den gefährlichen Gegenstand im öffentlichen Raum zu platzieren, ohne dass er seine absolute Dominanz, seine Macht, ausspielen könnte. In dem Versuch, Vertrauen zu schaffen, wo eigentlich Misstrauen herrscht, schwingt freilich auch der Eindruck von falschem Zutrauen gegenüber jemandem mit, der nur harmlos scheint, dabei aber ein gefährliches Potenzial verbirgt. Durch ihre Performance gelingt es *Tomic*, diese Ambivalenz des Vertrauens zu fassen.

Die Arbeit *Otondro Prohori, Guarding Who* von *Naeem Mohaiemen* beschäftigt sich mit dem Gebrauch von Kommunikationsmedien wie der Mobiltelefonie oder dem Internet in einer Situation, in der dem herrschenden politischen System nicht zu trauen ist. Die technische Funktionalität der Medien gibt schematisch einen Gebrauch vor und erweckt das naive Vertrauen in einen Apparat, der einen bestimmten Zweck erfüllen soll: Telefonieren, Fotokopieren, E-Mail versenden, World Wide Web darstellen, an sozialen Netzen teilnehmen, etc. Der reale Gebrauch jedoch, der tatsächliche Kontext der Anwendung hat eine Komplexität, die dieses naive instrumentelle Vertrauen konterkariert, denn das Abhören von Telefonen und die staatliche oder nicht-staatliche Überwachung des Datenverkehrs gehören längst zum Alltag digitaler Kommunikation. *Mohaiemens* Bilderserie beschäftigt sich mit diesem Bruch des Vertrauens am Beispiel der alltäglichen Nutzung moderner Medien in Bangladesch und deren Kontrolle durch einen autoritären Staat mit dieser Ent-Täuschung. Nicht nur dort wird man als aufgeklärter Nutzer heute zum Misstrauen gegenüber den Medien angehalten und zu der schizophrenen Einsicht gezwungen, dass private und intime Medien ein offenes Leck unserer Privatsphäre darstellen.

The work *Otondro Prohori, Guarding Who* from Naeem Mohaiemen deals with the use of communication media such as mobile phones and the internet in a situation in which the ruling political system is not to be trusted. The technical functionality of media encourage a naive trust in devices that should fulfil a particular purpose: phoning, photocopying, sending e-mail, accessing the internet, taking part in a social network, etc. However, the real use and the actual context of the application has a complexity that contradicts this naïve instrumental trust. The interception of telephones and the state or non-governmental monitoring of data traffic have long been an everyday part of digital communication. Mohaiemen's series of images deals with this breach of trust through the example of the deception in everyday modern media in Bangladesh and their control by an authoritarian state. As enlightened users today we are encouraged to distrust the media and forced to assume a somewhat schizophrenic perspective towards the private and intimate media that cause obvious leaks in our private sphere.

You need not be cynical to doubt the principle of trust in social systems. Often these systems are infinitely distant from benevolence and require suspicion as a necessary attitude. The theses in Konrad Becker's text piece *Trusted Realities* spotlight the manipulation of truth, fraud and deception as counterparts of trust. The social philosopher Theodor W. Adorno suggested with his dictum "Wrong life cannot be lived rightly," that there can be no free life as long as social conditions are characterised by a lack of freedom. The rules of deception that Becker sets up, and the description of his efforts to conceal the falsity, signify a glaring need for security even in that state of falsity. Becker's work thus offers a rigorous deconstruction of the principle of trust in a technologically advanced society where justified trust seems unimaginable and where only the certainty of false illusion is realistic.

Man muss kein Zyniker sein, um das Vertrauen in gesellschaftliche Systeme grundsätzlich in Zweifel zu ziehen. Oftmals sind diese Systeme vom Wohlwollen unendlich weit entfernt und fordern Misstrauen als notwendige Grundhaltung. Die Thesen in Konrad Beckers Textarbeit *Trusted Realities* pointieren als Gegenbilder zum Vertrauen die Manipulation von Wahrheit, den Betrug, und die Täuschung. Der Philosoph Theodor W. Adorno verwies mit seinem Diktum, „Es gibt kein richtiges Leben im Falschen“, darauf dass es kein freies Leben geben kann, solange die gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen vor allem von Unfreiheit geprägt sind. Die Regeln der Täuschung, die Becker aufstellt, und die beschriebenen Bemühungen, das Falsche zu kaschieren, deuten dagegen ein eklatantes Bedürfnis nach Sicherheit auch im Falschen an. So bietet Beckers Arbeit eine rigorose Dekonstruktion des Prinzips Vertrauen. In einer technologisch aufgerüsteten Gesellschaft ist begründetes Vertrauen nicht vorstellbar, realistisch ist nur die Gewissheit falscher Illusionen.

Mit dem ambivalenten Vertrauen in Sicherheits- und Überwachungssysteme beschäftigt sich auch die Installation *Desire of Code* von Seiko Mikami, bei deren Betreten der Betrachter in das Innere einer großen Maschine einzudringen scheint. Zahlreiche kleine Roboterarme an einer langen Wand reagieren mit zuckenden Bewegungen auf die Präsenz des Betrachters. Die kleinen Arme folgen jeder Bewegung des Besuchers und richten ihre leuchtenden Kamera-Augen wachsam auf dessen Position. In einer Projektion ist wie in einem Kaleidoskop eine Unzahl von Bildfragmenten zu sehen, von denen einige aktuell aufgenommen sind, andere frühere Momente aus dem Installationsraum zeigen, und wieder andere über das Internet von anderen Überwachungskameras stammen. Trotz der scheinbaren Totalüberwachung stellt sich jedoch nicht ein Gefühl des Misstrauens ein, denn die Anlage erscheint hinsichtlich ihrer Funktionalität transparent und die Kommunikationswege nachvollziehbar. Unklar bleibt zwar, was die Maschine mit den gewonnenen Informationen bezweckt oder produziert, aber man fühlt sich in der Beobachtung aufgehoben, beruhigt und durch die ständige Aufmerksamkeit vielleicht sogar getröstet – im Vertrauen auf die Sicherheit, die ein wachsames Auge bieten kann. Die fragilen und nervös zuckenden Roboterärmchen legen zudem nahe, dass die Maschine selbst eher ängstlich und schutzbedürftig ist. Die Maschine scheint nicht böse, sondern begegnet dem Betrachter aufrichtig wie ein scheues Tier.

The installation *Desire of Code* from **Seiko Mikami** also deals with the ambivalent confidence in security and surveillance systems. When visitors enter the installation, they seem to venture into the interior of a large machine. Numerous small robot arms attached to a long wall react to the presence of an observer with twitching movements. The arms follow every movement of the visitor and turn bright, watchful camera eyes towards their position. In a projection a kaleidoscopic myriad of image fragments can be seen, some current, some showing earlier moments from the installation space, and yet others coming via the internet from different cameras. Despite the apparent total surveillance, there is no feeling of mistrust – the system is transparent in terms of functionality and the communication channels are comprehensible. However, what remains unclear is what the machine intends to do or produce with the obtained information. You feel suspended in the animation, reassured by the constant attention and perhaps even comforted – trusting in the security being provided by a watchful eye. The fragile and twisting little robot arms suggest that the machine itself is more anxious and vulnerable than the observer. The machine doesn't seem malicious, but confronts the viewer sincerely – like an animal.

More radical is the question that **Verena Friedrich** formulates with her installation *ENDO* about trust in technical control systems. Trust needs transparency and *ENDO* poses the question of trust in data and in its collection. An anonymous, incomprehensible, hermetic, closed machine unceasingly registers and documents data on its immediate surroundings. *ENDO* absorbs information, expropriates data, avoids a communicative engagement and stays instead silent, motionless on the floor and leaves the viewer in an uncomprehending helplessness. Is the data useful, perhaps, for the provision of a healthy indoor climate, as a safeguard against misconduct, or fire safety? It is nevertheless difficult to grant trust to this introverted apparatus.

Above all the mass media want to serve up manipulations and banal diversions – and yet we expect them to convey information that will help us to orient ourselves in this complex reality. **Antoine Schmitt's** installation *TIME SLIP* is about the desire to not only learn about the past through the media, but also to get a grip on the future. *TIME SLIP* is based on computer software that modifies the grammatical tense of current reports from news agencies. Headlines are translated from the present or past into the future tense

Noch radikaler ist die Frage, die **Verena Friedrich** mit ihrer Installation *ENDO* über das Vertrauen in technische Kontrollsysteme formuliert. Vertrauen braucht Transparenz und *ENDO* stellt die Frage nach dem Vertrauen in Daten und dem Vertrauen ins Sammeln. Eine anonyme, nicht verstehbare, hermetisch verschlossene Maschine registriert und dokumentiert ohne Unterlass Daten und Messergebnisse ihrer unmittelbaren Umgebung. *ENDO* schluckt Informationen, enteignet Daten, entzieht sich einer kommunikativen Auseinandersetzung und steht stattdessen geräuschlos, regungslos auf dem Boden und lässt den Betrachter in verständnisloser Ohnmacht zurück. Ob die gesammelten Daten vielleicht nützlich sind, für die Bestimmung eines gesunden Raumklimas, als Schutz vor Fehlverhalten, oder als Brandschutz? Es fällt dennoch schwer, diesem in sich gekehrten Apparat Vertrauen zu schenken.

Die Massenmedien mögen vor allem der Manipulation und banalen Unterhaltung dienen – dennoch erwarten wir von ihnen auch Informationen, mit deren Hilfe wir uns in der komplexen Wirklichkeit orientieren können. **Antoine Schmitt's** Installation *TIME SLIP* beschäftigt sich mit dem Verlangen, durch die Medien nicht nur etwas über die Vergangenheit zu erfahren, sondern auch die Zukunft in den Griff zu bekommen. *TIME SLIP* basiert auf einer Computer-Software, die aktuelle Meldungen von Nachrichtenagenturen in ihrer grammatikalischen Zeitlichkeit verändert. Die Schlagzeilen werden aus der Gegenwarts- und Vergangenheitsform in ihre Zukunftsform übersetzt und auf einer LED-Laufschriftanzeige wiedergegeben. Für den Moment des Lesens wird der Wunsch befriedigt, in die Zukunft zu schauen. Textlich und visuell vermittelt in den ‚Sprachen der globalen Wahrheit‘, also in englischsprachigen Schlagzeilen, entsteht ein faszinierendes Gefühl des Wissens um die Zukunft, dem man gerne Glauben schenken möchte. Die Schlagzeilen befriedigen einerseits den Wunsch nach einer guten Geschichte und legen andererseits, sofern man die aktuellen Nachrichten schon kennt, die Logik der zugrundeliegenden Täuschung offen. *TIME SLIP* ist die Simulation eines Orakels, einer prophetischen Maschine. Vertrauen stellt sich hier als Wunsch, als eine kleine Verschiebung und Selbsttäuschung in einem Moment ein, in dem man das Wissen um die Wahrheit der Nachrichten mit der Illusion ihrer Zukünftigkeit verbinden kann.

and reproduced on an LED ticker display. At the moment of reading, the desire to look into the future is satisfied. Lyrically and visually conveyed in the 'language of global reality' that is English headlines, a fascinating sense of knowledge is created about the future that one would like to believe. On one hand the headlines satisfy the desire for a good story and on the other, open up the logic of the underlying deception – especially if you are already aware of the current news. *TIME SLIP* is a simulation of an oracle, a prophetic machine. Here trust is employed as a desire, a small displacement and self-deception at the moment where knowledge of the truth of the message can be combined with the illusion of its futurity.

Our mistrust of the media doesn't mean that we don't consult them again and again, in the hope that a true, or at least good story is told. It is similar for us with our sense organs. For orientation in the world, we rely absolutely on our perceptual apparatus and it is difficult to mistrust or doubt sensations, even if we have learnt from experience of visual or acoustic illusions that we do not see, hear or smell everything as it actually is. *HC Gilje's* video installation *blink* leads us to an insistence on the truth of visual perception literally before our eyes. Viewers quickly understand that their perceptions are not to be trusted. The composition is designed for sophisticated and highly precise video projections to create impressions of optical illusions in the space. It is therefore all the more fascinating to observe how the perceptual apparatus processes what is presented, but takes it again at face value, even though a moment before what we saw was exposed as illusion. Finally, it is clear that we have nothing but our senses to rely on. Even if we are sceptical about the deceptions, the edges of light and reflections presented here are so clear that after a short period of doubt we want to trust our eyes unconditionally. *blink* asks us to: 'Mistrust perception, if you dare!'

Unser Misstrauen gegenüber den Medien bedeutet nicht, dass wir sie nicht immer wieder konsultieren in der Hoffnung, dass uns eine wahre, oder doch zumindest gute Geschichte erzählt wird. Ähnlich geht es uns mit unseren Sinnesorganen. Für die Orientierung in der Welt sind wir auf unseren Wahrnehmungsapparat unbedingt angewiesen. Es fällt schwer, Sinneseindrücken zu misstrauen oder an ihnen zu zweifeln, auch wenn wir durch zahlreiche Erfahrungen der optischen oder akustischen Täuschungen erfahren haben, dass wir uns täuschen können, und täuschen lassen. *HC Giljes* Videoinstallation *blink* führt uns das Beharren auf die Wahrheit visueller Wahrnehmung buchstäblich vor Augen. Die Anlage ist darauf ausgelegt durch trickreiche und hochpräzise Videoprojektionen optische Täuschungen im Raumeindruck zu erzeugen. Die Botschaft ‚Misstraue Deiner Wahrnehmung!‘ kommt schnell beim Betrachter an. Es ist darum umso faszinierender zu beobachten, wie sich der Wahrnehmungsapparat darauf einstellt, das was ihm präsentiert wird, doch wieder für bare Münze zu nehmen, obwohl wir es einen Moment vorher bereits als Illusion entlarvt hatten. Schließlich wird klar, dass wir nichts als unsere Sinne haben, auf das wir uns verlassen können. Selbst wenn wir skeptisch gegenüber Täuschungen sind, wie den hier präsentierten Lichtkanten und Reflektionen, so wird nach einer kurzen Zeit des Zweifels doch klar, dass wir unseren Augen bedingungslos vertrauen wollen. *blink* fordert uns auf: ‚Misstraue Deiner Wahrnehmung, wenn Du Dich traust!‘

Der Frage nach dem Vertrauen in unsere Wahrnehmung auf der einen, und in die Wissenschaft auf der anderen Seite, geht auch die Installation *rota* von *Carsten Nicolai* nach. Im Raum sehen wir einen übermannshohen, sich drehenden, verspiegelten Zylinder, dessen Oberfläche regelmäßig von geometrisch geformten Löchern durchbrochen ist. Im Zentrum des Zylinders befindet sich eine

The question of confidence in our perceptions on one hand, and in science on the other, is also dealt with by the installation *rota* from Carsten Nicolai. In the room we see a tall, rotating, cylindrical mirror with a surface broken regularly by geometrically shaped holes. In the centre of the cylinder is a lamp spilling bright light through the holes which becomes moving spots of light on the surrounding walls. A text panel on the wall shows a table that describes the different frequencies of light at which altered states of consciousness are triggered in the viewer. The cylindrical sculpture is thus presented as a manipulation machine in the tradition of 'brain machines' of the 1960s. It remains unclear whether the information in the table is true and whether the alleged effects are actually provoked in every visitor. Finally, it is hard to determine at what speed the cylinder is actually turning. As in other communicative situations, the relationship between exhibitors and visitors is a risky undertaking. The visitor enters a potentially 'dangerous,' manipulative situation and must rely on the fulfilment of responsibility at the hands of a careful and cautious host. Or is this perhaps an example of those scientific experiments that manipulate their subjects under the guise of objectivity and transparency but actually follow a completely different and hidden interest in knowledge?

Nicolai's work opens up a complex discourse about truth, perception and ethics that includes a critical assessment of the confidence in one's own senses: could our perceptual apparatus, our brain and mental state really be nothing more than an automatically responsive, controllable system?

One method of ascertaining reality is the imitation of the found world. Sophie Bélair Clément tries this in her *Choir piece for 24 voices attuned to the spectrum of frequencies of a sodium lamp powered by 60 hertz*. The sound of the technical device is simulated by the most fundamental instrument – the human voice. An audible

Lampe, deren helles Licht durch die Löcher als sich bewegende Lichtflecken auf die umliegenden Wände fällt. Eine Texttafel an der Wand beschreibt tabellarisch, dass bei unterschiedlichen Lichtfrequenzen im Betrachter entsprechend unterschiedliche kognitive Grundzustände ausgelöst werden. Die zylindrische Skulptur wird hierdurch als Manipulationsmaschine in der Tradition der 'brain machines' der 1960er Jahre vorgeführt. Dabei bleibt unklar, ob die Informationen in der Tabelle der Wahrheit entsprechen, ob der behauptete Effekt bei jedem Besucher tatsächlich so ausgelöst wird, und schließlich lässt sich kaum ermitteln, mit welcher Geschwindigkeit der Zylinder sich tatsächlich dreht. Wie in anderen kommunikativen Situationen geht es auch in der Beziehung zwischen Ausstellendem und Besucher um ein durchaus riskantes Unterfangen, denn der Besucher begibt sich in eine potenziell 'gefährliche', manipulative Situation und muss sich darauf verlassen können, dass der Ausstellende seiner Verantwortung als vorsichtiger und sorgsamer Gastgeber nachkommt. Oder handelt es sich vielleicht doch um ein Beispiel für jene wissenschaftlichen Experimente, die unter dem Deckmantel der Objektivität und Transparenz ihre Subjekte manipulieren und eigentlich ein ganz anderes, verborgenes Erkenntnisinteresse verfolgen? Nicolais Arbeit eröffnet einen komplexen Diskurs über Wahrheit, Wahrnehmung und Ethik, in dem auch das Vertrauen in die eigenen Sinne kritisch beleuchtet wird: Ist unser Wahrnehmungsapparat, unser Gehirn und unser psychischer Zustand wirklich nichts anderes als eine automatisch reagierende, steuerbare Anlage?

Eine Methode, sich der Wirklichkeit zu vergewissern, ist die Nachahmung der vorgefundenen Welt. Sophie Bélair Clément versucht in ihrem *Chorstück für 24 Stimmen, gestimmt auf das Frequenzspektrum einer Leuchtstofflampe, betrieben bei 60 Hertz* (engl. Originaltitel: *Choir piece for 24 voices attuned to the spectrum of frequencies of a sodium lamp powered by 60 hertz*) dem Brummen des Leuchtmittels nachzugehen. Mit Hilfe des fundamentalen Instruments der menschlichen Stimme soll der Klang des technischen Apparates simuliert werden. Es entfaltet sich ein hörbares Drama von großzügigem, hartnäckigem Bemühen um die korrekte Nachahmung des Tons und des Scheiterns

drama unfolds of generous, persistent efforts to obtain an accurate imitation of the sound, and of the subsequent failure in the face of the technological precision of the lamp. This drama is marked by the fact that it addresses the banal tone of a fluorescent tube, which is actually a waste product and commands little attention.

The kind of empathy needed to take this sound so seriously in an aesthetic sense and then guide a chorus in the singing of it is also needed for entry into a communicative relationship. The desire to acquire technology and control its effects in a highly technological world is increasingly urgent and reflected in the longing for another entity that can be trusted, whether person or system. The desire of becoming-lamp, of not only singing but also shining, puts forward a humorous attempt at a human variation of technological simulacra.

A deep immersion in technically produced simulacra is offered by digital animation in film and computer games. In *Lonely Record Sessions*, **Joan Leandre** has edited together scenes from such games into a linear video. The virtual worlds seem highly charged emotionally and make use of a cinematic visual language in scenes of the city and countryside. These mood shots aim to create a particular emotional state. The scenes never relinquish their status of simulated image, always remaining clearly artificial. It is obvious that the emotion is not produced by real things, but occurs in response to a construction. The deliberate mistrust of the image causes a mistrust of one's own emotions when viewing the work and reveals just how dependant we are in our responses to certain visual and auditory patterns. In these sessions, any interaction and control over the course of the story is removed, and we are forced to experience the intrusion presented by the pseudo-emotions of the images.

an der technologischen Präzision der Lampe. Dieses Drama wird dadurch pointiert, dass es um den banalen Ton einer Leuchtstoffröhre geht, der eigentlich als Abfallprodukt kaum Beachtung findet. Das Einfühlungsvermögen, das notwendig ist, diesen Klang in seiner Ästhetik so ernst zu nehmen, um daraufhin einen Chor anzuleiten diesen nachzusingen, diese Empathie ist auch beim Eintritt in eine Kommunikationsbeziehung vonnöten. Der Wunsch, sich Technologie anzueignen und ihre Effekte zu beherrschen, ist in einer hochtechnisierten Welt zunehmend drängender und spiegelt sich im Verlangen danach, einem Anderen, ob Person oder System, vertrauen zu können. Das Lampe-Werden-Wollen, nicht nur singend, sondern vielleicht auch leuchtend, ist ein humorvoller Versuch, den Simulakren der Technologie eine menschliche Variante entgegen zu setzen.

Ein tiefes Eintauchen in technisch erzeugte Simulakren bieten heute die digitalen Animationen in Filmen und Computerspielen.

Joan Leandre hat für seine *Lonely Record Sessions* unterschiedliche Szenen aus solchen Spielen zu einem linearen Videofilm zusammengeschnitten. Diese virtuellen Welten scheinen hoch emotional aufgeladen und bedienen sich einer kinematografischen Sprache, die durch die gezeigten Stadtansichten und Landschaften dieser ‚Mood Shots‘ eine bestimmte Gefühlslage erzeugen wollen. Da die Szenen aber nie den Status eines Simulationsbildes aufgeben, sondern in einer stets deutlich zu sehenden Künstlichkeit verharren, wird klar, dass die Emotion nicht durch einen realen Referenten erzeugt wird, sondern als Reaktion auf eine Konstruktion entsteht. Mit dem so hervorgerufenen Misstrauen gegenüber dem Bild entsteht beim Betrachten des Werks auch ein Misstrauen gegenüber den eigenen Emotionen. Es wird uns vor Augen geführt, wie abhängig wir in unseren Reaktionen von bestimmten visuellen und akustischen Schemata sind. Indem in diesen ‚Sessions‘ jede Art von Interaktion und Kontrolle über den Verlauf der Geschichte entzogen ist, müssen wir die Aufdringlichkeit erleben, mit der uns die Pseudo-Emotionalität der Bilder entgegen kommt.

Mit seiner Installation *Memory Cone* hat **Julien Maire** eine starke Metapher für den Zusammenhang von Bildern und Erinnerungen und für den prekären Status unserer Erinnerungen gefunden. Eine offen sichtbare Apparatur, die aber in ihrer Komplexität kaum zu durchschauen ist, lädt die Besucher ein, durch das Zusammenlegen und Verschieben von weißen Papierstreifen ein Photo in einer Projektion sichtbar zu machen. Hierbei scheint es sich um eine private

With his installation *Memory Cone*, Julien Maire has found a strong metaphor for the relationship of images and memories, and for the precarious status of our memories. An open visible device that is, however, in its complexity almost impossible to comprehend, invites us to make a photo visible in a projection through moving and compiling strips of white paper. This photo appears to be a private document with possibly great emotional content. But in the face of such a confusing technical system in which it is not clear where the image is actually being created, is it possible to really believe this picture? The image and its origins remain mysterious and even if we see that our interaction can appear in the image, we are separated from it by a border that is not only technical, but seems to be emotional as well. And if the images cannot be trusted, can one trust one's memories? The everyday desire to conserve and construct memories by means of media can only be fulfilled if we believe in the veracity of images – a veracity that cannot be proven ultimately. Like these pieces in front of us, the shards of our memories have to be laboriously assembled before they again fragment and lose their solid form.

Media transmit content. They make it possible to experience something that is absent, or past, or that cannot be sensed with our perceptual apparatus. Conventional radio converts specific electromagnetic waves into acoustic signals that can be perceived by the human ear. In everyday use, waves which are broadcast by a transmitter, are received and heard as music, sound or spoken word.

Joyce Hinterding deals with a frequency range that is affected by the rather random and secondary electromagnetic effects of natural and technological phenomena. There is something improbable and uncanny about how she presents an electro-acoustic reality that can be made audible by antennas drawn in graphite. This is not a kind of techno-animism, but simply antennas for one part of the reality spectrum that manifests itself and can be experienced through the medium of these drawings.

Aufnahme zu handeln, vielleicht mit großem emotionalem Gehalt. Aber kann man ob der unübersichtlichen Anlage, bei der nicht klar ist, wo denn das Bild eigentlich entsteht, diesem Bild trauen? Das Bild und seine Herkunft bleiben geheimnisvoll, und auch wenn wir erleben dürfen, dass unsere Interaktion das Bild erst erscheinen lässt, so sind wir doch von diesem Bild durch eine Grenze getrennt, die nicht nur technisch, sondern auch emotional zu sein scheint. Und wenn den Bildern nicht zu trauen ist, kann man dann den Erinnerungen trauen? Der alltägliche Wunsch, durch Medien Erinnerungen zu konservieren und zu konstruieren, wird nur erfüllt, wenn man Vertrauen in die Wahrhaftigkeit der Bilder setzt; letztgültig beweisen lässt sich diese Wahrhaftigkeit nicht. Immer liegen die Erinnerungen wie hier als Scherben vor uns, die mühsam und fragmentarisch zusammengesetzt werden müssen und ihre feste Form schnell wieder verlieren.

Medien übertragen Inhalte, sie machen etwas erfahrbar, das einmal war, abwesend ist oder sich unserem Wahrnehmungsapparat entzieht. So setzt das konventionelle Radio bestimmte elektromagnetische Wellen in akustische Signale um, die durch das menschliche Gehör wahrgenommen werden können. Im alltäglichen Gebrauch handelt es sich dabei um Wellen, die vorher von einem Sender ausgestrahlt wurden, um als Musik, Geräusch oder gesprochenes Wort empfangen und gehört zu werden. Joyce Hinterding beschäftigt sich mit einem Frequenzbereich solcher Radiowellen, in denen sich vor allem die eher zufälligen elektromagnetischen Sekundäreffekte natürlicher und technischer Phänomene auswirken. Es hat etwas Unwahrscheinliches und Unheimliches, was sie uns als elektroakustische Wirklichkeit vorführt, die hörbar gemacht werden kann durch die mit Grafit gezeichneten Antennen. Hierbei handelt es sich nicht um eine Art von Technoanimismus, sondern einfach um Antennen für einen Teil des Spektrums der Wirklichkeit, das sich manifestiert und durch das Medium dieser gezeichneten Antennen erfahrbar gemacht wird. Dabei ist der Teil des Spektrums, in den die Antenne eintaucht, sehr spezifisch und hängt von der individuellen

The part of the spectrum that the antennas pick up is very specific and depends on the individual form of each antenna. The drawing creates its own specific signals from this reality, which, in this particular form, is heard only through the specific shape of the antenna – a slightly differently drawn antenna produces a different signal from the same place. This could be described, albeit a little clumsily, as an aesthetically motivated spectrum-constructivism: it is not initially the objectivity of the electromagnetic spectrum that matters, but rather the drawing that corresponds to a unique aspect of the spectrum. Hinterding's drawings are an expression of a desire for communication as well as an expression of trust in this communication.

Hinterding's trust in the world of devices has a different quality to the trust in a 'normal' antenna, calculated and constructed according to the rules of radio technology. She puts trust in *drawing* as a world-disclosing technique that produces an instrument for an operation in the spectrum of reality at *degré zéro* of media technology: graphite pencil on paper. Her drawings are an expression of the desire for communication and of the confidence in this communication.

In the winter of 1967/68, the sociologist and systems theorist Niklas Luhmann worked at the former Social Research Centre of the University of Münster in Dortmund on his study of 'trust'. This work is still one of the key theoretical texts for our exhibition theme. In his book, Luhmann describes precisely the mechanisms and functions of trust both between individuals and in complex social systems. He writes in the spirit of the cybernetic social systems of his time, foregrounding the question of the functioning of systems through the illusion of trust. But is this 'real world' actually a world without trust? Or is it a world that should again reconsider *personal trust* after spending decades on perfecting its trust in systems alone?

English translation: Janet Leyton-Grant

Form der Antenne ab. Die Zeichnung erschafft ihre je eigenen Signale aus dieser Wirklichkeit, die in dieser Form überhaupt nur durch die spezifische Form der Antenne hörbar wird – eine etwas anders gezeichnete Antenne würde an derselben Stelle ein anderes Signal hervorbringen – man müsste diese Strategie etwas unbeholfen als ästhetisch motivierten Spektrumskonstruktivismus bezeichnen: Es geht nicht zuerst um die Objektivität des elektromagnetischen Spektrums, sondern um die Zeichnung, die einem einzigartigen Aspekt dieses Spektrums entspricht. Ihre Zeichnungen sind Ausdruck eines Verlangens nach Kommunikation, und Abdruck des Vertrauens in diese Kommunikation.

Hinterdings Vertrauen in die Apparatewelt hat eine andere Qualität als das Vertrauen in eine ‚normale‘, nach den Regeln der Radiotechnik berechnete und konstruierte Antenne. Ihr Vertrauen ist eines in das *Zeichnen* als welterschließende Tätigkeit, die hier ein Instrument hervorbringt für eine Operation im Spektrum der Wirklichkeit am *degré zéro* der Medientechnik: Grafitstift und Papier. Ihre Zeichnungen sind Ausdruck eines Verlangens nach Kommunikation, und Abdruck des Vertrauens in diese Kommunikation.

Im Winter 1967/68 saß der Sozialwissenschaftler und Systemtheoretiker Niklas Luhmann in Dortmund an der damaligen Sozialforschungsstelle der Universität Münster und arbeitete seine Studie über das ‚Vertrauen‘ aus – bis heute einer der wesentlichen theoretischen Texte zu unserem Thema. Luhmann bemüht sich in seinem Buch um eine präzise Beschreibung der Mechanismen und Funktionen, die das Vertrauen zwischen einzelnen Menschen und in komplexeren sozialen Systemen hat. Hierbei stellt er, ganz im Sinne des kybernetischen Systemdenkens seiner Zeit, die Frage nach dem Funktionieren des Systems durch die Illusion des Vertrauens in den Vordergrund. Aber ist diese ‚wirkliche Welt‘ tatsächlich eine Welt ohne Vertrauen? Oder ist es eine Welt, die sich wieder auf das Personenvertrauen besinnen sollte, nachdem sie über Jahrzehnte vor allem das Vertrauen in Systeme entwickelt hat?

Konrad Becker

Trusted Realities

Text installation
Text-Installation
2010



The installation by Konrad Becker displays, carved in stone, what is probably the most deceitful medium of human expression, namely text. Like codes of law he presents theses which speak of deception, insecurity and distrust, pointing us to the simultaneity of truth and delusion.

Die Installation von Konrad Becker zeigt in Stein gemeißelt, was zweifellos das trügerischste Medium menschlichen Ausdrucks ist, nämlich einen Text. Wie Gesetze führt er Thesen vor, die von Täuschung, von Ungewissheit und von Misstrauen handeln, und verweist so auf die Gleichzeitigkeit von Wahrheit und Täuschung.

TRUSTED REALITIES

Text is a mythical practice. Authors like to claim that words were dictated to them by reality. Infected with the unconscious, language vaporizes into collective dream.

Attention is the key to intangible forms of power and coercion, inseparable from the reality of our drives and its very opposite: perceptual disintegration.

The past slips away so fast it creates the illusion of change, the future is non-predictable because nothing ever happens.

Influence makes targets believe that ideas and desires originate in their own mind. Myth creation engineers consent by internalization.

Psychological manipulation exploits the streams of desire stimulated by media channels; libidinal attention feeds a plethora of ghosts multiplying every moment.

The Evil Eyes of antiquity manifest in digital surveillance, social sorting and invisible categorization.

The enigma of the Zombie: What is the difference between Death and the Living-Dead, undead enough for work and consumption?

Ignes fatui, foolish fires, ghostly lights seen hovering over swamps at night compel travelers to chase the strange and elusive glow.

The mysteries of Information Societies do not hide in the shadow lands of technology but in the human nervous system. What is real is not certain, what is certain is not real.

Konrad, you have been engaged with conspiracy theories for many years. Do you think there is sufficient reason for their existence?

It is not only tempting because it is a taboo of civic intellectuality. 'Conspiracy theories' are considered to be superstitious and are likely to be presented as a secularisation of a religious-magical imagination, although world history certainly is full of examples of successful and even more of unsuccessful conspiracies. Genuine execution of power lives off its invisibility. Naturally, the denial of opaque operations is nothing but an expression of the fear of ghosts.

Science always bears elements of 'conspiracy theory,' because all research wants to reveal and describe new and hitherto unseen connections. The emergence of the modern notion of 'conspiracy theory' has been linked with the early globalisation of trade in the late nineteenth century and the development of multilayered connections around the world. Simultaneously, the meaning of networks has aggravated the awareness of expanded contexts and the importance of orchestrated exertions of influence. In the age of globally connected hyper contexts, in which everything is linked with everything else, it is always about complex interrelations. Since non-physical immaterial methods of governance do not have an immediately graspable existence, their ability to control and transform the social body is perceived as a supernatural force.

A 'conspiracy theory' typically applies when it concerns Western elites and office-bearers. That way, critique can be dismissed (e.g. illegal abductions and torture in secret prisons) and at the same time sinister intrigues by 'malicious Orientals' theorised, or notions that Saddam Hussein has conspired to build weapons of mass destruction can be claimed.

The classification as 'conspiracy theory' mainly serves as a weapon to marginalise competing models of reality. Although the attempt at a systemic critique of the *modus operandi* is a far greater challenge for systems of governance than the identification of isolated grievances or individual misbehaviour. Every resolute form of knowledge generation which forms its own truths or realities is thus ominous and dangerous.

There may always have been more or less witty forms to orchestrate mobbings and intrigues. The sentence ascribed to Napoleon Bonaparte 'Never ascribe to malice that which can adequately be explained by incompetence,' I could agree with myself. Even though a conspiracy of incompetence and mediocrity does exist. It is in no way only a few that conspire against the majority, on the contrary, in democracies frequently the majority conspires against minorities. There are so many conspiracies that it wouldn't be worth tracing all ploys in the ongoing war of ideas. It is not by chance, that the financial markets are reminiscent of organised crime. In this context there is, for example, the global conspiracy of the rich to get ever more rich.

Are there occasionally conspiracies discovered by conspiracy theorists before they have actually happened?

- There will always be cohesion forces of intentionality or collaborative attempts to influence reality; the force of gravity most likely was also in effect before it was discovered. However, a manoeuvre that has been stymied because it reached the public prematurely is part of the daily business of politics, it's especially not so uncommon when it comes to decisions over political personnel.

Your artistic and your publishing work oscillates between critique, enlightenment and perhaps a very Viennese, slightly morbid lust for crisis. Would you see yourself as an educator, or does education make no sense anyway and can certain phenomena, at best, be named and described?

Enlightenment in the sense of 'the Enlightenment' would be counter-productive, especially since it is about emancipation from the myths of modernity. Vigilance towards the abuse of power always means systemic thinking. I'm living in a morbid city indeed, but to look into issues of governance, power and injustices, to not put lipstick on things, and to also think politically as an artist is not morbid, but the opposite. However, I'm interested in the transgressive as well as the abysmal aspects of horror, and its relationship to the principles of humour, indeed. Each in reference to daily life. Although I'm not interested in de-politicised death culture, but in the trauma as inversion of wonder and the potential of rebellion.

- From your point of view, is there any reason why we should put trust into the techno-political system of our day? You probably board a plane every now and then yourself and trust that the technology works and you'll get back on the ground safely, and that the security systems will prevent someone from bringing a bomb on board? Would you trust at least Lufthansa?

No, I don't suffer from flight anxiety, but if one is engaged with technologies seriously one learns about their problems. Whereas the fear of bombs and terror instead shows how far the politics of angst have been inscribed into the imagination very successfully. Rather than dealing with real dangers, many prefer unrealistic dangers much more.

How would you judge the potentials of artistic and creative action? The titles of your books contain notions like 'tactics' and 'strategy' and point to real action potentials – or does art remain trapped in critique, negation and the fictional?

We know that recent discussions often have boiled down to the assumption that cultural critique ultimately refines the methods of oppression and further stabilises existing systems. In many cases it seems justified to state that. From the bigoted art world, to the precariously flexibilised creative class or the military entertainment complex, to cultural greenwashing. Even in radically oriented practice, illusions about the impact of the individual (or small groups) may be given up confidently. Networks of parallel cultures and unauthorised re-evaluations of an epistemological guerrilla remain largely invisible. But this does not mean at all that cultural practice doesn't have effects – even if they may not be as spectacular as some may wish. Nevertheless, the sole privilege of humankind is to demand the impossible. As the saying goes, 'only those who attempt the impossible will achieve the absurd'.

Can we put faith in the truthfulness of the theses in your piece for the TRUST exhibition?

- Oh yes, I would say they are practically carved in stone! It's hardly possible to be more trustworthy! They were transmitted quasi from outer space.

Konrad Becker is active in electronic media as an artist, author, composer as well as curator, producer and organiser. Director of the Institute for New Culture Technologies/ t0, and World-Information Institute (World-Information.Org), a cultural intelligence provider, co-founder of the seminal Public Netbase (1994–2006) he also created Monoton, a pioneering electronic music act, and the Global Security Alliance for cultural risk management.

Becker's field of work and artistic production includes all areas of electronic art and culture, from audio to video, TV and radio, multimedia productions and installations, software, VR and digital networks to performance and activism. He has realised numerous electronic productions, exhibitions, conference series and event designs for international festivals and cultural institutions as well as a range of controversial interventions in public space. Media works and installations, electronic audiovisuals, and many video productions from experimental works to documentaries have been presented in galleries, museums, festivals as well as broadcast. His audio releases were singled out by The Wire magazine as among the 100 most important records of the twentieth century. His work has been characterised by extensive cooperation with influential collectives and protagonists of new artistic practices worldwide. Member of various boards for information technologies and a founding member of European cultural networks, he has contributed to policy recommendations towards a digital ecology of information landscapes.

Publications include theoretical texts and books on the politics of the infosphere. As an interdisciplinary communication researcher Becker investigates the cultural and social implications of technology in information societies. A particular emphasis is placed on the interrelations of the symbolic and the real, immaterial information regimes and tangible reality. His latest books include 'Strategic Reality Dictionary, Deep Infopolitics and Cultural Intelligence,' (Autonomedia NY, 2009) 'Critical Strategies in Art and Media' Konrad Becker, Jim Fleming (eds.), (Autonomedia NY, 2010) 'Deep Search – The Politics of Search beyond Google' Konrad Becker, Felix Stalder (Eds.), (transaction, 2009), 'Phantom Kulturstadt' Konrad Becker, Martin Wassermair (Eds.) (Löcker, 2009).

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Konrad Becker

Konrad Becker ist als Künstler, Autor, Komponist sowie als Kurator, Produzent und Organisator im Bereich Kunst und elektronische Medien aktiv. Er leitet das Institut für neue Kulturtechnologien t0 und das Cultural Intelligence Network World-Information Institute (World-Information.Org) und war Mitbegründer von Public Netbase (1994–2006) einer bedeutenden Kulturschnittstelle für neue Kommunikationstechnologien. Er gründete Monoton, ein legendäres Projekt aus der Frühzeit elektronischer Musik und initiierte die Global Security Alliance für kulturelles Risiko-Management.

Becker betätigt sich in zahllosen Bereichen elektronischer Kunst und Kultur von Audio und Video, Radio und Fernsehen, Multimedia-Inszenierungen und Installationen, Software, VR und digitalen Netzwerken bis hin zu Performance und Aktivismus. Er realisierte zahlreiche elektronische Inszenierungen, Ausstellungen, Konferenzreihen und Event-Designs für internationale Festivals und Kultureinrichtungen sowie eine Reihe kontroverser Interventionen im öffentlichen Raum. Seine audiovisuellen Arbeiten und Installationen werden in Galerien, Museen, Festivals sowie in zahlreichen Broadcastmedien präsentiert. Das Magazin The Wire wählte seine Musikveröffentlichungen unter die 100 wichtigsten Platten des 20. Jahrhunderts. Sein Werk als Künstler im Bereich elektronische Medien zeichnet sich durch zahlreiche weltweite Kooperationen mit namhaften Vertretern einer neuen künstlerischen Praxis aus. Als Mitglied in diversen internationalen Arbeitsgruppen zu Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie und Gründungsmitglied Europäischer Kulturnetzwerke leistet er einen Beitrag für politische Handlungsempfehlungen zu digitalen Ökologie von Informationslandschaften.

Als Buchautor und Verfasser von Texten zur Politik der Infosphäre die in mehreren Übersetzungen vorliegen, beschäftigt er sich mit den kulturellen und psychosozialen Implikationen einer von Technologie bestimmten Informationsgesellschaft. Ein besonderes Augenmerk liegt auf dem Zusammenhang zwischen dem symbolischen und dem realen, immateriellen Informationsregimes und greifbarer Wirklichkeit. Zu seinen letzten Buchveröffentlichungen zählen 'Strategic Reality Dictionary, Deep Infopolitics and Cultural Intelligence', Autonomedia NY (2009) 'Critical Strategies in Art and Media' Konrad Becker, Jim Fleming (eds.), Autonomedia NY (2010) 'Deep Search – Die Politik der Suche jenseits von Google' Konrad Becker, Felix Stalder (Eds.), transaction (2009), 'Phantom Kulturstadt' Konrad Becker, Martin Wassermair (Eds.) Löcker (2009).

www.t0.or.at

Sophie Bélair Clément

Choir Piece for 24 Voices Attuned to the Spectrum of
Frequencies of a Sodium Lamp Powered by 60 Hertz

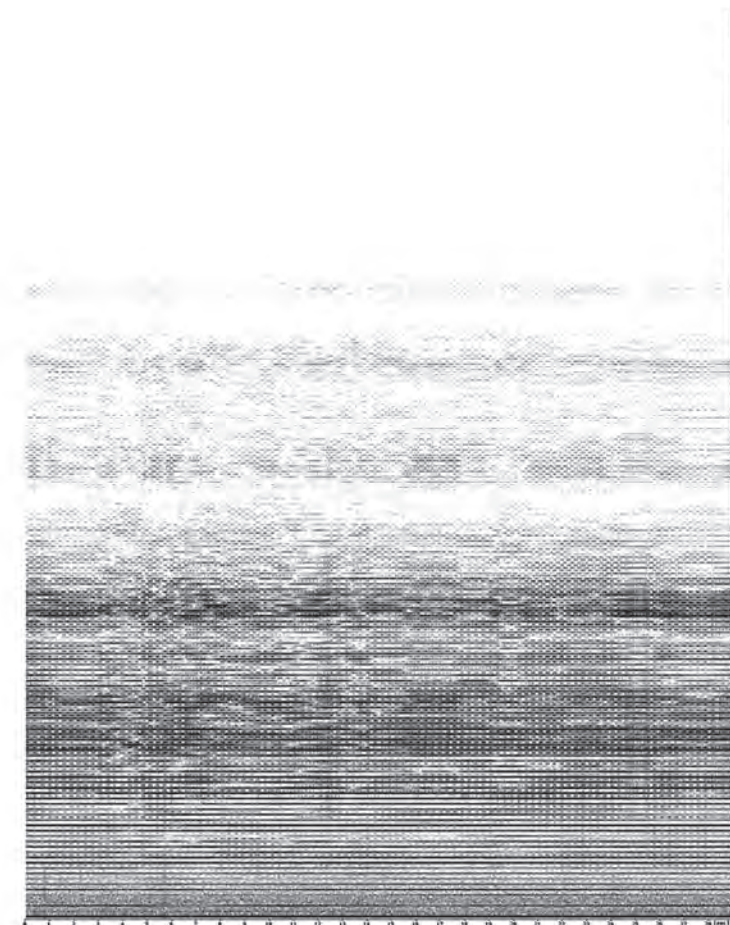
Sound installation
Klanginstallation
2008



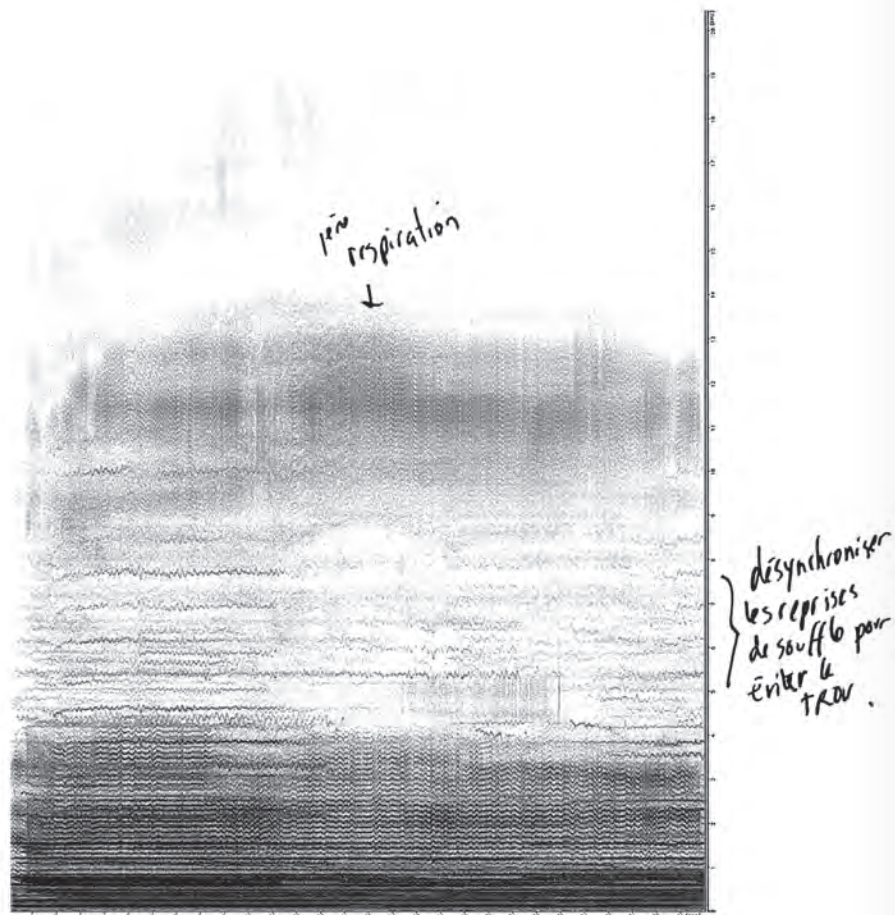
For her work *Choir Piece for 24 Voices Attuned to the Spectrum of Frequencies of a Sodium Lamp Powered by 60 Hertz*, Sophie Bélair Clément has analysed the acoustic frequency spectrum of a sodium lamp, and has subsequently commissioned a choir to perform and sing this spectrum of sound. In the exhibition, the artist presents a recording of this choir performance as a sound installation piece.

Für ihre Arbeit *Chorstück für 24 Stimmen, gestimmt auf das Frequenzspektrum einer Leuchtstofflampe, betrieben bei 60 Hertz* analysierte Sophie Bélair Clément das akustische Frequenzspektrum einer Natriumlampe und beauftragte anschließend einen Chor, dieses Klangspektrum aufzuführen und zu singen. In der Ausstellung präsentiert die Künstlerin eine Aufnahme dieser Chor-Performance als Klanginstallation.

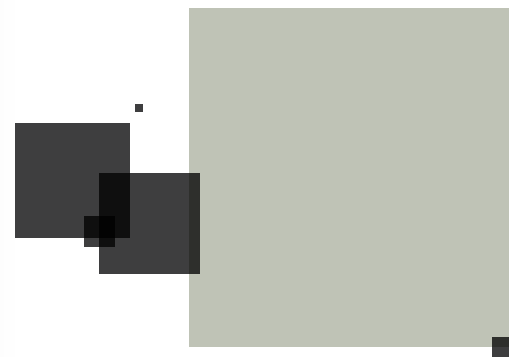
Performed by:
Francine Lemay Delorme (soprano)
Natalie Bériault (contralto)
David Jacques (baritone)
Olivier Girouard (tenor)
François Dubé (bass)



Spectral analysis of the sound produced by a sodium lamp powered by 60 hertz



Spectral analysis of a 24 voice choir attuned to the frequencies of a sodium lamp



Sophie, what was the process from the analysis of the sodium lamp frequencies to the moment that the choir could actually read (and sing) the notation of the final musical score for the piece?

The piece was made under pressure, in a single recording session with the assistance of Olivier Girouard, an electroacoustic composer who helped me through the recording and the mix. We met the singers in a studio and used software to analyse the sound emanating from the sodium lamp (recorded in a deserted corridor in downtown Montreal) and it generated an active sonogram. Corresponding to the range of their voice, one at a time, the singers listened to every important frequency of the sonogram of the recording of the lamp while performing it for the longest length of time possible – thinking about the final mix as a continuous sound. The problem with human voices is the need to breathe, as can be seen by the hole in the accompanying graphic representation.

Why did you choose the (human) voice to translate and amplify the acoustic side effects of the (technical) lamp into the sonic environment of a sound installation?

To embody the stability and the continuity of the electric tone was the (utopian) challenge.

The choir consists of twenty-four voices, in how far does this number relate to the results of your frequency analysis?

They performed the largest band of frequencies possible, from bass to soprano, and we stopped when we felt it was enough to recreate the complexity of the electric source. I counted them afterwards, for the precision of the title.

Do you think that, on a metaphorical level, the choir is competing with the 'singing' lamp in the piece? Or is the choir even trying to emulate the technology – maybe in order to begin to shine at the next moment? Is there a drama of desire and alienation unfolding before our eyes and ears?

It is true that the failure of the recreation is the only possible result. The attempt of being attuned and having continuous breath is activated by desire and performed with a voluntary consciousness of the impossible exactitude of the end result. The performance is more of an excessive analytic play based on empiric experience rather than a metaphoric one. The voices are performing beyond language; a white noise choir (or almost); this is maybe where the alienation appears.



Sophie Bélair Clément

Sophie Bélair Clément is interested in exhibition circumstances, in information obtained in the course of the documentation process and in the dissonances that derive from attempts at recreations. Her performances and installations, contextually developed in collaboration with cultural workers and musicians, suggest sustained attention to the immediate and mediated space. Bélair Clément lives in Montreal, Canada. In 2010 she is artist in residence at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, on invitation by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

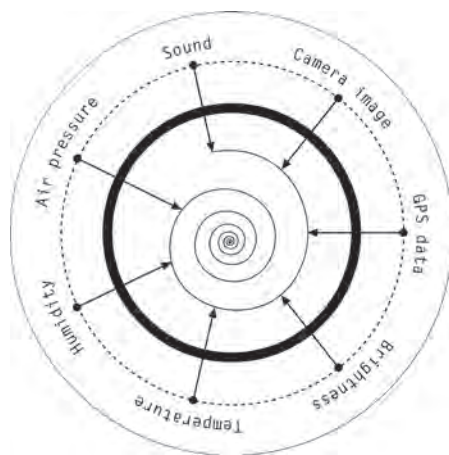
Sophie Bélair Clément beschäftigt sich in ihrer Arbeit mit Ausstellungsbedingungen, mit dem im Dokumentationsprozess entstandenen Material und mit den Dissonanzen, die über entsprechende Wiederherstellungsversuche entstehen. Ihre Performances und Installationen, die kontextbezogen und kollaborativ mit Kulturarbeitern und Musikern entwickelt werden, regen eine nachhaltige Aufmerksamkeit gegenüber unmittelbarem sowie vermitteltem Raum an. Bélair Clément lebt in Montreal, Kanada. 2010 ist sie als Gastkünstlerin im Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, auf Einladung des Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.



Verena Friedrich

ENDO

Installation
2007 – ongoing fortdauernd



ENDO is a recording device that captures and logs the surrounding situation from its individual point of view. Equipped with various sensors and a terabyte hard drive, the object continuously gathers information about its environment: sound, camera images, GPS-coordinates, brightness, temperature, air pressure and humidity values are archived within this black box without observers ever knowing what happens to the stored data.

In the course of time the machine produces a huge pool of information whose content or usage remains unknown. Does the record serve any secret purpose? Could it be exploited to act against us? Is this a trap? What remains is endless speculation – about the nature of information, the construction of a media-dominated reality, the ‘ghost in the machine,’ and a potential loss of control.

ENDO hence mirrors a situation we are all in: data – also about us – is gathered continuously. These mountains of data are rarely evaluated, yet they remain piled up, beyond the control of any single individual.

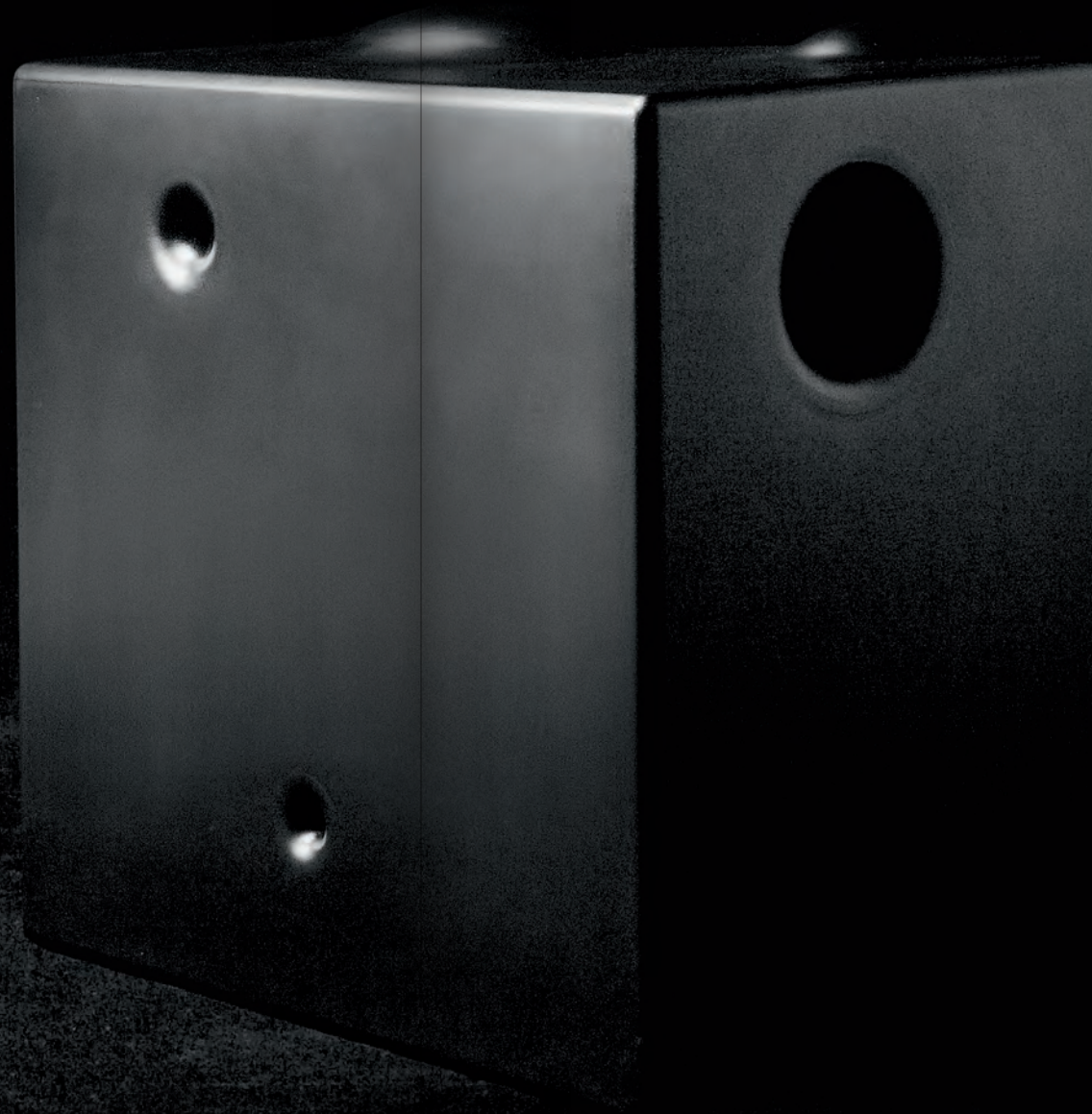
ENDO ist ein Aufzeichnungsgerät, ausgestattet mit verschiedenen Sensoren und einer terabytegroßen Festplatte, das die Umgebungssituation aus seinem individuellen Blickwinkel heraus erfasst und protokolliert. Der schwarze Kasten sammelt kontinuierlich Daten der aktuellen Umgebung: Töne, Kamerabilder, GPS-Koordinaten, Helligkeit, Temperatur, Luftdruck, und Luftfeuchtigkeit werden im Inneren dieser Black-box archiviert, ohne dass der Betrachter jemals erfährt, was mit den gespeicherten Informationen passiert.

Im Laufe der Zeit produziert die Maschine einen ungeheuren Informationsvorrat, dessen Inhalt und Verwendung in Frage steht... Dient die Aufzeichnung einem geheimen Selbstzweck? Oder kann sie instrumentalisiert und gegen uns verwendet werden? Ist das alles eine Falle? Was bleibt ist endlose Spekulation – über das Wesen von Information, die Konstruktion medialer Realität, den ‚Geist in der Maschine‘ und die Möglichkeit des Kontrollverlusts.

ENDO spiegelt eine Situation, in der wir uns alle befinden: Laufend werden Daten angesammelt – auch über uns. Diese Datenberge werden meist nicht ausgewertet, bleiben aber angehäuft und der Kontrolle des Einzelnen entzogen.



Verena Friedrich ENDO

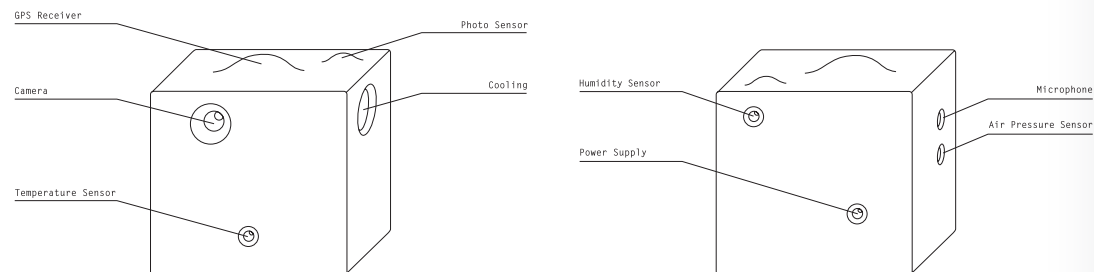


Verena, *ENDO* is a device that collects various data, or at least claims to do so. For the work the question whether it really does, seems to be secondary, since its conceptual approach mainly takes place in the head of the visitor to the exhibition. How important was the actual functionality of *ENDO* as a recording device?

I would like to put it this way: it is possible that I actually record data and that I evaluate it afterwards. It is also possible that I record it and only store it, and it is also possible that this data does not exist at all. It doesn't really make sense to insist on one of these possibilities, since it would be merely an unproven claim. Regarding the technical implementation, of course I had to choose one variation. I have chosen the variation which seemed to make the most sense for my work and with which I could live. I think it is important that the different possibilities exist simultaneously, and to ask what the difference would be. How does your own behaviour change, if you assume that the object is recording you or not? What are the traces I decide to leave? How does my 'room for manoeuvre' change?

What is especially important to me is to generate profound uncertainty. This of course is only constructed, because no outsider has access to the things actually happening inside the device. And in between there is the description level, which the exhibition visitor may trust or not. In the case of *ENDO*, the 'technological reality' is additionally protected by the rules of the exhibition environment.

However, this situation can also be compared to other moments in which we leave behind data traces without being able to erase them again – for example search requests on the internet. The user has to trust the corporate privacy policy, but has no access to the server on which his data is actually stored. And we know that it is rather common with many companies to take privacy issues not so seriously – Google Street View vehicles, for example, 'accidentally' recording the user data of private wi-fi networks.



The mysterious black box with its (technological) capacity promise works for *ENDO* because of – or despite – its passive receptive status. In how far does *ENDO* operate with the myth of the literal 'black box' and its promise of obscure security?

I'm not sure if the presence of a 'black box' (as in aeroplanes) helps to re-establish the belief in security as such. This 'black box' is used with a potential accident in mind, and ultimately is only used once an accident has happened. It might help then to investigate the circumstances and add to the prevention of such accidents in the future. The operation itself is not getting any more safe, the device may merely help to avoid the problem next time around. Still, it would be interesting to ask why it does produce a comforting feeling subjectively to have such a unit on board. I think the presence of precise recording equipment generates a feeling of being in control, to be able to oversee the overall complex situation and therefore maintain a 'grip' on it.

The black box is also about the fantasy of recording without any gaps, about the memory capacity of the machine vs. the human ability for recollection. This 'black box' is used because the pilots in most cases wouldn't survive the crash. In contrast, the machine device does survive and gains a prolonged life because of its material consistency, with the promise to preserve the message about the course of things that have happened in the past, and are no longer accessible in any other way.

So the concept of the flight recorder was indeed an important reference in the development of the work. I remember one day the images in a TV documentary about plane crashes, and my fascination with this near indestructible thing, sitting in between dirt and wreckage, promising to solve all uncertainty.

So the black box constitutes an important cultural factor, in which the complexity of the technological world may also unfold a calming effect. Beside the drastic and other possible interpretations *ENDO* may evoke through its appearance, is there also a strong (symbolical) moment of trust inscribed in the work?

ENDO does exploit the mundane trust in the surfaces of technical things in a way. Certain surface designs suggest a particular functionality on the inside. A low, humming work noise, the spinning of a fan... at the same time, the whole thing could be altogether fake. For me, *ENDO*, mainly raises the question of how far we can trust such technological entities at all if we do not know how they really work because, for example, we are deprived of direct access to them.

We do of course deal with these 'black boxes' on a daily basis – which can be technical equipment, but also other people – who we also cannot look into. This ignorance is to some extent necessary and wise. We are operating with surfaces which in a functional sense is mostly absolutely sufficient. Only few people could for instance explain a daily object like a cell phone in all its parts and functions. Even if a technical device is dismantled into pieces, all you get is another pile of smaller black boxes ... So there may be further and ever more detailed levels of explanations, but there will never be a complete 'understanding' of the other.



Verena Friedrich

Verena Friedrich is an artist who avails herself of diverse media to develop artworks dealing with the relationships between humans, science and technology – mostly in the form of installations, objects and robotics.

Shown internationally at various media art festivals and exhibitions in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Turkey, Japan and the USA, Friedrich's works have received the International Media Award for Science and Art from ZKM Karlsruhe and were nominated for the Transmediale Award 2008. In 2009 she received a work stipend from the German foundation Stiftung Künstlerdorf Schöppingen.

Verena Friedrich studied art and media at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and at the University of Art and Design Offenbach from which she also holds a diploma and where in 2009 she also taught and conducted workshops related to electronics.

Verena Friedrich is based in Frankfurt/Main and Cologne where she is currently studying in the postgraduate programme of the Academy of Media Arts (KHM).

www.heavythinking.org

Verena Friedrich ist eine Künstlerin die sich verschiedenster Medien bedient, um Arbeiten zu entwickeln, die sich mit dem Verhältnis von Mensch, Wissenschaft und Technologie kritisch auseinandersetzen – zumeist in Form von Installationen, Objekten und Robotik.

Teilnahme an zahlreichen internationalen Medienkunstfestivals und Ausstellungen in Deutschland, Österreich, Schweiz, Italien, Türkei, Japan und USA. 2005 Auszeichnung mit dem Internationalen Medienpreis für Wissenschaft und Kunst des ZKM Karlsruhe; 2008 Nominierung für den Transmediale Award. 2009 erhielt sie ein Stipendium der Stiftung Künstlerdorf Schöppingen.

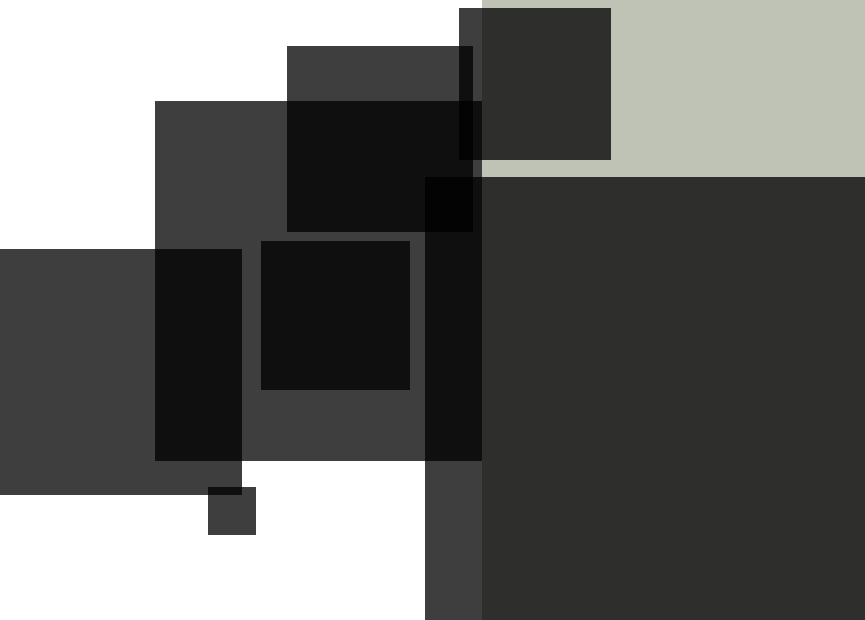
Verena Friedrich studierte Kunst und Medien an der Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach und an der Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien. 2009 erhielt sie einen Lehrauftrag an der Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach und leitete Workshops im Bereich Elektronik. Verena Friedrich lebt in Frankfurt/Main und Köln, wo sie zurzeit ein Aufbaustudium an der Kunsthochschule für Medien (KHM) absolviert.

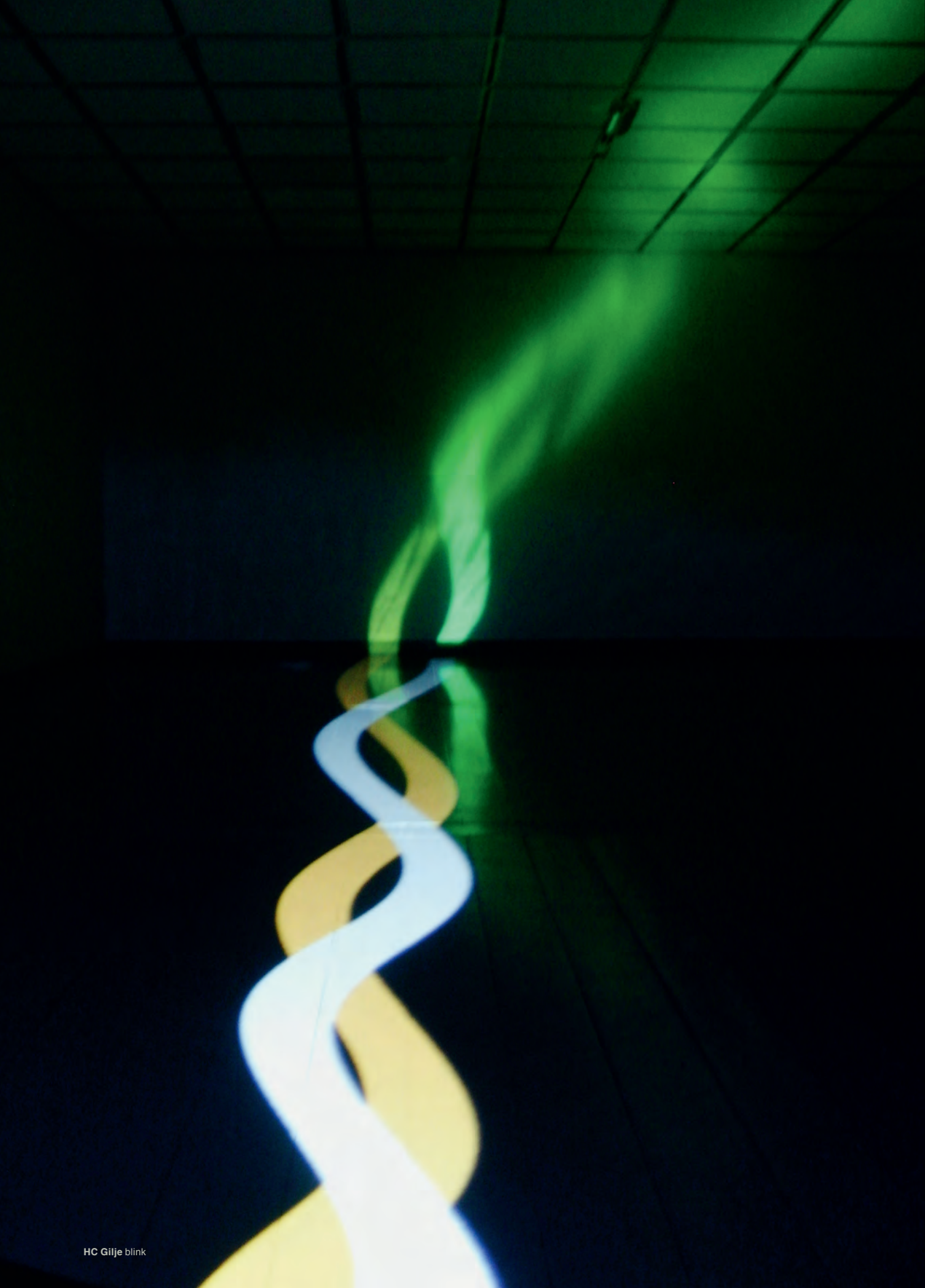
www.heavythinking.org

HC Gilje

blink

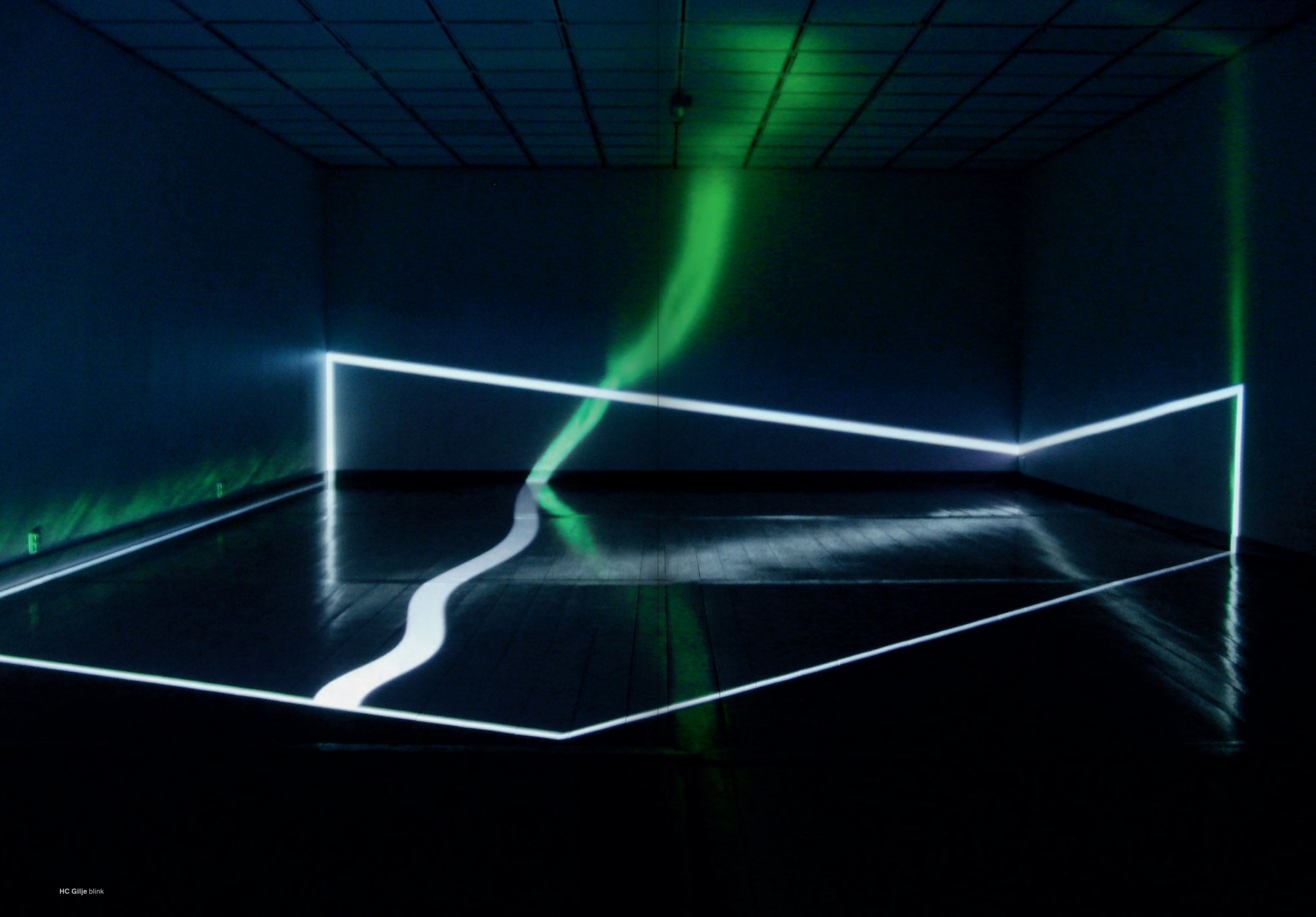
Audiovisual installation
Audiovisuelle Installation
2009

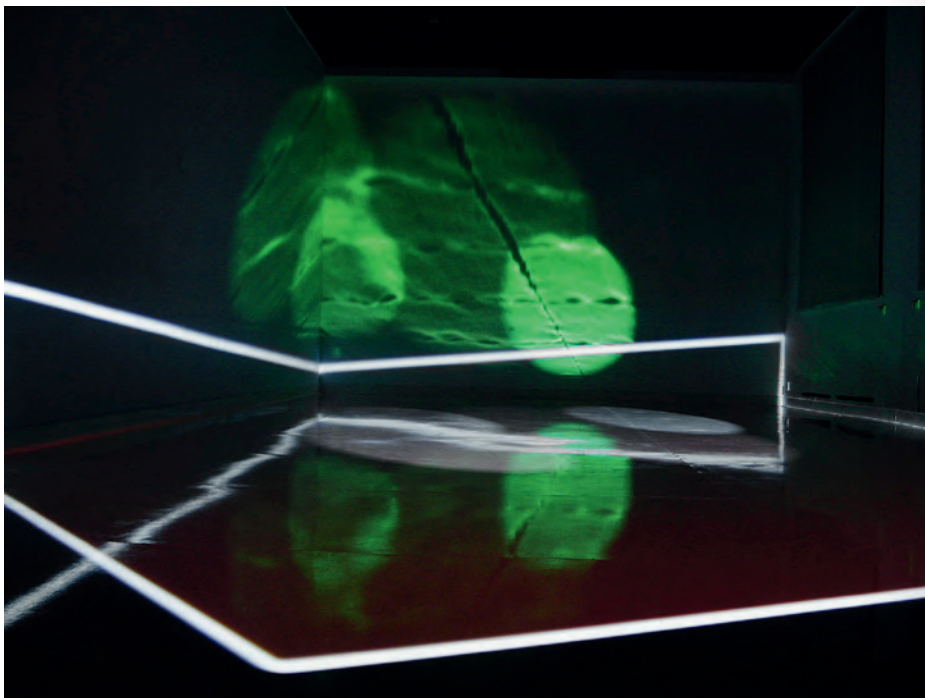




***blink* starts with an empty gallery space. The floor is printed in a shiny grey, the walls and ceiling are white. The physical qualities of the empty space modulate the projected image and sound. Speakers are placed at various positions on the ceiling, bouncing sound off the surfaces of the room, creating a drone texture. A video projector is the only light source. The precisely mapped projection is combined with reflections from the floor onto the walls of the space, and the mirroring of images from the walls onto the floor. The gallery space is transformed into a dynamic, abstract light painting.**

blink beginnt mit dem leeren Raum der Galerie. Der Boden ist glänzend grau gestrichen, Wände und Decken sind weiß. Die physikalischen Eigenschaften des leeren Raums modulieren die projizierten Bilder und Töne. An verschiedenen Stellen der Decke sind Lautsprecher positioniert, deren Klang von den Oberflächen im Raum reflektiert wird und eine brummende Klangtextur schafft. Ein Videoprojektor ist die einzige Lichtquelle. Die exakt ausgerichtete Projektion wird mit den Reflexionen des Bodens auf die Wände des Raums verknüpft und die Bilder von den Wänden auf den Boden gespiegelt. Der Ausstellungsraum wird in ein dynamisches, abstraktes Gemälde aus Licht verwandelt.





HC Gilje blink



HC, *blink* is an investigation into the possibilities of interpreting physical spaces by means of audiovisual techniques. Is this a project about optical illusions? Do you play tricks on the sense of the eye?

For me, *blink* is more about focussing on particular parts or qualities of a space using light, colour and sound. Of course I work with contrasts and colour combinations that might make us perceive the space differently than in a normally lit space, accentuating how light forms the way we perceive a physical form or space. I think it is also interesting to invert the role of light and space: how a space modulates the light, drawing on ideas from Moholy-Nagy's Light-Space-Modulator. I send image and sound into the exhibition space which functions as a giant effect box transforming the light and sound, based on the physical characteristics of the space.

Recently there has been a trend in the art world to use mapped video projections in environments to create moving sculptures or light paintings. However, your work relies on the projection as much as on the reflections and shadows it creates. What is so fascinating about working with a video projector as a light source?

A video projector in combination with a digital source gives us the promise of the ultimate controllable light source, down to individual pixel level.

Video projection is basically an advanced light source: In combination with a computer you can combine an infinite variety of masks with millions of colours to give you a tool for painting with light.

I realized quite early in my work the potential of using video projections as light sources. In 1999–2000 I developed the project *VideoNervous* where I wanted to explore the combination of computer controlled digital video with video projectors, and this resulted in my first experiments in projecting video into three dimensional spaces and onto physical bodies.

Thinking of video projection as light detaches it from the usual format of projection of content onto a screen, and opens it up to projecting on bodies, objects, surfaces, walls, floors, ceiling, buildings, etc.

The interplay of light and darkness forms the world (as we experience it), and by being able to control both the placement, intensity, colour, and shape of the light as well as being able to control these parameters over time, gives me the possibility to transform spaces using light.

One of the interesting differences between film and video projection is the depth of field. While film projection has a very narrow depth of field, video projection has an almost endless depth of field, so both foreground and background can be sharp at the same time. This makes it possible to project on objects/forms at various depths using the same video projector.

Artists like Pablo Valbuena and others also make use of exactly calibrated projections to transform physical spaces. In *blink* there are some moments where you seem to give up on the perfectly precise mapping of the projection onto the walls and start a more improvised play with the light. How do you see the relationship between the physical architecture and your composition?

Improvisation has always been a key element in my work, in live constellations like *242.pilots* but also as a strategy for recording and generating material for my video works. During the last five years I have been looking for ways of improvising with physical spaces directly, where position and movement become as important as the actual content of the image and sound. So I have stripped down my sources to light, colour and sound (often generated by the light), and have focused more on creating movement through a physical environment.

This has resulted in works as different as *Wind-up Birds*, *nodio* and *shift*. *Wind-up Birds* is a network of mechanical woodpecker-like birds placed in forests. *Nodio* is a series of multi-channel sequencer environments where I explore how to compose with movement, placement and combination of image and sound, using multiple audiovisual sources. The *shift* installations extend this by combining mapped projections onto boxes as well as a direct connection between image and sound: when a box is projected on it also generates sound based on the projection.

At first sight *shift* looks similar to works that came out at the same time by people like Valbuena and AntiVJ: mapped projections on more or less complex physical forms. But while a lot of the mapping projections are exploring the viewer's perspective to seemingly explode physical structures using virtual geometry, I have become more interested in the interplay between the projected light and the physical form.

There are basically two approaches to projection mapping. You can recreate the physical geometry of the space you want to project into in 3D software, where the virtual camera is the video projector. This means you need to know a lot about the physical characteristics of both the environment and projector. Also the projector needs to be in exactly the same position as the virtual camera to get an exact match between the projected texture and the physical form. The measuring, modelling and calibration is a time-consuming and difficult job, and in most cases it rules out real-time work.

I created Video Projection Tool (VPT) as a free and open-source tool for people to work with projections in physical environments. My approach, achieving similar results as the mapping technique described above, is based on positioning, masking and warping multiple projection layers (using a single projector) onto a physical structure. There is no need for measuring the space, creating a 3D model or calibrating the projector. Basically I build the projection while I am in the space, giving me the possibility to work directly with how the light modulates the space and the space modulates the light. So the short answer: flexible software gives me the opportunity to compose with light in real-time, making it more intuitive to work with more than just the geometric qualities of a physical structure.

In a similar way, we enter a space we try to ascertain its coordinates to orient ourselves in relation to people or things that are already in that space. We map ourselves into that space, using our senses, especially sight and hearing, but also balance and possibly touch and smell, too. *blink* takes our desire for orientation and the determining of our position and undermines it by destabilising our sense of place. Can you say something about the strategies that you have used to do this? How calculated are the experiences for the audience, and is your interest more in the aesthetic manipulation of the space, or in the manipulation of the visitor's experience?

I am interested in the duality in the interplay between light and physical structures. How light shapes our perception of time and space, for instance how a city changes in appearance from day to night. A change in light indicates a passing of time, so by being able to control the changes in light I am able to manipulate people's sense of time, which I think is an important element in *blink*.

So the light influences how we perceive time and space, but the space itself modulates the light. I particularly work with the floor, which has a shiny surface. When the light from the projection hits the floor it bounces off and hits the walls and ceiling, and any irregularities in the floor distort the reflected image. The floor also functions as a giant mirror, mirroring the light patterns on the walls and floor. There is then an interplay between the projected image, the reflection and the mirroring. If the visitor steps into the light she becomes part of the light modulator, creating new shadows and distortions.

The sound, which consists of a single sound texture played back from multiple speakers with slight offset in time, is coloured by the acoustic qualities of the space. It functions as an anchor in the physical space, gluing the different 'blinks' together.

I think it is difficult to distinguish between an aesthetic manipulation of the space and the manipulation of the visitor's experience, as my aim is to create a changing sense of place/time using image and sound. It might not be obvious, but I am quite inspired by the New Zealand artist Len Lye, who said his material was motion; he composed 'figures of motion'. I guess you could say I am trying to mould the flow of time through a space, so rhythm, repetition, and movements from static to dynamic, are important building blocks when composing *blink*.

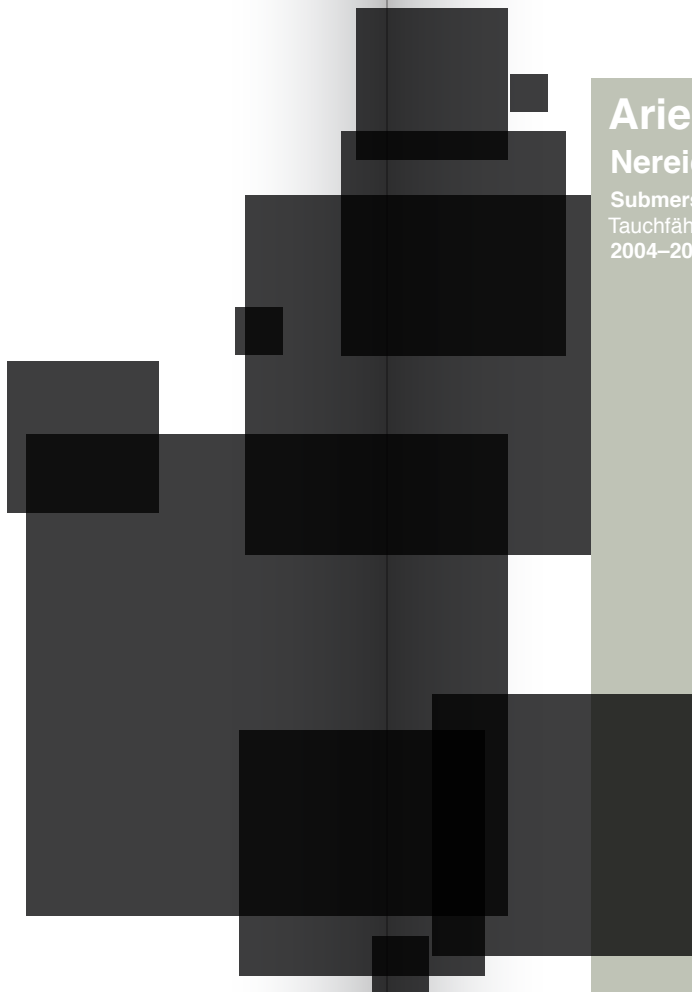
HC Gilje works with realtime environments, installations, live performance, set design and single channel video. Gilje has presented his work through different channels all over the world: in concert venues, theatre and cinema venues, galleries, festivals and through several international DVD releases, including *242.pilots live in Bruxelles* on New York label Carpark and *Cityscapes* on Paris-label Lowave. He was a member of the video-improv trio 242.pilots, and was also the visual motor of the dance company kreutzerkompani. In 2006 Gilje initiated the research project *Conversations with Spaces* in which he explores how audiovisual technology can be used to transform, create, expand, amplify and interpret physical spaces.

hcgilje.com

HC Gilje

HC Gilje arbeitet in Bereichen wie Echtzeit-Umgebung, Installation, Live-Performance, Set-Design und Einkanal-Video. Gilje präsentierte seine Arbeit weltweit und in unterschiedlichen Formaten: In Konzertsälen, Theatern und Kinos, Festivals, Galerien und in einer Reihe internationaler DVD-Veröffentlichungen, darunter *242.pilots live in Bruxelles* beim New Yorker Label Carpark und *Cityscapes* beim Pariser Label Lowave. Er war Mitglied des Video-Improv Trios 242.pilots und war der visuelle Motor der Tanz-Company kreutzerkompani. 2006 initiierte Gilje das Forschungsprojekt *Conversations with Spaces*, in dem er erkundet, wie audiovisuelle Technologie physische Räume erschaffen, expandieren, verstärken, transformieren und interpretieren kann.

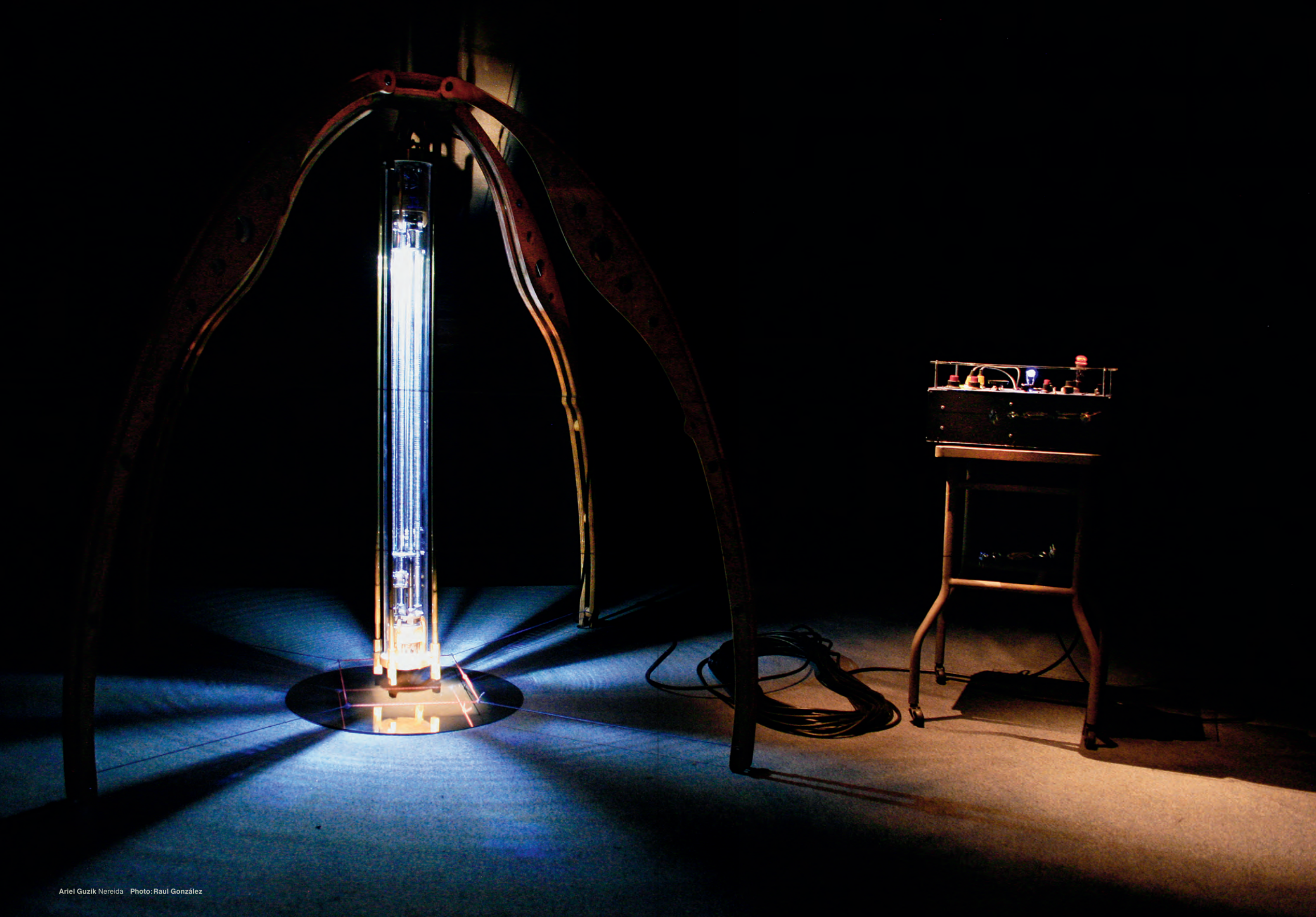
hcgilje.com



Ariel Guzik

Nereida

Submersible capsule
Tauchfähige Kapsel
2004–2009



***Nereida* consists of a capsule that contains a device with strings and circuits. It is part of a collection of tools whose purpose is to establish contact with cetaceans (whales and dolphins) through music, without interfering with their freedom. The experiments made with *Nereida* are based on some aspects of the theory of chaos and on the fact that to dolphins and whales, observation and communication are one circular, indissoluble process based on sound waves.**

Ariel Guzik Nereida Photo:Raul González



Nereida besteht aus einer Kapsel, die eine Einheit aus Saiten und Schaltkreisen enthält. Sie ist Teil einer Sammlung von Werkzeugen, deren Zweck es ist, mittels Musik Kontakt mit Meeressäugern (Walen und Delfinen) herzustellen, ohne in ihren Freiraum störend einzuwirken. Den mit *Nereida* durchgeführten Experimenten liegen Aspekte der Chaostheorie zugrunde. Sie beruhen auf der Tatsache, dass Observation und Kommunikation für Wale und Delfine ein zyklischer, unauflösbarer Prozess ist, der auf Klangwellen basiert.



Ariel Guzik Nereida Photo:Raul González



Ariel, a number of your works and projects focus on the interpretation of communication mechanisms, from signals by plants to those of different animal species. Would you associate your work generally more with artistic practice or rather with scientific research?

My work is an artistic practice. It follows different rules than science. Although I develop technology for reaching my purposes, it is mainly a subjective, affective and intuitive approach, free of any kind of *useful* purpose, which puts the work far away from aseptic and pragmatic science.

What were the major experiences and findings with *Nereida* in regard to the harmonic communication and interaction with the different species you have encountered?

Being seen accurately by a whale, and then being 'hosted' in the whale's mind – a mind that describes the universe with sound. That was the most important experience for me in this research.

The human-animal interaction and communication carried out in your work seems to require a large degree of trust from both sides. What role does trust play in your overall work and in *Nereida* in particular?

If you talk about trust on both sides, you are describing the essence of my research. Finding partners *outside* is what I seek. My work is an act of survival. *Nereida* is a personal instrument for making contact with cetaceans.

Since it seems impossible to know whether the cetaceans actually have a sense of trust towards your attempts at communication, the crucial moral dimension of this project seems to be the category of 'responsibility' – a responsibility that you have to take. How do you deal with the moral burden and with the risk that is involved in communicating with beings from whom you cannot get direct responses?

In my experiments, the sounds emitted by the whales are as subtle as a whisper, much lower in frequency and amplitude than the noise from boats and equipment present in the sea.

But also, we do have direct and obvious responses from cetaceans; communication between human beings and other species is quite common, although in our research the possibility of working with animals in captivity is ruled out. At this stage of the invasion and human destruction of the sea, trying to communicate with cetaceans in a simple and humble way could be an ethical strategy used to approach cetaceans.

One of your long-term plans is to create an underwater station 'to make contact and to create some kind of intelligent link with cetaceans'. How far are you in the development of this underwater station?

Currently I'm concentrating on the construction of a crew capsule, called *Narcissus Ship*. Its construction process, with its various implications in the philosophical, technical and practical fields, lead me to envision a life-long project.

Ariel Guzik

Nereida – Seeking contact with the ancestors who emigrated to the sea.

"The only creatures who possess a larger and perhaps more developed brain than ours are cetaceans: whales and dolphins. Perhaps someday they will have something important to tell us, but it is very unlikely that we may ever hear it, since we are coldly and efficiently exterminating them, motivated by economic interest."

Jacques Cousteau

Nereida is the beginning of a project to design, build and ultimately operate an underwater station, the purpose of which is to make contact and to create some kind of intelligent link with cetaceans in their natural habitat, free from any type of domination and without restricting their freedom. A series of experiments are performed based on some aspects of chaos theory and on the fact that, in dolphins and whales, observation and communication mechanisms constitute one and the same circular, indissoluble process based on sound waves.

Nereida is an underwater, molten-quartz musical instrument. The capsule design is based on the *Plasmaht Mirror*, the *Harmonic Spectral Resonator*, and the *Spectral Subharmonium*, tools created to bring to light, through resonance phenomena, harmonic elements and distinctive signals which are usually found hidden in the architecture of those things we describe as being natural.

The submersible is usually suspended between a floating buoy and an anchor. The capsule can be submersed to a depth of 30 meters (4 ATM) and it is coupled through a communication cable and control to the *mother station*, which is located in a ship that can be up to 250 metres away.

A series of expeditions are taking place starting in Baja California, Mexico, a territory with biodiversity and geographic conditions that make it one of the most important whale sanctuaries in the world.

Narcissus shining Experiment

The dolphin's stage of evolution being so high, I am particularly interested in the fact that they use sound to scan their environment and as a means to communicate. Like all cetaceans, dolphins have developed a complex vocal language as well as an echolocation system (sonar) based on frequency and sound pulsation displacements.

We are faced with a specific form of intelligence where *observing* and *expressing* constitute the same circular process involving the same organs.

Underwater, sound travels in a different way than it does in the air. Water resistance to sound dispersion is lower than air resistance by several orders of magnitude. Cetacean messages can spread travelling dozens of kilometres. In a dolphin community, the sound environment constitutes a chatter of

space description waves and communication which suggests a great consciousness unity shared by all members of the group.

For light, on the other hand, it is the exact opposite. In the air, light is dispersed even more than sound. The role and importance of sight organs for humans is equivalent to the ear in cetaceans (consider that thirty meters below the sea surface, light and colour barely permeate the ocean). Studies have shown that the auditory area in dolphin's brain is larger than the visual area in a human brain.

Experiment description:

The Quartz Harmonic Resonator, built into the architecture of Narcissus Ship, is an instrument designed to receive high-frequency signals (like the dolphin's sonar) and produce other subtle signals in response, which contain low and medium frequency harmonic sequences originated in the *convolution*¹ of the fundamental arbitrary frequency of a local low frequency *harmonic resonator* and the received signals.

When the dolphin aims its sonar at the capsule immersed in the sea, the capsule reflects the natural echo usually described by its shape and contour in the cetacean's mind, but it also emits – outside the sonar's band and within the band of its guttural sounds – subtle harmonic spectrums which constitute a musicality derived in an accurate and continuous way from the spectral inflections of the sonar in convolution with the instrument's set of resonance frequencies.

The dolphin will then be facing an object which, when *observed* by it through ultrasonic signals, produces subtle vibrational harmonic figures physically linked to the mechanics inherent to such observation. In other words, the musical order produced by the quartz harmonic resonators is modified by the mind of the dolphin hearing it. Perhaps this could be the beginning of a refined and unprecedented communication bridge between dolphins and humans through music.

For example, imagine you are walking through a wood in the moonlight. The crickets chirping, the stars, trees, rocks and paths are familiar to you since they all belong there. Suddenly, you discover that when you set eyes on a faraway hill, a strange crystal object located there *sings* a delicate note. When you look again and watch the object and its surroundings, the mysterious harmony of the song becomes richer and this embellishment grows with the detail and care with which your eyes and your mind examine the object. If you close your eyes, the singing stops. If you open them and look at the object again, the singing reappears. You could create harmonic manifestations governed by your own observation and, in time, you would learn to modulate them at will.

Considering this object from a strictly human point of view, we might think that the crystal object had been placed there by beings of a nature different to our own. It might seem that they had found a way to get our attention: our eyes. The subtle harmony of the alien instrument might produce in us a strange *déjà vu*; a narcissistic feeling of hearing music sung by something or someone who derives this music from our own mind, creating for us an intimate experience.

This far-fetched visualization reflects the character and intention of the project, but we are unable to establish beforehand the effect the experiment will have on the dolphins. Nevertheless, we are certain that these are beings with a complex intelligence and that they are, like us, eager to communicate.

We must underscore that the experiment does not intend to interfere with the dolphin's echolocation mechanism. Therefore, the band of frequencies broadcast by the capsule is found, together with others which abound in the ocean's natural sound environment, several octaves below the cetacean's sonar range. The amplitude (volume or intensity) of the vibrations produced by the resonator is self-regulated to make the total energy produced equal to or lower than the surrounding average sound energy striking the capsule body. This purist consideration ensures that the sounds produced by the *Narcissus Ship* are not significantly invasive in the already contaminated oceanic sound environment.

In view of the many-sided resourcefulness that characterises both humans and dolphins, when the conditions to explore this particular encounter are set, we find it difficult to assume that such a phenomenon could go unnoticed by either species.

Experiment of the White Field Context

Practical by nature, current science rarely contemplates answering questions that are too daring, preferring to ask others which, when worked on, yield far-reaching technological results or clearly defined conclusions that represent developments true to previously-reached conclusions. Fortunately, in recent decades some physicists have resumed thinking whose virtue lies precisely on a fertile margin of ambiguity or uncertainty, and which glances at the roots of mystical vision, creativity and art. Some even examine how the consciousness of an observer has an effect on the behaviour of its own subject of study.

In the particular subject of *describable* versus *indeterminate*, new positions are introduced which relax the scientific approach, returning to forms of thought where other criteria and domains of human culture are included.

Precisely the relative threshold between *order* and *chaos* constitutes the starting point of this experiment to approach cetaceans.

Larger whales, such as the sperm whale, blue whale, grey whale and the humpback whale, as well as dolphins, inspire me to try and create instruments to approach them, contemplating the highly probable fact that these beings possess minds not only comparable to the majesty of their appearance, but quite specifically to the enormous size and complexity of their brains, larger, by the way, than ours.

In general I find it pointless to try to understand the thought processes of other species from perspectives too attached to our own references and manners, but I imagine it is probable that universal foundations exist which link us to other inhabitants of this planet, since we can take as a basis that *consciousness is only one*, or at least that we share a fundamental thing: the *iceberg* of memory. Understanding others is also interpreting ourselves. Understanding is perhaps just remembering what was forgotten.

The elements that constitute this experiment are quite varied. Most important is a joint creation of a broad context. Animals in captivity are inappropri-

¹ a function, derived from two given functions by integration, that expresses how the shape of one is modified by the other.

ate for this experiment, as much as it would be inappropriate to impose our presence. This can only be accomplished by providing room for the wealth, care, freshness and justice of this eventual encounter. In the first experience of aesthetic approach to grey whales which our work group had in Baja California in 2002, fantasy, freedom and creativity proved to be even more essential elements than our own material resources and tools.

After the encounter we had the feeling that it had been carried out in concert, a kind of common agreement between both species. The experiment consisted of recording the whale's voices and at the same time producing signals from the *Plasmaht Mirror*, one of the tools created in my lab (described later). Since this encounter was taking place at the peak place and moment of the yearly cycle of this species of migratory whales, mating and parturition, the doubt arose: "No matter how subtle our participation may be, is it wise?" This was when the whales seemed to take control of the experiment.

The different ways they approached us and expressed acceptance were so remarkable that the unfolding of this event turned out to be crucial in the course of my life and my work. The foundations were set for the *Narcissus Ship* project. That experience and its fruits, abstract as they might seem at first, were captured in the multidisciplinary work called *Grey Whale* (2004).

In the yearly project, *context* is of course determined by the broad stage where the encounter takes place and by the action of the interpreters from different species on that stage, which we will call *the great context*. But in particular, the *Lluvoide (Rainoid)* one of the instruments which make up *The Narcissus Ship*, is specifically designed to produce an environment called *White Field Context*.

In defining the design of an instrument that might enable us to communicate with cetaceans by means of ordering harmonic signals, I find it more convenient to seek such signals in a source of *infinite possibilities* rather than in a sound repertoire with a given order. White light contains in it all possible colours. Likewise, *white noise* contains, from a statistical point of view, all possible sounds.

Experiment description:

A small thermometer contained in a crystal sphere, located on the outside of the capsule, collects thermal ocean noise and translates it into a complex signal called *boltzian white noise*². Theoretically, a white noise signal is made up of an infinite number of frequency components. Each component of this signal contributes an infinitesimal part to the total noise energy, which is infinite. This is analogous to the concept of the ensemble of dots which constitute a line. Although the dots which form a finite line are an infinite ensemble, if we cross that line with another line, the resulting dot will have a determinable value. The distance between the start and the point of intersection can be measured with a ruler.

A circuit produces a variable time clock derived from the low frequency or high pulsating subaqueous sound components usually found within the

whales' area of influence. A signal thus produced forms a pulse train with variable and indefinite intervals. With each pulsation from the clock, another circuit takes a sample of any of the infinite possible waves from the frequency spectrum from the *boltzian* thermometer. This *x* frequency wave is fed with energy (*delta pulse*) and focused on the capsule quartz harmonic resonator. Most of these signals projected on the resonator are dispersed, since they produce an effect not larger than a low-intensity homogeneous, harmonic *shower*. A small portion of these aleatory *x* signals, nevertheless, resonates with any of the resonator's harmonic components, producing a sound figure which spreads, as a message, to the sea.

These intermittent consonant sonorities derived from the infinite ensemble of possible events of white noise from the sea, constitute a beautiful musicality which can be described in physical terms as a collection of events of *higher order*, that is, in a sequence unpredictable to the human mind (although determinable in its statistical range of probable frequencies, which are related to the nature and tuning of the instrument).

These sounds, transmitted at the core point and moment of the experiment, acquire great significance when they influence our own mental mechanisms *which build perception* – a conjunction of sensations and memory – taking a timely, emotive and symbolic position within the *great context*.

Cetaceans will also be witness to and participants in these primitive harmonic sonorities derived from chaos in a context of mutuality, which will also crystallise in their consciousness when influencing their *perception builders*, made up over time by a refined sense of hearing and their own memory. Perhaps to them it will be nothing more than low-intensity noise, which represents a minimum amount of information. But there is a possibility that it may not, since we assume that the threshold between *signal* and *chaos* is different in human and cetacean minds, and that for them such musicality, originated in something from an undetermined order, *may reach their field of consciousness and memory* triggering some particular expression, a song, a genuine look, an unpredictable gesture of acknowledgment or approach. This alone would make this experiment, the mission of *Nereida*, meaningful.

² White noise is theoretically a signal that contains all possible frequencies. A practical implementation of the same principle is Boltzman Noise, a way of representing the entropy of gases statistically, attributed to Ludwig Boltzman (1844–1906).

Collaborators in the project are Leobardo Ramírez, Catalina Juárez, Emilio Gálvez y Fuentes, Alejandro Colinas, Adriaan Schalkwijk, Peter Schalkwijk, Raúl González, Beatriz Beltrán and Rafael Salazar.

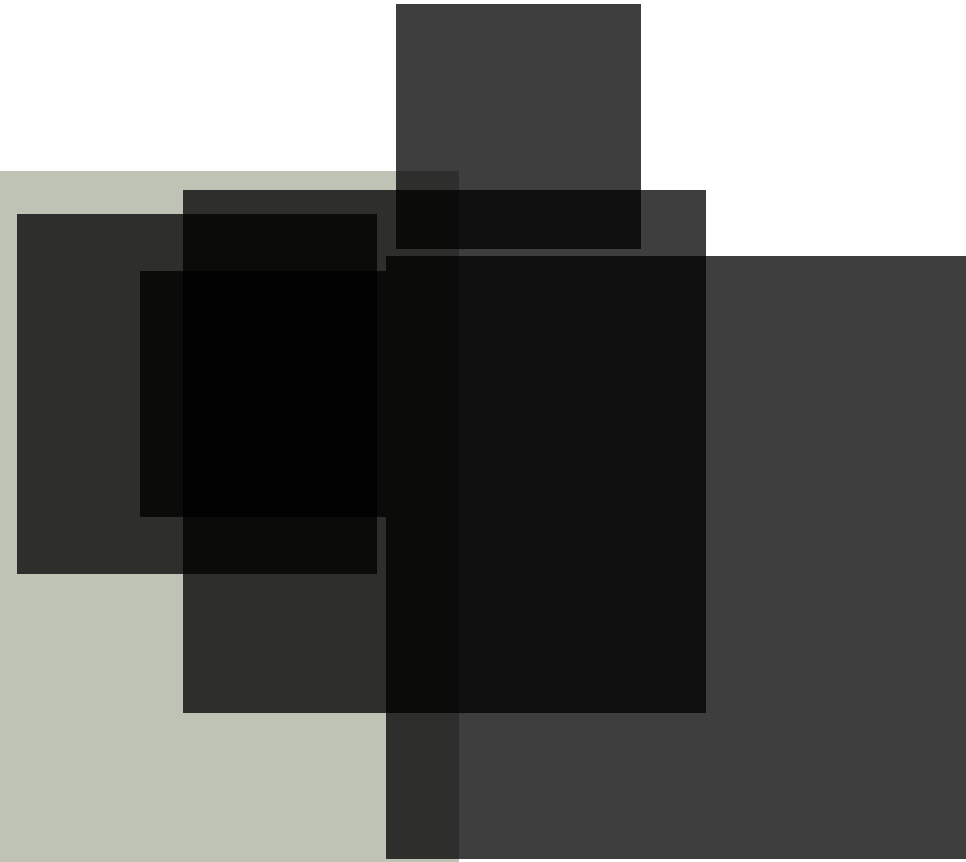
Ariel Guzik

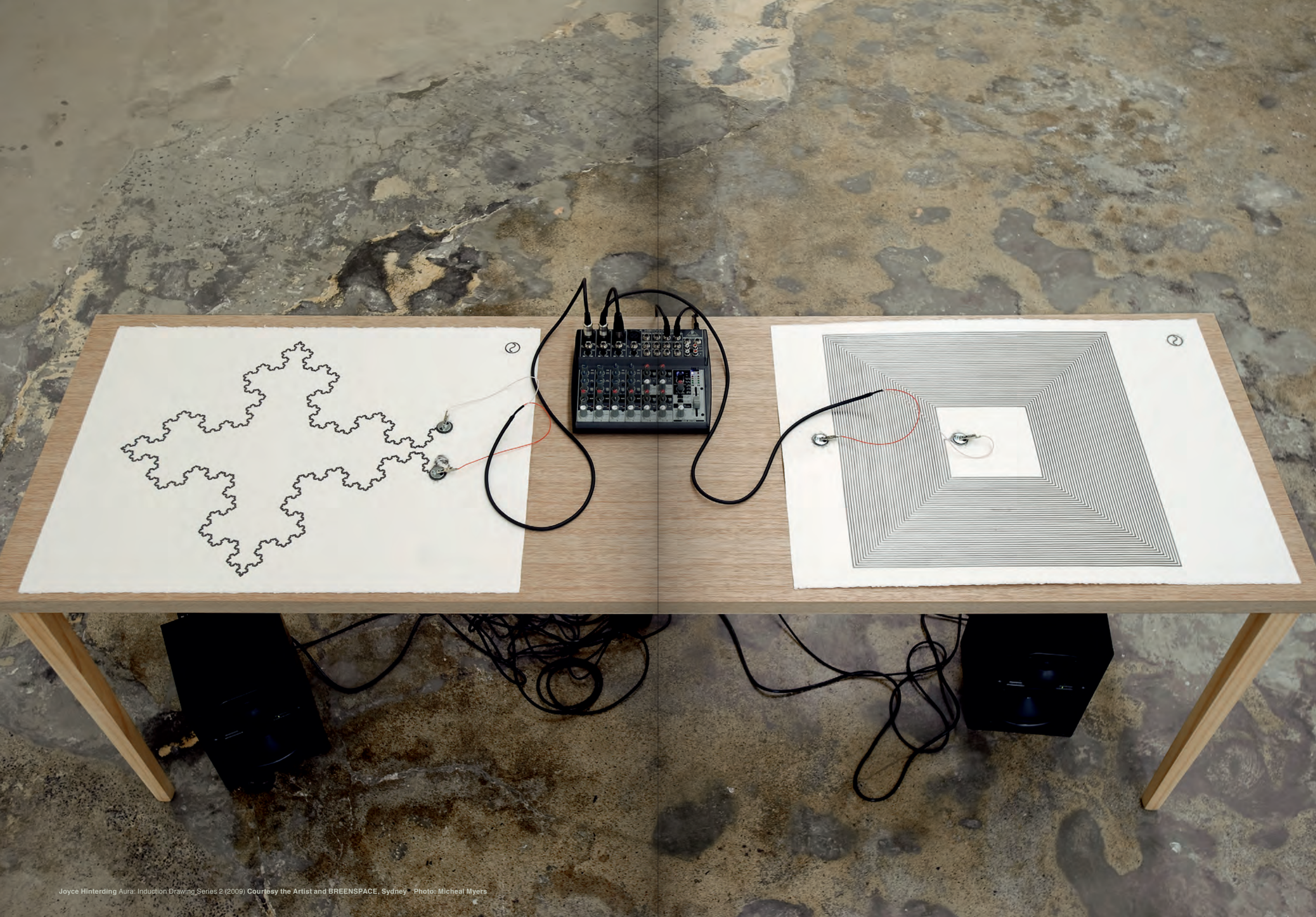
Ariel Guzik designs and produces mechanisms and instruments to enquire into the various languages of nature. He is also a musician, draftsman and illustrator. He is Director of the Laboratorio Plasmaht de Investigación en Resonancia y Expresión de la Naturaleza, Asociación Civil. Installations and individual exhibitions of his work have been presented in national and international institutions, such as the Feria Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo (ARCO) Madrid, the Apijay Media Gallery in New Delhi, the Havana Art Biennial, the Fine Arts Museum in Houston, Texas, and St. Mark's Church in New York.

Ariel Guzik entwirft und produziert Mechanismen und Instrumente, um die unterschiedlichen Sprachen der Natur zu erkunden. Gleichzeitig ist er Musiker, Zeichner und Illustrator. Er ist Direktor des Laboratorio Plasmaht de Investigación en Resonancia y Expresión de la Naturaleza, Asociación Civil. Installationen und Einzelaustellungen seiner Arbeit wurden in nationalen sowie internationalen Institutionen gezeigt, darunter Feria Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo (ARCO) Madrid, Apijay Media Gallery in Neu Delhi, Havana Art Biennial, Fine Arts Museum in Houston, Texas, und St. Mark's Church in New York.

Joyce Hinterding
Loops and Fields:
Induction Drawings Series 3

Drawings
Zeichnungen
2010





Loops and Fields is a collection of drawings that resonate sympathetically with the electromagnetic fields within the gallery. Delving into the relationships between physical principles and the chaotic nature of the hand drawn line, these drawings are an exploration of conductive materials and the possibilities for drawing electronic components. When connected to a sound system these drawings make audible their interior activity and reveal the energy that exists in the immediate environment.

“An electric hum pervades the gallery – a low static vibration – like inputs incorrectly plugged. It is the sound of unanchored energy amplified, open to the potential for articulation. Like an open channel it sounds available for use, as if existing at the brink of articulation.

Deriving from the Greek – energia, an ‘activity or operation’ – energy is a quantity that can be assigned to every particle, object, and system of objects. Energy is created as a consequence of the state of these particles or systems, and despite the seeming certainty of their categorical definitions, any form of energy can be transformed into another form. As a universally occurring transformative process this possibility for movement on a particle level highlights the mutability of all things, regardless of scale.”¹

The gold and graphite drawings in *Loops and Fields* aim, like any receiving antenna, to convert an electromagnetic wave into a voltage; the loop antenna is particularly sensitive to magnetic fields and outputs a voltage proportional to that field. Monitoring this activity allows us to experience the local fields and generates the site-specific and dynamic aural landscape, literally, out of thin air. The hand drawn nature of the antenna opens up thoughts about potential tactical relationships to energy scavenging, while providing a platform for representation and functionality to collide through drawings of mathematically derived forms.

“In the early electric age of the middle twentieth century Heidegger pondered the question of things – of how it was that things came to speak, to yield their truth. For his examples, he took ancient temple stones, simple tools, dumb things, works of art as things. Hinterding is likewise engaged in finding the means to a deconcealing. Her medium, however, in the late electric age, is a subtle line which literally comes a-live, becoming productive.”²

¹ Emily Cormac, Opening lines, catalogue essay, Gertrude Contemporary Galleries, Melbourne, 2010.

² Dr Ann Finegan, aeriology: catalogue essay, Artspace, Sydney, 1997.

Loops and Fields ist eine Sammlung von Zeichnungen, die in Abhängigkeit von den elektromagnetischen Feldern im Ausstellungsraum ins Schwingen geraten. Die Zeichnungen untersuchen leitende Materialien und die Möglichkeit, elektronische Komponenten zu zeichnen, indem das Verhältnis von physikalischen Gesetzmäßigkeiten und die chaotische Natur der von Hand gezogenen Linie erkundet wird. Sobald die Zeichnungen mit einer Verstärkeranlage verbunden werden, wird ihre innere Aktivität hörbar und offenbart die im unmittelbaren Umfeld vorhandene Energie.

„Ein elektrisches Summen durchzieht die Galerie – eine tiefe statische Vibration – wie von falsch verstopften Steckern. Es ist der Klang verstärkter freiliegender Energie, die gegenüber potenzieller Artikulation offen ist. Wie ein offener Kanal steht sie zur Benutzung frei, als ob sie am Übergang zur Lautbildung verläuft.

Aus dem Griechischen stammend – energia, eine ‚Aktivität oder Ablauf‘ – ist Energie eine Größe, die jedem Partikel, Objekt und Objektsystem zugewiesen werden kann. Energie entsteht als Folge des Zustands dieser Partikel oder Systeme, und trotz ihrer scheinbar sicheren kategorialen Definition kann jede Form der Energie in eine andere umgewandelt werden. Als universell erscheinender transformativer Prozess stellt diese Möglichkeit der Bewegung auf Partikelebene die Wandlungsfähigkeit aller Dinge heraus, unabhängig von ihrer Größenordnung.“¹

Die Zeichnungen aus Grafit und Gold in *Loops and Fields* haben das Ziel, wie jede Empfangsantenne, elektromagnetische Wellen in elektrische Spannung zu übersetzen; die Rahmenantenne ist besonders empfindlich gegenüber Magnetfeldern und gibt eine zu diesem Feld proportionale Spannung aus. Das Abtasten dieser Aktivität erlaubt es, die lokalen Felder wahrzunehmen, und erzeugt die ortsspezifische dynamische auditive Landschaft, sprichwörtlich aus der Luft gegriffen. Die handgezeichnete Natur der Antenne eröffnet Gedanken über etwaige taktische Überlegungen zur Rückgewinnung von Energie und bietet gleichzeitig eine Plattform, auf der die Darstellung und die Funktionalität von Zeichnungen mathematisch abgeleiteter Formen aufeinander prallen.

„Im frühen elektrischen Zeitalter der Mitte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts sinnierte Heidegger über die Frage der Dinge – wie es geschieht, dass Dinge zur Sprache kommen, und wie sie ihr Wesen freisetzen. Als Beispiele nahm er alte Tempelsteine, einfache Werkzeuge, stumme Dinge, Kunstwerke als Dinge. Hinterding ist ebenso damit befasst, die Mittel zu einer solchen Freisetzung zu finden. Ihr Medium ist jedoch, im späten elektrischen Zeitalter, eine subtile Linie, die sprichwörtlich zum Leben erwacht, und produktiv wird.“²



Joyce Hinterding Tuned Field: Induction Drawing Series 1 (2008)
Courtesy the Artist and BREENSPACE, Sydney

Joyce, *Loops and Fields* works with the magnetic fields in the (gallery) environment, which are usually not, or hardly, perceptible by the human visitor. With your drawings (and the attached amplification), you translate these rays and waves into a landscape of sound. What is the role of the (human) visitor in this landscape and in how far does he or she influence, or become part of, the energetic sphere that is reflected in and by the work?

The drawings in *Loops and Fields* function primarily as antennas, resonating to the background electromagnetic environment, but as they are drawings with no sealant on the graphite or the gold they are also materially unstable and function to some degree like open circuit devices. The result of this is that when the drawings are touched, the volume of the sound increases. This change in volume appears to be a reflection of the electrodermal energy of peoples' skin or the fluctuations attributed to the galvanic skin response. As a result people have mildly different effects on the drawings when they touch or come very close to them. Generally it's the volume that changes rather than the pitch, but this increase in volume opens the sound out so that you hear more of the nuances and harmonics of the local fields.

This interaction with the drawings changes the work, smudging and leaving marks on the surface which breaks with a fundamental art convention, one of not touching. New media and interactive work is complete with reset switches but this is an interactivity of consequence that endures in the work.

From a technical perspective, the drawings in *Loops and Fields* also have the function of an instrument to measure existing fields of energy. With this 'instrumental' side of the work, would you draw a connecting line, or interest, to physical measuring devices in science which visualise, or 'perceptualise,' various field data?

The drawings rely on the basic principles of the directional loop antenna and the VLF (Very Low Frequency) antenna. This frequency range correlates with the audio frequency range and is generally not used for broadcasting because it is 'noisy'. Listening to this 'noise' commonly called natural radio, is what VLF frequency range antenna are primarily used for.

The fields generated by the human made electrical environment also resides predominantly in this frequency range and override the more subtle naturally occurring phenomena. The drawings have been designed specifically to reveal the complete local electromagnetic environment and explore the overlay that we have built for ourselves. The results have revealed that this environment is a terrain that has its own temporal ecology – one of sonic reinforcements, cancellations and spectacular sounds – of extraordinary intensity.

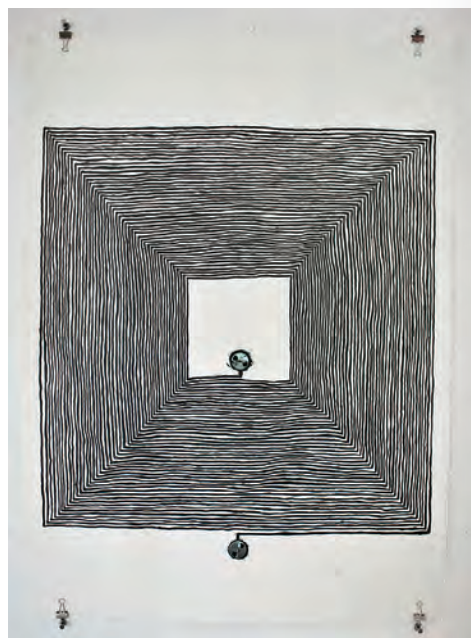
The work also opens up connections concerning the relationship between technical or experimental drawing and the relationship between language and images that function as the thing they represent.

You have experimented with different shapes and ornaments in these drawings. These shapes have a functional dimension in that they define technically different antennas, and they of course also have an aesthetic dimension, especially if we think of the uncontrollable variations in the hand-drawn antennas, or of the elaborate arabesque ornamentations of antennas that you have printed on paper. What are the thoughts that lead your ideas for these different shapes, and what do you think about the visual and the acoustic aesthetics of these variations?

The different shapes and line qualities that make up the algorithmically generated and stencilled body of drawings come from thinking about the possibilities of extending a line. As most contemporary technology is concerned with a reduction in size, fractal mathematics and the research into fractal antenna has provided a means for reducing the overall size of the space an antenna needs to occupy.

The frequency range I am fascinated by belongs to the lower regions of the spectrum where the wavelength is large, so I have been exploring other possibilities for producing large handmade fractal loop antennas that can receive this large wavelength with something that is the size of a standard piece of fine art paper. This exploration has led me to look at some very cool, old mathematicians such as Helge von Koch, Stanislaw Ulam and Pierre de Fermat.

My interpretations have resulted in works of art that are both aesthetic works on paper and experimental antennae. As the works are based on six iteration algorithms, I am still in the process of listening to these works and discovering how to include all the audible qualities inherent in these lines into the wider universe of my work. The exploration into algorithmic mathematics has been inspirational, revealing more possibilities for working with generative methods, and has opened up a greater understanding of the naturally occurring chaotic qualities of the hand drawn line.



Joyce Hinterding, Tuned Field: Induction Drawing Series 2 (2009) Courtesy the Artist and BREENSPACE, Sydney

Can we then think of the work also as a musical instrument in a certain way?

The drawings are live or real time sound art works and can indeed be thought of as musical instruments. I have used them in experimental sound performances and used the recordings as live sound components to video works.

Apart from the natural magnetic and otherwise energetic fields, the respective environment contains a large number of artificial airwaves, depending on the actual location, which makes *Loops and Fields* a thoroughly site-specific artwork. In how far do the individual locations differ and how do they change the outcome of the work?

As a minimalist sound art work, *Loops and Fields* is very site specific, since the local environments can fluctuate quite a lot. The basic background of the 60hz and 50hz systems are the first differentiating factor, some buildings are well insulated and just hiss while others carry low frequencies or have definite periodic data pulses running through them. This variation does not really change the outcome of the work, although it can change the overall ambience of the work. The subtlety of this aspect is really only revealed after the event when comparing the documentation from different places, and these recordings are now forming a secondary sound ecology style project.

The atmospheric nature of the work with its connection to hidden energy sources builds a situation of momentariness and volatility. Is it also a reference to the fragility of the environment?

Maybe not quite the fragility of the environment but the extraordinary energising of our atmosphere and environment. This in turn opens up the possibilities for thinking about energy scavenging.

The "thin air" that is surrounding us is full of data and information when deciphered with a respective device. *Loops and Fields* reads, or translates, the energy of the data in a rather poetic way, irrespective of its otherwise underlying content. Can this also be described as a gesture of trust?

The element of trust that is revealed in this work points to how little we know about electricity and the electromagnetic environment that we have built for ourselves.

Joyce Hinterding

Joyce Hinterding produces works that explore physical and virtual dynamics. Her practice is based on investigations into energetic forces, through custom-built field recording and monitoring technologies. These explorations into acoustic and electromagnetic phenomena have produced large sculptural antenna works, experimental drawings, video and sound-producing installations and experimental audio works for performance. She often collaborates with artist David Haines to produce large-scale immersive video and sound works that explore the tension between the fictive and the phenomenal. Joyce lives and works in the Blue Mountains, Australia and is represented by Breenspace, Sydney; her audio work has been released by Antiopic.

Her work *Earth Star* won an Award of Distinction at Ars Electronica in Linz 2009. Recent exhibitions include *Aura*, Breenspace Sydney (2009), *Telepathy*, Performance Space Sydney (2008), *Turn and Widen*, *media_city_seoul*, The 5th International Media Art Biennial, Seoul (2008), *Superlight*, The 2nd Biennial 01SJ Art on the edge, San José Museum Art (2008), *Waves – The Art of the Electromagnetic Society*, HMKV, PHOENIX Halle Dortmund (2008), The AV Festival Newcastle, *(in)visible sounds*, Netherlands Media Art Institute, Amsterdam (2007), *V2 Zone, Act interact*, The Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei (2007). *ReSearch*, The Sendai MediaTech in Sendai (2006). *Under the Radar*, FACT (Foundation for Art & Creative Technology), Liverpool (2006), *Waves (Electromagnetic Waves as Medium for Art)*, Riga (2006), 26th Bienal de Sao Paulo (2004), Biennale of Sydney. *(the world may be) fantastic*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2002), Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, *Converge: where art and science meet* (2002); 7th Istanbul Biennial, Yerebetan Cistern, Istanbul (2001). Recent live solo performances include, *Sound and Electricity*, The Performance Space (2006), *Audiotheque*, The night air, ABC radio national (2005), and *Tonic*, New York (2004).

www.sunvalleyresearch.net, www.antiopic.com, www.breenspace.com.au

Joyce Hinterding untersucht in ihren Arbeiten physikalische und virtuelle Dynamiken. In ihrem Werk erforscht sie energetische Kräfte mittels speziell angefertigter Aufnahme- und Messinstrumente. Diese Erkundungen von akustischen und elektromagnetischen Phänomenen resultierten in großformatigen skulpturalen Antennenarbeiten, experimentellen Zeichnungen, Video- und Klanginstallationen sowie experimentellen Audioarbeiten für Performances. In regelmäßigen Kollaborationen mit dem Künstler David Haines entstanden umfangreiche immersive Video- und Klangerbeiten, die der Spannung zwischen dem Fiktiven und dem Phänomenalen nachgehen. Joyce lebt und arbeitet in den australischen Blue Mountains, sie wird vertreten von Breenspace Gallery, Sydney; ihr Audioarbeiten werden von Antiopic veröffentlicht.

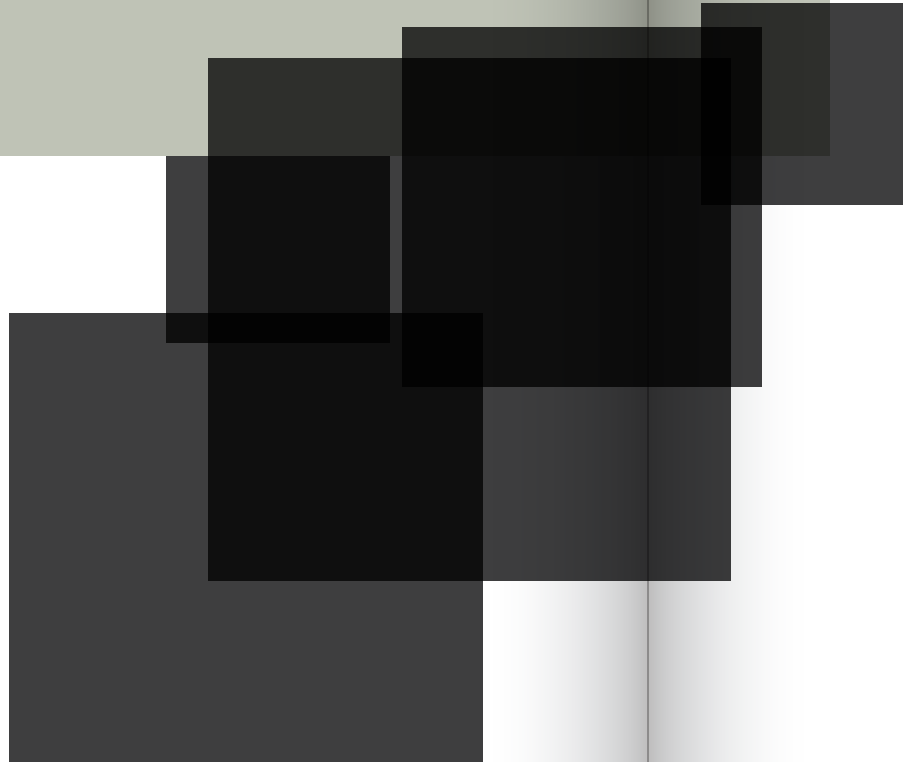
2009 erhielt ihre Arbeit *Earth Star* den ‚Award of Distinction‘ der Linzer Ars Electronica. Ausstellungen unter anderem *Aura*, Breenspace Sydney (2009), *Telepathy*, Performance Space Sydney (2008), *Turn and Widen*, *media_city_seoul*, The 5th International Media Art Biennial, Seoul (2008), *Superlight*, The 2nd Biennial 01SJ Art on the edge, San José Museum Art (2008), *Waves – The Art of the Electromagnetic Society*, HMKV, PHOENIX Halle Dortmund (2008), The AV Festival Newcastle, *(in)visible sounds*, Netherlands Media Art Institute, Amsterdam (2007), *V2 Zone, Act interact*, The Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei (2007). *ReSearch*, The Sendai MediaTech in Sendai (2006). *Under the Radar*, FACT (Foundation for Art & Creative Technology), Liverpool (2006), *Waves (Electromagnetic Waves as medium for Art)*, Riga (2006), 26th Bienal de Sao Paulo (2004), Biennale of Sydney, *(the world may be) fantastic*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2002), Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, *Converge: where art and science meet* (2002); 7th Istanbul Biennial, Yerebetan Cistern, Istanbul (2001). Recent live solo performances include, *Sound and Electricity*, The Performance Space (2006), *Audiotheque*, The night air, ABC radio national (2005), und *Tonic*, New York (2004).

www.sunvalleyresearch.net, www.antiopic.com, www.breenspace.com.au

knowbotic research

macghillie_just a void

Participative performance project
Partizipatives Performanceprojekt
2009



In the public performance project *macghillie_just a void*, urban sites are visited by a figure, clad in a camouflage suit, who reveals neither the traits of an individual, or even of a person. The so-called *Ghillie Suit* was originally invented in the nineteenth century for hunting, and has been used as camouflage for soldiers in military conflicts ever since the First World War. Its camouflage results in the anonymisation and the neutralisation of the person who wears it in public. The figure oscillates between the hyper-presence of a mask, and visual redundancy. It traverses the modern urban environment in which conspicuity holds ambivalent currency, wavering between cumbersome affirmation and visual arbitrariness.

Im öffentlichen Performanceprojekt *macghillie_just a void* werden urbane Orte von einer mit Tarnanzug bekleideten Figur aufgesucht. Sie zeigt nicht die Züge eines Individuums, noch nicht einmal die einer Person. Ursprünglich wurde der sogenannte *Ghillie Suit* im 19. Jahrhundert für Jagdzwecke erfunden und seit dem ersten Weltkrieg dann auch als Tarnung für Soldaten in militärischen Konflikten eingesetzt. Seine Tarnerschaft führt zur Anonymisierung und Neutralisierung der Person, die ihn in der Öffentlichkeit trägt. Die Figur oszilliert dabei zwischen der Hyperpräsenz einer Maske und visueller Redundanz. Sie durchquert die moderne urbane Umgebung, in der Sichtbarkeit als ambivalente Währung zeichnet, und schwankt zwischen bemühter Affirmation und visueller Beliebigkeit.





kr, where exactly does the 'Ghillie Suit' originate, and are there references to local traditions of places where the project has taken place so far, like Zurich?

knowbotic research (kr) discovered the suit in the course of doing research about camouflage in spaces controlled by technology and surveillance. In a historical foray through the (martial) history of camouflage, in which artists were frequently involved in the development of the art of defilade, kr explored the Scottish Highlands of the nineteenth century, where some people in Ghillie disguise, clad in grass and earth, hunted game (and sometimes amorous adventures). After kr in an earlier project built a boat invisible to radar – a boat which was technologically invisible, but perceptible to the human eye – this suit was interesting in so far as it makes its user unidentifiable for video surveillance in public space, but in contrast to the boat, this time also circumvents human recognition.

The wearer of the Ghillie Suit, *Macghillie*, attains a multilayered ambivalent visibility: *Macghillie*, on the one hand is becoming hyper-present through the rather peculiar outfit, which against a differently coloured background doesn't serve as camouflage at all. On the other hand, the figure as such can not be decoded by most of the passers-by. What is this? A tramp, a lunatic, an animal, someone who has missed Halloween? Most people confronted with this anonymised protagonist cannot solve these questions, and thus do not *want* to see him. Invisible, because he is not supposed to be seen. This is something very typical for an overregulated city like Zurich. A city that gives space to everything that is calculable but declares the rest non-existent. *MacGhillie* is the visual leftover that remains.

The Ghillie Suit was originally invented as a hunting aid. Is the *MacGhillie* of your participative performance project more the hunter, or the hunted?

MacGhillie is a 'prefer not to be,' an actor, in between any claim for identity and recognition. *MacGhillie* is just roaming around, defying a goal, without intention, withdrawing from purpose. Somebody is crossing the cybernetic loops, indifferent to what is happening, not man, nor woman, not dominant, nor subjecting. *MacGhillie* defies classification, attributions are shifted into the void, no will to communicate. How long can this last in a post-utopian space? Are there locations for something that does not want to be anything?

What exactly is this 'post-utopian space' of the *MacGhillie*?

Better to ask what does it mean to be part of the post-utopian space we live in. It means taking part in an evolving loop, where you are both the subject and the object of experimentation. This is the relationship that has developed between scientific inquiry and world-changing technology. Researchers reshape the environment that defines them, and vice-versa. Such self-affecting loops are the vectors of a radical constructivism, an artificialization of existence. Their content and their continuous metamorphosis are what gives form to life... All that can be done with a powerful feedback loop is to subtly change its informational contents, its flow parameters, its intensity and modulation.



knowbotic research macghillie_just a void
Photo: Christoph Oeschger

What about *MacGhillie's* presence, does it evoke some kind of insecurity in its surroundings?

MacGhillie's presence in an ostensive encounter is merely tender affection, no obvious threat. He withdraws from any closeness. Faint-hearted and yet menacing? *MacGhillie* is present, and absent, at any time, at any place. Our blindness and numbness for the unknown, the undesired and the unclassifiable in urban space assures his omnipresence.

Does this, in contrast, mean that *MacGhillie* (temporarily) can overcome this blindness and numbness?

There lived a fuzzy-head who had no eyes or ears. He didn't have hair either, so he was called a fuzzy-head arbitrarily. He couldn't talk because he had no mouth. He had no nose either. He didn't even have arms or legs. He had no stomach, he had no back, he had no spine, and he had no innards at all. He didn't have anything. So we don't even know who we're talking about. It's better that we don't talk about him anymore.

How does the suit affect its wearer over a period of time?

Try it out, put yourself at stake! Pass the passers-by, seemingly enclosed in a fleshless shell, meet the messianic animal in you.

We imagine that a shift of perception takes place in the (new) *MacGhillie* over time. How fast does one get used to being the masked figure, and when does the surrounding area actually turn into a strange place itself; or asked differently – what would be your personal experience of being out as *MacGhillie*?

No matter, the question may be asked (off the record): why time doesn't pass, doesn't pass, from you? Why it piles up all about you, instant by instant, on all sides, deeper and deeper, thicker and thicker? Why it buries you grain by grain neither dead nor alive? With no memory of anything, no hope of anything, no knowledge of anything, no history and no prospects, buried under the seconds, saying any old thing, your mouth full of sand. Oh I know it's immaterial: time is one thing, I another. But the question may be asked, why time doesn't pass? (Just like that, off the record, en passant – to pass the time.) I think that's all, for the moment. I see nothing else (I see nothing whatever), for the time being. But I really mustn't ask myself any more questions (if it's I), I really must not.

knowbotic research (Yvonne Wilhelm, Christian Hübler, Alexander Tuchacek) was formed in 1991 and is based in Zurich, Switzerland. The artist group has been experimenting with urbanity, construction of knowledge and political representations in mediatised public spheres. Most recently, kr have been investigating the construction of meaning and communication in a series of 'test cases' that raise important questions about the constitution of subjectivity under the conditions of an information society.

knowbotic research has participated in the 48th Venice Biennale (1999), Seoul Biennale (2002), Hongkong Shenzhen Biennale (2007), Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (2009), exhibited in Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, (1994), Hamburger Kunstverein (1995), Henie Onstad Kunstsenter Oslo (1996), Museum Ludwig Köln (2000), New Museum New York (2002), Witte de With Rotterdam and MOCA Taipei (2004), Kunsthalle St. Gallen (2005), Wilhelm Lehbruck Museum and Skuc Gallery Ljubljana (2006), NAMOC Beijing (2008), Aarhus Kunstmuseum (2009), FACT Liverpool (2010).

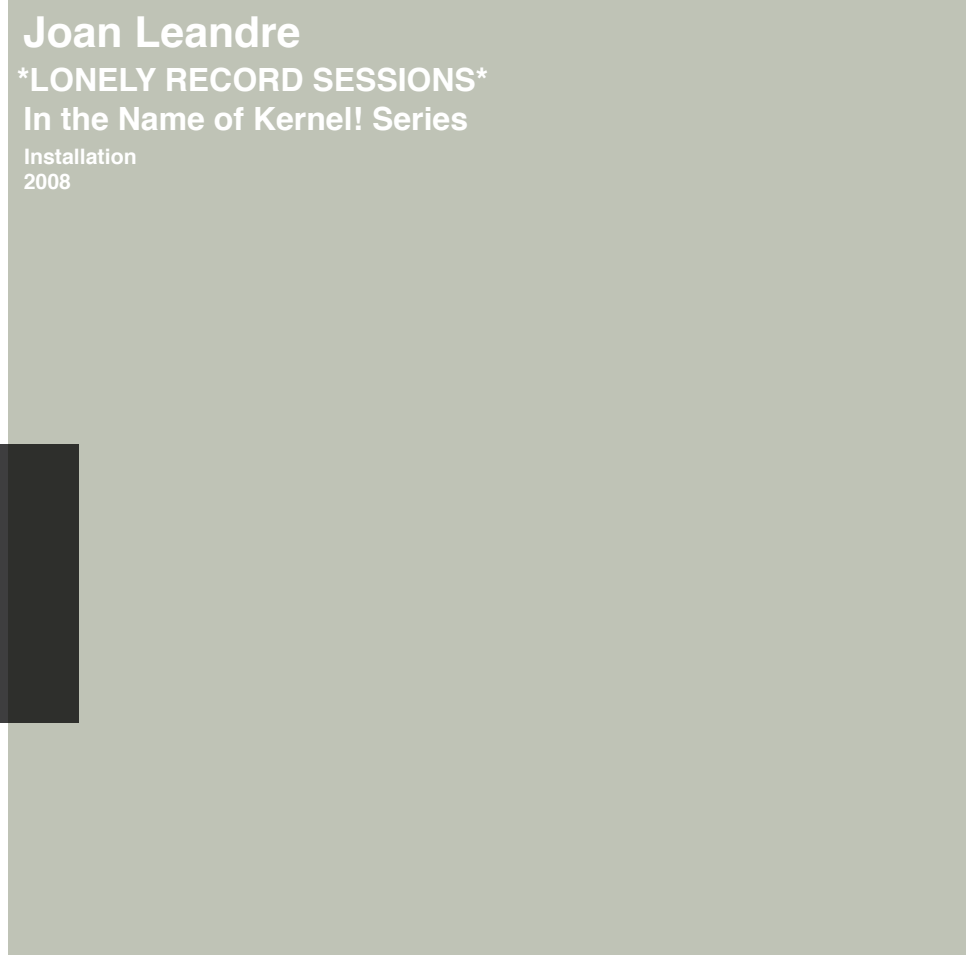
www.krcf.org

knowbotic research (Yvonne Wilhelm, Christian Hübler, Alexander Tuchacek) wurde 1991 gegründet und ist ansässig in Zürich. Die Künstlergruppe experimentiert in langfristig angelegten Projektreihen mit Themen wie Urbanität, der Konstruktion von Wissen und der Zirkulation von politischen Repräsentationen in medialen Öffentlichkeiten. Konzentrierten sich die früheren Arbeiten der Künstlergruppe auf netz- und medienimmanente Materialitäten und Intensitäten, untersucht sie in ihren aktuellen Arbeiten – den Testfällen – Momente der Transkodierungen in Real-Räumen, d.h. das Übersetzen von abstrakten, sich klassischen Öffentlichkeiten entziehenden gesellschaftlichen Sachverhalten und Bedingungen in temporär sicht- und verhandelbare Situationen.

knowbotic research nahmen teil an der 48. Venedig Biennale (1999), Seoul Biennale (2002), Hongkong Shenzhen Biennale (2007), Architekturbiennale Rotterdam (2009), und stellten aus im Museum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Helsinki, (1994), Hamburger Kunstverein (1995), Henie Onstad Kunstsenter Oslo (1996), Museum Ludwig Köln (2000), New Museum New York (2002), Witte de With Rotterdam und MOCA Taipeh (2004), Kunsthalle St. Gallen (2005), Wilhelm Lehbruck Museum und Skuc Gallery Ljubljana (2006), NAMOC Beijing (2008), Aarhus Kunstmuseum (2009), FACT Liverpool (2010).

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knowbotic research



Joan Leandre
LONELY RECORD SESSIONS
In the Name of Kernel! Series
Installation
2008



145-B

I have been recording landscapes from computer war games. I used cheats to kill all moveables so there was no one around. The result is a collection of empty, digital, frozen moments of beauty:

It was a very bright high-resolution day with a peaceful slow sunshine down in the valley. A pressure in the air, dense soft seconds into hours of waiting invisible standing... One could imagine a world of silence where nothing really happens as time spins around the shaders and frames. It is the Day of the Tentacle when one has managed to sit down and contemplate the silent remains of nature itself. Those short journeys in search of that centre. Those experiences without words eventually led by a sharp and pure instinct. This is the file left by Wojtek Kubasik at the site of impact close to 'Le Château des Pyrénées' long before the Great Erasing Day: 'machine quickly seizes the area, prompting me to dispatch an elite team of Special Forces Operatives on a fake rescue mission.' I say no! During the Shredding, the true nature of the artefact quickly emerges, pointing to the existence of several disturbing corporate entities on Earth, and ultimately the trigger for a massive-scale bewildering operation. The battle to save Earth begins as a flash freezes the tropics into a ghostly-white frozen landscape, a nameless land... the area in which the disasters have turned into a barren wilderness, filled with artefact-hunting characters and vicious mutants. As you wander the land in search of items and people on your objectives list you'll find out you are absolutely alone. 'Silent is around like a company that whispers low and calm. You can listen to your own heartbeat, you breathe deep, you wish then there was someone there or at least some far very low rumour which would warm you enough.' It is the crisis of the self, a shock imposed by our own biology ('now that things have lost their common sense contemplation holds us together'). It is the shift of time which leads us to the unknown Stalker, the emptiness of dead rooms in space.



Joan Leandre *LONELY RECORD SESSIONS*



Ich habe die Landschaften von Computer-Kriegsspielen aufgezeichnet. Ich habe Tricks benutzt, um alles was sich bewegt auszublenden, so dass keiner mehr da war. Das Resultat ist eine Sammlung von leeren, digitalen, erstarrten Augenblicken der Schönheit:

Es war ein sehr heller, hoch aufgelöster Tag mit friedlichem langsamem Sonnenschein unten im Tal. Ein Druck lag in der Luft, dichte weiche Sekunden zu den Stunden des unsichtbaren Wartens... Man könnte sich eine Welt der Stille vorstellen, in der nicht wirklich etwas passiert, während die Zeit sich um Shaders und Frames dreht. Es ist der Tag des Tentakels, an dem man es geschafft hat, sich hinzusetzen und die stillen Überreste der Natur zu betrachten. Diese kurzen Reisen auf der Suche nach jenem Zentrum. Diese wortlosen Erfahrungen, die schließlich vom scharfen und reinen Instinkt geleitet werden. Dies ist die Datei, die Wojtek Kubasik am Ort des Einschlags in der Nähe von 'Le Château des Pyrénées' lange vor dem Großen Tag der Auslöschung zurückließ: 'Maschine erobert schnell die Gegend, war veranlasst eine Eliteeinheit der Spezial-Einsatz-Kräfte in einer verschleierte Rettungsaktion einzusetzen.' Ich sage nein! Während des Schredderns tritt die wahre Natur des Artefakts schnell hervor und deutet auf die verstörende Existenz einiger Unternehmenseinheiten auf der Erde, und letztlich auf den Auslöser einer verwirrenden Operation im großen Stil. Die Schlacht um die Rettung der Erde beginnt, während ein Blitz die Tropen in einer geisterhaft-weißen Landschaft erstarren lässt, ein namenloses Land... die Gegend, in der das Unheil sich in eine wüste Wildnis verwandelt hat, voll von Artefakte jagenden Figuren und boshaften Mutanten. Während du durch das Land streifst auf der Suche nach Dingen und Personen, die auf deiner Aufgabenliste stehen, wirst du herausfinden, dass du völlig allein bist. 'Es ist still rundherum, wie ein leise und ruhig flüsternder Begleiter. Du kannst deinen eigenen Herzschlag hören, du atmest tief ein, dann wünschst du dir, da wäre etwas, oder zumindest ein weit entferntes leises Murmeln, das dich etwas wärmt.' Es ist die Krise des Selbst, ein Schock, ausgelöst von der eigenen Biologie ('jetzt da die Dinge ihren Verstand verloren haben, hält uns die Kontemplation zusammen'). Es ist der Zeitenwechsel, der uns zu dem unbekanntem Stalker führt, die Leere der toten Plätze im Raum.

Joan, the scenes in the piece *Lonely Record Sessions* are all taken from computer games, yet they have an intensely cinematic quality as mood shots that seem to interrupt some dramatic narrative, a moment of taking a breath before the next adventure or the next drama begins. What are your thoughts about turning such scenes, which derive from the interactive game medium, into a linear film?

One of the motivations of the whole 'In the Name of Kernel' series in which the *Lonely Record Sessions* is included, is the visualization of certain common stereotypes inside this contemporary form of mass media distraction, the so called computer game environment. This idea of loneliness confronted with media cloning and this moment of software interruption breaking into the true game or the adventure of learning... The *Lonely Record Sessions* is a collection of rare moments of loneliness inside certain commercial software products. It is about using the whole thing – not to make a narrative sequence or a short film or some sort of post video-art... in my opinion perhaps it shouldn't be that easy. I mean this idea of the medium here is secondary. Even more, it all should go beyond any legal or corporatist consideration. I always felt very seduced by this utopia, the idea of the communication agent acting in absolute freedom. Most of this effort is perhaps about an impossible dream, confronting and turning a mass media system of mirrors into emotional pulsations, I'd like to see it as an honest act of translation.

Can you say a little bit about the production of the film? What were the games that you used? How difficult was it to find these empty and inactive scenes?

Five heavy First Person Shooter computer 'games' were used in the search for contemplation. Of course the term 'game' should always be questioned: Where and which is the last boundary of the game? Some of the lonely moments were recorded by cheating... cheats such as the well-known 'killMoveables' (in Doom 3, an engine intended to basically remove all AI and so remain alone) some others are just peaceful moments, empty moments of calm and contemplation in between nightmarish episodes. In any case, the interruption of the powerful mass media stereotype is the big thing, not to lose the scope and to keep the hard work in mind. So, as said before, the *Lonely Record Sessions* is about translating all these media iconographies.

The scenes in the film are highly emotional, yet despite their references to the sublime, at all times the aesthetics of the images shows that they are clearly computer generated. Does it matter to our experience whether we are confronted with 'virtual' or with 'real' scenes?

It is this almost invisible limit imposed by the synthetic nature of the image which is very interesting to me... there's partly here a very strong connection with this well known phenomenon of perception that is very common in Hyperrealism, this feeling of 'dead nature' can be very disturbing. Very often there's a clear rupture of the border into one side or towards the other. This thin line of tension between dimensions is almost imperceptible and has become a common variable in the human relationship with nature. So, I actually think it matters what kind of experience we would really like to have, how someone wishes to be involved in a global context... We really should specifically consider the contemporary alienated human approach to nature itself.



Joan Leandre *LONELY RECORD SESSIONS*

Watching the *Lonely Record Sessions* was an important inspiration for the TRUST exhibition as a whole. The film seems to express the ambivalent suspension of disbelief and our desire to be affected by media experiences, disregarding their ontological status. We simply want the apparatus to tell us a good story. Do you find it problematic that people might have such a desire for emotional immersion?

A desire for any kind of emotional experience is always good, now in these times of excess perhaps even more. This experience in the digital-distraction environment is most of the time a physical experience (a chain of fast reactions to light and sounds, a mechanical continuity, an illusion of the infinite), it very rarely implies the adventure within, not even a mental effort because it's simply designed to not trigger such things. That is historically a structural part of mainstream media. Because it is designed to become a ritual of repetition – when this cloning experience is missing, everything changes completely and the media loses its main role. There's obviously no adventure when repetition is involved and when there is a confrontation with the unknown, the emotional immersion is a full part of the story.

Joan Leandre, media translator and interpreter, has been a member of the OVNI Archives since 1992. Between the years 1994 and 1996 Leandre worked in the media interruption / continuity Analog Series *MAP* (Mega Assemble Project), Zero Foundation and Serial Monuments. From 1995 until 1997 he worked on the Oigo Rom Mega Assemble Project, and was later involved in the President Archives node. In 1999 he developed some software reversing techniques using commercial digital-distraction products such as computer games resulting in the series *retroyou RC Fuck the Gravity Code*, *retroyou RC Butterfly Overflow* and *retroyou nostalg(G) Phoenix West*. Some unfinished projects are *Deep Boot* and the long ongoing series *retroyou nostalg2*. Other collective projects include the *Babylon Archives* and *Velvet Strike*. Leandre is now developing the impossible 'In the Name of Kernel' series, a desperate effort to escape the mass media nonsense gravity sphere in search of the true unknown.

www.retroyou.org

Joan Leandre

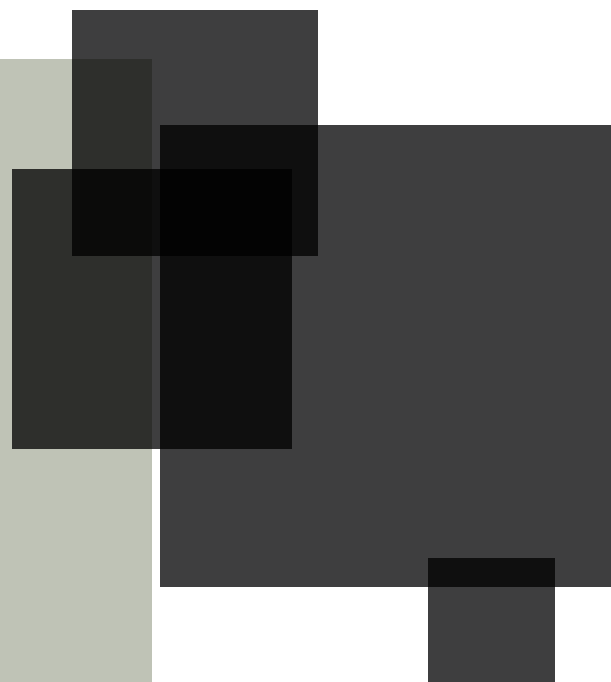
Joan Leandre übersetzt und interpretiert Medien. Er ist Mitglied der OVNI Archive seit 1992. Zwischen 1994 und 1996 arbeitete Leandre bei der media interruption / continuity Analog Series *MAP* (Mega Assemble Project), Zero Foundation und Serial Monuments. Von 1995 bis 1997 arbeitete er am Oigo Rom Mega Assemble Project, und war später befasst mit dem President Archives Knoten. 1999 entwickelte er einige Umkehrtechniken für Software, die von kommerziellen digitalen Ablenkungsprodukten wie Computerspielen benutzt wird, was die Serien *retroyou RC Fuck the Gravity Code*, *retroyou RC Butterfly Overflow* und *retroyou nostalg(G) Phoenix West* zum Ergebnis hatte. Einige seiner unvollendeten Projekte sind *Deep Boot* sowie das Langzeitprojekt *retroyou nostalg2*. Andere kollektive Projekte umfassen die *Babylon Archives* und *Velvet Strike*. Gegenwärtig entwickelt Leandre die unmögliche 'In the Name of Kernel' Serie, eine verzweifelte Bemühung, auf der Suche nach dem wahrhaft Unbekannten dem Gravitationsbereich des Unsinn der Massenmedien zu entkommen.

www.retroyou.org

Julien Maire

Memory Cone

Installation
2009



A video camera records the hands of a person organising strips of paper on a table. The whiteness of the blank paper triggers micro mirrors that orient a section of a photographic image on a screen. These micro mirrors, activated by a video source, open up 'photographic windows'. With his *Memory Cone*, Julien Maire invites us first of all to explore the nature of the grain in the image and question its apparent motionlessness. The installation functions as a laboratory for probing the material qualities of a mediated image.

The status of the image in *Memory Cone* can neither be described as a photograph, nor a slide, nor a video nor film still. A video-image without pixels? A quietly vibrating photograph? The projection of the white paper fragments seems neither purely digital nor analogue. Julien Maire prefers a conflation, or hybridisation, to a simple opposition. In *Memory Cone*, the combination of visual sources provokes the awareness of different generations of images. When participating in this heuristic process, the viewer turns into a media-archaeologist.

Whereas consumer electronics become increasingly smaller and at the same time continue to expand their memory capacity, Julien Maire celebrates the sheer materiality of a deconstructivist display, foregrounding the whole configuration of machines necessary for the production of a limited number of images. In sharp contrast with the daily visual overkill, polluting our consciousness without making lasting impressions, Julien Maire cultivates the slow process of image recuperation.

Julien Maire Memory Cone Photo courtesy Artefact STUK Leuven

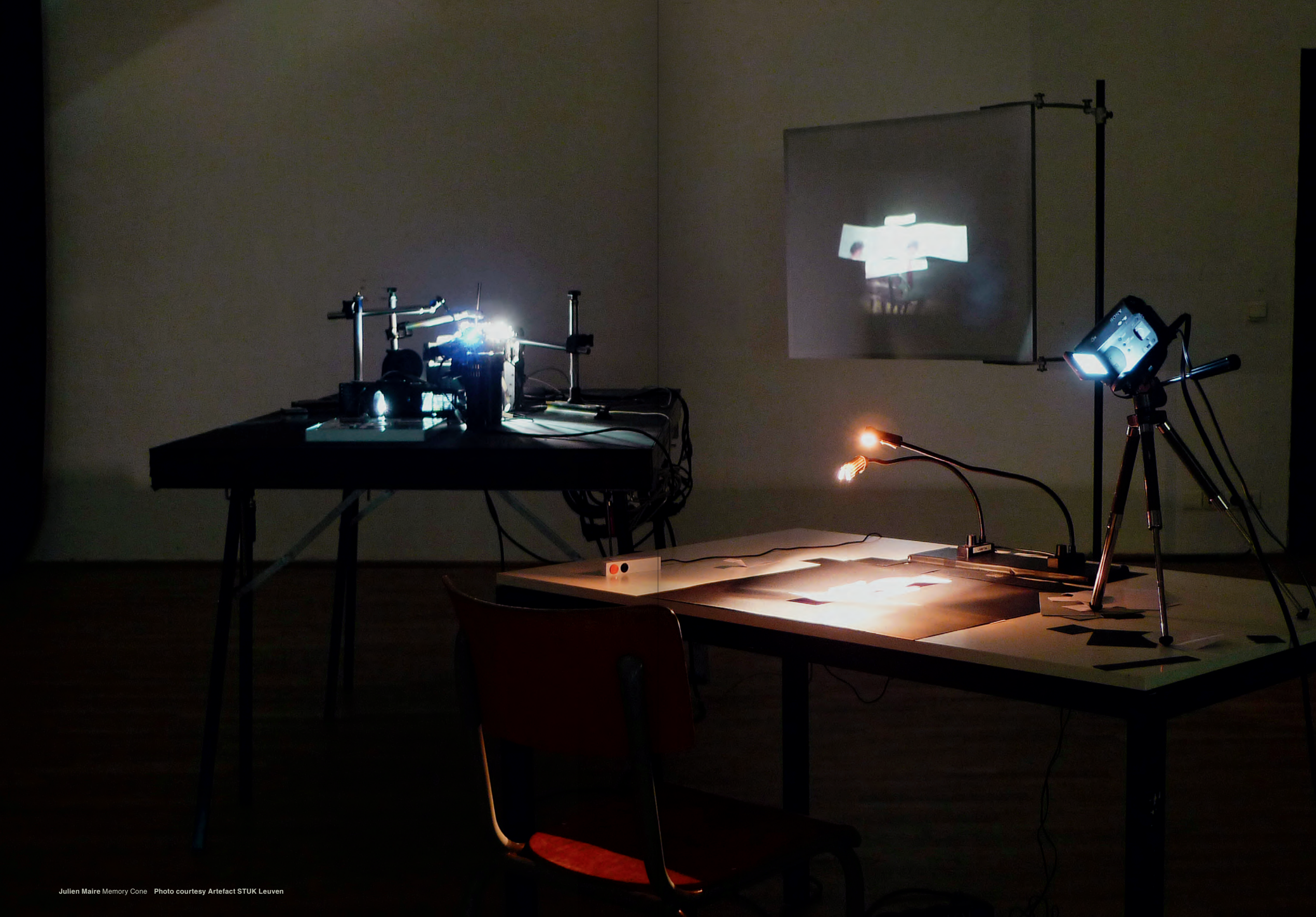


Julien Maire Memory Cone Photo courtesy Artefact STUK Leuven

Eine Videokamera filmt die Hände einer Person, die auf einem Tisch Papierstreifen ordnet. Die weißen Flächen des leeren Papiers steuern Mikrospiegel, die Segmente einer auf eine Leinwand projizierten Fotografie ausrichten. Die Mikrospiegel werden von einer Videoquelle aktiviert und öffnen 'fotografische Fenster'. Mit seiner Arbeit *Memory Cone* lädt uns Julien Maire dazu ein, die Eigenschaften der Körnung von Bildern zu erkunden und deren scheinbare Bewegungslosigkeit zu hinterfragen. Die Installation fungiert dabei als ein Laboratorium, in dem die materielle Beschaffenheit des medialen Bildes untersucht wird.

Der Zustand der Bilder in *Memory Cone* ist weder als Fotografie oder als Dia, noch als Video- oder Filmstill richtig beschrieben. Ein Videobild ohne Pixel? Eine leise vibrierende Fotografie? Die Projektion auf den weißen Papierfragmenten scheint weder ausschließlich digital, noch analog. Julien Maire bevorzugt die Verschmelzung, oder Hybridisierung, gegenüber der Kontrastierung. Die Kombination der visuellen Quellen in *Memory Cone* macht aufmerksam gegenüber den unterschiedlichen Generationen von Bildern. Sobald der Besucher in diesen heuristischen Prozess eintritt, wird er automatisch zum Medienarchäologen.

Während Konsumenten-Elektronik immer kleiner und gleichzeitig ihr Speichervermögen immer größer wird, zelebriert Julien Maire die schiere Materialität des dekonstruktivistischen Displays, und rückt den ganzen Aufbau der Maschinen, der notwendig ist, um ein paar wenige Bilder zu erzeugen, in den Vordergrund. Im scharfen Gegensatz zu dem täglichen visuellen Übermaß, das unser Bewusstsein belastet ohne einen bleibenden Eindruck zu hinterlassen, kultiviert Julien Maire den langsamen Prozess der Wiedergewinnung des Bildes.





Julien Maire Memory Cone Photo courtesy Artefact STUK Leuven

Julien, you develop a lot of the hardware and the software for your works yourself, and you present the works in a way that the technical system is openly visible. Do you think of the installations as 'technical media' which are only there to create certain visual experiences, or do you think of them as 'sculptures' which, in your particular artistic work, happen to use a lot of technical parts, but which should really also be looked at as sculptural assemblages?

The aesthetic problem with electronics and mechanics is very important for me: I try to find an aesthetic way of working with the materials I'm using. The way they are built and the construction solution must fit with the idea of the piece and must reflect its meaning... In this sense, the easiest way to do it is not always the best: I avoid the standard use of electronic materials as much as possible.

I like the setup of the exploding machines, because they turn the inside of the machine out. Some part of the hardware can be taken away, some other parts can be isolated and set up in the front and they suddenly become a main actor in the installation.

For example, in a previous work called *Exploding Camera*, I took all the elements of a video camera apart and assembled them in such a way that you could still see what their (separate) function was. This is my look into the machine.

I very much identify with Claude Lévi-Strauss' notion of the 'bricoleur' who creates improvised structures by appropriating pre-existing materials. The practice of 'bricolage' can be seen as operating through several key transformations: addition, deletion, substitution and transposition. The bricoleur approximates 'the savage mind' and the engineer approximates the scientific mind. Still the word 'bricolage' is normally used in a very derogatory way – either you are a professional, or you are a bricoleur... But I totally accepted that after a while, and I like it because I'm actually not trying to do anything new or better, I'm remixing pre-existing things and technologies that are not made to work together, that is what makes the work new.

The work *Memory Cone* uses a sophisticated technical set-up to create a projection in which the visitor can observe his or her own attempts at reconstructing, of making visible a photographic image. How important is the interactive aspect of the piece in relation to other works of yours which are not interactive?

The piece is mainly about time, about different times that have to be superimposed. There is the 'real-time' (present) and there is the time of the photograph, which is more connected to the idea of the archive (past) and which is a visible and tangible medium in opposition to the invisible digitally stored image.

Real-time in many media installations is usually about being fast, using computers that are as fast as possible to simulate the 'real time' in the best way they can. Paradoxically, it means that 'real-time' tries to reach the static state of 'presence' by increasing the speed! High-speed cameras are also working with the same paradox. For me, it is a very important point: the lie of all the moving images. We are an entity of movement and not the infinity of a cut in time. (Zeno's paradox is very helpful to understand what I mean: Zeno abolishes motion saying: 'What is in motion moves neither in the place it is in, nor in one in which it is not.')

In almost all my works, I try to find a system for portraying the ambiguous relationship that exists between reality, moving images and still images.

I always bring together and condense different levels of time in an image. For example in *Demi-Pas* there are cuts through the images on their different levels and you see that they are only inside the projector, and suddenly the real-time of the place and the time of the projector overlap, resulting in a momentary concurrence of time. The audience then has to work out these different time scopes.

Memory Cone uses optical processes that mix a slide projection with a video projection without using a computer: the presence of the spectator and his simple interaction represent the 'real time'.

The interactive aspect in the piece is very simple. Still, the visitor actually becomes part of the overall image. So it is more a performative work, where the interaction of the individual is an integral part of the functioning of the work. The work is probably not so much interactive, but rather participative.

The interest of the piece is more in the comprehension of what your presence means! Your presence is filmed and you become a moving image, the moving image opens a window that shows part of a still image projected in the room: a photographic memory is always present, but invisible until you decide to re-project it: your movement triggers the view of the immobility!

Can you say a little bit about the title and where you came across the notion of the 'memory cone'?

The title refers to the notion of the 'memory cone' described by Henri Bergson in his book *Matter and Memory*. I don't know why, but I had this figure in mind for a very long time. The figure drawn by Bergson could be an optical setup, or an acoustic setup. It is really about the idea of sharp/unsharp, where the end of the cone is actually sharp/in focus and the rest of the cone is out of focus. Since I work with film material very often and on different levels, this idea of the inverted (light) cone was great...

Technically, I was taking the light processing technology and connecting it to the idea of Bergson (there is actually a good description in a text by Edwin Carels about that in a forthcoming catalogue about my work). Anyway, I was trying to work out the difference between human memory and the memory of the computer – which, of course, function very differently. One distinguishes between 1s and 0s; the other arranges the memory and the access to it in an entirely different way, with no such clear or sharp distinction between the individual bits that make up the memory. This *Memory Cone* is part of a series of several memory stations which I have built, and some others are still in development. They make an attempt to describe how an image may be functioning inside your own head and how you recover it.

Whose memories are being reconstructed in the installation? Would you be interested to see how people used the work if their own private photographs were used?

The piece is more of a metaphorical machine that doesn't deal so much with specific memories. Until now I have used anonymous memories (anonymous pictures). I have a large collection of slides (I buy them at the flea market here and there) and I have also used some pictures from Sebastien Koeppe's slide collection in Brussels. I think anonymous pictures are universal in the way that they could be the memories of anybody.

The technical process of *Memory Cone* establishes a small moment of astonishment that changes the perspective and creates the actual involvement in the image even if they are not your own memories... *Memory Cone* can also only display a portion of the image at one time. To reconstruct the whole image you have no other solution than to use your memory: it's a process of persistence of vision...

Many of your works deal with the aesthetics of the manipulated technical image; you explore what lies beyond the 'normal' image apparatus and thus offer us a sort of 'estranged' media apparatus that can no longer hide its own, specific conditions. Do you want to make people critical of how the media work, or are you looking for a new type of expression, an expressiveness and poetics hidden in the apparatus?

I think it's important to understand and to find another way to construct different perspectives of time and image composition. I'm not interested in pre-existing technical solutions, but I use them as a reference. Since machines are closed and look for a well-defined and common use, the problem is to make them permeable again: it's what we called 'reverse engineering'. The concept of reverse engineering (also called 'hacking') allows you to enter the machine and to change it.

In *Memory Cone* I have tried to change the technology of the setup so that it would work a little bit like the brain. I have mixed two generations of projection systems (analogue and digital) to project a hybrid image: the image is a perfect mix, but it is incomplete, never totally sharp, like the images that we partially remember in our brains... But what is more important is that we experiment with a totally unstable and fragile projection system and look at a non-recordable image.

I'm not sure how critical of technology I would be, I'm certainly very fascinated by it. I'm more looking for a new type of expression that shows what is missing in the classic recorded image.

Julien Maire

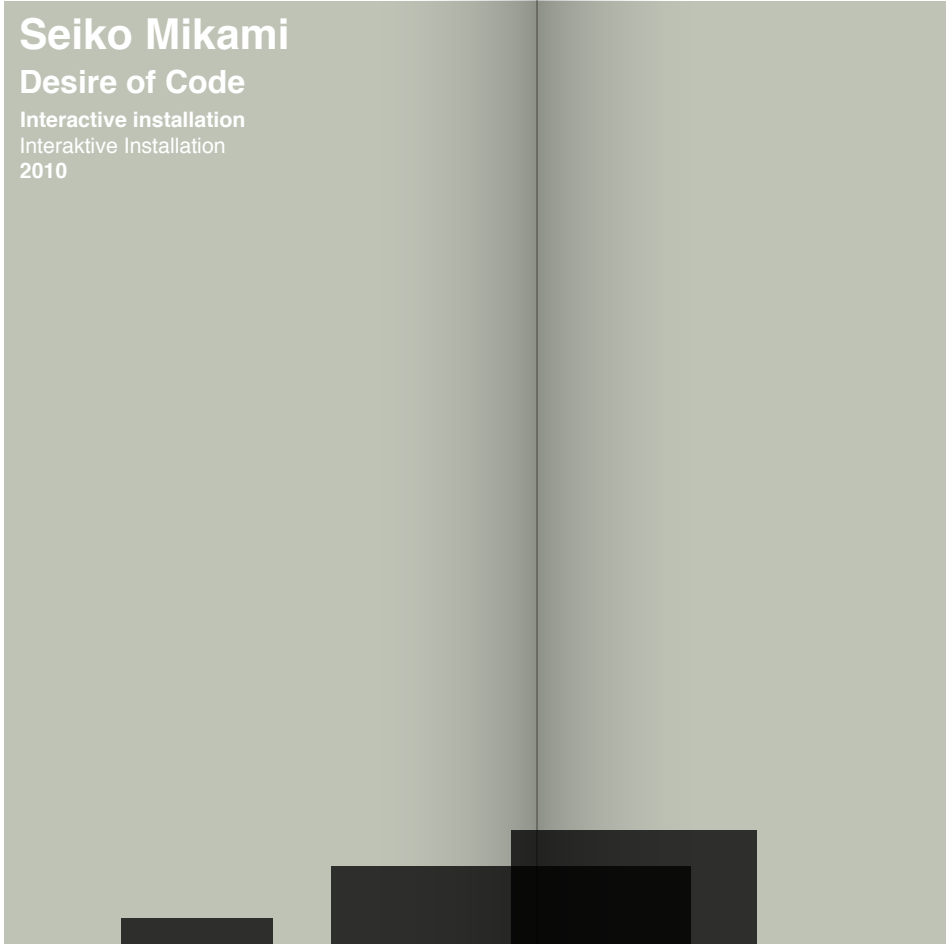
Julien Maire lives and works in Berlin. He studied fine arts in Metz. Maire is a visual and performing artist who deconstructs and re-invents the technology of audio-visual media. He renews obsolete cinematic techniques and develops alternative interfaces to produce moving images. His research confronts immobility and movement, reality and fiction and interrogates the notion of time and memory in the film image. His performance *Digit* and the installation *Exploding Camera* both received an Honorary Mention at Ars Electronica Linz 2007. *Exploding Camera* also received the New Media Art award from the Foundation Liedts-Meesen in 2008. His work was nominated for the World Technology Award in New York in 2009. Recent exhibitions include venues such as The French Pavilion, 25. Biennale of Alexandria; Matter and Memory, Woodstreet Galleries, Pittsburgh; SMAK, Gent; Behind the Image, Festival Artefact, Stuk, Leuven; 5th Seoul International Media Art Biennale, Seoul; Elandscapes, Eart Festival, Shanghai.

julienmaire.ideenshop.net

Julien Maire lebt und arbeitet in Berlin. Er studierte Bildende Kunst in Metz. Maire ist ein bildender Künstler und Performancekünstler, der die Technologie audiovisueller Medien dekonstruiert und neu erfindet. Um bewegte Bilder zu produzieren erneuert er überholte kinematische Techniken oder entwickelt alternative Schnittstellen. In seiner Arbeit erforscht er Stillstand und Bewegung, Realität und Fiktion, und hinterfragt Begriffe wie Zeit und Gedächtnis des filmischen Bildes. Seine Performance *Digit* und die Installation *Exploding Camera* erhielten beide eine Honorary Mention bei der Linzer Ars Electronica 2007. Die *Exploding Camera* erhielt ebenfalls den New Media Art Award der Fondation Liedts-Meesen in 2008. Seine Arbeit wurde 2009 für den World Technology Award in New York nominiert.

Jüngere Ausstellungsbeteiligungen umfassen den französischen Pavillon, 25. Biennale of Alexandria; Matter and Memory, Woodstreet Galleries, Pittsburgh; SMAK, Gent; Behind the Image, Festival Artefact, Stuk, Leuven; 5th Seoul International Media Art Biennale, Seoul; Elandscapes, Eart Festival, Shanghai.

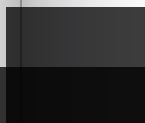
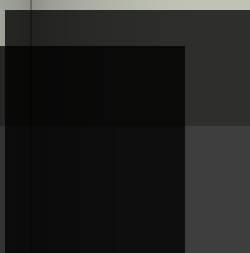
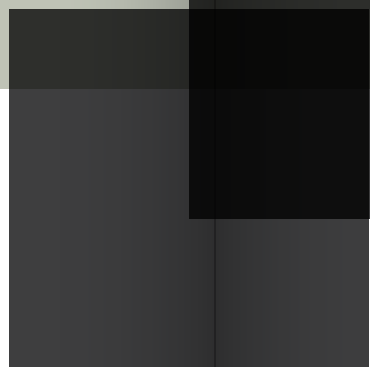
julienmaire.ideenshop.net

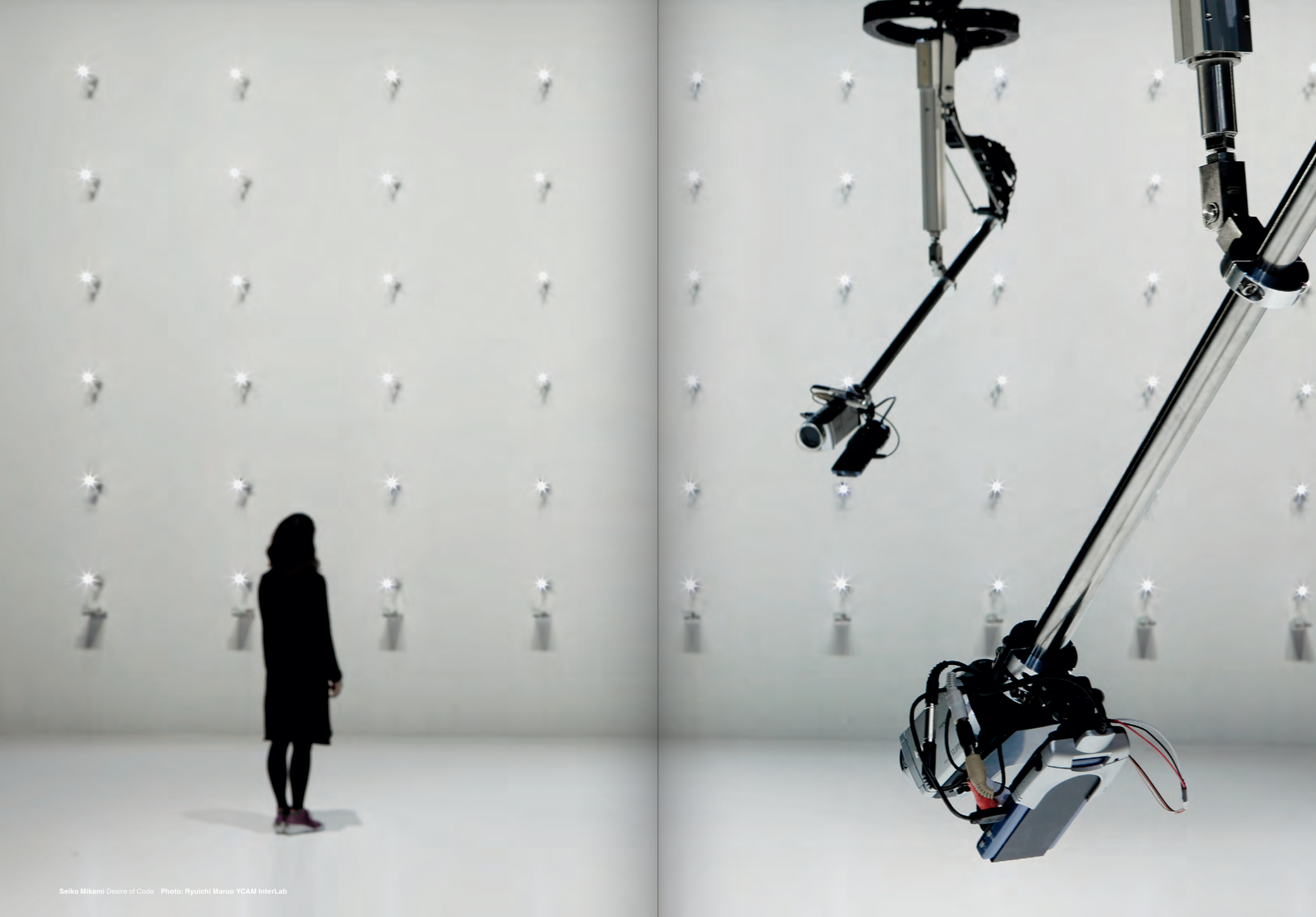


Seiko Mikami

Desire of Code

Interactive installation
Interaktive Installation
2010





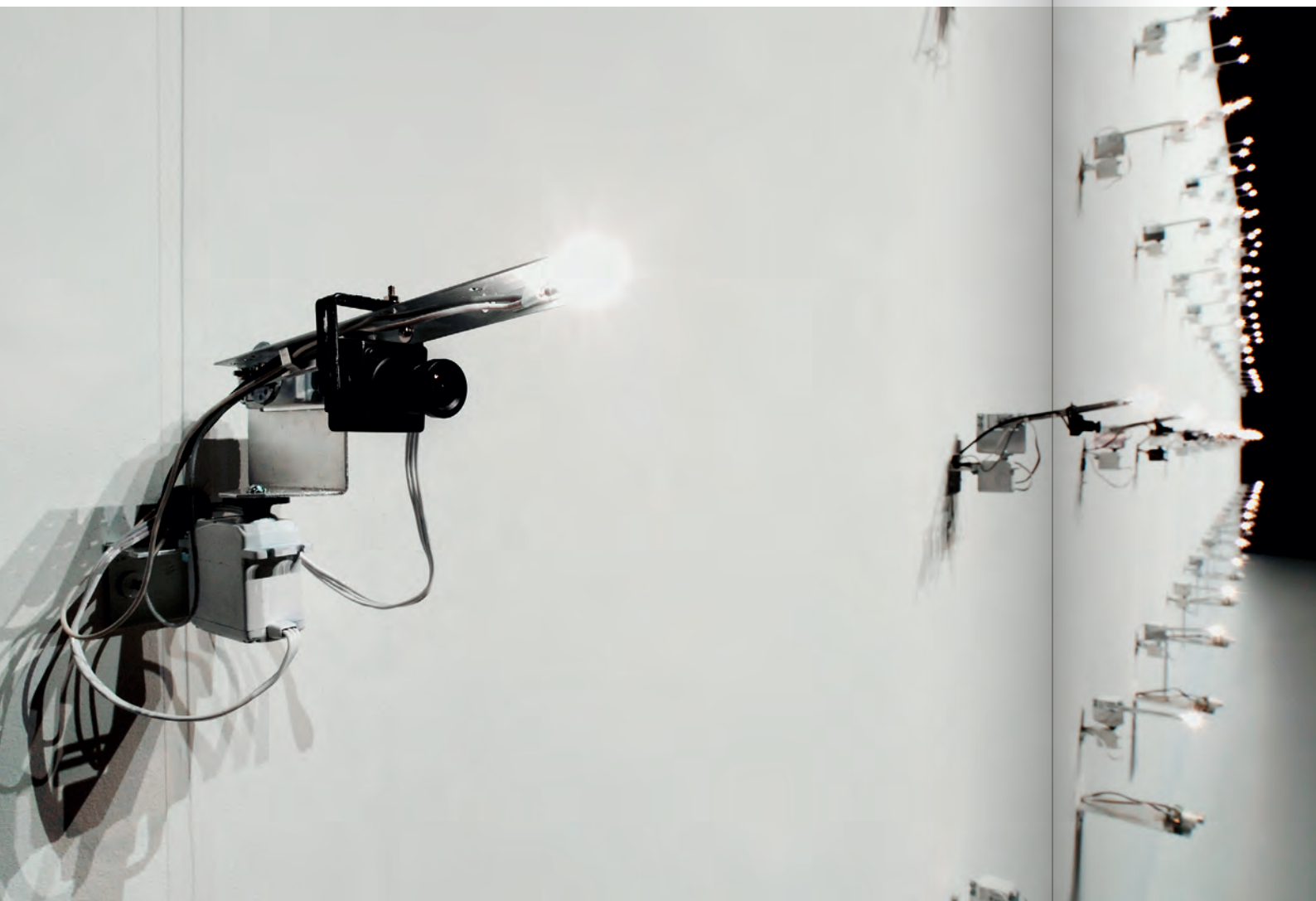
In her latest project, Seiko Mikami addresses the relationship between human and machine agents. A matrix of sensors, mini spotlights and surveillance cameras is arranged across the space and follows the movements of visitors. Every movement a viewer makes sets off a response from a whole swarm of small surveillance units, each using their stepper motors to find the right position for pointing at the body present in the room. An uneasy dialogue may evolve in which the visitor looks for strategies to either confuse the machine sensing system, or become completely invisible by standing still.

There are three parts to this work; the first and second part are being shown in the TRUST exhibition. The first part, *Wriggling Wall Units* consists of 180 devices distributed across a wall. As soon as a visitor enters the area in front of the wall, the devices' heads start blinking. They move in the direction of the visitor in synch like an insect's tentacles. Highly sensitive cameras and microphones able to detect motion and sound beyond human perception record the visitors' actions and send the recorded images and sounds to an integrated database. From there they are transmitted to *Compound Eye Detector Screen*.

Compound Eye Detector Screen is the second part of the work, and this image is like facets of an insect's compound eye; countless hexagonal parts make up one large screen. Accumulated visual data in the database from wall cameras, as well as data collected by surveillance cameras installed in public spaces around the globe, are projected onto the single facets that form this screen. Detailed real-time images of visitors' skin, eyes and hair are projected onto the screen facets where they are mixed with pre-recorded footage of other people and with surveillance images recorded at public places such as airports, parks, hallways and crowded streets from around the world. The accumulating compound eye can be considered a device that illustrates the automatic generation of desire, (data) based on information collected in contemporary information/surveillance society.



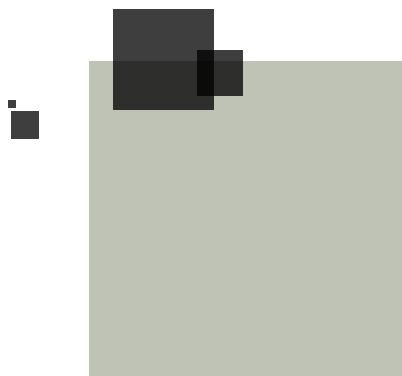
Desire of Code was commissioned by YCAM/Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media.
Desire of Code wurde von YCAM/Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media in Auftrag gegeben.
Programming Compound Eye Detector Screen: Norimichi Hirakawa
Hardware Wriggling Wall: TAKEGAHARASEKKEI
Curator (YCAM): Kazunao Abe
Co-developed with YCAM InterLab
Technical direction: Soichiro Mihara
Technical direction: Richi Owaki
Sound programming: Satoshi Hama



In ihrem neuesten Projekt beschäftigt sich Seiko Mikami mit der Beziehung menschlicher und maschinischer Akteure. Eine Matrix von Sensoren, Mini-Spotlights und Überwachungskameras, die über den Raum verteilt angeordnet ist, verfolgt die Bewegungen der Besucher. Jede Bewegung eines Besuchers löst die Reaktion eines ganzen Schwarms kleiner Überwachungseinheiten aus, von denen jede mit ihren Schrittmotoren die richtige Position des im Raum befindlichen Körpers sucht. Ein unbehaglicher Dialog könnte sich daraus entspinnen, in dem der Besucher entweder nach Strategien sucht, das sensorische System der Maschinen zu verwirren, oder durch Stillstehen einfach unsichtbar zu werden.

Die Arbeit besteht aus drei Teilen; der erste und der zweite Teil werden in der TRUST Ausstellung gezeigt. Der erste Teil, *Wriggling Wall Units*, besteht aus 180 auf einer Wand verteilten Einheiten. Sobald ein Besucher den Bereich vor der Wand betritt, beginnen die Einheiten an ihrer Spitze zu blinken. Sie bewegen sich synchron in die Richtung des Besuchers, wie die Tentakel eines Insekts. Hochempfindliche Kameras und Mikrofone, die in der Lage sind, Bewegungen und Geräusche jenseits der menschlichen Wahrnehmung zu erfassen, zeichnen die Aktionen der Besucher auf und senden diese Bilder und Töne an eine integrierte Datenbank. Von dort aus werden sie an den *Compound Eye Detector Screen* übertragen.

Compound Eye Detector Screen ist der zweite Teil der Arbeit, wobei seine Erscheinung den Facetten des Netzauges eines Insekts ähnelt; unzählige hexagonale Elemente bilden einen großen Schirm. Die in der Datenbank angesammelten visuellen Daten der Wandkameras werden zusammen mit Bildern von Überwachungskameras auf öffentlichen Plätzen aus aller Welt auf die einzelnen Facetten projiziert, die diesen Schirm bilden. Dabei werden detailreiche Echtzeitbilder von Haut, Augen und Haaren der Besucher auf die Facetten projiziert und mit vorproduziertem Bildmaterial von Überwachungskameras aus Flughäfen, Parks, Korridoren und überfüllten Straßen gemischt. Das akkumulierende Netzauge kann als Instrument angesehen werden, das die automatische Erzeugung von (Daten-)Begiehrde illustriert, auf Information basierend, die in der zeitgenössischen Informations- und Überwachungsgesellschaft gesammelt wurde.



Seiko, in *Desire of Code* you move beyond the analytical approach you used to apply to the human senses in your previous projects to address the relationship between human and machine agents directly. On entering the matrix of sensors, mini light spots and surveillance cameras follow every movement of the visitor. One may engage in a rather uneasy dialogue and look for strategies to confuse the machine sensing system or to become invisible in front of the multi-faceted eye. However, experiencing the installation can also be comfortable and calming – being immersed in the surveillance system creates a sense of being taken care of. Could you describe this ambivalence more precisely?

In *Wriggling Wall Units* fifteen multiple viewpoint cameras with monitoring systems are installed amongst ninety arms which simultaneously record the space the videos are sent to a database of the compound-eye images which feeds the sixty-one cells/units of the *Compound Eye Detector Screen*. Intermingled on the screen are not only multi-view images of the scene but also archive images accumulated in the past, some selected images of face recognition, partially analyzed, and surveillance images from public spaces all over the world fed onto the web. Thus, all the images and sound in *Desire of Code* is created by you – the installation audience. The multiple images are created from data that has been introduced into the system by you. That is why it feels a little as if you are being taken care of. Also these moving units produce insect-like sounds that seem to make people think of the forest which is calming and makes them comfortable.

Who desires what?

Desire of Code has a double ontological theme relating to the boundaries of 'individuality' in public and private existence: 'the body of data' and 'the physical body'. The work represents the blurring of the boundaries of this contemporary state. For me, 'code' is, in the information society, an accelerating desire. Swirling desires. Your data, reflected, exposed, analyzed and rewritten, are present and labelled in the double helix. 'Code' has 'Desire' and 'Desire' has 'Code'.

You have been working on this project over the last four years. Previous versions have been presented at Kulturhuset, Stockholm in 2006 and at TESLA, Berlin in 2007. Can you please explain the development of the work over these years? How did your ideas about it change? Where did it all start?

The first interactive installation idea was to build life-like mosquitoes or flies and to let viewers walk through hundreds of small, camera-equipped flying machines. However, a tight budget and the technicalities of wireless flying made it difficult. These machines, attached to the wall, are a more realistic approach. The improved version was a little slow in coming because I had another work called *gravicells* showing internationally at the same time. Basically the former version is on a smaller scale and there is no compound-eye screen.

In the installation as you showed it at YCAM the work consisted of three elements: the matrix of robot arms, the projection of the faceted eye and six bigger robotic arms with cameras and projectors. Do these elements belong to the same machine or are they individual works? What is the relationship between these elements?

6 Multiperspective Search Arms is being shown at the Künstlerhaus Vienna from 5 August to 20 September 2010. If you have time, please see it.

These 'search arms' are also related to and a part of *Desire of Code*. The wall cameras film from the side, but these arm cameras film from above, to trap you – the six robotic search arms resembling tentacles are suspended from the ceiling. Cameras and projectors mounted onto the ends of these arms keep recording and projecting images while the arms follow the movements of visitors. A visitor who enters the exhibition space is detected and recorded by the robotic arms, and eventually confronted with enlarged images of him- or herself projected onto the floor. The images and the behaviours of the 'search arms' are at the same time transmitted to the database, all of which is then updated in the soundscape of the installation.

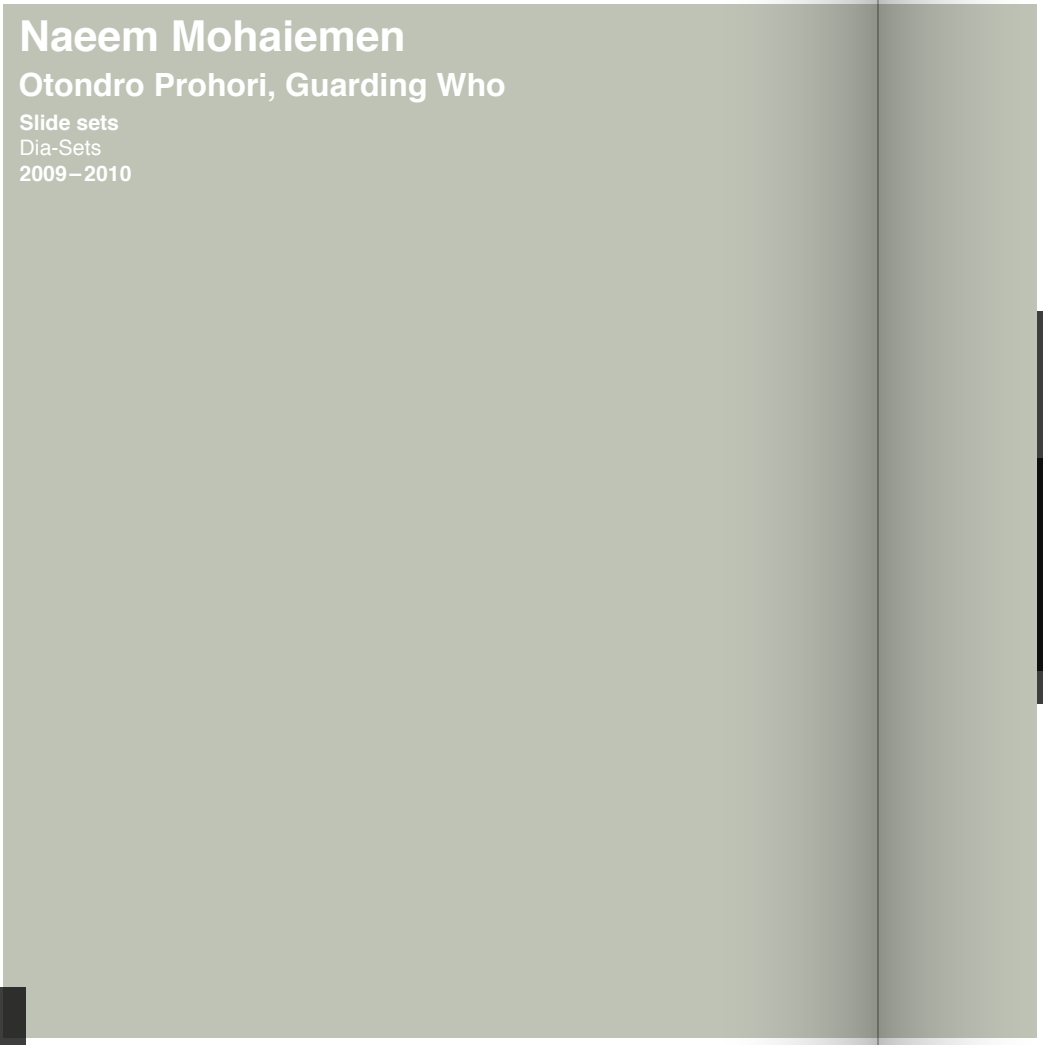
Although you focus a lot on the eyes in the work, sound is important too. There are the machinic sounds of the robot's stepper motors and the more atmospheric sounds of recorded voices. What role does the soundscape have?

Superdirective microphones are installed at several points in the exhibition area and I record every sound occurring in the space. Voices and other noises generated by visitors, as well as the artworks' own mechanical sounds, are mixed on a recombined time axis to create the soundtrack for this installation. The behaviours' respective elements trigger all previously recorded sound data accumulated up to the present point, and these components keep forming a constantly updated sonic environment. We can't hear how our own voices sound because what we hear is conducted through our bones, so it sounds a little strange. In this installation, you will faintly hear fragments of your own voice from a few minutes ago.

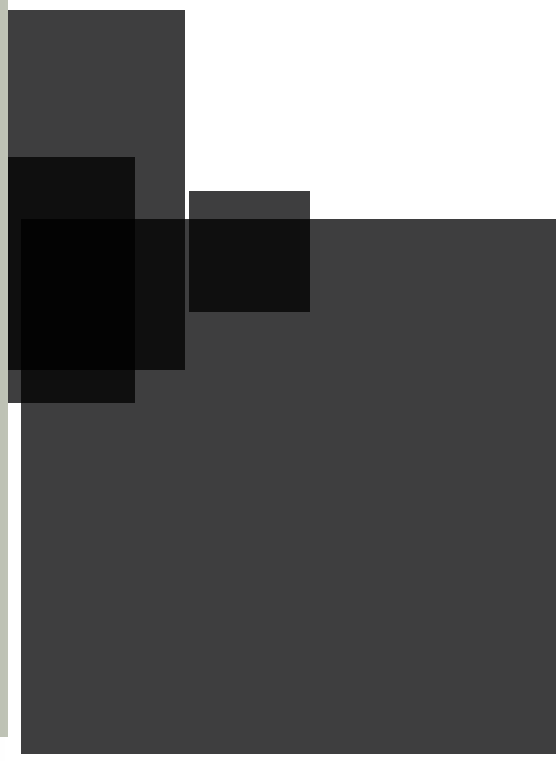
Seiko Mikami

Seiko Mikami is an artist living and working in Tokyo. She has been showing large-scale installations themed on information society and the human body since the 1980s. Since the nineties most of her works have been interactive media art installations incorporating human perception, such as the eye tracking project *Molecular Informatics* at Canon ARTLAB, the acoustic sense and inner body sound project in ICC's permanent collection, and *gravicells*, on the theme of the gravity, 'the sixth sense,' at YCAM. Her works have been exhibited at many galleries in Europe and the USA, including the Miro Museum in Spain, Musée des Beaux Arts de Nantes, and Kulturhuset in Sweden. She has also exhibited work at media art festivals around the world – DEAF in Rotterdam, transmediale in Berlin, the SHARE FESTIVAL, Italy, Ars Electronica Linz, MoisMulti, Quebec, the Digital Culture Festival, UK, and many others. Mikami is currently Professor of Media Art at Tama Art University.

Seiko Mikami ist eine in Tokio lebende Künstlerin. Seit den 1980er Jahren arbeitet sie in großformatigen Installationen über das Thema der Informationsgesellschaft und des menschlichen Körpers. Seit den 1990ern waren die meisten ihrer Arbeiten interaktive Medienkunstinstallationen, die menschliche Wahrnehmung einbeziehen, wie etwa das Eye Tracking Projekt *Molecular Informatics* am Canon ARTLAB, ihr Projekt über den Hörsinn und Geräusche im Innern des Körpers, das sich in der Sammlung des ICC befindet, und *gravicells* über das Thema der Schwerkraft als ‚sechstem Sinn‘ beim YCAM. Ihre Arbeit wurde an zahlreichen Orten in Europa und den USA gezeigt, darunter im Miro Museum in Spanien, im Musée des Beaux Arts de Nantes und im Kulturhuset in Schweden. Daneben nahm sie weltweit an Medienkunstfestivals teil, wie DEAF in Rotterdam, transmediale in Berlin, SHARE FESTIVAL, Italien, Ars Electronica Linz, MoisMulti, Quebec, Digital Culture Festival, Großbritannien, und vielen anderen. Gegenwärtig ist Mikami Professorin für Medienkunst an der Tama Art University.



Naeem Mohaiemen
Otondro Prohori, Guarding Who
Slide sets
Dia-Sets
2009–2010



The images in Mohaiemen's slides show re-stagings of the interstices between political life, surveillance, and the media, in a globalised world. They display a skewed glance at reality from the perspective of shadow puppet theater. Military camps, building demolitions, wall slogans, demonstrations, and personal details merge into a narrative about the foundations of distrust in digital culture.

Die Bilder in Mohaiemens Dias zeigen Neuinszenierungen von Zwischenräumen zwischen politischem Alltag, Überwachung und Medien in einer globalisierten Welt. Es ist ein verdrehter Blick, der die Wirklichkeit aus der Perspektive eines Puppenschattenspiels betrachtet. Militärlager, Abrissgebäude, Wandparolen, Demonstrationen und persönliche Details verschmelzen zu einer Geschichte über die Grundlagen von Vertrauen und Misstrauen in der digitalen Kultur.

Sound: Kaffe Matthews



Students
Unity of
Bangladesh



Naeem, the *Otondro* project emerges from a political praxis that takes the media – mass and individual – as key players in the political struggle. Do you see this setting as specific for Bangladesh, or is it a more general condition that the work responds to?

I'll wait to have an audience walk into portions of this project and see what they draw out of it. The universal will come out with a little bit of serendipity, I'd rather not force-feed or produce a summary. *Otondro* of course came out of a specific context, the military government that ran Bangladesh for two years (2007-2008), and the ensuing meltdown in our lives over that period. It was a repetition of a pattern Asia had seen many times before (the benevolent strongman, we will only be here for few years, for the greater good, we had no choice, we did not want this but were compelled...). It also echoed strands that appear in mutated forms in many familiar contexts: country, nationalism, histories, borders and unintentional comedy.

The work deals with the 'embedded' status of all our mediated communication. Is it more important for you to give a 'precise' poetic description of the condition that this addresses?

Actually the work is often taken to be precise because there's so much text in my work, which seems to trigger the idea of factual descriptions or journalism. But because the specific histories I research are not excavated, even when there is an amount of whimsy or invention, it's not clearly grasped. People don't know which portions of the narrative are fiction, and that makes things slip out of reach.

Do you have alternative media usages in mind when you think about the everyday praxis that you portray? Do you imagine an alternative media ecology?

Well I think the continuous migration of clashing practices into the visual arts over the last decade has already created one such media ecology. If you look at an instance like Raqs Media Collective's co-curation of the last Manifesta Biennial, there's a collision of many different disciplines and forms, in a fairly energetic way, that creates space for my peer group.

In this context, what is it, for you, that people can trust?

Family and friends. The novel as a form that will outlast gimmicks. MRI scans (sometimes). Glass bottles for water. The last thought before going to bed.

Naeem Mohaiemen

Back to elections. Back to democracy. The new normal. Mission accomplished.

But the residues are still here. A temporary camp for highway construction. Phantom investor. New chairman. List of approved guests. Shadow falls.

A theorist talks about the architecture of occupation, hollow land. But security presence in Asia is subtle. Suit tie coat bideshi degree. Think tanks, seminars, conferences, talk shows, newspapers. Everyone has an opinion on the century's obsession. War against an invisible enemy.

They tell us, we know all the answers. How to catch them, inside and outside borders. How to keep them out. Facial hair, surname, skin hue, city of birth, passport - the full spectrum domination of motivation recognition. It's not who you are, it's who we say you are.

Dhaka is now inside a security zone bubble. Will democracy remove the steel wire barricades and midnight checks on Dhanmondi Bridge? On the day after the state of emergency was lifted, I saw a homeless woman drying her family clothes on that same wire barricade. A sweet, fleeting moment. But a few days later, the barricades were back in action. The demand for ID, the sudden stop and search, the rummaging inside your camera bag, the interrogation. Eto raat e beriyechen keno? Janen na din-kal kharap?

I feel a searing nostalgia for open space, a time before these 'temporary' structures. Temporary camps that never leave. It's all to make you safe and secure. Safe from what?

A long pause.

Yourself, your weaker side, your politics, your affiliations, your nightmares, your ideology, your rights, your friends and neighbors.

Your dreams.

October 2006

Dhaka is ripped open by ferocious street battles between the two main political parties, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Awami League (AL). At issue is whether the ruling BNP will allow fair elections.

November 2006

Grameen Bank's Muhammad Yunus arrives in Oslo to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. He is the third Bengali to win a Nobel, after Rabindranath Tagore in 1913 and Amartya Sen in 1998, but the first from Bangladesh (the other two laureates are technically 'Indian').

January 2007

United Nations representatives send a letter stating that if the Bangladesh Army supervises any 'controversial' elections under the BNP government, they could lose UN peacekeeping quotas. Bangladesh is the largest supplier of soldiers to UN blue-hats.

On January 11th (1/11), the Army declares a state of emergency, removes the civilian administration and forms a 'Caretaker Government'. It is Bangladesh's third military government after 1975 and 1982.

February 2007

Among the army's new austerity measures is the requirement to have all lights out by 8 pm to save electricity. Officials arrive at the Public Library to eject people and enforce the new law.

Muhammad Yunus announces he will form a 'third platform' and run for President. He is seen as tainted by association with the military government and meets a boycott on university campuses.

April 2007

As Yunus continues to travel all over the world for post-Nobel events, he is described as 'out of touch' by local media. Seemingly rejected by the intelligentsia as well, he abandons his political bid.

May 2007

CNN stringer Tasneem Khalil is picked up by military intelligence for writing against the army. His wife fears he is being tortured and an international appeal is launched.

Two days after his arrest, Tasneem is released. He goes into hiding while his newspaper editor negotiates to have his passport returned.

Interrogators selectively leak contents of Tasneem's computer and allege that he is funded by anti-army politicians. Jonotar Chokh ('Eyes of the People') publishes cover story 'Laptop Conspiracy to Overthrow Government'.

June 2007

Tasneem's passport is returned. He flees into exile in Sweden and has never returned to Bangladesh since.

July 2007

Caretaker Government escalates arrest campaign against politicians, culminating in the midnight arrest of AL leader Sheikh Hasina. Her rival, Khaleda Zia of the BNP, remains outside jail.

August 2007

A confrontation between soldiers and university students, at a football match, escalates into rioting that spreads across the country.

After days of student riots, the army backs down and vacates the campus. It is a costly loss for the regime and the beginning of the end for the Caretaker Government.

September 2007

Khaleda Zia is arrested, along with her sons who are considered the kingpins of Bangladesh politics. The move is seen as bringing parity of arrests, as leaders of both parties are now in jail.

December 2007

The army bulldozer campaign against illegal buildings hits a major snag with the infamous Rangs Building. After a floor collapses, bodies of demolition workers killed in the accident are trapped in rubble for almost a week. As bodies decompose, the press talks 'omens'.

January 2008

Although the Caretaker Government began with a 'war on corruption,' rumors become popular that the money trail is reaching army officers as well. Civilian gossip encompasses institutions like Trust Filling, the army-welfare-trust run gas station.

June 2008

Military regime releases Sheikh Hasina after sustained international campaign. Part of the media debate leading up to her release is whether she is suffering slow poisoning from prison food.

August 2008

The medical community is in turmoil as the MRI scan of Khaleda's son Tarique Zia becomes a key exhibit in a war of words. At issue is whether the scan shows he was tortured in custody, or that he had an old spinal injury.

September 2008

Military regime releases Khaleda Zia, and her two sons are allowed to leave the country. Negotiations begin to return power to elected officials, which includes implicit assurance that there will be no trials of military officers.

December 2008

Sheikh Hasina's Awami League wins a landslide victory in Army-supervised elections. The rightist BNP and the Islamist Jamaat e Islami are reduced to a small minority in Parliament.

February 2009

The new government faces its' biggest crisis when a mutiny erupts at the headquarters of the border guards, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). While negotiators meet with mutiny leaders, behind the scenes the rebels hunt down and kill their senior army officers inside the barricaded headquarters.

The final grisly death toll from the BDR massacre is 81, almost all senior army officers. A national debate erupts over whether the Army should have been allowed to capture the headquarters by force.

Army officers, reeling with grief, have an angry exchange with Prime Minister Hasina during a closed-door meeting, clandestine recordings of which are leaked. The government temporarily bans YouTube to prevent the tapes from circulating.

April 2010

Interrogation of arrested BDR soldiers yield no conclusive evidence of a 'foreign link'. 56 rebels die while in custody, but they are classified as 'heart attack'.

May 2010

After a year of allegations of foreign conspiracy, the government seems to conclude that the BDR rebellion was over basic grievances of salary, ration and promotion. However, investigators are still mystified by the brutal killing spree.

July 2010

After legal debates over whether the mutineers would be tried in civil or military court, the government finally brings charges against 824 soldiers. Death sentences are expected.

In an attempt to remove the stigma of the rebellion, the border guards get a new name and uniform. No word yet on whether their slogan will change. It is currently 'Otondro Prohori'—never sleeping, always on guard.

Naeem Mohaiemen is an artist and writer working in Dhaka and New York. He uses text, photography and video to explore histories of the international left and utopia-dystopia slippage. Mohaiemen's projects have been shown at venues including Gallery Chitrak (Dhaka), Experimenter (Kolkata), Third Line (Dubai), Ashkal Alwan (Beirut), Queens Museum of Art (New York), Shedhalle (Zurich) and the Finnish Museum of Photography. He organised the Visible Collective, a group of artists, lawyers and activists who had a video project shown at the 2004 Whitney Biennial ('Wrong Gallery'). Excerpts from his current research on 1970s ultra-left movements will be shown at the 2011 Sharjah Biennial.

Naeem also works on activist projects in Bangladesh. He writes on religious and ethnic minorities in the Ain Salish Kendro Annual Report (askbd.org) and the Daily Star newspaper (thedailystar.net). Working between two countries, this work explores contradictions between Bengalis in marginal migrant status in northern countries, and majoritarian (and authoritarian) status inside Bangladesh. As part of this work, his film *Muslims or Heretics: My Camera Can Lie* was screened for an ancillary meeting of the EU Human Rights Commission at the UK House of Lords.

His essays include 'Everybody Wants To Be Singapore' (Carlos Motta's *La Buena Vida/Democracy*, 08), 'AdMan Blues' (*Indian Highway*, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Serpentine Gallery, UK, 08), 'Fear of Muslim Planet: Hip Hop & Islam' (*Sound Unbound*, MIT Press, Paul Miller ed. 08), 'Mujtaba Ali: Amphibian Man' (*Manifesta 7*, European Biennial, Rana Dasgupta ed., Trentino, 08), 'These Guys Are Artists & Who Gives A Shit' (Jamini Journal, Dhaka, 07), 'Beirut, Silver Porsche Illusion' (*Men of the Global South*, Zed Books, 06), 'Why Mahmud Can't Be a Pilot' (*Nobody Passes*, Seal Press, 06), 'Enigma of Transit' (*The Book of Bangladeshi Fiction*, 06), the book *Collectives in Atomised Time* (with Doug Ashford, Idensitat Press, 09), and the comic 'No Exit' (with Glenn Urieta, *Secret Identities: Asian Superhero Comics*, New Press, 09).

Naeem studied economics and history, and was awarded a Thomas Watson Fellowship to make an oral history of the 1971 Bangladesh genocide.

shobak.org

Naeem Mohaiemen

Naeem Mohaiemen ist ein in Dhaka und New York lebender Künstler und Autor. Mit Text, Fotografie und Video erkundet er die Geschichte der internationalen Linken und das Entgleiten von Utopie und Dystopie.

Mohaiemens Projekte wurden unter anderem gezeigt bei Gallery Chitrak (Dhaka), Experimenter (Kolkata), Third Line (Dubai), Ashkal Alwan (Beirut), Queens Museum of Art (New York), Shedhalle (Zürich) und im Finnischen Fotografiemuseum. Er war einer der Organisatoren des Visible Collectives, einer Gruppe von Künstlern, Aktivisten und Anwälten, die mit einem Videoprojekt bei der Whitney Biennale 2004 ('Wrong Gallery') vertreten war. Auszüge aus seiner aktuellen Forschung über ultralinke Bewegungen der 1970er Jahre werden bei der Sharjah Biennale 2011 gezeigt.

Naeem Mohaiemen arbeitet ebenfalls an aktivistischen Projekten in Bangladesch. Er schreibt über religiöse und ethnische Minderheiten im Ain Salish Kendro Annual Report (askbd.org) und in der Tageszeitung Daily Star (thedailystar.net). In seiner Arbeit zwischen zwei unterschiedlichen Ländern untersucht er die Widersprüche zwischen dem marginalisierten Migrantenstatus von Bengalis in nördlichen Ländern und ihren mehrheitlichen (und autoritären) Status innerhalb Bangladeschs. Sein Film *Muslims or Heretics: My Camera Can Lie*, der aus diesem Arbeitsfeld stammt, wurde anlässlich einer Begleitkonferenz der EU Menschenrechtskommission im britischen Oberhaus gezeigt.

Jüngste Essays umfassen 'Everybody Wants To Be Singapore' (Carlos Motta's *La Buena Vida/Democracy*, 08), 'AdMan Blues' (*Indian Highway*, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Serpentine Gallery, UK, 08), 'Fear of Muslim Planet: Hip Hop & Islam' (*Sound Unbound*, MIT Press, Paul Miller ed. 08), 'Mujtaba Ali: Amphibian Man' (*Manifesta 7*, European Biennial, Rana Dasgupta ed., Trentino, 08), 'These Guys Are Artists & Who Gives A Shit' (Jamini Journal, Dhaka, 07), 'Beirut, Silver Porsche Illusion' (*Men of the Global South*, Zed Books, 06), 'Why Mahmud Can't Be a Pilot' (*Nobody Passes*, Seal Press, 06), 'Enigma of Transit' (*The Book of Bangladeshi Fiction*, 06), die Buchpublikation *Collectives in Atomised Time* (mit Doug Ashford, Idensitat Press, 09), und der Comic 'No Exit' (mit Glenn Urieta, *Secret Identities: Asian Superhero Comics*, New Press, 09).

Mohaiemen studierte Wirtschaftswissenschaften und Geschichte und erhielt das Thomas Watson Fellowship, um die mündliche Geschichte des Völkermordes 1971 in Bangladesh zu untersuchen.

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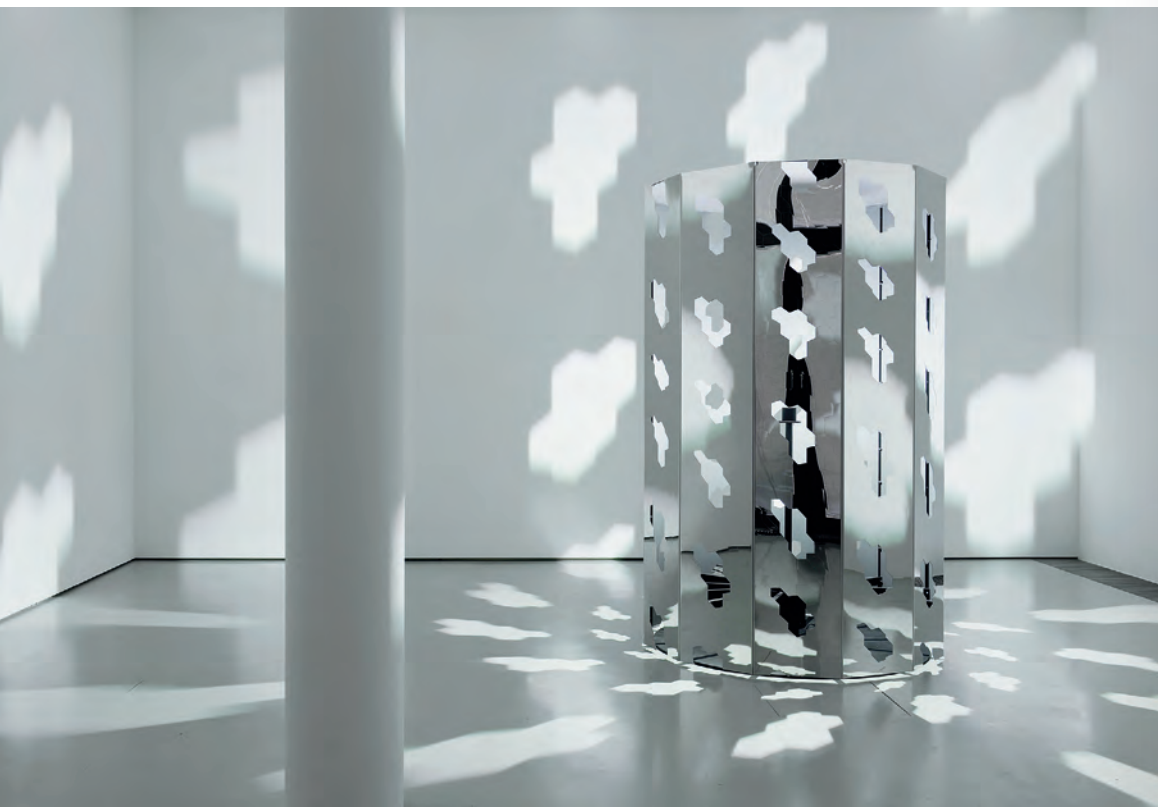
Carsten Nicolai

rota

Rotating cylinder with engraved and perforated stainless steel surface, light, sound
Rotierender Zylinder mit perforierter Edelstahl-Oberfläche, Lichtquelle, Klang
2009

rota, considered as an experimental work, combines scientific research with artistic production. The installation deals with the effects of audiovisual stimulation on human perception by creating a stroboscopic visual effect which, depending on the rotation speed, produces changing frequencies of flickering light pulses that are also transformed into sound. According to scientific research these pulses can have a direct effect on the brain waves of the spectator causing neural feedback that can simulate different types of mental states like trance, meditation, relaxation and stress.

The *dream* and *mind machines* in particular, developed by Brion Gysin during the 1950s beatnik era, which apparently produced alpha waves to expand human consciousness, were the inspiration for *rota*. The construction presents an experimental set-up that allows viewers to experience in what way light pulses might effect their own brain activity and if special functions of the brain – like relaxation, attention, learning potential and hence creativity – might potentially be controllable.



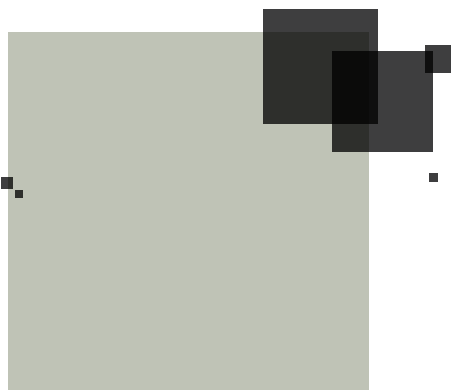
Die als Experiment zu verstehende Arbeit *rota* vereint wissenschaftliche Forschung mit künstlerischer Produktion. Die Installation beschäftigt sich mit den Auswirkungen audiovisueller Stimulation auf die menschliche Wahrnehmung durch die Erzeugung eines visuellen Effekts, der je nach Geschwindigkeit des Rotationsvorgangs verschiedene Frequenzen flickernder Lichtimpulse generiert, die auch auf akustischer Ebene umgesetzt werden. Laut wissenschaftlicher Forschungen können diese Impulse direkte Auswirkungen auf die Gehirnströme des Zuschauers haben und somit ein neuronales Feedback bewirken, welches unterschiedliche Zustände mentaler Verfassung – wie Trance, Meditation, Entspannung bis hin zu Stress – hervorrufen.

Besonders die im Kontext der Beatnik-Bewegung seit den 1950er Jahren von Brion Gysin entwickelten *dream* oder *mind machines*, welche durch die Produktion von Alpha-Wellen eine bewusstseinserweiternde Funktion besitzen sollten, standen Pate für *rota*. Daran angelehnt stellt die Arbeit eine Versuchsanordnung bereit, welche den Zuschauer potenziell am eigenen Leib erfahren läßt, inwiefern seine eigene Gehirnaktivität durch die Lichtimpulse beeinflussbar ist. Es ergibt sich die Frage, ob und inwiefern sich bestimmte Funktionen des Gehirns – wie Entspannung, Aufmerksamkeit, Lernfähigkeit und damit auch Kreativität – potenziell steuern lassen.

Courtesy Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig
and und Galerie EIGEN+ART Leipzig/Berlin.



frequency type	frequency	state	possible effects
delta	0.5 – 4.0 hz	deep sleep trance	
theta	4.0 – 6.5 hz	early sleep phase hypnosis daydream	
	6.5 – 8.0 hz	hypnosis daydream meditation	increased learning ability creativity
alpha	8.0 – 13 hz	relaxed state of being awake (closed eyes)	increased concentration and learning ability
beta	13 – 15 hz	relaxed state of being awake (open eyes)	good receptivity
	15 – 21 hz	normal to increased attention	good intelligence performance
	21 – 38 hz	stress anxiety	rapid thoughts activity
gamma	38 – 70 hz	high level excitement hyperactivity	neuronal reorganisation



Let's first have a closer look at the installation *rota*: there is the turning, mirrored cylinder with its calculated cavities through which moving blots of light are projected onto the walls of the space; there is a ticking sound signal in the rhythm of this movement; and on the wall there is a tabular text attached, which describes the context of signal frequencies and brain activity. A bench invites the visitors to a slightly hypnotised contemplation.

Carsten, with the text on the wall and the precise construction, the work suggests a high level of scientific affinity, and mixes this with associations of psychedelic 'brain machines'; how do these two aspects of science and psychedelia go together?

When I started the work, I first had to free myself from the fact that this flicker effect had been discussed extensively within the beatnik generation, who of course had always been seeking to reach psychedelic states through drug use (given the coincidence with the early use of LSD). However, this kind of reference is actually not helpful at all when talking about *rota*. My explorations have led me to results from scientific research about this flicker effect, which is well known and well defined, where the interweaving of the stimulation of the so called alpha waves of the brain and the synchronisation of these alpha waves is not only made up in the artistic context, but is very much established in the scientific context. Yet, no further research really exists outside of specific neurological disorder patterns, like epilepsy for example. I have consulted a few scientists specifically about these effects and they have confirmed that these effects do exist in such a way that they may evoke psychedelic and hypnotic states, but also other states too. And my focus was on these other states, which are not only stress, but also increased learning attention. I was interested in the fact that these stimuli are being brought back into consciousness, not only into artistic consciousness, but into scientific consciousness too. The work itself was first presented in the Schering Stiftung, which explores this symbiosis of science and culture. In this context I wanted to create an occasion for inspiration or attention to these flicker effects, because there is very little scientific research to it, and because there are very few opportunities to make use of these effects in a positive way.

The installation claims a targeted, though benign, manipulation of the state of consciousness of the visitor to the exhibition; can the construction be trusted?

- In principle one can assume that people are different, and that they react to these effects in very different ways – some react very strongly, others not at all. I have experienced myself, after a few times of being exposed to the effect, that it does have quite an impact. That is what I also like about the work, that you cannot assume the same conditions. Every person has a different perception, so that the degree of constancy we may know from visual media or from the written word, or even from music, does not exist in this case. This of course shows the boundaries and the depth and the individual dissimilarity of perception. This is very important for me in the context of this work.

In how far does, in your opinion, the speculation of the visitor about whether the construction can be trusted play a role in its aesthetic effect?

- I think the answer to the question is very simple. One has to trust things and take the time with any artwork. If one opens up and engages with the artwork, one can experience things that wouldn't be possible to experience without that commitment. Otherwise nothing much would be happening. But it is of course left to everybody to decide in how far they want to be affected.

Would you then also connect critical questions to science, which draws a large part of its legitimation from these kinds of claims and pacifications, with it?

In the first place the work is a sculpture that is reviving a topic which disappeared forty years ago. It had been washed out and perhaps had been ascribed too much to drug or music contexts. That is why the work is so important to me, to show how little we know about the phenomenon and how much could still be done. And here I see approaches where teams of artists and scientists could work collaboratively in the future.

Carsten Nicolai, born 1965 in Karl-Marx-Stadt, is part of an artist generation that works intensively in the transitional area between art and science. As a visual artist Nicolai seeks to overcome the separation of the art forms and genres through a holistic approach. He strives to overcome the separation of the sense perceptions by, for example, making sound and light frequencies perceivable for both eyes and ears, to sensitise the viewer to the connection of the different sensory levels. Other aspects of his works include the integration of error and chance as well as the implementation of mathematical, physical or natural phenomena and theories. He also has a special interest in so-called self-organising processes like the growing of snow crystals.

Following participation in major international exhibitions like documenta X and the 49th and 50th Venice Biennial, Nicolai's works were shown in two comprehensive solo exhibitions at Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Germany (anti reflex) and at Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, Germany (syn chron) in 2005. In 2007 he had further extensive shows in Zurich and New York. For several years Carsten Nicolai has been experimenting with sound under the pseudonym noto to create his own code of signs, acoustic and visual symbols. As alva noto he leads those experiments into the field of electronic music.

www.carstennicolai.de

Carsten Nicolai, 1965 in Karl-Marx-Stadt geboren, gehört zu einer Künstlergeneration, die intensiv in den Übergangsbereichen zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft arbeitet. Als bildender Künstler sucht Nicolai die Trennung der Kunstformen und Genres zu überwinden, indem er um einen holistischen künstlerischen Ansatz bemüht ist. Daher versucht er, die Separation sinnlicher Wahrnehmungen zu überwinden, indem er etwa Klang- und Lichtfrequenzen für Augen und Ohren wahrnehmbar macht, um das Publikum für die Verbindung der verschiedenen Wahrnehmungsebenen zu sensibilisieren. Weitere Aspekte seiner Arbeit beinhalten die Integration von Fehlern und Zufällen sowie das Implementieren mathematischer, physikalischer und natürlicher Phänomene und Theorien. Ein besonderes Interesse legt er auf sogenannte selbstorganisierende Prozesse, beispielsweise das Züchten von Schneekristallen.

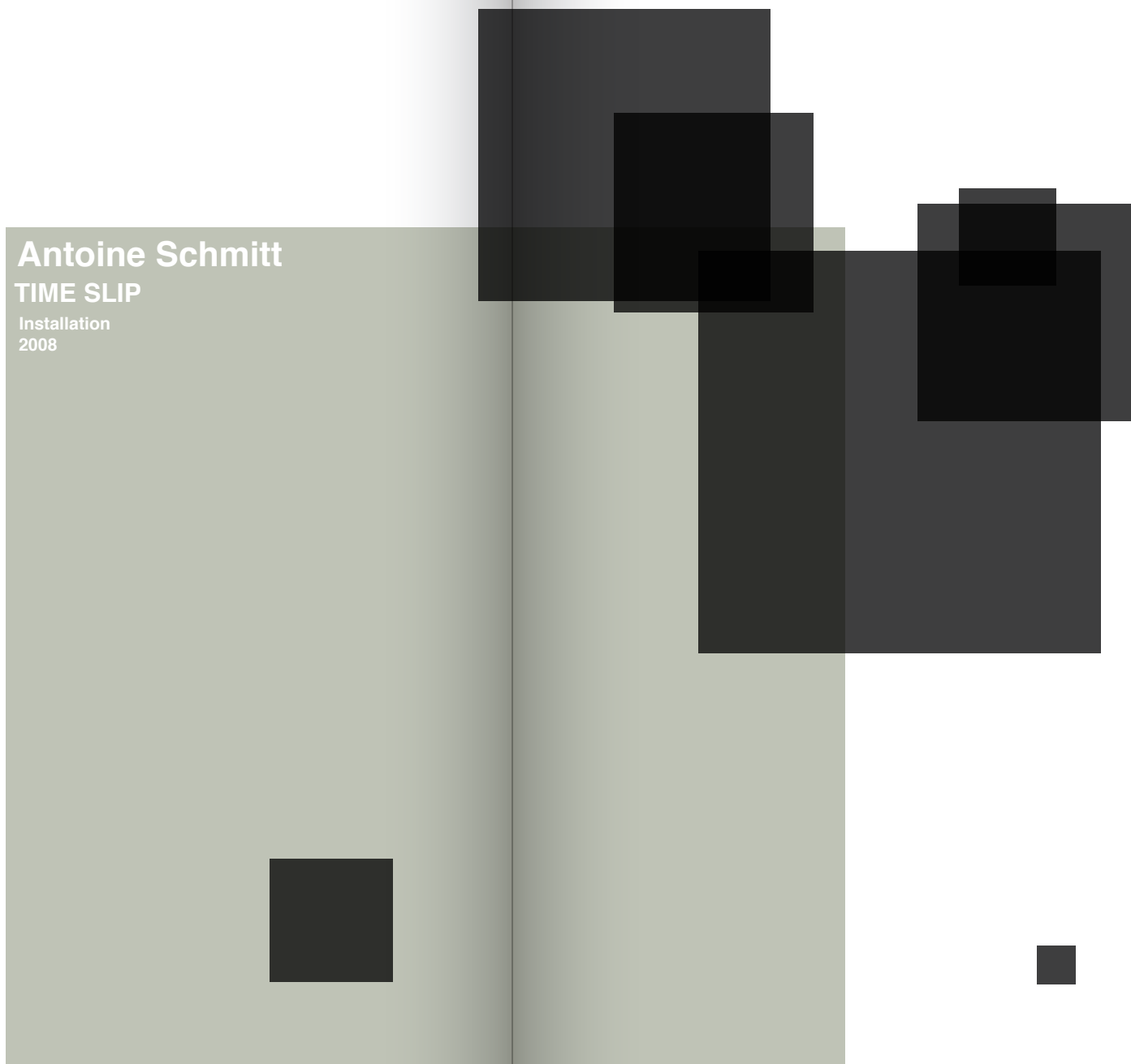
Nach Teilnahmen an großen internationalen Ausstellungen wie der documenta X und der 49. und 50. Biennale von Venedig wurden Nicolais Arbeiten 2005 in zwei umfangreichen Einzelausstellungen an der Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (anti reflex) und der Neuen Nationalgalerie Berlin (syn chron) gezeigt. 2007 bestritt er weitere ausgedehnte Ausstellungen in Zürich und New York. Carsten Nicolai experimentiert seit vielen Jahren mit Klang unter seinem Pseudonym noto und schafft seinen eigenen Code von Zeichen, akustischen und visuellen Symbolen. Als alva noto führt er diese Experimente in den Bereich der elektronischen Musik.

www.carstennicolai.de

Carsten Nicolai



Antoine Schmitt
TIME SLIP
Installation
2008



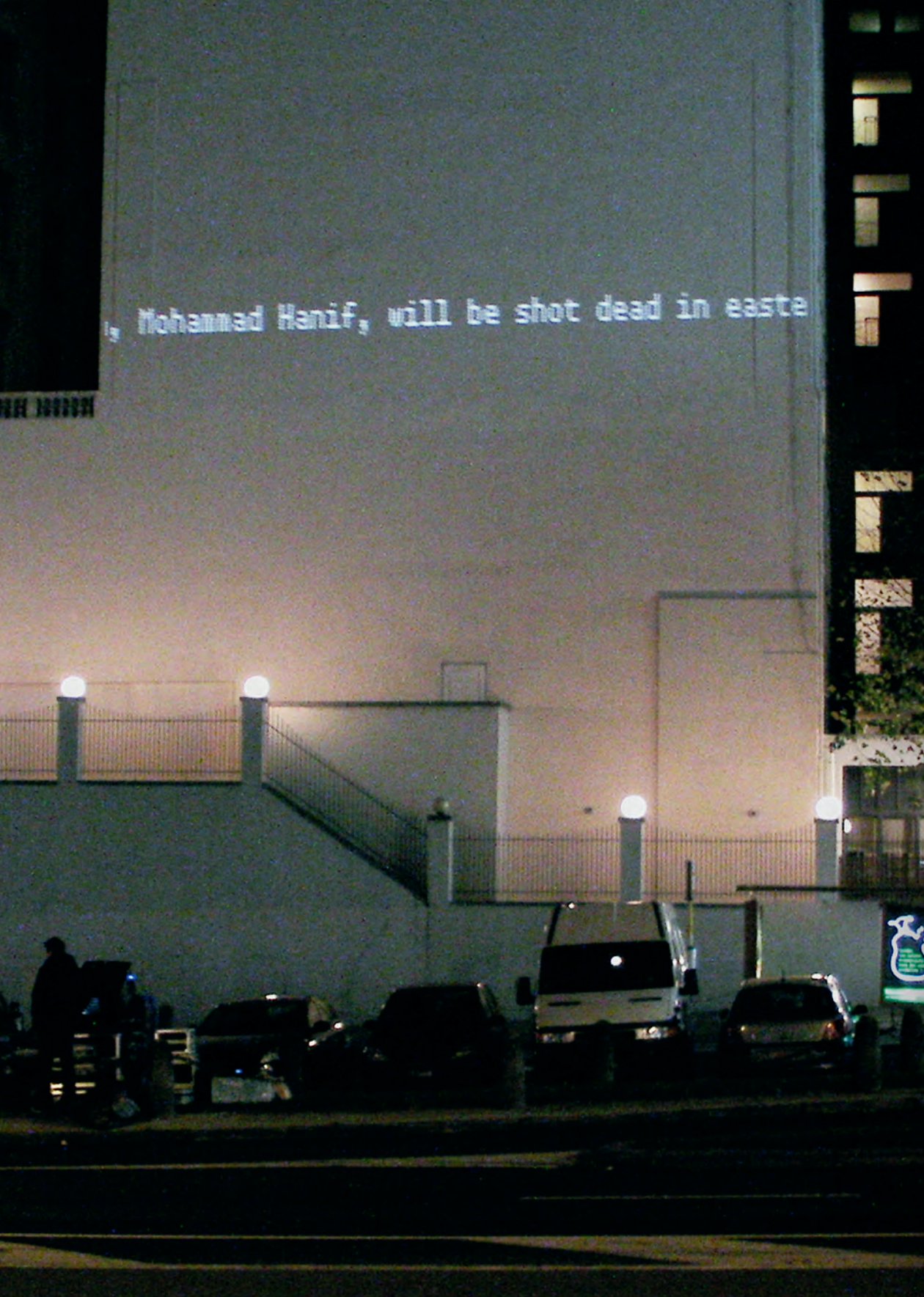
o people will be killed

will report a quarter

Police will arrest two m

Ita will die suddenly du

will kill at least 23 p



On a public display, a news ticker continuously shows news in scrolling text. The news items are, however, conjugated in the future tense: 'the NASDAQ will drop 4.3 points today,' 'A plane will crash in Madrid killing 153 people,' 'The Giants will crush the Red Socks 10-3'. Aside from the tense of the verbs, all the news is completely true... *TIME SLIP* is a visual artwork anchored in philosophical questionings about destiny, its potentially predetermined nature and its causal determinism. It is also a work about free will in a universe where time and causality can 'slip'. It confronts the spectator with the control of his or her own destiny. It is also a work engaging with the motifs of unpredictability and risk, which are increasingly central in the contemporary world.

TIME SLIP is based on custom-built software that feeds from official news agencies, changing the tense of selected news items from near past to near future. *TIME SLIP* is always current. It is a programmed generative artwork.

Auf einem öffentlichen Display wird kontinuierlich der Text durchlaufender Neuigkeiten eines Nachrichtentickers angezeigt. Die Nachrichten werden dabei jedoch in Ihrer Zukunftsform konjugiert: 'Der NASDAQ wird heute um 4,3 Punkte fallen', 'ein Flugzeugabsturz in Madrid wird 153 Todesopfer fordern', 'die Giants werden die Red Socks mit 10 zu 3 auseinandernehmen'. Außer der Zeit der Verben entsprechen alle Nachrichten vollständig der Wahrheit... *TIME SLIP* ist eine visuelle künstlerische Arbeit, die philosophischen Fragen über Schicksalhaftigkeit, deren potenziell vorherbestimmte Natur und ihre kausale Bestimmung nachgeht, und am Ende auch eine Arbeit über den freien Willen in einem Universum, in dem die Zeit und ihre Ursächlichkeit entgleiten können. Der Besucher wird dabei mit der Kontrolle über sein eigenes Schicksal konfrontiert. Es ist aber auch eine Arbeit über Motive wie Unvorhersagbarkeit und Risiko, die in der heutigen Welt eine immer zentralere Stellung einnehmen.

TIME SLIP basiert auf einer speziell angefertigten Software, die sich offizieller Nachrichten-Feeds von Agenturen bedient und die Zeiten ausgewählter Schlagzeilen von der Vergangenheit- in ihre Zukunftsform ändert. *TIME SLIP* ist immer aktuell. Es ist eine programmiertes generatives Kunstwerk.

Antoine, *TIME SLIP* pinpoints the desire to get the news and know the truth in advance. This is the genre of the old 'media' of astrologers, fortune-tellers and oracles. The news media have, by reducing the time between the event and the news broadcast to zero, created the illusion of an approximate ability to control these events and their outcomes – whether as happy endings, or as spectacular catastrophes. What role do the temporal aspects of 'live-ness' and 'realtime' play in your work, work that is based on such fast, digital transformation of news information? What is the desire that you are trying to spark with this piece?

When confronted with *TIME SLIP*, the reader of the news has two possibilities: either he already knows the news and he is then projected mentally into a past time where some oracle tells him a future that he knows to be true ('a bomb will kill 12 people in Moscow' – yes, this is true) – there is a feeling of time fuzziness. Or he or she does not know the news yet, and she is then confronted with an oracle that pretends to know the future and that bluntly and neutrally announces it – creating a feeling of anxiety or of perverted absolute power. In both cases, time is blurred, whether it is the near past or the near future. The fundamental equation that states that the past is past and that the future is unknown suddenly loses its solidity. This equation is the basis of one of the main forces that move us as humans: curiosity (and its opposite, fear). By deactivating this equation, *TIME SLIP* creates a feeling of deep unease. It stops us, giving us some time to question this powerful attraction to the future.

Your work uses the sophisticated, yet 'simple,' artifice of reversing the grammatical tense of these headlines, turning quick and catchy news with a rather short half-life into solemn oracles of the future. The startling moment that may be experienced at the point of realising this time shift, or time slip, perhaps comes from the meeting of the familiarised form of these messages and the uncompromising authority of the prediction. Essential for the authority of a supposed contemporary oracle, however, would be the amount of trust put into the predictions. What significance, or weight, does trust have in *TIME SLIP*?

In the installation notes, I specify that *TIME SLIP* should be displayed in order to look official. The red LED version looks like a plain standard outdoor news ticker. This gives it a neutral, almost laconic quality, that added to the fact that the vocabulary and grammar of *TIME SLIP* exactly reflects those of the usual news, account for the fact that the information displayed by *TIME SLIP* is immediately recognized as news and is imbued with the quality of truthfulness in the viewer's mind. At that point, the viewer has lost – his mind is already caught up in the *TIME SLIP* trap. There is only one escape for the viewer, which is to realize the vanity of this system that pretends to know the future but that in fact, of course, does not know anything.

One question about generating, or rather conveying, the news is the position of the filter – the human and the machinic one. Who decides what is a relevant news item and what is not? Similarly, the work feeds from a number of existing sources which needed to be decided upon. What motivated the choices of your sources?

I analysed many media sources, focusing on the ones that were strongly related to announcements of general interest (rather than discussions, or futile or specialised news): financial news, economic news, international news. There are also some technical constraints: the translation engine is rather simple so only phrases in which the engine finds and knows the verb are selected, transformed and displayed. Also all the phrases that were already in the future tense are dropped. This unnatural selection mechanism gives a sense of subjectivity to the system, which seems to select some news items and drop others, and gives it an added 'oracle' sense.

Next to the assumed, or at least temporary trust demanded by the respective messages, there is the latent distrust with the source being used in a manipulative way by different information lobbies. If one angle of *TIME SLIP* were about unmasking the suggestive manipulation of the news media, how big would the share of subversive energy in it be?

TIME SLIP is subversive on two levels: first, as outlined above, it deactivates and questions our own attraction to the unknown future. And secondly, by forcing us to distrust the supposed oracle with its ever so official look, it leads us to wonder how much trust can be put in the normal newsfeeds anyway.

Antoine Schmitt

Artist and programming engineer Antoine Schmitt creates installations, situations and objects, minimal and abstract, anchored in time and movement, that address the modalities of the free being in the system of reality. With reference to a systemic contemporary world, Schmitt places programming, an artistic medium that he considers radically new because of its active dimension, at the core of most of his artworks to challenge the forces in play, and their form. He has, alone or through collaborations, fostered confrontations with this approach in more established artistic fields like music, dance, architecture, literature and cinema, whose codes he re-examines. He has collaborated with Vincent Epplay, Jean-Jacques Birgé, Atau Tanaka, Anne Holts and Jean-Marc Matos, Alberto Sorbelli, Joana Preiss, Juha Marsalo and others. As a theorist, jury spokesman, and editor of the gratin.org portal, Schmitt explores the field of programmed art. Antoine Schmitt lives and works in Paris.

www.gratin.org/as

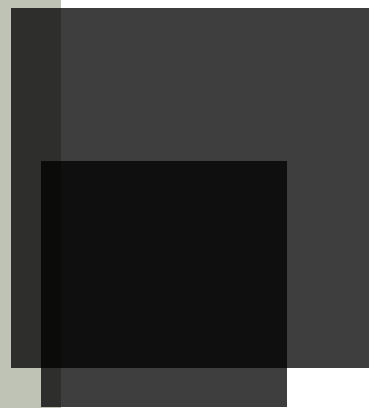
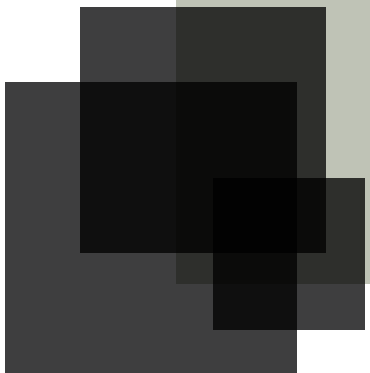
Der Künstler und Programmierer Antoine Schmitt arbeitet mit Installationen, Situationen und Objekten, minimal und abstrakt, die Zeit und Bewegung ergründen und sich mit den Bedingungen des freien Wesens im System der Realität befassen. Bezugnehmend auf eine systemische zeitgenössische Welt setzt Schmitt das Programmieren selbst – ein künstlerisches Medium, das er aufgrund seiner aktiven Dimension als radikal neu betrachtet – ins Zentrum der meisten seiner Werke, um damit die Kräfte im Spiel und deren Form zu hinterfragen. Die Auseinandersetzung mit diesem Ansatz pflegt Schmitt, alleine oder mittels Kollaborationen, ebenso in etablierteren Kunstfeldern wie Musik, Tanz, Architektur, Literatur oder Film, deren Codierungen er neu aufgreift. Er arbeitete zusammen mit Vincent Epplay, Jean-Jacques Birgé, Atau Tanaka, Anne Holts und Jean-Marc Matos, Alberto Sorbelli, Joana Preiss, Juha Marsalo, und anderen. Als Theoretiker, Jurysprecher und Herausgeber des gratin.org Portals erkundet Schmitt das Feld programmierter Kunst. Antoine Schmitt lebt und arbeitet in Paris.

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Milica Tomić

One day, instead of one night, a burst of
machine-gun fire will flash, if light cannot
come otherwise*

Photo/video action
Foto-/Videoaktion
2009





Milica Tomić One day, instead of one night, a burst of machine-gun fire will flash, if light cannot come otherwise Photo: Milica Lopicic

Over a period of two months, in the autumn of 2009, Milica Tomić visited particular sites of successful antifascist actions that members of the People's Liberation Movement and ordinary people, citizens, carried out in Belgrade against German occupation during the Second World War. The photos and video footage taken during these repeated walks are documents of the marking and mapping of sites where these actions took place, actions that are not part of the public memory of the city of Belgrade.

“Today, whether we are in a direct war situation or not, we find ourselves in a state of permanent mobilization. However, is it possible to use armed force without establishing a strict division into the terrorist versus the terrorized? Even if it were possible, such an action would have to be singular and entirely separate from all public opinion, political promises of identity groups, parties, movements or organizations, and would be distanced from the politics of terror and anti-terror. This description of a singular and universalistic position of the use of armed force is very much reminiscent of Partisan warfare, and of the politics that Yugoslav partisans conducted in the course of their antifascist revolutionary struggle, in a war against war – for peace. The action is an attempt to proceed from the position of a rebel, assuming an active position, without referring to the position of a victim, moving from the position of a victim onto the streets, with a machine gun in hand, carrying it simply and with determination, as if it were a supermarket carrier bag or an umbrella.” Milica Tomić

Im Herbst 2009 suchte Milica Tomić über einen Zeitraum von zwei Monaten markante Orte in Belgrad auf, an denen Mitglieder der jugoslawischen Volksbefreiungsbewegung, gemeinsam mit einfachen Bürgern, erfolgreich antifaschistische Aktionen gegen die deutsche Besatzung zur Zeit des Zweiten Weltkriegs ausführen konnten. Die Fotos und Videos, die bei den wiederholten Begehungen entstanden, dokumentieren das Markieren und Kartieren jener Orte, an denen sich diese Aktionen zugetragen haben. Aktionen, die heute ihrerseits nicht mehr Bestandteil der öffentlichen Erinnerung der Stadt Belgrad sind.

„Wir stehen heute in einem Zustand permanenter Mobilisierung, unabhängig davon, ob wir uns in einer unmittelbaren Kriegssituation befinden oder nicht. Ist es aber möglich, bewaffnete Gewalt auszuüben, ohne eine strenge Unterteilung in Terroristen und Terrorisierte vorzunehmen? Selbst wenn dies möglich sein sollte, so müsste die Aktion jenseits aller öffentlicher Meinung, politischer Versprechungen einzelner Gruppen, Parteien, Bewegungen oder Organisationen geschehen, und distanziert sein von der Politik des Terrors und Antiterrors. Diese Beschreibung einer singulären und universalistischen Position erinnert stark an die Kriegsführung der Partisanen und an die Politik der jugoslawischen Partisanen in ihrem antifaschistischen revolutionären Kampf. In einem Krieg gegen den Krieg – für den Frieden. Die Aktion ist ein Versuch, von der Position des Rebellen aus fortzuschreiten, eine aktive Haltung einzunehmen, ohne sich dabei auf die Stellung des Opfers zu beziehen, die Stellung des Opfers auf die Straße zu bringen, mit einer Maschinenpistole in der Hand, die ganz einfach und mit Entschlossenheit getragen wird, so als wäre sie eine Einkaufstasche, oder ein Regenschirm.“ Milica Tomić

* The title is taken from the fragment of a poem by Oskar Davico, 1925.

* Der Titel stammt aus einem Gedicht von Oskar Davico, 1925.
(Eines Tages, statt eines Nachts, wird ein Maschinengewehrfeuer aufflammen, wenn es kein anderes Licht gibt.)



One day, instead of one night, a burst of machine-gun fire will flash, if light cannot come otherwise

Milica, One day... is a subtle, yet at the same time massive intervention in the public sphere. With you walking down the street with a machine gun in hand, the work breaks the routine of the regular passersby and turns them into a part of the action. The action, pointing to a moment in time when it was not so unusual at all to be out in the streets bearing arms, is generating a time shift between direct, yet opaque history and lost, or at least buried, recollections of violent incidents in the very same place only a few years earlier. What are the reactions you get from your 'audience'? Can they usually connect with this 'time shift' you point to with your action, or, if not, what are their interpretations of the action, from their perspective?

I openly carried this army gun (Kalashnikov) as if it was perfectly 'natural' and I was not challenged at all. People on the street didn't react. They even avoided looking at me. My first thought about this was that the image of an armed woman in civilian clothes is something non-recognizable, because it is non-expected. It is not part of any layer of remembering or history of the city in Belgrade. Except in WWII, in which (armed) women had a significant and important place. But today the anti-fascist struggle and the People's Liberation Movement are no longer part of public memory, and my intervention was exactly about this – through pointing out locations in the city where the People's Liberation Movement performed successful anti-fascist actions during the Second World War, I tried to confront an erasure of the anti-fascist struggle from public history, and new forms of fascism which developed alongside. Images of armed women were not present during the wars in the 1990s. The role of the woman during those wars was completely different – to cover and hide the fact that the war was going on – but very important.

And then another aspect: during the recent war, the Serbian regime never admitted that Serbia took part and waged wars all over the region. By ignoring the appearance of an armed woman walking along the streets, there is again some kind of a denial. Belgrade citizens then in the 1990s and today do not want to know anything about what they actually see and what is being displayed in front of their eyes. We all know that most of the male population had contact with machine guns, or tried avoid it using different strategies during the time of the military mobilization of the citizens (leaving the country, hiding etc.). So, everybody knew exactly what I was carrying. Even the police ignored me. Why did nobody want to look at me? Just a few kids and teenagers...

But something happened during the *One Day...* intervention. It coincided with the detention of the 'Belgrade Six'. During my intervention, six young activists who are associates of the Anarcho-syndicalist organization (ASI, Belgrade, Serbia) were imprisoned, under allegations of 'International terrorism'. They are also a member organization of the International Workers Movement. By being imprisoned they became victims of political prosecution, facing the very worst cruelty of the EU and global anti-terrorist regulations. For me it appeared as direct proof of my thesis on the enclosure of public space and reductions of political and civil liberties through discourse on terrorism and its criminalization. The event in real life and my art action meet and pose the same questions: Who is a terrorist and who is being terrorized? And can violence, if not conceptualised as *(anti)terrorism*, be constructive today?

I considered this to be an important connection with my artistic work and I supported the 'Belgrade Six' in public. They were in prison for six months. Many intellectuals supported them, and finally, during the trial the allegations were changed.



In the case of the Anarcho-syndicalist group, anti-terrorist regulations within European law reduce the area of political and civil freedom and open a space for the criminalization of politics. They are about the right to the consumption of public space. These kinds of regulations intervene and reduce the free space for citizens, they allow nothing to appear that is not marked, signed and approved by the state, and through that, citizens are pacified.

My solidarity with those imprisoned was realized by using a media space in the free daily newspaper, *24 sata* (24 Hours), to support the campaign for liberation, by dedicating my artistic intervention to the anarcho-syndicalists and by concentrating on spreading information about these events to international art venues.

The action you are performing is reminiscent of successful anti-fascist actions during World War II against the German occupation, which as you say is not part of the public memory in Belgrade. Are they not part of the public memory in the sense of the lack of cultural recollection, such as monuments, or are they nearly non-existent in the immediate communicative recollection, such as written or oral history?

The social semantics of the fight for liberation conditions the ambivalent relationship between Serbian-nationalist connoted self-determination and determining what must be regarded as a struggle for freedom, terrorism, or criminal machinations. Who is a terrorist and who is being terrorized? What is legitimate resistance and what is simply a criminal act?

My intervention makes clear that historically determined places have fostered various concepts of the criminalization of the current state's monopoly of violence. I also see that the fragile relationship of *Legitimacy and Legality* has to be redefined in each case. For this reason it is necessary to ask to what extent the demands for (bourgeois) freedoms and political, as well as civil, resistance are being criminalized, and who feels entitled to ignore the state's monopoly on violence. Moreover, the artistic intervention also consists of marking the site as a territory in which a processual 'monument' is simultaneously created, one that only exists in the presence of events. At the same time this is the antithesis of the political acts that will be later underlined in the writing of history and which will be reified in monuments that legitimate the political governance by creating the corresponding memorial culture.

The rupture of a daily situation that is implied in *One day...* also alludes to a feeling or state that is required for the actual functioning of life in public space – and that is *trust*. The trust put into the other agents on the scene, that, for example, they wouldn't point a gun at you. Your action may be viewed as a symbolic breach of this trust, or quite the opposite, as a solid affirmation of it?

War used to be defined as a continuation of politics by other means. The moment when the war on terrorism was declared marked an act that changed the concept of war. This new type of war introduced specific mechanisms of criminalization and also placed certain ethnic groups, states, religious groups and political organizations outside the law. This new type of war changed the concept of the public (public space) and as a result we faced, as I already said, enclosure of public space and reduction of political and civil liberties through discourse on terrorism and its criminalization. How can we speak about trust when the shift of the notion of war to permanent war placed us at the centre of an open question: Who is being terrorized and who is the terrorist? Suspension of rights and the terror, for example, of the US state over Afghans is actually a terrorist act against American citizens. Or the suspension of rights and the terrorist actions of the Serbian state over Kosovo Albanians is actually a terrorist act against Serbian citizens.

But this also means that permanent war mobilizes us all, regardless of whether we are in a direct wartime situation or not. This gives rise to a question: how do we position ourselves in relation to this state of permanent mobilization? Mobilization bans any use of weapons whose outcome is not a division into the terrorist and the terrorized; that is to say, this confirms that there is a general ban on the use of armed force unless it is for the purpose of anti-terrorism or terrorism. Each act of getting hold of a weapon that does not serve the purpose of war against terrorism is proclaimed to be a terrorist act. What happens when we use armed force that does not establish the above-mentioned division into the terrorist and the terrorized?

One aspect of your mapping could be seen as bringing out parts of forgotten or repressed history and reintegrating them, artistically, into scenarios of the present – from 'the position of a rebel,' is this the position you would have most confidence in?

The repressed history that I am talking about is also a history of rebels and their struggle against fascism. The People's Liberation Movement is a movement that undertook a radical act of rebellion when rebellion was not possible. The People's Liberation Movement, known as partisans in the Second World War in Yugoslavia, was the only anti-fascist political movement in Europe. This movement invented the politics of emancipation, actually the politics of universalism of those who were excluded from it. And in doing so, defeated fascism.

Milica Tomić

Milica Tomić works and lives in Belgrade. She is a visiting lecturer at international institutions of contemporary art, such as Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, NIFCA (Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art), Piet Zwart Instituut, Rotterdam, Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna, and others. Currently she is a PhD candidate at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki. Tomić's work centres on issues of political violence, nationality and identity, with particular attention to the tensions between personal experience and media constructed images.

Milica Tomić has participated in international biennales, such as Venice Biennale (2001 and 2003), Sao Paulo Biennale (1998), Istanbul Biennale (2003), Sidney Biennale (2006), Prague Biennale (2007) and Gyumri Biennale (2008), and exhibited internationally, including Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Arnhem, Kunsthalle Wien, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, MUMOK - Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Fundacio Joan Miro, Barcelona, Ludwig Museum Budapest, Malmo Konsthall, Palazzo Della Triennale Milano, Museum of Contemporary Art Belgrade, GfZK-Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig, State Museum of Contemporary Art Thessaloniki, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, Freud Museum, London, KIASMA Nykytaiteen Museo, Helsinki, Nasjonalmuseet for Kunst, Arkitektur og Design, Oslo, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

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Milica Tomić nahm teil an internationalen Biennalen wie der Venedig Biennale (2001 und 2003), Sao Paulo Biennale (1998), Istanbul Biennale (2003), Sidney Biennale (2006), Prag Biennale (2007) und Gyumri Biennale (2008). Sie stellt international aus, u. a. Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Arnhem, Kunsthalle Wien, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, MUMOK- Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Fundacio Joan Miro, Barcelona, Ludwig Museum Budapest, Malmo Konsthall, Malmo, Palazzo Della Triennale Milano, Museum of Contemporary Art Belgrade, GfZK-Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig, State Museum of Contemporary Art Thessaloniki, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, Freud Museum, London, KIASMA Nykytaiteen Museo, Helsinki, Nasjonalmuseet for Kunst, Arkitektur og Design, Oslo, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

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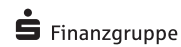


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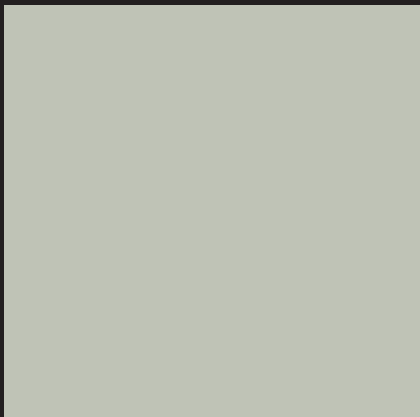




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