The world’s greatest peer-reviewed newspaper of in/compatible research

THANK YOU & GOODBYE

What happens when in/compatible phenomena are brought to the fore rather than hidden away in the dark underbelly of digital culture?

INSIDE: SOUVENIR POSTER
TRANSMEDIALE 2K+12 EDITION
Different technologies, their cultures of use, and how they are conceptualised, at once represent compatibilities and incompatibilities. What happens when such in/compatible phenomena are brought to the fore rather than hidden away in the dark underbelly of digital culture? Is their in/compatibility a threat to stability, connectivity and to the operations of socio-technical systems more broadly? How do these unresolved tensions and paradoxes of media technologies continue to impact experimental artistic imagination and research practices?

It is in this context that the in/compatible research newspaper provides a new platform for knowledge exchange, and research across disparate fields of practice. The content of the newspaper derives from a Ph.D. workshop and conference in November 2011, held at University of the Arts, Berlin (organised by Aarhus University in collaboration with transmediale/reSource for transmedial culture and the Vilém Flusser Archive). It provides an insight into current research from academics, practitioners, and Ph.D. students working in with in/compatibility, the 2012 transmediale festival theme. As such, the newspaper constitutes a thematic publication for the festival, and is an attempt to extend a media art festival like transmediale into a research context. Leading up to that event, and subsequent to it, a blog has been gathering draft articles and discussions, reflecting on the issue of in/compatibility. This collaborative ‘peer-review’ process (further developed during the festival itself in February 2012, at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, with presentations and discussions) culminates in the publication of this newspaper. So, although this may seem like old news in many ways, in terms of research practices, it breaks with some of the current academic conventions of peer-review, academic reputation, and what constitutes proper scholarly activity.

The paper is organised into three main strands of inquiry, related to in/compatible interfaces, methods and markets, which together explore some of the fundamental conditions for contemporary research practices. The paradoxes abound. On the one hand, a range of methods, including artistic research, extend and challenge the hegemony of knowledge production, but on the other, there is a powerful trend towards the marketisation of research, the creative industries agenda and instrumentalism in education. Underpinned by new public management, and the Bologna process, research undergoes ‘quality assurance’ where it is measured (through endless audits) and subject to compatible standards. In this process, knowledge production becomes ever more related to economical frameworks. The evidence is all around us, where drastic cuts to education, and research programmes are made compatible with austerity measures in order to subsidise the failures of financial capitalism (with fees). We ask whether it is possible to reconceptualise research outside the confines (and failures) of financial capitalism? What are the alternative models, which seek autonomy over knowledge production? How are technological paradigms redefining the horizon of social possibilities and enhancing autonomy over research from within a community of peers? These are research questions that we ask you to consider in reading this newspaper, and we hope you enjoy it.

Christian Ulrik Andersen, Tatiana Bazzichelli, Geoff Cox, Kristoffer Gansing (Aarhus University/ transmediale), January 2012.

“Being theory as well as practice, political practice, education today is more than discussion, more than teaching and learning and writing. Unless and until it goes beyond the classroom, until and unless it goes beyond the college, the school, the university, it will remain powerless.” – Herbert Marcuse

**DIFFUSION OF THE PEER-REVIEWED NEWSPAPER**

Public Interfaces, 2011. “Photos by Alex de Rijke.

**THE THREAT OF DISCONNECTION**

The threat of disconnection can be seen as force behind the developments of our current network culture.

**CAPITAL MARKETS**

How can permeability, and access from markets become an opportunity to advance the ideals of information-sharing and an academic gift economy?

**“... LA TÂCHE DU COLLÈGE EST [...] DE METTRE EN PLACE UNE DYNAMIQUE INSTITUTIONNELLE QUI PERMETTE DE LES FORMULER ET DE DÉFINIR LES CONDITIONS DANS LESQUELLES DES RÉPONSES PEUVENT ÊTRE APPORTÉES.”**

– FRANÇOIS CHÂTELET (ON COLLÈGE INTERNATIONAL DE PHILOSOPHIE)

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Starting from the assumption that the increasing commercialisation of the contexts of sharing and networking is transforming the meaning of art and participation, then how do artists, activists and hackers respond critically?

And if hacker and artistic practices are developing in the context of a deep transformation of the meaning of participation, often reflecting a precarious cultural and economical configuration, what are the responsibilities and the role of cultural institutions engaging with art and digital technologies towards a critical articulation of culture production?

In Berlin, hacker, activist and artistic practices are very much realised outside the realm of artistic institutions. Some of those practices are contributing to the transformation of the economy and the cultural asset of the city, but they are also becoming easy targets to be exploited by the market. However, this is not only a local phenomenon: at this present time, while financial markets are deeply influencing the development of cultural production and, more generally, our daily life flexibility, direct participation and common engagement are becoming pervasive business logics.

Analysing the topology and the effects of artistic and hacktivist practices in decentralised social networks implies a reflection on power structures, business methodologies as well as on the relationship between art and economy. The analyses of these subjects imply sharing methodologies whereby artists, hackers, activists and researchers join together to form practice-oriented contexts of reflection and provide feedback to both theory and practice through an interdisciplinary, distributed and polyphonic approach. Artistic and hacker practices are conceived both as a resource for producing cultural innovation, but also as a strategic challenge to generate media criticism and act as a meta-reflection on artistic production in the framework of digital culture and network economy.

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**reSource: What?**

The reSource for transmedial culture is a new framework for transmedial festival related projects that happen throughout the year in the city of Berlin. The objective is to act as a link between the cultural production of art festivals and collaborative networks in the field of art and technology, hacktivism and politics.

**reSource: Who?**

Source codes are useful to modify a program or understand how it works. Taking this notion more broadly, the reSource is a starting point from which a distributed sharing process, and a common executable (artistic) program, is produced. The objective is to develop a networking distributed platform and an executable meta reflection on the meaning and the practices of networked art, hacking and collaborative art production within the context of an international art festival.

**reSource: Why?**

The launch of the reSource takes place at transmediale 2012 through different project disseminations such as workshops, talks and performances. The reSource programme at transmedial festival is distributed into five different sub-themes: reSource methods, reSource activism, reSource networks, reSource markets and reSource sex. After transmedial 2012, the reSource will extend its activity in collaboration with partners: CTM/DISK, proposing a series of open events held in the spring 2012; the Post-Media Lab of the Leuphana University Lüneberg and Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien (Berlin), organising a public event in August 2012.

**reSource: When/Where?**

The activity of networking is seen as a research method used to explore how collaborative practices among communities of artists, activists and hackers contribute to shape new courses of action, tools and contents within (and beyond) digital culture production. By generating a set of questions and issues which are addressed to local and translocal communities, the main idea is to develop mutual exchanges of methodologies and knowledge, as well as project-space experiences, investigating new ways of forming a cultural public, and producing a meta reflection on strategies of collaborative actions.
"How can new scientific and technological paradigms redefine the horizon of social possibilities and open new concatenations that can reduce exploitation and enhance human autonomy?" – Scépsis – European School of Social Imagination

Interfaces

Is the ‘interface’ an alienating ideal for human/computer activity?

By CHRISTIAN ULRIK ANDERSEN & SØREN POLD

Compatibility in the interface can be constructed in different ways. This forces us to think critically about the mechanisms of control that are exercised when not only man meets the computer, but also when one level meets another within the computer, computers meet each other in a network, or when hardware meets software.

The German computer artist Frieder Nake urges us to begin by thinking on the division between signs and signals. Nake uses the example of Ivan E. Sutherland’s Sketchpad from 1962 to explain a basic incompatibility in the computer interface. Sutherland suggests that a successful drawing and design program depends on ‘the double existence’ of the drawing. It is at once an object in a complex data structure, and a visually perceptible object on a screen. Sutherland’s separation of data processing and visual representation is a division between machine-like signals and human signs. Interfaces exist to create compatibilities between sign and signal processes – they are ‘algorithmic signs,’ perceptible (by humans) and computable (by computers) and thus connecting the aesthetic/accessible with the algorithmic domain.

Division of labour

Nake also evokes Karl Marx’ description of an industrial and capitalist production process that generates a division between commodity and product, separating work from labour, and production from life; a duplication where the market outshines the labour (128). With technology, the worker is relieved from the duty of performing a task, and his/her work is reduced to controlling that nothing goes wrong in the process. Though less of an effort, and hence a liberation, this kind of monitoring is also alienating. The crafting skills vanish, and production is distanced from life.

Sketchpad suggests a new moment in the division of labour. The coupling of sign and signal enables the designer to draw parallel lines, duplicate drawings, etc. with virtually no effort. Like other technological tools, Sketchpad exceeds the bodily limitations of its user. However, apart from being an extension of the hand, the coupling of sign and signal is also an ‘augmentation of the human intellect’ (as described by another pioneer from the sixties, Douglas Engelbart). This makes the designer a craftsman (once again) – an ‘intellectual labourer.’ Through the software, the designer is liberated from boring technicalities and allowed to focus entirely on his/her creative skills: Life and work becomes one in the non-alienated designer.

Consumer control

Have the aspirations of the avant-garde (everyone can be an artist) come through with software (no more alienation)? To unveil this all-encompassing cover-up, one must focus on the work of the interface, and analyse the production of compatibility; the work of the interface.

Compatibility between signs and signals has for decades been conceptualised terms of ‘user friendliness.’ Today, in contemporary interface culture, the interface has become a model for consumer control. Within the computer game industry for instance, gamers can produce their own interfaces to the game. In fact, this kind of participatory innovation is encouraged by the game producers - but as long as the alternative interface does not threaten business. Game companies prosecute gamers who come up with their own interface models. This is evident in the example of World of Warcraft, a programme that automates the repetitive work-like actions of game avatars to increase one’s level in the game World of Warcraft. Eventually, the game user who invented the program was met (in his house) by lawyers from the game producer. Following, he was sentenced to pay a 6 million US$ fine (Boyer). Players have to work.

Alienation

In online game communities as well as platforms for file distribution (Appstore, Xbox Live, etc.), and in many other examples, the relations between signs and signals are constructed as if there are no alternatives – you just have to click ‘accept’. Participation is compulsory, but defined by nonnegotiable terms and conditions.

This expresses a possible alienation from the interface. The human-computer interface that addresses the juxtaposition and incompatibility between the work of the computer (processing signals) and the work of the operator (processing signs), is designed as if there legally and perceptually is only one way to make the two compatible. In this, the user potentially becomes alienated to the process of compatibility. This calls for new visions of alternative compatibilities, and an interface criticism that is able to analytically and conceptually deal with the construction of compatibility.

(pong) pong

By LASSE SCHERFIG

What do we do with the computers that surround us? And what do we see on their screens? Three games help understand the nature of ‘interaction’ as the interplay of controlling and being controlled by symbolic representations – that are created in action.

In 1960, Valie Export presented the installation pong, a film to be played using a paddle and a ball. At the same time, Ralph Bear constructed the Brown Box – the prototype of a game that later would be named Pong, featuring similar game play: hitting a bright spot on screen with an, albeit virtual, paddle. These two pong games strangely reflect a third ‘game,’ set up by Norbert Wiener in 1941: an experimental system in which a person had to hit a white spot of light projected onto a wall using a second spot, controlled by a joystick. Pong was meant as a critique on the dispositif of cinema but also anticipated the format of interactive media art installations to come. As such a transitory piece between old and new media, its criticism of cinema as an apparatus of control anticipated much of the later critique of interactive media that speaks of ‘conditioning of a viewer’.

Pong is an early specimen of a new type of machine uniting the Universal Turing Machine with the control principle of feedback: the Feedback Machine.
Any network connecting people, devices or systems meets its adversary in disconnection.

By TERO KARPPI

Disconnection

The threat of disconnection, in Baran’s thought, leads to a model of a distributed work that has been called as one of the most important technological diagrams of our century. (Galloway 11-12) Simultaneously it is a push towards digital technology, new at the time. Baran’s system chops information into digital packets and reconstructs it in the target location. This was highly significant for what was described as “minimal essential communications,” an euphemism for the President to be able to send a command: “You are authorized to fire your weapons” or “Hold your fire” (An Interview with Paul Baran 14).

Moreover, the threat of disconnection explains why the distributed network is made to grow and adapt machines and technologies within its system; since threat does not have its own operable logic, it adopts the idea of the doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction. While MAD presupposes a total destruction which will deter totalitarianism the whole planet, distributed network materializes this threat in advance to a global low-cost network that will survive the destruction.

In conclusion, the threat of disconnection can be seen a force behind the developments of our current network culture. At any rate, it helps us to understand the myth of the Internet being a product of nuclear war, and illustrates its consequences that are not merely political but also technological and material. tkarp@utu.fi

Works cited:


Image: Objects: Computer Graphics and Object Orientation

By JACOB GABOURY

The term ‘computer graphics’ was first coined in 1960 by William Fetter, an art director working for Boeing. In 1964, Fetter was the first person to model the human figure using a computer. ‘Boeing Man,’ as he has come to be known, was intended to model the human form and provide adaptable representations for use in ergonomic simulations, in other words, to create a digital model of a physical object in order to simulate real-world interaction. One year prior, in 1963, Ivan Sutherland defended his PhD at MIT. Titled Sketchpad: A Man-Machine Graphical Communication System, it outlined the first complete graphical user interface that allowed the user to create and manipulate lines and shapes directly on the screen of the computer, organizing them into ‘objects’ that could later be recalled and ‘instances’ that could be manipulated en masse. Between 1962 and 1967 Ole-Johan Dahl and Kristen Nygaard developed the Simula programming language at the Norwegian Computing Centre in Oslo. As its name implies, Simula was developed for simulating discrete event systems, and first introduced concepts such as objects, classes, sub-classes, virtual methods, coroutines, discrete event simulation, and garbage collection to programming languages. It is considered the first object-oriented programming language.

Simulation

Beginning in the 1960s there is a shift in the field of computer science from computation as procedural, end-driven, linear calculation to a kind of computation as procedural, end-driven, linear calculation toward a kind of computation through simulation - of simulating a world comprised of self-contained, constructed objects that are capable of discrete forms of interaction. These objects are nameable, actionable, visualisable, and are meant to replicate real world engagement with a knowable object world. While in the past computing had largely been concerned with the procedural computation of information about the world, and in solving problems derived from information taken from real world contexts, this shift marks a move to digitise the physical world so that it can be re-coded subject to a system of simulations. Through this process of digitisation, the world is limited, made discrete and knowable, and can be used to model virtual scenarios that may be translated back into the physical world.

Object-oriented

Over the last fifty years this simulation logic has come to dominate the way we produce and engage with the objects that make up our world. In the same way computer graphics have been used to model the function of real-world objects, object-orientation mimics the physical and linguistic object relations of the human world. In doing so it interfaces the human with the nonhuman, as through interface “users are made to inhabit the space and medium of the other objects and are treated as objects themselves” (Alt 297). Users are disciplined so that they may be interfaced with the object-network. And yet these object-oriented systems also produce non-human forms of affective engagement, in that the object-actants shift and adapt in response to an engagement with the system. For example, watching a swarm of insects in a swarm are engaged in a process of affective sensing and adaptation, “software is... a body of code being executed, existing through that temporal unfolding in technological and other milieu and support (or afforded existence)” (Parikka 165-166). In this way object-oriented systems are both structures of highly networked control and examples of a non-human ontology that nonetheless contain the human within itself, “a nonhuman that traverses the human, that runs through the human” (Galloway and Thacker 141).

Blind Optics

How is cinema redefined in the course of ongoing technological developments? At first, one might think that the incorporation of digital computers would radically change the norms of movie production, distribution and exhibition. Nevertheless, the exact opposite seems to be happening: while these practices retain their mediatized specificity, it is technology that changes its nature, as it becomes the means through which to convey the cinemographic circuit. For instance, after it has been installed in a projection booth, a computer should be operated only in function of movie screenings. Thus, multiple characteristics of the machine are treated in order to comply with its use as an apparatus for film exhibition. This rationalisation of technique within cinema goes unnoticed precisely because the medium entails the parameters of its own evaluation. Matthew Kirschenbaum calls this a modal ideology: one that makes us approach cinematic techniques such as generative programming, presents visuals that are not conveyed by clear lenses, visuals that mostly result from celluloid stock, electronic circuits and digital codification. Looking at these pieces, we are confronted with a sort of blind optics: images produced not by the means of abstracting the world, but through the abstraction of apparatuses themselves. Pushing forward the horizon of a potentially invisible cinema, blind optics exposes the apparatus that supposedly characterises the medium. This logic sets the conditions for an element to be cinematic – for example, by establishing how many pixels an image should have in order to attain the resolution proper to the medium. Such epistemological bias filters most possibilities of new technologies out of cinema right from the outset.

Optical Media

But if we are allowed to ask whether computers can produce images as clear as film, why can’t we expect cinema to be as interactive as a Web browser? To further probe into the relation between media and technique, it seems necessary to avoid the medium’s own parameters. In this direction, we might adopt Friedrich Kittler’s idea of optical media instead – a classification based not on the cognitive effects of cinema, but rather on the operational principles of its apparatus. This attention to optics can be useful to disclose mechanisms of figurative representation. Paul Virilio has previously used it to distinguish between the ways different media technologies organise space and time. However, such an approach also risks obfuscating even more the artificiality of technique. To analyse the apparatus as purely optical is to overlook their physical constitution, which is also mechanical and chemical, electromagnetic and computational.

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Material Incompatibility

By JUSSI PARIKKA

Forget smooth, start with the rough. What if we assume a fundamental incompatibility?

What if we assume that by their nature, things don’t fit in? Not with the world, not with themselves; incompatibility is not a contingent or if it is, it is the fundamental contingency of the world from thoughts to things, ideas to devices. Furthermore, incompatibility is not only a cognitive category, or an object that just does not fit in – the anomalous, the incongruous, the thingy without even a proper name.

What kind of materiality are we talking about then?

Is it the material that we know from a certain brand of German media theory, often for the Anglo-American audience attached to the name of Friedrich Kittler only? The materiality that starts reading media devices from their scientific and engineering roots, in order to claim that the frustrations at the entertainment interface are only an after effect of a much longer military-scientific genealogy? That media studies starts from physics and communications engineering, from war and scientific management theories than it does from the audience or representations, from content or narratives.

Or another kind of a materiality?

What if we take it even more literally and start talking of “plasma reactions and ion implantation” (Yoshida 105) – as in processes of semiconductor fabrication, as relevant to arts and humanities perspectives that have to entertain the atmosphere of consumerism. This is followed by a quick turn to obsolescence. Dealing with obsolete devices is often called ‘recycling’ but is actually waste-trade, where old electronic media are shipped, e.g. to India to be disman-tled by means of some very rudimentary – and dangerous – processes that affect the lungs and nervous systems of the poor workers. (Gabrys) Nor should we forget where the minerals for the components come from – such as coltan, which is mined in Congo and from which refined tantalum powder is obtained. Tantalum powder is extremely heat-resistant and hence ideal for manufacturing certain parts in mobile phones, Play station game consoles, and so forth. The mineral allows us to consume mediatic content but has at the same time its own genealogies of matter and politics, for instance in bloody wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where a range of European mining companies have had their own dubious part to play, including funding the war efforts in order to secure the extraction of the mineral (Cuveller and Raaymakers).

So what if we consider media archaeology as media garbology?

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AGAINST PSYCHOPATHIA MEDIANS - FOR NORMAL SCHIZOPHRENIA
A MINIMAL MANIFESTO

By SIEGFRIED ZIELINSKI

1.

Arts and theories that possess an affinity to advanced thinking and advanced technologies demand maximum movability. This movability is not the same as the mobility that is demanded of us day in, day out, and proclaimed as an inherent necessity. Movability does not offer itself for exploitation and, in turn, it does not exploit. Our movability gets by with a minimum of possessions albeit carefully selected ones. It cultivates a life of wandering and attempts to orient itself in the world without prescribed disciplines. It is in the best sense undisciplined. It cannot be disciplined. This is a plea for theory and practice situated in the in-between of disciplines, between stuck-out territories, between the dispositifs of power, which Michel Foucault identified above all as senility, truth, and knowledge. To this we can add the network.

2.

And this is a mini-discourse on incompatibility: Globalisation is a concept that is profoundly bound up with economic, cultural, and political power. The word originates from a vocabulary that has nothing to do with art. Our justified concern is to communicate our work on a worldwide basis, and to carry this through without falling into the trap of such (pre)determinations, therefore we need other concepts and other orientations. Poets and philosophers, like Édouard Glissant from Martinique, may be able to provide them. Glissant operates with the concept of mondialité. Jacques Derrida also regarded this concept very highly. With mondialité both thinkers describe a quality of worldwide relationships, which are not defined in terms of their rational purposiveness, but as the “poetics of relations” Art and theory that are created with the aid of advanced ideas and media could in this sense become “mondiale” theory and practice.

3.

In case of doubt and with the option of choosing alternatives, a risky decision in favour of the possible is more appropriate than a pragmatic decision in favour of reality. Modern science, technology, and art have expended their energies for over 400 years on making the invisible visible and the imperceptible perceptible. Through translating natural and binary data and rendering social relations, including their fine structures, systematic, this process is now far advanced. The more that the technological world is programmed to make the impossible possible — that means, to make it function — it is worthwhile to undertake the attempt to confront the possible with its own impossibilities. This would be an alternative programme to establishing cybernetics as a cultural and social technology.

4.

In the most advanced societies we live in a permanent testing situation. Our environment is set up as a test department, which was also the name of a great band (Test. Dept.) in the 1980s from Glasgow in Scotland. Ideas and concepts that have barely seen the light of day are subjected to trials to test their viability on the market. By contrast, in elaborate artistic processes the experiment takes precedence over the test. As a matter of principle experiments are free and failure is always possible. Tests, on the other hand, are tied to clearly defined purposes and pre-ordained objectives that have to be met. Tests serve to create products. In a test, input and expected output are connected as closely as possible.

5.

In the early modern era the attraction of the alchemist’s laboratory was not primarily to turn base metals into shining gold. Rather, the fascination was that they were places where it was possible to gather profound experience of active processes for changing something less than perfect into something more perfect. This process consisted mainly of research. And the transformation of the transmutes was just as important as the transformation of matter.

6.

Theory and practice of the arts that are realised by media, amongst other things, should not waste their energy on renovating and restoring the world, but rather on the never-ending experiment, which is never in vain, to create a different world to the one that exists. Because the media-based arts are all time-based — that is, arts realised in a space-time continuum — one thing is of prime importance: to give back to those who are supposed to look

7.

The enormous amount of effort and energy, which is required to occupy the centre of technological and cultural power, is not worth it. Movements at the periphery have greater freedom, give more enjoyment, and hold more surprises in store. Such movements do not preclude the occasional excursion through the centre to reach other places on the periphery. On the contrary: living permanently on the periphery is only to be recommended if one knows the centre’s special qualities and if one has an idea of how it works. Only then can one enjoy the movements at the periphery.

8.

In more ways than one dual identities at very or at a magician. An experimental approach to the world demands acts of intervention as well as actors who are prepared to follow a hands-on approach. The best is: magical operator or operative magician. It is high time to cease regarding as an antagonism what Walter Benjamin formulated over seventy years ago for “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproduction” for art processes in the age of their limitless simulability.

9.

The social and political macrocosm, just like the microcosm of the individual brain, is determined by a high tension, which time and again threatens to rend the one or the other. One does not have to be a psychiatrist or psychoanalyst to engage rigorously with advanced ideas and technologies. However, it is good to know in what ways they act within the field of tension constrained by systems of which we can profit enormously. Cultivation of one’s own dreams is just as important as constant practice of organising everyday life. Care of others’ dreams we should leave to others. The act of interpreting dreams and the act of controlling dreams are closely related. That is the reason why we mistrust people who want to know what we have dreamed in order to interpret it.

10.

Art produced by advanced ideas and technologies does not necessarily have to increase the mysteriousness of the world. But it also does not necessarily have to increase the amount of what is obvious or customary. There is quite enough of this already, without artists and theorists contributing more.

11.

The difficult balancing act for the visual arts is to enable expression of the invisible using the resources of the visible. This applies similarly to the acoustic world and the world of poetry: to make what is tonally not imaginable accessible to hearing, and to formulate what is not expressible in language in a formal arrangement that possesses the greatest degree of freedom. The most important task is to sensibilise, or maintain people’s sensibility, for the Other, that which is not identical to us, that which is as a principle and in its essence alien, utilising the means and instruments of aesthetics. This
Notes on 120 Days of *buntu

By GEOFF COX

What kind of transgressions are imagined in the naming of this project? The 120 Days of Sodom, or the School of Libertinism, written by Donatien Alphonse François (aka Marquis de Sade) in 1785, famous for its portrayal of artificial paradise, the stretch of time that only drugs can induce but machines can simulate. The Long Now is an obsession project that was developed by engineers and program­mers who want to play God.

To avoid an existence that is caught up too much within time and is therefore para­noid, and to avoid being too little within time and therefore thinking one is at home on the rings of Saturn in melancholy and bitterness, it is helpful as a principle to cultivate the conscious split. We work, organise, publish, and amuse ourselves in networks. We rhapsodise, meditate, enjoy, believe, and trust in autonomous, separate situations, each to his/her own and sometimes with other indi­viduals. This adds up to a balancing act: in a single lifetime we have to learn to exist online and be offline. If we don’t succeed in this, we shall become mere appendages of the world that we have created, merely its technical functions. We should not allow cy­bernetics, the science of optimal control and predictability, this triumph.

As the young Wittgenstein wrote in Tractatus logico philosophicus “The subject doesn’t belong to the world, but it is a limit of the world” (Proposition 5.632). This has not changed. Not even after the sovereign indi­vidual subject of the European modern age was declared variously as dead. On the con­trary. Only the boundaries have shifted. The fact that such limits exist is not affected.

Like heaven and hell, the Internet has no location. However, body and mind can only be in one place at a time. To militate against the sacralisation of the networks it is useful to develop a profane relationship to them. This can only be done from somewhere located outside of them.

The greatest impossibility that one can work on at the moment is the relations of indi­viduals with each other and, as a conse­quence, the relations between the many. Michel de Montaigne defines friendship (following Aristotle) as a constellation where one soul lives in two different bodies so that neither giving nor taking is an issue. “To the company at table I would rather in­vite someone witty than thoughtful; to bed rather beauty than goodness; to social oc­casions the quick-witted [...]” Relationships between friends are characterised by the ab­sence of any such determination of aims and intent. This absence is not a lack but a reflection of the greatest possible richness of experience.

Ability and the replication of proprietory and normative forms. This identifies one of the paradoxes of free software development more generally: its ready recuperation, and that its very success is part of the problem. Any relat­ed notion of freedom stands for a paradox: belief in open standards and at the same time the means to capitalise on sharing and free la­bour. Moreover, radical sharing communities that have emerged through projects like GN/Linux are not simply alternatives to capitalism but also new forms that express its unerring ability to absorb social innovation and pervert its capturing critique, as well as the desire and imagination invested in it in the first place. Perhaps this is also what happened to some extent when Ars Electronica decided, in 1999, to award its Golden Nica not to an artwork but to the Linux operating system and in this way unwittingly absorbed it into instrumentalised understandings of creativity (exemplified by the giving of awards). (Further irony is added by 120days receiving a Honorary Mention at Prix Ars in 2011.)

Excess

So is the project not simply doomed to fail­ure, especially given that alternative technical systems and creative activities once released are soon after effectively absorbed by free market ideology? Has it also not become an orthodoxy these days for cultural producers to work “operatively” at the level of the apparatus like technicians or engineers (as Benjamin recommended in his “The Author as Produc­tor” of 1934; or Savičić and Vasilić’s own “The Manifesto for Critical Engineering” of 2011)? What is the effect of the intervention here in terms of operating systems more broadly; of art, of politics, of the body, and so on? By tak­ing de Sade as inspiration, something rather different seems to be exposed, more in the realm of tactics where new production be­comes a preferred technique to escape the de­termination of existing imperatives of capital­ism (Bataille). Something else is also revealed, in that political struggle is characterised be­tween operating systems for liberating desire and mechanisms of control over the imagi­nary (Berardi). Perhaps 120 Days of *buntu manages to reactivate excess, desire and im­agination in these ways, thus opening up new possibilities for socio-technical transgression.
NOTUBE CONTEST 2011
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The NoTube Contest has a new champion. It’s the user ‘fakety’ who found the video ‘ignacio: 4!’. An absolutely valueless experience, awarded by the 2011 special jury:

Geoff Cox, Marisa Olson and Constant Dullaart.

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EXHIBITION AT COMPUTERSPIELEMUSEUM BERLIN AND TRANSMEDIALE 12

transmediale 2k+12
The press was driven by Good Wheels Heavy Transport to the port in Karodia for shipping to Germany by Acela (AFC), born 8/7/79, from Gurgaon, Haraina Province, father of three.

A vast area is mined in the brown hills of central Chhattisgarh province it just happened that enormous reserves of iron ore to feed India's modernisation revolution. 10,000 people work there, the mining camp is populated by approximately 50,000. Everyday they eat breakfast and go to dig in the mine. Some have been working there since 1977, however due to extremely bad conditions in the early days few have managed to survive that long.

On January 21st 1984, N. M. Joshi, born in 1920, woke up, had breakfast prepared by his wife and went to the mine as usual, on the left was met by Bhimabai, a worker, and three others. Together they walked up to the minehead where they were directed where to work by H. L. Gupta, director. He worked his allotted 10 hours during the day. At the mine, hopping ore out of the side of the mine wall with a spade. During these ten hours of work he produced 142 kilograms of ore. This amount of ore resulted in approximately 1 kg of the steel in the Aspra 9877 printing press, which used approx. 500 kg of steel in all.

Therefore, for ten days of N. M. Joshi's work would have sufficed to produce the ore for the press which printed this newspaper.
“Can art become a re-activator of the social body, beyond the commodification of the art formats and the an-aesthetics of media overload?” – Scépi – European School of Social Imagination

THE GLITCH ART GENRE

To encapsulate a whole range of unstable processes and sometimes almost contradictory intentions of glitch artists, it is useful to consider glitch art as a genre.

By ROSA MENKMAN

As the popularisation and cultivation of glitch art facts is now spreading more widely, it is interesting to track the development of these processes and their consequences. One of these consequences is that we can consider glitch as an artistic genre. But what does saying ‘glitch is a genre’ actually mean?

The fatal manner of glitch, its orientation towards the destruction of what is, can present a problem to those who want to describe old and new culture as a continuum of different discrete practices. One way to deal with this problem is to repeatedly coin new terms and concepts to make room for splinter practices within the expanding media cultural field. An abundance of designations such as databending, datamoshing and circuitbending have come into existence to name and bracket varieties of glitch practices, but all in fact refer to similar practices of breaking flows within different technologies or platforms.

Genre

To consider glitch art as a genre is to emphasise that genres are social and consensus-based constructs, rather than definitive categories (Altman). Steve Neale has suggested that genres are best understood as processes: The process-like nature of genres manifests itself as an interaction between three levels: the level of expectation, the level of the generic corpus, and the level of the ‘rules’ or ‘norms’ that govern both. […] the elements and conventions of a genre are always in play rather than being, simply re-played; and any generic corpus is always being expanded. (56)

While genres are always ‘in play’, they also – by definition – have some sort of organised and perceived unity. This unity models both how a viewer perceives any work in the genre and how she comes to associate new works within it. Mary Ann Doane suggests that “the unity of a genre is generally attributed to consistent patterns in thematic content, iconography, and narrative structure” (34). In glitch art, this ‘thematic content’ can be found within the work’s language and design, while iconographic and narrative themes are positioned within glitch art’s investment in the rupture of procedures and technique, the break from a flow or the void of meaning in the social understanding and the esthetical references.

Materiality

To call glitch a genre also means to suggest that it is intelligible as a tendency: to exploit medium-reflexivity and to take on the rhetorical questioning of the perfect use and function of technologies, their conventions and expectations. Paradoxically then, out of its instantiation in error and breakages, Glitch art can, through its play with conventions and expectations, be described as a genre that fulfills certain expectations. This reflexive approach to materiality in glitch tends to, as Katherine Hayles would assert, re-conceptualise materiality itself as “the interplay between a text’s physical characteristics and its signifying strategies.” Rather than suggesting media materiality as fixed in physicality, Hayles’ re-definition is useful because it opens the possibility of considering texts as embodied entities while still maintaining a central focus on interpretation. In this view of materiality, it is not merely an inert collection of physical properties but a dynamic quality that emerges from the interplay between the text as a physical artifact, its conceptual content, and the interpretive activities of readers and writers.

Glitch genres perform reflections on materiality not just on a technological level, but also by playing off the physical medium and its non-physical, interpretative or conceptual characteristics. To unravel the wealth of work from the genre of glitch art completely, each level of this notion of (glitch) materiality should be studied: the text as a physical artifact, its technological and aesthetic qualities, conceptual content, and the interpretive activities of artists and audiences.

This text is a paragraph from the upcoming notebook: “The Glitch Moment(um).”

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GLITCH STUDIES

Manifesto

1. The dominant, continuing search for a noiseless channel has been — and will always be — no more than a regrettable, ill-fated dogma! Acknowledge that although the constant search for complete transparency brings nothing, ‘better’ media, every one of these improved techniques will always possess their own inherent fingerprints of imperfection.

2. Dispute the operating templates of creative practice; fight genres, interferences and expectation! Refuse to stay locked into one medium or between contradictions like real vs. virtual, obsolescent vs. up-to-date, open vs. proprietary or digital vs. analog. Surf the vortex of technology, the in-between, the her artifacts!

3. Get away from the established action scripts and join the avant-garde of the unknown. Become a nomad of noise artifacts!

The static, linear notion of information transmission can be interrupted on three occasions; during encoding-decoding (compression), feedback or when a glitch (an unexpected break within the flow of technology) occurs. Noise artists must exploit these noise artifacts and explore the new opportunities they provide.

4. Employ bends and breaks as a metaphor for difference. Use the glitch as an exoskeleton for progress. Find catharsis in disintegration, ruptures and breaks manipulate, harness any medi- um towards the point where it becomes something new; create /glitch art/.
PERFORMING THE PARADOXES OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

I DON’T KNOW, video, 2006, screenshot

TACTICAL QUESTIONING

CORNELIA SOLLFRANK INTERVIEWED

You have recently completed your PhD, what was the topic of your research?

My research was a practice-led investigation into the conflicting relationship between copyright and art, i.e. it was interdisciplinary research involving different disciplines such as aesthetic theory and practice, and law. The incentive to conduct this research was an act of censorship that I experienced in my practice as an artist. In 2004, a planned exhibition was cancelled due to alleged copyright infringement, because I used the motif of the Warhol Flowers for an experimental continuation of postmodern authorship-critical concepts under the condition of digital networked technologies. This incident aroused my curiosity and I wanted to explore what the connecting lines between my art practice and the framing concept of intellectual property were. Moreover, I was aware that ‘my case’ was not an exception; since intellectual property has become a central concept to safeguard the marketability of intangible goods within the knowledge economy. Stricter copyright laws and their harsher enforcement increasingly have also led to legal problems for artists whose practice is based on the use and reworking of existing copyrighted material. Thus, I was also interested in getting a deeper understanding of these dynamics and in particular the role art and artists play within these developments.

How did you conduct your research?

The advantage of research in the art context is that it is not only possible but even required to develop one’s own methodology. Each single research project demands its own methods. They are usually developed on the basis of a specific art practice, its contextual theory, the topic of the research and the desired outcome.

The starting point for my research was the paradoxical concept of intellectual property. The basic idea of intellectual property is to find a balance between the protection of the economic and moral interests of creators and innovators and, at the same time, to enable cultural, scientific and economic innovation. Yet where creation and innovation rely on access to, and the use of protected works, proprietary rights hamper new creation and innovation. This paradox has always existed, but due to the technological, economic, legal and cultural developments that have taken place since the mid-1990s, it has turned into a central problem of the information society. My project focused on the paradoxes produced by copyright, as one form of intellectual property, in the light of art practices that are based on the use and reworking of protected material.

Since it was clear from the beginning that I would not be able to ‘solve the problem’ through my research, the challenge was to come up with a methodology that would lead to results that still could contribute to a solution by producing new knowledge. For that reason I chose the concept of ‘performativity’ to be the methodological paradigm of my research as it allows for the conceptualisation and dramatisation of a subversive artistic approach to law. To develop this approach, I drew on Brad SSPZ’s concept of performative research as a third research paradigm alongside the established paradigms of quantitative and qualitative research; and additionally introduced Judith Butler’s juridical model of ‘performativity’ as well as Julie Stone Peters’ theory of law’s performative nature. The combination of these theories resulted in a practice-led methodology that allowed a substantial part of the research to be conductive through art practice.

Could you please describe the practice part in more detail and explain what the role of the artworks is in the context of the research?

The practice part consists of four consecutively produced artworks, which explore different aesthetic, theoretical and legal aspects of Internet-based artistic appropriation and reworking. The works that in their entirety form the project This is not by me all use Warhol’s iconic Flowers as an exemplary case. In the first part are the anonymous Warhol Flowers, digital collages produced with the help of the net.art generator, an online computer programme. They relate established practices of copyright, because they were formed from protected material. The ambiguity that results from shifting between representing the new aesthetic and technological paradigm of the ‘networked image’, which exists beyond traditional notions of authorship and originality, and the traditional autonomous image, is essential in performing the dynamic conflicts caused by intellectual property in the network society–on the Internet and in the art gallery. The video lecture copyright © 2004 cornelia sollfrank is a thorough investigation of the unanswerable question: who is the author of an automatically generated image? The investigation is based on legal studies and adopts the style of legal expertise, while clearly indicating the gap between the ‘professional’ and the ‘amateur’. For this method, I used the term ‘performative dilettantism’, which in my case means the artistic adaptation of legal knowledge.

The following project, the video installation Legal Perspective, bringing glitchspeak into the creative domain of autonomous art and artistic research. The method of conducting semi-structured interviews provided the basis for the work, in which four copyright experts elaborate on the legal implications of the net. art generator and the anonymous Warhol Flowers. Despite the professional contradictions it generated, the project clearly demonstrated that the creation of new works that build on existing ones takes place in a legal grey area. Legal Perspective draws on law’s dependence on theatricality and exploits it for the purpose of staging legal experts who perform the limitation of the law as well as its legitimizing function for appropriative art. In order to complement the preceding dominant legal assessments that had ultimately proved unable to clarify the situation, the basic idea of the video I DON’T KNOW is to obtain permission and, from the rights holder. The fake video interview shows that Warhol does not have any conceptual, aesthetic or legal problems with the use of his images. However, combining authentic and newly shot material in a montage technique results in a short cut between form and content. The artwork that symbolically asked for permission led to a letter of complaint from the original film-maker and ended in having to ask for his permission.

The strategy I chose for the practice part was to emphasise the identified problem by performing and staging it this way, i.e. by contributing to a subversion of the law, which might eventually contribute to a solution. The different artworks are not just expressions of my research in their own right, but actually perpetrate the copyright infringement. The projects themselves are partly situated in the legal grey area and therefore do not just function as conventional artworks, but rather perpetrate copyright infringement while being what they name. This is what Brad Hasemann calls “the double articulation involved in creative arts research.”

What is the role of theory both in relation to the practice and for the research in general?

It would not have been possible to realise the artworks without sound legal knowledge. One level is the practice part, which, of course, is ambiguous and open to interpretation. This level requires an active engagement from the side to the viewer. Additionally, there is a written thesis that contains a detailed description of the artworks, but also offers a substantial contextualisation of the practice part.

What is your opinion on the widespread criticism of artistic research as another effect of neoliberal education policies or the scientificity of art?

I think it is important to understand the dynamics and the political framework within which one is situated, and also to be aware of the traps of artistic research. It is definitely advisable to insist on the specific epistemology of aesthetics as something different from traditional scientific methods which, by the way, are not uncontested within their own disciplines. Therefore, instead of theoretically criticising or condemning artistic research, I would find it more useful to work on its conceptualisation as a field different from scientific research. This is the only way to transfer certain aspects of freedom from art to artistic research and safeguard its autonomy towards tradition.”

5 Realize that the gospel of glitch art also tells about new standards implemented by corruption. Not all glitch art is progressive or something new. The popularisation and cultivation of the avant-garde of mishaps has become predestined and unavoidable. Be aware of easily reproducible glitch effects automated by softwares and plug-ins. What is now a glitch will become a fashion.

6 Force the audience to voyage the automatic videocase. Create conceptually synthetic aesthetics, that exploit both visual and aural glitch (or other noise) artifacts at the same time. Employ these noise artifacts as a mobile interface to the inner workings and that will compel an audience to listen and watch more exhaustively.

7 Rejoice the critical trans-media aesthetics of glitch artifacts. Unlike glitches to bring any medium in a critical ‘state of hypertrophy’, to (subsequently) criticize its inherent politics.

8 Employ Glitchspeak (as opposed to Newspeak) and study what is outside Newspeak. Realize that the gospel of glitch art also criticises Newspeak and study what is outside Newspeak. Employ Glitchspeak (as opposed to Newspeak) and study what is outside Newspeak, and study what is outside Newspeak.

This is why glitch studies is necessary.
FUTURISTS: for too long have you dominated the art of noise. For too long has noise been tethered to your bloodlust dreams of violence, destruction and warfare, your celebrations of man’s triumph over nature through his machinic extensions.

Marinetti, you should not have scorned for woman, for your noise belongs to us. The women you dismiss, with their ‘drollity’ and ‘chatter’, have a more intimate relationship with noise than can ever be achieved through forced submissions and bloomed penetrations of the flesh.

Throughout the history of Western thought, women and noise have found themselves on the same side of philosophical dichotomies that have governed and legitimated their subordination. They have been locked down on the side of unreason, of madness and hysteria, of irrational non-meaning. Women’s noises, the ‘idle gossiping’, the sounds of excitement, are cast out as affect dislocations. Their unpredictable outputs are to be controlled, abated.

WomE/An or/Is noise: an INTER%ERENCE within the channels of ‘reason’ from which she has been excluded.

The **“Laugh of Medusa”** ruptures, *the linear trajectory of phallogocentrism.*

While she has rarely been the creator of the machine, she has often been its collaborator and as such, has found herself as the gatekeeper of noise. She sits in front of the switchboard, connecting and/or disconnecting://

Mmanda dmdoyy 1000100010031456 s md cv gb- haaaaaaa0000933791 ==

WOMEN/and noise share the threat of DEATH and DESTRUCTION: the sten’s voice is a sonic weapon.

Let us make a Mess. Let us use our noisy, machinic colleagues to Undermine the power structures that have ga
dust us noise.

| (Noise is not a sound. It is an affect with effects.) |
| Music/noise? Wanted/unwanted? Meaning/non-meaning? May our noise remain incompatible with neat, dualistic logic: that which has sought to abate us. |

Let us make a Mess. Let us use our noisy, machinic collaborations for Destabilization NOT DOMINATION. Let us use them to UnDerMIne the power structures that have rendered us noise.

**Let us make use of the rupture.**
On Queer Viralities

By ZACH BLAS

Can the viral operate as a diagram for queer illegibility?

Queerness and the viral connect on numerous fronts: to its histories with HIV/AIDS and controlling medical practices and rhetorics, to backward subcultures, to anticapitalist tactics and frameworks.

The virus carries along with it themes common to queerness, such as risk, transgression, amorphousness, and multiplicity. Queerness could be said to exist in a paradoxic relation to the virus, as it is both subjected to viral control yet also finds the virus playful and pleasurable.

A queer interest in the virus might be to experiment with parsing dominant configurations of the viral. What a virus is and does cannot only be extracted into the qualifier viral just as the qualities of the viral cannot be reduced to the virus. We could say a virality, or viral, is one of many possible identities of the virus (constructed by the human) or that the viral is a creative opening or disturbance into the virus. Just as queerness has pulled apart supposedly causal relations between sex, sexuality, gender, and subjectivity, a queer viral politics must experiment with parsing the virus and viral in search of minor, or alternative, viralities. A queer viral politics is one way to expand queerness into the realm of the nonhuman.

Virus

Representations of the virus/viral today typically hinge on rapid spreadability and mutation. In fact, whenever one looks, the virus has gained the most attention through its abilities to replicate and disseminate. In line with this perspective of the virus, Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker, two theorists who have written extensively on viruses, state that the virus succeeds in producing copies through a process Galloway and Thacker refer to as “never-being-the-same” (87). Maintaining within itself the ability to continuously mutate its code with each reproduction, the virus propagates itself. Defining the virus based on action, they write:

Reproduction and cryptography are thus the two activities that define the virus. What counts is not that the host is a “bacterium, animal, or a “human.” What counts is the code—the number of the animal, or better, the numerology of the animal. […] The viral perspective is “cryptographic” because it replicates this difference, this paradoxical status of never being the same. What assuages us is that the viral perspective presents the animal being and creaturely in life as an illegible and inscrutable manner, a matter of chthonic calculations and occult repli-

Work cited:


Artistic Technology Research

Artistic research can be faster than scientific research and can react much more directly to current social and technological developments.

By MATHIAS TARASIEWICZ

New Media Arts, as “artistic research and development” between artworks, networks, and techno-scientific discourses, is research-based and practice-led. It does not produce final products but “process artefacts.”

Henk Bordgordt states that “research and development are intimately entwined” (44), and thematises the importance of documentation and dissemination (58). Since media arts finally matured new media channels evolved the virus as well, the question remains, where the advocacy and the audience for new media arts resides? There is still “no market, no galleries, few curators and critics, and no audience” (Lovink) – at least for an art market in a traditional sense. Also, the term “New Media Arts” is somewhat outdated to describe a contemporaneous practice of new media artists.

In the age of “Kontrollverlust” (Seemann) a change of reception/perception of audiences can be observed – still, through multiple, diverse channels of consumption and participation, the creation of attention and user-engagement is crucial to New Media Arts. In this sense, previous descriptions of the term have to be extended regarding “attention economy” and “real-time media” and “real-time participation”.

With the “query public” (Seemann), we have to radically rethink the concept of the public artists as researchers find a transforming and ever-changing media situation. Artistic research can be faster than scientific research and can react much more directly to current social and technological developments. Still, new artistic practices are often misunderstood and there have been many attempts made to move artistic innovations to creative commonplaces such as R&D labs or the advertising industry. While media art-works often show high technological potential, it is criticised if this is the case (characteristic Nordmann). New Media Arts produce “artistic technologies” (Nowotny) and not “economical technologies” – to stress a more strict distinction from the creative industries.

A distinct profile for critical new media practice is needed to generate awareness and respect for that field, since a non-popular artworld does not necessarily mean market failure. Media artworks are cultural products and processes that force the “production and circulation of symbolic ideas” (Galloway and Dunlop), and therefore do not need a market as such. Richard Florida is right stating “creativity is the ultimate economic resource” (xii), but there is a different meaning for the terms ‘innovation’ and ‘creativity’ when centred within art system or economic system. In times when ‘creativity’ becomes a replacement for the term ‘art’ (Raunig and Wuggenig), we have to rethink what we call New Media Arts, remember that culture should not only be merely valued for its economic contribution.

Works cited:


transmediale 2k+12
In a culture of computer ubiquity, of “cybrid” networks and all sorts of transformations that unfold from technical mediation processes, what is the artist’s role when dealing with mediation technologies? It is a question with no unique or ultimate answer, but it’s essential in every aspect of artistic and theoretical practice.

With the exponential increase of interdisciplinarity between the fields of arts and media engineering, methods and theories used in the field of technology are progressively incorporated to the art field, which confuses the differences between artistic propositions and those made by the media industry. According to Arlindo Machado, among the greatest challenges posed to artists, is how to deal with the advanced state of mediation technologies. In fact, it is very common to find in media art events a great number of works that are focused on technical and instrumental aspects of the development of media devices. Even though they might seem interesting at first sight, it doesn’t take long until you notice that these works are just one more functional update, instead of an attempt to explore aesthetic or critical possibilities.

These dynamics create a tension because a large part of these procedures seem to be incompatible with the subversively deconstructive attitude of artists, who, up to the 1990s, were involved in criticizing industrial patterns and mass entertainment while operating through the deconstruction of TV equipments, videocassettes and other media devices. This context produces a lot of questions when you consider contemporary media art production. Could we consider that artist’s and engineer’s methods and attitudes are merging, thus leading artistic practice to search in the same way for the development of new media devices? Contemporary production should be evaluated for its critical component, its technological quantum, or could there be other criteria sufficiently established for that? These questions allow us to investigate the compatibility between the models of art and media technologies in terms of knowledge production.

### Apparatus

Vilém Flusser’s idea of “apparatus” allows us to approach these questions from a privileged point of view, by delineating art and engineering as two distinct fields, from which different problems emerge. This happens because technology is displaced from the position of an instrument to the perspective of media engineering, and thus becomes a way for the artist to bring tensions to vectors of political, ethical, economic, epistemic dimensions, which are encoded in the abstract layers of mediation technical devices. In this way, it would be possible to consider the hypothesis of a displacement of the artist’s position, who would then begin to be understood as a programmer of abstract machines, considered in terms of the Flusserian apparatus. These propositions include subversion strategies, however, may also include media archaeology, in an attempt to identify how the abstract dimensions of apparatus can be comprehended in virtual environments, cybernetic, mobile devices or networks that operate in sociocultural contexts. Accordingly, the art of the apparatus could be considered an effective integration of art, science and technology, in compliance with the recovery of the Greek idea of technè, as questions proceed to concern matters beyond functionality and instrumentation, ascending to the speeches that make it possible to conceive the world, the politics of images and sensitive experience.

Works cited:


### Poetic expression as research method

By MORTEN BREINBJERG

An echo machine is proposed to serve as an interface to the past by capturing resonating echoes. The pre-radars listening device for detecting approaching airplanes that can be seen in the picture inspires this machine.

Operating the machine will enable the user to listen to the soundscape of the city and to capture auditory fragments relating to everyday life. The user will, for instance, hear stories told by local legendary figures, hear legal judgements being delivered at court, overhear gossips being told at the city well, and more. The machine will be able to be rotated 180 degrees in order to control the direction of listening and also there will be a zoom function allowing the user to "move" into the soundscape. Technically the machine is connected to a game engine in which the soundscape has been organised.

The idea of building a machine that brings us back to the past by pretending to capture resonating echoes is a poetic expression that seems incompatible with traditional research methods. However, as Michel Serres writes in his book Genesis, in which he reflects upon the concept and the phenomenology of sound, an echo is the first instigation of order, in which he reflects upon the concept and the phenomenology of sound, an echo is the first instigation of order, in an attempt to identify how the abstract dimensions of apparatus can be comprehended in virtual environments, cybernetic, mobile devices or networks that operate in sociocultural contexts. Accordingly, the art of the apparatus could be considered an effective integration of art, science and technology, in compliance with the recovery of the Greek idea of technè, as questions proceed to concern matters beyond functionality and instrumentation, ascending to the speeches that make it possible to conceive the world, the politics of images and sensitive experience.
... is it even possible for a machine to reflect upon its own practice?

An interview with the STEAM ENGINE

By MORTEN RIIS

This interview is an attempt to ask some in-depth questions to a music machine.

Language

How do you conduct an interview with a machine? First of all you have to talk the same language, a major quest for many computer scientists during the last 60 years. This would imply teaching the machine to understand the language that we speak, and not the other way around. It could of course be argued that learning a programming language would be comparable to the language of the machine, but it is important to understand that the syntax of programming languages are constructed from conventions that mostly follow rules originating from daily spoken language.

Questioning

In order to excavate the hidden stories that the machine holds, we must ask the right questions, and at the same time be aware that this is a two-way communication, where all senses must be open; open to answers coinciding with our expectations, but especially open to answers not coinciding with our deterministic understanding of the machine’s answer to a given question. Central to this questioning becomes the relationship between hearing what you know, and knowing what you hear; thus being sensitive to the fact that the machine says something that is unexpected, and not immediately focus on what answers would live up to expectations.

Listening

By speaking directly to the machines deepest desires and dreams, and consequently as an observant-listener, I now know that instability is the true voice of the machine, a voice that is often heard by the fast-growing quest of technology. It is a voice that the musical steam machine makes more clearly than the other machines, and a voice that tells us something about the relationship between the process and the finite. It could even be argued that the concept of a predetermined output from a machine does not exist? Maybe the perfect finite output is an illusion upheld by the imaginative notion of infallible technology. The machine continues to report about how instability, randomness and the possibility of error is something that occurs because of its physical characteristics, it is something integrated in the connections between transmission and exchange of energy and motion, that takes place in the various parts of its construction; conditions that on one hand makes certain functionalities possible (the machine’s purpose: to create a musical expression), and at the same time challenges this expected functionality. In the worst case, this functionality is absent.

Machine story

This interview has been an attempt to ask some in-depth questions to a music machine. The machine has given me many answers, which were only possible to hear if we paid sufficient attention to what was being said. The interview developed into a dialogue, and became more and more interesting because the answers given were unexpected; answers that have given me things to reflect upon, and maybe it is not exclusively this music machine’s story; maybe it is a story that can give a different perspective on all the machines we surround ourselves with.

By Morten Riis

The Steam Machine (Morton Riis, 2011)

On http://www.mortonriis.com/006994/15

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performative journalism
I would like to propose “enchantment” – the capacity of continuing through time in spite of change – as an alternate to the much used (perhaps overused) notion of sustainability. Sustainability and sustainable development, defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development 43), are key concepts in terms of which discourses on nature have been often framed in recent decades. Underlying such discourses has been a long-standing concern with the relation between nature and technology, premised upon an incompatibility between the two.

In one iteration of it, this concern takes the form of the argument regarding “the disenchanted nature” – a term introduced by Max Weber – determined by technology. In the story of the disenchchantment of nature, as Bronisław Szerszynski explains (5), “as technology’s powers advance, those of nature withdraw.” Technology renders nature fully explainable – calculable and predictable. Disenchanted by technology, nature becomes “a standing reserve” (Heidegger 257) to be used (up) and, thus, in need of preservation. At stake here is the issue of rationality/reason, given that calculation is traditionally conceptualised as being the essence of reason. It is precisely this link between rationality/reason and calculation that must be undone, according to Jacques Derrida. Derrida undertakes to rethink reason beyond teleology – beyond (and without) necessary determination and certainty. “A reason must let itself be reasoned with,” writes Derrida (159). Unlike Kant’s teleological reason, which annuls the eventfulness of what comes, “beginning with... the technoscientific invention that ‘finds’ what it seeks” (Derrida 128), a reason that lets itself be reasoned with makes possible the unconditional event (contingency).

To build on Derrida’s thought, I suggest that reasoning with reason is linked to measure (rather than calculation) – to the performance of figuring out and keeping (the right) measure. “Measure” here means limit, proportion, and standard of comparison. It is the site on which – through the practice of care, of awareness – seemingly incompatible things meet the needs of the present and the future. Endlessly confronting and sometimes micro-correcting of on-going perception and action involves a folding forth and sometimes micro-correcting of on-going modeling. Much of this in turn draws on this tangle of big models. We model “performance” and “productivity” in the workplace. We model climate and responsibility in the Kyoto treaty. We model national happiness. Yet as Vilém Flusser noted long ago in “On the crisis in our models”, if we “lose confidence” in our “objective models”, as we now have, “it becomes difficult to find our way in the world” (76). What to do?

First, realise that the old models have often failed. To do that, we need to see them for what they are, allow ourselves to feel their dead weight in our living. We especially need to understand what habits they form in us. Second, in becoming more aware of our models, we do need to give many of them up. We need to subtract. Subtraction actually frees things up, gives back the potential for the new (Deleuze). Third, we need to allow for more flexible models. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari might say, we need to become “equal to the event... or the offspring of one’s own events” (159). Crudely put, we need, again and again, and this is the real work of serious modeling, to adjust our models to what is really happening. And by “adjust our models,” I don’t just mean adjust the content but still allow ourselves to keep the fundamentals. It’s the fundamentals that are the problem. In media, political and social life we need something like what I’ve called elsewhere “ghosted publics” and “unacknowledged collectives” – ways of living that step outside of recognised, big modeled existence.

*Works cited:*
and beings can be brought together and put in relation to one another in ways that make possible the emergence of the event. As such, measure becomes an aesthetic procedure that embraces unpredictability and a form of knowledge that grows from uncertainty, from a place of not (fully) understanding.

The right measure is a matter of figuring out what works for each person individually and in relation to the others. It materialises in a specific style of life – a life of care, an examined life. Socrates stated that the unexamined life is not worth living; perhaps there is value in this thought.

My claim is that reason – or reasoning with reason – can be an aid in this experiment of figuring out the right measure. More than this, I would like to propose – perhaps as an experience of thought – that reasoning with reason potentially opens the way for another concept of technology, different from the modern one emphasising the power of technology to overcome contingency and to offer the certainty characteristic of teleological reason (as calculation). This concept would be closer to the one with which the classical thinkers (Plato and Aristotle, among others) operated. This is the concept according to which “technical” – “intrinsically uncertain and unpredictable in their outcomes” – “were activities involving the making of things in a way which was guided by logos, by reason” (Szerszynski 52). To be clear, in this formula, reason would be used in the non-teleological sense. At the interface between such a concept of technology and such a concept of nature the possibility of endurance potentially emerges.

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A spectre is haunting Media Art, the spectre of digital decay. All the powers of old school archiving have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Academics and industry, Microsoft and Free Software, pirates and copyright law enforcers.

This research explores experimental and speculative approaches to archiving and preserving Media Art. As such I define artistic and academic theory-practices that dare to think beyond the confines of traditional strategies to see if and how they can contribute new aspects of dealing with failure, decay and obsolescence – in other words, the everyday challenges of archiving and preservation.

While recent years have seen the spring of numerous research initiatives for preserving and archiving Media Art, the question remains if these artworks are “archive-able” at all, in the traditional sense. Database archives and research initiatives have been launched and then disappeared again, without offering solid, sustainable solutions. Increasing technological decay and the loss or subsequent inaccessibility of data not only poses a threat to Digital Cultural Heritage – of which New Media Art constitutes an important part – but also demonstrates the shortcomings of traditional archival practices when applied to this field.

**Speculative archiving**

Speculative archiving starts by understanding a work of art as an ongoing process. It therefore qualifies artistic production and radical modifications as legitimate ways of contributing new aspects to the discourse of archiving Media Art. Rather than in deep storage, solutions for sustainability seem to be provided by the network, in which artistic practices of hacking, remixing and Open Culture, of versions, glitches and pirating, of sampling, appropriation and wild dissemination, are creating novel perspectives on digital originals and mutant life forms on a daily basis. The accelerating loss caused by (politically-implemented) incompatibilities of different hardware, of software versions, of decay and obsolescence force us to rethink the archive and its processes. It no longer is a passive place, but has become a hyperactive non-space.

The accelerating loss caused by (politically-implemented) incompatibilities of different hardware, of software versions, of decay and obsolescence force us to rethink the archive and its processes. It no longer is a passive place, but has become a hyperactive non-space.
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At the beginning of computing and networking, incompatibility was a sign of heterogenesis. It was because computers had multiple genealogies and specifications that networking had to begin with the invention of ways to connect the incompatibility. Incompatibility thus preceded and followed networking - as when preexisting heterogeneous mainframes and mini computers had to be connected or when new types of machines were invented and had to be integrated. With the introduction of the principles of open architecture in 1973, the primacy of differentiation and its eternal return was established. Shaped by a hacker ethics that valued openness and connection, protocolological power was thus also the expression of a new kind of connective synthesis producing the bare conditions of cyberspace. One could even go as far as saying that incompatibility lies at the point where the chaotic genesis of networks as open topologies starts. (Terranova 2004)

As computers became personal, escaping corporate and university labs to make it into the homes of computer amateurs and cyber-enthusiasts in the nineteen eighties, incompatibility marked a forking of the machinic phylum of personal computing. Incompatible software pointed to an uneven polarisation of populations of users - the vast majority on the one side, the small, but obstinate minority on the other. On the one side, the great Microsoft/IBM masses, multiplied through the techniques of cloning and reverse engineering, made compatibility the privilege of the majority. Operating within an MS-DOS and Windows system meant putting up with clunky design and buggy software, but also being able to take for granted one's compatibility with almost everything. On the other side the hard core of Apple and Macintosh users, locked into smoothly designed microworlds, made incompatibility the mark of an exclusive minority (Eco 1994). Living within a MAC-OS environment involved limited communication with the larger world of software development, but gave you the satisfaction of sharp design and smooth processing. It will be only in the late nineties and early two thousands that the great divide will be bridged but only in order to produce another one (proprietary Apple and Microsoft on the one hand, and Open Source Linux and Ubuntu on the other).

Overcoming incompatibility

In the nineteen nineties, overall, incompatibility stops driving the evolution of the network and becomes a hurdle in the way of smooth, universal connectedness as software turns modular and eminently linkable and computing becomes ubiquitous. By the year 2000s, incompatibility signals almost exclusively the accumulation of the technofunk generated by half a century of computing. Incompatible software is a sign that one is lagging behind, of unplanned and unwelcome obsolescence. As fully modularised software objects knit together even further the space of the web 2.0, incompatibility has become a matter of media archaeology: it is about old machines and old software, about files that refuse to be opened, about what was once new media art that becomes inaccessible. Overcoming incompatibility becomes the work of the info-artisan - carefully reconstructing appropriate conditions for old software to run again, drawing out information locked within old formats.

And yet, incompatibility as the productive limit of the open network, was never just about technical machines or the hacker ethics, but necessarily referred back to the existence of a larger, transversal social machine that invested in expansive differentiation as the engine driving value-production (Lazarato 2002). In the forty years spanning the history of popular computing and networking, new, more powerful machines, platforms and new media objects have incessantly succeeded each other producing the network as a smooth space of compatible differentiation. Economic and libidinal investment in growth and innovation supported by exponentially increasing processing power also had an important effect: it produced the conditions of compatibility between the expansion of neoliberal capital and immaterial labour power.

For the longest time, it seems, intellectual capital and the networked multitudes were bonded together by the desire for proliferating, compatible, connectable, miniautised machines and ever-increasing computing and connecting power. Struggles around the status of property and control of information flows never crossed the threshold of an incompatibility able to produce a true forking line as long as Moore Law’s act as catalyst, mediator and midwife to the compatible convergence between intrinsically heterogeneous and conflictual forces. It might have been this transversal relation, rather than the addictive drive to compulsive communication identified by Jodi Dean, that allowed not simply the capture, but the compatible relation between the corporate Internet and precarious labour (Dean 2010). Not even the nervous exhaustion denounced by Franco Berardi has derailed the networked multitude from desiring such compatibility. Fuelled by credit and liquidity generated by financial capital, flying in the face of the diminishing returns on actual work performed, immaterial labour power has populated its homes with electronic, connectable devices and turned its body into a mobile, connected, hyper-communicative node.

But what is going to happen to such compatible convergence once the investment strategies of neoliberal capital change? Aren’t the financial and fiscal crises that started in 2008 producing a becoming-incompatible of financial capital and immaterial labour power? Up to which point is the exponential growth of immaterial capital going to be balanced out by the exponential growth of distributed computing power? For how long is the exponential curve drawn by Moore Law going to guarantee the compatible relation between these two opposing libidinal forces? Where is the threshold at which the accumulation of liquidity by one side of the polarity is no longer balanced by the growth of income and purchasing power on the other? When will the consciousness of the inequality of money paid in return for work and money generated by financial transaction and rent become unbearable? What happens when large forms of public welfare guarantee the sustainable reproduction and reinvocation of the living conditions of immaterial labour power are swallowed up by debt? Under what conditions, that is, will the relational compatibility between financial capital and networked labour power be broken?

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“What is the impact of the current economic crisis on the life of the European society? What is the relation between financial crisis and political imagination today?” – Scépsi – European School of Social Imagination
When digital culture becomes software business

Controlled Consumption Interfaces

BY SØREN POLD & CHRISTIAN ULRIK ANDERSEN

We live in the era of cultural computing. New IT gadgets – such as game consoles, tablets, smart phones and e-readers – are platforms for cultural content. But how is this changing digital culture?

Culture has broadly been conceptualised through two different, opposing approaches: the object-oriented and the exchange-oriented. One is concerned with objects, goods or works, that have an author or a brand and is seen as stable, also when put in different relations and contexts. The other sees culture as a process made up of collective collaboration, sharing and a constant creative process (Stalder). The object-oriented fits into traditional copyright legislation while the exchange-oriented is more related to cultural practices of collaboration and remix.

IT and digital culture has been a primary battle scene for this discussion – between anti-pirates and pirates, between established rights holders and new emerging media artists, or between the old content industries like the movie and music industry and new disruptive business initiatives like Napster and Google. For a long time, it looked like the cultures of sharing and exchanging were winning the battle over a paralysed traditional content industry, but currently companies with their roots in new media such as Apple, Microsoft and Amazon are developing new business models in new media such as Apple, Microsoft and Appstore, Microsoft's Xbox Live, Sony's Playstation Network (PSN), Amazon Kindle shops, the way software companies develop cultural business models (e.g. Apple's IOS devices and their integration of iTunes and Appstore) and the way new cultural digital formats are handled (e.g. the way Amazon has developed the Kindle bookstore and e-reader in order to handle e-books), Apple's IOS iTunes and Appstore, Microsoft's Xbox Live, Sony's Playstation Network (PSN), Amazon Kindle are all examples of controlled consumption strategies that work along the four principles, though there are significant differences in how tightly the control is exercised.

The model of controlled consumption opens up for a very particular business model for cultural software. It works for some uses but also standardises software culture to a specific object-oriented model, where the consumers are forced to adapt to a specific, rather passive model of consumption framed by the licenses and the technology. In this way, it also harbours a specific model of culture, which excludes potential new developments of a culture of exchange. Furthermore, it is a ready-made business model for artists, and while this can be seen as an advantage it also limits the possibility for artists to engage in developing new alternative ways to engage with their audience, e.g. through business models that build on collaboration, engagement or just other ways of collecting payment.

In this way, it is potentially stifling innovation in digital culture, and we need to look for alternatives.

Controlled Consumption

Where the music industry failed in developing business models that both take advantage of the net and prohibits file sharing, software companies seem to rule by implementing new business models of cultural consumption. One of these business models can be characterised by the term "controlled consumption" developed by Henri Lefebvre in 1967, and applied to contemporary publishing and book trade by Ted Strifpas. Strifpas summarises controlled consumption in four principles:

1) A cybernetic industrial infrastructure integrating and handling production, distribution, exchange and consumption is developed around the product.
2) The consumption is controlled through programming that closely monitors consumer behaviour and the effects of marketing through tracking and surveillance.
3) Controlled obsolescence is programmed into the product limiting the functionality and durability.
4) The overall effect of controlled consumption is a significant reorganisation and troubling of specific practices of everyday life.

Controlled consumption precisely characterises business strategies from both cultural software industries (e.g. the way the XBox and Playstation 3 game consoles include online shops), the way software companies develop cultural business models (e.g. Apple's IOS devices and their integration of iTunes and Appstore) and the way new cultural digital formats are handled (e.g. the way Amazon has developed the Kindle bookstore and e-reader in order to handle e-books), Apple's IOS iTunes and Appstore, Microsoft's Xbox Live, Sony's Playstation Network (PSN), Amazon Kindle are all examples of controlled consumption strategies that work along the four principles, though there are significant differences in how tightly the control is exercised.

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Phone Story, a game for smart phones by Molleindustria, 2011 (banned from App Store)
构成——它只存在于通信。在一封“公开信给世界”，匿名者说：“我们已经开始讲出我们自己的故事。分享我们的生活，我们的希望，我们的梦想。我们不那么不同，正如我们可能所认为的那样。”

匿名者提醒我们，斯宾诺莎的概念——在通信中，它起着决定性的作用。例如，埃格尼·泰克指出，主体的产生已经成为不可能的（Haraway）。匿名者出现，并且作为复杂地交织在一起的协议、文化实践和技术基础设施。问题在于数字化的协议，以及控制、权力和生产的年龄网络。如果控制、权力和产生的模式被考虑在内，匿名者使我们能够讨论新形式的集体性的挑战和关系的解体，以及对心理边界的逃脱。这种新的集体性启发我们重新思考社会/政治体制之外的构成，从而创造新的叙述，这些叙述将改变代表逻辑的构想，并且因此将改变我们对研究和知识生产的理解。

引用文献：

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VENTURE COMMUNISM AND COPYFARLEFT

By DMYTRI KLEINER

"The State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behavior; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently..."  
(Landauer)

Proposing an approach to class struggle based upon venture communism and copyfarleft would be shockingly to many revolutionaries due to the utilisation of joint stock corporations, bonds, rental agreements, copyright licenses and the retention of the market exchange of the products of labour. Therefore, it must be noted that venture communism and copyfarleft are only a means of class struggle, not ideal goals in and of themselves. They are intended as a means of organisation production towards the goal of building the economic capacity required to engage in class conflict, and transform a capitalist system.

In the words of the Industrial Workers of the World "not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."

Capitalism, a mode of production where the worker earns only subsistence while property owners retain the remainder of the productive output, can only create a society where the interests of the property owner will be reflected in the social institutions, and the interests of subjugated producers. Both venture communism and copyfarleft have, as their goal, the creation of a productive commons that producers can use to accumulate mutual wealth, and thus work towards realising their historic role of creating a society free of economic classes. As long as producers operate within the capitalist mode of production, they cannot change society politically. Whatever wealth producers can apply to influencing social institutions must come from the share of production they retain, and thus will always be smaller than the share retained by the owners who can use it to prevent change.

When we employ a commons of productive assets, which have no individual owners but are collectively owned, we retain the wealth we create, and thus the possibility for a new society is within our grasp.

Extract from The Telekommunist Manifesto (50). A pdf of the publication can be freely downloaded at: http://www.networkcultures.org/networknotebooks

This publication is licensed under the Peer Production License (2010).

Works cited:
By AYMERIC MANSOUX

When talking about pioneering technologies, it is popular to use metaphors related to the 19th century American Old West. In this regard, the Internet and its ‘Electronic Frontiers’ is no exception and is still widely seen as an ex-wonderland of free spirits, which is now suffocating under corporatizations. After a few decades of educating savages with marketing best practices, apps and black boxes, the Net is perceived today as a bureaucratic conquest where the old world settlers are imposing their law in order to control the natives’ digitally born content. From the settlers’ perspective, it is a matter of utmost concern to deliver market freedom and open web evangelism so as to get rid of the axis of digital evil in the name of privacy, security and year-end bonuses. This set design is not so distant from the epic landscape depicted by Sergio Leone in *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. As a matter of fact, by superimposing the film’s archetypes on top of the main Net culture content creation mechanisms we may well obtain a prophetic narrative for present and future creators.

**Ugly**

Even though the Bad has been killed, the Ugly, who somehow managed to survive during the whole tale, sees his life spared by the Good and is abandoned in a cemetery in the middle of nowhere. That he survives, or not, does not matter. As a lonely freak of nature, he can do no harm. Presented as the weakest role, the Ugly is in fact the most interesting character. He is everything that cannot be expressed by a content creator stuck in the binary morale. He is the grey zone that makes the social context of authorship and production tangible, yet compatible with the system. The Ugly is the Petri dish for new adaptations: the GPL is mutating into the e-GPL, the PPL rises from the CC-BY-SA, and the FA licenses copyleft software into system art.

As we are getting closer to the end of the pioneering era of networked media, content creators are increasingly forced to be Good and make legitimate a specific definition of artistic freedom that goes hand in hand with capitalist and liberal agendas. Therefore, Ugly content and Ugly licenses must multiply and be encouraged. Together they form a novel form of legal avant-garde that is operating on the imaginary of production. By being able to interface their incompatibility with the system they challenge, they will avoid the fate of the Bad, and like a mutating opportunistic bacteria, they might well rise from the cemetery and bring to its knees the sterile goodness of a world that forgot how bad it actually was: enter the dawn of the Ugly.

**Good, Bad**

More precisely, as of today, the Good creator is the one that is respectful of the code and law and contributes to its evolution and interpretation. Depending on how she envisions the question of access, publishing and sharing of information, she can either adopt a copyright or copyleft practice, which in both cases aims at making legitimate a conditional access to culture. At the opposite, the Bad creator is the outlaw. She is frequently mashing up material from peers or the Good, following unspoken, illegal, poetic or politically charged rules of attribution, if any at all. Just like the symbiosis between the media industry and piracy, the Bad is in fact manipulated for the sole profit of the Good who will not hesitate to get rid of the former, once her part has been played.

Resistance is futile. Avoiding this lethal relationship is impossible because anything that is not explicitly developed within an appropriate legal framework is constantly threatened to fall back into law and order. The artistic software Pidip, released with a copyleft license, has been outcast from the Pure Data community, because the author refused to remove a personal statement that conflicted with the GPL. With such a dichotomy, the practice and intention that led to the creation of Pidip becomes incompatible with its technical and legal framework; it contradicts the system it is born within. Yet, the system survives the paradox, becomes stronger, and bans the mutant software; enjoy tarring, feathering and the recovering of peace in the PD community. This is a Baudrillard ‘prise d’otage’ that is turning ugly, but one that sets the conditions from which the third archetype of our tale will eventually rise.

**Waste grounds are the most concrete emblems of every economic cycle.**

Dominique Laporte’s *History of Shit* (first published in French in 1978), verifies that modern power is founded on the aesthetics of the public sphere and in the agency of its citizen-subjects but that these are conditions of the management of human waste. He insists that in parallel to the cleansing of the streets of Paris from shit, the French language was similarly cleansed of Latin words to establish official French without “foreign leavings” (according to an edict of 1539). Thus he contends that language was purged of its “lingering stink” to become purer and invested with authority, “elavating it to the divine place of power freed from odor.” (18)

The place where one does one’s business is also the place where waste accumulates.

The desire for clean language, as well as clean streets, sublimes shit and demonstrates an expression of new biopolitical forms of control over subjectivity (indicated by the bodily functions of speaking and shitting) and one where the market becomes sovereign (rather than the State). The same can be said of the technologies that are now found on the streets (installed in mobile devices and such-like) that are purged of their stink. The move towards service-based platforms (so-called ‘cloud computing’) provides a further example of purified forms and the privatisation of collective speech acts. This is the Apple paradigm of software development with specially conceived proprietary “apps” (for iPhones and iPads) that close off users from the underlying impurities (‘stink’) of code.

Such developments are crucial for a fuller understanding of the suppression of political expression in the public realm and the ways in which the voice is becoming promoted through ever more privatised forms. The most important commodity of late capitalism, the mobile phone, is the instrument for this, producing “network dependency” and social potential is stolen from the public realm and commodified (Berardi). If the health of the body politic can be detected in its shit, the current mismanagement of this is clear for all to see in its vile products.
Technical mastery of the markets—promised since the London Stock Exchange ‘Big Bang’ of 1986—is visible today in a stripped-down form. Disparities from the economic crisis, together with greater transparency in investment business, have exposed the unprecedented complexity and interdependent aspects of today’s world economy. Steep reductions in market value are a counter-point to expanding and intricate, economic circuits. Previous efforts to restore confidence in this system are now giving way to fundamental restructurings.

Culture of Cuts

Today, in Europe, governments are dedicating themselves to reductions in welfare state spending (‘EU austerity drive country by country’). In Ireland, Greece, Portugal and Spain, money is being raised through the sale of public assets. In the UK, the economic crisis has become a rallying point for an agenda of cuts which directly targets state institutions, both social and educational (‘Public sector job losses ‘worse than expected’’). As a consequence of these reductions, UK workers in tertiary education are facing severe job cuts (Times Educational Supplement) and are seeing their institutions transformed.

Cuts affect also those who rely on the sector for short-term contracts, and for whom it is a locus of formal and informal networks. In the arts, practitioners who are members of these communities face a double bind, as funding bodies pass stringent budget reductions along the chain, thus limiting opportunities for creative practitioners to access further sources of income. Artistic responses to these conditions range from ‘outreach’ programmes as part of the curriculum of academic institutions, to those which could be seen as less intrinsic to educational bodies and others which are altogether independent of any formal organisation.

Reductions in Social Welfare State Institutions

Whether or not a clear link can be made between the critical thinking, which universities have long existed to advance, and impartiality in the media, it seems there is good reason to think that both are threatened by the present unraveling of the welfare state. The concern for objective criticality, is the lifeblood of academic inquiry, as underlined in an address from Mackenzie Wark to students at The Open School in New York: “The aim of education is to negate the given, and in so doing, throw into sharp relief both what is right and what is wrong with the social order. Education is not outside of the incessant struggle to make the world. It is one of the essential moments of that struggle.”

At a time when the future direction of bastions of the welfare state (including even the British National Health Service) are under intense scrutiny, institutions face increasing pressure from the market. Hito Steyerl reflects on this situation:

Now the problem is—and this is indeed a very widespread attitude—that when a cultural institution comes under pressure from the market, it tries to retreat into a position which claims it is the duty of the nation state to fund it and to keep it alive. The problem with that position is that it is an ultimately protectionist one, that it ultimately reinforces the construction of national public spheres and that under this perspective the cultural institution can only be defended in the framework of a New Left attitude seeking to retreat into the remnants of a demolished national welfare state and its cultural shells and to defend them against all intruders. (18)

Reductions in Public Institutions

The cuts, which in the UK, have largely still to be realised (Mulholland), are being applied to organisations instituted from above (by the State) and from below (by individuals and communities). As prominent examples, in October this year, the BBC announced a profound re-structuring, introducing up to 2000 staff lay-offs and more programme cuts in the schedule (“BBC cuts at a glance”); artist-led organisations have been the major casualty in the Arts Council of England’s most recent funding round (Artist’s Newsletter).

Hand in hand with the logic of cutting state provision, is privatisation. Even before consideration of student tuition fees, it seems that in UK higher education, privatisation is already well under way. Sally Hunt, General Secretary of the Universities and College Union states, “While public expenditure on post-16 education has risen 6% in ten years, private spending has gone up 80%.” With around a third of the system now privately funded, the market is taking over in front of our very eyes” (Shepherd).

In the media, even-handed reporting has been one of the founding principles of the BBC (“The BBC’s impartiality principles”) so that in the attack on public state institutions, sought-after impartiality in public debate may also be in peril. Two separate media stories bring a more optimistic measure to the discussion. The first concerns WikiLeaks, its publication of classified information and attempts to impugn the organisation and those who run it (Harvard Law and Policy Review); the second, involves News Corporation and the illegal accessing of voice mail by staff at News of The World (“Phone hacking”). Together these stories have brought the ethics of sharing to the core of a debate which makes the availability of information and the public interest, with the individual (and institutional) right to privacy. Because of the nature of the two organisations (WikiLeaks, a hacker inspired, not-for-profit institution which tends to see information as a public good, and News International, a for-profit, global corporation), these questions especially draw attention to issues of integrity and transparency and they resonate with concerns about the identity of our public institutions.

Works cited:

While Anaheim Ducks have been struggling this season in NHL, winning only nine of 32 games, Teemu Selänne has scored 10 goals and assisted 23 and is currently Anaheim’s overall points leader.

**THE FINNISH FLASH**

By TERO KARPPI

As computers became personal, escaping conFor four consecutive years, Selänne has been speculating ending his amazing career in NHL during which he has over 600 goals and 700 assists. Eventually Selänne will stop playing but meanwhile we are privileged to see ice hockey exceeding its limits.

Scoring over 600 goals in NHL is not about repeating the same old systems and drills but understanding that every goal is a singular event. The winning goal is always a singular event. The winning goal is always a singular event. The winning goal is always a singular event. The winning goal is always a singular event. The winning goal is always a singular event.

As a singular event, scoring a goal resembles a strike of lighting. According to a French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, a flash of lighting differentiates: “Lightning [...] distinguishes itself from the black sky but must also trail it behind, as though it were distinguishing itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it. It is as if the ground rose to the surface, without ceasing to be ground.” (36)

It is no wonder that Teemu Selänne is nicknamed the ‘Finnish Flash.’ While other players are left in the background repeating their memorised hockey moves, Selänne is the flash that literally illuminates the hall by turning on the red light above the net, the signal that a goal has been scored.

**Pure potentiality**

Scoring a goal is the moment of intensive differentiation. It is a moment when a form is separated from the background. Scoring a goal does “distinguish itself,” but “yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it.” (Deleuze 36.)

Selänne on ice is pure potentiality. When he shoots, the movement of the puck exceeds its material limits and becomes a force that has the power to change the course of the game.

Not only does the The Finnish Flash hold the potentiality to reveal and differentiate a hockey game but also the hockey game reveals itself in the Finnish Flash. His salary for this season is $4 million. His potentiality to score is further differentiated into ticket sales and sponsored products. A sound of a goal is also a sound of cash register going ‘cha-cha’.

For the Ducks, Selänne is the most valuable player. His value cannot be reduced to money or scored points. It lies in the potentiality to change the game.  

**ANDREI MARKOV’S KNEE IS STILL INJURED**

Andrei Markov’s knee is in danger, damaged, will never be the same again. What is the unique identity of Andrei Markov’s knee, is there a way to authenticate it?

By BARUCH GOTTLIEB

Will his knee be the same again, will it be better? Are they allowed to put some Pistorian magic piston in his knee, so that, not only will it never fail again, but it might even be better, springier, more resilient and stronger (Oscar Leonard Carl Pistorius, also known as “Blade Runner,” a double-amputee who has competed against ‘normal’ athletes running on carbon fibre transtibial artificial limbs?) James Wissnewski had the same problem. He injured his knee at age 18, then again at age 23, 24. He is playing well again, will this be the case for Andrei? Why don’t they ever show the knee on TV? Or even in the paper? The knee has an interesting distance, or inaccessibility about it. Would Walter Benjamin call it “aura”? Maybe there is a reversal in the age of hyper-re-productibility of the work of art, the work of art which is Andrei Markov’s thrice reconstructed knee is never to be seen, it’s historical authenticity is thus reenmeshed, compulsively by sports commentators.

George Bataille asks “what are our reasons for being seduced by the very thing that, in a fundamental fashion, signifies damage to us, the very thing that even has the power to evoke the more complete loss we undergo in death?” Certainly the ‘loss’ of Andrei Markov’s knee is not terminal, if it were, it wouldn’t be any fun to talk about it. But it is fun, it is fascinating, and as such allows us to enframe death in an injoinsive, which nags and irritates us but which we are sure will eventually go away, the travails of a solitary injured hockey player, one of 801 players to have ever played for the team.

Andrei Markov’s thigh and at the end of Andrei Markov’s leg, knee needed to be summoned and subsumed again into the integrity the performing hockey player. It is only now that he is offstage, unable to perform that the spectral figure of the knee is in danger, damaged, will never be the same again. What is the unique identity of Andrei Markov’s knee, is there a way to authenticate it?

Will his knee be the same again, will it be better? Are they allowed to put some Pistorian magic piston in his knee, so that, not only will it never fail again, but it might even be better, springier, more resilient and stronger (Oscar Leonard Carl Pistorius, also known as “Blade Runner,” a double-amputee who has competed against ‘normal’ athletes running on carbon fibre transtibial artificial limbs?) James Wissnewski had the same problem. He injured his knee at age 18, then again at age 23, 24. He is playing well again, will this be the case for Andrei? Why don’t they ever show the knee on TV? Or even in the paper? The knee has an interesting distance, or inaccessibility about it. Would Walter Benjamin call it “aura”? Maybe there is a reversal in the age of hyper-re-productibility of the work of art, the work of art which is Andrei Markov’s thrice reconstructed knee is never to be seen, it’s historical authenticity is thus reenmeshed, compulsively by sports commentators.

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**Stats for Andrei Markov’s leg:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>games</th>
<th>goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>623</td>
<td>84</td>
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**Works cited:**


When that time comes, I will be watching, but I won’t be thinking about the knee. The knee will have been subsumed again into the integrity the performing hockey player. It is only now that he is offstage, unable to perform that the spectral figure of the knee is never to be seen, it’s historical authenticity is thus reenmeshed, compulsively by sports commentators small and grand concerned and very solemnly began announcements dire and bland on Andrei Markov’s knee.

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Fuller biographies can be found at http://darc.imv. au.de/incompatible/?page_id=23

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Interview with 
Kristoffer Gansing, 
artistic director of 
transmediale

By GIANNINA LISITANO

What questions does the theme in/compatible raise?

The fundamental question of how we relate to technology in our everyday life. Do we see it in an instrumental way, as a tool in order to achieve rational goals or do we think about it as inescapably part of the messy realities in which politics, culture and nature cannot be clearly separated?

It is in many ways an attempt to question what role different social actors ascribe to technology and media. Think about terms like digital culture, new media and social media - they all imply a certain perspective on technology, and what you mean by these terms will depend on whether you are an academic, an entrepreneur, a politician, a journalist, a consumer / prosumer, etc.... We often see that people come together in conferences and research projects and claim to be interdisciplinary, but we seldom discuss the differences between the concepts of media and technology and their relation to society at large. The different points of departure are not discussed, and thus in/compatible should be a step back, a non-instrumentalised discussion where you bring these tensions and differences into the open. Often, such sensibilities to tensions and conflicts within a rational idea of technology is found within artistic production. But, in order not to sound completely like Heidegger, today we also need to acknowledge the ambiguity of artistic production itself - its complicity with business and the aestheticisation of politics. A further aspect is the increasingly everyday nature of creative work, which means it is not necessarily in the institutional scenes of artistic production that we find the most interesting examples of possible social critiques, but incompatible aesthetics work in the interstices of incompatible systems (financial, political, cultural).

Why was this theme chosen?

Is there a figure or example that clarifies its relevance?

This theme confronts the myth of convergence. The idea that all previously separated media seamlessly come together as a digital ‘Universal medium’ envisioned by computing pioneer Alan Turing. It is only true in a metaphorical sense that digital and networked technology has led to a unification of many different previously separated media. ‘Old media’ doesn’t simply get digitised, but in fact we are dealing with a complex set of what Chris Saltzer has called ‘entangled’ materialities, of old and new, and what Jussi Parikka recently called ‘mediatunaries’ where there is no longer a clear distinction between technology and our daily environments (be they human, non-human, natural or cultural). Now, with already a long experience of convergence worldwide (not only technologically, but also politically and economically on a global scale), it is becoming clear that new types of tensions are being articulated. The examples of these seem very concrete: financial, ecological, technological (energy retrieval, for example) cultural, political (the Arab Spring) and educational (Bologna process and UK riots) crises. But these are embedded in terms of their felt (physical and medial) impact - such crises are also very abstract, networked phenomena, and co-produced through their real-time mediation.

So what is the position of in/compatible in this?

Above all it is just that: a position. To be incompatible means to not accept easy solutions to states of crisis. When things are not working, there is always the desire for the status quo to implement the easiest solutions and integrate problems into business as usual. In technology this of course happens all the time - developer and hacker cultures are about modifying the system into something better functioning. But there is a difference: in the practice of hacking, you don’t always have the functional motivation - it also works as a form of disruptive critique, stopping the system for a moment. Let’s use these kinds of stopped moments in the festival, the incompatible positions, in order to talk about how to go further (or backwards or sideways) on renewed terms - hence the in/compatible.

Can you give an example of when failing technologies lead to specific innovations?

I would prefer not to use the language of innovation, which has been so co-opted by the creative industries at the moment. But I think I know what you are looking for... an example would be different kinds of ‘reverse engineering’. In the so-called Arab Spring, when mobile connectivity and the internet was shut down in Tunisia, the network of Telecomix (with main figures in Berlin and Scandinavia) stepped in and basically ‘crowd-sourced’ internet connectivity. They didn’t do this by any fancy new technology, but instead simply utilised dial-up internet, that is through analogue phone lines. This is not an example of a ‘failing’ technology but analogue communications are increasingly becoming incompatible in a deeper sense - they do not fit into the business plans of the global telecommunications industries or of complicit government agendas (where digital is easier, at least in the imagination, to render compatible on/off logics). So this is more an example of incompatibility on a broader scale, not about errors and failure, but about being incompatible with technological development. The in/compatibility comes into play when this leads to a kind of innovation in the sense that the terms of communication and of its development are being renegotiated, modified, hacked and reverse-engineered.

Without moments of incompatibility, of things not working together, you can’t have any development...

The current ecological debates, it is clear that nuclear power is compatible with certain quick economic expansion, but on the other hand incompatible with matters of environment and security which in the long run might even be incompatible with the original economical concerns... Again, these are entangled media natures which function in networked ways - hence compatibility and incompatibility depends on your standpoint - that is why it is so important to talk about different starting points for viewing technology before engaging in interdisciplinary collaboration. If anything, a forum like transmediale, with its strong socio-political focus and transdisciplinary nature, not lodged in one single institutionalised field, can contribute to such discussions. [...] In what way do in/compatible beings drive the logic of cultural production?

Here I refer to Tiziana Terranova, and the logics of counter-production and incorporation. Without moments of incompatibility, of things not working together, you can’t have any development... “The media age proceeds in jerks, just like Turing’s paper strip,” as Friedrich Kittler wrote, and in this he could just have well been talking about technological development in general where the production of incompatibilities is central to having any development at all. Digital culture events continuously celebrate the open and free as if these paradigms of cultural production are an anti-thesis to our present crises and could somehow rescue us. It’s the big media against small, it’s the creative commons against the copyright industries. But these incompatibilities are only superficial - they don’t get to the heart of the matter that people like Christian Marazzi have analysed – that financial capitalism is totally dependent on, and itself generating, these new modes of open and free production and co-production. They won’t save us from financial crisis because they are part of the system, that in itself needs saving (or not). Let’s savour the position of not trying to be productive for a moment, an in/compatible moment for in/compatible beings exploring the paradoxes of contemporary network culture, economy and politics. And furthermore, transmediale 2012, and the in/compatible theme stresses an alternative to synthesis, more in line with incomplete synthesis; or more correctly, transversal thinking and practice.
ALL POWER TO THE FREE UNIVERSITIES OF THE FUTURE!

Statement in relation to the outlawing of the Copenhagen Free University

By THE FREE U RESISTANCE COMMITTEE

The Copenhagen Free University was an attempt to reinvigorate the emancipatory aspect of research and learning, in the midst of an ongoing economisation of all knowledge production in society. Seeing how education and research were being subsumed into an industry structured by a corporate way of thinking, we intended to bring the idea of the university back to life. By life, we mean the messy life people live within the contradictions of capitalism. We wanted to reconnect knowledge production, learning and skill sharing to the everyday within a self-organised institutional framework of a free university. Our intention was multi-layered and was of course partly utopian, but also practical and experimental. We turned our flat in Copenhagen into a university by the very simple act of declaring “this is a university.”

By this transformative speech act the domestic setting of our flat became a university. It didn’t take any alterations to the architecture other than the small things needed in terms of having people in your home staying over, presenting thoughts, researching archival material, screening films, presenting documents and works of art. Our home became a public institution dedicated to the production process of communal knowledge and fluctuating desires.

The ethos of the CFU was critical and opinionated about the ideological nature of knowledge, which meant that we did not try to cover the institution in a cloud of dispassionate neutrality and transcendence as universities traditionally do. The Copenhagen Free University became a site of socialised and politicised research, developing knowledge and debate around certain fields of social practice. During its six years of existence, the CFU entered into five fields of research: feminist organisation, art and economy, escape subjectivity, television/media activism and art history. The projects were initiated with the experience of the normative nature of mainstream knowledge production and research, allowing us to see how certain areas of critical practice were being excluded. Since we didn’t want to replicate the structure of the formal universities, the way we developed the research was based on open calls to people who found interest in our fields or interest in our perspective on knowledge production. Slowly the research projects were collectively constructed through the display of material, presentations, meetings, and spending time together. The nature of the process was sharing and mutual empowerment, not focusing on a final product or paper, but rather on the process of communication and redistribution of facts and feelings. Parallel to the development of the CFU, we started to see self-organised universities sprouting up everywhere. Over this time, the basic question we were constantly asking ourselves was, what kind of university do we need in relation to our everyday? This question could only be answered in the concrete material conditions of our lives. The multiplicity of self-organised universities that were starting in various places, and which took all kinds of structures and directions, reflected the diversity of these material conditions. This showed that the neoliberal university model was only one model among many models; the only one given as a model to the students of capital.

As the strategy of self-institution focused on taking power and not accepting the dualism between the mainstream and the alternative, this in itself carried some contradictions. The CFU had for us become a too fixed identifier of a certain discourse relating to emancipatory education within academia and the art scene. Thus we decided to shut down the CFU in the winter of 2007 as a way of withdrawing the CFU from the landscape. We did this with the statement “We Have Won,” and shut the door of the CFU just before the New Year. During the six years of the CFU’s existence, the knowledge economy had rapidly, and aggressively, become the norm around us in Copenhagen and in northern Europe. The rise of social networking, lifestyle and intellectual property as engines of valorisation meant that the knowledge economy was expanding into the tiniest pores of our lives and social relations. The state had turned to a wholesale privatisation of former public educational institutions, converting them into mines of raw material for industry in the shape of ideas, desires and human beings. But this normalising process was somehow not powerful enough to silence all forms of critique and dissent; other measures were required.

In December 2010 we received a formal letter from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation telling us that a new law had passed in the parliament that outlawed the existence of the Copenhagen Free University together with all other self-organised and free universities. The letter stated that they were fully aware of the fact that we do not exist any more, but just to make sure they wished to notify us that “In case the Copenhagen Free University should resume its educational activities it would be included under the prohibition in the university law §33.” In 2010 the university law in Denmark was changed, and the term ‘university’ could only be used by institutions authorised by the state. We were told that this was to protect “the students from being disappointed.” As we know numerous people who are disappointed by the structural changes to the educational sector in recent years, we have decided to contest this new clampdown by opening a new free university in Copenhagen. This forms part of our insistence that the emancipatory perspective of education should still be on the map. We demand the law be scrapped or altered, allowing self-organised and free universities to be a part of a critical debate around the production of knowledge now and in the society of the future.

We call for everybody to establish their own free universities in their homes or in the workplace, in the square or in the wilderness. All power to the free universities of the future.

The Free U Resistance Committee of June 18, 2011.