

18-21 october 2001 make-world festival munich germany

ØYES

border=Ø location=YES

make world event

make world is a unix command used to completely update an operating system. It's designed to follow the latest developments once the local sources are synchronized. Typing "make world" in the command line rebuilds and renews the whole system while it's running.

What's new? Even in times when everyone is shocked by the news, something new refers not to the unknown or the never seen before, but to the omnipresence of permanent change. What was beyond imagination up to recently may, in the next moment, come as no surprise.

The first make world festival will take place from October 18th to the 21st in Munich. Against the backdrop of one of the fastest growing High Tech and New Media clusters in the world, scientists, theorists, artists and activists are invited to participate in presentations, constructive conversations, reflection and debates. It's an opportunity to link up different approaches while keeping and challenging their diversity, contextuality and self reference.

Under the title **BORDER="Ø" LOCATION="YES"** the event aims to track new forms of subjectivity carried out by current modifications of the world: which until recently were characterized as "infolization", "digitization" and "globalization". The more these buzzwords lose their glamour, the more important it is to discuss the role borders play, and question what restricted and unrestricted locality, mobility and freedom of movement may mean.

Global processes are running out of time and space. Facing the end of the end, everything - what might happen or has to be done - starts from scratch. And this new beginning embraces much more than ever before. It's time to scroll: to look ahead and behind, to step to the side, to think ahead.

people

make-world festival
BORDER="Ø" LOCATION="YES"

Concept by:
Florian Schneider and Olla Lialina

With support of:
Thomas Atzert (Frankfurt), Shu Lea Cheang (New York), Dragan Espenschied (Nordheim), Oliver Frommel (Munich), Graham Harwood (Amsterdam), Wolfgang Hauptfleisch (Muenster), Fran Illich (Mexico City), Manse Jacobi (Beirut), Paul Keller (Amsterdam), Alain Kessi (Sofia), Hagen Kopp (Hanau), Mike Konstantinov (Moscow), Susanne Lang (Berlin), Geert Lovink (Sydney), Sebastian Lutgert (Berlin) Armin Medosch (London), Anton Monti (Helsinki), Marko Peljhan (Ljubljana), Klaus Schoenberger (Tuebingen), Pit Schultz (Berlin), Armin Smallovic (Berlin), Felix Stalder (Toronto), Soenke Zehlke (Saarbrücken).

paper

The paper hand-out for the festival participants has been compiled and edited by: Geert Lovink, Sebastian Luetgert, Joanne Richardson, Pit Schultz, Florian Schneider, Soenke Zehlke

conference program

THURSDAY, 18 OCT 2001

Thu, 20.30 Muffathalle
Opening by Lydia Andrea Hartl

A new political landscape?
Saskia Sassen (Chicago), Ghassan Hage (Sydney)
Publix Theatre Caravan (Vienna)

Thu, 23.00 Muffathalle (Cafe)
DJ Spooky (New York)

FRIDAY, 19 OCT 2001

Fri, 12.30 lothringer13
Informational self-defense
[NN]
Sam de Silva (Melbourne), Eveline Lubbers (Amsterdam), afrika-gruppe, Marko Peljhan (Ljubljana)

Fri, 14.00 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Living wage and waging life
[Soenke Zehlke]
Kimi Lee (Los Angeles), MEK Software (Dortmund), Trabaja Zero (Madrid)

Fri, 15.00 lothringer13
Free Floating
Paul D Miller/DJ Spooky (New York)

Fri, 16.30 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Mobility, Freedom of movement, Acces for all
[Angela Mitropoulos]
Partha Pratim Sarker (Dhaka), Osaren Iginoba (Jena), Fran Illich (Tijuana)

Fri, 17.30 lothringer13
Are you net?
Roman Leibov (Tartu)

Fri, 19.00 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Representations of labor:
[Shuddhabrata Sengupta]
Franco Berardi (Bologna), Prabhu Prasad Mohapatra (New Delhi), Myoung Joon Kim (Seoul)

Fri, 19.00 lothringer13
Opening of the exhibition "The artist as an expert"

Fri, 22.00 Muffathalle
Guillermo Gomez-Pena

SATURDAY, 20 OCT 2001

Sat, 11.00 lothringer13
Flexible Citizenship
[Anton Monti]
Yann Moulier Boutang (Paris), Jussi Vahamaki (Tampere)

Sat, 11.30 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Common, Community, Allmend
[Thorsten Schilling]
Reinhold Grether (Konstanz), Volker Grassmuck (Berlin), Shuddhabrata Sengupta (New Delhi)

Sat, 13.30 lothringer13
Low Tech, low-paid, no rights
[Birgit Beese]
Valery Rey Alzaga (Denver), Beshid Najafi (Cologne), Gemma Susa (London)

Sat, 14.00 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Semi(o)resistance

[Joanne Richardson]
Wu-ming (Bologna), Tom Mulcaire (Cape Town), Harwood (London), Zoran Panteleic (Novi Sad)

Sat, 16.00 lothringer13
Uncertain Borders and Informal Economies
Stefano Boeri and Multiplicity (Milano)

Sat, 16.30 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Immaterial labor
[Thomas Atzert]
Maurizio Lazzarato (Paris), Paolo Punx (Milano), Antonio Conti (Rome), Markus Termonen (Helsinki)

Sat, 18.30 lothringer13
Firewalls
[Armin Medosch]
Erich Moechel (Vienna), Christine Schulzki-Haddouti (Bonn), Janko Röttgers (Berlin)

Sat, 18.30 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Time, space, action
[Pit Schultz]
Geert Lovink (Sydney), RTmark, Matt Fuller (London), Aris Papatheodrou (Paris)

Sat, 20.30 Muffathalle
Kodwo Eshun (London)

Sat, 21.00 lothringer13
Micromusic

Sat, 21.00 lothringer13/laden
Expertlounge

SUNDAY 21 OCT 2001

Sun, 11.00 lothringer13
The language of the new media
Lev Manovich (San Diego)

Sun, 11.30 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Roaming producers
[NN]
Sebastian Luetgert (Berlin), Shu-Lea Cheang (New York), Dorian Moore (London), Ludovic Prieur (Paris)

Sun, 13.30 lothringer13
Beyond the web
[Olla Lialina]
Pit Schultz (Berlin), Niko Waesche (Munich), Konrad Becker (Vienna)

Sun, 14.00 Muffathalle (Cafe)
Non-Conformism
Diedrich Diederichsen (Berlin)

Sun, 16.00 Muffathalle
Videoconference with Antonio Negri (Rome)

exhibition

ARTIST AS AN EXPERT
19 october - 25 november
13pm - 19pm,
lothringer13 (closed on monday)

Herbert W. Franke (DE)
Expert in Computer Art, Cybernetic Aesthetics, Visualisation of Science, Futurologie, Speleologie, Paleo-chronology

Entropy8Zuper! (US/BE)
Experts in the longest route from point A to point B

Jennifer Reeder (USA)
Expert in White Trash

Marko Peljhan (SL)
Expert in Communication Technology and Earth/Space Environment applications

BEIGE (USA)
Experts in Intentional Computing

expertbase 0.1

Expertbase is a site for people with extraordinary skills. It's a site for people, who are not found in any commercial or official databases. A site for people, who are being ignored by vulgar headhunters and usually excluded from the labor market -- either because of their residence permit status or because of their origins, but in the last instance because of their unique abilities and singular qualifications. Expertbase is a site for people, who have gained expert knowledge on any field and who are willing to share these experiences with others.

If you're looking for a job, for an occupation or for further education, at expertbase you can upload, edit and download your profile. At expertbase you carry your data in your own hands. It's up to you, to determine, how to be represented in the expertbase and why. You decide yourself, with whom to get in contact and when. Each user has got password protected, anonymous access to the expertbase, which furtherly works as your personal expertspace including a free email-account and an increasing number of services.

If you're looking for a person to hire for a certain job or special task, at expertbase you can search or upload your offer. At the cutting edge of human expertise as well as due to up-to-date information retrieval technology expertbase is the place to multiply all available capacities and to explore the potentials of truly globalized ways of collaboration and cooperation.

Expertbase is based on the idea of open sources and open borders. It is designed as a project, which aims nothing more than to come straight to the point and to fit to the immediate needs of its contributors. It is under permanent construction and work in progress in true sense. It's use is its only value. expertbase.net is to push forward the limitations of access, mobility and informational self-determination into many different directions, by any means towards new frontiers.

Expertbase1.0 is part of ØYES border=Ø Location=yes make-world festival held in Munich October 18-21, 2001 <http://make-world.org> Everyone is an expert is presented as a public interface installation during make world festival at Lothringer13.

ECONOMY OF FEAR

What we are witnessing after September 11 seems to be, above all, an enormous effort to radically intensify the societies of control, an attempt to skip several stages in their development, to accelerate them through five-year-plan- like state-financed operations, to ultimately tighten the networks of security on every front. But obviously, to radicalize control also means to radicalize its inherent contradictions. The concepts of "infinite justice" and "enduring freedom" will create infinitely small but enduring glitches and holes, both ideologically and practically. Paranoia has been finally globalized: we are facing a new kind of war that no longer makes any distinction between the interior and the exterior, and that, by its very own definiton, can never stop. But if now the apocalypse may even come as a single envelope in tomorrow's mail, then doesn't it look like the societies of control and their economies of fear have already reached one of their absolute limits? And if so, then: what next?

A Symptomatology of 9-11

In this section we tried to not to explain anything but to allow an overview about a range of diagnoses. You can fast forward and 'fly' over the media scenery which opened after the events of september 11. A certain mix of voices helps to examine in which way the economy of emotions around these events can lead to specific politics. The meaning which might be produced inbetween is dependent on the order of reading and other external factors, introducing an actualized reading of the following textes of this reader. We do not think that now, everything has to be fundamentally different, but tried at least to reduce for you the ammount of repetition. In any case there is more material at www.textz.com or www.nettime.org.

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"A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough."
President Bush's Address to Congress and the American People Thursday, Sept. 20, 2001
<http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2001/9/21/02114.shtml>

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"For the last, you know, 50 years, action movies have been in and if they are well-made people will go in to see it - I mean, I don't think that - if there's any indication that this terrorist attack happened because of some of the terrorist movies that were made, then that's one thing, but that's definitely not the case."
Arnold Schwarzenegger http://www.screenwriter-sutopia.com/script_reviews/collateral_damage.html -

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In global capitalism, the State, which tends to be unemployed, seems now to have found a permanent job [...] As the towers were a symbols in a (postmodern) world where symbols (supposedly) can be moved around independently from their referents, now all discourses are stamped by a rhetorics of emergency, which in its argumentation will rarely keep its rhetorical promise: that now everything has to be seen differently. Since most authors argue: Now everything is different, that's why everything i have always been saying is true.
Diedrich Diederichsen: Das WTC hat es gegeben
<http://www.taz.de/pt/2001/10/06/a0100.nf/text.name.ask8hcbmM.n.1>

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Viral power is understandable only in the language of the media: the twin spectacles of sadness and terror: the doubled language of fascination and dread. In the days ahead, the media spectacle will shift to the viral language of rage and revenge. [...] It is a micro-power, not a super-power. It is low tech, not high tech--and thus invisible to the optical scanners of the ruling technological regime. Paradoxically, the (technological) weakness of viral power is its strength.
Arthur and Marilouise Kroker: Terrorism of Viral Power
<http://www.ctheory.net/>

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For a few hours or days there appeared no official spin on the event, no slogan/logo in the media, no interpretation, no meaning. We watched the cloud drift around the city, first to the East over Brooklyn, then up the west side of Manhattan, finally over the east side as well. With the smell and the poisonous haze around the moon came

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a nightmare about the occult significance of the cloud: -- angry bewildered ghosts in a vast white cloud. And we breathed that cloud into us. We'll never get it out of our lungs. What the cloud wanted was an explanation, a meaning.
Peter Lamborn Wilson (Sept. 18, 2001) 9/11 and the Crisis of Meaning
<http://slash.autonomeia.org/article.pl?sid=01/10/09/169203>

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It is precisely now,when we are dealing with the raw Real of a catastrophe, that we should bear in mind the ideological and fantasmatic coordinates which determine its perception. If there is any symbolism in the collapse of the WTC towers, it is not so much the old-fashioned notion of the "center of financial capitalism," but, rather, the notion that the two WTC towers stood for the center of the VIRTUAL capitalism, of financial speculations disconnected from the sphere of material production. The shattering impact of the bombings can only be accounted for only against the background of the borderline which today separates the digitalized First World from the Third World "desert of the Real." It is the awareness that we live in an insulated artificial universe which generates the notion that some ominous agent is threatening us all the time with total destruction.
Slavoj Zizek Welcome To The Desert Of The Real
Date: Fri, 14 Sep 2001 00:49:43 +0100
<http://amsterdam.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-0109/msg00106.html>

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The Huntington/CIA "Clash of Cultures" model of Islam proposes it as a kind of disease that has to be kept isolated & confined. The neo-liberal "Global Market" model of the "Orient" views it as a source of raw material (such as black gold) and cheap labor that must be exploited. The resources are to be taken away, the labor is to be kept in place. Obviously Moslem immigration to the "North" does not fit well with either of these models. If Islam is a "disease, then "refugees" are a virus, penetrating borders like immune systems. But then disruptions are also inevitable, given the "logic of the Market".
Hakim Bey Islam and Eugenics NYC, Aug 16 1997 <http://www.hermetic.com/bey/islamand-eugenics.html>

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It was not just the head, it were the twins. David Lynch's "Twin Peaks", one of the most successful TV series of the last decade, referred to two hills around which the american phantasy circulated. Twin Peaks, these were the breasts of the raped daughter, the negative phantasy of threatening and abuse. It's positive counterpart are the Twin Towers, the double dick, erected as a powerful symbol among all the loathsomeness and violence of the others, of the negatively assigned plane of Twin Peaks. The Twin Towers mirror America's narrative of success, supremacy and audaciousness, and anyone who has ever been in New York has seen them, or has even been on the top, via one of these high-speed lifts, and seen the panorama of the city as american nature. The assault against this double phallus was, trivially said, a kick in the balls, which was also aimed at the head. Insofar this assault was perfectly planned: Its goal was not only to hit the symbolic center, but also the one of the very real power.
Interview mit Klaus Theweleit 'Innere Panzerung wäre die Idiotenlösung' die tageszeitung,

19.09.2000
<http://www.taz.de/pt/2001/09/19/a0117.nf/text>

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Then when things seems to get back in some type of order again from the chaos that just happen, then Boom. Evil hits again Media sets you to takes sides, people set you to take sides, everyone is looking to whom to blame, but no one is be a thinker and no one is annualizing and no one is seeking out the facts to get to the truths of what has happen. What was the cause that gave these effects,what are the actions we take now after we find out the cause,the effects to bring about justice. So now the hate is back in after we all just went through our sorrows,so we back to racism, evil hate the same crap from the last millennium in this millennium. Negative energy grabbing at Humans to destroy Humans, animals, lands Mother Earth.
Afrikaa Bambataa A Wake Up Call To All
Date: Fri, 14 Sep 2001 19:03:49 +0000

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Inevitably, then, collective passions are being funnelled into a drive for war that uncannily resembles Captain Ahab in pursuit of Moby Dick, rather than what is going on, an imperial power injured at home for the first time, pursuing its interests systematically in what has become a suddenly reconfigured geography of conflict, without clear borders, or visible actors. Manichaeic symbols and apocalyptic scenarios are banded about with future consequences and rhetorical restraint thrown to the winds.
Edward Said Islam and the West are inadequate banners
The Observer, Sunday September 16, 2001
<http://tesa.leb.net>

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Hackers face life imprisonment under 'Anti-Terrorism' Act: Justice Department proposal classifies most computer crimes as acts of terrorism. Hackers, virus-writers and web site defacers would face life imprisonment without the possibility of parole under legislation proposed by the Bush Administration that would classify most computer crimes as acts of terrorism. The Justice Department is urging Congress to quickly approve its Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), a twenty-five page proposal that would expand the government's legal powers to conduct electronic surveillance, access business records, and detain suspected terrorists. Kevin Poulsen Sep 23 2001 11:00PM PT
<http://www.securityfocus.com/news/257>

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Remember that the goal of terrorism is to create increasingly paralytic totalitarianism in the government it attacks.
John Perry Barlow Date: Fri, 14 Sep 2001 04:14:25 -0400
<http://amsterdam.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-0109/msg00107.html>

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The Internet, itself a key communications tool for terrorists, also facilitates high-volume piracy, with up to \$11 billion in pirated software products sluicing through computer networks worldwide last year. McAfee, the Internet security services provider, warns parents on its kids Web site that organized crime "is very involved in Internet pira-



cy." The convergence of our economic security and our national security became starkly apparent on Sept. 11. The staggering economic losses to America's copyright and trademark industries - alarming unto themselves -- now are compounded by the opportunistic trafficking in IP products to finance terrorism and other organized criminal endeavors.

Roslyn A. Mazer From T-Shirts to Terroism
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A43957-2001Sep29.html>

The net, the marvelous miracle of communication which might be some utopian reading of the situation, will never reach the other 99% of the world in time. The reason that it will never come to save the world, like a miracle, is that terrorists will invade the net. They will be representative of all of the outside, and the outside includes all the countries where the people don't even have telephones. This is all the outside, the outside is all demonic for the inside, and therefore the technology will not be transferred, because that would be asking angels to transfer their technologies to devils, from their point of view.

Peter Lamborn Wilson Islam and the Internet MetaForum II/NO BORDERS/Budapest Networking Conference Budapest, October 6, 1995
<http://www.hermetic.com/bey/pw-islam.html>

"Well, why it's happening is that God Almighty is lifting his protection from us. And once that protection is gone, we all are vulnerable because we're a free society, and we're vulnerable. We lay naked before these terrorists who have infiltrated our country. There's probably tens of thousands of them in America right now. They've been raising money. They've been preaching their hate and overseas they have been spewing out venom against the United States for years. All over the Arab world, there is venom being poured out into people's ears and minds against America. And the only thing that's going to sustain us is the umbrella power of the Almighty God."

Pat Robertson, American Christian Coalition
http://www.pfaw.org/911/robertson_falwell.shtml

To illustrate the language of the major terrorists, Noam Chomsky quotes, St. Augustine telling the story of a pirate captured by Alexander the Great who asked him, "How he dares molest the sea?". -How dare you molest the whole world?-, the pirate replied: "because I do it with a little ship only. I am called a thief; you, doing it with a great navy, are called an Emperor." (Pirates & Emperors: Int. Terrorism in the Real World).
From: JSalloum@aol.com Date: Fri, 14 Sep 2001 06:01:19 +0200
<http://amsterdam.net-time.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-I-0109/msg00107.html>

In this three-year period the Soviet Union has been unable to subjugate Afghanistan. The Soviet forces are pitted against an extraordinary people who, in their determination to preserve the character of their ancient land, have organized an effective and still spreading country-wide resistance. The resistance of the Afghan freedom fighters is an example to all the world of the invincibility of the ideals we in this country hold most dear, the ideals of freedom and independence.
Ronald Reagan Proclamation 5034 -- Afghanistan Day March 21, 1983

Can there be any hope left after having listened, hardly 36 hours ago, to the speech made the President before the U.S. Congress "We will use every necessary weapon of war." "Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen." "Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." "I've called the armed forces to alert and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act and you will make us proud." "This is the world's fight, this is civilization's fight." "I ask for your patience... in what will be a long struggle." "The great achievement of our time and the great hope of every time, now depend on us." "The course of this conflict is not

known, yet its outcome is certain... And we know that God is not neutral." "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." "We will use any weapon." "It will not be short combat but a lengthy war, lasting many years, unparalleled in history." "It is the world's fight: it is civilization's fight." "The achievements of our times and the hope of every time, now depend on us."

Speech by President Fidel Castro Ruz President of the Republic of Cuba Havana, September 22, 2001
<http://www.granma.cu/ingles/septiem4/discusi.html>

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism: the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory with stirred the deepest depths of their hearts, and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpourings of fervid eloquence which moved every listener.

The War Prayer Mark Twain
<http://textz.com/index.php3?text=twain+war>

In 1993 and 1994, two terrorist bombs planted by the I.R.A. exploded in London's financial district, a historic and densely packed square mile known as the City of London. In response to widespread public anxiety about terrorism, the government decided to install a "ring of steel" -- a network of closed-circuit television cameras mounted on the eight official entry gates that control access to the City. Throughout Britain today, there are speed cameras and red-light cameras, cameras in lobbies and elevators, in hotels and restaurants, in nursery schools and high schools. There are even cameras in hospitals. [...] And everywhere there are warning signs, announcing the presence of cameras with a jumble of different icons, slogans and exhortations, from the bland "CCTV in operation" to the peppy "CCTV: Watching for You!" By one estimate, the average Briton is now photographed by 300 separate cameras in a single day.
BEING WATCHED fwd by: Harsh Kapoor October 7, 2001
<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/07/magazine/07SURVEILLANCE.html#>

In order to build the e-commerce economy that we thought was coming, billions was invested and lost in building up a delivery based economy, with dead companies like webvan set to take online grocery orders and deliver them. The influenza pandemic of 1918 killed as many as 40,000,000 people in 1918, sending everybody home meant they could do no work at all, see or hear no news (radios had been banned during the war), do little but read and live in fear. Food delivery could have been arranged, but logistics would have been difficult without having people interact with one another heavily, and thus spreading disease. Today we might barely notice being shut in our homes. I work at home, and as such often find days may go by where I don't leave it. Today we even have the dawn of decent videoconferencing.
From: Brad Templeton <brad@templetons.com
Subject: Could the failed e-commerce plans be the end of epidemics? To: dave@farber.net Date: Sun, 7 Oct 2001 23:33:09 -0700
<http://www.templetons.com/brad>

In 1979, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the CIA and Pakistan's ISI (Inter Services Intelligence) launched the largest covert operation in the history of the CIA. Their purpose was to harness the energy of Afghan resistance to the Sovi-

ets and expand it into a holy war, an Islamic jihad, which would turn Muslim countries within the Soviet Union against the communist regime and eventually destabilise it. When it began, it was meant to be the Soviet Union's Vietnam. It turned out to be much more than that. Over the years, through the ISI, the CIA funded and recruited almost 100,000 radical mojahedin from 40 Islamic countries as soldiers for America's proxy war. The rank and file of the mojahedin were unaware that their jihad was actually being fought on behalf of Uncle Sam.

Arundhati Roy The Algebra of Infinite Justice Saturday September 29, 2001
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4266289,00.html>

It is quite certain, with the cold and flu season almost upon us, that people will be flocking to their doctor when they get any sign of a cold or flu, to be tested, for ANTHRAX. IMAGINE, THAT YOU ACTUALLY HAD THE FLU, AND IT WAS ANTHRAX, AND YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT, AND YOU COULD NOT GET INTO YOUR DOCTOR FOR SEVERAL DAYS BECAUSE HE IS TOTALLY BOOKED UP BECAUSE OF PANIC. If you already are administering Cipro, it could make the difference between life and death. ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THIS CHANCE?? If not, please visit our website. You only need to fill out a simple form, and on approval from our doctors, you will have your Cipro, Gas Mask, or any of our other life changing products delivered to your door by FedEx in 2 days. Please, think about the safety of yourself and your family. Is it worth the risk not to? <http://www.deskfold.com/cindex.htm>

Top 10 Gaining Queries - Week Ending Sept. 13, 2001

- 1. nostradamus 2. cnn 3. world trade center 4. osama bin laden 5. pentagon 6. fbi 7. american red cross 8. american airlines 9. afghanistan 10. american flag

Top 10 Declining Queries - Week Ending Sept. 13, 2001
1. us open 2. aaliyah 3. hank the angry dwarf 4. irs 5. compaq 6. david blaine 7. shark attacks 8. anne heche 9. Carly Fiorina 10. kate winslet
<http://www.google.com/press/zeitgeist/9-11-search.html>

An elite press consortium made up of the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and CNN also apparently handed the Bush administration another big favor this week when it indefinitely delayed making public the results of its Florida election recount. The long-awaited analysis of 200,000 disputed ballots from the presidential election was supposed to be published on Monday, but the Times quietly informed its readers in a Sunday essay by political reporter Richard Berke that the "move might have stoked the partisan tensions" and "now seems utterly irrelevant." A journalist involved in the project later told Inside.com, "There's a sense that now is not the time to be writing about something that might make it look like someone else should have been elected president."

Salon.com, September 29, 2001
<http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2001/09/29/democracy/index2.html>

Giorgio Agamben Security On Security and Terror

Security as a leading principle of state politics dates back to the birth of the modern state. Hobbes already mentions it as the opposite of fear, which compels human beings to come together within a society. But not until the 18th century does a thought of security come into its own. In a 1978 lecture at the Collège de France (which has yet to be published) Michel Foucault has shown how the political and economic practice of the Physiocrats opposes security to discipline and the law as instruments of governance. Turgot and Quesnay as well as Physiocratic officials were not primarily concerned with the prevention of hunger or the regulation of production, but wanted to allow for their development to then regulate and "secure" their consequences. While disciplinary power isolates and closes off territories, measures of security lead to an opening and to globalization; while the law wants to prevent and regulate, security intervenes in ongoing processes to direct them. In short, discipline wants to produce order, security wants to regulate disorder. Since measures of security can only function within a context of freedom of traffic, trade, and individual initiative, Foucault can show that the development of security accompanies the ideas of liberalism.

Today we face extreme and most dangerous developments in the thought of security. In the

course of a gradual neutralization of politics and the progressive surrender of traditional tasks of the state, security becomes the basic principle of state activity. What used to be one among several definitive measures of public administration until the first half of the twentieth century, now becomes the sole criterion of political legitimation. The thought of security bears within it an essential risk. A state which has security as its sole task and source of legitimacy is a fragile organism: it can always be provoked by terrorism to become itself terrorist.

We should not forget that the first major organization of terror after the war, the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS), was established by a French general, who thought of himself as a patriot, convinced that terrorism was the only answer to the guerrilla phenomenon in Algeria and Indochina. When politics, the way it was understood by theorists of the "science of police" in the eighteenth century, reduces itself to police, the difference between state and terrorism threatens to disappear. In the end security and terrorism may form a single deadly system, in which they justify and legitimate each others' actions. The risk is not merely the development of a clandestine complexity of opponents, but that the search for security leads to a world civil war which makes all civil coexistence impossible. In the new situa-

tion created by the end of the classical form of war between sovereign states it becomes clear that security finds its end in globalization: it implies the idea of a new planetary order which is in truth the worst of all disorders.

But there is another danger. Because they require constant reference to a state of exception, measure of security work towards a growing depoliticization of society. In the long run they are irreconcilable with democracy. Nothing is more important than a revision of the concept of security as basic principle of state politics. European and American politicians finally have to consider the catastrophic consequences of uncritical general use of this figure of thought. It is not that democracies should cease to defend themselves: but maybe the time has come to work towards the prevention of disorder and catastrophe, not merely towards their control. On the contrary, we can say that politics secretly works towards the production of emergencies. It is the task of democratic politics to prevent the development of conditions which lead to hatred, terror, and destruction - and not to limit itself to attempts to control them once they have already occurred. <http://www.textz.com/index.php3?text=agamben+terror> (unauthorized translation by soenke.zehle@web.de, source: FAZ 09/20/01)

Kwame Karikari I Wonder as I Wander: African Women Don't Cry

If Western, specifically Anglo-American, culture is marching unhindered to conquer the minds and hearts and souls of even the most "primitive" communities on the globe, the spearhead are the mass media. The West very beautifully labels this speedy process of domination "globalization". And they find many choruses around the globe chirping or gloating the merits of the new label for old processes that used to be called "imperialism" and other less sweet names by its opponents and more discerning Western thinkers. The spearhead for this dizzyingly rapid process of cultural invasion and conquest are the media. Of the media, nothing has been as stubborn and pervading as the motion picture. And when motion picture was adopted by wire broadcasting into television, the miracle became complete. And so when, due to rapid progress in telecommunications technology and vast amounts of capital, investments in mass media became an international business, television became the most important missionary of Western culture, values, images, symbols and ways of life. For Africa and Africans, this means many things. By and large, ultimately and most devastating of all, as my dear friend Akoto Ampaw keeps saying, even if many times without the necessary audience, our leaders, at all levels, have abandoned thinking. Euro-America has the answers, the money to borrow, the food to "donate", the old clothes to dump, and the dazzle of TV to entertain. The dazzle of TV, of Western TV, could be blinding. It is awe inspiring indeed. The imagery

is bewildering. The charm is so discreet it sucks you in, buys you out and leaves you stupefied. Its power of attraction and endearment goes beyond the glitter of advertising that makes you keep wondering whether God created you too in God's own image. It makes you a believer. And this is the point. The impact of TV news is overwhelming. In a second it turns devils like Osama bin Laden into household names. In a week, or less, CNN and BBC television coverage of starvation in Ethiopia touches so many hearts that even thousands of little American school children donate their lunch stipends to save lives in lands they may never grow up to know. An hour's documentary on CNN sends shivers behind millions of spines around the globe in anger against the butchery in Sierra Leone. Then, of course, the world goes agog instantaneously as millions watch great athletic feats on this or that international channel. So, TV news on the international networks has become a gospel. Few watch CNN or BBC TV news with any critical sense. Here is the picture, here are the words from the subjects' own mouths. There couldn't be anything more or less than what you see. That is how Western media, particularly TV, have succeeded in projecting or reinforcing images of western society, and of other societies too, for the world to see and believe.

So, it happens to be the case that, whenever there is a crisis in Africa, whenever there is an upheaval, whenever there is violent commotion -

and also, nowadays, whenever there is a democratic election in Africa - CNN and BBC will be there. And when there is violence in Africa, an outbreak of madness, it is the case also that, most of the time what you see is Africans on the run, women with bundles on their heads running, going where only heaven knows.

When there is violence, when evil strikes and there is bloodshed, you see bleeding people, broken limbs, perpetrators wielding machetes and guns and spears and weapons of torture and death. When there is mayhem in Africa or other places, CNN or BBC shows you the broken limbs, the dead bodies and the vultures feeding on them, the gore and blood. They show you human suffering. They show you helplessness. In Africa, when violence goes berserk, however, what the BBC and the CNN rarely, if ever, show you is an African mother weeping, wailing, shedding tears.

That is curious. But what is even more curious is this: since the most heinous act of terrorism hit America, the CNN and the BBC have not shown us one drop of blood. We have not seen one torn limb. We have not seen one dead body. The CNN told us that when some journalists attempted to take close-up pictures, they were arrested. All this is quite curious, isn't it?

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200109230069.html>

Shuddhabrata Sengupta On the word "Imperialism"

The record of the twentieth century is ample illustration of how yesterday's victims, turn into tomorrow's aggressors. All terrorists are state terrorists. They act in the name of existing or desired states. Conversely, I would also agree that all states are terrorist states. I am not for a moment suggesting that we try and weigh whether the Taliban or the Northern Alliance are preferable to each other. Or whether Saddam Hussain (who massacred all the leftists of Iraq even as they sang his praises) can be considered as an ally against imperialism. They are all shades of each other ... Capital demands wars, and violence on a global scale, just as much as it desires the peace and quiet of the graveyard. In the confusion of fluttering national flags, flags of faith, and flags of states aborted and still born, let us not lose sight of the cold calculations of money and profit that are made on all sides in times of war and peace (is there a difference any longer anyway) ... The militants of national liberation, and jihadis, are just as happy to milk the global financial system by speculating on the stock market. as are the managing directors of Exxon corporation. On occasion, they even do business and set up joint ventures with men in suits who can be seen on television in finance programmes

and heading the boards of respectable transnational corporations and public sector monopolies. No national liberation movement anywhere, no jihadi group known to human history has ever been heard to call for an abolition of wages, or of capitalism, or of the market or of the state. They want their market, their state, and the ability to determine wages for work on their terms. They want to overthrow evil jewish-christian-hindu-muslim-black-white-brown- yellow regimes and replace them with their own jewish-christian-hindu-sikh- black-white- brown-yellow regimes. And leftists everywhere will sign petitions in their behalf and congratulate themselves on the impeccability of their anti-imperialist credentials. And then leftists everywhere will rot in the prisons of their own making. Perhaps it is time we all returned to a dispassionate examination of capital, and remember a young man who once wrote in the wake of the rising tide of nationalism in 1845 the following pithy comment - about the citizenship of the graveyard: "The workers of the world have but one country - and that is six feet under the ground" Perhaps it is time to reflect on this phrase yet again, and to transpose funeral pyres for graves and see how the phrase reads today: "The workers of the world have but one country

and that is made of the ash of the aftermath of explosions"

We can enter this country anywhere, we can see its citizens in the ash covered survivors of September 11, in the to-be-reduced-to-ashes people of Afghanistan, in the ashen sullenness of children in Iraq and in the blood and ashes in Kashmir. We can see the ashes falling like flakes in front of our eyes. It makes us sick and tired and humiliated, everywhere. Let us not weigh today the fragile chance of solidarity of all those who are humiliated, of those who have no estate, anywhere, be it in Jackson Heights or in Jalalabad - against the questionable record of the nation state in human history. Is it time, then, for the last international? And time to leave our dreams and nightmares of statehood behind. And time to conceive of "internationalism" not as the alliance of nations, but the coming together of people who find themselves, outside, the mind frame of the nation state, or of civilisational and cultural certainties.

Shuddhabrata Sengupta <shuddha@sarai.net> [Reader-list] on the word "imperialism" Wed, 3 Oct 2001 13:42:07 +0530

We "We have met the enemy and he is us" (Pogo). The enemy is no longer outside. Increasingly, the enemy is no longer even clearly identifiable as such. Ever-present dangers blend together, barely distinguishable in their sheer numbers. Or, in their proximity to pleasure and intertwining with the necessary functions of body, self, family, economy, they blur into the friendly side of life. The Cold War in foreign policy has mutated into a state of generalized deterrence against an enemy without qualities. An unspecified enemy threatens to rise up at any time at any point in social or geographical space. From the welfare state to the warfare state: a permanent state of emergency against a multifarious threat as much in us as outside.

Society's prospectivity has shifted modes. What society looks toward is no longer a return to the promised land but a general disaster that is already upon us, woven into the fabric of day-to-day life. The content of the disaster is unimportant. Its particulars are annulled by its plurality of possible agents and times: here and to come. What registers is its magnitude. In its most compelling and characteristic incarnations, the now unspecified enemy is infinite. Infinitely small or infinitely large: viral or environmental. The Communist as the quintessential enemy has been superseded by the double figure of AIDS and global warming. These faceless, unseen and unseeable enemies, operate on an inhuman scale. The enemy is not simply indefinite (masked, or at a hidden location). In the infinity of its here-and-to-come, it is elsewhere, by nature. It is humanly ungraspable. It exists in a different dimension of space from the human "here," and in a different dimension of time: neither "now" of progress, nor the cultural past as we traditionally knew it, nor a utopian future in which we will know that past again. Elsewhere and elsewhere. Beyond the pale of our accustomed causal laws and classification grids. The theory that HIV is the direct "cause" of AIDS is increasingly under attack. More recent speculations suggest multiple factors and emphasize variability of symptoms. AIDS, like global warming, is a syndrome: a complex of effects coming from no single, isolatable place, without a linear history, and exhibiting no invariant characteristics.

"Scary" does not denote an emotion any more than "terrorist" denotes an ideological position or moral value. The words are not predicates expressing a property of the substantive to which they apply. What they express is a mode, the same mode: the imm(a)(i)nence of the accident. The future anterior with its anteriority bracketed: "will [have (fallen)]." Fear is not fundamentally an emotion. It is the objectivity of the subjective under late capitalism. It is the mode of being of every image and commodity and of the groundless self-effects their circulation generates. Capitalist power actualizes itself in a basically uninhabitable space of fear. That much is universal. The particulars of the uninhabitable landscape of fear in which a given body nevertheless dwells vary according to the socially-valorized distinctions applied to it by selective mechanisms of power implanted throughout the social field. An urbanized North American woman dwells in a space of potential rape and battering. Her movements and emotions are controlled (filtered, channeled) by the immanence of sexual violence to every coordinate of her socio-geographical space-time. The universal "we," that empty expression of unity, inhabits the in-between of the gunman, his victim, and the policeman. "We" are Marc Lépine, at the same time as "we" are the fourteen women of the Polytechnique, and the police official whose daughter has just died. "We" are every subject position. "We" extraordinary ordinary people are men or women without qualities, joined in fear.

The mass media, in their "normal" functioning, are specialized organs for the inculcation of stupidity. Stupidity is not a lack, of information or even of intelligence. Like fear, it is an objective condition of subjectivity: a posture. Stupidity is the affect proper to the media, the existential posture built into the technology of the broadcast apparatus and its current mode of social implantation. The media affect-fear-blur-is the direct collective perception of the contemporary condition of possibility of being human: the capitalized accident-form. It is the direct collective apprehension of capitalism's powers of existence. It is

vague by nature. It is nothing as sharp as panic. Not as localized as hysteria. It doesn't have a particular object, so it's not a phobia. But it's not exactly an anxiety either; it is even fuzzier than that. It is low-level fear. A kind of background radiation saturating existence (commodity consumption/consumption).

The mass media works to shortcircuit the event. It blurs the event's specific content into an endless series of "like" events. (Stupidity may also be defined as perception and intellection restricted to a recognition reflex: difference subordinated to an a priori similarity-effect.) "Like" events rush past. No sooner does one happen than it is a has-been. The who? what? when? and where? become a whatnot? ("anything can happen") and what's next? ("what is this world coming to?") The externalization and objectification of memory and the infinite repeatability of the event distances cause from effect. The event floats in media-suspended animation, an effect without a cause, or with a vague or clichéd one? The jarring loose of cause and effect does not, as has often been argued from a Baudrillardian perspective, make power mechanisms obsolete. Quite the opposite, it opens the door for their arbitrary exercise.

The media shortcircuiting of the specificity of the event opens the way for mechanisms of power to reset social boundaries along roughly historical lines. In other words, in favor of traditionally advantaged groups (whites, males, heterosexuals). It is only an apparent contradiction that these are the very groups in the best position to profit from the socio-economic fluidity of late capitalism. Fluidity and boundary-setting are not in contradiction, for two reasons. First, the boundaries themselves are as easily displaceable as the perception of risk. "The family" is a code word for an immensely complex set of laws, regulations, charity campaigns, social work, medical practices, and social custom that varies locally and is under constant revision. The boundaries of "the family" fluctuate as welfare, abortion, and tax laws change, as church influence and temperance movements rise and recede ... "The family"-any bounded social space--simply does not exist as an effectively self-enclosed, self-identical entity. "Bounded" social spaces are fields of variation. The only thing approaching a structural invariant is the high statistical probability that wherever the boundary moves, the (im)balance of power will move with it (the advantaged group will stay advantaged, in one way or another). The second reason is that the nature of the "boundary" has changed. The individual is defined more by the boundaries it crosses than the limits it observes: how many times and with whom has one crossed the boundary of the family by growing up, getting married/living together, and divorcing/breaking up? how many times has one been in and out of prison, and for what? how does one negotiate the everyday yet elusive distinction between work and leisure? how many jobs or professions has one had? how many sexual orientations? how many "looks"? how many times has one gone from consumption to self-production by buying to be?

The self is a process of crossing boundaries. The same could be said of the state. With the transnationalization of capital and the proliferation of world trade and political organizations (IMF, World Bank, World Court, UN, EEC, US-Canada free trade) a state is defined at least as much by the way in which it participates in processes greater than itself--none of which exercises full sovereignty over it, or "encloses" it in an all-encompassing higher power on the nineteenth-century nation-state model--as by the way it exercises its own brand of partial sovereignty over processes smaller than it (in the US, domestic apparatuses of power operating on a "checks and balances" principle). The generalization of the capitalized accident-form has virtualized the boundary, which now exists less as a limit than an immanent threshold. Every boundary is present everywhere, potentially. Boundaries are set and specified in the act of passage. The crossing actualizes the boundary--rather than the boundary defining something inside by its inability to cross. There is no inside, and no outside. There is no transgression. Only a field of exteriority, a network of more or less regulated passages across thresholds. What US president will not push the jurisdictional limits of the executive branch? Particularly as regards war powers. What country will

the US not invade if it sees fit? And what country invaded by the US will not open the war on the US home front through the threat, implied or stated, of terrorism? The borders of the state are continually actualized and reactualized, on the domestic side by constant fluctuations in jurisdiction, and internationally by regular flows of people and goods (customs and trade regulations) and exceptional flows of violence (invasion, terrorism).

"This will not be another Vietnam." --George Bush
The capitalist relation cannot unify without at the same time dividing. It cannot optimize and globalize the capitalized flow of people and goods without producing local rigidifications. It cannot fluidify without concretizing here and there, now and again. It was inevitable that the end of the Cold War and the opening of the "Soviet bloc" to the world capitalist economy would multiply regional "hot" wars. The political-economic expression of the capitalist accident-form (generalized deterrence) cannot actualize itself without simultaneously alienating itself in the often horrendous content of a local disaster. There will be more Vietnams. Any number of them, in any number of guises. Crime "war," drug "war," "battle" for the family ... Wherever there is a perceived danger, there is deterrence; wherever there is deterrence, there are immanent boundaries; and wherever there are immanent boundaries, there is organized violence. For having boundaries that are actualized by being crossed is a very precarious way to run a world. It leaves little space for negotiated crisis management. Either the crossing trips established regulatory power mechanisms into operation as it actualizes the boundary, and the traditional imbalance of power holds; or the crossing eludes or overwhelms regulatory mechanisms, and the only ready response to the threat to the privilege of the traditionally advantaged groups is "offering" the enemy a "choice" between unconditional surrender and maximum force (this could be dubbed the George Bush "Saddam Hussein theory" of political free will). The social and political fluidity of late capitalism has not been accompanied by a withering away of state violence. On the contrary it has also been fluidified and intensified. The rapid deployment force is the model of late capitalist state violence, on all fronts: the ability to descend "out of nowhere," anywhere, at a moment's notice--the virtualization of state violence, its becoming-immanent to every coordinate of the social field, as unbounded space of fear. Rapid deployment is a correlate of deterrence. The ever-ready exterminating SWAT team is as characteristic of late-capitalist power as productive mechanisms tied to surveillance and probabilization, which virtualize power as control.

The virtualization of power as violence through rapid deployment is accompanied by a displacement of command. Command is depoliticized, in the sense that it is not open to negotiation through elective or administrative channels but remains fully in the "untied" hands of delegated "experts" (Bush: "I will not tie the generals' hands"). Command turns absolute and unyielding. War, crime, drugs, sexual, educational or artistic "subversion": on every front of the capitalist warfare state a rapid deployment force will enter into operation, if not officially then on a vigilante basis. To each "enemy" its custom-tailored SWAT team. Media watch groups are examples of how rapid deployment operates in the cultural sphere: the absolute vigilance of obsessive surveillance, then the second an offending image sneaks past, a preemptive strike against future incursions in the form of instant boycott.
<http://textz.com/index.php?text=massumi+&fear>

Brian Massumi Everywhere You Want To Be. An Introduction to fear

MULTITUDES

The Empire we are faced with wields enormous powers of oppression and destruction, but that fact should not make us nostalgic in any way for the old forms of domination. The passage to Empire and its processes of globalization offer new possibilities to the forces of liberation. Globalization, of course, is not one thing, and the multiple processes that we recognize as globalization are not unified or univocal. Our political task, we will argue, is not simply to resist these processes but to reorganize them and redirect them toward new ends. The creative forces of the multitude that sustain Empire are also capable of autonomously constructing a counter-Empire, an alternative political organization of global flows and exchanges. The struggles to contest and subvert Empire, as well as those to construct a real alternative, will thus take place on the imperial terrain itself--indeed, such new struggles have already begun to emerge. Through these struggles and many more like them, the multitude will have to invent new democratic forms and a new constituent power that will one day take us through and beyond Empire. (Excerpt from: Michael Hardt / Antonio Negri, Empire)

Geert Lovink, Florian Schneider New Rules Of The New Actonomy

Time is Running Out for Reformism. This is the golden age of irresistible activism. Accelerate your politics. Set a target you can reach within 30 seconds--and formulate the key ideas within 30 seconds. Then go out and do it. Do not despair. Get the bloody project up and then: hit hit hit. Be instantly seductive in your resistance. The moral firewalls of global capitalism are buggy as never before. Corporations are weakened because of their endemic dirty practices, mad for profits. The faster things are changing, the more radical we can act. The faster things are changing, the more radical we have to act.

The green-liberal idea of slowly changing capitalism from within no longer works. Not because the Third Way parties powers have "betrayed" the cause. No. Simply because their project is constantly running out of time. Global systems are in a state of permanent revolution, and so is subversive politics. Society is changing much faster than any of its institutions, including corporations. No one can keep up. There is no time anymore for decent planning. The duration of a plan, necessary for its implementation is simply not longer there. This mechanism turned the baby boomers into such unbearable regressive control freaks. There is no more time to go through the whole trajectory from research to implementation. Policy is reduced to panic response.

Government policy is reduced to panic response. For the complex society its enemies are the blueprints of five years ago. The future is constantly being re-defined, and re-negotiated. Global systems are in a state of permanent flux between revolution and reaction--and so is subversive politics. Society is changing much faster than any of its institutions can handle. In short: no one can keep up and here lies the competitive advantage of today's mobile actonomists.

Instead of crying over the disappearance of politics, the public, the revolution, etc. today's activists are focussing on the weakest link defining the overall performance of the system: the point where the corporate image materializes in the real world and leaves its ubiquity and abstract omnipresence. Shortcut the common deliberations about the dichotomy between real and virtual. Get into more sophisticated dialectics. It's all linked anyway, with power defining the rules of access to resources (space, information or capital). Throw your pie, write your code. Visit their annual stockholders meeting, and do your god-damned research first. What counts is the damage done on the symbolic level, either real or virtual.

The new actonomy, equipped with pies and laptops, consists of thousands of bigger and smaller activities, which are all by themselves meaningful, manageable and sustainable. For this we do not need a General Plan, a singular portal website, or let alone a Party. It is enough to understand the new dynamics--and use them. Create and disseminate your message with all available logics, tools and media. The new actonomy involves a rigorous application of networking methods. It's diversity challenges the development of non-hierarchical, decentralized and deterritorialized applets and applications.

Laws of semiotic guerilla: hit and run, draw and withdraw, code and delete. Postulate precise and modest demands, which allows your foe a step back without losing it's face. Social movements of the last century were opposing the nation state and disclaimed it's power. In the new actonomy activists struggle against corporations and new

forms of global sovereignty. The goal is obviously not so much to gain institutional political power, rather to change the way how things are moving--and why. The principle aim is to make power ridiculous, unveil its corrupt nature in the most powerful, beautiful and aggressive symbolic language, then step back in order to make space for changes to set in. Let others do that job, if they wish so. There is no need for a direct dialogue in this phase. Exchanges on mediated levels will do. Complex societies have got plenty mediators and interfaces. Use them. Indirect contact with the power to be does not effect your radical agenda as long as you maintain and upgrade your own dignity, both as an acting individual and as a group.

Radical demands are not by default a sign of a dogmatic belief system (they can, of course). If formulated well they are strong signs, penetrating deeply into the confused postmodern subjectivity, so susceptible for catchy phrases, logos and brands. Invent and connect as much intentions, motivations, causalities as possible.

These days a well-designed content virus can easily reach millions overnight. Invest all your time to research how to design a robust meme which can travel through time and space, capable to operate within a variety of cultural contexts. The duality between 'small is beautiful' and 'subversive economies of scale' is constantly shifting. Low-tech money-free projects are charming, but in most cases lack the precision and creative power to strike at society's weakest link. Be ready to work with money. You will need it for the temporary setup.

Think in terms of efficiency. Use the staff and infrastructure on the site of your foe. Acting in the new actonomy means to cut the preliminaries and get to the point straight away. A campaign does not rely on ones own forces, but on those of your allies and opponents as well. Outsourcing is a weapon. It is a means of giving someone else the problems you cannot solve yourself. Remember that you won't get very far without a proper infrastructure such as offices, servers, legal frameworks to receive and pay money, etc. However, you can also treat these institutional requirements as flexible units. You do not need to own them, the only thing you need is temporary access so that you can set up the machine ensemble you need for that particular project.

Radical demands are not by default a sign of a dogmatic belief system (they can, of course). If formulated well they are strong signs, penetrating deeply into the confused postmodern subjectivity, so susceptible for catchy phrases, logos and brands.

Invent and connect as much intentions, motivations, causalities as possible. Nowadays activists use multi-layered and multiple voice languages that reach out far beyond the immediate purpose of a campaign or a concrete struggle, and in doing so, they create a vision much larger than what is accessible right at the moment. This mechanism needs a re-assessment of rhizomatic micro-politics which sprung up in a response to the centralized macro politics of the decaying communist parties in the seventies.

Act in a definite space and with a definite force. Dramaturgy is all that matters. Precision campaigns consists of distinct episodes with a beginning and an ending, an either smooth or harsh escalation and a final showdown. Accept the laws of appearance and disappearance. Don't get

stuck in structures which are on the decline. Be ready to move on, taking with you the (access to) infrastructure of the previous round. Action is taking place in a variety of locations and thus refers in a positive way to a new stage of people's globalization from below. One that is not just an empty, endlessly extended market, but full of energy.

Refuse to be blackmailed. If attacked, make one step aside or ahead. Don't panic. Take all the options into account. No one needs cyberheroes, you are not a lone hacker anymore. The attack maybe be done by a single person but remember we are many. The corporate response may be harder than you expect. It may be better to evade a direct confrontation, but don't trust the media and the mediators. Ignore their advice. In the end you are just another news item for them. If trouble hits the face, scale down, retreat, re-organize, get your network up, dig deep into the far corners of the Net--and then launch the counter campaign.

Program and compile subject oriented campaigns! These days a lot of people talk about a global uprising, which is only in the very beginning and definitely not limited to running behind the so called battles of the three acronyms: WTO, WB and IMF. But the urgent question of that movement is: what new types of subjectivity will raise out of the current struggles? Everybody knows, what's to be done, but who knows, what are we fighting for and why? Maybe it doesn't matter anymore: net.activism is of a charming fragility. In the end it means permanently revising and redefining all goals.

The revolution will be open source or not! Self determination is something you should really share. As soon as you feel a certain strength on a certain field, you can make your power productive as positive, creative and innovative force. That power opens up new capacities, reducing again and again unexpected and incalculable effects.

Ignore history. Don't refer to any of your favorite predecessors. Hide your admiration for authors, artists and familiar styles. You do not need to legitimize yourself by quoting the right theorist or rapper. Be unscrupulously modern (meaning: ignore organized fashion, you are anyway busy with something else). Create and disseminate your message with all available logics, tools and media. The new actonomy involves a rigorous application of networking methods. It's diversity challenges the development of non-hierarchical, decentralized and deterritorialized applets and applications. In the meanwhile leave the preaching of the techno religion to others. Hide your admiration for everything new and cool. Just use it. Take the claim on the future away from corporations. Remember: they are the dinosaurs.

Read as many business literature as possible and don't be afraid it may effect you. It will. Having enough ethics in your guts you can deal with that bit of ideology. Remember that activism and entrepreneurial spirit have a remarkably lot in common. So what? Benefit from your unlimited capacity of metamorphosis. With the right spirit you can survive any appropriation. Free yourself from the idea that enemy concepts are compromising the struggle. You don't have to convince yourself, nor your foe. The challenge is to involve those, who are not yet joining the struggle. The challenge is to use resources, which may not belong to you, but which are virtually yours.

Sydney/Munich, June 2001

<http://new.actonomy.org>

An intense debate was already initiated by Genoa. After Prague, Quebec, and Goleborg, the massive anti-G8 gatherings have slammed into the increasing hardness of States that have militarized the conditions of expression for a refusal to globalization. The result is well-known: one death. How shall we face this blackmail, which we find in Kabylia, for example, and much more violently, other than by a "militarization"? of political combat, symmetrical and catastrophic in its effects? However, the debate on Genoa finds itself singularly overdetermined by *Apocalypse New York*. If the military response is absurd and absolutely does not reflect the composition of the Multitudes who, in Seattle or in Chiapas, knew precisely how to ally a firm will with intelligence, it is also because an analysis of the transformations of neo-liberal capitalism that is simply limited to a militarization of imperial power lacks even an iota of subtlety.

Short of developing the very paranoid idea that the United States, holding the mandate of imperial power, did not just pull off a show of terrorism on a global scale in order to justify military repression and an anti-terrorist operation against the nascent movement, we should rather consider, from the point of view of simulated real war and super-terrorism against the superpower, that there is another structure at work. The renewal of the formation of a global movement in Seattle in 1995 completely upset the neo-liberal scenario of a linear absorption of the second and third worlds following the disappearance of existing socialism as a global alternative to globalization. Anti-capitalist globalization developed at a very rapid pace based on the total absence of any ideological alternatives both conceptually and, I would say, corporeally, in the sense of a body-without-organs (hence, impossible to overcome by the surgical destruction of a vital organ). This "no" to globalization prescribes with ecological rationality the outlines of a serious counter-project, but it is still groping and lacks the political force equal to the heights of the challenge.

As shocking as this must be to New Yorkers, in Toronto, the city where I live, lampposts and mailboxes are plastered with posters advertising a plan by antipoverty activists to "shut down" the business district on October 16. Some of the posters (those put up before September 11) even have a picture of skyscrapers outlined in red--the perimeters of the designated direct-action zone. Many have argued that O16 should be canceled, as other protests and demonstrations have been, in deference to the mood of mourning--and out of fear of stepped-up police violence.

But the shutdown is going ahead. In the end, the events of September 11 don't change the fact that the nights are getting colder and the recession is looming. They don't change the fact that in a city that used to be described as "safe" and, well, "maybe a little boring," many will die on the streets this winter, as they did last winter, and the one before that, unless more beds are found immediately.

And yet there is no disputing that the event, its militant tone and its choice of target will provoke terrible memories and associations. Many political campaigns face a similar, and sudden, shift. Post-September 11, tactics that rely on attacking--even peacefully--powerful symbols of capitalism find themselves in an utterly transformed semiotic landscape. After all, the attacks were acts of very real and horrifying terror, but they were also acts of symbolic warfare, and instantly understood as such. As Tom Brokaw and so many others put it, the towers were not just any buildings, they were "symbols of American capitalism."

As someone whose life is thoroughly entwined with what some people call "the antiglobalization movement," others call "anticapitalism" (and I tend to just sloppily call "the movement"), I find it difficult to avoid discussions about symbolism these days. About all the anticorporate signs and signifiers--the culture-jammed logos, the guerrilla-warfare stylings, the choices of brand name and political targets--that make up the movement's dominant metaphors.

Many political opponents of anticorporate activ-

A dangerous situation has resulted that was already produced on the Italian and European scene near the end of the 1970s. Dangerous, because although the movement is capable of interrupting the gear shifts and changes of speed which the new capitalism would impose, it cannot yet brake the growth of the constituent power of another type of globalization. The impetus of the movement continues to win in terms of enlargement, in its capacity to hit hard at the strategic objectives of cognitive capitalism (in particular its need for new closures, as shown by the victory of the South in the matter of generic medicine), but the violence of power seeks to suck it in as a magnet in order to place it on a terrain where it could be defeated.

What I am calling a "magnet" is the reduction of both the notion of imperial power to a repetition of the thesis about American imperialist superpower, as well as the measure of the radicality of the power of the movement to its capacity to respond to global capitalist power. It is precisely in such phases that terrorist overdetermination almost systematically intervenes. Each time the movement expresses the potentiality of the multitude, and the virtual is the mirror of this future, the blackmail of the expression of immediate power intervenes and sends into limbo this actualization of multiple power. *Apocalypse New York* records the formidable counter-thrust of imperial power in a catastrophic way (like Hollywood films that come true on the spot), but completely twisted around in the sense that Palestinians become Taliban.

The protest against globalization, which loathes the abomination of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (the market and the sword), finds itself called upon to support this passage to the act of destruction. The most serious catastrophe is not only in the consequences that this terrorism, promoted to the imperial-State level, will have in terms of "military" repression of protes-

ism are using the symbolism of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks to argue that young activists, playing at guerrilla war, have now been caught out by a real war. The obituaries are already appearing in newspapers around the world: "Anti-Globalization Is So Yesterday," reads a typical headline. It is, according to the Boston Globe, "in tatters." Is it true? Our activism has been declared dead before. Indeed, it is declared dead with ritualistic regularity before and after every mass demonstration: our strategies apparently discredited, our coalitions divided, our arguments misguided. And yet those demonstrations have kept growing larger, from 50,000 in Seattle to 300,000, by some estimates, in Genoa.

At the same time, it would be foolish to pretend that nothing has changed since September 11. This struck me recently, looking at a slide show I had been pulling together before the attacks. It is about how anticorporate imagery is increasingly being absorbed by corporate marketing. One slide shows a group of activists spray-painting the window of a Gap outlet during the anti-WTO protests in Seattle. The next shows The Gap's recent window displays featuring its own prefab graffiti--words like "Independence" sprayed in black. And the next is a frame from Sony PlayStation's "State of Emergency" game featuring cool-haired anarchists throwing rocks at evil riot cops protecting the fictitious American Trade Organization. When I first looked at these images beside each other, I was amazed by the speed of corporate co-optation. Now all I can see is how these snapshots from the corporate versus anticorporate image wars have been instantly overshadowed, blown away by September 11 like so many toy cars and action figures on a disaster movie set.

Despite the altered landscape--or because of it--it bears remembering why this movement chose to wage symbolic struggles in the first place. The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty's decision to "shut down" the business district came from a set of very specific and still relevant circumstances. Like so many others trying to get issues of economic inequality on the political agenda, the people the group represents felt that they had

tatory movements crushed between submission to the anti-terrorist consensus (repentance, disavowal, surrender) or caving in to absolute rebellion, demonic and demonized. Hence, concretely, it is a reduction or a shrinkage of the spaces of liberty which the movement had begun once again to conquer after the "wintry year" as they were named by Felix Guattari. The catastrophe is rather in this projection to the highest level, in this challenge-trap in which one can no longer say, as at Genoa, that only the police created the provocation. *Apocalypse New York* thus proves itself to be a powerful overdetermination of Genoa. It is a call (for employment) to all the radical "Black Blocks" in the South as well as in the North and between the two. What does the Tobin tax matter in the face of the temptation to be physically done with the general-symbol of the headquarters of global capitalism, its armed forces and the policeman of the world? In both cases, the comparison is a false one because the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are much more than symbols, without being, for that, the effective headquarters of global capitalism which is, above all, without divisions and thoroughly abstract, ungraspable.

The real provocation, compared to which the actions of the police at Genoa and the Italian State were nothing more than derisive gesticulations, is this overdetermination. This is a much more formidable virus which intends to clone the anti-globalization movement, remake the multitudes, the "peoples". And soon enough, we will have protests against the bombardment of Kabul. In this radically new situation, we can not be satisfied with the old cliches of provocation and manipulation. What kind of politics is there for the multitudes in a scene that is half cartoon, half reality (along with special effects, a superproduction worthy of Star Wars, the Roman Empire and real deaths)? Herein lies the real question.

France September, 2001

been discarded, left outside the paradigm, disappeared and reconstituted as a panhandling or squeegee problem requiring tough new legislation. They realized that what they had to confront was just not a local political enemy or even a particular trade law but an economic system--the broken promise of deregulated, trickle-down capitalism. Thus the modern activist challenge: How do you organize against an ideology so vast, it has no edges: so everywhere, it seems nowhere? Where is the site of resistance for those with no workplaces to shut down, whose communities are constantly being uprooted? What do we hold on to when so much that is powerful is virtual--currency trades, stock prices, intellectual property and arcane trade agreements?

The short answer, at least before September 11, was that you grab anything you can get your hands on: the brand image of a famous multinational, a stock exchange, a meeting of world leaders, a single trade agreement or, in the case of the Toronto group, the banks and corporate headquarters that are the engines that power this agenda. Anything that, even fleetingly, makes the intangible actual, the vastness somehow human-scale. In short, you find symbols and you hope they become metaphors for change.

For instance, when the United States launched a trade war against France for daring to ban hormone-laced beef, Jose; Bove; and the French Farmers' Confederation didn't get the world's attention by screaming about import duties on Roquefort cheese. They did it by "strategically dismantling" a McDonald's, Nike, ExxonMobil, Monsanto, Shell, Chevron, Pfizer, Sodeexo Marriot, Kellogg's, Starbucks, The Gap, Rio Tinto, British Petroleum, General Electric, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Citigroup, Taco Bell--all have found their gleaming brands used to shine light on everything from bovine growth hormone in milk to human rights in the Niger Delta: from labor abuses of Mexican tomato farmworkers in Florida to war-financing of oil pipelines in Chad and Cameroon; from global warming to sweatshops.

In the weeks since September 11, we have been reminded many times that Americans aren't particularly informed about the world outside their

Yann Moulier Boutang Apocalypse New York, after Genoa

Naomi Klein Signs of the Times

borders. That may be true, but many activists have learned over the past decade that this blind spot for international affairs can be overcome by linking campaigns to famous brands--an effective, if often problematic, weapon against parochialism. These corporate campaigns have, in turn, opened back doors into the arcane world of international trade and finance, to the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and, for some, to a questioning of capitalism itself.

But these tactics have also proven to be an easy target in turn. After September 11, politicians and pundits around the world instantly began spinning the terrorist attacks as part of a continuum of anti-American and anticorporate violence: first the Starbucks window, then, presumably, the WTC. New Republic editor Peter Beinart seized on an obscure post to an anticorporate Internet chat room that asked if the attacks were committed by "one of us." Beinart concluded that "the anti-globalization movement...is, in part, a movement motivated by hatred of the United States"--immoral with the United States under attack.

In a sane world, rather than fueling such a backlash the terrorist attacks would raise questions about why US intelligence agencies were spending so much time spying on environmentalists and Independent Media Centers instead of on the terrorist networks plotting mass murder. Unfortunately, it seems clear that the crackdown on activism that predated September 11 will only intensify, with heightened surveillance, infiltration and police violence. It's also likely that the anonymity that has been a hallmark of anticapitalism--masks, bandannas and pseudonyms--will become more suspect in a culture searching for clandestine operatives in its midst.

But the attacks will cost us more than our civil liberties. They could well, I fear, cost us our few political victories. Funds committed to the AIDS crisis in Africa are disappearing, and commitments to expand debt cancellation will likely follow. Defending the rights of immigrants and refugees was becoming a major focus for the direct-action crowd in Australia, Europe and, slowly, the United States. This too is threatened by the rising tide of racism and xenophobia. And free trade, long facing a public relations crisis, is fast being rebranded, like shopping and baseball, as a patriotic duty. According to US Trade Representative

Robert Zoellick (who is frantically trying to get fast-track negotiating power pushed through in this moment of jingoistic groupthink), trade "promotes the values at the heart of this protracted struggle." Michael Lewis makes a similar conflation between freedom fighting and free trading when he explains, in an essay in *The New York Times Magazine*, that the traders who died were targeted as "not merely symbols but also practitioners of liberty.... They work hard, if unintentionally, to free others from constraints. This makes them, almost by default, the spiritual antithesis of the religious fundamentalist, whose business depends on a denial of personal liberty in the name of some putatively higher power."

The battle lines leading up to next month's WTO

negotiations in Qatar are: Trade equals freedom, anti-trade equals fascism. Never mind that Osama bin Laden is a multimillionaire with a rather impressive global export network stretching from cash-crop agriculture to oil pipelines. And never mind that this fight will take place in Qatar, that bastion of liberty, which is refusing foreign visas for demonstrators but where bin Laden practically has his own TV show on the state-subsidized network Al-Jazeera.

Our civil liberties, our modest victories, our usual strategies--all are now in question. But this crisis also opens up new possibilities. As many have pointed out, the challenge for social justice movements is to connect economic inequality with the security concerns that now grip us all--insisting that justice and equality are the most sustainable strategies against violence and fundamentalism.

But we cannot be naïve, as if the very real and ongoing threat of more slaughtering of innocents will disappear through political reform alone. There needs to be social justice, but there also needs to be justice for the victims of these attacks and immediate, practical prevention of future ones. Terrorism is indeed an international threat, and it did not begin with the attacks in the United States. As Bush invites the world to join America's war, sidelining the United Nations and the international courts, we need to become passionate defenders of true multilateralism, rejecting once and for all the label "antiglobalization." Bush's "coalition" does not represent a genuinely global response to terrorism but the internationalization of one country's foreign policy objectives--the trademark of US international relations, from the WTO negotiating table to Kyoto: You are free to play by our rules or get shut out completely. We can make these connections not as "anti-Americans" but as true internationalists.

We can also refuse to engage in a calculus of suffering. Some on the left have implied that the outpouring of compassion and grief post-September 11 is disproportionate, even vaguely racist, compared with responses to greater atrocities. Surely the job of those who claim to abhor injustice and suffering is not to stingily parcel out compassion as if it were a finite commodity. Surely the challenge is to attempt to increase the global reserves of compassion, rather than parsimoniously police them.

Besides, is the outpouring of mutual aid and support that this tragedy has elicited so different from the humanitarian goals to which this movement aspires? The street slogans--PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT, THE WORLD IS NOT FOR SALE--have become self-evident and viscerally felt truths for many in the wake of the attacks. There is outrage in the face of profiteering. There are questions being raised about the wisdom of leaving crucial services like airport security to private companies, about why there are bailouts for airlines but not for the workers losing their jobs. There is a groundswell of appreciation for public-sector workers of all kinds. In short, "the commons"--the public sphere, the public good, the noncorporate, what we have been defending, what is on the negotiating table in Qatar--is un-

dergoing something of a rediscovery in the United States.

Instead of assuming that Americans can care about each other only when they are getting ready to kill a common enemy, those concerned with changing minds (and not simply winning arguments) should seize this moment to connect these humane reactions to the many other arenas in which human needs must take precedence over corporate profits, from AIDS treatment to homelessness. As Paul Loeb, author of *Soul of a Citizen*, puts it, despite the warmongering and coexisting with the xenophobia, "People seem careful, vulnerable, and extraordinarily kind to each other. These events just might be able to break us away from our gated communities of the heart."

This would require a dramatic change in activist strategy, one based much more on substance than on symbols. Then again, for more than a year, the largely symbolic activism outside summits and against individual corporations has already been challenged within movement circles. There is much that is unsatisfying about fighting a war of symbols: The glass shatters in the McDonald's window, the meetings are driven to ever more remote locations--but so what? It's still only symbols, facades, representations.

Before September 11, a new mood of impatience was already taking hold, an insistence on putting forward social and economic alternatives that address the roots of injustice as well as its symptoms, from land reform to slavery reparations. Now seems like a good time to challenge the forces of both nihilism and nostalgia within our own ranks, while making more room for the voices--coming from Chiapas, Porto Alegre, Kerala--showing that it is indeed possible to challenge imperialism while embracing plurality, progress and deep democracy. Our task, never more pressing, is to point out that there are more than two worlds available, to expose all the invisible worlds between the economic fundamentalism of "McWorld" and the religious fundamentalism of "Jihad."

Maybe the image wars are coming to a close. A year ago, I visited the University of Oregon to do a story on antisweatshop activism at the campus that is nicknamed Nike U. There I met student activist Sarah Jacobson. Nike, she told me, was not the target of her activism, but a tool, a way to access a vast and often amorphous economic system. "It's a gateway drug," she said cheerfully.

For years, we in this movement have fed off our opponents' symbols--their brands, their office towers, their photo-opportunity summits. We have used them as rallying cries, as focal points, as popular education tools. But these symbols were never the real targets; they were the levers, the handles. They were what allowed us, as British writer Katharine Ainger recently put it, "to open a crack in history."

The symbols were only ever doorways. It's time to walk through them.

Radio Warsaw 1.

1.1. Genoa was Warsaw. The Empire chose the road of coup d'état, because it has not been able to enact a global constitution and to regulate the markets with its institutions that are establishing. The opportunities of mediation were crushed, and it's no use to live in the delusion that it was solely a question of a single fascist government and its conducts. On the contrary, this situation has been produced by the best experts which the Empire has in controlling and suppressing social movements. So many details link Quebec City, Gothenburg and Genoa together. All this is connected to an authoritarian phase, whose realization has been decided by the powerful cluster, which is producing and using military technologies of destruction in the United States. We can verify this without collapsing into a comfortable paranoia or tempting conspiracy theories.

1.2. Talking about an authoritarian phase in a society of control may sound paradoxical. If the free expression of subjectivity is the precondition of

capitalist accumulation, why is this same subjectivity brutally repressed? Apparently a certain critical point has been reached. At the same time it must be added, that the strategy of the Empire not based solely on police activity and on refusal of rights, but that it is based on diverse technologies of control: from media control to the dominance of everyday life, from loss of economic security to the distribution of illusions of social success. Nevertheless it is reasonable to say that the refusal of constitutional rights and police activity have the most central position. We are dealing with biopower, which can change into the power of death anytime. This explains the contradiction which we have witnessed recently: what prevails between the moments of dialogue/mediation and repression/murder. In the postmodern society the control tries to become invisible, non-touchable and to make productive freedom possible. However, this can be crushed the moment a critical point of rupture has been reached. When the movements of social co-operation and multitude begin to escape imperial control, violent repression enters into the stage. During "the

blue moment" when the relative freedom, realized in the range of control, is becoming an exodus outside of the system, to a real constitutive deterritorialization. Therefore there is no reason to be amazed, why the Empire's violent procedures of repression were mostly centered on the peaceful multitude in Genoa and Gothenburg. This was the actual object of violence.

1.3. The authoritarian phase is following the tactic of coup d'état. When freedom increases and accumulates, when the signs of exodus can be seen in the horizon, suddenly the national constitutions are not valid anymore. What makes this situation paradoxical is the fact that at the same time as the Empire is unable to write its own formal, global constitution, it is forced to temporarily suspend constitutions valid on the national level or to temporarily suspend international agreements. In practice this means that on the moment of repression no constitution is valid. It means that Empire is based on no constitution. It is power in the cleanest form. It is postmodern fascism (without this term needing to offend any-

one). The tendency is completely exposed, when we think about the coup d'état during the presidential election in the United States realized by Bush and the military-production cluster. As the results of this coup d'état, now a missile shield is being built, and there are appeals for nuclear power and sales of consultation services during top summits for the police forces of the imperial provinces.

2.

2.1. The fighting cycle which began in Seattle has been able to completely delegitimize the effort to establish institutions, which were supposed to govern the global market. This has forced the Empire to resort to the use of force instead of looking for legitimization. The reasons for the success of the Seattle movement are in its ability to foresee Empire on the level of globalization and especially in its ability to recognize certain institutions as strategic in the process of global governability. All this even before Empire itself has understood, that it was maybe possible to govern the markets with the organs created in Bretton Woods or during the years of the oil crisis.

2.2. The movement of multitude, which has expressed itself during the previous twenty months, has also explicitly pointed where its own shortcomings are. It has mostly attacked politically the imperial institutions, but it has not been able to bring the forces of social and productive co-operation into the range of the struggle. Because of this, the movement has been continually forced to expand its supporting base with the methods of mediation. New subjects have been included by sloping the themes. For these reasons the movement has been forced to lean on spectacle and such communication techniques which have been easily appropriated by the Empire. From a tactical point of view the choice of visibility has been intelligent, but it should have been supported by a stronger contribution to the themes of social production.

2.3. At the moment it looks like the movement is giving itself permanent structures in the form of Social Forums. These are some kind of co-ordination circles between different groups. In the Social Forums there is included a danger that the forces directed towards it will fight each other for hegemony or for homogeneous action methods and that they are not ready to encounter the new situation in which everything should be started from the beginning. In addition to this, the mainstreaming of the Social Forums is driving away the new and young subjectivities which have been the most central motor of the fighting cycle. We have also reason to ask if the Social Forums are able to represent the richness of the productive multitude, its diversity and its subversivity by placing themselves inside the fabrics of metropolitan production.

2.4. Genoa was a point of rupture because the multitude surprised everyone. The mobilization ability of the forces of social co-operation was a surprise. The surprise was even bigger, because we know, that these were just the first groping steps of an infant. However, there was something in the air which made us feel what it could be like: beautiful and terrifying. Genoa was like Warsaw and Dresden, the beginnings of revolutions which were able to destroy the horrors of socialism. Dozens and dozens of thousands of people on the streets without a large party or a large trade union. The entrance of a new way of decision-making, a way which is neither predetermined nor determined from above and which is not based the memory of the movements, but a decision-making which is realized in the actual event, in the moment when the event projects the multitude into a possible future. Direct democracy without representation. Subjectivity in the best meaning of the word. Genoa ridiculed and made completely inefficient all the logics, which we were used to, and which we thought would be adequate to postmodernity: from blocs of different colors to Social Forums. The traditions' and orthodoxies' structural inability to understand what was happening is nearly too obvious to be even mentioned. If in Genoa the multitude placed in crisis all the action models, which we thought would be on the conflictual level (from spectacular civil disobedience to pacifist carnivals), how can some people believe that the solutions of some 19th century quacks could be actual? When the productive multitude enters the field everything must change.

2.5. Genoa and Gothenburg also brought forward

the element, which should have been evident for a long time. The hegemonic one concerning the forms of conflict is the one who uses force. It's useless to deny this. The one who is prepared to use force and who used it, defined the course of the events. The old Leninist truth. However, from a technical and political point of view the use of force was a losing option. It was defeating because it was not able to decrease the slaughtering of the demonstrators, which of course would have been realized anyway, not depending on whether the demonstrators had used force or not. Therefore the use of force was not based on the Leninist logic of hegemony - a logic which is strange to us but whose efficiency is factual - but on a complete disorder, whose effects were heavy to everyone. Violence was a defeat also politically because it opened contradictions and denunciations, and because it wasn't able to encircle the movement around the proposed action pattern. However, this does not mean that the problem concerning the self-defense of the multitude has been solved. Maybe it's more actual than ever. We should understand which are the forms of self-defense that everyone shares and uses in order to defend the multitude, however without once again going into the mediation between different groups, in which methods and symbols are exchanged like fish in the market by escaping both Leninist hegemony and anarchist chaos.

3.

3.1. The suggestion of returning to the factory may sound like a leap backwards. But it is not a such thing, if we use the concept to mean the fabric of immaterial production in metropolis as a whole. The suggestion may give the impression of being a leap backwards, but in reality it is a moving forward of a remarkable quality. The movement has gone forward until now without posing the question on how it is possible to break the capitalist ability to always appropriate the knots of social co-operation and to control the production of value. Once the forces of social production and co-operation have shyly appeared inside the movement, the repression has been merciless and it has tried to completely destroy the possibilities of the productive multitude to express itself in the terms of political decision-making. Not later than now we should start using the results of the research, which has identified the general loss of security of the metropolitan proletariat as the most important means of social and productive control in the imperial era. The indication which comes up on the basis of the questions presented here, is the immediate placing of the forms of work and neoliberalist loss of security and the research concerning guaranteed income in the central point of theory and action.

4.

4.1. In the United States the coup d'état has already been realized. Europe will - nevertheless - stay as an open field, on which to make an offensive in order to create new political space. Europe will be the initial level for the multitude's activity. Maybe also this seems like a step backwards. Why should a movement, which we define as global, close itself into a restricted space? The question is not if we believe Europe or not, if we believe in the global dimension of the movements or if we want to place ourselves behind the options of Fischer and Chirac. The question is about recognizing a constitutive space for the multitude's material activity. Even now there is a vacuum of power in Europe, a constitutional void, and there are profound contradictions, which stretch all over the institutional world. Especially because of this Europe can be a speed-wheel for the offensive against the imperial power, without digging up outdated theories about chains and weak links. This is the reason why foreseeing the Empire in the field of defining the European political space is principally important. It's as important as the already discussed ability to foresee the Empire in the tendency in which it is formalizing the institutions whose function would have been to guarantee the governability of the global market. In other words, Europe as a minimum space in which to develop social struggles for guaranteed income and in which to realize metropolitan research.

5.

5.1. The return to the themes of research, work, livelihood and metropolitan areas does not mean retreating from the offensive against the imperial institutions. However, we must understand that we are dealing with an end of a certain cycle. We are left with a strong extension to the direction of

subjectivities of political organizations, non-governmental civil organizations, voluntary work and certain syndicalist organizations. What we lack today is a rooting strong enough to the areas of the productive metropolitan proletariat. This is the first knot to be opened, the first priority which needs to be answered by turning towards the European research of work and the struggle for guaranteed income. The second priority is included in the first. The return to the themes of work and guaranteed income cannot happen within the borders of national states anymore, but solely on a European level by following the productive chaining. This is nothing else than a suggestion to begin a research and struggle for livelihood in Europe. The third priority is connected to the strategies of coup d'état and the imperial development into the direction of increasing militarization. In this third area it is important to put into the field the forces which we have.

5.2. To these three priorities (work/livelihood, European political space and resistance against coup d'état and the militarization of production) it is possible to give a sufficient answer only by posing the question of organizing the multitude at the same time, of course not by prioritizing it to the content of the struggles, and by remembering firstly that today there is no suggestion of party on the agenda. Just a need to thinly connect parts into each other. If we pay attention to the complexity of the themes and the extensiveness of the areas it is evident that the organizational question cannot be evaded anymore. We should discuss about all this.

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MIGRATION AND TERRITORY

Saskia Sassen The Centrality

The vast new economic topography that is being implemented through electronic space is one moment, one fragment, of an even greater economic chain that is in good part embedded in non-electronic spaces. There is no fully virtualized firm and no fully digitalized industry. Even the most advanced information industries, such as finance, are installed only partly in electronic space. And so are industries that produce digital products, such as software designers. The growing digitalization of economic activities has not eliminated the need for major international business and financial centers and all the material resources they concentrate, from state-of-the-art telematics infrastructure to brain talent.

Nonetheless, telematics and globalization have emerged as fundamental forces reshaping the organization of economic space. This reshaping ranges from the spatial virtualization of a growing number of economic activities to the reconfiguration of the geography of the built environment "for" economic activity. Whether in electronic space or in the geography of the built environment, this reshaping involves organizational and structural changes. Telematics maximizes the potential for geographic dispersal and globalization entails an economic logic that maximizes the attractions/profitability of such dispersal.

One outcome of these transformations has been

captured in images of geographic dispersal at the global scale and the neutralization of place and distance through telematics in a growing number of economic activities. Yet it is precisely the combination of the spatial dispersal of numerous economic activities and telematic global integration which has contributed to a strategic role for major cities in the current phase of the world economy. Beyond their sometimes long history as centers for world trade and banking, these cities now function as command points in the organization of the world economy: as key locations and marketplaces for the leading industries of this period (finance and specialized services for firms); and as sites for the production of innovations in those industries. The continued and often growing concentration and specialization of financial and corporate service functions in major cities in highly developed countries is, in good part, a strategic development. It is precisely because of the territorial dispersal facilitated by telecommunication advances that agglomeration of centralizing activities has expanded immensely. This is not a mere continuation of old patterns of agglomeration but, one could posit, a new logic for agglomeration. It is a logic that operates mostly for strategic sectors: a majority of firms and economic activities do not inhabit these major centers.

Centrality, then, remains a key property of the

economic system but the spatial correlates of centrality have been profoundly altered by the new technologies and by globalization. This engenders a whole new problematic around the definition of what constitutes centrality today in an economic system were i) a share of transactions occur through technologies that neutralize distance and place, and do so on a global scale; ii) centrality has historically been embodied in certain types of built environment and urban form. Economic globalization and the new information technologies have not only reconfigured centrality and its spatial correlates, they have also created new spaces "for" centrality. As a political economist interested in the spatial organization of the economy and in the spatial correlates of economic power, it seems to me that a focus on place and infrastructure in the new global information economy creates a conceptual and practical opening for questions about the embeddedness of electronic space. It allows us to elaborate that point where the materiality of place/infrastructure intersects with those technologies and organizational forms that neutralize place and materiality. And it entails an elaboration of electronic space, the fact that this space is not simply about transmission capacities but also a space where new structures for economic activity and for economic power are being constituted.

Stefano Boeri USE Uncertain states of Europe

The history of European architecture is not the evolutionary history of one or more constant "styles," but rather a succession of colonizations and external reinterpretations of monuments and cultures of inhabitation within a tolerant and "open" system of rules ... Fundamentally, European space is transformed by accumulation, addition, and superimposition, but rarely by outright replacement or elimination. The invention of new urban entities, new typologies of habitat, does not depend on tabula rasa, as it may in other cultures of inhabitation; rather it demands the reuse and reconversion of the existing urban materials.

European space has extended in the past toward Asia, it has colonized parts of America, and it has more recently contracted with the phenomena of globalization: because the European territory is not a system of national states, nor the perimeter in which a tradition is perpetuated. It is a highly particular mode of change and innovation of the space.

But in the contemporary European city, the interaction between global energies and local structural conformations has radically altered the relation between the principles of variation and difference. Today the principle of difference no longer acts between contiguous and diachronic urban components (i.e. between the nineteenth century city and the Renaissance city, between the modern suburb and the 19th century grid, etc...) but rather between the single molecules of the urban organism's vast territorial sprawl: between the family house and the contiguous shopping mall, between the shopping mall and the

adjacent low rise building, between the car wash and the industrial shed with the built-in house, etc... In the same way, the principle of variation does not have effect within the boundaries of vast or compact urban parts, but rather operates with the declination of a few families of urban forces that regulate the composition of the emerging city. This variation is thus reduced to infinite adaptations, conformations through elementary components can take on through surprising leaps and improvised solutions in varying territorial contexts.

The exploration of the new European territories marks the end of the syntactical dispositif of territorial organization and innovation which seemed to allow for a deeper identification of the distinctive features of European cultural identity. The dynamics appear chaotic, unpredictable in their trajectory, and therefore all the more powerfully charged with uncertainty. Indeed, a gaze that observes the mutations in real time, that samples portions of time and circumstances of transformation, can encounter forms of autopoietic innovation of inhabited space. Places and territories that seem able to adapt in original terms to the great global energies; limits within which the local dispositif of innovation-and not simply change-begins to fully manifest its staying power and long duration. In the new territories of diffuse urbanization, all these forms of innovation in inhabited space encounter an initial friction that rearticulates them into a limited series of evolutionary assonances; a series of mechanisms that composes these individual acts within the major waves of change. These mechanisms can be described with the help of metaphors:

-Linear attractors (heterogeneous sequences of linear development, especially along major axes that establishes the orientation and constitutes the major reference point); -Bowling pins (introduction of autonomous elements on the terrain); -Islands (appearance of introverted "islands" within which similar objects and lifestyles are reproduced); -Cloning zones (spontaneous repetition of the same urban elements within definite limits); -Grafts ("insertions" by the replacement of elements); -Zones of metamorphosis (molecular processes of "internal transformation" susceptible of radically altering the symbolic but also the spatial identity of an area).

These patterns reflect a limited number of dynamics of basic interaction at work in the construction of our territory through the self-organization of our society into subsystems, conducted by "minorities" which act as microcosms of autopoiesis (extended families, ethnic and professional clans, cultural communities, leisure or consumer associations) ... "Self-organization" in this context is not used to mean only spontaneity, informal or non institutional character of the processes of territorial change. Rather, self organization - which often creates spaces of innovation-means above all that settlement rules (that give order to a certain set of individual tremors) are produced and shared by subjects that participate in the system itself.

European space, which is a palimpsest of projects sedimented in time, is also today the field of action for an indeterminate and changing number of subjects, many of whom maintain a

temporary relationship with the territory. A battle of codes and interpretations ceaselessly unfolds upon this field, which is continually being rewritten, where almost nothing is ever erased, where the long-term structures are often temporarily hidden by others which are less powerful and enduring, but currently more visible. I really think that the new themes for the architecture practice are all there: the capacity to intervene in mechanisms of individual variation, the care of new and temporary community spaces, the attempt to use the economic power of certain building processes to produce a symbolic added value that redeems them from their egotism. But a new paradigm for interpretation of the emerging city is needed, one that can take the place of the one we have inherited from the sixties.

The USE (Uncertain States of Europe) Project creates "eclectic atlases" as new ways of studying the correlations between space and society. We had to disperse our efforts, to spread out across a huge environment, recognizing that the most interesting innovations are often not to be found in the center. More often they are located in the periphery, in the marginal hidden areas beyond the perimeter of our gaze. What we have seen is not simply change, not architecturally recognizable

change: we are seeing processes of radical spontaneity really able to produce new effects in the physical environment, which at the same time provoke a high degree of uncertainty. The documents are heterogeneous, but similar in their visual approach. They take the form of an "atlas" in so far as they seek new correlations between spatial elements, the words we use to name them, and the mental images we project upon them. And they are eclectic because the basic criteria of these correlations are often multidimensional, new and experimental.

These atlases most often observe the territory from several viewpoints at once: from above but also through the eyes of those who live in the space, or on the basis of new, impartial and experimental perspectives. By adroitly interlacing the viewpoints, the eclectic atlases propose a multiple visual thinking that abandons the utopia of a synoptic vision from an optimal angle of observation. This research paradigm offers a new "strategy" of vision, and suggests four major revisions of the techniques for the representation of the territory. -First, the new paradigm seeks to account for the mutations in real time, introducing a temporal element which is generally absent from the disciplines that study inhabited space. -

Second, it proposes observations limited to certain samples of the territory, with an attitude of hunting for clues, testimony, and indicators that are often temporary and have been left behind in the space by new, as yet unstandardized behaviors. -Third, this logic of sampling supplements the zenith view through a system of coordinates and criteria which are used for the choice of the punctual places of research, and for the comparison of the results. -And fourth, the new paradigm inquires into the identity of those who inhabit the space and construct its representations. In other words, it seeks to enrich the notion of the "landscape" by research into the complex identity of its users, and into the forms of the dynamic perception and memorization of the inhabited territories.

The maps produced by interweaving these four "lateral" gazes are attempts to observe the territory while it changes. The USE project is born of a sampling of the places and processes of mutation, whereby European space and its intense, unlimited activity finally comes to light. And uncertainty transforms into innovation.

Much

is made of the difference between 'virtual' and 'actual'. Other than asserting a distinction between 'unreal' and the 'real', the uses of such oppositions demonstrates the real workings of a conflict between different approaches to and mappings of space, as both cyberspace and landscape. The singular experience of the net consists in making manifest a particular sense and use of space-including the so-called 'real' space of the world's surface-that has no place in officially-sanctioned, or rather petrified, maps and models. Because more than the question of whether the content of various sites or techniques remain trapped in the figurations bequeathed to us by the French Revolution (where 'man' exists as human, and has human rights, insofar as 'he' is a citizen of a nation-state), the experience of the net is otherwise. Moreover, I want to insist, above all, that what is virtual is preamble, that it exists. The virtual spaces of cyberspace have a distinctive connection to that which is immanent and imminent, material and emergent, or better: the net is really, virtually that which makes apparent, and increasingly convenes, an antagonism to authorised spatial organisation. geopolitics

At the end of the 20th century, nationalism had flourished to become the planetary system, covering every centimetre of the globe, administered by various inter-nationalisms, including the agencies of the United Nations. As landscape, space is delimited by nation-states. Migration policies (border controls) were largely non-existent prior to the 20th C. The consolidation of nation-states that mostly took place in the 19th and 20th centuries-and the tyranny of citizenship (always founded on and premised on exclusions) that was their corollary-meant that the 20th C was fated to be the century of the 'refugee problem', as the UN and many NGOs prefer to apprehend it. movement in every sense

In the second half of the 20th C, a movement emerged in every sense. Currently estimated at over 50 million people, very often existing and moving clandestinely, this is the largest movement in history. Out of necessity and desire it refuses the cages and enclosures, the pass laws that regulate and control the paths between them, and creates the greatest challenge to the principal role of the nation-state: the 'right' of nation-states (whether as one nation or 'united' nations) to allocate, regulate and control bodies for the purposes of a capitalist production. It connects to a long line of struggles against the geopolitical inscriptions of capitalist production and imperial economy: the enclosure of the commons in England, the laying down of fence-lines for imperial agriculture, the forcing of indigenous peoples into missions and reserves alongside the passage of 'anti-nomadic' laws, to name but a few and only those most familiar to locals.

Previous centuries were marked by the journeys of colonial powers across the globe in search of imperial expansion and consolidation. By contrast, the second half of the 20th C was signifi-

cant for reversing this process. During that time, people from Asia, Africa, and Latin America began moving in significant numbers, relative to pre-ww2 periods, to Canada, the US, the EU countries and Australia. It is as a response to these movements that, by the late 1990s, the US (1996), Australia (1992), and the EU (1997) all passed some of the most vicious border laws imaginable. Like all border laws, these were not meant to stop people from moving. Rather, they tried to recreate the conditions of the global sweatshops (the so-called 'third world') in the face of the threat to their precondition: border controls. In this way, the distinction between 'third' and 'first' worlds is increasingly a division internal to countries. The illegalisation of undocumented workers in places like the US and Australia means that they continue to be a reserve for hyper-exploitation, much the same as if they had remained in, say, Mexico or Vietnam, as documented workers.

In a broad sense, this movement consists of the undocumented, those without papers or sans papier. In other registers it, or parts of it, is composed of 'refugees', 'illegal immigrants', 'asylum seekers', 'economic refugees', 'stateless persons', 'non-persons'-but all these words are categorisations from the perspective of the nation-state, many formally sanctioned by the UN, of the degree to which discrimination and exclusion are authorised in particular cases or of the exact point at which one feels authorised to perform the role of border cop.

visibility, media and mediation Whereas real space was generally visible only by way of official mappings, of legal routes and national territories, the actual paths of this movement of flight and escape became visible in cyberspace, whether as the circulation of struggles of those without papers, or in chatrooms and across emails that connected people on the move and as they moved, with information, friends and contacts, or simply as experimentation with a language that was not premised on national borderlines. On the net, ideas of space did not parallel that of national space. Here, those who are juridical 'non-persons' in a world dominated by citizenship found a media for communication.

The 'virtualisation' of the movement against the enclosures is not a function of its unreality, but a result of a history of figuration and the processes by which movements are designated, recognised, given stamps of approval as oppositional-or not. There are those who refuse to acknowledge that it is indeed a movement, or those who can only recognise movements when they are designated as such by the media or the self-appointed officials of mediation. Indeed, for a long time, since the Bolsheviks in 1920 adopted Woodrow Wilson's inter-nationalist doctrine of the 'self-determination of nations'-since that is, they became little more than ambassadors for various nation-states (pro-China, pro-Soviet, pro-Cuba, etc.), in turn regarding flight from such states as traitorous-many could only imagine struggle as the

struggle for more nationalisms. In short, many would only recognise movements if they appeared in the manner of their opposite: i.e., as enclosure rather than movement, as capture rather than freedom. In doing so, they had a deft hand in the invisibility of this movement, or at best, could only approach it as latter-day missionaries seeking out converts amongst the dislocated, or as another means to prove their indispensability as mediators between the state and the insubordinate.

But aspirations for mediation have some difficulty being sustained on the net, not least because if one were to accept a version of communication and media such as that which operates on indymedia, it is difficult if not impossible to assure the delimited, fixed and mediatory model that claims to representation rely on, and which remain the format of, especially mainstream news media outlets. The net make any equations between media as communication and mediation as representation, and the integrative expectations of the latter, difficult to sustain. That is not unrelated to the very possibility of the net making manifest a movement that, since it has no leaders or representatives, would otherwise be characterised mindless bodies in search of missionaries and representatives-the 'non-persons' of juridical space re-figured as the non-agents of political practice.

[Even so, I'm not suggesting that the net is solely responsible for the de-coupling of mediation from media. The end of mediation is an historical moment, some refer to it as neo-liberalism, where the trade-off between integration and concessions was no longer possible, reducing mediation down into a moment of repression and little else. This is why, for instance, the pre-condition of claims to representation are overwhelmed by and indistinguishable from the question of discipline: self-styled representatives of detainees or 'refugees', for instance, are asked whether they can ensure their ostensible constituency's pacification or, if they cannot, they are expected to denounce the actions of detainees or, on occasion, have inaugurated their claims to representation by insisting on the "need to integrate" detainees, as if the problem stems from detainees being too much on the outside of the circuits of representation. In any case, mediation is no longer, if it ever was, capable of granting concessions or relief.]

nomadic and netactive "Chiapas was increasingly subjected to all manner of transnational influences. During the 1980s and early 1990s, it became a crossroads for NGO activists, Catholic liberation-theology priests and Protestant evangelists. Guatemalan migrants and refugees, guerrillas coming and going from Central America, and criminals trafficking in weapons and narcotics. This exposure to transnational forces was stronger and more distinctive in Chiapas than in two other nearby states-Oaxaca and Guerrero-that were often thought to be likely locales for guerrilla insurgencies (and had been in the past).

Angela Mitropoulos Movements against the enclosures - Virtual is preamble

And this helps explain why Chiapas, and not another state, gave rise to an insurgency that became a netwar." - Rand Corporation <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR880/MR880.ch16.pdf>

The Rand Corporation commentary, cited above, indicates something of the relationship between the experience of movement and netactivism in generating the particular strategies of the Zapatistas in Chiapas. Rather than an echo of Microsoft's publicity dream of a borderless world without dissension and the exploitation of bodies are made invisible, the net has seen the emergence of a language and subjectivity that is antagonistic to the enclosure of the commons, in both landscape and on the net, where open source meets open borders, undocumented

meets techno-nomadic, and the emergence of trading posts and routes that are neither officially-sanctioned nor reducible to exchange and calculation. Here, there is antagonism to the fantasy of a world without bodies (Microsoft), a world where bodies are distributed according to pass laws and confined by borders, and more importantly still, the possibility of a practice that doesn't assume it is 'our' role to grant intellects to mindless bodies.

see also:

[bordercartograph http://www.money-nations.com/cartographies/eng/index.htm](http://www.money-nations.com/cartographies/eng/index.htm)

[online action against deportation http://go.to/online-demo](http://go.to/online-demo)

<http://stop-depclass.scene.as>

[xborder http://antimedia.net/xborder/](http://antimedia.net/xborder/)

For an indication of proposals to draft conventions for cyberspace that re-assert national boundaries, see "Sea, Space, Cyberspace: Borderless Domains", V. A. Cebrowski, 1999, US Naval Military College, at www.nwc.navy.mil/

<from Rogue States, Media Circus, Melbourne, 2001>

Ghassan Hage In The Shrinking Society

In a lecture presented in London, the Slovenian philosopher and psychoanalyst, Slavoj Žižek, reflected on the inability of the British left to dent Margaret Thatcher's electoral appeal among the working classes with their usual strategy of emphasising the massive inequalities her policies were generating. For Žižek, in its preoccupation with inequalities in the distribution of wealth and the distribution of goods and services, the opposition left out of its sight the very area where Thatcher's strength resided: her capacity to distribute 'fantasy'. 'Fantasy' here is a psychoanalytic term for the set of subliminal beliefs that individuals hold and which makes them feel that their life has a purpose, a meaningful future.

Thatcher distributed hope primarily through a racist emphasis on the causal power of the British character and through highlighting the possibility of the small shopkeeper's dreams of rising above one's situation and experiencing upward social mobility. Her message was simple and clear: if you 'possessed' the 'British character', you possessed the capacity to experience upward social mobility even if, in the present, you are at the bottom of the heap. The British character did not give you immediate equality and the good life but it enabled you to hope for a future good life. You could look at your Pakistani neighbours living in the same conditions you are living in and say: 'sure we're in the same hole, but, I've got the British character, so I can at least hope to get out of this hole, while these black bastards are hopelessly stuck where they are'.

This capacity to distribute hope (particularly the capitalist-specific dreams of upward social mobility) in the midst of massive social inequality has been the secret of the ability of the nation-state to provide such an enduring framework for capitalist accumulation. [...] We should remember that in the history of the West access to a share of 'dignity and hope' was not always open to the European lower classes. The rising bourgeoisie of Europe inherited from the court aristocracies of earlier times a perception of peasants and poor city people as a lower breed of humanity. The lower classes were 'racialised' as innately inferior beings considered biologically ill-equipped to access human forms of 'civilisation' which included particularly 'human dignity and hope'. 'Human' society within each emerging nation at that time did not coincide with the boundaries of the nation-states. Its borders were the borders of 'civilised' bourgeois culture. What Michelet's work describes to us is the important historical shift that began occurring in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century: the increasing inclusion of nationally delineated peasants and lower classes into the circle of what each nation defined as its own version of human society. But this de-racialisation of the interior went hand in hand with the intensification of the colonial racialisation of the exterior. Now skin colour in the form of European Whiteness was emphasised, more than ever before, as the most important basis for one's access to 'dignity and hope'. Nevertheless, Michelet captures the birth of the nation-state proper: A state committed to distribute hope, to 'foster life' as Foucault has put it, within a society whose borders coincide with the borders of the nation itself.

It is no secret that under capitalism government has always given primacy to the interest of investors. But thanks to the framework provided by the nation-state, the interest of investors did not

seem to contradict a commitment to the construction of a viable society within national boundaries. Hope, as Ernest Bloch has theorised it in his 'Principles of Hope' made people determined 'by the future'. The capacity to dream a better future that is 'not too far off' was capable of overriding the determining power of the inequalities of the present. This worked well with capitalism. Hospitality towards migrants and refugees in this national system was also part of this dual economic/social logic. They represented an extra source of (often cheap) labour, but their reception was also represented as a commitment to an ethic of the good society in general. The fact that they were received reflected something positive about the quality of life within the host society and legitimised it in the eyes of its very nationals as capable of producing a surplus of hope. This was so even when this surplus was itself the product of the colonial plundering of resources, and the destruction of existing social structures which undermined the hopes of millions of people in what became known the Third World. The vacuum of hope left behind is still felt today within the societies of the colonised, whether in terms of the hopelessness found in some colonised indigenous societies or the migration generated by dysfunctional colonially produced nation-states unable to provide a sufficient 'share of hope' but to a small minority of their citizens.

Until recently, the capacity of the great majority of migrants to settle in Western Society was dependent on the availability of a Western 'surplus of hope'. This surplus is the pre-condition of all forms of hospitality. But it is clear today, that while the West is producing a surplus of many things, hope is not among them. This has been perhaps the most fundamental change that global capitalism has introduced to Western and non-western Society alike. In the era of global capitalism, the successful growth of the economy, the expansion of firms and rising profit margins no longer go hand in hand with the state's commitment to a distribution of hope within society. In fact what we are witnessing is not just a decrease of the state's commitment to an ethical society but a decrease in its commitment to a national society tout court. We seem to be reverting to the time where the boundaries of society coincided with the boundaries of upper class society. Hope stops where the investment of global capital stops. Global Capitalism and the shrinking configuration of hope

It is well acknowledged today that what characterises the global corporation most and sets it apart from its multinational and national predecessors is the absence of a permanent national anchorage point that the corporation sees as its 'true home'. [...] The multinational firm, as its name implied, was no longer associated with a single nation-state. It had core bases in many parts of the world, though wherever it was, it was operated within a nation-state framework. The most important political aspect of global capitalism is the end of this reliance on a nation-state framework of operation. On one hand, global capitalism is simply the intensification of the tendencies of multinational capitalism towards capital accumulation outside the traditional industrial sector. Now there is a clear dominance of the finance sector and a massive expansion of an economy of services. These are also accompanied with the rise of a relatively new field of capital accumulation: the information sector. Partly because of the above, the global firm is charac-

terised by an almost complete loss of a specific national anchoring. It is not that, like the multinational corporation, it has many, but rather that it hasn't got any. Wherever it locates itself, it is considered a home on a conjunctural non-permanent basis. Capitalism goes transcendental so to speak. It simply hovers over the earth looking for a suitable place to land and invest. Until it is time to fly again.

It is here that emerges a significant phenomenon. The global corporation needs the state but does not need the nation. National and sub-National (like State) Governments all over the world are transformed from being primarily the managers of a national society to being the managers of the aesthetics of investment space. For among the many questions that guide government policy one becomes increasingly paramount: how are we to make ourselves attractive enough to entice this transcendental capital hovering above us to land in our nation? This involves a socio-economic aesthetic: How do we create a good work environment such as a well-disposed labour force or a suitable infrastructure? But it also involves an architectural and touristic aesthetics: how do we create a pleasing living environment for the culturally diverse, mobile managers and workers associated to these global firms to make them desire to come and live among us for a while? [...]

The global aestheticised city is thus made beautiful to attract others rather than to make its local occupants feel at home within it. Thus even the government's commitment to city space stops being a commitment to society. This global urban aesthetics comes with an authoritarian spatiality specific to it. More so than any of its predecessors, the global city has no room for marginals. How are we to rid ourselves of the homeless sleeping on the city's benches? How are we to rid ourselves of those under-classes, with their high proportion of indigenous people, third world looking (ie, yucky looking) migrants and descendants of migrants, still cramming the non-gentrified parts of the city? Not that long ago, the state was committed, at least minimally, to prop up and distribute hope to such people in order to maintain them as part of society. Now, the ideological and ethical space for perceiving the poor as a social/human problem has shrunk. In the dominant modes of representation the poor become primarily like pimples, an 'aesthetic nuisance.' They are standing between 'us' and the yet-to-land transcendental capital. They ought to be eradicated and removed from such a space. The aesthetics of globalisation is the aesthetics of zero tolerance. As the state retreats from its commitment to the general welfare of the marginal and the poor, they are increasingly, at best, left to their own devices. At worst, they are actively portrayed as outside society. The criminalisation and labelling of ethnic cultures, is one of the more unethical and lowly forms of such processes of exclusion. This is partly why globalisation has gone so well with the neo-liberal dismantling of the welfare state. The state's retreat from its commitment to see poverty as a socio/ethical problem goes hand in hand with the increased criminalisation of poverty and the deployment of a penal state to fill in the void left by the retreat of the welfare state.

Hope is not related to an income level. It is about the sense of possibility that life can offer. Its enemy is a sense of entrapment not a sense of poverty. As the withdrawal of the state from society and the existing configuration of hope begins

shrinking many people, even with middle class incomes, urban dwellers paradoxically stuck in insecure jobs, farmers working day and night without 'getting anywhere', small-business people struggling to keep their businesses going, all of these and more have begun suffering from various forms of hope scarcity. They join the already over-marginalised populations of indigenous communities, homeless people, poor immigrant workers and the chronically unemployed. But unlike them they are not used to their state of marginality, they don't know how to dig for new forms of hope where there is none, and they live in a state of denial, still hoping that their 'national

identity' is bound to be a passport of hope for them. They become self-centred, jealous of anyone perceived to be 'advancing' while they are stuck, vindictive and bigoted and always ready to 'defend the nation' in the hope of re-accessing their lost hopes. They are not necessarily like this. Their new life condition brings the worst out of them as it would of any of us. That is the story of many of Howard's 'more than fifty percent'. They are the no-hopers produced by global capitalism and the policies of neo-liberal government, the 'refugees of the interior'. And it is ironic to see so many of them mobilised in defending 'the nation' against 'the refugees of the exterior'. Global re-

jects against global rejects. Only the lowly can rejoice at this sight.

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<http://www.plutoaustralia.com/db/161.html>

Many people have thought of us, borderhackers, as people who are against the new world order. And in fact, I could easily say with closed eyes that I'm more of a fan of the USA than I am of my own country. I am a border kid, a pocho from the wrong side of the border, which for years consumed life and material goods at American malls, museums and libraries. A kid who grew up in a country where the government couldn't care less for its people during many years. And all of a sudden when time came for university, I noticed the things I would never be able to get, confined to an educational system lost in time, which is eager to generate as much possible workforce for NAFTA factories.

It was not a dream for me to pursue. It wasn't about preparing the student to become what he wanted to, but to make him ready to fill the ranks of qualified mensch-machine. But the border was always there; whenever I would come to the U.S. with my American-citizen dad, I would remember I was an alien in California, not even a tourist. And I couldn't understand why. Truth is, we borderhackers simply don't believe borders should exist.

Boundaries and limits are meant to be broken by human endeavor; they're OK as inspiration sources (factories of human energy that will take you to the next level of the videogame). But then again, didn't the Berlin Wall teach us of the damage of keeping people apart, of splitting the world in regimes, races and classes -- when at the end we're all human beings?

Last year -- the first Borderhack -- we tried to penetrate and understand the border with a very critical mindset, acknowledging the strange attractors that keep the people from both sides of the border together and at the same time apart. We tried to stay apart from the clichés of border activism: There is a reason why Mexicans gamble their lives in order to become American citizens.

When people gamble their lives in the desert, river, freeway, etc., in order to find a better future in another country, it's because the situation has reached a limit. Why are people leaving Mexico to go to the USA? If people could be happy staying where they are, with their current situation, why would they leave?

There is the theory that these people leave home for the USA, but it could also be that they're fleeing Mexico to find a place they can call home. Same thing, reverse perspective. If one thing is true, it's that the border isn't as real as when you are next to it. It doesn't matter if there are laptops or ISDN lines and a lot of campers. The rusted metal borderwall goes all the way into the Pacific Ocean, the helicopters fly in the skies, the border patrols are everywhere.

There's no way you can deny or even forget that you are on the verge of a world. You can almost see replays of those legendary hunting days when in this same spot of land, Mexicans were the thing of prey, a prize to put on the wall. You can almost play back images of families running on Interstate 5 in order to catch their future wonderful lives, brown indigenous characters at U.S. Customs repeating "American citizen" like a scratched record, their only hope a new life in the U.S. Kids playing cat-and-mouse with INS officers, Mexican students crossing the border every morning in order to attend school.

Some call this Latin America, others call it Third World. But still the border is closed: The wall reminds you this is as far as you can get, one more step requires credentials, permits, and so on. And once you pass the border, you find a lot of bytes from the other side floating around, and they're constantly causing failures and fatal exemptions to the machine. Files get lost in the transaction; tension-causing riots in the actual hard drive. You find a Mexican California, and a Californified Mexico.

So this is Borderhack. Hacking the border. Don't be misled; hacking is not destroying. Hacking is done in order to get to know the system better. The system is always repaired by people who understand the system. Borderhack is a camp where the world of technology and the Internet -- tools that are known to break borders and erase limits -- meet with the world of physical borders and passport handicaps. Hacktivists, Internet artists, cyberculture devotees, border activists, electronic musicians and punk rockers are ready to delete the border on Tijuana-San Diego if only for a few days, with java applets, port scans, radio, microwaves, ISDN, face-to-face communication, technology workshops, presentations, music events.

The idea to synthesize the camp is born out of our condition of dilettante border kids, out of our years of crossing the border and doing a little window shopping, pretending that we could be part of the American Dream of wealth, happiness and freedom. We are confused, we accept it. On one side, the malls are filled with happiness, and on the other -- the wrong side -- we are forever condemned to produce goods that we will never enjoy ourselves. That is, unless we are lucky enough to come by a green card. This is the border. Our border. A place where we earn pesos and consume with dollars. Where we almost live in the U.S. Where we can smell the future coming from the freeways, from Silicon Valley, from Hollywood, yet we are trapped in a muddy hill with unpaved streets. We are the good neighbors of the U.S., always here, always smiling, ready to serve the next margarita. And ready to delete the border.

<http://www.de-lete.tv/borderhack>

Fran Ilich Ready to Delete the Border

MOVEMENTS

Janitor Power: The new women's movement

The Justice for Janitors began in 1986 in Denver, Colorado as a groundbreaking, grassroots labor organizing campaign aiming to improve the working conditions of exploited janitors in the commercial building industry. The continuous campaign to empower these "invisible" workers has made them one of the most fearless and well-organized work force in recent American labor history. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the largest union within the AFL-CIO, decided to seriously support and organize low-income immigrant workers across the country by strengthening existing building service unions through innovating internal organizing models and by aggressively unionizing the un-organized. The on-going national Justice for Janitors Campaign has helped SEIU become one of the strongest, most active and militant unions in the U.S. by using direct action, strategic alliances, as well as corporate and political strategies to achieve improvements for the janitors. Last year through a coordinated national contract fight, from NYC to L.A. salaries were significantly raised and working conditions were improved for over 100,000 janitors and their families. Currently the focus of the union is the political fight for the legalization of undocumented workers through community, labor, religious and political alliance work.

Daisy Cabrera was one of the thousands of janitors who won more money this week from some of America's wealthiest building owners. It was her latest triumph, and one she came upon almost by accident.

Just a few years ago, the Salvadoran-born Cabrera, mother of three, was far out of touch with the laws and ways of L.A.'s political system. Like many traditional Latino women from Mexico and Central America who immigrate to this country, the 26-year-old South-Central resident was more in tune with house chores than with City Hall.

But ironically, Cabrera said, her job as a janitor taught her much more than the correct use of bathroom solvents: She became a community activist, and joined a movement that garnered nationwide attention and almost brought the city to its knees.

"Before, I didn't know who my councilman was or

who the mayor was," said Cabrera, celebrating her wage increase of 70 cents an hour with thousands of other members of the Service Employees International Union for Justice for Janitors.

The three-week strike brought the local SEIU into the national limelight. It showed that the once-ignored janitors - mostly made up of immigrant women - are a social and political force to be reckoned with.

More than half the SEIU janitors are women from Mexico and Central America, union spokeswoman Blanca Gallegos said. Many are single mothers; for some, it is their first job.

This phenomenon led Senator Ted Kennedy, who addressed a rally earlier this month, to remark that the janitors' strike was not only a labor movement, but a "women's movement." City Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg, who was arrested during one of the marches, said that the strike was about much more than bringing fairer wages to the janitors. Goldberg said the janitors are now a political force in their own right, even more so than soccer moms. "Not to disparage soccer moms," she said, "but they [the women janitors] will get involved in their schools and make sure that their neighborhoods are safe."

The women janitors display a unique brand of grassroots feminism in a community traditionally dominated by men, said state Assembly Speaker Emeritus Antonio Villaraigosa. The janitors - the women in particular - show a true-grit determination in the way they sustain their families on near-minimum wages, much as immigrants from the old world have before them.

Brought up in East Los Angeles by a single mother, Villaraigosa said that he sympathizes with the women janitors: "They are just like my mother. They have an incredible fighting spirit."

For Maria Quintanilla, a 37-year-old, soft-spoken janitor and mother of two sons, fighting has been a way of life. She left war-torn El Salvador 20 years ago in search of a better life. Alone and inexperienced, she illegally crossed three borders and was imprisoned in a Texas INS detention center before she reached Los Angeles. Once here, she held many factory jobs before she

picked up a mop and became a janitor in one of L.A.'s high rises.

There, during long nights of emptying wastebaskets and vacuuming carpets, she met a young man from El Salvador who would become her husband. They had two children before divorcing seven years ago.

Quintanilla has labored for 15 years in the same Hope Street high-rise for contracting company One Source. She wanted to become a teacher's assistant and took classes at UCLA extension on the weekends, but hasn't been able to amass the necessary credits. "Janitorial work is not what I wanted to do, but I have managed to sustain my children," said Quintanilla, who lives in Koreatown. "I tell my children that there is no reason to be ashamed of being a janitor. It is not a shameful trade like stealing or prostitution."

For Rosa Ayala, a 56-year-old native of El Salvador who cleans office buildings for ABM, being a union janitor has been a kind of calling, she said. She has been with SEIU for 11 years and has learned along the way to become politically active in her community.

Like Quintanilla and Cabrera, Ayala helps the SEIU to gather signatures or votes for elected officials it believes will help it in its cause. This also helps them learn the political ropes they will need to assure that politicians will help them in matters such as immigration and other community issues.

Latinas are known for being good homemakers and dedicated to their families, said Ayala, who is a mother of two and supports her disabled husband. But, she added, they can also be like the Adelitas, the women soldiers who fought during the Mexican Revolution.

"We Latinas have always been seen as submissive women," Ayala said. "Not anymore."

Janitor Power: The new women's movement, by Joseph Trevino - L.A. Weekly

Labor News Production

I met once a labour activist in a restaurant. During the conversation people sitting with us asked him how he got the strength to continue the struggle despite the risks involved in being a labour activist in Korea. He replied very briefly that if he hadn't seen a Labor News video two years earlier he couldn't have gone through the difficulties he faced at the time. "That gave me a broader sense of activism, not just as propaganda, but as an emotional visual impetus". This man made me think that sometimes we underestimate the importance of our activities, and that we must be very cautious about our work, because it really affects people.

On another occasion, after screening in Seoul [the video] Fired workers I saw an audience of four hundred totally shed tears while walking out of the theatre in complete silence. I then understood more than ever that video could really help people to comprehend the situation of other people. Without the video, they would have never thought about the lives of the workers fired during 1980s and 1990s, because the mainstream media totally ignored their struggle and their situation.

There are also dreadful lessons. I never expected so many activists of the 1980s to be coopted so fast into the system, and some even became the

vanguard of right wing politicians and practitioners for neo-liberalism.

On the other hand there are many newcomers in the progressive video movement who are former trainees of Labor News Production. I never expected our small training programmes could make people think more seriously about their lives.

The world must be analysed from the people's point of view, and though there are always things that can't be predicted it is important to think more systematically and act more rigorously without losing the belief in the progress of the world, without being trapped in the unreal imagination. Then we can change ourselves and can change the world.

That's one of the lessons from my twenty years of activism from student movement to labour movement and how I understand the term communication for social change.

[Related by Myoung Joon Kim, chief producer of LABOR NEWS PRODUCTION (LNP)]

"Labor News Productions" main goal is to strengthen the democratic and progressive labour movement in Korea and worldwide and to

play an important role in making the situation of media in the country more democratic.

To fulfill its goal, this rather small organisation, with seven fulltime staff, covers various areas, categorised as follows: Production: LNP has produced more than fifty video programmes including newsreels, educational video, historical documentaries, etc. The content and style varies depending on the partner organisation. LNP videos have not been broadcast on Korean television but have been distributed widely through trade unions, NGOs and student organisations, and often shown in international festivals.

Archive: LNP records footage for specific productions, but also documents every important issue related to the labour movement. As a result the organisation has more than 3, hours of archives.

Training: Since 1991, LNP has trained the workers and ordinary citizens both in video production and the critical reviewing and understanding of the mainstream media. Among the results of this activity are six videos made by collective video-groups composed of workers.

Organising and networking: Various video groups are active producers, and LNP's mission is to support them to build their own solidarity net-

work.

Solidarity: LNP participates in different progressive communication networks: the Korean independent film and video makers, the Anticensorship forum, the Project for People's TV, the People's Coalition for Media Reform, the Human Rights Film Festival, the Korean Progressive network, Korean LaborNet, and Videazimut. The organization has been instrumental in preparing international conferences such as LaborMedia 97 and LaborMedia 99, considered by international activists as the most important conference on labour movement and media.

Research: LNP has played a pioneering role introducing in Korea concepts such as public access, community radio, participatory communication, etc. Since 1997, it has established a research group as a separate branch, which publishes a bi-weekly Webzine on the progressive media movement called Prism

Distribution & Festival: The alternative distribution system in Korea being very weak, LNP uses different strategies to distribute its videos as widely as possible. The main distribution method is to use the network of affiliated trade unions of KCTU. Since 1997 another channel for video distribution has opened through the annual Seoul International Labor Video and Film Festival, which has become the best showcase for films and videos in the labour movement and a forum for video activists. The majority of the programmes screened during the festival are distributed nationwide through agreements with each producer.

Labor News Production managed to survive through the political turmoil of Korea during the 1990s. Its activity contributed to the process of democratisation that has recently reached mass media.

About 80 percent of the annual budget of Labor News Production comes from its own activities, such as revenues from tape sales, production fees from coproduction projects with trade unions and NGOs, and training fees from the training programme. Only 5 percent is from individual supporters, and 15 percent is from rare public or international sources such as Crocevia (Italy).

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

In Korea, as in most countries of the world, people are facing serious problems due to the globalisation strategies and to the current economic realities of inequality and profit-motivated exploitation of workers. The labour movement is called on to play an essential role for changing the situation, although many of the existing trade unions are not effectively playing this role.

Labor News Production believes that strengthening the democratic labour movement is essential for the process of making the whole society more democratic and guaranteeing decent living conditions for the working people, who are not only a majority but also the people who really contribute to development and progress. Thus, Labor News Production wishes to be the driving force for us-

ing media in strengthening the progressive labour movement and also wants to make this movement internally participatory and democratic.

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

During the twelve years of activity of Labor News Production important changes have taken place in video production, training, solidarity, distribution and advocacy, according to Myoung Joon Kim.

Video became an essential part of labour education and has played an important role in sharing information on the labour movement among working people, recording visual history of working people's lives and struggles. It sometimes represents hundreds of union members with a voice of their own, or targets wider audiences to articulate the perspectives of working people. A new audience for alternative video has grown. Inside the labor movement, Labor News Production has successfully introduced the significance of democratic communication. Subsequent to ten years of conducting training, there are now several workers' video collectives active in various regions, and many independent documentary video makers. Labor News Production has trained more than one thousand people. The solidarity movement led by organisations such as JimboNet, LaborNet, Association for Korean independent film and video makers, and Labor News Production has resulted in the establishment of the Human Rights Film Festival, and the International Labor Media Conference. Labor News Production is a member of the board or steering committee in every organisation mentioned above.

International video distribution of Labor News Production videos has expanded to Japan, USA, Australia, and other countries with alternative distribution circuits. Videos played an important role explaining to workers of other nations the situation of working people in Korea. "From the crisis of the capital..." was broadcast by satellite by Indymedia during the Seattle demonstrations against international trade policies.

Labor News Production activities were partly liable for finally obtaining people's access to public broadcasting, cable and satellite TV. Alternative media became more attractive among activists in the social movement, as a result of LNP's struggles. Furthermore, government-funded institutions in the film and broadcasting sector have finally started research projects on the alternative media movement. Last but not least, based on the activity of the Anticensorship Forum headed by Myoung Joon Kim, Labor News coordinator, several articles about censorship in video and film legislation were ultimately deleted.

MEDIA & METHODS

Video is at the axis of media activities of Labor News Production though other communication tools are used as well. LNP publishes a quarterly newsletter about its activities, and its research branch puts together a biweekly Webzine and e-mail newsletter. The LNP Web site has been accessible since 1998, and in May 2 LNP started monthly Internet Webcasting of its programmes. Given the recent changes in public access to na-

tional broadcast, LNP plans to produce videos targeting the access structure, mainly aimed at the Korean Public Broadcasting System (KBS). This should be done without sacrificing content, according to Myoung Joon Kim.

Labor News Production is a participatory communication project. Internally all activities are decided with participation of every member. The video production methods also pursue a participatory process, which is one reason why most of the programmes are coproductions. LNP and workers learn from each other, and much of the production process is devoted to discussion. Often, the footage comes from cameras operated by the workers, as happened with One Step at a Time a video portraying the struggle of hospital workers.

Labor News Production opted for a methodology of video production with the people not about the people. One of LNP's main activities is to help rank and file workers to make their own videos, which is an essential part of the participatory process encouraged within the labour movement.

CONSTRAINTS

The very nature of the activity of Labor News Production is meant to encounter difficulties and obstacles. Some of these constraints are internal, such as misconceptions, and sometimes, fear about democracy among trade union leadership and even NGOs.

Financial problems have often threatened Labor News Production activities, even though the organisation itself established the principle that most of the budget should come from its own revenues from the beginning. Very little funds turn up from other sources, as labour issues and grassroots training activities do not attract private or public funding. Recent changes in public institutions and policies will perhaps provide new sources of funding, though LNP foresees that it will not be among the real beneficiaries, in spite of the leading role that it has played in changing the policy. The political situation has generally improved since the early 1990s, when Labor News Production had to face repression too often. In spite of the changing political environment, the Labor Film Festival is nonetheless considered illegal in Korea because the Film Rating Commission does not rate the video productions that are screened. Though recently there has been no police prosecution, LNP still believes that government police continue investigating the organisation. If the political situation becomes more conservative, repression could happen again.

REFERENCES

This chapter is mostly based on e-mail exchanges with Myoung Joon Kim and his answers to a questionnaire on Labor News Production May 2000.

The Labor News Production Web site <http://www.lnp89.org/english.html> and Webcasting <http://mayday.nodong.net>.

What is the Garment Worker Center?

The Center is a place for garment workers to organize. There will be monthly educational workshops that explain issues such as wage and hour laws, health and safety regulations and discrimination. Garment workers can also come to find help with their work problems - if they have not gotten paid, if they were fired unfairly or if the factory is engaging in unfair and unsafe practices. The center also provides a space to centralize all the efforts happening against sweatshops and to help garment workers.

How did the Center get started?

The Center was started by a coalition of immigrant rights groups who have been helping workers for many years. The groups received calls from garment workers occasionally and helped them one by one. But none could ever focus on the garment industry because they focus on other low

wage industries that include restaurant workers, gardeners, day laborers, etc. Because the garment industry is so huge here - everyone felt like there should be a place that solely focuses on organizing garment workers and fighting the garment industry.

What does the GWC do? What type of services do you provide?

The Center is a place for workers to stop by to pick up information or ask questions. The Center sponsors workshops and intake clinics- where workers can come and speak to a volunteer. We will have information available about issues facing workers such as health care and discrimination. The Center will help workers file their claims when they don't get paid. We will also support workers who want to take actions against unfair employers, manufacturers and retailers and organize with other garment workers.

Are you organizing workers to join a union?

Not directly. Right now the workers are very disconnected from organizing and from even knowing their rights. Most workers do not know about the minimum wage or any laws that protect them. We want to help bridge the gap between workers and organizing and be a first step for workers. Hopefully down the road, workers will want to join unions or create associations but that will take a long time.

Who are "good" labels right now? How do you know who is good or bad?

You can check <http://www.sweatshopwatch.org> for the latest campaigns against labels. We ask people to support organized campaigns around certain labels. There are a number of labor organizations which monitor labels and you can find it on the internet. You can't tell who is good or bad just by looking at the label. If garments are made in the US there is a better chance that the worker received a better wage than in another country

Garment Worker Center

but it is not a guarantee.

What are typical conditions in a factory?

Factories today are the same as they were in the early 1900's. The machines are crammed into a factory, little ventilation with lots of dust particles in the air, chemicals and machinery are out in the open and workers do not have protective gear, the floor is dirty, there are rats and cockroaches, the bathrooms are locked and dirty, men and women share one bathroom for dozens of workers, there is no clean water and the lighting is bad. Many workers cannot take breaks or must eat lunch quickly. Some cannot go to the bathroom unless they finish sewing a quota. Some workers cannot look up from their machines and are not allowed

to talk to each other. Factories are divided by language and race. Workers come in very early and leave late without proper timecards and do not receive overtime. Some workers must take work home after working over 10 hours in a day. The average LA garment worker makes \$7,000 a year and does not receive health benefits. They can't even call in sick without being docked pay.

Aren't there laws against sweatshops?

The U.S. has some labor laws- minimum wage, workers comp, some places have living wage, no child labor - but laws don't help without enforcement. Many garment workers do not know their rights and do not feel safe speaking up. Some do not have documentation which makes them fear-

ful to fight for their rights. Everyone who works has rights - immigration status does not matter. The Department of Labor does little monitoring- they do not have enough staff to cover the entire industry and penalties are not strict enough for violations to be deterred.

Why focus on Los Angeles when labor violations are worse in other countries?

Los Angeles is the home of the largest garment industry in the country. There are over 140,000 workers and 5,000 contractors here. Less than 1% of garment workers are unionized. There is a huge need to be working in Los Angeles.

"noborder" antiracist European network

With the increasingly restrictive harmonisation of asylum and immigration policy in Europe, there have been several attempts in the last few years to improve the networking between anti-racist grassroots organisations.

Under the slogan "more control, more exclusion, more deportations", different European groups appealed to demonstrate against the meeting of heads of EU governments in Tampere/Finland in October 1999, where the coming into force of the Amsterdam Treaty was discussed as another stepping stone towards Fortress Europe. In eight different EU countries, demonstrations and direct actions were organised against the European project of deportation and exclusion. On the basis of this common practical experience and due to the increasing interest in cross border cooperation, the first noborder meeting was held in Amsterdam in December 1999. Activists from France, Italy, the UK, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium and Germany took part and groups from Poland, the Ukraine and Spain joined this attempt of grassroots networking at next regular halfyearly meetings. A common [English speaking] mailing list has been set up in the beginning of 2000 and many grassroots groups, even from outside Europe, are actively using this networking project to exchange information and discuss migration and borders.

Two practical campaigns are central to these cross border activities: Deportation-alliance [ht

tp://www.deportation-alliance.com]. This common web site connects campaigns against airlines that take part in the deportation business. During the past few years, there have been a plethora of successful actions against Martinair in the Netherlands, Air France, Swissair and against the Belgian airline Sabena. From these experiences, and from long-lasting aviation campaigns such as the Lufthansa and KLM campaigns, the resistance against deportations has gained a new impetus. New initiatives are starting to target British Airways and Iberia in Spain, and in June 2001 another campaign against Romanian charter-deportation-airline Tarom could succeed in Germany. The exchange of experiences and the development of common bases for action have on the one hand proven to be an effective tool in disturbing the EU's deportation machinery. On the other hand, this new "alliance" has served as a mutual encouragement at a time when prospects of resistance seemed bleak.

Noborder Camps [www.noborder.org/camps]. During the last four years, activists have created new forms of resistance against the brutal and often deadly border regime of Fortress Europe with different actions and noborder camps. This new approach has been taken up and developed further in the noborder network in 2000 and 2001. "Freedom of movement" was the main objective of a chain of camps last summer: simultaneous activities took place in the beginning of July at the polish border to Belarus, in Slovenjas triangle

to Hungary and Croatia, and in South-Spain at the coast to Morocco. After participation in Genova against G-8-summit, in particular with no border-no nation - caravan from activists in Austria, another noborder-camp with more than 1000 activists took place at the end of July close to Germanys most important deportation-airport in Frankfurt. For summer 2002 a proposal is circulating now: to organize an international noborder camp in Strasbourg, directed mainly against the SIS, the Schengen Information System, which includes the first supranational electronic database to deport and exclude non-europeans from fortress Europe.

Furthermore, on noborder mailing list many calls for actions in the individual countries circulate and attempts are being made to coordinate activities, for example to establish the 13th of October as a common action-day or to mobilize in resistance to official European summits.

This practical approach, to coordinate actions as an expression of a fundamental critique of EU migration politics, is central to the noborder project. This involves continuous networking and information exchange. Because our aim always remains not only to criticise, but to create European-wide structures for practical and effective resistance.

www.noborder.org

IMMATERIALS

Milan is a European metropolis like many others, but which are the real mechanisms with which the muscles and the brains of the varied productive multitude become folded to the requirements of the capital? Which are the sufferings, the contradictions, the desires that the various fragments of the multitude animate? These are only some of the questions that we have placed since some years ago, we begun to place the metropolitan research problem. Some of us came from the previous political experiences, from the old cycle of fights of the 70's, and some had begun to make politics in the social centers, but we all understood the insufficiency of both these methods in front of the productive and social transformations that had redefined the structure of the metropolis and particularly the life of its inhabitants. [...]

While during the fordist era the worker had such places and (s)he was in such common conditions, which allowed him to recognize himself as a collective subject, currently - in the era of fragmentation - the multitude is atomized, deconstructed, it is accustomed to live like a singularity, it is unable to exit through the walls of difference and the specificities, incapable to notice the various momentums of the exploitation and consequently the productive cycle in its entirety (at the utmost, the subject understands the exploitation included in the formal job). There is an enormous disproportion: powerful and dark enemies appropriate your life and you are alone in approving this imperial normality, which is said to be the only and the natural alternative for you.

The challenge of research is therefore how to break from this dynamic of control, and how to find common characteristics within the multitude, not through artificial operations of political homogenization, but through the understanding of the various specificities and common elements. Today the research is continuing. Some interviews, narrations and questionnaires can be found in our web pages (www.ecn.org/gruink),

Work There is too much work because everyone works, everyone contributes to the construction of social wealth, which arises from communication, circulation, and the capacity to coordinate the efforts of each person. As Christian Marazzi says, there is a biopolitical community of work, the primary characteristic of which is "disinflation," in other words, the reduction of all costs that cooperation itself and the social conditions of cooperation demand. This passage within capitalism has been a passage from modernity to postmodernity, from Fordism to post-Fordism. It has been a political passage in which labor has been celebrated as the fundamental matrix of the production of wealth. But labor has been stripped of its political power. The political power of labor consisted in the fact of being gathered together in the factory, organized through powerful trade union and political structures. The destruction of these structures has created a mass of people that from the outside seems formless -- proletarians who work on the social terrain, ants that produce wealth through

but it cannot be asserted that the job is concluded, on the contrary it is open and in a stage of continuous evolution.

How to transform, therefore, the common characteristics found in the multitude into biopolitical paths and social demands? It is not by chance that in the first years of the 1970's the great labour fights demanded salary to be detached from productivity. Today, by estimating the transformations that have occurred in production, it is central to demand livelihood detached from work. [...]

But what exactly is this universal unconditioned citizenship income? It is the amount of money which is enough for living and which is given to everyone: both to those that are at work and to those that aren't. Universal livelihood because it must be given to everyone regardless of where one lives and or where one is born. Unconditioned because it is totally separated from work and some other particular conditions. Although universality as a concept is sufficiently describable, we must stop for a moment to ponder the concept of citizenship, which we are not accustomed to connect to residing in a certain area in a certain moment, but more to the prevailing juridical conception, which is based on the removal of rights through the heritage of blood or through the settling down of long duration (e.g. five years or more) in a certain country.

But what are the factors which make the citizenship income such an important demand? The first is the humanistic factor: everyone has the right to live according to one's value solely for the fact that one exists, regardless of one having a job or one having born in a certain place. The second factor has a syndicalist-demanding character. Today the profit and the exploitation exceed the formal working time and embrace our whole existence, our relations, our affections, our communication, our consumption: simply put we are not paid anything for this time. Therefore the

collaboration and continuous cooperation.

Really, if we look at things from below, from the world of ants where our life unfolds, we can recognize the incredible productive capacity that these new workers have already acquired. What an incredible paradox we are faced with. Labor is still considered as employment, that is, still considered as variable capital, as labor "employed" by capital. Employed by capital through structures that link it immediately to fixed capital. Today this connection, which is an old Marxian connection, but before being Marxian it was a connection established by classical political economy, today this connection has been broken. Today the worker no longer needs the instruments of labor, that is, the fixed capital that capital furnishes. Fixed capital is something that is at this point in the brain of those who work; at this point it is the tool that everyone carries with him- or herself. This is the absolutely essential new element of productive life today. It is a completely essential phenomenon because capital itself,

citizenship income is also a particular salary for the extensive and stretching time, which exceeds the formal working time. Moreover to break the bound which makes work the only source of livelihood, means in practise to cut apart, including the roots, what nowadays seems to be the central form of blackmail, with which to force the majority of humanity, in the north and in the south, to approve of smaller and smaller wages and reducing the rights, in order to earn even a little. The effects of citizenship income can stop the global race for diminishing salaries.

The last factor, but not the least important, concerns time. To demand livelihood independent of work is also a part of the anthropological and cultural fight, which - beyond materiality - places the premises in order to liberate free human activity from the slavery of work, liberating our time in order to make us able to do something else. Guaranteed income would enable a shorter working time or no work at all, offering the opportunity to construct something else, without the constant blackmail of livelihood. After all, today, the parasitic character of capital is more evident than ever: it is the material, intellectual, social, relational, communicative and affective work of the multitude which produces wealth. The capital is limited to command, to control, to direct this productive power through choices which are often devastating for the largest part of the humanity and to the planetary ecosystem, survival and the imperial command as its only goals.

To construct something else means to reappropriate this productive power, to place questions of what, how, where, when and how much to produce, also from the perspective of the bio- and ecologic necessities. Therefore it also means to liberate the power of social co-operation from the capitalist power and the imperial command. Therefore citizenship income refers to building this other, by simultaneously opening possibilities for its realization.

through its development and internal upheavals, through the revolution it has set in motion with neoliberalism, with the destruction of the Welfare State, "devours" this labor power. But how does capital devour it? In a situation that is structurally ambiguous, contradictory, and antagonistic ...

Certainly, on one hand, capital has won, it has anticipated the possible political organizations and the political "power" of this labor. And yet, if we look for a moment behind this fact, without being too optimistic, we also have to say that the labor power that we have recognized, the working class, has struggled to refuse factory discipline. Once again we find ourselves faced with evaluating a political passage, which is historically as important as the passage from the Ancien Régime to the French Revolution. We can truly say that we have experienced in this second half of the 20th century a passage in which labor has been emancipated. It has been emancipated through its capacity to become immaterial, intellectual, and it has been emancipated from facto-

Paolo Punx Milan, Proletarian Research And The Universal Unconditioned Income

Toni Negri Back To The Future

ry discipline. And this presents the possibility of a global, fundamental, and radical revolution of contemporary capitalist society. The capitalist has at this point become a parasite, but not a parasite in classical Marxist terms -- a finance capitalist; rather, a parasite insofar as the capitalist is no longer able to intervene in the structure of the working process.

The Becoming-woman of Labor

With the concept of "the becoming-woman of labor" you can grasp one of the most central aspects of this revolution we are living through. Really, it is no longer possible to imagine the production of wealth and knowledge except through the production of subjectivity. And thus the general reproduction of vital processes. Women have been central in this. And precisely because they have been at the center of the production of subjectivity, of vitality as such, they have been excluded from the old conceptions of production. Now, saying "the becoming-woman of labor" is saying too much and too little. It is saying too much because it means enveloping the entire significance of this transformation within the feminist tradition. It is saying too little because in effect what interests us is this general transgressive character of labor among men, women, and community. In fact, the processes of production of knowledge and wealth, of language and affects reside in the general reproduction of society. If I reflect back self-critically on the classical distinction between production and reproduction and its consequences, that is, on the exclusion of women from the capacity to produce value, economic value, and I recognize that we ourselves were dealing with this mystification in the classical workerist tradition, then I have to

say that today effectively the feminization of labor is an absolutely extraordinary affirmation. The feminization of labor because precisely reproduction, precisely the processes of production and communication, because the affective investments, the investments of education and the material reproduction of brains, have all become more essential.

Certainly, not only women are engaged with these processes, there is a masculinization of women and a feminization of men that moves forward ineluctably in this process. And this seems to me to be extremely important. Immaterial Labor and Migrants

When we talk about immaterial labor we are not referring simply to intellectual labor. By intellectual labor we mean corporeal labor that certainly includes the intellect but refers primarily to its plasticity, its malleability, its capacity to adapt in some way to every situation. I would say that the category of immaterial labor is a category that allows us to understand profoundly precisely this plasticity of the new labor power. Certainly there are differences between speaking about mass intellectuality and speaking about flows of immigrants that are sometimes themselves flows of intellectual labor power. For example, with respect to North Africa or other such regions, the emigrants are normally people who have already had a certain level of education, high school or even several years of college. But this is completely secondary with respect to the fundamental characteristic, which is their mobility, that plasticity of this labor power, which can always adapt to the immateriality of productive flows.

Undocumented

and that of entrepreneurial activities for that capacity of management of their social relations and of structuration of the social cooperation of which they are a part). This immaterial labour constitutes itself in forms that are immediately collective, and, so to speak, exists only in the form of network and flow. The organisation of its cycle of production, because this is precisely what we are dealing with, once we abandon our factoryist prejudices is not immediately visible because it is not confined by the walls of a factory. The location within which it is exercised is immediately at the territorial level: the basin of immaterial labour. Small and very small "productive units" (being often only one individual) are organised for ad hoc projects and are used for the given time of work. The cycle of production emerges only when it is solicited by the capitalist, then to dissolve, once "order" has been determined, within networks and flows which permit the reproduction and enrichment of its productive capacities. Precariousness, hyperexploitation, mobility and hierarchy are what characterise metropolitan immaterial labour. Behind the label of the "independent or dependent" worker is hidden a true and proper intellectual proletariat, recognised as such only by the employers who exploit them. [...]

Immaterial labour finds itself at the crossroads (is the interface) of a new relationship between production and consumption. The activation, both of productive cooperation and of the social relationship with the consumer, is materialised within and by the process of communication. It is immaterial labour which continually innovates the form and the conditions of communication (and thus of work and of consumption). It gives form and materialises needs, images, the tastes of consumers and these products become in their turn powerful producers of needs, of images and of tastes. The particularity of the commodity produced through immaterial labour (seeing that its essential use-value is given by its value contained, informational and cultural) consists in the fact that this is not destroyed in the act of consumption, but enlarges, transforms, creates the "ideological" and cultural environment of the consumer. This does not produce the physical capacity of the workforce, it transforms the person who uses it. Immaterial labour produces first of all a "social relationship" (a relationship of innovation, of production, of consumption); and only if it succeeds in this production does its activity have an economic value. This activity shows immediately that which material production "hid": in other words, labour produces not only com-

I would say that the struggles of the "sans papiers," the illegal aliens in France reveals a fundamental thing: the demand really for a right of citizenship, and thus for biopolitical intensity, for presence on the social terrain. It is a radical demand for the right of citizenship for those who move around. It represents in itself a subversive element of the national legal order and represents a first political translation of a situation that is becoming generalized. This is becoming a demand for legal recognition, for the rights of citizenship for all who work. This development thus creates a political integration of the new world productive order and the movements that arise from it.

We have to be able to imagine the fact of being citizens of the world in the fullest sense, realizing no longer the Internationale of workers but a community of all the people who want to be free.

[Note: This text is a transcription of an interview video, *Retour vers le futur*, which was produced in the days leading up to Negri's return to Italy and to prison. That video, which is in Italian with French subtitles, can be ordered from L'Yeux Ouverts, B.P. 624, 92006 Nanterre CEDEX, France, for 250FF (around \$50 US). An extended version of the interview has been published by Editions Mille et Un Nuits under the title *Exil* (Paris, 1998).]

modities, but first and foremost the capital relationship.

Our working hypothesis consists in the observation that the cycle of immaterial labour is preconstituted on the basis of a social workforce which is autonomous, and able to organise its own work as its own relations with the enterprise. Industry does not form this new workforce, but simply recuperates it and adapts it. The control of industry, on this new workforce, is predisposed by an independent organisation and by a free "entrepreneurial activity" of its productive force. [...]

In contrast to many theoreticians of postFordism, we do not believe that this new workforce is solely functional to a new historical phase of capitalism and of its process of accumulation and reproduction; this workforce is thus the product of a "silent revolution" which is taking place within the anthropology of work and within the reconfiguration of its senses and its significance. Waged labour and direct subjugation (to organisation) are no longer the principal form of the contractual relationship between capitalist and worker; polymorphous autonomous work emerges as the dominant form, a kind of "intellectual worker" (*operaio intellettuale*) who is himself an entrepreneur, inserted within a market that is mobile and within networks that are changeable in time and space.

If the "discovery" of the Marxian concept of "General Intellect" guaranteed a sure theoretical and political anticipation, today this anticipation has become a reality of management and of organisation of the collective capitalist. During the 1980s, at a worldwide level, production and command were rearticulated along the lines of the networks and flows of immaterial labour. Its cooperation and its subjectivity guaranteed management, innovation, productivity of the post-Taylorist system. The class anticipation sprang out against the massive and imposing "setting-to-work" of general intellect. In these conditions, also a theoretical advance, requires an absolutely necessary presupposition an inquiry into the powerful economic, productive and political threads woven around immaterial labour. An inquiry into the material power (*potenza*) of the immaterial will only be able to bring forth convincing results if it takes on the necessity of the political constitution of the "general intellect" as a precondition.

Translated by Ed Emery

Maurizio Lazzarato Towards an Inquiry into Immaterial Labour

There has by now been a significant quantity of empirical research into the new forms of organisation of labour, and a corresponding wealth of theoretical reflection on the question, and all this has begun to highlight a new concept of labour and the new relations of power which this implies.

A first synthesis of these results, conducted from a particular viewpoint (that relating to a definition of the technical and subjective-political composition of the working class), can be expressed via the concept of immaterial labour, wherein immaterial labour is the labour which produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity. This concept refers to two different methodologies of labour: on the one hand, as regards the "informational content" of the commodity, it alludes directly to the modifications of working-class labour in the big industrial concerns and big organisations in the tertiary sector where the jobs of immediate labour are increasingly subordinated to the capacities of treatment of information (and of horizontal and vertical communication). On the other hand, as regards the activity which produces the "cultural content" of the commodity, it alludes to a series of activities which, normally speaking, are not codified as labour, in other words to all the activities which tend to define and fix cultural and artistic norms, fashions, tastes, consumer standards and, more strategically, public opinion. Once the privileged domain of the bourgeoisie and its children, these activities are today spreading, after the end of the 1970s, of what has been defined as "mass intellectuality". The profound modifications in the strategic sectors have changed radically not only the composition, the management and the regulation of the workforce, the norms of production, but more deeply still the role and function of intellectuals and of their activity within society [...]

All the characteristics of the post-industrial economy (present both in industry and at a territorial level) are heightened within the form of "immaterial" production properly defined: audiovisual production, advertising, fashion, the production of software, photography, cultural activities etc. The activities of this kind of immaterial labour oblige us to question the classic definitions of "work" and of "workforce", because they are the result of a synthesis of varying types of *savoir-faire* (those of intellectual activities, as regards the cultural-informational content, those of manual activities for the ability to put together creativity, imagination and technical and manual labour;

MF : In your new book, 'The Factory of Unhappiness' you describe a class formation, the 'cognitariat' - a conflation of cognitive worker and proletarian, working in 'so-called jobs'. You've also previously used the idea of the 'Virtual Class'. What are the qualities of the conitariat and how might they be distinguished from this slightly higher strata depicted by Kroker and Weinstein in 'Data Trash'?

Bifo: I like to refer to the concept of virtual class, which is a class that does not actually exist. It is only the abstraction of the fractal ocean of productive micro-actions of the cognitive workers. It is a useful concept, but it does not comprehend the existence (social and bodily) of those people who perform virtual tasks. But the social existence of virtual workers is not virtual, the sensual body of the virtual worker is not virtual. So I prefer to speak about cognitive proletariats (cognitariats) in order to emphasize the material (I mean physical, psychological, neurological) disease of the workers involved in the net-economy.

MF: The political / economic theorisation of post-fordism which has much of its roots in Italian activism and thought of the sixties, seventies and onwards is now an established term in describing post-industrial, work conditions. You present a variant of this, and one which suggests that the full political dynamics of this change have yet to be appreciated - how can we describe the transition from 'The Social Factory' to 'The Factory of Unhappiness'?

Bifo: Semiokapital puts neuro-psychic energies to work, and submits them to machinic speed. It compels our cognition, our emotional hardware to follow the rhythm of the net-productivity. Cyberspace overloads cybertime, because cyberspace is an unbounded sphere, whose speed can accelerate without limits. But cybertime (the time of attention, of memory, of imagination) cannot be speeded up beyond a limit. Otherwise it cracks... And it is actually cracking, collapsing under the stress of hyperproductivity. An epidemic of panic is spreading throughout the circuits of the social brain. An epidemic of depression is following the outbreak of panic. The current crisis of the new economy has to be seen as consequence of this nervous breakdown. Once upon a time Marx spoke about overproduction, meaning the excess of available goods that could not be absorbed by the social market. Nowadays it is the social brain that is assaulted by an overwhelming supply of attention-demanding goods. This is why the social factory has become the factory of unhappiness: the assembly line of netproduction is directly exploiting the emotional energy of the virtual class. We are now beginning to become aware of it, so we are able to recognize ourselves as cognitarians. Flesh, body, desire, in permanent electrocution.

Snafu: This consideration opens up, in your book, an interesting reflection about the mutated relationship between free and productive time. In the Fordist factory, working time is repetitive and alienating. Workers start to live elsewhere, as soon as they leave the workplace. The factory conflicts with the "natural desires" of the worker. On the contrary, in the post-fordist model, productivity absorbs the social and psychological capacities of the worker. In this way, free time progressively loses its interest, in favour of what you call the contemporary "reaffectivization" of labour. On the other side, you depict the net-economy as a giant "brainivore". My question regards the apparent contradiction embedded in this double movement. How is it possible that people are at the same time so attached to their job and so exhausted by it? What are the psychological reasons that push people to build their own cages?

Bifo: Every person involved in the Net-economy knows this paradox very well. It is the paradox of social identity. We feel motivated only by our social role, because the sensuous life is more and more anorexic, more and more virtualized. Simultaneously we experience a desensualization of our life because we are so obsessed by social performance. It is the effect of the economic backmail, the increasing cost of daily life: we need to work more and more in order to gain enough money to pay the expensive way of life we are accustomed to. But it is also the effect of a growing investment of desire in the field of social

performance, of competition, of productivity.

MF: In what ways are people developing forms of resistance, organisation, solidarity that shift the algorithms of control in their favour in 'the movement of the cognitariat'. Or in other words, what forms - and given the difference between the 'felicità' of the original title and 'happiness' in English - might the production of happiness take?

Bifo: Resistance is residual. Some people still create social networks, like the centri sociali in Italy: places where production and exchange and daily life are protected from the final commodification. But this is a residual of the past age of proletarian community. This legacy has to be saved, but I do not see the future coming out from such resistance. I see it in the process of recombination. I see this movement, spreading all over the world, since the days of the Seattle riots as the global movement of self organisation of cognitive work. You know, I do not see this movement as resistance against globalisation. Not at all. This is a global movement against corporate capitalism. Problem is: where is it receiving its potency from? I don't think that this is the movement of the marginalized, of the unemployed, of the farmers, of the industrial workers fighting against the delocalisation of the factories. Oh yes, those people are part of the movement in the streets. But the core of this movement resides in the process of conscious self-organization of cognitive work all over the world, thanks to the Net. This movement represents, in my view, the beginning of a conscious reshaping of the techno-social interfaces of the net, operated by the cognitarians. Scientists, researchers, programmers, mediaworkers, every segment of the networked general intellect are going to repolarize and reshape its episteme, its creative action.

MF: You were involved in manifestations against the OECD meeting in Bologna. What are the tactics developing in that movement and elsewhere that you see as being most useful? What are those that perhaps connect the cognitariat to other social and political currents?

Bifo: I do not think that the street is the place where this movement will grow. In the streets it was symbolically born. The street riot has been the symbolic detonator, but the net-riot is the real process of transformation. When eighty thousand people were acting in the streets of Seattle, three, four million people (those who were in virtual contact with the demonstration thanks to the Internet) were taking part in a big virtual meeting all around the globe, chatting, discussing, reading. All those people are the cognitariat. So I think that the global movement against corporate capitalism is absolutely right when it goes to the streets, organizing blockades like in Seattle, Prague, Bologna, and Quebec City, and next July in Genova. But this is only symbolic action that fuels the real movement of sabotage and of reshaping, which has to be organized in every lab, in every place where cognitarians are producing, and creating the technical interfaces of the social fabric. The industrial working class needed a political party in order to organize autonomy, struggle, self-organization, social change. The networked class of the cognitariat finds the tool of self-organization in the same network that is also the tool of exploitation. As far as the forms of the struggle in the streets are concerned, I think we should be careful. This movement does not need violence, it needs a theatricalisation of the hidden conflict that is growing in the process of mental work. Mental work, once organized and consciously managed can be very disruptive for capitalist rule. And can be very useful in reshaping the relationship between technology and social use of it.

snafu: I'd like to know what the 'keywords of resistance within every lab' that you mentioned are, and to ask what the technical interfaces of the social fabric are? In particular I'd like to understand if, when you mention the techno-social interfaces, you refer to non-proprietary systems such as Linux, or if you have a broader view. But also, if the shared production of freeware and open source softwares represents a shift away from capitalism or if we are only facing the latest, most suitable form of capitalism given in this historical phase. As far as I know, military agencies and corpora-

tions use and develop free software as well as hacker circuits...

Bifo: Well, I do not see things in this antagonistic (dialectical) way. I mean, I do not think that free-ware and open source are outside the sphere of capitalism. Similarly I do not think that the worker's collective strike and self organisation in the old Fordist factory was outside the sphere of capitalism. Nothing is outside the sphere of capitalism, because capitalism is not a dialectic totality suited to be overwhelmed (Auf-heben) by a new totality (like communism, or something like that). Capital is a cognitive framework of social activity, a semiotic frame embedded in the social psyche and in the human Techné. Struggle against capitalism, refusal of work, temporary autonomous zones, open source and freeware... all this is not the new totality, it is the dynamic recombination allowing people to find their space of autonomy, and push Capitalism towards progressive innovation.

snafu: Another question is about the network. It can be used as a tool of self-organization, but it is also a powerful means of control. Do you think that there are new forms of life emerging within the network? I mean, can the network guarantee the rise of a new form of political consciousness comparable to the one emerging with mass parties? At the moment, global networks such as nettime, syndicate, rhizome and indymedia remain platforms for exchanging information more than real infrastructures providing support, coordination and a real level of cooperation (with few exceptions, such as the Toywar). Do you see the development of the network of the cognitarians, from a means of info-distribution to a stable infrastructure? How the different communities - such as hackers, activists, net.artists, programmers, web designers - will define a common agenda? At the moment each of them seem to me pretty stuck on their own issues, even when they are part of the same mailing list...

Bifo: The net is a newborn sphere, and it not only going effect conscious and political behaviour, but it is also going to re-frame anthropology and cognition. The Internet is not a means (an instrument) of political organisation, and it is not a means (an instrument) of information. It is a public sphere, an anthropological and cognitional environment... The Internet is simultaneously the place of social production, and the place of self-organisation.

MF: After the May Day demonstrations in central London, at the central end of which the police, several thousand of them, penned in a similar number of demonstrators for hours, it strikes me that it's almost as if the police are determined themselves to teach the people that staying static is a mistake. Certainly though, new ways of moving collectively in space are being invented and many of those are being tried out in the street. But perhaps amongst other currents there is also a reluctance or a nervousness about doing something concrete, about using power in a way that might risk repeating the impositions we have all experienced. On the one hand it could be said that this meakness is a strength, (if not just a public expression of a vague moral unease) but on the other it could be understood precisely as a result of this awareness that people have that their actions are always implicated in a multi-layered network of medial iteration. Centralised networks that stratify and imprison people in the case of CCTV, but that also networks that are at once diffuse but that also contain, as you say, 'exploitation'. Given this, what are the ways in which you claim that this 'net-riot' creates transformation or exerts its political strength?

Bifo: I see two different (and interrelated) stages of the global revolt: one is the symbolic action that takes place in the street, the other is the process of selforganisation of cognitive work, of scientists, researchers, giving public access to the results of the cognitive production, unlocking it from the hold of corporations. It may sound paradoxical. The physical action of facing police in the streets, of howling below the windows of IMF, WTO and GB, this is just the symbolic trigger of the real change, which takes place in the mental environment, in the ethereal cyberspace.

Franco Berardi The Factory of Unhappiness

CODEMILLS

In real space we recognize how laws regulate--through constitutions, statutes, and other legal codes. In cyberspace we must understand how code regulates--how the software and hardware that make cyberspace what it is regulate cyberspace as it is. Code is law. This code presents the greatest threat to liberal or libertarian ideals, as well as their greatest promise. There is no middle ground. There is no choice that does not include some kind of building. Code is never found; it is only ever made, and only ever made by us. Change is possible. I don't doubt that revolutions remain in our future; the open code movement is just such a revolution. But I fear that it is too easy for the government to dislodge these revolutions, and that too much will be at stage for it to allow the revolutionaries to succeed. Our government has already criminalized the core ethic of this movement, transforming the meaning of 'hacker' into something quite alien to its original sense. Things could be different. They are different elsewhere. But I don't see how they could be different for us just now. This no doubt is a simple confession of the limits of my own imagination. I would be grateful to be proven wrong. (Excerpt from: Lawrence Lessig, Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace)

Stefan Merten Oekonux GPL Society

is a radical German mailinglist discussing free software from green-alternative and post-Marxist perspectives. The tone on the list is unusually open, not to say utopian. There is a true sense of possibilities felt: a free software revolution; revolution through free software.

Geert Lovink: Could you tell us the history and context of the Oekonux list?

Stefan Merten: I had the idea that Free Software is something very special and may have a big potential for a different society beyond labor, money, exchange - in short: capitalism - in 1998. In September 1998 I tried to make that an issue on the Krisis list. However, that didn't work since next to nobody was interested. In July 1999 there was the "Wizard of Open Source" conference in Berlin. I attended that conference and was especially interested in the topic "Neue Ökonomie?" ("New economy?"). However, on the background of the idea mentioned above, I found the talks presented there not very interesting. After the talks I took the opportunity to organize a spontaneous BOF session and luckily it worked well. So we sat there with about 20 people and discussed the thoughts presented in the talks. At the end I asked all the people at the BOF session to give me their e-mail address. After the WOS conference the organizers of the conference (Mikro, "http://www.mikro.org/") created a mailing list for us - and that was the birth of the Oekonux (Oekonux stands for "OEKonomie" and "IINUX") mailing list ... As far as I can see the subscribers come from a quite wide range of thinking traditions and areas of interest. Though of course they all share a common interest in political thinking, there are people from the Free Software and Hardware area as well as hard core political people as well as people with a main interest in culture and so on ... In December 1999 I created the web site www.oekonux.de. It's main purpose is to archive the mailing list. Of course some material created in the realm of the project is presented there also as well as a link list listing links to web sites and pages relevant to our discussion in some way...

GL: The relation between Marxism and open source is a highly debated topic on Oekonux. For some this might be an unusual combination. There are even discussions about general principles of a "GPL society", extending the legal framework of free software into a variety of social and economic fields. That's pretty ambitious, not to utopian, with the fall of the Berlin Wall a little over a decade ago. Don't you think that it would be better to debunk failed leftist principles than to come up with new ones?

SM: The question is what leftist principles are. Personally, I think Marx created a very good and still very valid analysis of capitalism. Of course some of his thoughts must be brought into a contemporary perspective, but that doesn't make them worthless. However, rethinking Marx in the framework of today's world is something leftists

of all currents seldom do. In the history of workers movement there are very few exceptions and most currents concentrated on other things. Leninism and Stalinism had further negative influence on rethinking Marx in an adequate way. Even the people calling themselves "Marxians" are rarely very interesting. My main criticism to most of those leftist (Marxian) currents in the past is there lack of a utopia. The "utopia" they had was not more than an improved labor society rather similar to the one they lived in. Well, of course this analysis is very shortened and omits a number of points, but to defend earlier leftist currents, I think they had one big disadvantage: They didn't live at the decay of capitalism where the new society already starts to raise its head. In Oekonux there is a common sense, that Free Software might be exactly this: an early form of the new society embedded in the old society. (We call this new society "GPL society" to have a word for this new thing we're trying to explore.) And if you have some knowledge about Marx' theory you will note, that a lot of phenomena fit perfectly into his analysis of capitalism and its intrinsic contradictions which it can't overcome.

GL: Some on the Oekonux list seem close to the "Krisis group" around the 'apocalyptic' Marxist critic Robert Kurz. Could you explain to outsiders, not familiar with contemporary German Marxist currents, Kurz's position and what he has got to do with Linux, open source and the network society?

SM: The Krisis group's main position is that capitalism is in decay because the basic movement of making money from labor works less and less. Of course this doesn't mean that capitalism must end soon. Capitalism may continue to exist for hundred of years. But it won't ever be able to hold its old promises of wealth for all. In my opinion meanwhile this is clearly visible even in our Western societies and I find it astonishing how good leftists are in defending capitalism and expecting a long life of it. However, the reality of capitalism is apocalyptic - take the climate catastrophe as one of the most visible and dangerous signs. In some way it's not fair to call the Krisis position "apocalyptic" just because they say how things are. The relation of the Krisis group to Free Software is non-existent. I tried to talk with Robert Kurz about that once in a while a few years ago, but learned that this is simply something he isn't concerned with and doesn't know anything about. However, at the start of December 2000 there was a workshop with Stefan Meretz and Robert Kurz in Dortmund, which I attended as well. This was the first time I think Robert Kurz was really confronted with the thoughts discussed in Oekonux and I think he understood a number of points. Maybe there are new developments to expect.

GL: Even on the Oekonux list the interests seem to be very much focused on open source related issues and not so much to create a wider network. Many computer users are saying that open source will only become a success if

it is able to transcend the (male) geek culture of software engineering, making alliances with interface designers, activists and artists, cross-linking with broader cyber-cultures such as the games communities. Do you think that the withdrawal into the technical is only a temporary phenomena? When is the free software/open source movement ready to break out?

SM: On the Oekonux list we are actively trying to see the whole picture ... Bringing together people from as many professions as possible who are all interested in the model of free development the free software is only the most visible example. On the other hand we are talking of a new model of goods production in general, which transcends the industrial model. So it is clear, that a big part of the picture has to be technical and that people with knowledge in engineering of any kind play an important role in that picture.

GL: Yes, this is what you and others call the "GPL society." Could you explain this? Isn't free software and open source more like a source of inspiration and metaphor rather than a model for the entire society with all its complex relations? The digital economy itself is everything but open source. The Internet Economy is all about accumulating intellectual property. What makes you think that the free/open source models can go beyond the realm of software production?

SM: With GPL society we describe a society beyond capitalism. The main difference is, that this society is no longer based on exchange and exchange value and thus the term labor doesn't make much sense any longer. Instead the basis of this new society will be the individual self-unfolding ("Selbstenfaltung") combined with self-organization and global cooperation. Goods in this society are not sold but simply available and taken by those who need them. Of course such a society is difficult to imagine for people who grew up with only money on their mind. To my knowledge the historical new thing of this concept is, that the GPL society will transcend the industrial model of production into a new form, which allows human potential to really flourish. In particular the work machines are doing is actually used for setting people free in the sense that the machines do the necessary things while humans can be artists, engineers, ... whatever they like. This way the permanently rising productivity no longer results in the curse of unemployment but in the benediction of freedom from the necessity for mankind. A world where the individual freedom of each single person is the precondition for the freedom of all. These aspects of absence of exchange value (i.e. money), self-unfolding, self-organization, and global cooperation are the ones in the Oekonux project we recognize in the principles of free software development. Indeed many people on the Oekonux list think free software is a germ form of the GPL society. Insofar it is much more than a metaphor, because the analysis of the phenomenon of free software constantly brings up new aspects which often can be trans-

formed into a different organization of a society very well. Actually I'm astonished over and over again how good this works. Of course we don't have a full-blown concept in our drawers how the new society will look like - and we better should not have such a drawing table model. Of course today there are many questions which can't be answered honestly. However, it is possible to think about this GPL society and which trends in the present may extend and lead us into this GPL society. Indeed given the frame work of Oekonux you can find a number of aspects already existing today, which may also be seen as germ forms. For instance, NGOs share a number of interesting aspects with the development of free software and may be seen as a non-technical counterpart among the germ forms for the GPL society. And even in the midst of capitalism you can see how the production process more and more depends on information. Today the material side of material production is rather unimportant even in capitalism. And information is something very different from the material world simply by the fact that

you can copy it without losing the original. What is known as the new/Internet/digital economy is indeed the plain old money economy on new territories. What this economy does is to try to make profit from things which are inherently not profitable. The very basis for any profit is scarcity. Since the invention of computers and particularly the Internet, however, scarcity of digital information is difficult to keep. Once a digital information has been produced it is reproducible with extremely marginal cost. This is the reason why information industries of all kinds are making such a fuss about intellectual property rights: IPRs could make digital information a scarce good you then can make profit with. Personally I think the technical means of reproduction, which meanwhile are distributed among millions of households, opened the bottle, the ghost is out and nothing will be able to put it back in there. Take for instance the freely available music files Napster started to establish. The music industry may destroy Napster but what for? The clones and even better, non-centralized ideas are already

there and these things will survive everything - even a hoard of hungry lawyers. However, there is an even more fundamental reason why I think the free production of information and in the end of free material goods as well will overcome societies based on exchange: They simply produce better goods. You can see that with free software and there are more and older examples proving that the free flow of information results in better products. Science and cooking recipes both are good examples. Particularly the cooking recipes show how useful global cooperation and sharing of information is. As capitalism with its industrial model was able to deliver better products than the former feudalistic models and therefore overcame feudalism, free production of goods will overcome the former model of capitalism. I'm not saying that these trends will become dominant all by themselves; they are only potentials humans must actively put forward to transform the world into something better. That's the deepest reason I think the Oekonux project is not only useful but ultimately needed.

Aspectre is haunting the corporate world--the spectre of organized world-wide file-sharing. MP3, to name the most common synonym for the becoming-distributor of millions of former customers, has clearly shown that the flows of digital data are much more driven by people and popular protocols than they are determined by legislation, ownership or the new global rules of the corporate-political. Napster has reverse-engineered the ideology of a whole industry, and it has finally proven its total, complete and absolute obsolescence. Today more than ever, the nets are zones of excess, immune against the business model of electronic scarcity. The transnational companies that are trying to break up the file-sharing networks have declared a war they will never be able to stop. There are going to be thousands of Napsters. textz.com is not even zero-point-five of them.

We are not the dot in dot-com, neither are we the minus in e-book. The future of online publishing sits right next to your computer: It's a \$50 scanner and a \$50 printer, both connected to the Internet. We are the & in copy & paste, and plain ASCII is still the format of our choice. It shouldn't require a plug-in to read a book on the net, nor should it require a credit card. The text industry is a paper tiger. Along with the mass erosion of their proprietary rights goes the vanishing of their digital watermarks. Packed today, cracked tomorrow. Whatever electronic gadgets they will come up with--they are all going to be dead media on their very release day. Forget about your brand

new Kafka DVD. I already got it via SMS. One shouldn't expect the 50 million former users of Napster to be digitally illiterate: They won't judge an e-book by its cover.

This is not Project Gutenberg. It is neither about constituting a canonical body of historical texts (by authors so classical that they've all been watching the grass from below for almost a century of posthumous copyright), nor is it about digitizing freely available books into unreadable sub-chapterized hyper-chunks. Texts relate to texts by other means than a href. Just go to your local bookstore and find out yourself. The net is not a rhizome, and a digital library should not be an interactive nirvana. The conceptual poverty of today's post-academic, post-corporate public online services--and we haven't seen dot-museum yet--is not and has never been a desirable alternative to the dystopic vision of a future controlled by the super-pervasive data-streams of the emerging military-entertainment complex. There are still other options. Nostalgia is slavery. Stay home, read a book.

Information does not want to be free. In fact it is absolutely free of will, a constant flow of signs of lives which are permanently being turned into commodities and transformed into commercial content. textz.com is not part of the information business. They say there was a time when content was king, but we have seen his head rolling. Our week beats their year. Ever since we have been moving from content to discontent, collecting

scripts and viruses, writing programs and bots, dealing with text as ware, as executables--something that is able to change your life. This is not promotional material. Facing the unified principles of information--the combined horror of global communication and so-called guerilla marketing--there is no more need for media theory or cultural studies. The resistance against corporate culture can itself no longer remain in the cultural domain. You make a mistake if you see what we do as merely apolitical.

We are studying the coils of the serpent, watching the walk of the penguin, mapping the moves of our wired enemies. Intellectual, digital and biological property--cornerstones of the new regimes of control--are the direct result of organized corporate piracy. They are not only replacing such dubious and obsolete notions as freedom, democracy, human rights and technological progress. All these new forms of ownership are, in the first place, attempts to expropriate people's work, data and bodies--just as they begin to acquire, for the first time in history, the technical means to organize them in a radically different way. Today's global media and communication conglomerates are mafias, and we shouldn't count on what's left of the national governments when it comes to fighting back. "Humanity won't be happy until the last copyright holder is hung by the guts of the last patent lawyer." Napster was only the beginning. The Ninties of the net are over. Let's move on. <http://textz.com>

What kind of Silicon Alley companies are you studying and why?

There's a lot of awareness of how exploitative sectors of that economy were and still are. So I decided to go to companies that were about as good as it gets. In many ways, these companies were labor aristocracies. The salaries were fairly high. There was a remarkable amount of personal autonomy on the job. Employees were given permission to manage themselves and their expressive energies. These companies also had strong, organically grown cultures, as opposed to culture with a capital C.

In what ways was bohemian culture imported into the workplace?

There was an attempt to bring the bustle and the vitality of urban street life into the workplace. Traditionally bohemian workstyles were visible in everything from casual dress and the informalization of the workday to the endorsement of a kind of general hedonism and party culture in the office. This contrasts with mainstream corporate America, which represents the bourgeoisie. There is a civil war being waged between the old economy and the new economy. And in many ways, that battle is a replay of the 19th-century Parisian face-off between bohemians and the bourgeoisie. A lot of these companies presented themselves as alternatives to corporate America and took on all things bohemian. What's interesting is that both groups needed the other. The world of the bourgeoisie always needed a bohe-

mian underside, a sort of fantasy demimonde, just as the bohemians always needed the bourgeoisie to define themselves against. And a lot of the culture that you find in the Internet economy is very much a reenactment of that century-old opposition between the bohemians and the bourgeoisie in an urban setting. The fact that such a familiar dialogue has been played out in the business world is quite extraordinary.

What was truly new about the new economy's work mentality?

It was everything, from the physical space -- the arrangement of the office -- to a greater sense of permission and personal autonomy. The true mark of humanity is choice. Is workplace community obligatory or optional? In other words, can you chose to treat your job as just a job? In some companies, employees who want to fit in have no choice but to hang out constantly with the "in" crowd -- which isn't entirely healthy or humane. There's a very thin line between communitarianism and obligatory community in the workplace. Employees also had greater liberty to manage themselves. In the history of work, there has never been such emotional self-management on the job. By self-management, I mean the degree to which employees accept or reject the idea that the working day can be a mix of work and play, self-application and dreamy idleness. Ultimately, I'm talking about work rhythms and patterns that imitate the way artists traditionally work. When I'm writing, I spend a lot of time just sort of messing around -- writing now and again. Play is criti-

cal. Most managers haven't yet been able to incorporate creative meandering in a sustainable way. From an employee's point of view, there was also an unprecedented sense of permission in the workplace. Someone I recently interviewed described the sense of constant encouragement as a gentle light that's always glowing in another room -- or an encouragement so pervasive, it's like love. There's no source of the power that constitutes love, but when you feel it, it's omnipresent. The new-economy workplace was also supposed to provide a level of self-actualization for employees -- not just self-fulfillment, but self-actualization. People approached a job as if it were a work of art, a test of their innermost essence and integrity.

What was true two years ago that is no longer true today?

Consider the degree of specialization of labor that's kicked in over the past year. The Internet industry is a young industry, with a medium that had to be discovered and with an early-adopter workforce that basically had to self-learn the necessary skills along the way, because there were no textbooks for this stuff. These were Renaissance men and women. Today, there's much more of a division and specialization of labor. Between then and now, we created a whole discipline of information architecture and devised a formal academic system to train and credential employees in a particular skill, rather than an informal multidisciplinary education where you learned a little bit of everything. You had similar patterns in pre-

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Andrew Ross Industrialization of Bohemia

crisis? Anecdotal evidence suggests that women are attracted to programs in information systems, rather than computer science or computer engineering, because "information systems is perceived as more people-oriented and more attuned to the uses of information technology."¹¹² What does this tell us about the historical and social construction of computer knowledge and specialties? In what ways has the absence of women from the programming profession been used to emphasize its rational, "scientific" qualities? Labor historians have developed an extensive literature on work and gender; historians of software should make use of their expertise and experience.

⁹⁹ Willis Ware, "As I See It: A Guest Editorial," *Datamation* 11, 5 (1965), 27

¹⁰⁰ Jennifer Light, "When Computers Were Women," *Technology & Culture* 40, 3 (July, 1999).

¹⁰¹ Admiral Grace Hopper received her "Man of the Year" award in 1962. Needless to say, it was extremely unusual for an association of technical professionals to grant its highest honor to a woman, especially in the early 1960s!

¹⁰² These technical reports are most easily found today in reprint form in William Aspray and Arthur Burks, eds., *The Papers of John von Neumann on Computing and Computer Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, and Los Angeles: Tomash Publishers, 1987).

¹⁰³ Fritz, p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ Frances Elizabeth ("Betty") Snyder Holberton was awarded the Association for Women in Computing's Ada Lovelace Award in 1997. Grace Hopper described her as being "the best programmer that she had known during her long career." (W. Barkley Fritz, "The Women of Eniac," *Annals of the History of Computing* 18, 3 (1996)).

¹⁰⁵ Report, "Advanced Programmers, Women Employment Seen Rising," *Datamation* 10, 2 (1964)

¹⁰⁶ Valerie Rockmael, "The Woman Programmer," *Datamation* 9, 1 (1963), 41, 41

¹⁰⁷ William Paschell, *Automation and employment opportunities for office workers: a report on the effect of electronic computers on employment of clerical workers* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1958); also Rockmael, p. 41.

¹⁰⁸ "Checklist for Oblivion," *Datamation* 10, 9 (1964)

¹⁰⁹ The quote from Helen Gurley Brown appears in an advertisement for the Computer Sciences Corporation, "In case you missed our first test," *Datamation* 13, 9 (1967).

¹¹⁰ Peter Freeman and William Aspray, *The Supply of Information Technology Workers in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Computing Research Association, 1999), p. 113.

¹¹¹ Sherry Turkle, *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984); Tracy Kidder, *The Soul of a New Machine* (New York: Avon Books, 1984)

¹¹² Freeman and Aspray, p. 111

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~nathanen/software.pdf>

THE ARTISTAS AN EXPERT

Artists are experts. Who could have thought they were just kissed by a muse. Some artists are experts by aestheticizing special knowledge sets and using more or less advanced techniques and technologies. Some are experts in communications; engineers of human souls. Some are experts in constructing or deconstructing institutions. Some become experts just because there are no other experts around. For sure, there are as many different ways of becoming an expert as an artist, but the interesting question is: how to challenge the commonplace and trivial definitions of expertism. Being an expert means: to be confident there is always an easier way to do it, that there is always a more direct confrontation with reality which might yield an interesting spin-off, that there is always the possibility of an incalculable effect, which might turn everything upside down. An expert is a person, who has collected a certain amount of experience in a certain field. To experience means to go through changes.

Your biography is quite colorful. How did this come about?

There are reasons for this. In fact I wanted to work in science. But I studied just after the war, and when I graduated there was no chance of doing anything in this profession. Since I had already been writing and had started experimenting with photography as a student, I had additional possibilities, and I saw that people who are sitting there in the hierarchy, in some bureaucracy, are really poor people. At first I thought this applied only to civil servants, but then I found out that the same applies to industry officials, and my last discovery in this context was that even university officials are no better. Even if you only consider what I have done on the side in terms of scientific work, I've done more than many a professor who gets paid for his research, because he has to deal with organizing seminars or raising funds. I didn't have to do all that.

What is the background of your artistic work?

I am trained to be a physicist, and therefore I was not restricted by this art context, in which you had to go by some rules imposed by that context. Anyway, one did not get invited into any gallery, and there were no prizes. That meant one could do what one pleases. There, completely independently of the contemporary fashion at that, in which the artist is still quite trapped in tradition, one could really work freely. That went on for ten years, until the historians, the art theorists began to show an interest. I remember how, at the Ars Electronica, we worked undisturbed for about ten years, and no one from the academies showed any interest. Then suddenly it became famous, it became a success, and everybody came and said things like "I don't understand, I'm an arts professor in Linz, why am I not invited?"

As things go in Austria, the guy then got an invitation, and that meant a step backwards. We then had such people on the jury, and I remember how one of the most famous Austrian artists, who had to be on the jury because he had demanded it, said to the others: "What nonsense it is, this electronic art, that stuff they do." And then at the award ceremony he was holding great speeches again.

In my own works and in those of the people I was in close contact with (these were Frieder Nake and Georg Nees and later also Manfred Mohr and a few others), we were faced with the problem that people did not really understand us. In a way it was clear to us from the very beginning that the real strength of the computer does not lie in creating still pictures, that it hides incredibly interesting possibilities and one really has to follow that way. People then did not understand in what way our thinking differs from that of others, and even today there are only few who do.

And what is your purpose?

Even today, when I am invited somewhere, they keep asking me for pictures. Now an exhibition is planned in the German Museum, and what they wanted from me are examples of picture processing on portraits. And one of the earliest examples of picture processing ever, I have made with the help of a setup developed by the department of electro-medicine of Siemens at Erlangen, with which I did a series of pictures. I scanned a b/w photo of Einstein, which I then gradually processed and so gradually alienated. The idea was

that with an optical setup for dissolving, one could create a small series in which Einstein could first be seen as real and then become ever more abstract, until nothing but a vague smear remained. Then I produced slides by holding the camera in front of the screen, at the time there was no other way to do it. And of course some art critic then said: "What's that now again? Some game? It doesn't make sense." Then I said: "You apparently just have not understood the sense." Then he: "But why, why?" And I: "Well you surely know what Einstein has done. When he started working, our world was still concrete, and at the end of his work, the world had become abstract. All this I express with the example of Einstein's picture. And if you want things more concrete, then you can say that the head is visible at first as a face, and what then happens with my series of alienations is that you end up seeing only the outline of the brain."

This was only an example showing that there was a transition to the movement there. We always thought that the way of working the computer gives us the possibility, if we describe the images through mathematical formulae, to vary the parameters, and that in arbitrarily small steps. And if you do that, you have the raw material for an animation series. In principle this was possible even then, however costly, and the realization as a film was even more expensive. At the time there was no money in that. People nowadays do not understand this, they'll ask you: "Why did you not have a large image made?" To which I say: "Well, don't you know what an Ektachrome of that size costs?" We took a cheap copier in order to have a picture for documentation purposes, but in reality what mattered to us was not the picture, but the series of movements, and in this respect the slides are much closer to the original than the enlargements we are making, which they now want to hang there at all costs. And that's how they do it at the German Museum as well. They were not even prepared to install a dissolving setup, they just hang two pictures on the wall, and that's it.

What was the development in the technical equipment you have been working with? Are there differences between analog and digital systems?

The final aim in our work was of course always to get soft transitions, at first in the colors, later in the movement. Remarkably these wishes could be fulfilled by the cathode ray oscillographs. It was all soft and completely smooth and with no jerks in the movement. It's just that with the cathode ray oscillograph of course you cannot, and by far, do as much as with a digital system. That's why we were convinced that a point would be reached, sooner or later, in the development of computers, at which this wish would be fulfilled. Of course this was not possible with the plotter, when you have to transfer each picture in a 20 minute ceremony on cardboard - you need to be able to generate images on the monitor lightning fast. Then, with the electronic method, it worked. After all, the plotter is an archaic system in comparison with the electronic systems we compute the images with.

Besides your artistic work you have always also worked on a theoretical level on art, and have written a number of books about this. What is the relation between your practical and theoretical work?

In a way I've always been more interested in ab-

stract images than in alienated real pictures, because they raise a problem with art theory. It is understandable that people are interested in depiction. But at the time, the question of why people are interested in completely abstract images was unsolved in my eyes. The art theorists at the time were saying that there was no such thing, that each abstract image contains something concrete hidden in it, and that this is what makes an impression. I did not believe this, and indeed it isn't so. For me the experiments with these things were also activities of an experimental aesthetics. My idea was that one should not tackle art from a historical point of view, but rather analyze it scientifically and ask oneself what concrete statements can be made. Of course you will hit a limit at some point, but I thought there must be some way. It's only somewhat later that it became clear how this could be done, namely through information theory, in which one can clearly see that art is a communication process. The relevant theory is thus communication theory, and as a mathematical instrument information theory. This in turn is linked to perception, since our brain, which perceives, is a data treatment system, an analytic system, a system for interpreting. This leads you directly in the full range of problems of neurology and brain research, but there's no way around it if you want an explanation for the phenomenon "art".

And where does technology come into play?

Creativity can be expressed in technology, why is it expressed also in art? Is it the same, or a different creativity? We are here at a really deep point at which both have their root, if we say that the man is a tool maker. If man at a given stage has recognized these skills as useful and has developed them through a process of selection, there are reasons for this. Then again, he has not made these tools for the fun of it, they had to be useful to him. Then we reach the point where he starts developing art machines as well. Suddenly we have both. The one who develops the art machine, perhaps a program, I'd include that into the concept of the machine, at once also wants to work with it. And it's extremely interesting to see that in the first five years there were no artists involved, because they simply did not know how to program, did not know math and simply did not have access to computers. There were, incredibly, many programmers and mathematicians who had felt the challenge of these systems and had started to make more or less interesting things, without there being any reason for it, without having been told to do it. In the US there was a magazine called Computers & Automation, and that's when the stroke of luck hit. The editor-in-chief's girl-friend was an art professor, and they put out a contest in 1963. They wanted to award prizes for the most beautiful computer graphics and thought the odd image would be sent in. They ended up receiving buckets full of contributions, from all over the world.

To what extent has technology influenced your way of working?

Nowadays, when you program graphics, you usually don't have control over the sequence in which you apply the elements. At the time this was not necessary, you could use a completely different method, which I've used again and again. When you have applied the elements, and an element called up later comes to lie on an element called up earlier, the latter was hidden behind the

Herbert Franke

Interview by Oliver Frommel

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Expert in Computer Art, Cybernetic Aesthetics, Visualisation of Science, Futurologie, Speleology, Paleochronology

former. I could thus apply a loop of arbitrarily many elements, and the image would continuously change. If I built in a random generator that would define the image parameters, I would get perpetual sequences of moving images. I've done this quite often, with all sorts of thoughts on the back of my mind...

Has the interaction with the viewer played an important role for you?

The idea of taking art down from its high pedestal and making it tangible and susceptible to manipulation was there from the beginning. And if I may allow myself to hyperbolize, in this way the vision or wish that every one of us may be an artist is a bit easier to attain. Because one spares oneself practicing manual skills and can thus concentrate much more on the conception process. I think this is a good thing. In the plastic arts this may not be quite so obvious, but when I observe the poor music students, it was not about music at all, the aim is exclusively to be able to move one's fingers a bit faster. I really ask myself, where is there art in all this? And when you can spare yourself that, then you reach realms in which people do not have a clue, simply because they have not learned it. I, for instance, am very fond of jazz, and am interested also in harmonic sequences that differ from those of our music. When I try to speak with such a person about it, they have no clue. But that is the interesting and essential thing, all that concerns composition, the structure of this music. This means that with our technological resources we make the way free for dealing only with the actual, creative process. So that one is not excluded because one's hands are too slow, or because one is clumsy with the paintbrush. The intellectual faculty is not tied by the inabilities that we, unfortunately, have here and there.

Has the further development of technology changed also art itself, or the approach to it?

This has changed to the extent that now also from among artists there is a rather great interest for the media. In the transition period in which the first artists came and said: "What do I have to do if I want to use this instrument?" One would then say: "Well, my dear, you need to learn how to program." "Oh, my God." So there was this wish coming from artists to be able to use these systems as easily as possible, and the consequence of this were the pen systems. This means that today we have, besides the method of describing the image with a formula, a second method, which is to simulate the classic art process with a pen system. On the other hand, a completely new method of description - namely programs - provide a kind of notation, a partition for images. This notation however by far surpasses the musical notation, because the generative principle is contained in the programs - which is not the case of musical notation. This means one can see the structuring principle in this program, which carries in itself this concrete art work that has been programmed. Naturally this allows changing things at the root and also making something entirely new. While the person writing something with an inductive pen on a tablet will likely produce no more than someone would have produced with a graphite pen in earlier times.

Do you consider the development of technology is progress?

I need to relativize this a bit. Today one can use pen systems. Quite refined tools are available on the market for reproduction, for fanning out, for modifications of the image structure, all this can, nowadays, be called up and inserted even without knowing math. Today there is such a broad range of pen systems and programs available that offer such effects, that even I don't sit down and invent a new structure there, except if I have an idea I want to realize and don't find anywhere. Then I need to sit down, but I can do it.

Nowadays one can find many very interesting possibilities. I must say that today one can really work creatively with pen systems. But I nevertheless think that if you work on a deeper level where you really have to think about the structure you are initialing and introducing into the image, then you go a bit below the surface. If you work with a pen system, on the other hand, you remain on the surface. These are the fundamental possibilities acquired through the stimulation that comes from this way of working with programs or on a mathematical basis.

Do you see an end to this technological development? In what direction are things likely to go?

I could imagine that with the appearance of three dimensional screens, i.e., output devices in which you really see in three dimensions and also create in three dimensions, one will need completely different pen systems. And they are not appropriate for these devices anyway, those are then architectural systems if we deal with buildings. One could also use genetic programs to grow graceful things. I think that we have great possibilities ahead of us. But here we have already drifted off somewhat into tangential topics. We do not need to worry about specific fundamental mathematical things, but have to get to know principles of growth, possibilities for structuring, for instance in the organic world. Think of Prusinkiewicz who was probably the first to try to simulate processes of growth. Carls Sims then took this up, this is still avant-garde, I would say, but in a few years it will be available to all, of course, and if you imagine in addition three dimensional creation, then you can imagine all sorts of things. I imagine for instance myself sitting in a small planetarium, just the size of an igloo, but if good use is made of the means of representation I don't see the border and see arbitrarily far into space, I'm surrounded by the screen, just like in the CAVE system, but without the edges, I can walk through it, and I can, at the same time, intervene creatively, like a gardener who says: "Here I want to plant," or like an architect who says: "Here I want to build a building." You could create entire planetary systems, there are still enormous possibilities there, but this is just one sector. The other will probably melt together with such things. Because these are not entirely unproblematic any longer. Even when you work with such a simple system as Bryce, you will realize that you are given choices in terms of optical devices to the extent that they do not know any longer what they are actually doing, if they haven't worked with quantum physics.

Which two types of artistic activity you described above do you see as the most valuable?

I think that one has to respect both nowadays, also as a creative activity. Someone can make use of the work done by his or her predecessors, and nowadays one cannot do without it. If you use a programming language there are many ideas included in it, which you just draw on. But of course also in a more concrete sense, when you use pen systems the possibilities integrated in them are of such a great variety that nobody has been able to oversee them completely. This means that you are faced with a set of instruments that allows you to create innovation, something completely new that nobody before you has made. This is a very nice system and in every way acceptable. But after all, the interesting thing about computer and media art has not reached its maturity yet. There are enormous possibilities that one will be able to tackle only when the systems reach that stage of development. This is the unique chance we have, to be living in these times. Someone who has carved stone with a chisel may not have this chance any more. In the domain of stones there will not be much to be found that would open new possibilities from the side of the raw material, these are exhausted. But we work with immature systems. This often annoys us, because we'd like to do something and know that in principle it can be done, but we don't have the instrument yet, we cannot pay for it, or even if we could pay for it, it does not exist yet, because we would need a quantum computer and so on. This is a wonderful, but also frustrating thing. It is in this interstice that we are active.

Are you an expert?

Everyone is an expert, on what they are interested in and what concerns them. In this sense I am also an expert. But of course I am especially an expert on the things I have explored intensively, perhaps more than others. That is for instance this development over the first years. It is unlikely that there are many who have followed this as I have. After all at the time I was already freelancing and was able to do more or less what I found interesting. Almost all my colleagues, Hacke, Nees or Noll and all the others had a permanent job of some kind and could not do what I did, which is to remain systematically up to date about what is going on. And of course I could participate in many discussions, I wrote a few books,

which again led to new contacts. This has allowed me to get to know many people, to travel, so that in this domain I am of course an expert. In this domain there are many questions that have been explored very intensively, but often these are tiny details. For instance, over the past two years I have worked on making animations with the programming system Mathematica. Then I simply compiled a book from my own experience, and so I could say that I am an expert in animations with the Mathematica system. But if someone comes along and asks me how to solve differential equations with the system, I have to say, for God's sake, don't ask me, I have no idea.

Although the system is quite useable, Mathematica is strangely structured, and you have to be something like a Chinese calligrapher, of which they say there are only five who really know all the signs, and all the others just use a few of them and make do with those. Those, however, who know them all, don't get anything else done, because they continuously have to be up front to keep themselves up to date or to complement.

So I am no expert for Mathematica, but just for a tiny subspace of it. And in many other domains it is the same, one can say there is a strange lack of knowledge in the vicinity of expert knowledge.

You are in a sense an expert in familiarizing yourself with the greatest variety of domains?

I could also say that I am an expert on the overarching relations between different branches of science, on the overview that arises. I have noticed this in many discussions. When you discuss art, then you enter many different domains, after all I don't know in advance what I will be asked in such a discussion. One person wants to know about the color structure of a given image, created with a given computer program, the other asks me whether there is something divine to be found in oil paintings. I have noticed with many people who are indeed experts in arts or cybernetics, that they are splendid in their domain and know everything. But it's not enough to take into account only one thing. Another also has its influence, and then suddenly they have reached their limits. And I am in the comfortable position to be able to link many things with each other. I have been forced to work quite intensively with information theory, which is mathematically quite demanding, with the theory of automata, cellular automata, then of course programming, what is behind it, what are their fundamental possibilities. But in the first few years I have also worked on building computers out of the smallest electronic parts.

In my work I have also been a writer and have worked on science fiction, or have come across physical problems of speleology. Before starting to write science fiction I had to collect precise information and see whether I can present things this way and I think I have made few mistakes. This overview is there, but of course you cannot demand the detail from me.

E8Z! Auriea Harvey Michael Samyn

Questions by Josephine Bosma

www.e8z.org

It seems you are experts in finding the longest route from point A to point B. Are there any specific area's or terrain in which this specific expertise is best perceived? Do you have a preference for certain domains to work/move in this way?

Auriea Harvey: One good example of this comes from analyzing the routes that Internet data takes from place to place. Even if the web page you look at is stored on a server located next door may have had to travel circuitously around the globe before it reaches you.

The longest route from point A to point B is best perceived from very far away much like the view from an airplane. One examines the pattern made by the various routes to point B and can find pleasure in those patterns.

Michael Samyn: I disagree. The best way to perceive the longest route between point A and point B is to not perceive it at all. To be so immersed in it that it becomes so omnipresent that you lose any sense of direction. Like a kitten playing with wool.

AH: We use the Internet to connect these distances. We are perhaps the last big believers in the digital promise of utopia.

Even in our work for clients we are constantly seeking the best route, which we find more often than not, isn't the most direct. If one wants to draw an eye one must concentrate on the ear.

(MS: Note that I first read this expression in an essay by Kees Vollemans. It has been haunting me ever since. I'm not sure if it was originally his) (AH: Note that I first heard this expression from Michael when trying to draw an eye. It has been haunting me ever since.)

Rather than linking directly to the point we seek to show a viewer the route which may be the most entertaining.

The exhibition we have planned for the make-world festival is another example of this principle. We see exhibiting a website in a gallery setting as not showing the webwork itself but just a copy of that original so extreme is the difference in context but we also see it as not a good enough copy or facsimile of the work as the alteration of context changes the work into an object away from an environment. Because of the artificiality of the surroundings in a gallery setting (As opposed to a chance network encounter) the work takes on a whole new meaning. Thus we as designers of this exhibit must do some problem solving. The only solution we see is to make an effort to take the work even further out of its original context. We are taking our work even further away from its original net-based environment by not showing the copy at all. In this instance we prefer to connect people to the elements which make up the original web work. Sound isolates them from their physical surroundings putting their heads somewhere else giving them the sensations of our site. It is an attempt to recreate the virtual environment in their heads. In this way we reconnect people to what is essential in the work by offering them the superfluous elements: soundtrack audio of surfing through, in text the minute thoughts and ideas that went into the work, the sight and scent of a rose.

MS: First of all, the format of this exhibition required us to call ourselves experts in something. This caused something of a minor identity crisis.

One of the main reasons being, probably that we do not consider ourselves experts in any one thing. If we have any expertise, it's in combining all sorts of little mini-expertises together. So, for your information, here's the list that this mini-crisis caused. You will notice an evolution caused by drifting between three styles: poetic, ironic and factual.

experts in interactive design experts in Wirefire
experts in Linear and Non-Linear WirePresence
experts in Network Sex Drives
experts in 404Kissing
experts in Frozen Time
experts in Passionate Computing
experts in Desktop Tragedy
experts in Bread and Games
experts in the future

experts in despair
experts in cognito
experts in everything
experts in alpha et omega
experts in destruction and creation
experts in total nuclear war
experts in heat
experts in hard and soft
experts in clination
experts in to
experts in two experts in the air
experts in carnation
experts in deed
experts in diana
experts in solence
experts in saliation
experts in excile
experts in ternet HA HA
experts in-game
experts in deprivation of the senses
experts in depth
experts in suspending disbelief
experts in one another
experts in smoke screens
experts in bad taste
experts in clouds
experts in development
experts in sickness and in health
experts in oral sex
experts in Fellatio et Cunnilingus
experts in tongues
experts in the machine
experts in mind
experts in cluded
experts in losing
experts in and of themselves
experts in operation
experts in a pillar of cloud and in a pillar of fire
experts in ethnical cleansing
experts in Beauty and Truth
experts in the Golden Section
experts in perspective
experts in trompe l'oeuil
experts in freedom of expression
experts in oil on canvas
experts in museum quality artwork
experts in contemporary art
experts in open information distribution
experts in the crucial bridge between the ironic and post-ironic worlds
experts in challenging the traditional art selling system and the institutionalized establishment of curators and directors
experts in levelling the distinctions between art and life
experts in questioning the need to show our work in a museum
experts in the harmonious collaboration of art, technology and society
experts in Internet-based artworks
experts in interactive Web sites and multimedia narratives
experts in complex virtual environments full of visually sophisticated images and evocative sounds
experts in cutting edge interface design experts in user experience design
experts in empowerment of the people
experts in permanent revolution
experts in social upheaval
experts in political correctness
experts in the truly international character of the World Wide Web as a medium of communication and direct distribution
experts in compelling and seductive narratives
experts in an unabashedly romantic aura that is all the more impressive for its emotional honesty and directness experts in allusive, elusive and provocative alternatives
experts in the real power of the Internet
experts in end-to-end solutions in online learning, advertising, e-commerce, CRM, and entertainment
experts in return on investment
experts in customized solutions
experts in rich media entertainment on the internet
experts in computer-human interaction
experts in high-impact Web design
experts in next-generation animation and interactivity
experts in the future of art and entertainment experts in the longest route between point A and point B

This list in and of itself is probably a good illustration of one way in which we are "experts in the longest route between point A and B". Trying to find the longest route between point A and point

B as a design technique. When we start a design job (which includes the works of art we seem to produce), we make long lists of everything that could have something to do with the projects. And somehow, we are able to put all of those elements in the piece in one form or other. We are maximalists. It's not that we cannot make choices. Anyone who has seen our work will have to admit that its underlying structure is often very rigid and simple. Maybe we are experts in data compression. Or maybe we are experts in making one word say more than a thousand pictures.

Another side to "the longest route between point A and point B" is the client side. Obviously, the Western capitalist world seems to think that everything needs to be designed in order to shorten the distance between start and end, question and answer, consumer and product. We are simply not very interested in that kind of efficiency. And on a politico-philosophical level, we think that that kind of efficiency is potentially very harmful. The longest route between point A and point B is about joy. A is a given, and so is B. Neither gives pleasure. Neither gives pain. Maybe point A is birth and point B is death. A person's humanity can be measured according to the length he or she is willing to give to the route between point A and point B. Or in social terms, a society is as humane as the route its members can afford to make the route between point A and point B.

But that's not what I wanted to say at all. For me, calling ourselves experts in the longest route between point A and point B is a design statement. I'm afraid that at this point in time, I can't seem to find any words that explain it better than that phrase.

What is it that makes you look for the longest route instead of the shortest? Is it an interest in slowness? Is it a desire for precision? Or is there an element of obstinacy and rebellion in it, a rebellion against the pressure of deadlines and fast living perhaps?

AH: This could be considered a very paradoxical route.

Auriea is point a and Michael is point b. Thus the longest route from Auriea's hand to Michael's was through the Internet but perhaps this longest of routes was also the shortest.

Ours is in one way an interest in slowness because it is always our desire to take away the rush to click.

There is a bit of rebellion in the urge to connect physical spaces with digital ones. One may consider the Internet the longest route because the data must travel the globe without you but this long trip is nothing compared to that of connecting minds and ideas which one can only write about and not see or feel except through the proxy of its host language or culture.

MS: Not slowness but endlessness. The greatest distance between point A and point B is infinity. The ideal is to never reach point B. Not because of failure, but because the route towards point B is so much more interesting than actually reaching it. Not slowness, but richness (not quantity, but quality). If we design a search engine, we hope that people never find what they were looking for. Not because the application that we designed failed or people failed to figure out how to use it. But because we were able to show them something that was infinitely more interesting, enjoyable, etcetera than what they were looking for. In a way, this may be considered our secret art guerilla. We design an object that is useful and usable. Beyond a doubt. And then we add to that layers and layers of meaning and possible interpretations. And on top of that we design a system of seduction. And this is our area of expertise, or at least where we would like to be experts in: the seduction of people in the quagmire of pseudo hallucinations that we spin for them. Maybe being experts in the longest route between point A and point B is not unlike being the Big Bad Wolf in Little Red Riding Hood when he shows the girl the beautiful flowers off the path in the forest. In that sense, I guess, we are Evil.

Obstinacy is definitely part of it too. We prefer depth to speed.

In what way do you think people, and most of all your colleagues, could benefit from your expertise? Are you interested in sharing your knowledge at all?

AH: Everyone could benefit from finding a longer route. Perhaps the world would be a more peaceful place. Seeking ways to look and find the best solution and not only the most expedient.

MS: I'm glad you ask a question like this because it puts the focus on our work as research. And that's how we like to see it. We are very modest about the amount of knowledge that we may have acquired during the research project. I feel that we are still very much in the middle of it and have not done any real discoveries. But maybe those discoveries are our infamous point B that we should postpone reaching as long as we can. I think our most important contribution to the evolution of a new grammar for interactive media thus far, is that it is not necessary to throw everything overboard when working with new media. There are many things from the past that can be very useful to the present. One of our major discoveries was linearity, e.g. On the other hand, we also advocate a radical eclecticism of methods. Purism has no place in interactive media. In mul-

timedia, hypermedia, the singular is dead. Everything is plural. Embrace everything! (yes: design equals politics equals sex)

If one would want to follow in your footsteps what would be the best way to proceed?

AH: The beauty of the longest route, as embodied by the Internet, is that it is always changing. It is impossible to take the same longest route twice therefore one is always following in our footsteps.

MS: Haha. The internet analogy would also mean, that we travel in bits and pieces. A file does not travel as a whole on the internet. It is split up in tiny packets that all follow different routes and is then put back together on the other end. But during the travel (which often takes less than a second) the packages travel over the whole world and mingle with zillions of other packages that are parts of other files. I think internet users do the same.

Do you mean then that all of us already are experts in taking the longest route from point A to point B, simply by working with the internet?

AH: If one is able to think of using the Internet as

traveling the wires then perhaps. Some people simply use the internet and others live there. Truly taking the longest route means you have to feel the journey. Time collapses and the person across the ocean feels like he is right next to you and breathing in your ear. Taking the longest route must mean having a vivid imagination. Do traceroutes turn you on?

MS: I wouldn't want to restrict this to the internet nor to being an expert or not. For me, the internet is a funny and coincidental illustration of this principle. And I don't think it is necessary to be an expert in order to enjoy the longest route between point A and point B. I would like it if the word 'expert' kept its meaning of extreme knowledge and experience. I wouldn't want to see it watered down in slogans like "everyone is an expert". This being said, people who are comfortable with the net as part of their lives, must definitely have developed a strong expertise with the longest route between point A and point B (maybe this is a form of Sadean "masochism" -learn to adore what you abhor!). And maybe an expertise like this is required to enjoy our work. Many people on the internet, on the other hand, just use it as a tool. Those people still have a long route to go.

Whereas

art loaded with autobiographical, conceptual, pedantic, or pedagogic information is seen with a sense of authenticity, Jennifer Reeder's wordless, faintly dramatized, direct videos of Midwestern living are said to be apolitical, lost, and "passive." They are slow, excruciatingly slow, without recognizable narrative, and truly arbitrary. Consequently, some viewers are upset that they can't make sense of two men pumping iron for an outstretched 10 minutes, or of a woman walking along the same suburban street for five minutes. But, in fact, being an observer is anything but being passive, at least in Reeder's videos. To be placed, perhaps forcibly, in an almost stationary viewers position helps one actively question situations, gestures, movements, environments. By not playing the teller, Reeder puts the classic less-is-more aesthetic to use without post-Minimalist cliches. She makes the ephemeral perennial. Although undoubtedly slow, Reeder's videos aren't excessively long, formless gunk. Her work can, to a certain degree, be described as what a friend of mine called "acute boredom," a sensation that's ironically, exciting and eerie. Sometimes, slow isn't soporific, cool isn't louche and in Jennifer Reeder's case, entirely true. After two years since taking part in the Whitney Biennial with "Nevermind", and six years after the "White Trash Girl" series, Reeder is smack dab in global daring-do. She recently took time for an interview on Midwestern parochialism, NY snobbery, camp and collective sensibilities, irony and parody in video, digital and analogue production, and big hair.

This may seem like an outworn observation of something that's somewhat of a cliché in art nowadays but your recent videos grok something that's entirely familiar but foreign, without a klepto-kitschy slant towards some kind of a "collective conscience." Why do you think your work has this fresh but strange quality?

Each video, one is three minutes long, the other is six minutes long, is thought of as montage sequences from traditional film works. For instance, in films, generally teenage girls are portrayed, for the most part, as sexualized, although still innocent and really beautiful in a conventional way. Sort of the wind blowing through their long flowing hair. In their counter part, young men are portrayed, often times, in a more campy way. So, I wanted, especially in a current situation, to call those portrayals into question. Not only think about how they reflect a real situation, how my pieces in a way are real and contemporary images of young adults, but equally, how media represents young adults and how even that media representation of young adults affects how they imagine themselves. So, it seems familiar, but at the same time, I wanted to call that into question to suggest that this may seem like something I've seen before, but at the same time, not at all.

You have been known for your marked knack of mixing sound with video. When and why did you begin this approach?

On the one hand, I think it's a really natural marriage, sound and image, but I've been accused recently of only making music videos. Although I don't think anything I do resembles anything you would see on MTV, for instance, still that opinion has been presented to me as though my work somehow is on that level in terms of a popular sentiment as opposed to a fine-arts sentiment. I don't agree. I think that the two of them are closely linked. Video has an intense relationship to television. Contemporary video practice, especially in terms of the tools of video, is closely linked to the contemporary tools of music production, electronic music specifically. Being invested in both, I feel like the music and the image coming together is vital. I don't always think I'm putting music to video, I think I'm putting sound to video, and then later on someone tells me that it's music. Do you know what I mean? The piece that I'm working on right now, does bring in aspects of dialogue with sound that's much less recognizable as music, although the composers of those sound-pieces consider themselves contemporary electronic musicians. So I think sometimes, in some ways it's how I define this marriage of image and sound as opposed to how other people define a music video. But for me it's a really organic combination, so I'll continue with that combination.

I've done two silent pieces. Once of the pieces is 18 minutes of scrolling text. So there was no need to put sound to that image. The second piece that was silent, also was part of a two part installation. The sound of the first part was overwhelming in the space, so I didn't want the second piece to overwhelm it. In "A Double Image Both in Focus Simultaneously", both pieces occupied the same space, and both pieces had sound. Although the sounds were different, they were both done by the same people. So, there was a way, actually, that when they were played simultaneously, one didn't distract from the other.

Your recent soundtracks, unlike your earlier ones, lack jag and juke, and are excruciatingly slow, droney, sullen, and quirky, but surely aren't the work of overrated and inkhorn artists of the "glitchcore" genre. Why have you chosen the music that you have to accompany your videos?

Well, the trio of tapes that I did with that, where the sounds were manipulated from pop-songs, "Lullabye" and "Nevermind", and the other one... A sense of that sound, I feel is closely related to the contemporary clickers and clackers, as I call them. You take what are the defects, literally the glitches, and you distill them to perfection. I even think that those three videos that accompany those soundtracks are also full of video glitches. To me, those were produced right at that turn from analogue to digital, when analogue was obliterated by digital. Yet to isolate analogue glitches, I used digital tools. So in a way those tapes, both in terms of their soundtracks and images, were about that transition from analogue to digital. Right now so much of the music produced

by the clickers and glitchers, which I love, feels close to me in the same way that we can consider contemporary digital image production and the way that all that noise had to move through that really messy period between analogue and digital to pull out what we have now, this really exciting image and sound production.

So in "Nevermind", is a pop-song made into a glitch?

Well sure, because "Nevermind" is just the original "Smells Like Teen Spirit" with the tempo slowed almost three times but the pitch hasn't changed. So all of the analogue instruments of the last of the punk-grunge heroes, i.e. Nirvana, get turned into this electronic grind, not the kind of clear and minimal clicks and beeps that are used right now. But it's still sending that cultural sentiment through a kind of electronic meat-grinder. In a way, aspects of popular culture are glitches, blips if you think about it. It's not a note that's sustained, it's a moment that comes and goes quickly.

Speaking of culturally specific sensibilities, how has your work crossed over international-ly?

Actually I've had tremendous cross-over. I think part of it has to do with my older work having a lot to do with American popular culture, especially a Western-European fascination with American pop-culture. The narrations of the early pieces were in English without subtitles and the lyrics were in English, but of course popular music travels very easily between the U.S. and Europe. But even with the more recent work, because there's no dialogue whatsoever, and there are no lyrics and a lot of the musicians that I'm using actually are European, then I think it's also a really natural crossover. I've been compelled and didn't operate under any restraints of language. Even if they were images of American suburbs, it could be suggested that those are also suburbs of large European cities, or just a sentiment of people in general, or there could be a way for audiences to watch the images and listen to the sound and not get distracted by a second language or even subtitles. I've had some success in Asia, although not as much, but I've never been anywhere in Asia. I'm dying to go visit.

You're an out-on-out Midwesterner, as you've said yourself. Has this had an influence on your video-making? What does it mean to be a Midwesterner in the first place?

Well, I think that there's a sense of having grown up in the middle of the middle of the middle. Culturally, this country values what comes from the extreme coasts, or we look at the coasts as the purveyors of culture, or we look outside of this country before we look into the middle of the country. I actually contend that. There's something much more interesting to me about everything that's happening between the coasts. That's complicated. Being in the middle is not the

Jennifer Reeder

Questions by Robert Becraft

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[bio_reeder.html](#)

Expert in White Trash

same as being mediocre. Being in the middle is not the same as being, medium, let's say. And the landscape and the architecture of certain areas of the two coasts are extra-ordinary, and also personalities are extreme.

Personalities?

In a really genuine sense eccentric. I'm still in the Midwest. I feel comfortable here, that's not to say I don't feel comfortable outside of this country, or I don't feel comfortable when I go to visit either coasts by any means. But there's also a sense of comradery amongst other people of the Midwest, especially women, I think, because we all remember at some point in high school having hair that was about as close to God as you could get in terms of height, and that's still the case in certain areas. I'll tell you that even though I've lived in the city for the past seven years, my secret tendency is still to want to get my hair as far away from my head as possible. That's a superficial manifestation of the Midwest.

Are you talking about bouffant afros?

See now, because you're not from the Midwest I think you don't understand it. You'd just have to know it. You'd just have to have a sense of it.

Would you call it a bouffant though?

No, never. It doesn't have a name. It's just big hair.

Some of your work seems to portray ordinary, rueful characters apparently ignored or forsaken. If this isn't a parody or criticism, what is it?

There's also a sense of the Midwest that's boring. There's something very tense about that. The piece that I shot last summer that was all shot in central Ohio, the whole thing's 35 minutes long, it begins basically in the morning and ends at night. In it, no one's where they're supposed to be. It begins in the morning with this june bug turned over in a pool. This very banal situation, the bug being turned on its back and kicking, to me indicates a really blunt tension that I intended to be maintained throughout the whole tape. So we follow kids at swim team practice, endless flows of cars, a young girl who takes 8 minutes to walk her subdivision, and by the end you just see this group of people filling into an all-night supermarket. Everyone's in this middle period, no one's where they're supposed to be. I wanted a tension in that waiting, in that transitory period, which to me has a sense of the Midwest, but I didn't want to present it as sinister, or with hyperbole. Take Gummo, that's kind of an explicit Midwestern-ness. It's like explicit normalness in a way. I actually wanted to present normal as normal and boring as boring. But I wanted to present the Midwest in way that's actually loving and lovely, but still with a certain amount of tension. With this track by the Stars of the Lid, which I wouldn't describe as droney, but it's not dramatic in an obvious way. I think the same thing can be said about "A Double Image Both in Focus Simultaneously", in that same sense. One of the same sequences was shot in Ohio and the other in Chicago. I wanted both of them to take very normal events, in the sense of normalcy, waiting, walking, or just existing, and be able to examine that, or scrutinize it, but not in a way that seems obvious. It's not ironic. I have zero interest in presenting irony, I'm really interested in being genuine.

Do you ever worry that the very people that your videos are about are excluded as audiences?

The Ohio piece was commissioned by the Institute of Visual Arts, which is a contemporary arts facility associated with the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. When I was talking to Peter Dreshenko, who's director of that space, about doing a piece for the solo shows that were opening a year ago in September, we both talked about the need for work that addressed the Midwest. I felt excited by that idea. To a degree, I had always felt that I addressed the Midwest, but not in a very specific way, like that's the take that I brought to my work, that's who I was the minute I first picked up a camera. The same can be said about being a female. I don't necessarily think that what I do is feminist work or is girl-made-work, but it's implicit in the work because I'm female. So that piece premiered in Milwaukee. It screened here, and although I haven't had a screening in Ohio, I certainly sent multiple copies

to everyone in my own family, you know? I would hate to think that anything that anybody would do would be excluded from anyone anywhere in the country. I feel like art sometimes has that way of not reaching certain audiences just because there aren't the same kind of facilities in every city. I think that art is accessible and should be accessible not just physically but intellectually. Realistically, the audiences of museums and galleries are low, in terms of the rest of the population.

"White Trash Girl" can be bought online for about \$20,00, but your recent work probably can't, at least while galleries are showing them. Does the accessibility of art subtract from how highbrow (or even high-flown in some cases) it can be?

That debate, in terms of contemporary video, is tough. We think of video as an infinitely reproducible medium that was born out of a sense of radicalism, that was born out of a need to de-commodify art to rethink the art-object. All of those things are totally thrilling to me. On the one hand I love being able to have hundreds and hundreds of copies circling the globe in the hands of galleries and dealers or just in the hands of someone not so specifically involved in art. I like to think of the situation in a complicated way, because it is complicated, but not in a way that's hypocritical. There are pieces that I sell in unlimited edition for a very reasonable price, and then there are pieces that are produced for collectors in a limited edition. For instance two pieces in DIBFS, the three-minute section is sold with a 6ft. x 8ft. hand built screen.

Does it come with a parking lot?

And the other piece comes with a parking lot. So I can't make an unlimited amount of parking lot just anyone who wants one of those, right?

So do collectors decorate their houses with parking lots and streaming video?

As strange as that sounds, I think collectors who are realizing that video is a really vital contemporary art making tool, are realizing that collecting video is essential and are reconfiguring their houses to accommodate installations, or screening rooms, or plasma screens, etc.

I guess I have a hard time imagining videos running incessantly in private houses.

I find that hard to believe that too. Because I think video is democratic, it's suppose to be everywhere, not just in the hands of the people who can afford it. It can be broadcast on television and on the Web, it can be sent in a hundred different directions and retain it's original format and quality. There's a conflict, and it's complicated. But I feel compelled to pick my battles, and at some point put bread on my table. Because we're a world still interested in art objects, then the object of video becomes very elusive. Although I find that fascinating, when comes down to your bill of sale, it's tough.

Some of your work, like "Twin Decks" is purposefully antic I think, but does, at the same time, have serious, staid, and immobile overtones. Is all art meant to be ambiguous?

Well, I think my newer work has more of a sense of ambiguity than my early work. My earlier work had a very strict agenda. If you think about "White Trash Girl", I was a very angry, angry girl when I produced that work. I had a specific agenda, both politically and socially.

Wasn't "WTG" like a slapstick?

I think of Buster Keaton when I think of slapstick, or the Three Stooges. "WTG" had a target. It took a very specific aim. I'm much less interested in that rigidity now. Thinking back to "Twin Decks", its ambiguity is really interesting to me. Basically, it's another montage sequence of two men lifting weights. Their bodies are coded, the space that they're in is coded, the gesture of lifting weights is coded, so depending on who you are, although the work itself is ambiguous, your response to that work can be really specific. You can look at these guys and want to be them, or you may want to beat them up, you may be afraid of them, you may also desire them. Equally back towards the audience, they appear to be, not overly buff but in shape, lifting weights in a confined, closed

space. There's nothing to lead us to believe that they're a couple, it's called "Twin Decks" but the title actually comes from the name of the audio track (by Biosphere). So we can imagine that they're a couple, or is there something else tapped in between the two of them as they sweat and pump-up next to each other. In my recent work what I really want to do is to pack as much information, or as many possibilities in the smallest amount of evidence as I possibly can. The past year and a half I've been thinking about minimal video production, how does the contemporary aspect of Minimalism translate to video? I really want to examine very small fragments, whether it's a gesture, a curb of a hill, a movement through a space, and try to present as many possibilities either slowly or over and over again.

But "Twin Decks" is humorous.

Absolutely. I think the bottom line is that I always want multiple reads. And certainly I want one of those reads to be humorous. Not that kind of ironic humor per se or a kind of a knee-slapping humor necessarily, but the ability to make an audience laugh at what they're looking at, or at themselves even. I think art tends to be a little serious to me, so I always like to present that side, humor.

How would you see the Midwest's art-scene? Compared to New York's? LA's? Europe's? Strictly from an outsider's perspective, can galleries be seen as places for spruced-up cliques?

In central Ohio, there's the Western Center for the Arts. In Cleveland, as well as in Cincinnati there are nice spaces. In New York, all there is is the art scene, which I find completely boring and loathsome. Yeah. That's the worst part of the art scene whether you're here, in New York, or Zanesville, Ohio. It's like the worst part of high school, so much so that I find myself not interested in going to openings and participating. For instance, in New York, I'd much rather go shopping or see a good movie than go to an opening. Now in Chicago, most of the people who are involved in the art scene are my friends, people who I've been cultivating friendships with for seven years, so it's hard to understand it. I can tell you that recently with the crop-up of lots of new galleries, one of which being mine or Julia Friedman's space that actually going to openings and seeing shows and seeing new work is actually very exciting. I live in Chicago because I feel interested in showing in Chicago. I show in New York, LA. I show in Europe and it feels fine to be in cities known for their attention to the arts. But then to be able to come back to this city known for its great music, great food, a big lake, and a different way of living, much more conducive to me for art production. I find NY too crowded and conscious of it self as NY. In a way it's like the prom queen.

I thought it would be funny if I interviewed Venessa Beecroft in jest, as I practically have the same last name as her, but was told that she's too big. Isn't it unfortunate that artists, even my distant relative, can become celebrities?

There's a way now that artists have become celebrities. I guess that happened during the 80's for instance. Artists show up as much in the social pages of Harper's Bazaar, as they do in critical reviews. I don't have a problem with that. I'm interested in the way that those situations collapse. Fashion photography, fine art photography, TV commercials, video art, design, sculpture, they're all one big situation. I recognize that. I don't know how I feel about it, but I recognize it. I'm interested in artists as celebrities in as much as I want to think of them as cultural double agents, that they're more than just another version of a movie star walking down the red carpet. I want to think of them as makers of culture rather than the pretty vessels that carry out paltry dialogue. So in order to feel comfortable about that sense of celebrity I really imagine that they're infiltrators into that celebrity ivory tower in a way, spies for the rest of us.

What are specifically Midwestern phenomena that has caught your attention besides emo? Isn't Chicago home to that sort of things?

I think Chicago particularly has trapped a lot of emos. You know what I mean? But we also are the kind of the ground zero of post-rock. I feel like in terms of art, I feel I can identify Mid-western artists because they bring the story very specifically

back to their own lives. I think because being in the Midwest and feeling unimportant, and as though their voice doesn't count on some level, a lot of work that comes out of Chicago is not just self-effacing but self-specific. I don't always think that's an interesting way to go, but it happens. I think that in other areas where art's recognized as much more vital, they don't feel compelled to tell their own story, they that they can tell the larger story. Even in terms of materials, here in the Midwest I think often the materials used that are used in the art-making process are indicative of that same kind of self-effacing, self-destructive sentiment. I think there's a sense of the underdog, and there's a sense of the irony, like: you think I'm the underdog, so I'll get in under the radar, using post-its in my artwork. But really, I think their intention's much larger, but I'm not sure if it ever stops being just post-its. That's not to say that it's always happening, or that's how it is, but the ambition of some Midwestern art makers are a little bit questionable.

In your latest twin-projection piece, quite literally titled "A Double Image Both In Focus Simultaneously", you portray gawky teenagers on the brink of adulthood. On the one hand a swim meet in central Ohio is shown, with prissy, embarrassed, ogling, nebbish, naive-looking girls. On the other hand, a high school senior cock-trotting down a corridor with brimming confidence. It captures adolescence accurately and naturally, yet whole parts of it are staged. How did you pull this off?

We're dealing with the portrayal of young women and the portrayal of young men. One sequence is just doc. photage, the other sequence is dramatized photage. In the swim meet photage, even though I didn't direct their gestures and behavior, they're still so aware of being watched by each other, that I might as well have. There's still a sense of drama in their very presence and very being. They are still under an enormous amount of direction. So I wanted to compare that to a sequence where there is specific direction. So I wanted to think about those two sequences. That sense of being aware of being watched by either a camera with a director behind it or another body with desire or contempt behind it.

So surprisingly the two were similar?

Right.

Why young boys and girls?

I wanted to portray teenagers. As an adult, thinking of that time, not my life but in everyone's life where perhaps the end of innocence has set in when you begin to realize the world's a very bad place. But there's still an abstract sense of confidence and wisdom. There's a need to take on responsibility, yet at the same time no demand of responsibility. It's really fantastic, this moment of suspension. But again, I didn't want to have that sense of exploiting young people. Because in a way I feel that I was that person once. So the trajectory is organic, concrete. Now, many years after being a teenager, I have a perspective on that situation, and at the same time a clear understanding that I'm still at, unfortunately now with the demand of responsibility. I feel like one of those teenage girls on the poolside with bills. I think as though when you're in the midst of that, you can't see how beautiful that is. I feel like even those young girls in the swim meet section are not the kind of young teen super stars that we see in magazines and on film right now, I feel like they're infinitely more beautiful and closer to superstars than the superstars themselves in terms of a kind of spirit. Equally, my speculation [for boys] is quite different but that's a really complicated scenario. Of course, these are both groups of white teenagers who we can speculate potentially on their economic. That's specific. That's not inclusive or exclusive. That's just the kind of area I felt like addressing.

Is it true that you once modeled for 17 Magazine?

When growing up in central Ohio I did some freelance modeling for Columbus' version of Carson Pirie Scott. I think my brother's girlfriend was modeling, so she took pictures of me with curled hair and lots of make-up. There was a situation that came up through 17 magazine, so yeah, I was in the magazine.

Were you on the cover?

No, I wasn't on the cover, I was on the inside. But that was a long time ago, I was probably about 15. It wasn't a whole spread, it was an ad for regional model search. So I was the spokes-model or something like that.

Does it bother you when people talk about "Nevermind" and "WTG" instead of your new work?

Not so much "Nevermind". I'm not as interested in the same kind of dialogue that "White Trash Girl" instigates as I used to be. I don't mind talking about "WTG" in a public situation. I understand that those debates still exist, and people want to talk that work to talk about larger issues. But I don't feel as interested in having those conversations. "Nevermind" was made in 1999 so it's not such an old piece that I can't think or talk about it. I feel like that work's all connected. I feel really grateful that people want to talk about anything that I do. Again, I feel grateful that I've been allowed to make this new work and that it's been accepted. And even though people have said that my new work is different from my older work, that doesn't mean that they don't like it or aren't interested in it.

You admittedly make slow videos. What sets apart sleepy work from keen work?

Patience. When I first made "Nevermind", I had never imagined that anyone would want to sit through 18 minutes of me lip-syncing very, very slowly to "Smells Like Teen Spirit", especially when the original version raucous and acute. But to my surprise and delight, audiences are much more patient than we think we are. They're ready to slow down and to contemplate and to be given that ability to think through situations. Because video is connected to all of the other moving images that we see on televisions and on the Internet, around us constantly. I wanted to offer a true alternative to the way images are brought to us in such a rapid speed that we can't even comprehend them. So I wanted to be able to offer a real alternative, not to bore my audience, but to give them the benefit of the doubt, and to allow a sentiment to unfold over a period of time rather than a half of a second. And to appeal to the intellectual and the emotional, as well as the visual. Some of the work that work has been called boring, but I don't take that as an insult. That's just a statement, not a judgement. Boring is a sensation and a really tough, complicated sensation.

Any advice for wonks, as well as loafers, at SAIC wanting to become art stars? Is simply putting your shoulder to the wheel enough?

Yes. Definitely. Even though you've suggested that any art student can pick up a french horn to become post-rocker nowadays. I feel like those are the blips and the clicks, and they go away. And that you have to work your ass off, and that's it, you know, and a really specific work ethic. It has nothing to do with who you know or what you wear or who's parties you go to, that's crazy. It sounds like kind of a focus-your-crystal mentality, but it's like anything, be good at what you do seriously. Don't take yourself too seriously, but take what you do seriously.

What's your most memorable life experience?

I don't think I've had it yet.

How do you view Makeoutclub.com, the online match-maker exclusively for hepcats?

Evidently, I had a friend who had his picture posted up on the website, and I guess the picture was taken I was in the background. So inadvertently I was included in a Makeoutclub.com page or photo or submission of some sort, although I haven't participated. I know of the phenomenon, but I've never participated.

But it's exclusively for the hipster set.

Yeah, but I think that's kind of an elusive situation. I think if it was literally makeout.com, like a way to find people to make out with I'd be all for it.

Well, it is essentially isn't it?

I think in reality, there's nothing better than just making out. If it involves actually making out I'm totally for it.

It's crazy to see all these girls with dyed black hair and straight bangs.

They look just like me?

No, like members of Sleater-Kinney or something.

Right.

Did you attend Ladyfest Chicago?

Well I was out of town. I don't know if it was sub-conscious, but I planned to fly out of town the weekend of Ladyfest and the Chicago Underground Film Festival. I think that that's very telling.

So is it franchised feminism?

You know I'll tell you. I'm totally in support of all things female-made. But I'm interested in a re-birth of the kind of gender democracy and not excluding or naming. So to a degree I agree.

Ladyfest Olympia, Ladyfest UK, Ladyfest Chicago, Ladyfest Scotland, what's next?

Yeah, exactly. I do find that bothersome. I can't tell you exactly why, but I don't feel totally in support. But yes, as I was taking off, it was in such a pathetic way, really telling that somehow I had unconsciously scheduled a trip out of town during those two events.

How do you view today's youngsters? Especially the one's with schlocky taste in tattoos and piercings among other things?

As an instructor of generally that age-group, I feel inspired. Where the rest of the world continues to bash that early twenty bracket, I look around my students and feel totally in awe. Having spent so much time at the School of the Art Institute...I definitely feel like an adult when I encounter young pie-rockers, I don't necessarily feel a kinship I feel now that my own body is incidental to my situation as a kind of professional. In terms of my students and younger art-makers, I feel that they get it, whatever "it" is. That makes me feel delighted for the future. Those are still subcultures. I'm thinking intellectually, in terms of music or literature or their participation in the world. But subcultures are still subcultures. And I know that anyone passed the age of like twenty is immediately uncool, but I'm more than willing to embrace the uncool.

You have many tattoos. How many do you have? When did you get your first one?

I got my first one when I was eighteen. I have approximately ten. I don't keep count. I haven't gotten a new one in about 2 years. I generally see other tattooed people and don't get it. I feel really disconnected from the tattoo community, especially from anything Taz.

Do you recommend tattooing?

No.

Beige Cory Arcangelo, Paul B Davis, Joseph P Beuckman, Joseph Bonn

Questions by Dragan Espenschied

Experts in Intentional Computing

What are "fat bits" and "post data"?

Paul B Davis: "Fat Bits" is a metaphor for escaping the restrictions which consumer software places on our interactions with computers. We call the bits that we poke "fat" to describe their expansion beyond the intentions of Adobe and Macromedia and Microsoft and Avid and Apple and etc.

Cory Arcangelo: Technically fat bits is the term used to describe the grid mode on a few old paint applications available on the Apple/Mac line of computers ... we use it to describe one of our Nintendo Projects. I like the term because it reminds me of the days when I used to stay up late and make animations on my apple computer. Paul might say something different to this question though...

Post-Data [coined by Joseph Bonn] is the name for our philosophy also described in our Make-World bio as "intentional computing".

"Intentional Computing" is the process of making work which is aware of this relationship, and work in which the artist demonstrates a complete understanding of the machine he/she is composing on [from the CHIP to the display]. We like to use obsolete computers and file formats because we feel since they offer limited options we can more easily understand the effects they have on the output. On modern computers this understanding is harder to achieve, and even more difficult to obtain when one uses some consumer software ...

Joseph P Beuckman: We're interested at the hardware level - before corporations write their proprietary "anything goes" interfaces. Computers have personalities, shapes and architectures like a canvas that influence what we make. We don't want to build a flat white surface over that and ignore the features of the machine.

You are well known for making jokes about people like Markus Popp (this years' winner of Ars Electronica in Electronic Music) for the tools he uses. What is the background of this and what is important about choice of tools concerning digital media?

PBD: When you are using a computer, I think the question of tools folds back in on itself in a few ways ... First as if you're using a mold or some sort of custom fabrication machine - it creates tools. But secondly, the division between the influence you exert on the computer and the influence it exerts on you can, with the use of many Microsoft products for example, become difficult to determine. When we put together one of our beloved Powerpoint presentations using its Auto-Content Wizard, who's the tool? The computer, or us, as we mind-numbingly bend to the whims of corporate design? Another huge danger is something like Flash where the tool and the delivery system are one and the same, and it's being promoted even by the art community as a standard and is taught in art schools. This coming from a company (Macromedia) who's founder Marc Canter once said: "Artists do not use computer languages if they can help it." Dragan I believe you would use your term "Analog-popper" to that. I think that "Made with Macromedia" gives Macromedia credit on a conceptual level to anything made with their software. And even people who make things with MAX and MSP and brag about how you can write your own objects in C ... what's the point of that? If I'm going to bother writing something in C, I want it to do something cool - not be stuck in some slow, bloated programming environment on a Macintosh that can send midi notes to other applications.

Our position is that, because we program everything ourselves, the tool we truly use is the computer - it's not the software. And likewise our medium is also not software, it's the computer.

What's happened with Mr. Popp is that, as far as I know, he cannot program a computer. So his "tools" are the programmers he hires. And, at least with ovalprocess or whatever it is, their "tools" aren't actually programming languages, but Director(tm). This is bad. What it means is that for all his high-falutin' notions of digital aesthetics and computer music, it's hard for me to believe that Mr. Popp knows anything about his

chosen medium. His creative interface with computers is purely secondhand, and even then through the most evil of corporate softwares. The significance here is immense because he is so widely accepted as a foremost thinker in the field of computer fine arts. And as a sort of unwitting Executive Producer, I think Mr. Popp has possibly set an exciting trend for years to come in terms of career options for unskilled digital artists. It just proves once again that if you don't understand the bits, people will fool you all day.

JSB: Factory patches, plugins, templates, incompatibilities, needless complexity, general standardification, all these things are bad. Confronting the data where it lives opens the possibility of community with the data. Hiding behind high-level scripting languages does not promote meaningful relationships with the bits.

The worst are operating systems and software that provide their naive users false and meaningless descriptions of the power available in their computers.

Companies assume that people don't want to learn about their machines and indeed they don't want people to know about their machines. Companies are trying to sell "their" interface ideas which mostly have nothing to do with how the computer works.

But in what way are you opposed to standardization? Isn't it great that I am at least supposed to be able to print my MS Office documents on any computer in the world?

PBD: Certainly data is defined by prior intention ... what some people might call a "format", or maybe even a language to some extent. Without this everything is garbledygoop, like when you open up a Word98 document in Word95 and there's crap all over the screen. I don't think anyone cares about people just wanting to use a computer for word processing, even with the difference between Microsoft Word and the ASCII standard. Where it gets us is when these same tactics of writing crap software and then forcing it on everyone are used, is when they are applied to creative activities. Photoshop, Flash, Director, even java - which I never understood why there was a need for it, wasn't ANSI C supposed to be cross platform? - it just compromises the essence of what an artist does. No one is going to agree that standardization is good in the context of art - a field that applauds original thinking. And most of this software barely let's one think at all. If someone wants to have their activities on a computer standardized, then fine. But if they want to break from it, it should not be such a huge mess. I'm ok with acknowledging the division between creative and non-creative computer activities in this way, because it doesn't interfere with usage potential - it keeps the bits fat.

Is there any political implication to your use of technology? I remember the video where Cory shows how to circumvent the restrictions of a software by changing its machine code, "cracking" it, having the needed MC68000 codes written on his arm. It appeared like an agitation.

CA: By having 68000 codes on my arm I was simply pointing out the idea that as a computer artist I should have a complete understanding of every work I make down to the actual machine code. Nothing political.

This is the goal ...

PBD: I don't think cory had any political leanings with assembly language on his arm, and we don't have any sort of agenda or goals for ourselves, but I would say (and this might differ from everyone else) that there are political implications of our work. We are inherently supportive of open-source software, and not supportive of companies who monopolize the art world with tools that don't allow the creation unmitigated art. Digital distribution is a concern, and I at least am very skeptical of copyright covering both art and software. Also government attempts to regulate internet traffic are very worrisome.

In the USA right now there are some possibilities that what I consider normal use of computers (cracking software) will be prosecuted as terrorist activities. This in particular is ridiculous, as

cracking is already illegal in terms of copyright. But why? You paid for the computer, those bits are yours. If some company produces a piece of software that is degrading the experience you are having with your machine, you need to be able to change it. You can change a bunch of bits that might erase an entire program, but yet you can't change one bit so an icon is modified or a password is removed?

Anyway, I would hope that some of our work would create an awareness that many of society's ideas about computers aren't grounded in the truths of the machines or our interactions with them, but of corporate and government/media attempts to codify, regulate, and profit from most people's inability to use them for what they were designed for.

How did your style of working evolve?

PBD: Lots of really bad cocaine, I think.

CA: I think a few years ago we simply applied all the ideas we learned studying classical instruments to making work on computers. Paul was trained as a classical pianist, I a classical guitarist, Darius also I believe rocks a piano [he plays organ at hockey games too!], and Dwayne (Joe Bonn) plays madd bass and guitar. The idea behind a classical training is that one must obtain a relative mastery over the instrument before even attempting to interpret any composition. For example I had to play only studies and exercises 6 hours a day for 2 years before one professor would allow me to play any work. So somewhere around 1997 as everyone started fooling on computers [with no regard to even attempting to understand the tools they were using] we came to the conclusion that one should obtain a relative mastery over their software/hardware. [I had been rocking hypercard/director and things since early versions so I was lucky to make all the same mistakes people are making now when I was 12..] We started using fixed architecture machines, computers which are no longer being developed, at this time because it is impossible to keep up with commercial software and hardware. Imagine trying to play Bach on the piano if they switched keys around every few years ... and charged you for it! Plus the limited capabilities of these computers allows us to understand every aspect of the machine. Thus we can [parody the phrase] become "experts". Oh yah, and they are about 15\$ and can often be found in the trash. [even more than "net art" this can be thought of as art anyone can do..]

Aren't you often accused of being retro or limiting your artistic options?

JPB: People assume we are involved in kitschy promotion - trying to remind 20-30 somethings of when they were 5-12. They generally giggle when they ask us about it.

CA: No one calls Slash [from Guns'n'Roses] retro when he uses a 1960's Gibson guitar, or Orbital when they use an 808 and these machines are actually older than the machines we use ... hmmm ... you figure it out. But generally we have had very good response from art critics once they listen to our styles and see that we have good reasons for using these machines and are not just blindly cashing in on a fad. [Once they see our love for the sauce!]

What role does letterpress, hapsichord and vinyl records play in your work?

JPB: They are our interests.

PBD: For a specific example, I took my starting point as ASCII art and applied its aesthetics to letterpress printing and came up with what I call "ornamental portraiture" ... using type ornaments to model grayscale pixels. I see this as different to how aesthetics from other media, namely print and TV, are just stuck on the computer and called an "interface" in that I was trying to do the reverse. With the letterpress I was trying to legitimize computer aesthetics by applying them to a very traditional printmaking practice seeing that after thirty years of computer art it's still not widely accepted. With all things we do there is the same appreciation for the various media and desire to have total control over our art.

CA: Harpsichord: frills Letterpress and vinyl

records: paying the bills Computers: skills

And due to our intense dislike of "mainstream" computer art we are always looking for ways to bring our ideas out of the box and into people's homes, thus records, letterpress, silkscreens, game carts, ... and maybe even in the future childrens books.

You think that computers coming to the mainstream and more people using them will change people's view on data?

CA: Data is no longer respected. Data is tossed, turned, and twisted by people who have access to it only through third party Graphical User Interfaces (like Flash). This keeps me awake at night.

JPB: I don't think data is that popular or more than 7% of people even know it exists. I think what people are "excited" about are USB multimedia-enabled cell-phones that do "e-commerce".

International

audiences know you mostly as the creator of your main project, Makrolab, which was first presented at documenta X. After Makrolab you made series of projects (178 degrees East Another Ocean Region, Sundown, the Trust-System series, Solar, EMM and others) which explore the political and audio-visual aspect of the electromagnetic spectrum. Can you briefly explain your artistic strategies, and the tools and aims of these explorations?

Makrolab's main aims are to explore and reflect upon three complex and dynamic fields of global activity: telecommunications, weather systems and migrations. The machine was built to receive, observe, process and reflect information that is generated within these fields. But the earlier work that led to Makrolab, especially the collaborative work I did with Brian Springer, opened up a new chapter in the process of creating the performance Ladomir-faktura: Fourth Surface-the Surface of Contact! We used a lot of satellite telecommunications generated material, and this prompted me to investigate further in the field. The 178 degrees East work was realised in 1997 in Australia, and was an actual investigation of the current Australian Telecommunications Interception Act: its legal framework. The response from the public during the Code Red event was fantastic, and the law firm that we had hired to work on the project confirmed our legal interpretations. We even had a strategic studies expert come and open up the event which brought the two very distant worlds together. It was probably the first friendly face-to-face between the tactical media community and the tactical and strategic community ...Echelon was discussed a lot in that work and also at Makrolab long before the hype. The other major work that uses the developing Makrolab communications suite is the EMM-electronic media monitoring console and lecture series, which is part of the World-Information.Org infrastructure. I am also developing a smaller unit for tactical work on a more limited and mobile basis ...the reflection of the ever changing EM-spectrum must be constant. That is my aim. The tools are, of course, amateur-radio gear, processing electronics, and lots of patience.

You have just returned from Latvia where you were working on your latest collaborative project with medialab RIXC from Riga. The project was centred around an enormous radio telescope (d=32m), a former Soviet military object which only recently has been made accessible for public use. Can you provide us with some impressions of working with this extravagant tool, as well as what role this kind of exclusive opportunity plays in your artistic practice?

The Irbene antenna array was built in the early 80's by the Soviet military and was supposedly used for intercepting microwave telecommunications from Western satellites, both military and civilian. In information warfare, this was an incredible tool and possibly a response to the interception systems the Western powers were setting up at the same time, like the now famous Echelon. In any case, with the demise of the Soviet Union, the Soviet army left Irbene and the

What is your relation to Computer Science?

CA: I took a few computer science classes but did poorly. Once I forgot about the exam, went to it 20 minutes late, and then had to ask all the people around me for a pencil and paper cause I did not bring any. I think I got like a 40%. I did not get a CS degree because I have no interest in learning how to write 16bit loops in 6502 assembly, or learning how to sort efficiently through arrays unless it is to paint a pretty picture on a processor/system I found in the trash.

JPB: I studied computer science at Southern Illinois University @ Edwardsville. My project was a system of genetic algorithms that produced short themes. Neural networks were to learn how to grade the themes for "fitness" or "phatness." It was written in Microsoft Visual C++ using Microsoft Foundation Classes and never worked. I ran out of time. About a third of my time was spent writing the program and two thirds reading about why Microsoft feature A didn't work with Microsoft feature B. I should have written the program in pure C++ under Linux. I used FreeBSD

two arrays that they built there (32m and 16m). The same morning, Latvian scientists moved in as they wanted to keep and preserve this costly infrastructure for radio-astronomical use, and so the Ventspils radio-astronomy centre was established. Our Latvian hosts invited a group of international artists and media activists to a workshop in Irbene in August, and among other things, we wired up the array for tactical media use and investigation. As a radio amateur, it was quite an experience to be able to work with such equipment. The team I invited from my side (Borja Jeli and Ajjo a Abrahamsberg), did what we could in those two days, with some help from the radio astronomers themselves. We have gathered audio and data material that we will use for our performance Signal-Sever! which will take place in Riga in early September. This performance is the continuation of the work that I have started with the event Solar at Ars Electronica in '98, and basically it deals with the soundscapes that the electromagnetic spectrum is creating. It tries to materialise them in many ways; it is a durational performance that follows the status of the EM spectrum from sundown to sunrise, with lots of sound, rhythms and grooves of course.

One of the most challenging projects you did last year, in collaboration with Carsten Nicolai, is Polar, produced by Canon ArtLab in Tokyo. As I understand it, Polar is a simulation the experience of a person finding him/herself inside the virtual spaces of the electronic networks. It is hard to imagine... Can you give us some explanation how Polar functions as an aesthetic project/object? And is it true that you are winning one of the prizes in the Ars Electronica this year for it?

Polar is not a simulation of the experience of the network, but rather, it's a tool to experience it in real-time... It's a machine that not only translates and materialises the flows of information, but also the meaning of the data which inhabits the networks. The system could be described in two ways, through the visitors point of view and the data package point of view. These are two very different perspectives, but for a quick "capsule" review, I could quote the description we did of the work for the Prix Ars Electronica this year. We envisioned the 7m X 7m X 4m totally connected, and tactile space as a complex tactile-matrix interface. This enables the visitor to experience the flow of data in the global and local networks in a completely immersive, yet cognitive way. The work was inspired by the notion of the cognitive OCEAN as described in Stanislaw Lem's and Andrey Tarkovsky's SOLARIS. The initial conceptual equation was: OCEAN = MATRIX. The main outline of the work was based on the creation of two software and hardware "engines", the so-called POLAR ENGINE (with adjacent POLS, POLAR DICTIONARY and KNOWLEDGE BASE) and the CHANGE ENGINE (with adjacent TRACEROUTE VISUALISER, which consisted of two separate displays). The first was envisioned as an INPUT-ANALYSIS and CONSTRUCTION zone, and the second as an OUTPUT-SYNTHESIS-EXPERIENCE zone. These zones were defined both in conceptual sense, software and hardware senses, and also in the environmental sense. We have defined a "ZONE" in which the biological and physical was directly interact-

machines to plot the neural network error surfaces and that was the smoothest/most enjoyable part of the project. Window makes me depressed when I use it.

PBD: If I were studying computer science I would have to learn horrible things like ASP databases and silly Microsoft API's ... these things make you feel bad when you use them.

Like my dear friend Dragan Espenschied who, whether he knows it or not, has his soul slowly eaten away when he programs shit javascript for money because that's what companies pay for. He is a stronger man than I, I could never do it, and this is what computer science is these days at university's and I have no interest in it.

I think studying the computer within the context of making art or music is much better right now, and I should say that I hope to go back to school at some point and do this because there are so many facets of it I wish I was better at.

Marko Peljhan

Questions by Rasa Smite and Ieva Auzina

<http://makrolab.ljudmila.org/>

ing with the abstract-immaterial. One main question was posed in this process: HOW DO WE CONSTRUCT A COGNITIVE AND TACTILE EXPERIENCE OF THE SEAMLESS AND NEAR-ABSTRACT MATRIX WITH ITS ANALYSIS/CONSTRUCTION/TRANSFORMATION INCLUDED IN THE PROCESS? Basically, we wanted to create an interface between the human body and senses and the matrix, which would, by its sheer presence, (let alone the activities of the humans), already transform the structure of the matrix that is being observed/experienced, and the structure of the physical space that is being inhabited during this process. And indeed, we were nominated for the highest prize in the field for this work, the Golden Nica. Either this or the second prize will be ours, and the whole team is very proud of this.

Do you believe in a future constructive relationship between art and science in solving ... let's say ... major civilization problems that could occur as a consequence of the latest technological and economic developments? What is your vision in this regard?

I think that there is an urgent need to reflect upon these developments and develop strategies for sustainable growth and development that are not unilateral. As the development is centred now, I would say I am a pessimist and that the global future will be a very troubled one. The constructive creative art/science relationship is, of course, one of the possible tools of this reflection/construction, and I do not see any problems in this area except the cultural differences between these fields. But the global dynamics of change are very powerful and the knowledge distribution is uneven, in both economic and geographic terms. This needs to change, and communication technology is one of the possible vehicles for this change, but only if we will be able to liberate it from the grasp of the blind, solely capital-based use. The electromagnetic spectrum is an immaterial field with very material consequences, and unfortunately it has become a serious commodity. We have to liberate at least part of it, with all the democratic and technological means possible.

As an artist from Slovenia dealing with extremely global technologies and points of view, how do you see the political relation between the margin and centre? What is your impression of the possible new world order?

Wow, what a question. I think that there is no fixed new world order, but rather a changing flux of power from state and nation-based economies to corporate-based power... I believe that in macroeconomic terms this process was too quick, there was a lack of reflection involved in it and this gap also produced serious tensions between the many margins and the few centres of power. The social element is very much lacking in this process...in all societal territories, and in micro and macro environments. This will have to change. The economy itself, at least the most immaterial and spectral part of it, the flux and transfer value of it, started re-adjusting by itself last year. But the reflection on the political front is far from happening, and that is why I am a pessimist ... preparing for Makrolab in the Antarctic.

Expert in Communication Technology and Earth/Space Environment applications

