

5/BREAKING THE FRAME

VITAMIN'S COCKTAILS

Octopussy

- 1 fresh figs blended with vodka
 - 1/2 Aperol
 - 1/8 lemon juice
 - 1/8 cream
- shake with ice

Genkisthesis

- 1 Gokuri or fresh grapefruit
 - 1 peppermint tea
 - 1/3 Cointreau
 - 1/3 Campari
 - 1/3 gin
- peppermint essence

Cyndi Suicide

- 1 Di Saronno
 - 1 gin
 - 1/2 fresh passion fruit
 - 1/2 lemon juice
- shaken with ice, topped up with
2 dry ginger ale
or on the rocks

White Panther

- 1 vodka steeped with cardamon
 - 1 amaro
 - 1/2 cream
- almond essence
shaken with ice, or as shooter

Photo & recipes: Vitamin AA

Draculina

- 1 gin
 - 1 Campari
 - 1 Martini Rosso
 - 1/2 amaro
- gelatin
allow to set in salt-rimmed glass,
top with fresh raspberry jelly

Thaifood Mary

- 1 vodka
 - 3 fresh tomato juice
- fresh chillies
Thai basil
soy sauce
on the rocks

Thaichito

- 1 rum
- Thai basil
fresh ginger
brown sugar
topped up with 7-Up, on the rocks

Oysterism

- 1 gin
 - 1/2 lemon juice
 - 1/4 ginger cordial
- shaken on ice, topped up
with tonic or soda





This is not a Sex Party

- 1 gin
- 1 Cointreau
- 1 Green Chartreuse
- shaken on ice, topped up with tonic
- slice of orange

Wrasseberry

- 1 whisky
- 1/2 amaro
- 1/2 lemon
- 1 raspberry purée
- 1 pomegranate juice
- with ice

Indigo Blue (not blue at all)

SOPHISTICATED VERSION

- 1/2 Cassis
- 1 aquavit
- 1 secret ingredient
- tonic with ice

SWEET VERSION

- 1 Di Saronno
- 1 whisky
- 1 secret ingredient
- 1/2 lemon juice
- mango and apple juice with ice

*Ever wondered what to do
with Becherovka?*

- 1 Becherovka
- 1 gin
- 1 tangerine liqueur
- 1/2 Irish whiskey (not smoky!)
- fresh mint
- ice
- topped up with tonic

Fed up with Margaritas?

- 1 tequila
- 1 Campari
- 1 red vermouth
- twist
- ice
- topped up with freshly
squeezed orange juice

LUX & MUX

2003

Live and online audio-visual-gastronomic performance, commissioned by Moon Radio Web TV

Special thanks to dinner guests Jane Willis, Adrian Gothard, Andrew Humphrey and Masashi Fujimoto; to doc mic hostess: Kelli Dipple; to MYYMÄÄLÄ's Gareth and Voytec in Helsinki for pikniking with us remotely; and to all chatterers from Amsterdam, Baghdad, Birmingham, Helsinki, and Madrid for joining the prandial discussions.

5. BREAKING THE FRAME

1

The dinner guests

2

The kitchen

3

Shane Solanki, against a backdrop of Max/MSP/Jitter spaghetti

4

The blender, an online interface for mixing among three incoming streams

Photos: Gavin Starks

AV DINNERS: EPIC EROS

Combining the fine traditions of TV cookery shows and extreme gastronomy in a sensory networked cook-in, hungry artists gather to reinterpret rituals of food preparation and presentation. Four cunning winners of an online quiz (with cryptic clues involving extreme foods) are invited to ambient.space in East London as guests of honour.



1

Notorious epicure Vitamin AA, assisted by his able auxiliary, Koko di Mari, conjures a series of ambrosial dishes to overload the senses of live and remote participants. The menu is crafted to loosen corsets, set tongues wagging, and unhinge minds without mercy. Licentiousness and depravity duly ensue...



2

Synaesthesia is getting easier

The sights and sounds of food preparation are captured using multiple cameras and microphones, and manipulated using the Max/MSP/Jitter software environment by LUX & MUX, who provide flashes and glimpses, gurgles and slurps. Lascivious aur-or-al poetics are composed and delivered by sometime Ninja Tune wordsmith Shane Solanki.



3

Networked Cook-Ins

The sounds and colours of Vitamin AA's salacious cooking methods serve as sources for an audio-visual feast, streamed live. Agent Gav's stream blender enables remote participants to mix three different streaming audio tracks – MUX's sizzles and fizzes, Shane's speaking-in-tongue-in-cheek glossolalia, and a documentary stream with behind the scenes commentary by the rest of the crew, which reveals the studio setup, tools and techniques. Simultaneous feasts take place in Amsterdam, Baghdad, Birmingham, Helsinki and Madrid. A chat channel enables remote participants to join in the dinner conversation.



4

Inspired by texts including: Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's *The Physiology of Taste (Or, Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy)* of 1825, David Madsen's *Confessions of a Flesh-Eater* (1997), Georges Perec's 'Attempt at an Inventory of the Liquid and Solid Foodstuffs Ingurgitated by Me in the Course of the Year Nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Four' (originally published in *Action Poétique*, 1976)... and films including: Marco Ferreri's *La Grande Bouffe* (1973), Luis Buñuel's *Le Charme Discret de la Bourgeoisie* (1972), Xiaowen Zhou's *Ermo* (1994), Juzo Itami's *Tampopo* (1985), Nagisa Oshima's *Ai No Corrida* (1976)...

Quiz clues

1. aperitif (3, 7)

Buñuel's dry use for a ray of light

2. hors d'oeuvre (5, 8, 6)

This aphrodisiac marine surprise
is commonly found between the thighs

3. entrée (4)

Kabuki Killer – Puffer Daddy

Who is this asiatic saltwater baddie?

4. on the side: (9)

*It seemed to me that these celestial nuances
betrayed the delicious creatures that had
amused themselves by becoming vegetables
and which, though the disguise of their firm,
edible flesh, gave a glimpse in these dawn-
born colours, these rainbow sketches, this
extinction of blue evenings, of the precious
essence that I would still recognize when,
all night following a dinner where I had eaten
them, they played their crude, poetic farces,
like one of Shakespeare's fairies, at changing
my chamberpot into a bottle of perfume.*

5. dessert (3, 4)

A former king of Poland
defected to France
bringing Arabian Nights
to a drunken dinner dance

6. liquer (8)

Sweet when squeezed from
the fruit of Cybele
(but the fruit itself –
deadly when bitter)

7. cheese... (4, 5)

...taken to its logical conclusion

8. after dinner (4, 5)

Its expense and fragrant aroma
products of the bowels
of a paradoxical bisexual



1. dry martini



2. rocky mountain oysters



3. fugu



4. asparagus

Shane's Aur-or-al Poetics (xxxxcerpts)

[...] A raw pearl necklace
consumed by the reckless...
Human lips meet oyster hips
In an orgiastic embrace
that very moment
when slippery sensation
slides down the sides of the throat
Into the belly of a whale slips our heroine
Oceans implode within
Neptune beckons in a fleeting pause
and then aftertaste
the lingering satisfaction
a dark salty question mark [...]

[...] I can't bear these fruits
taking off their clothes
it makes my mouth water
it makes my panties wet
these parting shots of summer
so sweet and full of sex [...]

[...] Fall into the arms
of the truffle's handsome charms
Your nostrils flare
You stretch and yawn
Animal instincts thrice reborn
You growl and purr
Skin becomes fur...
'Oh, my', says the truffle,
'you do look sweet!
come sit here on my lap, pretty thing,
and tell me all your secrets' [...]

Stills from the animated quiz
clues



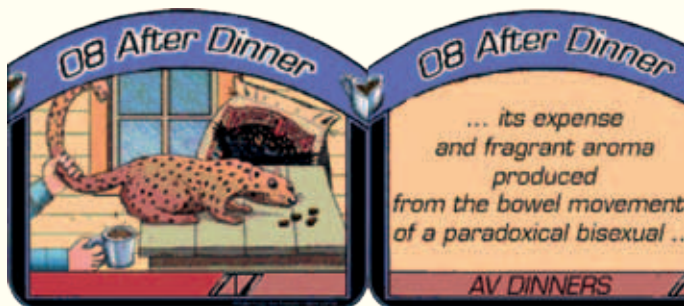
5. rum baba



6. amarretto



7. casu marzu



8. kopi luwak

5 BREAKING THE FRAME



Manu Luksch & Mukul Patel
2006

Single screen 10-minute
video installation with
labeled cans of food

**AV DINNERS 2: AJU J.'S NEW YEAR FEAST –
IN THE YEAR OF THE FIRE DOG**

A New Year's feast is prepared according to a traditional Akha recipe appropriate for the year of the Fire Dog. Under the skillful guidance of chef Aju J., a dog is chosen, slaughtered, elaborately spiced, and sautéed in a wok. The Akha distinguish between dogs that are to be eaten, and others that are used to hunt or guard. Dog-lovers of a different kind, who feel squeamish about eating their 'best friends', should look away now.

*Photo: Installation at
Temporary Art Museum
Soi Sabai, Bangkok 2006,
courtesy Makoto Yoshihara
and TAMSS*

5. BREAKING THE FRAME



TELEJAM

TELEJAM is a forum where audiovisual artists and musicians explore the possibilities and limitations of streaming media and its interaction with other media and physical spaces.

TELEJAM_01/DELAY_28

In July 2001, the broadbandits from ambientTV.NET and Latvia's rigasound.org (a 24-hr artist-run net.radio station) held up the information superhighway with the first *TELEJAM* laboratory. Audio-visual jammers based in Public Life (London) and Casablanca (Riga) worked in 'delayed synchrony'. Sound and image underwent punctuated accretion, with the jammers at each physical location mixing live into the received media stream, before sending it back online. Taking place on the occasion of broadbandit Ilze Black's 28th birthday, in London the crew worked with patterns of seven, and in Riga, of four. The experiment was fortuitously blessed with a 28-second transmission delay, generating a laid-back feedback piece.

TELEJAM_02/FRO_03

Extending the audio-visual jam to three remote locations, *TELEJAM_02* celebrated the 3rd anniversary of independent Austrian FM station Radio FRO 105.0 (Linz) in November 2001. The three-phase transcontinental party featured artists based at ambientTV.NET's studios in London, the Dizzi club in Riga, and Posthof in Linz.

TELEJAM_03/flipflop-TRYPTiCHON

flipflop and *TRYPTiCHON* (2002-04) further developed the *TELEJAM* idea to use audio-video-data jamming between mobile devices. These projects would eventually develop into the critical network dance/theatre work, *Myriorama* (2004).

ambientTV.NET

2001-04



TELEJAM_01 ARTISTS

London: Manu, Mukul, Kertal, Milky Bar Kid, Joanna and many more alchemists;
Riga: DJ heincha, d-9, gonzalez, heleena, NEI, Linards Kulless, MKII, pk

TELEJAM_02 ARTISTS

London: Mukul, Mario Ventrelli, Manu Luksch, Rachel Baker, Vortex, Black, Christa Geiselhofer, Ian, Kate Rich;
Linz: Fadi Dorninger (head operator, main mixer), Dietmar Bruckmayr (Reden an die Nation, Stimme), Martin Greunz aka Impact aka Nautic Cuts, Jomasound;
Riga: Kulless, Ratnix, F1, dill9jah, mums speelees Ivarx & @TOMS (No Rest), NGC-5128 (Fabrique)

Manu Luksch & Mukul Patel
2002

R & D document

FLIPFLOP

A SOLO-PERFORMANCE FOR TWO BODIES IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

A proposal

flipflop is a polemical exploration of the pathos and comedy in our ambivalent romance with communication technology. There are two audiences: those who have come to watch the show, and those who are going about their everyday business in the streets neighbouring the venue. Between these audiences is a human interface – one character in two bodies (the performer in the venue and the roaming performer), with a talent for cornering people at parties and gathering crowds on street corners. Via this performing interface, the audiences (inside and outside the venue) emerge as both actors and directors, both surveilleurs and the surveilled. The title alludes to a bistable logic device (the foundation of computer memory), and to the act of walking.

SETTING

The audience is invited to a party. There are the usual aids to conviviality: music, lights, video projections, a bar; though just where a performance might take place is unclear. There is no stage, there are no seats.

The guests chatter and network, hang around at the bar and flirt, dance and drink, listen to music and enjoy the view. Over the course of the evening, one of the partygoers (actor and motion poet Ajay Naidu) emerges as a performer, and the audience gradually realizes that it is participating in theatre.

CHARACTER

In-venue performer Ajay's 'character' is a storyteller, a megalomaniac who wants to conquer time and space with his omnipresence mediated by technology. He is on a search for enhanced social connectivity, enhanced human being-hood. He extends himself through bionics – the roaming performer is his avatar, in the 'real' space outside the venue. Ajay directly addresses audience members, allows himself to be interrogated by them, provokes them and serves as interface between them and the roamer. These interactions are caught by the roamer and thrown back to the venue.

5. BREAKING THE FRAME



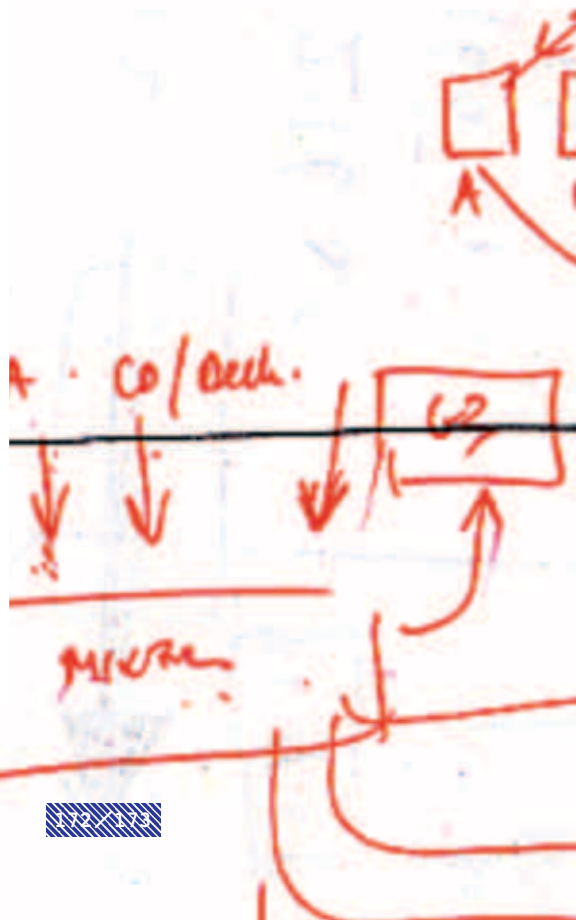
PLOT/DRAMATURGY

The story-generating structure and key vignettes focus on humanity's ambivalence to technology and bionic extension. Dreams of overcoming distance and defeating time, of being in many places at once, are realised, but their nightmarish character is also explored. Does the mediation of experience through telepresence throw light on the location of mind? Is the true self where the brain sits? where the sensors and actuators are? (brains in vats). Narrative vignettes explore cyber-utopias, omniscience and loneliness, intimacy and immediacy.

First through small talk, and then through more tightly scripted scenes that increasingly command audience attention, Ajay tells his story, while simultaneously, the roaming performer – Ajay's 'other 1st person' and avatar – wanders in the neighbourhood of the venue, equipped with a multimedia communications device. The street performer visits locations such as train stations, kiosks, bars, ATMs and petrol stations. The route is choreographed to synchronise with Ajay's storytelling, and a live 'point-of-view' video feed from the wanderer is relayed by wireless broadband to the venue.

Ajay extends his radius-of-transmission step by step, starting from personal conversation, through more attention-catching acts making use of the venue PA and video projections, to using his bionic extension (his avatar) via the neighbourhood network. At various points, people inside the venue feel (and behave) like partygoers, like a theatre audience, like performers. Sound and video elements are echoed back into the venue or relayed to people in the street via the roaming avatar. Initially, the screens in the venue display seemingly 'unpurposive' party visuals. Over time, as they incorporate more of the wanderer's video feed, the projections become increasingly explicit backdrops for Ajay's stories.

At the culmination of the performance, the virtual extension implodes and Ajay finds himself: the roaming performer arrives at the venue and the two bodies of Ajay synchronise: they engage with each other in a fusion of breakdance and capoeira. Crescendo: sonically, Ajay's words are looped and reformed into rhythm, and visually, feedback loops between the roaming performer's camera and the projection screens. The two bodies of Ajay then melt 'off stage' and become mere partygoers again. The event flips back into pure party mode.



at_N056deg48'182"_W003deg58'299"_altchecksum0425 >here_hear >head135_vel230 >untilyous



synchronicity

comix rushes for flipflop

guided by voices<<<mm-cha mm-cha<<<strides out the ride<<<th
whathafuck??!!<<<sisyphus?cissyfuss!<<<keep on keeping on
lo!<<<amidst purple heather<<<burning off mor



meanwhile, suddenly later...

ksshhhhhh...nmvreeeuuu

flipflop by manu luksch_ajay na
solo performance for 2 bodies in mu
an ambientTV.NET production_coming
flipflop@ambientTV.NET_synchronicity

ee_ >waypt004F >until you hear these tones>

ity
lop

the subsonic warrior walks alone<<<in a new found land<<<
<<<man it's HOT<<<next time exterraboots for sure<<<
ning mists<<<fade to white<<<



...sssZAGAKKK!

idu mukul Patel
multiple locations
g soon near you!
shot at makrolab

that toam asi



that thou art

loc>waypt004F
sensefn>ON
motilfn>ON
ID?>I
>selftestFAIL
ID?>I
>selftestFAIL
ID?>I
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Perthshire, Scotland,
July 2002: preproduction
workshop for *flipflop* at
Makrolab, a sustainable,
mobile, communications and
meteorological research
laboratory.

A song carries Ajay in
unknown lands, audio
waveforms turning into
undulating terrain. After a
long journey he is desolate
and begins to explore his
unbound inner space. He
re-encounters himself as
newly arrived from a planet
of alienation.

[http://
makrolab.ljudmila.org](http://makrolab.ljudmila.org)

Michael Uwemedimo

2002

Notes from the movement workshop with Manu Luksch, Mukul Patel, Ajay Naidu, Michael Uwemedimo, and Andrea Zimmerman, July 2002

Reflections on form

Capoeira finds a salient place within the technical and thematic framework of *flipflop* – a framework of surveillance apparatus that stages the compositional aspects of feedback and exploits them to dramatic effect through a series of projections, echoes and shadows.

Capoeira is corporeal dialogue – an exchange in which one's partner is a mirror possessed of a will to deceive, dissimulate and disguise. Each capoeirista echoes the other, a play in which it is possible to out-manoeuvre one's own shadow, an echo that tends to a Chinese whisper. Each partner extends the movement of the other and turns it against them. Dissimulation is central to the form; not only do participants deceive each other, but the spectacle of the *roda* (circle: the space where capoeira is played), is used as both an attraction and a distraction – it gathers a crowd and then diverts them while their pockets are lightened. Further, the form itself is a disguise. Martial practices amongst the slaves who developed capoeira were prohibited. The martial implications of the form had to be disguised as a recreational, quasi-religious dance.

Also like *flipflop*, capoeira is a syncretic discourse, in as much as it draws on and fuses, martial, musical, religious and dance forms from the communities along slave routes to the African interior. Along the course of its development, it has also incorporated movements and strategies from a number of other martial arts, most notably Taekwondo.

Mukul Patel

2003

Trials of technology (and its sponsors)

flipflop required a light, portable hardware solution to transmit and receive audio and video over WLAN (wireless network). The devices would be worn by both performers and would need to be robust enough to function outdoors in poor weather, and indoors while they played capoeira.

One of the project's funding agencies tried to pass off some 'wearable PCs' (made by Swiss company Xybernaut) as support-in-kind, and even attempted to stipulate their use in the work. Presumably the result of a sponsorship deal, the PCs, with 'futuristic' peripherals including wrist-mounted keyboards and head-mounted displays (HMDs), were barely functional. We conducted a thoroughgoing technical evaluation

Left: Photos from the movement workshop by Anthony Auerbach (above) & Ilze Black (below)





[1] www.ambienttv.net/3/flipflop/inprogress/flipflop_report_nov2002.pdf

*Above: The Xybernaut wearable computer and its numerous design failings.
Photos: Mukul Patel*

*Right top: flipflop movement studies workshop
Photos: Anthony Auerbach*

Right: Video data from the movement studies workshop, manipulated live by Jaromil using FreeJ/dyne:bolic on an 'obsolete' Pentium I

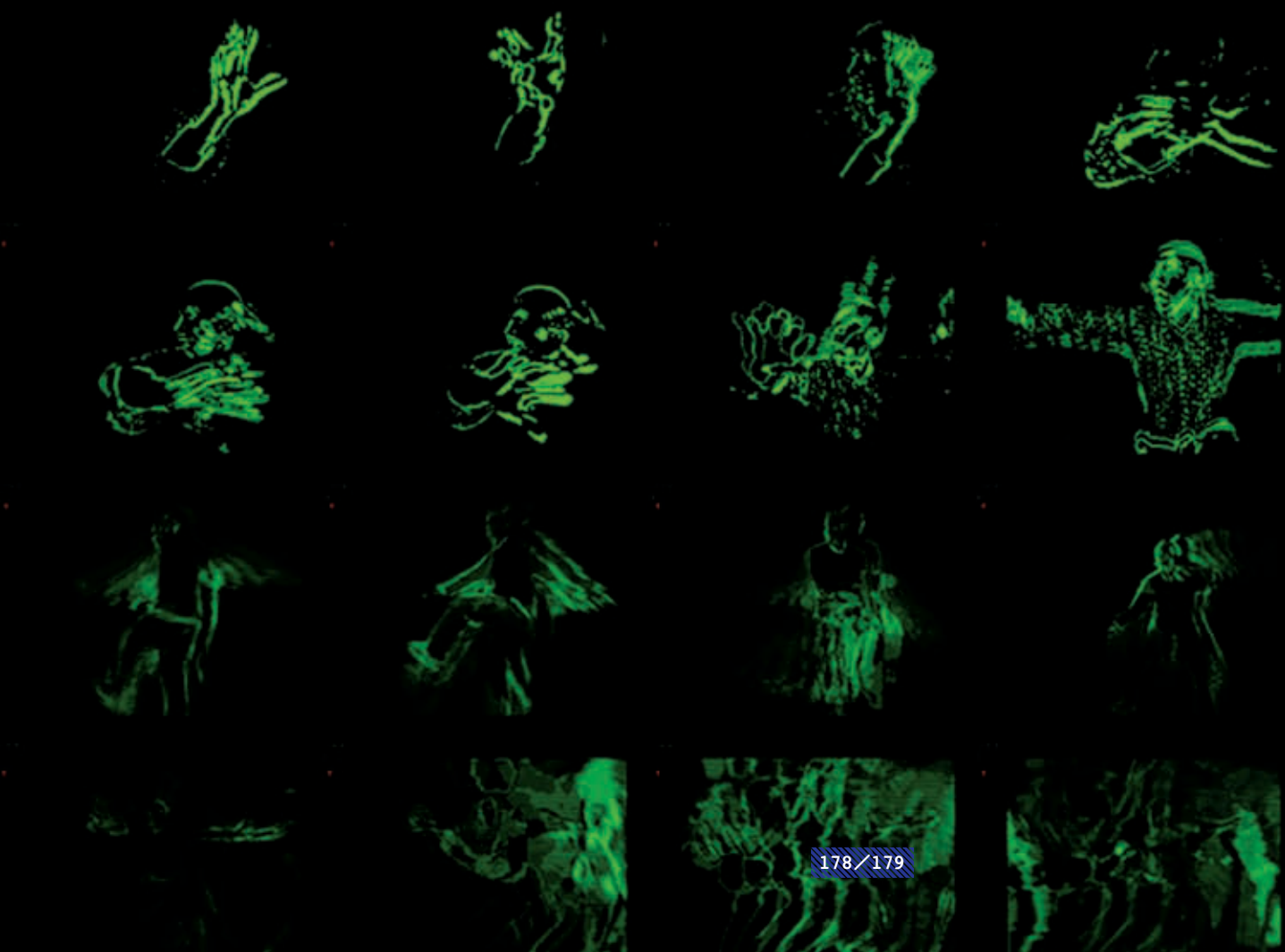
of the devices^[1]. Many of the failings were fundamental, for example: insufficient number of sockets for peripherals and insufficient clearance for peripheral plugs, no option for wireless peripherals (leading to 'cable spaghetti'), PCMCIA card chamber too small for wireless cards, HMD unusable in daylight, headset not adjustable to different head sizes, unreliable connections between hard drive and motherboard. In terms of both function and ergonomics, the devices were completely unsuitable for any computing task – let alone the rigorous use that *flipflop* would have subjected them to.

Given the state of ultramobile PC development at that time, we decided to move away from the PC/streaming media platform. There were also connectivity issues with WLAN, particularly in the 'urban canyons' surrounding potential venues. On paper, WLAN has the necessary range, but in practice, in the city it is vulnerable to signal attenuation and multipath distortion. As part of *The Spy School Exercise #2*, we had tested miniature imaging chips and microphone capsules in combination with analogue UHF transmitters and receivers. While adequate for that project, range and noise issues plagued this approach too, making it unsuitable for a larger scale theatrical piece.

Advances in mobile phone networks (3G) promised to fulfill *flipflop's* technical requirements, though the use of a closed network (as opposed to the open WLAN protocol) jarred with our championing of independent media infrastructure. This concern notwithstanding, we trialled the Motorola A920, one of the first 3G phones with a built-in GPS (Global Position System) receiver. It soon became clear that video calling was not yet practical, and given the earlier difficulties with video over WLAN or UHF FM, together with the availability of GPS, the original dramaturgy based on video telepresence was abandoned, in favour of an approach using sound, text, and location data.

A BRICK IN A WALLED GARDEN

When attempting to access the GPS data from the A920, a major problem arose: the phone would not run third-party applications unless they had been 'signed' (approved) by the network operator Hutchinson, ostensibly to prevent the distribution of malicious software. Hutchinson was running a developer competition at the time, but would only provide software emulators to the public – useless for applications that required access to the phone or GPS radio chips. Despite lobbying, Hutchinson refused to allow full access, so inevitably the phone was hacked. When we eventually accessed GPS



After a year of trials, we eventually assembled a working solution for mobile sound, text and location data communication using the Palm Tungsten W (a PDA and 2.5G mobile phone) coupled with an external GPS unit. While bulkier and more expensive than the A920, this device combination was robust and reliable, and proved itself in several performance works.

With the replacement of video telepresence with sound, text and location data as the dramaturgical basis, and open WLAN data channels with a closed, proprietary mobile phone network, the *flipflop* project had changed substantively. We tested the Palm/GPS combination under the title *TRYPTICHON* at the DMZ Media Arts festival in London (November 2003), and subsequently developed a performance for *pixelACHE 2004* in Helsinki. The final manifestation of this line of enquiry was the networked dance/theatre work *Myriorama*, presented in London and at ISEA 2004, Helsinki. The general ambivalence towards technologically-mediated omnipresence/omniscience of *flipflop* was replaced with a sharp critique of network surveillance. This refining of focus occurred across our practice, as playful explorations of new technologies were increasingly tempered with a growing awareness of the systems of control that they instituted.

— — —

Right: Data traces from wandering performers of TRYPTiCHON 1.0 at DMZ, London



TRYPTICHON

*a leash of minstrels
sings streets into existence
leashed by time's ticks...*

TRYPTICHON combines sound and text transmissions and location data from wandering performers with mobile phone/GPS units, to form a collaborative piece writ large over the neighbourhood. Each mobile unit sends text and GPS data via the mobile phone network provider to a server computer at the base station, from where it is relayed to other machines on a network for processing in the Max/MSP/Jitter application.

In November 2003, TRYPTICHON 1.0 was shown as a work-in-progress at DMZ Media Arts Festival, London. Aims of the exercise included a technical proof-of-concept, the discovery of salient data types and the exploration of narrative.

TRYPTICHON 1.0

Roaming performers (mU! and Agent Gav) equipped with two mobile units transmitted to three artists (manu/mukul/muth) at the base station who managed the data and presented the audio/visual performance. Roamers could follow an algorithmically-derived route (e.g., only streets beginning with the letter 'C', or those having newsagents; or using the 1st bus that arrives for a journey of 1 stop, then the 2nd for 2 stops, and so on). Alternatively, they travelled under the suggestion of texts such as *Hänsel und Gretel*, Thoreau's *Walden*, and Kerouac's *On The Road*. A balance was struck between objective (if non-traditional) and subjective mapping.

GPS fixes from the roamers were visualized as on-screen traces in a perspective projection. Other data flags set by the roamers (signifying, for example, mood) were interpreted and used to modify traces on screen.

Technically, the system worked, but the data from the roamers needed to be richer in order to feed a performance piece. This point would be addressed in the version developed and presented the following year in Helsinki.

ambientTV.NET

2003-04

TRYPTICHON 1.0 at DMZ
Media Arts Festival, London
2003: a wandering wireless
performance by manu/
mukul/muth with malo/mU!/
minna and agent Gav



Gavin Starks

November 2003

TRyPTiCHON 1.0 Roamer log

I started by cycling to Canary Wharf. Noted the sterility of the place: it was like a ghost town. Found a neat little street where older houses were overshadowed by the newly-developed 'New Providence' buildings directly behind them.



At New Providence Wharf Development, stopped and took photos of the building. Within five minutes a security guard came out and told me that photography was forbidden; I replied that since I was on a public highway, he had no jurisdiction over me. Happened to be on the phone to Mukul and was relaying some of the conversation to him, and holding the phone/GPS unit as if it were a measuring device, all of which made the guard nervous. Eventually he left.



Went up to all the CCTV cameras I could find and took photos from directly underneath. Within a minute, the manager was out asking what I was doing. Continued to use the phone/GPS unit as if it were a measuring device, which really unnerved him. He kept trying to see what was on the screen. He did not want 'the tabloids taking photos'. I confirmed they were 'non-commercial' and he went away. There was also a radar unit right outside the building.



Proceeded south east toward the Greenwich Tunnel, noting the significant contrast in architecture, but similar desolation in the people. Travelling through the tunnel, was able to confirm that it is completely radio-quiet for cellphones. The location could be of use for anonymity (though you'd be seen entering and leaving). There was much more life in Greenwich: bustling, happy people. Looped around Deckspace and headed back via the south bank of the river. Later: a chance encounter with a beautiful sailing ship in front of Canary Wharf; further along, I was held up as Tower Bridge opened to let the ship through.



Took far longer to traverse the south side of the river because of the new, exclusive property developments that bar access to the riverfront. I'd find my path repeatedly blocked and would have to double back and take an alternative route. (This happened eight times: very annoying.)

Arrived back at DMZ at 6 pm, having cycled for about 4 hours.

Photos: Gavin Starks

TRYPTiCHON 2.0

the city rewritten

plots upon plots

textured in dance

The audience at the Kiasma Theatre was led all the way down the steps of the tiered seating area and invited to take their places inside a hexagonal tent of veils raised on the stage. A roaming performer equipped with a mobile phone/GPS unit left the building on a walk. As the lights dimmed, the semi-transparent walls of the tent became a myriad of projections and the stepped auditorium a stage for a dancer dressed in white. The bip-bip-bip sound of a pedestrian crossing signal was heard, introducing an evocative live surround-soundtrack.

The walk, framed between the steps of Helsinki's Parliament building, the steps of Tuomiokirkko (the Lutheran Cathedral), and those inside the theatre, also formed the framework of the 45-minute show as text messages from the roamer and positions reported by GPS were mapped in real time projections. The roamer wrote in one of three modes: internal space (my world), shared space (our world), external space (their world).

The live messages from the roamer emerged from the context of layers of archived walks and the earlier roamers' messages, and threaded their way through a forest of texts across the walls of the tent. As the roamer's data was visualised and sonified, the dancer interpreted and narrated the three modes of physical and emotional space through her movement. She was also multiplied: seen through and casting shadows on the tent-screens, her image projected from archive video and also via a live camera. Sight lines from the audience, seated at will in the tent rather than in traditional theatre rows, criss-crossed as they traveled to the manifold figures of the dancer and the architectonic threads of texts.

ambientTV.NET's interest in 'locative media' (mobile position-aware systems) stems from earlier 'telejams' which linked performers in different cities with live video, and draws from the tradition of psychogeography the notion of a spatial encoding of narrative and its subsequent unveiling. The development of TRYPTiCHON 2.0 has yielded valuable technical solutions, but above all has generated critical approaches to locative media that prevent the work from being a gadget-piece.

Anthony Auerbach

April 2004

TRYPTiCHON 2.0 by
ambientTV.net (Manu
Luksch, Mukul Patel, David
Muth)

Live locative media and
dance performance.
Developed at the NIFCA
Media Air artist residency
on Suomenlinna, Helsinki,
Spring 2004.

Presented at Kiasma
Theatre, Helsinki as part
of the *pixelACHE 2004*:
Audiovisual Architecture
festival.

With: Hanna Ylitepsa
(choreography and dance),
Gavin Starks (roaming
performer), Camalo Gaskin
(costume and tent design)
and featuring walks
through Helsinki by John
Hopkins, Mariko Montpetit,
Nick Grindell, Hermann
Ylitepsa, Voytec Mejor and
others





*Left: TRYPTICHON 2.0 in and
around Helsinki, April 2004
Photos: Anthony Auerbach,
Camalo Gaskin, Mariko
Montpetit, Mukul Patel,
Gavin Starks*

*Above: TRYPTICHON 2.0
performance at the Kiasma
Theatre, Helsinki 4 April 2004
Photo: Anthony Auerbach*





*Left and above: TRYPTICHON
2.0 at the Kiasma Theatre,
Helsinki 4 April 2004
Photos: Anthony Auerbach*

"The basic survival of the poor, undocumented or 'illegalised' often depends on the ability to operate without detection, the necessity of ID, or the creation of official records. This grey zone of anonymity is constantly squeezed in the interests of population management, border enforcement, welfare clamp-downs, technocratic convenience and, of course, the economy."

*Josephine Berry Slater,
from her Editorial for Mute
magazine, Vol. 2, No. 7, 2008
[www.metamute.org/en/
Editorial-Mute-2-7](http://www.metamute.org/en/Editorial-Mute-2-7)*



*Students at Srishti
College of Art, Design and
Technology in Bangalore
setting up movable
projection screens for the
installation Hinges On*

Manu Luksch & Mukul Patel

2005

Responsive media installation by students at the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore, India

HINGES ON

Hinges On is a responsive media installation that functions as a comment space on the economic 'grey zones' of the information & communication technology sector in Bangalore. The work was developed by students at the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology during a month-long tactical media lab that we led in April 2005, and presented at Ars Electronica in Linz that September.

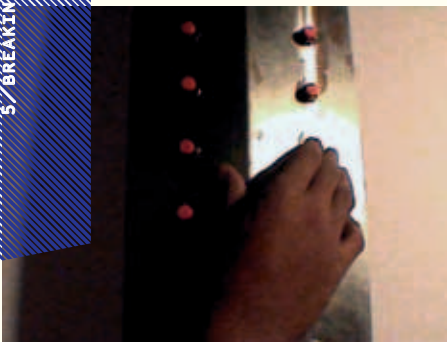
Visitors enter through a sparsely-lit sound tunnel, where they are exposed to an audio montage of failed attempts at information retrieval. Released into the video installation room, they are faced with large hinged doors in the centre of the space that serve as target surfaces for the projectors on each wall. As the door-screens are turned, they catch a juxtaposition of projected images, consisting of reenacted interviews with people involved in Bangalore's info-techboom, from labourers laying cables to the police chief in charge of cyber crime. Visitors to the installation choose different permutations of the video reenactments using a switchboard.

The coexistence of mainstream multinational branded markets and thick multilayered networks of informal economies provides a complex space to explore questions regarding access, distribution and regulation of products and systems. The employment and revenue generated in the informal sector is significant, making the question of regulation particularly interesting.

There is no one story. We collect the voices, opinions, viewpoints and concerns of a wide range of people together in one space where they can be in dialogue with one another. Visual fragmentation creates voids and makes room for interaction, interpretation and reflection.

— Ramyah Gowrishankar

What is intriguing about the setting is that one is provided the ability to control what one views, which in turn reflects the way in which one functions in and interacts with these systems. Seemingly, every dimension of the economy is visible



simultaneously. And yet some aspects of the perspective do not reveal themselves unless the right door is opened, the correct alignment is struck. It is not enough to be mere spectators – move things around till the picture becomes clearer!

– Nishita Kavadia

The informal economy and the formal live like old neighbours in a system of mutual understanding.

The characters in the game we call our economy become other characters in a play that we construct. These characters want to speak to each other, to locate themselves in a dialogue that has never before taken place.

Ideas emerge for an interface: how to get an audience to interact with the characters that increasingly define the fabric of their world?

- invite them to conversations through telephone handsets
- allow them to juxtapose characters, using movable projections
- provide a switchboard to physically connect characters in dialogues

– Divya Vishwanathan



SIDELONG GLANCES

3. *Measuring the gallery*

At *Belladonna*, ICA, London 1997: confronted by Anish Kapoor's highly polished cosmic navel yawning out of the wall, Sue promptly stuck her head in it. The guard became very agitated, pointing to a nearby sign that said 'Please Do Not Touch'. A war of attrition between human and steel is one-sided. But anyway – wasn't that sign part of the piece? The work is entirely about boundary. Was she not already touching it by occupying the void it emptied into? or even by merely being mirrored in it?

Mukul Patel
2007

Mukul Patel

2008

ambient.vista 2008 artists:
Wolfgang Staehle (New
York/Berlin), Tuomas
Toivonen (Helsinki), Fahim
Amir (Vienna), Shiho
Fukuhara (Tokyo)

Works were shown at
ambient.space as part of
the Whitechapel Gallery's
'First Thursdays' late-night
openings, and at E:vent
Gallery in Bethnal Green;
Fahim Amir also performed
at the Austrian Cultural
Forum, London. There was
a group show in October
as part of E:vent's *The
Beautiful Children* at the
V22 Wharf Road project.

ambient.vista 2008 artist
residencies generously
supported by:
Simon Bishop
Arts Council England
Austrian Cultural Forum
The Japan Foundation
Embassy of Finland London

London gallery shows in
partnership with Colm Lally,
E:vent Gallery.
www.eventnetwork.org.uk

Programme Director and
Producer: Mukul Patel

[www.ambientTV.NET/
content/?q=ambientvista](http://www.ambientTV.NET/content/?q=ambientvista)

AMBIENT.VISTA 2008

ARTIST RESIDENCIES AT AMBIENT.SPACE

The *ambient.vista* residency series invited international artists to reframe the city by critically addressing the vista over it afforded by ambient.space, the studio/workshop/salon of AIS. The creation of an artist residency was a natural development of the informal networking and hosting that AIS has been engaged in since inception.

Located on the 7th (top) floor of an industrial building in South Hackney, ambient.space has a continuous 12 m stretch of window facing due south, overlooking Regent's Canal and a gasworks. The view encompasses the City and Docklands, the grime of Bethnal Green, church steeples and the Kingsland Road Mosque, the Royal London Hospital's helipad, Tower Bridge, the Barbican, Centre Point, and the Millennium Dome; and above the horizon: columns of smoke rising from disused properties; violet explosions of fireworks celebrating Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year, or Guy Fawkes Night, flocks of geese leaving Victoria Park and streams of aircraft approaching Heathrow and City airports, and an hour's advance forecast of the local weather. Not least, the studio grants a perspective on the rapid and controversial redevelopment of the East End in the lead up to the 2012 Olympics.

Wolfgang Staehle: Imperial Gas Works

EXCERPTS FROM A CONVERSATION WITH MUKUL PATEL

MP – You've made several 24 hour (or longer), live broadcast or recorded time-lapse photographic panoramas. How does *Imperial Gas Works* fit into this series?

WS – *Imperial Gas Works* is a recent piece in what one could call a series of 'vedute', which is a genre of landscape painting that's been around since the early 17th century. Technically speaking it's not painting, of course; it's rather some sort of chrono-photography. A static camera takes a picture every couple of seconds with intervals usually in the 5 to 10 seconds range. Because they looked so much like today's postcards, vedute paintings were sometimes considered a minor genre, but I think there is something quite metaphysical about showing

the world just like it is. For me the most exciting thing is everyday reality, the fact that it occurs at all.

I always liked realist painters, such as Vermeer or the painters and photographers of *Neue Sachlichkeit* ('new objectivity') in the early 20th century. This cool, objective and distanced style suits me quite well – it's in itself a statement against the prevailing trends in contemporary art, which increasingly favour big spectacular productions. My work is not very entertaining and only few critics grasp the phenomenological underpinnings. It stays pretty much on the periphery of the major trends, although recently there were some discussions in a few art journals about 'slowness' as a phenomenon in the works of certain artists.

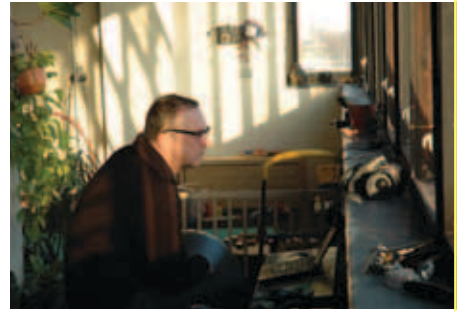
MP – Interestingly, the time-lapse aspect of your work also diminishes Docklands and the City relative to other parts of the image, by muting the strobing lights on top of the buildings, which normally draw the eye. When you talk about the 'phenomenological underpinnings' of your work, are you pointing to the temporal aspect of perception?

WS – Time is certainly an important aspect of the work. By using stills that are refreshed at certain short intervals, I feel I can affect a slight shift in perception. It's very different from looking at a continuous film or video of the same scene. To me it's almost hypnotic to watch the slight changes from one image to the next. The almost imperceptible changes in the light, a cloud moves a tiny bit or a crane in the distance shifts its position. Time moves, but it also quite literally stands still.

By 'phenomenological underpinnings' I didn't mean any investigation into the mechanics of human perception, but rather about achieving a temporal state of perception stripped of any intentionality. An awareness that there is something, rather than nothing. I'm perfectly aware that in contemporary culture this sounds pathetic and banal at the same time, but think about it.

MP – How much of your work have you viewed in real time?

WS – It's not necessary to view it all. Just look as long as you wish and then maybe return a few hours later. I think the only time somebody watched all 24 hours was when the Metropolitan Museum bought *Eastpoint*, a Hudson River vista, and some poor guy had to sit and check each and every frame of it.



Wolfgang Staehle, in residence intermittently March–July 2008

Imperial Gas Works
Digital photographs, taken at approx. 10 s intervals over 24 h periods

MP = Mukul Patel,
WS = Wolfgang Staehle
The conversation took place on 11 September 2008.



Imperial Gas Works
26 April 2008 (05.18.46)
Digital chrono-photograph
(Wolfgang Staehle, 2008)



Imperial Gas Works
8 July 2008 (12.40.06)
Digital chrono-photograph
(Wolfgang Staehle, 2008)



Tuomas Toivonen: New Rooms (NOW AVAILABLE)

Tuomas Toivonen's mixed-media sculpture, *New Rooms (NOW AVAILABLE)* was installed along the public balcony adjoining ambient.space on the seventh floor of Regent's Studios. Accompanying the installation was a series of flyers and posters advertising the availability of the 'new rooms'. The sculpture tested architectural effects and ideas through an optical experiment. The flyers were distributed in neighbouring Broadway Market, a street whose modest corner shops and cafés have gradually been replaced by boutiques and real estate agents over the recent years, to direct prospective property buyers to the installed sculpture.



Tuomas Toivonen, in
residence May–June 2008

New Rooms (NOW AVAILABLE)
Mixed media site-specific
installation, postcards,
posters



New Rooms at ambient.space,
5 June
Photos: Mukul Patel and
Manu Luksch



New Rooms (NOW AVAILABLE)
installed at ambient.space
(Tuomas Toivonen, 2008)
Photo: Mukul Patel



New Rooms (NOW AVAILABLE)
installed at ambient.space
(Tuomas Toivonen, 2008)
Photo: Tuomas Toivonen



Fahim Amir, in residence
June–July 2008

Drinking Theory – Grammar of the Metropolis – The End of Time and Space (As We Know It) – Against the Dictatorship of ‘There’s a Time and Place for Everything’

Posters, ‘speaking installation’, lecture–performance, sound work

Fahim Amir: Drinking Theory – Grammar of the Metropolis – The End of Space and Time (As We Know It) – Against the Dictatorship of ‘There’s a Time and Place for Everything’

AMBIENT.VISTA ARTISTIC RESEARCH PAPER VERSION 2. 5:
THE END OF TIME AND SPACE (AS WE KNOW IT)

Thick speaking: speaking in hypertext modality.

In a Europe destroyed after WWII, a world of without place, a world without any spaces whatsoever, ‘a new race of characters was stirring, a kind of mutant: they saw rather than acted; they were seers.’

Modest witness question:

Why did I decide to move to the Cyborg Market area? This is a very artistic and lively community to be part of. You meet a lot of talented and inspiring people when you go out and about. It’s not very inspiring, though, that my friend was knocked off his bike with an iron bar. Some teenager now has the two teeth that he’s missing.

Urban poor usually pay the highest rents relative to their living conditions. London’s East End, the Victorian world’s greatest slum: a vicious circle of housing demolition, rising rents, overcrowding, and disease. ‘The really high profits were not made from investment in the housing boom in the suburbs, but the rack-renting boom in the inner area.’ Slums like St. Giles, Whitechapel, and Bethnal Green attracted aristocratic investors whose ‘expectation of high returns on foreign investment had been disappointed’ as well as the frugal middle class for whom inner-city housing was ‘the most popular and the most accessible means of capital gain.’ Mega-slumlords like Thomas Flight (reputed to extract rent from more than 18,000 dwellings) had a lucrative stake in the immiseration of the East End. The same is true for Flight’s counterparts in fin-de-siècle Naples, or rural landowning elites in the Third world transforming themselves into urban slumlords. In India, an estimated three-quarters of urban space is owned by six percent of urban households, and just 91 people control the majority of all vacant land in Mumbai/Bombay. In the inflationary environment of the 1980s, real estate became the highest-profit-sector. Smart money flowed into the booming market for converting slums into upscale apartment neighbourhoods in Istanbul.

Performances by Fahim Amir at ambient.space (above) and Austrian Cultural Forum (right)

What about trickster market?

I think it's tough for most creative people who want to stay independent and make what they believe in. I've been working seven days a week for almost three years, just to get to where I am now. It's especially tough at the moment because of the recession, and I don't want to look back and say what if? or, did I try hard enough?

Neudeutsch Chef-Duzen: Kaffee ist gratis, alle sind per Du, und Überstunden werden nicht bezahlt. The creative entrepreneur is on the one hand a neoliberal role-model: working collaboratively is a necessity, lifelong learning is a matter of course; disciplined and subjected to project-based labour, the contemporary artist paves the way for cutbacks in the social system. Since she is identifying herself in her social entirety with her job, paid overtime is a foreign word for contemporary creatives. The successful artist embodies neoliberal social skills of networking, flexibility and mobility. Be creative, be be creative! – 'Hang on! Is this a dinner or are we networking?' My body my temple, my powernap, my retreat: fit for capitalism.

In the context of artistic and cultural work, the following conditions are most frequently mentioned as evidence of precarity:

1. project work and multiple job-holding;
2. a high level of formal education in combination with 'learning by doing';
3. low income and often little motivation to earn more;
4. close affective attachment to one's work;
5. overlap of work, private life, and leisure time: passionate work;
6. uncertain expectations for the future, including inability to even imagine one's future, deep insecurity with regard to future employment, and inability to plan reliably;
7. informality as a structural principle (network sociality, obligatory sociality), and clubs, pubs, friends and friends of friends as sources of new work opportunities;
8. new forms of self-discipline (as artistic individual, as entrepreneur) and the outsourcing of industrial control and safety mechanisms to the 'entrepreneur of his/her own labour';
9. long working hours associated with passionate/intensive work; extraordinarily high working time per week, no holidays;
10. a high degree of spatial, temporal, and social mobility;



11. alternating, frequently unforeseeable, phases of employment, unemployment, and permanent training.

Everything is changing so fast nowadays, but the centre can still hold. Just look at this area: city officials working with real estate developers, local landlords; rents are rising, but the wages won't. Hard to imagine my life in five, let alone 10 years.

I came to London in search of a part for my motorbike but ended up staying and getting into fashion design instead. After taking a few short courses I was accepted at the London College of Fashion and moved to Vampire Fields to be near the college.

I have lived and worked in the Cyborg Market area since moving from New Zealand. I bought a flat here eight years ago when the area was still affordable to buy in. That was a great move. The development of the area over the past five years has really helped me grow the business. Having a Cyborg Market address is really great as people know this street all over the world now.

But on the other hand, as a ideal potentiality the creative could be the transgressor per se, crossing territorial, topical and disciplinary borders:

We did some working class related politics the last years here around Cyborg Market – we even browbeat the Labour Party. If we had won seats on the Council, we would have founded an activist social centre here in the Leased End. We nearly did it.

The classical bourgeois ideology treated space as the domain of the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile – a world of passivity and measurement rather than action and meaning. Accurate packages of such geographical information continued to be of use to the state, in the West and in the East, for military intelligence, economic planning, and imperial administration.

These three arenas of intelligence, planning, and administration defined an 'applied' geography, cementing a special relationship with the state that probably arose first in an earlier age of imperial exploration. The majority of the most prominent mid-century geographers in the United States of America were tied in one way or another with intelligence-gathering activities, especially through the Office of Strategic Services, the progenitor of the CIA.

Opposite & following two pages: Posters by Fahim Amir

This is a project of urban geography as artistic research. The analysis of the spatiotemporal fixes focuses on processes of deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation and subjectification. Temporalities as war machines.

Baghdad and its slum Sadr City. Mind the urban gap! Future wars will take place in slums, where guerrilla tactics from dead Maoism could have a zombie-life on new urban battlefields. The price of urban warfare: after WWII, an inversion of norms. The civilian to military casualty ratio is now roughly 8:1.

Military geographers and warfare in the first century of the third millennium. The dark side is preparing. A revolution in military affairs, the cybernetic battle system for urban war, is a reaction to the 'universalization of information technology' and 'the efflorescence of capitalism'.

Walking through walls with Deleuze. Be part of the swarm talk. MOUT: military operations in urban terrain are nomadological. In these assaults, troops eschew traditional lines of advance – the alleys and streets of refugee camps – and burrow through buildings instead. MOUTs invert figure-ground relations in architecture. Military strategists use reversed city plans – where voids are treated as solids and solids as voids. Reverse your tactical assumptions to subvert the logic of an insurgency.

'Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tips of my words.'

Agoraphobia and claustrophobia first appear three decades before the start of the twentieth century. Agoraphobia and claustrophobia: the yin-yang of spatial thinking in the modernist period. What comes now?

The passionate intensity of the urban arcades PLUS the chancy promiscuity of the urban stranger EQUALS a poetry of the pavement.

Koolhaas calls it 'junk space'.
Maximum velocity. Smart bomb.

'It is not we who make cinema; it is the world which looks to us like a bad film.'

STRATEGIC LOW-INCOME URBAN MANAGEMENT

- micro-credits
- informal benefits
- gambling, petty bourgeoisie vs informal proletariat
- little witches
- kidney farms
- Pentecostal

POSTMODERN HAUSSMANN

- human encumbrments
- transients in a perpetual state of relocation
- the horrors of 'urban BEAUTIFICATION': Olympics, Samah, etc
- counterinsurgency
- criminalisation
- *Bladerunner's* 'off worlds' & architectures of fear
- fundamental reorganisation of metropolitan space
-

BABY-KILLERS LIVING IN SHIT

- risks = hazards x assets x fragility
- 'classquake' = flying coffins and flying tanks
- hot demolition
- interface of underdevelopment and modernisation



post-Maoist guerrilla

URBAN POVERTY'S BIG BANG: IMF 1974-75

- squatters as urban pioneers
- human dump
- Groupe CIAM Alger and the bidonville
- NGO-imperialism & globalisation from below
- slumlords: from Bethnal Green to Dharavi

Any composition is a mixture (melange) of smooth and striated space. The major task of micropolitics: mapping different kinds of space, analyse that mix in each assemblage (social, political, geological, biological, economic, aesthetic, musical).

Politics of non-identity. Reinheit ist der schlechte Fusel der Seele. Cyborgs, parasites and symbionts: living together in the New Urban Order. If chimpanzees and dogs have politics, why can't we?

'I use *Mixotricha Paradoxa* as an entity that interrogates individuality and collectivity at the same time. It is a microscopic single-celled organism that lives in the hindgut of the South Australian termite.

'What counts as "it" is complicated because it lives in obligatory symbiosis with five other kinds of entities. Each has a taxonomic name, and each is closely related to bacteria because they don't have a cell nucleus. They have nucleic acid, they have DNA, but it's not organized into a nucleus.

'Each of these five different kinds of things live in or on a different region of the cell. For example, one lives in the interdigitations on the exterior surface of the cell membrane. So you see these little things that live in these folds of the cell membrane, and others that live inside the cell. But they aren't in the full sense part of the cell. They live in obligatory symbiosis. Nobody can live independently here. This is codependency with a vengeance! And so the question is – is it one entity or is it six? But six isn't right either because there are about a million of the five non-nucleated entities for every one nucleated cell. There are multiple copies. So when does one decide to become two? When does this whole assemblage divide so that you have, now, two? And what counts as *Mixotricha*? Is it just the nucleated cell or is it the whole assemblage?'

Mixotricha means mixed threads. This is obviously a great metaphor, that is a real thing, for interrogating our notions of one and many.

Biology is an endless resource. Prefer it to psychoanalysis!

I want to thank the Cultural Academy research group (London/Vienna) where some of the ideas of the manuscript were first discussed. All intellectual labour is social.

End of manuscript.

*Language is a skin: I rub my language
against the other. It is as if I had words
instead of fingers, or fingers at the
tip of my words*





Shiho Fukuhara, in
residence October 2008

Parts Unknown

Plastic work, text,
single-screen video work,
photographic prints.

Thanks to Rachel Baker for
reading the voiceover text
for the video.

Shiho Fukuhara: Parts Unknown

VOICEOVER TEXT FOR VIDEO WORK

In the middle of the Pacific Ocean, between Hawaii and Japan, there is a new and independent country. A country without beaches, without mountains, without rivers, without soil, without ground. A country without land.

This country is made from floating islands. Only a few humans have heard of it. Even fewer have dared to journey to the island and set foot on-shore. And no explorer has yet planted a flag to claim this country.

It is a country without a name. A new white spot on the map. A new Atlantis, rising from the waters in front of our very eyes.

But this country is not foreign to us. This is not a strange place, floating just beneath the surface of our consciousness. It is the by-product of our global metabolism, a manifestation of our common culture, the results of our collective consumption.

It is – plastic.

Plastic – like the wrappers of your sweets.

Plastic – like the bottle you drink your water from.

Plastic – like the toys your children play with.

Plastic – like the housing of your computer.

Plastic – like the bags from your last shopping.

Plastic – like the shell of your mobile phone.

Plastic disposed over the last 50 years, since the dawn of the plastic age. A primordial plastic ocean, a perfect mixture of accumulated plastic garbage and the steady influx of new arrivals. A post-mordial soup of post-mortem consumption.

The dimensions of this plastic country are massive, and it is getting bigger every day. Every time a plastic package is bought, every time a plastic package is dumped, it contributes to the growth of the island. Now, it is already twice the size of the US, but still it is growing, still it is gaining weight, still it is gaining strength. Driven by the currents of the Pacific and trapped in its gyre, it keeps on developing, it keeps on revolving, it keeps the vortex moving.

And it is has a cloak of invisibility, it does not want to cast a shadow. It does not want to show itself yet, it prefers to stay

hidden for the moment. It keeps itself just below the water surface, so that satellite images fool us into believing in a clear, blue, untouched Pacific Ocean, while the island slowly and patiently prepares to rise up.

Once it appears on the ocean surface, the heat of the sun softens the plastic and melts it down. This meltdown gives rise to fumes, to ether-like structures, to ghosts.

They will exist inside us. Each one of us will become in some part plastic. We will become plastic people. Large pieces of plastic are broken down into microscopic particles. Micro-granular plastic is mistaken by fish, crustaceans and other sea creatures for food. But the consequences are dire. The plastic clogs their bloodstream and kills them in the most gruesome way. It replaces the building materials of their bodies. How long until nano-plastic particles are replacing the building materials of our bodies?

The island itself is like a living entity, 'it moves around like a big animal without a leash'. It is unleashed and Big. It is big and fearless. It bites and barks. And when it barks, 'it spits its guts over real beaches of real island, leaving a deadly confetti of shredded plastic in its wake'.

Immigrants are secretly travelling to this unknown country. They don't need money for the ticket, they don't need passports for border control. They are expelled from their countries of origin, but they are going to find a new place to call home. They become part of this melting pot, their brands and logos slowly fading away, their memories getting bleached by the sun. Their one-way journey might be over, but their mission is only starting. They are the foundations of a new habitat, a habitat of eternal plastic, revolving only around itself. A plastic time-capsule with all the time in the world.

They carry small maritime species collected along their journey with them. Species not supposed to belong together. Bioremixing to create lifeforms yet unknown.

A new nation is being built. The process of construction is underway. New flags will be flown across its acres, new hymns will be whistled by the passing winds, new stories of origin will be heard and told. A new nature made from cultures past. A new polymer nature from the global consumer monoculture.



Above & right: Parts Unknown
Photographic prints
(Shiho Fukuhara, 2008)



A long journey is coming to an end.

After millions of years of transforming from organic matter into oil...

After decades of being drilled and probed and pumped and refined, shipped, refined again, transformed and moulded into form...

After decades of being filled, wrapped around, stacked, carried, worn, kicked, taking on logos and marks...

After years of being shipped from one place to the next, from one country to the other...

...the ghosts are freed from the burden of attention, freed from the agony of consumption. Hollowed out, emptied of the substances and goods that were made in their ideal image. Ghosts whispering of the desires and wishes and vanities they once were signs for. After-echoes, vanishing in the distance, taking with them their meaning. Leaving behind pureness. Nothing to prove, nothing to lose, everything to be.

All rivers flow into the sea. Canals, like veins, transport the used and exhausted material forward to the source, back to the origin. An arduous journey, many miles long, many seas wide, many storms deep. Blood is flowing back to the heart and send out again, refreshed, rejuvenated, new. Plastic is flowing into a heart of darkness, no escape, no way out. Terminal. End.

Start. Beginning. Emergence as something else. No longer product, no longer object of consumption. Form without Structure, shape without meaning. Ready to be a part of a new country, a new commonwealth, a new union.

The new Atlantis.



1



2

1

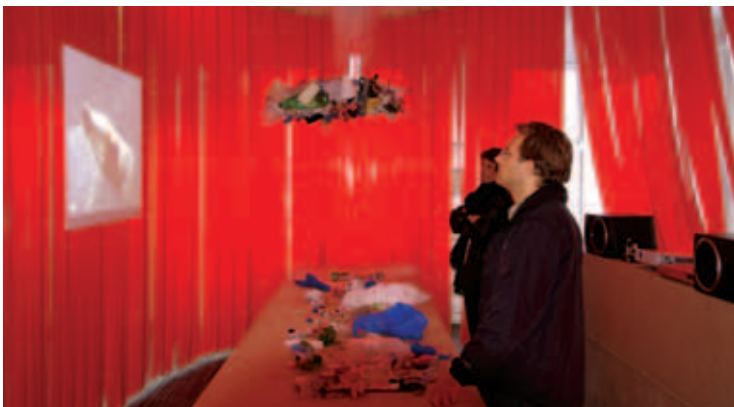
Plastic garbage in Regent's Canal

Photo: Manu Luksch

2

Boat with wireless camera used to film Parts Unknown

Photo: Mukul Patel



3

3

Parts Unknown video and plastic works installed at E:vent Gallery's The Beautiful Children show, V22 Wharf Road Project, October 2008

Photo: Mukul Patel

Mukul Patel

2004

Public sound art and choreography for portable tape/CD players; site-specific sound work and choreography for Trafalgar Square

D.I.S.C. was commissioned by Århus Festuge for the *Streets of Asia* festival; *England Expects...* (*Nelson– not –Nelson*) was commissioned by Greenwich & Docklands Festival for *Square Perspectives*, 2004.

www.ssshhhhh.dk/ghettoblast.htm

WORKS FOR GHETTOBLASTERS

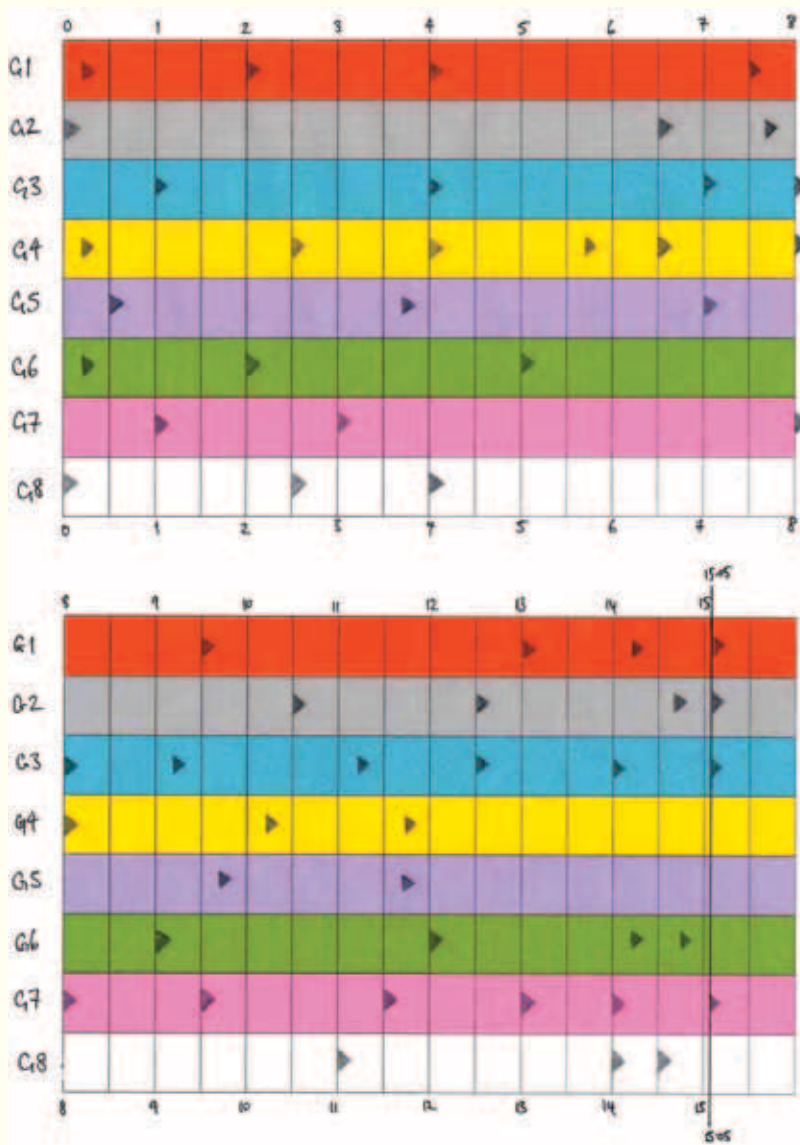
The eight-piece Danish GhettoBlaster Ensemble is a mobile sound art unit that performs works in public space. In 2003 the GhettoBlaster Ensemble performed my *Diaspora.In.Synchro.City* (*D.I.S.C.*) as part of Århus Festuge. *D.I.S.C.* maps parts of contemporary Bombay onto the performance space. Performers arrive by train and move through four locations (railway platform, station forecourt, marketplace, a city square) before departing again. Based on manipulated field recordings, the ghettoblaster G1–G8 take on individual characters, including a radio announcer, a taxi driver, a b-boy and a street hawker. *D.I.S.C.* is designed for seven playback machines and one recorder – and so documents its own performance – but was adapted for the CD playback-only machines of the GhettoBlaster Ensemble. The 15-minute work is given in the form of CDs or tapes with multiple tracks, scores (and frameworks for improvisation) for each ghettoblaster, a cue sheet for the conductor, and choreographic notes.

England Expects... (Nelson– not –Nelson)

In 2004, I invited the GhettoBlaster Ensemble to perform a new work, *England Expects... (Nelson– not –Nelson)* in Trafalgar Square for the Square Perspectives 2004 festival. Arranged for seven ghettoblaster and a megaphone, the 10-minute work anticipates by a year the bicentennial of the Battle of Trafalgar, and is a witness to the history of the square and its environs (Admiralty Arch, South Africa House, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields).

England Expects... is based on field recordings and samples including speeches by Nelson Mandela on his release; reports from the bombing of Trafalgar Square during World War II, from the Falklands/Malvinas War, and from the bombing of Baghdad in 2003; recordings of anti-capitalism demonstrations in the Square on June 18th 1999 and on May Day 2000 and anti-war demos in London and Cairo in 2003; and a recording of a stuntman's parachute leap from the top of Nelson's Column to raise awareness for Act for Tibet. Beginning with and punctuated by megaphone announcements ('England expects...'), the work concludes with a toppling of statues – of Saddam Hussein

(during the 'liberation' of Baghdad), of Bush (during the 15th February protest against the war), and of Admiral Nelson (during the performance, ideally). The performers are choreographed in a narrative that begins with a triumphal march down the steps from the National Gallery, circles around the fountains to cascade down the steps again in a struggle between police and demonstrators, points to South Africa House and the sites of WWII bombardment, follows the trajectory of the parachuting protester, and finally, using maximum volume, topples Nelson off his column.



Above: Conductor Ture Larsen and megaphone operator Michael Uwemedimo in Trafalgar Square, July 2004
Photo: Anthony Auerbach

Left: Conductor's cue sheet for D.I.S.C.