



Leonardo Electronic Almanac

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INTRODUCTION

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< This Issue >

Craig Harris

The realm of new media art is characterized by a wealth of new genres, styles, definitions, approaches and opinions. As a feature of the current state of contemporary art this reflects the diversity and richness that we have come to expect and enjoy in this domain, Accompanying this is a vibrant exploration of aesthetics, covering a territory that is similarly diverse, complicated by technological evolution that spawns new media and new genres before the community has an opportunity to understand the nature and impact of what was new in our recent experience. One of the goals of Leonardo Electronic Almanac is to provide a forum for critical discourse in the interest of establishing an effective means for communicating about new media art. Even acknowledging that there may not be a common aesthetic that can function as an umbrella for understanding all new media art, there is still value in creating a common language that facilitates effective discussion. In LEA 6:3 Maureen Nappi provides us with a "broad stroke" survey of her perspective in "An Embryonic Scan of the Aesthetic Parameters of Technological Means." Readers are invited to respond to Maureen's "scan" using LEA as a forum.

Also in this issue Leah Lubin provides reminiscences of her work as an artist and musings about her intersection with science in an article providing the basis for a talk that she gave at the NASA Ames Research Center on January 26, 1998. Steve Wilson reveals insights into his recent public art exhibit in a profile "A Living Map: CrimeZyland."

In addition to a full set of reviews present in Leonardo Digital Reviews, Michael Punt is exemplifying his goal to redefine the role of reviews in new media art in the inclusion of an editorial "Art and the Artificial," by Freider Nake. This editorial also explores the aesthetic realm, in this case information aesthetics, and continues the evolving discussion began in Michael Punt's introductory editorial presented in LEA 6:2.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

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< An Embryonic Scan of the Aesthetic Parameters of Technological Means (excerpts) >

Maureen Nappi

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Key words: computer arts, technology, language, meta-tools, aesthetics

Abstract

As the computer has an increasing impact on our daily existence through altering and enhancing the ways in which we do things, it is having no less an effect on the creation of contemporary art. For an increasing number of artists, the computer has become the means and/or site for making art. It is in the midst of this shift, involving the artistic utility and appropriation of technological processes, that questions arise of critique and aesthetic approach appropriate to this new work. Questions that, perhaps, portend a new route of inquiry.

Introduction

Aesthetics, embedded within axiological concerns of value, examines what is aesthetically valuable along with the attributable features that contribute to that value. Value, then, emerges out of the articulated specificities of the object of evaluation. Accordingly, it is the intention of this aesthetic inquiry to specify the nature and qualities of artworks created through the use of contemporary technological means. This inquiry begins by collecting and sorting some of the contemporary and historical ideas specific, and perhaps, foundational to such an investigation. The present day artistic utilization of computational means, following a long lineage of artistic appropriation and redefinition of technological utility, charts an inescapable dialogue between the artists, the means and the epistemological world in which they exist.

This text is to be considered by the reader as a demonstration of very broad strokes scanning the parameters relevant to such an investigation. It is concerned with computer technology and with the nature of creative expression, with the philosophy of language and with computational linguistics, with artworks created through the use of technological means and with the development of a contemporary framework to comprehend and critique these work.

Admittedly, this research exists at an embryonic stage of development, but one that is a prerequisite for its future growth and coherence. There are areas that have undoubtedly been omitted from this query and which might be critical to its maturation. As warranted, they will be included in prospective revisions of this material. Still, the centrality of the concerns raised here are pivotal not only towards an understanding of this inquiry but towards an appreciation of the very

nature of contemporary cultural existence.

[Ed. note: the complete content of this article is available at the LEA website: <<http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-journals/LEA/>>.]

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| PROFILE |
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< I Paint The Cosmos (excerpts) >
Leah Lubin

I Paint The Cosmos
By Leah Lubin

Artist's Biography

It all starts back in the seventies. I was out of art school, an artist already exhibiting my work for over four years. I was interested in the human body's energy force field and the way the body moved, sending unseen sparks of light and movement with every gesture and pose.

Before my interest in people, I had a two year period of drawing only water. The way it broke up round pebbles in streams of water or large waves on rocks. Water as small molecules of life force fascinated me.

During my art college period in the middle to late sixties in London, my teachers kept emphasizing that everything had already been painted by great past masters. The modern artist must use the intellect to say something new, not only paint a great painting.

I realize that although I wanted to be a traditional painter, the traditional subjects of landscapes, figurative, still life, or abstract would not be my focus. The year was 1973 and I found myself living on the grounds of the Weitzman Institute of Science in Israel. We were a tightly knit group of privileged scientists and their families. Everything was provided from Villas and swimming pools to restaurants and movie theaters... and of course the libraries and the many science buildings.

My work [as an artist] was known about, but mainly I found conversation and interest points in common to be very limited for me.

[Ed. note: the complete content of this profile is available at the LEA website: <<http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-journals/LEA/>>.]

< A Living Map: CrimeZyland (excerpts) >
Stephen Wilson

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CrimeZyland is the "Playland" of crime. This interactive public art

exhibit, across from City Hall, offers attractions such as Map-z-crime, Scan-z-crime, and Web-z-crime to visitors and Web surfers alike.

A Living Map

CrimeZyland will transform the City Site lot into a computer controlled living "map" that creates light, motion, and sound corresponding to the minute by minute statistical level of crimes committed in San Francisco districts, as indicated by the Police Department CABLE crime statistics. The viewer can experience the crime "pulse" of the city firsthand. Interactive features include "Choose-z-Crime" in which the viewer can direct the the lot to focus on particular kinds of crime, and the "Scan-z-Crime," which allows viewers to hear live police scanner radio.

Artistic Agenda

This installation appeals on a sensual level, and also encourages viewers to think about deeper issues:

1. Crime as Entertainment: it questions the media circus created around crime.
2. Deconstructing Crime: What's a crime? Who defines it? What are our prejudices about crime? Are street crimes worthy of more attention than other crimes against the community such as poisoning the bay?
3. Information visualization and access: The installation will use the tools of public sculpture to give viewers intuitive access to this provocative information about urban life.
4. Real vs. Virtual Presence: The installation asks viewers to think about the difference between physical and Internet participation in public events. Some analysts note that because of crime, urban dwellers increasingly engage in "cocooning." This installation offers enhanced control options to those brave viewers who venture out to be physically present.

CrimeZyland is realized under the auspices of San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery US Exploration: City Site public art series that funds outdoor installations to explore art in the urban context. The City Site space is located at 155 Grove Street across from City Hall. It opens March 6th, 1998 from 4-6 PM and runs 24 hours a day till July 6th. It is available both physically and on the Web.

CrimeZyland is a creation of Stephen Wilson, SF artist and director of Conceptual/Information Arts at SFSU's Art Department.

[Ed. note: the complete content of this profile is available at the LEA website: <<http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-journals/LEA/>>.]

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< Editorial: Art and the Artificial >

Written by Freider Nake

When in February, 1965, the first exhibit of computer art opened at the studio gallery of the University of Stuttgart, Germany, showing a small selection of plotter drawings by Georg Nees, uneasy feelings emerged among the audience. Was this supposed to be art, if it was true that a computer had produced the works? To what extent was the computer the creator? To a considerable degree, the audience consisted of artists from the Stuttgart area. Max Bense, the philosopher who had arranged the show, felt obliged to cool down the disturbance by stressing a distinguishing line between art as a purely human activity, and art produced by computer. The latter he called artificial art (kunstliche Kunst). Thus he coined a new concept.

Now, art has always been artificial, and it is ridiculous to assume anything different. Nowhere in nature do we encounter works of art, and it is only after art has become an important facet of human culture that we discover aesthetics in nature. We discover it by projection and interpretation only. And yet, mirrored by the machine, traditional art appears as if it was natural. In this view, we take what we do without the help of a machine as natural, thus opening up a domain of artificiality for the machine. Artificial art then becomes a synonym for machine art, i.e. art that gets created through a process of partial delegation of human activities to a machine. There is nothing terribly shocking about artists delegating some of their activities to someone else, even if this was delegation to a mechanical or electronic machine. Indeed, many artists have been clever managers in distributing labor to their employees. When software takes the place of the artist or of his helpers, the question of who (or what) is creative shows up: the artificiality of art.

Max Bense much liked the idea of generating aesthetic objects with the aid of computers because this could prove the point of information aesthetics. Information aesthetics was the heroic attempt by Max Bense and Abraham A. Moles to use Shannon's and Weaver's concept of information as the guiding principle for an analysis of aesthetic processes, both analytic and generative. Although, some exciting insight into the nature of aesthetic processes was gained this way, the attempt failed miserably. Nothing really remains today of their theory that would arouse any interest for other than historical reason.

The failure of information aesthetics is due to its most fascinating starting point: the radical idea of an aesthetics of the object. All subjectivism was to be banned from aesthetics. Measure instead of value judgment, number instead of feeling, mathematics instead of psychology. An aesthetics of the object was supposed to produce methods of measuring the object such that a quantitative feature vector would replace the aesthetic object in any matter of value judgment. Information aesthetics failed when it became clear that information was no objective measure, but rather a subjective construct. The constructivist notion of information as an emerging quality when systems adapt to their environment, turned information aesthetics into an extreme case of European scientific imperialism.

But one concept remains that was central to information aesthetics: the concept of the aesthetic object as a sign, i.e. as a semiotic entity. This great assumption has tremendously gained in importance. Information aesthetics was turned into a semiotic aesthetics. It borrowed the term and concept of "sign" from Charles S. Peirce. Max Bense was one of the very first in Europe to understand the great importance of Peirce's work for any communicative processes - and art was a process of communication.

A semiotically grounded aesthetics not only opens to the discourse of postmodernism, it also links parts of aesthetics to informatics, which, in my opinion, turns out to be a technical semiotics or semiotic engineering. "Sign" is central to informatics, to aesthetics, and to postmodernism. Postmodernism is the times of enhanced artificiality. Any formalistic approach to aesthetics is capable of addressing only the lower levels of aesthetics. In particular, if computers are to play a role, only computable aspects of aesthetics may be addressed.

Treating any real process by computer pre-supposes three reductionistic steps: a semiotic transformation of things to signs, a syntactic transformation of signs to "representamens" (Peirce's concept), and an algorithmic transformation of representamens to computable structures. On the other hand, this very process of reductions opens up the field of aesthetic semioses for new algorithmic works, and thus for a new kind of aesthetic experience. The field of algorithmic semioses is still to be explored aesthetically, both on the analytic and generative levels. An aesthetics of algorithmic semioses is more likely to produce interesting results for sequences of objects than for individual objects. Its genuine realm is the small difference between two pictures, and thus the animated film sequence, more than the single great painting on the wall. In an oversimplification of computer art, we may identify two transformations occupying the artist. The first type of transformation takes the world as it is given, and produces an aesthetic sign by abstraction. The second type of transformation takes the world as it is thought up, and produces an aesthetic sign by concretization. The first transformation takes our bodily experience of moving in time and space as its starting point. The second starts out from our experience of dreaming and thinking. The first type, the abstract one, is exemplified by Harold Cohen, the British in the West of America. The second type, the concrete one, is exemplified by Manfred Mohr, the German in the East of America.

Virtuality is not the opposite of reality. It is part of reality! Virtual reality is the semiotic domain of reality. Actual reality is the corporeal domain of reality. We now encounter signs in the state of algorithmic semioses. This is a new aspect of art, and of the sciences as well. It is a fascinating, yet grossly overrated, aspect. It causes rather stupid speculation about the self-determination of

the machine. It is wise to remain relaxed. We tend to interpret the world by projecting our currently most beloved artifact onto it, and then to interpret the artifacts by projecting ourselves onto them. This turns things and relations upside down. I prefer to identify signs on the computer as signs of a new type: calculated and calculating. Signs on the computer themselves become sources and sinks of signs. This makes us wonder what they really are. Agents?

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< Exhibition Review: documenta X and Its Media Concept >

Kassel, Germany
1997

Reviewed by Sabine Fabo
Email: <leo@mitpress.mit.edu>

There has been much criticism about this year's documenta X, especially with regard to its reluctance towards an expressive, opulent art that might appeal intensively to the senses. Thus painting or sculpture play a minor role in the exhibition whereas art reflecting its mediality stands in the focus of curator Catherine David's concept.

The scepticism towards the materiality of art becomes obvious in one of the central rooms of the main exhibition building, the Fridericianum, where the German painter Gerhard Richter, acknowledged for his variety of different styles in paintings, ranging from photorealistic realizations to large abstract formats, is only presented with Atlas, his private photo archive that is closely connected to both his work and his biography. The subjective collection of private snapshots and reproduced cut-offs from the press has served the artist as inspiring raw material over a period of three decades. It constitutes a basis of already mediated images from which the process of painting as another transformation of media images is developed. The paintings as results of these exploration are absent, which somehow characterizes the concept of Catherine David: the complex process of image-making is focused and favored against the idea of the merely aesthetically pleasing perhaps comforting results of a closed work of art.

The immediacy of art and its spontaneous impact on the viewer is always questioned, the exhibition is devoid of any unmediated approaches towards art. The world seems to have become too complicated to follow a simple pleasure principle. David's concept couples mass media as well as new electronic media with entertainment and Guy Debord's notion of a "society of spectacle," against which she endeavors to establish a critical discourse. The idea of artists' experiments and explorations of new means of expression in the field of the electronic is rather ignored. Consequently David tries to avoid any commercial involvement both in the art market and entertainment industry. Oddly enough, it was this strategy that has brought documenta X an enormous public awareness; the culture industry has embraced and encapsulated most willingly an approach that was originally meant to criticize the very system.

The "political and aesthetical inquiry" David intends to undertake is also reflected in the catalogue's title "poetics and politics," the main assumption being that under the signs of globalization experience can only be gained in fragments. There are no central perspectives offering a complacent, holistic view of the world. The rejection of a single, all-prevailing view is central to the exhibition, instead the notion of the periphery is emphasized against the center. Urban structure has become a metaphor for actual modes of perception as well

as for the social framework embedding and contextualizing art. Architects with their concepts of social city structure, theories on urbanism, social networks and global economy are crucial to David's outlook on the state of modern society and culture. Rem Koolhaas in particular seems to have inspired vast parts of the exhibition. His concepts for the Pearl River Delta in China are reproduced as huge wallpaper which contextualizes the exhibition rooms in some areas. Koolhaas' concept of urbanism, overwhelmingly formulated in his book *S, M, L, XL*, has been quoted in the catalogue as structural metaphor. Earlier critical utopian positions like those of Aldo van Eyck, Archigram's design for flexible, almost organic cities in the sixties, or the early Hans Haacke are reemphasized and put into an actual contextualization.

Despite the clearly defined concept of art experiencing different kinds of mediation, documenta's approach towards media cannot avoid ambivalence. The highly ambitious theoretical claim is not convincingly reflected in the medium of the exhibition itself: leaving out the Internet projects with their emphasis on the urban metaphor, media art or electronic art as such is only very sparsely presented. There is a video installation by Jordan Crandall, "Suspension," that explores different roles of the observer who himself is being observed by the machine. Another multimedia installation, "Poetics Project," is presented by Mike Kelly and Tony Oursler.

The organizers want to distance the exhibition from playful multimedia presentations and the associative spectrum of computer games. Yet it is difficult to free oneself from the impression that interactive art is unspokenly submitted under the same category as computer games. The absorption and embrace of the audience, which are generally associated with computer games, is probably regarded to be too charmingly seductive to be trusted. The hype about interactivity is obviously refused, instead the more distanced mode of critical observation becomes one of documenta X's key concerns. These underlying presuppositions lead to a certain neglect of the state of the art of media art, especially those forms of art that involve digital media.

Thus media is present as communication metaphor and guiding principle of the documenta, but media are not focused in a more direct and outspoken way in the exhibition, as could be observed, for example, at the documenta 6 in 1977, where photography, video art, performance art penetrated the official presentation, or in 1987, when video sculpture played a dominant and somehow provocative role in the documenta 8 exhibition.

[Ed. note: text omitted, see below]

The procedural shift from focusing the work of art itself to the process of reception and producing, that has been reemphasized by digital art, can also be observed as one central metaphor of the documenta X, but with the result, that procedural qualities can mostly be observed in the structure of the exhibition itself, not so much in the works presented. Advanced media art, that has become quite familiar at media festivals, has almost been neglected. In contrast to other documentas presenting new developments in media art, documenta X harks back to older positions. Fatigued by the popularity of new media, this year's documenta introduces a rather traditional concept of criticism that is rooted in the early 70's with its criticism of media and their role of collaborating with institutions of power. A media concept that claims to reflect and criticize actual positions of the state of the art without considering important fields of artists' exploration and experimentation in the field of the digital and electronic cannot avoid taking a rather ambiguous position.

[This review has been abbreviated here and may be read in entirety
online at <<http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-journals/Leonardo/ldr.html>>,
Choose Issues/March 1998]

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< Book Review: A Short History of the Shadow >

Victor I. Stoichita
London: Reaktion Books
1997
ISBN 1-86189-000-1

Reviewed by Roy Behrens
Email: <ballast@netins.net>

In the 18th century, when Italian Jesuits went to China as missionaries, they were surprised to find that Chinese artists understood but rarely used linear perspective. Nor did they include shadows, because, the Jesuits reported, "they looked like smudges on the face." Shadows are pictorial ephemera; the painting's subject is paramount, while shadows are incidental. We often take shadows for granted, but only since the Renaissance have they been portrayed systematically. This is one of several books in recent years to examine the art historical and symbolic significance of shadows. Well-illustrated and clearly written, "A Short History of the Shadow" opens with the shadows in Plato's cave and Pliny's assertion that painting began by tracing silhouettes, moves through and beyond the Renaissance, and concludes with a too brief account of their use in this century by Marcel Duchamp, Francis Bacon, Joseph Beuys, and others.

(Review reprinted from Ballast Quarterly Review, Vol 13 No 2, Winter 1997-98)

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< Book Review: Road to Pleiades and Crystal of Aquarius >

Yury Linnik
Road to Pleiades: Russian artists-cosmists
Petrozavodsk:Svyatoi Ostrov (Saint Island)
286 pp.,1995 [in Russian]
ISBN 5-87339-024X.

Yury Linnik
Crystal of Aquarius: Book about the Artist B.A.Smirnov-Rusetsky
Petrozavodsk,231 pp.,1995 [in Russian]
ISBN 5-87339-028-2

Reviewed by: Bulat M.Galeyev,
Email: galeyev@prometey.ksu.ras.ru

Yury Linnik, the author of the above-mentioned books is well-known to Leonardo readers. He participated in the Termen's column of LMJ (vol.6, pp.70-71, 1996). A little earlier, his information about the Museum of Cosmic Art was published in the Prometei special issue of Leonardo (no.5, pp.337-338, 1994). He planned to establish this museum using as the base his collection of works of artists-cosmists from the group Amaravella. Unfortunately, the museum with its hundreds of canvasses and graphics is quartered still in the small flat of Yu.Linnik in Petrozavodsk, while his achievements in the field of cosmic art become known for wide public from his numerous publications in the Press House Svyatoi Ostrov (Saint Island) which (alas!) also quartered in the same two-room flat; in spite of all these difficulties, Prof. Yu.Linnik publishes only his own works! During the years of perestrojka he published, presumably, about one hundred different works such as an anthology of verses, fantastic prose, and

books about all basic religions of the world. Moreover, even his personal newspaper 'Yury Linnik' has appeared!

There may arise a question: is, perhaps, our respected doctor of aesthetics a graphomaniac? But if it is so, it is a special kind of graphomania, graphomania of the man who is awfully glad that there is not any censorship anymore and that anyone can write and publish all things to one's heart's content! The main thing is that he can now freely tell about his favorite artists-cosmists from the group Amaravella which appeared in the post-revolutionary Russia of the early twenties; later, in Stalin's times, the group was dissolved and consigned for a long period of time to oblivion.

These artists were far ahead of their time and their creation was based, on the one hand, upon the scientific-philosophic ideas of Russian scientists-cosmists such as N.Fyodorov, K.Tsiolkovsky, V.Vernadsky, and A.Chizhevsky; on the other hand, they follow the lines of artistic searches of such outstanding people as N.Rerikh, V.Kandinsky, M.Churlenis.

For the first time, Yu.Linnik has acquainted himself with the creative work of Amaravella representatives at the conference Light and Music in Kazan in 1975, where the works of such artists as V.Chernovolenko and A.Sardan were exhibited. It was these artists creative activity that Yu.Linnik described in his first Amaravella publications. It is worthy to note to the point that he has managed to publish a number of papers and articles in Kazan (as far back as in Soviet times).

In 1993 he published the excellent album "Sonata of Orion;" the book tells about the artist-cosmist V.T.Chernovolenko. In 1995 two books about Amaravella appeared simultaneously.

The first book tells about the Amaravella group and its genetic links with abstract art, music (Wagner, Skrjabin), and ideas of artistic synthesis. One of the sections in this book is devoted to the Amaravella founder P.Fateyev (1892-1971) who pioneered in the field of cosmic painting in Russia. Two other separate sections tell about the creative works of A.Sardan (1901-1974) and the tragic fate of S.Shigolev (1895-1942?) who perished no one knows where nor when after his arrest by punitive organs of NKVD.

Yu.Linnik has prepared the separate monographic essays on the life, world outlook and creative activity of these artists. At the end of these essays he puts his own fantastic story whose scene turns a reader's mind to the future and describes the ideas and creative activity of each of these artists. What is more surprising, Yu.Linnik has written a special poetic hymn of praise for each of these artists! The book has a great number of color and black-and-white illustrations.

The second book is also issued in a similar unexpected publishing genre; it is entirely devoted to one of the Amaravella members, B.Smirnov-Rusetsky (1905-1993). Among the members of the group, he is probably, the most subtle, transparent, exquisite and philosophic in character and creative activity. In my opinion, his works are similar to those of N.K.Rerikh whose name was planned to be assigned to the Museum of Cosmic Art in Petrozavodsk (I believe that the name of N.K.Rerikh is well-known to Leonardo readers, since for a long period of time he lived and actively worked abroad in India and visited the USA and France, where he spoke before the public with pacifist and uniting statements about the necessity to establish UNO and UNESCO).

We can hope that this review will make it possible for a reader to gain a closer acquaintance with less-known artists from the Amaravella

increasingly popular area of computer music. His own numerous compositions have been the laboratory for the research and development that resulted in this book.

The author's examples use a graphical programming language called Max. Each example in the text is accompanied by a picture of how it appears on the computer screen. The same examples are included as software on the accompanying CD-ROM, playable on a Macintosh computer with a MIDI keyboard.

Although the book is aimed at those interested in writing music and software using Max, the casual reader can learn the basic concepts of interactive composition by just reading the text, without running any software. The book concludes with a discussion of recent multimedia work incorporating projected images and video playback with sound for concert performances and art installations.

For professors interested in using the book for potential course use, please contact:

Margie Hardwick
Textbook Manager
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| | OPPORTUNITIES | |
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< iEAR Studios: Assistant Engineer >

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The iEAR studios at Rensselaer Polytechnic announce an immediate opening for an Assistant Studio Engineer. To initiate an application send resume and letter of introduction via email to <garril@rpi.edu>. Send hardcopy of same to:

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Assistant Studio Engineer
iEAR Studios
Department of the Arts
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Job summary

Under limited supervision, reporting to the Studio Engineer, perform a full range of assigned duties pertaining to technical, engineering, and managerial operation of the iEAR Studios. Requires BS degree in Electrical Engineering, or equivalent professional experience, including substantial technical expertise in several of the following areas: digital audio, video, computer graphics, and computer system administration. Preference will be given to those with strong video and computer admin skills.

Should be a self-starter, able to organize time effectively to carry out a wide range of responsibilities, operating on own initiative to assure smooth daily operation of the studios. Carry out assignments of substantial importance to the Studios with general direction or minimum of supervision, and use of independent judgment. Work in a Macintosh based office and complex multi-computer, multi-platform (MacOS, Windows NT and Windows 95, and Unix) studio environment. An interest in contemporary music and art is an important asset. This is a professional exempt position.

Responsibilities

- * Perform routine maintenance of the studio, as assigned by Studio Engineer.
- * Perform system administration tasks on computer systems, as assigned.
- * Assist in ordering and installing new equipment and software, as assigned.
- * Maintain good working knowledge of all current and new studio systems and equipment.
- * Assist faculty in training students and visitors in technical aspects of various equipment and systems in the studios.
- * Coordinate technical setup for classes and presentations.

The iEAR Studios include state of the art facilities for creative work in computer music, video art, computer imaging and animation, media installation and performance. The Masters of Fine Arts program in Electronic Arts is based on the model of an art school in a sophisticated technological environment, and is clearly focused on the integration of the time-based electronic arts. The undergraduate program in Electronic Media, Arts and Communications is a major new initiative of Rensselaer's School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Each semester the studios serve up to 200 undergraduate EMAC majors and non-majors, 25 full time graduate students in the MFA program, as well as faculty, staff, and visiting artists.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Rensselaer is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer.



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Les Ateliers UPIC, Paris, France
Summer Intensive in Electro-Acoustic Music
July 6th - July 31st, 1998

Les Ateliers UPIC, the electro-acoustic studios of Iannis Xenakis, offers a month-long intensive course in electronic music and composition for American college students. The course takes place at UPIC studios in Paris. Group class sessions and private work in the studios are the heart of this program. Classes will be taught by Gerard Pape (U of Mich, Ann Arbor), Julio Estrada (U of Mexico), Joel Chadabe (SUNY Albany), Randall Neal (Bennington) and others. Assistance in private studio work will be provided. All sessions conducted in English. Les Ateliers UPIC maintains both UPIC and Pro-Tools 4 studios. Newest studio acquisitions include Di Giugno's MARS workstation and MetaSynth. Les Ateliers UPIC is supported in part by the French Ministry of Culture.

Field trips will be provided to observe other aspects of the French and European electro-acoustic music scene. In past years these have included Pierre Schaeffer's GRM at Radio France; IRCAM at the Pompidou Centre; a Stockhausen electronic music performance in Amsterdam, and other studio groups or individuals working at either the classic or the cutting edge.

Consider a creative experience in Paris for 1998!

< ArtSci98 Symposium >

ArtSci98
Extended Studies Program
30 Cooper Square
The Cooper Union, NYC 10003-7183
Tel: (212) 353-4195

Conference Information:
Cynthia Pannucci
Tel: (718) 816-9796
Email: <asci@asci.org>
URL: <<http://www.asci.org/ArtSci98>>

ArtSci98 seeding collaboration, a public symposium

April 4-5 (Sat/Sun)
Cooper Union, NYC
PRE-REGISTRATION extended to: 3/27/98

REGISTRATION COSTS:

\$50/day or \$90/both days
or
Pre-Registration by 3/27/98

\$35/day or \$60/both days
Call Cooper Union and pay by credit card or check.

PROGRAM

SATURDAY, April 4, 1998

KEYNOTE: Roger Malina, astrophysicist & Editor of Leonardo Journal

PANEL I. Creativity - Its Meaning and Function in Science and Art.

Creativity is a shared aspect in both science and art. It involves the ability to develop new cultural expressions, new ways of seeing, and new insights to be shared. This panel explores aspects of creativity. (David Katzive - Moderator, Pauline Oliveros, Roger Malina, Cynthia Goodman, Ron Graham)

PANEL II. The Dialectics of Art & Science

Art and science have always impacted one another. The discoveries and tools of science have had major impacts on art, while art has altered the direction of science. This panel explores ways in which art and science have altered and continue to move each other. (Carl Machover - Moderator, Ken Knowlton, Doris Schatt-Schneider, George Chaikin)

PANEL III. The Artist & Scientist in Society

It has been argued that as our society becomes more global, complex, and potentially destructive, it becomes incumbent on all elements of society to play roles which use their talents to move society forward. Some artists and scientists have argued that this role is outside their mandate, while others have gleefully taken it on. This panel will explore this arena. (Red Burns - Moderator, Mary Lucier, Murray Turoff, Roxanne Hiltz, Wendy Brawer)

PANEL IV. Technology and Creativity

It is well established that technological advances in tools and materials made available or designed by artists and scientists have always acted as catalysts for creative and scientific innovation, quite often allowing previously held creative ideas or theories to be realized or affirmed. This panel will examine how current technological tools affect the creative process from discovery to presentation to collaboration. (Jan Hawkins - Moderator, Christopher Janney, Nadrian Seeman, Helen Thorington, Meryl Meisler)

SUNDAY, April 5, 1998

KEYNOTE: PAULINE OLIVEROS composer, musician, educator, pioneer in electronic music

PANEL V. Literal & Actual Collaborations

Collaborations between artists and scientists take a number of paths from one-on-one partnerships to large-scale, push-me, pull-you collaborations (e.g. rock-and-roll musicians and the development of electronic keyboards). This panel examines the nature and consequences of such collaborations. (George Whitesides - Moderator, Elizabeth Goldring, Tod Machover, Linda Stone, Billy Kluver)

PANEL VI. Problem Solvers & Mythmakers

Society has often looked to scientists to solve practical problems and

to artists to bring a personal vision to bear on the experience of life. However, much of today's [pure] science verges on the metaphysical while many artists have in recent decades gone beyond "art about art" to creating works and that speak to practical, daily problems- from ecology to political activism defined as art. (Robert Atkins - Moderator, Robert Greenberg, Greg Blonder, Greer Gilman, Amelia Amon)

PANEL VII. Science in Art/ Art in Science: Influence and Integration

Many artists incorporate scientific concepts into their work. These ideas can act as an inspiration for an expressive form; act as conceptual metaphors for organizing images, materials, sound, or movement, regardless of whether those ideas are systematically or intuitively applied; or be directly addressed or commented on in the work. This panel explores how science influences art and whether art has as much influence on science as science does on art. (Doree Seligmann - Moderator, Michele Oka Doner, Ashok Dhingra, Stephen Soreff, Laura di Laurenzio)

PANEL VIII. Transformative Functions of Science & Art

Science and art have functioned as cultural transformers in civilization within both the frameworks of progress and chaos. This panel will explore how the scientist and artist, through their thoughts, problems and products, change the worlds we and they inhabit. (Don Ihde -Moderator, Chuck Hoberman, Tyler Volk, Carl Zimmer, Doris Vila)

< A New Locus+ Project >

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A new Locus+ project
CATHY de MONCHAUX
The Day Before You Looked Through Me
On site from March 24th

A site specific work for Cullercoats Metro Station, Tyne and Wear, UK.

"You're rushing to get your train, always late, half asleep, wishing you were somewhere else. In the station a photograph has appeared. It fills the whole wall. The image is of some foreign train station. The perspective of the tracks draws you in against your will. You can't quite focus on the blurred image. Moving closer, the surface reflects you walking into the scene. Maybe taking you off on an imaginary alternative journey. It was the day before you looked through me. A busy Saturday in a Parisian station. I had no train to catch, no people to meet. Aimlessly wandering in dream time, feeling as inconsequential as a ghost. On the platform lay a red carpet, a great slice of red, an illusion for the sensitivity of a footstep deemed to be special. In the distance, the end of the carpet railed pathetically

onto the tracks, obstructing the path of the arriving train. I had a sense of impending carnage. Everybody disappeared, leaving me with this scene, as unbelievable as a dream. Anything was possible, in the optimism of the day before you looked through me."

The Day Before You Looked Through Me is her first permanent public artwork, incorporating the use of photography on a monumental scale. A digitally manipulated image, 3.8m high x 6.2m wide, it shows a deserted railway station after an important ceremony. An abandoned red carpet on the platform, folded by the winds and sodden from the rain, spirals onto the tracks; the lights of an arriving train can just be seen on the horizon. The stark, melancholic image retains the emotive and cerebral potency of de Monchaux's sculpture. We are reminded that the activity of travel involves expectation, disappointment and celebration. Reflective perspex placed over the image reflects the viewers' gaze, who can see themselves inserted into the tableaux, stood on a red carpet, awaiting a journey of their own.

Image for The Day Before You Looked Through Me now on the L+ web site.

Reception March 24th 6-8 upstairs cocktail lounge, Bay Hotel, Seafront, Cullercoats.

Cathy de Monchaux, born in 1960, studied at Camberwell School of Art and Goldsmiths College in London. She is particularly well known as a sculptor who produces objects that create an air of disquiet in the viewer through an elegant combination of materials balanced in opposition; velvet and leather gripped in elaborate bronze talons. Ribbons, glass and paper balanced against lightly dusted steel.

She has shown extensively in this country and abroad including recent one person exhibitions in Milan, Vienna, Paris, Zurich, New York and last year's successful exhibition at the Whitechapel in London.

Her work is widely collected and is in many private and public collections including the Tate Gallery, Sculpture at Goodwood, British Council, Arts Council of England and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo.

The Day Before You Looked Through Me was curated and initiated by Locus+.

The Day Before You Looked Through Me is supported by Nexus, ABSA North Tyneside Arts, Northern Arts, Arts Council of England and The Henry Moore Foundation.

Locus+ is an arts organisation based Newcastle upon Tyne, England that develops new strategies with visual artists for different contexts and across formats.

< Nexus '98: Relationships between Architecture and Mathematics >

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Nexus '98

Relationships between Architecture and Mathematics, second international, interdisciplinary conference, Mantua, Italy.

Dates: June 6-9, 1998.

Speakers: Michele Emmer, Henry Crapo, Vera Spinadel, Marco Frascari, Paulus Gerdes and others.

The publication "Nexus 2: Architecture and Mathematics" will be present at the conference.

< ARS Electronica Festival 98 >

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ARS Electronica Festival 98
September 7 - 12, 1998
Linz, Austria

In 1998, under the banner of "INFOWAR," the Ars Electronica Festival of Art, Technology and Society, is appealing to artists, theoreticians and technologists for contributions relating to the social and political definition of the information society. The emphasis here will lie not on technological flights of fancy, but on the fronts drawn up in a society that is in a process of fundamental and violent upheaval.

INFOWAR - information.macht.krieg

URL: <http://www.aec.at/infowar>

The information society - no longer a vague promise of a better future, but a reality and a central challenge of the here-and-now - is founded upon the three key technologies of electricity, telecommunications and computers: technologies developed for the purposes, and out of the logic, of war, technologies of simultaneity and coherence, keeping our civilian society in a state of permanent mobilisation driven by the battle for markets, resources and spheres of influence. A battle for supremacy in processes of economic concentration, in which the fronts, no longer drawn up along national boundaries and between political systems, are defined by technical standards. A battle in which the power of knowledge is managed as a profitable monopoly of its distribution and dissemination. The latest stock market upheavals have laid bare the power of a global market, such as only the digital revolution could have fathered, and which must be counted as the latter's most widely felt direct outcome. The digitally-networked market of today wields more power than the politicians. Governments are losing their say in the international value of their currencies; they can no longer control, but only react. The massive expansion of freely accessible communication networks, itself a global economic necessity, imposes severe constraints on the arbitrary restriction of information flows.

Any transgression of critical control functions into the cybertechnologies' sphere of responsibility and influence puts central power wielders in a previously unheard-of position of vulnerability

and openness to attack. The geographic frontiers of the industrial age are increasingly losing their former significance in global politics, and are giving way to vertical fronts along social stratifications.

Whereas, in the past, war was concerned with the conquering of territory, and later with the control of production capacities, war in the 21st century is entirely concerned with the acquisition and exercise of power over knowledge. The three fronts of land, sea and air battles have been joined by a fourth, being set up within the global information systems.

Spurred on by the "successes" of the Gulf war, the development of information warfare is running at full speed. Increasingly, the attention of the military strategists is turning away from computer-aided warfare - from potentiation of the destructive efficiency of military operations through the application of information technology, virtual reality and high-tech weaponry - to cyberwar, whose ultimate target is nothing less than the global information infrastructure itself: annihilation of the enemy's computer and communication systems, obliteration of his databases, destruction of his command and control systems. Yet increasingly the vital significance of the global information infrastructure for the functioning of the international finance markets compels the establishment of new strategic objectives: not obliteration, but manipulation, not destruction, but infiltration and assimilation.

"Netwar," as the tactical deployment of information and disinformation, is targeted at the human mind. These new forms of post-territorial conflicts, however, have for some time now ceased to be preserve of governments and their ministers of war. NGOs, hackers, computer freaks in the service of organised crime, and terrorist organisations with high-tech expertise are now the chief actors in the cyberguerilla nightmares of national security services and defence ministries.

In 1998, under the banner of "INFOWAR," the Ars Electronica Festival of Art, Technology and Society, is appealing to artists, theoreticians and technologists for contributions relating to the social and political definition of the information society. The emphasis here will lie not on technological flights of fancy, but on the fronts drawn up in a society that is in a process of fundamental and violent upheaval.

PRIX Ars Electronica 98

A prize for artistic creativity and pioneering work in the field of digital media.

URL: <<http://prixars.orf.at>>

Total prize money: US \$105,058.00

Entry deadline: April 30, 1998

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