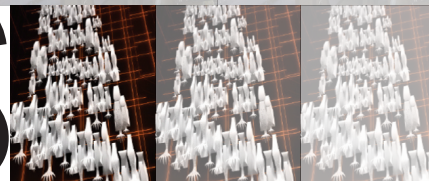# URBANISMS

April 12-June 10, 2005

URBANISMS

Gregory Chatonsky
David Crawford
Sylvain Hourany
Paul Myoda + Ruy Klein Architecture
Stanza
Marek Walczek + Martin Wattenberg

Curated by Annette Weintraub

PACE DIGITAL GALLERY
April 12-June 10, 2005

Urbanisms

"The Metropolis strives to reach a mythical point where the world is completely fabricated by man, so that it absolutely coincides with his desires. The Metropolis is an addictive machine, from which there is no escape, unless it offers that too… Through this pervasiveness, its existence has become like the Nature it has replaced: taken for granted, almost invisible, certainly indescribable. …Manhattan has generated its own metropolitan urbanism—a culture of congestion."
Rem Koolhaus, *Delirious New York,* 1994

Manhattan was once uniquely representative of the culture of congestion described by Rem Koolhaus. Its characteristic elements are still visible in lower Manhattan, in winding streets free of the grid imposed above Canal Street in 1811, in narrow canyons, and in the skyscrapers that establish their solidity at street level, step back pointing toward the light, and terminate in the whimsy of fanciful crowning towers. The qualities of scale, congestion and verticality that once defined skyscraper urbanism have mutated into the diverse urbanisms of a global culture, typified by the hyper and hybrid cities of Asia and Latin America and the chaotic density and horizontal expansion of the cities of the periphery. This is not an urbanism of physical structures alone, but one that encompasses concrete fact and fluid information, and one in which data flows, spatial patterning, social networks and political economies create urban structures that coalesce, fragment and reform.

Cities transmit, and are themselves the visual artifacts of technology, culture, and the political and personal narratives of their inhabitants; to map appearance and geography or to inventory information is also to chart history and consciousness. *Urbanisms* is a selection of projects that remap and revisualize the city through the processing and reinterpretation of diverse streams of information: sound, captured visual images and texts. The projects in this exhibition reflect the dynamic diversities of urban patterning and permit us to perceive the city in different ways: through surprising juxtapositions of sounds, in the minute physical gestures of its inhabitants, in a changing collision of passers-by and their environment, in the accumulations of data flowing from online to physical space, and in the mechanisms of surveillance and control that provide a constant stream of visuals as byproduct.

The artists in this exhibition address urbanism from different perspectives, yet a number of common threads are present in their work. Several share a similar approach toward the sourcing of images—rather than authoring images in the sense of traditional photography, images [and sounds] are resourced via web cam, surveillance cameras, or other online sources captured in a stream; or used as raw material and documentation. Stanza's project *Global* grabs images from CCTV surveillance cameras monitoring public space in cities around the world as well as from web cameras online, and

maps them in real-time into a 3D sphere; in *CityCollage*, Walczek and Wattenburg use a locally sited camera within the exhibition to capture images that are then composited with a second exterior street cam to create new, hybrid images. Sylvain Hourary's *Magma* grabs urban sounds from the web and creates a sound collage using acquired sound as well as audio contributed by viewers of the *Sonoises* site. Gregory Chatonsky's project, *The revolution took place in New York,* uses an image search engine to translate words to images and dynamically reconstitutes a new narrative with a text by Alain Robe-Grillet as the source for the search. David Crawford takes photos in cities around the world in that most urban of locations, the subway, and exploits minute frame-to-frame differencing in his animations to create narrative and reveal social behavior. The tempo of his sequenced frames is affected by the net connection speed, and like *Global*, *The revolution...* and *Magma* makes network activity an essential part of the configuration of a distinctive and constantly altering urban space.

Another point of commonality among the projects in *Urbanisms* is the use of pattern and the dynamic manipulation and recomposition of derived or fabricated patterns. These patterned structures convey a dual sense of the individual module and the aggregate massing that typifies the congestion and density of urban structures. Interest in patterning is evident in Stanza's work, and in Walczek and Wattenberg's dynamic collages, while Crawford explores the eccentricities of behavioral patterning. Myoda and Ruy Klein Architecture use pattern and repetition as an organizing principle. Their sculpture, *The Rogue Wave,* hangs on the edge between raw force of nature and urbanity; it's overall shape suggests the stepped quality of a skyscraper, but its component forms are organic and menacing.

The projects in *Urbanisms* offer an expanded vision of urbanism—or more precisely, a multiplicity of urbanisms—that is global, dynamic and mutating. These urbanisms present a spectacle of ever-shifting patterns of visual, aural and cultural information to be processed, manipulated and reconstituted anew.

Annette Weintraub

Annette Weintraub is a media artist who investigates architecture as visual language and the symbolism of space. Her work has been presented at the International Art Biennial-Buenos Aires; 5th Biennial of Media and Architecture in Graz Austria; The Whitney Biennial 2000; The International Center for Photography/ICP; The First Chiang Mai New Media Art Festival/Thailand; International Film Festival Rotterdam; Thirteen/WNET TV's Reel New York.Web, and numerous other exhibitions. She is Professor of Art at The City College of New York where she is the Director of the Electronic Design & Multimedia Program and The Robinson Center.
http://www.annetteweintraub.com
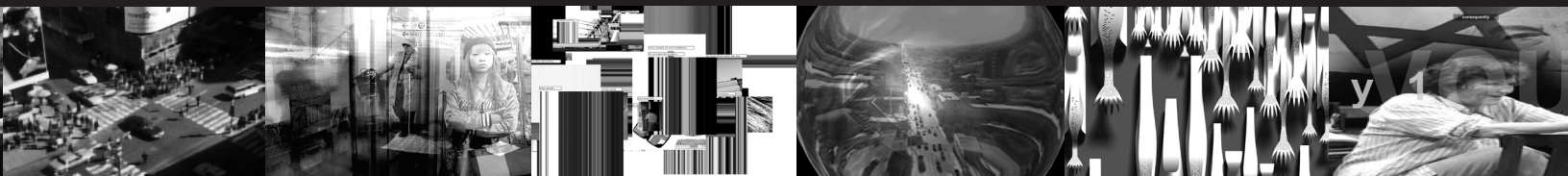
PROJECTS

Gregory Chatonsky

After completing interdisciplinary studies in visual arts and philosophy, Gregory Chatonsky is pursuing doctoral studies at the Sorbonne in the philosophy of art with a focus on technology, interactive fiction and multimedia. He began working in media in 1991, following a long practice in painting and drawing. Chatonsky is the founding member of incident.net, a collaboration inaugurated in 1994.

From 1995-98, with the assistance of World War II deportees, he developed *Memories of the Deportation,* a CD-ROM which received the Mobius prize. In 1997 he created the website for the Villa Medicis and in 1999 designed the Pompidou Center website for its' reopening.

Chatonsky has been artist-in-residence at the International Center of Video Creation (1998-2001), C" of Budapest (2001), the Abbey of Fontevraud (2002), and in Fresnoy (2003-04) where he has also taught.

Prize winner of the Villa Medicis les Inclassable in Montreal (2002-03), he has also won numerous other awards in France and internationally including SACD (2000), FilmWinter (2001), Sound Space (2001), Computer Space (2001), Viper (2001), Videoformes (2003), SCAM (2004).

In 2004-05, Chatonsky created a variable fiction project for Arte TV.

The revolution took place in New York, 2002-2003.
Based on Alain Robbe-Grillet's book, *Project for a revolution in New York* **(1970).**
Media/technologies: Flash, PHP, Google image search engine.

The revolution took place in New York is a real-time generated fiction that utilizes the flow of the network. A text generator produces an indefinite novel in the style of Alain Robbe-Grillet's 1970 book, *Project for a Revolution in New York.*

Individual words and short phrases are associated with fragments of video and sound, images of Ground Zero, and audio pulled from the web. Other words are translated into images using the Google image search engine (http://www.google.fr/imghp?). The juxtaposition of all of these elements produces a changing narrative.

It's often said that our hyper-industrialized societies are entirely visual, however on the Internet, it's text that dominates the image. Encoded numerically, each image has a name for indexing, and the search engine, which accesses the numerical-textual data, forces the image to appear only after it has been sorted by the title. The domination of text raises questions about the complex relationship of modes that are historically intertwined, but which simultaneously create a space, a no man's land between the alpha-numeric and the icon. Our question is not about producing new images, but about finding them within in an existing database.

http://incident.net/works/revolution_new_york/

The revolution took place in New York

The revolution took place in New York (04-Jun-2003 11:40).

Stop Motion Studies-Series 13

Stop Motion Studies-Series 13, 2004.

David Crawford

Stop Motion Studies-Series 13 05/2004.
Media/technologies: Flash transcoded to MPEG-2.

The *Stop Motion Studies* extend my long-standing interest in narrative and, in particular, look at the subway as a stage upon which social dynamics and individual behavior are increasingly mediated by digital technology. As one of the most vibrant and egalitarian networks in our cities, subways bring people from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds into close contact with each other. This process plays a significant role in shaping both the character of a city as well as our individual identities.

In this remix of footage originally shot for previous installments in London, Paris, Boston, New York, and Tokyo, each installment's modular structure has provided a library of building blocks that have been edited into a linear animation approximately 7 minutes long. The algorithmic montage constituting each clip's DNA remains intact, while the individual sequences are now composited within a linear framework. The speed of the transitions is based on network connection speed.

David Crawford was born in 1970 in Riverside, California. He studied film, video, and new media at the Massachusetts College of Art and received a BFA in 1997. In 2000, his "Light of Speed" project was a finalist for the SFMOMA Webby Prize for Excellence in Online Art.

In 2003, Crawford's *Stop Motion Studies* project received an Artport Gate Page Commission from the Whitney Museum of American Art and an Award of Distinction in the Net Vision category at the Prix Ars Electronica. In 2004, he received an MSc from Chalmers University of Technology and is now an Assistant Professor at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

http://www.stopmotionstudies.net

Sylvain Hourany

Sylvain Hourany is a French media artist. After Cultural Engineering studies, he completed an advanced degree at the National School of Fine Arts in Paris.

Hourany is interested in the polysemous nature of certain constructs which he describes as crossroads, intersections, points—places where there is convergence and divergence. Exploring these relationships enables him to develop ideas and generate forms that blend sociology, poetry and images and sound.

His exhibitions include Arborescence (2004), Le Cube, Espace de Création Numérique, New Sounds, New Visual (2005), Videoformes Festival (2003, 2005), Ososphère Festival (2003 & 2004), Contemporary Art Fair of Montrouge (2002), and E-magiciens festival, in which he was awarded the Art Prize (2002).

Hourany received the Numeric Creator Prize from the Jean Luc Lagardère Fondation for *Magma*, the project in this exhibition.

Magma, 2004.
Concept/programming: Sylvain Hourany.
Sound Design: Sylvain Hourany and Sacha Gattino.
Additional programming: Renaud Gaudin.
Media/technologies: Flash.

"Let us cross a great modern capital with our ears more alert than our eyes, and we will get enjoyment from distinguishing the eddying of water, air and gas in metal pipes, the grumbling of noises that breathe and pulse with indisputable animality, the palpitation of valves, the coming and going of pistons, the howl of mechanical saws, the jolting of a tram on its rails, the cracking of whips, the flapping of curtains and flags. We enjoy creating mental orchestrations of the crashing down of metal shop blinds, slamming doors, the hubbub and shuffling of crowds, the variety of din, from stations, railways, iron foundries, spinning wheels, printing works, electric power stations and underground railways."

<div align="right">

Luigi Russolo, *The Art of Noises*, 1913 (Ed Allia, 2003)

</div>

Sonoises is an experimental web site, that proposes new relationships between images and sounds. Sonoises is built around different modules or autonomous fragments. One of these modules is called *Magma*. *Magma* encompasses sounds of the earth, tectonic movements, the intimate sounds of matter and also the sounds of industry, chimneys, contemporary forges, sounds of destruction and sounds of creation; the Apocalypse now. It sweeps away the specter of audible frequencies and image fabrication: crushing, colliding and shattering its components to form a new numeric dough. The module includes sound from the net and contributions of online visitors. This project has been customized for *Urbanisms*.
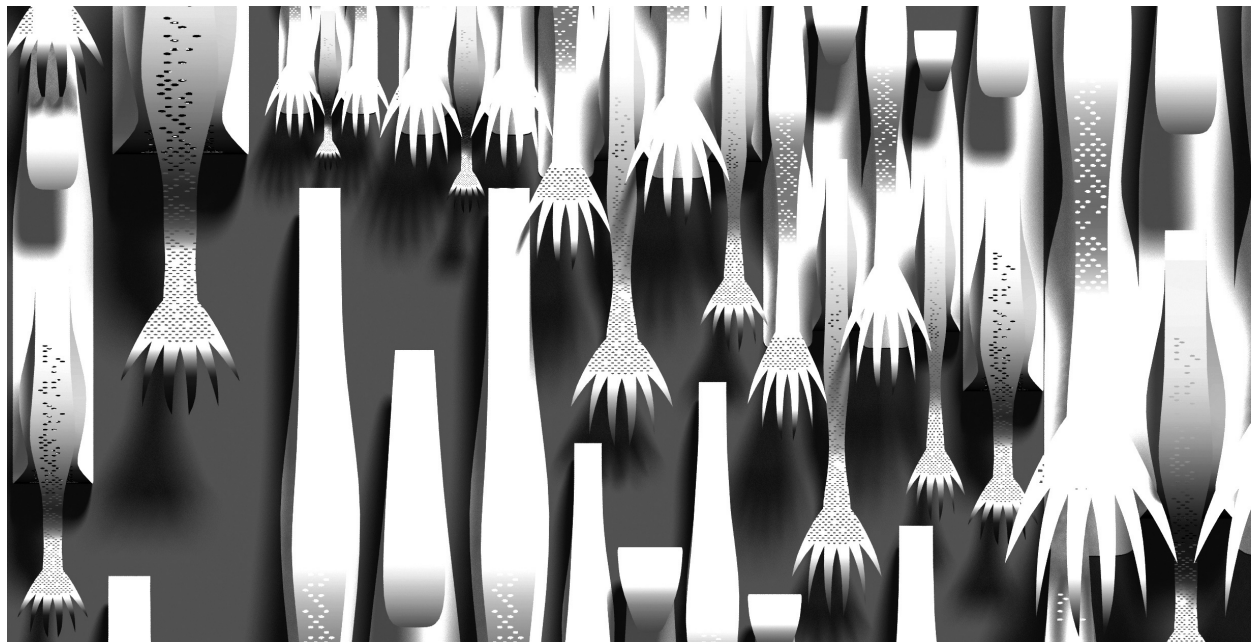
http://www.sonoises.org

Magma

Magma, 2004, screen shot.

Rogue Wave

Rogue Wave, 2005. Rendered image of installation detail.

Ruy Klein Architecture + Paul Myoda

Rogue Wave, 2005.
Media/technologies: renderings developed with Adobe Illustrator CS and Alias StudioTools. Installation is laser cut, manually bent, anodized aluminum modular units. Dimensions variable.

The power of new technologies to span distances between points of exchange is redrawing the traditional boundaries between city and frontier, artifice and nature, known and unknown. Urban experience, though distinct as mood, is ambiguous in its territory. Known forms of expression that depend on the separation and the valorization of the human in relationship to the natural lose focus as the otherness of the geographical frontier recedes. Understanding the domain of urbanism in the 21st century will be concurrent with the discovery of new, possibly unexpected unknowns.

The sublime that was understood to be outside of urbanized space, has little resonance as the satellite phone rings in the middle of the ocean, but in the pause of that interruption, there is astonishment that the space of that technology itself is strangely savage. The strange effects of new technologies and the unanticipated territories of the computational universe are beginning to define a new frontier.

Rogue Wave emanates from this new technological frontier. The wave form is composed of a series of modular bands mounted above the horizon of view and folded in low relief against the wall. The individual units constituting the wave form are incrementally developed through computational variation. A morphology of self similar curve profiles is distilled into flat pattern templates for laser cutting and manual one directional bends. The complex repetition becomes an aleatoric assemblage, and the expression of a technological sublime.

http://www.ruyklein.com

Paul Myoda received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from the Graduate School of Art, Yale University. Myoda has exhibited sculptures, drawings, photographs and short films nationally and internationally, and has written for art and cultural publications, including Art in America, Flash Art, Frieze, and Feedmag.com. With Julian LaVerdiere, he created the September 11th memorial, the *Tribute in Light*, and the Urban Lodestar for Popular Science, among other public artworks. He and Ruy Klein Architecture have developed interdisciplinary public proposals for the High Line and for the World Trade Center Memorial Competition. He teaches art theory and issues in electronic media at The City College of New York. He is based in Manhattan, NY and represented by Friedrich Petzel Gallery, NY.

Ruy Klein Architecture is a design practice in New York City with a focus on new technologies and methods. Co-directors, David Ruy and Karel Klein, have a mutual interest in bridging theoretical academic research with contemporary pragmatics. David Ruy & Karel Klein have conducted design research at Columbia University, Princeton University, and are currently both at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Design, where David is the director of research at PennDesign's new NSO (Non-Linear Systems Organization), a new institute exploring experimental organizational models for architecture.

Stanza

Stanza is a UK based artist who specializes in net art, multimedia, and electronic music.

His award winning online projects have been invited for exhibition in digital festivals internationally. Stanza is interested in the engagement of the public/audience as a creative user across a variety of formats, from the web to CD-ROM and to gallery installation.

Stanza has produced a body of work online encompassing twenty years development and production regarding the urbanity of cities: the city as code, emergent knowledge and memory mapping. His interactive digital artworks of the past decade reflect wide ranging technical and cultural concerns.

Stanza has won nine first prizes for his work, most recently: VidaLife first prize 6.0 Spain (2003), Fififestival France Grand Prize (2003), New Forms Festival Canada (2003), Fluxus online first prize (2002), Senef Grand Prix, Korea (2002), Video Brasil first prize (2001), Links first prize Porto (2001), Cynet art (2000), first prize Dresden, and the Wolsfon 25 Painting prize.

Stanza has been awarded a NESTA dreamtime award for 2004 and also received The Clark Digital bursary enabling him to work with the Watershed in Bristol.

Global, 2003.
Media/technologies: Shockwave video composed from online database of images, real-time rendering.

'Never the same again always different....forever', *Global* is a real time web artifact, a 3d web sculpture being tranformed in real time with live data from around the world. *Global* uses CCTV and web cams which offer readily available sources of continuous visual data from our environment and world cities. CCTV systems are everywhere in the public domain. We appear as actors in this continuing film. Except we cannot watch, it is not on public display and the results are monitored, filtered and distributed without our permission. This work turns the notion of surveillance upside down, since we are all watching everybody else; essentially it turns us all into voyeurs. *Global* also opens the question of the legality of captured imagery. It creates an online global repositoned world view which unfolds in real time and is constantly in flux.

Cities offer the opportunity for exploiting unique types of data gathering via a variety of sources. Selected feeds are collected from around the world in real time. These real-time images are fed into a software system where a series of specialized channels rework these images. The channels are always on, and always changing, providing a constant view of the world changing and evolving around the clock. The images in *Global* are continually mutating. If many computers all link to this work, each of the onscreen images will be different. This is city as dynamic network.

Global is one of many works Stanza has made recently using real-time data in networks and cities.

http://www.stanza.co.uk

Global

Global, 2003, screen shot.

CityCollage

CityCollage, 2005. initial and processed final image.

Marek Walczek + Martin Wattenberg

CityCollage, 2005.
Media/technologies: Java application and webcams.

CityCollage takes your photo and uses it to build a streetscape. You become the raw material for an urban construction. As in a city, your own presence is tangential, one ingredient among many. You may not even see yourself, until a sudden moment of recognition, like spotting a familiar face in a crowd.

CityCollage creates a leisurely, painterly image of a single second. Your image is used as a palette that echoes the sampling of the artist's eye.

Two cameras are trained on two views, one on the street, one in a private space at the installation. Each time movement is detected in the private sphere, a new streetscape is created.

http://mw2mw.com

Marek Walczak is an artist and architect who is interested in how people participate in physical and virtual spaces. This has led to projects such as *Apartment*, shown at the Whitney Museum and many venues worldwide, and *Dialog Table*, a commission of the Walker Art Center that replaces a keyboard and mouse with a shared interface based on gesture recognition technology. Current projects include a one block long facade at 7 World Trade Center that reacts to pedestrians walking beneath it (for James Carpenter Design) and interactive video installations such as *Third Person*, recently shown at the ICA, London.

Martin Wattenberg's work centers on the theme of making the invisible visible. Past projects include *The Shape of Song*, *Third Person*, the Whitney Artport's Idea Line, and *Apartment*. Wattenberg is a researcher at IBM, where he creates new forms of data visualization. He is also known for the SmartMoney.com *Map of the Market*. He holds a Ph.D. in mathematics from U.C. Berkeley.

About Us

Pace Digital Gallery, inaugurated in Spring 2003, is an initiative of Pace's Center for Advanced Media.
The gallery is a collaboration between the School of Computer Science and Information Systems and the Fine Arts Department.

Mission

The goal of Pace University's Digital Gallery is to foster the creation and understanding of digital art. It furthers Pace University's commitment to education excellence, diversity, and civic involvement by exhibiting the work of Pace faculty and students, and regularly presenting curated programs featuring leading digital artists. It sponsors lectures and symposia on digital art, an artist-in-residence program, and supports publication of materials for documentation and promotion.

Credits

A project of Pace Digital Gallery
www.pace.edu/digitalgallery

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Directors: Jillian Mcdonald and Francis T. Marchese
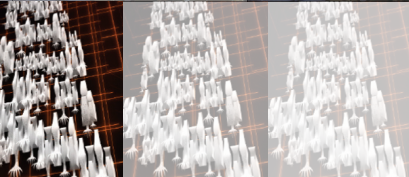*Assistant Director: Will Pappenheimer*

Designer: Vasheena Doughty

Pace Digital Gallery   PACE UNIVERSITY   CAM   CSIS   Fine Arts Dept.

Pace Digital Gallery