

Habitat

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Biographical information

Olly Farshi is a British Sound Artist and Composer, currently residing in Jyväskylä, Finland. He is currently completing his debut album for Anglo-Canadian record/media-label CocoSolidCiti, due for release in late 2008. As a Sound Artist, Farshi's explorations concern playful interaction, digital communication and, in an ongoing piece of research entitled *iRedux*, notions of intangible property and connected life-styles. Farshi has been involved with a variety of festivals, venues, exhibitions, conferences and collaborative projects, including: Resfest Austria, Foldback, Mediaterra Greece, FutureSonic, Commonwealth Film Festival, Defunktion.net, Shunt Gallery London, Salone Internazionale del Mobile, CocoSolidCiti, KunstForum.

Description of Piece

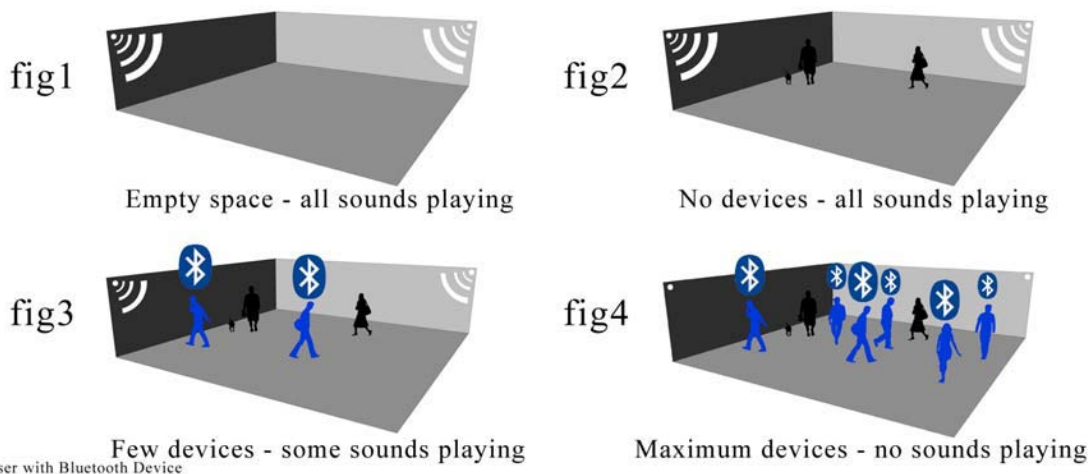
Habitat is an ambient sound installation designed to be exhibited within a public city-space. The installation generates a sonic landscape – a generative wildlife habitat – based upon how populated the installation space is. The objective of Habitat is to encourage those who experience it to consider the installation space and, by association, the city-space differently; considering the impact of commercialisation, gentrification and industrialisation on these public spaces which, at one point in time, were not so densely populated.

Habitat displaces the default sonic landscape – pedestrians traversing the city-space, commercial ambience etc. - overlaying a generative ambience constructed entirely out of wildlife and field-recordings. As the population shifts within the physical installation space – transient individuals enter and leave – the sonic landscape generated by Habitat reflects these changes: various animals and exotic wildlife emerge, flock and interact with each other, resulting in a vibrant and enchanting ambience.

Using Bluetooth, the Habitat software polls the space every 30 seconds, counting the number of mobile devices carried by individuals in the installation space. The more devices the system counts, the fewer wildlife sounds will be heard, implying that to encourage wildlife to return to the space, the individuals with those devices must eschew their technology – switch off their mobile devices – to re-enliven the Habitat.

As fewer devices are counted, more animals and insects flock to the sonic landscape. When the installation space is empty, in terms of bluetooth devices counted, the wildlife habitat is vibrant, all possible sounds are playing (see *fig1* and *fig2* for examples of empty installation spaces). Thus users with bluetooth mobile devices can leave the space, knowing that in doing so they are having a positive impact on the sonic landscape, or, as a more compelling course of action, encourage others within the space to switch off their mobile devices and instigate a mass change on the installation's sonic landscape.

The aim is to heighten awareness and consideration of the city-space that one occupies, utilises and traverses. In experiencing Habitat, one is given the opportunity to build a new relationship with the city-space, to consider our impact as pedestrians, users and consumers on this space and to consider its natural origins. As each individual within the space contributes to the juxtaposition of familiar wildlife sounds alongside the city ambience, Habitat invites the *flâneur* to stop, observe and listen, in order to experience the true impact that those traversing the installation space have on the sonic environment.



MIRROR OF THE MOON

Soundspace and Video installation

Jeff Talman

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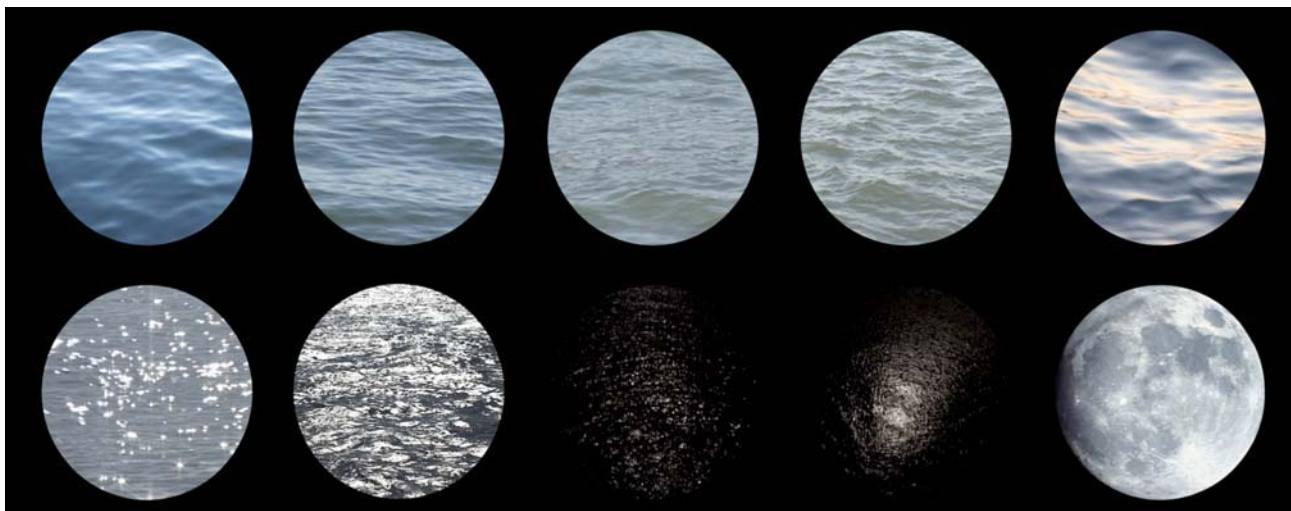
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Artist Biography

International artist Jeff Talman has created installations in collaboration with the cathedral and the City of Cologne, Germany, for St James Cathedral, Chicago, at the MIT Media Lab, The Kitchen, Eyebeam and Bitforms Gallery in New York. He completed a series of three installations in the Bavarian Forest in May 2008. Recognized as 'a pioneer of the use of resonance in artworks' by 'Intute' the consortium of British universities, his unique achievement is self-reflexive resonance, in which the ambient resonance of an installation site becomes its sole sound source. Talman's work further investigates the nature of sound and light as primal wave/radiant forces. Recent awards include a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Sound Art (2006) and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Computer Arts (2003). Residencies in 2007 include the Liguria Study Center in Bogliasco, Italy; Yaddo, and the Künstlerhaus Krems.



The Sea, the Sun and the Moon (2008)

Project Description

For the 8th Annual NIME Conference and the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Villa Croce, it seems only natural to begin with the sea, as the sea permeates the culture and lives of the Genoese. From this it follows that it is entirely appropriate that a sense of the sea should literally permeate the museum gallery. Rather than the cartoonish effect of merely transposing literal sea sounds to the gallery, I decided instead to extract sound waves of the tide mapped to the gallery's resonant frequencies, so that the gallery itself would harmoniously speak of the sea. Sonic spectral analysis of the gallery provided a chart of the room's resonant frequencies. I then programmed progressively shaped, digital filters and used them to filter a recording of sounds of the tide. Only those frequencies that are resonant to the largest gallery space in the museum were extracted for use in the installation.

Humans do not normally pursue sound as a referential aspect of space. The sense of sound of a space remains largely intuitive and/or subconscious, though it is a significant factor in human spatial cognition – as any blind person would know. By emphasizing the resonance of the gallery the installation enriches the human perception of the space's sonic and spatial reality. In *MIRROR OF THE MOON* this emphasis on the characteristic sound of the space provides a phenomenological template for hearing/sensing the space, while it serves as the plastic art material for an expressive sound work. Constructed into a 5-channel sound installation, the temporal field of the work is ever-changing as one walks through the space. The gallery itself becomes recognizable as a tuned instrument 'played' by sounds of the sea.

Further, the gallery space becomes a field of compositional activity, which may be explored interactively by simply walking through the space and pausing at different locations to witness the room, video projection and the interaction of the room modes and their nodes and anti-nodes within the space. Everything heard, though heard differently from any location in the room, reflects normally submerged sonic aspects of the room. Importantly, by harnessing the sound of the sea to the gallery, the installation recognizes a confluence of waveforms, those of water, sound, light and the effects of gravity. Here the sounds of the Mediterranean meld into an environment that stands in relation to itself, the people and their city by the sea.

Fold Loud

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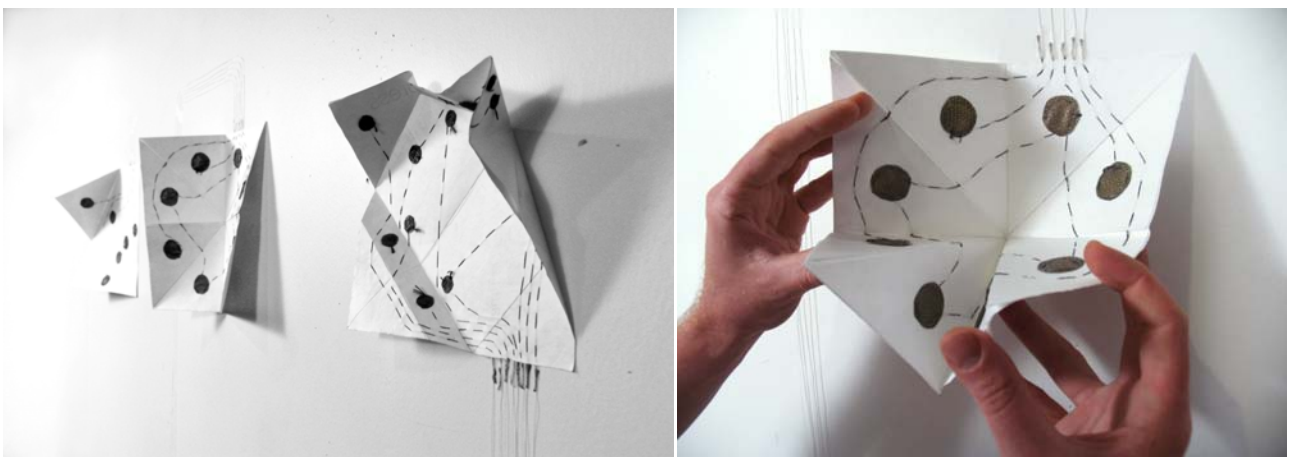
Biographical information

JooYoun is an artist and interaction designer born in Seoul and based in New York. She has created interactive objects that reflect on human behavior, technology and social change. She earned a Master's degree from the Interactive Telecommunications Program at NYU and is currently an Artist in Residence at Eyebeam. JooYoun's art has been displayed by the Museum of Modern Art New York, SIGGRAPH 2007, Museum of Science Boston and Seoul Museum of Art. Her work has also been published in BBC News, Architectural Magazine, Next Magazine and many other publications.

Description of Piece

Fold Loud is a (de)constructing musical play interface that uses origami paper-folding techniques and ritualistic Taoist principles to give users a sense of slow, soothing relaxation. *Fold Loud* interconnects ancient traditions and modern technology by combining origami, vocal sound and interactive techniques. Unlike mainstream technology intended for fast-paced life, *Fold Loud* is healing, recovering and balancing.

Playing *Fold Loud* involves folding origami shapes to create soothing harmonic vocal sounds. Each fold is assigned to a different human vocal sound so that combinations of folds create harmonies. Users can fold multiple *Fold Loud* sheets together to produce a chorus of voices. Opened circuits made out of conductive fabric are visibly stitched onto the sheets of paper, which creates a meta-technological aesthetic. When the sheets are folded along crease lines, a circuit is closed like a switch. Thus, the interface guides participants to use repetitive delicate hand gestures such as flipping, pushing and creasing. *Fold Loud* invites users to slow down and reflect on different physical senses by crafting paper into both geometric origami objects and harmonic music.



in a thousand drops... refracted glances

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Biographical information

Kenneth Newby is a media artist whose research and creative practice explores expressive applications of computer assisted media composition, performance and diffusion. He teaches new media composition and technique. Aleksandra Dulic is a media artist and theorist working in the area of interactive computer animation with current research underway in performative visualization of sound and music. Martin Gotfrit's research centres on the creation, performance and function of music and sound in many different disciplines and contexts. He is the Director of the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University. Together the three authors of this work have been working together as the Computational Poetics Research Group for the past four years.

Description of Work

in a thousand drops...refracted glances
Interactive Installation. Media Diffusion:
4-channel audio and 100-channel video.



in a thousand drops... refracted glances is an audio/visual sculpture in fragmented space and time that becomes a single audiovisual image as one interacts with the space of the exhibition. The work presents fragments of the bodies of humans in hybrid relations to themselves, thereby creating a sense of the fragility of experience. The work reveals a background made of deeper perennial questions: Who am I? What is my community? Where do its boundaries exist and how permeable might they be?

The interactive aspects of the work provide points of focus for flows of both audible and visible images. As one moves with the work a subtle effect is exerted on how these images are animated. Characters composed of multiples emerge and are accompanied by synchronized emergent musical gestures. The resulting audiovisual environment is one of construction and deconstruction of bodies through processes of stitching, repetition, collage, stretching, contraction, multiplication, and reduction. As a result of these processes new hybrid fugal bodies are born that speak to the variety and complexity of the ecological and interpersonal balances that depend on the mutual interdependencies of the community of agents that make up its population. Interactions with the work take the form of refracted glances both rewarding and confounding in an ongoing process of making sense of a chaosmos — the balance between confusion and order — the fantastic and the logical — dreamt and waking realities.

Musical Interface

A set of layered generative music processes are guided in their production by the data inferred by a motion tracking system including blob-detection, to determine individual locations for tracking in relation to the space of the installation, and optical flow sensing, to determine the relative direction of the participants' movement. The overall effect of the interactive process is one of a kind of spatially dynamic orchestration in which a particular musical process-gesture is mapped to either a specific location or a movement style such as motion along the slow-fast spectrum, the near-far spectrum, and stillness. These states are mapped onto the musical parameters such as orchestration, phrase selection and detail as well as stochastic characteristics such as glissandi speed and direction. As the same motion tracking information is also used to guide the visual animations, the audible and visible images have a strong synchronization. The participants, in this way, become collaborators with the unfolding audio-visual experience.

Given the dynamic character of the multi-screen animation, and the flexibility of the musical production, the work moves toward what we have been theorizing as a new form of process-based cinematic experience in which the processes guiding the audible and visible images are braided together into a new heteroform of multiply-mediated experience.

Soundscaper

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Biographical information

The Soundscaper team has worked on many interactive projects and large-scale installations. The four met at NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program. Their work collectively has been covered in The New York Times, Popular Science, The Village Voice, New York Metro, C|NET and others, and has been displayed at the Chelsea Art Museum, Sony Wonder Tech Lab, Eyebeam, 3rd Ward (Brooklyn), Proflux (RI), VIDEOFORMES (France), China Digital Entertainment Festival, New York University, University of British Columbia, Svevo Castle (Italy), DUMBO Arts Festival, Refusalon Gallery (San Francisco), STYLIN Festival (Miami), Schautankstelle Gallery (Berlin), Merce Cunningham Studio, Rockefeller Center, and many others.

Description of Piece

As John Cage demonstrated, even in silence, there is sound all around us. By detaching sound from observable cues, recordings often reveal more about our surroundings than passive hearing, i.e., the sound of industrialized society masking the natural world, and vice-versa. The Soundscaper is a tool to make geo-tagged recordings, entered from a mobile device. The soundscapes of cities and savannahs can be captured for later listening and manipulation, by increasingly sophisticated mobile devices. For NIME, we intend to walk around the city and the sea to create a Genovese soundscape using Nokia N95 phones—the sound of ships, church bells, factories, parks, buoys, etc. These recordings can be used for sound games in which people are sent out to find or retrieve specific sounds, games of hear-and-see, and other applications.

The SoundScaper widget contains a “See Waypoints” section and a “New Waypoint” section. The database contains a list of “Waypoints” entered by users. Users can enter new recordings, attached to a Waypoint, with a description of the sound. The database stores date and time information, and a Web page lists the sounds available for listening and download. N.B. The application does not operate on all networks in all countries. The only technical requirements are phones that run our widget, and small condenser microphones. A project description may be found at <http://mediatedspaces.com/soundscaper/> and a video at <http://mediatedspaces/lib/mov/soundscaperlow.mov>.

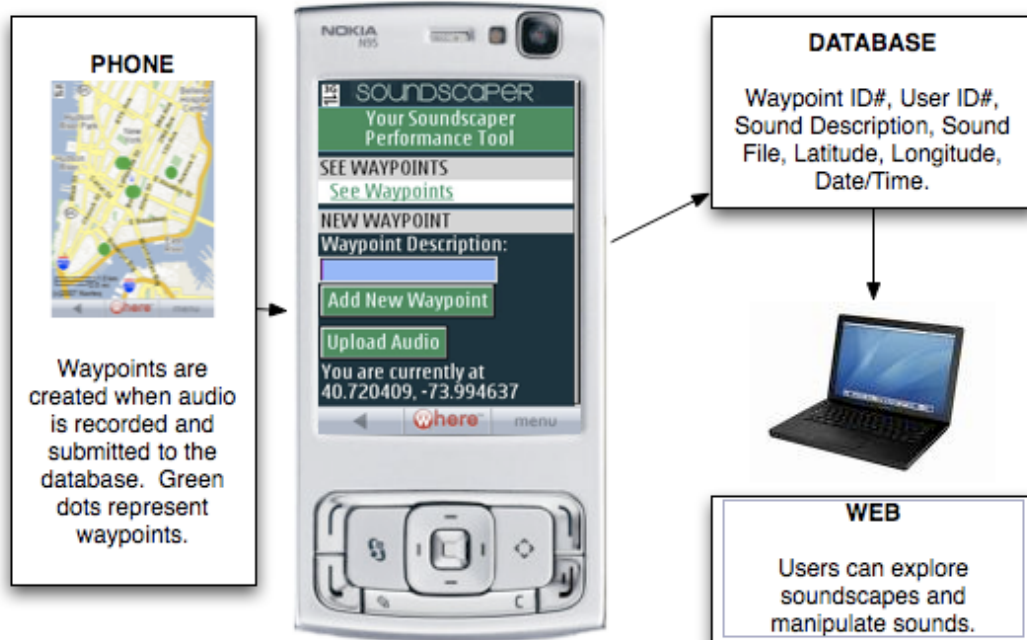


figure i. Major components of the Soundscaper.

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Biographical information

Pasquale Napolitano, born in 1980, is a researcher in design and visual communication. He graduated with honors at the University of Salerno, with a thesis on the aesthetics of remix. He is a stable collaborator of the faculty of Industrial Design at the same university, where he curates didactical laboratories in visual communication, as an expert in video-design. His doctoral research in Media Studies is focused on the design potential of video as a form of expression, as well as on the relation between the former and the derive of contemporary visual imaginary. He has participated in a few exhibitions as a visual artist, videomaker and performer. He co-founded the collective Componibile and the project SoundBarrier. A video of his will be shown at Locarno film festival 2007, in the section nPlay Forward. Some of his papers appeared edited by Plectica edizioni. He also published some essays on the relation of audiovisual forms and digital cultures, in editions such as Carocci, Cronopio, L'Arca.

Stefano Perna born in 1977, Napoli, Italy, Stefano Perna is pursuing a PhD in Communication Sciences at 'Università degli Studi di Salerno', focused on the analysis of the Scopic Regimes of Information Age. His work is about Visual Culture, Information Aesthetics, Digital Design. He published several articles in the field of Visual Studies and New Media Studies. He is author, with Ruben Coen Cagli, of Ber.loose.coin, a digital theory and online project on contemporary politics, now in the Rhizome Art Base.

Pier Giuseppe Mariconda born in 1980 in Avellino, he is Degree in Communication Sciences by thesis in Design entitled "The Sound Image. Study and design scapes, and Communicative Use of Sound". Musician and Sound Designer (Studies of Violin and Piano at the Conservatory D. Cimarosa of Avellino from 2000 to 2007) constantly engaged in studies on sound and visual communication and relationships from audiovisual and generative occurrences. Research in the field and on Interaction Design in realtime audio and video through the use of experimental software (Eyesweb, Processing, Puredata, Supercollider, etc.). Participation in Vision'R 2008 (international festival of Vjing in Paris) as a programmer team SoundBarrier.

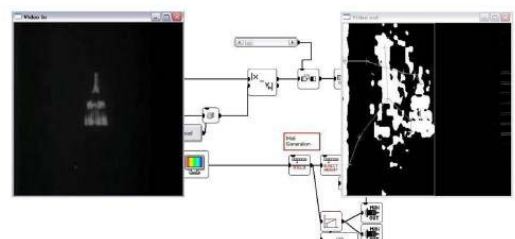
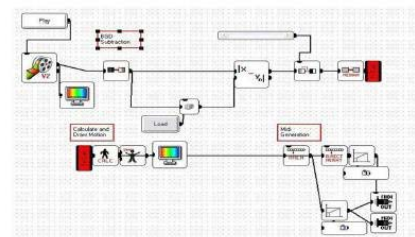
Description of Piece

1. A moving image is a signal that continuously change in time. More than forms, figures and volumes, it is made of dimensions, frequencies, intensities. On a digital medium image and sound share the same substance: electronic coded impulses. What at a first glance may appear as a simple technical factor, can become an aesthetic hypothesis. In the era of digital technologies we can mention acoustic or musical factors of an image not only in a metaphorical way. A new kind of connection is emerging. Now it is possible to create interactions, driven by mathematical rules, between the audible and the visible media in a way that erodes the barrier between the two fields of sound and image. With digital media we reach the indistinguishable point where image becomes sound and sound becomes image. In our project, a patch written in EyesWeb analyzes the moving image extracting some parameters that are subsequently converted in a data stream. Data are translated to a MIDI signal that controls audio software and synthesizers. This process gives the sound a deep sensibility to the variations of the moving image. Selected movies are analyzed and played back. Most of them are from american underground cinema of the '60. The experimental approach of some directors of that period - their approach to cinema as a medium and as a machine - deeply influenced the birth of what now we call new media. The selection is at the same time a homage to that directors and a media archaeology research.

2. The continuous reference to the universe of the artistic experimentation can act from indicative jewel of the new ways of feel, to perceive and to know proper of the video-cultures. In this perspective it could be of extreme interest to analyze that area of experimentation, already very advanced from the point of view of the realizations but almost entirely unexplored from the theoretical-critical point of view, transversal to a series of productive practices (software art, genetic art, vjing), that investigates really the unpublished and disruptive possibilities of elaboration, mapping and aesthetic result of the video flows and to which he is turning as with always greater interest not so much the traditional disciplines of aesthetics but the universe of the planning.

3. In this perspective, the need of a "reinvention" (Rosalind Krauss) of the video medium, is central. In this constant and militant remediation context our analytical artefact on the Andy Warhol Empire tape find its basis. The long film of the american artist have a peculiarity: it puts up the time, not the chronological time, but the enduring time, theorized by Bergson (peculiarity that is noticeable in many other work of Warohl like so in other video artists that refer to the New American Cinema). In other words: a bergsonian permanence exercise. During the eight (and then some) hours of the film, Warhol never quits the fixed eye on the skyscraper; this way of proceeding involve that the scan of the time is entrusted to the shake, the flow and the flicker of the film on the tape head. As in other works of that period all the channel distortions became incarnation of sense. As to say an antelitteram glitch. In McLuhanian terms: the medium (and its material device) is the message.

4. The core of the project is: try to map and sonificate this film movements, vibrations and distortions. What follows is the patch created with EyesWeb in a screenshot beside.



China Gates

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Biographical information

Art Clay (USA/CHE) is a specialist in the performance of self-created works with the use of intermedia. He has appeared at international festivals, on radio and television in Europe, Asia & North America. Recently, his work focuses on large performative works and public spectacles using mobile devices. He is artistic director of the Digital Art Weeks in Zurich and teaches at various Institutes including the Zurich University of the Arts. <http://mypage.bluewin.ch/artclay>

Dennis Majoe has a PhD in Navigation related Electronic systems and has worked extensively in the design of a variety of motion and orientation sensing systems and computer generated environments including 3D audio. He is director of MASC, an innovative electronics and computer design company active in the field of wireless communications. In addition to his activities at MASC he is as a senior researcher on the ETH Zurich for the Computer Systems Department, where he developing applications related to proactive health.



Description of Piece (performative Installation)

The work China Gates is technically based on possibilities of synchronizing a group of performers using the clock pulse emitted from GPS satellites. Aesthetically, China Gates is rooted in works for open public space and belongs to a genre of works, which celebrate the use of innovative mobile technologies to explore public space and public audience. The performance takes place in a limited city area such as a city square, a park and open courtyard. A series of tuned gongs is used. The number of gongs is greater than the number of performers participating. Tuned to an Eastern musical scale, these gongs give the piece a touch of the orient on the horizontal, melodic side and a western type dissonance on the vertical, chord structure side. The gongs are circulated amongst the players by an exchange process so that an on going change in harmonies can be achieved. Each of the players wanders through the performance space freely. A custom built GPS interface on the wrist registers the player's position and determines to geographical coordinates when to play the gong. By using a delay between the satellite clock pulse and the LED that indicates when to strike the gong, a harmolodic effect is obtained as the players gradually shift from a chordal to a melodic structure dependent on geographical coordinates. In general, each player tries to move when another is not, so that a "choreographic counterpoint" results that allows for a rhythmic-melodic coloring caused by the vertical to horizontal unfolding of the struck gong chord. The performance ends for each player at the return to the start point. The interface therefore acts as a "conductor", indicating when the gongs are to be hit and how the music as a whole will sound in the end.