

Dienstag, 9. September 2003

**Kultur**

# Faszinierende „Zaubereien“ mit Stimme und Technik

„Messa di Voce“ – Ein Konzerterlebnis der besonderen Art am Schnittpunkt von Mensch und Technologie

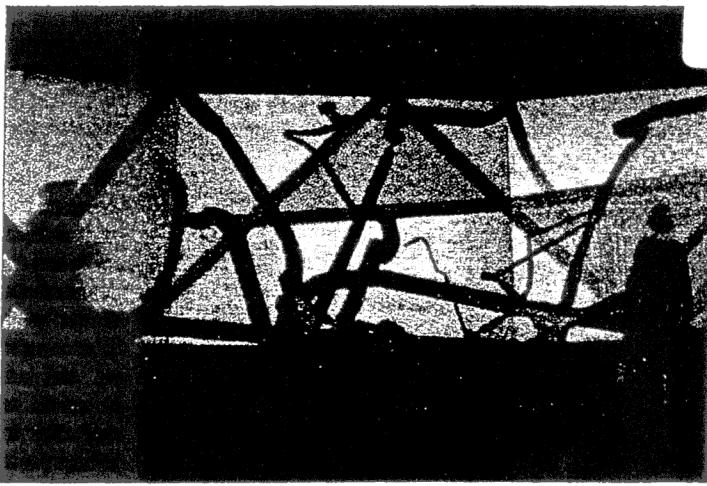
Für die paar Tage während der Ars Electronica ist Linz internationaler Mittelpunkt der Medienkunst. Künstler, Journalisten und den elektronischen Medien verfallene Kunstfreaks aus aller Welt bevölkern die vielfältige kreative Spielwiese, als die man die Ausstellungen und Veranstaltungen betrachten kann, ohne den Kunstanspruch zu schmälen. Ein ganz neuartiges Konzerterlebnis gab es am Sonn-

ausdrucksstarke Grafik. Das sah auf der Riesenleinwand dann so aus, dass die beiden Vokalisten hinreißend grunzten, schnarchten, „sangen“ oder sonst welche Töne in allen Lautstärken und Stimmnuancen von sich gaben und diese dann in bunte Flächen, Linien oder – besonders hübsch anzusehen – einen ganzen Regen von dreidimensional wirkenden Bällen und Kreisen umgewandelt

wurden. Durch dieses Zusammenspiel von Stimmkunst und 3D-Visualisierung ergeben sich viele neue Möglichkeiten, die richtungweisend sein könnten für die Zukunft der Live Performance. Vor allem aber kann man mit dieser Art von Darbietung auch Skeptiker dazu bringen, sich näher mit den neuen Kunstformen zu befassen und die Scheu davor abzulegen. *Ingrid Feilmayr*

## ARSelectronica

tagabend im Brucknerhaus mit „Messa di Voce“, das bedeutet sinngemäß „die Stimme platzieren“ und erwies sich als faszinierendes Spiel von Stimme, Sprache und virtuellen Grafiken. Denn die hochentwickelte Software von Tmema (dahinter verbergen sich die US-Web-Designer Golan Levin und Zachary Lieberman) verwandelt jede vokale Nuance der Stimmkünstler Jaap Blonk und Joan La Barbara in eine entsprechend komplexe und



Menschliche Stimmen, in Bilder verwandelt ...

Foto: Nöbauer



## Ein Hase allein gegen das Böse

Wie man geht, bestimmt, was man sieht. Zumindest, wenn man ein Hase ist, der alle seine Zähne verloren hat und sich auf Würstchendiät wiederfindet. Der Spanier Marcell di Antúnez Roca verkörpert in seiner Performance dieses schräge Tier. Vordergründig eine klassische Geschichte, in der die Mächte des Bösen den Hasen von seiner geliebten Prinzenpolli abzutragen versuchen. Aber auch mehr: Eine ironische und poetische Fabel als Produkt der Interaktion zwischen Performer, Zuschauern und Maschinen. Vielszene Inszenierung werden live über robotische Exoskelette gesteuert.

„Pol – Mechantronic Performance“ im Posthof: Donnerstag, 11. 9., 21 Uhr.

**PERFORMANCE:** Die StimmkünstlerInnen Jaap Blonk und Joan La Barbara im Brucknerhaus

## Was hast du gesagt? – Ich hab' doch gar nichts gesagt!

Ein völlig neuartiges Konzert-erlebnis bietet „Messa di Voce“. Zwei kostümierte StimmkünstlerInnen, der Niederländer Jaap Blonk und die US-Amerikanerin Joan La Barbara, schreien, singen oder treiben auf der Bühne sonst allerlei Unfug mit dem Mundwerk. Sie spielen ein Instrument, das jeden der Töne in ein 3D-Objekt verwandelt. Diese Objekte werden in den Bühnenraum projiziert, bleiben bestehen, schweben um die Sänger und sind interaktiv, können also etwa von den Künstlern im Raum verschoben oder zusammengedrückt werden, wobei sich der Ton, für den sie stehen, verändert.



„Messa di Voce“ liegt am Schnittpunkt von menschlichen und technologischen Performance-Extremen. Die Künstler improvisieren und verwenden dabei modernste Geräte zur Spracherkennung. Völlig wortlos, dennoch verblüffend verbal werden Fragen verhandelt über Bedeutung und Auswirkung von Redetönen, über Sprechakte.

Im Zusammenspiel von Stimmkunst und 3D-Visualisierung ergeben sich neue Möglichkeiten – ein hochinteressanter und unterhaltsamer Abend, der in die Zukunft der Live-Performance weist.

„Messa di Voce“ im Brucknerhaus: Sonntag, 7. 9., 19.30 Uhr.

## AEC Umbau

### Open House am 5. 9.

Bis 4. September wird im AEC umgebaut. Bis zu diesem Tag bleiben auch das SKY Media Loft und das Museum geschlossen. Ein Außenlift wird künftig das Media Loft, das neu gestaltet wird, auch außerhalb der Öffnungszeiten des Museums zugänglich machen. Diese Café-Bar im obersten Geschöpfe des AEC mit herrlichem Blick über die Donau eignet sich prächtig für private Treffen, zum Ausgehen oder für Events aller Art. Das Museum erneuert – wie jedes Jahr – im Zuge des Festivals einen Ausstellungsbereich.

**Open House:** Bei freiem Eintritt präsentiert das AEC, das Museum der Zukunft, seine attraktiven Installationen einen Tag vor Beginn der Ars Electronica, und zwar am 5. September. Prunkstück der neuen Ausstellungsgegenstände: eine neue, bessere und realistischere Version des beliebten Flugsimulators Humphrey. Die Besucher können mit ihm die Illusion zu fliegen hautnah erleben. Ein weiteres Beispiel: Gullivers Box, bei dem die Besucher als holographische 3D-Figuren projiziert werden. Bei Networked Portrait können die Besucher über Touchscreen den Gesichtsausdruck zweier Porträts verändern.

**Open House im AEC:** Freitag, 5. 9., ab 10 Uhr.



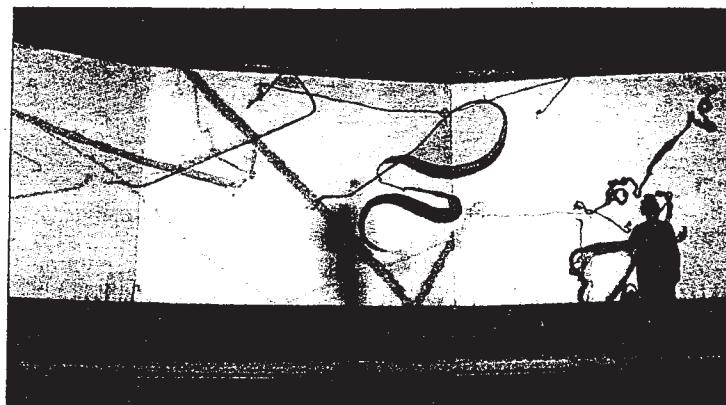
# »OBSERVER«

A-1020 Wien, Lessinggasse 21  
Fon: +43 1 213 22 \*0 e-mail: [service@observer.at](mailto:service@observer.at)

Verlag-Fon: 0732/78 05\*0  
Auflage: 119590  
09.09.2003

Graz, 09.09.2003

Geliefert vom »OBSERVER« zum eigenen Gebrauch nach §42a UrhG. Anfragen zum Inhalt und zu den Nutzungsrechten bitte an den Verlag.



Erinnerungen an 50er-Kunstexperimente

Foto: Nöbauer

**ARS: Blonk/LaBarbara im Brucknerhaus**

## Magere Stimm-Bilder

**VON IRENE JUDMAYER**

„Mein Kreislauf kollabiert!“ – sagt die Frau vor mir. Kein Wunder: schließlich warten wir schon fast 20 Minuten in dichtester Masse vor den Eingängen zum Großen Saal des Brucknerhauses. 20 Minuten nach dem eigentlichen Beginn, wohlgerne. Die Künstler seien beim Proben, erfahren wir. Hätten die Veranstalter Platzkarten ausgegeben, wäre uns die Dränglerei erspart geblieben. Aus dem Irgendwo taucht ein Sessel auf und die Frau – mittlerweile kalkweiß im Gesicht – bekommt ein Glas Wasser und kann sich setzen: „Hoffentlich zahlt sich die Warterei wenigstens aus!“ seufzt sie.

Ihre Bedenken sind gerechtfertigt. Denn die Vorerlebnisse bleiben das Spannendste an „Messa di Voce“ (ital.: „die Stimme platzieren“), einer Performance, die eine digitale Umwandlung von Lauten in Klänge demonstriert. Der Niederländer Jaap Blonk und die Amerikanerin Joan LaBarbara arbeiten dafür mit einer Software von Tmema, die auf neuen Technologien von Spracherkennung und

Computergrafik basieren soll. Neu kann sie ja durchaus sein, die verwendete Technik, die Umsetzung jedoch ist bieder und altbacken: LaBarbara und Blonk schreiten durch den Raum in großer Geste. Ihre Bewegungen erreichen kaum die Dynamik anthroposophischer Eurithmie, was etwas heißen will. Auch ihre mageren Stimmvorgaben wirken seltsam esoterisch.

„Pfrrr-pl-pl-pl-pffffrchkchch“ – plodert der Mann in das Konzertsaal-Dunkel. „Srrrrr-ssss-slp-ss“ zischelt die Frau, und auf der dreigeteilten Leinwand hinter ihnen schwimmen Farben ineinander, Linien übereinander. Balken, Figuren, stilisierte Kugeln. Psychedelic-Retro auf 1970–80, ein bissel was auch vom Formenrepertoire des frühen Informel in der bildenden Kunst. Angeblich ist's dreidimensional, zumindest haben wir die Brillen dafür auf. Angeblich ist's ja auch interaktiv, woran mich manchmal jedoch verzögerte Stimm- oder Bildeinsätze zweifeln lassen.

Übrigens: Die kreislaufende Dame hat die knapp über halbstündige Performance nach etwa 15 Minuten verlassen...

# "Gläserner Mensch ist Realität"

UNZ / Von 6. bis 11. September findet in Linz das Computerkunst-Festival Ars Electronica 2003 statt. Unter dem Motto "Code – die Sprache unserer Zeit" werden zahllose Ausstellungen, Performances, Konzerte und Konferenzen abgehalten, zu denen bis zu 30.000 Besucher erwartet werden.

Der Leiter des Festivals, Gerfried Stocker, sprach mit RUNDSCHAU-Redakteur Herbert Schorn über Computerkunst, Codes und warum seine Ansicht nach der viel zitierte "gläserne Mensch" schon längst zur Realität geworden ist.

**Herr Stocker, wissen Sie den PIN-Code Ihres Handys?**  
Ja, natürlich. Ich brauche ihn ungefähr drei Mal täglich.

**Welche Codes umgeben Sie im Alltag?**  
Jede Menge! Vom Internet angefangen bis zur Kreditkarte und zum Handy. Mit dem Bankomat-Code hatte ich schon schlechte Erfahrungen, als ich ein Mal in Rotterdam am Bahnhof stand und unbedingt Geld für eine Fahrtkarte brauchte. Ich tippte den Code drei Mal falsch ein und die Karte war weg. Ein Blackout.

*Codes haben also auch Nachteile...*

Natürlich. Und die sind den meisten Menschen gar nicht bewusst. Wenn ich einen Code betätige, bin ich sofort lokalisiert. Wenn ich in einem Geschäft mit Bankomatkarte bezahle, kann das zurückverfolgt werden. Ach-

tung, Gerfried Stocker hat sich heute in diesem Geschäft eine Hose gekauft. Der gläserne Mensch ist schon längst Realität. Nur den meisten fällt gar nicht auf, welche Maschinerie sich in Gang setzt, sobald ein Knopf gedrückt wird.

**Principles of Indeterminism** heißt ein Abend, bei dem am 9. September ab 19.30 Uhr im Großen Saal des Brucknerhauses im Brucknerhaus eine Reise durch die Entwicklung der elektronischen Musik angekündigt wird. Es spielt das Bruckner Orchester (Dennis Russell Davies) verbunden mit grafischen Projektionen.

NUMMER 35. 44 MITTWOCH, 27. AUGUST 2003

RUNDSCHEAU

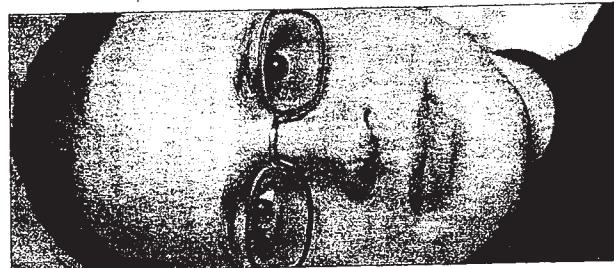
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Fon: +43 1 213 22 0 e-mail: service@observer.at

Verlag-Fon: 0732/76 16\*\*564  
Auflage: 38100  
0109

Linzer Rundschau Linz  
Süd

Linz, 27.8.2003 / 35



**Das Thema Code ist ja nicht neu: Fingerabdrücke gibt es, seit es Menschen gibt.**  
Das ist richtig. Auch Verschlüsselungssysteme kennen wir schon seit Jahrhunderten. Aber die Entwicklung von den meisten für objektiv und unfehlbar gehalten wird. Doch alles, was er kann, kann er nur aufgrund einer Software, die erst recht wieder von Menschen entwickelt wurde.

**Zurück zum Festival: Die Zahl der Veranstaltungen ist riesig. Ist das nicht schon zu viel?**  
Wir haben verschiedene Zielgruppen: Künstler, Medienleute, Studierende, Wissenschaftler. Ihnen bieten wir ein anspruchsvolles Programm. Wir wollen alle diese Leute an einem Ort zusammenbringen. Das ist auch mit ein Grund, warum so ein Festival im Zeitalter des Internets seine Daseins-Berechtigung hat.

**COMPUTERKUNST**

**Der Prix Ars Electronica** wird am 8. September um 21 Uhr im ORF Landestudio Linz in mehreren Sparten vergeben. Die Siegerprojekte werden im O.K. Centrum für Gegenwartskunst im Brucknerhaus und im Rahmen der "O.K. Night" und des "Electronic Theater" gezeigt.

**WISSENSCHAFT**

Insgesamt drei Symposien beschäftigen sich mit den gesellschaftlichen, künstlerischen und sozialen Auswirkungen von Codes.

- Nächste Informationen

zum gesamten Programm gibt's im Festivalbüro unter Tel. (0732) 7272-0 oder unter [www.aec.at/cote](http://www.aec.at/cote).

**STOCKERS TIPP**

**Messa di Voce**. Am Sonntag, 7. September, präsentieren um 19.30 Uhr im Großen Saal des Brucknerhauses zwei Sänger eine Performance, bei der jedes Geräusch in 3D-Grafiken umgesetzt wird. Es spielt das Bruckner Orchester (Dennis Russell Davies) verbunden mit grafischen Projektionen.

JEUDI 11 SEPTEMBRE 2003

# Culture



*En Autriche, Ars Electronica, baromètre annuel du numérique, marque un retour aux sources.*

Messard, Alice  
membre du conseil  
de direction  
de la fondation  
du musée  
des beaux-arts  
de Montréal  
et de la  
Société des  
amis du musée  
des beaux-arts  
de Montréal.

# ALOGICIEL OUVERT

**Linz** employe spéciale  
**D**epuis près d'un quart de siècle, Linz, en Autriche, accueille le plus ancien festival dédié à l'art et aux nouvelles technologies. Crée en 1979, l'Art Electronica (1) est une sorte de Cannes du numérique, les paillettes en moins, qui accueille des centaines d'artistes et investit pendant six jours une dizaine de lieux (musée, centre d'art, parc, université, boîte de nuit...) avec des spectacles, installations, conférences et concerts. Même si l'austère vieille dame voit sa primauté disputée par l'élosion de jeunes festivals plus « sexy », comme la Transmediale à Berlin, qui les œuvres qu'on ne pouvait voir

qu'à Linz voyagent plus facilement, son influence reste prépondérante sur la scène numérique, voire au-delà. **Coda.** Après s'être aventuré aux frontières du media-art, Ars Electronica opère un retour aux sources avec une 24<sup>e</sup> édition — qui se conclut aujourd'hui — intitulée *Code, le langage de notre temps*. **Code, le festival a repoussé les limites dans toutes les directions, y compris les plus extrêmes comme la génétique, la mondialisation, car l'une des caractéristiques des arts électroniques, c'est leur sensibilité aux dynamiques sociales et aux questions politiques.** Après avoir beaucoup exploré les bords, il faut parfois rentrer à la base. Cela explique son directeur,

Gérfried Stocker. Pas vraiment un repli, même si le rendez-vous affiche un profil plus modeste, moins de débauche high-tech et de shows spectaculaires, que les années précédentes, mais un *temps de réflexion*, après l'euphorie de la Net économie et l'éclatement de la bulle, «pour repenser l'identité du media-art». D'où

un retour à son essence même, le code et ses implications sociales, culturelles, juridiques. Le langage des ordinateurs, omniprésent dans notre quotidien, est-il en train de devenir *la langue franca de la société globale de l'information*, s'interroge Stoker. Le scénariste philosophe Lester Finsenius, lors d'une intervention remarquée au symposium (2), n'a pas hésité à tracer d'audacieux parallèles entre le mouvement actuel du logiciel libre et les tentatives de création de langues universelles à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme le volapük ou l'espéranto. De leur côté, le Gruppe Fok, des étudiants suisses de l'université d'art de Zurich, ont dressé, sur la façade de la Kunstmuseumstrasse de l'Irr

un clavier d'ordinateur géant sous la forme d'un mur d'escalade. Sous les instructions d'un opérateur, les grimpeurs se hissent pour toucher les commandes et écrire le code collectivement. Un exercice pour sensibiliser les gens aux problèmes de brevetabilité des logiciels discutés en ce moment au Parlement européen.

**Milliers de lignes.** Le code, langage mystérieux et souvent hermétique pour le nom-initié, est devenu la matière première d'une nouvelle génération d'artistes-programmeurs décomplexés, grandis avec ces technologies, pour qui manipuler le code est aussi naturel que maîtriser le pinceau pour un peintre. Cela donne des œuvres formelles et expérimentales, comme l'élegant *Microblème* de l'Américain Casey Reas: des milliers de lignes courtent sur trois écrans alignés, autant de petits programmes au comportement autonome qui s'entre-croisent, s'agrégent, se dispersent, changent de couleur de façon imprévisible, mimiques modifications qui affectent "image globale" 

## Computer & Cyberspace Die menschliche Stimme als Pinsel auf der Leinwand

Utl: Neue Wege der digitalen Musik - «Messa di Voce» als Gemeinschaftswerk von Sängern und Programmierern - Roboter sind die Stars einer «mechatronischen Show»

Von AP-Korrespondent Peter Zschunke =

Linz (AP) Die menschliche Stimme dargestellt als Computergrafik auf einer Leinwand - mit dieser Premiere beim Medienkunst-Festival Ars Electronica in Linz haben zwei Sänger und zwei Programmierer eine der zentralen Tendenzen in der digitalen Kunst bestätigt: In der Verbindung von realem Leben und Computerwelten entstehen Erfahrungen, wie sie bisher kaum möglich waren.

Die amerikanische Sängerin Joan La Barbara hat sich darauf spezialisiert, die klanglichen Grenzen der menschlichen Stimme auszuloten. In der «Messa di Voce» (aus dem Italienischen für «die Stimme platzieren») gestaltete sie jetzt auch Grafiken auf einer Leinwand, die in Echtzeit erzeugt wurden - also unmittelbar vom klanglichen Input ihrer Stimme. «Es ist, als ob man mit der eigenen Stimme malt», erklärte der Niederländer Jaap Blonk, der die Aufführung als zweiter Sänger mitgestaltete.

Abstrakte Linien, aus dem Mund hervorquellende Blasen, sichtbare Schallwellen oder farbige Säulen - die Grafiken, die auf die Bühnenleinwand im Linzer Bruckner-Haus geworfen wurden, fielen höchst unterschiedlich aus. Dabei erzeugten die Stimmen - meist mehr Rufen, Sprechen und Schreien als Gesang - eine eigentümliche Soundkulisse, die zum Teil wiederum vom grafischen Geschehen beeinflusst wurde. Als Kern der technischen Umsetzung diente ein Computer, der mit einer Kamera die Bewegungen der Sänger verfolgt und ihre Stimmlaute analysiert.

«Wir sind erst am Anfang unserer Arbeit», sagte Joan La Barbara im Gespräch mit Journalisten. «Die nächste Aufführung im November in London wird wieder ganz anders sein.» Und auch das Programmierer-Duo «Tmema» (aus dem Griechischen für «kleines Stück»), bestehend aus Golan Levin und Zachary Lieberman, kündigte an, dass die Software für die «Messa de Voce» weiter entwickelt werde. Auf der Aufgabenliste von Levin steht nach dem Abend in Linz eine Undo-Funktion - um zu verhindern, dass noch einmal ein Pfiff aus dem Publikum in die Aufführung eingreift und von der Software als Echo weitergetragen wird.

Dass digitale Musik auch einem breiten Publikum zugernutzt werden kann, zeigte das auf dem Eröffnungsabend der Ars Electronica aufgeführte Stück «Piano Phase» von Steve Reich. Nach einer ersten Phase rhythmisch pointierter digitaler Klänge traten die beiden Pianisten Dennis Russell Davies - Chefdirigent des Bruckner-Orchesters in Linz - und Maki Namekawa auf die Bühne und fügten sich an einem Doppelflügel nahtlos in die digitale Klangfolge ein - bis sie die Komposition schließlich allein zu Ende führten.

Das Stück «Piano Phase» ist Teil einer vierstündigen Aufführung der Ars Electronica mit dem Titel «Principles of Indeterminism».

# Associated Press

AP MAW 07.09.03 11:48:00

ddal\xgecc\wie\Klangwolke,\tanzende\Roboter\und\Elfen-Suche

## Wochenendzusammenfassung (Bild:FRA104;FRA105) (weitgehend neu)

Utl: Medienkunst-Festival Ars Electronica in Linz eröffnet -  
Software-Code als «Sprache unserer Zeit» - 30.000 Besucher erwartet  
=

Linz (AP) Mit einem musikalischen Feuerwerk und tanzenden Robotern hat am Wochenende in Linz das Medienkunst-Festival «Ars Electronica» begonnen. Künstler aus aller Welt zeigen in der oberösterreichischen Hauptstadt sechs Tage lang ihre Werke. Die besten von insgesamt 2.700 eingereichten Beiträgen aus 84 Ländern werden mit der «Goldenen Nica» ausgezeichnet, dem Oskar der Computerkunst. Leithema der von einer Fachkonferenz begleiteten Schau ist der Software-Code als «Sprache unserer Zeit». Die Veranstalter erwarten rund 30.000 Besucher.  
«Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Kunst, Gesellschaft und Technik verbindet das Thema Code alle drei Bereiche», sagte am Sonntag die künstlerische Leiterin der Ars Electronica, Christine Schöpf.  
«Jeder Mensch ist täglich mit irgendeinem Code konfrontiert.» Mehrere tausend Besucher strömten am Samstagabend zur Aufführung der «Klangwolke Europa»: Auf einer Schiffsbüühne gestalteten das Bruckner-Orchester Linz und vier Chöre ein Spektakel aus Musik, Video, Pantomime und Feuerwerk, komponiert vom österreichischen Musiker Christian Kolonovits. In anderen Konzerten - wie einer von zwei Sängerinnen aufgeführten «Missa di Voce» - kommen Software und Computergrafik als Musikinstrumente zum Einsatz.  
Als eines der zentralen Themen der Ars Electronica nannte Schöpf die Überlappung der Computerwelt mit dem realen Leben. Auf einem Platz im Zentrum von Linz demonstrierte dies die Internet-Gruppe FOK (Freie Online-Klasse) mit ihrer «größten Computertastatur der Welt», als Kletterwand eingerichtet an der Fassade der Kunstuiversität. Vier Bergsteiger hangelten sich zu den Buchstaben der Wand, schlugen dort angebrachte Kontakte an und schickten so die entsprechenden Zeichen zu einem Computer - bis ein kleines Computerprogramm fertig war. «Wir verbinden unsere Aktion mit einem Protest gegen Software-Patente und mit einem klaren Statement für freie Software», erklärte Projektteilnehmer Florian Merkur.  
Eine offizielle Anerkennung der Festival-Jury erhielt die Kölner Künstlerin Agnes Meyer-Brandis für ihren «Elfen-Scanner», eine Verbindung von Computerkunst und der Beschäftigung mit Jahrmillionen alten Gesteinsstrukturen. Einen in der Luft tanzenden Roboter hat der spanische Künstler Marcel Li Antúnez Roca installiert, der von den Bewegungen der Besucher in Schwung gebracht wird.  
Der Japaner Tomoki Saso präsentierte zum ersten Mal in Europa sein Projekt «Rotkäppchen im Cyberspace», das ein reales Buch mit dreidimensionaler Computergrafik verbindet. Wird eine Web-Cam auf bestimmte Stellen der Buchseiten gerichtet, versetzt ein Monitor das Märchen in eine fantastische 3D-Welt.  
Zu den Sponsoren der Ars Electronica gehört erstmals das deutsche Software-Unternehmen SAP. In einem Grußwort bezeichnete SAP das

## Zeichensysteme der modernen Welt: Ars Electronica beleuchtet «Codes»

Linz (dpa) - Das diesjährige Computerkunst-Festival «Ars Electronica» beleuchtet von 6. bis 11. September unter dem Titel «Codes» die Zeichensysteme der modernen Welt. «Jeder Mensch, ob Hacker oder völliger Computer-Laie, ist im Alltag mit Codes konfrontiert. Das reicht von Barcodes auf Verpackungen bis hin zu Überwachungssystemen», begründeten die Veranstalter am Mittwoch in Wien die Themenwahl. Das System allgegenwärtiger, oft unsichtbarer Codes verbinde gleichzeitig jene drei Felder, denen sich die Ars Electronica als «Festival für Kunst, Technologie und Gesellschaft» widmet.

In Symposien und Ausstellungen beleuchten Wissenschaftler und Künstler verschiedener Disziplinen die theoretischen und praktischen Aspekte der Entwicklung und des Einsatzes dieser Zeichensysteme. Der finnische Kunsthistoriker Erkki Huhtamo etwa beleuchtet die Verwendung von Software als Medium der Kunst. Die Direktorin der Electronic Frontier Foundation, die sich für die Einhaltung der Bürgerrechte im Cyberspace einsetzt, Cindy Cohn, skizziert den rechtlichen Hintergrund. Der Programmierer Marc Canter beschreibt den Einfluss der Software-Hersteller auf die Wahrnehmung von Information.

Im Mittelpunkt des diesjährigen Musik-Programms steht die Performance «Principles of Indeterminism», ein fünfstündiges Konzert, bei dem Musik von Steve Reich bis Iannis Xenakis zeitgleich in optische Bilder übertragen wird. Auch im Projekt «Messa di Voce» mit den Vokalkünstlern Jaap Blonk und Joan La Barbara wird Software als Instrument in einer Live-Performance eingesetzt.

Interaktive Ausstellungen im Brucknerhaus, im Ars Electronica Center und im O.K Zentrum für Medienkunst zeigen unter anderem die Siegerprojekte des «Prix Ars Electronica». Die «Goldenen Nicas» als Trophäen des Wettbewerbs für Cyberart in sechs Sparten und Geldpreise im Wert von insgesamt 109 000 Euro werden am 8. September in einer Gala vergeben.

(Internet: Homepage des Festivals Ars Electronica:

## Observer

DPA

Mittwoch, 20. August 2003

Nachrichtenagentur / täglich

Seite: 1 / ganze Seite

Suchbegriff: Ars Electronica, -Center, -Festival

Publikationsname  
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Gedruckte Auflage

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## Messa di Voce

NEWS

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20.06.2003

**After the audiovisual installations *RE:MARK* and *Hidden Worlds of Noise and Voice* Golan Levin and Zach Lieberman once more realize a project focusing on the visualization of sound and voice. *Messa di Voce* is a concert performance with the vocal artists Joan La Barbara and Jaap Blonk.**

*Messa di Voce* is a concert performance and creates a fascinating symbiosis of sound and image, real voices and virtual graphics. A software that has been custom-designed for this project converts every vocal nuance into highly expressive real-time graphics with which the singers, in turn, can play. A cycle of interaction that fully integrates the performers and singers into an ambience consisting of sound, virtual 3-D graphics and real-time processing.

The software in *Messa di Voce* combines a motion tracking system and a speech analysis and projects graphic objects in real-time. Every noise long and short, high and low notes, shouting, barking, coughing sound level and intensity have a visual correspondence. The result is the illusion that language and sound are visible.

*Messa di Voce* does not use any elements of a concrete language; instead, it is completely abstract. The vocal artists Joan La Barbara (US) and Jaap Blonk (NL) will experiment with all possibilities of vocal expression and thus create a space full of sound poetry. In the interaction with the real-time graphics it is possible to tell stories in which reality and virtuality melt. The result is a technically complex and nevertheless enormously playful audiovisual narrative.

The term "mess di voce" ("placing the voice") describes one of the most difficult exercises for singers. One note is sung in a steady *crescendo* and *descrescendo* and in *piano* and *forte* without leaving the pitch. This as well as intonation and resonance have to stay constant. The difficulty is not to change the tone by altering the sound quality.

Golan Levin: Artist, composer, engineer interested in developing artifacts and events which explore subtle new modes of interactive expression. Levin is primarily engaged in the development of technical systems and software to realize audiovisual installations. He was represented in the Ars Electronica 2001 with his *Dialtones Telesymphony*. His installations *RE:MARK* and *Hidden Worlds of Noise and Voice* (2002) are to be seen in the Ars Electronica Center. He is given an Award of Distinction in the category Net Vision in this year Prix

Ars Electronica for his project *The Secret Lives of Numbers*.

Zachary Lieberman: New York based visual artist and software engineer. Artist in residence in the Ars Electronica Futurelab in 2002. His work emphasizes installations that combine sound localization systems and 3-D projections.

Joan La Barbara: one of the most significant contemporary vocal artists going far beyond the boundaries of traditional vocal art. Worldwide concerts, producer of several recordings of John Cage and Morton Feldman et. al. She premiered works of American composers, Robert Ashley, Philip Glass, Charles Dodge, Morton Subotnick among others. Compositions for dance and film.

Jaap Blonk: composer, vocal artist, sound poet. Work as soloist and collaboration with several ensembles and musicians in the field of contemporary music and improvisation. Founder and leader of the orchestra "Splinks" and the avant - rock trio "BRAAXTAAL. □

*Messa di Voce* is a project of Tmema by Golan Levin and Zachary Lieberman. Presented on September 7, 2003, 19:30 in the Brucknerhaus Linz.



Tuesday, October 28, 2003



HOME > WORLD

## Singing a stream of floating images

Rosanne Bersten  
OCTOBER 28, 2003

ARTISTS Jaap Blonk and Joan la Barbara are babbling, but the audience is transfixed. They are using their voices as the input for an amazing performance at Ars Electronica, a week-long electronic arts extravaganza in Linz, Austria.

The performances include five groups of Australian artists, among them Linz-based Time's Up (<http://www.timesup.org/>), with Australian researcher Tim Boykett.

The group's work immerses individuals in acts that challenge space and gravity, such as Sensory Circus, Sonic Pong and SPIN.

Other Australian artists are Experimenta, the Next Wave Festival, Electrofringe and ACMI.

In Jaap and Joan's act, three enormous screens behind them display their sounds transformed into lines, curves and bubbles. The audience is equipped with 3D glasses and the objects float out towards the audience.

In one part of the performance, Jaap and Joan stand against a red background like a field of distress flares and seem to speak in streams of white lava and teal oil.

In another, they use their voices to paint: very basic, fat black lines for louder sounds, holding a note steady makes the line stay straight, pitch variations curve and where lines cross, colour appears vibrant.

Jaap paints dots with staccato "ha, ha, ha" sounds while Joan creates sweeping curlicues with trills and swooping notes.

"I was more driven by what I saw on the screen than by what I heard, but intuitively we use some things that relate to each other, some rhythms," Jaap says.

"There are certain tasks we're trying to accomplish," Joan says. "I'd like a little more control, but I think it's a matter of getting used to the instrument. There's also cross-talk between the two microphones. Sometimes I would be singing and doing a line, but because of what he was doing it would get jagged."

The creators of the software, Golan Levin and Zachary Lieberman, say it's early days. "Zach and I are software developers, more than software artists," Golan says.

"The work is about the relationship between sound and image. In the combination of the two, hopefully it succeeds. The ideal would be for Joan to walk away saying the audio is great, this is an album, and I could walk away

saying the collaboration was great."

If this is just the beginning, the possibilities are impressive. What would come out if it was played with an aria? What sort of works will artists of the future create with this technology? There will be further performances in England in November (see <http://www.ultrasound.ws/> and <http://www.ica.org.uk/> for details).

Ars Electronica is at <http://www.aec.at/>. The centre has four floors of permanent exhibition (including a virtual reality cave with simulated time travel) and many other works exploring digital interface, haptics, music and more.

For the festival and the coveted Golden Nica of the Prix Ars Electronica, the exhibitions and installations have overflowed into at least four other venues.

In the Brucknerhaus, the electrolobby is filled with experimental works, including Trash Mirror, which reflects your shadow at you in a collection of lost bus tickets and packaging; and Switch, an interactive feature film from Denmark. In the Hauptplatz, an enormous climbing wall laid over big printed letters forms the TeleKletterGarten, a programming interface that requires bodily intervention.

Performances are scheduled twice daily, with coders relaxing on the couches below asking for the next letter through a microphone as climbers scramble across to the Enter key.

In the OK Centre, visitors can explore the winning works of the Prix, including the stunning animation Tim Tom, a student project from France (by comparison, last year's prize for animation went to Monsters).

This year's theme is Code, and Humboldt University-Berlin's Institute for Aesthetics music history and aesthetics professor Friedrich Kittler starts with a history of code, code as law, code as a set of instructions and code as language.

Electronic Frontier Foundation legal director Cindy Kohn discusses the legal implications of code as speech, and Smart Mobs author Howard Rheingold tells the audience "the battle over code is the battle over our ability to organise collectively".

"We need to take back the public sphere," he says. "We have opportunities for new technologies, new social forms, new cultural forms. It's important to stress that a smart mob is not necessarily a wise mob."

Around all this is woven a soundtrack of digital and analog music, from the cutting edge Blockjam, toy of the future, to Audiopad, a collaborative light interface for performance by James Patten and Ben Recht from MIT.

One Japanese work involves instruments that play themselves, including an automatic xylophone shaped like four flowers with moving petals.

Winner of the Golden Nica for interactive art is Blast Theory from the UK, which aims to be in Adelaide in February 2004, with a work called Can You See Me Now? It has real-world players chasing online players using GPS and WiFi.

*Tech Traveller is an occasional series.*



# il manifesto

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## Tutti nella rete digitale

Ars Electronica a Linz, tante performance e un solo «code»

MARINA TURCO

I festival sono per il mondo della cultura quello che i pellegrinaggi sono per la religione: un evento eccezionale, in cui i ritmi e le occupazioni della vita quotidiana sono sospesi per consentire ad una comunità di celebrare i propri riti. *Ars Electronica* (Linz) è il luogo sacro della cultura digitale, dove non soltanto si riuniscono gli specialisti del settore e si presentano le ultime novità «artistico-tecnologiche» ma si rinsaldano e rinnovano gli ideali che sostengono questa cultura. La parola magica, il tema di questa edizione, *code*, cerca ancora nei codici astratti della programmazione un comune denominatore, filosofico e pragmatico, per tutte le forme espressive legate ai media digitali. Le installazioni interattive, i video games, le animazioni cinematografiche, le performance e la net-art hanno un linguaggio comune. Ma il codice, come hanno sottolineato alcuni studiosi e artisti presenti alle conferenze, non è linguaggio. Solo l'utilizzo di un codice a fini comunicativi in un certo contesto sociale crea un linguaggio. Le performance presentate a Linz forniscono un esempio di questo scarto concettuale. Lo stesso software è stato utilizzato da alcuni artisti sia per le installazioni che per gli spettacoli multimediali. Justin Manor ha realizzato, con il supporto dell'Ars Electronica Center, l'opera *Key Grip*, menzione speciale per la categoria «arte interattiva». Il lavoro si basa su un software che permette di manipolare le immagini video, registrate o live, con il gamepad arcade. Nell'installazione l'«interattore» vede se stesso sullo schermo e può deformare, ruotare, avvicinare l'immagine con i tasti del gamepad, scegliendo tra pochi effetti predefiniti. Nel vj set *Transcription of Sound*, eseguito all'O.K. Centrum con Timon Botez e il dj-rapper Eric Gunther, l'artista americano utilizza sample televisivi e processa le immagini al ritmo della musica dance, seguendo iconografie e tematiche della tradizione vj-ing. Il software di *Key Grip*, comandato dal gamepad e da altri strumenti, ha prodotto anche i *visual* con cui Manor ha accompagnato il concerto più tradizionale dello Studio Percussion Graz (*Principles of Indeterminism*).

Uno degli spettacoli più acclamati del festival è stato *Messa di Voce*, poetica interpretazione delle infinite possibilità acustiche della voce umana. I virtuosismi sonori dei vocalisti Jaap Blonk e Joan La Barbara vengono tradotti in immagini dal programma elaborato da Golan Levin e Zachary Lieberman, programma basato sui sistemi di *speech analysis* (misurazione dello stress nella voce, riconoscimento dei fonemi ecc.): lettere e forme (associate ai suoni secondo i principi della psicologia della gestalt) escono letteralmente dalla bocca dei performer, creando una storia surreale che ibrida il linguaggio dei fumetti, della poesia visiva e dell'arte astratta. La versione per installazione, realizzata l'anno scorso nel contesto dell'*artists-in-residence* del Futurelab, è stata riproposta all'Ars Electronica Center. Ma il visitatore che prova a generare forme con la propria voce ottiene risultati molto meno «spettacolari».

I software interattivi applicati a forme più o meno tradizionali di spettacolo cominciano a sviluppare un linguaggio complesso, articolato in «dialetti» che corrispondono ai diversi contesti sociali e culturali. Si va dai programmi che traducono imput sonori in immagini (Lia), a quelli che analizzano il movimento dei ballerini sul palco (il *motion tracking* nella versione elaborata da Paolo Coletta, vedi [www.eyesweb.org](http://www.eyesweb.org)), alla semplice manipolazione di immagini in *real time*. Tutti questi sistemi possono interagire con ogni tipo di performance (teatro, danza, musica), con risultati imprevedibili. Lo stesso Ars Electronica nel suo insieme è una straordinaria performance, un evento abilmente orchestrato per coinvolgere il pubblico, attivare emozioni e relazioni. Conferenze, spettacoli, incontri che avvengono in luoghi dai nomi suggestivi (l'Electrolobby, l'Electrokitchen, il Futurelab), come tanti piccoli palcoscenici della cultura digitale su cui si muovono le star (Lev Manovich, Howard Rheingold, John Maeda, Pierre Lévy) e molti attori co-protagonisti.

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## Ars Electronica: interface futures

**Kate Richards**



Marcel-li Antunez Rocha, *POL*, a Mechatronic Performance  
photo: Sabine Starmayr

*Ars Electronica* is revered in the annals of new media arts and theory, and for its role in the European, Oceanic and North American new media art scenes. Packed into 5 days at Linz, about an hour and a half from Vienna and straddling the River Danube, the event comprises a conference, an exhibition at the *Ars Electronica* Museum of the Future, the Prix at the OK Centrum, electronic theatre and live performance. Linz is small and it's easy to flow between the riverside and downtown venues while media arts lay an incongruous internationalist map onto the medieval city.

The conference is now rather institutionalised and themed (this year: Code = art, code = law, code = life). Among the exhibitions and performances there are 3 threads I want to mention: realtime video and audio manipulation; multi-user environments; and developments in tactile user interfaces.

Realtime manipulation of video and audio signal flow is a prevalent *techné*. The *Cinema Fabrique* (Justin Manor, USA) is a gesture-controlled, hardware/software environment for single-person improvisation. Holding a section of the interface in each hand, the visitor can choose, filter, scratch, loop

and otherwise manipulate projected pop culture video/audio sequences. The 2-handed interface is enticing—it encourages expressive, free-form movement and a dance approach to interactivity.

The software artists TMEMA (Golan Levin, Zachary Leiberman USA) in collaboration with voice artists Jaap Blonk (NL) and Joan La Barbara (USA), performed the playful *Messa di Voce*. The piece is written in custom code developed during a residency at *Ars Electronica*, and is based on speech recognition algorithms. In what was more a series of set pieces than a fully realised performance, the vocalists were tracked spatially and their utterances analysed in real time. The system synthesises and outputs graphics in response—so Blonk performs his virtuosic vocals and the graphically rendered bubbles projected around his head are pushed up and suspended by the force of his breath. While the possibilities of the technical arrangements are very inspiring, I had to ask what creative and aesthetic development has been sacrificed for the complexity of the software development.

A wonderfully realised live performance with interactivity was *POL, a Mechatronic Performance* by Marcel-li Antunez Rocha (Spain). Two performers with exo-skeletal apparatus drive the fable of a rabbit's search for love; performers' action and voice, transcoded by the exo-skeleton, manipulate robotic off-siders, sound and projections. The complex, 3 channel Flash animations are synthesised into a retro-futuristic trope of mythical creatures, Bosch-like scapes and scenarios of sex, death and betrayal. The robotic and the cybernetic merge with an aesthetic of baroque intensity, evoking various origins of the abject and disembodied subject: surrealism, 1920s futurism, medievalism and collective fable.

Multiuser environments provide a challenge to new media artists and designers. *Instant City* (Sybille Hauert, Daniel Reichmuth, CH) is developed in Max/MSP. A very tactile interface helps—visitors stand around a square plinth on which they arrange acrylic blocks in architectural forms—the ‘buildings’ of the instant city. The placement and mass of the blocks manipulates the sound composition (visitors choose between 6). The installation successfully brings visitors together across the top of the plinth:

the acrylic blocks, lovely in their own sandblasted way, are non-threatening. It is easy to play with their manipulating effect and to tweak the compositions with a degree of finesse.

*Access* by Marie Sester (France) allows more freeform audience response. A motion-tracking spotlight attaches itself to a passerby and follows them around the gallery. A simple idea, which has complex interactivity affect (people become self-conscious about ‘being in the spotlight’ and probably about the simplicity of the metaphor too). Why am I grinning so foolishly? Visitors become inventive—playing tag with the light, and with other potential ‘subjects’, pushing the installation to its limits. *Access* plays with notions of light as sprite, the audience as focus of attention, and an anthropomorphism we cannot help but bring to animated objects.

In *Pockets Full of Memories* (George Legrady, USA), visitors scan an object of their choice and enter associated metadata into a database.

Throughout the duration of the exhibition the database grows and is continually reconfigured (and projected) as an emergent system using a Kohonen self-organising map algorithm. Although employing a single user interface, the installation evokes real world consciousness of being and contributing in a system with others, in which we nevertheless aim to make an individual mark.

*Can you see me now?* (Blast Theory and The Mixed Reality Lab, University of Nottingham, UK) is an addition to an important body of multi-user performance works. *CUSMN* operates in the non-private, non-public cultural spaces emerging around wireless communications like mobile phones, GPS and 3G. ‘Real’ players on the street and online players inhabit the city and a virtual overlay—“the players online and the runners in the street enter into a relationship that is adversarial, playful and ultimately filled with pathos.” A crucial feature of Blast Theory projects is the ability to extend user and audience affect *outside* the game—rather than delimiting our consciousness to the stereotypical and virtual, the gameplay pushes us to understand aspects of ourselves, our communities and social responsibility. This is partially achieved by the very visceral gameplay—in *CUSMN* the players and

gameplay self-generate affects of pursuer and pursued. In a new work, *Uncle Joe*, players are encouraged to buddy up and commit to long term mutual support outside the game, without any mediation by the organisers. It was encouraging to see Blast Theory awarded the Prix Ars Electronica Golder Nica, which has in the past lauded some commercial, apolitical projects.

Developments in tactical user interface were particularly in evidence at the *Ars Electronica* Centre. Many of these applications are prototypical and easily understood as collaborative production tools. However the possibility of artistic application imbues them with extra frisson. *The Audio Pad* (James Patten, Ben Recht, MIT, USA) enables sole or collaborative users to compose using freely mobile discs that trigger and manipulate predetermined audio compositional variables (eg timbre and pitch). The interface is very attractive, fluid and responsive. Also developed at MIT, the *SAND TRAY* tool enables multiple users to model interdependencies in earth science, engineering or hydraulic projects using a tray of coarse sand as the interface. Depending on how the sand is modelled—add a hill, flatten a mound—the effects on height, topography, water flow and temperature are calculated and projected back onto the sand in realtime. These innovations in tactical and multi-user interface address current issues about collaborative work process and the role of interactivity.

Other displays use sound as data input, and many visitors were fascinated by *Protrude, flow* by Sachiko Kodama and Minako Takeno (Japan), an installation of strongly magnetic fluid which responds to sound inputs. An attempt to model matter freely, as well as express wild and organic shapes, the work responds to synchronous sound by creating 3D patterns of splitting, clustering, flowing or dripping.

Finally, a whimsical work *Earth Core Laboratory and Elf Scan* (Agnes Meyer-Brandis, Germany) encourages a very careful, delicate form of tactical user interactivity. Based on the conceit that mineral-dwelling elves carry on a complex, humanoid life within a parallel universe of mineral cores, the work demands visitors very carefully scan the cores with some pseudo-scientific gear. The more careful,

delicate and composed your search, the steadier your hand, the greater chance of seeing the little elf vignettes.

Ars Electronica, *directors Gerfried Stocker & Christine Schopf, Linz, Austria, Sept 6-11*

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Identificativo: DO20030914014AAA

Data: 14/09/2003

Testata: IL SOLE 24 ORE

Giorno: Domenica

Inserto: DOMENICA / ARTE

Linz - All'Ars Electronica Festival gli intrecci tra immagini, suoni e tecnologie innovative

### **Dipingere con la voce**

*Dai dispositivi che riproducono i rumori delle nostre città ai concerti live per "computer solo": la musica è la vera protagonista dell'edizione 2003 di Chiara Somajni*

Jaap Blonk e Joan La Barbara sono in piedi ai lati del palcoscenico. Con la voce muovono un enorme rettangolo proiettato sullo schermo che li separa, un po' come fanno i bambini altalenando a cavalcioni sulle due estremità di un'asse in bilico. Un inizio in bianco e nero, astratto, lieve che presto si anima del virtuosismo vocale dei due straordinari performer e di quanto la loro voce e i loro movimenti generano: un dirompente concerto sonoro e visivo, in cui suoni e colori sono strettamente correlati. Tanto i movimenti quanto l'emissione vocale sono infatti monitorati e rielaborati in tempo reale: così dalle loro bocche insieme ai giochi di voce escono forme colorate, le loro ombre si staccano e diventano elementi ritmici della trama musicale-visiva, l'intero spazio scenico diventa una tastiera cromatica. *Messa di Voce* di Golan Levin e Zachary Lieberman è organizzata in una serie di quadri, nell'ambito dei quali i due performer improvvisano su una serie di regole di interazione prestabilite, cercando di dare alla propria interpretazione un unitario senso musicale e visivo. Sono quadri talvolta giocosi, come quando il borbottio di Jaap si traduce in un'emissione di bolle nere che volano verso l'alto progressivamente riempiendo lo spazio fino a cascare all'improvviso a terra, in una repentina inversione delle leggi fisiche. Talvolta astratti, come nell'ultima sequenza, quando la voce letteralmente dipinge sullo schermo; e lo cancella con un semplice "Sssht".

*Messa di Voce* ha debuttato all'Ars Electronica Festival che l'ha prodotto e del quale l'opera ha rappresentato una sorta di controcanto poetico rispetto alla sovrabbondante presenza di opere tendenti all'autocompiacimento tecnologico e di rado espressive. È un rischio inevitabile per un'imponente manifestazione come quella di Linz (Austria), che mira a investigare il terreno in cui si intrecciano arte, tecnologia e società privilegiando l'innovazione, e che negli anni è cresciuta fino a perdere quel mordente proprio di realtà più giovani. Così il festival oscilla in maniera sempre più evidente tra il desiderio di premiare la ricerca tecnologica e la necessità di dare maggiore spazio a una scena artistica che di questi strumenti si è progressivamente appropriata ma per la quale l'innovazione non è più necessariamente un valore prioritario. L'ambizione di coprire in maniera interdisciplinare un ambito tanto vasto è difficile da perseguire senza perdere la bussola, così pur continuando a essere una straordinaria caratteristica di questo festival ne diventa anche il limite. Ambiguità che emergono sia nella selezione delle opere per i premi Cyberarts sia nella sezione monografica del festival, quest'anno dedicata al codice in quanto "linguaggio del nostro tempo" ovvero "codice=legge codice=arte codice=vita".

Un tema urgente, come sottolinea Florian Cramer (giovane studioso di letteratura, computing e net art), ma posto in maniera ingannevole: è fuorviante infatti usarlo in senso metaforico, "non ha in sé nulla a che vedere con la legge, l'arte, la vita; può semmai diventare materia per creare delle opere d'arte". Nel corso del convegno questa distinzione almeno è emersa chiaramente, grazie a interventi che del "codice", ovvero del linguaggio artificiale di programmazione dei computer, hanno mostrato le derivazioni storiche (Kittel), le affinità e le differenze che esistono rispetto ai linguaggi puramente iconici quindi privi di grammatica (Cramer), alle lingue naturali o agli utopici tentativi di imporre lingue universali come il Volapuk o l'Esperanto (Findeisen). Accanto ad alcune relazioni del tutto eccentriche (come quella deludente di Howard Rheingold, venuto a promuovere il suo libro sugli smart mobs) e a interessanti considerazioni sui vantaggi che comporterebbe un approccio naturale, generativo, "genetico" nello sviluppo dei software rispetto all'attuale approccio top down (che rischia di diventare presto ingestibile, Bentley), molto spazio è stato dato alla ricerca artistica. Sono gli artisti che in questi anni hanno cercato di mostrare come il software sia inteso oggi sul piano culturale, che ne hanno decodificato e messo a nudo la natura, mostrandone i limiti e rendendolo più accessibile concettualmente e praticamente. Un esempio, tratto dalla mostra "Codedoc" curata da Christiane Paul per il Whitney Museum e presentata a Linz: Bradford Paley ha realizzato un programma che se eseguito mostra se stesso, nonché la sequenza secondo la quale è stato elaborato, la stringa di comandi che in quel momento viene letta ed eseguita dal computer e la presunta progressione nella lettura dell'osservatore. Di interazione con i software è fatta sempre più la nostra quotidianità, comprenderne la natura diventa dunque una necessità. C'è anche chi si sforza di rendere più accessibile la programmazione stessa, come Casey Reas Ben Fry con *Processing*, progetto artistico-didattico online. Tra le rideclinazioni più intriganti del tema, l'esilarante concerto dal vivo per computer solo di Alexei Schulgin (che con 386dx ha riproposto una serie di classici rock interpretati da un sintetizzatore vocale), l'installazione 24! di Aschbauer, Pfaffenbicher e Schreiber che traduce nello spazio fisico visivamente e acusticamente un semplice programma, e *Trash Mirror* 2002 di Daniel Rozin, un grande schermo che invece dei pixel impiega frammenti di oggetti riciclati, e che restituisce in tempo reale la sagoma della nostra immagine (ripresa da una telecamera) attraverso un gioco di chiaroscuri ottenuto muovendo i singoli frammenti.

Venendo alla mostra delle opere selezionate per le Nica d'oro, i premi per l'arte interattiva e per la Rete sono stati assegnati a due progetti che impiegano rispettivamente Gps e Wi-Fi (tecnologie attualmente molto in) e che sono concepiti come giochi sociali: una caccia all'uomo il primo (*Can you see me now?* di Blast Theory e altri), una sorta di caccia al tesoro il secondo (*Noderunner* di Y. Gitman e C.J.G. de Llarena). Mentre la sezione dedicata alla Rete è piuttosto ricca (di vari progetti si è già parlato su queste pagine; rinviamo al sito [www.aec.at](http://www.aec.at)), la mostra dedicata alle installazioni interattive è risultata nel complesso piuttosto deludente. Meritano però d'essere segnalati almeno *Deep Walls* di Scott Snibbe (uno schermo passando davanti al quale la nostra ombra in movimento viene catturata e riproposta in piccoli loop accanto ad altre 11); *Block Jam* di H. Newton-Dunn, H. Nakano, J. Gibson e R. Kuwakubo

(una serie di mattoncini combinabili che permettono di comporre musica con progressivi gradi di sofisticatezza); *Streetscape* di Iori Nakai (un dispositivo che restituisce la memoria sonora di alcune città) e gli strumenti assurdi, musicali e non, di Maywa Denki. La musica ritorna come promettente filo conduttore di questa edizione, ricordiamo dunque il premio per la musica digitale, andato ad Astro Twin / *Cosmos* di A. Yoshida, Sachiko M e U. Kawasaki; e infine *Tim Tom* di R. Segaud e C. Pougeoise, vincitore per la sezione Computer animation e Visual effect.

## Messa di Voce Tmema / Jaap Blonk / Joan La Barbara

Messa di Voce (ital. „die Stimme platzieren“) ist eine Konzertperformance, in der Sprache, stimmliche Geräusche und Gesang zweier Vokalkünstler durch eine interaktive Software in Echtzeit-Visualisierungen umgesetzt werden. In Messa di Voce verschmelzen Spontaneität und die herausragenden Stimmtechniken der Performer mit neuesten Technologien der Spracherkennung und Computergrafik. Eine spielerische und virtuose audiovisuelle Erzählung.

*Messa di Voce (ital. „placing the voice“) is a concert performance in which the speech, shouts and songs produced by a duet of abstract vocalists are radically augmented in real-time by Tmema's custom interactive visualization software. In Messa di Voce, the unpredictable spontaneity and extended vocal techniques of two master composer/improvisers meld with the latest in computer vision and speech recognition technologies in the service of a sophisticated, playful, and virtuosic audiovisual narrative.*



Tmema is Golan Levin and Zachary Lieberman.  
Composers/performers: Jaap Blonk and Joan La Barbara.  
Computer vision subsystem: Carlos Andres Rocha.  
Additional production design: Gregory Shakar.  
Commissioned by the Ars Electronica Festival 2003, Linz.  
Produced with the generous support of SAP, la Fondation Daniel Langlois,  
Eyebeam Atelier, Ars Electronica Futurelab, Speechworks, the Rockefeller  
Foundation Multi-Arts Production Fund, and the Lower  
Manhattan Cultural Council.  
Look for **Messa di Voce** in England in November 2003!  
November 7-8: Institute for Contemporary Art, London.  
November 29: Ultrasound, Huddersfield.

# ULTRASOUND 2003

27/28/29/NOV/HUDDERSFIELD/

Golan Levin, Zach Lieberman, Jaap Blonk  
+ Joan La Barbara / Stillupsteypa /  
Adriana Sá / @c+Lia / Vindva Mei /  
Kippi Kaninus / Kitchen Motors Band /  
Johann Johannsson / Hilmar Jansson /  
Ólöf Arnalds / ap / Darri + Thorunn /  
Nullpointer / rand()% / Mugison /  
Sumeru /

[www.ultrasound.ws](http://www.ultrasound.ws)

Ultrasound is a 3 day international festival exploring the territory of experimental sound and electronic music.  
Ultrasound 2003 also includes DJ Night, Workshops, Conference and Showcase.



**TMEMA is GOLAN LEVIN and ZACHARY LIEBERMAN. Software by TMEMA. Composed and performed by JAAP BLOK and JOAN LA BARBARA.**

*Messa di Voce* was commissioned by the 2003 Ars Electronica Festival. Produced with the generous support of: SAP, la Fondation Langlois, Eyebeam Atelier Artist Residency Program, Ars Electronica Futurelab, The Rockefeller Foundation Multi-Arts Production Fund, and the New York State Council on the Arts. Costumes by Sasha Wizansky. Sound design by Gregory Shakar.

### *A new performance for voice and interactive media*

**Messa di Voce** (Ital., "putting the voice") is a new concert performance in which the speech, shouts and songs produced by two abstract vocalists are radically augmented in real-time by custom interactive visualization software. The performance touches on themes of abstract communication, synaesthetic relationships, cartoon language, and writing and scoring systems, within the context of a sophisticated, playful, and virtuosic audiovisual narrative.

Tmema's software transforms every vocal nuance into correspondingly complex, subtly differentiated and highly expressive graphics. These visuals not only depict the singers' voices, but also serve as controls for their acoustic playback. While the voice-generated graphics thus become an instrument which the singers can perform, body-based manipulations of these graphics additionally replay the sounds of the singers' voices - thus creating a cycle of interaction that fully integrates the performers into an ambience consisting of sound, virtual objects and real-time processing.

*Messa di Voce* lies at an intersection of human and technological performance extremes, melding the unpredictable spontaneity and extended vocal techniques of two master composer/improvisers with the latest in computer vision and voice analysis technologies. Utterly wordless, yet profoundly verbal, *Messa di Voce* is designed to provoke questions about the meaning and effects of speech sounds, speech acts, and the immersive environment of language.

More information can be found at <http://tmema.org/messa>

# Go West!

Home to a world-renowned music festival, site of architectural splendour and host to some culinary crackers; we uncover the real Huddersfield

## HCMF

A time of great rejoicing and merriment which comes but once a year

One of the country's most exciting and diverse (not-to-mention under-documented) arts events, the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival is an impressive 26 years old this month. A showcase for both the highly acclaimed and the underexposed from the UK and overseas, this year promises to deliver one of the most adventurous line-ups ever. In fact, eschewing the mainstream has always been very much at the heart of things according to the event's organisers. "We dare to champion composers and artists that we really believe in and want to hear, sometimes flying in the face of fashion elsewhere," they say, and sure enough, a look at the current event diary confirms this.

While it would be convenient to claim that many of the performers can broadly be categorised into either the jazz or classical arenas; the truth, and in many respects the very point of the matter is that there are many others who more accurately occupy the spaces between and around those two crude delineations. This means you can easily spend an afternoon listening to the **Arditti Quartet's** matchless interpretations of the most avant-garde contemporary repertoire, followed by **Psappha** (they liked it so much last year, they came back) — a theatre-meets-music ensemble the size of a football team with more than a penchant for the works of Frank Zappa. If the exotic modal refrains of Hungary's finest touring musicians don't tickle your fancy, then pop across to the Lawrence Batley Theatre main stage and experience electro-acoustic 'sound' art courtesy of one the edgiest and most conceptual of trios, **The GRM Experience**.

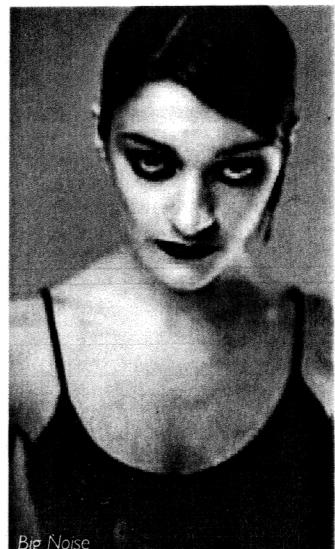
The HCMF must also be applauded for its unwavering commitment to new music, with 14 world premieres, 34 UK premieres and three special commissions — along with a healthy selection of overseas acts making their UK debuts. Among the delights that should be of interest to discerning surveyors of the *Leeds Guide Jazz & World* section is **Big Noise** — an explosive combination which brings together two of the most important forces in contemporary music; Dutch group *Orkest de Volharding* and British outfit *Icebreaker*. The former — little known on these shores, but almost

a genre-defining act at home — harnesses saxophones, French horn, piccolo and double bass to quite revolutionary effect. Couple this with the 12-piece fully electrified panpipe and guitar assault of *Icebreaker* and quite stunning support from leading club visual team *Hexitatic* and the result is as varied and compelling as the Festival itself.

A few words are also due for opening act **Tim Berne's Science Friction**. A seminal figure in jazz and contemporary music for more than two decades, Berne's career has been a fascinating and sometimes freaky journey during which the deliciously warped alto sax man has fused sizzling avant jazz with an assortment of textural colourations straight out of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop. A crack musical exploration team including long time collaborator, producer, guitarist and electronics pioneer David Torn joins him on his sci-fi quest. Expect mutating funky backbeats and otherworldly improvisation.

As well as live performances look out for the numerous fringe events such as **Ultrasound** — a three-day event "exploring the territory of experimental sound and electronic music" as well as other interactive workshops and educational events — some yet to be announced. All in all, a true musical feather in Huddersfield's cultural cap — and a timely pre-festive treat into the bargain.

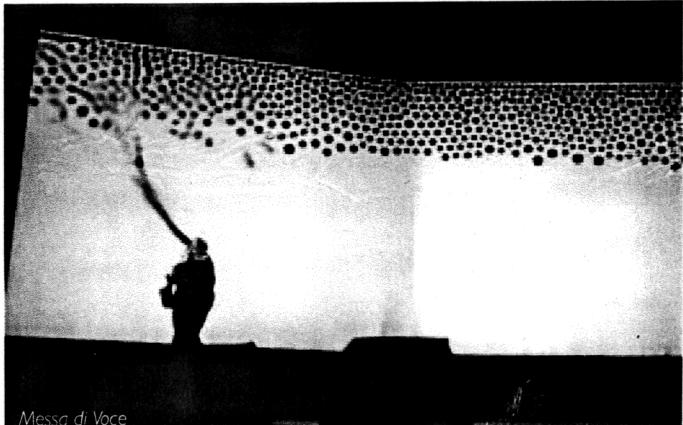
Andrew Brown



Big Noise

## Ultrasound

Listen up, but don't worry if your brain is deafened, says Abi Bliss



Messa di Voce

You may not be aware of ultrasound — unless you happen to be one of *Leeds Guide's* select number of canine or bat readers, the high-frequency sounds are outside the range of hearing — but nevertheless it's still there. Similarly, next time you go to a club and dance to some techno whilst admiring the visuals, you may not be thinking of the "reciprocal contamination of creative means and sensibilities", but that doesn't mean that someone else isn't.

Like the Contemporary Music Festival's eccentric, computer-obsessed younger sibling, the Ultrasound festival brings the experimental and technological possibilities of electronic music to the fore. Combining live performances with workshops and a conference, this year's festival will feature a special 'Icelandic Partition'. Co-programmed by Thor Magnusson of *ixi-software* — who produce free software to help create experimental electronica — the strand highlights the rich mine of creativity and individualism to be found on the windswept, volcanic island.

One such act is the **Kitchen Motors Band**, a multi-activity collective who combine music-making with running a label and art organisation, film-making and publishing. Their first gig saw them using only acoustic or battery-powered instruments, including glockenspiel and portable radio. Whilst their set at Ultrasound will be amplified, it's unlikely that their take on electronica's bleeps and bloopes will be completely straightforward. Other Icelandic artists appearing include garage-rockers-turned-amorphous-sound-artists

**Stillupsteypa**, and recorder player **Thorunn Björnsdóttir**, who will be collaborating with **Darri Lorenzen**.

Portuguese sound artist **Adriana Sá** has been in residence at the Media Centre's Digital Research Unit since October, working on a piece that combines architecture, weather, geometry, notation systems and philosophy: Ultrasound presents a chance to see and hear the results. Over at Huddersfield Art Gallery, **Messa di Voce** is a US/Netherlands collaboration which pits a duo of "professional abstract vocalists" against two software manipulators, with the aim of exploring the links between visual and heard language. If that sounds a little too highbrow, then back at the Media Centre, Tom Betts, aka **Nullpointer**, will cater to the 8-bit side of listeners' brains with his music composed on the Nintendo Gameboy.

Ultrasound appears to be performing a strange balancing act between accessibility and elitism: the events are free to attend, yet many are couched in an intimidatingly academic language, almost as though the organisers felt that for electronic music to be taken seriously (which it should be), it needs to be taken out of clubs and into the lecture theatres and the laboratory. But that shouldn't put people off discovering some of the most ear-stretching and brain-twisting sounds this side of a bats' convention.

**Ultrasound** runs from 27 to 29 November at the Media Centre, Huddersfield, with the exception of **Messa di Voce** which takes place on 29 November at Huddersfield Art Gallery

## Q&amp;A

Golan Levin



In collaboration with fellow software artist Zachary Lieberman and singers/composers Jaap Blonk and Joan La Barbara, Golan Levin (pictured) has created *Messa Di Voce*, a new concert performance in which the speech, shouts and song of two abstract vocalists are complemented by corresponding live graphics. The show is part of *Ultrasound 2003*, Huddersfield's international festival of experimental sound and electronic music.

**Please explain *Messa Di Voce* in layman's terms.** It means 'placing the voice'. It's a conscious performance in which we are visualising the speech and song of two singers with extended vocal techniques, in that they specialise in making unusual vocal sounds. The concept is they're singing and, as they sing, it has been visualised behind them on a large screen.

**Right. And how do you do that exactly?** We've written all the software that does the visualisation, which uses speech recognition technology. We know where the performers' heads are, so we can make the graphics appear to be emerging from them. We can change the colour or the shape or the texture of the graphics to correspond with the singing.

**So were you a software developer before embarking on this?**

No, I'm an artist.

**Did you have to get up on computer programming?** That's like asking a painter if they had to learn how to use paint. I think every artist has to do research into how to use their materials. The art here is software.

**Sorry.** That's OK. We've had some problems getting press about the project because no one knows quite how to categorise it. Is it visual? Is it a music concert? We're well into the 21st century and we're ready for a new form of performance. Although, in a way, we've had it for 100 years and we've called it cinema – but this is live.

Mickey Noonan

Tomorrow, Huddersfield Art Gallery, Princess Alexandra Walk, Huddersfield, 7pm, free with ticket, returns only.

Tel: 0870 990 5007.

[www.tmem.org/messa](http://www.tmem.org/messa)

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## CLUB

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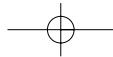
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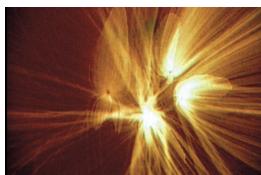
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HUDDERSFIELD, ENGLAND

## Ultrasound

Ultrasound is a new international festival that will be held in Huddersfield in Yorkshire, England, from November 27 to 29, exploring the territory of experimental sound and electronic music. If contemporary music is a radical research in sound beyond music, Ultrasound attempts to research beyond the sound, opening to explore the intersections of audio and video. The festival features a new work by Golan Levin, *Messa di voce*, realized in collaboration with Zachary Lieberman and the voice performers Joan La Barbara and Jaap Blonk. *Messa di voce* is a concert of visualized speech and songs: the speech, shouts, barks, and songs produced by the duet of abstract vocalists La Barbara and Blonk are radically augmented in real-time by custom interactive visualization software designed by Levin and



GOLAN LEVIN, Scribble, 2002. Live performance at Ultrasound 2002.

Lieberman. The 40-minute performance, lying at the intersection of human and technological performance extremes, explores the themes of abstract communication, synesthesia, cartoon language, writing, and scoring language. The festival also presents a special section curated by Thor Magnusson, dedicated to the emerging electronic Icelandic scene, featuring Stílupappsteypa, Vindva Mei, Kitchen Motors Band, Johann Johannsson, Kippi Kaninus, Hilmar Jensson, Ölöf Arnalds, Darri + Thorunn. For further info, visit: [www.ultrasound.ws](http://www.ultrasound.ws)

—Lavinia Garulli

MILAN

## Darren Almond

London-based journeyman Darren Almond — whose work investigates the most hidden and remote gears of geography and history — will have his first Italian solo exhibition at the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi in Milan this November. Almond will bring the shiny signs and the bathing atmosphere of the northern town of Blackpool, one of England's most renowned tourist locations, to Palazzo della Ragione, a historical and picturesque building and former site of a medieval market in the center of the city. In this way the Fondazione pursues its intention to use the whole city as exhibition space by inviting artists to develop site-specific projects in relation to local surroundings, as seen with Elmgreen and Dragset's earth-breaking trailer van last May. For further info, visit: [www.fondazionenicolatrussardi.com](http://www.fondazionenicolatrussardi.com)

**GARDEN OF EDEN**  
October 9 - November 2, 2003

Andisheh Avini  
Nedim Kufi  
Talal Refit  
Hanibal Srouji

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618 East 9th Street, New York  
212.7777922

46 Flash Art OCTOBER 2003

BERLIN

## Face Up: Contemporary Australian Art

“Face Up: Contemporary Art from Australia” comes to Berlin this fall as part of a new initiative to bring Australian art to Berlin. Space and place, inversion and transformation, humor and playfulness appear in many of the 36 works by 14 leading Australian artists in “Face Up.” Curated by Britta Schmitz, visitors will enter the Hamburger Bahnhof through Callum Morton’s enormous shark jaws; Patricia Piccinini, fresh from her success at the Venice Biennale, will immerse visitors in car culture, adolescence and transformation in her installation; James Angus takes on the fundamental concerns of sculpture in his up-ended balloon, manta ray and fascist palazzo; Rosemary Laing explores the notion of the Australian landscape as a culturally predicated construct in her cinematic scale photographs; Susan Norrie portrays a planet on the verge of catastrophe in her apocalyptic video projections; delicate vitrine sculptures of frill neck lizards, ferns and fruit bats by Fiona Hall explore issues of trade and colonization; and a new *in situ* painting by Guan Wei



CALLUM MORTON, Down the Hatch, 2003. Courtesy Anna Schwartz Gallery.

focuses on migration and refugees. The ghostly images of Indigenous artist Darren Siwes explore presence and absence; Simryn Gill considers how we experience place in 260 photographs of lounge rooms in Malaysia; East meets West in the exquisite porcelain works of Ah Xian; the ‘great Australian dream’ of the backyard-makeover is humorously exposed in the work of Robert MacPherson; David Rosetzky investigates our tendency to live as if we are on reality TV in his video installation; Daniel von Sturmer interrogates the interplay between the viewer and the viewed in the context of the gallery space; and Mikala Dwyer will create a new multilevel plastic sculpture.

MANCHESTER

## Comme Ca Art Prize

This year sees the inauguration of the Comme Ca Art Prize, with a shortlist of five and a purse of £10,000. The prize is organized by the aforementioned Comme Ca Art, operating out of Manchester and part of its ever expanding art scene. The short-listed artists include ‘Little Artists,’ who recently took the London Art Fair by storm with their model characterizations of art-world chic; David Mackintosh, who makes objects and drawings in ink on paper and a series of paper baseball caps titled *Hats for people I hate*; and Paul Rooney, whose video, sound, and performance works, include his call center phone conversation, a karaoke-style ballad between a female operator and male caller. The latter artists, Mackintosh and Rooney, can also be seen in “We Go Round and Round in the Night and Are Consumed by Fire” in Chelsea, New York from October 17. This is a new

location for showcasing emerging British and international artists (the majority of the artists will be based in Northern cities of the UK, taken from the roots of *Flux* magazine (its curator/co-coordinator of the inaugural show) and Comme Ca Art; from the ‘North’ to the International glare and manners of NYC. The artists’ chosen media ranges from installations in the style of architectural models to videos with a soundtrack of dialogue and pop songs, from large format drawings to witty cartoon-style illustrations, and even Legos. The winner of the Comme Ca Art Prize will be selected from the exhibition at the Comme Ca Art Gallery, Manchester, from October 8 — the same day the jury decides and announces the winner of £10,000 presented by Chris Ofili. For further info, visit: [www.commeaart.com](http://www.commeaart.com) or [www.fluxmagazine.com](http://www.fluxmagazine.com)

—Paul Anthony Black

