

La Caldera Body and Technology Lab
4-10 December 2006
Barcelona

Absent Interfaces #2

By Scott deLahunta and Daniel Aschwanden

Investigation of creation processes connected to dance and technology

The laboratory will consist of the development of an artwork. Different sessions will be done throughout the day. The sessions will deal with skill acquisition, quick development of prototypes, follow-up and available information on materials and methodologies.

How can we make a movement visible?
How is the action codified?
Why does a system need media?
How can a gesture be learnt?
What is the role of authenticity?
Which bodies can be built?

In the place of this lab Scott and Daniel presented a series of four interventions.

The notes from each day and a list of references are attached.

Absent Interfaces: La Caldera

05.12.06

ABSENT INTERFACES

Starting Point: the relationship between live (dance) performance and media practices.

But assume nothing to be necessary: no specialist knowledge; no certain technological instruments. And question the typical relation of body as input, computer as processor and audio/ video media as output

Zagreb// Vienna // Istanbul // Barcelona

zagreb concept:

a dramaturgy machine
database as material
digital thinking
explore machines/ explore ourselves

keywords:

algorithmic editing
database narrative
scripts
rules/ protocols
pattern recognition (william gibson)
sequence
accumulation
multiples
thresholds
selection
collection
association chains

examples:

lev manovich: soft cinema
the onyxproject (shuffle/ thread/ jump)
iPOD (masses of data)

what does it mean in terms of narration?

Absent Interfaces: La Caldera

06.12.06

ABSENT INTERFACES

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Zagreb// Vienna // Istanbul // Barcelona

vienna concept:

what sort of medium is the body?

- walter benjamin = mechanical reproduction / reproducibility = end of aura
- aura=uniqueness/ originality
- objects making evolved past aura-tic art = there is no object to hang onto now

how does the art object and art body come together?

body art hanging onto aura = franko b

- art work came closer to the body
- became the body itself
- now going beyond the body

bio-art / the art work is within the body

uses body processes, chemical and metabolic systems

bio-art / extends field of non-auratic art

questions:

relations of body and technology

where is the interface?

keywords:

biotechnology

genetic engineering

metabolism

rematerialiasation

cloning

ecosystems

transgenics

examples:

Franko B. (body art)



"Franko B has recently decided to discontinue bleeding in performance, and is pursuing other challenging creative strategies, including painting. In Don't Leave Me This Way, his latest performance work in progress, Franko B's body is presented naked and unpainted, seated on a raised plinth or altar. The audience is allowed time to look at his body, to approach it as a sculptural form."

Eduardo Kac (transgenic art)

GPF bunny (green fluorescent protein)



"Alba", the green fluorescent bunny, is an albino rabbit. Under ordinary light conditions she is completely white with pink eyes. She glows when illuminated with blue light. She was created with an enhanced version of the original wild-type green fluorescent gene found in the jellyfish *Aequorea Victoria*.

Stelarc (human tissue culture)

The Extra Ear Project



This 1/4 scale replica of Stelarc's ear is grown using human cells. The ear is cultured in a rotating micro-gravity bio-reactor, which allows the cells to grow in a 3D structure.

Yann Marussich (chemical choreography)

Bleu Provisoire



2001 performance piece of Swiss choreographer Yann Marussich, Bleu Provisoire, in which biochemical reactions make up the performance. How might works of this type that hack the body's internal machinery change our thinking about relations between "dance and technology"?"

POLITICAL BODIES/ STORIES



Absent Interfaces: La Caldera

07.12.06

day one:

living with technologies
how we think and create narratives/ memories/ stories/ etc.
database as artistic material

day two:

what sort of medium is the body?
body processes as artistic material
bio-technology (which we are also living with)

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

FURTHER QUESTIONS

- who needs the interface?
- who controls the interface?

BUT: not obsessed with Absent Interface / we know that need to work on context

WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH TO THE INTERFACE? (politics, understandings, uses...)

.....

SYNONYMS (thesaurus):

nouns

separating surface
common boundary
meeting place
point of communication
connection
linkage

verbs

translating
bridging
sharing
interacting
coordinating

SAMPLE ARTWORKS

Station House Opera

Roadmetal, Sweetbread (1998)

Scott Snibbe

Deep Walls (2003)

Klaus Obermaier

D.A.V.E. (1998); Vivisector (2002); Apparition (2004)

Absent Interfaces: La Caldera

08.12.06

day one:

living with technologies

how we think and create narratives/ memories/ stories/ etc.

database as artistic material

day two:

what sort of medium is the body?

body processes as artistic material

bio-technology (which we are also living with)

day three:

other approaches to the interface?

artworks: Roadmetal, Sweetbread; Deep Walls; Apparition

keywords: real-time, dramaturgy, stage/ screen/ installation

day four: MIND HACKING

Phineas P. Gage (1850s) railroad worker; iron bar accidentally passed through his skull causing the supposed inverting of his emotional, social and personal traits. Gage's condition led to changes in the understanding of the **function** and **compartmentalisation** of the brain with regards to emotion and personality.

decade of the brain (1990s)

- brain building (cognitive science and artificial intelligence)
- brain imaging (neuroscience)
- philosophy of mind (bringing mind and body together)

where is the interface?

- brain processes information from inside/ outside mixing with language memory etc)
- brain structure has interacting parts parallel (not on and off / simultaneous)

mind hacking

- explanations from cognitive neuroscience / popularisation of science
- how to PLAY with this

keywords:

- perception
- attention
- senses
- illusion
- hack

examples:

stroop effect

- conflict visual / language processing
- have to think about it / slow down / no longer automatic processing
- has been studied for over 50 years (1935 J.R. Stroop attention and interference)
- has contributed to current understanding

mirror box

- therapy for phantom limb pain (pain loop)
- occurs when brain needs feedback from a real arm to break the pain loop
- for some people it works to fool the brain into thinking there is a real limb there

Absent Interfaces#2: La Caldera Bibliography [links checked 09.12.06]

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day one: living with technologies/ database as narrative

Lev Manovich: <http://www.manovich.net/>
See: Language of New Media and Soft Cinema

Marie-Laure Ryan (Theory of Narrative Media):
<http://www.imageandnarrative.be/mediumtheory/marielauryan.htm>

Information Aesthetics ("Form follows data"): <http://infosthetics.com/>

Onyx Project: <http://www.theonyxproject.com/>

day two: what sort of medium is the body?/ bio-art

Edgar DaSilva (article linking Bio-technology and Bio-art):
<http://ejbiotechnology.ucv.cl/content/vol7/issue2/full/8/index.html>

Franko B (artist website): <http://www.franko-b.com/>
Eduardo Kac (artist website): <http://www.ekac.org/>
Stelarc (artist website): <http://www.stelarc.va.com.au/quarterear/index.html>
Yann Marussich (artist website): <http://www.perceuseprod.ch/>

day three: other approaches to the interface?

Station House Opera (artist website): <http://www.stationhouseopera.com/>
Scott Snibbe (artist website): <http://www.snibbe.com/>
Klaus Obermaier (artist website): <http://www.exile.at>
Blast Theory (artist website): <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk>
Marie Sester (artist website): <http://www.accessproject.net/>

Blurring Boundaries: theory of the artwork (scott delahunta)
PDF in english: <http://www.sdela.dds.nl/blur/index.html>
For catalan, spanish and english: <http://www.compasbcn.com/>
(find the first issue/ under DANCE ZONE: new technologies)

Interface Design:
<http://www.web-side.org> and <http://www.mediatecaonline.net/web-side/>

day four: mind hacking

Mind Hacks Website: <http://www.mindhacks.com/>
See: information about the book / the blog and many links

Stroop Effect: <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/java/ready.html>
Mirror Box: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror_box
Oliver Sacks (author): <http://www.oliversacks.com/>

Art and Science (working in the space between)
Leonardo: <http://www.leonardo.info/>
Choreography and Cognition: <http://www.choreocog.net>

Konic Thtr: <http://www.koniclab.info>
Luca Ruzza: <http://www.openlabcompany.com/>
Daniel Aschwanden: <http://bilderwerfer.com/>
Scott deLahunta: <http://www.sdela.dds.nl/>