

EXPERIMENTAL EMERGING ART



ISSUE 3, 2018

DANGEROUS ART

**JURIJ KRPAN / ALEX ADRIAANSENS / ROY ASCOTT /
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ZORAN TODOROVIĆ / MARKO MARKOVIĆ / ALEXANDRA MURRAY-LESLIE**

ISSUE 3

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EE - EXPERIMENTAL EMERGING ART
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WARNING - UPCOMING



EXPERIMENTAL EMERGING ART

EE -Experimental and Emerging Art- documents important contributions to all what art can be. The works and tendencies we present are major additions to the field of emerging aesthetics. EE focuses on experimental art projects - the stuff that somehow stretches and challenges established notions of what art is. We believe the field of art is -and should be- in a constant flux, challenging the otherwise market and cash driven understanding of art. If innovation always comes from the periphery, then EE will also move at the rim of aesthetics. We also defend our right to sometimes fall into its core. And at other times out of it.

**WELCOME TO THE BIGGER PICTURE
OF WHAT ART CAN BE.
ONE MAGAZINE AT A TIME.**

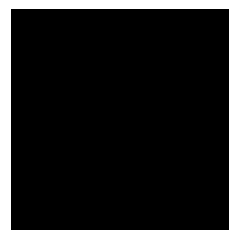
All what art can be EE's format is multiple; part magazine, newszine, part website and it spans across several media formats. While the printed issue is for sale, EE is also freely downloadable online at eejournal.no as a PDF based magazine. Often EE articles are more visual than

textual, but online you will find additional background material such as texts, original sound files, video, photos and other Zeitgeist documents to our coverage.

EE is In Medias Res and we believe our magazine to be a necessary publication both to be informed about and document a field in constant and rapid change. EE endorses these fluctuations in thinking & doing and see them as essential components of the experimental and expanding field of art. One of EE's main purposes is to support the interesting, the subversive, the abject, the striking but also intriguing, wondrous and the beautiful in the ongoing human project of making art. Whatever art might be or become.

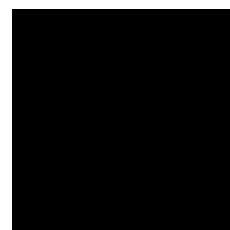
Oslo, April 2018

**The interesting,
the subversive,
the abject, the
striking but
also intriguing,
wondrous and
the beautiful**



Stahl Stenslie
Editor-in-chief


Stahl Stenslie, 2017



Zane Cerpina
Editor,
Designer,
Photographer

Zane Cerpina, 2018

EDITORS LETTER EE III : DANGEROUS ART

 The EE #3 issue researches dangerous works of art and artistic ideas, presenting some of the most dangerous contemporary artists, thinkers and actors in art.

Dangerous? What is really dangerous art?

Physically threatening performances such as a SRL - Survival Research Laboratories- putting the audience's safety at stake while killer-robots re-enact a retro-futuristic gladiators fight? Leif Elggren's visually contagious images of lethal viruses? That you are only allowed to see when moving about in the gallery with a flashlight. What about bad art such as populist, crowd pleasing spectacles like Koon's kitsch? The meaningless art by the happy amateur? Or the mental trash represented by the shallow voids of banal IKEA style paintings? Threatening to empty Art of all its existential meaning? Or shock art such as the Chapman brother's ultraviolent sculptures and sceneries? American abstractionism as it was politically applied, employed and sponsored by CIA? Speculative and lethal art causing the killing of animals such as Damien Hirst's *Mother and Child Divided*? Or Wim Delvoye's tattooed pigs? That he later kills to sell their skins as pictures. How to deal with taboo breaking art such as Oleg Kulik's life and mating with a dog? When is the dangerous also getting illegal? Criminal art such as Alexander Brener's infamous graffiti add-on to Malevich's paintings? Or John Duncan's *'Blind Date'* where he purchases a female corpse in Mexico and performs intercourse with it to punish himself for not feeling love. According to Adorno 'every work of art is an uncommitted crime'. Then what about aesthetic thinking gone wild? Such as Hitler's (in)famous speeches on grand arts and culture? Or Stockhausen's naming of 911 as art? Or Schlingensief's homage to the 911 terrorist Atta as an artist? What about the (apparently) suicidal art of Schwarzkogler, the hero of the Viennese Actionism. Gay sodomized, S&M art such as Robert Mapplethorpe's sexualized self-portraits? Self-molesting performances such as Chris Burden shooting himself in the name of art? Bluntly offensive art of the Punk movement? What about poorly done works of art? Not necessarily Arte Povera,

but works so poorly done that it offends both qualified as well as uninterested audiences? Such as Fellesskapsprosjektet's recent monument in Kvam, Norway? Where a single work of art, a trash-like sculpture made from locally found material, divided the Kvam community into antagonistic fractions, threatening to tear the social bonds apart. What about mechanically dangerous art such as Tinguely's auto-destructive 'Homage to New York'? Or Serra's super heavy metal walls threatening to fall over you at any moment? Political satire and actionism such as done by Pussy Riot? Or is the real danger in the hands of hard-core curators of transgressive art such as Jurij Krpan? If art is evil -as in better than the good- is it then not also dangerous? Or only yet again a victim of moral banality. Is the trans-species art of Maja Smrekar dangerous? Or just another typical hetero-normal approach in an age of hyped biotechnologies. When Zhu Yu appears to cook and eat a human baby, is that dangerous or just another piece from the 'cadaver school'?

Then what about Milo Yiannopoulos (dangerous.com) who bathed in pigs blood while also splashing it on images of victims of Islamist terror. Was it ultrapopulist, pro-Trump poor art (#DaddyWillSaveUs) or simply clever exploitation of the art world's desperate -and dangerous- need for transgressive acts?

What about James Bridle's *Drone Shadows*, drawing the 1:1 shadows of real drones on the ground, as a reminder of their two primary functions: to spy or to kill. Seems we cannot be saved by technology either.

If art is about challenging and shaking our established notions of the world, are not all artists then dangerous? Are you a dangerous artist? In the end it might be your perceived sense of threat that decides what is dangerous or not. But one danger constantly hovers over us: in this age of the Selfie, the missing image is the most dangerous.

Welcome to our bla█end issue.



TOP 10
**THE MOST
 DANGEROUS
 ARTWORKS**

TOP 10 CORPORALLY DANGEROUS ART WORKS
 rated firstly by how dangerous it is for the audience and secondly for the artist

1. **Delusions of Self-immolation** (1993) by Erik Hobijn. A 'suicide machine' literally engulfing the participant in a lethal shower of flames.
2. **Inheritance** (2016) by Erich Berger and Mari Keto who made an exclusive necklace from radioactive material and gold. The piece is conceived as a 'family jewellery' as it must be stored for many generations before it is safe to wear
3. **Event for penetration/extrapolation** (1976) by Stelarc where he jumps through an huge sheet of glass, barely avoiding to cut himself to pieces.
4. **Shoot** (1967) by Chris Burden when he lets himself be shot in arm.
5. **Shooting** (2002) by Boris Sincek. To re-experience his traumas as a soldier during the Balkan wars he dressed in a bulletproof vest and was shot with a 9mm pistol by the curator Jurij Krpan.
6. **Que le cheval vive en moi (May the horse live in me)** (2011) by Marion Laval-Jeantet & Benoît Mangin; where Marion was injecting horse blood plasma aiming to blur the boundaries between species.
7. **El-en-i'** (1998) by Ive Tabar. A medical love poem and performance where he touches his own heart by inserting a catheter into one of his major veins, pushing it to his heart until it starts to fibrillate, testing the tiny line between life and death.
8. **Planting Grass** (2000) and **Earth** (2004) by Yang Zhichao when he implanted respectively grass and earth into his own body, pinpointing his idea that the body is more comfortable with technology than nature.
9. **Selfeater** (2009) by Marko Marković where he eats a larger piece of his own skin including flesh.
10. **I Miss You** (1999 - 2005) by Franco B where he walks slowly up and down a catwalk while blood slowly drips from calendulas in his arms. A performative suicide ending with his own fainting or fatigue.

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CURATING DANGERS

JURIJ KRPAN

Jurij Krpan (SI) is the director at Kapelica Gallery in Ljubljana, Slovenia since 1995. In 2010, 2013 and 2017 he was a member of the Hybrid Arts jury for the Ars Electronica Prix (Linz, Austria). He has been a contributor to the EU Creative Europe projects Trust Me, I'm an Artist (2014-2017), and the European Digital Art and Science Network (2014-2017), as well as working with the European Commission - Horizon 2020 project Doing It Together Science (DITOs).

The following is a transcript of the conversation between Jurij Krpan and Zane Cerpina during Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria, 2017.

Zane Cerpina (ZC): Kapelica Gallery (in Ljubljana, Slovenia) is considered as one of the most dangerous art galleries in Europe, in terms of works and artists. What is your manifesto as a curator?

Jurij Krpan (JK): First, you should know that I am not trained as a curator. My background is in architecture, and my studies started in the 1980ies. And in Slovenia and Hungary in the 80ies, it was interesting situation because the artists were the first to start to raise difficult questions about the society as such. We were living in socialism, it was still Yugoslavia and we had a one-party totalitarian system. Since we were born in this system we were not able to reflect on it. We were like fish in a tank; they don't see water, they're just swimming. This is how we were living at the time. Then through the artworks that I was experiencing in the 80s, I began to reflect upon larger society, the systemics that were organizing my life. At the beginning, I was really upset about art, but since I'm a really curious man I started

to delve into the topic and I got a completely new vision upon society and my life. So, I can say that art changed my life profoundly. And I believe that art can do that.

Understanding contemporary art means understanding the life we are living

We are now living in another ideological frame which is even more powerful, more profound, but maybe less visible. Capitalism with all its consequences form a biopolitics where we are just sustaining our bare life as a game of gambling. This is also

*We are living in a
very dangerous
world so dangerous
art is necessary*

Jurij Krpan

oppressive. So, we need to raise difficult questions, we need to raise questions to the centre of power and to what the holders of power are trying to hide. I profoundly believe in the empowerment of civil society, and the projection of civil society that started in the 80ies. Now with all the NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) we are seeing how powerful we are as self-organized citizens. Because the state cannot answer our questions, we need to answer them ourselves. And artists are the most sensitive part of our society. They can sense everything much faster, much better than anybody else. I keep saying that understanding contemporary art means understanding the life we are living. Of course, we are constantly opposed to the classical understanding of art, which is object-oriented, pleasure proposing, recreational practice. The art market is the most powerful representation of the bourgeoisie production of art. It is super

For those who rule, art should be dangerous, art should be disruptive

aggressive. And since its language is money, it completely goes along with the set of values that liberal capitalism is now promoting. Right now, we are living in a very special moment where big Internet platforms are taking over the initiative. Also over the rest of the social activities that National states previously had, from the social networking, information sector - the newspapers, the television and so on. Everything is moving on to the Internet, especially the commercial sector. We are not anymore as much in service to the National state as to the capital. They track us all the time, and all the consumer patterns that we are creating with our behaviour serve to concentrate money even more. We have this 1% rich against 99% poor situation. The whole set of values and the whole machinery, it is driving us, and our activities and what we earn for the 1% richest.

And I think that as the strategies of oppression are changing, the strategies of artistic activities are changing as well. We are living in a very dangerous world

so dangerous art is necessary. I'm using deliberately your term, 'dangerous'. For those who rule, art should be dangerous, art should be disruptive. And as a curator and as somebody who is responsible in the art scene, I'm not that kind of curator that just opens and closes the door. As the head of an institution I know that we need to show artworks next year, and next year and the year after. Therefore, I am deeply concerned about what the artistic production does, how the artists are living, if they have access to the technology, to the spaces and so on. Besides my curatorial practice, I run a lot of activities which are trying to defend artists against political decisions and so on.

ZC: How much does the considerations of funding and legal implications twist the curatorial process? Do these circumstances make artworks less dangerous?

JK: No. Because you need to know how the mechanism of funding art functions. We (Kapelica Gallery) are 100% publicly funded, and you can be publicly funded if the work you are doing is in public interest. We know our work is in public interest, so when we defend our production we go literal on that. The art project might be difficult, but it's necessary, and it is up to you how you defend this necessity. Of course, there is also a subjective factor where those who are deciding on funding might not like you. Fortunately, there are different public sources through which we are funded; it's the Slovenian state, the city of Ljubljana and European projects. And once the work is produced and it is successful, alive, then everybody is satisfied. They don't need to understand it, but since the work got public recognition or the recognition from the professionals or abroad, this is the best thing that can happen to the artist. When this goes through, we can build further upon our values. In our 23

The art project might be difficult, but it's necessary

years of existence we have won so many awards and reached so many milestones that nobody can question the content we are doing. At times, various people

have tried to change us or even disable us, either through financial discipline, or by attacking our support activities. Because our artists like to collaborate with scientists, with engineers and so on, they want to learn tech skills that they are not learning at school. Therefore, we do workshops or different activities, which are technical. They are not about art, but about tools, materials and so on. This year we were not allowed to fund workshops where the focus is on technical teaching. That is completely stupid. The Slovenian Ministry of Culture try to harm us this way and they try to hide their agency this way.

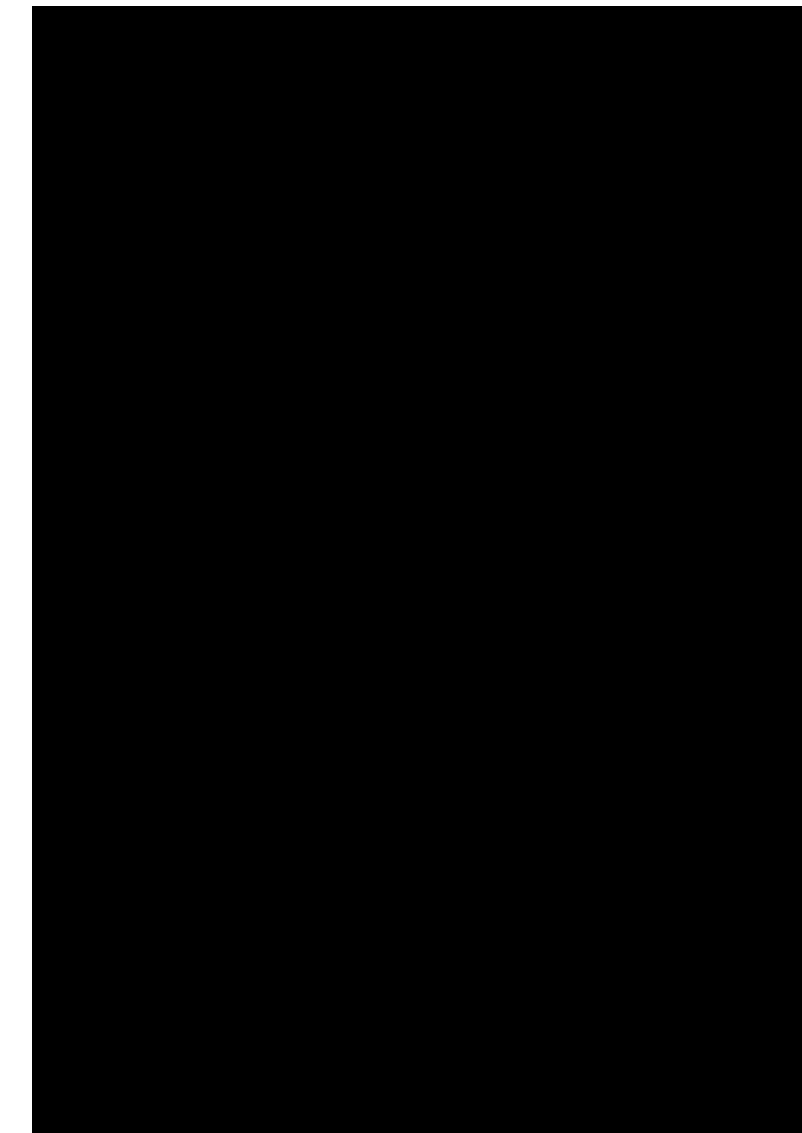
Various people have tried to change us or even disable us

ZC: How has the Kapelica's artistic direction changed throughout the years? Many of the works showed at Kapelica has a focus on bio art. Is that where the danger is - in bioart and biopolitics?

JK: The basic curatorial interest was always the same. How is the life of a person affected by the mainstream society? Maybe it seems that in the beginning we had a lot of so-called body art, body related projects, but they were all related to life as an object, how you protect, how you defend, how you -through the explicitness of those artworks- brought the materiality of the body in front. If we're talking about bare life, we often inaugurate the body with blood, liquids as a material for expression. That can be necessary because ultimately everybody is experiencing the outside world on his body and mind. Maybe our biggest bloodletting performance was with Franco B, but already in 1996 we brought Stelarc here. Then there were not many artists like Stelarc, Marcelí Antúnez Roca, Stahl Stenslie; artists who are applying technology on to their bodies, who are very much into life that can be changed, modified, enhanced, stretched, connected and so on. And it was at that time that we found those artists active. And through that we somehow managed to build our audience. Our audience started to understand that being radical, is not about shocking themselves, shocking others,

but that the message conveyed through the artwork is larger than life. This relates to my beginning as a curator. I believe that art is larger than life since my own life was changed by it. This is my equatorial metaphysics. I was always interested in artworks that were so big, so powerful that they immediately opened those (existential) questions. I used to say that you don't go in our gallery to relax, for recreation or to contemplate; you go to work. You need to think, to remake, to rethink everything you knew until then. This has been demanding for the absorption capability of our audience.

Our biggest bloodletting performance was with Franco B



Performance *Que le cheval vive en moi (May the horse live in me)* by Marion Laval-Jeantet & Benoît Mangin, Kapelica Gallery, Ljubljana, 2011.

Jurij Krpan at Kapelica Gallery, Ljubljana.

point of singularity: when technology and biology completely merge into one. This future is inevitable, and we are completely unprepared for it.

ZC: What about the topics of this year's *Ars Electronica (2017): machine learning and AI*?

Machine learning is still on a relatively low level, but once the machines will start to learn by themselves, who knows what they're going to learn. It is kind of a Black Mirror scenario. Therefore, I think that these topics are very interesting for artists. They are dangerous topics. They are life threatening topics. So, we need exquisite art to decode them and to prepare us for a public debate.

ZC: Are there hybrid artists that you would like to point out?

JK: There are a lot of hybrid artists. But hybrid is by default without a genre. It can be hybrid of any kind. There is a lot of investigation going on, and this is where the art production becomes interesting. Because through that investigation you can participate. Hybrid artworks usually have an open structure. There is not a nice art object produced in the end, it is often more an installation or a set-up through which you are invited on to the journey. It can be performative, or not performative; interactive, or not. But you need to be there and you need to go through it. Hybrid art is a field with a completely open structure, which is traumatic, but it's open. I do not want to mention specific artists, but I find the hybrid field really interesting.

You don't go in our gallery to relax, for recreation or to contemplate; you go to work.

When technology and biology will completely merge

Throughout the years, we therefore lost a lot of audience. They simply got tired. They couldn't go along because it was not only about body, it was also about technology, then it was how you build all these things with microbiology, and they (the audience) just can't do that. These are just different facets of the same thing, that we need to protect our life, and we can protect it only by understanding the mechanisms through art. And right now, biotechnology is both accessible and so powerful. It is announcing the

I believe that art is larger than life since my own life was changed by it

ZC: How much does the curator become an artist in his process? How much of your curatorial vision of art influences and shapes the final outcome?

JK: It is a dangerous question. It is not that the curator is an artist. I believe strongly that a curator has to have his own agenda, and this is how you differentiate one place (gallery) from another. It is like the editor's house; you do not publish everything, you publish a certain literature, and this is what we do as well.

A curator has to have his own agenda

By your selections you influence your surroundings, society or environment. And of course, our work has influenced some Slovenian artists as well. They get the possibility to see and meet the most interesting artists from around the world. This is the best school they can have; the input for their own artistic work. We also produce some works by foreign artists. Because we needed to connect on different levels, between different professionals.

Once you have this ecosystem, you can much better enable the artist who is commissioned at your own gallery. I have a lot of experience working with artists. I know the backstage of their artworks, and it is a very precious knowledge that I share with other artists. I can encourage them about how far they can go as artists. And as for my

If I am selecting an artwork I will defend it by all means

curatorial discipline - if I am selecting an artwork I will defend it by all means. I am defending my choices, but also the artwork as such. Like the lawyers say: "I am objectively responsible for what is happening." Artists appreciate that. They feel safer to take a step further.

ZC: What is the most dangerous thing you have done as a curator?

JK: The most straight forward dangerous piece was *Shooting*, the shooting piece with Boris Sincek (in 2002) (Bryzgel 2017) which had a very strong symbolic and emotional coverage. I just felt that we had to do it (shoot at the artist with a 9mm pistol). We had to allow Sincek to re-enact his wartime experiences and enable the performance (of being shot at) to happen. Even if there is a most radical and dangerous idea, it would not be executable if there is not enough expertise. We grew our expertise (in shooting) and the performance was made possible.

There was a big danger of anaphylactic shock

Also, the project *Que le cheval vive en moi (May the horse live in me)* with Marion Laval-Jeantet & Benoît Mangin injecting the horse serum into her own blood. There was a big danger of anaphylactic shock. The body could have fallen into an inflammatory state. But because we did everything as it should be done, and we also provided the necessary backup, it went through.

It is the same with Maja Smrekar's *K-9_topology* and Ive Tabar who performed surgery on his own body. Because we were constantly involved in the productions we took every possible medical measure to protect the artists, the artworks and ourselves. This was possible only because we believed so strongly in the artists.

ZC: I find it very interesting how you play and balance on the edge of legality and safety, often working in the grey zone.

JK: Well, dwelling in safety is not interesting. It is boring and everybody can do that. But our aim is not to provoke people. Our aim is to begin the debate, begin a different kind of thinking, different kinds of seeing and understanding the life we're living in. In the beginning art was here to bring more spirituality, a more

This is why we need powerful artworks; to wake us up

Even if we went into space we are still just coping with our earthly problems

contemplative future reality. Now, we are living in a completely fake reality. And we need artworks to wake us up and out of this dream. This is why we need powerful artworks; to wake us up. I am very often asked, because I am not easily understood as a curator, "How far would you go?" First, it is not about how far, because we always know what is enough, we are not guessing. And then once I was asked if "I

would allow somebody to kill himself in a gallery?" And my immediate response was: "Of course not", because life is the highest value we have. But then I had to rethink if I'm defending "larger than life" works? And what does it really mean, what is larger than life? Then I have to reformulate my answer into having an open end. Now I would allow it if the artwork will have the artistic coverage, rhythm. What this rhythm is I don't know, but it's an open end, because this is constantly shifting. This is how I believe how we should act.

ZC: What is currently happening at the Kapelica Gallery?

JK: As I said, the singularity is still a myth, but we have all the ingredients already. This is what I'm interested in; the artists who are playing with these ingredients. It is not about science-fiction anymore. Some of the wealthy guys are playing with money and doing things that are profoundly changing our society and also our understanding of what is fiction, or not fiction. Obviously, they live their childhood obsessions. However, they are so powerful that they influence the generations to come. I recall how David Cameron told that he was raised in an environment where everybody was talking about flying to the moon, satellites and so on. But even if we went into space we are still just coping with our earthly problems. This is why he financed his submarine and went to the bottom of the deepest ocean. Well, only a few years later, we are all about flying to Mars, living on the moon, building huge rockets and really doing it, it's happening. We are literally flying around with flying taxis; they're still only built as proof of concept, but it's just a matter of time.

We shouldn't lose ourselves into big narratives

Quantum biology is opening up a very interesting field

ZC: How about the big narrative or survival?

JK: We shouldn't lose ourselves into big narratives. We just need to understand the ingredients and try to combine them to foresee the threats and the opportunities that are in front of us. As we heard at the ARS Electronica symposium 2017: if we are building the code of AI, it is us who are responsible for everything. Unfortunately, the gadgets are turning into black boxes, you can't do anything about that. But this is where we come in. The art field can open it, demystify it, show it, ask for different things, and so on.

ZC: AI is trendy and many artists are focusing on it, also because of the funding in it.

They have to believe us, and this is really difficult

JK: The focus on AI is very abstract, but if there are some ingredients that are pointing towards possible futures, then that is interesting for us. We are into quantum computing now, pointing to a whole developing field in biology which is on the verge of metaphysics. Already medical experts, scientists are understanding that you cannot just cut off, eat and put chemistry into the body to solve everything. There is something more which is super-connected, and is not only in one body, but between bodies and so on. The area of quantum biology is opening up a very interesting field, a very interesting field where I believe computation will get a proper task. The computer was invented to simulate the impact of atomic bombs. That research is coming to its end. Now the quantum computing needs a proper task, and I believe that there are dimensions in front of us that are super, super interesting. The artworks that will address all these issues will be interesting, important, dangerous, scary, whatever name it's called. And I think that we as a platform, we need to encourage and support artists to work with that. It is very difficult to sell our artworks, basically impossible. And we need to create a possibility for the artists doing these projects to survive. Not only survive,

they should live really well because they represent one of the most important parts of our society. This is why Kapelica Gallery wants to create an artistic ecosystem, not just a few art spaces, but connect with others, invite, work with kids so that they are not spoiled by a system of values that are measurable and goal-oriented.

ZC: Ljubljana is a very interesting location, with several unique thinkers such as Dragan Zivadinov and Slavoj Zizek.

JK: We still have this experience from the 80ies that I was talking about at the beginning, when we understood that art has this mighty power to change, to change individuals, to even change society. And we believe that our actions can change it. Unfortunately, the generations that were born afterwards, they don't have this experience of a totalitarian system, so they have to believe us, and this is really difficult. Take for example, Maja Smrekar who has really sacrificed everything for her art. She is one of the rare artists who believes that changing people, society, the environment is possible. This is why she invested her own body into the artwork, why she is defending her radical project in front of everybody.

We try to convey this message and this urgency to other generations so that also they see how art can change society.

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Kapelica Gallery <http://www.kapelica.org/>
Kersnikova <http://kersnikova.org/>

DANGEROUSLY UNSTABLE

ALEX ADRIAANSENS

Alex Adriaansens (NL) is one of the founders of V2_ (1981) and the general and artistic director. He is also the director of the bi-annual Dutch Electronic Arts Festival – DEAF. He is a guest curator for different art and technology festivals and events (a.o. Meta.Morf, Norway; Moca in Taiwan; China Media Art Tri- annual; eArts festival in China; Dutch Cultural Center Shanghai for the World Expo 2010). He has given many talks and presentations around the world (universities, symposia, festivals, workshops, expert meetings etc.).

The following is a compressed transcript from the conversation between Alex Adriaansens and Zane Cerpina on December 8, 2017, Rotterdam.

Zane Cerpina (ZC): What is dangerous art to you? What and how should dangerous art be?

Alex Adriaansens (AA): Dangerous art is art that disturbs, that transforms the environment in which it is practiced. That means it should have an impact on the outside world, the world outside the arts. If art is dangerous, it's dangerous for something or to someone, and sure art can also be dangerous for itself. I always had a love-hate relation with the arts, since most of what we call art is a very introvert and conservative domain, while another part of the art practice is taking an avant garde

If art is dangerous, it's dangerous for something or to someone

position and likes to formulate critique on itself and society. The founders of V2_ were practicing artists. We did art schools; we looked at the arts as being a free space, not yet bound to the

power and language of economics, but we represented only a small part of what we call 'the arts'. So, in that sense, the V2_ art practice is dangerous for the arts itself, since we were questioning our own practice and art in general. By questioning the arts and our own practice, we were

redefining what art could be and mean for ourselves and society at large. Here, we were expanding the domain of the arts by relating it to social, economic events, and to technology as a major designing factor of everything in the world. Here, the art started to question society and the role of the arts in it. Here, we also became dangerous for the world outside of the arts.

At V2_ the arts question and thus disturb the concepts on which your life and worldview are built. It becomes dangerous because it questions you and your environment and all the belief systems on which your/our world are based. It's a bit of a romantic view on the arts, but since economical concepts have saturated all activities in society and all our thinking, the arts is the only domain left where risks are taken, where critique can be performed in an interdisciplinary way.

ZC: Talking about dangers of the past, what works would you like to bring out from the V2_ archive?

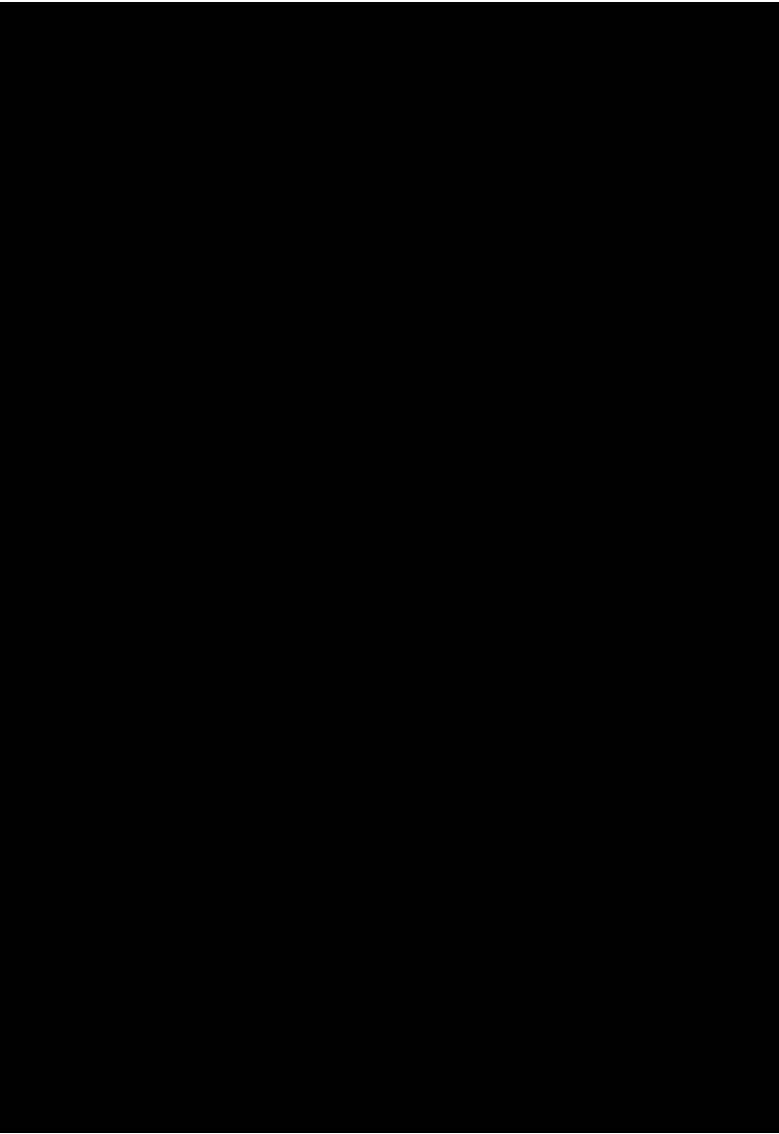
AA: There have been many projects that had a dangerous aspect. First, what we tried to do is question the arts in the context

Dangerous art is art that disturbs, that transforms the environment in which it is practiced

The V2_ art practice is dangerous for the arts itself

Alex Adriaansens

The Body in Ruin exhibition at V2_, 1993.



build a critique based on 'doing and making', as well as 'theory and writing'. At V2_, we want to be dangerous within the arts itself. The most dangerous projects we present have a strong social, political, or conceptual context, like thinking about the body in relation to technology. The Body was seen as a holy temple within Christianity, something you should not invade and transform with technology. The body was seen as a temporary vehicle to get to the next stage etc. Questions on Life and Death were closely connected to this. Think about the incredible impact of technology on all aspects of our lives and all fantasies and dangers related to this: technology as the Golem that will ultimately destroy humans. To illustrate this, in 1993, we set up a 4-week event called *The Body in Ruin*. We showed an exhibition with works from Paul Sermon (*Telematic Dreaming*), Keith Piper (*A Nigger in Cyberspace*), Orlan (*My Flesh*, the text and the languages), and Erik Hobijn (*Delusions of Self-Immolation*), an exhibition that would never have been possible if we had asked the city for permission, since they would have thought of it as being too radical and provocative.

We took care of security and safety as much as we could, but we took a certain risk. So, there was a certain danger to it, but we could oversee the risks well. The most dangerous machine -physically speaking- in the exhibition was the often-named suicide machine, called *Delusions of Self-Immolation* by Erik Hobijn. (1) It was so risky for the participants that they had to sign a contract before stepping into it. The danger was not so much being inside the suicide machine itself, since this was a controlled machine with precise safety measurements. The danger was the mental process you would undergo when people prepared you to step onto the suicide machine: a gigantic device with two long arms, each 6 meters long, where you

Technology as the Golem that will ultimately destroy humans

Participants had to sign a contract before stepping into it

The arts is the only domain left where risks are taken At the same time, we have positioned ourselves within the arts because art is a domain where you have several specific privileges and a sense of the liberty that you can allow yourself to do certain kinds of research and

would stand between the two long arms. One arm was a flamethrower spitting a ten-meter-long flame, while the other arm was a kind of shower that would put out the flames by taking all oxygen out of the air a split second after. The person that was selected to go on the suicide machine had to be prepared before stepping onto the machine. It took about 30 to 40 minutes before the person was prepared by the artists, who would put a (fire protective) paste on your body very slowly. When done, you would be guided to the machine and strapped onto it. A limited audience was allowed to watch this process or, better said, this ritual. You could hear a needle fall on the floor; everybody was extremely concentrated and already imagining what would happen with this person once the machine spit out its giant flames. You were thinking about what might happen when you would step onto this machine?! Nobody got seriously injured on this machine; only small blizzards occurred once a while, but people who had been on this machine got a different mindset as it was a near-death experience which was the goal of the project.

It was a near-death experience

If you think of a dangerous (art) machine, then this was a dangerous work, mentally and physically.

If the physical aspect of danger seduces you, then it is hard to get out of that perspective

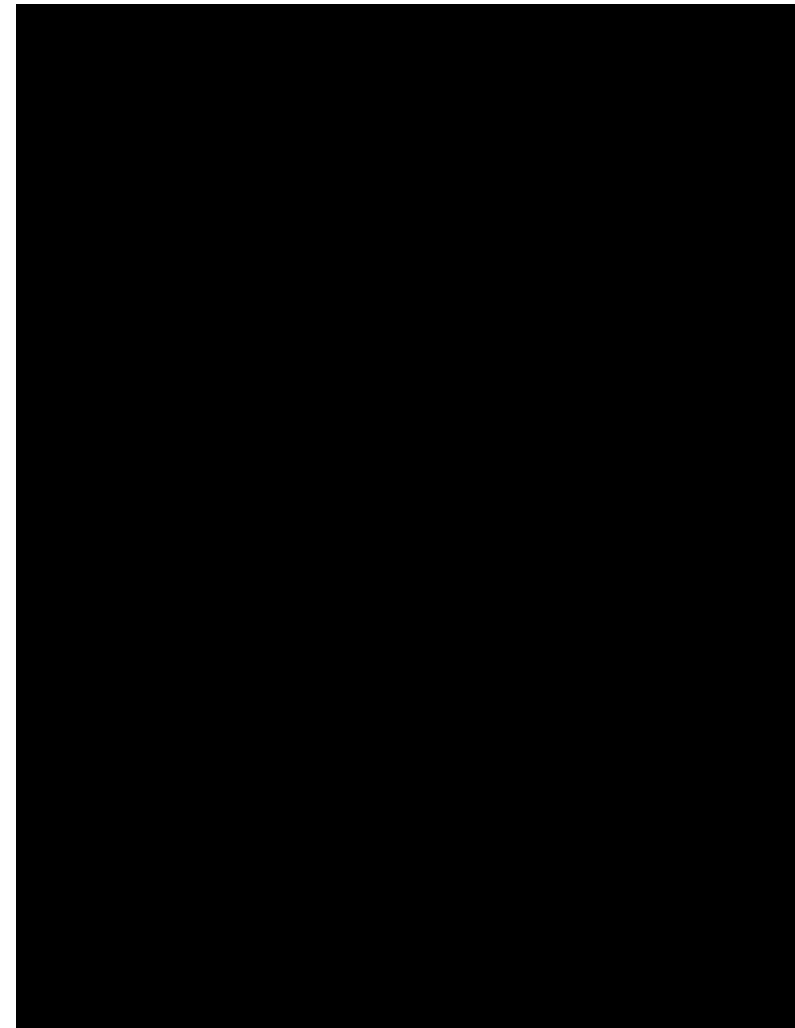
ZC: It is interesting to search through the V2_ archives through you. Any other works to mention?

AA: If the physical aspect of danger seduces you, then it is hard to get out of that perspective. Many of the works we have developed or showed at V2_ have been questioning the invasiveness of technology, social issues, control issues, and hacking. These are all dangerous topics, in principle, or relating to dangerous

future scenarios related to technology. They can be dangerous in a social sense, political sense, or within any other context. Most works at V2_ probably fit within this category, even though we also presented quite a few dangerous works due to their physical impact.

In the sense of raising public attention, danger is very much a promotional issue. You can use it to make people excited, to make them curious, to seduce them to do something. Danger is an exploitative concept for raising attention. And sure, most people feel attracted by danger; it spices up their daily routines. It makes them more alert, more present.

Danger is an exploitative concept for raising attention



Delusions of Self-Immolation by Erik Hobijn, 1993.

ZC: At V2_, the exploration of more analogue and physical dangers seems to be replaced with algorithm-based, digital, virtual, and artificial intelligence related topics. Are all dangers now hidden in the black boxes of technology?

We cannot really oversee what is happening in our black box society

AA: The dangers are hidden in the black box, but the impact is outside it. We cannot really oversee what is happening in our black box society, and we can be surprised and/or speculate by what comes out of the black box.

I have this feeling something is going to change very drastically in the coming 10 years. And I don't know what it is, but one thing that triggers me is the word 'singularity'. It expresses so nicely our limited understanding of how technology might be able to determine its own future. This concept has a place in the minds of many people, of many writers, artists, developers, and philosophers. It relates to the insecurity that people experience every day, such as economic, social, and political insecurity. It is an interesting topic that relates to how we imagine our technological based future, a topic well-known in the arts. You can easily connect *The Body in Ruins* to the same kind of question: Could there be intelligent machines? Could there be consciousness in those machines? In that case, we would have to understand what consciousness is; otherwise, we could not design it, or can it emerge by itself out of specific conditions that we do not know yet? Who are we? Where are we going? Where are we coming from? And how do we understand ourselves? These questions come up repeatedly, although they are differently packaged each time, and the answers to these questions can be very dangerous!

One thing that triggers me is the word 'singularity'

ZC: What about accidents? The DEAF98 was titled *Art of an Accident* and the upcoming Meta.Morf Biennale in Trondheim focuses on the theme *A Beautiful Accident*. Are beautiful accidents dangerous too?

People feel a negative connotation to the word accident

AA: It's a nice wordplay the way it is framed within Meta.Morf's theme 2018. *A beautiful Accident* has something paradoxical, of course.

In principle, most people feel a negative connotation to the word accident. It is not

a word that is related to positive news or positive events. We are used to avoiding the word accident in that context, which is, of course, a wise decision. Nevertheless, in our world, accidents are an everyday part of reality.

Any technology we develop always comes up with its own accident

The things we produce tend to malfunction as much as they are capable of functioning properly. We try to predict and control things; yet, we are often surprised by their creativity to malfunction in many ways. Accidents only happen from the perspective of an illusion of safety and control. Misfortune and failure are not signs of improper production; they are inherent to any production.

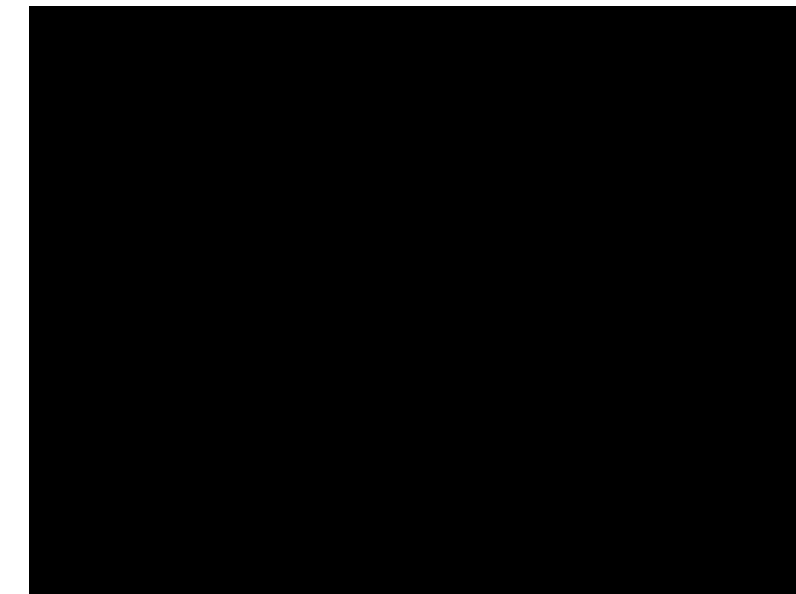
One can state there is a productive potential in rupture, friction, instability, and unpredictability. If we can frame and understand this productive potential, we could embrace malfunction and the accident as being inherent to understanding.

In Meta.Morf, we take the idea of the accident into the process of evolution that has brought forward a complex species like humankind. In 1994, there was a series of interviews and debates on Dutch television titled *A Beautiful Accident* in which the central question was if the rise of humankind and, with it, Intelligence and Consciousness could be understood as the outcome of an endless series of accidents or if there might be some other concepts to explain it.

Embrace malfunction and the accident

In the exhibition of Meta.Morf, we are questioning how we can understand intelligence by looking at how artists make use of artificial intelligence in their work. AI, in these works, is a simulation of a possible intelligent system, or a learning system that tries to develop some kind of intelligence.

Alex Adriaansens during Meta.Morf 2016
It's Nice to be in Orbit exhibition opening.



Another question addressed is the concept expressed earlier that says any technology we develop always comes up with its own accident. In the case of AI, it might be the question what kind of accident it could be that will surprise us soon. Or can we be so creative to integrate possible accidents in the design process of AI?

We should look at instability as an inherent quality of all living systems

Having this interest in the creative potential of technology to generate accidents is also expressed in the name of V2_, Institute for Unstable Media. The title came up when writing *The Manifest for Unstable Media* in 1987. We should look at instability as an inherent quality of all living systems and look at it, not only as something negative that should be eliminated, but also as a productive force that can make a system more resilient.

References:

(1) *Delusions of Self-Immolation* by Erik Hobijn
<http://v2.nl/archive/works/delusions-of-self-immolation>

CONSCIOUSNESS IN DANGER

ROY ASCOTT

Roy Ascott (GB) (born 1934) is an influential British artist and teacher engaged with the theoretical and practical application of cybernetics (the study of networks of dynamic relationships) to art. Since the 1960s, he has been a practitioner of interactive computer art, electronic art, cybernetic art, and telematic art; examples of his pioneering works were recently included in *Electronic Superhighway* at the Whitechapel Gallery in London and at MAAT in Lisbon. Ascott has taught and advised internationally. He is widely seen as a radical innovator in arts education and research and is the founding president of the *Planetary Collegium*, an advanced research network that he set up in 2003, and is also DeTao Master of Technoetic Arts at DTMA in Shanghai. He received the first *Ars Electronica Golden Nica award for Visionary Pioneer of Media Art* in 2014.

The following is an edited transcript from the conversation between Roy Ascott and Hege Tapio in Corfu, May 27th, 2017.

Hege Tapio (HT): Technological advances continue to change the way we communicate and interact, urging us to explore new modes of operation and new ways of making. In this context, what is dangerous art to you?

Roy Ascott (RA): *The danger is very simple*

Well, the danger is very simple. It is art that sets its own limits and develops within itself, speaks only to itself, and resides alone within the materialist model of the universe. Dangerous, where the technology employed supports political oppression - capitalism, for example - and is supported by it. Dangerous, because it refuses to explore out-of-body states, while playing with ideas of us getting off the surface of the earth.

HT: How do you see network technologies affecting the future of human consciousness?

RA: The next interesting and probably important moment will be when the interface of telematic networks moves into the body. It is virtually there; most people walk around with this thing in their hands 24/7. It is a short step to an implant. And when that is done, we can explore other kinds of thinking processes that can be put to work. We can begin to understand better the universal form of organism, which we tend to forget, particularly politically. We seem to be too often concerned with isolation of the 'self', of the individual, and we too little think of ourselves as part of larger organisms. We live in a kind of fraudulent situation. Most of the time, we need to have the Wi-Fi prepared in the environment. It is still not as freely available as water, and God knows there is enough restriction on water across the planet. So, at the moment, it is a sort of myth, and we all play with this idea of being

globally interconnected. In fact, we are not. That raises an important question: "To what extent will interconnection be voluntary or oppressive?" I mean, in the streets, you cannot help it if someone says: "Hey, you." And you cannot stop someone from stepping in your way and asking a question. Whereas, if it happened telematically, what would it mean? Are we going to be bombarded? How will we deal with messages, contacts, information flow? Huge questions arise when we become telematic. As I say, at the moment, it is play, it is theater, it is useful, and of course, as always, it is for the privileged. If you live in a space like New York downtown, you will have Wi-Fi on call, like water is on call there, but in most parts of the world, you do not have it. But most parts of the world strain towards it and act as if they've got it. So, let's talk about these things when we've got some telematic situations. But I do think we will see implants in the body for the reception and transmission of electronic messages, and the sharing of our individual

We all play with this idea of being globally interconnected. In fact, we are not

HT: Considering the growing immersion in network and global connectedness, what do you think are the biggest dangers for our future society and culture?

RA: Well, they are obvious, with fascism on the rise in the US and Europe. There can be access to channels of thought and to ways of resolving issues and problems and projects that cannot be absolutely secure; that is the first thing. As the understanding of networks increases, so does the knowledge about how to break into and abuse these networks. So, it is thought to be dangerous and will impact the front line of political assertions and political movements. And, most sadly, it will do so in all the systematic advances for and in the hands of capitalism. That

is a deeply serious problem, even for those who thought they benefited from capitalism. Those who thought they were privileged and thought capitalism is the thing are now questioning it. They don't know the alternative; they have only very simple things, like soviet communism or something of the deep past that they don't quite understand. I think that is the interesting moment we are in now. Networking calls for and will eventually enhance new political, social, and economic strategies. Artists have a role to play in this.

Networking calls for and will eventually enhance new political, social, and economic strategies

HT: The topic of artificial intelligence has become a hyped field of interest for artists too. It also is the topic of *Ars Electronica Festival 2017*. How do you see the artist's role in this field of technological development?

RA: I am particularly interested in what AI virtual worlds have used. People in various ways are testing out the persona they might adopt under different circumstances. So, we are already dealing with creating and playing with a range of 'selves'. We are no longer stuck with "this is me and this is how I was" - I may now have another me over

Blackboard Notes (1969) by Roy Ascott.

consequence of artificial intelligence. On the other hand, we have the fun aspect about robots and so forth, and I think we are living in it. I think it is a childish stage of thinking we will make sort of other people that look like us. Of course, we will be looking at endowing environments with intelligence. So, if we want a cup of tea, don't expect a little person. On the other hand, we don't expect the kettle to start boiling. We have completely different systems for doing this stuff that needs to be done externally to ourselves.

HT: Where is the human body in all of this?

RA: That is a good question. The human body in my view, as we understand it, represents an evolutionary moment towards the realization of a universal consciousness. I think, primordially, we have consciousness. I see space and consciousness as primordial fields. Organisms on our planet evolve to navigate these fields, you could say, or to exercise themselves or develop, or to enter into those two fields - space and consciousness - some more advanced than others. For example, we get the idea that dogs probably have more access to consciousness than tulips, but it is not certain. We know plants have a sensory apparatus that recognizes change, not just in terms of nutrition in their environment. Ayahuasqueros in South America recognise plants as possessing intelligence and giving access to consciousness. We seem to sit at the top of that development; we have greater access. There is every inhibition to deny it in Western societies for fear of the consequences for political control.

These avatars will quickly acquire artificial intelligence

The consciousness is primordial and organisms move towards greater and greater access to it

Plants as possessing intelligence and giving access to consciousness

Those who wish to exercise power over others must ensure others' access to the field of consciousness is extremely limited. You can see education as a process for doing precisely that, rather than what it is supposed to do: open up the mind. And remember State education was introduced in Britain in the 19th century in the service of industry to create a productive workforce. It was the same thing, I believe, in ancient Egypt. The same with the Royal College of Art, created in 1831, essentially to make products more marketable to move faster. To get back to the question, I think the consciousness is primordial and organisms move towards greater and greater access to it. And we have developed this organ, the brain, which has access to it. But there are other cultures that quite early discovered the intelligence in which accumulated knowledge in one individual shared with others produces knowledge and we can access it through various systems. So, with plants, for example, in the forest in South America, the ayahuasca has its essential role in the development of consciousness and awareness in those sorts of cultures. There is a lot for us to learn about intelligence from nature.

HT: What is the most dangerous thing you have done as an artist?

There is a lot for us to learn about intelligence from nature

RA: I suppose it is the *Change Paintings* I produced (1), which introduced the idea of interaction and the idea that the viewer makes the picture, makes the meaning. Equally, many authorities have damned my educational policies as too radical, although not in China, where my studio is greatly supported. And art is seen as a system that includes the artist, the artwork, and the viewer and which overturned the idea that the artist transmits meaning to the viewer and the viewer learns to receive it. It was probably dangerous and could have been seen as dangerous to the way art and cultural authority more generally was and still is. I mean, nobody wants to

pay for art, unless it can be related to investment, and that ties into the meaning attached to the work, what it conveys, the values of a period, or the notability of an individual, or the power of the state or whatever. If you say the function of art is not to transmit values, ideas and so on, but to enable the creation of values, ideas and experiences by the viewer, then I think that -in terms of the art market and in terms of art history- is probably a dangerous idea.

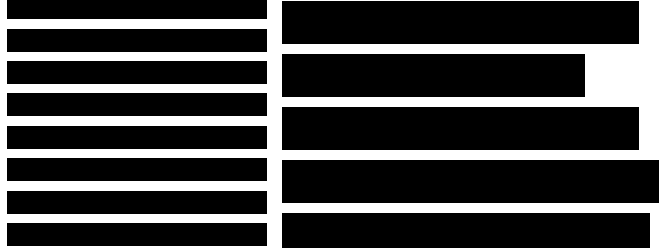
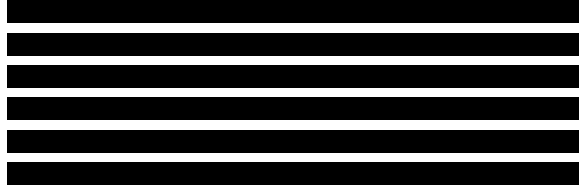
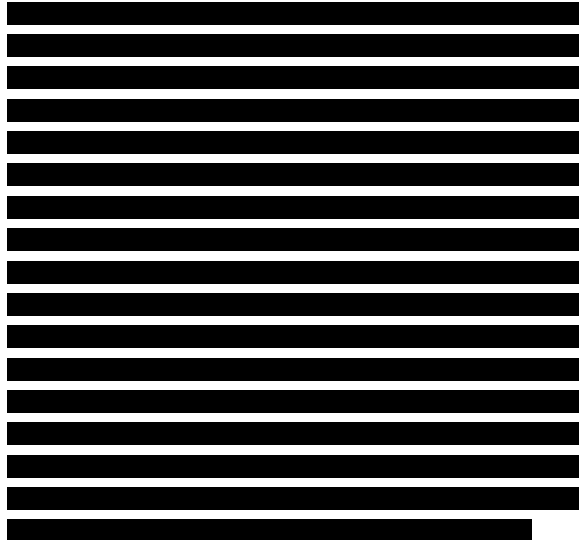
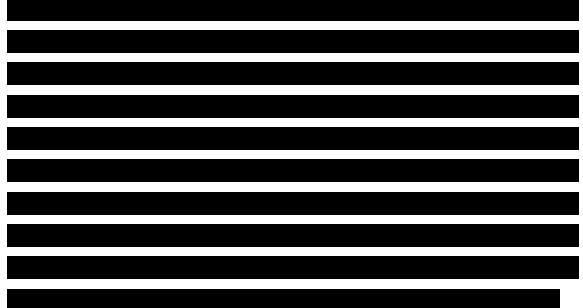
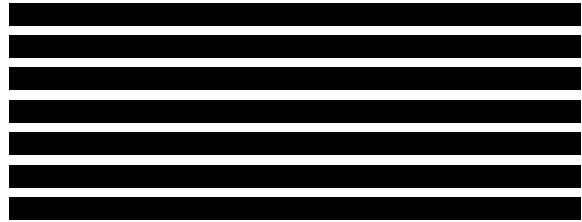
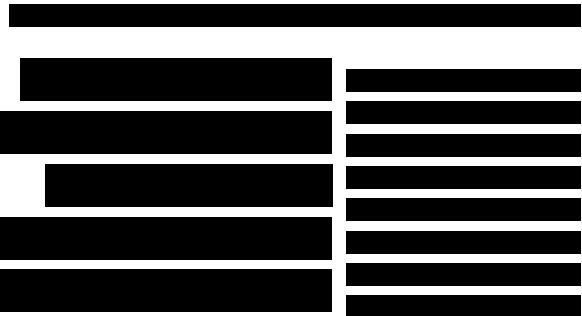
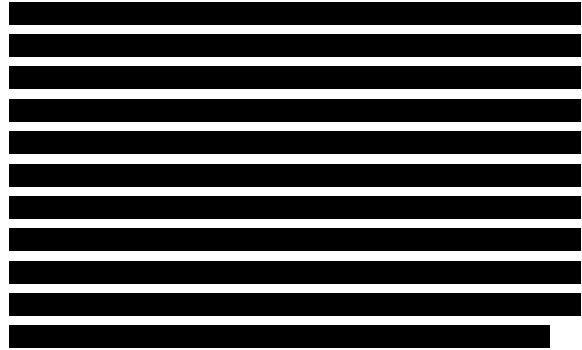
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(1) *Change Paintings*
http://www.englishgallery.com/artists/artists_group/?mainId=253&media=ALL

Plastic Transactions (1971) by Roy Ascott.



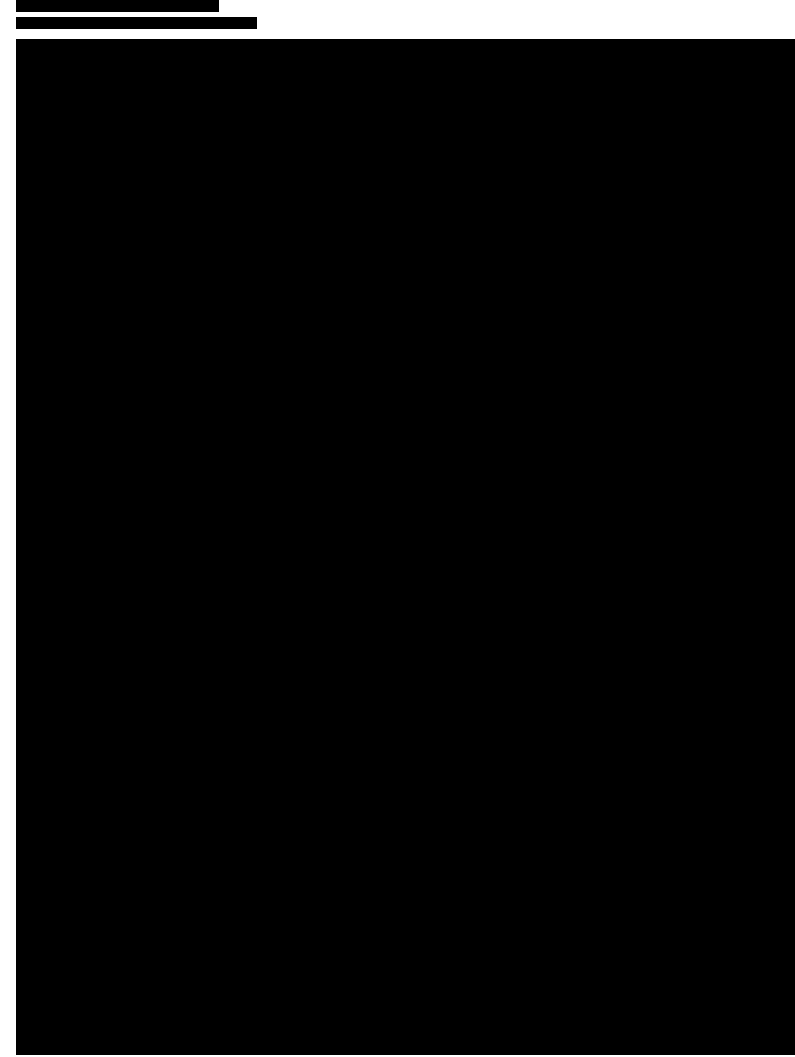
The following interview had to be censored due to the risk and danger of potential self-harm and self-incrimination inflicted upon the artist by herself. We hope to bring you an uncensored version in the next issue.



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Whatever EE publishes, we aim to protect our artists, contributors and audience from any harmful danger existing outside these pages.

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STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AS ART

JULIAN BLAUE

Julian Blaue (D/NO) is known for his transgressive and often violent acts of self-expression. With his ongoing artistic research Ph.D. (at UiA, NO) he has inverted his stylistic approach and – almost in a Christ-like manner – turned towards an inner state of feeling shameful as his new performative tool. And dangerous it is: together with his family of four, he will search for two criminals from a poor Brazilian favela who violently robbed them three years earlier. Why? In what might be perceived as a twisted turn of potlatch economy, taking his theory into praxis, he wants to involve the criminals as collaborators in his next performance, intending to level out the inherent violence of capitalism’s hierarchical structure. Here in his own words:

SHAME IS A REVOLUTIONARY SENTIMENT

By Julian Blaue

In which ways can the paradoxical relationship between white French Philosopher Jean Paul Sartre and black militant enemy of the French Frantz Fanon, inspire artistic criticism of capitalism?

Reading Frantz Fanon’s essay *Wretched of the Earth*, and Jean Paul Sartre’s preface

Why did we get robbed in Rio de Janeiro on Christmas Eve? to it is a paradoxical experience: On one hand, you have an angry black decolonization writer, arguing for a violent rebellion against Europe, the colonizing continent. On the other, you have a white, European star intellectual, who,

understanding the arguments and the rage of the “enemy,” applauds the violence, which is directed against his country, class, and race.

At the heart of my current work, which also is part of my artistic-scientific Ph.D., there is a very similar paradox: I’m developing a performance, that criticizes uneven distribution of wealth, using a personal experience. Christmas 2015 **Globalized capitalism, which I presume to be violent**

my family and I were assaulted and robbed by two poor armed men in Rio de Janeiro. First, I perceived us as victims and the men as perpetrators. Later I understood that one can also explain the incident the other way around. Namely as a result of economic inequality. The two men are on the bottom of a global economic hierarchy, while my family is in the middle. The assault on us is also an assault on that hierarchy. To put it like that means to rationalize the attack. I can understand the violence of the underclass against the economical class I am a part of. This understanding of somebody, you also could define as an antagonist, is the link between my paradox and the Sartre-Fanon-paradox. Can their answers help me finding my answers?

It is part of my project to go back to Rio de Janeiro, getting in touch with the two men (the police know their identity). If possible, I will invite them to participate in my performance. Exploring their social situation, I hope to understand their motives. And thus, hopefully, the effects of globalized capitalism, which I presume to be violent.

Me being co-responsible for the assault against myself

Julian Blaue

ENVY

Fanon gives us an explanation of the violent power of the colonized. The colonized man is an envious man, he states. When one has the experience of being underprivileged and at the same time has (visual) access to the privileged life of the colonizers, envy seems to be an obvious emotional result. Fanon goes as far as writing the famous words:

The colonized wants “to sit at the settler’s table, to sleep in the settler’s bed, with his wife if possible.”

One could define Christmas as “celebration of capital”

Fanon writes a whole phenomenology of the envy of the colonized. The motive of the underprivileged, nourishing his rage with the feeling of envy, can be applied to my project. Rich and poor clash together in the city of Rio de Janeiro (making invisible global inequalities visible). This resembles the co-existence of colonized and colonizer in the same city, a co-existence of unfortunate differences that Fanon describes as the precondition for being envious: The underprivileged can continuously compare his situation with the privileged one.

An obvious question that could be asked with Fanon’s analyses of envy in mind is this: Why did we get robbed in Rio de Janeiro on Christmas Eve? Assaulting a little family during “the celebration of love,” with the iconic Rio-statue of Cristo Redentor above us, appeared at first to be pure cynicism, pure cruelty. At least out of the perspective of the Christian tradition. But in times of globalized capitalism there’s a stronger ideology ruling, even on Christmas, or shall I say: especially on Christmas? The ideology of consumption. Instead of calling it the “celebration of love” one could define Christmas as “celebration of capital,” and thus as the day where the underclass feels it’s lack of capital even stronger. And hence it’s revolutionary envy. Could it be that the two men had good reasons to be envious on this particularly symbolic day? And therefore, ventured from the poor favela into the paved city of the middle- and upper classes, violently redistributing wealth?

BOOMERANG

One of the premises of my project is the (provoking) paradox of me being co-responsible for the assault against myself. If I seriously want to argue for that hypothesis, I have to find out how I, as a representative of the global middle class, in the first place am co-responsible for violence against the global underclass, which the two men represent. For the underclass, violence against the middle class is maybe - to speak with Sartre - only a boomerang; an effect of the violence the middle class has inflicted on them.

The (provoking) paradox of me being co-responsible for the assault against myself

Sartre also criticized himself for being part of a class and a nation that he meant was responsible for violence against colonized people. Today it is less one country that exploits another country. It is instead the global middle and upper classes that exploit the global underclass. There are still structures that lead to unequal life chances.

In Rio de Janeiro, the local underclass works in big scale and for little money for the pleasant lifestyle of the local and global middle and upper class. By using buses with underpaid bus-drivers or sleeping in hotel rooms that are cleaned by poorly paid cleaning ladies, often coming to the cities from their favela, my family and I have gained touristic benefits from structural violence against the underclass. Maybe the bus driver and the cleaning ladies were the parents of the two men assaulting us to gain the money their parents couldn’t gain in their jobs? In this sense, I can speak about my co-responsibility for the violence of the suppressed, as much as Sartre can speak about the responsibility he and his nation have for the violence of the colonized.

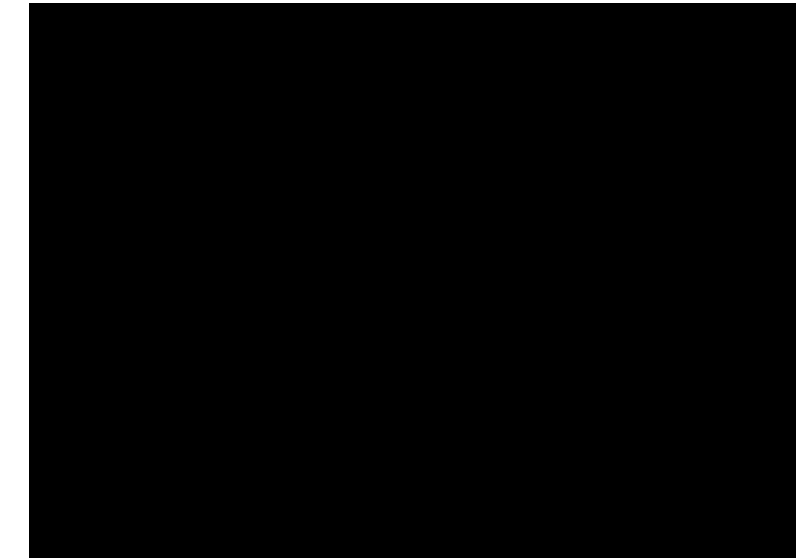
SELF-CRITICISM

The most inspirational and surprising aspect of Sartre’s relationship to Fanon is the aspect of self-criticism. It is surprising because it is uttered on the background of existing violence against the class, race, and nationality he is a part of, and on the background of Fanon’s threat of anti-colonial violence in the future. To be self-critical is a demanding task - and all the more so when the ones who made you self-critical are ready to be violent against you. The reason Sartre nevertheless feels he has to be self-critical is that he agrees with Fanon that the colonizers themselves indirectly have produced the violence against themselves: “It is the moment of the boomerang; it is the third phase of violence; it comes back on us, it strikes us, and we do not realize any more than we did the other times that it’s we who have launched it,” Sartre states.

My family and I have gained touristic benefits from structural violence against the underclass

Sartre’s self-critical attitude is very inspiring for criticism of global injustice in a world where the critic himself is part of structural

Julian Blaue during a performance.



violence, that produces the criticized injustice. And in a world where the critic has begun to feel the violence of the victims, coming back to his class as a boomerang. I believe that globalized capitalism at the beginning of the 21st century is such a world and that the assault on us in Rio in 2015 can be explained in accordance to this. I never want to experience it again.

Self-criticism can lead to shame. Sartre suggests having the courage to read *Wretched of the Earth*, because “it will make you ashamed, and shame, as Marx said, is a revolutionary sentiment.” Shame can be the emotion coming up when one confronts themself with the fact that they are part of the structural violence against the underprivileged. I will highlight this sentiment in my project, hoping that others will feel as ashamed as I do and thus pave the way to transformation. I do think that shame is the precondition for developing a will to change globalized capitalism.

Shame is the precondition for developing a will to change globalized capitalism

Julian and his family in Rio de Janeiro, 2015.

TABOO TRANSGRESSION TRANSCENDENCE

DALILA HONORATO

Dalila Honorato (PT/GR), Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in Media Aesthetics and Semiotics at the Department of Audio and Visual Arts of the Ionian University in Greece. She is a founding member of their Interactive Arts Lab. In 2017, she organized the *Taboo-Transgression-Transcendence in Art & Science* conference.

The following is a transcript from the conversation between Dalila Honorato and Hege Tapio in Corfu on May 27th, 2017.

Hege Tapio (HT): What inspired you to organize the conference “Taboo - Transgression - Transcendence in Art & Science”? (1) How did it come to life?

Dalila Honorato (DH): It is an act of necessity to do something provocative in a moment when everything seems prohibited, forbidden. In Greece, we are not supposed to have money to do anything that is not saving the population, solving some sort of (economic) difficulty. We are denied all sorts of support for research and art production. When things are really hard you have two options - you can hide and kill yourself, or you do an act of madness and passion. I choose to say: “I want to do this. I am alive. And I have the right to do it.” The conference is revenge against all the negative mood around. It keeps getting harder, but we have growing support from people who want to participate. The conference is more an act of activism than anything else.

HT: Have there ever been works left out because they were too far over the edge?

DH: No. But, of course, we cannot accept everybody. This year, we cut two-thirds of the proposals that were not directly connected to the subject. But many people would like to attend. That gives me fuel. You are not able to see the results (of the conference) immediately, but it eventually comes with time.

HT: What are the limits of art that explore taboos, transgressions, and transcendence?

They expand; this is the good thing about limits **DH:** They expand. This is the good thing about limits. We start with the taboo, a limit that -socially speaking- we do not want to pass over.

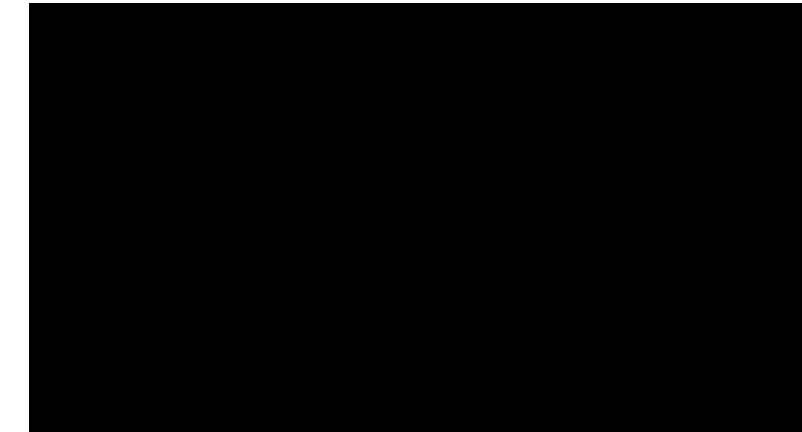
Then, there is transgression, when someone does not accept what everybody else seems to agree with, for example, that you are not supposed to eat French fries. If someone says: “I can eat French fries, let me try one,” then that is a moment of transcendence. Through the act of expanding and pushing limits a little further, others might follow. Or not. Or you might even die doing it. This is the story of science, the story of Galileo. The story of every visionary. You might die for your vision. You might die by pushing the limits - but everybody else might follow. We were not trying to get killed at the conference. Things are just so foggy at this moment, socially, politically, economically, everywhere, not just Greece. Everybody is compromised, so I think we need to review our taboos and measure the possibilities of transgression. And if transgression works, and if it is a holistic act of transgression, you should go through transcendence.

HT: We live in dangerous times. Is art getting more dangerous as well?

DH: I hope so. Talking about art and design, I appreciate an effective way of presenting things and symmetrical designs. But the thing is, we are crooked. We are monsters, we are a mixture of things, we are not pure, we are a lot of things. We are here to get mixed with the environment, and there is no such thing as stability. Stability is a dangerous act, or it is getting dangerous, because it is something that cannot be sustained. One of my favourite political thinkers, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), talked about that; you can invest a lot of energy trying to keep things in a certain state, but the simple act of keeping things in a certain state brings pollution to

We are crooked. We are monsters.

Portrait of Niccolò Machiavelli by Santi di Tito.



it, forcing things into an unstable state of being. This can be seen in anything, including art. I am a social scientist, so this is my feedback from a person that follows what is happening in art.

HT: Do you think society will ever run out of taboos?

DH: No, that is the thing. After transcendence, when you pass over that taboo, there is a new limitation. And after finding that new border, we need to get a little stable for a certain time. It is like, when you go up or down the steps, you always stop for a second. So that is what comes after transgression. Once you have reached it, once you have pushed the border, you will find a new limit. And that limit will be called taboo, and it will give birth to reactions, and that will be the new transgression and new transcendence. Some things go back and forth. If you push too much and too fast in a certain direction, you might have the opposite effect. I think, if you check history, you can see we go back and forth a lot of times. But that movement is the important part. So, fuel it!

References:

- (1): Interdisciplinary Conference - TABOO - TRANSGRESSION - TRANSCENDENCE in Art & Science. <https://avarts.ionio.gr/ttt/>

ART OF FEAR

MARNIX DE NIJS

Marnix de Nijs is a Dutch installation artist. As a pioneer of Dutch media art since the mid-90s, de Nijs makes use of high-concept mechanics, software and ever-evolving technologies to create interactive artworks that play with the viewer's perception of image, sound and movement.

The following is a transcript of the conversation between Marnix de Nijs and Zane Cerpina in Rotterdam, December 2017.

Zane Cerpina (ZC): What is dangerous art to you?

Marnix de Nijs (MN): Most of my works are about physical participation, direct gut feeling and emotions you get from an interactive work. **Fear is one of the very basic feelings I play with.** Therefore, I sometimes put the public in a dangerous situation, so they actually experience fear.

ZC: Are you a dangerous artist?

MN: I made some artworks that are quite dangerous. Especially *SPATIAL SOUNDS (100dB at 100km/h)* (1) - the big spinning speaker piece, where you would have to control a speaker by moving around it. It's a massive machine equipped with sensors that reacts on you. When it gets a sensory overload, it will start spinning at the top speed of about 100 km/h. It is a big monitor-size speaker, if you stick a hand in front of it, your arm would snap, if you step over the fence, you could possibly die. It is of course clear where you should go and where you should not, but people are always teasing the work. And your perception gets tricked because it is a spinning speaker and it spins at a speed so fast that it generates a Doppler effect. That affects your experience - you cannot locate the speakers anymore. So you see where the speaker is visually, but your ear gets confused and therefore your brain gets fucked up. You don't really perceive the exact size of the work anymore. **If you step over the fence, you could possibly die**

Spatial Sounds (100 dB at 100 km/h) at Prix Ars Electronica 2001, Linz.

I love big machines and machine violence

This work triggers extreme emotions. We had a presentation at *Nuite Blanche* which is an all night long exhibition in Paris. And then somewhere in the middle of the night drunk people were getting crazy and really tried to challenge the work putting themselves in danger, even stepping over the fence. That was the point where it went a bit too far but then again, I am challenging them a with the work to do so.

ZC: How would you define your artists' manifesto?

MN: I simply have a taste for extreme works and therefore I also enjoy dangerous works that are physically involving and dangerous. I love big machines and machine violence.

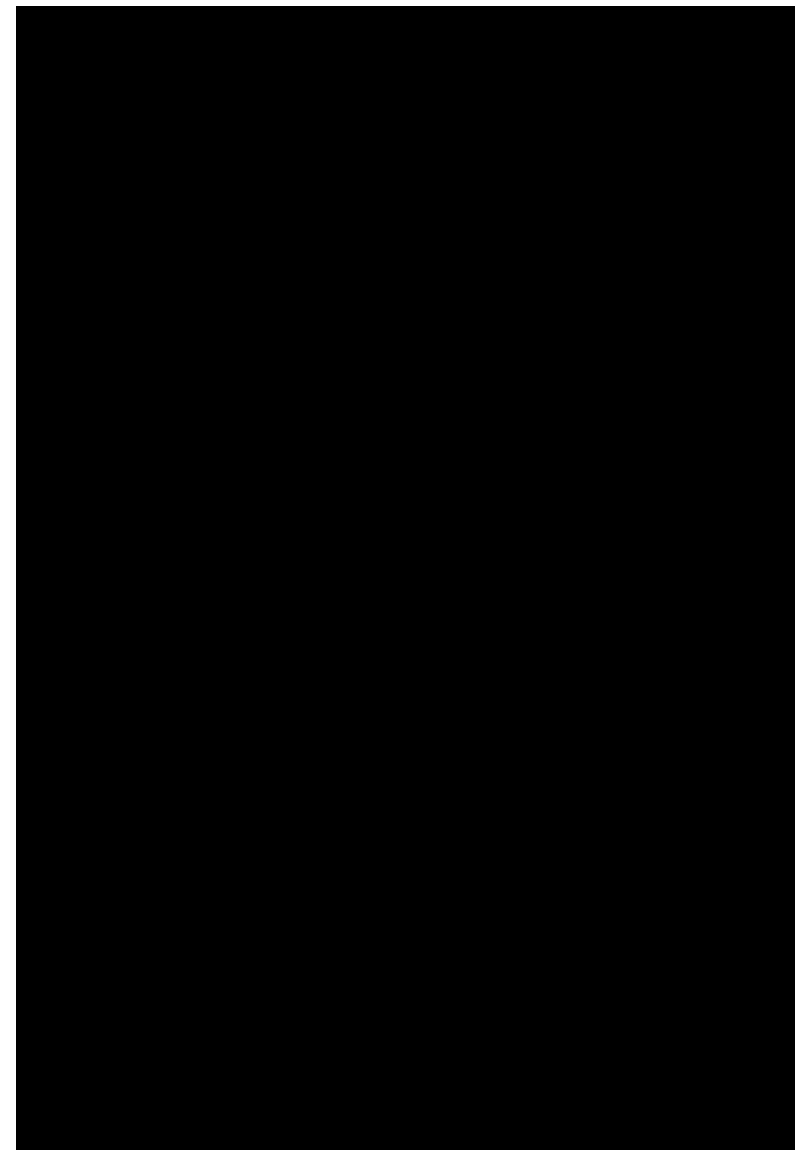
ZC: The physicality is mesmerizing, but why are we so attached to our gadgets?

MN: Technological devices are getting smaller and therefore less physical, I guess it is one of the reasons why my little bit old-school big interfaces are still popular at festivals, because you need something physical at a festival. You cannot organise a festival with only VR glasses and computer screens, you know.

ZC: What are you working on right now?

MN: The works I am doing now are also physically participatory. They involve the body a lot, but it is less about danger as such. It is more about the complexity and stories I can tell with the image. **Your ear gets confused and therefore your brain gets fucked up**

Marnix de Nijs at V2_, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2017.



References:

(1): *Spatial Sounds (100dB at 100km/h)* is an interactive audio installation by Marnix de Nijs and Edwin van der Heide.
<http://www.marnixdenijs.nl/spatial-sounds.htm>

MARNIXDENIJS.NL

*CONTAGIOUS, HAIRY,
HOT, MESSY, MORTAL,
PRECARIOUS, PRECIOUS,
SLIMY, SMELLY, SPLENDID,
STICKY, TICKLISH*

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*ARE WE F***ED?*

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*“A BEAUTIFUL ACCIDENT”
META.MORF 2018*

*SEATED IN ECONOMY
CLASS, SIPPING ON PIÑA
COLADAS, LISTENING TO
THE BEACH BOYS WHILE
BLISSFULLY SAILING INTO
THE ULTIMATE SUNSET;
IS MANKIND PREPARED
FOR BEING THROWN OUT
OF TELLUS’S COCKPIT,
AS A PRODUCT OF OUR
INNOVATIVE NATURE?*

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FEEDING DANGEROUS IDEAS

CATHRINE KRAMER & ZACK DENFELD

Cathrine Kramer (NO) and Zack Denfeld (US) founded the Center for Genomic Gastronomy (2010), an artist-led think tank examining the biotechnologies and biodiversity of human food systems. The mission of the Center is to map food controversies, prototype alternative culinary futures, and imagine a more just, biodiverse and beautiful food system. Cat and Zack are dedicated to the advancement of knowledge at the intersection of food, culture, ecology, and technology. The Center presents its research through public lectures, research publications, meals, and exhibitions.

The following is a transcript of the conversation between Cathrine Kramer, Zack Denfeld and Zane Cerpina in June 2017, Dublin.

Zane Cerpina (ZC): You are working with somewhat dangerous food ingredients in your projects: radiation, pollution and even bringing extinct species back to life just to eat them again. Do you consider your artistic practice to be dangerous?

Cathrine Kramer (CK): Our work doesn't necessarily deal with dangerous materials, but dangerous ideas instead. We try to challenge how people see the world and how they see themselves. Our projects can make people uncomfortable, but we don't pick a side in what we bring to the discussion.

As soon as you pick a side, you shut down the conversation People often ask: "Are you for or against Genetically Modified Foods?" As soon as you pick a side, you shut down the conversation. Instead, let's all have a discussion together.

ZC: What is the most dangerous thing you have done as artists?

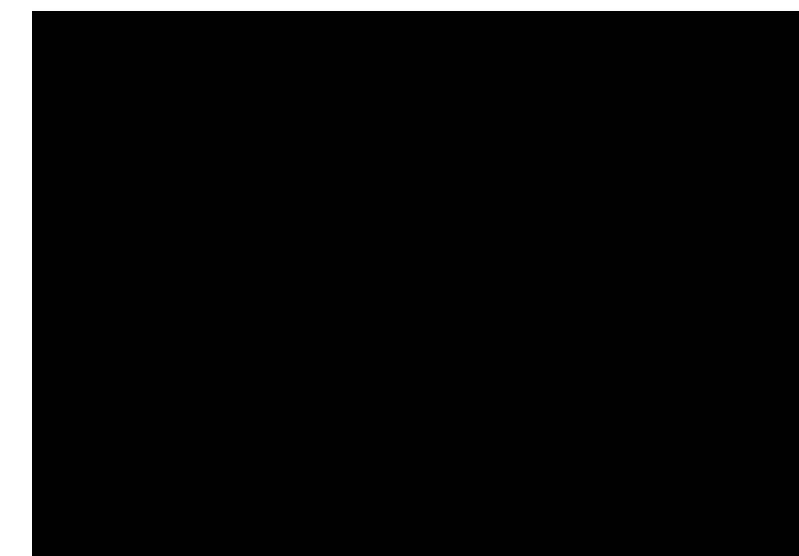
CK: We breathe polluted air every day! Well, we can mention our *Smog Tasting* (1) performance where we harvested concentrated smog by whipping egg whites and to bake cookies. We had a funny interaction on the street because we did it as part of a public festival. There was a woman who came by, and after tasting the cookie, she said to Zack, "Oh, my throat hurts! I thought you were abstract artists." We replied, "No, we are realists." She seemed to understand and not be too angry about her scratchy throat.

ZD: We are very keen on being material-accurate whenever we can. If we are feeding smog to people, we want to have the actual chemicals there. We want to have people confronted with the reality of that material. We are always striving to have that aspect

We harvested concentrated smog by whipping egg whites

If we are feeding smog to people, we want to have the actual chemicals there

Zack Denfeld



Cathrine Kramer and Zack Denfeld at their studio, Dublin, 2017.

in our work. When Cat was making a meal as part of the *Art Meat Flesh* (2) event, she, with her colleague, prepared human breast milk ice cream and served it to the audience. It was not enough to just serve simulated human breast milk as it was also crucial that the person gave permission to use her body to feed others, and had to integrate the need to pump extra breast milk for eaters other than her child into a daily routine.

ZC: Do you think that your projects *Smog Tasting* and *Cobalt-60 Sauce* (3) possibly can break the taboo of seeing these ingredients as inedible?

ZD: That was one of the criticisms we had to deal with: “Why are you even talking about GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms)? You shouldn’t even talk about them!” or “What do you as an artist, know about this topic?” But we are focusing on gastronomy which is the art of collecting, assembling and cooking food. Gastronomy is an art and has to take seriously uncomfortable topics and materials and to be open to the range of subjectivities and preferences that exist.

CK: I almost hope that the concept of smog tasting becomes normalized because it is an invisible ingredient we didn’t think about before. For example, we could imagine a future where recipes include modifications for both high-altitude and high ppm levels. Aeroir, the unique atmospheric taste of place affects how we eat, what we eat and how we experience the flavour.

Only two people have thrown up

ZC: Food is a very sensitive topic, very personal. Can you talk more about what reactions you get from the audience?

CK: Only two people have thrown up.

ZD: Yes, which is a great reaction! For one hung-over audience member, the smell was too strong, and he got sick, but another person at the *Art Meat Flesh* event could not overcome the anxiety when the lab-grown meat was served. I think they got quite physically ill and that is not an experience you hope for, but I think it is good to know

that one possible outcome can be a sense of pure disgust.

CK: Quite often people get very excited, and they want to know more, want to talk about these topics more and want to explore other ways of thinking about these issues. There is a hunger for having these conversations.

ZC: Any dangerous idea that you haven’t talked about yet?

ZD: I guess it is a dangerous idea that we haven’t fully articulated yet - the idea of culinary eugenics. We have this terrible history of human eugenics, especially in the United States - where racial ideology was and is deeply mixed up with scientific theory and historical practices for deciding what kind of humans should live, die, or reproduce - based on their “genetic fitness.” Emerging technologies potentially allow for the more precise selection of genes in humans, rather than the much blunter “selection” of people. The debates between bioconservatives and techno-utopianists are starting to mix up normative ideological positions on the political spectrum. Food politics are a strange parallel conversation to debates over human genetic engineering. Almost all the food we eat has been selectively-bred, domesticated, and increasingly may also involve mutagenesis, transgenesis, CRISPR and speed breeding techniques. But the resurgence of xenophobia and fascism thought the U.S. and Europe has a bizarre culinary dimension. In the US you can see advertisements for open-pollinated seed varieties on conservative media. Reactionary “Blood and Soil” ideologies have often romanticized the rural and tried to define what is “authentically” local. It is unclear how concepts of re-localization, gastronomical preservation, food innovation and emerging biotechnology will all relate to each other in five years’ time. How will anti-corporate,

It is good to know that one possible outcome can be a sense of pure disgust

The idea of culinary eugenics

ecologically minded food justice advocates relate to the more deeply reactionary foodies? Will we see racists ideologues advocating for the revival and consumption of “traditional” recipes and ingredients and the growing of “pure” non-hybrid cultivars? Things are getting very strange around the edges.

ZC: And hunger for extinct species?

ZD: In our project *De-extinction Deli* (4) we asked if it is likely that some humans will eat the species that we revive using de-extinction techniques. We ate some of these animals to death the first time around, has human nature changed that much in the meantime? These are cultural, not scientific questions, but they are dangerous because we feel very uncomfortable about admitting that the generations before us ate whole species to death. As an example, 6 billion pigeons in the United States were hunted to death for their feathers and their fat. We have improved a lot as a species in past two hundred years, but would we make the same mistakes now?

Humans will eat the species that we revive using de-extinction techniques

ZC: Maybe we should genetically modify our bodies to eat in different ways in the new age of the Anthropocene?

ZD: I guess we have already been genetically modifying our bodies in a lot of ways. Scientists are looking at a lot of intergenerational changes right now and how our bodies have changed over a short time. But you can see that we have always changed our bodies if you look at our gut microbiome. People are always modifying themselves based on what they eat.

CK: And we are only at the very beginning of understanding what role the microbes in our guts play. As we learn to understand that, I think there is going to be a whole lot of new ways to modify ourselves by modifying our guts. That is exciting!

References:

- (1) *Smog Tasting* is a work by The Center for Genomic Gastronomy, using egg foams to capture and harvest air pollution. Smog from different locations can so be tasted and compared. <http://genomicgastronomy.com/work/2011-2/smog-tasting/>
- (2) *Art Meat Flesh* was a TV-Style cooking competition including two teams of philosophers, scientists, chefs and artists battling in a TV-style cooking competition for supremacy over a remarkable secret ingredient. The event took place at V2_, Institute for Unstable Media. http://v2.nl/events/test_lab-art_meat_flesh
- (3) *The Cobalt-60 Sauce* by The Center for Genomic Gastronomy is a barbecue sauce made from common mutation-bred ingredients. <http://genomicgastronomy.com/work/2013-2/cobalt-60-sauce/>
- (4) *The De-extinction Deli* by The Center for Genomic Gastronomy is a fantastical market stand that is designed to highlight the emerging technologies, risks, and outcomes of the growing movement to bring back and possibly eat extinct species. <http://genomicgastronomy.com/work/2013-2/deli/>

GENOMICGASTRONOMY.COM



Zack Denfeld presenting *The De-extinction Deli*, 2013.

HUMAN GOURMET

ZORAN TODOROVIĆ

Zoran Todorović is a Serbian performance and video artist. Zoran deals with modes of enacting bio-political control and explores the ways in which institutional spaces of control and punishment are inscribed in the body. He is best known for his new media and video works that often shocks and confronts the viewer.

The following is a transcript of the conversation between Zoran Todorović, Stahl Stenslie and Zane Cerpina in October 2016, in the Youth House in Belgrade (Serbia).

SS: Can you briefly explain your work *ASSIMILATION?* (1)

Zoran Todorović (ZT): It is a simple idea to make food out of human flesh and body, but it is also about the concept of beauty. I used plastic surgery clinics to collect the (human) material for meals. I also took pictures of patients during those surgeries. *Assimilation* works as some short circuit or, in psychological terms, as the artificially created cognitive dissonance which disturbs us through the simultaneous occurrence of two contradictory phenomena.

SS: Did you take part in the actual surgeries?

ZT: Yes, I was one of the medical team photographers who followed the procedures. In the end, they usually throw it (the human waste material) in the toilet, but I just collected and kept it. For the first performance, I asked a professional chef for advice, and he suggested to make some aspic dish - local traditional food. Because I wanted to prepare food for many people, the first time I collected leftovers from a face-lifting surgery (which was done with only a small cut and therefore produced little material), an aspic recipe sounded like a promising idea.

SS: You are connecting beauty and the body, and there are many other artists who have done that using body as a material. But you have taken a step further to share it with your audience, so you do the cooking and the eating as a piece of art.

I used plastic surgery clinics to collect the (human) material for meals

I collected leftovers from a face-lifting surgery

ZT: Yes, but I also used professional chefs who aestheticized food, so this involved the process of aestheticization, or normalization, of our bodies and some piece of meat. I wanted to connect to and problematize the process of aestheticization by using the taboo of cannibalism.

SS: What was the procedure of cooking and serving? How did people perceive it?

ZT: For chefs, that was an interesting experience! They were very excited about it. But for the audience, it was a moment of conflict. For example, people who ate it had to explain and justify why they did it to the other part of the audience who refused to taste it. So, it was some moment of conflict and attention.

For the audience, it was a moment of conflict

SS: Were the patients notified about the project?

ZT: No. The patients were not involved in that story. The material was acquired from the surgeons, and it was an agreement between doctors and me.

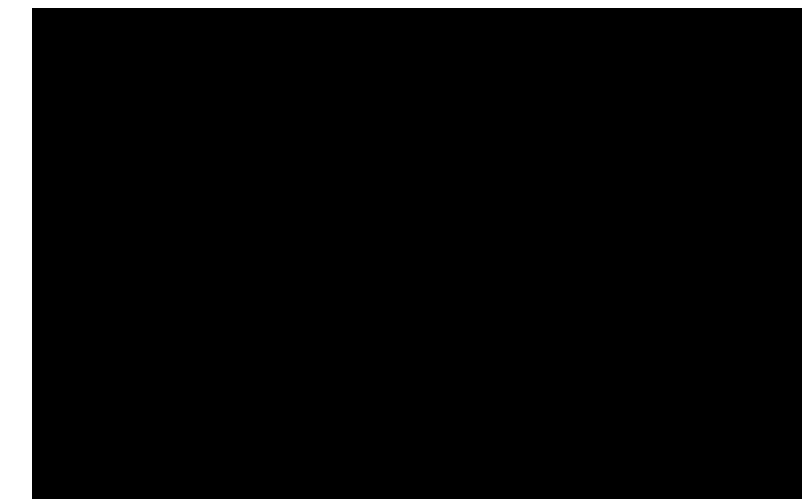
SS: What about the taste?

ZT: I don't know because I never tasted it. First, I did not want to eat human flesh. But another reason was more artistic. I always want to avoid a situation in which I make a performance out of myself, like a theater where audience looks at what the artist is doing.

SS: What were the exact reactions from the audience?

ZT: In different places, I hear different reactions. For example, here in Serbia, Croatia and especially Slovenia, many people wanted to taste it and to open some discussion around it. But in central Europe, for instance, and especially in Germany, the primary question is whether this performance is legal; the answer may surprise you - cannibalism is not forbidden, at least not in Europe. In Great Britain, the

A taste of *Assimilation*.



underlying problem about this work is a sanitary one. The British are concerned whether the offered food is healthy, and it is only in Britain that it is prohibited for the audience to taste this food since it was not possible to get the sanitary certificate for this food, which otherwise, in other places, was eaten for the most part during the performance. The performances usually function in such a way that during the performances themselves there's the discussion going on between those who tasted the food and those who refused it. On one occasion the discussion which started at the exhibition in Novi Sad ended up in the parliament of Vojvodina province.

Cannibalism is not forbidden, at least not in Europe

SS: British would have been punished if they ate it?

ZT: They didn't allow it, I don't know what would happen if someone tried to.

SS: How many people have tasted your food? How many have crossed the taboo of eating human flesh?

ZT: I don't know the number of people, but many. When I was setting up the performance, I put up very detailed information with pictures and many details about the prepared meal. I tried to avoid misunderstandings about what the food was made from.

The shit, the snivel, the corpse, etc., it is some 'accursed share,' the surplus of the waste, which not only belongs to you but in some sense also constitutes you

Zoran Todorović

SS: Your work touches so many political and ethical aspects. You take it from the body, prepare it, externalize it, then take it back into your body, of course not just by eating and tasting it, but also by making the human flesh eternal, beautiful.

ZT: Yes, As I said beauty is some kind of construction and some kind of politics. On that level I want to provoke: what is beauty, what does that mean?

The works I make have relational nature. These are procedures or situations which do not have a finite form and in whose formation the audience is somehow involved. The material used in their realization is some kind of tactics in which their institutional and symbolic origin is inscribed. If I make food out of human tissue, then it is essential that this tissue appears as a waste from the industry of aesthetic surgery, and therefore it acts as an 'accursed share' which hinders us to fit into some aesthetic standard. It is a fictional surplus which is problematic, socially produced, and which in an aestheticized form, in the form of tasteful food, is returned to the public, more concretely, to the audience which somehow must react to this normative stoppage in which it found itself. Here the taboo of cannibalism is some method through which a symbolic interruption of its own kind is made, where the effect of the abjection occurs as a denied truth of medical and normative procedures which relate to the body and its aestheticization.

What is beauty, what does that mean?

This work, as well as some other works which I made, produces the effect of abjection which does not allow an easy identification with it. Namely, the problem of abjection is the problem of the object (neither the object nor the subject), it is something which is external but is also at the same time yours. For instance, the shit, the snivel, the corpse, etc., it is some 'accursed share,' the surplus of the waste, which not only belongs to you but in some sense also constitutes you...

ZC: Do you think there is moment of normalization of the taboo (cannibalism), when people taste it?

ZT: For some people, it is OK. And also, many people told me that they would like to taste themselves; for some, it is their skin; for some, it is their finger. They were just curious. But for others that was a very problematic behavior.

Many people told me that they would like to taste themselves

ZC: And how did chefs perceive the challenge of cooking human flesh?

ZT: They almost immediately understood what the problem was. We carried a tiny piece of meat and had many people who potentially might want to taste it. So that was the frame for them, practically and economically. They would add spices and other ingredients to prolong the meal.

References:

(1) *Assimilation* by Zoran Todorovic: Performance/Action, realized between 1997 and 2016.

A series of events which questioned the idea of beauty. It's about meals, for example, suppers, made of human tissue which appears as a leftover in the industry of aesthetic surgery. The installation involves showing photo and video documentation that explains the origin and preparation of the food offered to spectators. zorantodorovic.com/portfolio_page/assimilation/

ZORANTODOROVIC.COM

EATING YOURSELF

MARKO MARKOVIĆ

Marko Marković is a Croatian artist working across the mediums of video, installation and performance. In his works Marković often includes the audience and other participants as the medium of expression.

The following is a transcript of the conversation between Marko Marković and Zane Cerpina in October 2016, in the Youth House in Belgrade (Serbia).

Zane Cerpina (ZC): You work with the topic of auto-cannibalism and human flesh consumption in your performance works. Can you tell more about your work *Selfeater*?

Marko Marković (MM): First, I would like to relay the project in the context of human behavior and consumption regarding the present time. In the past, in challenging, extreme and brutal circumstances; if people came to the point where there was no food, they would perform cannibalism. Of course, we know that in certain tribes, the cannibalistic rituals were performed in a way to transfer relative energy through the body of dead people - to uplift them in the new life. This would be the starting point for me. However, in my performances, I did self-consumption as a reflection on modern society and today's human principles.

The first performance *SELFEATER / The thirst* (2009) (1) about self-consumption deals with our needs to have a voice and direct our destiny. To exemplify, I was drinking my blood through a straw inserted into my intravenous system.

Before I was doing this type of performance, I talked to the doctors, and they explained to me in which way I need to behave, in a physical way, not to harm myself, because that was not the point of the performance. The point was to give the statement. After, I went a step further and performed *SELFEATER/ Hunger* (2009) (2) in which I made a dinner with myself. There was a big white table; a waiter set the table and the medical nurse cut out the piece of the flesh from my left arm. It was then served on the plate, and I ate it. It was a type of ritual as it observes a cultural aspect of the environment.

These performances came in particular period of my life when I could perceive the

growing divisions among the social classes. They were acts of protest and revolt against system apparatus. With these actions, I have sent out the message to the public that we are the owners of our own life, our body, and our soul. Some of us urge to resist authorities and understand our freedom as the principles of Anarchism teach us: "The liberty of man consists solely in this, that he obeys the laws of nature because he has himself recognized them as such, and not because they have been imposed upon him externally by any foreign will whatsoever, human or divine, collective or individual."

ZC: How big was your meal?

MM: It was about two or three centimeters of skin and flesh underneath the skin. The experience I got from this performance was unique. It is interesting how the public cannot see everything that the performance consists of; there are always parts invisible for them. Ask yourself, "what is happening with the performer before they start to perform?"

I was drinking my blood through a straw inserted into my intravenous system

What is happening inside of them while performing? What comes after the performance? It is the path with many steps.

For me, this was the most challenging performance I did, because I didn't know what will be after. I thought much about what could come out of this action, what are the possible consequences in the personal, private and the public space. I took a lot of preparation for this piece; I overthought all the possible outcomes that I could see in that time. For me, this performance was much more mental than physical training.

Eduardo Viveros de Castro explains that the possession of a similar soul implies the possession of similar concepts, which determine that all subjects see things in the same way. Individuals of the same species see each other (and each other

only) as humans see themselves, that is, as beings endowed with a human figure and habits; seeing their physical and behavioral aspects in the form of human culture. What changes when passing from one species of subject to another is the "objective correlative," the referent of these concepts: what jaguars see as "manioc beer" (the proper drink of people), humans see as "blood." Any species of subject perceives itself and its world in the same way we perceive ourselves and our world. "Culture" is what one sees of oneself when one says "I."

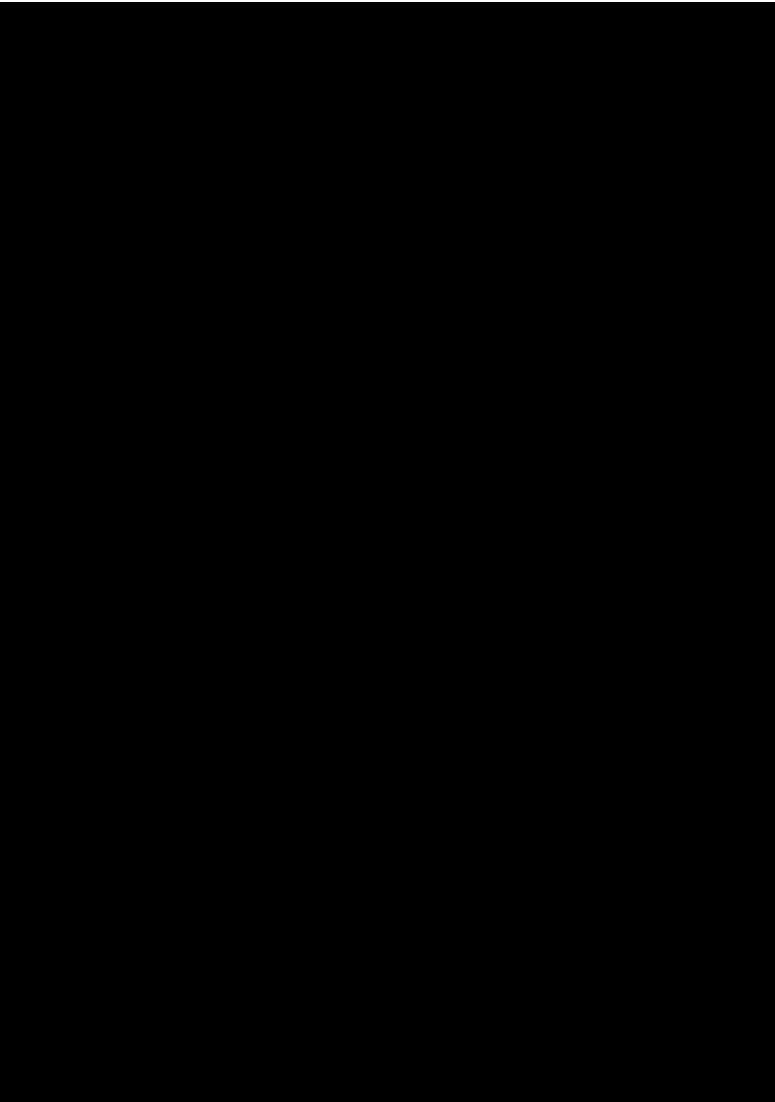
ZC: How did the audience react?

MM: In both performances, people were shocked. I did not aim to shock, but when the shock comes out of the audience, I presume that it is a valuable process. In such situations, people are questioning themselves and others around them. Why is something shocking for somebody and for somebody else it is not? So, it is not in the relation - what the poet wanted to say, it is different. What is the meaning that you are asking from yourself? In that way the audience was also reacting, some people were crying, and some people were inspired. Anyway, shock is an excellent trigger to understand the human nature and what is underneath the surface.

ZC: Did these acts of self-cannibalism somehow changed your relationship to your own body?

MM: This was the period when I was investigating the extreme body art practice. In such conditions I have developed my understanding of performance and how can my body be its medium.

Marko Marković performing
SELFEATER/ The thirst, 2009, Split.



Zagreb, Croatia supported the terminology of auto-cannibalism.

Body art practice has helped me to understand the meaning of the performance and its importance for the people who are dealing with this force. It is dangerous if we don't know how to control the uncontrollable.

ZC: The drive of why you are doing what you are doing?

MM: Yes, it is essential to know why you are you doing what you are doing. For example, if I perform body art on myself, I am okay with it. I wouldn't do that on anybody else because that would terrorize them. If another person is willing to do that, we need to ask ourselves, "why is this person willing to do that?" It is a great responsibility, and we need to be careful not to harm each other.

Shock is an excellent trigger to understand the human nature

There was a big white table; a waiter set the table and the medical nurse cut out the piece of the flesh from my left arm. It was then served on the plate, and I ate it.

Marko Marković

When one older colleague saw that I am going to extreme body art practice, he told me, "You need to be careful what you are doing. Learn to recognize the wolf inside yourself; the beast is pushing you, and that is a great challenge". Of course, you need to be aware of your limits, and body art practice is investigating those boundaries. It is important to say that these performances were recognized as most extreme body art practice in Croatian performance art scene. Performance responses were burdensome, different opinions from positive to negative. Scientific research by Dr. Suzan Marjanic from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore in

Learn to recognize the wolf inside yourself

References:

- (1) SELFEATER/ The thirst is a performance work by Marko Marković.
<http://markovichmarko.blogspot.no/2012/02/selfeater-thirst-production-2009-dopust.html>
- (2) SELFEATER/ Hunger is a performance work by Marko Marković.
<http://markovichmarko.blogspot.no/2012/02/selfeater-hunger-production-2009.html>

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galerie-stock.net/en/mm-marko-markovic

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FASHIONABLY DANGEROUS

ALEXANDRA MURRAY-LESLIE

Dr. Alexandra Murray-Leslie is an academic artist, guest researcher Animal Logic Academy, Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation, The University of Technology Sydney, and co-founder of the art band Chicks on Speed. Her practice-based research focuses on the design and development of somatic wearable musical instruments with a focus on computer enhanced foot devices for theatrical audiovisual expression.

The following is a transcript of the conversation between Alexandra Murray-Leslie and Zane Cerpina in June 2017, Dublin.

Zane Cerpina (ZC): *Chicks on Speed started as an art intervention into commercial music sector. How have things changed in the past 20 years? What art interventions do we need in 2018?*

But I think really it was about this act of just being bored

Alexandra Leslie Murray (ALM): Melissa Logan and I founded Chicks on Speed behind the Munich Art Academy as a sort of subversive act, if you like, and also because we were bored. And it was from there that we realized that through art we could only reach a certain amount of people. I think we just had this strategy that we could impact a lot more people if we made some sort of product that would be in between art, music, fashion and in a way blow up these boundaries. But I think really it was about this act of just being bored. It is always for necessity that you want to make change and change your environment around you, and I think that is actually the job of the artist. And today, if you are asking about what is missing, I think more of us need to maybe stop making things, so we need to de-make and make in another ways, and that is within the circular economy.

ZC: *Your hacking fashion projects can be read as comments on the fast fashion industry?*

ALM: Yes. I am an activist against fast fashion. Fashion, I think in a way really doesn't exist anymore. It used to be a

We have tortured our feet for long enough

mechanism for change and for recognizing something new, but I think fashion has gotten lost and I am sort of disillusioned from fashion as you can see.

But I also think it is something with musical instruments. They have all been made for hands, and so the hands have almost been overused because we put so much emphasis on our hands. I almost think that maybe the problems we have today are also caused by our hands. So the notion of manipulation is pretty negative to the hand. So if we think about 'pedi-pulation', could that be something positive if we think through our feet, if we feel through our feet, if we give more sensitivity to our feet to be in contact with the Earth, it is very related to Somaesthetics philosophy - that through this new sensing maybe we will experience around us in a different way, and maybe the way we affect the world will also be different, because we have open ourselves up to that. I just feel like we need to use other parts of our body, so my emphasis, my focus is the feet because we have tortured our feet for long enough and we have tortured the Earth for long enough.

ZC: *Do you want to be dangerous to the fashion industry?*

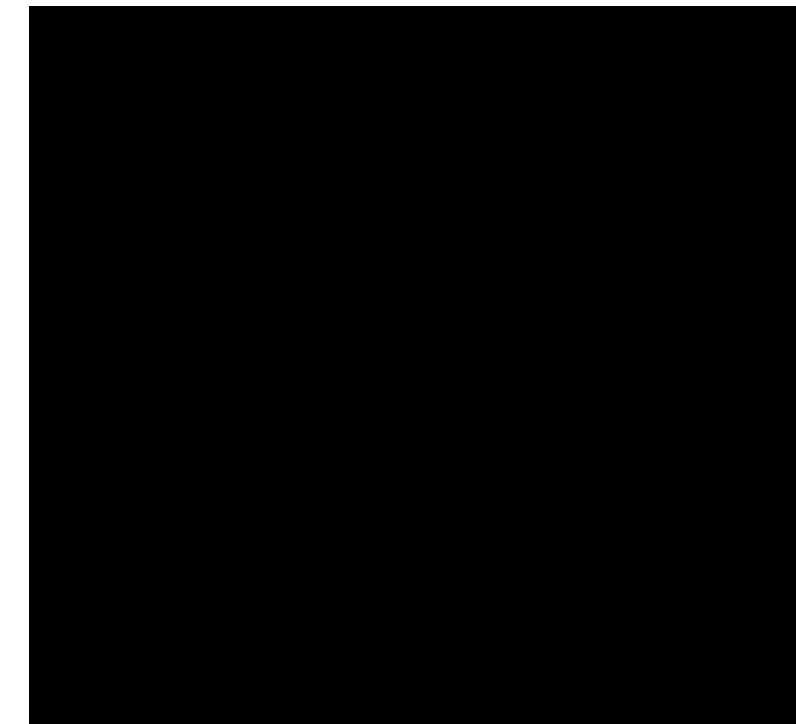
ALM: Absolutely dangerous! I think we need to be radical now, I think we need to be absolutely subversive if we are going to make any change. And I think even art, there is no real reason for art anymore in the way dead art has been re-made. Only the live is of interest, they can have a say, they can make change.

Absolutely dangerous!

ZC: *What is the most dangerous thing you have done as an artist?*

I've gotten to travel a few times with some of the workshops. I did a workshop with Rebecca Fiebrink and Atau Tanaka where I teach guerrilla strategies. We go off our laptops and we go into the real world. I led the students, and I led them and led them and they didn't know where we were

Video Still from Chicks on Speed - We don't play Guitars, 2003.



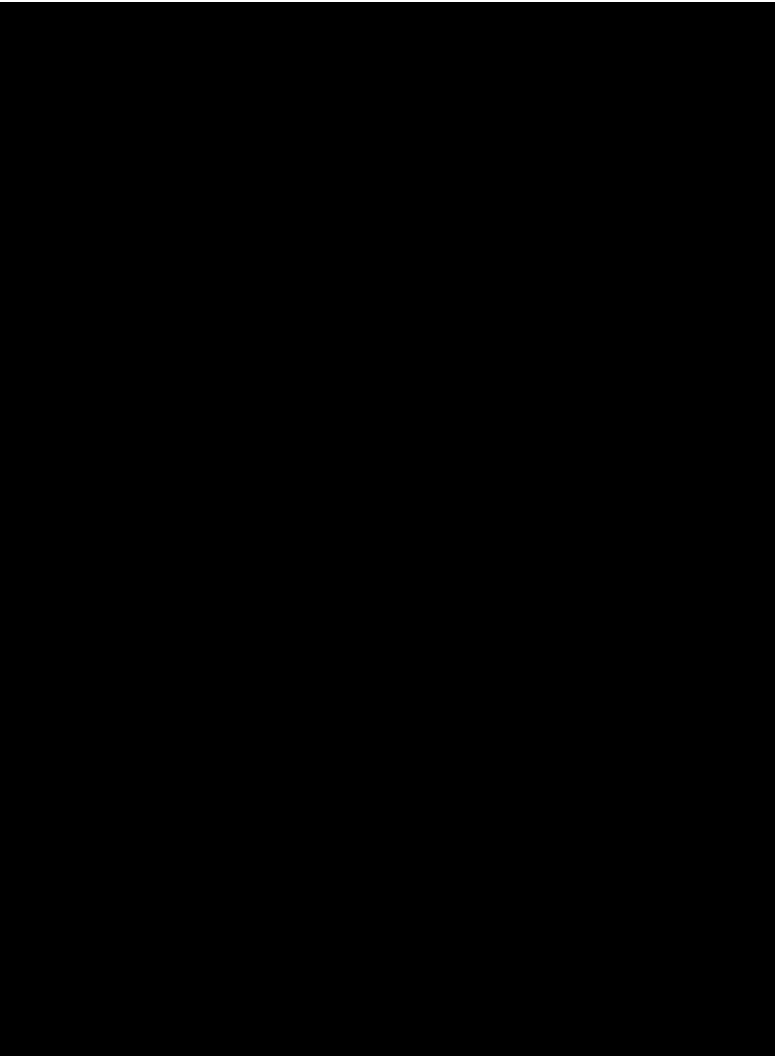
going. And then we got to the corner of this building in a very expensive part of London, and I asked them, "Do you know where we are?" and they said no, and I said, "We are outside the Ecuadorian Embassy, and we are going to go and free Julian Assange now." That was not dangerous, but the dangerous part I found was that some of the American students got really angry with me and I felt they were going to take me to court. And the activity was about watching the watchers watching, so we were carrying out active surveillance.

Watching the watchers watching

And in the way that Steve Mann has carried out 'Veillance': we were watched from above so we were watching from below. But the American students didn't really understand, and it was at that moment that I asked them: "What media do you read? What do you listen to?" and they told me Fox News, and I said, "Well that is the problem because you need to read broadly, you need to understand what is really going on." So I think maybe it is very dangerous when people don't look around and see a broader horizon around them, and that is dangerous for me and I felt in danger. I was endangered by my students. Because they thought that I was morally incorrect.

Alexandra Murray-Leslie during artist talk: Shoe Shredding at Science Gallery Dublin, 2017.

Chicks on Speed performing at ARS Electronica 2017, Linz, Austria.



I think the refreshing thing about Autodesk was that the reason why they bring artists in is to make trouble, to push the boundaries of where the machines can go, to reprogram the machines, to get into the G-Code and fuck things up; they want that. And I think that is really unique and I think that is how more companies should be because it is the artists that are going to advance the software, they are going to advance these machines because they are going to want to do things that the machines can't do yet.

Make mistakes because it is the mistakes that lead you to the unexpected outcomes

So it is these experiences of artists coming up with ideas, experimenting with these machines, experimenting with fabrication methods in order to make steps towards the unknown, and that is something I am really interested in. So not just creating an STL file, giving it away, or even putting it in yourself and sending it to the printer. But going, "Okay, I have sent my file, now how can I actually physically mess with this machine to change my print?" And I find that physicality really exciting because I'm a performer and I see the 3D printer as a stage for action. So if I just put my STL file in and I push 'Start' and I have to watch it for 16 hours, I feel left out of the performance, so I want to stop it, I want to embed stuff and I want to change the nature of the output of the print because in a way these 3D printers, they are too perfect, there are no mistakes. A lot of our work has to do with craft and manual labor, and I think there needs to be more of an integration of traditional craft methods of making with the digital making, so opening the printer up, scraping a bit around. And make mistakes because it is the mistakes that lead you to the unexpected outcomes.

ZC: What about your residency at Autodesk, what experiences did you get out of it?

ALM: I think working with people that have an expertise in so many different areas, so this notion of being able to collaborate with an astronaut, collaborate with somebody who does 3D printed glass. In a way of bringing in all these areas and seeing where can a collaboration grow. So I really went in there with a pretty open mind, and sure I wanted to create another prototype of my shoes through 3D printing, but aside from that I also wanted to see what would happen and to be open to those inputs from those different people. And I ended up coming out with a couple videos, I did choreography with robots, I learned how to program the choreography with a robot.

Alexandra Murray-Leslie during the Watching the watchers watching activity.

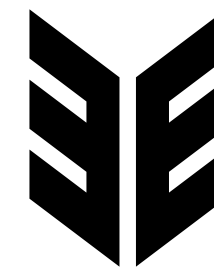
We are outside the Ecuadorian Embassy, and we are going to go and free Julian Assange now.

Alexandra Murray-Leslie



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UPCOMING EVENTS



ARTISTIC RESEARCH WILL EAT ITSELF

The ninth edition of the SAR International Conference on Artistic Research
University of Plymouth, April 11th - 13th 2018

The provocation Artistic Research Will Eat Itself can be understood as a warning against the dangers of methodological introspection, or as a playful invitation to explore the possibilities of a field in a constant state of becoming. In this context, the 'cannibalism' of artistic research 'eating itself' embodies a dynamic tension between self-destruction and regeneration.

hsarconference2018.org

DANGEROUS FUTURES CONFERENCE

Conference @ Meta.Morf 2018, May 4 & 5, 2018, Trondheim, Norway
Curator and moderator: Zane Cerpina / Co-curator: Espen Gangvik

Gaia is a tough bitch. The catastrophe has already happened. The word "crisis" is the default mode in this the age of the Anthropocene. We are obsessed with the ecological apocalypse. Scared shit-less by the propaganda on global terrorism while waiting for Donald to hit the nuclear switch. We build our society on fear. Are we f***ed?

dangerousfutures.com metamorf.no

ISEA 2018 IN DURBAN

Conference 23rd -30th of June 2018

ISEA2018, the 24th International Symposium on Electronic Art, is the first ISEA to be held in the African sub-continent. Hosted in the coastal city of Durban, South Africa, this event will be combined with the 5th iteration of the DUT Digifest in a strategy to build a local legacy.

isea-international.org/isea2018

QUITE FRANKLY: IT'S A MONSTER CONFERENCE

Conference dates: 18-19 October 2018, UWA, Perth, AU
Call for Abstracts: 31 March 2018

2018 marks 200 years since the publication of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus. Shelley's "Creature" is usually conceived as a human creation, the stitched-together, tragic victim of scientific and technological experimentation. We rupture these stitches, revealing that the Creature is more than the sum of its parts. We invite you to explore the dynamic ecosystems evolving within and from the gaps between the Creature's fragments.

symbiotica.uwa.edu.au/activities/symposiums/quite-frankly-2018

TTT2018 TABOO - TRANSGRESSION - TRANSCENDENCE IN ART & SCIENCE

Conference dates: 11-13 November 2018
Call for papers & presentations: Deadline for proposals: 30 April, 2018

Including theoretical and artwork presentations TTT2018 continues to focus: a) on questions about the nature of the forbidden and about the aesthetics of liminality - as expressed in art that uses or is inspired by technology and science, b) in the opening of spaces for creative transformation in the merging of science and art.

avarts.ionio.gr/ttt/2018





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