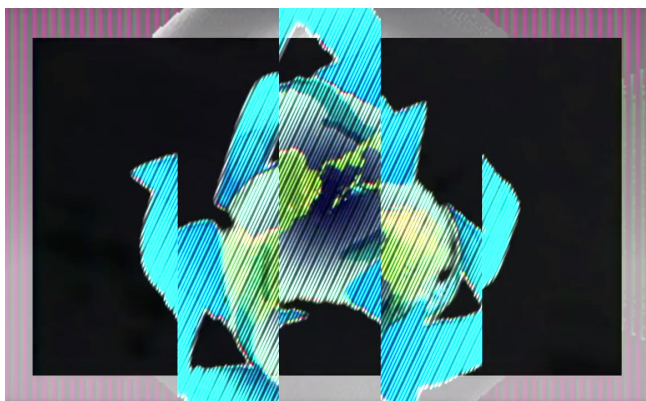


Beyond the Interface



Curated by

Marc Garrett and Julian Staddon for ISMAR 2014 Conference, Munich

Featuring

Erica Scourti, Jennifer Chan, Branger_Briz, Julian Oliver, Mez Breeze, Heath Bunting, Pierre Proske, Genetic Moo, Zach Blas

10 - 12 September 2014

Weisser Saal, Faculty for Architecture, Level 5

The interface is the boundary across which information is exchanged, causing a transformation in one or both sides of that boundary. This exhibition features art that disrupts or bypasses this interface. Interfaces have always been a site of control, hidden in plain view: symbolic, social or technological. They facilitate and shape the dialogue that happens between tribes from different religious, scientific or philosophical backgrounds; between components of computer systems; or between machines and living beings.

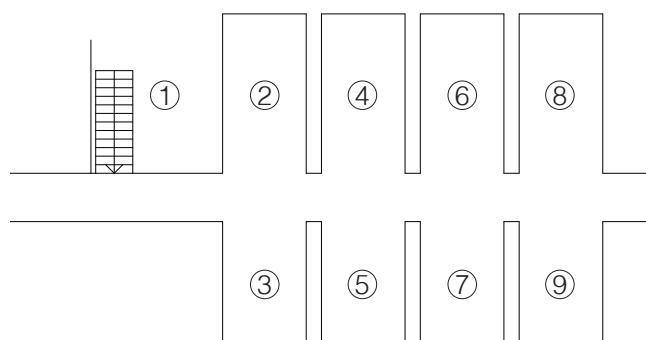
Technological/designed interfaces deploy audio-visual and tactile inputs with touch screens, mice, joysticks and buttons on our mobile phones, game

consoles, televisions, radios and laptops. Amazed and engaged, we forget to question how we might have been dominated and reprogrammed by the very facilities that were supposed to free us as part of the Digital Revolution. Lori Emerson suggests this is an “overwhelming push to disempower users/consumers with closed devices”.¹

The artists in this exhibition, critical practitioners in art and technology, lift the veil on contemporary interfaces, setting out alternative routes, aesthetic visions and disruptive behaviours.

1. *Against the Frictionless Interface!* - an Interview with Lori Emerson www.furtherfield.org/features/interviews/against-frictionless-interface-interview-lori-emerson

Floor Plan



1. Genetic Moo
2. Pierre Proske
3. Zach Blas
4. Julian Oliver
5. Heath Bunting
6. Branger_Briz
7. Erica Scourti
8. Jennifer Chan
9. Mez Breeze

1

Genetic Moo

It's Alive!

2010-13

Multimedia networked installation

It's Alive! sees two populations of parasites and a screen image combine into a living interface. Webcam, maggots and ants. The webcam looks out into the space and slowly builds up an RGB image of what it sees - point it at another changing artwork like a video and it will subtly shift its patterns of light. The maggots feed on this light and are revealed writhing away within the image once a certain brightness has been achieved. Large and ugly they are indifferent to the source as long as there is enough light. The ants have a different scheme in mind. They continuously wander across the surface of the image looking to repair damage caused by the maggots. Filling in holes with fine gossamer-like threads, their programmed desire is to restore order. The three intertwined activities - webcam, maggots and ants - operate as a living ensemble, continuously being reconfigured — parasitic interface consuming energies from the artworks and audience they share a space with.

Genetic Moo

Genetic Moo (Nicola Schauerman and Tim Pickup) have been creating individual interactive artworks for over 5 years. They create Microworlds, digital ecosystems and living installations that are always changing, mutating, and evolving in front of your eyes. Both gained Masters degrees from the Lansdown Centre for Electronic Arts. They have exhibited extensively in galleries, festivals and museums. <http://www.geneticmoo.com>

2

Pierre Proske

Tele-roulette

2014

Transistor TV, random YouTube videostream

"Search engines are determining our sources of information, guiding us towards what they believe we want through increasingly complex heuristics. As a result we are fed only a small slice of the possibilities the Internet has to offer.

The Tele-roulette is a reworked retro transistor TV that broadcasts a constant stream of random videos plucked off YouTube.com. The motivation for Tele-Roulette is to monitor the pulse of the web and capture the zeitgeist of the Internet through a stream of random videos.

The result – different every time, but most likely intriguing, then dull, then disturbing, then really really funny. No longer constrained by search metrics dependant on language and view counts, the Tele-roulette reveals obscure, multi-lingual content lost in the glamour of popularity.

The videos of Tele-roulette are found objects for the 21st century, discarded fragments of people's lives uploaded and then swiftly forgotten."

Pierre Proske

Pierre Proske is an electronic media artist specialising in interactive installations and immersive experiences. He is also founder and director of the electronic media arts organisation Media Lab Melbourne. Pierre explores the pervasiveness of technology in science and culture and its relationship to nature.

Alongside electronic art projects he also works as a sound designer and electronic musician. He has exhibited and performed in Australia, Sweden, Bhutan, Peru, Canada, Iceland, Brazil, Japan, Austria and the Netherlands. <http://www.digitalstar.net/>

3

Zach Blas

Facial Weaponization Communiqué: Fag Face

2012

HD video, 08:10

Facial Weaponization Suite protests against biometric facial recognition – and the inequalities these technologies propagate – by making “collective masks” in community-based workshops that are modeled from the aggregated facial data of participants, resulting in amorphous masks that cannot be detected as human faces by biometric facial recognition technologies. The masks are used for public interventions and performances. One of these masks, the Fag Face Mask, generated from the biometric facial data of many queer men’s faces, is a response to scientific studies that link determining sexual orientation through rapid facial recognition techniques.

Zach Blas

Zach Blas is an artist, writer, and curator whose work engages technology, queerness, and politics. Currently he is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art at the University at Buffalo. His work has been written about and featured in Art Review, Frieze, Art Papers, Hyperallergic, Rhizome, Mousse Magazine, The Atlantic, Al Jazeera America, The New Inquiry, Leonardo Electronic Almanac, and Wired. <http://www.zachblas.info/>

4

Julian Oliver

Border Bumping

2012

HD video, touch screen interface and maps

Border Bumping is a work of dislocative media that situates cellular telecommunications infrastructure as a disruptive force, challenging the integrity of national borders.

As we traverse borders our cellular devices hop from network to network across neighbouring territories, often before or after we ourselves have arrived. These moments, of our device operating in one territory whilst our body continues in another, can be seen to produce a new and contradictory terrain for action.

Running a freely available, custom-built smartphone application, Border Bumping agents collect cell tower and location data as they traverse national borders in trains, cars, buses, boats or on foot. Moments of discrepancy at the edges are logged and uploaded to the central Border Bumping server, at the point of crossing.

Border Bumping was commissioned by the Abandon Normal Devices Festival as part of their 2012 Mobile Republic program. It was then further developed with the assistance of the Techné Institute, University of Buffalo in New York State, as part of a short residency.

Julian Oliver

Julian Oliver is a New Zealander, Critical Engineer and artist based in Berlin. His work and lectures have been presented at many museums, galleries, international electronic-art events and conferences, including Tate Modern, Transmediale, the Chaos Computer Congress, Ars Electronica, FILE and the Japan Media Arts Festival. Oliver has received several awards, most notably the distinguished Golden Nica at Prix Ars Electronica 2011 for the project Newstweek (with Daniil Vasiliev). <http://julianoliver.com/output/>

5

Heath Bunting

Proto-type Off-the-shelf (OTS) British Anonymous Corporation

2014

Documentation material and identity kit

This work is part of a larger project called The Status Project, a study of the construction of our 'official identities' what Bunting describes as "... an expert system for identity mutation". It is an identity created for Anonymous corporations that consist of non-natural person members: eg: human being(s), artificial person(s).

His research explores how information supplied by the public in their interaction with organisations and institutions is logged. The project draws on his direct encounters with specific database collection processes and the information he was obliged to supply in his life as a public citizen in order to access specific services; this includes data collected from the Internet and information found on governmental databases. This data is then used to map and illustrate how we behave, relate, choose things, travel and move around in social spaces. The project surveys individuals on a local, national and international level producing maps of "influence and personal portraits for both comprehension and social mobility".

Heath Bunting

Heath Bunting was born a Buddhist in Wood Green, London, UK, and is able to make himself laugh (currently, reduced to only smile). He is a co-founder of both net.art and sport-art movements and is banned for life from entering the USA for his anti-genetic work. His self taught and authentically independent work is direct and uncomplicated and has never been awarded a prize. He is both Britain's most important practising artist and the World's most famous computer artist. <http://www.irational.org/heath/>

6

Branger_Briz

A Charge for Privacy

2011

Digital video and iPhone Station

Nothing online is really "free." We often forget (or might not even realise) that the online services we depend on for our most intimate and private exchanges (Facebook, Gmail, etc) are not exactly "free" nor are they exactly "private." Every word you email to your family and every link you share with your friends is being archived, indexed and monetized, either in the form of targeted ads and/or other data-mining ventures.

A Charge for Privacy is an iPhone charging station which functions as a metaphor for the online services that we use. Services that are thought to be "free" but are in fact paid for with a new digital-age currency, our privacy. Our charging station gave users a "free" charge (but not without agreeing to the Terms of Use) in exchange for all of the photos on their iPhone, which at the moment of connection, are downloaded to the station and projected publicly on the wall.

Banger_Briz

Banger_Briz are artists, educators && programmers bent on articulating our digital landscape creating memorable interactive projects for themselves && clients. To them contemporary culture means digital culture. They are driven by a desire to share our digital literacies, so their work tends to be public-facing && leverage new-media. They specialise in producing custom projects from concept >> design >> development >> launching/sharing && love every step in the process. <http://brangerbriz.com/>

7

Erica Scourti
You Could've Said

2013

Online performance, 19:00

The top occurring three-word phrases from personal texts written over a busy 4-months period - including diaries, essays and blog posts - were used as search terms in Google's keyword tool, which assists search engine optimization by offering alternative and similar phrases for use in web copy, in order to make websites score higher in Google rankings. The long list of phrases suggested were edited down to create texts that act as a personal confessional spoken through the words of thousands of web-users worldwide.

Erica Scourti
The Outage

2014

Book

The Outage is a ghostwritten memoir based on her digital footprint, the first in a series of books that collectively make up the work Shadow Sides, to be published by Banner Repeater.

Each book draws on profiles and data based on her public and semi-private online activity, obtained through the expertise of professionals working within the fields of cyber security, digital privacy, and social profiling. Working with a different ghostwriter for each book, the material collected informs the basis of each new text narrating her memoirs, extrapolating different versions of her aggregate data self, constructed through her digital footprint.

Erica Scourti

Erica Scourti works with video, performance, online and with text, and has shown internationally at Kunstverein Munich, Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, Museo Reine Sofia, Kunstmuse-

um Bonn and Jeu de Paume Museum, as well as festivals such as Recontres Internationales and Impakt as well as extensively in the UK, most recently at Banner Repeater, Grand Union, New Bridge Project, Enclave, and ICA. <http://www.ericascourti.com/>

8

Jennifer Chan
Grey Matter

2013

Digital video, 05:21

A confessional remix video on the artist as a teenage internet user.

"Jennifer Chan's Grey Matter... mashes up pop culture, net art, and teen-girl online aesthetics into a overloaded diaristic video that questions what privacy and sharing mean in the age of social media." – Jillian Steinhauer, "Tracing a Path from Cubism to Digital Art", HyperAllergic (02 April 2013)

Jennifer Chan

Jennifer Chan is an artist-curator who works in and outside of traditional exhibition spaces. Her work explores institutional critique and feminist perspectives in video and web-based media. Chan is a recipient of the Mississauga Art Awards for Emerging Visual Talent in 2008. She has exhibited her work at Transmediale 2012, GLI.TC/H Festival, Portland Art Museum, Images Festival, and Low Lives International Exhibition of Live Networked Performances. <http://jennifer-chan.com/>

9

Mez Breeze

T[he]Issue: The Geospatial and Mixed-Locative Colonisation Act of 2014

2014

Online documents and internet-enabled workstation

For all the current hype surrounding the practice and implementation of Augmented Reality technology, there has been a complete lack of focus (artistic or otherwise) regarding the ownership/proprietary rights involved in colonising geospatial arenas. *T[he]Issue_* is a “Geospatial and Mixed-Locative Colonisation Document” that asserts ownership rights to emergent Augmented and Mixed/Virtual Reality dimensions. The document asserts a blanket claim over all spatial and locative sectors involved in an updated version of the Virtual-Reality Continuum (think: [Geophysical]<—[Cartesian]–[Mixed]–>[Synthetic]).

This “Geospatial and Mixed-Locative Colonisation Document” will comprehensively outline ownership adoption of non-colonised geospatial/geolocative vectors according to a contemporary interpretation of Geospatial Law. The aims and

issues involved in the creation of *T[he]Issue_* are associated with problems arising from disputes concerning the proprietorship of valuable locative sectors and to curtail AR avatar abuse. For instance, if an assumed virtual or augmented embodiment is created identical to a phenomenologically-defined “real” person, what are the governing guidelines regarding Mixed Reality copyright, trademark, and intellectual property issues? If a business or government stakes an exclusivity claim involving Augmented Reality output in a public or popular geographic area, then who owns the rights regarding AR delivery into that space?

Mez Breeze

Mez Breeze is an Australian-based artist and practitioner of net.art, working primarily with code poetry, electronic literature, and digital multimedia works combining text, code, image and sound. Born Mary-Anne Breeze, she uses a number of avatar nicknames, including Mez and Netwurker. As of May 2014, Mez is the only digital writer who’s a non-USA citizen to have her comprehensive career archive (called “The Mez Breeze Papers”) housed at Duke University, through their David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library. <http://mezbreezedesign.com>

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