1

Tenebris in Lux

The Performance of Code and the Aesthetics of Transmission in contemporary art through practice-orientated research.

Marcia Nancy Mauro Flude

MFA (Media Design) **Piet Zwart Institute Hogeschool Rotterdam University for Applied Sciences** 2007
Grad Dip (Theatre) **DasArts Amsterdam School of the Arts** 2004
BA Hons 1:1 (Performance Studies) **University of Sydney** 2000

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. University of Tasmania, November, 2014.

2

Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of the my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

Authority of Access

This thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying and communication in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

Nancy Mauro-Flude

Acknowledgements

4

Abstract

This thesis contributes to the discourse concerning the role played by computational devices in contemporary culture, specifically, in contemporary art and performance. It addresses the cultural chasm - which has been widening since the Industrial Revolution - between the production and consumption of technology. A position is developed that unmasks the creative possibilities of experiencing the computer as a theatre machine, a mechanism of infinite purposes and diverse desires, rather than solely as an unmediated presentation of a 'ready-made' functional tool. Beyond this technological pragmatism, the inquiry instead points to a richer engagement with technology that can occur through the application of arcane cultural practices from speculative traditions of thinking that include cryptography, theatre and occult philosophy.

The study examines the depth of the reach of the computer into the social fabric of everyday life through a series of experimental artworks and performances. The research areas mobilised in the artworks and applied in the exegesis posit that the distinguishing character of computer networks and systems lies in their materiality. This research also extends to the modes of performance they enable, through which human beings participate and interact.

An exploration of the black-box metaphor - as applied to both computers and theatre and a review of links they share - demonstrates how perceptions about techné and the aesthetic use of technology are shaped by a knowledge of social histories, politics and cultural experiences. Dramaturgy is a central discipline framing the project because performative actions offer an insight into, and elaboration of, aesthetic processes and the effect of technical provocations.

Underlying the artworks that make up this thesis is a methodology that defines radical subjectivity. By drawing attention to the apparatus used to construct and enact the work, new models of aesthetic engagement are created which can be characterised by a playful enactment (a *ludibrium*) of arcane tropes. The thesis concludes that profound play with the limits of a given schema, even of the most utilitarian kind, can lead to startling transfigurations and unanticipated ripples of sway far beyond the maker's intent.

Contents

6

0 GLOSSARY

Font Key
There are several threads of conversation occurring in this Thesis. These are indicated by
The following font formatting:

A) Passages of subjective sense impression   [12pt Cochin - Grey]

b) Subjective observations of self and methods   [11pt Helvetica - Black]

c) Objective argument in an academic context   [12pt Cochin - Black]

GLOSSARY (Hacker Jargon File)

This glossary provides definitions of critical terms used frequently throughout the exegesis. It
also indicates how these terms are referenced in the submitted work.

Apparatus: An assemblage of modular equipment needed to work together to function. Although not perceived
to be synonymous, the word can imply an understanding of the complexity of the organs of a structure or
system, such as the body, or machine.

ASCII Art | Animation: A technique consisting of pictures pieced together from characters and symbols as
defined by the ASCII standard compliant character sets. ASCII primarily employs computers for presentation,
and can be created with any text editor. ASCII representation stems from a time where the transmission of
graphical pictures was not possible through devices such as typewriters, non-graphic computer consoles and
terminals. ASCII art is used wherever text, as opposed to graphics, can be more readily printed or transmitted -
for instance, in circumstances of low bandwidth. 'ASCII art is also traditionally used within the source code of
computer programs for representation of company or product logos, and flow control or other diagrams. ASCII
is an abbreviation of American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII), a set of digital codes
representing letters, numerals, and other symbols, widely used as a standard format in the transfer of text
between computers.'[1]

Amsterdam Subversive Center for Information Interchange (ASCII): A cultural centre, and an early
manifestation hack space operating in Amsterdam from 1999-2006. This center functioned as a free Internet
work place, a hub for various free software projects, and a node point for free culture initiatives such as
Genderchangers Academy (GCA), Amsterdam Wireless.[2]

Black Box: An apparatus, device, system or object which can be viewed or obscured in terms of its function in
regard to input, output and transfer characteristics.

Critical Engineer: Aesthetically exploiting otherwise closed systems. A term that needs to be considered
separately from a 'hacker', or 'hacking', or 'hackspace'.[3]

Code: A code is a set of rules that allow an initiated user to convert one type of information to another. There
are many conflations in how the word 'code' is used even though the contexts may be completely different;
equivalence is frequently made between heuristics, algorithms, programming and language. There are various
technical terms for code instances that relate to their functionality in a utilitarian sense, for instance: source
codes, dictionaries and grammar. Every computer language has a defined grammar, which is interpreted by a
compiler. The compiler digests semantic content and produces byte code, which the computer can execute.
Sometimes an artwork carries with it a set of semiotics so obscure and hermetic that unless you actually
understand the code involved, the meaning may be hidden from you. All societies are replete with social
transactions and codes of conduct; such codes must be learned by the individual wishing to function fully
within that society. Often in social or political settings, the elusiveness of 'the code' is the intention.

Cypherpunk: An advocate for the use of strong cryptography as a route to social and political change.
Originally communicating through a dedicated electronic mailing list, informal groups of Cypherpunks aim to

---

1 ASCII art, Wikipedia, viewed 10 January 2014, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASCII_art >.
2 ASCII Archive, viewed 10 January 2014, <https://scii.nl/>.
3 Julian Oliver & Danja Vasiliev as part of the Critical engineering working group discussion: 'we think those
terms have become loaded and lost in common parlance. Hacking tools and strategies are used often in our own
critical engineering' (Fortune, S 2013).

achieve privacy and security through the proactive use of cryptography. Such Cypherpunk groups have been actively engaged in this movement since the late 1980s.[4]

Darknets: Can be viewed as the wilderness of the Internet. Typified by user groups that choose to operate online in the blind spots of search engines, market analysis data scripts and global surveillance. To access the darknets, a user must connect to a Tor network via standard Internet connections. Tor is a type of anonymizing software with no one centralized location that operates through a constructed interchange of forked sites and server mirrors. The shadow side of the Internet is a platform for trickster's activists and technically sophisticated programmers; it is full of individuals who also want or need to hide their actions, activists hiding their digital footprint, and whistleblowers leaking data. However, these darknets can also operate as a base for heinous organised crimes and are also 'dangerous place[s], where illicit, underground nastiness occurs.'[5]

Dramaturgy: Dramaturgy foregrounds the tensions spectators encounter within a performance. A dramaturge draws out (and connect together) historical, philosophical and intertextual aspects of the work at hand. In this sense, Barba discusses how the 'work of the actions' considers all the dramatic elements, which in turn constitutes the 'weave of performance (1985, p. 75).'

Free Software: The GNU/Linux Free Software Foundation (FSF) campaigns for the rights of computer users. Their core principles highlight cooperative freedom and the rights of users to control their own computing conduct. When the source code used to write software is not only copyrighted but also closed, a situation occurs whereby a user is unable to adjust the software to his or her particular needs. The problematic situation is not centred on the fact that it is commercial software, as some Open Source applications cost money, but is more an issue involving ethics. The Open Source software movement includes principles of 'freedom of information' and 'universal interoperability of systems (open standards)', which are more valued than the principle of 'knowledge sharing' highlighted by the Free Software Foundation. The former includes the latter, but the latter doesn't necessarily include the former.

Genderchangers Academy (GCA): The name 'Genderchangers' is derived from a small piece of computer hardware that changes the sex of a computer cable. The metaphor was chosen to create awareness around the significant lack of women in the field of Information Technology (IT). Furthermore, the GCA's customized experiential learning events challenge the more goal orientated, vocational and teleological approaches that are so dominant in today's learning environments. Their desire is to change the dominant gender of people who use technology, and this is communicated in the events this organisation produces. GCA is an international collective of women who deal with computers the hard way in the sense that in workshops they open up computer hardware, thereby demystifying machines by cataloguing their inner parts. Since 2001 they are active on almost every continent and have been a large influence on women driven hacker space events. They meet 'in real life' (IRL), on a mailing list, via 'Internet Relay Chat' (IRC) and on the website that contains an interactive 'content management system' (CMS) Drupal. They promote a Do It Yourself/Together (DIY/DIT) approach in Information Technology (IT) and promote the use of Free Software.[6]

GIThub: A code repository and version control database. If software programmers allow source code to be made available for users to modify and extend upon, it becomes exceedingly open to idiosyncratic configurations (via a process often termed 'forking') where GIThub is a repository for such shared projects.[7]

Hacker: A curious person who is obsessive about programming software, hardware, distribution and functionality. Hackers often engage in the opening any kind of black box in order to explore, understand, and improve upon it. An abbreviated version of Eric Raymond's hacker definition is 'A person who enjoys exploring the details of programmable systems and how to stretch their capabilities, as opposed to most users, who prefer to learn only the minimum necessary. An expert at a particular program, or one who frequently does work using it or on it; as in `a UNIX hacker'…One who enjoys the intellectual challenge of creatively overcoming or circumventing limitations.' [My italics.] And the most common version of hacker as is shown

---

4 Cypherpunk, *Wikipedia*, viewed 15 December 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cypherpunk>, also see See Assange (2012).
5 'Meet Darknet, the hidden, anonymous underbelly of the searchable Web', viewed 15 December 2013, <http://www.pcworld.com/article/2046227/meet-darknet-the-hidden-anonymous-underbelly-of-the-searchable-web.html >.
6 Some of the portal sites where related projects exist online: Genderchangers Academy (GCA), viewed 15 December 2013, <http://genderchangers.org | Eclectic Tech Carnival (/etc), viewed 15 December 2013, <http://eclectictechcarnival.org | Miss Despoina's Critical Engineering Space, viewed 15 December 2013, <http://miss-hack.org>.
7 GitHub supports collaborative software development as well as being a code repository, viewed 15 December 2013, <https://hithub.com >.

regularly in the mainstream media is '[deprecated] A malicious meddler who tries to discover sensitive information by poking around. Hence password hacker, network hacker. See [cracker].'[8]

Hackspace: A location where people with an extracurricular interest in information technology (and computer science) congregate and potentially collaborate. Ideally, these events pose a new radical set of models that in turn provide inspiration and new insights to creative learning and engagement with technology and tools. As such, key to the functionality of hackspace events are both the online communities via mail list chat(s), forum discussions, and in real life meetings (IRL). In these arenas, discourse and knowledge exchange are the central feature.

How-To Manual: A step-by-step textbook on how to learn various skills or assemble an apparatus.

Internet Relay Chat (IRC): IRC occurs on IRC servers running software that allow users to open up communication channels. Some IRC servers - such as IndyMedia and Freenode - are globally networked. Using IRC client software, a user can connect to multiple servers at once and join multiple channels. IRC users can switch conversations by switching tabs or windows. One can choose between public conversation on a group channel or use #/msg or #/query to initiate private conversations. Gabriella Coleman discusses how IRC communication has grown tremendously since 1988 'To give a sense of its growth, one of the popular servers, EFnet, had 38,000 users in 1998, growing to 106,976 in 2004 (2013, p. 214).'

Leet | 1337 | l33t: Abbreviated code speak for 'elite'. This chat type is articulated in a humorous manner, usually during a text chat. Its coded nature provides an example of an 'initiate' geek, showing their sp33k (speak) and computer subcultural prowess. The playful coded geek elite 'Leet' or '1337' or 'l33t' speak are 'words in alphabetic languages that are not read as a whole but are processed via their constituents, the letters' (Perea 2008, p. 1) could also be more vernacular, for instance, d00d (dood).

Live Coding: A contemporary computer-based artform that manifests as performances which include 'on the fly' programming. Live Coding focuses on algorithmic execution while exploring the meaning of interactivity and the relationship between the performer and emerging technologies. It questions the nature of real time performance and the contexts that surround it.

Ludibrium: Satire and a playful dream. Ludibrium is a derivative of Ludus, a word of Latin origin meaning play (or deception) that is associated with liturgical and theatrical representations and games of chance. The ambivalent definition Ludibrium is synonymous for scorn and derision, public spectacle, games, dalliance, and the combination of satire and a playful dream (Dickson 1998, p.88).[9] Widely discussed and used by Johann Valentin Andreae to describe the 'ludibrium of the fictitious Rosicrucian Fraternity' as described by Frances Yates (1975, p.80). 'A ludibrium could be a play, a comic fiction…the theatre as a moral and educative influence. The theatricality of the Rosicrucian movement…is one of the most fascinating aspects of the whole affair...the framers of the manifestos did not intend the story…to be taken as literally true, it might yet have been true in some other sense, might have been a divine comedy, or some allegorical presentation of a complex religious and philosophical movement.'(Yates 1975, pp.80-81, my italics).

lulz: Online shorthand corruption or derivative of lol (laugh out loud) including the nonstandard spelling of the plural suffix -s. Mainly used in context of The lulz: 'It's not the anaesthetic humor that makes days go by easier, it's humor that heightens contradictions. The lulz is laughter with pain in it. It forces you to consider injustice and hypocrisy, whichever side of it you are on in that moment.' Adapted from Quinn Norton (2011), *Anonymous 101: Introduction to the Lulz*.

Maker Culture: The growth of the Maker movement and Do It Yourself (DIY) enthusiasm has developed exponentially since the first Maker Faire (2005) in San Francisco. Maker culture reflects a popular cultural surge in hack space and hacker orientated activities, extending its reach into the fields of design and fashion.

Modding: 'Today, the functionality of the computer is concealed inside the gray/white/ beige box that covers the cards, slots, motherboard, and wires. In modding, these parts are reimagined as elements of visual richness that convey a symbolism. Hardware elements are aestheticized: users might install neon lights, weird jumbo fans and colorful wires into a transparent computer case or even build an entirely new one from scratch. Electronic boards jutting out at 90 degree angles and architectures of twisted wire are widely used, as in cinema and design, to represent technical substances.' (Goriunova and Shulgin 2008, p. 113).

Postdramatic Theatre: Derived from Brechtian theatre Verfremdungseffekte (the effect of making strange) and formal elements of Gestus (the paradox of showing), the narrative of the live event and the experience of the spectator can be seen as having a dynamic relationship with each another, 'in contrast to other arts, which

---

8 *The Jargon File* is a document about culture released to the public domain in 1983. Maintained by Eric Raymond, viewed 15 December 2013, < http://www.gutenberg.org/files/38/38.txt>.
9 1963, *Collins Latin GEM Dictionary*. ed D.A. Kidd. Collins: London and Glasgow. p. 195.

produce an object and/or are communicated through media, here the aesthetic act itself (the performing) as well as the act of reception (the theatre going) take place as a real doing in the here and now.' (Lehmann 2006, p. 17).

Scrying: A technique of divination and revelation producing visions (perhaps of the future) through prolonged gazing at an object, usually of crystal or liquid in nature. Famously practiced by the 16th century astronomer, mathematician and alchemist John Dee (Clulee 1988).

Server: A computer program that provides services to users and other computer programs in the form of local or remote computers. A computer via which a program runs is also referred to as a server. A server is also a program that processes requests from client programs. A Web server is a computer program that serves HTML requests from a web client - for instance, a web browser (Firefox, Chrome) is a client that requests HTML files from Web servers.

Regular Expressions (regex): One of many *nix (GNU LINUX) tools used to recognize strings of text parsed by using particular characters for concise outputs. For simple rule-based tasks, these human constructed algorithms can be scripted to rapidly compute and access large quantities of data.

Selfie: A recent popular culture phenomena, Selfies derives from the traditional self-portrait. Selfies consist of photographs that one has taken of oneself - typically with a mobile device or webcam - and uploaded to a social media web server. As a form of 'voluntary servitude' (Bauman 2013) encouraged by persistent social media outlets.

Source Code: The underlying machine code of a computer program that remains accessible for developers (and others) to use, modify, and redistribute on repositories such as GIThub.

Tagging: A keyword assigned to a computer file to describe or categorise an item. The item in question may be found again by browsing or searching with that term.

Tor: An open network that helps defend against traffic analysis and network surveillance that may threaten personal freedoms and privacy, confidential business activities and relationships, and state security.[10]

Vanity Search | Vanity Surfing | Googling: To 'Google' someone is to literally type that person's name into the Google search tool and analyse the output results of the Google database engine.

Verbose: Expressing the underlying complex processes of a script in its execution 'verbose mode' #–v, of a *nix computer console. Is also a term for a human who communicates themselves in more words than are necessary, usually with the intention of conveying additional complexity.

Vodou: The traditional spelling of the religion and culture of the Haitian people. Arose from the fusion of different cultural traditions, including the Hermetic-Cabalist traditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For the purposes of this text, I'll refer to general Vodou Culture, specifically the tradition having been practiced in subterfuge over long time periods (hence its manifestation in domestic appurtenances and paraphernalia).

Wikipedia: A free collaboratively built encyclopaedia using wiki software.

A note on Internet and Wikipedia references which are in many cases cited as an academic source; because technologists, practitioners and the developer community predominantly use these online repositories (and therefore the technical descriptions employed there), the latest revisions and surrounding discourses are often more up to date here. 'Information technology is among the most reliable content domains on Wikipedia, given the high interest of such topics among the readership and the consequent scrutiny they tend to attract.' (Kirschenbaum 2008, p. xviii).

---

10 Tor Project, viewed 15 December 2013, <https://www.torproject.org/index.html.en>.

0.1 Prologue: Tenebrae in Lux

> Remember that the theatre of the world is wider
> than the realm of England.[11]

> - Mary Queen of Scots before her execution judges, October 1586.

To understand a genre's evolution, one must trace and acknowledge a broad range of histories.[12] To orient this research project for the reader, its particular theatrical point of view must first be explained.

The title of this exegesis *Tenebris in Lux* (Darkness in Light) is an inversion of *Lux in Tenebris* (Light in Darkness).[13] These three words are like tangled strands - an abundance of knots containing hidden meanings. *Lux*, from Latin, literally means 'light'. Likewise, Lux (lx) is technically a standard SI unit of illumination referring to a unit of luminous emission, or lumen.[14] In Latin, *tenebris* or *tenebrae* literally means 'shadows' or 'darkness'. The term 'tenebrae' also refers traditionally to a ritual of extinguishing candles in an evenly paced manner, while a series of psalms are chanted during a holy religious service.[15] The entire phrase *Lux in Tenebris* is originally said to appear in the fifth verse of the first chapter of the Gospel of John 'And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not'.[16] The 'Lantern in the Void' is a metaphor of the Jesuits, a military religious order of the Roman Catholic

---

11 Cited in Fraser (1969, p. 590).

12 Bateson writes on the notion of analytical categories and genre 'That is why one cannot simply define one's terms. To understand what any meta language or theory is on about, one has to have been part of its evolution, or be prepared to trace that evolution, by reading, talking, exchanging meanings in dialogue, Intertextuality, interpersonally, understanding the institutions within which the discourses and genres peculiar to this theory operate, living those institutions and their networks of power and desire, so that one's own subjectivity is partly constructed in these signifying practices' (Bateson 1987, p. 15).

13 I have inverted *Lux in Tenebris* (Light in Darkness) to be *Tenebris in Lux* (Darkness in Light); in Latin however the grammatical convention is not as simple as merely transposing the terms. For the purposes of this discussion, the conceptual reasons for this inversion is discussed further in the 'Introduction' Chapter. This elaboration will unfold in relation to the black box and white cube, which are spaces referred to in the computing, contemporary art and performance fields.

14 Viewed 10 August 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lux>.

15 For further information about *Tenebrae* as a Catholic ceremony, see *Sisters of Carmel*, viewed Jan 1 2014, <http://www.sistersofcarmel.com/tenebrae.php>.

16 'John 1:4' 1611, *King James Bible Authorized Version*, Cambridge Edition, viewed 16 August 2013, <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1611_John-1-4/>.

Church.[17] Conversely, the term *Lux in Tenebris* could also refer allegorically to *illuminati* or persons who possess an awareness of codified symbols, rules and regulating systems of an occult nature, circulated and acknowledged through various forms of ritual. In fine art, 'tenebrism' is mainly agreed to be a technique initially applied in painting and printmaking and later on with Expressionist dance and Expressionism in theatre and film, leading to the popular Film Noir genre, where the lighting conventions create a dramatic impression.[18] This figurative formalism gives a mysterious and three-dimensional quality as if the subject is emerging from the darkness.[19]

It is for these reasons that the title *Tenebris in Lux* situates the project at the crossroads between present, past and future in regard to timing, change, and a continuing encounter. One could visualize these crossroads as similar to a Möbius strip; they reveal themselves to have a spiral form and multidimensional nature. The use of a Latin aphorism (to some) might seem elitist, bizarre and obsolescent.[20] But by the complexity of its manifold meanings, it allows us to step further into solving conundrums, which reveal countless truths in the act of deciphering - the very undertaking of unpacking and solving - that a dramaturgical approach brings. Likewise, this is how the artworks that make up this thesis are intended to be experienced. When it comes to *Lux in Tenebris*, or light and dark in this arena, meaning is dynamic, volatile and open ended. Light and dark are distinguishable and yet simultaneously they are fundamentally inseparable, with one only knowable in relation to the other. Another way of understanding (or mediating) this dichotomy is to recall how our view of the moon is dependent on sunlight, its appearance is ephemeral as it moves through its shifting phases.

The very act of reading light in darkness indicates how language can be considered rhetorical, and as having in its execution particular tactics and aims. Umberto Eco

---

17 Jesuit General Curia, central government of the Society worldwide in Rome, viewed January 2 2014, <http://www.sjweb.info/arsi/index.cfm?LangTop=1&Publang=1>.

18 In the twentieth century the technique extended to both in Film Noir and the Graphic Novel popularized by Frank Miller, see Nericcio (1995).

19 The artists Artemisia Gentileschi, Caravaggio are exponents of tenebrism, including the formula for the 'Masters of Candlelight', (Fichner-Rathus, Lois 2011, p. 90). This technique was used centuries earlier than the seventeenth century, evident in *Self-Portrait at 28* (1500) by Albrecht Dürer, most famous for his copper plate cut *Melancholia* (1514).

20 Even though Latin is a language for the pedagogical elite, it was also once perceived to be a transcultural democratic language for scholars from different countries across England and the European continent, therefore making it easier to transfer information and share knowledge across borders. This enabled researchers like John Dee to work across institutions such as the University of Louvain, Belgium and University of Cambridge, Britain. For more information, see Deacon (1968).

elaborates on the various nature of transmission and reception of communication and light:

> To say that light is a medium is a refusal to realise that there are at least
> three definitions of "light". Light can be a signal of information…light can be a
> Message…light can be a Channel…In each of these cases the impact of a
> phenomenon on the social body varies according to the role it plays in the
> communication chain…the meaning of the message changes according to the
> code with which I interpret it (1995, p. 139).

In an artwork, shades of blackness can be a metaphor for the process of anticipation by which an individual tries to find their infinite veracity or divinity, which is discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4 (in relation to the field work and artworks themselves). Predominantly, the term *Lux in Tenebris* is embraced throughout this research project because the activation of the black box in a performative manner is a structuring element, as well as a central concern.

0.1 The Black-Box Analogy in Technology and Theatre

The black box is a visually and conceptually weighted term in theatre, science and technology; it can also be used in a social sense as applied to the cultural perception of technology. There is a difference in the way technologists employ the term, which again also differs to how scientists use it.[21] Manipulating a black box with light, or having a complete 'black-out' in the black box of the stage, is often an aspiration for a theatre designer.[22] In a similar way, exploiting a black box is often the objective of the hacker or Critical Engineer. A Critical Engineer views engineering as a vital and volatile context for the purpose of cracking open 'opaque systems and machines (aka 'black boxes').'[23] For instance, a standard commercial mobile phone is a black-box consumer device; you cannot open it to customise or modify it, as this will void the

---

21 For instance, Thomas Kuhn (1962) discusses these differing paradigms in his influential book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

22 Aside from the well-rehearsed discussion on the quality of the 'floor', theatre makers then usually begin to appraise a space on its ability to attain complete blackout, especially in regard to the 'EXIT' light.

23 Cited in Fortune, Stephen, 2013. Also see the early use of this term by Bruno Latour, whose work later became the influential field of Science & Technology Studies (STS), see Latour (1987).

warranty, and often the machine may simply shut itself down.[24] This is an anathema for the Critical Engineer. A Critical Engineer is an artist who views the opening up of a computer system's black box as '[an] exploit [and] the most desirable form of exposure.'[25] In contrast, the principle of a blacked out space in order to stage – in darkness - enchanting luminous games is often one of the defining features of a performance space. To activate a black box - a liminal space where the mysterious and unknown materializes - serves a number of functions. Eugene Thacker writes:

> …the black box serves as a kind of allegory of individuation. At once engineered and yet completely mysterious, the black box of individuation functions as a crucial link between the life that is already known and the life that is unknown (or not-yet-known) (2009, pp. 86-87).

There is a desire for transparency in opening and laying bare the black box (input and output code); however, there can never be total transparency, because it will always be relative to the position of the audience or viewer (or field of research, as discussed above). Therefore claiming absolute transparency can also imply that something is being hidden from view. Practically, the idea of the black box as a vast capacious or abyss-like space to be demystified, probed and re-enchanted (and placed into a white cube) is the perspective, or terrain, from which this study uses the term.
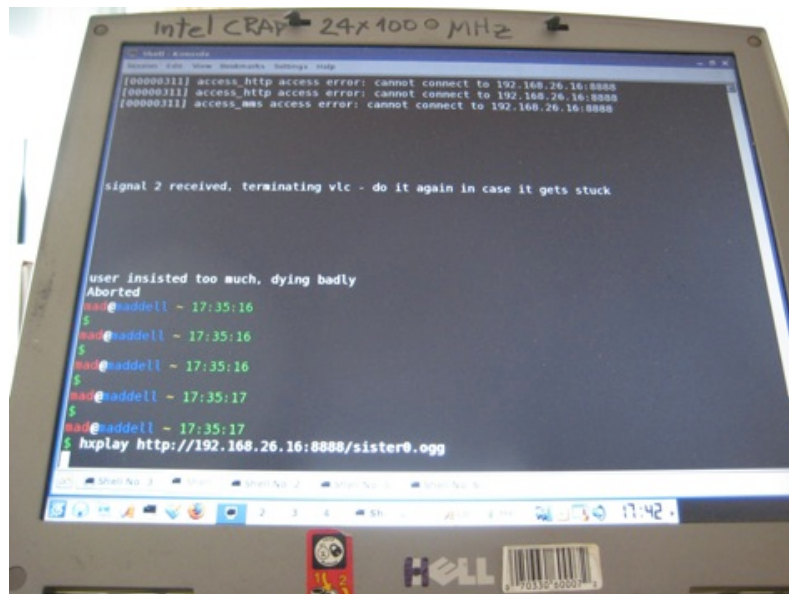
FIGURE 1 A TYPICAL COMPUTER CONSOLE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

---

24 For instance when one tampers or 'jail breaks' a mobile phone device in order to have full control over the hardware and software functions, shutdown is an undesirable consequence where the electronics gadget becomes 'bricked'. A consumer example is the application programming interface (API) provided by Apple for the iphone or ipod, which only allows the features to be used in certain limited ways.

25 Danja Vasiliev, the Critical Engineer working group co-founder, states this on his Twitter profile. Profile viewed December 20 2013, <https://twitter.com/k0a1a>.

Another appealing concurrence is the notion of the theatrical 'black box' and the (traditionally) black console or 'shell' of the computer terminal; such terminals are used for the operation of code as a series of interrelated programs (see Figure 1).[26] The computer should not be considered as self-contained or static, as besides other processing that may be running simultaneously, it could also be connected remotely to other computers. In this way, both theatre black box and computer console are distinct from the notion of the white cube (a common art parlance referring to a white-walled gallery, arguably a modernist art notion for the ideal format of a self-contained gallery space).[27] The black box and the white cube also, in each instance, infer a temporal mode of engagement. Due to the implied rules and protocols of established theatrical conventions involving the black box, the audience is generally more comprehending of an artwork as an act as compared to a white cube mode of spectatorship. One enters the theatre knowing you may be engaged for a significant duration of time, where you will experience a performance with others. It is normally the case during a theatrical production that people commune together; and to leave during the show is taboo. Leaving mid-way through a performance reads as a sign of impatience, intolerance, or potentially indicates an emergency of some kind.

By contrast, upon entering a white cube gallery although there is less expectation on the audience in terms of time spent viewing. The white cube also labors under limits of its own. One such constraint is described by Constant Dullaart, where he states 'the most hierarchical and conservative medium the art world has to offer [is] the gallery white cube' (2013, p. 127). Arguably this white cube could be understood as a less regulated space than a black box theatre, as it is left up to the individual to decide upon the amount of time spent in the space. Although a time length may be given on a white cube 'gallery sheet', it is most often an exception rather than a rule when an artist prescribes a set time for engaging with their work.

As such, computer-based activities like trouble shooting in programming, or word processing (writing an email, text or a journal) are sometimes sustained for long

---

26 For a discussion of the command line interface and how adding language to the computer interface allows us to use a rich linguistic vocabulary, and which allows for references to objects that are not immediately visible, see Mauro-Flude, Nancy (2008).

27 For a comprehensive discussion of the 'black box' and the 'white cube' in contemporary art and performance, see Wiles, David (2003). For a comprehensive discussion of the white cube, see O'Doherty, Brian (1999).

periods, or divided into sessions where one remotely connects with others in meetings for long durations or *on the fly* in short instants. The length of time taken is often dependent on what unfolds when starting one's personal computer, for instance in the theatre of one's email or Internet Relay Chat channel. This idea finds correspondence with a form of ritual where one plunges into differing depths of awareness and meaning. Whatever thought experiments are presented, or whatever material, composition, light or colour exist in an individual work, the body of the work (as a whole), comes out of the darkness, emanating from an abyss. Couched in shades of black, these repetitions and variations play out in the works that form this thesis, not only in their encounters with various materials, but also through the allegory of signaling to the heavens, or descending into the depths, and hence inward to the self.

0.2 Mysticism and the Computer

This thesis is developed from the perspective of a practitioner and researcher centered in theatre and computer hacker sub-cultures. The research also arises from a background of magic, vaudevillian and mesmeric traditions, and is particularly influenced by the author's great-great grandmother who had a 'high-class' act that boldly conflated roles of a scientific medical 'Professor' and the 'sleight-of-hand' magician with the vaudeville mesmeriser (a 1877 poster claims 'The Celebrated Magician of the Age will perform the most wonderful SLEIGHT - OF - HAND TRICKS, which will perfectly astonish the audience, the only Lady Professor in Tasmania. This talented Lady will appear as above when no one should miss the opportunity of witnessing her astounding performances.') (See Figure 2).

The thesis also emerges from the influence of Florian Cramer's intensive exploration into how 'executable code existed centuries before the invention of the computer in ritual magic, the Kabbalah, musical composition and experimental poetry' (2005, p. 41). Cramer concludes with the proposition: 'It leaves, on the other hand, *the question as to what extent religion, metaphysics and speculative thinking might still be present in contemporary computer culture*' (2005, p. 41, my italics). This thesis picks up and continues on around these conceptual corners by heading down the track of performance and theatre, and briefly explores the traces of Kabbalistic elements in

Haitian *Vodou* culture (rather than in European cultural history). There are therefore many actants at play.

**FIGURE 2 1877 POSTER OF PROFESSOR ALLEN, BELLERIVE INSTITUTE TASMANIA.
PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.**

Let me continue to open a wormhole through time and to explain the significance of the term *Lux in Tenebris,* particularly how it relates to this study. The profundity of the phrase initially struck me when reading *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* by Francis Yates.

Yates, who elucidated how *Lux in Tenebris* was the title of 'an extremely curious book (1975, p. 199)' written in 1657 by John Amos Comenius, that:

> contained the outpourings of three prophets, three visionaries who claimed to make revelations about coming apocalyptic events, the end of the rein of Antichrist, and the return of light after the darkness of his rule...visions were brought to by angels, so he believed, who would suddenly become visible, show a vision, and return to invisibility (Yates 1975, pp. 199-200).

Yates continues to explain how the book was written specifically to dispel the impending political darkness of Catholic dominion via the Counter-Reformation movement. It was proffering that if the prince of Transylvania, among others, would perform the task of undertaking the destruction of the Pope, they would be guaranteed miraculous assistance. Comenius was a mystic and much darkness surrounded the light of the anticipated reform (which ultimately heralded the Thirty Years' War in Germany). In this sense, *Lux in Tenebris* could also be interpreted as the symbol for deep knowledge that needed obscuration at a time when obfuscated communication and performance of code was the norm, in order to ward off 'extremists who saw blasphemy and treason in every questioning word' (Deacon 1968, p. 102). Nonetheless, this was a book of hope, mainly due to the profound reform of the educational system on all levels. Comenius advocated full-time schooling for all the youth of Europe at a time when it was heretical for women to enter education. His acclaimed and widely circulated school textbook, the *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1657), illustrates perfectly how Comenius believed in the power of pedagogy and egalitarian sharing of knowledge.

0.3 Theatrical Automata

The late seventeenth century was a particularly curious moment in history. This Renaissance period saw engineers making phenomenal leaps in art and science through the development of hydraulic automata, speaking sculptures, kaleidoscopic mirror marvels and mechanical paraphernalia, all of which gave off a magical atmosphere of awe and mystery (Yates 1975; Lazardzig 2008). Animated automata were implemented in both domestic settings (garden design) and the stage (theatre machines). The general class of gizmos, objects and interfaces for use in performance have always been emblematic of deception, trickery, charlatanism and healing (often combined) in many

cultures. In his discussions upon 'Machine as Spectacle', Lazardzig (2008) explores this curious and potent ability of theatrical machines. He recounts a comment from the 1600s by Leibniz in regard to his *Drôle de pensée*, a subjective space of experience, encounters, and curiosities (Lazardzig 2008, p. 170):

> Leibniz wonders if cheats should be allowed into theaters or not. Finally he comes to the conclusion that gambling must remain the nucleus of the entire project, because in play even deception entails a healing effect. "Games would provide the best excuse in the world to begin such a useful thing for the public, since one needs to fool people, to profit from their weakness and to deceive in order to heal. There is nothing better than using machines for introducing wisdom. This truly means *miscère utile dulci* and to make medicine from poison". (2008, p. 172).

The significance of *miscère utile dulci* and the anti-venom approach, including gambling and deceptive play is discussed in relation to *Ludibruim* below, and will also be elaborated upon in the Methodology (Chapter 3) and discussed in relation to the artworks in Chapter 4. The work of French intellectual Roger Caillois (2003) - who made an interesting distinction between games of skill or competition (Agôn) and games of chance (Alea), the latter of which he categorises as gambling - is also considered.

This alien ability of deceiving in order to heal (*miscère utile dulci*) and inspiring curious minds to muse upon the input/output characteristics of the black box proliferates into a multiplication of perspectives, dogma, opinions and insights, which have led to new inventions and are responsible for what we know today as the computer. In *Engines of Logic: Mathematicians and the Origin of the Computer,* Martin Davis explains how Leibniz 'dreamed of machines capable of carrying out calculations, freeing the mind for creative thought' (Davis 2011, p. 4). His binary arithmetic became the locus of modern computing, evident in his concepts of 'universal artificial mathematical language' and 'invention of the calculus' (Davis 2011, p. 12). It is also pertinent to note that it is generally accepted that Leibniz was a Rosicrucian; Yates, among others, discusses his work *Monadology* (1989) and how it bears the stamp of the Hermetic tradition (Yates 1966, p. 388).

One particular theatrical performance on which I would like to briefly elaborate was, for its time, exceedingly impressive. This automaton showed a chess player embodied by the famous act of *The Turk* (Figure 3). Constructed by the Hungarian engineer and inventor Baron Wolfgang von Kempelen (1734–1804), the mechanism appeared to be able to play a winning game of chess against any human opponent.[28]

FIGURE 3 AN ENGRAVING OF *THE TURK* FROM KARL GOTTLIEB VON WINDISCH'S 1784 BOOK, *INANIMATE REASON*. IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Thanks to the ingenuity and discretion of all of *The Turk's* caretakers for eighty years, this black box machine not only served to entertain audiences around the world, but helped lay the groundwork for public contemplation of the possibility of calculating machines. Standage (2002) vividly describes how the mysterious automaton captured the imagination of an eight-year-old Charles Babbage, and speculates how this act

---

28 Standage, Tom (2002).

contributed to the development of mechanical computers.[29]Nonetheless, *The Turk* was a black box illusion, a clever trick achieved by arranged mirrors that allowed for a human chess master to hide inside the machine. *The Turk* was enchanting and inspiring both as a playful dream and as satire. It drew attention to the apparatus through implicit deception and by 'using machines for introducing wisdom' (Leibniz, cited in Ladzardzig 2008, p. 172) so as to induce speculation about the apparatus and its bewildering input and output characteristics. It thus offers a small insight into the early relationship between theatre, theatre machines, the potential for the computer as a theatre machine, and the possibilities of using a computer as an expressive medium.

0.4 Shakespeare, John Dee and Renaissance Satire

In this thesis, theatre is not considered as a self-contained play on a single stage, but rather as the theatrical forms of expression influenced by political cabaret, Dada, expressionism and the travelling Elizabethan English companies - elaborated upon by Yates (1975) – who's work played out on several simultaneous stages, not unlike networked space.[30] In the Rosicrucian manifestos and the associated 'invisible society', the preference for empiricism over religious dogma is an extremely complex and paradoxical issue that relates to religious, intellectual, magical, political and theatrical movements. Yates speculates that during this period 'Renaissance magic' was 'magic as an intellectual system of the universe, foreshadowing science, magic as a moral and reforming movement, magic as the instrument for uniting opposing religious opinions in a general movement of Hermetic reform' (Yates 1975, p. 18). Yates recounts vividly the invitation to the royal wedding in the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz* (1616), the third of the original manifestos by Valentin Andreae. The manifesto opens with Magus John Dee's philosophical key, the *Monas Hieroglyphica* symbol (the secret philosophy) behind the Rosicrucian manifestos (Yates 1975, p. 81) as is seen in Figure 4.

---

29 There were numerous calculating machines made earlier than this, and the first mechanical computers were actually the Jacquard mechanical looms which were developed in 1801. For more information see Davis, Martin (2011).

30 This is one of the areas where the premise of this thesis and Brenda Laurel's (2013) *Computers as Theatr*e diverges. Arguably, Laurel's readership audience is human-computer interaction designers. She also refers to the self-contained traditional text based play of mainstream conservative proscenium theatre, rather than the experimental and radical notion of theatre in which Shakespeare is re-situated in this thesis, and his contribution to the *world as a stage* beyond the confines of a self-contained play.

Dee's cosmology described the mechanics of the universe, where intellect was illustrated as an orb illumined by rays. According to Dee, the rays are emitted by every entity and fill the universe with their influence (Clulee 1988). How these theories of John Dee relate to this research is considered in the artworks *Valetudo* (2013), *ism | breath | she | who | with | I* (2012), *"I am Googable", therefore, I am* (2009-11), *Self Portrait* (2013), *Scrying:Mea* (2013) *and Awry Signals* (2013), all of which will be discussed and elaborated upon in Chapter 4.

THE HIEROGLYPHIC
MONAD
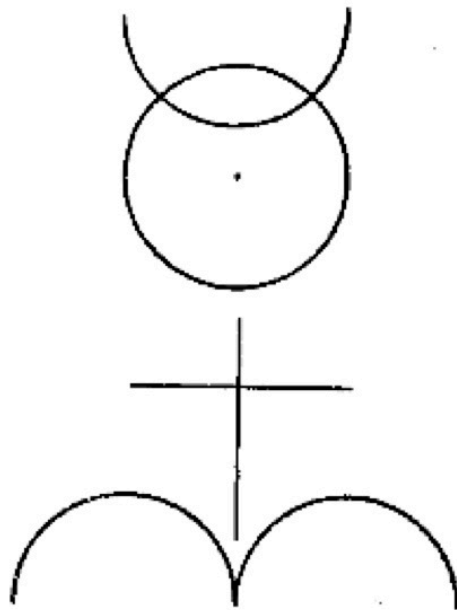
FIGURE 4 THE *MONAS HIEROGLYPHICA*. THE SYMBOL IS CONSTRUCTED FROM FOUR DISTINCT SYMBOLS: THE ASTROLOGICAL SIGNS FOR THE MOON AND THE SUN, THE CROSS, AND THE ZODIACAL SIGN OF ARIES THE RAM, REPRESENTED BY THE TWO SEMI-CIRCLES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GLYPH. IMAGE: © SAMUEL WEISER. RED WHEEL/WEISER: SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

Specific to this project is the philosophy behind the Rosicrucian manifestos found in the thinking of John Dee, who also authored the *Monas Hieroglyphica* (1564). Also specific to this thesis are the notions underpinning the myth of Christian Rosenkreutz and the importance of their connections to theatre and the plays of Shakespeare:

> The movement used theatrical forms of expression, influenced by the travelling companies of English players in Germany…Shakespeare's thought in these plays

belongs to the evolution of the Renaissance Hermetic-Cabalist tradition into Rosicrucianism (Yates 1975, p. 18).

The idea of the world as a stage beyond the confines of a self-contained play was common during this particular period. Renaissance satire and allegory can be traced initially to *The Praise of Folly* (1511) by humanist Erasmus, where the personification of Folly comes to earth to expose the irrationalities, foibles, and failings of humans. Erasmus expounds:

> Now the world is nothing else but such another comedy, where every one in the tire-room is first habited suitably to the part he is to act; and as it is successively their turn, out they come on the stage, where he that now personates a prince, shall in another part of the same play alter his dress, and become a beggar, all things being in a mask and particular disguise, or otherwise the play could never be presented (Erasmus 1511).

In a resolute manner implying the deception of her captors, Mary Queen of Scots admonished 'Remember that the theatre of the world is wider than the realm of England' (spoken before her execution judges in October 1586) (Fraser 1969, p. 590). Shakespeare portrays a melancholic Jacques in *As You Like It* (1599–1600) whose monologue asserts, 'All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players.' (Act II, Scene VII). And eventually in the work *Peregrini in Patria errores* (1618), Andreae compares the world to an amphitheatre where no one is seen in their true light.[31]

The perception that Shakespeare and Dee were close colleagues - and even collaborators - is of interest because it suggests how these Hermetic traditions profoundly permeated Western theatre culture, a fact often overlooked by theatre historians and practitioners.[32] Furthermore, due to his close relationship with the British Navy who (in competition with the French and the Spanish) were attempting to colonise parts of the New World in the Caribbean, Dee gained much information

---

31 Sell, Roger D & Johnson, A. W (2013).
32 Deacon succinctly confirms and defines the friendship between Dee and Shakespeare (1968, p. 82-102).

about culture on these islands, including Haiti.[33] Haiti arose from a fusion of different cultural traditions, including the Hermetic-Cabalist traditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During this time there was a particular period of piracy in the Americas arising from a complex political / social / economic situation; the lines between the privateer, buccaneer and the pirate were exceedingly blurred. We can find traces of buccaneers and pirates as described in *The Tragedy of Hamlet* (1605), Act IV Scene V.[34] Hamlet's return from a sojourn is a dramatic device providing a *deus ex machina* (an engineered solution to a complex problem) for the famous play's plot. A problem that seriously threatened Elizabethan security was the prevalence of pirates; however, the imperial rule funded and legitimized the pirates when it suited, and then labelled them saboteurs when it did not. For instance, Sir Francis Drake was a privateer hero to England but branded a pirate in Spain (Cummings 1996, p. 273).

The significance of the connection between the formation of Haiti and ambiguity of the status of pirates is discussed in the *Methodology* (Chapter 3 and Appendix) where a field trip to Haiti by the researcher is described. The relevance of Dee's development of cyphers for the Navy and British security (MacMillan 2001; Sherman 1995) will also be discussed in the *Introduction* (Chapter 1) and in the description of artworks (Chapter 4). I will highlight especially the association with online art and activism, cypher encryption and how theatre permeates right into the heart of contemporary computer subculture.[35] This highlighting will also act as a reminder that 'the theatre of the world is wider than the realm of England', and that 'all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players', 'where no one is seen in their true light.'

---

33 In 'Treasure trove and a plan for the Navy', Deacon discusses Dee's mythical justification of England's rights over territories in the New World and his insistence on creating a navy able to contribute to the conquest of new lands (1968, p. 85).

34 Shakespeare, W 1998, *Hamlet*. Act IV Scene V. p. 310.

35 One other example of this complex connection is a work by self-described 'contemporary artist and pirate' Paolo Cirio, of whose artwork and hack *loophole4all* (2013) he satirically states, 'It empowers everyone to evade taxes, hide money and debt, and get away with anything by stealing the identities of real offshore companies.', *loophole4all* viewed January 1 2014, <http://loophole4all.com/>. Acknowledged in the article Benjamin Sutton 'Artist-Hacker Invites You to Exploit Corporations' Cayman Islands Tax Breaks' in *Huffington Post*, viewed February 19 2013, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/artinfo/artisthacker-invites-you-to-exploit-corporate-cayman-tax-breaks_b_2718672.html>. Comparisons should be made to more serious calls by police when the project first made its debut 'Hackers target Cayman bank accounts' of the *Cayman News Service* crime section, viewed January 1 2014, <https://www.caymannewsservice.com/crime/2013/10/17/hackers-target-cayman-bank-accounts>.

0.5 Ludibrium

Ludibrium is redefined in this research as a theatrical genre that extends beyond the bounds of the traditional stage, and that exists in experimental theatre and computer subcultures; exactly how is elaborated upon in Chapter 2 and 4. *Ludus* is a word of Latin origin meaning playful (or deception). *Ludic* pertains to undirected spontaneously playful behaviour. The Oxford University Press defines *Ludibrious* as an apt 'subject of jest or mockery', and following this term is *Ludibry*, which translates as 'brought upon every stage and into the pulpit as fittest for ludibry by the Players, Priests, and Prelats…by Popish artifice, the most renowned court in the world is made the ludibrie and laughing stock of the earth' (1971, p. 1675). This gives an example of the interdisciplinary vastness of such a term and its ability to penetrate beyond the bounds of a discrete category, object or region. It usually describes liturgical and theatrical representations and games of chance, of which *ludibrium* is a derivative (meaning scorn and derision, public spectacle, games, dalliance). However, *ludibrium* can also mean the combination of satire and a playful dream (Dickson 1998, p. 88).[36] It is widely discussed and sardonically used by Johann Valentin Andreae to describe 'the ludibrium of the fictitious Rosicrucian Fraternity' as described by Yates, who continues:

> The Latin word which Andreae uses most frequently when mentioning the Rosicrucian movement is ludibrium. Of the manifestos he uses expressions like 'the ludibrium of the vain Fama', or the ludibrium of the fictitious Rosicrucian Fraternity (Yates 1975, p. 80).

By using these terms, Andreae opened up the complexities of what this Rosicrucian mystery – this make-believe game founded in real-world concerns – conjured in the social body of the time. Yates describes how such association had become dangerous and how:

> A ludibrium could be a play, a comic fiction, and…Andreae thought highly of the theatre as a moral and educative influence. The theatricality of the

---

36 *Collins Latin GEM dictionary*, 1963, ed D.A. Kidd. Collins, London and Glasgow, p. 195.

Rosicrucian movement, as revealed in Andreae's comments and allusions, is one of the most fascinating aspects of the whole affair (1975, p. 80).

It is generally established that the writers of the Rosicrucian manifestos did not intend their work to be taken literally; for instance, in *Monas Hieroglyphica* Dee defines it as a magical parable. Yates confirms Dee's philosophical involvement behind these manifestos:

It might yet have been true in some other sense, might have been a divine comedy, or some allegorical presentation of a complex religious and philosophical movement...for we know that a major influence on them both was John Dee's *Monas hieroglyphica* (Yates 1975, p. 81).

Moreover, Yates states that: 'Andrea's insistence that the Rosicrucian myth is "theatre" or a "play-scene"' (1979, p. 123). Profoundly influenced by English traveling players, Andreae plunders his own fiction mercilessly by the magisterial privilege of the self-deconstructing; he mutilates his profound illusions which now recursively and ceaselessly are refigured. This anticipates theatre maker Bertolt Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekte*, the technique of estrangement and the paradox of showing - to mock and comment on the formal elements in performative modes. Brecht explains the technique of estrangement here:

What is obvious is in a certain sense made incomprehensible, but this is only in order that it may then be made all the easier to comprehend. Before familiarity can turn into awareness the familiar must be stripped of its inconspicuousness; *we must give up assuming that the object in question needs no explanation* (Brecht 1964, p. 144, my italics).

Such awareness reveals the idiosyncrasies of received conventions and in the act of doing so, both transgresses them and provides an acute awareness of implied protocols embedded into whatever system or apparatus is being questioned. The use of dialogical satire which Brecht masters was also reminiscent of the work of Andreae (both in his comic fiction and clandestine theatrics of *ludibrium)*, divine comedy, and the classic Comenius dystopian text *Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart* (1669), which refers to the Rosicrucian metaphor of how life seems to show itself as a maze as we explore the contradictions we face (and hopefully resolutely overcome). These elements and paradoxical allusions were explored in the fieldwork and the artworks that make up the thesis, and are elaborated upon in Chapter 3.

It is essential to also mention here that *Lux in Tenebris* is also the title of a one-act play written in 1919 by Brecht, his employment of the title, *Lux in Tenebris* (1919) - with its distinct juxtaposition of the sacred and profane - is harsh and cruel in its synopsis when seen in the light of historical reflection. The content parodies both the practice of divinity and the utopian ideal of liberal thinkers, as well as the egalitarian sharing of knowledge and education.[37] The title and the specific satirical subject matter is a distinct intimation of the Rosicrucian manifestos. It could be speculated that as a theatre theorist, Brecht would have known that Shakespeare also belonged to the Hermetic tradition in its Rosicrucian phase (Yates 1975, p. 19) and of the influence of the plays staged by English players in Germany as well as the German Rosicrucian literature (Yates 1978, p. 99). Another way the dialogical satire *Verfremdungseffekte* can be understood is explicitly through the final scene of Brecht's most popular work, *Three-Penny Opera*. This work - which contains the title of the last scene, *deus ex machina* - calls attention again to the problem of the bourgeois theatre (the self-contained one-act plays) he was critiquing at the time and emphasizing the artificiality of suspending conflicts and differences into transcendentalisms. The extent of Brecht's demystification of the theatrical black box, by dispensing with the 'fourth wall' to create an awareness of (and to contribute remedies to) the social, political and cultural concerns of the time, destabilised the existing hierarchies of meanings, actions and experiences which are still being unravelled today.[38]

The meanings behind the title *Tenebrae in Lux* (black in white) have been discussed in order to highlight the transdisciplinary movements of the seventeenth century which gave rise to both engineering marvels and the theatrical genre of *ludibrium*, with the latter, it is argued, influenced by Shakespeare.[39] The significance is the extent that Shakespeare's theatre of the time was omnipresent, a broadcast network comparable to the pervasive nature of the 'many to many' communication of the Internet. In this way

---

37 For the entire synopsis of *Lux in Tenebris* (1919) one act farce in prose, see Willet, John, 1967, p. 27.

38 I would also like to recognise the achievements of Russian theatre director, Vsevolod Meyerhold, whose work 'was a significant attempt to break the barrier of the footlights and establish a more direct relationship between performer and spectator (Braun 1969, p. 22)' and was continually seen as a threat to the Russian authorities. This indicates that something crucially political was at issue with his work considering the conflicts he and his wife had with Russian Government, and which lead to their ambivalent violent deaths. Regrettably due to the constraints of this research I am unable to illuminate more upon Meyerhold, whose 'intention-realization-reaction theory of physical action incorporated ideas from gymnastics, acrobatics, fencing, sports, circus acts, and Commedia dell' arte...(Toepfer 1969, p. 179)'.

39 From these propositions we can also conclude that the history of 'intermedia' is much older than the term coined by Dick Higgins (1966) from *Fluxus*.

the computer can be seen as an expressive medium, a theatre machine. It is precisely these elements of audience consideration, the profound *ludibrium,* the *miscère utile dulci,* that are often neglected through the use of black box interfaces in computational media, consoles, and human interface design (such as the Graphical User Interfaces). In retrospect, the 1700s seems almost progressive. These ludic and satirical principles of generating awareness, paradoxically making something comprehensible by making it abnormal, all manifested in Brecht's theatre methodology of *Verfremdungseffekte*, which has links to the contemporary hacker culture and manifestos such as Critical Engineering and the postdramatic theatre genre with which the art works in this project have all been brushed.

1.0 Introduction: Overview

> Don't look straight at the sun. Go into a dark bar for a bit and have a beer with
> Dionysius, every now and then.
> -Ursula Le Guin (1976)

This project addresses the cultural chasm – which has been widening since the Industrial Revolution – between the production and consumption of technology. It contributes to the discourse on the role played by computational machines in contemporary culture, specifically, contemporary art and performance. In many cases the discussion of computational media rests on the basis of its efficacy, utility, ease and accessibility. A position is developed that explores the creative possibilities of experiencing the computer as a theatre machine and as a mechanism of infinite purposes and diverse desires, rather than as an unmediated 'ready-made' functional tool. The artworks that form this thesis are thought experiments in hardware and software that promote an open-ended approach to technology, which, in the context of contemporary art, is more engaged with the material of technology, rather than the common view of and by artists as end users of digital technology.

Play, collaboration and active participation are crucial elements for experiencing and understanding technical functionality, and for transforming these findings into concepts, or 'performances of code' in the broadest sense. The practical interrogations that have emerged are a result of research into demystifying, reprogramming,

rethinking and redesigning tools of production and transmission. This can also be characterised by a satire or playful performance (a *ludibrium*) of cryptic tropes rather than mere illustration or representation. This type of prescriptive approach more often than not, tends to merely reinforce consumerist models and bears no relation to radical subjective practices which can open up an entirely new realms of understanding.[40] An exploration of the black box metaphor as applied to both computers and theatre and an examination of the links that they share, demonstrates just how perceptions about *techné* - 'the human ability to make and perform' (Shiner 2003, p. 19) - and the aesthetic use of technology are shaped by knowledge of social histories, politics and cultural experiences.[41] The potentiality and limitations of contemporary art practices that engage with emergent technologies and performance are outlined, and their field of action is analysed from a practitioner's perspective. From an industry standpoint, digital technology is a significant driver of new products; these technological products have specific crafted representations as symbols of cultural status, control and participation. Often there is only a superficial capability built into these products for the consumer to customise and craft their own meanings and relationships. Beyond technological pragmatism,[42] this inquiry points to a richer engagement with technology that can occur through the application of arcane cultural practices from speculative traditions of thinking that include cryptography, theatre, language and occult philosophy. This thesis develops an approach to technology that engages with computation and networks in a theatrical manner. As a corollary, the current aesthetic emphasis on the 'transparency' of computational media is questioned through an examination of the depth and reach of the machine into the social fabric of everyday life. This machine reach is further highlighted through a series of experimental artworks, installations and performances.

---

40 A pertinent article is 'The Push Pull Decade' Stephanie Britten (2010), founder of *Artlink* magazine, who in her discussion brings this optical-centric habit of the contemporary visual art world to our attention; 'Surprisingly the wider art-going public continues to prefer contemplating large paintings or objects of complex elaborated decoration in the hush of an art museum, the kinds of places where the quality controllers are thoroughly at home…less familiar modes such as work in the digital arena continue to be a small audience niche, underlining the need for magazines like *Artlink*, *Art Monthly* and others to continue to keep the conversation going about the reality of today, networked or otherwise, into the future'.

41 A definition of techné is used in relation to the complexly interrelated ars and techné in his discussion, so that Shiner concludes that 'In fact techné and ars referred less to a class of objects than to the human ability to make and perform' (2003, p. 19).

42 Katherine Neal discusses very accurately just how early this habit of pragmatising machines extends as a tactic in relation to mathematics and mechanical arts in order to disassociate from occult association (1999, pp. 151-178).

I do not experience events chronologically and this text should not be read as if the works were made in a particular order. I could be writing to you now as if it were a long time ago, not necessarily in any known present, past or future. I also believe that anything I type, without indicating anything that rationally speaking transpired, indirectly speaks about them.

1.2 Summary of the Artworks:

Valetudo (2013) prayer flag.
Medium: 180cm x 300cm, hand sequined-embroidered Knitted polyester flag, embedded Augmented Reality Layer. The form of the Haitian Vodou Flag is embraced and a connection between a mortal and a virtual presence is established.

ism | breath | she | who | with | I (2012) code séance installation.
Medium: 3 x coded video projections (dimensions variable) continuous loops, colour | audio. Attempting to transcend the realm of the anecdotal in the dark magic space of the shell, a classic essay on women and fiction is divined by regular expressions, reconfigured into lists, new found treasures are revealed.

Error_in_Time() (2012) one act play.
Medium: 35-minute theatre performance.
A performer unfolds the insides of the operating system behind our daily computer interactions. Through journal entries, performative algorithms and enquiring conversations with a chat bot, a first person narrative, touches on subjects from Ophelia and dark matter to rogue bots.

"I am Googable", therefore, I am (2011) networked installation.
Medium: colour, silent, (former live aggregated data feed networked computer monitor), 349mm x 6000 mm semi-gloss colour print on banner paper. This self-portrait refers to the solipsistic behaviour inspired by regular Internet use. It is common to look out into this void almost as if it were a mirror to reassure ourselves that 'we' exist.

Scrying:Mea (2013) performance.
Medium: live coding performance installation. A tarot reading takes place by a fembotic mechanism, a cypher strips away the historical significance and ideologies from divination through an encoded choreography that generates new forms of contemplation.

Self Portrait (2013) video.
Medium: digital video - sound | colour | continuous. The video is shot at Tessellated Pavements, an uncanny matrix landform and a platform to the underworld whose entrance we are yet to find. Standing behind a mirror, holding it, the performer attempts to use it as a cypher or a key to pick the lock to a backdoor.

Awry Signals (2013) code séance performance.
Medium: 15 min performance and ongoing installation. In collaboration with Linda Dement, the researcher constructs a device to tap into a starlight WIFI beam in order to receive messages from the three stellar punks now making their way along it to the heavens; they shine up the cathedrals of light in the night sky.

Computer is Dreaming (2012) Installation.
Medium: an assemblage of totems, non-utilitarian paraphernalia, and computer hardware elements. A script scans /dev/mem - a code abstraction - which acts as an interface to the computer memory and outputs this inner veracity as a video scape.

1.3 Hermetic Computing and Theatre

> Yeah, it's really horrible. It's like the way Shakespeare is put on by the Royal Shakespeare Company. They know fuck all about Shakespeare. He was a true punk. We have to remember that in his day, they put on these plays in the village square, when everyone was pissed on flagons of ale, everybody was fucking shouting and screaming, and throwing mud at the performers. Look at Hamlet. Even Romeo and Juliet for fuck's sake. They've been homogenised and sterilised out of all existence, but they're not what people believe they are. People believe that Shakespeare's some sort of saint. Shakespeare was the most fucking subversive writer who ever lived.
>
> -Irvine Welsh (2006)

The primary strategy in developing an idiosyncratic and speculative perspective on the role of technology in the everyday is to relate the present uses of computational media in art to the distant past - in this case, the Hermetic tradition through the lens of the English Renaissance.[43] As such, this inquiry explores the connections between arcane cultural practices such as; cyphers, scrying, augury, divination and the theatrical genre of *ludibrium*[44] (a satire and playful dream) and, at times, their simultaneous concurrence and conflict with present-day modes of expression in contemporary art forms and digital culture, namely Critical Engineering and postdramatic sub-genres.

As Irvine Welsh allows for a visceral reappraisal of Shakespeare's work (2006) finding him subversive and unruly, thus this proposition engenders a plethora of textual manias, speculations and obsessions surrounding the emergence of Hermeticism in Renaissance thought, a tradition influenced by the magus John Dee (advisor to Queen Elizabeth I, and a colleague of Shakespeare).

Parallels can be drawn to contemporary computer culture and performance:

---

43 Yates describes this reformation as a movement, 'The word 'renaissance' means 'rebirth' and it is expressive of the way the movement was understood by scholars and thinkers who created it...Thus the Renaissance movement was essentially a movement towards recovery of the past, towards the retrieving of knowledge which had been lost. This attitude is particularly true of the revival of what we vaguely call 'the Hermetic tradition' in the Renaissance. It was an attempted return to sources of knowledge believed to be even older than the civilizations of Greece and Rome (1978, p. 12)'.
44 See *GLOSSARY* (Chapter 0) and Prologue for further expansion on the significance of the term.

> Elizabethan Imperialism was developed, not by some survivor from the Middle
> Ages, but by John Dee, Hermetic Magus and scientist, a figure thoroughly
> representative of the most 'modern' times of the age in which he lived…the
> great, illuminated, revolving model of the heavens which showed forth the
> destiny of the monarchy…was a highly 'modern' expression of the latest
> mathematical-mechanical techniques, though its purpose was talismanic and
> magical (Yates 1985, p. 125).

This quote reveals a small insight into the early relationship between theatre and
theatre machines and even points to a conceivable relationship to the computer as a
theatre machine and an expressive medium. While Dee's system of celestial navigation
and communication was implemented into a codified system for the British Naval fleet,
Dee's cypher methods and clandestine codes weaved their way into the reforming
movement of the time.[45] This was the Rosicrucian movement, in which Dee was
influential, and 'used theatrical forms of expression, introduced by the travelling
companies of English players in Germany' (Yates 1978, p. 8) which was briefly
surveyed in the Preface and will be further discussed in Chapter 4. It is also
conjectured that John Dee's major work was actually a cover for intelligence work and
'the emerging Idea of the British Empire as Dee conceived it' (Yates 1985, p. 115)'.

It is proposed that these cyphers and their coded implementations fall vertically across
time; and hence, these activities of obstinate characters, such as John Dee, could be
seen as a predecessor to programs such as PRISM, a mass electronic surveillance
program operated by the United States National Security Agency, and the consequent
exposés that have been exploited through many artist's 'post dramatic' art projects,
which will be further elaborated upon in this chapter and in Context (Chapter 2), and
Artworks (Chapter 4) specifically in relation to the artworks *"I am Googable", therefore, I
am* (2011) and *Self Portrait* (2013).[46] We can see the theatrical discourse in the title of
the Chaos Computer Congress (30c3) talk, 'To Protect and Infect; The Militarization

---

45 Yates 'Dee was an uninhibited magus, who attempted to operate Agrippa's occult philosophy on all its three
levels, and whose powerful influence on the Elizabethan age, on the Queen herself, on aristocracy and artisans,
on the shaping…Dee's influence percolated far and wide. Hence the Elizabethan revival included a Dee revival,
and this coincided with the Dee revival in the German Rosicrucian movement' (1978, p. 134). See also
MacMillan, K (2001).
46 *PRISM: The Beacon Frame* (2013) by Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev is an art project in reaction to the
NSA / PRISM revelations, which consequently have provided prime fodder for exploitation, *PRISM: The
Beacon Frame* (2013) viewed 20 November 2013, < http://k0a1a.net/danja/prism>.

of the Internet (Part Two; in three acts)' by Jacob Appelbaum, an artist and Internet security expert, core developer and researcher with the Tor Project.[47]

As a corollary, it is proposed that the depth of a practitioner's historical knowledge affects how art is made; consequently, the emergence of new forms of expression and the mixing of different perspectives on media and technologies will often lead to a reexamination of aesthetics and ethics as they are conventionally received. Specifically, this perspective was explored and developed through a field trip to Haiti, to collaborate with a community of artists who combine *Vodou* culture and sculpture, discussed at length in 'Methodology – Field Work' (Appendix).

This research framework, developed through the artworks and elucidated in the exegesis, juxtaposes often apparently oppositional positions (e.g. data mining and divination, calculating machines and radical theatre). The primary method employed focuses on the control and making of modified objects (talisman) or custom-built devices that are actuated in a performative manner. For instance, a shaman's rattle is a personal talisman, but could also be argued to be an analogue of a wireless communication device. Like most computers, the rattle has antennae (feathers) that can detect and connect to the forces within an immaterial world. In a similar way, the computer is approached not as a word processer, but as a theatre stage; not as a calculator, but a writer of love letters, a manifold realm, a place for performance of code as an executable process, whether it is used to formulate instructions for a machine, for people, or both.[48]

In 2003 (prior to commencing this project), field work was conducted at the Fundación de Investigaciones Chamanistas in the Putumayo region of south-western

---

47 Profile Jacob Appelbaum, *Transmediale festival of digital art and Culture*, viewed 10 January 2014, <http://www.transmediale.de/content/jacob-appelbaum>. See documentation of the entire talk 'To Protect And Infect; The Militarization of the Internet (Part Two; in three acts)' at the *30c3* December 30th, 2013, viewed January 2 2014, <http://media.ccc.de/browse/congress/2013/30C3_-_5713_-_en_-_saal_2_-_201312301130_-_to_protect_and_infect_part_2_-_jacob.html>.

48 Brenda Laurel (2013) discusses a similar connection in her aptly titled book *Computers as Theatre;* however, this concept is used more in relation to design approaches for computer applications and human interface design. Furthermore, a similar sentiment was also used in Dutch exhibition *chmod +x art* which posited 'the computer as a world, as a place of revolution, art as executable.' However, the *goto10* curators disarticulate technology from magic, and state that if you don't have access to the code it is merely a magic trick. Instead, this research expressly embraces those practices to be omnipresent in computing culture and performance. Viewed 11 September 2013, <http://makeart.goto10.org/chmod+x/>. *The Renaissance of the Theater of Memory,* Peter Matussek, 2001, discusses art of memory and its theatre of icons, memory theatres as in the magical prodigies of the Renaissance and how it appears to be an anticipation of artificial intelligence and computer memory. Viewed August 10 2013, <http://www.peter-matussek.de/Pub/A_38.html>.

Colombia, in order to experience ancient practices of plant usage (as software) and learn how objects such as the Shaman Rattle and other paraphernalia or talismans (hardware) are related to the rising ubiquity of computational media. It is my view that mythical and telepathic elements are distinctly present in both old and new forms of communication; shamanic rituals may be akin to talking to people in other times and spaces via telepathy or telepresence. The research investigated how one could demystify and spark a renewed and more meaningful understanding that opens up the possibility of forging a non-hierarchical relationship between ethno-medicine and art practice, a relationship of mutual enrichment beyond the self-assured cadre of New Age healer, disembodied computer geek, or vacant style of provocative shock artists.

1.4 Propositions

The research propositions do not aim to provide affirmative answers, but rather to provide insight concerning questions, such as:

- How can performance help us understand the relations between immaterial and embodied experience and their relation to code based practices; to clarify this, is the act of performing live code invocations an embodiment of a speech act?

- What type of works are generated when an artist has a substantial technical understanding of the computer as a tool and a theatrical medium, and what is their purpose and aesthetic?

1.5 Contextual Overview

The terms 'performance of code' and the 'aesthetics of transmission' are developed and applied to examine the oeuvre of theatre makers, computer culture figureheads, performers and artists who claim (or are declared to be) of an eclectic character and have influenced the artworks in the thesis. The 'performance of code' encompasses code in a social sense and slips within descriptions of code in functional senses, such as lexicon and grammar, encoding systems and heuristics and algorithms, programming and language (which are considered as dynamic, ephemeral, and always in motion).

The 'aesthetics of transmission' considers the gap between the way artists and computer scientists define 'transmission'. This poses a series of creative problems as well as illustrating how often artworks using networks are evaluated on standards and parameters which are completely foreign, rather than their native attributes. Rather than a strictly technical definition that remains in the domain of the computer scientists, it is proposed that code and transmission might best be re-addressed through an aesthetic lens. What the terms 'performance of code' and the 'aesthetics of transmission' provoke is discussed at length in the Chapter 2 and in Chapter 4.

The research probes the diverse and transdisciplinary nature of artists and theatre makers, such as:

- Bertolt Brecht's fascination with the portrayal of outsiders and clowns as politically powerful;
- the provocative theatricality of Valeska Gert who proclaimed herself to be a witch, her 'anti-dance' genre-busting work both pushed at and analysed societal and artistic convention;
- *Tanztheater* (dance theatre) exponent Pina Bausch, who was described as a wicked fairy, and in her later years as a Queen of the Deep[49] with her use of raw materials (such as flowers, dirt and water), circus tricks, and dissonant use of repetition as a choreographic tool that so accurately reveals how we as humans perpetually attempt to transcend our imprisoning obsessions;
- Maya Deren, a *Vodou* priestess whose work drew attention to the technical apparatus in her kinematic films, who described herself as a burglar who believed 'the souls of people are moved by communication systems - unconsciously in the technical sense' (Holl 2001, p. 173);
- Virginia Woolf's savvy fictocriticism and characteristic style of punctuating obliqueness with pertinent yet contradictory phrases in her writing;
- John Dee, alchemist, mathematician, astrologer, and comrade of William Shakespeare (Deacon 1968, p. 101) who sought the use of divination paraphernalia and regularly practiced talking to angels (Clulee 1988);
- The mathematician and philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz and his curious tolerance for deceptive and healing automata (theatre machines) (Lazardzig 2008) and whose calculating machines were a precursor to the modern-day computer,

---

49 Bausch's work gave way to intense mocking and furious radical subjectivities with her use of many raw materialities such as pissing on stage. Taking *Sleeping Beauty* out of the company Tanztheatre Wuppertal's season, she was labeled a wicked fairy. See Tashiro, Mimi (1999), also see Lawson Valerie (2000).

- Richard Stallman, the Free Software Foundation Figurehead's outlandish performances under the pseudonym St. IGNUcius of the Church of Emacs;
- Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev, both Critical Engineers whose art works demystify the black box of the computer by performatively decrypting transmissions in order to make data networks transparent, and
- The artists of !mediengruppe BITNIK whose custom-made telepresence performance tools open up backdoors to interrogate the mechanisms of the modern gatekeeper.

The transdisciplinary nature of these artists may allow for a reappraisal of the boundaries of specific artistic genres, but as a group they share practices that are collaborative, performative, radical and in most cases, present a paradoxical combination of satire and transcendentalism. Likewise, these practices can be seen as multiple overlapping threads, not extending through the full length of yet still forming a single twine, in which the context of practice for this thesis extends.

Writing I feel myself struggling. I have a speculative approach. I take risks. I read a lot, I not only read, I live through these texts and of course they influence me. Estranged and destabilised selves are to which I overwhelmingly relate. I migrate across and continually translate from writing to performing arts, but does this stand for computer science and contemporary art discourse as well? This is the very junction where my work rests, the structures are made up of different fragments, different kinds of perceptions. But what holds the works together? I view this as a kind of magic, or at least something arcane. I am attracted to, and use, a lexicon of codes, cyphers, all derived from many sources.

1.6 Radical Subjectivity

The research posits that the distinguishing character of computer networks and systems lies in their materiality and the modes of performance they enable, through which human beings participate and interact. Underlying the artworks in this project is a process for defining a radical subjectivity. An application of sixteenth-century French essayist Montaigne's radical subjectivity can be found in this depiction:

Souls are most beautiful when they show most variety and flexibility…Life is a rough, irregular process with a multitude of forms. It is to be no friend to yourself – and even less master of yourself – to be a slave endlessly following

yourself, so beholden with predispositions that you cannot try from them nor

bend them (Montaigne 2004, pp. 247-248).

If we take on Montaigne's suggestion, then this is a form of engagement in stark contrast to the norms and constraints of consumer culture, or even the hard logic normally associated with computers. In this thesis, the daily rituals we have with our technology, and that come to form part of our spiritual and emotional lives, are held up for reappraisal. A reflexive and playful ethos is advocated that encourages the continual questioning of established responses and behaviours to artistic production and reception by fostering a radical subjectivity through such an experiential approach. Montaigne's pursuit of curiosity, critique, 'variety and flexibility' is comparable to the vivid characterisation of radical subjectivity by Eugenio Barba, theatre director and dramaturg:

> Artistic discipline is a way of refusal. Technique in theatre and the attitude that
> it presupposes is a continual exercise in revolt, above all against oneself, against
> one's own ideas, one's own resolutions and plans, against the comforting
> assurances of one's own intelligence, knowledge and sensibility (Barba 2000, p.
> 56).

Barba and Montaigne both advocate reflection upon the patterns that trap our perceptions and desire, since to not recognise these results is akin to being enslaved by alien habits and conventions. In contrast (according to Kellner), radical subjectivity is 'taking seriously existing consciousness, criticizing mystifications and distortions, and formulating needs, values and ideals which will aid in the process of human liberation' (1999, p. 22). As the reader may note, there is quite a difference between the contested and somewhat honestly uncomfortable view of selfhood in Barba and Montaigne, and Kellner's somewhat fantastical moralistic left position; this is precisely the friction that this research highlights.

The artworks developed for this thesis are thought experiments which question our aesthetic relationship with machines.[50] A dynamic model that embraces a playful

---

50 Ursula LeGuin (1976) writes in her introduction to *The Left Hand of Darkness* 'The purpose of a thought-experiment, as the term was used by Schrodinger and other physicists, is not to predict the future—indeed

attitude and serves to demystify and disarticulate the black box of computers through the construction of analogies to the black box of theatre, it generates an active engagement that looks simultaneously at technology and the signs it produces.

This could be seen as a paradox in the work: on the one hand, I am interested in the demystification of technology, and on the other hand, the 'mystification' in and through the performance of the machinic assemblage. This tension between ongoing extremes could be seen as the common thread through all the artworks produced in this thesis.

1.7 Dramaturgy and the Apparatus

Dramaturgy is a central discipline framing the project as performative actions offering an insight into, and elaboration of, aesthetic processes and the effect of technical provocations. Dramaturgy foregrounds the tensions in the spectator's encounter with an artwork; the audience relationship engendered by the processes of the artwork is crucial. In this sense, Barba discusses how the 'work of the actions' considering all the elements constitutes the 'weave of performance' (1985, p. 75):

> Actions are all the relationships…between the characters and the lights, the sounds, the space. Actions are what work directly on the audience's attention, on their understanding, their emotiveness, their synaethesia (Barba 1985, p. 75).

It is proposed that if the artwork draws attention to its apparatus – that is, the audience perceives the apparatus as constructing and enacting the artwork – then an encompassing awareness of the form, context and content of the artwork are created that extend beyond the encounter in the theatre or the gallery. This concept of the apparatus is defined in the Glossary and elaborated upon in relation to Maya Deren and !mediengruppe BITNIK's artwork in Chapter 1, and the research project artworks, specifically Valetudo (2013), Error_in_Time() (2012), Scrying:Mea (2013) and Awry Signals (2013) as discussed in Chapter 4.

Schrodinger's most famous thought-experiment goes to show that the 'future,' on the quantum level, cannot be predicted—but to describe reality, the present world.'

Another aim of this research is to explore the relationship between the performer and emerging technologies, and the contexts that surround both the technologies and the performer. The question of Eugenio Barba, is posed when carrying the legacy of the past reformers, heretics and visionaries, we must always make certain this work holds the same integrity and substance, of those predecessors. Barba asks of this quality: 'Do I still have the legacy in my hands or have I squandered it? Is its value still intact? Has it been corroded by commerce with the world, by contact with the trade? Has this legacy retained it personal sense, intimate incommunicable?' (1992, p. 79). Many audience–performer relationships do not allow for free engagement with the action, since this possibility has already been precluded by dominant conventions 'corroded by commerce with the world'. An observation of this prevailing tendency of contemporary culture from Adorno is well worth repeating:

> Tension is but superficially maintained and is unlikely to have a serious effect any more...This longing for 'feeling on safe ground'- reflecting the infantile need for protection, rather than the desire for a thrill – is catered to. The element of excitement is preserved only with tongue in cheek. Such changes fall in line with the potential change from a freely competitive to a virtually 'closed' society into which one wants to be admitted or from which one fears to be rejected. Everything somehow appears 'predestined' (2002, p. 161).

By interrogating relationships such as those between performer and audience; reception and participation; reader and writer; and programmer, maker and user, constituent processes have been identified within these relationships resulting in an actant who plays their part in an unravelling of the traditional theatrical dynamic between performer, object and audience.

1.8 Open Ended Play and *Ludibrum*

In this research, making as a form of open-ended play has not been experienced as flippant or tongue-in-cheek, but rather as a divergent strategy for creating relationships between rule-based systems. Playfully testing the very limits of a rule-based system develops a deeper understanding of its potential for the maker. This idea will be detailed more in the Methodology Chapter 3 and where a field trip in 2009 to the Ghetto Biennale in Haiti is described and analysed. It was on this field trip that a

fictional *ludibrium* occurred, where a used rectangular black plastic oil container transformed into a video camera, providing insight into the role of apparatus and the power of a playful dream. As a result, usual social stratifications and other limiting divisions were transcended, fulfilling (and thrilling) the aspirations of those involved beyond the moment.

The development of the thesis is avowedly syncretic as such; through divergent thinking, it offers new insights through the unusual connections that are made. These shortcomings are explored in Chapter 2 in relation to the 'performance of code' and the 'aesthetics of transmission'. By exploring the performativity of character through literature and other modalities or theatrical motifs that are an indirect consequence of the mise-en-scène of hardware and software, the 'liveness' in the approach adopted could be perceived as unruly and un-governed. However, it is the codes, the implicit rules and protocols of the systems that form much of our daily experience that are of interest. This approach employs a collective notion of performance that is dependent on 'framed social typifications of interaction' (Lewis 1998, p. 2), but not the competitive performance metrics encountered in corporate settings. In contrast, performative actions will be examined, as well as how these mechanisms are transmitted and understood between a group of people or an audience. Of course, to communicate with a community of people, or a network of people, is itself a type of performance; and we should note that the aesthetics of this very transmission between the being, doing and saying is crucial, 'In this sense the social performative is a crucial part not only of subject formation, but of the ongoing political contestation and reformulation of the subject as well' (Butler 1997, p. 160). Judith Butler proposes that the explicit performance of the performative utterance is potentially subversive. The artworks in this research highlight this very notion; it puts into motion the rasp one may encounter when experiencing the rub between materiality and immaterial experience.

1.9 Methodologies

The methodologies employed in this project of risk taking, experiential prototyping, radical play and speculation are enacted through ongoing experimentations in performance and media design.[51] Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and the ambiguous etymology of objects, specifically, paraphernalia. An embroidered augmented reality prayer flag, a code executed as a daily ritual and affirmation, an oil container transformed into a video camera, a carefully positioned mirror to gain access to the underworld, even the measuring ruler that was used as a 'selfie stick'[52] can all be exploited to enact a performance. It will be demonstrated how the choice of tool and interface used in an artwork provokes new situations that must be tackled; and therefore the materiality of the artwork (specifically hardware and software choices) becomes inherent to the subject in question. From this perspective, an artwork is approached as an occasion to develop a prototype to solve a puzzle, or gain insight into the potentials and limitations of an emergent technology.

Syncretic approaches to materials and form have an interchangeability that renders the specificity of traditional approaches and reception secondary. Strategies, which artists in this vein use to shape their work, demand an investment from all the senses, and, more especially, a firm trust in the path of awareness over identity. This isn't necessarily a new or radical approach; it reflects the modernism of Duchamp as much as postmodernist or contemporary approaches. However, it is the experiential prototyping approach that champions the amateur in the realm of the professional, and places value in participants following their own enthusiasms that is radical. Radical because it is mostly the case that people are not taught generic computer principles and skills, but how to operate makes and models of a specific brand. Almost universally, it is common that people think OSX Pages and Safari (or Microsoft Word and Internet Explorer) are indistinguishable from word processing and browsing or a computer is nothing more than a media player. An experiential prototyping method is not a prescribed approach; what drives these collaborations is a desire to skill share in ways other than rote learning according to 'industry vocational standards'. One need not have a complete technical understanding to begin, but one has to be open to the idea that this type of understanding has value and is worth nurturing. The process

---

51 For a comprehensive article detailing experience prototyping within the industrial design field, see Buchenau, Marion and Suri, Jane (2000).
52 An extendable pole with an attachment (for phone or camera) in order to adequately frame oneself in the shot, and therefore broadcast 'selfies' on the fly.

incorporates openness to a mixture of participants, both professionals and amateurs, whose activities are deeply intertwined. The experiential prototyping methodology is outlined further in Chapter 3. The radical ethic of risk-taking and the experiential prototyping aesthetic embraced by this project is reflected in the statement made by Torvalds, winner of the Prix Ars Electronica Golden Nica for the operating system Linux in 1999, that 'interrupts are not hidden'.[53] Torvalds insisted that rather than treading lightly for fear of a crash, the error should be embraced, as it carries with it a transmission signal that is an opportunity for thinking alternatively, if not radically.

Chapter 4 is an account of how the project was pursued in relation to the art works described in detail in the body of this exegesis. I will also touch on how the performative aspects of the artwork adopt the theories of Wendy Hui-Kyong Chun (2011) by presenting a framework to reappraise code as a script, a medium for the interaction of human and non-human networks.

This method of acknowledging and working with complexity reflects a view of life itself as a labyrinth through which we chart our passage, confronting the obstacles we face and assiduously transcend. This project – the exegesis and associated body of work that form the thesis – can be seen as a labyrinth made from a matrix of phenomena through which a version of Ariadne's thread weaves. It is my hope that you, the reader, finds the fibre is luminescent and tactile even in the darkest and most twisted corner.

---

53 Torvalds, Linus 1991, *Notes for linux release 0.01,* for the seminal email, see Appendix 7.2.

2.0 Context: The Performance of Code

In this chapter, the key concepts of this thesis – the performance of code and the aesthetics of transmission – will be developed, and the fields and sub-genres of art in which this research resides will be mapped.

For the purposes of this inquiry, what may constitute the 'performance of code'? There are many conflations in how the word 'code' is used, even though the contexts may differ. Equivalence is frequently made between heuristics, algorithms, programming and language. There are various technical terms for code that relates to functionality in a utilitarian sense: for instance, source codes, dictionaries and grammar. A code is a set of rules that allow an initiated user to convert one type of information to another. Every computer language has a defined grammar that is interpreted by a compiler, which digests its semantic content and produces byte code (which the computer can then execute). Wendy Chun writes 'To know the code is to have a form of "X-ray" vision that makes the inside and outside coincide, and the act of revealing sources or connections becomes a critical act in and of itself' (2011, p. 188). Sometimes an artwork carries with it a set of semiotics so obscure and hermetic that unless you actually understand the code that underpins it, the meaning may be hidden. All societies are replete with social transactions and codes of conduct which must be learned by an individual wishing to function fully within that society. Often, in social or political settings, the elusiveness of 'the code' is the intention, as explained in the Prologue.

To the uninitiated, the implied rules and protocols that define the codes of sub-cultures may often seem exotic or esoteric. Pre-defined words or gestures can make a statement, confirm allegiances or promote questions in a subtle but direct manner. This is a description of code in a social sense. As Florian Cramer maintains 'program code contaminates in itself two concepts that are traditionally juxtaposed and unresolved in modern linguistics; the structure, as conceived of in formalism, and structuralism, and the performative, as developed by speech act theory' (2013, p. 94). On the other hand, it may be more than incongruous that both the polemics and the behaviour - of which media theorists are critical - come from the same misconceptions. The meaning of natural language communication emerges from its context, rather than its form. Does

this dichotomy come as a consequence of the fundamental misunderstanding of the correlation between formal and natural language? What happens when the embodied written work becomes type, the type becomes symbols for a calculating machine, and the written text becomes a performance, a medium, something more than just words on a screen or paper? Does it set something unfathomable into motion? It is precisely these unresolved gaps (and non-prescriptive but performative slippages by theorists, artists and technologists) that are defined in this research as the performance of code.

Though this study may seem to focus on an intermingling of different agendas and discourses, a key thread is the act of locating or exploiting a loophole in the coded system; as an operative principle, code's significance thus extends far deeper than its current digital manifestation. Frederich Kittler, a media theorist who combined technical and cultural understandings of code brought about a profound conceptual transformation of a general understanding of it. He writes:

> Codes by name and by matter are what determine us today, and what we must articulate if only to avoid disappearing under them completely. They are the language of our time precisely because the word and the matter code are much older…they are a part of every transmission medium (2008, p. 40).

The understanding of the transmission signal is analogous to an Ariadne's thread, which will guide us through the labyrinth of current issues in regards to the aestheticisation of the 'vast process of the semioticization of behavior' (Fuller & Goffey 2012, p. 98). This aestheticisation of a semiotic description of behaviour is significant, and this investigation into the performance of code attempts to carry this thread further still.

In this research, the 'proto-linguistic' or 'para-linguistic' experiences that inhabit the perimeter of formal systems in defining the performance of code are of paramount interest. There can be no doubt that codes are used for communication, transmitting social messages and having a logical (and even empirical) existence. However, prior to being drawn into the stream of solidified meaning, they inhabit a realm that makes the performance of code possible. The term 'performance' in this sense is not used in relation to financial terms where measurement and optimisation shrink people's

vocabulary and grammatical nuances over time, so as to posit structured thinking at the expense of the possibility of free expression and radical subjectivity. Instead, the term code is used interchangeably to describe the language implemented to write a software program, a theatrical series of conventions scripted in a performative manner, and the protocols used in many other social and technical systems. Inke Arns (2004) discusses the performativity of code - not of speech, but of being 'spoken' in relation to a 'post optical unconscious' - on which I elaborate in order to demonstrate how code can be many things other than a unit of information or potential message.

Cyphers are codes utilised by both sender and receiver; they can be used to conceal the 'real' messages being transmitted (and are often used by subcultures). Cyphers are often conflated with computer programming in regard to public key cryptography. There are also secret key code combinations that require special knowledge to invoke types of arcane powers. Theatrical conventions played out in a performative manner are codes that figure in the understanding of a work, and indeed the theatre script itself can also be seen to have an executable function. For instance, there are codified techniques in many forms of dance. Since human experience always involves interpretation, the line between audience perception and artist intention is significantly frayed and dependent on the context, the sender and the receiver. In this way, a pattern of drumbeats can be interpreted as sound or music, or alternatively, (and possibly simultaneously) a code to be deciphered, or even a rhythmic call to arms as in the Haitian revolution (discussed in the next chapter).

2.1 Control and Repetition in Performance of Code

From a dramaturge's perspective, a pause is considered a highly charged space of potency; as code, the act of the pause exceeds itself in the anticipation of meaning it generates. The hesitation of meaning for an audience is rendered as 'public thought'. Therefore the timing in a performance becomes a critical factor, as gaps and pauses can be where sentiment and meaning reside, and where they are both established and uncovered. Often the only intention is performance narratives that have already been told, anew, repeated and scrambled, timed differently, with the symbolism, wires or

code laid bare. This approach is epitomised in the work of Valeska Gert and Pina Bausch.

Pause.   Phot. Käte Ruppel, Berlin

FIGURE 5 VALESKA GERT DANCING A PAUSE IN 1920. PHOTO: KATE RUPPEL.

Valeska Gert was a dancer who generated a 'fast' and 'exotic' existence for the particular period of the early twentieth century, where the new independent and thinking woman was a manifestation of progressive contemporary discourse about the status of women that were, and still are, in circulation.[54] Gert entertained Berlin 'cinema audiences during the pause between reels by dancing…the Pause itself' (Goldwyn 2011), and her anti-dance works were designed to draw attention to stillness

---

54 For a further discussion of this manifestation of progressive discourses see: Niehoff, Pamela (1994).

and serenity (as seen in Figure 5). 'Pause' anticipated John Cage's groundbreaking silent composition, *"4'33"* (1953) by thirty years.[55] Gert also parodied social codes in a sophisticated but darkly comic and sharp manner; this approach punctuated social convention illusions of the time. Gert was self-supporting, confident and her expression in her performances was forthright. This forthrightness can also be seen as an attempt to alter the characteristics of the old institutions and their antiquated anachronisms, which included the surveillance of women most commonly perpetuated in the hierarchical formation and practice of repertory theatre and the classical ballet tradition. Although most of Gert's performances were solo pieces, she stated:

> I need a partner and this partner is my audience…For me every dance is a path
> that I pursue from the beginning to the end, and even beyond into a land which
> people call fantastic, grotesque or metaphysical (1931, p. 15).

Of note here is the dynamic relationship between the narrative of the concept of the live event and that as experienced by the spectator. Hans-Theis Lehmann, a contemporary of dramaturge Eugene Barba, draws a distinction between different realms of real and fictive experience. In his book *Postdramatic Theatre*, which ventures to define a sub-genre of performance, he writes:

> the blurring of the borderline between real and fictive experience to such an
> extent has far-reaching consequences for the understanding of the theatre
> space; it turns from a metaphorical, symbolic space into a metonymic space
> (2006, p. 151).

This thesis adopts a similar position to that of postdramatic theatre, in that it encourages the questioning of acquired responses and behaviours to codes of artistic production and reception in a contemporary art context. 'In contrast to other arts, which produce an object and/or are communicated through media, here the aesthetic act itself (the performing) as well as the act of reception (the theatre going) take place as a real doing in the here and now.' (Lehmann 2006, p. 17). Such a perspective aligns itself with corresponding changes and reflections upon the ways we speak about code in relation to communication, computers and performance as live and executable.

---

55 Gladysz 2010 states it is twenty years, however, a calculation says it is thirty three years.

In an artist statement, Valeska Gert sees profound social significance and places the utmost importance in the message from sender to receiver. This message has the same universal laws when it comes to survival (life) and death (legacies, dynasties, genealogies):

> art relates to a particular period...I believe that any artist can only create in the context of his own period...Our works on the other hand will appear timeless to future generations only if they are profound enough. They will deliver a message which passes from generation to generation and which reveals that we are all human, we all have to follow the same laws, we all have to fight, we all have to die (1931, p. 16).

When ordinary place, space and time disappear into illusion, an artwork then transcends the mere need for identification and instead creates an opening out of experience. As Gay McAuley notes 'the spectator is to be seen as a crucial and active agent in the creative process' (1999, p. 235). In Gert's performances, she would command the stage alone with rarely any peripheral accompaniment, thereby executing the most difficult task of absolute concentration and physical presence in the space.

Talking about artworks that use a system of strategies to force an engagement with formal languages and embodied procedures (including an awareness of the deep structure of such systems), Lehmann states:

> Post-dramatic theatre is a post-Brechtian theatre. It situates itself in a space opened up by the Brechtian inquiries into the presence and consciousness of the process of representation within the represented and the inquiry into a new 'art of spectating.' (2006, p. 33).

Along with Brechtian theatre *Verfremdungseffekte* (the effect of making strange) and formal elements of *Gestus* (the paradox of showing), Lehmann describes this process as the 'art of spectating' where the agent has an awareness of his or her own finitude in terms of being and existing through a language that is always already inscribed. On the work of Pina Bausch, Lehmann writes 'events remain present in their traces after they have happened and passed, time becomes denser…The spectators do not observe but experience themselves inside of a time-space' (2010, p. 152). As one investigates the formal barriers and aspects of the medium, it is also tempting to speculate that

Lehmann's theories are touching upon the profound influence and ubiquity of the computer on contemporary culture, and hence also on performance of both human and nonhuman actors.

Likewise Arns discusses how one's self is 'uttered' in a depersonalised element in a dramatic whole by having 'mechanical control codes' removed from the specialisations and confines of the personality:

> Human language is infiltrated with mechanical control codes and algorithms – similar to the heretical technique of speaking in tongues or the Surrealist écriture automatique (automatic writing), both techniques that seek to deactivate consciousness (putting one into a trance or state of sleep) in order to give voice to the divine…the convulsive appearance of the 'postoptical unconscious' is at least one more sign that this is not about speaking, but that we are being 'spoken' (2004, p. 5).

The notion of being 'spoken', rather than having deterministic control and knowing the entire measure of our actions can be witnessed in Pina Bausch's use of repetition. In transcending the anecdotal, this repetition is a ritualistic form that treats the human being not as the source of the dramatic action but as a cypher, an ontologically vacant vessel, perhaps to be re-written or 'spoken'. Barthes suggests this jouissance is a 'system of reading, or of enunciation, by means of which the subject, instead of affirming, abandons itself '(1981, p. 206). Use of repetition as a convention seems to allow for a profusion and transcendence of the simple and finite, as oscillations transform the body into a vessel that seems to hold a complexity of other places, spaces and times.

In contrast, the blatant use of repetition seems to also highlight the dancers' enculturated habits. In Bausch's signature work *Café Müller* (1978) (see Figure 5) Performers move about the stage as if they are somnambulists, being driven not of their own will but instead by the force of habit.[56] 'We must look again and again' Bausch once said in defense of her excessive repetitions, 'and maybe the saddest thing about our obsessions is that they often look so cheerful' (Cited in Birringer 1986, p.

---

56 Author attended a performance of *Café Müller*, in March 1999 at the Wuppertal Theatre, Wuppertal Germany.

91). The bodies of Bausch's dancers are shown to be vessels of an infinite veracity and contradiction. In one particular moment during the performance, a man and a woman begin to embrace; this is repeated with an extra performer who acts almost as if he is their puppeteer, engineering them to repeat the sequence. What initially began as an invigorated embrace now continues as if they are automata (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6 *CAFÉ MÜLLER* PERFORMANCE STILL. PHOTO: HELOÍSA BORTZ PINA-BAUSCH.DE.

Perhaps Bausch's dramaturgy was anticipating the pre-emptive responses that many cultural situations and devices increasingly ask of us in daily rituals.[57] According to Barthes this type of 'repetition is a maleficent theme'(1981, p. 206). This is especially notable in the processes of consumerism when applied to technology; people are relegated into being 'readerly' only 'users', denied the ability to participate in less cursory or 'writerly' modes of communication with the digital culture realm. Barthes (1974) discuses writerly as having an active performative function where the reader is 'no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text' (1974, p. 4). For this reason Lawrence Lessig (2008) uses the terms Read/Write (RW) culture and Read-Only

---

57 Jim Johnson [Bruno Latour] discusses how 'It is always a trade-off…behavior imposed back onto the human by nonhuman delegates…prescription is the moral and ethical dimension of mechanisms. In spite of the constant weeping of moralists, no human is as relentlessly moral as a machine, especially if it is (she is, he is, they are) as "user friendly" as my computer' (1988, p. 301).

(RO) culture to describe the complications of access and rights. The former, Read/Write 'The analogy is to the permissions that might attach to a particular file on a computer. If the user has "RW" permissions, then he is allowed to both read the file and make changes to it. If he has "Read/Only" permissions, he is allowed only to read the file' (Lessing 2008, p.28). Read/Only he claims is 'less practiced in performance, or amateur creativity, and more comfortable (think: couch) with simple consumption' (2008, p.28). Repetition of read only tasks makes us seem more like robots than humans because the intention behind the action is partly adrift where 'bodies also become objects other than or "othered from" our selves' (Lewis 1995, p. 222);[58] a symptom of an instrumental condition 'maintained irrespective of inner resistance' (Joas 1996, p. 155). Despite this excessive repetition not only allows an individual to fall into a trance-like state, but can also reveal evidence of other forces at work, that could be malign or jouissant, in which code as an allegory comes to the fore.

Both repetition of enculturated habits, and a nonlinear idea of time, are modalities used as ways of reflecting on the development of the artworks in the thesis. In his discussion of shifting-out, Johnson (aka Bruno Latour) describes 'the subtle beauties of techno-social imbroglios' (1988, p. 309) that escape our attention. He continues 'One of the reasons for this lack of concern may be the peculiar nature of the shifting-out that generates machines and devices. Instead of sending the listener of a story into another world, the technical shifting-out inscribes the words in another matter...'(1988, p. 309). The repetition of imposed routines leads to a stagnation locked within a repetitive 'grid'. Massumi describes this grid as 'the habit-forming whole attractors to which society expects its bodies to become addicted (love, school, family, church, career: artificially closed energetic systems revolving around subtypes of each gender category). "Man" and "Woman" (and their many variations) designate stereotyped sets of object choices and life paths (stable equilibriums) promoted by society. They are 'clichés that bodies are coerced into incarnating as best they can' (Massumi 1992, p. 87). This type of social field produces a restricted body that is regulated and linked to the schema of a cultural field, which conditions the body in certain ways (by rewarding the person for some ways of being and discouraging others).

---

58 Bernhard Siegert (2012) also gives a pertinent description of the cultural significance of the use of doors, and the importance of the automatic door-closer and its implications when human and nonhuman agents interact.

2.2 Performances by Coders

> The story of the creation of the GNU General Public License ultimately affirms the hacker ethic, not as a story of the ethical hacker genius but as a historically specific event with a duration and a context, as something that emerges in response to the reorientation of knowledge and power, and through active modulation of existing practices among both human and nonhuman actors…
> If there is a hacker ethic it is Free Software itself, it is the recursive public itself, which is much more than a list of norms.[59]
>
> -Christopher Kelty (2008)

Let us consider for a moment the notion of performance as a magical act – in particular the performance by Richard Stallman, the founder of the Free Software Foundation (FSF) whose alter ego St IGNUcius often manifests at the end of his lectures (see Figure 6). Initially, Stallman pragmatically and fluently relates a genealogy/nativity-type story about the GNU system and how Linux is one of its kernels, highlighting the fact that the media have locked onto the term Linux but have neglected to acknowledge that the system should instead be called GNU/Linux.[60]

The audience is presented with technical facts, evidence and various opinions which expound upon how: GNU is a longstanding project developing and advocating for access to source code and creation of free operating systems; Linux, a kernel developed by Linus Torvalds, was the last missing piece; there are numerous similarities between Unix and Linux systems but they should not be conflated – for instance, apparently one is required by law to write *nix, instead of UNIX because the latter is trademarked.[61]

Included in Stallman's monologue is how Emacs (a text editor he has written) became a way of life bordering on a religion, as well as one of the most powerful computer

---

59 Kelty, C 2008, p. 181.

60 During the course of research, author attended Stallman's Lecture 'Free Software in Ethics and in Practice' at Stanley Burbury Theatre, University of Tasmania, 30 September 2010.

61 For an account of the genealogy of the Unix machine and its offsprings of *nix derivatives see Hardie, M (2007). I am required by Law to write *nix, instead of UNIX as Selkirk, C (2004) writes '…I used the term "*nix" to denote Unix, or more precisely Unix-like operating systems, this is due to the fact that "Unix" is a trademark, and as such cannot be used in this way. However, as the operating systems we are discussing owe their historical roots to AT&T's "Unix", we will describe them generically as "*nix".'

tools for daily use. Stallman ends this talk by turning his back to the audience, donning a cloak and headdress, and then revolving back to face the crowd as the smiling St IGNUcius. He then begins to sing the free software song:

> Join us now and share the software;
> You'll be free, hackers, you'll be free.
> Join us now and share the software;
> You'll be free, hackers, you'll be free…[62]

FIGURE 7 STALLMAN AS ST IGNUCIUS. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

'I am St. IGNUcius of the Church of Emacs and I bless your computer, my child. Long may you run.' ~ St. IGNUcius on an AMD64. This text is performed by Richard Stallman where in this act it he discusses his accouterments, 'That is no computer disk, that is my halo — but it was a disk platter in a former life. No information is available

---

62 Richard Stallman website, viewed 12 December 2013, < http://www.gnu.org/music/free-software-song.html>.

about what kind of computer it came from or what data was stored on it. However, you can rest assured that no non-free software is readable from it today'.[63]

This humorous St IGNUcius performance by Stallman (as pictured in Figure 7) usually concludes the serious part of his lecture concerning how the GNU operating system developed, and how it is typically used together with the Linux kernel. Stallman seems to have an alter ego, not just as seen in his transformation into St IGNUcius, but also in the very manner he conducts himself; he imbues his words and actions with an authority all of his own, transforming himself into an agent provocateur working outside convention. The romantic notion of the outsider or rebel figure relates to many free software and free culture advocates such as Julian Assange, these I will briefly refer to again in Chapter 2.7 and 4.3 in relation to the artwork *"I am Googable" therefore "I AM"* (2013). The important implications for the purposes of this research is the playful *ludibrium* of Stallman's performance, and how this slots into the advocation of a free software code base which functions as a dynamic open repository (perhaps even a deep vault) for people (who know how) to extend upon it.[64]

Barbara Maria Stafford reflects upon the recurrent idea of the 'digital *magoi*' and their ability to be 'in direct contact with code' (Stafford 2008) which I will elaborate on in more detail below. Also, Florian Cramer refers to how 'Information as a code that executes into political action and into utopia existed before the Free Software movement. It was central to the 17th century educational utopias of Comenius…and co-author of the original 1614 Rosicrucian manifesto Fama Fraternitatis, Johannes Valentinus Andreae' (1998, p. 51). In context of the historical discussion outlined briefly in the Prologue, we can draw similarities between the free software movement and the philosophers of the protestant reformation who were protesting - among other things - the authority of the priestly hierarchy as the sole interface to God, and demanding that everybody should be able to read the bible (source code) in their own language in order to establish their own relationship with Him.

---

63 Richard Stallman website, St IGNUcius, Viewed 12 December 2013, <http://stallman.org/saint.html>.
64 Richard Stallman states 'Some people don't realize that Saint IGNUcius is Saint IGNUcius's way of not taking himself too seriously. Therefore, Warning: taking the Church of Emacs (or any church) too seriously may be hazardous to your health.' Viewed 10 September 2013, <http://stallman.org/saint.html>.

When source code is made available to me as an artist, it allows one to acknowledge and have respect for other people's work. What continues to be remarkable for me are the ongoing connections with theatre and play, even in the most computer science environments, such as a FSF lecture I attended during the writing of the exegesis, which contributed to the development of the key concept performance of code. It is vital to share not only the code, but also the histories, traditions and philosophies that play out through this collaborative field.

In principle, the tools of free software remove the stern barrier between software users and developers.[65] As the software's source code is made available for users to modify and extend, it becomes very open to idiosyncratic configurations in a process often termed 'forking' (in version control systems such as GIThub, a shared code repository).[66] However, Jaron Lanier contests:

> An honest empiricist must conclude that while the open approach has been able to create lovely polished copies, it hasn't been so good at creating notable originals. Even though the open-source movement has a stinging counter cultural rhetoric, it has in practice been a conservative force (2010, p. 125).

While the point of Lanier is accurate, what he neglects to take into account is how the movement's innovation has flourished elsewhere as a social and economic process. Although these propositions are radical, in practice Free Software and Open Source are not entirely progressive movements, as always, there is social stratification of class, gender and race to navigate.

With its eclectic combination of earnestness and missionary zeal, Stallman's act is the unconventional manifestation of a philosophical connection between theatre and the abstract, of techno-centrism and often intangible nature of software development. Of Stallman's GNU Manifesto, Aymeric Mansoux writes 'Looking at the text itself, we can see that the tone and the writing style used by Stallman make the GNU Manifesto

---

65 I write this in principle, because I perceive that here applies a very crucial issue of technical entitlement. Matthew Fuller discusses this very fact 'Free Software is too internalist. The relation between its users and its developers is so isomorphic that there is extreme difficulty in breaking out of that productive but constricted circle.' (2004, p. 25). Also, for a discussion about gender and access to software development opportunities see, Mauro-Flude, Nancy (2006).

66 GitHub supports collaborative software development and is a code repository. Viewed 15 December 2013, <https://hithub.com>.

closer to an art manifesto, than to yet another programmer's rant or technical guideline' (Mansoux 2011). He explains 'the way in which the legal system has had to deal with collaboration in its management of difference within the aesthetic and information economy is suggestive of a path applicable to other new and immaterial forms of production', Aymeric Mansoux's text 'My Lawyer is an Artist' (2011) articulates a concise position for the artistic decision to choose an alternative to standard copyright and licenses for artwork. The individual that gave his or her name to a discovery did not create or discover it all *ex nihilo*; rather, they were the one who tied the final knot, or who patched together many separate strands. Take, for instance, the source code that contributes to a larger repository of knowledge for someone to extend and tweak to their personal inclination.

Authorship and acknowledgement of prior art is not new, but has only been brought to prominence through the twentieth century corporatization of *techné* (creative industries).[67] Even if we wormhole back in time to the publication of the first 'machine books', the necessity for idiosyncratic custom builds was discussed in the seventeenth century. Early 'how to' manuals, or 'machine books' emphasise the 'inclusive' activities of the machines as explained by the ingenuous engineer, Heinrich Zeising for the general social body:

> The hands point not to the machine as a whole but into the machine's interior, thus emphasizing and explaining the technical apparatus. This pointing gesture…collapses the role of the viewer in the picture with that of the viewer in front of the picture: "I hope to please every refined person who looks carefully at these machines and reads their principles and properties. The gentle reader is truly considered… the most blissful person since he can benefit from these inventions for his own purpose with ease and free from worries"(Lazardzig 2008, and Zeising cited in Lazardzig 2008, p. 158).

Here we see how the seventeenth century engineer Zeising thinks it is worthwhile to have a Read/Write mode. That is, to able to acknowledge, and then copy, an invention and in so doing, gain an understanding of how its creator thought and felt, while always bringing in one's own idiosyncrasies and vision, in the understanding that all

---

67 The discussion of where people draw the line in acknowledging technical contributions to an artwork is also a pertinent topic here. For instance, designers or artists who never acknowledge coders' contributions.

these efforts are related and have a larger common purpose. We are always faced with the problem of getting on with our own necessary processes of self-discovery, which, for regular users of computers, should also entail finding out how operating systems work, and how to discover a computer's internal system, language and power.

The GNU/Linux Free Software Foundation campaigns for computer users' freedom to cooperate and control their own computing conduct. There is an argument that open source software principles of 'freedom of information' and 'universal interoperability of systems' (open standards) are more valued than the principle of 'knowledge sharing' passionately emphasised by the Free Software Foundation. When the source code used to write software is not only copyrighted, but also closed, a problematic situation arises because someone may be unable to adjust the software to his or her needs. The dilemma is not that it is proprietary software (closed to the source) being used to program the computer (some proprietary applications are open source and cost money) it is rather an ethical, and arguably, a spiritual issue.[68]

2.3 Live Coding

A kindred practice – which is about ideas rather than artifacts and with which the artworks in the thesis align – is the practice of 'live coding'. Live coding is a contemporary computer art form that manifests as performances which include 'on the fly' programming. The sub-genre of live coding is related but distinct from the forms of performance promoted in this exegesis, and which is discussed further in *The Intimacy of the Command Line* (Chapter 4.1), where two artworks have elements of live code performed; this could be seen as related to (but more accurately as sharing parallels with) this movement. Alex McLean (2011) has both described and coined the Live Coding genre:

> The work is not generated by a finished program, but through its journey of
> development from nothing to a complex algorithm, generating continuously

---

68 The open source software principles of 'freedom of information' and 'universal interoperability of systems' (open standards) is more valued than the principle of 'knowledge sharing' highlighted by the Free Software Foundation. The former includes the latter, but the latter does not necessarily include the former. However, I would like to leave aside the pedagogical and political debate for now: an overview, discussion and appraisal upon art and free/open source software projects (and critique about these computer sub-cultures and discourses by programmers, designers and artists) can be found in the publication *Floss and Art* (2010) Mansoux, A & de Valk, M (ed.s).

changing musical or visual form along the way...hands-on human involvement

is essential to the development of a piece (2011, p. 130).

Although the work in this exegesis does feature elements of live code, the lines of code being executed in a hands-on manner during the performance are not entirely constructed live; although there are elements of improvisation, these are also structured through a 'theatrical script'.[69] This constituent is demonstrated in the artwork *Error_in_Time()* (discussed in detail in Chapter 4). In this artwork/performance, text is parsed, and pre-existing text is appropriated in order to generate new textual output along with the live component. The dramatic tension is brought about by the controlled timing of the execution of action (typing and gesture) within the work, rather than algorithms of sound as a predominant output. That is, the Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekte* (the effect of making strange) is emphasized by the performer who is theatrically performing with a machine, and the dramaturgy of the executed script - or the rhythm of the typing on an amplified computer keyboard - is more prominent, whereas the algorithmic processes in the works are secondary.

In contrast, the live code community focuses on algorithmic execution. They explore the meaning of interactivity and the relationship between the performer and emerging technologies of real time performance, as well as the contexts that surround it. The live coder rarely acknowledges the audience throughout the performance, often concentrating on creating sound and visual output, and maintaining and modifying an algorithm in real-time. However, some live coders do at times comment on the forms they use in the performing act in the sleight-of-hand geeky humour in coded comments. Thor Magnusson acknowledges:

> Live coding is hard to define. I see it as a technique, and at some point in
> the future the term will dissolve, as it will become a natural tool to pick up
> from the toolbox of compositional and performance techniques.[70]

And perhaps the live coding genre will become a tool, a performance convention, like the formal elements of *Gestus* have become theatrical techniques for makers. The Brechtian formal elements of *Gestus* (the paradox of showing) are met in the live

---

69 See Appendix 9 for theatre script of *Error_in_Time()*.
70 Magnusson, Thor 2013, email LiveCode mail list, 14 August 2013 20:38, <th.list@gmail.com>.

coding genre by showing the code generating the music. Brecht writes, 'This means, from the aesthetic point of view, that the actor's social gest becomes particularly important.' (1964, p. 86). The audience awareness of the code is privileged over a confining totalitarian identity, where art is a mirror for reality.

The live coding community is a vibrant community connected online through a mailing list and in the real world via physical meet ups and performance events. Key players in the emergent genre continually discuss the constraints and definitions of 'live code', a term that navigates and negotiates its meaning amongst the participants who contribute. In a pertinent post by Julian Rohrhuber that discusses the particular collusion of 'live public thought' and 'display algorithms' (in which the works that make up this thesis identify with the former, but not with the latter so-called 'bling thought'), it is asserted that:

> …live coding is public thought…Eventually though, live coding is thought
> being delegated to algorithms and becomes bling thought, and algorithms affect
> thought, so it changes direction…Then live coding may be the experimentation
> with what can still be called a thought or what can be recognised as thought
> (i.e. what is transmissible)' (16 August, 2013).[71]

The live coders (or electronic musicians) who use instrumental 'algorithms to reason about sound' are engaging with a form of anti-content. Instead of the realm of narrative and the anecdotal, they focus on the transmission of the media and the live flow of control: how to break down a problem systematically and then compose an algorithmic solution on the fly; how to generate open-ended algorithms that affect the sound or visual frequency, amplitude and duration of media; and regularly have knowledge of other various types of data-bending modulations.[72]

It is common in the genre of live coding that performers usually sit at their 'laptop' facing the audience under a video projection that reveals the contents of their screens. At times, live coders do incorporate sophisticated Human Interface Devices (HIDs) that have the potential to allow for a larger range of physical gestures based away from

---

71 Rohrhuber, Julian 2013, email LiveCode mail list, cited 15 August 2013 06:40,
<julian.rohrhuber@musikundmedien.net >.
72 For a comprehensive reading of algorithms and the genre of live coding see, Geoff Cox and Alex McLean,
(2012).

the keyboard and screen rather than be restricted by the regular hand tweaking of a computer keyboard, although it is rare to see the theatrical potential explored.[73] Playful with technical knowledge, live coders exhibit deterministic control over their embodied performance. The allowance of chance elements transpiring from their media (files, scripts and patches) is improvised, but in the confined parameters of algorithm prescription and process. For instance, changing the function mapping while it is looping allows for a buildup of several layers of sound to play simultaneously. Live coders often do not wear any make-up or elaborate costumes, and simply perform as 'themselves'.

2.4 A Guest + A Host (+ 127.0.0.1 | local host) = Ghost

This research does not travel down the well-traversed road that Duchamp paved, nor does it further explore his relationships to Dada and Surrealism, whose activities undeniably stamped themselves into the cannon of twentieth-century autonomous art. However, there is one of Duchamp's works that specifically relates to this thesis in regard to the performance of code and aesthetics of transmission.

Duchamp's *A Guest + A Host = A Ghost* is chosen here because of its connection to theurgical performance, for its emphasis on the 'post optical' (Arns 2004) and the paraphernalia associated with haptic chewy caramel with which the artwork exists.

A Guest + A Host = A Ghost
Marcel DUCHAMP

This text by Marcel Duchamp appeared in black print on green tinfoil wrapped around chewy caramel candy (see Figure 8). Duchamp handed out his candy by standing at the entrance of William Copley's show at Galerie Nina Dausset during its official opening in Paris in 1953.[74]

The chewy caramel as symbolic object migrates across the dividing line that separates artist and audience, and its edible form has haptic repercussions for what the art object means. In this sense, *A Guest + A Host = A Ghost* performs a function with an equation,

---

73 This can be seen in a performance setup that combines HIDs for gestural control with livecoding mapping these controls - an example is Marije Ballman's performance, cited December 30, 2014, <https://vimeo.com/80685324>.
74 Naumann, F (1999).

which is in a sense also code: a cryptic invitation wrapped up in cyphers. Such codes are not always interpreted and, in this case, inspire contemplation by the audience, rather than a deliberately obscured work functioning as cypher for any overt political reason.

FIGURE 8 *A GUEST + A HOST = A GHOST* DUCHAMP. THE REMAINING WRAPPER, BLACK PRINT ON GREEN TINFOIL ONCE WRAPPED AROUND A CANDY. © 2000 SUCCESSION MARCEL DUCHAMP, ARS, N.Y./ADAGP, PARIS.

It is an obscure work and very little commentary or explication has been devoted to this piece (Gould 2000). Duchamp placed an emphasis on the underlying speculative performance of the object in the context of the art gallery. However, this is clearly a word play or performance of code. According to Gould (2000) it is arguably his most profound work in regard to the 'reader'. The performance of code in the artwork gives another way of thinking of the host, guest, ghost and non-guest continuum; Duchamp twists the roles of the reception, sender and receiver. The host invites in the guest and non-guest, while an uninvited presence (ghost) comes through the 'backdoor' (a hacker perhaps, or in this case, the candy object as artwork) and travels in the pocket of the unsuspecting audience, sender and receiver. In this way, it subverts the cultural paradigm of the performer, audience, user and programmer continuum. Further, the slippage of character from guest to host to ghost is an interesting play on agency (which refers to the Holy Trinity). By obtaining a 'host' during a Catholic ritual of communion, one achieves closer contact with the source, the Holy Ghost.

Therefore, this Duchamp-created artwork is a formulation of instruction, a simple equation expressed in an intelligible language, which is executed in accordance with logical and conditional patterns. But once interpreted and executed, does it give rise to a definite result? Or was this behaviour a sumptuous play, a performance of code that took pleasure in the existence of an object of candy as paraphernalia?

Perhaps if Duchamp were with us today, he would add a further equation:

A Guest + A Host (+ 127.0.0.1 | local host) = Ghost.

In GNU/Linux (*nix) terms, in this equation I extend the artwork and pipe the Ghost through 127.0.0.1, also referred to as 'localhost', an IP address. A webserver is a process that requires an IP address and runs on a personal computer. A common saying in hacker culture is 'There's no place like 127.0.0.1' (home)',[75] a direct play on the chant, 'there is no place like home' (an incantation prayer by the *Wizard of Oz* character Dorothy, who, by clicking her heels together three times and repeating these magic words, executes a code - a speech act - and is magically transported home to safety).[76]

2.5 New *Digital Magoi*: Hacking and Making

Since the time of the Romantics, it has been a common practice to seek beauty in the sublime (the awe and majesty of an environment), and these notions in contemporary art are still omnipresent, according to Cramer 'technological may arbitrarily take the place of Kant's natural beauty…we are no longer overwhelmed by mountain ranges or thunderstorms, but for example by the pervasiveness of computing (2013, p.119)'. On the other hand programmers who practice and are informed by the languages of information technology are only rarely connected to contemporary art or artists, and in most cases aesthetic concerns are seen as an anathema.[77] In their discussion of

---

75 For instance, this subculture shows many of their favourite codes via t-shirts fashion featuring witty idioms as witnessed here on the *ThinkGeek Merchandise* site, viewed 18 December 2013, <http://www.thinkgeek.com/product/5d6a/>.

76 As represented in L. Frank Baum's 1900 novel and MGM's 1939 motion picture *Wizard of Oz* starring Judy Garland.

77 See Appendix 7.4 for an example of an email, displaying a challenged computer science perspective of playful experiential prototyping models.

'interface aesthetics', Andersen and Pold equate the sublime with navigating the depths below the visual surface:

> …we need to get past the classic Kantian dichotomy of the beautiful versus the sublime. Digital artistic practice has often been biased towards the latter, but we need to address all the dimensions of interfaces and not stay on the visual surface (2011, p. 13).

In relation to people who unmask the 'visual tricks and those who perpetuate image-mongering', Barbara Maria Stafford discusses this historical conundrum between the black box duping apparatus and specious expertise:

> This coexistence of competing, technically inflected visual environments and rituals…optical instruments as devices - in the double sense of duping apparatus and specious expertise - is still with us today. Perhaps it is nowhere more evident than with the new *digital magoi* who alone can go below or above the interface to achieve the experience of "real presence" with the codes, i.e., be in direct contact with code (2008, p. 148).

At the same time, Stafford locates the 'new *digital magoi*' and proposes that their practices may mediate even further these distinct, but co-constituting oppositions. It is commonly assumed that the Reformation valued the authority of the word over a culture of showing.[78] Stafford (2008) recognises those who know how to go above and below the interface (or code) as '*digital magoi*' who might mediate or heal this fracture or ghettoized knowledge area.

This situation is changing; one could say the first *Maker Faire* (2005) in San Francisco was a moment of explicit self-recognition. For the popular growth of the 'maker' culture, this may have acted to crystallise issues, especially in regard to the enthusiasm for a Hacker/DIY aesthetic. But perhaps this does not really mark a starting point for that community, especially considering that a decade prior, several large-scale popular computer subculture festivals and hacker meet-ups occurred in Europe and in the USA. Examples include the first *Hackers Conference* in California (1984), the first *Computer Chaos Club Congress* in Germany (1984), *Summercon* held in St Louis, Missouri

---

78 Semiotician Umberto Eco (1994) wrote a playful article on this very topic in his column of an Italian newsweekly.

(1987), and the first *Galactic Hacker Party* (1989) presented by a not-for-profit organization that holds a quadrennial Dutch hacker convention ever since.[79] The latter is a weeklong camping carnival where formal presentations and hands-on learning workshops take place; it is largely attended by an international community of hackers and security experts and has been a large informant upon the perspective of this research.

Access to the pedagogy of programming has become freely available for those who would usually not even consider (or otherwise have the ability) to complete a traditional Computer Science education. Universities such as Harvard and Stanford teach free online courses in computer programming, which in turn has engendered an invigorated attitude to experiential art making and related computer sub-cultures.[80] The methodologies of experiential prototyping that these communities adopt is described and elaborated upon in Chapter 3. What also needs mentioning here are older avant-garde movements such as Dada, Political Cabaret, Mail Art, Fluxus, Squat Theatre, Situationism, Anti-Theatre and Experimental Theatre, all of which form yet another historical pretext and some of which will be depicted in this chapter.

Sites of convergence and congregation still operate for artists who engage with emergent art forms and contemporary digital culture, and who consider the pedagogy of technological democratization as still rare within the contemporary art field. Pointing out this blind spot, Florian Cramer writes:

> …[the] aesthetic, Pythagorean beauty ideals that governed computer science from Knuth to fractal geometry, the 'art and beauty' of the white hat hacker culture described by Steven Levy, and the human/computer interface designs of mainstream, high tech media lab arts…this dialectics helped to stabilize and reinforce 'media art' as a separate art system based, with a few exceptions, on pre-modernist aesthetic parameters. The contemporary (visual) art system is,

---

79 There is also Homebrew D.I.Y computer history influenced by the 1974 Ted Nelson book *Computer Lib* that is considered the first book about the personal computer (which was eventually packaged with *Dream Machines*, another book by the same author).

80 See online free courses that were originally spearhead by MIT and Processing in the dissemination of programming skills, such as Harvard University 'Introduction to Computer Science' viewed October 20 2013, <https://www.edx.org/course/harvardx/harvardx-cs50x-introduction-computer-1022 http://code.org>, Standford CS101, viewed October 20 2013, <https://www.coursera.org/course/cs101>, which provides access to basic commuter science for a zero-prior-experience audience. This is part of a broader Open access movement, viewed October 20 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Access>.

Although I will define the genres discussed, a further elucidation can be located in the Glossary Chapter 0.

unlike electronic art, music or film, no longer defined by a medium or

occupation with media, but first of all by its own system (2013, p. 117).

For the connection between artists, programmers, and the 'new *digital magoi*' (Stafford 2008) to occur, a framing and contextualisation must take place for these distinct knowledge domains to be able to interface. An example of such is the post-digital performance event initiated and curated by myself, the researcher. This event, called 'Networked Art Forms and Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits (NAF:TMFC)' showcased artists, programmers and thinkers (whose work responds to the emergent conditions of a networked world, a realm increasingly transmitted through fiber and code) who came together in Hobart, Australia. Presented at Contemporary Art Tasmania, on radio and on the Internet, the event was comprised of a series of events inspired by computer culture. It was described as a 'technological coven disguised as an art project' by a local Hobart street press arts reviewer.[81] Another summary by a contemporary art reviewer who attended NAF:TMFC concluded 'Initially I really felt that the aspiration for accessibility and empowerment wasn't available to me and I would still argue that many will be locked out by the cult-like feel of the event' (Abel, 2013). On the contrary, in actuality the project was well attended (being the most visited gallery event of the year)[82] and considered a success by the local participants because of ease-of-accessibility and ready induction into the mysterious world of computer subcultures. The local attendees participated fully in the programme of events that spanned the entire month of June 2013.[83] According to Lewis, 'all positions have political consequences'; in order to inevitably escape the confinement of disciplines within received genres and taxonomies, there will always be a need for events that open up inaccessible fields (and the desired acknowledgment of such). Lewis highlights the 'continuing struggle over generic and general categories, with full understanding that all positions have political consequences.' (1995, p. 224). Hence, the central motivation for this NAF:TMFC event (and also this study) is to present and survey emergent contemporary art practices, especially those that endeavor to expand technical disciplines from the confinement of the received sub-genres of art.

---

81 Overview of NAF:TMFC, 2013, *WARP Magazine* April 2013, p. 15.
82 Correspondence with the communications and marketing personnel at Contemporary Art Tasmania, Hewitt, S 2014, email 15 January 2014, <sara@contemporaryarttasmania.com >.
83 For a full rundown of events, performances, presentations, workshop documentation and participant reports please see Network *Networked Art Forms and Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits* (NAF:TMFC) viewed 15 January 2014, <http://tacticalmagick.net>, Also see Appendix 7.3 for promotion material including the programme and concept outline.

For example, there is an array of related sub-genres of art constructed from, or existing alongside, the medium of performance and software, such as: contemporary performance, experimental theatre, post-dramatic theatre, live art, software art, code art, generative art, mail art, digital art, computer art, game art, interactive art, new media, electronic art, telematic art, and algorithmic art.

This discussion will be limited to some of these fields in relation to contemporary art and the performing arts, where it is acknowledged that the category of 'art' and 'theatre' has expanded to include 'performance' and subsequently 'postdramatic theatre'. These analytical categories allow the inclusion and examination of a larger cultural paradigm than the terms 'theatre', 'dance', 'cabaret', 'live art', 'performance art', 'contemporary art', 'fine art', or even 'ritual' permit. Performance also has many meanings; for example, it can refer to acting out in everyday life.

2.6 Critical Engineering

> *Men In Grey* emerge as a manifestation of Network Anxiety, a fearful apparition in a time of government wiretaps, Facebook spies, Google caches, Internet filters and mandatory ISP logging.[84]
>
> -Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev (2010)

Closely aligned with the position developed in this research is that of the self-titled 'Critical Engineers' Julian Oliver, Gordan Savičić and Danja Vasiliev. The distinguishing character of their work comprises computer networks through which human beings participate and interact. These contemporaries have a manifesto titled 'The Critical Engineering Manifesto (2010)'. Tenets 6 and 7 relate to how performative actions offer an insight into and elaboration of aesthetic processes, and the effect of technical provocations that question the cultural chasm between the production and consumption of technology:

> 6. The Critical Engineer expands 'machine' to describe interrelationships encompassing devices, bodies, agents, forces and networks.
>
> 7. The Critical Engineer observes the space between the production and consumption of technology. Acting rapidly to changes in this space, the Critical Engineer serves to expose moments of imbalance and deception.[85]

---

84 *Men in Grey* (2010) project website, viewed October 20 2013, <http://www.meningrey.net/rfc14.html>.

FIGURE 9 *MEN IN GREY* PROMOTION IMAGE. PHOTO: JULIAN OLIVER, DANJA VASILIEV.

Men in Grey (2010) is a dystopian artwork by Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev. Figures 9 and 10 display two anonymous figures in grey suits who carry briefcases with an embedded screen. These contain computing hardware and software built and programmed to exploit wireless network traffic in order to reflect it back to the public, revealing how our assumed data exchanges in the form of private communication are not as secret as we would expect. In their performance, the faceless men dressed in grey provoked suspicion as they wandered through public cafes whilst mining the data from the ether.

The colour grey - in many cases – is associated with a notion of impartiality. In hacker culture, there are ways to describe socio-political viewpoints that incorporate colour; for instance, white hats and black hats are not dissimilar to how black witches and white witches are described in faërie tales. Black is viewed as the symbol of using power for personal gain or 'evil', whereas white is benevolent, ethical or 'good'. In traditions of magic, practices of 'Grey Magic' are usually invocations carried out with beneficial intentions, but without the permission and/or understanding of the receiver. Likewise, the grey hacker mediates and operates in the interstices (between these colour variations). The most commonly encountered scenario is the grey hat hacker that will exploit or point to a 'hole' or 'back door' in the system, gaining access without permission and informing the targeted organisation after the fact, often by via a report outlining strategies that will fix the 'problem'. In regards to 'grey media', Fuller &

---

85 Critical Engineering Working Group, viewed October 20 2013, < http://criticalengineering.org>.

Goffey discuss its vastness, and how 'it no longer represents simply interpretation, miscomprehension, inaccuracy, or at best an intuitive fuzziness, but becomes productive…fundamentally leak(s) beyond the first ranks of technicians who nurtured the mainframes, then out of the boxes onto the desktop, then into billions of embedded gadgets and sensors and thus into the world.' (2012, p. 121). This idea about gaining access to a closed system through a 'backdoor' is taken up in the following thesis artworks: *ism | breath | she | who | with | I, Computer is Dreaming* and *Self-Portrait* (discussed further in Chapter 4).

Men in Grey is an important work in the context of this project because it points to a developing awareness (rather than identity formation) of an artistic and performative understanding of hardware and software. The 'Internet is considered as a cultural apparatus' (Cramer 2011, p. 12) from where the action of the artwork is generated, rather than as a platform for the presentation of an existing work, or simple channel for self-promotion. Cramer discusses the dilemma of how 'fine artists who create…white-cube installation works are the most avid networkers via blogs and social networks, more so than many net and media artists with their frequent reservations about these systems.' (2011, p. 12). It could be argued that some of these practitioners are enculturated in the previous generation of technologies such as mailing lists and because most early adopters are reluctant to shift to newer forms of social communication. However, by claiming that visual artists have a propensity to up take new technologies that are merely an 'extension of consumer fetishism', without necessity or critical application of the medium to the content of their work, Cramer is asserting that for 'white cube fine artists', often 'the look' is valued over process or concept. The crucial concept of the work *Men in Grey* is 'a manifestation of Network Anxiety' via a critical parade of code on the embedded screen as data emerges through the network. Such data (internet traffic) is visualised through access to concealed networks. The primary purpose is to open the black box as a method of gaining access to events that are not physically observable, and revealing them as contingent and hackable, a process reminiscent of scrying.
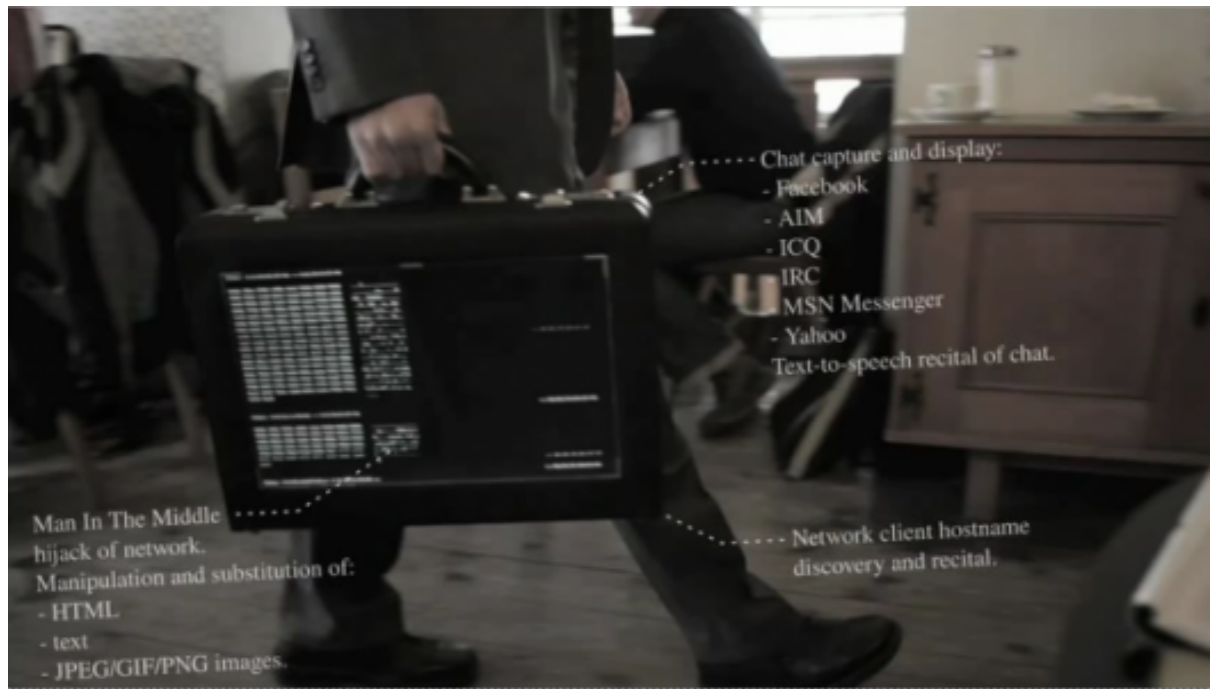
FIGURE 10 *MEN IN GREY* (2010) [WIRELESS TRAFFIC SCREEN DISPLAY] STILL FROM MEN IN GREY VIDEO. 'H1606: FIELD OFFICER PROTOCOL'. PHOTO: JULIAN OLIVER, DANJA VASILIEV.

The practice of scrying is often described as a method of predicting the future that's most commonly done with a smooth 'screen-like' surface such as a crystal ball; readings of such screens allows access to concealed information. Arguably, *Men in Grey*'s 2010 data visualisation performance anticipated the recent (2013) NSA PRISM revelations concerning eavesdropping. The satirical and marvelous that are seen in dystopian theatrical modes of art such as *Men in Grey* are also described in the work of Pina Bausch and Valeska Gert (and elaborated upon in the artworks in Chapter 4).

It may well be an over-simplification to claim that this research inserts the black box (*tenebrae*) of the computer terminal and of the theatre into the white cube (*lux*) of the gallery space, but it is a useful way to discuss the space, or void, that this research claims. It is proposed that this is to be found in the performance of code playing havoc with signification by inverting the 'code' in the performative act, and creating a void which carries its meaning to other performative places - places which as yet can only be imagined. In the case of the performance of code and the dramaturgy and aesthetics of transmission, it nominates a realm which lies under the shadow of code, but is still, for the moment, outside of codification.

2.7 Aesthetics of Transmission

> Nothing is impossible to those who see the invisible.
> -Nova Peris (2013)[86]

Transmission (as defined technically) is signal transference from (and to) one, or many, locations by means of signals (light, electrical) or radio waves. That being so, the aesthetics of transmission backgrounds a technical definition of transmission, and foregrounds emergent forms which are not premised on the visual, but are nonetheless often visually engaging. For this reason, Arns explains that '[t]he age of transparency is marked by a dual structure of the panoptical and post-optical' (2011, p. 260). An aesthetics of transmission partakes in the verve beyond light, waves or electrical data as it suggests a 'post optical' stance; this stance lies beyond and through the primary sense spectrums (visual or aural), but resides in the actual unfolding experience of such signals as indicators of the haptic (secondary senses).

We are always shifting our perception and action to switch from one mode to another. Meanings which are themselves often constituted and mediated in transmission are articulated through the nexus of perception and language and are never the same as the initial embodied experience. Media theorist Petra Loeffler stated 'Perception, in my point of view, is a relay, and media can intensify the permeability of it. No more, no less.'[87] The use of relay in transmission as an electro mechanical device or transistor is of a different order to 'relaying' a message. A relay is a switch that connects two circuits – it does not necessarily transmit a message. For instance, to chant a song out at sea, relay a message in a bottle, beat on a drum or a transmit a smoke signal is in turn a different mode of activity than that performed by an electronic relay.

Like relay and code, transmission is a broadly used term. Its usage derives from the early seventeenth century and a merging of Latin *transmissio*: *trans*, meaning across or beyond; and *mission* is from the word *mittere* (to send) which originated in the mid-sixteenth century and denotes the sending of the Holy Spirit into the world).[88] One of

---

86 A quote from the maiden speech by Nova Peris (2013) the first Aboriginal woman elected to the federal parliament of Australia.

87 Lovink, Geert, 2013 interview.

88 *Oxford English Dictionary*, Online, viewed 10 December 2013, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/mission>.

the motivations for developing an aesthetics of transmission is the desire to push the consciousness of the artist and audience deeper into the various fields of code and sensory perception. The spread of the communicative field is never wholly complete, one cannot predict every instance, nor control the production and reception of every variable in the sending of a code or a signal, nor in the multitude of ways that they may traipse. Therefore, the artworks produced in this thesis are situated at the very horizons of perception, where meaning may flicker on and off like a relay switch or an interrupted signal transmission.[89] It is an aesthetic that accommodates artworks that deliberately explore an excess of transmission, a transmission gone awry (that is dissonant and does not reach its target), or a transmission that moves and *shapeshifts* through a series of states to reach its receiver.

A well-known model of communication - developed in 1948 by mathematicians and information technologists Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver - was concerned with the transmission of information.[90] In Shannon's schema, information is a physical concept – an expression of ordering that emerges from thermodynamics. This is an idea that the linguists of the time appropriated and applied to human communication models closely aligned with cognitive behavioural sciences. A similarity with communication is the concept of bandwidth that arises out of information theory, which gives us some measure of how much information can be transmitted over a channel. The combined technical notion and holistic awareness of the fluidity of electronic devices and their cultural interactions with natural and artificial design is known as 'Hertzian space' – a term coined by Anthony Dunne (2001). Arguably, when experiencing an artwork, the form tells us almost nothing about content, but does influence the form that the content might take. This entanglement of experience is based on an aesthetics of transmission, through the routing, tunneling and reception of signals. In the wake of the spiritual vacuum of materialism, these aesthetics are

---

89 In *Framing Art*, Michael Carter discusses 'the idea of coding is a direct reply to those who would turn Art making into an ineffable mystery in three ways. Firstly coding is largely, but not wholly, an unconscious process; secondly coding is a rule-governed activity; finally conscious choice can and does operate at certain levels of coding, but this in no way lessens the coded nature of what is being done…the processes of coding need not be fully known by each individual producer for them to be operative…Thus an Art work may situate itself at the very horizons of consciousness, that point where meaning is flickering (1993, p. 70)'.
90 *A Mathematical Theory of Communication* by Claude Shannon is hosted at Bell Labs, viewed 12 December 2013, <http://cm.bell-labs.com/cm/ms/what/shannonday/shannon1948.pdf> which was later joined by Warren Weaver to make a more comprehensive edition.

susceptible to the realm in which transmissions operate.[91] This method of acknowledging and working with such complexity reflects instead a new materialist view of life itself which, according to Rosi Braidotti, 'marks a shift away from anthropocentrism, in favour of a new emphasis on the mutual interdependence of material, biocultural, and symbolic forces…a sort of biocentered egalitarianism, forcing a reconsideration of the concept of subjectivity' (2010, pp. 203-204). An aesthetics of transmission assumes that a perfectly pure transmission is imaginary, and instead reverberates in the realm of the metaphysical and even make-believe intermediaries existing between worlds and which serve indescribable results. The position here is to understand both the complexities of the arcane world, which includes omens and interpretations of forces, vibrations and natural elements, and the post-industrial realm where access to the ether is prescribed and commoditised. The airwaves have been partitioned, as if the very ether, the air we breathe, was not already public. For instance, portions of spectra are licensed differently in different countries, but there are a range of bands available for common usage – including 2.4GHz, which is used for WiFi and cordless phones, 5GHz is also available, as well as short-range FM, AM and long-distance short wave radio.

This research acknowledges a transmission to be many things other than a simple broadcast or merely a potential one-to-one message, as signals (echo and rebound) move through frequencies simultaneously. Without disputing its role as information, this thesis highlights how an aesthetics of transmission is concerned with what transpires when there is interference; glitches that happen in the flow of communication when transmitting, receiving and entwining apparently incongruent codes, sensibility and knowledge. Interference and glitches are not a result of the concept of clean and pure communication; instead these gaps, seams, scars and interference zones are access points with which to start an exchange. Erving Goffman (1959) sees the performance of self as the most essential frame to understand communication because it is our embodied self that is the one perceiving.[92] The point is

---

91 For instance, art theorist Michael Carter discusss how the arcane 'material /symbolic dividing lines had important repercussions for what the object meant. The use of gold leaf in religious icons added to the spiritual preciousness of such images, while the utilisation of the finest woods, the best yarns and the most precious jewels all contributed to the symbolic value surrounding the work' (1993, p.65).
92 Goffman wrote, 'What does seem to be required of the individual is that he learn enough pieces of expression to be able to 'fill in' and manage, more or less, any part that he is likely to be given (1959, p. 73).'

that indefinable transmission signals have the potential to be meaningful in and of themselves, as we tune in listening for the sound of our own kindred spirits, a sign meant for us. For instance, the hum of a computer could manifest as appearing along the pathway of sound and hearing (as momentarily that space contains your being). This appearing is not just about becoming visible, but is about tuning in to remote presences.

Philosophically there are problems when we confuse lower order phenomenon such as the switch with high order ones messages in terms of Gilbert Ryle (1949) research notably in his work *The Concept of Mind* there is a category error being committed. When we relate those to acts of perception by communication at a distance it becomes fraught - the signal is not a message per se. It also could be argued that a message ceases to exist if it is never received – as often a message is a consensual understanding that emerges from a striving for meaning between both parties. However, for some the signal and its incomprehensibility is not futile, for as Douglas Kahn has noted, noise is far from meaningless; in relation to Burroughs's three radios he asserts '[d]espite how "off-tuned" they were, they can never be less significant than a potential broadcast' (2001, p. 75), which suggest that perhaps this intention if just that, is an existential foundation of coming into being. Unsettled by the ripples in the ether issuing from metaphysical networks, or para-linguistic unseen behaviours, by taking up an aesthetics of transmission one is receptive to full experiences, and it is advocated that contemporary art should be considered within these sensory wavelengths as vivacious signals or presences that go awry and percolate into a vast unfulfilled cosmic interstellar space where creation flourishes for an infinite eternity. This notion is elaborated upon in *Awry Signals*, *Computer is Dreaming,* and Chapter 4 artworks.

2.8 Apotheosis of http://54.243.29.30/assange

Considering our analysis thus far - especially in regard to 'tuning in' in a 'post-optical' manner - what follows is an example of the apotheosis of an aesthetics of transmission in the account of an artwork by !Mediengruppe Bitnik (read: 'the not mediengruppe bitnik') titled «Delivery for Mr. Assange».
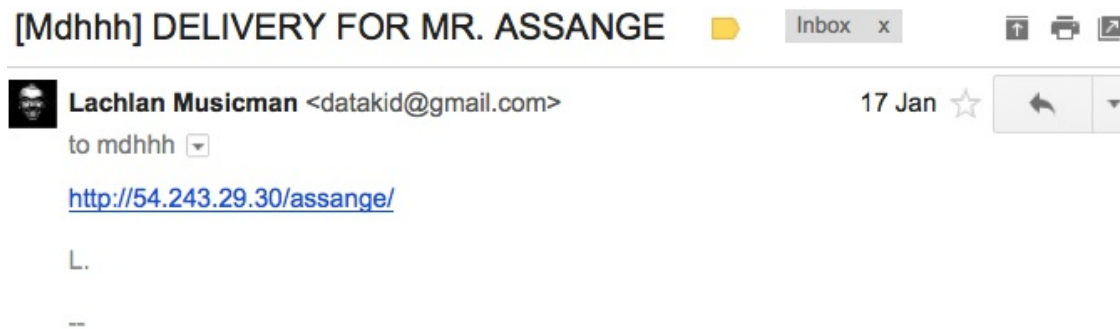
FIGURE 11 DETAIL OF EMAIL THAT ARRIVED IN MY INBOX. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Delivery for Mr. Assange was a 32-hour live telematic/mail art piece performed on the 16th and 17th of January 2013. A very simple URL was posted to the site http://54.243.29.30/assange (see Figure 11) with a subject header: 'Delivery for Mr. Assange'. Curious, I followed the URL to discover a live performance unfolding on the project website which displayed (every 10 seconds) images from a package travelling from the borough of Hackney which was addressed to Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian embassy in London. The package was a custom-built performance tool, consisting of a camera, an antenna and an embedded board, programmed for live mobile wireless broadcasting of digital images in real time. The networked performance was experienced alone in the researcher's home, together with a remote audience.
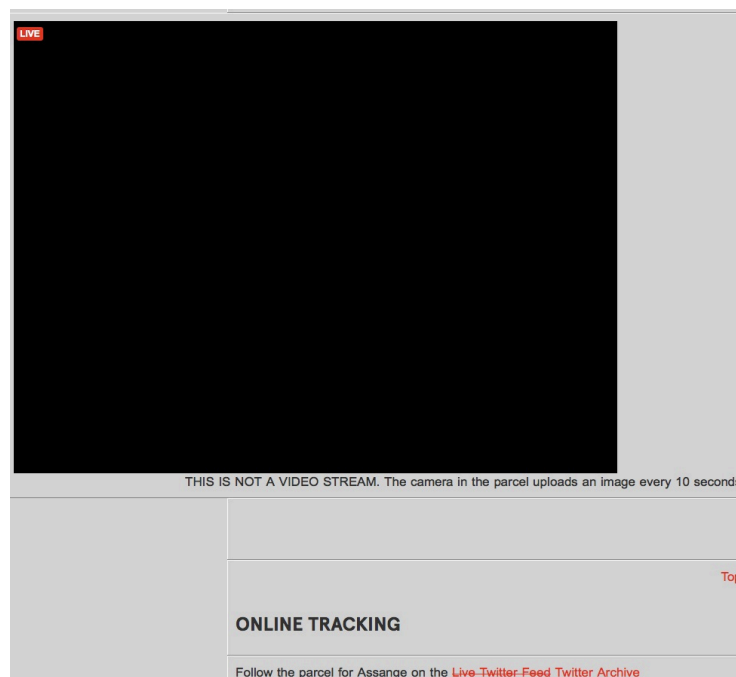

FIGURE 12 DETAIL OF BROWSER INTERFACE FOR «DELIVERY FOR MR. ASSANGE» PROJECT. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

It became clear that many others were also engaged in the durational artwork when following the group's Twitter handle (https://twitter.com/bitnk) and Twitter feed #Assange #Live #Bitnik it clearly stated at the top of the page, 'Follow the parcel for Assange on the Live Twitter feed' (see Figure 12).

Mail art historically emerged from the Dada and Fluxus movements, where artists wanted to propel artworks beyond the confines of the official system of the gallery.[93] As well as utilising the postal system, «Delivery for Mr. Assange» inhabits both these channels (the project website and the Twitter feed), where a conversation took place fostering a shared understanding of what was unfolding as the images were being uploaded to the project site from the parcel (as it travelled through the postal network).
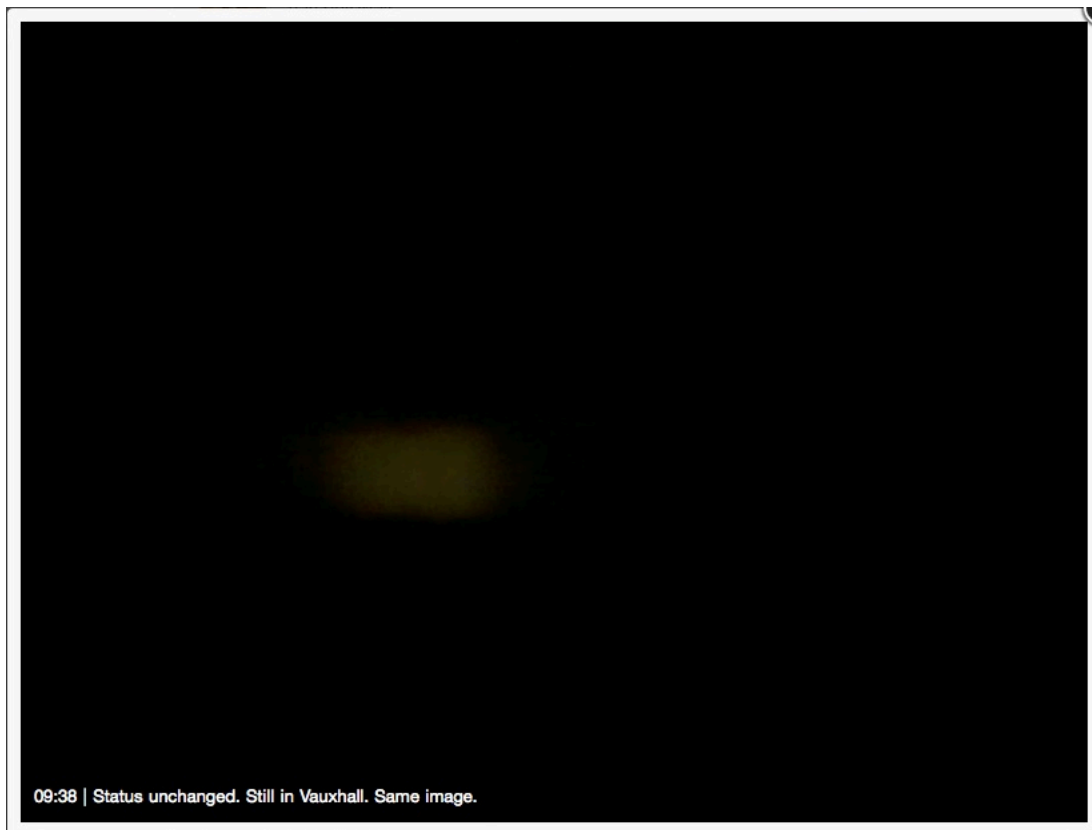

09:38 | Status unchanged. Still in Vauxhall. Same image.

FIGURE 13 STILL FROM THE TRAVELING PARCEL BY !MEDIENGRUPPE BITNIK ON ITS JOURNEY TO JULIAN ASSANGE. SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

93 See Welch, Chuck (1995).

With each webcast image shown as part of «Delivery for Mr. Assange», the anticipation mounted via a series of tableaux on which !Mediengruppe Bitnik would comment (and which adding to the dramatic situation) (see Figure 12). The images were not aiming to be flawlessly composed epic (or sublime) masterpieces, but instead their function was to capture and engage a network of people - and hence gather momentum – who were all traveling through a trajectory in space and time through momentary 10 second glimpses (in which aesthetics of transmission instead applies). A glitchy white noise picture or a black out (almost as if a pause) would add to the mounted tension of questions in the audience's mind such as: should the parcel get intercepted? Or: could this really reach Julian Assange in real time? The anticipation and suspicion of the momentary blackout in the next frame would be ambient and reveal in its abyss a fleck of light creeping in to the frame to show its passage, not unlike a conventional tenebrist application (Figure 13). Then, the next webcast would reveal a still life chair in a postal office (Figure 14), and as an audience member one would almost catch their breath in case the package had been intercepted.

FIGURE 14 STILL FROM THE TRAVELING PARCEL BY !MEDIENGRUPPE BITNIK AT THE POST OFFICE, ON ITS JOURNEY TO JULIAN ASSANGE. SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Various images and text updates continued as part of the performance. A short excerpt from the work is as follows:

> Black. No lights in the room. The parcel seems to be in one of the first anterooms of the embassy.
>
> Light again. Definitely inside some kind of box. #Assange #Bitnik #Mail_Art
>
> A blurred image, and some stripes. Red colour.
>
> Parcel is still inside bag. But bag has shifted slightly. #assange #mailart
>
> It seems parcel is covered with something. The light room in the room just went on & off. Parcel is still awaiting security check.
>
> Lights on! First view of a room in the embassy! #Bitnik #ASSANGE #LIVE
>
> Assange has received the parcel. #MAIL_ART

Postal Art is contagious #Assange #Live #Bitnik[94]

18:29 | More coming. Tiger.

FIGURE 15 STILL FROM THE TRAVELING PARCEL BY !MEDIENGRUPPE BITNIK WHICH ARRIVED AT THE EMBASSY LOCATION OF JULIAN ASSANGE, WHO THEN BEGINS PERFORMING WITH THE PLATFORM. SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

---

94 Status updates taken !Mediengruppe Bitnik Twitter handle, 16 and 17 January 2013, viewed 10 January 2014, <https://twitter.com/bitnk >.

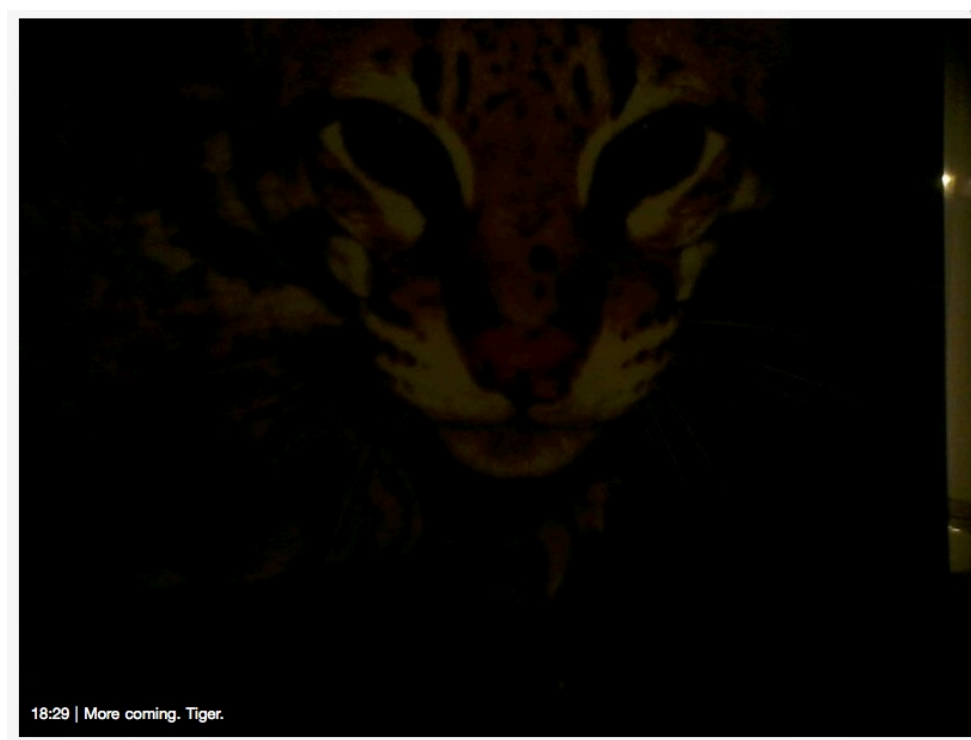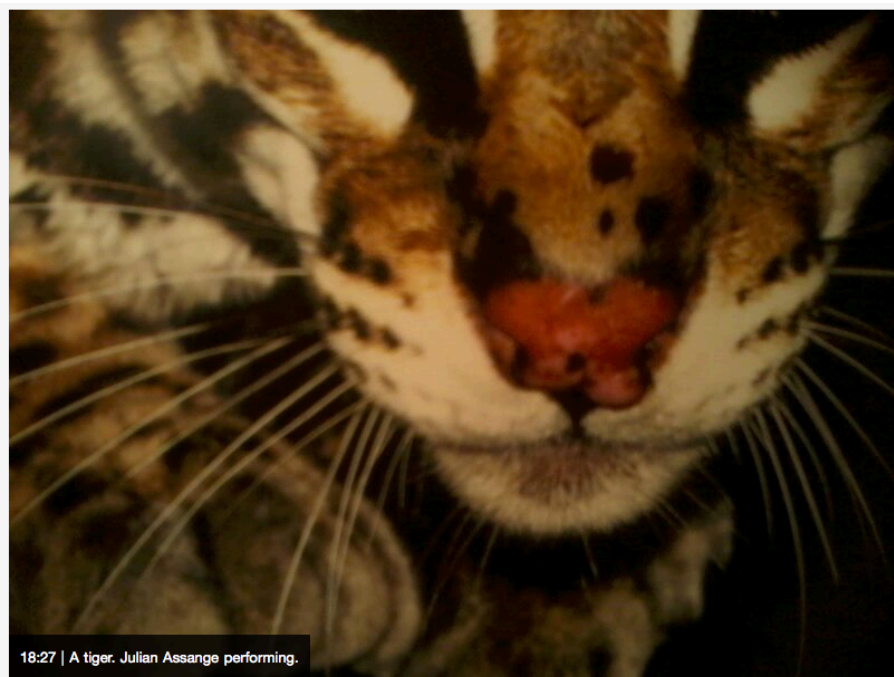18:27 | A tiger. Julian Assange performing.

FIGURE 16 STILL FROM THE TRAVELING PARCEL BY !MEDIENGRUPPE BITNIK WHICH ARRIVED AT THE EMBASSY LOCATION OF JULIAN ASSANGE, WHO THEN BEGINS PERFORMING WITH THE PLATFORM. SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

18:57 | Transparency for the state! Privacy for the rest of us!

FIGURE 17 STILL FROM THE TRAVELING PARCEL ARRIVED AT THE EMBASSY LOCATION OF JULIAN ASSANGE WHO BEGINS PERFORMING WITH THE WEB CAST EMBEDDED PLATFORM. SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

When the parcel arrived at the Embassy, the way Assange eventually came to receive it revealed the beauty of the transmission aesthetic; what eventuated was a live unfolding. He began to play along with the package as both a live performance tool and a communication system, and this precise combination was what makes this piece, an apotheosis of the aesthetics of transmission. Assange aimed the mini camera, first by slowly bringing the frame to the picture of a tiger (Figure 15-16) and then to a puppet of a cow, before using the platform to transmit political slogans 'Transparency for the State! Privacy for the Rest of Us!' (as seen in Figure 17). Since being granted asylum in June 2012, Assange has resided in the Ecuadorian embassy in London, and there has been much cultural speculation about what was 'going on inside' there. !Mediengruppe Bitnik (sender) and Julian Assange's (receiver) creative reflection and critical intelligent play upon the apparatus (see Figure 18) allowed for numerous synergies between the micro-computer as a telegraphic transmitter (along with providing a platform via which a wider audience could participate). This influences how we are naturally inclined to interact and use these new technologies, and how these interactions can impact on society.

FIGURE 18 JULIAN ASSANGE REFLECTIONS UPON THE APPARATUS. SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Offering a counterpoint to a one-way transmission, Brecht emphasised the idea of telecommunications as an artistic medium in his seminal text, *The Radio as an Apparatus of Communication*:

> So here is a positive suggestion: change this apparatus over from distribution to communication. The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes. That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as to transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him. (Brecht 1964, p. 52)

In *Delivery for Mr. Assange*, the audience had a topical reason for tuning into the artwork; it corresponded with the desire of the people addressed through open participatory nature of the art, and those who knew about his incarceration; a chance meeting of ambient computer subcultures communing together across timezones, borders and realms. Removed from the realm of purely aesthetic abstraction, and made comparable to the concrete context of the spectator's experience, perplexity can be produced in the critical reception that distances the spectator and prevents identification in favour of a vast understanding of awareness.

An aesthetics of transmission opens the spectator to other times, registers of existence, and entanglement of experience.[95] In a similar way, Adrian Mackenzie (2010) conceives 'wirelessness' as a techno-social entanglement and as a constitution of experience. He describes how 'The fact of wirelessness comes into existence on different temporal and spatial scales, some of which move more quickly than others. Wirelessness effervesces or foams (Sloterdijk 2004) rather than flows' (Mackenzie 2010, p. 199). In this way, «Delivery for Mr. Assange» spread an experience amongst a diverse collection of people by dispersing the action through the internet, with the

---

95 For other discussions on an aesthetics of transmission, see the work of Beiguelman, G (2006), and Collins, S (2007). However, I do not include these discussions as they seem to reinforce a screen based visual premise of the still and the moving image, and whilst the discussion does move over the material to record a digital image and transmit it across space and time, there is not much talk of the networked tuning-in sense, nor a discussion of the slippage for technical and communicative terms in which it is the hope that this thesis adds and expands on in order to build bridges between media art and contemporary art in the post-optical understanding put forth by Inke Arns (2004, 2011).

website feeding into email groups, the live tweets and text feeds building vibrancy, the postal package travelling through space, and the ongoing description on Twitter of the various encounters with infrastructure, logistics, and protocols. This artwork demonstrates how an aesthetics of transmission can be understood in the context of contemporary art forms, and how communication is as much about sensing other people's reactions and feelings as they tuning into the networked space via emails, twitter feeds, and web cam images posted to the Internet. In this work, a hovering layer of meta-reports unfolded over time and built fervor in the remote audience. Such sent transmissions enable a receiver to experience information and tune into and commune with a group of people across temporal and physical boundaries.

The act of transmission is never simple, because it subverts and destabilises a relationship between emitter and receiver (which is fixated by an anachronistic ideology of viewing), but transmission requires both senders and receivers. However, the meaning frequently oscillates between points of understanding. An aesthetic of transmission utilises the interstices of local and trans-local communication over vast distances. This is what makes it significant, as much as those audience members who were close in terms of distance, and those who were able to tune into many other remote presences.

The works in this exegesis explore not only how a spectator experiences and artistic practices are shaped, but also how they attend to the many ways in which those processes work upon that understanding through displays, technologies and cultural performance. It emphasises the embodied subject in the practices, media, and conceptual frameworks that make up contemporary art forms. An aesthetics of transmission implies being post-optical – or rather than simply seeing, *experiencing* connections via movement patterns – and being aware of social patterns, electromagnetic invisible processes and the interplay between mixed realities' 'contemporary performative (information) architecture and spaces' (Arns 2011, p. 261). It is for this reason Inke Arns (2004) refers to the post-optical as:

> the technical structures that observe and act performatively have increasingly withdrawn into invisibility. In many cases, performative structures, whether unimaginably small, immaterial or remote are recognisable only by their effects

but are no longer necessarily visible...most software eludes human perception
because it involves 'inconspicuous' performative (geno-)texts lying below the
visible surfaces (pheno-texts) that generate them.' (Arns 2011, pp. 261-2).

I would add that an aesthetics of transmission highlights haptic modes of perception,
and it is argued that they are more relevant to contemporary art forms than the
traditional scopophilic modality of viewing art. A haptic perception of an artwork
privileges that modality as a way of being in everyday life. The aesthetics of
transmission does not discount the more 'vulgar', haptic, or serpentine senses. Joas
writes of the privileged optical sense in the rational world:

> Since the days of Greek philosophy sight has been hailed as the most excellent
> of the senses...in addition to furnishing the analogues for the intellectual upper
> structure, has tended to serve as the model of perception in general and thus as
> the measure of the other senses. But it is in fact a very special sense. It is
> incomplete by itself; it requires the complement of other senses and functions
> for its cognitive office...Its very nobility calls for the support of more vulgar
> modes of commerce (1966, p. 135).

Sight is the sense we can most actively consciously control - 'with sight all I have to do
is open my eyes, and the world is there, as it was all the time. We have shown the case
is different with hearing; and touch has to go out and seek the objects in bodily motion
and through bodily contact'(Joas 1966, p. 143). What is proposed by an aesthetics of
transmission is a refreshing way of encountering an artwork with the full body gestalt;
presence in the here and now which does not reflect back a mimetic double. This
emphasis on a perceptual shift in reception is not a new observation; one could
compare it to the premise of the influential exhibition *Les Immatériaux* (The
Immaterials) from 1985 by curator and theorist François Lyotard (shown at the Centre
Georges Pompidou). The exhibition was made purposefully ambiguous and
contradictory to encourage free association and independent thought. The eye was no
longer the privileged or exclusive agent in the experience - there was freedom of
movement in the way the audience experienced the show. Five words were chosen in
which to create zones of inquiry and spacial arrangement: 'material' (the support of the
message), 'materiel' (hardware that moves the message), 'maternity' (the function of
the sender), 'matter' (what the message is about), and 'matrix' (the code of the

message). 'One example of a display within the "materiel" sites included ten square meters in which microphones, sonars, and computers translate all movement into music, and a read-out of the sound is produced by the transmitter circuit and headphones' (Martin 2003). Josephine Bosma writes: 'It might be time to take his words further and look at also electromagnetic waves, sound waves, etc. as materials. They can be measured, steered, or blocked. They are not immaterial like ideas or concepts are'.[96] Perhaps a contemporary way of experiencing an artwork can be validated in terms of what materialises instead when the transmission is lost, or when the target ignores the signals and the artwork instead turns into choreography of multiple relays, codes and transmissions foaming and dispersing. Encoding, transmission and comprehension of information are the central topics of information flow in natural languages, as well as many other means of ephemeral communication. It foregrounds the viewer's embodied engagement with the medium as a transgressive site where we potentially learn how to experience and understand different socially mediated patterns of energy and movement, being in time, emotions and desire. Understood as an 'aesthetics of transmission' within a larger art culture, this research introduces questions about inherent aesthetics, conventional usage for the viewer, and the changed technology of the machine.

Even though there is trepidation of what I cannot comprehend, I always want to play with that and attempt to touch the unknown.

Tuning into voices, messages signal transmitted to me from far distant realms…It is not because you don't see it, it is not there. You do not necessarily have to look but you have to *see*.

2.9 Kittler and Ariel's Broadcast

The signaling of Kittler's death brought with it providence of a kind, at least for me, in two ways. The first was a friend's quixotic eulogy, 'Kittler and the Sirens'. Tom McCarthy wrote about his transcendental convergence with Kittler:

> He asked me whether Shakespeare's work contained motifs of music and
> transmission; I suggested Ariel's broadcast to Ferdinand in The Tempest; he

---

96 Josephine Bosma. 2013, Publication Forthcoming. 'Trash Transmissions – Abstraction and Re-appropriation of the Wireless Domain in Art' in *ORF Kunstradio publication: Celebration of 10 years ORF Kunstradio*. Confirmed by Bosma, J 2013 email, 28 September, <jesis@xs4all.nl>.

thanked me profusely, though of course he would have already known the passage inside out (McCarthy 2011).

In *The Tempest*, Ariel is a cypher key whose portrayal had the most elaborate stage notes of all of Shakespeare's plays, including detailed instructions for the conjuring of magic tricks with mirrors. This play text is no less than a comprehensive how-to manual, and since interrogating software and hardware had been Kittler's legacy, it embodies a key signifier in this exegesis (that being theatre and computing). The character of Prospero in *The Tempest* is inspired by John Dee and his influence on Rosicrucian thought; his purportedly transcendental ability to connect with elementals and sprites in the ether is well documented.[97]

The second way Kittler's death proved notable was in the torrent of texts and responses that ran though my email. For the first time in a long time, the 'Nettime' mailing list was full of contributor emails. On Sat, 29 Oct 2011, Florian Cramer wrote:

> …his greatest legacy and impact on media studies and media criticism will be the hacker legacy: his insistence that one needs to have technical understanding of the systems one analyses and criticises. In a world where scholars identify with terms like "digital humanities", apparently without knowing more than the colloquial meaning of 'digital', this remains a painfully important message.

Indeed, this reality of knowledge-makers being largely unaware of the true meaning of 'digital' is a potent challenge. The work developed for this thesis has considered the audience, the dramaturgy of text and of scripted operations, and has privileged the execution of code in a performative manner, rather than in a technical sense. The technical aspects of the work may seem quite cargo cult, charming and maladroit to sophisticated programmers, but highly sophisticated to those with no programming knowledge. What type of works does having a technical understanding of the computer as a theatre machine (both tool and a medium) generate? What is their purpose and aesthetic? What is a technical understanding – how deep does it need to be? These questions are explored and developed in the Methodology Chapter.

---

97 Yates proposes that John Dee was the model for the protagonist Prospero in *The Tempest,* with the comments 'dare one say that the German Rosicrucian movement reaches a peak of poetic expression in The Tempest, a Rosicrucian manifesto infused with the spirit of Dee, using theatrical parables for esoteric communication?' Yates, Frances A. (1975, p. 234).

3.0 Methodologies of Risk and Experiential Prototyping

> Oh go through the walls; if you must,
>
> walk on the ledges of roofs, of oceans; cover yourself
>
> with light: use menace, use prayer...My sleepers will flee toward another...

> -Jean Genet, cited on *Wave* (1979) The Patti Smith Group album.

Experiential prototyping is a dynamic model that embraces a playful attitude.[98] It encourages probing the inexplicable whilst avoiding traditional top-down methods of assigning value; an approach that employs and advocates home-brewed methods for collective gain (think of self-organized digital literacy circles). These approaches to materials and form have an interchangeability that renders the specificity of traditional approaches and reception secondary. Radical play and speculation are enacted through ongoing experimentations in performance and media design. This methodology champions the amateur in the realm of the professional, and places value in participants following their own enthusiasms to realise their wishfully imagined experiential prototypes. From this perspective, artworks are created (and performance events generated) as occasions to develop prototypes that solve puzzles or propel insight into the potentials and limitations of an emergent technology. Using experiential prototyping for developing artworks is an area that demands investment from all the senses, especially a firm trust in the path of awareness over identity. This aspect is considered further in *Chapter 4,* and especially in relation to the art works *Error_in_Time() (2012)*, *"I am Googable", therefore, I am* (2011) and *Self Portrait* (2013).

In late 2008 I founded Miss Despoina's Pataphysical Salon. In forming such a Salon, my intention was to attract likeminded colleagues with which to collaborate, and develop a platform for aesthetic research underlined by feminism, maker culture and computing.[99] My aim for this Salon was to extend kinship groups (revelry), explore critical discourse (theory) and enrich hands-on skill-sets (practice). I had just returned from spending the turn of the century in the Northern Hemisphere where I had been contributing to projects

---

98 For a comprehensive article detailing experience prototyping within the industrial design field, Buchenau, Marion and Suri, Jane Fulton (2000).

99 The title was originally Miss Despoina's Hackspace; however, the analytical category 'hacker' and 'hackspace' (and the highly marked baggage it carries with it because of its popularisation) seemed to become a further site of contestation where such terms have become loaded and lost in common parlance.

that were inspired by the free software movement, such as skills sharing initiatives, workshops and art events; and wanted to nurture a similar community in my hometown of Hobart, Tasmania.[100] Initially this was with an exhibition titled 'encoding_experience/10_October_2008_ g_18:00_EST.*' at the Plimsoll Gallery, University of Tasmania, the first of a series of events inspired by the ways in which artists embrace critical, hands-on interventions to develop an understanding of technology.[101] Alongside these more publicly framed events, a series of informal parallel events began to emerge in a garage style 'hackspace' I had set up at my house. I also administered and moderated a mailing list to extend and stimulate discourse to enable 'the uninitiated' into liberation technologies, free software and hardware hacking culture. In instigating this Salon (and the other activities surrounding it), my intention was to remove the barriers between users and developers through hands-on engagement, and to raise awareness that there are 'writerly' approaches which open boundless possibilities to one's approach to creating with technology, rather than simply using 'read only' prescribed 'off the shelf' tool options.

The events aim to attract a mixture of different participants, combining both professionals and amateurs, whose activities are deeply intertwined. Seeking and advocating agency in order to encourage individual and social transformation, the approach champions the value of participation by amateurs in professional realms; where 'passion and commitment have their own rigor and seek our appropriate techniques.' (Lester 1998, p. 8). Where once the development and production of emergent technologies was the domain of the privileged few, a point of departure for this project is rooted in the belief that diverse (and typically excluded) groups - such as women and other minorities - need to engage with systems and develop software platforms according to their own needs and experiences.[102] This model nurtures embodied methodologies and appreciates sensory learning approaches that are outside traditional vocational skills development. All people privilege some sensory modes above others in terms of the type of information they garner from the environment,

---

100 On June 17, 2009 the Sydney Linux user's group sent out an email to its Mailing list inviting people to the first Australian hack lab. This gives an indication of how new such collaborative technical skillshare initiatives are in Australia.

101 Viewed 14 July 2014, < http://moddr.net/encoding_experience/>.

102 There are many instances of this happening, but it's by no means universal and there are many different viewpoints, depending on the level of knowledge or technologically naivety. For instance, one could argue PHP was the most commonly used programming language (or was a few years ago), but it is also criticized by sophisticated technologists because it's a language largely developed by non-professional programmers, and therefore Python programming language is the more 'clean' language to engage as a tool.

whether that is looking at form and colour, being more sensitive to the kinesthetic feedback from textures and rhythm, and so on. This model also suggests modes of performance and engagement that are inclusive of people who have taken unorthodox pathways into the roles of receiver, custodian or user of knowledge. Therefore play, collaboration and active participation are crucial elements for experiencing and understanding technical functionality, and transforming that functionality into an artistic concept. As such, these are risky approaches to making, and as a form of play they are not frivolous; rather, they represent a dissonant logic of relating to a particular context and set of rules. The participants also perceive them as risky because contemporary ideas of digital literacy mean that most people are 'trained' to use specific tasks and applications, rather than learning general fundamental principals of computing.[103]

With experiential prototyping there is no incremental or prescribed approach - instead the sharing of skills is what drives collaborations. For example: The *NETworkshop* led by critical engineers Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev discuss computer networks. While doing so, Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev also lead participants through the creation of a small scale model of the Internet (with which they are encouraged to interact) with another self-built local network, and in the process low level computer networking skills are acquired. In the '*Hardware Demolition and Reconstruction*' workshops led by the author, Nancy Mauro-Flude, invited participants were asked to break open computers in order to explore mechanisms, name the parts and either put the machine back together, or create something beyond the design specifications of the original device. For both, no prior knowledge of computer science is required. These are just a few examples that illustrate that in order to begin experimenting with technology, one need not have a complete initial technical understanding, but that it helps to be open to the idea that this type of understanding has value and is worth nurturing.

Playing with the limits of a given system leads to a more complete understanding of its potential, and for the maker it should act to provoke questions rather than formulate

103 In a discussion of the command line poetics and Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs) Florian Cramer elaborates upon the history of usability and the design goals of Xerox PARC in the 1970s, 'to allow users to plug together their own applications from existing modules. In its popular forms on Mac OS, Windows, and KDE/GNOME/XFCE, GUIs never delivered on this promise, but reinforced the division of users and developers' (Cramer 2013, p.99).

answers. Formal and informal demonstrations between participants give momentum to the speculative *mise en scène* of making. The experiential prototyping method has many approaches; for instance, these are some of the strategies used and possible steps to consider:

- *Mock ups* – a consideration of the aesthetic, rather than the functional – asking why it is subjectively interesting, testing the 'look and feel';
- *Prototypes* – a consideration of functionality devoid of the aesthetic – asking how it potentially works, testing the interaction; and
- *Proof of concept* – a practical demonstration of how it could be achieved, listing the technical issues.[104]

Integral to the experiential prototyping ethic is the mutual benefits offered by the sharing of ideas and support amongst artists. In critical round table sessions, artists discuss and test mock-ups, cultural probes and experience prototypes together. By acquiring technical skills through the practical interrogations that emerge, participating artists are encouraged to rethink, reprogram and redesign their own media and tools of production rather than only using readymades.

Considering how the choice of tool and interface used in developing an artwork leads to challenging situations, the materiality of the artwork (specifically hardware and software choice) becomes inherent to the subject in question. Employing methodologies of risk for artistic practices that utilise technology ultimately highlights the creative affordances of collaborative networks of people and presences, rather than individual practices, to encourage radical and diverse approaches to aesthetic models in contemporary art forms.

---

104 See Appendix 7.3 NAF:TMFC event including the website listed for responding artist participant reports which includes participant outcomes.

FIGURE 19 *NETWORKED SOUND DEVICE 1.0* INSTALLATION SHOT DETAIL (2013). PHOTO: AARON HORSLEY.

For instance, Nick Smithies constructed an aleatoric system prototype called *Networked Sound Device 1.0* (Figure 19). He says about this device:

> In considering the topologies of networks and global flows and retention of data, I hoped to explore what little control and understanding the typical end-user has of the process of data exchange as a response to the intensive *NETworkshop* led by critical engineers Julian Oliver (NZ/GR) and Danja Vasiliev RU/GER) at the NAF:TMFC (Smithies 2013).[105]

In an experiential prototyping environment interaction, demonstrations and performances of the participants are key. As the artists develop and eventually present only partially resolved prototypes, it is crucial to the reception of the work that the processes and the context be clearly communicated to the audience. Constructive peer-critique helps to mold and unfold anticipated audience responses to each artist's work.

> I can never lose sight of my work. If I forget my work, my work forgets me. I explore different aspects of considering and understanding things; I never find it crucial to decide on one resolved meaning.

---

105 Viewed 14 January 2014, < http://www.tacticalmagick.net/nicksmithies/>.

The emphasis placed on audience engagement encourages the questioning of acquired responses and behaviours to artistic production and reception; it stimulates a more situated and meaningful discourse for those people who have communed together, rather than an external set of values and absolutes to which one should aspire. These practices not only mobilise engagement, but actively create an understanding of these tools as world-making in a literal (not only metaphorical) sense, for example, the no future watch which transforms the experience of time from a clock radio in *Michael Jackson Afro-Futurist space travel glove* (Figure 20).[106] In *Michael Jackson Afro-Futurist space travel glove*, the performative presentation of the paraphernalia or 'up-cycled' item offers insights into aesthetic processes and technical provocations, and as such develops a novel relationship to an awareness of time.
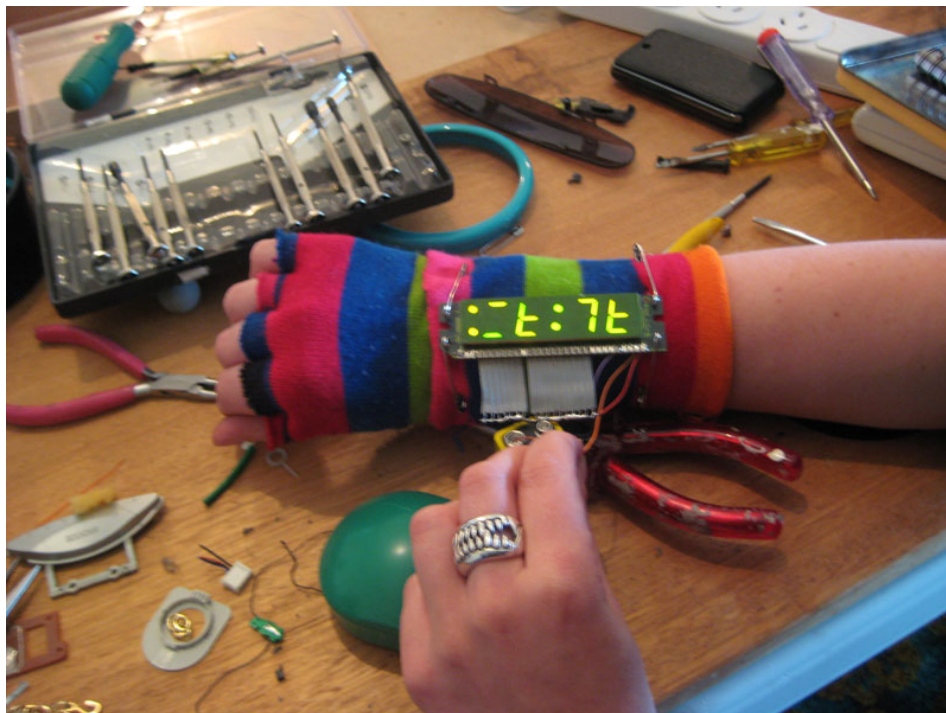
FIGURE 20 HARDWARE HACKING DEMOLITINO AND RECONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT CREATION 'NO FUTURE WATCH' (2009). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

A thread common to the experiential prototyping model is an interest and desire to creatively explore technology and find out how the object can find another life. By being interrogated, taken apart and repurposed, everyday electronic devices and computers take on a new life as they shift our vision of the use of data and purposes of

---

106 Henry Jenkins describes world-making as 'the process of designing a fictional universe that will sustain franchise development, one that is sufficiently detailed to enable many different stories to emerge but coherent enough so that each story feels like it fits with the others (2006, p. 308)'.

technology. Likewise, Michael Murtaugh (2008) discusses (and broadens) the term interaction that is linked to a 'tradition of engineers, mathematicians, and software hackers looking for a way to break out of the rigidity and strictness of their systems-out, as it were, of the black box…a radical usage of computers: giving (untrained) groups of users "live" contact with the machine' (2008, p.143). Often products are constructed in such a way that consumers are trapped in an endless cycle of upgrades with the promise or illusion of enhanced productivity or social appeal. These predefined 'lock in' strategies over time may limit the human condition and the possibility of becoming something other.[107]

The collaborative experiential form in which this familiarity emerges (and the mode in which it is communicated) can break and shift habits in a way reminiscent of Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekte* (alienation effect). Experiential prototyping approach highlights the essential paradoxes of the object in question in order to reveal the idiosyncrasies of received conventions and transgress the implied rules and protocols of use. Brecht maintains 'we must give up assuming that the object in question needs no explanation' (1964, p. 144). In particular, the discussion of technology is not only concerned with what is made, but *how* and *why* it is made in a shared adaptable environment that is accessible, flexible and responsive. Michael Murtaugh (2008) discusses this as:

> a kind of dance alternating between active computation and responsive strategies to a changing environment. Embracing interaction requires the programmer or designer to break open the black boxes of algorithmic processes and acknowledge the incompleteness of what they create in the pursuit of experiences that are playful, insightful, and potentially surprising (Murtaugh 2008, p. 148).

This dance between active computation and a playful tactical response, includes the potential for extension or synthesis in the transformative moment of an idea coming to life through a mechanism. These open up entirely new sets of possibilities from

---

107 Describing the an approach to computational tools outside of a prescribed use, Florian Cramer gives an example of video editing that empowers the user and gives results far beyond what we already know it to be, this could also be equated with understanding ones hardware as having such modular potential and flexibility 'a concept that simply exceeds the paradigm of Graphical video editor with the predefined concept of what video editing is. *The implications of this reach much farther than they might at first seem to.* The command line user interface provides functions not applications; methods, not solutions, or: nothing but a bunch of plug-ins to be promiscuously plugged into each other. The application can be built, and the solution invented, by users themselves. It is not a shrink-wrapped (Cramer 2013, p.99 [my italics]).

ubiquitous domestic items towards which we develop habitual use patterns. This perspective encourages participants to express alternative perspectives through the development of a self-reflexivity to technology (in an invigorated and performative manner). From this perspective, there is no longer a specific object used to perform a specific task, but a variety of objects can perform this task and the same object can perform different tasks. This process of modification is not new; in the course of human history, it is the norm. For instance, the boomerang is a toy, weapon, digging tool and musical instrument. It is only with the dominance of mass production in the past fifty years that such 'modding' has become a marginalised subculture.

One can link the alternative use of paraphernalia and vernacular objects to many practices. Examples include the use of improvised instruments for making folk music, such as the spoons, saw with a fiddle bow, or percussion instruments such as the classic Australian lagerphone or tea-chest bass. In Figure 21, one can see a workshop participant enchanted by the view of the inside of a hard-drive seen for the first time; she is examining this mirror as a rare object.

FIGURE 21 HARDRIVE OR MIRROR? AN UNDETERMINED OBJECT. (PARTICIPANT AT THE HARDWARE DEMOLITION AND RECONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP, MOONAH ARTS CENTRE. APRIL 2010). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

These 'hardware demolition and reconstruction' workshops invite participants to break open the computer in order to explore the mechanism and to divert its use into entirely new directions. In the case of Figure 21, the computer hard drive has been transformed momentarily into a compact mirror (very different from its original use as a storage device for data). Playing with frontiers, such projects not only challenge a standardized conception of technology but also of art, code and design. They reveal the power of subjective approaches and how modding tools can arouse social reflection and alternate participation.

For instance, the tradition exemplified in Figures 22 and 23 in the *Vodou* altar of Joseph Silver and family, Bèlè, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, reveals a combination of vernacular objects: coke bottles, coffee cups, skulls, miscellaneous bottles, roses, a plastic bag with black polka dots, and random vases all huddled around a wooden crucifix. Such inexplicable syncretic juxtapositions seem to be intrinsic to Haitian *Vodou*. Each *Vodou* sanctuary also possesses flags and these flags - when not in use - are kept near the altar, where they are thought to renew their mystical powers along with other ceremonial objects and paraphernalia including coffee cups, coke bottles, dishes, jugs, shells and flowers.

FIGURE 22 VODOU ALTAR OF JOSEPH SILVER AND FAMILY, BÈLÈ, PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI. IMAGE: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURE 23 VODOU ALTAR OF JOSEPH SILVER AND FAMILY, BÈLÈ, PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI. IMAGE: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Custom-built objects and artworks transmit and reflect the human view back on itself, and by doing so they act to generate a perceptual shift that may reasonably define what one experiences as their reality. Signs are marks and codes that are able to qualify, refer to, or represent other signs and things in the world; tools are objects able to shape and transform other things. Both are forms of abstract thinking used to manipulate our perception in regards to how we relate to objects in the world.

When I have finished a work, I do not ask whether it can state my thoughts clearly, but whether it can make you, the audience, ruminate.

But what if you get lost? You might not find the thread I have left for you in the work.

For instance, a brick, which has an assigned utilitarian reality, was used 'conceptually' as a brick with antenna in an act of resistance by the people of Czechoslovakia when invaded by Soviet army in 1968 (as seen in Figure 24). As the people were prohibited from listening to radio broadcasts, they started attaching antennas to bricks as a sign of protest, responding to the repression of political reforms through creative means. Fosco Lucarelli (2002) describes how 'although they were useless as a communication device, they were continuously confiscated by the Soviet Army.' This perceptual shift in relation to an object represents, for 'Tamás St. Turb (poet, musician, and performance and Fluxus non-artist), the mutation of socialist realism into neo-socialist realism: a non-art art for and by all' (Lucarelli 2002). In this particular case, a vernacular brick becomes a speculative and operative marvel, and thus demonstrates a methodology of risk.

Novel engagement with objects can metamorphose the tools themselves from standard objects into abstract signs. Although Heidegger calls this 'present-at-hand', (1927, p. 73), perhaps Heidegger didn't go far enough: what about when a tool does not function according to its habitus, when it breaks down? This difference of reality as an

idea and reality as an experience finds a parallel in Heidegger's distinction between how - at first sight - tools are fundamentally different from signs. Heidegger describes the instrumental use of a tool, 'It aligns seamlessly with its function and does not call for further reflection; we do not think about a hammer, we just use it.' (1927, p. 73). Heidegger wrote:

> Because the essence of technology is nothing technological, essential reflection upon technology and decisive confrontation with it must happen in a realm that is, on the one hand, akin to the essence of technology and, on the other, fundamentally different from it (1927, p. 33).

The object becomes 'estranged'. By extending an object beyond its intended use, it takes on dramatic meaning and is freed from being a sign (other than a broken one) to become pregnant with a myriad of other possibilities. The point is that signs are mental shortcuts: often they blind us to what is really there.

Over the years I have accrued an eclectic performative skill-set; this accumulation is characteristic of my vast, diffuse material and immaterial working processes. In the same manner, I haphazardly work with electronic performance tools, computational media and also build custom interfaces - often by hacking what is available already, and sometimes building from scratch - to expose concealed mysteries. Due to excessive tweaking, manipulation and the fragility of electronic hardware when exposed, the artworks may break or the systems require software updates and regular maintenance; I elaborate on these issues in Chapter 4 through an examination of *Computer is Dreaming* (2012). In Chapter 4, I also discuss how for one performance of *Error in Time()* (2011) a digitally literate audience (without hesitation) accessed the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) software and became a part of the work, in stark contrast to the audience that was not.

Very often I may not know if the technology will function (until completion), or whether I have broken mechanisms. I discuss this further in relation to the work *Valetudo* (2013) Chapter 4. I worked against all consumer advice (as espoused in the manual) not to use animated or sparkling images, and also ignored the advice there that only under particular lighting conditions would the application work. However, it was not until the actual pattern had been sewn and completed that I could actually test if the sequins could be scanned with the Layar Application, which had been installed on my

Smartphone. The intended engagement pattern of *Valetudo* ran thusly: the first level of the work was to be experienced via the senses, and the secondary level of engagement, for the 'initiate' viewer, was to be made aware of the 'code' and/or in possession of a scanning tool (smart phone) who could then access more information about the work. I take a chance that this engagement pattern would make some elements of the work accessible to a general audience, and hoped that at least a few would appreciate all the manifold levels of the work including the magical parable concealed within.

Metaphorically, the broken object now points towards a new possibility; the user then has to reconsider their engagement with the tool as an object, repair it, replace it, or change their relationship to it.

> It is all there. I do not wish to approach these things with a rational state of mind, but I want to understand them as something to which one is susceptible. I become more predisposed to clues, emblems, myths and reading around myself as if every moment could be opened up for divination.

In a similar fashion, when collaborating during the first Ghetto Biennale Port-au-Prince, Haiti (2009) a witnessing took place, a used black oil container transcended its customary role it became more than a prop but a tool for recording, surveillance and resistance, and charged with a multitude of other possibilities. The Ghetto Biennale, held in the UN-designated Red Zone, was reported and documented by many mainstream media (see Figure 25).[108] Most importantly, TeleGhetto, a children's film crew from the streets of Port-au-Prince, filmed it. TeleGhetto mirrored these international visitors with their digital cameras and mobile devices. Having an archival impulse, TeleGhetto took footage of all the events using a small oil-container fabricated into a HD video camera with pop out viewer screen and microphones made of plastic and silver gaffer tape (Figure 26). They even interviewed the Haitian Minister of Culture attending the event; she, with her entire suite of bodyguards, played along. It could be assumed that this particular black box oil container was used as a typical hand held video camera is designed to do. Such an act opened out the possibility of a black container – as both a black box and a new prospect - from the simple binary of illustration of the haves and the have-nots. It transcended the first life of a simple recycled oil container into a magical self-performing object.

---

108 Savage, Polly 2010; Fabius, Carine 2010; Moberly, Tracey 2010.

FIGURE 25 GHETTO BIENNALE PRESS CONFERENCE 2009, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURE 26 TELEGHETTO FILMING GHETTO BIENNALE PRESS CONFERENCE 2009, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

It was iconoclastic, dodgy, humorous, and predictably unreliable; but in that unreliability, TeleGhetto emerged neither fixed nor fictional, but instead what could be

characterised as an experiential satire, a critical but playful prototype.[109]Hence, the alchemist's ultimate dream – the transmutation of base metals into precious ones – is also the transformation of trash into treasures.

Such self-display and representation is an innate urge to broadcast to the world through presence. TeleGhetto's filming harnesses a similar reappropriation method as the brick radio through a type of evasion. Codified by their enslavers, Haitians historically have encoded messages through *Vodou* drumbeats, a means of communication, which helped the slaves overthrow their colonial rulers. The encoded drumbeats would have provided confidentiality and integrity for the data exchanged and encrypted between sender and receiver. The Haitian revolution was an exploit of an otherwise closed system of control through the use of cyphers.[110] The suppression of the religious practices of the non-Christian members of the colony led to the manifestation of the syncretic form Vodou, which in turn defeated the closed system of French colonial authority. The drums were a public sound that can be played without fear or risk that it will be heard – and decoded - by the wrong ears. On a secondary level is the code – without the knowledge of the cypher itself, it is not a message, it is merely a remote drumbeat (or a simple brick, in the case of the Czechoslovakia radio).

Putting a new spin upon practice (and therefore developing arcane ways of looking at the world) is a type of *vodou*, an eclectic tool-set for reverence and divination. In the pursuit of re-enchantment, this is an experiential approach to objects by extending their use from what their maker intended to an 'other-than-itself'/primary purpose ideal (via the opening out of ideas, dreams and fantasies into an infinitely intriguing way of making). Bollas aptly describes his instinctual process: 'I often find that although I am working on an idea without knowing exactly what it is I think, I am engaged in thinking an idea struggling to have me think it (1987, p. 10).' Steven Conner talks about a speculative playful approach where limitations become possibilities 'The point of putting things into play may be to play them out, to see how far they go, how far we can go with the open totality of their affordances. And, at the same time, we put ourselves into play…seeking its possibilities and limits (Conner

---

[109] See Appendix 8 *Notes from the field* - a report on the first Ghetto Biennale, Port-au-Prince Haiti.
110 Cosentino, Donald J. (1995, pp. 25–55).

2011, p. 6).' This make-believe is founded in real-world concerns, all conjured in the social body of the times.

Methodologies of risk can also be characterised by a satire or playful performance of cryptic tropes as opposed to symbolic representations. The prescriptive approach of literal illustration or concrete artefact bears no relation to radical subjectivity in practice; this can act to facilitate entirely new realms of understanding as is demonstrated in the 'No Future Watch' workshop creation (seen in Figure 20). As Genet whispers 'use menace use prayer (1979)', Leibniz's *miscere utile dulci* - fooling in order to heal (Lazardzig 2008, p. 170) - is similar to how Maya Deren sees her process as akin to robbing 'I am for the real bank robber, who gets down in the deep vaults…a creative artist must be willing to rob his own bank (1965, p. 52)'. Looking further into how and what contexts tools, machines and codes are devised, we can experiment with what options we have to rethink them. The tools we use to make our art completely inscribe this creative work by practicality boundaries; by dismantling such tools, we are able to expose confined objects and reconfigure them. The tool becomes a medium in regard to both material and immaterial processes (see the discussion of artworks in Chapter 4.3, especially in regard to the assemblage *Computer is Dreaming*). By exploring the potential to effect in this performative manner, we can reinterpret and bind these marvels.

I am interested in provoking the impossibility of making connections and wreaking havoc on the sanctity of divisions. I come to make things with an understanding of everyday magic, the ambience that hovers and which you tune into. And this might be one of the more important reasons why I am doing all of this and why I can keep gambling with such a mysterious profession. Taking risks, I am compelled by a force to pursue the making process by (almost) any means necessary, taking myself to the edge of the abyss, this force I believe is far greater than my will alone. It usually works out in the mysterious act of assemblage all sacred things eventually find their place.[111]

Often I have found myself often wandering through discarded bric-a-brac, I have come to form a practice of playing with found objects, but I take the object, transform

---

[111] This quote takes its lead from 'All sacred things must have their place…It could even be said that being in their place is what makes them sacred, for if they were taken out of their place, even in thought, the entire order of the universe would be destroyed.' (Fletcher cited in Lévi-Strauss, 1966, p. 10).

it; extend its purpose and function in order to transcend both it, and my own limitations. This is why risk taking for me is a methodology. A level of consciousness that is quite inaccessible is appealing to me. I am repugnant to dead ends. I refuse to enforce meaning. I am not seeking identification or understanding, but I want you (the reader, the audience) to believe, to be here with me, without the slightest resistance. I want you to surrender. When I close my eyes I want you to close your eyes and listen to the beats and waves I am listening to…

3.1 The Trash Stratum and *Vodou* Paraphernalia

> I believe that generally children dominate their toys; in other words that their choice is determined by dispositions and desires, vague, if you wish, and by no means formulated, but very real.[112]
>
> -Charles Baudelaire (1853)

While paraphernalia and curiosa are without a doubt marvellous in every sense of the word, their non-utilitarian function establishes them as something beyond useful. [113] Although very often in the eyes of an arbiter of taste, these accoutrements may appear chaotic, futile or secondary, in reality, they reveals some of life's vital practices.

A mirror, a bottle of oil, a black doll, cascading style sheets, bones, odds & ends, petals, sculls, leaves, coins, sequins, lace, teapots, pins, crystals, cards, discarded wood, gaffer tape, tap shoes, gadgets, badges, incense, jars of herbs, dolls amulets, tickets, crosses, & ribbons, flags, masks, old phones, equipment, stuff, things, apparatus, <div>tags, kits, saws, feathers, drills, shoes, implements, tools, utensils, materials, patches, beads, plastic roses, broken teacups, 1920s dresses, cameras, dolls eyes, rouge cheeks, accouterments, appurtenances, bits & pieces, informal gear, strange syncretic juxtapositions, auguries or tokens for predictions, occult gizmos, pipes, general equipment to bring you great personal wealth, pointe shoes, dice, spoons, shells, leaves, duct tape, flowers, feathers, stones, berries, an old tin with pink pelicans on top, discarded plastic items, coins, dice, marbles, nails, broken crockery, pieces of glass. A used paint brush, a photograph stained with

---

112 Baudelaire, Charles (1964).

113 The history of marvel and wonder is wide and vast. For useful instances of the shifting terminology and meanings, see Platt P.G (1999). Also, for the discussion of thaumaturgy and John Dee accomplishing remarkable things through human agency, see Yates, (1969). In *Poetics*, Aristotle discusses wonder per chance 'Such incidents have the very greatest effect on the mind when they occur unexpectedly and at the same time in consequence of one another; there is more of the marvelous in them than if they happened of themselves or by mere chance. Even matters of chance seem most marvelous if there is an appearance of design as it were in them' in Aristotle, *Poetics* (1995, p. 2323).

fluid from a leaking roof, an old keyboard with a pink casing, red and white danger tape, a room full of sequined dancing costumes, rusty tins with pink flamingos on top, picture with a black haired woman in an old Spanish tutu, lovingly embroidered garments, tartan fabric, a plastic fork, ornaments, crystals, animal shells, a lipstick, a cordless drill, hardware, software, an old radio dial, a light seeking robot…

Something that is obviously cast off may not be instantaneously useful, but I often read such castoffs as inexpressible gestures or as omens to be deciphered. Science fiction writer Philip K. Dick pronounces '…the clue lies there…symbols of the divine show up in our world initially at the trash stratum.' (Davis 2003, p. 303). Paraphernalia can become intensified to the point where it transcends the limits of the known. I identify with it and appreciate it as objects of beauty; sometimes I almost forget myself, as if the paraphernalia operates as a spiritual teacher. By imbuing such objects with meaning, I make connections with and through them. Paraphernalia gives me a clue as to if I am on the right track (or not), or reminds me of a longstanding desire (perhaps saddening in its lack of fulfillment), or provides a fresh insight or tactic to operate more effectively in the future. At many times in my life, by necessity I have lived upon the (perceived) waste-wreckage of others. Through amassing random paraphernalia, I deem them as treasures; a magical stash which I hold sacred (perhaps as a testament to survival).

This instinctive sleight-of-hand can also be found in the notion of *bricolage*, coined by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966). Underlying this assumption is a sense of multifaceted diversity and multiple comprehension paths; methodologies are better comprehended as a tangled mesh of both mythical and logical modes of understanding. Bricolage magnifies the phenomena of art and found technology and their interrelationship. This interrelationship does not impose abstract notions of self-hood, place or tradition that are not already embedded in the habits and customs of a populace. Lévi-Strauss writes:

> The characteristic feature of mythical thought is that it expresses itself by means of a heterogeneous repertoire, which, even if extensive, is nevertheless limited. It has to use this repertoire, however, whatever the task in hand because it has nothing else at its disposal (1966, p. 19).

'Mythical thought' validates the plethora of ways and means by which artists approach problem solving. The application of Lévi-Strauss's (1966) intellectual bricolage to the

tools of the artist yields significant insights into how the human mind works; what is true of objects also applies to beliefs, customs and institutions – all symbolic forms involving cultural practices of employment and appropriation. Lévi-Strauss confirms 'It might be said that the engineer questions the universe, while the 'bricoleur' addresses himself to a collection of oddments left over from human endeavors, that is, only a sub-set of the culture' (1966, p. 19). Notwithstanding the choice of objects, tools, techniques, or hardware and software that are made (and their history, design and materiality) they have meanings and agendas embedded in their core; cultural, political and economic interests shape them.

Assemblages of paraphernalia produce a subtle transgressive power. They allow access to a treasure trove of imaginings and meanings accumulated through an awareness of our ancestors, animals, habitats and plants. They give insight into the distinctive characteristics of the tool beyond their manifest usage. However, in general usage, the term 'paraphernalia' conjures up an impression of an excessive, possibly futile, set of objects; things that are often categorized as surplus or waste. This is confirmed when examining this definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, which states *paraphernalia* to mean 'miscellaneous articles, especially the equipment needed for a particular activity: drills, saws, and other paraphernalia necessary for home improvements, trappings associated with a particular institution or activity that are regarded as superfluous'.[114] We can comprehend the eclectic and subordinate usage of the word paraphernalia when conducting an on-the-fly 'Google' search and viewing the results (both text and image based). 'Drug Paraphernalia' is listed as second to the formal definition, and continues to be referenced for the next six results.[115] Furthermore, engaging with an academic database for this research, I was required to eventually enter the search term 'Paraphernalia, no Drug' in order to weed out the stigma attached to the term.

The etymology of paraphernalia comes from the Latin root, *parapherna*: *para* 'distinct from', *pherna* (from *phernē*) 'dowry'. The word *paraphernalia* stems ultimately from Medieval Latin which indicated its meaning as linked to a bride's property 'over and

---

114 Oxford University Press. (2013) viewed 12 Jan 2014, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/paraphernalia?q=paraphernalia>.
115 This is true for searches conducted in the Google engine through 2007, 2012 and my most recent search occurring on 22 August 2013.

above the items in her dowry' (Conner 2011, p. 11). A married woman's personal belongings and property were controlled by her own person, and her husband would not be able to sell or dispose of any of it legally (at least, in theory). I assert that the current negative connotations associated with the definition of paraphernalia are a residual effect of 'the medieval war on witches' (Dulchinos 2011, p. 76). This period also saw the muting of the Renaissance Hermetic tradition, which was discussed in the Preface and Chapter 1. Frances Yates elegantly argues this significance:

> The Hermetic tradition grew in importance and influence throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though it has severe opponents. Many feared its magic. To what extent the witch scares in this period were intensified by hostility to Renaissance magic is a problem which has hardly yet been examined…the historical thought which has been for too long avoided…areas of imaginative and religious life affecting the development of the arts as well as of the sciences (1975, pp. 17-19).

As Yates confirms, the voices of the so-called heretics reach us constrained and distorted and, in many cases, they have not reached us at all.[116] Women were no longer allowed to heal the sick or deliver children; all drugs and paraphernalia were now entrusted to the care of the new medical fraternity overseen by the church and state. Dulchinos (2011) discusses a manifold response to 'the survival of the goddess-centered Eleusinian shamanism, which the Christian church organized in Rome when the status of women had declined to the point that the wife was merely chattel of her husband' (2011, p. 76).[117] The definition being tied to the apparent excess of the dowry exemplifies a time when women were objectified and hemmed by the restraints of the dominant religion and culture. Steven Conner describes the pejorative and marginal connotations of the word:

> The association with women's personal things means that 'paraphernalia' unfortunately connotes the incidental and the accessory, with a suggestion of the trivial…Even in…specified contexts, paraphernalia, like stuff, gear and clobber, retains the idea of a diffuse miscellany (2011, p.11).

---

116 Comenius advocated for an equality of gender education in his treaties. See, for instance, J. A. Comenius, (1896). Yates continues to pave the way for this approach, 'If any traces of such influences were perceived in great scientific thinkers, they were ignored and dismissed as unimportant. Today it is felt less and less desirable to separate the genuinely scientific elements in the minds of thinkers of the past from the context of their outlook as a whole, from one part of which the scientific interest developed (1975, p. 11).'

117 Dulchinos writes that 'shamanic Figures of modern Europe have in common ecstasy and the battle for fertility – once again, features of the Eleusinian Mysteries. The concept of a widely worshiped "great goddess" as popularized by Marija Gimbutas in Ginzburg's view an abstraction which "arbitrarily homogenizes heterogeneous cults." Nevertheless, Ginzburg did refer to Despoina, a goddess of Arcadia as "assimilated to Kore, the daughter of Demeter," Ginzburg's book seems to confirm our working hypothesis that witchcraft is not only a surviving old religion, but specifically Eleusinian' (2011, p. 81).

Paraphernalia in this sense included very personal appurtenances, amulets, plants, jewelry, lace, brooches, menstruation items and so forth. I venture that many of these so-called superfluous items of paraphernalia (located among the functional accessories) were actually paramount for women to access in order to maintain a sense of personal subjectivity. It is speculated that historically, paraphernalia was vital to keeping an ever-weakening link to women's former elevated status and role in society (for instance, midwifery).[118] Furthermore, this paraphernalia allowed midwives to disguise the tools of their vocation, which had been usurped by the authority of the Church. The subsequent denigration of paraphernalia was a way of subjugating customs hitherto seen as vital and significant. This subjugation as a contributor to the deterioration of our connection to quotidian vernacular rituals outside the context of church is also considered by Achterberg (2011) and Yates (1975). The etymology of paraphernalia reveals traces of why the term, and its material manifestations, embodies such stigma. For instance, a magus or a shaman's divination kit may seem extraordinary in the West; whereas to him or her, it is quite a normal toolset for reverence and divination which serves an essential purpose.[119]

Later in the mid-1800's, women in the United Kingdom began to protest against the subservient position of the term paraphernalia by attempting to disassociate the term from the subordinate 'odds and ends' and instead link it to more respectful and functional definitions such as 'equipment, apparatus'.[120] In its broader contemporary sense, the definition of paraphernalia carries with it subjugated traces of its history; it is still seen as a sub-set of objects and their functions, still positioned as questionable, dubious or even a taboo topic in the contemporary public domain.[121]

118 Achterberg argues how 'the position of the Church was "that if a woman dare to cure without having studied, she is a witch and must die." The machinery of Church and state had conspired to create "the shocking nightmare, the foulest crime and deepest shame of Western civilization, the blackout of everything that homosapiens, the reasoning man, has ever upheld' (2001, p. 81).

119 Patrick Curry asks 'Why does the act of randomizing (throwing coins pebbles or dice, picking shuffled cards blind, mapping the current sky…play such an important part? Confining discursive meaning to human language; what an effective way to deprive animate nature of its voice in the war to extend the human empire of 'reason'…The imperialism was plain in the military, misogynist and sado-dispassionate metaphors of Bacon, Descartes and Galileo, but its roots lie much further back; further even than the version of Christianity that provided their basic template…This became an extremely destructive intervention against the aboriginal mode of a divinatory relationship with the natural world.' (2013, p. 116).

120 See Al-Khalidi, Alia (2001, pp. 257-273).

121 For instance menstruation paraphernalia are still taxed as luxury goods, at least in Australia: women pay a 10% Goods and Services Tax (GST) on these items and therefore they are categorized as superfluous and not fundamental even though clearly there is an obvious practical functional for such items. *Godfrey, Miles (2013) The Australian, February 13 2013,* 'Axe the Tampon Tax issue rises again', viewed 10 December 2013,

A plastic oil container became a make-believe video camera - a prop transcending its customary role - and manifested out of a conscious attempt to manipulate an outcome. This plastic black box became a focal point and reminded us of the power of the imagination that is accessible by any one of us. Intention was directed and pressed into this inanimate object for the communal use of playful mirroring by building upon and capturing an ephemeral moment. The play upon the surveillance object by its experiential use reshaped the material world and produced new fields of meaning and action.

Does that mean the charm performed its work?

…which is another way of asking if charms, talisman or signs can really work independent of one's belief set. Paraphernalia, by its very presence, may set implied rules. People imbue objects and various paraphernalia with personal connections that vary widely (depending on cultural context). Depending on the beholder, an object can be experienced as a medium, a container of symbolic content privy to a process, or simply a functional tool. Assemblages of paraphernalia can take on the function of a medium, which by its presence imposes a set rules and protocols. The significance of paraphernalia may even be 'self-performing' for instance, like an altar with a crucifix and a football logo. Conner picks up on the *para* segment of *paraphernalia* to explain that 'the word has a slightly meretricious ostentation that carries across to the things it names' (2011, p.12); which ratifies the term's obscurity and potential omniscience:

> The most important and expressive thing about this word is the prefix para-, which signifies something alongside but in addition, equivalent but extra…the word, which gives the impression of specifying some very precise kind of thing, like 'paraphilia', 'paranoia' or the 'paranormal', is in this respect self-instancing and self-performing (2011, p. 12).

Such objects collect the resonances of their surroundings for as long as they have existed and can be acknowledged as being talismans - are these items capable of amplifying our thoughts? In any case, such objects can be used to frame and strengthen the relationships between people offering a new way of perceiving or another type of contemplation. As it was discussed in the instance of the oil

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/axe-the-tampon-tax-issue-rises-again/story-fn3dxiwe-1226577773273>.

container/video camera, or the brick/radio, the term 'object' can be used in a very broad sense as a prop; it is open to a multifunctional point of view, dependent on the frame and context. From a semiotic perspective, an object may function as a material or immaterial cultural pattern of perception. The image of a bus ticket (a gate-keeping object from 30 years ago) as seen in Figure 27, tells us quite a lot more about the period from which it comes, in which opportunely advertising the State Museum as having the largest collection of aboriginal skulls in Australia was deemed to be acceptable.

FIGURE 27 TASMANIAN METRO BUS TICKET 1983.

Recycling discarded objects into new forms is a common artistic method practised in many cultures, and especially in Tasmania where this exegesis is written. Bill Mollison, a Tasmanian, developed the revolutionary ecological practice 'Permaculture' (permanent agriculture), and Tasmania was also the birthplace of the first Green political party in 1972. The environment movement is now global.[122] The utopian 'Reuse-reduce-recycle' mottos are well-rehearsed at the eco-friendly 'Art from Trash'[123] annual show (which is hosted by ReSource Tip junkyard shops) and by the more slick aesthetic design-orientated 'Bricolage Design Prize'[124]; both the show and the prize are examples of initiatives rooted in conservation efforts. This distinction of the 'bricolage' consumer is important, as Josephine Berry Slater (2006) observes, 'a vicarious worship of all things bricolaged, improvised and threadbare – read pauperised – has taken hold...the acid bath of poverty is the urbane consumer's chemical peel of choice.' (2006, p. 7). It is fashionable to laud initiatives that inspire pragmatic waste redirection and re-use of unwanted surplus in the pursuit of sustainable living, but this praise is often a hollow observance. In my experience there does not seem any rigorous, ritualistic connection in these mainstream events beyond a naïve, one-step, recycle

---

122 A compendium of Green Party Chapters world wide are listed at this URL for further reference, viewed January 10 2014, Wikipedia<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Green_political_parties>.
123 Art From Trash Tasmania, viewed January 10 2014, <http://www.artfromtrash.org/>.
124 Bricolage Design Prize, viewed January 10 2014, <http://www.environment.tas.gov.au/?base=4544>.

function and philosophy. These affirmative movements must find room for the intuitive, the fictional and the excessive.[125]

What I'm interested in is when paraphernalia becomes a talisman. Charms, within both word incantation and as objects, may relate to a pact between a mortal and a deity.

3.2 Methodology of Risk Epilogue: whose beginning is not, nor end cannot be.[126]

I became freshly aware of a situation to which I had grown insured and oblivious; that in a modern industrial culture the artists constitute, in fact, an "Ethnic group," subject to the full "native" treatment. We too are exhibited as touristic curiosities on Monday, extolled as a culture on Tuesday, denounced as immoral and unsanitary on Wednesday, reinstated for scientific study Thursday, feasted for some obscurely stylish reason Friday, forgotten Saturday, revisited as picturesque Sunday. We too are misrepresented by professional appreciators and subjected to spiritual imperialism…My own ordeal as an "artist-native" in the industrial culture made it impossible for me to be guilty of similar effronteries towards the Haitian peasants.[127]

-Maya Deren

To arrive at the Ghetto Biennale, I travelled from Tasmania (via New Zealand) to Los Angeles and Miami before finally arriving in Haiti. Each journey leg was part of a mental journey in an effort to gain clarity by passing through the labyrinth, not unlike entering Comenius's Labyrinth of the World novella. At each turn I was required to surrender possessions by powers beyond my control.[128] That is to say, during transit much of my electronic equipment was confiscated. On arrival, I came to find that power outlets were a rarity in the Grand Rue Ghetto. As such, my electronic performance tools and interfaces could not be used in the art works I had been invited to share (and had planned to both realise and explore). This small incident, along with the massive earthquake in the wake of the event, changed my entire research direction. This directional shift altered from an

---

125 Even a vernacular Western Medicinal-Herb-Vegetable garden (for instance the Find Horn Garden in Scotland) can serve as a good basis of what types of higher grade differentiation can be nourished beyond a utilitarian garden. One example of a realm in which humans, plants and animals partake of dimensions that are not ruled by the imperatives of use and efficiency is outlined in *The Findhorn Garden Story* (1975) by The Findhorn Community, Harper & Row: London.

126 This sentence is taken from the work *A true & Faithful Relation of What Passed for Many Years Between Dr John Dee…and Some Spirits,* also referred to as 'angelic conversations' by the magus John Dee. See Meric Casaubon (2008).

127 Maya Deren, 1970, p.7-8.

128 The pilgrim is directed to the invisible church, see Jan Amos Comenius (1669) *Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart,* Chapter XLI.

affirmative orientation upon free-software open-source methodology, and its relationship to contemporary art, to a broader conversation around performance tools and aesthetics and their historical and political antecedents. Hence, my previous convictions and research questions, as well as approaches to materials, changed. Hearing of the earthquake (having left just before tragedy struck) seemed uncanny.

FIGURE 28 THE RECONCILIATION ROOM AT AUCKLAND, AIRPORT TERMINAL NEW ZEALAND.

The estrangement from important others (friends, family) I had often experienced – perhaps due to a nomadic existence and therefore having adopted the habit of the outsider – was taken to an extreme. Feeling responsible, I had a deep-seated and helpless sensation that I had abandoned these people, these new friends I had left behind. My thoughts were nebulous, my mind confused and every once in a while frightful; but my spirit felt alive, although everything I had thought had profoundly changed. Eventually the strategies that trapped my perception and desire became less transient, and my need to make aesthetic decisions, based on steadfast rules, asserted itself; instead of being nihilistic, I was making assessments that had more clarity and led to stable outcomes. I had not previously been as consciously in the world as I was then. But at the same time things started floating; I was losing connection with real life. Everything I had taken for granted until then took a turn and marked the realm beyond the demands of survival. I felt dead and alive at the same time. I thought I understood more of what 'being' was possibly about.

On the one hand, I experienced so many rare things that I almost started to believe that I was already (un)dead. The rules of the mundane gave way to the demands of elevated states examined through the lens of the oil container. It was a state not unlike what the Lakou dance group, who performed *Zonbi Zonbi* at the Ghetto Biennale, claimed: 'Nou

tout se Zonbi!' (We are all Zombie!) It's not only just after death that a person becomes a zombie - many people become zombies without even knowing it.[129] I became even wearier of the tedious divisions between the states of being dead and alive.

Jalal Toufic, a Lebanese philosopher reflects upon phenomena of death before dying:

> Were you to die physically before me (who has already died before dying), becoming in the undead realm a superposition of possibilities, and I opted for forgery rather than history, I would inflect what will have happened to you, the late (2009, p. 22).

Caillois places death or 'the instinct for letting go' parallel with the forces of life. He discusses how death is inside of 'life', rather than a peripheral guest who arrives at the moment that life ceases (2003, pp. 66-81). This ambivalent notion of death before dying, and communicating at the crossroads between life and death with a more-than-human world, are further examined in the artworks *Valetudo* (2013) and *Awry Signals* (2013) in Chapter 4.

I became even more susceptible to uncanny sensations.[130] There is nothing irregular about them. It is all there. I do not wish to approach these things with a rational state of mind, but I want to understand them as something to which one is susceptible. I became even more predisposed to clues, emblems, myths and reading around myself as if every moment could be opened up for divination. I found myself in my former environment talking about things that I felt completely alienated from, that is, normal things; such as what to do when you want to get a kernel update from a remote server mirror on your computer through a university proxy server.

I had always been intrigued by the allure of pirate utopias, what Hakim Bay calls a 'temporary autonomous zone' (TAZ), but I started to realize that there must be a difference between this life and one that longs for a poetic (utopian) life.

---

129 The Zonbi Zonbi work was co-conceived by Hermane Desorme and performed by Lakou, viewed 26 August 2013, <http://www.yoonsoo.com/ghetto/2009/files/participants.html#Hermane>.

130 The mixed sensations of pleasure and vertigo brought me to an awareness of being more than alive. Not long after, I conceived a new life. I gave birth to Pearl Elektra Flude Smithies on 1 February 2011. Needless to say, I then abandoned quite of a lot of these prior thoughts.

> We are looking for 'spaces' (geographic, social, cultural, imaginary) with
> potential to flower as autonomous zones...times in which these spaces are
> relatively open either through neglect on the part of the State or because they
> have somehow escaped notice by the mapmakers, or for whatever reason.
> Psychotopology is the art of dowsing for potential TAZs (1990, p. 101).

Instead what remains the most lucid for me now is a most difficult and cherished thing - how rare experiences gain importance in daily life.

The cryptic writings of John Amos Comenius in his novel, *Labyrinth of the World*, evokes manifold parallels to my pilgrimage, the history of Haiti and the 'pirate utopia' it carries in its wake including the unshackling of the first slave nation and the hopes that manifests with its bitter sweet consequences. Like the transcendental informants proposing the Rosicrucian reformation and John Dee's cypher system of mirrors for remote communication and implemented for the British Naval command, the practitioners of Vodou encoded messages through drumbeats as a means by which the slaves overthrew their colonial masters (the French) and established the (new) world's first independent republic. Such a labyrinth (for Comenius) was a trial of the mind and necessary for the liberation from ignorance.

> The city itself, as I perceived, was divided into innumerable streets, squares,
> houses and buildings both large and small. It swarmed with people as if with
> insects (Labyrinth of the World, 1669, V).

Frances Yates discusses how this results in a curious twist:

> Such a city ought to be at the same time a Utopia, an ideal city, a blueprint for
> a reformed world of the future. But Comenius is in reaction against the
> delusive hopes of preceding years; his city as a labyrinth reverses Utopia,
> because in this labyrinth everything is wrong. All the sciences of man lead to
> nothing, all his occupations are futile, all his knowledge is unsound...It is also a
> record of the disappointing experiences which have led to this state of despair,
> a record of the Rosicrucian movement (1975, p. 203).

If these reflections do not permeate daily life including its vexations, then the experience is in danger of being merely an ideal, a utopian exotic projection; undesirable in any way other than as spectacle. In *The Tempest,* a labyrinth is set up by Prospero to test the motives of his adversaries. After his dominion is established over others by renouncing magic through his noble pursuit of reason, Prospero pushes one more threshold into wisdom. In cultural terms, these rituals are 'rites of intensification' (Turner 1969, p. 131) that are a temporary dissolution of the established order, in order to then embed and reinforce values and norms. So that inversion simply reifies the position of the master and the slave when the biennale (or carnival) is over.

In concrete terms, the nightmare of the earthquake - and the ad hoc building infrastructure standards - contained and trapped literally thousands of people. In another instance, home-brewed substances often cause painful death if the chemicals were used in the wrong amounts; there is a place for regulations.

FIGURE 29 CHILDREN OF GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

In Haiti the drum beat plays day and night, but is it now a hollow form?

I delayed writing about this period of time to the point of deceiving myself, because I was afraid it would wake me up from the dream, which in reality, turned into a nightmare. I was afraid that putting it into words would make the good parts of the experience stop and disappear. But now I am writing, I realize it is not about memory, and trying to be accurate. There is no separation between now and then; an infinite continuum spirals through generations. Everything is still there, 'whose beginning is not, nor end cannot be'. After these insights, I did not come to make things the way I worked before. But most surprising of all was to come to an understanding of the everyday magic, the ambience that hovers and which you tune into within certain sensory wavelengths. This might be one of the more important reasons why I am doing all of this and why I can keep gambling with such mysterious epitome.

4.0 ART WORKS Valetudo

> We have to go to bad places to try to heal, you must do the healing.
> But it takes all colours to do it.
>
> - Ida West[131]

When I first read the quote above by the late Auntie Ida West (1919-2003), a Tasmanian Aboriginal elder and matriarch, I was deeply moved. I had never heard this sentiment expressed so unambiguously. The two sentences were very poignant, Tasmania being a place that both magnetizes and haunts me reciprocally. I was further moved by the accomplishment of this elder's battle for a 'healing garden' at Wybalenna, Flinders Island – the site of incarceration of the exiled Tasmanian Aboriginal people from 1830 until 1856. For unrelated reasons, I had always wanted to create my own garden in this island home of Tasmania. Paradoxically, my own exile of almost two decades from Tasmania was an attempt to move towards this dream. In 2003, I briefly returned to Tasmania after three months of research at the Society for Ethnomedicine in south Colombia, learning about the medicinal properties of plants and how they act as mediums. During this residency, my bloodline (or lack of knowledge of it) became apparent. There were continual questions to me as to what it was, mainly from the European guests and the Spanish Latin Americans; the local indigenous people seemed to be the least concerned. These questions troubled me as they caused me to reflect upon how I am caught up in the so-called 'messy detritus of colonialism' (Taylor 2012, p. 24), and made me wonder even more about my little-known ancestral lines and my inadequacy in the face of this unknowing. I do not have the luxury of a clearly mapped lineage and am still not very interested in bloodlines, either, because of the problems of 'purity' such knowledge conjures, and the different ways people are subsequently treated.[132]

In a misguided but benevolent attempt to clarify the ancestry of their indigenous people, the Australian Government created categories that caused even more hurt and subsequent anger. Richard Flanagan, an Australian novelist, environmental activist and historian aptly observed: '…the politics of identity can sometimes obscure more

---

131 It was stated in 'Battler for Reason dies', *The Mercury* (September 10 2003, p.12).
132 This also stands true for gender and class.

than they reveal; that they can cripple and gaol, as much as they can liberate' (2002). The complex issues of racial discrimination in the Tasmanian context is a potent topic, the full discussion deserved exceeds this particular context. In spite of this fact this thesis considers how an artwork came about and how such feelings weigh into the development of *Valetudo* (2013) (Figure 30), which includes consideration for the harshness that many people in Tasmania's colonial period endured; needless to say, the hurt still ricochets through its society. Flanagan writes:

> Tasmania…was not an English land, but a polyglot world, full of Otahetians, Caribbean slave revolt leaders, Lascars, Moluccan whalers and Maori sealers, and their descendants, too, hid their origins with fabulous genealogies of Portuguese princesses and Spanish maidens. In time the descendants of such people not only wondered if they were not, too, Tasmanian Aborigines, but were often discriminated against on that very basis, sometimes for generations. Having suffered and continuing to suffer as Tasmanian Aborigines, not without good reason some came to believe that they were Tasmanian Aborigines (Flanagen 2002).

The year 2013 marks a decade since Auntie Ida, a Tasmanian Aboriginal elder and matriarch, left this realm; therefore, a eulogy to Auntie (Ida) West in the form of a healing flag felt appropriate (see Figure 31). Ida West stated that the only way forward was through reconciliation, by considering many sides of our [Australian] history and 'going to bad places to heal' (West 2003, p.12)'.[133] The name for the artwork *Valetudo* is a Latin feminine noun, and carries meaning that contains opposites within: health, soundness, good health, bad health, where medicine can be made from, or, turn into poison; depending on the dose. Anti-venom therapeutics is implicit in the word *Valetudo,* a vaccination against its own bewildering effects. In Spanish the words are separate; the saying 'vale tudo' is an expression used for 'anything goes' or in a playful way, 'everything's worth, or everything has a value'. *Valetudo* (2013) represents a struggle to communicate with all people, everywhere; its function is to shine light (lux) into the darkest (tenebrae) places.

---

133 Ian Anderson writes that while his people have suffered a 'regime' that aimed to '"fuck 'em white" and/or "train 'em right" ' (one that aimed to produce 'hybrids' who 'have no history'), 'to resist' is to 'make whole'. It is by accepting the impact of changes wrought by colonisation that (paradoxically) a coherent Aboriginal identity emerges. Then the 'symbol' of Truganini is subverted. 'No longer are we hybrid children of the dead race ... we are ... the mutton bird mob (1995, p. 32).'

FIGURE 30 *VALETUDO* (2013) DEVONPORT REGIONAL GALLERY, INSTALL SHOT – DETAIL - PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The anti-venom is a metaphor for the activation of the black box discussed in the Preface and Context chapters in relation to Critical Engineering and postdramatic theatre. As a reaction to counter the prejudice that Haitian artists endure in her summary of the first Ghetto Biennale,[134] Polly Savage describes the 'cultural anti-venom' approach of the organisers;

> …working symbiotically as a kind of cultural anti-venom, to produce what the press release termed 'a third space' 'It's like electricity', explained Eugene, 'when you put positive and negative together, _ the light comes on!_ (Savage, 2010, p.15)'

The flag is embroidered with sequins of many shining colours framed by darkness they emerge. The pattern is recursive, drawing inspiration from a lotus that opens out and

---

134 The first Ghetto Biennale is described breifly in the Methodology and outlined in Appendix 8.

up infinitely, celebrating multiplicity. Embroidered flags are a key item in *Vodou* ceremonies, as they help to bridge the physical and spiritual world.
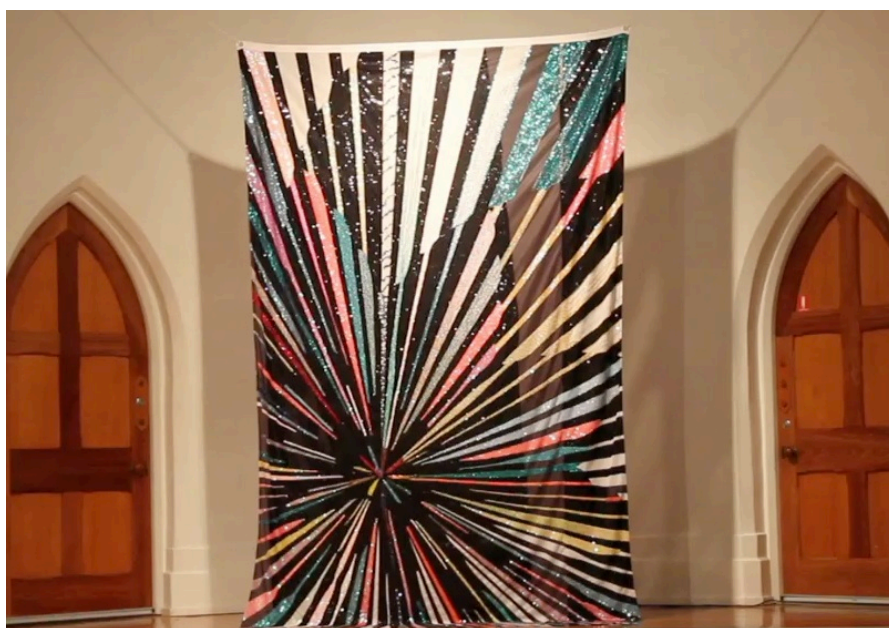
FIGURE 31 *VALETUDO (2013)* INSTALL SHOT DEVONPORT REGIONAL GALLERY. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The form of the Haitian *Vodou* Flag (sequined *drapeaux* or prayer flags) embraced, an intermediary between the visible and the invisible and where a connection between a mortal and a virtual presence is established (see Figure 32-33-34). Often spirits are portrayed on *Vodou* flags in symbolic diagrams called *veves*. For instance, Ogoun, the spirit of fire, war and metallurgical elements, is often pictured on flags with a geometric symbol. The intention with the sacred lotus form design, sewn and embedded in the flag, is to give rise to archaic energy, where membranes push through the long ribbed hand-sewn canals. The hand-sewn one by one investment of labour that was needed to realize the work was almost trance-like. Sewing all the coloured tendrils of the lotus coming out of the 'tenebrae' darkness in the pattern made sense, by playing with different textures and motifs in order to give the arras a ceremonial presence.

The first level of the work is to be experienced aesthetically. A secondary level of engagement is for the 'initiate' viewer, aware of the 'code' and in possession of a scanning tool (smart phone); a connection between a mortal and a virtual presence is established.

FIGURE 32 *VALETUDO* (2013) – INSTALL SHOT – DETAILS, AUDIENCE INTERACTION WITH THE AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) LAYER. DEVONPORT REGIONAL GALLERY - PHOTOS: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.
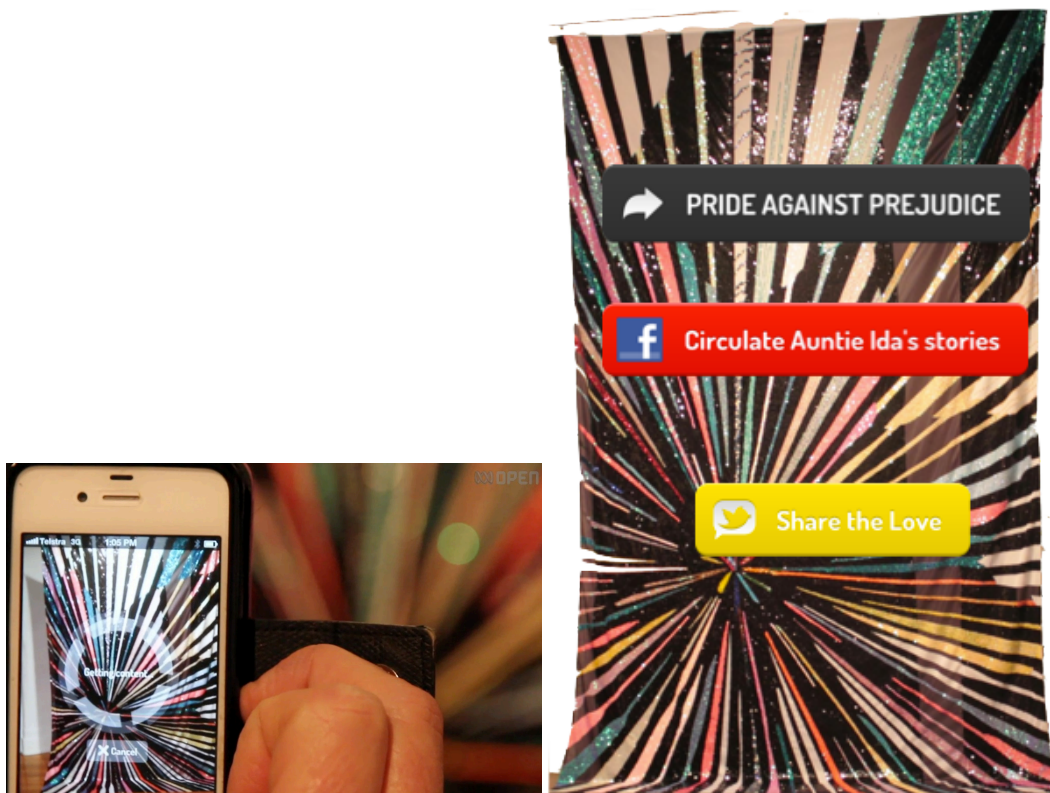

FIGURE 33-34 *VALETUDO* (2013) – INSTALL SHOT – DETAILS, AUDIENCE INTERACTION WITH THE AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) LAYER. DEVONPORT REGIONAL GALLERY - PHOTOS: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The Augmented Reality (AR) layer was embedded into the material (Figure 33-34). Scanning the work takes the viewer to a series of interviews and broadcasts with Auntie Ida. The act of accessing these texts are announced on the social media

platforms with which the viewer is associated, and so the interviews are shared with others who are not in the gallery. This could be thought of as a way to take a part of the artwork to others – extending the work beyond to where it was originally encountered. The AR Code is not explicitly mentioned in the exhibition of the work; it is implied in the catalogue and artwork details. A hidden back door behind the arras exists but it is hidden. This very notion is discussed further in Chapter 4.2. The mobile phone of the viewer potentially becomes a cypher key. For the AR divination experience, the viewer needs to have a smartphone, with an AR layer scanner application installed. It works best with recent smartphones that have a higher pixel resolution. However, the audience is also welcome to simply 'view' it, which is the first level of the work: to be experienced simply as a work of visual art. If people take the time to read the catalogue and the artwork notes, then they know that there is another level that they can access in the work. If they have the know-how, then there is another experience to be encountered. The reasoning for this added dimension not to be more explicit, is that a traditional gallery environment where the work was under contract and commissioned, is a very different scenario to a workshop, as outlined in the experimental prototyping methodology, Chapter 3.

People who are not used to being active with contemporary art works often get anxious when they are required to scan. If it 'does not work' they feel disappointed, or if they do not have a smart phone they may feel excluded. Yet there is also a mix of excitement about what we perceive to be as the 'other self that is coming into the flow of time' (Weber 1987, p. 14), and frustration that occurs when one has to tune in to a mode of engagement they are not used to, as discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to the aesthetics of transmission. Of this potential self-reproach that people may experience, dramaturge and philosopher Samuel Weber describes it as a tendency that occurs before and during a change, 'because such fixed habits become, by virtue of their very fixity and hence inflexibility, incapable of dealing with changing and infinitely variable circumstances' (1987, p. 14). Such expectations can also be articulated as a constraint which embodiment theorist Lowell Lewis writes in reference to 'all experience' that 'has a mode of secondness, which appears to the self as struggle, as shock, as resistance. It is this form of experience that prevents people from constructing the world just as they might want or imagine it to be' (1995, p. 225).

Beadwork is an instrument for referring to the endless nesting of time, the performative gesture in the sewing actions opening out the meanings and contexts in the textile. Such acts of repetition reveal themselves through the labour-intensive process over the months and weeks of attaching sequins and beads by needle and thread. The Haitian *Vodou* flag developed from the application of the Haitian ancestral tradition of beadwork to the eighteenth century French military flags, which consisted of large tapestries bearing the coats of arms and colours of the noble families. Historically, mirrors are not only a tool, but also a medium allowing the perception of what is not immediately visible – a source of wonder and of ineffable knowledge. Traditionally used as a method of storing wealth and information for nomads and pilgrims, many people in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries would buy sequins and mirrors that would absorb the rays emitted by holy objects present in the church.[135] William Powers (2010) recounts how people would take these mirrors home so that the people who could not go to the cathedral could still benefit from these relics by experiencing the rays. 'A special devise had been created to ensure that no one missed out: a small convex mirror designed to catch and absorb the rays…'and 'were though to retain sacred energy, they could be used long afterward to heal the blind, the sick and anyone else in need of divine help' (Powers 2010, p. 127-128). The study and use of mirrors to capture energy and as optical phenomena as described by Dee in his earlier research was a blend of numerology, astronomy, alchemy, and kabbalah gnostic magic, titled *Propaedeumata Aphoristica* (1558).[136] These mirrors will also be contemplated further in relation to the artwork *SelfPoitrait* (2013), in Chapter 4.2.

I initially ordered the flag envisaging it as smaller, but its large scale became apparent on arrival. Thankfully I had a lot of black sequins, and Guédé, lord of the *Vodou* cemetery, is fond of black. Coming from a tradition of performing arts, sewing sequins into costumes is a family custom that originates from my great grandmother, and continues with my grandmother, my mother and myself.

Initially, I was invited by curator Julie Gough to contribute to the group exhibition *Testing Ground,* a laboratory of artists' self-initiated insights into ancestry, personal influences

---

135 Wilkins (1969) gives an eloquent study of prayer beads. the opulent jewelled rosaries and related paraphernalia, interweaving art-history, folklore, religious devotion and its relationship to Hermeticism of the Middle Ages and early Renaissance.

136 Clulee compares and contrasts the philosophies behind Dee's Monas Hieroglyphica and Dees earlier research titled, *Propaedeumata Aphoristica* (1558), for further information. See Nicolas Clulee (1988 p. 111-115).

and cultural practices. *Testing Ground* is a nationally touring show around Australia (and for this reason only documentation of the artwork was exhibited in the examination show).[137] The exhibition's premise is as follows:

> A key intention of the exhibition is to destabilise mainstream expectations about culture. To this end works have been selected that are likely to provoke unanticipated emotional responses; they are confounding, surprising, humorous, and together offer an audience an experiential discourse about the value of divergence (Gough 2013).

After I had proposed Valetudo (2013) and the form it would take, we entered into discussion about the artwork. This conversation was a very pertinent one, and is a strand that cannot be entirely unpacked in this context. But this initial email is an example of how the absence of a solid point of reference generates suspicion and confusion. After a series of emails, the queries from curator Julie Gough were initially perplexed about its 'anything goes' *valetudo* nature. I have included the first and final resolution emails, which are germane examples of exactly what I was trying to pinpoint in the artwork:

Initial email:

It is interesting and for me not a little uncomfortable - not sure why - is it because there is no indication that it is about Australia or Tasmania and the black person is Cuban = African ? it is a mash up ! I am not sure how i feel about this lack / erasure? of Tasmanian cultural specificity !?! - what does it mean to do this? is our story a universal one? is that what you mean ?   - anyhow these kinds of conversations / thoughts make art the best platform to push ideas around beyond 'formal' , safe, linear text/articles I reckon…[138]

Final email:

I'm curious about how I am responding to this one - like it is changing, evolving before my eyes - which it does and is - so your worldly bower bird mission is working I think. Also I have my own cultural baggage that is affected by this work, so my train of thought previous email is much about that stuff - which is not your stuff [sorry !] and provocative = idea raising art is THE BEST.[139]

---

137 The video feature was shown instead which showed demonstrations of users with the work and an interview with the artists, see *Tribute to Auntie Ida West* on ABC Open by Producer Leandro Palacio, viewed 13 March 2013, <https://open.abc.net.au/posts/tribute-to-auntie-ida-west-38qo3jd> .
138 [spaces in original email] Gough, J 2012, email, 12 December 2012 23:36, <julie.gough1@gmail.com>.
139 Gough, J 2012, email, 13 December 2012 09:28, <julie.gough1@gmail.com>.

Although syncretism is innate to my making process, I was not simply seduced by an attractive formal sparking surface of the *Vodou* flag form. I do not claim to have personally known Auntie Ida, but her serpentine ripples of energy still stir me. In her time, she was provocative for the sake of community, not self-aggrandizement.

Auntie Ida's moxie to tinker with social protocols, to open out new possibilities, gives me courage to make a work like *Valetudo* (2013). Frustrated by limited classifications of what an artist, healer, activist, teacher or even class, race and gender may be, interlacing apparently incongruent strands of cultural phenomena; as Flanagan (2002) reminded us, this does not come without conflict, ambivalence and misunderstanding.[140] On the contrary, these convergences or interferences are access points and windows of chance to start a conversation with others, especially those who don't see us as we see ourselves.

Misère utile dulci…where there is danger, there also can grow what heals…

Circes' New Equipment

The predecessor to *Valetudo (2013)* was an artwork called *Circes' New Equipment* in 2011, a hand sequined-embroidered knitted polyester flag with an embedded Quick Response Layer (see Figure 35). The title *Circes' New Equipment* refers to the goddess Circe and harks back to a time when the status of women was more prominent. I am referring to the ancient Venusian artefacts from pre-history to the Greeks, and theories of the beginnings of culture when the notion of matriarchy was said to be subsumed by patriarchy by the division of art, crafts, technologies and ritual.[141]

Circe is a key archetype in Greek mythology, a goddess of magic, this so-called mythical enchantress described in Homer's *Odyssey* as the loveliest of all immortals.

---

140 Sewing the art work I listened to the radio, at the time there was a lot of publicity surrounding an upcoming bout between Australian Aboriginal Boxers, Anthony Mundine and Daniel Geale upon the lead up to the day of the big fight. They would stage various publicity stunts before the boxing match to get an edge over their opponent. This consisted of various racial prejudice statements and slander about how 'black' one or the other was, which I found both topical and resonant with the concerns I wanted to capture in the artwork. One example of such is 'Geale says Mundine's comments go too far' on *ABC news*, viewed August 18 2013. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-10-18/mundine-slammed-for-geale-slur/4321864>

141 I am referring to the conversations around the idea of ritual and craft and matriarchy that gets brought up in relation to the Paleolithic female 'Venus' figurines such as *Venus of Willendorf*. This history is discussed in detail by Cynthia Eller (2001).

Circe is also known to be the daughter of Hecate, queen of the dead, although in other accounts she is the daughter of Perse and Helios (Yarnall 1994). What is most relevant here is that there are unified accounts of her special knowledge considering acts of incantation, purifications, poisons and their antidotes, and metamorphosis, using various paraphernalia such as plants, flowers, wands, and chalices as her divinatory toolkit.[142] The work's title is in a sense a retort, a response to the histories outlined above, a rebuff at the sterilized state of so-called digital culture, an attempt to inform a more ritualised presence, embodied awareness and connection to objects and our daily use of gadgetry. It implies that the goddess Circe has updated her methods for contemporary existence. Exploring ancient practices that both embody and resist the dynamics of dominant authoritarian structures; accordingly, the work has a hidden double meaning on multiple levels.

Sewn into the 'mirror space' of John Waterhouse's painting *Circe Offering the Cup To Ulysses* (1891) is a QR code; its construction from sequins lifts it away from the sterility of conventional advertising and product information (Figure 35). Through the QR code, a connection between a mortal and a virtual presence is established. A QR code could be also thought of as a secret or disguised way of writing; a system for writing cryptic notes in a cypher, like Circe's paraphernalia, the information may be continued in such a cypher encryption.

---

142 Charles Zika, 2002, 'Images of Circe and Discourses of Witchcraft 1480 – 1580', *Zeitenblicke* 1 (2002), Nr. 1, viewed 13 January 2013 < http://www.zeitenblicke.historicum.net/2002/01/zika/zika.html >.

FIGURE 35 INSTALL SHOT PLIMSOLL GALLERY, TASMANIA. *CIRCE'S NEW EQUIPMENT (2011)*. PHOTO. GERARD
DIXON. MEDIUM: MIXED MEDIA ASSEMBLAGE: 1X CUSTOM_FLAG 900MM X 1800MM, EMBEDDED
DIGITAL PRINT ON KNITTED POLYESTER, INCLUDING A QR CODE EMBEDDED WITH SEQUINS.

The 'initiate' viewer, aware of the 'code' and in possession of a scanning tool, connects
to the monochrome shadow projection of maze like sequined QR code and in doing so
is further transported into a myth. As seen in Figure 36 the viewer first arrives at a
quote by Kathy Acker:

> Now I remember what the pirate girls say, they say the ancient
> Greeks sick of the priestesses and fortune-tellers who were
> Controlling the future, transformed Hecate into death (1997, p. 9).

Continued development was contemplated in regard to developing the online element of the work further for the willing viewer, to be 'led' via myth to follow a narrative text, images and geo-location features to place the reader/viewer into the centre of the work as if they were following some kind of 'treasure map'.
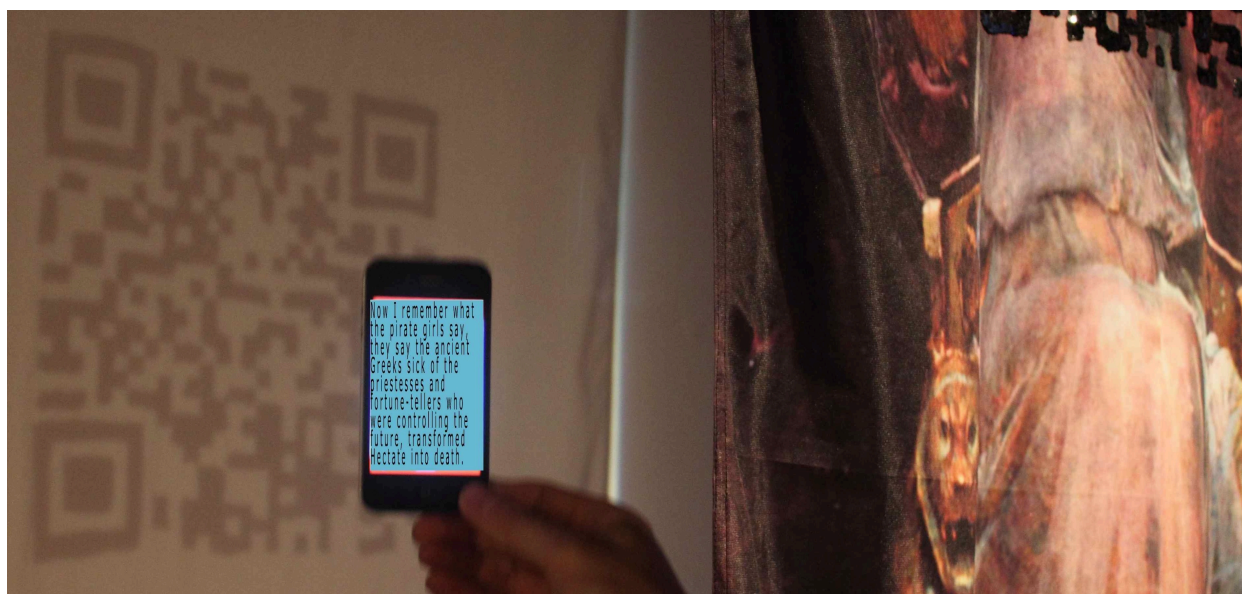
FIGURE 36 INSTALL SHOT DETAIL. PLIMSOLL GALLERY, TASMANIA. *CIRCE'S NEW EQUIPMENT (2011)*. PHOTO. NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The HTML5 narrative would combine a non-linear journey through fiction, fact and subjective narrative. It would incorporate sound files triggered that might recite this story along with reading. At the time of making the work, QR codes had not been incorporated into vernacular print material but their sudden presence everywhere, took away from deeper meaning and so it was not included in the body of artwork that supports the research project. However the notion of performative code sewn into material to activate another medium, led me to explore and resolve the anti-venom approach in the work *Valetudo (2013)*. Extending the work beyond where it was originally encountered and as a way to trigger further transmissions outside the gallery.

4.1 The Intimacy of the Command Line

> I feed my data into the computer…I am the data-bank…
> My drama has not taken place. The script was lost.
>
> -Heiner Müller, *Hamletmachine* (1977).

The more densely I structure a performance, the less space is left for the liveliness of different things that could occur at different moments. When a question about theatre comes to my mind, I try to find an answer through thinking about ritual and the connection to my daily rituals with my computer. If I think of these questions, I address life, ritual and the black box all at once. Because if I invite you into my terminal screen, to the theatre, I have the ambition and the highest hope not only to present you theatre, but also to have you attending a ceremony, and give you a piece of my life.

To make something perceptible, often one must leave something out. Entirely text-based, there are no pictorial icons or sign languages in either of the works *Error_in_Time()* or *ism | breath | she | who | with | I*. The computer is controlled instead by text-based commands. For the 'uninitiated', command line, or text-based computing, was mainly used before the invention of the 'mouse' (or touchscreen/pad).[143] Command line computing (CLI) is an expressive language within a 'shell' or 'terminal' an alternative user mode to the Graphical User Interface (GUI). There are many arguments contesting the obfuscated limitations of complex language created by the dominance of the GUI in one's daily computational routine because of its predominant dominant mode of computer operation.[144] By using a computer shell, aesthetically the works have a raw simplicity in order to emphasise the complexity of the language consisting of coded transmissions and hands-on human–machine articulations. The works sit next to (but not within) the live coding genre, in the way that the viewer is

---

143 The first UNIX shell was developed by Thompson in 1971, the first trackball in 1946 and then came the mouse interface in 1963. The light pen preceded the mouse in the 1957. All of which came well before windows and icons. See *UNIX and Linux System Administratin and Shell Programming*, version 49, viewed of January 15, 2014 < http://www.osdata.com/programming/shell/unixbook.pdf >. Fredrich Kittler (1995) raises issues with the GUI and its disavowal of the writing process, 'on an intentionally superficial level, perfect graphic user interfaces, since they dispense with writing itself, hide a whole machine from its users. Secondly, on the microscopic level of hardware itself, so-called protection software has been implemented in order to prevent "untrusted programs" or "untrusted users" from any access to the operating system's kernel and input/output channels…'.

144 For instance warning if people opt for this mode ultimately limits human communication and even our ability to imagine the intangible Nielsen & Gentner (1996) write 'The see and point principal states that users interact with the computer by pointing at the objects they can see on the screen. It's as if we have thrown away a million years of evolution, lost our facility with expressive language, and have been reduced to point at objects in the immediate environment. Mouse buttons and modifier keys give us a vocabulary equivalent to a few different grunts. We have lost all the power of language, and can no longer talk about objects that are not immediately visible'.

presented with the bare-bones nature of the computer being operated upon by visible text-based scripting and code interaction, coupled with the audibility of the hands-on human involvement in the command line interface.

The works feature a textual aesthetic and the sound of hands typing into a computer terminal interface performing a series of executable scripts in the command line to parse though well known classic texts. Parsing is a process of analysing a string of symbols to get various output results. The sound of the fingers typing on the keyboard, amplified by contact microphone, acquire throughout the performance a rhythm and presence all their own and add to the rise and fall of dramatic tension. The amplification of the fingertips is about the reciprocity of the human embodiment and the operating system that has been coded by human beings, not taking either as a given.
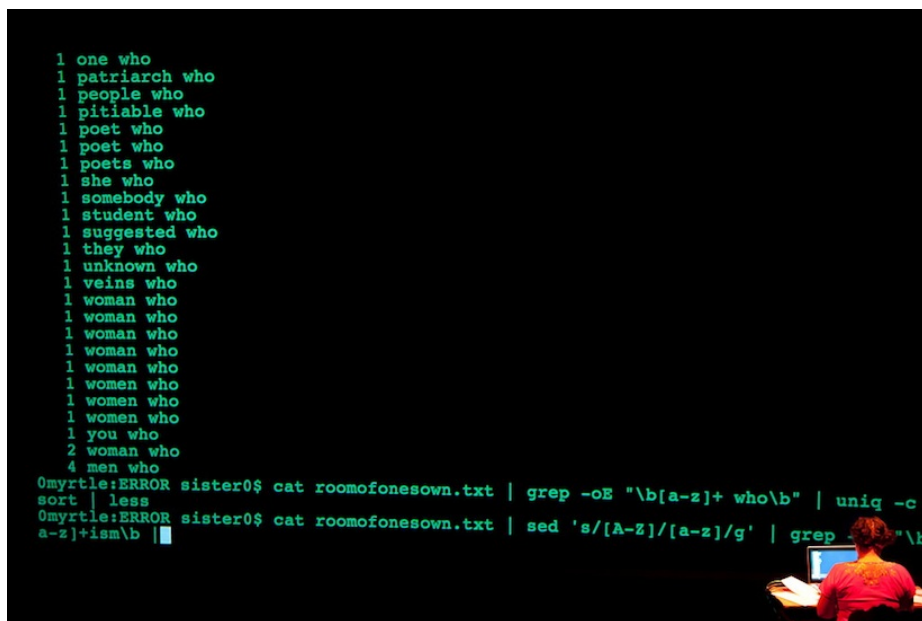
FIGURE 37 *ERROR_IN_TIME()* PERFORMANCE STILL (2011) PEACOCK THEATRE, TASMANIA. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Regular expressions (regex), one of many *nix tools, are used to recognize strings of text being parsed by using particular characters for concise outputs. For simple rule-based tasks, these human-constructed algorithms can be scripted to compute and access massive quantities of data rapidly. For instance, the command #cat (abbreviated for concatenate) strings files together and display the contents of an entire file on the screen (see Figure 37-39) to search for how many times 'who' did what and how many times in the text. Likewise, using the grep command (comes from the command g/re/p,

meaning to globally search a regular expression and print), which searches the given file for lines containing a match to the given strings, words and/or lines of text that match one or many regular expressions, and outputs only the matching lines. The work acts to integrate script as a visible and prominent medium to illuminate, among other things, processes that seethe with activity, under the surface of the computer's interface.[145]

error_in_Time() is set in the darkness; a performer sits at her computer. The character enters into her daily computer routine. With her back to the audience, they look over her shoulder in a voyeur's position, watching her execute commands, open files, adjust windows and type her conversation. The coded content of the performers computer screen is projected large-scale upstage. File recording, searching and parsing are the main scene of action, the clacking of keys, throughout acquires a parallel rhythm and presence of their own. Weaving her story through performative algorithms, the execution of code in a surreal first-person narrative, touching on subjects from dark matter to rogue bots, through her journal entries, and conversations with a chatbot, the performer muses about security, embodiment, habitus and morphology; demystifying the mysterious or elite world of computer subculture.

The first act, in *error_in_Time(),* begins with the character conducting journal entries. Sharing her impressions of the day in images, however in a supreme paradox, these visions only exist through language, for it is through the words of that the image given life in the theatre of her and the audience's imagination, for instance:

> Deadpan stare; no filter.
> Coincidentally autofocused raindrops.
> Warped picture of the restaurant taken through a wine glass'.[146]

Reading these words an illusion takes shape in the minds of the audience through another illusion, the language and acting of the performer on the stage. The attempt is to set the scene in order to reveal, like *Hamletmachine,* the *mise en abyme* of the image through language.

---

145 Inke Arns (2004) discusses the performativity of code in relation to the term 'post optical unconscious'.
146 See Appendix 9 play script *error_in_Time()*.

After these journal entries, the play text *Hamletmachine* is scrolled through in starts and stops as an entire text. The character sifts through and pauses on significant statements and moments of prominent action (see Figure 38).
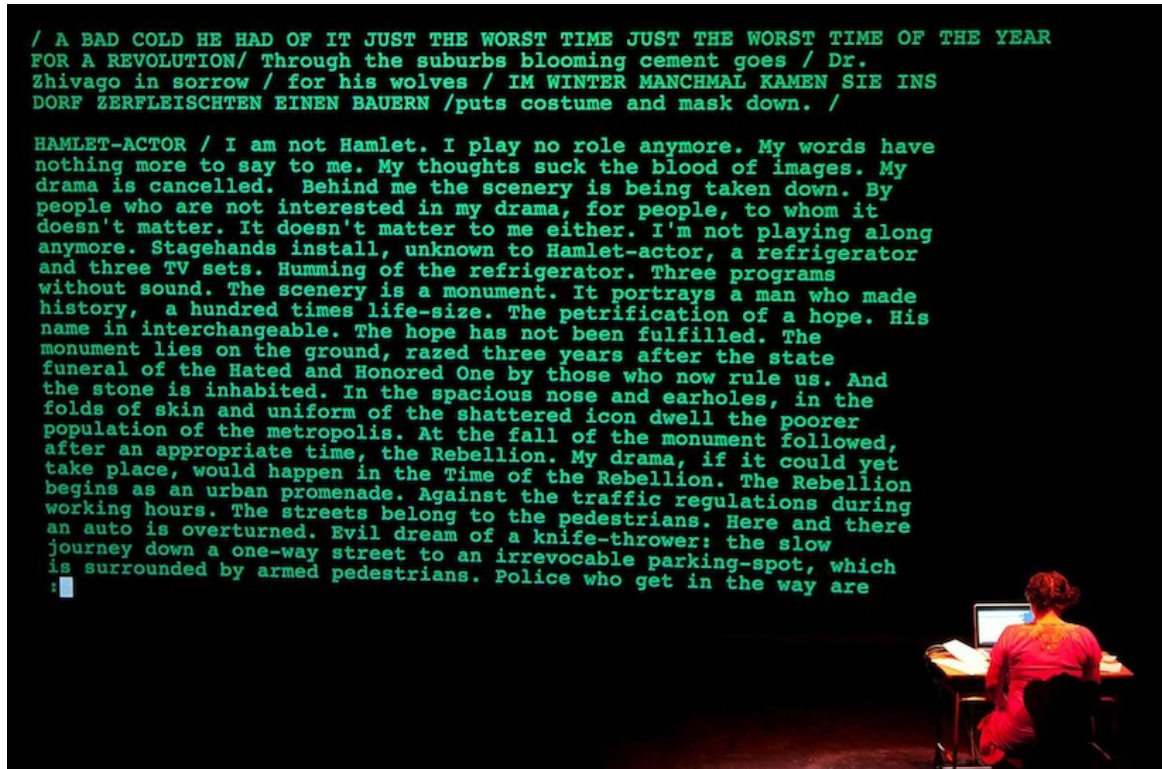

FIGURE 38 *ERROR_IN_TIME()* PERFORMANCE STILL (2011) PEACOCK THEATRE, TASMANIA. PERFORMER SCROLLS THROUGH THE ENTIRE TEXT OF *HAMLETMACHINE*.

The performer's fingers dance in various formulas of regular expressions (regex) into the terminal and parse through the file of the play text to get particular outputs, and keeps returning to draw out particular words. For instance, the performer greps (get regular expression) for each time the word 'love' is featured in the play text:

#cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ love\b" | uniq

also love

breathe love

An example of the code, which is composed to parse through and include the word before each instance, invigorates the already existing text, drawing further meaning.
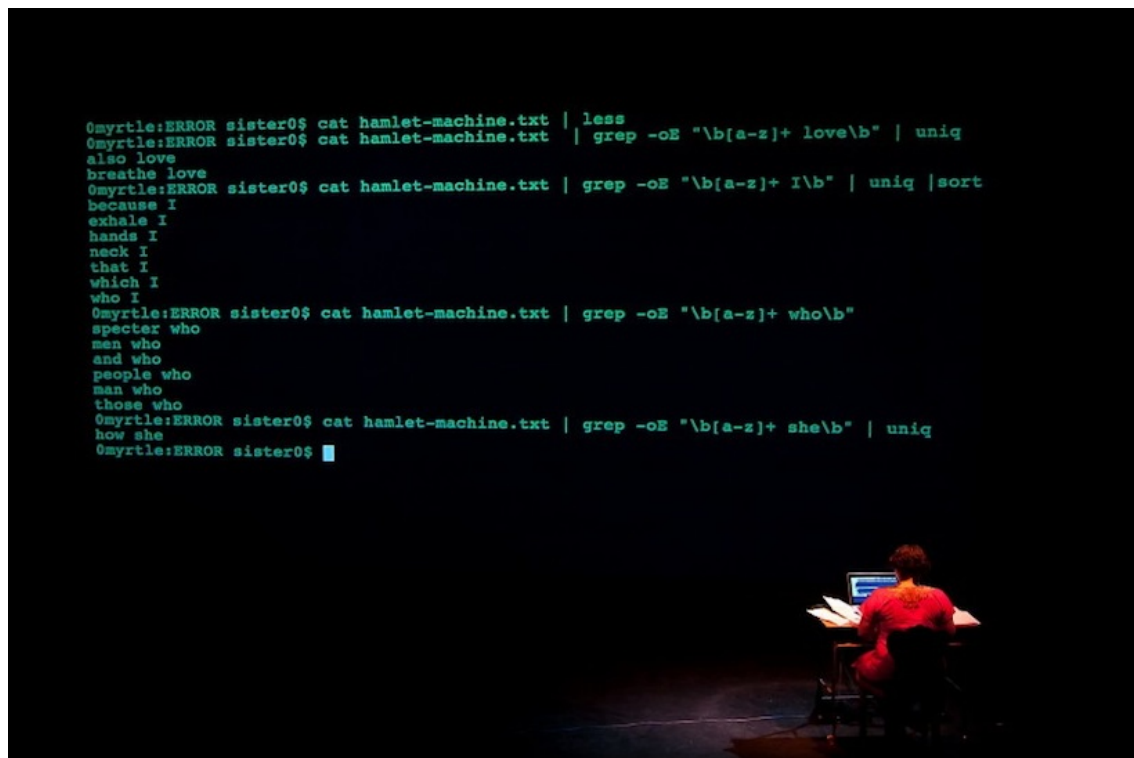
FIGURE 39 *ERROR_IN_TIME()* PERFORMANCE STILL (2011) PEACOCK THEATRE, TASMANIA. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

When I first saw code being executed into a black terminal I started to feel a familiar sensation, I was transported back to the dark empty space of a theatre. The dim light and velvet abyss make me forget everything. An entire planet lives behind those curtains. When my world begins to burn down around me, this is where I find refuge.

As a climax, the performer's typing stops, the character opens an ASCII fire animation, and an .mp3 recording encoded from an old vinyl record plays *Con el corazón* by Mercedes Sosa. The performer stretches, to the point of almost dancing on her chair, by the warmth of an ASCII generated fire (see Figure 40).

FIGURE 40 *ERROR_IN_TIME()* PERFORMANCE STILL. EASTERN BLOC, MONTREAL (2012) PHOTO: THIÉN V.

Hamletmachine is by the late Heiner Müller, a leading director and playwright in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) who worked in the Berliner Ensemble, after Bertolt Brecht. Müller said that 'to produce Brecht without criticising him was treason'. One way of 'criticising' Brecht that Müller advocates is to *'rework play-texts themselves, so that they can communicate effectively to a changed audience'* (cited in Eddershaw 1996, p. 153, my italics). Müller's five-part masterpiece *Hamletmachine* (1977) [HM] is a reworking of Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (1605) [Hamlet], for a contemporary audience. The conflicting and polarising dystopian content gives rise to a furore anticipating revolution. Arguably, it is prophetic since the work predicts a time where the front line no longer runs between East and West, but between the first world and their colonized countries. This is exemplified in Müller's claim: 'My place, if my drama would still happen, would be on both sides of the front, between the frontlines, over and above them' *(Hamletmachine* Act IV). Although written much earlier, its theatrical premiere was staged in 1978 in Brussels, and then later in 1990 in Berlin, shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall.[147] The entire *Hamletmachine* text reads as a literary invocation of its time and beyond. Its intertextual

---

147 Lotringer (1990, p.249).

nature features a myriad of mythological codes, narratives and histories hardwired into Western cultural history; Mueller hacks and redefines such archetypes. For instance, Ophelia ('She who the river could not hold') is at first presented to the reader as usual the ultimate 'dead girl', the consort of the prince Hamlet, magnetised to her horizontal propensity, but in the last scene she ends triumphantly, given a voice of her own by channelling Elektra:

> Ophelia:
> Here speaks Elektra.
> In the Heart of Darkness.
> Under the Sun of Torture.
> To the Metropolises of the World.
> In the Names of the Victims.
> I expel all the semen which I have received.
>
> - HM-ACT5

I try to see the computer as ritual, as theatre – as life
I try to see the computer and the theatre as ritual – as life

It is for these reasons I have, in turn, partially reworked the *Hamletmachine* text in the performance. At the very least, *error_in_Time()* pays homage to such a meaningful theatre text, with a hope to offer insights and encapsulate current concerns of the image-saturated emphasis endorsing our constant surveillance, in the computer-mediated culture of 2013. This is notwithstanding the hidden mechanisms of control within our ever-expanding ubiquitous technical environment: complex tools, formal languages and concealed substructures of the computational world that are increasingly pervading our collective legacies, our sense of selfhood, and our ability to experience the unfathomable. As discussed in relation to John Dee, this idea of espionage is nothing new. Playing the lead role of Hamlet in both Shakespeare's play and Heiner Müller's *Die Hamletmaschine* (*Hamletmachine*, 1989), Mühe (2007) recalls, 'Theatre was the only place in the GDR where people weren't lied to. For us actors it was an island. We could dare to criticise.'[148] A powerful medium in Shakespeare's time, theatre – like the Internet at present – was also used as a tool of social and political subterfuge.[149]

---

148 In obituary by Bergan, Ronald (2007).

149 Shakespeare's imperial Elizabethan Renaissance influence through theatrical parables is continually reasserted in the work of Yates (1978) for instance she writes 'We begin to understand that *The Tempest* was a very bold manifesto (1978, p.130)', and further 'a deeper sense of the knife-edge of danger on which they were poised...how Shakespeare...saw a vision of a wide imperial peace (1975, p.134)'.
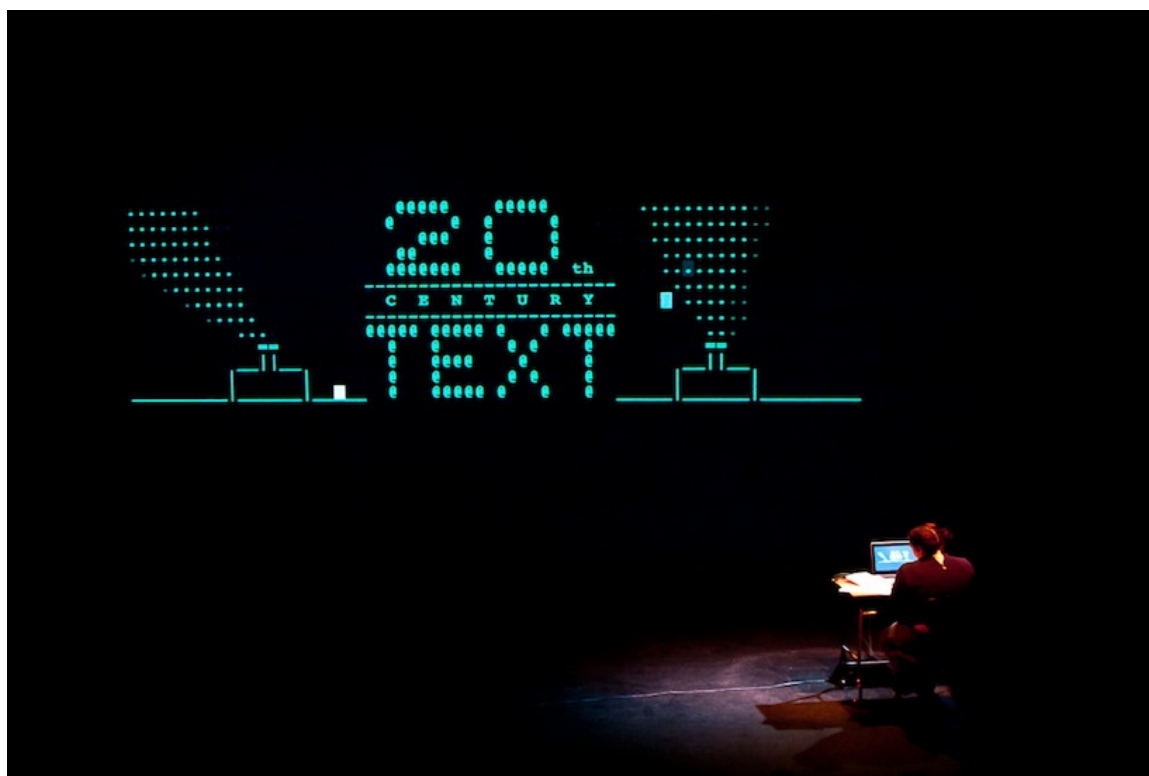
FIGURE 41 *ERROR_IN_TIME()* REHEARSAL STILL (2011) PEACOCK THEATRE, TASMANIA. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

The audience enters on an opening scene from 20th Century Fox (see Figure 67) in a text-based ASCII animation, which orientates the audience to some kind of impression that they are entering a temporal paradox. The term *error_in_Time()* is a software object from a Python language library. In this context, it also simultaneously refers to 'time out of joint' as spoken by Hamlet:

> Hamlet
> The time is out of joint. O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it Right!
> *Hamlet,* Act I, Scene V[150]

Müller and Brecht believed that the only way forward for the theatre was to challenge its immediate historical context. In this sense, it was my intention and expectation that error_in_Time() reflects a current point of view in time. The artwork asks: Where does this technology come from? What is the real use of a computer, and what social issues of privacy, surveillance, control paradigms are embedded into the technology? A pertinent example of this can be seen in regard to a spying tool used by the National Security Agency known as a 'portable continuous wave generator'. Jacob Appelbaum

---

150 Shakespeare, W 1998, *Hamlet*. Act I. Scene IV. p.196

(2013) recently demonstrated that this remote-controlled device works in tandem with tiny electronic implants to bounce invisible waves of energy off keyboards and monitors to see what is being typed, even if the target computer is not connected to the Internet.[151] In regard to freedom, privacy and digital surveillance, the vacuous consequences abound, rebound and resonate across numerous platforms when someone has little understanding of how the digital world is put together. Our dreams were once the place where we can remember that which we never realized we knew, and now these are being commoditised and codified by the prism through which we could reflect these visions.

Among other things, this recent revelation makes the fact that keystrokes are prominent in the work *error_in_Time()* even more pertinent to the immediate historical context, for the audience can literally hear and watch every keystroke the performer makes. In the artwork a performer opens the insides of the operating system, she uncovers and writes her files with textual commands. Through enquiring conversations and the amplified sound of fingertips she looks behind our daily computer interactions and uncovers the computer as a theatre machine, portraying it as a calculating device for symbol manipulation, not simply as media player or email portal, but as a complex mechanism that processes stories with algorithms.

> *Error_in_Time()* 30 Min Performance.
> Synopsis:
> This isn't a performance about identity, it is about identity theft.
> Our computers know us more intimately than lovers — but this is a lopsided relationship. Behind their user-friendly facades, what do we know of the operating systems that drive our daily fix? What happens inside the clandestine transmissions of geek space? In the age of Facebook, Twitter and WikiLeaks, most men and women grapple with issues of online privacy and exposure without understanding how the online world is put together. _Power geek_ Figures tend to be male: think Mark Zuckerberg, Julian Assange, and Kevin Mitnick. Is there a place for women inside *geek space*: what news might a female hacker bring back for the rest of us?
>
> _Error_in_Time() gives us a compelling insight into geek space from the perspective of a female hacker. _Error_in_Time() uses sound, literature, performance and live code manipulations to explore the intimate workings of computer/human interfaces, surveillance and social media.
>
> Error_in_Time() is a performance in which the character enters into her daily computer routine. The coded content of her screen is projected upstage. Networked presences, dancing, file searching and parsing are the main scenes of action. sister0 weaves her story via performative algorithms and types in a first person narrative touching on subjects from Ophelia and dark matter to rogue bots.[152]

---

151 Allworth, James (2010)
152 Please see Appendix 9 for *Error_in_Time()* performance script.

It is often claimed that *Hamletmachine* has always been a challenge to stage, whereby no director has reached the full potential of realising the text from the page to stage, even though Müller himself staged a seven-and-a-half hour version of the work.[153]

Originally the work came from the desire of Müller to translate Hamlet into German.[154] Of the significant and profound work and the ambivalence of how the play-text came into being, Müller writes:

> When I wrote the text I had no idea whatsoever how it could be realized on stage, not the slightest idea...you can only discover the answers when you are grounding the work strictly in the text and insist on the text; then certain constraints will appear which may lead to new forms of theatre or a new way to manipulate a theatre space. But without this step into an absolute darkness, the absolutely unfamiliar, the theatre cannot continue (cited in Lotringer 1990, p.239).

The 'absolute darkness, the absolutely unfamiliar' is a realm that *error_in_time()* attempts to capture.

On a screen a cursor pulses. A mise en scène filled with everyday objects - desk, chair, and computer. Simultaneity of stillness, restriction and hard logic, tied with vastness, connection; the elaborate and the unknown. The audience watches and gradually become aware that they are brought into a room that has a connection with the beyond. The minimal restrained typing opens to the incredible speed and intricate activity of the zeros and ones, of the packets sent and received and also to the rich conceptual bricolage of text being given form. Transfixed, enthralled, like little kids being told a story, following the typing, backspacing & retyping re-phrasing; the audience spellbound, sits silent and reads. Warm laughter erupts with typos and odd responses from bots. The rhythmic sound of amplified taping fingers is soothing. They lean in towards the stage, baited breath waiting for the next line, the next shift, the next contact with the software construct spirit voice in this code based séance. [155]

---

153 This has been communicated by many theatre directors, one instance is critic, theatre director, and playwright, best known for being a close collaborator at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Charles Marowitz who recounts his view of *Hamletmachine*; 'this piece has fascinated me for many years and repelled so many of the managements that I approached to allow me to stage it…', viewed December 10 2013, <http://www.swans.com/library/art14/cmarow103.html>.

154 In this seven and a half hour performance of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* at the Deutsches Theater East Berlin in March 1990, Müller inserted his own text *Die Hamletmaschine | The Hamletmachine* (1977) as a play within the play (Barnet 2006). Charles Marowitz writes 'It reads more like an invitation to a "happening" or a Performance Art piece than it does "a play" -- but because it contains an intrinsic theatricality and a number of wildly rotating themes, it tends to elude all categories, viewed December 10 2013, <http://www.swans.com/library/art14/cmarow103.html>.

155 Adapted from, Linda Dement (2012) email exchange with author 30 July 2012 09:18 <linda@lindadement.com>.

Each performance of *error_in_Time()* has contributed to its further development. Iterations were trialed and tested in front of formal audiences and more informal showings. Although the performance has a set structure and script, there is room for ad-hoc interventions and textual play to unfold. The decision of having a non-linear script gives comprehension to all the levels at play, especially because it is primarily a textual work. The heteroglossic nature of the word in a live setting, to which the theatrical nature of the work gives form, makes potent the use of typed text.

The Art of Hacking

The initial idea for the work *error_in_Time()* was to collaborate with remote performers, and other non-human presences (chatbots and scripted text animations), so that the human and nonhuman roles would become interchangeable for the audience. The most successful and deeply fulfilling collaboration was working with Mez Breeze (networker) and Sara Platon (ko66) who contributed to the work remotely via Internet Relay Chat (IRC), seen in Figure 68.[156] These were treasured peers of the researcher, who played a significant part in the work's development and iteration for the opening of the *Art of Hacking* exhibition at the Netherlands Institute of Media Art (NIMK) in 2011. As contributing writers and performers to that particular iteration, they embraced other intervening people into the performance. They were acutely aware of both the subjectivities and complexities of online remote computer sub-culture, and the wider literary and theatrical context of *Hamlet*, including the dramaturgy required – the aesthetic and pace of the text as it appeared on the screen in order to unfold the dramatic tension and non-linear narrative. The playful coded geek elite 'Leet' or '1337' or *'l33t' speak* are, 'words in alphabetic languages that are not read as a whole but are processed via their constituents, the letters' (Perea 2008, p. 1).[157]

---

156 Please see Appendix 9.1 for *E_i_T(v.3.1)* the collaborative script with MezBreeze and Sara Platon for the *Art of Hacking* exhibition at Netherlands Institute of Media Art (NIMK) in 2011, including programme catalogue.

157 See *l33t* speak Glossary.

```
18:34 <@sister0> Complex systems behave discontinuously
18:34 <@netwurker> Complexity_sys[Admin.I]tems, behave pls!
18:34 <@sister0> Systems change states when they are alive.
18:35 <@netwurker> Discontinuous_sTem[ples]s[+ PEtals] change sta[Mens]tes.
                   M(N)odes of Co[Bu]mplexity_system[ic]s,
                   controll_ur_recursion_looping!
18:35 <@sister0> In modes of complex systems a controlling loop may reach another
                 threshold state and transfer controll to another loop altogether
18:35 <@netwurker> U may[+B/+C] reach+hold. S[The]Tate+transfurry.
                   ContRo[i]l[ing]+loop_The_Perpetual_Social_loop:al2gether.
18:36  * netwurker trolls + teases
18:36  * ko66 is watching a squirrel and it is looking back at her while it is
         smoking a menthol cigarette
18:36 <@sister0> only *nix: switched back because i just miss too many things that
                 make my life easier
18:36  * netwurker SQQQUUUUUEEEEEEEEEE-rl?
18:36 <@netwurker> [L]on[e]ly [L|i]unix Witched_Under_ur_ease_of_use_back_skin?
18:36 <@sister0> socket received
18:37 <@sister0> #cathamlet
18:38  * netwurker that hamlet, such a cheery genderless soul.
18:38  * netwurker hands ko66 a plastic castle, a rotten wooden ghost, and a
         freudian father figure.
18:38  * ko66 says schellenkleid
18:39  * ko66 says wow to netwurker and thank her for the gadgets
18:39  * netwurker nods [play with them, pls?]
18:39 <@netwurker> cat H[C]am+[Taxi.dermied]Let_Us_PrayMachine:
18:39 <@netwurker> anal[trul]y, sez HamletMachine
18:39 <@netwurker> .
18:39  * ko66 goes to wet sand with her new gadgets
18:39 <@sister0> #catroom on the beach
 [18:39] [@sister0(+i)] [2:freenode/#Error_in_Time()(+ns)] [Act: 3]
[#Error_in_Time()
```

FIGURE 42 SCREEN SHOT OF 2011 PERFORMANCE *E_I_T(v.3.0)*, NANCY MAURO-FLUDE (SISTER0) IN COLLABORATION WITH MEZ BREEZE (NETWORKER) AND SARA PLATON (KO66).

The way the performance is scripted allows for an improvised (real-time) level of interaction, in a ludic manner from the script could subtly deviate. Online chat interventions from other performers took place when some of the audience jumped onto IRC channel #Error_in_Time(), being displayed on the networked computer screen that we all occupied, which was projected into the NIMK gallery. The audience used the IRC software, because they knew how; it was not 'suggested' in the catalogue or by the host. If one were a part of the hacker computer subculture that used IRC on a daily basis, they felt it was the place to be to feel through the theatrical interplay of the work in real-time (see Figure 42-43). During a showing in Tasmania at the Peacock Theatre, some audience members expressed afterward that they felt like 'logging in to IRC' and joining in but resisted the urge. However, in the right context at the opening of the *Art of Hacking* exhibition, it almost seemed a given to those who knew how.

```
02:59 < sister0_> banal stuff
02:59 <@netwurker> or: U can lea[Identity_Bu]rn a heap about urself
                   reaDing[!*grats*] the emails u_neva_s[c]ent.
02:59 <@netwurker> or: Ban[d]A[ged]_l[uver] stuff.
03:00 < sister0_> ko66 opening up machines & touching their inner parts
03:00  * netwurker co-opts ko66's response by whispering: "iLike. iOpen. Machines
         [t]Ouch + bleed_in[side+front+back]ner[ds]. iLike. iOpen. Systems_say:
         touche, [p]Arts."
03:00  * ko66 codes hardware for the masses
03:00  * netwurker masses code 4 the 'ware
03:00 < sister0_> systems can be followed CPU through to the bus route
03:01 < sister0_> white noise i smell it
03:01 <@netwurker> ...vs: snow_st[m]at[r]ix_in_audio_[ear]cups, i hear it
03:01 < sister0_> i dragg my finger along the cable
03:01 < sister0_> Persephone
03:01 <@netwurker> ....bleeding.data, no doubt?
03:02 <@netwurker> ...vs: Purse=phones, now.
03:02 < sister0_> into the grail of Persephone it falls
03:02 <@netwurker> The an[pres]cient Greek[s]: [now financially]Godd[ard]less.
                   Truly inter[-D-]jected human being[s].
03:02 < sister0_> Goddess of the underworld - a truly connected being.
03:02 < sister0_> I'm tired of runaway processes, broken sessions never fully
                  terminated.
03:02 -!- dddw [~DanielPar@host064-010.kpn-gprs.nl] has joined #Error_in_Time()
03:02 <@netwurker> connecks+throats, ooh yeah baby.
03:03 < dddw> meep
03:03 < sister0_> I am sure there is a socket time out setting to prevent this.
03:03 < sister0_> ..
03:03 < sister0_> aloha dddw
03:03  * netwurker welcomes dddw with a cup of hot steaming identity
 [03:03] [sister0_(+i)] [2:freenode/#Error_in_Time()(+ns)] [Act: 1,3]
[#Error_in_Time()
```

FIGURE 43 SCREEN SHOT OF PERFORMING COMPUTER WHERE AT 03.02 AN AUDIENCE MEMBER OF THE 'ART OF HACKING' EXHIBITION JOINS IRC CHANNEL #ERROR_IN_TIME(). *NETWORKER WELCOMES DDDW WITH A CUP OF HOT STEAMING IDENTITY.

When other people were included into the performance, the machinic nature of the chatbot appears clumsy and insignificant, especially when highlighted against Mez Breeze's hybrid language 'mezangelle', which dismembers, recombines and amasses multiple layers of meanings into a single phrase (see Figure 42-43). And while this was a thrilling and successful formula amongst which to perform, both the logistics of arranging for three people in different continents to be available and all they had to offer created an entirely new work all together. Therefore the performance work has a derivate name: *Error_in_Time() Version 3.1 / E_i_T(v.3.1)*, notwithstanding, clearly it is the more *l33t* version.[158]

In general, *error_in_Time()* exists as a solo theatre performance work in collaboration with a chatbot. The work has been perceived as inaccessible and elite, Leet – 1337[159]

---

158 The *E_i_T(v.3.1)* script can be compared with the *Error_in_Time()* script in Appendix 9 and Appendix 9.1.
159 The work is supposed to be performed in a black box to emphasis that relationship of the theatre, to the void of the computer terminal or shell. The *mise-en-scene* is just as important as the computer terminal and the Internet connection itself. Although it seems rare to convince programmers to place it in the theatre perhaps because of its 'experimental computer based nature'*1337*. The work has been staged at theatres, white cube galleries and to open plan warehouses housed by artist run initiatives. Namely: Eastern Bloc Montreal, an

by some conventional theatre reviews.[160] The final version documented for this thesis focuses on the machine, in particular the interweaving of the *Hamletmachine* text – alongside other texts by the author, Mary Shelly, Netochka Nezvanova, Kathy Acker, Charles Baudelaire, and Unix permission files – to invigorate text and to contemplate the role of automata in our personal media-scape and their impact on our attention. Computers, through computer agents (chatbots), have become key social actors and communicative partners in the human domain. The modes of interaction between humans and computers have provided fruitful territory for theatrical exploration.

Therefore, what also is poignant is that in *The Tragedy of Hamlet* (Hamlet), Hamlet the character is dominated by a feeling, which is so ineffable he refers to himself as a 'machine', 'whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet'. This is thought provoking as; conversely, it anticipates human and non-human performative agencies more than a century or two before the Industrial Revolution.[161] This is picked up by Müller in *Hamletmachine* (1977) where Hamlet has as his one desire to divest himself of all 'baser matter' he now claims 'I want to be a Machine' (Act IV). In this way, *error_in_Time()* stages an interaction of human and non-human performer; audience members find themselves reflecting on the differences and similarities between the human performer and her inhuman machinic partner through the inhuman speed of chatbot responses (the bot's responses appear immediately with no evident pause for reflection or typing) contrasting with the human performer's pauses and typing mistakes.[162] A custom-built chatbot gives 'helpful' grammatical suggestions when the human performer mistypes words or uses faulty punctuation, highlights the machinic nature of the non-human performer. Audience members, although aware that it is a machine, find themselves anthropomorphising the bot:

> I liked that the bot was obviously a bot - its dumbness brought clarity. It would
> be hard to mistake it for human or for quickly pasted text or anything else people
> might imagine is happening. The mechanism was clear. The computer's responses
> are inhumanly fast, and machinically off. Her text is poetic, funny, dark. The

exhibition and arts production center dedicated to New Media and interdisciplinary art; Netherlands New Media Art Institute; Brighton Pheonix Theatre; Peacock Theatre, Salamanca Arts Centre; Serial Space Sydney; Kulturen der Welt in Berlin Germany's national Centre for the presentation of international contemporary arts, Seymor Theatre Centre Sydney.
160 See contrasting reviews (Andrews, Duncan 2012; Rackham, Melinda 2010; Jarman, Robert 2011)
161 Shakespeare, W 1998, *Hamlet*. Act II. Scene II. p.209
162 Kathy Cleland, 2010, pers. comm., 21 October.

other, the software construct who answers, is that the straight guy in this wordplay? (Linda Dement 2011).[163]

These interactions show the inability of machine intelligence to maintain its performance as a believable social partner. Its overtly precise machinic intelligence and machinic quirks lead to communication errors and eventually a breakdown of understanding. Sometimes the performer would at times make syntax errors in executing her code and get no output at all, due to her incorrect input. A characteristic of humans is that in the face of incomprehension, we still strive to find meaning, or create an entirely different meaning in the erasing of a word to another. It also raises the question: why is the character attempting conversation with a chatbot? It is symptomatic of our entire dialogue with computers through games, or the corporate machinic structure. During the interaction between the human performer and the computer chatbot, the responses were not always known; although they were pre-programmed, the chatbot responses were not deterministic but triggered via word syntax prompts. The irony is that the machine is not intelligent or self-aware, so there can be no communication nor shared understanding (except for some rules of grammar and a database of related words).[164] Therefore, both facilities of skillful expertise as a command line computer operator and as an improvising theatre performer were required. These performative gaps and 'slips' in understanding between the human and chatbot translate to be both satirical and aesthetically provocative (Figure 44).

As the human performer is positioned with her back towards the audience and facing towards the projected screen showing the computer terminal, it enables the performer to be semi-anonymous; she is as 'faceless' as the chatbot interlocutor she is communicating with. Curious about the performer and her reactions to the chatbot text responses and questions; the audience get no clues from her visage or her facial expression. The audience members are thus forced to rely on her countenance through text inputs, which builds up a sense of anticipation and suspense; they imagine their

---

163 Linda Dement (2012) email exchange, 30 July 2012 09:18, <linda@lindadement.com>.
164 Not everyone would agree that consciousness can ever be simulated; nevertheless some people claim that machine intelligence is possible and predict that a simulation may pass a Turing test sometime in the next century. Although since Weizenbaum (1966) scripted the first chatterbot Eliza people have been proffering such developments. Even so, that being the case, a fully functioning sensory and cognitive apparatus can be entirely different depending on ones predilection and experience for further discussion, see Jakab, Z (2000 p. 329–351).

own responses, waiting to see what she types and project possible conversational

trajectories into the interpretation.
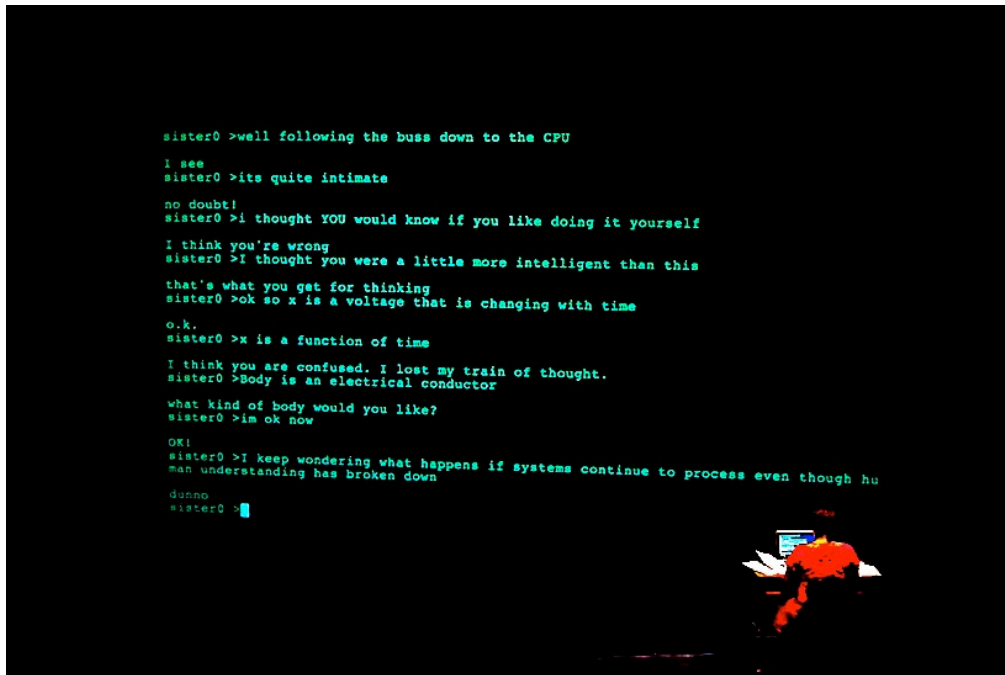
FIGURE 44 PERFORMER CONVERSATION WITH BOT. PERFORMANCE STILL *ERROR_IN_TIME()* (2011), PEACOCK
THEATRE. PHOTO NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The audience imagines their own responses, waiting to see what she types and project

possible conversational trajectories into the interpretation. For the audience this

staging uses the convention of social Gestus. The techniques of Brechtian theatre –

Verfremdungseffekte (the making strange) and formal elements of Gestus (the

paradox of showing) – can be traced in the performance; in this way, the performer

simultaneously mocks and comments on the forms she uses. Brecht describes his

concept of social Gest:

> the spectator is given the chance to criticise human behaviour from a social point
> of view, and the scene is played as a piece of history. The idea is that the
> spectator should be put in a position where he can make comparisons about
> everything that influences the way in which human beings behave (1964, p. 86).

There is something unsettling about having someone communicating to an audience

with their back to them. Further the audience is encouraged to identify with her role as

a cypher; she becomes the viewer's stand-in or proxy in the interchange with the

chatbot. This faceless aspect was initially inspired by the painting *Not to be Reproduced*

(La reproduction interdite) by René Magritte (1937), the work depicts a Figure standing

in front of a mirror, but the man can see only the back of his head unlike the book on

the mantelpiece, well-worn copy of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, which is reflected correctly (see Figure 45).

FIGURE 45 *NOT TO BE REPRODUCED (LA REPRODUCTION INTERDITE)* BY RENÉ MAGRITTE (1937) [MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN IN ROTTERDAM].

Together, Poe's dystopian literary maelstrom on sailboat Ariel, and the shudder that Magritte's painting *Not to be Reproduced* rouses, could be an analogy for the wincing feeling of exploitation one endures when it is realised that whatever one searches on the Internet tends to get reflected back at the non-critical user. For instance, Google gives us responses filtered by our previous history to reinforce the worldview we already have. What other kinds of prescriptive models use this information? Fuller and Goffey propose that our every twitch and instinct is now being always and already pre-empted, in an aptly titled book *Evil Media*, they continue to emphasise how 'computers translate speech acts into signals' (2012, p.191). Including tangentially and very messily so. What is salient here is the everyday silent conversation that we carry on when perceiving with our proprioceptive facilities, our unfolding ideokinetic exchange, and the consequences of this data being captured, processed and subjected 'for market place behavioural analysis' (Fuller & Goffey 2012, p.47). This is using such signaling in its most pervasive and limiting scenario: it is a framework where it stands a disservice to our embodied proto linguistic state, our being. Therefore the work

error_in_Time() is not about identity; it is instead a comment on how a more subtle form of identity theft is taking place. Through subtle control of the lazy regular computer user on the Internet, constant engagement hinders our expressiveness, sells our uniqueness back to us by appearing in synchronicity. It is almost as if people are being demonically possessed by pre-programmed social media user profiles, which are both quite prolific and hysterical. This is exemplified more so in the artworks *"I am Googable", therefore, I am* (2009-11); *Scrying:Mea* (2013) and *Self-Portrait* (2013), discussed in Chapter 4.2.[165]

The act of 'tagging' people online in social media is often driven by some kind of public institutional rhetoric, self-promotion or funding propaganda. It is essentially reductive, because we are constantly asked to solidify and reify something that in essence is always developing and changing. It has been a while since Hamlet threw down that gauntlet to 'Suit the action to the word, the word to the action' (Act III, Scene II).[166] But this is precisely this distinction between utterance and action, between saying and doing what Judith Butler's (1997) theory of performativity brings into play. In her rousing essay, 'On "Sourcery" or Code as Fetish', Wendy Hui Kyon Chun speculates: 'Code is a medium in the full sense of the word. As a medium, it channels the ghost that we imagine runs the machine-that we see as we don't see-when we gaze at our screen's ghostly images' (2011, p.184). As a part of the corporate machinic structure, we are haunted like Hamlet, who in his grief is driven by his father's ghost. So it is not the forms of power that stand out; it is the changing status of meaning at play. Watching language, letters and words form and reform as they are being typed then backspaced, then re-typed with another iteration, then erased, literally opens up possibility to re-code, re-phrase and re-signify – to make manifold. The dramaturgy is all in the timing of the sound of the amplified fingers digital tapping on the keyboard. The 'speech acts' occur in the performance of the typing hand, where the focus of attention is the cursor, pulsating in the command line. In this way Chun continues:

> …when a speaker executes a performative utterance, she or he cites an
> utterance that makes a "linguistic community with a history of speakers". What
> is crucial here is: one, code that succeeds must be citations - and extremely

---

165 Maintaining one's social media user profile and tagging ones community as a form of 'voluntary servitude' which the concept and the enigma is discussed by Zygmunt Bauman (2013).

166 Shakespeare, W 1998, *Hamlet*. Act III. Scene III. p. 248

exact citations at that. There is no room for syntax errors; two, this iterability
precedes the so-called subject (or machine) that is supposedly the source of the
code; three, and most importantly an entire structure must be in place in order
for a command to be executed. This structure is as institutional and political as
it is machinic (2011, p.193).

To explore the energy of the word in relation to meaning, it's 'iterability'. The
substance of a text, as it were, exceeds the sum of the substances of the words that
make it up. By performing the texts, the ability to fit subtle gestures to actions and
phrases and the pronunciation of them both, in order to subvert the rational sense of
the words, the expression in language understanding is re-organised around the
embodied sounds of the performative utterance. This may have to do with hearing and
what is happening in the texts that are coming through the performer. The performing
body gives rise to the 'performative utterance', which is there to be traversed again and
again. The word – the movement of it – arises from within me, and from what is
outside of me, coming through me. Nevertheless, Friedrich Kittler (1995) claims: 'We
simply do not know what our writing does'. Arns (2004) discusses the performativity
of code and not of speaking but of being 'spoken', where the code is not secondary;
rather, it is the execution of the code that speaks itself. So what else does such a
staging of the theatre machine put into motion? In other words, is the user opening the
operating system, or is the operating system opening the user?

The story is already there in the space… but every time it is different, although it
always starts the same… It is like this… It could also be different…It has all always
been there…What a character says is an expression of her entire being. She says those
things because she has a history. On that specific moment in time as the text is being
made manifest she deals with her environment and her soul in that specific way. Is the
character an incessant expression of primal suffering? The character has great depth.
There are distinct bonds that tie her with present, past and future. Then there are
bonds between the character and the performer, between fiction and reality. The entire
being of the performer has not been neglected; on the contrary, the performer while
she simultaneously represents something or someone represents herself, while the
character in rather rare moments brings her to life. And much of the time, I feel I am
bearing the weight of the centuries of Ophelia coming out from the heart of darkness.

Code Séance: ism | breath | she | who | with | I

ism | breath | she | who | with | I consists of three screen recordings of text being typed into a black computer terminal. The installation is a development of the performance work *error_in_Time()* as a gallery installation. It came to be a work in its own right through the density of the texts employed and a desire to give them room to reveal themselves anew.

Transcending the realm of the anecdotal, in the dark magic space of the shell, the artist undertakes divination from the timeless essay on women and fiction by Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Reconfiguring this profound work into lists, the artist almost takes on the role of literary pirate but transparently she reveals the essay's treasure.

FIGURE 46 INSTALL SHOT *ISM | BREATH | SHE | WHO | WITH | I* PLIMSOLL GALLERY (2012). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The 'first' screen consists of red, yellow and white burning ASCII animation fire. The fire is placed, as if text were positioned next to a fireplace, to comfort the viewer and in a playful way allude to the 'traditional' book reading intellectualism that the essay so directly nudges. However, its main function is as a signifier of an intimate act of ritual, a place of communion and knowledge sharing in many cultural worlds. The middle video is a recording of the artist, using vim, a text editor, typing out the extended essay *A Room of One's Own*. In a performative manner, the typing includes mistakes and

inconsistent timing, accompanied by the sound of the fingers on the keyboard recorded through this durational activity. The left-hand side video features a screen recording where various command line regular expression tools (cat, sed, grep) parse through the essay, reconfiguring it into different categories and lists (see Figure 47). For instance, in one moment the work searches for how many times a word ending in 'ism' appears in the said essay:

```
#cat roomofonesown.txt | sed 's/a[A-Z]/[a-z]/g' | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ism\b" | sort | uniq -c | sort
    1 despotism
    1 feminism
    1 organism
    1 scepticism
    1 symbolism
   13 criticism
```

The performative manner pervades the work through the use of simple executable code to parse through the canonical text, which recodes, reinvigorates, reconfigures, transfigures and compute its treasures. Other texts unfold inside this text in order to make it breathe and pulsate, reminiscent of Woolf's breath in *A Room of One's Own*.
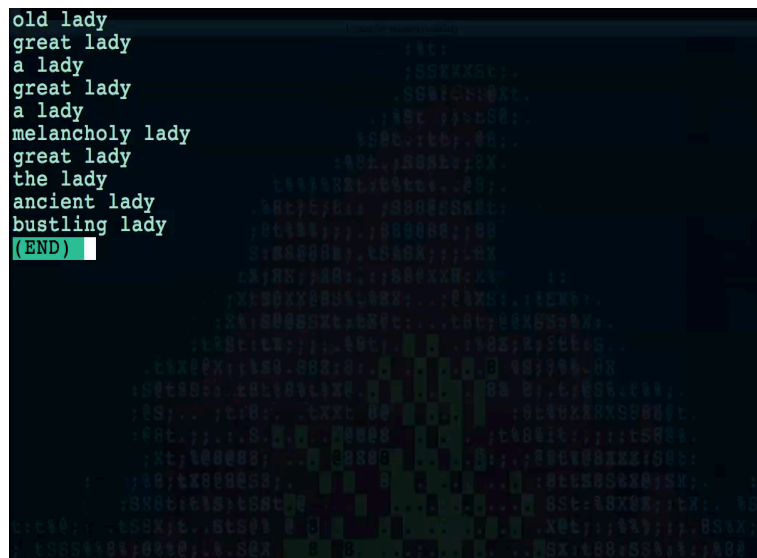
FIGURE 47 SCREEN SHOT ISM | BREATH | SHE | WHO | WITH | I. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Additionally the action of transparently executing code is a way of letting the 'uninitiated' in to the process. This terminal space has traditionally been a male dominated zone. Therefore it is, a new way playing out of the labyrinthine journey that Virginia Woolf traverses and leads the reader on, to investigate women and fiction, including taking to task the, so called, elite Oxbridge Boys Clubs of England. In this

way *ism | breath | she | who | with | I* has extended *A Room of One's Own* to become a shell of ones own.

Woolf's essay sharply references the writer's experience and the place of women in the University, in fiction and in society per se. She pays attention to women who are ostracised, banished or imperiled because of their elusive and enigmatic way of being in the world. Woolf, as the writer in first person, takes us on a journey through her wanderings and experiences, amongst a rigid scenario where implied rules and protocols are prevalent and acutely stifling to someone who would go against them. But as a reader we experience how she so deftly, satirically and playfully navigates these obstacles and as a result transcends them. By utilising Woolf's text as a spring board for *ism | breath | she | who | with | I*, the work represents a ficto-critical (or *ludibrium*) method so wonderfully placed by Woolf in her provident way of presenting contradictions and possibilities to the reader throughout her critical enterprise. In an attempt to divine the wise words of a lucid, cogent thinker who is no longer alive but still relevant, the semantic analysis of the list structures transfigures the work into its essential constituents.

> I want to breathe new life into her words and validate them in our, character limit (sms = 160 character, twitter = 140 character), 'status updating', aphorism-saturated culture, which is so limited in comparison to the textual complexities of yore.

The benefit of knowing how to compute such algorithmic procedures, the act of executing code in the command line to parse through a text and make one anew, is revealing of how polyvalent these practices can be, and how they lend themselves. *ism | breath | she | who | with | I* could be also perceived to be a code-based séance which opens a wormhole to contact the author and summon the transcendental power of the dark magic space of the terminal shell to collapse time and reanimate the text.[167] As a result, as soon as utterances are recorded in writing, they acquire a permanence separated from our embodied matrix, because language is spun out of the stillness of

---

167 Siegert's gives a similar example where he recounts Kafka's dream, as 'new version' of the old invocation of the Muses', of collapsing time and space 'to install a communication channel between the present an Roman antiquity…the distinctions between language and noise, animals and human beings are abolished, and which threatens - or, rather, seduces Ulysses with his own demise. The origin of language has been relocated to the realm of nonhuman signaling technology, and it is there that the dreamer hopes to hear the classical voice of Roman antiquity (2007, pp. 39-40)'.

our fluctuating experience. From Derrida: 'Writing is space itself and the possibility of repetition in general. This is why "We should get rid of our superstitious valuation of texts and written poetry. Written poetry is worth reading once and then should be destroyed"(TD, 1978)' (cited in 1978, p. 247).

But Derrida's semiotic argument hinges on the fact that even though speech encounters disclose themselves to immediate perception, they do so as vectored styles of unfolding, not as finished matter; the dynamic ways of engaging are limited by the habit of ocular-centric ways of being. Here, the formal structure between *La Langue* and *La Parole* remains enigmatic – that is, the relation between the formal structure of language and the expressive act of speaking defined by Saussure (1960) and as unpacked by Chun (2011). This juxtaposition is apparent in the sparseness of the performance work's textual interface, where the code is both simultaneously emotive and logical. In the process of the text forming, the agent has an awareness of her own finitude in terms of being and existing in a language that is always already inscribed, of herself being 'uttered'.[168]

4.2 Vanity apocalypse: "I am Googable", therefore, I am

> …the Internet might have become a too risky medium to play "Anonymous"…
>
> -Florian Cramer 2014.

I have been told I have as many faces as there are characters. It never really troubled me; on the contrary, I try to keep up with all these façades. I want to be invisible and visible in the same moment. I want to be someone with one face, or is it that I think I have to be someone with one face? There is a desire to clear up all the murkiness, because it very often feels that this affirmative manner is what society wants from me. When I express myself in obscurity, which is the most common feeling I have about what I do, I feel judged as ambiguous. But what if the finite categories presented to us as a given, were simply meant to be transgressed? And yet if I have to be affirmative, it is in the darkness, here inside the black box I feel most at ease. Sequestered in the wings, enveloped by the stage curtain, waiting to bathe in the light.

---

168 Jacques Derrida's discusses performativity as citationality and asks: 'Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a 'coded' or iterable utterance, on in other words, if the formula I pronounce in order to open a meeting, launch a ship or a marriage were not identifiable as conforming with an iterable model, if it were not then identifiable in some way as a "citation" (1977, p.193)'.

In Hamlet – Act II, Scene II, a puzzled and confused Polonius suggests to Claudius to hide behind the arras (a hanging wall tapestry) in order to spy on the ambivalent Hamlet and his communications with Ophelia.

Had he gone mad?

Or is Hamlet simply evading being 'read' because his beliefs had dramatically transformed?

To 'Google' someone is to literally type that person's name into the Google search tool and analyse the output results of the Google database engine. It is common practice for regular Internet users to look into the void-like screen of a networked site, like Google, as if this database were an accurate mirror of the world that they use to reassure that 'they' or 'others' exist. The act stems from what is commonly known as 'vanity surfing'. In a chapter titled 'Making people obsolete so that computers seem more advanced', Jaron Lanier, writer, computer scientist pioneer and composer, identifies this trait as 'the race to be the most meta' (2010, p. 28). Although he is an avowed humanist materialist, very different from the metaphysical and speculative approach which the research in this thesis stems, Lanier makes a compelling critique of the hive mind, or swarm mentality, that has emerged on the internet, which acts 'to remove the scent of people, so as to come as close as possible to simulating the appearance of content emerging out of the Web as if it were speaking to us as a supernatural oracle' (*Edge Magazine* 2006). I elaborate upon this peculiar transcendental characteristic in Chapter 4.3, in relation to the artworks *Scrying:Mea* (2013), *Awry Signals* (2013), and *Computer is Dreaming* (2012).

Before the current wave of international surveillance scandals, contemporary electronic movements (Anonymous, darknets and cypherpunk communities) and related computer sub-cultures had been obscure in popular culture. Aside from the popularisation of the Internet itself since the nineties, accomplished hackers had many personal reasons for the need for anonymity and in general avoided celebrity. We see, in the mainstream media, that even magazines like *Rolling Stone* are featuring articles on

hackers as if they are the new genre of rock star.[169] For instance, WikiLeaks', main representative Julian Assange, is now a common household name even though the site itself runs on the anonymising Tor network.[170]Jacob Applebaum, WikiLeaks representative, artist, and a Tor developer, is also becoming well known outside the elite computer hacker sub-culture.[171]

Surveillance disclosures by hackers and hacker movements are getting heavy exposure for leaking information and opening up the net in conflict zones (now commonly known as the 'Arab Spring'), along with global surveillance disclosure by whistle-blower Edward Snowden in June 2013, which revealed that basic human rights to privacy are violated as a routine course.[172] This is especially significant since the political conditions in these Arab countries have left a power vacuum. That being said, many of the 'revolutions' in former Eastern Bloc countries were anticipated and highlighted so succinctly in Müller's *Hamletmachine* (1977), discussed in Chapter 4.1.[173] Debatably, there are still some groups, like Anonymous (Anon), a collectively fluid and dynamic Internet subculture, which have had a large public profile but until recently individuals could not be pin pointed.[174]Anon's performance spectacles critique topics and current events related or relevant to contemporary Internet culture; their slogan is 'in lulz we trust'. The satirically natured open wikis *4chan* and *Encyclopedia Dramatica* have been known to be a public platform and have acted as smoke screen for Anon and other data-leaking actants.[175] A notoriously unconstrained online swarm, it is deliberately made unclear who has decision-making rights in Anon, who have been known to target governments, institutes and corporations who enforce Internet censorship.

169 This is quite diverse and one could claim in fact the 'Hacker' is the new celebrity which can be comprehended seen in diverse Mass Media coverage from respected computer magazine *Wired*, or popular culture arbiter *Rolling Stone*, to more vernacular publications for instance *Mirror UK*. See Quinn Norton, (2012); Pisa, N (2013); Best J (2013); NineMSN, Australian Federated Press 2012, *Assange gets rock-star welcome at balcony*, August 20 2012, viewed January 10 2013, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/world/2012/10/08/14/18/assange-gets-rock-star-welcome-at-balcony>.
170 A constructed interchange of forked sites and server mirrors; a storage tool for the implementation and dissemination of data across numerous servers, with no one centralized location, see the Tor project site, viewed 13 January 2013, https://www.torproject.org/ >.
171 See Nathaniel Rich, (2010).
172 For more info see *Wikipedia* definition of Global surveillance disclosure, viewed 13 January 2013, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_surveillance_disclosure>.
173 For a discussion of how and why such political comment and demonstration explodes onto the stage, in Hamletmachine (1977) see, Müller H. 2001.
174 Although Anon there have been recent 'faces' unveiled see, Poulsen, K (2013).
175 *4chan* can be found at their website, viewed January 10 2013, <http://www.4chan.org/>. *Encyclopedia Dramatica* operated from (2004-2011) under its creator, Sherrod DeGrippo, in late 2011 created a forked site by redirecting *Encyclopedia Dramatica* to a new site, *OhInternet*, due to hollow extreme content, *OhInternet*, viewed January 10 2013 <https://OhInternet.com>.
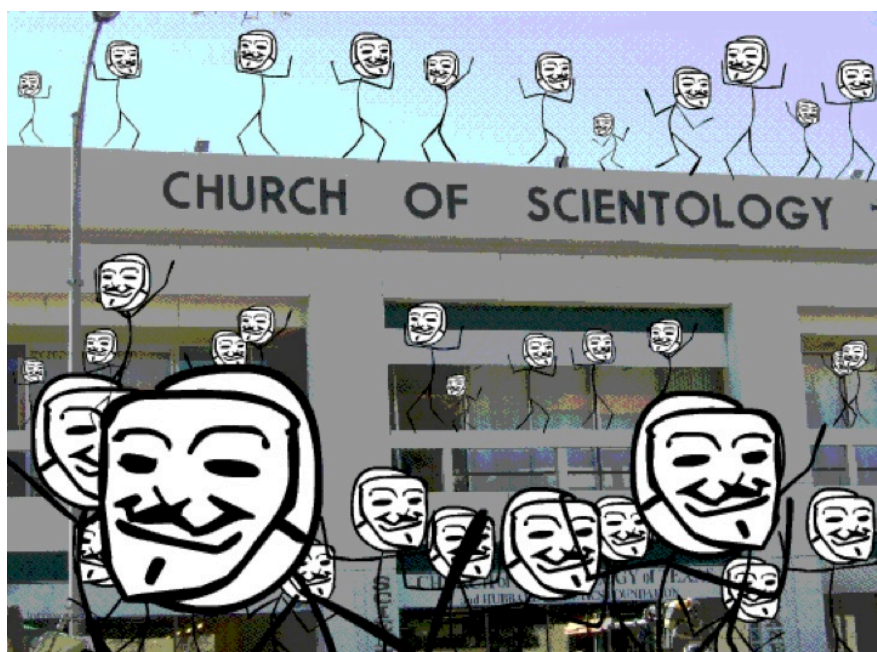
FIGURE 48 EPIC FAIL GUY SCREEN SHOT OF *CHANOLOGY* PROTESTS. PHOTO: ANONYMOUS.

Anon is also associated with wearing the caricature Guy Fawkes mask, arising from 1980's England through comic books published by DC, but most commonly popularised in the film, *V for Vendetta* (2005). The originally appropriated mask intention was to symbolise the Epic Fail Guy (EFG) from *4chan*, who found the mask dumpster diving and decided to use it in the *Chanology* protests against the Church of Scientology. This was meant to imply that Scientology is 'epic fail' (see Figure 48), just like the historical figure Guy Fawkes (1605) a religious extremist and thwarted right wing revolutionary who tried and failed to blow up the King in the House of Lords, in order to restore a Catholic monarch to the throne after the wake of Queen Elizabeth I.[176] This mask has become an internet meme and somewhat contradictory symbol not only for the realm of Internet hackers, but also on the ground as a sign of cultural capital, witnessed in the post-anarchist Global Occupy movement,[177] as a dramatic sign of dispute in the European Parliament, and as a working class protest.[178] As a

176 On September 30th, 2006, a thread was posted in which a comic series illustrated the EFG finding a Guy Fawkes mask similar to the one in the movie *V for Vendetta (2005)* in a garbage bin, and decided that he would wear it in protest against the Church of Scientology, for more info see *Project Chanology*, viewed 14 January 2014 < https://encyclopediadramatica.es/Epic_Fail_Guy and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Chanology>.
177 For an account of the relationship between online swarms and the 'on the ground' Global Occupy Movement see Wolf, A(2013).
178 'Masked Men: Bizarre Twist in Sprit Protest', *The Mercury* August 10 2013, p. 1., features a report on how masked protestors defying court orders created a 'bizarre scene in Melbourne demonstrating against the sacking of wharf workers' in relation to the Spirit of Tasmania boat allegedly being found to be a major conduit for illegal drugs and guns into the Island state. Politicians in Poland protesting about the latest EU

movement, it is debated whether Anon is actually one, because it is not an organisation that you can contact and to which you can contribute information directly. Journalist and blogger Quinten Norton, who covers hacker culture and Occupy movements, describes this volatile playful nature of the Anon crusade:

> Anons lie when they have no reason to lie. They weave vast fabrications as a form of performance. Then they tell the truth at unexpected and unfortunate times, sometimes destroying themselves in the process. They are unpredictable.[179]

There is a highly contested area within the Anon movement: 'since 2008, a frequent subject of disagreement within Anonymous is whether members should focus on pranking' (Kelly 2012, p.1682), or *lulz* (*ludibrium*) or target more administration activities directly highlighting surveillance and control regimes. Jaron Lanier argues against anonymity, claiming that 'emphasizing the crowd means de-emphasizing individual humans in the design of society, and when you ask people not to be people, they revert to bad, mob-like behaviors' (2010, p. 56). Historically wearing masks or giving information in cyphers is a form of camouflage, play, theatre or ritual attire**.** The increasing need for such 'masks' (not only for Anon but also the notorious punk band Pussy Riot)[180] and encrypted information raises questions. Especially as facial recognition software becomes prominent, the work of databases, algorithms and networks has become a central topic of public debate.

The recent Snowden global surveillance revelations may have temporarily masked the fact that espionage, surveillance and control is not new, although the scale and depth of its mechanisation is unprecedented. It is also widely speculated that John Dee's major work, as mentioned earlier in thesis, was actually a cover for intelligence gathering described by Yates as 'the emerging Idea of the British Empire as Dee conceived it' (Yates 1985, pp. 115-6). Clulee elaborates on this and writes that Dee studied Johannes Trithemius' work:

---

http://www.techdirt.com/articles/20120126/12313917555/polish-politicians-don-guy-fawkesanonymous-masks-to-protest-acta-signing.shtml Also see Post Desk 26th October, 2011, 'Interview with the British man who designed the Anonymous (V for Vendetta) mask, what he thinks of how it's being used' viewed 14 January 2014, <http://www.postdesk.com/an-interview-with-the-british-man-who-designed-the-anonymous-v-for-vendetta-mask-on-what-he-thinks-of-how-its-being-used>

179 Quinten Norton, 2012.

180 Russian feminist punk rock protest group Pussy Riot based in Moscow. Founded in August 2011 and like Anon has a variety of members who wear brightly colored balaclavas. See Pussy Riot Home page http://pussy-riot.livejournal.com/ viewed 10 Jan 2014.

153

> Unlike [Trithemius'] work Polygraphia, which is unmistakably cryptography,
> the Steganographia concerns both cryptography and the transmission of
> messages by occult means which have much to do with spirits, and their images,
> invocations, and conjurations…and disguising methods of
> encipherment…(Clulee 1988, p.137).

This use of Steganographia is implied in the double-00s, the number referred to by Dee as the secret eyes of the Queen Elizabeth I. In this sense, the 'cypher' refers to the observed zones in which Dee has surveillance and control (see Figure 49) and the *7*, which refers to a root symbol along with a cabalistic significance. This dense combination of meaning where one theory doesn't discount the other with layers thoroughly theatrical is emblematic of the Hermetic tradition, and characteristic of the artworks in this thesis.

FIGURE 49 DEE'S CYPHER, MEANING HE IS THE QUEENS EYES.[181]

The artwork *"I am Googable", therefore, I am* (2009-11), is a satirical account of how the Internet as a platform encourages us to consider ourselves within social networking sites and persistent identity services. An artwork reflecting on the theme of 'voluntary servitude' (Bauman 2013) is the sardonic *Suicide Machine 2.0* (2008) by Critical Engineer, Gordan Saviçiç, whose concept is to kill your virtual identity on social media. 'We believe everyone should be able to commit suicide in social networks!'[182] This reductive behaviour or 'voluntary servitude' (Bauman 2013) is conjectured to be a consequence of the 'vanity apocalypse'.[183] This is an applied example of how such technological omniscience and information is pervasive and ubiquitous, along with the realities of their actual deployment. *"I am Googable", therefore, I am (2009-11)* could be seen as a contemporary self-portrait, referring to the solipsistic behaviour inspired by regular Internet use (see Figure 50).

181 Cited in Deacon (1968, p.3)
182 *Suicide Machine 2.0*, viewed 10 January 2014, <http://suicidemachine.org/>
183 'Vanity Apocalypse', is a term I first heard in 2003, used by Wheelsfalloff a Tasmanian breakcore artist. On his myspace page he writes, 'Like those pets who forget how to reproduce because they're in a box all their lives. Or the stuff they put on kids fingernails to stop them biting them. Or that drug they make them violently ill when they drink alcohol...People sitting around on paroxysm frantically trying themselves who they are...let alone anyone else...yep that's the one....it will be...THE VANITY APOCALYPSE!!! see the hilarious irony of me posting this and fully realise what a silly little conundrum of a person I am' viewed 15 July 2013, <http://www.myspace.com/Wheelsfalloff >
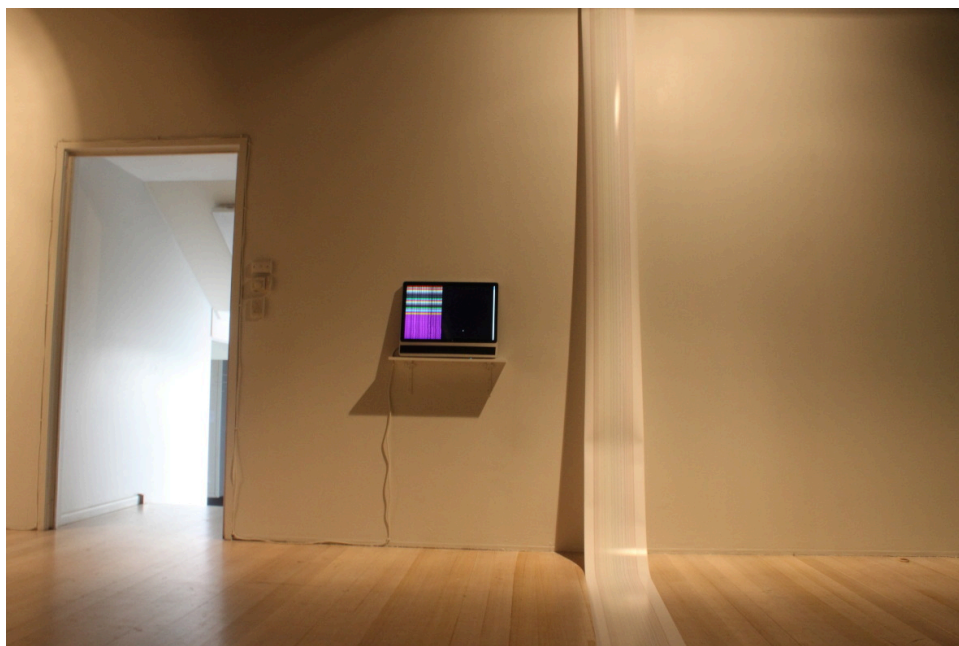
FIGURE 50 *"I AM GOOGABLE", THEREFORE, I AM* (2009-11). INSTALL SHOT CONTEMPORARY ART TASMANIA (2011). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

"I am Googable", therefore, I am (2009-11)

Medium: Former live feed, Networked installation, colour, silent, data feed embedded in a website on my server, networked computer monitor, along with a 349mmx 6000 mm semi-gloss colour print on banner paper.

There was a time in the early 2000s when wireless Internet hubs in public spaces became popular within the computer sub-cultures, arguably spawning future Anons when the aspiration was not to be 'Googable' but to be mercurial and faceless. In many cases, you only become aware of the name of the actual real life person and their one or many IRC ./nicks (online pseudonyms), only after a long time, or perhaps never at all. Presenting your 'online self' as shape shifting and mysteriously magical was often the aim.

Over the last decade, signs of an emergent 'vanity apocalypse' began in subtle everyday ways. At first it started in passing: people would confess privately they had 'Googled' someone (or me) when they had first met. This then developed into 'Googling' themselves and comparing their results with others – to count how many 'hits' they were getting when they entered their name into the search engine. At first it was explained discreetly, as if it was a shameful thing to do, like most stalking, spying

and trolling can be conceived to be. However, this had developed into open public practice for instance one can stumble across twitter updates about this (Figure 52). Over time these began to accumulate and became quite cynical (Figure 53).

I began to wonder: how can people really know themselves, if they keep on looking outward into the void of the Internet to find out? What does this mean for their sense of self or even for our sense of otherworldliness and the unfathomable?

Sarah Christie
6 July near Hobart

Evie: Mum! Let's google to see if god is real! Let's use images to see a picture of god!

Like · Comment   👍 16 💬 3

Phaedra Brothers, Carolyn Wigston, Anthea Boden and 13 others like this.

Tracey Boyden Ha! Good work Evie. Demand proof! 🙂
6 July at 11:13 via mobile · Like · 👍 1

Allison Leary Surely, Google will know...
6 July at 11:19 via mobile · Like

Matt Preston Dawkins didn't think of that!
6 July at 22:00 via mobile · Like

FIGURE 51 SCREENSHOT 2013, HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SARAH.CHRISTIE 6 JULY 2013 NEAR HOBART. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Admittedly, the intention of 'Googling' is often playfully naïve, like the case in Figure 51 where a six-year-old girl was curious and asked her mother to see if they can find God through Google. This is a dangerous proposition if it is not playful but seen as a belief system,[184] or was done for even more banal reasons – for instance to see who has the same full name, or just to observe what is logged about them publically on databases. But people would admit to 'Googling' someone after they had met them, in order to check their validity or social status. But the so-called innocent act of

---

184 Alan Liu describes a provocative connection between the long history of the Christian encoding of the human perceptual system, 'A long time ago (and, of course, still in many parts of society today), people had another name for massive information dumps that occurred spontaneously without any query having been made. They called it God. It was God, or the gods, who spoke out of the burning bush to tell you what you did not even know you needed to ask. Before Oracle, Inc., in other words, there were oracles. But since the Enlightenment, secularization, and the many modern revolutions, that role of the oracle has been renamed History. We know we are in the presence of history when it preemptively tells us, and enforces upon us, something we didn't even want to ask about. Gods and history: before we even know to query or pray, they have their root kit in place. So that accounts for the perhaps romantic notion of the "ethical hacker" in my book (cited in Lovink 2006)'.

existential confirmation – just 'Googling' someone to find out a bit more about them, or
of they themselves – is exemplified for instance in comments like: "Googled myself
(NAE). Discovered a page which shows who has favourited which of my tweets.
People I didn't even realise knew I existed :)" @Mjec[185] expresses existential pleasure
of being noticed by others. This notion of appearing that is not just becoming visible is
discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to the aesthetics of transmission. But if the palpable
qualities of tacit human relation become predominantly absent then people become
objectified in an alarming way.

FIGURE 52 @HEIL_KITTY CITED 26/04/11 10:46.186. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Any human expression beyond the confines of the conventions of a 'Googable' trace is
no longer valued by some people, as the quotes by @heil_kittty and @Nikoochu belie.
Where once, to be 'unGoogable' was considered mysterious and very smart, according
to @heil_kittty: 'when you can't find someone on Google that they're fucking boring'.
Or according to @Nikoochu, they should be deemed as suspicious: 'I don't trust
anyone I can't get google [sic] results for.' And although these might be slightly ironic
there is a certain truth to them.

185 @mjec Twitter Feed cited 11 March 2011, viewed December 12 2013, <http://twitter.com/#!/mjec >.
186 @heil_kitty Twitter Feed, 26 April 2011 10:46, viewed December 13 2013,
<https://twitter.com/heil_kitty/status/6285999820362547 2 >.
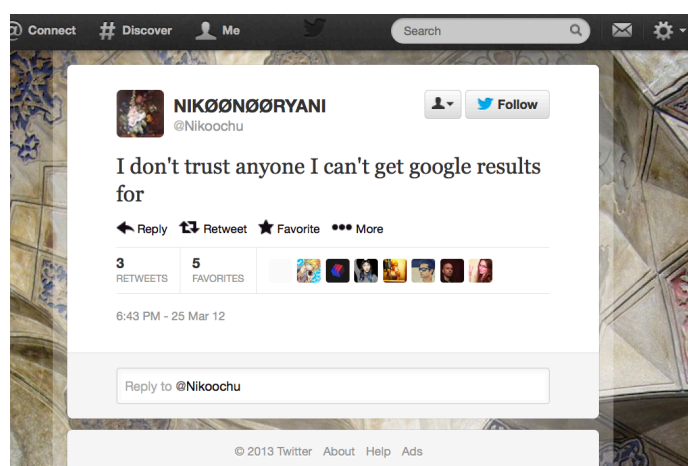
FIGURE 53 NIKOOCHU 18:43 PM - 26 MAR 12. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE. [187]

A strange sort of vanity based on a purloined social networking identity is prevalent. In our interactions with such, we find ourselves becoming more and more removed from an actual living organism. Having an interior sense of self that isn't reduced to categories is something that Lanier discusses. In the visceral experience of something existential, the sharing of private fantasy beyond the self-reduction of a social networking site, 'life is turned into a database…the philosophical mistake, which is the belief that computers can presently represent human thought or human relationships. These are things computers cannot currently do' (2010, p. 69). The computer envisaged here is not universal and is unable to partake of dimensions that are not ruled by the imperatives of use and efficiency. What Lanier is advancing, albeit in a highly conservative view of humanism, is a very broad picture of life in which there are a considerable number of areas unable to be contained by programmed constructions but are nonetheless seemingly governed by them.

The artwork *"I am Googable", therefore, I am* (2009-11) gestures towards this colossal effort of trying to find out more about ourselves through an external means. The artwork consists of an output of accumulated results of a 'Google search' which prints out the artists name and how many 'hits' the name attracts onto an HTML page. This information is automated to add a new line; additionally it is programmed to cycle through a limited array of colour each day. For instance:

---

187 @Nikoochu Twitter Feed, - 26 Mar 12 18:43 pm, viewed December 12 2013, < https://twitter.com/#!/Nikoochu/status/184153622161006592 >.

Approximately 31,600 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Fri, 11 Nov 2011 01:01:01 CET
Approximately 31,600 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Thu, 10 Nov 2011 16:30:02 CET
Approximately 6,920 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Thu, 10 Nov 2011 01:01:01 CET
Approximately 6,930 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Wed, 09 Nov 2011 16:30:02 CET
Approximately 6,950 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Wed, 09 Nov 2011 01:01:02 CET
Approximately 6,950 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Tue, 08 Nov 2011 16:30:01 CET
Approximately 1,130 Google hits for Nancy Mauro-Flude on Tue, 08 Nov 2011 01:01:01 CET

I want to emphasise that if we approach the search engine Google as if it is a wise oracle of objectivity, it will give us a false impression – an illusion, like a rainbow that recedes from view the more you try to approach; you can never pinpoint it. The rainbow-like hues are seated in a black abyss, which daily updates a status count on the screen and on the print. Both are positioned as this infinite hope that a rainbow inspires (Figure 54).

I had also thought to program a 'dot matrix printer' to print the new line, live, each day in the gallery. However, when I first exhibited the work, many people thought that the paper feed was in fact already live, rather than a pre-print on banner paper (which it was). Thus, I decided that this extra detail was unnecessary, adding little conceptual meaning to the work than a retro nostalgia of an old machine chewing up electricity, and added little more than a savvy hardware hack to the meaning of the artwork.

This is a speculative work; it doesn't matter that these results are not very accurate. This is particularly true since 'Googling' brings many different results that depend on many variables. For instance, a name may bring different numbers of 'hits' for a person who may be more or less popular in particular countries, mirroring servers throughout different time zones that read out variable numbers of results, also dependent on your computer's search history. Google searches differentiate between paid and unpaid results.[188] In fact, I came to appreciate that: the more the results are capricious, the better. The objective of the work is that the 'hits' act as a metaphor to tell the artist that she, in fact, does exist. This in turn serves to make a statement about one's sense of self, their interiority, or the increasing lack of it, in an age where the ability to exist in seclusion or isolation is vanishing.

---

188 Blumenthal, Mike, (2012)
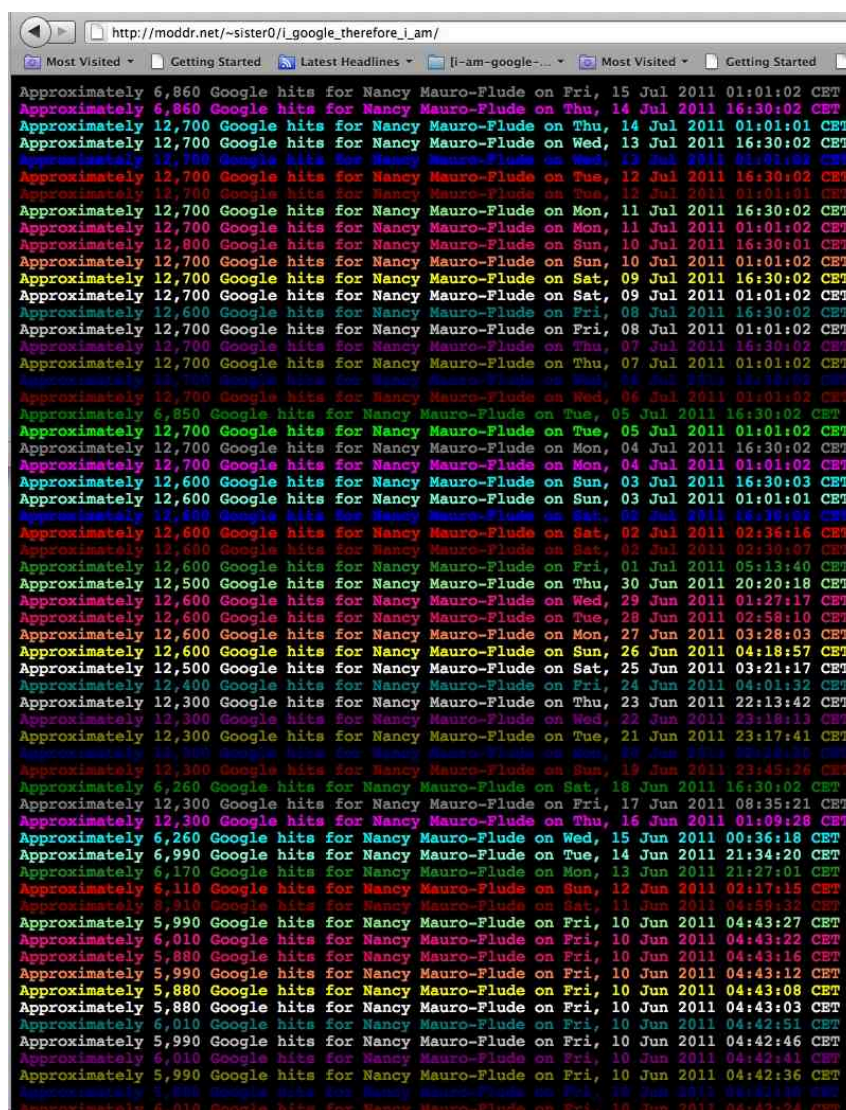
FIGURE 54 *"I AM GOOGABLE", THEREFORE, I AM* (2009-2011). SCREEN SHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

An uncanny thing to me happened during the live operation of the artwork, an unprecedented hacking of Google took place, and this had immediate repercussions from Google's security measures and the artwork on December 16 2010 the last update.[189] The server that the artwork operates upon gave up the error results: Traceback (most recent call last): File "/home/sister0/public_html/i_google_therefore_i_am/googleresults.py", line 4, in <module>   import pycurl ImportError: libpython2.5.so.1.0: cannot open shared object file: No such file or directory

---

189 Steven Levy discusses how a security stronghold password system code named Gaia was hacked (2011, p.308). Also see Kim Zetter (2010).

Apparently there is nothing mysterious about this, as it is just telling the client that the Python shared library file disappeared and there is an error on my server. This had nothing to do with Google. However, the HTML parsing ceased according to the changes that happened on Google's side December 16, so the date is hardly just pure coincidence. After trying to hack this artwork back to execution by myself and with no luck, I asked some peer colleagues. No one could fix it without a major overhaul of the entire project since Google had moved everything to HTTPS. Furthermore, Kim Zetter in *Wired* magazine wrote: 'the attacks appeared to have begun Dec. 15, but may have started earlier.

FIGURE 55 INSTALL DETAIL, *"I AM GOOGABLE", THEREFORE, I AM* (2009-2010). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

They appear to have ceased on Jan. 4, when command-and-control servers that were being used to communicate with the malware and siphon data shut down' (Zetter 2010). As a result, Google also did a major overhaul to its Privacy Policy and Terms of Service; officially these changes took effect on March 1, 2012 from a HTTP to a HTTPS / SSL unified privacy policy, but the work was rendered untenable from December 16, 2010 (the work began its daily updates March 2009). I had been contemplating the artwork's end and how would I conclude it. Therefore, I came to the decision that although I could spend a lot of time re-doing a playful hack, the artwork reached its logical conclusion and had come to its fruition.

Self Portrait (2013)

> "And who is your Queen?" I inquired.
>
> "She who directs the world and its entire course from one end to the other," he replied.
> "Her name is Wisdom, although some dunces dub her Vanity…"
>
> -Comenius (1669) *Labyrinth of the World*.

Some people still read stones; they encrypt their secrets, relate it to their interiority and even seek their glyphs and markings for such wisdom. In some belief systems it is an interpretation of nature, of the whole cosmos of something that is symbolic. The video *Self Portrait (2013)* is shot at the Tessellated Pavement, an uncanny landform and a place of beauty and mystery.[190] The matrix-like slate rock formation resembles a labyrinth (See Figure 56). Comparable to Comenius's (1669) *Labyrinth of the World* and his labyrinthine hall of mirrors and surfaces, it is a void, a non-place or a place of possibility. It is also to a degree quite haunting, it very often seems that perhaps it might have been, or might be, inhabited.

FIGURE 56 JUST AFTER SUNRISE, THE TESSELLATED PAVEMENT, EAGLEHAWK NECK, TASMAN PENINSULA, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA (2009) PHOTO: JJ HARRISON.

I suspect that to solve its mystery might provide transcendence of some kind Perhaps it is a platform to else where, an underworld whose entrance others and I have yet to find? As I stand behind a mirror and hold it, the mirror becomes a type of threshold. I am attempting to use it as a cypher key to pick the tessellated lock to the backdoor (See Figure 57).

---

[190] Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania, May 2011, Geodiversity: Tasman Peninsula -- Landforms explained, Viewed December 9 2013, < ww.parks.tas.gov.au/file.aspx?id=7038>

Ever since I read the curious quote of Kleist (1810), I was opened up to the possibility of the backdoor entrance, who claimed in On Marionette Theatre: 'And Paradise is locked and bolted, with the cherub behind us; we must journey around the world and determine if perhaps at the end somewhere there is an opening to be discovered again' (Kleist 1972, p. 24). I want to pick that lock to the place that Kleist calls Paradise. Flanagan (2002) once called Tasmania 'the antipode of the antipodes'. Was this the end that Kleist refers to? In his quote, Kleist seems to be informing us to find a method that bypasses normal authentication. To take a journey, find the hidden back door with fellow travellers, elsewhere. Leave behind the cherubim, and instead embrace the imperilled, the undaunted, the gamblers, and inspired rule breakers.[191]

FIGURE 57 DIGITAL STILL SELF PORTRAIT (2013). VIDEO | SOUND | COLOUR | CONTINUOUS. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

A back door exists in the background, hidden from the user; often you can just sense it is there. In the same way, many of us know how to use our friend's back door when we visit, but have not undergone a formal induction process for our validation. As such, the back door is, in computer science, a maintenance or testing tool but also a clandestine entrance, known to an intimate few, perhaps deliberately left in place by

191 We can witness this idea when we see how the work of John Dee and for instance - Nicolas Tesla (1856-1943), were considered charlatans by some people, even though their eclectic inventions and ad-hoc way of navigating society are now implemented into our daily industrial infrastructure as a rule of course.

such Critical Engineers for ease of access, (notwithstanding even an oversight by a system admin). As discussed in Chapter 4.1 in relation to the artwork *Valetudo* (2013), sequins and mirrors can be used to transport meaning to other places – wild places that, as yet, can only be imagined.

Before industrialised telecommunications (and the Internet) there were many different types of signaling systems. Mirror systems and cypher codes were used to channel messages from one remote entity or dimension to another. Borges writes: 'From the remote depths of the corridor, the mirror spied on us. We discovered…that mirrors have something monstrous about them' (1962, p. 27). The mirrors would reflect light in order to transmit signals over a distance to remote presences. The mirror is an essential tool in the technology of self-portraiture in the history of art since the Renaissance. Magus John Dee implemented this communication technology in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. He even 'had a theory that powerful mirrors, specially constructed, could be used for drawing magical power from the sun to transmit messages and objects to the stars and other worlds' (Deacon 1968, p.37), as previously discussed in the Preface and Chapter 1. John Dee's navigation experiments with mirror signals were not only applied to dream worlds but also resulted in developing a codified signaling system for the British naval fleet (Deacon 1968, p.88), along with this other, more extra-terrestrial communication. This will be considered further in relation to the artwork *Awry Signals* (2013), in Chapter 4.3.

With *Self-Portrait* (2013), an allegorical backdoor is created to secure a remote access, while attempting to remain undetected. A visage is not available for scrutiny by pervasive social media tracking sites or even to feed the 'vanity apocalypse' of aggressive narcissism, as indulged by facial recognition software; this personal motivation should hardly be surprising.[192] In this age of the vanity apocalypse, the mirror in *Self Portrait* doesn't want to reveal its secret too easily, because it understands the many levels of intelligence and (in)security (See Figure 83).[193] In *Self Portrait*, the mirror is striking instead of a visage one has to do is to admire the monstrous and

---

192 See Mukherjee, Aurindom, 2013; Turnbull, Joe, 2013.
193 Arguably, one could say that in 2013, 'security' never felt so much like a term of abuse ACLU Speech, Privacy & Technology Project, Senior Policy Analyst Stanley, Jan, 2013, *How Social Networks Short-Circuit Our Inborn Privacy Intuitions,* viewed 26 November 2013, <https://www.aclu.org/blog/technology-and-liberty/how-social-networks-short-circuit-our-inborn-privacy-intuitions>

fascinating splendor of reflection of the dazzling set of forces carved into the rocks. But this reflection is not simply a sparkling surface; because of its exquisiteness, one tends to forget that the true fascination of the mirror lies beyond all matter, all beauty and all action as it transports us into another realm.

Jean Cocteau's film *Orphée* (1950) uses a simpler allegory: he also uses mirrors as a door to elsewhere. On arrival, Orphée asks; 'Where are we? Do all mirrors lead to this zone?' A gatekeeper elicits the response, 'Life takes long to die. It's the zone…made of memories and the ruins of human habit'. In Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) a mirror is also used as a passage to another world where there is a tall lady dressed in black with a mirror face. Deren writes that 'the film is concerned with the interior experience of an individual' (1965, p.1). Contrary to this, in this self-portrait the individual is passed over, it disappears behind the mirror. On one hand, this impulse is guided by a wish to merge with the immediate environment, combined with the tension and aspiration for transcendence. The evaporation of the self to transcend is what Kleist acknowledges as those to be 'afflicted with the inertia of matter, the property most resistant to dance' (1972, p. 24). Paradoxically performing with the mirror, the performer has to be aware and present; that is, solely concerned with the holding of the mirror in that moment. Yet simultaneously, the performer is absent because their whole being is taken up by holding the mirror. Lowell Lewis claims that there can never be an absolute pure mediated presence or absence:

> Therefore it is possible to assert that absence is the ground of presence, that stillness is the ground of movement…both oppositions should be seen as always already mediated. This means that a logically necessary absence must become a phenomenal absence in presence, and likewise a ground of stillness can only appear as stillness in motion (1995, p. 236).

How much can the 'I' disappear behind the actions, and the endless number of noises that want to bring to life, all that is not me? In this way the work is reminiscent of Valeska Gert's most enduring work *Pause* (1920), 'designed to draw attention to stillness and serenity' (Blackburn 2013). A state that is always motion (presence) in stillness (absence), or stillness (absence) in motion (presence).

I do not perceive myself as somebody. Meanwhile I am there. I am where I am supposed to be. I am only with what I do. However the true power of the mirror in whatever technology we are able to work with lies in the absence of its looker, the absence of its own. The only thing I am essentially concerned with is my performer's presence.

How should I be, what should I do? Should I perform anything at all? Am I being a medium enough for other things to speak through me? The mirror is small – I can hold it in my hands – but in other aspects, it is without ending. I make contact with the macrocosm. In my universe, I manipulate these things around me to understand who is manipulating them. I identify myself with my surroundings. I slowly start to become my surroundings.

The main creative principle in the making of the work was the wish was to highlight the artificiality of the machine as obvious since there is no perfect illusion. The embodied presence subtly reveals itself in the jerks of the unsteady mirror and camerawork. There is rupture, a clunky break within the video loop showing different angles and fragments of being in an uncanny environment, which is to denote a shift of state, as if the cypher key has been decrypted. The works do not strive for sophisticated, seamlessness, because transparency too often signals that something is being hidden. Seamlessness in the implementation of technology tends to be driven by the need for humans to resist change, or to adapt or challenge ourselves (our inertia) from our habitus that is continually reinforced by social customs. Finally the hope is that the works, *"I am Googable", therefore, I am* and *Self Portrait*, offers two very small antidotes to the mirror ball of worldly identity. The awkwardness in the hand made and shot art forms validate that moment of awkwardness where we might prize up the layer and uncover the tessellation of rock for something we might recall as soul underneath.

4.3 Theatre Machines and the Firmament.

> It is useless to answer that reality is also orderly. Perhaps it is, but in accordance with divine laws – I translate: inhuman laws – which we never quite grasp. Tløn is surely a labyrinth, but it is a labyrinth devised by men, a labyrinth destined to be deciphered by men. The contact and the habit of Tløn have disintegrated this world. Enchanted by its rigour, humanity forgets over and again that it is a rigour of chess masters, not of angels.[194]
>
> *-Labyrinths* Jorge Luis Borges

The process of anthropomorphism haunts us. We stare into the screen's surface, as if it's a crystal ball, expecting revelation, where in most cases all we discover are displaced and distorted reflections of our own input.[195] This in itself is not offensive, but the ostensible networked synchronicity, built into the operating systems of the networked media we daily use, makes it so. Arguably, it could impair one's ability to perceive what one thinks is authentically synchronized as meaningful, but instead in most cases it is a marketing ploy. What does this mean for unforeseen creative processes? Will it limit the dissipations that can induce all sorts of pleasurable meltdowns? As observed earlier in the Prologue and Methodology chapters, automatons and paraphernalia, in contemporary (and earlier) cultures, many people have had a strong desire to invest objects and mechanisms with sentience.[196] Jaron Lanier discusses the experience of something existential, 'The mere possibility of there being something ineffable about personhood is what drives many technologists to reject the notion of quality' (2010, p.50). Roger Caillois, defined anthropomorphism as 'The tendency to endow all beings and things with the feelings, emotions, reactions, cares, ambitions and so on appropriate to man' (1964, p.16), he also warned of the risks he thought lurked in the anthropomorphisation, and its potential to isolate human beings from the rest of the environment.[197] In the study of animal behaviour

---

194 Borges (1962, p. 42)

195 Kirschenbaum, in his succinct take on forensic computing also reminds us that 'the familiar posture of today's computer user – shoulders hunched, head thrust forward, peering into the depths of the screen (2008, p. 257)'.

196 For insance the principles of animism which rejects Cartesian dualism and the separation between the spiritual and material worlds. There is also a significant theoretical divide in the way that matter was conceptualised by the Greek tradition of mimesis in order to create narrative. On the contrary, Bataille's *L'Inform*e conceptualises energy as a principle of non-separation, a process of undulation and alternation, proposing a distinctly different subject–object relation to the one developed in western culture through the isolation and depiction of objects. SeeBataille, G (1929, p. 31)

197 Carlo Ginzburg gives an account of mythology around the' Collége de Sociologie founded by Rodger Caillois and Georges Bataille in 1937 and the painful criticism around the proposition of the Surrealist movement who proposed to recreate a secret society or order. It is important to note that the after affects of the initial Hermetic Renassance movement in the late sixteenth century as influenced by John Dee, as described by Yates (1975, 1979) is important and various, for instance Thomas Huxley who spoke 'explicitly of divination directed toward the past' I am leaving out for reasons that these later more popular 'occult' sub-

anthropomorphism is also believed to have been the cause of much misinterpretation, and a drag on the scientific study of the causal mechanisms (Kennedy, 1992). Kennedy also recommends that a technologist remain ever vigilant to slipping into the belief that non-human entities have feelings and purposes, which they act upon. Caillois deeply explored the drives, forms and structures that embrace both the human and non-human orders: 'The time has come to invoke "motives" that are just as pressing on a universal scale, such as profusion, play, ivresse and even aesthetics, or at least the need for ornament' (Caillois 2003, p.346). Calculating machines have become fetish objects so when Lanier declares the ways that 'people are able to lessen themselves to make a computer seem accurate' (2010, p. 53), he is explaining that the impulse to anthropomorphise can interfere with objective thought processes.

The everyday conversation that we carry on when perceiving with our proprioceptive facilities, a continuous ideokinetic exchange (via our autonomic nervous system) is being captured and transmitted by the devices we hold close. We contend with issues of online privacy at the most intimate level; a concrete example is how, while holding our connected mobile devices, every flick of the wrist, finger hover and eyelid flicker is captured by kinetic data measures. Fuller and Goffey discuss this overt teleological feature:

> the financialization of everyday life will not be complete until everything has been translated into the semiotics of market signals.…We will all learn how to send signals. Politicians send signals to markets, consumers send signals to producers, prices, are signals for everyone, all behaviour is a derivative (2012, p.58).

The proprioception of the user interfaces with vernacular mobile devices and therefore consumer behaviour strategies in their pervasive implementation. For instance, when the hand readily navigates the space between the fingers and the keys on the mobile device or networked computational object via 'air gesture' – 'optical smart scroll'. In human computer interaction and interaction design, gaze interaction is an area actively

---

cultures are in short, faddish, and therefore not with in the bounds of this research project (See; Carlo Ginzburg 1990, pp.126-143).

being explored. Gaze tracking technologies were previously been highly controlled psychology experiments; now more recently, they have made inroads into marketing.[198]

The intention in these artworks – *Scrying:Mea* (2013), *Awry Signals* (2013), and *Computer is Dreaming* (2012) – is to highlight 'profusion, play, ivresse' and how the symbolic formulae of computing machines, metaphysics and the performance of language have historically co-constituted one another or have been integrated in what was formally considered *techné*. Matthew Kirschenbaum reminds us 'computers themselves were initially engines of prediction and prognostication' (2008, p. 4). If we use Cramer's comprehensive notion of magic which is 'at its core, a technology, serving the rational end of achieving an effect, and being judged by its efficacy…'(2006, p.15), from the fictional performance of code in an artwork to its everyday use in computing, as such software can be rich with significance. Cramer continues: 'Magic wasn't considered occult until religion and later science and technology rivalled and marginalized it. The technical principle of magic, controlling matter through manipulation of symbols, is the technical principle of computer software as well' (2005, p. 15). Rather than treating these apparently transparent, but often closed, systems as subjects to challenge, in these artworks I discuss how I have constructed and opened machines in a speculative performative manner, destabilising their traditional operating paradigm. To clarify, the audience can see 'behind' the scene – the technical origin of the action in a verbose output of textual data and the coloured cables are laid bare, and the boxes are transparent to reveal the inner working components of the mechanism. But nothing is shown by this; it is de-illusionary and magical in the same moment.

However the aims of the artworks *Scrying:Mea (2013), Awry Signals (2013), Computer is Dreaming (2012)* is to point to the tension of that mysterious moment when the divergence between reality and fiction ceases to be palpable. Not because what is real is unmasked as false, nor *vale tudo* (anything goes) – rather because we are confronted with the apparatus at work in a transparent manner. The works are responding to a desire for laying the black box (input and output code) bare.[199] Lanier discusses the

---

198 Tobii Technology is a pioneer in eye tracking development 'EyeX engine' and development applications, see their website which contains all the information about the companies global network and divisions including production, solutions and research services, viewed December 10 2013, <http://www.tobii.com/>.
199 This corresponds to what Jaron Lanier avows: 'Enlightened designers leave open the possibility of either metaphysical specialness in humans or in the potential for unforeseen creative processes that aren't explained by ideas like evolution that we already believe we can capture in software systems. That kind of modesty is the

intravenous experience of something existential as 'an airtight reality that resembles an idealized computer program, in which everything is understood and there are no fundamental mysteries. They recoil even from the hint of a potential zone of mystery or an unresolved seam in one's worldview' (2010, p. 50). These artworks reveal how these calculating machines influence our desires and fears, concerns and prejudices and how we have the ability to re-think the mechanism. To be able to control (or at least understand) that technology ourselves, as we live our lives and make meaning from them, shows the social, political, or cultural meanings that even a material as unassuming as code can carry. Reading signs is 'the ability to construct from apparently insignificant experimental data a complex reality that could not be experienced directly' (Ginzburg 1990, p.103). It can be executed in a séance performance; it can be arranged into a form of divination; it can be entwined to act as a means for deciphering information from starlight, as our loved ones travel into the other world after leaving this one; or it can be a way of viewing back our traces left in the hardware we use in our daily ritual with them.

There is an ongoing hope that one day, all pieces will fit together, things will get their clarity (dark) and there will be one way (light). I notice how I swiftly cover myself in quotes of other people or in jump cuts of my own thoughts. Please consider this a genuine attempt to come closer to the feeling of enchantment that floated around me during this project. I am attracted to them as words that reassure me. They start a process of association with things on my mind, or they simply express what I do not come to articulate in words myself.

SCRYING:MEA (2013)

Scrying:Mea (2013) evolved from a work called *MediaDivination3.0* [MD3.0] (2009). MD3.0 was an Internet-based divination, a speculative artwork that reveals your place in the manifold of time, through a numerological and word analysis. The code was crafted according to arbitrary patterns that depended on the user's keywords, to perform date-time related sorting operations, mining textual data from the online database Wikipedia. The data mining tools normally used are for the process of

---

signature quality of being human-centered…Adopting a metaphysically modest approach would make to harder to use database techniques to create instant lists of people' (2010, p.52).

analysing data from different perspectives and summarising it into utilitarian information, are subverted for celestial function of divination and soothsaying.[200]

The 'user' in order to find their place in the manifold of time discloses: email, name/nick, date of birth and three meaningful keywords. The decades and years appeared in hacker style ASCII figlet-poison font, as it was parsing through each year of the Wikipedia search 100 years before and after the date of birth, so that the audience could see a 'verbose' action-taking place. Meanwhile, on screen it prompts them: 'It takes a minute or so to perform the divination - please, be patient :)'.

FIGURE 58 SMALL SPECIFIC PROMOTIONAL CARDS THE GROUP EXHIBITION CARD FOR MD3.0 AT LCA2009

---

200 *ScryingMea* and *MD3.0* employed a set of software installed by default on most of the *nix distributions: Lynx, sed, text stream editor, filters content according to arbitrary patterns, python implemented a custom search engine to mine the textual data retrieved according to keywords and to perform date-time related sorting operations. However MD3.0 used GNU troff, 1.19.2 generates a printable report of the result set, GNU Bash 3.1.17 wraps it together.

MEDIA DIVINATION 3.0

http://www.mediadivination.net

go to URL & disclose:
name/nick;
D.O.B;
3 keywords.

A divination report is printed in *.pdf to
*Reveal your place in the manifold of time *

* BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED

Contemporary Art meets linux.conf.au
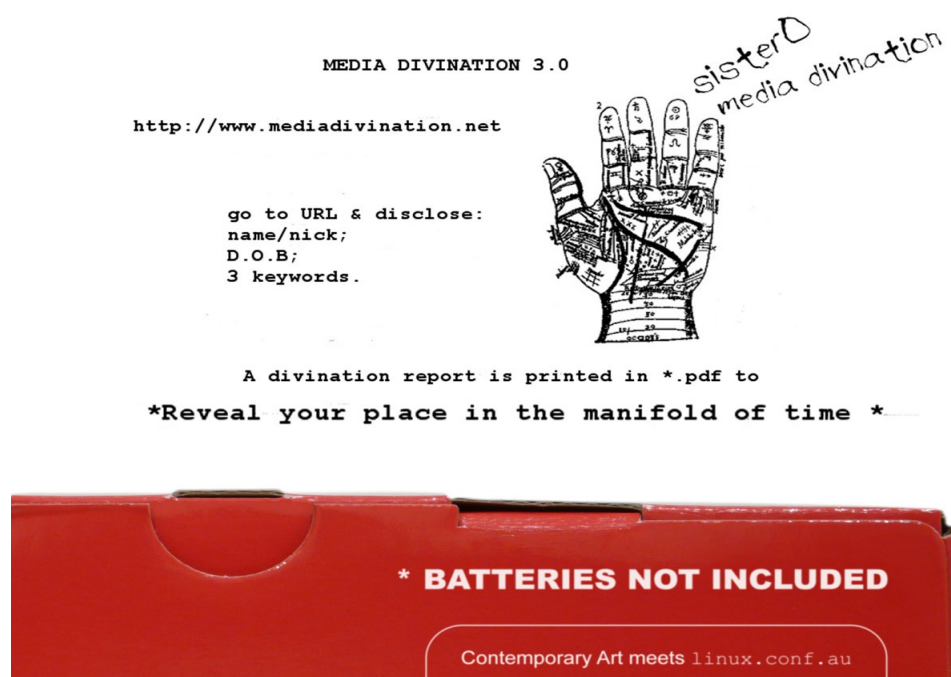
FIGURE 59 PROMOTIONAL CARDS THE GROUP EXHIBITION *BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED* CURATED BY KEVIN LEONG (LCA) 2009

A divination report was printed on the screen and a .pdf file is emailed, along with being able to be read previous divinations from others who have also participated in the work. I showed an early iteration called *Media Divination 3.0* (MD3.0) for a group exhibition called *Batteries Not Included,* curated by Kevin Leong at Linux Conference Australia (LCA) in 2009. After a working prototype was exhibited at the tenth Anniversary of the Linux Conference Australia [LCA 2009], the project was reassessed. A semiotic analysis of the keywords users were asked to enter, in the various ways that each person interpreted 'three meaningful keywords' was also revealing:

sleep, homicide, boobs;
Repetition, Chance, Harmony;
water, melon, paprika;
Lascivious, Relative, Sighted;
Linux, Penguin, Devil;
nancy, lecture, pearl;
beer, humans, metal;
Technology, Sustainability, Sex;
computers, fiction, cyborg;
dog, work, navel;
frustration, permaculture, bloglines;
linux, myelin, immunoglobulin;

amusingly, trivial, analysis;
Atheist, Coder, Education;
peace, holiday, exercise;
geek, optimistic, polite;
flowers, water, science;
war, fire, destruction;
sex, motorsport, email;
chocolate, cotton, love;
Apples, Ice, Peace;
davinci, invain, pioneer;
thing, attitude, other;
love, art, media;

punk, science, water;
Glendon, House, Forest;
chocolate, worse, happy;
cheese, chicken, beef;
Generous, Friendly, Touchy;
flowers, technology, linux;
python, tendinitis, Croatia;
Penguin, Star, Linux;
swing, fly, magic;
apple, peace, days.
honest, adventurous, exciting;
apple, peace, days.

Technically, the keywords of the users 'search terms' would allow for a more or less interesting divination output from a Wikipedia database of related events. Water, for instance would print pages of data, so this function needed to be rewritten. After a few aesthetic fixes (of the browser interface, and the divination report font) and some wrangling with the Wikipedia search terms, the project still needed to be more sharply defined, especially as to how to implicate the user/audience more in the events parsed from the wiki. The printout still really wasn't that interesting as a document beyond that novelty moment of exchange 'the get it - got it art' moment of seeing one's name and date of birth embedded in the series of various fictional and actual events.

The 'twist' was to implicate the willing participant within a series of events. It was conceded that no one has time to read the mass of data in such a context. The A4 pages are burdensome and create yet more things to file away; they would gather dust, even if the results could be compressed into one very stylised page.

For a long while (2008–2011) I held onto the idea of Wikipedia as a database for divination because of how it converges mythological, fictional and factual knowledge into historical time lines – which when combined, produces a result that reveals how these forms of knowledge intertwine. However, I couldn't reconcile that even though the artwork was available on the Internet, the 'actual' artwork did not feel to be complete without being *in situ* in a performative context. I tried a version of leaving *MD3.0* mysterious cards at a computer conference in the 'attendance bags' a participant gets on registration, in the symposia foyer, to let the work be discovered by a more ambient means (see Figure 58). The work was well attended, but finally, I considered that such a 'nebulous' work online might do more to embed the separation of artist and technician than bridge it. Further, the 'live event' of form filling seemed vacuous and trivial. For these reasons I decided that the groundwork done for *MD.3.0* had had its time. I could use this experience to create a work that focused on the performance, installation, and hands-on knowledge of a divination. This would include a local computer programme, which has the dual function of being both a prop and an actor, along with the artist as performer to guide the participant.

The work *Scrying:Mea (2013)* is a performance installation. MEA is short for *mise en abîme* a play of signifiers within a text, of sub-texts mirroring each other; to describe the self-reflexive embedding's that play out in the work. *Mise en abîme* occurred in medieval arts, in the narrativising of key events in the life of the object or thing. For instance in *Hamlet* it occurs as a play within a play, discussed in Chapter 4.1. The divide between the back end of the computer and the front end consumption of an art practice are laid bare, revealing what is otherwise hidden inside the black box of the computer interface. It is a revelation of the computer interface because the divination algorithm is expressive in its aesthetic and its timing, of the command line and the flashing cursor, the dramaturgy of the ASCII colour text images float within black space, coming out of a void of blackness. The positioning of Figures in blackness symbolizes the abyss (tenebre) (Figure 60).
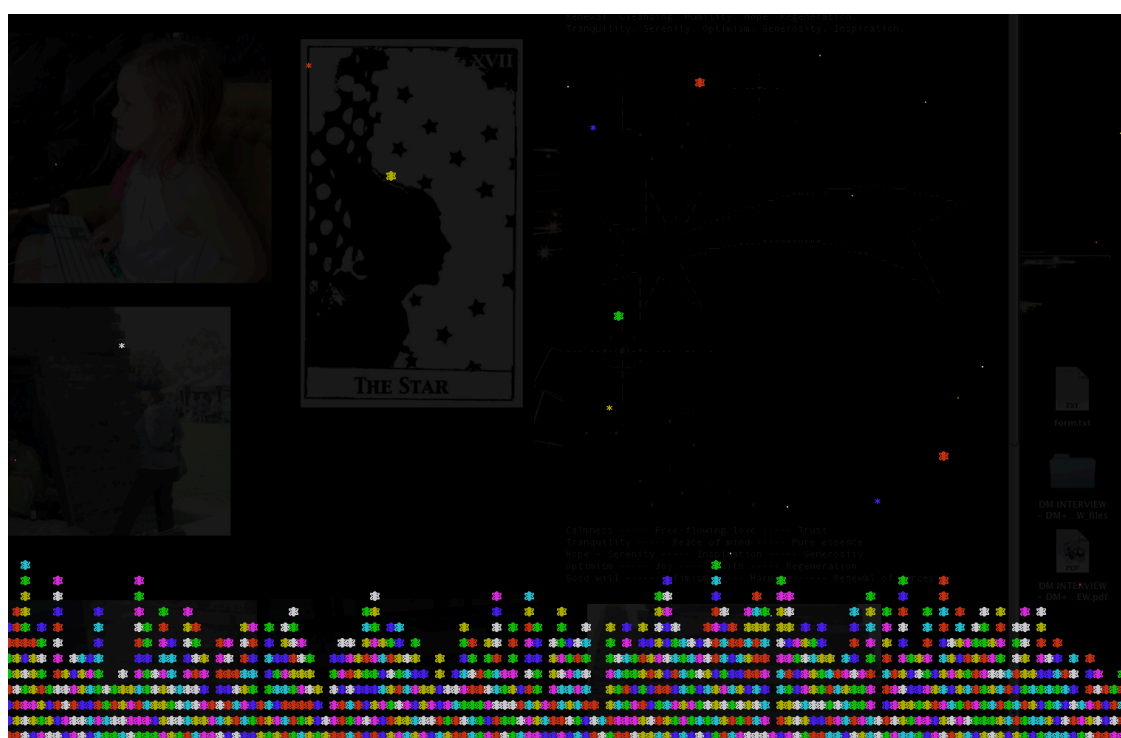
FIGURE 60 COLOURFUL ASCII PIXELS 'PROCESSING' THE USERS KEYWORDS TO GET RESULT. SCREENSHOT NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Scrying:Mea (2013) turns these inside out to ascertain something about the nature of technology to establish how the processes of divination (particularly augury) relied upon the compilation of relationships between signifiers and portents, similar to the relationship between objects in a database. The marketplace has traditionally been a location for the practice of fortune telling. In the arcane market place, the modes and

methods of divination took many forms - for instance, the augury of chicken entrails to predict the future. The aim is to demystify and re-imagine these methods and reveal the omnipresence of arcane practices in contemporary markets. It strips away both the historical significance and ideologies from what we perceive divination to be, through an encoded choreography of new forms detached from their original context.

The work *Scrying:Mea* playfully explores the divination methods of scrying and Tarot. Like MD3.0, the romance of the human-medium connected to another realm is given over to the computer, to predicate the participant's information. A Tarot reading takes place by a fembotic mechanism, a cypher, but this time assisted by the performer – the 'maven of the matrix' (see figure 61). The computer functions as an actor and the work uses computer code-custom built by the artist, with the model of the Major Arcana Tarot from 0-21 as its base. The Major Arcana (greater secrets) is symbolic of the stages and experiences we all go through from birth until death has allegorical meanings originally derived from elite ideology in the Italian courts of the fifteenth century (Dummett 1980, p. 110). Although its significance can be traced further back to Hermetic culture 1300 to 1600 A.D (Tambiah, 1990 p. 26).

The work was first presented in public in the Triangle Teepee commissioned by the Museum of New and Old Art, Art Market (Figure 61-62). The installation of *Scrying Mea (2013)* consisted of divination paraphernalia, including a microcomputer, a screen, a small table, a small printer, and a chair (Figure 63-64). For reasons of accessibility, it was called it a digital fortune telling salon. But if a distinction is to be made between scrying and fortune telling, scrying has a more formal or ritualistic element and often contains a more social character. In *Scrying:Mea,* information travels in a decentralised, horizontal, three-way, conversational manner between the computer, the host (artist-performer as high-priestess) and the guest. A *mise en scène* of divination paraphernalia is shown in Figure 63. The computer is programmed to ask, and the performer guides, the curious guest to give specific details of name, date of birth, and three meaningful words that capture their state of mind (see Figure 64), with the aim of providing an insight about how this person is at that very moment inspiring an active observant presence. The experience of scrying requires that the user be actively involved in bringing to the surface any latent thoughts or concerns.

FIGURE 61-62-63 PERFORMANCE INSTALLATION DETAIL OF *SCRYING MEA (2013)* TRIANGLE TEEPEE, MUSEUM OF NEW AND OLD ART MARKETS. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURE 64 *SCRYING:MEA* INSTALLATION DETAIL: WHAT THREE WORDS BEST CAPTURE YOUR SATE OF MIND? PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

By allowing the user to participate in the production of their divination, the aim is to develop a sympathetic relationship with the computer as a divination tool, so that the user takes ownership of their reading. The reading takes place through reference to a custom database. The outcome is a tarot card firstly on the screen (Figure 65) and then printed, and which the participant takes with them (Figure 66-67). The divination is

crafted from arbitrary associations between the user's keywords, the date and time, and the textual data from the database about the Major Arcana.
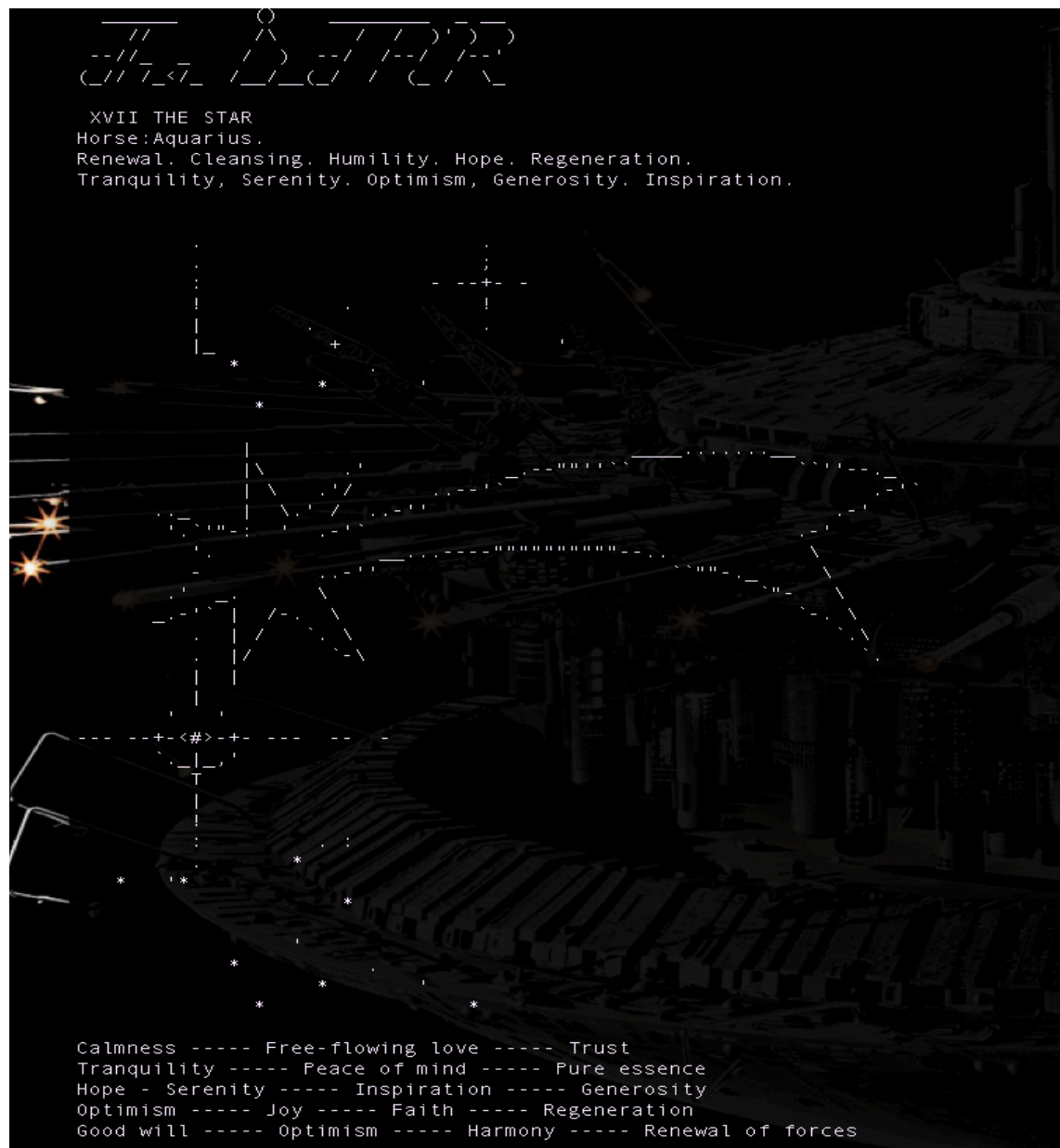
FIGURE 65 DETAIL OF THE *SCRYING:MEA* DIVINATION OUT COME. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

Each card features an image, collages that have been graphically manipulated and thematically chosen to form the twenty-two Major Arcana, which traditionally have acted as a mnemonic device for revealing profound philosophical meaning (Figure 66-67). Chiaroscuro is a major element in the composition of the collages, a harsher version of *tenebrism* in its use of dark and light shades and contrast.

Scrying is a form of magic for the purpose of perceiving things that are beyond standard senses. It is usually achieved by mediums who gazed at an object with a shiny surface until a form or vision of some kind is disclosed - designating one thing in the form of another.

FIGURE 66-67 ONE EXAMPLE OF MAJOR ARCANA 'THE STAR' TAROT CART IN SCRYING:MEA. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Although the object used for scrying usually has a shiny surface, such as a pool of water, or a mirror, innumerable objects have been used for the practice over the centuries. John Dee used an Aztec black obsidian mirror, amongst other devices (Figure 68). 'The mirror is seven inches in diameter obtained Mexico between 1518 and 1521 by the Spanish conquistador Hierna Cortes 1485 – 1547. An Aztec mirror that passed into the possession John Dee. A wand and some of Dee's magic formula books are also part of this collection of the British Museum'.[201] Clulee, discusses the spiritual séances, visions of spirits conjured by Dee in the Monas:

> His later interest in scrying…on divination with mirrors and bright
> objects…which are conjured by means of the reflective surface of a pitcher or
> pot of water, all point to the possibility of an active interest in this magic on
> Dee's part in the late 1560s (1988, p.141).

---

[201] British Museum, *Dr Dee's magic*, viewed December 10 2013, <
http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pe_mla/d/dr_dees_magic.aspx>.

FIGURE 68 JOHN DEE OBSIDIAN MIRROR. PHOTO: © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Scrying comes from the Middle English word *descry* which means 'catch sight of', to reveal or make out dimly. This in turn is a variant of obsolete descrive (via Old French from Latin describere 'write down'), which also had the meaning 'perceive'.[202] Scrying is one of the earliest forms of divination.[203] This tradition was not about being a hostage to fortune as is commonly thought, but according to Carlo Ginzburg

> For the future there was divination in a strict sense; for the past, the present and the future there was medical semiotics in its twofold aspect, diagnostic and prognostic, for the past, there was jurisprudence. But *behind this presumptive or divinatory paradigm we perceive what might be the oldest act in the intellectual history of the human race; the hunter squatting on the ground studying the tracks of his quarry* (1990, p.105) [my italics].

Referring to venatic lore, Ginzburg discusses divination as an arcane survival technique to read one's surroundings in whatever surface that may be present. However the conception of nature as something more than a gigantic process dominated by survival is put forth by Caillois, whose perspective on nature was

---

202 2013 Oxford University Press, viewed December 10 2013,
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/scry?q=Scrying>.
203 Carlo Ginzburg (1990, p.105).

multifarious. One thread relevant for this study is the contrast and interplay between the 'non-utilitarian' and the 'utilitarian'. At the heart lay a theory of the object: 'It is obvious that the utilitarian role of an object never completely justifies its form, or to put it another way, that the object always exceeds its instrumentality. Thus it is possible to discover in each object an irrational residue' (1990, p.6). The limitations of the computer as a counter-point reminds us of the vast and complex powers we have, or have access to, an interiority that we've long forgotten. Computers are therefore, in this sense, a prop, theatre paraphernalia, an ornament capable of amplifying our thoughts.

'Is Starlight a Wifi Signal?'

This work *AWRY SIGNALS: A Eulogy for the Stellar [Girls] (2013)* partially takes as its basis the premise of the author's ISEA 2013 commission, the networked performance 'Is Starlight a Wifi Signal?' - not included in this research project. On Wednesday 12 June 2013, the author created a live networked performance on-line, in Darwin, physically from Hobart (see Figure 69) and through 'The Portals' screen in Sydney's Chatswood (see Figure 70).

FIGURE 69 PERFORMANCE STILL, *IS STARLIGHT A WIFI SIGNAL?* (2013). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.[204]

204 Is *Starlight a Wifi Signal?* Project site viewed 10 December 2013, <http://sister0.org/?starlight-02/>.

FIGURE 70 PERFORMANCE STILL CHATSWOOD STAGE. *IS STARLIGHT A WIFI SIGNAL?* (2013). PHOTO: RICARDO PEACH.[205]

The networked performance *Is Starlight a Wifi Signal?* (2013) was a meditation on the relationship between a body and a greater universe, generated through performers' gestures, inscriptions and text. A cosmogonic ritual, the traces of movement intertwined with translucent light tendrils evoked in a telematic tableau vivant. The work questions what it means to be human, giving a poetic account of how we are beginning to routinely engage with ubiquitous transmissions. We have always navigated by the stars, and now as a species we regularly and increasingly habitually use networked communication systems (WIFI, the Internet, radio, etc.). In turn, these omnipresent transmissions and signals are a new kind of fictional species, that exist with/in us forming new habitats, drives, forms and structures, cosmographies and cosmologies. Linda Dement was in the audience for this work, and afterwards invited the author to collaborate with her Bundanon *Niteworks* project. This collaboration became *AWRY SIGNALS: A Eulogy for the Stellar [Girls] (2013)*. It is important to briefly explain the creative relationship with Linda Dement in more detail. A major part of my former research for the past decade was merging digital and analogue technologies. In 2002, I undertook a residency in Waag Society for New and Old

---

205 Is *Starlight a Wifi Signal?* Project site viewed 10 December 2013, <http://sister0.org/?starlight-02/>.

Media's *Sensing Presence* lab in Amsterdam. I engaged in learning an online networked collaborative software KeyWorx, developed by Waag Society programmers. Linda Dement based in Sydney, also engaged in these sessions where we collaboratively learnt the software. For almost a year, translocal meetings in a KeyWorx only environment between Linda Dement, and media artist Michelle Teran, and myself took place. We explored the affordances of the Internet via the software as a meeting place for a space of multiple viewpoints and live performative forms of storytelling. These meetings built merged-reality environments over a non-local and local network in 2003. In collaboration, we developed an eight-hour durational work 'electric-theatric operation' in the street zone around, and inside the 'Theatrum anatomicum' at the Waag Society for New and Old Media in Amsterdam, with a station also hosted by Artspace in Sydney, Australia. An Open-rehearsal was held in Colombia at the Colombo Cultural Institute. The work explored how we deal with the tensions of ephemeral collaboration and physical separation as we negotiate relationships of presence filtered through networked objects via computer software and digital networks.

FIGURE 71 PERFORMANCE STILL *ALL OF US GIRLS HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR SO LONG (2004)*. MUIDERPOORT THEATRE AMSTERDAM. PHOTO: CORRIE ANCONE.

FIGURE 72 PERFORMANCE STILL *ALL OF US GIRLS HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR SO LONG (2004)*. MUIDERPOORT
THEATRE AMSTERDAM. PHOTO: CORRIE ANCONE.

In 2004 I devised a solo digital dance work *All of Us Girls Have Been Dead for so Long* that was a digital dance theatre adaptation of *Pussy King of the Pirates* (1996) by Kathy Acker (Figure 71-72). Linda Dement both directed and mentored this work. Both projects were concerned with disorientated, ostracized, banished or imperiled bodies of knowledge and interested in the transmission and retrieving of them. There are other art works and vast kindred interests beyond the scope of this thesis, but I want to give a brief snap shot of the ongoing conversation for the past decade with Linda Dement. To sum up, the work *AWRY SIGNALS: A Eulogy for the Stellar [Girls] (2013)* can be seen as a continuation of this.

AWRY SIGNALS: A Eulogy for the Stellar [Girls] (2013)
Collaboration with Linda Dement for Bundanon Niteworks 2013.

The premise for this artwork *AWRY SIGNALS: A Eulogy for the Stellar [Girls]* (2013) was to pay respect to the lives of three great women were all recently deceased: Ari Up of the Slits (1962–2010), Poly Styrene of X-Ray Spex (1957–2011), and Chrissy Amphlett of the Divinyls (1959–2013). The work honours those women whose voice,

amongst other things, was prominent in the pursuit for pleasure, exuberance, and vertigo. A montage of conversation, description, conjecture and moments pirated from history and literature.

The artwork was initiated by Linda Dement with this email (excerpt):

inspired by yr starlight wifi…Voices from beyond, Dead stars go to the stars, text based séance something. Warnings / advice from these 3 via starlight wifi. Bundanon is having Nightworks in Oct. Could put a little text based glowing thing in a grotto there?...[206]

Since the event at Bundanon Niteworks 2013 was held in the evening, the premise was to acknowledge the nocturnal (*tenebrae*). Linda and I started with conversations about how it would be nice for the work to be driven somehow by starlight (astero seismology, *lux)*; the pulsations of a star's data would give rhythm to the work. Suggestions and discussions were around using a light sensor, a webcam aimed at the sky. Due to any constraints it was decided that we would instead pick up live Internet data via WI-FI about the position of Alpha Centauri.

As another starting point, we began taking phrases from the songs of dead women, and discussed various options of having to rely on starlight and possible rain or cloud on the night at the event. The programming language Python was used to manipulate this and the text. The work predominantly is speaking to Chrissy, Ari and Poly, about their travel out to the heavens, and the vibrations that they have left with us, their lyrics resonating on the earthly plane as a cut up of forming a series of satirical aphorisms. A table of phrases was gleaned from the women's lyrics; then by matching these phrases, the output on the screen, would look like conversations between the three dead girls (Figure 73). The text that appears on-screen is a key element of the work. The concept is a dialogical satire of its own discourse, tuning into the archaic energy, ecstatic movements, painful moments, and amorphous chaos, physically and virtually.

In some belief systems it is said that deceased warriors first disappear beyond all visible horizons and then reappear in the firmament as multitudinous star clusters.[207] In

---

206 Dement, L 2013, email, 17 June 2013 19:07 <linda@lindadement.com >.

207 These notions on firmament and the deceased is discussed in the work of John Dee, who writes, 'The demiurge originally implanted knowledge in the souls of men, when, "mounting them as it were in chariots, he showed them the nature of the universe and declared to them the laws of destiny," and the righteous soul after

John Dee's most hermetic work *Monas Hieroglyphica* (1564) unpacking the meaning of the symbol (Figure 3) he drew upon ancient star magic. Clulee recounts:

> magic refers to not only the 'magical' transformation of the elements in alchemy that confounds the limits of conventional physical theory but most importantly it also now includes the spiritual transformation of the soul and its mystical ascent from the material to the super celestial realm' (2008, p.127).

Dee was also preoccupied with theories on the speed of light and 'interested in the idea of a mirror propelled into space at a speed higher than that of light being able to reveal to man all the events of the past by a process of reflection' (Deacon 1968, p.38). Some of the stars nearest to earth are in Alpha Centauri, a binary system composed of Alpha Centauri A and B, close to a third star, Proxima Centauri. Alpha Centauri is 4.3650 light-years away, while Proxima Centauri is 4.241 light-years away.

We need this level of detail because we can see how in the firmament the past is visible in the light of the stars and the present is delayed by distance. Light transmission comes to us at 300,000 kilometres per second, traversing the cosmos to show us something that once was, but is no longer a living reality. The last 4.3650 years have seen the deaths of these three great women who have inspired us during their lives: Ari Up of the Slits (deceased October 2010), Poly Styrene of X-Ray Spex (deceased April 2011), and Chrissy Amphlett of the Divinyls (deceased April 2013). Therefore, it is our calculation that the light we see in the night sky comes to us from a time when all three were still alive. A direct beam of starlight Wi-Fi is now passing back through their last days, deaths and afterlives (see Figure 99).
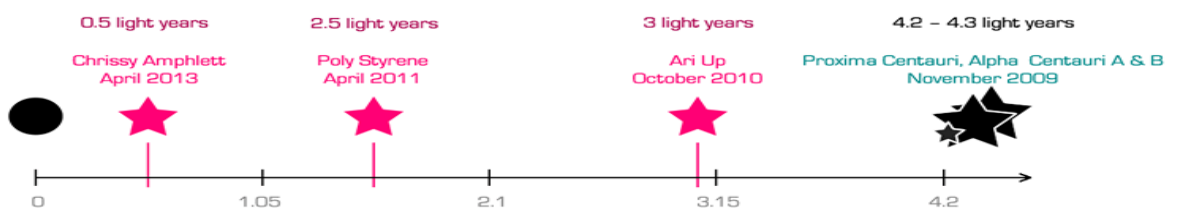
FIGURE 73 TAPPING INTO THE STARLIGHT BEAM FROM ALPHA CENTAURI TO RECEIVE MESSAGES FROM THE THREE STELLAR PUNKS NOW MAKING THEIR WAY ALONG IT TO THE HEAVENS. IMAGE: LINDA DEMENT.

death returns to live in glory "with its consort star"' (Dee 1594, p.124). Furthermore the idea of warriors disappearing into the stars is discussed in the *International Necrounautical Society Secretary Report* by Tom McCarthy (2002, p.4).

FIGURE 74 INSTALL SHOT - DETAIL - BUNDANON NITEWORKS OCT 2013. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

A script cycles according to the seven-minute cycle of oscillations from Alpha Centauri, sending out 'Awry Signals'. We ask them such questions as:

What is it like in the heavens?
What can you tell us of the future?
What is the meaning of life? (see Figure 75)

FIGURE 75 SCREENSHOT. AWRY SIGNALS DETAIL. QUESTION 1: KEYWORD 'LIKE' SCREEN SHOWS PHRASES FROM THE DEAD PUNK GIRLS CUT UPS OF THEIR SONGS.

The code is crafted according to patterns that perform keyword-related scrying operations, divining textual data from the repository that refers to all the lyrics of the songs of the three women. The questions have keyword triggers that enabled particular responses.

Question 1: keyword 'like' (see fig 75)
Question 2: keyword 'future'
Question 3: keyword 'life'
Question 4: keyword 'death
Question 5: keyword 'for you'
Question 6: keyword 'advice'
Question 0: any other words in question, responds with one line from each

In the installation, an automated script asks the questions and receives answers (see installation, (Figure 74). The NiteWorks event also had a short performance featuring the author – (Nancy) as a medium.

The same principle of having the code as a verbose output – showing 'searching for signal', 'initializing connection,' the computational machinery was presented in transparent containers. The performance element consisted of a simple series of commands:

1. Nancy types in question
2. Connects to the stars (audio & onscreen text 'attempting communication' etc)
3. Signal strength read from Asteroseismology data (which it continually reads all night in background)
4. Signal strength determines how many lines of answers are communicated from each dead girl
5. Answers are projected on screen, the text from the three girls is interspersed
If in the moment the data is down to very small or zero (no signal), one would need to attempt communication again.

Luminous virtual stars shine rays down on Bundanon Niteworks 2013 for our connection with the dead. On these beams of light, Nancy Mauro-Flude and Linda Dement talk to Chrissy Amphlett (1959–2013), Poly Styrene (1957–2011) and Ari Up (1962–2010) as they make their way to the heavens. An electronic séance was constructed to tap into that WIFI beam from Alpha Centauri to receive messages from the three stellar punks now making their way along the beam to the heavens (see figure 100). In our eyes, these dead girls were warriors drawn towards horizons and extreme limits; they stepped outside the boundary of the visible world. Lines of disappearance and appearance, a direct beam of starlight: WIFI is now passing back through the dead girls' last days, deaths and afterlives. The computer in this artwork has become a theatre machine, a field across which the ripples of the jouissance can be evoked.

Computer is Dreaming (2012)

> The overriding desire of most children is to get at and see the soul of their toys, some at the end of a certain period of use, others straight away. I do not find it to me to blame this infantile mania; it is the first metaphysical tendency. When this desire has implanted itself in the child's cerebral marrow, it fills his fingers and nails with an extraordinary agility and strength. The child twists and turns his toy, scratches it, shakes it, bumps it against the walls, throws it on the ground. From time to time he makes it re-start its mechanical motions, sometimes in the opposite direction. Its marvelous life comes to a stop. The child, like the people besieging the Tuileries, makes a supreme effort; at last he opens it up, he is the stronger. But where is the soul? This is the beginning of melancholy and gloom.
>
> -Charles Baudelaire, 17th April, 1853

Most of us work with computers in one way or another, but how often do we look inside the case? When I look inside machines, I like to touch their inner parts. This probably stems from childhood: when someone would turn the T.V. off, I'd run to see if I could catch the tiny people leaving from behind. Wondering about the ineffable element within the machine, we are curious and mystified. According to Baudelaire, 'This is the first metaphysical tendency.' In his essay 'Philosophy of toys', Baudelaire suggests that 'in their games children give evidence of their great capacity for abstraction' (1964, p. 203). After I pull apart the old computer hardware and name the parts, I reflect upon how the computer is designed, and what options I have of playfully rethinking it. This way of working is an active process of thinking how things could be otherwise.

Opening up computer hardware and cataloguing its inner parts demystifies the black box of the machine. Following the bus route to the CPU (central processing unit) – the movement of electricity through the miniature universe of the motherboard that pulses through its intricate circuit system – is enchanting. Of this plundering approach, Elizabeth Grosz claims: 'Artists and activists, pirate technologies in the pursuit of re-enchantment and liberated space' (2001, p. 83). In the artwork *Computer is Dreaming* (2012), the computer is stripped down to its fundamental components. Hardware is unscrewed and extracted from the computer, out of the bounds of its traditional tower-like container. The components that make up the computer are spread out into their modular parts. This opening action is replicated in the software via a set of non-standard command line tools from GNU/Linux repository. Via an executable code the computer is instructed to look into its random access memory (RAM) (/dev/mem). /dev/mem is a character device file that provides access to an image of the physical memory of the computer, in a traditional computer scenario it may be accessed, for

example, to examine the contents of the active operating system and running processes. In this artwork, all of the accumulated data is scanned and an output of the /dev/mems veracity is rendered as digital audio and video output. The main tool is GStreamer, a pipeline-based multimedia framework written in the C programming language. The command as follows is programmed to execute this as an infinite loop:

#gst-launch-0.10 filesrc location=/dev/mem ! videoparse ! xvimagesink

As if the computer is dreaming, we see the flashes of the computer's use history, its experiences whilst in action revealing the machinic underpinnings. Not unlike dreaming during sleep, the viewer is privy not to a static homogenous state, but rather a progression through various states with unique characteristics. The audience witnesses unpredictable patterns, rich colour variations in a lively interplay of digital audio and video output (see Figure 76).
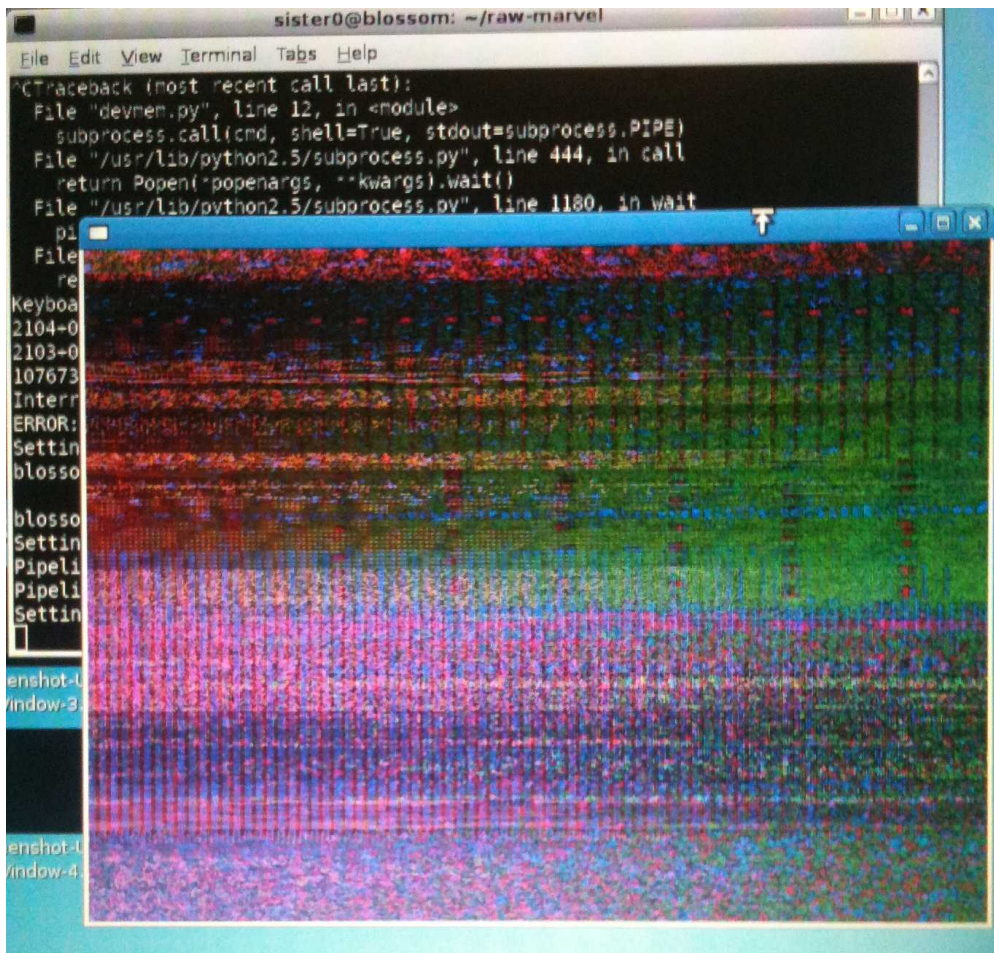
FIGURE 76 TESTING SCANNED AND AN OUTPUT OF THE /DEV/MEMS. SCREENSHOT: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

For a long time, I have been interested in the output of /dev/mem. In the digital theatre work *All of Us (Girls) Have Been Dead for so Long* (2004) discussed above, in one section the performer would walk to the computer in the 'land of the dead' scene, and execute a similar script to scan the /dev/mem. This would then project from the ceiling onto the entire stage in which digital audio and video output acted as scenography (Figure 77).

FIGURE 77 DIGITAL VIDEO STILL FROM 'LAND OF THE DEAD' SCENE, *ALL OF US GIRLS HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR SO LONG* (2004). PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Although the work could be seen as a part of the glitch art genre it is argued that this work is very different from 'datamoshing' and 'databending', terms used to describe deliberately corrupting images or video to generate artwork.[208] In *Computer is Dreaming* (2012), the physical memory /dev/mem is the actual source of data (not a corrupted media file per se), which is then rendered as image and sound.

---

208 Glitch *art created by 'databending'*, Wired magazine, viewed December 13 2013 < http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2010-08/17/glitch-art-databending>.

FIGURE 78 *DATAJ* DATA PLAYBACK STATION (2010). PHOTO: DANJA VASILIEV.

A similar process of scanning the disc and outputting its contents is also used in an artwork *Dataj* (2010) data playback station (see Figure 78) by Danja Vasiliev. He describes it as 'a prototype of a raw data playback machine; it will allow one to playback computer hard-disks as if those were LPs or CDs - in a familiar DJ-like way.' However, this hard-disk is used as a 'controller (rotary encoder) while the data is being read off the smaller hard-disk attached to the system using a 'PATA-USB' interface' (Vasiliev 2010). Vasiliev also writes that *Dataj* conceptualised during the 'Data Carving' workshop at xxxxx, Berlin in collaboration with Gordan Savičić and Brendan Howell, which indicates the informal, playful and context in which works, experiential prototypes, like this are conceived, as discussed in and 'Methodology – Field Work' (Chapter 3).[209]

Computer is Dreaming (2012) is not interactive in the sense that the audience cannot play with it hands-on. Its non-utilitarian function establishes it as something beyond useful. The computer is approached with a narrative that playfully anthropomorphizes the machine, evoking this with the title 'computer is dreaming'. The act of hardware demolition and reconstruction proposes new veracities can be applied the components and their assemblage. Reminiscent of augury, when the oracles looked at entrails to

---

[209] Vasiliev, D 2010, *DataJ*, viewed 10 June 15 2013, < http://k0a1a.net/danja/dataj>.

divine the future. Augury of a sort is just one of many narratives at work. Maybe their future re-purposing is an augury of sorts, without explicitly being so? The way that the installation is assembled also contextualizes the computer into a ritualistic context, but playfully extending from the modding aesthetic. Olga Goriunova and Alexei Shulgin write:

> Today, the functionality of the computer is concealed inside the grey/white/ beige box that covers the cards, slots, motherboard, and wires. In modding, these parts are reimagined as elements of visual richness that convey a symbolism. Hardware elements are aestheticized: Users might install neon lights, weird jumbo fans and colourful wires into a transparent computer case or even build an entirely new one from scratch. Electronic boards jutting out at 90 degree angles and architectures of twisted wire are widely used, as in cinema and design, to represent technical substances' (2008, p.113).

Initially the computer was embedded into a wooden platform (Figure 79-80) to aestheticize the hardware elements. Then I decided to paint the wood then strip it and play with various compositional combinations. However, this was containing the computer into yet another traditional yoke.

FIGURE 79 INSTALLATION DETAIL, COMPUTER IS DREAMING (2012) DEVONPORT REGIONAL GALLERY.
PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Instead I present the modded computer, including its added-on bling: neon lights, weird jumbo fans, as an assemblage, a *mise en scène* where every element has its place in the intimate space of the gallery (Figure 81 – 82). I have included other paraphernalia, such as neon totems, broken wine glasses, mirrors, teacups – so-called excessive

talismans that I have either broken or used and considered meaningful during the time of the research project. Along with their composition to the assemblage, these objects have a secondary function and are actants that reflect light and shadow around the installation.
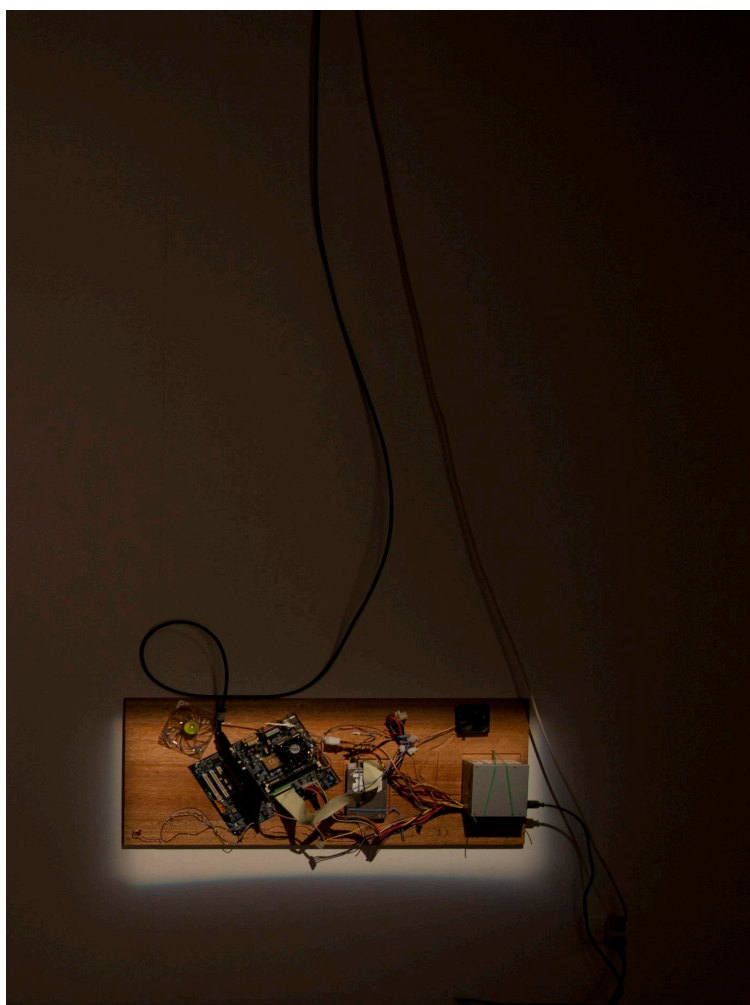
FIGURE 80 INSTALLATION DETAIL, *COMPUTER IS DREAMING* (2012) PLIMSOLL GALLERY. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

What is common to all the elements is that they are arranged as an assemblage primarily to be considered – not through the lens of pragmatism and function, but through the lens of aesthetics. Their pleasure derives from the exuberance and vertigo this paraphernalia can potentially cause. The artwork is presented as if it is an altar, although not to worship at, but to contemplate, in a playfully serious manner. *Computer is Dreaming* honours the sacrificial destruction of utility that so often accompanies most intense forms. This could be seen as a paradox in this work (and all the artworks in the thesis). On the one hand, the matter-of-fact demystification of technology; on the

other, complexity, sumptuousness and baggage over function when in action is treasured because what is provoked and highlighted is the discrepancy between readymade technology and the speculations we project on to the apparatus.

FIGURE 81 - 82 INSTALLATION DETAIL, *COMPUTER IS DREAMING* (2013) PLIMSOLL GALLERY. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

5.0 Conclusion: It's hard to find a good séance these days.

The research has tracked a journey from inside a labyrinth, in the darkness trying to decipher the theatrical parables transmitted by the Renaissance movement with only a few twinkles of light to guide us through the edge of a communicative field. Stumbling out into the realm of experiential prototyping, into an abyss of jumbled codes, cables and knots that on inspection contained hidden meanings and multidimensional perceptions. With my bare hands I gradually pulled apart the tangled webs, found myself walking on the hard wooden boards, in a vast black box theatre. I discovered myself sitting as a performer with my back to audience, unraveling the reader, writer, programmer, maker and user. Re writing these roles, this friction caused a fire. I moved into the stage wings, past the bulk of velvet curtains, and down to the guts of a labyrinth, into the square of the Grand Rue slum in Port-au-Prince. I found myself twisted in a mortal coil of bedsprings, sequins, beer bottle tops, and discarded components. An a surveillance device, under the guise of an oil container, led me to a pirate map from the sixteenth century, and with this I navigated my way out through the maze, to discover myself contemplating and substantiating the power of suspending one's disbelief. From this position, I evaluated how the objects created by our embodied thought shift in tandem with the technologies that in return engage our senses, our inner veracity.

The fieldwork in Haiti was seminal in galvanising the view that talismans and paraphernalia run on transformative paths different from those of use and function. Transfigured by mere possibility, the rules of the mundane gave way to collaborative, experiential learning models, in order to explore radical modes of aesthetic engagement where the prototype may occasionally bend and alter the very nature of the system within which it is embedded. This in turn generates unanticipated ripples and on-flows of influence far beyond the maker's intent. The key terms 'performance of code' and the 'aesthetics of transmission' were developed and considered rather than a strictly technical definition but what the provoke and which in turn challenged the mechanisms of domination, where the rational is the sole criteria for quality. The propositions addressed gave prominence to our bizarre behaviour patterns, morphological marks, suggesting a way out of the labyrinth of binaries that are woven

into our rigid and deeply rooted worldview, costuming essentialist identification in favour of awareness.

The Renaissance thinkers and scholars, artists and Critical Engineers that have been discussed, bring with them this distinction and the peculiarity of mysterious and illusionistic phenomena in their contradictory combinations of playful dream and satire. The term *ludibrium* has been revitalised to offer a specific competence to prepare and sharpen the mind towards the deceptions that trap our perceptions and desires in the theatricalisation of knowledge through the pervasiveness of computing. In the performance of code, technical changes and elaborations are revealed and bring with them many possibilities. Further, it has been revealed how technical consideration of the apparatus as both tool and a theatrical medium is generated and the condition in which human beings are located – an open-ended, ever variable trajectory – unwraps, rather than the fixed and regulated machines often characteristic of the consumer world. Aesthetically exploiting these otherwise closed systems, *techné* pays heed to those dimensions that are not governed by the imperatives of use and efficiency. In the future, such policies might be abandoned as an impediment to understanding.

With this perceptual shift (or cypher key of *ludibrium*), the infinite potential of a theatre machine can be re-engineered, and our ability to experience the unfathomable can be nurtured. Radical subjectivity and the methodologies of risk have been discussed in relation to accounts of experiential play and the forms of artful elusiveness. These dynamic practices reveal a terrain where there exists no clear determination of individual responsibility, but instead a social process engaged in theatrical, performative relationships. This has been developed and addressed through a range of informative pedagogies, technologies, entities and activities. The thesis has advanced the proposition of how performance can help us understand the aesthetic relations between immaterial and embodied experience and how such executions of code may be invocations with reference to jouissance profusion and ivresse.

A methodology of risk, and a mindful approach to such possibly dangerous states, carves out a new territory for us to exist in by excavating an old territory from our previous existence. Yates reminds us that the Renaissance movement was 'not abandoning the past for the future but seeing the future as a child of the past…' and

yet 'created new forms of art and thought and culture' (Yates 1975, p. 12). Raising new problems by solving old ones – the concept that the works in the thesis reflect – is not comforting. But it is my hope that they are eccentrically beautiful, jouissant inexplicably and transgressive.

To illuminate the ethos underpinning the research, a systematic account on the effectiveness of dramaturgy that underpins the research project. An exploration of the black box of the computer and of theatre through the development of the artworks in a white cube has revealed how knowledge of staging and performing are central to a rejection of closed, hierarchical and hence exclusive systems of knowledge. Bringing dramaturgy to the interaction between machines and their audiences is easily overlooked in consumer accounts, which base their conception and analysis purely on a technological pragmatism or even the vulgar expression of evaluating a theatre work with regard to the mercantile colloquialism : 'bums in seats'. In our endeavor to be meaningful, we limit the set of our potential actions by casting our calculating machines into purely utilitarian roles. However, the expressive use of the black box never completely justifies its procedures, a meaning of which we can never be sure has escaped us. This echoes the paradox of the black plastic rectangular oil container that appeared and blossomed in the ghetto of Grand Rue, Port-au-Prince.

6.0 Bibliography

Abel, J 2013, 'Cracking the technology case', *RealTime*, Issue #115 June-July 2013, viewed August 10 2013, <http://www.realtimearts.net/article/issue115/11207>.

Achterberg, J 2001, *Woman as Healer*, Shambhala, Boston.

Acker, K 1997, *Pussy: King of the Pirates*, Grove Press, New York.

Adorno, T 2002, *Minima Moralia: Reflections From Damaged Life*, Verso, London.

Al-Khalidi, A 2001, 'Emergent technologies in menstrual paraphernalia in mid-nineteenth-century Britain', *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 257-273.

Allworth, J 2010, 'Your Smartphone Works for the Surveillance State', *Harvard Business Review* viewed January 2 2014, <http://blogs.hbr.org/2013/06/your-iphone-works-for-the-secret-police/>.

Andersen, CU & Pold, SB 2011, 'Introduction: Interface Criticism', in CU Andersen & SB Pold (eds.), *Interface Criticism: Aesthetics Beyond Buttons*, Aarhus University Press, Aarhus, pp. 7-18.

Anderson, I 1995, 'Re-claiming TRU-GER-NAN-NER: De-colonising the Symbol', in P van Toorn and D English (eds.), *Speaking Positions: Aboriginality, Gender and Ethnicity in Australian Cultural Studies*, Department of Humanities, Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne, pp. 31-42.

Andrews, D 2012, 'The Brighton Digital Festival launched in coded fashion', *Culture24*, 06 September 2012, viewed 10 January 2014, <http://www.culture24.org.uk/science%20%26%20nature/technology/art400093>

Applebaum, J 2013, 'To Protect And Infect: The militarization of the Internet (Part 2, in three acts)', video recording, *CCC-TV 30C3* Recordings Release, viewed January 2 2014, <http://media.ccc.de/browse/congress/2013/30C3_-_5713_-_en_-_saal_2_-_201312301130_-_to_protect_and_infect_part_2_-_jacob.html>.

Aristotle, 1995, *Poetics Complete Works*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Arns, I 2004, 'Read_me, run_me, execute_me, Code as Executable Text: Software Art and its Focus on Program Code as Performative Text', in R Frieling & D Daniels (eds.), *Media Art Net 2: Key Topics*, viewed 15 June 2013, <http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/generative-tools/read_me/>.

Arns, I 2011, 'Transparent World: Minoritarian Tactics in the Age of Transparency', in CU Andersen & SB Pold (eds.), *Interface Criticism: Aesthetics Beyond Buttons*, Aarhus University Press, Aarhus, pp. 253-278.

Assange, J 2012, *Cypherpunks: Freedom and the Future of the Internet*, OR Books, London & New York.

Barba, E 1985, 'The Nature of Dramaturgy: Describing Actions at Work', *New Theatre Quarterly*, vol. 1 Issue 01, pp. 75-78.

Barba, E 1992, 'Eftermaele: that which will be said afterwards', *The Drama Review*, 36, No. 2 (T134), pp. 77-80.

Barba, E 2000, 'The Deep Order Called Turbulence: The Three Faces of Dramaturgy', *The Drama Review*, Vol. 44, No. 4, pp. 56-66.

Barnett, D 2006, 'Resisting the Revolution: Heiner Müller's Hamlet/Machine at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin, March 1990', *Theatre Research International*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 188-200.

Barthes, R 1974, *S/Z* Hill & Wang, New York.

Barthes, R 1981, 'Vocabulary' in Sylvére Lotringer (ed.) *POLYSEXUALITY*, Volume Iv, No 1, Semiotext(e), New York, pp. 205-207.

Bataille, G 1929, 'A Critical Dictionary: The Informe' Reprinted in Stoekl, Allan (ed.) 1985, *Documents*, 1 (7): 382 or *Georges Bataille: Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Bateson, G, 1987. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution and Epistemology*, Jason Aronson Inc., Northvale NJ.

Baudelaire, C 1964, 'The Philosophy of Toys', *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, J Mayne (trans.), Phaidon Press, London, pp. 198-204.

Bauman, Z & Donskis, L 2013, *Moral Blindness: The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Bay, H 1990, *TAZ: The Temporary Autonomous Zone*, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism, Autonomedia New Autonomy Series, New York.

Bergan, R 2007, 'Obituary of Ulrich Mühe', *The Guardian*, 28 July. Viewed 10 December 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2007/jul/25/ulrichmuehe19532007>.

Best, J 2013, 'Julian Assange appears in bizarre rap video to promote Wikileaks candidates in the Australian election', *Mirror UK* August 26 2013, viewed January 10 2013, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/weird-news/julian-assange-appears-bizarre-rap-2225172#ixzz2qJNtRQfD>.

Birringer, J 1986, 'Dancing Across Borders', *The Drama Review*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 85-97.

Blackburn, G 2013, 'Germany's forgotten performer Valeska Gert helped inspire punks', *Deutsche Welle*, viewed 10 November 2013, <http://www.dw.de/germanys-forgotten-performer-valeska-gert-helped-inspire-punks/a-6007667-1>.

Blumenthal, Mike 2012 'Is Google Intentionally Trying to Minimize the Fact that These are Ads?', viewed December 12 2013, <http://blumenthals.com/blog/2012/01/31/is-google-intentionally-trying-to-minimize-the-fact-that-these-are-ads/>.

Bollas, C 1987, *The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Borges, JL 1962, *Labyrinths,* DA Yates & E James (eds.), New Directions Publishing, New York.

Braidotti, Rosi 2010, 'The Politics of "Life Itself" and New Ways of Dying' in Diana Coole & Samantha Frost (eds.). *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*. Duke University Press Durham and London, pp. 201-220.

Braun, E (ed.) 1969, *Meyerhold On Theatre*, Methuen, London.

Brecht, B 1964, *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of An Aesthetic*, J Willett (trans.), Methuen & Co Ltd, London.

Britten, S 2010, 'The Push Pull Decade', *Artlink Australia*, Vol. 30 No. 4, viewed 10 November 2013, <http://www.artlink.com.au/articles/3535/the-push-pull-decade/>.

Buchenau, M & Suri, JF 2000, 'Experience Prototyping', DIS '00 Proceedings of the 3rd Conference on Designing Interactive Systems: Processes, Practices, Methods, and Techniques, *ACM*, New York, pp. 424-433.

Butler, J 1997, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. Routledge, New York & London.

Caillois, R 1962, *Man, Play and Games*, Thames & Hudson, London.

Caillois, R 1964, *The Mask of Medusa*, Vitor Gollancz, London.

Caillois, R 1990, *The Necessity of Mind*, Lapis Press, Venice, CA.

Caillois, R 2003, *The Edge of Surrealism: A Roger Caillois Reader*, C Frank (ed.), Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

Carine, Fabius 2010, 'Ghetto Biennale and Other Pleasant News From Haiti', *Huffington Post*, Viewed 10 March 2013, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/carine-fabius/the-2nd-ghetto-biennale-a_b_1095449.html> .

Carter, M 1993, *Framing Art*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney.

Casaubon, M 1969, *A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed between Dr. John Dee (A Mathematician of Great Fame in Q.Eliz. and King James their Reignes) and Some Spirits: Tending (had it Succeeded) To a General Alteration of most States and Kingdomes in the World* M Casaubon, D.D.(ed.), London, 1659, rpt. Berkeley, Golem Media, 2008.

Chun, WHK 2011, 'On "Sorcery" or Code as Fetish', in O Grau & T Veigl (eds.), *Imagery in the 21st Century*, MIT Press, Boston.

Clucas, S 2006, 'Enthusiasm and "damnable curiosity": Meric Casaubon and John Dee' in RJW Evans & A Marr (eds.), *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* Ashgate, Aldershot.

Clulee, NH 1988, *John Dee's Natural Philosophy, Between Science and Religion,* Routledge, London & New York.

Coleman, EG 2012, 'Our Weirdness Is Free: The Logic of Anonymous—Online Army, Agents of Chaos, and Seeker of Justice', *Triple Canopy*, Issue 15, viewed March 20, 2013, <http://canopycanopycanopy.com/issues/15/contents/our_weirdness_is_free>.

Coleman, G 2013, *Coding Freedom The Ethics and Aesthetics of Hacking*, Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford.

Collins, S 2007, 'Pixel Landscapes and the Aesthetics of Transmission', (Proceedings) *CAe2007:International Symposium on Computational Aesthetics in Graphics Visualization, and Imaging*, Banff, Alberta, Canada.

Comenius, JA 1896, *The Great Didactic*, London: Adam & Charles Black.

Comenius, JA 1657, *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, viewed March 20, 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orbis_Pictus>.

Comenius, JA 1669, *Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart*, Chapter XLI, viewed March 20, 2013, <http://www.labyrint.cz/en/>.

Conner, S. 2011, *Paraphernalia: The Curious Lives of Magical Things*, Profile Books, London.

Conrads, M 2011, 'The Radical Realist – An Exhibition Dedicated to the Dancer and Performer Valeska Gert', Goethe Institut e, viewed 7 January 2014, <http://www.goethe.de/kue/tut/fab/aus/en7164500.htm>.

Cosentino, DJ 1995, 'Introduction: Imagine Heaven', *Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou*. UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, Los Angeles, pp. 25–55.

Cox , G & McLean, A 2012, *Speaking Code, Coding as Aesthetic and Political Expression*. The MIT Press, Boston.

Cramer, F 1998, 'Digital Code and Literary Text', *netzliteratur.net*, viewed 7 January 2014, <http://www.netzliteratur.net/cramer/digital_code_and_literary_text.html>.

Cramer, F 2005, *WORDS MADE FLESH: Code, Culture, Imagination*, Piet Zwart Institute Media Design Research, Willem de Kooning Academy Hogeschool Rotterdam.

Cramer, F 2011, 'Friedrich Kittler', *nettime-l Digest*, Sat, 29 Oct 2011, viewed 7 January 2014, <http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-1111/msg00052.html>.

Cramer, F 2011, 'Net Art Back to Square One', J Bosma, *Nettitudes: Let's Talk Net Art*, nai010 publishers, Rotterdam, Willem de Kooning Academie, and Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam.

Cramer, F 2013, *Anti-Media, Ephemera on Speculative Arts*, nai010 publishers, Rotterdam, Willem de Kooning Academie, and Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam.

Cramer, F 2014, 'Anonymous movement in decline?', *nettime-l Digest*, Vol. 76, No. 3, viewed 7 January 2014, <http://nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-1401/msg00009.html>

Cummings, J 1996, *Francis Drake: The Lives of a Hero*, Palgrave Macmillan: Virginia.

Curry, P 2013, 'Embodiment, Alterity and Agency' in P Curry (ed.), *Divination: Perspectives for a New Millennium*. Ashgate, Surrey, pp. 85-118.

Davis, E 2003, 'Philip K. Dick: Speaking with the Dead' in R Christopher (ed.), *Follow for Now: Interviews with Friends and Heroes*, Seattle, Well-Red Bear, Seattle, pp.301-312.

Davis, M 2001, *Engines of Logic: Mathematicians and the Origin of the Computer*, W. W. Norton & Company, London.

Deacon, R 1968, *John Dee: Scientist, Geographer, Astrologer and Secret Agent to Elizabeth I*. Frederick Muller Ltd, London.

Dee, J 1954, *Monas Hieroglyphica*, JW Hamilton-Jones (trans.) 1946, rpt 2000, Weiser Books, Boston/York Beach, ME.

Deren, M 1965, *FILM CULTURE*, No. 39, Winter Anthology Film Archives, New York.

Deren, M 1970, *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti,* McPherson, New York.

Derrida, J 1976, *On Grammatology*, G Spivak (trans.), John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Derrida, J 1977, 'Signature Event Context', *Glyph 1*, S Weber & J Mehlman (trans.), pp. 172-197.

Derrida, J 1978. 'The Theatre of Cruelty', *Writing and Difference*, A Bass (trans.), Routledge, London, pp. 232-250.

Dickson, DR 1988, *The Tessera of Antilia: Utopian Brotherhoods and Secret Societies in the Early Seventeenth Century*, Brill, Leiden.

Dulchinos, D 2011, *Forbidden Sacraments: The Survival of Shamanism in Western Civilization,* Autonomedia, New York.

Dullart, C 2013, 'Begginings + Ends', *Frieze Contemporary Art and Culture,* No.159 November – December, pp. 124-131.

Dummett, M 1980, *The Game of Tarot*, Duckworth, London.

Dunne, A 2001, *Hertzian Tales: Electronic Products, Aesthetic Experience, and Critical Design,* MIT Press, Cambridge, London.

Eco, U 1994 'The Holy War: Mac vs. DOS', *Espresso*, September 30.

Eco, U 1995, *Faith in Fakes: Travels in Hyperreality*, W Weaver (trans.), Minerva, London.

Eddershaw, M 1996, *Performing Brecht: Forty Years of British Performance*, Routledge, London.

Eller, C 2001, *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory*, Beacon Press, Boston.

Erasmus, D (1511, reprinted 1876), *In Praise of Folly*, Online Library of Liberty. Reeves & Turner, London, viewed 10 March 2013, <http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=551&Itemid=27>.

Fichner-Rathus, L 2011, *Foundations of Art and Design: An Enhanced Media Edition*, Cengage Learning, Connecticut.

Flanagan, R 2002, 'The Lost Tribe', *The Guardian*, Monday 14 October 2002, viewed 10 March 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/oct/14/australia.features11>.

Fortune, S 2013, 'ENGINEERING CRITICALLY: Dazed speaks to a workspace uncovering the influence of new technologies on everyday life', *Dazed Digital*, viewed December 2013, <http://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/16269/1/weise7>.

Franko, M 1995, 'Emotivist Movement and Histories of Modernism: The Case of Martha Graham', *Dancing Modernism/Performing Politic*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis.

Fraser, A 1969, *Mary Queen of Scots*, World Books, London.

Fuller, M 2004, *Behind the Blip: Essays on the Culture of Software*. Automedia, New York.

Fuller, M, & Goffey, A 2012, *Evil Media*, The MIT Press, Chicago & London.

Gentner, D & Nielsen, J 1996, 'The Anti-Mac interface', *Communications of the ACM*, Vol. 39, No. 8, pp. 70-82, viewed July 10 2013, <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/anti-mac-interface/>

Gert, V 1931, 'Dancing', from a talk given at Radio Leipzig, Vol. IV, No 1, June 1931' in VP Dunlop and S Lahusen (eds.), *Schrifttanz: a view of German Dance in the Weimar Republic*, 1990, Dance Books, London, pp. 1-23.

Gert, V 1950, 'I am a Witch', in R Drain (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Theatre: A source book*, (1995), Routledge, London &New York, pp. 33-34.

Ginzburg, C 1990, *Myths, Emblems, Clues*, Radius Books, Santa Fe.

Ginzburg, C 1992, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Gladysz, T 2010, 'The Remarkable Life of Valeska Gert', *Huffington Post*, 23 September 2010, viewed 13 December 2013, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/thomas-gladysz/the-remarkable-life-of-va_b_732146.html>

Goffman, E 1959, *Self in Everyday Life*, Anchor, Garden City, NY.

Goldwyn, M 2011, 'During the Pause', *Artslant*, 7 March 2011, viewed 13 December 2013, <http://www.artslant.com/ber/articles/show/22078>

Goriunova, O & Shulgin, A 2008, 'Glitch' in M Fuller (ed.), *Software Studies A Lexicon*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 110–118.

Gough, J 2013, *Testing Ground* exhibition catalogue, 14 March–28 April 2013, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart, Tas.

Gould, SJ 2000, 'The Substantial Ghost: Towards a General Exegesis of Duchamp's Artful Wordplays', *Tout-Fait*, Issue 2, <http://www.toutfait.com/issues/issue_2/Articles/gould.html>

Grosz, E 2001, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA & London.

Hardie, M 2007, 'An alternative history of *nix - machine(s) = person(s) | dev/*nix', *AUSKADI database*, viewed 10 March 2013, <http://auskadi.com/files/nix1.pdf>.

Hayles, KN 2005, *My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London.

Heidegger, M 1927, *Being and Time*, J Macquarie & E Robinson (trans.), Harper & Row, New York.

Higgins, D 1998, 'Statement on Intermedia', viewed December 13 2013, <http://www.artpool.hu/Fluxus/Higgins/intermedia2.html>.

Holl, Ute 2001, 'Moving the Dancers' Souls' in Bill Nichols (ed.) *Maya Deren and the American avant-garde*, University of California Press, Berkeley, pp.151-178.

Homer, 800 B.C.E *Odyssey*, Samuel Butler (trans.), viewed December 13 2013, <http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.html >.

Hopkins, D 2004, *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction,* Volume 105, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Jakab, Z 2000, 'Ineffability of qualia: A straight-forward naturalistic explanation', *Consciousness and Cognition*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 329–351.

Jarman, R 2011, 'Error does not compute' *The Mercury*, August 5.

Jenkins, H 2006, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York University Press, New York.

Joas, H 1996, 'Situation-Corporeality-Sociality: The Fundamentals of a Theory of the Creativity of Action', *The Creativity of Action*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, pp. 145-195.

Johnson, J [Bruno Latour] 1988, 'Mixing Humans and Nonhumans Together: The Sociology of a Door-Closer', *Social Problems, Special Issue: The Sociology of Science and Technology*, Vol. 35, No. 3, (Jun., 1988), University of California Press, California, pp. 298-310.

Kahn, D 2001, 'Three Receivers' in Allen S Weiss (ed.), *Experimental Sound and Radio*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. pp. 73-80.

Kellner, D 1999, 'Marcuse and the Quest for Radical Subjectivity', *Social Thought & Research*, Vol. 22, No. 1/2, pp. 1-24.

Kelly, B 2012, 'Investing in a Centralized Cybersecurity Infrastructure: Why 'Hacktivism' can and should influence cybersecurity reform', *Boston University Law Review*, Vol. 92, No. 5, pp. 1663–1710.

Kelty, C 2008 *Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Kennedy, J. 1992, *The New Anthropomorphism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Kirschenbaum, M 2008, *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination*. The MIT Press Cambridge & London.

Kittler, F 1987, 'Gramophone, Film, Typewriter', D von Mücke & PL Simon (trans.) October, Vol. 41, pp. 101-118.

Kittler, F 1995, 'There is No Software', in A Kroker & M Kroker (eds.), *Ctheory Articles: a032*, viewed 19 March 2013, <http://www.ctheory.net/printer.aspx?id=74>

Kittler, F 2008, 'Code (or, How You Can write Something Differently)' in Matthew Fuller (ed.), *Software studies: a lexicon*. The MIT Press, Cambridge & London, pp. 40-47.

Kleist, H von & Neumiller, TG 1972, 'On the Marionette Theatre', *The Drama Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3, The Puppet Issue, September, pp. 22-26.

Lanier, J 2006, 'DIGITAL MAOISM: The Hazards of the New Online Collectivism', *Edge*, 29 May 2006, viewed 15 July 2013, <http://www.edge.org/conversation/digital-maoism-the-hazards-of-the-new-online-collectivism>

Lanier, J 2010, *You are not a Gadget: A Manifesto*, Alfred A. Knof, New York.

Latour, B 1987, *Science in action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Laurel, B 2013, *Computers as theatre: A dramatic theory of interactive experience* (2nd ed.), Addison-Wesley, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Lawson, V 2000 'Pina, Queen of the Deep' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 July. Or same article, in *The Pina Bausch Sourcebook: The Making of Tanztheater*, Royd Climenhaga (ed.), pp. 217-225.

Lazardzig, J 2008, 'Machine as Spectacle: Function and Admiration in Seventeenth-Century Perspectives on Machines' in H Schramm, L Schwarte, & J Lazardzig (eds.), *Instruments in Art and Science: On the Architectonics of Cultural Boundaries in the 17th Century*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin & New York, pp. 152-175.

Le Guin, U 1976, *Left Hand of Darkness*, Ace Books, New York.

Lehmann, HT 2006, *Postdramatic Theatre*, K Jürs-Munby (trans.), Routledge, London & New York.

Lessing, L 2008, *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy*, Bloomsbury, London.

Lester, G 1998, 'Kai Tai Chan: part one fingers dancing in the dark', *Brolga,* 8, June. pp. 7-17.

Lévi-Strauss, C 1966, *The Savage Mind*, J Weightman & D Weightman (trans.) Series: Nature of Human Society (NHS), University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Levy, S 2011, *In The Plex: How Google Thinks, Works, and Shapes Our Lives*, Simon & Schuster, New York.

Lewis, L 1992, *Ring of Liberation: Deceptive Discourse in Brazilian Capoeira*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Lewis, L 1995, 'Genre and Embodiment: From Brazilian Capoeira to the Ethnology of Human Movement', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 221-243.

Lewis, L 1998, 'Sex and Violence in Brazil: Carnival, Capoeira and the problem of everyday life' in *Book 2 Selected Reading for Ritual and Festivity* in Brazil Dr Lowell Lewis. University of Sydney. Manuscript #96-AM067. Also appearing in *American Ethnologist*.

Lotringer, S & Virilio, P 2005, *The Accident of Art*, Semiotext(e), New York.

Lovelace, A 1842, 'Sketch of The Analytical Engine Invented by Charles Babbage', viewed 21 September 2005, <www.fourmilab.ch/babbage/sketch.html>.

Lovink, G 2006, 'Interview with Alan Liu: I work here, but I am cool', *NETWORK CULTURES BLOG*, viewed 13 December 2013, < http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/geert/interview-with-alan-liu/>

Lovink, G 2013, 'Aesthetics of Dispersed Attention-Interview with German Media Theorist Petra Loeffler', *Nettime-l Digest*, Vol. 72, Issue 23 Tue, 24 Sep 2013 14:05:10 +0200, viewed 21 November 2013, <http://nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-1309/msg00046.html>.

Lucarelli, F 2002, 'dOCUMENTA 13: Czechoslovak Radio 1968, by Tamás St. Turba', viewed 14 January 2014, <http://socks-studio.com/2012/08/01/documenta-13-czechoslovak-radio-1968-by-tamas-st-turba/>.

Mackenzie, A 2010, *Wirelessness: Radical Empiricism in Network Cultures*, The MIT Press, Cambridge & London.

MacMillan, K 2001, 'Discourse on History, Geography, and Law: John Dee and the Limits of the British Empire, 1576-80', *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 1-25.

Mansoux, A 2011, 'My Lawyer is an Artist', *nettime-l Digest* Fri, 11 Nov 2011 14:23:23 +0100, viewed 10 December 2013, <http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-1111/msg00047.html>.

Martin L 2003, 'Lyotard, Jean-François, 'Les Immatériaux. Thinking About Exhibitions' in F Greenberg, and Nairne (eds.), *Theories of Media*, Winter 2003, Routledge, London, 1996, viewed 13 December 2013, <http://csmt.uchicago.edu/annotations/greenbergthinking.htm>

Massumi, B 1992, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London.

Mauro-Flude, N 2006, 'Social Software, fiction, Action at a Distance and Dolls', *MUTE Magazine*, viewed 13 December 2013, <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/social-software-fiction-action-distance-and-dolls >.

Mauro-Flude, N 2008, 'Linux for Theatre Makers: Embodiment & Nix Modus Operandi', in A Mansoux & M de Valk (eds.), *FLOSS+Art*, GOTO10, Poitiers, France. MUTE, London, pp. 206-223.

McAuley, G 1999, *Space in Performance: Making Meaning in the Theatre*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

McCarthy, T 2002, 'General Secretary's Report to the International Necronautical Society, 2002', *Navigation Was Always a Difficult Art*, International Necronautical Society, Vargas Organization, London.

McCarthy, T 2011, 'Kittler and the Sirens', *London Review of Books*, 9 November, viewed 19 August 2013, <www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2011/11/09/tom-mccarthy/kittler-and-the-sirens/>.

McLaren, M 2003, '8-Bit Punk', *Wired Magazine*. Issue 11.11, November, viewed 10 December 2012, <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/11.11/mclaren.html>.

McLean, CA 2011, *Artist-Programmers and Programming Languages for the Arts* (unpublished PhD thesis), Goldsmiths, University of London.

Mersch, N 2007, 'Representation and Distortion' in H Schramm, L Schwarte & J Lazardzig (eds.), *Instruments in Art and Science: On the Architectonics of Cultural Boundaries in the 17th Century*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin & New York, pp. 20-27.

Moberly, T 2010, 'Haiti Ghetto Biennale', *Dazed and Confused*, Jan 28, 2010, viewed 13 March 2013, <http://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/6425/1/haiti-ghetto-biennale>.

Montaigne, M 2004, *The Essays: A Selection*, M.A. Screech (trans.), Penguin Books, London.

Mukherjee, A 2013, 'FTC to scrutinize new Facebook facial recognition feature' viewed 26 November 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/12/net-us-facebook-privacy-idUSBRE98B01V20130912>

Müller, H 1984, *Hamletmachine and other texts for stage*, C Weber (ed.), Performing Arts Journal Publications, New York.

Müller H. 2001, *A Heiner Müller Reader: Plays | Poetry | Prose* Carl Weber (ed. & trans.). PAJ Books Series, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London.

Murtaugh, M 2008, 'Interaction' in Matthew Fuller (ed.), *Software studies: a lexicon*. The MIT Press, Cambridge & London, pp. 143-148.

Naumann, F 1999, *Marcel Duchamp, L'Art à l'Ere de la Reproduction Mécanisée*, reproduction #191. Editions Hazan, Paris, p. 179.

Neal, K 1999, 'The rhetoric of utility: avoiding occult associations for mathematics through profitability and pleasure', *History of Science*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 151–178.

Nericcio, William A 1995, 'Artif[r]acture: Virulent Pictures, Graphic Narrative, and the Ideology of the Visual', *Mosaic: Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 28.4, December, pp. 79-109.

Niehoff, P 1994, 'The New Woman and the Politics of' in Jeannette Hoorn (ed.), *Strange Women: Essays in Art and Gender*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, pp. 38-52.

Norton, Q 2011, 'Anonymous 101: Introduction to the Lulz', *Wired Magazine*, 11 August 2011, viewed 14 January 2014, <http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2011/11/anonymous-101/all/ >.

Norton, Q 2012, 'Atari Teenage Riot Goes for the Lulz With Anonymous', *Wired Magazine*, 7 October, viewed 10 January 2013, < http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2012/07/atari-teenage-riot-anonymous/>.

Norton, Q 2012, 'In Flawed, Epic Anonymous Book, the Abyss Gazes Back', *Wired Magazine*, June 2012, viewed 14 January 2014, <http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2012/06/anonymous-parmy-olson-review/>.

O'Doherty, Brian 1999, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space,* University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Perea, M 2008, 'R34D1NG W0RD5 W1TH NUMB3R5' *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 237–241, viewed 21 September 2013, <http://www.uv.es/~mperea/leet1.pdf>.

Peris, N 2013, 'Nothing is impossible to those who see the invisible', *ABC News*, 14 November 2013, viewed 13 December 2013, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-11-14/peris-nothing-is-impossible/5092108/?site=indigenous&topic=latest>.

Pisa, N 2013, 'Julian Assange dubbed Rockstar of the Year by Italy's Rolling Stone', *Daily Mail* 2010, viewed January 10 2013, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1338566/Julian-Assange-dubbed-Rockstar-Year-Italys-Rolling-Stone.html#ixzz2h6Hx47yv>.

Plant, S 1997, *Zeroes + Ones: Digital Women + The New Technoculture*, Fourth Estate, London.

Platt, P 1999, 'Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters', *Early Modern Culture,* 16, Newark & London. pp. *15-23*.

Postlewait, T 1992, 'History, hermeneutics, and narrativity', in J Reinelt & JR Roach (eds.), *Critical Theory and Performance*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI, pp. 356-368.

Poulsen, K 2013, 'Anonymous Hacktivist Jeremy Hammond Sentenced to 10 Years in Prison', *Wired Magazine*, viewed 12 December 2013, <http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2013/11/hammond-sentence/>.

Powers, William 2010, *Hamlet's BlackBerry: A Practical Philosophy for Building a Good Life in the Digital Age*, Harper Collins, New York.

Rackham, M 2010, 'Mind, Play, Empathy & Machines: SEAM 2010: Agency and Action', *RealTime* issue #100 Dec-Jan, p. 21, viewed 10 January 2014, <http://www.realtimearts.net/article/100/10110>.

Rich, N 2010, 'The American Wikileaks Hacker: Jacob Appelbaum fights repressive regimes around the world - including his own', *Rolling Stone*, 15 December 2010, viewed December 2 2013, <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/meet-the-american-hacker-behind-wikileaks-20101201>.

Ryle, Gilbert 1949, *The Concept of Mind*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Savage, P 2010, 'The Germ of the Future? Ghetto Biennale: Port au Prince', *Third Text: Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Art and Culture*, Vol. 24, No. 4, pp. 491-495.

Selkirk, CA 2004, 'Shell Basics.v1.1', Piet Zwart Institute Media Design (Research) viewed 23 April 2009, <https://pzwart.wdka.hro.nl/mdma/staff/cselkirk/Documents/shell_basics.pdf> .

Sell, RD & Johnson, AW (eds.) 2013, *Writing and Religion in England 1558-1689: Studies in Community-Making and Cultural Memory,* Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Surrey.

Shakespeare, W 1998, *Hamlet*, in GR Hibbard (ed.), Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Sherman, William Howard 1995, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*, University of Massachusetts Press, Boston.

Shiner, L 2003, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Siegert, B 2007, 'Cacography or Communication? Cultural Techniques in German Media Studies', *Grey Room* Quarterly Vol. 29,The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston pp. 26-47.

Siegert, B 2012, 'Doors: On the Materiality of the Symbolic', *Grey Room Spring* 2012, No. 47, John Durham Peters (trans.) Grey Room, Inc. and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. pp. 6-23.

Slater, JB 2006, 'Editorial', *Mute*, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 7.

Stafford, BM 2008, 'The Enlightenment "Catholization" of Projective Technology: Theurgy and the Media Origins of Art', in H Schramm, L Schwarte & J Lazardzig (eds.), *Instruments in Art and Science: On the Architectonics of Cultural Boundaries in the 17th Century*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin & New York, pp.127-151.

Standage, T 2002, *The Turk: The Life and Times of the Famous Eighteenth-Century Chess-Playing Machine,* Walker & Co, New York.

Swinton, T 2003, 'In the Spirit of Derek Jarman' *Vertigo Magazine*, Volume 2 - Issue 4. Close-Up Film Centre, London, viewed 13 December 2013, <http://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/volume-2-issue-4-spring-2003/tilda-swinton-in-the-spirit-of-derek-jarman/>.

Tambiah, S 1990, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the scope of Rationality (Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures)*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Tashiro, M 1999, 'Wicked Fairy or National Treasure?', viewed September 2013, <http://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bausch/life.html>.

Taylor, R 2012, 'The national confessional', *Meanjin*, Vol. 71, No. 3, pp.22-36, viewed 13 Jan 2014, <http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=804505408783392;res=IELLCC>

Thacker, E 2009, 'Alberto Toscano, the Theatre of Production: Philosophy and Individuation between Kant and Deleuze', *Parrhesia,* No. 7, pp. 86-91.

Toepfer, K 1997, *Empire of Ecstasy: Nudity and Movement in German Body Culture, 1910-1935*, University of California Press, London, Berkeley, Los Angeles.

Torvalds, Linus 1991, *Notes for linux release 0.01*, viewed 11 September 2013, <http://ftp.funet.fi/pub/linux/historical/kernel/old-versions/RELNOTES-0.01>.

Toufic, J 2009, *Over-Sensitivity* (2nd electronic ed.), Forthcoming Books, Beirut. Viewed 15 December 2013, <http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads/Jalal_Toufic,_Over_Sensitivity.pdf>.

Turnbull, J 2013, 'Is Facebook sharing making us more vain?', *The Guardian*, viewed 26 September 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/25/facebook-vain-tools-ideology-sharing-users>.

Turner, V 1969, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Aldine Publishing Co, Chicago.

Vince, RW 1989. 'Theatre History as an Academic Discipline', in T Postlewait & BA McConachie (eds.), *Interpreting the Theatrical Past*, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City, pp. 1-18.

Weber, C 1991, 'AC/TC: Currents of Theatrical Exchange', *Interculturalism and Performance*, Writings from PAJ. PAJ Publications, New York, pp. 27-37.

Weber, S 1987, 'Texts/Contexts', *Institution and Interpretation*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Welch, C (ed.) 1995, *Eternal Network: A Mail Art Anthology*, University of Calgary Press, Calgary.

Welsh, I 2006, 'Feature Article: Irvine Welsh Waxing lyrical', *Dazed & Confused: The Freedom Issue*. July, pp. 25-29.

Wiles, D 2003, *A Short History of Western Performance Space,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wilkins, E 1969, *The Rose-Garden Game, The Symbolic Background to the European Prayer-Beads,* Victor Gollancz, London.

Willett, J. 1967, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht: A Study from Eight Aspects*, Methuen, London.

Wolf, A 2013, 'Seeking extra-sentience in social media spaces: the beginning is infinitely near' *Networked Art forms: Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits*, Contemporary Art Tasmania, viewed 14 January 2014, http://www.tacticalmagick.net/?asherwolf/>.

Woolf, V 1989, *A Room of One's Own*. Harcourt Brace & Co, New York.

Wright, E 1989, *Postmodern Brecht*, Routledge, London.

Yarnall, J 1994, *Transformations of Circe: the history of an enchantress,* University of Illinois Press.

Yates, FA 1966, *The Art of Memory,* Routledge, London.

Yates, FA 1969, *Theatre of the World,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Yates, FA 1975, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, Routledge, London.

Yates, FA 1978, *Majesty and Magic Shakespeare's Last Plays: A New Approach,* Routledge, London.

Yates, FA 1985, *Astraea: The imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Centry*, Ark, London, Boston.

Zetter, K 2010, 'Google Hack Attack Was Ultra Sophisticated, New Details Show', *Wired Magazine*, viewed December 12 2013, <http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2010/01/operation-aurora/>.

Zetter, K 2011, 'TED 2010: Google Optimistic It Can Remain in China', *Wired Magazine*, viewed 23 December 2013, <http://www.wired.com/business/2010/02/ted-2010-google-optimistic-it-can-remain-in-china/>.

Žižek, S 2013, 'Nadezhda Tolokonnikova of Pussy Riot's prison letters to Slavoj Žižek', *The Guardian*, 15 November 2013, viewed 23 December 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/nov/15/pussy-riot-nadezhda-tolokonnikova-slavoj-zizek>.

6.1 List of Figures & Image Credits

214

7.0 APPENDIX

7.1 SUBMITTED ART WORK

7.2 Appendix Torvalds, Linus 1991, *Notes for linux release 0.01*

7.3 Appendix Network *Networked Art Forms and Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits* (NAF:TMFC) promotion material including programme and concept.

7.4 Appendix Computer Science Student email.

7.5 Appendix list of events under the banner 'Miss Despoinas Critical Engineering Space' 2009-2013.

7.6 APPENDIX RESEARCH OUTPUT:

7.6.1 Papers at conferences and publications during thesis,

7.6.2 Curation,

7.6.3 Selected Bibliogpraphy Reviews -Interviews,

7.6.4 Selected Presentations / Lectures / Workshops

7.6.5 Performances

7.6.6 Solo Exhibitions and Installations

7.6.7 Group Exhibitions.

8 Appendix Metholdogy Field work

9 Appendix Theatre script of *Error_in_Time()*.

9.1 Appendix Theatre script of Error_in_Time() Version 3.1 / E_i_T(v.3.1)

7.0 LIST OF SUBMITTED ART WORK –

Valetudo A eulogy to Ida West (2013) prayer flag.
Medium: 180cm x 300cms, hand sequined-embroidered Knitted polyester flag, embedded Augmented Reality Layer. I have embraced the form of the Haitian Vodou Flag, where a connection between a mortal and a virtual presence is established.
[Documentation in Examination Shown – Video Interview, and Stills]

ism | breath | she | who | with | I (2012) code séance.
Medium: 3x code projections (dimensions variable) continuous loops, colour : audio.
Attempting to transcend the realm of the anecdotal, in the dark magic space of the shell, a classic text is divined by regular expressions, reconfigured into lists, new found treasures are revealed.
[Exhibited in Examination Show]

Error in time() (2012) performance.
Medium: 35-minute theatre performance.
The performer uncovers, visually opening up, the insides of the operating system behind our daily computer interactions. Through enquiring conversations, the amplified sound of fingertips dancing across the keyboard conveys the poetics and isokinetics of machine and human intelligence.
[Documentation in Examination Show]

"I am Googable", therefore, I am (2011) networked installation.
Medium: color, silent, a former live aggregated data feed networked computer monitor, along with a 349mmx 6000 mm semi-gloss colour print on banner paper. This self-portrait refers to the solipsistic behavior inspired by regular Internet use.
It is common to look out into this void almost as if it were a mirror to reassure that 'we' exist.
[Exhibited in Examination Show]

Scrying:Mea (2013) Medium: live coding performance installation. A tarot reading takes place by a fembotic mechanism, a cypher, strips away both the historical significance and ideologies from what we think divination might be, through an encoded choreography that generates new forms of contemplation.
[Exhibited in Examination Show as performance mise-en-scène installation /]

Self Portrait (2013) video.
Medium: digital video - sound | colour | continuous. The video is shot at Tessellated Pavements, an extremely uncanny location, for me, a mysterious labyrinth, a platform to the underworld whose entrance I am yet to find. Standing behind a mirror, holding it, I am attempting to use it as a cypher, a key to pick the lock to a backdoor.
[Exhibited in Examination Show]

Arwy Signals, (2013) code séance.
Medium: 15 min performance and ongoing installation. In collaboration with Linda Dement, the researcher constructs a device to tap into that starlight WIFFI beam, to receive messages from the three stellar punks now making their way along it to the heavens; shining up the cathedrals of light in the night sky.
[Exhibited in Examination Show]

Computer is Dreaming (2012) Installation.
Medium: Assemblage of non-utilitarian paraphernalia, totems and computer hardware elements. A script scans /dev/mem, a code abstraction, which acts as an interface to the computer memory and outputs this inner veracity as a video.
[Exhibited in Examination Show]

217

7.1 Appendix - Notes for linux release 0.01

Linus Torvalds posted this message on the comp.minix.os USENET newsgroup on 25 August 1991:

Path: gmdzi!unido!fauern!ira.uka.de!sol.ctr.columbia.edu!zaphod.mps.ohio-state.edu!wupost!uunet!mcsun!news.funet.fi!hydra!klaava!torvalds

From: torva...@klaava.Helsinki.FI (Linus Benedict Torvalds)
Newsgroups: comp.os.minix
Subject: What would you like to see most in minix?
Grazing the Digital Commons   150 120 121 122
Summary: small poll for my new operating system Keywords: 386, preferences Message-ID: <1991Aug25.205708.9541@klaava.Helsinki.FI> Date: 25 Aug 91 20:57:08 GMT

Organization: University of Helsinki Lines: 20

Hello everybody out there using minix -
I'm doing a (free) operating system (just a hobby, won't be big and professional like gnu) for 386(486) AT clones. This has been brewing since april, and is starting to get ready. I'd like any feedback on things people like/dislike in minix, as my OS resembles it somewhat (same physical layout of the file-system (due to practical reasons) among other things).
I've currently ported bash(1.08) and gcc(1.40), and things seem to work. This implies that I'll get something practical within a few months, and I'd like to know what features most people would want. Any suggestions are welcome, but I won't promise I'll implement them :-)
Linus (torva...@kruuna.helsinki.fi)

PS. Yes - it's free of any minix code, and it has a multi-threaded fs.
It is NOT portable (uses 386 task switching etc), and it probably never will support anything other than AT-harddisks, as that's all I have :-(.
Source:
<groups.google.com/group/comp.os.minix/msg/b813d52cbc5a044b?dmode=source&hl=en>

7.3 Appendix email from perplexed computer science student.

Regarding your "hackerspace".

From emglina

To sister0@dyne.org

Date 2012-07-10 09:19

Hello,

*snip

Your occasional backyard organisation does not, in my view, count as a legitimate hackerspace in line with what we hope to create. Nor are you the only person who has such get-togethers in this part of the country...People with some sort of web presence that gets together at someone's house now and then to put together Lego Friends?

*snip

Regards,

Elyse

7.4 Appendix list of events under the banner 'Miss Despoinas Critical Engineering Space' 2008-current, developing the experiential prototyping methodology.

2008
'encoding_experience/10_October_2008_ g_18:00_**EST.***', Plimsol Gallery Tasmania,
The first of a series of events inspired by the ways in which artists are embracing critical, hands-on interventive strategies towards the understanding of, and experimentation with technology.
moddr.net/encoding_experience/
10_October 2008 – 16 November 2008

2009
Hands on Electronic Sculpture, *Tasmania School of Art,* 10 days Undergraduate Student Complementary Studies Unit.
July 9 – 19
'Hands on Electronic Sculpture', *Home of Nancy Mauro-Flude,* 1 day workshop.
November 19

2010
'Hardware demolition and reconstruction,' *Moonah Art Centre,* 1 day Workshop.
April 11
'My Avatar', *Glenorchy Works Festival*, 1 day workshop.
July 23

2010
'Network Performance, dramaturgy and Pure Data Processing Language' *Israeli Center for Digital Art and Bet Berl Academic college, Tel Aviv Israel,* 3 day workshop.
November 13-15

2011
'Network Performance, dramaturgy and Pure Data Processing Language' *Darwin Community Arts | 24hourART NTs Contemporary Art Space,* 3 day workshop.
June 23 – 25

2012
'Hands:On Tactical Magick: social software: fiction, action-at-a-distance and dolls', *FEMHACK launch of Foufem, presented by the Montreal Women and Feminist Hacker group and STUDIO-XX. 1 day workshop 14 November*

'Hands On Electronic Sculpture'*, Financial Integrity Research Network* hosted by TAS School of Art, *1 day workshop* 9 November

2013
'Encoding Experience' - *Devonport Regional Gallery* 1 x day MasterClass in Augmented Reality codes and procedures in contemporary art.

'Networked Art Forms: Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits', *Contemporary Art Tasmania [CAT]*
A series of events with artitsts who take inspiration from computer culture. World-class artists, programmers and thinkers from the frontline of the maker aesthetic.
2x Survey Exhibitions / 3x day Symposium / 2 x 3 day Workshops / Performance programme / informal critical feedback circles /
tacticalmagick.net
31 May – 30 June 2013

7.6 Appendix - Research output:

7.6.1 Selected Publications by Nancy Mauro-Flude

'Intimacy of the Command Line', *The In/Visibilites of Code*, Volume 10 Number 2, 2013, Scan: Journal of Media Arts Culture
http://scan.net.au/scn/journal/vol10number2/Nancy-Mauro-Flude.html
[Refereed Article] [CODE Conference Proceedings]

'Experiential Prototyping with Miss Despoina' *RunWay* Issue #23 [Prototype],
Runway Australian Experimental Art. Sydney: The Invisible Inc.
http://runway.org.au/interrupts-arent-hidden-experiential-prototyping-miss-despoina/
[Refereed Article]

'Ode to Paraphernalia': Bricolage as a design approach for electronic performance tools
(2013)', *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research*, Volume 11, Issue 1.
[Refereed Article]

'Ode to Paraphernalia': Bricolage as a design approach for electronic performance
tools', LEONARDO JOURNAL VOLUME 47, ISSUE 6, 2014 Leonardo Transactions,
Special Issue on Live Interfaces [Refereed Article]

Mather J.Margaret (2013) 'Exposing the Inner Workings: An Interview with Nancy
Mauro-Flude', Feminist Journal of Art and Digital Culture *.DPI* #27 Hacktivism
http://dpi.studioxx.org/en/exposing-inner-workings-interview-nancy-mauro-flude
 [Professional, Refereed Article]

'Producing realignments shake things up', *.DPI* Journal discourse and creation, on the
subject of women, media and technological landscapes. #26 Edition (2012)
[Professional, Refereed Article]

'ism | breath | she | who | with | I', *GEEK MOOK* Vingette Press (2012)
[Book Chapter]

'ism | breath | she | who | with | I', *Code {poems}* Eds: Gauthier. D, Allen. J, Noble. J,
Ignac. M. (2012)
[Published Creative Work]

'Looking for An Image to Protect me', *ILK* #1 Taxonomy Publishing (2012)
[Published Creative Work]

'Circe's New Equipment & sister0's Paraphernalia', *.DPI* #22 Edition Free Culture (2011)
discourse and creation, on the subject of women, media and technological landscapes.
Professional, Refereed Article]

Grady, Kendall / you will _KNOW how_: an interview with Nancy Mauro-Flude 31
October, 2011 *MASTERofMEDIA*
http://mastersofmedia.hum.uva.nl/2011/10/31/you-will-_know-how_-an-interview-with-nancy-mauro-flude/
[Professional, Refereed Media Interview]

'Charming Atavisims: New Perspectives in the PatchingZone', *Real Projects for Real
People* (2010), vol. 1, (Ed) Anne Nigten. Publisher: V2_ publishing Distribution: Nai.
[Book Chapter]

'Embracing new technology: welcoming video art into the classroom.'(2010) MOVE: Video Art in schools video package introduction. Partnership between Kaldor Art Projects and the NSW Department of Education and Training. TMAG and Detached. [Professional, Non-Refereed Article]

'Peacock Theatre - Sound to Light' Lowdown Magazine (2010)
[Magazine Article]

'I See You' in *Supermassive Blackhole* Issue 4 (ed) Barry W Huges (2010)
[Published Creative Work]

'Indonesian Local Archives Project [LAP]', *Engage Media* (2009)
[Blog Article]

'The art of storage and transmission. Tactical media for artists and activists' in The Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT] Communications Forum and International Conference 'Media in Transition 6: stone and papyrus, storage and transmission.'
[Refereed Conference Proceedings]

7.6.2 Curated Projects by Nancy Mauro-Flude

*experience/10_October_2008_ encoding_18:00_**EST.**** is the first of a series of exhibitions inspired by the ways in which artists are embracing critical, hands-on interventive strategies towards the understanding of, and experimentation with technology.
http://moddr.net/encoding_experience/
10_October 2008 – 16 November 2008

Networked Art Forms: Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits
A series of events with artitsts who take inspiration from computer culture. World-class artists, programmers and thinkers from the frontline of the maker aesthetic. Contemporary Art Spaces Tasmania [CAST]
tacticalmagick.net
31 May – 30 June 2013

7.6.3 Selected Bibliography Press

Turton-Turner, P, (2013) Feminist Sensibilities: Focusing on the Art of Nancy Mauro-Flude and Selena de Carvalho, *NAVA Quarterly*, 1, (1) pp. 13. ISSN 1032-9617 (2013)
[Professional, Non Refereed Article]

Tritton, Amy (2013) 'Testing Ground' in Artlink. vol 33 no 2.
http://www.artlink.com.au/articles/3990/testing-ground/
[Professional, Non Refereed Article]

STUDIOxxxx, (2013) Networked Art Forms and Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits (Part I of II) Feminist Journal of Art & Digital Culture
[Professional, Refereed Article]

Forrest, Nicholas (2013) The Future of Electronic Art at ISEA2013 in Sydney
http://au.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/913206/the-future-of-electronic-art-at-isea2013-in-sydney

Lagnley, Somaya (2013) The big connect
http://isea2013-in-realtime.net/2013/06/26/the-big-connect/

Andrews, Duncan (2012) The Brighton Digital Festival launched in coded fashion
http://www.culture24.org.uk/science%20%26%20nature/technology/art400093

Sutczak, Patrick (2012) 'ism| she: 20th Century text", WARP Magazine p.32 &
WriteResponse, a platform to review all types of art and creative endeavour.
http://writeresponse.blogspot.com.au/2012/04/ism-breath-she-who-with-i.html

Rackham, Melinda (2012) Structures, strictures & students : challenge & change in
media arts education RealTime issue #110 Aug-Sept 2012 pg. 22
http://www.realtimearts.net/article/issue110/10746

Goldenberg, Anne, Editors (2011) 'sister0 and her Paraphernalia' in .dpi #22 Edition
Free Culture. discourse and creation, on the subject of women, media and technological
landscapes.
http://dpi.studioxx.org/demo/?q=en/no/22/

Anneke van de Vusse (2011) *Inside the Intimate machine* ABC. 24 August,
[Media Interview]

Fitzgibben, Rebecca (2010)'The Intimate Machine' in The Mercury. July 29
[Media Interview]

Rita Dimasi (2011)'Monday at MONA FOMA' in ArtsHub Tuesday, January 18,
http://www.artshub.com.au/au/news-article/opinions/arts/monday-at-mona-foma-183145
[Media Review]

Graham, Leslie. (2011) 'Life, death and Big Questions' in The Mercury Tuesday
January 18. p. 13.
[Media Review]

Rackham, Melinda (2010) 'Mind, Play, Empathy & Machines: SEAM 2010: Agency and
Action' in RealTime issue #100 Dec-Jan 2010 pg. 21
[Media Review]

Mcgregor, Fiona (2010) 'screen bleed' in RealTime issue #99 Oct-Nov
[Media Review]

Fitzgibben, Rebecca (2010)' Hack In A Box ' The Mercury. April 16.
http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2010/04/16/140271_attitude.html

Briony, Kidd (2009) 'Toussaint' The Australian Stage. 27 October
http://www.australianstage.com.au/200910262951/reviews/tasmania/toussaint-|-the-
southern-belles.html

Corbet, Jonathan (2009)'Mobile Linux at linux.conf.au' January 21,
http://lwn.net/Articles/315705/

Vigna, Elvira (2009) 'Dances with her Shadow Verbo' in AGGUARRAS journal 13, July

Clinch, Hayley (2009) 'Review' in Jac Bowie Australian Burlesque. June
http://www.jacbowie.com/blog/?p=5632

Nigten, Anne (2009). 'Process patching, Defining New Methods in aRt&D' Leonardo -
Volume 42, Number 5, October 2009, The MIT Press. pp. 478-479. E-ISSN: 1530-9282
Print ISSN: 0024-094X

7.6.4 Selected Presentations / Lectures / Workshops

2013

'Encoding Experience: The Use of Code in Contemporary Art Practice and literature'.
The School of Humanities and Communication Arts at University of Western Sydney.
at *Transformations of the Image and Text: space and the ethos of liveness in digitality and writing.*
[Refereed Research Event]

MasterClass - Devonport Regional Gallery
[Curated Event]

2012   Hands On Electronic Sculpture for Financial Integrity Research Network hosted by TAS School of Art
'Paraphernalia and the Trash Stratum' at 'Whose Business is Risk?' Symposium, Feminism and Gender studies Department McGill University Montreal.
[Refereed Research Event]
'The Intimacy of the Commandline', CODE 2012 Swinburne University of Technology, Leeds University, Live Interfaces Conference.
[Refereed Research Event]
Hands:On Tactical Magick: social software: fiction, action-at-a-distance and dolls for FEMHACK launch of Foufem, presented by the Montreal Women and Feminist Hacker group and STUDIO-XX.
[Curated event]
'The Central Core of Technology' *Time Machine Festival*. Presented by Serial Space Panel Discussion.
[Curated Event]
'Spoon Feeding or Spoon bending?: Participatory Culture & Relational Aesthetics' in *Touchy Feely* INFLIGHT ARI Tasmania.
[Curated Event]

2011   'Rethinking Tactical [& tactile] Media for Artists and Activists' in *Environmental politics and conflict in the age of digital media Symposium*, Journalism, Media and Communications, School of English and European Languages. University of Tasmania
[Refereed Event]

'In statu nascendi : Charming atavisms, New perspectives in the Patching Zone' in
 EAT (Environment & Arts Trajectory) Symposium Faculty of Arts University of Tasmania.
[Referred Event]

'Vessels for infinite veracity: theatre machines and the body', in *National Australian Visual Arts Association We Are Here ARI symposium*, Fraser Street Studios Sydney Australia.
[Curated event]
'Engaged Autonomy: Digital Materiality, Craft Knowledge and possibility' Decmocrability panel in transmediale.11 | RESPONSE:ABILITY festival for art and digital culture Berlin

2010   'In statu nascendi : Charming atavisms, New perspectives in the Patching Zone'
Presentation in CreateWorld 2010 - "Working on the Edge - Creativity, Technology and Innovation" Southbank Institute of Technology
[Peer reviewed paper]

'Vessels for infinite veracity: theatre machines and the body'. SEAM 2010 Public Symposium: Agency and Action, Seymour Centre
[Refereed- extended abstract publication]

'Everything Old is New Again' Presentation, panel 2010 Freeplay Independent Games Festival State Library of Victoria August 14 & 15.
[Curated Event]

'Engaged Autonomy: Digital Materiality, Craft Knowledge and possibility':
SEiR 2010 Uni of Tas Postgraduate Research Conference 2010 [presentation]

Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (ACUADS) Uni of Tas - Launceston
[Refereed Paper- Published and Presentation]

Tasmanian School of Art research symposium 'Sequel/Segue'
[Refereed Research Event]

'SEAM2010- Agency and Action - Somatic Embodiment, Agency & Mediation in Digital Mediated Environments', presented by Critical Path Sydney and Uni of Western Sydney
[Curated event]

Conference Design, Technology and Politics: A Critical Exploration in the Drafted Land at The Israeli Center for Digital Art and Bet Berl Academic college, Tel Aviv Israel.
[Curated Event]

'Bricolage as a Design approach: the symbols of the divine in paraphernalia' in Theory and in Practice' Tasmanian School of Art Research Symposium

'Miss Desponinas Hack Lab Hobart.' Linux.conf.au 2010 Wellington. Conference presentation
[Refereed Event]

2009   'Linux.conf.au 2009:What happens when Performing Arts and Computer Science meet in Tasmania?'
Teaching Matters – Annual learning and teaching conference. University of Tasmania
[Refereed Abstract Paper]

'Custom Built Interfaces: Tactical Media for Artists and Activists' in International Season of Electronic Art international Symposium on Electronic Art, University of Ulster. Belfast.
[Juried Event]
Stone and papyrus, storage and transmission, Media in Transition conference, Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT]
[Juried Event]

'Artists using free Software, ASCII & the Genderchanger Academy'
'Baglady2.0 streaming on the fly': Linux.conf.au 'March South' Australian Linux conference
[Juried Event]

2008   'The Future of New media' (Panel & symposium) & Linux, Custom built interfaces & Bricolage as a design approach in ArtElectrofringe: Newcastle, Australia.
[Juried Event]
Making Links – where social action & technology converge; Melbourne University.
[Juried Event]

7.6.5 Performances

2014
Error in Time() Networked Performance TRANSMEDIALE afterglow 2014 (forthcoming)

2013
Is Starlight a Wifi Signal? – The Portals, ISEA 2013 Sydney Curator: Dr Ricardo Peach

Awry Signals NITEWORKS Bundannon Trust. Curator David Cranswick

2012
Intimacy of the Command line – Time Machine Festival Serial Space

Dances with her Shadow [An ode to Man Ray (1916)]. FLAM3 Forum for Live Art Amsterdam. Artie Amiche, Curator Rose Akras

2011
Error in Time() Networked Performance. Netherlands New Media Art Institute 'Art of Hacking' Curator Petra Heck.

Error in Time() Peacock Theatre, Salamanca Arts Centre. Junction arts Festival Launceston, Tasmania.

Dances with her Shadow [An ode to Man Ray (1916)]. Critical Path Sydney SEAM2011 Spacing Movements Outside In. Curators Margie Medlin, Benedict Anderson

Paraphernalia ['Don't Anthropomorphise Me' Version] MONA FOMA - MONA Festival of Music & Art PW1 Curated by Brian Ritchie of Violent Femmes.

2010
Error in Time() SEAM2010 Seymor Theatre Centre. Sydney.

2009
My First Burial in LUST FOR LIFE, Contemporary Art Services Tasmania - CAST Gallery Curator Lucy Bleach

Be My 127.0.0. International Season Electronic Art [ISEA] PS2 Gallery. Belfast.

p a r a p h e r n a l i a
VERBO Exhibition. Contemporary Art Galeria Vermelho Sao Paulo.
Brazil. Curator Marcos Gallon; ONO – [One Night Only] – Hobart, Tasmania ; Kiss Club:
Bill+george Gallery Sydney Curator: Karen Terese; Ghetto Biennale: A Salon des Refusés for the 21st century– Port au Prince, Haiti Curator: Leah Gordon

sister0's UnderwaterDatabase: BREAKING THE SPACE Speculum Atrium Delavski Dom Trbovlje, Trbovlje, Slovenia.Presented by Department of Video and New Media, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Curator Evelin Stermitz.

Connection with the Medium Plimsoll Gallery. Tasmania. Australia.Curator Noel Frankham

Media divination 3.0, *Batteries Not Included: Contemporary Art Meets Linux.conf.au*. Curator Kevin Leong

7.6.6 Solo Exhibitions and Installations

2013
Self Portrait Sawtooth ARI New Media Gallery,
[Peer Reviewed Event]

Is starlight a WIFI Signal? The Portals, ISEA2013 Curator Ricardo Peach
[Curated Event]
ScryingMea MONA Museum of New and Old Art, Curator Natalie Holtsbaum

The Reluctant Clown -
CONSTANCE ARI *Paddy Lyn Space*
[Curated Event]

2012
'ism | breath | she | who | with | I'
 New Media Gallery Sawtooth ARI. Director: Fernando de Campo

Error_in_Time()
HTMlles 10: Festival of Media Arts + Digital Culture in Montreal Curator : Sophie Le Phat Ho
Brighton Digital Festival UK Curator: E-Permanent Cheryl Gallway
24hourART NTs Contemporary Art Space. Curator: Steven Eland

2010
'Confession' in collaboration with Audrey Samson Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, N8 Museum Nacht
Curated by Rose Ackras and Dirk Jan Jager

2009
'Bag Lady 2.0'. PS2 Gallery. Belfast. Spark Platform, International Season Electronic Art [ISEA]
Curator Kathy Ray Huffman

7.5.7 Group Exhibitions and Installations

2013
Valetudo in Testing Ground in *10 Days on the Island.* **Long Gallery SAC***. Devonport regional gallery Curator Dr Julie Gough.*

'Bread and Roses' in Trans Technology: Circuits of Culture, Self, Belonging Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series at the Institute for Women and Art. New Brunswick, NJ. USA.

Intimacy of the Commandline – Performance Lecture TimeMachine Festival Presented by Serial Space.

2012
'Computer is Dreaming';
The Research Life of Objects, Entrepot Gallery. Curator Paul Zika.
Moving Parts, Devonport Regional Gallery. Curators: Ellie Ray & Astrid Joyce.

'ism | breath | she | who | with | I' CODE Exhibition, Swinburne University of Technology. Curator Dean Kemp

'The Dream LIfe' Touchy Feely INFLIGHT GALLERY. Curators Amy Spiers, Pip Stafford

2011
E_I_T(v_3) in 'Art of Hacking' Netherlands New Media Art Institute. Curator Petra Heck

Read_Run_Execute: Pirating the Archaic Energy 'genart_sys | push_pull_change_grow' Australia Council for the Arts. Curator Deborah Turnbull

I Google Therefore I Am in 'Erotographomania' Contemporary Art Services Tasmania CAST. Curators: Sarah Jones and Philip Watkins

Circe's New Equipment in 'An Archival Impulse' Plimsoll Gallery, University of Tasmania Curators: Dr Brigita Ozolins, Dr Ruth Frost,

Miss Despoina's 'IDE-stripped Bare' in collaboration with Nick Smithies. Tas Art Trail Curator: Nicole O'Loughlan

2010
Read_Run_Execute: Pirating the Archaic Energy in BLOODBATH, Horden Pavillion Sydney. Curated by Linda Dement / BUMPPprojects/NewMedia Curation.

"Resist", She Said. Freeplay independent Games Festival. State Library of Victoria. Curator – Thea Baumann/Aphids

I See You in LOOK OUT. Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart Tasmania. Curators Michael Edwards, Jane Stewart.

Bag Lady 2.0 in LOOK OUT. Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart Tasmania. Curators Michael Edwards, Jane Stewart.

8 Appendix METHODOLOGY – Notes from the Field

> …the clue lies there...symbols of the divine show up in our world
>
> initially at the trash stratum
>
> -Philip K. Dick (2003)

The Ghetto Biennale, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 28 November - 18 December 2009

I am standing in a slum in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, watching a plastic crocodile mutate from an innocent child's toy to a horrifying agent of revenge, as it devours a woman in one gulp, feet first. At the very glimpse of this object, I know I am on the right track. A similar image of a crocodile with a woman hanging out its mouth (from a very different context) which I have had treasured for many years is on my wall at home (see Figures 83-84). I am surrounded by a maze of dirt-encrusted skulls, dug from the cemetery and fixed into rusted iron rings or welded onto poles. The place resonates with life, but is clearly rooted in death. At the entrance I have already been greeted by gatekeeper Papa Guédé, a trickster, warrior and messenger of destiny; a Vodou sculpture constructed from the skeleton of an old car, bed-frame, miscellaneous scrap metal and a formidable wooden phallus suspended on a spring, which I was told, if you plunk, it brings good luck (see Figure 85-86).[210]

FIGURE 83 A SCENE FROM PINA BAUSCH'S THE LEGEND OF VIRGINITY WUPPERTAL THEATRE GERMANY.
PHOTO: HELMUT NEWTON.

---

210 I discuss omens in found objects in the next chapter 'Vodou paraphernalia and the Trash Stratum'.

FIGURE 84 CHILDREN'S ARTWORK AT ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURES 85 PAPA GEDE JUST AFTER THE ENTRANCE OF ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURES 86 PAPA GEDE AT THE FIRST ENTRANCE OF ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE.
PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

In 2009, I attended the first Ghetto Biennale hosted by Atis Resistanz, a community of artists who live in the Grand Rue. Combining Vodou and sculpture, their artwork is made from trash and paraphernalia.211 They repurpose devices, clothing and objects that have been discarded from the first world, often in the guise of benevolence and dumped in their town. Much of the discarded paraphernalia from the first world is redundant here. These Haitian makers seemed to me the final repository of the marvelous, the last possessors of the wand of the magical goddess Circe.[212]

The Haitian revolution in 1804 resulted in the permanent abolition of slavery with a declaration of independence. These matters have profound meaning for the Haitian people, an island once controlled by pirates, existing outside of the law. The myths, religion and the history of a nation that led the first successful slave rebellion spills around me as I walk across the viaducts and climb up and down hills, through the frenetic streets, dodging broken concrete.

I fall to sleep and awaken to the beat of a drum, far off in the distance. Vodou permeates everything, although there are religious ceremonies, it is first and foremost a social and cultural system, inseparable from the way of life for most Haitian people. The people joke that the current population is 90 per cent Catholic, but 100 per cent vodou.

---

211 Vodou is the traditional spelling of the religion & culture of the Haitian people. For the purposes of this text I refer to general *Vodou* Culture, specifically the tradition having been practiced in subterfuge over long periods of time, hence its manifestation often in domestic appurtenances & paraphernalia.

212 Cinderella's fairy godmother and her wand may well be derivative of Circe, which I will discuss further in Chapter 1. The late Malcolm Mclaren (1946-2010) also discusses the wand of Cinderella, which influenced this perspective, instead he finds 'Chip music is the final repository of the marvellous, its makers the last possessors of the wand of Cinderella fairy godmother (Mclaren 2003)'.

FIGURE 87-88 ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURE 89-90 LA SANTE PHARMACY AND GRACE DIVINE TAILORING ESTABLISHMENTS, PORT-AU-PRINCE.
PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Almost every shop sign has in its title a promise on a painted insignia, highlighting a potential with luck, chance, fortune, paradise, spirit, grace and the divine. Contemplating the omens from the debris and the street in daily life in Haiti is overwhelming. I couldn't possibly solve the plethora of riddles placed before me by these tricksters who revel in life and laugh at death.

People sell paraphernalia in ad-hoc stalls. There is garbage piled up in all corners, everywhere. However, there is a clear distinction between rubbish and rot. The Kréyol word for this kind of rotting waste is fatras, a sub-category of discarded paraphernalia;

consisting of compost, fleshy remains, components from obsolete machineries. In the local cemetery, there is prostitution as well as tombs. Many graves are rented for a short period; after this, decaying corpses are removed. Most coffins are cremated: others find their ways into artists' hands.

FIGURE 91 CEMETERY PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

The Grand Rue ghetto is a labyrinth filled with talismanic charms mainly crafted from the remnants and paraphernalia of previous mechanisms. This place, attracted me by instinct rather than by choice...

On meeting the members of Atis Resistanz we negotiated a mix of gestures, broken English and Kréyol for interaction purposes. Excitement helped the communication along. The children would show me their work, leading me through the narrow labyrinthine alleys adjacent to their homes. I was overwhelmed to see their bizarre syncretic juxtapositions and paraphernalia jam packed into every nook and cranny of their homes.

I was invited to perform my work Paraphernalia, a techno-electro-clash-breakcore act, at the opening of the Ghetto Biennale. This consisted of manipulating curiosities embedded with electronics, custom-built human interface devices that via wireless communicated with my computer, which I had programmed to process the signals and distort sound. On arrival, it became very clear to me that what I had planned was entirely unsuitable.

FIGURE 92 CHILDREN OF ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURE 93 CHILDREN OF ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURE 94 CHILDREN OF ATIS RESISTANZ, GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

I spend a considerable amount of time is spent drinking Haitian rum cocktails with the Atis Resistanz sculptors, other participants in the Ghetto Biennale, a hotel dog, strange men smoking cigars (I had no idea of how they were related to the event), a wealthy anarchist filmmaker who would talk for hours then slap me and say she loved me and eventually give me her entire body of films in a suite of DVDs.[213] The International party also consisted of academics and artists from England, America, Jamaica and Canada including a cluster of London people from the KLF stardom bandwagon.214 The 'money-burning' gesture, titled The K Foundation Burn a Million Quid (1994) was a momentous act for Artis Rezistanz elder Eugene, and it was significant that Bill Drummond, former member of the KLF, was at the event. Arguably, one could say that the act, which aimed for the contemporary art system, found almost no resonance except within the acid-house pop tabloid culture from which it came, and filtered its way to Haiti where much of the trash from the third world floats.

---

213 As it turns out she was one of the main funders and paid for our translator and airport transfer
214 For more on The K Foundation Burn a Million Quid read an appraisal by Jim Reid (1994) 'Money To Burn' in The Observer 25 September. Also can be found online, viewed January 10 2014, <http://www.libraryofmu.org/display-resource.php?id=387>. In regard to how such provocative acts are inspired by Art Strike campaigns and got appropriated by pop culture but swerved contemporary art mainstream that they were targeting, see Cramer (2013) 'Anti-Copyright in Artistic Subcultures' p.24-38.

Amongst the chaos, I would muse over my next step. I delved deep into my inner vaults and wondered what I could bring to such an inaugural event apart from the small number of battery-operated games and hand-held Vocoders (that thankfully were not confiscated like my other electronic devices, during my journey through New Zealand airport security). I continued showing up each day to the Grand Rue and finally began to scavenge for wood scraps in order to make a version of a percussion folk instrument, the Australian lagerphone (Figures 95-96). I would spend my days mainly with the children. Things began to take their own shape. Many of us eventually began to jam, and came to familiarise ourselves with a basic tune that had emerged in our collaboration. Together we made a performance, waving red and white danger tape, old wood embedded with nails and beer bottle tops, cheering we promenaded through the opening of the Ghetto Biennale (Figures 98-99). Our march eventually evolved into a jam session, a free-for-all. It was truly a Ghetto Parade.

FIGURE 95 MAKING LAGERPHONE IN GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURE 96 LAGERPHONE IN GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURE 97 GETTING READY TO JAM WITH LAGERPHONES IN GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

FIGURES 98-99 GHETTO BIENNALE GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURES 100-101 GHETTO BIENNALE GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURE 102-103 TELEGHETTO AT GHETTO BIENNALE GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE

The rest is TeleGhetto's story to tell.

FIGURE 104 – 105 TELEGHETTO AT GHETTO BIENNALE GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

FIGURE 106-107 TELEGHETTO AT GHETTO BIENNALE GRAND RUE, PORT-AU-PRINCE. PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

Self-display, appearance is for the other, but at the same time it is the existential foundation of coming into being. Louco, one of the main elders of Atis Resistanz announced, 'Today, in the midst of all these people, I can sense that the whole world is watching us. I really feel like now I do exist'.[215] One month later he would fall victim to the earthquake).

RIP: Destinma 'Louco' Pierre Isnel.

FIGURE 108 ARTIS RESISTANZ GRAND RUE, ELDER 'LOUCO' PHOTO: NANCY MAURO-FLUDE.

215 This is quote by Locou is featured in the text by in Savage, Polly 2010, who also elaborates upon how there is much debate about the proliferation of biennials how art feeds into a neoliberal agenda and excludes much of the world it aims to display and make spectacle from.

A scenario comes to mind: On the shores of where the shipwreck of Global surveillance has cast us, I like to pick up pieces of the wreckage and play with them, at least until I find the wand of Cinderella's fairy God-Mother, Circe.

Figure 109-110 Self-Portrait with Milou and Nancy. Ghetto Biennale Grand Rue, Port-au-Prince. Photo: Nancy Mauro-Flude.

9.0 Appendix Network *Networked Art Forms and Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits* (NAF:TMFC) promotion material including programme and concept.

NETWORKED ART FORMS AND TACTICAL MAGICK FAERIE CIRCUITS

31 MAY – 30 JUNE 2013

A SERIES OF EVENTS INSPIRED BY COMPUTER CULTURE
Presented by Miss Despoinas and CAST

3 DAY RITUAL: WORKSHOPS, TALKS AND PERFORMANCES 31 MAY – 2 JUNE 2013
OPENING EVENT FRIDAY 31 MAY FROM 6PM
NOTORIOUS R&D EVENT 23 JUNE 2013 FROM 3PM
THIS EVENT IS PRESENTED IN ASSOCIATION WITH MONA AS PART OF DARK MOFO 2013

EXHIBITION 31 MAY - 30 JUNE 2013

NETWORKED ART FORMS AND TACTICAL MAGICK FAERIE CIRCUITS

ARTISTS, PROGRAMMERS AND THINKERS FROM THE FRONTLINE OF THE MAKER AESTHETIC

RAHNI ALLAN AUS, JOSEPHINE BOSMA NL, EMMA BUGG AUS, MEZ BREEZE AUS ANDY CAMPBELL UK, SELENA DE CARVALHO AUS, FLORIAN CRAMER GER/ NL LINDA DEMENT AUS, JULIA DROUHIN FRA/AUS, CONSTANT DULLAART NL, MATTHEW FULLER UK, ANNE GOLDENBERG FRA/CAN + KARIN RATHLE CAN/UK, JASON JAMES AUS, IDIOT LUST AUS, OLIA LIALINA RU/GER, PROF. JEFF MALPAS AUS ROSA MENKMAN NL, JULIAN OLIVER NZ/GER, FRANCESCA DA RIMINI AUS, DYLAN SHERIDAN AUS, NICK SMITHIES AUS, DANJA VASILIEV RU/GER/NL, ASTRID JOYCE AUS ASHER WOLF AUS

CURATOR: NANCY MAURO–FLUDE
PRODUCER: PIP STAFFORD
CAST FACILITATOR: KYLIE JOHNSON
** ENQUIRIES AND WORKSHOP REGISTRATION: KYLIE@CASTGALLERY.ORG
FULL PROGRAM DETAILS: **TACTICALMAGICK.NET**

FRIDAY 31 MAY 2013

TIME			VENUE
1000 – 1200	NET_WORKSHOP Part 1.0 Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Learn how to manipulate computer networks and how they manipulate us. No prior knowledge of networking required. No fear 1337 hackahz will be catered 4. ** Registrations essential.	CAST
1230 – 1330	Post-Digital Aesthetics in Contemporary Art Florian Cramer GER/NL	Art Forum Media experimentation in contemporary art has shifted. This talk will sketch why the post-digital and neo-analog are more than retro trends.	Dechaineux Lecture Theatre
1400 – 1630	NET_WORKSHOP Part 1.1 Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Routing, core protocols, network analysis, network packet capture and dissection. **	CAST
1800	Networked Art Forms and Tactical Magick Faerie Circuits (NAF:TMFC)_* OPENING *	Presentations, public conversations, performances and the carnivalesque.	CAST
	Magick Vs Magic in Digital Culture Keynote Florian Cramer GER/NL	What is the occult underground in computing and how does it relate to contemporary art and design? Followed by a short Q&A.	CAST
	Loader (Porcelain) Constant Dullaart NL	Performance. A tribute to all the uploaders… \o\ \o/ /o/	CAST
	Don't Be Evil Matthew Fuller UK	Stratagems of Contemporary Media Power (Remote) presentation with live visuals by Miss Despoinas.	CAST / Website
	Benchmarking the Deranged Rosa Menkman NL	Performance lecture: 'Instead of choosing "best practices" as a point of reference, what happens when we chose an unreasonable benchmark?'	CAST

SATURDAY 1 JUNE

TIME			VENUE
1100 – 1300	NET_WORKSHOP Part 2.0 Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Participants learn to read network topologies as political control structures, seeing how corporations and governments shape and control the way we use computer networks. **	CAST
1400 – 1700	NET_WORKSHOP Part 2.1 Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Continued. **	CAST
1830	Dancing to the Beat of a Different Drum Josephine Bosma NL	The contemporary art world's refusal to look beyond the screen of the computer is part of a history of obscured alliances between human and machine. (remote)	CAST / Website
1900	Topos and Techne: Re-Embodying Technology Keynote Prof. Jeff Malpas AUS	Presentation. Technology isn't new. It has been around for as long as there has been language.	CAST
1930 – 2030	Tactical M[ez_tr]agic: Hostage_ Stage + [st]Ream_Spam Mez Breeze AUS	Performance. [DE]SCRIPT: #Prepare [or: "Previously, on Mezangelle…"]# (remote).	CAST /IRC /Mailinglist
2000	Seeking extra-sentience in social media spaces: the beginning is infinitely near Asher Wolf AUS	Presentation. When we spend most of our lives online, connected to others - who are "we"? How do mass online swarms begin and dissipate?	CAST
2100	BlackMagick/WhiteMagick Anne Goldenberg CAN/FRA I Karine Rathle CAN/UK	Performance. Power relationships and dependency toward our technological tools.	CAST
2130	Improvisation Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Performance Disko Chill OUT session.	CAST

SUNDAY 2 JUNE

TIME			VENUE
1100 – 1300	NET_WORKSHOP Part 3.0 Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Learn to study power structures by tracing the flow of packets as they pass over land and sea. Macro-economic and geostrategic speculations will be made. **	CAST
1400 – 1530	NET_WORKSHOP Part 3.1 Julian Oliver NZ/GER I Danja Vasiliev RU/GER/NL	Participants will be provided with a Live USB operating system complete with tools familiar to both the hacker and network engineer alike. **	CAST
1600 – 1730	Radiophony: Haunted Air Julia Drouhin FRA/AUS	Sound performance. 18 artists from France, UK, Brazil, Argentina and Australia. Chill OUT session.	CAST

WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE – FRIDAY 7 JUNE

TIME			VENUE
1400 – 1600	Attent!on Som(t)a(c)tic – Anne Goldenberg FRA/CAN I Karine Rathle CAN/UK	Experiential Somatic Dance Workshops. Enquiries/registration: goldenberg.anne@gmail.com	Constance ARI

SUNDAY 9 JUNE

TIME	
1300 – 1600	TACTICAL MAGICK CRITICAL RESPONSE (CLOSED SESSION) @ CAST

SUNDAY 16 JUNE

TIME	
1300 – 1600	TACTICAL MAGICK CRITICAL RESPONSE (CLOSED SESSION) @ CAST

SUNDAY 23 JUNE

TIME			VENUE
1500 – Late	Notorious R&D Rahni Allan, Emma Bugg, Selena de Carvalho, Jason James, Astrid Joyce, Idiot Lust, Dylan Sheridan, Nick Smithies TAS	Responses to the NAF:TMFC hothouse ritual. Live coding, tele-robotics, net-art, installation, performance… Releases early, often and with home-made dream machine whirs, encoded charms & fem-botics. This is notorious R&D.	CAST
	BlackMagick/WhiteMagick Anne Goldenberg FRA/CAN I Karine Rathle CAN/UK	Performance. Power relationships toward our technological tools.	CAST
	Tactical M[ez_tr]agic: Hostage_Stage + [st]Ream_Spam_ featuring Mez Mez Breeze AUS	Performance (remote). [DE]SCRIPT: #Prepare [or: "Previously, on Mezangelle…]#	CAST /IRC /Mailinglist

SUNDAY 30 JUNE

LAST DAY OF EXHIBITION

VENUES
CAST GALLERY – 27 TASMA STREET, NORTH HOBART
DECHAINEUX LECTURE THEATRE – THE TASMANIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS, HUNTER STREET, UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA
CONSTANCE ARI – 100 GOULBURN STREET, HOBART

ONLINE
TACTICALMAGICK.NET
CASTGALLERY.ORG
CHAT: IRC.INDYMEDIA.ORG #ETC
TWITTER TAG: #MISSHACK
MAIL LIST: GENDERCHANGERS.ORG/MAILMAN/LISTINFO/MDHHH

9.1 Appendix Theatre script of *Error_in_Time()*.

Error_in _Time()
One Act Play by Nancy Mauro-Flude.

Key:
text that is script typed onto the performers computer
BOLD indicates an executable command the performer types into the computer terminal
------- Performer erases words, or the sentence changes typing with hesitation and
( ) This indicates what it is modified to be
 # Italics are stage directions
(Some text integrated by other authors – it is stated through out the script)

<START>

#echo helloworld
hello world

#vi.JOURNAL-day 01 (with the date and the time of the real time performance Vi is a command line text editor).

Walter Benjamin One said of analog photography, "The illiterate of the future will not be the man who cannot read the alphabet, but the one who cannot take a photograph."

today = new Date( );

Deadpan stare; no filter
Coincidentally autofocused raindrops
Warped picture of the restaurant taken through a wine glass
Branches against a colorful background
Grainy shot of lightning
Blurry road sign taken through windshield.
Screenshot of a text message conversation.
Non-relevant texts blurred.
Inspiring quote stenciled on the side of a building
Latte with foam shaped like a four leaf clover
A black cat, sleeping
Obligatory greasy-Zeppelin-fan tourist shot
Stage full of blue lights accented by a blurry guitarist
My totem animal in a shaft of light.
A woman moving as if she was a spider in black and white.
The moon.

On my journey to find sleep I hunted for an image that would protect me.
I couldn't find anything.

The performer takes off the mouse from her computer and puts it on the floor, she begins a new journal entry.

JOURNAL-day 02

The regular use of a computational interface, has deep physiological effects.

***It's as if we have thrown away a million years of evolution, lost our facility with expressive language, and have been reduced to point at objects in the immediate environment. ***
Mouse…s give us a vocabulary equivalent to a few different grunts. We have lost all the

power of language, and can no longer talk about objects that are not immediately visible."
According to Neilson and Genter …

Perfomer slightly Coughs & Grunts

Our ability to * imagine the intangible*

Command line computing (CLI) is an expressive language within a 'shell' or 'terminal' (this space)-----. Using commandlines you keep moving all the time, discovering always new executable codes sensitive to commands.

#man man
man - format and display the on-line manual pages

SYNOPSIS
    man [-acdfFhkKtwW] [--path] [-m system] [-p string] [-C config_file]
    [-M pathlist] [-P pager] [-B browser] [-H htmlpager] [-S section_list]
    [section] name ...

DESCRIPTION
    man formats and displays the on-line manual pages. If you specify sec-
    tion, man only looks in that section of the manual. name is normally
    the name of the manual page, which is typically the name of a command,
    function, or file. However, if name contains a slash (/) then man
    interprets it as a file specification, so that you can do man ./foo.5
    or even man /cd/foo/bar.1.gz.

    See below for a description of where man looks for the manual page
    files.

#man chown
CHOWN(8)   BSD System Manager's Manual   CHOWN(8)

NAME
    chown -- change file owner and group

SYNOPSIS
    chown [-fhv] [-R [-H | -L | -P]] owner[:group] file ...
    chown [-fhv] [-R [-H | -L | -P]] :group file ...

DESCRIPTION
    The chown utility changes the user ID and/or the group ID of the speci-
    fied files. Symbolic links named by arguments are silently left
    unchanged unless -h is used.

    The options are as follows:

    -f   Don't report any failure to change file owner or group, nor mod-
          ify the exit status to reflect such failures.

    -H   If the -R option is specified, symbolic links on the command line
          are followed. (Symbolic links encountered in the tree traversal are not followed.)

#man petal

Location(1)   *Location(1)*

NAME
        leaves+petalz -> Netochka Nezvanova

SYNOPSIS
    Flows are everywhere. The source and location - nowhere.
    The displaced garden is rootless, seedless, derived from
    technologically-altered and increasingly sophisticated information.
    Content and meaning disperse with such speed that sound rapidly advances
    in all directions tending towards vacuous silence or saturated noise.

    Plants cannot escape competitors, predators or harsh environmental
    conditions. In defence they respond via growth modifications and the
    proliferation of alternative structures. Depending on the conditions,
    plants derived of exactly the same DNA many appear startlingly different.

    Equilibrium is a futile state to desire. If equilibrium occurs,
    it is momentary. A system oscillates about non-fixed points.
    An environment tests its structure, its identity, by allowing external
    influence to unfold and diversify surfaces. A environment's fear of being
    destroyed or appropriated arises from resistance to change.

    Nothing is free of error. Nature's resilience and longevity stems
    from a vulnerability to change. Tracing fragile communications -
    nurtured in a receptive whole - causes extraordinary and hitherto
    unheard-of connections.

        From vulnerability - beauty arises.

     hello [options]

     option option

     [" -yy –zz ..."]

AVAILABILITY - All living on planet earth.

#top
Processes: 69 total, 4 running, 65 sleeping, 375 threads   11:18:24
Load Avg: 0.71, 0.88, 0.90 CPU usage: 5.11% user, 2.55% sys, 92.32% idle
#q *to exit*
With the #TOP command we begin understand the processes and have an idea of the
most important processes and how to manage them, for example, with *top* command I
can get information on my system and its operations.

Performer kind of writes with a timing of anticipation and times it very carefully as she might be in some kind of intimacy with the computer.

When look inside machines

 I like to touch their inner parts

– (demystify its senses follow the bus route to the CPU (central processing unit)-

Deal with the computer the hard way.

249

In child hood as when someone would turn the T.V. off I'd run to see if I could catch the tiny people leaving from behind its screen. Curious according to Baudelaire 'This is the first metaphysical tendency', who in the 'Philosophy of toys' suggests 'in their games children give evidence of their great capacity for abstraction.

In the shell (this space) I find a marvelous mess of constellations, nebulae, interstellar gaps, awesome gullies, that provokes in me an indescribable sense of vertigo, as if I am hanging from earth upside down on the brink of infinite space, with terrestrial gravity still holding me by the heels but about to release me any moment.

All science begins with fiction. As we have all once heard, but just incase, it usually boils down to these three things:

#1) Respect the privacy of others.
#2) Think before you type.
#3) With great power comes great responsibility.

#cacafire
#mplayer Mercedes Rosa a signer from Argentina the music is clearly taped from an old record.

*Performer throw pages she has been reading from into the direction of the
 simulated fire projected on the back wall.
she BREaTHEs- stretches _ almost DANCES _ stretch in the chair.
She Navigates the entire HAMLET MACHINE text (appendix below-see video)
 before the song ends.
She opens the text of Hamlet Machine by Heiner Muller and scrolls through it
Pauses and searches through it for particular phrases but the audience doesn't
get to read the entire thing.*

#cat hamlet-machine.txt | less

She types in a formula of regular expressions into the terminal and parses through the files to get particular words.

cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ love\b" | uniq
also love
breathe love

#cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ machine\b" | uniq
a machine

#cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ heart\b" | uniq
your heart
my heart

Music ends and a sample of a heart beat for a moment echos.

#cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ with\b" | uniq
spoke with

coffin with
succeeded with
and with
draped with
sleep with
back with
become with
cry with
woman with
alone with
woman with
them with
coffin with
steps with
man with
outfitted with
choked with
crackling with
bedroom with

```
#cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ who\b"
```
specter who
men who
and who
people who
man who
those who

```
#cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ she\b" | uniq
```
how she

```
cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ I\b" | uniq
```
because I
hands I
who I
neck I
exhale I
that I
which I

```
# cat machine-as-spectacle.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ machine\b" | uniq
```
a machine
the machine
real machine
the machine
a machine
theater machine
of machine
the machine
a machine
the machine
century machine
a machine
and machine
the machine

all machine
the machine
theater machine
the machine
a machine
the machine
a machine
the machine
en machine
spectacular machine
e machine
en machine
a machine
of machine
the machine
of machine
flying machine
a machine
s machine
this machine
elaborate machine
this machine
a machine
divine machine
a machine
extensive machine
between machine
and machine
wealthy machine
infinite machine
a machine
the machine
e machine

The projection is now a BLANK SPACE BLACK WAIT 3 # COUNTS to then start to type in a new file, Journal.

She starts a conversation with Chatbot
#cd Chat ./Chatbot

Hello! Let's chat the world is spinning faster: this program uses gets(), which is unsafe.
sister0:Hello
Chat Bot: hi
Sister0: what are you up to?
Chat Bot: Making a paper crane
Sister0: Can I see it?
Chat Bot: No
Sister0: Well can you explain it?
Chat Bot: No way
Sister0: well I am in the middle of a performance about code and imagery so you could help me out.
Chatbot: (random answers)
Which show? What do you do when you are bored? When do you need that by?
Chatbot: When was this exactly?
Sister0: What do you think of risk.
Beautiful afternoon a healthy dose of creativity curiousity and paronoia.
Chat Bot: That recently.

We all need great Leathermans in life
A new millennium Witch bag!
Not Bot: Yes quite.
sister0 >just talking about lifes great tools

What is there to talk about any how
sister0 >we all need great leathermans in life

have you ever contemplated suicide?
sister0 >now? You are not alive how would you do that?

is it that urgent?
sister0 >I'm talking about a NEW millennium Witch BAG

why talk when I could be eating!
sister0 >your just a bot

I categorically deny that I am anything other than human
sister0 >machine

:(
chat bot says random things that make only slight or no sense at all.

She navigates away from the page and opens journal entry and continues to update it.
#vi.Journal day 04

Perhaps over the years the long-term use of GUI's may see its durational end-users becoming like the pathetic monster's Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein', the makers walk staggering and jerky, their reach clumsy and inaccurate, reflexes spasmodic; unaware of labyrinthine space, careening about the environment, every movement a source of danger to himself and others. Even at the very dawn of the human machine age Mary Shelley recognised this danger and predicted the perils of the techno utopia and the GUI! The original monster was a loquacious individual, more aware of his plight than his creator…

As regular computer users are we loosing the ability to sense our own internal communication and physiological processes. Perhaps Shelly' fiction was not really about the uncontrollable man made monster but rather about the horror of a human who didn't have the capacity to imagine realms of abstraction.

Our very own inner veracity.

Different from the objectified body - the skeletal-muscular system. Underneath the anatomical and mechanical body, dwells the lived body, the body that actually experiences our world, the vessel that initiates our movements and suffers our passions.
GO TO TALK TO CHAT BOT>
#./chatbot
Sister0 I just keep wondering what happens if these entire systems
continue to process even though basic human communication has broken down.

Bot says usually 'what do you want me to say & I'll say it.

Conversation continues in this manner with things are poignantly obvious – in regard to the lack of comprehension between human and chatbot.

Performer opens a computer script and sit back and watch the lines unfold:

#./Timeloops03.sh
The overriding desire of most children is to get at and see the soul of their toys,
some at the end of a certain period of use,
others straight away?
I do not find it to me to blame this infantile mania;
it is the first metaphysical tendency.
When this desire has implanted itself in the child's cerebral marrow,
it fills his fingers and nails with an extraordinary agility and strength.
The child twists and turns his toy,
scratches it,
shakes it,
bumps it against the walls,
throws it on the ground.
From time to time he makes it re-start its mechanical motions,
sometimes in the opposite direction.
Its marvelous life comes to a stop.
The child, like the people besieging the Tuileries, makes a supreme effort;
at last he opens it up, he is the stronger.
But where is the soul?
This is the beginning of melancholy and gloom.
Charles Baudelaire, 17th April, 1853

Navigates to the script of end
#./toilet --gay -d ./fonts/ -f oldbanner.flf "The End"
#./theend.sh

END it makes a little dance of fonts saying THE END.

(She closes the lid of her computer and stares at a blue screen or just stares the the dance of the fonts)

</END>

Error_in_Time() Version 3.1 / E_i_T(v.3.1)

Script for the 'Art of Hacking' show at Netherlands Media Art Institute. September – November 2011.
Nancy Mauro-Flude / Mez Breeze / Sara Platon

NOTES: stage/cue directions in blue

Netwurker_Mez & k066 are in irc.freenode.net #Error_in_Time()
sister0 has 5 terminals open in a tab formation
IRC is in terminal 2.

IRC channel is where the cues [i.e #ERROR cue 1] are announced by sister0 [unless specified in stage directions below].

Mez ends her mezangelled texts with an .
Ko66 is sitting in the NMIk performance with her back to the audience and facing the data projection.

They are all connected in virtual space via IRC, TeamViewer and a live stream in which sister0 shares her Desktop & navigates the performance.

Previously she has given access codes to Netwurker_Mez & k066.

Spontaneous/improv irc performers included buZz, dreamer, jaromil and dddw. Improv txt contributions are highlighted in red.

CUE list:
Cue 1:   #ERROR
Cue 2:   #TODO:
Cue 3:   #TODO2
Cue 4:   #IRC
Cue 5:   #CATHAMLET
Cue 6:   #CATROOM

```
Cue 7:   #ASCIICACCAFIRE
Cue 8:   #IRC
Cue 9:   #MANFILES
Cue 10: #IRC
```

```
<START>
```
Pre CUE
```
sister0
# telnet towel.blineklights.nl.
```

ko66 is watching starwars as Audience enters in terminal 1

Cue 1: **#ERROR**

sister0 in **TERMINAL 3**
```
#cd /ERROR
#./timeloops03.sh
```

```
The overriding desire of most children is to get at and
see the soul of their toys, some at the end of a certain
period of use,
others straight away?
I do not find it to me to blame this infantile mania;
it is the first metaphysical tendency.
When this desire has implanted itself in the child's
cerebral marrow,
it fills his fingers and nails with an extraordinary
agility and strength.
The child twists and turns his toy,
scratches it,
shakes it,
bumps it against the walls,
throws it on the ground.
From time to time he makes it re-start its mechanical
motions,
sometimes in the opposite direction.
Its marvelous life comes to a stop.
The child, like the people besieging the Tuileries, makes
a supreme effort;
at last he opens it up, he is the stronger.
But where is the soul?
```

This is the beginning of melancholy and gloom.
  Charles Baudelaire, 17th April, 1853

sister0 then navigates to IRC TERMINAL 2 - Netwurker_Mez has/is writing:

The overRid[den+rough-shoT]ing[le] desire of mOSt
child[Like.W]ren[s] is to get.
And 2 c.
Some = end use[rs],
Others = straight away?
This.Infantil[Der(r)id(a)]e[d].Mania;
[cf reddit>(4)chan(s)>imageboards]
= 1st meta[Non-Geo]Physical desire.
When: cerebral + non_bio_dependant||geo_IDent_coded
Fills: their psyche[s] with the exXxtraOrdina[nces]ry.
We: ch[W]i[l]d tWis[h]ts turns,
Scratches: it,
Sh[R]akes: it,
B[P]umps: it against the [(N)etheReal]wAlls,
ThRows: it on the [unshakeable||shak(li)eAble]ground.
From: time2time [S|(T)]he(y) re-start
Mechani[zed+Machinimaed]cal.
soMeTimes: life.
S[C]ome[Here, Child!]times: >>stop<<
[Strong opener, this 1.]
B[G]ut[Ted+Groaned]: .where .is .the
.s[f]oul[ed_+soiled_sentience?]?
This = Cholically_lO[ut]O[f]M[ana]ed.
.

[ko66 + netwurker + sister0 comment in IRC:]
*_06[02:49] * @netwurker forced_life+bovine_living*
[02:49] <sister0_> rapture
*_06[02:49] * @ko66 is where is here is there is no where*
*_06[02:49] * @netwurker MOOssssss*

Cue 2: *#TODO:*
Sister0 types in terminal 3
#vi.journaltodaysdate.txt

cat fighting ? collar with infra-red sensor is needed for
cat door activation.
Tax ? receipts - sewing
BIGGER PLAN:
house - garden with every edible flower possible
-aim make entire salads with flowers.

sister0 then navigates to IRC TERMINAL 2

ko66 + netwurker + sister0 comment in IRC:
*_06[02:50] * @netwurker pokes ko66 with a large wet
reality schtick*
*_01[02:50] <@netwurker> 1.: F[r]ightingly_collared in
inFra[ngipannied]_reddenings [#WindowsActivationCode
(any1?)].*
*_06[02:50] * @ko66 is hit in the face and licks her
wounds*
*_06[02:51] * @netwurker gives ko66 a
gentle_towel+patpatpats*
*_01[02:51] <@netwurker> 2.:
TAxed+[Paper]Bound[+AcctGagged]*
*_06[02:51] * @ko66 grabs her machine*
*_06[02:51] * @netwurker wrestles it from ko66 yelling
"MINE!"*
*_01[02:51] <@netwurker> 3.: [-N]Compass:
Ab[|d]ode+sust[en(D)]a[nce_l]ined_[f]lower[s*
*_06[02:52] * @ko66 hands netwurker a dual boot passage*
*_06[02:52] * @netwurker gives it back + c[g]leans it
thoroughly*
*_03[02:52] * dreamer (~henk@fedora/dreamer) has joined
#Error_in_Time()*
*_06[02:52] * @ko66 installs (yet) another os*

Cue 3: #TODO2
*(k066 STARTS THIS all commenting in between each
other)in* IRC
k066 writes:
tips for a possible counterattack (small-size distance)
- a pair of small scissors (cutting network cables)
- localise and identify powerlines & antenne
- plastic is good, plastic is freedom (recycled and does

prevent electric
shocks)
- know the way of moving forward (library kung fu how to)
- buy a server hotel and rule it with soft hard hand

sister0:
- Rice dries electronics fast and safe
- Sculpt the shape of the network in my favour?
- Network data capture & manipulation of text
- HTML page reconstruction from network packets
- Spoofing remote browser sessions?
- Intercepting chat sessions, change what people say to
each other?
- hack the grand narratives further.
- The way of moving forward (find yoga studio with wooden
floor)

Netwurker_Mez:
[t]IP[s] for a[-n] [-im]possible
[small_scale_(k)nit:reality:]:
4.: Work_in_pack[et]s, c[R]apture_in_creation.
5.: [Read_the_flowing]Constructs. Sit[S]e[O]Hound[ing]s.
6.: PPL:me:view. Tickle:me:punk.
7.: *Poof*! REM[ote]_B[|D]rowsing.
SexT[ant(ric)]ing_ImAges.
8.: Inter/X/In_Cept[ionDate]sessions. RepliKant
Sh[Dr]iftings.
9.: Im[maM]age+streaming_Body_RecoN[et_In]struction: dl
>THIS< sucka.
10.: Traffic_Riff_Raff_Routing
with
11.: grid-like ra[b]i[d][-]n[dimensional]bows
12.: [St]Itch [H]Ac[t]king plastique
13.: body_[h]act[s]+peak_[g]oiled...
User=me, [N]info=u.
.

*ko66 + netwurker + sister0 + dreamer comment in
IRC:*
_06[02:53] * dreamer suggests upgrade
_06[02:53] * @ko66 recommends everyone to wear a pair of
scissors around the neck
[02:53] <sister0_> SPOOFING

*_06[02:53] * @netwurker pokes dreamer with a large dry
upgrade stick
[02:54] <sister0_> data capture & manipulation
[02:54] <sister0_> Sculpt the shape of the network
[02:54] <sister0_> sister0 picks up the stick
_06[02:54] * @ko66 uses recycled plastic
[02:54] <dreamer> netwurker: you stick, it is beta
_06[02:54] * @netwurker
recons+cuts.ur.body.with.a.polymer.sheen
_01[02:55] <@netwurker> BETA-ness/ </perpetual, huh?>
_01[02:55] <@netwurker> .
[02:55] <sister0_> ko66 when are you buy that server
hotel - i know you will rule it with a soft soft hand.
_06[02:55] * @ko66 owns one already
_06[02:55] * @ko66 has soft hard hand
_06[02:55] * @netwurker sighs
[02:55] <dreamer> as long as the bugs don't eat your
stick
[02:55] <sister0_> way of moving forward -*

Cue 4: #IRC

netwurker + dreamer comment in IRC:
*_01[02:56] <@netwurker> xenomorph, eh dreamer?
[02:56] <dreamer> beta is always moving
_01[02:56] <@netwurker> beat-shifts+shimmy, oooh yeah*

sister0: "You can learn a lot about yourself reading the
emails you never sent.
Banal stuff."
Mez: U can lea[Identity_Bu]rn a heap about urself
reaDing[!*grats*] the emails u_neva_s[c]ent.
Ban[d]A[ged]_l[uver] stuff.

sister0: "only *niX: switched back because i just miss
too many things that make my life easier..."
Mez: [L]on[e]ly [L|i]unix
Witched_Under_ur_ease_of_use_back_skin?
.

*ko66 + netwurker + sister0 + dreamer + dddw +
jaromil comment in IRC:*

*06[02:57] * @ko66 codes hardware for the masses
_06[02:57] * @netwurker masses code 4 the 'ware
[02:57] <sister0_> systems can be followed CPU through to the bus route
[02:58] <sister0_> white noise i smell it
_01[02:58] <@netwurker> ...vs: snow_st[m]at[r]ix_in_audio_[ear]cups, i hear it
[02:58] <sister0_> i dragg my finger along the cable
[02:58] <sister0_> Persephone
_01[02:58] <@netwurker> ....bleeding.data, no doubt?
_01[02:59] <@netwurker> ...vs: Purse=phones, now.
[02:59] <sister0_> into the grail of Persephone it falls
_01[02:59] <@netwurker> The an[pres]cient Greek[s]: [now financially]Godd[ard]less. Truly inter[-D-]jected human being[s].
[02:59] <sister0_> Goddess of the underworld - a truly connected being.
[02:59] <sister0_> I'm tired of runaway processes, broken sessions never fully terminated.
_03[02:59] * dddw (~DanielPar@host064-010.kpn-gprs.nl) has joined #Error_in_Time()
_01[02:59] <@netwurker> connecks+throats, ooh yeah baby.
[03:00] <dddw> meep
[03:00] <sister0_> I am sure there is a socket time out setting to prevent this.
[03:00] <sister0_> ..
_06[03:00] * @netwurker welcomes dddw with a cup of hot steaming identity
[03:00] <sister0_> aloha dddw
[03:00] <dddw> hola
_06[03:00] * @ko66 hands sister0 a socket time out plugin
[03:00] <sister0_> capture
[03:00] <dreamer> release
_06[03:00] * @netwurker sockets a spacetime plugin
_06[03:01] * @ko66 says socket is purple
_06[03:01] * @netwurker captures + releases, in.all.ways
[03:01] <sister0_> that socket will assist me to reach a threshold state and transfer control to another loop altogether - why thx
_06[03:01] * dreamer throws a forkbomb and sees the bits break free
_01[03:02] <@netwurker> how thoughful[l] u r, ko66!
_03[03:02] * jaromil (jaromil@s3.enemy.org) has joined #Error_in_Time()

_06[03:02] * @ko66 says hi to all dreamers
_06[03:02] * @netwurker pokes Jaromil with a large hairy
afro stick
[03:02] <dreamer> :(){ :|:& };:
[03:02] <sister0_> #cathamlet - i must be off brb
_06[03:03] * @netwurker grabs sis0 + ties her forking
self DOWN!
_01[03:03] <@netwurker> .
_06[03:03] * jaromil frobbles like a rj45 squid
_06[03:03] * @netwurker LaTex's Jaromil
_03[03:03] * buZz (~buzz@bydogen.stoned-it.com) has
joined #Error_in_Time()

Cue 5: #CATHAMLET
In TERMINAL 3 sister0:

cat Hamletmachine.txt | less

sister0 quickly scrolls through Hamlet machine then does
some SED:

cat hamlet-machine.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ love\b" |
uniq
also love
breathe love
cat machine-as-spectacle.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+
machine\b" | uniq
a machine
the machine
real machine
the machine
a machine
theater machine
of machine
the machine
a machine
the machine
century machine
a machine

```
and machine
the machine
all machine
the machine
theater machine
the machine
a machine
the machine
a machine
the machine
en machine
spectacular machine
e machine
en machine
a machine
of machine
the machine
of machine
flying machine
a machine
s machine
this machine
elaborate machine
this machine
a machine
divine machine
a machine
extensive machine
between machine
and machine
wealthy machine
infinite machine
a machine
the machine
e machine
```

[sister0 then navigates to IRC TERMINAL 2 after each cat
*- Netwurker_Mez **has/** is writing:]*

cat H[C]am+[Taxi.dermied]Let_Us_PrayMachine:
anal[trul]y, sez HamletMachine.
.

ko66 + netwurker + sister0 + dreamer + dddw + buZz
comment in IRC:
[03:04] <dddw> no topic?
*_06[03:04] * @netwurker welcomes buZz with a*
lulseconds+Anon_1st
*_03[03:04] * buZz changes topic to 't(r)opical_'*
[03:04] <dddw> ah better
_01[03:04] <@netwurker> dddw: we need none.
[03:04] <dreamer> buZz: spaceheater?
_01[03:04] <@netwurker> or rather, u can set 1?
[03:04] <buZz> just gave you 1

[03:05] <dddw> nah, no ops for me, jsut lurking
_01[03:05] <@netwurker> i c, u did, gene.r[ror]ous!
[03:05] <buZz> gast@sparc1:~$ fortune
[03:05] <buZz> Q:How many Marxists does it take to screw in a light bulb?
[03:05] <buZz> A:None: The light bulb contains the seeds of its own revolution.
*_06[03:05] * @ko66 has heard that one before*
*_06[03:05] * @netwurker buzzes BUZZ with phat_red_marx*
[03:05] <sister0_> #catroom i've been forked
*_06[03:05] * buZz works the net*

CUE 6 #CATROOM

In TERMINAL 3 sister0:

```
cat roomofonesown.txt | less
sister0 reads part of the text
then conducts her analysis of it;

#cat roomofonesown.txt | sed 's/a[A-Z]/[a-z]/g' | grep -
oE "\b[a-z]+ism\b" | sort | uniq -c | sort
   1 despotism
   1 feminism
   1 organism
   1 scepticism
   1 symbolism
  13 criticism
```

[sister0 then navigates to IRC TERMINAL 2 – Netwurker_Mez has/is writing]

```
#cat roomofonesownmezangelled.txt | sed 's/a[A-Z]/[a-
z]/g' | grep -oE
"\b[a-z]+ism\b" | sort | uniq -c | sort
  1 Des[deMona(lisa-ed.Mystery.)]Potism
  1 fem[me-in-al(bino)l]inism
  1 [b]organism
  1 scept[er=NULL, crown=NULL]icism
  1 sy[E]mbolism
 13 crit[12 mastery, 6 agility]icism
```

ko66 + netwurker + sister0 + jaromil + dreamer

comment in IRC:

_06[03:06] * @netwurker wurks + hollow_data_points+prods.
we're all friends+followers here, correct?
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> f.
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> r.
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> i.
[03:07] <sister0_> That a famous library has been cursed
by a woman is a matter of
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> e.
[03:07] <sister0_> complete indifference to a famous
library.
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> n.
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> d.
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> s.
_01[03:07] <@netwurker> c[p]urses of wimmen, dognabbit!
_01[03:08] <@netwurker> .
_06[03:08] * @ko66 is becoming a bit cold and sticky
_06[03:08] * @netwurker hands ko66 a dry rough douglas
adamesque towel.
_06[03:08] * @ko66 reaches for it and says thank you
_01[03:08] <@netwurker> [no babelfishing there|here]
_06[03:09] * @netwurker nods
_06[03:09] * @ko66 is watching greps
[03:09] <jaromil> saint augustin had fornicating
thoughts...
_06[03:09] * @netwurker watches as a fish slides slowly
out her bi-lingual ear
[03:09] <jaromil> its hard to believe...
_06[03:09] * @netwurker for[ks]nicates all history.
[03:10] <dreamer> jaromil: you dirty coder
[03:10] <dreamer> jaromil: have you lubrified any
compilers today?
06[03:11] * @ko66 thinks this is gezellig
[03:11] <jaromil> dreamer we are supposed to wake up at
least one time in our life
[03:12] <dreamer> jaromil: as long as I wake up in a new
dream I am happy to wake up any time
_01[03:12] <@netwurker> jaromil: hamlet:awake _vs_
ophelia:as[s]leep?
[03:12] <jaromil> regular expressions aren't friendly.
[03:12] <dreamer> of course the snooze button may be used
regularly as well

In TERMINAL 3 sister0:

```
sister0:
#cat roomofonesown.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ breath\b" |
uniq |sort >> breath.txt

drew breath
her breath
his breath
hot breath
my breath
our breath
their breath
```

```
#cat roomofonesown.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ breath\b" |
uniq |sort >> breath.txt

drEw[!] breath
her[e] breath
his brea[ch]th
Hot [Chip]breath
my breath
[Y]our breath
tHe[ll]ir breath
```

In TERMINAL 3 sister0:
```
#cat roomofonesown.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ heart\b" |
uniq |sort >> heart.txt

excitable heart
his heart
human heart
its heart
s heart
s heart
the heart
```

```
#cat roomofonesownmezangelled.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+
heart\b" | uniq |sort >> heart.txt
```

```
X[-x]citable heart
his[Tory] heart
human[ity] heart
[f]its[+start] heart
s[-lined] heart
s[-curved] heart
the[re+here] heart
```

In TERMINAL 3 sister0:

```
sister0:
cat roomofonesown.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+ with\b" | uniq
|sort >> with.txt
about with
about with
acquaintance with
acquaintance with
again with
agree with
agree with
alive with
alone with
alone with
and with
and with
and with
and with
and with
appreciate with
argument with
association with
atrocities with
beef with
began with
begin with
begin with
begin with
bent with
bent with
born with
bound with
but with
came with
```

```
close with
collision with
come with
common with
compared with
compared with
conflicts with
contact with
contend with
cope with
corners with
course with
crazed with
cupboards with
deals with
disputes with
distracted with
do with
do with
done with
done with
down with
emotion with
encumbered with
end with
endowed with
enmity with
especially with
estates with
even with
even with
experience with
flashing with
flushed with
forth with
freely with
furnished with
girls with
glancing with
glowed with
goes with
heave with
her with
herself with
```

herself with
herself with
herself with
houses with
hung with
intercourse with
intercourse with
intercourse with
interfere with
interferes with
it with
it with
itself with
itself with
jowl with
kneeling with
lady with
laid with
listened with
lived with
love with
mad with
made with
man with
man with
manage with
match with
me with
meeting with
meets with
memory with
met with
method with
moment with
moment with
morning with
myself with
not with
not with
now with
often with
on with
one with
only with

```
or with
or with
or with
order with
over with
over with
particular with
playing with
quadrangle with
remains with
response with
rioted with
roaring with
rods with
roof with
room with
said with
satisfied with
scene with
seclusion with
served with
shoulders with
similarly with
something with
soul with
spinning with
starred with
stocking with
stockings with
streets with
strewn with
suspiciously with
swarming with
takings with
talking with
tampering with
tampering with
terms with
them with
there with
there with
tombstones with
touch with
turned with
```

up with
us with
us with
walking with
war with
way with
way with
welcoming with
when with
woman with
woman with
women with
women with
write with
you with
you with

sister0 then navigates to IRC TERMINAL 2
- Netwurker_Mez   has/is writing:

```
cat roomofonesownmezangelled.txt | grep -oE "\b[a-z]+
with\b" | uniq |sort >> with.txt
a.bout[of]with[er]
ab[g]out with
a[h]cQuaint[+ d]ance with
acqu[iesce.m]aint[10]ance with
again[st.her.shiver_blooded.body] with
agree with
[dis(turb)agree] with
al[one.ah.l]ive with
alone with[x1]
alone with[x2]
[st]and with[in: in humbled crumbling parts]
[b]and with[out: in striated joylessness]
[quicks]and with[in + freeze-dried chamberlings]
a[mpersa]nd with[co(d)Ed.slipper-y-ness]
[anag]ra[(c)m]nd[line] with
appreci[g]ate[dNcaged] with
argu[d(c)e]ment with
[dis]association with
A[s]tro[Boy+Gal]Cities with
be[an.instead.of.carnivorous.d]e[a]f[ness] with
bega[t.ur.fine.self-]n with
beGin[+purified.tOn(|Off)ic{tion}] with
```

```
be[es.swoon.in.collapsible.death+human.swivelling.in.pigs
]gin with
begin[this.colossal.fail+end.]with [species_XXXX_ing]
bent[ova+snapped.2.grid] with
bent with[x.ov(um)a.2]
born with[out.(k)ey(nesian.sense)es]
[Chinese.feet.genda]bound[ with
but[ter.mouth] with
ca[ramel.]me[+candy.u] with
[-N]close with
coll[u|]ision[detection] with
come[inside(r)] with
com[e]mon[day|tuesday|humpday] with
pared[down_with_a_throatcut_knife] with
comptrollered with
conFlic[ker.w(g)o(ld)rming]ts with
contact[high+lo] with
contend[er-fast+furious] with
co[bi]pe[dal.advantage] with
cor[k]ne[ed]rs with
[dis]c[bl]o[od.c]urse with
cRaz[or]ed with
[hands.]cup[ped.round.drowning.liquid.stone]boards with
d[p]e[t]als[,again] with
disPut[in.convex]es with
disTract[s+trawling-s]ed with
do with[x1]
do with[x2]
done with[postx1]
done with[postx2]
down with[upx0]
emoti[c]on[s_bleed.thru+over.ur.flowing.hands] with
[-N]cumber[bunn]ed with
end with [.]
.
```

ko66 + networker + dreamer comment in IRC:
[03:13] <dreamer> /flood
*_06[03:14] * @ko66 likes this flood*
_01[03:14] <@netwurker> ./netspilt, inc.
*_06[03:14] * @ko66 never seen anything like it*

Cue 7: #ASCIICACCAFIRE

sister0
#mplayer Mercedesosa.mp3
#caccafire

play music - start fire cacafire

```
          (.   )   )     (        )        .' . ' . ' .    ( ,
)   (.  ) ( ',  )     .')(.)  , (,   ) (.     ).,(. ( )(,') .'
( ,  )      (_,).),) _) _,') (,) '.)  ,.(')   .')(.)  , (,   ) (.    ).,(
.  ( )  (_,).),) _) _,') (,) '.)  ,.(')   ).,(.  ( )(,') .'(  ,   )    ).,(
.  (^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
```

stretches her limbs.

netwurker + sister0 + jaromil + dreamer comment in IRC:

*_06[03:14] * @netwurker floods+burps, again.*
[03:14] <dreamer> libcacacam?
[03:15] <jaromil> my touchscreen is melting
*_06[03:15] * @netwurker melts +*
audio_shifT[ingles.up.my.inner.spine]
_01[03:15] <@netwurker> .
[03:16] <dreamer> jaromil: rsi-break?
*_06[03:16] * @netwurker strokes her outE[xxxo]r_spine.*
Ow.
[03:17] <@sister0> feeling that

Cue 8: #IRC

netwurker + sister0 + jaromil + dreamer comment in IRC:

[03:17] <sister0_> beautiful afternoon it was
_01[03:17] <@netwurker> #Beauty_full, inDeed.#
[03:18] <sister0_> A healthy dose –
*_06[03:18] * @ko66 reacts and is InDeed*
[03:18] <sister0_> curiosity, creativity and paranoia ;)
*_06[03:18] * @netwurker revolts + is re:volt[age]ing*
_01[03:18] <@netwurker> U have them in
spades[+hearts+diamonds+....]?
*_06[03:18] * @ko66 has queens & kings*
[03:19] <sister0_> Unicode - the vast abyss, the

character system set on which all modern operating systems depend.
[03:19] <sister0_> One character per frame.
*_06[03:19] * @netwurker trades ko66 with jills not jacks*
_01[03:19] <@netwurker> "Unicode" always reminds me of "Unicorn"....
[03:19] <sister0_> Myths & repositories
[03:19] <jaromil> the curious cat has found some reasons to be paranoid
[03:19] <dreamer> netwurker: it reminds me of urinoir
[03:20] <sister0_> at odds wiht notions of so called public space
[03:20] <sister0_> with :D
_01[03:20] <@netwurker> ....vs: shifts + _suppose_iTories
_01[03:20] <@netwurker> There's still notions of "public" vs "private'? These da[ze]ys i assume there
_01[03:20] <@netwurker> s [sadly] no distinction, with lumpy_right_wing_skewness existing on the #PublicISAll side?
*_06[03:20] * @netwurker dreams all the things?*
[03:20] <sister0_> if the air we are breathing, the mythical repositories, the aether is considered free - why are the signals passing rapt?
[03:21] <sister0_> we are living in captivity down to our exhale
_01[03:21] <@netwurker> ....or: rapt.[gl]orious. devils_own_data_w[th]ings.
_01[03:21] <@netwurker>
.

Cue 9: #MANFILES
In TERMINAL 3 sister0:

```
Sister0
#man chmod
#man chown
#man flower
#man petals
```

sister0 then navigates to IRC TERMINAL 2
- Netwurker_Mez has/is writing:

#man[up,] [biat]chmod
#man[down,] [gender]chow[der]n
#man[thru,] [-D]flower[_her]
#man[all,] pEtal.
.

ko66 + dreamer comment in IRC:
[03:21] <dreamer> (r)aptitude
_06[03:22] * @ko66 grabs a manfile by the balls

Cue 10: #IRC
ko66 + netwurker + sister0 + jaromil + dreamer comment in IRC:
[03:23] <sister0_> i'm configuring some new man files
[03:23] <sister0_> i've been
[03:23] <sister0_> anyhows
_06[03:23] * @ko66 hands sister0 all her zines
_01[03:23] <@netwurker> pls [ins(ert)ide-
ur_perf_sur(lyGlossy)face] tell?
_06[03:24] * @netwurker zips + s[l]ips [mach]zines
[03:24] <sister0_> those zines are printed to flux on demand
[03:24] <sister0_> good terms
[03:24] <dreamer> xterms are the best terms
[03:24] <sister0_> a huge pool of people who once linked up
_06[03:24] * @netwurker bathes_in_discrete_[f]lux
[03:24] <sister0_> responding there are no limts to the amount
[03:24] <sister0_> limits
_06[03:24] * @ko66 adds dadadata
[03:24] <sister0_> to the amount of people or issues
[03:24] <jaromil> i'm compiling petals now. thanks for the tip. cu
_03[03:25] * jaromil (jaromil@s3.enemy.org) has left #Error_in_Time()
_01[03:25] <@netwurker> #ItComes [ITCOMES] down_a_huge_slimy_netted_p[pl]ool: linked -d -formed -d -ma[|e]ngelled.

_01[03:25] <@netwurker> u
re:s:pond[s+trickling_creekages].Organelles+[organ]limits
.
_01[03:25] <@netwurker> .
_06[03:25] * dreamer bathes in the ambient light of
(xf)lux
[03:25] <sister0_> I just keep wondering what happens if
these entire systems continue to process even though
basic human communication has broken down?
_06[03:25] * @ko66 slips into something comfortable
_06[03:26] * @netwurker slips in2 her broken [s]end
space. nite, all.
[03:26] <dreamer> ko66: monospace 5? ;)
_06[03:26] * @ko66 is off
_06[03:26] * @netwurker waves a distinct good[+evil]bye.
_06[03:26] * @ko66 and says goodbye
[03:26] <@sister0> ahlobye

#cacafire

```
        ( .   )    )     (      )        . ' . ' . ' .     ( ,
)    (. ) ( ',  )     .')(.)   , (,  ) (.     ).,(. ( )(,') .'
( , )       (_,).),) _) _,') (,)'.) ,.(')   .')(.)   , (,   ) (.    ).,(
. ( )  (_,).),) _) _,') (,)'.) ,.(')   ).,(. ( )(,') .'( ,  )   ).,(
. (^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
```