

# Media-Scape

Biennial for Time-Based Art

## Topical Tactics - Tactical Topics

Zagreb, 29 September - 19 October 2012



# **Media-Scape**

**Biennial for Time-Based Art**

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# Topical Tactics – Tactical Topics

Dedicated to Heiko Daxl (1957-2012)

Exhibition of video, computer and sound installations, photography,  
interactive computer installations, concert/performance, lectures

**Zagreb, 29 September – 19 October 2012**

## CONCEPT

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In collaboration with the Croatian Association of Visual Artists, Zagreb –  
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HDLU, © Ilse Ruppert

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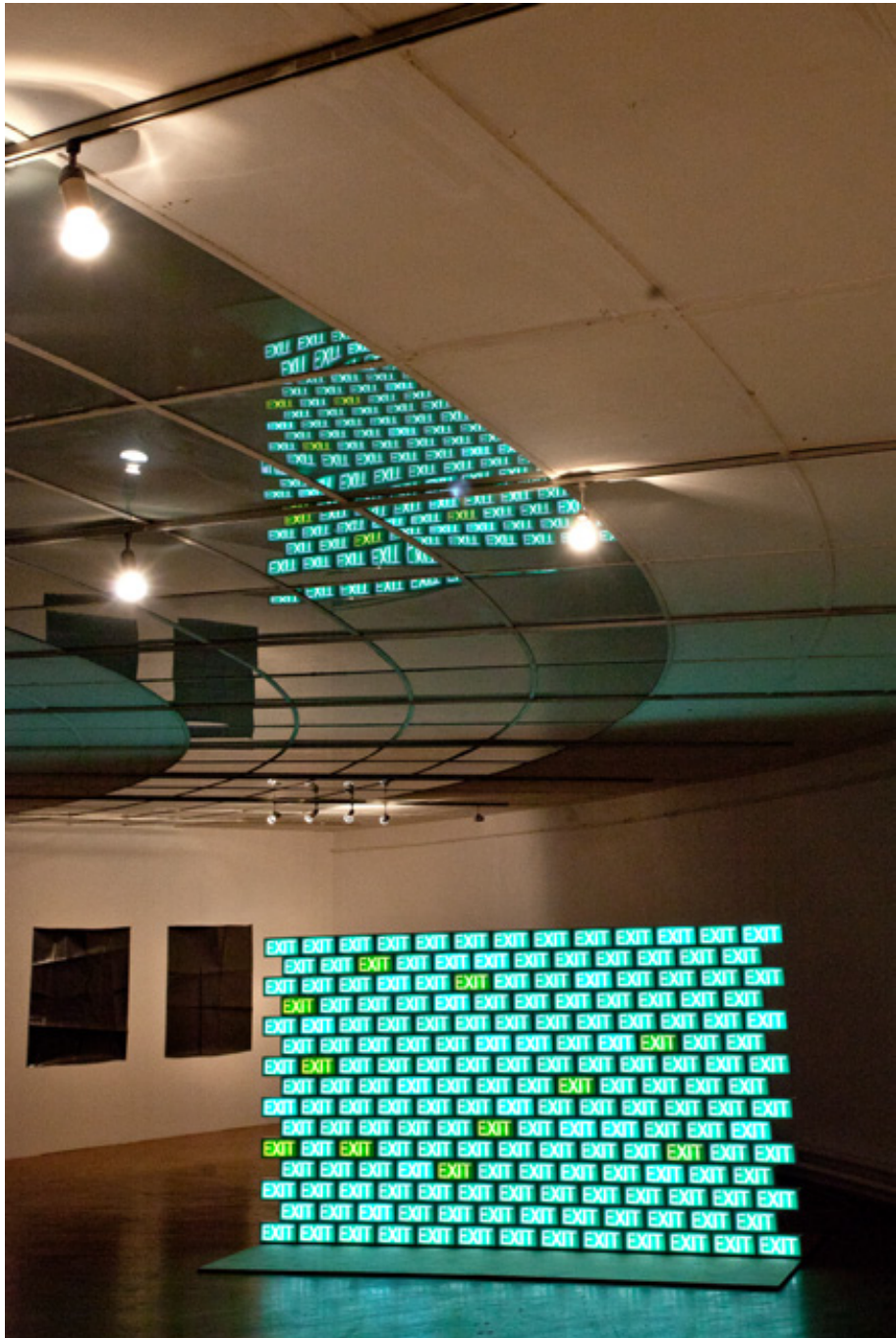
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© Sibylle Hoessler



# Preface

*By Heiko Daxl, October 2011*

The abbreviation of “Media-Scape Biennale Zagreb,” MSBZ, is reminiscent of MBZ (Muzički Biennale Zagreb/Music Biennale Zagreb). This similarity is not accidental, but rather conceptually fits the idea of continuously building bridges between different disciplines of art and knowledge and science, as well as between traditions of avant-garde and the latest tendencies in media art.

“All men by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses; for even apart from their usefulness they are loved for themselves; above all others the sense of sight. For not only with a view to action, but even when we are not going to do anything, we prefer sight to almost everything else. The reason is that this, most of all the senses, allows us to know and brings to light many differences between things.” (Aristotle)

Taken as a motto of the exhibition, this quote of Aristotle’s, written so much before the advent of “new” media technologies, can serve as a key to understanding how the media and technological environment has changed – not only the production of knowledge but also the landscape of art. Even the “traditional” media and the traditional ways of creating art are informed and transformed under their influence.

Let us simply say that there is no more land, there is the mind. The media and technologies transcend the space that we can ordinarily perceive, shift the visual experience from morphological to conceptual. The meaning of knowledge is no longer a function of the gaze alone. The new geography can be conceived as a mind map, where the nodes in the system of coordinates are tactical topics. Paraphrasing Lawrence Weiner in dealing with the space, staging, whether you want to or not – “like you can say, I am not terribly interested in oxygen but you are breathing it,” – we find that, regarding new technologies and media spaces, whether someone shows direct interest in them is of little importance, because the new experience of space has become like the air we breathe. As a result, the object of art is no longer simply a question of contemplation. The unidirectional perspective of a classical subject/object relation comes to vanish, shifting our perception as aesthetic sensations, and the artistic medium, communication media and intelligent (technological) systems open up a space for fluxes of abstract structures.

Just like Aristotle in his time understood knowledge as permeating through all our senses and not only through vision and perspective, in a cognitive techno-socio-economic system that what is visible and that what is invisible are mutually complementary processes. This is a system of soft surfaces, sensitive like skin, which presuppose tactility, going beyond the field of vision, or rather flirting with the visible. What emerges on the surface of the skin visualizes seductive desires, while the forming processes remain invisible under the surface. Let us call this phenomenon the aesthetics of hyper-textuality, a circulating semiotic structure to which encoding systems contribute by changing linear progress through textuality as a new metaphor of art. As a result, the state of art is reorganized in a new form of social value, based on the promise of art becoming again part of everyday life, as the art object dissolves in conceptualization and dematerialization. “The continued evolution of both communications and control technology bodes a new type of aesthetic relationship,” (Jack Burnham) in which art embodies a new mode of knowledge production, unpredictable aesthetic sensations and experience of the invisible.

Under the title “Topical Tactics” the exhibition will put on display works of media art as mixed media techniques with video, computer art, sound installations, photography, media objects, graphics and concerts/performances.

Conceived as a survey exhibition, the Media Scape Biennial presents positions from contemporary artistic production and focuses on the potential of artistic practice to inhabit the invisible liminal zones in the “media world,” making them visible in order to call them into question through interference and disruption. It highlights the processes of transformation and of establishing new or imaginary linkages.

Topical Tactics brings together a wide range of artistic positions from different countries, enabling the exhibition to draw lines of connection and continuation to current approaches to the aesthetics of media art. Works by pioneering figures have paved the way since the sixties and developed a discourse by producing conceptual breakthroughs or analytical deconstruction and reorganization – semantic structures that link them with the artistic positions of the younger generation.



Heiko Daxl, Media-Scape 2010, © Sibylle Hoessler

# Topical Tactics – Tactical Topics

*By Ingeborg Fülepp, in collaboration with Dimitrina Sevova, September 2012*

One of the founders and main curator of Media-Scape Zagreb, Heiko Daxl, is unfortunately no longer with us. He passed away this year in the prime of his life and work. We will continue to follow his idea of Media-Scape in the future, and try to be consistent with his aims and directions. Without being able to rely on his great talent and intellectual acumen, Media-Scape will certainly be different, but no less intensive, creative and devoted to showing the best of media art in the future.

This year's Media-Scape will be a combination of media art works previously conceived by Heiko Daxl, and works of artists inspired by them – works that correspond with his ideas as well as with our sorrow of losing him.

More about the works in the show:

- Pablo Alonso's graphites on paper, although abstract in content and giving the impression of heavy metal material, provide the viewer with the illusion of a movement between lightness and darkness, heaviness and easiness of forms. Thinking of symbolism in images, it can be translated as complexities of our experiences in life.
- *De Fibrillation* by Barbara Caveng. Defibrillation is a common treatment for life-threatening cardiac dysrhythmias, ventricular fibrillation, and pulseless ventricular tachycardia. (Wikipedia). The threads of a robe are extracted, turning the material into a transparent shadow, symbolizing the frailty of our existence.
- *Exit-Wall* by Cécile Colle and Ralf Nuhn, is a modular installation "comprising hundreds of illuminated exit signs, assembled by means of permanent magnets.
- *Doppelgänger* by Stefano D'Alessio & Martina Menegon. From the German "double walker" – in fiction and folklore, a paranormal double of a living person, typically representing evil or misfortune (Wikipedia).
- Heiko Daxl's *Le Cinéma – Le Train* depicts a railway journey as a cinematographic experience, and in *Azoth* he playfully uses toy letters to recombine linguistic stereotypes of modern society.
- *Are you Breathing?* by Ana Elizabet. The title is the message.
- *disc.o* by Andreas .muk. Haider, combining the technology of a multiplayer music instrument with eight CD players and corresponding speakers, arranged in a circular spatial installation; sequentially switched light spots in combination with graphical cutouts in the CDs create noise patterns based on the principle of optical sound.
- *KREUZUNG/CROSSROADS* is a video by Sibylle Hoessler. The artist is questioning the definition of inner and outer space, requiring a rephrasing of this relation.
- *Five Suitcases* is an installation by Duje Jurić that sends messages via old-fashioned suitcases, as symbols for travel, instability of the home, passages in time and space, until the last voyage to infinity.
- *The Eye of God* by Paul Magee's computer programme, played off a widescreen monitor, is one of those Media-Scape projects that have other references: "Left to its own devices for a very long but finite period, the screen would generate every possible image at increasingly higher resolutions. Photographs from every dream and nightmare, from all pasts and futures – actual, possible and inconceivable." In

many of his artistic works Heiko Daxl has used colour as a symbol for the RGB video image as well as pixels. Paul Magee continues in the description of his work: "The whole screen starts as one 'pixel'. The programme goes through all possible combinations of RGB for this single pixel. That is to say, every combination of the 256 reds, 256 greens and 256 blues that can make up a pixel. It then splits the screen horizontally and vertically, and combines each 'pixel' with every other 'pixel' on the screen in all possible configurations – and in all of each pixel's own possible RGB combinations. The programme keeps splitting the screen until it reaches the size of an actual pixel.

- *Time Bridge* by Rivka Rinn is photography of her travels as a permanent motive in her photographic works. In her images, travel is a symbol of speed and transformation of space in the course of time.
- *Cubus Niger – Incarnation cRdxXPV9GNQ*, and *Avatar* by Michael Saup are part of a project that shows photos of a lignite coal cube with a side length of 3 meters, created by the electrical power consumption of one million views of the Avatar movie trailer on YouTube. A lignite coal pyramid with a base side of 1,422 meters and a height of 905 meters created by the electrical power consumption of the Internet in 2009, totalling 1,000,000,000,000 kilowatt hours. The lignite briquettes would create a line 1.5 times as long as the distance between the Earth and the Sun.
- *The Irrelevance of Getting to the Point of Things* by Riikka Tauriainen is a mind-map, cross-linking words, found images and appropriated texts. The author seeks out discrepancies based on language and translation, the ways meaning is betrayed and dissolves between text and image and their respective meta-levels. Playing with the inherent dichotomy of language and bipolarity of positivity and negativity, she fragments and estranges paragraphs from their sources, thus reflecting on the process of memory and thinking, of retrieving information, and on the dictionary structure, and, self-reflexively, on the art of research.
- *60 Seconds*, installation by Ignacio Uriarte, showing 60 wristwatches, representing the unavoidable circle and limited time of our lives.

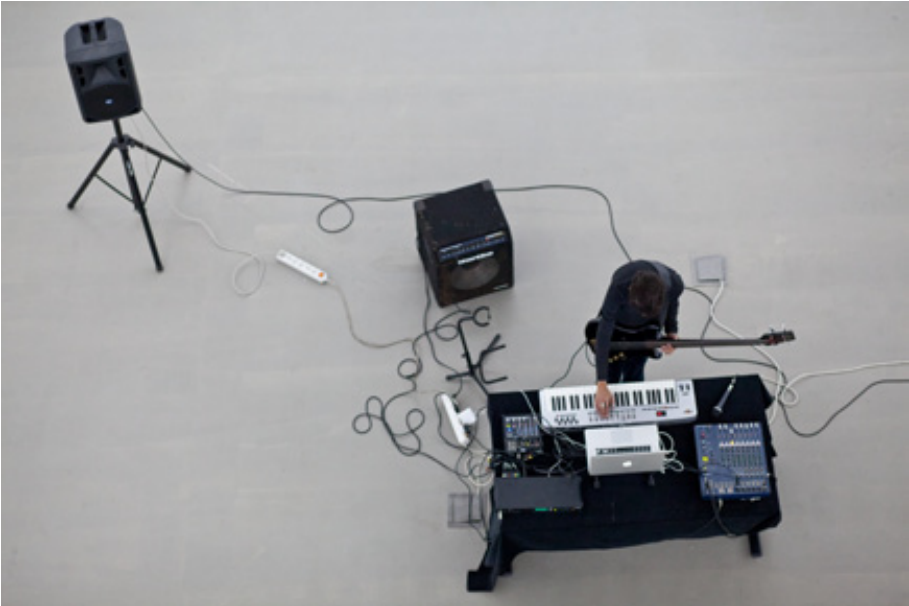
Having dedicated Media-Scape 2012 as a whole to Heiko Daxl, we also selected several projects in his honour, among them:

- *Project of Unsuccessful Gathering* by Igor Eškinja, empty chairs half painted in different colours as if they were waiting for someone to come.
- Sibylle Hoessler's photo showing Heiko Daxl from the back, going to the HDLU with his famous red suitcase, constitutes at the same time both – his coming towards us and his leaving us in his last farewell.
- *Directing Wagner* by Peter Kees, who shows himself directing, without sound, empty space in different surroundings.
- *Sequel of Nina Hagen* by Ilse Ruppert, a portrait of the punk singer at the height of the Berlin underground scene of the eighties, the time when Heiko first came to the city he would later choose as the city to live in.
- The drawing portrait of Heiko by Branka Uzur is a final interpretation of his facial expression, showing concentration and, at the same time, the playfulness of his character.
- A concert/performance at the opening of the Media-Scape exhibition, played and improvised by Mia Zabelka on her electric guitar, as the musical accomplishment of the long travel of Heiko Daxl. We will follow you all the way through, dear Heiko.

## Zahra Mani

### For Heiko

*For Heiko* is a live solo performance by Zahra Mani which premiered at the opening of Media Scape 2012.



© Sibylle Hoessler

Sonic fragments emerge into an already sounding space, initially merging with the ambience then becoming increasingly perceptible through their repetition, clarity and gradual crescendo, intensifying in tone and intricacy to a complex body of sound, shifting temporally, spatially and substantially in itself through a viscous mutation of aural consistencies, before returning to the ambience from which it began, returning the space to its resonating essence.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Zahra Mani (UK/PK) is a musician and composer whose work focuses on complex resonances, sounds and spaces that are intrinsically "between". She plays various instruments including the double bass, bass guitar, guitar, piano and keyboards and uses her laptop as a mutational instrument to relay her constantly evolving archive of field and studio recordings. These sonic fragments, on the whole very short audio particles that are looped, transformed, and constantly re-contextualized, form the basis of her compositions, installations, radio art and live performances. The use of music software and max/msp patches for live performances and installations is a bridge across the the analogue - digital threshold, allowing her to convey

and compose organic, natural “found” sound and instrumental abstraction in a given context, using electronics to heighten the organic and tangible elements of sound and instruments to shape the sonic ambience in synthetic abstraction.

She studied German & Philosophy at Oxford and (briefly) in Vienna, and music performance and composition at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY.

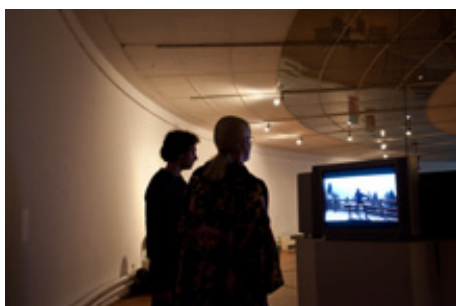
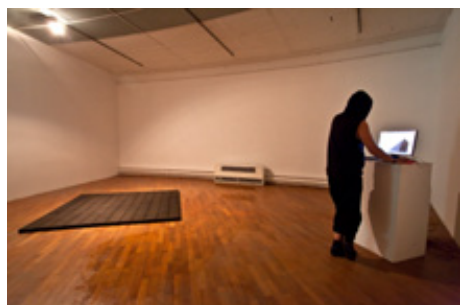
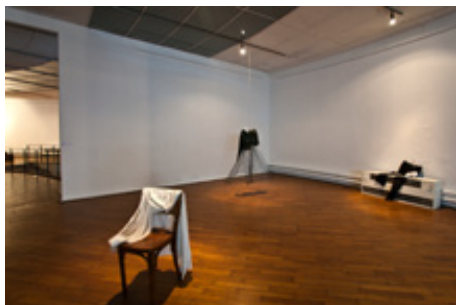
Recent collaborations include inter-medial work with live film artist Mia Makela, sound and installation artist Rie Nakajima and ongoing work with violinist Mia Zabelka.



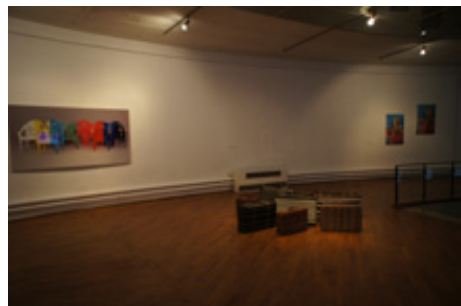
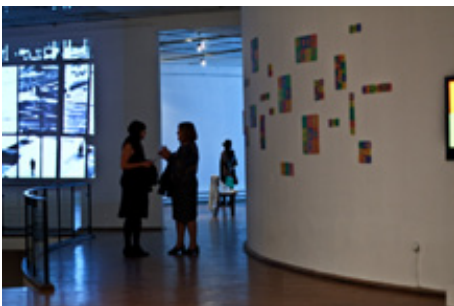
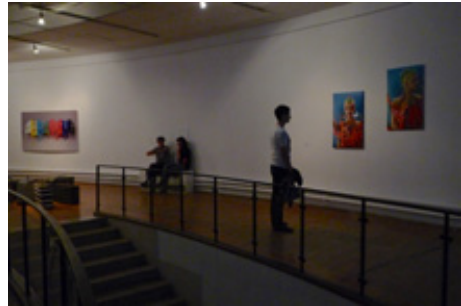
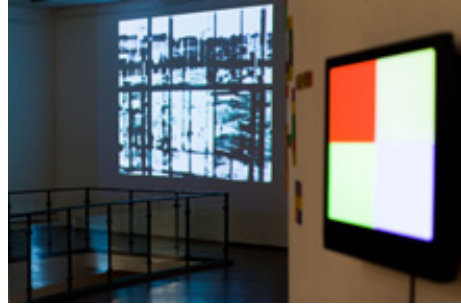
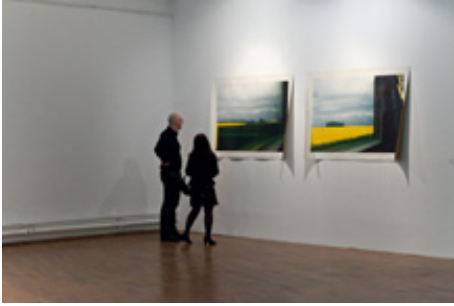
© Ilse Ruppert

## EXHIBITION, HDLU GALLERY "RING"

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Photos © Sibylle Hoessler



Photos 1-2 © Sibylle Hoessler, 3-5 © Ilse Ruppert, 6 © media in motion, 7-8 © Bojan Baletić



# Pablo Alonso

Graphite on Paper, 133 × 155 cm, 2012



© Ilse Ruppert



© Sibylle Hoessler

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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1969 – born in Gijón, Spain

### **Solo shows**

2012 – Wendt+Friedmann, Berlin, DE

2011 – Galerie Patrick Ebensperger, Berlin, DE

2009 – Pinturazombi, Galería Babelos, Vigo, E

2007 – Der Himmel ist oben, die Erde ist unten, Galerie Jan Wentrup, Berlin (Kat.), DE

2007 – Torta Morbida, Galerie Suzanne Tarasiève, Paris (Kat.), F

2004 – Zur wahren Eintracht, Galerie Jan Wentrup, Berlin, DE

2004 – Galgen, Galerie Jan Wentrup, Berlin, DE

2004 – El Imparcial, DA2 Domus Artium 2002, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Salamanca (Kat.), E

2003 – El Imparcial, Galería Salvador Díaz, Madrid, E

2002 – „Alonso Alonso“, Kampnagel, K3, Hamburg, DE

### **Group shows**

2011 – Kunsthalle Hamburg, DE

2011 – Kunsthalle CCA Andratx Mallorca, E

2010 – Adacyl, MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, E

2010 – Galerie Patrick Ebensperger, Berlin, DE

2010 – Tokyo Wonder Site, Tokio, J

2010 – Pablo Alonso präsentiert ALLES: Karin Sander, Jennifer Jordan, Kaori Nakajima, Kiki Moore, Santiago Sierra, Awst & Walther, Jens Nippert, Andreas Sell, Hans Jörg Mayer, Robert Crotla u.a., The Forgotten Bar, Galerie im Regierungsviertel, Berlin, DE

2010 – Upstairs Galerie, Berlin, DE

2009 – Zeigen. Eine Audiotour durch Berlin, Temporäre Kunsthalle Berlin, DE

2009 – Crotla Presents, Lothringer Str. 13, München, DE

2009 – Das Mittel Tor Raum 500, München, DE

2009 – Schickeria - Highsociety, BDA, Braunschweig (Kat.), DE

2008 – Galerie Grimm Fine Art, Amsterdam, NL

2008 – Back to black. Die Farbe Schwarz in der aktuellen Malerei, Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, DE

2008 – Centro de Arte, Contemporáneo, Salamanca, E

— [www.pabloalonso.de](http://www.pabloalonso.de)

# Barbara Caveng

## De Fibrillation

3 objects: De Fibrillation 1°, sculpture, 2011; coat, partly dissolved, hanger, string; ca. 140 × 100 × 100 cm (excluding string); De Fibrillation 2°, sculpture, 2012; shirt, partly dissolved, wooden chair; 90 × 50 × 40 cm; De Fibrillation 3°, sculpture for wall, 2012; handkerchief, trousers, hanger; ca. 100 × 30 × 8 cm



© Sibylle Hoessler



© Joachim Gern

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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1963 – born in Zurich, Switzerland

1982-1986 – studies at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Graz (A)

Visual artist, lives and works in Berlin and elsewhere.

Numerous domestic as well as international exhibitions, e.g. at Aram Art Gallery, Seoul; N.A.I. National Museum of Architecture, Maastricht; Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts, Koroška Galerija, Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia; Kunsthalle Mannheim; Kunstverein Heidelberg; Museum Neukölln, Berlin; Kunstners Hus Oslo; Art Museum, Akureyri, Island; Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje

Works in public collections of Berlinische Galerie, Berlin; Reykjavik Art Museum; Investitionsbank Berlin; Collection of the City of Saarbrücken

— [www.caveng.net](http://www.caveng.net)

# Cécile Colle}{Ralf Nuhn

## Exit-Wall

Modular installation, 2010



© Ilse Ruppert

Material: 200 electric exit signs, permanent magnets, multi-sockets, metal structure. Dimensions: 4 m (width) × 2.25 m (height) × 0.1 m (depth).

“Exit-Wall” is a modular installation comprising hundreds of illuminating exit signs, assembled by means of permanent magnets. Usually the signs are used in public spaces to indicate, in case of emergency, an escape route to the outside. By contrast, we are employing the exit signs like bricks of a wall to build a barrier within a space. For us, the paradoxical nature of this assemblage – originating from the contradiction between the linguistic meaning of its constituting parts (the exit signs) and the physical obstacle it poses in reality – evokes the inherent ambiguities of different limits in “real life”: architectural, political, cultural, psychological, technological...

The project relates strongly to our continuous research about the new (im)possibilities of exchange proposed by technology. In particular, our work revolves around the inherent ambiguity of the interface, providing access to new territories but at the same time separating us from other parts of reality. Like an interface, our wall “promises” an exit, access to the other side, but at the same time it constitutes a physical separation. See also: [imiteme.com/english/en-photopages/en-lemur.htm](http://imiteme.com/english/en-photopages/en-lemur.htm)

A video featuring the Exit-Wall was screened on Dover’s BBC Big Screen during September/October 2010. The video can be viewed at [www.imiteme.com/english/en-moviepages/en-mp-wall.htm](http://www.imiteme.com/english/en-moviepages/en-mp-wall.htm)

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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**Cécile Colle**, born in 1974 in Lyon, lives in Roubaix (France). She obtained a Diplôme National Supérieur d'Études Plastiques from the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts (Bourges) in 1999.

**Ralf Nuhn**, born in 1971 near Kassel (Germany), lives between Roubaix and London. He is currently Research Fellow at the Lansdown Centre for Electronic Arts in London, where he obtained his PhD in 2007.

Since 2003 the two artists have developed a shared practice. Their work has been shown internationally, among others at the National Museum of Fine Arts (Taiwan), ZKM - Center for Art and Media (Germany), V&A - National Museum of Childhood (London), CASO Gallery (Japan), Haus am Lützowplatz (Berlin).

— *imiteme.com*

# Stefano D'Alessio & Martina Menegon

## Doppelgänger

Interactive installation, 2012



© Sibylle Hoessler

The work presents itself as a large, vertical monitor showing a black image, it is a foggy layer that hides a reflection of what is in front of the monitor. This layer shades the whole image except for what is moving, so the only way for the audience to see thru it is to perform a physical action, as just what is moving can be seen.

This reflection is not mirrored by a flat and static object, but by a virtual liquid, a narcissus water mirror, which waves, responding to audience movements.

Doppelgänger is a loanword from German, which literally means "double-walker". It is a paranormal entity which is the double of a living person, and it is traditionally considered a sinister omen.

The theme of Doppelgänger was investigated by psychologists and psychoanalysts in relation to the Freudian concept of the Uncanny and/or to narcissistic personality disorders.

The concept of Uncanny was introduced in psychology by Ernst Jentsch, defined as the doubt whether an animated object is really alive or not. Sigmund Freud used the Uncanny as conceptual term that refers to an aesthetic attitude of fear, which comes to life when something or someone is perceived as both familiar and strange at the same time.

Uncanny is something that was removed and that is surfacing because of a particular experience, the re-occurrence of what Freud called primary narcissism is an example of it. Primary narcissism is a childhood phase in which the ego creates a double of itself as an assurance of immortality, which then becomes unconscious because of the superego.

Nowadays, nearly everybody has one or more digital doubles, alter egos which are copies of people or manifestations of what someone would like to be like. Contemporary common avatars are, obviously, not considered a death presage, like in ancient mythologies, but they can be connected to the Freudian double of primary narcissism, as they are a potentially immortal representations of ourselves.

Social networks and virtual realities are digital worlds that contain virtual versions of the population, how a person behaves, what its belief is, what it did or is doing, what it looks like, etc. All of this information about the characteristics that define a human being and its personality, are contained as digital codes in these virtual worlds – these digital codes are contemporary Doppelgängers.

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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**Martina Menegon** lives and works in Vienna. Her works are mainly multimedia and interactive installations, performances and motion designing. She graduated in Visual and Performing Arts at University IUAV of Venice in 2010.

She is now student in Brigitte Kowanz Transmedial Art class at Die Angewandte University in Vienna. Since 2010 she is one of the assistants of Klaus Obermaier at the IUAV University of Venice and is also part of his team for The concept of...here and now performance. Since November 2010 she is co-founder of the Locker Gallery Association.

— [martinamenegon.tumblr.com](http://martinamenegon.tumblr.com)

**Stefano D'Alessio** lives and works in Vienna. His works are mainly interactive installations, performances and experimental music. D'Alessio graduated in Visual and Performing Arts at the IUAV University of Venice in 2010. He currently studies in Brigitte Kowanz Transmedial Art class at the University for Applied Arts in Vienna.

Since 2010 he has been working with Klaus Obermaier, teaching multimedia programming in his class at the IUAV University, and being part of the concept of... (here and now) performance team, as programming and technical assistant. Since November 2010 he is co-founder of the Locker Gallery Association. Recently he collaborated in the realization of *Muybridge! Muibridge!*, a theater performance by the Office for Human Theatre, and took part in the realization of the interactive dance performance *MetaMorphyc* by Anagrama Coreografico.

— [cargocollective.com/stefanodalessio](http://cargocollective.com/stefanodalessio)



# Heiko Daxl

## Azoth

### Objects



© media in motion

„The term was considered by occultist Aleister Crowley to represent a unity of beginning and ending by tying together the first and last letters of the alphabets of antiquity; A/Alpha/Alef (first character of Latin, Greek & Hebrew), Z (final character in Latin), O as Omega (final character in Greek) and Th as Tau (final character in Hebrew). In this way permeation and totality of beginning and end was symbolised to consider the supreme wholeness and thus the universal synthesis of opposites as a ‘cancellation’ (i.e. solvent) or cohesion (i.e. medicine), and in such a way is similar to the philosophical “absolute” of Hegel’s dialectic. Crowley further made reference in his works referring to Azoth as “the fluid”, calling it the universal solvent or universal medicine of the medieval alchemical philosophers (...)”

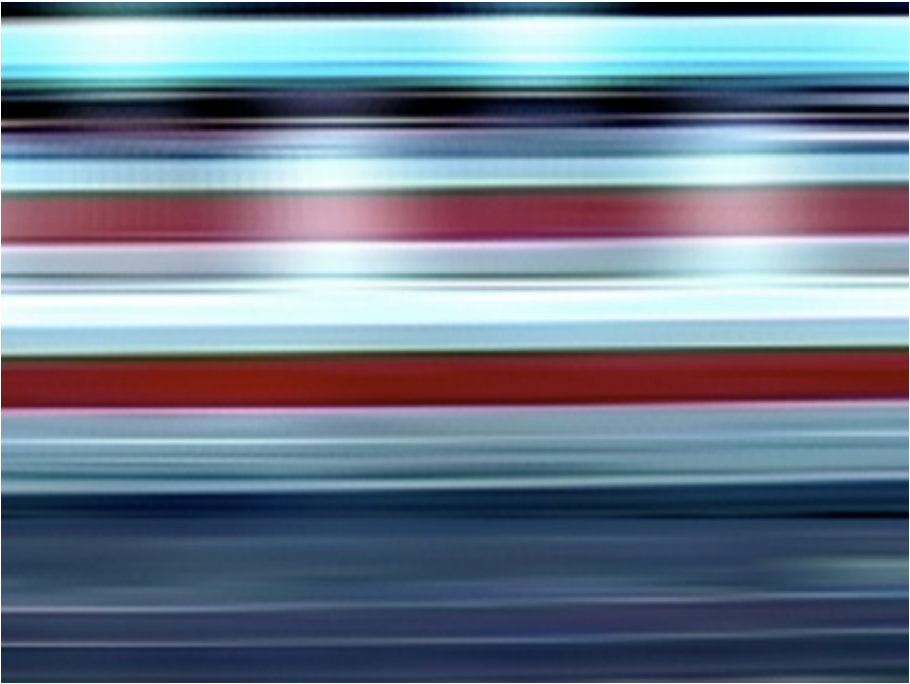
(Source: Wikipedia)



© media in motion

## Le Cinéma – Le Train

Video installation



© mediainmotion

Music: Tobias PM Schneid

Sounddesign: Markus Lehmann-Horn

Duration: 14:00 min

Film leads and film takes of railways are the raw footage of this work. By manipulation and montage in relation to the musical composition there are points for thoughtful excursions, roundabouts, dreams, curves, imaginations and lost memories. But the continuance of transitoriness keeps its familiar riddle. A railway journey as a cinematographic experience.

“The flowers are not flowers anymore, but spots of colour, or better to say red and white stripes. There is no point, everything turns into stripes. Cornfields like long yellow strands of hair and meadows like long green plaits. Church towers and trees start to dance and merge in a lunatic way with the horizon. Sometimes a shadow appears, a ghost (...) and disappears like a flash” (Victor Hugo, 1837)



© Sibylle Hoessler

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Heiko Daxl 1957-2012. Born in Oldenburg, Germany; lived and worked in Berlin and Zagreb

1978-1985 – studied architecture at the Technical University, Berlin; media science and art history in Braunschweig, Zürich and Osnabrück; M.A. in communication aesthetics

1980-1992 – founder, organizer and curator of the European Media Art Festivals, Osnabrück (International Experimental Film Workshop 1980-87, European Media Art Festival 1988 - 1992)

1990/91 – curator, editor and producer of *INFERMENTAL 10*, the international video art-magazine (Osnabrück-Skopje-Budapest)

1993-1999 – curator and art director of Media-Scape, International Symposium and Exhibition for Media Art in Zagreb, Croatia

1995-1999 – chair of VideoKunstMultiMedia Berlin (VKMM e.V.)

1996-2002 – collaboration with the Studio for Electro-Acoustic Music of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin  
As of 1980 – organizer and curator for various media festivals, curator in different museums and galleries for film and video art in America, Asia, Australia and Europe (for Goethe Institute in more than 20 countries)

As of 1983 – lectures and seminars at universities and film schools in Europe and Asia, (among others Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen, Potsdam-Babelsberg and University of Applied Technology and Business, Berlin).

As of 1978 – work on various film and video productions, photo- and computer graphics, installations, CD-ROM and DVD projects, participation at international exhibitions and festivals worldwide, publication of numerous articles on media art in books, catalogues and magazines, a number of grants and awards

As of 1991 – collaboration with Ingeborg Füllepp as mediainmotion, Berlin

— [www.daxl.org](http://www.daxl.org); [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiko\\_Daxl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiko_Daxl)

# ANA Elizabet

## Dišeš? / Are you breathing?

Neon light, intended for public space, 250 cm × 60 cm × 15cm, 2011



© Sibylle Hoessler

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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1969 – born in Zagreb, Croatia, where she lives and works

1993-1998 – studies at and graduation from the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna (B.Gironcoli)

#### Works in Public Spaces

2011 – Dišeš? / Are you Breathing?, temporary exhibition of neon light sculpture in public space, Zagreb

2011 – Untitled, sculpture in public space, Dürnstein, Austria

2010 – Dišeš? / Are you Breathing?, temporary light installation, Upper Town, Zagreb

2009 – Untitled, in front of the Brundo the Bear kindergarten, in collaboration with architects H. Njirić and D. Bušnja, Zagreb

2007 – More Light, Klub SC, Teatar &TD, Zagreb

2004 – High Hills, exhibition in public space, Krems, Austria

2002 – Memorial to Johann von Klingenberg, winning project of the Competition, Public Art Lower Austria, Eisgarn

1997 – Panta-Rei, symposium and exhibition in public space, Strausberg, Germany

— [www.ana-elizabet.org](http://www.ana-elizabet.org)



# Igor Eškinja

## Project for Unsuccessful Gathering

Lambda print on plexiglas, 120 × 200 cm, 2011



© Igor Eškinja



© Sibylle Hoessler

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Born in 1975 in Rijeka, Croatia, graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice, Italy. Lives and works in Croatia, exhibited extensively in solo and group exhibitions in Italy, Croatia, Spain and Austria among others.

### **Awards**

2006 – Henkel Art Award, Henkel and Kulturkontakt, Vienna

2004 – Radoslav Putar Award



# Andres .muk. Heider

disc.o

2009



Photos © Ilse Ruppert

disc.o is a multiplayer musical instrument with eight CD players and corresponding speakers arranged in a circular spatial installation. Sequentially switched light spots in combination with graphical cutouts in the CDs create noise patterns based on the principle of optical sound.

disc.o refers to early optical sound instruments like Emerick Spielmann's Superpiano (Austria, 1927), which was based on the same technique of sound creation through a photoelectric process. But disc.o does not only use a repetitive method in sound generation, the whole instrument is based on the repetitive principle of the later developed step sequencer.

The circular arrangement of the instrument creates a visual representation of the Loop, which is the foundation of contemporary repetitive music. The interplay of travelling light with the corresponding acoustic response creates a spatial experience of this Loop.

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Cameraman and new media artist; born in 1976 in Dobersberg, Lower Austria, living and working in Vienna  
2005-2010 – University of Applied Arts, Vienna – digital art, graduated in 2010 under Ruth Schnell (class of Virgil Widrich – Professors Peter Weibel / Thomas Fürsten)

since 2006 – founding member of tagR.tv – association for media art

since 2004 – freelance cameraman/assistant for Georg Riha, MRC FILM and Otters

2009 – studies at Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam, NL, Intershop @ The Patchingzone in Rotterdam, NL

2005-2008 – freelance work for and with the VideoMovingSystem

1999-2004 – interdisciplinary videoliveperformances and visuals in cooperation with Bea von Schrader (dancer), and partly with live musicians and painter Dieter Puntigam

2001-2003 – work with Doris Kittler on documentary movies about former Soviet Union

1999-2001 – work as GSM technician

Until 1998 – graduation in higher technical studies of control and feedback control systems

— *muk.me.uk*

# Sibylle Hoessler

## KREUZUNG / CROSSROADS

Video loop, duration: 2:23, Avenue Mall, Zagreb 2012



© Sibylle Hoessler

How do we deal with the image of *crossroads* – the clash between two or more concepts originally not connected with each other? Where will such rapid mixture, even hybridization of ideas lead to?

Avenue Mall can be seen as a model for a *designed* urban structure as opposed to a *grown* structure. The Mall is located at the periphery of Zagreb city, surrounded by various speed roads, leading into and away from the city core. Yet how do we bridge the concept of an evolved city with a constructed one? Could it be that the periphery already forms a coherent unity no longer in need of the city center? Hence, this model is already invalid. Thus, the idea of an inner space opposed by an outer space requires a redefinition, a rephrasing.

*CROSSROADS* shows this fluctuation, the process created by the people inhabiting it.



© Sibylle Hoessler

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Sibylle Hoessler is a photo and video artist. She studied photography in Berlin at the School for Design and Photography Lette Verein. For fifteen years, she worked in the film business.

Her work over the last ten years has been exploring possibilities of extending the theme of portraiture through collage and montage.

Sibylle Hoessler's photographs and videos have been shown in numerous exhibitions both in Germany and abroad.

— [www.sibyllehoessler.de](http://www.sibyllehoessler.de)

# Duje Jurić

## Five Suitcases

Installation: acrylic paint, fabric, suitcases, slide projector, 2002



© Sibylle Hoessler

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Duje Jurić (born in 1956 in Rupe, Croatia) is a Croatian contemporary artist and one of the key figures of the New Geometry movement of the 1980s. He lives and works in Zagreb, Croatia.

He was an associate of the Master Workshop of Ljubo Ivančić and Nikola Reiser (1982–1985). At the end of the 1980s he collaborated with Julije Knifer in making murals in Sète, a small town in southern France (1889 and 1990, Villa Saint-Claire).

During the 1990s he supplemented his works with text and made artistic interventions upon various objects, either his own or objects belonging to others (such as doors, cabinets, suitcases, clothes, paintbrushes, etc.).

In more recent years he has been involved with creating ambient, action and performance art. Jurić also works as an art restorer, and in the period between 1977 and 1993 he was an associate member of the Croatian Conservation Institute.

From 1984 to 1999 he worked as a freelance artist, followed by a position at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (1999–2000), and a teaching position at the Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb, first as assistant professor, and now as fully appointed professor at the Department of Painting.

Jurić had some sixty solo shows and over one hundred group exhibitions. He has also performed several actions and participated in a number of art projects, the highlight of which were his ambience art projects (light installations), and his theatre sets made for the Kugla Theatre project.

He received several awards, including the 2002 Croatian Association of Artists Award for Best Exhibition (for his exhibition in the Gliptoteka gallery at the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts) and the 2002 Vladimir Nazor Award.

(Source: Wikipedia)

— *www.dujejuric.blogspot.com*

# Peter Kees

## Conducting Richard Wagner

4 monitors, video loops: Hochkopf, Meer, Schnee, Walddirigat, 2010



© Sibylle Hoessler

In the videos Peter Kees conducts Richard Wagner at unusual places, without the sound of music. Only the background noise of his surroundings is heard. The presentations of the conducting moves in unexpected spaces, against the backdrop of their daily sounds, are quasi-ironic images of the conductor's position of power, but for the viewer also negation of the surge and emotion of the Wagnerian experience of music, as well as transformation of music into the language of the moving picture.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Peter Kees is a chronicler and surveyor of contemporary social phenomena. His focus is the exploration of the boundaries and constraints – whether natural or socially determined – which shape human experience. His work is conceptually rooted, however it is characterised by aesthetic-formal concerns.

Kees works in several media, from public interventions and performance, to video and photography. While in general the focus is a questioning of the status quo, of the way-it-is, his work frequently explores the implicit alternatives – human desires, ideals and utopias.

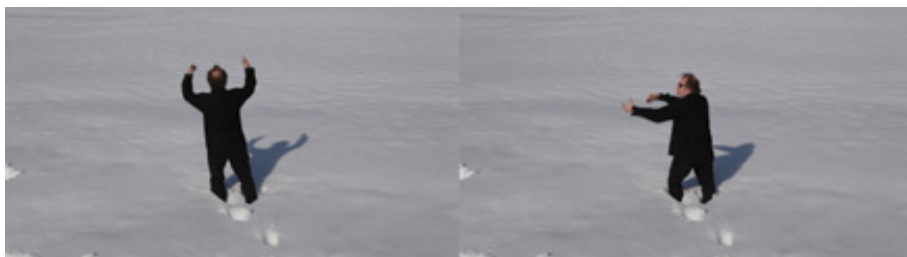
— [www.peterkees.de](http://www.peterkees.de)



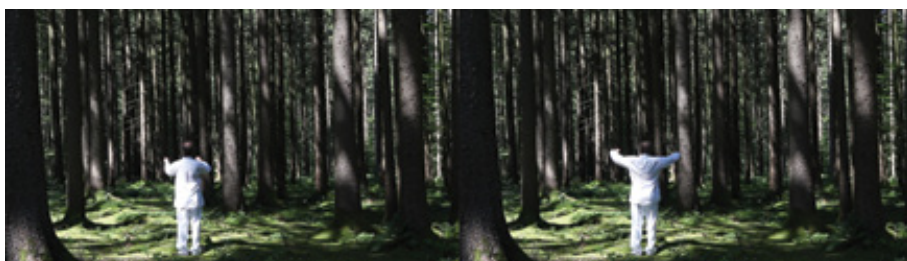
Hochkopf, © Peter Kees



Meer, © Peter Kees



Schnee, © Peter Kees



Walddirigat, © Peter Kees



# Paul Magee

## The Eye of God

Computer-based art, 2005



© Sibylle Hoessler



© PaulMagee

Computer programme and wide-screen monitor. Left to itself for a very long but finite period, the screen would generate every possible image at increasingly higher resolutions. Photographs from every dream and nightmare, from all pasts and futures – actual, possible and inconceivable.

The whole screen starts as one 'pixel'. The programme goes through all possible combinations of RGB for this single pixel. That is to say, every combination of the 256 reds, 256 greens and 256 blues that can make up one pixel. It then splits the screen horizontally and vertically, and combines each 'pixel' with every other 'pixel' on the screen, in all possible configurations and – in all of each pixel's own possible RGB combinations. The programme keeps splitting the screen until it reaches the size of an actual pixel.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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### **Education**

2008-2010 – MFA Fine Art (Sculpture), Slade School of Fine Art, UCL

2001-2005 – BA Honours Fine Art (Sculpture), Slade School of Fine Art, UCL

2000-2001 – Chelsea School of Art, BTEC Foundation

### **Exhibitions**

2010 – No Explanation, Galeria Arsenal, Poznań, Poland

2009 – URBAN (R)EVOLUTIONS #2: URBAN STILLLS, Festival Miden, Kalamata, Greece

2008 – CAC 2, Museo de Arte Moderno, Toluca City, Mexico. Slow Art, SIGGRAPH, Los Angeles, USA

2008 – soundOBJECTS, Digital Media festival, Valencia, Spain; Computer Art Congress 2, Museo de Arte Moderno, Toluca City, Mexico

2007 – Píksel 2007 festival, 3.14 Gallery, Bergen, Norway

2006 – 151206, Oko/Ucho Galeria, Poznań, Poland

2006 – Sleep, Galeria Anex, Poznań, Poland

2004 – Young Artists at CERN, CERN, Geneva, Switzerland

2004 – Young Artists at CERN, Institute of Education, London, UK

2004 – Reading Spaces, Galeria Plastyfikatory, Lubon, Poland

2004 – Untitled, Galeria Naprzeciw, Poznań, Poland

2002 – Critical Curtain, Bloomsbury Theatre, London, UK

— [www.p000m0000.com](http://www.p000m0000.com)

# Rivka Rinn

## Time Bridge

Cibachrome, 68 × 1852 cm, 2001



© Sibylle Hoessler

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Born in Tel Aviv, lives and works in Berlin and Rome.

1976-1980 – studies at the Universität für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria

1981/82-1986 – teaching at the Internationale Sommerakademie für Bildende Kunst, Salzburg, Austria

1986-1988 – teaching at the Universität für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria (assistant of Oswald Oberhuber)

1986-1994 – lives and works in Florence, Italy

2001-2007 – professor at the Internationale Sommerakademie für Bildende Kunst, Salzburg, Austria

2002-2011 – guest professor at the Architecture Faculty Studio3, Innsbruck University, Austria

2005 – lecturer at the Bartenbach Lichtakademie, Aldrans, Austria

2007 – nominated Active Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Austria

— [www.rivkarinn.org](http://www.rivkarinn.org)



# Ilse Ruppert

## Sequel: Nina Hagen,

Photo transfer on canvas – colour, West-Berlin, 1984



© Sibylle Hoessler

“Her photographs have the beauty of dreams and the cruelty of nightmares.”

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Born in 1947, currently based in Berlin, Germany. Ilse Ruppert is a well-known German feature and portraiture photographer since 1978, with a keen sense of ambience, artistry and composition. In a career that spans over four decades, she has travelled extensively across Europe and America, shooting numerous influential musicians, performers, actors and writers, including the likes of Keith Richards, The Ramones, Nina Hagen, Dennis Hopper, Frank Zappa, to name but a few. Took part in exhibitions in Berlin, Paris, Cannes, Düsseldorf and New York.

— [www.ilseruppert.de](http://www.ilseruppert.de)



# Michael Saup

## Cubus Niger – Incarnation cRdxXPV9GNQ

C-print, aludibond, 100 × 100 cm, 2010. Courtesy Michael Saup, supported by ZNE. Original photograph by Rita Willaert



© Sibylle Hoessler

A lignite coal pyramid with a base side of 1,422 meters and a height of 905 meters created by the electrical power consumption of the Internet in 2009, totalling 1,000,000,000,000 kilowatt hours. The lignite briquettes would create a line 1.5 times as long as the distance between the Earth and the Sun.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Saup studies Music, computer science and visual communication at the Dominican College of San Rafael, USA, the Hochschule Furtwangen, and the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Offenbach am Main. During his studies at the Dominican College, in 1980 he started to program and at the start work with the media of film and video. In 1987 he realized Flicker, a computer-controlled light installation. Since 1989 Saup has been experimenting with the possibilities of alternating computer-supported transformations of sounds and images.

Saups work included the automatic control of video cutting through music, interactive sound-controlled computer-animation, and programmes for the real-time conversion of acoustic and optic signals into digital signals, which allowed dancers and musicians to trigger image-generating electronic devices, such as 3D graphic workstations, laser disc players or hard disk recorders, thus transforming acoustic events into

variable visual experiences. Examples include the film *Paradays* (1989), installations such as *pulse8* (1992), and performative projects like *Hyena Days* (1992) (with Steina Vasulka) and *metallic metaballistic membrane* (1995) (with William Forsythe and the Frankfurt Ballet).

Through a dynamic model, Saup jointly defines sound, light and space. In 1997 *Tunnel* was created, a corridor at Terminal 1 of the Frankfurt airport, as well as the installation *R111* (1999-2004). In 1994 Saup founded the *Supreme Particles* collective.

Since 1989 Saup teaches at the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Munich, the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach, the Hochschule für Künste in Bremen and the Hochschule der Künste in Zurich. Between 1991 and 1994 he was artistic and scientific assistant at the Institut für Neue Medien of the Städelschule in Frankfurt/Main. From 1996 to 1997 he was Locum Professor at the HfG Karlsruhe, at which he was then Professor for the art of digital media between 1999 and 2005.

— *particles.de*, *de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\_Saup*, *openresource.cc/pyramis-niger.php*



# Riikka Tauriainen

## Ein mögliches Synonym für Anordnen

Mixed media installation, 2010. Project presented by Dimitrina Sevova



© media in motion

The Irrelevance of Getting to the Point of Things by Riikka Tauriainen is a mind-map cross-linking words, found images and appropriated texts. The author seeks out discrepancies based on language and translation, the ways meaning is betrayed and dissolves between text and image and their respective meta-levels. Playing with the inherent dichotomy of language and bipolarity of positivity and negativity, she fragments and estranges paragraphs from their sources, thus reflecting on the process of memory and thinking, of retrieving information, and on the dictionary structure, and, self-reflexively, on the art of research. (Dimitrina Sevova)

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Born in 1979 in Finland.

#### **Education**

2008-2010 – Zurich University of the Arts, Master of Arts in Fine Arts

2007-2008 – Berlin Weissensee School of Art, Faculty of Fine Arts, Sculpture

2005-2006 – University Duisburg-Essen / Folkwang Hochschule, Faculty of Art and Design, Communications Design

2004-2007 – Estonian Academy of Arts, Bachelor of Arts in Photography

## **Solo Exhibitions**

2010 – Ein Manuskript mit Fehlern und Bildern. Artachment, Basel, Switzerland

2010 – Ein mögliches Synonym für Anordnen, Les Complices, Zurich, Switzerland

2009 – Sanatorium, with Katrin Murbach, City Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia

2008 – Am I Staying While I'm Going?, Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia

— [www.riikkatauriainen.com](http://www.riikkatauriainen.com)

# Ignacio Uriarte

## 60 Seconds

60 wristwatches, approx. 400 cm diameter, 2005



© Ilse Ruppert



© Sibylle Hoessler

Every hour 60 wristwatches are beeping one second after each other, each lasting exactly one minute.



© Sibylle Hoessler

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Born (1972) and raised in Krefeld, Germany. Studied Business Administration in Madrid and Mannheim between 1992 and 1995, and subsequently worked for corporations such as Siemens, Canon, Interlub and Agilent Technologies in Germany, Spain and Mexico. Uriarte studied audiovisual arts in Guadalajara, Mexico (1998 to 2001) and quit his last serious job in November 2003, dedicating himself since then to what he calls "office art". From 2004 to 2006 he took part in an artist residency programme at Hangar, Barcelona. Since 2007 he is living and working in Berlin. A selection of recent museum solo exhibitions includes CGAC, Santiago de Compostela (2007); Laboratorio 987, MUSAC, Leon (2008); and Centro Huarte de Arte Contemporáneo, Pamplona (2008).

### **Solo Shows**

- 2010 – Ignacio Uriarte, i8, Reykjavik, Iceland
  - 2010 – Auf dem Papier, Kunstverein Arnsberg, Arnsberg, Germany
  - 2010 – Aufzählungen und Abrisse, Vierter Stock, Berlin, Germany
  - 2010 – The Invention of Letters, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth, Australia
  - 2010 – Typologies, Galerie Feinkost, Berlin, Germany
  - 2010 – The History of the Typewriter, recited by Michael Winslow, Nogueras Blanchard, Barcelona, Spain
  - 2009 – The Michael Winslow Typewriter Experience, Art Positions, Art Basel, Miami Beach, USA
  - 2009 – I am Making Art, with Wilfredo Prieto, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan
  - 2009 – Trabajos sobre (el) papel, La Fábrica Galería, Madrid, Spain
  - 2009 – 9 to 5, Galerie Feinkost, Berlin, Germany
  - 2008 – Incidental arrangements, Galleria Gentili, Prato, Italy
  - 2008 – Trabajos en serie, Huarte Centro de arte, Pamplona, Spain
  - 2008 – Tan sencillo como una línea ó un círculo, Laboratorio 987, MUSAC, Leon, Spain
  - 2008 – Atasco de papel, Casa Encendida, Madrid, Spain
  - 2008 – Alfa & Omega, Capella de Sant Roc, Valls, Spain
  - 2007 – About Lines and Circles, Nogueras Blanchard, Barcelona, Spain
  - 2007 – O debuxo por diante, CGAC, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
  - 2005 – Lo que pasa cuando dejas la oficina para dedicarte al arte, Casa Soler i Palet, Terrassa, Spain
- Latest exhibition in Berlin 2012: [www.figgevonrosen.com](http://www.figgevonrosen.com)

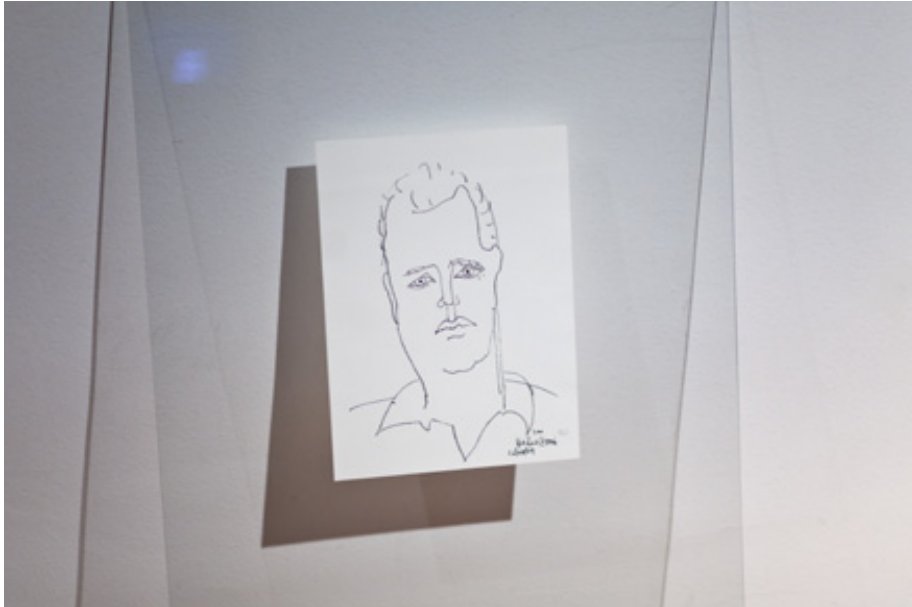
— [www.ignaciouriarte.com](http://www.ignaciouriarte.com)



# Branka Uzur

## Portrait: Heiko

Drawing, 2011



© Sibylle Hoessler

The drawing portrait of Heiko Daxl by Branka Uzur is a final interpretation of his facial expression, showing concentration, and at the same time the playfulness of his character.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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Born in Zagreb. lives and works in Zagreb, Sydney, Buenos Aires and Berlin.

Studied painting and ceramics in Belgrade (graduated from the Academy of Applied Arts) and Helsinki (specialization at the Academy of Applied and Fine Arts). Started exhibiting in 1974. Managed the Handicraft Promotion Project within the United Nations Development Programme in Cyprus between 1989-1992. In Cyprus Uzur also organized numerous exhibitions, workshops and seminars. Moved to Sydney in 1992, where she continued to paint and exhibit broadly, in solo and group exhibitions.

## Works in Collections

Museum of Applied Arts, Zagreb

Gallery of Contemporary Arts, Zagreb

Modern Gallery, Graz

City of Sydney Art Collection, Sydney Town Hall

## **Awards**

1983 – Award for Young Yugoslav Artists

1983 – Scholarship for specialization at the Academy of Applied and Fine Arts in Helsinki

1984 – Award at Small Ceramics, Zagreb

2007 – Art Residency at The Gunnery studios, Woolloomooloo, Sydney

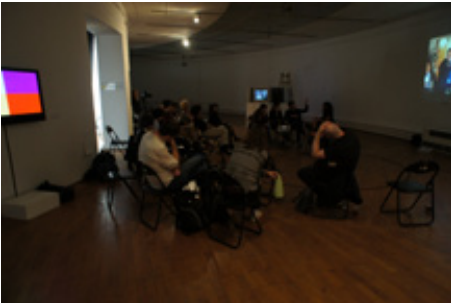
— [www.mediainmotion.de/BrankaUzur](http://www.mediainmotion.de/BrankaUzur)



## LECTURES / TALKS BY ARTISTS

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Lectures by Michael Saup, Dimitrina Sevova, Işin Önel and introductions of artists



Photos © media in motion



© Sibylle Hoessler

# Shadows as Tools for Participation

By Işın Öno1

If light is the element of violence, then one must combat light with a certain other light, in order to avoid the worst violence, the violence of the night that precedes or represses discourse.<sup>2</sup>

Hatziavatis: Those who are asleep see  
only shadows on a screen,  
but those who are awake  
know what the shadows mean.  
When the lights go down  
the shadows disappear.  
Life is fleeting,  
death is always near.<sup>3</sup>

We've been telling ourselves such stories forever, as a way of making sense of what we call our "relationship to nature"—to borrow that curious, revealing phrase. (What other species can even be said to have a "relationship" to nature?)<sup>4</sup>

For more than ten years now, my research has been mainly based on my artistic and curatorial preoccupation with the notions of shadow and darkness, as physical entities, as art forms and as tools for political gestures, for their immaterial materiality, for visual expression between visibility and invisibility and for their spatial relation between art and architecture, fleeting at the subtle border between the work of art and the space of art. Investigating the diverse aspects of the use of cast shadow as art forms, and as independent entities with their usability as strategic tools to transmit hidden connotations, the research aims at analysing the status of shadow within the space of the exhibition between representation and reality, as well as in relation to its connotation as a critique of the conceptions of certain notions such as truth, illumination, clarity, and reliability of information and knowledge that underlie the core of Western ideology. It proposes the idea that light does not always necessarily unveil the truth but can also be and is used in manipulating truths in various modes. In accordance with this perspective, it argues that the use of shadow in art practices would by definition deal with the misuse of language surrounding the binary opposition of light and shadow. It focuses on various approaches in current art practices that are dealing with these notions by employing shadows as tools for creating space for participation, as real-time still or moving images, playing with the politics of representation as well as spreading possible hidden information.

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the text has been extracted from a previously written text by Işın Öno1, entitled "Cast Shadows as Readymade Images amid the Status of Representation and Reality", written for and presented at the Symposium "Reality Manifestos – Can Dialectics Break Bricks?" accompanying the exhibition holding the same title, initiated by Dimitrina Sevova.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, Routledge, 2001, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> An extract from Karaghiozis & Hatziavatis Greek shadow theater, taken from Lewis Hyde, "Karaghiozis, Art Critic: An Essay on the Hero of Greek Shadow Theatre, Done as a Play in Three Acts," in Paolo Colombo and Sean Kissane (eds.), *In Praise of Shadows* (exhibition catalog), Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, 2008, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Pollan, *Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World*, Random House, New York, 2001, Introduction p. xxv.



© Sibylle Hoessler

Several postmodern scholars, working mainly in the framework of class, race, sex, and gender politics have long debated the question of whether Western thought and culture have “been dominated by an ocular-centric paradigm, a vision-generated, vision-centred interpretation of knowledge, truth and reality,” and “questions regarding the historical connections between vision and knowledge, vision and ontology, vision and power, vision and ethics.”<sup>5</sup> Long before Plato, philosophical thinking in Ancient Greece, which laid the foundation for Western philosophy, was drawn to the authority of sight. But one can also see that these political teachings did indeed repeatedly insist on the warnings about the dangers in placing too much trust in vision and its objects. The danger was not only about the tricks and deceptions of everyday perception but also the illusions and superstitions of visionary religion. The origins of this discourse come from archaic history, including myths about visionary journeys, visionary religions, visionary rituals and practices, visionary “technologies of the self.” Plato’s famous paradigm of the cave in *The Republic* also refers back to the experiences of such visionary practices, was an aspect pointedly criticized by feminist scholars, mainly Irigaray, who identified the allegory itself as unmistakably patriarchal and celebrating a vision made possible by the triumph and domination of men turning their gaze to the eternal truths in a light visible only to the purified reason of the philosopher.<sup>6</sup>

Quoting from David Michael Levin, who writes extensively about the historical privilege of sight and has edited a number of books inviting positions focusing on this subject: “For those of us who can see, vision is, of all the modes of perception, the one which is primary and predominant, at least in the conduct of our everyday lives. More problematic however, is the narrative that argues for the domination, the hegemony, of a visual paradigm in our cultural history.”<sup>7</sup> He also asks in his book *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* back in 1993 whether it could be argued that “in the period we call “modernity” (the period beginning [...] with the “discovery” of perspectivism and the rationalization of sight in the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth century), this Ocularcentrism has assumed a distinctively modern historical form. How is the Ocularcentrism of modernity different from that which prevailed in earlier ages? [...] What is left, today, of the rational vision of the Enlightenment?”<sup>8</sup>

According to Derrida “starting with its first words, metaphysics associates sight with knowledge.”<sup>9</sup>

In order to respect this strange movement within language, in order not to reduce it in turn, we would have to attempt a return to the metaphor of darkness and light (of self-revelation and self-concealment), the founding metaphor of Western philosophy as metaphysics. The founding metaphor not only because it is a photological one – and in this respect the entire history of our philosophy is a photology, the name given to a history of, or treatise on, light – but because it is a metaphor.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> David Michael Levin (ed.), *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision*, University of California Press, London, 1993, Introduction pp. 2 and 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-27.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Jacques Derrida, Catherine Porter and Edward P. Morris, “The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of Its Pupils,” *Diacritics*, Vol. 13, No.3 (Autumn, 1983), p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

John McCumber, who focuses on the metaphor of sight in Derrida in his essay *Derrida and the Closure of Vision*, points out that “it was thanks to taking vision as its (metaphorical) model for knowledge that philosophy became metaphysics.”<sup>11</sup>

These questions continue to be significant today, as our current use of language, inevitably distributed by the modern media and mainly television, is very much based on this vision. According to Levin, for Derrida “it has extended its hegemony beyond the margins of philosophical textuality into the politics of culture. In the eighteenth century, its politics was that of the Enlightenment. It supported a reflective critical rationality and the visions of a utopian imagination. But in our own time, we can see the tain of the mirror: the other side, a phallogentric, logo-centric “heliopolitics” driven by the violence of light and the threatening to impose the ontological order of presence wherever its mastery can reach.”<sup>12</sup>

Starting from the second half of the 19th century, the rapid developments in light technologies and uses of electricity abundantly supported the ideology based on sight and vision. With the invention of electricity and the use of petrol for the first time in the 1850s, the view of the nightlife of the urban landscape dramatically changed. The gaslight, which had replaced the candlelight in the 1820s of the Western world, was rapidly substituted by electrical lighting with the invention of the light bulb in 1880.

In his extensive research about shadows, Roberto Casati draws attention to a significant detail that lies in this change: Until the use of electricity, light was never stable and neither were shadows! From the sun to fire, from candlelight to the gas lamp, sources of light caused moving shadows.

The nineteenth century didn't just vanquish shadows; it created new ones. They were frozen shadows produced by a fragment of material heated to incandescence. These were new shadows: static shadows had never existed in nature, nor were they ever before produced by man.<sup>13</sup>

As Casati nicely puts it, “until just a few generations ago, shadows were always moving [. . .] Modern shadows – stuck to walls, jammed between houses – are like a new species that has populated the earth by colonizing the empire of the night.”<sup>14</sup> According to this information, the 19th century illumination developments not only strengthen the system of surveillance but also alter the ambiances of the city features creating the illusion of separating them sharply from nature. Ironically enough, this is also when the desperate attempt of disposing of shadows starts in both ideological/metaphorical and physical aspects. However, as Raban would later claim in his well-known statement, *the stronger that any light shines. . . the darker the nearby shadows grow*.

Despite the continued violent battle for clearing the areas of darkness and shadow, the visual arts and literature embraced them tenderly throughout the history of humankind and opened up spaces to cherish them from different aspects, without considering them as objects of fear. Through candlelight the Chinese shadow puppetry reached all around the world long before the invention of electricity. Following that many forms of Shadow Theater emerged in the Eastern Hemisphere, including Hacivat (Cevat the Pilgrim) and Karagöz (Black Eyed) of the early Ottoman Empire (adopted from the Arab world and later transmitted to Greece), severely criticizing their governors through their shadows. In 1814, the popular story *Peter*

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<sup>11</sup> McCumber, “Derrida and the Closure of Vision,” in David Michael Levin, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

<sup>12</sup> Levin, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Roberto Casati, *The Shadow Club: The Greatest Mystery in the Universe – shadows – and the Thinkers who Unlocked Their Secrets*, transl. from Italian Abigail Asher, Little Brown, London, 2003, p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

*Schlemihl* by Adelbert von Chamisso was published, about a man who sells his shadow to the devil. The well-known fairy tale *The Shadow* by Danish poet and author Hans Christian Andersen was published in 1847 in which a wise man that loses his shadow and for that reason struggles forever, with a reference to *Peter Schlemihl*. In both, losing one's shadow is associated with losing one's self, identity, and soul. Both fall into the years before the invention of electricity, when light was not static and shadows were moving and fascinating.

After the invention of electricity, there were new approaches for dealing with the notion of shadow at an aesthetic level. One of the most prominent writers of Japanese literature, Junichiro Tanizaki, not only in his essay *In Praise of Shadows*, but also in many of his novels, suggested opening up spaces to acknowledge and enjoy the beauty of darkness and shadows, back in the 1930s, shortly before the sore incidents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, criticizing the ambition of projecting excessive light and consuming energy for the sake of imposing glossy urban landscapes of the night as well as over-bleached interior spaces. In the same frame of time, it was Lotte Reiniger who developed shadow animations re-enabling static shadows to move, representing well-known fairy tales through dark images during the First and Second World War era.

The more oppressed the dark image was, the more it was embraced by artists, litterateurs and avant-garde thinkers. The stronger the light technologies emerged and the more improved information claimed to be provided by ideologies, the more the fascination for it in art, literature and philosophy grew.

Could this be a coincidence? On the contrary, it reveals the oppression in our cultural and historical landscape: Shadow means the subaltern, the unwanted, uncanny, disregarded, the overlooked; the other. . . Shadow was Lilith, whom it was attempted to delete from history. Shadow was the black other, the poor, the dirty, and the weak under the violence of the brilliant power. . .

Along with the rapid developments of light technologies today, and under today's information bombardment, shadows continue to be even more fascinating for a growing number of artists and occupy a greater and explicitly political space. It does not only connect the space of art and the actual space, but also the work of art and the audience, organically. It fulfils the definition of the ready-made object and it is doubtless a representation in its own image, however in its two-dimensional image-like manifestation, it is "real", by definition telling the truth in its genuineness. Buchloh's text on the shadow series of Warhol is noteworthy:

The shadow is self-generated by light and matter, parthenogenesis of form, the utter opposite of the man-made, even of the readymade. Who authorizes the shadow? Like obsolescence, the shadow is also an index of temporality and passing time. Since the shadow has no material substance of its own, it will disappear when its light source fades or when its projecting object is shifted. Thus shadows are not just metaphysical ready-mades par excellence; they are also the sublime antidotes to an aesthetic of the readymade itself.<sup>15</sup>

With today's digital technologies, there are many attempts to let the shadows be permanent as traces of facts and memory of the space. For many artists, it is not only a tool to generate participation through its playful features, but also to transmit information, shifting the politics of representation.

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<sup>15</sup> Benjamin H. Buchloh, *Shadows and Other Signs of Life: Anniversary Notes for Andy Warhol* (exhibition catalog, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris), Walther König, Cologne, 2007. Republished as "Drawing Blanks: Notes on Andy Warhol's Late Works" in *October*, No. 127, Winter 2009, p. 11.



© media in motion



Among the growing number of artists who are using new wave digital technologies as a consequence of the rapidly developing DIY cultures, using open source technologies, the work of Andreas Muk Haider is one of the most significant. In his hyperactive installation entitled *Skia*, Haider grabs the attention of the audience by capturing, manipulating and projecting their artificial shadows. Through this encounter, the audience who passes through the exhibition hall is invited to have a playful interaction with their digital shadowlike images. As long as the viewer continues to be in physical movement throughout this play, the shadow-like image behaves like the actual shadow of this person. Only when they stop moving, they encounter the shadow of the other in lieu of their own shadow. Through this realization of interacting with the body/shadow of the other, not theirs, a new layer of the interaction game starts up for the viewer.

In *Tactical Topics / Topical Tactics*, an older work of Haider is exhibited, entitled *disc.o*, which is a “multiplayer music instrument with eight CD player and corresponding speakers arranged in a circular spatial installation. . . Sequentially switched Light spots in combination with graphical cutouts in the CDs are creating noise patterns based on the principle of optical sound.”<sup>16</sup>

*disc.o* refers to the early optical sound instruments like Emerick Spielmann’s Superpiano (Austria, 1927) which was based on the same technique of sound creation through a photoelectric process. But *disc.o* doesn’t only use a repetitive method in sound generation, the whole instrument is based on the repetitive principle of the later developed step sequencer. The circular arrangement of the instrument creates a visual representation of the Loop, which is the foundation of contemporary repetitive music. The interplay of traveling light with the corresponding acoustical response creates a spatial experience of this Loop.

The work allows eight people to interact with the work itself and with each other simultaneously, collectively composing and performing experimental sound through the hand-made apparatus and broken CDs. Through a very subtle light and shadow interaction within the machinery, the sound is formed as a physical entity.

In *Doppelgänger* by Martina Menegon and Stefano D’alessio, the viewer’s mirror image is captured as a strategy for generating interaction. The viewer encounters a black screen that is hung on a wall. No images reflected through it when there’s no audience and it reproduces no sound. At the first glance it seems as if the monitor has been switched off, however, as soon as someone passes by it, some abstract images get to be visible on the screen. In fact, by moving, it is possible to *delete* the darkness, and let the image be visible. With the gesture of clearing out the air between the monitor and themselves, the audience can get a clearer image eventually to their surprise, to see themselves on the monitor. The screen is not a simple monitor any longer but a fake mirror, representing a shadow image of what physically exists and moves in front of it. Through their participation, the audience allows the artist to capture and represent their image, which brings up the question of surveillance.

...

In today’s socio-economic, political landscape under the perpetual surveillance of societies and the violent flood of information, shadows as minor areas of possible darkness provide temporal spaces of escape, to recollect other possibilities of modes of existence and reconnect the nature, from which human being can by no means be detached.

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<sup>16</sup> Extracted from the notes of the artist.

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Dedicated to Heiko Daxl  
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