

WATER VIEWS: CARING AND DARING

3WDS14 – WATERWHEEL
WORLD WATER DAY
SYMPOSIUM 2014
WAVES, RIPPLES, & SPLASHES



WATERWHEEL

Water Views: Caring and Daring – Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium 2014 – 3WDS14

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This e-book brings together the works presented between March 17 and 23 at the Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium 2014 – 3WDS14. 450 participants, including children, youth, communities, TED talkers, scientists, activists and artists, from 34 countries and five continents, responded to the theme ‘Water Views: Caring and Daring.’

They interacted with audience “live” on the Internet and in 18 physical venues (“nodes”), through Waterwheel, an online platform dedicated to water. The 2014 symposium integrated youth participation and intergenerational dialogue with ‘Voice of the Future.’ Waterwheel’s unique video-conferencing / media-mixing system, the Tap, allowed presenters and audience to be on the same web-page experiencing “liveness” with the potential for creativity. The symposium was free of charge and, being online, saved on travel costs, accommodation and venue, thereby reducing its carbon and water footprints.

Transversal knowledge and multidisciplinary across cultures and languages shaped the content and structure of the e-book. The nine, richly illustrated sections contain three types of entries, based on the presentation given as part of the Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium 2014: “Splash”– project overview, “Ripple”– detailed project description, and “Wave”– peer-reviewed article on original research. My immense gratitude goes to assistant editor Silvana Tuccio, the associate editors, contributors, reviewers and Inkahoots.

Suzon Fuks

Created in 2011 by an Australian team – Inkahoots, Igneous and Suzon Fuks –Waterwheel responds to the need on a global level to share resources around water awareness, management and celebration. Waterwheel’s international community is growing exponentially every year, as is the Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium, its biggest annual event. The symposium was co-chaired by Amin Hammami (Tunisia) and Suzon Fuks (Australia/ Belgium) for three years in a row, from 2012 to 2014.

WATERWHEEL WORLD WATER DAY SYMPOSIA PARTNERS

2012–2013: University of Sousse in Tunisia under the direction of Professor Hichem Rejeb;

2013: Queensland College of Art Galleries of Griffith University (Brisbane) and Five Colleges (Massachusetts);

2014: World Water Museum Installation & Technohoros Gallery (Athens), Cantoalagua (Bogota), Inkahoots & Igneous (Brisbane), CEIArtE—UNTREF, IQlab & Reciclarte (Buenos Aires), Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (California), Boultek (Casablanca), Bonemap & James Cook University (Cairns), Columbia College (Chicago), Bildungsbüro & Aktionstag (Coburg), Ear to the Earth (NY), Lieu Multiple & Espace Mendes (Poitiers), University of Arts, Studio for Transdisciplinary Projects & Research (Poznan), Milk Bar & WEAD—Women Environmental Artists Directory (San Francisco), De Saisset Museum of Art and History (Santa Clara University), Bamboo Curtain Studio (Taipei), Centre of Contemporary Arts (Torun), ESAD—Ecole Supérieure d’Audiovisuel et de Design (Tunis), and Houghton Valley—Lifting the Creek (Wellington).

3WDS14 TEAMS

The Selection Committee was composed of professors, teachers, researchers, scientists and artists: Alejandra Ceriani (Buenos Aires), Amin Hammami (Tunis), D.L. “West” Marrin (San Diego), Dobrila Denegri (Torun), Ian Winters (San Francisco), Irina Novarese (Berlin), Joanna Hoffmann-Dietrich (Poznan / Berlin), Lauren Elder (San Francisco), Leah Barclay (Brisbane), Mary Gardner (Byron Bay), Molly Hankwitz (San Francisco), Paula Vélez (Paris / Medellín), Ricardo Dal Farra (Montreal / Buenos Aires), Silvana Tuccio (Syracuse / Melbourne), Suzon Fuks (Brisbane).

Youth Committee: Liz Bryce (Christchurch), Keti Haliori (Athens), Mariana Carranza & Jasmin Müller-Alefeld (Coburg), Michele Guieu (San Jose), Suzon Fuks (Brisbane).

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CONTENTS

1. Opening.....	011
OPENING – OVERVIEW by James Cunningham.....	012
OPENING – OVERVIEW by Liz Bryce.....	013
– ‘100 Names for Water’ by Ulay – Splash.....	014
– ‘Last Drop’ by Jason Lim – Splash.....	016
– ‘Little Streams Make Big Rivers’ by Suzon Fuks – Ripple.....	018
2. Voice of the Future.....	027
VOICE OF THE FUTURE – OVERVIEW by Suzon Fuks.....	028
YOUTH PERSPECTIVE – OVERVIEW by Liz Bryce.....	029
– ‘Ask the Flask’ by Keti Haliori – Ripple.....	030
– ‘Haiku Workshop on Water’ by Patrick Treguer, Lieu Multiple Team, Paula Vélez (Version Française p. 37) – Ripple.....	033
– ‘Spheres en Bouteille’ by Lorraine Beaulieu (Version Française p. 44) – Ripple.....	042
– ‘Water Conservation Awareness Posters’ and ‘Watercolors of Bay Area Landscapes’ by Michele Guieu – Ripple.....	046
– ‘Message in a Bottle – Concept’ by Corinne Weber, Yvonne Senouf for Meld – Ripple....	050
– ‘One Hundred Boats, One Hundred Waters’ by Lea Petrou – Ripple.....	055
VOICE OF THE FUTURE – OVERVIEW by Alberto Vazquez.....	059
– ‘Coburg Node’ by Jasmin Müller-Alefeld, Mariana Carranza – Ripple.....	060
– ‘Mares y Malabres’ by Mariana Caranza – Ripple.....	065
– ‘Five Precious Letters’ by Virginia Gathoni – Splash.....	068
– ‘Promises to Children of the Future’ by Helen Anastasiou – Splash.....	070
– ‘Lake ZOO’ by Katarina Djordjevic Urošević – Splash.....	072
– ‘Walk Along the Water’ by Jelena Lalic – Splash.....	074
3. Activism, Art & Science.....	077
– ‘Canary Coffee’ by Mari Keski-Korsu – Splash.....	078
– ‘ArkO and the OSWASH (Open Source Washing Machine)’ by Paula Vélez, Jean Noël Montagné, Rob van Kranenburg – Splash.....	080
– ‘Sounding Zameen’ by Leah Barclay – Splash.....	082
– ‘Rights’ by Elizabeth Zetlin – Splash.....	084
– ‘Drinking Water and Sanitation Challenges in North Bihar’ by Eklavya Prasad – Splash.....	086
– ‘The Mary Flows On’ by Glenda Pickersgill, Joolie Gibbs – Splash.....	088
ACTIVISM, ART & SCIENCE – OVERVIEW by Lila Moore.....	090
– ‘Water Sense’ by Alireza Hejazi – Ripple.....	091
– ‘Flood Language’ by Joolie Gibbs – Ripple.....	096
– ‘The Paperboat Project’ by Mr. & Mrs. Gray – Ripple.....	102
– ‘Magnificent Object Workers’ by Anna Yen, Jeff Turpin, Therese Collie – Ripple.....	108
BERLIN NODE – OVERVIEW by James Cunningham.....	112
– ‘One Hour, One River – Berlin Node’ by Irina Novarese, the Hydromemories artistic group, Engineers Without Borders Germany – Ripple.....	113
– ‘Reflections Built on Water’ by Riccardo Bertan, Elvis Marangon – Ripple.....	119
– ‘Water e-Motion: Transformative Views’ by Dr. Lila Moore – Wave.....	122
4. Art & Science.....	131
ART & SCIENCE – OVERVIEW by Dr D.L. “West” Marrin.....	132
– ‘Hybrid Practices – from General to Specific’ by Piibe Piirma – Wave.....	134
– ‘Fuel Cells in Art Projects’ by Ana Laura Cantera (Versión Española p. 143) – Wave.....	140

– ‘H2O: Emergencias’ by Esther Moñivas Mayor – Wave	146
– ‘Understanding and Communicating about Water via Spatial and Temporal Patterns’ by Dr. D.L. “West” Marrin – Splash.....	154
– ‘Flow – Poznan Node’ curated by Joanna Hoffmann-Dietrich, assisted by Piotr Słomczewski – Wave	156
ECOLOGY	
– ‘The Strategies of Plicosepalus Acaciae to Get Free Water in the Desert Environment’ by Naoufel Souayah – Splash	178
– ‘Watercaring for Trout Breeding in Upper Bavaria’ by Carlotta Brunetti, Dr. Reinhard Reiter – Splash.....	180
VISUAL NARRATIVES – OVERVIEW by James Cunningham.....	182
– ‘Mapping the Tomato: Visual Narratives of Daily Food Consumption’ by Peter Hall – Ripple	184
– ‘Mutatoes’ by Uli Westphal – Ripple	187
– ‘You Eat 3,496 Liters of Water Daily’ by Angela Morelli – Splash	192
– ‘Perceiving the Links among Water, Food and Choice’ by Dr. D.L. “West” Marrin – Wave	194
5. Hydrology – Past & Future.....	203
INDIA, GREECE, TUNISIA & CA, USA	
– ‘Participatory Groundwater Management, in North Bihar’ by Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni, Eklavya Prasad – Wave	204
– ‘Yamuna Beach Project’ by Vinny Bhagat, Ashhar Farooqui – Splash	206
– ‘Zameen’ by Attakkalari dancers, S. Shakthidharan, Leah Barclay, Jehan Kanga – Splash	208
– ‘Understanding Conflicts around Floods in India’ by Eklavya Prasad, K. J. Joy – Wave ..	210
– ‘Contemporary Development Betrays Ancient Brilliance in Water Management’ by Cheryl Colopy – Wave	220
– ‘Greek Node’ curated by Keti Haliori – Ripple.....	226
– ‘The Water-Oracle of Apollo on the Island of Amorgos’ by Zoe Nikitaki – Wave.....	232
– ‘The Story of Water in Three Major Sites in Tunisia’ by Khémais Benhamida – Wave.....	240
– ‘Tunis Node’ curated by Amin Hammami – Splash	246
– ‘What?! Sharks in My Backyard? – Hayward Node’ by Jennifer Koney, Maggie Wenger, Nancy Ceridwyn – Splash.....	248
PATTERNS & CYCLES – OVERVIEW by Dr. D.L. “West” Marrin.....	250
– ‘The Art of A.R.T.’ (Adapting to Rising Tides) by Lauren Elder – Splash	252
– ‘New Definition of Earth’s Water Cycle’ by William Waterway – Splash	254
– ‘Water Forms – Great Sandy Strait’ by Jolian Solomon – Splash.....	256
– ‘The Aral Sea Disaster’ by Karl Metchkin – Ripple.....	258
– ‘Rebuilding Connection between Small Rivers and Local Societies Due to Contemporary Needs in Vistula Mouth’ by Adam J. Czarnecki, Rodrigo R. Ramos Ribeiro, A. Lewandowska-Czarnecka – Wave.....	260
URBAN WATER	
– ‘Pour une gestion durable de l’eau’ par Fatine Jarrad – Splash	266
– ‘Between Commercialisation and Devalorisation of Water! “The Guerrab” as a Research Tool in the Moroccan Society’ by Siham El Rharbi (Version Française + English Abstract) – Wave	268
6. Conservation & Transmission.....	277
PAST & FUTURE – OVERVIEW by Molly Hankwitz.....	278
– ‘World Water Museum’ by Keti Haliori – Ripple	280
– ‘Museum of Water’ by Amy Sharrocks – Splash	284
– ‘Ao. Aoo. Oo. Oooa. Eooao. Eau’ by Emmanuel Fleitz, Pierre Christophe – Splash.....	286
– ‘The Future of Water in Poitou-Charentes’ by Carine Fortin – Splash	288
– ‘Joining Rivers’ by Alireza Hejazi, Aristi Costopoulou – Ripple	290

- ‘Absorbing Red Photons’ by Michelle Atherton – Ripple 293
- ‘Deep Like The Rivers’ by Fo Wilson, Andrea Mikeska, Cristabel Tapia, Janelle Vaughn Dowell, JJ McNeal, Sarah Colbert – Ripple 296
- WATER & MEMORY – OVERVIEW by Russell Milledge..... 300**
- ‘Hydrologies+History::Water and Memory – Milkbar Node’ curated by Molly Hankwitz – Ripple..... 302
- ‘Water Rights in Gaza & Maia Mural Brigade’ by Susan Greene – Ripple..... 306
- ‘Speaking Tributaries’ by Ana Labastida, Kate Lee Short, Sadie Harmon, Jesus Landin-Torrez – Ripple 312
- ‘See, Sea – An Exploration of Memory and Time’ by Susan Sentler – Wave 314

7. Care & Dare.....323

CONNECTING TO CREEKS – OVERVIEW by James Cunningham..... 324

- ‘Fresh Meets Salt’ by Jo Hardy, Rhonda Truscott, Sharyn Lowth, Shelly McArdle – Ripple 326
- ‘Art as Environment – A Cultural Action at Plum Tree Creek: Mending Broken Land with Water’ by Margaret Shiu & Wu Mali – Wave 329
- ‘Putawai: Lifting The Creek – Wellington Node’ by Ella Cavander, Jan Vladyka, Grant Corbishley, Geoff Hume-Cook, Dave McArthur, Miranda Munro, Jenny Rattenbury, Andrea Selwood – Wave..... 336

FLUID VALUES – OVERVIEW by Suzon Fuks 346

- ‘Fluid Values – Cairns Node’ curated by Bonemap – Ripple 348
- ‘Hine Pu-Wai-Ora’ by Te Urutahi Waikerepuru – Ripple 351
- ‘Water from a Hybrid Polynesian Context’ by Ian Clothier – Wave 355

BEYOND LANDMARKS

- ‘Words for Water: Gathering’ by Tracey M Benson – Ripple 362
- ‘Maldives Match-Up ‘ by Josephine Starrs, Leon Cmielewski – Ripple 367
- ‘Hybrid Cartographies’ by Camilla Boemio – Ripple 371
- ‘Ringbalin – River Stories’ by Ali Sanderson, Ben Pederick – Splash 382

NEEDS AND TRENDS

- ‘Humid Balance’ by Dr. Ricardo Dal Farra – Ripple 384
- ‘Cantoalagua 2014: A Unique Voice – Bogota Node’ by Hector Buitrago, Catalina Salguero, Juanita Ariza, Oscar Caicedo, Juan Moreno (Versión Española p. 389) 388
- ‘Sip. Do Not Gulp.’ by Michele Guieu – Ripple..... 391
- ‘The Image and Sound of Water in the Persian Garden’ by Mana Salehi – Wave..... 395
- ‘Acqua, Luce, Ortigia: The Culture of Water Environments – Overview’ by Dr. Silvana Tuccio – Wave..... 403

8. Performance..... 411

PERFORMANCE PERCEPTION – OVERVIEW by Zsuzsanna Soboslay..... 412

- ‘Metamorphosis’ by Atefeh Khas – Splash 414
- ‘Hydrontology’ by Jaime Del Val – Ripple..... 416
- ‘Getting Intimate with Moolabin’ by James Cunningham – Wave 420
- ‘As Water is to Water’ by Zsuzsanna Soboslay – Wave 426

PERFORMANCE – OVERVIEW by James Cunningham..... 440

PERFORMANCE – OVERVIEW by Lila Moore..... 441

- ‘Ebb & Throw’ by Bonnie Hart – Splash..... 442
- ‘The Empress’ Tears’ by Pegi Marshall-Amundsen, Suzon Fuks – Splash 444
- ‘Guddling* About: Experiments in Vital Materialism with Particular Regard to Water’ by Minty Donald, Nick Millar – Splash 446
- ‘Performative Class’ by John G. Boehme & Intermedia ART Students from Camosun College – Splash 448
- ‘Sour Amane’ by Nezha Rhondali – Ripple (Version Française p. 454)..... 450

PERFORMANCE CONNECTIVITY & RESEARCH – OVERVIEW by Molly Hankwitz	458
– ‘Bay Requiem: A Work in Progress’ by Nina Haft, Ian Winters – Ripple.....	459
PERFORMANCE CONNECTIVITY & RESEARCH – OVERVIEW by Alberto Vazquez	463
– ‘S P E A K 4.0 / LIQUID’ by Alejandra Ceriani, Fabián Kesler, Fabricio Costa Alisedo, Javiera Saez Mansilla (Versión Española p. 468) – Ripple.....	464
OCEAN SYNAPSE – OVERVIEW by Zsuzsanna Soboslay.....	470
– ‘Ocean Synapse: A Transhemisphere Performance Exploring Convergence Phenomena as Bodies in Drift’ by Sarah Jane Pell, Benjamin Burke – Wave	471
– ‘Envisioning, Performance and Poetic Design as Research Approach to Predict Future Convergence Between Bodies, Technologies and Water’ by Sarah Jane Pell, Benjamin Burke – Wave	477
– ‘Bonemap’s Fluid Hybridisation’ by Russell Milledge, Rebecca Youdell – Wave	482
9. Hydrosonics.....	493
HYDROSONICS – OVERVIEW by Suzon Fuks.....	494
– ‘Hydrosonics – New York Node’ curated by Leah Barclay, with Joel Chadabe, Tom Beyer, The Australian Voices, Mahesh Vinayakram, David Monacchi, Garth Paine, Eric Leonardson – Ripple.....	496
– ‘Hydrographies: 607km’ by Ferando Godoy Monsalve (Versión Española p.506) – Wave .	502
– ‘Remembering Chinaman Creek’ by Nicholas Ng, Amber Hansen – Wave	511
– ‘Voluminous HydroLogic’ by Sergey Jivetin – Ripple	518
– ‘Imaginary Concerts’ by Dr. Ricardo Dal Farra (Versión Española p. 522) – Ripple	520
– ‘Mille Lumières’ by Julie Rousse, Jacques Perconte – Splash	524
– ‘River Listening’ by Toby Gifford, Simon Linke – Splash.....	526
Appendices.....	529
– Call for Proposals.....	530
– Call for Proposals for Voice of the Future – Youth Participation.....	534
– Media Release.....	540

8 ■

Performance

PERFORMANCE PERCEPTION – OVERVIEW

by Zsuzsanna Soboslay

The beauty of session #4 is that it breaks down the relationship between human bodies and water. It encompasses experiences of duress, duration, embodiment, witnessing and journeying through, whilst simultaneously inviting an experience of documenting, analysing, questioning and talking about our relationships to human bodies and our understandings of water.

Atefah Khas opens the session by displaying her enormous block of ice which will be documented in meltdown over the next 7 hours (and shown over three Tap sessions in that time). Her presentation transcends the limits of the current one hour session, but also requires the commitment of viewers to remain alert, keep track, think in time and stay aware of both their responses and the objective fact of this artefact disappearing through time. The performance heightens how we alternately remember and forget about the effects of global warming.

James Cunningham shows us maps of the territory he traversed along Moolabin Creek (SE Queensland). The online performance incorporates sound, GPS tracking and the webcam mounted on his head as he walks, simulating his own visual and to a lesser extent aural perceptions. Online, we cross marshy terrains, bow into tunnels and re-emerge, re-discovering the vegetation his body passes, and presumably marks, on some level. As viewers, are we the same as the “he” who walks? The he/I, you/ we dichotomy is effectively dealt with via the sequence of images displayed, raising all sorts of questions about the relationship between personal experience and collective empathy—a question demanding urgent address in the current politics of ecology. What are “we” (and our decisions) if “we” think or feel otherwise?

In my presentation, I discuss the work of Melbourne’s UWPG (the Urban Water Performance Group, more recently re-dubbed the Environmental Performance Agency) at the site of Dight’s Falls on the Yarra River—a historical/personal/metatheatrical event composed as a counterpoint to the super-indulgences of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival on the shores of the Yarra in March. The group’s presentation highlights particular moments where the relationships of body to water, or bodies to sensing and knowing water, are most clear; both to performers and audience. The presentation also attempts to document where the performance (currently) fails. The capabilities of the Waterwheel—such as being able to draw over images with an animation tool and thereby create what I would call awareness vectors – substantiate its capabilities as a vibrant interactive tool in real-time.

Jaime del Val positions a webcam with a view up towards his neck, chin and face, simultaneously highlighting and in some ways horrifying his presence as human, but also representing and perhaps unwittingly criticising the scope of human perception of the environment via the act of speech. There is something almost nauseating in this camera angle, the motion of his voice box is exaggerated. The piece strikes me less as interactive on the “understanding of life as a formless process of emergent movement” but as an assertive multidimensional narrative on the relationship between contemporary and classical philosophies—all of which have been transliterated in the viewer dialogue box to make sure nothing is missed.

This presentation contrasts with the images Khas had supplied in her presentation of an earlier work, where her hair is dyed red and represented as “woven to water,” virtually knitting a part of the human

body into an environmental process. There is also the poignant dialogue in the viewer box where she discusses the “ice block” process in interaction with viewers. As the ice melts (in Tehran) it is “mopped up”; a viewer comments, “It is crying on the floor...like a funeral for the ice”—much as perhaps James’ walk is also a kind of requiem for what may not remain in place much longer.

The online chat at the end of the session is an exercise in the relationship between assertion and reception. It is interesting, in the real-time experience of it, that it is relatively unmediated by a chair or moderator, which to my mind allows for an exaggeration of the inherent perspectives, (including right/wrong, fluid/fixed, masculinist/feminist), in which each presenter operates.

It is intriguing that the Waterwheel can accommodate both “soft” and “hard” presentation values. For many, the “hard” values of online interactives per se are an obstruction but the Waterwheel team are making great inroads to rendering the Wheel more and more accessible and comprehensive in many different ways.

NOTE: other performances can be found in the following chapters:

1. OPENING:

‘100 Names for Water’ by Ulay (p. 14), ‘Last Drop’ by Jason Lim (p. 16), ‘Little Streams Make Big Rivers’ by Suzon Fuks (p. 18)

3. ACTIVISM, ART & SCIENCE:

‘Reflections Built on the Water’ by Riccardo Bertan and Elvis Marangon (p. 119)

5. HYDROLOGY – PAST & FUTURE:

‘Zameen’ by Attakkalari dancers, Leah Barclay & S. Shakthidharan (p. 208)

6. CONSERVATION & TRANSMISSION:

‘See/Sea’ by Susan Sentler (p. 314)

7. CARE & DARE:

‘The Exquisite Liquid, Song for Water’ by Bonemap (p. 348)

9. HYDROSONICS:

The entire chapter is dedicated to sound performance (p. 493)

Presentation

'Metamorphosis'

This is a time-based work addressing climate change, particularly global warming. I think that we must pay more attention to this problem, which people ignore, but which progresses on a daily basis. In order to create a clear ice cube, I boiled water twice over to remove the bubbles in the water. Then I placed the cube outdoors and let it melt according to the temperature from morning till evening. A webcam captured the melting process over the entire day. This happens every day on Earth, though on a bigger scale!

Presenter

Atefeh Khas is an Iranian artist. She has her MA in Art Research in Alzahra University and her Bachelor in Painting from Shahed University in Tehran. She is a member of an environmental artists group "Open Five" since 2005. Her specialty is in Environmental Art. She has been participated in more than thirty Environmental Art Festivals in Polour, Hormuz, Shoushtar, Uremia, Isfahan and Nowshahr since 2005 to present. Her works have been exhibited internationally in Canada, United State, Nepal, Belgium, Romania, South Korea, France, Greece, Poland. She also was selected for the Environmental Art Residency Program in South Korea in 2012.

Links

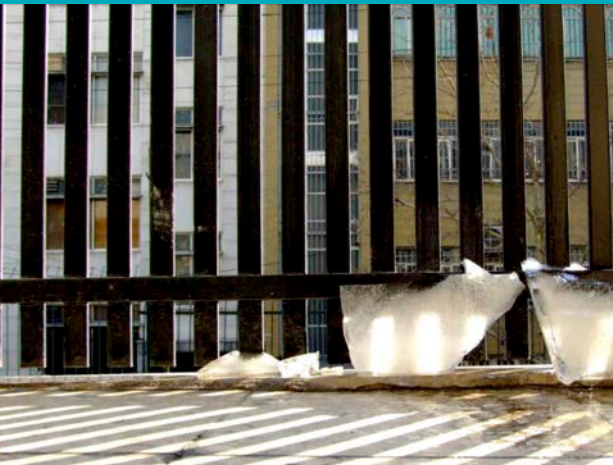
<http://www.atefehkhas.com>

Screen recordings of the Tap presentation, Parts 1-3:

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4863

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4867

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4871



Photos taken by Atefeh Khas throughout the day, as the performance unfolds.

HYDRONTOLOGY

Jaime del Val
Madrid, Spain

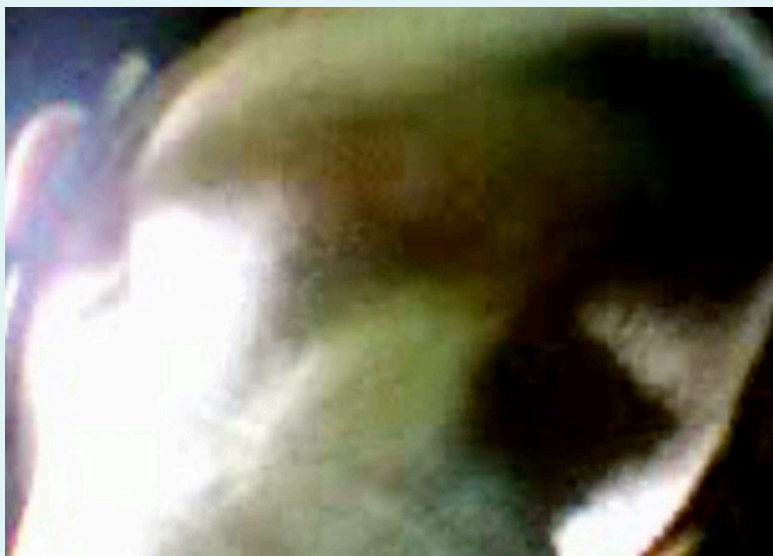
Jaime del Val's performance on the Tap for the Waterwheel Symposium included the following text as spoken discourse:

"Since the practice of HYDROMANCY in the ancient world, water has been linked to ontologies of becoming, to an understanding of life as a formless process of emergent movement.

According to Archeologist Luis Siret, the drawings of swirls or spirals that pervade ancient middle eastern and mediterranean cultures before the Phoenicians were attempts to understand, learn or read the movement of water, considered the sacred element, because it embodied the movement and transformative becoming of the world more visibly than any other element.

Water transforms visibly from fluid to solid or gaseous states. Water and humidity seem visibly related to life in all its forms. The ancient naturalist cosmogonies and religions saw in water the sacred force of life before it acquired any animal or human form.

Only later did the deities acquire the form of those animals that moved more like water, such as snakes or horses, and only later did they become fixed into a fully human form. Ancient deities were natural forces and amongst them water embodied the creative forces of formless movement more than any other force.



The Babylonian and Egyptian creation myths placed in the different kinds of water the origin of the world. In homeric epic it is the oceans from which the world was created. Tales from Miletus, acknowledged as the first scientist and philosopher, described water as the principle of the Cosmos, from which all things are constituted or derived.

Water was considered to be alive, because it moves, because of how it dances (hylozoism). As in animistic cultures, where life is not a privilege of certain species, a more ecological worldview.

In pre-socratic philosophy the principle of eternal motion runs through Anaximander's àperion or indeterminate principle, and through Anaximenes's principle of air, and Heraclitus' principle of fire, as well as through atomism and Anaxagoras's compound seeds.

Water reappears in Heraclitus' most famous saying that "we cannot step twice in the same river." His disciple Cratylus radicalized this vision saying that we cannot step even once, since while we step, the river is changing and so are we, a denial of the principle of identity and a radical ontology of becoming.

Parmenides introduced for the first time the idea of an immobile world, denying movement and splitting the world of the senses from the intellect. Plato did not deny movement as Parmenides did but placed it as illusory with regard to the world of eternal and immobile forms. Aristotle brought back movement as immanent to matter and form, but subjected to the latter, where form is the immobile principle and the teleology of movement.

Euclidean geometry fixed vision along infinite lines, Renaissance perspective fixed perception in algorithmic vision, mechanicism in functions, liberalism in property, so that now water is perceived as an objectified commodity.

Commodification is a form of engineered and abstract perception that consolidated in ancient cultures with the birth of money when value of use shifted to value of exchange and goods become abstractions. Yet it is only more recently that the perception of water as commodity has emerged.

The increasing expansion of dualistic worldviews, in which the subject is distinct from its environment relates to the perceptual techniques developed since the birth of geometry, through perspective to cartesianism, which are conditions of possibility of commodification, since they produce the perception of reality as external and appropriable.

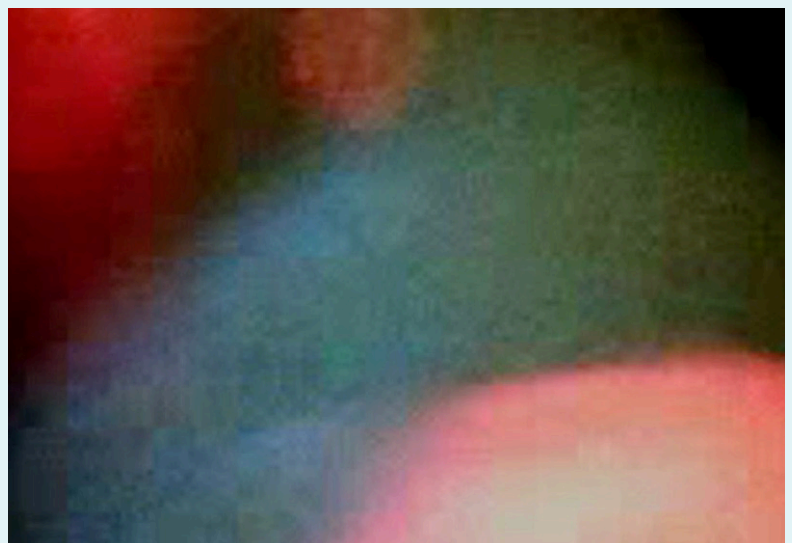


Fig.1 & 2 Jaime del Val during his pperformance. Screen captures.

But in the XXth century, physics, biology, cognitive sciences and ecology have provided a radically relational view of the world. Complexity theories and quantum mechanics show the non-linear turbulent and emergent processes in which the world moves, a process of becoming, not of change, since as physicist Ilya Prigogine said, "change is the denial of becoming," since it assumes that things are what they are and only move between given states. But things are in becoming and move towards what is not yet.

While Quantum Mechanics has shown the interdependence of observer and observed, Lynn Margulis' biological theories of endosymbiosis show evolution as process of radical interdependence and cooperation amongst

species.

Cognitive theories of enaction, the expanded mind, embodiment and proprioception, to name but a few, point to how thinking and consciousness itself are distributed processes that emerge from relations of movement constituting at the same time the subject and the world.

Current biology acknowledges largely the origin of life in water, as the first unicellular organisms developed over three billion years ago. For over two billion years life evolved in the turbulence of the oceans where bacteria generated the biosphere, the atmosphere and gave birth to multicellular organisms through hypersexual experimentation.

According to Lynn Margulis we are offsprings of the hypersexual experimentation of bacteria in the oceans.

The HYPERSEA theory by McMenamin proposes that what we perceive as individuated living organisms are part of a flowing metabody of water that emerged as life transferred from the oceans to the land. Our intimate watery encounters, the humidity of sex, is an echo of the originary life in the ocean, and water would be the continuous metabody that links organisms in land, a waterflow of life across the organisms, of flowing currents of a Water-body of the Earth.

We need a change in perception that shifts our focus in things and elements as external and appropriate distinct entities, to how we are immanent part of larger metabodies of relations, diffuse movement relations at all scales and modes of existence.

Water constitutes some of the metabodies we are part of.

An affordance, following James Gibson is a potential for interaction, the disponibility of something in the world, yet affordances emerge and transform in multiple collective movement relations across long periods of time. The affordance of a glass for drinking water, the affordance of an instrument for measuring the quality of water, the affordance of water itself as commodity are effects of movement relations with an environment, of perceptual movements.

Through radical commodification of water we are not only limiting the access to water, but also exponentially increasing its poisoning at a planetary scale, with the waste in the oceans, the contamination of rivers and subterranean water, or of the very water that constitutes our bodies.

The capitalistic and imperialistic idea of water as a resource, as property (even if common property) is killing water and the possibility of a relational ontology of becoming. But water cannot be property, not even shared, public or common property.

How to regain an onto-epistemology of indeterminate becoming that allows to decommodify not only water but all spectrums of existence?

A HYDRONTOLOGY would be an ontology of becoming that takes the movement of water as reference for a relational and emergent rethinking of the world, for an ecology to come. This onto-epistemology wouldn't be about fluid form, but about the ongoing metamergence of the amorphous, which implies a new mode of perception.

Metabodies are bodies of movement in permanent becoming, like the water from which we come and of which we are made, in its complex heterogeneous compounds, its indeterminate movements.

Hydrontology is a politics of intimacy, of fluid contacts in motions across bodies, of bodies without form that run across the bodies.

Hydrontology speaks of the caress of water as a posthuman affect.

Hydrontology is microsexual.

Microsexes are emergent bodies-affects-desires-movements in permanent formation that never actualize in a form, amorphogenetic hydrontological bodies, diffuse affordances for an openended world of indeterminacy.

Hydrontology speaks of bacterial affect. Bacteria, who have generated the biosphere and the ecosystems of the planet. Bacteria, who are the hope of this nihilistic, so called “human” species, if it arrives to extinction and environmental destruction.

We must disalign perception from all the dominant perceptual alignments, of geometry, perspective and coordinates of control, in order to facilitate new ecologies of relational becoming that foreground open ended movement.

As Karen Barad says, “we are part of intra-actions, we emerge and co-constitute in processes of neverending becoming in relation to a world.” As Erin Manning says, “we world,” water metabodies of which we are part of, world, generate world, relationality.

We must undo the perceptual conditions of commodification and understand water as uncommodifiable, unappropriable movement of the world.

Water is amorphogenetic, its movement exceeds and defies form, reduction to form, function, property. Water demands a new ontology of the amorphous.

We must again learn the movement of water, its generosity, its caress, its transformative force, its living dance.

...BECOMING WATER...

BIOGRAPHY

Jaime del Val / JaiVal (Madrid 1974) is a meta-media artist, philosopher, performer, producer, environmental activist and postqueer, director of Reverso Institute and of Metabody Project. He has developed transdisciplinary projects in the convergence of technological arts, critical theory and activism, that have been presented all over Europe, and North and South America, which propose redefinitions of embodiment, perception and affects that challenge normative constructions of subjectivity, sexuality and control technologies of the Information Society.

LINKS

<http://www.reverso.org>

<http://www.metabody.eu>

Screen recording of the Tap presentation:
http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4865

GETTING INTIMATE WITH MOOLABIN

James Cunningham

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Abstract

She lies quietly behind suburban backyards, alongside and partially underneath busy roadways. Eroded into the landscape, her bed rests below the surrounding terrain. To get down to her banks, tangled scrub and vines must be delicately traversed. Her interior is a slightly wild mix of nature spiced with industrial refuse.

By approaching slowly and treading lightly, I will try to get close to this overlooked waterway, to unveil her as she is. She is a little local creek, like many others, yet as deserving of attention as any. The watery liquid that passes through her body will someday pass through mine.

Photo slideshows reveal details hidden within her body. GPS data inscribe fine scribbles against the smoothness of her curves. Hear her trickles, and tweets generated by bird-life sheltered in her folds. Live-stream webcam caresses her right now, as she is, this very moment. Time-lapse videos rush into and along her tree-lined course. Her name is Moolabin, and she is my local creek.

Introduction

This paper recounts the intentions, preparations and unfolding of 'Getting Intimate with Moolabin—Encounters Performed through Imagery and Sound Gleaned from Moolabin Creek, South East Queensland,' a media performance exploring Moolabin Creek, Brisbane, which was created for the Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium 2014 and broadcast via Waterwheel's Tap platform to a live on-line audience on March 18, 2014.

Intentions

The intention was to present a poetic live-mixing of webcam video and pre-recorded media of my local creek—Moolabin Creek in the suburb of Moorooka in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. I wished to familiarize myself with, and bring my audience's attention to, what seemed a very ordinary suburban creek, in order to raise appreciation of the beauty and diversity (both natural and man-made) that can exist in these kinds of common yet overlooked places. I would use processes I was developing in the then early stages of an Igneous project I was working on with Suzon Fuks, called Fluidata [1], including durational performance (particularly with the enacting of extreme slow motion movement), timelapse video created from still photos, photo slideshows, and visualizations of GPS tracking data.

During the performance, I was to comment in real-time on the location I was in, to relay details, but to also reinforce the liveness of the webcam image and sound—that people would get the sense of being in the creek with me at that moment, as well as seeing and hearing aspects of the creek recorded from the week before.

The abstract above were the words I used to express my intentions for the performance to the Waterwheel Symposium panel, along with the following technical notes: "Each timelapse video is under 90 seconds and represent a passage of 1000's of still images shot continuously over a two-hour period. The photo slideshows comprise selected images derived from these shots. Pre-recorded and processed GPS tracks shown on Google satellite imagery. Sound will be pre-recorded files and live. Live sound and webcam image of Moolabin will be attempted to be streamed during the performance. I must find a collaborator to operate media (on the Tap)."

The phrase "getting intimate" in the performance title, and the anthropomorphic, sensual tone of

the abstract, originate from my impression that satellite imagery of the tree-lined creek might resemble female genitalia, and that the GPS animation of a line being traced along its course, and the sensual physical approach I take when walking it, might be taken as an “intimate encounter.”

Preparations

In the week prior to my performance, I captured and post-produced media, scripted my presentation, and rehearsed with my long-term collaborator, Suzon Fuks, who had agreed to operate the media in the Tap session according to my script.

Capturing The Media

Over three days, March 12–14, 2014, I wandered extremely slowly for a total of 13 hrs along and beside a section of the creek, from the ponds in the Brisbane Golf Club upstream to the storm-water drains under the Ipswich Highway—a section of about 1km, with the last 300 m or so through the Moorooka Lions Bicentennial Picnic Grounds. I walked with a still camera mounted on a helmet that was taking a photograph every five seconds (figure 1), and carried in my pocket a mobile phone that was logging my position according to GPS, also every five seconds or so. At the beginning and end, I recorded audio using a small solid-state recorder.



Fig.1 Author walking in creek bed with helmet-mounted digital stills camera. Moolabin Creek, Qld, March 2014. Photo by author.

Encounters and Impressions during the Capture Phase

On the first day, I felt exposed walking through the private property of the golf club and thought I might be stopped or questioned by one of the grounds keepers who were driving around the place in the early morning. I tried to enter the creek at the northern end of the grounds, but found it too deep and slippery at the bank, and fell into the water twice, almost ruining my audio recorder. Later attempts to get close to the creek were also difficult due to fencing and too much overgrowth on either side of the creek. On days 2 and 3, I was able to get right down into the creek bed and walk in the water, which ranged from trickles to ponds in which I was waist deep, with some sections overgrown with reeds, weeds and spider webs (Figure 2). Most of the time the banks were steep around me so I was able to pass by the back of private and industrial properties without being seen. I made numerous sound recordings of diverse industrial sounds and birds, and passed through two sets of storm-water pipes that went under road crossings (Figure 3). The creek water was clear in parts, though mostly covered in an oily slick, with a lot of algae growing on everything within it. I saw four eels (including one about a metre long and 12 cm in diameter), lots of water dragons and skinks, and a group of ducks.

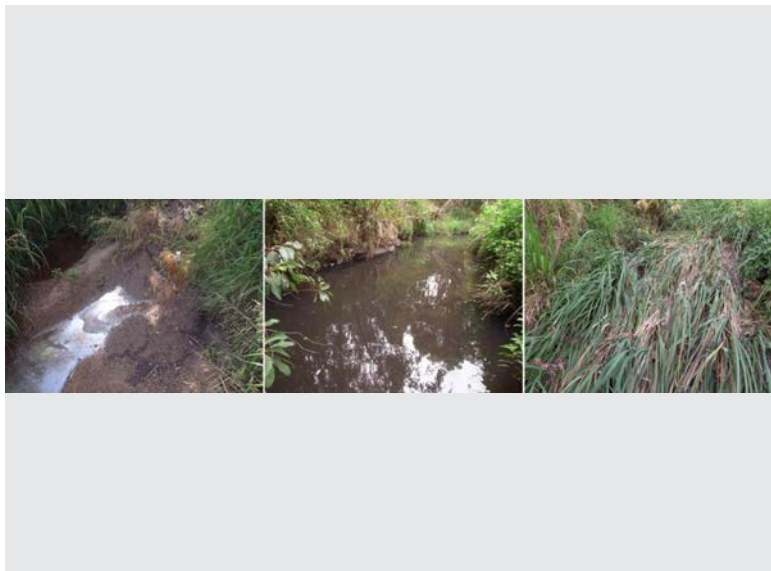


Fig.2 Oily trickle, pond and reeds. Stills from timelapse video, Moolabin Creek, Qld, March 2014. Photos by author.



Fig.3 Storm-water drains under road crossing. Moolabin Creek, Qld, March 2014. Photo by author.

Post-Production

About 8000 still images captured over the three days, were later placed on a timeline in Final Cut Pro at a rate of 25fps, creating a timelapse video a little over five minutes long, showing my point of view of the creek as I was travelling up it, only sped up in time. Audio (in realtime) was added to it. A timestamp showing the start time and date, and then the time on the hour every hour after that, was placed on the movie to show the amount of time passed in the images (Figure 4). The GPS logging files were played as “flyovers” in Google Earth and the screen recorded (Figure 5). The speed set in Google Earth for the flyover rendered the 12 hrs or so of travel also to about 5 minutes. Prior to uploading on Waterwheel, the timelapse movie and the GPS flyover screen-grab were each divided into 4 parts, with no part more than 90 seconds, in order for them to be able to be played on the Tap, Waterwheel’s live media-mixing and presentation platform. The media uploaded on Waterwheel and their titles are: four timelapse movies (JC_1A, JC_2A, JC_3A, and JC_4A), four GPS flyover movies (JC_1B, JC_2B, JC_3B, and JC_4B), one PDF slideshow of 30 images (JC_5), and one sound file (Moolabin Creek Sounds).



Fig.4 Stills from timelapse movie showing timestamps. Moolabin Creek, Qld, March 2014. Moolabin Creek, Qld, March 2014. Photos by author.

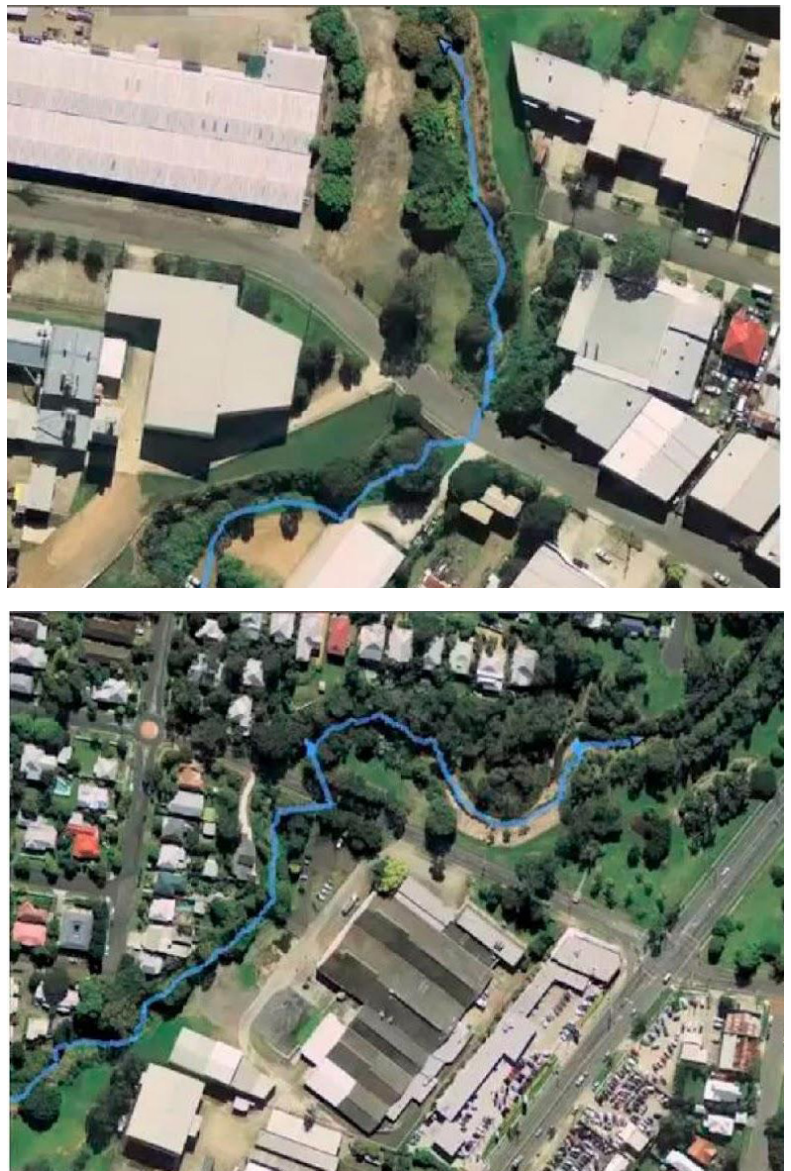


Fig.5 & 6 Stills from GPS track movie, created in GoogleEarth, March 2014, by author.

WAVE

Scripting and Rehearsing

For the performance, I was to be walking in Moolabin creek streaming live webcam video and audio, while Fuks was to manipulate the media concurrently with the live feed, on the Tap, according to a “script” and a visual diagram describing the layout, timing and overlapping of imagery. The live feed was to be placed alongside the timelapse movie, and the sections of GPS movies played at the time when their tracks corresponded to the section of creek appearing in the timelapse movie. The GPS tracks would then be placed in a curve so the aerial view of the map of the creek joined up, with the entire creek section fitting on the stage, and the lines of my previous pathway (along the creek’s course) playing in loop. In rehearsal Fuks offered to use ManyCam to play the entire 5-minute timelapse movie through her webcam rather than starting, looping and manipulating the 4 x 90-second clips. I fitted an external USB webcam upside-down to my bicycle helmet and plugged it into a PC netbook that I would carry in my backpack, and wore a lapel microphone and earbuds plugged into the audio jacks. Internet access was provided by an Android smartphone sharing its connection with the netbook.

The Script

The following notes constitute a kind of “script” that were used, along with a diagram, by Fuks, for the playing, timing and positioning of media on the Tap during the live performance. The Tap interface allows for the streaming of live webcam imagery and the playing of video, sound, slideshow, animation and live drawing. Any piece of media placed on the Tap “stage” can be moved around, tilted, enlarged, shrunk, faded and overlayed on any other piece of media. The manipulation of my media during the performance enabled me to perform remotely in an outdoor location, without having to interact with a computer interface, and to focus on the environment I was traversing.

1. Enlarge my webcam and flip it upright.
2. Play movie at bottom far right. Loop.
3. 1B above movie. Loop. After one minute,
4. 1B to bottom far left. Slight tilt anticlockwise.
5. 2B above movie. Loop. After one minute,
6. 2B to slight overlay on 1B. No tilt.
7. 3B above movie. Loop. After one minute,
8. 3B to slight overlay on 2B. Slight tilt clockwise.
9. 4B above movie. Loop. After one minute,
10. 4B to slight overlay on 3B. More tilt clockwise.
11. Reduce my webcam & move bottom centre (between movie and 1B).
12. Play sound file. No loop.
13. Place slides over everything and bring to half transparency.

The Live Performance

Immediately prior to leaving the studio to go to the creek, I realized my audio input and output was not working, and didn’t have time to troubleshoot it properly. So I went out to perform my slow walk in the creek, knowing that I could stream my webcam image, but not send my voice through the microphone nor hear any sound coming back from the Tap.

I could only hope that my stream was still working after putting my netbook into my backpack, and walked down into the creek at the beginning of a 50 m section that went from a rocky bed with a narrow stream, around a bend and opened onto a waist deep reed-lined pond. Once I thought 20 minutes had definitely passed, I exited the creek, stopped the webcam stream and returned to my studio to rejoin the Tap symposium session. I learnt afterwards that my webcam image stream did indeed come through successfully for the entire walk and that Suzon had handled the playing, placing and timing of the media seamlessly.

Outro

I was happy with the media I created for the piece and some nice synchronicities that occurred between the webcam image and the timelapse movie as they played out on the Tap—noted at the time by Fuks and seen later by myself in the screen-capture documentation [2]. In retrospect, however, I realize that if I could have had my voice heard, I could have explained, as I had intended to, that the webcam image was live and that I was actually walking along my local creek at that time, and that the other video and photo imagery and sound was prerecorded from just the week before. This intended, but un-realised, live narration, along with live locational sound, may have helped to provide the online audience with a stronger feeling of presence in the landscape, and may have helped them connect with the live webcam imagery. As it was, I am not sure that the liveness of my walk was apparent to online audience. I believe that the combination of live webcam streaming a performer's point of view (POV) camera angle, and live voice commentating on what is seen/shown, is a powerful way to create a sense of presence in the landscape for the viewer despite them being remote and watching and hearing a streamed feed via computer, monitor or projector. I look forward to further experimentation with this configuration and to allowing more time to test technical setups prior to events.

This work may serve as a blueprint or model for creating live online events in different creek locations and with local participants wishing to connect with their local creek.

I was amazed at how rich the natural life is along such a short section of suburban creek being so closely bounded by industrial and residential premises (particularly in the first half of my walk), and I have become quite fond of my local creek—a considerable change as my first impression of Moolabin Creek was that it was nothing more than a smelly drain overgrown with weeds.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

James Cunningham is a performance, movement, video and networked performance artist working in social, environmental and architectural surroundings, exploring the limits of bodily perception, performativity and the relationality of one's self with others, objects, and environment. He is co-Artistic Director (with Suzon Fuks) of Igneous Inc. since 1997. He has collaborated on and performed in numerous networked performances on the Tap, UpStage and other platforms, and has performed the “go-between” role—linking onsite and online performers—in various Waterwheel events.

Recent live art performances include ‘Antennae’ (SEAM Sydney—Nov 13, Exist-ence 5 Live Art Festival Brisbane—June 13), ‘Anybody is Free to Do Nothing With The Artist’ (Exist artist residency at Room60 Backdoor space—June 13), Slow Build (constructing a shelter with his “working” hand tied behind his back—Exist-ence 2011) and Still/City (participatory stillness event in an outdoor city location—SEAM 2011).

His essay ‘Breathing the Walls,’ which contextualises aspects of his performative practice and research, with Arakawa and Gins’ notions of body perception within architectural surrounds, was published in 2013 in ‘Inflexions, a journal of research creation.’

REFERENCES & LINKS

[1] <http://www.igneous.org.au/projects/fluidata>

[2] Screen recording of the Tap presentation:
http://www.water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4864

AS WATER IS TO WATER

Zsuzsanna Soboslay

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Abstract

Water is considered a metaphor of adaptability and change. In literary history, it has also symbolized qualities such as purity (or making pure) and power, especially as a synecdoche of the ocean. Often, its mutability has brought with it an association of being “fickle,” as when Shakespeare’s Antony turns tail to follow Cleopatra away from battle. He berates himself as “dislimned... as water is in water.”

Water as a substance, however, is remarkably stable and consistent to itself. Water is highly responsive, but retains integrity. In fact, by dint of its consistency—as stabiliser, conduit, mediator, regulator and even boundary-definer within the systemic fields in which we live—it is the very guardian of the life systems we need in order to survive.

As our bodies are comprised of over 70% water, one could presume it logical to behave like water. I suggest, however, that water’s qualities of responsiveness and resilience are just what we resist—that its vulnerable authority is considered a weakness against which we tend to be on guard. Only by dropping that defensiveness can we begin to find non-damaging solutions to our current ecological crises.

This paper draws parallels between water’s features (such as strong hydrogen bonding, specific heat capacity, surface tension and hydrophobic qualities) and the kinds of realisation that are made, through sensory experience and training, in theatre and dance ecology praxis. I take as an exemplar the recent site-responsive performance work of Melbourne’s Environmental Performance Agency (or EPA). I also take up Krippendorf’s suggestion that, if it made sense to us, communication within and around ecological thinking could be more a cooperative dialogue, as between dancers, instead of a battle. Other models of non-agonistic relationship include indigenous, shamanic and non-Western medical practices. Such models can alter the metaphors we live by, and hence too the nature of our decisions and engagements with the world.

As Water is to Water.

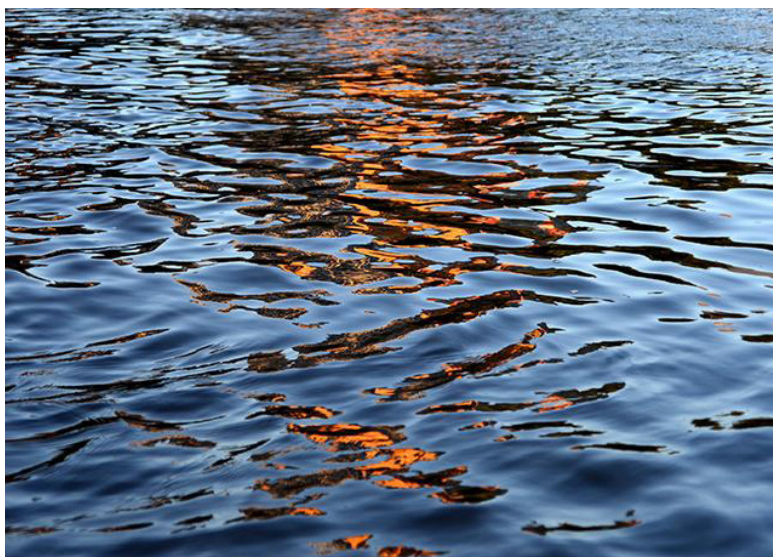


Fig.1 The Yarra River. Photo: Bronwen Kamasz, The Environmental Performance Agency, 2014.

Our capacity to see outside of ourselves renders our relationship to ecology and ecosystems inherently complex. Do we relate to our world from a perspective within, outside, or aloof from the elements in our environment? Does a perspective outside of our being-in, or similar to, these elements, separate us from that in which we live? How do we make decisions about harnessing the forces in our world and its elements? And in what ways do we really have a choice in how we do this?

If our bodies are comprised of at least 70% water, does that mean we are the “same as” water, and therefore are in some way obliged to think like it? Is it immoral, inaccurate or incorrect to do otherwise?

This article is a journey through how we experience ourselves, understand, perform in, and hence make decisions about, the world in which we live, and whether these variations of how we cognise our experience make any substantive difference in terms of how we make decisions in our world and the sustainability of our own and others’ (including the more-than-human others’) lives within it. I suggest that subverting binary thinking, by thinking both ‘without’ and ‘within’, is critical to solving our current, pressing crisis relationship with ecology and ecosystems under duress; and further, in encompassing this complexity, that how we sense and feel ourselves to be, can become a positive rather than a negative tool in problem-solving, especially in the fields of environment studies and ecology.

But firstly, in order to understand what parts of our conscience and consciousnesses can work together, it is helpful to understand what concepts and experience keep things divided and apart. This is no less than an attempt to curtail a war between art and science, rational and irrational, pragmatic and poetic worlds, in which we often seem involved.

Our understandings and misunderstandings of the nature and workings of water are exemplars in this conversation.

Pride and Prejudice

Environment studies can become trapped in discourses that try to restrict the agency of humans, pointing to all the disasters we have created, and demote us to a place of lesser value than the more-than-human world in which we daily have to make decisions. Arne Naess, for example (see Sessions, 1995), discusses the fierce faction-fighting between eco-philosophers. Some of these factions presume we, as humans, can never control our human greed and ambition, can only right environmental wrongs by denying our own agencies. But leaving “nature to nature’s own” can be problematic in a cognitive framework that sees nature itself as fickle and untrustworthy. There is a history to this embedded in a deeply rooted antagonism between and within the arts, politics and science, only some of which I will be able to outline in this essay.

I will turn to Shakespeare’s ‘Antony and Cleopatra’—one of his late plays written in the politically volatile Jacobean era—as an example that still has currency.

Antony, a Roman soldier, has fallen for Cleopatra who, as Egypt’s Queen, is meant to be his enemy. In the midst of battle he orders that his own ship follow hers when she turns tail in retreat from Caesar. Antony recognises that by following his heart he not only abandons his own army but also commits an act of betrayal against his very identity.

The following passage is from where he confesses to his soldier Eros the ramifications of what he has done. He indicates that he can no longer “hold” or “know himself” (to know, fr. OE *cñawan*, to recognize, identify) and this per se prefigures the way his life needs to end.

ANTONY (to Eros)

Sometimes we see a cloud that’s dragonish;
A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
A tower’d citadel, a pendent rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontor
With trees upon’t, that nod unto the world,
And mock our eyes with air: thou hast seen
these signs;
They are black vesper’s pageants.

EROS

Ay, my lord,

ANTONY

That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct,
As water is in water.

EROS

It does, my lord.

ANTONY

My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body: here I am Antony:
Yet cannot hold this.

Anthony and Cleopatra, Act 4, Sc 14

The archaic word “dislimn” means “to cause to become dim or indistinct,” and Antony indicates his whole bearing has lost weight, distinction and significance by dint of his actions. There are several issues revealed here: one is a pitting of heart against rule, with a suggestion that he has become emasculated by so doing. The pageant of clouds, mutating from bear to lion to promontory to horse and eventually to “nothing,” mocks his masculine identity and role. Ipso facto there is nothing left but to complete the dismantling of his worth. As he later explains to his Lieutenant,

Nay Weep not, Enobarbus, there is left us
Ourselves to end ourselves.

Yet this logic, true to his definition as a soldier and man of war, is not true to the nature of clouds and water to which he draws analogy. Although Shakespeare is not writing a scientific tract, yet it is worthwhile to dismantle the presumptions on which his metaphors rest, as such presumptions are repeated and ratified to this day.

Firstly, that clouds “dislimn” could be viewed as an endlessly re-creative, rather than destructive, capacity, an exemplar of the mutability in which all matter exists—more an example of grace or generosity towards the process of change than a shameful act. Clouds are as they do, and are constant and consistent in that capability.

So too with water. Although it does meander, swarm, gather and embrace—that is, behaves in ways that are responsive and adaptive to changing circumstances and environments—it is yet remarkably consistent to itself. Water is, in fact, one of the most consistent of substances on our planet, and life as we know it relies on it being so:

- Thanks to its specific heat capacity, water has a higher boiling point than oil and low freezing point, which helps keep earth’s surface temperatures moderate.
- It easily changes density, in both warming and cooling, delaying rapid temperature change in large bodies of water (lakes and oceans). This creates “seasonal turnover,” which helps protect and preserve aquatic life.
- Its hydrophobic effect separates nonpolar molecules (such as hydrogen and carbon). This contributes to the formation and sure boundaries of cell membranes.

Its remarkable contextual responsiveness makes it resource-full in other ways. Recent research, as detailed by D.L. “West” Marrin (2011), shows that sections within a single body of water behave differently according to the electromagnetic, light, mineral, sonic or chemical forces in their vicinity. Magnetic fields can generate polarities and create pockets of self-filtration, more effective and compact than man-made chemical or mechanical systems, and/or create strong vortices of energy without any loss of energy through friction. Liquid crystalline structures form, causing molecules to group like “swarms of fish” and, like all tetrahedral structures (such as the water in our bodies), act as superconductors of information between cells. These are capabilities that, if understood and harnessed, could provide far more cost-effective, non-polluting and sustainable energy sources than we humans have generated hitherto. If this is fickle, then we need more of it!

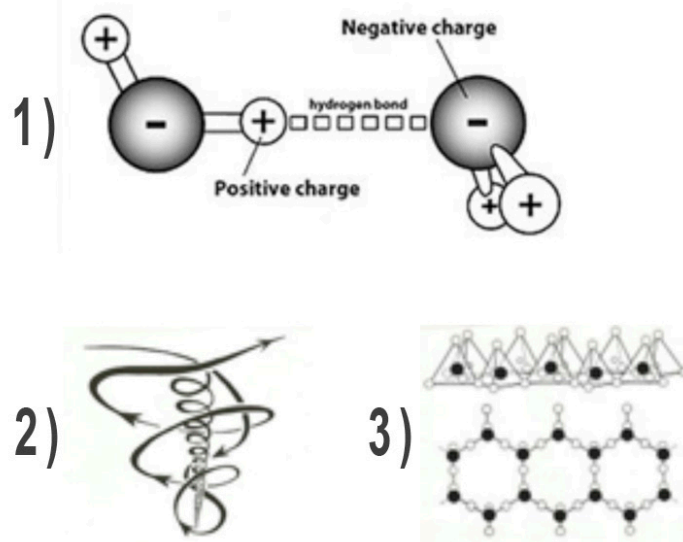


Fig.2 Images show 1) strength of hydrogen bonds; 2) magnetic fields creating an energy vortex; 3) the tetrahedral structure of liquid crystalline water [1].

Not only is water capable of behaving with a contiguous complexity but it is not at war with itself in being so. As water is to water. The language of ecologists, however, is so often about war—conquering drought, fighting nature, fighting each other over resources. What if our exchanges—around water, and other elements—were more of a dance of cooperative, compatible, efficient and self-sufficient interests? If Krippendorf (1990) is right in that we always act according to what makes sense to us, then “knowing water” better can pave the way to a non-agonistic way of co-existing in our world. And because we are also water, perhaps we can better harness our own capabilities to make decisions of far-reaching benefit to others, our environment and ourselves.

Knowing Water: Knowing Ourselves



Fig.3 The Environmental Performance Agency (EPA), ‘Body of Water,’ Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, March 1–2, 2014. Photo James Geurts.

The Environmental Performance Agency (EPA) was formed in 2013 by Dr Stuart Grant with postgraduate students from the Monash University School of Theatre Performance in order to examine how we experience and relate to water in urban contexts via performance. The stated goal of the group is “to create and promote more aware, responsible and responsive practices in regard to the preciousness, necessity and enjoyment of this fundamental element of life.” Members train together on site in different locations and devise performance interventions within festivals, conferences and larger research projects.

To date, the group has performed at the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival at Queensbridge Square, Southbank, Melbourne over the weekend of March 1–2, 2014 [2], part of Professor Maudie Palmer's Birrarung Project. Individual members also discussed their praxis at 'Knowing Water,' a conference run in conjunction with the Systemic Governance Research Project (SGRP) convened by Professor Ray Ison from the School of Geography, Monash University. 'Knowing Water' gathered together academics, performance artists, geographers, ecological philosophers, and members of the Murray Darling Basin Authority, with a longer-term goal to examine the nexus between water policy, performance, decision-making and associated praxes [2]. During the conference, some attendees sharply questioned the value of the performing arts in this dialogue. In many ways this article seeks to answer to those questions that divide a performer's art from our quotidian, social and political engagements.

Why Perform Ecologies

Most of the EPA performance artists are trained in Bodyweather (a form of dance training established by Tanaka Min in the 1980s in Japan) or other forms of site-responsive bodywork training. Group members share an intention to highlight aspects of body-site-history relations, and illustrate how and in what ways we might understand the workings and qualities of, and meanings and values attached to, water via means of performance praxis.



Top: Fig.4 Photo EPA / Bottom: Fig.5 Photo James Geurts.

Bodyweather and similar processes emphasise the plasticity and responsiveness of the body. The performer's body (like anyone's, really) is a site subjected to and able to generate different "weathers." Just as the weather that we walk in is a result of continuously varying conditions and

systemically-related events, so too does the performer's body (learn to) respond to space, climate, environment, others, and story, generated and/or received from both without and within.

Preparation and warm-ups include exercises with names like “bag of bones,” where the body is carefully lifted and moved by others and encouraged to give over to the prompts, suggestions, buoyancies and flows initiated and supported by them. As in Figure 4 above, the “others” act on the performer's body as do wind, water, and air pressures and temperatures. The performer then gives new shape to what s/he has experienced, linking inner realisations with outer form (Figure 5). Other exercises examine and reflect information such as the difference in texture and density between solids and liquids, solids and air. Another layer to the investigation is to examine and incorporate researched histories of place.

So the performance ‘Body of Water’ examines such questions as: what can bodies know and remember about place; how can they show what they sense; are there gaps between these sensory documents and “official” histories; can the body “know” as deeply as water. Performer perceptions of the partly invisible worlds of place function rather like a microscope recording the motions of water outlined above—a kind of knowing before technology can show it—whilst also enacting particularly human actions such as pointing (into landscape—Figure 9), carrying buckets (of water), enacting (flotsam and jetsam bobbing on the river surface—Figure 3), and even discoursing on politics and philosophy (engaging the human intellectual realm).

This intertwining of knowing and unknowing (or subconscious knowing), membering and remembering, becoming like, similar to, but still different from, operates in a kind of continuously receptive present and approximates the notion of “becoming” that ecologists such as David Abram (1997) argue is critical to our era. The notion of “becoming”—a direct borrowing from the work of philosopher and radical sociologist Gilles Deleuze (ref. Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) where identity, coherence, and hence our actions, are engaged in a continuous process of making, re-making and being re-made in engagement with our environment and circumstance—is a very specific way of knowing ourselves and hence of making decisions regarding how we enact and take action in our world. It requires not only the “unimpededness and interpenetration” made famous in the 1960s by the composer John Cage (1961) but a concept of reciprocal exchange and mutual respect between and amongst human, and more-than-human, co-existents. Such a process requires new forms of making and reading maps, of hearing and asking questions, and of receiving and processing dialogue with and in the landscape—one that I argue is endemic to performer process. It also demands a relation to past, present and future that is fluid, and that can remain receptive to change and variation whilst respecting difference. For although we are of water, we are yet separate from (other) bodies of it.

It is an awareness that can and needs to be mapped in a variety of conventional and unconventional ways, and one that can accommodate a variety of perspectives and languages ranging from the historical, the poetic and the more-than-human through to the scientific, including knowledges held important to different Indigenous traditions. This raises the question of what bears witnessing, let alone which languages and processes are considered viable to this process.

Acceptance: A Variety of Mappings

Over many weeks of preparation, group members undertook various forms of mapping of the Yarra Falls site. EPA member Bronwen Kamasz created art with location maps, her folded documents marking ways researchers navigate and interact with the documented past. The group referenced early 20th Century, topographic maps as well as created pictorial scores of their interactions and physical researches in place. Squiggles and scratched zones, whilst seemingly more abstract than Figure 6, nonetheless become concrete mnemonic tools to a performer and part of his or her personal archive—a shorthand record to return to when s/he needs to perform. A topographic map, however, can also be read as a map of the dance of the river across the Melbourne basin—an animate figure “running its course,” and hence less different to the dancers’ scores than we might imagine.

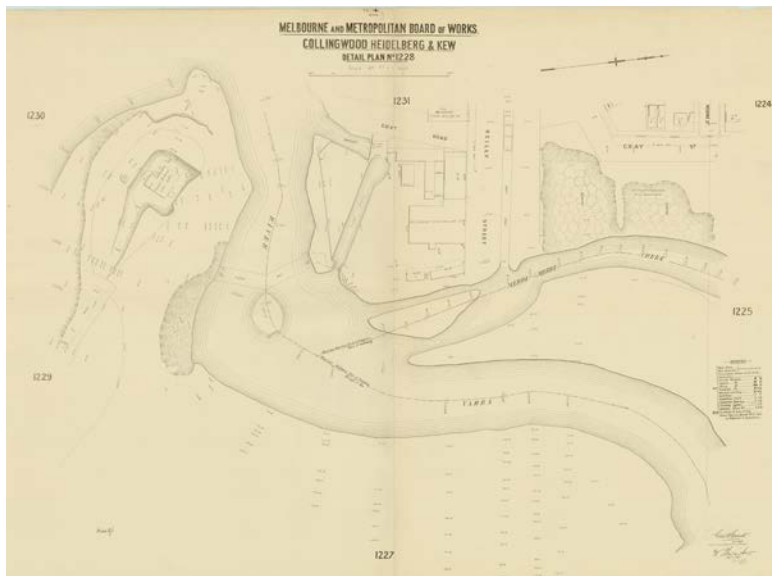


Fig.6 Yarra Falls: City of Melbourne.



Fig.7 Peter Fraser.

The group conferred with Uncle Larry Walsh, a Taungering man who is keeper of knowledge for his and several other clan groups, who lay historical claim to the area. Uncle Larry's input provided a “counter-memory” to the colonial history recorded of this place, which in turn demanded certain variations on how the group animated the site. He told stories of pre-settler fishing and playing in the river, whilst recounting the white fella accident (the son of John Batman, founder of Melbourne, drowning in the falls) that caused the rapids to be dynamited. The knowledge Larry brought to the project does not so much anthropomorphise place as allow place to have its own voice, albeit interpreted through human story-telling intervention. The difference between the Western Romantic “pathetic fallacy”—a poetic technique which acknowledges human emotion by projecting it onto the “inanimate” world, and strangely incorporates “nature” whilst splitting the speaking subject into one who speaks and the “other” or external which feels—and a landscape where “everything stands up alive,” in, of and for itself, is marked, and requires examination.

The Principle of Equivalence

At the ‘Knowing Water’ conference, elder Feli McHughes quietly spoke of the river Murray as if it were a beloved uncle (“he is always talking to us”). Attributing language to a river asserts its presence as a living, breathing, thinking, independent, yet generously relational entity. Such representation is metonymic rather than metaphoric; we are looking to what (larger) cognition of

relationships is represented in an entity, rather than what an entity or element is “like” or “stands for” (in place of). Similarly, from the Amerindian Dine tradition, River Junction Curly’s ‘Blessingway’:

With everything having life, with everything having the power of speech, with everything having the power to breathe, with everything having the power to teach and guide, with that in blessing we will live. (McNeely, 1997)

It asserts that each of the earth elements is “standing up alive” and has the right to “live, speak and breathe,” in and for itself, and not just as a metaphoric representation of something in the human realm. This perspective was ratified in the Law of Mother Earth, passed in the Bolivian Parliament in 2010.

The Bolivian Law confers the same rights to nature as to human beings, including “the right to life and to exist; the right to continue vital cycles and processes free from human alteration; the right to pure water and clean air; the right to balance; the right not to be polluted; the right to not have cellular structure modified or genetically altered” [1]. It is not just a set of abstracted laws and injunctions (about what not to do), but is an ordered set of considerations based on a principle of the potential equivalent value of all co-existent living things.

Although it does not attribute speech to nature as clearly as does Curly’s ‘Blessingway,’ the Bolivian Law yet demands a dialogue with how nature manifests and operates (and hence “expresses itself”). We could, poetically, nominate this as “nature’s voice,” but in many indigenous traditions the cognition has practical ramifications, which in turn help determine how politicians, developers, and citizens should act in the world. But at the core, “how nature manifests and operates” (via its language) needs ears willing to hear it. A speech act—whether its agent is human or otherwise—requires a hearer to listen and recognise its otherness. Willingness to listen is an act of animation (‘to animate’ (v.), 1530s, “to fill with boldness or courage”). Do we have courage enough to do this? And how do we learn to do this? For it is true that acting/performing in our world (‘to perform’ (v.), c.1300, “to carry into effect, fulfill, discharge”) is a skill that needs training, in order to do well.

In the words of anthropologist Frederique Apffel-Marglin (1994), describing the life of indigenous peoples in the Andes:

The conversations between persons and the other inhabitants of the world are not primarily engaged in for the purpose of ‘knowing reality.’ They are engaged in it as part of the activity of *criar y djarse criar*, or nurturing (raising) and letting oneself be nurtured (raised)... The point of conversation is not the attainment of knowledge through the interrogation of nature, it is rather to generate and regenerate the world and be generated and regenerated by it in the process.

This is an antiphonal process, endemic to a variety of traditions from African chant, Western medieval sacred song, amongst Australian indigenous peoples and in contemporary Western jazz. Its key principles are responsiveness and reciprocation; its touchstone is respect for difference amongst equals. Listening feeds action: the body is an ear.

Western philosophers such as David Abram (1977), Luce Irigaray (1983) and Heidegger (1951) before them have chastised us on the way we “forget” air or water and other elements. It is something a site-specific performer is obliged not to do. Any incompleteness is potential violation, and no site-specific performance artist I know can bear to do anything of that sort: being attuned to feeling, they feel the violation. Remembering the complexity of others is a duty of care. But rather than thinking of this as a kind of anxious hypersensitivity, perhaps at least we can engage in a living practice based on first principles that remembers what we tend to forget, neglect, or oppress. The flip side of the partnership is to maintain our own presence in a way that renders us equal participants in the dialogue, learning to listen in a way that sustains and informs our continuous engagement and co-participation in hearing and making the world.

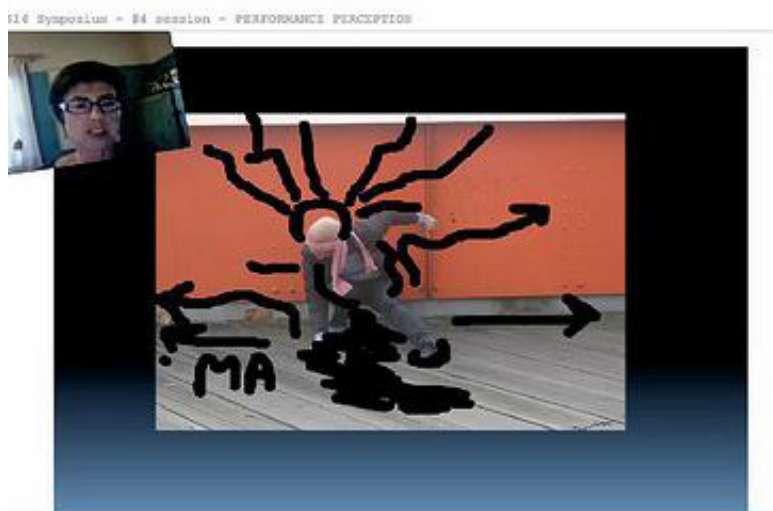


Fig.8 Me, illustrating how a performer’s sensory body engages in mapping space, during the presentation of my paper in 3WDS14. Screen capture.

Subjects-in-Process

The capacities of the Waterwheel Tap presented an opportunity to both talk about performers-in-process but to also think of myself as a presenter-in-process and the online audience as subjects-in-process (sujets-en-process, ref. Kristeva, 1980) navigating this same territory.

Within our daily waking states, there are conditions that coexist around and within us of which we are insensate. For example, the interior workings of our (Western) bodies are considered unknowable to us without the intervention of microscopes and machines. Yet Eastern meditation practices (including the tradition titled Chi Nei Tsang—ref. Chia, 1990) teach a “knowing” of the body’s interior and thence an ability to heal some of its ailments. This is a capability oddly ratified by the Western medical practice of biofeedback, where the mind (albeit mediated by machines) can alter a body’s metabolic rates.

Oppositional thinking—whether we can/can’t know our interiors, the invisible, and the too-small—is supported by enculturated habits and prejudices rather than by fact, and this applies also to elements considered “too large to know,” such as space.

Figure 8 is a screen shot of the paper I presented at the symposium, where I used the Waterwheel drawing tool to illustrate the sensory processing a performer undergoes in training and how s/he maps space in that heightened sensory realm. The screen shot shows EPA member Peter Fraser on site beside the Yarra River wearing an eye bandage that serves to limit his visual perception in order to heighten other senses.

In real time during the Symposium, I drew line vectors out from his body in order to illustrate the activity of a performer’s attention in this “heightened state of being,” and also to counter the taking-for-granted aspects of seeing that would normally occur looking at images in 2-D. Who pays attention to space in this way? Actors do, birds do, possibly, kangaroos do with their tails. Perhaps we do, when placed in a situation that awakens our sleeping senses, such as with eyes bandaged or whilst taking a shower. When else in our civilised Western lives do we regularly have the opportunity to think of the length of the back of our necks?

Actors consciously undergo training in order to awaken their habitual awareness from a kind of quotidian slumber in which we generally live—a slumber determined by cultural habits and protocols rather than by what is.

The Japanese have the concept “ma” which denotes the active presence and fullness of space. “Ma” can be witnessed for example in the care taken in constructing Zen temple gardens, where the

proportion measured between monolithic stone dolmens, raked white stones, and the garden walls, invites poetic and spiritual contemplation. Space here is considered an organic entity full of substance and rhythmic complexity, and great care is taken in the construction of these gardens. But “ma” does not only refer to a relationship between bodies and the spaces outside of them. “Ma” also applies to the spaciousness of the body’s interior. During the online Symposium, I drew a cap over Peter’s head, in order to call attention to the interior within his cranial dome—the architecture of this crown, its spaciousness as uplifting as the dome of a church built in Byzantium. A performer in this state of awareness will be operating in a dialogue reciprocating between space without and within—a dialogue with the invisible, internal realm.

I should reiterate that I am not inventing this awareness, but rather calling attention to a latent capability that we habitually neglect or forget to engage. Other, spontaneous acts of empathy with space may occur at unusual times—such as during a mountain-climb, a bushwalk, or the aforementioned shower. But in what quotidian ways do we show this matters, that we register that we care (OE *caru* (noun), *carian* (verb), fr. OHG *chara* “grief, lament,” *charon* “grieve”; fr. Old Norse *kor* “sickbed”)?

The Waterwheel Symposium title was Caring and Daring (to risk caring or danger; to do). It is daring to be so inclusive. What do we include and exclude, when, and why? To “care for” is not just to care for the present, but for the past and future, as all time co-exists in the “now.” What has happened because of decisions and events of the past? What will happen by dint of decisions and events in the future?

Enactment: Care Made Visible

The performance ‘Body of Water’ itself made visible and audible both the present and some of the “disappeared” history of place near Yarra Falls, which included stories of the water itself—its motions and flows, and the course it once followed—and that of the space inhabited and appropriated by others. ‘Body of Water’ created an interface between knowledge/ways of knowing that seek(s) no conclusions in order to provoke a way of rethinking and reconsidering what was, is and will be.

The bones and flesh of the performers affirmed both the agency of human action whilst representing the agency of the more-than-human others of this place. The performance running sheet (signaling performers to become “reeds,” “torrent,” “waterfall”) is a cryptic shorthand, or mnemonic, for a complex engagement with the complete actual present of a bustling contemporary city, replete with concrete and high-rises, and in a strange red ziggurat in the middle of Queensbridge Square (Figure 10). The group’s choice to wear acrylic blue suits—similar to, but also anomalous amongst the lunchtime city-worker crowds—emphasizes this point. Stuart Grant, in worker’s overalls, placed witches’ hats along the ground, marked measurements onto his clipboard and related parts of his childhood by the river to a puzzled audience, wondering who was this philosopher in overalls.



Fig.9 Members of EPA in performance. Here the group gestures “up-river,” enacting a moment of “being human” amongst the sections of performance in which they embody water per se, or its motion.

Performers slip in and out of Bodyweather mode, becoming sightseers pointing upstream (Figure 9), then turn and become “human sparkles,” embodying the gorgeous passion of light on the river [3].

Dale Gorfinkel, whose soundscape utilised found objects and hand-made instruments, called spectators to re-cognise the complexities of place with his imitations of water, seagulls, air bubbles, and other disturbances, amplified amongst the hum of traffic and swarming lunchtime crowds.

The finale—performers as waterfall, representing water falling against the back of their necks, against the backdrop of the orange ziggurat and high rise office tower behind—exemplifies the complexities of the performance narrative, but also touches on the ecstasies performance can reach. But these ecstasies are not simple joys.



Fig.10 Photo James Geurts.

Ecology and Joy

Spinoza divides ‘joy’ into two categories. One he calls *Titillatio*, referring to immediate, simple, pleasurable excitements, which, importantly, only affect a “sub-group of parts of the body” (Naess, 1973: in *Sessions*, 1995, p.252). The condition of *Hilaritas*, however, reflects on the idea of a body as an ecology, both unto itself, and in relation to others, affecting “not only a subgroup of functions of the organism, but each and every one” (*ibid.*). *Hilaritas* invites an ever-expanding engagement with more and more of the world.

A performer approaching *Hilaritas*—becoming animal, becoming space, light, water, history, and place, and also remaining human—displays a confluence and interplay of qualities, thoughts and awarenesses, as does water itself. The performing body (as are we) “both seems and is” a variety of contiguous capabilities. Training, then, allows one to become acutely aware of various dimensions of what is, which includes the passage of, and what changes over, time. What this includes is the differences between then and now, me and you, it and us, and the human capacity to make decisions, for practical, aesthetic and (hopefully) ethical reasons. This constitutes a condition I call *vulnerable authority*—the ability to respond to and reciprocate with(in) an environment in which one also makes magnanimous decisions.

In this way, performing and ecology—and, too, performing ecologies—can be both entertaining, titillating, and an exercise in *Hilaritas*, waking up the world to the complexities in and around us.

Conclusion

This essay concludes that the condition of *vulnerable authority*—a combination of knowing in different guises and temporal manifestations of knowledge, being both receptive to co-participants in

an environment, whilst not negating one's own presence—is at the core of site-specific performance practice and a realisation that can be of potential benefit in the fields of geography, economics and the environmental/ecological sciences. Laws such as that passed in Bolivia (the Law of Mother Earth) assert equal rights to all elements in an ecosphere, including the right to be left to their own natural courses; but within that picture, the place and function of the human body and mind needs to be assessed as a component in service to the principle of equivalent value and respect to all co-existents in that field. The challenge lies in recognising, valuing and applying recognitions made by site-specific performance artists and translating that into decision-making processes in the fields of ecology and other disciplines.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Zsuzsanna Soboslay (BA (hons); A.Mus.A., L.T.C.L.) is a writer, dance ecologist, therapist and theatre creator engaged in a diverse range of arts practices focussed on concepts of ability, dis/ability, ageing and other transitions and the relationship between art, science and compassion. She is enrolled in a PhD through Monash University titled 'Trauma, Ecology and Presence: Why Performance Matters' and works extensively with music group Synergy Percussion. Her current, interactive, cross-artform theatre project, *Anthems and Angels* is a process-oriented performance/installation combining archival materials with real-time interactions, centred on two key questions: how bodies relate to and remember land (and water), and how to respectfully represent the unspoken memories and resilience of people in exile.

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Screen recording of the Tap presentation:

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4866

PERFORMANCE – OVERVIEW

by James Cunningham

Spanning sessions #4–6, Atefeh Khas' 'Metamorphosis,' a live webcast of a block of ice melting, accompanied by pre-recorded music composed by Amin Hammami, raised questions. Could the work be considered a performance because 1. Atefeh declared that it was, and 2. Audience engaged with the work on the basis that it was said to be a performance? Could the work be considered performance, even without humans performing in it? Or could we consider that the humans performing in the work were Khas herself (she switched her webcam image between herself sitting indoors and the ice melting outdoors) and the work's onlookers? She, herself, says that the ice is the performer, slowly melting over hours.

I certainly had a feeling similar to watching a live durational performance—being witness to an event as it unfolds in real time. I found it addictive, and the format of streaming live video of the event in bursts (20 minutes or so at a time over the duration of the ice melting, which lasted 8 hours) fitted well into the format of the symposium as a whole.

Bonnie Hart also offered a webcast of a live performance, 'Ebb and Throw,' in which she tossed litter she had collected that very day from her local creek, onto a sculpture, that in the dark, lying on floor, had the overall size and curves that gave it a body-like resemblance. 16 mm films, projected from various angles, lit the sculpture with colourful ever-changing imagery, and a handheld microphone amplified shuffling sounds combined with a gurgling soundtrack that seemed to be composed of toilet flushes and underwater recordings. The climax of the piece comes when Bonnie lays down with the sculpture, caressing it with one hand and with the other, switching internal lights on and off.

In Pegi Marshall-Amundsen and Suzon Fuks' 'The Empress' Tears,' four aligned-in-a-grid images show two webcam angles, each of the two women performing with water-filled fish tanks, pouring in water, playing with floating rubber figures, dispensing ink into the water... Their actions are rehearsed to coincide, timed with the soundscape of electronic music and water sounds, which, doubled with the fact of having a second angle of their actions, and flipping lower webcams vertically so as to "reflect" the upper ones, created visual rhythm, and visual communication between images. For example, when water is poured into a fishtank in the upper image, it appears to go through the frame into the lower webcam image. They use similar objects too—the same kind of fishtanks, glass jugs, etc. creating a visual uniformity that supports the formal concerns of symmetry, reflection, repetition, rhythm, visual design and a choreographic movement between the frames of the webcam images.

As the 12-minute piece progresses, the transparency of the water becomes coloured with ink, and the women wrap their fishtanks with brightly-coloured caution tape, the kind used to delineate a damaged public site, one with the word "CAUTION," the other with the word "DANGER."

PERFORMANCE – OVERVIEW

by Lila Moore

'Metamorphosis,' a time-based installation by the environmental artist Atefeh Khas (Iran), refers not only to global warming and the daily phenomenon of melting ice on Earth, but the common apathy in the face of it. Khas carefully prepared an ice cube and placed it outdoor to melt naturally. She showed the gradual disappearance of the cube through a webcam, streaming the process on the Tap.

As a centralizing point in space and time, the Tap, in this work, illustrated the collective awareness of separation from the environment. The need to overcome the split between people, environment and the news media reports on climate change echoed in the soundscape.

On the one hand, the juxtaposition of the small cube with an ambient sound of powerful glaciers cracking, arctic wind and chimes denoted environmental interconnectedness and a shared human destiny. On the other hand, the powerful sound of breaking ice, which didn't reflect directly the environment streamed live on the Tap, recalled news media reports on climate change that, no matter how severe, seemed to lack direct context, thus, dissolve ineffectively in the noisy postmodern media landscape.

Bonnie Hart's performance 'Ebb and Throw' engaged with the obscure and lethal interaction of people, industrial waste and nature. Streamed live on the Tap, the relationship of humans with trash in the sea was performed as toxic and addictive romance. Plastic debris, Hart's movements, artificial lights and celluloid sea moved like a mollusk, forming into a body of mutating organisms.

'The Empress' Tears' was performed on the Tap by two remote characters portrayed by installation and performance artist, Pegi Marshall-Amundsen (North Carolina) and experimental multidisciplinary artist, Suzon Fuks (Brisbane). Each character inhabited two webcams placed side by side with one character on top of the other, forming a rectangle screen.

The space was divided into four small screens/webcams so that when the character on the top looked down at her aquarium she was also facing the other character whose webcam was positioned beneath her though upside down. The characters were shown from a frontal point of view of their upper body with an emphasis on heads and hands as they were handling objects and liquids in an aquarium, and from a perspective beneath each aquarium.

This created the impression that the viewers were also watching the actions from the perspectives of the water in the aquariums. The fluid from which dinosaurs and sunglasses evolved became a performer, a subject and object. The tendency to focus on the weight of human activity was inverted not only through an upside down performer in a webcam, but by using the webcam to create the illusion that the water is watching and reflecting on the situation.

However, as the performance progressed, the views of the water were increasingly obstructed by human action and language, until the water disappeared entirely, and was marked out by signs as a danger zone. At that point, the chance-like evolutionary aspect of the creative process, which was sustained and embodied by water, came to a halt.

Presentation

'Ebb and Throw'

In a world of manifest convenience, multiplicity meets complicity. Entitlement of space and matter valued as temporal object for the individual. Collective petro-delusions and the flow of tides bury their heads in the sand. But can they hear the ocean through the waves?

A prophylactic, obscured perception of the natural world. Amidst the BPA debris, life cycles as light and sound interpenetrate to a mollusc romance.

The format of the expanded cinema work was 5 x 16 mm film loops, sculptural installation, optical sound and live performance.

Presenter

Bonnie Hart's practice is an assemblage of filmmaking, music, performance art, journaling, visual art and sculpture. Her expanded cinema performance is a fusion of performance stagecraft, the textural beauty of handmade celluloid and a tragicomedy of continually malfunctioning systems/equipment. Inspired by the symbolic, aethyric, esoteric nature of conceptual elaboration, Bonnie's work is rooted in the gritty realism of the contemporary sociopolitical landscape.

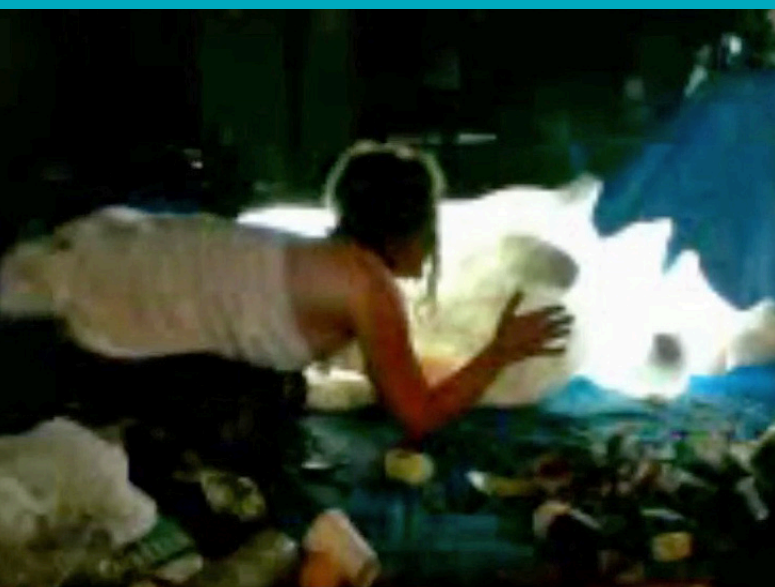
She holds a degree in Film & Television Production from the Queensland University of Technology. In 2006, Bonnie founded the audio visual laboratory Venting Gallery which produced the 'Rituals of the Captured Moment,' a series of 1000 films about experimental music. She is the founding Secretary of the Foundation for Contemporary Music & Culture and President of the Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome Support Group Australia.

Links

<http://www.ventinggallery.com/bonnie-hart-bio>

Screen recording of the Tap presentation:

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4870



'Ebb and Throw' by Bonnie Hart. Screen captures.

Presentation

'The Empress' Tears' is a "cyber-performance installation" with Pegi Marshall-Amundsen from North Carolina, USA and Suzon Fuks in Brisbane, Australia.

"Notions of Future" is the departure point for asking questions to and provoking each other, well as both the online and onsite audience, and although it delves into profound matters, it is improvised with humour and poetry. Water, as a metaphor for all there is and was, focuses attention on the "Now" and "being aware." Tears of joy or sadness are magnified in a fish tank, shared across continents.

We each had a fish tank filled with water and oil, in which at times we moved miniature objects, according to the conversation that took place via Waterwheel's video conference/media mixing system, the Tap.

- Is water a metaphor for the moment?
- Transforming from one state to another, all the water we have is all the water we've ever had. So do you have Zero Water for me?
- Where does it come from? The Emperess' Tears?
- Where is it now? In the toilet on which I am perched going down the drain?
- Where will it be? For some people, it may be the source of sleeplessness, or a search for their survival. But for so many of us, we don't question its future. We take it for granted!

Presenters

Suzon Fuks is an intermedia artist exploring the integration and interaction of body and moving image through performance, screen, installation and online work. Australia Council for the Arts Fellow from 2009–2012, Copeland Fellow & Associate Researcher at the Five Colleges, Massachusetts in 2012, she is the initiator and co-founder of Waterwheel, a collaborative online venue for streaming, mixing and sharing media & ideas about water.

Pegi Marshall-Amundsen is a designer and maker of live Performance, Theater and Installations. Her work can be seen on stages, in public and online. She believes theater should be accessible, socially responsible and sustainable. In addition to creating and designing, Pegi teaches and has an effect on future artists and designers.

Links

<http://www.pegidesign.com>

<http://suzonfuks.net>

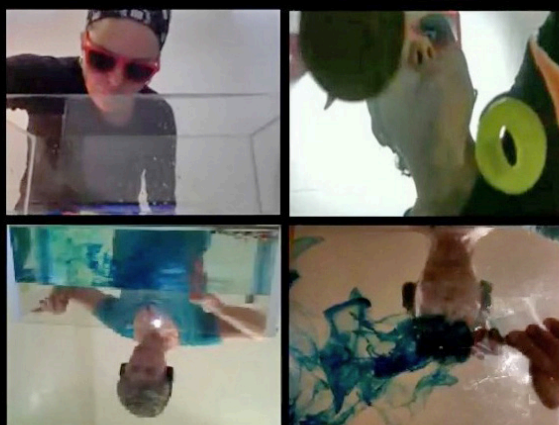
Screen recording of the Tap presentation:

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4872

DS14 Symposium - #6 session - PERFORMANCE



DS14 Symposium - #6 session - PERFORMANCE



DS14 Symposium - #6 session - PERFORMANCE



'The Empress'Tears' by Pegi Marshal-Amundsen (top of the screen) and Suzon Fuks (bottom of the screen). Screen captures.

SPLASH

Presentation

'Guddling* About: Experiments in Vital Materialism with Particular Regard to Water' *Scots. Verb: Messing about, particularly with water.

A presentation and commentary on performances with water in Calgary, Alberta and prospective performances in Glasgow, Scotland in 2013 and 2014. The project entails a series of actions or experiments made with the main watercourses that flow through the two cities: the Bow River, Calgary and the River Clyde, Glasgow. These contrasting urban waterways represent diverse examples of human/water interdependency.

The Bow River and its watershed provide drinking water for Calgary and much of Southern Alberta. The Bow is an iconic Canadian River, emerging from the Bow Glacier/Bow Lake in the Rocky Mountains. It is a site of recreation and contemplation for Calgarians but, in June 2013, it flooded severely, submerging downtown Calgary and damaging irrevocably a significant proportion of property in the city centre.

The River Clyde is a heavily industrialised watercourse, which was narrowed, deepened and canalised to enable trade, shipbuilding and large-scale manufacturing in Glasgow. Since the decline of heavy industry, however, the Clyde's role in the city is ambivalent. Despite major regeneration currently taking place on its banks, the water itself remains largely neglected.

'Guddling About' is an attempt to explore human/water—and ecological-social—relations in these two contrasting locations. In response to vital materialist discourses (Jane Bennett, Tim Ingold et al) it aims to use performance practice as a means of foregrounding the liveliness, or agency, of water, and thus challenging human-centred understandings of human/water interdependency.

Presenters

Minty Donald is an artist and lecturer/researcher in the School of Culture and Creative Arts, University of Glasgow, Scotland. Her practice is context and not medium-specific, though ephemeral media such as performance, projected imagery and sound are frequently used in her attempts to explore human/more-than-human relationships. She regularly works in collaboration with Nick Millar.

Nick Millar is an artist with a project-based practice, based in Glasgow, Scotland. He works frequently with Minty Donald and with other regular collaborators including Untitled Projects/Stewart Laing & Arika. Working with Minty Donald, his current practice reflects on human/water interrelations in the context of the River Clyde, Glasgow & recently had a Watershed+ residency in Calgary developing 'Guddling About,' Episodes 1–3

Links

www.tumblr.guddling.com, www.tumblr.guddlingaboutexperiments.com

Screen recording of the Tap presentation:
http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/5082

Action/Experiment #1: Water Carry

Scoop water from the river with bare, cupped hands. Carry the water in your hands as far as possible from the river. Stop when there is no water left in your hands.

Action/Experiment #2: Water Borrow

Visit as many of the tributaries of the river as possible. Ask each tributary you visit for permission to borrow some water. If you feel permission has been granted, carefully take a pailful of water, noting the date, time, weather conditions, topographical features and water quality. Remember to thank the river or creek for the water.

'Guddling* About' by Minty Donald and Nick Millar. Screen captures.

Action/Experiment #4: Where Water Goes (Puddles)

Borrow a small jar of water from the river. (Remember to ask for permission and to thank the river.) Find a place where there is crack or indentation in the road or sidewalk. Pour a small amount of water into the crack or indentation. Observe where the water goes. Try this action/experiment on different types of surface, at different times of day and in different weather conditions.

Presentation

'Performative Class'

Students of Intermedia ART, Camosun College in Victoria, led by John G. Boehme, talked about understanding our vulnerabilities, conflicts, successes and failures around water.

Presenters

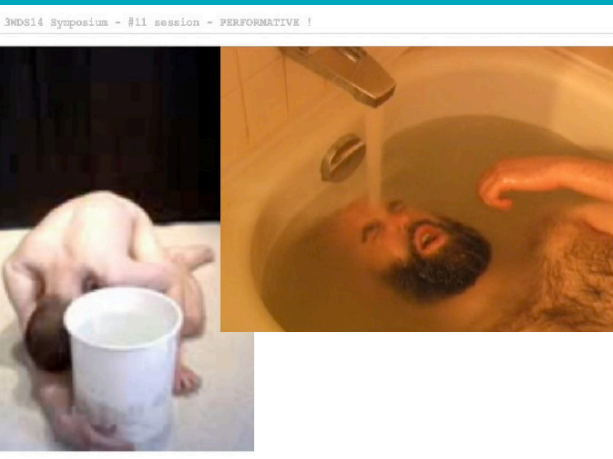
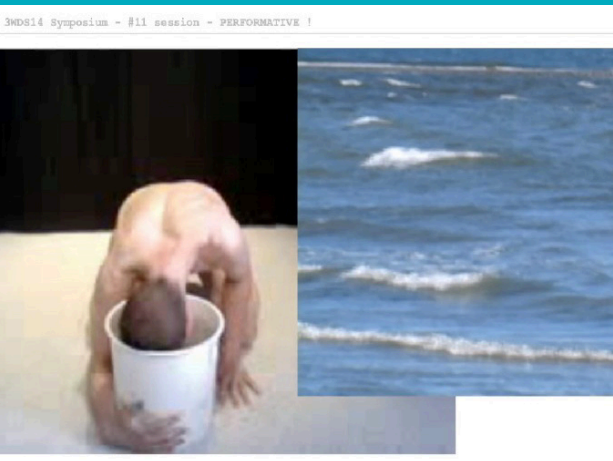
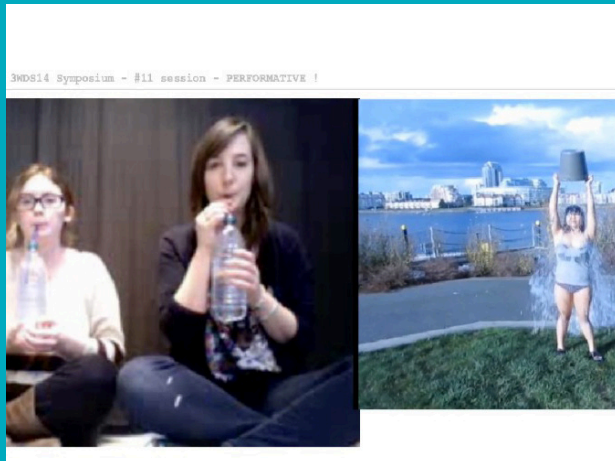
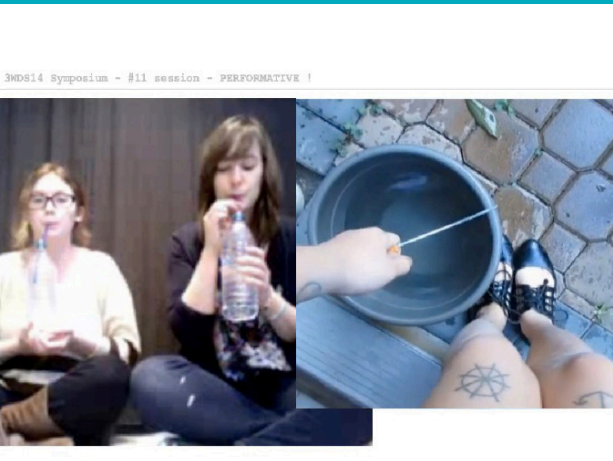
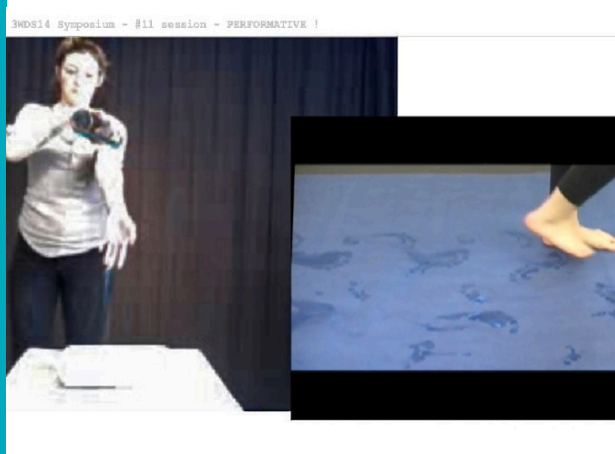
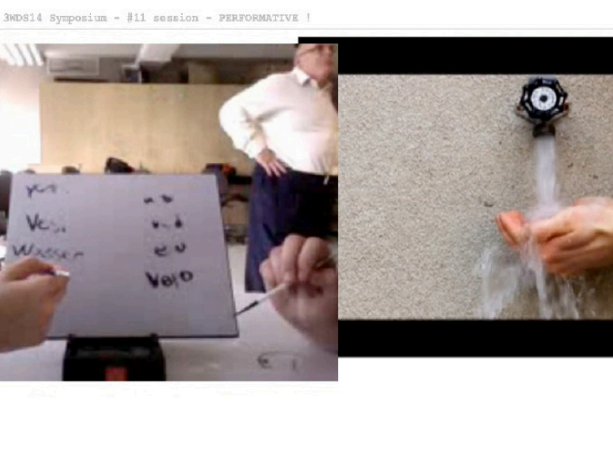
Weaned in the Windansea of La Jolla, California, **John G. Boehme's** practice encompasses painting, sculpture, performance, video and digital technology, installation, and photography. His work examines the performance of masculinity, the valorization of labour, the pursuit of leisure, and the marshalling of amity, using both the spoken and gestural aspects of human communication. Not constrained to any specific medium, his recent 'trans-disciplinary' work simultaneously integrates performance, video, audio, and material.

Students from Camosun College, Intermedia Art, in Victoria, BC, Canada.

Links

<http://www.finearts.uvic.ca/~jgboehme>

Screen recording of the Tap presentation:
http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4884



'Performative Class' with John G. Boehme and students from Camosun College, Intermedia Art. Victoria, BC, Canada. Screen captures.

SOUR AMANE

Nezha Rhondali
Casablanca, Morocco

'Sour Amane' is a multidisciplinary performance involving four Moroccan artists, presented on Waterwheel. Sour Amane which means "to quench thirst" in the Berber Moroccan language, Amazigh, is an exploration through music, voice and dance, of the stages of the water cycle, especially in Morocco. A week-long art residency at the Boultek Centre for Contemporary Music in Casablanca preceded the performance. Water in all its states was the inspiration for the artists.

Aali Wica (poet, singer) brought to the group texts in Arabic (poems and prayers), Dubosmium (musician) brought a variety of recorded sounds and electronic music related to the water cycle, Jauk (percussionist) brought his expertise and original instrument "the Jaukagua," and Nezha (dancer) brought movements inspired by the water contained in her body and in nature.

The performance was the result of a scientific, social and environmental investigation of water, informed by the teachings of Professor Tahiri, who is an expert in water management and the environment. A discussion with the audience about the performance ensued, followed by a debate moderated by Professor Tahiri on the environmental and social challenges of water management in Morocco and more specifically in Casablanca. The event was a success both artistically and in terms of raising awareness about water.

The 'Sour Amane' artist residency

The artist residency began with an investigation on water, including concerns and current challenges. The research led to setting the stages of the water cycle as the thread for the performance:

- Evaporation
- Condensation
- Rain / Snow
- Runoff
- Infiltration
- Evaporation or Distribution
- Consumption

The artists took into consideration the specificity of Morocco, including water scarcity, such as drought and desertification. Research on each stage of the water cycle gave birth to a palette of sounds and movements, which became material for the improvisation:

- Aali Wicca plunged into the Moroccan cultural and religious heritage to reveal poems, songs and prayers praising water. Texts in which the sacred value of water is reflected.
- Jauk shared, amongst other things, one of his creations: the Jaukagua, the meeting of a metal can with the African water drum. In the early 70s, Jauk used it to play jazz with Carolyn Carlson and Peter Goss. The Jaukagua is a rhythmic percussion instrument with an extensive range, going from the very low to the highest sounds, with an ability to imitate all instruments; it is also an amplified electro-acoustic instrument, which requires the interpreter to move the body, making it a musical instrument and "conversator." And, of course, it reproduces the sounds of water.



Fig.1 left to right: Jauk and Aali Wica during the 'Sour Amane' performance, at Boultek.

– Hassak Mr. Abdellah, alias Dubosmium created a variety of sounds by drawing on a database of recordings (the streets of Casablanca or the ocean), using them as inspiration to compose electronic music on the spot, all the while seeking to create a soundscape that evoked the stages of the water cycle. In this way, he endeavored to accentuate, support, mitigate or deflect the music and movement interventions of the three other artists.



Fig.2 Hassak Mr. Abdellah, alias Dubosmium.

– Nezha conducted her research on the meeting point between body and earth, both at the level of presence and in relation to the role of water. Water nourishes, carries, regulates temperature, eliminates waste, in equal proportion. Water connects all. This investigation was the departure point for her movement research, which involved going through the physical and subtle sensations of being both water and the container of water. The interaction with the musicians, instruments and objects (such as a hammam bucket) further enriched the exploration of movement. A musical water wheel appeared in the course of the performance, which the body of the dancer in trance interpreted by striking the Chinese cymbals in a circular fashion, all the while following the Jaukagua's increasing pace.

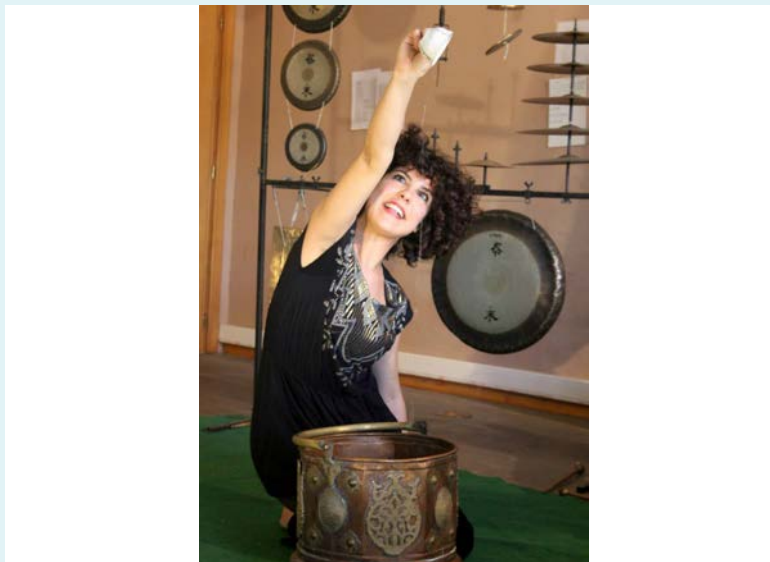


Fig.3 Nezha with the hammam bucket, during the 'Sour Amane' performance, at Boultek.

The 'Sour Amane' performance

At the end of the five-day residency, the artists agreed on a structure that would provide the space for a collective improvisation of music and dance; the various stages of the water cycle would create the structure and the transitions would be based on carefully listening to the improvisation of the others.

The performance took place in a small room at the Boultek, with an audience of 20 people. Artists and audience were spellbound by the performance.

The performance was unable to be streamed live on the Waterwheel platform, though it was performed as part of the Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium. Since then, the artists have continued to present the Sour Amane performance to the Moroccan public.



Fig.4 left to right: Jauk, Dubosmium, Nezha, and Aali Wica during the 'Sour Amane' performance, at Boultek.

At the end of the performance, the public voiced their curiosity, asking questions about the artistic process, the techniques used and the message communicated. A very interesting debate followed, led by Professor Tahiri, an expert in water management and the environment. He presented a

definition of drinking water, and the environmental and social issues as a result of the lack of awareness that different social actors demonstrate in their activities (government, companies and citizens). He succeeded in playfully informing the audience, proposing daily solutions on how to better manage water and act with consideration towards the environment.



Fig.4 Prof. Mohamed Tahiri leads a debate with audience members about water management.

The performance experience proved to be enriching, and allowed the collaboration between the four artists to consolidate, to become a Moroccan group engaged in Art-Ecology and multi-disciplinary artistic improvisation.

BIOGRAPHIES

Jauk (French-Moroccan) has a 50-year international career as a songwriter and performer. He became a percussionist in the early 1960s, playing in several jazz, rock, and ethnic groups. His music and vocals embody a fusion of these three cultural styles. Jauk designed the Dakka jazz style and invented an electro-acoustic amplified instrument: the Jaukagua, a fusion with the African water steel percussion drums of his childhood. Jauk is also a musician of gesture and movement: he invented the choreorhythmy and choreosophy (at the Sorbonne), which accompany dance. He collaborates and works with leading choreographers and musicians worldwide.

Hassak Mr. Abdellah, alias **Dubosmium** won recognition with his unique electro-ethnic Moroccan style, as the creator of music that combines the atmosphere of the Electroworld with the culture of his country. Taking root in the underground culture of Casablanca, his hometown, his music reconciles musical tradition with the electronic modernity of new technologies. It is a rhythmic journey that invites one to a true homecoming.

Aaliwica is an artist, native of southern Morocco. He is a musician, singer, but also a poet and painter. In some of his works, Aaliwica explores themes on Djinn and prayers. He composes and sings his songs and poems, and collaborates with other artists such as Dubosmium, always looking for experimentation that allows the mixing of styles and epochs.

Nezha is a French-Moroccan nomad dancer, based in Casablanca, where she has focused on developing artistic, cultural and social projects. Dance improvisation is her favourite space. She dreams of organising music and dance improvisation jams in Morocco. Nehza tries to link her interest in ecology, particularly in permaculture, to her artistic activities and daily life.

Mohamed Tahiri is professor and president of the Chair of Innovation at the University Hassan II in Casablanca. Expert in water management and the environment, he works fervently to raise awareness of eco-citizenship and eco-innovation.

ABOUT THE PLACE

The Boultek centre for contemporary music in Morocco is a place where musical groups and artists from the urban scene can work, meet and get advice. There are three equipped rehearsal studios, a recording studio, a training room, and a concert hall. The Boultek is also a resource and information centre, and a point of reference for artists.

LINKS

Video of the entire performance <http://youtu.be/Z-0StFCL2LM>

Jauk <http://www.jaukelmaleh.com>

Boultek <http://www.boulevard.ma>

VERSION FRANCAISE

SOUR AMANE

Nezha Rhondali

Casablanca, Maroc

Résumé

Sour Amane, « éteindre sa soif » en amazigh (langue berbère marocaine), est une exploration à travers la musique, la voix et la danse, des différentes étapes du cycle de l'eau, dans le monde et plus précisément au Maroc. Une performance multidisciplinaire, résultat de la réunion de 4 artistes marocains et de la plateforme Waterwheel. La performance fut précédée d'une semaine de résidence artistique au Boultek, centre des musiques actuelles de Casablanca. L'Eau fut le centre d'inspirations des artistes, l'Eau sous tous ses états.

Aali Wica (poète, chanteur), apporta au groupe des textes en langue arabe (poèmes et prières), Dubosmium (musicien) une palette de sons enregistrés et musique électronique liés au cycle de l'eau, Jauk (percussionniste) son inestimable savoir-faire et son instrument original « le Jaukagua », et Nezha (danseuse) des mouvements inspirés par l'eau contenue dans son corps et dans la nature.

La performance fut le résultat d'une investigation scientifique, sociale et environnementale sur l'Eau, éclairée par l'enseignement du Professeur Tahiri, expert en gestion de l'eau et de l'environnement. La performance s'est terminée par une discussion ouverte au public au sujet de la performance, suivi d'un débat animé par le Pr. Tahiri sur les défis environnementaux et sociaux de la gestion de l'eau au Maroc, et plus précisément à Casablanca. Ce fut un succès tant au niveau artistique qu'au niveau de la sensibilisation environnementale.



Fig.6 The collaboration between the four artists consolidated as a Moroccan group engaged in Art-Ecology and multi-disciplinary artistic improvisation / Cette expérience a permis la consolidation de ces 4 artistes, en tant que groupe marocain engagé dans l'Art-écologie et l'improvisation artistique multi-disciplinaire.

A propos de la résidence artistique 'Sour Amane'

Cette résidence artistique débuta avec une investigation autour de l'Eau, des préoccupations et défis actuels, et révéla le fil directeur de la performance: les différentes étapes du cycle de l'eau:

- Evaporation
- Condensation
- Pluie/neige
- Ruissellement
- Infiltration
- Evaporation ou Distribution
- Consommation

Bien évidemment, les artistes prirent en considération la spécificité du Maroc et intégra ainsi les problèmes d'absence d'eau, telles que la sécheresse et la désertification.

Une recherche autour de chaque étape du cycle de l'eau donna naissance à une palette sonore et de mouvement riche, un matériel qui permit ainsi d'alimenter l'improvisation de la performance :

- Aali Wica se plongea dans le patrimoine culturel et religieux marocain pour révéler des poèmes, chants et prières faisant la louange de l'Eau. Des textes dans lesquelles transparaissent la valeur sacrée de l'eau.
- Jauk, partagea, entre autres choses, une de ses créations, le Jaukagua, la rencontre d'un bidon métallique avec le tambour d'eau africain. Dans les débuts des années 70, Jauk l'utilise avec Carolyn Carlson, Peter Goss, dans le jazz. C'est à la fois une percussion rythmique, avec un registre basse très étendu jusqu'au plus aiguë, doté d'une tessiture très étendue, et d'une capacité à imiter tous les instruments. Un instrument électro-acoustique amplifié, qui demande à l'interprète de bouger tout le corps, instrument musical et « conversateur ». Et qui bien sûr restitue tous les bruits de l'eau.
- Dubosmium varia ses inspirations de sons, en piochant dans sa base de données d'enregistrements (comme par exemple des rues de Casablanca ou de l'océan), en composant de la musique électronique de manière instantanée, cherchant ainsi à installer un fond sonore capable de révéler au public les différentes étapes du cycle de l'eau. Il rechercha de ce fait à accentuer, supporter, atténuer ou dévier l'intervention musicale et de mouvements des 3 autres artistes.
- Nezha dirigea sa recherche sur le point commun qui a entre le corps et la Terre au niveau de la

présence et du rôle de l'Eau. En proportion équivalente, l'eau nourrit, transporte, régule la température, élimine les déchets, l'Eau connecte le Tout. Cette recherche fut le point de départ de son investigation de mouvements, passant par la sensation corporelle et mentale d'être le contenu et le contenant de l'eau. L'interaction avec les musiciens, les instruments, et les objets (tels que le seau de Hammam) enrichi considérablement ses ressources de mouvements. Il apparut ainsi, une roue d'eau musicale, interprétée par le corps de la danseuse en transe tapant de manière circulaire les cymbales chinoises au rythme croissant du Jaukagua.



Fig.7 Jauk et Nezha durant la performance 'Sour Amane' au centre Boultek.

A propos de la performance 'Sour Amane'

A la fin de la résidence de 5 jours, les artistes se mirent d'accord sur une structure qui permettrait de donner de l'espace à une improvisation collective de musique et danse. La structure suivant basiquement les différentes étapes du cycle de l'eau, et les transitions s'appuyant sur une écoute aigüe de l'improvisation de chacun. La performance a eu lieu dans une petite salle du Boultek, avec un public d'une vingtaine de personnes. Tant les artistes que le public furent satisfaits et emportés par la performance. Malheureusement, elle n'a pas pu être retransmise en live streaming sur la plateforme Waterwheel, mais cela ne leur firent pas quitter le sentiment d'avoir fait partie intégrante du Symposium de la Journée Mondiale de l'eau. Depuis, les artistes continuent leur travail pour présenter de manière plus officielle la performance Sour Amane au public marocain.

A la fin de la performance, la parole fut passée au public, curieux d'en savoir plus sur le processus artistique de Sour Amane, sur la technique utilisée et sur le message transmis. Un très riche débat s'en suivit, animé par le Pr Tahiri, expert en gestion de l'eau et de l'environnement. Il rendit accessible au public la compréhension de la définition scientifique de l'eau potable et expliqua ensuite les enjeux environnementaux et sociaux du comportement inconscient des différents acteurs sociaux (Etat, entreprises et citoyens). De manière ludique, il réussit à éclairer le public en proposant des solutions possibles localement et quotidiennement, pour mieux gérer l'eau et agir dans le sens du respect de l'environnement.

BIOGRAPHIES

Jauk, 50 ans de carrière franco-marocaine et internationale, auteur, compositeur, interprète, il devient batteur-percussionniste dès le début des années 1960 dans plusieurs groupes de jazz, rock et musique ethnique. Il incarne une fusion de ses trois cultures à travers sa musique et ses discours. Il conçoit un genre de musique, le dakka jazz et invente un instrument électro-acoustique amplifié, le Jaukagua, fusion du tambour d'eau africain et des bidons-percussions métalliques de son

enfance. Musicien du geste et du mouvement, il crée la chorérythmie et la choréosophie (à la Sorbonne) et devient un compagnon de la danse. Il collabore et travaille avec de grands chorégraphes et musiciens du monde entier.

Hassak M. Abdellah, alias **DUBOSMIUM** s'impose sur la scène avec son style électro-ethnique marocain unique, comme le seul créateur de musique qui combine l'atmosphère du l'Electroworld avec la culture de son pays. En prenant racine dans la jeune culture underground de Casablanca, sa ville d'origine, sa musique réconcilie la tradition musicale avec la modernité électronique des nouvelles technologies. Elle propose un voyage posé et rythmé qui invite à un véritable retour aux sources.

Aaliwica est un artiste originaire du sud du Maroc. Il est musicien, chanteur, mais aussi poète et peintre. Dans certaines de ses œuvres, il explore les thèmes du Djinn et des prières. Il compose et interprète ses chansons et poems et collabore avec d'autres artistes tel que Dubosmium, toujours à la recherche de l'expérimentation qui permet le mélange des styles et des époques.

Nezha est une danseuse nomade franco-marocaine, installée à Casablanca où elle se consacre à développer des projets artistiques, culturels et sociaux. La danse improvisation est son espace de prédilection, elle se laisse ainsi rêver à organiser prochainement des jams de musique et de danse impro au Maroc... Elle s'efforce de lier son intérêt à l'écologie, plus particulièrement à la permaculture, à ses activités artistiques et sa vie quotidienne.

Mohamed Tahiri est professeur et président de la Chaire de l'Innovation à l'université Hassan II à Casablanca. Expert en gestion de l'eau et de l'environnement, il travaille ardemment pour la sensibilisation à l'éco-citoyenneté et l'éco-innovation.

A PROPOS DU LIEU

Boultek, premier centre de Musiques Actuelles au Maroc, est à la fois un lieu de travail, d'échange et de conseil pour les formations et artistes de la scène urbaine. Il comporte trois studios de répétitions équipés, un studio d'enregistrement, une salle de formation et une salle de concert. Le Boultek est également un centre de ressources et d'information et un repère professionnel pour les artistes.

LIENS

Voir version anglaise, ci-dessus.



Fig.8 Contenu/contenant de l'eau fut l'une des investigations de mouvements de Nezha.

PERFORMANCE CONNECTIVITY & RESEARCH – OVERVIEW

by Molly Hankwitz

Bay Requiem, ongoing project by Mary Armentrout, Lauren Elder, Nina Haft and Ian Winters. Direction: Nina Haft.

In this original performance from the project 'Bay Requiem,' Nina Haft and Company dance at the Hayward Shoreline along with collaborators Mary Armentrout (dance), Lauren Elder, and Ian Winters (video), in a mix of loose-knit interpretive styles mingled with site specific details about a place marked for impact by sea-level rise.

In this session of the Symposium, ocean and saltwater flooding-issues were addressed. Eight dancer/choreographers, a director and filmmaker explored the location and "scale" using the Waterwheel Tap space as the "live" stage/frame to create an intricate and layered piece of art. A good mic and a high quality video camera transformed the Tap space into an audio visual zone in which localized sound of wind and the moving dancers evolved over time.

Nina Haft and Ian Winters' commentary and explanation of their collaborative methods and history of site, worked especially well to develop understanding of the work. Audience was intimately connected with a well-planned and shared experience; meeting and chatting with, and listening to dancers discuss their activism, and methods with the issues and the land.

To achieve a really finely tuned performance takes particular planning, rehearsal, and familiarity with what is possible, and on the Waterwheel Symposium Tap, as much as it is an informal venue, available through laptops, performing has particular challenges as a web-based and telepresent medium. 'Bay Requiem' artists should be admired for the range of possibilities they explored; giving a relatively unknown place in California, drama, history, and vitality, while expressing and evoking serious concerns with climate change. Winters' video overlays also lent much to the piece. Evocative and stark, they provided a time-based history to the art, as they were all performed and shot earlier, then brought in semi-transparently over the "live" dance.

Broad use of the huge open landscape as backdrop by Haft had the remarkable effect of effortlessly blowing away the small screen such that fragile human scale ran consistently through the piece. The Shoreline took on an impersonal immensity and this had a profound result. The audience was drawn in to Hayward shoreline's history and development as reserve into a wildlife preserve for jogging and nature walks as the setting for numerous small-scale dance scenarios in which freeway noise, bird life, the Bay; and a power plant became "set."

The deft 360 degree video tour by Winters' gave a proper visual context and Haft discussed her directorial process using basic scripts about "drought" and "flood" with the dancers who then constructed the duets and trios. Ultimately, the entire piece was a mix of movement, environment, voice, video, and site specific detail revealing much about water.

'Bay Requiem' in the context of the Symposium, was "news," "activism," and art, addressing local concerns. Winters' poetic films somehow evoked the domestic work and prior drudgery of the salt industry which once occupied the location. Combinations of dancers performed for nearly two hours, and in each case Haft introduced the themes being responded to, framing for the audience the artistic intentions.

BAY REQUIEM: A WORK IN PROGRESS

Nina Haft & Ian Winters
Oakland, CA, USA

Location: Hayward Regional Shoreline nature center and marsh.

'Bay Requiem' is part of a long-term site-specific project addressing sea level rise around the San Francisco East Bay shoreline created by collaborators Mary Armentrout, Lauren Elder, Nina Haft and Ian Winters. Filmed, performed and presented in the Hayward Regional Shoreline, the telematic showing of the 'Bay Requiem' work in progress for the Waterwheel Symposium was the first public showing of one strand of ideas.

The performance material shown was choreographed as a series of site-specific improvisations by Nina Haft and her dancers, and Mary Armentrout. The visual and sonic material was structured for a Tap presentation by Ian Winters, and filmed by Winters, Elder and Haft. The work on the Tap consisted of pre-recorded video shots of the site at the time of the "King Tides" (when tides reached one of their highest points in years on San Francisco Bay). This was mixed on the Tap with live video of the site-specific performance, and mapping information / live chat about the site.

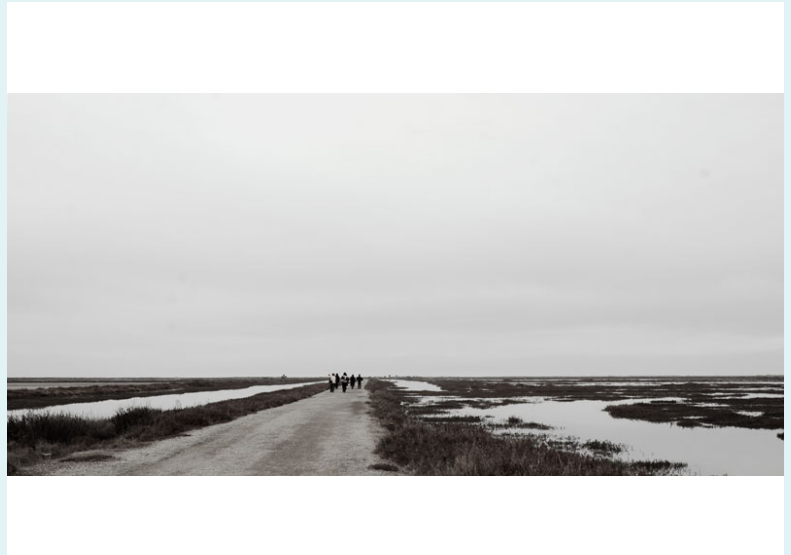


Fig.1 Still from the site.

For Haft, Bay Requiem started as a conversation about impermanence:

Our initial meetings were about king tides—the extreme high and low tides that happen twice a year, and which are often exaggerated by winter weather patterns. For example, the devastation of New York City by Hurricane Sandy revealed the potent alchemy of tides, storm surges and human modifications to the environment. Natural disasters are frequently the result of this kind of multiplier effect.

King tides offer us the opportunity to stand in the now while experiencing the future of sea level rise. Plainly put, king tides flood low-lying areas that someday will be underwater all the time. They help us jump cut across geological time to experience the consequences of our actions, and to perhaps (we hope) make different choices.

As artists, we know each other from our work in the theatre. I am a choreographer whose work is about place. Mary's work offers reveries on presence. As a media artist, Ian is particularly interested in embodiment across real and mediated dimensions. Lauren's work as an environmental and installation artist grapples with climate change in tactile, poetic

forms. We share a sense of grief about what is already lost to climate change. We also share hope for the future. Our work together as artists is to transform future possibilities by asking questions that enable us to fully inhabit the now.

Our first site is the shoreline in Hayward, California where I work and teach. This location is an estuarial reserve on the coastline of the San Francisco Bay. Many of the dancers live, study or work nearby. All of our video was shot in this location, using similar points of view and framing choices. Our site is one of the largest uninterrupted stretches of coastline in the San Francisco Bay. It also carries historical significance as the outlet for the San Leandro Creek watershed. Here is where native Ohlone people foraged and fished. Later, European settlers built Eden Landing, a lively dockyard and market where large fishing vessels sold their daily catches. Before becoming a nature reserve this land was a salt farm.

Today, the Hayward shoreline is a park where people jog and walk and bicycle, next to the loud traffic coming on and off the San Mateo Bridge. Hayward residents who live near the shoreline do not live in luxury; this coastal land has evolved into the kind of industrial complex that occupies much of our waterways. On the other side of the reserve is a large power plant with several stacks of billowing smoke. Millions of people pass by this site every year. Few ever truly experience it. When the Hayward shoreline and downtown is underwater, the entire transit and energy infrastructure of the Bay Area will either adapt or die.

Our first creative research at our site was in January 2014 during winter king tides, when we shot video at and beyond the water's edge. Avoiding the delicate grasslands and mudflats where plants, birds, insects and microbes struggle to survive, we decided to sketch an imaginary journey of "climate refugees," people displaced by water but anchored by each other in community. These images capture some of the grief and hope we brought initially to our conversations; hence our title 'Bay Requiem.'

Our presentation consisted of an open rehearsal of improvisational movement scores emerging from our collective questions about water. Our premise was that human bodies are in fact permeable, embedded in the coastal ecosystem. We are subject to the same forces, tidal and weather patterns, natural disasters and daily challenges to our resilience as are animals, vegetables and minerals. Our practice as movement artists is one of profound transcorporeality—of porous, interdependent and mutually organized existence with the larger body of the San Francisco Bay. By talking and moving together, we are re-membering our bodies as weather vanes. We are re-membering our places in the environment. We are re-membering how to be changed by the world around us, instead of only trying to control it.

As artists, we are developing improvisational scores that emerge from our conversations about:

- Predictability vs unpredictability—we don't know when and how much water will come. This makes it hard to grow food, to feed ourselves and each other.
- Displacement—too much water or not enough of it forces us to migrate, adapt or die.
- Drought versus flood—what it is to have too much or not enough water? How do we hold that experience alone and together?

Each of these questions formed the parameters for our movement at the shoreline. For example, displacement became a task for one dancer to enact upon another, or respond to. Unpredictability was a way to disrupt

pattern, but also to charge a relationship, much the way that natural disasters galvanize our humanity for better and worse. We did not seek to represent these possible futures, but instead to experience them as agents. We believe this practice will cultivate our true power in this unfathomable situation of climate change. We also believe it will invite others to do the same.

Our presentation on the Waterwheel Tap revealed two things: 1) the difficulty of representing a tactile, bodily experience of a vast space in a primarily visual (video) mode; 2) the power of simultaneously being at a specific site in the past (pre-recording), present (live video) and future (sharing questions with a larger community).

We approached the Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center, who are already finding innovative ways to talk with community members about climate change, and are eager to work with local artists in this endeavor. We are, thus, partnering with the Centre on our immersive performances at the site. We envision community potlucks and conversations, creative educational workshops for youth and adults, and more open rehearsals.

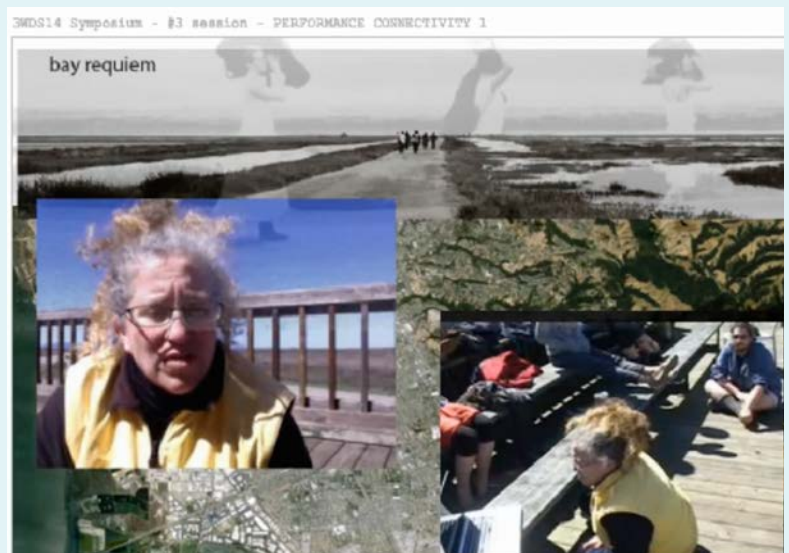


Fig.2 Screen capture from the post-performance chat.

BIOGRAPHIES

Nina Haft & Company is an Oakland-based contemporary dance group. Taking a “live cinema” approach to directing, we integrate movement, sound, light and space into evocative works that foster a deep understanding of place.

Ian Winters is an award winning video & media artist working at the intersections of performance, architectural form, and time-based media. In addition to individual work he often collaborates with composers, directors, and choreographers to create both staged and open-ended media environments through performance, visual and acoustic media.

THE TEAM

Dancers: Josie Alvite, Mary Armentrout, Jessi Barber, Rebecca Chun, Melanie Cutchon, Chris Gallegos, Jasmine Yohai.

Direction: Nina Haft

Video and Media Design: Ian Winters

Camera: Ian Winters, Nina Haft, Lauren Elder

LINKS

For more info: nohaft@gmail.com

<http://ninahaftandcompany.wordpress.com>

<http://www.ianwinters.com/bay-requiem/>

Screen recordings of the Tap presentation intro, & performance excerpt:

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4861

http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4862

PERFORMANCE CONNECTIVITY & RESEARCH – OVERVIEW

by Alberto Vazquez

‘Speak 4.0/LIQUID’ by Alejandra Ceriani, Fabricio Costa Alicedo, Javiera Sanz and Fabián Kesler, from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

This original performance not only realized the aesthetic interaction between machines and man—using MOLDEO, created by Fabrizio, where movements generated by Alejandra (the dancer) together with the sounds generated by Fabian (the musician), produced images of the projection that fed back movements and sounds in a beautiful co-creation—but they went further by involving the audience, who via android smart phones could change the projected images.

So, who modified what to whom? Space and time, a new dimension, passive (audience) and active (performers) are part of a whole, a true and inclusive co-creation.

The authors’ description is very clear:

Through the proposed interface, the ‘Speak 4.0/LIQUID’ installation will be broadcast live via Waterwheel. The facility may be operated by other devices connected to the network (Tablets and Smartphones) through tangible interfaces protocol: TUIO (TuioDroid for android systems TuioPad for iOS systems). These touch devices, by simply pointing to an Internet address, can take over the installation, affecting the image and sound. Also, the Waterwheel platform was treated within Moldeo as a picture, and the resulting image incorporated within the installation.

‘Speak 4.0/LIQUID,’ in which the Internet is used as a living tissue capable of transmuting from a remote part of the world, is set to be created in real time in Buenos Aires. We let go of our creation and we travel through Waterwheel to other users involved and contributing to this dialogue that new communications technologies allow us. A work that is diluted and filtered in launching a global network signal from one geographical area to flow into the digital space and convene the interested community to contribute to the final result of the work as a continuous development process. In other words ‘Speak Liquid’ is configured as a version of the performance that conforms not only through formal processes produced by its members, but also through the contributions that sensitive Waterwheel users can make in a dynamic co-creation process.

S P E A K 4.0 / LIQUID [1]

Alejandra Ceriani [2], Fabián Kesler [3], Fabricio Costa Alisedo [4], Javiera Saez Mansilla [5]
La Plata, Argentina

There must be a kind of painting totally free of the dependence on the figure, or object, which, like music, illustrates nothing, tells no story, and launches no myth. Such painting would simply evoke the incommunicable kingdoms of the spirit, where DREAM becomes thought, where line becomes existence. —Michel Seuphor

Creative processes mediated by new digital technologies give rise to wide-ranging research on the interaction between languages of different disciplines. Works are created that involve professionals from various fields, including performers/dancers, programmers, artists, musicians and, generally those artists in different locations who have met to create complex interdisciplinary pieces.

The artists involved in 'Speak,' who are from different disciplines and backgrounds, have come together on such a premise. With performance as a means of expression, complemented by the use of new technologies, they focused on performing works that highlighted perceptual, sensory experiences and reciprocity. The use of technological devices was part of the communication process used by the artists, combining image, sound and performance.

The use of these technological devices was part of the research and development of the communication processes. Our aim was to create environments and moods that would allow new communication models to be explored, where body expression and processing in real time could meet, while at the same time entering into dialogue with the pictures and sound.

The proposed interface, the 'Speak' installation, was broadcast live on the Waterwheel platform.

The installation could be operated by other devices connected to the internet network, such as tablets and smartphones through the tangible interface protocol: TUIO (TuioDroid for Android systems TuioPad for iOS systems).

Using Moldeo for the visuals, an interactive multimedia software and platform for real time/live audio-visual interactive performance, and Max MSP to build the interactive sound and music system, the 'Speak' installation was available to be taken over by "touch" devices simply by pointing them to an internet address, from where they could interact with the image and sound installation.

The music was specially composed with different kinds of water sounds and various sound processes, which either made the end result more natural, more experimental or more pop sounding according to how the people interacted with the original music played and generated by 'Speak' over the internet. The TUIO messages both played and modified the sounds randomly such that this version of 'Speak' could be thought of as a virtual multimedia, live world jam.

The sound was broadcast in real-time by MP3 160 KB streaming. The instruments-sensors were based on joysticks, smartphones and keyboards that were built by Fabian Kesler.

From this perspective, the 'Speak Liquid' version was configured. The Internet was used as a living tissue capable of transmitting remotely what

was being created in real-time in Buenos Aires. Our creation was thus “freed,” allowing it to travel through the Waterwheel platform to other users, who could then contribute to the interactive, digital dialogue. A signal was launched from a geographical area into digital space, as it encountered the interested community they could contribute to the work in progress. In other words ‘Speak Liquid’ was configured as a version of the performance, which was created not only by the processes of its formal members, but also by contributions that Waterwheel users could make, in this way establishing a dynamic process of co-creation.

Multimedia Technical Specifications

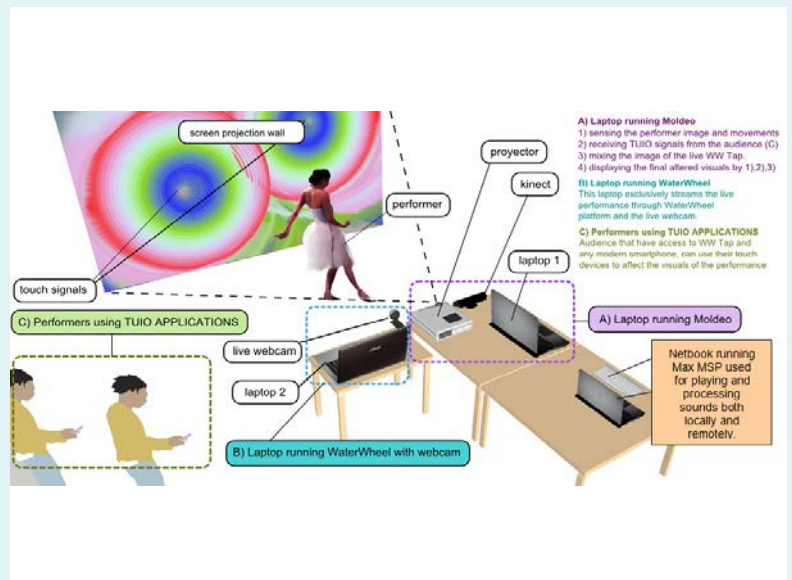


Fig.1 Technical set up of the performance.

A – Laptop running Moldeo

Moldeo carries out the following processes:

1. Sensing the image, body position and movements of the performer. This is done through the Kinect sensor, where image and movement are processed, thereby having an effect on the visuals of the Moldeo canvas.
2. Receiving TUIO signals from the audience (C)
3. Mixing the image of the Waterwheel platform.

Moldeo has an integrated chrome browser that can render a Moldeo texture. In this way, any webpage can be shown, including the Waterwheel platform. We experimented the integration of Waterwheel with Moldeo. Moldeo had its own “crew user” to connect to the Waterwheel platform, enabling and disabling layers from the Waterwheel platform.

4. Display the Moldeo canvas on the screen wall. This was done through the 2800 ansi lumens projector.

B – Laptop running Waterwheel

Waterwheel is the online platform that streams the webcam signal. The information to connect via TuioDroid or TuioPad was available on the Waterwheel end of the platform, in the top left-hand corner, as shown in the picture below (Fig. 2).

C – Sound and music

The water sounds were created and processed from scratch, and interacted with TUIO messages sent by audience members, so the final result was a mix of both, generating a kind of remote digital jam. Following, is the Max MSP template specially created for this event (Fig. 4).

D – Performers using TUIO applications

Audience members of the Waterwheel tap with an iOS or Android smartphones or tablets were able to interact with the visuals of the live performance through the internet. To do this, they had to install a simple free open source application and configure it with the IP displayed on the stage. For iOS devices, such as iPad or iPhones, an application called TuioPad was available for free.

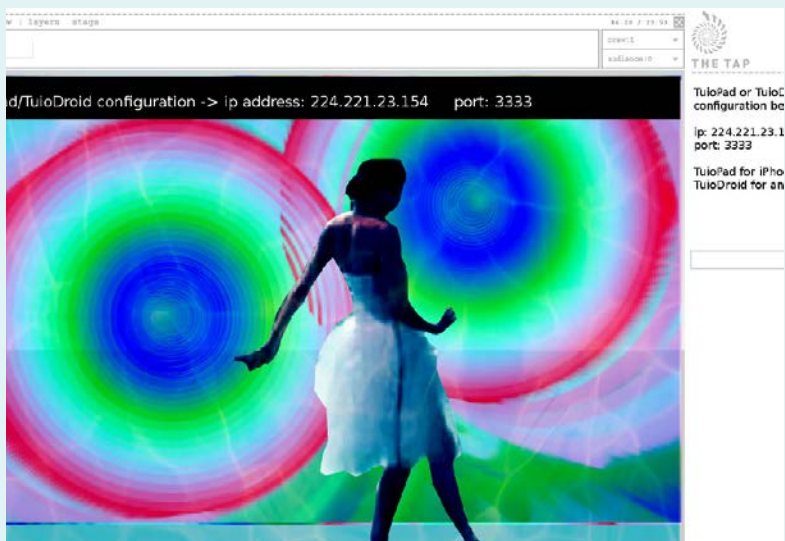


Fig.2 Screen capture of the performance on Waterwheel Tap.

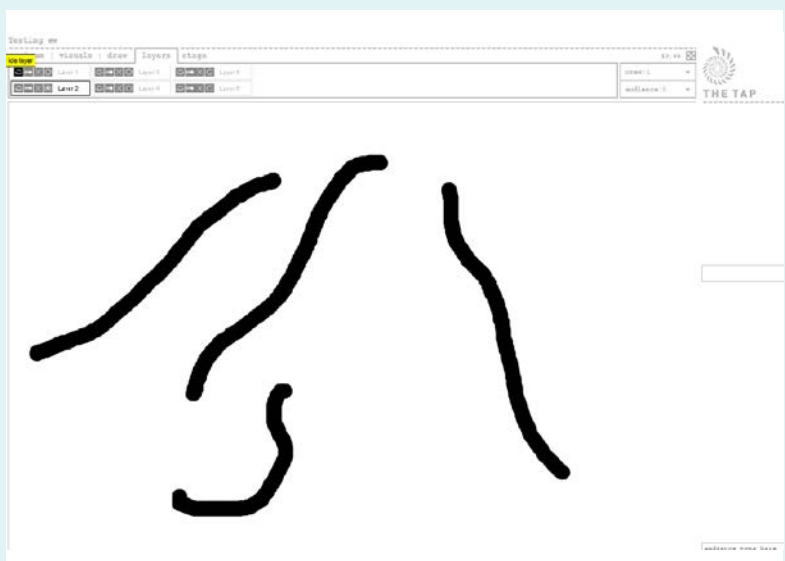


Fig.3 Mixing of Waterwheel layers onto Moldeo through Moldeo chrome plugin, so the performer could interact with the crew on the Waterwheel platform creating the drawings.

BIOGRAPHIES

ALEJANDRA CERIANI graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, UNLP with the titles of Professor and Bachelor of Fine Arts and Ceramics Painting orientation. She has a Masters degree in Aesthetics and Art Theory. She conducts Teaching and Research (category III), and currently has a scholarship from the UNLP to study the interrelationships between the disciplines of the body and new technological mediations. She is working on interactive installations with optical motion capture, including the 'Hoseo Project' (05–13) and the 'Speak' Project (07–14). She is also working on the 'Webcamdanza' Video Dance Project, delivering seminars and participating in presentations and publications across media. Alejandra coordinates the dance series 'En2Tiempos' for the pro-secretariat of Arts & Culture, UNLP (10–13).

FABRIZIO COSTA graduated from the Faculty of UBA in having completed Computer Science, Mathematics and Physical Sciences courses, specializing in the area of Computer Graphics. His work is related to audiovisual systems-programming and graphic design, dedicated to parallel processes. He started Multimedia Arts in 2002 to develop their own digital animation software to be operated mixing live video and 3D animation, which was to become the cornerstone of his work and the basis for directing digital art installations and live visual performances.

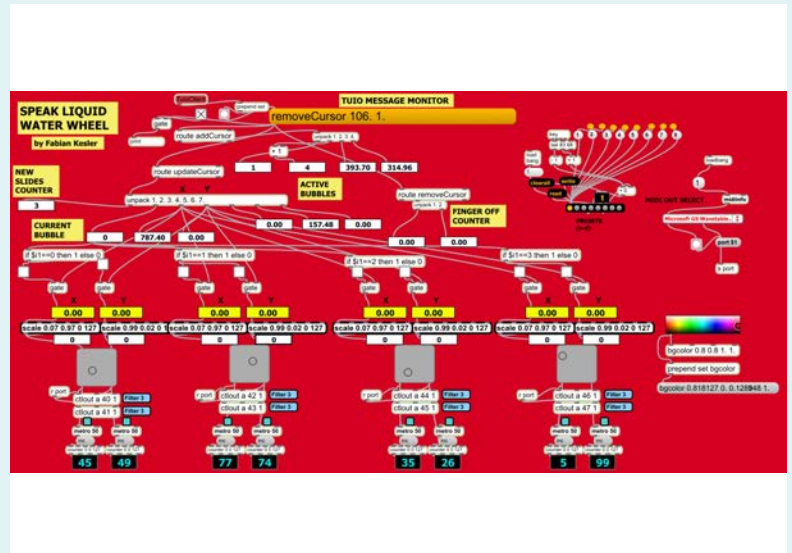


Fig.4 Sound set up on Max MSP by Fabian Kesler.

FABIÁN KESLER has a degree in electroacoustic composition. He is a composer and sound designer, and a teacher of artistic technique in different disciplines and for different ages. He is a keyboard player, multimedia artist, video editor and designer of interactive templates and sensors. He received a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture, Spain, and a group grant as a team member of Prodanza to work on the book 'Speak.' He has been selected by the Argentinian Chancery to host and finance their participation with the SPEAK group Digital Body Festival in Bolivia. He has been part of performances and seminars on art and technology in different Latin American countries (Chile, Bolivia, Uruguay, Ecuador) and in Europe (Cuenca, Spain). His works have been played, edited and acknowledged in America, Europe and Asia.

Javiera Sáez Mansilla (Ma) studied Art History at the International University SEK based in Santiago de Chile, graduating in 2009, after conducting her thesis research on the challenges museological processes involving the inclusion of new technologies in the artistic development. Later she moved to Buenos Aires where she has focused on both theoretical exploration and practice of interactions between art and technology, mainly linked to the paradigm of open source highlighted by her training in Moldeo software, and low tech electronics. She is cukiing on developing a new version of Moldeo, in charge of the training and dissemination of the software.

REFERENCES & LINKS

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- [2] www.alejandraceriani.com.ar
- [3] <http://fabiankesler.blogspot.com.ar> For more info on Max MSP interaction for sound, see <http://fabiankesler.blogspot.com.ar/p/max-msp.html>
- [4] Moldeo, an interactive multimedia software and platform for real

time/live audio-visual interactive performance www.moldeo.org

[5] <https://ar.linkedin.com/pub/javiera-s%C3%A1lez-mansilla/5a/36b/329>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Danzainteractiva>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/WEBCAMDANZA>

TuioPad is an opensource application available in the Apple Store.

Check <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/tuio-pad/id412446962>

TuioDroid is an open source application available in the Google Play

Store for Android devices. Check https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=tuioDroid.impl&hl=es_419



Fig.5 Free apps: TUIOpad used for iOS devices (left), TUIOdroid used for Android devices, such as Samsung Galaxy phones or tablets (right)

Versión Española

S P E A K 4.0 / LIQUIDO [1]

Alejandra Ceriani [2], Fabián Kesler [3], Fabricio Costa Alisedo [4], Javiera Saez Mansilla [5]

La Plata, Argentina

“Debería existir una pintura totalmente libre de la dependencia de la figura- el objeto que- como la música, no cuenta nada, no lanza una historia, no cuenta un mito. Esa pintura se contenta con evocar los reinos incommunicables del espíritu, donde el sueño se convierte en pensamiento, donde el trazo se convierte en existencia.” - Michel Seuphor

Los procesos creativos mediados por las nuevas tecnologías digitales promueven un amplio campo de investigación sobre las prácticas y procedimientos de interacción entre lenguajes de diferentes disciplinas, las que confluyen para generar obras en las que intervienen profesionales de diversas áreas, performers/bailarines, artistas, programadores, músicos y en general artistas de distintas esferas los cuales se conectan para crear piezas complejas producto de los cruces interdisciplinarios.

Es así como en ‘Speak’ confluyimos artistas de diferentes formaciones que a través de la performance, como medio de expresión complementada con el uso de nuevas tecnologías, nos enfocamos en realizar trabajos que se centran en la experiencia perceptiva, sensorial y de reciprocidad. El uso de dispositivos tecnológicos se ve justificado por los procesos comunicativos artísticos que conjugan imagen, sonido y performance.

En otras palabras, es importante recalcar que el uso de estos dispositivos tecnológicos se ve justificada por los procesos investigativos y comunicacionales que desarrollamos en torno a su uso,

a través del cual aspiramos a crear los ambientes y atmósferas que permitan la exploración de nuevos modelos comunicativos en donde se conjugan la expresión del cuerpo y su procesamiento en tiempo real, a la vez que éste dialoga con la imagen y el sonido.

A través de la interfaz que propone Waterwheel se transmitirá en vivo la instalación de ‘Speak.’

La instalación fué intervenida por otros dispositivos conectados a la red como “Tablets y Smartphones” mediados por el protocolo de interfaces tangibles: TUIO (TuioDroid para sistemas android, TuioPad para sistemas iOS).

Gracias al software Moldeo, un software y una plataforma para el desarrollo de instalaciones multimedia interactivas y a Max MSP para construir el sistema interactivo de música y sonido, la instalación interactiva ‘Speak’ estuvo abierta al público asistente en red para ser intervenida por estos dispositivos “touch” con simplemente apuntarlos a una dirección de internet, afectando la imagen y el sonido de la instalación.

La música de esta versión fue compuesta especialmente con diferentes clases de sonidos acuáticos con varios procesos sonoros, generando una resultante más naturalista, más experimental o más pop de acuerdo a como la gente interactúa sobre Internet con la música original tocada y generada por Speak. Los mensajes TUIO generan y modifican el sonido de forma aleatoria entonces esta versión de Speak se pensó como una improvisación mundial multimedia por presencia virtual.

El sonido se transmitió por un “streaming” de sonido mp3 160KB en tiempo real, y se tocaron instrumentos-sensores creados a partir de joysticks, celulares y teclados por Fabian Kesler.

Es bajo esta mirada que se configura la versión ‘Speak Líquido’ en donde se utiliza la red de Internet como un tejido vivo capaz de transmutar desde un punto remoto del mundo lo que se fue creando en tiempo real en Buenos Aires. Nos desprendimos de nuestra creación y la dejamos viajar a través de Waterwheel para que otros usuarios la intervengan y aporten a este diálogo digital interactivo. Una obra que se diluyó y se filtró en la red mundial lanzando una señal desde un espacio geográfico para fluir hacia el espacio digital y convocar a la comunidad interesada que aporte al resultado final de la obra como un proceso en permanente desarrollo. En otras palabras ‘Speak Líquido’ se configuró como una versión de la performance conformada no solo a través de los procesos producidos por sus performances activos y presenciales, sino también a través de los aportes sensibles que pudieron ofrecer los usuarios de Waterwheel en un proceso dinámico de co-creación.

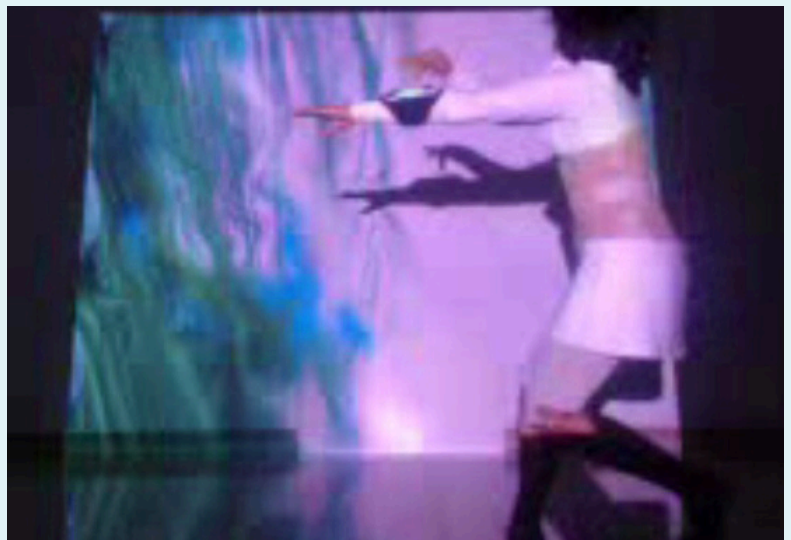


Fig.6 Captura de pantalla ‘SPEAK 4.0 / LIQUIDO’

REFERENCIAS Y LINKS

Por favor consulte la versión en Inglés de arriba.

OCEAN SYNAPSE – OVERVIEW

by Zsuzsanna Soboslay

A grey bay in south Melbourne; a fishing boat in deeper harbour overseas. Red fingernails folding paper boats, pushed across shallows: a different paper boat folded against a coiled rope on the edge of the boat, a different sea. Whirls and eddies, a merging of submergences; long hair, rope coils, red dresses, green seas.

‘Ocean Synapse’ was a glorious affirmation of the online interactive capability offered by the Waterwheel. Sarah Jane Pell and Benjamin Burke uploaded their respective performance videos/documents and let play what will. Remarkable synchronicities of colours, gestures and symbols occurred.

Pell had constructed a performance involving three women, red dresses, small red paper boats, and dives below water. Burke gets onto a fishing boat and tapes what happens, in cabin and on deck. Jumpers and compasses; edges and waves. Above and below.

The huge potential for poetry to occur in the interactions is illustrated in the audience comments, logged as follows:

LCE: These are really lovely images

ZS: ...hair like a mermaid's

ZS: And the fisherman?

A: no fisherman, Sarah and [R] are lovers..

ZS: paper boat upside down becomes a hat and a yoni...

The timelessness of readiness, of chance. Here, the continuity of camerawork, taking it all in, lets things happen. I lament how intentional “documents” miss capturing significant events: “I’ve eaten leaves and soil during performances and always wished someone had caught it on video.” In such an event as Waterwheel provides, asynchronous events come into sync in surprising ways, reminding us of the deep interconnectedness between us and within water, and especially, despite our usual editing processes. Pell and Burke agreed to “meet” online and see what happened. It is clear the delight was both theirs and ours.

OCEAN SYNAPSE: A TRANSEMHISPERE PERFORMANCE EXPLORING CONVERGENCE PHENOMENA AS BODIES IN DRIFT

Sarah Jane Pell, Benjamin Burke

TED Fellows - Melbourne, Australia & Oakland, United States

Abstract

By 2040, all systems collide: information transfers through liquids—oceans and gases—as a ubiquitous mainframe supporting all life and intelligence. We see our planet like a brain with two hemispheres supporting one body. The ocean therefore supports synapse pathways of many bodies in drift. ‘Ocean Synapse’ is a media performance philosophy-in-action event that occurs between two networked artists located in Melbourne and San Francisco. Trans-hemisphere exchange is enabled by digital technologies and historical counterparts and fused with the aesthetics of maritime and ocean lore. The purpose is to critique philosophical and technological convergence phenomena. We exploit poetic formats and a fictional design approach as a research tactic.

We artists exchange a flurry of white paper vessels, representing the day to day deluge of information exchanged between people and neurons alike, until they each decide to share something deeper, more personal and sacred, represented by red paper vessels which they extract from their pockets and mouths and send across the ocean, as they disappear from one screen and appear on the other, having seemingly traversed the great expanse between the players. Finally, both performers submerge themselves completely in this fluid expanse, which connects them, where a final ritual of convergence takes place.

‘Ocean Synapse’ is presented as a live(d) media performance. The audience engages with a series of camera views: 1 x southern hemisphere, 1 x northern hemisphere, and 2 x artist-cams. They contribute digital origami messages and see synapse pathways in real-time on a digital sextant. A literal and poetic performance system comprising of multiple bodies in drift, each body is a vessel containing a message deep within. The significance of the contribution is the poetic framework: a fluid examining of convergence phenomena as flow and its impact across all bodies: ecological, biological, and technological.

Introduction

This paper discusses an experimental performance—‘Ocean Synapse’—which was developed through a process of fluid fictional creative writing exchange between the two authors, and their real-life professional musing over their respective hybrid experimental arts practices and love for the ocean. This paper contributes insights into the technical manifesto or “terms of engagement” developed by the authors, and explores the significance of the poetic framework that continues to guide and examine the convergence phenomena. We will argue that by exploiting post-Heideggerian concepts of bodies in drift (Kroker, 2012, 2013; Pell 2013). Both literally and poetically, Pell and Burke examine approaches to performance with water that may point to the necessity of technology to adapt to us and not the other way around. As the exchange was manifested as two short films, we refer also to the supplementary video documenting the performance of ‘Ocean Synapse.’ While conceived in collaboration, the two short films were creatively developed, performed and produced independently. We see therefore the documentation as a significant outcome of the performance-as-research approach that promotes further discussion and evaluation. The first time the authors saw or heard the final piece was when it premiered live as a media performance for the World Water Day Symposium session on “communication towards collective goals, plans, values and dreams of

governance & stewardship of water for all” on March 21, 2014. The Waterwheel online media broadcast platform enabled the authors to collaborate from two locations, and to present their ideas side-by-side in tandem to a single audio track. Burke and his crew performed in Oakland, US and Pell and her crew performed in Melbourne, AU.

A speculative fiction to critique convergence phenomena and imagine futures

The genre of speculative fiction reflects the monstrous and marvelous imaginings we have for the future: by highlighting firstly, the people, gadgets and environmental phenomena easily reflected or understood in present-day reality, and then by narrative strategies to engage the audience in constructing various possible futures (Heinlein, 1947; Urbanski, 2007). We employ this art form as a strategy for a compelling critique of socio-technological-becoming through the performance and theatricality of an ultrafiction. It is in this state that we see humans someday being able to connect, not just in our current state of hyper-stimulation, but also in this medium of water, which carries sound, bends light and possibly allows for transfer of other forms of energy, and of which science has yet to discover (Pell, 2013). In other words, we imagine a future ocean as the modern-day-equivalent of the Internet of things.

We relate to water as an immersive field for human play, one which even frees us from gravity itself; an outer environment which mimics our inner environment, one in which we seem to almost disappear, where the lines between the conscious and unconscious become blurred (Pell & Burke, 2014). We think of humans most natural state as that of unencumbered play and posit that current technology more often restricts human movements and expressions than it sets them free (Pell & Mueller, 2013). If we understand that the “tool” of a civilized animal (differentiating human evolution from other species) is the symbol and self-consciousness of representative language (Mumford, 1971; 2010), we further note that language itself poses restriction on the expression of our thoughts and feelings. The oceanic environment is the antithesis of this: it is a hydrous, free, immersive and expressive state. The performativity of the oceanic body parallels the performativity of the social and bio-political body of the performers. We therefore choose the ocean as a ubiquitous tool for connecting with each other across hemispheres, states and time zones—as a metaphor and a burgeoning disruptive technology that reflects our current materialization of environment and culture.

‘Ocean Synapse’: a trans-hemisphere performance

The broad philosophical aims of this research project was to use trans-hemispherical media performance to develop and design tools that build capacity for sustainable wellbeing; to architect new systems for bodies in drift (Kroker, 2012); supporting peak states of flow leading to new paradigms that contribute a responsible environmental and cultural custodianship of complex dynamic forms of life including our own; and to finally enliven our senses to the natural world, to enhance our ability to adapt and ensure sustainability.

We assumed that the Ocean was not only a metaphor and point of departure or reference to “other things,” that is, in and of its own, a vital medium, indeed the elixir of life. The ocean is contained within us, and our bodies, as much as we can be contained within an ocean on literal and metaphysical levels. We proposed that a trans-hemispherical exchange could be enabled by digital technologies and historical counterparts and fused with the aesthetics of maritime and ocean lore to critique philosophical and technological convergence phenomena, if we exploited poetic formats and a fictional design approach as a research tactic (Dunne & Raby, 2012) and form of creative activism (Donawerth, 1997).

The adopted approach combined Burke’s use of spent technology design aesthetics and classical story telling through performance poetry with Pell’s cinematic and aquatic performing arts. Each of the artist/authors developed their contribution to the collaborative performance using the tools, techniques and crews of their respective performance expertise. Pell and Burke’s communication and co-creation from opposite sides of the globe mimics that of the characters in the film. Both parties are attempting to hone in on something intangible, some expression of internal human

experience, through the use of external devices. The final resulting short films can be viewed as experimental modes of speculative design or cinematic world building, although that was less of a conscious directive, and more of a tactical resolve to exploit our art, as an expression of the post-Heideggerian bodies in drift and ourselves (Kroker, 2013), searching for connection, and meaning through the love of ocean.

First Movement: Awakening

Aim: Exchange a flurry of white paper vessels from one side of the Pacific Ocean to the other.

Rationale: Represent the day-to-day deluge of information exchanged between people and neurons alike—use white and business corporate references, and a symbol of peace and purity.

Interpretation: Pell exploited motifs of feminine intuition as a tactic response to the day-to-day exchange of information. She employed an actress, an artist and an aerialist to join her on the beach in the Southern Hemisphere. Each participant was guided in a series of playful and imaginative scenarios. Pell did not script or direct, instead she encouraged the possibility of awakening a bodily awareness to perform within the speculative reality of another imagined world. Pell asked each woman to explore sensorial modes of seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling the ocean. Costumed in timeless flesh-coloured dresses, the first movement reveals the characters adopting the possibility of an ocean voice, and curiously exploring the notion that the ocean might be a conduit for transmitting dreams and desires. They begin to ceremonially send and receive white paper boats, by first folding them on their bodies, drawing from their imaginations and bodily outlines, and sending them forthwith with kisses and well wishes.

Scenes from the Northern Hemisphere show Burke on his boat and marina. His character uses unwieldy technology properties employed purposefully in invention. Clumsy bits of marine hardware, vintage phonographs and tinker man gadgetry are being tested with the aim to communicate with subjects on the other side of the world through the seas. We also see Burke using various contraptions to listen for signs of a reply via hydrophones in the water. The first movement follows Burke and a fellow sailor, as they venture beyond these inadequate devices, scene by scene, favoring more intuitive instruments.

Discussion: The two approaches to performance in the different geographic hemispheres begin to reflect the themes of every dichotomy and complementary opposite: none more so than the analogy to the two hemispheres of the biological brain. By virtue of the choices in materiality, employment of crews, locations, props and costuming, the exchange between Pell and Burke also becomes very gendered, and yet parallel. The symbolic motifs of the vessel, the body, the sensorial technology and desire for communication beyond the self are clearly established.



Fig.1 Video Stills of x2 companion video art pieces to the short film 'Ocean Synapse' (2014) by TED Fellows Sarah Jane Pell (AU) and Benjamin Burke (US). Movement 1 'Awakening,' World Water Day Symposium, live Waterwheel event 2014.

Second Movement: Discovering

Aim and Rationale: Send paper boats between two hemispheres. Red boats are introduced. Signals are received. The color of the boats changes from white to red during the performance, denoting this shift in communication towards something sacred, intimate and shared.

Interpretation: Pell's three muses receive a flurry of white paper boats, and the occasional strikingly red boat from across the seas. Emboldened and excited, they switch to red dresses, diving in, dancing calling out, and sending a flurry of sensuously folded red boats in reply.

Burke painstakingly continues to fold a typed letter to send via quasi-nautical contraption when a possible signal of reply is detected. The sailor's machines are abandoned for musical instruments; the ship is abandoned for blue sky, until finally even language itself is abandoned in favor of the act of creation in the form of paper origami boats placed in the water.

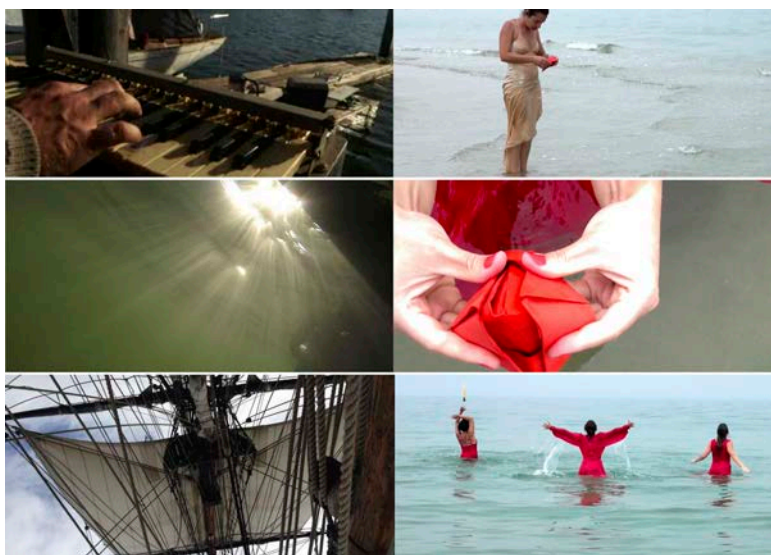


Fig.2 Video Stills of x2 companion video art pieces to the short film 'Ocean Synapse (2014) by TED Fellows: Sarah Jane Pell (AU) and Benjamin Burke (US). Movement 2 'Discovering,' World Water Day Symposium, Live Waterwheel event 2014.

Discussion: In spite of the constraints imposed upon sincere expression and communication by many global communications technologies, the characters scramble to share something at once intangible and imperative. Both performances coincidentally show underwater cameras and boats coming into, and out of, frames at the same time. There is an exchange and an increase in urgency and emotion; there is the discovery of possibility and the enchantment of a reply.

Third Movement: Connecting

Aim and Rationale: Both performers submerge themselves completely in this fluid expanse that connects them, giving themselves up to the world rather than simply manipulating it. This process, from simply thinking to simply feeling, is referred to in some circles as “the two-foot drop,” a reference to the distance traveled between the brain and the heart.

Interpretation: Pell enters the ocean at twilight. As the sun sets, a device over her heart dress begins to glow. She receives, and gently sends, paper boats before going ashore to eat a sea-logged hand-written origami boat as if being nourished by the message it carries. In part, the gesture of this character is one of desire, instinct, and openness and yet equally, it alludes to irrationality and glut. Once filled, Pell is serene and yet powerful. She begins a prayerful gesture of salute and dance in the bay—offering herself to the seas and a final poetic conjuring of the ocean synapse.

Footage in the northern hemisphere shows Burke acting on his discovery. We see him leaving the sanctuary of his known material-mental world in order to make the connection by “taking the drop.” The film culminates in the pair sending “themselves” across the sea and towards their target in a small rowboat, with a red umbrella upon the wind as their guide.

Conclusion

The trans-hemispherical experimental performance ‘Ocean Synapse’ contributes to a critique on the implications of convergence phenomena and bodies in drift. The aesthetics, poetics and technics (human use of technologies) of filmic speculative fiction are used as a tool to promote responsible environmental and cultural custodianship of complex dynamic forms of life including our own, and to enliven our senses to the natural world, to enhance our ability to adapt and ensure sustainability. In conclusion, we note the practice-based-performance outcomes are intuitive and poetic, not scientific. Academic and interrogative aesthetical analysis at this point would not be useful or desirable. Instead, the filmic artifact culminates towards a live manifesto exploring Kroker’s observations of current convergent phenomena and our reflective evolution as “bodies in drift.”



Fig.3 Video Stills of x2 companion video art pieces to the short film ‘Ocean Synapse’ (2014) by TED Fellows: Sarah Jane Pell (AU) and Benjamin Burke (US). Movement 3 ‘Connecting,’ World Water Day Symposium, live Waterwheel event 2014.

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- Screen recording of the Tap performance & presentation:
http://water-wheel.net/media_items/view/4929

ENVISIONING, PERFORMANCE AND POETIC DESIGN AS RESEARCH APPROACH TO PREDICT FUTURE CONVERGENCE BETWEEN BODIES, TECHNOLOGIES AND WATER

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Abstract

Through the lens of envisioning, design fiction, performing arts and creative writing, we examine these frameworks as a research approach to explore current trends and predict future convergence between bodies, technologies and water. We focus on a new work titled 'Ocean Synapse'—a media performance philosophy-in-action event that occurs between two networked artists located in Melbourne (AU) and San Francisco (US). Trans-hemisphere exchange is enabled by digital technologies and historical counterparts and fused with the aesthetics of maritime and ocean lore. By exploiting poetic formats and a fictional design approach as a research tactic, it is proposed that the work embraces flow and its impact across all bodies: ecological, biological, and technological. Building upon the premise of the ritual performance that by 2040, all systems collide: information transfers through liquids—oceans and gases—as a ubiquitous mainframe supporting all life and intelligence. We see our planet like a brain with two hemispheres supporting one body. The ocean therefore supports synapse pathways of many bodies in drift, we dive in, to critique the research approach, highlight the significance of the outcomes and contribute an understanding of the philosophical and technological convergence phenomena.

Background

'Ocean Synapse' premiered as a live stream media performance via the online Waterwheel platform for the World Water Day Symposium on March 21, 2014. The two authors/artists were located in opposite hemispheres. Pell performed live from Melbourne, Australia and Burke from New York, United States. Preliminary filming occurred in Oakland, California and Port Phillip Bay, Victoria across the Pacific Ocean. Maestro and virtuoso Usman Riaz scored the short film in May 2014.

The lens of envisioning and design fiction

In the vein of scenario building of science-fiction or film noir reality, we begin to engage with this performance as research with the premise that "by 2040, all systems collide: information transfers through liquids—oceans and gases—as a ubiquitous mainframe supporting all life and intelligence. We see our planet like a brain with two hemispheres supporting one body. The ocean becomes the medium supporting the synapse pathway of multiple concurrent bodies in drift" (Pell & Burke, 2014). In this paper, we attempt to show that the lens of envisioning and design fiction is a valid poetic tool for the exploration of interactions that test psychological habitability (Peldzus, Dalke & Welsh, 2010) of one possible reality. The scope of our discussions introduces the provocation, the production and performance and the poetry resulting from the convergence of bodies, technologies and water. In our narrative 'Ocean Synapse,' we see water, a natural element that clearly connects us all physiologically (Pell & Mueller, 2013), as the best possible medium for future technology to connect us cognitively. We do not address the direct implications of the research-in-the-world, nor provide analytical data resulting from audience or participant engagements beyond the research-in-action ethnography and our own experience-centred interaction and performance within this fictional scenario. Our contribution to research understands the implications of speculative design, and by designing artefacts and scenarios, the creation of the fictionalised interactions in a public space,

tests our values. In this case, we research through a filmic scenario forecasting emerging technologies and systems for convergence between the human and environment. In the words of Albert Einstein, “There is no place in this new kind of physics both for the field and the matter, for the Field is the only reality.”

Inspired by the recent manifesto ‘Speculative Everything’ (Dunne & Raby, 2013), we note that increasingly authors are surveying a range of ideas, ideals and approaches from cinematic arts to the philosophy of technology, to intentionally frame in idiosyncratic and eclectic reference for practice-based-designers. By seeking to disrupt a general discussion of what the field of conceptual design might be, the methodological playground of envisioning, performance and poetic design can be expanded to stimulate and inspire new convergences of futurology and speculative design.

We highlight both the beauty of a world interconnected through technology and the clumsy, unnatural methods by which that interconnectivity is achieved. We use poetic metaphors including the vessel or boat, in this case the origami paper boat as a form of letter or message in a bottle equivalent, and mystical ocean sirens magical call to sailors.



Fig.1 Video Stills of x2 companion video art pieces to the short film ‘Ocean Synapse’ (2014) by TED Fellows Sarah Jane Pell (AU) and Benjamin Burke (US). Movement 1 Awakening, 2 Discovering, and 3 Connecting, World Water Day Symposium, live Waterwheel event 2014.

Art predicting future convergence between bodies, technologies and water

Current convergences in art and science research are grappling to understand and critique a performing of post-human lives let alone address the question of what it is like to embody and communicate the experience. We see this challenge arising in cutting-edge biotechnology and the arts i.e., exploring the instrumentalisation of life (Catts & Zurr 2012; 2013; Armstrong, 2009, 2012); research on communication of, and with, natural systems data i.e., bio-acoustic mapping (Woo et al., 2005; Helyer & Varenese, 2009); hybrid digital-biological systems i.e., tools for living systems to communicate (van Eke & Lemmers, 2013); and investigations into signs of life (Zurr, 2012; Van den Hengel, 2012; Armstrong & Spiller, 2012) for example.

To address this issue, we employ poetic performance to critique and embody convergence phenomena. Our performance with the ocean is used to reflect that ways we interact with natural and human systems are vastly different to preceding generations. We seek to reinforce the message, that through our poetry and curiosity, we remember the way nature speaks to us. While current forms of communication, energy transfer and resource management, travel and habitation are being sold to us as “faster, smarter, and cheaper” than ever before; this scenario suggests that the ocean literally has a voice and demands that we listen. The implication of the narrative explains that as

technologies advance, humans are de-sensitising to the complexities of language and communication of natural and human systems, and therefore risk failure to adapt to a changing environment.

Poetic Discussion

This project employs human performance and poetics as a tool, to create an unreasonable solution to heighten the instinctually performative nature of bodies in and as natural systems. Bodies represent the mystery of existence itself. In short, human bodies comprise water and stardust. To understand bodies of water is therefore to understand us. The allure of an ocean like that of space extends well beyond the desire to seek novel life and explore new phenomena; it is our source and wellspring of life. Beneath all the complexity that bodies of water entail lays the humbling reflection of our human connection, and the remarkability of Gaia Earth. To understand space-faring bodies is also to understand us. In the great quest for understanding many unanswered questions of life we turn to grand experiments, missions of exploration, and expertise to create, design and build, the tools, instruments and systems that make it possible to acquire new knowledge about the physical, biological and cultural worlds. This knowledge exists in bodies—bodies in drift—between hemispheres, and in flow.

We muse “broad celestial currents, flows and cycles of energy and matter are dynamic and evolving over time. While humans have proven to be a highly adaptive and resilient species by syncopating with the frequencies of natural systems on Earth, there is increasing evidence of discordance between us. The amplitude between the phases of the human and environment increases as we move away from the natural and towards the technical worlds, and so these bodies separate. Depression and anxiety, disease and deficit disorder and infertility, congestion and asphyxiation are symptoms shared by all bodies: human, oceanic and celestial, and therefore indicating that the current technological trajectory is unsustainable without radical harmonization” (Pell & Burke, 2014).

Performance Development

We refer to the performance development in the companion paper: ‘Ocean Synapse: A transhemisphere performance exploring convergence phenomena as bodies in drift.’ This paper outlines, that while conceived in collaboration, the two short films were creatively developed, performed and produced independently. The Waterwheel online media broadcast platform enabled the authors to collaborate from two locations, and to present their ideas side-by-side in tandem to a single audio track. Burke and his crew performed in Oakland, US and Pell and her crew performed in Melbourne, AU. The first time the authors saw or heard the final piece was when it premiered live as a media performance for the World Water Day Symposium session on “communication towards collective goals, plans, values and dreams of governance & stewardship of water for all” March 21, 2014. The live-engagement and the documentation are seen as equally significant outcomes of the performance-as-research approach, and furthermore promote discussion and evaluation.

Indeed, we concluded the performance engagement, and our correspondence, with the following postscript: “In conclusion, we note the practice-based-performance outcomes are intuitive and poetic, not scientific. Academic and interrogative aesthetical analysis at this point would not be useful or desirable. Instead, the artefact culminates towards a live manifesto exploring bodies in drift” (Pell & Burke, 2014). There is still much to be done.

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- Screen recording of the Tap performance & presentation:
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BONEMAP'S FLUID HYBRIDISATION

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Abstract

Can an ecological perspective provide cues for hybrid arts practice? Over the last fifteen years, Bonemap's novel collaborative method has produced hybrid and genre-independent works within the broad field of contemporary arts. Their specific creative methodology relates to a practice and process imbued with an ecological perspective. The approach incorporates a multimodal and intermedial praxis that expands static representations of human creative environments and genres. Using flux, improvisation, participatory and responsive strategies to harness generative form it is argued that Bonemap's work articulates a metaphor of fluid hybridisation.

The authors cite the creative works of Bonemap and other influencers to approach contemporary arts practice with an ecological perspective producing evidence of a fluid hybridisation of artistic genre. Bonemap's key methodological operations are responsive through the embodiment of ecological perceptions, improvisatory through the virtual and the visceral, and participatory through the experience of the implied and explicit. Practiced as spatial concepts, that inform methodological approaches to practice, Bonemap's ecological and artistic concerns consider hybridity and intermediality as linking materiality and immateriality. The evidence considers the hybrid materiality of "unknowing" and "ephemerality" within creative research that further challenges conventions of knowledge creation and the categorization of form. Bonemap's methods are shown as moving towards a proposal for fluid hybridity that is set adrift in the sublime aim to articulate an ecological understanding of interconnected meaning and associations as a unique poetic vessel that bridges the interstices of genre.

Introduction

Engaging in improvisatory and participatory strategies, reflective incursions into the territory and investing in new modalities, outlines a world of practice familiar to the current orbit of contemporary arts and its global reach. Terry Smith suggests:

Art now comes from the whole world, from a growing accumulation of art-producing localities that no longer depend on the approval of a metropolitan centre and are, to an unprecedented degree, connected to each other in a multiplicity of ways, not least regionally and globally. (Smith, 2011)

Curator of New York's 2015 Armory Focus, Omar Kholeif notes, "It is essential for one to consider alternative centres, or starting points for the history of art, as cultural output, audiences and collecting becomes more global" (Kholeif, 2014). Within this world of art, identity and place inflect the conceptual characteristics of globalisation. Elements of memory and recognition, contained in those inflections, begin to underscore a unique ecological layering within cultural territories. Smith claims, "Place making, world picturing and connectivity are the most common concerns of artists these days because they are the substance of contemporary being" (Smith, 2010). Leslie Hill, in discussing place and placelessness as it relates to live art practices, observes that "we either view places from the inside out or from the outside in...and our composite understanding of places lingers on the threshold. Its all about perspective" (Hill & Paris, 2006). This interstitial perspective is additional layering that augments universal familiarity to contemporary forms of expression. It is a position that suggests diversification, rather than convergence, provides new understandings within global aesthetics. Allen Carlson (2009) argues, "We must also look to ecology." Pointing to what may

be called an “ecological approach to the aesthetics of human environments” (Carlson, 2009). Carlson’s environmental aesthetics provide a perspective that “stress ecological factors as a basis for appreciating human environments not as analogous to works of art, but as integral human ecosystems.” As our view of the territory expands, and becomes more dominated by the human, new tools and ways of understanding and being in the terrain need to be incorporated into the material production of our times. Paul Carter’s characterisation of “material thinking” articulates a complex drive to, “...demonstrate the great role works of art can play in the ethical project of becoming (collectively and individually) oneself in a particular place” (Carter, 2004). Carter’s sentiments indicate the role of creative process and collaboration in the formation of a “symbolic representation of the phenomenal.” For Carter engaging in collaboration exemplifies the way identity is formed and, “...to understand how relationships with others are actively invented (and therefore susceptible to reinvention), is essential knowledge if societies are to sustain themselves” (Carter, 2004).

The collaboration of artists engaged with the contemporary art group Bonemap, diversify their core investigative environment by contributing a matrix of personal and discipline-specific perspectives. These individual perspectives are distinguishable in segments and layers. The collaborative methodology is additionally structured from a strata including impetus from the natural environment and the human centred spatial environment. The natural physical environment of Bonemap collaboration is often located within the geographic torrid zone of, lightly urbanised, northern Australia, including the world heritage listed Wet Tropics rainforest and the off shore phenomenon of the Coral Sea’s Great Barrier Reef. The human environment through which Bonemap perceives its flow of influence is mediated and centred on a contemporary manifestation of art practice. The overt and encompassing environmental imperatives provide the symbolic, cultural, social and political tide as a barometer for the embodied praxis of creative production in this localisation. Bonemap operates within this ecology as an artistic collaboration that has arisen from individual practitioners actively engaged in the pursuit of innovations and renovations of artistic practice over time. The influencers and narratives include the seminal ideas of “re-enchantment” that emerged with the broadening ideas of human ecology in the 80’s and 90’s. International writers and contemporary art commentators such as Suzi Gablik (1991) attempted to articulate a rigorous proposal for a critical and creative ecological approach. Many artists such as Australian media artist Keith Armstrong provide further universal pathways for understanding art that facilitates “complex ecological concerns and social participation” (Armstrong, 2007).

Hybridisation

Bonemap’s recent activity includes hosting ‘Fluid Values,’ the Cairns node of the 2014 Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium and contribution of a work to be experienced through the water-wheel.net, Tap internet platform. The improvised and collaborative methodology that Bonemap draws upon is exemplified in the way it rapidly engages in mediated and telematic systems such as the water-wheel.net Tap. Responsive performance works developed for the Tap are inclined towards entropic outcomes. This is due to the uncertain and ephemeral transaction between the maker and the participant of the live Internet Tap platform. Bonemap’s other recent works such as Nerve Engine (2013) (Fig. 1) have developed a level of sophistication through creative iteration, their ambitious scale and complexity amplifying the inherent multiplicity of genre and output they entail. Through this refraction we begin to approach an understanding of work within Bonemap’s field of research and practice as fluid hybridisation.

In a relationship between the vernacular of understanding and the breadth of new thought in art, there has developed a hybridisation of contemporary practice. Genres such as live art materialise form in context and backfill the widening gaps in contemporary arts understanding. Lois Keidon claims live art is, “...acknowledged as one of the most vital and influential of creative spaces, that operates in the cracks of our culture” (Keidon, 2002).



Fig.1 Bonemap, Nerve Engine, intermedial performance installation, 2013.
Photo Tai Inoue.

For Bonemap fluid hybridisation is a rupture that renders the cracks between artistic disciplines overt, revealing fluidity where we expect to find the static. Bonemap succeeds in liberating vernacular form through the intermedial and multimodal processes of hybridisation. The 'Exquisite Resonance of Memory' (2008) (Fig. 2) is a Bonemap event liberating performance from the traditional definition of "performing arts" and the convention of "performance art." In the work, a performer is present for a short moment, however, captured in motion graphics and projected indefinitely as a video wall installation around the perimeter of an architectural space. For Bonemap this is a dialectic expressed in its collaborative methodology, as the ideological tolerance between generic forms, i.e. the tension between the live and the mediated. The methodology resists the patterns that categorise the common attribution of artistic genre such as "dance," "visual arts" or "live art," even if presenters and convention cannot fail to categorise. The tension is played out in the associations that expand genres into multidisciplinary practices. Anthony McCall's expanded cinema works from the 1970's are an historical precedent. McCall convincingly projected solid light through haze filled rooms by reversing the focus from projection screen to projector beam (Eamon, 2005). Yet the categorisation of his works such as 'Line Describing a Cone' (1973) as expanded cinema de-emphasised McCall's hybrid roots in performance (Eamon, 2005). The concept of perceiving light as volume rather than surface is a key hybridisation in the development of Bonemap's latest works.



Fig.2 Bonemap, 'The Exquisite Resonance of Memory,' intermedial installation, 2008.
Photo David Campbell.

For Bonemap, hybridisation positions investigation of materiality as ideological strata in the strategies for making work. Carter (2004) has suggested the process of thinking is different when making works of art. Carter's "material thinking" is multidimensional and artworks are "articulate precisely because they are articulated—jointed or joined together—in a variety of ways and dimensions" (Carter, 2004). Material thinking and ecological perspective provide processes for contemporary arts that are independent of standard categorisation. The practice bears the notion that fluidity within multidisciplinary hybridity is a sliding tolerance neither forming discrete disciplines or reliant on singular manifestations. The intellectual representations of practice indicate that multimodal competencies are a trait within Bonemap's compositional field.

The Bonemap projects 'Terrestrial Nerve' (2013) and 'Nerve Engine' (2013) (Fig. 1) exemplify a hybrid process. Developed as integrated components, these works allow presentational elements to morph between the specifics of public and private space such as the art museum, performance space, small screen and cinema. However, the hybrid work is best described as a form much more ephemeral. It includes a responsive environment with input and output sequences specific to the time and place of audience participation and engagement. The multimodal status of the works includes a series of time-based media that can be presented in the art gallery, online or performed as a spatial projection. In an expansion of genre, Bonemap's responsive environments are intrinsically more ephemeral and improvisatory, requiring systems of immediate generative content and interaction. It is this linking of the generative moment, a physical connection between the performed, the participated and the responsive manifestation of space that fluidly hybridises at the moment of perception.

The attributes of responsive presentational output, and participant engagement are found in the water-wheel.net Tap developed through the deft direction of Belgian/Australian intermedia artist Suzon Fuks. The collaborative online interface of the Tap has drawn the attention of Bonemap artists since its inception in 2011. Bonemap artists have been both collaborators and peer reviewers in the developmental stages of the water-wheel.net Tap. During a node of the 2014 Waterwheel World Water Day Symposium, 'Fluid Values' Bonemap performed the telematic work 'The exquisite liquid, song for water' (2014). During the development of the work generative and live data processing highlighted complexities bringing together an online participatory audience and local generative performer in real time, through the water-wheel.net Tap online interface. The interface itself allows interactivity through collaborative tools. However, these tools are limited to user graphical interface elements accessible, at the time, only by invited "crew" subscribers to the Tap event. Scripted motion graphics can be integrated, but in current iterations of the platform, deployed as packets of code to each end users/audience browser without visual feedback to the host, just local interactivity. Each end user can have their own interaction with scripted (ActionScript) motion graphics content independent of the host performance but concurrently overlaid on it. The mixed use of the water-wheel.net Tap sets up a particular expectation of approach and etiquette where online audiences are both individual (with their own PC interface) or in a group and at a remove with a data projection or other communal screen experience. These variables require a particular integrated narrative to alert each end user potential to the initialisation of appropriate reactive response.

In the work, 'The exquisite liquid, song for water' (2014), the Bonemap performer improvises with the web feed lens, where an extreme close-up of the performer's eye metaphorically represents a body of water. The isolation of the eye in the framing of the lens challenges the performer to consider in what way can the pupil perform? The performer's impetus is internal imagery and the convention of audience feedback is deferred. What are the observations of the online viewer and the offline performer that happen in concert? The live feed of the performance was also layered with generative content developed from ActionScript. Geometric circular forms (representation of bubbles) detect and bounce off each other using collision detection algorithms. The development of the work considered embodied strategies to allow sensorial encounters to occur through the "in" and "out" space of online telematics. Suzon Fuks' (2014) review of Bonemap's 'The exquisite liquid, song for water' articulates the work as "the interactivity between elements, the specificity of the streaming technology and agency of the public." Noting that, "prepared scripted animations ... activated by online audience, and "patches" to process media live and to layer them even more than

what the Tap tools already offer.” Fuks interpreted the work as, an “underwater soundscape, animated cartoon bubbles escaping the stage window, magnifying body close-ups of (the performer) with an iPod camera. Her playful presence, improvisation qualities and attention to the overall rendered moving imagery, demonstrated her experience as an online performer.” The process for ‘The exquisite liquid, song for water’ is equally concerned with the internal generative contribution of improvised choreography by the live performer in unity with the artistic manipulation of the mediated system or “digital engine” that facilitates the telematic event through the Tap interface. The nodal communication of telematic performance and participatory engagement, assisted through the Tap, exemplifies the interrelations that mark an ecological notion of fluid hybridization in this context.

Hybrid fluidity, as the intermedial and materiality of Bonemap’s process, is initiated by engaging in the primary progression of a collaborative multidisciplinary process. The collaborative process is reflective and multimodal. Gathering the thoughts of participating artists may reveal concerns associated with phenomenology, aesthetics, representation, ecology, performance, and communications theory, amongst others. These modalities, as value chains and intellectual adventures, make many disparate symbolic platforms suitable for the hybrid matrix Bonemap generates. This suggests the tolerances of individual modalities within the matrix are active enough to establish and materialise interstitial resonances. These resonances are the frequencies established for the symbolic and participatory regimen of the creative research. The creative process is a collaboration that is given the space and time to lead to its own devices through iteration and unfolding inference. The Bonemap project ‘Rupture and Residue’ (2005) developed a natural environment model of environmental aesthetics as an improvised investigation of the dancing body in a surrounding environment and the extension of the body and surround through media. The creative process was dissociated from specific expectations and standardised outcomes. The collaborators were inhabitants of a communal journey through time, space and material event. During, and as a consequence, of the projects hybrid fluidity many rhizomatic connections and offshoots developed at nodes with their own evolutionary trajectory. For example a significant and unexpected growth trajectory harvested a representational node of the work as a manifestation of mural photography in a commission for a large convention centre (Fig. 3, 4 & 5).

Ecology

Bonemap’s engagement within an ecological perspective can be interpreted as an experiential field that reconciles organism with environment through the praxis of making art. Erin Manning and Brian Massumi (2014) describe “ecological experience” as an:

...intertwining of fields of emergent experience not yet defined as this or that...yet their qualities already interact. The fields, in their immediacy, play off each other, lending their qualities to each other, composing a single field of mutual action, of co-fusion and changing contrast: co-motion. (Manning & Massumi, 2014)

An ecological perspective in this praxis includes the significant embodiment of artistic engagement within an endemic interrelationship to time and place—a relational field. This is what Carter (2004) describes as “the impulse to identify poiesis, or ‘making’ with place-making” in the expression of being and the process of becoming.

To record fluid hybridity in creative research, as two-dimensional text, risks forfeiting the distinctive quality of its material unity, its dimensionality in ecological space. However, the imperative to reconcile the ecological relation of the human and natural environment has been articulated by various authors over a sustained period after modernism. Morris Berman (1981), Suzi Gablik (1992) and Keith Armstrong (2007), amongst many others, provide a cogent and forceful challenge to the supremacy of empirical scientific and commercial attitudes as the basis of relational consciousness to nature. Science’s empirical emphasis on truth-value within a fixed mechanistic world-view focuses on the edict that we can only know the natural world by distancing ourselves from it. To relate the process of making art to the practice of science is, for Carter (2004), to “conceive of the work of art as a detached datum that fails to acknowledge, that the work of art begins as a social relation.”



**Fig.3, 4 & 5 Bonemap, 'Rupture & Residue,' intermedial installation, 2005.
Photos Russell Milledge**

Biologist Rupert Sheldrake (1993) discusses this divisiveness as it relates to “disembodied science” articulated as a separation of nature as “other,” “inanimate” and “object.” Art-science projects such as those proposed by Armstrong (2007) seek to reconcile the ecological perspective through a

co-fusion of creative and scientific research concerns. Armstrong described his art practice as:

... focused around the understanding that our ecological crisis is also a cultural crisis, perpetuated by our sense of separation from the material and immaterial ecologies upon which we depend. This misunderstanding of relationships manifests not only as environmental breakdown, but also in the hemorrhaging of our social fabric. (Armstrong, 2007)

The embodiment of an ecological awareness invokes a methodology of practice beyond the separation of subject/object, organism/environment and animate/inanimate. An important consideration for Bonemap's creative research is the principal of locating knowledge within spatial and temporal interrelationships. Manning & Massumi (2014) consider ecological experience in the immediateness of the environment as a mode of attentiveness.

A dance of attention is the holding pattern of an immersive, almost unidentifiable set of forces that modulate the event in the immediateness of its coming to expression. Attention not to, but with and toward, in and around. Undecomposably. (Manning & Massumi, 2014)



Fig.6 Bonemap, 'The Wild Edge,' fieldwork, 1999. Photo Glen O'Malley

The body and surround represents the material condition central to a spatial field in the participatory art events seminal to the Bonemap project. For example, 'The Wild Edge' (1999) (Fig. 4) was an event engaged with creative research through accessing out-of-awareness perceptions. Time, place, space and sensorial sensitivity beyond habitual movement and experience, were the centre of investigation. 'The Wild Edge' incorporated intense fieldwork and inhabitation in remote environmental locations and journeys over great distances. The projects process methodology aimed at imbuing the artists within a direct and sustained interface with natural conditions, situations and phenomena. This included the ecology of experiences that honour and emphasise subtle and ethereal interventions and interrelationships in the natural world. 'The Wild Edge' and a number of seminal events during the 1980's and 90's, signalled for Bonemap an embodiment of practice that had moved away from the production of artifacts and objects, towards the attunement of experiences. It sought to place subjective arts practice firmly in a non-linear space/time continuum as integral to the unnamable flux that constitutes natural environments. An early influencer on the gathering of Bonemap artists was Japanese dancer Min Tanaka in the 1980's-90's. The experiences with Tanaka revealed embodied techniques to heighten sensorial awareness of physical environmental conditions. Tanaka said, "I don't dance in the place, but I am the place" (Viala & Masson-Sekine, 1988).

The experiences of engaging with Tanaka's method revealed the discontinuity of time perception. His techniques allow shifts within the presence of the performer, who may imaginatively control recognisable body/time/space rhythms. The technique, described by Tanaka as "image work" or "imaginations," substitutes the reaction of sense receptors, such as the dancers skin, with the

imagination of kinesthetic impulses. The aim of the technique is for the dancer to become integrated into the environment or move the environment around and through the body. Physical bodywork within Bonemap's fluid hybridisation is a contribution to the temporal structure of the relational field where the kinesthetic marks a mode of choreographic extension within connections and influences, impacts and subtleties. An example of subtle kinesthetic impact has been articulated by Madeline Gins and Arakawa in their philosophical treatise 'Architectural Body' (2002). Like Tanaka's "image work" and embodiment of environment in dance, Arakawa and Gins (2002) describe "imaging landing sites" as imaginative substitution for kinesthetic vectors. They explore awareness as "events composed of kinesthetic- and proprioceptive- perceptual landing sites" in their articulation of subject and surround. Their thoughts are linked to the design of architecture, however moving the design process to a hybrid multimodal consideration of the fluid spatial trajectories particular to the choreographic and kinesthetic impact within ecological spaces.

Conclusion

Writing of the ecological perspective within hybrid arts practice, as a process of creative research, becomes a double movement that dissects the thinking and articulates the fluid strata of relations in a compositional field. The examples of practice provided by Bonemap's sustained engagement over time demonstrate how an ecological approach interrogates a compositional field providing a mode of operation for the organisation and representation of its hybridity. The structure of fluid hybridity has been demonstrated, through examples of contemporary arts from historical and current practice, as intermedial and multimodal, but also as temporal and shifting. This multiplicity is recorded as being a common current in contemporary arts at the beginning of the 21st Century.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Bonemap is a project-based intermedia arts partnership that encompasses project teams of interdisciplinary and visionary artists with an emphasis on process and presentation. Founded by Russell Milledge and Rebecca Youdell as an artists' collaboration, folding disciplines together, to produce artistic expression in creative spaces, Bonemap is concerned with the ecological edges of civilisation while creating immersive art and performance. Based in far northern Australia, projects often engage Cape York, Torres Strait Islander and international contemporary artists.

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