

DETAILED ADVANCE PROGRAMME

The Aesthetic Interface

MAY 9TH - 12TH



LOCATION: STORE AUD. IT-HUSET,
IT-PARKEN, AARHUS UNIVERSITET

MAY 9TH, WEDNESDAY 9.30-17.00

This day of the conference will discuss the interface in aesthetic and historical terms.

9.30-12.35 INTERFACE ARCHEOLOGY

- **Erkki Huhtamo: Multiple Screens – Intercultural Approaches to Screen Practice(s).**

Abstract:

We associate screens as information surfaces with western technological achievements and media cultural hegemony. The fact that similar screens are observed and manipulated in all corners of the world is taken as a sign of the increasing homogenization of culture; a 'global screen practice' seems to be in the making. Still, although they may not have used the word screen, different cultures have developed "screen practices" in very diverse cultural contexts for hundreds and even thousands of years. From the shadow theatre to the traditions of visual storytelling, screens have been used in countless forms, and associated with complex social, economic and ideological issues. Do these traditions play any role at all when it comes to understanding contemporary high-tech screen practices? Is there anything we could possibly learn from studying them? This paper proposes a media-archaeological approach to understanding screens as intercultural information surfaces. Drawing on fields like visual anthropology and comparative cultural studies, it looks at screens from an extended perspective, making a contribution to "screenology", a hypothetical field of study.

Bio:

Erkki Huhtamo is a media archaeologist, writer, and exhibition curator. He was born in Helsinki, Finland (1958) and works as Professor of Media History and Theory at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), Department of Design | Media Arts. He has published extensively on media archaeology and media arts, lectured worldwide, created television programs and curated media art exhibitions. His research deals with topics like peep media, Marcel Duchamp's optical experiments, the use of 3-D imaging by media artists, the pre-history of the screen, and the archaeology of mobile media. He is currently working on two books, one about the 19th century moving panorama, and another on the archaeology of interactivity.

- **Bodil Marie Thomsen: The Haptic Interface.**

Abstract:

This speech will explore the history behind the outspoken use of different form of haptic imagery in reality-tv, direct news broadcasting and documentary film formats (Dogmafilms etc). In tracing this story to the first feed-back experiments in 1960s video-art and performance it seems plausible that those haptic images of "white noise" were the forerunners of new media immediacy now associated with surveillance cameras, web-cams and digital video. Seen in this context it becomes evident how various manifestations of "reality" should rather be seen as hypermediated transmissions of media signals.

- **Lone Koefoed Hansen: The interface at the skin.**

Abstract:

Philips recently presented Skin Probes, a take on the possibilities of future wearable technologies and more importantly on future ways of engaging in social interaction. Philips' approach reflect a certain take on interfaces, communication, social engagement and not least the role of technology, where the ideal of transparent mediation is still implicitly present. However, the interface as a phenomenon is becoming ambiguous, self aware and not least a significant cultural phenomenon which can be seen in a large number of artistic or critical designs focusing more on how bodies and technology engage in interplay. I will present some of these projects and discuss how they challenge and provoke our understanding of literally embodied technologies.

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12.35 LUNCH

13.35-16.45 AESTHETIC INTERFACE

- **Florian Cramer: What is Interface Aesthetics?**

Abstract:

Common conceptions of "interface aesthetics" suffer from a narrow understanding of what a computer interface is and a superficial notion of aesthetics. What could "Interface Aesthetics" be if it were based on a concept of interfaces as any device connecting any combination of software, hardware and users, and a notion of aesthetics as perception-based apprehension and judgment.

Bio:

Florian Cramer (DE/NL) is a leading theoretician on software art, digital literature and literary code. He is the programmer of the web site 'Permutations' and Free Software activist. Florian is also an author of a number of texts on software art and an undercover artist. He is a Reader in Media Design at the Piet Zwart Institute, Willem de Kooning Academie, Rotterdam.

- **Søren Pold: Interface Perception.**

Abstract:

Walter Benjamin introduced the idea that sense perception is not only biologically grounded, but is also developed culturally and historically. This talk will discuss the interface in this perspective. The interface is where we can sense (read, see, hear...) the effects of the machine, however the interface is not only a screen, but also an input device which allows for a cybernetic feedback loop, where the machine - through the interface - registers the behavior of the recipient. I will discuss how this double two way perceptual loop and its effects on perception are articulated in contemporary net- and software art.

- **Jacob Wamberg: Interface/Interlace, Or Is Telepresence Teleological?**

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Abstract:

Foregrounding the functional dimension of the interface leads to an intermingling, an interlace, of medium (representation) and machine (reality), thereby establishing the oxymoronic possibility of telepresence, the mediated presence in remote locations. Through a reconsideration of aesthetics in relation to the concept 'affordance', the facilitated use, I will ask if this interlace implies a teleological dimension.

16.45 BOOK RELEASE RECEPTION

- for *Interface - digital kunst & kultur* & *Passepartout's Interface* issue



MAY 10TH, THURSDAY 9.30-17.00

This day of the conference will discuss cultural, social, and political issues of the interface

9.30-12.30 INTERFACE POLITICS

- **Inke Arns: Transparency and Politics. On Spaces of the Political beyond the Visible, or: How transparency came to be the lead paradigm of the 21st century.**

Abstract:

While the ‚disciplinary societies‘ as described by Michel Foucault were characterized by built enclosures that Gilles Deleuze compared to “casting moulds”, in today’s ‚societies of control‘ monitoring and modulation have appeared resembling a “self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the next” (Gilles Deleuze: Postscript on the Societies of Control, in: L'autre journal, Nr. I, May 1990). This self-deforming cast is characterized by transparency (= invisibility - withdrawing from our immediate sensory perception (Cp. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transparency_%28disambiguation%29, 8. April 2007)), immateriality (which is a quasi factual materiality interconnecting single materialities), and performativity (“code-is-law”). In this lecture I will analyse the contradictory meanings of the notion of transparency, and discuss artistic/activist strategies for making these invisible performative layers - that increasingly structure our everyday life - visible.

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Bio:

Inke Arns (DE): After having worked since 1993 as an independent curator and author focussing on media art, net cultures and Eastern Europe, Inke Arns (Dr. / PhD) since January 2005 is the artistic director of Hartware MedienKunstVerein in Dortmund, Germany (www.hmkv.de).

- **Jacob Lillemose: Interfacing the Interfaces of Free Software. X-devian: The New Technologies to the People System.**

Abstract:

Taking my point of departure in an analysis of Daniel Garcia Andujar’s installation project X-Devian - The New Technologies to the People System I will argue for an expansion of the concept of the interface and consequently of the aesthetics of interfaces.

Rather than limiting the concept to simple human-computer interaction I will discuss how computer culture is interfaced through various discourses (from advertising campaigns to media coverage) and how art can 'interface' this interfacing.

- **Christian Ulrik Andersen: 'Writerly gaming' - social impact games.**

Abstract:

The correspondence between game and reality is usually regarded as a representational relationship. Discussing the correspondence, one must, however, also look into the relation between game and player: The interests of the player and the staging of the player in the game. Games can be consumer software for private entertainment (looking/feeling real) or they can be pragmatic software used for training of professionals (affecting soldiers', pilots', etc. perception of the real). A third, and less debated game-reality relationship, based on public awareness and typically a socio-political agenda seem to be emerging in the field of gaming. The presentation will focus on this new correspondence, describe its different appearances, elaborate various historical traces and argue that user access to a textual, constitutive level of the game seems intrinsically linked with the genre.

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12.30 LUNCH

13.30-17.00 INTERFACE SPACE ECONOMY

- **Matthew Fuller: The Computation of Space.**

Abstract:

'Technological progress' has generated many new materials, and incorporated computation into many levels of their fabrication. This has established the possibility to create a new diversity of spatial forms and to begin to identify experimental methods of construction that weave the foundational abstraction of computation into their fabric. Once the joints are in place however, or the welds are made, the process of creation stops. We have yet to experience a space that is fully computational. This text aims to suggest a small means of doing so.

Bio:

Mathew Fuller (UK) is at Goldsmith College, University of London. He is author of *ATM*; *behind the Blip*, essays on the culture of software; *Media Ecologies*, materialist energies in art and technoculture and the forthcoming pamphlet, *Softness: interrogability*; general intellect; art methodologies in software. He is a regular collaborator with the artists group Mongrel.

- **Henrik Kaare Nielsen: The Interface and the Public Sphere**

Abstract:

The paper will in a primarily theoretical discourse discuss central potentials and risks of the digital media (here understood as the combination of the computer and the Internet) in the perspective of the democratic public sphere. Initially the concept of the public sphere will be qualified critically, thereafter general features of the conditions of the public sphere in late modernity will be characterized, and finally the specific properties and perspectives of the interface of the digital media will be discussed within this overall framing.

- **Christophe Bruno: Collective hallucination and capitalism 2.0.**

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Bio:

Christophe Bruno (FR) lives and works in Paris. Awarded with several prizes, e.g. the ARCO price, Madrid for *Fascinum*, the Share price, Torino for *Human Browser*, and an Honorary Mention at the Prix Ars Electronica 2003 for his piece *The Google Adwords Happening*. His work has been shown internationally: Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Transmediale in Berlin, galerie Sollertis in Toulouse, ICC in Tokyo, Nuit Blanche de Paris, File Festival in Sao Paulo, Modern Art Museum of the city of Paris, Tirana Biennale of Contemporary Art, f.2004@shangai, ReJoyce Festival in Dublin, Ichim in Paris, POes1s.net in Berlin, Microwave Media Art Festival in Honk-Kong, Read_Me Festival in Dortmund and Aarhus, Vidarte in Mexico City... He divides his time between his artistic activity, teaching, lectures and publications.



MAY 11TH, FRIDAY 9.15-17.00

*The last day of the conference will together with the Spor/
Tekne workshop discuss software and its creative potentials*

9.15-11.45 SOFTWARE INTERFACE

- **Geoff Cox: Means-End of Software.**

Abstract:

It has become common to replace a critical engagement of the interface with what lies behind it: source code. The paper investigates the performative dimension of code and the potential for software to break what Hannah Arendt calls the 'means-end chain'. Further evoking Giorgio Agamben, the disruption of the false distinction between means-end, or code-execution, presents the possibility of means without end.

Bio:

Geoff Cox is an artist, teacher and projects organiser as well as currently lecturer at the University of Plymouth (UK), and a member of the research faculty of Transart Institute (Donau University, Krems, A). He has a research interest in 'software art' expressed in various critical writings and projects, such as the co-curated touring exhibition 'Generator' (2002/03) and his PhD thesis 'Antithesis: The Dialectics of Software Art' (2006). He co-edited 'Economising Culture' and 'Engineering Culture' as part of the DATA browser series (Autonomedia 2004 & 05). He is also a trustee of Kahve-Society, on the council of management of Spacex gallery, and a trustee of the UK Museum of Ordure. <http://www.anti-thesis.net/>

- **Morten Breinbjerg: Music automata: the creative machine or how music and compositional practices is modeled in software.**

Abstract:

The unfolding of music can be prescribed in computer code and executed by computers. This changes not only the role of the composer but forces us to reflect the cultural understanding of music, music material and composition. These aspects will be discussed in relation to a number of works of different composers and artists.

- **Closing remarks**

11.45-13.00 LUNCH

Workshops and Exhibition

13.00-17.00 SPOR/TEKNE WORKSHOP: SENSORS_SONICS_SIGHTS

(location: Officersalen, Kulturhus Århus)

The workshop will consist of three lectures, one by each member of Sensors_Sonics_Sights. Each lecture will be one hour, plus 15 minutes for questions.

- **Laurent Dailleau: History of instrumental electro-acoustic music, with a focus on the Theremin.**

Info:

Other historical gestural instruments such as the Ondes Martenot will also be discussed. This follows a lecture that was given at the Cite de la Musique for their Musee de la Musique. At the end of the lecture presentation, Dailleau will give a demonstration of the function, operation, and performance practice of the Theremin.

- **Cecile Babiole: Experiments in sound/image coordination, with a focus on the musical use of video tracking and 3D graphics techniques.**

Info:

Babiole will present her work, in performance group context of S.S.S, but also of solo installation work, as well as her recent DVD release, Crumple Zone. She will introduce techniques of video tracking for audio-visual installations in public space. She will discuss application of 3D graphics programming in OpenGL for real-time use in dance performance. This includes pre-authoring in 3D animation programs and execution in live environments like Jitter.

- **Atau Tanaka: Composing for New Instruments and New Infrastructures.**

Info:

Tanaka will retrace a composer's approach to making new musical forms for instruments built with interactive technologies and networks. This includes discussion of the BioMuse, a biosignal-based musical instrument, Promethee-Numerique, a horspiel for Internet, and Net_Derive, a locative media musical work for mobile phones. Across these changing technologies, Tanaka defends the importance of the composer's approach of idiomatic writing, that of finding the musical voice of the medium.

17.00 OPENING OF EXHIBITION AT AARHUS KUNSTBYGNING

- **Daniel Garcia Andujar: x-devian by knoppix. Technologies to the People.**

Info:

The installation x-devian by knoppix. Technologies to the People created by the Spanish artist Daniel Garcia Andujar, thematizes the interface between man and computers. Andujar examines how the correlation “codes” our understanding of the computer as a piece of technology and our notions about the digital culture that the relation between man and computers are able to create.

Often this interface is understood in relation to its functionality in our use of the computer, but with his installation Daniel Garcia Andujar expands its meaning to also include the imagery used by the software industry in the marketing of its products plus the practical and conceptual contents of non-commercial software like for instance, Linux. Thus the installation consists of two parts: A so-called front end, where x-devian by knoppix is presented with all the accompanying cool graphic design, up-speed commercial and modern slogans, and a so-called back end, where the visitors can lose themselves in the possibilities of the operating systems as technology and culture.

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Bio:

Daniel Garcia Andujar is a member of the internationally well-renowned web-server community irrational.org, and within the last ten years he has received a lot of recognition for his artistic work with technology and culture. The exhibition is curated by Jacob Lillemose, Artnode in collaboration with TEKNE and The Aarhus Art Building.

The exhibition is open from May 12th - June 10th between 10am and 5pm - closed on Mondays.



MAY 12TH, SATURDAY

TEKNE Workshops (location Aarhus Kunstbygning).

Registration required for workshops: www.teknenet.dk

10.00-13.00 CURATING DIGITAL ART

- **Inke Arns & Erkki Huhtamo: How is it possible to exhibit an art form with anti-institutional tendencies, which is often time-based, interactive, and requires technological equipment and expertise? How does it fit into art institutions and art historical traditions and categories? How do audiences react?**

Bio:

After having worked since 1993 as an independent curator and author focusing on media art, net cultures and Eastern Europe, Inke Arns (Dr. / PhD) since January 2005 is the artistic director of Hartware MedienKunstVerein in Dortmund, Germany (www.hmkv.de). Professor Erkki Huhtamo's (USA, UCLA) recent work has dealt with media archaeology, an emerging approach he has pioneered (together with others, like Siegfried Zielinski) since the early 1990's. He has curated exhibitions such as "Alien Intelligence", at Kiasma, Helsinki and performed at Ars Electronica.

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13.00-14.00 LUNCH

14.00-17.00 WORKSHOP WITH DANIEL GARCIA ANDUJAR

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THE AESTHETIC INTERFACE

MAY 9TH - 12TH



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Organised by:

The Aesthetics of Interface Culture, Digital Aesthetics Research Center. TEKNE, Aarhus Kunstbygning, The Doctoral School in Arts and Aesthetics.

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WWW.INTERFAKULTUR.AU.DK &
WWW.TEKNENET.DK**