



GoApe Issue #2 Feb 06

Riding the 'patabike: Ich spiele Leben Marguerite Charmante

*Ich spiele mit der Zeit, ich hab genug davon.
Ich spiele mit der Macht, wer will das schon.
Ich spiele mit Musik, ich spiele jeden Ton, ich spiele Leben.
Hansi Lang (1984)*



In a sloping spiral curve the historic 'pataphysical bike breaks into pieces. Instead of dumping it in the trash can of art history, it can be recycled and poetically circuit bent. As an absurd forerunner of the bi-cycle, the monowheel appears to represent in itself an icon for imaginary solutions. Number 6, the first paradigmatic prisoner trapped on an informatic island, is himself a bachelor and identified by the vélocipède batch. The nouvelle société ludique investigates new bachelor machines again, but now these are over-clocked into living machines. The mise en scène of these play objects in life defines the line of ludics as a process of inquiry, as a game, a discipline based on arts real play and scholarship.

Riding the new monowheel with a firm grip but not thwarted in artistic passion helps to overcome the frame of the bike, the stiff 'cadre' of the bicycle, which became the epphénomène of a simple model of a technical machine in time. Alfred Jarry (1898) was framing his mindset by the bike of the time. Now the jeune 'pataphysicienne rides a monowheel, organises her affiliates helix' angel like in chapters and acts as penseuse maudite, as wicked severe thinker, a bon mot which Deluze originally had attributed to Nietzsche (1965). This discourse-theoretical framing drives closer towards Nietzsche's vibrant dictum of a 'gay science' in playful formats as aphorisms and poetry, transferred to life in Real Gaming and Real Playing.

The afore mentioned nouvelle 'pataphysicienne, Soeur Ubu, highlights a certain social life and mediated art sets as a game with a Real Gamer contrainte, a bondage. The concept of restraint is purchased from the group Oulipo, the legendary garage for the potentialities (potentates) in literature, but as ouXpo in all other fields of life as well. Some ludic socialities appropriated the practice of the ouvroir in society chapters for self-determined 'lust-oriented' 'gamish' work. To elude the illusionary and overcome the illusion of an all-life-long playing society, the contrainte is not a limitation, but an intentionally chosen poetic rule of play in 'Ludistik'. Sticking to the mercurial thievishness as a massively Real Player authenticator obviously constitutes the first contrainte of the hereby entered distinct level of LS Real Plays. The second



rule arrogates breaking the rules itself, a concept exemplarily exercised in GTA San Andreas as a seminal life model. To the 'patabiker in GTA, the monowheel appears as the most desirable vehicle to be driven. Just as in standard real life it can be significantly more easily obtained by cheats. If following the hereby opened potential 'pataspiral of retorsion thinking, where each step grounds the power of the next one, the rules of pure observation of games, as common in ludology and narratology, are broken in ludics like a stiff bike frame (Jarry's cadre) in a race.

Sometimes stiffness is desired, as in certain moments in life or in the play with bachelor machines or in the focus of 'pataphysics on the production of texts and other objects of attention, although very playful ones, if you think of the low-techy appealing taphon. But if the passion of Jesus is considered as an uphill bicycle race, each passion ride must be taken with a firm grip! The nouvelle 'pataphysicienne Rose Selay takes white to play and win, du(cha)mps the atomic elements of the crashed 'patabike finally for a self-sufficiently rotating monowheel, and then stitches glitches together on a ludic bread board. The ludic socialities of the known Ludic Society Chapter Vienna (Jahrmann/Moswitzer/ Savicic), actually involved in a new series of objets célibataires, call their processing drawings and later also fully dressed and equipped printed circuit boards, 'pataboards.

"Playing for souls. No blood, no guts, no gore - emotionally full games." (Christian Game Dev. Association, 2005) Experience PCB boards as 'objet de jeu, de vie et d'art' stand for emotionally charged game (re)search. The parenthetically Fibonacci spiraled layouts of most of their conducting paths become a design element, an aesthetic merit, and cause potential glitches, which are merely empowered by flexible resistors, which can be played like a guitar! The play (non stage as band) is a play in the living machine. Cul-de-sac, the dead end street can be exited by destroying laptop-music, as neo-ludite in an ludic act, by literally smashing the laptop instead of the guitar as stage performance. The live demonstration of roling the potentiometer soldered with hot air on the self-etched circuit board allegorises the ride on the monowheel. The stage tool still is a chindogu (useless object), but starts to work



Topic Issue #2
objets de jeu, vie et l'art!

The Ludic Society Chapters represent an international association of artists, game practitioners and theorists who seek to provoke a new artistic re/research discipline, which is 'best addressed as 'ludics' (Ludistik).

The re/research methodologies proposed are anticipative, all members are active in game development, theory and arts. They are defining their art works as play investigations. The proposed and used methodologies consist of a growing series of art games in real world sites and performative formats. Its objectives are play objects, developed by the individual members of the group as well as papers by socialities. The mis en scène of society affiliates and objets de jeu et vie are keywords in this trajectory.

Ludic Society affiliates February 2006:
Mr. Minietek, Ernst Struhal, DJ Glow, Mathias Fuchs, P.M. Ong, Maia Engell, Eward Castronova, Marina Grzinic, Beat Suter, Doris C. Rusch, Julia Tabakhova, maxOh_, Wolfgang Fiel, F.E. Rakuschan, Gordan Savicic, René Bauer, Cynthia Haynes, Mike Phillips.

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Number 6: my life is my own.
'The Prisoner', Patrick McGochan, 1967



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GTA: Monocycle Mod, Blues The Squirrel, 2005

more célibataire, acts more self-sufficient, rotates like a millwheel for music and makes the socialite even more attractive when playing with it. These are objets célibataires, sisters are doing it for themselves!

In "the logics of the imaginative" Roger Callois (1973) suggests the mollusc as soft conception model, which is obviously an adequate frame of experience for the hereby proposed proceedings of ludics (Ludistik). The mollusc mood styled smooth new objets célibataires trigger electronic and 'pataphysic poetic glitches, as a followup series of the ludic society gamebased search artifacts of 'GoApe-Chindogus'. Here glitch designed means that the processing drawings for the printed circuit boards are curved, twisted, twirled and spiraled, which is chique but abandoned in standard circuit board design, exactly because of possible electronic errors, called glitches for short. The spiral was not only the badge of Boris Vian, also on stage in Projex Pere Ubu concerts and at Oulipo meetings, it is also the PC layout for the LS objects referred to. The nouvelle société ludique is identified by the tin-plated circuit monowheel batch. If put on stage, it activates the Real Game and hands it over to each of us - the Real Players!

Nouveaux exercices de style, the new lessons in freestyle gaming are provided by the play of the new series of objets célibataires on stage as the climax of their use. Gaming that takes place in the banlieue as a strategy to appropriate the architecture of urban life is an example of this attitude. If style is an attitude (Audrey Hepburn in Breakfast at Tiffany's, 1961) then this can be claimed for the uninsured strolling workers and painters at the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge (which was once considered as one of the technical wonders of the potency of engineers), who

were risking their life forced by monetary and survival demands, but presented and mediated as proud players, real gamers with nothing to lose, who enjoy the work and their exploitation and develop a competitive sport out of it by hanging in the wires of the bridge, as skywalkers without any safety net. Following Roger Callois' game classifications again, the competition is one of the oldest and most fundamental types of play,ilinx, getting ill by the bodily experience, is the second fundamental one, and both types can be applied to the real gamers on the Brooklyn Bridge, to the le-parkour jumpers in the banlieues, to the car burners in the streets of Paris, Rotterdam, North Germany and GTA San Andreas.

In their conception as live tools for performances in club contexts the above mentioned objets célibataires can be compared to a playful Lebensmaschine= living machine in the sense of Christoph Schlingensiefel. When he presents the re-make of the historic theater-machine animatograph, he follows in its format works of avantgarde artists such as László Moholy Nagy, who constructed with his light-space-modulator what were at first glance useless multi-layered spaces as stages for play in reality. From the ludics point of view this new animatograph intends to be a "graphical" glitch machine, which engraves texts into the scene play and its surrounding realities. This black boxed deus ex machina is an effort to liberate from the pure art forms, as the art form of (stage)-play. For this purpose a real play machine needs to be created, which the ludic socialite can compare to other play objects. The historic Animatograph from 1896 by Robert W. Paul was conceptualized as a machine, projecting out of the illusionary play-works into the real-world stage. At the moment of their creation experimental machines of this kind were useless art projects, a sort of visual



French mosaicist: Design of M. Gautier, 1881

theremins playing with the promises of technologies. The synthesizer, the vocoder or the very convincing supersecretary voder of the 1940s Bell Laboratories were all such projectory objects of bachelors, which we would consider today as circuit bending machines. Especially the voder as a speech synthesizing object incorporates the direct use of the typewriter as listening aid (Röller 2005) and live audio tool, which replaces the often sexually connotated secretary. In an act of variantology, understood as relationship between norm and deviation, the ludic synthesizer will be driven by a spiralcured poetic object cèlibataire. The vocoder made its way onto the stage of fiction technologies, especially with artists as George Clinton and Parliament, with Bootsy and Sun Ra, in short the afrofuturist fiction strain in music.

Another Real Player, the ordinary female switchboard operator, nowadays plays with micro circuit connections on stage. She demonstrates the continuation of avant-garde techniques as cut-up, collage and automatic writing (William S. Burroughs). To envision this live gig, please call up your mental images of Godard's Alphaville (1964) or of the Anti-Pop Consortium's Perpendicular/Vector clip (2002), where the switchboard girl is incorporated as an icon. "The girls who get the calls, the girls who get the rings, are those who are in the know (...when it comes to caring for their clothes)." Advertisement quoted by McLuhan,

The Mechanical Bride (1951). So the one who eludes the conception of the chess player Marcel Duchamp and his dark chocolate (German: Herenschokolade) mill, is the self-proclaimed new mechanical bride, the charming Skype mistress who rides 'pataboards just by social engineering for a new game, for a new life!

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play our whole lives long. It can be observed, however, that the scope of the individual is becoming more and more constrained, and playing is increasingly something that one must be able to afford.

[1] Schreiber, Daniel Paul. *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken*, Ulstein 1982 (English translation: *Memoirs of My Mental Illness*). In this book Daniel Schreiber, son of the inventor of the *Schreibergarten* (allotment garden), described his everyday life and mental world during his stays in a mental hospital, developing his own mental system that partially rationalized delusional experiences. This resulted in a closed and stringent system of assumptions, rules and

consequences. Schreiber integrated the most recent insights of his day into genetics, theory of thinking etc. to construct a whole.

[2] Wikipedia. The Designers Republic;

[3] Weder, Mirjam. "Wir sind was wir kontrollieren". Verlag Berlin, 2000, p. 93/94.

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The End of Childhood P.M. Ong

"I would agree with the experience that we are meanwhile treated like game figures. Every morning at work we can observe that the game rules change and we always have to be someone else. Sometimes Super-Mario, sometimes PacMan, sometimes a turtle, sometimes a frog, sometimes a lemming or a number. We are constantly transforming ourselves and yet are no longer ever liberated. The games of today have actually long since become the realization of what Daniel Paul Schreiber describes in his 'Memoirs of My Mental Illness'. There are closed systems that we cannot understand, that we must always model improvisationally, because we are suddenly in the same rooms in which new monsters repeatedly appear out of nothingness, people that turn into corpses or even animals, endless hallways, and with Schreiber [1] we find ourselves wondering: "How do we know whether the moon is still shining outside?" Schreiber's influences are fading, there are increasingly adapted game worlds, which is regrettable, and yet we can live out our phantasms today, knowing that we have a space that can be defined and ultimately shaped, and this mental space, this space of possibilities cannot be extinguished. Finally, the extension of virtuality is constantly changing us, and the question arises as to whether we have not long found ourselves in other worlds than Baudrillard, who must still recognize the concept of reality like Allegra Geller from eXistenZ. The reality-virtuality difference has probably become a game from the rubbish bin, a cartridge that is unfortunately still running on several billion people." (René Bauer)

The collapse of Real Communism was an (earth-) Quake, which also had an impact in the realm of games, the effects of which are still measurable. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the world became boundless and could thus be (virtually) shaped. Since then we human beings have been living as constructs on a rolling Marble Madness ball. The game of two utopias turned into a monocausal system is connected by a worldwide network of communication. It is an absolute system, a game that demands everything from each of its players and where getting going is impossible. As consolation, there are still the games in the game. There you can do whatever you want.

This is the world we wake up in every day. The rules of this absolute game are: "work, consume, buy, die" [2]. It means keeping the body going, earning a living, working and consuming. We no longer wake up as bugs, as in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, more likely as SuperMarios, LaraCrofts or as our own Sims [3]. We are in a world of game figures, in which we have already turned ourselves into our own role-plays with our self-imposed rules. The absolute game that some call reality is a massive role-play that projects a million co-players onto the skin of every one of us, and it is a game of "every man/woman for themselves". Escape

attempts invariably end in the halls of Doom, which provides a good philosophical model of the real world. How do those children, who are actually allowed to play, deal with it?

As is well known, at only 150 - 200 years old, childhood is a relatively recent invention in comparison with "reason" or even "soul". This period was established to free the child from the battle for survival. Children should be allowed to play during this time, which was a cleared space: a lacuna and a laboratory before learning to read and write. "Childhood" as a period of respite. Now, however, the child is sacrificed to the absolute MMPRG reality. There are discussions about starting children in school at the age of 2 or 3. Parallel to this, children have been connected to the game for some time already, to the competitive programs from swimming to ballet. The period of respite is slowly being rescinded.

Playing has always been a way of differentiating one self, of generating reality. How do children and adolescents differentiate themselves now, if grown-ups play too? Is "child's play" a solution, or will children no longer even want to play in the future?

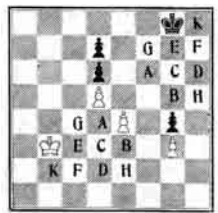
Baudrillard summarized the concept of play as follows: "This is the basis of all pleasure. The game does not liberate us from coercion (since we accept the - much stricter - rules), but rather from freedom. We lose freedom when we only live it as reality." [4] The old game concept - which Baudrillard appends here - was always also a space of tabula rasa, the final utopia of our society, a space where one can always start over, where everyone starts with the same conditions. The old game concept is ultimately an ideal utopia of a just world, in which everyone has the same opportunities.

But the absolute game goes on, colonizing more and more parts of the game concept: the Xbox 2 framework offers possibilities for buying additional gadgets. It is only a small step from the color of a car to a better motor, but for the game concept it signifies a radical shift, a monetarization. The children will learn quickly.

And for the rest of the players? Do today's games still liberate us from the rules of reality? Or is it not the old rules, long familiar from reality, which permeate the games? The games of today are perfect replicas of their reality: they are abstract philosophies of our society, whether being "chased" as a single player with Doom or with GTA, they all play with the same competitive mindset, thus continuing the Real World and, even more tragically, distorting it slightly. They generate no anti-world, against reality emerges. The games are thus a flight into a radicalized everyday life, waking up in the same nightmare. We live in a system, in which avatars incessantly assert that we all

Two Table Conversations From the Archives of the Collège de Pataphysique: Lemna "Art and Play" Ernst Strouhal

OuLiPo (L'Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle) - Laboratory for Potential Literature. Beginning in 1960 programmatically devoted to a rational aesthetic of the playful-combinatory experiment. Gradual expansion of the fields of activity to OuArtPo and Ou-x-Po, in other words to all human activities. See: Raymond Queneau, writer. François Le Lionnais, mathematician, diplomat, chess champion and author.



It is a little known fact that two old friends met at the opening of the exhibition "Through the Big End of the Opera Glass", to which Marcel Duchamp contributed a memorable invitation card, on 7 December 1943: the Oulipian François Le Lionnais and Marcel Duchamp, an Oulipian by anticipation. Theodor W. Adorno, just turned 40, and Raymond Roussel (+ 10) were seated at the next table. Robert Musil strolled through the gallery rehearsing an old diary entry about mathematical people. Ernst Strouhal (St. Geneviève/Vienna) has transcribed the table conversations in the archive of the Collège, added brief transitions and slightly abridged the text.

Table 1:
Marcel Duchamp (MD): I did what I had to do, but I hate openings. Exhibitions are simply dreadful.
François Le Lionnais (FL): You especially took the trouble to come here, Marcel.
MD: Yes, I especially took the trouble to come here

...
FL: ... well, you've apparently become reasonable?
MD: Yes, I have become reasonable, I'll fit in. But I hardly paint any more.

Table 2:
Theodor W. Adorno (TWA): The appropriate stance of art, I tell you, would be with closed eyes and gritted teeth. With closed eyes and gritted teeth, Raymond Roussel (RR, closes his eyes): Eyes, gritted teeth. Disorderly mound of words and teeth. The dove, formed from magnificently white teeth, was depicted in graceful and rapid flight; root of the tooth here a red feather on a dark hat, there a broad purple mantle closed with gold fillings.

Table 3:
MD: The milieu (he lights a cigar), the milieu of chess-players is far more sympathetic than that of artists. These people are completely cloudy, completely blind, wearing blinkers. Moreover of a certain quality, the way the artist is supposed to be, and isn't in general.
FL: You're telling me! But Marcel, what have you done now?
MD: What do mean, what have I done?
FL: The invitation card with the chess problem. I've

been trying to find a solution for a week, and you know that I'm no novice!
MD: Yes, yes, I know, we've played together often enough. Well, there was a little room left. But if a problem exists, then there is a solution. (hesitatingly) Something like this: "There is no problem, because there is no solution." Or wait: "There is no solution, because there is no problem"; that's it, but I have forgotten the context. I think it had to do with art. Art, oh well. But (laughs) you like those kinds of endgames, don't you?
FL: Yes, one could wax poetic about that. Listen, this was published this year in Stockholm. (Lionnais reads). "Mechanical in operation yet effective only through the imagination: bounded in geometric space though boundless in its combinations; ever developing yet sterile; thought that leads to nothing; mathematics that produce no result; art without works; architecture without substance." One ought to invent something like this for language itself. My idea would be to find combinations that have not yet occurred in the probability calculation of thousands of years of linguistic history, combinations that would influence the vibrations of the entire network once they were placed in even the most trivial position.
MD: More of a Cartesian exercise that helps one to repeat as little as possible. I want to place painting at the service of the mind once again (at the next table Adorno looks around when he hears the word "mind"). Indeed, creating retinal emotion, the retinal shiver is only a partial idea next to other functions that painting has once had and could have. I wanted to get away from the physical aspect of painting. I was interested in ideas, not just visual products.
FL: Before we met twenty years ago, I was acquainted with Tzara and Picabia, and I was a Dadaist, when I began studying mathematics in Strasbourg, ...
MD (laughs): ... but you played more chess than art.
FL: True. But maybe there is not that much of a difference. When I met you in seventeen years and I tell you about Oulipo, you will be interested. Like in Bourbaki and Poincaré, that I translated for you.
MD: Maybe, I will be polite, but I won't become a member.

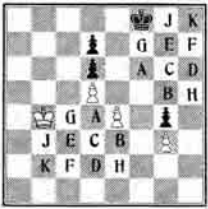
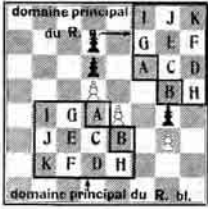


Diagram "Opposition und Schwesterfelder", Duchamp und Halberstadt, Paris/ Bruxelles 1932



At the next table:

TWA: ... so I say, the appropriate stance of art would be with closed eyes and gritted teeth. The most important thing is asceticism, asceticism against meaning, meaning expresses the art work through asceticism against meaning. But this most recent de-arting of art!

RR: (is silent)

TWA: Do you see, in the concept of art, play is the moment through which it is elevated above the immediacy of practice and its purposes. But art that seeks its salvation in play defects to sport. And sport, well, you don't know me, and works of art as puzzles? You must admit, works that are wholly comprehensible through observation and thought, are none at all. That would be arbitrary, meaningless acrobatics, word acrobatics, image and sound artistry, without spirit.

RR: Without spirit. Maybe writing a book about nothing, a book without external relationships.

Table 1:

FL: In any case, you are a conformist in play. It is easy in science, if one is a Newton, Einstein or Galileo. If one is an Einstein, one can contradict Newton, if one is a Galileo then everyone, but otherwise it is better to remain a conformist in play. MD: It was the artistic aspect of game that interested me. Objectively a game of chess looks very much like a pen-and-ink drawing, with the difference, however, that the chess player paints with black and white forms already prepared instead of inventing forms as does the artist. The chess player experiences a combination of two aesthetic pleasures: the abstraction of the depiction and the sensual completion of the depiction on the chess board.

FL: Aside from that, the images have the advantage of destroying themselves move for move, in the end all the figures are placed on the board again. Some accuse modern mathematics of being nothing more than a game with signs.

MD: One automatically ends up disastrously close to geometry and mathematics, but I had the idea that life would be more interesting, more of a game, if the laws of physics and chemistry could be extended.

FL: Every artistic activity is a game, yet not a senseless action, but rather as a system of playful exchange between author and reader. Both share the rules – their silence and their solitude. MD: Yes, a school of silence, it's wonderful for that. All future effort will be to invent, in reaction to what is going on now, silence, slowness and solitude. FL: Perhaps a distinction should be made between inventing and discovering. Some rummage through the literature that has already been written, and others invent new techniques. One devotes himself to discovery, the other to invention. Both complement each other very well.

Table 2:

TWA: ... this most recent de-arting of art. It surreptitiously makes use of the element of play at the expense of all others. Play is indeed regressive as well, disciplinary from the start, coercion to what is eternally the same. Where art thoroughly plays, there is nothing left of expression!

RR: I am sorry, monsieur, but first of all I don't understand German, and secondly I have been dead for ten years.

(TWA obviously continues to speak)

Between the tables:

Robert Musil (walks through the room with a glass of whiskey in his hand): Mathematics, and I should know, is the triumph of mental organization. That is the old secured highway exposed to the weather and the danger of bandits replaced by sleeping car railways. Mathematics is the economy of thinking. However, it is only when one does not look for external utilization, but within mathematics itself at the relationship of the unused parts, only then does one see the other and true face of this science. It is not purposeful, but rather uneconomical and passionate ...

Those are immeasurable fields that are only there for the mathematician: a tremendous web of nerves has assembled around the starting points of only a few muscles. Somewhere inside, the mathematician is working and his windows do not look outside, but into the neighboring spaces. Even if the effect is economy

a thousand times over, what is immanent is a complete surrender and passion. Mathematics is the brave luxury of pure rationality, one of the few that exists today. (Musil takes a big gulp)

We bawl for feeling instead of intellect and forget that feeling without it is a thing as fat as a pig. With it we have ruined our art of poetry to the extent that after reading two German novels one after the other, one must resolve an integral just to lose weight. And as far as art is concerned, I tell you, we are the first age that cannot love its poets. The goal has long since become mathematical thinking. With its ambitions, it provisionally limits itself to the exclusively rational and scientific. But believe me, this reason is devouring everything in its path, and as soon as it has seized feeling, it will become spirit. (TWA looks over from the next table) Taking this step is the task of poets. For this step they need not learn any new method – psychology, for phy's sake, or anything like that – but only ambitions. Precision is the sense of possibility. Precision. (Musil falls silent, but his lips continue to move)

Table 1:

MD: Who was that?

FL: Oh, a philosopher from Austria, I think his name is Wittgenstein.

MD: Ah, philosophy, oh well. All this nonsense about the existence of God, atheism, determinism, those are pieces of a chess game called language, and they are only amusing as long as one is not too concerned about winning or losing this chess match. Everything is dubious, I doubt myself, I doubt everything. I will remain a nominalist.

FL: And afraid?

MD: I'm afraid, François. I am an agnostic in art. I don't believe in it with all its mystical embellishments. As a drug it is probably quite useful for a number of people, very soothing, but as a religion it is not even as good as God. Art is a mirage, a little trick. But it is at this very point that the artist comes into play.

FL: The same is true for poetry, but one should be careful. Some say that what I mean is a linguistic machine, reducible to a program based on a mathematical algorithm. Yet I do not deny inspiration as a source of literary creativity at all. Every literary work emerges from an inspiration, that is what the author maintains in any case, which must somehow comply with a whole series of form constraints and methods that fit inside one another like Russian dolls. I am not in line to use the good services of the data processing machines for this as well.

Table 2:

TWA: Did you hear that? Data processing! Administered world, or just as bad: jazz, mechanical marching music, play, blind collectivity. More and more, we are becoming automaton shepherds. I tell you, but that, I must admit, is from Günther Anders. Play is anything but freedom. It is the replica of unfree labor, but the point is sensuousness and rationality, do you hear me, eros and insight. A poet

also needs spirit, you have to turn yourself upside down. (Roussel climbs onto the chair and stands on his head. The invitation card falls out of his pocket onto the floor.)

Table 1:

FL: Look at that, Marcel, Roussel is standing on his head, that is improbable. First of all, he doesn't understand German, secondly he has been dead for ten years.

MD: Well, you can say what you like, François: things like that may be rare, but they happen, not often, but they do occur. (There is a moment of silence. Suddenly Roussel shouts!)

RR: King to e3! I say: King to e3! (Everyone looks at Roussel. MD lowers his cigar in astonishment. FL smiles in disbelief, TWA impatiently shrugs, RM mumbles on)

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Catch me if you can! (part2)

Beat Suter

Graffiti in virtual reality?
Does virtual tagging equal real tagging?
Or is it just an aesthetic fluke?

since graffiti and hiphop have an abundant influence on videogames and film these days, it is hard to find the right starting point where graffiti and videogames had their initial and prolific encounter. to find it we may have to move back to the eighties and need to take a closer look at the art of the cracker intro, best described as part demo, part graffiti, intros are the animations which appear at the start-up of a cracked video game. these short artsy projects are designed to showcase the cracker's talent much in a way as the graffiti pieces are meant to show talent and fame of a writer. "Intro makers want to be seen, and want to belong to something", explains Linus Walleij, member of the legendary Swedish C64-demo crew triad, and "just like graffiti writers, intro makers live under the impression of being a part of something much bigger that has been around for ages." [1] and indeed, signatures, inscriptions and graffiti have been around for a very long time, and they may be part of something bigger, the cave paintings of our ancestors in

france, africa, australia or mexico indicate that graffiti is a valuable cultural expression with narrative and iconic value and may have been around as long as human language.

the history of the so called demoscene goes back to the early 80s, there were no gigahertz-computers or powerful 3D graphics cards, the commodore 64 had just appeared in the stores, and it all started with pirated copies of games. since the pirates or hackers wanted everyone to know who had cracked the software, they added short intros to the cracked games, this turned out to be a difficult task, there was not much room left for an intro and the computer did not feature very elaborate graphics capabilities, but there was this urge to show off one's own skills. An intro had to look great. And the intros did look good, most of them featured better graphics than the pirated programmes they were feeding on. What the crackers were doing was art.

by now the wilder years have gone. today we don't have to look for pirated copies of games to see intros. intros have become demos. they are free of charge. they can be downloaded from the internet. they can be found on digital fairs, in galleries and sometimes even in museums. they are free art for everyone, and they can be quite impressive art works. over the years the demoscene has kept up with the pace of the technological development of computers. today there are demos for any operating system and any hardware, there are demos for consoles, for the gameboy, even for mobile phones. since it is about the technical challenge there is no place the demoscene would not go.

graffiti makers are writers. their material: the letters of their artist-name. they go out in public spaces, deface a wall or bomb a train with their spray-colors. there is no place they would not consider for tagging. their territory is the urban landscape with all its glorious and lost corners. they have tagged and made pieces suspended from bridges and high buildings with the means of mountaineering gear, they have tagged right next to high-speed train-lines and in freeway overpasses. they have tagged while in constant danger of getting caught by armed security and police. their names on the walls mean fame, the names however are coded and do not just lead to their homes.

the intro makers are writers too. only they need to rip the videogame and write their own code into the programme. the 80ies scene mostly reworked the logos and preferred to work with letters and words. quite often the shapes of the logos and letterings come very close to graffiti letterings. and where the graffiti's purpose is to be transported through the city via traffic stream the logos and letterings of the intros themselves hover and move at a certain speed across the screen.

catch me, if you can. Graffiti are hacking reality, intros are hacks of virtual reality. But since writing graffiti in an urban environment is a well used form of real gaming, intros are a form of real gaming with virtual games. graffiti

writers are playing catch with the representatives of the law, the police, use main traffic arteries as carriers of their art, they are feeding on speed, on movement by trains, cars, pedestrians.

catch me, if you can. they are a rebellion of signs in the urban semiotic landscape [2] now i am gone, now, i am here! they are playing with visibility and invisibility, they are a filter, to see a city differently with. they are layers on top of other layers (of text and symbols and pictures). They are defacing walls and houses and trains and buses, deconstructing urban structures - and at the same time they try to aestheticize themselves.[3] a graffiti has to show a certain kind of quality, mastery, otherwise it gets defaced by the next crew. only an elaborate style amasses enough reputation to be left alone and admired by the other crews. A signature is not enough, an iconic evolution, a distinct and independent design is needed for lettering, icons, backgrounds and additional elements like characters.[4]

It is somewhat the same with the intros. they put a signature on a videogame which can be more elaborate than the game. the intro shows skills of mastery in programming and in graphics art. the game is hacked but not destroyed. intros are a viral addition to the game much as graffiti are to the urban landscape. intros show a good understanding of aesthetics, they show a different approach to design and form a new style much as graffiti do. the distribution of the work however is different, since a single disc had to be altered the work was only distributed in the crackers community and much unlike the heavily discussed graffiti didn't find any response in the mainstream public.

what is left of the intros today? are the demos just an aestheticist version of the intros? what are demos about? a demo is not a hack anymore, since there is no game or software altered. demos start from the scratch, they are own independent programmes or videos which take on a technological and an artistic challenge of creating great visuals and sound effects with as little data as possible. this can only be done by

real-time rendering, this means the visual and auditive design is re-created right on the spot for the viewer. much like a graffiti which would write itself on the wall when you look at the wall, or from the perspective of a passerby like a graffiti that all of a sudden appears in front of you when your train leaves the tunnel.

lately, we have seen a shift from abstract use of graffiti as a programme to the concrete use of graffiti as a gameplay enhancement. in grand theft auto san andreas at some point the player gets an aerosol can and the assignment to roam through town and cover up as many tags by a rival gang as possible, this becomes a difficult task when the player enters the home-turf of the rival gang, and the police does not like the tagging either. since graffiti is real-gaming at its best, a bit of real-gaming becomes part of this videogame, and you may have guessed it: a typical gra-highlight of the tagging-assignment is the option to abuse an aerosol can and use it as a weapon; you can spray paint in people's faces and render them defenseless. oh yes - and you get four more weapons if you successfully finish the graffiti mission.

in december 2004 four teens from greensburgh (pennsylvania) had been charged with "institutional vandalism, criminal conspiracy, criminal mischief and desecration of venerated objects". they were claiming to have received the inspiration from gta san andreas. the teens spray painted the initials "GKU" (standing for Gang Kids United) on more than a dozen buildings. even if this was just an excuse it shows how intertwined real-gaming and virtual gaming can become since the kids knew exactly that their statement was a winner in their game with the representatives of the law and it was able to extend the whole matter into a new sphere where the law people are unsure about effects and consequences.

the game "getting up" (using the title of c. castleman's famous book on graffiti from 1982 [5]) by atari (2005) features a graffiti writer as the main protagonist of the game. trane has to throw his graffiti onto the craziest spots in town in order to get enough fame, and he too has to face security guards, police and vigilant

citizens who are about to terminate his assignments. does this mean writers now can stay home and do their art in a videogame rather than roaming through the train yards at night? the answer is no, the "getting up" game by graffiti artist mark ecko doesn't allow you to develop a own style, and since it is a single player game it doesn't allow you to spread your fame. the game features styles of 60 known graffiti artists but doesn't allow any alterations or new styles.

then, you don't need to buy a playstation game to experience the graffiti groove, you might as well try a multiuser flash application like playdo graffiti [6], there you can practise your style in different rooms and even experience real-time battle for territory and style with your fellow taggers. a first hand experience of immediate defacement and hostility might prepare you for the real stuff out in the urban jungle.

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Pageturner by Black Maiden first seen at IJM 2004



Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, Rockstar Games, 2004



Gen, Zürich-Oerlikon, 1985



Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, Rockstar Games, 2004



Parcours (notes on a game video loop)
F. E. Rakuschan

The game-video discussed hereby was part of the ludic society traces installation first installed at the postmedia condition show at Neue Galerie Graz in December 2005 and at Centro Conde Duque Madrid in February 2006.

Whether we think of business warriors, top athletes or gamers as ego-shooter monsters – the author of a commentary on the riots in the banlieues hit the nail on the head when he said that an almost meditative immersion in aggression has long corresponded to the general demands of today's modern society. What matters is how one asserts oneself in the postfordist marketplaces. The architecture of the 60s and 70s is not to blame that those who have lost out in society in the course of subsequent waves of modernization express their frustration, as all the statements from the world of experts agree. In addition to the effects of a decrease in social solidarity and corresponding social policies, a problem of urban planning is also to blame. Yet no reproach can be made to the urban planners themselves, because the infrastructure that they had figured into their concept – which is always also a factor of living quality – has meanwhile simply ceased to exist. The urban zoning that corresponded to the linear repetitive tactics of fordist production lost its significance in the processes of spatial and temporal flexibilization. The logic of the service society in a post-geographic era generates multi dimensional, globally networked, often only temporary zones of intensity. And the idiosyncratic style exercises of an explicitly postmodern architecture, as they emerged in the 1980s, stand for a lack of ideas about how the new models should be represented. Whereas the computer has a fixed place in the development of architecture, the impacts of an "International Disney-world" live on in the 3D worlds of computer games.

The video loop *Parcours* by Margarete Jahrmann / Max Moswitzer is part of the installation *Ludic-Society-Traces*, presented in the exhibition *Postmediale Kondition*. It is simultaneously a trace of an investigation in progress between art and science, which deals with the game worlds and its implications.

A subcultural scene arose in France almost at the same time as the rebellion of the neo-avant-garde against the imperative of functionalism, which appropriates the city as a game course in a way comparable with the artistic practices of *dérive* and *déplacement*, as known from situationism. The artists Jahrmann/ Moswitzer selected sequences from the documentaries on the websites of *Le Parcours*, which were to show by the artistic means of "pixelation" the interplay of games and subcultural practices. These sequences are counterpointed with TV images from news reports on the current unrest in the Parisian suburbs. Displayed with the syntax of video clips, the work is also a reflection on identity and difference, on the social construction of reality between different fields of visualization.

With the establishment of new technologies, the "artificial" in real life has increased in live relevance. "Second nature", so to speak, the social organization as a second-order virtualization, has sprouted a third nature comprising electronic cybernetic spaces. It is the digital code-sphere, in which the global industrialization of codes takes place in the bio and media spheres. The separation into illusion and reality has long since ceased to be anchored in a subject/object schemata of epistemology.

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ludic society traces Jahrmann/ Moswitzer/ Savicic 2005/06

Inside the postmedial exhibition space, a museum show-case, an antique vitrine from the Hofmobiliendepot Vienna, provokes disapprobation! The vitrine evokes the reception situation of a cultural-historical museum. It disturbs the clear thinking lines and connections between an architecturally guided parcours through former media-art-works, which allege to emancipate from the dark cave of intermediality. As objet trouvé its impudent voluptuous shape contradicts the line of projections in dark rooms. The museum's vitrine needs a spotlight! Its high glossy glass top unpleasantly mirrors its surroundings, becomes a looking glass for objects and the observers of apparently technical objects which have come together in its abdomen. The baroque legs of the presentation shelf are an instability factor, a roccaille link to the retorsion spirals shown inside, the crafty self-etched circuit boards made of beautiful stylish black, specially ordered circuit board material and decorative, electricity- and signal- conducting copper. The presentation set-up couples the LCD screen for the game videoclip with the museum object vitrine. Its readymade character is a glitch, a provoked distortion of conservational decisions of not yet framed media and art positions.

The baroque museum vitrine with rotating roccaille mussel legs historicizes contemporary game worlds. In the display case the ludic society magazine is exhibited as ludic society fanzine next to the useless gameplay interface objects GoApe chindogus. All the objects are placed on red velvet. The "patastyled

circuit boards aesthetic contains elements of a bourgeois bohemian artisanship. As bijoux they are self-sufficient, yet they are also sound-playing performance hammers, in other words nouvelles machines ciblées, new bachelor machines. In the vitrine arrangement they are accompanied by some naked circuit boards without any functional technical elements, but with an ISBN number and barcode, demonstrating their objectiveness as a new format for text publications. They appear as system immanent explanation, similar to a Perli poetry work, at the same time readable when executed as technical object but also working when just lying in a vitrine and not activated: as language and as parole!

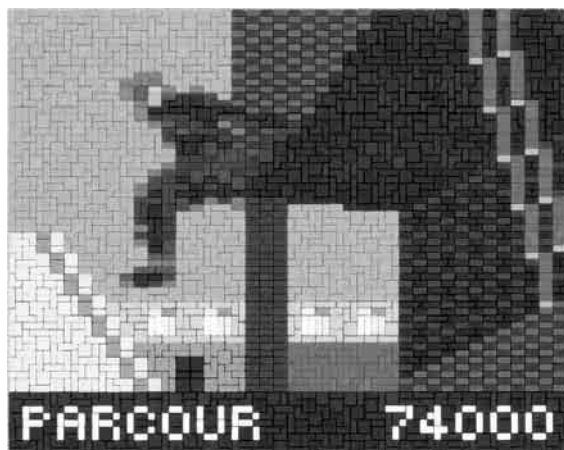
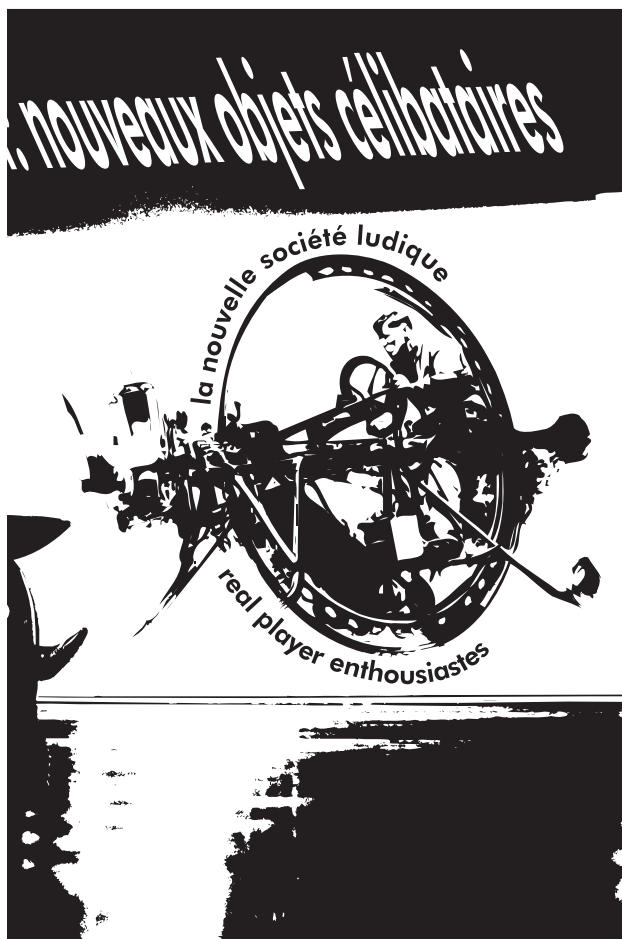
Banlieues, the suburbs in France and elsewhere are not built for living but for playing, either with cars or bikes or with your own body as a game character. The artificial freedom of interpretation allows the artist as ludic socialite to add some props (adding properties, props for short, to characters is a common practice in massively multi-player games) to the analog video documentaries of the le-parcours jumpers in banlieues:

- 1) a game status bar, indicating the play level
- 2) the massive re-pixelation of analog material, to give the look of a c64 game to the parcour real life clip.

Craziness, obsession, and individual style are indispensable features, both of the covered parcour scene and of the producing artists, who are constructors and collectors of the displayed ludic traces.



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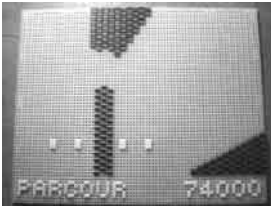
Ministek interpretation of the LS parcour video-loop, Mr. Ministek, 2006

**Just what is it that makes it so different,
so appealing?**
Mister Ministek

*"I feel so immortal when I do puzzles!"
(Sophia Petrillo)*

The view of people on the "lost" media seems very similar to the point of view the surrealists had when they were visiting second-hand markets for items. Their way of explaining their choice for a certain object was blaming the subconscious. Which leads us back to Ministek. It's not about working with the reality, ie. the plastic pixels, but it's about dreaming. It's a bio-drug. Not the material itself of course, but the state of mind it puts you in. Serious scientific research has proven that monotony and repetition are highly addictive. And that's the point which makes it really attractive if you really want to work with it for a longer period of time. Sitting at home, doing work which doesn't disturb your mind too much after you have designed the image to do and keeps the thoughts floating endlessly in your mind.

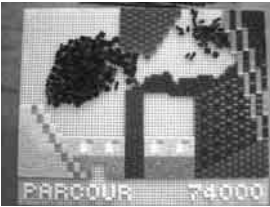
So, who of you can remember what an Advanced Intelligent Tape is? Working in that medium meant also a lot of time searching for it as it was hard to find. So I browsed the classifieds in papers - the search engines didn't deliver any useful results - for families whose children had moved from the house and who wanted to get rid of their toys. Once I drove 300 km to buy three huge boxes of Ministek. I was very lucky. Every weekend I checked the second hand markets with the hope of finding more of those old Ministek-images. But if once I had the luck and found some of the images, before I could start making my own images I had to tear them apart and sort the colours. My way of joining the future-conservatism and mixed-media hype was the start of "miniNT" in 1999 - a call for entries. (The name referred to the latest release of Microsoft's Window which was called NT as "New Technology") * "Everyone is an artist" the Fluxus pioneer Joseph Beuys used to say. SO: be creative! Send us any picture that pops up in your head! Use graph paper or the computer or both, but consider the size! MAXIMUM: 32 x 32 pixels or squares on graph paper. We will transfer your sketch to Ministek AND to a folder-icon for the computer. Ministek? It is a



sensational new technology fresh from the eighties! It's plastic passion, yeah! There'll be a travelling exhibition with the pictures and free download of the folder-icons on the homepage gallery. Don't leave everything to the course of time: pull up your sleeves and get giddy with the help of Ministeck!" [1]

The term "real game" leads me to the topic: Is ministeck, or puzzles and mosaics in general, really a game? A game is considered to provide fun and an end which is not pre-defined. The result is clearly defined - at least the way I do it. Of course you could just put one pixel after the other on the grid - like the old masters of painting did - and with the method of trial and error and tons of hope you will surely receive an image which you had in mind, good luck! Obviously that is not my way of doing it, because I'm not immortal.

In the days of the goldrush of the internet industry, when I made an internship at now dotcom-death Pixelpark, I realized that I did the same work I did at the computer also in my childhood, with Ministeck: Arranging pixels on a grid. In the computer it's the grid of the bitmap file, which then, in the "real world", is represented by the grid and the plastic bricks of Ministeck. I was inspired by the musician Pinknoise who uses sounds similar to or sampled from C64 games. So why not start working with images taken from C64 games? Their colour-depth matches very well with the palette of Ministeck.



Ministeck wasn't produced for a while at that time, which made it even more attractive for me. It seemed like a lost technology, which was very Zeitgeist. For example the issue of Emigre by dutch design-studio Experimental Jetset which was called "Lost Formats Preservation Society" and listed mediums which were about to vanish or had already passed. [2]

A major revolution was going on at these time: in the creative field it got more and more impossible to work without a computer. The enthusiasm of the masses for "everything goes with a computer" was reflected by a few with a nostalgic view on what seemed to get lost forever. And the wish to create something new with the outdated material and giving it the nimbus of a posh and glamorous technology, for example like Vinylvideo which stored video images on vinyl records. [3] The vinyl record in general seemed to be the number one accessoir for every mixed media-installation of the early 90ies.

- [1] Images of the "mini NT live" performance at <http://www.misterministeck.com/miniNT/live>
- [2] Emigre 57, Winter 2001
- [3] www.vinylvideo.com

Mister Ministeck Norbert Bayer is known for his notorious pixel extravaganza and exhibiting worldwide since 1999. Research on the 4th dimension in Marcel Duchamp's work. URL: www.misterministeck.com Modern Mosaics: www.modernmosaics.net



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happened, it becomes up to you to get him out of his immediate fix." (Fahrenheit by Quantic Dream, 2005) Good fun, day saved, nobody got hurt! I can avoid the pain of having stabbed somebody randomly in a café toilet by being a poor version of the stabber. And whereas Reebok advertiser Mike Skinner states:

"I never quite fitted into any scene. So I made my own. It's better to be yourself than a poor version of someone else", the real gamer shouts out loudly and proudly: "I can fit into any conceivable scene. I am the gloriously poor version of whomever I want to be. Halleluja!"

The half-belief of half-living beings from the game world differs not only from the world of corporate pseudo-identities, but also from the complete confusion of the game called Rock. (Not to be mixed up with Rockstar Games :-))

Rock Music made us familiar with creative identity challenges, where we were supposed to be them, and they want to be us.

Bob Dylan complained: "I am trying so hard to be what I am, but everybody wants me to be just like them."

Tragic for Mr. Dylan, but a completely symmetrical problem, because everybody (the record industry) wanted us to be like them (the rock heroes) as well. David Bowie wanted to be like the "Common People" yet the common people dressed, half-dressed and behaved as if they were him.

"I want to be like common people, I want to do what common people do. I want to be like you."

Rock musicians have an identity problem which is two-directional, they want to be like the common people and they think that the common people want to be like them. Sometimes they are flattered by that, sometimes they are frightened by it, as Eminem seems to be. Uncertain if him being anything other than his listeners he states in an interview on 30th June 2000 with Free Press pop music critic Brian McCollum:

"Sometimes I feel like I'm living my life for everyone else." In his No. 1 song "The Real Slim Shady", he phrases the issue:

"And there's a million of us just like me
Who cuss like me
Who just don't give a fuck like me
Who dress like me
Walk, talk and act like me."
(Eminem in "The Real Slim Shady")
C-Murder picks up Eminem's observation and twists it slightly, when he concludes that the "niggas live like motherfuckin' G".

"You don't wanna fuck with C
You don't wanna fuck with me
All my niggas know we live for weed and money
Platinum and vagues on the walls of my company
Cuz TRU niggas live like motherfuckin' G

I make money off the words that I speak
I flip a cassette like I used to flip a quarter key
The rap game is like standin' on a block
Every tape I sell is like a motherfuckin' dime rock
Give me the money so you can keep the bitches
They don't play no game C-Murder bout his riches."
(C-Murder in "The Rap Game")

The "rap game" is not a videogame. Both share a conflict in identity of the players, but the mode of deception differs radically. There are 3 possible modes of deception:

- 1 - The rapper is a player, who wants to be player and pawn at the same time.
- 2 - The gamer is a player who prefers to not know whether he is player or pawn
- 3 - The consumer of life-style commodities is a pawn who thinks that he might be the player.

Of these three deceptions, the last one is the most pathetic one.

Mathias Fuchs

Artist, musician, media critic. He is Programme Leader for MSc: Creative Games at Salford University and Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader for MA Creative Technology at Salford University in Manchester. Studies in computer science and electronic music triggered his interest into electronic arts, especially computer mediated sound generation and manipulation. He currently works on games engines as creative tools for performers.



Games, Rap, Rock and Reeboks Mathias Fuchs

If you have got the right sneakers you know who you are. "I am what I am."
(Mike Skinner in an advert for Reebok)

If you make music, you don't know who you are.

"I am he
As you are he
As you are me
And we are all together."
(John Lennon in "I am the Walrus")

If you play the game right, you know that you don't want to know who you are. Let's look at this:

"The basic plot of Half-Life 2 is pretty simple in concept, much as the first game was. You are once again Gordon Freeman."
(Half-Life 2 by Valve Corporation)

Am I Gordon Freeman? Pardon me, who said so? Do I know who I am? Maybe. Do I want to know who I

am: Not really. It appears to me that the problem is such: If I find out, that I am Gordon Freeman, I have to cope with pretty unpleasant situations, e.g.

"You are going to have to murder a lot of hostile beings in order to save the day."

That's not fun anymore, if I really am Gordon. It's frightening, it is tedious, it is dirty, all the blood sucks and it is painful as hell. If, on the other hand, I find out, that I am Mathias Fuchs, controlling some Gordon Freeman, I do not know any longer, why I spend my time murdering hostile beings. There are better ways to save the day. I guess it is best not to know, who I am. Consciously avoiding to identify with me or him, allows me to float amongst viewpoints, positions and actions. Half-believing in being a lunatic is semi-reasonable.

"You apparently lose control of your body and viciously stab an apparently random old guy in a café toilet. As he regains control and realises what has

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'the microchips as a regular spice for todays kitchen' maxOh_

'daKa', the microcontroller enriched with USB served out of an etching-pot: For today's recipe we would like to expose a new dish from the cutting edge of the fusion kitchen of maxOh_ located in Zürich. Micro controller cooking recipes are a great source for technical cooking. If you are looking for a different taste, here you will find that special flavour. Nowadays you can find microchips in a lot of dishes, but mostly they are covered by other ingredients and get lost under a diversity of competing savours. Its pure taste is hidden through the industrial chain of production. To experience the whole spectrum of this dish you must apply the crafty technique of etching. This will give you the perfect kick for a real home made interface board like at grandma's. Stop this waffling, let's cook!

All you need to enter into this world of sensorics and connections is the following:

- 1 pinch of Atmega8
- 1 Etching-pot(preferably with Sodium Persulphate)
- 1 UV exposed 1-Layer Print(take a fresh one, the older they are the more soft are the edges of the conductor paths)
- 1 connector USB Type B
- a handful of drivers (you can use the flavour OSX or even the cheaper XP, Linux will make it salty)

- 1 stripe of tin-solder
- some capacitors and a not too less of resistors
- lastly, a little bit of courage and willpower

Just like my mom, I cook with feeling, so my measurements are all by approximations. So cook this recipe according to your own feelings or preferences!

A serving tip: Your beloved will be delighted if you include some additional nice shapes to the layout of the PCB (as the ludic société's nouvelles machines célibataires are proving!) You will be surprised by the tastiness and digestibility of the 17 free programmable pins as well as how your petty cash will stay in shape. Finally I hope you enjoy this recipe and maybe you can surprise your husband, wife or your friends with the technical taste of this dish.

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<http://interaction.design/projects/daka>
<http://objets-celibataires.konsum.net>

maxOh_ is an internationally exhibiting artist, shows as in DADA Festwochen/Zürich, CART Kunst 04/Zürich, ICC/Tabo (in collaboration with doubleNegative), Daejeon/Korea (also collaboration with doubleNegative), Ars Electronica Campus/ Linz.

Hyperventilation by F.E. Rakuschan

The story so far: breathe deep; a tempo; out of breath. When no stone is left on top of another, or the playing pieces in the virtualization of the societal no longer have a fixed place, then we are challenged to rethink the offers of art-culture.

At the same time, however, we will not delve into models of thinking that recommend themselves to us as pleasant, cooperative theories and suggest certainties. Instead we will focus on a theory concept that primarily pursues an interest in the normalization of the improbable, but not without first surrendering once familiar conventions. Even though it is not the selection of successful references via codes is established in consciousness and communication as a value judgment – and therefore inevitable in dealing with everyday life – we will purposely dispense with value judgments. We move to a deeper level, so to speak, where we are interested in the functional aspects of the underlying circumstance that surplus of meaning must be selectively used, in order to be able to prove themselves across all discontinuities as a generalization. Every social order produces norms, is indeed dependent on doing so. In keeping with the chosen theory concept, however, we reject the idea of the norm with its proximity to value judgment and replace it with a reformulation. Through a specification of the reference problem, the norm proves to be a "risk of generalization immanent to meaning" and thus moves into focus as a more productive factor. Psychological research functionally relates the concept of generalization to system/environment conditions and is thus understood here as an instrument for coping with the complexity gap between environment and system. In terms of system theory, generalization also has "the function specific to meaning of bridging the majority of the dimensions of meaning and maintaining their accessibility at every special moment of meaning" (Luhmann 1987: 137). Here it becomes clear that a contradiction, a paradox also has meaning: "It is only through the inclusion of all contradictions that the world of meaning can achieve the character of self-referential closure, and only this is a correlate of the self-referentially closed communication system of society" (Luhmann 1987: 138).

In this way, a system can correct or readjust its relation to reality. Contradictions are specific forms of self-reference and destabilize a system. Yet it is precisely in this way that they become promoters that keep the system running. For in their autopoietic context, most mental and social systems reproduce the instabilities that they need to a high degree, in order to be able to react to themselves and their environment. Whereas the unity formation of the contradiction – in other words the contradictory in the impossibility of its composite existence – runs operatively through consciousness, it takes place in social systems through their working units, i.e. through pro-

cesses of communication; in both cases in autopoietic execution. Mental systems undoubtedly have molecular components, thus fulfilling the laws of physics, whereby their spatial existence is determined. However, they are not defined as autopoietic by physical characteristics. Rather, autopoiesis depends much more on the organization of the unit and on the way it is realized. Autopoiesis is not merely another term for existence and life in the simplistic understanding of them as self-preservation. If preservation is indeed an issue, then it is a matter of the "essential variables" (Ashby 1962). Since contradictions have the characteristic of enabling, but not forcing the elimination of deviations, they foster and strengthen the systems' immune system. Instabilities, disorder and turbulences are thus equivalent to the saying, "rumors of my death have been greatly exaggerated", thus affording us an understanding of occasional debates about "the end of art".

All dimensions of meaning, whether the dimension of facts, society or time, hold a potential of disintegration at any point, whereby generalization is assigned the function of stopping continuously possible disintegration at some point, depending on the needs of the use of meaning. As the highly differentiated art system and the currently diversified art landscape show, generalization has halted across all discontinuities at the "multiplication of contradictions". This may not be considered rationally productive, but it is functionally productive if we think of the reproduction of instabilities for the benefit of the immune system that a system must react to itself and its environment.

"I stood naked in front of my full length mirrors for a long time yesterday. I was all made up with my hair done. What did I see. My breasts are beginning to sag a bit. ... My waist isn't bad. My ass is what it should be, the best there is."

(America's sex goddess Marilyn Monroe in a tape recording addressed to her psychiatrist)

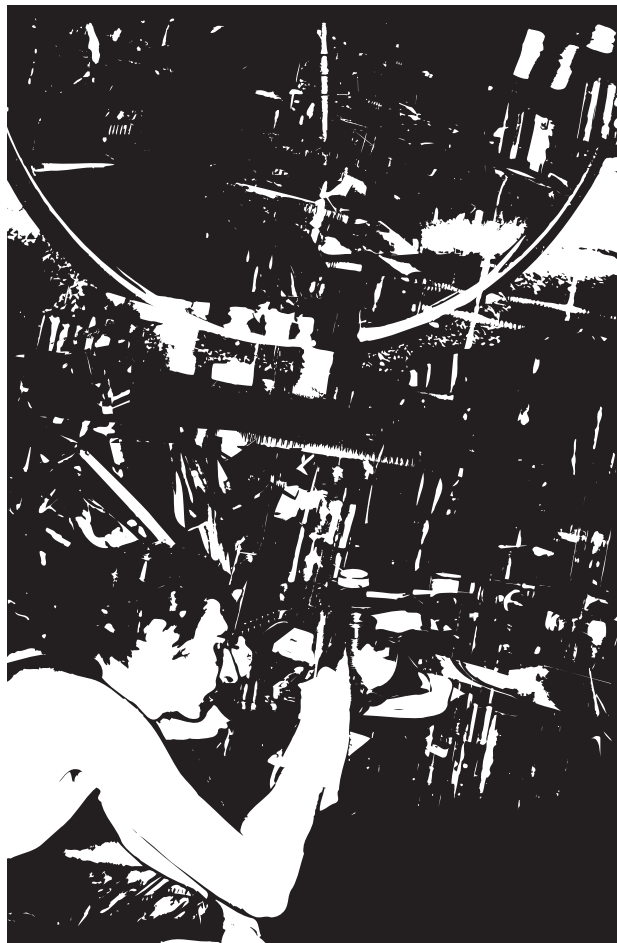
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REAL

Edward Castronova

Instructions: imagine a world that is not real. Design it, then implement the design. Finally, enter your creation, and erase from your memory all traces of the first instruction. Goodbye, God be w/ye, God be with you. We will never see you again!

Humans have eternally transacted ephemeral objects and endowed them with value, and yet when objects appear inside software and communications systems labelled "games" we reject them as worthless. "Play money." Yet there is no difference between the services of an Etruscan Priestess or influence with the Emperor of China, both of which could be acquired by paying for them, and a contemporary real cheeseburger or virtual doubloon. The string of letters "www.exon.com" are virtual and only exist in a virtual world, but if you believe they have no value in the economy, please acquire them and give them to me for free. The economy is a human relationship, where an object is what we say it is, and an object's value is created, for better or worse, by our collective judgements. But the skeptic of all things virtual, the one who insists on Reality, will soon confront greater challenges than the genuine and exponentially growing productive value of killing dragons, challenges

made by the body in response to the ever-more authentic signals that will pummel ceaselessly from the ever-more enshrouding virtuality of the human sensory environment. When the virtual paradigm of all things human beautiful walks across the virtual room and sits down next to you, you him, her, and offers to do something in return for a few of those virtual doubloons, when the perfect heshe moves close and reveals imagery superior perfect unblemished, blood will flow and the real body will speak its undeniable words. The purported reality of a virtual gold piece will be a moot point, no, less than moot, irrelevant and forgotten, an argument to a yawn. The gold piece is real, because my body is real and my throbbing heart is real and this gold piece brings heshe back to me again and again and again and I have never seen nor never will again someone so ideal and I am starting to love him/her.

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Need for Speed II - The ludic chapters programm and other search tales ludic-society@konsum.net

In ludics (Ludistik) life itself serves as optimum game, especially in its bodily qualities. Ludics constitutes as discipline to abandon platonic ideas and to neglect abstract bodiless thinking, as it was introduced over time as supreme discipline for philosophical thinking. Friedrich Nietzsche's dictum of the "gaya scienza" was already introduced as leading orientation for the ludic research program in the ludic society magazine issue#1, 2005. For the penseur maudit, the wicked thinker, life play and illness becomes the main interest.

"Need for Speed 2" allegorizes as title of a well known racing game, the doubletivist of the ludic search program. On one side the release number "2" can be ludically interpreted as a metaphor for the second nature of games as life models per se. 2ndly "2" stands for a reference to the epiphomenon of (racing) games implemented after videogames in real life. The interesting point is the formal backlash on the way of how these games are performed in the area of computer games. The french le-parcours jumpers move like Super Mario over walls, and change their physical abilities and experiences by these activities. Real Players as for example the motorcycle speedrunners, filming their mad life-risking highspeed race over real highways with a camera in first person "Real Player" perspective. It shows the street as if "I", the viewer were driving, shows the handlebars, but never the face of the driver, reproducing exactly those images known from game consoles. So the exchange goes in both directions, into the bodily action and into its aesthetic representation.

One of the best known unknown drivers is named *Ghostdrider*. He is such an impersonator of racing games on highways in combination with an unknown identity, consisting assumably of a complete player team. So this epiphomenon could be named as con-dividuality, or even better as Real Player. The research focuses of the different Ludic Society chapters do not contribute directly to games studies, but elaborate experience based research by a variety of experimental games, first person methodologies, and various differing concepts of ergodic search, consisting of ergon and hodos, work and path (Aarseth 1997), so to speak real epistemic plays. The goal is to show an empathy with experimental anticipative research on conceptual art plays, live action roleplaying games, computer games in at least a bidirectional way, both as source and target. Its topics are playful social practices out of games in real space and extended gaming zones (Alberto Lacovoni 2004). It stresses the conceptual disjunction of game and play and its transgression into newly developed game structures for real life. Real Players incorporate a crucial role in the reconstruction of the rules of play as a vibrant element of today's ludic "Umwelt".

The topic of Real Players, also considered as con-dividualities, as conceptual entities for arts and other purposes is linked to the etymological coincidence of the related terms ludus (=game), ludics (Ludistik) and ludism, (Maschinensturm). The forcibly desperate run of weavers on the new punchcard driven weaving machines (Joseph-Marie Jacquard, 1752-1834) at the beginning of the industrial revolution in the 19th century in England, was led by an individual called General Ludd, as the newspapers were reporting, but: "The origin of 'Ludd' is unknown. There is no basis for the story put out by The Nottingham Review on 20 December 1811, that an apprentice named Ned Ludd once smashed a master's machine near Leicester and hence gave his name to the action. It is more likely that the local Nottingham speech had an expression similar to the one in Cornwall, where *sent all of a lud* meant struck all of a heap, or *smashed*." (Revolution and the quintessential naysayers to odious and intrusive technology.

<http://www.mindfully.org/Reform/Luddite-History.htm>) General Ludd could be considered as first Real Player. In fact his identity was never clarified. His appearance as activist fictional con-dividuality could be compared to the progression of a game character, which can be used by anybody for certain purposes. A character is not necessarily defined by its faciality but by its possibilities of actions. So another face-less figure, El Sub Commandante Marcos, the masked south american Zapatist leader, who can never be killed or arrested because he is wearing the black racing mask (shure accompanied by a revolution-styled uniform cap) could join this chorus line of Real Players, investigated in ludics. That's why he is an activist for indigenes as well as a DJ in a Berlin club.

Whereas General Ludd (and luddites, workers, who attacked machines, the bugbear of capitalism based on machine industrialization in 19th century England) was still the project of a blurred play, the ludically proven real life model El Subcommandante Marcos masked his facial identity and thus became the mask of a social player that anyone could use – the cultural terrorist, DJ and real life player.

"Everyone is El Sub!"

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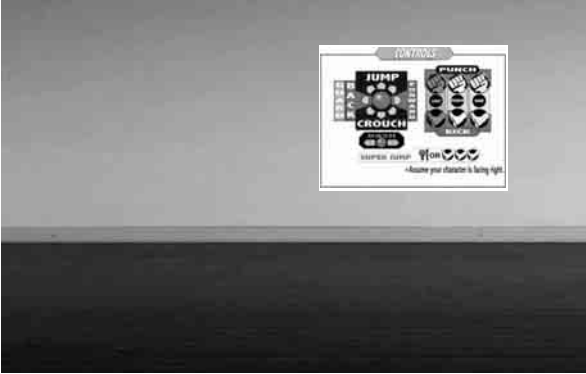
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The Artist as Mad Scientist: "Create a non-sense tale and play! The artist is the mad scientist and she creates a counter-environment to reflect the reality." Francesco Monico, head of media design department studies Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, Milan.



The Dollhouse Shooter Level
by Maia Engeli

We can play with toys and create stories while we play. We can play games and reach a goal while we do so. We can play with computers and experience how they process our input. And we can merge the three and have even more fun. That is the formula for the ultimate ludic experience... for example when combining a shooter game and a dollhouse.

Dollhouses and shooter games provoke opposing associations: The cute world of the dollhouse versus the brutal realm of the shooter game. In a workshop at the Graz University of Technology combined the two and collaboratively designed a dollhouse level for the shooter game Unreal Tournament. The result draws its strength from combining contrasting worlds and it is not only played from the usual first-person perspective but can also be enjoyed from the third-person view that we know from dollhouses.

Dollhouses, especially the ones from the 17th-19th century, are intriguing miniature worlds. They originally came into existence as beautifully crafted miniaturisations of noble households in Germany and The Netherlands as well as other Middle and Northern European countries. Only in the 19th century did they start to become used as toys, their original function was the idealistic representation of the estate of their owner for instructional purposes or as cabinets filled with precious miniatures. The earliest dollhouse was without dolls; the first dolls were introduced around 1611. Müller-Krumbach observes: "With the introduction of the dolls something qualitatively new came into existence. The dolls acted as owners and users of the household and thus turned it into a small world

somewhat detached from the outside world. The original instructional and stimulating character of the dollhouse becomes more a documentary one, which may easily transform into something museum-like." (Mit der Einbringung dieser Puppen entstand etwas qualitativ Neues. Die Puppen treten als die Besitzer und Nutzer dieses Hausstandes auf und schließen ihn damit, als Welt im kleinen, quasi von der Außenwelt an. Die ursprünglich lehrhafte und anregende, beispiegelnde Haltung des Puppenhauses bekommt deutlicher dokumentierenden Charakter, der ohne Schwierigkeit in Museale übergleiten kann.) [Müller-Krumbach 1992]. In other words, she suggests that the introduction of the representations of humans – the representations of conscious beings – alters the possible relationship between viewer and house; while the house was first regarded as a spatial tool it becomes a virtual parallel world. By staging scenes with dolls in the house it is also transformed from a collection of information to a collection of comprehensive events.

Shooter game worlds, contrary to dollhouses, are not representations of a larger reality, they are the primary reality for the game. There are a few examples of game worlds based on real world settings, but none of them without considerable adaptation for the game. The game world first of all has to correspond to the nature of the game and afford the basic user interactions, allow the development of strategies, be supportive of the goal of the game, provide a high enough level of challenge, and offer an interesting visual landscape. In the earlier games the worlds were built in ways to show dramatic settings while



Every tool is a weapon if You hold it right!
Margarete Johnson, Sky Museum

-No need to cry -
Thoughts about the unique emotional
potential of computer games
Doris C. Rusch

Computer games can provide their players with strong emotional experiences. But since it is rather rare that they make their players cry (crying out of frustration does not count), they are considered superficial and shallow compared to films... by people who obviously do not play, of course. Crying and similar emotional responses to vicarious moments seem to be the ultimate barometer for the maturity of an entertainment medium. Even Hollywood Director Steven Spielberg claims: "The medium will come of age, when somebody confesses that they cried at level 17" [1]. Admittedly much can be learnt from a comparison with film in regard to the range and depth of emotional experiences. But maturity of the new medium will not be reached when it finally provides the same emotional experiences film allows for, but when it has developed its own unique ways of engaging its users.

According to Tan, emotion is defined "as a change in action readiness as a result of the subject's appraisal of the situation or event." [2]. The fiction film evokes emotional responses by appealing to certain source concerns of the audience like security, love, freedom, etc. which are endangered in the course of the narrative. The wish to restore the desirable states that result from the fulfillment of the source concerns promotes action readiness. In the narrative process the source concerns are concretized by surface concerns. The most important surface concern realized by films is the creation and resolution of tension [3]. This is basically also true for the majority of computer games. It is important to note, though, that the emotional experience of gaming is not only a result of endangering and restoring desirable states on the level of narrative, but also and foremost on the level of game-play. Games appeal to source concerns unique to the interactive form: agency, the feeling of sensorimotor competency and the need to prove oneself. In computer games the action tendencies evoked by the wish to restore or establish a desirable state (i.e. to save a comrade, to regain freedom, to overcome an obstacle, to eliminate an opponent) are actual, not virtual. In a game, hoping that everything will turn out fine in the end won't get you far – it might even get you killed. The player has to work for the "happily ever after". Therefore one could argue that the emotional experience computer games enable are more "real" than those of fiction films, which allow only an actual realization of an action tendency: to keep awake, present and watching.

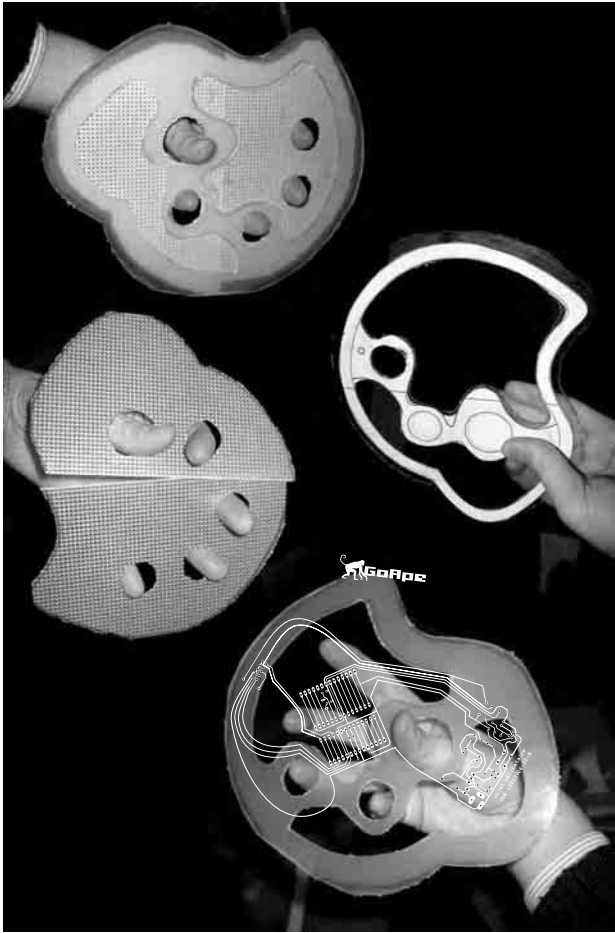
From this it probably has become clear that the main difference between computer games and films is that games possess three operational levels – the level of narrative (including pre-scripted moments and the narrative arising during play), the level of interface

(where the events are audio-visually represented and the communication between game and player takes place), and the level of the game as system (which contains the rules and determines the game-play), whereas films only have the first two levels at their disposal (with restrictions on the level of interface.) The unique emotional potential of computer games lies in the level of the game as system that distinguishes it from all traditional media. The reason for this is that a mediated event can only then evoke an emotional experience from the recipient if accepted as real. "This law of apparent reality (Frijda 1988) states that emotions are evoked exclusively by events that are appraised as real and that their intensity corresponds to the degree to which this is the case." [4]

Games have a huge advantage here: Due to the third operational level, they are already 'half real', 'video games are real in that they are made of real rules that players actually interact with; that winning or losing a game is a real event.' [5] The other half of a video game consists of its fictional world, the narrative universe. The key to the realization of a game's emotional potential is the interplay between the fictional world and the game as a system. If the narrative is acted out via the game-play, assumed feelings of a character can be made tangible for the player. This allows for a degree of identification traditional storytelling media would have trouble to achieve. The medial characteristics of games not only enable the transfer of the avatar's feelings to the player. Their meaning making potential could also be used to convey abstract concepts and critical ideas by creating complex symbolic languages (represented on the level of interface) that are reinforced by the game-play. Considering this, one can only imagine what a wonderfully provocative vehicle the computer game could be for a new generation of intellectuals, artists and all kinds of people who search for innovative forms of expression. There really is no need to cry!

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GoAppe, lud/dic socialites!

