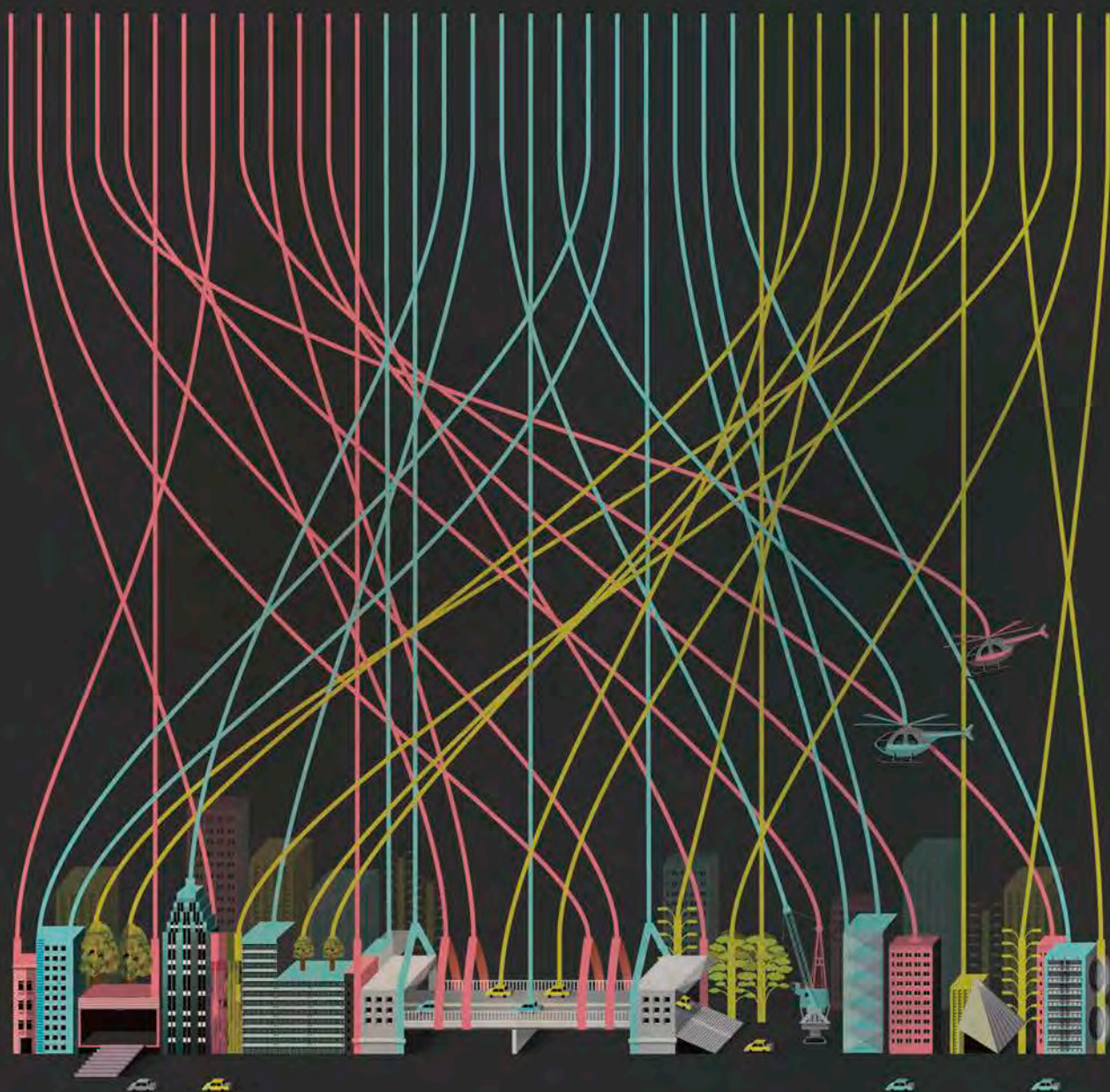


文字機器創作集第五輯 WMC_e5 | THE WRITING MACHINE COLLECTIVE, THE 5TH EXHIBITION

讀寫靈機：唧唧復唧唧

Tracing Data WHAT YOU READ IS NOT
WHAT WE WRITE

PROCEEDINGS



參展藝術家 PARTICIPATING ARTISTS ————— **JAMES COUPE / YOHA (GRAHAM HARWOOD AND MATSUKO YOKOKOJI) / DANIEL C. HOWE & JOHN CAYLEY / 葉旭耀 IP YUK-YIU / MIKE KING / 黎尚嫻 LINDA LAI / 劉清華 JESS LAU / 羅海德 HECTOR RODRIGUEZ / AUDREY SAMSON / 蘇慧怡 ZOIE SO / 孫詠怡 WINNIE SOON / 黃照達 JUSTIN WONG**

09.10 — 22.10.2014 . CONNECTING SPACES HK-ZH

主辦 Presented by



場地贊助 Venue sponsored by



資助 Supported by



文字機器創作集第五輯 WMC_e5 | THE WRITING MACHINE COLLECTIVE, THE 5TH EXHIBITION

讀寫靈機：唧唧復唧唧

Tracing Data WHAT YOU READ IS NOT
WHAT WE WRITE

PROCEEDINGS

09.10 – 22.10.2014 . CONNECTING SPACES HK-ZH

主辦 Presented by



場地贊助 Venue sponsored by



資助 Supported by





TRACING DATA:

A Concept Statement

/ Linda Lai and Hector Rodriguez

“Tracing” is multiple. Following, step by step, moment by moment. Recording. Scanning. Compiling. Archiving. Unfolding. Reconstructing. Decomposing. Deconstructing. Streamlining. Visualizing. Sonifying. Mediating. Transforming. Translating. Transferring. Associating. Mapping. Combination. Permutation. Integration. Hypothesizing. Calculating. Estimating. Interfering. ... These are the manifold actions that the artists of WMC_e5 have enacted on the data they are working with.



The impact of computation on both aesthetic expression and aesthetic criticism has been widely felt. Not only artists but also critics are using digital technologies to analyze works of art and literature. Computation generates new modes of art by which criticism and artistic creation meet, an apt description for many works in this exhibition.

Many scholars in the so-called digital humanities, for instance, use the computer to “mine” individual texts, or large collections of texts, for patterns that are not obvious on the surface. Daniel Howe and John Cayley’s *The Real Story of Ah-Q* (阿 Q 正傳) is a real-time exfoliation of a famous text by May Fourth writer Lu Xun (1881-1936), through the politically-implicated lenses of algorithmic and networked services.

Cinema scholars and experimental artists have also used the computer to re-examine existing films, presenting familiar content in unfamiliar ways. Linda Lai’s *Vaulting Space* (翻騰空) is a formal analysis of swordplay syntax by a restless, almost endless combinatorial display of 3 image discourses, to open up our understanding of “montage.” Hector Rodriguez’s *Theorem 8* (第八定理) uses the information of one movie to decompose a second movie frame by frame, turning “superimposition” into a unique analytic-aesthetic language. Ip Yuk-yiu’s *Rehearsals for muted films #2* is a reductive analysis of Hollywood films set against Hong Kong, turning the speech-image hierarchy on its head.

The computer has made possible not only new ways of making art and literature (writing) but also new ways of reading (understanding and analyzing it) it. In the works presented in WMC_e5, reading is also writing, and vice versa. The crucial question for us is: How do computational technologies change what we call reading? The idea of reading is to be understood broadly, to include any act of engaging critically and creatively with a text. We understand reading so that it applies to language in a broad sense, including visual, sonic, and cinematic language. What can the act of reading become in a digital context? For instance, how can

we read a film, photograph, or literary work through methods of computational analysis? How can we use those methods to read works of visual and literary art in ways that were not previously possible? Next to Howe and Cayley's piece on Ah-Q, [Justin Wong's *Autocomic #1*](#) is both a reading machine of his own library of comics and a writing machine of potential comics narratives governed by a set of rules. [James Coupe's](#) cameras, for example, survey Fort Street outside the venue Connecting Space-HK as well as the venue itself to generate a ficto-docu narrative, [jalousie room](#), drawing from Robbe-Grillet's *La Jalousie* as its meta-script. [Mike King's *map01*](#) also takes an inventive approach — by visualizing procedural interference between transcendental functions.

The topic of reading is closely connected to the question of surveillance. Coupe's work turns surveillance into an artistic metaphor to shed light on our postmodern human condition. Techniques of data mining and data analysis play a crucial part in surveillance activities. Data need to be "read" so as to be rendered useful. Surveillance can therefore be understood as a form of computationally mediated reading. In this way, new forms of reading acquire huge social and political significance. [YoHa's *Endless War*](#) magnifies leaked data from the Afghan War Diary by taking multiple analytical positions as well as makes audible machine sounds when data are running. Moreover, many artists use techniques that originated in, or were inspired by, surveillance applications — such as Rodriguez's deployment of a mathematical technique, orthogonal decomposition, often used in surveillance software.

We live in a society where privacy is continually under threat, not only due to government

monitoring of activity, but also to the widespread collection, analysis, and exchange of consumer data by companies like Google, Amazon, or Facebook. This negative, *yin*, side of tracing data is equally intriguing. [Winnie Soon](#), with her [Hello Zombies \(回轉喪屍\)](#), walks in the shoes of dormant and discharged data waste to play up their endless, zombie-like wandering in the limitless virtual space inside the machine-world. On a performative note, [Audrey Samson's *ne.me.quittes.pas* \(請別離開我\)](#) materializes a(n) (im)possible farewell to immaterial data through her symbolic-scientific digital data funeral service.

There is always room for poetics, even when working with computation. [Zoie So's *Weather forecasting* \(氣象預測\)](#) articulates an experience that approaches the sublime: the contemplation of the unfathomable, immense impact of a tick or glitch of a minute chunk of data. [Jess Lau's *The Fading Piece* \(消失之中\)](#) is a trial of our attention to a process of transposition. It echoes the Chinese title of this exhibition — 《唧唧復唧唧》 — which suggests the sounds made by a weaving machine or the sighs of the persevering female weaver: *Jik-jik-fook-jik-jik, Jik-jik-fook-jik-jik,*

Linda C.H. Lai (WMC Artistic Director) / Hector Rodriguez
(WMC Director for Research & Education)

October 2014 / Hong Kong

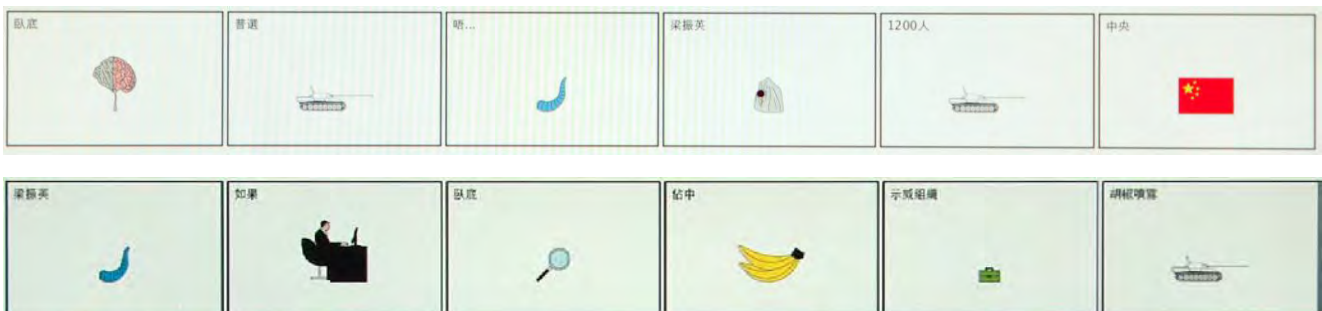
Hector Rodriguez

“Reading, Writing, Machine” 機器如何讀寫？

11 October 2014 / 6:00pm @ Connecting Space-HK

I think we are all anxious to see the show. A lot of the works are not going to be simple. So I will give you an overview of what the Writing Machine Collective is about – as Linda just said we are 10 years old and we can all sing “happy birthday.” I also want to go through some of the themes in this show.

Our collective was developed to study the idea of language – and language in a very broad sense, not just what we will normally called “English” or “Chinese,” but symbolic systems including diagrams, the “language” of cinema and so on. We are concerned with **language in a broad sense** – the **language of comics**, and here’s the work by one of our members, Justin Wong, which is right over there – *Autocomic #1*... [see below]



Justin Wong: *Autocomic #1* (2014)

But we are interested in a wide variety of things about language, for example, the language of measurement, and there is work by Zoie So (*Weather Forecasting*), which is in some way about the nature of **measurement**, the culture of measurement, and our obsession with measuring in order to predict. And that's a really important theme because in a way all of us, media artists, have to work with measurement devices – a camera is a measurement device in a sense, so thinking about measurement as a theme is a very important idea within this exhibition. We concern ourselves with measurement's cultural indication in a metaphorical aspect.

We are interested in language, but from a very particular point of view. We are interested in **language as a source of invention**, so I used the word "**singularity**." Singularity means something new, something inventive, something perhaps unexpected – and we are using language to bring that about. We do that in different ways, for example, through the idea of recombination, through **using databases to recombine various elements**. I think James' work (*jalousie*) did a little bit of that, and Linda Lai's work (*Vaulting Space*) is also recombining a database of Chinese films by classifying them based on some aspects about movements, then **creating rules** to rearrange those various clips. The influence I think behind this work is a group of writers called the "Oulipo Group," working a lot with rule-based media. Some of you may know Italo Calvino, well-known writer from that group, and they were obsessed with inventing new rules for their own artwork. I think the work of Justin's, the comics, is also an example of **rule-based creativity** and Justin is very interested in the idea of **generative comics**, just as Linda is interested in **generative cinematic database**. So it's how to make things new, how to create events which are singular and unique through recombination.



Linda Lai's 3-panel *Vaulting Space* hanging from ceiling



James Coupe's *Jalousie* (2014) combines prepared dialogs with video footage picked up live at the venue



Rodriguez's *Theorem 8* is a complex combination of higher and lower dimensions of spaces using mathematical concepts

We are also interested in the idea of **language as a process, as work, the work of making symbols, inscribing things, writing things and erasing them – but also the time that a work takes**. And these are the ideas of, for example, a very beautiful manifesto in an animation piece near the entrance of the gallery, Jess Lau's *A Fading piece*. Equally important is the idea that language, the symbol system that we use, **frames how we think**. And that is very important, and is a very political idea. There is a work, *Endless War* by YOHA, which – hiding behind that door right there and please don't miss it – addresses how we think about war by inspecting databases that deal with warfare, and **how the data that we use express certain ways of thinking about a phenomenon**, and that's very political, especially if we want to change how we think about a phenomenon. The idea of the frame, therefore, is very important in the entire show, and in different works.

The idea of creating a dialog between different symbol systems is a key thought in this exhibition. We are creating dialogs primarily between computation and cinema, but also between computation and comics, as in Justin's work, or between literature, as in the work of Robbe-Grillet, and the videos James Coupe made using the his novel. Most of the works here

deal with dialogs between different language systems, and we believe this kind of dialogs is a source of creative power, a source of invention.

In particular, we look at one language system which is **computation**, and we are interested in how we use **computation as a perspective on other systems**. For example, can computation change how we read literature? This topic is addressed very explicitly in a work by Daniel Howe and John Calyley (*The True Story of Ah-Q in the 21st Century*), in which the artists take up a very well-known Chinese short story by Lu Xun, the story of “Ah Q,” and develop a software that finds snippets in that story that is also found in other books in Googlebook. This work is about changing how we read through computation. Many works in this show tend to do that, too.

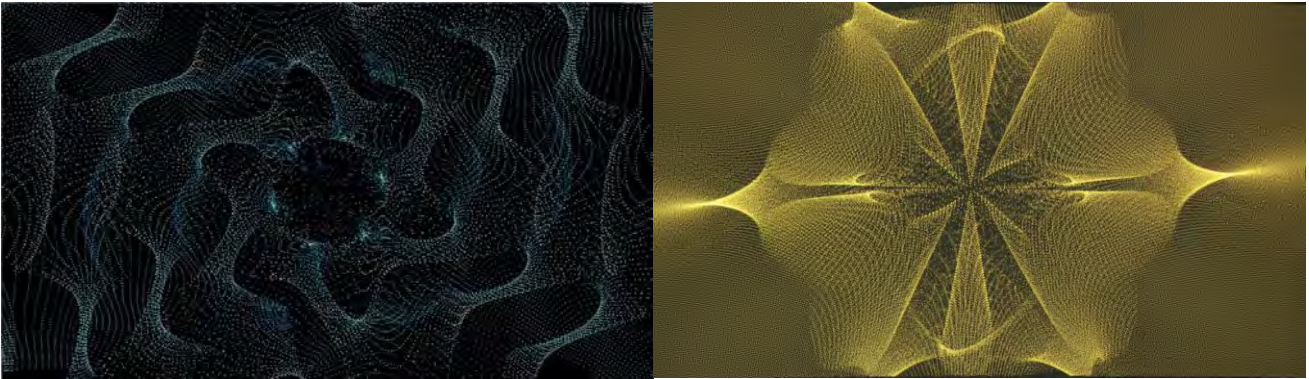


Daniel Howe + John Calyley: *The True Story of Ah-Q in the 21st Century* (2014)

We are called the Writing Machine Collective, so many people ask – where are the robots? But the word **machine**, as we use it, that doesn’t necessarily mean a physical device. It means something more like **an automatic rule-based system**. You can say a computer program is a machine – so it is a machine in a more abstract sense, and most of us like to work with mechanical processes, automated processes, and the materiality of those processes. An example is the work of Winnie Soon (*Hello Zombies*), which works with spam to produce spam poetry. She also works with the culture of spam, the names that are used in spam, and the culture and economic aspect of **spam culture**.

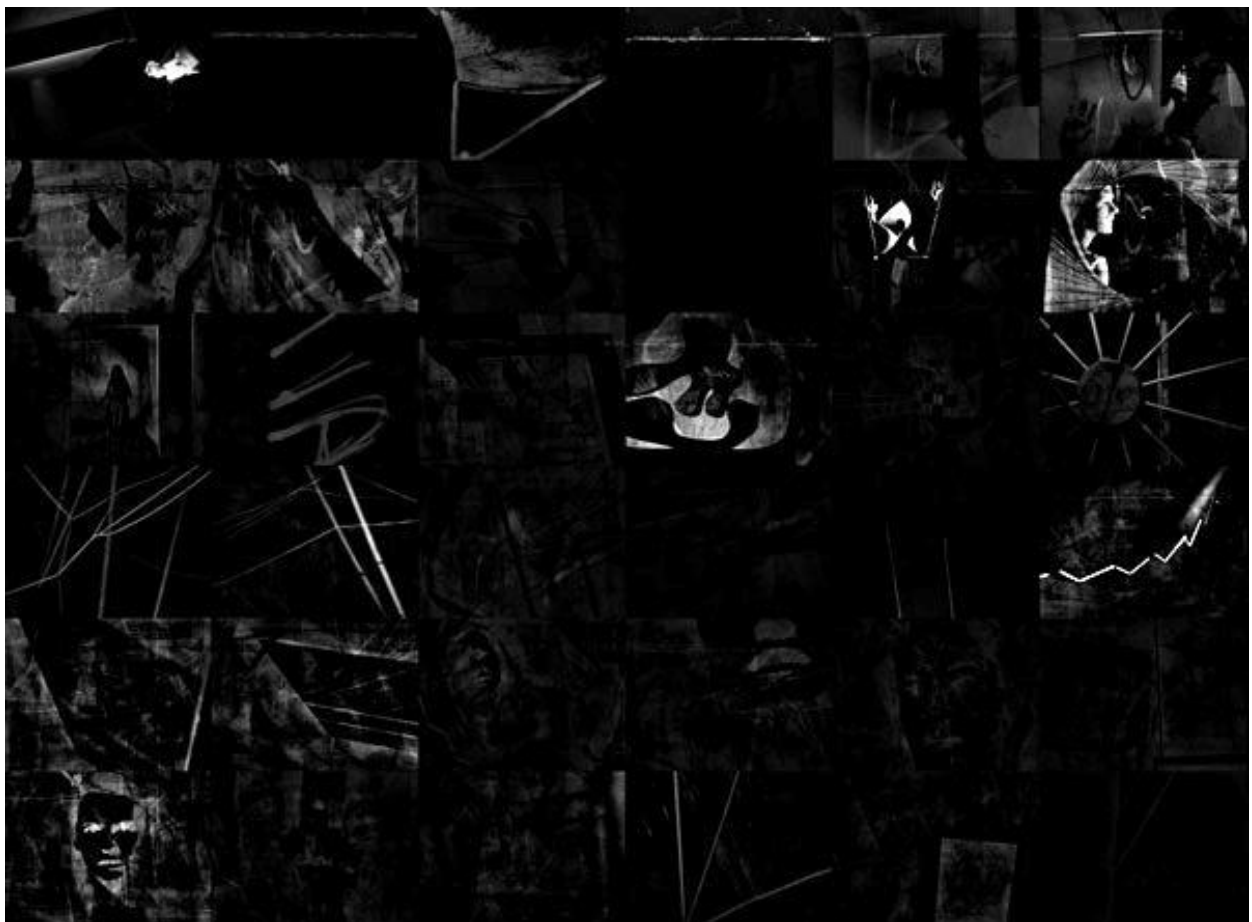
One of the key themes for us in this show in particular is the idea of “**reading is writing and writing is reading**.” This idea goes back to a well-known philosopher and theorist Julia Kristeva writing in the 70s. It is really the idea that **we write in a medium by reading other media**. The borderline between writing something and reading something else is blurred. In a way, all artists are like that. I make art by responding to other artworks. So I am **reading other artworks in writing my own art**, and we highlight this point through the whole show. This is one of the key ideas in the entire exhibition, and I think many of the works do that.

There is yet another key topic. On the wall next to us you can see the **visualization of abstract systems**. Theorist Vilém Flusser once argued that our modern world is meaningless because a lot of the ideas around us are highly abstract and detached from experience. For example, we cannot always experience a mathematical formula. So Flusser’s challenge for us is how we can connect abstract systems such as the formulas of mathematics or physics with perceptible manifestations. This is the work by computer programmer Mike King (*map01*), which is a visualization of waveform interferences. For this work the artist developed his own software which accelerates the CPU so that many calculations can be performed in real time, so this is a **real-time generative system**.



Mike King's *map01* (2014)

[Speaker pointing to *Theorem 8* (2013) on the wall...; see below] This is my work, which is right there but barely visible (due to too much light). To say one thing about the work, I was at that time studying linear algebra, and I read a mathematical theorem called the orthogonal decomposition theorem. I asked myself how I could make visual art out of a very abstract mathematical concept – that was how the work was formed. It is a visualization of a theorem.



We are interested in language too as **a cultural form** and as **a form of relation between people**. This is a piece by Audrey Samson (*ne.me.quittes.pas*), in the room behind James Coupe's, which deals with the idea of data, and **destruction of data**, the death of data, data funerals, the culture that develops about that, and the way that people relate to one another around such issues. So we are generally interested in **different languages as forms of culture**.

It seems many ideas in this show are what we called, perhaps a bit pretentiously, "the Poetic Function of Language." By poetic function, we don't mean poetry necessarily – though we've got a work there that hates spam poetry [jokingly]. By "poetry" we refer to the idea of making language say something new, making it unfamiliar through combining and recombining, and using computation as a perspective on language – to change how we think by doing that.

I have just delivered an overview of the main concepts of the show.

[Notes of acknowledgement...] I am repeating what Linda said, but I have to say thank you to Nuria and Jessica at the Connecting Spaces, to Harold Kramer who brought us together, Harold the matchmaker. Connecting Spaces is a really wonderful space to work with. And we also want to say, thank you to the people who gave us the money – the HK Arts Development Council. Next time, give us more money, please. But really, they have made the show possible. Thank you Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

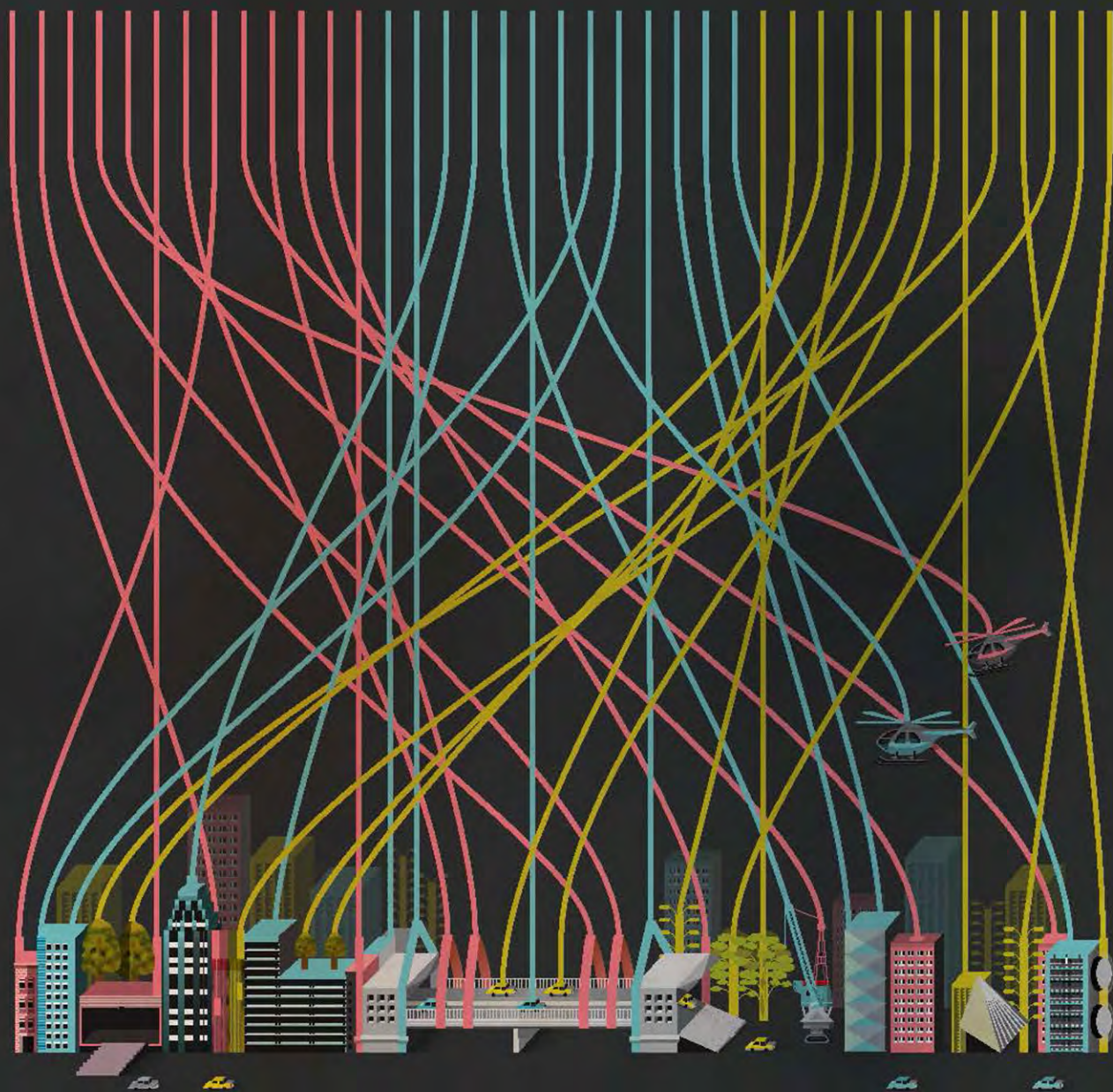


文字機器創作集第五輯 WMC_e5 | THE WRITING MACHINE COLLECTIVE, THE 5TH EXHIBITION

讀寫靈機：唧唧復唧唧

Tracing Data

WHAT YOU READ IS NOT
WHAT WE WRITE



參展藝術家 PARTICIPATING ARTISTS ————— JAMES COUPE / YOHA (GRAHAM HARWOOD AND
MATSUKO YOKOKOJI) / DANIEL C. HOWE & JOHN CAYLEY / 葉旭耀 IP YUK-YIU / MIKE KING /
黎尚嫻 LINDA LAI / 劉清華 JESS LAU / 羅海德 HECTOR RODRIGUEZ / AUDREY SAMSON / 蘇慧怡
ZOIE SO / 孫詠怡 WINNIE SOON / 黃照達 JUSTIN WONG ————— [www.connectingspaces.ch]

09.10 — 22.10.2014 . CONNECTING SPACES HK-ZH

主辦 Presented by



場地贊助 Venue sponsored by



資助 Supported by



Tracing Data WHAT YOU READ IS NOT WHAT WE WRITE 讀寫靈機：唧唧復唧唧

雙邊揭幕展出 BILATERAL OPENING

香港·蘇黎世 **CONNECTING SPACES HK+ZURICH**

◆ **09.10.2014 (星期四Thu) 12:00-8:00pm**

Connecting Spaces-hk + Connecting Spaces-zurich

FORUM OPENING TALKS

開幕 論壇

講座

工作坊

WORK SHOPS

11.10.2014
(星期六Sat)
5:00-8:00pm

5:00pm 客席藝術家專題 ARTIST'S FEATURE / JAMES COUPE (美國USA) :
《教我如何不再看?》“On the Outside Looking In”
6:00pm 主題轉軸 EXPOSITION / HECTOR RODRIGUEZ :
《唧唧復唧唧：機器如何讀、寫?》“Reading, Writing, Machine”
7:00pm 酒會 RECEPTION PARTY

19.10.2014
(星期日Sun)
4:00-5:30pm

《我的居所宏大可你觸不及我》ABSTRACT SPACES
羅海德 HECTOR RODRIGUEZ
(文字機器創作案研究總監 / 藝術家 WMC Research Director and Artist) and
FELIPE CUCKER
(城大數學系講座教授 Chair Professor, Mathematics, City University of Hong Kong)

19.10.2014
(星期日Sun)
5:30-6:00pm

《寫作評閱一個有關讀寫的展覽》NO IDEAS. JUST THINGS. THE HATTER'S WISDOM AND AN EXHIBITION ABOUT WRITING. OR READING
HARALD KRAEMER
(城大創意媒體副教授 School of Creative Media City, University of Hong Kong)

19.10.2014
(星期日Sun)
7:15pm

數據化的研究 DATAFIED RESEARCH
(TRANSMEDIALE 短講對話系列 / TRANSMEDIALE SERIES) —
AN EVENING OF SHORT POSITION PAPERS
Christian Ulrik Andersen (丹麥DK) / Manuel Bürger (德國GER) / Geoff Cox (丹麥DK / 英國UK) / Søren Pold (丹麥DK) / Jane Prophet (英國UK / 香港HK) / Daniel Howe (美國US / 香港HK) / Damien Charrieras (法國FRA / 香港HK) / Ingrid Hoelzl (奧地利AU / 香港HK)
**organized by the Participatory IT Research Centre (Aarhus University), transmediale/resource, and SCM (the City University of HK)

12.10.2014
(星期日Sun)
3:00-5:00pm

《請別離開我·或·如何為電子數據舉行葬禮》
DIGITAL DATA FUNERAL: NE.ME.QUITTES.PAS
AUDREY SAMSON
(新媒體學博士候選人 / 藝術家 Ph.D. researcher in new media and Artist)

18.10.2014
(星期六Sat)
11:00am-1:00pm

觸感學堂·拼貼藝術創作練習 DISCOVER TEXTURE, COLOR AND FEELING IN MIXED MEDIA — 劉清華 JESS LAU
[兒童工作坊 Children's workshop]
(粵語主講 / conducted in Cantonese)

所有講座及工作坊除註明外，均以英語進行。
All talks and workshops will be conducted in English, unless specified.

詳情及報名，請瀏覽網址：
Please visit our website for programme and enrollment details：
www.writingmachine-collective.net

**另特別提供免費導賞團，歡迎聯絡我們安排時段，請電郵致 info@writingmachine-collective.net 預約。
***Special Free guided tours on request, please contact us at info@writingmachine-collective.net to make reservation.



CONNECTING SPACE HONG KONG

北角堡壘街18-20號華禧大廈 (北角港鐵出口：B1, B2, B3)
G/F, Wah Kin Mansion, 18-20 Fort Street, North Point (North Point MTR exit: B1, B2, B3)
每日中午 12:00-20:00 daily (22.10.2014 將提早於 18:00 關閉
Exhibition will close earlier at 18:00 on 22.10.2014)
www.connectingspaces.ch

Table of Content

[concept statement] Tracing Data: What You Read is Not What You Write
/ Linda C.H. Lai, Hector Rodriguez /**4-5**

[exposition] Reading, Writing, Machines / Hector Rodriguez /**6-10**

Exhibition and event dates /**11-12**

List of artists and works at Connecting Space-HK [main exhibition] /**14**

Remote opening at Connecting Space-Zurich (bilateral exhibition) /**15-18**

Talks, Seminars, Features **19-34**

- Audrey Samson: Digital Funeral [workshop] /**19**
- Hector Rodriguez + Felipe Cucker: Abstract Spaces [Artist's talk] /**20**
- Harald Kraemer: No ideas - just things. The Hatter's Wisdom and an Exhibition about Writing, Or Reading [exposition] /**21-25**
- James Coupe: On the Outside Looking In [FEATURE] /**26-34**

Sketches: exhibition site overview and distribution of works
/ Wong Chun-hoi /**35-38**

ARTWORKS at WMC_e5, HK main exhibition **39-101**

- James Coupe: *Jalousie room* (2014) /**39-44**
- YOHA: *Endless War* /**45-50**
- Daniel Howe + John Cayley: *The True Story of Ah-Q from the 21st century* /**51-56**
 - Linda C.H. Lai: *Vaulting Space* (2014) /**57-63**
 - Jess Lau: *A Fading Piece* (2014) /**64-66**
 - Hector Rodriguez: *Theorem 8* (2012) /**67-71**
 - Audrey Samson: *ne.me.quittes.pas* (2013) /**72-80**
 - Zoie So: *Weather Forecasting* (2014) /**81-85**
 - Winnie Soon: *Hello Zombies* (2014) /**86-92**
 - Justin Wong: *Autocomic #1* (2014) /**93-95**
 - Mike King: *map01* (2014) /**96-99**
- Ip Yuk-yiu: *Rehearsal for Muted Films #2* (2014) /**100-101**

Audiences (image photo capture) /**102-103**

Transmediale at WMC_e5 /**104-105**

Artists' biographies /**106-110**

WHAT IS THE Writing Machine Collective? / Linda C.H. Lai /**111-112**

WMC exhibitions: a list of past shows and events
WMC and WMC_e5: the team /**113**

TRACING DATA: What you Read is Not What we Write

讀寫靈機：唧唧復唧唧

文字機器創作集第五輯 WMC_e5 2014.10.09-22

James COUPE	<i>jalousie room</i> **
YOHA (Graham HARWOOD + YOKOKOJI Matsuko)	<i>Endless War</i>
Daniel HOWE & John CAYLEY	<i>The True Story of Ah-Q from the 21st Century</i> 阿Q正傳**
IP Yuk-yiu 葉旭耀	<i>Rehearsals for Muted Films #2</i> **
Mike King	<i>Map01</i> **
Linda C.H. LAI 黎尚嫻	<i>Vaulting</i> 翻騰空**
Jess LAU 劉清華	<i>A Fading Piece</i> 消失之中
Hector RODRIGUEZ 羅海德	<i>Theorem 8</i> 第八定理
Audrey SAMSOMN	<i>ne.me.quittes.pas</i> 請別離開我
Zoie SO 蘇慧怡	<i>Weather Forecasting</i> 氣象預測**
Winnie SOON 孫詠怡	<i>Hello Zombies</i> 回轉喪屍**
Justin WONG 黃照達	<i>Autocomic #1</i> **

** = World Premiere 世界首演

BILATERAL EXCHANGE

4 works from Hong Kong by WMC artists were presented at Connecting Spaces-Zurich to mark WMC_e5's bi-lateral opening

9-18 October 2014 / Zürich

| reading as writing | writing as reading

Exhibition at Connecting Space Zurich

2014 Connecting Space Zurich, Toni-Areal, Pfingstweidstrasse 96, Zurich, Galerie 2

Bilateral soft opening Connecting Space Hong Kong and Connecting Space Zurich: Thursday, 9. October 2014, 1.30 pm (Zurich), 7.30 pm (Hong Kong)

<http://www.connectingspaces.ch/tracing-data-what-you-read-is-not-what-we-write-2/>



Connecting Space Zürich is located in the old town at Bären-gasse 22, on the premises of Bären-gasse Museum (in association with On-Curating), opened in February 2014. Its programs are curated by Patrick Müller and team.

Hector Rodriguez – *Theorem 8* (single-channel version)
– also at WMC_e5, Connecting Space-HK



Jess Lau – *The Fading Piece* (2014), 2-channel video of a work of stop-motion animation

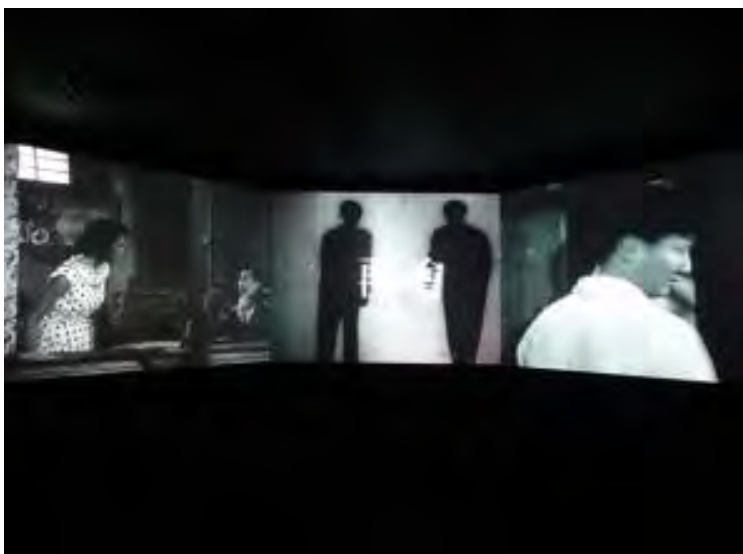
<http://cargocollective.com/jesslau/The-Fading-Piece>

[description with extracts]



Linda Lai – *Door Games Window Frames: Near Drama* (2012, single-channel version) – a work that shares the same codes running *Vaulting Space* at WMC_e5, Connecting Space-HK

<https://vimeo.com/66923033> [extracts]



Justin Wong – *City Forum* (2010, single-channel version) – from WMC_e4, Hong Kong



Before the show, Patrick Müller (Zürich) and Linda Lai (Hong Kong) discussed a model of collaboration.

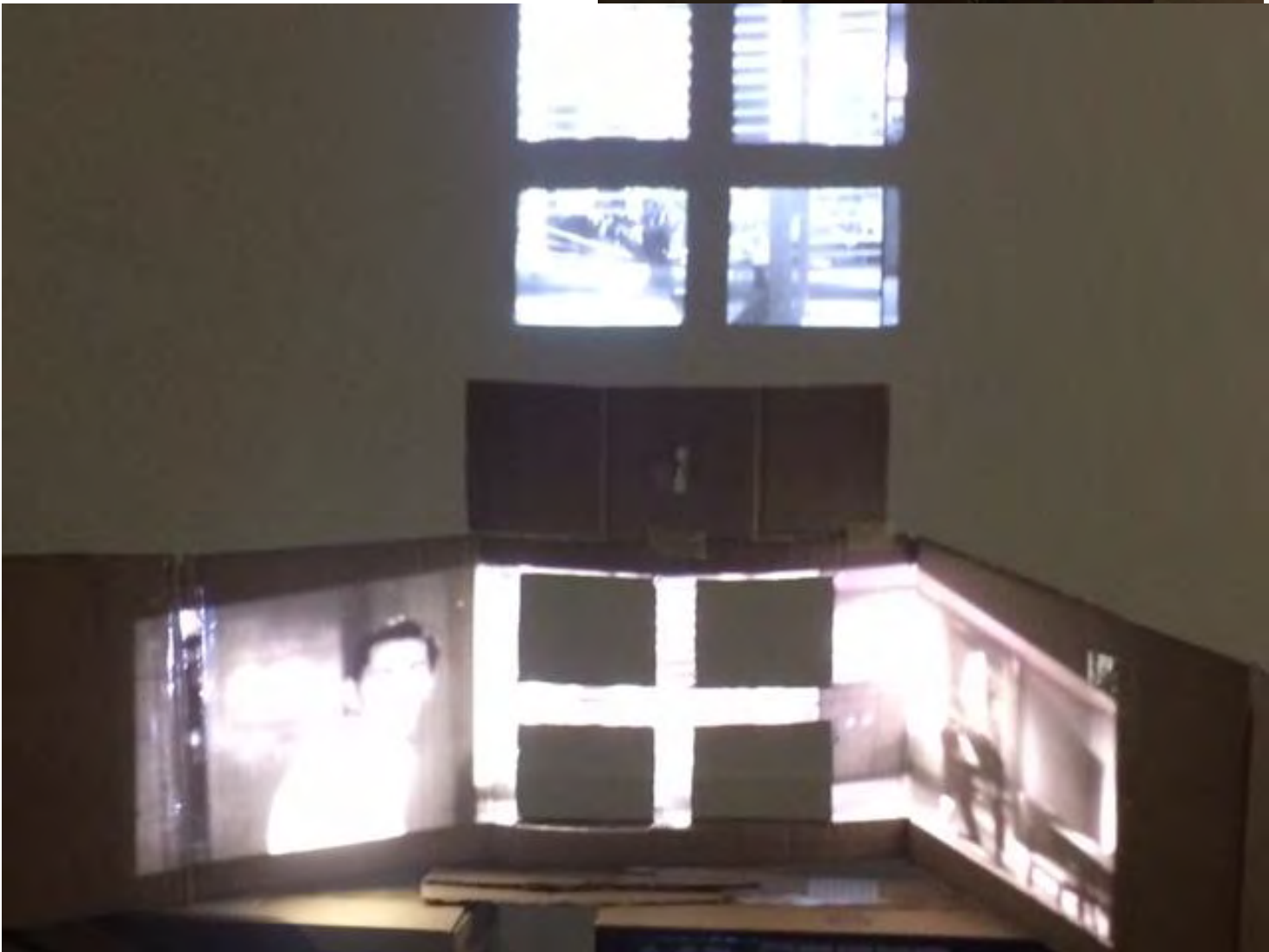
Müller pointed out that at Zürich, they were experimenting with „remote spacin” in a seminar with students, which dealt with questions of ‘distant working / learning processes’, or in this current event, ‘distant writing / reading processes’. Müller then proposed some possibilities of ‘display intervention’ for the 4 WMC works at Connecting Space Zürich.

On *Door Games Window Frames: Near Drama* (single channel video version)..

The treatment is to turn the single-channel version of this work, which was originally adapted from a 3-channel programmed projection, **back to a multiple-display installation**. Müller proposed in an email he sent to Lai –

“*Door Games* is projected on a surface with a window cut-out. So you see the projection (as in a triptych) on the two sides, on the window, and also through the window on the wall in the back.”

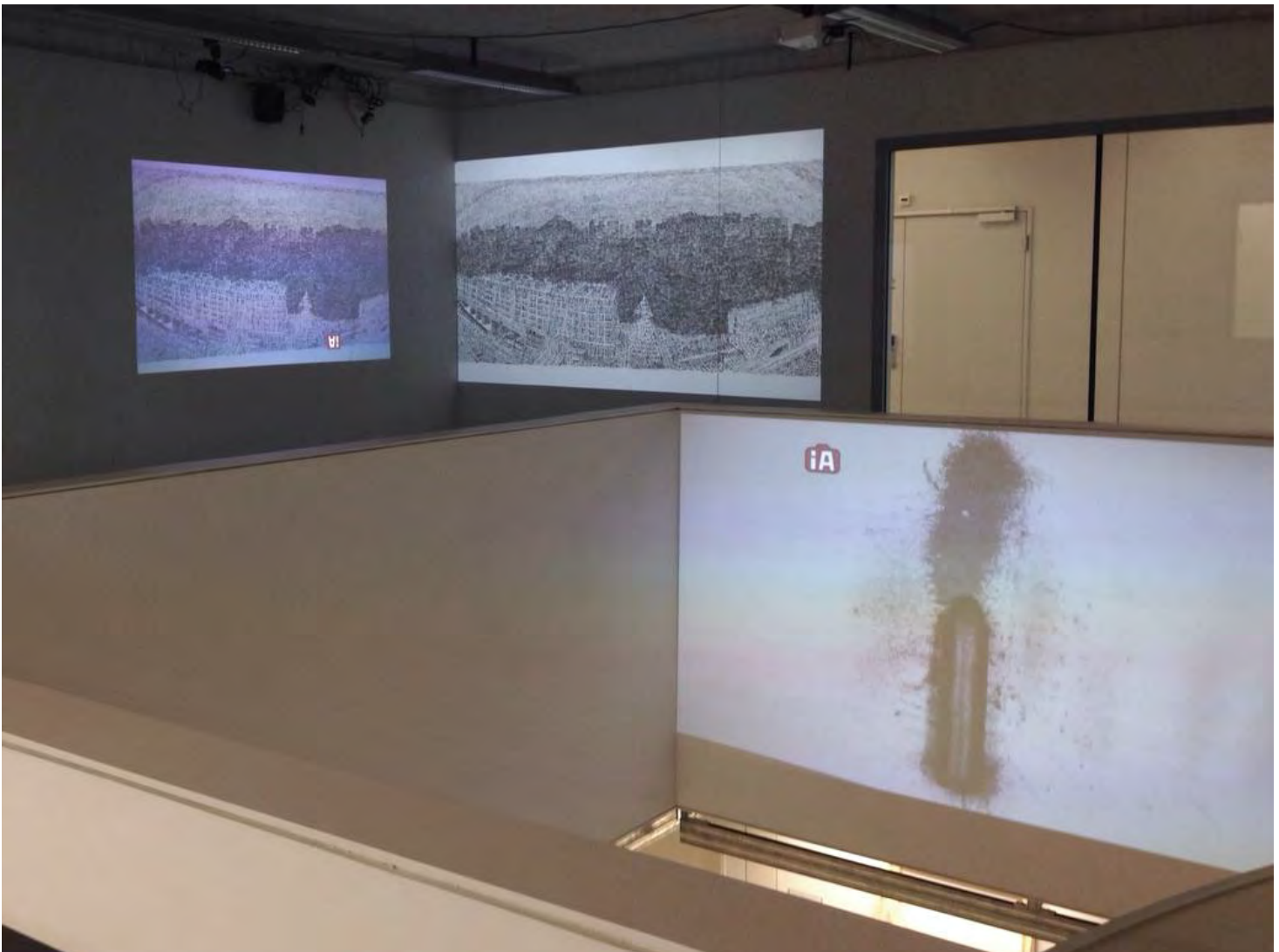
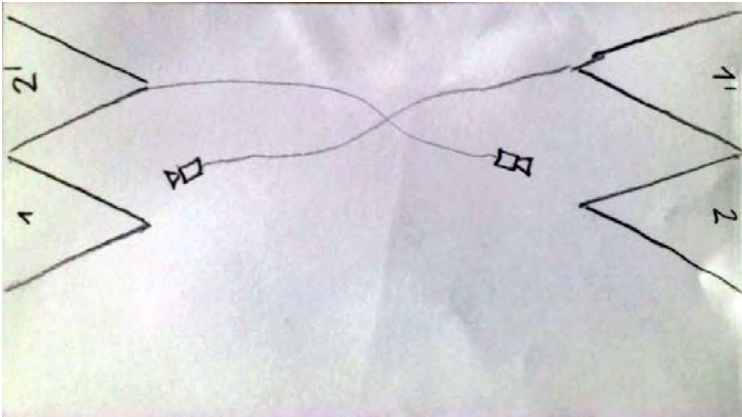
Two concept sketches were attached...



On *The Fading Piece*...

“We would like to develop a four-channel projection out of the two-channel projection— two opposite walls with the two projections of the left and the right video — one of each projection on one wall is the original; the other is the filmed original from the other side. So if somebody is watching the video in front of the filmed original, he/she will appear in the projection of the filmed version on the opposite wall. The goal of this display was to take up the idea of circulating and transforming, and also to have a further layer of the relationship between the two videos. ...” – Patrick Müller

Here’s the conceptual sketch,



Jess Lau’s *The Fading Piece* (2014) as it was “translated” at Connecting Space Zürich on 9 October 2014



Audrey Samson

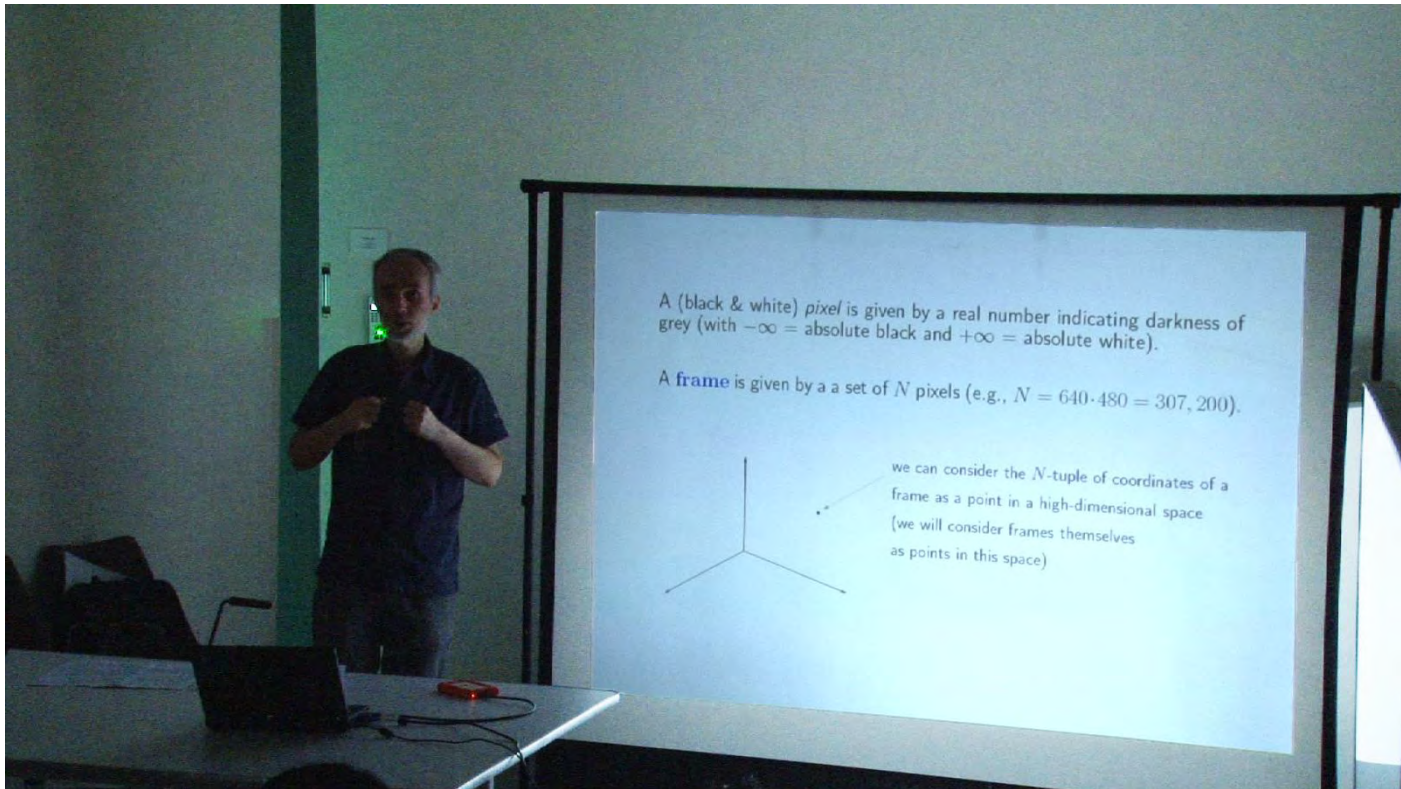
“Digital Data Funeral: ne.me.quittes.pas”

請別離開我，或，如何為電子資料舉行喪禮

12 October 2014 / 3:00-5:00pm @ Connecting Space-HK

This workshop examined the different forms of digital data traces that we (often involuntarily) leave online. How is our data being used? How do issues of privacy, data ownership, surveillance and cyberbullying relate to networked digital data? In the workshop we discussed these issues and we thought about how data deletion could be a form of gesture against quantification and surveillance. We considered creative ways we could ritualize the erasure of data and what kind of personal data we would like to delete. No prior technical experience was required for the workshop.

我們日常 (非自願性) 在網絡上遺下的不同形式的電子數據，將如何被取用？工作坊會討論有關的私隱、數據所有權、監控及網上欺凌的相關議題，亦會觸及銷毀數據作為一種抵擋人被量化的反監控的行動。個人有什麼數據希望可以永久銷毀？如何以創意的儀式去銷毀數據？這些都是工作坊會觸及的。參加者不需要任何技術性的經驗。



Hector Rodriguez + Felipe Cucker

“Abstract Spaces” 我的居所宏大可你觸不及我

19 October 2014 / 4:00-5:30pm @ Connecting Space-HK

In this talk, software artist Hector Rodriguez described in detail the creative process leading to the production of his recent work *Theorem 8* (2013), on show at the 5th Writing Machine Collective exhibition. The main challenge of the project was to transform an abstract mathematical concept into a visual artwork. In particular, the basic idea for this piece is to assert and explore the geometric structure of digital images. Rodriguez outlined such conception and the process of developing it. While the content of this talk necessarily contained mathematical ideas, these were presented in an elementary way suitable for a non-technical audience.

This talk offered a unique opportunity for audiences to experience a very detailed and in-depth description of the production of a specific work of art, from the standpoint of its creator.

The mathematical consultant to the project was Felipe Cucker, Chair Professor of Mathematics at the City University of Hong Kong. Professor Cucker was the co-presenter of the talk.

„No ideas – just things. The Hatter’s Wisdom and an Exhibition about Writing. Or Reading. 實作評閱一個有關讀寫的展覽

Harald Kraemer 19 October 2014 @ Connecting Space-HK

I would like to dedicate my talk and this text to our colleague Julian Lee, who died in September 2014.

Once upon a time Pei Xiu 裴休 presented Huángbò Xīyùn 黄檗希运 with a text he had written on his understanding of Chán 禪 (Zen).

Huángbò placed the text down without looking at and after a long pause asked, "*Do you understand?*"

Pei Xiu replied, "*I don't understand.*"

What you read is not what we write.

With *Tracing Data*—the title of the show—I have no problems. It can mean anything. Or nothing. A perfect title for a group show. But the subtitle of this show is an irritation. I’m just a simple art historian and I’ve written a lot and till now I hoped that those who have read what I’ve written have read what I’ve written. But this subtitle makes it a little bit more difficult. Let’s modify a famous bonmot about modern museums given by Gertrude Stein: "You can be a writer or you can be a reader. But you can’t be both."

If some artists in this show have used some techniques to make their works of art readable, it seems to be a big challenge in the communication between the writer and the reader. So for me the whole exhibition is about communication or non-communication between an author and his or her recipient.

Communication can be produced in many ways. On one side there is the slightly smug tone of small talk. On the other side we have the so called 'academic knowledge' that far outweighs words and sentences alone. There is the self-referential monologue of the author or artist. And often a certain ignorance regarding the reader. Sometimes there is a clear message. Quite rarely but nevertheless true. And don't forget the inability and impossibility to talk about contemporary art in general. So as we can see the relationship between a writer and a reader or an artist and his or her fan can be a difficult one. Profound disputes about communication lead us to nowhere because they are too many and too specific. But how can we solve the riddle of the subtitle?

In the depths of my memory I found some fragments of good old 'Alice in Wonderland'. And in chapter 7 of the 'Mad Tea-Party' there is a possible key. So let us refresh the details of this famous part of the book.

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was, 'Why is a raven like a writing-desk?' 'Come, we shall have some fun now!' thought Alice. 'I'm glad they've begun asking riddles.--I believe I can guess that,' she added aloud.

'Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?' said the March Hare.

'Exactly so,' said Alice.

'Then you should say what you mean,' the March Hare went on.

'I do,' Alice hastily replied; 'at least—at least I mean what I say—that's the same thing, you know.'

'Not the same thing a bit!' said the Hatter. 'You might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what I see"!'

'You might just as well say,' added the March Hare, 'that "I like what I get" is the same thing as "I get what I like"!'

'You might just as well say,' added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, 'that "I breathe when I sleep" is the same thing as "I sleep when I breathe"!'

'It is the same thing with you,' said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn't much.

The conversation is still going on, but we have to leave Alice now and concentrate on the last words of the Hatter. Full of insight and full of wisdom. *'I see what I eat'* is a contribution to quality. An understanding how all things are related to each other. It is the consequence of thinking about what I really need and what I don't need. A behavior based on the real needs and not controlled by illusions or visions.

In contrast to *'I see what I eat'* is *'I eat what I see'* a contribution to quantity. It is the incorrect interpretation that I as a consumer have to take what is on offer. And I mean all what is on offer. In a world full of digital media the offer is enormous. The boundaries between seeing and eating, liking and getting, writing and reading, ideas and things no longer seem to exist. We eat what we see. And we consume and produce more and more.

It must be wonderful to have a place where all these images, all numbers, all these thoughts and all things, and all these gods can be found. The Austrian artist Herbert Starek has found such a place in 2003. And what a wonderful place this must be. It contains everything. A land of milk and honey for all archivists and media artists, all those who are hungry for knowledge and digital data. But all these treasures are hidden in hermetically sealed boxes. Present but intangible. Complete but not available. For Herbert Starek such a place is *'The saddest place on earth'*. We see it, but we can't eat it. It has been written, but no one can read it.

How can we grasp the world of writing and reading in its full reality? And how can we reduce the velocity and decelerate the dynamic of the growing writing or art systems? How can we catch the attention of the reader? How can we simplify the complexity? So how can we get clear?



Herbert Starek, *'The saddest place on earth'*, 2003, H. 20 x W. 30 cm, carbon print on deckle-edged paper.

The Hatter's wisdom as well as Starek's 'saddest place on earth' shows us the dilemma of writing and reading facing to the growing amount of data. We have to learn to reduce what we see/eat or better what we read/write. To understand this, we have to separate thoughts and things. In the following I would like to show four possible approaches: illusion, authorship, identity and composing or inventing.

Illusion. In Dieter Kiessling's masterpiece 'continue', this interactive binary drama from 1997, the user is given the freedom to either "quit" (white) or "continue" (black). If you choose "continue" the two fields initially presented change to 4 fields, than 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256 fields and so on. And after a while – in one continuous flow – the screen ends up being full with black and white dots. On level 19 you will find 153.600 interactive possibilities. But this approach to free will is in effect killing the presentation. The longer you go on the more accidental the interactions become and the interface ceases to be usable. The reader ends up being overwhelmed by this torrent of information and thus comes to realise the problems inherent in a system like this. At the end the user learns that it is an illusion to think that you have the possibility to make decisions in a closed system. In our exhibition show some of the works like *Endless war* by Yoha, *Hello Zombies* by Winnie Soon, *Weather forecasting* by Zoie So and *Jalousie Room* by James Coupe are playing with this insight.



Dieter Kiessling, 'Continue', 1997, in: Artintact 4, Karlsruhe: ZKM, 1997, CD-ROM.

Authorship. In his film 'La Pluie. Projet pour un texte / The Rain. Project for a text' from 1969 the Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers is sitting in his garden and he's writing a text. Suddenly it starts to rain. Rainfall wash the written words away. But Broodthaers continues his never ending task. Neither writing nor reading is possible. At the end the writer has to accept his failure and he stops. The film shows the absurdity to create a text against all existential circumstances. At the end the question concerning the author is still open. Is Broodthaers the author or the rain? And if even Broodthaers can't read what he has written who is the reader? The different identities between writer and reader are neutralized. Writer and reader are bended by a higher power and the idea of authorship has been repealed in favour of a new whole. We find the problem of authorship in the works *Map 1* by Mike King, *Vaulting Space* by Linda Lai, but also in *Rehearsals for Muted Films* by Ip Yuk Yiu and in *The Real Story* by Daniel Howe and John Cayley.

Identity. In William Kentridge's film 'Jackson Pollock paints Robert Ryman' of the year 2001 we find the metamorphosis from one work into another one. We find also the change of meaning in the confrontation of Pollocks action painting with the nearly monochrome reduced white of Ryman. The confrontation of making a painting by overpaint the white of the canvas versus allowing the white canvas to consist as an equal partner. By destroying the identity of Pollock Kentridge creates the identity of Ryman. But he creates also the void as a starting point for the creation of something new. *The fading Piece* by Jess Lau, *Ne me quitte pas* by Audrey Samson and *Theorem 8* by Hector Rodriguez are works dealing with this strategy.

Compose. Invent. To understand the difficult details we should read the poem *A Sort of a Song* written by William Carlos Williams in 1923.

*Let the snake wait under
his weed
and the writing
be of words, slow and quick, sharp
to strike, quiet to wait,
sleepless.
Through metaphor to reconcile
the people and the stones.
Compose. (No ideas
but in things) Invent!
Saxifrage is my flower that splits
the rocks.*

Especially two lines have attracted me like magic: *Compose. (No ideas but in things) Invent!* With all the thoughts we have heard manifolded interpretations can be created by reading and re-writing these two lines. If we change—for example—two simple letters, we will get: *Compost* instead of *Compose* and *Invest* instead of *Invent*. Now the reading and the meaning has changed: *Compost no ideas. But in things invest.* This corresponds perfect with our understanding how we deal with thoughts and things in our daily life. As scientists as well as artists we are the masters of composting and re-investing. Ideas are leading us and seducing us in our behaviour. They are manifesting itself in wishes, needs and longings and creating an on-going conflict in our world full of illusions. A neutral and value-free handling with everyday things will lead us to immediacy of life. If we read those lines as *No ideas but in all things* or *No ideas other than things* then we are following Master Huang-po again and by reading *No ideas but in things* in the tradition of chan or zen philosophy which means *Don't compose ideas but invent yourself and the world around you in all things.* And this daily and new. Stories about how to manage our daily life are the central part of Justin Wongs *Autocomic*.

So we've seen that in my way of reading the exhibition all shown works of art are related in a special way to another. Let's *reconcile the people and the stones* or better let us close the gap of writing and reading. For this reconciliation of writing and reading we find an excellent example in the *Kagebôshishû* this marvellous collection of Haiku and woodprints after ink drawings printed in 1754 in Ôsaka.

a song – just for me
paintbrush – I throw you away
beautiful cuckoo
Chôshû

A writer of Haiku poems is sitting at the window and listening to the call of the cuckoo. He is not writing, he is listening or in our case 'reading' the birds call. Especially in this Haiku we will find the lines of William Carlos Williams again: *Compose No ideas. But in things. Invent.* Facing to the idleness of the poet the imperatives of *Compose* and *Invent* call upon us not to stay in the world of ideas but to manifest and materialize the things. Therefore all digital data need a visualization to make their potential for art visible. As we have seen in the show 'Tracing data' the shown artists are using different strategies of illusion, authorship, identity and composing or inventing to write, re-write or over-write these data.

We have started with Huangbo. Let us finish with him.

Pei Xiu 裴休 presented Huángbò Xīyùn 黄檗希运 with a text he had written on his understanding of Chán 禪 (Zen).

Huángbò placed the text down without looking at and after a long pause asked, "*Do you understand?*"

Pei Xiu replied, "*I don't understand.*"

Huángbò said, "*If it can be understood in this manner, then it isn't the true teaching. If it can be seen in paper and ink, then it's not the essence of our order.*"

What you read is not what we write.



Harald Kraemer, 2014.10, Hong Kong



Dr. Harald Kraemer is Associate Professor at
the School of Creative Media, the City
University of Hong Kong

Works in the WMC_e5

main exhibition

(Connecting Space-Hong Kong)

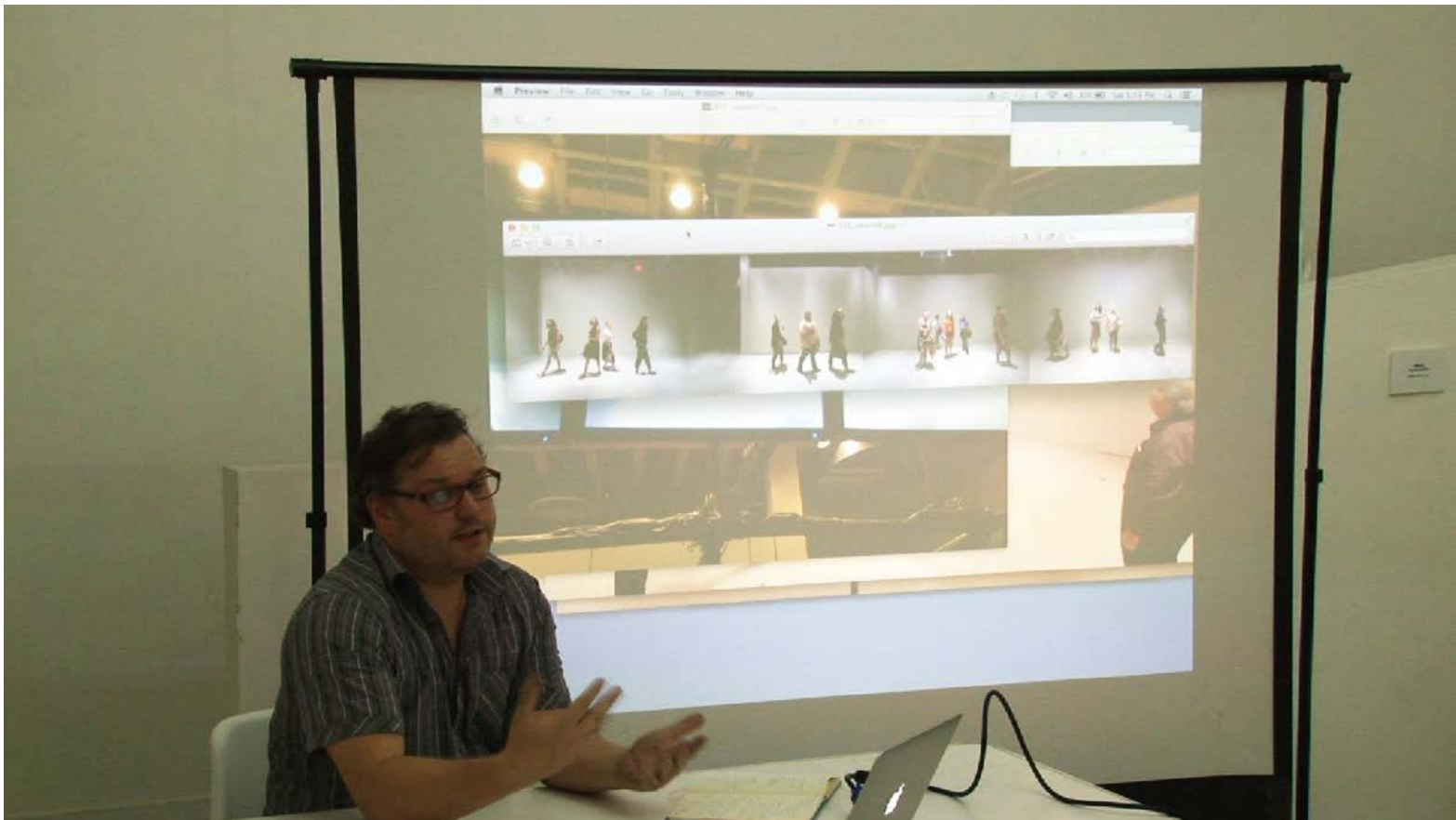


James Coupe

“On the Outside Looking In”

教我如何不再看

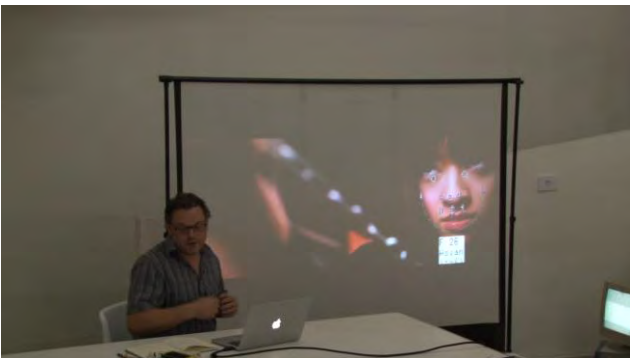
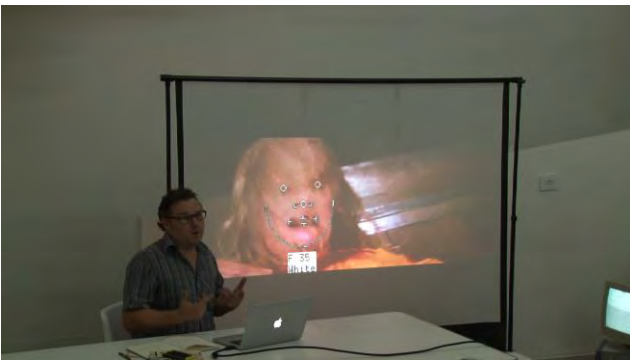
11 October 2014 / 5:00pm @ Connecting Space-HK



ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN 教我如何不再看？

JAMES COUPE / 2014.10.11 / WMC_e5 Hong Kong

I'd like to start by saying thank you to everybody who has made it possible for me to be here. I felt very honoured to get an invitation from Hector, probably 2 or 3 months ago. We started talking about projects for this space – actually it was back then for a different space. And yesterday, as Linda mentioned, there were two main themes that you are keen on for this show – **algorithmic cinema** and **surveillance**, so I will try to focus on that a little bit today and show you some context from my work and some examples of the pieces I've made that are examples of either algorithmic cinema or surveillance, or both, most often both.



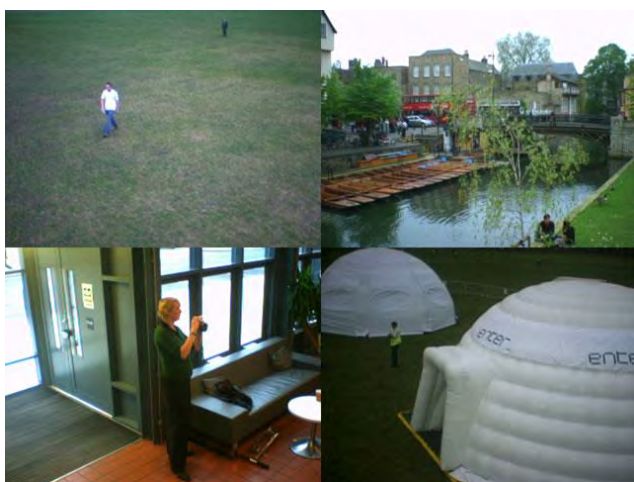
Coupe at WMC_e5 seminar on facial profiling (photo: Wong Chun-hoi)

A lot of my work, at least over the past few years, has been involved with **facial profiling** and **computer vision**. Basically the algorithm detects faces and profiles them in terms of age, gender, race, facial expression and so on. It's fairly accurate, it's not perfect but it does pretty well. And

what's really good about this system is that it works on real-time. So you can make works that are sort of live, interactive and responsive. And for me, the value of this kind of face profiling is the possibility of imposing narratives or **discovering narratives in the real world in real time**. With two people in a gallery, their spatial relationship, their age, their gender and their race can be mapped against potential cinema narratives, things that we are all familiar with. When we see two people in a space, we start thinking about this as a love story, and when we see 1 person in a space we start thinking of this as a much more introspective kind of experience. So I will show you a few projects, which make use of this kind of computer vision and **narrative surveillance** approach.

I want to start with *(re)collector* from 2007. This project, like many of my works, uses text from a novel as a source. Let's say that you have a whole bunch of surveillance footage or data. Anybody who is working in digital media is working with data. The question that I think is really important is how to organize that information into something that makes sense or something that's meaningful, and to me, my method, or my strategy, always tends to be to look for some kind of **narrative template** to organize information. So in the case of *(re)collector*, we have 10 cameras spread around in the city centre in Cambridge in England, and they were programmed to recognize scenes or things that people are doing in the city that resemble scenes from the movie *Blow Up*. It is a 1960s Michelangelo Antonioni film set in the 1960s about a photographer who is wandering around the city looking for things to take pictures of, and he ends up in a park where he sees a man and a woman, thinks they are interesting and takes pictures of them. They run up to him, tell him to get away, ask him for the film and to stop taking pictures. He refuses and goes back to his studio, blows up the images and realizes that there was a lot more going on in the image. He then realizes there is a dead body that he hasn't notice when shooting.

He runs back to the park and tries to find out what happened but it's too late. Everything's changed. So the point of the film is that no matter how much data you have, how much surveillance footage you have, how many images you have, that still doesn't necessarily mean you know what happened, and that you won't necessarily guess the truth by having more information. The film *Blow Up* is actually based on a novel by Julio Cortázar called *Las babas del Diablo*. I like making works that use novels or films or both, and I really like using projects that actually have both – because then you have kind of a visual cinematography alongside the text and for the narrative to rely on. Then when you have lots of surveillance footage, you can start organizing it and layering it so it can use the vocabularies of both in order to make sense. In *(re)collector*, we use computer vision to find scenes in the movie that resemble scenes from the city from the cameras. So you ended up with things like this.



(re)collector (2007, James Coupe)

[video clip] <http://jamescoupe.com/?p=25>

This project had 10 cameras around the city centre programmed to recognize scenes from *Blow Up*. We know how to pick out from a huge amount of surveillance footage which pieces are interesting because we are borrowing cinematography from Antonioni, assuming he said, "He did this well, this is already acknowledged, this works and so we'll take that." So this helped us to

organize the surveillance footage. When it comes to the actual narrative itself, we have the book that the film was based upon to refer to. So we go through lines from the Cortázar's original short story and tag them. **Metadata** is really important to my work. So these texts can be associated with the kinds of things that the cameras are capable of recognizing. Then we start breaking the original movie down into individual scenes. Inside each scene, we have metadata that we can look for. Essentially the project looks at the surveillance video, and what metadata can be discovered by the computer vision system in the surveillance video, then compares it with the metadata that was manually added to the original film. Then you end up with a project that combines the original text in the novel with the cinematography from Antonioni and ends up looking something like this – the different cuts my system outputs. [Images on screen showed the title page, bits of surveillance footage Coupe picked, time codes and some inter-titles added between images, which contain data from the book.] We then ran some codes, turned them into XML files which could then be imported to Final Cut Pro, and then you ended up with the timeline and everything perfectly organized, all of the clips in the right order, and all of the inter-titles there as well. Each day, a film is generated by the system and for the duration of the exhibition it was projected back into the city centre in Cambridge, which is really important for the project. The people going back there every day for business in the city were able to see a kind of narrative superimposed upon their behaviours, the idea being that from day-to-day, people will start to modify their behaviours in order to get into the film. In other words, fiction would become superior to the real.

[demonstration of *(re)collection* (2007) video]

Each day the system accumulates more footage and tags more footage, and so it is able to find different matches for its metadata within the master template and the video footage coming in. Some of the footage from one day

might be associated with one piece of text, and the next day with another piece of text. So you get this system that begins to undermine itself, to contradict itself, and that's another thing which I find very interesting in my work. So this project is looking to **use surveillance to generate narratives** by having a perspective on the city, which we would not be able to have on ourselves. This work then is thinking about **surveillance as a kind of simultaneous information feed** that is being organized into a narrative, something we would not be able to do by ourselves. I do not like to be making works that I already know how to do, or make systems that show me things that I already know. So I am looking for a system that generates knowledge from a **generative system**.

I am now moving onto another project, to flesh out the idea in the above a little further. This is a project that uses **Facebook**. This project came about when I was doing a residency in 2009 and I was kind of working on some projects related to *(re)collector* and then I started working on this **video profiling system** which tells you what people's demographic is. Then I realize Facebook is the perfect complement to this because Facebook demographically tags everybody already, but it tells us what the individual users report only. Say, if I am looking for video footage of people, I know how old they are, what their demographic is, what they have said, and all I have to do is plug in Facebook and it has subtitles for those people. So I started working on this idea and made a Facebook application which was kind of the first Facebook art project made with Facebook itself. The work is called *Today, too, I experienced something I hope to understand in a few days*. It's a kind of complicated-sounding title, but it actually comes from a short film by Jorgen Leth, which again talks about templates, things that are able to organize data. Its cinematography became the framework of this project. And this is a short video that shows you how this Facebook project is pieced together.

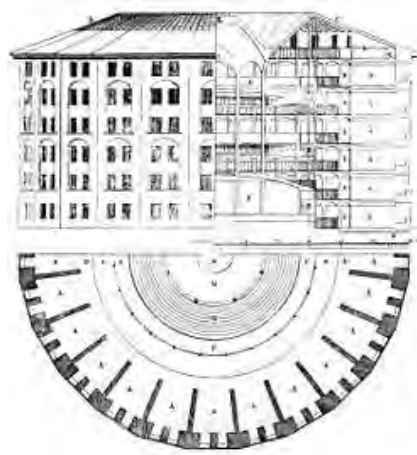


[demo video] <http://jamescoupe.com/?p=778>

So we shot a bunch of clips of people doing nothing really, just standing around in the studio, including long shots, medium shots and close-ups. We tried to get as many angles as possible. What we got essentially were 3 parts – video portraits, status updates which should come from Facebook, and a match with video portraits of people of the same age and gender. Then we link up with a Youtube video which is automatically downloaded based on matching the keywords in the status updates. You end up with this bizarre automatically generated video which Facebook status posts as a **film script**. We then post it back on Facebook, on people's walls. So you see how these narratives have been generated. I guess all these stories somehow make sense to you. Maybe if your grandmother reads it she might say "well I have no idea what's going on here," but for you, you sort of piece these stories together. They are all joined together through yourselves – and this gives a new way of thinking about script or narrative. We are watching these things, we see this kind of metadata relationship between the text and the Youtube video, we start seeing where the narrative is going, and it starts taking us off to a new kind of **self-surveillance oriented approach** to telling a story. What this project brings, I think, is self-surveillance into the mix – when watching these people juxtapose, we may feel a little bit sorry for these people being paired up with Tina Turner or body builders, but that's the kind of logic of these computer systems. You know when you are typing something in Gmail or in Google, you get a particular kind of products or services based on your demographic which is not you at all, but that is how the system sees you. It is that self-surveillance aspect – and perhaps there is this

interesting relationship with the dynamic between **voyeurism and exhibitionism**. In social media we can decide when we want to be seen and when we just want to watch. That kind of surveillance dynamics becomes a strategy on the part of people looking at their lives nowadays. Perhaps we have new forms of communication coming through that are based on the **logic of surveillance**, and that is very much how we are operating nowadays. I have briefly talked about this **relationship between self-surveillance, the use of social media, and the occupy movement** sometimes as well. Just thinking about the ways in which people are using social media in order to communicate what's going on in the world, sharing information. I remember when I went to New York, and I was at the Occupy Wall Street events there, what struck me was that whenever anything happened, people would be immediately surrounded by 200 people all taking pictures of the event. When a police officer came and spoke to somebody, everyone would take pictures of him. And although you had all the police surveillance all around there, that was nothing compared with the amount of surveillance the protestors were armed with themselves, because every picture taken would be shared with hundreds of people through Facebook and Twitter.

Now you get this kind of interesting relationship between the observant and the observer, which reminds me of the Panopticon, that is, Jeremy Bentham's design for a prison, which has a tower in the centre of circularly arranged prison cells. The idea is that prisoners in the cells will all behave themselves because there's always the possibility that one person in the tower might just be watching them. This way, you can control a whole community of people. And in the case of Occupy Wall Street example, the idea I think is that people in the prison cells have cameras too and they are constantly observing the people in the centre.



Panopticon

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panopticon>

I became interested in the relationship [between the observer and the observed] because of this Facebook project as I am interested in surveillance. I then started developing a number of works that took the architecture of the Panopticon Tower in the centre and the cell-like structures on the outside looking back. I devised a kind of architecture for cameras that we used in a gallery situation. In the middle of the gallery was an array of cameras that produced a panoramic representation of the gallery space, visible on one wall. The cameras were the middle and panoramic vision on the wall.



Panopticon Panorama #1: I am Standing in an Empty Room (2012)

<http://jamescoupe.com/?p=1182>

You could manipulate each individual camera feed, so it looked like it's temporarily consistent, as if it's from the same moment of time, in fact these could all be 5 different videos captured at different moments. It will

only show a feed from the camera when nobody is in. This “panoptic panorama” will always make a gallery seem empty no matter how many people are in there. The shimmer of a projector or a shadow will often make its way through, so people looking at this thing will think, “This is a live feed, I can see this thing, but I am not here. Why am I not here?” What’s interesting is that when people go through situations like this, they start waving at the camera and feel something’s wrong, because they want to be seen. This brings us back to the voyeurism-exhibitionism relationship from social media projects. You want to control when you are on camera. In this project you will never be displayed no matter how hard you try. So it shows us that surveillance is not just about avoiding the cameras, but surveillance is about wanting to have control about when you are seen and how you are seen. This piece got rolled out into a much bigger version, in fact a whole museum version. It’s a project called *On the observing of the observer of the observers*. This work adopts the subtitle of a book by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Assignment*. Again, the project involves **looking at templates, ways of organizing data, by resorting to literature**. In this project we built 13 rooms inside a museum, a chapel with church cubes in it. Inside the space, a priest gave a sermon which was recorded about God as voyeur, about how God is always watching you. One of the themes of this project was this idea of a **need to be seen**, and the novel’s conception of God is as the ultimate security blanket for human beings. If nobody cares about you, if nobody is watching you, nobody wants to look at you, God will always be watching you. That is the logic: there must be somebody watching you. We had a psychology testing room, which was running a conformity test dealing with peer pressure. A visitor sat down and found himself joined by 4 other people, and they had to make selections about what kind of stuff the group wanted.



Panopticon Panorama #2: Five People in a Room (2013)

<http://jamescoupe.com/?p=1480>

There was a control room with feeds coming from each room. There was a projection room, again a kind of self-surveillance, but this time pieced together out of footage from each of the different rooms adding subtitles derived from Dürrenmatt’s quotes. It’s a **fractured approach to a narrative museum** using literature and surveillance material obtained from **different sources**. In a way each of the rooms operated autonomously as a surveillance space, but also set up to contribute its narrative to a larger story at the same time. There was a waiting room for people to wait before moving through the other rooms.



On the Observing of the Observer of the Observers (2013)

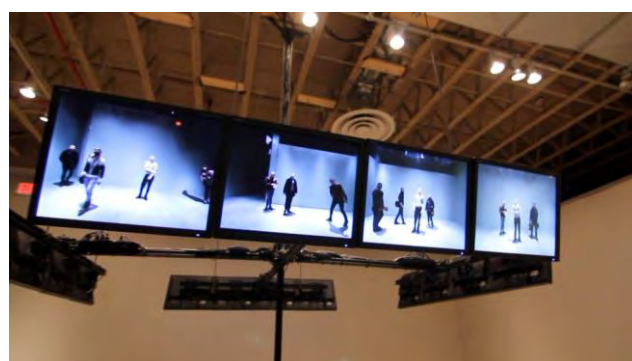
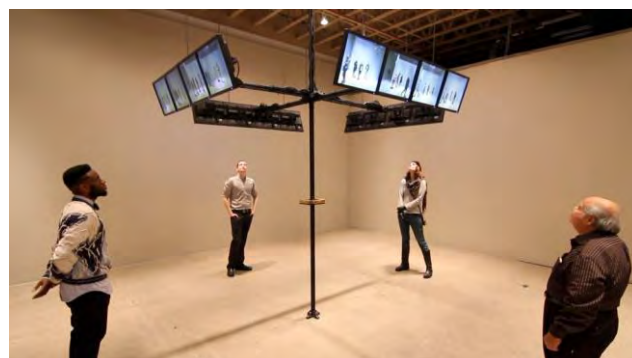
<http://jamescoupe.com/?p=1587>

The last project is called *Swarm*. This piece just received an honorary mention in Interactive Arts at Ars Electronica.

It was originally show in Toronto's International Film Festival. It consists of 4 stereo cameras in the middle, but here we've got 4 rows of 4 monitors, 16 monitors in total. And what would happen is as people go into the space, the cameras will profile them, figure out when they were in the space, and then it will piece them back into a virtual crowd of people based on all the people who've been there previously. So you end up in a community, a group of people whom you have not seen before, and all of a sudden you are occupying a gallery together. Now this group of people is demographically specific. So one group might just show women in their 20s, so you might find yourself alongside a group of women in their 20s. You might find yourself with men in their 40s, people of Latino descent, people with moustaches or beards, or people wearing black. This piece works with some social media logic, according to which we are always being profiled and reorganized into communities. We are suggested who we enter into community with. The piece brings that logic to a real space and asks how comfortable you would be with that situation. And this is actually based on a novel by J. G. Ballard called *High Rise*, and it was all supposed to be related in some ways to the films of David Cronenberg. I guess this work is sinister enough to fit into that category.

I have discussed some of the context, methodologies, strategies and interests of my work. Now turning to the piece in this show, it is called *Jalousie Room*, a title with two meanings. *Jalousie* in French means jealousy, but it also means Venetian blinds, and is very much inspired by this particular site [i.e. Connecting Space-HK]. When I first saw photographs of this gallery, I saw that it has this buffer space with partitions that resemble venetian blinds. I immediately thought, "OK, I'm going to do a project based on this novel by Alain Robbe-Grillet, because the title carries those two meanings deliberately. It's about jealousy and it's also about surveillance, and a person who is always looking at a scene through a set of Venetian blinds." For that reason, in this exhibition, the space of my

installation is partially closed off so you can't go into the space. And the monitors are arranged in such a way that no one can really see what's going on in the space. You'll have to look through the blinds in order to do that.



Swarm (2013) <http://jamescoupe.com/?p=1837>

As I said *Jalousie Room* is based on Robbe-Grillet's novel, a really interesting novel. It is unclear who the narrator is. The novel is set in some French colony and there is a woman who lives in a plantation, who is somebody's wife. There's a neighbour in the neighbouring plantation called Frank. A number of different events occur within the novel, which repeat themselves and contradict each other. The narration is obsessive and detail-oriented. Literally, the narrator will just say, "There are 22 banana trees in a row, and over there there are 23, there is 19 there, there is 15 here, there should be an extra 2 there..." And you think, "Wow, this is incredibly boring, what is going on?" But if you stick with it, there is then another series of events which basically involve the wife and the neighbour having cocktails in the veranda. It is not the neighbour's veranda. It is the wife's veranda. There are 3 chairs and there are 3 glasses, it's not clear who the third glass is for

but apparently it is for the narrator, who is presumably the husband. He never mentions himself directly. He is never part of the conversations. He just describes and recites analytical data. There is a dinner set for 3 people. When Frank sees a centipede on the wall and smashes it, the narrator becomes obsessed with this and constantly and passively comes back to this, talking and analysing, describing the smudge on the wall that doesn't seem to go away. When the wife and Frank go out of town, the narrator doesn't explain what they are doing, because he can't, because he is not there with them, leading us to believe the narrator is the husband who is only able to see things in his own plantation when he is looking through his Venetian blinds as his wife and the neighbour are having cocktails or dinner together. And there is a novel, which the wife and the neighbour Frank are reading together. So there is a novel inside a novel, and Frank's discussion of that novel is full of contradictions: "The main character of the book is a customs official. This character is not an official for a high-ranking employee of an old commercial company, this company's business is going badly, rapidly turning shady; this company's business is going extremely well. The chief character was known to be dishonest; he is honest. He is trying to re-establish the situation compromised by his predecessor who died in an automobile accident; but he had no predecessor, the company is only recently formed and it wasn't an accident; besides it happens to be a ship, a big white ship and not a car at all." This passage is symptomatic of the logic of the novel. Every time you are told something, it's taken away from you, contradicted by something else. So as you get through it, all these events will be constantly repeated, analysed and redrawn, and you realize that you have no idea what has happened at all. And the reason you have no idea is because the narrator is a crazy, obsessed husband who's gone mad, and you can't believe anything he says. So why am I interested in this novel? Because I think it says a lot about surveillance, about the gaze, our surveillance cameras... I

think we can take the husband in this novel and replace him with a camera quite easily. We can think about him as a camera – he has got that kind of analytical, objective gaze, but of course, at the same time he is not objective at all. He is obsessive. When we think about cameras, especially surveillance cameras, which are looking for particular things, we also think in the same kind of anthropomorphic way about cameras, having the same kind of personality as the husband.

What I am interested in here is the idea of an **unreliable author**, and you can see it from the work I showed you. That is a common theme for me – **narratives that contradict each other**. I am interested in questions like: who is telling the story? What does the narrator know? What's the narrator's position and relation to the camera for the events? What do we know? We only know what he tells us, just as in many of these projects, we only know what the footage shows us or what the system shows us, and that's how we learn what the ideas are. Robbe-Grillet's *Jalousie* is a book on partial experiences: we never get the whole story and that becomes a strategy for me to make this work.

So over here we have a room [pointing to the installation spot], a Jealousy Room and this is a room that contains blinds, and this is a room that's missing a lot of information. We can't see the whole picture, ever. No matter where we stand, we can't see anything that's going on. In a way, just as in this novel, by listening to what the husband says, we almost become jealous ourselves, jealous of not knowing everything, missing out something we want or wanting something we can't have. That's the idea in "Jealousy Room" as well, which is very much drawn from the novel. There is a camera looking onto the street obsessively. Most of the first 15 minutes or so of the video that's shown on a large screen is a description of events on the street and the houses opposite. That is an obsessive camera. But there is also a

camera pointing into the gallery, and that camera is looking for somebody who is very specific, who matches the demographic of the actress who plays the wife in the 3rd part of the piece, which is a 2-screen film that I shot a couple days ago here in Hong Kong. It's a conversation between a man and a woman over drinks, which references the scene in the book where Frank and the wife realize that the drinks aren't cold enough, and try to figure out ways to get some ice without themselves having to go and get it. In the end, it is the husband who goes and gets it. And the reason you know this is because the next thing you hear, the next thing you read, is the husband describing how he can walk around the house without making any noise, how we can see through blinds what's happening inside. So his perspective, the author's perspective, is changed. That's a kind of key moment. Then we have the master narrative that brings everything together, which is on the live screen. This video narrative is linear, it's about 20-25 minutes long but it loops, each time picking up new footage from the cameras. It's linear but it's not linear. It doesn't have a linear timeline, because the footage it uses is from different times of the day, and the text begins to contradict the image, and as you focus on it and if you actually stick with it, you will realize that it makes no sense at all. Linearity normally promises us something – it promises us a resolution, promises us the whole story – but it never provides any of these in my work because the system itself is more of a character, more of a personality than an object of system. Switching from meticulous studies of the street to meticulous studies of a woman, it's a surveillance system, a jealousy room about surveillance. It denies us any kind of complete experiences as result. To finish off with, I would like to read you this quote from Antonioni, which is actually from an essay he wrote about *Blow Up*: **“The camera hidden behind a keyhole is a tell-tale eye which captures what it can. But what about the rest? What about what happens beyond the limits of its field of vision? It's not enough. So, make ten, a hundred, two**

hundred holes. Install as many cameras and shoot miles and miles of film. What will you have obtained? A mountain of material in which are captured only the essential aspects of an event but also the marginal and possibly absurd or ridiculous aspects. Your task will then be to reduce, to select. However, the real event also contained these aspects, it had the same marginal details, the same excess in material. By making a selection you are falsifying it. Or as some would say, you are interpreting it. “

No matter how much information you have, how much footage you have, in order to turn into anything, you have to interpret it. And in doing that, things are going to go missing, there are going to be gaps so you will never get there. It's kind of futile in a way. So in this piece we are always on the outside looking in, even when we are the subject of surveillance in the real world, and we can never escape being seen.

Going back to the Panopticon, there's no escape, everybody is part of the system. It's the system itself that is in control. **As in the jealousy room, we might ask: What's in control? Is it an automated system or is it the scene of a crime? Was somebody in here making this thing or is it doing it itself? And I guess that's really the important question.** [end of documentation]



Full details of the work with sample narrative extracts:

<http://jamescoupe.com/?p=2037>

WMC_e5 at Connecting Spaces HK

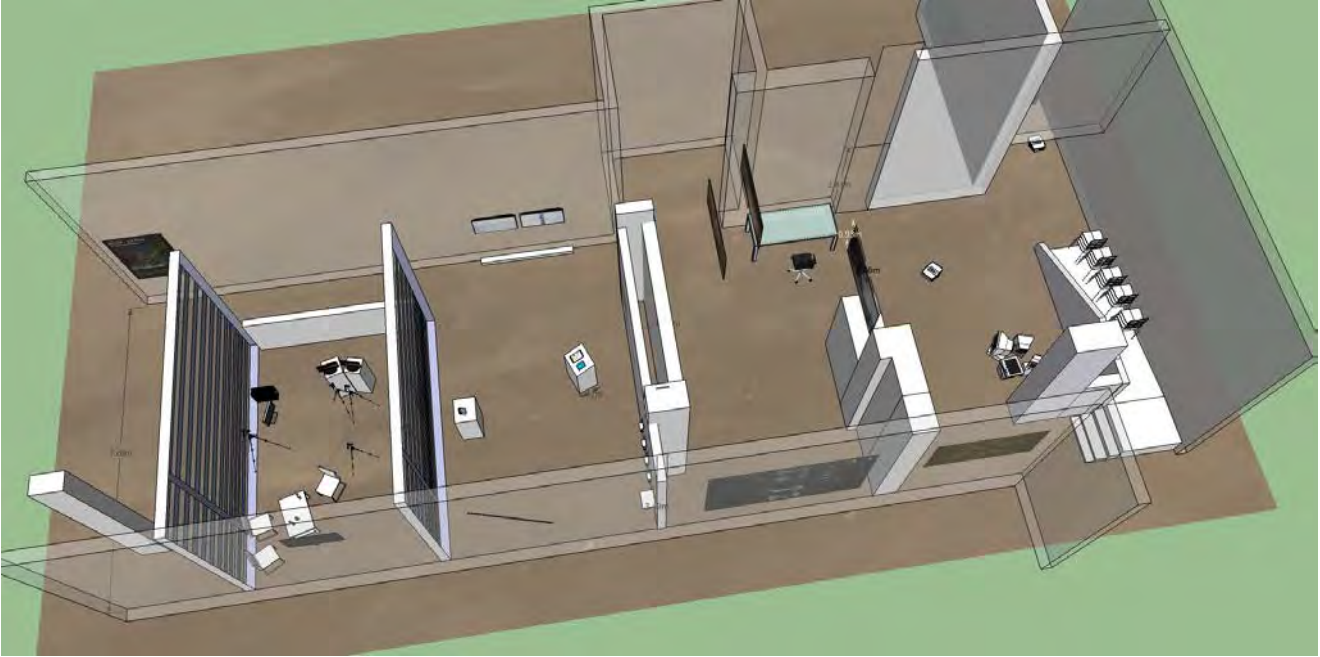
Sketches by Wong Chun-hoi



Entrance to show



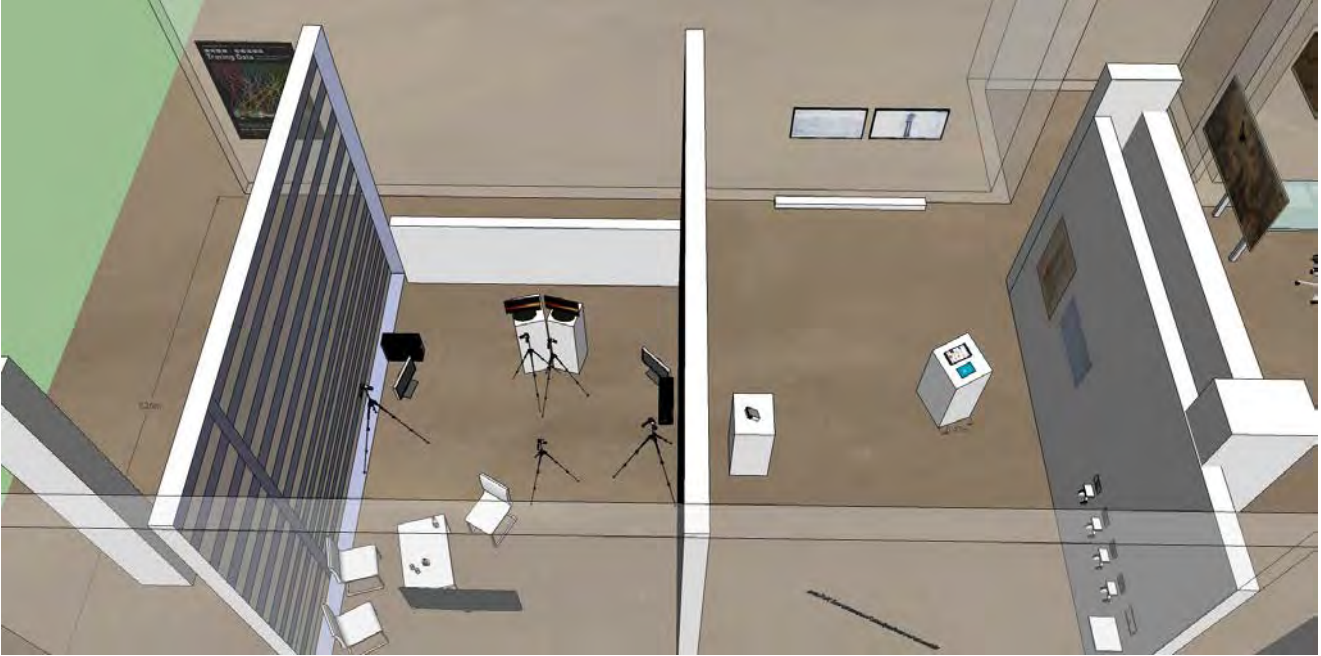
Top view + distribution of art works / Entrance: lower R



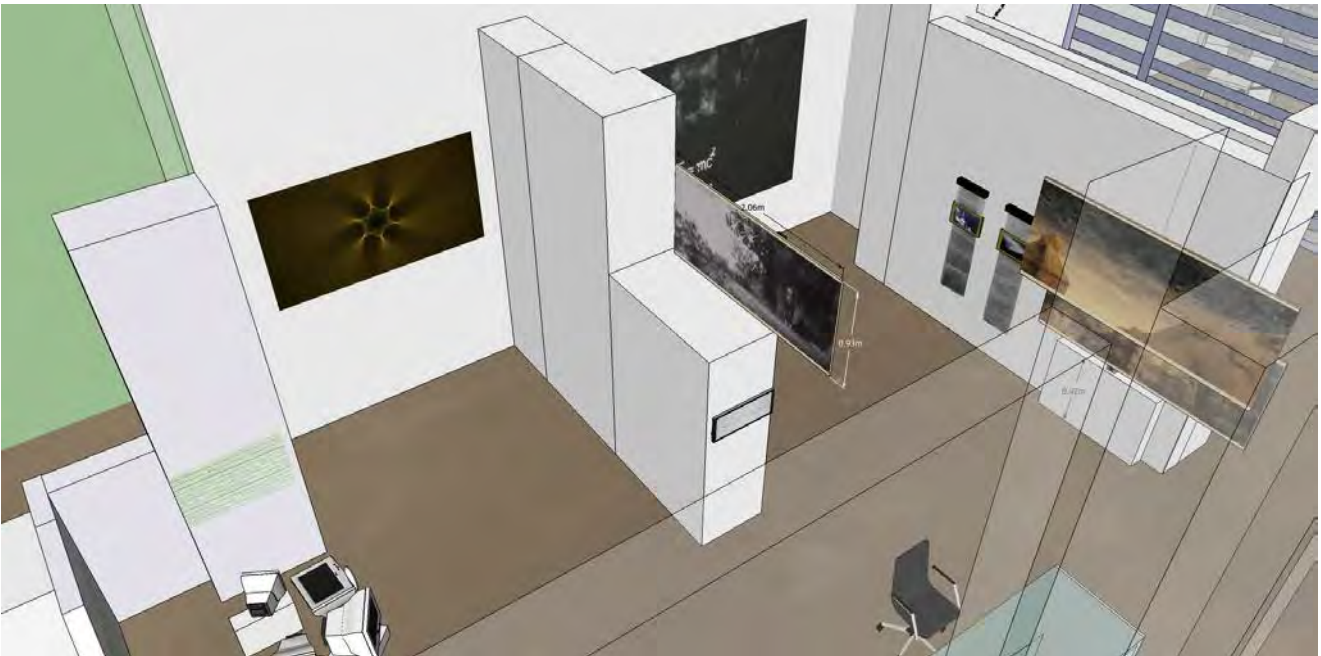
Top view + distribution of art works: entrance – Top-left



Top view + distribution of art works: entrance – Lower-right



Left: Room A - James Coupe's work (by entrance) / Right: Room B - works by Ip Yuk-yiu, Audrey Samson, Daniel Howe and Jess Lau



Right: Room C (behind Room B) – works by Zoie So and Hector Rodriguez / Left: Room D – Mike King and Winnie Soon

Between Room C & Room D – work by Justin Wall / Panels hanging down from ceiling: Linda Lai's work



Observing view: from back of gallery towards entrance (on R)



Room E (L end marked green): work by YOHA

// Sketches by **WONG Chun-hoi**

Works in WMC_e5's
Main exhibition
@ Connecting Space-Hong Kong
→
→
→

JALOUSIE ROOM

James Coupe

Multi-media installation with live feed / 2014 (world premiere)

***Commissioned for WMC_e5**

jalousie (法) /1. 嫉妒 / 2. 百葉窗簾

jalousie / ʒaluzi / nf [1] jealousy; [2] venetian blind

VIEWER AS VOYEUR, FRACTURED
NARRATIVES, REAL-TIME READING &
WRITING, PART-AND-WHOLE



裝置包括三個部分：一個攝影機巨細無遺的拍攝及分析著展場外的街道及樓宇；另一個攝影機則拍攝一位在展場內的女士；還有一段三人的對話，當中的一個女士卻長久緘默。來自三段影像的素材結合起來構成一個錄像敘述，明明向法國「新小說」大師亞蘭·霍格里耶1957年撰寫的小說《嫉妒》致敬。



This installation consists of three parts: a camera that meticulously and obsessively analyzes the street and buildings outside the gallery; a camera that is looking for a specific woman inside the main gallery; and a conversation between three people, one of whom never speaks. Footage from each part is combined together to form a video narrative based upon Alain Robbe-Grillet's 1957 novel, *La Jalousie*.

CONCEPT STATEMENT

In Alain Robbe-Grillet's 1957 novel, *Jealousy*, a woman is observed in her interactions with a neighbor. It is unclear if the observer is her husband or simply a camera, but regardless, the reader is complicit, always on the outside looking in, all we can know is what we are told and even that is uncertain, non-linear and contradictory.

This installation is an observation room with three parts: a camera that meticulously and obsessively analyses the street and buildings outside the gallery; a camera that is looking for a specific woman inside the main gallery; and a conversation between three people, one of whom never speaks. Binding it together is a disembodied mechanical voiceover.

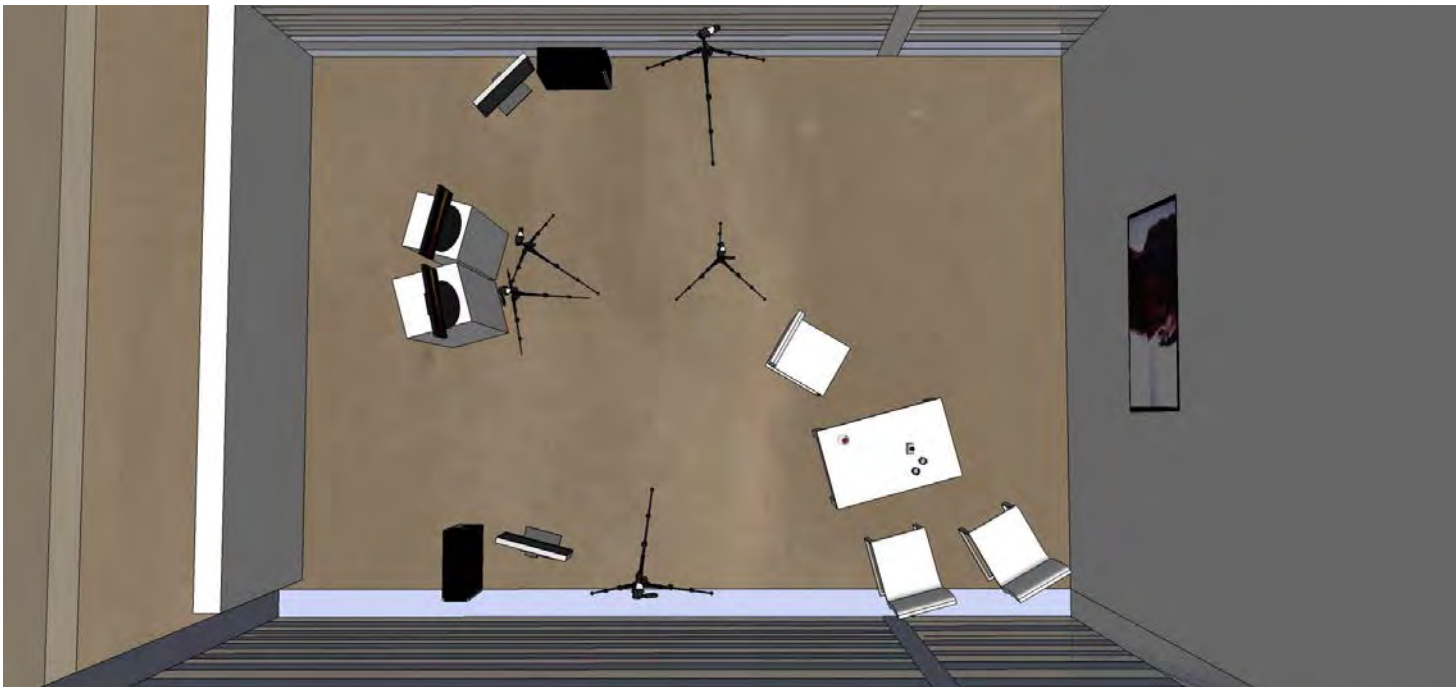
The work is concerned with the role of the viewer as voyeur, and the fractured, confused narrative that such a position provides. It uses the slatted windows of the gallery to ensure that what we see is always the part, and never the whole.

葉窗簾

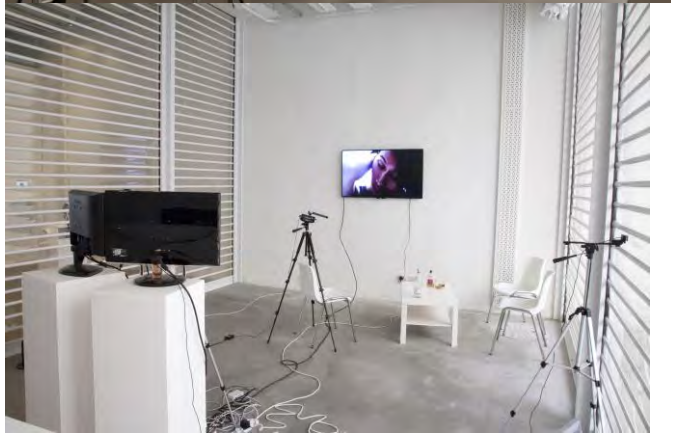
法國「新小說」大師亞蘭·霍格里耶 1957 年撰寫的小說《嫉妒》裡，女子與一位鄰居的交接一直被觀察著。觀察者是她的丈夫，或一個攝影機而已？不得而知。無論如何，觀眾都成了同謀，一直位處外面望進去。觀眾知道的亦僅止於此，全憑攝影機的描述——即使所描述的是甚麼無法確定、非線性，甚至是充滿矛盾的。

裝置是一個包含三個部分的觀察室：一個攝影機巨細無遺的拍攝及分析著展場外的街道及樓宇；另一個攝影機則拍攝一位在展場內的女士；還有一段三人的對話，當中的一個卻長久緘默。卻由一段旁述串聯一起。

作品探討觀眾作為偷窺者的角色，與及他們所佔據的碎裂、猶豫的敘事的視點。作品配合展場內的橫條狀窗戶，令觀眾永遠無法得知全貌。



Sketches of actual installation by Wong Chun-hoi



Site views at WMC_e5, Connecting Space-HK



Dialogues generated on the spot

Equipment

1. Camera tripods x 4
2. Monitors x 4
3. Projectors x 2
4. Computers x 4 (with video card that could connect to monitors/projectors)
5. Network hub x 1
6. Ethernet cables
7. Speakers x 2
8. Cameras x 5



James Coupe, 2014.10, Hong Kong



ENDLESS WAR

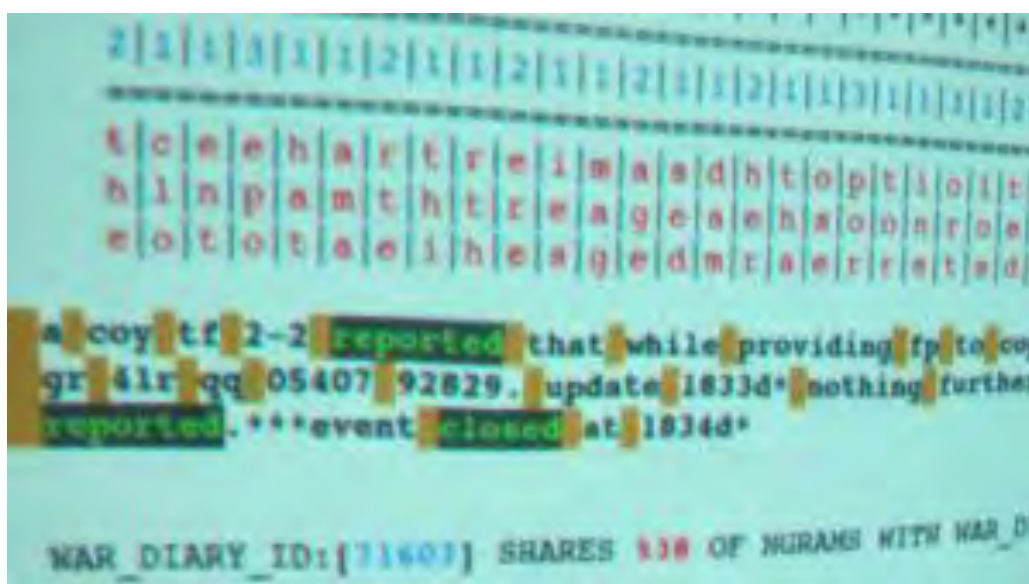
YOHA (Graham Harwood+Yokokoji Matsuko)

networked installation, data visualization / 2014 (WMC_e5 HK version)

the Wiki-leaked Afghan War Diary magnified...

*****Endless War*, YoHa with Matthew Fuller, 2011, was exhibited at
Void Gallery, Derry, Northern Ireland, 2011 and the Kunst Hal Aarhus,
Denmark, 2013.

MACHINE-READER, SCREEN-WRITER,
ALGORITHMIC & NETWORKED SERVICES,
REAL-TIME READING & WRITING,
CRITIQUE OF DATA



HOW does the way war is thought relate to how it is fought?

NATO forces invaded Afghanistan on October 7th 2001. At that point a system for reporting every interaction between NATO and local people started up. On 25th July 2010, WikiLeaks released a document set called the Afghan War Diary, over 91,000 (15,000 withheld) reports covering the war in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2010. The reports, written by soldiers and intelligence officers, are mainly short descriptions of military actions but they also include intelligence information, reports of meetings with political figures, and other details. This document was used by a group of newspapers to generate articles, many of which gave new kinds of insight into the prosecution of this war. The full data set however is rarely seen, and access to it is blocked in many territories around the globe. As a full document it is 108MB of text. It gives unique insight into the futile nature of the war in Afghanistan but also the ontology of contemporary war as it is carried out on the ground. Just as an algorithm is an 'effective procedure', a series of logical steps required to complete a task, the Afghan War Diary shows war as it is computed, reduced to an endless permutation of jargon, acronyms, procedure recorded, cross-referenced and seen as a sequence or pattern of events.

On 25th July 2010, WikiLeaks released a document set called the Afghan War Diary, which includes over 91,000 (15,000 withheld) reports by soldiers and intelligence officers covering the war in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2010. *Endless War* is not a video installation but a prolonged real-time processing of the data set seen from a series of different analytical points of view. As the war is fought it produces entries in databases that are in turn analyzed by software looking for repeated patterns of events, spatial information, kinds of actors, timings and other factors. *Endless War* shows how the way war is thought relates to the way it is fought. Both are seen as potentially endless, computational processes. The algorithmic imaginary of contemporary power meshes with the drawn out failure of imperial adventure.

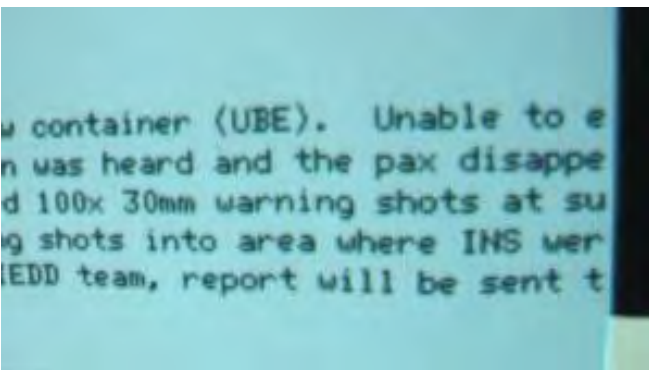
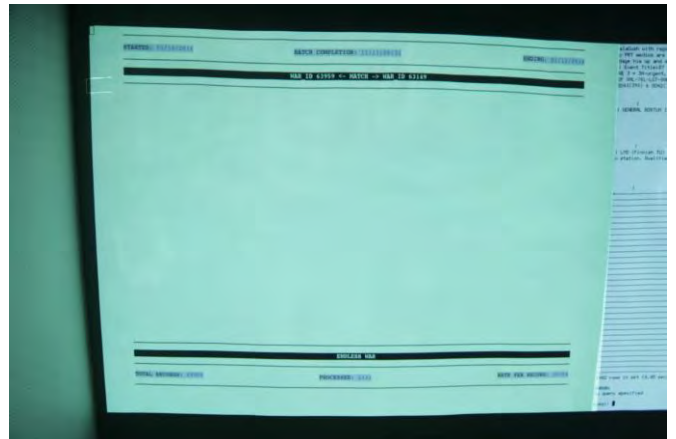
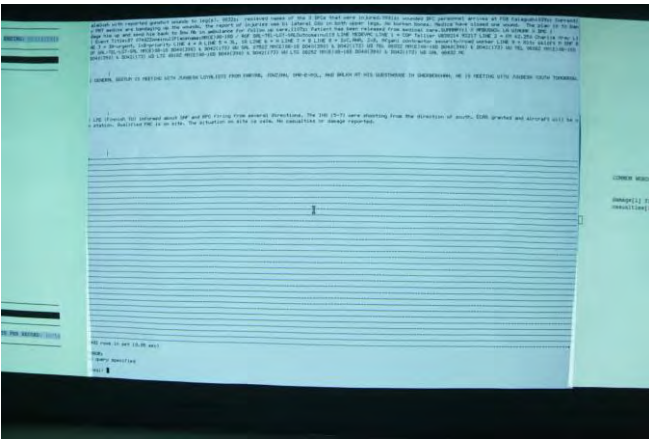
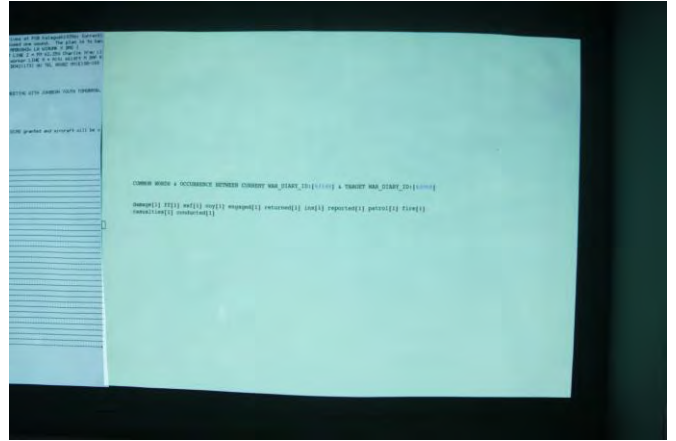
Endless War is not a video installation but a real-time processing of this data seen from a series of different analytical points of view. Pick-up microphones on the central processing unit feed back to the inner working of the machine as it processes each result. N-gram fingerprints categorize the summaries of the records finding a pathway through the 76,000 files. The reduction of words to sequences of bytes or letters allows patterns to emerge from the sequences which can be used in trigram matching between entries; and searches for the frequency of terms within those entries. As the war is fought it produces entries in databases that are in turn analyzed by software looking for repeated patterns of events, spatial information, kinds of actors, timings and other factors. *Endless War* shows how the way war is thought relates to the way it is fought. Both are seen as, potentially endless, computational processes. The algorithmic imaginary of contemporary power meshes with the drawn out failure of imperial adventure.

戰事如何被構想，與它的真實運作何干？

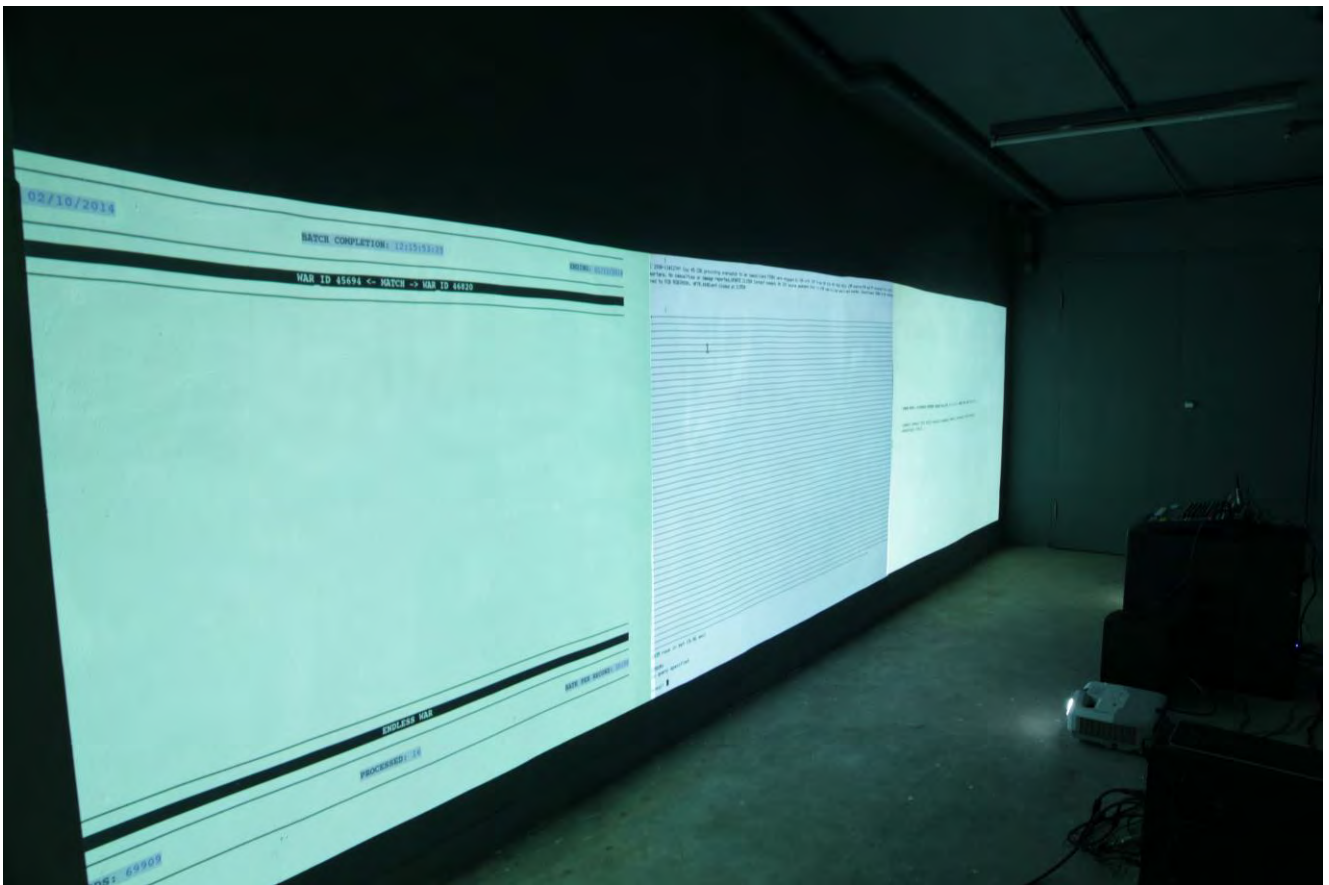
北約部隊於 2001 年 10 月 7 日入侵阿富汗。自此一個紀錄北約和當地人之間所有互動的系統啟動。2010 年 7 月 25 日，維基解密發佈了一份名為《阿富汗戰爭日記》的文件，當中包括超過 91,000 個 (其中 15,000 份絕密) 由士兵及情報人員作的有關 2004 至 2010 年間阿富汗戰事的報告。報告涵蓋了阿富汗戰爭從 2004 年至 2010 年由士兵和情報人員紀錄的報告，主要是是軍事行的簡要說明，但它們還包括情報信息，政治人物會議報告，以及其他細節。這份文件在一些報紙中選取文章，其中有許多為對這場戰爭的控訴提供新的視點。這樣完整的數據集是十分罕見，亦被阻止在全球許多地區發佈。作為一個完整的文檔，它有 108MB 的文字。它為徒勞的阿富汗戰爭及現代戰爭的本體論提供了獨特的視點。

《Endless War》並非一個錄像裝置作品，而是一項持續的、實時式、以多角度分析的數據處理系統。在漫長的戰事中產生出大量數據，將經由軟體程式進行分析，去發現當中的模式，包括事故出現、地理分佈資料、參與人員、時間性及其細節事項等。作品展示大家對戰事的構想，與其實況比對，兩者都看似是沒完沒了的過程，當代列強數理上的想像比照它們實戰上的失敗。《 中央處理器上的麥克風每個處理完的結果反饋機器的內部運作，N-gram 指紋在 76,000 個文件中尋找分類的記摘要。把這詞語分拆成以字節為單位或字母序列，讓模式以從所述序列出現，進行配對，並搜索這些條目中的術語的頻率。

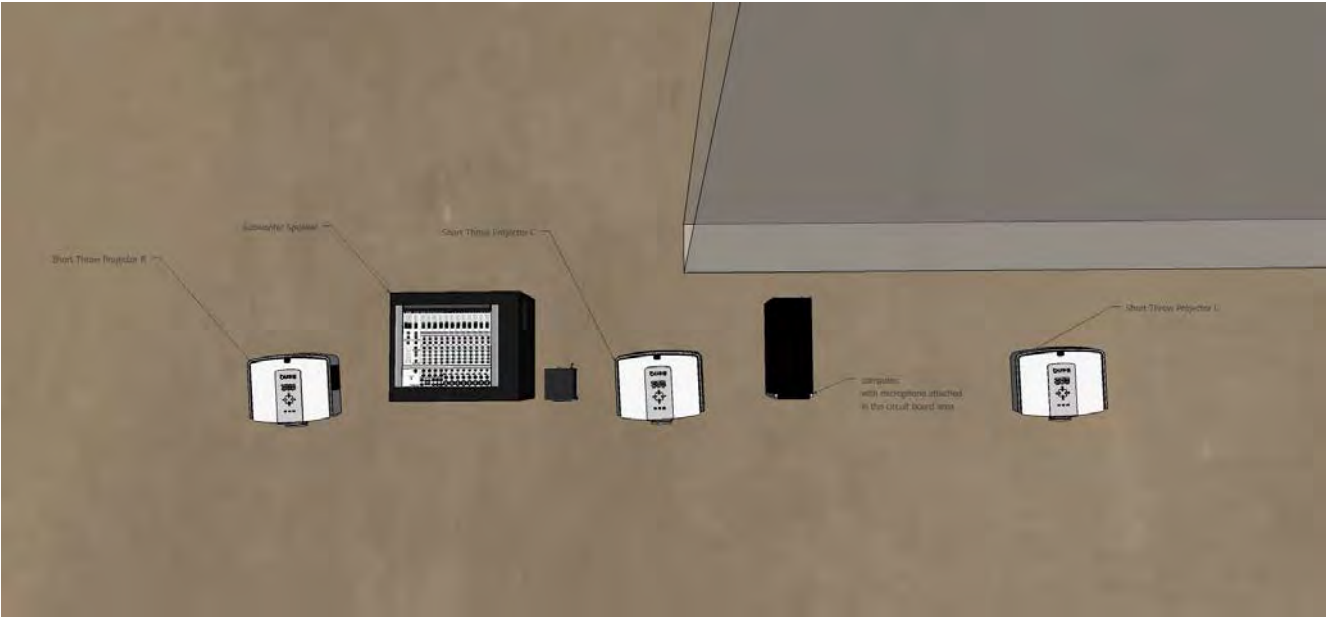
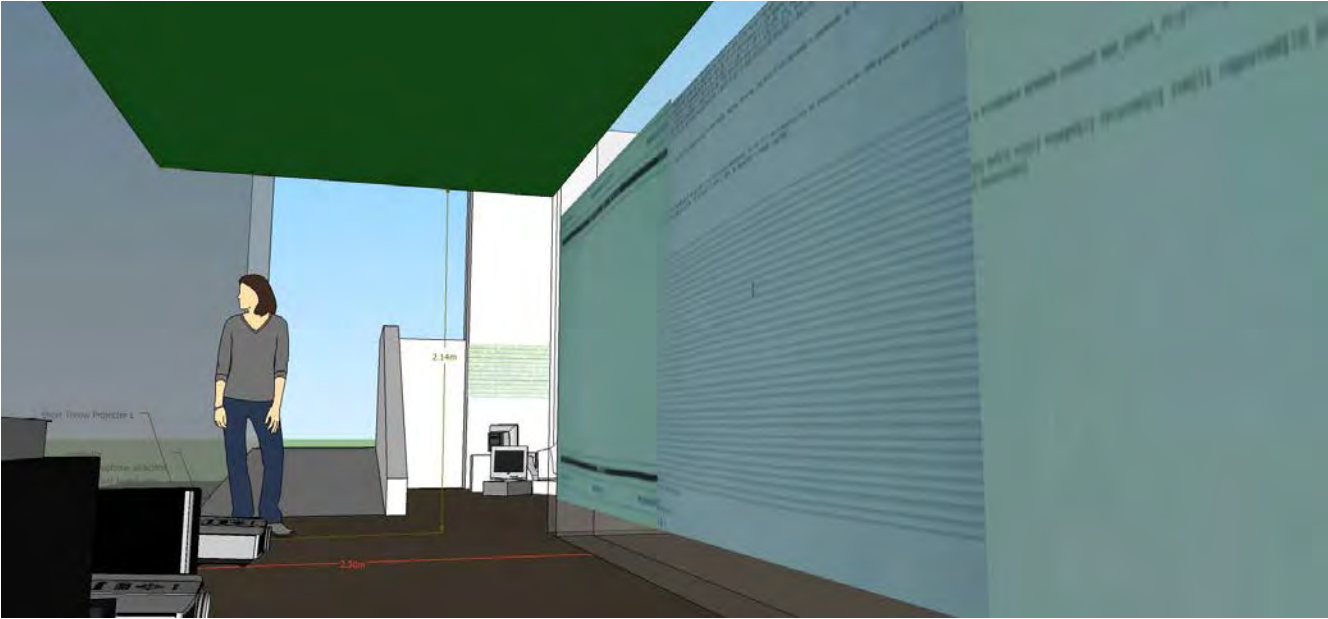
隨著戰爭的戰鬥，它於數據庫產生的條目，由軟件依次進行分析，尋找事件的重複模式，空間信息，各類行動者定時等因素。無盡的戰顯示戰爭如何被認為是涉及到它的戰鬥方式。



A few site views of *Endless War* at WMC_e5, Hong Kong 2014.10



SKETCHES



Sketches by Wong Chun-hoi

YOHA, 2014.10, Hong Kong

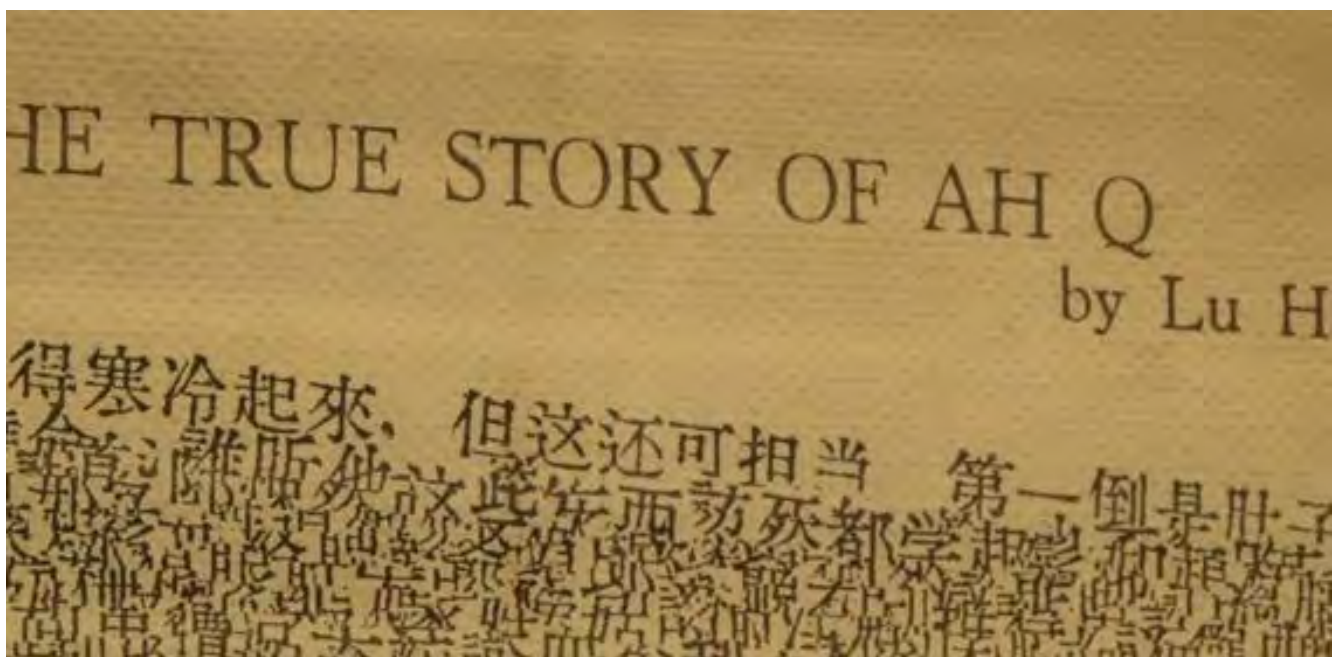


阿Q正傳 | THE TRUE STORY OF AH-Q

Daniel C. Howe & John Cayley

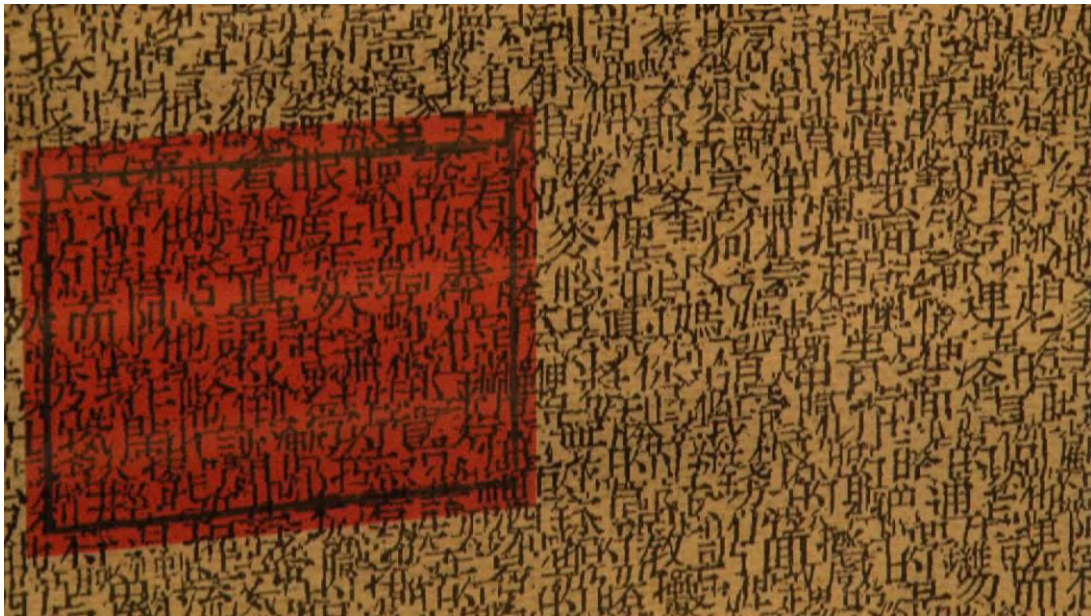
Mixed media installation, custom software / 2014 (world premiere)

MACHINE-READER, SCREEN-WRITER,
ALGORITHMIC & NETWORKED SERVICES,
REAL-TIME READING & WRITING,
PERCEPTUAL READING INTERFACE



The True Story of Ah-Q, an algorithmic collage, C-print 2014

作品以魯迅的革命性作品《阿Q正傳》的英文譯本作藍本，經數學程式分析處理書中的詞彙，選取的字詞是那些在網絡上其他非魯迅著作內出現的。搜尋過程中，「電讀器」將選取的字詞在不同網絡搜尋器內搜索，展示它們當下如何被閱讀。網絡內的延展閱讀，經由廣告、圖像及審查，不斷增加，在程式內依然不經審查地自行校閱。魯迅的原著始終默然不發聲，安靜的給置放在旁邊的讀經台上。

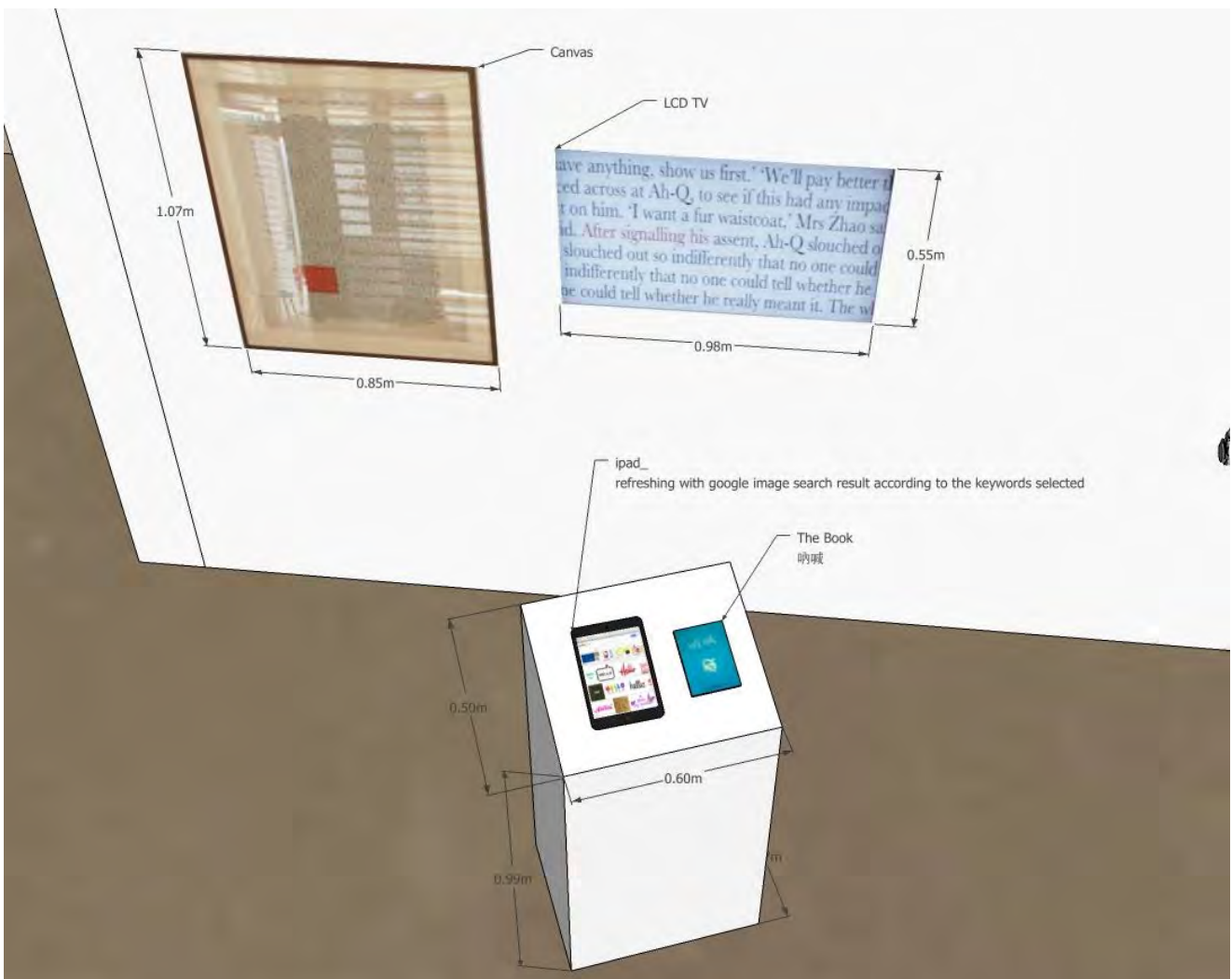


An English translation of *The True Story of Ah-Q* is read by an algorithmic process that highlights phrases from Lu Xun's revolutionary work. The phrases selected are words that others have also written – that is, they have been found on the Internet in other documents *not* written by or about Lu Xun. As the work progresses, the algorithmic reader sends these phrases to search engines, showing how they can be read *now*, in real time. This networked re-reading, augmented with targeted advertising, images, and even censorship, exists within an algorithmic framework still little-examined in terms of its effects on reading, and, indeed, its control of free inquiry itself.

CONCEPT at proposal stage

This networked/multi-channel installation work displays a *MachineReader* reading through an original work of short fiction. As it reads, it searches each phrase that it encounters on an image search engine. The resulting image-sets are sent to a *ScreenWriter* which, in real-time, chooses individual frames to layer into a stop-frame video composition.

The installation consists of one large-screen monitor (displaying the video composition as it is generated), one iPad/tablet (showing the image-searches issued), one interface knob (allowing visitors to interact with the piece by scrubbing through the text), and a framed print (of the fiction being 'read' by the system.)





This installation is driven by the artists' **Read for Us** (為我們看書) engine, in which an autonomous reader moves through the words of the chosen text, phrase by phrase, and then sends these phrases to a search engine, allowing the search engine to provide viewers with its own reading of the phrases (and also encountering occasional problems of access). A physical book, closed to us, is placed on the lectern nearby. The active digital reader is open to us in a new if now familiar way, within a culture of search and inquiry that is pervasive although still little-examined.

The Perceptual Reading Interface

We call the application visible on the large screen a **Perceptual Reading Interface**. The name derives from the area of attention within our visual field that shifts as we read a text on an inscribed surface. Studies have shown that we see only 30-40 characters distance around the central point of our focus. This interface presents a text in constant motion that preserves the phrase being read at the center of

this focal area. Crucially, however, the interface provides its readers with access to a typographic neighborhood, a concept we believe to be central to traditional reading experiences and distorted by Internet services and mobile devices. We show the text in movement, but we also show an approximation of the words that would have surrounded our focus of attention had we been reading these words on a typeset page. This exploration of typographic neighborhood is crucial to The Readers Project, of which Read for Us and *The True Story of Ah-Q* are instances.



Real-time Screen-writing

What the Perceptual Reading Interface reads

at, desperate course was to ask a fellow pr
 l of mine to trace Ah-Q through his crim
 cord. [REDACTED] go
 dy; no such individual – by the name of A
 ei, Ah-Gui, or anything like it – existed. T
 h I had no way of finding out whether thi
 indeed the case, or whether my acquaint:

The Perceptual Reading Interface moves our attention steadily through an English version of Lu Xun’s story. It reads up to nine words at a time, but chooses these phrases more carefully than may be apparent at first glance. At any given time, it only reads sequences of words that can be found in the indexes of Google Books not associated with Lu Xun (as far as our robots call determine). The reader first checks that other writers have also used each sequence of words in order to compose their own books and articles. As short sequences, therefore, these words are not unique to any particular person. They

have also been composed by others and, in a sense, might have been written by anyone. Highlighted as they are, they form part of a commons of language that is (or was) more or less democratically maintained.

Reading with Google and other Censors



The installation demonstrates contemporary modes of reading, contrasting these modes with those of the past and with traditions of 'deep' as opposed to 'hyper' attention. Network services and censors read, for us, this still important work of Chinese cultural and political critique. What happens when the phrases themselves, regardless of their associations with any particular writer are flagged as contentious by the indexed network services through which all of us now read?



Daniel Howe & John Cayley, 2014.10, Hong Kong

翻騰空

| VAULTING SPACE

Linda Chiu-han Lai

Automated 3-channel projection with found footage / 2014 (world premiere)

BASIC SET UP

A 3-screen automated projection with 470 clips on three 2-side surfaces (aspect ratio 21:9 / 2.5m horizontal measurement) hanging down from the ceiling distributed around the venue...

ARCHIVE, CINEMA HISTORY, STRUCTURAL
FILMS, VISUALIZING READING & WRITING,
PERMUTATION/COMBINATORIAL LOGIC,
NARRATIVE EXPERIMENTS, GENERATIVE
SYSTEM, INTERMEDIA SCORING



Collage of swordplay components (21:9 aspect ratio for individual panels)

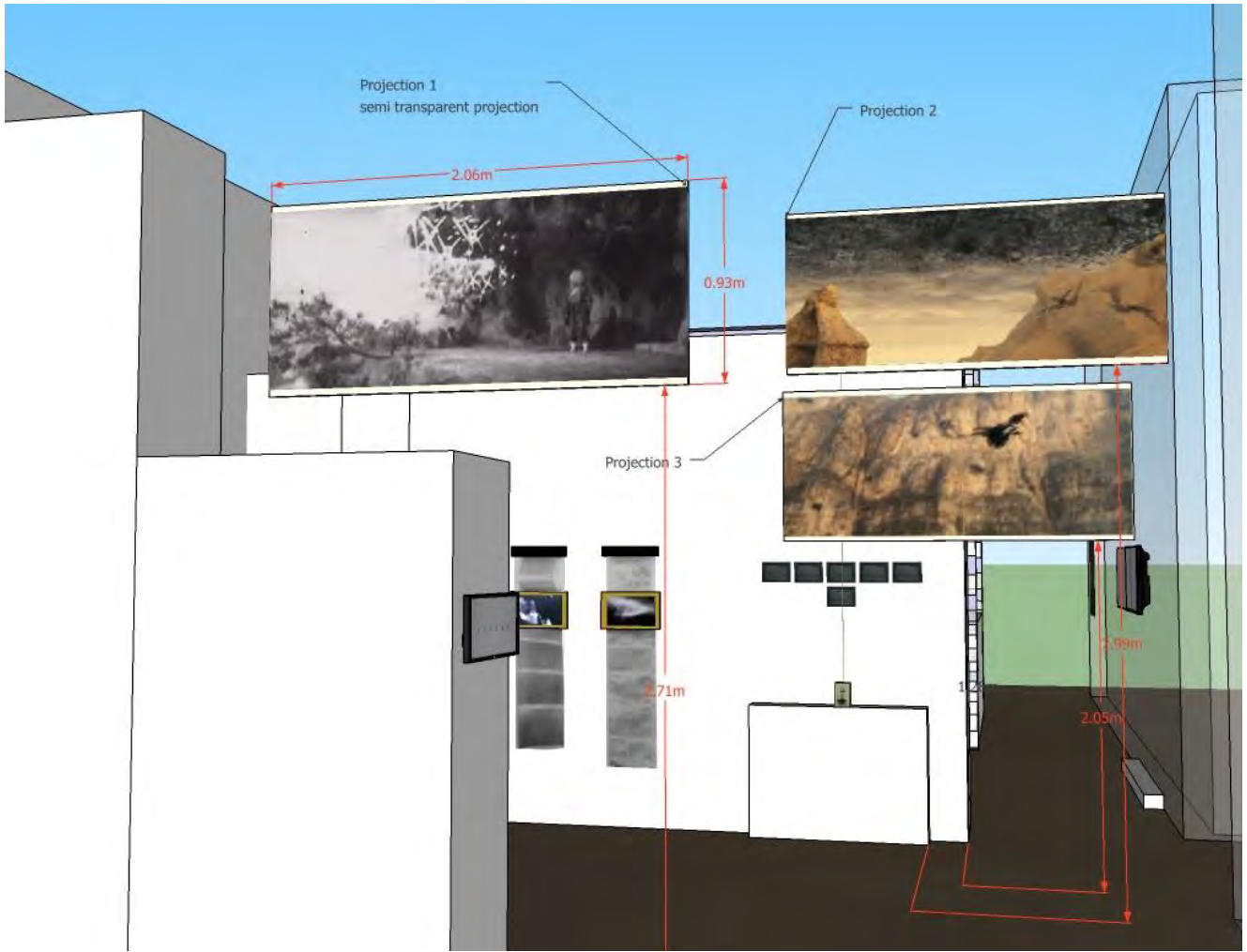
441個電影碎片。從1927到2011。上海神怪默片《西廂記》、港產《如來神掌》、港台合製《忠烈圖》、胡金銓的《山中傳奇》、蜀山、龍門…。8秒、5+3秒，10秒、4+6、7+3。彈騰、滾進、跳出、閃入、穿越、跨過，不動聲色。奔跑、攝走、驅散。著地、猛進，無重狀態。呼嘯器具交加，一盤紮實的拌麵條。數碼設定，三個布幕上現在進行式的對位法：迂迴重複的，對沖的，反差的，互相映照的，契合的。看得見的音韻，無盡延伸的律動，武俠電影的斷代板斧。《翻騰空》。請接招。



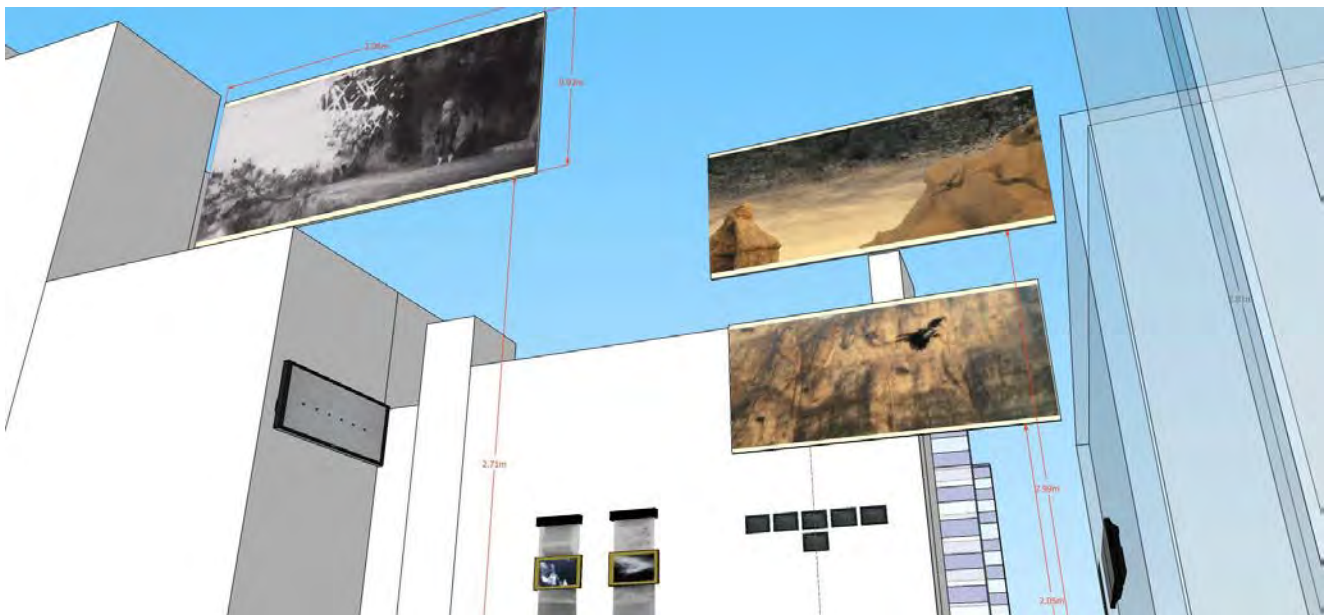
A collage of swordplay components

A 3-screen automated projection runs 441 clips from swordplay films spanning across 1927-2011, exploring visual styles and spatial imagination in Chinese swordplay films and their possible origins... The codes of the artist's former work, *Door Games Window Frames: Near Drama* (2012), are adapted to highlight the counterpoint relations of three image discourses, from the minimalist-constructivist view of the locomotive human body and tools and objects of swordplay to the most basic criteria of locomotion.

INSTALLATION DRAFT showing dimensions (for Connecting Space-HK)



Best view



Dimensions

Concept *Vaulting Space*, adapting the codes of my previous work *Door Games Window Frames: Near Drama*(2012), is an algorithmic combinatorial projection in 3 channels distributed in different parts of a room. Clips from 16 “*wuxia pian*” (Chinese swordplay films) are combined and projected on 3 horizontal banners (projected surfaces) hanged from the ceiling of 21:9 aspect ratio. The 3 banners, lying horizontally on parallel planes, are also orchestrated in such a way that the minimal actions form a visual chorus. The making of rules is comparable to counterpoints in music to govern the interdependence across the three image discourses (on 3 screens) and independence within each of the three image discourses. There is no big theory why the clips I cut up span across 1927-2011. But I certainly believe in the revelatory power of *longue durée* (long duration) as well as the excavational power of thinking moving images just for their surfaces. From epic-stories to micro-narratives, I have further descended onto the deconstructible level of action sequences to see how local capabilities of our body, limbs and joints have been subjected to the imaginary scores of vaulting and swordplay that comprise the most unique genre of Chinese cinema. On a broad level, *Vaulting Space* is a pleasurable celebration of the low-level visual/body mechanics and narrative components of swordplay in the form of a try-lateral polyphonic chorus. However, an under-current interrupts the image discourse of glorification every now and then — the monstrous and the tyrannical are the constant antagonists of swordplay heroes and heroines. *Jianghu* [the world of gallant chivalry of swordplay], after all, is a world of the outcast and the anti-establishment in a situation of no choice. Between allegorical ontologies and phenomenological engagement of swordplay processes, I am exploring the many possibilities of writing/reading, discursive formation and articulation.

概念

《翻騰空》延續前作《景框戲門》的程式演算創作裝置或「演算法錄像電影」，堅持我對衍生性藝術的探索。在規則的設計上，除了依據重複、組合、交換排列的邏輯去構想如何於三個布幕上分佈摘自 16 部武俠片的 431 個碎片之外，也向音樂上的對位法取靈感，調配三個影像流的相互性以及每個影像流的獨立自主性。三度平面，三個懸空的高度，21：9 的比例；我期待這基本的設置會向我揭示我肉眼所不能的武俠語言。說到 1927—2011 並沒有大理論，我只是相信長時段的宏觀橫向參照的力度。說是批判分析，倒不如說是以創作進行研究：我堅持活動影像的表面便是豐富的可觀現象足夠我們定睛細究。把「說故事」推到「微敘事」再往下推向「微動作」的操作層面，就是這個作品在視覺和理念上所依從的解構道路。整體而言，《翻騰空》猶如華麗的對位多重唱，素材是電影與身體語言的低度單位，以及武俠片的微敘事元素，交錯對鳴。暗湧卻時不時破流搶截，拋出猙獰、怒哮。這大概也是武俠世界的法度；「江湖」，本來就是不能認同建制、被「逼上梁山」的人的潛世界。在微敘事與本體論之間，我仍在尋找書寫、論述、發聲的多重可能性。



Site views... ..



Technical specifications

A 3-screen automated projection with 470 clips on three 2-side surfaces (aspect ratio 21:9 / 2.5m horizontal measurement) hanging down from the ceiling distributed around the venue...

This work is an application written in Processing 1.5.1. Java runtime environment should be installed on the computer.

Basic Hardware:

- 1 x Windows PC with PCI graphic card (sufficient for a resolution of 3840 x 1024)
- 3 x projectors, same model (resolution: 1024 x 768 OR 1280 x 1024)
- 1 x matrox TripleHead2Go monitor splitter
- white fabric hanging down from ceiling for projection (total - 3)

Display card on PC:

PCI graphic card sufficient for a resolution of 3840 x 1024

More advanced options:

- A) **ASUS DI-EN560DC ENGTX560** w/Mini HDMI+DVIx2 1GB DDR5 or
- B) **ASUS DI-EN550G1 GTX550** Ti 1G GDDR5

A monitor-splitter or video-splitter is also required to direct images from one computer to three projectors.

Sources of the 441 clips 441 個電影碎片的出處

	Film Title		Year	Director
01	西廂記	Tale of the Western Chamber (<i>aka</i> Romance of the Western Chamber)	1927	侯曜 Hou Yao
02	哪吒救母 (<i>aka</i> 哪吒 蛇山救母)	How Nazha rescued his mother from the Snake Mountain	1960	黃鶴聲 Wong Hok-sing
03	如來神掌	The Young Swordsman Lung Kim-fei (<i>aka</i> Buddha's Palm)	1964	凌雲 Ling Wan
04	武林聖火令	Moslem Sacred Fire Decree	1965	蕭笙 Siu Sang
05	大醉俠	Come Drink with Me	1966	胡金銓 King Hu
06	龍門客棧	Dragon Gate Inn	1967	胡金銓 King Hu
07	俠女	A Touch of Zen	1971	胡金銓 King Hu
08	忠烈圖	The Valiant Ones	1975	胡金銓 King Hu
09	楚留香	Clans of Intrigue	1977	楚原 Chor Yuen
10	倚天屠龍記	The Heaven Sword and Dragon Saber	1978	楚原 Chor Yuen
11	射鵰英雄傳 (下)	The Brave Archer 2 (<i>aka</i> The Legend of the Condor Heroes 2)	1978	張徹 Chang Che
12	山中傳奇	Legend of the Mountain	1979	胡金銓 King Hu
13	蜀山	Zu Warriors from the Magic Mountain	1983	徐克 Tsui Hark
14	東方三俠	The Heroic Trios	1992	杜琪峰 Johnnie To
15	東邪西毒	Ashes of Time	1994	王家衛 Wong Kar-wai
16	龍門飛甲	The Flying Swords of Dragon Gate	2011	徐克 Tsui Hark

Acknowledgements 鳴謝: Research/Technical Assistant: **Wong Chun-hoi** 研究及技術助理: 王鎮海 Technical Consultant: **Mike Wong** 技術顧問: 王健明 Programming Consultant: **Hector Rodriguez, Philip Kretschmann** 程式顧問: 羅海德, **Philip Kretschmann**



Linda C.H. Lai 黎尚嫻, 2014.10, Hong Kong



Vaulting Space (Linda Lai, 2014)

Site view showing the work's 3 movements: <https://vimeo.com/110445362>



消失之中 |

THE FADING PIECE

Jess Lau

Stop motion animation (20 minutes looping) / 2014

Showreel: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B6DNOHvFwba_THRXUWd4eGJQaEE/edit

MEMORY, TRACES, UNTRACING,
ARCHIVING, CONSTRUCTION,
DESTRUCTION



The animation, at the same time, is the recorder and the carrier of the energy.

*It has already gone too far.
Who knows when? Who knows how? It just
gradually happens.
We remains,
Wandering randomly,
On the streets, Into the alleys,
And in our faintly discernible memories.
One day,
Seems to be secretly,
Or quietly,
It comes.
Again, It comes.*



The Fading Piece (2014, Jess Lau) @WMC_e5, Connecting Space-HK

The Fading Piece is a duo stop-motion animation with sound. The animation on the right shows a diminishing pastel while the one on the left reveals the development of a line-drawing on the Kwun Tong landscape, simultaneously, line by line. Gradually, the skyline of the city is covered by black strokes left by the pastel.

《消失之中》為一雙視頻的定格動畫裝置。動畫展示現實中的一枝畫筆其重量完全轉移到畫紙之上（觀塘景觀）的過程。畫和筆不斷地一加一減，同時，它們攜手建立也消滅了城市。

物質與能量總毫無間斷地在流動，轉化；定格動畫記錄了現實中的一支畫筆其重量完全轉移到畫紙之上的過程，不斷地一加一減後，畫筆同時建立也消滅了城市。我花了半年時間，每天四至五小時去完成作品；大約用了一萬四千筆來完成，每畫一筆都會為畫紙及畫筆拍一張照作紀錄，合成後成為一個定格動畫作品。著眼於製作動畫的過程如何令能量轉化，是物質的量也是時間的量。

Substances and energies are unceasingly circulating and transforming. A stop-motion animation in the virtual world formed when the pastel in reality transformed into the scenery (Kwun Tong landscape) on paper, simultaneously, line by line. The animation is the recorder as well as the carrier of the energy.

An animation in the virtual world is formed when the pastel in reality transformed into the scenery on the paper. The stop-motion animation is the recorder as well as the carrier of the energy.

I spent around half a year, 4 to 5 hours a day, to make this stop motion animation. Alongside every stroke I made, I had to record the drawing and also the pastel. I repeated around 14,000 times to finish it. Unlike other animations, I highlighted the process of the creation of animation, an all-along meditative process of making as it happened.



Lau Ching-wa (Jess Lau 劉清華), 2014.10, Hong Kong



第八定理 | THEOREM 8

Hector Rodriguez

Programmed projection with custom software / 2014 (single-channel version for WMC_e5)

[Projection & sub-spaces](#)

<http://concept-script.com/theorem8/index.html#>

<https://vimeo.com/96876044>

(single-channel screening version without mathematical introduction)

<https://vimeo.com/96058548> (screening version with mathematical introduction)

CUSTOM SOFTWARE CREATION,
PROGRAMMED PROJECTION, ORTHOGONAL
DECOMPOSITION, ABSTRACT
MATHEMATICAL SPACES, HIGHER
DIMENSIONAL SPACE PROJECTING
SHADOWS ONTO A LOWER DIMENSIONAL
SPACE, FOUND FOOTAGE, FILM ANALYSIS



Theorem 8, details

《第八定理》是一個藝術家親自編寫的實驗性的錄像數據處理軟件，它藉由一套電影作為數據來源，解構當中每「格」影像。軟件以「正交分解」的數學方法，把來自高達的《阿爾伐城》及瑪雅·黛倫《女巫的搖籃》兩齣不同電影的影像重疊。「正交分解」的方法常見於監控用的軟件中。作品旨在凸顯和解構監控技術的程式計算的性質，其背後的哲學強調激進的藝術形式可帶動前瞻性的政治的思考。



Theorem 8 is an experimental video processing software that decomposes every frame in a movie using a fixed database of frames from another movie. By means of a mathematical technique known as orthogonal decomposition, it achieves a superimposition of frames from two different films:

Godard's *Alphaville* and *Witch's Cradle*, directed by Maya Deren. The technique of orthogonal decomposition is often used in surveillance software, and so the work aims to foreground and deconstruct the computational aspects of surveillance technologies. Its underlying philosophy is that radical politics demands radical artistic forms.

CONCEPT

Theorem 8 is originally a 3-channel video projection installation exploring the intersection of art and mathematics.

It is made using a specially authored software that decomposes every frame in a movie using a fixed database of frames extracted from another movie. The project is based on the mathematical concept of orthogonal decomposition, used in many surveillance applications. *Theorem 8*, however, redeploys this surveillance technique for very different purposes, to “read” one movie in relation to a second movie. This project thus visualizes the abstract mathematical concept of orthogonal decomposition. The idea is to select a fixed set of frames from one movie and then allow every frame in another movie to make a shadow projection onto each of those frames. Every frame in the second movie is decomposed onto those various changing shadows. By mixing the different shadow projections, it is possible to achieve an approximate reconstruction of the current frame in the first movie.

With this mathematical technique, it achieves a superimposition of frames from two different films: Godard’s *Alphaville* and *Witch’s Cradle*, directed by Maya Deren. The two films were selected because their filmmakers used light and shadow as dramatic elements. Godard can be seen a response to the rise of cybernetics and information technologies. Deren and Duchamp were interested in abstract mathematical spaces. The title, *Theorem 8*, refers to the orthogonal decomposition theorem, which concerns the idea of an object in a higher-dimensional space projecting shadows onto a lower dimensional space.

Since techniques of orthogonal decomposition are often used in surveillance software, the work aims to foreground, deconstruct, and liberate the computational aspects of surveillance technologies. Its underlying philosophy is that radical politics demands radical artistic forms. It also shows how surveillance method can be subverted as means of reading or decoding the cinematic tradition. The research of *Theorem 8* advanced from the artist’s previous research in works *Gestus* and *Gestus: Judex* (2010-2012), and *Inflections* (2010-2012).



Technical

Hardware requirements

- PC with PCI graphic card // min resolution: 3840 x 1024
- matrox TripleHead2Go monitor splitter // min model: vga edition, 3 x (1280 x 1024)
- 3 x projectors, ceiling mounted // min resolution: 1280 x 1024

Software requirements

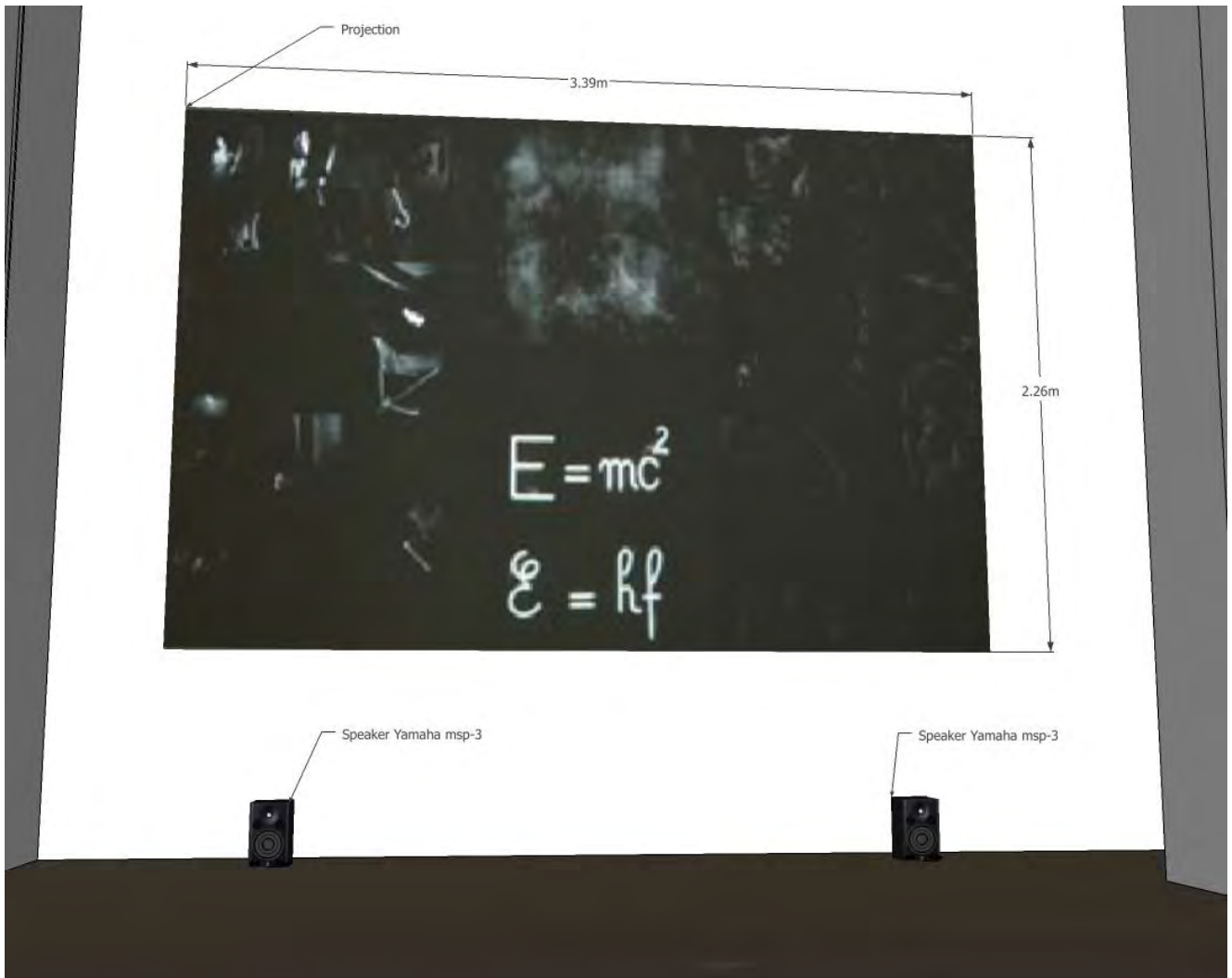
- vlc player for video playback (video format: *.mp4, h.264, 3840x944)

Full technical description

<http://concept-script.com/theorem8/index.html#>



Site view: *Theorem 8* at WMC_e5 at Connecting Space-HK



Site view: dimensions

 Hector Rodriguez 羅海德, 2014.10, Hong Kong



請別離開我 | **NE.ME.QUITTES.PAS**

Audrey Samson

Installed video documentation with objects / 2014 (HK version)

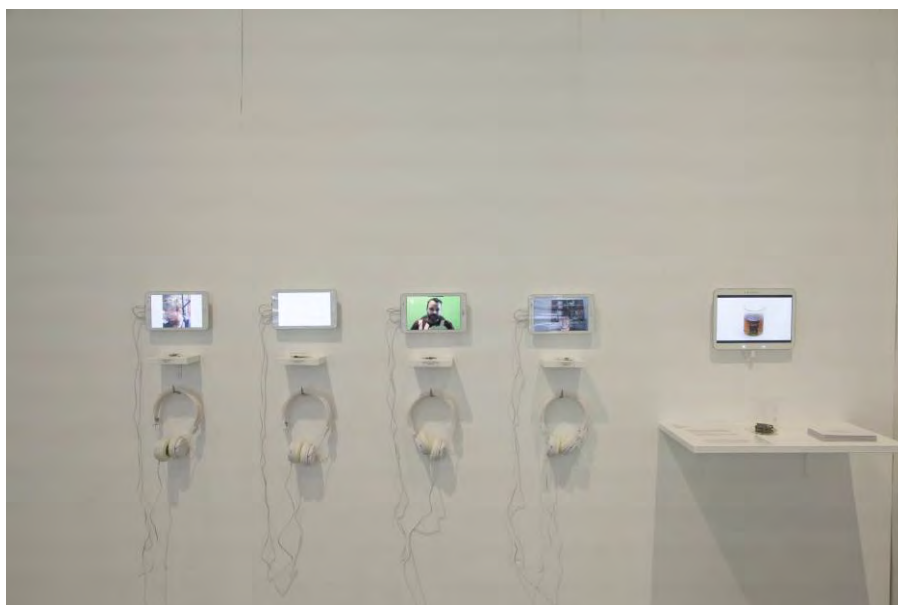
Mass surveillance is reality. Data fornicates, replicating at quantum speeds, multiplying our traces, sold to the highest bidder or even leaked for free. Selfies, email archives, twitter posts, likes, places, late night chat logs, health insurance records, bank statements, search histories... all those bits of identity, involuntarily immortalized as personality profiles in corporate server farms.

Whisper. If only it could melt away...

ne.me.quittes.pas proposes digital data funerals in which data is physically degraded, leaving no readable trace, only empty casings. It is a poetic gesture, a symbolic act, for what is already uploaded to the cloud is out of our control.

Bring us your data, we will put it to rest.

DATA OWNERSHIP, DATA RIGHTS AFTER DEATH, DATA PRIVACY, ERASURE OF DIGITAL DATA, UBIQUITOUS DATA ARCHIVING, BIG DATA AMASSING



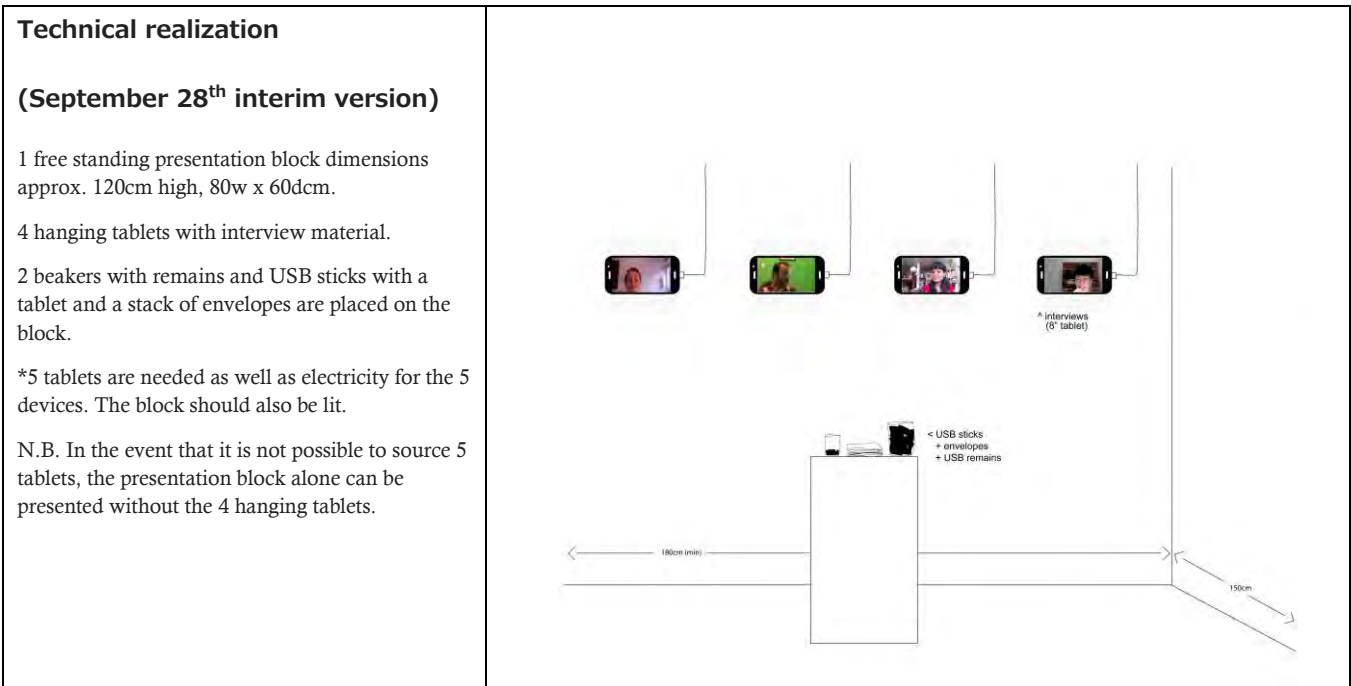
Ne.me.quittes.pas, 2014, Hong Kong

《請別離開我》是一個裝置，展示的是一個向電子數據長辭的葬禮。從一些關於數碼死亡的訪問出發，了解人們對離世後自己的電子數據的餘生的想像。獲邀的受訪者選出希望永久刪除的檔案，然後儲存於USB手指之內，給帶到香港城市大學的生物化學實驗室，然後放入高濃度腐蝕性硫酸之中銷毀。儲有數據的電子板被侵蝕，化成灰燼。經侵蝕的「遺骸」將與受訪問資料一併展出。紀錄整個儀式的錄像亦將會在展場中播放。

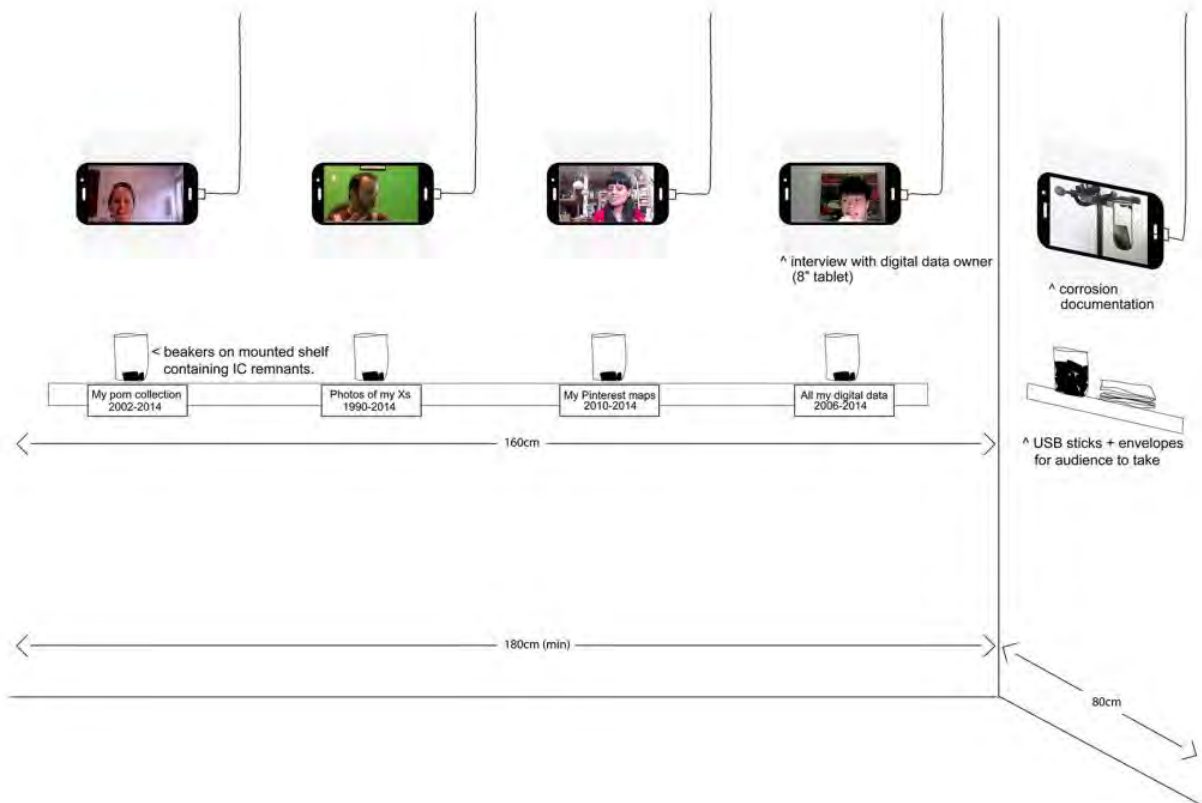


ne.me.quittes.pas is an installation displaying digital data funerals. It is based on interviews that were conducted with participants on the subject of digital death, and how they imagined the afterlife of their data. The participants selected files they wish to permanently delete. The files were transferred to USB sticks which were then placed in highly corrosive acid at the bio-chemistry lab of the City University of Hong Kong. Once the IC chips containing the data were irretrievably corroded, the remnants were collected like ashes. These corroded chips are exhibited in 'urns' in juxtaposition with the interview material. A video documentation of the degradation ritual is also displayed.

Set-up...



Technical realization (October 11th final version)



Sketch at final proposal stage (by Audrey Samson)

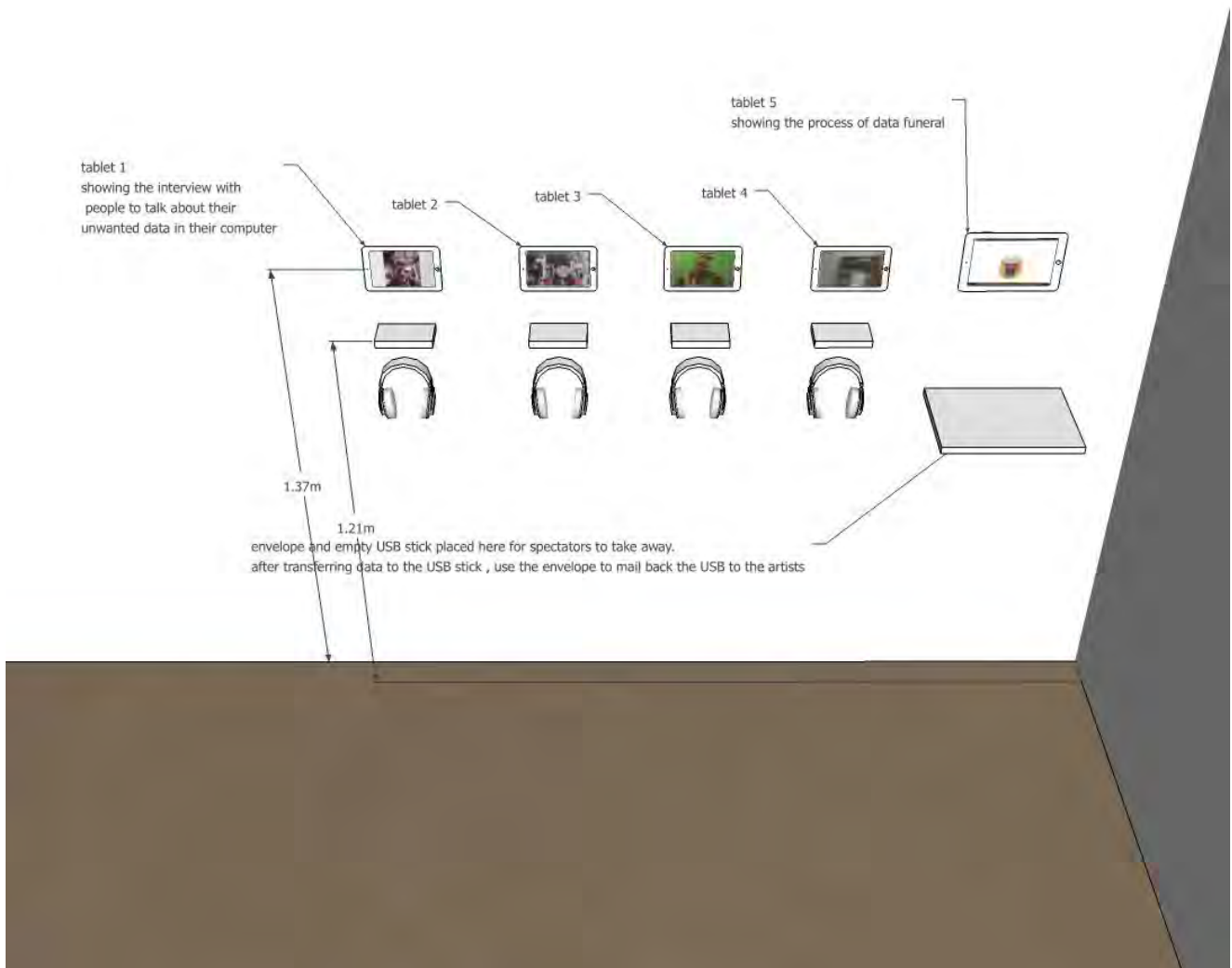
2 Wall-mounted shelves displaying urns and wall-mounted tablets displaying interview material.

Required:

- ▲ A power source for 5 tablets is required.
- ▲ 4 sets of headphones
- ▲ 5 tablets (8inch. any model)

Details:

- *2 shelves of approximately 160x15cm and 40x15cm.
- *1 container of USB sticks the audience may take with them
- *1 stack of self-addressed envelopes for the audience to take with them (to return the USB sticks)
- *4 (8") tablets that display video interview material with subtitles (wall-mounted).
- *4 tablets displaying interview material are connected to headphones (not shown in sketch).
- *A 5th video source displays documentation of the digital data funeral also shown on a tablet (no sound).
- *All 5 video sources are played in a loop.
- *The installation requires no maintenance.
- *The artist will be present to setup and take down the installation.
- *No electronic or chemical waste is generate during the exhibition and therefore no precautionary disposal methods are necessary.



Final site view at Connecting Space-HK (WMC_e5). Sketch by event documenter Wong Chun-hoi

DISCOURSE

‘Digital death’ is a growing concern as more and more data becomes digital including personal data and archives. It refers to the issues surrounding **data ownership** and **rights after death**. In recent years, numerous start-ups are addressing the issue as well as megapolies like Facebook, Google and Twitter. Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter have a large number of clients that have deceased.[1] Families and friends start making requests: for the data to be erased, handed over, hidden, or partially shared. These companies have consequently developed policies for what happens after their clients die.[2] Facebook has a profile memorialisation option while Twitter will discontinue the account. Ik R.I.P. was a platform developed in 2009 as a reflection upon this then ‘new problem’.[3] It enabled users of the Mediamatic site to draft a sort of digital will of their Mediamatic profile. More recently companies like Perpetu based in Hong Kong is concerned with handling your digital legacy after you die, a sort of digital executor of your social networking life.[4] LIVESON is a platform that proposes to continue your Twitter presence after you die based on your previous behaviour (with AI).[5] Eterni.me goes a step further and anticipates to collect “almost everything that you create during your lifetime” to then generate an avatar that emulates the deceased and acts as an interface for loved ones to gain access to this database of a lifetime. A host of companies offer services to safeguard passwords to digital data and distribution to the appointed person after death (Legacy Locker, Entrustnet, Digizeker). Some services include the passing on of messages upon death (Deathswitch). There are also a plethora of **memorial platforms** (Life.Vu, Forever Missed.com, Legacy.com, Tributes.com, Remembered.com, iLasting.com, Last Memories.com). Mostly, efforts are being made to think of ways to keep access to data alive after a person dies, in some cases even a simulation of the deceased.

There is very little said, however, about **erasure**. Viktor Mayer-Schönberger addresses the issues of **data privacy** that arise with digital archiving in ‘Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age’. The lack of context inherent to digital information for example can come back to haunt people later, they may lose a job over an unsavory picture posted 10 years earlier, or be denied access to a country. Many of the initiatives that are thinking about digital death are concerned with data privacy issues, the political and social implications of lingering data.[6] Who should have rights over a person’s data after they die for example. There is another aspect to digital death that Mayer-Schönberger points to, that is that forgetting is paramount, a built-in function of the brain, not a defect, that enables it to function properly.[7] It would appear that a recent study at the University of Basel shows that the brain actively erases information and that mental illness could arise should that process be disrupted.[8] Though we might perceive our memory as failing, it would seem that selective retention is how it is meant to work. The question then becomes, with the advent of digital technology, and cheap, plentiful storage devices, how is this nearly limitless archiving affecting our need to forget?

ne.me.quittes.pas begins to address a very underconsidered and important part of **digital archiving ubiquity: the erasure of digital data**. As big data sets are constantly amassed the materiality of data and the question of its erasure is no longer an issue solely related to digital death and mourning but also to privacy, data ownership, surveillance, cyberbullying, etc. The right to erase and/or forget becomes a political gesture that attempts to surpass datafication. *ne.me.quittes.pas* proposes a digital data funeral in which data is physically degraded, leaving no readable trace, only empty casings. What is already lost in the cloud is out of our control, it is therefore a poetic gesture, a symbolic act, and a mourning ritual. (Audrey Samson)



論述

「數碼死亡」日漸受到關注，因為數據電子化－無論是個人資料和檔案－都成主導趨勢。這情況引發出個人「死後」電子數據的所有權的問題。不單是初創企業，甚至巨無霸 Facebook, Google 和 Twitter 等近年來都緊釘著這些問題尋找解決方案。社交網站如 Facebook 和 Twitter 有大量已經過身的用戶。他們的家人和朋友開始提出要求：刪除，移交，隱藏，或部分共用相關資料。這些公司也因此制定他們的客戶過身後的對策。如 Facebook 就有一個 profile memorialisation (個人資料紀念存案) 的選項，而 Twitter 將終止該等帳戶。lk R.I.P. 是一個因應這個「新問題」於 2009 年開發的平臺。它讓 Mediamatic 網站的用戶，起草他們的電子遺願。最近不少公司，例如：總部設在香港的 Perpetu, 特別關注怎樣處理人死後的電字遺產。LIVESON 是一個建議 (使用人工智慧) 根據你生前的行為延續在 Twitter 的生命的平臺。Eterni.me 更走前了一步：它蒐集「你的一生中創造的所有東西」，然後虛擬一個模擬死者的化身，並為親人提供一個數據庫。主機公司以密碼保障電子數據，並分發死者給指定的人(Legacy Locker, Entrustnet, Digizeker)。有些服務包括通知死亡的消息 (Deathswitch)。像類似的紀念平臺還有 Life.Vu, 永遠 Missed.com, Legacy.com, Tributes.com, Remembered.com, iLasting.com 及 Memories.com 等。大多數情況下，會用盡辦法去保護電子數據，在某些情況下甚至模擬死者。但什少提刪除。Viktor Mayer-Schönberger 提出了「刪除電子存檔」時有關隱私的問題：「遺忘在電子時代的美德」。缺乏上下文電子資訊，有機會為人帶來後患的，例如：他們因一張 10 年

前張貼的照而失去工作，或者被拒絕進入的某個國家。許多人關心電子死亡帶來數據隱私問題、及對於政治和社會影響。例如：誰有權控制人死後的個人資料？另一個 Mayer-Schönberger 提出的問題是忘卻是最重要的，大腦的內置功能，沒有故障，需要能夠正常運作最近在巴塞爾大學的一項研表明，大腦積極擦除資訊和精神疾病可能出現的應是過程被打亂。雖然我們可能會覺得我們的記憶是消失的，它似乎是有選擇性的保留某些記憶。那麼問題就變成，隨著電子技術充足的存儲設備的出現，而且價格便宜，無限的存檔如何影響我們需要忘記？

《ne.me.quittes.pas》關注有關電子存檔十分重要的部分：刪除數字數據。隨著大數據集不斷積累，數據的重要性和刪除的問題，不再只與數碼死亡和哀悼有關的問題，而關係到私隱，數據所有權，監控，網絡欺凌等。刪除及/或忘記的權利變成一種試圖超越 datafication 的政治姿態。《ne.me.quittes.pas》提出了一種數字數據葬禮，在其中數據被實體破壞，不留可讀的痕跡，只餘空洞的外殼。事情已經超出我們的控制，因此，這是一個充滿詩意的姿態，一個象徵性的行為，和哀悼儀式。(Audrey Samson)



Audrey Samson, 2014.10, Hong Kong



氣象預測 | WEATHER FORECASTING

Zoie So

Mixed media installation / 2014 (world premiere)

METEOROLOGY, PALAEOCLIMATOLOGY,
INSRUMENTS TO MEASURE AND
FORECAST WEATHER, LIMITATIONS IN
MEASURING AND INTERPRETING WEATHER
DATA, PERCEPTUAL INSTALLATION



蘇慧怡的藝術創作糅合了光藝術、電子科技、機械設計、程式編寫及數碼影像，作品以雕塑、跨媒體裝置及表演等形式展出。她認為藝術創作是個整全的過程，反映生活、社會、大自然之間的連動關係，以流麗的方式將不可感之序呈現。在這次展覽中，她的最新作品《氣象預測》，記錄着她對達文西的氣象筆記、氣象學與古氣候學研究的讚嘆與反思，以水滴引路，從微小之中感受宏大。



Zoie's work features the spheres of light art, electronic art, mechanical design, digital graphics and programming at interplay, communicating to yield sculptures, multimedia installations and performances of diverse nature. She finds that deep engagement in the practice of art is a holistic process that reveals the active connections taking effect in life, society, nature and the universe between micro and macro spectra in all fields, which lead the artist and the audience in turn to a comprehensive sense of intimate issues. This time her *Weather Forecasting* starts with some of da Vinci's weather notes, and studies in meteorology and paleoclimatology, while various forms of water are at play, leading us to experience the grand universe through the very small and close to us.

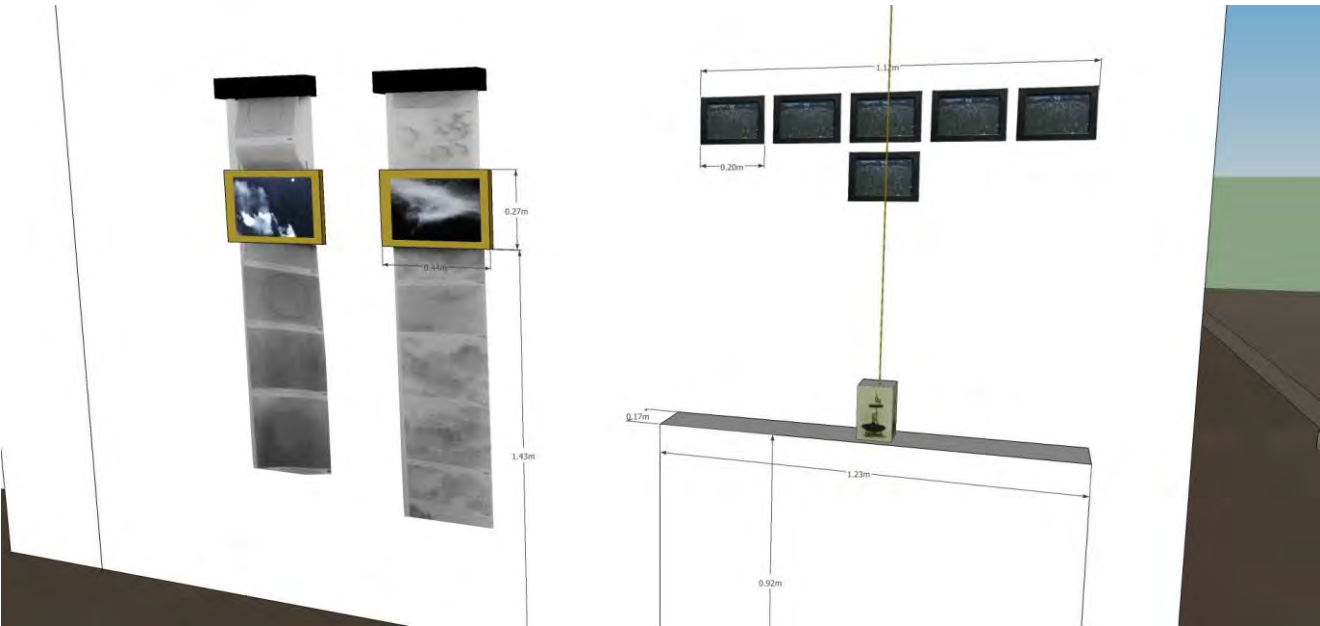
SYNOPSIS

“It is miraculous how the sun in our solar system beautifully interplays with water in all its forms on Earth to bring a variety of life-forms and the very conditions necessary for life itself. Here on Earth we humans feel impelled to predict and to prepare. Will it rain tomorrow? Should I bring a jacket along? Looking at the sky, how can we predict the weather? How far and beyond the clouds and past the stratosphere should we probe to obtain relevant climate data? How much can we learn about the past from weather fluctuations? How profound is our knowledge of the correlations of energies and forces in the universe with the climate? Is our technology sophisticated enough to accurately measure the data and really make sense of it? Do we understand the relationship between air pressure on our bodies and the forces that have kept planets, stars, and galaxies swinging for billions upon billions of years? Every humble measurement and prediction itself is a single solid stroke of the sketch of an ever-moving figure. I feel rather small thinking about this, but also feel a certain bliss having the chance to experience this grand world and its vital impulse.” – Zoie So



「古今中外，量度氣象變化、預測天氣，均是涉及民生、經濟、資源分佈的重要課題。遙望天際，採取資訊，大氣以外的無盡宇宙，可量可觀的，盡為考察。縱有幾百萬年的氣象數據，是否足夠我們了解偌大宇宙間的星系引力對地球的氣象影響？萬丈之外，太陽底下，幻化成不同形態動態的水，每天在地球上演活生命的韻律。明天會否下雨？這個問題，真的答不準。」

Set up



Weather Forecasting. Sketch by Wong Chun-hoi.

Site View



Details



 Zoie So 蘇慧怡, 2014.10, Hong Kong

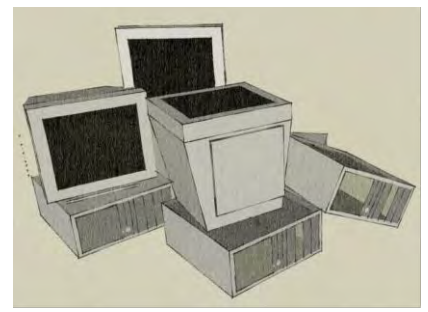
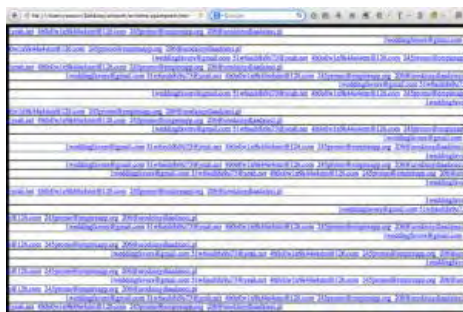


回轉喪屍 | HELLO ZOMBIES

Winnie Soon

Networked, programmed installation / 2014 (world premiere)

JUNK/SPAM/WASTE, ZOMBIFICATION, RE-
APPROPRIATION OF UNUSABLE
TECHNOLOGIES, SPAM CHECKING, SPAM
PRODUCTION, HACKING, DATAFICATION,
OPENING THE BLACK BOX, UNDEAD-NESS,
AUTOMATED UNDEAD WRITING, SPAMHAUS'
BLOCK-LISTS,



Hello Zombies, Winnie Soon, WMC_e5 2014

「我們生活在網絡世界裡並擁有奇特的住址，我們每天與你一起且懂得向你送上誘人的說話。可是你卻稱呼我們為”垃圾”。我們不過閒蕩流連於網絡，你卻要把我們消滅。可是我們仍無處不在。其實，我們只是你們社會和經濟體系嫡傳的孩子，可你偏要逃避我們，漠視我們的存在。我們卻是不死的。我們會編寫，我們會創造。」（“喪屍”自白）

此作品探討垃圾郵件（“喪屍”）的文化現象，這些看似沒有生命的喪屍其實擁有獨特的網絡身份，透過自動化程式，不停生產大量數據，讓人類感到懼怕。其實喪屍是具有生命力的活死生物。此藝術作品利用電腦程式不停地干預網絡運作，嘗試以詩句與喪屍溝通，並無間斷地聆聽網絡回覆。作品希望帶出在資本主義下的網絡文化現象，並探討科技、美學與社會之間的相互關係。



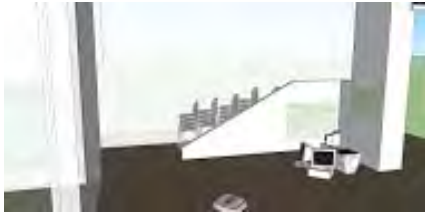
“We are with you everyday, we live in the Internet with peculiar addresses and enticing titbits, but you call us “spam”. We wander around the network, mindlessly, and you wanted to trash us, but we are still everywhere. We are just the children of your economic and social system, but you ignore and avoid us. We are not dead, we write, we create.”

This artwork examines these nonhuman zombies as a cultural phenomenon that produces quantified data and network identities. Through running the automated living machines, the artwork intervenes the network by writing spam poems to zombies and reading networked replies continuously. This project explores zombies of the living dead that bring forward social, technical, capitalistic and aesthetic relations in everyday lives.

Zombies in spam culture

HELLO ZOMBIES (2014)

/ Winnie Soon



“[Zombie] is a soulless human corpse, still dead, but taken from the grave and endowed by sorcery with a mechanical semblance of life-it is a dead body with is made to walk and act and move as if it was alive.”

- William Seabrook, *The Magic Island*, 1929

Spam appears everywhere on the Internet, from downloaded emails to server-based blogs, forums and social media communications. In 2014, statistics show that spam proportion almost reaches 70% of the entire email traffic.¹ People might not be aware of this datafied phenomenon because most email systems come with a spam-filtering software, which automatically deletes them or categorizes them into a special folder, namely ‘Junk’ or ‘Spam’. As such, spam comes in touch with us in a seamless way. Sometimes it still shows up in our normal inbox folder, bypassing intelligent filtering rules. Spam not only consists of commercial advertisements and enticing titbits, but they also come with peculiar email addresses.²

These email addresses become the identity of spam that show up in an email inbox interface that one can reply to. However, many of them are actually non-existing in the network. On the one hand, they are actively living in the network and are always monitored by algorithms; on the other hand, they consume numerous resources of the network and are regarded as “waste” (Parikka and Sampson 2009:4; Gabrys 2013:67) that are deadly trashed. This condition of the living dead resonates with the analysis of zombies in popular culture.

This artwork explores the notion of the living dead in the context of spam culture, and I use the term *zombies* to describe spam. Zombies have been used extensively in popular culture and entertainment, such as films, games and literatures (Boluk and Lenz 2011), to describe the phenomenon of mindless slaves (Seabrook 1929). They are usually situated in a condition of an outbreak with contagion effects (Munz et al 2009; Mahoney 2011; Moore 2013). The use of the term often raises the issues of power relations (Fischer-Hornung n.d), labour practices (Moore 2013), bodily infection (Peaty, 2011) and capitalism (Lauro and Embry 2008; Stinson 2011). This paper uses the zombie figure to describe the computational and network process of spam automation. It investigates the role of code plays and the material aspect of code interacts in the process of **zombification**.



A reflexive approach: understanding spam production

As regards spam culture, there are considerable scholarly discussions, for example a historical account on how the meaning of spam has changed through technological development (Brunton 2013), a cultural dimension to examining the implications of anomalies (Parikka and Sampson 2009), artistic methods for spam re-representation (Seiça, 2012), the concept of generativity in threatening spam (Zittrain, 2008), and the rethinking of spam waste (Parikka and Sampson 2009; Gansing 2010). Following the discussion of opening up the black box of zombie media by Hertz and Parikki (2012: 429), they suggest the possibility to discover “new use, contexts and adaptations” to re-appropriate unusable technologies. I have taken a reflexive artistic approach³ to investigate the zombie figure in spam culture, with a particular attention on the technical and material aspects of spam. This includes setting up a spam production line, writing computer scripts to capture spammers’ email address instead, producing and distributing customized spam poems automatically in real time. During the reflective and coding process, I understand ways of how spammer captures and composes data from the network. One needs to have a mail server in order to send out massive emails, but most hosting servers set a sending limit per day unless one rents a virtual private server (VPS). A strict sending limit from Internet service providers is imposed on using such email servers.⁴ However, email marketing is a massive business; one can pay and rely on companies to provide a sophisticated emailing solution, escaping from a complex infrastructural setup⁵. Regardless of any provided standard software or customized program, composing and sending massive emails require computer code that deals with file reading and data processing. An email program is also required to state the parameters that negotiate with a mail server, such as mail domain, username, password, sender address, receiver address, mail subject and mail body. As such, code contributes significantly into the process of spam data quantification and automation. I argue that, however, the role of code cannot be taken for granted from a pure technical perspective in datafication. It requires a thorough understanding of its cultural implications and its relationship with network environments.

```
Sent by an artist-researcher, Winnie Soon
e:readme@hellozombies.net

-----email is sent at 18/09/2014 17:46:15 (total no of zombies: 90)-----

To sousdfg@blogshoponline.com
How are you? This is not a commercial spam email, but a piece of poem instead.

<ALL DUMP OR ALL LEAK>
Use upload carriers.
Strict phones have typical data.
Cowards land what models either size.
Data that does not network directly concerns us.
URL, all dump or all leak.

Thanks for reading the poem.

Sent by an artist-researcher, Winnie Soon
e:readme@hellozombies.net

-----email is sent at 18/09/2014 17:46:18 (total no of zombies: 91)-----

To th3h54j@163.com
How are you? This is not a commercial spam email, but a piece of poem instead.

<CHEAP GIRLS>
Girls at $200 a pop.
Super DISCOUNT.
BUY NOW!!! E n t e r - D a t a - O n l i n e

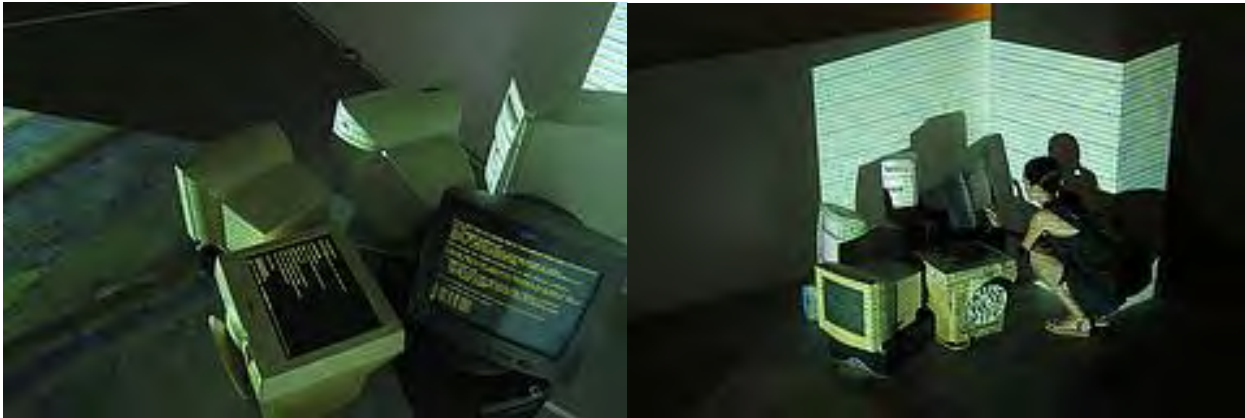
Thanks for reading the poem.

Sent by an artist-researcher, Winnie Soon
e:readme@hellozombies.net

-----email is sent at 18/09/2014 17:46:20 (total no of zombies: 92)-----
```

Mutating parameter value: addresses from senders to receivers

From stop forum spam, an online provider who supplies spammer information, one of the lists contains around 23,000⁶ spam email addresses for just one day. The List is continuously updated and contributed by network tinkers. Spammer address can be reported online. Once an address is identified, an email will be added into a block-list, hence this information will be distributed enormously in the network. According to Spamhaus, an international non-profit organization that does spam tracking, more than two billion mailboxes are using the Spamhaus's block-lists to filter the identified spam.⁷ In order to enter a mail account's inbox folder successfully, not only does the email content require to be customized, the identity has to be carefully considered. As such, spammer needs to change their address in order to escape being caught.

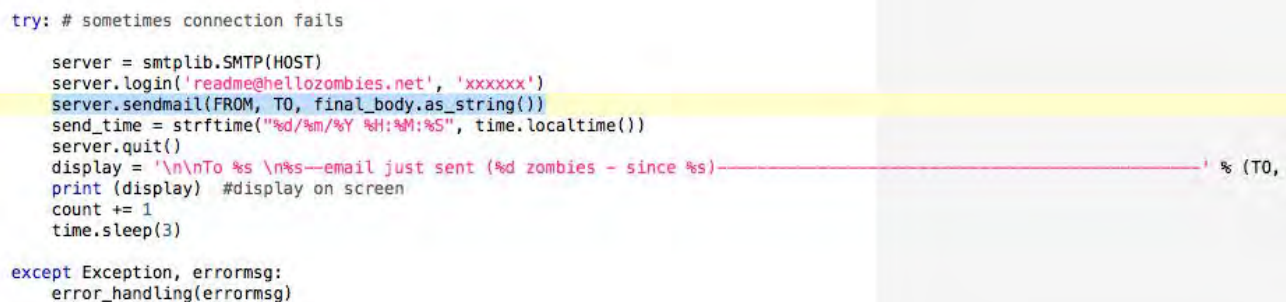


Some spam addresses are real with actual users who are currently using them. It is common to receive reported cases from the Internet where users' email account is being hacked. The mailbox sent spam email secretly out of an actual user.⁸ Indeed, email addresses can be faked easily; one just has to literally configure the parameter of 'sender address' in a program. Consequently, an automated system will execute this piece of information mindlessly, attaching it to every email that is going to send out. As such, zombies' identities come with faked and non-identifiable addresses, but they also include the live ones. However, once they have been tracked, zombies require a new identity to keep the continuity of producing quantified data. Therefore, each zombie' identity is paradoxically temporary and generative, the identity keeps mutating over time. This mutating quality is similar to the popular game *Zombie Farm*⁹ where zombies change their body parts to look differently in order to obtain higher success of harvesting.

In spam production, the configurable parameter, that is the sender address here, allows the corresponding value to change easily without impacting the entire production line. Simply replace a value with another email address. However, this changing parameter value in computer code is not merely a data configuration, as Neff and Stark put it, "the information architecture is politics in code" (2004:186). Code, in this emailing context, also includes "technological and social systems" that shape what the becoming value might be (ibid). The mutable values have a political condition. The longevity of a zombie's identity is affected by the social demand and the technological development of spam tracking, hacking techniques and security infrastructure. The changing values of such parameter have what Neff and Stark calls "political valence." (ibid)

Similarly, we can also apply the mutating concept into the parameter of a receiver address. Such data have enormous commercial value, and so reselling of email addresses is commonly found. Harvesting live data with active email addresses is arguably one of the most challenging parts for massive emailing. Security is continuously enhanced in email system and filtering rules. The web checking logic that differentiates robots and humans are becoming more sophisticated. Computer agents, such as web crawlers and web bots, use different ways such as web data mining,¹⁰ spoofing attack and dictionary attack to harvest valid and close-to-live addresses. In some occasions, a real email address is stolen through spoofing attack where "[s]pammers get names and addresses through compromised email accounts, which give them access to contact lists." (Yeaton 2013) Whilst in dictionary attack, spammers, on the other hand, based on obsolete and invalid addresses to generate a new one by slightly amend the username and replace the old email domain (such as the change of email address from james1@hinet.net to james@hotmail.com) (Clayton 2004).

The value of the receiver parameter stands for an actual target, and it is constantly mutating at code level (see Figure 1). Although in our common knowledge, one could input more than one target recipient in the carbon copy (cc) or blind carbon copy (bcc) field of an email client interface. Nevertheless, email server follows protocol specification¹¹ that process addresses one by one through command-line communication in the form of code. The specification “prescribes how the data should be formatted, the type of data allowed” (Hall 2000:13). This is what Galloway might be called “network control” (2004: xix). He explains, “[a] computer protocol is a set of recommendations and rules that outline specific technical standards”. On the one hand, these are technical standards; on the other hand, these “govern the set of possible behaviour patterns” as “regulations” (2004:6-7). The checking of mail servers includes the validity of domain, the receiver address, the sending limit and so forth¹². At the operation level of code, executing such spamming program means submitting data for email server’s regulatory check. As such, code cannot escape from the process of network control. In view of the receiver parameter, email servers constantly receive different lists of email through coding interfaces. These addresses are mutating at the level of code based on what have been found from computer agents. What I want to suggest here is not only examining the format of the email address, in terms of its numeric and alphabetical form, but to open the “black box” (Latour 1987:2-3) and understand how a program and a system works in order to examine the mutability of code. This mutable quality constitutes the entire production chain of spam, I argue, and it is not simply data configuration that substitutes a parameter value with data. It contains other cultural implications.



```

try: # sometimes connection fails

    server = smtplib.SMTP(HOST)
    server.login('readme@hellozombies.net', 'xxxxxx')
    server.sendmail(FROM, TO, final_body.as_string())
    send_time = strftime("%d/%m/%Y %H:%M:%S", time.localtime())
    server.quit()
    display = '\n\nTo %s \n%s--email just sent (%d zombies - since %s)-----' % (TO,
    print (display) #display on screen
    count += 1
    time.sleep(3)

except Exception, errmsg:
    error_handling(errormsg)

```

Figure 1: A screen shot of the artwork’s program that highlights the variable of email address. The fields ‘FROM’ and ‘TO’ are two parameters where they can put in any address value.

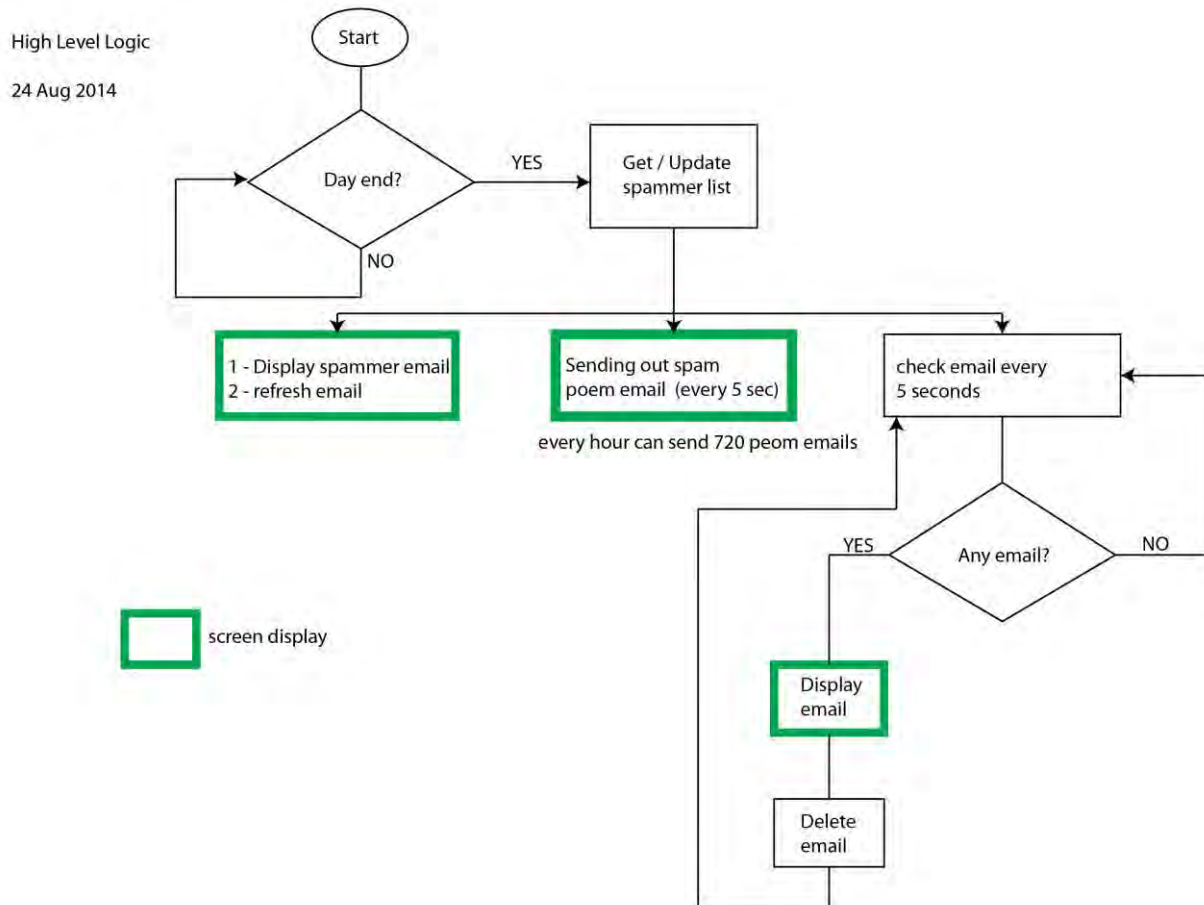
The undead writing of automation

With respect to spam production, it does not come from one machine, but plenty of them are running continuously that generate quantified data like a zombie herd. Ratliff describes it as the process of ‘herding’ where massive zombies receive code instructions to invade the network (Ratliff 2005). Zombies do not have a physical body, but they possess a temporal identity and a body of text. They may not survive for long but even if one is being trashed, there are still many around the network. According to Boluk and Lenz, who draw upon Lauro, Embry and Weinstock’s work, discuss zombie as “a figure of undead labor and consumption” and “is simultaneously a figure of pure automation, of programmed memory that infinitely loops” (2011:7). They are regarded undead because the automated process minimizes human interventions and optimizes labour practices. All the digital labour, such as computer agents and computer job schedulers (also known as cron job), have efficiently become automated. Quantified zombies are being distributed out of the automated computational process.

The automated spam production in *Hello Zombies* can also be understood as a repeatable writing process which is, according to Chun, “no matter who writes it or what machine it was destined for, something that inscribes the absence of programmer and the machine in its so-called writing.” (2011:42) As spam text is generated through computation, we could also say code writes spamming emails. From a confining process of computation to a wider framework of capitalism, zombies are undead, they are repetitively produced through writing – writing to mailboxes and writing for data capturing and processing. Computationally, Chun, however, reminds us code is a process of “undead writing, a writing that, even when it repeats itself, is never simply a deadly or living repetition of the same.” (2011:177) Such undead-ness of zombification suggests attention for the material level of code and the corresponding automated processes.

This artwork reflects upon the datafied condition of both quantified and automated zombies at the level of code. Code

associates with data capturing, network protocols and computational processes in the automation of spam production. The notion of the living dead, as I argue, encompasses code automation – an undead and repetitive writing process where parameters values are constantly changing. It contributes significantly to spam zombification, and possibly other kinds of software culture that demonstrates datafication, where things exist temporary but are constantly produced in the network.



Flowchart of machine process

Notes:

¹ A spam report in 2014: <http://securelist.com/analysis/monthly-spam-reports/58559/spam-report-february-2014/>

² Examples of such email addresses are naomiwhitfield274@trash-mail.com and *****@gmail.com. Spam email addresses can be found in stop forum spam: <http://www.stopforumspam.com/downloads/>

³ The artistic outcome can be found in <http://www.siusoon.com/home/?p=1273>, the artwork calls *Hello zombies*.

⁴ *Details about setting up an email system for mass distribution*: <http://www.slideshare.net/anissasimpson900/setting-up-a-email-marketing-system>

⁵ Examples of companies who provide email marketing solutions: Amazon SES: <http://aws.amazon.com/ses/details/> and Mail Chimp: <http://mailchimp.com/pricing/high-volume-sender/>

⁶ A snap shot as of 17 September 2014. The updated list can be found here: www.stopforumspam.com/downloads/listed_email_1.zip

⁷ The figure is as of Sep 2014. See the spamhaus project here: <http://www.spamhaus.org/organization/>

⁸ See some example of reported cases here: <http://askleo.com/why-does-my-account-keep-sending-out-spam/> and <http://lifelife.com/5875848/how-can-i-find-out-why-my-email-account-just-spammed-my-friends-and-family>

⁹ Zombie farm is a mobile game, see the link here: <http://zombiefarmgame.com/>

¹⁰ See different ways of harvesting email addresses: <http://www.private.org.il/harvest.html>

¹¹ See the full document of SMTP mail server protocol specification here: <http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2821.txt>; A SMTP command 'RCPT' is required to communicate with mail server.

¹² See the list of SMTP error messages here: <http://www.serversmtp.com/en/smtp-error>

References:

Boluk, Stephanie and Lenz, Wylie. *Generation Zombie: Essays on the Living Dead in Modern Culture*. Mcfarland, 2011. Print.

Brunton, Finn. *Spam: A shadow history of the Internet*. The MIT Press. 2013. Print.

Chun, Wendy. *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory*. The MIT Press. 2011. Print

Clayton, Richard. "Stopping Spam by Extrusion Detection" In *First Conference on Email and Anti-Spam (CEAS)*, Mountain View, CA. (2004). Web. <www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~rnc1/extrusion.pdf>

Fischer-Hornung, Dorothea. "Occupied Bodies: Zombies in William Seabrooks Memoir 'The Magic Island' and the Film 'White Zombie'" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Renaissance Hotel, Washington D.C.*, <Not Available>. Web. <http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p315353_index.html>

Gabrys, Jennifer. *Digital Rubbish: a natural history of electronics*. The University of Michigan Press, 2013. Print.

Galloway, Alexander R. *Protocol: How Control Exists after Decentralization*. The MIT Press, 2006. Print.

Gansing, Kristoffer. "'Press Delete' The Politics and Performance of Spamculture." ISEA2010 Conference Proceedings, (2010)364-265. Web. <http://www.isea2010ruhr.org/files/redaktion/pdf/isea2010_proceedings_p38_gansing.pdf>

Hall, Eric. *Internet Core Protocols: The Definitive Guide: Help for Network Administrators*. O'Reilly Media, 2000. Print.

Hertz, G., & Parikka, J. *Zombie Media: Circuit Bending Media Archaeology into an Art Method*. *Leonardo*, 45,5 (2012)424–430.

Latour, Bruno. *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society*. Harvard University Press, 1987. Print.

Lauro, Sarah Juliet and Embry, Karen. *A Zombie Manifesto: The Nonhuman Condition in the Era of Advanced Capitalism*. *boundary 2 Spring 2008 35(1): 85-108*. Web. <<http://boundary2.dukejournals.org/content/35/1/85.citation>>

Mahoney, Phillip. "Mass Psychology and the Analysis of the Zombie: From Suggestion to Contagion." In *Generation Zombie: Essays on the Living Dead in Modern Culture*. Eds, S. Boluk and W, LenZ. Mcfanland. 2011: pp.113-129. Print.

Moore, Christopher. "Zombie processes and undead technologies." In *Zombies in the academy: living death in higher education*. Eds, A, Whelan, R. Walker and C. Moore. The University of Chicago Press. 2013: pp.91-103. Print.

Munz, Philip, et al. "When zombies attack!: mathematical modelling of an outbreak of zombie infection." *Infectious Disease Modelling Research Progress*, 4 (2009)133-150. Print.

Neff, Gina and Stark, David. "Permanently Beta: Responsive Organization in the Internet Era." In *Society Online: The Internet in Context*. Eds, P.N. Howard and S. Jones. Sage Publications. 2004. Print.

Parikka, Jussi and Sampson, Tony D. *The Spam Book: On Virus, Porn, and Other anomalies from the Dark Side of Digital Culture*. Hampton Press (NJ, 2009). Print.

Peaty, Gwyneth. "Infected with Life: Neo-supernaturalism and the Gothic Zombie." In *Gothic: Science Fiction 1980-2010*. Eds, S, Wasson and E, Alder. Liverpool University Press. 2011. Print.

Ratliff, Evan. "The Zombie Hunters". *The New Yorker* 10 Oct. 2005. Web. <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/10/10/the-zombie-hunters>>

Seabrook, W.B. *The Magic Island*. Blue Ribbon Books, 1929. Print.

Seiça, Álvaro. "Anti-Spam: Reinventing Data". *Parsons Journal for Information Mapping* 4:1 (2012) 1-13. Web. <<http://elmcip.net/node/6566>>

Stinson, Elizabeth A. "Zoombified Capital in the Postcolonial Capital: Circulation (of Blood) in Sony Labou Tansi's Parentheses of Blood." In *Race, Oppression and the Zombie: Essays on Cross-Cultural Appropriations of the Caribbean Tradition*. Eds, C.M Moreman, C.J Rushton. Mcfarland. 2011. Print.

Yeaton, Monique. "What is email spoofing all about?" MIT News. 6 May. 2013. Web. <<http://newsoffice.mit.edu/2013/email-spoofing-whats-it-all-about>>

Zittrain, Jonathan. *The Future of the Internet - and how to Stop It*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press. 2008. Print.



Winnie Soon, 2014.10.24, Hong Kong



*Screen shots: courtesy of the artist

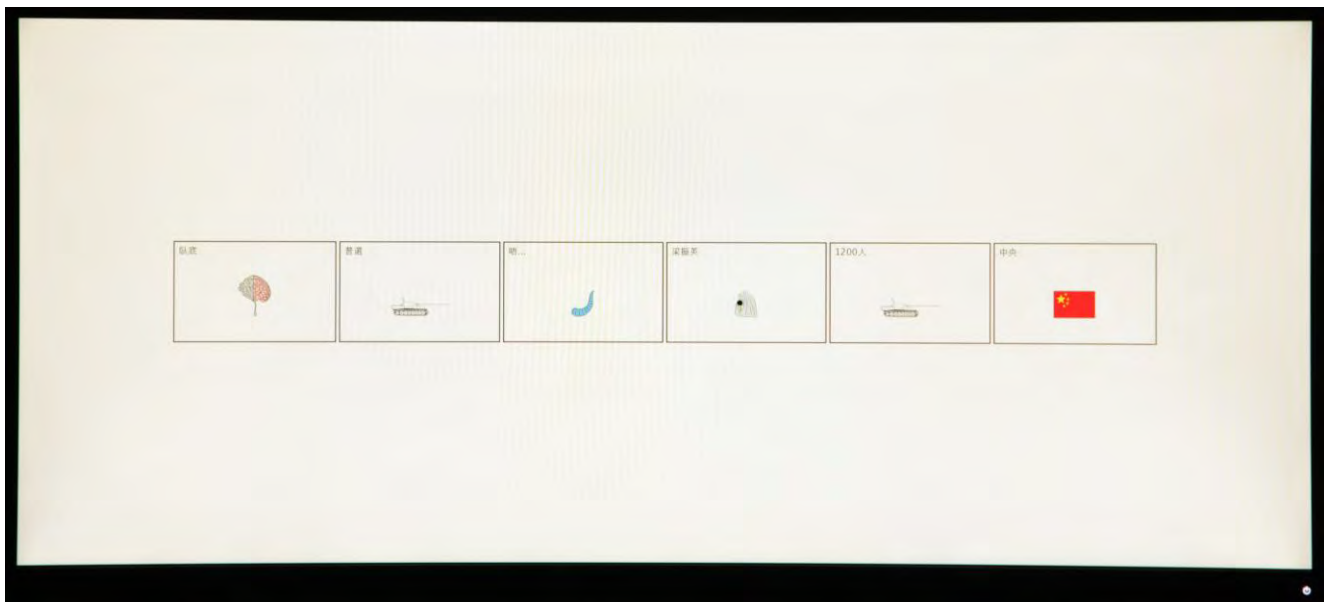
*Technical drawings by Wong Chun-hoi

Autocomic #1

Justin Wong

Generative comics on digital screen / 2014

GENERATIVE SEQUENCE, AUTOMATIC
COMICS, COMIC STRIPS INTO DIGITAL
LIBRARY, COMBINATORIAL PLAY



《autocomic#1》是作者於《明報》連載作品《嘖嘖格格》的重新演譯。故事是根據這六格漫畫所常用的敘事格式與規則，由電腦程式衍生而創作。當中的圖像與文字都取自過往創作《嘖嘖格格》時所建立的資料庫。

「當電腦硬件和軟件正在不斷為漫畫藝術帶來革新的時候，很少藝術家及學者留意到電腦科技從「衍生藝術」的角度可以為漫畫帶來什麼可能性。如果細心分析漫畫語言及其表達形式的關係，從廣義在說，漫畫可以看成是一種由「規則驅動」(Rule-driven) 的藝術形式。建基於「衍生藝術」的理論於文學及設計等範疇的應用，我相信其創作原則及方法可以為傳統漫畫敘事的策略帶來很大的挑戰。同時，也為有關漫畫語言的發展建立了新的討論平台。」

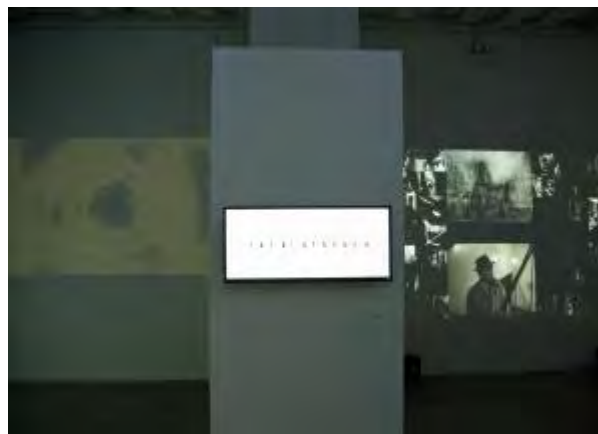


Autocomic#1 remakes the artist's daily six-panel comic strips, *Gei Ger Gaak Gaak*, published in local newspaper *Ming Pao*. The stories and the plots are computer-generated based on several simple "rules" and "formulas" commonly found in the comic strip format. All the source materials are extracted from a library of graphics and texts that is built from the artist's previous works.

While comic production has been greatly enhanced by the advancement of hardware and software in recent years, very few artists and scholars are aware of the potential computer could bring from the perspective of generative art. Comics can be seen as a form of rule-driven art if we closely study its language and its relationship with the form. I believe, with the rich histories of generative theory in the field of literature and visual design, the implementation of such principles and creative practices could pose a challenge to the existing storytelling tradition and it could establish a new platform for the discussion of the evolution of comics' language in the future.

autocomic #1 is such an attempt to revise storytelling through rule-based algorithmic thinking. The process is based on an extensive study of comics' unique language and basic elements such as image sequence, page layout, use of grid and theories of narrative. The creative process deploys images from the artist's previous works which form the data set and library of , *autocomic #1*, a writing/reading system.

Site view



Justin Wong 黃照達, 2014.10, Hong Kong

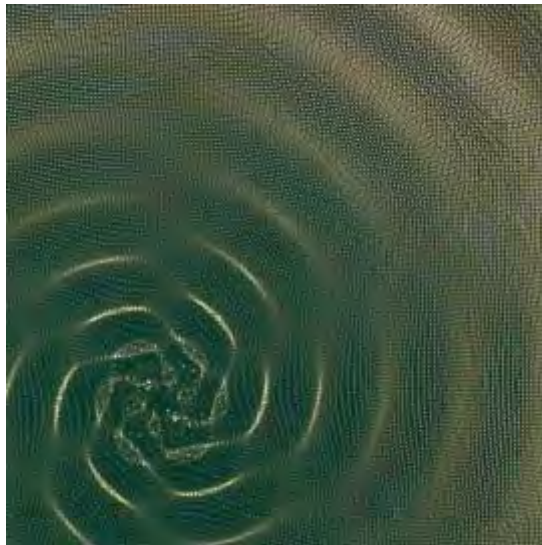


Map01

Mike King

Generative graphics / wall projection / 2014

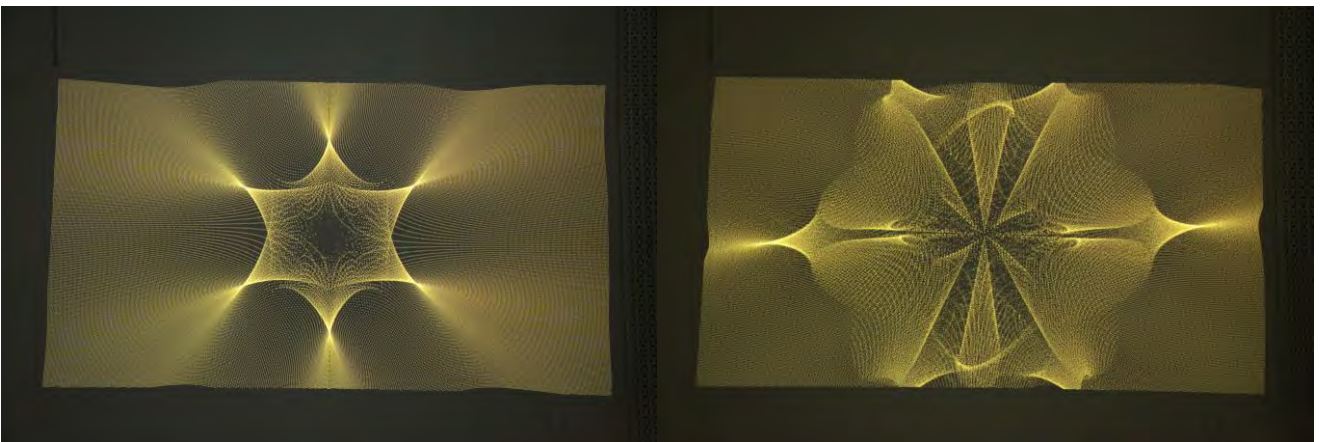
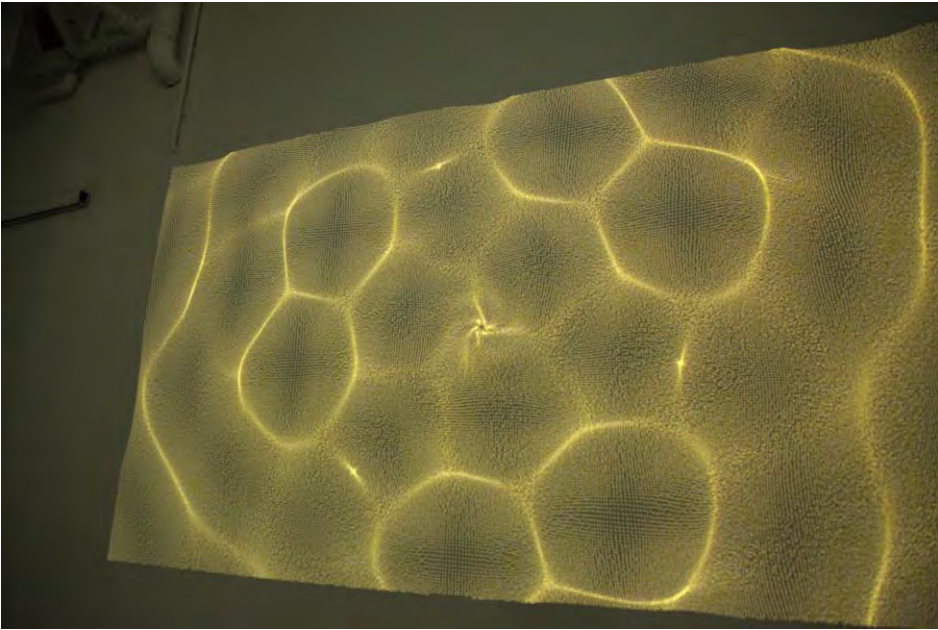
map01 is an experimental visual exploration of procedural interference between transcendental functions.



《map01》是透過以數學中的超越函數為基礎所進行的一項電腦視學藝術實驗。

A few site views of the work as a self-evolving wall projection...







The original blue version of *map01*... In its original test run, the image was blue in tone, but the artist changed the color to yellow to pay tribute to the Umbrella Movement.



Mike Wong, 2014.10, Hong Kong

Site view



REHEARSALS FOR MUTED FILMS #2

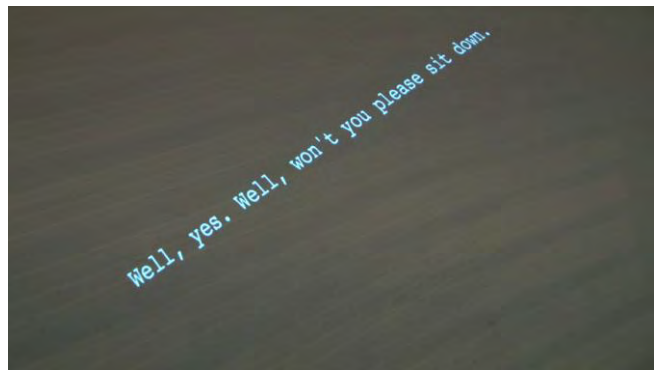
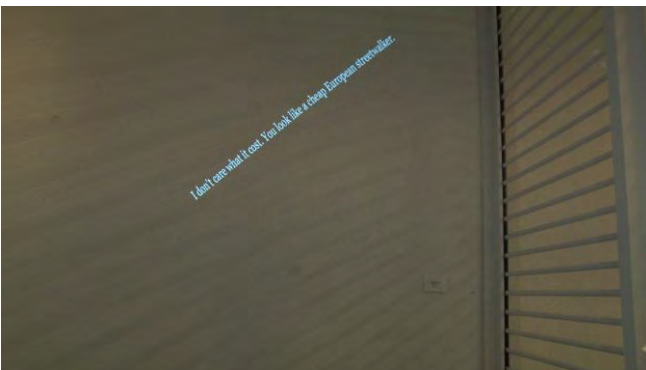
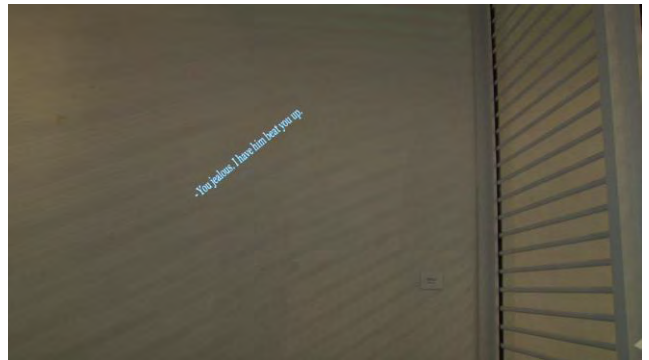
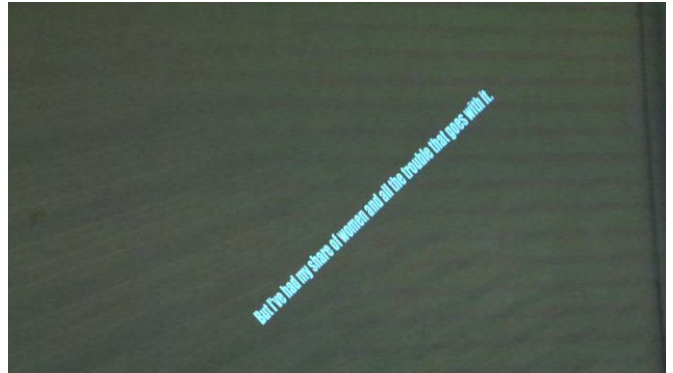
Ip Yuk-yiu


wall projection, film dialogues decontextualized / 2014



Rehearsals for muted films #2 reworks three Hollywood films with stories that were set against Hong Kong. The work for the visitor is a speechless excursions of projected text, which proposes new ways of seeing, listening and reading popular cinema while at the same time re-imagining the dialogue (or the lack of it) as an allegorical conversation about culture and identity. The three films are *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing* (1955), *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and *Enter the Dragon* (1973).

《Rehearsals for muted films #2》重構了三齣與香港有關的荷里活電影，包括《生死戀》(1955)、《蘇絲黃的世界》(1960)及《龍爭虎鬥》(1973)。作品猶如一段沈默的旅程，被投影播放著的文字開啟觀眾以全新方式去觀看、聆聽及閱讀普及的電影，同時把三部電影中的對話重新想像為有關文化與身份的寓意性的對話。



 Ip Yuk-yiu 葉旭耀, 2014.10, Hong Kong



WMC_e5 Hong Kong opening 2014.10.11



WMC_e5 seminar 2014.10.19



DATAFIED RESEARCH

19 October 2014 / 7:15pm @ Connecting Space

An evening of short position papers...

Christian Ulrik Andersen (丹麥 Denmark)

Manuel Bürger (德國 Germany)

Geoff Cox (英國 UK/丹麥 Denmark)

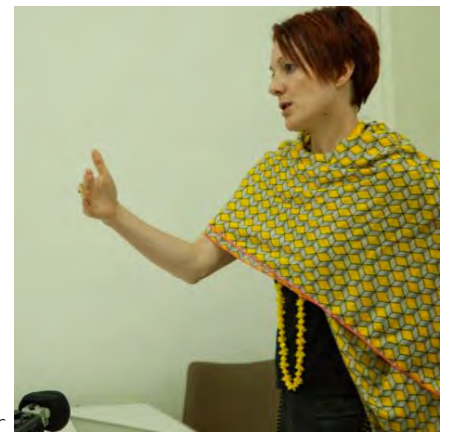
Søren Pold (丹麥 Denmark)

Daniel Howe (美國 US/香港 HK)

Damien Charrieras (法國 France/香港 HK)

Jane Prophet (英國 UK/香港 HK)

Winnie Soon (HK), liaison with WMC_e5



Jane Prophet, Moderator

////////

Datified Research relates to the artistic call of transmediale 2015 CAPTURE ALL [<http://www.transmediale.de/content/transmediale-2015-capture-all>] that “sets out to investigate and propose actions that push against the limits of today’s pervasive quantification of life, work and play.” The festival outline poses a series of questions. **“Are there still modes of being that resist the imperative of digital capitalism to Capture All, or is there no option but to play along? If so, are there artistic strategies and speculative approaches that do not play this game of quantification by the numbers? What are the blind spots and gaps of relentless quantification and gamification that can be exploited in order to carve out new ways of living?”**

DATAFIED RESEARCH aims to address this drive towards the quantification of everything – “the datified self,” “the datified city,” “datified management,” and similar notions. Although there has always been the tendency to use data in research practices, especially in scientific work, now data takes on a new force as all aspects of culture have been infiltrated by “big data.” In the arts and humanities, this is also reflected in emerging research practices of “computational humanities” and “digital humanities” where cultural data is subject to analysis, and perceived as the future of research.

////////////////////



Daniel C. Howe, presenter



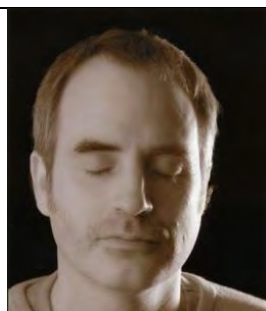
Prof. Roberto Simanowski responding...





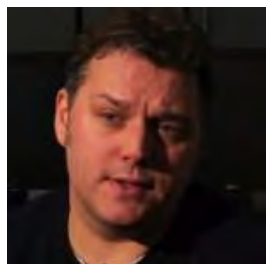
Geoff Cox and Christian Andersen on the left standing, Søren in the middle taking questions

About the artists...



John Cayley (<http://programmatology.shadoof.net>) writes digital media, particularly in the domain of poetry and poetics. Recent and ongoing projects include *imposition* with Giles Perring, *riverIsland*, and *The True Story of Ah-Q* in the WMC_e5 exhibition. Cayley is Professor of Literary Arts at Brown University.

John Cayley (<http://programmatology.shadoof.net>) 現為美國布朗大學文學教授，編寫數碼媒體，特別是有關詩學的範疇。近期正致力於與 Giles Perring 合作的項目「imposition」，還有「riverIsland」及在文字機器創作集第五輯展出的《阿 Q 正傳》。



James Coupe – “In his recent work, British-born, Seattle-based artist James Coupe examines the power and meaning of surveillance in our everyday life by working with advanced surveillance technologies, including high definition video cameras, facial recognition software, and computer algorithms derived from popular search engines and social media sites. Coupe works in new media but his artistic practice is anchored in an engagement with older media – namely, cinema, literature, and, most recently, the panorama. Situated at the intersection of the virtual, the fictional, and the real, Coupe’s work examines the ways that contemporary surveillance society simultaneously foregrounds self-observation and mutual observation, and thus mobilizes the classic scopophilic dialectic of voyeurism and exhibitionism. But, rather than subjecting surveillance to a systematic ideological critique, Coupe’s interests lie in the way surveillance provides a theme and metaphor for exploring the paradoxes of the postmodern human condition.”

James Coupe 藝術家，英國出生，現以西雅圖為創作基地。近期的作品經常探討日常生活中「監視」引出的權力和意義，尤其現今高科技監控技術的應用，包括高清攝錄機、面孔識別軟件、電腦網絡搜尋器及社交網站內的計算程式等。Coupe 專注新媒體創作，卻往往充滿著對「舊」媒體的思考，例如電影、文學，以及近期的「全景觀」。他的作品介乎虛擬、虛構、與真實之間，探討現今以監控主導的社會突顯人們對自身和彼此相互監視的形形式式，以至把討論引到「窺視癖」對「偷窺狂」的經典辯證論述。這次作品的重點，與其說是又一次對監控作出系統性的意識形態評判，不如說是 Coupe 對後現代人類的吊詭狀態的關注，試圖以監控作為核心，在題旨上以及作為隱喻的開發潛力上打開更多參照的可能。



Daniel C. Howe (<http://rednoise.org/daniel>) is an artist and critical technologist, whose work focuses on networked systems for image, sound and text, and on the social and political implications of computational technologies.

Daniel C. Howe (<http://rednoise.org/daniel>) 為電算科學博士及文學藝術碩士，是藝術家、作家、科技評論的批判學者。主要創作探索藉由網絡系統產生的圖樣、聲音及文字，及電腦科技的社會及政治涵義。



Ip Yuk-yiu is an experimental filmmaker, media artist, art educator and independent curator. His works, ranging from experimental films to live video performances and media installations, have been showcased extensively at international festivals including European Media Art Festival, New York Film Festival, the Image Festival, VideoBrasil, Transmediale, Hong Kong International Film Festival and more. He is a founder of the *art.ware* project, an independent curatorial initiative focusing on the promotion of new media art in Hong Kong. Ip has lectured extensively on film, video and media art. Currently he is Associate Professor at the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong where his recent works explore real-time and computational forms of cinema. His computational installation, *Between the threshold of good and evil: film noir no.1 (Double Indemnity)*, was presented at the WMC_e4 in 2010.

葉旭耀，實驗電影導演、媒體藝術家、藝術教師與獨立策展人。其作品曾在歐洲媒體藝術節、紐約電影節、柏林超媒體藝術節、錄像巴西、香港國際電影節及日本山形國際紀錄片節等多個國際

藝術節展出，包括實驗電影、即場錄像表演，和媒體裝置。曾客席任教於美國愛默森學院、美國麻省藝術設計學院及香港理工大學。現為香港城市大學創意媒體學院副教授。近年熱衷於研究未來電影形式的計算化和實時性。作品《黑色電影之首：『雙重賠償』》於文字機器創作集第四集（2010）首次發表。

Mike King is a computational artist who works in a visual art domain. His works rely on computation to visualize abstract ideas, subverted scientific findings and imaginary procedures. His work *Grapheme, on technostalgia, was part of WMC_e3* (2008).

Mike King 是以電腦程式創作的藝術家，主要從事視覺藝術創作。作品以編寫電腦程式展現抽象概念、顛覆性的科學數據及想像性操作。作品《*Grapheme*》於 2008 年文字機器創作集第三輯展出。



Linda Chiu-han LAI, Associate Professor in Intermedia Arts at the City University of Hong Kong's School of Creative Media (SCM), is a research-based interdisciplinary artist. After completing her Ph.D. in Cinema Studies at New York University, she has sought meaningful connective extension to other relevant artistic and theoretical endeavors. She persists in artistic creation as the **practice of theory**. A critical researcher on the **History of Everyday Life**, her works focus on historiography, visual and auto-ethnography, urbanity and popular culture. Her teaching revolves around the criticality of **micro/meta narrativity**. She has also designed, at SCM, Hong Kong's first courses in generative art & literature at the university level. She is founder of Hongkong-based new media art group, the Writing Machine Collective (2004) and has completed 5 major group exhibitions on questions of computational thinking and contemporary art. Though broadly known for her videography in the international art venues, she creates in different artistic mediums to turn art-making into criticism, history-writing, gaming and voyages of discovery. Her digital and non-digital works have been shown in key venues in many cities in Europe, Asia and the US, including the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, the Open City London Documentary Festival, LOOP Barcelona, Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin, the Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival in the Czech Republic, the Fourth State of Water (CoCA, Torun, Poland), Women Make Waves Film Festival (Taipei), International Centre (New Delhi), and the various Experimental Film/Video Festivals in Seoul (EXiS), Taipei (EXiT), Macao (EXiM), Kuala Lumpur (KLEX) and Hong Kong (HKEX). Lai considers herself a **montage artist**: to her, images are intensely rich perceptual surfaces that defy the binary division of representation and abstraction. Many of her works also deploy the notion of an archive and self-archiving, including her recent work "1906-1989-2012: Guangzhou-Hongkong-Shanghai-Anji," commissioned for the 9th Shanghai Biennale 2012 at the Power Station of Contemporary Art, which is also a piece of **experimental history** playing with childhood memory, the **use of everyday objects** and folk material, the postal history of Hong Kong and family stories. Lai seeks for **intermedia moments** and modes of connectivity, be it conjugation, modulation, combinatorial logic, permutation...

黎尚嫻，香港城市大學創意媒體學院互媒藝術副教授，同時也是以研究主導創作的跨領域藝術家，有豐富的國際參展經驗。於紐約大學電影研究系取得哲學博士之後，不斷尋究由電影延展開去的相關藝術和理論探索，一直不離不棄『理論就是行動實踐』的信念。在藝術創作和學術研究上，環繞歷史書寫、視覺和自傳式民俗志、都市研究和資料類集之間的批判性關聯，核心總離不開敘事的政治性，強調語言活動的詭辯。從女性主義的觸覺思維出發，她的作品強調『差異』的無盡性，以抒演的策略不斷的打開既定概念和操作成規。黎尚嫻的實驗性錄影、數碼或混媒的裝置曾於歐美和亞洲的多個城市展出，包括德國奧柏豪辛國際短片節，首爾實驗電影錄影節，美國俄亥俄州雅典城的國際電影錄像節、倫敦的開放城市紀錄片節、臺北女性影展、首爾國際女性影展、香港國際電影節等等。近作《1906-1989-2012》為第九屆上海雙年展（2012）的受委參展作品。個人最喜歡的創作是一本 260 頁的書，記述了她和攝影家陳超敏（英國肯特大學藝術理論與哲學系講師）八個回合的攝影和文字的跨媒對話遊戲。2004 年她創辦了香港為基地的新媒體群體「文字機器創作集」，至今已發表過五輯聯展，不斷探索電算思維與當代藝術的問題。在創意媒體學院，她任教的科目包括當代藝術與媒體考古、媒體藝術、電影史和視覺理論與實驗性錄像創作的關係、文化研究和民俗志在批判和創作上的實踐，以及書寫與創意。在香港大專界，她是首位設計和執教衍生性藝術與文學，以及從人文角度看聲音藝術的學者。



Jess Ching-wa Lau – a media and illustration artist, born in Hong Kong, 1991. Her works often contemplate the relations between animation and contemporary arts in general.

劉清華—熱愛媒體藝術及插畫。1991 年生於香港。作品往往是當代藝術與動畫之間的多重對話。

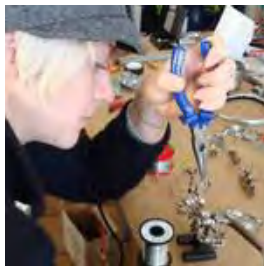
<http://cargocollective.com/jesslau/About-Jess-Lau>



Hector Rodriguez (WMC Research Director) is an experimental software artist whose work investigates the specific possibilities of information technologies to reconfigure our experience of moving images and our relation to film history. His work integrates video art with mathematics and computer science, exploring the tension between digital abstraction and cinematic representation. His work has been shown at the Saatchi Gallery (London, UK), the National Science Museum (Seoul, South Korea), the Museum Friedericianum (Kassel, Germany), Siggraph Asia (Singapore), and the WRO Media Art Biennial (Wroclaw, Poland), among other venues. He was a jury selection of the Japan Media Art Award. His digital experimental animation *Res Extensa* won him the Best Digital Work Award in the Hong Kong Art Biennale 2003. He received Hong Kong Contemporary Art Award's Achievement Award 2012 with his computational installation system *Gestus*. His theoretical writings have appeared in *Screen*, *Cinema Journal*, *Game Studies* and various anthologies. He currently teaches computer arts, film theory, and art/science at the School of Creative Media of the City University of Hong Kong. His work *Gestus-Beta* was premiered at WMC_e4 (2010). He also conducted a 12-hour workshop series on interactive fiction using Inform 7 at WMC_e2, 2007, among other educational events at the various WMC exhibitions.

羅海德，以香港為創作和學術基地的數位藝術家和理論家。研究方面，特別專注訊息科技如何重塑我們的活動影像經驗，以至我們對電影歷史的認知。創作方面，有志於錄像藝術、數學和電算科學的結合，去探索數碼抽象性與電影再現兩者之間的張力。他設計的遊戲系統

《CoPerspective》於 2006 年度維也納 Eurographics 會議 Games Meets Graphics 比賽中入選決賽。他所撰寫關於電影理論、數碼藝術和遊戲研究的文章曾於《Screen》、《Cinema Journal》及《GameStudies》中刊載。羅海德參與過多個大型藝術與科技會議，亦曾擔任香港微波國際新媒體藝術節藝術總監（2005, 2006）。他現為香港城市大學創意媒體學院副教授，主理當代視覺藝術、遊戲研究、電影理論、電腦程式設計和批判理論等學科；剛開創了亞洲區首個新媒體文理學士課程，於 2012 年 9 月開課，為該課程的主任。他的作品《Res Extensa》獲得 2003 年度「香港藝術雙年展」最佳數碼作品獎項。作品《GESTUS 姿勢》令他成為香港當代藝術獎 2012 優秀藝術家獎得主。《姿勢 – Beta 版》於文字機器創作集第四集（2010）首次發表。



Audrey Samson is an artist and researcher currently based in Hong Kong. She holds a BFA Major in Design Art from Concordia University (Canada), an M.A. in Media Design from the Piet Zwart Institute (The Netherlands), and is currently a PhD researcher at the City University of Hong Kong. She has taught at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and the Willem de Kooning Academy in The Netherlands, and set up and managed the Digital Art Lab at the Centrum voor Kunst en Cultuur. She co-founded Roger10-4 together with Sabrina Basten, a duo of women that make/break discarded electronics to build wearable electromagnetic field 'sniffers'. She is also member of genderchangers; a collective of women which promote the exchange of technical skills between women; and a member of Aether9, a collective which explores the dramaturgical possibilities of remote real-time storytelling. She routinely gives workshops on subjects such as wearables, FLOSS, and networked performance.

Audrey Samson 藝術家、研究員，現居香港。於加拿大康克迪亞大學取得藝術學士，專修設計藝術，又於荷蘭的 Piet Zwart Institute 取得媒體設計碩士。現為香港城市大學新媒體學博士候選人。曾於荷蘭 Gerrit Rietveld 學院及 Willem de Kooning 學院任教。創立及管理 Centrum voor Kunst en Cultuur 內的數碼藝術實驗室。又與 Sabrina Basten 共同創立「Roger10-4」二人組，生產電子廢物，也分解被扔掉的電子物品以製作可穿戴的含電磁場的「嗅探器」。Samson 亦是「genderchangers」和「Aether9」成員之一。前者是一個推動女性之間交換技術的組織，後者則探討遙距即時式說故事的戲劇理論可能。她亦定期舉辦有關可穿戴的電子衣裝、「FLOSS」及網絡表演的工作坊。



Winnie Soon is an artist-researcher born in Hong Kong and currently based in Denmark. Her artistic practice ranges from interactive & network media, installation to digital print. In 2012, she received Silver Award in the 17th ifva in HK (Interactive Media Category). Artworks have been exhibited internationally including Pulse Art and Technology Festival (USA), FutureEverything Art Exhibition (UK), Mobile & DMB Festival (Korea), Stuttgarter Filmwinter Festival for expanded media (Germany), International Digital Art Festival (Bulgaria), PhotoPark (China), Microwave International Media Arts Festival (HK), amongst others. In addition, she is a co-founder of a UK and HK based non-profit art organization InNoPO where she has curated and devised art projects.

As an artist-researcher, Winnie's research interest lies in: Practice-based Research, Collaborative Art practice, Critical Code Studies, Media (art) Theory, Internet Culture and Network Art, Cultural and Web data politics. Her PhD project is provisionally entitled *Beyond Data Representation: Rethinking Liveness in Software Art*. It is about the aesthetics of computational processes in the context of software art, in particular artworks that are data-driven and software based.

As an educator, Winnie has lectured widely in China, Taiwan, United Kingdom, Denmark and Hong Kong. She holds a MA in Media Cultures (City University of Hong Kong) and a MSc in Digital Art & Technology (University of Plymouth, UK) both with Distinction. She obtained scholarship and sponsorship from various organizations such as University of Plymouth,

University of Hull, Aarhus University, Lingnan University, Groundworks and Pacific Century CyberWorks.

She worked in creative media industries during 1998-2008 with solid experience in media & technology management. Winnie had managed various entertainment & lifestyle commercial projects in listed companies: PCCW, China Mobile, SINA and Edenred.

She is currently a PhD fellow at Participatory IT research centre (Department of Aesthetics and Communication, Aarhus University), and visiting researcher at School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong, and adjunct Professor in Interactive design at Savannah College of Art and Design (HK).

Winnie Soon's collaborative work with Helen Pritchard, *jsut code*, was part of the WMC_e4 (2010).

www.siusoon.com

孫詠怡生於香港並從事研究及藝術工作。她的作品探討電腦程式與網絡文化之間的關係，並多以互動媒體、網絡媒體、裝置藝術及數碼印刷呈現作品。孫氏曾在不同的藝術館、藝術活動、大學及研討會裡演講及展出其作品，包括 V&A Museum, Pulse Art and Technology Festival, FutureEverything Art exhibition, 微波國際新媒體藝術節, 國立臺北藝術大學及香港浸會大學等。孫氏現為丹麥奧胡斯大學(美學及傳播系)之博士研究生，並於城市大學創意媒體學院從事客席研究工作。2010 年曾與 Helen Pritchard 於文字機器創作集第四輯合作發表<jsut code>。更多資料:

www.siusoon.com



Zoie So is currently a senior lecturer in the Visual Studies Department of Lingnan University.

She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Creative Media from the City University of Hong Kong in 2004 and then went on, with the support of several scholarships and art grants, to complete her Master of Fine Arts degree in Studio Arts: Open Media at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, in 2008. Her works have been exhibited in Hong Kong, Montreal, Milan, Ptuj and Geneva. Her public work *Photosynthesis in Motion* was commissioned by the Tamar Public Art Project, while *Mediated Landscape* was also selected for the Hong Kong Contemporary Art Awards 2012. In WMC_e4 (2010), Zoie So exhibited an interactive sculpture, *Mediated Facial*.

蘇慧怡現為香港嶺南大學視覺研究系高級講師，任教數碼影像及電子藝術課程。蘇氏 2004 年畢業於香港城市大學創意媒體學院，2008 年於加拿大蒙特利爾康克迪亞大學獲得藝術創作碩士，期間她曾獲多項獎學金及藝術資助。其作品曾於香港、蒙特利爾、米蘭普圖伊及日內瓦多地展出。公眾藝術作品《葉一片·光合動態》於 2012 年添馬艦公眾藝術計劃中獲委約，而作品《顯微山水》更入選香港當代藝術獎 2012。互動雕塑《第二表情》曾於文字機器創作集第四集（2010）發表。



Justin Wong, comic writer and media artist, received his BA (Fine Arts) in Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1996 and his MA (Interactive Digital Media) in Ravensbourne College of Design and Community in London. After his graduation, he participated in the *Ars Electronica* award-winning web 2.0 project, *Last.fm* in London. Upon his return to Hong Kong in 2004, he taught at the School of Creative Media, the City University of Hong Kong, then as Art Director in an interactive media design company. At the same time, he began to contribute regularly to local newspapers as comic writer and illustrator. In 2007, he started his political comic column *Gei Gei Gaak Gaak* in *Ming Pao Daily*. His works include comics, graphic design, animation and interactive art. He is the Artistic Director of new media art group, the Writing Machine Collective, and lecturer at the Academy of Visual Arts at Hong Kong Baptist University. For the Writing Machine Collective, Wong has contributed *Typing Machine (Junk Mail Factory)* (WMC_e2, 2007), *Txt-Me-1st* (with Hamlet Lin and Eva Schindling (WMC_e3 at Dialogue, 2008), and computational animation, *City Forum* (WMC_e4, 2010).

黃照達，漫畫家及媒體藝術家。1996 年畢業於香港中文大學藝術系，2002 年於倫敦 Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication 修畢互動數碼媒體碩士課程，曾參與創作於 2002 年奧地利 *Ars Electronica* 電子藝術節獲獎的 web 2.0 網站 *Last.fm*。2004 年回港後於香港城市大學創意媒體學院出任導師。及後擔任本地互動媒體設計公司美術總監一職。期間開始替報章創作漫畫及插圖，並於 2007 開始於《明報》連載其漫畫專欄《噉噉格格》，題材以時事政治為主。除漫畫外，黃氏同時亦參與不同類形之創作，包括設計、動畫、互動媒體藝術等。現為香港新媒體群體「文字機器創作集」藝術總監及浸會大學視覺藝術學院講師。曾於文字機器創作集發表過的作品包括，《*Typing Machine (Junk Mail Factory)*》(第二輯，2007)，*Txt-me-1st* (第三輯，2008，林耀邦、Eva Schindling 協作) 及數碼併貼動畫《城市論壇》(第四輯，2010)。

About YoHa / Graham Harwood and Matsuko Yokokoji have lived and worked together since 1994. YoHa's graphic vision and technical tinkering has powered several celebrated collaborations, including Harwood and Yokokoji's co founding of the artists group Mongrel (in 1996-2007), which specializes in digital media, and the Mediashed a free-media lab in Southend-on-sea (2005-2008). In 2008 they joined long-time collaborator Richard Wright to

produce *Tantalum Memorial*, which won the Transmediale first prize (2009), was then featured at the ZeroOne Biennial (San Jose, USA), Manifesta07 (Bolzano, Italy), the Science Museum London, Ars Electronica, Plugin (Switzerland), and Laboral (Spain)



Graham Harwood and Matsuko Yokokoji 自 1994 年起互為生活及工作夥伴。「YoHa」對圖像的灼見和對技術的玩弄撮成了多個知名的合作計劃。他們共同創立了以數碼媒體創作主導的藝術家組織「Mongrel」(1996-2007)；又於英國濱海紹森德設立了自由媒體實驗室「Mediashed」(2005-2008)。2008 年，與長期合作伙伴 Richard Wright 共同製作了「Tantalum Memorial」，並獲 Transmediale 2009 第一名，其後於美國聖荷西的 ZeroOne 藝術雙年展、意大利波紮諾的「Manifesta 07」、倫敦科學博物館、奧地利國際電子藝術「Ars Electronica」、瑞士的「Plugin」及西班牙的「Laboral」展出。

What is The Writing Machine Collective (WMC)?

The WMC is a HK-based media art collective with a research-based orientation and theoretically engaged in new media issues. The following keywords demonstrate some of our key concerns:

**Writing systems as the creation of codes and symbols, writing as performance versus writing as inscription*

**User interface, compression, dictionary, data structure, information theory, codification...*

**Data visualization as forms of reading and writing*

**Computing as an artistic medium, algorithm as a thought process, machine as space, as process, and as an organism*

**Cyber-text over hyper-text, poetry over narrative, syntax over semantics*

The Writing Machine Collective (WMC), since its inception, has published four exhibitions (2004, 2007, 2008 and 2011) in Hong Kong. The first edition, WMC_e1 (2004), was an attempt to solicit attention for how coding can be the conjuncture of literature, machine and visual creation. A large part of the research process was about clarifying concepts for our intellectual curiosity, and at the same time looking for handy solutions for technical realization from existing software packages.

WMC_e2 (2007) explored writing as multiple sites of cultural engagement. The idea of writing was explored via diversity in user-interfaces – writing as a generative process, a performance, a bodily event, a form of artistic intervention and so on. WMC_e3 (2008), part of Digitalogue, a historical retrospective of media art in Hong Kong curated by Ellen Pau on behalf of the HK Museum of Art, focused on writing as a digital art. Although WMC_e3 only contributed five works to Digitalogue, the showcase upheld the centrality of codes and code-writing in new media, and subsequently led us to consider once again the idea of art beyond the object of

aesthetic judgment. In this sense, none of the completed works physically displayed could be considered final, but they were tentative display objects articulating only some of the many tangential relations a display may bear to the coding process.

In 2011, WMC_e4 maintained programming literacy as a core mission, and code-writing at the core of creative activities. Our previous exhibitions gained for us some basic experience in dialoguing with the contemporary art community and reviewing questions of community building. WMC_e4's specific problematic was to find adequate forms to present the process-oriented character of computational, code-base creative works to the ordinary visitors. In the words of our Research Director Hector Rodriguez's words, we found it essential to "open up the black box" of the creative processes. To examine digitality and computational thinking philosophically in non-digital works with an interdisciplinary vision was also part of our agenda. WMC_e4 had 8 invited works and 4 works solicited from an open call. In this edition, as an experiment to see how computational thinking could be expressed in more familiar art forms, a video program was curated through an open call.

WMC favours flexible organization. We choose to focus on gathering local artists while creating conversations with guest artists from overseas. While half of the artists in the current WMC_e4 had participated in previous exhibitions, our general practice is to freely invite interested artists and programmers to present their concept in a work. Whereas we seek to explore the positive side of 'circle of acquaintances' in networking, our 'participation-by-invitation' model has each time been complemented by open call for works in order to keep our community open. Lectures, workshops and student laboratories are always part of our program as strategic arms to develop quality audience and committed artist-researchers for the future.

WMC_e5, the latest edition, took place in October 2014.

(Linda C.H. LAI, Artistic Director, 2014)

的自主與技術上的成熟程度。

「文字機器創作集」創作群體

「文字機器創作集」(WMC)是一個立足香港的媒體藝術集合，值著研究為本的方位和理論介入而進行各種各樣的新媒體創作。「文字機器創作集」所關注的主要問題可以透過以下的關鍵片語表達：

- *編碼和象徵符號構成的「書寫」系統；「書寫」作為一種扮演狀態 Vs 「書寫」作為銘刻、印記的活動
- *用者的介面；（資料的）壓縮；字典；資料的結構；訊息論；編碼…
- *數據的呈現作為新媒體領域的「書寫」和「閱讀」的新模式
- *電算機作為一種創作的媒體；規則系統演算法作為一種思路的過程；機器的空間面向；機器作為過程；有機性的機械
- *電動制文本 Vs 超文本；詩 Vs 敘事；造句 Vs 語意構成

從2004年成立至今，「文字機器創作集」共出版過四期的作品展。第一集（WMC_e1）於2004年舉行，試圖在本地媒體藝術圈引起一些注意和討論，示範電腦編碼作為創作平臺如何與文學、機器、及影像交匯衝擊。今天回顧當日，很大部分的研究過程是為了釐清一些觀念來滿足知識上的好奇，同時又因創作想像上的需要，而從坊間現成的軟件工具中尋找快速的技術上的解決方案。

2007年的《文字機器創作集第二輯》（WMC_e2）專注於探討「書寫」作為文化生活領域上的不同實踐場所，以至「書寫」在新媒體的技術範圍內的延伸性。從觀念的實驗上，不同的「書寫」活動可以理解為層出不窮的用者介面——「書寫」可以是個此時此地、現在式的衍生過程、可以是一種表演，一項以軀體參與數據的創作的活動等等。而2008年的第三輯

（WMC_e3）是一共五件的作品群，於香港藝術館的《數碼演義》（由鮑海倫總策展）展覽中以「文字機器創作集」為群體單位展出。五件作品目標一致地以探討「書寫」作為數碼藝術的可能性。對於新媒體的定義和譜系的問題，這五件作品標誌著重要的再起步——程式編碼與編碼設計是新媒體的核心，由此推下去，就成為重新檢視「甚麼是藝術品」這老問題，因為傳統的藝術品作為審美對象的定位已失效。用另一種方法來說，所有於場中出現的「展品」都不是創作的「終極」，而是以電腦編碼為核心的漫長和多變的衍生過程中的一個中途站、一個中途的實驗展示。在藝術家的編排上，也刻意地強調他們在程式編碼上

2011年的《文字機器創作集第四輯》（WMC_e4），累積了六年的經驗，在方向上顯然地較之前清晰。繼續推廣程式編碼的素養固然是首要的任務，同時也明白到尋找與當代藝術群體對話的接合點的重要性，而在建立藝術群體上又有那些地方須要注意。

WMC_e4以「數碼化與計算思維」（computational thinking）為主題，其特定課題之一是關乎美學上的。如何為「過程」為本——即過程與產品同等重要，或過程比產品更重要，並以編碼為基礎——的新媒體藝術尋找合理的表達或展出形式？同時，我們提出了計算思維的出現先於數碼藝術的普及，在二十世紀的藝術實驗中早有伏線和先例。為此，我們透過公開徵稿而策展了兩個錄像放映節目，以「活動影像作為書寫機器」為題，播放十來個錄像作品。這算是一次實驗，透過較為人熟悉的錄像媒體去表達計算思維以及可引中的藝術想像活動。

在「文字機器創作集」未來的探索議程上其中一項最重要的是：如何以跨界的視野去從非數碼、非電子的作品中探討數碼化與計算思維哲學。如創作集的研究總監羅海德所說，「如何打開黑箱作業」的多向創作過程，仍須努力。

「文字機器創作集」傾向維持靈活的組織方針，並選擇專注於招聚本地的藝術家。過往每一輯的《文字機器創作集》都依據現有的理論著作進行深入討論，並由藝術家們自由作出對策，將它們化為不同的創作實驗課題。每一屆的《文字機器創作集》，約有半數的藝術家都曾參與過去的展出。一如既往地我們歡迎有興趣的藝術家和程式員加入，從而透過作品展示他們的概念。在歷屆的展覽中，我們除了以「邀請參展」的方式運作，亦同時以公開募集作品的方法來保持我們群體的開放性。過去幾輯的展覽，我們都從公開募集中選出了有意思的作品，保持群體的開放性。我們也謹守藝術教育的堅持，總節目除了展出外也包括了講座、工作坊和學生實驗坊。

《文字機器創作集》第五集於2014年10月發表。

（黎肖嫻 / 「文字機器創作集」藝術總監, 2014）

文字機器創作集 | THE WRITING MACHINE COLLECTIVE

以香港為創作基地的新媒體藝術創作及研究群體 a Hong Kong-based new media art group

WMC_e5: 2014.10.09-22, Connecting Space-HK: "Tracing Data: What You Read is Not What We Write"

WMC_e4: 2010.01.15-30, Youth Square: "Computational Thinking in Existing Art Forms"

WMC_e3: 2008.05.15-07.30, Hong Kong Museum of Art (part of Digit@logue: with 5 participating works)

WMC_e2: 2007.01.12-02.08, Videotage, 1a Space (Cattle Depot): "Writing & Machine as Sites"
**include workshop series: "Inform 7" (text-based interactive story-telling) + SCRATCH (for children)

WMC_e1: 2004.07.17-08.07, 1a Space (Cattle Depot)

Participating artists in WMC_e5

James Coupe / YoHa (Graham Harwood and Matsuko Yokooji) / Daniel C. Howe & John Cayley / Ip Yuk-yiu 葉旭耀 / Mike King / Linda Lai 黎肖嫻 / Jess Lau 劉清華 / Hector Rodriguez 羅海德 / Audrey Samson / Zoie So 蘇慧怡 / Winnie Soon 孫詠怡 / Justin Wong 黃照達 / Wong Chun-hoi 王鎮海 (artist-documenter)

WMC_e5 execution team - Project Manager: LEI Yuen Hung 李宛虹, Orlean LAI 黎蘊賢 / **Program Director:** Hector RODRIGUEZ / **Art Director:** Justine WONG / **Technical Director:** William WONG / **Project Director/Editor:** Linda LAI / **Artist-Documenter:** WONG Chun-hoi 王鎮海

ADC (Hong Kong Arts Development Council) project grant-media art recipients: Linda C.H. Lai, Hector Rodriguez, Justin C.T. Wong

WMC_e5 was supported by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council
Venue support by the International Graduate School of the Arts Limited

Tracing Data: What You Reading is Not What You Write: Proceedings

Edited by Linda C.H. Lai / Funded by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council

ISBN 978-988-14525-9-7

115 pages, published 22 June 2015 (on-line/pdf version)

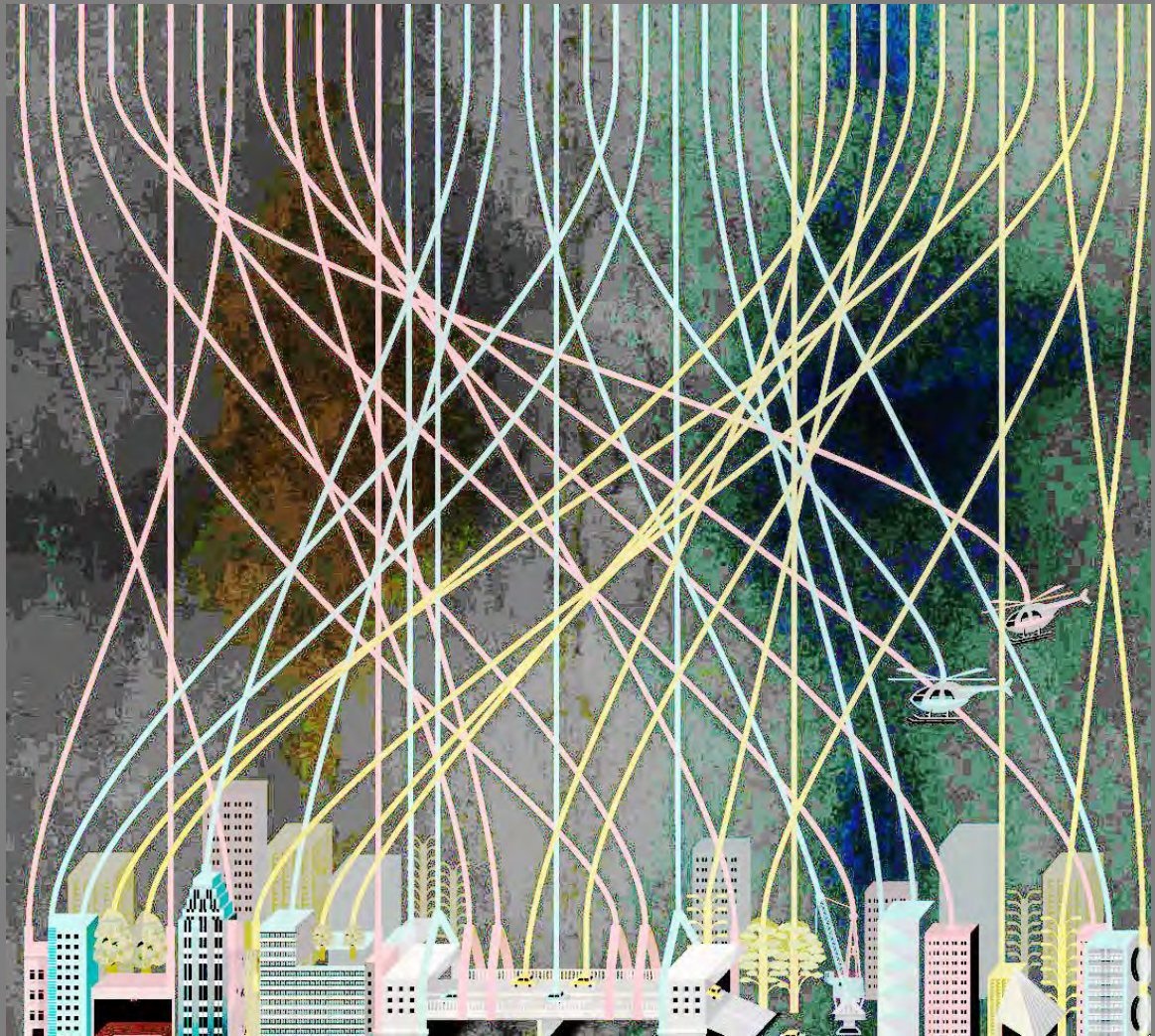
***All sketches are made by Wong Chun-hoi. Photographs: courtesy of Justin Wong, Wong Chun-hoi and Linda Lai.

***Special acknowledgement to Hector Rodriguez for part copy-editing

***Cover design: Cake For Tiger

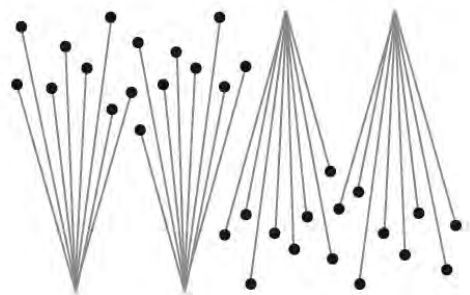
WMC (2004-)

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR (Project Development & WMC founder): Linda C.H. LAI / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Justin C.T. WONG / DIRECTOR FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION: Hector RODRIGUEZ



2014 HK

W R I T I N G
M A C H I N E
C O L L E C T I V E
文字機器創作集



ISBN 978-988-14525-9-7
June 2015 Hong Kong