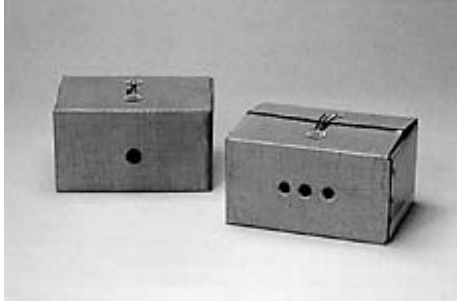


Seeing is Believing **Kazuhiko Hachiya**



Seeing Is Believing is an exhibit consisting of several elements. Here I would like to explain what motivated me to create each of these different works and projects.

Mega Diary – Global Diary Project on the Net

One day, I had a dream. I was in a very large library. It was a somewhat peculiar library, because its entire collection consisted of the diaries of all those people who had ever lived. I randomly read through these records of the lives of all mankind. They were written by various types of people of all ages and from all countries, some of them still living and others dead. I read, and I was both moved and impressed. I felt sympathy for the authors, and I laughed and I cried. Two weeks later, I started the Mega Diary project, conceived as one hundred people keeping diaries for 100 days and exchanging them with one another on the PC communications net. The diaries would be collected and shown each day through Nifty Serve and the Internet, as well as being broadcast nationwide once a week on FM "visible information radio". In fact, Mega Diary has spurred me to think about how diverse the everyday lives of others are, and how unaware we typically are of this fact, etc. The project has also made me realize that monologue is often a better means of communication than dialogue.

Empty Entity - The Invisible Electric Light Display

Though we usually tend to forget it, visibility and invisibility are deeply connected with how we humans are structured physically. The range of visible rays differs from species to species. Human eyes can pick up 400 nm [nanometer] to 800 nm electromagnetic waves. Of course, light also exists outside the boundaries of what is visible.

In this piece, each display unit is made up of 8 letters, with 16 x 16 [256] light-emitting diodes [LED] for each letter, and a total of 4 units in the room. Since 15 of 16 of the LEDs are infrared ones, the naked eye sees only flickering lights, produced by the small number of LEDs emitting visible rays. With special eyewear on, however, the viewer can see letters flowing across the units. In this exhibition, the diaries which many people have contributed to Mega Diary are displayed. These diaries could be considered as one of the best examples of something which is visible to us, but at the same time is not visible, and is extremely precious nonetheless.

The Sheep: The Tool to See the Invisible

In Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, there is a scene in which the prince begs "me" to draw a picture of a sheep. "I" draw many pictures, but none of them please him. Finally "I" draw a

picture of a box, and say, "This is his box. The sheep you asked for is inside!" Then, for the first time, the prince likes "my" picture. In this "box," which serves as eyewear for the viewer, what is inside, is not a tiny sheep, but a monochrome observation camera and a liquid crystal TV monitor. When you peep through the box, you will surely see a little bit of the invisible. After that, it's a matter of imagination: even if you no longer have the box, or even if the Mega Diary project runs to completion, you should still be able to use your imagination to think of those people with whom you have become acquainted. After all, you are no longer a stranger to them, now that you have read their diaries.

In my opinion, though, what one can see constitutes only a fraction of the truth. This is how I felt during the Mega Diary project. When I read someone's diary for a long while, I begin to experience emotions toward the author and feel closer to that person, even though I do not know him or her. My "connectedness" or relationship with the person is one of a sort of respect and "belief."