

..... SEVEN MILE BOOTS. SIEBEN MEILEN STIEFEL.
SEITSEMÄN MAILIN SAAPPAAT

**On foot in the medium of possibilities;
walking on line**

Seven-mile-boots, the magical footwear known from folk tales as seven league boots, enable their wearer to travel seven miles with one step. With little effort one can cross whole countries, be present wherever it seems suitable and become a cosmopolitan flaneur with the world as a street.

Chatting in the net has become a phenomenon during the past decade. There is endless communication among the online communities in the chat rooms. Walking and wearing shoes is an everyday exercise for humans. The seven-mile-boots piece is built up upon feet and shoes as an interface for moving in this text-based non-space of the chat rooms. The visible/physical part of the piece consists of a pair of boots which are available for use. They have two different modes—walking through the net, and standing, listening to / observing the chat-activity.

Observer / Flaneur / Voyeur

Technology enables us to observe real people communicating in real time from several remote places simultaneously. The user/observer is not in control, but is dependent on the existent situation and appears in it as a passive observer. *S/he acts like a flaneur*, who is satisfied in the midst of the crowd and waits for the next sensation to appear.¹



The user wearing the seven-mile-boots becomes a kind of a super-voyeur, able to search in several places and observe various situations simultaneously in the net. When the user is wearing these and standing still s/he can listen in several chat rooms simultaneously. S/he can observe life in the net and listen to the ongoing conversations between the people in chat rooms.

Open process ■■■■■■■■■■

The artistic focus of the piece is in the construction of an open structure filled by real people in real time, real life. It is a possibility space, pushing the users forward in search of more. This deficit creates the desire for substance, a desire to consume and to experience. The piece seduces on one hand with knowing and on the other hand with not yet knowing, What will happen now? What will be the next response?

Technical details ■■■■■■■■■■

After the users puts on the boots they start looking for active chat channels. When the users walk around they can locate a chat activity through audio. They will hear themselves passing through a group of chatters or can decide to stop for closer observation. The boots log into the chat rooms automatically under the name of "sevenmileboots." The channels are selected according to their activity and topic. Whenever they are walking, the boots are looking for a new selection of channels from the net. The boots contain all the necessary technology in them: a computer with wireless network, microprocessor, sensors, amplifiers and loudspeakers. The boots are ready to function in any location with an open wireless network.

<http://randomseed.org/sevenmileboots/>



- 1 Flaneur: In essays written in the 1930s Benjamin was led to examine the work of Baudelaire who had earlier popularized the concept of the Flaneur, drawing attention to this figure who takes an almost voyeuristic pleasure in detachedly watching the doings of fellow city-dwellers.

http://www.man.ac.uk/sociologyonline/Vccc/1_2_Benjamin_Flanerie/flanerie3.htm

<http://www.othervoices.org/gpeaker/Flaneur.html>

<http://www.modcult.brown.edu/Courses/MC90-01/student/ctaylor/lab3.html>

<http://www.cyberartsweb.org/cpace/politics/wodtke/flaneur.html>

Datadandy

<http://mitpress2.mit.edu/e-journals/Leonardo/isast/articles/datadandy3.html>



Zu Fuß im Medium der Möglichkeiten – ein Online-Spaziergang ■■■■■■■■■■

Mit Siebenmeilenstiefeln, dem magischen Schuhwerk, das man aus Märchenerzählungen kennt, kann deren Träger sieben Meilen mit einem Schritt zurück legen. Gleich einem kosmopolitischen Flaneur kann man ganz leicht Länder durchqueren und überall dort auftauchen, wo man möchte – unterwegs auf den Straßen der Welt.

Während der letzten zehn Jahre hat sich der Internet-Chat zu einem Phänomen entwickelt. Online-Communities sorgen für unbegrenzte Kommunikation. Spazieren gehen und das Tragen von Schuhen ist für uns Menschen alltäglich geworden. In diesem Projekt werden Schuhe und Füße als Schnittstelle eingesetzt, um sich in diesen textbasierten nicht-räumlichen Chatrooms zu bewegen.