

■■■■■■■■■ **Fore—Interactive Golf**

Fore! With this warning shout from the world of golf, the Stadtwerkstatt invites festivalgoers to a round of interactive golf in the area between the Ars Electronica Center and the Stadtwerkstatt. Fore! A shout of warning about the state of the planet that, in the hands of global players, is mutating into an egoshooter. Fore! A shout of warning about self-destruction and a playful call to undertake self-reflection. Fore!

In the tradition of the Stadtwerkstatt's "Kunst+Krawall" [art and tumult] label, we're fond of doing artistic work with available systems. A frequently utilized framework is game-playing per se. The game is modified by various interventions in the course of play or in the object of the game, reinterpreted, and thereby endowed with new content. In going about this, the point is not to question the game but rather, by means of this reevaluation, to utilize it as an artistic vehicle.

On one hand, the sociability and the competition inherent in the game suggest themselves as potential motivations of human behavior; on the other hand, there are the statements transported by the playing of the game that, as a result of the manipulation of the mode of play, call for substantive reevaluation. Through the activities of the players, the installation becomes the designer of the visual and acoustic image of the event. The work takes shape during the course of its performance.

Examples from the past include *AutomatenTV*, in which slot machines were used as interactive art machines and image generators (Ars Electronica 1989), *Glasfieber*, a bowling tournament in the slums of Linz, in which keglers rolled steel balls at glass bottles to win a basic monthly income (1999 Festival of the Regions) and *Meatspace—virtual reality job agency*, where avatars sought real jobs online (Ars Electronica 2001).

In *Fore*, the game of golf provides the basic form for an installation in public space, and a screen is the interface between the real world and the virtual one. The golfers play on the screen—as with golf simulators, the initial speed of the ball and its flight path are measured in order to deliver the basic data for the ball's further flight in virtual space. The centuries-old history of golf is inseparable from artificial course layouts, so that this step into the virtual world is a consistent one. The round is played in simple 3-D spaces with a wide variety of surfaces that are formally oriented on the aesthetics of comics.

To radicalize the social competence of the Me, Incorporateds of the modern world, the decisive innovation in our game is that we make the player into his own target. Using a bluebox system, the respective player is keyed in real time into the virtual world. The player is then confronted by his mirror image, which he can position in the virtual landscape through simple hand motions. Through this doubling process, he is not only the one driving the ball—and thus a quasi-joystick—but also the target. He hits the real ball at his virtual alter ego, and is thus an egoshooter in the truest sense of the word. To score points, the player draws a bead on himself. With the prospect of profits, mankind shoots itself right off the planet.

Bill Gates does it. George Bush does it. We're doing it too.

Our egoshooter as model of Me, Inc. reflects the capitalist self-destruction mechanisms of the modern world. How does the player react when he intentionally and ruthlessly attacks himself? The artificiality of the world confronts the reality of the protagonists. Psychia-

try cannot make the discrepancy go away. In this striving towards illusionary values, mankind's proclivity towards self-injury seems unanimous and boundless.

During the day, the driving area serves as a practice range. Professional golfers will be provided as coaches for festivalgoers to get them ready for the evening tournaments. Practice shooting at yourself. Get trained for the future.

Translated from German by Mel Greenwald

Fore: Term used in the game of golf; the universally understood warning that a golfer must shout whenever a struck ball could possibly endanger anyone else on the course.

Egoshooter: Designation for video games in which the depiction of the virtual world of play is from the player's point of view. This gives the player the illusion of actually being a part of the action in the game. The content of the game generally calls for quick reaction in gunning down virtual opponents.

A production of Stadtwerkstatt

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Stadtwerkstatt

Fore – Interaktives Golf

Fore! Mit diesem Warnruf aus der Golfwelt lädt die Stadtwerkstatt zum interaktiven Golfspiel im Geviert zwischen Ars Electronica Center und Stadtwerkstatt. Fore! Ein Warnruf zur Lage des Planeten, der in der Hand der Global Players zum egoshooter mutiert. Fore! Ein Warnruf vor der Selbstzerstörung und die spielerische Aufforderung zur Selbstreflexion. Fore!

In der Tradition des Stadtwerkstatt-Labels „Kunst+Krawall“ wird in der künstlerischen Arbeit gerne mit vorhandenen Systemen gespielt. Ein oft verwendetes Rahmenwerk ist das Spiel an sich. Dieses wird durch verschiedene Eingriffe in den Spielablauf oder in die Zielsetzung verändert und umgedeutet und dadurch mit neuen Inhalten aufgeladen. Dabei geht es nicht darum, das Spiel zu hinterfragen, sondern es durch Neubewertung als künstlerisches Vehikel zu verwenden.

Auf der einen Seite stehen die Geselligkeit und der Wettbewerb des Spiels als mögliche Motivationen für menschliches Verhalten, auf der anderen Seite steht eine durch die Manipulation des Spielmodus inhaltlich neu zu bewertende Aussage, die im Spiel transportiert wird. Durch die Aktivität der Spieler wird die Installation zum Bild- und Tongestalter des Ereignisses. Das Werk entsteht im Zuge seiner Aufführung.

Beispiele aus der Vergangenheit sind das *AutomatenTV*, bei dem Spielautomaten als interaktive Kunstmaschinen und Bildgeneratoren eingesetzt wurden (Ars Electronica 1989), *Glasfieber*, ein Kegelturnier in den Glasscherbenvierteln von Linz, bei dem mit Stahlkugeln auf Glasflaschen um ein monatliches Grundeinkommen geschossen wurde (Festival der Regionen 1999) oder *Meatspace – virtual reality job agency*, wo Avatare im Netz nach realen Jobs unterwegs waren (Ars Electronica 2001).

Bei *Fore* wird nun das Golfspiel als Grundform für eine Installation im öffentlichen Raum genutzt.