

## PHANTASMA I + II

### Basis

*Phantasma* is a Web project whose quality lies in sensorially staging the creation of art and knowledge. The primary emphasis in this work is on the philosophical and Web-dramaturgical confrontation with informational constructs and levels of perception. In it, a variety of different navigational models, spatially pervasive overall concepts and synchronous sequences of events make possible an innovative form of immersion into a world of all-encompassing audiovisual events at [www.zeitgenossen.com](http://www.zeitgenossen.com). Blocks of text and tonal spaces are interwoven with one another and generate possibilities, some of which differ in how they are taken advantage of. In *Phantasma*, a concrete ruin becomes a spatial metaphor for transience. It engenders the overall visual environment and provides a spatial setting for four realms that differ with respect to form and content, and that can be explored in a wide variety of individual spaces.

### Vocal Poesis

Two environments are primarily arrayed with voices in vocal rhythm. Both are set up as trilingual—in addition to German and English, Greek can be used in one (I) and Arabic in the other (II). The synchronous programming makes it possible to influence each individual word both with respect to how long it takes for it to be pronounced as well as the manual selection of the language. Even the slightest modification of the fundamental parameters immediately and directly produces a change in the vocal rhythm and melody. Statements with their inherent punctuation thus surmount their substantive as well as poetic fixation upon the written word and transform themselves into interactive language, rhythm or recitative singsong. The transformation is fluid and recursive, since each the three languages on which it is based constitutes an equivalent entity. Nevertheless, the poetic content remains in the foreground, since each and every formal change simultaneously causes a shift in what is expressed, ranging all the way to complete transformation of the spoken words into vocal poesis.

### ThinkSpace

Independent spheres for thought are opened up through the integration of excerpts from interviews with international experts in the fields of Greek-Roman Antiquity (I) and the Pharaonic Period in Egypt (II). Dynamic links to the websites of the various individuals provide access to a whole network of knowledge. To this day, the fundamental issues raised by both historical periods have lost hardly any of their relevance. Countless unique features of a variety of different pasts have had an impact upon information and interpretation models, and have determined what goes on in the world over many epochs. The construability of reality over the course of the millennia manifests itself unmistakably. The fact that, even to this day, cultural as well as political discourses have hardly progressed beyond the insights of Aristotle is accompanied by the knowledge that historical developments always undergo a climax and a transformation.

### StandStill

An additional environment can be explored in animated pictorial spaces whose unique feature is the link-up of static fundamental forms with individual dynamic objects. These undergo continual change and flow into one another, and eventually, at a particular point that lasts for just an instant, assume a unitary, static appearance. Following this process of amalgamation, the individual elements break off and again go their own way. They form particle clouds that merge or continue on separately. Musical miniatures composed especially for each individual space and synchronized to its visual flow are audible. The thematic basis of these works is the transience of form, space and time. The brief static moment refers to sculptures that, even without further explanation, can be clearly interpreted as a source of the past. Factually speaking, their historical significance is left out of consideration; they are mediated in the form of differing circumstances. In accordance with this confrontation with the installation's content, it is possible to intervene in the individual works only to the extent that this enables the user to open up the next space. However, there's no going back; once inside, you've got to continue all the way through. Here, standstill is synonymous with quality.

### No Comment

Finally, the ruin becomes visible from a vantage point within itself. Here, depictions whose walls display absolutely no solid substance react to mouse rollovers and open themselves up like venetian blinds to reveal continually new situations. Digital photographs refer to the local and cultural contexts of *Phantasma* and they are accompanied by what is in each case an appropriate soundscape. The montages thus integrate visual imagery into the spatial architecture and thereby adopt from them their significance as autonomous, two-dimensional, singular images. The spaces themselves move along with the visuals, which fly, as it were, through the landscape without being modified architecturally. They enter into a reciprocal visual relationship with the respective views that are periodically changing and, in turn, feed back upon the spaces and cause them to undergo changes.

### Background

*Phantasma* is the third project that has been developed expressly for the World Wide Web since 1999. The external framework is a "time window" that provides access to realms ranging from the present in *Binary Art Site* (1999–2001) to the future in *Outer Space IP* (2001–2003) and most recently into the past in *Phantasma* (2003–2005). All three projects are accessible on equal terms via [www.zeitgenossen.com](http://www.zeitgenossen.com).

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