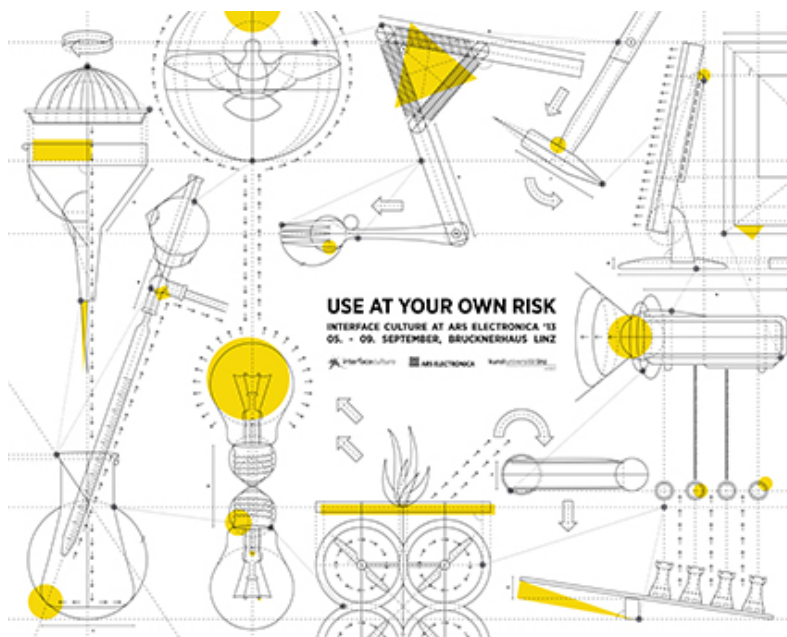# Use at your own risk
Interface Cultures at Ars Electronica 2013

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Brucknerhaus, EG, Untere Donaulände 7, 4020 Linz

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"Use at your own risk" is an allusion to a commonly used disclaimer text, warning the potential user of a certain software or hardware circuit that its makers cannot made responsible for any possible use or misuse of their inventions. When developing prototypes, the authors usually have to evaluate the potential risk or threat that their device or installation poses to the visitors within a public exhibition, which may lead to limitations of its overall use which eventually constrain the full potential of all interaction possibilities. Nevertheless the risk factor is an entire part of the making and design of novel interfaces and devices that are in direct contact with the visitors, which cannot just be ignored. This warning title reminds the spectators that experimental artworks are no exception to that rule.

www.interface.ufg.ac.at

Arnulf Rainer for digital performers, concert version

Alessio Chierico
Konzert, 2013
Interface Cultures

"Arnulf Rainer for digital performers" is a reenactment from the composition "Arnulf Rainer" made by Peter Kubelka, which creates its visual aesthetic from the essence of the cinematic image: light and its variations. Like digital systems, it comprises solely a binary alternation of light and no light. The storyboard is a composition which appears like a digital sequence. "Arnulf Rainer for digital performers" is based on a software that analyzes a remade composition of Peter Kubelka in real time, in order to extract the status (black or white) for each frame. Afterwards the main computer, metaphorically seen as the director, sends the status to a device ensemble meant as players, in order to perform the composition. Their interpretation becomes the real performance, which underlines the visual property of each performer. "Arnulf Rainer for digital performers" is a concert played by visual media that propose a contemporary aesthetic of the original score.

4th Skin

Mihaela Kavdanska
Interaktive audio-visuelle Arbeit, 2013
Interface Cultures

A project by Mihaela Kavdanska, Programming by Cristian Iordache, Sound by Sorin Paun aka Randomform, Performers: Dolma Jover Agullo & Luis Gonzaga Hoyos
A project co-produced by KOTKI visuals

The „4th Skin" project visualizes what we see, touch or reflect. It is the "skin" created by our whole body & mind experience and our relations with the world around. This interactive audio-visual piece has a strong performative and site-specific component. The relations between the performer and the surroundings result in the form of ephemeral multimedia garment. The video content is created live according to the performers' explorations with mobile filming devices: their presence in a given space, bodies, movements, actions, textures, these all become part of the dynamic garment. By acting in a way or another, the performer changes the garment's content. The captured video footage is projected on the performer's body using custom developed video tracking & video mapping solution. The "4th Skin" is a comment on the subjects of ephemerality, transience and impermanence. It reflects the sense-based exchange between one self and the world around.

A Day In A Life

Ivan Petkov
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

„Suffering makes you live time in detail, moment after moment." E.M. Cioran, The New Gods Starting with the sunrise, an empty book is being flipped by an airflow. At midday, the amount of the pages which have been turned, roughly equals the ones which are still left. At sunset, the end of the book is reached. An unexpected usage of a book takes place in this installation. It is blank and still can be read. In an intuitive way, without the torturous precision of the signs and through the invisible power of the wind. It reveals the time passed from the morning and the time left till dusk. It reminds on a bygone era in which only the bright part of the day belonged to the active life.

Acidable

Veronika Krenn, Vesela Mihaylova
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

The "Acidable" is an interactive turntable and orange squeezer at the same time. Based on the familiar movement of manually squeezing a citrus fruit, the interaction with the "Acidable" is brought to a new level of playful experience. Depending on the PH value of the freshly pressed citrus juice the machine creates a rhythm, as a result of turning the oranges the sound will be modified. This work is an interactive experiment which tries do bring back food production into our daily life. The visitor is asked to try out the new playful device and enjoy the freshly pressed orange juice.

240313: Bit-Poems

whoun (a.k.a. **Juan Cedenilla**)
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

"240313:Bit-Poems" is a collection of several poems and a possible visualization of each of them. These bit-poems are created by rules of poetry applied to bits. The contemporary world demands a different way of perceiving the digital aesthetic. For this reason, this project aims to transfer a concept of the non-digital world to the digital world and observe the result. The starting point is something created by humans: poetry. One of the main goals of poetry is to communicate. The poetry form follows a series of rules and conditions. Communication, rules and conditions are the settings of a protocol in the digital world. Visualizing this protocol can create a better non-digital understanding of it. This allows us to explore and discover the result of the translation of such a concept.

Digital HourGlass

Oliver Kellow
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

The "Digital HourGlass" is an abstracted hourglass form set in granite and extending an antenna towards the sky. Like sands running to the lower bulb the "Digital HourGlass" will change states when the upper bulb expires. The viewer may touch the frame of the hourglass, changing the power configuration and increasing the stress on the bulb. Symbolically, it represents the consciously marked passage of time and energy, providing no reference point to gauge the amount of time or energy remaining or previously spent. The only known value is that as a physical and familiar device it must degrade and expire, the moment of transition is pure serendipity, unpredictable to the both author and the viewer. This consciousness of time, energy and decay is accentuated by the physicality of the high consumption, antiquated Edison bulbs used. A simple reminder that although time and energy is always flowing, we do have the opportunity and the capability to use it or alter its path.

Memories of the Future

David Gann (Science-Interactive.com, SymbioticCube.com)
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

The genome is the basic level of memory and contains the building plan for us as human beings. As we have begun to understand our genetic code and are more and more able to change it, it is time to think and discuss about the potential impact on future generations. In this work multiple users can explore an interactive audio-visual map of the human genome on a touchscreen. About 28.000 genes are positioned on a ring which is representing the genome. The brightness stands for the expression level (how much gene product is produced) of a gene and the lines indicate the interaction between those. The genes are sonic grains on a long audio sample that contains many aspects of our culture and civilization. The user can associate his/her own audible memories with the sonification and gets a better spatial and relational understanding of the visualization. The user-interactions are recorded and the resulting data and musical compositions are published.

Micro Pets

Marie Polakova, Veselina Dashinova
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

Have you ever thought that microscopic organisms could be something more than a scientific specimen or feared disease? Something you could care for and even grow to love? The "Micro Pets" project is looking into the unthinkable, considering microbes of infinitesimal size as endearing and captivating creatures – as playful companions with personality and charm! The artists have taken up the difficult task of observing and understanding the natural behaviors of water microorganism. Building on their practical and conceptual research, there aim is to design suitable nano toys for such creatures together with "Micro Pet Lifestyle Accessories". The toys and accessories will be specially suited to the particular behavior and needs of each microorganism group. So far one can see a design of a toy and a digital simulation of the interaction between the "Micro Pets" and their toys. The next aim of the artists is to develop the design further and subsequently produce the toys. Created at Interface Cultures Lab with support of Ars Electronica Bio Lab.

Non Player Objects – Play with it!

Davide Bevilacqua, Alberto Boem, Isidora Ficovic, Marie Polakova
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

The Non Player Objects installation is addressing artefacts and media-contents in order to question the understanding of playfulness within contemporary artistic and cultural practice. The "gamification" of environments based on the idea of playful interactions is overtaking the discourse of digital media based arts, entertainment culture and design approaches. A group of students took up this state of the art to reflect upon the dynamics of cultural techniques of playfulness and possibilities to create a broader meaning of ludic practice. The project represents different layers and approaches combined in one installation. Video interviews that collect different viewpoints on the topic, artefacts to give the visitors of the exhibition the opportunity to intervene with playful actions, and toy-like objects to experience the exhibition in unconventional ways. The project gives as well an outlook to the new European Masters Programme in Ludic Interfaces, which will start at the University of Art and Design Linz.

Random Readings

Cesar Escudero Andaluz
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

This media archeology project is based on the reinterpretation of an optical telecommunication device dated in 1787. It develops new interfaces (physical and graphic) by embedding current platforms such as webcams, telemonitoring systems, streamings channels or closed-circuit surveillance. The recognition system for video tracking detects the threshold color changes in five different points located on the image surface. The information collected in these five points is decoded to an alphabetic system. Finally the letters are printed on the surface of the screen together with the previous values obtained. The final result is shown as an interactive installation that combines situations in public spaces with social control factors.

Sculpton

Alberto Boem
Klangobjekt, 2013
Interface Cultures

„Sculpton" is a malleable sonic object which uses the metaphor of sound sculpting for connecting physical information in digital audio. By manipulating the object the user can literally sculpt the sound through a real-time sound synthesis which reverberates the object structure. „Sculpton" is an attempt for the development of a new kind of digital musical instruments which combines multidimensional

control, tangible and malleable characteristics with an organic handling. This quality has an intimate relation with the sound production: the user shapes the sound by molding the object. Beyond the idea of control, „Sculpton" represent a sonic object which promotes physical effort and engagement with musical and non-musical characteristics. „Sculpton" is an interface for musicians and performers strongly based on the idea of exploration and improvisation, a tool for composing electronic music on stage.

Street-Scape

Jaak Kaevats
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

"Street-Scape" is a contextual visualisation of an urban environment. The walking direction of people in the street is plotted in one direction on the 5 minute timeline to make their relative distances between each other more apparent. The visualisations are rendered in a way that produces people walking 5km/h (average walking speed) with original proportions, everyone moving faster becomes thinner and everyone slower is mapped respectively wider "Street-Scape" renders the captured people anonymous while revealing their demographic qualities such as their approximate age and gender. Thus, presenting the relative amount of children, grown-ups, older people, bikers, etc in a particular location during the visualised time.

Suppenbrunzer

Nina Mengin
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

The communicative and ritual aspects of having a meal go through steady changes. Fast food and convenience food changed our eating behaviour radically. One of the consequences is that individual snacks exchange ritual meals within a family. Even if we eat high quality foods, we are still lacking time for an extensive meal. The installation quotes a folksy Austrian dining table, but it is cooped up between walls and only usable by one person at the time. Snacks are offered next to it, these have to be placed on the table to activate the "Suppenbrunzer" and start the interaction. The whole procedure only takes a few seconds, the "Suppenbrunzer" therefore adapts itself to the prevalent food culture.

The dream of flying

Chiara Esposito
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

Sometimes a plant dreams of flying. Movements in plants are usually imperceptible and associated with growth or following the sun. Plants that are capable of rapid movements look like animals or strange chimeras. But some plants indeed have an affinity with the air and the flight: some have no roots and get their nutrients from the air, others use the wind to let their seeds move quicker, or need the action of insects or birds to reproduce. Dandelions let their seeds fly gently, other plants spit them out like rockets. Every plant reacts to the environment in a different way. In the artwork „The dream of flying", an interface enables a plant to control a body extension: a small flying device. The interface measures the electrical activity of the plant and uses the gathered data to control the flight. The plant works here as an actor and a sensor, creating an open system in which visitors and the environment are actively participating to influence the pattern of the flying device.

Think Pink

Isidora Ficovic
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

This interactive video installation uses the qualitative research method of taking interviews in the streets of Linz. The public has been investigated about the question 'Which tool would you use to destroy a desktop?'. The most common answer is the "hammer". The public decided the hammer to become non-verbal communication tool. By hitting with the hammer the visitor of the exhibition triggers videos which are showing the interviews. Embedded sensors are randomly opening different videos and only one is the key to the "Think Pink" when the monitor becomes colored in pink.

Zuerst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral

Davide Bevilacqua
Installation, 2013
Interface Cultures

Vegetarian food, optimized production, low-calories drinks, bio-fast-naturally colored dishes. We are surrounded by different foods, symbol of cultures and fashions. Food has always played a central role in social gatherings, as a cultural sign and a collective ritual. Each event has indeed its own type of refreshment: wedding breakfasts, buffets, brunches. This buffet provides the suitable refreshments for the Interface Cultures' exhibition at the Ars Electronica Festival. The audience will enjoy a buffet made of experimental dishes and drinks. There will be original and collected recipes, some of them are close to the molecular kitchen, other to the DIY community. The selection follows a research lead by curiosity, lust for experimenting with food, discovering how ingredients react on each other and trying out new tastes and forms for usual dishes.