

DVD-project 2003

P R E S S R E L E A S E

dep,art,ment - the multiple shop of stockholm.

Text: Björn Norberg, Curator, Beeoff.

Beeoff has often marked their function as an alternative to television and has used the device "the non-tv-tv-station". Many of the works shown at Beeoff have followed the traditions from the early video art of the 1960's. Interesting is that the first video artists, such as Nam June Paik, also saw their works as an alternative to the television, which in their opinion gained too much attention.

One of televisions most known critics outside the arts is the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu who saw the media as a great threat to our society. He often claimed that the Television only provided the fast and the simple thoughts at the expense of the intellectual discussions. This could in Bourdieu's opinion threaten the democracy.

The frames set by Beeoff for the broadcasts put two important demands on the artists: the art should be created and broadcast in real-time and the live artwork should last at least two weeks. Even though this is a tough challenge at the same time the long-term real-time becomes method and material for the artists to work with.

Each DVD (edition dep,art,ment) consists of the artist's own selection of segments from Beeoff's "real-time" project that will be played in a continuous loop.

4 DVDs with 6 New Media Artists:

Peter Hagdahl Simulated social model no2 (sensoric transformation)

DVD, 2003
Edition 30
6 000 SEK for the Multiple DVD-kit

Society is always changing as a consequence of complex patterns of influences. The changes do not occur in a smooth flow but happen at different speeds at different times. The development of technology is given great importance in the history books. Technical revolutions have changed societies as much as ideologies. Often the development of technology and ideology seem to go hand in hand, influencing each

other. At the end of the 20th century we could see how our society went through a metamorphosis from a society based on industry to a society based on information and communication under influence from the development of IT-technology.

As individuals we all take part in the development. We influence our surroundings and in turn we are influenced, often without thinking of it. In several of his pieces Peter Hagdahl has been working with questions of how individuals influence and are influenced by society. His work investigates the relationship between the virtual digital world and the physical "real" world. In pieces like Under Influence/Transformation and Transformation model 7 the audience influenced a virtual world, whether they wanted to or not. A digital film was affected by the appearance of the viewer. The physical motion then had a virtual consequence that could be seen in a projection on a wall where the piece was shown.

In his new piece, Simulated social model no2 (sensoric transformation), on Beeoff Hagdahl takes the discussion further. A camera is placed somewhere in Stockholm where it registers motions in traffic and people walking. The registration of the camera is converted to impulses that are sent via Internet to the Beeoff studio just outside Stockholm. In the studio the impulses influence a 3D-animation. That means that the individuals passing by the camera are influencing a digital milieu placed far away. The result, the digital influenced animation, is then shown at several places in Scandinavia and on a web site.

Hagdahl's piece becomes an interesting social sculpture and pictures complex relations in society. Who is influencing whom? How does technology influence the individual and society and vice versa?

The camera, wherever it is placed, will not gain any attention. The people passing by will not know, and will not ever know, that with their motions they are influencing a digital animation. Still audiences all around the world will see their interaction with the technology. It is easy to draw parallels to how IT-technology can be used or misused. Our daily life is registered in many ways and we almost never think of it. Our lives are transformed into data in different digital worlds, data that creates the basis for changes. When Hagdahl uses Internet the discussion widens. The distance between the physical reality and the digital reality is larger. More and more the digital world becomes a Freudian dream developed by impulses from an unconscious physical reality.

STEVEN DIXON and TORE NILSSON **Channeling II**

DVD, 2003

Edition 30

6 000 SEK for the Multiple DVD-kit

Steven Dixon and Tore Nilsson's Channeling II is a development of an earlier piece, also shown at Beeoff. The piece uses cable TV as its source. A robot is programmed to choose between the channels. It chooses sound from one channel and image from another and combines them to one.

Sound and image do not then belong together. Or do they? Often the combination produces funny effects when sound and image melt together or crash into each other. Most of the programs are so superficial in nature that it does not matter how you combine image and sound. The scenes from American sitcoms produce mechanical laughter with short intervals, the soap operas are performed by mediocre actors who read through manuscripts written on the assembly line. There are few variations.

In addition to the sound and image Channeling II uses one more source from cable-TV. A computer is programmed to translate the sound from one of the channels. The text is shown as subtitles at the bottom of the screen to create an even weirder result. The translation is not perfect at all. The computer attempts to interpret what is said correctly but fails all the time. Maybe because people do not speak grammatically correctly and some do not speak clearly enough.

In a simple but effective way Nilsson and Dixon show how complicated communication can be and that technology is not always a help. They also point out that there is a difference in the way humans and machines work. Machines must be correct. We also expect them to be correct. Humans on the other hand often make mistakes, but usually we understand them anyway.

anonymous & anonymous

This work is a co-operation between one artist and one musician.

DVD, 2003

Edition 30

6000 SEK for the Multiple DVD-kit

In this piece a number of TV-channels (MTV/Bloomberg) are mixed together in real-time. This creates a flow of images that will run 24 hours a day for a period of almost two months. The images also influence the music and the sounds of the piece. An installation of electronic instruments composes music in real-time using data from the images as an input.

There is no point in searching for some narrative or an explanation. The artists have chosen to focus on the real-time, what is happening at the moment and then disappear. The focus on the passing moment in combination with the long period of time resembles works by for example Andy Warhol and John Cage. For Cage the time, the length of each tone and pause, was of greater importance for the music than the harmony. Warhol made several experimental films in which nothing seemed to happen. In Sleep, five hours long, he filmed a man sleeping. In Eat he let the artist Robert Indiana eat a mushroom as slow as he could. I think it is in this tradition you should view anonymous&anonymous.

JUHA HUUSKONEN
The Moment of Long Now

DVD, 2003
Edition 30
6000 SEK for the Multiple DVD-kit

The Finnish media artist Juha Huuskonen has given us an alternative to the flickering images of the TV-news. Every day, a few seconds of material from news TV-channels is added to the piece. This material is split into small image fragments that are repeated, blurred, magnified and manipulated in various other ways, stretching the duration of each second to last for hours. Huuskonen gives the audience a chance to stop and reflect on each single moment in the footage. The name of The Moment of Long Now was inspired by the The Long Now Foundation, an organisation which has a goal 'to promote "slower/better" thinking and to foster creativity in the framework of the next 10,000 years.'

Sound design is an essential part of the piece, it was done by Tuomas Toivonen, Finnish musician, journalist and architect. The soundscape of The Moment of Long Now is created by extending and compacting source materials until only the nature of the tools used are left. What remains is the amplified character of the signal path, effects and operations. Tuomas Toivonen is a recording artist, member of the major-label dub-RnB-rock collective Giant Robot, an independent electronic music producer and one of the founding members of Position Underground Records and the Eira Bass Assault Team. He has previously worked with film music (Rovaniemi Skinheads, 2002, Bad Luck Love, 2000) and sound for installation pieces (Prada Peepshow, Soho, NYC, 2001).

Juha Huuskonen is one of the founding members of katastro.fi media art collective and the director of Olento.fi production company. For The Moment of Long Now Huuskonen uses Qutomo, a graphics engine he has developed himself supported by a couple of organisations.