

urban interface | oslo

the porous city: art claiming the urban void | conference program

Friday, september 14th

10:00 Welcome by Atle Barcley, Introduction by Susanne Jaschko
10:15 Florian Rötzer: "Failed, Feral and Gated Cities"
11:00 Q+A
11:15 Drew Hemment: "From the Spatial to the Social - Urban Arts and Activism"
12:00 Artist Talk Laura Beloff
12:30 Artist Talk Michelle Teran
13:00 Q+A
13:15 Lunch
14:00 Martin Rieser: "Rediscovering spatial narrative for locative media"
14:45 Einar Sneve Martinussen: "Urban Computing and the Temple of Doom"
15:30 Q+A
15:45 Coffee
16:00 Panel discussion with Florian Rötzer, Drew Hemment, Martin Rieser, Einar Sneve Martinussen
16:45 Artist Talk HC Gilje
17:15 Artist Talk Habbestad + Larsson
17:45 Q+A
18:00 Egil Martin Kurdøl: "Site-Specific Commission for the Motorway Bridge in Drammen"
18:15 End

Saturday, september 15th

10:00 Welcome by Susanne Jaschko, Introduction by Jeremy Welsh
10:15 Lev Manovich: "The Aesthetics of Information Interfaces"
11:00 Q+A
11:15 Jan Inge Reilstad: "When art wants to talk – what and where is the interface to whom?"
12:00 Jørn Mortensen: "Vacant lots and the market"
12:45 Lunch
13:30 Panel discussion with Lev Manovich, Jørn Mortensen, Jan Inge Reilstad
14:30 Coffee
14:45 Open Forum: Art in Public
 Silver and Hanne Riverud: "Visitor beta"
 Anders Hofgaard: "Ikkelyd (no-sound) and Masselyd (all-sound)"
 Aase-Hilde Brekke: "Tilgivesle (forgiveness)"
 Leif Inge: "Orchestral Investigations of Second Life by Avatar Orchestra Metaverse"
16:00 Artist Talk Sancho Silva + John Hawke
16:30 Artist Talk Vibeke Jensen
17:00 Conclusion by Jeremy Welsh + Susanne Jaschko
17:30 End

Florian Rötzer: "Failed, Feral and Gated Cities"

After the end of the Cold War strategic thinking about security and military intervention has shifted away from war between state armies to peace keeping and stability operations in so called "failed states". In a globalised world civil war, fights between ethnic groups or states without a central government, where organized crime and rebels find a safe haven and where poverty or social chaos are ruling, are a threat also to rest of the world. This concept has been – and still is – the legitimisation for military interventions, regimes changes and state building. On 11/9 terrorists have finally started to act globally in the same way and made their attack from the failed state Afghanistan in New York. A new security problem has emerged with the beginning of the US Global War on Terror, especially with the war on Iraq and focussing on cities. The cities in the "homeland" of the Western states have become to a new front. They have to be secured, protected with surveillance of all sorts and rebuilt through urban planning as gated cities. On the other side are the cities in the poor, unstable or failed states, where military interventions taking place or could take place. For these "feral" cities, mostly exploding megacities, Baghdad with its Green Zone as central fortress, with its uncontrollable public space, with neighbourhoods as gated communities, secured through gangs and militias, may give a glimpse into the future of the new strategic "city building". Unruly Iraqi cities like Falluja have been secured through walls to control ingoing and outgoing traffic and the people. The wall doesn't protect the city, it protects - in opposition to the front cities in the Western homeland - the outside, the city becomes a jail, more: a panopticon. Now has started a new strategy of city building in Baghdad as a big city which cannot be enclosed within a wall. So many kilometres of walls are built between the already ethnic cleansed districts. First they will be cleaned from "terrorists", then they will be sealed as gated communities or city jails, so that all ingoing and outgoing traffic can be controlled. People will be obliged to have documents with biometric identification.

Florian Rötzer has worked as an author and publicist after studying philosophy. His focus lies on media theory and aesthetics. Since 1996 he is chief editor of the on-line magazine Telepolis (www.telepolis.de) and editor of the Telepolis books at the Heise Verlag Heise-HH. His publications include (selection): Die Telepolis. Urbanität im digitalen Zeitalter - The Telepolis. Urbanity in the digital age, Mannheim 1995; TerrorMedienKrieg – TerrorMediaWar (Ed., with G. Palm), Heidelberg 2002.; Medien der Gewalt – Media of Violence (Ed.), Heidelberg 2002; Vom Wildwerden der Städte – Cities turning wild, Basel 2006. (For your convenience these titles have been translated into English).

Drew Hemment: "From the Spatial to the Social - Urban Arts and Activism"

An interest in social technologies and art in urban space was developed through a 3 year study on the shifting boundaries between art practice, the event and data systems. Participation in a series of workshops and online discussions in 2003 which helped to elaborate the field of locative media, was followed by the Mobile Connections exhibition within Futuresonic 2004 that sought to explore forms of expression that are intrinsic or unique to mobile and wireless media.

Locative media created an opportunity to look anew at public art and other spatial practices, and also has energised an interdisciplinary thinking of the city. Two outcomes of this were Loca: Set To Discoverable, an arts-based group project on grass-roots, pervasive surveillance which combined art installation, software engineering, activism, pervasive design, hardware hacking, SMS poetry, sticker art and ambient performance, and the Urban Play strand of the Futuresonic festival which seeks to reimagine, free and make strange the city through collaborative art and technology practice.

Dr. Drew Hemment is Associate Director of Lancaster University's Imagination@Lancaster research lab. Director and founder of the Futuresonic festival, established 1995, and Director of Future Everything, a non-profit creative studio. Founder member of the Loca art group, developed during an AHRC Research Fellowship at Salford University, and of PLAN, The Pervasive and Locative Arts Network (EPSRC). Other projects include Urban Play and the Social Technologies Summit. Curator of numerous exhibitions on media art, mobile culture and locative media, and was involved in early UK electronic dance culture as DJ and event organiser. Completed a PhD at University of Lancaster in 1999, and an MA (Distinction) at the University of Warwick, when he was a participant in the Virtual Futures events.

Martin Rieser: "Rediscovering spatial narrative for locative media"

This paper explores the debates around present locative practice and sets them against such models drawn from a broad range of cultural artefacts. It also questions whether, by rooting artistic practice in an understanding of profound cultural and psychological spatial structures, locative work can gain greater artistic resonance. The paper includes a survey of early cultural artefacts and their potential lessons for contemporary locative media art and interactive public art practice. Specifically examined are issues of ritual space and the spatialisation of narrative, including Aboriginal Australian, Amerindian, Celtic, Hindu and Christian sacred architectures and land art. The narrative potentials of ancient architectural alignments, spatial architectural organisation and acoustic resonance will be contrasted with a range of contemporary projects exploiting contemporary architectural and public spaces and examples from the artist's own work.

Martin Rieser is a digital artist, educator and writer. He has worked with Digital media since the early 1980s. Pioneering work in digital print, installation, web art and interactive narrative. Professor of Digital Arts and Senior Teaching Fellow at Bath Spa University, running an experimental lab examining the relationship between new technologies of mobility and the learning of design. Co-editor of "New Screen Media" (BFI/ZKM 2002), he has also exhibited and presented his own work internationally at ISEA, Siggraph and many other festivals. He is currently authoring a book on mobile technologies and art, entitled "The Mobile Audience".

Einar Sneve Martinussen: "Urban Computing and the Temple of Doom"

Interaction designer with a background from architecture and urbanism. He is currently working with a Master thesis on Urban Computing at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design; focusing on computing and digital networks in urban landscapes, and on the cultural and social impact this has on the city.

Martinussen works specifically with / towards designing mobile technology devices with the purpose of provoking and gathering opinions about everyday life in cities and towns. The conceptual backdrop of the project consists of oldschool psychogeography, the exploration of the Arctic, the *dull* and Indiana Jones. The project's vision is to design and equip an exploration into the non-spectacular and mundane side of city life.

His previous work include sound, electronics, tangible interfaces and gaming. At Urban Interface in Oslo he will be presenting urban gaming and work-in-progress.

Lev Manovich: "The Aesthetics of Information Interfaces"

Lev Manovich will discuss the changing aesthetics of information interfaces over last 10 years - from personal information devices such as mobile phones to public displays. This discussion will be placed in a larger context of cultural and social developments which are re-shaping all objects and spaces in a global economy: the rise of "experience economy," democratization of design, spatial branding, supermodernist aesthetics, and "mayaism."

Lev Manovich is the author of *Soft Cinema: Navigating the Database* (The MIT Press, 2005), and *The Language of New Media* (The MIT Press, 2001) which is hailed as "the most suggestive and broad ranging media history since Marshall McLuhan." Manovich is a Professor in Visual Arts Department, University of California, San Diego and a Director of the Software Studies Initiative at California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (CALIT2).

Jan Inge Reilstad: "When art wants to talk – what and where is the interface to whom?"

Jan Inge Reilstad will present the art project *Neighbourhood Secrets*, taking place in Stavanger as a part of Stavanger as European capital of culture in 2008. In an early phase the project invited the inhabitants of the cities of Stavanger and Sandnes to reflect on which site in the city was the most important to them personally. In a collaboration with the main newspaper and the local television in spring 2006 they got 30.000 votes with a lot of arguments to it. The eight sites with the most votes then were selected as arenas for future art projects in 2008. The eight sites selected is the ones which the inhabitants themselves regard as giving them most of their urban identity, for different kinds of reason. Jan Inge Reilstad will use the project as a background to talk about strategies and impacts when art invites society and individual to a meeting point, with art itself as the chairman.

Jan Inge Reilstad has been working as a critic and essayist in different Norwegian magazines and newspapers since the middle of the 1990s, as well as working as an advisor and planner for different institutions in the field of culture in Norway. He has been occupied with the different art forms and popular culture regarding to their public role, function, use and effects. The last years he has published books on different subjects such as popular song lyrics and public art. In the period from 2000-2005 he was the editor of *Localmotive*, a Scandinavian netmagazine on contemporary art and culture. *Localmotive* practises as a group of artists and curators as well, with performance, happenings and exhibitions in the Stavanger region. In the period from 2005-2008 he is working with the Swedish artist and professor Jrgen Svensson as a curator and project manager on the art project *Neighbourhood Secrets*.

Jørn Mortensen: "Vacant lots and the market"

The talk will discuss to what extent artistic interventions in vacant lots, in urban voids and in process areas - rather than offering an alternative reading of the city - actually work as a catalyst for gentrification processes in the interests of real estate developers. By referring to the most significant urban development project in Norway in modern times, that is the Bjørvika region of Oslo, the talk will try to show how art has been used as tool for increasing real estate value for private and semi-public interests.

Jørn Mortensen works as Associate Director at Office for Contemporary Art (OCA). He has recently served as Information advisor at KORO (Public Art Norway) in Oslo; as Director of Momentum, the International Biennial for Contemporary Art (2001 - 2006); and as Director of UKS in Oslo (1994-2001). Mortensen is educated at the University of Oslo in Media and Communications, History of Ideas and Music.

the porous city: art claiming the urban void | open forum presentations

Through the open call for the Open Forum we received a number of very interesting projects which will be presented and discussed on Saturday, 15 September between 14:45 and 16:00.

VISITOR beta by Silver & Hanne Rivrud

The project VISITOR is an intervention into social and public situations. What happens to the social games between people when one person is remotely controlled?

The project questions the role of simulation in our everyday lives, and tries to reverse the simulation back into reality. Hidden in the crowd, Visitor (the avatar) is attending a big social event. He is like anyone of us, but connected to him via mobile networks you can control his actions and influence the social game at the event. By using a mobile phone with the Visitor application, the player can send different commands to the avatar. When the avatar hears these commands, he has to do them, but still act natural. Connected to him via mobile networks, people can remain incognito and safe, while he experiences the true pain of life.

Production team: Martin Havnør, Hanne Rivrud, Petr Svarovsky, Johan Sæther, Christian Tviberg. Developed in collaboration with Vodafone GROUP R&D Germany and Atelier Nord, Oslo, Norway.

IKKELYD (NO-SOUND) and MASSELYD (ALL-SOUND) by NODE

Ny Musikk (Norwegian section of the International Society for Contemporary Music) asked NODE to do a purely visual project about sound in public space. For this project NODE co-operated with Felix Weigand to develop an alphabet that is playing with visual musical references. This alphabet was used to write sound-words in parks in Oslo, Berlin and Amsterdam — without announcing it or asking for permission.

“Masselyd” (Mass[ive]-sound) was initiated by Ny Musikk in cooperation with NODE and was run for two days in November 2006. A veteran bus with a massive speaker system mounted on the roof was driven around in the city centre of Oslo playing contemporary music for the masses. The sound being played ranged from Kurt Schwitters and Alvin Lucier to new and unpublished pieces by Norwegian contemporary composers.

www.nodeberlin.com

TILGIVELSE by Aase-Hilde Brekke

During Oslo Open in 2007 an outdoor installation and performance was placed in the park by Grønland Police Station, and Oslo prison near Grønland Park in the eastern side of the city. The project was called “TILGIVELSE”(no.), “Forgiveness”, and was presented as an installation with written texts about forgiveness, which was “planted” in the ground and hung from the trees in the park, and people could write in “The Book Of Forgiveness!”, in the interactive performance held. The park is a neuralgic spot in Oslo where drugs are sold and openly used. The park is close to the biggest prison in Norway, which represents an official take on forgiveness. For the project, people were invited to write a text about forgiveness and send it to the artist.

ORCHESTRAL INVESTIGATIONS OF SECOND LIFE by Avatar Orchestra Metaverse

The Avatar Orchestra Metaverse is an orchestra within Second Life, a threedimensional virtual world populated by avatars - online representations created by people who acts in Second Life through the avatar. The Avatar Orchestra Metaverse is an intercontinental orchestra which counts among its members programmers, architects, visual, digital and performance artists as well as musicians and all the possible mixed breed. Its members are an ever changing mix of backgrounds and generations shaping the orchestra at any time. It just started in early 2007.

To play live within Second Life means to play in a spatial sound environment. As a listener to inworld performance you will hear the music according to where you place yourself with respect to the performers, the performer close to you you hear better than you do the performer further away. This audience experience is essential to the performances of Avatar Orchestra Metaverse.

At the Open Forum, Avatar Orchestra Metaverse will play live “Fragula” by Miulew Takahe. The instruments are by Bingo Onomatopoeia. The project will be presented by Leif Inge.

Preview on Friday 18:00 - Egil Martin Kurdøl: “Site-Specific Commission for the Motorway Bridge in Drammen”

Egil Martin Kurdøl will give a preview of the three new works commissioned for the motorway bridge in Drammen, Norway. Kurdøl was a consultant to the project.

In connection with the building of a new motorway bridge, (a four lane bridge, almost two kilometres long, going through the centre of Drammen town), across the Drammen river, the Municipality (Drammen kommune) contacted the Norwegian Public Road Administration (Statens vegvesen), the County (Buskerud fylkeskommune) and Public Art Norway (Koro), with the aim of realising art projects according to this situation. Three projects came out of it: under the bridge – on the bridge – by the bridge:

AND ALSO THE OTHER PART SHOULD BE HEARD by Marit G. Arnekleiv

TEMPERATURE TIMEPROJECT by /Gunnar H. Gundersen

LISTEN by Istvan Lisztes