DIGISCAPE: UNEXPLORED TERRAIN

ABOUT US: Pace University’s Digital Gallery is the combined initiative between Pace’s Center for Advanced Media (CAM) and Digital Arts. It was inaugurated in Spring 2003 as a collaboration between the School of Computer Science and Information Systems and the Fine Arts Department.

LOCATION: Located at 163 William Street, a few blocks from City Hall, The Brooklyn Bridge, and Wall Street, Pace’s Digital Gallery is part of a vital downtown NYC art scene that includes historic architecture and national museums.

MISSION: The goal of Pace’s Digital Gallery is to foster the creation and understanding of digital art for the benefit of Pace University, the surrounding community, and the general public. It furthers Pace University’s commitment to educational excellence, diversity, and civic involvement by exhibiting the work of Pace faculty and students, and regularly exhibiting curated work of leading digital artists. It sponsors lectures and symposia on digital art, an artist-in-residence program, and publication of materials for its documentation and promotion.

DIRECTORS: Francis T. Marchese, Jillian McDonald
A special thanks to Francis T. Marchese and Jillian McDonald, Directors of Pace Digital Gallery; Richard Humann; Jill Conner; and the participating artists for without their help and contributions this show would not be possible.

Curated by China Blue
paths of six people that are then channeled into abstract form, era. Keeping with this idea, Humann’s video captures the movement within the new urban environment of the Modern was initially used by Piet Mondrian as a symbol of physical abstraction developed prior to the Second World War, the grid uses the abstract grid as a framework to suspend one’s view of Mark Esper and Richard Humann who separately use the concept of rapid electronic movement appears in the work of contemporary art by drastic measures, often confusing the boundaries between art and entertainment. Historically, move- ments were established by a group of artists who experimented with the formal limitations of the plastic arts, bringing it all very close to society before collapsing into appropriation. At present, the digital dialogue continues in the work of David Opdyke. His hand shaped like a spider which reflects and receives a variety of ideas and more upon figurative form. Known for her interac- tive installations, the artist presents two pieces in this exhibition that were started by the artist. The act of typing is also accompanied with the sound of handwriting, which is incidentally turning into an archaic phenomenon as the digital age continues to progress. China Blue, however, turns the notion of technological advance ment into a paradox. “The Calls,”(2006) is a sound piece that centers around the World Trade Center attacks that took place on September 11, 2001. Voices of the control tower dispatcher with the pilots are mixed with dial tones echo range of absurdity, stripping enlightened rationale away from musical scale that sounds pleasant but eerie. The dial tones were derived from available statistics about the World Trade Center: how tall it was, how much it cost to build it, how many square feet of office space was available per floor, when it was hit, how many people died etc. Voices from the airplanes and global. “Digiscape: Unexplored Terrain,” at Pace Digital presents a collection of art by China Blue, Suzan Dionne, Mark Esper, Jaakko Heikkilä, Richard Humann, David Opdyke, Marc Ramocki, and Marina Zurkow. Ranging from photography, and control tower can be heard faintly in the background, preserving the last fatalities in a shrub of mystery. These examples of digital creativity have moved the underlying concept of art closer to the senses by appealing to sound in another context. As Feenberg has noted, the digital age continues to progress, where multiple voices collide, new technologies, and stimulate. Together, the artists clearly convey that the significance of networks, both social and technical, now are intertwined with the arts. At present, the digital dialogue continues in the work of David Opdyke. His hand shaped like a spider which reflects and receives a variety of ideas and more upon figurative form. Known for her interac- tive installations, the artist presents two pieces in this exhibition that were started by the artist. The act of typing is also accompanied with the sound of handwriting, which is incidentally turning into an archaic phenomenon as the digital age continues to progress. China Blue, however, turns the notion of technological advance ment into a paradox. “The Calls,”(2006) is a sound piece that centers around the World Trade Center attacks that took place on September 11, 2001. 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The Calls, is a sound piece that is an ode to the World Trade Center. The piece is based on actual recordings of phone calls and dispatches made during and after the attacks and, air traffic controller recordings just prior to the impacts. Dial tones form the overlying sound structure. The tones selected are all derived from available statistics about the World Trade Center: how tall it was, how much it cost to build it, how many square feet of office space was available per floor, how many underground levels there were, the numbers of the floors of the sky lobbies, when it was hit, how many people died etc. As an acoustical element, the usage of dial tones is central because the cell phones were the only mode of communication available during the search and recover phase.

The creation of this piece was very important to me because it is only now that I can distance myself, somewhat, from that event on September 11, 2001. My office at that time was on the 86th floor of WTC #1 for 3 years. We had moved out of the building only 2 weeks prior and we were still in the process of moving into our new quarters a few blocks away when 9/11 occurred. This piece underscores the failure of communication.

This work depicts a beautiful, abstract landscape where things appear to be going up in purple flame. It makes a sardonic and timely reference to Orwell’s Animal Farm, and in particular to the pig’s statement at the end of their long and arduous adventure that “all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others.”

**Suzan Dionne**

**“All Things Being Equal...”**

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MARK ESPER  WEAVER

I feel that my photography is more or less an appreciation of the fragility of life. Photography is often like an assault—an act of aggression; you only need to look at the newspapers or TV to experience that intrusion into people’s lives as way of marketing a story or event. The principal of my work is non aggressive, I say that because having experienced the miracle of walking away from the hospital fifteen years ago, having survived cancer, only to have my wife unable to survive leukaemia—it made me see the world through the eyes of a child in wonder. When I think about that time now; of returning from the monthly trips to hospital—it’s somehow that I miss that feeling of having the permission to live. I try to remind myself of the seriousness of the situation—it makes life more endearing. I want to embrace those people with whom I come into contact.

WEAVER, 2006
Sculpture imbedded with a complex circuit and a large array of leds, circuit designed and programmed by artist.

JAAKKO HEIKKILÄ  PETER IN HIS ROOM

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PETER IN HIS ROOM, 2005
Photograph

Photograph

Photograph
Ghost Trails is a work by Richard Humann that deals with the path followed. A video projection of a live web site charts, the path of six different and unrelated people over the course of the exhibition, creating a concise picture of our unerring ability to create patterns out of nothingness, and in this way to make our world smaller, known, bearable. It creates a live and constantly changing picture of, ironically, the smallness and intimacy of pattern and habit, of the little routines of trajectory that make the vastness of possibility tolerable.

And then where there are deviations from those patterns, they seem to be huge, daring forays that go off the radar. By picturing trajectory in this way, Ghost Trails allows us to see exactly how big those deviations are, and that perhaps our habits are function of necessity, of sanity. It also captures an idea of the trace, of one’s passage through time and space that touches others, leaving behind a ghost trail.

GHOST TRAILS, 2003
Live video projection from web site. Variable dimensions.

DEBATEABLE, 2004
Double Projection Shockwave movie

A target form or framework is chosen. A limited set of elements and a few structural rules are chosen. The rules are followed, or bent, in an accumulation of hundreds or thousands of individual decisions about putting this part here, that part there. The goal is to find an interesting, uncomfortable balance between the complex absurdity of the process and the believability of the form.
History is an interactive custom, software art project created in Lingo programming language on Macromedia Director. The installation of the piece consists of a wall projection and a keyboard station where users can input data and interact with the application.

The projected image consists of a semi-random flow of words which create landscape-like composition. The words originate on the left side of the screen and move across the stage leaving behind trails of visual material, debris, accumulation. The initial set of 150 words is provided by the artist, but users are encouraged to enter their own words into an input panel on the upper left corner of the screen. The new words gradually become a part of the flow, replacing the initial set, influencing the shape and look of the new landscape. Users can also use the mouse/cursor to carve the existing landscape to any shape they desire, however the continuous flow of words will gradually cover up their designs.

The soundtrack of the piece is ambient sound of hand-writing, which is modulated (pitch, speed) by the behavior of flowing words.

The piece is metaphorically depicting the mechanisms behind historical build-up, relationship between the individual input, inertia of the written word, limitation of language and other social/physical forces.

MARINA ZURKOW HOLE AND FISSURE

Hole and Fissure are conceived as animated projections that fall between sketch, graffiti, and data, between private and public portraiture, and between downtown and a national condition. Struggle against the real and imagined edges of space. A more optimistic reading: in A Field Guide to Getting Lost, Rebecca Solnit writes that “Gravity is about motion, weight, resistance, force, the most primary experience after all the touches on our skin, of being corporeal. And so it may be that gravity is a sweet taste of mortality and our strength to resist it, a luxuriating in the pull of the earth and the pull of muscles against it, in the momentum the two create, and how close you can cut it.”
China Blue is an artist and innovator who creates artworks in a variety of media focusing on sound and how it shapes space. Her current projects involve electronic circuits and mechanical devices. These are my attempts to explore and render the invisible.