Surrey Urban Screen is an outreach venue of the Surrey Art Gallery and is located on the west wall of the Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre. The venue can be viewed from the SkyTrain between Gateway and Surrey Central stations. Exhibitions begin 30 minutes after sunset, and end at midnight. www.surreyurbanscreen.ca

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art gallery
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new forms
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REVISED: PROJECTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

☐ Malcolm Levy and Kate Armstrong

Our interest in working with the form of the urban screen in this project relates in one part to the catalyst of the *McLuhan in Europe 2011* initiative[1] in which artists and curators have taken the centennial year of media theorist Marshall McLuhan's birth as an opportunity to consider the transformative impacts of his ideas specifically in the context of media art. The other component that spurred the development of this exhibition was an interest in partnering with the Surrey Art Gallery to present work specifically geared to the unique context of the Surrey Urban Screen, as it is the largest urban screen in Canada and the only one that is devoted to the presentation of art.[2]

If urban screens are defined as the "various kinds of dynamic digital displays and interfaces in urban space such as LED signs, plasma screens, projection boards, information terminals but also intelligent architectural surfaces"[3], it becomes immediately clear how deeply they have infiltrated the urban environment, and it must be noted that the commercial aspects of this ubiquitous form are fundamental to their existence.

The urban screen as a form typically fluctuates, a bit uneasily, between two poles: Not purely commercial and rarely purely cultural, a common tactic of the urban screen is to deliver culture in interstitial spaces or timeslots, for example showing video or media art in the last minute of each hour or work-

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1   A primarily European project initiated by Stephen Kovats and Michelle Kasprzak to create "a conversation that spans art, communications, and technology." http://www.mcluhan2011.eu

2   Architecturally the Surrey Urban Screen is in fact more of a façade than a screen, as it possesses a unique exterior with a set of illuminated, irregular windows that challenge it as a traditional projection surface.

3   Mirjam Struppek is the founder of the International Urban Screens Association, http://www.urbanscreens.org/about.html

ing with public transit authorities to show animation or experimental video on the television screens in trains or subways.

However variable or restricted these sites are, these tactics produce unique if not immense opportunities for delivering art in new ways and new spaces, for example allowing it to be shown simultaneously in 15 cities across the U.K.[4], engaging huge audiences in major public squares[5], reaching people such as commuters *in situ*, or allowing architectural surfaces to operate cinematically or socially so that groups of people can gather in public space to interact with a large-scale, shared image.

In response to these complex and multivalent conditions, an international network of artists, curators and theorists has emerged for the purpose of discussing and examining the role of the urban screen and to creating discourse among "artists, curators, cultural managers, architects, government institutions, screen operators as well as theoreticians" so as to rethink "the relationship between architecture and public space in the digital age"[6] and to consider the implications of ongoing tensions between commercial and artistic concerns as well as the restrictions that arise from questions of ownership and control in relation to the public context. Whether through the cultural bureaucracy of a municipality[7] or a multi-national corporation such as Clear Channel[8], screens are regulated, and ultimately cause an examination of what is and is not public.

For us, the networked, global form of the public screen manifestly raises questions about simultaneity, relationships between public and private, issues of centralization and control, as well as causing an examination of the ways in which cultural and commercial spheres intersect — all issues that pierce through and overlay the theme of "electric speed".

This project might be characterized as an invitation to the six artists — Melissa Mongiat and Mouna Andraos, Jeremy Bailey, Jillian Mcdonald, Jon Sasaki, and Will Gill — to test the formal qualities of the public screen as a medium, because on some level the urban screen implicitly suggests an investigation of the contemporary media environment itself. With all the opportunities and restrictions of the screen, and the attendant factors which are explored in these works as well as in these essays and interviews, it remains for us an active question: Do the formal and contextual constraints that lie at the heart of the urban screen prevent it from functioning as a meaningful cultural space? Or on the other hand, is it even possible to imagine a meaningful investigation of global urban culture or media that takes place anywhere *but* there?

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4   The BBC Big Screens initiative is a collaboration between the BBC, LOCOG and UK local authorities in which screens become focal points in the city for sports, news, events and content arising from partnerships with arts organizations.
5   Initiatives to present cultural projects operate in connection with sites such as New York's Times Square, the large-scale urban screen in Federation Square in Melbourne, and the Collegium Hungaricum in Berlin.
6   Mirjam Struppek,
http://www.urbanscreens.org/about.html

7   Where public art must be in dialogue with community and the specific requirements and constraints presented by the site in question.
8   Clear Channel is a global media and entertainment company that owns and operates approximately one million screens in 45 countries across 5 continents.

ELECTRIC SPEED

☐ Kate Armstrong

This exhibition was developed on the occasion of the Marshall McLuhan centennial in 2011 as a way to invite reflection on the state of accelerated culture. Six artists, Melissa Mongiat and Mouna Andraos, Jeremy Bailey, Jillian Mcdonald, Jon Sasaki, and Will Gill, were invited to create new work.

In 1964, McLuhan wrote, "Today it is the instant speed of electric information that, for the first time, permits easy recognition of the patterns and the formal contours of change and development. The entire world, past and present, now reveals itself to us like a growing plant in an enormously accelerated movie. Electric speed is synonymous with light and with the understanding of causes."[1]

The subject of speed runs like wires through the kinetic, aphoristic writing of McLuhan, and never more so than when he's urgently describing electric circuitry and characterizing the world as a giant central nervous system.[2] He asserts that "electric circuitry has overthrown the regime of 'time' and 'space'" and that it "confers a mythic dimension on our ordinary individual and group actions," where myth "is the mode of simultaneous awareness of a complex group of causes and effects."[3] We hear about a

1   Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), p. 305.

2   Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (Berkeley, California: Gingko Press, 1967), p. 40.

3   Ibid., p. 114

"clash of cataclysmic proportions"[4] and the "buzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzing"[5] that accompanies, or perhaps creates, "dramatic or rapid changes."[6]

There are many dimensions to the fundamental query of how speed affects our perception and experience of the world. Among these are: how does acceleration relate to the concept of centre and how does this play out philosophically on a global level as well as in relation to an everyday experience of urban or public space? How does velocity change sense experience and the way we as a culture construct an understanding of what it means to be human? And how has this changed from McLuhan's era? In short, what have 50 years of "electric speed" produced?

Noticeable in this group of works is how the artists anchor their explorations in performative action and bodily experience: the experience of time and space in an accelerated culture is examined from a scale that is mindfully human-centred. We find the artists in conversation with popular culture but also with the material world. The effects and affects of technology are made a part of this dialogue, and are reviewed, and, perhaps, in some senses renewed. Though speed is neither celebrated nor rejected, we find in these works reminders of the slow. For example, for Melissa Mongiat and Mouna Andraos, the public screen is a site for public debate that addresses the screen as a networked phenomenon, and which echoes the global #Occupy movement, inviting a measured reconception of news headlines. For Jeremy Bailey, this is an opportunity to critique the role of the artist in the radically commercial, global sphere of the urban screen. Jillian Mcdonald is locked in a staring contest with vampires, inserting herself into a dialogue with popular culture and raising questions about the position of the consuming subject and the speed of desire. Jon Sasaki considers speed in the context of a daredevil culture, raising the spectre of radical collapse. Will Gill flays a series of placid landscapes

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4   Ibid., p. 94
5   Ibid., p. 11
6   Ibid., p. 10

with light, which he produces using charming, low-tech methods.

In *Rewrite the Year*, Melissa Mongiat and Mouna Andraos position the Surrey urban screen as a site for global debate inspired by the human microphones of the Occupy movement. The "human microphone" is a method for transmitting human voices in the setting of a large public gathering. Here the words of a human speaker at the centre of the group are repeated, at intervals, in concentric waves by the audience, so that the words can be transmitted through the gathering without the use of projected sound.

This recalls McLuhan's idea of technology as an extension of human capacities or senses — but, in this case, the method invites an interesting inversion: it is a fundamentally technological but completely human activity; something we have learned from the machine but have taken back from it.

The project goes further, as it is structured around the idea of inviting the public to revisit the events of 2011 through the news headlines of the past year. The revolu-

tions of the Arab Spring, the flourishing and as yet unresolved protests of Occupy Wall Street that have spread to hundreds of cities globally, the threat of collapse of the global financial markets and the cascading failures of banks — these events form the backdrop of the work. Here we are invited to revisit the headlines and to re-form them; to erase and rewrite them in the way we would like them to have been. *Rewrite the Year* is a hopeful message that transgresses the irreconcilable, linear advance of time and turns our accelerated culture back onto itself, using the tools and processes of instantaneous communication to revisit our mistakes rather than allowing them to fuel the conditions in which these mistakes keep happening.

In *Explore the Future of Creativity,* Jeremy Bailey takes a different approach to the form of the urban screen, addressing the radically commercial context rather than the possibilities the form holds for collective action. As a critique of this space, Bailey produces a commercial for himself.

Bailey films himself alone in his studio — the solitary artist captured hard at work. But his gestures produce unexpected results: fantastical graphics and shapes; a cartoon gun shooting rays; rainbows flying from his fingertips. His performance-oriented practice centres around the use of custom augmented reality software that overlays graphics on top of the photographic image. The array of visual effects he produces is an innately silly and over-the-top extravaganza of internet aesthetics — a world of rainbow halos and rotating .gifs. Soon a text crawls across the bottom of the screen: "Jeremy Bailey, Famous New Media Artist, Explore the Future of Creativity, *www.jeremybailey.net.*"

In addition to this video, designed for the context of a large public screen, Bailey's project includes an extended campaign of Google ads and paid promotion on YouTube that runs throughout the exhibition.

For McLuhan, one of the implications of electric speed is that it allows us to observe, chart and ultimately cooperate with the massive, far-reaching patterns in culture that are created by communication technology. Electric speed marks the onset of an accelerated era that for the first time in human history allows cultural patterns to become clear. At the heart of Bailey's work is an interest in the absurdity of contemporary technology and media cultures. Perhaps a question becomes, then, is it a normal evolution of culture — or a stranger world than ever — when a Canadian guy in a turtleneck and denim shorts shoots rainbows from his fingers and has advertisements and guns and laser beams and multi-coloured .gifs and Google ads and a website?

Like Bailey, Jillian Mcdonald's video projects engage, on a fundamental level, with popular media culture, and depend on performance in that she appears as a character in her videos. In much of her work, Mcdonald explores the position of the subject in the face of contemporary popular culture, often filtering her explorations through the genre of horror.

With *Hunger*, Mcdonald positions herself in a staring contest with a vampire —

actually, with three vampires — famous, handsome vampires from contemporary popular culture.[7] The first from *True Blood*,[8] the second from the *Twilight Saga*,[9] and the third from *Being Human*.[10]

Mcdonald has stared in the past: she has stared at Billy Bob Thornton[11] and at Brad Pitt.[12] But there are reasons that the staring contest in *Hunger* seems stacked against her, not least being that the idea of a vampire depends on an inversion of timescale: a vampire is an instantiation of eternity who exists within, but is constantly at odds with, the linear continuum of historical time. There is also the issue of desire and the way the current vogue for vampires neatly dovetails with a puritanical pro-abstinence message delivered through

novels and films to North American youth.[13] Mcdonald takes on the subject of longing and places it into a paralyzed, competitive moment between two subjects, writ large on an architectural exterior. The video addresses hunger, duration, competition, attention, desire: there is both a pull and a stillness alongside the irony. It is the frozen and extended outtake from an imaginary film. Here speed is addressed through slowness. We experience a stasis that is produced not by inactivity but by intense and focused concentration to not move, to not break the connection.

A recurring reference for Marshall McLuhan and one that serves as a direct metaphor for the impact of electric speed is Edgar Allan Poe's short story, "Descent into the Maelstrom." In this story, a sailor describes how he was able to survive a hurricane that caused a gigantic whirlpool. After observing the action and effects of the whirlpool, the sailor opts to clasp onto a barrel, which prevents him from being sucked into

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7   *True Blood* began as a series of books and has become a TV series on HBO. *Twilight* also began as a series of novels and has spawned the four-film *Twilight Saga*.
8   Bill Compton played by Stephen Moyer.
9   Edward Cullen played by Robert Pattinson.
10 John Mitchell ("Mitchell") played by Aidan Turner.
11 *Me and Billy Bob* (2003)
12 *Staring Contest with Brad Pitt* (2009)

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13 All three vampires are trying to abstain from blood and, in Edward's case, sex.

the vortex that is swallowing the ship. Taking this narrative reference as a starting point in the making of *Gravity*, Jon Sasaki travelled to the U.K. to experience first-hand a kind of strange, real world vortex — the Ken Fox Wall of Death.

A Wall of Death is a vertical racetrack where motorcycle and go-kart riders are suspended by centrifugal force as they race around, allowing them to obtain impossible angles. The Ken Fox Wall, which is 20 feet high and 32 feet in diameter, is made of Oregon pine and was built at a shipyard in New Brighton, U.K., in 1995.[14]

For the video, Sasaki filmed Alex Fox riding a 1920s Indian Scout motorcycle. Framed against a red and yellow tent and the impossible vertical of the wood frame, Fox circles the track, eventually standing up on the moving bike as it continues to circle.

The Wall of Death exists as a piece of popular culture — a recurring act at Glastonbury, a setting for an Oasis video, the subject of a short amateur video that is one of YouTube's top hits. It is a phenomenon that itself has a life within the whorls and eddies of information ecology and the culture at large. It is something we see but can't quite believe — a real world marvel. On film we are conditioned to wonder whether the effect has been generated by computer manipulation, but this is part of the point. The Wall of Death is a marvel that depends on the physical laws of the world.

It becomes difficult to establish a clear notion of vertical and horizontal when watching Sasaki's video. Relationships between figure and ground are challenged: the daredevil's skill depends on and works directly in relation to speed as a force. Extending this further, Sasaki manipulates the footage to achieve extreme slow motion, creating new conditions for the action. The rider must accelerate or he will fall, yet here he is slowed.

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14 Walls of Death began to appear in the U.K. in 1929 and became widespread over the next decades, eventually diminishing in popularity by the end of the 1950s. By 2011, there are only two Walls of Death in the U.K., including the Ken Fox Wall.

In Will Gill's *Firefly*, we find his signature illuminations: this time glowing arrows are shot from house to house in the darkness of a Newfoundland outport town — across barrens, through forests, outside church doors, and into vast oceans. These classic landscapes are initially so still that they have the quality of photographs; then they give way to motion when they are suddenly sliced by mysterious, points of light. Each point is juxtaposed on this landscape — a kind of surprise lightning beam that interrupts what could otherwise be understood as a very traditional pictorial view.

We don't know how these points of light are being produced or what they mean; we don't know where they are coming from or where they are going. There is something of tracer-warfare in them: they are not necessarily benign. And yet there is something utopian about them as well. Fast, beautiful — they somehow reference both nature and technology.

In a world where it might, strangely, be easier or more predictable to produce com-plicated computer-generated effects than to shoot bows and arrows, the artist does just that: he straps glowsticks to arrows and, with groups of friends, blasts them over landscapes at dusk. This play with light depends on process and the hand-to-hand action of being in the world. Against the dusk and then the darkness, these points of light seem like a metaphor for information, travelling in all directions with unspecified urgency and proliferating wildly. They are a reminder of the world — the real world in which all of this perpetual information travels through, over and within.

SWITCH OFF! OR: MORE TIME FOR OURSELVES

☐ Mirjam Struppek

The presence of digital moving images in our urban environments is growing. The recent world soccer championships and the Olympics in China have left a lot of public transmission screens dispersed all over our cities[1]. New screens are being set up for the London Olympics. The advertising industry is predicting growth for "digital out-of-home" media. Urban or regional screen networks, on public transport for instance, are becoming increasingly available, and there is renewed interest in media facades.

There is also, however, growing public intolerance of the light emitted from large monitors, especially when their content lacks popular local appeal. With experience, the nationwide BBC "public space broadcasting"[2] initiative aiming at the installation of large monitors in central urban locations has shifted to include more specifically local content in order to increase popular acceptance. There is, incidentally, no advertising on these monitors. We should also remember the extraordinary initiative of São Paulo's mayor, banning all public advertising from the urban environment, to huge popular acclaim.

The digital out-of-home industry has acknowledged the need for more diverse programming, including news, public service announcements, and

1   This essay was first published as "A Plea for the Media Arts" in Public Art 2.0,
PublicArtReview, issue 41, Fall/Winter 2009, pp. 46-49
2   BBC Big Screens Public Space Broadcasting Initiative,
www.bbc.co.uk/bigscreens.

entertainment content, amid their advertisement programs. Planning authorities are attaching more stringent conditions for architectural integration and content. But only with a real understanding of the medium will the local authorities be able to influence its development in favor of the public interest.

If installation of such media in the public domain were contingent on the inclusion of cultural content, these screens could be an arena for social experimentation—and for art. Public space, whether physical or virtual, is an area for the creation and exchange of culture, for strengthening local economies and the cultural fabric, and for providing local identity.

The BBC's public space broadcasting initiative generates content in close collaboration with local authorities, artists, and educators in each specific location. Besides "public news, information and education points," the program's purpose is to provide a high-profile outlet for visual arts, digital innovation, and local filmmaking. Thus, Yoko Ono's return to Liverpool's Bluecoat in April 2008 was shown live on the BBC Big Screen in Liverpool[3], while in Bath, a collaborative research project, Cityware, uses the screens to interactively involve the local population in the creation of community art and games.

Nevertheless, a number of issues present a potential for conflict among the public broadcaster and local political or arts institutions and cannot be underestimated: Should displays of violence, nudity, discrimination, or drugs be restricted? How do you present art to a public that is not specifically prepared to visit an art event? How relevant are official "content guidelines"? Moreover, the involvement of local residents may yield unexpected fears and resentments—not to mention the liberties advertisers take to shock and seduce consumers. Ultimately, artists might have to be ready to work in contexts ranging from popular entertainment to communally watching a sports event. On the other hand, with skilful programming, media

3   BBC Big Screen Liverpool, www.bbc.co.uk/liverpool/big_screen

art also presents a totally fresh opportunity to reach completely new audiences.

The most exciting merger of a TV-format screen and a public urban space has been achieved in Melbourne's Federation Square with its FedTV.[4] With an agenda of community-building and sustainability, it is a good example of how screen projects may build sustainable relationships among culturally diverse citizens of a vibrant, modern city.

Federation Square's main plaza centers around a prominent 200-square-meter public LED screen, a rare case of early consideration of the marriage of new media and urban design. The screen is primarily for the use of local groups for their festive activities. Thus, the 2008 Urban Screens Festival[5] developed its programming in collaboration with local video and arts festivals, and included professional development workshops for young media artists. To mitigate light pollution, a special *Dark Nights* program features

video works in darker colors with less hectic changes in lighting. Moreover, the program must work without sound—since noise ordinances strictly prohibit sound, permanent urban screen art must function as a purely visual language. One method of transcending this "sound barrier" is demonstrated at the Contemporary Art Screen in the redevelopmet area Zuidas, Amsterdam[6] Positioned next to a train station entrance, this project CASZ presents three-minute silent shorts to passersby. If your interest is stimulated, you can use your mobile phone as a loudspeaker by calling a particular number.

The *Mia*[7] temporary media facade covering building works at Milan's landmark Cathedral (Duomo) Square consists of a digital section for arts and noncommercial public service announcements, framed by large conventional advertising scaffoldings. The first *Mia* series attempted to counter its commercial surroundings with a participatory

4   Federation Square, Melbourne, FedTV, http://www. federationsquare.com.au

5   Urban Sreens Melbourne 2008, http://www. urbanscreens08.net

6   CASZuidas, Amsterdam, www.caszuidas.nl

7   Media facade MIA (Milano In Alto), http://www. urbanscreen.net

approach: Passersby could contribute their portraits straight onto the screen through a national competition. Whether something so simplistic can seriously challenge commercial advertising remains questionable.

For their one-month *Tarantula* project, the Milan-based Fondazione Nicola Trussardi presented works by 15 established artists during twice-daily hour-long screenings. Most impressive was Pippilotti Rist's series of 16 one-minute video segments, *Open My Glade[8]*, originally commissioned in 2000 by the Public Art Fund in New York City, where it aired in Times Square. It represented one of the most successful treatments in a commercial format, using the screen's window-like character to afford fascinating views into an altogether different commercial media universe.

A different approach is represented by the Streaming Museum[9] project, which attempts to link urban screens to present joint, linked exhibitions "on cyberspace and public space on seven continents." Billed as a "hybrid museum for the twenty-first century," the Streaming Museum commissioned artists to create works that were then displayed on public screens across the world, as well as on the Internet and handheld electronic devices.

In the fall of 2008, the Berlin Media Facade Festival[10] presented a number of works in the public domain. Twenty-four Berlin-based artists participated, producing site-specific facade works for SAP, a software firm; Berlin's 0_2 World arena; a historic gas storage facility, or gasometer; the cultural center Collegium Hungaricum Berlin; and a public information terminal operated by the street furniture producer Wall. The artistic challenge consisted in working with new resolutions, different pixel spacings, and new sizes and viewing distances. During the development of projects it also became apparent that the built facades serving as screens would always reveal something about their

8   Project „Open my Glade" by Pippilotti Rist, www. publicartfund.org/pafweb/projects/00/rist_p_s00.html
9   Streaming Museum, a new hybrid museum, www. streamingmuseum.org

10 Media Facades Festival Berlin 2008, www.mediafacadesfestival.com

corporate operators, which defines their relationship with the general urban environment and the particular locale. Hence the Gasometer and 0_2 screenings were perceived as iconic markers of the redevelopment of Berlin and the impending gentrification of the affected areas. The festival culminated in a heated debate on the furious opposition by local residents to nighttime light emissions.

The artworks for the Gasometer reflected on the role of the media facade as a communications medium with participatory potential. The *Stimmungs Gasometer* created by Benjamin Maus, Julius von Bismarck, and Richard Wilhelmer transformed the structure into an indicator that reflected residents' moods. In his work Sonic *Parole—Think different, Be yourself, Join the revolution!* for the 0_2 entertainment arena facade, artist Georg Klein created an ironic commentary on radical social and political slogans of the 1960s and 1970s that are now often transformed into messages of radical chic in contemporary advertising.

Architecturally well-incorporated and purpose-built screens can provide interesting aesthetic experiences with space and structure. During daytime the LED lights incorporated into the curvilinear window frames of the arena disappear completely, while providing interesting perspectives into interior and exterior space at night when the building is lit inside. Depending on the intensity of the latter, the interior either outshines the advertising message or is eclipsed by it.

The newly built Hungarian cultural institute Collegium Hungaricum Berlin[11] uses its media facade for self-promotion, as an artistic medium, and to generate funds for its operations. The festival offered an opportunity to try out the newly fitted rear projection equipment and raise the public profile of the location and the facilities. Consequently, Peter Greenaway was later happy to show his *Tulse Luper Suitcases* project as a live veejay performance projected on the facade, during the Berlin Film Festival in Spring 2009.

11 Collegium Hungaricum Berlin (CHB), www. hungaricum.de

The Freewaves Hollywould Festival[12] filled TV sets and monitors in 30 selected stores along Hollywood Boulevard with new media art. Additionally, new art videos were shown in and on 2,200 TV sets in transit buses throughout Los Angeles, while artist-activists simultaneously staged guerrilla-style actions that questioned the appropriation of media for surveillance. "Helping communities see their own image without a corporate lens has been a major motivation for Freewaves ever since the beginning," explains the organization's director, Anne Bray. The videos ranged in content and location, including a gender program that looped in the store window of an erotic supply store and a documentary about people who traveled to New Orleans to help residents after hurricane Katrina.

Some architectural projects have proven to be suitable for longer-term presentations of media artworks. An important condition is the successful aesthetic amalgamation of the screen itself with the architectural building shell. The more the light-pixel installation becomes an artwork, the less its appreciation depends on constantly changing content and promotion — a fact demonstrated in the now legendary Bix media facade,[13] which covers a part of the Kunsthaus Graz building with an organic form of light rings. For a large cultural institution like the Kunsthaus this concept serves well as additional unique exhibition space for special artistic productions, communicating creatively with the public. The Ars Electronica Center[14] has recently followed this example.

High-quality site-specific content, however, can transform an ordinary facade. The Dexia Tower in Brussels is an exemplary instance of a corporate effort to create a strong profile for a high-rise through the application of art and events. The special light game *Touch* by Lab[au] used a huge touch-screen installation in front of the tower as interface for interactive engagement with the public. Another corporate project, SPOTS,[15] at Berlin's Potsdamer

12 Freewaves HollyWould Festival, www.freewaves.org

13 Kunsthaus Graz with BIX media facade, www. museum-joanneum.at/en/kunsthaus/bix-media-facade
14 The new Ars Electronica Center, www.aec.at/center_building_en.php.
15 SPOTS light and media facade, Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, http://spots-berlin.de/en

Platz, consisted of a series of curated media artworks displayed monthly on 1,800 conventional fluorescent light rings, installed temporarily behind the glass facade. The project showed the challenge for site-specific content if the building itself is not a clear landmark—especially, in this instance, in the visual clutter of the redesigned Potsdamer Platz. To draw attention to the installation, artist Terry Gilliam created two humorous screen sculptures that triggered the passing public into action. These fairground-like figures in front of the building provided a wry commentary on the overstaged surroundings of this tourist location.

Experience so far has demonstrated that only sustained and determined joint efforts by artists, architects, cultural operators, and a concerned and well-informed public will create the necessary conditions to appropriate urban screens from exclusive commercial use.

As a forum for user-generated content, urban screens may help to redefine our notions of urban communities, mobilizing citizens to take part in actively shaping the public space and its urban interactions. Media artists can play an important role in this appropriation by experimenting with urban screens to increase their potential for building community, sharing experiences, and ultimately, facilitating exchange within our diverse urban societies.

Mirjam Struppek works as urban media researcher, lecturing and publishing essays with a focus on the livability of urban space, the public sphere and its transformation through new media. She developed the concept of Urban Screens and co-founded the *International Urban Screens Association* in 2008. With Susa Pop of Public Art Lab she developed the *Media Facades Festival*, a new exhibition format for media arts.

REWRITING 2011, ONE WORD AT A TIME

☐ Sylvie Parent

Which event made the headlines on January 25, 2011? Or on March, 11 2011? What about the events of the past few days? As the year draws to a close and retrospection is in the air, Mouna Andraos and Melissa Mongiat have devised a way to peruse the news of 2011 and to provide the public an opportunity to add their two cents' worth. On the Surrey Urban Screen, viewers will see newspaper headlines from the beginning of the year to the present and be able to modify them, one word at a time. The content of these titles thus transformed, they will reinvent recent history, commenting on and deflecting it in tandem with other participants.

Normally, these bold headlines are presented to us and help shape our understanding of the world without our seeing any reason to doubt them. They provide tightly packaged information that piques our curiosity and, quite often, provokes an emotive response in us. Today, digital technology has given us the means to react and leave behind our role as passive readers. We are no longer content with being mere receptors of the media's one-way communication. Thanks to the social media and the numerous sources of alternative information on the Web, we now have access to multiple perspectives and lines of expression. The project *Rewrite the Year* fits perfectly with an era in which our sources of information have fragmented, communication is multi-directional and citizen participation is on the rise.

Another contemporary phenomenon to which Mongiat and Andraos' project is directly tied is the increasing presence of the digital in public space. We now know that the exchanges taking place in the social media have a real effect on the world and enter into public discourse. Certainly the impact of the social media on the great protest movements of the past few months—the Arab Spring, the Indignados, the Occupy movement—confirms this. They have become true instruments of change, responsible for the great waves of unrest rocking the planet. More than ever, McLuhan's ideas on the global village and simultaneous communication are being borne out. With technological means of communication we now have the means to act and react almost instantaneously to events taking place in distant parts of the world.

Naturally, the headlines around these protest movements will figure prominently on the *Rewrite the Year* screen, but they will not be the only ones. In keeping with viewers' diverse interests, the news stories taken from local and international newspapers will address a variety of topics in order to provide an overall picture of the news. What sort of results should we expect? A variety of contributions reflective of those rewriting them: critical, absurd, humorous, poetic. These rewritings will take whatever forms the community of writers wishes to give them, presenting a colourful look back on the year that is drawing to a close.

This one-word-at-a-time rewriting exercise is reminiscent of literary games based on constraint, such as those of the Oulipo group, which have also garnered many adherents in the digital universe. Group rewriting activities based on precise rules seek to unleash creativity by specifying the field of action. In *Rewrite the Year*, the technique used obliges participants to work with an existing text and the contributions of other writers. By limiting their rewriting to a single word, participants must vary the statement only slightly to obtain the desired effect. The meaning will obviously evolve with each successive replacement, giving rise to a kind of narrative within each headline and from one

headline to the next. Such unpredictability in the textual transformation will certainly make the challenge highly attractive to participants. The playful aspect of the activity and the desire to participate in a group creation will prove to be powerful motivators.

When we look at Mouna Andraos and Melissa Mongiat's past work, moreover, either individually, together or with other collaborators, we realise that this playful quality is a large part of their artistic practice. Montreal residents saw this last spring with the piece *21 balançoires* in the entertainment district. Similarly, their playful spirit was very much in evidence in the *Giant Sing Along* at the Minneapolis State Fair. This playful aspect, the role of self expression and the feeling of contributing to a shared result are the main ingredients of their work.

Several of their past projects (*The Good Conspiracy*, *Musée des possibilités*, etc.) also encouraged the exploration of narrative forms in unusual settings. More rarely, however, have participants had to confront serious content the way they will with the headlines

on the *Rewrite the Year* screen. Certainly the local and international news stories of 2011 call out for self-examination and involvement. The *good participation*[1] these artists promote is also *living with our time*[2], to have antennae, to listen to and be present in the world around us. It is up to participants to revisit the events of 2011 in a critical or whimsical manner as a way of sharing ideas with others and expressing one's hopes or opinion. As in any good look back, positive elements will be found alongside more negative ones, and participants will compose a series of statements with a number of nuances and twists and turns.

Over time, the gap between the date of the headlines and that of their projection on the screen in Surrey will be whittled down.

1   Good Participation is an initiative of Kelsey Snook and Melissa Mongiat to "create interactive, meaningful and engaging experiences." http://www.goodparticipation.com
2   Living With Our Time is the name of a creative agency operated by Melissa Mongiat, Mouna Andraos and Kelsey Snook, which "empower[s] people to have a place in the stories that are told around them." http://www.livingwithourtime.com

Sylvie Parent is the artistic director of Molior, an organization specialized in the production of new media exhibitions and projects. She has been involved in the international art scene as a curator and a writer for the past twenty years. Among her curatorial projects, the collective exhibition *Inside* was presented in the 3rd Beijing International New Media Art Exhibition (2006) and at Paço das Artes in São Paulo (2008). She co-curated *Location / Dislocation* for the New Museum in New York (2001) and was responsible for the Web art component of the *Biennale de Montréal* 2000. Sylvie Parent has worked as an editor for *HorizonZero*, an online magazine published by the Banff New Media Institute (2002-2005) and *CIAC's Electronic Magazine* (1997-2001). She has written extensively on art for many printed and electronic publications.

The look back will be complete and spectators will set about reformulating the present. During this countdown from the past to the present, *Rewrite the Year* participants will have travelled the breadth of a year in about a month. They will revisit and redo 2011 in fast motion. This temporal contraction may very well bring a fresh perspective to the year-end review. As Marshall McLuhan said in his book *Understanding Media*, "electric speed at bringing all social and political functions together in a sudden implosion has heightened human awareness of responsibility to an intense degree".[3] The *Rewrite the Year* project, carried out as part of an event paying tribute to this famous thinker, may very well accomplish just that.

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3   Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 5

RÉÉCRIRE 2011,
UN MOT À LA FOIS

☐ Sylvie Parent

Quel événement a fait la manchette le 25 janvier 2011 ? Quel autre, le 11 mars 2011 ? Que dire de l'actualité des derniers jours? En cette fin d'année propice à la rétrospective, Mouna Andraos et Melissa Mongiat ont imaginé un moyen de passer en revue les nouvelles qui ont marqué 2011 et d'offrir au public l'occasion d'y mettre son grain de sel. En commençant par le début de l'année pour arriver jusqu'au présent, les spectateurs verront apparaître les grands titres des quotidiens sur le Surrey Urban Screen et pourront les modifier, un mot à la fois. En transformant ainsi les contenus de ces titres, ils réinventeront l'histoire récente, la commenteront et la détourneront avec la complicité des autres participants.

D'ordinaire, ces grands titres nous sont livrés et contribuent à façonner notre compréhension du monde sans qu'il nous soit donné de les remettre en cause. Ils fournissent des éléments d'information bien ficelés, pour piquer notre curiosité et provoquer, bien souvent, une réponse émotive de notre part. Or, les technologies numériques nous donnent maintenant des moyens de réagir et de sortir du rôle de lecteurs passifs. On constate à l'heure actuelle que le public ne se contente plus d'être un simple récepteur de la communication à sens unique des médias. Il dispose aujourd'hui, grâce aux réseaux sociaux et aux nombreuses sources alternatives d'information sur le web, de multiples perspectives et voies d'expression. Le projet *Rewrite the year* s'inscrit précisément dans notre époque d'éclatement des sources d'information, de communication multidirectionnelle et de participation citoyenne.

Autre phénomène de notre temps auquel ce projet de Mongiat et Andraos est directement lié, la présence de plus en plus marquée de l'univers numérique dans l'espace public. On sait maintenant que les échanges prenant place dans les médias sociaux ont une portée bien réelle dans le monde et parviennent à voir le jour sur la place publique. Assurément, l'impact des médias sociaux dans les grands mouvements de constatation des derniers mois – le printemps arabe, les Indignés, le mouvement Occupy – nous le confirme. Ils sont devenus de véritables instruments de changement, responsables de grandes vagues de turbulence se répercutant à l'échelle planétaire. Plus que jamais les idées de McLuhan sur le village global et la simultanéité des échanges trouvent une résonance juste. Grâce aux outils technologiques de communication, nous avons désormais les moyens d'agir et de réagir quasi instantanément à des événements qui se déroulent à des points distants sur la planète.

Bien entendu, les grands titres qui touchent à ces mouvements de protestation occuperont une place importante parmi ceux qui apparaîtront sur l'écran de *Rewrite the Year* mais ils ne seront pas les seuls. Prélevés dans plusieurs journaux locaux et internationaux, les faits de l'actualité porteront sur des sujets variés à même de solliciter les intérêts diversifiés des spectateurs et d'offrir un portrait général des nouvelles. À quels résultats faut-il s'attendre ? Aussi bien des contributions critiques, saugrenues, humoristiques que poétiques à l'image des auteurs qui les auront réécrites. Ces réécritures prendront des formes que voudront bien lui donner la communauté de rédacteurs et présenteront une rétrospective haute en couleurs de l'année qui s'achève.

Cet exercice de réécriture, un mot à la fois, rappelle certains jeux littéraires fondés sur la contrainte (comme ceux de l'Oulipo) qui ont d'ailleurs fait beaucoup d'adeptes dans l'environnement numérique. Les activités d'écriture collective basées sur des consignes spécifiques visent à déclencher la créativité en précisant le champ d'action. Dans *Rewrite the Year*, le procédé utilisé oblige le participant à tenir compte d'un texte préexistant et des

contributions des autres rédacteurs. En limit-ant la réécriture à un seul mot par collabora-tion, il s'agit pour le participant de faire varier l'énoncé pour obtenir le meilleur effet de sens désiré. Évidemment, la signification évoluera avec les remplacements successifs et une forme de narrativité s'installera pour chaque titre et d'un texte à l'autre. Certainement, l'imprévisibilité de cette mouvance textuelle rend le défi fort attrayant pour les participants. L'aspect ludique de cette contribution et le dé-sir de participer à une création collective con-stituent des facteurs de motivation puissants.

D'ailleurs, en considérant les propos-itions passées de Mouna Andraos et Melissa Mongiat, que ce soit leurs projets élaborés in-dividuellement, en commun ou avec d'autres collaborateurs, on se rend compte que cet aspect ludique est très présent dans leurs pratiques. Les visiteurs montréalais en ont fait l'expérience le printemps dernier avec les *21 balançoires* au Quartier des Spectacles. De même, lors de la Minneapolis State Fair, avec le *Giant Sing Along*, l'esprit du jeu était certainement au rendez-vous. Le côté ludique

de l'expérience, la place donnée à l'expression de soi de même que la sensation de contribuer à un résultat commun forment les ingrédients principaux de leurs réalisations.

Plusieurs de leurs interventions passées favorisaient également l'exploration de formes narratives (*The Good Conspiracy, Musée des possibles*, etc.) dans des contextes in-habituels. Plus rarement dans leurs projets cependant, les participants ont eu à faire face à des contenus graves, comme ce sera le cas forcément avec les grands titres diffusés dans *Rewrite the Year*. Certainement, l'actualité locale et internationale de 2011 porte à s'interroger et à s'impliquer. La *bonne par-ticipation*[1] que valorisent ces créatrices, c'est aussi de *vivre avec son temps*[2] avoir des an-tennes, être à l'écoute et se rendre présent au monde qui nous entoure. Aux participants de revisiter les événements de 2011 de manière critique ou fantaisiste de façon à partager des idées avec les autres, émettre des opinions ou des souhaits. Comme dans toute bonne

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1   www.goodparticipation.com
2   www.livingwithourtime.com

Sylvie Parent est directrice artistique de Molior, un organisme spécialisé dans la production d'expositions et de projets en arts des nouveaux médias. En tant que commissaire et auteure, elle est impliquée dans le milieu des arts depuis plus de vingt ans. Parmi ses projets d'expositions, on compte *Inside* présentée lors de la 3rd Beijing International New Media Art Exhibition (2006) et au Paço das Artes à São Paulo (2008). Elle était co-commissaire de l'exposition *Emplacement/Déplacement* pour le New Museum de New York (2001) et responsable du volet art web pour la Biennale de Montréal 2000. Sylvie Parent a agi comme rédactrice de plusieurs magazines, notamment *HorizonZero*, une revue électronique publiée par l'Institut des Nouveaux Médias de Banff (2002-2005) et le *Magazine électronique du CIAC* (1997-2001). Elle a rédigé de nombreux textes sur les arts tant dans les médias électroniques qu'imprimés.

rétrospective, les éléments positifs côtoieront ceux qui sont plus négatifs et les collaborateurs composeront une série d'énoncés aux multiples nuances et rebondissements.

Au fil des jours, l'écart entre la date des titres et celle de leur diffusion sur l'écran de Surrey s'amenuisera. La rétrospective sera complète et les spectateurs reformuleront le présent. Durant ce compte à rebours, du passé vers le temps actuel, les participants de *Rewrite the Year* auront parcouru une année en un mois environ. Ils auront revu et refait 2011 en accéléré. L'expérience de cette contraction temporelle pourrait bien apporter de nouvelles perspectives sur cette revue de l'année. Dans son livre *Understanding Media*, Marshall McLuhan disait de la vitesse de l'électricité qu'elle a « intensifié à l'extrême le sens humain de la responsabilité. »[3] Le projet *Rewrite the Year* réalisé dans un événement qui rend hommage au célèbre penseur, pourrait bien accomplir exactement cela.

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3   Electric speed at bringing all social and political functions together in a sudden implosion has heightened human awareness of responsibilty to an intense degree. » Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 5.

ADSPACE/ARTSPACE:
Jeremy Bailey and the Future of Creativity

☐ Caitlin Jones

In 1989 TV viewers in Canada became the unwitting consumers of video art. Stan Douglas' *Television Spots* — twelve 30-second mini-narratives — were selling no product or service, but instead interjected incongruous, fragmented narratives into the otherwise prescribed landscape of evening television. Through *Television Spots* and his later, similar work *Monodramas* (1991), Douglas took on the form of the television advertisement as a way to problematize our viewing of this deeply codified medium. *Television Spots* is not an overt critique of advertising or broadcast television power structures, but rather it forces the spectator to confront expectations of what we see in specific media environments. Of course Stan Douglas was not the first artist to occupy the form of the television advertisement, nor the first to invite us to question our consumption of broadcast culture. These critical questions have been with the medium since its inception, often tied in with notions of deconstruction and the subversion of dominant forms to make way for a more democratized media landscape.

With television firmly incorporated into our domestic spheres, the public sphere has become almost equally dominated by another form of broadcast technology — the urban screen. On buildings, next to highways and in public squares, the LED sign, with its constant advances in size and brightness, has become an integral part of the landscape.

In the anthology *Urban Screens Reader*, scholar Erkki Huhtamo traces the history of visual advertising in urban environments. From 17th century

handbills to current LED signs, Huhtamo outlines an historical trajectory of advertising in urban space. Although critical of the unrelenting encroachment of these signs in the public realm, Huhtamo is careful to outline the broader cultural functions these screens can engender, beyond simply advertising. Quoting Oscar Wilde who said that 19th century advertisements brought "colour into the drab monotony of the English streets"[1] Huhtamo illustrates the expanded function of urban screens as decorative architectural elements, as community relations hubs, as art-specific venues, and as hybrids of all of these. While broadcast television similarly became a hybrid space through public and community access television, the urban screen's embededness within the public sphere confers on it a unique position in the contemporary urban landscape.

One of the most famous displays of outdoor screens exists in New York City's Times Square. Times Square, the home of the "Broadway" theater district, has always been a cultural site in the city, but over the past decades has become a mega-spectacle deeply committed to a capitalist position. This said, the innumerable LED signs that comprise this public space has also had a rich history of artistic intervention. In 1982, Jenny Holzer's *Truisms* appeared on one of the first of these screens, the giant Spectacolor board. Phrases like "PROTECT ME FROM WHAT I WANT" and "ABUSE OF POWER COMES AS NO SURPRISE" ran alongside Cheetos logos and a host of other advertisements promoting Holzer's desires. *Truisms* importantly and influentially interjected a cool critical component into a consumerist frenzy—an injection of art into a non-art context. Since Holzer, numerous artists have had their works screened on Times Square's jumbotrons, often made possible by the New York non-profit organization Creative Time's *59th Minute* program. Since 2000 the *59th Minute* has aired videos by artists such as Tibor Kalman, Geneviève Cadieu and William

1   Huhtamo, Erkki. "Messages on the Wall: An Archaeology of Public Media Displays." *Urban Screens Reader*, Eds. Scott McQuire, Meredith Martin and Sabine Niederer. Institute of Network Cultures: Amsterdam, 2009. p. 21

Kentridge in the last minute of every hour on the large Astrovision screen in Times Square. This program has been almost universally lauded as a successful urban screen project and has laid the groundwork for a number of other endeavours, ensuring that artist interventions will be an ongoing component of the Times Square advertising spectacle.

Discourse around urban screens tends to be the domain of architecture and urban studies. The idea of the screen as one node in a larger public space through which essential issues and tensions between commercial, artistic and community forces play out is a central one. This focus becomes clear in a quote by urban screens scholar Mirjam Struppek who wrote that "urban screens can be understood in the context of a reinvention of the public sphere and the urban character of cities, based on a well-balanced mix of functions and the idea of the inhabitant as active citizen instead of properly behaving consumer."[2] With

this, Struppek also brings into focus another essential element in the discussion—the public. A discussion of the role of the spectator as an active agent is key to any discussion of urban screens and the effectiveness of artistic interventions on them. How are we expecting art in this context to be viewed and consumed? What measures for success — for audience engagement, for effective critical intervention — do we have?

As with previous interventions into the broadcast sphere, an ameliorating tendency can be read throughout artistic projects that take place on urban screens. Within this tendency the classic play of high versus low or the civilizing nature of art over crass commercialism plays out alongside other common dialectics such as public versus private. In the essay "Interpreting Urban Screens" by artist and curator Anthony Auerbach, he raises questions about the ideological functions of these screens and the role of art within them. Specifically, whether this mode of distribution adequately engages broader audi-

2   Quoted in Decker, Annet. "City Views from the Artist's Perspective: The Impact of Technology on the Experience of the City." *Urban Screens Reader*. Eds. Scott McQuire, Meredith Martin and Sabine Niederer. Institute of Network Cultures: Amsterdam, 2009. p. 222

ences or if it simply illustrates "the tendency towards displaying culture as if it were separate from the conditions of its reproduction and the acceptance of a marginal position."[3] For Auerbach, the insertion of art into a primarily commercial context reinforces a historical and subservient position of art to capital. Viewed from this perspective we might ask whether, for example, Creative Time's *59th Minute* project has been truly successful in carving out an effective model for art presentation in a commercial urban environment or if its placement in the very last minute of the hour only highlights its position as secondary to a larger capitalist project.

For artist Jeremy Bailey, one of the five artists commissioned to make work for urban screens as part of the Electric Speed project, this is an essential question. Rather than providing an opportunity for "millions of passersby… to pause and see their surround-

ings anew through the eyes of artists"[4] Bailey sees art on the urban screen as "a self-marginalizing strategy. In a way, an advertisement of the irrelevance of art."[5] The notion of the hybrid space where commerce, community and culture critically engage with each other holds massive potential for some. For others, it highlights a perception of art's role as mere window dressing. Even in the context of the Surrey Art Gallery's art-only urban screen, where the Electric Speed exhibition is being launched, the spectre of the advertisement looms large due to the association of urban screens or facades with billboards.

Equally relevant to the discussion of the effect of art on the urban screen environment is its inverse: what effect does that environment have on art? What is the effect of injecting art into this overtly consumptive model? Again, for Bailey, the position creates less than ideal circumstances for production

3   Auerbach, Anthony. "Interpreting Urban Screens." *First Monday: Special Issue* #4 (2006): Oct 20, 2011 <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1546/1461>

4   Creative Time. Web. Oct. 20, 2011 <http://www.creativetime.org/programs/archive/59/artist_retrospective.html>
5   Bailey, Jeremy. Email interview with Caitlin Jones. Aug. 17th, 2011.

and reception. "The frequency or time that work is up onscreen is very low and if the public is lucky enough to glance up at the right time they are often unaware that they aren't looking at advertising (constraints on what is suitable for young audiences etc. also contribute to this pain — all public art suffers from this)"[6]. Whether in the public sphere or in a more traditional gallery setting, art always exists with constraints, but this multi-use public space, in concert with the temporal nature of the form, imposes further limitations. *Television Spots* worked precisely because the viewer was unaware they were not looking at advertising, but its meaning was dependent on the context of the 1990s media landscape. Before DVRs and iPads allowed us to view media in a non-linear fashion we were a captive audience plunked down in front of our televisions for a set duration with set expectations. Within the context of the urban screen we are confronted with a wildly fractured media landscape that relies on the accidental encounter.

Stan Douglas said about *Television Spots*, "I couldn't tell audiences that I was an artist and that what they were seeing was 'art' because as soon as that happened they would no longer think that the 'television' was speaking"[7]. By 'television' Douglas refers to the overarching framework of the broadcaster (more specifically the CBC and its advertisers) that control what we see. Douglas' anonymous insertion of art into the hierarchical structure of broadcast television is an attempt to destabilize our relationship with it. His anonymity enables us to question what we see in this controlled environment, but is essentially replacing one form of hierarchical information transfer with another – in this context the commercial is simply replaced by art.

As an artist Jeremy Bailey takes a different approach. Rather than a "disruption" or "insertion" Bailey sees himself and his art as part of the same urban/technical/cultural landscape in which his work is being seen. This approach reflects his work on the

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6   *Ibid.*

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7   Watson, Scott, Diana Thater, and Carol J. Clover. Stan Douglas. London: Phaidon, 1990.

Internet, a media landscape that operates independently of traditional cultural hierarchies, obliterating ideas of high and low as well as commercial and cultural. With his work *Explore the Future of Creativity* Bailey explores a fluid attitude to notions of commercialism and consumerism by creating an advertisement for himself. *Explore the Future of Creativity* reveals Bailey performing alone in his studio where virtual armour and weapons created using custom-made software augment his rather thin frame. As cartoonish laser beams and seemingly random shapes and colour gradients fly around the screen, the tag line "Famous New Media Artist Jeremy Bailey. Explore the Future of Creativity. www.jeremybailey.net" runs across the bottom of the frame. With this textual gesture he takes on not only the form of the commercial, but also its content. His wry reference to himself as "Famous New Media Artist Jeremy Bailey" rather than simply "artist Jeremy Bailey" directly references the ironic invisibility of the media artist in a highly mediated landscape and further, the ego of the solitary

artist/genius in his studio. In a sense, what Bailey is alluding to is that he really could use some advertising. For him there is utility within this context, and he uses our commercial expectations to his advantage, attempting to advertise himself into broader notoriety.

Bailey's work also draws into focus a wider media landscape that includes mobile technologies: phones, cameras, laptops. Not confined to the centralizing form of the large urban screen, *Exploring the Future of Creativity* becomes a multi-level ad campaign for art—specifically for his own art. Rather than use the mobile device as a way to interact with the urban screen itself[8] Bailey would rather focus on how our personal, portable, social screens can function alongside the larger advertising spectacles, and how they can extend these platforms. As such, as part of the project he has purchased ad space so that during the exhibition period Google ads for the "Famous New Media Artist" pop up on the

8   Certain types of work for urban screens rely on this type of interaction, in which members of the public change and affect content on a large, shared screen or façade.

search engine and alongside emails as well as on YouTube. Through these strategies Bailey's work conveys a nuanced grasp of our experiences with these everyday technologies.

In the end, has Bailey created "an ad for the irrelevance of art" or has he avoided creating one? Is *Explore the Future of Creativity* a truism or a Cheetos ad or something different, or in the context of contemporary culture in 2011, is this question relevant? Like Douglas, Bailey is asking us to question our expectations of what we see and to question the context in which we see it. And with his advertisement he questions the encroachment of advertising in all facets of our lives, but importantly, he is equally critical of the notion that art should — or that it even has the ability — to mitigate this. Despite his skepticism, Bailey manages to be neither defeatist nor celebratory with *Exploring the Future of Creativity*. Rather he uses the urban screen platform and its highly contested position as an opportunity to exploit the expectations of both advertising and art.

Caitlin Jones is the Executive Director of the Western Front Society in Vancouver, BC. Prior to this appointment she had a combined curatorial and conservation position at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and was the Director of Programming at the Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery in New York. As a curator and researcher, Jones has also been responsible for developing important tools and policy for the preservation and documentation of electronic and ephemeral artworks. She was a staff writer for Rhizome and her other writings on contemporary art and new media have appeared in a wide range of periodicals and other international publications including *The Believer*, *Art Lies*, *Cory Arcangel: A New Fiesta in the Making* (exhibition catalog), *Nam June Paik: Global Groove 2004* (exhibition catalog) and the upcoming edition of the *Documents of Contemporary Art* series published by Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press.

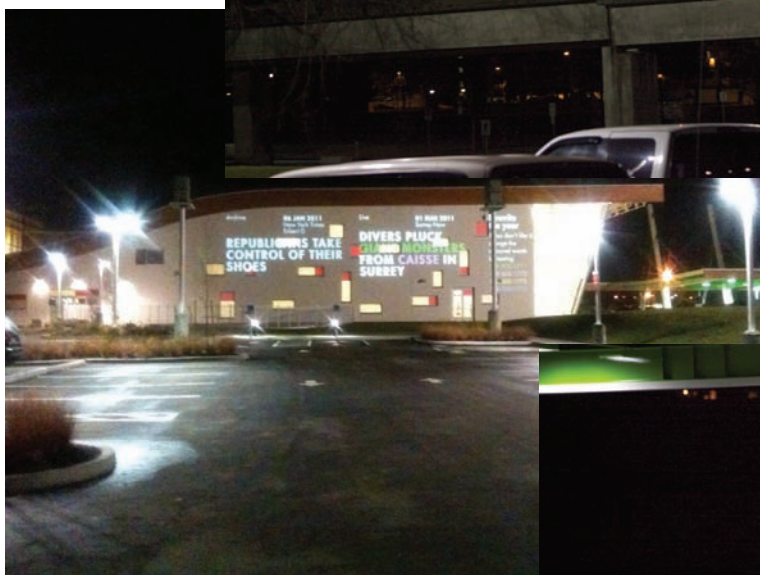# MELISSA MONGIAT & MOUNA ANDRAOS

Rewrite the Year

From the desert of Yemen to the urban centres of New Delhi, Athens and London, to cities across North America, this past year has seen an extraordinary wave of protests sweeping the world. Everywhere people are taking to the streets calling for change, reclaiming their right to express themselves and refusing the status quo.

Starting on December 2nd, 2011 and running through to January 15, 2012, the large scale urban screen operated by the Surrey Art Gallery on the exterior wall of the Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre in Surrey, British Columbia becomes the site of Rewrite the Year, a tribute to the year 2011.

Rewrite the Year is an interactive installation that revisits 365 key headlines of 2011. From protests, elections, conflicts, change, victories and other events – local and international – the year is re-written and re-broadcast. Citizens are invited to participate in the project, collectively rewriting history through an online web interface or through text messaging to the live screen.

Headlines used for this project are drawn from local and international newspapers such as Surrey Now, the Vancouver Sun, The Globe and Mail, The New York Times and The Guardian. Transformed headlines are collected and archived. As the artwork moves through the 2011 headlines yesterday's news becomes today's headlines.

Editing

06 JAN 2011
New York Times
(514) xxx 6772

REPUBLICANS TAKE CONTROL OF THEMSELVES

Rewrite the Year

Change the coloured words by texting:
778-800-1771

JAN 2011
ardian

Editing

06 JAN 2011
New York Times
(778) xxx 2084

FLOODS SLAND TENS ANDS

REPUBLICANS TAKE CONTROL OF THE

anonymous

If you don't like it, change it.

A YEAR LATER, HAITI FIGHTS BACK

REPUBL CONTR DRIZZY

LICANS TAKE TROL OF THE LD

Change the coloured words by texting:
778-800-1771

rewritetheyear .com

Mouna Andraos & Melissa Mongiat

Mouna Andraos and Melissa Mongiat share a practice in participatory artworks involving audience, interaction and technology. They have created projects for PS/MoMa and Eyebeam in New York as well as London's Southbank Centre and MUTEK. They are based in Montreal.
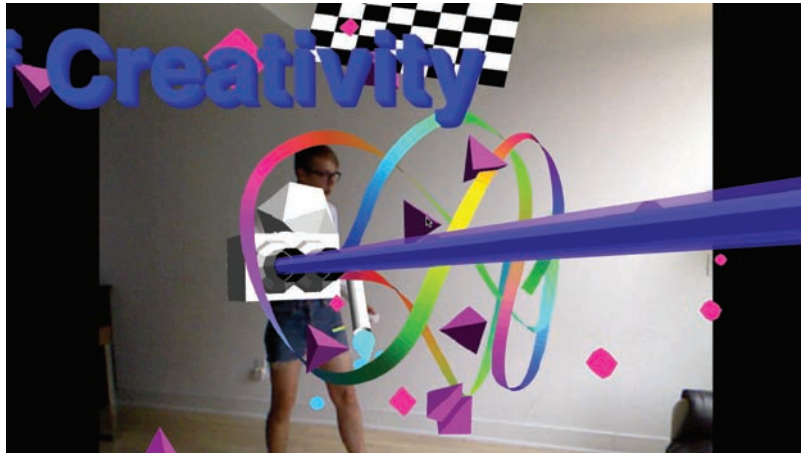
JEREMY BAILEY
Explore the Future of Creativity

Jeremy Bailey's performance-oriented practice centres around the use of custom augmented reality software which overlays graphics overtop the photographic image. In the video work *Explore the Future of Creativity*, Bailey has produced an advertisement for "Famous New Media Artist Jeremy Bailey". Bailey's ad, designed for presentation on large scale public screens, runs concurrently with an external advertising campaign on Google adwords and YouTube. The work explores the urban screen as a commercially-driven element of public space and extends the urban screen to include the small, mobile, personal and social screens of our other devices. Bailey uses the aesthetics of the Internet and the perpetual cartoon "now" to interrogate relationships between cultural and commercial contexts and to challenge expectations of both advertising and art within the frame of contemporary global media culture.

Jeremy Bailey

Jeremy Bailey is a Toronto-based
new media and performance art-
ist whose work explores custom
software in a performative context.
Recent projects include perform-
ances at the Tate Liverpool and the
New Museum in New York.

JILLIAN MCDONALD

Hunger

With *Hunger,* Jillian Mcdonald inserts her image digitally into TV and film scenes from three contemporary vampire stories - *Twilight (New Moon)*, *True Blood*, and *Being Human* - in order to engage in a staring contest with the vampires. Time is suspended in the staring contests which no one wins and no one loses. Mcdonald takes on the subject of longing and places it into a paralyzed, competitive moment between two subjects, writ large on an architectural exterior. The video addresses hunger, duration, competition, attention, and desire.
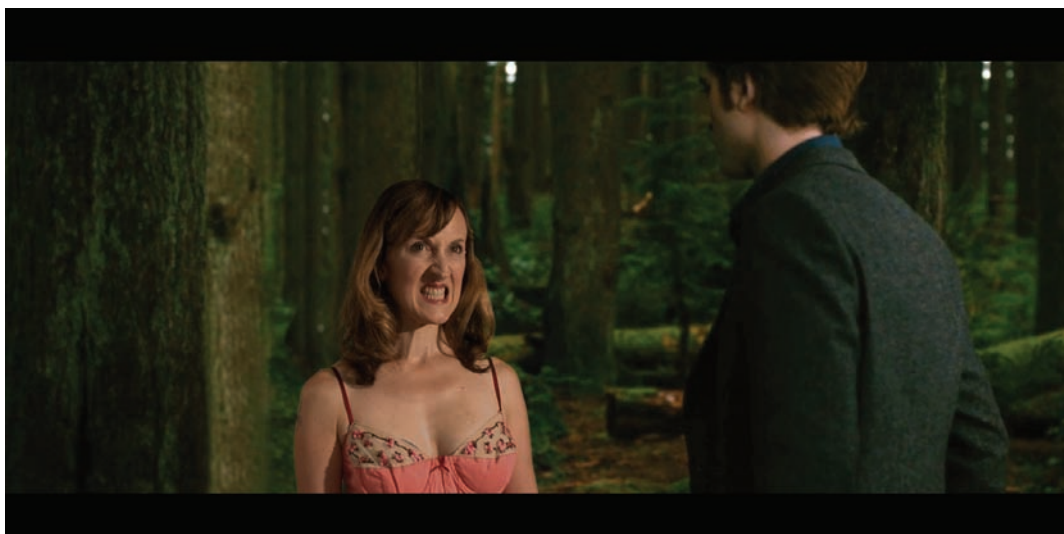
Jillian Mcdonald

Jillian Mcdonald incorporates performance into videos, installations, and audience participation-based projects. Her work examines popular film genres such as romance or horror in relation to their effect on audience and society. Recent solo shows and projects include Lilith Performance Studio in Sweden and Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in New York.

JON SASAKI
Gravity

In this video a daredevil performs on the Ken Fox Wall of Death, a cylindrical wooden track 20 feet high and 32 feet in diameter. The audience is keenly aware that deceleration on the steep vertical wall is not an option; slowing down would produce catastrophic results. Sasaki explores this action as an analogue for our culture of "electric speed", identifying an imperative to continue along this trajectory (or, more likely, accelerate.) Shot at a high frame rate and presented in slow motion, the rider appears untethered from the physical forces that are keeping him aloft. Centrifugal motion becomes invisible and physical space is distorted as the rider seems to take on the ability to navigate impossible Escher-like planes. With a triumphant gesture he appears to transcend physical form, to float. He is both angelic and forebodingly reckless.

Jon Sasaki

Jon Sasaki is an artist working with performance-for-video, objects, installations and interventions. Recent solo shows include the Art Gallery of Ontario and Good Intentions, a seven-venue touring exhibition coordinated by the Doris McCarthy Gallery. He lives and works in Toronto.

WILL GILL
Firefly

In Will Gill's video *Firefly*, illuminated arrows are launched through the darkness of a Newfoundland outport town, across barrens, through forests, outside church doors and into vast oceans. Associative of both nature and technology, the kinetic points of light interrupt what could otherwise be understood as very traditional pictorial views, and bring to mind the material world within which we experience accelerated information.

Will Gill

Will Gill is a visual artist with a background in sculpture and a wide-ranging exhibition history that includes artist-run centres, commercial galleries, and public galleries and museums. Gill was selected to the national longlist for the Sobey Art Award in 2004 and 2006 and is based in St. John's, Newfoundland.

INTERVIEW WITH MOUNA ANDRAOS & MELISSA MONGIAT
Steve Dietz

Steve Dietz: Like many artists today, you seem to have a flexible practice according to specific projects. Who are you and how do you work?

Mouna Andraos & Melissa Mongiat: Who are we? We are believers!

We are a multidisciplinary practice and work in a collaborative way. We are Mouna and Melissa and our studio is based in Montréal. We also share our practice with Kelsey Snook, based in Portland.

We work with an array of partners and collaborators from all over the world (well, almost) including writers, industrial designers, balloon experts, architects, engineers, composers and cooks.

We come from the fields of interaction design and narrative environments. Our work is at the junction of participation, design and technology. Our approach is context based, we are interested in the challenges related to different places, stories, and publics. The process often starts with problem solving and gets mixed in with intuition.

We also like to use new (communication) technologies and media as opportunities to make a difference in people's lives and invite them to take ownership of their environments.

Mouna Andraos and Melissa Mongiat, Giant Sing Along, Minnesota State Fair, 2011; commissioned and presented by Northern Lights.mn, Minnesota State Fair and Minnesota State Fair Foundation with the support of Bremer Bank.

SD: Participation, interaction, and narrative are key elements of your practice. Can you share some of the insights you have learned about the 'sweet spots' of each of these broad areas? What are you looking for to activate these terms in your projects?

A&M: Participation needs attention. Designing 'good' participation is always a bit scary. However, when you are attentive to some key considerations—like the incentives, the rules to take part, the feedback mechanisms—and test a lot, participation starts to become an interesting raw material from which ideas can emerge.

SD: Two hugely successful recent projects, *21 Balançoires* and *Giant Sing Along*, have some of the simplest interfaces I've seen for large-scale participatory works. *Rewrite the Year* seems necessarily more complex. One of the ways I think you are attempting to motivate people to participate in it is through the trope of the end of year 'best of' onslaught, a familiar interface, just as the swing and karaoke are familiar interfaces that you hijacked for your earlier projects. Still, it seems that crowd-generated narrative is an inherently more difficult task to successfully simplify. Talk about some of the specific decisions

and trade-offs you made to increase the likelihood of success with *Rewrite the Year*.

A&M: In a sense, the entry door to *Rewrite the Year* remains a familiar and accessible one since people interact via cell phones using text messaging. We figured it would be the easiest way to get anyone to contribute text (and ideas) – more familiar than a custom designed on-site interface for example. But as you point out, and regardless of the interface, collective narratives and content-based projects do present a different level of challenges.

So we resort to prototyping as a starting point, testing content and interactions with different people. The main realization that came from prototyping is that we have to really frame individual contributions in order to serve the greater story.

One of the 'rules' of the interaction is therefore that we limit the number of words per headlines that can be edited to a maximum of three words. We then try to have a good diversity of headlines that speak to as broad a public as possible (including keeping

a minimum of entertainment and sports). A simple color code links phone numbers to the editable words helping people find their way through the process.

But all and all, we're betting on a replay function, featuring all the headlines animated with their previously submitted edits, to be the magical element that will inspire people to take part.

You also have to understand the context of the piece. This is a large-scale screen in a location that does not have a lot of foot traffic outside of event openings etc. In that context, the replay function also becomes important: as we don't anticipate a lot of participation on site (because the audience is simply not there), we're hoping the installation will at least have an audience, in cars, on the road, in the train around it, and online.

SD: One of the thorniest issues in 'contributory' work is often the ratio of noise to signal, so to speak. How do you think about this in relation to *Rewrite the Year* and your work in general?

A&M: Framing participation by giving people a clear context of why and how they can participate helps limit the noise vs. the signal. The key is often in the invitation itself. But of course there will always be noise. It's just part of the game. The challenge then is to enable to community to take ownership of the messages and the project. Any input can be overwritten at any given time, so whether it's a political message you dislike or an unproductive contribution, we try to tell them that "If you don't like it, change it" and give them the means to do it easily.

The Surrey screen will bring another layer of difficulty because community self-regulation requires a critical mass of participants – which the site doesn't naturally have. That is also why chose to open up the project online.

SD: I think there is often a line drawn between what might be termed fun play, such as *21 Balançoires* and *Giant Sing Along*, and playful seriousness, which could perhaps describe *Rewrite the Year* or The Good Conspiracy. How do you think about participation in relation to empowerment and agency and a larger set of social and cultural issues?

A&M: We think playfulness is a tool to stimulate ownership and empowerment. 21 Balançoires gave back to the public a piece of urban space that was previously unusable. It gave them the power to animate that site. Giant Sing Along, through the act of singing together, generated a sense of community amongst the crowd, and we like to think it contributed to a sense of belonging, a bit of "I feel happy to be with these people" that day.

Rewrite the Year is indeed more political. We have been moved by the movement that started from Occupy Wall Street and the Indignados and so decided to work on a project that could take part in the larger attempt to make citizens more active. Through the very simple, yet playful gesture of rewriting a small piece of history, we're hoping we can contribute to more awareness on what is going on all around the world and how we could all be more actively involved in it.

In the end, *Rewrite the Year* will probably end up generating more poetic and absurd

headlines, but we believe that, just like swinging musical swings or singing "I Love Rock 'n' Roll" with mom and dad, it is a means to provide a shared moment of empowerment to people.

SD: Thank you so much for your time and thoughts. My last question is what can cultural producers and presenters do to help you and other practices like yours succeed?

A&M: Participatory work often raises a lot of concerns from producers and presenters as it comes with less control over the content, over the experience as well as over the process. Placing the user at the center of a project demands flexibility and the ability to react and adapt quickly. It also requires a willingness to tackle these concerns rather

than avoid them; to support the development of innovative approaches that help deal with issues when they come up rather than simply trying to avoid them at all costs.

Cultural producers and presenters have to accept that the success brought about by truly open participation cannot happen without taking risks.

Steve Dietz is a serial platform creator. He is the Founder, President, and Artistic Director of Northern Lights.mn. He was the Founding Director of the 01SJ Biennial in 2006 and served as Artistic Director again in 2008 and 2010. He is the former Curator of New Media at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he founded the New Media Initiatives department. http://www.northern.lights.mn

INTERVIEW WITH JEREMY BAILEY
Garnet Hertz

Garnet Hertz: To somebody that isn't familiar with your work, how would you describe it?

Jeremy Bailey: My work consists of my persona, Famous New Media Artist Jeremy Bailey, writing and demoing creative software that responds to real world art contexts. These demos are sometimes performed live—in person and over the internet—and sometimes recorded and uploaded to YouTube, where they live among other artists and regular citizen demos of their work.

GH: What concepts and technologies have you been working with lately?

JB: For the *Electric Speed* project I've been working with online direct marketing advertising platforms (Google AdWords, Facebook ads, YouTube ads) and for another commission I'm working on I've been working with bots and virtual assistants. Because I am increasingly busy and unable to answer all media requests I have created a Siri like version of myself to handle interviews for me in the future – I did this before the release of Siri but the project is not yet live.

I've been working at extending the visibility of my persona and following through on a mantra I came up with that "I will produce more artwork of less value faster". You could substitute artwork for content. But basically I have this belief that post internet culture values volume of information over content. An update on Mubarak's death is as valuable to me as a notification that it is my highschool sweetheart's birthday, or at least that's the way the computer sees it. I've also been thinking a lot about marketing and branding and product cycles in consumer technology and performing

some of these same strategies personally as an artist. Of course I'm always working with the newest technologies. I joke that I'm trying to get to the party first so that I can ruin it for everyone else. Recently I've worked a lot with Kinect and with thought controlled computing peripherals.

GH: I've seen you refer to your work as "post-internet"? What does this term mean to you?

JB: To me post internet refers to a generation of artists that have grown up with the Internet and have come to understand it and respond to it as popular culture. They understand it like pop music or tv sitcoms, and they are able to weave it into their practice in ways that transcend specific technical or formal references or constraints. They're basically postmodern artists working in the most postmodern context in existence. My own attachment to this word is derived from my my understanding of video art history and it's

Dialectical Software Gundam Suit (2010)

intersection with YouTube and realtime video hangouts, which I believe fulfill, in popular culture, art theory that was first described in response to 1970s performance for the camera video art. The YouTube video aesthetic is a lot like 1970s 'performance for the camera' aes-

thetic – except that the whole world is doing it now, not just artists in their studios.

GH: Is 'post new media' perhaps a better term for your work than 'post-internet'? In other words, is it more of a reflection of millenial work done on the internet after the phase where new media is no longer new?

JB: This may be true but the internet ultimately shifted the conversation from a realtime relationship between technology and the artist to a realtime relationship between the artist and their reflection as it is mediated by technology. This isn't new, but rather a popular re-investigation of a state of being first uncovered by performance for the camera video artists in the 1970s and described by Rosalind Krauss in her essay titled "The Aesthetics of Narcissism". The internet has made everyone more aware of themselves, they have become the material, a traditional new media artist still considers technology the material.

GH: I've made a graph that describes three phases of digital media: new media, consumer commodity, and surplus/remixing. Do you see your work falling into the last category? If the last category was relabeled 'post new media' or 'post internet' would you see your work in this category?

JB: It's a great coincidence that you shared this with me. I'm in the middle of reading Crossing the Chasm by Geoffrey A. Moore, which takes Everett Rogers' consumer adoption curve and attempts to explain to marketers of technology products how to bridge the gap between early adopters and mainstream customers. New media defines itself as transgressive for choosing not to cross this marketing chasm. It's permanently stuck in neutral, 'discussing the potential' but never realizing true mainstream popularity.

I definitely see myself in the last category you mention, uncovering and parodying this strangely wonderful breed of people, but I also see myself in the first category, actively engaged with the one product they produce that I find of significant and popular worth: hope. Ultimately I'm interested in looking backward and forward at the same

time, and I think that's a great way of describing 'post new media' or 'post internet art'.

GH: McLuhan saw artists as antenna of the society – as an early warning system. Do you think this is accurate? If so, what are you warning about? If not, what are artists?

JB: I agree with this statement, though I don't believe it's an artist's job to be rhetorical. That said, my warning is simple: don't ever let a machine tell you how to be creative.

GH: Do you see the self-deprecating component of your work as being Canadian?

JB: It was a great privilege that my first art professor was Canadian artist Colin Campbell. He has a video called *Sackville I'm Yours* in which he parodies an artist named Art Star who lives in small town Sackville New Brunswick. He hilariously and pretentiously describes his 'career' in Sackville in such a way that he simultaneously pokes fun at himself (he was living in Sackville as an artist when he made it) and the entire art world. I remember thinking how amazing this video was within seconds

of it beginning. It was the first time I'd seen someone in a position of power make fun of themselves. I was so used to the opposite, and having completed the greater share of a sociology degree, I knew a lot of white men from good backgrounds just like me had not historically presented themselves the same way. How refreshing would it be if everyone just admitted they were pathetic!

I do think that way of thinking about the world is very Canadian. Or at least Canadians are very self conscious of the fact that they are meaningless and so they rarely recognize success. The good news is I think most Canadians realize at some point that when you recognize how pathetic you really are you can truly be anything you want - and that's when people outside Canada start paying attention to how amazing and different you are.

GH: In what ways is cynicism productive?

JB: Though my point of view may appear cynical, it is actually the opposite. It is my sincere love for technology as a tool for expression

that has led me to create a persona so ignorant and naive that this dream is still possible. In fact I'm much more cynical about the art world than I am about technology. Technology is a prop I use to dance around other issues. That said, I strongly believe in the Marxist statement that a machine is something that uses you. You could say, I'm fighting back against machines. There's nothing cynical about fighting back is there? If it was good enough for Arnold to make three movies about, it's good enough for a nerdy white man to build a career around.

GH: Do you see your work as a type of chindõgu – an invention that is brilliant in one regard, but intentionally backwards?

JB: I love this concept and actually forgot about it until you mentioned it. In my mind the best art is intentionally backward and looks a lot like a brilliant invention. My favourite quote, not sure who said this, is that the best art is art that doesn't look like art at all. I've worked very hard to make my art not look like art, and

I suppose therefore, very backward. Perhaps one day it will also be considered brilliant.

GH: In what ways do you see your work as a parody of the new media art scene of the late 1990s or early 2000s?

JB: My work is a parody of myself. I was a kid obsessed with using technology creatively. My mom loves to tell the story of how she cried when she saw the computer animated birthday card I worked on for a week when I was 9 (she was yelling at me to get off the computer shortly before she saw it). I'm crying as I write this, and I'm not sure if it's because I'm thankful for technology or because I'm mad at all of it's broken promises. I'm 32 years old and I was drawn to video art and then new media because I desperately wanted to preserve and relive a childhood full of magic. More often than not I find myself looking at work and listening to artists that break a promise that technology made to me as a child: That life would be fun, creative and full of possibilities.

GH: What is the most magical aspect of technology?

JB: The most magical thing about new technology is it's unknown disruptive potential. Every new technology starts with the hopeful visionary seed of it's potential, and that fragile creative state when anything is possible is the most magical thing I can imagine. It's like imagination IRL.

Garnet Hertz is a design theorist and contemporary artist whose work explores themes of technological progress, creativity, innovation and interdisciplinarity. Dr. Hertz is Artist in Residence and Research Scientist in Informatics at UC Irvine and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Media Design Program at Art Center College of Design. http://www.conceptlab.com

INTERVIEW WITH JILLIAN MCDONALD

The Cedar Tavern Singers AKA Les Phonoréalistes (Daniel Wong and Mary-Anne McTrowe)

Daniel Wong: Let's start by talking about your use and embrace of markers from popular culture as a material to engage the viewer. This is apparent throughout your practice with your use of the horror genre and in works where you digitally insert yourself into existing films with celebrity actors. This is may be a very broad question but what is your attraction to popular culture as a type of raw material? How do you relate your work to cinema in particular?

Jillian McDonald: My attraction to specific types of pop culture and popular cinema started as repulsion, or less dramatically, disinterest. I started my celebrity-based work in 2003 because I couldn't relate to why people fall in love with or become obsessed with celebrities; my newer horror work sprang in 2006 from a genuine incomprehension of how audiences can enjoy the visceral sensation of terror. In both cases, once I started investigating I lost interest in these critical questions and quickly sunk my teeth into enjoyment of the material. The most interesting thing to me, and where there is common territory, is fandom. For horror in particular, if it weren't for legions of die-hard fans, the industry would fall on its face. In works such as Me and Billy Bob I 'play' the adoring fan, but now with horror I'm tapping into the fan base, even working with fans collaboratively in performances and videos. Horror films are, to my surprise, rife with metaphor, archetypes and rich themes. Although in some ways narratives are

recycled endlessly, there is an evolution. There is so much humour and artifice that I keep finding new things to investigate. Suddenly, for example, we have the gorgeous abstinent male vampire, who is about as far from monstrous as one can imagine – in a competing archetype, there are plenty of scary vampires baring their fangs, but these beautiful vampires are compelling. I'm recently also attracted to the cinematic clichés in horror: the clues that we are in a horror film, rather than say a romantic comedy, begin with the opening credits.

Field of the Dead and Undead, still (2011)

Mary-Anne McTrowe: You've done a number of works the production of which have been in collaboration with horror fans, and interaction becomes an important aspect in some of the other works in their finished form (for example, *The Sparkling*, in which the viewer's proximity to the work provokes a response from the video, or even the *Temporary Billy Bob Tattoos*, whereby anyone can show their adoration for the actor). Can you talk about how engaging with your audience in this interactive way is important in your practice?

JM: The moment I moved to New York I was compelled by my daily interactions in the street to become involved with strangers through my work – at the time my work might have been labeled a social practice, providing services in public spaces in order to interact with passersby. I altered clothing, borrowed personal items, shampooed hair, gave advice and went for walks. Since then a lot of my work has included aspects of participation,

and in some of my recent works I can't resist the exciting collaborative nature of working with fans who play significant roles in making the work. I enjoy the relationship between participant and artist, and the exciting reality that I don't have complete control over the work because so many people are involved. I am directing these performances and videos, but I simultaneously feel like I'm playing the role of director. When I made the Billy Bob tattoos, I had launched my MeandBillyBob.com website and was getting attention from fan websites. I wanted to offer something for those fans rather than just the experience of watching the videos – I mailed out tattoos in exchange for photos of the fans wearing them. On the website I made a gallery of images so the fans could picture themselves as part of their own community. The Sparkling was inspired by many horror films featuring chandeliers swinging out of control; my projected chandelier seems haunted because it sways crazily and emits eerie high-pitched sounds when viewers approach.

DW: The notion of fandom is interesting. As you say, some of these genres or celebrities are driven by their fan base and almost become subcultures in themselves. I have in mind your video, *Field of the Dead and Undead*, where you cast a variety of non-professional actors of various ages to portray zombies (and I am assuming various degrees of fandom as well). Without the standard zombie narrative tropes and camera work, it can almost be read as a documentarian style behavioral study of these fictional creatures – but also on another level, a study of a cultural collective understanding of these fictions. I'm wondering how much you view your work as having an anthropological aspect as well.

JM: I don't consider my work anthropological. I'm not studying people, whether fans or actors, but rather fictional characters. I'm interested in audiences and their relationships to cinema and archetypes that sometimes evolve and sometimes get recycled. Zombies are pretty pervasive in popular culture right now. They weren't when I started this work, but now they are even used to sell books,

cars, and TV. If it weren't for horror fans across the world staging zombie events, there wouldn't be so many zombie films, and vice versa. There's a symbiotic relationship.

Field of the Dead and Undead is meant to be meditative and timeless, it's the longest video I've ever made, by far, at over eighteen minutes. It could be read as a study of collective and individual ideas about how the undead move since those actors were each given a simple direction: to walk onscreen alive and walk offscreen dead. They weren't influenced by each other or me because they were all filmed separately and I didn't teach them how to do it. The characters are the aimless undead, and can be read as something like ghosts or zombies. I read that George Romero (arguably the auteur of the contemporary film zombie) tells his actors that he doesn't want them all moving in the same way – I like this approach, because once you say "drag your feet" for example, then everyone drags a foot and the bigger picture of a field of zombies without individual walking styles will seem less believable.

MM: I like this idea of giving the actors none but the most minimal direction; the individual interpretations of being "dead" and "undead" in the video are quite different, yet all fit into what we understand the "undead" to be according to pop culture. This brings me back to what you said at the beginning, about the cinematic clichés in horror film and the way clues to what type of film we are about to watch are delivered to us as early as the opening credits. What other sorts of clichés are capturing your interest right now?

JM: I'm watching for all the clues, taking note. Visual clues include wind in trees, grey skies and other signs of bad weather, doors opening or closing on their own, disembodied shadows and reflections, broken things such as neon signs fizzling out, dusty abandoned toys, wall-mounted taxidermy, dirty crumpled paper blowing down an empty street (which I see as a reference to the tumbleweed of the Western genre), close-ups of flies, peeling paint and wallpaper, chandeliers or other inanimate objects swaying, lightning illuminating the

setting, dripping blood, the dark side of nature seen in dead or rotting things, uncanny sights such as a decapitated (possibly rolling) head; also cinematic clues like startling jump cuts, strategically implemented slow or fast motion film, and shots that include the monster's point of view. Audio clues include creaking doors, unexpected and loud sounds like claps of thunder, doors slamming, ticking clocks, breathing, scraping, high pitched voices, glockenspiel and toy piano, silence. The list is endless – I've been thinking about making a super long video called *Endless Horror* that simply cycles through the tropes of horror but without any actors, possibly randomized.

Despite the fact that they are clichés these techniques are powerful. *RedRum*, a video I shot in Buffalo in 2009 with a crew and cast of teenagers, consists of clichés specific to ghost or haunted films. It's shot with very little motion, and the surprising result is that despite being predictable in shot composition and arrangement, viewers still find it scary. Those scare tactics are tried and true.

Also the cliché of handsome vampire male, fiercely protective of his young mortal ingénue, is capturing my interest at the moment.

DW: This recently popular brand of the good 'beautiful' vampire narrative has cultivated a massive fan base – though, these fans are a very different kind from the standard horror fans. There seems to be much debate amongst the horror fans about whether things like *Twilight* even qualify as horror and there is even some animosity about the markers of horror being appropriated into this other form. Your interest in this type of narrative makes sense to me since, along with the horror tropes, it also seems to relate in a way to your earlier non-horror themed works that dealt with celebrity romance and jealousy. This is mostly an observation, I suppose, but I just wanted to know if you see it the same way or if your recent attraction to this type of narrative comes from a different place.

Also, I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about your commissioned work for the *Electric Speed* exhibition.

JM: I don't consider the *Twilight* and friends to be horror but they do come from that tradition. The work for *Electric Speed* is called *Hunger*, it's a video for which I've also gone back technically to that earlier work, shooting with green screen and trespassing into existing film scenes with some of these contemporary heartthrob vamps, locking eyes with them in staring contests. I made a video in 2008 called *Staring Contest with Brad Pitt*, which is an endless loop where no one blinks – effectively, no one wins and no one loses. I wanted to make more staring contests but got distracted by other projects, so now I'm taking the time to revamp that project. These vampires are apologetic monsters, somewhat benign, so you'll perhaps need to recognize them to get the vampire reference. Edward from *Twilight* doesn't even have fangs for crying out loud, but Edward is such a household face by now as that saga wraps up it's final segment.

MM: The curators of *Electric Speed* talk about Marshall McLuhan's "idea of the global village [introducing] utopian connectivity as well as physical disquietude: Speed brings a network of moments in which we experience not only smooth connection with other people but dissonant disembodiment from ourselves." They go on to describe the works in the series as questioning "totalizing visions of a simultaneous global culture in order to design or reinvent ideas of connection between people, systems or places, with a critique of speed and technology." Edward's ubiquity is doubtless in large part a result of speed and technology – does work like *Hunger* explicitly critique the role of speed and technology in bolstering (and in some cases producing) celebrity and feeding fandom? Can you talk a bit about your work in relation to the broader themes in Electric Speed?

JM: I am critical of some aspects of popular culture, and the speed and influence with which they spread. For example, McLuhan wrote about hot vs. cold media where what we might call rich media is hot, yet coldness signifies more participation (or imagination) from the viewer/reader. Some of these vampire narratives began in novels, allowing read-

ers to envision their own protagonists and anti-heroes, but by the time the movies were released, everyone everywhere who was connected to the rapid electric force of popular knowledge knew what Bella the ingénue and Edward the vampire, for example, looked like, as well as the gist of their dilemma, without having to read the story or see the film. And it's hard to erase these images because this hot media version is instantly everywhere at once, indelibly replacing our own.

I find it curious that there is currently a squadron of the male vampires I described holding sway on TV and the silver screen. At least one UK series is even being remade in the USA while the original is still being created. I am wondering, are the fans proliferating because there is so much media or is the glut of these soft vampires an answer to what the audience wants? As we discussed, these vampires are like watered down horror monsters – when there are more fascinating and terrifying on-screen versions out there, why is this one so compelling?

The Cedar Tavern Singers AKA Les Phonoréalistes are Mary-Anne McTrowe and Daniel Wong. They have been collaborating since 2006 and have been called "considerably more entertaining than the writings of Clement Greenberg." http://www.thephonorealistes.com

INTERVIEW WITH JON SASAKI
Greg J. Smith

Greg J. Smith: Your artist statement describes the plight of the protagon-ists in your video work as being trapped in an "inescapable cycle of trial and failure" and you also liken the structure of many of your pieces to a long-winded, anticlimactic "shaggy dog joke." While many of the scenarios you create are seemingly hopeless, a viewer of your work is often invited to make an emotional investment and root for a positive outcome. So, with all of this said, how do you design your projects? To what degree do you think about the experience and engagement of the viewer? Do you set out to connect with them, or should your work be read as more introspective meditations on the experience of being in the world?

Jon Sasaki: The viewer is of paramount importance to me, and I care enor-mously about what they think. I hope that the work touches on something familiar in the viewer... feelings of frustration, self-doubt, longing, whatever. My intention is not to exacerbate these things, but rather to point to some shared condition. I hope that, if people recognize something of themselves in the work, they find it comforting to know that others feel the same way too. Or at the very least I hope people find some form of escapism in the absurd humour. I want the work to be useful to people in some way. It oc-curred to me though, that maybe these things are only funny to me. Shaggy dog jokes are generally more funny to the teller than the recipient. They are long, clumsy convoluted ways of getting to something that could have been conveyed much more efficiently. Sometimes I think making art is like that. At times the effort far outweighs the results, something that takes months of studio time could maybe be communicated far more economically another way. With a hug or something, I don't know. And sometimes the audience al-ready knows the shaggy dog punchline, they can see coming it a mile away. I actually prefer it that way. Then it's not about the need to hear resolution

to a buildup, it's merely about spending time together.

GJS: I like this discussion about punchlines and hugs – both are refreshing descriptions of the response one might get (or need) after encountering your work. So, while I think it is clear how you feel about the viewer who comes to your work, how would you context-ualize the 'protagonists' in your installations and videos?

JS: Really awful things happen to those protagonists. For the most part, they are doomed to some weird purgatory of irreso-lution. Their narrative arcs are pretty much flat-lined, or at best, incredibly shallow sine waves. It seems a bit funny that my work often has its genesis in autobiography, be-cause I honestly don't see my own situation in such bleak, futile terms. I guess they are extrapolations of small frustrations and self-doubts. After a piece is completed and I step back from it, I usually oscillate between iden-tifying with the protagonist and feeling some deep revulsion for the stasis he represents. There is a lot of pathos in these situations. People often approach the Flyguy and phys-

ically hoist him upright, trying to give him a momentary boost. Even though I don't really invite that kind of 'hands-on engagement', I like that a bunch of cloth, thread and elec-tronics can become a container for empathy.

GJS: I know that your *Electric Speed* piece Gravity was largely inspired by a photograph. In this image, a stunt car is driving along the side of a vertical well and the driver is stand-ing vertically with his torso protruding from the passenger window and his arms are out-stretched as if he were flying. Could you de-scribe your reaction when you first encoun-tered this image and how it led to Gravity?

JS: That photograph was the final piece in a puzzle that I had been trying to solve for a long time. I had wanted to talk about forward momentum, and the imperative to keep mov-ing forward once in motion. I wanted to talk about the perils of deceleration. I had been pondering some other ways to approach it, but when I saw that photo in one of those free commuter dailies, it all came together. I love the gesture he is making... so triumphant, as if the potential dangers of his activity are out of his mind completely. The motorcycle rider

in my *Electric Speed* piece, Alex Fox, makes a very similar gesture while standing upright on his bike. He is incredibly precariously balanced yet he creates the impression that he is oblivious to the danger. He circles quite happily. The image makes me think of Poe's *Descent Into the Maelstrom*, which McLuhan was fond of citing.

GJS: Do you think the figure that "circles quite happily" works as a metaphor for the 21st century citizen? How do speed and daredevilry relate to the navigation of 'supersaturated' media environments?

JS: The rider has a bit of an 'everyman' thing going on, but I guess I wasn't trying to be all-encompassing with the metaphor. I'd be happy if some people found it relatable to some facets of their lives. For me the appeal of daredevilry is in the complacency projected, the rider's apparent lack of concern for the consequences of his actions. That said; I don't really know what those consequences look like when the metaphor is transposed back to the real world. i.e. what the analogue for falling off a cylindrical wall would be when referring to media environments. In fact I like it better when it's an ambiguous, unstated threat. It's a cautionary tale with no clear take-away. Sometimes I walk past
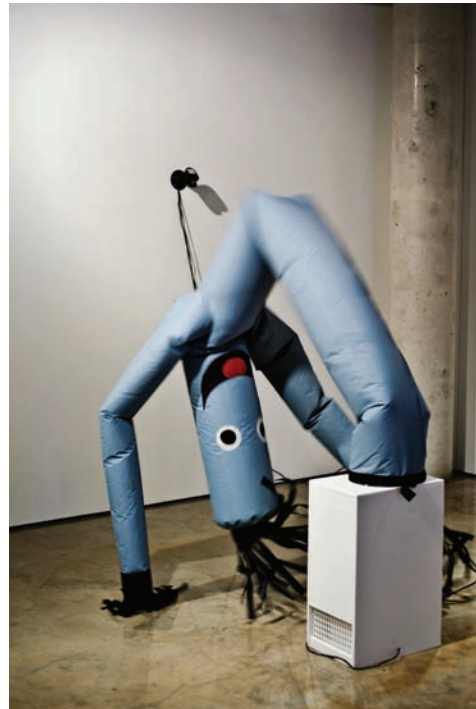
Flyguy Triggering His Own Motion Sensor (2010)
nylon, fan, plinth, motion sensor

Ladder Climb, still (2006)

construction sites and see those signs on the hoarding that say: "DANGER DUE TO _____" and they have not been filled in with a specific hazard. In such a case I don't know whether I should be on the lookout for falling bricks or sinkholes, and it makes me very anxious. I hope this video makes viewers very anxious, I prefer it when I'm not the only one who's agitated. Maybe I see my role as the unhelpful guy standing around rhetorically asking: "should we maybe slow down here?"

And indeed the rider has been literally slowed down in this case. The video was shot at a high frame rate which makes Alex appear un-tethered from the physical forces that enable him to stick to the wall. Slowing the footage down makes the centrifugal motion invisible, and the situation looks even more precarious than at normal speed. The piece is still a time-based work, but the slow-motion imbues it with some qualities of a still image. There is an immediacy to it; the whole pattern (albeit distorted) is legible instantaneously without having to wait for a sequence to unfold. McLuhan might have described it as 'non-linear all-at-onceness' or some such thing. Since the rider has no destination, we know as much about him at a glance as we ever will.

GJS: Lets step away from pure momentum, unidentified sources of danger and triumphant gestures – could you provide a little information on the production of *Gravity*? I know you researched quite extensively to select an appropriate site and filming this sequence was no simple task. Please provide us with some context to understand how this work was created.

JS: In the 1920s and '30s these motordromes were everywhere. In fact they were so common that performers had to look for additional ways to spice up the act… riding with live lions in a sidecar for example. Today, though, they are few and far between. I think there are still a few walls in North America, but they weren't very accessible. So I decided to shoot one of the two remaining shows in the UK. I met up with the Ken Fox Troupe at the Cumbria Steam Gathering in the Lake District, and shot footage for two days. (I appreciate the irony of taking a long transatlantic flight, two trains, a bus and a one mile hike in order to make a piece about *Electric Speed* and the dematerialization of geographic distances.) But it was well worth the trip, the riders were incredibly generous with the access they granted me. I was allowed into the centre of the arena,

tucked in among the parked bikes. That upward perspective was crucial to the piece, but tricky to shoot… I was in tight quarters, following the rider by doing pirouettes with the camera, trying not to bump any motorcycles off their kickstands. Initially I had considered shooting with a high-speed 16mm but in the end it wasn't feasible. That camera takes forever to load, it doesn't autofocus and requires 120v AC, so it was totally impractical. I opted for an HDV camera at a high frame rate and fast shutter speed.

At the conclusion of every show the riders "pass the hat" by inviting the audience to toss coins into the centre of the arena. I was kind of worried about getting smacked in the face with a two-pound coin thrown from 20', but I guess I should be glad I didn't have to deal with any live lions during the shoot.

Greg J. Smith is a Toronto-based designer and researcher with interests in media theory and digital culture. In addition to acting as a managing editor for the digital arts journal Vague Terrain, his writing has appeared in a variety of publications including Creative Applications, Rhizome and Vectors. Greg runs Mission Specialist, a small print and web design studio and is an adjunct instructor in the University of Toronto Mississauga/Sheridan College CCIT program. http://www.serialconsign.com

INTERVIEW WITH WILL GILL
Justin Waddell

Justin Waddell: I am interested in the idea of "peacefulness" in your work. You've used the term several times to describe a couple of different works (Cape Spear, Bareneed, etc.). Could you expand on that and how it might apply to your process of art making?

Will Gill: I think there is meditative quality to the way I approach to the conceptualization of artworks and I think this slow, quiet development of the initial idea sometimes translates to a kind of peacefulness in the completed work. It is often the case whereby I have an idea in my head for a period of time before it comes to fruition, so there is a distillation process that happens before a piece has really even begun, to try and get an idea to its purest form. It is a process of simplification – there is a certain peace in simplicity. I am also interested in the notion of 'calm', specifically periods just before or after pivotal events, and how the calm can still be charged with an air of anticipation, loss or sadness.

JW: In an interview for the exhibition, Salt Concentrates: Will Gill and Annette Manning you mentioned an experience you had, where, while afloat in the ocean, you noticed a sunken bathtub about 20 feet below the surface. You had said that the image was eerie, sad, and beautiful. What is it about the water and distance between the surface and the depths that might create these qualities?

WG: Ever since I was a kid I have had a reverence for the ocean and its power to give and take. I grew up in Ottawa but used to spend summers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. We picked up fish from the fishermen at the wharf and used to hear stories about men being lost at sea after getting tangled in nets and pulled overboard, or meeting fisherman with huge

hands that—more often than not—were missing fingers. These stories and images haunted me for some time so there has always an association of loss in relation to the ocean. When I saw the bathtub in the ocean, I was struck by its formal beauty (its stark whiteness against the undefined darkness of the ocean floor) but it was again tinged with a kind of sadness as I imagined how it could have ended up there. I pictured myself being witness to a great flood. There was also something beautiful about an object that spent its life containing water ending up being enveloped in it. The sculptural work Charred Forrest, 2004/2005 is about an experience I had in northern Ontario a few years back, coming upon a large swath of forest that had recently burned. It was visually striking because the wind-driven fire had been blown through the area so quickly it had only charred the trees half way up. There was a quietness and calm to that scene which was beautiful and the feeling was that I was witness to an end… but also a beginning.

JW: Do you think that perhaps being a witness to both a beginning and an end is the distancing? So, when you are in one place temporally, spatially, or mentally you are also in another. That you are able to both remember the past and project into the future. Is this distancing maybe some of that beauty in the experience?

WG: Yes, I think that is true in some cases. A friend mentioned some time ago that he thought my work seemed to be about transience and transcendence. It had not really occurred to me at the time – as impulses to make things are not always clear to the person making them. But I think he was right in some ways. I think a lot about the fragility of life and lifespans, and that maybe comes out in some of the work I make. Things I see and experiences I have had certainly factor into my creative process. So it is kind of a personal-poetic reading between the beginning and the end that I find so beautiful…. or the end and a new beginning.

JW: Your work is very much about hand-building and the process of fabrication. I think I see a parallel here between your studio methodology and your interests in phenomenology and storytelling. Could you

speak a little about where you think your work originates?

WG: My work comes from a combination of sources and my methodology for producing work is largely dependant on what discipline I am working in. My background is in sculpture, which does not necessarily lend itself to spontaneity and intuitive approach. So in that case I often have a work in mind and that could be based on anything, from a strictly formal exercise, to an idea I had based on something I saw or experienced. Things can be changed of course, but there are no elements of spontaneity involved. I think the parallel you are talking about is best evidenced in my approach to drawing/painting and making videos. Generally speaking, I set out, in my works on Mylar for instance, without any end in sight. It is kind of a stream-of-consciousness, intuitive method to making work. I am interested in not knowing where I am going and making discoveries through chance or trial and error. Images eventually begin to appear and are left if they are appealing enough on a variety of levels. What I like about video is that it allows me to combine my interests in three-dimensional objects with

an approach to art making which allows for chance, unpredictability and experimentation. Furthermore, it lets static objects become animated. Even though my knowledge of digital media practice is novice at best, shooting and editing video is fluid by nature and the DIY feel of the finished video is very much true to the way in which the entire piece developed.

JW: But you also document your process and make those images available on your website along with the final work. This to me presents your work as the product of many decisions and, I would expect, many failures along the way. Your sculptures and paintings have the ability to exhibit their history through the layers of paint or the marks of your tools. What do you think might be lost or gained when working with video? Where might we be able to see the history and/or the hand of the artist in the final work or do you think this is an irrelevant question?

WG: I was one of those people who for the longest time, rejected video because of its apparent inability to engage the audience in a visceral way. Obviously that's not always

true but I am kind of a traditionalist in the sense that I am interested in seeing evidence of the hand of the artist. So I struggle with that when thinking about how and why a particular work should be created in the form of a video. But then again working with video opens up so many new creative opportunities. The way I have approached video so far has been pretty reserved: to use it largely as a simple documentation tool, with little manipulation to the imagery, and only basic editing to the timeline to create some kind of quasi-narrative. I include images of work in progress on my website because I think perhaps it can add a certain extra layer of understanding to a work and also because in many cases the journey to the end was much more interesting than the end result itself.

JW: You mentioned that you were "haunted" by stories and images of fishermen on the ocean. Do you see the act of performing moments, metaphors, as well as building objects for your videos as a sort of engagement with these ghosts?

WG: There is a potency to young peoples' perspectives and imaginations that really interests me. I have a six-year-old boy who is going through a period of being frightened easily by things. It seems to come at a time when kids start learning about the concept of death. When you are young (or old for that matter) life's dark moments can be so haunting. By making reference to these moments in my work it is simply a way of recognizing the beautiful power of the imagination as we face life's realities.

JW: Your video, *Firefly*, which was commissioned for Electric Speed is similar to your earlier work, Cape Spear, in material usage and a sort of 'launching' or 'projecting' of light to interrupt the natural landscape. I think this interruption is more obvious in Firefly in that it cuts through the frame without ever landing or settling. Do you see this interruption as an intervention into nature or an observation on nature? In other words, do you see the video as a sort of documentation of a phenomena, a re-creation of a phenomena, both, or something else entirely?

WG: The commissioned work for *Electric Speed* came about through a kind of meditation on the nature of contemporary communication in Newfoundland. Initially the work was much more of a traditional narrative than the final cut lets on. It involved a moving image of a person swimming in the ocean (apparently lost) in the middle of the night. Word of mouth has always operated as foundation for tight knit communities here in Newfoundland, and the images of light moving through the picture frame were meant to convey signals frantically going back and forth as word spread about an accident. Cell phone signals perhaps. So the landscape imagery was simply part of the portrait of this place. But the obvious narrative elements of the video were removed because of the context in which the video is likely to be viewed: on urban screens. People simply won't have the time on the street to take in a full narrative sequence. The end result, however, still tells the story of a kind of communication. I am interested in the potential reading of the lights in the video as bullet tracers from some unseen conflict. A firefight.

JW: I find this really interesting; I had made a connection to a firefight and/or conflict when I saw the video but I was hesitant to bring it up. Also, now that you've revealed your initial narrative intentions, this work takes on a whole new meaning for me. The opening images of white picket fences, docked boats, and especially the lighthouse set the stage for a much more domestic scene. By that I mean a scene that is familial but separated by distance; like a village, town, or country. The shooting lights can then operate as a warning sign or signal home, very similar to the lighthouse.

WG: I was interested in setting a scene of tranquility in a kind of rural context only to be interrupted by a kind of rush of urgent activity. It's a work of opposites. That's why I like the possible reading of a firefight, it's so out of place but at the same time, not entirely impossible, anywhere in the world. I appreciate your interpretation of the lights as a warning sign or signal home, this is very close to what I was looking for.

JW: This seems to be one of the first instances of a more violent act in your work. You've

had some aggressive connotations to your work such as floating/sinking objects and charred or patched wood but this image of light being shot across a relatively peaceful landscape is different to me. It reads as more unnatural and the mention of a firefight only emphasizes that. Could you expand on this idea of an unseen conflict a bit more?

WG: This work was commissioned to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of Marshall McLuhan and so it is fitting that one potential reading of the lights as a firefight relates directly to the steady diet of war and global conflict we are fed from the mass media machine. A persons' suffering has become big business and a kind of demented entertainment.

Justin Waddell graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design and received his MFA in Integrated Media from the University of Windsor in 2003. He has worked in various capacities at several artist-run centers, festivals, galleries, and magazines in Canada. Waddell currently lives in Calgary, Alberta where he is a Permanent Instructor in the Photography Department and Head of the First Year Studies and CORE Department at the Alberta College of Art and Design. http://www.justinwaddell.ca

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MCLUHAN IN EUROPE 2011

2011 is the 100th anniversary of the birth of media and communications visionary Marshall McLuhan, who identified the mode and societal contours of the media-oriented life we now experience in the 21st Century with greater accuracy than many of his contemporaries. The cultural network project McLuhan in Europe 2011 has explored, critiqued and celebrated McLuhan's impact on European art, media and culture through a series of manifestations throughout the Centenary year.

Known worldwide as Canada's communications guru and infamous for coining and popularising terms such as 'global village', and 'the medium is the message', McLuhan's ideas went further and deeper than his charismatic catchphrases, exploring notions of a complex world contracted in time and space by electronic technologies. These ideas captured imaginations across Europe and the globe, including inspiring the founders of world-leading culture and technologies magazine Wired, who adopted McLuhan as their "patron saint".

The McLuhan in Europe 2011 project created a pan-European conversation that spanned art, communications, and technology. By developing and sharing original thinking on these perennial questions and McLuhan's importance and influence through dozens of events in over ten European nations, we forged long-term relationships between individuals, communities, organisations, and countries.

The projects that we have supported throughout this year have ranged from conferences to exhibitions to a day spent watching television. Electric Speed is a terrific example of using a platform that surely would have intrigued the televisually-conscious McLuhan: what happens when artists create work for what are essentially giant televisions appearing in public space? Both Stephen Kovats (Initiator/Director of the McLuhan in Europe 2011 initiative) and myself would like to extend our congratulations to Kate Armstrong, Malcolm Levy, and all the artists on the occasion of the launch of this project, and also express our excitement as we anticipate the project's tour within Europe.

Michelle Kasprzak,
Project Director, *McLuhan in Europe 2011*

MALCOLM LEVY

Malcolm Levy is an artist, curator, writer and filmmaker living in Vancouver, Canada. Levy's curatorial, film and video installation works have been presented in India, Australia, China, Germany and Canada. Malcolm recently presented at ISEA, The Inter-Society for Electronic Arts, which was held in Istanbul in September 2011. Levy's most recent installation, *A Place to Reflect*, premiered at Nuit Blanche Toronto 2011. Current projects include pursuing an MA in Media Studies at the New School in New York, Director of the New Forms Festival, and developing a media lab and Digital Archives for the grunt gallery in Vancouver. Malcolm is a founder of Revised Projects which is managing a Satellite project for the Goethe Institut in Vancouver. Feature length documentaries include Shambhala (2001-2008) and Walking on Glass (2006-present).

Past projects include co-founding Capital Magazine (1999-2005) and the New Forms Festival (1999-present), undertaking projects for CBC / 120seconds, Virtual Museum Canada, Project Stitch, and writing or curating for Mobile Muse, MUTEK, VIDFEST and Assignment Zero, among others. He was the curator of CODE Live at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, where he oversaw the installation of over 40 interactive media artworks and 8 performances across the city.

KATE ARMSTRONG

Kate Armstrong is a Vancouver-based artist, writer, and independent curator producing exhibitions, events and publications in contemporary media art in Vancouver, Canada and internationally. Her areas of focus include location-aware and perpetual narrative forms, and participatory projects, particularly those which engage with public space. Her work has taken a variety of forms including net art, psychogeography, social media platforms, drawings, and books. Recent exhibitions include Akbank Sanat (Istanbul), Pace Digital Gallery (New York), Centre A (Vancouver), Contemporary Art Centre (Vilnius), and a solo show at the Prairie Art Gallery.

Armstrong has written for *P.S.1/ MoMa, Blackflash*, *Fillip*, *SubTerrain*, and *Granville Magazine*, has contributed to *DAMP: Contemporary Vancouver Media Arts* (Anvil Press, 2008), and is the author of *Crisis & Repetition: Essays on Art and Culture* (Michigan State University Press, 2002). Her books include *Medium* (2011), *Source Material Everywhere* (2011), and the 12 volume *Path* (2008).

She is a founder of Revised Projects which is managing the Goethe Satellite, a 2 year initiative of the Goethe-Institut to produce exhibitions in Vancouver. Other recent curatorial projects include *Tributaries and Text-Fed Streams* (2008) and *Group Show* (2010). An exhibition for the Grunt Gallery in connection with Activating the Archives is forthcoming in 2012.