
Li Yizhuo

VIRAL TRANSMISSION

A Medium in Between, 2020 Research-Based Curatorial Project, OCAT Institute

JOAN SNITZER CHROMOPHORES

Interview via Zoom, July 17th, 2020

Li Yizhuo: Joan, you place the Chromophore series within “our histories and visual surroundings,” and counter the representational assertions of the media through abstraction, a process both highly personal and entangled with the macro vision. Can you elaborate on the specific ways your layering method of Chromophore 2 responds to the overarching narratives of the media culture? Do you agree that the created forms of “freedom” and “illegibility” emphasize more on the performative engagement—to borrow Judith Butler’s notion of gendering, it enables subjects to come into being through the “differentiating relations”—rather than ontological principles of seeing and understanding?

Joan Snitzer: Yes, My work is a process executed by hand and over time. Most of the works contain a dozen or more layers of painterly information. I begin with a sizable washy layer to set a tone or mood onto which I transfer images collected from the media. I download photography from internet sites or transfer images directly from digital magazines. The selected photos describe current events to which I have a personal reaction, politically or personally. Many of them come from architectural magazines that suggest how we should live, what we need to live

with, or merely American-designed environments. I find that perplexing because they indicate how we share the most private moments in our homes. Another type of imagery comes from news feeds that show a stark contrast to the beautifully-styled domestic environments and contrast horrific events happening in the world. I place them together in compositions and wonder how I could occupy these two places simultaneously. The act of viewing and collecting these images every morning creates a kind of anxiety. My artistic process is to re-sort the anxieties and reconcile the conflicts of idealized environments and real living conditions. The computer’s home screen is what I see at the beginning of every day, and I subscribe to half a dozen different current news feeds.

Y.L.: It’s also essential to think about how such news feeds and external sources are curated or dominated by computer algorithms and media platforms’ business interests. At the same time, we feel a sense of control over our actions of subscribing and browsing despite powerful influences.

J.S.: Right, and my immediate reaction is that I can subvert the manipulation by interacting with these images in the material context of my home. The media understands this emotional reaction created by algorithms and their organization of content, enabling distortion. We currently understand that photographs are no longer truths. Often one doesn’t know how an image is selected and who’s mediating it, leaving it illegible. Certain anxiety emerges as we begin to comprehend how representations of freedom of the press, thought, or emotion conflict within this digital reality. As an artist, I want to be sensitive to imaging techniques, becoming more sophisticated, and detect discrepancies within them. Paintings become physical objects transferring the virtual into created material and emotional textures presented in real space.

Y.L.: That is precisely what I’m trying to explore in this exhibition, by playing with the way your paintings are displayed. So departing from the tradition of hanging, I hope to place on a stand and see their spatiality while encouraging audiences to approach it from all angles.

J.S.: I have had them leaning up against the wall, overlapping, or lying on the floor. Most of the works are on wood panels, which give them a stronger sense of physical presence. They hold an illusion of space while building a material existence through the process.

Y.L.: When did you start this practice of collecting and transferring materials onto the panel?

J.S.: I’ve been collecting materials for about a decade now. I used this process in my installations, for example, *Letters from Home*, where I collect objects from my home that had no particular meaning except that they had lived in my house for so long and started to have a purpose connected to me.

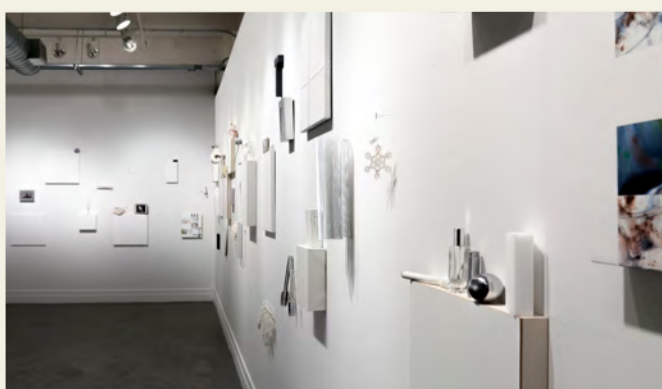
INTERVIEWS

白梦帆 | Peer Bode | Joan Snitzer
Eric Souther | 张瀚文

FROM THE STUDIO

READING LIST

COMMENTARY



LETTERS FROM HOME

Joan Snitzer, installation
A.I.R. Gallery, Sep 7 - Oct 1, 2011



A Medium in Between

Joan Snitzer

It was also a feminist practice, elaborating on the role of women as the keepers of intimate spaces and values. Many of my installations embody whiteness or cleanness prevalent in the tastes of American high culture, representing a class structure and sophistication. The more educated and socioeconomically advantaged, the cleaner your home is, which is ridiculous if you think about how we abuse our natural environment. I purposefully choose images to represent the values of a particular gender, including things we learn to care for and about.

More recently, as a protest, I use heavily saturated colors in my paintings. It is my way of restating or taking back the original inhabitants of those designated white aesthetics.

The Internet is trying to lure us into a very competitive world of image consumption. The ultimate meaning of images is seductively manipulated using contrast and saturation. I repeat the seduction with the materials in my studio, rendered by hand with the richest, brightest pigments possible. I add paint in layers, each becoming brighter, more intense, with more depth and contrast, in competition with the heavily edited images collected on the Internet.

Y.L.: I was thinking of how Judith Butler was talking about gendering. Instead of norms and characters, it's primarily about the differentiating relations—how each body is reacting, and trying to create their specific ties to the culture.

J.S.: Judith Butler distinguishes between sex, the biological term, and gender, a lived experience. Her construction of gender is defined through the repetition of acts or performances. I repeat the actions of my hand through the layering of paint. I hope to reassign my image and culture through repeated performance.

Y.L.: Would you also consider your painting gendered? Some artists would make a clear distinction between a feminist artist and feminist art. How would you see that difference?

J.S.: That's a fascinating question. I've lived with women and women's art my entire adult life and interacted with many highly political feminist groups. Yet, I've chosen to move away from any political representation into abstraction. I prefer to experience my gender as a woman rather than represent it. As you said, I'm trying to build a material body in the painting, without referring to it in an obvious way. I am a living female body, using materiality represented in my work, to refer to the body rather than an illustration of time, act, or temporally finite life. This materialism is very gratifying and intentional.

Y.L.: I've been trying to comprehend this junction or overlap between digital media, the permeating digital network culture, and the individual experience that is again embodied and integrated into the network.

J.S.: I think about being present in an exhibition gallery and continue to perform work on the paintings, adding layers through the duration of the show. It is a constant ping-pong between what I'm experiencing virtually and physically while trying to reconcile those two sets of data. How do we experience the virtual and the physical, daily? There is something beautiful about having virtual real-time communication with friends and colleagues around the globe. I'm still trying to work through that global information, now experienced, make it alive, and bring it back to a living body.

Y.L.: This pandemic has reinforced the junction of physical experience and what's coming through the screen and the digital network. Suppose we think about how we're all encouraged to stay indoors, socially distanced, while our phones are

constantly bombarded with shocking and unsettling news. Everything is getting out of control, the systems are collapsing, and people are dying. It's hard to deal with all such apocalyptic information that's not readily in front of us.

J.S.: During the past few months, after speaking with people in different time zones with varying restrictions of living and normalities, I began to feel invisible back in my own home. I question whether I really exist as a body or just a series of thoughts that absorb a virtual world created in a mental-scape. We're all going to learn how to be comfortable virtually. I feel passionate about creating physical bodies of paint as long as I have hands to document life through materials.

Y.L.: This reminds me of a book series that fascinated me, titled Technographies. By definition, it means the writing of technology, and this group of scholars try to emphasize the idea that technology isn't merely machinery or physical attributes. Instead, it's about the exteriorizing process of human imagination and contrivance about the projection of human experience into the vision of objects; in this process, humans continue to further their imaginations and personal experiences of these functional machines, instead of following specific instructions.

J.S.: I agree, but that human intuition also comes from life experience. The impulse of intuitive action is the result of a history of experience and knowledge. We're grappling with a resolution between science, biology, or, back to Judith Butler, the repetition of culture. The virtual holds the potential of a space in which we can participate as intuitive inventors. We are to sort that out, and this will be our collective history.

Y.L.: It's also why I'm introducing into this exhibition the idea of viral transmission. Viruses are indeed invisible to the human eye, but they can be deadly and bring about horrible experiences on such a massive level. At the same time, our knowledge and information about viruses filter through the lens of science or mass media...

J.S.: And some political filters.

Y.L.: Yes. That's how we generate the illustrative images or renderings of, for example, the new coronavirus, for communications and public understanding.

J.S.: I agree. A year before the onset of Covid-19, I was researching Tulip Mania during The Dutch Golden Age. This was the first time a Western Culture had such access to immense wealth, resulting in prototypes of auctions or commodity markets selling tulip bulbs. The resulting crash of the market is attributed to an outbreak of bubonic plague. History does repeat itself. How will the world be different now, and how is it going to be defined?

Y.L.: Our historical moment is probably evocative of Antonin Artaud's plague theatre, which emphasizes that the essential theater is contagious not in theatrical elements, the mise en scene, but because of its capability to bring forth the perverseness of human mind—and again in Butler's language, the experience that comes into cultural relations.

J.S.: Exactly. This experience creates categories of being alive, sociopolitical identities, and national alliances. I would hope that societies work together in a way that they had not in the past. Currently, most of the scientific community collaborations extend beyond borders and politics.

Y.L.: Can we talk a bit about your other commitment, for example, your involvement in the A.I.R. Gallery for the past decades? I'm particularly curious about the interaction between your artistic practice and A.I.R.'s engagement and operations, specifically in a changing landscape of feminist movements and sociopolitical context.

J.S.: A.I.R. was founded not in isolation, but when many were questioning the authenticity of their culture and authorities. A counterculture was forming in the U.S. during the late sixties and early seventies. It was in reaction



Snitzer's collection of paper files, image courtesy of the artist

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to the Vietnam War, which many people opposed and increasingly turned to mass protests, leading to a critique of authority, government, and culture. Before, there were no women artists exhibited in public institutions. It just wasn't considered. Women, overall, were neither shown nor seen as valuable cultural creators. It seems very strange now to think that way, but that was the foundation of A.I.R. Those women had an opportunity to question how that could be.

So twenty women got together—I wasn't there in the first meetings, but I was there in the first few years as a student intern—and created this collective Gallery. They were women that already had connections through husbands and friends to a commercial or recognizable art world. They knew what they were doing and what women wanted, as far as visibility, but also acknowledged that they weren't going to get it unless they did it themselves. They rented space, each paying \$25 a month. Financially, it was a very different time. New York was in a recession, and things were in a certain way better for artists because one could function with very little money. A.I.R. opened its doors when I was struggling as an art student with professors telling me I had to paint representational paintings because that's what women did. They paint flowers, figures, or pretty domestic life pictures. When I went to A.I.R. as a student, I was greeted by women who saw me as a person and wanted to know what I was thinking and how I saw the artwork. I just didn't want to leave, and I haven't left. I am still at A.I.R. It's going to be fifty years old soon, a very long time for a non-profit. I think its longevity is a testimony to the achievements of this group of women and the continuous need for gender-specific organizations that support the needs of women artists.

Y.L.: Several latest findings on the recent acquisitions and exhibitions at major museums still show a significant disproportion among female and male artists. The gap has not been filled yet. In the A.I.R. archive hosted at N.Y.U.'s Fales Library, I found a fascinating exhibition in 1982, titled *Women Choose Men: An Invitation Show of Work by Men*. Do you have more information about that?

J.S.: That is when I had sparred from A.I.R. to work at the Bronx Museum and the Cultural Council Foundation for "The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Program." The C.E.T.A. program is an important example of what can be done to support artists during the current unemployment crisis. It was the eighties and into the nineties that I started teaching at Barnard, although I was still in touch with several of them at A.I.R.; for example, Nancy Spero was a lifelong friend.

Y.L.: In that aspect, A.I.R. has done well in documenting their practices and forming solid archives. It's beneficial to have a comprehensive view of its history. I do find the Gallery's risk-taking experiments profoundly influential, in which the artists chose the work and organized the exhibition on their own, regardless of others' expectations. That's where I see the operational mode of a gallery can make a significant impact on personal practices.

J.S.: It is critical. The Gallery has to vote for membership as a collective. One needs to apply and present their work and mission, but once accepted as a member, that person has total control over the exhibition. There is no restriction on what can be shown and how it's shown. The Gallery does not interfere, which has led to an enormous amount of fascinating work over the years. That ability to be so open and trying out new things makes it a real experimental space.

Y.L.: Many other artist-run collectives and galleries were booming in the eighties in downtown New York. How was A.I.R. related to the different exhibition cohorts or non-profit initiatives at the time?

J.S.: The art industry was booming, certainly in New York. Many collectives emerged as a part of that, and



Hashtags, 2018-2020, photographic ink transfers, water, vinyl and oil paints on wood panel

A.I.R. was one of the models for them. But the eighties, in particular, was not the most potent time for collectives because of an underlying idea that there were so many successful commercial spaces where people all made money. Comparatively, a non-money-making venture like A.I.R. was not quite popular. A.I.R. certainly succeeded in getting recognition from peers, artists, curators, but not much on the commercial side. It never did and probably never will. It's not designed to do that.

So the fact that A.I.R. has supported so many other programs, lectures, conferences, and international shows, sets it apart from just a group of people wanting to show their work. That's probably why it's still living. It isn't only a gallery, but an organization to support women artists, and at this point, female-identified artists. The reading groups and historic shows promote a kind of cultural vision of gender that doesn't exist anywhere else. The only other organization that I find in some ways parallel and still alive is Artists Space. It isn't gender-specific, but it was specific to the experimental model and community-making events that people could attend and participate in the dissemination of information. It opened about the same time as A.I.R. and is still programming.

Y.L.: From the archive, I noticed that the membership of A.I.R. was still limited to twenty artists until around 2006?

J.S.: We've arranged to have around 18 to 22 member artists in New York, mainly a calendar issue. Now we have different levels of membership, including more people and allowing us to commit to all women artists. The national membership and the fellowship program are for six emerging artists who have never had a one-person show in a commercial gallery. The program has been extraordinarily successful and has launched so many exciting careers by giving young artists confidence and experience.

Y.L.: I noticed in recent years a tendency of associating virality and feminism. Anicka Yi is one of the most prominent artists doing so, who points to the contagious potentiality of feminism. In her 2015 exhibition at The Kitchen, she gathered biological information from a hundred women to cultivate a viral pathogen or the idea of a female figure. Then, in the gallery, used quarantine tents to protect these fragile micro-ecosystems. There could be many parallels or analogies between virality and other concepts as well, nowadays, notably digital media. Your interest in the idea of virus and pandemic started before this year. What were your focuses and approaches?

J.S.: I think that the way viruses are transmitted and absorbed is a metaphor for how art fits into the human condition and culture. From a feminist perspective, it directly relates to how women internalize social conditioning. These messages can be a visual, virtual, felt

emotion, or image. People are more sensitive about how we "ingest" the virus or the viral and what that does to our identity, health, and vision now. It is changing our cultures. The first thing that I did when we reached stage 2 [of reopening] was reconnecting with the paintings that I knew and loved. Now, I am watching closely as I put things back into my life, body, and mind and continually investigate what's important.

Y.L.: Can we say that non-objective painting is your response to all the pressingly felt emotions that are not immediately available through representations?

J.S.: It was a process of layering and layering that goes after days, weeks, months, and even years. They're not wholly non-objective in that you can look closely and see fragments of images that are recognizable from the culture, but they keep changing as living bodies.

Y.L.: That points to my next question, about the possible structure and form of an artist oeuvre's imaginary archive. You mentioned that your paintings are seen as continually changing or building onto itself; how would you envision an archive that would embody your artistic ideals?

J.S.: I certainly envision working on it in decades to come. It motivates me to see how my experiences and intuitions change alongside the world. I talked to a dealer friend about how I was always going back and re-doing a layer on one of my works. She brought up that one of her artists who had sold a work to the Museum of Modern Art and later went in with her paintbrushes because she wanted to touch something, only to be told, "you don't own that anymore. That's not your work." I think our system wants to place works as finished or finite, as icons. As both a woman and an artist, I want to keep nurturing and growing, which is reflected in the paintings that I make.

Y.L.: The conservation and exhibition of art have become increasingly complicated, notably in digital media. The parts and components of many works have already become obsolete, damaged, or irreparable. Then how do we restore, preserve, or sometimes re-imagine these works? And that could potentially lead to further revisit of rather traditional media like paintings or sculptures— can artists make choices to come back and modify the works when they simply want to?

J.S.: I think of works as living bodies that can't be told to stop growing.

So I do believe that we will probably need to perfect ways of preserving digital media that allows for the inevitable development of new technology. I've already begun to work with both traditional and digital media, meshing those two concepts as I layer the images. More people will be doing similar combinations.

Y.L.: The living form of works is indeed an integral part of the meaning, not just conditions in storage or ways of exhibiting. With the A.I.R. Gallery or similar organizations, we have a clearer understanding of the types of documents that could and should be collected, such as administrative records, exhibition files, and the press. I'm curious how individual artists would see their archive evolve. Specifically, as you imagine, what kind of unpublished materials or personal documents could be integrated into your archive?

J.S.: I have lots of paper files that I print out from the computer, some color-coded and some event-dated. Of course, social conditions such as media and current events influence the perception of a woman's body. My archive reflects how a woman is supposed to live and political and cultural events that affect those ideals. In the end, I will have quite a file of images that create a kind of history. It will be a personal history, but with critically social aspects. ■

张瀚文 A REAL FAKE ARTIST

2020年7月24日，微信和邮件问答

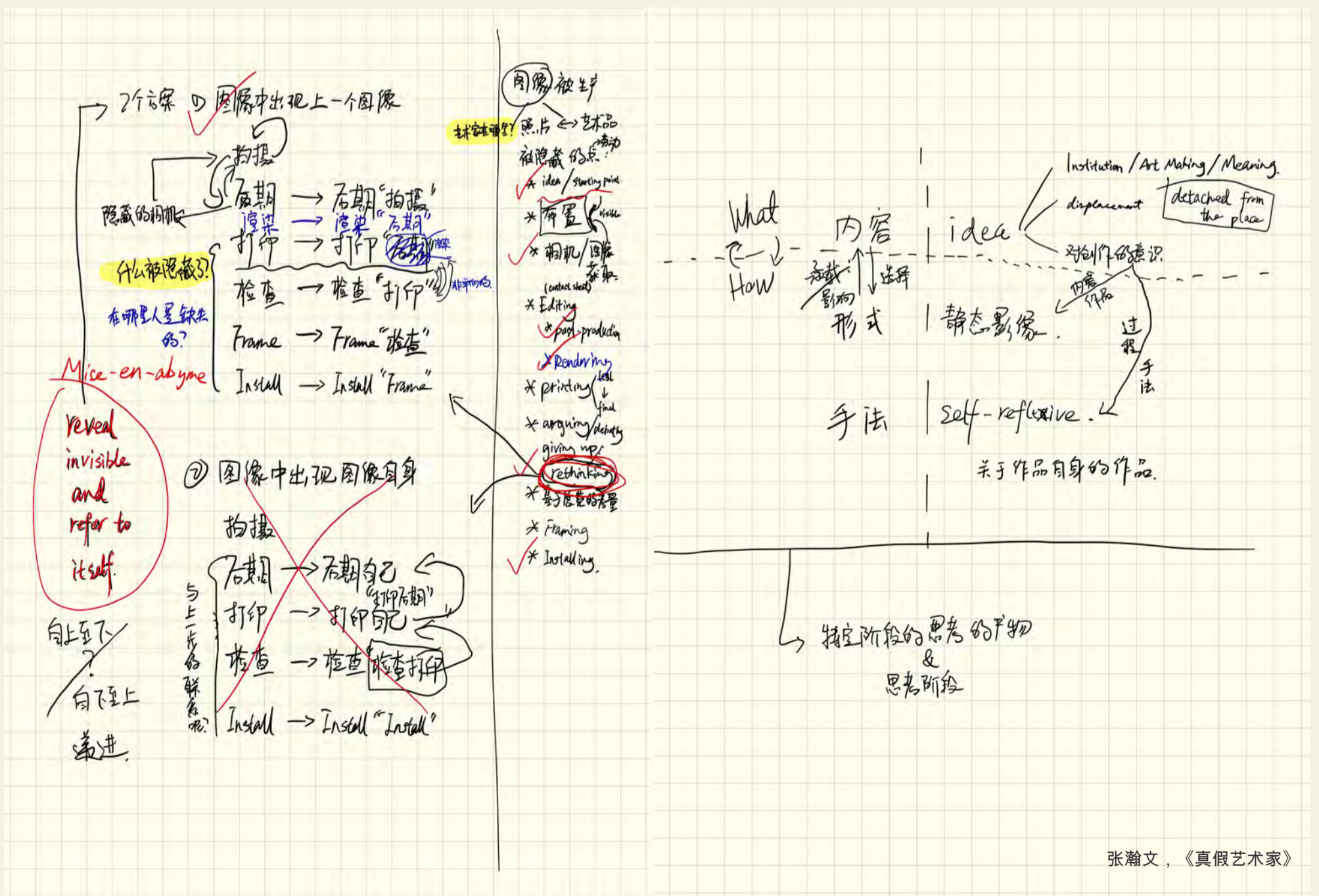
1. 《真假艺术家》的每次展览都根据不同空间、背景而在陈列方式、图像内容上有相应变动。如设想收入一个电子档案库，这组作品是否需要一个呼应虚拟空间的形态，而非仅仅是实体展览的记录集合？它可能会以什么样的形式和内容实现？

这个作品原初的出发点里就包含了对（西方或者美国语境下的）Fine Art教育体制现状的思考，尤其是在我的专业方向——摄影。尽管在过去的几十年中这个领域被技术进行了彻头彻尾的数字化改造，对于照片的讨论更多延伸向广义的图像领域，但是对于图像/照片的物质性的迷恋与反思是一直在的。其中的理由既可以追溯到很详细的「摄影成为/作为艺术」的历史脉络中，也可以从更广义的「艺术市场/机构-艺术品-艺术家的劳动」中找寻。可能有点跑题，是为了铺垫我的回答：我不认

为这个作品需要一个呼应虚拟空间的形态。或者说，按照作品的内在逻辑，如果将其置于虚拟空间的语境中进行重新思考的话，应该要对作品的内容进行大量的改动才是，也与作品的出发点相悖。也就是说，它可能不得不以实体展览记录的形式进入电子档案。

2. 你2016年的作品《2012012176》正是以个人档案的形式讨论意识形态中“科学”与“真理”的人为构建。这里的“个人”实际是以你大学的学号指向的一个虚构身份和档案，而《真假艺术家》中的场景似乎也来源于你的真实生活环境，进而放入根据你本人的形象创造的虚拟人物。你认为这样融合的结果在真实与虚构两极之间处于什么样的位置？

这个问题没办法直接回答。我是在这两年开始变得对「虚构」的问题更有意识了，但显然在实践与思考上还有很大的空间。具体来说，就是「虚构」的东西是怎么从「真」的东西里来的，又跟「真」是一个什么关系，「艺术」又是怎么介入这个过程。非要较真的话这两个作品被叫做「非虚构」可能更合适，因为与现实生活



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(尤其是我自己的个人经验)的连接是很强烈的, 都是在其之上做了「虚构化」的处理。可能当这种处理到了一定的程度时, 作品看起来就脱离了「非虚构」的领域, 但这个度肯定不是确定的, 从观者与作者的角度来看也都不一样。即使最「真」的非虚构作品, 也肯定没办法和现实划等号; 即使最「假」的虚构作品, 也都会以某种方式进入现实。

3. 这组展出作品通常包含了你创作过程中的草图和展览示意图, 这些辅助图像的存在似乎在主体构成的指涉系统之外突出了该结构的自反意识, 明确指向自我内部的相互指涉。这甚至一定程度上破坏了原本清晰、完整的结构, 代之以制作过程和所用工具对生成图像的影响。由此考虑, “额外”的材料是否反而被赋予了一个至关重要的、点睛的功能?

还是一个老话题: 「灵感/点子/蓝图」对于艺术家来说到底有多重

要? 「灵感/点子/蓝图」跟Process是个什么关系, 跟最终得到的结果又是个什么关系? 一个「点子」艺术家是不是大概率不会成为一个「好艺术家」? 我觉得做作品也主要还是自己想不明白, 主要是问问题然后像是自问自答一样。这个回答可能也没说清楚什么...

以及, 我相信所有艺术家都挂在嘴边的Process和Labor或者Material是一体的。这里Material不一定是实体的, Labor也不一定是可见的或艺术家本人的。观念艺术的一些思想游戏固然是有意思, 但是这几年大家也越来越不买账了。

张瀚文

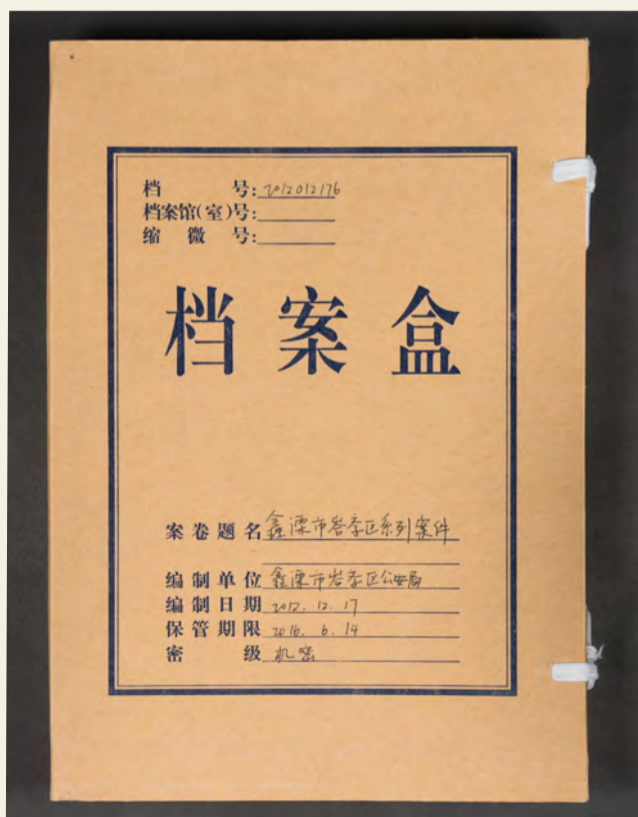
我不认为这个作品需要一个呼应虚拟空间的形态。或者说, 按照作品的内在逻辑, 如果将其置于虚拟空间的语境中进行重新思考的话, 应该要对作品的内容进行大量的改动才是, 也与作品的出发点相悖。也就是说, 它可能不得不以实体展览记录的形式进入电子档案。

2012012176

I used to believe that science is the best way to understand the world, to guide my life, and to reach the “truth”. At least that’s what I learned from my education and experience. But how true is that?

The question, which never occurred to me before I studied Physics in college, led to this constructed photo archive installation work. The title “2012012176” is my student ID number at Tsinghua University, acclaimed for its science and engineering programs. By composing fictional investigations, I reflect on how my observation, interpretation, and perception of the world are systematically transformed by the “ideology of science.” Each case in the archive roots in my personal life, demonstrating how our lives are permeated by science.

左上: 《真假艺术家》#0
左下和右: “2012012176”
图片由艺术家提供



MODULAR SOFTWARE

CREATING PERFORMATIVE TOOLS FOR ARTISTS

Eric Souther

Over the past two years I have become increasingly interested in the rich potential in working with hybrid analog and digital systems for real time performative processing. There is an interesting tension that occurs when combining the precision of digital with the unpredictability of analog. I used a hybrid setup for my recent performance *Multiplying Muybridge* where I used an analog synthesizer to create live sound that was manipulated by a thermion like depth sensor that outputs control voltage to the system. This instrument along with a hand full of oscillators are digitized in MIDI and used to generate patterns in Processing. Those patterns are then sent to Max via Syphon to chromakey 6 separate videos into the patterns. Each of the three patterns can be controlled via a USB MIDI controller, two knobs for each X and Y direction. I use OSC (Open Sound Control) to pass that from MAX to Processing.

Why describe this in such detail? I am interested in the notion of open modular systems of making hybrid works. Philosophically, this tool creation and workflow is inspired by the design sensibilities of analog video synthesizers created in the 1970's by toolmakers such as Dan Sandin, Bill Hearn and Dave Jones. The relationship of these systems had with control voltage interfaces for maximum variability stands in stark contrast to many of the professional software packages used today.

In December 2015, my friend and fellow artist Jason Bernagozzi, started a collaboration to develop software tools for time-based media artists as a way to support the fundraising efforts of Signal Culture. We wanted to make software that is inspired by the open systems of these early video pioneers and that is philosophically grounded in modularity. We are interested in creating tools that are real time, performative, modular, and exploratory. The first app Jason and I wanted to work on was a process inspired by the classic *Frame Buffer* created by legendary toolmaker Dave Jones of Dave Jones Design, who has made significant contributions to the history of video art. The *Frame Buffer* application saves a series of video frames into memory that repeat over one another within the keyed areas of either a lumakey or a chromakey. The process is simple however, but what we wanted to focus on more is how to make the application control and be controlled by a wide range of sources.

The first thing we created was the capability to ingest a wide range of video sources, such as web cameras, external cameras (via fiberwire or thunderbolt), QuickTime movie files, and to or from syphon. We designed it to cover a wide range of possible resolutions from Classic *Frame Buffer* 256 x 256 all the way to 1920 x 1080 HD. You can also control the frame rate of the video output, which can be sent out to external devices, recorded to a QuickTime,



SEARCH ENGINE VISION SERIES

INTERVIEW: ERIC SOUTHER

Search engines, icons, the White House, Buddha, real-time, viral memes, diffraction, and performativity...

July 11, 2020, via e-mail

Li Yizhuo: The themes in your *Search Engine Vision* series spans a broad political, cultural, and religious spectrum. How did you decide on them and their scope, specifically concerning "The White House" and "Buddha"?

Eric Souther: I tend to focus on recognizable icons of religion or culture because they provide assumptions knowing what they are. The *Search Engine Vision* Series works against that knowing by broadening our definitions and understanding of the icons via the masses. The *White House* was in direct response to the shifting political landscape in 2016 when President Trump took office. The scope of "The White House" piece, however, spans from 2000-2018, I plan to keep adding to the piece until the end of 2020. Many of my works deal with ritual and religion for ways to contextualize and humanize our ritualistic relationships with technology. The *Search Engine Vision Buddha* work is also a homage to Nam June Paik TV *Buddha* Series. For Paik, the Buddha meditated on his real-time video image. For my piece, Buddha meditates on his online existence from a western search engine.

Y.L.: By clustering materials under the chosen terms, how do you see the inter-relations and intra-actions between the deployed video footages, in particular the ones gridded together into one recognizable pattern or structure?

E.S.: The clustering allows for a macro view of the database that is outside the norm of our consumption of YouTube. The gridded structure mimics the structural output of the search engine. However, the three-dimensional form disrupts and bends the grid around itself. I'm interested in this act being the material or matter that forms from the intra-actions of the collection. In all the pieces in the series plays a game of visually searching the database, asking the viewer multiple times, does this fit your definition of the icon?

Y.L.: You referenced Joseph Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs* for your inquiry into the "online social structure," and in my understanding, towards the generative condition and impulse of this structure. Can you elaborate more on the concept and purpose of your construction, which I find closer to the experiential process of meaning-making rather than extraction toward a psychological archetype or visual representation? In other words, can we perhaps say that the *Search Engine Vision* series brings forth a reflexive vision in search of its creative engine, instead of the vision itself?

E.S.: The construction of the work in the series is performative, created in real-time. I developed my software to move the camera, 3D model, and plane of 1,000 videos. These movements are related to gestures of searching i.e. looking sided to side, up and down, and zooming in and out of the database. I search for the meaning of icon in question, then rest on videos that call for attention to spotlight them for a moment before the search continues.

The meaning happens in-between the videos, an emergence that rises from the entanglement of intra-actions within the collection and my performance.

The meaning happens in-between the videos, an emergence that rises from the entanglement of intra-actions within the collection, and my performance. The process of meaning-making is more of diffraction than a reflection. Reflection is about representation that reinforces sameness and something that is fixed. Diffraction supports a closer look at the collection for similarities, divergence, and difference.

Y.L.: Can we talk more about the notion of "viral transmission" and an archival model that I consider central to this

A Medium in Between

syphoned out to another software application, or be full screened to be used for a performance. We wanted the process to be intuitive for the user, which makes for a difficult balance of fine tuning and narrowing down parameter ranges without making it so limiting that it acts like a filter you would apply in a nonlinear editing or compositing program.

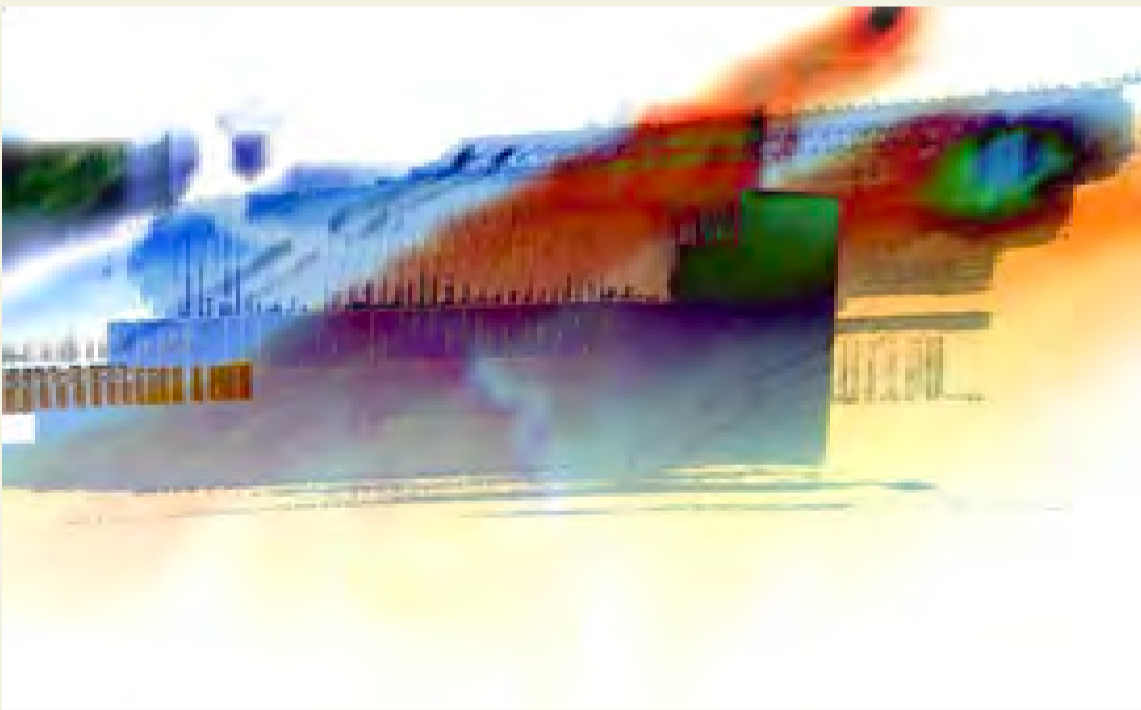
There are seven various parameters that can be explored in the app. Being concerned with performability, we made it so all the parameters could be controlled via MIDI or OSC. The user could have an analog synth control the parameters, hook in a CV->MIDI interface or use an OSC touch interface on your phone control the app, making it able to run video and control between several software packages such as Ableton Live, VDMX, Processing, etc all in real time.

We released the Frame Buffer app in January 2016 as a part of Signal Culture's sustainability fundraising campaign. Signal Culture is a nonprofit experimental media art organization offering residencies, resources, and exhibition opportunities. The Frame Buffer is the first of six applications we have planned for 2016. Check out the Signal Culture App club for more details. The exciting part of making these tools is seeing what artists make with them. I want to share two works by artists that have used the Frame Buffer in their new works, "Negative Vibes/////Rough Idol" by Patrick James Cain, a sound and video artist residing in Washington D.C., and "Mix Buffer" by Alan Powell, a Video Artist and Associate Professor at Arcadia University.

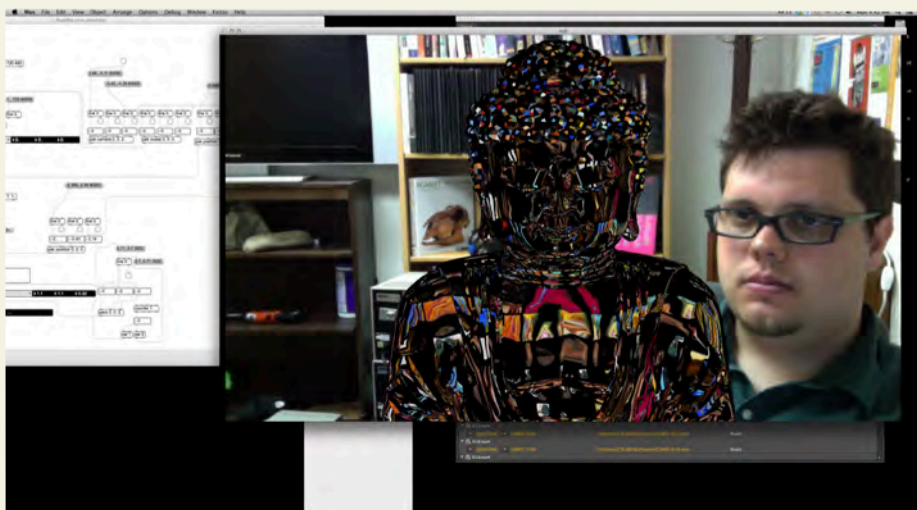
Jason and I are now finalizing our second app titled Maelstrom, which was based on a process I developed for a 2012 project "Life in the Maelstrom". Maelstrom combines real time lumakeying and pixel sorting paired with digital feedback to create repetitions into infinity. The app allows the user to control the direction of the feedback, zoom in and out, and rotate the angle of each repetition in space. During the development process of Maelstrom, I created a new performance titled "Synaptic Transmissions." Working with the app in relation to audio visual performance led us to new ideas for future apps, in particular methods that would help create audiovisual sync. A simple example of this would be to use frame difference and Image brightness average for MIDI or OSC output.

We are not alone in developing creative tools for artists. There is an exciting renaissance of artists and toolmakers sharing and creating tools. Our goals are pedagogical in nature, to think about process versus effects. An effect is meant as an illusion, a real time process however can be used to articulate new visual and aural metaphors that come out of discovery and a relationship between the artist and their tools. In many ways this connects real time media production to music, it is not the inherent sound of the instrument that is significant, it is the choices the artists makes that creates the melody.

Eric Souther, 2016



Patrick James Cain, "Negative Vibes/////Rough Idol," 2016, image courtesy of the artist.



Souther, Screenshot, *SEV Buddha*, 2013, image courtesy of the artist.

ERIC SOUTHER SEV SERIES

exhibition? You mentioned that much of your practice is aligned with new materialism, and among others, theories by notable scholars such as Karen Barad. In fact, Barad's agential realism might offer a profound update of Antonin Artaud's vision of the plague theatre, where he importantly emphasizes the theatre's capability of bringing out the latent perverseness of human mind like the plague, rather than an analogous contagiousness of the stage. How do you envision your position in a web of connected and mediated practice, as an artist who creates this series with Youtube videos, shares the collective memory with many of their authors, and again makes your work searchable, and potentially transmittable, under the relevant keywords?

E.S.: I am outnumbered in my own body, and my position on the web is constructed from those around me alive or dead, in person or in text. We are all mediated. The stage is full of viral memes (element of culture or system that transmit from one person to another) that for the vast majority serve as entertainment. I strive to create work that reveals unseen signals within our technologically saturated lives, with the hope they provide a pedagogical experience to be retransmitted into the culture.

Y.L.: You have been working with a number of media centers and institutes in upstate New York, whose close engagement of artists and technologists has made a notable impact on the new media landscape; I also find this integration a distinct quality of your artistic work and experiments. Where would you stand around this junction—if you agree, there is a meaningful junction—of a permeating digital network culture across socio-cultural, geopolitical borders and the historical, institutional legacy of a specific region that is oftentimes limited to its immediate communities?

E.S.: Absolutely, the historical junction in upstate New York for experimental media art in large part is because of the pioneering work of Experimental Television Center and their foresight and focus in toolmaking, Media Study/Bufalo (Gerald O'Grady, Woody and Steina Vasulka, and many more), Visual Studies Workshop, and the support of the New York State Council of the arts and its dedication to supporting experimental media art.

The lineage of these communities continues to be supported via the Institute for Electronic Arts (IEA), Squeaky Wheel, and Signal Culture. Out of the three, Signal Culture has influenced my practice and life the most. The founders Jason & Debora Bernagozzi and Hank Rudolph continue to build communities between artists, toolmakers, and researchers. I joined the board of directors in 2016, to help develop experimental video applications for real-time video processing. This was our way of sharing the importance artist-made tools that used the guiding principles of ETC/SC studio's, which include modularity, performative systems, philosophical processes, and provide a way to give back to our artist community around the world. Making video instruments (real-time hybrid analog and digital systems) is a key aspect of the tools and work I make.

Y.L.: If incorporating the SEV series into an imaginary archive of your oeuvre decades from now, what information would be the most constructive and crucial? What unpublished materials might be included?

E.S.: I want to think that the works could be restaged if their data is not upsampled to current formats. In this imaginary archive, you could use a search engine within a social visual platform for moving images for specific icons of the time, stream the first 1,000 videos or other future moving images like holograms in a grid (hopefully the internet is fast enough by then), map the grid onto a three-dimensional representation of the icon being searched, spend time searching the database via gestures of searching IRL, the soundscape should be a muted cacophony of 50-100 audio clips shifting across the 1,000 overtime, until a video is looked at (eye-tracking), then solo its audio, and then go back to searching. This may constitute a speculative software version of the Search Engine Vision series that would allow users to use as a real-time and generative experience. It would be nice to include unpublished sketches and expanded text, like this one. ■

白梦帆

《被抛弃的以太》 《等待戈多》

我们都知道万物是在不断运动的，绝对静止的物体是不存在的，试图在绘画中构建一个“绝对静止”的空间可能是这两组作品之间的联系。

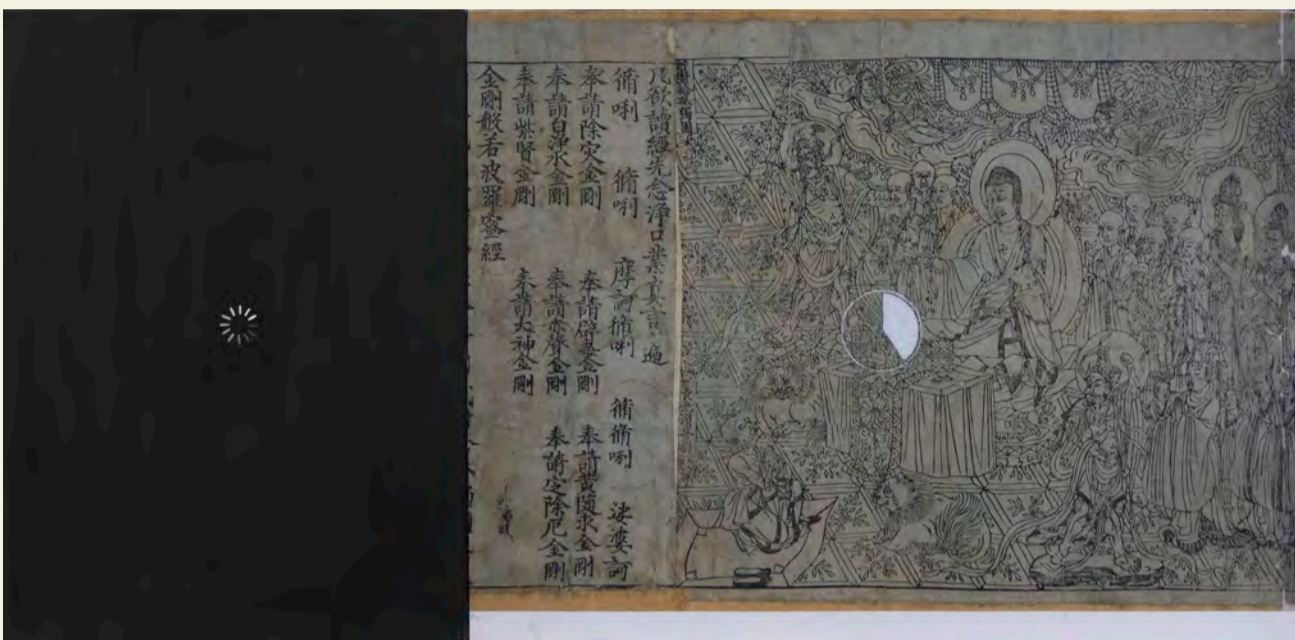
2020年7月24-27日，微信和文档回答

你的作品似乎常将不同时期、地域文化背景的概念和意象结合起来，例如《道德经》和以太、敦煌壁画和电子屏幕上的加载符号。这些选择和组合的主要来源是个人的深刻经验，有意识的身份追问，或者刻意的反差并置？

主要来自有意识的身份追问和无意识的反差并置。

整理作品信息的时候，我们讨论到在哲学和物理学历史上围绕“以太”的争议和探究，这目前仍然是一个无法论证却吸引许多人不断去追寻、体验的概念。你认为电子屏幕或广义的数码信息网络在此引入什么样的新角度和可能性？

电子屏幕在生产过程中只是一块由成千上万个像素点均匀排列组合的矩形。我认为只有当人与它互动产生连接时，电子屏幕才成为虚拟世界中“以太”的容器。脱离人本身的观看，意识和欲望，数码信息网络中的一切对这个世界或是其他生物可能没有任何意义。以太作为物理学上一种假想的元素，电子屏中所承载的一切图像和动态信息我们也可以理解为一种假象的物质观念。屏幕中一个与现实环境中等大的苹果，无论画质多么清晰流畅，我们所看到的始终与实物有色彩和质感上的差异。电子屏最终呈现的效果同时也受外界光线和物理温度等条件的影响被局限。作为一种可能性，也许有一天无处不在的电子屏幕会和“以太”一样被抛弃，另一种新的传播介质成为“以太”充斥着数码信息网络。



《等待戈多7》，布面油画及喷绘，2018

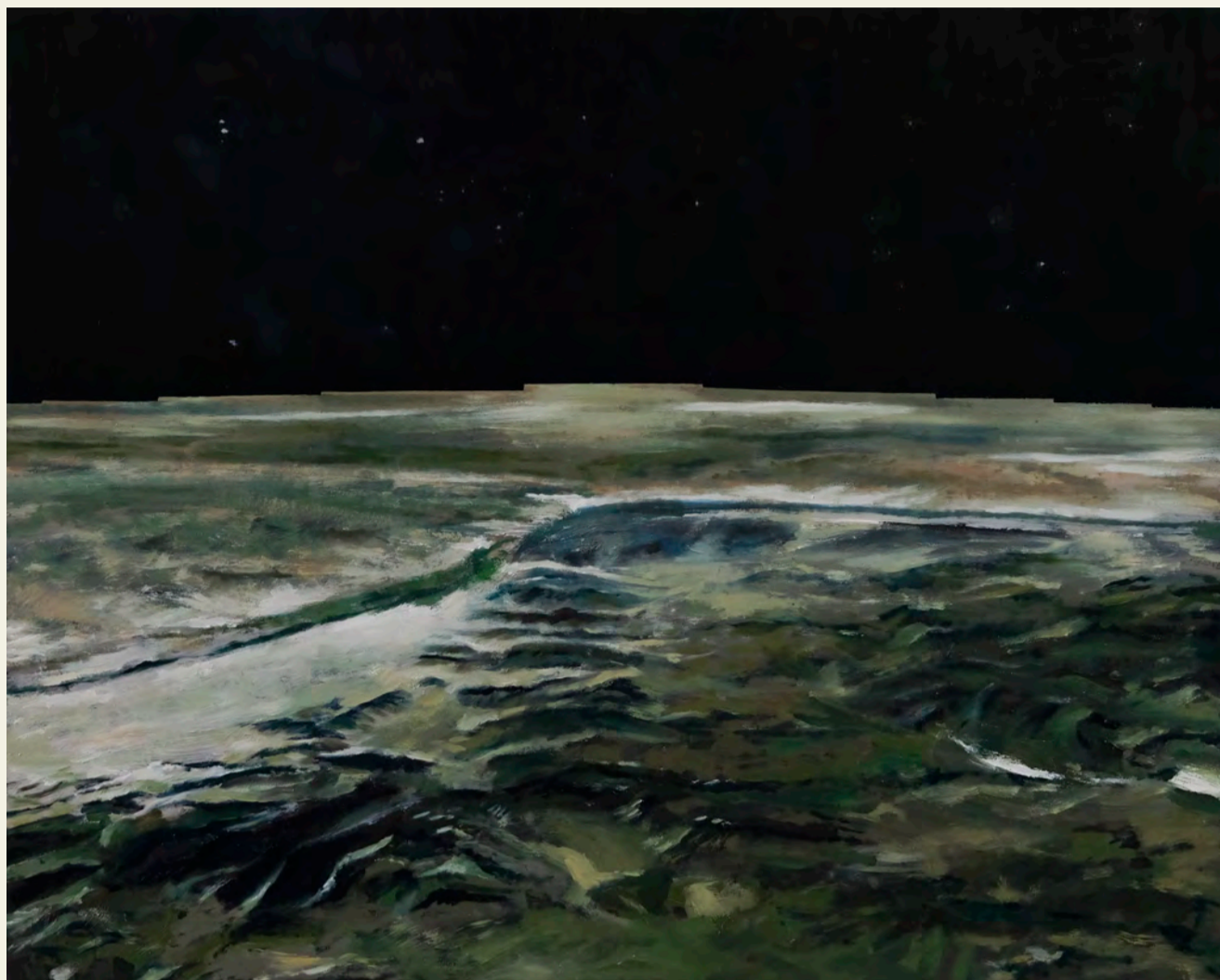
观看你的作品时，发现在通用的环形加载符号和以太之间似乎有一些偶然的巧妙对应，比如它们都不承载明确的物理性质，无始无终做着环形的运动。而深究的话，这两者又都可能和人类群体意识中对“天穹”的想象、认知感官系统对于对称、整体的偏好，以及地球的形态和运转方式相关联。你如何看待这些无意识而又引人深思的联系，尤其是它们对与作品内含的意义？

我们都知道万物是在不断运动的，绝对静止的物体是不存在的，试图在绘画中构建一个“绝对静止”的空间可

能是这两组作品之间的联系。高空中的某个时刻我曾在虚拟屏中看见夜色中的乌兰巴托，我知道那个时刻垂直于我脚下的是乌兰巴托，但我看不见真正的乌兰巴托。电子屏逐渐成为人体外延的虚拟感官显示器，我们既可以自以为整体的观察局部“苍穹”，也可以无限放大苍穹中的每一颗被渲染过的星星。加载符号既不指向更加清晰的图像也没有瓦解在图像崩坏的瞬间，与画布上的图像一同无限悬置的还有观者本身。当观者以为可以通过科技随心所欲的观看时，其实自己才是被悬置的存在。



左：《等待戈多8》，2018，布面油画；右：《唯一的房子》，2017，布面油画及喷绘



《被抛弃的以诺》, 2020, 木板油画

白梦帆

展览中另一位艺术家Joan Snitzer同样在思考着数码媒介对于绘画方式的影响, 试图用饱和、充沛的材料和色彩达到虚空。我很感兴趣你作品中对于电子屏幕和机器系统与个体经验结合、碰撞的思考, 能否分享一些你对于电子视野、幻象的理解或设想?

大家可能思考的是同一种虚空, 只是用了不同的媒介和色彩体系。我很感激电子设备的发展帮助创作者们可以多角度的观察或者利用机器本身作为媒介进行创作。但同时我也一直在用绘画的方式去规避机器对人感官的奴役和异化。

你近年的大量作品中再现了城市景观, 即它们如何在全球化的过程中变得雷同、模糊, 又在很多场景下叠加上数码屏幕的重塑。而人与“城市”和“屏幕”进行的互动、甚至纯粹的想象和思索, 也是其产生意义的重要条件, 你如何理解创作者与画面主体和绘画经验的关系?

“全球化即世界观, 产品, 概念及其他文化元素的交换, 所带来的国际性整合的过程。”我的大部分作品的确在一个假定“全球化”的背景下创作出来, 但近期我常常思考全球化是否只是由于人类盲目乐观和过度膨胀

制造出的伪命题, 一场病毒足以击穿人们对世界一体化的美好幻想。即使各地的城市景观已经趋于雷同, 但经过这动荡不安的几个月足以使人看清挡在人与人之间, 意识形态与意识形态之间无法逾越的鸿沟和无从消解的隔阂。现在回头看曾经当作全球化产物之一去画的玻璃幕墙, 虽然整洁, 透明, 统一, 但也无法隐去它作为墙的基本属性, 有隔断必然会隔开贸易往来, 资本流动和知识传播。生活在这样被层层叠叠的玻璃幕墙和电子屏幕包围的环境下, 作为创作者很难将自己置身事外。

我喜欢山, 但从来不敢提笔画真正的青山。我画过屏幕中的远山, 水杯中咖啡渣沉淀后像山一样的倒影, 出租车上真皮沙发形成的山形轮廓, 但那些都不是山, 因为我没有长期沉浸在层峦叠嶂郁郁葱葱的视觉经验之中。现在我所做的, 通常是在将图像从“屏幕”转译到画布上时, 重新建立平面上的空间关系, 带入自己对质地感的理解和想象, 试图在眼前有限的平面上用画笔堆砌出颗粒感。画画时我会幻想自己是种田人, 是泥瓦匠, 是刺绣阿姐, 唯独不是艺术家。在我看来全球化像是把原本椭圆的凹凸不平的球体强行拉成扁平光滑的状态, 邀请更多的人相信“The Earth is Flat”。我希望在更多人选择相信地球是个球之前, 至少看见球上有芝麻这样的突起物存在。■

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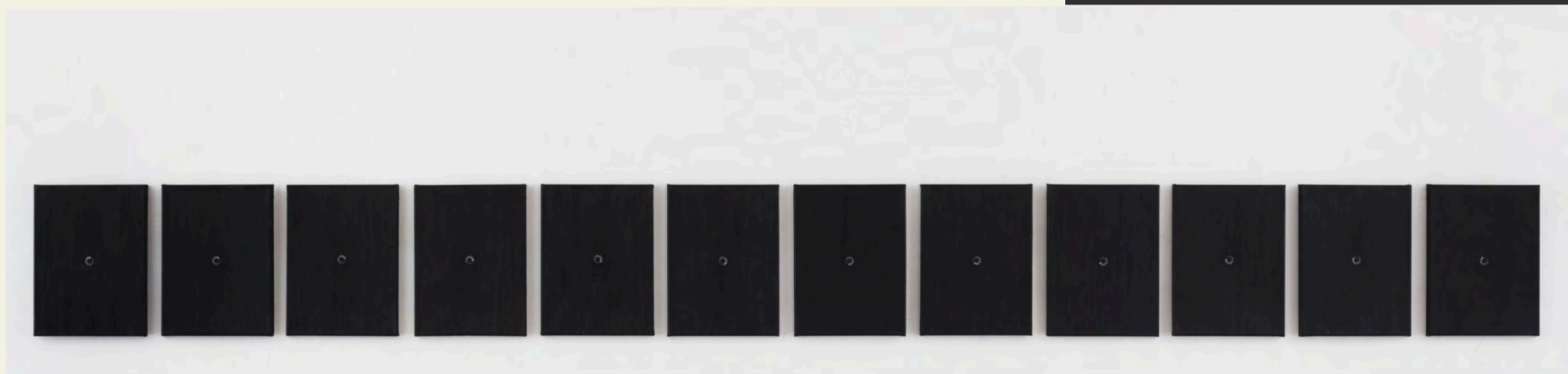
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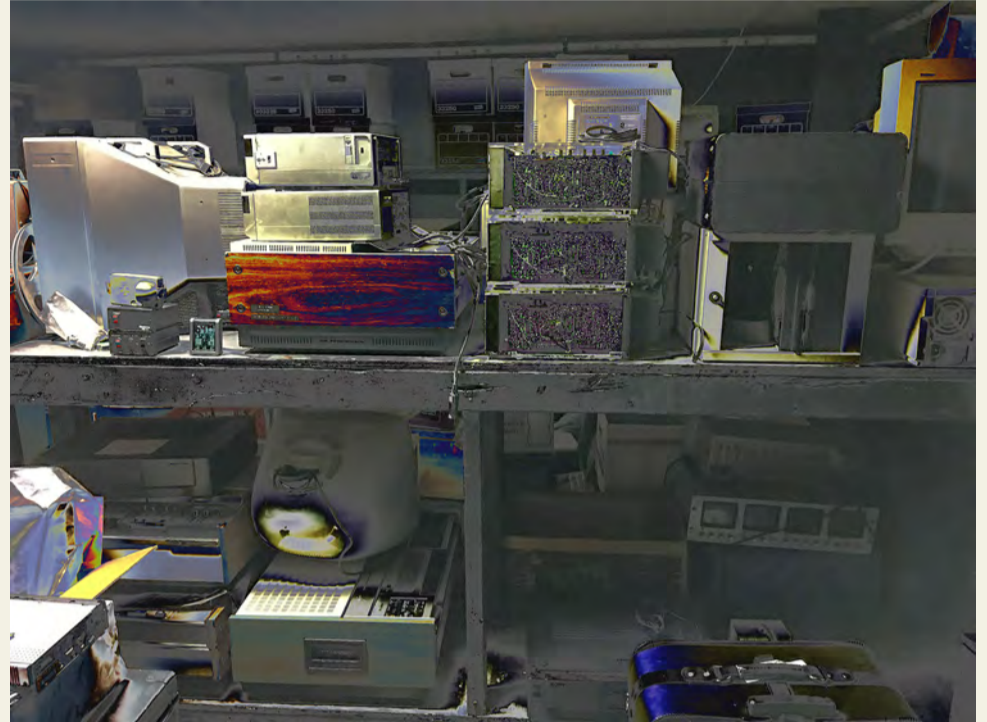
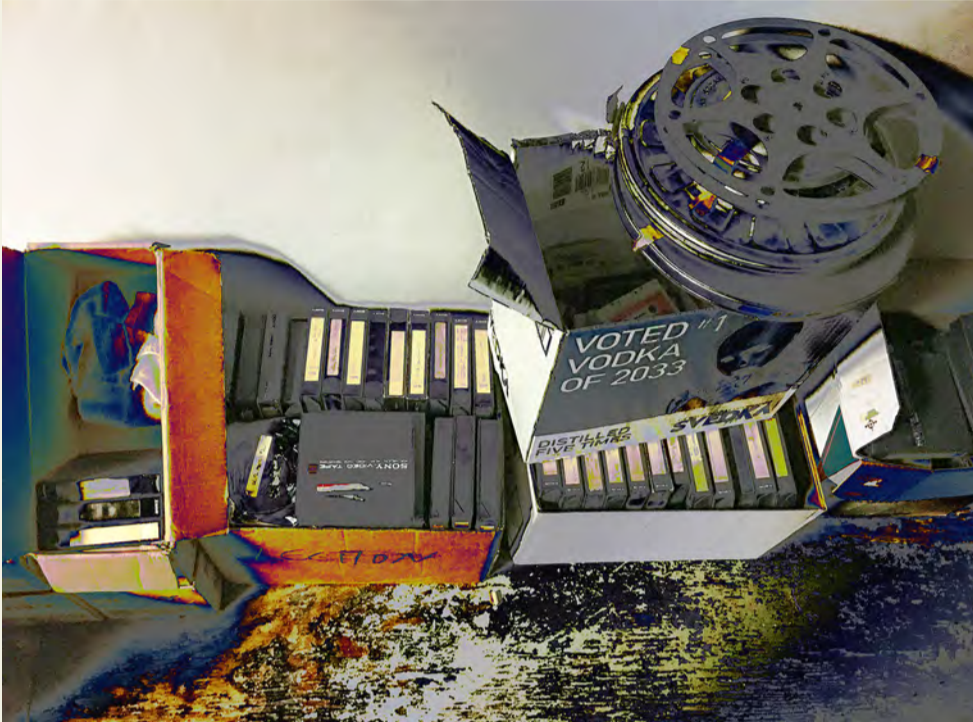


《等待戈多》, 2017, 布面油画

A Medium in Between

See enclosure for Peer Bode's full response to interview questions.

Bode, *Altered Archives*, 2017, image courtesy of the artist.



PEER BODE: VIDEO, ELECTRONIC TV, 1975-1985

These particular video pieces were made in 1975-1985 during residencies at the Experimental Television Center in Binghamton (ETC), New York and then in Owego, New York. At the time, I referred to these pieces as the "Process Tapes." They were for the most part live real time recordings, shimmering electronic events, micro-narratives, documentations, performances, and cinematics. This was the chance to capture and focus on a wonderful body of electronic video. The context was thinking about and pursuing strategies of inventiveness as well as hijacking television and media, salvaging and repurposing technologies, responding to New American Cinema and New Music jewels, imagining experimental television potentials, living in alternative cultures and imagining and making alternative art. The experience was of electronic and cinematic adventures, fragile markings, resonating moments surrounded by a constellation of ideas and exciting experiences. The mode was not utopian; it was materialist.



Ring Modulation 1978 7:47

Image states / sound states. A bell, hand held, ringing, two oscillators each independently controlling a sync event - a red and blue color together with sound and no sound state and a sweeping video clip, together with audio filtering. Both oscillators sweep up incrementally one after the other and then down. The visual and sound bell is immersed in the electronic space / state. One b&w camera, two oscillators, David Jones keyer and colorizer, audio filter. Vibratory spaces to live in, calm and ecstatic.



Camel with Window Memory 1983 4:22

The "Camel with Window Memory" piece was made one weekend in the early 80s. I pulled out my post card collection and began to look at specific postcards run through the new digital video buffer I had built together with David Jones. The buffer had only one frame of memory but it was real time. It had the capability of displaying the image memory space, either as live or frozen. "Camel with Window Memory" was a live performance recording: hand held postcard, stop watch for timing and the live or frozen memory mode switch. A second key input to the buffer determined where the image would be live or freeze. I used two synched oscillators to create the square key clip shape. For sound, I sampled two areas of the image for grey level values that were turned into control voltages to control the Brewster and Bernie Hutchins modular audio synthesizer in the studio. The image and sound changes were live as I turned on and off the image freezing, watched the stopwatch and heard the sound changes as I moved the postcard, reactive, as in looking and listening, real time image and sound recording. The camel and man postcard also was particularly resonant as we were experiencing gas rationing and gas lines in the states, oil politics of the time then also. I remember reflecting that the camel was historically the traveling water storage unit of the desert, an organic system for storing water, energy and memory.



Light Bulb with circular update (camera zoom + pan + variable clock) 1981 3:30

Real time digital buffer recording, light bulb, panning camera motor and turntable. Light Bulb, the title says it almost all. Real time recording events. Two cameras, light bulb, camera panning motor, electric lazy Susan, spinning white paper rectangle for the clip. Using the first digital video frame buffer I built together with David Jones, video buffer number one with variable clock. Several minutes of Rube Goldberg like digital electronics and optical props and motors. No computer, just energetic digital slivers, shimmering and shattering.