# THE AGE OF EXPERIENCE





# MARCH/13/2015-APRIL/22/2015 SCHOOL OF CREATIVE MEDIA RUN RUN SHAW CREATIVE MEDIA CENTRE **18 TAT HONG AVENUE KOWLOON TONG HONG KONG**

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### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

The word 'Curator' is related to the Latin word 'curare' which means 'take care'. What a sublime understatement in the face of our exhibits title. So I have taken great care in selecting these works of art and in arranging them in a constellation of hidden connections. Combined with a few quotes they show the impossibility of encompassing 'The Age of Experience'. A sisyphean task indeed. Now it's up to the visitor to play this game. Harald Kraemer

"To perceive means nothing anymore. We arrive to depart." Eugène Delacroix June 6th, 1856

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference." Robert Lee Frost The Road Not Taken / 1920

"With cities, it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a rebus that conceals a desire or, its reverse, a fear. Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else. [...] I speak and speak, Marco says, but the listener retains only the words he is expecting. [...] It is not the voice that commands the story: it is the ear." Italo Calvino Le città invisibili / 1972 / Invisible Cities / 1974

"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser Gate. All those moments will be lost in time like tears in rain. ... Time to die." Roy Batty to Rick Deckard / Blade Runner / 1982

"Accustom yourself to believe that death is nothing to us, for good and evil

### **MAX HATTLER**

HEAVEN AND HELL / 2010 Double channel HD video / 2 min loops / Sound

Inspired by the paintings of French outsider artist Augustin Lesage, this duo of animation loops lures the viewer into a spellbinding rhythm of infinitely receding

digital landscapes. Lesage (1876-1954), who signed his geometric constructions as Leonardo da Vinci, was praised and exalted by the Surrealists. This outstanding artist has created complex visual grammars, using an unique symmetrical style with ornament patterns and monolithic constructions.

1923 aka 'HEAVEN' is based on Lesage's painting 'A Symbolic Composition of the Spiritual World' from 1923. The second loop, 1925 aka 'HELL', is based on Lesage's painting of the same name from 1925. While 'HEAVEN' refashions Lesage's work into a fantastic, ascending futuristic metropolis, 'HELL' presents a more sinister rendition in the form of a descent into the cryptic architecture of ever-moving pillars, sliding doors, and shifting facades.

'HEAVEN' is a pulsing fluorescent twilight zone. Somewhere between TRON, METROPOLIS and LAS VEGAS. 'HELL' is dark, rough and dirty. The aesthetic of the machines in MATRIX, TERMINATOR and MAD MAX. Doomsday mood. The human race has lost. Rotted and forgotten.

The sound is an almost endless repetition of the decor and underlines the inevitable repetition. Machines prevail and master this apocalyptic mantra. Terrifying and impressive at the same time. "I never have an overview of the entire work at any point of the execution. My guides tell me," said Lesage about his worlds, "I surrender to their impulse." Ghost in the shell.

### **JULIAN LEE**

CHEZ MOI (MEDIUM BLUE) / H 80 x W 105 cm AFTER INGRES / H 95 x 135 cm CHAMONIX ARGENTIERE (WHITE) / H 80 x W 105 cm

### **JEFFREY SHAW**

THE LEGIBLE CITY / 1989–1991 / Text by Dirk Groeneveld / Original Silicon Graphics application software: Gideon May / Migrated PC application software: Bernd Lintermann / Bicycle construction: Huib Nelissen / Karlsruhe version of The Legible City in the collection of the ZKM Media Museum, Karlsruhe

In 'THE LEGIBLE CITY' the visitor is able to ride a stationary bicycle through a simulated representation of a city that is constituted by computer-generated three-dimensional letters that form words and sentences along the sides of the streets. Using the ground plans of actual cities–Manhattan, Amsterdam and Karlsruhe- the existing architecture of these cities is completely replaced by text formations. Travelling through these cities of words is consequently a journey of reading; choosing the path one takes creates a recombination of these texts and spontaneous conjunctions of meaning. The handlebar and pedals of the interface bicycle give the viewer interactive control over direction and speed of travel. The physical effort of cycling in the real world is gratuitously transposed into the virtual domain

The Manhattan version (1989) of this work comprises eight separate fictional story lines in the form of monologues by Frank Lloyd Wright, Donald Trump and some others. Each story line has a specific letter color so that if the bicyclists Karlsruhe (1991) versions of 'THE LEGIBLE CITY' all the letters are scaled so that they have the same proportion and location as the actual buildings that they replace, resulting in a transformed but fairly exact reproduction of the actual architectural appearance of these cities.

### LAM MIU LING

DANCE IN THE MIST 翩翩霧時 / 2014-2015 Optical illusion & fog projection

### **TOBIAS GREMMLER**

### HUMAN CENTERED MEDIA / 2014–2015

The project refers to the human body as a navigational tool for next generation interactive surfaces at the scale of the human body and larger. The employed gesture-based interaction methodologies and the graphical user interface enable multiple users to browse simultaneously within a real space inherited by virtual information objects without the need for additional physical devices (intangible interaction). The graphical user interface is directly linked to the human body and is generating an intuitive user experience while allowing users to interact with complex data and large amounts of content.

The project involves a series of interactive studies, developed with the aim of putting the human in the centre of a rich media environment. It explores the potential of interconnecting human motion with immanent structural features of digital media, such as databases and algorithms. By extending the dynamic of human motion into virtual space, the self-awareness of controlling a physical body virtual environment, creating a kinesthetic conjunction of the active body in the adapts to a situation-based awareness of controlling and navigating through digital information.

The project crosses the boundaries between art, design and research. It shows a series of studies on new interaction design principles and its application. The underlying database consists of audio-visual material from Tobias Gremmler's wish, they can follow the paths of each narration. In the Amsterdam (1990) and book 'Creative Education and Dynamic Media'. It includes several hundred digital media assets from his university courses, student works and research projects. Projected on a large-scale screen, this digital content becomes immediately accessible to the public.

### **TOMAS LAURENZO**

TWO SYSTEMS / 2014 / Interactive stop-motion animation / Sound Co-author: Tatjana Kudinova

imply awareness, and death is the privation of all experience. [...] Death, therefore, the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we are, death is not come, and, when death is come, we are not. It is nothing, then, either to the living or to the dead, for with the living it is not and the dead exist no longer." **Epicurus** Letter to Menoeceus

"Dig into your sense. Look at what there is within. Don't analyze it with words. Translate into sister images, into equivalent sounds. The clearer it is, the more your style affirms itself. (Style: all that is not technique.)" Robert Bresson Notes sur le cinematographe / 1975

"The 'experience' that we need in order to understand logic is not that something or other is the state of things, but that something is: that, however, is not an experience. Logic is prior to every experience-that something is so. It is prior to the question 'How?' not prior to the question 'What?'" Ludwig Wittgenstein Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus / 1922 / 5.552

"Their work should be full of failures; for these are the signs of efforts. [...] Go to nature in all singleness of heart, and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thoughts but how best to penetrate her meaning, and remember her instruction, rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing; believing all things to be right and good, and rejoicing always in the truth." John Ruskin Modern Painters Vol. 1 / 1843

"a song - just for me paintbrush – I throw you away beautiful cuckoo" Chôshû Kagebôshishû / Ôsaka / 1754

"Dreams deliver us to dream, and there is no end to illusion. From the mountain you see the mountain. We animate what we can, and we see only what we animate. Nature and books belong to the eyes that see them. It depends on the mood of the man, whether he shall see the sunset or the fine poem. [...] All things swim and glitter. Our life is not such threatened as our perception. Ghost-like we glide through nature, and should not know our place again. [...] "So much of our time is preparation, so much is routine, and so much retrospect, that the pith of each man's genius contacts itself to a very few hours." Ralph Waldo Emerson Experience / Essays (Second Series) / 1844

"When we live our lives it's something like a race - our minds become concerned and covered over and we get depressed and have to get away for a holiday. And then sometimes there are moments of perfection and in these moments we wonder why we ever thought life was difficult. [...] Moments of awareness of perfection and of inspiration are alike except that inspirations are often directives to action. [...]

A work of art is successful when there is a hint of perfection present at the slightest hint ... the work is alive. The life of the work depends upon the observer, according to his own awareness of perfection and inspiration." Agnes Martin Reflections / Artforum / Vol. XI / No. 8 / April 1973

"And to me, as I am passing away, it brings to me a conclusion: What a wonderful life I am living through." Julian Lee passed away last year. His works continue to live in us. They are living without our even knowing it. They are full of memories and reflect a life full of sentiment and passion, full of desire and melancholy. They are an echo of Julian's living experience.

'AFTER INGRES' is one of his masterworks. In this blurred come together of shades of grey, white and black he is combining the pleasurable tension of Robert Mapplethorpe with the strict classic composition of Jean Auguste Dominique Ingre's 'Odalisque in Grisaille'. A repetitive experience.

This timelessness and placelessness we find again in the serie 'Pantone-Mine' from which two of his photographs have been chosen. 'CHEZ MOI (MEDIUM BLUE)' shows a room in his apartment and reminds us of Edward Hopper's last painting 'Sun in an Empty Room'. In his ode to light Julian also praised the shadows. Our own transitoriness and our own fears are hidden in this empty room but also our belief in a good end. Veil of mist are thinning out and allow new perspectives.

'CHAMONIX ARGENTIERE (WHITE)' is a very personal moment of reflection in a twilight zone between life and death. But this "I invite the viewer to reinterpret my works, although in a sense they are only 'out-takes' of my life." So Julian invites us to discover life in all its aspects and to discover it now.

famous bistable optical illusion created by Nobuyuki Kayahara in 2003. A female dancer is perceived to be spinning clockwise or anti-clockwise by different observers, and some may even see the figure suddenly spins in the opposite direction.

thickness and creates a virtual 3D effect. The bistable property of the optical illu- how to control the sound.

sion preserves in the virtual 3D display. As a generative piece, code is replaced the pixels of the screen and scatter the projected light. The turbulent flow in the Audience are invited to experience the aesthetic pleasure of watching the chaotic dynamics inside the 'microscopic universe' composed by light and mist where all sorts of possibilities could exist.

'DANCE IN THE MIST' is a fog projection installation that studies visual experience Based on thirteen-frame laser-cut hand drawn animations of a fire, Laurenzo took and how depth perception is constructed. It resembles the Spinning Dancer – a the thirteen pictures and then gradually burned the wooden pieces creating an orthogonal axis of animation. All in all there are thirteen different sets of burned pieces, giving a total of 169 possible images that are animated following paths within these two axes. With the two knobs the visitor is controlling both, the In this installation, an immaterial screen is formed by a cloud of mist that animation path as well as the sound. The sound is created by algorithmically is streamed continuously from a fog machine and rising up in the air. The dancer's combining two different recordings of Hong Kong's student-led pro-democracy silhouette is projected on the mist and appears to be suspending and spinning in demonstrations in the last fall. Although the two controls have a clear impact in mid-air. As the image casts on a volume of fog rather than a flat screen, the light the sound that is being reproduced, the causal relation between the spectator's rays are scattered at different depth positions in the fog. This gives rise to image interaction and the sound changes permanently, turning impossible to 'learn'

But is this interactive installation just an animation of a cosy fireplace? by the piezoelectric transducer in the fog machine to create an autonomous, sto- Or a sound-driven game to control a fire? By no means. The whole installation rechastic system mediated by mist. Thousands of microscopic water droplets act as flects on systemic structures and their supposed 'freedom', on mechanisms of manipulation and how to control all this. Read and written against the background mist is clearly visible and brings about a poetic and illusionary visual experience. of the 'Umbrella Revolution' Laurenzo's 'TWO SYSTEMS' is a powerful tool to make visible how different systems are interwoven and what role does each individual play in times of crisis. Burn and to get burned are synonyms for the 'hot' engagement of the students as well as the assertive, reckless action of the government, 'arsonists' of the younger generation. The inability of the user of learning how to control the sound is a direct reflection on the idealistic view of democracy that the Umbrella Revolution has.

### **ZHENG BO**

### MAURICE BENAYOUN

A WALL / 2015 / A web-based platform

'A WALL' is a curated selection of artworks from China's leading contemporary artists. Text, photos, videos and other archival material combine to form a digital wall that tells the story of socially engaged art in China over the past 20 years. In concept and style, 'A WALL' is a reimagining of China's Democracy Wall for the digital age. The Democracy Wall was a brick wall established in Beijing in 1978, which became a key platform for creative and cultural expression. Artists and activitists recorded ideas, news and commentary on the Democracy Wall following the collapse of the Cultural Revolution. In the same spirit, you can contribute your thoughts on the artworks and themes posted on Zheng's wall.

Artworks featured in 'A WALL' include: # Keepers of the Waters, organised by Betsy Damon, participated in by Yin Xiuzhen, Dai Guangyu and others, Sichuan and Tibet, 1995-96 # Moving Rainbow, Xiong Wenyun, Sichuan-, Qinghai-Tibet Highways, 1998-2001 # 'Everyone's East Lake', Li Juchuan, Li Yu and others, Wuhan, 2010 # 'Breakfast at the Plum Tree Creek', Wu Mali, Taiwan, 2010-11 # 'Style of the Northeastern New Territories', Tai Ngai Lung and others, Hong Kong, since 2009

# 'Two Square Metres', Xu Yan, Guangzhou, 2014

The issues explored in 'A WALL' are diverse. Each project is an individual investigation into one aspect of China's social fabric, from Li Juchuan's consideration of the rise of the individual and decline of the collective subconscious, to Xiong Wenyun, Wu Mali and Tai Ngai Lung's investigations into the impact of globalisation, over-development and urbanisation.

WHITE CUBE ALPHA 白色空間 alpha L'ESSENCE DE L'ART CONTEMPORAIN 當代藝術精華 / 2014 10 flacons with perfume

Recognition is the basis of acceptance in the art world and requires producing minimal signs of respect for implicit standards. There is thus no point in being surprised by reactions of refusal that are based not on rational decisions, but on the necessity to preserve all or some of the rules that define the institutional portant is to identify the properties determining the limits of these external signs National Park in USA, eight days after the couple married in 2013. of contemporary art.

impression that what he is eating contains real freshly-picked strawberries with that taste of genuine traditional products characteristic of reputed organic agriculture.

Benayoun proposed attempting to achieve the equivalent in art and produced a work out of it, thus creating the essence of contemporary art. Along with turpentine, it was too characteristic of art exhibitions in the 1950ies to give that contemporary fragrance which should affect traditions in a permanent manner. The smell of vinyl paint, which characterises the recently renewed white box, is more discreet and more undeniably present at the smart opening nights of exhibitions.

'Contemporary Art Oil' might be distributed in little well-designed flasks, in museum shops or, even better, in shops selling art materials.

### DON RITTER

**UNNECESSARY SIGNAGE / 2015** 13 silk screen prints on aluminium / each H 58 x W 41 cm

'UNNECESSARY SIGNAGE' is a depiction of humanity's struggle with morality, comprised of prohibitive instructions and pictographs that are presented as industrial road signs. Each sign refers to a real-world event that involved morality and the human condition, including birth, love, marriage, parenting, social recognition, and death. A sign containing the text 'Do Not Push Husband Off Cliff framework, which enable art to evolve in a context of total serenity. What is im- During Honeymoon' includes a pictograph of the event that occurred at Glacier

Most of the signs are associated with a specific tragic event that occurred The use of aromas in the food industry, which gives the consumer the within the last 30 years, including a mother who beat her four-year old son to death because she suspected he was a homosexual ('Do Not Beat Child To Death For Seeming Gay'), a father who murdered his daughter for marrying a man of a certain religion ('Do Not Stone Daughter To Death For Marrying The Man She Loves'), and man who was found alone in his house 15 years after dying ('Do Not Be Too Disappointed When You Die Alone In A Dark Room').

> "The most obvious, ubiquitous, important realities are often the ones that are hardest to see and talk about." David Foster Wallace

### 古之真人,不逆寡,不雄成,不謨士。若然者,過而弗悔,當而不自 得也。... 翛然而往, 翛然而來而已矣。 "The true men of old were not afraid when they stood alone in their views. No great exploits. No plans. If they failed, no sorrow. No self-congratulation

in success. [...] Easy come, easy go." (translated by Thomas Merton) 莊子 Zhuangzi 大宗師 The Great and Most Honoured Master

"To be a straight thinker or not to be. To be blind." Marcel Broodthaers Le Privilège de l'Art / 1975

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This exhibition will be shown in January/February 2016 at FRANZ JOSEFS KAI 3, the new exhibition space of the University of Applied Arts Vienna.



### **JANE PROPHET**

NEURO MEMENTO MORI / Number 1 / 2014 Polymer 3D print from MRI & facial scanning data

A portrait of the artist contemplating death. This art piece is part of a collaboration between the visual artist, Jane Prophet and neuroscientists Zoran Josipovic (NYU) and Andreas Roepstorrf (Aarhus University). Jane is the subject of a trial where she looks at representations of memento mori and vanitas paintings and objects while being MRI scanned to monitor the functions of her brain.

Following Zoran Josipovic's instructions, she has learnt to meditate, specifically to contemplate death. She has repeated these meditations in an fMRI scanner. Accumulated fMRI brain images are being processed, producing 3D data of the artist's brain. This piece is a sculptural object made from the MRI data and facial scanning data and is one of a series of contemporary vanitas or mento mori.

The questions that underpin this project are: # Can contemporary neuroscience and new imaging technologies increase our understanding of consciousness? # When we look at memento mori artworks are we prompted to contemplate our own mortality?

# What parts of the brain are active when we look at these artworks? # What parts of the brain are active when we meditate on death? # Is there any similarity in brain function in these two instances?

### SAMSON YOUNG

MUTED SITUATIONS 消音狀況 / 2014 #1 MUTED CLASSICAL QUARTET 消音弦樂四重奏 # 2 MUTED LION DANCE 消音舞獅 2 loops total duration 24'31"

through a re-prioritisation of different sound layers. Certain layers - in most cases how to stage these situations range from specific directives, to more open ap- and he has donated his body for scientific research. proaches that require negotiation with the participants.

Mute is not silence. Muting is not the same as doing nothing. Rather, the soft tissues of many living systems are essentially structured water. 50-75% of the act of muting is an intensely focused re-imagination and re-construction of the human body is H2O. This high proportion of water makes crystallisation within auditory. It involves the conscious suppression of dominant voices, as a way to uncover the unheard and the marginalised, or to make apparent certain assump-

tions about hearing and sounding.

### **TOBIAS KLEIN**

ORGANIC CHANDELIER (ABDOMEN) / 2013 Nylon 3D Print, Aluminum Sulfate, 40 watt neon bulb in acrylic cylinder H 60 x W 30 x D 30 cm

The 'ORGANIC CHANDELIER' is part of an installation which Klein has shown 2013 'MUTED SITUATIONS' are proposals for sonic situations to be heard anew, achieved in Washington DC. The background story begins with 'THE VISIBLE HUMAN PRO-JECT'. In 1994 anatomists have frozen the cadaver of Joseph Paul Jernigan solid the sonic 'foreground' of such situations – are consciously muted or suppressed, at –73°C, then cryosectioned it at 1 millimeter intervals into 1,871 slices, which and as a result the less-commonly-noticed layers are revealed. Instructions on were then photographed. The murderer Jernigan was executed by lethal injection

Living cells consist of an aqueous solution inside of a cell membrane. The

the body occur in two main ways: through dehydration, when minerals crystallise from a saturated solution, and by freezing, when ice crystals are formed. The formation of crystals in living cells is usually fatal.

> In his project 'THE INVISIBLE HUMAN' Klein echoes some of those 1,871 slices. A human body is digitally divided using MRI scanning, and turned into a template onto which crystals are grown. The body sections are given shape through the crystallization processes that echo those occuring in the body as it dies. For the materialization Klein has chosen the idea of a chandelier. In the 15th century this ceiling- mounted light fixture hung often over the grave of the donor. In this respect the crystals of the 'ORGANIC CHANDELIER' make the invisible body of his blood donor visible and shows us how death leads to life again.















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