

the importance of video-based remix techniques for critiquing cultural norms and narratives. A screening of the short film *Walking on Eggshells: Borrowing Culture in the Remix Age* (2010) by Jacob Albert, Ryan Beauchamp, and Brendan Schlager extended this dialogue into the natural evolution of creative languages, the definition of authorship, and modes of storytelling. An exhibition of recent remix video works looped throughout the event on a series of flat-screen televisions in the lobby. Curated by Elisa Kreisinger of Pop Culture Pirate and Francesca Coppa, founder of the Organization for Transformative Works, this series of pieces by multiple artists and cultural anthropologists explored issues of gender, power, apocalypse, and comedy in a quick-cutting installation of pop cultural quotations.

In "Storytelling Without Bounds," new modes of storytelling took the form of transmedia dialogues with "story architect" Lance Weiler, founder of The Workbook Project, and Tommy Pallotta, producer of *A Scanner Darkly* (2006, directed by Richard Linklater), and the recent transmedia project about peak oil and the future, *Collapsus*.¹ Weiler specializes in multiplatform approaches to enhancing film narratives using cell phones, live performance links, comic book tie-ins, and

websites in addition to traditional screenings. Both producers define transmedia as a multiplatform approach to storytelling that mirrors how we consume stories as an interweave of texting, screen capture, remix dialogues, and theatrical and television viewing.

Since the digital revolution, myriad content producers continue to upload media files via YouTube, Vimeo, blogs, and websites, and the influence of fan culture on consumer interactivity has shifted the role of viewer to one of active collaborator. Through transmedia approaches to marketing and telling multimedia stories, the core DNA of narratives continues to morph across technological boundaries of light, time, and space, and we are all open video participants in the telling.

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NOTE 1. See www.collapsus.com.

BUILDING A WORLD

2010 O1SJ Biennial

San José, California

September 16-19, 2010

Now in its third iteration the biennial O1SJ arts and technology festival in San José, California, is finally gaining traction. With its blend of commissioned works, museum and gallery shows, and a street fair, the festival brought an interesting and occasionally perplexing vibe to the downtown area.

The festival was not for the passive art viewer. This year's theme, "Build Your Own World," included many projects that either were created right in front of spectators or required viewer participation or active discussion with the artist for full appreciation of the work. For example, Christopher Baker's project *offscript* (2010) invited participants to describe their view of the future and submit images or words to the project's website.¹ The words and drawings were then projected each evening of the festival onto the façade of one of San José's upscale shopping areas. Shoppers who paid attention could also contribute their own text and words by interacting with the artist on the spot. The artist team Blast Theory created the interactive performance project *A Machine to See With* (2010), which is designed to be played with a random partner based on instructions arriving



via mobile phone. Meeting a stranger and collaborating with that stranger on an unknown escapade, which takes the participants through obscure parts of the city, ensures that issues of trust and partnership came into play. In commissioning projects such as these, ZER01 is moving art out of the gallery and onto the streets.

As part of the theme, museum and gallery venues were free to interpret the intersection of art and technology as they wished. The San José Institute of Contemporary Art presented "Exposed: Today's Photography/Yesterday's Technology," an exhibition of photographs by artists using retro-photographic techniques to communicate their contemporary ideas. Exhibiting artists included Binh Danh, Chris McCaw, Beth Moon, and Brian Taylor, and during the street fair Michael Shindler worked his alchemy to create tintype portraits.

This year a selection of artist teams were commissioned to create work over the course of two weeks in an 80,000 square-foot

Above

At Todd Chandler and Jeff Stark's *Empire Drive-In* during the screening of Chandler's *Flood Tide Remixed* at O1SJ 2010; photo by Kevin Powers

exhibition and workshop space called “Out of the Garage Into the World.” Workshops were organized with local participants on topics as varied as youth videomaking, solar-powered sculptures, and *huarache* shoemaking. The War Veterans Book Workshop was a poignant and quiet space amid the frenetic energy of the festival. In just a few short days, project leader Monica Haller and five veterans wrote diary entries and longer pieces of prose, combining them with photographs and mementos to create books.

The highlight of the exhibition space was Todd Chandler and Jeff Stark’s *Empire Drive-In* (2010). A backdrop to Chandler’s film *Flood Tide: Remixed* (2010), this multimedia installation was a *Mad Max*-style drive-in theater constructed from twenty-four junked cars and a concession stand. The attention to detail was so precise it even included the ability to tune car radios to the film’s soundtrack. The venue was used for other screenings and performances, including one by cellist Zoë Keating, who performed her new work, *Into the Trees*, accompanied by a digital animation created by Robert Hodgins.

In conjunction with the festival, a two-day “Global Warning Symposium” was held, bringing together artists, scientists, and policymakers to discuss how collaborative art projects are used to

communicate very complex subjects. To this end, San José’s Public Art Director, Barbara Goldstein, together with ZER01’s Executive Director Joel Slayton and three artist teams, are finalizing proposals for the *Climate Clock* project, which promises to be a “a work of landmark art that incorporates Silicon Valley’s measurement, data management, and communications technologies to help people understand climate change while encouraging them to continue reducing their carbon footprint on planet Earth.”²

The symposium added weight to the OISJ Biennial and the clear evidence of research likewise underpinned the intentions of many of the socially conscious art projects on view. Lest this suggest that the festival was too serious, there were plenty more fluffy participatory projects with which to engage. Overall, the excellent combination of commissioned works and the backing of local art venues and the city’s public arts department lead to a festival that is rich in terms of the diversity of projects, artworks, and artists.

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NOTES 1. See <http://offscript.org/>. 2. See <http://ad.sjsu.edu/community/creativepartners/>.

SAGAS

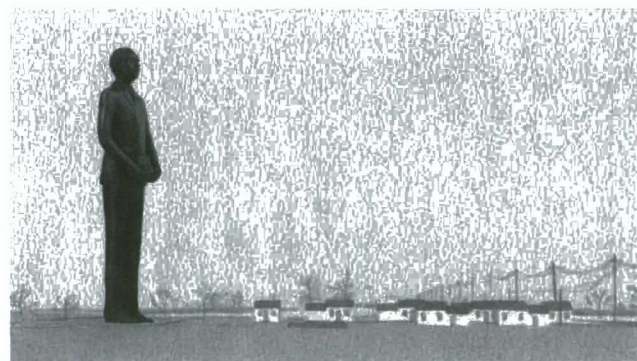
SITE Santa Fe Eighth International Biennial Exhibition

Santa Fe, New Mexico

June 10, 2010–January 2, 2011

“The Dissolve,” the Eighth International SITE Santa Fe Biennial, curated by Sarah Lewis and Daniel Belasco, seeks explanation for an aesthetic conjunction of “homespun and high tech.” The exhibition contemplates a revived exploitation of early animation and moving picture imaging by contemporary artists. According to the curators, this is nothing less than “a new historically rooted impulse.” Their curatorial agenda envisions new paradigms, alchemical engagements, and the emergence of a collective yet uncoordinated aesthetic. Such considerable claims breed skepticism, and viewers may be struck by the curatorial romanticism that conjures unsolved mysteries, unveilings, and explorations of the unknown, the unexpected, and the unexplainable—synthesized and presented for the first time.

Lewis and Belasco’s arguments depend on juxtaposition and hybridization of old and new technologies, a division embraced by bicameral minds and doggedly echoed on digital screens and printed pages. To utter “technology” in our present vernacular tends not to elicit images of frying pans, pliers, or dental floss. Today, technology connotes integrated circuits that, following popular pundits, shape or control our daily lives. Perhaps this is so, but *Homo sapiens* shape and create that same technology. It is not *sui generis*. Whether old



or new, the tools of human adaptation extend our species’ capacity to exploit (and define) our environments. We invent tools, fabricate them, adjust them, extend them, destroy them, and objectify them. In turn, the availability and range of particular toolkits impact our performative abilities, reasonably and sometimes unpredictably modifying our behavior. The dynamic meaning of this relationship rests neither solely with the human, nor with the tool, but in their interaction. Somebody and something must generate the power and plug in the camera.

The curatorial selections in “The Dissolve” sketch a compelling history of animation and related techniques, exemplifying how their precedents have been continuously integrated into a wide range of artistic practices. Neither the aesthetics nor the techniques of animation have been abandoned, waiting for reinvention or revival. Rather, the “hybridization” of alchemical qualities evoked by the curators seems a reasonable, even predictable, generative