



LEONARDO ELECTRONIC ALMANAC

VOL 18 NO 3 VOLUME EDITORS LANFRANCO ACETI, JANIS JEFFERIES,

IRINI PAPADIMITRIOU / EDITORS JONATHAN MUNRO AND ÖZDEN ŞAHİN

Touch and Go is published in collaboration with Watermans and Goldsmiths College in occasion of the Watermans' International Festival of Digital Art, 2012, which coincides with the Olympics and Paralympics in London. The issue explores the impact of technology in art as well as the meaning, possibilities and issues around human interaction and engagement. *Touch and Go* investigates interactivity and participation, as well as light art and new media approaches to the public space as tools that foster engagement and shared forms of participation.



TOUCH AND GO

Copyright 2012 ISAST

Leonardo Electronic Almanac

Volume 18 Issue 3

August 2012

ISSN 1071-4391

ISBN 978-1-906897-18-5

The ISBN is provided by Goldsmiths, University of London.

LEA PUBLISHING & SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Editor in Chief

Lanfranco Aceti lanfranco.aceti@leoalmanac.org

Co-Editor

Özden Şahin ozden.sahin@leoalmanac.org

Managing Editor

John Francescutti john.francescutti@leoalmanac.org

Art Director

Deniz Cem Öndüğü deniz.onduygu@leoalmanac.org

Editorial Board

Peter J. Bentley, Ezequiel Di Paolo, Ernest Edmonds, Felice Frankel, Gabriella Giannachi, Gary Hall, Craig Harris, Sibel Irzik, Marina Jirotko, Beau Lotto, Roger Malina, Terrence Masson, Jon McCormack, Mark Nash, Sally Jane Norman, Christiane Paul, Simon Penny, Jane Prophet, Jeffrey Shaw, William Uricchio

Contributing Editors

Nina Czegledy, Susan Collins, Leonardo Da Vinci, Anna Dumitriu, Vince Dziekan, Darko Fritz, Marco Gillies, Davin Heckman, Saoirse Higgins, Jeremy Hight, Denisa Kera, Frieder Nake, Vinoba Vinayagamoorthy

Cover Image

Scenocosme

Editorial Address

Leonardo Electronic Almanac

Sabancı University, Orhanlı – Tuzla, 34956

Istanbul, Turkey

Email

info@leoalmanac.org

Web

- » www.leoalmanac.org
- » [www.twitter.com/LEA_twitts](https://twitter.com/LEA_twitts)
- » www.flickr.com/photos/lea_gallery
- » www.facebook.com/pages/Leonardo-Electronic-Almanac/209156896252

Copyright © 2012

Leonardo, the International Society for the Arts,
Sciences and Technology

Leonardo Electronic Almanac is published by:

Leonardo/ISAST

211 Sutter Street, suite 501

San Francisco, CA 94108

USA

Leonardo Electronic Almanac (LEA) is a project of Leonardo/
The International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technol-
ogy. For more information about Leonardo/ISAST's publica-
tions and programs, see <http://www.leonardo.info> or contact
isast@leonardo.info.

Leonardo Electronic Almanac is produced by

Passero Productions.

Posting of this journal is prohibited without permission of
Leonardo/ISAST, except for the posting of news and events
listings which have been independently received.

The individual articles included in the issue are © 2012 ISAST.

LEONARDO ELECTRONIC ALMANAC, VOLUME 18 ISSUE 3

Touch and Go

VOLUME EDITORS

LANFRANCO ACETI, JANIS JEFFERIES, IRINI PAPADIMITRIOU

EDITORS

JONATHAN MUNRO, ÖZDEN ŞAHİN

Watermans International Festival of Digital Art, 2012

Touch and Go is a title that I chose together with Irini Papadimitriou for this LEA special issue. On my part with this title I wanted to stress several aspects that characterize that branch of contemporary art in love with interaction, be it delivered by allowing the audience to touch the art object or by becoming part of a complex electronic sensory experience in which the artwork may somehow respond and touch back in return.

With the above statement, I wanted to deliberately avoid the terminology 'interactive art' in order to not fall in the trap of characterizing art that has an element of interaction as principally defined by the word interactive; as if this were the only way to describe contemporary art that elicits interactions and responses between the artist, the audience and the art objects.

I remember when I was at Central Saint Martins writing a paper on the sub-distinctions within contemporary media arts and tracing the debates that distinguished between electronic art, robotic art, new media art, digital art, computer art, computer based art, internet art, web art... At some point of that analysis and argument I realized that the common thread that characterized all of these sub-genres of aesthetic representations was the word art and it did not matter (at least not that much in my opinion) if the manifestation was material or immaterial, conceptual or physical, electronic or painterly, analogue or digital.

I increasingly felt that this rejection of the technical component would be necessary in order for the electronic-robotic-new-media-digital-computer-based-internet art object to re-gain entry within the field of fine art. Mine was a reaction to an hyper-fragmented

and indeed extensive and in-depth taxonomy that seemed to have as its main effect that of pushing these experimental and innovative art forms – through the emphasis of their technological characterization – away from the fine arts and into a ghetto of isolation and self-reference. Steve Dietz's question – *Why Have There Been No Great Net Artists?*¹ – remains unanswered, but I believe that there are changes that are happening – albeit slowly – that will see the sensorial and technical elements become important parts of the aesthetic aspects of the art object as much as the brush technique of Vincent Willem van Gogh or the sculptural fluidity of Henry Moore.

Hence the substitution in the title of this special issue of the word interactivity with the word touch, with the desire of looking at the artwork as something that can be touched in material and immaterial ways, interfered with, interacted with and 'touched and reprocessed' with the help of media tools but that can also 'touch' us back in return, both individually and collectively. I also wanted to stress the fast interrelation between the art object and the consumer in a commodified relationship that is based on immediate engagement and fast disengagement, touch and go. But a fast food approach is perhaps incorrect if we consider as part of the interactivity equation the viewers' mediated processes of consumption and memorization of both the image and the public experience.

Nevertheless, the problems and issues that interactivity and its multiple definitions and interpretations in the 20th and 21st century raise cannot be overlooked, as much as cannot be dismissed the complex set of emotive and digital interactions that can be set in motion by artworks that reach and engage large groups of people within the public space. These interactions

generate public shows in which the space of the city becomes the background to an experiential event that is characterized by impermanence and memorization. It is a process in which thousands of people engage, capture data, memorize and at times memorialize the event and re-process, mash-up, re-disseminate and re-contextualize the images within multiple media contexts.

The possibility of capturing, viewing and understanding the entire mass of data produced by these aesthetic sensory experiences becomes an impossible task due to easy access to an unprecedented amount of media and an unprecedented multiplication of data, as Lev Manovich argues.²

In *Digital Baroque: New Media Art and Cinematic Folds* Timothy Murray writes that "the retrospective nature of repetition and digital coding—how initial images, forms, and narratives are refigured through their contemplative re-citation and re-presentation—consistently inscribes the new media in the memory and memorization of its antecedents, cinema and video."³

The difference between memorization and memorialization may be one of the further aspects in which the interaction evolves – beyond the artwork but still linked to it. The memory of the event with its happening and performative elements, its traces and records both official and unofficial, the re-processing and mash-ups; all of these elements become part of and contribute to a collective narrative and pattern of engagement and interaction.

These are issues and problems that the artists and writers of this LEA special issue have analyzed from a variety of perspectives and backgrounds, offering to the reader the opportunity of a glimpse into the complexity of today's art interactions within the contemporary social and cultural media landscapes.

Touch and Go is one of those issues that are truly born from a collaborative effort and in which all editors have contributed and worked hard in order to

deliver a documentation of contemporary art research, thought and aesthetic able to stand on the international scene.

For this reason I wish to thank Prof. Janis Jefferies and Irini Papadimitriou together with Jonathan Munro and Özden Şahin for their efforts. The design is by Deniz Cem Önduygu who as LEA's Art Director continues to deliver brilliantly designed issues.

Lanfranco Aceti

Editor in Chief, *Leonardo Electronic Almanac*
Director, Kasa Gallery

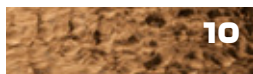


1. "Nevertheless, there is this constant apparently inherent need to try and categorize and classify. In *Beyond Interface*, an exhibition I organized in 1998, I 'datamined' ten categories: net.art, storytelling, socio-cultural, biographical, tools, performance, analog-hybrid, interactive art, interfacers + artificers. David Ross, in his lecture here at the CAD-RE Laboratory for New Media, suggested 21 characteristics of net art. Stephen Wilson, a pioneering practitioner, has a virtual – albeit well-ordered – jungle of categories. Rhizome has developed a list of dozens of keyword categories for its ArtBase. Lev Manovich, in his *Computing Culture: Defining New Media Genres* symposium focused on the categories of database, interface, spatialization, and navigation. To my mind, there is no question that such categorization is useful, especially in a distributed system like the Internet. But, in truth, to paraphrase Barnett Newman, "ornithology is for the birds what categorization is for the artist." Perhaps especially at a time of rapid change and explosive growth of the underlying infrastructure and toolsets, it is critical that description follow practice and not vice versa." Steve Dietz, *Why Have There Been No Great Net Artists? Web Walker Daily* 28, April 4, 2000, <http://bit.ly/QJEWIY> (accessed July 1, 2012).
2. This link to a Google+ conversation is an example of this argument on massive data and multiple media engagements across diverse platforms: <http://bit.ly/pGgDsS> (accessed July 1, 2012).
3. Timothy Murray, *Digital Baroque: New Media Art and Cinematic Folds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 138.

Leonardo Electronic Almanac
Volume 18 Issue 3

4 EDITORIAL Lanfranco Aceti

6 INTRODUCTION Janis Jefferies



10 **SUGURU GOTO, CYMATICS, 2011 - AN ACTION SHARING PRODUCTION** Simona Lodi & Luca Barbeni
+ **SUGURU GOTO** in conversation with Paul Squires



30 **INTERACTIVITY, PLAY AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT** Tine Bech

44 **UNITY: IN PURSUIT OF THE HUMANISTIC SPIRIT** One-Room Shack Collective
+ **ONE-ROOM SHACK COLLECTIVE** in conversation with Evelyn Owen



52 **HOKUSPOKUS** Michele Barker & Anna Munster

58 **AS IF BY MAGIC** Anna Gibbs



60 **BLACK BOXES AND GOD-TRICKS: AN ACCOUNT OF USING MEDICAL IMAGING SYSTEMS TO PHOTOGRAPH CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CONTEXT OF A DIGITAL ARTS PRACTICE** Eleanor Dare



72 **CO-AUTHORED NARRATIVE EXPERIENCE: AFFECTIVE, EMBODIED INTERACTION THROUGH COMBINING THE DIACHRONIC WITH THE SYNCHRONISTIC** Carol MacGillivray & Bruno Mathez

84 **UNTITLED** Phoebe Hui
+ **PHOEBE HUI** in conversation with Jonathan Munro

98 **GOING WITH THE FLOW**
GAIL PEARCE in conversation with Jonathan Munro



102 **THE SWEET SPOT** Graeme Crowley in collaboration with The Mustard and Blood Orchestra

108 **STRATA-CASTER: AN EXPLORATION INTO THE TOPOGRAPHY OF POWER, PRESTIGE, AND POSITION** Joseph Farbrook
+ **JOSEPH FARBROOK** in conversation with Emilie Giles



114 **WHERE IS LOURENÇO MARQUES?: A MOSAIC OF VOICES IN A 3D VIRTUAL WORLD** Rui Filipe Antunes



122 **GEOMETRY**

FÉLICIE D'ESTIENNE D'ORVES in conversation with Claire Le Gouellec

130 **THE EMPOWERING POTENTIAL OF RE-STAGING** Birgitta Cappelen & Anders-Petter Andersson

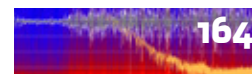


140 **SCENOCOSME: BODY AND CLOUDS**

Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt

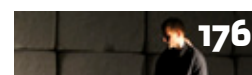
154 **LIGHT, DATA, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Dave Colangelo & Patricio Davila



164 **INCARNATED SOUND IN MUSIC FOR FLESH II: DEFINING GESTURE IN BIOLOGICALLY INFORMED MUSICAL PERFORMANCE**

Marco Donnarumma



176 **THE STORY OF PARCIVAL: DESIGNING INTERACTION FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DANCE PERFORMANCE**

Gesa Friederichs-Büttner & Benjamin Walther-Franks

190 **INTERACTION'S ROLE AS CATALYST OF SYNTHESIZED INTELLIGENCE IN ART** Judson Wright



200 **IN SEARCH OF A DIGITAL MASTERPIECE (OR TWO): STANZA**

Maria Chatzichristodoulou [aka Maria X]



212 **TELEMATIC TOUCH AND GO**

Ellen Pearlman, Newman Lau & Kenny Lozowski

224 **HAPTIC UNCONSCIOUS: A PREHISTORY OF AFFECTIVITY IN MOHOLY-NAGY'S PEDAGOGY AT THE NEW BAUHAUS**

Charissa N. Terranova



236 **THE GESTALT OF STREET TEAM: GUERRILLA TACTICS, GIFS, AND THE MUSEUM** Charissa N. Terranova

240 **BIOGRAPHIES**

250 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

