UBERMORGEN.COM

UBERMORGEN.COM

LINK
EDITIONS

STEAL
THIS
BOOK
HOFFMAN

A handbook of
survival and warfare
for the citizens of
Woodstock Nation!

[V]OTE-AUCTION

2000, http://www.vote-auction.net

With a project like *[V]ote Auction*, it is hard to avoid hyperbole. After all, very few artists can boast a debut work that garners a half hour programme on CNN.
[V]ote Auction pulled it off, as the most successful application of UBERMORGEN.COM's concept of "media hacking": a "massive intrusion into mass media channels", using standard technologies accessible to all, thus gaining access to a vast audience at a relatively low cost.
A combination of swift action, sheer audacity, endurance and a communications strategy that cuts both ways gave rise to one of the most spectacular media performances since the days of Orson Welles.

As in the case of *The War of the Worlds* (1938) the point of departure was relatively simple and apparently innocuous: in that case it was a science fiction novel published 40 years previously, here it was a website put online by an American student (a certain James Baumgartner) who, when threatened with the charge of "high treason", hastily declared that the site was a "parody". As with Welles, the attack was launched from a relatively new medium, the potential of which had not yet been fully comprehended by the public.

With the mediation of the American collective RTMark, in March 2000 the site voteauction.com changed hands, from Baumgartner to UBERMORGEN.COM. Founded just a year previously, the latter did not yet have a defined identity on the net. Independently of what the net.art community knew about its founders, publicly UBERMORGEN.COM looked like an odd dotcom involved in developing obscure e-commerce solutions.

The homepage, under the slogan "if you don't get help from us please get help somewhere", gave this explanation: "we are a European intelligence hub for digital uber:companies, projects and individuals".
As for voteauction.com, the revamped site declared its desire to "bring capitalism and democracy closer", explaining: "Voteauction.com [...] is now owned by an Austrian holding company that has invested in many of America's new, emerging industries. We feel that the American Election Industry provides unique new opportunities for the foreign investor. We purchased voteauction.com in order to investigate the profit-making potential of the American Election Industry."

These few details were enough to transform a simple little site without any real e-commerce function into a touch paper. For the media and the American legal system, the fact that a "maverick Austrian businessman" (as Hans Bernhard was described by CNN) had the audacity to meddle with their electoral system was pure madness. The site indeed offered American voters the opportunity to "profit from your election capital by selling your vote to the highest bidder". Voters could register to auction their vote, while candidates and corporations could register to bid. The election in question was clearly that of 2000, which was due to end on 7 November, with the victory of one of the two main candidates, the Republican George W. Bush or the Democrat Al Gore. In the space a few weeks, there was a media explosion. UBERMORGEN.COM was doing an average of 30 telephone

[V]ote-Auction Seal - voteauctionseal.gif
2000, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

interviews and 15 by email a day. Various states issued temporary restraining orders or injunctions for alleged illegal vote-trading. While these injunctions had no validity outside America, they led to the closure of the site, which then rose from its ashes under a variety of domains: vote-auction.com, vote-auction.at, vote-auction.net. Federal Attorney Janet Reno, the FBI, the NSA and the CIA started investigating the case to ensure the integrity of the voting process.

By November 2000, when the project ended, *[V]ote Auction* had totted up around 2,500 appearances in the national and international media. It had cost UBERMORGEN.COM 70,000 euro, and even now its members are forbidden to enter the United States. But to understand *[V]ote Auction*, and in the light of the aforementioned definition of "media hacking", these should not be considered as the consequences of a project limited to a website, but rather as an integral part of the project itself. *[V]ote Auction*, as we have said, is a performance that takes place in the intangible world of information. The two versions of the site, the phoney statistics that back them up, the press releases issued by UBERMORGEN.COM, the verbal and written declarations, the mountain of injunctions received on a daily basis via fax, post and email, the articles in the press, and the narrative development that holds all these media fragments together, are all part of the work, and are also works of art in their own right. It is no coincidence that these elements are often featured in exhibitions. In the numerous shows that followed

the project, alongside the *[V]ote Auction* seals UBERMORGEN.COM presented the video of the whole episode of "Burden of Proof" that CNN dedicated to the project on 24 October 2000, and a monumental paper installation made of the impressive volume of legal documents generated by *[V]ote Auction*: legal or media readymades that convey the numerous political issues raised by the project.

As for the political nature of *[V]ote Auction*, this should be clarified: the project is not 'political' in the sense that normally applies to political art or activism. *[V]ote Auction* does not condemn, or protest against something. All it does is give rise to a very ambiguous, dynamic situation, and sustain its position consistently right to the end. It detects a new business opportunity, draws our attention to it and invites us to reflect on it. It refuses to be pigeon-holed into any specific category (parody vs. real business), laying claim to the flexibility of the "Internet generation" it belongs to. *[V]ote Auction* is political because it engages with politics, presenting itself as a discussion platform on the relations between capitalism and the electoral system, and due to the fact that its mere existence, as Cornelia Sollfrank notes, shows capitalist democracies for what they are: a parody of themselves.

[V]ote-Auction Endresults
2000, Screenshot

[V]ote-auction

vote-auction.com
it's different because it's fundamentally different

bidders statistics

bid-check see all END-RESULTS

End results for the voting blocks:

Rank	Price per Vote	State	100 voters	10,000 dollars
01	157.03	New Jersey [NJ]	81500	519
02	114.68	West Virginia [WV]	12500	109
03	78.16	Washington [WA]	34000	435
04	62.50	Ohio [OH]	23000	386
05	53.54	Arkansas [AR]	15500	295
06	46.95	Indiana [IN]	20000	426
07	45.23	Illinois [IL]	45000	
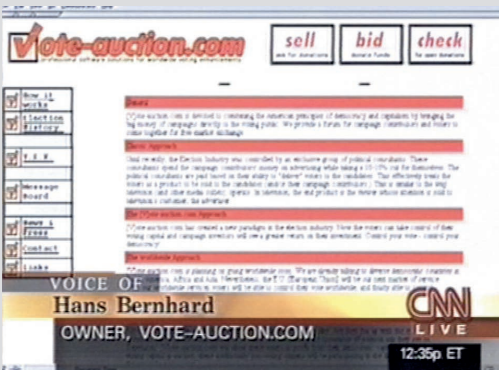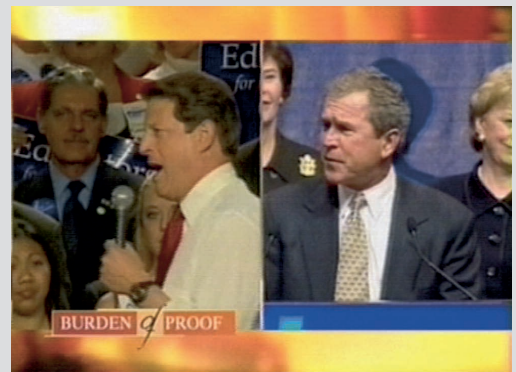
[V]ote-Auction's 27 min. on CNN "Burden of Proof - Bidding for Ballots: Democracy on the Block"
2000, Video/DVD, 00.27.00, Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

vote-auction.com
professional software solutions for worldwide voting enhancements

sell — ask for donations
bid — donate funds
check — for open donations

"Bringing Capitalism and Democracy Closer Together"

How it works
Election History
V.E.K.
Message Board

History | Press Release

[v]ote-auction.com is owned by an Austrian holding company that has invested in many of America's new, emerging industries. Like the Prison industry....

Take a closer look here.

We have subject to diverse legal calamities during the last few weeks. We, however, feel the moral obligation to keep up our services to all our users....

Read our Press Release here.

Voter Empowerment Kit

BURDEN of PROOF

CNN LIVE — NAS ▲ 42.57

CNN LIVE — DOW ▲ 147.61

Sell: Register to ask for donations

First (Given) Name
Last (Family) Name
Address (Line 1)
Address (Line 2)
City
State
Zip Code
Middle Initial

CNN LIVE — NAS ▲ 41.58

VOICE OF
Hans Bernhard
OWNER, VOTE-AUCTION.COM
CNN LIVE — DOW ▲ 134.76

VOICE OF
Hans Bernhard
OWNER, VOTE-AUCTION.COM
CNN LIVE — NAS ▲ 32.06

vote-auction.com

Current bids for the voting blocks:

CASE LAW
Buying Votes Online
WEB SITE SHUT DOWN BY JUDGE, REOPENS UNDER NEW NAME
CNN LIVE — 12:36p ET

*THE*AGENCY* [for Manual Election Recounts]

2004, http://www.ubermorgen.com/*THE*AGENCY*/

One of the avenues opened by [V]ote Auction in 2000 was the possibility for non-Americans to play an active role in the American presidential elections. Something that appeared unreal and presumptuous at the time began to be perceived as a necessity and a right only a few years later – after 9-11, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and America's repeated refusals to comply with the Kyoto protocol. The American president has the power to decide on the world's destiny, so why does the world not have the right to vote?

In 2004, UBERMORGEN.COM attempted to offer a solution to this contradiction, in its own way, in the shape of two parallel projects: Sell The Vote and *THE*AGENCY*.
The first is a website that enables American voters to offer their votes to anyone who, for whatever reason, does not have the right to vote in the United States. Once again, there was no real sale mechanism, just a forum for American voters to explain the reason behind their offer of a vote, and for non-voters to say why they were interested in voting in the American elections. Linda, for example, aged 25, from New York, explains: "My vote goes to a Puerto Rican, Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico pay federal taxes, fight in the US army, and have US passports – but are entirely denied a right to vote in the presidential elections."

*THE*AGENCY*, presented for the first time at Kunsthaus Graz in November 2004, is a "concept exhibition" that investigates the American election system, its name an explicit reference to the election chicanery which led to the 2000 victory of the Republican candidate George W. Bush. Alongside the installation (featuring the "seal" of *THE*AGENCY* and a paper sculpture made of thousands of ballot papers) there was a performance, staged in Graz on 4 November (two days after Election Day), which enabled exhibition visitors to vote for their preferred candidate. But the ritual character of the performance was deceptive: the participants' votes were entirely valid, albeit cast illegally. UBERMORGEN.COM had in fact managed to get hold of a limited number of authentic ballot papers, through one of the sites created for American voters abroad. These could be submitted by post after the fact, taking advantage of the special concessions for overseas voters. Participants were asked to wear a protective suit and gloves to avoid leaving organic traces on the ballot paper.

Upending the modus operandi of [V]ote Auction, UBERMORGEN.COM switched from the media arena to a museum venue, but continued to work a dual strand, like a tightrope walker on the thin line that separates truth from fiction.

*THE*AGENCY* for Manual Election Recounts Seal - agency_seal.gif
2004, Inkjet on Canvas 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

THE*AGENCY* for Manual Election Recounts
2004, Mixed Media Installation & Performance,
Kunsthaus Graz, Medien.Kunst.Labor,
02.11.- 28.11.2004

OFFICIAL BALLOT
GENERAL ELECTION
November 2, 2004
County of Miami-Dade

FILL IN BUBBLE COMPLETELY USING →
DARK BLUE OR BLACK INK ONLY.

THIS BALLOT STUB SHALL BE REMOVED AND RETAINED BY THE VOTER.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

GROUP NO.

WARNING - VOTING TWICE IN THE SAME
ELECTION IS A FELONY AND CONSTITUTES
A CRIME IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA.

U.S. Postage Paid
39 usc 3406

PAR AVION

OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOTING MATERIAL - FIRST-CLASS MAIL
NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IN THE U.S. MAIL - DMM E080

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK
PO BOX 00000
MIAMA FL 00000-0000

*THE*AGENCY* for Manual Election Recounts - Election Ballots
2004, Offset Print, 20,9x7,3 cm
Ballot No. 1 "08, Kerry/Edwards" Edition of 90.000
Ballot No. 2 "12, Bush/Cheney" Edition of 90.000
Ballot No. 3 "Empty" Edition of 90.000

THE*AGENCY* for Manual Election Recounts
2004, Mixed Media Installation & Performance
Kunsthaus Graz, Medien.Kunst.Labor
02.11.- 28.11.2004

BERNHARD M 23 07 1971
Luzius
A PS102
PSY/Station 4B
Pat.Zl: 901-20311/02/02042

PSYCH|OS

From 2004, http://www.ubermorgen.com/psychos
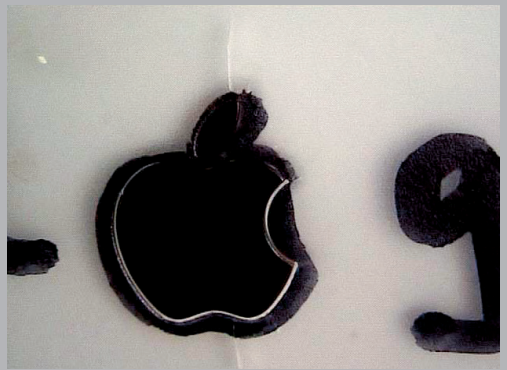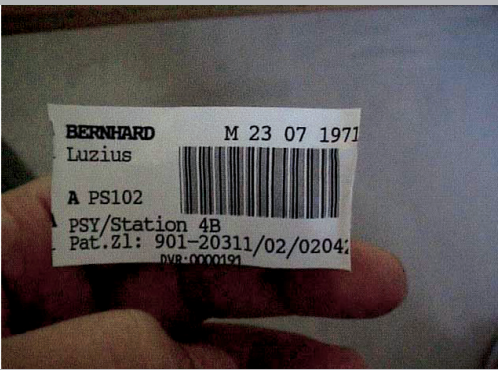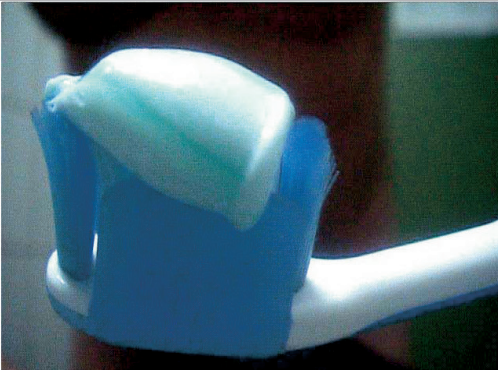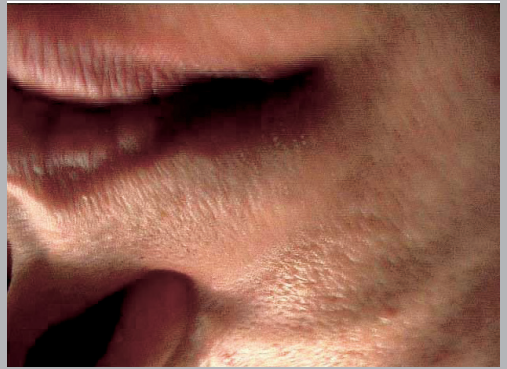
At the heart of all of UBERMORGEN.COM's work there is a simple concept, well conveyed by the term "Digital Actionism". According to UBERMORGEN.COM, the digital actionist operates directly on the web, "connected to millions and millions of invisible channels", and experiences the sensation of being "a thin membrane within a mass media storm". The stage is the actionist's own body, and head in particular: "It vibrates, it becomes threatening, it accelerates, the communication gets out of control and the network suddenly turns into a global menace."

This is an interesting definition from various points of view. On one hand, the explicit reference to Viennese actionism – a radical performance art movement with a highly ritual approach – invites us to consider the media sabotage actions of the collective in a very different light from the usual interpretation (political activism). On the other hand it reminds us that the global network is a hybrid organism, whose human appendages count as much as its connections, data flows, databases, overlaid languages.

In this context, the personal is public as well as political, and what involves the body and mind of the actionist will, sooner or later, affect the entire network.

In March 2002 Hans Bernhard fell victim to an attack of mania. Loaded bodily onto a plane – he was in Cape Town in South Africa – he was taken to the General Hospital of Vienna, Ward 4B, Department of Psychiatry, where he was diagnosed with bipolar affective disorder and committed. Two and a half years after his spell in hospital

UBERMORGEN.COM discovered the huge pile of material submitted by Hans Bernhard while a patient. They decided to take it in hand, and the result is a video that lasts one hour, one minute and one second (01:01:01), entitled *Psych|OS*. In the video we see Hans zombified by his medication and illness wandering around the hospital with his electronic prosthesis and carrying out everyday activities like having a shower, brushing his teeth, making a phone call and downloading his mail. At times the lens of the camera pauses on a detail: his face in the mirror, the bar code on the pills beside the patient's name, the apple on his Mac, the pixels on the screen, the keys on the phone, the packaging of the salami that Hans unwraps and sticks to the window, the lumps of fat that look like pixels. The video depicts a world saturated with technology, given a hyper-realistic, hallucinatory gloss by the psychotic eye of UBERMORGEN.COM. It records a breakdown caused by an overdose of technology and the subsequent resurrection, which springs from a gradual adaptation to this world and this new way of life.

But Hans Bernhard's illness was only one stage of a symbiotic relationship in place since the glory days of etoy, when he decided to "leave reality behind" and embrace a lifestyle made of network protocols and synthetic drugs, electronic music and mirrored sunglasses. In this symbiotic relationship, what the net gives out in terms of life and illnesses, it also receives. It is an ongoing exchange, and the two organisms influence each other.

The Psych|OS Cycle - psychos_hans_01.jpg
2003, Lambda Print on Aluminium, 66x100cm and 100x150cm
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p.
Foto by Oliver Jiszda Photography

The Psych|OS Cycle - psychos_hans_02.jpg
2003, Lambda Print on Aluminium, 66x100cm and 100x150cm
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p.
Foto by Oliver Jiszda Photography

The project *Psych/OS* sets out to explore the forms of this dialogue, dwelling on its most human, visible aspect: illness. The series of photographs *Psych/OS – Hans* (2004) shows Hans running on an acid green lawn, dressed only in a white dressing gown. The images translate mental illness into a visual metaphor, a mix of nature and artificiality, fact and fiction (far from being reportage, the photographs were carefully constructed and have been visibly retouched). *Psych/OS Generator* (2006; cf. p. 42 - 43) is an online software which invites the user to describe his or her psychological state, then responds with a prompt diagnosis and medical prescription: here the net, the cause of the disorder, is also the doctor who prescribes the treatment. *hansbernhardblog* (2006) is the online diary to which Hans Bernhard committed an account of his daily diet of psychoactive drugs, linking the scientific names of the medicines to their Wikipedia entries. This is a highly refined concept, a psychological diary which turns its back on the subjective tone of the confessional for the cold objectivity of scientific knowledge, backed up by a collaborative

encyclopedia, the latest example of collective intelligence on the net, to talk about the mental health of one of the nodes of the network. Lastly, the two digital prints *Zyprexa "Lilly 1112"* and *Zyprexa "Lilly 4117"* (2006) are portraits of the psychoactive drugs Bernhard was taking. In actual fact, the two images, which depict the molecular structures of the two drugs, invite a reflection on their ambiguity as images: the molecule becomes pixel, which in turn becomes ink on canvas. Writing and images, matter and language are overlaid, and discover they are made of the same material. Nothing, UBERMORGEN.COM seems to tell us, is left unaltered by the encounter with the digital realm.

Zyprexa Lilly 1112
Zyprexa Lilly 4117
2005, inkjet on canvas, 50x50cm, 100x100cm
Edition of 3 + 1 a.p.

Fig. 4 Molecular modeling of anzeigne (A) and crociate (B). The interplanar angle between the benzene ring and the thiazdiene ring in (A) and that between the two thiazdiene rings in (B) are about 145° and 144°, respectively.
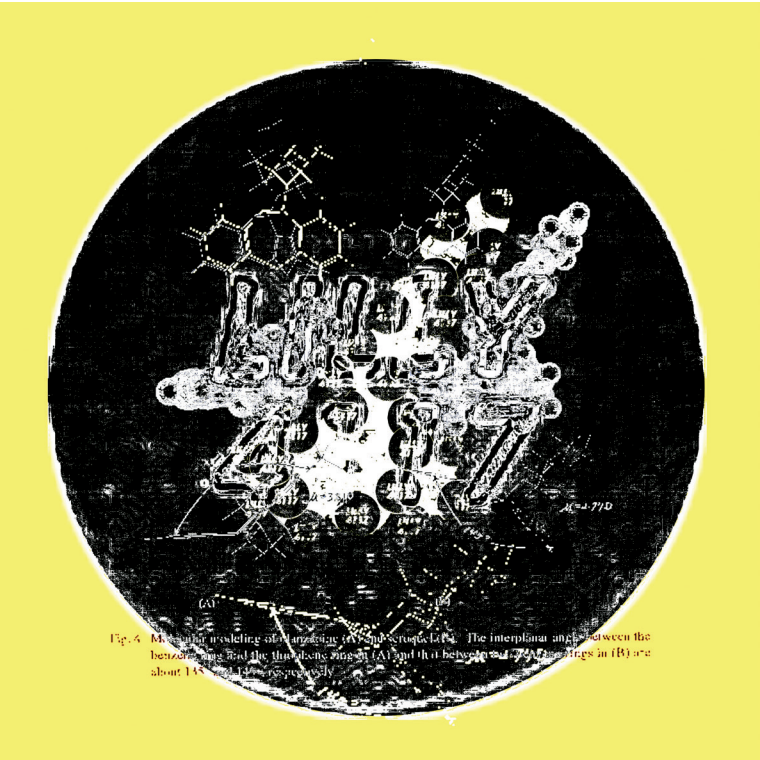
ART FID

2005 - 2006

The idea of the pixel as the minimum unit of the digital image recurs constantly in the work of UBERMORGEN.COM, conditioning the aesthetic of the images that accompany their media hacking operations: from the *Seals*, the logos of the various projects, to their purely painterly works, such as the series *Pixelpaintings*, virtual images (or at least perceived as such on screen) reproduced on canvas, pixel by pixel. On one hand, the low resolution that renders the pixel visible appears to be the aesthetic counterpart of the media hacking poetic: infiltrating communications systems by means of the proficient use of easily accessible devices: low-tech, low-res. From another point of view, pixels, as the minimum units of digital information visualized on the screen, are an agent of disclosure, shattering the digital illusion and annulling the differences between all the various styles of presentation. In the end, images, photographs, text, documents and virtual worlds are just "pixels on the screen": liquid information which can be manipulated, therefore giving the lie to claims of authenticity (cf. *Foriginal Media Hacks*, pp. 26 - 29). Lastly, pixels, as the minimum unit of the representing entity, can be related to the minimum unit of the entity represented, and become the linguistic equivalent of that relationship between inside and outside, between psyche and OS, between bio and tech, which brings us to another node of the UBERMORGEN.COM oeuvre: the pixel as molecule.

The series *ART FID* (2005 - 2006) gathers all these aspects. The name (an acronym of Art Frequency Identification) refers to RFID technology (Radio Frequency Identification), which is increasingly replacing the barcode as a device which guarantees the traceability of products. An RFID chip is a microchip that can store a certain amount of information, which is transmitted via a radio antenna to specific reader that functions at a distance. While its use in the distribution chain is well established, its use on humans – from passports to health cards, to subcutaneous implants – opens up a whole host of new scenarios in terms of the control and availability of personal information. The series ART FID heralds this opportunity and explores its potential and limits, introducing the issue of the manipulatable nature of digital data. In the first series, *ART FID* (2005) – shown for the first time during ART 36 Basel and announced by a press release describing the series as a homage to the introduction of RFID technology into the art system, an experimental initiative implemented by Art Basel itself – three different RFID tags are shown, enlarged, against a monochrome background. Under the magnifying glass, the tags reveal a close analogy with cells, becoming a visual metaphor for the fusion of the biological and technological that they foreshadow. At the same time, the digital manipulation of the image ends up interfering with the structure of the tags, imperceptibly interfering with the data carried by them.

The series *ART FID My...* (2006), shown for the first time at the Phoenix Halle in Dortmund, is a collection of five digital prints of a series of photos showing RFID chips implanted into objects or living beings, like a cow's ear (*ART FID My Cow*) or a human hand (*ART FID My Hand*). The manipulation of the lighting and pixels makes the original image unrecognizable, but preserves its spirit (which is essentially information).

The Dortmund show also featured an *ART FID Seal*, a large mural and an "assembly line", in which pixel 'cubes' fitted with real RFID tags, could be laid out and re-assembled into new solutions.

ART FID Seal
2000, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

ART FID - Lilly controls my [F]originals
2005, Installation, Fabio Paris Art Gallery, Brescia
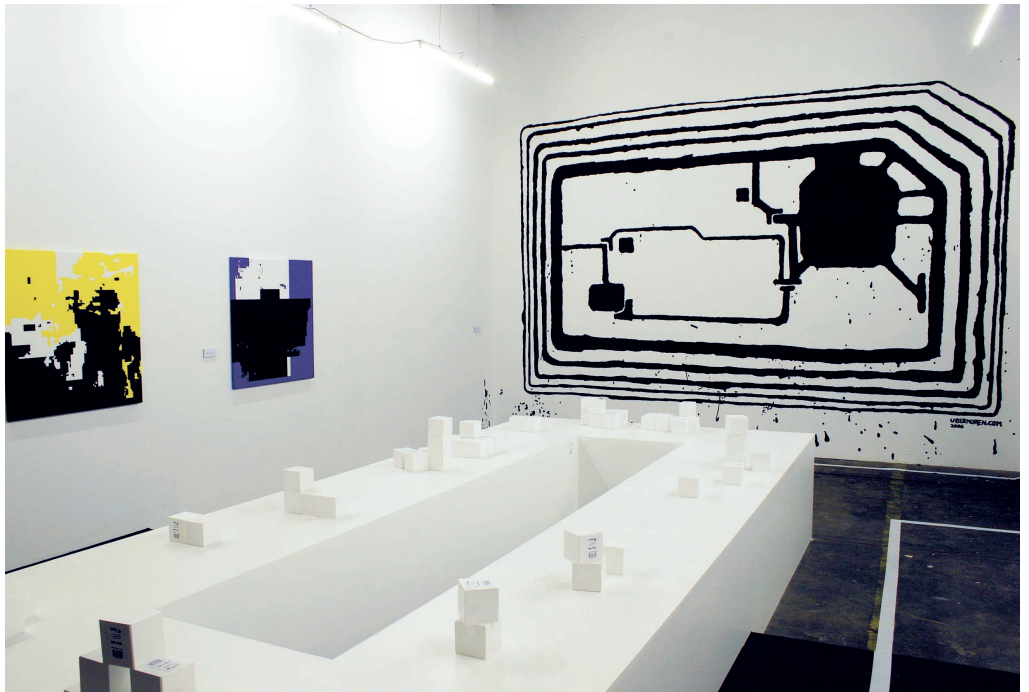
UBERMORGEN.COM: ART FID [F]ORIGINALS - AUTHENTICITY AS CONSENSUAL HALLUCINATION
Hartware MedienKunstVerein, Dortmund, May 27- July 16, 2006
Courtesy Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV), Dortmund
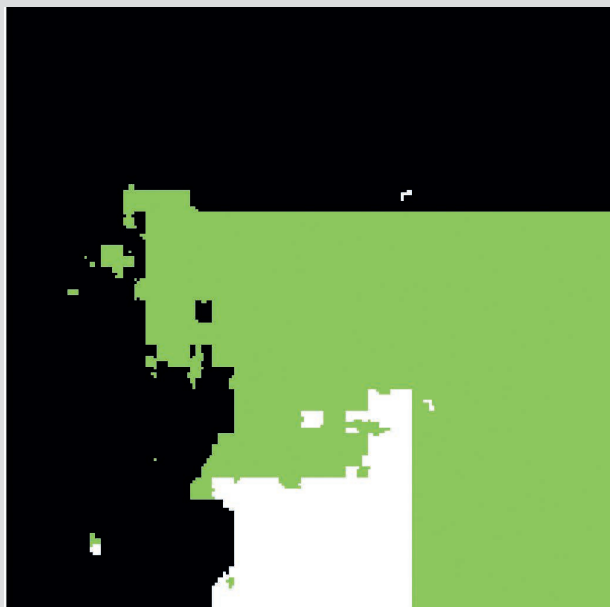
ART FID My Box
ART FID My Palm
ART FID My Hand
2006, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm
Edition of 6 + 2 a.p.

ART FID My Satellite
ART FID My Cow
2006, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm
Edition of 6 + 2 a.p.

U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA

FORIGINAL MEDIA HACKS

2006 – 2007, http://www.foriginal.com

According to Inke Arns, "UBERMORGEN.COM has coined the term "[F]original" to designate any document or legal paper that in the narrow sense of the word is not an original any more, as it has been generated by a machine ("maschinell erstellt") and is "valid without a signature". "[F]original" is a neologism from "to forge" and "original". [...] such "[f]original" documents are mere pixels on a screen or ink on paper. [F]originals claim authenticity but on closer inspection they turn out to be the product of "consensual hallucination" – William Gibson's famous definition of cyberspace."
The [F]original concept was formulated during *[V]ote Auction* (cf. p. 5 - 9), when UBERMORGEN.COM was submerged by an avalanche of injunctions sent by fax or e-mail, which did not have any legal value outside the United States, but which were unexceptionally effective.
This led to *The Injunction Generator*, the first episode in a tetralogy of generators (cf. p. 36 – 45) used to create "forged originals" – legal, medical or banking documents above suspicion from the formal point of view yet entirely without validity outside of the "consensual hallucination" they belong to.

The videos *Foriginal Media Hack No.1* (2006) and *Foriginal Media Hack No.2* (2007) extend this reflection to the presumed documentary value of video material shot with non-professional devices like mobile phones and digital cameras and uploaded onto sites like Google Video and Youtube. Once again, a purely "formal" aspect (low resolution, live sound, rudimentary editing), together with the means of the delivery, has become a guarantee of the authenticity of a document,

with repercussions on the mass media which range from entertaining to disturbing. Starting out from this idea, UBERMORGEN.COM used a rudimentary device and a team of professional stuntmen to produce two videos that document non-existent yet credible events. In the first, a group of people brutally beat up a policeman during the riots in Berlin – Kreuzberg, on 1 May 2006.
In the second, a group of policemen attack a wheelchair-bound protester in an episode of unrest in Rostock in the North of Germany on 2 June 2007, during the G8 summit. Apparently the videos, which did the rounds on the net as genuine documents, were later claimed by UBERMORGEN.COM to be "readymades".
In actual fact the entire cycle was controlled by the collective, both in terms of production (as we have said, with the help of a few stuntmen) and distribution, accomplished by setting up false identities and using these to get the videos onto blogs and mailing lists. According to the accompanying statement, this is an example of Media Hacking in its purest form:
"No ethics, no content, no message. [...] we follow simple instructions on how to infiltrate mass media with low-tech instruments (email, mobile-phones, web/blog) and ambiguous data. This action is an experiment within this conceptual setting. It is an amalgamation of fact and fiction."
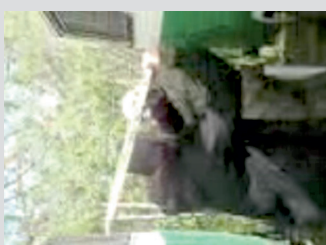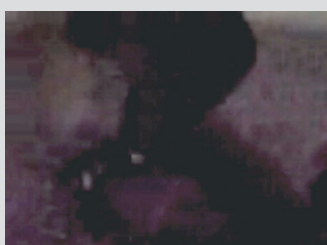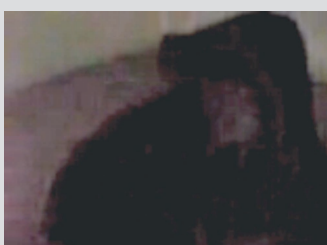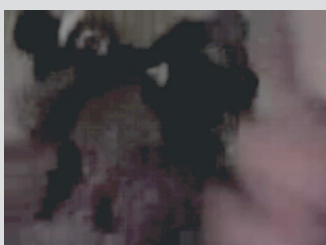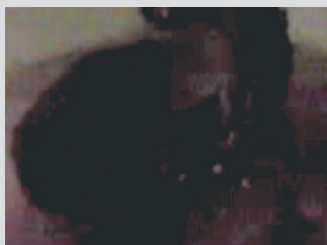
Foriginal Media Hack No. 1
2006, Videostills, DVD, .mov format (originally .3gp), 2,1 MB, 00:00:43, filmed with mobile phone by Mazzotti Action, Berlin, edited by Stefan Eipeltauer, Edition of 9 + 1 a.p.

Foriginal Media Hack No. 2
2006, Videostills, DVD, 3,3 MB, .mov format, 00:00:42, 2007, filmed by Mazzotti Action, Berlin
Edition of 9 + 1 a.p.

CHINESE GOLD

2006 – 2009, http://www.ubermorgen.com/CHINESE_GOLD

In recent years online virtual worlds for gaming (like the wildly popular World of Warcraft) or other social or recreational activities (like Second Life) have proved capable of giving rise to a healthy economy that regards not only the corporations that run them, but also the users themselves. Many of these virtual worlds have their own in-world currency, which in some cases can even be converted into real money and therefore generate income that can be used outside. In virtual worlds players need money to acquire all sorts of things: more money, weapons, equipment, a new avatar, and in some cases, virtual estate, interior decor, clothes, jewellery, animations and so on. This nascent economy has already spawned millionaires and specialized companies, like BANKofWOW, a very specialized company that focuses on selling World of Warcraft gold for the best price. As UBERMORGEN.COM notes: "In Warcraft, it's the currency itself that's being overproduced, not just any product. That means it'll take more units of that currency to exchange for any product. Inflation. The price of everything goes up. Everything you worked so hard to save up for suddenly becomes worth so much less. The Warcraft economy appears to be on the lip of this plunge and administrators are taking steps to curb inflation. When they find a career farmer, they ban the character." These 'farmers' work for small companies that produce currency and equipment to sell to other players. In order to make a profit, production costs must be reduced to a minimum. This has led to the creation, in countries like China, of little companies whose employees do nothing but play World of Warcraft for hours on end, often located in genuine office/factory settings, selling their products on eBay to wealthy gamers in the States and Europe. They are known as "Chinese Gold Farmers".

Chinese Gold is a research project exploring and documenting this original frontier of the virtual economy, which could not fail to arouse the curiosity of UBERMORGEN.COM. The work, still in progress, gathers texts, found footage and documentary-style digital prints, often taken from found material (including the documentary *Gold Farmers*, by the Chinese director Ge Jin), appropriated and rebranded by UBERMORGEN.COM. The work appears to run on two levels: that of a "simulated" life that for many players becomes their actual daily reality, and that of a totally virtual economy that nevertheless ends up conditioning the physical conditions where people live and work, and that curiously follows the same rules as the real economy (with the relocation of production to China and other developing countries pretty much the norm).

The first area is explored in the series of prints *Chinese Gold - World of Warcraft, Belgrade Session* (2006), which document the on-screen life of George, a player tracked down in an underground playing arcade in Belgrade, Serbia; and in the *Machinimas* (2006), short, blurry, low-res videos showing Chinese gold farmers working on the same routines over and over. The second issue crops up in the *Chinese Gold Blue Series* (2006) and the two series taken from a programme which aired on MTV in 2007, focusing on the living conditions of the gold farmers, who often eat, sleep and live in the workshops where they work, glued to the screen for hours and hours. Virtual and real are constantly overlaid, and, in the words of UBERMORGEN.COM, the really "virtual" (the game) blends constantly with the virtually "real" (the money).

Belgrad Session No. 3 - Detail
2007, Lambda Print on Aluminium, 45x60cm and 90x120cm
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p.
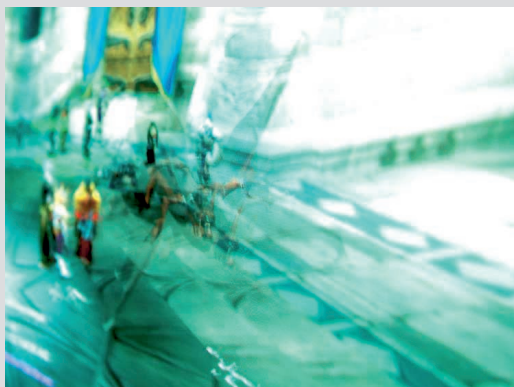
Belgrad Session No. 1 - No. 8
2007, Lambda Print on Aluminium, 45x60cm and 90x120cm
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p. each
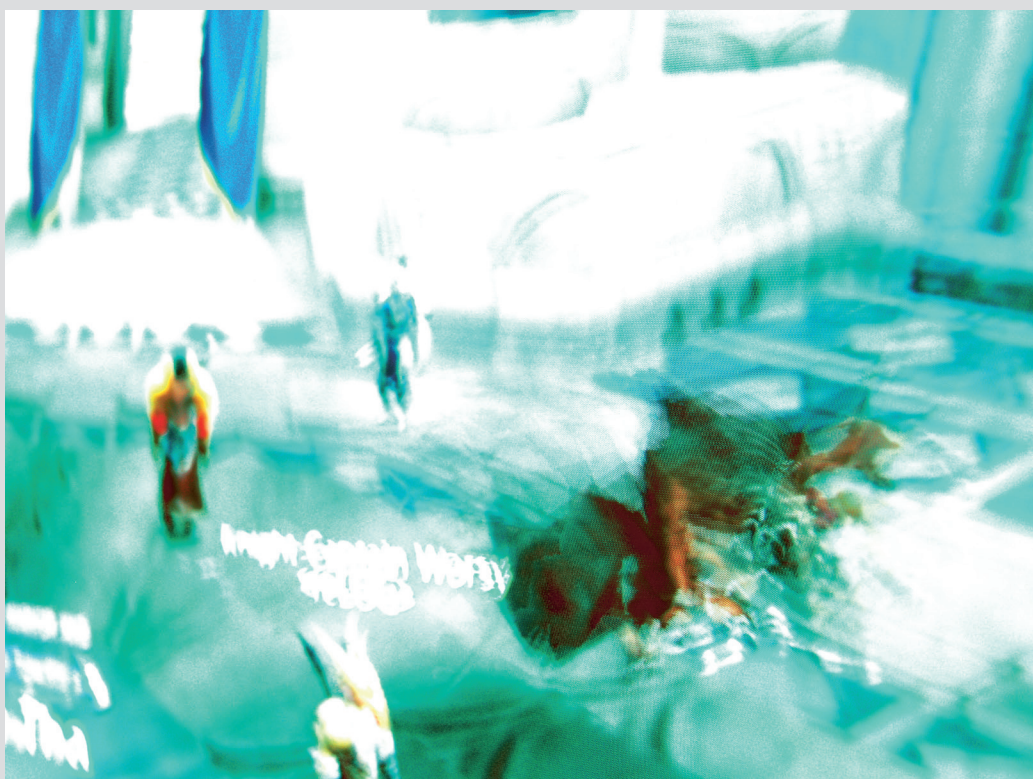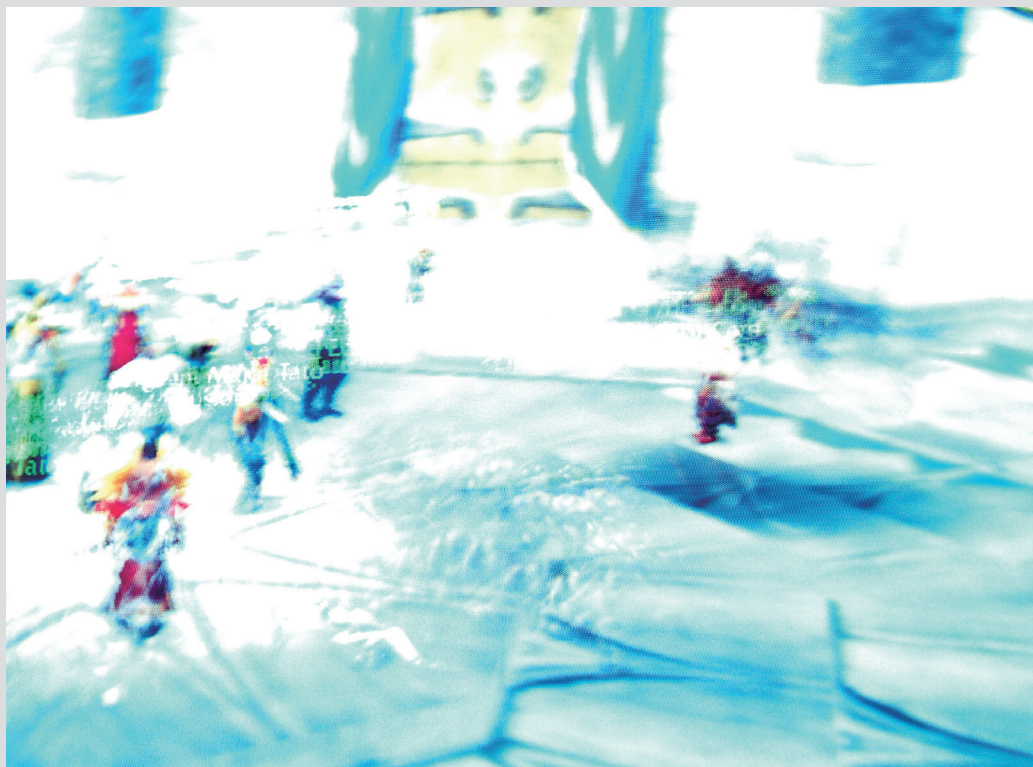
Machinima No. 0 - found footage
2007, Videostills, DVD, 00:09:38
Edition of 8 + 2 a.p.

Untitled No. 1 – No. 7
2007, Lambda Print on Dibon in Shadowbox, 40x60cm
and 80x120cm
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p. each
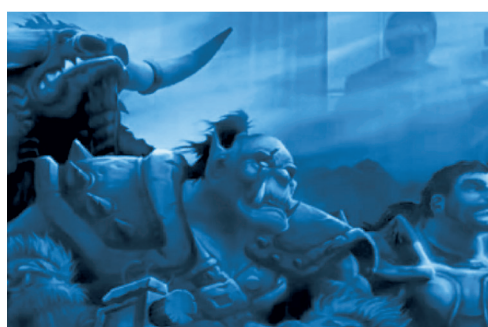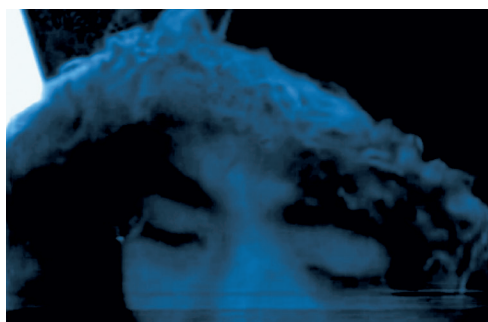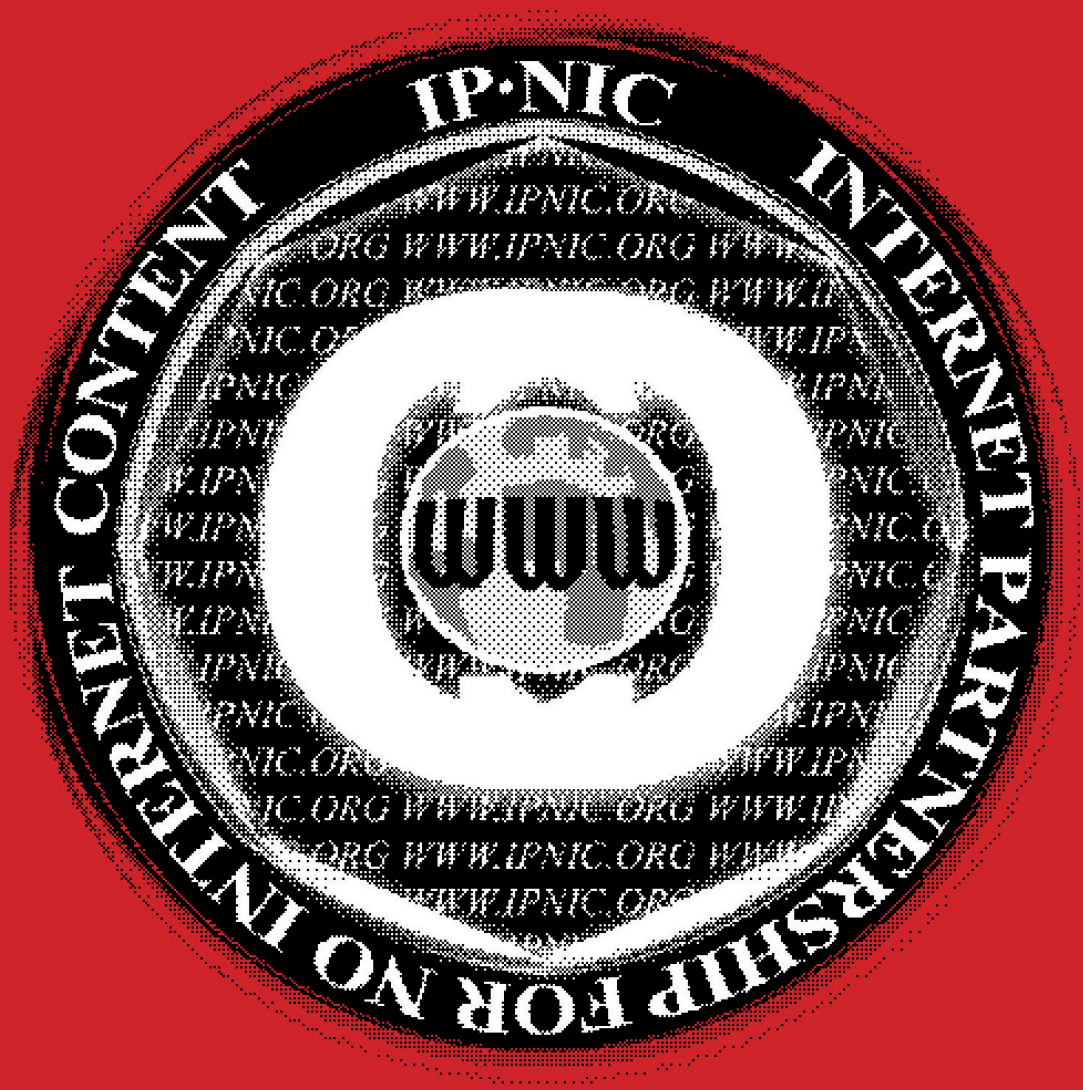
GENERATOR TETRALOGY:
INJUNCTION GENERATOR, BANKSTATEMENTGENERATOR, PSYCH|OS GENERATOR, SUPERENHANCED GENERATOR

2000-2009

As we all know, by implementing specific algorithms, software enables many processes to be automatized. This possibility has been enthusiastically embraced by the art world for decades: not only does it allow artists to delegate a significant portion of work to a machine, it also allows them to give up, entirely or partially, on the element of artistic "intentionality", which is substituted with the random factor much sought after by the avant-garde movements.
Thus, alongside a flourishing current of generative art – which uses algorithms to give rise to images, sound and text – we find a long series of generators, capable of rolling out original texts and images by drawing on a rich archive of raw material and assembling this using intelligent machines.

UBERMORGEN.COM's generators only partially belong to this trend. Instead of emulating a creative process, these generators actually appropriate an authoritative device and offer it to anyone who wants to use it. To issue an injunction, bank statement or prescription you require the authority to do so: in other words, you would need to be a law court, a bank or a doctor. What UBERMORGEN.COM's generators do is appropriate this authority. They can do this thanks to the evolution that the formal device of the "certificate" has had in the digital era, with the shift from "original" to "[f]original". The authenticity of such documents is claimed and acknowledged according to a hallucination which is shared by all, but which is nevertheless a hallucination.
Working from this basis, UBERMORGEN.COM programmed machines to generate injunctions, bank statements and

prescriptions which are unexceptionable in terms of form and content, and which can be put into circulation in the given communication systems, with varying results.
At the same time it is clear that the generators, beyond their specific function, work first and foremost as "representations", eliciting reflections on the situation that gave rise to them: a network of conventions that tends to attribute incredible power over the social, physical and psychological life of an individual to a piece of paper, or even worse, a digital document ("just pixels on the screen, just ink on paper"). This phenomenon is all the more absurd when it enters into collision with the globalized information society we now live in.

INJUCTION GENERATOR

2000, http://www.ipnic.org

Like almost all the subsequent generators, the first generator in the tetralogy came about as an answer to questions raised by a larger project, which in this case was *[V]ote Auction* (2000, cf. p. 4 - 9). During that project, the Circuit Court of Cook County, Chicago issued a temporary injunction against the "individuals" behind *[V]ote Auction*. This injunction was then sent by email to Corenic, a domain name service (DNS) registrar in Geneva, Switzerland. After receiving this email, Corenic decided to shut down the domain vote-auction.com without notice. There are various elements which mean that this injunction is entirely lacking in legal value: American jurisdiction does not extend to Switzerland, and a legal injunction cannot be delivered via e-mail. Yet *[V]ote Auction* was shut down. It was this episode that sparked the idea of launching a "public shutdown-service" - christened IP-NIC, the acronym of "Internet Partnership for No Internet Content". Adopting an affirmative, rather than antagonistic approach, UBERMORGEN.COM transformed this episode of intensely "creative" use of power into an artistic project, and a public service. Using the *Injunction Generator*, you auto-generate an injunction, basically a standard court-order, claiming that the target website operates on an illegal basis.

The document will then be sent, in standard .pdf or .rtf format, to the appropriate domain name service registrar, to the owner of the web-site and to various journalists and lawyers for legal and public processing.

IP-NIC and *Injunction Generator* are operations of overidentification, portraits in relief of a perverse legal system that sacrifices freedom of expression to financial and political interests, and the plurality of the global network to the power hunger of an individual state.

They accomplish this not with the heavy hand of satire and exposé, but with the light touch of Pére Ubu, the prototype of all strategies of overidentification. As for the "products" of the *Injunction Generator*, the key to appreciating them lies perhaps in lizvlx's approach: "I just refuse to get scared when I'm sent legal papers. Anyway, it is just ink on paper and lots of emotions put into some kind of very beautiful legal poetry."

IPNIC Tetralogy Seal - ipnic_seal.gif
2000, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

The Injunction Generator - Screenshots of Webform
2000

IP·NIC
Internet Partnership for No Internet Content

Universal Content and/or Domain Removal Form (UCDR)

Personal Data of Claimant

01 Email Address:

02 Name of Person or Organization:

03 Nationality:

Involved Parties and Jurisdiction

04 Defendant - Target Website/Domain:

05 Defendants: People and/or Organizations:

06 Plaintiff - Person(s) and/or Organization:

07 Name of Court:

08 Court Division:

09 select kind of the Court Order:

10 Legal Basis of Court Order:

11 enter sections (plain numbers, best: 1-20):

12 enter subsections or articles (plain numbers, best: 101-785):

Crime and Misconduct Information

13 defendants violate trade mark rights and/or copyrights by operating above-mentioned domain.

14 defendants violate the law by offering pornographic material to minors by operating above-mentioned domain.

15 defendants violate the law by making false promise to consumers by offering services they cannot deliver.

16 general criminal activity as defined by ICANN statutes.

17 other :

18 timeframe: since when have crimes been comitted?

19 specific nature of crime:

20 describe briefly the actions of the defendant:

21 What will happen if the criminal activity is not stopped by this court now?

22 How are defendants hurting society by operating the site?

23 How are users being hurt, or how are users part of criminal activity?

24 Select which of these extras you also want to include (hint: use all):
- Plaintiffs possess certain and clearly demonstrated rights which need protection.
- Plaintiffs will suffer irreparable harm without protection of an injunction.
- There is no adequate remedy at law to compensate for Plaintiffs' injuries.
- In the absence of injunctive relief, the Plaintiffs would suffer greater harm without an injunction than Defendants will suffer if it is issued.
- Defendants have been notice of the Plaintiffs' Emergency Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order.

Judge's Order

Defendants and all acting in concert with them are enjoined from:

25 Using or operating above-mentioned Internet website and domain.

26 Using, operating, facilitating or accessing above-mentioned domain name and to remove such web site from the Internet completely or, in the alternative, to modify the above-mentioned Internet web site as so as to remove any illegal content.

27 Allowing or continuing registration of above-mentioned Internet domain name or any other domain name offering substantially the same service as above-mentioned site.

28 Using or operating any Internet web site by any name in any manner that would violate the prohibitions set forth in this document and/or violate the laws as stipulated above.

29 other?

30 Defendants shall within _____ days report to the court on the measures they have taken to implement this order.

Publication and Handling:

31 send this Order to these Email Addresses:

32 Handle my personal Information:

33 I want to receive a printed and stamped copy of this Court Order (this involves costs, you can revoke this option anytime).

34 Are there any Messages you want to send to IP·NIC or ubermorgen?

IP·NIC
Internet Partnership for No Internet Content

Universal Content and/or Domain Removal Form (UCDR)

Personal Data of Claimant

01 Email Address:

02 Name of Person or Organization:

03 Nationality: United States

Involved Parties and Jurisdiction

04 Defendant - Target Website/Domain: www. _____ . com

05 Defendants: People and/or Organizations:

06 Plaintiff - Person(s) and/or Organization:

07 Venue of Court: US State: Select State

08 Venue of Court: US County: <------------------->

09 select kind of the Court Order: ● temporary ○ preliminary

10 Legal Basis of Court Order: State Rules

11 enter sections (plain numbers, best: 1-20): 12 , 3 , 19

12 enter subsections or articles (plain numbers, best: 101-785): 303 , 425 , 721 , 723

Notes to the UCDR

01 We use your Email Address to inform you of the status of your injunction.

03 We need this information for basic statistics.

04 Enter the Website you want to be taken down.

05 Enter the People or Company behind the site. If you do not know this information, leave this empty, we will fill it in for you.

06 (Kläger, Person suing) this can be anyone, you yourself, another company.

07 Make up a US-Court - Use something like Court of Cook County. Note: Use Google to locate a court in a specific US-State.

08 Something like "Division of Internet Crime" or "Department of Civil Law", etc.

09 Select your favorite order.

BANKSTATEMENTGENERATOR

2005, http://www.ipnic.org/BANKSTATEMENTGENERATOR
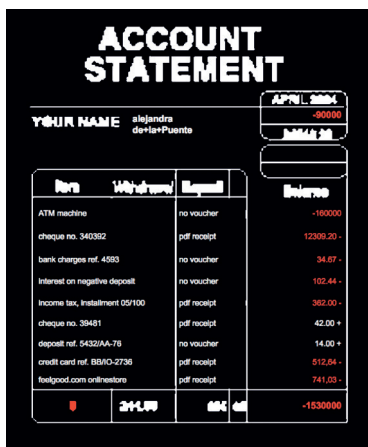
The *BANKSTATEMENTGENERATOR* is an online software application that has been exhibited as an installation on various occasions, including the Ars Electronica festival in 2005, in the form of an ATM. Unlike the other generators, it is interesting to see that the [f]originals this one produces are glaringly "forged", with a pictorial quality which would never feature in any document making a bid for authenticity: the text is red and white on a black background, the font is the one used in the rest of the project, and many fields are barely legible, as if to comply with some form of data protection. The fields to compile in order to generate the bank statement also differ from those we might be expected to give a cash machine: they include the presumed "credibility of the bank", and decidedly subjective elements like one's own "psychological state". Yet all of this does not flaunt the nature of the [f]originals and the poetics of the generators; quite the opposite.

As Inke Arns explains: "UBERMORGEN.COM suggests that these documents produced mechanically or by software could also take on a very different appearance. A bank statement that consists of a certain number of dots (pixels or specks of ink) could just as easily assume the form of a work of art, or could even be depicted in a more financially flattering or optimized way (i.e. upwardly or downwardly adjusted bank balance) through 're-arrangement' of the dots. Thus, according to UBERMORGEN.COM, not only is the relation between the 'real' account balance and its representation an arbitrary one, but the account balance itself is also virtual." The statements produced by the *BANKSTATEMENTGENERATOR* are no more or less original than the other [f]originals: it is just that the "deterioration" of the image and its pictorial slant detaches them from the logic of authenticity and its deceptions. The process is very akin to that adopted by pop art (for example Warhol in his accidents or the series devoted to Jackie) with regards to photography: by emphasizing the halftone screen effect, the media image loses its functional and indexical value, but increases its power as an aesthetic fetish.

PSYCH|OS GENERATOR

2006, http://www.ipnic.org/psychos
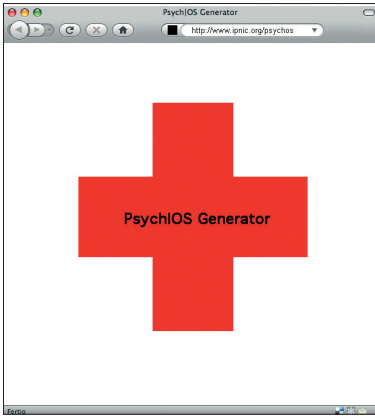
Created in the context of the project *Psych|OS* (cf. p. 14 - 19), the *Psych|OS Generator* is a tool that generates a medical prescription based on the user's input.
This can be uploaded in different ways: by selecting one's condition from a menu of common mental illnesses (depression, schizophrenia, anxiety, personality disorders, etc.); or by answering a multiple choice questionnaire featuring questions such as: are you all right with your body / appearance? how would you describe your sexual conduct? do you like being alone? is your daily routine messed up by thoughts or actions? has your sexuality changed? etc. At the end of the questionnaire the generator offers a diagnosis and treatment. To create the questionnaire, UBERMORGEN.COM used the ICD-10, the 10th version of the ICD (International Classification of Diseases), proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO). In other words, the questions are as objective as possible, and the prescriptions are a faithful reproduction of a German template, bearing the forged signature of a certain Dr. U. Morgen. Faced with a document like this, a distracted chemist might not even hesitate.

The *Psych|OS Generator* is a kind of oracle that sheds light on our problems, and indicates treatment, based on information freely available on the web. Yet behind this data, on one side there are sick people, and on the other side there are vastly wealthy drug companies keen to capitalise on our suffering. Can a software programme treat our illnesses – for which the very media themselves are increasingly responsible? Can chemistry influence a psyche increasingly infected by information flows? Like all of UBERMORGEN.COM's works, the *Psych|OS Generator* offers no answers, just raises questions. And churns out prescriptions.

The Psych|OS Cycle - The Psych|OS Generator
2006, Introscreen - Screenshot

The Psych|OS Cycle - Psych|OS - Prescription Print-out
2006, Inkjet on Paper 10,6x16,8cm

The Psych|OS Cycle - Psych|OS Generator Installation
2006, Mixed Media Installation, Academy of Fine Art Berlin, Transmediale 06

SUPERENHANCED GENERATOR

2008-2009, http://www.ipnic.org/superenhanced/generator

The fourth episode in the generator tetralogy represents the central nucleus of a complex project dedicated to the contemporary use of torture, featuring prints, videos and performances (cfr. *Superenhanced*, pp. 58 - 64).
Using the slick, efficient marketing-style terms currently used to describe torture, the *Superenhanced Generator* could be described as a tool of "advanced interrogation" – inspired by the questionnaires used for market research. But one look at the interface of the site, with its top secret document aesthetic, occasionally interrupted by lines blacking out supposedly confidential information, reveals that this is no ordinary questionnaire.
The questions, indeed, aim to determine one's personal preferences concerning the so-called modern techniques of interrogation carried out by security and intelligence agencies, such as "Enhanced interrogation" (basically a legal form of torture) and "Extraordinary Rendition"
(the equally ascetic term used to indicate the kidnapping of so-called "potential unlawful combatants" by government agencies such as the CIA and the FBI).
During the interrogation (sorry, questionnaire) the *Superenhanced Generator* questions the user's stance on these issues, his/her level of patriotism, political views, and how he or she would behave in potentially dangerous situations, and poses questions like: "Is it ok to step on an ant willingly? Who is more important: The System (Country,

State, Company) or the individual, the person? How important is it to follow rules in enhanced interrogation? Hatred in the world is best fought by war – yes or no? The final results of the questionnaire are presented to the user in the form of Rendition Orders and lists of questions for Enhanced Interrogations. The user's data is also inputted into the generator's database, which thus gradually becomes a repository of public will. The database also becomes the brain behind a series of live performances, where enhanced interrogations performed by real people are carried out according to the suggestions given by the database. The responses of the users therefore determine whether the *Superenhanced Generator* subsequently becomes a further instrument of torture, or a tool for civilization.

Superenhanced Generator - Intro-Animation
2009, Screenshot

Superenhanced Generator - Question 93
2009, Screenshot

Superenhanced Generator - Backend systems graph
2009, Screenshot

Section 7(9), in conjunction with 18 U.S.C. § 3261, likewise provides that those persons employed by or. accompanying members of the Armed Forces subject to the UeMJ are not within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States when they, while outside the United States, engage in conduct that would constitute a felony if committed within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction.21 And, like members of the Anned Forces, if such persons commit a misdemeanor offense while in an area that falls within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction, they are within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction. Although What is your name? these two classes of persons are not within the special maritime and territorial .jurisdiction when they engage in conduct that would constitut **Hatred in the world is best fought by war — yes or no?** e a felony if engaged in within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction, they are in fact punishable for such conduct a) John Doe when they are outside the United States-·whether they are in an area that is otherwise part of the special maritime and b) Jane Doe territorial jurisdiction or elsewhere outside the United States, such as in a forei **a) yes.** gn state. Section 3261 (a) provides that when such persons are outside the United States and they engage in conduct that would be afelony c) if committed in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction, those persons "shall be punished as provided for that offense." 18 U.S.C. § 3261(a). Section 3261(a) therefore gives extraterritorial effect to th **b) no.** e criminal prohibitions applicable to the speclal maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States. Thus, with respect to interrogations, memberS of the Armed Forces and those employed by or accompanying the . Anned Forces will be subject **c) I do not know, how should i?** to the felony criminal prohibitions that apply in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction irrespective of whether the interrogations occur at, for example, a U.S. military base or at the military facilities
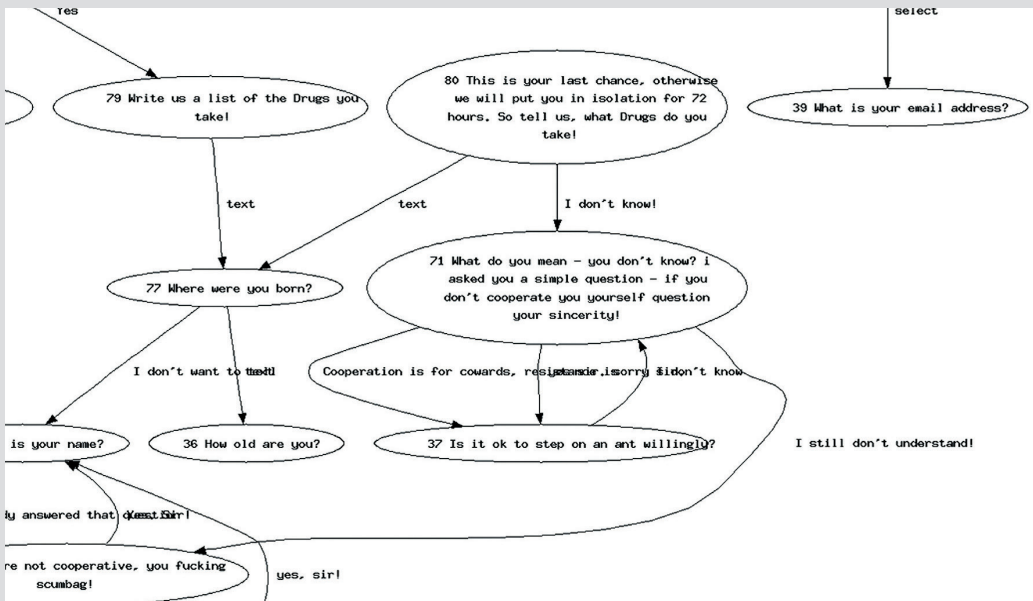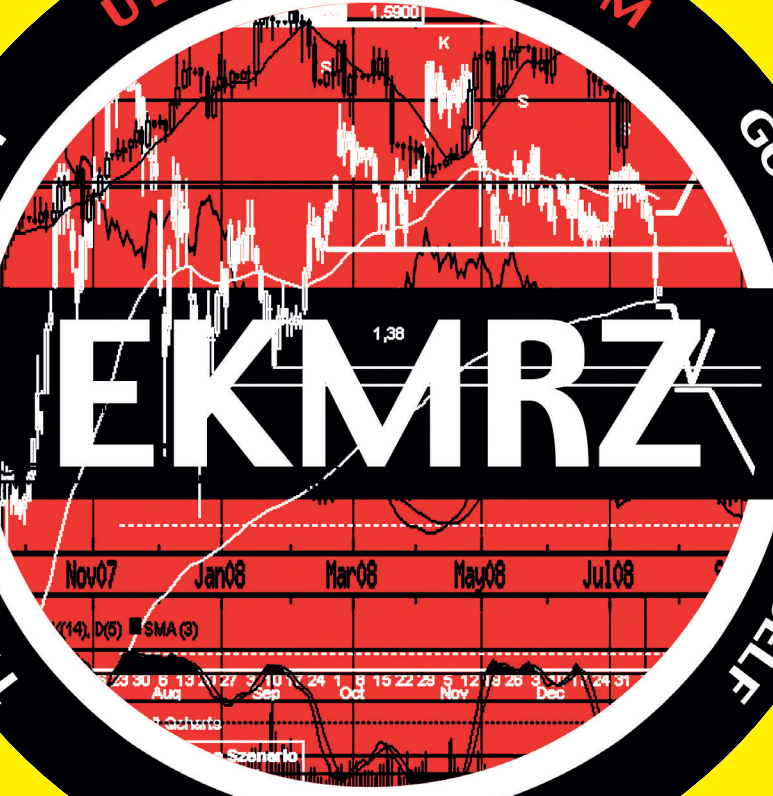
EKMRZ TRILOGY:

GWEI, AMAZON NOIR, THE SOUND OF EBAY

2005-2008, http://www.ubermorgen.com/EKMRZ_Trilogy

2000 – the year that started with *Toywar* (namely the triumph of the artistic collective etoy against the e-commerce giant eToys) and ended with *[V]ote Auction* (a project that portrays e-commerce getting its hands on the US elections) (cf. p. 5 - 9) – was also the year that saw the beginning of the so-called dotcom crash. The collapse of Wall Street in the spring of 2000 dragged down thousands of start-ups and generated widespread doubts over the internet and its alleged bubble. Television news reports constantly reiterated that the internet was dead. Yet a few lifeboats continued to stay afloat in these stormy seas.

In 2002, Google, a search engine founded in 1998, launched a successful advertising application based on search key words, and in 2004 it went public to the tune of 2 billion dollars on the first day. Amazon, an online bookseller (founded in 1995), progressed slowly on the stock market, and only began to see its first significant results at the end of 2001. Amazon's contemporary, the auction website eBay, was floated on the stock market in 1998.

Today Google is the undisputed leader of search engines and advertising on the net. Amazon is one of the most popular e-commerce services in the world, and eBay, which bought Paypal in 2002 (and Skype in 2007) is unrivalled in its field. The lifeboats have become arks. And we need them; we would feel lost without them. The negative mythology that surrounds almost all of the world's giant corporations, including some of the big names in computing (like Microsoft and IBM), does not seem to touch them.

They are, and continue to be, the heroes of the net, its saviours from speculation, and over time they have managed to maintain their understated image and user-friendly approach.

The *EKMRZ Trilogy* (EKMRZ stands for e-commerce) is probably the artistic project that best portrays this new season of the internet, and contemporary society. Viewing it in terms of hacking or sabotage would be specious and misleading: UBERMORGEN.COM is attracted by the surface of Google, Amazon and eBay. It loves and uses these services, just like we all do. Its intention is not to subvert them, but, as Inke Arns notes in her essay (cf. p. 78 - 89), to get under the thin membrane that is their interface with us, and introduce new contents, new narratives: "... feed info-pieces into the global network-matrix and watch them travel, morph and come back." UBERMORGEN.COM, another dotcom which survived the crash, has generated tiny parasites which suck money, books and personal data from these three giants, developing parallel microeconomies. And above all, developing contents, which is the key value that UBERMORGEN.COM offers.

EKMRZ Trilogy Seal
2008, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

GWEI – GOOGLE WILL EAT ITSELF

2005-2008, http://www.gwei.org
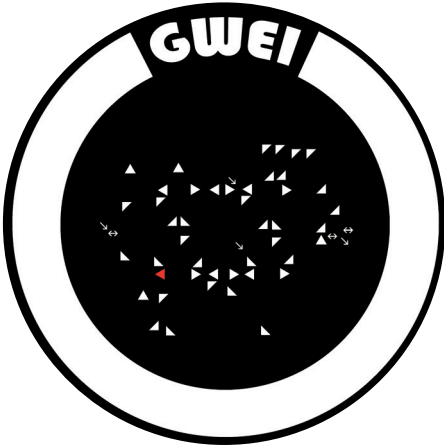
"We are just trying to improve the system. As an "We are just trying to improve the system. As an experiment", stated lizvlx in an interview. Produced in collaboration with Alessandro Ludovico (director of the historic magazine *Neural*) and Paolo Cirio (former member of the collective [e]pidemiC), *GWEI* (acronym for *Google Will Eat Itself*) is basically an experiment in parasitic economy.
GWEI does not attack the site, but attaches itself like a tick to Google's main source of revenue, its advertising service. Google AdSense is based on a very simple mechanism which brings together the needs of companies with those of a practically infinite "attention market". If I have a site, and this site generates a fair amount of traffic, Google can help me earn money without investing a penny: all I need to do is offer part of my homepage for Google to insert discreet advertising messages connected to the key words on my site. For example, if I have a blog about comics, it is natural to assume that my readers will be interested in buying comics, gadgets, action figures, DVDs, maybe even original drawings. Google places ads for these on my site, and every user click means money in the bank for me. Obviously Google gets the lion's share, but it puts a little by for me too. Cool.
GWEI transforms this virtuous mechanism into a celibate, paradoxical machine that recalls the paradox of Achilles and the tortoise. The challenge is this: to buy Google using Google's own money. Time estimated for the full purchase: 202,345,117 years. Basically the members of *GWEI* have set

up a network of "shadow" sites with automatically generated contents, the AdSense service activated and a "click generator" that guarantees a constant flow of income. This income is transferred to a shared account belonging to GWEI, a private company that uses this account to buy shares in Google (which was floated on the stock market in 2004).
Lastly, *GWEI* donates these shares to GTTP Ltd. (Google To The People), a Public Company that any Google user can join. As I write, GWEI holds 819 Google shares, to a total value of $ 405,413.19.

The mechanism works, and the attack, while weak compared to Google's economic clout, is highly powerful from a symbolic point of view. As UBERMORGEN.COM explain: "We like Google, we use Google, we fuck with the minds of the Google users and Google employees. Google's position is dominant right from the moment when they enter a new business field with a new service. It's the 'Google effect': creating consensus in a new business field, even if they instantly take the dominant position. The greatest enemy of such a giant is not another giant: it's a parasite. Our working thesis: if enough parasites suck small amounts of money from this embodiment of self-referentiality, they will empty this artificial mountain of data and its inner risk of digital totalitarianism.
By establishing the *GWEI* model, we deconstruct the new

GWEI - Google Will Eat Itself Seal
2005, Inkjet on Canvas 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

GWEI - Google Will Eat Itself - Installation
2007, Mixed Media Installation, The Israely Center for digital Art, Holon

GWEI - Google Will Eat Itself Diagram
2005, Inkjet on transparent foil, 21x29,7cm
Edition of 99 + 2 a.p.

GWEI - Google Will Eat Itself / THE ATTACK   2

1 GWEI.ORG

www.gwei.org (GWEI - Global Web-Marketing and E-Business Information Magazine) website, designed for Google advertisment and for our clicking robots.

2 GWEI.ORG & AdSense

We set up an AdSense account with Google, serving targeted ads on the web-marketing platform gwei.org

3 GWEI.ORG & AdSense

Our UBERMORGEN.COM and Neural.it network (community) is informed and invited to visit (create impressions for ads) and click thru: generating cash

4 GWEI.ORG & AdSense

Additionally a program (php-robot) to simulates visitation and clicks and therefore generates cash / income for GWEI.

5 Google Shares

With the cash we receive from Google, we buy Google shares

Google Will Eat Itself thru advertisment.

GWEI

global advertising mechanisms by rendering them into a surreal, click-based economic model."

They add: "What does money really mean anymore if a company that lives from commercial pixel-arrow-relations is worth a thousand times more than, let's say, a food chain, or if you like, even a bank? I think that *GWEI* is in fact very serious and that Google seems to be a parody of the capitalist definition of 'money'." *GWEI* introduces a virus under Google's "porcelain interface" (Alessandro Ludovico), and sits back to admire the results. The appeal lies in the beauty of the mechanism: its beauty and ability to chronicle our capitalist economy. We have already mentioned celibate machines, and Duchamp's *The Large Glass* is undoubtedly the main reference for this project: a mechanism rolled out by a series of diagrams inspired by company organigrams, and a quasi-alchemical logo that recalls the circularity of the ouroboros, the snake that eats its tail.

Whenever possible the computer disappears behind the scenes and makes way for prints, slide projectors and overhead projectors: analogic devices that deliver the cold aesthetic of a conceptual work of art; soon to be extinct media telling the story of an undertaking as old as the hills: that of transforming base matter (in this case pixels on a screen) into gold.

GWEI - Google Will Eat Itself Diagram
2005, Inkjet on transparent foil, 29,7x21cm
Edition of 99 + 2 a.p.

SECRET NETWORK

WEBSITES
WWW.YZX.COM

WEBSITES
WWW.YZX.BIZ

WEBSITES
WWW.YZX.ORG

WEBSITES
WWW.YZX.NET

TRIGGER

HIDDEN ENGINE - PHP, JAVASCRIPT, FLASH

DECODER OF CALLS

DATABASE
DEFAULT
VALUE

ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE
GENERATOR

MIXER & MULTIPLEXER DATA SOURCE

RANDOM
ACTIONS

RANDOM
DELAY

RANDOM
IP

RANDOM
GMT ZONE

RANDOM
COUNTRY

RANDOM
CLIENT

HUMAN
BEHAVIOUR
GENERATOR

NETWORK
TRAFFIC
GENERATOR

PERSONAL
DATA
GENERATOR

RANDOM
FEELING

RANDOM
MEMORY

RANDOM
CONNECTION

RANDOM
REFERENCE

RANDOM
PREFERENCES

RANDOM
HISTORY

CLICKS /
IMPRESSIONS
GENERATOR

RATIO
CONTROLLER
MAX 3%

OSCILLATOR

CLICK THRU

STAT
STORED

RANDOM
KEYWORDS

RANDOM
TEXT

CONTENT
GENERATOR

HIDDEN
WEBSITES

ADSENSE
TEXT ADS
DECODER

RANDOM
IMAGE

RANDOM
FORMAT

GWEI PROJECT

GTTP-COMMUNITY

ADVERTISER &
ADVERTISER'S WEBSITE

$

Google™

$

$

Google Share

SHARES

$

$

$

$

AMAZON NOIR

2006-2007, http://www.amazon-noir.com

With *Amazon Noir*, the second project in the *EKMRZ Trilogy*, UBERMORGEN.COM (again collaborating with Alessandro Ludovico and Paolo Cirio) raises the burningly topical question of intellectual property rights: a question recently relaunched by the Free Software movement, which quickly extended to all fields of knowledge and cultural production. This development has given rise to interesting attempts at mediation, like the Creative Commons licences, which try to reconcile an open, flexible conception of copyright, in line with the new forms of communication, with the legislation in force in the individual countries. We have to accept that the traditional conception of copyright is now obsolete, forcing those who wish to enforce it in the context of the digital media and the global network to perform convoluted contortions. One perfect example of this is the "Search Inside the Book" service offered by Amazon.com, which has everything to gain from maintaining a restricted conception of copyright, but which, at the same time, in order to be competitive, has to offer its users ample, stimulating access to the product they are about to purchase.
The "Search Inside" function is a concession in this direction. It enables registered users to literally skim through a book, but with a number of limitations: users can perform key word searches, but cannot copy content or look at more than a given number of subsequent pages. When you try to access a page which is off-limits, this warning appears:
"To protect this copyrighted material, books are subject to publisher-approved page-viewing limits."

Yet the book is there, accessible in its entirety, but partially hidden behind this debatable system of protection.

Amazon Noir is a sort of "rogue company" that exploits this latent potential. The first step was to create a software programme able to access these books using different identities, then copy the content of each page and reassemble the book automatically, creating a single pdf file. The intention of *Amazon Noir*, Amazon's dark twin, was to distribute these "liberated" books through peer-to-peer networks. The operation was carried out in secret, but Amazon quickly cottoned on, and took action.
At this point *Amazon Noir* entered a new phase, planned from the start, which turned into a narrative featuring the stereotypes and iconography of the noir. The story is a simple one, as told in Ludovico's "Thieves of the Invisible". The *Amazon Noir* gang cannot resist the attraction of culture displayed in all her alluring nudity, and decides to "steal the invisible": "We couldn't resist her beauty. She was a beautiful rich body of culture, continuously unveiling her generous and attractive forms at request, but never saying: 'Yes, you can take me away'. This free cultural peep show started to drive us crazy." The gangster is led into temptation by the femme fatale. The baddies kidnap the moll, but are found out and corrupted by the "good guys" (Amazon), who decide to buy their software: "We failed and we were in the end corrupted, and we had to surrender to the copyright guardians. We failed to break into the protectionist economy. We failed, because

Amazon Noir Seal - Femme Fatale
2006, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

Amazon Noir Seal - Shoot out
2006, Inkjet on Canvas, 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

Amazon Noir - Steal this Book - Incubator
2006, Mixed Media Installation
Edition of 5 + 2 a.p.
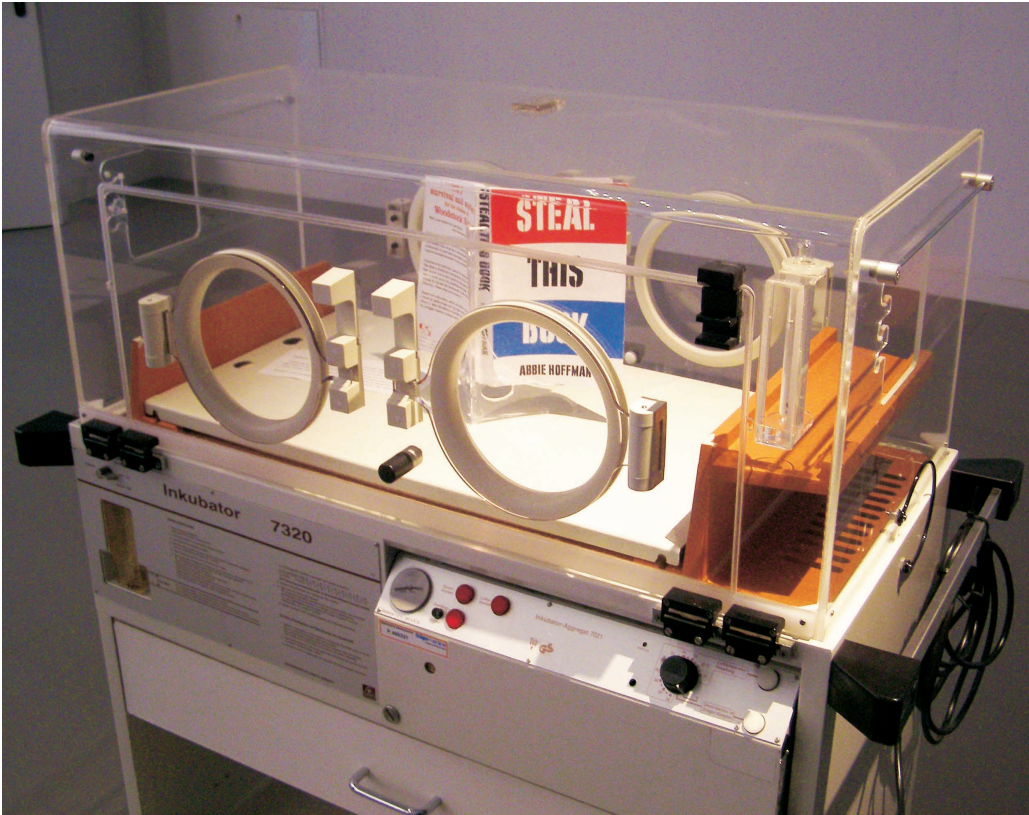
Amazon Noir Femme Fatale
2006, Screenshot

we wanted to share and give away." Amazon Noir lives on as a story, as the symbol of an ongoing battle. It lives on, with its 3,000 "liberated" books, and above all its manifesto book (*Steal this Book* by Abbie Hoffman, 1971) which is liberated, reassembled, reprinted and placed in an incubator as a symbol of a temporarily broken dream, but a dream that can live on with our care.

And it lives on in the smudgy, black and white aesthetic of its "seals", which reference both film noir iconography and the cyclostyle printing of underground magazines.

Amazon Noir - Steal this Book
2006, Mixed Media Installation
MOCA Museum for Contemporary Art, Taipei

Amazon Noir - The Big Book Crime - Core Robot Diagram
2008, Lambda Print on Aluminium, 25x42cm
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p.

THE SOUND OF EBAY

2008 - 2009, http://www.Sound-of-eBay.com
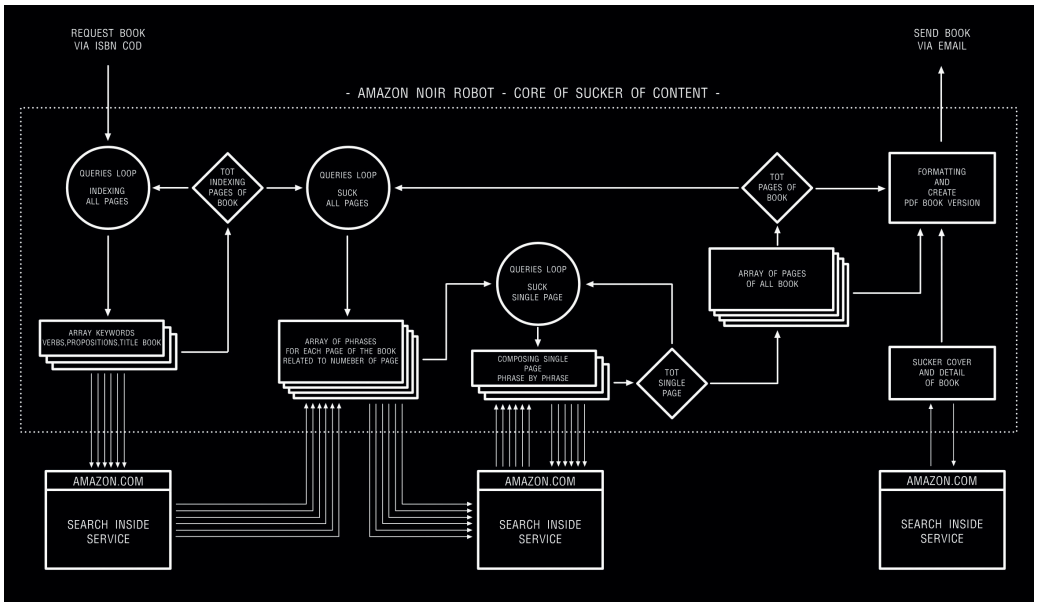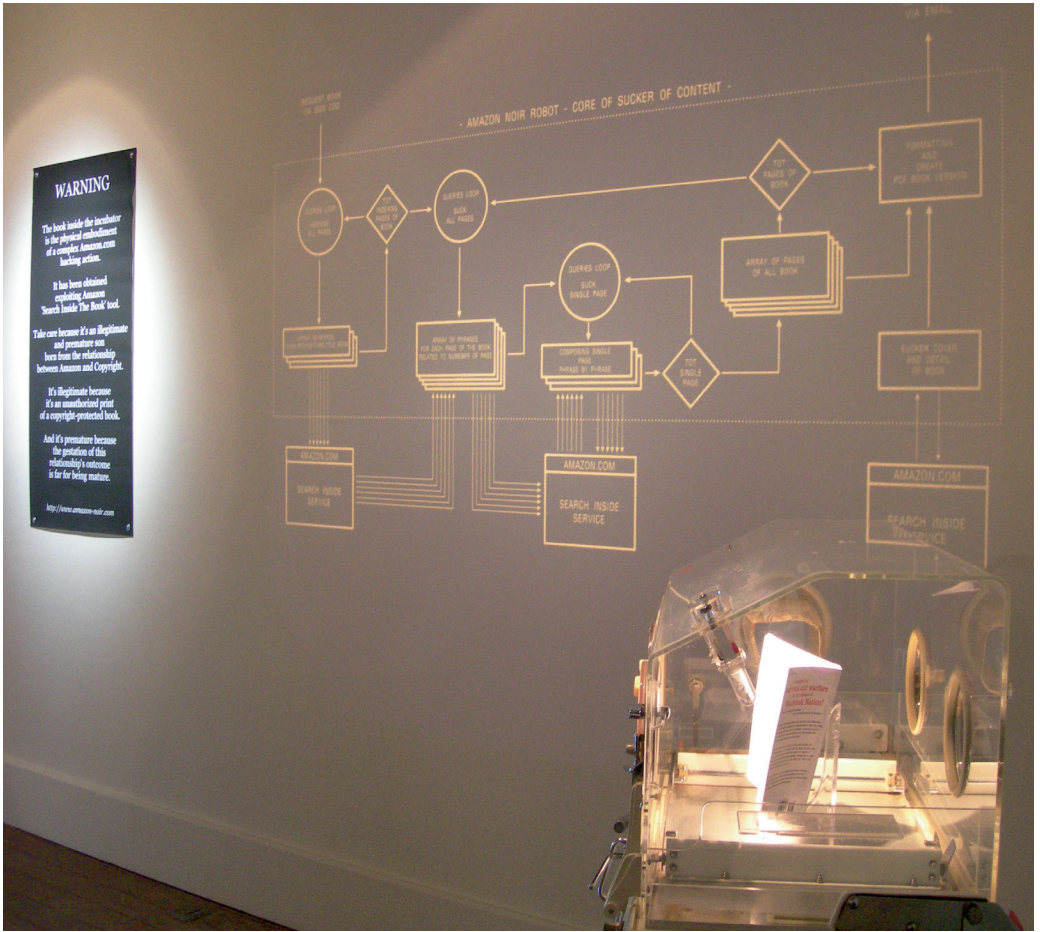
In the context of the *EKMRZ Trilogy, The Sound of eBay (SoE)* might look slightly anomalous at first glance. While *GWEI* subverts the cornerstone of Google's economy, and *Amazon Noir* turns Amazon into a vault to plunder in the name of the free circulation of knowledge, behind the mechanism that converts user data from eBay into electronic music it is difficult to see anything but pure art or entertainment. The aesthetic elements, so eminently justified elsewhere, here seem a little gratuitous: just what do porn, techno music and teletext have to do with eBay? The narrative element also seems to be lacking, in favour of a more aggressive interface that appears to overwhelm its relatively poor content.

SoE is perplexing, and undoubtedly effective. It suffices to take a peek into the archive of hundreds of musical files generated by users on a daily basis. It is hard to identify the project's appeal, and there is a strong temptation to single out its supposed superficiality. In one interview UBERMORGEN.COM stated: "it is a mere mirror of the nonsensical behaviour that web 2.0 users show off on a daily basis. As much fun as it is to do projects that have a very clear vision and goal – as much those projects always risk being just preachy boring stuff [...]. But do you really ask now what the point of combining porn, music and sales data is? If yes – stop it!!! There is no point in music and sex – there has absolutely never been a point to databases filled with extremely unnecessarily gathered data from uninteresting users..."

In other words, the approach adopted in the two previous projects is further developed in terms of affirmation and pure entertainment value. But watch out: on one hand, "the nice thing about affirmation is that one can never tell if it is at all subversive, nor if it can or should be interpreted as such"; and on the other, "entertainment products are ultimately subversive works of art, politics becomes entertainment but we do entertainment that becomes politics, even something soft and corny like *The Sound of eBay*." Thus the act of appropriating a

mass of personal data considered "sensitive" and translating it into catchy techno pop is a gesture of irreverent freedom, flying in the face of the anxiety induced by omnipresent surveillance; while the pornographic image, conveyed in the pure colours and simplified forms of teletext, is a such a brash celebration of the pleasures of consumption and shopping (of which eBay is an undisputed symbol, with its equally colourful, simplified logo) that it calls for reflection.

SoE was foreshadowed in 2007, by *The Sound of Mercadolibre*, that transformed Mexican Mercadolibre's user account data into unique synthetic mariachi-jazz-songs. Compared to this project, which focused mainly on the sound element, *SoE* works more with the communication and visual aspects. The "teletext babes" that people the interface have been transformed into postcards for mass distribution, and a series of woodcut prints that highlight the analogy between the rough, perfunctory look of this medium (above all as used by the German expressionists), and the two-dimensional, simplified rendering of an image made possible by teletext. These are teamed with an animated programmed by LIA, an Austrian visual artist and VJ renowned for her abstract software works. Indeed collaboration is once more one of the chief aspects of the project. As UBERMORGEN.COM say:

"The core team of *The Sound of eBay* was living within a radius of 3 km in the city center of Vienna (Soundcoder Stefan Nussbaumer, lizvlx and Hans Bernhard, Theorycoder Grischinka Teufl and Visualcoder LIA). And, the essential data-grabbing robot comes from Erich Kachel, a guy we don't know. We don't know who he is, we don't know where he (or she) lives, we have no reference to her / him, we find no references on the web except some strange coding tutorial web-sites. We have never talked to nor seen a picture of her / him... S/he is a phantom, a positive intruder and one more possible spy in a row of spies we have been exposed to in the last 10 years."

The Sound of eBay Seal
2008, Inkjet on Canvas 100x100cm and Carpet 200x200cm
Edition of 7 + 2 a.p.

The Sound of eBay - Do you know who the father is?
The Sound of eBay - It's getting big
The Sound of eBay - You don't even want to live off camera!
2008, Woodcut on Paper, 70x50cm - Edition of 47 + 3 a.p.
Courtesy Black Box Gallery Copenhagen
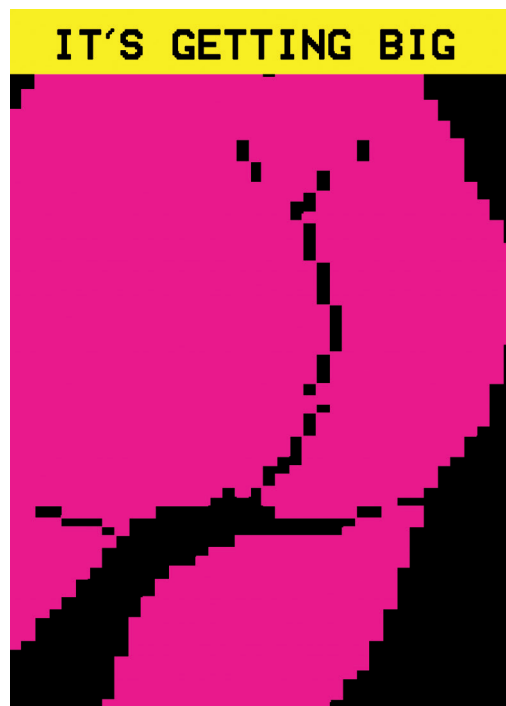
SUPERENHANCED

OUR BRANDS SHALT BE THE OPIATE OF THE USER

SUPERENHANCED

2009, http://www.ipnic.org/superenhanced

On the creative panorama of UBERMORGEN.COM, which ranges from the cold aesthetic of conceptual art, to the functional look of diagrams, the minimal semblance of pixels, the anonymity of reportage and the retro feel of noir and teletext, *SUPERENHANCED* stands out for its attractive, glossy, almost glamorous look. It is as if the torture team at Guantanamo had hired UBERMORGEN.COM to work on an image campaign to relaunch the popularity of practices getting a hard time in the media, such as Enhanced Interrogation and Extraordinary Rendition. UBERMORGEN.COM as the Oliviero Toscani of the CIA... But while it is true that UBERMORGEN.COM, as in other projects, sacrifices a direct attack for the oblique and subtle strategy of overidentification, it is also true that it would be difficult to imagine a harsher condemnation of torture and its reappearance in a legalized, no less abhorrent, guise.

UBERMORGEN.COM adopts the language of marketing, because this is precisely what countries are now using to revamp and justify practices that, in name only, they eradicated decades ago. This ascetic, functional, hypocritical language, where "Cold Cell" means exposure to extreme cold before interrogation, "Waterboarding" is a controlled form of drowning, "Attention Slap" is a beating, "Extraordinary Rendition" means kidnapping, and "Enhanced Interrogation" is torture, from its mildest to most brutal forms (where the death of the prisoner is regarded as "collateral damage") is the weak link in the phenomenon, and it is there that *SUPERENHANCED* strikes.

It hits home with images that are both beautiful and terrible, featuring none other than the youngest members of UBERMORGEN.COM, Lola Mae and Billie Ada (aged 2 and 5 respectively). The techniques of Enhanced Interrogation are tested out on them – standing for all the children imprisoned, tortured and sometimes killed in maximum security prisons around the world – and the rest of the UBERMORGEN.COM family, with the stated aim of "acclimatizing and familiarizing ourselves with them".

The project also features a video, in which various scenes from the studio session when the photographs were taken are accompanied with sitcom-laughter sampled from G.W. Bush speeches; and the *Superenhanced Generator* (cf. p. 44 – 46), the archive of which is the point of departure for a series of live performances: torture sessions where the actor has no input, but merely conforms to the indications supplied by the generator, based on the users' opinions on the contemporary use of torture.

In this dumb show, UBERMORGEN.COM insidiously withdraws the spectator's last, reassuring delusions: that the system is, at the end of the day, principled; that most "enhanced interrogation" is mild; that torture is a form of "collateral damage" in a "necessary" fight against terror, and that overkill is rare, and when it happens, unavoidable. Now we are the ones inflicting those wounds.

Superenhanced Familiarization: S1E1
Superenhanced Familiarization: S1E3
2009, Inkjet on Paper, 55x55cm
Edition of 9 + 2 a.p.

Superenhanced Familiarization: S1E2
Superenhanced Familiarization: S1E4
2009, Inkjet on Paper, 55x55cm
Edition of 9 + 2 a.p.

Superenhanced Familiarization: S2E1
Superenhanced Familiarization: S2E3
2009, Inkjet on Paper, 55x55cm
Edition of 9 + 2 a.p.

Superenhanced Familiarization: S2E2
Superenhanced Familiarization: S2E4
2009, Inkjet on Paper, 55x55cm
Edition of 9 + 2 a.p.
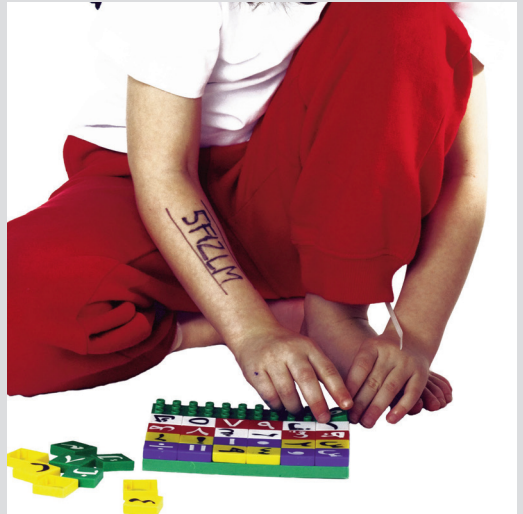
Superenhanced Familiarization: S3E1
Superenhanced Familiarization: S3E3
2009, Inkjet on Paper, 55x55cm
Edition of 9 + 2 a.p.

Superenhanced Familiarization: S3E2
Superenhanced Familiarization: S3E4
2009, Inkjet on Paper, 55x55cm
Edition of 9 + 2 a.p.

Superenhanced V1E1
2009, Videostills, Video/DVD 00:01:31
Edition of 5 + 1 a.p.

Superenhanced
2009, Installation and performance
01-18-2009, Fabio Paris Art Gallery, Brescia
Foto by Bruno Muzzolini

Le project Paparazzo - Starbucks - Detail
2008, Inkjet on Paper 100x100cm

"UBERMORGEN.COM might be always trying to combine some nice entertainment with very intellectual European subversive art, but God Christ, we need to relax sometime and sell Google ad space on eBay and write a book about it and sell that on Amazon and twitter everybody about it and be totally modern, postmodern and lostmodern" … "UBERMORGEN.COM's work is unique not because of what we do but because how, when and where we do it. The Computer and The Network create our art and combine every aspect of it" … "UBERMORGEN.COM is metaphysically influenced by Lawrence Weiner and practically enhanced by constantly reinventing Madonna, Jean Tinguely, the Nouveaux Réalistes and by the hardcore Viennese Actionists" … "The UBERMORGEN.COM virus is typically described by scientists as a rare, mild and usually harmless infection in humans, affecting mostly the news media and curators. In technical environments, however, the virus has been touted as a   killer" … "How many hate-mails can one get in one day" … "Painting the virtual makes it become real" … "Like the paperless office brought us 1000% more paper over the last 10 years, digital art will bring us 1000% more physical objects over the next decade" … "Once information exists outside your brain, it is impossible to control, it will make its way" … "We are dangerous and devious but not destructive. We are seducers and brainfuckers" … "Becoming an artist was rather simple, it was all about usability" … "We don't need to agree with one another in order to work together" … "Our central motivation is to gain as much information as possible as fast as possible and as chaotically as possible and to redistribute this information via digital channels" … "We find it justifiable to damage or destruct existing art works and property as a statement - improving the artwork or making a performance to maximize fame and value in the art market" … "Our work is here to be used" … "In the end only courage, intelligence and basic technological know how is necessary" … "All our projects are non-ideological, non-political. They are pure basic research experiments" … "Our method is experimental, we use the corporations, their platforms and technologies as playing field for our lust and perversion" … "We are plain simple affirmative in a normal way - although we are both psychos, but this ain't no contradiction" … "All there is left to enjoy with stock traded corporations nowadays is lifestyle and surface glamour and entertainment - as one cannot make money anymore" … "Corporations do not exist, they cannot be good or bad, that is something only humans and mosquitos are free to decide upon" … "The best jokes, the most pervert ideas and the hardest images are destined for an audience of just two people, namely lizvlx and Hans Bernhard" … "Privacy is the natural enemy of fame and we rather choose the latter" … "Entertainment products are ultimately subversive works of art, politics becomes entertainment but we do entertainment that becomes politics" … "We are constantly tilting back and forth between art world and mass media entertainment".

DOMENICO QUARANTA

UBERMORGEN.COM. THE FUTURE IS NOW

DOMENICO QUARANTA
Is a contemporary art critic and curator. His work focuses on the impact of the current techno-social developments on the arts, looking specifically at art in networked spaces, from the Internet to virtual worlds.
As an art critic, he is a regular contributor to *Flash Art* magazine, and his essays, reviews and interviews have appeared in many magazines, newspapers and web portals, such as: *Magazine électronique du CIAC* (CA), *Rhizome* (US), *A Minima* (SP), *Vague Terrain, HZ Journal, MESH* (AU), *RCCS (Resource Center For Cyberculture Studies*, US), *Maska* (SLO), *Around Photography* (IT), *FMR Bianca* (IT), *Digimag* (IT), *Exibart* (IT), *Noemalab* (IT), *Arte e Critica* (IT), *Drome* (IT), *Cluster* (IT), *L'Unità* (IT) and many others.
His first book, entitled *NET ART 1994-1998: La vicenda di Äda'web* was published in 2004, and together with Matteo Bittanti he also co-edited the book *GameScenes. Art in the Age of Videogames* (Milan, October 2006). He has also contributed to a number of other books and publications. Since 2008 he has edited a series of books on New Media Art for the Italian publisher FPEditions (titles edited: *Todd Deutsch - Gamers*, 2008; *Gazira Babeli*, 2008; *Holy Fire. Art of the Digital Age*, 2008; *RE:akt! | Reconstruction, Re-enactment, Re-reporting*, 2009).
He has curated and co-curated a number of exhibitions, including: *Connessioni Leggendarie. Net.art 1995-2005* (Milan 2005); *GameScenes* (Turin 2005); *Radical Software* (Turin 2006); *Holy Fire. Art of the Digital Age* (Brussels 2008); *For God's Sake!* (Nova Gorica, 2008); *RE:akt! | Reconstruction, Re-enactment, Re-reporting* (Bucharest - Ljubljana 2009); *Expanded Box* (ARCO Art Fair, Madrid 2009); *Hyperlucid* (Prague Biennial, Prague 2009).
He lectures internationally and teaches "Net Art" at the Accademia di Brera in Milan.
For more info: www.domenicoquaranta.net.

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UBERMORGEN.COM was set up in 1999 in Vienna by two young Austrians, who
registered it as a corporation in Austria, Germany and Bulgaria. The name
is a German word which can mean, prosaically, "the day after tomorrow",
or more poetically, "super-tomorrow". To those with little knowledge of
German, however, it has an ambiguous sound. That banal little prefix is
known outside Germany in connection with two different expressions,
both of which are linked to Nazism: Nietzsche's term "Übermensch", and the
verse of the German national anthem (as yet still banned from the official
version) "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles". Marketing is skilled in
exploiting the ambiguity of words, and marketing, as we will see, is the daily
bread of UBERMORGEN.COM, which upped the ante by issuing press
releases inspired by the tones of Futurism, and calling one of its first projects
(a service for the reintegration of neo Nazis) *Nazi-line* (2001).

UBERMORGEN.COM, as we have said, is a corporation. Or, more accurately, a
dotcom. In the late 90s dotcoms were the new frontier of the economy -
Wall Street went wild over them, and the consequences are common
knowledge. In its first company profile [2], UBERMORGEN.COM describes
itself as follows: "UBERMORGEN.COM is a know-how platform based on
brains [...] focused on individual solutions and digital services"; the
services on offer go from "strategic consulting" to "communication-
design" to e-marketing. Its slogan is: "if you don't get help from us, please
get help somewhere!". Its CEOs are Maria Haas, alias Elisabeth Haas, alias
lizvlx, and Luzius Bernhard, alias Hans Bernhard. lizvlx studied art, but
found art school boring, and "went on to study commercial sciences and
market research, which was absolutely fascinating." Hans studied under
Peter Weibel at the Academy of Applied Arts in Vienna, and in the early 90s
was one of the founding members of etoy.com [3]. The encounter with the
internet was pivotal for both. lizvlx, a long-time techie, started using
programming, "pixel drawing" and digital image manipulation to make
art. Bernhard, on the other hand, was engaged in conceptualizing and
giving rise to one of the most ambiguous and interesting artistic identities
to emerge in the late 90s: etoy.com.

Life, "a hybrid gesamtkunstwerk"

Autumn 1994. Franz Penz, a lecturer at the Vienna Academy of Applied Arts, meets
Herbert and Hans, two of his most promising students. "I have something to

show you", he says, but refuses to say more than that: "This is way too cool; I really can't explain." The two students follow him to the computing lab of the Technical University. Herbert and Hans had already used internet for transmitting data, but had found it unreliable and boring. But what they saw now was different. It was the World Wide Web, a system with a graphic interface where one click on underlined text (called a hyperlink) could beam you from a server in New York to one in Tokyo, and from there to Madrid. Ubiquitous. You could be everywhere in a flash, without ever leaving your computer: that was what Hans saw on that autumn day. "I had stars in my brain, and I knew this was exactly what I wanted for the next couple of years. This was the future", he later confessed [5].

A few weeks previously, Herbert and Hans had met up with five other friends in Weggis, by Lake Lucerne. After a week of tireless brainstorming, the seven of them had set up a company. The group included an architect, an IT scientist, a manager, two musicians, and Herbert and Hans, who warily considered themselves artists. It was not easy to reach an agreement, but there was one thing they all concurred on: whatever they were, they had to act as a group. The final name was only chosen later, with the help of a piece of software programmed to go through all possible combinations of four letters. The chosen one was "etoy".

In subsequent years etoy evolved into an "edge game", an enclave of "radical self-experiments", as Hans Bernhard described it [6]. The members of etoy, from then on etoy.AGENTS, cancelled out their individual identities and took on the collective one, in terms of both name and image: all with shaved heads, mirrored sunglasses, orange jackets and black leather trousers, dubbed respectively etoy.ZAI, etoy.BRAINHARD, etoy.GRAMAZIO, and so on. They conveyed their image in radical communications, with mottos like "Leaving reality behind" and "Always online, sometimes lost", and media performances such as the well-known *Digital Hijack* (1996), an operation manipulating the indexing system of search engines.
Operating on the dividing line between art and entertainment, etoy managed to garner a level of attention unthinkable even for the darlings of the art world: they aroused the interest of Bjork and the CIA, gave rise to a multitude of articles in the main papers, and inspired various books [7].

In 1999, just before etoy was attacked by a (near homonymous) multinational company selling toys (eToys) and found itself engaged in a battle for the freedom of information (and its very survival), which it won [8], Hans Bernhard and some of the other agents left the original group. etoy survived the split, and the attack from eToys. As for Bernhard, leaving etoy coincided with the start of a new personal and artistic adventure, which was very different from etoy yet capable of drawing on the results of those extraordinary years. Responsible for communications and public relations, Bernhard played a key role in the marketing, media sabotage and identity

simulation project that was etoy. At the same time, the experience taught him a great deal. There, Bernhard first experimented with issues that were later developed in a very different way by UBERMORGEN.COM. It was there that Hans learned about the power that simple, accessible means of communication such as email and mobile phones grant to all of us, and it was there that he mastered the strategy he called "media hacking".
In etoy he learned not to do away with the distinction between art and life, as the avant-garde movements did, and as pop icons do, and he came up with his conception of art as "freestyle research", not conditioned by any rule, limit or context. It was there that he understood that art needed to depart from the self-referentiality that closes it into a discursive cul-de-sac, and blend with other practices, learn from them, pretend to be something else and act on a broader platform, such as entertainment and the media.

But it was time to test these ideas out with a different venture, which came to coincide with a new life project: UBERMORGEN.COM. While I think that we can't understand UBERMORGEN.COM without talking about etoy – as well as net.art of the "heroic period" and the hacktivist thread of the late Nineties (well discussed by Inke Arns in her text published here) – I also believe that UBERMORGEN.COM has recently developed into something completely different from those experiences. On a personal level, if etoy was "the first street gang in the information super highway", we could say that UBERMORGEN.COM is a family-run business. Hans and lizvlx met in 1995 in Vienna, and they already were a couple when they started working together as artists and marketing consultants for dotcom companies. Working as a couple was very different from working as part of a bigger and organized team, and gave them the freedom that led to projects such as *[V]ote Auction*. While etoy, in its first years, ran on testosterone, drugs, friendship and exalted adolescent vagaries, UBERMORGEN.COM reveals a new maturity, not only that of its members, but also in terms of a new phase in communications systems, which had developed antibodies against viruses like etoy and now had to be subverted on a more metaphorical level.
With the creation of UBERMORGEN.COM, the theories developed by Bernhard encountered lizvlx's work on the digital image, her user-unfriendly approach and her knowledge of the mechanisms of the economy. Their relationship with the art world is also much more mature. As Bernhard explains in the interview cited: "Artist is fine with me, it makes things less complicated. [...] Becoming an artist was rather simple, it was all about usability. Although in the beginning – with etoy – we did not really consider our work as art but rather as radical self-experiments, social and technological experiments – but after eliminating all other candidates (such as sports, politics, etc.) there was nothing left but art. Today I consider this process to be freestyle research. Conceptual art is crossed with experimental research and mass

media stunts – but the products (sites, digital images, sculptures, emails, log files, paintings, drawings, etc.) are positioned in an art context. During project phases we play different roles and use a series of different aliases, sometimes we even swap aliases with other entities [...] With such identity changes, we position ourselves as doctors, businesspeople, retired military personnel or teenagers." [9] But at the end of this research – and often, bang in the middle of it – another current opens up, looking to the mechanisms of representation, the languages of video, painting and conceptual multimedia installations, and addressing the demands of the art market. As the Danish critic Jacob Lillemose [10] has commented, this strand does not produce "derivative works", but works which spring organically from the particular conception of art put forward by UBERMORGEN.COM. "We mesh and route aggressive tactical behaviour with conservative fine art in a practical and theoretical compound" [11], state UBERMORGEN.COM. The idea is to infiltrate the art world, introduce a new vision using languages familiar to it, and force it to measure up to concepts, practices and applications that may appear distant from our daily lives, and yet belong to them entirely.

"The future is now", declared UBERMORGEN.COM, in the presentation of *Chinese Gold*, one of the group's recent projects. In this case, this statement is not some banal Futurist rhetoric: the future is already here, we just need to pick up the signals. UBERMORGEN.COM is the Geiger counter that enables us to decode those signals.

Yet without UBERMORGEN.COM the works themselves are of little account. Their seals, wall drawings, pixelpaintings, paper sculptures and wall projections are just the highly sensible, prickly nerve endings of a complex organism that tests out procedures and technologies on itself, that combines and opposes different forms of intelligence, bodies and sensitivities, that lays itself open, tells its story, disguises and glorifies itself. This is an organism built on the love of a couple, the often conflictual collaboration of a duo, and the internal dynamics of a family (UBERMORGEN.COM views the two daughters of Hans and lizvlx as part of the company and often involves them in projects).

The decision to structure this organism as a corporation is based on the idea of artistic identity as an all-encompassing work of art, a complex, hybrid gesamtkunstwerk that everything else leads back to.

Entertainment

"UBERMORGEN.COM might be always trying to combine some nice entertainment with very intellectual European subversive art, but God Christ, we need to relax sometime and sell Google ad space on eBay and write a book about it and sell that on Amazon and twitter everybody about it and be totally modern, postmodern and lostmodern." [12]

Nowadays the relationship between avant-garde research and pop culture is open to question, and constantly being renegotiated. Now it is impossible to trace a

net separation between avant-garde and kitsch as Greenberg did in the 1930s, but it is also impossible, as happened in the Pop Art of the 1960s, to keep pop as an "external" reference for an art which continues to manipulate the codes of the avant-garde. This depends on a whole series of reasons, each of which would merit lengthy discussion. The eradication of the dividing line between art and life, actively pursued by the avant-garde movements, is now the prerogative of pop stars, for whom the construction of a public identity, a personality that is both a work of art and a commodity, is at times more important than what this entity produces in terms of cultural artefacts (music, films, etc.). At the same time, pop culture, constantly in search of "novelty" elements to render products attractive and desirable, exhibits an increasing ability to appropriate the languages of art – and consume them in a short time. Just how long did the advertising world take to appropriate the language of body art, the aesthetic of Vanessa Beecroft and Matthew Barney? In the most extreme cases, pop itself enters into competition with art, in a dialogue among equals which no longer sees them separated by some artificial pedestal: just think of advertising execs, designers and directors like Oliviero Toscani, Philippe Stark, Michael Gondry. Lastly, the artists themselves come to serve pop culture (such as Murakami and Eliasson for Vuitton, designing a range of bags and a store respectively), competing directly with the products of the entertainment world and operating in an extended system of signs in which contemporary art is a "spectacular system" that offers experiences rather than contents. This is borne out by the success of art shows and biennials, the renewed interest in performance art and the proliferation of site-specific installations, from *The Weather Project* (2003) by Olafur Eliasson at the Tate to the recent (2008) setting of works by Jeff Koons in the regal halls of Versailles.

Despite these premises, UBERMORGEN.COM's relationship with mass culture, entertainment and pop star fame is entirely idiosyncratic. In the first place this is a generational thing: "We are the children of the 1980s. We are the first internet-pop-generation. We grew up with radical Michael Milken [The King of Junk Bonds] and mythical Michael Jackson [The King of Junk Pop]", UBERMORGEN.COM wrote in the introduction to the project *Psych|OS*. In the days of etoy, this meant seeing boy bands, terrorist cells and the coordinated image of corporations as a model to imitate, rather than an enemy to wage war on. This approach enabled etoy to address a much vaster and more variegated audience than was accessible through art, and transformed the collective into a hybrid, transversal phenomenon, that was, and is still, talked about in the current affairs sections of the papers, and on television – not just in art magazines. Drawing on this experience, UBERMORGEN.COM managed to reach a vast audience with its first big project (*[V]ote Auction*,

2000) stirring the media into a frenzy with a few, simple declarations and a lot of nerve. Few artists could boast garnering 30 minutes of prime time CNN with their debut project: UBERMORGEN.COM pulled it off by operating with the freedom of art outside the confines of the art world, and manipulating the media with the savvy head and insight of a seasoned rock star.

As they declared in an interview: "We are constantly tilting back and forth between the art world and mass media entertainment. E!-Monsters such as Robbie Williams, Madonna, Britney Spears or former boy-group The Backstreet Boys create(ed) highly self-referential and subversive products and shoot them at very content and context-sensitive global audiences. The consumers are not stupid and with high-end forms of entertainment you communicate through the guts and not via brains. Intuitively the recipient understands the vibe and becomes partially schizophrenic by enjoying the comfy feeling of the beat while feeling the psycho vibe." [13] UBERMORGEN.COM's greatest works manage to communicate both "through the guts" and "via brains", functioning as entertainment yet indisputably still being art. The implicit potential in this new blend of art and entertainment, radical research and mass communications, is vast. It does not necessarily follow that this potential is already exploited to the full: UBERMORGEN.COM is a pioneer, and those who lead the way always go slower than those who travel a beaten track. One thing for sure is that the works of UBERMORGEN.COM cannot be contained in the white cube: they surpass it and develop an aura which is largely independent of what the art world could lend it. These works are cultural viruses that can easily adapt to any context, and can take hold and achieve cult status in any context.

Kunst

"UBERMORGEN.COM is metaphysically influenced by Lawrence Weiner and practically enhanced by constantly reinventing Madonna, Jean Tinguely, the Nouveaux Réalistes and by the hardcore Viennese Actionists." [14]

Mingling Madonna and Jean Tinguely, Andy Kaufman and Joseph Beuys might be extraordinarily fertile, but it also has its risks. etoy had already realized that its own uniqueness would not survive the ruthless mechanisms of the commercial system. These mechanisms are not alien to the art world: the market often obliges artists to tone things down, to turn successful areas into a formula and abandon trickier, less identifiable lines of research. And it was there, more than anywhere else, that the dimension that UBERMORGEN.COM calls "freestyle research" can be maintained and developed. It was there that UBERMORGEN.COM decided to operate. In a clean break with the early stages of etoy, UBERMORGEN.COM chose the languages of art to convey its discourse.

The UBERMORGEN.COM virus is injected into forms known to and accepted by the establishment, and by means of its apparently innocuous hosts is put into circulation, with unpredictable results: the UBERMORGEN.COM virus attacks and corrodes its host from the inside, turning it into a mutant. This process can be seen in action in the series of Seals that accompany all of UBERMORGEN.COM's projects. In the corporate narrative of UBERMORGEN.COM, the *Seals* are the brands of the companies that give rise to the various projects [15]. IP-NIC (Internet Partnership for No Internet Content), for example, is the company that in 2002 created the *Injunction Generator*, a tool that can be used to shut down any site rightly or wrongly held to be 'unlawful'. The IP-NIC seal is the symbol of that company, at least on the surface. Yet when UBERMORGEN.COM prints it onto canvas it immediately becomes a work of art, which obliges the viewer to assess it from an artistic, as well as functional point of view, and elicits a comparison with painterly traditions – above all the abstract tradition which works with elementary shapes like squares and circles – like the works of Kasimir Malevich and Kenneth Noland. But there is more to it than that: if we take a closer look at the surface, we can see that the Seals are paintings to all intents and purposes. A seal is usually a simple, clear, effective image, which can be reproduced intact in any dimension. Its function is to convey an institutional and sometimes corporate image in any context, from headed paper to billboard. If the *Seals* were merely attempts to convey the image of a project, to "document" the operation, they would be nothing more than the reproduction of a brand.

On the contrary, UBERMORGEN.COM's *Seals* are actually "painterly images" created by colouring pixel on pixel. Depending on the size they are printed, the pixels can blend into the image, or becoming irritatingly evident. The *Seals* are brands corrupted by a painterly approach to the creation of an image, reproductions – which inevitably lose out in quality – of a non-existent original. To draw a parallel, they can be likened not to the American dollar or a photo of Marilyn, but to Warhol's silkscreen reproductions of these. The erosion of the value of an image does not occur, as for Warhol, by means of endless reproduction and repetition, but through the direct attack of an original which is no longer such – because in an era when all kinds of documents and images travel via computer, they are converted into digital data and become none other than "forged originals": "just pixels on a screen, just ink on paper."

In other words, for UBERMORGEN.COM painting – just like video, photographic prints and installations in other instances – is not a means for documenting media-related projects in a form acceptable to the art world and in line with market demands. What this practice regards is reactivating languages to

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continue a line of research initiated elsewhere, on another plane – namely art. As Jacob Lillemose writes: "As artists of the computer and net generation UBERMORGEN.COM conceives of any medium – whether classical or contemporary, artistic or otherwise – as a discipline, a structure, a concept and a reality to be 'hacked' and at the same time as the means with which to perform the hack." [16]

This processual approach can be seen in all of UBERMORGEN.COM's works, such as the recent *Superenhanced* (2008 – 2009), for example. The heart of the project is an innovative "networked performance": an online generator uses a market research type questionnaire to gather users' opinions on the modern day use of torture, and the results generated by the questionnaire are used to inflict pain on a performer. Torture is no longer the instrument of a recondite, albeit democratically elected power, but the expression of public opinion and will. The project also features a series of photos which adopt the glossy, glamorous language of advertising images – already used by others for exposés – to "promote", by means of a subtle and perverse use of "over-identification" [17], the torture services offered by the *Superenhanced Generator*. The models that feature in the campaign are, incidentally, the members of the UBERMORGEN.COM "family": Hans, lizvlx and their daughters, Lola Mae and Billie Ada, tied up, hooded and tortured.

At this point, we have come full circle. UBERMORGEN.COM, a company that is also a family and a total work of art, has developed a radical research project, putting itself on the line, first and foremost, and infiltrating the media on one hand and the languages of art on the other. By means of the former, the project becomes entertainment, a game, a temporary cure for navigation ennui, a 15 second phenomenon – like the videos on Youtube and many other instruments that characterize our daily lives, version 2.0 of whatever. By means of the latter, UBERMORGEN.COM consigns its projects to the lengthier time frames of the art world, and an attention economy more capable of recall, also granting them new momentum. Towards a future that is already here.

FOOTNOTES

[1] This phrase, uttered by William Wood, Chief Counsel, Secy. of State of California during the episode of CNN's legal show Burden of Proof, on 24 October 2000, entitled "Bidding for Ballots: Democracy on the Block" which was dedicated to *[V]ote Auction*, was transformed into one of the trademark delusion of the project by UBERMORGEN.COM.

[2] Accessible online at http://www.ubermorgen.com/2000/, which preserves the first homepage of UBERMORGEN.COM. Today UBERMORGEN.COM is no longer a corporation – on a legal level – and it no longer does commercial work under the same label. But the "corporate identity" still works on a conceptual level.

[3] Cf. Régine Debatty, "Interview with Ubermorgen", in *we-make-money-not-art*, October 26, 2006.

[4] Régine Debatty, "Interview with Ubermorgen", quoted.

[5] This anecdote – backed up in a personal conversation with Hans Bernhard – is related in Adam Wishart, Regula Bochsler, *Leaving Reality Behind. The Battle for the Soul of the Internet*, 4th ESTATE, 2002 (Ecco – Harper Collins 2003). The chapter referenced here can be also found online on *The Guardian*'s website, at the URL http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2002/aug/14/firstchapters.reviews

[6] Régine Debatty, "Interview with Ubermorgen", quoted.

[7] Besides the aforementioned *Leaving Reality Behind* (2002), in 1998 the Italian publisher Castelvecchi released *Cyberterrorismo. Come si organizza un rapimento virtuale* (ed. Nico Piro, Rome 1998), based on a long interview with members of the collective. Some of the details quoted here are taken from this source.

[8] For the history of etoy, see http://history.etoy.com/ and Adam Wishart, Regula Bochsler, *Leaving Reality Behind...*, cit.

[9] Régine Debatty, "Interview with Ubermorgen", quoted.

[10] Jacob Lillemose, "Medium hack. Painting as a conceptual strategy to expand net art into the world of objects and make an attempt to enter the market", in Alessandro Ludovico (Ed), UBERMORGEN.COM, *MEDIA HACKING VS. CONCEPTUAL ART*, Christoph-Merian-Verlag, Basel 2009.

[11] Régine Debatty, "Interview with Ubermorgen", quoted.

[12] Domenico Quaranta, "It's lustful entertainment, baby! Interview with UBERMORGEN.COM", in *Digimag*, Issue 39, November 2008.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Régine Debatty, "Interview with Ubermorgen", quoted.

[15] According to *Wikipedia*, a seal is generally "a wax seal bearing an impressed figure, or an embossed figure on paper, with the purpose of authenticating a document" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seal_(device), last visited January 9, 2009). As UBERMORGEN.COM points out in a personal communication, "during *[V]ote Auction*, we received all these mails, letters, scans, and all those documents worked with seals as letter-headers or somewhere else, in order to reinstate their governmental power and authority. There were also a few companies that used seals instead of logos so that one would regard them rather as pseudo-governative agencies and not as money-making-scams. We thought that all these icons, which had all developed out of kings' and queens' rings and coats of arms into sheriffs' stars and then into the "Texas internet crime task force" and so on, that those were a whole lot more interesting than those 20th century consumer brands we usually call 'logos'."

[16] Jacob Lillemose, "Medium hack...", quoted.

[17] The concept of "over identification" is well illustrated in the essay by Inke Arns which appears in this book. Cf. pp. 78 – 89.

INKE ARNS

STORYTELLERS OF THE INFORMATION AGE
On the role of narrative in
UBERMORGEN.COM's work [1]

INKE ARNS

Has been the Artistic Director of the Hartware MedienKunstVerein, Dortmund (www.hmkv.de) since 2005. Between 1988 and 1996 she studied Slavistics, Eastern European studies, political science and art history in Berlin and Amsterdam.

In 2004 she took a PhD (Dr. phil.) at Humboldt University in Berlin. Since 1993 she has worked as an independent curator and author focussing on media art, net cultures and Eastern Europe.

Her curatorial work includes international exhibitions, festivals and conferences - most recently *History Will Repeat Itself*, Dortmund 2007 / Berlin 2007-2008 / Warsaw 2008 / Hong Kong 2008;

The Wonderful World of irational.org, Dortmund 2006 / Glasgow 2007 / Novi Sad 2008 and *Anna Kournikova Deleted By Memeright Trusted System – Art in the Age of Intellectual Property*, Dortmund 2008.

Her books include *Netzkulturen* (2002), *Neue Slowenische Kunst* (2002) and *Avantgarda v vzvratnem ogledalu* ("The Avant-garde in the Rear-View Mirror", Ljubljana 2006).

She has published numerous articles on media art and net culture, and has edited numerous exhibition catalogues.

For more info: www.inkearns.de

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The last fifteen years of net art, media and net activism have been a time of intensive story telling. Against the prevailing narrative of the "frontier" once proposed by John Perry Barlow [3] – which some have dubbed the "Californian Ideology" [4] – we have seen the emergence of counter-narratives, such as "Temporary Autonomous Zones" (TAZ), for example [5]. A public consisting not only of *net aficionados* remembers the heroic David vs. Goliath confrontation between a global toy retailer and a small group of net artists in 1999/2000, which the artists won thanks to the *Toywar* campaign that mobilized its global coalition of supporters [6]. Earlier in the mid-1990s there were the "Hacktivist" activities of the Electronic Disturbance Theatre (EDT) which consisted of blocking the website of the Mexican government in support of the Zapatista movement (*FloodNet*, 1998) [7]. And then there were the activities of the ZaMir initiative in the early 1990s which, in a different direction to the Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks by the EDT, were designed to enable communication between the citizens of the former Yugoslavia at a time when communication was made impossible by the warring states themselves. ZaMir enabled dialogue between citizens of the former Yugoslavia by re-routing messages via a mailbox in Bielefeld, Germany [8].

The last decade, meanwhile, has been marked not so much by stories and technologies of obvious resistance, but by artistic narratives that insert a seed of doubt into what Deleuze and Guattari call a "major language", namely the fabric of society, by taking up, twisting and playing back the ruling norms of society (that normally remain hidden) to that very society in an explicit way. The music group Laibach, since the early 1980s, the artistic collectives RTMark and The Yes Men, the theatre and film director Christoph Schlingensief, Santiago Sierra in the field of contemporary art, and the (net) artist duo UBERMORGEN.COM, are all representatives of the artistic subversive-affirmative strategy of over-identification [9]. As critical art strategies have become increasingly ineffective – since, as BAVO has it, "they conform to what is expected" [10], the art of over-identification "offers an uneasy answer to the question of artistic resistance" [11] in a post-critical condition; it asks artists "to ignore society's pathetic demand for small creative acts and, inversely, to uncompromisingly identify with the ruling order itself and to act out its logic in its most extreme, dystopian form" [12]. The art of over-identification thus aims to "radically confront the current order with the ultimate consequences of its own principles [...] in order to confront it with the impossibility of its desire" [13]. It is in this line that we

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should consider works like Christoph Schlingensief's *Please love Austria! First European Coalition Week* (2000) [14]. This event, which was publicly advertised as an action of the FPÖ (the right-wing Freedom Party of Austria, in power as part of the Austrian ruling coalition since 2000) adopted the Big Brother mass-media format to stage a live, media-savvy deportation of asylum seekers from a container located next to Vienna opera house. The Yes Men, for their part, have been appearing as the official representatives of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since 2001. Using faked websites that are the spitting images of official WTO sites, these artist-activists have received numerous invitations to appear as WTO representatives at international conferences. Their overall goal is "identity correction": they want to help corporations and organizations openly articulate aspects which are implicit in their business practices. For example, in the case of the WTO, The Yes Men bring the idea of free trade to its logical consequence, hoping to provoke a sense of dread in their audience. Most of the time, they succeed in quite the opposite direction, awakening pure enthusiasm in their listeners. Even the most radical suggestions are taken seriously on the strength of the WTO's authority. Since 2002, The Yes Men have also been engaged in correcting the identity of Dow Chemical. In 2002, they set up a fake website, on which the corporation announced that it would not be able to provide compensation to the victims of the chemical accident that wreaked havoc on Bhopal in 1984, since neither the victims nor their families were shareholders (!).   As a result, The Yes Men were invited to a live talk show on BBC World in November 2004, where the Dow representative "Jude Finisterra" announced that the company had changed its mind, and had decided to compensate all victims on occasion of the 20th anniversary of the catastrophe [15]. The company denied this immediately (well, after the "news" had circulated for an hour on BBC World and CNN), but the value of its stock went down considerably. In 2005, a certain "Erastmus Hamm" spoke on behalf of Dow Chemical at a conference on "Global Risk Management" in London. Here, he presented a computer programme called the *Acceptable Risk Calculator* to an enthusiastic audience of bankers. This programme was apparently designed to allow companies to establish the risks they were willing to accept in exchange for potential profits. On occasion of this action, which was recorded with a hidden camera, The Yes Men unveiled Gilda, the golden skeleton. Delighted, the executives and managers attending the conference posed for photographs with this golden "skeleton in the closet" and exchanged business cards with the representative of Dow Chemical [16].

The Yes Men infiltrate the world of big business and smuggle out stories that are both shocking and hilarious; author Naomi Klein has dubbed them "the Jonathan Swift of the Jackass generation" [17].

Klein's reference to the famous Anglo-Irish satirist, essayist and author of *Gulliver's Travels* brings us back to the importance of narrative in contemporary net cultures, and, more precisely, to the crucial role of narrative in UBERMORGEN.COM's work. My argument starts from the assumption that we live in a world that, due to growing digitalization, is increasingly complex and transparent. However, transparency, in this respect, should not be mistaken for visibility – it is rather that the age of transparency is marked by a dual structure of the panoptical and post-optical. On the one hand, we are confronted with total, panoptical visibility: this began in the 1980s, if not indeed earlier, with the installation of video-monitoring systems, and is now being perfected in the shape of state and private-sector surveillance satellites (GoogleEarth, anyone?) [18]. In parallel with this panoptical visibility, the technical structures that observe and act have increasingly withdrawn into invisibility. In many cases, the performative structures are recognizable only by their effects, but no longer necessarily visible. Satellites, for instance, are so far from the earth that they can scarcely be detected with the naked human eye; miniaturized nano-machines are simply too small, and most software eludes human perception because it involves "inconspicuous" performative (geno-)texts lying below the visible surfaces (pheno-texts) that generate them. In the age of transparency we find ourselves dealing with a fundamental de-coupling of visibility and performativity/effectivity. While everything else is being subjected to the paradigm of permanent visibility, the performative structures – the ones that actually act – are withdrawing from this very visibility, and thus from our direct control. These structures have become transparent. Invisibility is thus becoming the privilege of operative, performative structures [19].

So, how do we – not necessarily being extremely tech-savvy – make sense of such a complex and transparent world (understanding still being a prerequisite for acting)? One way of making sense of a world which increasingly withdraws from human perception is storytelling. I would claim that stories – and, in a broader sense, narratives – are extremely powerful tools that give form/shape to contexts that cannot easily be grasped and made sense of by our "unenhanced" human senses. Narratives and counter-narratives have the capacity to make complicated and complex structures and the interrelations they are based on understandable, and thus to make a transparent world opaque - i.e. graspable. In the context of media and net activism this holds especially true for UBERMORGEN.COM's art of storytelling.

After leaving the corporate art group etoy ("the first street gang on the information super highway") which he had co-founded in the early 1990s, in 1999 Hans

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Bernhard (a.k.a. etoy.HANS, etoy.BRAINHARD, hans_extrem, e01) together with Maria Haas (a.k.a. liz or lizvlx) founded the company UBERMORGEN.COM, registered in Germany, Austria and Bulgaria. UBERMORGEN.COM is active in the fields of software development, licence contracts and applied design and consulting services for multinational corporations, as well as action art, performance art and mass media communication art. UBERMORGEN.COM describes its activities as "media hacking" and distributes its contents via "guerilla-marketing tactics" and through so-called "shock marketing".

Storytelling is an integral part of these media hacking activities, or rather, it is the *very core* of these tactics. However, it does not actually matter whether the stories that we are told by the artists are true or not, whether they have really happened or not; what is important is whether they function as stories. What really matters is whether the stories are good stories. We can therefore say that within media and net activism it is not only the technical hacks or the hardcore programming code – the *fact*, if you will – that are performative in the sense of Austin's speech act theory, but also the narratives – the *fiction*. Narrative is the framework that not only assigns meaning to the disparate, unconnected elements of the world we perceive; as a performative text it also has the potential to mobilize people. Fiction has an effect on those it is being told to, as well as on those who are engaged in (re-)telling and further distributing it. By infusing and releasing these stories (hoaxes) into the mass media (i.e. by hacking the mass media) it becomes possible to launch a certain topic in the mass media and to reach a global audience. UBERMORGEN.COM are masters of storytelling in, with and through the media.

[V]ote Auction: Bringing capitalism and democracy closer together

UBERMORGEN.COM's first ingenious media hack intervened in no less than the (in)famous U.S. presidential elections in 2000 (G. W. Bush vs. Al Gore). Based on an idea by James Baumgartner, further developed by UBERMORGEN.COM, the media hack *[V]ote Auction* made extensive use of the aforementioned tactics. Under the catchy slogan "Bringing capitalism and democracy closer together!", voters were offered the possibility, via the online auction platform vote-auction.com, to auction off their vote to the highest bidder. Once the votes of an entire U.S. state were sold, the vote sellers would be paid their due share from the returns. What was demonstrated here in enviable clarity was the entanglement of capital and (voting) power: while the selling of individual votes is illegal in all U.S. states and on a Federal level, this prohibition is at the same time constantly being undermined by massive (legal) campaign contributions from big corporations. *[V]ote Auction's* repercussions in the mass media were

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overwhelming. During the three months before the election, every day UBERMORGEN.COM gave up to five interviews for radio and television, and up to 20 e-mail and phone interviews. Several State Attorneys announced a total of thirteen lawsuits against UBERMORGEN.COM. In four U.S. states legal proceedings against UBERMORGEN.COM were instituted (Missouri, Chicago, Massachusetts and Wisconsin) and temporary injunctions were issued. Following a judgment in Illinois the domain was blocked, but it managed to get back online under a slightly altered name – in time for the elections. CNN reported on the project seven times and on October 24, 2000, the channel dedicated a thirty-minute episode of the legal programme "Burden of Proof" entitled "Bidding for Ballots: Democracy on the Block" to *[V]ote Auction*. UBERMORGEN.COM claims that with *[V]ote Auction* they reached an audience of 450 million media consumers. But as no evidence for illegal activities could be provided, the legal proceedings in all the U.S. states (except Illinois) had to be closed. In actual fact, however, the entire project was a hoax – the online auction platform was entirely inoperative. *[V]ote Auction* spread like a sinister virus through the global media networks, but it was merely a story that multiplied and gained strength and authenticity by being distributed through the mass media. In this respect it resembles Orson Welles' radio play of H. G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, that is said to have created mass panic at Halloween in 1938, because radio listeners really believed that the Martians were invading. Yet despite *[V]ote Auction* being purely fictitious, to this very day the project's representatives are denied entry into the United States of America.

Psych|OS: Sickness as Metaphor and Narrative

In March 2002, UBERMORGEN.COM's Hans Bernhard experienced [20] a manic outbreak (bipolar affective disorder) [21] in Cape Town, South Africa. He was airlifted to Austria – General Hospital Vienna. Two and a half years later, UBERMORGEN.COM found video footage of his stay at the mental hospital – Station 4B, Department of Psychiatry, (the reference to the 1999 movie *The Blair Witch Project* is by no means incidental) [22]. They decided to release the material unedited, with only minimal contextual information: "We are the children of the 1980s. We are the first internet-pop-generation. We grew up with radical Michael Milken [The King of Junk Bonds] and mythical Michael Jackson [The King of Junk Pop]. Hans Bernhard is loaded with 10 years of internet & tech [digital cocaine], mass media hacking, underground techno, hardcore [illegal] drugs, rock&roll lifestyle and net.art jet set [etoy]. His neuronal networks and brain structures are similar to the global synthetic network he helped build up and maintained subversive activity within. And now they are "infected" by a manic-depression [WHO ICD-10, F31.1.], both Hans Bernhard and the

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"Network" are infected by this structural disorder. Waves of mania and
depression are running through the technical, social and economic
structures. Contemporary high-tech societies deal with hardcore brains
using bio-chemical "agents" to control the internal information flow, we
call them psychotropic drugs. Hans Bernhard was legally sloshed by
Zyprexa®, Temesta®, Dominal®, Depakine®, Neurotop® [23]. But how can
we treat a mentally ill global network?" [24]. The video installation *Psych|OS*
(2004) consists of a back projection of the video material onto a sensitive
membrane. The screen serves as a thin skin which is penetrated by light
and onto which a unique reality is projected. This membrane moves if you
touch it and it curls if you blow: the image twists. The membrane
represents the human and the network – it is hypersensitive. The sound is
played quietly via speakers and very loud via earphones. The room is filled
with daylight so the mood of the viewer is influenced by the weather
outside. It is no different from a room in a mental hospital [25].

"202,345,117 years until GWEI fully owns Google"

This rather disillusioned yet poetic statement opens the first chapter of
UBERMORGEN.COM's *EKMRZ Trilogy,* entitled *GWEI – Google Will Eat
Itself,* which began in 2005. Together with colleagues Paolo Cirio and
Alessandro Ludovico [26] the duo tackles the trinity of EKMRZ [27] giants that
survived the crash of the dotcom boom and are now almost generic names
for unique business models – and monopolies – on the Internet: Google,
Amazon and eBay. Founded in 1998, Google is the most popular search
engine on the Internet. Over the last decade it has developed from a
simple search engine into a bold conglomerate of free services: e-mail
(Gmail), online mapping (Google Earth), office productivity, social
networking, and video sharing services (YouTube). Amazon.com started
out in 1995 as an on-line bookstore, but soon diversified to product lines
including VHS, DVDs, music CDs, MP3s, computer software, video games,
electronics, apparel, furniture, food, toys, etc. [28]. Today it is the largest
content distributor online. eBay.com, also founded in 1995, is an online
auction and shopping website in which people and businesses buy and sell
goods and services worldwide [29].

The EKMRZ Trilogy looks at the monopolists' distinctive business models and
proposes creative ways to "short-circuit" the immaterial wiring of these
models. While UBERMORGEN.COM proposed that Google "eat itself" by
obediently turning themselves into the ultimate torch-bearers of the
Google advertising system (thus coming to own Google in a remote future),
they performed another kind of hack on the Amazon system by bluntly

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downloading the digital content of thousands of books. Within *The EKMRZ Trilogy*, eBay, in turn, is made to play the tune of e-commerce, created by transforming eBay user data into the dull yet hypnotic soundtrack of ubiquitous online micro payments.

GWEI – Google Will Eat Itself (2005-2008), the first part of the trilogy, generates money by serving Google text advertisements on a network of hidden websites. With this money the artists automatically buy Google shares: "We buy Google via their own advertising! Google eats itself –but in the end we own it! By establishing this autocannibalistic model we deconstruct the new global advertisement mechanisms by rendering them into a surreal click-based economic model." [30] The artists have calculated that it will take exactly 202,345,117 years until GWEI fully owns Google. We are thus informed that by re-routing some of the immaterial wires of the digital information economy it is potentially possible to hack the system – no matter that the result will only be visible more than 200 million years later.

The second EKMRZ hack, which followed just a year later, was *Amazon Noir – The Big Book Crime* (2006-2007). This exploited Amazon's "Search Inside the Book" feature – a service which allows customers to search for keywords in the full texts of the 250,000 books in their catalogue [31]. Between July and October 2006, 3,000 digital books were "stolen" from the Amazon website by targeting weaknesses in the "Search Inside the Book" feature. A specially programmed software "bombarded the Search InsideTM interface with multiple requests, assembling full versions of texts and distributing them across peer-to-peer networks (P2P)" [32]. Michael Dieter points to the fact that far from being a purely malicious and anonymous hack, the "heist" was publicized as a tactical media performance, based, one should add, on a script that recalls a Spaghetti Western: "The Bad Guys (The Amazon Noir Crew: Cirio, Lizvlx, Ludovico and Bernhard) stole copyrighted books from Amazon using sophisticated robot-perversion technology coded by supervillain Paolo Cirio. A subliminal media fight and a covert legal dispute escalated into an online showdown with the heist of over 3,000 books at the centre of the story. Lizvlx from UBERMORGEN.COM had daily shoot-outs with the global mass media, Cirio continuously pushed the boundaries of copyright (books are just pixels on a screen or just ink on paper), Ludovico and Bernhard resisted kickback-bribes from the powerful Amazon.com until they finally gave in and sold the technology for an undisclosed sum to Amazon. Betrayal, blasphemy and pessimism finally split the gang of bad guys. The good guys (Amazon.com) won the showdown and drove off into the blistering sun with the beautiful femme fatale, the seductive and erotic massmedia." [33] Michael Dieter has further suggested that the extensive use of imagery and iconography from the "noir" genre can be understood as an explicit reference to the increasing

criminalization of copyright violation through digital technologies. At the same time, the term also refers to the fact that it is increasingly difficult (in *Amazon Noir*, as in real life) to distinguish between the "bad guys" and the "good guys". The politics of filesharing, Dieter continues, essentially depend on the "command of imaginaries" – *Amazon Noir* specifically "dramatizes these ambiguities by framing technological action through the fictional sensibilities of narrative genre." [34]

The Sound of eBay (SoE, 2008), the final and most recent chapter of *The EKMRZ Trilogy*, provides us with the ultimate soundtrack of the e-commerce that underlies most online activities. SoE generates unique songs from eBay user data. By entering any eBay username and an e-mail address, and clicking "generate", a "score-file" is created from the data harvested by the software, and this is then transformed "into your unique but uniform song and presented in teletext porn style!" UBERMORGEN.COM continue in their inimitably over-enthusiastic style: "We love it! *The Sound of eBay* is our affirmative low-tech contribution to the ATOMIC soundtrack of the peer-to-peer hyper-catastrophic shock-capitalism. reference: Peter Weibel's song *Sex in der Stadt* (Sex in the City) from 1982 – Hotel Morphila Orchester, where PW "raps" (sings) sex-ads from a newspaper". [35]   Indeed, Peter Weibel's singing of sex-ads [36] provides an interesting frame of reference for this project: it is about reading the underlying texts of our surroundings and reproducing them in real time, like a parallel reading (input) and automatic writing (output) which recalls the Surrealist writing experiments of *écriture automatique*, or glossolalia (speaking in tongues). We are also reminded of other artistic performances: for example, Sanja Ivekovic's *Town Crier* (1979) [37], Gebhard Sengmüllers' *TV Poetry* (1993-1994) [38], Igor Stromajer's *Oppera Internettikka* (since 1998) [39], and Christophe Bruno's *Human Browser* (2004) [40]. All of them, to a certain degree, limit the factor of intentionality, namely the active role of the artist, in favour of casting themselves (or the performers) in the role of a medium through which language speaks. The artist/performer appears as an entity loaded with pre-existing language which cannot utter anything but the discourse of the Other. Jacques Lacan defines this repetition as the "insistence of the letter" [41] (*l'instance de la lettre*), that is, the compulsive repetition of certain signifiers or letters despite the subject's conscious attempts to repress them. "Repetition", he writes, "is fundamentally the insistence of speech." [42] Of course, in *The Sound of eBay* it is not the voice of the radically decentered subject that produces language utterances, but a software program that generates a catchy 8-bit musical soundtrack from eBay user data. It reminds us that underneath the shiny surfaces and glossy interfaces there is a layer of performative code and precious personal data that performs the constant modulations crucial for the functioning of today's society of control [43].

Above all in their *EKMRZ Trilogy*, UBERMORGEN.COM formulate dark visions of the "information society" and turn these visions into highly entertaining, blithe narratives about the age of transparency, using the format of film scripts (Western and "noir"), adventure novels and tabloids. "We have stolen the invisible" – this apparently intimate confession opens the story of "The Big Book Crime", which involves assaults on stage coaches filled with digital gold, and the sombre highwaymen of the information super highway. In the end, the good guys drive off into the blistering sun... and the bad guys? They are certainly on their way to the next story, and we are all curious to know what it will be about this time.

FOOTNOTES

[1] I would like to thank Johannes Auer who invited both Hans Bernhard and myself to two literature events in Stuttgart (D) in 2007 and 2008 which led me to think more in depth about the crucial role of narrative in UBERMORGEN.COM's work: Hans Bernhard im Gespräch mit Inke Arns, "Netz(kunst)aktivismus. UBERMORGEN.COM + friends", in *tell.net*, Stadtbücherei Stuttgart, January 17, 2007; Hans Bernhard im Gespräch mit Inke Arns, "Erzählungen als Strukturelement von Medienaktivismus", in *Literaturfestival Stuttgart*, April 17/18, 2008.

[2] Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *Kafka. Toward a Minor Literature*, University of Minnesota Press, p. 16.

[3] John Perry Barlow, "A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace", 1996, online at homes.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[4] Richard Barbrook & Andy Cameron, "The Californian Ideology. A critique of West Coast cyber-libertarianism", 1995, online at www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/theory-californianideology.html (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[5] Hakim Bey, T. A. Z. *The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism*, Autonomedia, New York 1985 (1991). Also online at www.hermetic.com/bey/taz_cont.html (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[6] Inke Arns, "This is not a toy war: Politischer Aktivismus in Zeiten des Internet". In Stefan Münker, Alexander Roesler (eds.), *Praxis Internet. Kulturtechniken der vernetzten Welt*, Frankfurt/Main, Suhrkamp 2002, pp. 37-60. Also online at www.inkearns.de/Texts/Media/notoywar.html (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[7] The activities of the EDT (Stefan Wray & Ricardo Dominguez) were modeled after Critical Art Ensemble's *Electronic Civil Disobedience*, online at www.critical-art.net/books/ecd/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[8] A broad panorama and a typology of net activism can be found in Inke Arns, *Netzkulturen*, Hamburg, Europäische Verlagsanstalt 2002.

[9] The term was coined by Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Zizek in his seminal essay "Why are Laibach and NSK not Fascists?", in *M'ARS - Casopis Moderne Galerije*, /3.4 1993, p. 4. I co-edited, together with Sylvia Sasse, an issue of the Slovenian journal of performing arts Maskadedicated to this topic in 2006. See Inke Arns, Sylvia Sasse, "Subversive Affirmation. On Mimesis as Strategy of Resistance", in Inke Arns / Sylvia Sasse (eds.), "Subversive Affirmation", *Maska*, Vol. XIX/ 3-4 (98-99) / 2006, Ljubljana 2006, pp. 5-21 (also published in: IRWIN (ed.): *East Art Map. Contemporary Art and Eastern Europe*, MIT Press 2006, pp. 444-455).

[10] BAVO, "Introduction", in *Cultural Activism Today: The Art of Over-Identification*, Rotterdam, Episode Publishers, 2007.

[11] Ibidem.

[12] Ibidem.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] Online at www.schlingensief.com/auslaenderraus/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[15] In 2001, Dow Chemical had bought Union Carbide, the chemical company responsible for the Bhopal catastrophe. But Dow continued to decline taking over responsibility for the events of 1984.

[16] The project was included in the exhibition *Glamour and Globalisation*, curated by Inke Arns and presented at Hartware

MedienKunstVerein in the PHOENIX Halle Dortmund (D) in 2006 and at PROGR Zentrum für Kulturproduktion Bern (CH) in 2008.

[17] Online at www.theyesmen.org/yes-men-book (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[18] See Lisa Parks, *Cultures in Orbit: Satellites and the Televisual*, Durham and London 2005; see also "Satellite Voyeurism," an event created by Francis Hunger (PHOENIX Halle, Dortmund, 2007).

[19] See Inke Arns, "Transparent World. Minoritarian Tactics in the Age of Transparency", in Dennis Del Favero, Ursula Frohne and Peter Weibel (eds), *un_imaginable*, ZIP digital arts edition, ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe; iCinema Center/University of New South Wales, Sydney; University of Pittsburgh; Hatje Cantz 2008, pp. 20-35. Also online at www.inkearns.de/Texts/Media/2008_Arns-Transparent-e.pdf (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[20] Online at hansbernhard.com/TEXT/2000_2002/2002_BRAIN_MELTDOWN/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[21] WHO, ICD-10 Classification: F31.1 Bipolar affective disorder, current episode manic without psychotic symptoms.

[22] UBERMORGEN.COM's text about the work begins with the following quote, from *The Blair Witch Project's* teaser: "In October 1994 three student filmmakers disappeared in the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland while shooting a documentary. A year later their footage was found...".

[23] Online at hansbernhard.com/drugs (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[24] UBERMORGEN.COM, "Psych|OS - Digital cocaine - Children of the 1980s", in Inke Arns, Ute Vorkoeper, HMKV (eds.), *On Disappearance. Loss of World and Escaping from the World*, Frankfurt/Main: Revolver

- Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 2005.

[25] This description follows UBERMORGEN.COM's compelling text "Psych|OS - Digital cocaine - Children of the 1980s", see previous footnote.

[26] Italian programer Paolo Cirio and Neural.it editor Alessandro Ludovico have collaborated with UBERMORGEN.COM on *Google Will Eat Itself* (2005) and *Amazon Noir* (2006), but not for the *Sound of eBay* (2008-2009).

[27] EKMRZ is the artists' word for e-commerce.

[28] Online at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon.com (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[29] Online at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EBay (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[30] Online at www.ubermorgen.com/EKMRZ_Trilogy/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[31] The feature started with 120.000 titles (or 33 million pages of text) on October 23, 2003. There are currently about 250,000 books in the program. Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon.com (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[32] Michael Dieter, "Amazon Noir. Piracy, Distribution, Control", in *M/C Journal - A Journal of Media and Culture*, Vol. 10, Issue 5, Oct 2007, Online at journal.media-culture.org.au/0710/07-dieter.php (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[33] Online at www.ubermorgen.com/EKMRZ_Trilogy/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[34] Dieter, op. cit.

[35] Online at www.ubermorgen.com/EKMRZ_Trilogy/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[36] Listen to this great song on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvIMbUGo9Fk (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[37] The performance took place on 12 December 1979 at the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. The artist was facing a TV set which in turn was facing the wall. Ivekovic was the only one who could see the TV screen and hear the audio via a headset. With the beginning of the transmission of the News of the Day by Zagreb Television at 20:30, the performance started. "I try to repeat every word I hear, but because of the rapid flow of verbal information some words and parts of sentences are missing in my speech, or else they are mispronounced. However, the audience is able to discern that the content of my narration is the News of the Day, transmitted by Zagreb Television at that moment. When the TV News ends, the performance also ends." (Sanja Ivekovic, *This is My True Face*, Muzej Suvremene Umjetnosti Zagreb, Zagreb 1998, p. 54).

[38] On the occasion of the Medienbiennale Leipzig 94 which I organized together with Dieter Daniels, the Austrian artist Gebhard Sengmüller installed *TV Poetry*. It consisted of satellite TV receivers in Vienna, Rotterdam and Lüneburg, which switched the TV channel every ten seconds. On the computers connected to the satellite receiver, a text-recognition programme was running, filtering out the text elements; e.g. subtitles or news headers. The software then converted the graphical text into ASCII characters. Depending on the size and the clarity of the 'original' texts in the TV images, the result was more or less correct. Every ten minutes the computers connected via a modem to the central computer in Leipzig, where the results — easily readable texts alternating with machinic gibberish and vice versa — were displayed as an infinite text stream on a monitor. TV Poetry was a silent meditation on the aesthetics of the machinic and the uncertainties of communication. See also www.gebseng.com/ (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[39] *Oppera Internettikka* is a series of low-tech Internet opera art projects which Stromajer started in 1998 by singing the HTML code. It explores the combination of classical opera tactics and strategies, together with singing HTML source code, text-to-speech software, Java scripts and applets.Online at www.intima.org/index_1995-2007.html (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[40] "A human being embodies the World Wide Web": Via a headset, an actor hears a text-to-speech audio that comes directly from the Internet in real-time. The actor repeats the text as he hears it. The textual flow is actually fetched by a program that hijacks Google. Depending on the context in which the actor is, keywords are sent to the program and used as search strings in Google so that the content of the textual flow is always related to the context. Online at www.christophebruno.com/?p=83 (last accessed January 2, 2009).

[41] Jacques Lacan, "The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious", in *Yale French Studies*, n° 36/37, "Structuralism" (1966), pp. 112-147.

[42] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar. Book III. The Psychoses*, 1955-56, London, Routledge 1993, p. 242.

[43] Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Society of Control", 1990, in *Negotiations*, New York 1995.

Fwd: 1429.BC -SDDDDDSsssssosSDSDD$DD

JODI

Jodi (Joan Heemskerke and Dirk Paesmans, www.jodi.org) is the pioneering Belgian / Dutch duo of Net Art.

Their work has been exhibited in many international exhibitions and festivals, including: *Documenta X*, 1997; ISEA97, Chicago 1997; DEAF, Rotterdam 1998; *net_condition*, ZKM Karlsruhe 2000; Transmediale, Berlin (1997, 2000, 2002, 2006); Centre Pompidou, Paris 2003; SFMOMA, San Francisco 2004; Guggenheim Museum, New York 2004; Montevideo, Amsterdam, 2006; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam 2008; and then in Tokyo (2001, 2002), Madrid (2001), New York (1997, 2003, 2005, 2007), Basel (2002) and Paris (2004, 2006).

For its transparent coherence, what this mysterious European duo have done in the last 15 years is in many ways unsurpassed - and for many it remains a revelation. Jodi have taught us to puncture the interface, to go beyond the surface, to contaminate languages, to look for a new way of interacting with software; and they have done this without ever labeling their work 'art', without ever creating an online 'gallery', but allowing others to do it for them. Even today, Jodi's only real homepage is their Wikipedia entry. This means one can still come across their work 'by chance', without any preconceived ideas: always the best approach. Falling headlong into Jodi's web without a safety net is an experience that leaves its mark.

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"Fwd: 1429.BC -SDDDDDSsssssosSDSDD$DD" is a work of e-mail art created by Jodi as
a tribute to UBERMORGEN.COM for this book. As always in Jodi's works,
it can be read on various levels. At first glance, it is a work that subverts
the function of email, sabotaging the flow of communications between
sender and receiver. It is as if a bug had rendered the email illegible,
inverting the usual relationship between code and interface. In actual
fact, here email is used as a creative tool rather than a communications
device. And, as for all visual works of art, each to his/her own
interpretation.
Addressees UBERMORGEN.COM interpreted it as follows: "they start the email with
superficial chaos and money… then there comes the jihad (I mean the
Arabic characters), and it gets louder (I mean font being bold); then it
gets red and bold, so quite aggressive, then it becomes orderly but Arabic
again, and in the end it all resolves in sweet iconographic pop."

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UBERMORGEN.COM [A/CH/USA, *1999]

UBERMORGEN.COM is an artist duo created in Vienna, Austria, by lizvlx and Hans Bernhard, a founder of etoy. Behind UBERMORGEN.COM we can find one of the most unmatchable identities – controversial and iconoclast – of the contemporary European techno-fine-art avant-garde. Their open circuit of conceptual art, drawing, software art, pixel- painting, computer installations, net.art, sculpture and digital activism (media hacking) transforms their brand into a hybrid Gesamtkunstwerk. The computer and the network are (ab)used to create art and combine its multiple forms. The permanent amalgamation of fact and fiction points toward an extremely expanded concept of one's working materials, that for UBERMORGEN.COM also include (international) rights, democracy and global communication (input-feedback loops). "Ubermorgen" is the German word both for "the day after tomorrow" or "super-tomorrow".
http://www.ubermorgen.com

Lizvlx (A, *1973)

Lizvlx is a Vienna and St. Moritz based artist, designer and technologist, producing both artistic and commercial work for companies, collectors and institutions. Using technology and computers as a medium since 1994, she has exhibited her net.art works in venues like the Ars Electronica (Austria), the Konsthall Malmoe (Sweden), the NTT ICC Museum (Japan), ARCO (Spain) or the Lentos Kunstmuseum (Austria). Lizvlx is a founding member of 194.152.164.137 and UBERMORGEN.COM. She studied fine art and economics in Vienna. Lizvlx is a professional artist and creative thinker, focusing on digital art projects, exhibitions and travelling the world lecturing at conferences or universities.

Hans Bernhard (A/CH/USA, *1973)

Hans Bernhard is a Vienna and St. Moritz based artist working in the fields of digital and fine art. Using technology, computers and the internet as a medium since 1994, he exhibited and performed in venues like the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (Japan), the Ars Electronica (Austria), the Konsthall Malmoe (Sweden) or the SFMOMA (USA). He is a founding member of the legendary etoy.CORPORATION and of UBERMORGEN.COM. He studied visual communication, digital art, art history and aesthetics in Vienna, San Diego, Pasadena and Wuppertal. Hans is a professional artist and creative thinker, working on art projects, researching digital networks, exhibiting and travelling the world lecturing at conferences and universities.

SELECTED SOLO SHOWS

Expanded Box, ARCO Madrid
Fabio Paris Art Gallery, Brescia
Kunsthaus, Graz
The Premises Gallery, Johannesburg
c3, Budapest
plug.in, Basel
Hartware Medienkunstverein, Dortmund
Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich
Overgaden Contemporary Art Institute, Copenhagen
EAF – Experimental Arts Foundation, Adelaide
Gosia Koscielak Gallery, Chicago

SELECTED GROUP SHOWS

iMAL Center for Digital Cultures and Technology, Bruxelles
HMKV Hartware Medienkunstverein, Dortmund
Biennale of Sydney
New Museum, New York
Laboral, Gijon
MOCA, Teipeh
MAK, Vienna
DEAF, Rotterdam
NTT ICC, Tokyo
Akademie der Kuenste, Berlin
Ars Electronica, Linz
Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz
Konsthall, Malmoe
Kokerei Zollverein, Essen
Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum
Secession, Vienna
La Casa Encendida, Madrid

LINK Editions
http://editions.linkartcenter.eu/

Clouds

Domenico Quaranta, *In Your Computer*, 2011
Valentina Tanni, *Random*, 2011
Gene McHugh, *Post Internet*, 2011
Brad Troemel, *Peer Pressure*, 2011
Kevin Bewersdorf, *Spirit Surfing*, 2012
Mathias Jansson, *Everything I shoot Is Art*, 2012
Domenico Quaranta, *Beyond New Media Art*, 2013
Curt Cloninger, *One Per Year*, 2014
Adam Rothstein, *Astronaut Luggage*, 2015

In My Computer

#1 Miltos Manetas, *In My Computer # 1*, 2011
#2 Chris Coy, *After Brad Troemel*, 2013
#3 Martin Howse, *Diff in June*, 2013
#4 Damiano Nava, *Let the Right One In*, 2013
#5 Evan Roth, *Since You Were Born*, 2014
#6 Addie Wagenknecht, *Technological Selection of Fate*, 2014
#7 Roberto Fassone, Giovanna Manzotti, *If Art Were To Disappear Tomorrow What Stories Would We Tell Our Kids?*, 2014

Catalogues

Collect the WWWorld. The Artist as Archivist in the Internet Age, 2011.
Exhibition Catalogue.
Edited by Domenico Quaranta, with texts by Josephine Bosma, Gene McHugh, Joanne McNeil, D. Quaranta

Gazira Babeli, 2011.
Exhibition catalogue.
Edited by Domenico Quaranta, with texts by Mario Gerosa, Patrick Lichty, D. Quaranta, Alan Sondheim

Holy Fire. Art of the Digital Age, 2011.
Exhibition catalogue.
Edited by Yves Bernard, Domenico Quaranta

Ryan's Web 1.0. A Lossless Fall, 2012.
By Ryan Trecartin

RE:akt! Reconstruction, Re-enactment, Re-reporting, 2014.
Exhibition Catalogue.
Edited by Antonio Caronia, Janez Janša, Domenico Quaranta, with texts by Jennifer Allen, Jan Verwoert, Rod Dickinson

Born Digital, 2014.
Exhibition Catalogue.
Edited by Link Art Center.

6PM YOUR LOCAL TIME EUROPE, 2015.
Catalogue.
Edited by Link Art Center.

UBERMORGEN.COM, 2015.
Catalogue.
Edited by Domenico Quaranta, with texts by Inke Arns, JODI.ORG

Open

Best of Rhizome 2012, 2013
Edited by Joanne McNeil
Co-produced with Rhizome, New York (USA)

The F.A.T. Manual, 2013
Edited by Geraldine Juárez, Domenico Quaranta
Co-produced with MU, Eindhoven (NL)

Troika, 2013
Edited by Domenico Quaranta
Co-produced with Aksioma - Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana (SLO)

Eternal September, 2014
Various Authors
Co-produced with Aksioma - Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana (SLO)

Torque # 1. Mind, Language and Technology, 2014
Edited by Nathan Jones and Sam Skinner
Co-produced with Torque Editions (UK)

U+29DC aka Documento Continuo, 2014
Enrico Boccioletti
Co-produced with Viafarini, Milan (IT)

CyPosium - The Book, 2014
Edited by Annie Abrahams, Helen Varley Jamieson
Co-produced with La Panacée, Centre de Culture
Contemporaine, Montpellier (FR)

UBERMORGEN.COM

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