



The Israeli Center for Digital Art

Free Radicals



The exhibition "Free Radicals" features contemporary and historical projects created by individual artists as well as by artist/activist collectives that breach the boundaries of art and cross into other fields. The exhibition embraces a wide range of work, striving to point in the general direction in which contemporary artistic autonomy is headed and wherein it is shaped, as well as the possibilities it opens up for art when it strives to operate within society. At the same time, the exhibition sets out to propose a historical reading of the various projects as part of a broader artistic phenomenon that forms an alternative to the bourgeois history of art.

Historiographers write history as a sequence of events set in motion by prominent individuals (political and military leaders), thus recycling the capitalist logic of the individual

as expressed in the history of art: the artist as lone genius. This narrative undercuts the significance of the group and of collective work, which underlie the artistic or political creative process.

"Free Radicals" proposes a reading of the works as integrated within the history of art and as a new direction for art which resumes an active role in the society and context within which it is created. The exhibition focuses on projects that transgress the boundaries of art's autonomy to such fields as economy, politics, sociology, science, etc.

In Western democracies, art is granted an autonomy whereby the artist is allowed a broad freedom of action. Thus, it is the product of an ideology, and cannot be regarded as exempted from politics.¹ Western culture has created an artist who is above the society in which s/he lives. This separation, which defines the artist in socio-historical and economic terms, was founded on the aforementioned myth of the artist as a genius operating in isolation. It emerged concurrent to the formation of the democratic nation-state (as conceived in Western Europe, and in some respects - in Israel as well) and parallel to the evolution of capitalist consumer society (as manifested in the United States).

The autonomy enjoyed by Western art practices leads, in most cases, to a preoccupation with intra-artistic issues often dissociated from their social environment. It has enabled the artist a virtually unlimited freedom, but at the same time neutering art's subversive elements that could potentially undermine political or economic systems. One ought to consider the development of art's autonomy in the context of the regulation of power between government

The Marching Plague – Critical Art Ensemble (CAE)

The Marching Plague project is a critique of UK-US bioweapons research, addressing the paranoia of bioterrorism. The film centers on the recreation of secret sea trials conducted by the UK government in the 1950s.

In May 2004, FBI agents and the Joint Terrorism Task Force raided Critical Art Ensemble founder Steve Kurtz's home, seizing art works and research materials for the Marching Plague project. The raid enabled the FBI to accuse Kurtz of bioterrorism, an accusation made possible in the context of the "war on terror" and the internal security policies implemented by the US government following 9/11. Nearly three years since the raid, the case has not reached court, and the allegations against Kurtz are still pending. Despite all this, the research was completed and CAE managed to reconstruct some of the material and produce both the film and a book: *Marching Plague: Germ Warfare and Global Public Health*. The project is an attempt to challenge the political status quo in times of crises. The main argument, so difficult to establish in an atmosphere of government-enhanced paranoia (especially since 9/11), is that the government's funds for germ warfare research are largely based on deception and scare tactics. Such research is a tremendous waste of public funds that could have been invested in the study of diseases such as HIV that are killing millions each year. CAE's argument should be viewed as a broader critique of the current "war on terror" policy and the government's exploitation of the crisis to redirect precious resources to causes that harm the public good. Kurtz's case is a good example of this. The government's inability or unwillingness to acknowledge the fact that Kurtz is an artist and not a terrorist highlights the dimension of panic and paranoia. In addition, the artist's perception as someone whose role is to criticize cultural and political structures is not prevalent enough to allow for a clear-cut distinction between an artist and a terrorist. Against this backdrop, CAE's move stands out as courageous. *Marching Plague* is a powerful critique of the Government's use of scare tactics and exploitation, and may account for the radical response to Kurtz's practice, his arrest and investigation. A critical artist who dares challenge government policy in times of crisis, which is supposed to generate hegemony of thought, can be quite a nuisance.

Victimless Leather – Tissue Culture & Art (TC&A)

Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr grow a semi-living coat in an attempt to produce victimless leather, striving to introduce the possibility of wearing leather without killing an animal. In most cases, once the cell growth process begins, the quantity exceeds that found in the organism from which they were originally taken. For example, the 3T3 mouse cells which are highly prevalent in scientific research and are now weighed in tons, all came from one mouse in the 1970s. In other words, a model has been created that uses life without causing death. The intention is not to develop yet more consumer goods, but rather to raise awareness of the exploitation of other living creatures by human society. Catts and Zurr endeavor to provide models or examples for a possible future, and to study their possible impact on our cultural perception of life. In this respect the lab they operate at the University of Western Australia has a unique role. They introduce artistic presence into the scientific field, thus generating a new agenda. In a reality where the use of

and citizen in Western society. The paradox of freedom, if you will, in Western society lies in the fact that in order to gain freedom - the right to work, to welfare, to freedom of movement, etc., the citizen must give up considerable parts of his freedom, subordinating himself to social regulations and government control. The citizen is registered and followed in practically all aspects of his life. From this point of view it is interesting to examine the freedom granted to the arts in Western culture. In it, art is neutered of its subversive element, of its absolute freedom, the very freedom capable of undermining society's foundations, in exchange for an almost total freedom as pertains to engagement with the self, self-freedom, and personal freedom of expression.

In Israel, the art field's autonomy is preserved as well, and the state finances art, even when it is incongruent with the national ideology. Putting aside the size of its budget for the time being, one might say that Israel has a vested interest in financing "Israeli art" and disseminating it worldwide. Here too, artistic freedom is marketed as an ideological tool for Israeli propaganda, enhancing Israel's image as "the only democracy in the Middle East." To wit, art serves a certain state need; thus, supporting it is worthwhile.² The inherent paradox in artistic autonomy is preserved here as well: an illusion of freedom from ideology which serves an ideology.

A different reading of artistic autonomy may draw on the idea of the "state of emergency" or "state of exception" as formulated by Giorgio Agamben.³ According to this reading one may perceive art as operating in a sphere where the law is suspended. Artists are allowed to say and do much more than practitioners in other sectors in society, even in time of emergency - they are allowed, so long as their art does not undermine the real social,

biotechnological research, genetic engineering, and other scientific fields, along with the information pertaining to these fields, are in the hands of governments and economic corporations, TC&A's demand to be partner in research and dissemination of information, and the presence of artists in the research processes enable its democratization, reinforcing ethical and political questions that usually remain unasked. The project is conducted at HYPERLINK "<http://www.symbiotica.uwa.edu.au/>" SymbioticA: The Art and Science Collaborative Research Laboratory at the University of Western Australia, in consultation with Prof. Professor Arunasalam Dharmarajan from the School of Anatomy and Human Biology and HYPERLINK "<http://www.verigen.de/>" Verigen, a Perth-based company specializing in tissue-engineering.

Vote Auction - Ubermorgen, Hans Bernhard and Lizvlx

Voteauction was a Website which offered US citizens to sell their presidential vote to the highest bidder during the Presidential Elections 2000, Al Gore vs. G.W. Bush. The website was conceived by a student, James Baumgartner, and subsequently sold to Austrian artists Hans Bernhard and Lizvlx. Several US States (Missouri, Wisconsin, Chicago, Arizona, Nevada, California, Massachusetts, New York) issued temporary restraining orders or injunctions for alleged illegal vote trading. This led to the shutdown of two domains (voteauction.com and vote-auction.com). Federal Attorney Janet Reno, the FBI and the NSA investigated the case to ensure the integrity of the voting process. Subtitled "Bringing Democracy and Capitalism Closer Together," the project was a satire which criticized the connection between capital and government. It elicited harsh and at times illegal responses. Network Solutions (a private corporation in charge of all the .com, .net, and .org domains) shut down the vote-auction.com domain without warning or explanation, shortly after the public attacks made by the California Secretary of State, and following an election fraud lawsuit in Chicago against the domain. The project criticizes the corporate funding of election candidates and the links between capital and government. The site highlights the ways in which corporations purchase votes uninterruptedly as part of candidate financing. In reference to the project, constitutional Law Professor Jamin Raskin said: "...we have now evolved a system in which it's OK for money to buy elections, and yet we somehow cling to the fantasy that there's something deeply immoral about the purchase of an individual vote." The legal campaign and the US legal system's swift response reinforce this assertion. The unbearable lightness with which the project could be opposed and the site could be shut down exposes the priorities of American democracy and who it is intended to serve. The explicit link today between capital owners and election candidates is not perceived as a threat to democracy, the rule of law and the incorruptibility of the election process. In response to the measures taken against the project, the domains vote-auction.com and voteauction.com were disseminated to servers throughout the world. The project is supported by RTMark whose primary goal is to publicize corporate subversion of the democratic process, and support anti-corporate projects.

capitalistic or national structure, so long as it preserves the artist's professional one-dimensionality as someone who engages solely in art, and does not venture into other fields.

Concurrent with art that upholds its autonomous position, an alternative has always existed, which rejects art's market economy or does not take part in it. In recent years this field has become a strong current rendering the act of trespassing into a mode of action. Trespassing, by essence, invokes a counter-reaction by the law, the state and society. Playing against the law, the provocative act and its counteract are the thread linking the projects together in "Free Radicals." The different included projects illustrate how the field of political art - in a post-political era, an era underlain by a dichotomous world view between culture and fundamentalism,⁴ Christianity and Islam, good and bad - has transformed into a field where the way to have influence is via playing with and around the law; by adopting tactics of terror, spectacle, plagiarism. If we adopt the description of Western society as the society of the spectacle, as conceived by Guy Debord, a society that has replaced reality with representation, social relations with consumerism, a society that is in a post-political era, then the way to act and influence it is much more radical. In order not to become a part of the culture industry, not to produce ever more images of objection that may be abducted by advertising firms, one must adopt other tactics, conscious of the difficulty in creating an alternative in a society that embraces any objection to the hegemony, thus neutering it. This is the place of the artist as an amateur, as someone who rejects the fixed definitions of professionalization in capitalist society. It is the place of the artist as a fundamentalist, not by virtue of religious faith, but as one who truly believes. It is the place of the artist as a perpetrator, a vandal, a thief. The artist embraces

Injunction Generator - Ubermorgen, Hans Bernhard and Lizvlx

"Injunction Generator" is a software module that enables the production of injunctions to force the removal of a website from the web. It is a credible and efficient interface that facilitates the demand to stop personal activity automatically sent to domain administrators, web owners, and journalists in order to "harness" their support in the legal trial. Presented as a "Internet Partnership for No Internet Content" it is a satirical response to a similar action taken against Ubermorgen following its Vote Auction project, which enabled Americans to sell their votes to the highest bidder. The work cynically presents the ease with which the freedom of speech on the internet may be violated by issuing injunctions and exploiting the war on terror and national security as a guise for violation of basic civil rights.

Google will Eat Itself (GWEI) - Ubermorgen, Hans Bernhard and Lizvlx in collaboration with Alessandro Ludovico and Paolo Cirio

GWEI.com's objective is to hijack hits from people searching for information about marketing and business, and lure them into clicking the Google ads. Each time a user clicks one of the Google text-ads, GWEI receives a micropayment, which is invested in Google shares. In other words, Google will slowly be bought via its own advertisement-system. The long term plan is to take over Google and turn the ownership over to a GTTP-community - Google to the People. The project is a critique of Google's growing monopoly of information. At the same time, it is an experiment in global "click economy." It sets out to undermine Internet advertising systems by transforming them into surrealist models of the click economy. The ability to tackle Google's dominance of the Internet is not via competition, but rather through tactics of parasitism; using existing systems for other needs in order to cause their collapse.

Amazon Noir - Ubermorgen, Hans Bernhard and Lizvlx in collaboration with Alessandro Ludovico and Paolo Cirio

The Amazon Noir team stole copyrighted books from Amazon online store by using robot-

all his definitions that threaten order in capitalist society only to generate interference, intervention, or spectacle.

It is interesting to survey the cultural-political establishment's confrontation with artistic practice when it is incongruent with the goals in whose name the art's autonomy is granted. In the USSR, the way to manage art and artistic creation was via tight control and penalization. Thus, although during the first years of its inception the various avant-garde currents were considered desirable since they shared the idea of the artist's commitment to proletarian causes, during the 1930s all artistic work incompatible with the criteria of Socialist Realism was banned. In the West, confrontation by the avant-garde and overtly political artists that undermined the capitalistic, bourgeois or national hegemony was treated differently. Its celebrated freedom was co-opted by government as an expression of the West's moral superiority and freedom of expression. Dually, various avant-garde concepts were commandeered by the media and industry, and became commodities, a brand of freedom and originality, thus ensuring that these ideas would be emptied of their contents, leaving but an external shell, the revolutionary trend without its revolutionary potential.

After the fall of the Communist Bloc and during the 1990s, a sharper transition occurred in the market economy towards globalization. The global economy created a global consumerist market in which the culture industry exists alongside other industries. Symbols of political radicalism or resistance

perversion technology coded by Paolo Cirio. The Amazon Noir robots played around Amazon's "search inside the book" function, until it gave away complete volumes of copyright protected books. This was carried out by sending 5,000-10,000 requests per book. The data was subsequently converted to pdf format. Amazon USA, Amazon UK, Amazon Germany, and Amazon France were the targets. During the attack they changed part of the "search inside the book" options to defend the rights of copyright holders, without actually solving the problem. Over 3,000 books were downloaded between April and October 2006. In July 2006 Amazon France and Amazon USA threatened to litigate. The matter was resolved out of court in October 2006. Amazon bought the Amazon Noir software for an undisclosed sum. The project strives to raise basic questions about the copyrights held by Amazon, and to disseminate books freely. In a world where cultural assets are being privatized, the use of cultural content ceases to be a right, and becomes a business. The project's original goal was to download all of Amazon.com's 150,000 searchable books, and then use the same technology to steal books from the Google Print Service. The aesthetics of this activist project is founded on Film Noir and German Expressionism. It was presented as a plot where the bad guys (Amazon Noir) steal from the good guys (Amazon); unlike the film noir tradition, however, here the good guys win, and the bad guys betray their cause and sell themselves out.

Reverend Billy

Reverend Billy (Bill Talen) and the Church of Stop Shopping believe that we live in a consumerist society that corrupts our souls and identities. By buying products based on images rather than needs, we allow the giant corporations to control us, as the Catholic Church did in the past. By dictating what to buy, and more importantly – what we want, "big corporations are more to blame for the death of God and religion in America than liberal politicians." Rev. Billy's churches are the supermalls and chains stores where he preaches to stop shopping by taking over the monumental halls of consumerism with the help of his followers. The takeover tactics use the presence of church members in the malls and café chains, taking the place of cash-paying customers. In the next stage the Reverend comes in giving his sermon to an audience made up of the church members and regular customers. The takeover returns the corporate space to the public, raising questions about the public sphere in addition to preaching the message of anti-corporate consumerism. The Reverend who preaches inside corporate spaces, generates a presence apt for public spaces, such as Speakers' Corner in London's Hyde Park, opening them up for critical practice.

Institute for Applied Autonomy

The Institute for Applied Autonomy (IAA) was founded in 1998 as a technological research and development organization dedicated to the cause of individual and collective self-determination. Its mission is to study the forces and structures which affect self-determination and to provide technologies which extend the autonomy of human activists. The institute engages, inter alia, in contestational robotics, a research initiative and work mode which inverts the traditional relationship between robots and authoritarian power structures by developing robots to meet the needs and budgets of culturally resistant

have become the protagonists of advertising campaigns, and virtually any aspect of Western culture has become part of consumer culture. As early as the 1960s, the Situationists had already described reality in capitalist society as one that transforms any experience or activity into a commodity. They tried to conceive new tools with which to confront consumerist reality, underlain by the realization that in a world where exposure to visual images is so vast, art must rethink its tools. Their influence is discernible to date, and it is based on the concept of trespassing - penetration into forbidden territory, territory intended neither for the artist nor for the citizen, in order to generate provocation or change of meaning. Trespassing is a device that invokes counter responses which expose the borders of the trespassed territory.

A reconsideration of politically committed art and activism in the reality of the global capitalist economy alters the perception of art's autonomy in Western society. The artistic establishment raises questions about art's economic profitability within the global market, whereas artists strive to re-define the limits of their autonomy by adopting new tactics. Criticism however, comes also from a whole cultural field unrepresented in the art market since it is not engaged in the production of negotiable cultural commodities - whether due to ideological choice or constraints of the everyday. This cultural field has now become more relevant than ever, subverting the boundaries of the artistic field and artistic autonomy. Technological developments, especially in the field of global communications, allow these cultural phenomena to deviate from their local frameworks and become global phenomena existing outside the market's centers of power, and their impact strays from the boundaries of the community in which they emerge. The tools adopted by the Situationists and

forces. Projects such as "Little Brother" and "Graffiti Writer" invert the traditional connection between research processes and centers of power. They encourage people to share their thoughts with their communities, exploring possibilities of using new technologies. "Studies have shown that in nearly 100% of the cases, a given agent of the public will willingly participate in high profile acts of vandalism, given the opportunity to do so via mediated tele-robotic technology." This distinction illustrates the social potential inherent in tactics of inverted robotics which the Institute employs. iSee is a project for cell-phones based on a real time updated database that allows any user to program urban routes with the smallest exposition to surveillance and close-circuit cameras. In times of crisis it is easy to justify any increase in security and surveillance means without providing any proof of their efficacy, while their only certain achievement lies in limiting of civilian freedom and privacy in the public sphere. Projects criticizing the policy of security and surveillance are especially vital in times of crisis which is further reinforced by the authorities (mainly after 9/11).

Conglomco Media Network (CMN)

CMN is a collective of computer artists, programmers, and cultural producers, working in the tradition of the hacker, to collectively throw a wrench in the gears of the corporate machine. CMN members are scattered throughout the US, UK, and the EU. Utilizing the expanding potentials for copying, appropriating, sampling, and synthesizing provided by the internet, CMN seeks to create projects that explore the possibilities of social commentary and creative activism in a networked and techno-savvy environment. Re-Code.com was a web site that allowed users to enter information about products they purchased into a publicly searchable database. The information included name, brand, store, barcode, price, and packaging material. It enabled users to generate a new barcode for the product with the desired price. The site also offered a visual step-by-step guide explaining how to use the new barcode on existing products.

Temporary Services

The Temporary Services group uses the diverse backgrounds and interests of its three members (Brett Bloom, Salem Collo-Julien, and Marc Fischer) to produce exhibitions, events, projects and publications. Their work generates dynamic social situations and spaces for dialogue. The distinction between art and other creative human activities is irrelevant to the activities of Temporary Services. The group focuses on self publication, seeking varying spaces and audiences for their projects.

other avant-garde groups since the 1960s form the basis for this activity, reinstating previous tactics into our current reality where they are ever more pertinent.

The new conception of artistic autonomy which develops gradually from the diverse practices implemented by groups of artists and activists is not founded on the principle of the lone, isolated artist, but rather on the collaborative, the collective and the dialogical. It is an autonomy that exploits art to engage in politics, economy, science, and social concerns. It is a not focused on the creation of social distinctions between the artist and their surroundings, but rather on allowing for the artist's active participation in their environment, and thus rendering their commitment to the society in which they live a practical matter. Under the rubric of "art", artists are free to undermine political, economic, journalistic, scientific and technological thought and production processes. Their autonomy is shaped by activist cells, by working groups within the "body" of global politics and economy, and within global networks. These often operate like viruses that disrupt the smooth, silent flow of capital, at times taking advantage of its loopholes. Their scope ranges from introductions of theoretical and practical models for economic-political alternatives to vandalism and hacking. Art's freedom, whose value has been preserved as a heritage, enables "making" politics, economy, science; not in the service of capital or nationality, rather in order to propose models for social change.

The exhibition features cultural creations whose tactics combine humor, media exploitation, invasion, hacking, parasitism, seizure of public space, manipulation of visual language, virus dissemination, theft of information, copyright violation, etc. Loose knit organizations operate alongside established collectives, the definitions of whose practices greatly deviate from the limits of art's autonomy as we know it. The work they produce takes place on the streets, indoors, on the Internet, in schools, in the public sphere, inside corporate computer systems. Thus,

Cultural Terrorist Agency – Rachel Baker and Heath Bunting

Cultural Terrorist Agency is a funding agency committed to the support of subversive acts pertaining to property and representation. It turns its rivals' most effective weapon – the ability to invest – against them. The agency provides tactical financial support from the fund to activist groups and individuals. The fund is a flexible means that can be immediately accessible in areas of conflict with "fundamentalist capitalists." According to the Agency, cultural terror may be defined as an attack on dominant systems of meaning and their ability to define reality within their areas of propaganda and disinformation. Artists and culture-makers are forced to choose a route within the commercialization categories of capital between crime and terror. The Agency is committed to supporting individuals and organizations currently described – or ones that will be described in the future – as terrorists.

Projekt Atol – Pact Systems – I-Task

Projekt Atol is planning to construct and launch a constellation of two nano-satellites with store and forward communications and medium resolution multi-spectral remote sensing capability to service the Interpolart Transnational Art Science Constellation LADOMIR Antarctic and Makrolab mkVII Arctic base complexes. The project will be presented for the first time during the exhibition, "Free Radicals" and will encompass the legal research background and analysis of the following treaties, needed to be studied for the first independent, open source based orbital system:

- Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water (1963)
- Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1967)
- Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1968)

alongside introducing evolving alternative models of art, the hidden interests that allow capitalist artistic autonomy are revealed.

The exhibition space of the Israeli Center for Digital Art will transform into an open learning commons for the duration of the exhibition. They will host projects, lectures, workshops, films, and texts which have in common the manipulation of artistic autonomy in order to cross the boundaries of artistic fields and in order to make politics, economy, scientific research - to steal from the supermarket, buy votes, and so on.

The exhibition spans contemporary and historical, international and local, artistic and activist - projects all focused on active intervention in society. The major concern linking all the works is their relationship to the law and the law's response. In the absence of a central authority, as represented by the church in previous centuries, the bureaucracy of the law takes the place of divinity. Bureaucratic law - and, in this context, governments' emergency measures as well - is intended to regulate social relations. Rebellious against the law, by undermining its authority and exploiting the privileges it grants, form the basis for the actions performed by the artists participating in the current exhibition. As a social phenomenon, it is interesting what can be learned from an exploration of different attitudes in varying societies to the legal system and to the ability to make "shortcuts" around legal liabilities.

Israel, characterized by a culture of "cutting corners" as far as bureaucratic procedures are concerned, is often associated with a different legal tradition, not based on a set of rules and bureaucratic regulations. Judaism has created rules which were not intended to regulate the social relations within a political entity and its

- Agreement Relating to the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization INTELSAT (1971)
- Convention of International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (1972)
- Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1975)
Basic subsystems and systems design, together with the model of the Prozrachny Mir satellite bus will be presented at the project unveiling in April 2007. The planned launch of the constellation is in the 2009-2010 period. Projekt Atol and Macrolab focus on the following research fields: communication technologies, emigration and climatic systems. These fields have been studied and charted by the Macrolab participants with regard to the physical, psychological, social, political and artistic aspects. Macrolab is a process-oriented work machine under constant development. It includes a modular work environment, sensors, energy-production systems, food, communication, networks, production, and presentation. The mobile lab operating for over a decade intends to establish two permanent stations at the North and South Poles. The satellite is scheduled to be launched into space in 2010.

Tal Adler - Petek Party

The Petek project aimed at running for the Israeli Knesset elections. The idea was to use the Party Financing Law to submit a list for the Knesset and receive air time as part of the television and radio propaganda broadcasts. The Petek project operated on several levels: in the art world, in Israeli politics, on the Internet, and in various forms of mass media, advertising and distribution. Petek identified the Israeli election campaign as a powerful platform on which contents and actions challenging prevalent perceptions about the role and function of politics, power relations, and the interrelations between politics and art, establishment and culture, establishment and subversion, may be superimposed. The Petek project generates confusion. It uses rules derived from the systems of politics, art, the establishment, anarchism, economy, Internet, religion, mass media, and activism, exploring their validity and impact, while implementing and assimilating them into other systems. Petek makes politics and art. It surrenders to the systems and at the same time fights against them.

Graffiti Printer for Every Child! - Ariel Schlesinger

Graffiti Printer for Every Child is a project aimed at research and development of graffiti printers, "a technology that will revolutionize the way in which we educate the children of the future!". Ariel Schlesinger engages in invention and self-construction of various tools and devices. The exhibition will feature the graffiti printer he has built, which enables the spraying of graffiti according to a pre-loaded text. During the exhibition a workshop will

citizenry, but rather to define the boundaries of the tribe, the ethnic group, as a minority itself.⁵ Judaism, as a religion that has always operated from a position of seclusion, the position of the Homo Sacer, maintains an ambivalent attitude to the law of the State, thus having revolutionary and oppositional potential inherent in it. How does it happen, then, that in Israel of all places, the State is so rarely questioned, that artists produce such scarce radical activity, such little subversion of bureaucracy or questioning of the law?!

Notes

1. The autonomy of Western art is customarily regarded as the opposite of the engaged political art of the Soviet bloc and the Communist countries, as manifested in Socialist Realism in the USSR. The artist's freedom is perceived as total liberation from political commitment, as opposed to art in the USSR which was subjected to state control and was regarded in the West as a propagandist tool. Western democracy, in avoiding direct intervention and tight control, has always blurred the propagandist dimension of cultural creation. Nevertheless, as maintained by Max Kozloff in Art Forum in May 1973 ("American Painting During the Cold War"), modern art, and especially Abstract Expressionism, perceived as apolitical, the majority of whose practitioners displayed leftist political inclinations, expressed the period rhetoric of American superiority by representing its self-confidence, painterly freedom, genius expressed

be held that will address the use of everyday consumer goods to develop inventions for self-use, during which participants will build an operating graffiti printer.

Space Hijackers

A group of anarchists fighting the aggressive encroachment of institutions, corporations and urban planners onto public spaces. The group opposes the way in which public space is being eroded and replaced by corporate profit-making space. They oppose the way in which the public is exposed to increasing scrutiny and control by those who own the public spaces, and to the destruction of local community and local culture in the name of global economic progress.

Through its various actions the group attempts to raise awareness of these issues and change the way in which public space is used and perceived in the future. Through these actions and via direct intervention hierarchies are shattered within the public space, and public ownership is reclaimed.

One of the group's first actions was the hijacking of a Circle Line carriage on the London Underground. Its activity has since expanded to include the construction of "city farms" as well as the design and production of "hijacker equipment."

Surveillance Camera Players

Surveillance Camera Players began operating in protest of the extensive use of surveillance cameras in the public sphere. This use infringes on the legal right to privacy. The group performs plays specially written or adapted for surveillance cameras.

Through their visibility and public appearance, the media coverage they are granted, and their web site, they strive to undermine the prevalent perception, whereby only one who is "guilty" of something objects to being watched by cameras.

The group was founded in New York in 1996 in view of the increase in electronic surveillance equipment in the public sphere as part of the war the city declared against crime. Ever since, the necessity of the action has only increased, mainly in light of the post-9/11 surveillance means. Thus, the excuse of the war on crime has teamed with the war on terror which increasingly pervades the public sphere.

The Vacuum Cleaners

The Vacuum Cleaners is a group of artists and activists using legal and illegal creative tactics to generate interruption of power foci and to try to prevent the disintegration of the planet. To this end the group stages performances, interventions, acts, revolts, pranks, installations, videos, web sites, presentations, educations programs, etc.

in unfettered gesture, and created consummate symbols of freedom. Kozloff describes how the CIA, which acknowledged the propagandist power of these artifacts, started "exporting" them worldwide via the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art as commodity in the struggle for American dominance against the communist threat. See http://64.241.242.253/p/articles/mi_m0268/is_9_41/ai_101779145.

2. In this context it is interesting to examine the wording of the agreement signed by an artist with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when they are granted support for travel abroad. The artist is defined as service provider, and the state - as the recipient.

3. Giorgio Agamben maintains that the state of emergency has, in the second half of the 20th century, and especially after 9/11, become the prevalent form of government in many Western democracies. This state of exception is one where emergency decrees erode the democratic structure, giving the authorities increased power. These decrees are intended to protect the social structure against a permanent external threat. The result is a self-nourishing system and an interest to preserve the constant existence of a threat in order to justify the state of emergency and hence the transfer of authority. See: Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

4. Slavoj Žižek distinguishes between belief as part of

System 77 – Civil Counter Reconnaissance
Eyes in the Skies / Democracy in the Streets

S-77CCR is a tactical urban counter-surveillance systems for ground controlled UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) and airborne drones to monitor public space. Contemporary war has shifted from the classical battlefield to low intensity conflicts in highly developed societies of capitalist democracies where security is under different stages of privatization and corporate control. To allow for equilibrium of skills in surveillance and a broad education of the public in control technologies, access to a technology for the people seems necessary. In respect to abuse of civil and human rights, defensive public intelligence is well advised to use advanced techniques of crime mapping and spatial representation of conflict. Self-protective tools of risk assessment in the hands of independent citizens are a prerequisite for confronting challenges of global risk environments and civil conflicts. Semiautomatic geographic information applications can analyze street deployment of hostile elements or containment units for civil society conflict analysis. Biometric surveillance methods for the security of the cultural and political active citizen allow the tagging of government representatives and business agents. The observation of police forces or riot control units can give a tactical advantage in mass demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience. The project is a counter response to the intense use of biometric surveillance technologies and UAVs which are gradually directed inward, into the urban public spaces of Western democracies following the end of the Cold War and the growing paranoia and fear after 9/11. The ability to control many aspects of civilian life and follow them in the name of freedom is a built-in paradox in a democratic regime, which we tend to accept automatically. The project offers a reversal to the technology and exploitation of the possibilities offered by the free market to equip groups of civilian resistance with the most advanced technologies to follow law enforcement groups.

The True Victory – Hagar Goren
Field work – 2nd phase of an ongoing project

Hagar Goren is conducting a research project exploring Israel's fertility policy. The project originated in Goren's desire to become a mother without starting a normative family, a desire which forced her to confront questions such as what is considered "natural," questions about social norms, the Zionist ethos of the country's settlement, and ethical questions about ethnic identity. The project explores the modus operandi of sperm banks, as the implementing branch, and the way in which they serve state policy. In what way does the sperm bank serve the demands of the woman? How are these banks supervised? What information is given to the donor, what information is given to the woman, and what remains unsaid? The State of Israel promotes family expansion incentives in the Jewish sector as part of its demographic war, while blurring the political dimension of this policy by using security and ethnic arguments. Goren's project asks the most basic questions about Israeli policy, via direct encounter with the people operating in the system: the employees, the applicant women, and the donors. Through a series of interviews and actions she tries to expose different facets of the Israeli fertility policy and introduce a new narrative whereby it may be read and construed. The work consists of research, information gathering and analysis. It includes direct action in the public sphere intended to raise questions about social and cultural norms of the Israeli public as pertaining to fertility, identity, ethnic blending, segregation, etc.

culture and fundamentalism:
 "...What is a 'cultural lifestyle' if not that every December in every house there is a Christmas tree - although none of us believes in Santa Claus? Perhaps, then, 'culture' is the name for all those things we practice without really believing in them, without 'taking them seriously.' Isn't this why we dismiss fundamentalist believers as 'barbarians,' as a threat to culture - they dare to take seriously their beliefs?" See: Slavoj Žižek, "Passion: Regular or Decaf?" In These Times, vol. 28, iss. 09, 27 Feb. 2004, http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/146/passion_regular_or_decaf/.

5. Ibid



 Babylon Poems
 (Translation, text, and sound works)
 Sala-Manca Group

Hebrew to Hebrew translation of ten poems from the 2006-2007 matriculation exam list for Israeli high school students. The poems were translated using Babylon automatic machine translation software, passing through 14 different languages (from Hebrew to German, German to Dutch, Dutch to Spanish, Spanish to French, French to Italian, Italian to Portuguese, Portuguese to Japanese, Japanese to Chinese, Chinese to Arabic, Arabic to Korean, Korean to Turkish, Turkish to Russian, Russian to Polish, Polish to English, and from English back to Hebrew). Poets: Haim Nachman Bialik, Nathan Alterman, Shaul Tchernichovsky, Uri Zvi Grinberg, Rachel, Dahlia Ravikovitch, Leah Goldberg, Natan Zach, David Avidan, Yehuda Amichai The poems were read by Ilana Zuckerman, sound and radio artist, founder and director of the Metula Poetry Festival

* Work from the project "The Right to Copy"

 Curator: Eyal Danon
 Assistant Curator: Maya Pasternak
 English Translation: Daria Kosovsky
 Arabic Translation: Faisal Sawalha
 Design: Guy Saggee - Shual Studio





The Israeli Center for Digital Art

Events / Lectures / Workshops

24 February 2007 / 20:00
Opening

6 March 2007 / 19:00

Opening of the Tissue Culture & Art Lab and project presentation. Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr will present the TC&A lab operating in the University of Western Australia, and launch the Victimless Leather project.

17 March 2007 / 11:00

Workshop: Tissue engineering for artists: Tissue Culture & Art - Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr

The workshop will explain how to set up a domestic lab for tissue culturing and engineering. Tissue culture manipulation and engineering represent a new field of artistic practice. These branches of bio-medical research have great influence on the perception of the body, the self, and on medical theory. Tissue engineering enables researchers to grow 3D living tissue in varying dimensions and forms. The intense workshop by Catts and Zurr will present artists and the general public with the basic principles of growing and engineering living tissues. In additions, they will review the history of various artistic projects pertaining to this field. The workshop is open to artists and others interested in tissue engineering, who do not

have professional training in the field.

22 March 2007 / 20:00

Presentation: Lennaart van Oldenborgh, The FBI Bug

Lennaart van Oldenborgh will present a preview of a film in development about the work and trial of Steve Kurtz, one of the founders of Critical Art Ensemble, which is internationally known for its work on the intersection of art and bio-technology. In May 2004, Kurtz was detained by the FBI on suspicion of bio-terrorism. In the same year, he was indicted on a technicality for Mail and Wire Fraud, an offense punishable by up to 20 years' prison. For two years, Kurtz's defense has tried in vain to get the case dismissed, although a date for the trial has yet to be set. In the meantime, Kurtz has managed to continue his work with Critical Art Ensemble, producing both a book and a film on "The Marching Plague", their take on bio-weapons and bio-defense. H+O Films (Lennaart van Oldenborgh and Adnan Hadzi) and their American collaborators (Rich Pell, Mike Bonanno and Andy Bichlbaum) have followed the Kurtz case from the moment he was allowed to re-enter his house after it was searched by a Joint Terrorism Task Force. The movie will show how the work of the Critical Art Ensemble aroused suspicions from an establishment which believes that any "amateur" working with bio-technology must be a potential terrorist, which believes that science must not be just regulated, but must be classified according to the perceived security requirements of the state. This is exactly what the work of Critical Art Ensemble agitates against; according to them, research and knowledge must be free to empower citizens to make up their own minds about the uses and desirability of bio-technology.

5 April 2007 / 20:00

Presentation: Marko Peljhan

Marko Peljhan is presenting the first independent satellite, with Projekt Atol, which is planning to construct and launch a constellation of two nano-satellites with store and forward communications and medium resolution multi-spectral remote sensing capability to service the Interpolar Transnational Art Science Constellation LADOMIR Antarctic and Makrolab mkVII Arctic base complexes. The project will be presented for the first time during the exhibition, "Free Radicals" and will encompass the legal research and analysis of the following treaties, needed to be studied for the first independent, open source based orbital system:

- Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water (1963)
- Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1967)
- Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1968)
- Agreement Relating to the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization INTELSAT (1971)
- Convention of International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (1972)
- Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1975)

Basic subsystems and systems design, together with the model of the Prozrachny Mir satellite bus will be presented at the project unveiling in April 2007. The planned launch of the constellation is in the 2009-2010 period.

6 April 2007 / 11:00

Workshop: Ariel Schlesinger
A Graffiti Printer for every Child!

The workshop teaches how to produce a graffiti printer from everyday consumer goods. It is open to youth and adults, intended to provide them with an opportunity for research, hands-on experience, and self expression. The workshop will provide the basic components to enable the production of a basic graffiti printer, and the participants will come out equipped with an operative printer that will enable them to disseminate their message and express themselves in any public place where they may be.

11 April 2007 / 20:00

Presentation: Oliver Ressler

Oliver Ressler is presenting the work, "Alternative Economics, Alternative Societies." The project focuses on diverse concepts and models for alternative economies and societies, which all share a rejection of the capitalist system of rule. At the start of the project, in 2003, interviews were carried out (for each concept. Interview partners include) with economists, political scientists, authors, and historians. From these interviews, a video was produced that forges the basis of the project. Ressler will present the work and speak about the role of the artist as one who offers alternative models and as one who can be an instrument in their consideration.

17 April 2007 / 20:00

Presentation: Hans Bernhard, Ubermorgen

Hans Bernhard of the Ubermorgen group will present the group's various projects and the legal issues arising from its activities. The projects presented in the exhibition, such as Vote Auction and Amazon Noir, balance on the thin line of legality, and have solicited reactions on the part of the US legal authorities.

Screening program during the exhibition

24 February - 3 March 2007

Film: The Yes Man

The film follows Andy and Mike (the Yes Men) from their beginnings with GWBush.com, and on to their tasteless parody of the WTO's website. Some visitors fail to notice that the site is a fake, and send Mike and Andy speaking invitations meant for the real WTO. The group uses pranks and trickery to operate in a society governed by mass media. The Yes Men may be dubbed a satire, a parody, an intervention and a blurring - all aimed at those who misuse their positions of power. Thus far they have impersonated public figures and famous institutions, including President Bush, the World

6 March - 10 March 2007

B.L.O. Nightly News

In a form of subversive media terrorism, Barbie Liberation Organization (B.L.O) operatives purchased talking Barbie and G.I. Joe dolls, both of which were programmed to speak crude cultural clichés. The dolls were then taken to the BLO headquarters where "corrective surgery" was performed: switching the dolls' voice boxes. The dolls were then placed back on the store shelves in a process of reverse shoplifting—"shopgiving." In the format of a nightly news program, this witty and satiric video documents the activities of the Barbie Liberation Organization, including the "corrective surgery" procedure and the "shopgiving" actions. The tape functions as witness and instruction manual on culture jamming—an interference strategy used by guerrilla art and media activists to expose and undermine the logic and domination of corporate-controlled media and capitalist culture.

13 March - 17 March 2007

Film: Czech Dream

It's a few minutes before 10 a.m. and there are more than 3000 people jostling on a remote parking lot. Many of them are clutching plastic bags in their hands; some of them are armed with trolley bags. Assistants are handing out plastic cups and the moderator on the illuminated stage urges the people to have a drink from the near-by water tankers. The "hyper-anthem" of CZECH DREAM rings out once again from the speakers: "Try to see as a child, many things will seem wild..." Suddenly the managers of the hypermarket rush out on the stage, greet their customers and briskly cut the glittering ribbon. The escort removes the metal barriers and the crowd starts moving. They still have 300 metres to reach the hypermarket. People start running... A moment later, the fastest of them are struck dumb: the hypermarket that they have reached is nothing but a huge film decoration... Documentary hyper-comedy CZECH DREAM is a feature film about a hypermarket that has never existed. CZECH DREAM documents the largest consumer hoax the Czech Republic has ever seen. Filip Remunda and Vit Klusak, two of Eastern Europe's most promising young documentary filmmakers, set out to explore the psychological and manipulative powers of consumerism by creating an ad campaign for something that didn't exist.

20 March - 24 March 2007

It's Not My Memory Of It: Three Recollected Documents

Julia Meltzer and David Thorne create video pieces addressing documentation and the impact of political violence. Their projects explore the use of documents, photographs, texts, objects, the body, and physical structures to reflect and generate the vision of the future. In addition they engage in the bureaucracy of clandestine organization and of memory. It's Not My Memory of It is a documentary about secrecy, memory, and documents. Mobilizing specific historical records as memories which flash up in moments of danger, the tape addresses the expansion and intensification of secrecy practices in the current climate of heightened security. A former CIA source recounts his disappearance through shredded classified documents that were painstakingly reassembled by radical fundamentalist students in

Iran in 1979. A CIA film -recorded in 1974 but unacknowledged until 1992 - documents the burial at sea of six Soviet sailors, in a ceremony which collapses Cold War antagonisms in a moment of death and honor. Images pertaining to a publicly acknowledged but top secret U.S. missile strike in Yemen in 2002 are the source of a concluding reflection on the role of documents in the constitution of the dynamic of knowing and not knowing. It's Not My Memory of It is conceived and produced by The Speculative Archive. The Archive works with existing collections of historical records to produce new documents. The Archive was founded by Meltzer and Thorne in 1999.

27 March - 31 March 2007

The Marching Plague

Filmed on location in Stornoway, Scotland, Critical Art Ensemble's film Marching Plague presents a powerful critique of UK-US bioweapons research and addresses the paranoia surrounding bioterrorism. It centres on the recreation of secret sea trials conducted by the UK government in the 1950s. The film's ultimate aim is to address and dispel some of the public's fear of "bioterrorism", which has been greatly exaggerated since 9/11. It tries to convey a more reasoned perspective on the level of risk to the public and the desirability of germ warfare weapons, than is usually presented in more "sensational" fiction or even in television docu-dramas. Bioweapons experts and artists, including Heath Bunting and Kayle Brandon, join Steve Kurtz, Steve Barnes and Lucia Sommer of Critical Art Ensemble to discuss bioterrorism, the culture of fear and artistic censorship.

3 April - 7 April 2007

Films by Yossi Atiya and Itamar Rose

Yossi and Itamar started working as an artistic pair during the settlers' struggle to prevent the disengagement. They went to the Gaza settlements where they satirically documented the battle. Their films combine documentary and satire, and they have been previously screened in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Following their interest in such a mode of creation and collaboration, they decided to drop out of the Sam Spiegel Film & Television School, work independently as an artistic duo, and develop the docu-satirical style. They work in tandem independently and are committed to low-budget production and continuous creation, free of the support of cinema schools and art encouragement funds.

10 April - 14 April 2007

Film: Border Crossing Services

The European Union member states' restrictive immigration regulations mean that there is almost no chance to legally migrate to the EU and reside in a member state. For those who want to enter, making use of border crossing services is often the only possibility for penetrating "Fortress Europe." The goal of the project "Border Crossing Services" ("Dienstleistung: Fluchthilfe") is to redefine and highlight the positive aspects of terms such as "smuggler" or "trafficker" which have been given a negative connotation through the dominant medial discourse. Based on conversations carried out in Germany and Austria with immigrants and

persons involved in the political left, the basic theme was separated into four sections for analysis and critique: "Who is allowed to migrate?," "Celebrating and excluding," "About border crossing services" and "Against racism" - all confronting the hegemonic model for representation of "border crossing services" and migration.

17 April - 21 April 2007

Film: The Pie's the Limit

A video featuring the Biotic Baking Brigade and the Global Pastry Uprising and a cornucopia of political pie-throwings. The movie has interviews with underground pie-tossers, and a corporate media analysis of their actions. Most delicious of all, of course, is the video footage of San Francisco's Mayor Willie Brown, Robert Shapiro (CEO of Monsanto), economist Milton Friedman, Kenneth Derr (CEO of Chevron), Renato Ruggiero (Chief of the World Trade Organization) and Bill Gates getting pied in the face! Easily the funniest political video you'll ever seen.

24 April - 28 April 2007

Film: Sonic Outlaws

The film is about what happened when Californian band, Negativland, used samples from a U2 song and released the single in 1991, as a joke. U2's label, Island Records, charged Negativland with copyright and trademark infringement for the appropriation of the letter U and the number 2, even though U2 had in turn borrowed its name from the Central Intelligence Agency. Sonic Outlaws covers some of the same territory while also expanding upon the ideas behind Negativland's guerilla recording tactics. Guerilla is indeed the word, since these and other appropriation artists see themselves as engaged in real warfare, declared by the commercial airwaves, and entertainment industry.

Director/Producer: Craig Baldwin



The Israeli Center for Digital Art / Free Radicals / Events + Lectures + Workshops

