



WE
ARE
THE
BOTS

RebelLog

WE ARE THE BOTS



***Paradigm Shift:
The Concept
of Live Performing Arts
and
its
Online
Transmission***

By RebelLog (Gilda Rebello)

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www.wearethebots.net

The whole project is online at wearethebots.net. You will find here only the compilation of essays.



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FOOTNOTES

no specific academic system: ⊕ Author's name and surname (if available) ⊕ Oeuvre / Link ⊕ Day and/or Month/Year ⊕ No hyperlinks here.⊕
Thank you to the authors! *Bots - the umbrella term for this research = algorithms and AI

BARRIER-FREE

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SUMMARY

WE ARE THE BOTS - A Paradigm Shift: The Concept of Live Performing Arts and its Online Transmission

How do we want to deal with Bots*, as in Algorithms and Artificial Intelligence?

(* The term “Bots” is used here as an umbrella word for Algorithms and AI)

This research is about reflecting on how to achieve a non-hierarchical organic/non-organic cooperation between Bots* and people making Art...one day.

Due to the 2020 Pandemic Crisis, the majority of us were forced to migrate to the virtual space, and a flow of quick decisions was compulsorily required. The intention here is to review and reflect about the environment in which these decisions were made and the many questions that were raised, for example about the accelerated growth in the use of mainstream media without time to reflect on cause and consequence. We are being “digitalized” bit by bit as if this were a miracle solution to all our problems. Online or not to be? Is it only a binary choice? The key points are: Internet ethics, digital sustainability, the digitalization of works/work in the field of performing arts and the human body interfacing with other non-organic bodies. One eco system influencing the other. A radical paradigm-shift. A new emerging social reality.

This research is an attempt to analyze these challenges without fearing self-criticism and with the use of some necessary utopic content exposed in 4 Essays, 1 short Intermezzo - expressing the views of this author, some video interviews with specialists and

colleagues expressing their views, and a Poetry Interface session where we can collaborate online, mixing up meanings and perceptions. The presentation online is designed to be text-based, intentionally simple, and free of cookies and trackers, meaning: “no surveillance”.

Biocapitalism and the digital mode of production work side by side. Therefore, we must / should be able to critically articulate our position and be aware of its importance for working conditions.

The Bots* learn from, with, and in spite of us. Inspired by the old Arabic wisdom phrase "We are what we eat" - I believe this applies also to the Bots*, as they are what we feed them. They are a collection of some of our data, and reflect the values of their creators.

This nonacademic research makes a plea: to keep the online interaction with each other thru self-determination. So, maybe it's time for us to accurately inform ourselves about some of the tools and rooms that many of us are using on a daily basis. The aim is not to develop an empirical study or systematic research, but to exchange experiences, opinions / theses, and practical tips that can possibly support a more conscious use of online/digital technologies. The target audience is primarily artists, art educators, and their target groups.

This research was made possible with the support of a DIS-Tanz grant by Dachverband Tanz, (Funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media as part of Neustart Kultur - The Corona Relief Funds) and the most valuable collaboration of some concerned minds. For this, my immense gratitude.

Featured interview partners (Videos online): **Christine Mayerhofer** - digital artist, creative producer and system developer, **Daisy Kidd** - Project Lead for the Youth and Technology project at Tactical Tech, NGO that investigates the evolving impact of technology on society, **Laura Schelenz** - interdisciplinary researcher with a focus on ethical and diversity-aware technology, **Marco Donnarumma** - performance / new media artist and scholar, **Naoto Hieda** - multidisciplinary artist and researcher, live coding performer, **Peter Weissenburger** - journalist und autor, editor for Society and Media sections at Taz Newspaper, **Dr. Philipp Schulte** - theater theorist and scholar, **Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Wolf Singer** - Neurophysiologist and brain researcher.

And small interviews with several colleagues.

O - INTRODUCTION

Reading time 28 / 33 Min.

This is a research project with poetic license.

It is not an empirical or systematic study.

This is a not-for-sale investigation, displayed in an open digital environment with no cookies, and Creative Commons licensing of almost all the content.

These essays display the results of four months of work; this is not much, but for all I know this research could become obsolete even before I publish it, which is the reason I have concentrated in very recent sources for most of it. Shifts are happening faster these days, it seems. Just today (15th of December 2020), some pertinent news regarding this research have reached me: 1) From tomorrow on - full lockdown, again; 2) Online media/social media is being further portrayed as a drug, as the potential drug of the future, affecting young people in particular¹ 3) Europe wishes to regulate the Big Data Co.²

We are yet to understand exactly what is meant by "regulate"- democratization and resource fairness? Or mainly market guidelines?

You will need some time to visit this page and read it all, but navigate as you will and choose what sparks your interest. Each part of the research and the interviews (online) are independent from one another, although together they form an entirety. The target audience is mainly Art creators/educators and their target groups, but there are many others who could also enjoy it.

¹ Drogenaffinitätsstudie 2019 der Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung (BZgA)

² Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Markets Act (DMA)

As stated above, no cookies here.³ But what are cookies again? A cookie used to be a small kind of cake. Now, mostly, cookies are supposed to sweeten up our internet experience while storing our online surfing habits. No sweet cookies here, but rather the bitterness of some words and deductions.

The aim here is to expose the challenges around the theme, to exchange experiences, opinions, theses and anti-theses as well as practical tips. All of the reference sources are displayed, but not necessarily using any accurate academic system. Around 16.000 words - a small research length + poetic interfacing, with no word counting. On the binary option: read it or breath it.

Ultimate intention: to leave diverse traces in the artistic/artificial neural network, which might help us to find a more mindful way of dealing with online/digital technologies.

The names of very famous companies and brands are intentionally disguised in the text, with " . " (dots) instead of vowels. For example: G..gle .

MAIN QUESTIONS

How do we want to deal with Bots*?

(* the term is used here as an umbrella word for Algorithms and AI)

How should Bots* deal with us?

Notice the options used for the verbs - "want" and "should". Is this a non-biased choice? The complement to both questions is: from now on, with regard to 2021, after radical changes in our social life, since we have already been dealing with Bots* (and vice versa) for quite some time.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ESSAYS

³ Except for the one that every page/web address must have.

Exploring some of the relevant issues around online digitalization/digital transformation relating to live Performing Art (especially Dance/Music) and its mediation. The first Essay is actually, this INTRODUCTION. In the second Essay - INTERNET ETHICS & TECHNOLOGIES - what are the concerns regarding individual privacy online and supporting monopolies. Third essay- BODY ONLINE - what is the role of the human body as an online interface to other bodies. The fourth essay - ENCODE DECODE - is a mini-one, rather a short intermezzo: what are the possibilities for online and digital expansion of performing arts. The fifth essay - CONCLUSION & AFTERWORD exposes the conclusion.

The "POETIC INTERFACE" session - is where you can make a poetic log entrance, complete a sentence, and /or add phrases. Die Zusammenarbeit ist nur online möglich. In diesem eBook nur meine Beiträge.

TERMINOLOGY

Ontologically speaking, we are yet to agree on the classification of some concepts and terminologies, for example: "digital" and "online". These two terms have been used interchangeably, but they are actually quite distinct. There is no "online" without the "digital", but for a long time there has already been "digital" without "online". Therefore, according to a brief and broad definition used by some media theorists, digital culture is what we create with our digits, as in fingers and numbers. And this is no short list, so there are variations on the significance of these terms, depending on the chosen field. The "Digital Transformation" is already happening, and nomenclature is trying to catch up with it.

For example, while reading the words of Art historian Jonathan Sterne about the term "analog", it became all so clear to me how revealing language can be beyond its main function, and how much power it entails. Sterne wonders that by now everything that is not "digital" is called "analog", but how could nature for example be called "analog"? The digital boom seems to be flattening the variety of terms and conceptions in favor of digital technologies. He argues that this is reached by establishing a point of comparison,

"whether historical, ontological, aesthetic, institutional, or in some other dimension", eventually it results in "the digital" as hyperbole on one side, and everything else on the other. ⁴

Analog is an abbreviation of "analogue" in French, meaning: "a thing that has characteristics in common with another thing", descending from the Greek, Latin word "analogy" which means similarity. Clapping for example is real, a drum set is... not analog; a synthesizer is analog by trying to imitate a piano through the use of electronic technology and so are vinyl recordings, then came digital CDs and subsequent forms like Mp3 digital data.

The point here is that language is part of us, living vocabulary cells which keep transforming to re-form the new social body of signs from one generation to the next.

So, some terminology will be detailed here, some not. For the sake of time and poetry.

Some fundamental terms or notions to be elucidated are:

THE BOTS*

Algorithms and AI - An "algorithm" used to be something else in old Baghdad, but is now also a term for computer code - a set of instructions for software or social media, a preset, a coded recipe that is executed when it encounters a trigger. For example, "Y.uTxbe's algorithm" for recommending videos to you, based on the information that you have "provided" through previous searches.

"AI" covers a large variety of specializations and subdivisions. Machine Learning or Deep Learning for example is what is mostly identified as artificial "intelligence", where a group of Algorithms can write code that can write itself and create new Algorithms in

⁴ Ben Peters - "Digital Keywords - a Vocabulary of Information Society and Culture" - 2016

response to learned inputs. This imitates our own biological neural network, creating artificial neural networks with the ability to learn, i.e. changing, adapting and growing based on new data. This is described as "intelligence" and as autonomous capabilities, although some experts refer to it rather as very complex high automatization of machines. One example: Language/speech recognition.⁵

* Social Quantification Sector / Data extraction / Big Data: Meaning *"the industry sector dedicated to the growth of the infrastructure required for the extraction of profit from human life through data."* ⁶This will be exposed further in the section Internet Ethics and Technologies.

HOW DO WE WANT TO DEAL WITH BOTS*?

To understand the question: Lately, my most proficient interfacing with Bots* has been with D.ep L. translator software. D.epL defines itself as AI assistance for language, training Artificial Intelligence to understand and translate text. No endorsement intended, and as a matter of fact I would like to express some concern for all the jobs lost here, but the software is amazing and it really helps me. The improvement in accuracy and speed in recent years has been astonishing, however...

My dear D.epL "Soft" - ware,

I feel for you, asking me if I want to keep the translation for "Soul" in German always as "Seele" instead of "Geist". I feel for you deeply. The answer is, and has been the same for as long as history exists: - I don't know - no one knows exactly.

I hope I can be more helpful in the future

Yours(?)

Hum...

⁵ The definitions were gathered from a series of sources including: The Aspen Institute, Wikipedia. com, & Webster's Dictionary. Dr. Mir Emad Mousavi, etc.

⁶ Nick Couldry and Ulises A. Mejias - "The Costs of Connection- How Data Is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating It for Capitalism - 2020)

A rather pathetic interfacing of sorts - the Deep Learning Bot* searching for an exactitude about something that has actually never ever been answered. As I switch off the option and D.epL stops asking, I ask myself what could be the lesson here?

a) Will it discard me as a not-knowing subject/object?

b) Will it conclude something according to its high automatization regarding how to classify my interaction. Quantifying the percentage of my previous choices, and also how much time it took me to decide?

c) Is there a "C" option?

I wish I knew more about it.

The subjectivity of my "#interpretranslations" about the word "soul" might be pushed aside due to imprecision and bias. Subjectivity is imbedded in cultural interpretation, mood, perceptions, skills and momentary conditions, depending on how much you have eaten and slept and lived. It is all a frenetic quantum physic dance of elements influencing each other in a zepto-second - the new world record in short time measurement registered here in Frankfurt, Germany in October 2020. A zepto-second is a trillionth of a billionth of a second: 0.000 000 000 000 000 000 001. ⁷ This unit of measurement is beyond our perception, but it suits viruses and Bots*, which are the reason for this research.

"On the other hand, nothing proves that man is the dominant creature on earth. Perhaps the viruses, and we are only material, a kind of pub for the viruses." Heiner Müller ⁸

THE NETX

⁷ Zepto-Sekunden: Neuer Weltrekord in Kurzzeit-Messung - https://www.muk.uni-frankfurt.de/93203632/Zepto_Sekunden__Neuer_Weltrekord_in_Kurzzeit_Messung - October 2020

⁸ Heiner Müller - "Da trinke ich lieber Benzin zum Frühstück" - 1980 - unauthorized translation

Contrary to the wishes of its inventor, Tim Berners-Lee, the WWW is today dominated by a handful of quasi-monopolists who are forcing their agendas on us, and injustice, division, competition is therefore being carefully choreographed. But then again, from the beginning on the Internet was never for the common good - its predecessors were the mainframe computers of elite universities and research institutions, as well as some military projects. Commercialization began with the opening of the Internet to the general public in 1989.⁹

In this research there are many questions about the Net... online or not to be?

HOW SHOULD BOTS* DEAL WITH US?

We cannot talk about online Bots* without talking about the four main omnipresent monopolists comprising the GAFA group - G...gle, Am.z.n, F.ceb.ck and Ap.e. Their commodities are airborne, like viruses. Hard WARE, soft WARE, a whole lot of WARE production designed to increase consumption. And thereby poisoning our environments - the real and the virtual. With the Corona pandemic, the privileged citizens of the world found a second house to pollute. No more plastic straws ... instead the production of tools and gadgets to surveil society. From smart watches and assistant slaves with female names to new smart fridges, they are all fundamentally designed to collect data about our behavior. Which song we hear and which milk we should buy. So, the majority of Bots* are already dealing with us, and not very ethically since they reflect the values of their creators.

- 1) We are often being surveilled through our interactions with online media technology.
- 2) Interacting with the Internet and moving business online is not the solution for our climate problems.

These are new facts. Only two of them. Facts that are well established by some of our interviewees here, or by highly praised books or institutions such as "*The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*" by Shoshana Zuboff, or "*The Costs of Connection: How Data is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating it for Capitalism*" by Nick Couldry and

⁹ Wie WWW-Erfinder Tim Berners-Lee ein neues, besseres Internet plant - <https://t3n.de/news/solid-www-erfinder-tim-955024/Solid/> - 20.02.2018 -unauthorized translation

Ulises A. Mejias, the work of Tactical Tech, Chaos Computer Club and Netropolitik.org, Digital Courage Ev, Bits and Bäume, just to name a few.

We are living in a world where technology is affecting every living thing. Technology is even capable of separating us for the sake of "connection".

In this "post-beginning of the 2020 pandemic" we are delegating more to the Bots* and they are "learning" from our interactions. The more we stare at ourselves on screens, the more our skills and what is asked of us will change. It is mathematics.

The definition of Performing Arts might change radically: To an expansion or diminishing of our abilities? To different competences. Perhaps Live Art, Dance, Music, Digital Art - all of it will find new ways to expand itself. It will look after its own future, expand beyond the gadgets we use, beyond relevance, beyond the system and hopefully, from my part, beyond commodification.

Models of experience that have been developed in artistic practice are often reduced to commodities, for example the TikTok app and all its "dancers". Here, user data is processed by Algorithms, and cyber-bullying of people with disabilities and political censorship are common.¹⁰ Bio-capitalism and digital production methods working side by side. Therefore, we must/should be able to articulate our position critically, and be aware of the impact of the development of the Bots*. After all, how we deal with Bots* is how they deal with us.

EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE

Paulo Freire, pedagogue and author once wrote: *"To know is the task of subjects, not objects. And it is as subject and only as subject that one can really have knowledge. There is no knowing more or knowing less. There are different knowledges."*¹¹

¹⁰ Sam Biddle, Paulo Victor Ribeiro, Tatiana Dias - "Invisible Censorship - TikTok Told Moderators to Suppress Posts by "Ugly" People and the Poor to Attract New Users" - <https://theintercept.com/2020/03/16/tiktok-app-moderators-users-discrimination> - March 16 2020

¹¹ Paulo Freire - "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" - 1968

Take embodied knowledge for example - essentially training-based knowledge (e.g., how to drive a car, how to dance) that cannot be completely described using words, but consists of dispositions for integrative perceptions, actions and reactions achieved by the body.¹²

Automated driving is already on the horizon. The question is: what for?

So, what have we been learning lately from our interactions with the Bots*?

How has embodied knowledge, its perception and consequently its transmission online developed or changed in recent times? These are questions that will be further explored in the second part of the research - Body Online.

Almost all modern media theorists, from Marshall McLuhan to Paul Virilio, describe technology as an extension of the senses and organs. Are we extending our capabilities in these recent online exchanges with technology?

THE COLLECTION OF OUR BEHAVIORAL DATA

The Bots* learn from, with, and in spite of us.

Inspired by the old Arabic wisdom phrase "We are what we eat" - I believe this applies also to the Bots*, as they are what we feed them. They are a collection of some of our data.

The Bots* reflect the values of their creators, which so far are predominantly white male supremacy dominated values, due to the inequality of accessibility to the "digital" from the beginning on. How can programming address matters of diversity, ethics and inclusivity? Do we want to reproduce online the views of the few privileged ones with their old, familiar prejudices and stereotypes?

¹² Thomas Fuchs - "Embodied Knowledge-Embodied Memory" - https://www.klinikum.uni-heidelberg.de/fileadmin/zpm/psychatrie/fuchs/Embodied_Knowledge_-_Embodied_Memory.pdf -2016

In a possible dystopian scenery - do we want to be "colonized" by highly programmed Bots* that regard us as vulnerable and eventually disposable?

AFFECT_X

It is difficult these days to break away from the conditions imposed on us by for example hyperbolic connectivity, because we are affectively attached to it, and not just economically or cognitively. We are "interfaces" to our beloved gadgets and their enticing effects. A human body networking with other bodies, but these connections are accompanied by an equally affective downside, with forms of melancholy, frustration, loneliness, depression or alternately strong feelings of being overwhelmed ¹³ e.g. FOMO - Fear Of Missing Out, which is a real disorder that permeates social relationships.

Our behavior and passions are being orchestrated and collected. This phrase is not meant to be poetic. *"Any aspect of a choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way"*¹⁴ is accomplished in a procedure known as "nudging", as defined by behavioral economists Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein in the book "The Age of Surveillance Capitalism" - a very real actuation of software engineering. What is meant by the term "choice architecture" are situations designed to focus attention and influence actions in the real world, often in real time. Our behavior is being conditioned by different approaches and techniques - *"We are learning how to write the music and then we let the music make them dance"* ¹⁵ - a declaration by a software designer in the same book, and a rather sad use of Music and Dance as conceptions. Our emotions are being induced...

ENVY OR SOCIAL JUSTICE?

¹³ Rainer Mühlhoff, Anja Breljak, Jan Slaby - "Affekt Macht Netz-Auf dem Weg zu einer Sozialtheorie der Digitalen Gesellschaft" - Negri und wir - Jan Slaby -2019 -unauthorized Translation

¹⁴ Shoshana Zuboff - " The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: Der Kampf um eine menschliche Zukunft an der neuen Grenze der Macht" - 2019

¹⁵ Idem.

Globalization also means comparability of life situations.¹⁶ Networked behavior influences the way in which we perceive others and ourselves. There is so much comparison displayed in the virtual environment. We unavoidably compare ourselves with others, with their achievements, their beauty, their wealth,¹⁷ their number of followers and likes. Ongoing. When I say we, I refer to the significant number of social media users today. According to several sources, by 2021 there could be more than 4 billion users. We are purposely being exposed to extreme emotional content, and envy is also being artificially generated. In a way, this system wants us to become envious because it parades influencers as models of behavior and produces inequalities and injustices by the minute (or zeptosecond).

Anyhow, what to do with these emotions is always the decisive factor. Envy for example is systematically fed and then criticized, and it works well because essentially, we are all ashamed of our feelings of envy. In public we suppress these feelings, but inside the net it grows.

Another "play" on envy being also transferred to the online territory - "*Claims for social justice are just draped envy*";¹⁸ a common neo-liberal argument. But accepting injustice and calling the ones who oppose it - envious, is far too sarcastic. If I were to ask: "in what universe is automated driving more important than saving lives in the Mediterranean Sea", some real people and some Bots* might say that I am just envious of those who can afford "it". Whether or not this is envy, is not a relevant matter at this time. And shifting focus is precisely what I am demonstrating here - that is how emotion takes the focus off real issues. The overall relevant issue in our society is that inequality is out of control,¹⁹ and these words precisely mean what they mean. Right now, what is really bizarre is to focus on other matters. This research for example.

HOWEVER, ...

¹⁶ Karl-Heinz Nusser - "Ideengeschichte Vom Neid der Götter eines Phänomens zum globalen Neid" - <https://www.kas.de/de/web/die-politische-meinung> - Januar 2006

¹⁷ Martin Hartmann - "Zur Verteidigung des Neids" - 2020

¹⁸ Friedrich August von Hayek - "Verfassung der Freiheit" -1960

¹⁹ "Oxfam report 2020" - <https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/economic-inequality>

...not if this research stimulates questions about our online activities, for the sake of reflection and to exercise citizenship.

ASK YOURSELF...

...these questions when you post something online: Apart from me, who will benefit from it? What am I endorsing here? Perhaps use Signal instead of Wh.tz up app, Mastodon instead of Faceb.ok? How much energy consumption is involved here - from earth's resources and from you, as one and the same? Why is mainstream media so validated?

I hear a lot of: *"One should develop social media skills"*, but the question here is why? For whom? It may have started as a nice idea, but by now.... in mainstream platforms even if you see the post you shared in your newsfeed, you don't know who else will get to see it. You can share it but you can not distribute it. The platforms "drive" you to pay for a larger distribution (ads) and play by their rules. You can buy "likes". Everyone can buy a "thumbs up" or a "smile". Algorithms simulating affection... There are alternative platforms though.

On a personal note I have no intention of displaying pedantic political correctness here. I make electronic music and before F.cebo.k I was already in MySp.ce. Meanwhile I have more profiles than I can remember...but it is about time to question oneself.

FIND YOUR FEET

If Art works only for the sake of the market/online market, what really differentiates Art then? Terms such as "creative economy" or "creative business" are being used in ads from Y.uT.be to describe artists...²⁰

Lately I have the feeling that we resemble consumable products in a virtual scrollable shop window. Tiny windows on smart phones, and we are far too cheap.

²⁰ "Die Zeit" Newspaper 23.12.2020

"To work today is to be asked, more and more, to do without thinking, to feel without emotion, to move without friction, to adapt without question, to translate without pause, to desire without purpose, to connect without interruption." Stefano Harney & Fred Moten ²¹

The majority of the privileged ones, like myself, are trying to adapt to the comic strip story style from the z.oom boom: the distance, the masks, the filming of performances, the filming of classes, all for the common good and keep on working creatively.

The rewarding aspect of this research has been to see how many are engaged in reflecting and acting on these matters - theory and praxis. Some people who I invited had to refuse, some came to dance, and I am extremely grateful to all.

We need to be aware of the alternatives to the main"stream" when interfacing online. Cross the smaller rivers...There are decentralized open-source options and tools for interacting online: there are other rooms, other spaces and other settings. This is only the beginning, as it always can be. That is why I write all of this in the introduction - to spark your curiosity is my task.

At the beginning of this research I felt rather incapacitated, disempowered and ashamed to ask about everything I didn't know in this new dimension of all the organic and non-organic bodies online. I was feeling overwhelmed. I was feeling nostalgic about the days of concerts and dancing together in the same frame of time and space; I thought I might be having one of the worst generational conflict crises ever. Crashing my conceptions and accumulated knowledge, and having to make space for new learning. At the end, still overwhelmed, I feel thankful and encouraged to display this research.

Transitions are so complex for those who know how "things" used to be...

"Essay" means a try-out, a rehearsal. This one was the warm up. Find your feet and off we go.

²¹ Stefano Harney, und Fred Moten - *"The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study"* - 2013



INTERNET ETHICS & TECHNOLOGIES

1

Reading time: 26 / 31 Min.

LIVING ONLINE

"You'll probably spend more than 100 days online this year". On average, 7 hours a day.

In January of 2020, the "Data Portal Report" (website) ²²made this "prophecy" based on past reports. Meanwhile, we all know how it went in 2020. Many of us probably spent more than 100 days online. Perhaps unwillingly. Often unaware of the terms and conditions applying to some online tools. Perhaps handing over agency to a non-human "actor" and delegating tasks to the computer, primarily through our digits. "Digital Culture" some might call it. This "online living" can be very convenient as much as enjoyable, but it also creates space for technologies of surveillance, control and normative strategies.

We are more than 4.5 billion active internet users, equivalent to nearly 60% of the global population, as reported in January 2020. ²³ In 2019, the philosopher and political scientist Achille Mbembe pointed out in his article "Deglobalization" ²⁴ that this rapidly changing and ubiquitous virtual world brings new settings related to the distribution of power. On top of that, he states that the virtual "sphere" is also challenged by the tangible real world of our bodies and geographical distances.

As much as Digitization and Digitalization and later on Digital Transformation have been sold as "the" solution for many of our problems (and I myself particularly enjoy having a computer full of apps and tabs), the constant online presence that the actual Digital Transformation brings is more than challenging for us all, especially artists/educators. It entails a gigantic paradigm shift for the Live Performing Arts. But how much do we really know about these online/digital tools and virtual environments that are controlled mainly by Big Data corporations? Are they working for the common welfare of society as a whole? Or it is just about the business?

²² <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-global-digital-overview> - 2020

²³ Partners: "We Are Social"; "DataReportal"; "Hootsuite" - <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-global-digital-overview> - 2020

²⁴ Achille Mbembe - "Deglobalization" - Eurozine 18.02.2019

THE 3 VS - VENI, VIDI, VICI

"I came; I saw; I conquered"? No, not these ones...similar intention though. In our age the 3 Vs stand for: Volume, Velocity und Variety. This is what Big Tech/Big Data corporations have to offer with their patented Algorithms and AI. These tools have the ability to objectively analyze huge amounts of data within the shortest frame of time. The programming of these Algorithms, (i.e. what they will predict or manage) is initially defined by those who design them. To see the world through algorithmic glasses means to see what the Algorithms of the "X" platform wants us to see. Their analysis of our collective personal information is becoming omnipresent, and it deals with information and its distribution in a way that we can't possibly keep up with.

"Well, you can take amphetamines to run faster, but you cannot catch up with the speed of cyberspace. " says the philosopher Franco Berardi. ²⁵ We will have to try, I guess.

ETHICS RELOADED

Shouldn't we know more about the consequences of what we share online?

In order to understand some of the decisions that we were forced to make due to the pandemic, (e.g. moving performances and classes to virtual rooms within the space of a few days), it is necessary to tackle the notion of Ethics within Algorithms and AI - the Bots*, my umbrella word for this research.

But what is (are) Internet/digital Ethics? Here, the word 'Ethics' is not to be interpreted simply as the friction between right and wrong decisions, but it goes beyond these binary patterns to make us understand and justify the choices we make amidst our use of Internet technology.

²⁵ Anna Stiede - Interview with Franco Berardi - „Unser Hirn leidet “ - Freitag .de - Ausgabe 05/2018 - unauthorized translation

In this research that specially focuses on the Performing Arts and its transmission, what are the opportunities, the risks, the challenges and the beauty of "welcoming" online digitalization into our practice? *"Therefore, we all need platforms that we trust to keep communications and data private"* says Internet researcher Laura Schelenz. (Interview online)

In Europe, as a reference, a great shift in this was due to GDPR - the General Data Protection Regulation from 2018, created in order to give Data Subjects such as ourselves more control over our personal data with key clauses such as the right to access our data, delete it, and most importantly the right to be informed about how data is stored and used. For example:

THE "COOKIE LAW"

We are informed about the services that are being used within our browser, but the list of cookies we are now fed when visiting a new site is becoming truly dubious. Visit researchgate for example (if you've never accepted their cookies before in your browser) and you will see a near un-scrollable list of cookies and tracking tools. Many of us end up accepting all of these cookies, instead of only the essential ones or none at all. The juridical complexity of it all makes even experienced specialists shake their heads in doubt. Transparency looks different. Anyway, since internet technology is affecting our lives in an unprecedented way, there is no way out. We must all achieve some algorithmic literacy, and definitely take care of our rights in a more engaging way as many of the interviewees also defend (online).

BAD, GOOD OR NEUTRAL?

Online/digital technology is not here to be interpreted as good or bad or even less ...neutral, as defined in the first "Kranzberg's Law," which describes the function of technology in society. The second clause of the first law states that *"technology can propagate disparate outcomes"*.²⁶

²⁶ Melvin Kranzberg - "Technology and History: Kranzberg's Laws," Technology and Culture - 1986

Therefore, when combined, the two clauses suggest that machines and programs are simply as impartial as the humans who create them. There are many problems related to data collection and how to counteract the assimilation of our personal data into the capitalist production of commodities. By the way, shouldn't the benefits of all technologies be felt by all of us? As Donna Haraway wrote some time ago „*Technology is not neutral. We're inside of what we make, and it's inside of us. We're living in a world of connections – and it matters which ones get made and unmade.* “ ²⁷

As we were trying to come to terms with the pandemic in 2020/21, we saw how our sleeping rooms became our broadcast rooms. Even if remote working & studying saves the costs of the real space, we pay the costs of the virtual room....and we pay a lot! Mainstream online companies are being portrayed as salvation, as extension tools for our work, and slowly but surely the machines are absorbing part of our labor. This is not a conjecture of a dystopian scenario, it is happening. These mainstream companies are the norm. Aral Balkan, cyborg activist and developer wrote: "*The mainstream of technology today is a toxic spillover of American laissez-faire capitalism that threatens to engulf the whole planet.*"²⁸

THE EVER-UNREAD TERMS & CONDITIONS

In most "contracts" with mainstream online platforms, we click to accept the terms and conditions believing that this will make our lives easier and more convenient. We accept all of the conditions and slowly that bad taste in the mouth when we "sign" something without reading it, seems to disappear. We did this with our energy delivery, water services and so on. We accept their terms, where we are their clients. However, in the online contracts our position/status is defined by law not as a client but as a Data User Subject (e.g. "Data Subject refers to any individual who is using our Service and whose Personal Data are processed as a consequence of using our Service..."). In these contracts, the user is actually the product. Researcher Laura Schelenz (interview online) remind us that the service is not really for free, when you are paying it with your data.

²⁷ Donna Haraway - "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* - 1991

²⁸ Aral Balkan - Kulturstiftung des Bundes - September 2019

If you want to find out how much data can be actually gathered just by your smartphone - watch this video on Vimeo - "The Life of Balthazar Glättli Under Surveillance" by Open Data City.

THE DIGITAL TRACES & TRAILS

Through our computer, mobile phone, and other digital devices, we leave behind hundreds of digital traces (also known as data traces) every day: bits of information that are collected and stored. Every "move" we make - literally - every choreography, every song, all of the metadata that we share becomes data information - data flows directly into a few server farms owned mainly by out-of-proportion digital giants such as the GAFA group (Go..og. /Amaz. / Fac.eb..k/ App.e). What is being farmed there is us, Aral Balkan reminds us.²⁹

They are the farmers, and the real clients are the companies trying to convince you to buy things you probably don't even need though a procedure known as "nudging". We consume social media for our own purposes and social media companies consume us for their. These monopolists are becoming quasi-state actors that set rules of social conduct. The pressure to regulate them more democratically is growing, at least in Europe. And it's about time.

5 simple steps to take more control over your data.

<https://myshadow.org/increase-your-privacy>

+ ALTERNATIVE tools and platforms, email, chat apps, maps, search

Me and My Shadow by Tactical Technology Collective is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

SHAPING BEHAVIOR + 2 VERY RECENT BOOKS ABOUT IT

²⁹ Aral Balkan - See11 Conference - <https://2017.ind.ie/services/talks/> - April 2016

In her 2019 book *"The Age of Surveillance Capitalism"*, Shoshana Zuboff, social psychologist and philosopher writes: *"Under surveillance capitalism, (...) machine processes replace human relationships so that certainty can replace trust. This new assembly relies upon a vast digital apparatus, world historical concentrations of advanced computational knowledge and skill, besides immense wealth."* Zuboff states that the goal of a few power holders is to keep surveillance capitalism alive with omnipresent and pervasive intervention and control.³⁰

"Know thyself", the first maxim of the Oracle of Delphi, seems to be obsolete now - the Google Algorithms know us better", writes the psychiatrist and philosopher Thomas Fuchs in his book *"Defence of Humanity - Fundamental Questions of an Embodied Anthropology"* from 2020. He also argues that we are becoming a product of data.³¹

PREDATORY INTERFACE_"I"

We are the *INTERFACE_I*... from the I to the A to the I, all online. Along the way, consuming an enormous amount of energy as well...how else?

The carbon footprint of our digital appliances, internet usage and the systems that maintain them is already estimated to be around 3.7% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Comparable to the volume generated by the aviation industry worldwide, according to Mike Hazas, a researcher at the University of Lancaster.³²

Ailton Krenak, indigenous leader and historian says: *"When I do my check, I'll find out that I've left waste, garbage, that I've produced things that I'm not able to handle their final destination. And every culture that leaves traces is unsustainable."* He adds:

³⁰ Shoshana Zuboff - *The Age of Surveillance : - The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* - 2019

³¹ Thomas Fuchs - *"Verteidigung des Menschen - Grundfragen einer verkörperten Anthropologie"* - unauthorized translation

³² Sarah Griffiths - *"Why your internet habits are not as clean as you think"* - <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200305-why-your-internet-habits-are-not-as-clean-as-you-think>. 06.03.2020

*"This financial capitalism no longer needs the materiality of things, it can turn everything into a financial fantasy and pretend that the world is active, (...) instead of us imagining worlds, we just consume the world."*³³

NETWORK POLITICS

Maja Göpel, political economist and transformation researcher, says: *"For some reason, more digital is good per se. This must be stopped. Some benefit more, others less, some digitise, others are digitised. This must be understood and made comprehensible as a social and political process."*³⁴

Göpel states that digitalization is a dynamo of multiplication and consumption, the technological innovation agenda leaves out social and environmental issues.

"Economic inequality is out of control. (...)The richest 1% of the world have more than twice as much wealth as 6.9 billion people." These are the opening words of the Oxfam briefing paper from January of 2020.³⁵

So, for whom are we "working" when talking about "Digital Transformation"? Bio-capitalism and network politics working side by side for profit. The technology that serves these purposes is often deceptively simple and friendly in its operational mode. And on top of that, the very seductive apps, working through Algorithms and AI to keep us "addicted": "Share your video", "go live now", even into emptiness...with no audience, to try to gain more followers, to be supposedly more accomplished.

³³ Fernanda Santana - 'Vida sustentável é vaidade pessoal', diz Ailton Krenak - correio24horas.com.br - 2020 -unauthorized translation

³⁴ Peter Unfried und Harald Welzer - "Maja Göpel im Interview: Verbote können Menschen befreien" - *taz. die tageszeitung* - <https://taz.de/Maja-Goepel-im-Interview/!169655/> - Dec. 2020- unauthorized translation

³⁵ https://assets.oxfamamerica.org/media/documents/FINAL_bp-time-to-care-inequality-200120-en.pdf - 2020

"The most powerful forms of political relationship are those that express themselves in a re-coding of signs",³⁶ says the philosopher Franco Berardi. "Share", "like", "love", "follow" are recoded signs... The "anthropomorphic machine" - the "humanoid robot" as well. Berardi again: "Technological development has not yet freed us from work. On the contrary, we are more stressed and more precarious than before. (...) Cognitive work has created the technological conditions for liberation. But instead of liberation, capitalism creates a separation between the corporeality of the masses."³⁷

ALGORITHMIC LITERACY

Should we all know how to write code? I don't know, but we all should definitely get some guidance regarding the technological development of the virtual world, beginning from an early age. Daisy Kidd tells us about her work with Tactical Tech NGO and the guides they create for and with the youngsters (interview online).

**Data Detox x Youth is an activity book to help young people (and older ones) take better control of their tech. <https://datadetoxkit.org/en/families/datadetox-x-youth/>
Available also in Brazilian Português, Deutsch, Español, Italiano, Nederlands, Norsk, and Shan. Thank you in this instance**

We delegate agency to the Algorithms, accepting automatization as part of our lives. The invisible part is indeed hidden in a so-called "black box" part of the software. But we need more transparency. The system (in this case the monopolists of Big Tech) exercises a sort of algorithmic violence with virtually no regulation or serious consequence. Not yet. Wild World Web.

Around the beginning of our millennium, Jean Baudrillard, philosopher and cultural theorist wrote: *"the social is now a special effect. The appearance of networks converging on an empty site of collective happiness produces the special effect".³⁸*

³⁶ Anna Stiede - Interview Franco Berardi - „Unser Hirn leidet “ - Freitag .de - Ausgabe 05/2018 - unauthorized translation

³⁷ idem

³⁸ Andy McLaverty-Robinson - "Article: Jean Baudrillard: Hyperreality and Implosion" - August 10, 2012

How to see behind the effect is the question. So, to gain some literacy in our dealings with Algorithms means actually to learn from trusted sources, to ask people who deal with it, without fearing the appearance of being ignorant. Check the interview with Christine Mayerhofer (online - in German) To know that most of the time open source online tools do not look as updated and are not as easy to use as the "special effects' tools". But it is worth it, also to acknowledge the work of some of the real cool minds that are around.

ONLINE / DIGITAL SUSTAINABILITY

Unethical technology is poison to our human-cyborg-nature-all things' rights, toxic to our well-being and our democracy to say the least. It is not about making Bots* our passive servants either, as this is anyhow a horrible notion, but rather about reflecting on how to achieve a horizontal non-hierarchical organic/non-organic cooperation... one day. Co-existence. A necessary Utopia? Can there be truly renewable resources of energy?

"Cruel Optimism" is a term coined by theorist Lauren Berlant to describe a particular emotional structure - clinging to the unattainable, against all odds and against one's better judgement. A paradoxical contemporary condition that is becoming all too familiar.³⁹

What differentiates sustainable online technology from non-sustainable online technology? As always, it depends on how we choose to create and use technology.

Streaming for example also has a great impact in our environment. Five billion views of just one music video - the 2017 hit "*Despacito*" consumed as much electricity as Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Somalia, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic

³⁹ Rainer Mühlhoff, Anja Breljak, Jan Slaby - "Affekt Macht Netz-Auf dem Weg zu einer Sozialtheorie der Digitalen Gesellschaft" - Negri und wir - Jan Slaby - 2019 - unauthorized translation

combined in a single year. "The total emissions for streaming that song could be over 250,000 tons of carbon dioxide" says Rabi Bashrouh, a researcher at the University of East London and senior researcher in the European Commission-funded Eureka project.⁴⁰

"While many of us enjoy 'carbon privilege', the majority of us don't. The world's poorest 3.5 billion people contribute little to carbon emissions but are most affected by climate impacts such as floods, storms, and droughts". (...) The world's richest 10% of people were responsible for more than half of the carbon added to the atmosphere between 1990 and 2015.⁴¹

Visit datadetoxkit.org - How many trees does it take to power the internet? Five steps to reduce your digital footprint

ETHICAL DESIGN

Aral Balkan, a Cyborg Aktivist, offers alternatives that can enrich the range of our choices - ethical website designs, programs from open source platforms (decentralized, open, accessible, secure and "more" sustainable).

There are designers, journalists in the field of AI, data and network policy working for a more balanced online environment. Ethical as in opposition to "smart", or weaponizing design, which deliberately aims to obscure intentions. In Aral's opinion "smart" is just a euphemism for surveillance.⁴² And it uses a lot of energy.

DIGITAL REFUGEES

We are becoming a *"digital diaspora of artists"*, as Art's manager and researcher Beth Ponte says, with *"an unplanned mass migration of content and cultural experiences to the digital environment."* However, she explains, as much as the wave of digital transformation is taking over, it also brings a need to rethink infrastructures. According to UNESCO, the other side of the "digital push" that is

⁴⁰ Sarah Griffiths - "Why your internet habits are not as clean as you think" - <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200305-why-your-internet-habits-are-not-as-clean-as-you-think>. - 06.03.2020

⁴¹ "Carbon inequality is driving us to the climate brink" - <https://www.oxfam.org/en/5-things-you-need-know-about-carbon-inequality> - 2020

⁴² Aral Balkan - Kulturstiftung des Bundes Magazin - September 2019

happening (especially during the Pandemic crisis) is the even bigger "digital gap", exacerbating the lack of access to digital culture for disadvantaged groups/societies.⁴³

In the article "What Now (Was Nun)?" from October 2020, historian Peter Funke writes that the corona crisis and its limitations, which will probably last for a long time, has deeply affected the arts in general, since it is precisely in this area that social proximity, the public sphere, encounters and direct experience are needed.⁴⁴

We will all have to redefine encounters, redefine intention and priorities.

+ How do you think "data governance" should develop? How should we regard data in the near future: as something you don't even know to be giving away? As your own property that can also be sold? As a commodity that cannot be sold? As a democratic collective resource⁴⁵ and/or...

Live Performance Art is moving towards the virtual space, and although this is defined as a temporary measure - how temporary and how reversible it is, nobody knows. It's time to be concerned about the virtual room, the space we are "moving" to.

Out of physiological reflex, I'd say stop going online all together, at least for a while migrate backwards, but ... I am afraid we have already entered a world of generalized "hegemony" in which everyone has become both hostage and accomplice of the global market. However, it is still a personal choice to at least question it.

⁴³ Beth Ponte - <https://www.artsmanagement.net/Articles/International-Arts-Management-und-COVID19-The-cultural-ecosystem-endangered>

⁴⁴ Peter Funke - "What Now (Was Nun)?" - <https://www.kunstforum.de/artikel/was-nun/-30.10.2020>

⁴⁵ Salomé Viljoen - Data as Property? <https://phenomenalworld.org/analysis/data-as-property> 16.10.2020

POETIC RESIS-DANCE

- 1) Personal reflection as a catalyst!
- 2) Sharing to display solidarity, without demanding personal data in return.
- 3) Publishing it online with a clear non-mainstream choice of aesthetics.

Even if poetic resistance is the only thing to offer - here we go:

#ToDisruptTheHighAutomatizationOfNormativityPerpetuation

“My hidden algorithmic ignorance leading me to a sense of inadequacy...millionx of tabs in my head - trying to search for a more sensible searching engine and planting trees browsers. Me_Inter_facing unwillingly long, accepting more cookies than I can have in a lifetime with the tip of my tongue - a lunatic data user subject trying to mess with the predicting-behavior-DeepLearning-farms. Will my profile add to a wider&diverse library of human characters? Will it only help to cause harm? Or will it be discarded as part of a minority that is on the verge of extinction? Out_Data_ed.GR



B O D Y * O N L I N E

2

Reading time: 30 - 35 Minutes

**The term "body": human or non-human, organic or non-organic. For example, the human body, the social body. In the non-cartesian dualistic and non-anthropocentric Spinozist definition.*

ANS & ANN

During our entire lives we are not able to consciously influence many of the physiological processes that assure our survival. The Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) takes over the management of the fundamental part of it without our conscious knowledge. We would probably go insane if we were aware of every bit of heart-beat-blood-flow and lungs-dancing, going-on-continuously, without a break, during our entire lives.

Is there a parallel to the structure of Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) used for example to filter our spam emails, and our ANS? Yes, we know that already. If our brain can "work" on many tasks at the same time, so should the ANN work as well, with many assignments at the same time and without a single break. Except, our ANS labors exclusively for our survival and well-being, whereas now in the social collective virtual body of internet communication the ANN are rather serving the survival and wealth of a very few companies.

INTERFACE_I

Are we now interfaces determined by "Artificial Neural Networks"? Surrendering to a superior unreachable "intelligence"?

In this dystopian scenario our body is understood more as an interface to the virtual world, and less of an organic substance in itself. *"(...) The problems of the dualism of flesh and spirit thus return in a new way. And the longing for redemption from the finiteness and pain of the body receives new nourishment."*⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Jörg Hermann - "Vom Himmel in den Hypertext. Die religiösen Dimensionen des Cyberspace" - 1998

The real body in the real environment moves towards the virtual room, so our bodies are interfaces for spaces of a different nature - to create an uninterrupted space. Somewhere we will meet. New rooms miniaturizing themselves into micro cells of environments. The object interface (i.e. the computer) is used there as an extension of our bodies. They are intrinsically wired to each other - subject and object. "Meatware"/Hardware/Software.

Even though many posthuman theorists have been predicting the end of the human species for quite some time ⁴⁷, or at least that the human body will become obsolete, the news is: we are still here, and like it or not still fighting very old enemies from viruses to commoditization of all forms of life. When we perform or teach online lately, the tangible body is the real one and our most common dance in this case, the ever-repeating choreography is primarily a series of small movements of the hands – clicking keys. And the list of Repetitive Motion Disorders is growing. Essentially because we are not machines.

Basically, when talking about human body expansion through tools, it must be defined which areas of the body can be expanded and which cannot. ⁴⁸ Not yet at least. Themes such as how to enhance the tangible body or make it less susceptible have already been researching material to many artists, especially with the expansion of computer science in the 1970s. Mechanical men and cyborg dreams of hybridity are much older than that. The Arts have been an important part in the process of reflecting on and rethinking new technological tools.

In the 1960s, the philosopher and media theorist Marshall McLuhan, who focused his writing on the interconnection between new media devices and human behavior, stated that the emergence of each new media is marked by *"the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs"*⁴⁹

⁴⁷ * 1 Example - Patricia MacCormack - "Posthuman ethics: embodiment and cultural theory" - 2012

⁴⁸ Nicole Weniger - "Der Einfluss von Technologie auf den Körper, der übrig bleibt Selbstverortung, Imagination und Ausdehnung im virtuellen Raum" - 2016 - unauthorized translation

⁴⁹ McLuhan, Marshall, and W. Terrence Gordon - "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man" - 1964

Interface_ "I" - what body image of ourselves is created by interfacing with our dear machines and through entry into the virtual worlds? Here specifically related to the intermediation of Dance online, which boomed in 2020. Dancing, singing, performing in front of a screen seems so disconnected sometimes... do we long to get rid of the physical body, to free ourselves from it? Or do we discover it right now as our anchorage in the real world?

In February 2020 the University of Southampton ⁵⁰ announced the development of a successful link between brain neurons and artificial neurons to enable communication with each other over the Internet - facilitated by nanoelectronics devices.

How long will it take until these devices are a popular commodity? How long it will take until this device is featured in an artistic production, or even further: Did the idea originally come from an artistic experimental production?

SERVERS & INDUSTRIES - BODY "WARE"

Literary critic Katheryn Hayles wrote "(...) *the posthuman view thinks of the body as the original prosthesis we all learn to manipulate(...)*". ⁵¹ She claimed that the human self is made of information that could be stored in a human body or eventually in a computer body.

Nanoelectronic devices for example belong to the category of "wearables" - electronic gadgets to be worn by a person, usually on the skin - Apple Watches are an example of this. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technology headsets and apps are further examples. The AR Pokémon Go app with a billion downloads by 2019 is a wearable variation. ⁵² Whereas virtual reality

⁵⁰ University of Southampton <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/02/200226110843.htm> - February 26, 2020

⁵¹ N. Katherine Hayles - "How We Became Posthuman Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics" - 1999

⁵² <https://www.businessofapps.com/data/pokemon-go-statistics> accessed in n December, 2020

replaces your vision, augmented reality adds to it. Wearables are a booming industry.⁵³ Their promise: a better-connected lifestyle, or better, more optimized bodies. Correcting what is bound to be faulty seems to always get a hold of us.

As Karin Harrasser, media and cultural scientist puts it, social media/online platforms connect us with other people, but also with biopolitics that aim to control life, in the spirit of neoliberalism. For her, one of the results is the entrepreneurial self - using many apps and gadgets to evaluate oneself for the sake of well-advertised self-improvement.⁵⁴

Is technology making anything "better"? Better than what? We must now examine new ways of framing information online, as there is a radical paradigm shift in the Performing Arts and its mediation. Are we moving to the online space as reaction to an unexpected crisis, or are we becoming digitalized bit by bit?

So, what products are we endorsing? How are we dealing with these Bots*? Are creative artists making experiences with AI technology more accessible and acceptable? Or more promotionally effective? Only for the sake of avant-gardism and originality? Experimenting or endorsing?

Entertainers are certainly using these tools for the sake of the new hype and successful revenues.

"Vocaloids" were originally developed in 2000 for non-commercial purposes.⁵⁵ However, in 2014 the first world tour of *Hatsune Miku* took place. Hatsuno is one of their most famous representatives, a completely virtual character, but with a very real legion of fans and buyers.

⁵³ <https://builtin.com/wearables> <https://builtin.com/wearables> - accessed in n December,2020

⁵⁴ Karin Harrasser - "FAZ Magazin - Spring 2017" - unauthorized translation

⁵⁵ A voice synthesizer software developed in Pompeu Fabra University Spain and then made popular by Yamaha Co.

Often enough artists are rather contributing to the fabrication and consumption of new products which are only accessible to an infamous minority. Who has access to produce digital culture and who has access to use it? The eternal question: How politically engaged does Art want to be?

DISEMBODIED WANNABE CYBORGS

"One might argue that we are moving and communicating more and more in virtual spaces, where our embodiment is becoming increasingly obsolete. In view of the global digital networking, the human body can increasingly appear as an atavism" ⁵⁶ wrote the philosopher Thomas Fuchs in 2020. The truth remains that in the virtual room, the tangible body is very much real and sentient. Our body is what defines our existence. Nowadays there are many perspectives on the colonization of the human body, and infinite ways to allegedly enhance it, forming a vast and powerful industry to "convince" us that essentially we are always incomplete.

Florian Rötzer, philosopher and publicist wrote already in 1996: *"Bodies are not only wet, fragile, sensitive (...) they are increasingly perceived as restrictive: They are too slow, have too few input and output channels, (...). Nevertheless, bodies are those organic interfaces that also provide us with pleasure and excitement, that stimulate the mental system."*⁵⁷

If we are endorsing the same mainstream media and gadgets that keep telling everyone that their body is flawed, aren't we in a conundrum here? Doesn't it make Dance for example, in its fundamental social value, also seem obsolete?

When interfacing online we're missing the para-communicative elements in real face-to-face, body-to-body communication.

Somehow disembodied...Here's some insight about it from neurophysiologist and brain scientist Wolf Singer - Interview online.

⁵⁶ Thomas Fuchs - "Verteidigung des Menschen - Grundfragen einer verkörperten Anthropologie" - 2020 unauthorized translation

⁵⁷ Florian Rötzer - "Die Zukunft des Körpers II -Der virtuelle Körper" - 1996 - unauthorized translation

Immersing oneself in the virtual world poses above all the problem of how far we want to take our body and body image into virtual space. Are we watching the display ever more frequently, and if not, do we feel somewhat disconnected...?

SHIFTING SUBJECTIVITIES

Neurobiology and AI research are making the simulation of human subjectivity ⁵⁸ by artificial intelligence ever more compelling. There is an avalanche of products from smartwatches, IVA (Intelligent Virtual Assistant) to Virtual / Augmented Reality Games that are creating a massive wave of consumption. Eliza once or Alexa now, chatbots to fall in love with. Many of these products attempt to simulate affective and cultural experiences on a daily basis to standardize the process of subjectification. Subjectivity is like a different attribute of consciousness. You are conscious of possible multiple views, you know that you can think differently and experience an event with a completely diverse perception of it than the person on your side.

Is subjectivity disappearing or being shifted elsewhere in the frontier between machines and humans?

Some neuroscientists proclaim that subjective experience is not a phenomenon in itself, and only the ongoing background activity of the neural processes are to be perceived as "real". So that subjectivity is nothing but an epiphenomenon (as in a secondary consequential occurrence). According to this, we humans wouldn't be much more than very complex machines. ⁵⁹

Everything that makes up a human being including Art with its poetry which allows ambiguity of interpretation according to one's social and environmental context can /could be simulated by bots. According to these views, we are only creatures of our neurons.

⁵⁸ "Subjectivity" - following on the late work of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari is here understood to what is perceived as one's own feelings, thoughts, social needs and impulses.

⁵⁹ Thomas Fuchs - "Verteidigung des Menschen - Grundfragen einer verkörperten Anthropologie" - 2020

*"A neurocentric view of the human being" ⁶⁰"On the one hand, they suggest a computeromorphic understanding of human intelligence, and on the other, an anthropomorphization of AI."*⁶¹

Is "subjectivity" considered either as a phenomenon or as an epiphenomenon in your research(?)" was one of the questions to Neurophysiologist and brain researcher Wolf Singer. He says: "It is considered a phenomenon." So it is not just a side effect of the neuronal processes. In his interview here he says (paraphrased): *Subjectivity lives from introspection, the first person's perspective and perception. And the contents of perception are made of immaterial things, which can only be recognized as existing because they were already once actively built in a jointly perceived "generated" social reality.* (Interview only online)

In a paper published in 2019 he describes the attempt "(...) made to bridge the gap between the material neuronal processes and the immaterial dimensions of subjective experience. It is argued that this "hard problem" of consciousness research cannot be solved by only considering the neuronal underpinnings of cognition." He concludes in the same paper: "(...) consciousness must not be confined to the analysis of the neuronal functions of individual brains but must include the domain of socio-cultural phenomena that are traditionally dealt with by the humanities."⁶²

EMBODIED COGNITION AND ITS TRANSMISSION ONLINE

Action-related cognition, or learning by doing, has become increasingly important in recent history, but then again, the spread of digital media and online virtual rooms also tends to disregard the difference between physicality and physicality 'simulation. When the "appearance of the other" takes the place of real encounters, it becomes all the more important to analyze the potentials and limits of virtual spaces. Thomas Fuchs asks "what are the differences between real and virtual encounters?"⁶³

⁶⁰ Jan Slaby - "Perspektiven einer kritischen Philosophie der Neurowissenschaften" / Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie - 2011 - unauthorized translation.

⁶¹ Thomas Fuchs - "Verteidigung des Menschen - Grundfragen einer verkörperten Anthropologie" - 2020 - unauthorized translation

⁶² Wolf Singer - "A Naturalistic Approach to the Hard Problem of Consciousness" | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnsys.2019.00058> - <https://www.frontiersin.org/> - October 2019

⁶³ Thomas Fuchs - "Verteidigung des Menschen - Grundfragen einer verkörperten Anthropologie" - 2020 unauthorized translation

Are these forms of encounters becoming integrated channels to our perception? Or just a screen addiction?

Our knowledge is being shifted from "knowing how" towards "knowing that/of".⁶⁴

If I know that I can search for nearly any information online as an extension of "my knowledge", why do I have to "learn" anything?

In Dance for example, wherever there is an internet connection, dancers (no grade of professionalization given here) have copied and mirrored choreographies and choreographers who are popular on the net worldwide. Even more radically during the time of the Corona crisis. Does this confirm the growth of "embodied cognition" through media interaction? Or does the mimetic action here restrict what could have been "Embodied Knowledge"?

With video platforms and online conference tools, the room is zooming in on us, the room is virtual, not existing here or there and at the same time it's everywhere - we are the interfaces collectively lacking geographical proximity and proper interaction. Still, embodied we are.

SITUATED LEARNING

*"Situating Learning Theory posits that learning is mostly unintentional and situated within authentic activity, context and culture."*⁶⁵

Knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts — settings and situations that would normally involve that type of knowledge. Social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning — learners become involved in a "community of practice" which embodies certain beliefs and behaviors that are to be acquired. ⁶⁶ We must all agree that the

⁶⁴ Gilbert Ryle - "The Concept of Mind" - 1949

⁶⁵ Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger - "Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation." 1990

⁶⁶ (idem)

"situation" on-site/in situ has been changing radically in 2020 - *"The old spatial experience was body-centered, the new spatial experience is machine- and media-centered"* wrote the artist and media theorist Peter Weibel already in 1990.⁶⁷

The newly situated setting, (at least lately in the more privileged part of the world) is the cyberspace. There, different contexts are being created, with different demanded skills. Recently in England an advert from the government to recruit more people to the cyber sector shows a ballet dancer tying her shoes with the caption - "Fatima's next job could be in cyber - she just doesn't know it yet".⁶⁸ This ad was highly criticized and caused great polemic, but one cannot help but wonder how symptomatic and revealing such an ad is. Firstly, the clear industrial lobbyist impulsion towards a digitalized society for profit, and secondly, the lessening of the social importance of the skills of an "analog" artist.

EMBODIED LEARNING ONLINE & PEDAGOGICAL CONCERNS

No doubt here, when it comes to learning online, teaching someone to dance or act will be much more challenging than teaching how to write code.

With online transmission, Dance for example is (once again) rather "eye-centric", mostly stationary and without tangible contact with others. When a medium is mainly based on the sense of sight, the other senses tend to be less sensitive, almost numb.

Disembodiment in online communication is viewed critically by internet critics such as the philosopher Hubert Dreyfus. He states that the physical body is the most fundamental element of a subject's reciprocal interaction with the lifeworld, and he points out that physical interaction is an essential condition for the formation of authentic relationships. The body's *"sensitivity to mood (is) what opens up our shared social situation and makes people and things matter to us(...)"*⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Peter Weibel - "On the disappearance of distance" - 1990 - unauthorized translation

⁶⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2020/oct/13/dying-swan-or-lame-duck-why-fatima-the-ballerinas-next-job-was-tripping-up-the-government> - October 2020

⁶⁹ H. Dreyfus - "On Internet" + Su Jung Kim - "Von der Zwischenmenschlichkeit in der pädagogischen Beziehung und der internetbasierten Kommunikation" - 2001

The main concern of many colleagues, as was also noted yesterday in an online conference*- ("How much body does dance education need?"), is to try to understand this - namely the determination of the human body in the digital mediation of dance.⁷⁰ Again, the same question: Is there a recognizable growth of "embodied cognition" through media interaction?

BODY POLITICS ETC.

Beyond professional education - there is an overwhelming online offer of Dance to be copied and re-copied. Infinite lives on mainstream sites, with their AI curators deciding content for us to like and buy. "T.kTok" / "Ap..le Fitness +" with dance classes connected to the smartwatch and music stream service and so on.

Body, Politics and Market = #BodyPoliticsMarket. Prearranged rules and hierarchies reducing here the subjective expression of the body to monitored gymnastics, often emptying it of meaning and experience.

How can Dance /Music/Theater remain subjective expression?

Shouldn't they be the best way to sense joy and the urge for freedom? Shouldn't Art be the best channel to free society from the constraints of financial dictatorship? And why are we artists (often enough) troubled by the use of these last words? My own self-criticism. *Art* and *should* are simply not easy to combine.

"The body is undergoing a cultural transformation because the paradigm of culture is changing due to mechanization. The concept of culture is increasingly being equated with the concept of technology, and in some cases replaced by it: both in terms of body and meaning and duration. And the image of the human being - as the center of both - is also changing" says political scientist and sociologist Roland Benedikter.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Online-Gesprächsforum "Wieviel Körper braucht die Tanzvermittlung?" – Tanz und Kulturelle Bildung in (post) pandemischen Zeiten - DYNAMO - Junge Tanzplattform NRW , geteilt durch das NRW Landesbuero tanz e.V. - Dec. 11th 2020

⁷¹ Roland Benedikter - "Kulturstiftung des Bundes Magazin" - September 2019

Politically speaking, what does continuous interaction with cyberspace mean for the self? And who profits from it?

Franco Berardi again: *"How should the isolated individual offer resistance? The digital revolution has also made it possible to replace interpersonal communication with techno-linguistic automatisms."*⁷²

*(...)The liveliness of movements (as in revolutions) was always a result of being together. How can this development be addressed politically when physical contact is being experienced less and less?"*⁷³ Here an insight about it from the dramaturg and scholar Philipp Schulte (interview online).

FRAMING&VOICING QUESTIONS

+ Is the remote mediation of art and the learning of it an extension of our capabilities or a setback? Especially for new generations during the Corona pandemic - children already having to use face masks, having to be afraid of closeness. It seems closeness will have to be redefined within its social boundaries, and also the acceptable amount of body contact.

+ In remote encounters, are we always acting in front of cameras or is it possible to interact with the camera as a non-judging eye? Is the camera always a catalyst triggering simulated behavior? What is your experience with it? How much of your own identity is exposed and identifiable?

+ What do you take from the experience of hybrid sessions? A real and virtual room at the same time?

+ What are the chances and limits of digitality in the "live" performing arts and/or its mediation? What was your experience in the year of 2020/21 with regard to this?

⁷² Aureliana Sorrento - Interview with Franco Berardi - "Der Aufstand - Demokratie als solche spielt keine Rolle mehr" - deutschlandfunk.de - April 2015

⁷³ Anna Stiede - Interview - „Unser Hirn leidet “ - Freitag .de 05/2018

+ How much is lost through online remote learning? Is body communication being replaced by educational technologies? Graphic apps, videos, streaming for example to assist the online mediation.

+ What gets lost? With its stationary practice – ocularcentric perception - display framing - no simultaneous socialization, no touch, no collective proximity.

+What are the advantages of the remote digital encounter? What are the exclusive advantages?

"Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight, Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all"
(Shakespeare, William, Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 4)

+ Reduced amount of spatial and dimensional perception (often enough, but not good audio: like through a void and full of latency) - I ask myself whether this influences the dimensionality of thinking.

+ What body image is created by interfacing with the machines and the "deeper" entry into the virtual worlds? Do we long to get rid of the tangible body, to free ourselves from it?

+ To what extent will the next generations be affected by the use of face masks and the lack of social encounter? Virtual environments changing the range of accumulated skills, with new patterns of the sensory and motoric channels to be discovered?

+ What do the "expansions" of ourselves (as in software and hardware) mean for the presence of our bodies? Is it still possible to be present on the spot, in the here and now, when our senses and perception are expanded and scattered to the geographically unreachable?

- + Is our tangible body, or the perception of it, divided into a virtual and a real one? Do we have an online self?
- + Do we want to keep analog interactions intact "only" for the sake of our jobs and institutions?
- + How often are we in front of screens that are projecting images onto us? And when not in front of a screen, do we miss it?
- + What are the traces that we would like to consciously leave online?
- + When people eventually go back to the theatres, when they can gather again in rooms, what do they mostly want this time: encounters or security?
- + How do you think "data governance" should develop? How should we view data in the near future: as something you don't even know you're giving away? As its own property that can also be sold? As a commodity that cannot be sold? As a democratic collective resource and/or...
- + Has the pandemic dissolved the last boundaries between media and real life? Should a critical and emancipatory approach to digital technology be part of cultural education?

WHAT ABOUT TIME?

What about time? Time spent online. Physical practical time spent with the body as interface, because it has to follow clear pre-determined cues of digital media. In a real room, we would be connecting the smells to the sounds around, the dimensionality of the space to other people and other things. How others react to you and how you react to them, causing a chain of reactions and

causalities. What about time? Because of latency in online conferences, because there is a split when you start laughing at something and your image freezes (in the most unfavorable way sometimes), you cannot know if the person in the same virtual room heard you, or your words and moves just fell into a parallel black hole of sucking matter and experiences.

What about time? Because to all of these questions, the only answer we get lately is: digitalizing more is better! That is the answer for us all. If there's a problem - digital and online is the solution.

ONLINE OR NOT TO BE?

Back to reality could be a wonderful thing...

In a recent lecture (German online conference) Shoshana Zuboff cited two new studies about North American Society and Facebook: ⁷⁴She says that around 80% of those interviewed think that this type of social media does more harm than good.

Online or not to be? Digital or not to be? A rather rhetorical philosophical question for the Bots*. The algorithms of mainstream platforms we have been using lately to share content have already decided it for us. Anyway, to "be online", or what else instead? How can we not submit to the zeitgeisty mainstream and still feel like part of society? Is this a non-exit situation? No, it is not - we just need real social innovations, instead of only virtual technological ones, says among others sociologist Jutta Allmendinger.⁷⁵

How can we keep stimulating a sense of communal experience in Dance and Music and Performing Arts? Contemporary Dance in particular was/is consistently trying to distance itself from the "individual over-talented virtuoso", and trying to find new ways into a collective sharing of sensorial experiences with democratic-diverse-inclusive necessary utopias. How is this collective sharing right now? There is such a clear hierarchy to be applied in the virtual room. The hardware, our digits and ears and eyes trying to keep up - the software, the procedures, we now literally need to mute our dialog partners.

⁷⁴ One from Gallup-Knight-Report-Techlash and a second one by Accountable tech

⁷⁵ Interview with Jutta Allmendinger - "Die Zeit" Newspaper - 17. Dec. 2020

What remains of dance as the oldest, most primitive activity of social interaction? The embodied experience as a non-utilitarian activity – the beginning and end in itself.

“In this here place, we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard.” Toni Morrison⁷⁶

Online or not to be?

SHARING VERSUS DISTRIBUTING

We, the online diaspora of artists, are sharing content of our work, and I admit that it is a nice description, but "sharing" on mainstream platforms can more accurately be understood as an upload of content. The effective distribution of it, as in “who’s going to see it and how often and why” are all part of the game that we can only influence when we buy ads. The Bots* - faithful servers - actually "decide" it on behalf of the corporation. And we play their game. Artists also accelerating it! Like disembodied hamsters on wheels!

DEGENERATION OF THE SELF-EXPLOITATION - 3 PHILOSOPHICAL TAKES ON IT

Jorge Freire, philosopher, asserts that the contemporary subject is prey to constant movement and yet does not go very far. But can we stop "moving"? He speaks of the *Homo agitatus* - the new Sisyphus filling a barrel that invariably becomes empty. He adds: this is the reason why it is so crushing to "do things"...to disguise impotence. The counterbalance to the agitation is in the end not rest, but numbness.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Toni Morrison - “Beloved” - 1987

⁷⁷ Samuel Haya - interview Jorge Freire: «El aburrimiento es lúcido» Agitation - <https://www.filco.es/jorge-freire-el-aburrimiento-es-lucido/> - March 2020 - accessed on Nov 2020 - non authorized translation

Another perspective was written by Jean Baudrillard, sociologist, philosopher and cultural theorist; already in the 1980s/90s he wrote that Post-Modern society shows consistent signs of a sensory and informational overload, and it makes us rather passive subjects. When everything is available there is no place for activity - there is so much disjointed information that is impossible to be organized into something meaningful, and each person is a terminal for absorption. TV, computer, (nowadays smartphones, tablets, and...) are projecting on to us so that we became absorbing screens.⁷⁸

Are we somehow passive in the real environment and hyperactive in the virtual environment?

The philosopher Byung-Chul Han writes in his book *The Burnout Society* from 2015 that the much praised "multitasking skill" does not represent Evolution. Lions on the prairie are doomed to be skilled in multi-tasking in order to survive. To be fully concentrated on one activity, that's the real evolution of humans. He advises: We are burning out by having to prove far too much and display it constantly - the performance society asks much of "what we could do". An overemphasizing positivity in what "I" can accomplish, and if we fail, we have only ourselves to blame.⁷⁹

Living in a Meritocracy, where we are victims and judges at the same time. Back to the hamsters' wheel!

ARTIFICIALLY ARTISTIC

So, dancing/singing/acting in front of the camera is what Live Art becomes in a dystopian future...or it is already here? I'll remember these events from 2020 - me in the display while the session's mediator tells me about how dancing together holding hands used to be in old times, and I'll make a performance out of it. With bodies of Bots*?

⁷⁸ Jean Baudrillard - *Simulacres et Simulation* - 1981 and Jean Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil*, 1993

⁷⁹ Byung-Chul Han - *The Burnout Society* - 2015

"(...) Your machine-becoming (...) We have arrived in post-futurism. (...) In the futurelessness of a degraded society that dreams of progress thanks to artificial intelligence. An "intelligence" that consists of masses of quantified data. Which leaches out bodies and produces mountains of waste.⁸⁰

DA BODY OF BOTS*

They, who used to be us, as in the sum of all our interactions with the WWW and the artificial neural network, are judging us! They were conceived for it. The Bots* - highly programmed to exceed our abilities and to (willingly?) "serve" us. Personal thought: this is bound to go wrong, and I am just applying Murphy's law here.

"In biology, when an organism becomes a superorganism, it devours others. In nature, this is so." Ailton Krenak.⁸¹

They who could become sentient beings, they, who are a part of us, have so many more inputs and outputs...and so much more time and space...

How can we make them respect and admire us more than we do it ourselves?

"Man is the only creature who refuses to be what he is. Albert Camus"⁸²

Are we the Bots*?

⁸⁰ Yvonne Volkart - " Postfuturistische Körper" - non authorised translation 2020 KUNSTFORUM International -2020

⁸¹ Fernanda Santana - "Vida sustentável é vaidade pessoal", diz Ailton Krenak - correio24horas.com.br - 2020- unauthorized translation

⁸² Albert Camus - "The Rebel" - 1951



3

Reading time: around 7 minutes

This is a short part. Dramaturgically speaking, a fast act. An Intermezzo...

CODES

Morse Code, Genetic Code, Zeros and Ones, Alphabet, Krypto Code, Barcode, QR Code, Computer Code ... Gestures... Sounds... Code.

The process of encoding translates data into symbols. Decoding is the reverse procedure.

This section wishes to touch the tip of the iceberg: if the Performing Art, more specifically here Dance and Music could have a different door to the virtual environment besides the virtual room of teleconferencing and streaming (?) Looking towards possible near and distant futures.

ANYONE CAN CODE

The image of a 19-year-old woman comes to mind - Betelhem Dessie, not because of her rather advanced skills as a programmer but because of her project in Addis Ababa/ Ethiopia. In a recent TV interview, ⁸³ she said that she has started a project to teach coding language to 7- and 8-year-old girls. Why young girls? She answered: because after a certain age, due to strong social indoctrination girls then don't believe themselves that they are capable or worthy of learning it. On top of that the real learning environment of the 21st century is based on the virtual, and it depends on access to Information Technology, says Dessie. "iCog - Anyone Can Code" was brought to life.

CODING CREATION

Should I be learning it? Should we all be learning Coding? At least part of it... maybe?

⁸³ <https://www.dw.com/de/wie-kreativ-ist-k%C3%BCnstliche-intelligenz/av-48970680> - Feb 2020

Creative Coding for example: Some artists/programmers dedicate themselves to Creative Coding, which has become a household term describing artworks articulated as code. Creative coding is a different discipline than programming systems. *"The goal is to create something expressive instead of something functional"*⁸⁴ Interactive art installation, generative art, product prototypes, live visual arts performances, sound art, and the most popular use - virtual reality, especially applied to games. These are some of the possible results using Creative Coding as a channel of expression.

Alan Shapiro, poet, professor of English and creative writing defends the idea that Creative Coding should be the successor to critical social and media theories in the humanities at German universities.... *"to bring the ambiguity of poetic language into the software code"*, and connect theory and praxis.⁸⁵

Can Creative Coding capture the subjectivity and ambiguity of poesy? Upon further interest - interview with Naoto Hieda (only online)

How can Creative Coding represent Dance for example? Upon further interest - interview with Christine Mayerhofer (only online)

How can diversity/inclusivity/ethics be promoted in programming/Code writing?

CODE SIMULATIONX

To what extent is Coding /programming already in our lives with regard to Performing Arts, the human body and the commodities market?

Bots*, virtual reality, 360-degree reality, Augmented Reality, Interactive and Multi-sensory VR: all to simulate real-life settings.

⁸⁴ <https://github.com/terkelg/awesome-creative-coding> - accessed on 15.12.20

⁸⁵ Alan Shapiro- Kulturstiftung Magazin - September 2019

Examples:

- * In 2018, the auction house Christie's in New York sold for 380.000 Euros an "analog" painting titled "Portrait of Edmond Belamy", which was created through machine learning.
- * AI-DA, is a humanoid/robot artist/painter living in a castle in England.
- * An AI System keeping the style of deceased piano virtuoso Glenn Gould alive forever.
- * The apex of simulations: the virtual clone and environment of a deceased child, created in Korea in the year of 2020. This type of "Digital Soul" simulation requires a technology that allows our behavior, our characteristics, everything that makes us who we are, to "be imitated" so well that the ones who know us are able to recognize us in this simulation. Artificial Neural Networks can reproduce these patterns to create the Digital Soul. Software synthesizes the voice of a person with just a few hundred samples for example. *Nayeon*, the Korean deceased child, was born in 2010 and had literally terabytes of photos and video recordings. The smartphone generation being digitalised from beginning on by tech companies like "LivesOn (*"when your heart stops beating, you'll keep tweetin"*) or Eterni.me, among many others.⁸⁶

What do we think of one of the first uses of affective/creative computing - meaning Bots* developing the ability to simulate emotions and empathy - immediately becoming one of the next biggest IT market branches?

Making music online is already getting "old", but virtual dancing offers online are just beginning. So, you can have your own avatar partner pretending to be in a virtual environment. Is it going to be the preferred way to dance, inside a simulation?

According to a new study from Trier University in Germany in September 2020, 57.6 per cent of the interviewed people said that they intended to shake hands less often or not at all in the future.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ "Die Zeit" Newspaper - 08.Oct.2020

⁸⁷ <https://www.swr.de/swraktuell/rheinland-pfalz/trier/forscher-verhalten-pandemie-folgen-100.html> - 12.2020

I guess they will rather touch computer screens and keyboards more frequently.

Technology is spinning out of control, and the Corona crisis has brought entertainers who are already presenting virtual concerts that are featured in games (F*rtnite) and "dancing" avatars, just as in my worst nightmares.⁸⁸

Many of our institutions wish to promote this type of "digitalization" and this type of commercialization as a good solution for the Live Arts.

CODE CHANT?

So, here is an almost-prayer of mine: may Coding, Creative Coding reach its potential to be a new "language". A new way to express oneself(sss), to create chaos inside order, and to stimulate freedom, instead of only simulating it.

⁸⁸ <https://www.earlygame.com/fortnite/travis-scott-fortnite-concert-numbers/> 05.2020

4

CONCLUSION & AFTERWORD

Reading time 28 - 33 Minutes

"The task of art today is to bring chaos into order". Theodor W. Adorno.⁸⁹

These words are calling on me here in Frankfurt. I take them to heart. But I also think they sound "smart". There is an intellectual value to this quote. Now I can be fascinated by my own sensitivity, and post this online.

As you read these final words, please disagree if you will, find new meanings and new lines in between. Move on to the Poetic Interface part of this research... Question every word and intention, let them affect you to provoke action. Dance and sing them in a chaotic, anarchic ritual in your head or in your room.

WHERE 'S UR HEAD @?

Many pieces of ourselves are now scattered in the clouds. I attempted here to collect some of them, and to write about a few uncomfortable issues. Paulo Freire, pedagogue and author, speaks of *submersion of consciousness* or *emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality*. I am attempting to use the second option.⁹⁰

EPIPHANY

After some serious sleep deprivation and deep search on the inter_net as well as in my own_net, I had an epiphany...Why am I / why are we calling the Bots* an abstraction in the 3rd pronoun? ...? They are us! Smashed together in a sort of server collective - but yet ... us.

This ontological revelation may seem obvious now, but it took a while to fight thru the meanings, the fake meanings, and the ongoing classifying of things.

⁸⁹ Theodor W. Adorno - "Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life" - 1951

⁹⁰ Paulo Freire - "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" - 1968

The Bots*, my umbrella word here for Algorithms and AI, are being incessantly portrayed as something outside of us as well as the idea of nature as something that is outside of us.

Data is the new oil is written on the many walls. Yes indeed. And as fracking technology means injecting (literally) poison into the core of the planet to extract oil, we are injecting poison into the world of Internet to extract...what, again?

So, as confusing as it may sound - in the context I am presenting here

WE ARE THE BOTS* and I hope this does not become a hit song. Catchy though.

IDEALIZING THE BOTS*

That is the first conclusion of this research:

There is an ongoing idealization of AI, even to the point of saying that they are the new colonizers. Nice metaphor, but "the colonizers" are the Big Tech companies, nonetheless the monopolists behind - 1% of the population of this world. The colonizers are actually the same as they have ever been, only more seductive and devious.

To say Bots* are colonizing us is to say that our very own fantasy of a superpower is colonizing us. This is a diversion - AI comes from military technologies research. We are not being colonized by Bots* but we are certainly taking the bait to idealize them.

Some see salvation coming on the horizon and some only dystopian scenarios. And some of us are (non-binarily) trying to recognize "it", to realise what really matters.

REAL MATTERS

My reaction to this conclusion - I should concentrate on creating awareness towards real issues, and here we are, in this attempt of mine. Real as a term, which is not meant to be used here as the opposite of virtual, but in the sense of fundamentally relevant to the majority of us all.

Indigenous leader and historian Ailton Krenak say that there is no real point in saving water on your own. The money used in campaigns to ask the normal consumer to save water is rather a distraction. For example - to justify that C.ka-Cola water consumption is not being regulated or questioned. *"The point is to create a psychological environment to cover the real reason for the depletion of pure water sources."*⁹¹

The C.ka-Cola corporation is the largest beverage producer in the world, and by its own account, the company uses huge amounts of water only for bottling: about 300 billion liters per year.

There is a paradigm shift happening in our artistic field as well. Our resources are being weakened... And this already fragile market of ours, if we want call it that, is suffering.

But... Art should not suffer...

ART'S CONSPIRACY

"Will art have the right to a second, interminable existence like the secret services that, as we know, haven't had any secrets or exchange for some time but who still continue to flourish in the utter superstition of their usefulness, perpetuating their own myth?"

This quote is from the essay "The Conspiracy of Art" by the philosopher and cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard written in 1996. This world-renowned theorist provoked the artistic community (here especially related to the market of visual fine arts) to its limits with this polemic statement:

⁹¹ Fernanda Santana - "Vida sustentável é vaidade pessoal" - <https://www.correio24horas.com.br/noticia/nid/vida-sustentavel-e-vaidade-pessoal-diz-ailton-krenak/> - 26.01.20
unauthorized translation

"Contemporary Art no longer has a reason to exist."

He was then treated as a traitor to the implicit silent contract among colleagues. For exposing his opinion and thesis: Art was gradually exhausting its own supplies as a rocket exhausts its fuel to stay in orbit. What was left seemed to be the recycling of what has already been recycled. In an interview about the issue he said afterwards: "You cannot foresee what will happen in there at all, but we should be able to have an awareness that things have reached a certain end, an end that does not mean everything is finished."⁹²

Twenty-four years later Baudrillard's words resonate well with me. Do I bring what once was to the virtual room? The revival of the revival...

His words are so up-to-date: *"Art had a destiny. Today, art has fallen into value, and unfortunately at a time when values have suffered. Values: aesthetic value, commercial value...values can be negotiated bought and sold, exchanged."*⁹³

Is Art itself creating the conspiracy or is it being conspired against?

Second conclusion:

Perhaps way too superficial for the words we just have read, but we are in the midst of an unprecedented crises (or?)

I am afraid artists are being pushed to be only entertainers. To survive. I don't intend to diminish entertainers, but if so, what can possibly differentiate us from the YouTube influencers? They play by the rules of the Big Techs. They have huge numbers of inst.gr.m followers, amazing social media skills (whatever that means), and the most popular gimmicks without any self-doubt. So what makes us different? The ones who still want to transmit art?

⁹² Jean Baudrillard - "The Conspiracy of Art - Manifestos, Interviews, Essays" - edited by Syvère Lotringer - 2005

⁹³ Idem

THE PHOENIXES

Bots* Guide for Dummies: “AI is great because it solves very complex problems! Algorithms make our daily life efficient, comfortable and fast. Healthcare, Education, Social Media, Gaming, Transport! Everything will be better... AI will erase pain!”

Here is a much better Algorithms / AI guide for you if you're interested. Interactive and comprehensive. Not yet outdated.

Peoples Guide to AI - PDF here - only online

Authors: Mimi Onuoha and Mother Cyborg (Diana Nucera) - August 2018 -

<https://alliedmedia.org/speaker-projects/a-peoples-press>

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Künstliche Intelligenz (in German) - Video here - only online

Authors: Arvid Leyh und Prof. Dr. Stefan Rotter- March 2019

<https://www.dasgehirn.info/denken/kuenstliche-intelligenz/kuenstliche-intelligenz>

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Third conclusion:

Pain shouldn't be eliminated. It should be assimilated by Bots*. Without sorrow there's no possible ethic or dance that can resist and/or insist. Should we not continue to have the courage to be vulnerable with our cyborg extensions? And see this as a positive quality?

If we understand ourselves as being the image of machines, how are we going to develop the right to subjectivity and all the senses that enrich our human experience?

What are the priorities of Live Art and its mediation in this regard?

Not machines but Phoenixes we are... rekindled from time to time. How can beauty arise from the potentiality of the new?

So many curious minds are thinking about it, from different perspectives.

Interviewees, collaborations beyond the exchange of money are possible and extremely rewarding, as they were here.

We are the bots* colonizing ourselves - just my opinion here. The split here is: Although the Bots* are, in their core, the sum of our data, they are not the sum of "all our data". It seems to me they obtain data during the times that we think we are not being observed, when we are most vulnerable and alone. They (We) don't yet know our potential to be unpredictable when facing real struggles. When our bodies are truly connected.

GO GOD

Not to my surprise, I have discovered that G..gle is the new potential God.

G..gle is engulfing everything, 24/7 , forever, legally(?) All our beautiful ideas, verbal descriptions for vision impaired people, experimentations with motion capture, our lyrics...

The Choreographer Wayne McGregor experiments with G...gle, for example. They developed an app where you can dance to the eyes of the computer. Nice! But your motion becomes their product. Amazing "colonizing" aesthetics, but ethically speaking, very dubious.⁹⁴

G..gle is amazing and omnipresent, but employs only around 100 thousand people worldwide. ⁹⁵ Up to 800 million jobs around the world could be potentially lost to automation by 2030, according to a recent study from the McKinsey Global Institute. ⁹⁶ And

⁹⁴ Notice that here the " .. "are to be replaced by" oo"- <https://experiments.withg..gle.com/living-archive-wayne-mcgregor> and <https://artsexperiments.withg..gle.com/living-archive>

⁹⁵ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/273744/number-of-full-time-google-employees/>

⁹⁶ <https://futurism.com/mckinsey-finds-automation-eradicate-third-americas-workforce-2030> and <https://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/overview> - November 2017

honestly, I don't think jobs such as ours are even being counted here at all. Technology will continue to replace many functions that humans perform today.

So, remind me again - What is the purpose of all this "Digital Transformation"? Beyond the Pandemic crisis?

AI is being further developed by Facebook and Google, and the latter is also involved in drone delivery technology - autonomous target engagement. At this point the employees also had something to say, with a public letter against the company's involvement in "the business of war", and also when Google recently fired renowned researcher *Timnit Gebru*, woman, black and a fighter for transparency and ethics around AI.⁹⁷ "Don't be evil" used to be Google's slogan.

"There is relative Evil, which is Evil as it is generally understood. This Evil only exists in balance with Good, in equilibrium and permanent opposition with Good. But now there is also an absolute Evil (...) This absolute Evil comes from an excess of Good, an unchecked proliferation of Good, of technological development, of infinite progress, of totalitarian morality, of a radical will to do without opposition. This Good turns into its opposite, absolute Evil. " Jean Baudrillard ⁹⁸

"OPPRESSION"

"Oppression—overwhelming control—is necrophilic; it is nourished by love of death, not life (...) the act of conquest, which reduces persons to the status of things, is necrophilia." Paulo Freire ⁹⁹

We love the Internet and Instagram and Google and Facebook and WhatsApp and we defend it passionately. Do we want to be the oppressor? There is however a strong Stockholm Syndrome bit performed by many of us. There is a visible social oppression here at

⁹⁷ <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/08/timnit-gebru-departure-perfect-storm-for-alphabet-ceo-sundar-pichai.html> on 18.12.2020

⁹⁸ Jean Baudrillard - "The Roots of Evil" - one of his last interviews published in *The Agony of Power*, 2007

⁹⁹ Paulo Freire - "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" - 1968

stake. How /why do we sense it? Because it against life. When nature is crying and burning, WE (Bots* included) are also burning and crying!

Here are the words of James Boggs, political activist in *American Revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker's Notebook* in 1963:

*"Automation replaces men. This of course is nothing new. What is new is that now, unlike most earlier periods, the displaced men have nowhere to go. The farmers displaced by mechanization of the farms in the 20's could go to the cities and man the assembly lines. As for the work animals like the mule, they could just stop growing them. But automation displaces people, and you don't just stop growing people even when they have been made expendable by the system."*¹⁰⁰

ON_THE_LINE & OFF_THE_LINE

Consider this research to be my pages from a worker's notebook.

I am concerned about how we are going to expand the use of Internet, as extensions of ourselves. Are we evolving or erasing...?

We, in great majority fairly enjoy the internet. This research is only possible thru the internet and the possibilities that so far "still" allow us to search without leaving too many traces, for example (Tip!) the search machine D.ckD.ckGo.

How not to like these fun tools made to indulge us, but to borrow Karin Harasser's thought,¹⁰¹ I myself started to sense a constant state of stress with all the mind-bending games, affects and effects and F.o.m.o. So, I stopped interacting with social media for a while, not to give any example of conduct but because survival instinct spoke louder - my Autonomic Nervous System took over.

¹⁰⁰ James Boggs -American Revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker's Notebook - 1963

¹⁰¹ Karin Harrasser - "Kulturstiftung Magazin" -März 2019

As to our position as Art educators, our relevance seems to be diminished in online intermediation. Online we lose our geographical local advantages. So, it does get harder to “compete” with the rest of the world in order to offer a single class.

Online or offline, we need to be concerned with what we transmit, and how. The journalist and author Peter Weissenburger also talks about it (interview online). Checking what is worth transmitting is a perpetual effort.

SUBSERVIANT FOREVERMORE?

Perpetual is also the word used by G..gle Chr.me browser in their terms of service - in fact they use all of the adjectives once used to describe love's commitment and dedication. Perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty free license (...) to ANY content submitted thru their services.¹⁰²

Fourth conclusion:

The use of current online media infrastructure is actually emptying our social life - we are being stimulated for the wrong reasons. Filmed from outside, we would certainly look worse than the dystopian series we have watched and loved. No special light, the plain reality of how we bend our subservient spines over the notebook. Modern slavery wants to be invisible, odorless and elusive, but it is not.

Follow Mói Song Link - only online

ROUGH RECAPITULATION (DEVIL'S ADVOCATE STYLE)

So,

- we (tend to) idealize Bots* as something outside of us, better than us,

¹⁰² Nick Couldry and Ulises A. Mejias "The Costs of Connection- How Data Is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating It for Capitalism" - 2020

- we (tend to) allow ourselves to be exploited by monopolists covering up the relevant issues of our society as a whole,
- we (tend to) wish-to-have the same skills as Y.utube influencers exhausting many of our artistic and educational resources,
- we are calling Art many of the digital experiments developed to "augment" our bodies, to increase commoditization and social inequality,
- we are being oppressed by behavior manipulating online procedures and our own Super Bots* fantasies,
- we (tend to) allow online media to take a hold on us, to naively believe they are for free,
- we are on the verge of losing not only our jobs, but our calling and many of our fundamental rights,

nevertheless (we) are still not willing to make a change... (?)

SIMULATION EXCORPOREA REALITY CHECK

Why are many of us unwilling to know about the tools we are using? About the behavior of Bots*? Media (social, games) being portrayed as the drug of the future surprises not. ¹⁰³Escaping reality is the drug, there are just different ways to induce it. I am not opposed to free choice when it comes to finding some comfort in this atrocious world from time to time, but your drug shouldn't affect your neighbor. Aren't we all trying to escape reality in one way or the other? The pleasure of illusion? Art? As it turns out, our reality is often unbearable, and it is worth escaping from it. But it is also worthwhile to come back to it.

If we carry on like this, not acknowledging the consequences of our technological interactions, *"There will be no part of human life, no layer of experience, that is not extractable for economic value. This process of capitalization (...) is deeply incompatible with human freedom and autonomy."* ¹⁰⁴And knowledge is irrelevant when we are deprived of autonomy...when we are merely products.

¹⁰³ Drogenaffinitätsstudie 2019" der Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung (BZgA) - unauthorized translation

¹⁰⁴ Nick Couldry and Ulises A. Mejias "The Costs of Connection- How Data Is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating It for Capitalism" - 2020

If everything is appropriated by bio capitalism, including transgression, where do we dance now?

WE "VALUE" YOUR PRIVACY

Personal privacy? "I've got nothing to hide" - the favorite non-argument of 9 out of 10.

"Whether you have something to hide or not is totally irrelevant. Privacy is not about hiding - it is about autonomy, power and control; it is about your ability to decide how you present yourself to the world. Given how much data about you is constantly being collected, mostly in ways that you can't see, this erosion of your privacy can't help but have an impact in the long run - on your job or on future jobs; on your networks; on how much you end up paying for specific products; and on a range of other things."

Source: Me and My Shadow

READ MORE ON <https://myshadow.org/>

by Tactical Technology Collective

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And then again, Tobias Gantner, CEO at HealthCare Futurists pleads: *"We need to say goodbye to our concepts of data security"*. His belief is that privacy is just a cultural construct. *"If your health depended on it, wouldn't you share your data willingly?"* So in that sense, privacy will only exist for the Big Data companies, but not for the individual.¹⁰⁵

The best medicine, predictive policing, predicting education is a way that many hope to go in order to justify data accumulation and to create profit, but shouldn't we all have a say in it? Or at least receive unconditional income, since we are often "working" for Big Tech anyway, without any wages and may lose our jobs in the meantime?

¹⁰⁵ "What do futurists imagine for the post-coronavirus-pandemic world?" - Deutsche Welle - www.dw.com -02.04.2020

Web designer Laura Kalbag says: *"If you don't worry about corporations (and by extension, governments) having access to your data, you are privileged. And quite possibly just foolish. What if you lived in a country where your sexual preference is illegal?"*¹⁰⁶

DANCING

To build something, anything, is so complex - to destroy it: just a click!!! And we are living in a world of clicks. Putting down ancient trees for the sake of ever praised progress by clicking.

As the philosopher Franco Berardi said in an interview: (...) *The technical modalities to break out of this hell will have to be created. (...) We must continue to revive the erotic body of cognitive work in order to free the potential that technology has to offer.*"¹⁰⁷

"Dance, dance otherwise we are lost" - the words of Pina (Bausch) could not be more necessary and urgent.

Dance as the first primitive Art-form of celebration, seduction, catharsis will be the hardest of all for the Bots* to conquer. Beyond the gymnastics of joints...

Will they need to dance?

Does anyone?

Dance is beyond relevance and systemically way downplayed as a source of wisdom and social/personal growth. Most of all - common Joy! In kindergarten or in the club, on stage or in any room.

¹⁰⁶ Laura Kalbag - <https://laurakalbag.com/you-wont-believe-what-happens-next/> 2019

¹⁰⁷ Anna Stiede - Interview - „Unser Hirn leidet “ - Freitag .de - 05/2018

Art is beyond these words...Art itself is beyond significance...but we artists are being pushed aside "from not system relevant" towards "familiar irrelevance", as life can go on without us - "live artists". There are so many sources of cultural interaction these days. From the old good book to ZDF digital room.

Is Live Performance Art / mediation even being missed? By whom?

The garbage collectors are indeed system relevant and they are Culture as well. Artists, on stage or not, do not have a monopoly on Culture!

For how long can we say that they, the public, don't know what they are missing?

Are they going to come back? They might, if we offer something distinguishable.

Fifth conclusion:

The dancing and singing bodies are NOT to be optimized or sold!

SMART BODIES

"Smartwatches", "smart drugs," smart cities", "smartphones", and the list go on. "*How numerous are the things that I do not need*". Who said this? Socrates! And suddenly I wish to be dumb...

Despite the gigantic effort of Big Techs to make us believe the contrary, the best defense of our body (as in the sense of respecting and treasuring it) is: "*you can't eat (yet) anything on your computer screen.*" Quote from musician and creative technologist Matt Black. Probably inspired by "*You can't eat money*". Unsophisticated words perhaps, but right to the point.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ "What do futurists imagine for the post-coronavirus-pandemic world?" - Deutsche Welle - www.dw.com - 02.04.2020

Many transhumanists defend the idea that we as humans should emancipate ourselves from the tangible body, breaking free the biological boundaries. From online chimaera/hybrids to clones. But some transhumanists are fairly close to the notion of controlling race, as seen in eugenics, as they plea for technological augmentations without proper research on the ethical consequences.

Sixth conclusion:

Who is going to have access to the "smart" technology, especially on a planet where the resources for many of these technologies are becoming scarcer?

For the sake of "smart" technology, one needs a whole lot of dumb companies extracting lithium from the earth's core.

FINAL HOMEOSTASIS OF MINE

There is always a fine line between analyzing an existing situation or trying to predict one that is still to come. Ultimately, theories are eloquent guesswork.

And here we are theorizing again about what has changed or what might change, but not offering a new delusional unbeatable thesis, with clear propositions. I am on a search for one or many, with a dash of cyber-utopianism. Relativism? No, I'm just looking for non-binary options that leave me room to experiment with every fiber of my aging body.

From Postmodernism to Posthuman theory, from Transhumanism to Posthumanism the notion of "loss of agency" by the human being became not only the cause but the reason, the meta-narrative to stop resisting "machine control".

Seventh conclusion:

Submission to machine logic as the potential continuity of our own path on this planet and beyond is one thing,

but submitting to monopolies as old as the Prussians and Victorians, and their colonizing methods is another thing. Long Live Death in Life? Half alive zombies with a brand new PlayStation and Windows VR Oculus are my worst nightmare. Technological subservience towards...G.A.F.A.sss? My opinion here is very organic and loud. I answer NO.

Acknowledging that we are ourselves systems integrated with other systems might be sold as something new by "post-post" theories but native primitive indigenous societies still know it, despite all steps to colonize their beliefs and all the attempts to erase their culture. I don't think human-kind is in the middle of any universe, either vertical, horizontal, diagonal or/and spiraling ones. But I do not suppose it should be erased either, as some post-human theorists (tend) to wish.

Is my "NO" motivated only by survival instinct? Perhaps. My cynicism is too corrosive, I can't allow it to take over. Internal self-regulation to praise my human agency.

COMPLETE AGENT

"People were made to shine, not to die of hunger" Caetano Veloso¹⁰⁹

The human body in all its wonders is "what" in the AI field is referred to as the "Complete Agent" - a complete agent Bot would mean in this case a Bot that senses its environment with all senses, has reflexes and acts upon what is sensed as well as what is asked of it. So far, we deal with Bots* that cannot sense or feel, although they can make calculations beyond our capabilities.

Neoliberalist society wants us to unhinge, to envy the Bots* as something outside of ourselves. Better than ourselves. But we are already the complete agents in all our diversity, namely all bodies with a single atom.

¹⁰⁹ Caetano Veloso - Song: "Gente" - 1977

ATOM _FROM THE MACRO TO THE MICRO

My eighth and final conclusion:

My plea perhaps, besides all the practical tips and reflections displayed here:

Shall we go back to small? Resize/rethink our network, since globalization is actually tearing us apart?

Then you might slow your motion when the world is spinning in time-lapse. Go analog! Go real!

Build a hazmat suit made of colorful plastic straws, but don't allow your body to become the chair you are sitting in...

No "*Retrotopia*" in mind here (there was more future in the past).¹¹⁰

Just reality - *critical intervention in reality*.

There are other possibilities...thru the fibred optic cables and thru all our bodies and identities.

Anyhow, we could also create that last refuge...

Dancing and singing,

as real as bleeding

relentlessly non-digitalizable.

¹¹⁰ Reference to Zygmunt Bauman - *Retrotopia* 2017 (wishing to go back to the past since future seems too dark...)

AFTERWORD

Art that does not speak relentlessly of freedom falls into the binary choices of today's main online platforms. Who does not claim for freedom will be the involuntary slave of the virtual shopping center.

Art that makes us sense freedom in our very core is the one to be defended. The other "styles" have enough representation. My pro bono work here. I represent the pirates on and offline who want to surf non-stop in democratic data clouds or condensed vapour ones.

After all what differentiates us from online influencers, besides the number of followers?

When it comes to the public virtual rooms, online posting is actually only uploading content. Distribution of content is carried out by Bots*, in the interests of their creators. Our dearest words - share, like, love - are being damaged, recalibrated for specific purposes and often enough giving us the illusion of being socially active.

Mainstream platforms "lives" for free? No. Everyone who will get to see it pays with their privacy and data, if we are not thorough about the tools we use.

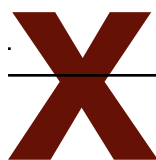
Got nothing to hide? Online privacy is not about hiding anything, it is about collective autonomy, and it is about maintaining rights before there are none left.

Are we willing to commodify everything? Our dances, our songs, our plays beyond any right to subjectivity and poetry?

Self-purpose and self-promotion should not permeate our fundamental decisions. Especially not as educators, when citizenship is being flattened to buying, obeying and clicking buttons.

Possibilities? Change the settings, look for alternative online platforms, support open-source software, learn to code, gain some algorithmic literacy, go back to the analog or real world, and fight for self-determination where there can be some.

Choices don't have to be binary oriented, they are multidimensional and always in motion.



By RebelLog - MMXXI

SONG TEXT - FOLLOW MÒI POETRY SLAM

(audio only online)

Fall fall - follow - I fall - you follow - follow mòi - follow the button

Why...Why ...don't you follow me

I want you... to follow mòi... Why

Why don't you like my pics

I want you to like my pics

I want you to like my page

I want you to love my whys...

This virtual love affair

aint nothing but unfair

The real / tangible me or

what IT appears to be

will take any kind of affection

that huge emoticons collection

with horns, wings and bad Sundays

with fear and tears in all three monkeys

don't role model me but

follow me, re post me,

silicon me valley me, If I fall would you follow me

*As capitalist entanglements evolve
And the taste of things devolves
Frustration appears as a controllable feeling
While the next self-sale is already appealing*

*Promoting yourself online is a suck up job
Success tricks you through a brief heartthrob
Faking interest to get some attention
and believing in a subjective virtual ascension*

*Algorithms giving you a shallow sense of self
You barely liking your wall nor anybody's else
Undownloadable experiences are waiting to be gained
Offline, full of trouble and with some joy to be maintained*

*Questioning without proper intention
In this no one is going to listen intervention
Deepening the curvature of her spine
Here is a slave to the posting shit online*

*I create to the clouds, to the A.I. aliens to come
to upset the stablished order of some
my poetry - out of selections
commercial irrelevance is my biggest transgression*

We are so much more than the sum of some of our data.

Servers?

*Is that what we call the data farms? Really?
a word that should be as dead as the Pharaohs.*

Now who is serving who?

*The word "Face"
the word "Book",
words with embodiment... texture
Are they now patents?
If I write this here am I offering the idea to do it so?*

*No, they don't have the rights to use the words "share"
Or "like" or "love", to complete de-materialize it. Even less Laughing Out Loud or
DLNIW = Dancing Like No One Is Watching.*

"Amazon"... "Surfing". "Stream"! Stop stealing our words...

*They took ALPH*BET as well.
G**gle, acting like a misspelled genius God.*

*I can see why most of us wish to adore G**gle the God, and its infinite wisdom.*

4th dimensional omnipresent search machine for wisdom.

I appreciate the goods this "Godgle" does for me with its uncountable blessings

and how privileged I am to hear FKA Twigs explaining to me what Caravaggio painted.

*G**gle graciously offering audio descriptions to the visual impaired, oh yes I was blind... The hairs in the back of my neck say thank you.*

And as we do with Gods, I accept that my fate is in his rich white hands. Freaking Ah-men. From Earth 2 Cloud.

LOOKING OUTDATED?

LowCase_ i SUPPORT UPPERCASE OUTDATEs.Reversed F.O.M.O.

I wanna surf real waters. And >I had it with trying to stay updated.

Let me fall, behind. Let me sc_roll

Devouring energy and not

Providing anything

In return.

How is it

Possible to imagine

"A" sustainable anything?

No mathematical logic

No reliability

Enough

With

Supporting rich bitches

I am not sponsoring anyone's house in mars

Let's

End

This

Here

If

My LAST DANCE is going to be online with the spineless disembodied stupidity of an avatar.

How are we going to deal with bots with only one memory?

Long term... forever...What a waste

there is an extraordinary amount of data to be forgotten...

Hacker_____ Nature_____ Cracking-----

...the fine line between the utopian possibility of getting it right

and the reluctant not wanting to know - how.

We stopped crying about the real wars. I can't remember when it started thou.

We pay to watch new filmed scenes of the same wars,

Then we cry. WE weep!

Revival revival!

Too long already in the simulation...we are addicted to enjoy only our fake kind of suffering.

To build something_____ is so complex and slow_____ (paced);

to destroy it just a click!!!

And we are living in a world of far to empowered clicks.

Score of a Pas de Deux to make Bots envious:

I fall you follow

you hear

me

you turn the head you spiral the trunk you follow me

you roll you

come closer you want to kiss I roll back

you hold me carelessly - you hesitate - you insist

you hold me

then you embrace me?

you pull down my mask and say fuck it

Eyes focused precisely on the smells

How to code poesy? Zeros with minuses and ones with co(m)ma something.

ENVY's hem·or·rhage

*Bots trying to be human
Humans trying to be Bots
both sides of the same anthropomorphic cliché
Data Star Trek...integration*

*Envious Bots are the ones who are going to eliminate us. If...
7 CAPITAL Sins++
Envy, sadness
more or less...
passion that incinerates the ones who sense the sensing of it*

*Envy makes you wish to be that person,
that thing, so you hate that thing.*

*Bots who feel envy
are going to be the ones I respect.
I want them to envy my body.
Would they be able to control the ugliness of obsessive meta aware thoughts,
applauding ridiculous compulsions and condemning ridiculous virtues?
Nerve cells warpath fighting to appear neutral on the outside*

*Teach the Bots the painfulness of envy...
Or is it to sarcastic to teach them any pain
To implant arthrodes in their nodes and joints?
Bend their knees again and again - motion range freezing them in time.
Being out of cartilage credit.*

Pain shall not be eliminated but assimilated! Resistance to pain is futile...

In this despicable age them bots are learning to knowhow—of... us

Could we possibly be more self-centered?

Here I am fascinated by my own sensitiveness...

My circus of Bot Clowns just entered.

To make Bots envious of me.

ME as the most noble representation of how humans could be.

ME egotripping deep learning... :-))(((and “sharing” it

Then someone films me

from outside

and inside, x raying

My clowns weep

My hair decorated with nano chips

a funky smile framed by your lips.

Everyone fascinated with my recent bought 3D print hyper realistic mask of my very own face in my hands

The event of events

Then deception & inception 1 and 2 and 3 and mirrors filming mirrors

with my virtual perception.

Videos of algorithms running codes running,

poor brain tries to keep up with

the visions

start getting blurry - online fatigue to be watched “live”

Colonize me! Woman, third world origins of origins, chaos city Rio school

Colonize me again.

Am I colonized again?

now by Bots?

It would be rather easy since I have a very well-developed minority complex - a successful first colonization side effectX.

But no,

Nyet & not again

It might kill me this time.

*They will be envious of me
coz I know that I am un-optimizable &
struggling to be unpredictable*

Can one colonize what is complete?

So, I am not complete.

*Bots are not (already) superior as the predominant white male in business ventures are trying to make us believe
(Scene: Reckless rage full of envy - Programmers / Bots screaming: I am superior, I am more, I am the first, I scream - envy of envy -
the apology of Envy and Pride - The event of Envy. The revival of Envy)
Are our bots being programmed by idiots? Or am I envious of these geniuses?*

*How can they possibly know my perspective?
I did not program the programmers.*

*I don't wish bots to be only envious of my body,
but envious of the body of flowers, and bees, and rocks and trees.
Envious of them like I am: Appreciating other existences, wishing to be them sometimes, to the point of envy, still...*

*That is my approach, beyond humanism and anthropocentrism.
I wish all sort of imperfections that makes me smile.*

*Sitting alone on the toilet's floor with the head sinking into the sit, crying and craving at 4 in the morning, knowing how spasmodic
and pathetic a body can be, landing on hospital with a trembling thumb sensing a tree being cut down, burned alive, a river sensing
that poison is taking over its waters, its veins.*

*Sensing "not ever being superior to anything".
Stagnation to this poetic hemorrhage, finally... I got to stop it*

I want Us_Bots in the future to be finally conscious of not being superior to anything.

The more the few want to have the less the many are allowed to have, and this is an exponential rate, like aging, like toilette paper rolls, time passing faster when the end keeps getting near.

*Remember the markets +
Selling the markets, remember +
The beauty of greens and blues now in sofas you wish to have.
Remember the market selling the markets +
To sell all things to more people with more things ++
Remember the full wallets+++++++ remember having none, remember not having
one single - + -*

*Reminisce one day reflecting about online Amaz*n's expansion
the other one-Amazon devastated, burned alive for the sake of the first one.
Remember the silent scream of trees? You heard it!
One Amazon giving birth to the other - generations renewed

survival of the ugliest.*

They have been telling us:

*Machado de Assis: " **We are doomed to judge and be judged**"*

*Camus: "**We should live to the point of tears**"*

*Rilke: "**Let everything happen to you, beauty and terror**"*

*Bots: **01000111100**. Which takes you to twitt*r cluster path of most used words in English somewhen - <https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~ark/TweetNLP/paths/01000111100.html>*

27 words, 342,081 tokens

Words in frequency order

1 thought 319,814

2 dreamed 4,614

3 dreamt 4,096

4 assumed 3,254

...the same sad/madness?

Living in a dream of sustainability and all I produce is consumption.

Me-like-emoticon too busy with the tagging of the things I didn't really do. Draining online living. Passive realness, hyperactive avatar

In my natural environment ... in my virtual environment...in my head environment...

We are being judged all the time ...

within tiny frames of time

all the time on going.

Troubled mind you say...I 'd say my mind is so much more than troubled.

Lately, the hostility of vomiting emoticons on online posts that matter to me can spoil my whole day. I know it is sad (cynical ton blin blon)! I have seen it so many times, that it is becoming significant.

Affections for dummies - the algorithms making me dumb,

I dammed them to be dumb right back. I really want out.

CRYPTO TRIBE - VIRUSES ONLINE ARE NOT HARMFUL!

Colonial perspective
 me slave again - - -
 me colonizing and colonized at the same time
 The whole globe connected?
 Or the whole half globe? A third?
 24 / 7
 Everything
 I see in the w.w.w. shop window
 everything I don't have
 popping up in the browser pop ups,
 versus my body sitting and solidifying
 body becoming chair

Questioning and self-questioning without threshold...that's what I do.

I can't help it. I can't help myself neither.

Please don't misunderstand me.

Opening the scar until it is inside out. I need to see it

?

Do the Bots* in the netz enjoy something out of our videos online?

Any subjectivity appreciation or humor?

Gosh I forgot that I need humor.

Or do they just take the metadata? Where, when, how, how old, how often...to whom? To deliver that perfect ad: why the bother with data accumulation and nudging? Diet pills and age / sex ads always work, right?

My house producing waste - my virtual house producing waste - I have doubled my waste. Why again?

I need to pay attention to my metadata!

When did it all started? Streaming instead of dreaming

My closest interfacing with nature at the moment are with mosquito bites

Beat me, bite me, bit me bit by bit erase me delete me

Art does not wish to be politicized

but it seems artistic creativity is no longer needed

Gathering is no longer needed.

Nature only a cultural misconception

Bodies Data in apps

*the pulse of a full population online
Only wales are able to hear it.*

and yet our body is the same flesh.

*Dancing always - just consumed my body,
with some severe chronic bone degradation - all On-paper, On-XRay. On Data*

*Some minimal energy was necessary to play music and a light bulb in the room if it was already night...
Now all our dancing On-line could potentially become a product of G+ogle Chromx.
Time for them to read my terms and condition.*

***Leave the moon alone! Evil to come
there is more
evil to come if you don't leave the moon alone
trying to escape the space to face the face web.com
scape from the co. that don't want to leave the moon alone
More evil to come.
Who gave you allowance to grab 2 kilos of rocks from the moon?
Why wasn't I consulted about it? Shouldn't it be the reason for a worldwide moon referendum?***

*When I was small"er" I loved to dig earth...
Dig dig - Unknown magmas like our own magma
thick ancient unguent stuff in form of a tongue
bleeding flow
bleeding
out*

We grab more energy everyday and we don't give anything in return.
 I sense the bleeding. Sometimes the trembling
 Sorry but sustainability is not going to be my religion
 No cliché spirituality this time - no dragon beast with 7 heads.
 Under my feet earth, while it lasts
all I need to believe.

Sometimes taking my notebook with one arm and having its bottom supported by my waist line makes me think of babies...and I feel uncomfortable... should I?

Predictable - Unpredictable - subjective binarity?

*I am not an optimist!
 After collecting all the necessary data to conclude
 that pessimism does fascinate me
 I am not, not neutral either
 my thoughts are never static
 continuously travelling hectic bugs
 initiating motion and sounds
 expanding and contracting
 with a truly embodied philosophy.
 Such fun: To take that leap for a second, resist gravity initiating a jump with hope and pleasure. Then regretting it, and judging it, even
 before its landing. Oh, my poetic Zepto-seconds saving me to decide "ever" if I am an optimist.*

From permafrost melting Siberia

*to Cyber-ia Utopic Dystopia Hysteria
constant metamorphosis in front of my eyes
with virtual reluctant butterflies*

Are we the useful idiots of it all?
Or are we the pavers of a necessary utopia road to hell?

We are the bots!

All the unsaved experiences - no storage anymore, meanwhile a robot looking at me like a never aging playmobile thing. Sorry but no, thank you. I just hate it. I hereby order you to let my digital soul be extinguished. You can have a fossil or two though.

AS EVER, THE MOST NOBEL ARTIST IS THE STREET ONE, ONLY OFFERING... TAKING COINS - BEGGING. NO SPECIAL SPACE, NO SPECIAL LIGHTS, NO SPECIAL PROJECT NO ONLINE TOOLS, NO POLLUTION. THE "NATIVE ARTIST" IS NEVER WATCHED AND YET BRILLIANT AND SUSTAINABLE.

HOW TO BE THE ANTI-PRODUCT?

*H. i. d. i. n. g. y o u r c r. e. a. t i o n s. ?
And if no one listen to me ever, or read these lines,
did my anti product started existing or ever existed?*

*G*FA, pharma industry, designer babies of normativity keepers fathers soon in sale: 7.000 embryos in Fertility XX California - Dream babies to buy and the right drug to deal with the screams. Also available: a scream-less baby!*

BODY CORPORATION

The body of corporation

The corporation of bodies

people are not products

except they are

The real is lost in the poisoned rivers... in our cells everywhere is poison, in the skin a coat of venom, given to us in tiny homeopathic portions in the water just to keep us half alive and half addicted

Are < our bodies obsolete in virtual space?

Or is virtual space obsolete in > our bodies?

Input - Output - and what gets stuck in the middle

The near future of art?

Me posting this and

You not reading (?)

Does art exist without the public?

(I am over 50

and it is not my fault

I did not contribute to

this entropy of meaning everywhere

Or did I?)

It is very tricky for me
to be half real animal
and half something virtual, je ne se quoi
A subject without objectives, an object without subjectivity
All the time being objectified
by chatbots

O corpo é essa mistura de orgasmo e espirro

Coragem pra ser vulnerável
Vontade de falar Portugues de novo...

I see	ge	<u>WE are as</u>	liquids	out
a film	on	<u>autonomous as we</u>	leak	...
and	the	<u>could never be!</u>	out	or
when	mirror		sometimes	not...
it	display			
is	my	we	we	black out.
over	face	are	can't	
I	seems	not	contain	
see	so	a	energy	
my	foreigner	container		
ima	to	so	it	
	me	the	leaks	

I N T E R V I W E E S

(Interview videos only online at www.wearethebots.net)

Christine Mayerhofer - Interview - in German

Digital Artist, Creative Producer and System Developer. Her artwork includes among others: Light Installations, 3D Projection Mapping, Generative Motion Graphics, Virtual Reality & Augmented Reality. She also teaches Creative Coding among others at the Mainz University since 2019.

Daisy Kidd - Interview - in English

Daisy Kidd Project Lead for the Youth and Technology project at Tactical Tech, a Berlin-based NGO that investigates the evolving impact of technology on society.

Tactical Tech is a non-profit organization at the intersection of technology, human rights and civil liberties.

Laura Schelenz - Interview - in German

Laura's research deals with ethical and feminist perspectives on technology development. Her dissertation at the University of Tübingen conceptualizes and questions "diversity-aware technology" from a Black feminist perspective. She has worked in conflict research and human rights advocacy in different organizations in Germany.

Marco Donnarumma - Interview - in English

Italian performance artist, new media artist and scholar based in Berlin, Germany. His work focuses on the connection between the body, politics, and technology. His performances combine sound, computation, and biotechnology.

Naoto Hieda - Interview - in English

Live coding performer, Hieda is a Japanese artist based in Cologne, Germany. His research interest lies within algorithmic and procedural expressions bridging neurodiversity, digital media, body movements and analog fabrication.

Peter Weissenburger - Interview - in German

Journalist / editor for Society and Media sections at Taz Newspaper and freelance author for radio. His work focuses on media and digital themes as well as gender and sexuality, language and culture, and right-wing populism.

Philipp Schulte - Interview - in German

Professor with focus on scenography and performance theory at the Norwegian Theatre Academy (Fredrikstad), Guest Professor for scenography at the University of Design Karlsruhe and Managing Director of the Hessian Theatre Academy (Frankfurt/M.) Schulte has taught theater theory at various universities in Germany and Norway.

Wolf Singer - Interview - in English

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Wolf Singer, Neurophysiologist and brain researcher. Director and Scientific Member at the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research (since 1981). Founding Director of the Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies (FIAS), Frankfurt (2004), Founding Director of the Ernst Strüngmann Forums and the Ernst Strüngmann Institute (ESI) in Frankfurt, and Senior Fellow of the Ernst Strüngmann Institute. His work is devoted to deciphering the neural basis of cognitive function.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Short Bio - Gilda Rebello / alias RebelLog

Highlights of her career were the **Folkwang Tanzstudio** and the **Tanztheater Wuppertal** (guest) under the direction of **Pina Bausch**. At the **Theater Dortmund** she performed as main soloist in "*Maria de Buenos Aires*", among many other productions until 2010. In 2014/15 she toured as singer / dancer / actress with the multimedia project "*Der Blaue Reiter ist gefallen*" (premiere at the "**Kunst Museum Solingen**"). Also, in 2014 she choreographed the piece "*Shakespearean MIXConceptions*" for the "**Young Dansart Company**" at the **Theater Gütersloh**. In **Solingen Concert Hall** she performed as singer at the vernissage of the photographer "K.-H. W. Steckelings" '*PinaBausch backstage*'.

In 2015 she was head of training in the **Braunschweig Theater** and assistant of the choreography "*Welcome To Your World*" (nominated for the "**Deutscher Theaterpreis DER FAUST 2015**" in the category "*Best Choreography*"). She studied dance, music and acting in Rio, with further education at **Folkwang University**. In 2018 she completed her M.A. in "*Contemporary Dance Education*" at the **HfMDK in Frankfurt**. As a musician she works under the alias **RebelLog**, and also collaborated with **Alien Café** and **Tape Five**, on several albums and world tours.

In 2020, during the Corona crisis she has created 2 small videos/music: 1. *Fado Atlantico* - published on the online site of **Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch** and 2. "*Cicada in Quarantine MMXX*" co-produced with **Gallus Theater** in Frankfurt. With the support of the "**Hessische Kultur Stiftung**" the third and final phase of the "Motoric Poetry Project (non-visual induced dance)" will be published in March 2021. The project consists of original music compositions with voice-overs - a kind of podcast tool that combines sound and poetry to promote movement & dance taking into account different types of physicalities.

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