

2013

Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme

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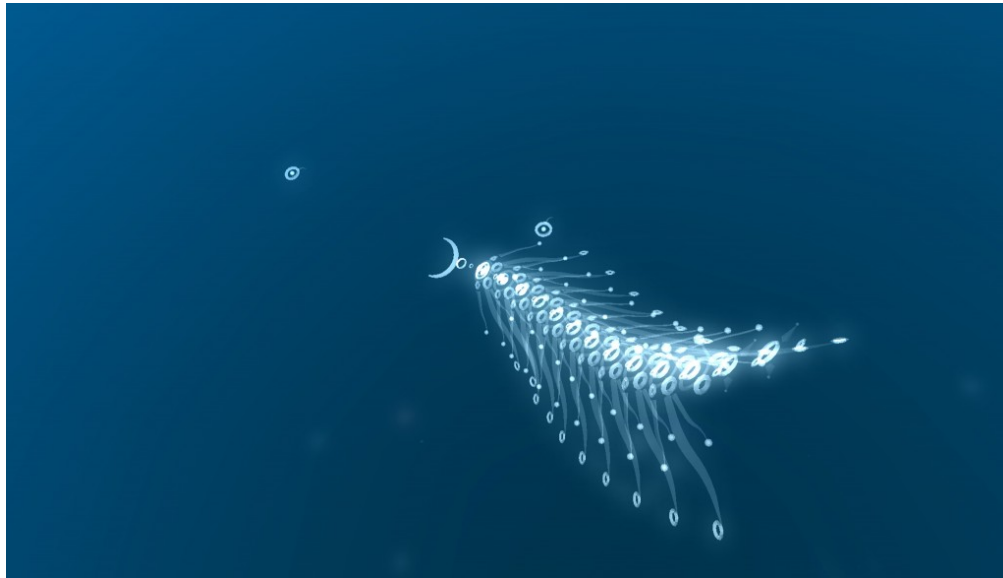
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Exhibition Info

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/exhibition-info/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized



Jenova Chen (Chinese, born 1981) with thatgamecompany and Nicholas Clark, game design, “fLOW,” 2007, PlayStation®3 video game, screenshot courtesy of the artist. © thatgamecompany and PlayStation®3

Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme

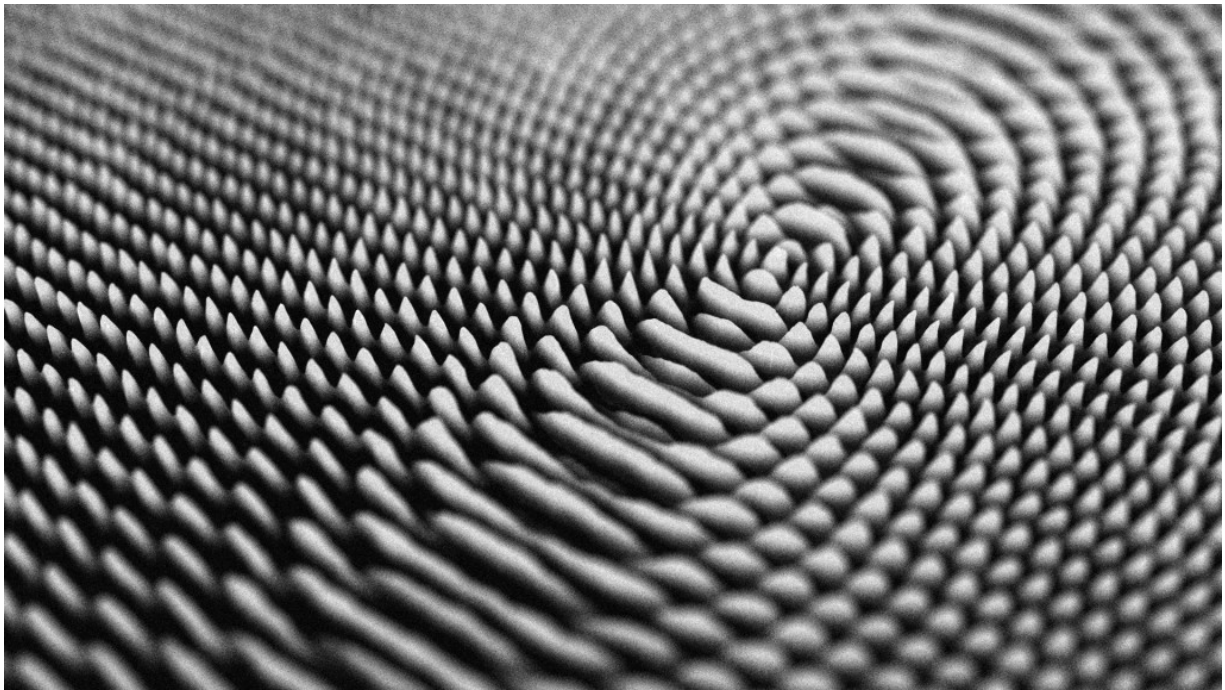
Joel and Lila Hamett Museum of Art
University of Richmond Museums, VA
January 29 to June 28, 2013

Psychologist [Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi](#) first used the term “flow” in 1975 to describe “being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz.” Accordingly, this experience of single-minded immersion in an activity that is continuously challenging and rewarding is the secret to a vigorous and satisfying life.

Also referred to as “being in the zone,” this state of flow is the launching point for this exhibition and online catalogue, which present a variety of media involving kinetic forms, non-static content generation, visitor interaction, and collective states of being. Twenty-four works of art by twenty-one artists of national and international origin explore a range of definitions and applications of the word “flow,” from dynamism and movement to ideas and communication.

The exhibition is organized by University of Richmond Museums and curated by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, Deputy Director and Curator of Exhibitions, University Museums. The exhibition and programs are made possible in part by the University’s Cultural Affairs Committee, and funds from the Louis S. Booth Arts Fund. Additional support has been provided by grants from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia and the Austrian Cultural Forum, Washington, DC.

Director's Foreword



Semiconductor Ruth Jarman (British, born 1973) and Joe Gerhardt (British, born 1972), Stills from "20Hz," 2011, 5:00 minutes, color sound (stereo), HD video, Courtesy of Semiconductor and LUX, London. © Semiconductor

We are pleased to present this exhibition and online catalogue of work in various media including video, sound, installation, sculpture, painting, and photography by twenty-one artists of national and international origin. The exhibition uses the psychological state of flow as a launching point to examine related definitions and applications, many of which involve kinetic forms, non-static content generation, visitor interaction, and collective states of being.

Today's constant bombardment of information made possible through digital access, the mixing of previously distinct cultures and ideas, and the increasing speed and ease of global travel has produced a simultaneous and continuous flow of both physical and non-physical entities. To be a socially and politically engaged person, partaking in this flow seems mandatory. Living "off-the-grid" in most economically developed societies is largely a conscious choice, requiring fortitude and foresight, particularly if one wants to communicate with others while taking oneself out of the flow.

Because the word "flow" is an apt and often-used term to describe this constant state of activity, an examination of the word's many meanings and applications seems appropriate for contemporary artists, viewers, and readers. The possibilities are as endless as the word's many definitions, such as to move freely, circulate, appear graceful, derive, be plentiful, flood, and rise.

Appreciation is extended to all who have contributed both directly and indirectly to this exhibition, catalogue, and related programming. We thank the many artists, collectors, and gallery dealers and staff who not only lent the artwork for the exhibition but also assisted throughout in the formation of the project. The exhibition's curator, N. Elizabeth Schlatter, Deputy Director and Curator of Exhibitions,

University Museums, would especially like to thank the artists who participated in interviews for the catalogue. Appreciation is also extended to Schuyler Swartout '11, who assisted with initial exhibition research and to Sarah Matheson, '13, who conducted several of the interviews and was integral in planning the related programs that will take place during the run of the exhibition. Many people contributed to the formation and completion of *Flow, Just Flow*; please see the full list presented on the [Acknowledgements](#) page.

The exhibition and programs are made possible in part by the University's Cultural Affairs Committee, funds from the Louis S. Booth Arts Fund, and the University's Department of Art and Art History. Additional support has been provided by grants from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia and the Austrian Cultural Forum, Washington, DC. At the University of Richmond, our special appreciation goes to Dr. Edward L. Ayers, President; Dr. Stephen Allred, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Dr. Kathleen Roberts Skerrett, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, for their continuing guidance and support of the University Museums, comprising the Joel and Lila Harnett Museum of Art, the Joel and Lila Harnett Print Study Center, and the Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature.

As always, we give our thanks to the staff of the University Museums, each of whom has effortlessly and creatively mastered the technological and communication challenges that this project required.

Richard Waller
Executive Director
University of Richmond Museums

Programs

 flowjustflow.com/programs-2/

University Museums programs take place on the campus of the University of Richmond. All programs are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted.

JANUARY

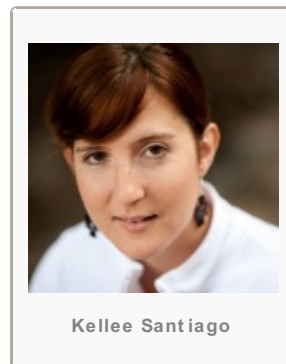
Monday, January 28, 7 to 9 p.m.

7 p.m., Lecture, [Camp Concert Hall, Modlin Center for the Art](#)

“Flow in Games and in Life” featuring [Kellee Santiago](#), Partner at Indie Fund, video game designer, producer, and co-founder and former president of thatgamecompany

8 to 9 p.m., Opening reception and preview of the exhibition *Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme*, [Harnett Museum of Art, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

Watch Santiago’s talk at the University of Richmond



FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 3, 2 to 3 p.m.

iPad® Workshop, [Harnett Museum of Art, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

“Guided Gaming” featuring [Nathan Altice](#), '05, media art and text scholar

Bring your own iPad® or borrow one of ours. Free, but registration required, call Heather Campbell, Curator of Museum Programs, University Museums, 804-287-6324 or email hcampbel@richmond.edu

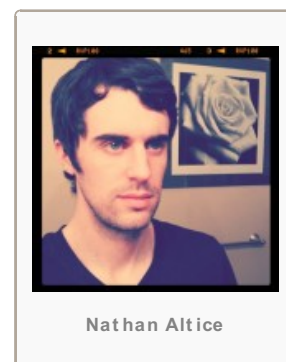


Sunday, February 24, 2 to 4 p.m.

Creativity Workshop, [Keller Hall Reception Room, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

“Workshop on Flow in Creativity and Art.” [Sue Johnson](#), artist and professor of art and art history, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Free, but registration required, call Heather Campbell, Curator of Museum Programs, University Museums, 804-287-6324 or email hcampbel@richmond.edu



Tuesday, February 26, 12 to 1:15 p.m.

Artist’s Talk and Dance Demonstration, [Harnett Museum of Art, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

“Flow in Dance” featuring [Jessica Lang](#), dancer and choreographer

Flow in Dance featuring [Jessica Lang](#), dancer and choreographer.

MARCH

Friday, March 1, 7pm through Sunday, March 3, 7pmRVAGAMEJAMS presents “Flow Jam,” 804RVA 1657 W. Broad Street, Richmond, VA

Participants are invited to design video games inspired by the exhibition. All levels of design and programming experience welcome. Hosted in conjunction with RVA Game Jams. To register or for more information go to www.rvgamejams.com.

Play the games that were developed at Flow Jam.

Monday, March 4, 12 to 1 p.m.Artist’s Talk, [Harnett Museum of Art, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

“trance_siberia: An Artist’s Talk” featuring [Lena Lapschina](#), artist featured in the exhibition Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme

Thursday, March 28, 8 to 10 p.m.[Harnett Museum of Art and Print Study Center, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

“Museums After Hours: College Night” featuring art activities, entertainment, music, and food for the enjoyment of college students.

Read more about the evening’s events.

APRIL

April 10, 2013, 12 to 1 p.m.

[Harnett Museum of Art, Modlin Center for the Arts](#)

Idea Lounge on the topic of “Flow.” A discussion with University of Richmond faculty and staff:

[Mavis Brown](#), Associate Professor of Education; [Emily Cobb](#), Director of Multi-faith Initiatives, University Chaplaincy; [Johann Stegmeir](#), Assistant Professor of Theatre



Sue Johnson



Jessica Lang



Lena Lapschina

College Night: Museums After Hours

 flowjustflow.com/college-night-museums-after-hours/

The University Museums will be opening its doors late this coming Thursday evening, March 28th, for its first ever “College Night.” Visitors are invited to help us celebrate the current contemporary art exhibition, “Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme” on view in the Harnett Gallery. The night will highlight Jenova Chen’s “fIOW,” a PS3 video game featured in the exhibition, as well as the two other thatgamecompany video games, “Flower” and “Journey,” made available just for this night. In addition to these video games, the University Museums will welcome local game jammers who have created games based on the concept of flow. Games of other sorts (janga, board games, etc.) will be offered as well.

The museums will also be welcoming two student organizations, [Choeur du Roi](#) acapella group and [Subject to Change](#) improv troupe, who will be performing throughout the course of the night. Visitors can also expect food and drinks provided outside of the gallery.

This event is for both new and returning visitors- don't miss out!





U-Ram Choe (Korean, born 1970), "Jet Hiatus," 2008, Scientific name: Anmorosta Cetorhinus maximus Uram, stainless steel, acrylic, circuits, synthetic resins, acrylic paint, CPU, LED board, motor, approximately 35" x 7.25' x 33" / 88 x 222 x 85 cm, edition of 5, collection of Jonathan Carroll, Courtesy of bitforms gallery, New York. © U-Ram Choe

Follow news and press related to the exhibition

Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme

- [Exhibition Press Release](#)
- Richmond's [StyleWeekly](#) features "Flow."
- [WRIR](#) interview with the curator
- [Play the games developed](#) at the RVA Games "Flow Jam"
- [RVAGAMEJAMS](#) presents "Flow Jam"
- [The Collegian](#), University of Richmond student newspaper, features "fLOw."
- [Richmond Arts Review](#) interviews the curator of the exhibition
- [University of Michigan School of Art & Design](#) highlights [Michael Flynn](#)
- [artdaily.org](#) highlights the exhibition
- [Kellee Santiago, videogame innovator, speaks to WRIC TV8](#) (Richmond, VA) about "flow" and videogame design.
- Nathan Cushing for the [RVA News](#) interviews Kellee Santiago, videogame innovator. Cushing says "Most people go their entire lives avoiding a public row with Roger Ebert. Kellee Santiago isn't one of those people." [Read more about Santiago and her upcoming talk](#) on Monday, January 28, 7 to 8 p.m., Camp Concert Hall, Modlin Center for the Arts, University of Richmond.

Acknowledgements

 flowjustflow.com/about-3/acknowledgements/

We are grateful to the artists who participated in the interviews for this online catalogue, and we appreciate their assistance, as well as that of the collectors, dealers, and distributors who kindly offered their services to bring this project to fruition.

The exhibition and programs are made possible in part by the University's Cultural Affairs Committee and funds from the Louis S. Booth Arts Fund. Additional support has been provided by grants from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia and the Austrian Cultural Forum, Washington, DC.

We would like to thank the following people for their support throughout the development of this exhibition, related programs, and online catalogue:

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Dana Greenidge, Boston
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Laura Leffler, Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York
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Lauren Vincelli and Will Blanton, RVA Game Jams, Richmond, VA
Sarah Walzer, Salon 94 Bowery, New York

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Mavis Brown, Associate Professor of Education
Carolyn Burruss, Interior Design Manager
Emily Cobb, Director of Multi-faith Initiatives, University Chaplaincy
Nancy Colon, International Taxation Officer
Myra Daleng, Director of Dance
Pam Harper, Manager, Telecom and Multimedia Services
Sarah Matheson, '13, studio art major and art history minor
Robert S. McAdams, Program Coordinator, Joan Oates Institute for Partners in the Arts
Robert K. Nelson, Director, Digital Scholarship Lab
Hil Scott, Media Production Coordinator, Information Services
Phil Sherman, Senior Engineer, Telecom and Multimedia Services
Johann Stegmeir, Associate Professor of Theatre
Schuyler Swartout, '11, philosophy major
Diana Vincelli, Director of Grant Support, Foundation, Corporate, and Government Relations
Doug West, Vice President, Telecom and Multimedia Services

University of Richmond Museums

Heather Campbell, Curator of Museum Programs
Katreena Clark, Operations Manager
Denisse De Leon, Coordinator of Museum Visitor and Tour Services
Stephen Duggins, Museum Preparator
Henley Guild, Museum Preparator
David Hershey, Assistant Collections Manager
Matthew Houle, Curator of Museum Collections
N. Elizabeth Schlatter, Deputy Director and Curator of Exhibitions
Richard Waller, Executive Director

Object List

 flowjustflow.com/about-3/object-list/

Flow, Just Flow: Variations on a Theme

Joel and Lila Hamett Museum of Art
University of Richmond Museums, Virginia
January 29 to June 28, 2013

Object List

(dimensions denote height x width x depth)

Marco Breuer (German, born 1966)

Drag (C-1062)

2011

chromogenic paper, burned

21 1/8 x 17 3/8 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Von Lintel Gallery, New York

Untitled (C-979)

2010

chromogenic paper, scraped

11 15/16 x 9 1/4 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Von Lintel Gallery, New York

Throw (C-893)

2009

chromogenic paper, scratched

23 1/8 x 18 7/8 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Von Lintel Gallery, New York

Untitled (C-795)

2008

chromogenic paper, scratched

19 11/16 x 15 11/16 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Von Lintel Gallery, New York

Daniel Canogar (Spanish, born 1964)

Pneuma 3

2009

discarded telephone cables, wood, projector, multimedia disk, and fans

30 x 16 x 22 inches

Courtesy of bitforms gallery, New York

Jenova Chen (Chinese, born 1981)

with thatgamecompany and Nicholas Clark, game design

fIOW

2007

PlayStation@3 video game

U-Ram Choe (Korean, born 1970)

Jet Hiatus

2008

Scientific name : Anmorosta Cetorhinus maximus Uram

stainless steel, acrylic, circuits, synthetic resins, acrylic paint, CPU, LED board, and motor

approximately 35" x 7.25' x 33" inches

Collection of Jonathon Carroll, courtesy of bitforms gallery, New York

Michael Flynn (American, born 1967)

Magnetoscope

2012

cooperatively-interactive public art: solid aluminum panels (6mm thick), ferrofluid (nano-engineered magnetic liquid), neodymium magnets, transparent acrylic domes and liquid trays

58 x 30 x 36 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Jonathan Harris (American, born 1979) and **Sep Kamvar** (Persian-American, born 1977)

We Feel Fine

2006

data visualization and website

Courtesy of the artists

HINT.FM: Fernanda Viégas (Brazilian, born 1971) and Martin Wattenberg (American, born 1970)

Wind

2012

Interactive online information visualization

custom software

Courtesy of the artists

Aaron Koblin (American, born 1982)

Flight Patterns

2008

data visualization of flight patterns in United States on August 12, 2008

Courtesy of the artist and bitforms gallery, New York

Lena Lapschina (Austrian, born Russia 1965)

trance_siberia

2006

video, 180 minutes

Courtesy of the artist

Golan Levin (American, born 1972)

with Kamal Nigam and Jonathan Feinberg

The Dumpster

2006

interactive online information visualization, custom software

Courtesy of the artist and bitforms gallery, New York

Marco Maggi (Uruguayan, born 1957) and **Ken Solomon** (American, born 1971)

Micro and Soft on Macintosh Apple

2004

video, 4:01 minutes

Courtesy of Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York

Shinichi Maruyama (Japanese, born 1968)

Kusho #3

2006

archival pigment print on paper

44 1/4 x 58 1/2 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York

Kusho #18

2008

archival pigment print on paper

42 x 43 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York

Nude #8
2012
archival pigment print on paper
43 x 43 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York

Nude #9
2012
archival pigment print on paper
43 x 43 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York

Marilyn Minter (American, born 1948)

Playpen
2011
video, 20 minutes
Courtesy of the artist and Salon 94, New York

Semiconductor: Ruth Jarman (British, born 1973) and Joe Gerhardt (British, born 1972)

20Hz
2011
color, sound (stereo) HD video, 5:00 minutes
Courtesy of Semiconductor and LUX, London

Hiroshi Senju (Japanese, born 1958)

Iguaçu
2008
fluorescent and acrylic pigments on Japanese mulberry paper
107.8 x 167.7 inches
Private collection, courtesy of Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York

Katy Stone (American, born 1969)

Lunar Drift
2011
acrylic on Duralar, pins
112 x 124 x 2 inches
Courtesy the artist and Mary Ryan Gallery, New York

Silver Fall
2013
brushed aluminum
116 x 35 x 2 inches
Courtesy the artist and Mary Ryan Gallery, New York

Zimoun (Swiss, born 1977)

125 prepared dc-motors, filler wire 1.0mm
2009/2010
motors, aluminum, and steel
39 x 196 inches (16.3 feet wide)
Courtesy of the artist and bitforms gallery, New York

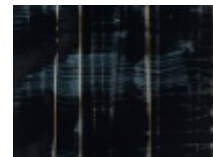
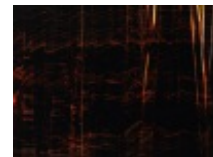
Marco Breuer

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/marco-breuer/

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Email interview with Marco Breuer conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, November 2012

Within the context of this exhibition your work initially appears to capture a sense of flow that is frozen, as if it's a snapshot of a split second of light or energy. But actually, the imagery is created through a process that takes time and effort on your part, even if the results are perhaps unpredictable. Would you mind explaining your creation of the four works in the exhibition?



In my work I subject photographic paper to a range of destructive forces. Tools have included paint scrapers (e.g. Untitled (C-979), 2010), heated metal bars (e.g. Drag (C-1062), 2011), or simply the floor of my studio (e.g. Untitled (C-795), 2008, and Throw (C-893), 2009). In order to allow for discoveries in the process of making, rather than executing pre-determined ideas, I tend to incorporate a degree of chance and push the paper to the very limit of its physical capabilities.

Are you interested at all in the concept of capturing energy within your artwork? Whether it is motion that you have generated or light or chemical reactions or heat? If so, do you think this interest informs how you decide what direction you're going to explore in terms of making an image?

My interest is in the materials' recording abilities beyond the designated purpose. For example, photographic paper is light sensitive, but it also responds to heat, pressure, etc. The deliberate misuse of materials and tools is the starting point for a negotiation between the recording material (generally, but not exclusively, photographic paper), the hand, and the tool employed.

Regarding the question above, would you mind discussing your creative process? Do you dedicate solid periods of time to make your work or is it spread out over hours/days/weeks?

The process depends entirely on the particular piece or the series I am working on. Some work requires short, repeated bursts of attention, while other work requires a month or so of doing little else. Every project has its own rhythm.

Do you look for feedback from the work itself in terms of moving onto another artwork or do you "go at it" all at once?

I certainly look for feedback: a good piece is one that leads to the next.

Do you have an idea of what you want to see as a final result before you start?

I consider the process of photographic printing not a means to an end, but rather an independent method of investigation. Stripping photography down to its bare essentials and eliminating the intermediate steps of standard photographic practice allows me to work in the present tense. I think of it as photography with the immediacy of a pencil drawing.

I'm wondering if there's a connection between how self-contained and/or complete and non-referential these artworks are and whether that mimics or is the opposite of how you work? I think what I'm asking is, do you have a sense that your purpose in making artwork is autotelic?

Of course I do this work first and foremost for myself —if you don't as an artist, I believe you're in trouble. That being said, once you choose to participate in the larger framework of art by exhibiting, lecturing, teaching, entering the discourse, external forces come into play and the term autotelic doesn't really apply anymore.

Could you talk a little bit about the concept of space? I'm thinking both in terms of the space within your artwork (the invented interplay of surface and depth) and the space in which you create. I read a quote about how you work alone and don't farm out any part of your process. You said, "This space of concentration is very important to me."¹ So I'm especially curious about if there are any connections that can be made between the isolated spaces in which you make art and the illusion of space in the art itself.

My workspace is very simple and more defined by what it is not, than by what it is. There is no telephone, no Internet, no radio, no distractions. It is little more than four walls, a sink, and a few tables. The lack of any permanent set-up prevents ruts: the space has to be reconfigured for every new project.

As for the work I certainly aim to disrupt the conventional figure-ground relationship. Many of my images constitute a negotiation of the illusionistic space of photography versus the concrete space of the physical mark. Image and support are often rendered inseparable.

[Installation of Marco Breuer: Line of Sight](#) from [FAMSF](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Marco Breuer (German, born 1966) received his academic training at the Fachhochschule Darmstadt (1988-92) and the Lette-Verein Berlin (1986-88). His work has been exhibited internationally and is in numerous collections, including the Alright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo; the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University in Cambridge; the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston; the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart, Germany. Breuer is the recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship (2006); a Japan-US Friendship Commission/NEA Creative Artists Exchange Fellowship (2005); a Carriage House Residency at the Islip Art Museum (2004); a Peter S. Reed Foundation Grant (2000); and three MacDowell Colony residencies (2003, 2001, 2000). His publication *SMTWTF* received wide critical acclaim and a photo-eye Award for Best Photography Book of 2002. In 2007, Aperture published a monograph of his work titled *Early Recordings*. Breuer currently resides in upstate New York.

Notes:

1. *Conversations 7: Marco Breuer and Carter Foster*, Pollock Gallery, Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University, 2008, p. 12. ↩

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, December 2012

Your piece *Pneuma*, fits most obviously into the theme of this exhibition because of the interplay of flowing light on the telephone cables. But more subtle is the reference to communication flow and specifically to obsolete means of communication. In a previous interview, you remarked that once, upon seeing a mountain of discarded cables at an industrial dump, “I could almost feel the buzz of all the information that had circulated through the piles of cables.”

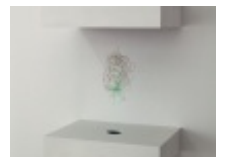
¹ What is it about conduits for conversation, amongst other kinds of technology, that appeal to you?

*I'm very interested in how technology blurs our bodily boundaries, and how communication technologies extend our sense of self. I always visualize telephones as devices that stretch out our ears through the wires. As so many of us, I'm seduced by access to the endless communication that the Internet promises, but also overwhelmed by social networking, a feeling of always lagging behind (with emails, for example) and an inability to process the barrage of information constantly being hurtled my way. The mountains of discarded cables I find in junkyards summarize that attraction/rejection I feel towards our highly networked society. Works like *Pneuma* allow me to marvel at the engineering miracle of technological communication and to regain appreciation for the almost magical quality of energy flowing through our modern communication networks.*

The word “pneuma” has various meanings derived from classical sources, including breath or breath of life, spirit or soul, and air or a mixture of air and fire that circulates in the body. You've used *Pneuma* as the title for a few related works. Can you describe what you consider pneuma to mean in relationship to these sculptures?

*Technologies that surround us seem so alive in their behavior. The Greek term “pneuma” is about the “fire of life” present in living beings. To project such a model on inert machinery is an animistic approach that I catch myself doing all the time. I rationally know these technologies are not alive, yet a part of my psyche can't help but relate to them as if they were. The *Pneuma* series is about that contradiction.*

Light, color, and movement are critical components in works such as *Pneuma* to help transform the quotidian material of telephone wires into something almost mysterious. How do you think about and determine the flow of light in these works? What kinds of effects are you seeking for the viewer's direct experience with the pieces?



When creating the Pneuma series I was attempting two kinds of effects: beads of light that imitate data transmission through cables, as well as more rapid lightning-like sparks that would suggest synaptic firings in the brain. As the series unfolded, I also became interested in video animations in red and blue hues that would remind the public of anatomical renderings of arteries and veins. The bundles of telephone cables also helped me reference other body organs: hearts, lungs, etc. I want the viewer to be surprised when discovering that there is no actual energy traveling through the cables, as well as discovering how simple the effect of lines of light scanning the cables actually is.

And the shelves that support the wires, lights, and additional hidden materials are so carefully constructed and positioned to heighten the magic of the piece. Would you ever consider these works to be like minimalist altars? And if so, what would they be dedicated to? Are they things to be revered or feared?

Pneuma's shelves were actually inspired by Donald Judd's work. When I was trying to figure out how to encase the projection equipment for this piece, I saw a Judd installation and thought how perfect it would be to have the sculptural telephone cable connecting two of his shelves. I have always felt uncomfortable with the immaculate perfection of Post-minimalism: they elicit a desire in me to "mess things up." My Spanish Catholic upbringing, more tuned to baroque excess, seeps into a lot of my work. The Pneuma series is a good example of this: It's Post-minimalism with a baroque twist. There is nothing more baroque than an optical effect, which is what the experience of light traveling through the sculptural cable really is.

By using discarded electronic materials, do you ever feel like you're sentimentalizing these objects or are their "histories" just a portion of what they contribute to a bigger idea? And why is it important that these wires be discarded as opposed to new or unused?

I'm really not into nostalgia. I rather think of my approach as using today's technology to update the old, or said in another way, an attempt to make the old look extremely new and of the present. I don't want to get stuck in nostalgia, but rather use the past to figure out how to proceed in the future. I'm particularly attracted to markings left on objects we use: such markings are witnesses to the fact that we were actually alive, triggers of otherwise evanescent memories. Discarded technologies seem to carry the memories of their past users, the voices and data that once flowed through the telephone cables for example, which is why it is important for me that in the case of Pneumas, the cables have a past.

In the same interview mentioned above, you said, "It's difficult to respect the sometimes unpredictable pace of the creative process when you have to meet exhibition deadlines, but I know my best projects are the ones in which I've really let the creative process carry me along. Sometimes I succeed and sometimes I don't. But there's nothing more thrilling and exhilarating than being swept away by the powerful torrent of creation." That statement sounds just like the experience of flow in creation that Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has researched. Is it fair to say that you experience this flow when you create? And how do you try to maximize your opportunities for unbridled creative process?

We often romanticize the creative process. It's mostly a huge struggle, sprinkled with some moments of blissful flow. I procrastinate, I meet obstacles (most of them in my mind), I am plagued with self-doubt and fear never being able to produce anything of interest again. But when I finally get on the road, take those first few steps, I lose a sense of self-awareness and become utterly absorbed by the process itself. The feeling of creative flow is so powerful that I am willing to endure the difficult prelude of getting a new art project started. I think most artists find tricks to short-circuit the difficulties; for me, it's all about paying attention. I consciously silence the inner-babble of my mind and start really focusing on my immediate environment. Walking around with my camera usually helps to open up to my surrounding, take things in and notice small details that were always there but only now have entered my consciousness. This heightened state of attention is usually the beginning of my creative flow, and in the past has led to some of my best work.

“Pneuma 3” (2009) by Daniel Canogar from [bitforms gallery](#) on [Vimeo](#).

“Flow” (2011) by Daniel Canogar from [bitforms gallery](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Daniel Canogar (Spanish, born 1964) earned a Masters in Photography from New York University and the International Center for Photography. He has exhibited in the Contemporary Art Museum Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; the Palacio Velázquez, Madrid; Max Estrella Gallery, Madrid; Filomena Soares Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal; Hamburger Bahnhof Museum, Berlin, Germany; bitforms Gallery, New York; the American Museum of Natural History, New York; the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburg; and the Borussan Contemporary Museum, Istanbul, Turkey, among many other museums and galleries. His recent work includes his interactive video projection “Asalto New York” in Brooklyn (2011); “Vortices,” a commission for Fundacion Canal Isabell II in Madrid (2011); the installation “Synaptic Passage” in the exhibition “Brain: The Inside Story” at the American Museum of Natural History in New York (2010); and two installations at the Sundance Film Festival 2011. Canogar has created numerous works of public art throughout Europe and South America.

[Read more about Canogar and his work](#)

Notes:

1. Cecilia Andersson, *Process in Dialogue: Daniel Canogar and Stephen Dean* (San Sebastian, Spain: Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa, 2010) accessible at <http://www.danielcanogar.com/entrevistas.php?lang=en> ←

Jenova Chen

 flowjustflow.com/2012/01/29/jenova-chen/

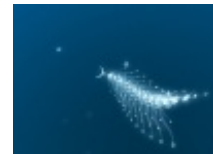
January 29, 2012 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Jenova Chen conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, January 2013

Congratulations on *fIOW* being one of the games recently acquired by MoMA's permanent collection. Does that acquisition reflect some of the goals you've had for your games and your company?



TGC [thatgamecompany] has been focusing on making games that introduce new kinds of emotional experiences. We are using video games to communicate strong feelings that are humane to our players, which I think is why people consider our games artistic. Out of all the games we've made, fIOW is considered the least artistic game out of all the games we created. fIOW is a test sample we made to prove that Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's psychology theory could be used to improve accessibility for a wide variety of users to enter a Flow state while playing games. So when it is acquired by MoMA's permanent collection, I'm somewhat confused at first since it's the least emotional game out of all the games we've made. Then I read the details that it's a collection for video game starters. I guess the mouse control made it much more accessible than the other TGC games where players have to learn how to use a controller.



With many artists making time-based work, such as video and online pieces, time is a crucial component of their work, similar to how a painter thinks about paint. When you are designing a game, does the aspect of time factor into your decisions as much as aesthetics? And if so, since time is really variable depending on the game's user (as opposed to a video which has a specific length of time), how do you consider the flexible factor of time in your games?

During the making of fIOW, the thing that matters the most is that time is our budget. We have to make our decisions to design the game so we can finish it and polish it before we run out of money. When it comes to players' time spent with our game, we don't try to control it, instead we want our players to take the time they need to engage with the game and practice their skills before they feel ready to move on. It's an active difficulty management from the player's subconscious, so their interactivity with the virtual world remains in the Flow zone.

Some reviews of your games talk about how the player brings herself into the game and has a unique experience because of the environment and challenges that are presented in response to her actions and choices. This is a little bit like artists who want to leave space within their art so that the viewers construct their own meaning, rather than the artists telling the viewers what to think. Does that seem like an apt analogy for how you want to construct the player's experience within your games?

It depends on the title. Journey, out of all the games we made, is very much left for players to interpret. We wanted a spiritual journey. However, we don't want to preach any specific version of religion. Therefore, we want to leave as much space as possible for the players to fill. In the game rather than relying on the traditional storytelling through text and cinema, we used "story discovery" as our way to communicate the narrative. We want the player to discover the world, reveal pieces of ancient history that give abstract information and come up with their own understanding of what happened in the past and assign their own meaning to the journey they go through.

The development of *fIOW* was informed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's theories of flow as applied to games, which you

wrote about in your MFA thesis. Now that you run a game design company, how do you make sure that you still experience periods of flow, particularly in terms of creativity? And is it possible to ensure that the team has opportunities for flow as well?

There are many conditions for flow to happen during the creative process. At thatgamecompany, the creative process isn't always smooth and great. What enabled us to enjoy the process slightly longer was probably due to the fact that we are very confident about what we are doing and therefore feel we are in control. Even though we don't know what the game is going to be in the end, we are certain that the direction we are taking is proven in the traditional medium, like knowing that you are on a boat that will follow the river to the destination eventually. We might run into a couple hitches and obstacles here and there, but we are making progress towards the end goal. With that said, the development process of making creative projects is filled with up and downs, I doubt if the entire process is always in flow, whether it will actually be boring or not.

[Play the online version of “Flow”](#)

[Learn more about Chen and thatgamecompany](#)

Biography

Jenova Chen (Chinese, born 1981) earned a B.S. at Shanghai Jiao Tong University and an MFA at University of Southern California, in the Interactive Media Division. He went on to found thatgamecompany where he remains its Creative Director. He has created the award-winning games Cloud, fOw, Flower, and Journey. Flower has been awarded the British Academy of Film and Television Arts for Artistic Achievement; Best Downloadable Game of the Year by the Game Developers Choice Awards; and Best Independent Game by Spike TV Video Game awards. The game Journey has received numerous awards since being released, including “Game of the Year” by GameSpot (2012); Best Director, Best Art Direction, and Best Sound Design by Telegraph Video Awards (2012), and Best Overall Game (among other awards) by IGN (2012). Chen has been named one of *Variety*'s 10 Innovators to Watch (2008); Most Creative Entrepreneurs in Business (2009, 2010); and named by MIT's Technology Review Magazine TR35 list as one of World's Top Innovators under the Age of 35 (2008).

U-Ram Choe

 flowjustflow.com /2013/01/29/u-ram-choe/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with U-Ram Choe conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, January 2013



The backstory on *Jet Hiatus* is fascinating! Is the following interpretation of *Anmorosta Cetorhinus maximus* Uram correct? An=animal, mo=motor, ro=rotation, sta=stainless steel. And *Cetorhinus maximus* is the same species name for the basking shark, which looks remarkably like *Jet Hiatus*. Why were you interested in the form and possibly the habits and movements of a sea creature, as opposed to other kinds of animals and plants that seem to be referenced in other works?

An=animal, mo=motor, ro=rotation, sta=steel & aluminum, How did you figure this out? Great!!! Above all I am interested in all creatures. I revere the power of the universe that created a deft and unimaginable ecosystem through the history of evolution. So I gain a lot of ideas from nature documentaries about organisms. Sometimes fish and plants get mixed and fungus and mammals blend as well. Jet Hiatus is an idea from the intermix of basking shark and jet engine. At the airport I saw a jet engine gaped at the mouth of an aircraft and to me it looked like a basking shark opening its jaw to eat plankton. And like a jet engine, it gulps down its prey.

Not only does your piece look like a basking shark, but its movement, while not replicating that of a sea creature, does appear to flow in an organic fashion. How do you determine the design of movement in your sculptures? Can you describe certain characteristics that you are seeking?

First of all, I want to appreciate you for accurately reading the movements that I have been directing. The shape and movements are different in every work, but the most fundamental aim is to imitate the movement of the organism to the maximum degree. When producing machine organism concepts, I first decide the ecology of that organism and seek the kind of motion necessary in certain environments and search for the creature with such gestures in order to strive for the identical replication of their movements.

There are some other artists in this exhibition who are interested in flow found within nature or in natural properties. Examples of what I'm talking about include Shinichi Maruyama's photographs, Semiconductor's [20Hz](#) video, and [Wind Map](#) by Fernanda Viégas and Martin Wattenberg. Why do you think artists might find the concept of flow and movement in nature to be especially interesting?

My approach to nature seems different from the subject matter of the works mentioned above. To describe my circumstances . . . I admire the perfection of nature. For billions of years, organisms have been adapting to environmental changes and have repeated the evolution process for survival so that today we have diverse forms and ecosystems present in nature. The span of time impossible to perceive from the short life of mankind, the flawless forms of organisms adjusted to environments, mutual balance between the movements and etc.; their immaculate entanglement beyond human imagination and indefinable survival methods always enlighten me with countless inspirations.

In a previous interview, you said "I consider my works to be living things."¹ But there's this wonderful mix of natural and mechanical in your sculptures or anima-machines. While some elements mimic forms and movement in nature, it's clear that the work is artificially derived. At no point are you trying to fool the visitor into thinking that this is an actual organic

being because all the materials and mechanics are visible. Or are you? And, with this idea in mind, what are you hoping viewers will experience when they are in the presence of works like this?

When I initially lay out plans for the machine organism works, they are all based on the story that machines went through rapid evolution because of human desires and eventually began evolving on their own. Consequently, although they have organismal shapes and movements, their bodies are made with artificial materials, easily attainable from industrial society. Motors or metal components are plainly exposed to show that they are organisms composed of machinery products. Moreover, a related article about the organism is exhibited in company with the work as if it is the truth. I create a very realistic ambience by presenting fabricated evidences, maximizing the atmosphere like when a new creature is discovered on The National Geographic Channel. As the audience comes into the exhibition space and reads the article along with the work, I briefly delude myself that those imaginary organisms exist in reality. People have an instinctive desire for exploration of the unknown world. I want to provoke that part. I intend to invite people into the unknown world for a moment; shake their everyday routine and common sense and stimulate their consciousness through new and sensible experience.

The last sentence of the description of *Jet Hiatus* says the following: “Through reconstructed models based on already completed research, U.R.A.M. (United Research of Anima-Machines) is pursuing studies on how swiftly this creature, which is sometimes misrecognized as a UFO in low flight, generates the conversion of psychological flows into physical energy.”² The psychological concept of flow is at the heart of this exhibition *Flow, Just Flow*. Could you elaborate on that last point of the sentence from the *Jet Hiatus* description, of converting psychological flows into physical energy?

For a start, I will explain the engine rotating in the center of Jet Hiatus. From a marine documentary, I observed a school of sardines creating the gigantic shape of a lump as a shark was chasing after them. This huge sphere made by small fish speedily moves and transforms its shape to raise the chance of survival. When you take a close look, those small creatures on the verge of life or death revolve the best they can to confuse the predator. On the other hand, the shark also waits for the right time and digs into the lump of sardines as best as it can for survival. From their struggle for life, I find the most brutal and cold beauty. Accordingly, an agglomerated frame rotates in the center of the engine, symbolic of the fish shoal, and aluminum casts of shark teeth surrounds and spins around them. When the shark teeth change the rotating direction, the sphere inside also changes its direction as well. The psychological energy heightened for the survival among other species accelerates evolutionary process and also for our society, this kind of energy ultimately became the driving force for the development of the civilizations. ‘Psychological energy transforms into physical energy.’ This is my impression of the history of nature.

Regarding the psychological concept of “flow,” mentioned above, could you talk a bit about your creative process? Now that you have a team of assistants, when do you find yourself in a creative state of flow, and how are ideas generated and managed?

I spend a lot of time with my team not only working, but also eating and just hanging out. In those hours we naturally share our thoughts and I consult my ideas as well. Sometimes it appears that our flows of thoughts become one and I try hard not to let loose of the thoughts intensified in the midst of these discussions. Heaps of time is consumed to make the physically impossible things closer to imagined figure in the course of actualizing the central initial idea. Because of the moving equipment within the work, the process of sketches, design plan, compartments manufacture, assembly, experimental operation, modification, and final completion is required like that of an engineer producing new machines. Therefore, it takes one to two years in order for a work to be completely done. I have been working with a professional programmer since several years ago and he designs CPU boards and creates programs to produce a more life-like movement.

“Jet Hiatus” (2008) by U-Ram Choe from [bitforms gallery](#) on [Vimeo](#).

See an 2010 interview with Choe conducted by thecreatorsproject.com

Biography

U-Ram Choe (Korean, born 1970) received both his B.F.A and his M.F.A. from Chung-Ang University in Seoul, Korea. Choe has been awarded the POSCO Steel Art Award (2006); a residency at Doosan Art Center, New York (2009); Kim se choong Sculpture Award (2009); and the Young Artist Today Award (2009). Recent solo exhibitions have been held at the Gallery HYUNDAI, Seoul; the John Curtin Gallery in Perth, Australia; and at the Asia Society Museum, New York. His work has been exhibited in the Saatchi Gallery, London (2012). the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; 2008 Liverpool Biennale at FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology, Liverpool; Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville; the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; Shanghai Biennial; Leeum Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; NTT Intercommunication Center (ICC), Tokyo; Art Basel; Seoul Museum of Art; Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art, Dallas; Asian Art Triennial, Manchester Art Gallery; Sungkok Art Museum, Seoul; Metropolitan Art Museum, Busan; Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna; SCAI The Bathhouse, Tokyo; Beijing ExpoCenter; and Olympic Art Museum, Seoul, and Choe currently lives and works in Seoul, Korea.

Read more about Choe and his work

Notes:

1. "The Creators Project." *The Creators Project*. N.p., n.d. Web. <<http://www.thecreatorsproject.com/creators/u-ram-choe>>. ↵
2. Artist's statement, accessed 18 Dec. 2012. <http://www.uranet/eng_new/gallery/2004/1_jetHiatus.html> ↵

Michael Flynn

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/michael-flynn/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Michael Flynn conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, December 2012

Why were you drawn to work with ferrofluid in the first place? Would you mind talking briefly about what ferrofluid is and what makes the amazing shapes appear? Why do you find this material especially appealing to work with?



The Magnetoscope is not intended to deliver scientific information; its function is simply to activate curiosity. Natural human curiosity is the most potent, and the only authentic motivation for learning. The following explanation is made palatable by ravenous curiosity: Ferrofluid is a magnetic liquid that was developed by NASA. It is engineered at the molecular level, with nano-scale iron oxide particles chemically joined with oil to form a stable colloidal mixture that will not separate – even when exposed to strong magnets. Magnets steer the shape of the liquid as the iron particles in the oil are pulled toward the strongest magnetic fields. But the magnetic field is affected too. The field lines normally spread out as much as possible when traveling through air, but they are drawn together inside the columns of iron-rich ferrofluid. There are almost no magnetic field lines between the liquid columns because the magnetic fields crammed into adjacent columns repel each other. Gravity slumps these liquid columns into cone shapes, like piles of sand. And surface tension in the oil is responsible for the sharp tips and the glossy appearance. There is a lot of physics and chemistry at work in this enigmatic display of levitating liquid.

There's an inherent lusciousness to ferrofluid, both in terms of its color and its forms. What kinds of aesthetic considerations went into your final design that relate to the purpose of the piece (e.g. color and size)?

I built the Magnetoscope around the maximum gap between magnets that I could span with ferrofluid. The heavy aluminum construction feels smooth and solid. It creates the science fiction futurist aesthetic which is an identifying characteristic of my artwork. I love the appearance of the Magnetoscope's large viewing domes, but these were designed primarily for their function as a sturdy enclosure that remains immaculately clean – far from the messy splash of ferrofluid.

The flow within *Magnetoscope* is present in both the ferrofluid itself and in the interaction of the museum visitors who are able to change the position of the magnets. Why did you create a piece that requires interaction instead of just displaying the ferrofluid in motion?

The Magnetoscope fosters an extended sense of community in public spaces as people engage each other in cooperative play. Independent magnet positioning hand wheels require users to negotiate a shared control strategy to steer the liquid's flow with the top and bottom magnets. Transforming impersonal spaces with an experience of community is the highest purpose of public art.

A few of the other works in the exhibition *Flow, Just Flow* visualize physical properties of a variety of things and phenomena. Examples include Semiconductor's [20Hz](#); HINT.FM's [Wind](#); and [Shinichi Maruyama's](#) photographs. All of these works, along with *Magnetoscope*, deal with movement of substances or of energy within the natural world. Why do you think artists are inspired by this as a subject to explore?

Matter and energy flow in accord with the same universal laws of physics that shape ourselves. The subjective beauty of natural patterns is in the way we identify with order and complexity. It is as if we glimpse our own portrait in these patterns, which affirms our inherent connectedness to the natural world.

I wondered if you might talk about your creative process and if you ever find yourself in a state of creative flow? When/if that does happen, does it occur at various stages throughout the making of the work?

I find my best creative flow in my initial planning stages where I can dream freely. Even logistic constraints are springboards for inspiration. Because of this, I have dozens of projects in prototype stage and lots of cool junk crammed into my workshop. I find it difficult to bring my ideas all the way to market as a finished product; I worked for five years to refine the design of Magnetoscope. It is clear that I suffer from start-ophelia and finish-ophobia but I really enjoy the labor I've chosen for myself.

[Ferrofluid Magnetoscope by Michael Flynn](#) from [Michael Flynn](#) on [Vimeo](#).

[See a brief interview with Flynn at the Henry Ford Museum in Detroit, Michigan](#)

Biography

Michael Flynn (American, born 1967) is a lecturer at the University of Michigan Stamps School of Art & Design and also founder of Fun Exhibits, an art & science experience-design company based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Flynn has a B.S. in Physics and M.S. in Science Education, and has experience as a science educator, designer, and engineer. His exhibits are in continuous use in the permanent collections of The New York Hall of Science, The Inspiria Science Center in Norway, The Impression5 Science Center and the Ann Arbor Hands-on Museum in Michigan, and WonderLab Science Center and The Imagination Station in Indiana. He has exhibited at Dublin's Science Gallery, The Edinburgh Science Festival, The USA Science and Engineering Festival and Maker Faire technology festivals in San Francisco, Chicago, Detroit, and New York.

[Read more about Flynn and his work](#)

Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar

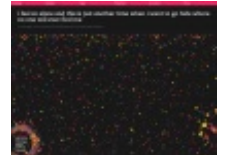
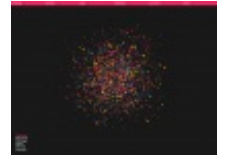
 flowjustflow.com /2013/01/29/jonathan-harris-and-sep-kamvar/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Essay by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator

By putting their emotions into words on their blogs, the millions of bloggers in the [We Feel Fine](#) database are also taking a step back, observing their emotions, and forming a more clear and precise picture of what it is they are feeling. In doing so, they are able to rise above their emotions. Little did they know what a beautiful collective picture they were building in the process.

—Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar. ¹



Encountering *We Feel Fine* elicits amazement due to both the immense number of sentiments being presented and categorized, as well as the efficient and elegant design by its creators, Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar. Launched in 2005, the website is a data visualization of more than 12 million posts in English that contain the words “I feel” or “I am feeling,” culled in real time from blogs and then sorted according to a variety of demographics of the authors, such as gender, age, and location. Further delving into *We Feel Fine* reveals all variety of personal statements, from shockingly intimate pronouncements to mundane observations to universal truisms.

We Feel Fine can seem alternately superficial and earnest on a massive scale. Drilling down into the work one usually finds a single sentence by each blogger that can seem pithy, naïve, or painfully self-conscious, essentially naked without context. The images pulled from the blogs by the program likewise appear vulnerable or worse, derivative of stereotypes perpetuated by the media. After spending time on the site, it is no wonder that one of the popular feelings amongst teenagers on *We Feel Fine* is angst. ²

Although patterns in feelings emerge from the site that sometimes confirm age, gender, and social stereotypes ³, Harris and Kamvar interject little judgment in their data visualization design and in their interpretations and analysis discussed in their accompanying book. Every feeling from each source is accorded the same dignity as, well, a bit of data. This perspective lends not only a sense of wonder to the entire project, but also one of grace. It enables the artists the distance to view this vast amount of content as both enlightening and flawed.

The subtitle on the site reads “An exploration of human emotion, in six movements.” In addition, the descriptive text about the book declares the project, “a portrait of human emotions,” “a collective emotional landscape,” and “a crash course in the secrets of human emotion.” However, as mentioned in the quote above, Harris and Kamvar rightly note that *We Feel Fine* is not exactly culling emotions but culling what people say their emotions are, in English specifically. This distinction is important because blogs are a major source of the “I feel” statements and therefore offer a particular form of communication, different than texting or the spoken word. Blogging is more of a singular means of expression, like a megaphone, than texting, which conversely is private and dependent upon two-way interactions. Blog readers can respond (or not, depending on the blogger’s controls), yet the power relationship between the blogger and the reader/responder is not equal. The blogger, having a public platform, self-censors according to what he or she is willing to share. Granted, some blogs may appear to lack self-censorship. But for the moment, the distance between thought and blog post is still greater than that between thought and spoken word.

The “feelings” in *We Feel Fine* are written descriptions and observations of emotions. Perhaps this seems obvious because a blog relies on written language as its medium. But what is fascinating about this work is not just the scale of the project or the level of revealing self-reflection, but also how the project evidences the limitations of English as a means of expression. For example, the most popular “feeling” on the site is “better” amongst all age groups, genders, and locations. ⁴ But “better” is a comparative word. It refers to a different feeling that has improved, and that original feeling is essential to understanding the meaning of “better.” Consider the following examples culled on January 6, 2013:

- For example, if i'm stressed and then i continuously drop stuff eventually i drop something and i curse and that alone makes me feel better so if someone hears and says what's wrong that question alone just pisses me off, cuz for me nothing is wrong anymore
- i'm sitting here by myself with the wind in my hair and the stars are out and i feel a bit better now that i'm out
- i picked up some advil sinus medicine and had a bowl of chicken noodle soup and took a nap and i feel worlds better today.

The authors of these statements hardly feel the same, but better is the chosen word to describe the upgrade in whatever they were feeling before these posted sentiments. "Good" and "bad" appear next in the list of most common feelings, but again, these are presumably verbal surrogates for feelings that could be more specifically designated, such as lonely, lovable, or, in a more physiological context, experiencing angina.⁵

The topic of semiotics in social media has already garnered academic attention. By omitting much of the referential material needed to fully interpret the meaning of a feeling described in a blog post, *We Feel Fine* reveals English's tenuous netting. These decontextualized feelings communicate little to the viewers of this work but provide a service to the writers, those who know what "feeling better" means and who gain some sort of benefit from writing it. Thus, for the sixth and final movement of *We Feel Fine*, Harris and Kamvar picked the perfect symbol to represent the ambiguity of the "feelings" in their project — multi-hued, squiggly mounds.

Experience "We Feel Fine"

Biography

Jonathan Harris (American, born 1979) studied Photography and Computer Science at Princeton University. His work has been exhibited widely at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Le Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the CAFA Art Museum, Beijing; the Garage Center for Contemporary Art, Moscow; and The Pace Gallery, New York. His work has been recognized by AIGA; Ars Electronica; *Print Magazine*, which named him a New Visual Artist (2008); and The World Economic Forum, which named him a Young Global Leader (2009). He has won two Webby Awards (2005) and a Fabrica fellowship (2004).

Read more about Harris and his work

Sep Kamvar (b. 1977) received his A.B. in Chemistry from Princeton University (1999) and his Ph.D. in Scientific Computing and Computational Mathematics from Stanford University (2004). He is currently the LG Associate Professor of Media Arts and Sciences at MIT and the Director of the Social Computing Group at the MIT Media Lab. Prior to MIT, Kamvar was head of personalization at Google; a consulting professor of Computational and Mathematical Engineering at Stanford University; as well as founder and CEO of Kaltix, a personalized search company acquired by Google in 2003. He has authored two books and over forty technical publications and patents in the fields of search and social computing. Kamvar's work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, and the Gwangju Design Biennial, South Korea.

Read more about Kamvar and his work

Notes:

1. Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar, *We Feel Fine: An Almanac of Human Emotion* (New York: Scribner, 2009), p. 278. ↩
2. Ibid, p. 251. ↩
3. Ibid, p. 230-231. On these pages Harris and Kamvar look at findings such as "Women express more love, affection, and warmth than men," compare their conclusions with a few academic studies, and offer up some statistics from their own site. ↩

4. Ibid, p. 240, and the website “Mobs” movement [↔](#)
5. The specificity of the feelings relates somewhat proportionately to the level of popularity. For example, disconnected, burnt, itchy, and ambivalent are examples of less popular feelings [↔](#)

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with HINT.FM ([Fernanda Viégas](#) and [Martin Wattenberg](#)) conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, December 2012



Obviously, the idea of “flow” is crucial to your creativity, seeing as how you named your pre-Google joint venture “Flowing Media, Inc.” And the word “flow” appears in the titles of several of your works, such as *TimeFlow* (2010), *Flickr Flow* (2009) and *history flow* (2003). Why did you choose the word “flow” for all of these projects? Is there something about that word that seems especially apt for data visualization?

Flow has always been a thematic word for us. Our very first project was called history flow, to convey the fact that it visualized evolution over time. We’ve always had a special fondness for that project, and perhaps because of that, the word “flow” has become kind of a talisman in our work. Flow also implies an awareness of history, as well as future directions.

Many of your other projects focus on data compiled from human-created sources and surveys, such as *Flickr Flow* and *Luscious* (2010). But the subject of [Wind Map](#) is data about a naturally occurring flowing movement—wind across the U.S. What made you decide to focus on wind as a subject?

It was our own very human shivers during the cold, windy winter of 2012.

And how did you come around to deciding the overall look of the piece, i.e. why black and white and not, say, blue or purple? How do the aesthetics of the work play into your design decisions? And why not add Hawaii and Alaska?

We tried many different visualization techniques, some dreadfully colorful. Although the current version might seem simple, spare, or even obvious, it took us a long time to arrive there. In the end we decided to keep a pure grayscale palette to emphasize the texture and movement of the wind.

We didn’t include Alaska and Hawaii for some minor technical reasons... Hopefully someday in the future!

How important was the idea that [Wind Map](#) be consistently pulling from current data?

We think it helps the piece enormously. Historical snapshots are interesting, of course, but there’s no substitute for seeing what is happening right now. The proof, for us, is that we keep checking it ourselves.

Is there an edge that you have to balance between data visualization and creative interpretation that verges more towards expression than conveying information? Do you think you’d ever feel comfortable playing around with that line or slipping over it for a personal project?

*We don’t always stick to data visualization. One of our pieces, *Luscious*, is much more guided by aesthetics than data, for instance. But part of what we seek to elicit in viewers is the “joy of revelation,” and clarity helps that kind of magic happen.*

I wondered if you might talk about your creative process as an artistic team and if you ever find yourself in a state of creative flow together or separately? When/if that does happen, does it occur at various stages throughout the making of a work?

We definitely go into states of flow, at every stage. We often start with a wide-ranging conversation about a topic, and then move to finding data and playing with ways to represent it. We know we finally have something when we can't stop playing with it—and that might be the closest thing for us to a feeling of flow.

Experience [the Wind Map](#)

[Eyeo2012 – Viegas and Wattenberg](#) from [Eyeo Festival](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

HINT.FM is a collaboration between Fernanda Viégas and Martin Wattenberg, who currently lead Google's "Big Picture" visualization research group in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Before joining Google, the two founded [Flowing Media, Inc.](#), a visualization studio focused on media and consumer-oriented projects. Prior to Flowing Media, they led IBM's Visual Communication Lab, where they created the groundbreaking public visualization platform [Many Eyes](#). The two became a team in 2003 when they decided to visualize Wikipedia, leading to the "history flow" project that revealed the self-healing nature of the online encyclopedia.

Viégas (Brazilian, born 1971) is known for her pioneering work on depicting chat histories and email. The visualizations of the stock market and baby names created by Wattenberg's (American, born 1970) are considered Internet classics. Viégas and Wattenberg are also known for their visualization-based artwork, which has been exhibited in venues such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, London Institute of Contemporary Arts and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Read more about [HINT.FM](#)

Read more about [Viégas](#) and her work

Read more about [Wattenberg](#) and his work

Aaron Koblin

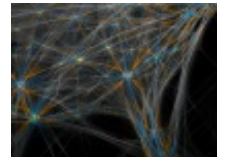
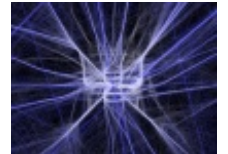
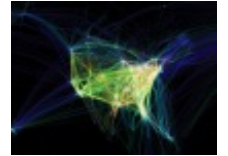
 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/aaron-koblin/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Essay authored by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator

We're constantly collecting more data, and it's starting to be very relevant to our lives. We have the capacity to collect global insights that we couldn't have imagined in the past, and it's extremely exciting. Yet I think it's the tip of the iceberg. As we get more and more transparent with datasets about infrastructure and systems management I have a feeling we'll see big changes in how we think about complexity and our relationship with our actions.

—Aaron Koblin ¹



As soon as you learn what is being depicted in Aaron Koblin's [Flight Patterns](#) — a visualization of more than 200,000 aircraft in flight over the U.S. monitored by the FAA on August 12, 2008 — the piece suddenly makes complete sense. The sequence begins around 5 p.m. EST and the country is ablaze with lines representing planes traversing the nation. As evening progresses, the lines become fewer, and the nighttime flights to Europe from the East Coast become one major group of activity. Around 2 and 3 a.m., the red-eye flights traveling East from the West Coast start their journey. By 6 a.m., the New England, the Mid-Atlantic, and Southeast regions wake up first, and the pattern of light moves slowly from right to left along with the sunrise.

Unlike some other data visualizations [in this exhibition see [The Dumpster](#), [We Feel Fine](#), and [Wind](#)] Koblin's piece is not one in which the viewer can drill down, so to speak, into progressively more minute pieces of data. What you see is for the most part what there is, in the sense that the micro, as in those other works, has no equivalent here. Although Koblin did make different versions of the piece in which he highlighted certain airplane types, altitudes, regions, and airline hubs (such as the Southwest, Florida, and Atlanta) the viewer of the video [Flight Patterns](#) cannot manipulate the appearance or decide to study more closely just one plane or one route.

In fact, if you didn't know the background of how Koblin generated the imagery, you could even reasonably infer that this work is not based on data but on only slightly manipulated and combined photographs and videos taken from a spacecraft or satellite. This is where the genius in [Flight Patterns](#) lies. Chances are, few of us have actually viewed airplanes crossing the country from a height above the aircraft. And yet, with one brief explanation, the piece is immediately comprehended. We think, of course this is what it looks like.

The other artworks mentioned above retain a visual link between the data and its accessibility. In [Wind](#) you can move the cursor around and click on various points to, for example, see the current wind speeds in Omaha today. In [We Feel Fine](#) and [The Dumpster](#) you can learn the feelings of a person on a specific day, like Wednesday, February 27, 2005. One could conclude that Koblin's piece is different because it is based on images rather than text. But that would be incorrect, in that [Flight Patterns](#) was derived from data that clarified the position of airplanes in the sky during a precise period of time, supplied by FlightView software. In this sense, Koblin's work is perhaps more like Semiconductor's work [20Hz](#) in imagining what the depicted subject could look like. However, the gap between knowledge and illustration differs between these two visualizations. Many of us have flown, yet few have studied geo-magnetic storms above the Earth.

And it is this familiarity with the topic, along with its alluring graphics, that makes [Flight Patterns](#) so intriguing even though the subject is impersonal. Watching Koblin's brief (57 seconds-long) work, you might recollect an overnight flight to London marred by the anguish of a crying toddler in the seat next to you. Or a trip heading south to Houston that left at the crack of dawn and provided a heart-stoppingly gorgeous sunrise on the ascent above the clouds. It's as if the visualization confirms your own experience with flying. This seems to affirm Koblin's stated goal for understanding data. Sophisticated data visualizations allow for new global insights while simultaneously referencing our own actions. The macro is in front of your eyes, the micro is in your memory.

Biography

Aaron Koblin (American, born 1982) has an MFA from UCLA's Design I Media Arts program. His work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the Art Institute of Chicago; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, among others. His projects have been shown at international festivals including TED (2007, 2009-2011); Ars Electronica (2006, 2008, 2011-2012); South by Southwest (2007, 2009, 2011, 2012), SIGGRAPH (2005-2006, 2009); and the Japan Media Arts Festival (2005-2006, 2008, 2011). Koblin has received Grammy nominations for two of his music videos (2009, 2011) and was awarded first place for science visualization through the National Science Foundation (2006). Other recognitions include the Abramowitz Artist in Residence at MIT (2010); *Creativity Magazine's* Creativity 50 (2009); Best and Brightest by *Esquire Magazine* (2010); Most Creative People in Business by Fast Company (2010); and one of Forbes Magazine's 30 under 30 (2011). He currently leads the Data Arts Team in Google's Creative Lab in San Francisco, California.

[Read more about Koblin](#) and his work

Notes:

1. interview with Iliyas Ong, "An Artist for our Digital Time," *DesignTAXI* Accessed at <http://designtaxi.com/article/100795/Aaron-Koblin-Tech-Lead-of-Google-Creative-Labs/> on December 18, 2012.

↩

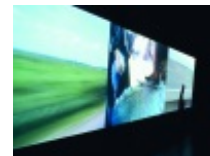
Lena Lapschina

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/lena-lapschina/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Lena Lapschina conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, January 2013

Can you tell me a bit about what we are seeing in *trance_siberia*? Is this all footage that you shot at various points both on and off the train yourself?



Yes indeed all used footage was shot by myself during five years or so of my many interrupted journeys through different parts of the Trans-Siberian railway line. Different places, different trains, different destinations. The places tend to stay anonymous in order to give that abstract feeling of endless space and time without any touristic-geographic touch.

One description of the piece said that the work “gives an impression of some of the pastimes of passengers.” Various scenes in the piece show people laughing, dancing, hanging out, eating, drinking, making crafts, farming, and just waiting around, among other activities. Is this work something of a portrait of both the passengers and of the region? And if so, why did you choose this format to work with?

Actually I would rather like to see the piece as a portrait of life as such. Okay, it's based on or connected to a specific region and its inhabitants, but even that is not quite true.

The Trans-Siberian railway in Russia is known for its massive length and the duration of the full trip, which according to Wikipedia takes 6 days and 4 hours from Moscow to Vladivostok on the Pacific coast. How do you feel you are using time as a medium or as a concrete form in this piece and do you intend for it to complement the train experience?

Of course at some point the mythos of the “transsiberian magistrale” (as they call it in Russia) stays in the centre of the project with its magical length and sheer unendlessness. With memories of totally unimportant encounters with people (whom you will never meet again)—and their stories. I maybe have to admit that for me personally, in the beginning there wasn't any magic for me in this train. Growing up somewhere in the middle of that nowhere province, the transsib was just absolutely normal public transportation. I used to ride it almost every week during collegetime. Short distances—a couple of hours per trip. The meaning of the transsiberian movement I realized much later in all its spatial and temporal power.

So I think, time is quite important like a fact of being on the road, offside of a normal life at home or at work or with guests. It's a timeout time. With no purpose. Only waiting to appear at point B, just after leaving point A behind. This state of in-between initially does not have any sense. It is just a losing of time.

*To answer your question in one short sentence: In *trance_siberia*, time is playing the lead—the train is only the stage.*

The visual rhythm of the work is subtle and complex, with different pacing between the three channels. Sometimes images are repeated on two or three of the screens, sometimes there is a sequential relationship, some scenes are sped up and others slowed down whereas others show your subjects moving forward and then in reverse repeatedly. What do you consider to be important when you explore the relationship between the layered and differing depictions of time throughout the video?

I've tried to stimulate a visual experience which is as close as possible to the real process of seeing. When

*looking at a specific scene, we do not “see” just a single two-dimensional photographic representation of that scene, but a multi-faceted compilation of various content (people, objects, events, surroundings etc.). Most important, simultaneously we also “see” all the mental layers of our memories. So the layering/overlaying in *trance_siberia* is just a reflection of this “perception of the real.” Our visuality is constructed as a mixture of seeing something plus the (your) visual luggage everybody is carrying with her/him.*

This work relates to the idea of “flow” on numerous levels, most obviously being the subject of the movement of people on a train. But the soundtrack, adapted from Nuclear Los, and the progression of imagery creates a flowing experience for the viewer, that, at times encourages daydreaming and relaxation. [I’m thinking in particular about the segment around 1:50 to 2 hours, where the images are at night.] What intentions did you have when you were constructing the piece in terms of how the viewer would react to the work?

When playing with the words “trans” and “trance,” I of course had in mind to construct a space where a visitor gets the chance to leave her or his daily life and enter a state of trance. My three-channel video installation goes on for three hours. The first hour is like a prelude: You are still under stress of preparing for a long journey that will begin soon. Then—slowly—the feeling of losing the point A arises, without seeing point B on the horizon. You are still in the past. The process of flowing will start at the very same moment when you’ll stop asking what it is all about and let it go.

To achieve the state of trance is somewhat similar to enjoying a swim in the ocean. You have to make it through the first wave ... That could be a hard job ... But when you are in the flow, it’s so easy to continue!

The same is with my film. It seems to be slow, in nowhere with no meaning. But if you let go and flow, there will be a lot of inhalt [content] and thousands of contexts. And it will end abruptly and suddenly without any warning—after a sequence of speedy cuts.

Regarding the psychological concept of “flow,” could you talk a bit about your creative process?

*Maybe it’s just a creative process by itself? You’ll never get smooth results without flowing. For example, after the *trance_siberia* project, I created a series of extra-short videos, *17 Seconds Of Art*. This was the opposite of *trance_siberia* in the sense of time. You could never cut such short films without being in a perfect flow.*

[“trance_siberia” by Lena Lapschina](#) from [Lena Lapschina](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Lena Lapschina (Russian, born 1965) currently lives and works in Vienna, Austria. She received an Mag. art and Ph.D. from the State Stroganow University of Fine and Applied Arts. She is co-founder of “State of the Art” magazine and is curator for M21. Her many awards include an Austrian state grant for video and media art (2011).

[Read more about Lapschina and her work](#)

Lena Lapschina’s artist’s talk at the Harnett Museum of Art, on Monday, March 4, 2013, noon to 1 p.m., has been made possible with a grant from the Austrian Cultural Forum, Washington, D.C.

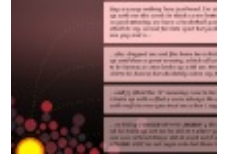
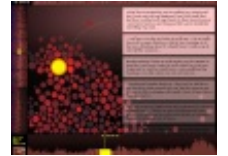
Golan Levin

 flowjustflow.com /2013/01/29/golan-levin/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Essay authored by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator

As a viewer who is decades older than the age group represented in [Golan Levin's *The Dumpster*](#), I find that reading beyond a small sampling of posts in the work is a somewhat painful experience. Once the initial responses of empathy ["Poor girl"] or shock ["What a jerk"], or dismay over the mangled use of the English language subside, I feel a bit numb and awkwardly embarrassed for the posters. It is painful in the same manner as watching a bad acting performance — the sincere intent to communicate is present but it is impossible to get past the melodrama.



However, the elegance of the design of *The Dumpster* ameliorates the triteness of the work's content. The piece presents a visualization of 20,000 posts by teenagers culled from blogs in 2005, in which the authors state that they have broken up or been dumped by their romantic interests. Each post can be accessed via date and gender, and they are arranged on the screen based on similarity in content and authorship. For example, two adjacent posts might read:

- I broke up with Jordan and feel sooooo bad. I still really like him and I hate not being wit him. It's like, you never know how much you wanna be with someone until you're no longer with them. Then it hits...
- well today i broke up with Justin cuz I do nt want a bf right no..but yeah thatz life! hez a nice guy jus i do nt want a bf! okay yeah! anyway I think mand3rz mad at me idk y though hopfully shes ...

In his artist statement about the project, Levin clarifies that one of the goals of the work is not just to cynically highlight the omnipresence of romantic dissolve, but to reassure the authors that "pain which they might believe no one else could possibly understand is actually quite similar (and sometimes seemingly identical) to that of other people." ¹ In the next paragraph, Levin clarifies that this uniformity of the expression of pain might actually be due to the limits of the English language, which not only constricts verbal expression according to existing vocabulary and patterns but actually shapes how we understand our feelings. ²

In his essay about *The Dumpster*, scholar Lev Manovich calls the piece a "social data browser," that "allows you to navigate between the intimate details of people's experiences and the larger social groupings. The particular and the general are presented simultaneously, without one being sacrificed to the other." ³ Both Manovich and Levin describe the work as a group portrait, although Levin clarifies it as also a "technologically enabled assemblage of self-portraits." ⁴

After delving into the posts, I kept thinking, now this is a group portrait that Andy Warhol would adore. *The Dumpster* is a bit like his paintings of Coca-Cola bottles and Campbell's soup cans. Just like rendered objects in Warhol's works are similar yet just slightly different, thanks to the imperfections of his screenprinting process, the posts in *The Dumpster* are analogous yet reveal the warts and other imperfections that the Pop artist loved to highlight. Aside from proving yet again his now over-used "famous for 15 minutes" proclamation, which seems to have been manifested by blogs, YouTube, and other social media, Warhol would no doubt appreciate any artwork that manages to concurrently highlight and de-personalized the most personal of experiences — a romantic break up.

The bridge between the social and the intimate that Manovich stresses to differentiate *The Dumpster* from representational artforms of the past, such as paintings of individuals or groups, is constructed out of thousands of very thin reeds. After all, how can a single post, composed presumably in a moment laden with extreme emotion (hatred, sadness, revengefulness, shame, etc.), possibly convey the full complexity of one's personality and character? The collective presentation of such posts, of these sincere but overwrought articulations authored by a group that age-wise is perhaps the most earnest and vulnerable to histrionic self-expression, is inherently painful for a viewer not simply because the subject is painful but because the communications are so fleeting and raw. *The Dumpster* is a heartbreaking portrait of the heartbroken.

Experience [The Dumpster](#)

Biography

Golan Levin (American, born 1973) received a B.A. from MIT and an M.A. from the MIT Media Laboratory. His work has been included in exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Modern Art, all in New York; the Ars Electronica Center Festival, Linz, Austria (multiple presentations); The Museum of Contemporary Art in Taipei, Taiwan; among other venues. Recent solo exhibitions have been held at biforms Gallery, New York; Kiasma Art Center, Helsinki; Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh; and the Beall Center for Art and Technology, Irvine, California. He has been awarded the Prix Ars Electronica Honorable Mention (2002, 2004, 2009); a Creative Capital Foundation Artist's Grant (2006); a Webby Award (2007); and a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Fellowship (2008). Levin is currently Director of the Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry and is Associate Professor of Electronic Time-Based Art at Carnegie Mellon University.

Read more about Levin and his work

Notes:

1. See "[Artist Statement](#)" tab on *The Dumpster* ↩
2. Ibid. On this topic Levin writes, "This is at its root a Whorfian linguistic conjecture: Our pain may be unique, but because we all use (astonishingly) similar language to describe it, our understanding of our own emotions is attenuated and conformed accordingly." See Wikipedia entry on linguistic relativity and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_relativity ↩
3. Lev Manovich, "Social Data Browsing," Tate: Intermedia Art, February 12, 2006, accessed at <http://www2.tate.org.uk/intermediaart/entry15484.shtml> on January 5, 2013. ↩
4. See "[Artist Statement](#)" tab on "The Dumpster" ↩

Marco Maggi and Ken Solomon

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/marco-maggi-and-ken-solomon/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Essay authored by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator

My first video piece, in collaboration with Ken Solomon, shows the biography of an apple. A photo with video vocation, a slow perception test. One photo, every ten minutes during 40 days, documenting apple skin micro mutations.

– Marco Maggi, interview with Becky Hunter, *Whitehot Magazine*, March 2009 ¹



For the first minute of the video [Micro & Soft on Macintosh Apple](#), nothing seems to happen. The shriveled, amber-colored apple with its upright stem sits in the middle of the frame. Occasionally, the incised pattern on the skin moves slightly, which is only noticeable because of a tiny change in either the reflected light or the revealed sliver of flesh. The apple's perimeter gradually nudges outward, but even that movement makes you wonder if you really saw anything or if you perhaps just blinked at the wrong time. But then, around two and a half minutes, the apple begins to blush, starting from the top and the bottom and then spreading into the middle. At three minutes, it's a brilliant red that subtly darkens to crimson and then returns to the warm, lighter hue as the skin seems to regenerate. The change in size dominates the movement as the apple swells, threatening to burst as it reaches its original fullness. Meanwhile, the engraved lines simultaneously have grown and flattened as the fruit expands until they magically dissolve. The video ends with the image of a perfect, unblemished apple, quickly fading away.

The title of this video is as puzzling as the angular marks on the apple itself. Clearly Maggi and Solomon intended to refer to the corporate brands of Microsoft and Apple, although the meaning is obscure. Why are “micro” and “soft” separated? Maggi has mentioned in various interviews that he is interested in the connection between the macro and the micro. His “systems” incised on surfaces such as apples, photocopier paper, aluminum foil, and Plexiglas, can be read alternately as “a bird’s eye view of the urban fabric” or “micro computer intimacy.” ² The “Macintosh Apple” in the title presents the company and product in reverse order [one typically hears of Apple’s Macintosh computer], and is a homonym of the actual type of apple in the video, a McIntosh. Ironically, when you Google search ³ “apple” the company scores the first three hits; only after scrolling down does the Wikipedia entry for the fruit appear. ³

In an article about Maggi’s work, it was suggested that the artist incorporated apples harvested in New Paltz, New York, where he received his M.F.A. at SUNY and later taught. ⁴ Does this mean *Micro & Soft on Macintosh Apple* is an autobiographical video? Perhaps this attempt at analysis up to now puts too much emphasis on interpretation. After all, the artist said in a recent interview, “I am a supporter of polysemic titles and landscapes; words or signs that allow variable conclusions.” ⁵

But the concept of “the biography of an apple,” is too enticing to ignore. The word “biography” suggests a text that is read, or, at the very least, a story. Maggi, as well as critics and scholars, has referenced texts, symbols, and codes as sources or even as the subjects of his work, which is more commonly represented by drawing, printmaking, sculpture and installation, not video. Regarding drawing in particular, Maggi has said, “drawings are texts you cannot read.” ⁶

So let’s make the leap that this video is also a non-readable text. And let’s also employ our suspension of disbelief, because clearly, this is not the typical life cycle of the fruit. The progression is backwards, from a marred, desiccated form to a ripe, unspoiled specimen. What is happening? The story is up to the viewer to decide (a postmodern trope), so I’ll provide one version to consider, even though it is historically inaccurate.

In 2010, scientists decoded the apple genome, specifically the apple cultivar Golden Delicious. ⁷ An apple genome, located inside the nucleus of an apple cell, contains the genetic information for the apple to grow and develop. Scientists and farmers can use this information to develop apples that are better resistant to disease and more resilient

in droughts. Interestingly, sequencing the genome proved that the Golden Delicious is related to the wild apple *Malus sieversii*, native to the region of present day Kazakhstan.

If we interpret the patterns carved into the apple's skin in *Micro & Soft on MacIntosh Apple* as symbolizing the genetic coding of the fruit, then the video really is the biography of an apple, which is essentially reading itself, that is, reading the information it needs to fully mature. The code informs the growth, which we see before our eyes. The code also reveals an ancestral story. I'm not claiming that Maggi and Solomon were prescient in making this video in 2004, that they somehow predicted that six years later the apple's genome would be decoded. I'm merely telling the story backwards, and then forwards, like the video. The apple fades to black when it is complete, because once an apple is fully formed, we know the end of the story. It's the beginning that provides the mystery.

[Micro & Soft On Macintosh Apple, Marco Maggi e Ken Salomon](#) from [Revista Select](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Marco Maggi (Uruguayan, born 1957) received his MFA from the State University of New York, New Paltz. He has several solo exhibitions, including most recently at the Instituto Tomie Ohtake, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Galerie Xippas, Paris; the Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, California; Hosfelt Gallery in San Francisco; and Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York. His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions at museums including Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Art and Design, both in New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the CU Art Museum, University of Colorado, Boulder. His work is in the permanent collections of several museums, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Maggi currently lives and works in New York and Montevideo, Uruguay.

Ken Solomon (American, born 1971) studied at the University of Syracuse in Florence, Italy and received a BFA at the University of Wisconsin. Recent solo exhibitions have been held at Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York (2005, 2008, 2010). Solomon's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions, most recently at such venues as the Museum of Modern Art and the FLAG Art Foundation, both in New York; the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Judi Rotenberg Gallery, Boston; and the Nettie Horn Gallery, London. Solomon currently lives and works in Brooklyn.

Read more about Solomon and his work

Notes:

1. <http://whitehotmagazine.com/articles/2009-interview-with-marco-maggi/1773> accessed January 13, 2013 ↩
2. Ibid. This comes from a response to a question about Maggi's interest in micro and macro. The full and following sentences read, "Looking at the same drawing we can see different things: is this a bird's eye view of the urban fabric or micro computer intimacy? Is this texture, textile, or text? Is this archaeology or statistics?" ↩
3. This Wikipedia entry is accompanied by a photograph of a perfectly round, ripe red apple, with the charming caption "A typical apple." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple#Production> accessed January 13, 2013. ↩
4. Maggi has also exhibited actual carved apples in addition to the video. See Raúl Zamudio, "Between Drawing and Withdrawing," *ArtNexus*, No. 75, Vol. 8, 2009, p. 63. ↩
5. Interview with Selene Preciado in the exhibition brochure for "Marco Maggi: No Idea," at the Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA, January 21-April 29, 2012, accessed at <http://www.molaa.org/pdf/MOLAAMarcoMaggiBrochure.pdf> on January 13, 2013. ↩
6. Op. cit. interview with Becky Hunter. ↩
7. Riccardo Velasco, et. al., "The Genome of the Domesticated Apple (*Malus x domestica* Borkh.)," *Nature Genetics*, published online August 29, 2010, <http://www.nature.com/ng/journal/v42/n10/full/ng.654.html> accessed January 13, 2013. See a very helpful animation explaining what is an apple genome at The Apple Genomics Project, http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/apple_genomics/ accessed January 13, 2013. ↩

Shinichi Maruyama

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/shinichi-maruyama/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Shinichi Maruyama conducted by Sarah Matheson, '13, studio art major and art history minor, University of Richmond, November 2012

Can you describe your creative process as one that includes flow? If so, when do you experience it or what are the conditions that make it possible? And do you consider your artistic process to be just as important as the finished product?



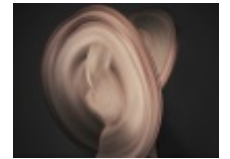
Although being Japanese, we are not so familiar with the psychological meaning of “flow,” however we are very much influenced by this state of mind through Zen culture such as Judo, Sado (Japanese tea ceremony), Shodo (calligraphy), etc. All of these sports and art forms which are originated from Zen culture require self-discipline. Being disciplined takes you to a state of mind of “flow.”



The Kusho series was created from memories of practicing calligraphy in my childhood. I loved the nervous, precarious feeling of sitting before an empty white page, the moment just before my brush touches the paper. Kusho is calligraphy in a way. Instead of on paper, it is written in the air. Throwing ink and water in the air numerous times requires self-discipline.



By stopping time and giving permanence to ephemeral, short-lived moments, you create a palpable feeling of tension in your *Kusho* series. Is this an intentional juxtaposition to the flow of the piece? Why are you so interested in movement and motion?



Because I love the fact that it is beyond my control.

The newest of your series, *Nude*, uses movement and the human figure to construct new, independent shapes and forms. How did you transition from *Kusho* to *Nude*?

*I tried to capture a moment which the human eye cannot in real time in *Kusho*. In *Nude*, I combined those unobtainable moments together.*

Why did you decide to abandon fluids as a subject and focus on the human figure?

Because I am also interested in the beauty of the human body.

Is it important to you for the viewer of these works to recognize the human figure as the source of the images?

Yes, it is.

Maruyama regarding the *Nude* series

I tried to capture the beauty of both the human body's figure and its motion.

The figure in the image, which is formed into something similar to a sculpture, is created by combining 10,000 individual photographs of a dancer.

By putting together uninterrupted individual moments, the resulting image as a whole will appear to be something different from what actually exists.

With regard to these two viewpoints, a connection can be made to a human being's perception of presence in life.

[KUSHO](#) from [Shinichi Maruyama](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Shinichi Maruyama (Japanese born 1968) studied film and photography at Chiba University (1991) and worked as a member of Hakuho Photo Creative as well as a freelance photographer (1992-98). Recent solo shows have been held at Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York (2009, 2012) and Blitz Gallery, Tokyo (2009). Maruyama has been awarded the New York ADC Gold Award (1998) and the Japan Magazine Advertisement Prize (1999) and has published two books (2001), *The Spiti Valley* and *Spiti*. He currently lives and works in New York.

Read more about [Maruyama](#) and [his work](#)

Marilyn Minter

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/marilyn-minter/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Marilyn Minter conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, November 2012

You've said that babies are metaphors and that they represent "a blank slate for the human condition—a beginning, and the clearest articulation of the 'human condition' unaltered." ¹ Would you mind expanding a bit on that idea? What are you referring to when you talk about the human condition, an unawareness of consciousness or maybe innocence?



| *Babies haven't been programmed in to the desiring machine.*

The children in *Playpen* have varying expressions of expectation, surprise, and glee. I know that pleasure is a theme that you explore in much of your work. Was it important to you that the children in *Playpen* be seen enjoying themselves?

| Yes.

Where does the soundtrack in *Playpen* come from? Is it recorded from the actual action taken place in the video? Is it manipulated? Did you focus on the "fluid" sounds in particular, and if so, why?

| *The sound was totally manipulated – it was manufactured in the studio for obvious reasons.*

Not surprisingly for an exhibition about flow, a number of works being presented address or capture the movement of fluid. You've worked with fluids as a primary part of the content and material in much of your work throughout your career. Could you describe what it is about fluids/fluidity/fluid motion that fascinates you? Is there something about its materiality and about its symbolism that repeatedly draws you to utilize/depict it?

| *I don't know. I've always been interested in things that drip, things that sweat, wet things.*

Why did you decide on a metallic fluid, and silver in particular, in this video and in others?

| *Strictly aesthetic reasons.*

I read the following quote from you: "I like to make pictures of things that exist but that you really don't see...." ² There are a number of works in this exhibition that focus on frozen moments, interactions of forces (e.g. magnetism and wind), and other entities that are typically unseen (e.g. communication). Why do you think artists like to "see" these things and then share them with others?

| *I like to think that artists are people that shine a light on life and the times we live in.*

[Marilyn Minter: "Playpen" 2011](#) from [Salon 94](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Marilyn Minter (American, born 1948) received her B.F.A. from University of Florida (1970) and her M.F.A. in Painting from Syracuse University (1972). Recent solo exhibitions have been held at the including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 2005, the Center for Contemporary Art, Cincinnati, Les Rencontres d'Arles festival in 2007, France, OH in 2009, La Conservera, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Ceutí/Murcia, Spain in 2009, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, OH in 2010 and the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg, Germany in 2011. Her video *Green Pink Caviar* was exhibited in the lobby of the Museum of Modern Art, New York for over a year, and was also shown on digital billboards on Sunset Boulevard in LA. She has been included in numerous group exhibitions. In 2006, Minter was included in the Whitney Biennial, and, in collaboration with Creative Time, she installed billboards all over Chelsea in New York City. In 2009, she had solo exhibits at Regen Projects, Los Angeles and Salon 94, New York. In 2011 Minter had a solo exhibition at Team Gallery, New York. She was featured in Commercial Break, at the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture and POST, for the 2011 *Venice Biennale*. Her work was featured in "Riotous Baroque," a group exhibition at the Kunsthaus Zurich, that travels to the Guggenheim Bilbao in June 2013. Minter currently lives and works in New York.

Read more about Minter and her work

Notes:

1. Sameer Reddy, "Autumn Ideas on the Walls," *Wall Street Journal*, October 26, 2011 [↩](#)
2. Linda Yablonsky, "Artifacts: Marilyn Minter's Oozing Desire," *The New York Times Style Magazine*, October 28, 2011 [↩](#)

Semiconductor

 flowjustflow.com/2012/11/27/semiconductor/

November 27, 2012 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Semiconductor conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, November 2012
Within the context of this exhibition your work *20Hz* seems to be a direct visualization of the flow of energy, although it is not exactly a smooth flow, more like a vibrating sequence of patterns. The video “depicts” a geomagnetic storm, solar wind creating a temporary disturbance in the earth’s magnetosphere. How were the images in *20Hz* derived? Did you have an idea of what kinds of forms and movement you wanted to include?



We knew we wanted to create a different way of representing a waveform, beyond a single undulating line. We had been looking at interference patterns and ways these are captured for inspiration, and the aesthetic grew from the technologies used to do this. We were also thinking of electron microscopy. The developmental phase of a work like this is very lengthy as we don’t depend on the software for the visual representation but want to develop our own visual language, so there’s a lot of time consuming experimenting. We worked in 3D software and programmed it to take the sound and directly generate these kinetic sculptures.

I read that you worked with a scientist already involved with turning the data from CARISMA (Canadian Array for Realtime Investigations of Magnetic Activity) into audio. So how did the soundtrack to *20Hz* emerge from that? Did you remix/interpret/sculpt what was given to you? Or did you wholly create the sound from the data?

We worked closely with the scientist Andy Kale to process the sound. The nature of the data means it has to be up-sampled to bring the frequency into our audible range but there’s different ways this could be done so we spent time to-ing and fro-ing with him to get what we wanted. So what you hear is the raw data as sound but we then created a composition with the sounds to allow for a kind of narrative to emerge. We did this scene by scene before the animation was generated so we could control the flow of the piece. If we were to leave the data raw the piece would have quite a different rhythm without much action for long periods, this may lend itself well to an installation work but we knew we wanted to make a short moving image piece.

Along those same lines, is it correct to say that there is translation (or maybe transformation is a better word?), going on with this piece, that is, magnetic forces and energy transfers turned into (or emitting) sound, and sound turned into visual shape and movement in your piece. And then, in the viewer’s experience, transforming the sound into a comprehension or concept of what a geomagnetic storm is. Is this kind of fluid transmission of data/ideas of the physical world into an experience for the viewer relevant to your work? If so, how does it motivate you in terms of choosing projects?

Our work is very much about creating first person experiences for the viewer and questioning how we experience the physical world through the language of science. When we work in this way, directly translating scientific data which is representing something beyond the limits of our perception, it isn’t to try and create a realistic interpretation of what form the matter takes but to re-interpret the data to, on the one hand to create a new experience that becomes a humbling and even phenomenal visualisation and on the other hand to question how science mediates our experiences of the physical world. A solar physicist once said to us “science is a human invention it’s nature that’s real,” and we like to probe the boundaries of the science, its language and philosophies and ultimately question our place in the physical world.

What is it about the “secret lives” of invisible magnetic fields that intrigue you? Or is it more that you’re interested in all

things solar? Why do you want to visualize a force or a movement that most of us are unaware of?

It's a way to speculate about what science tells us about the physical world that exists beyond our senses. We're interested in the material nature of these things, as a painter is interested in the material nature of paint say or a sculptor his material. This invisible matter has become our medium via the tools and processes of science. It's the signature of these tools that we are really seeing in our work not the matter itself, but the way man has invented the language of science. We like how this is so self referential, that we think we are 'seeing' the sun or 'seeing' the magnetic field lines but we are really only being reminded about the presence of the human as observer.

20Hz looks old by which I mean, it's in black and white, the imagery is fuzzy, and that fuzziness is present also in the sound. It is reminiscent of a science movie from the 1950s. And this then makes the video seem somewhat more authentic or authoritative. Was that intentional?

We referenced some scientific techniques that are used to observe the invisible world and adopted shallow depth of field and particular qualities such as the black and white and the amount of detail so that it feels like you are witnessing these events for real through the technology of man. It's not a device to try and trick people into thinking it is the actual Earth's boundary but to raise questions about the validity of scientific endeavor compared to our everyday experiences of the natural physical world.

Regarding the psychological concept of "flow," I wondered if you might talk about your creative process as an artistic team and if you ever find yourself in a state of creative flow together or separately? When/if that does happen, does it occur at various stages throughout the making of a work?

We can each take on different roles during the making of an artwork, but we tend to jointly develop the work through intensive periods of brainstorming and experimenting being wholly focused on realising the work. It does tend to take over everything else in life. The flow as mentioned here sounds like a continuous state of being arising from one activity though, there are a lot of elements that go into making an artwork like this and this state can occur through the different stages, the research, sound development, conversations not just what would be considered the actual making of the work in the same way if you were drawing or painting. There are a lot of interruptions and technical difficulties when working with CG animation, but I guess you do need this sense of 'flow' to see you through as it's a very time consuming and labour intensive process. In this sense the final vision is very important and I guess the determination and motivation to get there could be this 'flow'.

20Hz was co-commissioned by Arts Santa Monica + Lighthouse. Supported by the British Council. Commissioned for the Invisible Fields Exhibition at Arts Santa Monica, Barcelona. 2011-2012 • Audio Data courtesy of [CARISMA](#), operated by the University of Alberta, funded by the Canadian Space Agency.

20 Hz from [Semiconductor](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

UK artists Ruth Jarman (British, born 1973) and Joe Gerhardt (British, born 1972) founded Semiconductor in 1997. Their fellowships include the NASA Space Science Fellowship 2005 and Smithsonian Artists' Research Fellowship 2010. Their installations have won them awards that include Best Film at the Cutting Edge from the British Animation Awards 2008, *Nature* Magazine's Scientific Merit Award 2009 and Samsung Art Prize 2012, and have been shown at venues such as the Royal Academy of Arts, London (2009), the Exploratorium, San Francisco (2009), and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC (2012). Works influenced by their Galápagos residency were presented in their exhibition "Worlds in the Making" at FACT, Liverpool (2011).

[Read more about Semiconductor and their work](#)

Hiroshi Senju

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/hiroshi-senju/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Hiroshi Senju conducted by Sarah Matheson, '13, studio art major and art history minor, University of Richmond, January 2013



I read in some previous essays that you try to illustrate Lao-Tzu's philosophical notion of Tao, a universal and natural flow of order. Is this woven symbolically throughout your work or are there specific works or series that pictorially represent this? Does your work affirm this notion or does it challenge it in any way?

I am not trying to illustrate Lao-Tzu's idea. Probably both of us, brought up in the Eastern culture, we have experienced and mastered a similar sense of nature, to be on the side of nature. In Western culture, historically, nature is something to be managed and controlled by man; and that led to industrial development and new civilization. However, the people (both from Eastern and Western culture) share the same feelings towards nature, it is sometimes hidden under our consciousness.

What is the connection between the surface of your paintings, the mulberry paper mounted on board, and your artwork? Are these materials meant to reflect Japanese heritage? Is there a particular significance to the juxtaposition between the hard board and the softer paper? Why not just use canvas?

The reason for my use of mulberry paper is its flexibility. It can form any shape, and yet is strong enough to mount onto the hard board after all the manipulating. I find it very beautiful. There is a history of mulberry paper and the hard wooden board for the last one thousand years in Japan, but that is not the reason I'm attracted to the combination. They fit right into the contemporary sense of beauty, when the mulberry paper is mounted beautifully flat on the hard board. I've tried using canvas, but could not find the same effect as I want for now.

While on the subject of your materials, how do the natural sources of your pigments relate to your subject matter? Does the combination of the paper with the choice of pigment have a specific meaning within your work?

I have been using natural pigments because those were what are available for me.

(I encountered the natural pigments when I was in high school, and that triggered my strong desire to be an artist.) The natural pigments evoke my sense of respect for the nature and the memory which long lost in my DNA, profound awe was mother Earth.

A significant portion of your work throughout your career depicts liquid subject matter. And specifically, liquids that don't seem to have a beginning or end, as if they are always in mid-action, make up your waterfall series. What about this continuity of motion fascinates you? Is there something about its materiality and about its symbolism that repeatedly draws you to utilize/depict it?

My choice of motif is beauty. After I paint, then, I come to realize those images represent the continuity, the sense of no beginning or end, like the cycle of the universe and life.

Is the repetition of waterfalls in your paintings meant to evoke a feeling of consistent, melodic flow for the viewer? How does this calming nature compare to the feeling of the sublime in your works? Is this an intentional juxtaposition?

If it evoked those senses, that means, we share the same feeling toward nature. I want to share the sense of beauty and the sublime with as many people as possible, and that may be the reason for repetition. As there is no beginning or end, it continues, with no one moment the same as the other.

Along with the strong connection to your heritage, do you find yourself lost in a sort of flow, like a full immersion into positivity and focus, when producing your work? Does the connection between yourself and your work lie more in the process or the finished product?

I find the process the most important. I immerse myself and become one with nature. That's goes with my belief that art root back to the cave paintings found in Western Europe, like at Altamira and Lascaux, created fifteen thousand years ago. The paintings bring out the fundamental question to the universe. There is sublime, communication (question and possible suggestion) and learning.

Biography

Hiroshi Senju (Japanese, born 1958) received a B.F.A., M.F.A., and Ph.D. from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. He is the first Asian artist to receive an individual fine arts award at the Venice Biennale (1995). Solo exhibitions have been held at The Hakone Open-Air Museum, Kanagawa, Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo (2006), and Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York (2007, 2009, and 2012). He has been included in group exhibitions at the Japan Society and Asia Society in New York, the Tokyo National Museum, the Contemporary Art Museum Kumamoto, Japan, and the 6th Gwangju Biennale in Korea. Senju is president of the Kyoto University of Art and Design, director of Koyodo Museum, president of Tokyo College of Arts, advisor of The Tokugawa Museum, and vice chairman of The New Life Conference. His work is in the collection of many museums, including The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Toyama Museum of Contemporary Art, Kushiro, Japan. In October 2011, the Hiroshi Senju Museum Karuizawa opened in Karuizawa, Nagano Prefecture.

[Read more about Senju and his work](#)

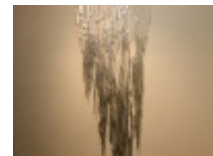
Katy Stone

 flowjustflow.com/2013/01/29/katy-stone/

January 29, 2013 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Katy Stone conducted by Sarah Matheson, '13, studio art major and art history minor, University of Richmond, December 2012

In the closing line of your online statement, you state, "Within each piece is the notion of the timeless, of tapping into an ongoing flow; the idea that a mark, line or shape can become a sign, symbol, or metaphor for the infinite." Regarding that idea, what sort of control do you have while creating your pieces? Do the colors and shapes flow into their own being or are they more accurately directed by your influence? Do you have an exact vision from the beginning of what a piece will look like?



That's an interesting question because it seems like I am always both trying to release control of the work and also at the same time, because it's my work, I can't help but direct its influence. It very much involves both parts of that continuum, at certain points in the process. Sometimes I start out with an exact vision, but at other times, a piece will just emerge. In both cases, it doesn't really come together until something unexpected happens that completes the work. This is what I'm always after. (Phillip Guston talked about that moment when you are working on a piece, when things fall together and become "inevitable.") With Lunar Drift, it was the placement—at the last minute—of an element that I hadn't initially envisioned being in the work at all, that bright yellow oval in the center.

I try to build chance into my process and I have strategies for employing chance along the way. In the beginning, the process of automatic, stream of consciousness mark making allows me to release control. More direct influence is at play when I then identify the specific form or forms that came out of the stream of conscious that I want to replicate. Then during that process of replication, painting the same one over and over again, the gesture takes over and I get to that place of painting and not thinking.

When the elements are cut out and assembled, it's back to my direct influence again. They are very intentionally and meticulously composed in order to achieve, in the end, something that looks like it is very organic and spontaneous. A friend said it's like ballet.

I'm also interested in the idea of control or lack of it as being built into a material. I always try to have something in the work happening that is out of my control, usually with the paint. Because I mix lots of water into it and it's very fluid, the way that it dries is out of my control, not a direct result of my hand. I completely rely on that. With the metal works, because of the way they are fabricated, there is a great degree of control. So with them, it's in the assembling and combining that allows for the unexpected to enter. If something slips or shifts when I'm composing, that unexpected occurrence is almost always the thing that brings the piece together. I also crop the metal parts sometimes, in order to get that unexpected shape that completes the piece. As for color, I use it in a very intuitive and it in a cyclical way.

Your work depicts ephemeral, naturally occurring events yet your materials are durable and long-lasting. Is this an intentional juxtaposition?

Yes, it's something that I've definitely thought about. In the mid to late 90s, just after graduate school, my works were all temporal and none of my materials were archival. But over the years, as I began to show and exhibit more, I moved toward more archival materials. Now, the materials I use still have a quality of ephemerality or delicacy even if they are durable. I think that's a compelling contrast. It took me a number of years to be able to articulate that characteristic that was always there in my work.

The titles of your work often include verbs (drift, fall, snag...), does this mean that they are meant to be seen as constantly growing and flowing outside of their physical boundaries?

Sometimes my works suggest what I like to call “nameable” things but equally they are about verbs—motions and actions. Despite the fact that they are frozen moments, they are very much implying ongoing motion, beyond the boundaries of what is seen. This tension between those two qualities of stillness and motion is interesting to me. There’s a wonderful essay by Helen Keller about how she experienced the world as both a blind and deaf person. She talks about “the straight and curved lines which are over all things.” I was so impacted by the truth of that description, and I think about that all the time. We’re surrounded by these seemingly static and separate objects, but under the surface there’s a flow, which you could experience if you “saw” and touched things with your hands: the boundaries disappearing, the lines flowing together and through everything.

I read that, following an exhibition in Vienna, you became interested in the idea of *lichtung*. As far as my research can discern, this alludes to a mysterious sort of clearing of light surrounded by nature. In your experience and work, is it more of an abstract state of being rather than certain concrete imagery? How has your work developed from the investigation of this concept?

*Well, it has ended up being both! I’d been working on a body of work for a show that would be seen in wintertime in Vienna, and before any of the work had come together, I had to come up with the title for the show. I was in the color mode of yellow, white and black. For some reason, it came to me that I should title the show *Yellow, Light, Black*. I didn’t know why “Light” instead of “White,” besides that it sounded more poetic. Then, several weeks later, researching titles and translations, I came across the word “*lichtung*.” In German, it literally means “a clearing in a forest where light comes in through the clouds.” Martin Heidegger used the word as a verb instead of a noun, to describe a function of art, positing that art embodies a state of being that is about clearing; it creates a space for “clearing, a space for “lightness.” I loved that. The idea completely articulated this thread that has run through my work for years. I’d been wondering about why there has always been both a literal and metaphorical lightness in my work. I’d been wondering why I was always compelled to make things that felt both fleeting and expansive. So that discovery was both an abstract notion that completely made sense to me and also it was a world of concrete imagery. I had already made a piece that was a black accumulation of parts that looked like both a landscape and a tree. I had a white piece that was cloud-like. I wanted to make a yellow piece but it wasn’t working in the shape I had envisioned for it. After I stumbled across that word, I knew immediately to make it into a more triangle shape, an elemental shape that I’ve used many times before, but after this discovery, I also understood that shape to represent a ray of light. Coming across this concept helped me understand an arc of meaning in my work that has been there since the beginning.*

Your work has a certain reflective/mirroring quality to it. Is there a flow you are trying to achieve between the work and its environment? Other than size, how does the artwork’s environment affect it? Is the setting where the piece will be shown highly influential during its creation?

I do think about space and site a lot when I’m making something. Because my background is really as a painter, I think of the wall or the floor as a ground, a space for dissolving the boundary of the picture plane.

*As far as setting, often I make a body of work for a specific show and specific place. I make works that will converse with one another and with the space. The piece *Lunar Drift* was originally created for a two person show called *Bramblur*, a play on the words *bramble* and *blur*. The richness of imagery and fleeing of motion from those two words led me to make the wheel-like, bloom-like shapes in the piece; I arranged it so that it seems to be spinning and dissipating, spreading, drifting. The other works I made for that show alluded to the different aspects of landscape, especially the landscape of Northern California. Each work also had a way that*

it seemed to be changing from one thing into another thing. Lunar Drift is earthy but aerial, it's like something that's both actively growing and also dissolving at the same time.

The Silver Fall piece that I'm making specifically for this show is going to be plain instead of painted because it's going to be in a space with video work, and the projected light and color from that will really affect the surface of the work. I'm excited that it will have a flickering, undulating quality, due to the reflected light of the other works. It will be something that keeps changing.

Biography

Katy Stone (American, born 1969) received her B.F.A from Iowa State University (1992) and her M.F.A. from University of Washington (1994). Recent solo exhibitions have been held at Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle (2002, 2005, 2008); Patricia Faure Gallery, Santa Monica (2006); Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati (2008); Johansson Projects, Oakland, California (2008); Atrium Gallery, St. Louis (2010); and Robischon Gallery, Denver (2010). Her work has also been featured in select group exhibitions appearing at Arena One Gallery, Santa Monica (2007); Neuhoff Gallery, New York (2008); Wright Exhibition Space, Seattle (2008); Tarryn Teresa Gallery (2009); Project4 Gallery, Washington DC (2010); and NAID, San Francisco (2011). She has received public art commissions in Houston (2007); Taiwan (2008); Seattle (2009); Las Vegas (2010); and many other locations. Stone has received Best of Show Award, Pacific Northwest Annual (1994, 1996); Missoula Trust for Artist Grant (1997); Seattle Collects Purchase Award (2003); Oxbow School Visiting Artist Fellowship (2008); and the GAP Grant, Artist Trust (2009). Stone is currently based Seattle.

[Read more about Stone and her work](#)

January 29, 2012 · by museums · in Uncategorized

Email interview with Zimoun conducted by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, curator, December 2012

With the work that is included in this exhibition, flow is experienced both visually and aurally when the piece is engaged. How important is this rhythm and flow when you decide to design and create a work like this one? And how important is it to you for the visitor to experience a flow with his/her senses?

Related to my work I understand “flow“ as the moment when dead matter (industrial materials) turns somehow into something almost feeling organic or alive. I try to develop systems on very simple principles that then start to develop their own behavior. Of course it’s still somehow dead matter, but the complexity of its behavior is growing in a way that it starts to feel somehow organic. I think this is happening if it’s reaching a level of complexity which, for us, is not predictable in its microstructures anymore. It can happen based on very simple, somehow primitive and also predictable individual behaviors (for instance watching a single mechanical element), if they are getting multiplied and start to become one bigger organism.



I read in an interview the following quote from you: “The order, the matrix is often the technical situation, the system, the set up. And then the chaos and individuality is coming out of its activity.”¹ Where do you see or experience chaos in your pieces? Do you find that the randomness is concentrated more in one form over another?

As I tried to describe it in the earlier question, I think this chaos or randomness grows out of complexity that happens if we study a piece as one organism, at the moment when microstructures in sound and motion get so complex that they start to remind us of something organic.

Patterns appear in the movement, sound, visual components (especially line, shade, and color), structure, and placement of your artworks. Are there any sources, natural or artificial, that you find particularly inspiring to you in terms of pattern?

I’m inspired by many different things. From nature to perception and brain functions, from artificial intelligence to robotics, from philosophy to themes of individuality, society and mass behaviors, from science to small details we could discover every day in normal and found objects all around us. Just to mention a few. So for me the inspiration is coming from many different fields and subjects.

You’ve also said, “What you hear is what you see.”² Why is the link between the visual, the kinetic, and the auditory so critical for much of your work? Would you ever consider playing around with that idea of presenting these elements but interrupting causal connections while implying or alluding that they exist?

It’s based on my general interest in simplicity and directness. I’m interested in trying to reduce my work as much as possible to get to the point when sound and motion become one thing. So the work is no longer a combination of visual aspects and sound— it’s one complete system and each part needs the other. As one whole system we can hear and see it.

The physical space or volume that you choose for your art seems carefully determined. The works and installations exist in space but also demarcate or contain a space, such as in the case of the piece for this exhibition that seems to emphasize the height and flatness of the wall. Is that so-called negative space, the place between the metal rods and the wall, or the interior of structures that you've created with boxes in larger installations, for example, as important as the physical presences of the materials you use? When you determine the volume and placement of your work, what kinds of factors are you considering?

I try to find a balance and connection/relationship between materials, space as volume, the sound properties of a space as well as of the used materials. I try to bring all those elements together in a way that they all need each other and develop an entire system.

To go along with this idea of your work existing in space, is it fair to say that within your practice as an artist you are exploring how art engages or connects to other people? I know that you purposely try to keep your works vague in terms of not insisting on any sort of interpretive content or references so that it remains open for the viewer to make associations or conclusions. But there still seems to be an obvious awareness of maximizing the potential experience of a person in the same space as your work, both visually and aurally.

I think a beautiful and important part of the arts evolve in the space happening between the audience and the art piece. My work somehow needs the audience which starts to make their own, individual connections to realities, illusions and experiences they made, to ideas they have and thoughts coming out of the inspiration happening at that moment. If the audience is getting activated and starts to create their own connections, far away from "right or wrong" the art can grow into unexpected and individual levels and dimensions. I'm creating abstract pieces based on very simple, industrial or every day objects, which then, if they work, can inspire and activate the people to create their individual connections and ideas. Ideally this can function similar to natural phenomena, in which beauty helps people to lose themselves for a moment and to discover themselves at the same time, somehow.

Regarding the psychological concept of "flow," could you talk a bit about your creative process? The art that you make seems to have many steps to completion. When do you find yourself in a creative state of flow, and how are ideas generated and managed when you have assistants with you in the studio or for installations?

I'm developing my work based on many elements. There might be an idea, maybe inspired by a material, a sound, a behavior of a movement, a space to present a piece, something I experience in an everyday situation or just an idea coming from somewhere. Then this normally turns into many steps of experiments, tests and prototypes. Through this process details start to get more clear or even unexpected results influence the whole development into an unexpected, other direction.

Zimoun : 216 prepared dc-motors, filler wire 1.0mm, 2009 / 2010 from [STUDIO ZIMOUN](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Biography

Zimoun (Swiss, born 1977) has had recent solo exhibitions held at Gallery Wandelbar, Gstaad, Switzerland (2004, 2005); FIT, Berlin (2005); Monkey Town, New York (2008); Push Gallery, Montreal (2010); Contemporary Art Museum MNAC, Bucharest (2011); and Bitforms Gallery, New York (2012). His work has also been featured in select group exhibitions appearing at Swiss Art Awards, Basel (2006, 2011, 2012); Nemo Festival, Paris (2008); Museum of Fine Arts, Bern, Switzerland (2009); International Biennale for Young Art, Moscow (2010); Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria (2010); Kunsthalle Palazzo, Liestal, Switzerland (2011); and Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei, Taiwan (2012). He has been awarded the Mention Swiss Youth Photo Award (2000); Residency in Beijing, China (2004); Aeschlimann Corti Award

(2005); Kiefer Hablitzel Award, Swiss Art Awards (2006); Aeschlimann Corti Award, First Prize (2009); and Prix Ars Electronica, Honorary Mention (2010). Zimoun currently lives and works in Bern, Switzerland.

[Read more about Zimoun and his work](#)

Notes:

1. interview in with Marco Mancuso, "Zimoun & Leerraum. Sound Organisms in Evolution," *DIGIMAG*, February 2011, <http://www.digicult.it/en/digimag/issue-061/zimoun-leerraum-sound-organisms-in-evolution/> accessed Dec. 12, 2012 ↩
2. interview with Mark Peter Wright in *EAR ROOM*, January 1, 2011, <http://earroom.wordpress.com/2011/01/01/zimoun/> accessed Dec. 12, 2012 ↩