

# Aalborg Universitet

## **Biotopia Revisited**

Beyond Art in the Wet Zone Søndergaard, Morten

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### LEA | DIGITAL MEDIA EXHIBITION PLATFORM

#### ---- MASTER SHEET -----

Curators: Vince Dziekan & Morten Søndergaard

Artists: Stelarc (AUS), Revital Cohen (UK), Jacob Kirkegaard (DK), Jim Gimzewski / Victoria Vesna (USA), Paul Vanouse (USA) and Mogens Jacobsen (DK). Exhibition/Project: Biotopia Revisited

Exhibition Period: February 2012

Release Date: 1 February 2012

FACEBOOK (TITLE): LEA Exhibition – Biotopia Revisited 01.2012

FLICKR (TITLE): Biotopia Revisited - 01.2012

LEA - Digital Media Exhibition Platform

Winter 2012

02.2012

'Biotopia Revisited – Art in the Wet Zone'.

ххуухх

Vince Dziekan

Digital Media Curator, Leonardo Electronic Almanac

Morten Søndergaard

Media Art Curator & Associate Professor of Interactive Media Art, AAU cph, Denmark.

CURATORIAL STATEMENT by Morten Søndergaard (Curator of Biotopia – Art in the Wet Zone at Utzon Center in Denmark, 2010)

Art in the Wet Zone – and Beyond...

Today, media art and the human sciences are both in a situation where a tensions between techno-aesthetic and bio-logical patterns are prevalent and preconfiguring our cognitive systems. Biotopia Revisited examines how art – and science - 'manage' this situation; how does artists and (human) scientists navigate the wet zones? According to Stelarc the body is obsolete. If the body is obsolete as Stelarc hypothesizes what does this mean? In one sense, perhaps art is obsolete as well? Instead, one could argue, new collective concepts appear that 'pick up' art again, and use it for something different - examples: 'New Media Art', 'Digital art', and 'Media Art'. If we accept that 'Media Art' is the metaphor we currently use most often to describe this transformation of aesthetics and art happening in the wet zone, then what would define (the consequences of) a Bio Media Art? The transformation of man?; of science?; a transformation of the human sciences, at the very least?

At the Utzon Center in Aalborg in 2010, the original exhibition BIOTOPIA brought together seven artists, all of whom set out to explore the wet zone through specifically commissioned installations: Stelarc (AUS), Revital Cohen (UK), Jacob Kirkegaard (DK), Jim Gimzewski / Victoria Vesna (USA), Paul Vanouse (USA) and Mogens Jacobsen (DK).

Biotopia Revisited wants to expose the moments and situations when art, technology, and curating enter into different roles (than the traditional ones) in the wet zone. In those situations they become more akin to scientific investigations into unknown territories of a remote corner of the universe – a science based on the human body's hypothetic obsoleteness. All the participating artists operate in the wet zone in-between and beyond art and science and are particularly acutely aware of what happens when technology and human beings intersect and intervene (each other)

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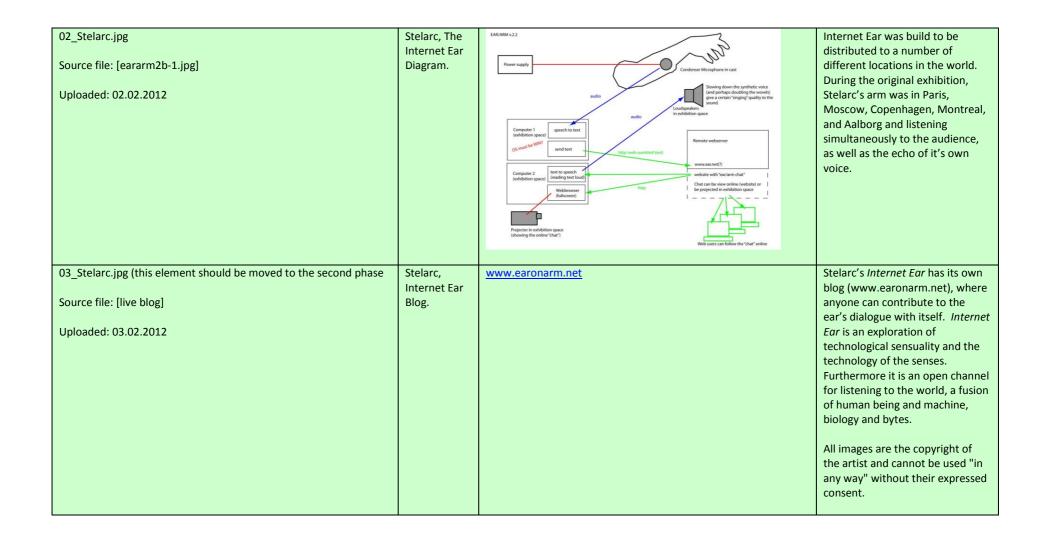
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File Name	Title	Image (Thumbnail)	Caption (max. 1000 characters)
FOLDER 1: Opening/Contextual images			
01_Stelarc.jpg Source file: [Biotopia-7745.jpg] & [Ear On Arm.jpg] Uploaded: 01.02.2012	Stelarc, 'Internet Ear', 2010.	<image/>	With Internet Ear the Australian artist Stelarc ventures into a controversial area: the fusion of the human body with technology. By means of a lengthy surgical process the artist had an artificial human ear implanted in his forearm. A subsequent operation then installed microscopic electronic equipment in this third ear, with a view to both transmitting and receiving sound. Because of the danger of 

---- PROGRESSIVE -----

	Arm, the exploration of technological sensuality, now becomes a sensuality that is distributed and expanded; a sensual technology disconnected from its original "host" and, in principal, beyond its control. We hear with Stelarc's ear! The phrase "Lend me your ear", in the words of the Beatles (and before them, Shakespeare (Julius Ceasar), becomes real. Stelarc actually does lend us his ear. But what will you say?
	Software and the Internet transform Internet Ear into a listening arm. You can listen along with it from (and to) Moscow or Paris, or whatever corner of the globe you happen to be in. All images are the copyright of the photographers and artists and cannot be used "in any way" without their expressed consent.



## 04\_vanouse.jpg

Source file: [Biotopia-7736.jpg]

Uploaded: 04.02.2012

Paul Vanouse, 'Ocular Revision'



alternative visual versions of DNA material. The work is a fine example of the artist's work with a number of different disciplines, because Ocular Revision moves in a zone that hovers between art, natural science and engineering. In recent years Vanouse has been especially preoccupied with opening up the highly specialised, closed world of science for a broader public. This is the theme he works with in Ocular Revision. With the assistance of technology borrowed from the area of natural science Vanouse has created a new, living, visual version of the complex codes of DNA molecules. A camera with a lens fitted to microscope projects large, circular images of DNA material up onto a vertical surface. But the DNA material does not behave as it usually does in the world of natural science. Paul Vanouse experiments with turning this version of DNA material into an organic, living experience, in contrast to natural science, which tends to portray DNA material in static diagrams.

Ocular Revision is an installation

that can analyse and display

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05_vanouse.jpg	Paul Vanouse,		Watch the accompanying video on LEA's Vimeo page: xxxx
Source file: [1. Ocular Revision, Paul Vanouse, installation detail,	'Ocular	The state of the s	
2010]	Revision'		Paul Vanouse's complex installation focuses on an
VIDEO LINK			important and highly relevant issue: the danger of regarding
Vanouse_Video01.flv			human DNA material exclusively
Source file: [ <u>http://www.paulvanouse.com/or-</u>			as a code to bend and break, instead of an integral, vital
movie-video.html			component of human biology.
		A Contraction of the	
Link to: http://www.paulvanouse.com/or-movie-		1 1	All images are the copyright of the artist and cannot be used "in
<u>video.html</u>			any way" without their expressed
			consent.
Uploaded: 05.02.2012			
06 Jacobsen.jpg	Mogens		Mogens Jacobsen's contribution
	Jacobsen,		to Biotopia is the installation
Source file: [gruppe_uden_dig_biotopia.JPG]	The Group Without You		<i>G</i> ( <i>ruppen</i> ) <i>U</i> ( <i>den</i> ) <i>D</i> ( <i>ig</i> ) / "The <i>Group</i> ( <i>without you</i> )". Jacobsen's
Uploaded: 06.02.2012	(version 2),		installation employs advanced
	2010.		surveillance technology, operated on several, identical laptop
			computers. The installation has
			been put together in such a way that each of the computers
			involved displays a single set of
			monitoring eyes. The viewer directs their gaze directly towards
			the computer's screen. They then

	burne and the second seco
	turn away. But the moment the
	viewer looks away, the
	monitoring eyes return again.
	It is, however, possible to outwit
	the work. If you look at it on the
	sly (through your fingers, for
	example) the monitoring eyes
	react to the viewer's gaze by
	looking away.
	In G(ruppen) U(den) D(ig)
	Jacobsen is working with so-called
	biometric surveillance technology,
	a technology used particularly by
	the surveillance industry. The
	hallmark of biometric surveillance
	is its capacity to register and
	recognise human identity, for
	example from a fingerprint or
	retina scanning.
	i cuina scanning.
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07_Rinaldo.jpg	Ken Rinaldo,		Watch the accompanying video
Source file: [Biotopia-7723.jpg]	'The Paparazzi		on LEA's Vimeo page: xxx
	Bots', 2009		While surveillance technology is
VIDEO LINK	(Inside Arte E	The second se	the vital element in Jacobsen's
Jacobsen_Video01.flv	Ciencia: Lisbon).		installation, the work is not simply a critique of our "Big Brother"
Successing videoorv	Lisbony.		society. Instead of focusing on a
Source file:			state's surveillance of its citizens,
[http://www.mogensjacobsen.dk/art/gruppen/]			in G(ruppen) U(den) D(ig) the
			artist concentrates on our surveillance of one another.
Link to:			Today we take surveillance for
http://www.mogensjacobsen.dk/art/gruppen/			granted. It is a result of the
Uploaded: 07.02.2012			spread of technology in the public
			space. It is something we are all forced to accept. This is clearly
			the case, for example, in the
			current growth of Facebook,
			Twitter and other social networks.
			Perhaps we want to be under survaillance?
			Survaillance:
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## 08\_Revital.jpg

Source file: [lamp.jpg]

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Rivetal Cohen, 'Electrocyte Appendix', 2010.



Electrocyte Appendix is a new example of Rivetal Cohens power and desire to break down the barriers between the organic and the mechanical. In concrete terms the work has created an organ out of artificially produced nanocells. This organ can be implanted in the human body, allowing it to function as an electronic organism. For Biotopia the artwork has been documented with both video and sketches. In *Electrocyte Appendix* Cohen is inspired by the animal kingdom, more specifically from the complex biology of the electric eel. In fact the creation of Cohen's artificial organ is inspired by the biological processes, which enable the electric eel to produce small electrical currents. *Electrocyte Appendix* empowers the body to convert natural blood sugar into electricity.

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09_Revital.jpg	Revital Cohen,	The work reveals Cohen's often ground-breaking investigations of
Source file: [Biotopia-7794.jpg]	'Electrocyte	human anatomy, investigations
	Appendix',	which are not afraid to reshape
Uploaded: 09.02.2012	Installation	human beings' basic biological
	Photo 2010.	material.
		Revital Cohen has strong views
		about the position of humans in a
		digitalised world, where
		electricity is an absolute
		necessity. Electrocyte Appendix
		and Cohen's other artistic
		experiments represent a radical
		break with the electrophobic
		opinions of earlier times.
		Electrocyte Appendix opens a
		debate on the possibility of
		reinterpreting the human body
		and broadening our common
		understanding of what it means
		to be human.
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10_Kirkegaard.jpg	Jacob	POLYTHERA is a water, sound and
	Kirkegaard,	light installation inspired by
Source file: [POLY-IMG_1656.jpg]	'Polythera',	Stanislaw Lem's science fiction
	2010.	novel <i>Solaris,</i> which has been
		filmed by both Andrei Tarkovsky
Uploaded: 10.02.2012	24 Car and Car An an	and Steven Soderberg. As well as
		being the title of Kirkegaard's
		contribution to Port 2010,
		POLYTHERA is also denotes a
		mysterious liquid, which in
		Stanislaw Lem's novel covers the
		planet Solaris. Kirkegaard's
		installation comprises a low basin
		filled with water. A sound with a
		frequency of 34 Hz causes the
		water to vibrate, producing small
		ripples in the surface of the
		water. A stroboscope illuminates
		the surface of the water
		concurrently with the sound, in
		the process creating an optical
		illusion. The water seems to move
		in slow motion.
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011_Kirkegaard.jpg Jacob The low frequencies us	
Kirkegaard, Kirkegaard, Kirkegaard, Kirkegaard, Kirkegaard's installation	n were
Source file: [Biotopia-7809.jpg]	that
– Installation – Installation – Installation	the first
Uploaded: 11.02.2012 Photo from film adaptation of Solar	
Utzon again emphasising the	
Center'.	
	anisiaw
Lem's novel.	
In the novel astronauts	have been
dispatched to commun	
the slowly flowing liqui	
POLYTHERA, a living or	
with a unique form and	
intelligence. POLYTHEF	
responds to their aggre	
approaches and materi	
images of the astronau	ts'
repressed sub-consciou	isness.
The sound image in Kirl	kegaard's
POLYTHERA is deep and	k
smouldering, inducing	viewers to
sink into an almost me	
state, a state in which t	
drift with POLYTHERA's	•
rippling surface. Could	
they will discover some	thing new
about themselves?	
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Suggested: Second phase of digital platform – Here, Biotopia is	
Revisited on a critical level – and the artistic formats focus on	
online dialogue (Stelarcs blog and live blogging with selected	

artists), video and sound.		
artists), video and sound.         12_stelarc.jpg         Source file: [         http://www.earonarm.net/index aal.php         ]         Uploaded: 12.02.2012	Full screen for one day: http://www.earonarm.net/index aal.php	<ul> <li>Why deal with art in wet zone?</li> <li>Our understanding of humanity based on that we have full control over 'our' world and culture, and 'our selves', is in a crisis.</li> <li>This does not mean we are going down or disappear, but rather that we need to sense human beings, ourselves, and our role in some new ways. There are opportunities in crisis: It opens up new discoveries and insights - and, not least, new ways to recognize and gain insight.</li> <li>This involves several levels of the human 'sphere' of which I may only elaborate on some of them here: The body, subjectivity, art and context.</li> <li>Let us revisit with the body. In the wet zone a body is not 'just' a body. A body is both physical and virtual. The body is stasis and movement, solid and liquid; thought and feeling; a paradox, it seems, for the philosopher – and for the human sciences.</li> <li>All images are the copyright of the artist and cannot be used "in any way" without their expressed consent.</li> </ul>
13jpg etc following the Biowrite <sup>©</sup>		All images are the copyright of

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FOLDER 3: Enteric Consciousness		
15jpg	XXX	Watch the accompanying video on LEA's Vimeo page:
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19jpg	ХХХ	Watch the accompanying video
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## INTERVIEW WITH KEN RINALDO

XXX

Q1. XXX?         A1. Response.         Q2. XXX?         A2. Response.         Q3. XXX?         A3. Response.         Q4. XXX?         A5. Response.         Q5. XXX?         A5. Response.         Q6. XXX?	Participate in the conversation by commenting to 'Biotopia Revisited' Photo Album on Leonardo Electronic Almanac's Facebook page: [http://on.fb.me/biotopiarevisited]
Q2. XXX?         A2. Response.         Q3. XXX?         A3. Response.         Q4. XXX?         A4. Response.         Q5. XXX?         A5. Response.	<b>Q1.</b> <i>XXX?</i>
A2. Response.   Q3. XXX?   A3. Response.   Q4. XXX?   A4. Response.   Q5. XXX?   A5. Response.	A1. Response.
Q3. XXX?   A3. Response.   Q4. XXX?   A4. Response.   Q5. XXX?   A5. Response.	<b>Q2.</b> <i>XXX</i> ?
A3. Response.   Q4. XXX?   A4. Response.   Q5. XXX?   A5. Response.	A2. Response.
Q4. XXX?         A4. Response.         Q5. XXX?         A5. Response.	<b>Q3.</b> XXX?
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A5. Response.	A4. Response.
	<b>Q5.</b> XXX?
Q6. XXX?	A5. Response.
	Q6. XXX?

A6. Response.

## SUPPLEMENTARY

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