RMIT UNIVERSITY

Thank you for downloading this document from the RMIT Research Repository.

The RMIT Research Repository is an open access database showcasing the research outputs of RMIT University researchers.

RMIT Research Repository: http://researchbank.rmit.edu.au/

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS PAGE

Video Games: A case study of a cross-cultural video collaboration

Larissa Hjorth and Nishant Shah

Introduction

The rise of mobile media is heralding new forms of networked visualities. These visualities see place, politics and images entangled in new ways: what can be called 'emplaced visuality'. In the images of citizen uprisings disseminated globally, such as the Arab Spring, it was mobile phones that provided the frame and context for new forms of networked visual politics. Due to the growth of networked photo apps such as Instagram and Hipstamic, the how, when and why of what we are representing is changing the relationship between place and co-presence. No longer the poorer cousin to professional cameras, camera phones have led to the rise of do-it-yourself ("DIY") aesthetics flooding mainstream and subcultural media cultures. In networked visuality contexts such as YouTube and Flickr, the aesthetic of what Burgess has called 'vernacular creativity' (Burgess 2007) has become all-pervasive—so much so that even mainstream media borrows the DIY style.

Now, with locative media added into the equation, these visualities are not only networked but also emplaced, that is, entangled within the temporal and spatial movements of everyday life (Pink & Hjorth 2012). Emplaced visualities represent a new relationship between place (as a series of what Doreen Massey calls 'stories so far' (2005: 130), co-presence, subjectivity and visuality. This phenomenon is influencing video art. In this chapter we reflect upon how mobile media visualities are impacting upon a sense of place and displacement. With the added dimension of Big Data and location-based services (like Google Maps and Facebook Places) now becoming part of the everyday informational circuits, how a sense of place and privacy is experienced and represented is changing. This phenomenon is apparent in the Palestinian cross-cultural video project called *Al Jaar Qabla al Daar (The Neighbour before the House)* as we will discuss in detail later in this chapter.

With its history of displacement and disapora, Palestinine's role in contemporary art

has become increasingly pivotal. This is especially the case with video art as it is a key medium for reflecting upon representations of place and movement.

When we think of Palestinan video art the first artist we think of is Mona Hatoum. Hatoum was a poineer in so many ways. In particular, she gave voice to Arab women. Her work unsetttled the poetics of the everyday by evoking a sense of displacement and entanglement. Whilst born in Beirut of Palestinan parents and then moving to London, she never identified as being Lebanese. Despite never having lived in Palestinian, Hatoum was like a number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon post 1948 who were never able to gain Lebanese identity cards. Unsurprisingly, Hatoum's experiences of exile permulate her work. In particular, exile, politics and the body have played a key role. This is epitomised in her iconic *Measures of Distance* (1988). In this Hatoum superimposes images of her mother showering, with letters that had been written by her mother in Arabic.

However, Hatoum is not the only artist representing the oevre of Palestinian video art.. With the rise of mobile media affording easy accessibility to new media tools and networked contexts like YouTube a new breed of video artists has arisen over the last two decades. An example is *Navigations: Palestinian Video Art, 1988 to 2011* (curated as part of the Palestine Film Festival) that encompassed both the dispora and the artists working in Palestine over nearly a quarter of a century. Unsurprisingly, motifs of diaspora and displacement feature throughout the fifteen works by Hatoum, Taysir Batniji, Manar Zoabi, Larissa Sansour and Khaled Jarrar to name a few. In *Navigations: Palestinian Video Art* key themes include 'mobility and fluidity: the virtual and the real, the past and the future, the spectacular and the quotidian, the near and the far' quote needs to be referenced if it is a quote.

Another example of an event promoting Palestinian video art is the */si:n/ Festival of Video Art & Performance.* Beginning in 2009, this festival became the first festival of video art in Palestine. It consists of performances, video installations, lectures, talks, and workshops in various venues all over the West Bank and includes artists from all over

the world. The name */si:n/* is meant to link the words 'scene' with 'seen' and has been perceived as providing an innovative context for video artists to share and collaborate in a public venue. With themes such as 'poetical revolution comes before political revolution' the */si:n/ Festival* provides a context that reflects upon exile and place in one of the world's most contested and political spaces, the West Bank (2011: n.p).

Given this rich tapestry of video art emerging in Palestine, we explore the relationship between the emergent mobile visualities, diaspora and place, through a specific project called *The Neighbour before the House (*2012). This is a cross-cultural video collaboration between Indian artists Shaina Anand, Ashok Sukumaran and Nida Ghouse, with Palestinian and Israeli artists Mahmoud Jiddah, Shereen Brakat and Mahasen Nasser-Eldin. *The Neighbour before the House* is a video art project that explores quotidian practices of life in a 'post-surveillance society'. *The Neighbour before the House* is set in the context of the much contested territories and the relentless re-occupation and re-appropriation of East Jerusalem.

Working with cheap surveillance technologies, which have become such a ubiquitous part of the landscape of East Jerusalem, the artists use a Pan Tilt Zoom ("PTZ") security camera to inquire into the affective dimensions of 'mobile' life in the time of turbulent politics. The images that they capture look at jest, memory, desire and doubt as fragile conditions of trust and life shape the everyday experiences of the region. The camera is given to the residents of a neighbourhood torn asunder by political strife and conflicts. They are asked to search for the nugget of truth or morsel of thickness in the otherwise familiar flatness of walls and closed doors which have been completely depleted of all depth because of the increased distance in the social relations.

The images eschew the tropes of traditional documentary making by adopting the grainy, lo-resolution ("lo-res"), digital non-frame, Do it yourself ("DIY") aesthetics constantly in search of an image that might become the site of "meaning making", reword? but increasingly only capturing the mundane, the inane, the opaque and the evanescent. The image leads the commentary. The live camera operator's interest and

experience shape the image rendering the familiar or the insignificant as hugely affective and evocative. The project further initiates a dialogue between the neighbours, not only from across the contested zones but also from across picket fences and walls of surveillance. This is achieved by introducing the images to them, by inviting them to capture the images, and instil in them the narratives of hope, despair, nostalgia, memory, loss, love and longing.

The Neighbour before the House reflects upon the relationship between art, technologies of visual reproduction and political strife. Moving away from the documentary style that has been popular in capturing the 'real', *The Neighbour before the House* reconfigures the temporality and spatiality through new affective and metaphorical tropes. It plays with the tension between the presence of surveillance technologies and the familiarity of these images that breed new conditions of life and living, trust and belonging, safety and threat, for the Palestinian people. In the process it introduces key questions to the role of the artist, the function of art, the form of video art practice and the new negotiations that digital video apparatus introduce to the art world beyond the now main-stream ideas of, for example, morphing, digitization and remixing.

Moreover, *The Neighbour before the House* reflects upon a shift away from the dominant network society paradigm and towards more contingent and ambivalent micro-narratives of camera phone practices. It toys with the DIY 'banality' aesthetics of camera phones in order to consider the ways in which place is overlaid with different types of information: electronic, geographic, psychological and metaphoric. On the one hand, *The Neighbour before the House* evokes network society metaphors. On the other hand, it suggests a move away from this paradigm and towards a politics of both 'emplaced' and displaced visuality. In order to discuss this transformation of the relationship between image, place and information from network society metaphors towards 'emplaced' visualities we firstly describe *The Neighbour before the House* before then reflecting upon a few key themes the project explores. That is, the movement of the networked society to emplaced visualities and the rise of the politics of the phoneur.

The Neighbour before the House (2012): A case study

As aforementioned, *The Neighbor before the House* is a collaborative video project between Indian, Israeli and Palestenian artists. It appropriates, critically responds to and insightfully rearranges the notion of art, politics and digital video technologies in its exploration of everyday practices of life in critical times in a networked post-surveillance society. *The Neighbor before the House* equipped eight Palestenian families from East Jerusalem with the control of PTZ surveillance cameras mounted at strategic locations in the city. They were instructed to observe the live feed on their TV sets, record their reactions and to provide live commentaries of what they saw. Here, the Big Brother (haven't explained/defined what Big Brother is) and its contemporary Big Data again here term needs to be defined,referenced, is inverted through everyday citizens being given the omnipresent eye. It plays on the idea of the neighbour being a friendly eye and follows? when this watching shifts from being benevolent to malevolent.

As the artists write, 'this footage shot with a security camera, takes us beyond the instrumental aspects of surveillance imaging, introducing us to the architecture of a deliberate and accelerated occupation of a city' (in interview with Shah 2012). Here the city is rendered into a cartography of informational circuits. Exploiting the conditions of networked spectacle, the project attempts to remap the real and the everyday through 'inquisitiveness, jest, memory, fear, desire and doubt' (in interview with Shah 2012). They use the surveillance cameras, symbols of suspicion and fear, to catalyse stories from Palestinians about what can be seen in different neighbourhoods. These included, 'messianic archeological digs, Israeli settlement activities, takeovers of Palestinian properties, the Old City, the Wall and the West Bank,' (in interview with Shah 2012) among other mundane and marvellous details of living life in those precarious conditions.

Through the inversion of the politics of survellience from the Big Brother to the ubiquitous neighbour, *The Neighbor before the House* provides a rich, evocative and non-representational history of living in East Jerusalem. The networked media spectacles which have come to stand-in for the complex geo-political struggles of the region are displaced. As the low-res cameras reduce the deep geography into an alien flatness on the TV screens and as the camera captures glimpses of what could have been and records traces of blurred movements it engages the families to communicate their hopes, fears, desires and doubts through the necessary discussions and debates about the possible meaning of the images. The art project also signals us to the new forms, functions and role of video art. Rather than the media event or spectacle, *The Neighbor before the House* provides the micro-narrative gestures of the everyday. It demonstrates the ways in which the place is a tapestery of subjectivities and experiences and not just a media spectacle.

As artist Shaina Anand mentions in an interview with Shah (2012) this is a new kind of storytelling, where:

> "… a lot of the practice actually removes the filmmaker, the director, the auteur, and also therefore the cameraman, and also the lens… and offers these possibilities and privileges of this look and gaze and all to the subjects themselves" (2012: n.p).

And as the lens makes itself invisible, it also gives new importance to the apparatus of surveillance, 'seeing' and its incorporation in our lives. As Florian Schenider mentions in the introduction to the project (*The Neighbor before the House* catalogue 2012) the house upon which the camera is mounted itself becomes a tripod made of stones. Instead of thinking of the video apparatus as 'out there', the private conditions of the home, the histories of the family, their relationships with neighbours and communities that they have lost and strangers that they have inherited all become the defining circumstances of this new crisis.

Borrowing from a Quranic saying, *Al Jaar Qabla Al Daar,* which is close to the idea of 'love thy neighbour' it explores how the presence of new digital video technologies establishes difference, distance, alienation, proximity, curiosity and surveillance which is not merely a function of governmental structures but also a condition of gamification and everyday engagement for the families in East Jerusalem.

For the artists, this also raises another implication of 'checking out your neighbour before you buy the house' suggesting the establishing of bounded similarities to seek comfort. The edited footage of the video shows the users getting control of the keyboard and a joy-stick, panning, tilting and zooming the camera and watching the live feeds on their television sets as they speak live over the footage. These commentaries are as personal as they are affective. Sometimes the commentary leads the person to probe the image deeper trying to find a meaning that can no longer be supported by the hyper-pixelated image on their screen but which becomes a site through which memories and interpretations are generated.

What begins as a playful probe soon takes up sinister shades as some of the images generate narratives of loss and death. Others take the opportunity to spy on the new

settlers who have, in some circumstances, taken over their old houses, wondering what changes they are making to what was their own. There is a sense of rawness and urgency as they look back with fear and anger but also with resignation at the houses that they were evicted from and the semblance of life that they can spot from their remote presence.

The final five cuts that the artist produce give us a deep and evocative insight into geography, temporality and the ways in which we can re-appropriate the network spectacle to look at things that are often forgotten or rendered invisible in the neat and clean lines of network models and diagrams. The 'footage' quality of the probes, the long dwellings on insignificant images and the panoptican nature of video as witness, video as spy and video as affective engagement with territories and times that are lost, all give a new idea of what the future of video art would be like. Instead of looking at a tired old Foucauldian critique of surveillance, *The Neighbor before the House* posits the question of 'Who watches the watchman?' in ways that are both startling and assuring.

Visualising the Politics of the Network

One of the key themes of *The Neighbour before the House* is the changing role of the network society especially in an age of Big Data and locative-based services ("LBS") whereby privacy and surveillance come to the forefront. The network society has often been cited as one of the defining frameworks of our heavily mediated times. From theorists such as Barry Wellman and Manuel Castells the network metaphor has

burgeoned in parallel with the all-pervasive rise of Information and Communication Technologies ("ICTs") globally. According to Lee Raine and Wellman in *Networked*, the 'new social operating systems of networked individualism liberates us from the restrictions of tightly knit groups' (Raine and Wellman 2012). They argue that there has been a 'triple revolution' comprising of the rise of social networking, the capacity of the internet to empower individuals and the always-on connectivity of mobile devices' (ibid). The ability of networks to explain a range of human personal and social relationships has afforded it a greater explanatory power where everything (and hence, by association, everybody) can be understood and explained by the indexicalities and visual cartographies that networks produce. The network is simultaneously and without any sense of irony committed to both examining sketchiness and producing clarity of any phenomena or relationality. The network presumes an externality which can be rich, chaotic and complex and proposes tools and models through which that diverse and discrete reality can be rendered intelligible by producing visualisations.

These visualisations are artefacts in as much as all mapping exercises produce artefacts and operate under the presumption of a benignity devoid of political interventions or intentions. The visualisations are non-representational in that they do not seek to reproduce reality but actually understand it thereby shaping the lenses and tools to unravel the real nature of the Real. In this function, the network visualisations are akin to art by virtue of attaining symbolic value and attempting to decode a depth that the network itself defies and disowns, simulating conditions of knowing and exploring, emerging as surrogate structures that stand in for the real. Thus the rich set of actions, emotions, impulses, traces, inspirations, catalysts, memories, etc. get reified as transactions which can be sorted in indices, arranged in databases, and presented as an abstract, symbolic and hyper-visual reality which can now be consumed, accessed and archived within the network thus obfuscating the reality that it was premised upon.

This phenomenon is what can be called the "spectacle imperative" of the network. Especially with the proliferation of ubiquitous image and video recording digital devices, this ability to create subjective and multiple fractured spectacles that feed into the network's own understanding of itself (rather than an engagement with a reality

outside) has become the dominant aesthetic that travels from Reality TV programming to user generated content production on video distribution channels on the internet.

This networked spectacle, without a single auteur or a concentrated intention has become the new aesthetic of video interaction, consumption and circulation. For example, the videos from the Arab Spring on YouTube, range from depicting small babies in prams to women forming barricades against a marching army and from people giving out free food and water to acts of vandalism and petty thefts. It invites an engagement, and a divesting of our energies and attentions from the physical and the political to the aesthetic and the discursive. Which is to say that when we consume these spectacles (or indeed produce them not necessarily only through the images but also through texts) we produce a parallel universe that demands that we understand the world 'out there' through these cultural artefacts which require an immense amount of decoding and meaning making. The network, in its turn, offers us better and more exhaustive tools of mining and sifting through this information, sorting and arranging it, curating and managing it, so that we build more efficient networks without essentially contributing to the on-the-ground action.

The peculiar self-sustaining selfish nature of the network, to become the only reality under the guise of attempting to explain reality, is perhaps the most evident in times and geographies of crises. Where (and when) the conditions of politics, circumstances of everyday survival and the algebra of quotidian life becomes too precarious, too wearisome, too unimaginable to cope with, the network spectacle appears as both the tool for governance as well as the site of protest. Hence, the same technologies are often used by people on different sides of the crises to form negotiations and get a sense of control on a reality that is quickly eluding their lived experiences.

Surveillance cameras storing an incredible amount of visual data forming banal narratives of the everyday appear in critical times and geographies as symbols of control and containment by authorities that seek to establish their sovereignty over unpredictable zones of public life and dwelling. The gaze of the authority is often criss-

crossed by the cell-phone, the webcam, the tiny recording devices of everyday life that people on the streets and in their houses use to record the nothingness of the crisis, the assurance of normalcy, the need to look over the shoulder and beyond the house, to know that whether or not god is in the heavens all is well with the world.

The Place of the Visual: Towards a theory of emplaced visuality.

However, with the rise of mobile media and its micro-narrative capacity the politics of network and its relationship to a sense of place changes. Far from eroding a sense of place in the growing unboundness of home mobile technologies reinforce the significance locality (Wilken & Goggin 2012: 5). Mobile media also signal a move away from earlier depictions of the network society. Through the growth in camera phone practices overlaid with location-based services we see new forms of visuality that reflect changing relations between place and information.

With the rise of technologies in an increasingly mobile physically and technologically world—the concept of place has become progressively contested. As Rowan Wilken and Gerard Goggin note in *Mobile Technologies and Place*, place is one of the most contested, ambiguous and complex terms today (2012). Viewing it as unbounded and relational, Wilken and Goggin observe that 'place can be understood as all-pervasive in the way that it informs and shapes everyday lived experience, including how it is filtered and experienced via the use of mobile technologies' (2012: 6). As social geographer Doreen Massey notes, maps provide little understanding into the complex elusiveness of place as a collection of 'stories-so-far':

> "One way of seeing 'places' is as on the surface of maps… But to escape from an imagination of space as surface is to abandon also that view of place. If space is rather a simultaneity of stories-so-far, then places are collections of those stories, articulations within the wider power-geometries of space. Their character will be a product of these intersections within that wider setting, and of what is made of them… And, too, of the non-meetings-up, the disconnections and the relations not established, the exclusions. All this contributes to the specificity of place." (2005: 130)

For anthropologist, Sarah Pink, place is increasingly being mapped by practices of emplacement (2009). With location based media like Google Maps and geotagging becoming progressively part of everyday media practice how place is imagined and experienced across geographic, psychological, online and offline spaces is changing. This impacts upon the role of ethnography and its relationship to geography and place. As Anne Beaulieu notes ethnography has moved from co-location to co-presence (2010). In this shift we see the role of ethnography to address the complex negotiations between online and offline spaces growing.

In *The Neighbour before the House,* we are made to consider the changing role of visuality in how place is experienced and practiced. By deploying a surveillant and multivalent gaze*, The Neighbour before the House* asks us to reconsider privacy and surveillance in an age of locative media. The rise of the network society has witnessed numerous tensions and ambivalence especially around the relationship between agency, information and place. This is epitomised by the second generation camera phone practices whereby, with the added layer of LBS, where and when images are taken becomes automatic by default. Whereas the first generation of camera phone practices noted gendered differences through LBS these differences take on new dimensions particularly in terms of its potential 'stalker' elements (Gazzard 2011). While notions of privacy differ subject to socio-cultural context LBS do provide more details about users and thus allow them to be victims of stalking (Cincotta, Ashford, & Michael 2011).

This shift towards second generation camera phone images sees a movement away from networked towards emplaced visualities (Pink & Hjorth 2012; Hjorth 2013; Hjorth & Arnold 2013). On the one hand, this overlaying of the geographic with the social aspects highlights that place has always mattered to mobile media (Ito 2002; Hjorth 2005). Far from eroding place mobile media amplifies the complexities of place as something lived and imagined, geographic and yet psychological. LBS enables mobile media users to create and convey more complex details about a locality. On the other

hand, LBS creates new motivations for narrating a sense of place and the role of amateur and vernacular photography.

Shifts in contemporary amateur photography highlight the changes in how place, co-presence and information is navigated, performed and represented. These issues are particularly prevalent in a contested location like Palestine. Last century it was the Kodak camera that epitomized amateur photography and which played an important role in normalizing notions of the family as well as ritualizing events such as holidays (Lee 2005; Gye 2007). As Lisa Gye notes, personal photography is central to the process of identity formation and memorialization(2007). The shift towards camera phones not only changes how we capture, store, and disseminate images but they also have 'important repercussions for how we understand who we are and how we remember the past'.[1] Moreover, with the rise in possibilities for sharing via social media like microblogs and Twitter, camera phone photography not only magnifies UCC, but also provides filters and lenses to enhance the "professional" and "artistic" dimensions of the photographic experience (Mørk Petersen 2009).

For Daniel Palmer, smartphone photography is distinctive in various ways, with one key feature being the relationship between touch and the image in what he calls an "embodied visual intimacy" (2012: 88). With the rise of high quality camera telephones, new forms of visuality are emerging along with the growth in distribution services via social and locative media (Pink & Hjorth 2012). The added dimensions of movement and touch become important features of the camera phone with the emphasis on "networked" shifting to "emplaced" visuality. Images as emplaced in relation to what human geographer Tim Ingold has called a "meshwork" and entanglement of lines (2008). Images themselves are part of such lines as they are inextricable from the camera and person who took them. In this sense camera phone images are not simply about what they represent (although they are also about that) but are additionally about what is behind, above, below, and to either side.

By using different smartphone photo apps, respondents tried to inscribe a sense of

place with the texture of emotion through making images relate to other sensories like smell. This photographic practice is what anthropologist Sarah Pink identifies as the "multisensorality of images." That is, they are located in "the production and consumption of images as happening in movement, and consider them as components of configurations of place"(Pink 2011: 4). Drawing on Tim Ingold's conceptualization of place as "entanglement" (Ingold 2008), Pink notes, "Thus, the 'event' where photographs are produced and consumed becomes not a meeting point in a network of connections but an intensity of entangled lines in movement... a meshwork of moving things" (Pink 2011: 8).

While the surveillant eye of Big Brother now takes the form of Big Data, the emplaced nature of camera phone images can help to contribute to a changing relationship between performativity, memory and place that is user-orientated. Rather than operating to memorialize place camera phone practices, especially through LBS networks, are creating playful performances around the movement of co-presence, place and placing (Richardson & Wilken 2012). As noted elsewhere, Pink and Hjorth argue that camera phone practices are highlighting a move away from the network(ed?) society towards emplaced visualities and socialities (2012). Emplaced visuality means understanding camera phone practices and the socialities that create and emerge through them in ways corresponding with non-representational (Thrift, 2008) or 'more-than-representational' approaches in geography which according to Hayden Lorimer encompass:

> ... how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions (Lorimer, 2005: 84).

Thus we see camera phone photography as a part of the flow of everyday life, an increasingly habitual way of being that is sensed and felt (emotionally and physically). Yet, because camera phone photography involves the production and sharing of images, it also compels us to engage with the relationship between the representational and the

non-representational. Emplaced visualities see images as embedded within the movements of everyday life. Tim Cresswell has suggested that we consider 'three aspects of mobility: the fact of physical movement—getting from one place to another; the representations of movement that give it shared meaning and, finally, the experienced and embodied practice of movement' (Cresswell, 2010: 19). These three aspects of mobility are deeply interwoven and entangled. In camera phone photography the experience and representation of the photography is enacted in the 'flow' of everyday life at the interface where digital and material realities come together. These emplaced visualities are often abstracted through the mechanics of Big Data mega surveillance. But as *The Neighbour before the House* demonstrates the perpetual movement of emplaced visualities is in sharp contrast with the unmoving, omipresent Big Data eye.

This contrast between the moving and unmoving, micro and macro information overlaid onto place can also be reflected as part of the shift from the *flâneur* to the phoneur. The notion of mobility as a technology, cultural practice, geography and metaphor has impacted upon the ways in which twenty-first century cartographies of the urban play out. Rather than overcoming all difference and distance the significance of local is reinforced through the trope of mobility and immobility. While nineteenth-century narrations of the urban were symbolised by the visual economics of the *flâneur,* the twenty-first century wanderer of the informational city has been rendered what Robert Luke calls the phoneur (2006). The conceptual distance and yet continuum between the *flâneur* and the phoneur is marked by the paradigmatic shift of the urban as once a geospatial image of and for the bourgeoisie as opposed to the phoneur which sees the city transformed into informational circuit in which the person is just a mere node with little agency. Beyond dystopian narrations about the role of technology in maintaining a sense of intimacy, community and place we can find various ways in which the tenacity of the local retains control. In particular, through the tension between mobile media and Big Data we can see how the local and the urban can be re-imagined in new ways.

The *flâneur* (or the wanderer of the modern city), best encapsulated by German philosopher Walter Benjamin's discussion of Baudelaire's painting, has been defined as an important symbol of the modernity of Paris as it moved into nineteenth century urbanity. Thanks to the restructuring of one third of the small streets into boulevards by Baron Hausmann, Paris of the nineteenth century took a new sense of place and space. Luke's phoneur, on the other hand, is the mobile 'user' who is part of the informational network flows constituting contemporary urbanity. If the *flâneur* epitomised modernism and the rise of nineteenth-century urban, then for Luke, the phoneur is the twenty-first-century extension of this tradition as the icon of modernity. As Luke observes, in a networked city one is connected as part of circuit of information in which identity and privacy is at the mercy of system (2006). The picture of the urban city today painted by Luke is one in which the individuals have minimal power in the rise of corporate surveillance. *Neighbour before the House* problematises Luke's dystopian view of the phoneur. The picture painted by *Neighbour before the House* is much more ambivalent. However it does make the audience reflect upon the changing nature of surveillance in an age of Big Data. These tensions around the dystopian phoneur and a more embodied and emplaced version can be found running as an undercurrent in the work of *Neighbour before the House.*

Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored the cross-cultural video collaboration, *The Neighbour before the House,* to examine the changing relationship between a sense of place, information and the politics of visuality. It is suggested that with the rise of location-based camera phone practices and Big Data we are seeing new forms of visuality that are best described as emplaced rather than networked. The notion of emplaced reflects some of the tensions around contemporary representations of mobility and movement particularly prevalent in the often displaced and diasporic experiences of the people in Palestine.

Filmed in Palestine, *The Neighbour before the House* explores the notion of place as entangled and embedded at the same time as displaced through the rise of ICTs. By

providing some of the paradoxes and ambivalences surrounding contemporary media practices and its relationship between information and place it allows space for reflection and contemplation about surveillence and privacy.

REFERENCES:

Burgess, J. *Vernacular creativity and new media* (Doctoral dissertation), 2007. Retrieved from http://eprints.qut.edu.au/16378/

The Neighbour before the House [Al Jaar Qabla Al Daar] (2012), accessed at http://www.camputer.org/event.php?id=98

Pink, S. and L. Hjorth 'Emplaced Cartographies: Reconceptualising camera phone practices in an age of locative media', *Media International Australia*, 145 (2012): 145-156.

Massey, D. *For Space*, London, Sage, 2005 (130).

Shaina Anand interviewed by Nishant Shah, December 2012.

Raine, L. and B. Wellman 2012, *Networked*, Cambridge, Mass, MIT Press.

Mizuko Ito, 'Mobiles and the Appropriation of Place'. *Receiver* 8, 2002, (consulted 5 December 2012) http://academic.evergreen.edu/curricular/evs/readings/itoShort.pdf; Hjorth, L. (2005)

Hjorth, L. 'Locating Mobility: Practices of Co-Presence and the Persistence of the Postal Metaphor in SMS/MMS Mobile Phone Customization in Melbourne', *Fibreculture Journal*, 6, (consulted 10 December 2006) http://journal.fibreculture.org/issue6/issue6_hjorth.html

Wilken, R and G. Goggin, 'Mobilizing Place: Conceptual Currents and Controversies', in R. Wilken and G. Goggin (Eds) *Mobile Technology and Place*, New York, Routledge, 2012, pp. 3-25 (5).

Pink, S. *Doing Sensory Ethnography*, London, Sage, 2009.

Beaulieu, A. 'From Co-location to Co-presence: Shifts in the Use of Ethnography for the Study of Knowledge'. *Social Studies of Science*, 40 (3) 2010: June. 453-470.

Lee, D.H. 'Women's creation of camera phone culture'. *Fibreculture Journal 6*, 2005, URL (consulted 3 February 2006) http://www.fibreculture.org/journal/issue6/issue6_donghoo_print.html

Hjorth, L 'Snapshots of almost contact'. *Continuum*, 21 (2) 2007: 227-238.

Gazzard, A. 'Location, Location, Location: Collecting Space and Place in Mobile Media'. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 17 (4) 2011: 405-417.

Gye, L. 'Picture this: the impact of mobile camera phones on personal photographic practices,' *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 21(2) 2007: 279–288.

Mørk Petersen, S. *Common Banality: The Affective Character of Photo Sharing, Everyday Life and Produsage Cultures,* PhD Thesis, ITU Copenhagen.

Luke, R. 'The Phoneur: Mobile Commerce and the Digital Pedagogies of the Wireless Web', in P. Trifonas (ed.) *Communities of Difference: Culture, Language, Technology*, pp. 185-204, Palgrave, London, 2006.

Schenider, F. 'Introduction'. *The Neighbor before the House* catalogue 2012.

/si:n/ Festival of Video Art & Performance. Retrieved from: http://sinfestival.blogspot.com.au/2011/06/poster-2011-sin-festival-of-video-art.html

---