

Nº14

GALLERY@CALIT2
EXHIBITION CATALOG

THREE JUNCTURES OF REMIX

JANUARY 17-MARCH 15, 2013

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Published by the gallery@calit2

University of California, San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive
La Jolla, CA, 92093-0436

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I. ESSAY

THREE JUNCTURES

BY EDUARDO NAVAS,* CURATOR

***EDUARDO NAVAS** IS THE AUTHOR OF *REMIX THEORY: THE AESTHETICS OF SAMPLING*. HE RECEIVED HIS PH.D. FROM THE PROGRAM OF ART HISTORY, THEORY, AND CRITICISM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO. HE RESEARCHES THE CROSSOVER OF ART AND MEDIA IN CULTURE. HIS PRODUCTION INCLUDES ART & MEDIA PROJECTS, CRITICAL TEXTS, AND CURATORIAL PROJECTS. NAVAS WAS GUEST SPEAKER AND CURATOR OF *THREE JUNCTURES OF REMIX* AT THE GALLERY@CALIT2.

Introduction

The exhibition *Three Junctures of Remix* featured the art of Mark Amerika & Chad Mossholder, Arcángel Constantini, Giselle Beiguelman, and Elisa Kreisinger, a group of international artists who have explored and reflected on the implications of the creative act of remixing since the concept became popular beginning in the nineties. The art works crossover and explore three junctures (moments of production): the pre-digital/analog, the digital, and the post-digital, which developed in chronological order, but after their initial manifestation, became intertwined and currently are often reintroduced in conjunction to inform the aesthetics of remix as a creative act in art practice. The exhibition was curated to reflect on how computing has enabled people to recombine preexisting material with unprecedented efficiency that is relatively affordable just about everywhere information-based technology is widely used. This has affected how local and global communities view their cultural production, from politics to the arts. Music initially was the cultural space where appropriation and recombination of preexisting material was explored aesthetically with the specific term “remix.” The music remix became popular in the late 1970s with extended disco remixes, and eventually ubiquitous in music culture during the ’80s due to the growing popularity of hip-hop, alongside the rise of house and techno; by the ’90s trip-hop/down tempo, and drum ‘n’ bass used sampling and remixing as basic creative resources, and most recently dubstep takes them as essential forms of expression. The music remix is so popular that it is not uncommon for a song to be released simultaneously with a set of alternate versions produced for niche markets. To this effect pop artists from Madonna to Lady Gaga have used the remix as a tool to crossover diverse music cultures.

This evolution can be viewed from the perspective of three key moments, which I define as junctures, because in them various cultural elements come together to make possible specific forms of material production. The three junctures of remix, as mentioned in the introduction, are

the pre-digital/analog, which is the time before computing became ubiquitous, around the 1970s and ’80s; the second is the digital, which took place when computing was introduced and became part of daily life throughout the ’90s on to the mid ’00s; and the post-digital is the time of the exhibition, when computing is ubiquitous.

As digital technology since the ’80s became part of just about all aspects of life beyond music, the concept of remix began to be used to describe the recycling and reappropriation of pre-existing material in new contexts and in relation to non-musical forms, including time-based media, image, and text. In the visual arts this moment is often argued to have precedents in movements such as Dada, synthetic cubism, bricolage and neo-dada. However, the concept of remix as understood in music has reshaped the way contemporary artists produce in unprecedented ways due to the fact that data/information is the constant referent and source material that comes to define at least tangentially the final artwork; this is the case even for artists who may decide to work with analog material during the time of the post-digital.

Looking at artworks selected for the exhibition in terms of the three junctures makes evident that as new technologies are introduced,

previous elements and cultural paradigms are not left behind but actually efficiently embedded in the present form as important variables of contemporary production. For instance, the telephone, the calendar, the map, the rolodex, the music jukebox, the photograph, the television and the film, to name just a few important cultural apparatuses from the last two hundred years, are all present and used during the second decade of the twenty-first century more than at any other time because of ease of access. This, unfortunately, is not true for all peoples but only for those who can afford or are able to access contemporary technology.

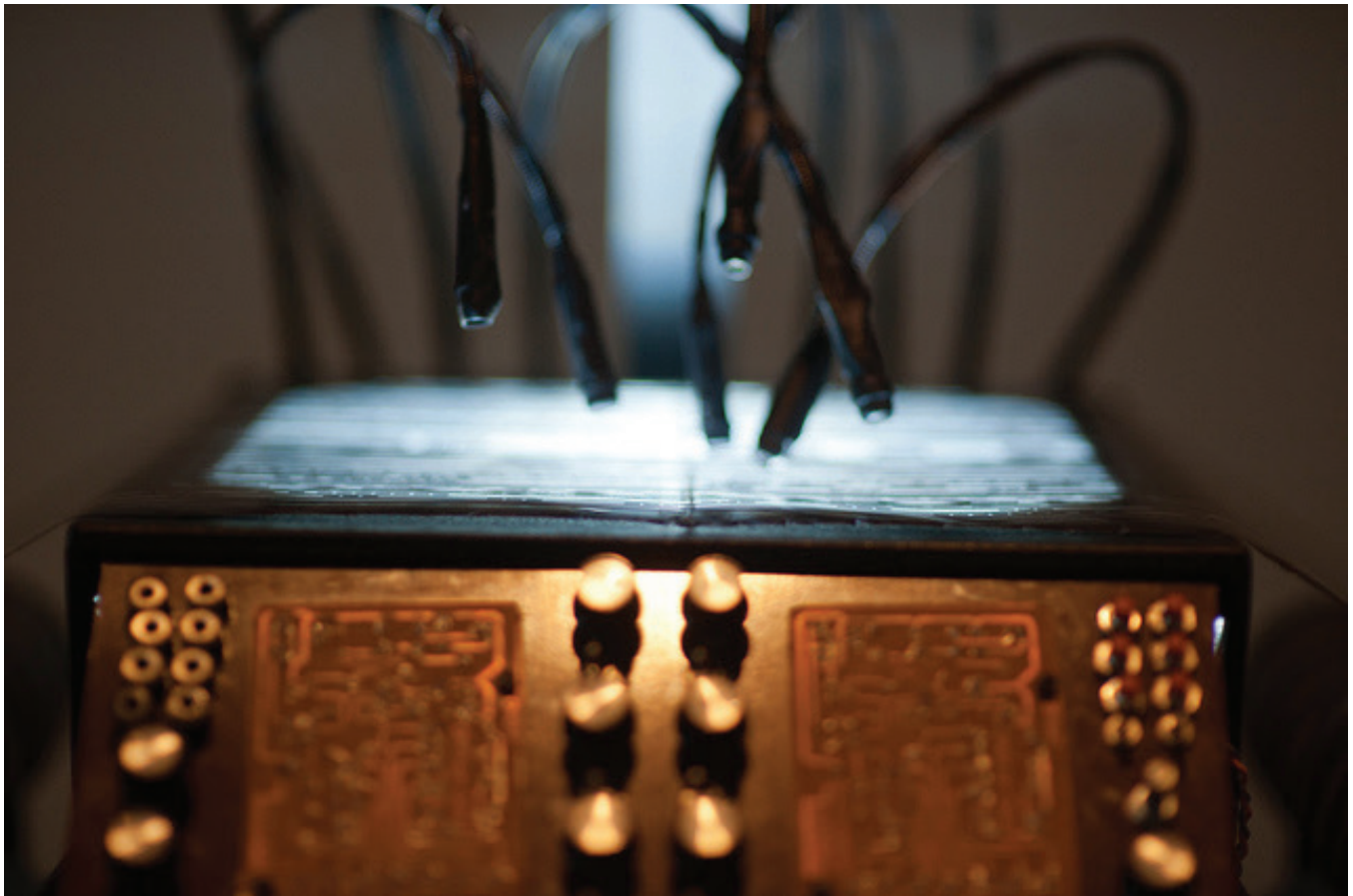
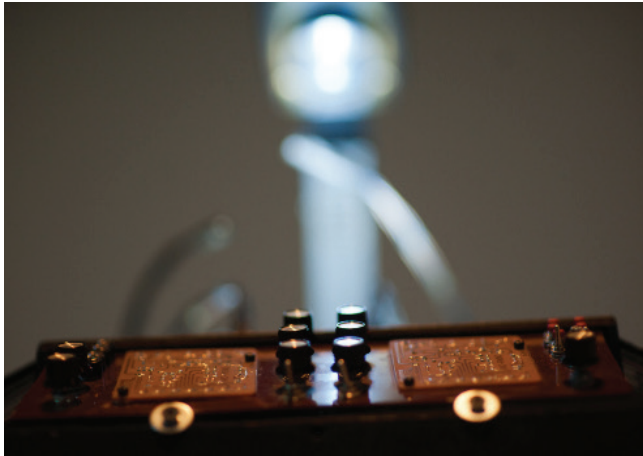
Currently, such apparatuses are relevant with mobile technology, whether a smartphone or tablet. All computing devices that offer multitasking capabilities essentially simulate how the apparatuses were used in their originating forms. It must be noted, however, that once a device becomes a cultural artifact, it can only be relevant in terms of simulation. The material forms of the apparatuses just mentioned above are left behind and it is their actual function and cultural understanding that is incorporated into new material forms.

The three junctures of remix are in fact three key moments in the assimilation of the computer in culture at large in which this sense of embedding and aggregation are important factors of material production. The art works selected for the exhibition make evident how these three junctures are ever-present in our time because, thanks to computing, culture has developed an attitude of recycling in formal and conceptual terms as a means to become increasingly efficient. In terms of history, there no longer is the past as understood in earlier periods of the modern and postmodern, but the archive, which is used as a resource to develop something new. The past comes to be configured as a historical resource during the emergence of a global economy. It becomes much more than a mere point of reference to “better understand” one’s culture and oneself; historical events become an essential tool for innovation. Mining history is now a major resource in the exponential

growth of the emerging informational economy. The selected works for the exhibition make this shift in our cultural production quite evident.

The Four Remixes

The four selected works that are part of Three Junctures of Remix are not meant to be illustrative of the many elements discussed above. The aim of their selection rather is to support the curatorial theme while also showing how there is much more to each work as well as the overall discourse of remix. This is in part why four artists were chosen as opposed to three. If three had been chosen, then viewers would be inclined to equate each of the three junctures with a particular artist, but this is not possible when four artists are presented. The aim then is that the audience will realize that each work of art has a relation to, or is informed by the three junctures, but that it is also not clear to which, or how they may relate explicitly. In other words, the viewer will have to reflect on both the works and the thematic into which the works have been contextualized. The works were chosen to reflect on the creative and critical use of the aesthetics of the three periods simultaneously, granted that one of them may be more pronounced over the other two in any of the works. Arcangel Constantini’s piece “Optosono 2.0,” for instance, recalls the pre-digital days by hacking an analog



ABOVE: ARCANGEL CONSTANTINI'S "OPTOSONO 2.0"

overhead projector. Constantini implemented an Arduino chip to turn the projector into a performative device. The device is equipped with a set of light sensors that convert the device's light into sound. A set of audio speakers that have been added to the projector emit the recordings of important presidential candidates of the last few elections in Mexico, all candidates promising major progressive changes for the nation.

A set of transparent cell speeches by the candidates are set up on top of the light to roll back and forth with the push of a foot-pedal. The positioning of the light sensors in conjunction with the rolling of the printed speeches create an obstructive noise that makes it difficult to understand the candidates' monologues. Constantini mashes analog and digital technology to create critical commentary, while also encouraging the user to have a playful moment with the hacked device. He explains that he was interested in the overhead projector because it belonged to the Mexican government; the device was thrown away once the government adopted newer technology.

Constantini found it in a flea market and bought it for a fraction of its actual worth. He was intrigued that the projector was discarded even though it functioned perfectly, and sees the projector as a symbol of the inefficiency at play in the politics in Mexico. "Optosono 2.0," then, makes use of technology that is relevant in the first juncture, the pre-digital, in



the transparent cell dates with direct relation to the third, the post-digital. Constantini's primary drive is to create a piece that is conceptually grounded in the relation of material production and the apparent discarding of material that at one point was new but soon became obsolete, but which can be revitalized as a work of art, as a form of disruption that reflects on the history of specific cultures.

Gieselle Beiguelman's *I Lv Yr GIF* makes reference to the digital period of Internet art, during the mid to late '90s, when gifs were quite popular on all types of websites; she updates the gif by creating a piece to be experienced with the use of the iPad. In this

way she brings together the second juncture, the digital with the third, the post-digital. In Beiguelman's work the user can experience early gif animations, which have been updated as part of an app. Beiguelman explains that she was very much interested in experimenting with gifs in the past by zooming into them at will. This was not possible with computers at the time the gif was first introduced, but once touch-screen technology became available with tablets, Beiguelman realized that she could remix her favorite gifs for this purpose. The result is an abstract piece that may appear to be primarily a formal exercise. Beiguelman, however, developed the app to explore and reflect on how open-source technology is becoming harder to implement



in tablets, particularly the iPad due to licensing fees that Apple implements. Unlike the earlier stages of networked communication, Apple has become a gatekeeper of emerging technology, particularly if anyone wants to use Apple’s developer kit. Beiguelman created her app with HTML 5, which is free for anyone to use. *I Lv Yr GIF* then is not only a contribution to the tradition of abstract art, but also a commentary on the development and privatization of technology.

Mark Amerika & Chad Mossholder remix Marcel Duchamp in their piece “Micro-Cinematic Essays on the Life and Work of Marcel Duchamp dba Conceptual Parts, Ink.” Their work is certainly grounded in the pre-digital period of the ‘80s and before, when emerging artists appropriated art works by established artists. Sherrie Levine, arguably, may be one of the best-known examples in this tradition, who, incidentally, also appropriated work by Duchamp. Amerika & Mossholder combine appropriation as practiced in conceptual art with the strategy of glitch—a movement mostly noted in contemporary experimental music. The latter is directly informed by the second and third junctures given that such work is defined by the aesthetics of error that in contemporary culture are usually linked to computer technology. Mossholder looks for noise (smack

of the lips, loss of rhythm of the voice or tone) in the initial voice-recordings of Amerika. Mossholder uses these elements to develop a soundscape that complements the voice in the final recordings. The result is a set of pieces that remix the writings of Marcel Duchamp with ambient soundscapes that in part are created by chance, yet another strategy from the past practiced by composer John Cage and his contemporaries. The fact that the final work is produced in the time of the post-digital, however, does play a major role in how the work is understood, presented and collected as a proper work of art, given that this one does not take a specific form anymore. In the pre-digital or analog period, a music project, even an experimental one, such as Amerika's and Mossholder's, would need to be encapsulated in a particular format, such as an album with a proper cover. While the collaborators do make it clear that the work can be purchased by an art collector, it is apparent that this is merely one of the many forms through which the work becomes validated as art. The work can be experienced in its entirety online, as well as in any gallery space where it may be exhibited. "Micro-Cinematic Essays on the Life and Work of Marcel Duchamp dba Conceptual Parts, Ink" in the end is a type of discourse with no specific form, and this is something that became naturalized in the time of the post-digital. In this sense Amerika and Mossholder's work conceptually



bring together the pre and post-digital, periods by pointing to how the reenactment and reimplementations of pre-existing ideas lead to new ways of experiencing and perceiving the world.

Elisa Kreisinger remixes footage from popular shows such as *Mad Men* and *Sex and the City*. A strategy that goes back to the early days of analog video editing, but which can only be achieved currently with the efficiency that database access makes possible in the post-digital period. Kreisinger relies on searches of dialogue transcripts for each episode to find footage that is relevant to the idea she wants to develop. Kreisinger in her remixes provides a queer reading of the TV shows. This does not mean that she wants people to think that the characters in the shows are gay or lesbian but rather that a queer subtext in culture –or queer culture at large– is deliberately subverted by mainstream media. Kreisinger also practices appropriation, as the other artists in the exhibit, while making the most of data-mining in order



to find key moments in the dialogue throughout the seasons of each TV show to then create her own narratives. In this way she is able to go through several episodes to create a specific narrative that would never have been conceived by the shows' producers. From a technological view, Kreisinger may be doing straightforward video editing, which was first defined with analog technology, but the in-depth analysis that she is able to perform would not be possible to achieve without the efficiency of data-mining. During the post-digital period, Kreisinger, then, is using contemporary technology as a tool rather than a medium. The result is a mashup of works that can be viewed in various contexts including the gallery and online space. The form of presentation is modular, yet another element inherent in the post-digital, and in this sense, she shares a conceptual sensibility with Amerika and Mossholder: both projects are about creating a discourse that can only be supported by the type of networked communication possible during the time of the post-digital. The result is the consideration of the past as a thing no longer relevant to one's immediate experience, but rather as an indispensable element that can be used to enhance one's perception: to present and represent—to define and redefine both the present, the future—and in turn, the very conception of the past and history itself.

The Three Junctures and Aggregation

The selected artworks make evident how all three junctures are intimately intertwined in contemporary production and how computing has helped create a space in which individuals can be self-aware of the aggregation of pre-existing devices as a forward-looking strategy. Contemporary culture then lives in an ever-present state in which past knowledge and apparatuses, when approached with a non-linear stance, become the modular blocks, the raw material to build the present with elements that already enjoy cultural value.

This enables us to move into more efficient states of production based on optimization by compression. Nothing is left behind but rather is reconfigured to become part of the present: it is remixed. The three junctures: the analog/pre-digital, the digital, and the post-digital are rich cultural crossroads. As each period moved on to the next, it did so, of course, by building on the knowledge of the previous periods. This form of aggregation is modularly grounded in digital technology. Due to our current technological efficiency, unlike the past, we have become self-aware of how cultural production functions, and this enables us to enjoy an unprecedented critical approach to material and immaterial production. Culture began to be aware of this, arguably, during postmodernism, and since then we have become more than ready to write the history of events not after they happen but as they are happening. Consequently we live in a state between the meta and the now—the time of the post-digital. The selected works part of Three Junctures of Remix, then, represent a time when culture is able to engage with the past, present, and future as apparatuses for cultural change—all three junctures can be remixed to develop discourses that will lead potentially to major shifts in material reality.

Culture has been carefully optimized to create its own future; a future that increasingly relies on the mining of its past in order to reinvent itself as something supposedly new. The works by Amerika &



Mossholder, Beiguelman, Constantini, and Kreisinger make evident the potential in the current moment of the post-digital: a moment for real change; something which is true only if one is able to acquire an historical conscience.

II. INTERVIEW:

MARK AMERIKA & CHAD MOSSHOLDER

Eduardo Navas: Tell us a bit about your collaboration.

Chad Mossholder: In working on *Micro-Cinematic Essays on the Life and Work of Marcel Duchamp dba Conceptual Parts*, Ink Mark would record himself reading (performing) his texts and remixed texts. He would send them to me via e-mail regularly along with ideas for how he'd like to hear them used. The texts themselves also suggested to me how they might work with other sounds. These performances by Mark implied songs that weren't audible. It was my job to find these unheard songs backing the texts.

Mark Amerika: I would add that our collaboration on *Micro-Cinematic Essays...* is also heavily influenced by the history of our collaboration across various transmedia projects. Our collaboration goes back to 2001 when we toured parts of Switzerland and Japan as an early avant-garde VJ/DJ duo remixing the eye-candy aesthetic of the time into something that has since been referred to as live-cinema or what for us was a cross between live A/V performance art and conceptual writing. We also, along with the digital artist John Vega, launched *FILMTEXT* [markamerika.com/filmtext] at the ICA in London in 2001-2002 as part of my net art retrospective, *How To Be An Internet Artist*. This piece was structured to play with remix on a few different levels. The interactive Flash interface and the sound-text-video-digital-image assets were built into the piece so that the interactive-participant could

construct on-the-fly narrative remixes that retold this experimental story about a post-apocalyptic figure referred to as The Digital Thoughtographer (DT). DT was not only a figure or what in conventional novels we would call a character, but a mental state, one that could be experienced -- or even achieved -- by navigating through and interacting with the game-like interface of *FILMTEXT* as a net art work. Also, the source material we developed for *FILMTEXT* eventually became remixed into our VJ/DJ sets as we continued to tour different parts of the world.

EN: How did both of you choose Duchamp as the focus of your project, and why a sound piece when Duchamp is associated with the history of visual arts?

MA: It's fair to say that our relationship to Duchamp has, at least initially, been driven by some of my own research into his work. I would suggest that Duchamp was really more of a conceptual medium than a visual artist per se. In fact, he viewed himself as an "anartist," i.e. no artist at all. The irony, of course, is that even as he tries to sidestep the whole notion of "being an artist," he has had more influence on late 20th and early 21st century postproduction artists than perhaps anybody else from the 20th century. Whereas it's true that he did not experiment with sound as much as he did other media, he was really interested in challenging retinal art, and especially the whole concept of painting. He is known, of course, for attacking the painterly art

establishment with his readymades. We too are interested in taking found objects and manipulating their exhibition and distribution context although for us, we're talking about digital objects or data, what in *remixthebook* [remixthebook.com] I refer to as the Source Material Everywhere. But his work as a conceptual medium goes deeper, especially in his two major works, the *Large Glass* (aka *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even*) and *Étant Donnés*. The *Large Glass* is really a kind of interactive narrative with a book (*The Green Box*) that serves as its conceptual key. I mention this because Duchamp, as conceptual medium, was very self-conscious of what role the artist per se plays in contemporary cultures (across the ages). He outlined his poetics in one particular lecture delivered in Houston in 1957 that he titled "The Creative Act." The recording of that lecture is used throughout our *Micro-Cinematic Essays...* and I even channel his poetics by performing a kind of cover (like cover song) of the lecture with my own voice. The Duchamp lecture is very clear in its attempt to position the artist as a medium, and we took this phrase quite literally and began using his voice as a kind of medium which we then, remixing my voice, attempted to transform into what in *remixthebook* I would call a *metamediumsytic performance*.

EN: You contextualize your collaboration in terms of glitch. How do you see this concept functioning in relation to remix?



CM: For me, remixing Mark's performances began with the glitch. I'd listen to the performances, listen to the imperfections in the recordings, the asynchronous rhythms of the voice against a missing soundtrack, the imperfect pitches; all of the elements that make sound organic and beautiful. From all of these elements I began constructing the backing tracks. Often I'll focus in on traditionally unwanted elements, like a smack of the lips, a saliva crackle, or a microphone pop. I won't remove these elements, I will enhance them, draw attention to them and let them create the textures that wrap that piece. I like to emphasize pops and clicks with long reverb and re-pitching, draw them out over time and turn them into tonal music.

MA: Chad's work with Twine really stood out to me for it's aesthetic use of glitch and drones as part of the compositional process, so it made sense that as we moved into remixing my voice and conceptual writings, our collaboration would investigate the relationship between text, voice, noise, signal, glitch, transmission, story, performance, etc. It's totally informed by the history of avant-garde sound compositions and experimental electronic music. In fact, we have been quite productive over the years and actually released two

long-form sound art works in 2012, though the second one, *The Comedy of Errors*, is embedded in a more elaborate transmedia narrative titled *Museum of Glitch Aesthetics* [glitchmuseum.com]. In *The Comedy of Errors*, we remix my voice delivering a “mock” stand-up comedy routine in front of a live audience and play with the glitch as an aesthetic that corrupts perceived forms of normalcy in the performer-audience relationship and hopefully transforms them into a unique listening experience. My voice – and more importantly, my delivery – taps into the rhythms of the stand-up comedian and the audience sounds like any audience – or does it? Chad is an expert at manipulating sounds and in this case we decided that we would really fuck with the sound of the laugh track, essentially turning it into a flow of drones, glitches, environmental soundscapes, noise, feedback, etc. It’s a very alchemical process and, in this sense, resonates with the Duchampian remixes in *Micro-Cinematic Essays...* where we are consciously aware of using glitch in very much the same way Brecht uses his alienation effect to defamiliarize the performance of the work. In our case, though, we’re also reflecting on our specific cultural milieu, i.e., network and mobile media culture. In a way, we have too much access to endless filters and are able to easily tap into this recombinant apparatus that gives us so many options that we can, if we choose, play with the idea of listenability as well. Chad is great at bending the sounds so that they blur the lines of distinction between what is aesthetically pleasing and what is

disruptive – or at least that’s the in-between space we like to explore. So that in *The Comedy of Errors* the listener may think they’re listening to a line from a stand-up routine that’s not particularly all that funny and the response from the feedback mechanism formerly known as the audience literally sounds like a pack of freaked-out hyenas. But somehow you still end up laughing. The question is, “What’s so funny?” Is it the form that makes it funny? The self-conscious way the sound has been modified? The noise that keeps triggering your own laughter? Maybe it’s not funny. Maybe there is no laughter. Sometimes there’s just silence.

EN: It appears that the creative process begins with Mark’s writing. Has your collaboration ever started with sound produced by Chad?

CM: Our new project does just that. I have been experimenting with orchestral arrangements and Mark is hoping to investigate more narrative elements in his vocal performances. What we plan on doing next is that I will arrange a kind of album-length “orchestral maneuvers in the narrative dark” and Mark will use the various instruments and sounds as triggers to create a story. We imagine it will be more psychogeographical, like what you would find in a film like Linklater’s *Slacker*.

MA: I would also add that we have experimented with methods associated with indeterminacy, something that John Cage and Merce Cunningham thoroughly

investigated through sound and dance but that Chad and I methodologically remix in our collaborations.

EN: How do you see the relation of art and sound? They have an interesting relationship in terms of defining the concept of autonomy in the arts. Music, as you know, during the 18th and 19th centuries was the premier model for all the other arts to develop an independent position in cultural production. And art had a contentious relationship with literature, which culminated in Clement Greenberg wanting to strip all visual art from storytelling, thereby promoting abstract expressionism as a “pure” art that did not bend itself to narratives. And here you are doing work that reminds us of all these contentions. How do you relate to this history?

MA: History is collapsing in on itself just as media time is collapsing in on itself. We’re really experiencing this multilinear layering of atemporality. In an art world context, who is to say that we are not once again Modern but with Postmodern resonance? In terms of compositional immediacy and the ability to creatively preempt ourselves while composing, it relates to what, in *META/DATA*, I refer to as *hyperimprovisational remixing in asynchronous realtime*. Playing with time as a kind of multilinear sense of measure is something that we explore in *Micro-Cinematic Essays*...

If you listen closely, you’ll hear distur-

bances of the rhythm and vocal tracks. At times the work feels really off-kilter, as if glitching the entire conceptual apparatus that drives the composition forward. As just one example, you can hear it in the opening track with its emphasis on the “delay” which is a sound pun: Duchamp refers to the *Large Glass* as “a delay in painting” and of course we can easily manipulate the voice itself through delayed effects. These delay effects are something I have always been interested in, especially in relation to history and the way autobiography is a form of fiction. Was it Céline who once wrote that life itself is a fiction and biography is something you invent afterwards?

CM: We’re also interested in challenging the different exhibition and distribution contexts our work circulates in. For example, anyone can listen to the nineteen tracks of *Micro-Cinematic Essays*... at our Bandcamp site [markamerika.bandcamp.com]. But they can come to the museum of gallery exhibitions of the work and experience it there too, in that more Greenbergian context.

EN: You state that the *Micro-Cinematic Essays* are remixes or close readings of Duchamp’s “work, language, notes, and influence” (your own words). It seems that it is Duchamp’s influence as a type of discourse that you are exploring. Could you elaborate on how you see the act of remixing functioning in this context, given that it appears that there is no specific work that you are rehashing, but rather Duchamp’s overall aesthetic?



MA: Duchamp was a big note-taker. He collected these notes and remixed them into what we would now refer to as transmedia art projects. He also role-played various personae in his art and writings and would even remix their “voice” in his early ‘zine publishing experiments. So we have access to a lot of his esoteric thoughts and experiments in language, especially his “puncturetual” side. These notes, phrases, and the creative act lecture I mentioned above, are sampled from and remixed into the various sound compositions as are some original responses to those same notes and lectures. In some of the tracks you hear the voices of Duchamp and Amerika trading notes, bobbing and weaving within a Mossholder soundscape, while in others, like the final track “Tuning Up,” you hear a very manipulated vocal track where the voice is asking a post-Duchampian question for the digital age: “Sometimes I wonder, what does it mean to be an avant-garde artist [tuning their instrument so that they can then become a meta-medium]?” The answer is in the asking, in the questioning, in the process of remixologically inhabiting or channeling the figure of the artist who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing.

III. INTERVIEW:

ELISA KREISINGER

Eduardo Navas: How did you develop your current practice of doing mashup videos? Were you always interested in video or did you do something different prior to your current practice which now informs it?

Elisa Kreisinger: I was always interested in appropriation art and cut-and-paste or photoshopped montages. I had a background in video editing so I used the skills I had and the materials on hand — commercials, TV shows, etc. — to make video montages like the photoshopped montages I loved. Early on these were very thesis-like. I had a point to prove and tried to set up the piece like an argument or an essay. It ventured into inadvertent propaganda and, if you ask me, that got boring, so I concentrated on telling an alternative storyline, one that I would have liked to see in a particular TV show.

EN: So were you thinking of these early projects as art pieces at all, or were they more like critical projects with an open-ended purpose? Did you consider yourself an artist at this stage? If not, when did you consciously decide to begin your art practice?

EK: I was right out of school when I started making them. I remember making a deliberate decision to work part time and focus on my creative work. I wanted to use the term “artist” when talking about or referring to this work but I didn’t go to art school so it felt awkward. Then I realized it felt awkward for everyone so I just used it over and over, whenever I could, on tax forms, at dinner parties. Its public acknowledgment sort of became a mantra, reinforcing it for me, albeit perhaps pretentious at times.

EN: The remix for you appears to be in the editing — postproduction through and through. Can you share some thoughts on this process? For instance, once you

decide to remix a particular TV show, do you then begin looking for possible bits? It seems like you are doing a type of “close reading” of the footage. Can you tell us more about this?

EK: Once I decide on a show, I create a script database. With *Mad Men*, the database was created over six months where I was transcribing each character’s lines from scratch using subtitles on the DVD box sets for guidance. With *Sex and the City*, there were many transcripts already online that had to be edited for accuracy. After the script database is created, I rip the DVDs, start pulling clips and create a word and image database that’s color coded by theme, topic, word or image. I’ve found this to be the most time consuming part but it also allows for me to easily pivot if the alternative storyline I have in mind isn’t working



as planned, which happens a lot. For example, I had remixed Betty, Joan and Peggy into radical feminists via a rather linear, narrative storyline. In my head it was an amazing remix where they were militant Marxist feminists and I thought that was fun and funny given the time period. But in real life, on my timeline, it just wasn’t working. But thankfully, I had the script database and word and image databases to fall back on to create *Mad Men: Set Me Free*. So, I can search for when Don Draper says the word “love” or a scene where Carrie

Bradshaw walks into a bar when I need it. This way I can make something with that source material, not just discard it as a 'bad source' because it didn't fit into my idea of what I thought would in my head.

EN: Really interesting process. It sounds like you make the most of non-linear editing. And I really like the idea of mining the script. Is this something common for vidders would you say, or is this your own technique?

EK: I don't know the details of what the vidding process is but I imagine it might be similar. I admire the work that vidders do. The idea that a group of women, pre-Internet, pre-YouTube, were teaching each other editing techniques, appropriating pop culture and then reading into the alternative narratives that resulted from that practice really inspires me. Although, I must admit I often don't have the capacity to dive in as deeply to their work as the source materials allow. For example, there is a great community of femme slashers, a term used for queering two straight female characters. These videos usually don't include speaking but the soundtrack becomes the narration. However, I often don't have a deep enough understanding of the source material to really understand the complexities of the queering. But I think it brings up an interesting point: Do audiences have to have prior knowledge of the source materials to understand and/or appreciate the remix? I've heard great arguments on both sides.

EN: For your Sex and the City remixes you essentially recycle footage in such a way that even if one is not completely familiar with the series, one still gets a sense of the original narrative and the one you are creating. What is interesting for me about your approach is that this is what makes it so effective. Can you discuss a bit your process to achieve this?

EK: That's a good question: Is it good to get a sense of the original source material in a remix where everything is supposed to be transformed and taken out of context? I'm glad you appreciate that dynamic. I'm not sure it was intentional but I think I was trying to acknowledge the audience's prior understanding and devotion to the context of the source material. I wanted to honor their knowledge of these characters and recognize and value the original storylines. I also wanted to let fans of the show know I wasn't an outsider coming in to dismember their favorite show and tell them how bad it is. I was a fan but I was critical of the show and blurring that line between fan and critic is important to me. I hoped that keeping parts of the original context would serve as a signal to the viewer that what they are watching is an alternative reading where you have to suspend some of what you know about one character but also give in and exploit a lot of what you know about another character.

EN: The concept of being a fan and a critic is quite challenging, don't

you think? How do you resolve this approach to critical production when there appears to be an ongoing expectation from the intellectual community to always develop critical distance. Can you really have critical distance when you are a fan?

EK: I think even the intellectual community finds opportunities to negotiate their desire to be critical but also seek enjoyment and pleasure in certain texts. It's this fine line that is most interesting to me. If the work were just critical, it wouldn't really be art. It would be an essay that began with a thesis statement and sought to prove it right. I like the complexity of negotiating those love/hate emotions. It's something I struggle with in my work and my personal life and I think it's relatable to every human who can feel. If we were 100% fans or 100% critics we'd not only be boring with no friends, we'd probably live a miserable life.

EN: When you respond to comments on YouTube about your work you state that by remixing the material as you do, you are queering it, and that this undoes the male gaze. Would you elaborate on how you see the male gaze functioning at this point in time, given that much has been written about, and much work like yours has been produced to dismantle it?

EK: I wish there was a filter in Final Cut that would allow us to 'edit out' the male gaze. But the male gaze can't be undone. It can't be remixed out. But it can be

appropriated and recontextualized and that's my goal.

EN: Interesting that you state that the male gaze cannot be undone – or remixed. But aren't you remixing it in all your work?

EK: I'm trying to recontextualize it. I can't go back and re-shoot *Mad Men*. It's shot as is. The perspective is that of the cinematographer and I can't undo that. The gaze is inherent in the source material I get from the DVD. The best I can do is recontextualize it, cut around the overtly-sexualized shots and take whatever's left to make a different story.

EN: Is there, at this point, a queer gaze would you say? Or does a gaze need to be predominant in the mainstream in your opinion?

EK: I think the male gaze is becoming queer-er but unfortunately, even in queer shows, with presumably queer cinematographers, both women and men are hyper-sexualized. I actually think that's the depressing part. It's almost like, "did we learn nothing from the past?"

IV. INTERVIEW:

GISELLE BEIGUELMAN

Eduardo Navas: *I Lv Yr GIF* is a very recent piece developed for the iPad, but it is about the early days of net art. Can you share the process of development?

Giselle Beiguelman: I've been collecting GIFs for a very long time. The idea of doing this project is from 2008, when Nokia and Apple launched the Micromap browser with the N80 device. This browser was supposed to allow zooming on images, but actually, it was just a promise. It was too difficult and not user friendly. But the feature itself, to zoom in and out of images on the screen, became one of my secret obsessions. I've been wondering since then how to do something in this direction, combining low and hi-tech and at the same time exploring the mobile context, the nomadic age and the ways in which it affects, modifies and transforms our ways of reading and our perception. Because of all of this, my collection of small GIFs was the perfect scenario. Most of the GIFs I use in *I Lv Yr GIF* are 10 x 10 px. But when you arrange them in the full screen, using basic html resources, combining layers and backgrounds, they become something totally different. And when you zoom them — in and out — is amazing.

When you invited me to this exhibition, I found it was an opportunity to remix an old idea, taking advantage of the iPad features in order to explore the different vision you get when you touch the screen and reconfigure the images by chance.

But nothing is perfect. In spite of the fact I had a draft of this project, it demanded a lot of research in order to understand how to build it as a Web app (to make the mobile Safari to stand alone, the add to screen, the configuration). After many years I came back to Dreaweaver and to the view source strategically. And what I got — a remix of the past and the future of the Internet in an optical black and white delirium — is really a result of the generosity of many people who keep sharing their codes and scripts.

So I would say that this piece is about the early days of net art not only because it is about GIF aesthetics, but also because of the process of “do it yourself with others.” And it is extremely contemporary, because its horizon is the mobile experience and nomadic culture.

EN: Really interesting that you mention the early days of Internet art. You were quite active then as well. When you developed your early pieces, did you ever consider them remixes of sorts or did this concept become more familiar in your practice as the concept of remix culture became more popular? I ask because Brazil has a strong relationship to the movement of Creative Commons.

GB: Creative Commons is a concept that is very important and I do respect very much Lessig and many other people behind it, like Ronaldo Lemos, from CC Brazil. But I am not supportive of this idea as a practice. I think free is free and

the idea of creating different instances in order to legalize what is free and how you can use it creates a bureaucratic culture that is totally against what the Internet means since its beginnings. What is really amazing about the Internet is the way it has been built, in a self-regulated and autonomous manner. My “methodology” is copy, paste, remix and distribute. Don’t ask, Do It Yourself with the Others. From this point of view the piracy strategies from the favelas, the way they appropriate the infrastructure from the cable TVs and Internet providers, forcing them to moderate their prices in order to get their regular market, for instance, are much more inspiring than the lawyer culture embedded in licenses of all sorts.

EN: As a follow-up question to the early days of Internet art, given that your piece comments on the history of new media art, would you share your thoughts on how you see the aesthetics of art that relies heavily on computing changing since the early days of the Internet?

GB: The most relevant change is the corporatization of the net. In the beginning net art’s biggest problem was the browser differences. Today, we are working for the device. It is true that the desktop version of *I Lv Yr GIF* performs differently in Firefox, Chrome and Safari. Better in the last two, and not so beautiful in Firefox. But, in short, what you get on Windows, MacOS or Ubuntu is very similar. But if you try the app on Android it is a disaster! In some ways Web 2.0 transformed us into fansumers, into naïve sponsors of a

couple of corporations.

Nevertheless, from another point of view, Web 2.0 democratized the Internet in a way we could not dream of in the beginning. This, synchronized with the mobile industry explosion, is changing the world (think about the Arab Spring, Obama election and re-election, Brazil, India etc). This situation made *I Lv Yr GIF* possible. Let’s talk then about net art, after net art or after the consolidation of the art fairs world.

Net art was hype — from the art system point of view —, but today, in an art world ruled by galleries and business collectors, it became a very complicated strategy. Exhibitions are more and more demanding objects, things to be shown according to a set of rules that are impossible to follow when you work in such a fluid context as the web. But, at



the same time, the web, through the mobile experience, became real and it is amazing to realize, again, that your work will be everywhere, in spite of the art world’s opinion.

EN: Much of your work, including *I Lv Yr GIF*, is quite abstract, even work that uses recognizable footage

tends to move towards abstraction, if not formally, certainly conceptually. Can you discuss your relation to the tradition of abstract art, given that it has a very strong tradition in Brazil?

GB: The relation is clear, but extremely contaminated by the concrete poetry experience and the way they read the Russian constructivist moment. The economy of the palette — basically black and white with some red variations occasionally — is not fortuity in my work. But I would also stress some more recent trends in Brazilian media art as related to my work. In this sense, the combination between high and low tech could be understood as part of my Brazilian background too; but moreover, and above all, the commitment to the open-source movement and aesthetics.

EN: In regard to open source, how do you see it functioning now that apps are becoming more common? It seems that information culture is entering as you already mentioned a time when corporations are taking more control. What do you think this will do to the foundation of sharing that was the primary fuel of online production?

GB: I built my app in HTML5 in order to skip the Apple licensing process. App culture means a new moment in net art history if we understand it as an opportunity for taking to the extreme the idea of an art to be experienced “in between”, while doing other things on demand, whenever and wherever you are, ready to be shared and linked. From this point of view it is net art after net art, or after net art, net art again! This makes net art so appealing. It reverts all the art history tradition (of contemplation, concentration, adequate environment, etc.). Because of this it is so important to challenge the shopping center culture that the app stores are trying to impose and to restore our ability to face the corporatization of digital culture in all its levels. Otherwise we will bet on the walled garden mentality, which is the foundation of social networks like Facebook, where you live attached to the affirmative-only possibility of the “like”. This, definitely, is not my choice and I really believe that open source is a much more contemporary way of thinking. It challenges us to think not only about a new ethics, but also in a new aesthetic.

V. INTERVIEW:

ARCÁNGEL CONSTANTINI

Eduardo Navas: You develop your work with old technology. By this I mean that you reuse machines that are no longer of practical use for day-to-day production. How did you come to develop your practice along these lines?

Arcángel Constantini: For a long time I have been interested in obsolescence not only in relation to technology but also to the perception of ideas, and processes that are forgotten as the principles of recent technological development, which nevertheless are relevant to our present and future. I'm interested in re-signifying all this in art. I love to read science fiction from the past and research how some ideas became future realities. One of the aspects of reality on which I focus is the processes of impermanence and decay. I am interested in reusing old technology to contextualize ideas that help define technology as "old." I also construct artifacts using old processes to analyze our present and future from a different point of view.

EN: Your work always has a performative aspect to it. *Optosono*, for instance was originally designed to be performed by you, or someone who understands how the machine works. But you also are able and willing to turn your performative objects into installations or interactive works. This is the case with *Optosono 2.0*. Can you explain how you go about

these changes and how performance plays a role and is different in terms of an aesthetic experience?

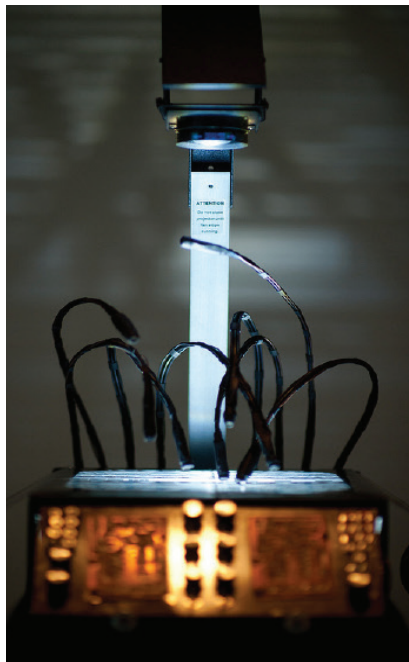
AC: When I put together works such as *Optosono* I do it in order to link process in



sound and electronic experience. When I begin to work I have a fairly clear idea of what I hope will take place in functional and formal terms. Usually when there is a deadline I test the work live. This gives recognition to the system in terms of improvisation. In this sense, *Optosono* was constructed with the idea of a sound system of failed transgression. This means that error is a major part of the piece. I am interested in enabling gallery visitors to analyze and to get to know the system through experimentation and improvisation. In *Optosono 2.0* I make a connection between the institutional origins of the machine to the democratic process upon which political speeches are dependent. Gallery visitors, when

interacting with the artwork, should understand not only its function but also the conceptual cultural implications I mention.

EN: Remixing more often than not is discussed in terms of what I define as material sampling (as in music samples) and cultural citations (as in embedding texts or ideas in another form, but not directly taking an actual recording or quotation). You recycle hardware, which is quite unique in terms of how remix is usually discussed. Thinking of all this, can you elaborate on how you relate to the concept of remixing in terms of your practice?



AC: In my practice I have two parallel developments. On one end there is a type of contextual experimentation on different aspects of the web and its perception, which is developed in the context of remix, appropriation, deconstruction and the reuse of information to recontextualize ideas. On the other hand I practice a type of technological hacking, geared towards hardware and physical computing. In different pieces I rely on recycling technology by using it towards ends for which it was not originally designed, or to construct systems that engage in dialogue with possible discourses of technological ideas from the past. With *Optosono* I researched the possibilities of

reusing sound and related it to democracy as a cultural element. I needed a projector with acetate cells and the first that I found was in perfect working condition. It had been discarded by the Federal Electoral Institute, and this led me to question the democratic process that is ineffective, a system with which people currently live in Mexico. I thought of how the process itself is obsolete. *Optosono* is a piece in which I appropriated the speeches to remix, deconstruct, and disrupt them in visual and aural performative forms.

EN: Based on what you explain, it sounds like you first found the gadget, and this one led you to see the politics behind the gadget. Is this how you usually approach your work? In other words, when you go to the flea market, do you have something in mind or do you arrive with an open mind?

AC: In this case it happened as you describe. I discovered the projector in the Tianguis — a type of flea-market —, which defined the political discourse of the piece. Sometimes I will go somewhere with a basic idea, searching for an object that will live up to the idea, and other times I will go just to see what I can find. I go to get lost in the immensity of material, scanning gadgets vendors are selling, viewing the objects, and just processing the information as I take it in. When I was invited to Black Box, part of the ARCO fair in Madrid, Spain, I developed a piece titled “Detector of Content.” It was the fair’s 25th anniversary. I went out searching for something, going all over the Tianguis, and I found a metal detector from the ‘60s and a vintage speaker. I knew what I wanted to do at that moment: to have a dialogue with the art market and the aura of its objects; the objects’ fictitious and speculative values once they are considered works of art. I approached this based on my reflection on obsolete

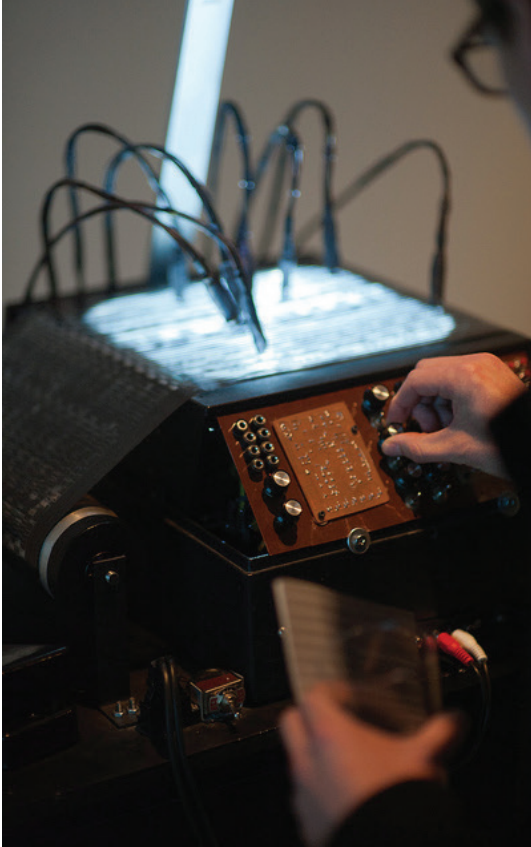
objects in the flea market, abandoned, depreciated and without aura. During the fair I walked through all the galleries with the speaker on my shoulder and with the metal detector searching content within the artworks, and sound-based action and a symbolic discourse on the constant search for some sense.

EN: You like to develop works that function in real space, but you also have produced a lot of online art. Would you share how you decide to work in one medium versus the other? Do you sometimes recycle an idea from one space onto the other?

AC: Looking back in my practice I realize that in my online production I have maintained a constant search that reflects on the perception of space, strongly informed by the semantics of space, which I used to develop net.art. In *unosunosunosceros.com* I establish a philosophical hypothesis on the perception of space, activating a triad that I refer to as concrete-dreamlike-digital perception. Most of the pieces and experiments on the site reflect on such conditions constantly recurring to question our reality. *Anima* is an example that in terms of an object reflects on the condition of the digital. It is an artwork that utilizes obsolete objects, again, from the flea-markets and through the dematerialization of its decadent condition questions are posed on the moment of experience, on the “soul” of the objects, on their aura, on net.art and the immaterial condition and permanence of the space. At the same time that I have developed

this online space, I have also created artworks that are not linked to online production at all. I have developed pieces with physical computing, kinetic installations, sound pieces and installations, hacking technology, robotics, experiments with water, electromagnetic oscillations.

At the moment I continue developing net.art applying the concept of “remixxx.” I explore sexuality through pornography under the domain *x-no-01.net*, which is an investigation that I have been working on since '96, and which currently is funded with a grant from the National System for Art Producers, or FONCA.





ABOVE AND LEFT: DISPLAY OF OPTOSONO 2.0 AT GALLERY@CALIT2

BIOGRAPHIES

Artists:

1. Mark Amerika is an internationally renowned remix artist who not only reconfigures existing cultural content into new forms of art, but also mashes up the mainstream media forms and genres that most commercial artists work in. His artwork includes published cult novels, pioneering works of Internet art, digital video, surround sound museum installations, large scale video projections in public spaces, live audio-visual/VJ performance, and most recently, a series of feature-length foreign films shot with different image-capturing devices in various locations throughout the world. He is currently a Professor of Art and Art History at the University of Colorado at Boulder and Principal Research Fellow in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at La Trobe University. Amerika is the author of *Remixthebook* (Minnesota, 2011) His Internet art can found at his website.

<http://markamerika.com>

2. Giselle Beiguelman is a new media artist, curator and researcher. She was Artistic Director of Sergio Motta Institute (2008-2011), and was also Professor in the Graduate Program in Communication and Semiotics of PUC-SP (São Paulo, 2001-2011). Beiguelman teaches Art History and Design at the Architecture and Urbanism Faculty of the University of São Paulo. She was Editor of *seLecT* magazine and curator of Tecnofagias (3rd 3M Digital Art Show, Instituto Tomie

Othake, 2012). Her art work has been presented in international venues such as Net_Condition (ZKM, Karlsruhe), el ñal del eclipse (Fundación Telefonica, Madrid), The 25th São Paulo Biennial, Transitio_MX (Mexico), YOU_ser (ZKM), among many others. She was Curator of Nokia Trends (2007 and 2008), and the Brazilian participation in ISEA Ruhr (2009), among many others.

<http://www.desvirtual.com>

3. Arcángel Constantini produces work of a marked ludic-experimental nature, strongly influenced by the fortuitous and chaotic processes of the city as reflected in the systematic use of glitch aesthetics. His work and artistic practice explore the dynamics of visual and sound works, low-tech installations, propaganda action, visual/sound performance, hardware hacking, physical computing, installation, sound art and net art. As an independent curator, Constantini has been developing the program of Cyberlounge, Museo Ruñno Tamayo since 2001, and was part of the curatorial team for Transitio Mx electronic art festival. He is a member of dorkbot Mexico D.F. council. He has received several awards, among them the Prize for Best Multimedia Work at Vidarte, Video and Electronic Arts Festival, CENART (Mexico City, 1999), and received first prize for Atari-noise at Interference Festival France 2000. In 2002 Constantini received the Rockefeller/MacArthur grant for new media.

<http://www.arc-data.net>

4. Elisa Kreisinger is a video artist based in Brooklyn. Her latest work includes remixing *Mad Men* into feminists and *The Real Housewives* into lesbians. Her work has been featured in galleries and festivals throughout the US and Europe, including the Museum of Film and TV (Berlin), MIP Cube (France) and SxSW. A prominent voice in the remix and online video community since 2006, Elisa speaks on campuses, including USC, MIT and Harvard, and at industry events throughout the world. Her success engaging female audiences online has led to collaborations with NBC, Paramount Pictures, Art 21, Eileen Fisher, Women Make Movies, the Women's Media Center, and Origin Magazine. An advocate and activist, Elisa works with Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society, American University's Center for Social Media, and the Electronic Frontier Foundation to continue to pave the way for a mashup-friendly web that acknowledges creators' rights under US Copyright Law's Fair Use provision.

<http://popculturepirate.com>

5. Chad Mossholder is a sound artist working in art installations, film, music and video games. His critically acclaimed and experimental electronic music project *Twine* has been performed all over the world and has released six full-length albums as well as numerous mini-albums, and EP's on such labels as Hefty Records (Chicago), Bip-Hop Records (Marseille, France) and Ghostly Records (Ann Arbor).

His live audio/visual performances have attracted audiences in Europe, Japan and North America. His sound collaborations with artist Mark Amerika, including Filmtext, Codework and Immobilité , have been exhibited in international museums, galleries and festivals.

<http://cwmossholder.com>

Curator:

Eduardo Navas researches the crossover of art and media in culture. His production includes art & media projects, critical texts, and curatorial projects. He has presented and lectured about his work internationally. Navas researches and teaches in the School of Visual Arts at The Pennsylvania State University, PA. He also lectures in the program of Culture and Media at Eugene Lang College, and MA Media Studies at The New School for Public Engagement, NY. Navas was a 2010-12 Post Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Information Science and Media Studies at the University of Bergen, Norway, where he remains an affiliated researcher. He received his Ph.D. from the Program of Art History, Theory, and Criticism in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego. He is the author of *Remix Theory: The Aesthetics of Sampling* (Springer 2012), and is co-editor of *The Routledge Companion to Remix Studies* (Routledge, 2014).

gallery@calit2 reflects the nexus of innovation implicit in Calit2's vision, and aims to advance our understanding and appreciation of the dynamic interplay among art, science and technology.



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