

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]: Exhibition



Semitra Exhibition "tFont/fTime"

Sep 19 (Sat), 2009 - Jan 10 (Sun), 2010 10:00-19:00

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Studio B, Foyer, Gallery second floor, Central Park

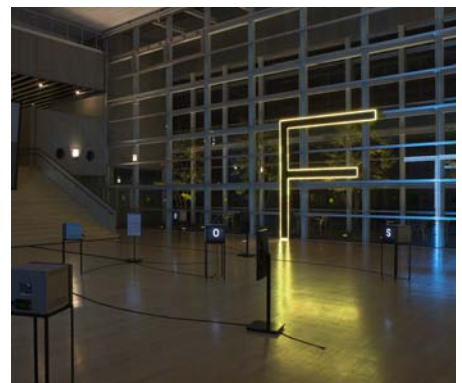
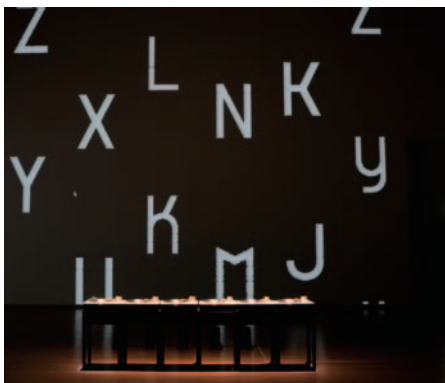
Admission Free

First exhibition of Semitra, a group of creators combining great media sensibility and technique

"Typeface with a temporal element" themed displays at YCAMs exhibition space and on the Internet

"Semitransparent Design" is a creative team that has been connecting the realm of design with cutting-edge media technology in works ranging from web design to graphic and interactive design since starting off in 2003.

YCAM now presents "tFont/fTime", an exhibition of the "Semitra" group of artists that emerged from this collective.



Designing Typeface & Time

Observing a continually transforming typeface in an installation and online

With a special focus on font design, this exhibition introduces new works based on the unique idea of a typeface that transforms hour by hour. Centering around four new installation pieces (shown at Studio B) incorporating the "tFont" typeface with an added element of time, as well as "fTime", which expresses time through typeface design, the exhibition allows the visitor to witness the generation and processing of this particular kind of font design via networks and visual relays. In addition, a number of large-sized signboards displayed in and outside the Center complete the ever-changing "fontscape" that pervades YCAM in a combination of real and informational environments dedicated entirely to the design of typeface and time.

Exhibition Website

<http://semitra.ycam.jp/>

Press Preview Sep 19 (Sat), 2009 11:00 - 12:00

* The exhibition will be open to the general public from 12:00 on Sep 19 (Sat).

Closed: Tuesday (the next days if it falls on a holiday) and December 29, 2009 - January 3, 2010

* Please note that this exhibition will be temporarily closed between Oct 26 (Mon) and Nov 6 (Fri).

Organizer: Yamaguchi City Foundation for Cultural Promotion, Agency for Cultural Affairs

Support: Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi City Board of Education

Sponsor: Color Kinetics Japan Incorporated

Produced by Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]

Technical Support: YCAM InterLab

Curator: Kazunao Abe (YCAM)

INQUIRY

Yamaguchi Center for Art and Media [YCAM]

Public Relations: Fumi Hirota, Aya Tatsumura

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7-7 Nakazono-cho Yamaguchi-city 7530075 JAPAN <http://www.ycam.jp>



山口情報芸術センター
Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media

Participate while viewing real-time images of the exhibition space via the Internet

An exhibition to be experienced from 12 locations in and around YCAM, and from your own computer

"tFont/fTime" stands for "time-font/font-time", and represents the result of an attempt to explore font design based on the novel idea of visualizing the transformation process of a gradually changing typeface.

The letters of messages supplied via a special website (<http://www.semitraexhibition.com/>) or email (m@semitra.com) become parts of artworks that ultimately emerge at YCAM's exhibition spaces. Messages are displayed in the original "tFont" typeface, and once placed on the "fTime" time axis, they are processed through visitors' actions and such media as cameras and monitors. The font's transformation process can also be observed in the form of "fontscapes" in images of the exhibition transmitted in real-time via the Internet. In addition to four new installation pieces exhibited at Studio B, these fontscapes unfurl at a total of twelve locations inside and outside the YCAM building, including the foyer and the Chuo Park.

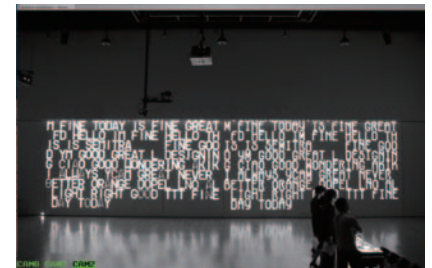
All exhibited works are fed with common data of visitors' actions and supplied messages, which are then translated into configurations of typefaces, lighting, etc. to affect each respective work.

*The title "tFont/fTime" refers to the original "time font" (a typeface with an added notion of time) and "font time" (time visualized through a typeface) developed by Semitra.

"tFont/fTime" Exhibited works (new work / commissioned by YCAM)

*The typeface design changes (decomposes) according to the actions of visitors and users accessing via the exhibition's special website. The artworks are constantly feeding the server with data of their ongoing coupled transformation process.

- *01. Movable Type (Studio B) Internet live streaming
- *02. Typesetting
Internet live streaming / display of messages
- *03. California Job Case
- *04. No Flash Photography Allowed
- *05. LCD/CRT (Foyer)
- *06. No Flash Photography Allowed - projection
- 07. Large Scaled Sign - LED
- 08. Large Scaled Sign - Sculpture (Central Park)
- 09. "tFont" Installative Photographs (Gallery second floor)
- *10. Large Projection from Studio B
- 11. Semitransparent Design's activities for Commercial Works (Information space first floor)
- *12. Terminals for Access on the Web (Internet live streaming/message posting)



Display of Special website (www.semitraexhibition.com/) Exhibited works(01-03) transmitted in real-time via the Internet

Exhibition Website
special website
email

<http://semitra.ycam.jp/>
<http://www.semitraexhibition.com/>
m@semitraexhibition.com

Semitra

A group of artists that emerged from the "Semitransparent Design" collective, Semitra developed an original design technique by interconnecting digital networks and real spaces. They received numerous advertising awards at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival, The Clio Awards, One Show, New York ADC, D&AD, and others.

The artists combine visual, programming and networking technology to create their imaginative works ranging from web-based art to installation, photography, imagery and other media/formats. Semitra's main activities to date include among others the "no flash photography allowed." installation at NTT InterCommunication Center [ICC] in 2008 showcasing their self-developed "tFont" typeface with an added element of time, a workshop at the International Academy of Media Arts and Sciences [IAMAS] revolving around "tFont", and film contributions to "Japanese Motion Graphic Creators 2009" (BNN) <http://www.semitransparentdesign.com/>

"tFont" is a two-dimensional typeface with an added element of time.

Dots of light arranged in seemingly random patterns describe in fact the shapes of letters that can only be read when photographed with long exposure.

This typeface consists of dynamic and in their original state unreadable blinking lights, so it requires the additional step of photographing or filming in order to become readable. In other words, "tFont" is a typeface that was designed based on the premise of being shaped/modified by a third party.

The web specific transmission of culture through shaping/modification that happens here hints at the various possibilities of creativity on the Internet.

Ryoji Tanaka (Semitra)



Semitra



Design work for YCAM information space(2003)



01

01. Movable Type

A font that can be played like music

Six turntables are set up in the exhibition space. Playing records on them triggers displays of letters from A to Z in alphabetical sequence on a screen in the front. By operating the turntable in a DJ-like "scratching" fashion, the visitor can change (distort) the shapes of the letters, and enjoy the resulting combinations of visuals and sounds demonstrating how this font design happens on a directionally manipulable time axis just like music or a movie.

At the same time, the letters gradually decompose during their repeated "playback" throughout the Center's opening hours. While the operation of the turntables results in a "distortion" that highlights a momentary relationship between the body and letters, the additional time axis introduced via the server causes further "decomposition". In this work, actual time as manipulated by the visitor overlaps with the notion of time added by the media, to produce a composite time axis that represents a new type of "fontscape".



02

02. Typesetting

Messages supplied via the Internet are displayed in the "tFont"

Text supplied via a special website or email address is displayed in the font that is concurrently designed in "Movable Type" (see above). In other words, this work synchronizes the timing of message posts to the website with the constantly updated data of the font's decomposition inside the exhibition space, in order to make participants' messages visible. Real-time footage of this process is streamed on the Internet, allowing those who posted messages to witness the decomposition process of their own letters in the physical exhibition space. The synchronized timelines interlinking the venue and the Internet, visitors and exterior participants, overlap with the aspect of time introduced through the media used, while the typeface's appearance keeps changing. The work as a whole can be interpreted as a visualization of the unique sensation of time in today's information society, along with the exchange of messages between an unspecified group of users.



03

03. California Job Case

Overlooking the transformation process of the original "tFont"

In this work, the visitor can observe the decomposition process of a font on a projected chart of letters (A-Z) and numbers (0-9). Manipulating the playback speed with a turntable results in a layering of multiple time axes that cause the typeface to change its appearance by the minute. The chart - in a sense a list of samples of the "tFont" - demonstrates on 33 examples how letters gradually transform into a distinctive font.



04

04. No Flash Photography Allowed

Messages that only become visible when photographed

Countless blinking dots of light representing text messages supplied via the exhibition's special website or email are being displayed on a screen in the original "tFont". The viewer can only read these messages by photographing the dots of lights and adding a temporal aspect to create an "animation". With an exposure time that is different to that of the human eye, the camera captures what seems like nothing but an accumulation of blinking lights, and reveals readable text information. The operation (photographing) of a third party as a subsequent creative/communicative element suggests an alternative form of creativity that, inspired by the unique sensitivity of skating and street culture, generates new scenarios in urban settings. This is the foundation the members of Semitra base their interpretation of the unique aspects of perception and speed in web design upon.

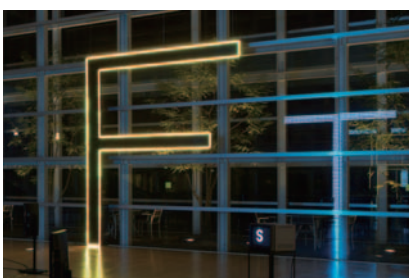


05

05. LCD/CRT

Experience a font that changes its appearance through media

This installation consists of a total of ten monitors (composed of both LCD and CRT) that display a font designed in "fTime". Here the decomposition process is demonstrated on single letters extracted from "fTime" (which is continuously updated at the exhibition space and via the Internet), appearing in random order and with varying speed on monitors with different reproduction systems and resolution. The work is a symbolic hint at the emerging various relationships between typeface, time and output media.



07

07/08.

Neon and other signs shaped like the exhibition's key letters

Large-sized displays in the shapes of the exhibition's key letters "T" (time) and "F" (font) are installed in the foyer. These T- and F-shaped objects are made of moving LEDs that change colors each time a message is posted via the exhibition's website. More huge Ts and Fs are placed in the Chuo Park, serving as benches among others. Visitors can enjoy the daily changing "fontscapes" of letters blending into the environment of the YCAM building and its surroundings.

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Website for message posts and real-time images from the exhibition

<http://www.semitraexhibition.com/>

During the exhibition period, this special website can be used at any time to access the venue.

Users who post messages can witness by way of real-time footage how the text they supplied is being displayed in a gradually transforming font.

Related Events

Opening Event : Artist Talk

Date & Time: September 19 (Sat), 2009 15:00-17:00

Admission Free

Panelist: Semitra

Guest panelist: Yugo Nakamura (tha), Yosuke Abe (tha)

Moderator: Kazunao Abe (YCAM), Daiya Aida (YCAM)

Talk event in which the artists themselves discuss their work with guests Yugo Nakamura and Yosuke Abe from the noted web and interface design studio "tha ltd."

Yugo Nakamura

Web Designer / Interface Designer / Motion Director. Born in Nara, Japan in 1970. Yugo Nakamura has graduated from the University of Tokyo's School of Engineering with a Masters degree. At present, he is a guest lecturer at Tama Art University. After establishing his career in Interactive Design since 1998, Nakamura opened his design studio "tha ltd." in 2004. Since then Nakamura has actively participated in various projects, including art-direction for websites, motion media, programming, and various other projects related to the field of design. His major award recognitions include the Cannes Cyber Lions Grand Prix Award, Tokyo Interactive Art Award Grand Prix, Tokyo Designers Club Grand Prix, and the Mainichi Design Award.

Yosuke Abe

Born 1973 in Tokyo. Graduated from Musashino Art University, Department of Visual Communication Design. After working for Business Architects Inc., joined "tha ltd." in 2007. Art directs websites and movies, and works as a director for such services as FFFFOUND! among others. Main awards include a golden "Cyber Lion" at Cannes, and a first prize at the Tokyo Interactive Art Awards.

Gallery Tour

Date & Time:

October 3 (Sat), 4 (Sun), 10 (Sat), 11 (Sun), 17 (Sat), 18 (Sun), 24 (Sat), 25 (Sun)

November 22 (Sun)

December 6 (Sun), 12 (Sat), 13 (Sun), 26 (Sat), 27 (Sun)

January 9 (Sat), 10 (Sun)

14:00-15:00

Admission Free

*Application: Please visit YCAM 1F Ticket Information before the gallery tour.

Gallery tour appreciating works while discussing with YCAM educational staff.

Workshop "typo DJ"

Date & Time:

November 28 (Sat) 13:00-17:00, 29 (Sun) 10:00-16:00 [2days]

lecturers: HIFANA

targets: Children - between 4th grade and 9th grade.

fee: ¥500

capacity: the first 12 applicants for each

Be a DJ and play with "imagery & music" using the "Movable Type" as presented in the exhibition!

Learning basic deejaying techniques and spinning records rounds off the visitor's experience of a new design idea involving time and typeface.

HIFANA

Duo comprised of Keizo and Juicy, formed in 1998.

Known for highly original live performances centering around rhythms created with electronic musical devices, percussion instruments and turntables (scratching).

"Hifana" is a native Okinawan word for "southern wind".

Presentation + demonstration

Date & Time: November 29 (Sun) 15:00-16:00

Admission free

A presentation of the results of a two-day workshop (live performance), as well as a demonstration by the hosting members of HIFANA will take place.

*The presentation and demonstration performances are open to the general public.

How to apply

Please Send email entitled "Semitra Exhibition: Related Events" with

- i) Expected date of workshop or Presentation+demonstration
- ii) Name in full
- iii) Address; with telephone number, e-mail address.
- iv) Date of Birth Year Month. Day.

deadline: November 21 sun, 2009

7-7 Nakazono-cho, Yamaguchi, 753-0075 JAPAN

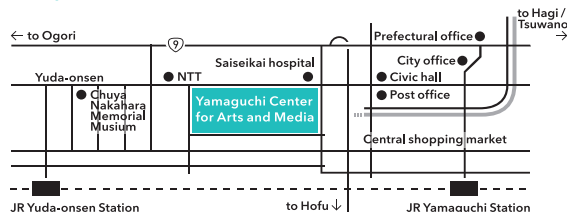
Attn: educational staff

TEL: +81-83-901-2222 FAX: +81-83-901-2216

e-mail: workshop09@ycam.jp



山口情報芸術センター
Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media



Hours: 10:00-20:00

Closed: Tuesday (If Tuesday is a holiday, then Wednesday),

Winter holiday season (December 29 - January 3)

7-7 Nakazono-cho, Yamaguchi, 7530075 JAPAN

Tel: +81-83-901-2222 Fax: +81-83-901-2216

http://www.ycam.jp/ information@ycam.jp

by airplane:

1 hour 30 minutes from Haneda Airport (Tokyo) to Yamaguchi Ube Airport

30 minutes from Yamaguchi Ube Airport to Shin-Yamaguchi station by shuttle bus

by Shinkansen Line (train):

from Tokyo to Shin-Yamaguchi; 4 hours 28 minutes

from Shin-Osaka to Shin-Yamaguchi; 1 hours 57 minutes

from Hiroshima to Shin-Yamaguchi; 33 minutes

from Shin-Yamaguchi station to YCAM:

by Taxi; about 30 minutes (about ¥3,000)

by JR Yamaguchi line;

-18 minutes to Yuda Onsen station and 20 minutes walk

-20 minutes to Yamaguchi station and 20 minutes walk

5 minutes by taxi

by JR Yamaguchi line (Yamaguchi liner);

-10 minutes to Yuda Onsen station and 20 minutes walk

-13 minutes to Yamaguchi station and 20 minutes walk

5 minutes by taxi