Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] 5th Anniversary: EXHIBITION

minimum interface

November 1, 2008 – February 8, 2009 12:00-19:00 (sat, sun, holiday 10:00-)

closed: Tuesday (if it is holiday, then Wednesday), Dec 29, 2008–Jan 3, 2009
Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Studio B, Foyer and other   Admission free

A look at communication design from the position of the interface

The theme of this exhibition, "the future of the interface," was chosen to reflect the particular cultural diverseness of today's information society. On display are a variety of works from the fields of film, photography, animation, sound, architectural sculpture, product design and others, selected based on the principles of "art + physical expression" as an original discipline pioneered by YCAM. A total of eight artists/units from Japan, U.S., Netherlands, and Spain present their newest pieces of art and design – including commissioned works – at several points across the venue.

The exhibition's title reflects a pursuit of possible interfaces that avoid language to enable user interaction through intuitive physical sensation and perception, as opposed to interaction based on verbal information and guidance provided to the user/viewer. User interaction that is created this way stimulates our interest in the information systems and processes that have produced these artworks, while at once suggesting the potentials of interfaces in the definition of a new relationship between information and art. Considering "interfaces", which did not exist in artistic expression prior to the emergence of advanced information technology, as the first essential (minimum) component of media art and information design, this exhibition further aims to be a point of departure for a search for new temporal and spatial possibilities opened up by way of informative art.

[Artists]

Sergi Jordà, Martin Kaltenbrunner, Günter Geiger, Marcos Alonso (Music Technology Group,Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain) [Spain]

Akihiro Kubota [Japan]

LEADING EDGE DESIGN [Japan]

Zachary Lieberman [USA], Theodore Watson [UK]

Daan Roosegaarde [Netherlands]

SHINCHIKA [Japan]

Chris Sugrue [USA]

Shunsuke Takawo [Japan]

■ website: http://minimum.ycam.jp/

5TH
5th Anniversary
Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media

YCAM

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

Connections established through media and the human body

The term "interface" is generally used to refer to a device that a person uses for navigating a computer. The keyboard, for example, connects the user's thoughts with the computer, functioning as a writing tool instead of a pen, but from a different point of view, one can also interpret it as an instrument that expands the abilities of the human body by way of the act of writing. Different ideas and systems are interlinked through the existence of an "inter-face", and the resulting communication makes us aware of new body sensations and images we aren't normally conscious of, while highlighting the connections between body and mind. By approaching the dynamic relationship of the body and its perceptions from the viewpoint of interface-based perceptive affordance, this exhibition aims to showcase the variety of spatial setups effected by the artworks on display. Visitors are invited to experience visually, acoustically and tactually some truly unique ideas for interfaces connecting media technology and the human body.

Sergi Jordà, Martin Kaltenbrunner, Günter Geiger, Marcos Alonso [Spain]

Music Technology Group,
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain
http://mtg.upf.edu

reacTable

The "reacTable" has been receiving international attention since it was used on stage during the "Volta" concert tour of the renowned singer Björk. At this exhibition, the instrument is introduced in the form of a hands-on installation that allows visitors to get in touch and play with it. The player of this novel kind of electronic musical instrument can manipulate sounds and its visual representations by moving or turning multiple objects on an illuminated round tabletop. Sonic and eventually musical structures are created based on the objects' orientation, distance and the relationship between them. The instrument can be played by two or more persons at once, while the spectators can monitor the other's performance and tangible manipuation of the sound elements, in order to study and acquire performance skills intuitively.

Music Technology Group, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

The instrument was developed by a team of digital luthiers, working mainly on the design of new musical interfaces, such as tangible music instruments and musical applications for mobile devices. The reacTable team was recently awarded with various international prizes such as the "Ars Electronica Golden Nica", the "Premi de la Cuitat de Barcelona 2007" and two "D&AD Yellow Pencils" and the Icelandic singer Björk has successfully used the reacTable during her last "Volta" world tour.

Daan Roosegaarde [Netherlands]

http://www.studioroosegaarde.net/

new work (commissioned by YCAM)
Liquid Space 6.0

This organically configured architectural object is slightly bigger that a human body. When a visitor approaches the object, sensors measure the position and distance from the object, and trigger an expansion or contraction of the three-armed structure, comparable to an underwater creature. In addition, LEDs integrated in the arms emit differently colored lights, while sound coming from the object's body change accordingly. The visitor can observe the transformations of the large object's shape and spatial construction that take place when he approaches or walks through it. This way a dynamic relation occurs between the visitor and the space via technology; as an extension of our skin.

Daan Roosegaarde

Daan Roosegaarde is a young artist working in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts AKI in Enschede, and at the Berlage Institute, a postgraduate laboratory of architecture in Rotterdam.
Roosegaarde's work explores the dynamic relation between architecture, humans and new media. His sculptures reflect collisions of technology with the human body. In this interactive relationship, the sculptures create situations where visitors and (public) spaces become one.
Currently, Roosegaarde is the creative director of Studio Roosegaarde, an independent artistic laboratory in which interactive artworks are being developed.

Akihiro Kubota [Japan]

new work (commissioned by YCAM)

Pure𝜙 - Abstract Painterly Interface

A dynamic pictorial image is projected onto a large screen as an abstract interface. Without using diagramatic graphical user interfaces (GUI) as symbols or icons, the random dot image that looks like mere noise when motionless is mixtured through optical flows. With this new piece, the artist explores minimal interface affordance by stimulating direct perceptional interaction out of rapidly transforming textures.

Akihiro Kubota

Tokyo-based sound and software artist/researcher. Has been investigating into fields ranging from digital programming to algorithmic improvisation, network and interface design, through both computer-based and physical audio-visual performances. Places emphasis on possibilities of interaction, and hybrid calculation methods combining live coding and natural computing. Is recently engaging in a theory of discrete information art for aliens that don't rely on human perception and physicality, and in bio (cell) sculpture-related projects. Currently works as a professor and chairman of the Art and Media Course, Department of Information Design, Tama Art University, Tokyo.

LEADING EDGE DESIGN [Japan]

Floating Compass

LEADING EDGE DESIGN have been focusing on future-oriented product design while consciously integrating aspects of human physicality and the way we relate to objects around us. This time the group propose a new interface for the navigation of the entire exhibition space. The display that lacks conventional explanatory elements is expected to unlock new sensual and intellectual channels in the visitor. Also exhibited is a work titled "Floating Compass", based on superhydrophobic technology to convey through a water strider motif the delicate sensation of "touching" a water surface.

"Floating Compass"(2007) Photo: Yukio Shimizu

Shunji Yamanaka

Graduated from the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Tokyo in 1982. Worked for Nissan Motor Design Center before going freelance in 1987. After working as an associate professor of the University of Tokyo 1991 through '94, he established his own design company, Leading Edge Design, in 1994. Was appointed professor at Keio University in April 2008.

While designing industrial products such as cameras, watches, automobiles and furniture, Yamanaka has been pursuing research and development in robotics, informatics and other scientific fields. Thanks to his extensive research into responses to shapes of ticket gates, he became a key figure in developing and implementing JR East's "Suica" automatic ticket gate system. Won a Gold Prize at the Good Design Award 2006 for the "OXO daikon grater", and a Good Design Award for Ecology Design in the New Territory Design category for the "Aimulet" batteryless communication terminal.

Hisato Ogata

Graduated in Engineering Synthesis from the University of Tokyo, Faculty of Engineering, in 2000. After leaving the International Academy of Media Arts and Sciences (IAMAS) in 2002, began to work as a web designer and programmer. Joined Leading Edge Design as a design engineer in 2003.

Won an Excellent Work Award at the DESIGNTOPE design competition in 2001, a "Jury Recommended Work" award at the Media Arts Festival, Agency for Cultural Affairs, a Good Design Award (2004) and an iF Product Design Award (2005) for "OnQ" (NTT DoCoMo).

Zachary Lieberman [USA], Theodore Watson [UK]

new work (commissioned by YCAM)

Card play

For years, magicians have been showing us that playing cards are more then just tools for games - they are instruments with which we can transform chance and fate into impossible reality. In this project, the interface is a simple deck of cards, and the goal is to transform them with the same spirit of the eager magician. These cards make music and they tell stories. When they are face down, nothing happens, but when you flip them over, a wild, impossible world appears before your eyes.

Zachary Lieberman

Lieberman's work uses technology in a playful and enigmatic way to explore the nature of communication and the delicate boundary between the visible and the invisible. He creates performances, installations, and online works that investigate gestural input, augmentation of the body, and kinetic response.

With collaborator Golan Levin, he created a series of installations – "Remark" and "Hidden Worlds" – which presented different interpretations of what the voice might look like if we could see our own speech. These were followed with "Messa Di Voce", a concert performance in which the speech, shouts and songs of two abstract vocalists were radically augmented in real-time by interactive visualization software.

He is currently working on a concert-performance, "Drawn", in which live painted forms appear to come to life, rising off the page and reacting to the world around them. Lieberman is also developing a suite of software for disabled students that transforms their movement into an audio-visual response as a means for performance and self-expression.

Theodore Watson

Theodore Watson is an artist, designer and experimenter whose work is born out of the curiosity and excitement of designing experiences that come alive and invite people to play. Watson's work ranges from creating new tools for artistic expression, experimental musical systems, to immersive, interactive environments with full-body interaction. His recent work includes the Graffiti Research Lab's Laser Tag, laser graffiti system, and Funky Forest, an immersive interactive ecosystem for young children. Watson works together with Zachary Lieberman on openFrameworks, an open source library for writing creative code in C++. Watson's work has been shown at MoMA, Tate Modern, Ars Electronica, Sundance Film Festival, Res Fest, REMF, Cinekid, Montevideo, OFFF, SHIFT, ICHIM, The Creators Series, Deitch Projects, Eyebeam, Pixel Gallery, Museum N8 Amsterdam.

SHINCHIKA [Japan]

new work (commissioned by YCAM)

H2Orz

Shinchika extract a variety of designs from Japanese subculture between the 1980s and today, and string them together to unique animated films combining elements of illustration and 3D computer graphics. This time they present a sculptural installation of objects that were plastically modeled after blueprints based on data from their own animations. Here the visuals as such integrate different methods and forms of spatial representation, to form interfaces depicting parts of reality.

Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo (2008)

SHINCHIKA

Creative unit combining original graphics, visuals, lyrics and music to a unique form of entertainment. Founded in 2002 by Tsuyoshi Hisakado, Yosuke Fujino, Rinshiro Fujiki, Shimpei Yoshikawa and Toki Katsumura, inspired by the "Shinsekai Kokusai Chika Gekijo" theatre in Osaka's Shinsekai amusement district. They assemble their works by connecting and editing fragmentary images born out of each member's recollections, living environments and daily activities. The results are little episodes that reflect exquisitely the bizarre fantasy world of Shinchika. The group showcased their work in an exhibition at Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo, in 2008.

Chris Sugrue [USA]

Delicate Boundaries

Small bugs are wriggling on a computer screen. When a visitor touches the screen, the bugs gather at that contact point, jump out of the computer and onto the visitor's hand, and crawl up his arm. The artist employs dexterously programmed sensing technology to explore the boundary that separates/connects virtual existences with physical bodies in the real world.

"Delicate Boundaries"(2007)

Chris Sugrue

Chris Sugrue is an artist and programmer from the USA whose software-driven artworks include interactive installations and live audiovisual performance. Her work reimagines digital technology in an attempt to bring unique worlds to life through code, cameras, projection and video. Sugrue holds a Masters of Fine Arts in Design and Technology from Parsons School of Design in New York City, and has held positions as a researcher and interactive developer at the Ars Electronica Futurelab, a production fellow at the Eyebeam Art and Technology Center in New York, and artist-in-residence at Hangar in Barcelona.Currently, she is an artist-in-residence at the Casa de Velazquez in Madrid.

Shunsuke Takawo [Japan]

new version for YCAM

Depth of the Field - Processing Photography Blink Series

Humans receive visual information while involuntarily opening and shutting their eyelids. This photographic installation works with sensors that were programmed to detect the blinking of a human's eyes, using the eyelid as an interface to manipulate the speed of a sequence of projected photographs. The images are shown on monitors of two different sizes, enabling the visitor to compare how the visual perception and experience of the photographs changes according to varying affordance and the amount of information perceivable on the monitor.

"Processing Photography"(2008)

Shunsuke Takawo

Photographer, born in 1981. Against the common trend of generating, editing and appreciating digital images on a computer, he presents his works in various forms while experimenting with different media technologies. His "Crawl" series of works photographed and edited following fixed rules from sunrise to sunset, and the "caplickr" software for lifelog, are just two examples. He is currently working on a new installment of the "Processing Photography" series, a package-type digital photographic work with a built-in viewing function, as well as a type of multi-camera photography software for laptop computer.
Takawo completed the course of Studio 2 (Time-based Media) at the Institute of Advanced Media Arts and Sciences (IAMAS) in 2008. Main exhibitions and screenings to date include "Media Explorer 2007", the Up and Coming International Film Festival, and the Dotmov Festival 2007.

During the event period, a set of hands-on workshops will give participants opportunities to learn about the peculiarities of interfaces by experimenting with their bodies and familiar articles of daily use.

"Handmade Mouse - Tailored to fit your body"   January 4, 5, 10, 11, 2009

This two-day workshop is designed to explore the function of an interface in the form of a computer mouse. The idea is to have every participant remodel a commercially available mouse to create an original device that perfectly fits his own body. In addition, attendants can learn through lectures and practical creative work about "human interfaces" and how they form informational environments in accordance with human attributes and aspects of interface design. Participants of the workshop can keep the their original mouse devices for home use.

"Sensory Athletics Workshop"   January 17 sat, 18 sun 2009

This workshop encourages participants to discover new body sensations by making simple obstacles with rubber string and cloth. All of our movements are automatically and profoundly influenced by physical features and things in our direct environments. Participants can study this invisible mechanism on actual movements of their own bodies.
Target: children aged 10 and above (parents are welcome to participate)

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

Hours: 10:00-22:00
Closed: Tuesday (If Tuesday is a holiday, then Wednesday),
          Winter holiday season (December 29 - January 3)

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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 Hakata to Shin-Yamaguchi; 37 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 or 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 or 5 minutes by taxi

tourist / hotel information
Yamaguchi City Tourist Association
Yamaguchi Station (second floor)
2-1 Sodayu-cho, Yamaguchi-city 7530042 JAPAN
tel.+81-83-933-0090

← to Ogori   Prefectural office ●   to Hagi / Tsuwano →
Yuda-onsen   ● NTT   Saiseikai Hospital   City office ●
                                              ● Civic Hall
        Yamaguchi Center   ● Post Office
        for Arts and Media
                        Arcades
                        Shopping Area

JR Yuda-onsen Station   to Hofu ↓   JR Yamaguchi Station