New Frontier Sneak Peek

THE LIBERATED PIXEL

Today's media environment assumes three-dimensional realities in time and space. Its evolving hardware increasingly blurs the line between our bodies and the cinematic. Mobile networks, electronic gadgets, wireless Internet, and surveillance technologies now encrust our bodies, creating an electroskeleton that structures our modern lifestyle, affecting our ethics and decision making. New Frontier at Sundance explores the ways storytelling and independent cinematic expression have adapted to today's environment to compel audiences to engage with one another in ways that fortify our humanity.

The fundamental building block of the modern cinematic image—the pixel—was originally designed as an illuminated point of light that works in tandem with thousands of others to create a reflective medium for image and narrative on a proscenium screen. Today the pixel has been liberated from this fixed broadcasting format to assume three-dimensional realities in time and space.

The works featured in the 2011 edition of New Frontier at Sundance dynamically and diversely engage with image and narrative in three-dimensional ways. Illuminated images crawl and fly though space and time while transmedia narrative experiences fully immerse the body and the imagination. Enter a social experiment conducted inside a game space and become actors, creators, and agents in the story. With the sublime, beautiful, and transgressive in mind, New Frontier artists engage our electroskeletons in ways that expand our conceptions of storytelling and the cinematic image. Their stories find us and follow us where we are as we move throughout our day.

— Shari Frilot, curator, New Frontier
A Machine to See With

Blast Theory, 2010

Keep your eyes peeled. Don’t walk into any traps. Other people seem to be in on this.

Mixing documentary material, stolen thriller clichés, and the films of Jean-Luc Godard, A Machine to See With invites you to take risks, play games, and connect the fantasy of a thriller movie with the political questions that each one of us must face.

To start you arrive on a deserted street corner with your phone. The phone rings, and your journey through the city begins. At first you walk alone, visiting hidden corners of the city and undertaking a psychological profiling test. But there are other characters in this narrative, and closely timed calls set up a secret rendezvous. You move from a focus group to a stakeout, receiving calls from a Denver call center in 1996 or a Paris side street in 1966.

A Machine to See With explores the agency of the individual within an automated system of interaction and narrative control.
Recipient of the Locative Cinema Commission co-commissioned by The Banff New Media Institute at the Banff Centre, ZER01: The Art and Technology Network, and New Frontier at the Sundance Film Festival, Blast Theory is renowned internationally as one of the most adventurous artists’ groups using interactive media, creating groundbreaking new forms of performance and interactive art that mixes audiences across the internet, live performance and digital broadcasting. Led by Matt Adams, Ju Row Farr and Nick Tandavanitj, the group’s work explores interactivity and the social and political aspects of technology. Blast Theory confronts a media-saturated world where popular culture rules by using performance, installation, video, and mobile and online technologies to ask questions about the ideologies embedded in the information that envelops us.

Links:

To learn more about Blast Theory’s work, visit the group’s website: http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/
In *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, Mark Boulos juxtaposes two documentary videos on opposite sides of a wall. The viewer stands between these two powerful videos, trying to negotiate the films. One film depicts the Nigerian guerrilla group that battles the colonization of petroleum resources on their land. The other film depicts stock traders in Chicago who are speculating on futures. In this powerful installation, the audio and intensity of the films crescendo to an uproar.
Mark Boulos lives and works in London, UK, and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He has shown his work internationally at galleries and museums. Religious ecstasy, romantic sacrifice, and political militancy are recurring themes in his work.
We Like America and America Likes Us (The Corpse)

The Bruce High Quality Foundation, 2010

The sculptural media installation, *We Like America and America Likes Us (The Corpse)*, is an allegory of American national consciousness. It depicts dark patriotism, a yearning for the possibility of transcendent national purpose, while it keeps the contradictions and disappointments of history close in mind.

In 1974 Joseph Beuys came to America to perform *I Like America and America Likes Me*. Because of the United States' involvement in Vietnam, he symbolically avoided touching American soil, wrapping himself in felt and riding from and to the airport on a gurney in the back of a '65 Cadillac hearse/ambulance. For the performance, Beuys lived in the Ronald Feldman gallery for a number of days with a wild coyote, at the end embracing the animal, a symbolic act that demonstrated his coming to terms with American identity and its spiritual mythologies.

The hearse/ambulance is a vehicle designed for both pragmatic emergency response and ceremonial lament. Its chassis astride a fresh piece of asphalt—a corpse on clean sheets—embodies a great American contradiction: a national character with a remarkable gift for survival despite its movement toward implosion.
The Bruce High Quality Foundation is a collective based in New York. The Bruce High Quality Foundation, the official arbiter of the estate of Bruce High Quality, is dedicated to the preservation of the legacy of the late social sculptor, Bruce High Quality. In the spirit of the life and work of Bruce High Quality, we aspire to invest the experience of public space with wonder, to resurrect art history from the bowels of despair, and to impregnate the institutions of art with the joy of man’s desiring. Bruce High Quality Foundation’s work has been shown internationally, including at PS1 in New York City and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, France.

Links:


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**Hippocampus 2**

**Spin**

**Daniel Canogar, 2010**
Daniel Canogar takes electronic detritus and transforms it into stunning installations with projection. His work explores the short lifespan of the technologies that we use daily.

_Hippocampus 2_ is a wonderfully resonant work made of discarded tangles of electric, telephone, and computer cables. Lines of light are projected onto the sculpture, creating an illuminated motion effect through the cobweb like structure.

_Spin_ is made of 100 discarded DVDs. Canogar copied the contents of the DVDs, which are then projected back onto their surface. These images projected on to the DVDs reflect onto the opposite wall, creating an abstract double of the films. The audio creates a cacophony of sounds layered from the sound tracks of the films.
Daniel Canogar lives and works in Madrid, Spain. In 1990 he received a master’s degree from NYU and the International Center for Photography. Canogar was recently appointed by the Spanish Ministry of Culture to be the artist representing Spain in the atrium of the European Parliament; he is producing a large-scale, site-specific piece. His work has been shown internationally.

Links:

Artist website: [http://www.danielcanogar.com](http://www.danielcanogar.com)


Three’s Company: The Drama
James Franco, 2010

*Three’s Company: The Drama* is a multimedia examination of the classic ‘70s sitcom. Television has undoubtedly shaped our world: our increased exposure to dramatic entertainment, the shapes of our houses, the definition of the time in our day. This piece hopes to pull television from the box and view it from a slightly oblique perspective.

Although James Franco is best known for his performances in such movies as *James Dean, The Pineapple Express,* and *127 Hours,* it is his work as a director and visual artist that inspires him most. This year saw the festival premieres of his short films *Herbert White, The Feast of Stephen,* and *The Clerk’s Tale,* as well as the documentary feature *Saturday Night.* Franco also opened his first solo art exhibition, *The Dangerous Book Four Boys,* and, in conjunction with his guest appearance on *General Hospital,* successfully blended media with performance art at LA’s MOCA.
After Ghostcatching

OpenEnded Group and Bill T. Jones, 2010

A re-envisioning of Ghostcatching (1999), After Ghostcatching is built from the same motions and vocalizations of Bill T. Jones used in the earlier work, but it explores the themes of disembodiment and identity with the new possibilities opened up by 3-D projection and a custom 3-D renderer built in the group’s software platform, Field. As viewers don their 3-D glasses, they experience the virtual movement in real depth.

After Ghostcatching was commissioned by SITE Santa Fe for its biennial show, The Dissolve, curated by Sarah Lewis and Daniel Belasco.

Excerpted from the SITE Santa Fe press release: (http://www.sitesantafe.org/pressroom/pdf/2010/SITE_Santa_Fe_PR_Bill_T_Jones.pdf)

Says Paul Kaiser of OpenEnded Group, “These advances will contribute to a far more immersive and beautiful version of Ghostcatching, and the one advance that will draw the most attention is the stereoscopic illusion (3-D). This will put Bill’s ghostly figure in a space that seems at times to hover within hand’s reach of the viewers; indeed, viewers may even feel lines of the drawing brushing against their foreheads.”
Bill T. Jones Bio (excerpted from his website):

A multitalented artist, choreographer, dancer, theatre director and writer, Bill T. Jones has received major honors, ranging from a 1994 MacArthur Genius Award to Tony Awards for his choreography on Broadway, including a 2010 Tony for best choreography in the critically acclaimed *FELA!*, the new musical Jones coconceived, cowritten, directed, and choreographed. Before forming the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company (then called Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane & Company) in 1982, Jones choreographed and performed nationally and internationally as a soloist and duet company with his late partner, Arnie Zane. In addition to creating more than 140 works for his own company, Bill Jones has received many commissions to create dances for modern and ballet companies. His memoir, *Last Night on Earth*, was published by Pantheon Books in 1995.

OpenEnded Group Bio (excerpted from its website):

We are three digital artists—Marc Downie, Shelley Eshkar, and Paul Kaiser—who create works for stage, screen, gallery, page, and public space. We do so by considering the two principal axes of time and space: time—so that a passing encounter with a work is captivating in its own right but can also lead to a deeper, committed exploration of its underlying complexities; and space—so that views from afar and views from up close disclose the work differently. A commitment to sharing our ideas as well as our technology has led to our releasing our software platform, Field, as open source and to write at length about our ideas and observations online.

Links:


Theatre III + Edgar

Avish Khebrehzadeh, 2010

From SITE Santa Fe website (http://thedissolve.net/video/7-backyard-2005):

Avish Khebrehzadeh's painting and video form one integrated work. *Theater III* is the ground for the projected animated narrative *Edgar*, where three loosely linked vignettes unfold. A pregnant woman is carried past a village into the desert, where the three men who have been carrying her leave her. She then disappears down a hole with the man who has been digging it. Khebrehzadeh’s works evoke fairy tales and dreamscapes, often inspired by her actual dreams and memories.


Avish Khebrehzadeh's (Iranian, b. 1969) hand-drawn animations and large-scale drawings are praised for their poetic sensibility and dreamy, timeless atmosphere achieved through the most economical means. Their usual motifs—human figures performing simple activities, iconic animals, and excerpts of nature against neutral backgrounds—are made of elemental shapes that are softly drawn with just a pencil, olive oil, and resin. The artist's inspiration stems from childhood memories, everyday life, literature, and art history.
Khebrehzadeh lives and works in Washington, D.C., and Rome, Italy. She studied in Iran, Rome, and Washington, D.C.; was the winner of the 2003 50th Biennale di Venezia Leone d'Oro Prize for the best Italian young artist; and was recently part of the SITE Santa Fe Biennial.

Links:

Artist website: http://www.avishkhebrehzadeh.com/

Video of Theatre III and Edgar: http://www.connercontemporary.com/artists/avish-khebrehzadeh/?view=video
Moony

Akio Kamisato, Satoshi Shibata, and Takehisa Mashimo, 2004

Moony description is taken from this website:


Moony, by Akio Kamisato, Satoshi Shibata, and Takehisa Mashimo from IAMAS in Japan, uses steam as both a screen and an interactive interface. If you touch one of the virtual butterflies projected into the vapor, it will fly away and disappear. But hold your hand into the steam for a while, and butterflies will flock around and play.

Artistic and Technical Statement on Moony from the artists (http://www.dacorg.cn/?action-viewnews-itemid-2918)

This artwork results from a technique of projecting interactive images on steam screens. It presents a new experience to visitors by expressing the dynamism of abstract relationships through the image of butterflies, following the example of "The Dream of a Butterfly" by Chinese philosopher Chuang-tzu.

Moony creates a mystic space by using steam screens with organic variations and interactive butterfly images. It expresses the virtual images of living beings as a stronger presence than their physical reality. The butterfly images react to the hands of visitors, and the butterflies are gathered into and escape from them. The butterflies also appear and vanish through steam variation synchronized with their motion. The matching of a particular screen and its interactive contents is an important element of this work. Moony received the Ars Electronica (the next idea) art and technology grant in 2004.
All bios excerpted from the Chinese Digital Art Association:  

**Akio Kamisato:** Born in 1979 in Okinawa, Akio Kamisato builds artworks on the theme of relations between nonphysical images and physical materials and strives to create tactile experiences by combining images controlled by computer with uncontrolled natural phenomena. Kamisato has participated in the Guwandge Biennale (2006) and other international exhibitions.

**Takehisa Mashimo:** Born in 1979 in Tokyo, Takehisa Mashimo is currently a lecturer at Seian University of Art and Design in Japan and is involved in several collaborative projects. He has participated in the Guwandge Biennale (2006), the Shenzhen Ink Painting Biennale (2008), and other international exhibitions.

**Satoshi Shibata:** Born in 1978 in Aichi, Satoshi Shibata is a research associate at Nagoya University of Arts and Sciences. Shibata works in the field of advertising design and graphic art using digital and print media. Shibata has also participated in several graphic-design exhibitions.

**Links:**

*Moony (4:31 min):* [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMgjOOnlHm0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMgjOOnlHm0)

Akio Kamisato website: [http://www.iamas.ac.jp/~akio03/](http://www.iamas.ac.jp/~akio03/)

Takehisa Mashimo website: [http://www.iamas.ac.jp/~mashim03/webconsole/profile/index.html](http://www.iamas.ac.jp/~mashim03/webconsole/profile/index.html)

The Johnny Cash Project

The Wilderness Downtown

Milk+Koblin (Chris Milk & Aaron Koblin), 2010

Participants are invited to create a drawing that is woven into a collective, hand-drawn, animated, music-video tribute to Johnny Cash, set to his song "Ain't No Grave." The project was inspired by the song's central lyric, "ain't no grave gonna hold my body down," and represents Cash's continued existence, even after his death, through his music and his fans. The work continues to grow and evolve as more people participate.

The Wilderness Downtown: http://www.thewildernessdowntown.com/

An interactive film using HTML5 programming and Google Maps creates startling individualized videos to the Arcade Fire song "We Used to Wait." The interactive video was an online sensation, leading to 35 million hits and five million unique visitors.
Chris Milk is a writer/director known best for his innovative music video work. He has worked with a diverse roster of artists such as U2, Green Day, Kanye West, Arcade Fire, Johnny Cash, Audioslave, Gnarls Barkley, Courtney Love, Modest Mouse, and John Mellencamp. Milk was the recipient of the highly respected Gold Clio Award and was honored in the New Director Showcase at Cannes all while still a student. His videos have received most every nomination and/or award in the business including MTV Moon Men, Grammy nominations, Cannes Lions, D&AD Pencils, and six MVPA Awards including the top award in 2008, "Director of the Year." Milk is a frequent speaker on music videos, technology, art and design, and filmmaking in general.

Aaron Koblin is an artist specializing in data visualization. His work takes social and infrastructural data and uses it to depict cultural trends and emergent patterns. Aaron’s work has been shown at international festivals including Ars Electronica, SIGGRAPH, OFFF, the Japan Media Arts Festival, and TED. He received the National Science foundation’s first place award for science visualization and is part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. In 2010 Aaron was the Abramowitz Artist in Residence at MIT and is Technology Lead of Google’s Creative Lab.

Links:
http://www.aaronkoblin.com/info.html
http://www.chrismilk.com
http://www.thejohnnycashproject.com/#/explore/TopRated (work sample—The Johnny Cash Project)
http://www.thewilderssdowntown.com/ (work sample—The Wilderness Downtown)
!WOMEN ART REVOLUTION

RAW/WAR

Lynn Hershman Leeson, 2011

!Women Art Revolution is a documentary film exploring the Feminist Art Movement in the United States from 1968 to the present. The rarely seen footage, interviews, and art in the film reveal the way the Feminist Movement transformed the art of our times.

RAW/WAR is an interactive, community-curated video archive. The website allows users worldwide to access the archive of footage as well as share their own stories through text, images, video clips, and links that highlight the achievements and practices of women artists. Users can also create shorter clips from the archive footage to comment and post on social-network platforms. The film and website work together to uncover this lost history and create a space for collaboration that shapes the RAW/WAR website.
Over the last three decades, artist and filmmaker Lynn Hershman Leeson has been internationally acclaimed for her pioneering use of new technologies and her investigations of issues that are now recognized as key to the working of our society: identity in a time of consumerism, privacy in a era of surveillance, interfacing of humans and machines, and the relationship between real and virtual worlds. Leeson’s work has been shown internationally. She currently lives and works in San Francisco, CA.

The creative team behind RAW/WAR includes Lynn Hershman Leeson in collaboration with: Gian Pablo Villamil, Alexandra Chowaniec, Brian Chirls and Paradiso Projects.

Links:

Artist website: http://www.lynnhershman.com/

Film website: http://www.womenartrevolution.com

Project website: http://www.rawwar.org

Leeson is represented by bitforms gallery: http://www.bitforms.com/lynn-hershman-leeson-gallery.html
Dreaming of Lucid Living is an exploration of shadow and animation and themes of domestic spaces, dreamlike vignettes, large and small cities, and magical powers. Myth and Infrastructure is a multimedia performance involving projected animation on screen, body, and props. Matreyek’s body becomes part of a layered world of animation, light and shadow. Her strikingly beautiful images lure the viewer into the piece and the story. The dreamy audio is sung by Anna Oxygen.
Miwa Matreyek is an award-winning animator, designer, and artist living in Los Angeles. She holds an MFA in experimental animation from California Institute of the Arts. Her work has been shown internationally at film, theatre, and performance festivals, including *Flux Super 8: 8 Emerging Filmmakers and Video Artists*. She was also invited to perform at the TED Global Conference in Oxford, UK, this year.

Links:


To see a video excerpt and stills of *Myth and Infrastructure*, go to this website: [http://www.semihemisphere.com/mandi.html](http://www.semihemisphere.com/mandi.html)

To see a video excerpt and stills of *Dreaming of Lucid Living*, go to this website: [http://www.semihemisphere.com/lucid_living.html](http://www.semihemisphere.com/lucid_living.html)

Glowing Pathfinder Bugs

Squidsoup, 2009

_Glowing Pathfinder Bugs_ is an interactive art installation that uses projection to visualize virtual bugs on a real sandpit. The bugs are aware of their surroundings and respond to the environment in their vicinity. Viewers can pick bugs up, dig holes, and create mounds that the bugs react to. Viewers can even squish the bugs! This highly malleable and tactile physical environment allows us to define and carve out landscapes where the creatures exist in real time. The piece was originally commissioned by [Folly Gallery](http://www.squidsoup.org/about.html) for [Portable Pixel Playground](http://www.squidsoup.org/about.html).

Bio from artist website ([http://www.squidsoup.org/about.html](http://www.squidsoup.org/about.html)):

Squidsoup is a group of collaborators that consists of Anthony Rowe, Gaz Bushell, Chris Bennewith and Liam Birtles. The collaborative’s work combines sound, physical space, and virtual worlds to produce immersive and emotive head spaces. The three artists aim to allow participants to take active control of their experience. They explore the modes and effects of interactivity, looking to make digital experiences where meaningful and creative interaction can occur. Their work has been shown at numerous festivals, seminars, and galleries around the world. They live and work in the UK.
Links:

Artist website: http://www.squidsoup.org/

To see a video of Glowing Pathfinder Bugs, go to this website: http://squidsoup.org/bugs/videos.html
ELEPHANT

Deke Weaver, 2010

(Photo credit: Valerie Oliveiro)

From *The Second Performance from the Unreliable Bestiary* (program blurb from Weaver’s September 27 show):

By 2050 climate change and our exploding population will push half the species on the planet into extinction. The lions and tigers and bears of our ancient stories will be long gone. Central to our myths, embedded in our language, rooted in our imaginations—what will we do when our dreams disappear?

*ELEPHANT* is the second chapter in Weaver’s lifelong project, *The Unreliable Bestiary*: an ark of stories about animals, our relationship to them, and the worlds they inhabit. Inspired by the literary concept of the unreliable narrator and the medieval bestiary, which gave every living thing a spiritual purpose, the project will present an evening-length performance for each letter of the alphabet—the letter representing a particular endangered animal or habitat.

From burial rituals to subtle interpersonal communications to post-traumatic stress, elephant and human societies have remarkable similarities.
Deke Weaver is an award-winning performer, playwright, and media artist. Weaver’s interdisciplinary performances and video installations have been presented internationally. He is currently an assistant professor in the School of Art and Design at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Links:

Artist website: www.dekeweaver.com

To learn more about ELEPHANT, visit the website: http://www.unreliablebestiary.org/elephant.php
Pandemic 1.0

Lance Weiler, in progress

A storytelling project that is impacted in real time by the interactions of those attending the Sundance Film Festival, Pandemic 1.0 is a transmedia experience that spans film, mobile, online, and real-world technology; social gaming, and data visualization. Over the course of the Festival, the story will unfold, enabling viewers/players to step into the shoes of our protagonists. The story experience starts when a mysterious sleep virus begins to affect the adults in a small rural town, whose youth soon find themselves cut off from civilization and fighting for their lives. Will they survive? Can you survive?

Lance Weiler is a critically acclaimed, award-winning writer/director, recognized as a pioneer because of the way he makes and distributes his work. He is a partner in Seize the Media, a social-entertainment company that focuses on transmedia story architecture. His next feature film/transmedia project entitled HiM recently won the Arte France Cinema Award at the 2009 edition of CineMart. In January 2010, HiM attended the Sundance Screenwriters Lab, marking the first time the lab has supported a feature film/transmedia project.

To see a video about this project and the app, visit this website: http://seizethemedia.com/demo/pandemic.MP4