

PIKSEL07 - HERCULES' BLOG

The official Píksel story - a logloady project

Píksel07 has started!

15 november 2007

Giss / horitzo.tv team is streaming - making juicy interviews for remote participation and for the archives. The chat is alive and reactive for interaction with viewers and questions.
Connect to irc.freenode.net server and join #píksel channel: there we are!

The first píksel-dev session started this morning; the Cinelerra group has been discussing about changing repository system format from Subversion to Git (Fast Version Control System), which will be presented later this week.

Marloes, Aymeric and Tom (goto10) held the first part of the CATkit workshop; participants are guided to build and solder a chip that will be programmed in Forth to make chiptune sounds and noise.
The result will be a little stand alone 1bit musical instrument.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

The first section of the exhibition, PíkselBent, opened the doors featuring Casperelectronics (US), Gijs Gieskes (NL) and Audun Eriksen (NO) showing fantastic music instruments created hacking and modifying toys, keyboards, videogames consoles and other objects. It is an anarchist approach to market offerings, a research towards the special, unique manufacture versus the serial industrial product. It is a technically advanced detournement of goods in favour of a rebel attitude that refuses pre-determined rules and usage instructions.
The industrial product becomes natural source material of fanciful experiments.



Photo by xname

<http://giss.tv/>
<http://horitzo.tv/>
<http://píksel.horitzo.tv/>
<http://goto10.org/>
<http://casperelectronics.com/>
<http://gieskes.nl/>
<http://www.bek.no/~Eaudun>

Presentations day one

15 november 2007

During the afternoon Martin Kaltenbrunner & Ross Bencina presented reacTVision, an open source cross-platform computer vision framework whose first well known application is reactable, a new astonishing musical instrument.



Photo by xname

reactTVision was designed for the rapid development of table-based tangible user interfaces as well as for multi-touch finger tracking. The system can be interfaced to puredata, max, macromedia, processing, and to other lower level programming languages. reactTVision is a standalone application which sends OpenSound Control messages via a UDP network socket to any connected client application. It implements the TUIO protocol, which was specially designed for transmitting the state of tangible objects on a table surface. Alternatively it can also send MIDI messages.

Anne-Marie Skriver Hansen presented CUI (Create USB interface) by Dan Overholt. CUI is similar in approach to the Arduino open source hardware, but is capable of doing true USB HID (Human Interface Device) transfers. Anne-Marie will give a presentation of her project "Vacuole Robes" based on CUI later this week.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

Audun Eriksen gave an introduction to Circuit Bending, the creative short-circuiting of low voltage battery-powered electronic audio devices. Reed Gazala, father of this practice, suggested the name 'circuit bending' and was the first to publish his notes around the subject and to share his anti-theories. His manual is a fundamental text for those who are interested in learning the subject.

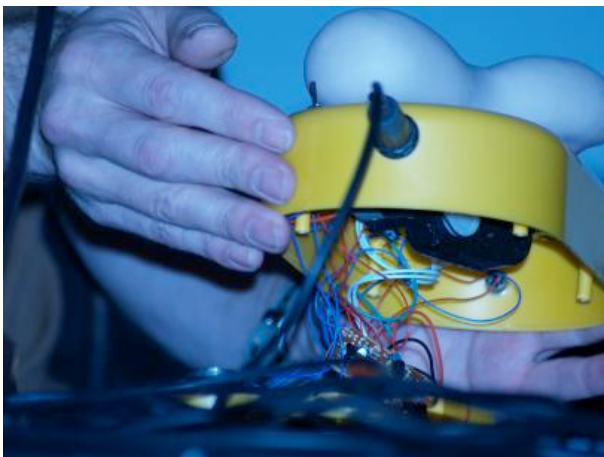


Photo by Carlo Prelz

<http://www.iaa.upf.edu/~Emkalten/>
<http://www.audiomulch.com/~Erossb/>
<http://reactivision.sourceforge.net/>
<http://mtg.upf.edu/reactable/>
<http://tulo.lfsaw.de/>
<http://www.create.ucsb.edu/~Edano/CUI/>
<http://www.create.ucsb.edu/~Edano>
<http://platformart.net/am/>
<http://bek.no/~Eaudun>

<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/CircuitBending/>
<http://www.anti-theory.com/>
<http://www.anti-theory.com/soundart/>

Bending Night

16 oktober 2007

The night featured great performances on the theme of circuit bending and DIY electronic musical instruments.

MOBDOG by Jan Carleklev (SE) was a live concert built around the concept of transformation: nine e-dogs, the latest happy meal mc donalds toy, were modified and controlled by processing through an arduino card. The result was a beautiful music and a strange atmosphere.

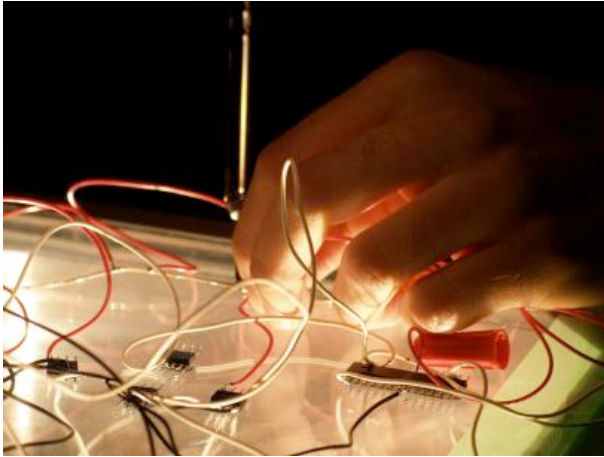


Photo by Carlo Prelz

Loud Objects by Kunal Gupta & Tristan Perich (USA) was a beautiful live audiovisual soldering show: the set was built in front of the public on overhead projector. The preliminary circuit is constructed from scratch, with electronics and soldering irons.

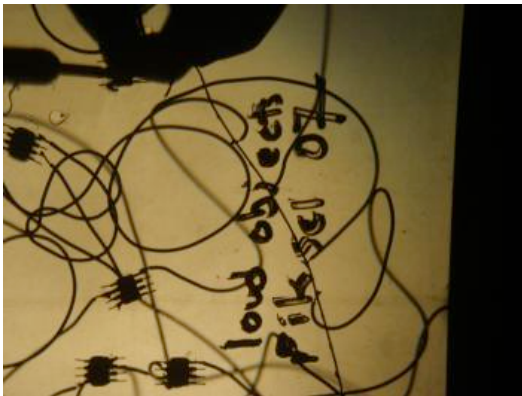


Photo by xname

Gijs Gieskes made a brilliant audiovisual show playing his own instruments and a mechanical simple kaleidoscope. The music was good, happy and danceable, the visuals were charismatic and intriguing.

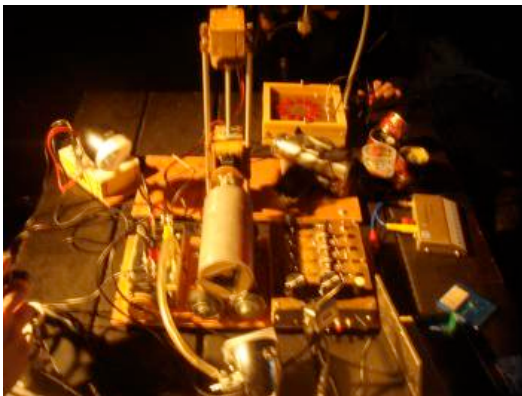


Photo by xname

MIKMO (DK) was a slow, longing electronic music concert from modified toys. The set was visually interesting, especially the transparent balls.



Photo by xname

Casperelectronics made a short set of nice music with his own instruments.

The spanish electronic music band Yes Robot, using circuitbended instruments & gameboy made a great audiovisual set, for the joy of the pikselers dancing and screaming in front of the stage.

<http://www.carleklev.se/>
<http://loudobjects.com/>
<http://gieskes.nl/>
<http://www.mikmo.dk/>
<http://casperelectronics.com/>
<http://yesrobot.net/>

Presentations day two

18 november 2007

This year Piksel is featuring a high level of artistic quality and complexity within the context of Floss and Open hardware. There is still a possibility for coding, sharing and learning together.

During the second day the CATkit workshop participants finished soldering and programming their home-made instrument.

Martin Kaltenbrunner built his own reacting table in the hotel room and he gave a workshop at Teknikerkroen on how to build tangible interfaces with Reactivision. All you need is as transparent table, a wide lens camera, a piece of software and some time...

During the afternoon Milos Rankovic presented his project ASNakedGene, an aesthetic research on hand drawing and images as possible evolutionary digitised seeds based on selected arbitrary sets of 'naked genes'. Variation is generated through direct operation on the arrays of pixel values as opposed to "genetic" representations of them.

Capturing, fashinating and obscure theory and application.

I wonder whether it is possible to synthesize its main concept in a simple frase...

Daniel Turing presented xinf (is not flash), a platform for GUI programming, a single language and API able to target Firefox! JavaScript, Adobe's Flash Player, and the Xinfinity runtime (Linux/GTK, Windows and OSX).



Photo by Carlo Prelz

It is similar to flash but people can work from inkscape; in the todo list a plugin for inkscape to allow direct creation of Xinf games and more. Currently licenced under LGPL, it will be more liberal in the next future, probably BSD.

Ross Bencina's Port Audio is an open source library for creating cross-platform audio software. It is a free, cross platform, audio I/O library ideal for writing simple audio programs in 'C' that will compile and run on many platforms.

It uses the OSC protocol and features binary format for packing messages that are identified by textual paths and can have multiple parameters.

Rob Munro (slick lister) previewed his Time Line OSC sequencer, which is a way on managing data outside of PD to keep patches clean.



Photo by Carlo Preiz

OSC messages are used to control separate audio and video PD patches. individual OSC events are programmed onto timelines and timelines can be sequenced together. Interesting system for compositing using different programs together all controlled by OSC, still in development phase.

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/fine_art/milos/asnakedgene/index.html
<http://asnakedgene.com/wiki/pmwiki.php/Piksel07/HomePage>
<http://daniel Turing.com/>
<http://xinf.org/trac>
<http://www.portaudio.com/>
<http://www.silicontransit.com/timeline/>

Fun House

18 november 2007

VOICE 2.0 by Paul Magee is the hypnotic work welcoming spectators reaching the exhibition Fun House at Gallery 3,14.

Voice 2.0 is a research on phonetics as minimal language units and their combinations' patterns. English texts are analysed to calculate the overall probability of each phonetic being spoken. 44 speakers are compositing seed sentences or array of phonetics; these are performed and arranged by the artificial sound system until it gets bored and generates another sentence. The voice suggests a level of sense signed but not declared nor unambiguous.

WAVES by Daniel Palacios is a beautiful audio-visual plastic expression of the invisible. Space is not void and surroundings are affected by us. More than a mere representation, Waves is a visceral brutal imprint of the relations between material and immaterial.

KNIFE.HAND.CHOP.BOT by Emanuel Andel and Christian Guetzer is a digital version of the test of courage: when a user puts a hand into the Machine the knife starts to hit the space between the fingers. A sensor tells the knife where to chop. Whether the test is about courage or fait it is an opened question: how far do we trust machines nowadays?

The work GROW by Christian Guetzer shows an original integration of natural and machinic, whereas the machinic element is, off-course, affecting nature. A special algorithm changes the position of a plant in a static light environment, determining the direction of growth. The abstract algorithm becomes manifest in the form of the plant. The reflection can be the following: how many algorithms do we normally see in our surroundings without getting the abstract formula behind the shapes?
Machines are just another creation of nature.

AROUGATE by Julien Ottavi and Dominique Leroy is a fascinating representation of chaos in its machinic manifestation. Arugate lays on the contrariety axis of machines in their wider acceptance; machines can be natural or manufactured. Arugate is progressing in the region of non-technology, towards the realm of nature...

The Analog Color Field Comp by Gregory Shakar proposes an essential use of audiovisual devices. A minimal transfer of information is reducing violence of continuous phenomenon of human adaptation: users can infact tune experience in consonance with their physical perceptions.

Other works were MOBISPHERES by N_DREW, who performed live with these audio-visual reacting spheres, BACTERIAL ORCHESTRA and SALTO MORTALE. Fun enough in the House!

<http://www.p000m0000.com/>
<http://www.waves.stopantplay.com/>
<http://www.5voltage.com/>
<http://toys.sonance.net/grow.html>
<http://www.apo33.org/arougate>
<http://www.moodvector.com/acfc/>
<http://organicode.net/>
<http://www.bacterialorchestra.com/>
<http://www.subtours.com/>

Better Live

18 november 2007

Claude Heiland-Allen opened Friday nights' show with his d0 -> d1 -> d2 -> d3 -> d4 audio-visual live-set: sounding as a mad musical box, music is piloting an abstract geometric object on the screen. Normal references are scrambled and space is reconstructed from a minimal sign appearing in the void. Long live techno. Robots are back!

Laser Trail Tracker by Kentaro Fukuchi is a development of the visual performance he exhibited in Piksel04. This new derivative work features sound-laser interaction: a sequencer is activated by the performers's movements. What will be the next step of this research?

Malte Steiner, using the 3D game engine Ogre, performs music and visual synthesis synced in realtime from one laptop. It is the evolution of Notstandskomitee, his (post) industrial music project. Creatures of evens and levels, triangles and pseudo-cathedrals of no-religion are squirming on the screen. Abstract shapes and no-shapes are defining a sub-level of signification in this meta-space of noise.

A tie is a noose is a bizarre audiovisual duel between the circuitbenders Audun Eriksen and Arnfinn Killingtveit. The atmosphere is oneiric; animated drawings from television series are passed through a pure data patch: the tactile texture objectifies the distance between childhood and present time, introducing a sense of extraneousness. The artists, astride small plastic horses, start fighting against each other. Music keeps up tension, echoing neighs. What is manoeuvring this grotesque contest?

<http://megaii.net/fukuchi/index.en.html>
<http://www.block4.com/index.php?id=10>
<http://www.auduneriksen.com/>

Achilles' heel of FLOSS

18 november 2007

Video editing is Achilles' heel of Floss environments.

Lot has been done through years, and it is now quite easy to approach video editing from different sides, within the Floss community.

One way is, off course, 'dividi et impera': instead of using gigantic problematic softwares like for example Cinerella, it is possible to use small handy applications to perform one specific step at a time. This is a very efficient way of developing small projects and experimental videos, animations and little clips of any kind. A list of available applications can be found in the link below.

Piksel, always very sensitive to video issues, organized this year a number of initiatives in that direction.

An example is Open Video Workshop by Richard Spindler; the intent was to go through a complete movie making work flow, using Open Movie Editor (a tool that provides basic movie making capabilities), dvgrab, dvdstyler, ffmpeg, etc.

Federico Bonelli and August Black performed a project similar in approach and target: "Kaos - Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead". The film, shouted and edited in few days during the festival, was premiered on Saturday night at USF Sardinien.



Photo by kaos crew

The short, inspired by Tom Stoppard's play, is a nice experiment on languages and the poetics of absurd. Characters are running around the screen, they look unsure, not knowing what to do, divided by order and disorder. They throw a coin, which gives always the same result: solutions are probably there, but you need to visualise them, and lots of what is happening is not relevant nor related to the main plot... But what is the main plot of our fictitious life styles? The authors used a second hand video-camera and free tools only... Success!

If Floss film production is still a pioneering process, real-time video, procedural video scripting and other delicious experimental practices can find a wider set of possibilities and applications within a Unix/Linux environment.

Some of these tools were presented on Saturday afternoon at Teknikerkroen. Lluís Gomez y Bigorda and Yves Degoyon introduced PDVJtools, a group of externals to facilitate visual work in puredata. The blobs function, by example, keys anything that moves and has a shape bigger than the defined numbers... Fresh code in full development!

Robert Atwood, who explored the use of free software for creating numerical feedback loops at multiple levels, gave a short demonstration of Jackbytes, his own applications for sound and visuals communicating via JACK and jackbytes. His presentation is available online.

Emanuel Andel introduced Tagr.tv, a dedicated video blog platform documenting in real-time all kinds of digital and media arts events. The idea was born during last piksel; collaboration with thenextlayer, a similar project by Armin Medosh, is active. Participation is open! Tagr.tv aims to abandon youtube and feature its own media system...

Christian Thater explained the advantages of GIT (Distributed Revision Control), a version control system designed to handle very large projects, most notably the Linux kernel. This distributed system is safer because only the owner needs writing permissions; this creates less conflicts and no discussions about who is allowed to commit because none has privileges. This system is fast and includes powerful tools for visualising and navigating a non-linear development history. It was created once upon a time by Linus Torvalds.

<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/OpenVideoLinks>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/OpenVideoEditing>
<http://propirate.net/oracle/>
<http://openmovieeditor.sourceforge.net/>
http://www.cinemasoluble.net/?page_id=94
<http://artefacte.org/pd/>
<https://devel.goto10.org/>
<http://www.piksel.no/107/www.jackbytes.net/piksel07.pdf>
<http://tagr.tv/>
<http://thenextlayer.org/>
<http://git.or.cz/>

XXXXX Seminar

Atmosphere at XXXXX was cheerful and vibrating, reminding collaborative hackmeetings but in a better equipment garment. The twelve hours life coding event, inspired by Plenum (collaboration with KOP, 2006), was divided in three sessions: Open Hardware, with Jessica Rylan and Ludic Society; Interface, with Yunchul Kim, Roman Kirchner, Olaf Val and Otto Roessler's incredible lecture, and Code, conducted by Tatiana Bazzichelli, Paolo Cirio and Stewart Home.

Noise/sound artist Jessica Rylan held a workshop on circuit boards to elaborate DIY audio representations of chaos.

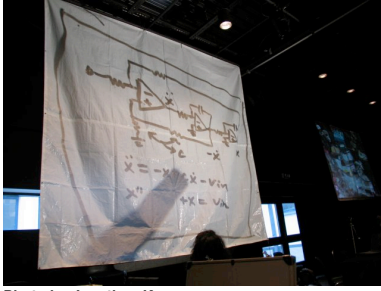


Photo by Jonathan Kemp

Ludic Society, a group attempting to create an artistic research discipline that studies the phenomenology of the act of playing in contemporary societies, presented blitz, a flashed Nintendo connected to a self etched electronic Littletree. This machine becomes a War driving access-scan tool to define play clouds and a circuit board to read RFID tags found in the area.

If culture industry produces players and consumers ready to accept fixed ideological conditions and rules, Ludic Society develops typologies of conversion and transformation, provoking and promoting a new form of gaming as a research field.

Yunchul Kim, Roman Kirchner, Olaf Val attempt to shift the world interface to include magic. Potential side effects include volcanic eruptions, according to local EM presence.



Photo by Jonathan Kemp

German biochemist Otto Roessler's digression around Chaos was as simple as complex, touching and abstract, theoretic and psychedelic in its original acceptance, which indicates something showing the essence and soul of things. You think you are understanding, but are you? Science is in danger because the essence of science is the lack of knowledge, not knowledge itself. There is no progress on the level of mathematics from Anaxagora to our times. Chaos is trivial and closed together with intuition. Benevolentia is the foundation of the "smile theory" which aims to define humanity (just in case...): animals are autistic, smile blind: they cannot show any benevolentia... That would be a categorisation of what is human, and what it's not. It is commonly accepted that animals do not have humanity, nor benevolentia. Though hackers are quite autistic, and some might have seen animals smiling, talking and making other delicate practices. So are animals human? Are humans animals? Are hackers persons? It is Chaos! Better not talk about malevolentia, for a better definition of the cycle, the omega point. Life will have life.



Photo by Jonathan Kemp

Everything is language; pornography as well and, especially in this accelerated society, it can be coded and recoded exploring different strategies and devices.

The working group was examining new fetishes and possibilities of overturn and subversion of the imaginary.

Tatiana Bazzichelli, Paolo Cirio and Stewart Home decided to analyse myspace-hacking possibilities. Nowadays it is not easy to inject a virus into myspace, as it was in early times. But what is hacking? Isn't it a break, the introduction of crammed full, redundant fake information?

The group decided to play with a fake identity, a trees-fucking girl who created a network based on non-existence. Is this effective? Identity playing, as Tatiana tried to remind us, is limited. If a virus can be a cultural virus, and sex with trees is no-sense worm breaking into public domain, yet a platform like myspace is off-course taking into account the proliferation of this fake identities practice, and probably it is ready to make profit out of it. What giants like myspace, facebook and google are marketing are our preferences, trends, fantasies, choices. When the database (of the variety and variations of humanity) will be filled, people will be asked not to make decisions anymore, because their profiles will be automatically making selections for them: fill in the form, and we will tell you what music you are supposed to listen to, what you would like to eat, who are your best friends, where you should really go on holidays, and, ofcourse, what to buy, how to dress, which books might interest you... Fake identities are an expression of our cultural shape, as much as real identities. As well, the observer is not ingenuous or naive. Google, by example, is able to recognise a user even if this person is not logged to any gmail and connects from a different IP and Mac-address. Everyone tends to query the oracle with his normal everyday struggles; everyone will search according to his interests, field of work, language. Everyone will probably often open his own website and a range of usual places. Our movements are pre-mapped. Murderer goes back to the place of crime!

As Paolo suggested, the best virus is an efficient alternative: social network needs a new open source peer-to-peer not centralized platform.

"Keep your hands off my settings... I don't want to be awake"

Philip K. Dick (1968), Do androids dream of electric sheeps?

- <http://1010.co.uk/index.html>
- <http://1010.co.uk/plenum.html>
- <http://residence.aec.at/kop/>
- <http://www.irfp.net/>
- <http://www.ludic-society.net/>
- <http://www.ludic-society.net/blitz/>
- <http://engramm.net/>
- <http://www.romankirschner.net/>
- <http://www.olafval.de/>
- <http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/Chemie/Chemie/PC/Prof/roessler.html>
- <http://bekstation.bek.no/piksel/piksel07/roessler.pdf>
- <http://www.tatianabazzichelli.online.de/>
- <http://www.paolocirio.net/>
- <http://www.stewarthomesociety.org/>
- <http://myspace.com/roxyporn>

Goodbye Noise Stars

Last day at Pikel in Bergen...



Photo by Bek

In the morning two workshops were open to public at Teknikerkroen: TOB by Jo frgmt Grys and Seamus O'Donnell and Arduino + PureData by Marcos Yarza and Carlos Lopez.

TOB - Transmitting Object Behaviors, is an experimental home-made radio & noise installation. The workshop focused on the construction of a musical device containing an oscillator (Special Noise Unit), a mini-fm-transmitter and a very simple digital theremin. The Transmitters are fed with sound material coming from DIY complex chaotic oscillators as well as from available radioprograms on air.

Technology is going out of control!

The arduino/pd VJ workshop aimed at creating ad-hoc physical interfaces to manipulate videos in real time using PD.

During the afternoon at USF the streaming crew presented GISS, Global Independent Streaming Support, a free software based internet broadcast network devoted to free media. Giss is a platform, based on icecast and ogg, supporting an everincreasing global network of streamers. One problem to be solved is anonymisation: icecast localises the streamers' ip, which can be inconvenient in some political situations. Lluis Gomez y Bigorda and Yves Degoyon recently developed T.S.S, Theora Streaming Studio, a long awaited GUI for ffmpeg2theora which allows double target encoding from the same source. Initially developed for horizo.tv, and used during a workshop in Palestina (Sakabuntu live CD), it is a usefull application for streaming video in two different qualities on two mountpoints, supporting audiences with different bandwidth. Applause!

Dyne.org Foundation, represented by MrGoil, featured BeTV, a media-box for bi-directional streaming of live and recorded contents. Still in early phase of development.

David Cuartielles's speech, named HIGH is FIVE, was meant to discuss strategies for sustainable open s/h projects, starting from his experience within the Arduino group. Arduino can now count two years development; at the beginning the project was self founded, now they sold lots of boards and they are able to finance people who cannot afford their own boards, for example in Mexico.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

The group is structured in two levels: the core group, two people, and the development group, thirteen people. David suggested the following main lines of sustainability: teaching; creating a half commercial system that gets money from companies releasing open source code; starting a foundation to access public money and fundings. Yet funds are an unstable source: you can easily run out of money!

Zosen and elpueblodechina made a quick overview on their manufactured toys and wearable electronic fancy accessories: collar and bracelet with integrated radio transmitter, a pink radio bag, beautiful puppets, a terrorist toy for crystal transmission, and masks with noise units.

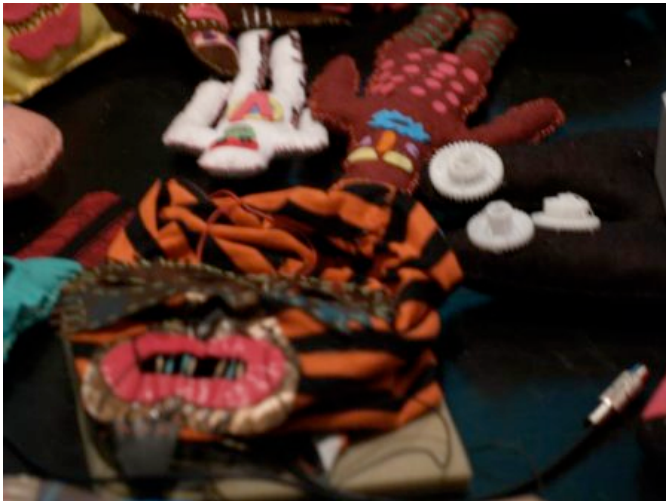


Photo by Carlo Prelz

Pueblo quoted the French sociologist and philosopher Henry Lefebvre and his criticism of everyday life; objects have a cycle of life that is programmed, they are built to break... DiyNoiseToys is a research on different ways to adapt circuits to the body, and not the body to the circuits.

Yves Degoyon presented /etc/groups (A Network Graphical Browser), a web application (a java applet using graphML files or a JDBC/SQL connection) for databasing big sets of data, mainly aimed at visualising groups and organisations and the relations between them (social movements).



Photo by Carlo Prelz

The very last presentation of this year was FLOSS+Art/people.makeart, by Aymeric Mansoux and Gisle Froyland. people.makeart is a repository of articles and lecture materials focused on the relationship between FLOSS and digital arts. The FLOSS+Art book is a collaboration between Bek, goto10 and the Digital Research Unit of the University of Huddersfield. The book, scheduled for spring 2008, will be print using OpenMute's POD publishing service.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

Last night's performances were simply great; SheepSint by Tom Schouten, Marloes De Valk and Aymeric Mansoux was an intensive 1-bit noise live improvisation using a home grown cheap synth build with PIC chips! The sound suggested me the image of a slaughtered shrieking animal approaching its electronic reincarnation.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

Noisehead was a strong, dense and concentrated performative action by elpueblodechina and Zosen. Pueblo activates the noisemask she is wearing with a light source.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

Zosen is drawing and writing over a pd projected text. Tension was high, electricity became visible: the sound thundered like an incredible, supernatural phenomenon!

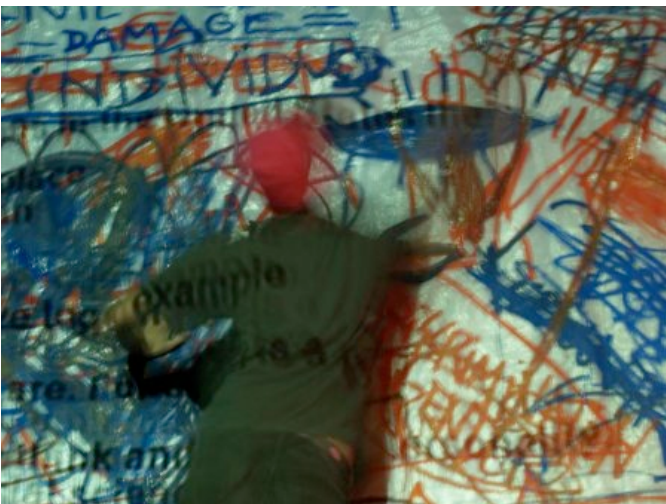


Photo by Carlo Prelz

VuNhatTan, Marhaug & FrOysland's audiovisual concert consisted of very good music accompanied by abstract unstable images of analogue and tactile appearance. A refined and erudite show.



Photo by Carlo Prelz

Last but not least, the Píksel Noise Allstars improvised a/v set was a liberating interaction between various artists, a generative connection for future collaborations. Away from keyboards, noisers can also sing!

<http://tob.de.vu/>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/TOB>
<http://ardpdvj.wordpress.com/>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/ArduinoPureDataVJ>
<http://giss.tv/>
<http://gollum.artefacte.org/tss/>
<http://dyne.org/>
<http://flux.bek.no/piksel/pwiki/BeTV>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/CvDavidC>
<http://flux.bek.no/piksel/pwiki/CvZosen>
<http://elpueblodechina.org/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henri_Lefebvre
<http://ljudmila.org/~pueblo/diynoisetoys.html>
<http://ydegoyon.free.fr/>
<http://etc-groups.sf.net/>
<http://people.makeart.goto10.org/>
<http://bek.no/>
<http://goto10.org/>
<http://www.hud.ac.uk/>
<http://www.openmute.org/>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/SheepSint>
<http://ljudmila.org/~pueblo/noisehead.html>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/CvTan>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/CvLasse>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/CvGisle>
<http://www.piksel.no/pwiki/PikselNoiseAllstars>

This text was written by Eleonora Oreggia for Píksel07 on <http://piksel.no> website.
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More pictures can be found here:
<http://bekstation.bek.no/photo/>
Published on <http://xname.cc>

