ISEA 2011
ISTANBUL

**17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
ISEA2011 Istanbul**

UN CONTAIN ABLE

SENIOR EDITOR & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Lanfranco Aceti

EDITOR & CURATOR Özden Şahin

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Andrea Ackerman

17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
ISEA2011 Istanbul
14–21 September 2011
Istanbul, Turkey

UN-CONTAIN-ABLE

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Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul: Some Thoughts After The Fact

When talking about ISEA2011 Istanbul one of the things I believe will remain as a legacy of the symposium is its magnitude. ISEA2011 was the most attended to date with almost 1500 attendees, the last count we had was of 1489, and it had over 100 artists – the ones we could account for - who participated and engaged with the city in multiple ways, authorized and non.

Overall ISEA2011 responded to the idea that we crafted for the event: a sprawling series of art events, exhibitions, initiatives, encounters, talks and performances that would reflect the sprawling uncontainable nature of the city of Istanbul. It was also about the 'uncontainable' nature of contemporary digital media which cross over physical borders and interfere with the local cultural order. These interferences may at times have generated conflicting relationships but in doing so also spurred development and innovative approaches.

ISEA2011 Istanbul proved how the lines and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid. Concepts of identity, cultural identifiers, nation state and belonging as well as place and time are challenged in both real and virtual contexts.

As Artistic Director for this exhibition – together with Özden Şahin, the Program Director – I wanted to showcase the complexity of contemporary social interactions and the role that technology is playing in redefining contemporary aesthetics.

The exhibition Uncontainable was part of the official Parallel Program of the Istanbul Biennial, which allowed participating artists and curators to provide diverse perspectives on the contemporary developments within fine arts aesthetics.

For this reason I am very grateful to all of the artists and delegates that supported ISEA2011 Istanbul through what at times was a difficult process in a difficult economic climate. Turkey does not have public funding for the arts – as for example in European countries – and ISEA2011 Istanbul was made possible through a long string of private sponsorships, institutional support and donors that we solicited.

In the end the variety of the venues and programs provided a colorful framework and allowed artists to engage not only with one another and the public but also with the Istanbul Biennial, with the art market held during two wonderful boat journeys across the Bosporus and with the city of Istanbul itself.

For the first time in the history of ISEA an electronic art exhibition program was officially part of the parallel program of an international biennial. The exhibition with its artists was publicized in the press package of the 12th Istanbul Biennial together with initiatives and events dotted across the city and internationally.

Therefore the art program was conceived as an artistic itinerary across the city that placed art events in proximity to the major touristic attractions of the city, creating an electronic/new media/digital layering that would interact with the socio-political history of the city. The art program did not limit itself to the ISEA conference period – September 14 to 21, 2011 – but continued with its events until November 2011.

The catalog becomes a way to place an order to all of the events and activities, creating a record of the artists participating and the invited curators, to whom I am extremely grateful for their contributions. It is a snapshot of the city and of the event itself, which has signed, we hope, a milestone in the history of the ISEA Foundation.

Lanfranco Aceti
Artistic Director and Conference Chair
ISEA2011 Istanbul

Istanbul, May 5, 2012

ROY ASCOTT, ELİF AYİTER, MAX MOSWITZER, SELAVY OH

LPDT2 alludes Roland Barthes's book 'Le Plaisir du Texte', a famous discourse on authorship, semantic layering, and the creative role of the reader as the writer of the text.

Roy Ascott is an artist and theorist whose research is invested in cybernetics, technoetics, telematics, and syncretism. He is the founder and director of the Planetary Collegium, and DeTao Master of Technoetic Arts at DTMA Shanghai. His exhibitions range from the Venice Biennale, Ars Electronica and the Shanghai Biennale. His theoretical work is widely published, translated and referenced.

Elif Ayiter is the chief editor of the academic journal Metaverse Creativity with Intellect publishers and is active as a virtual builder and fashion designer both in Second Life and the OpenSim.

Max Moswitzer is a multiple Ars Electronica award recipient, who in recent years has collaborated extensively with Chris Marker for whom he also built *Ouvroir*, a virtual three dimensional museum in Second Life and the New Genres Grid.
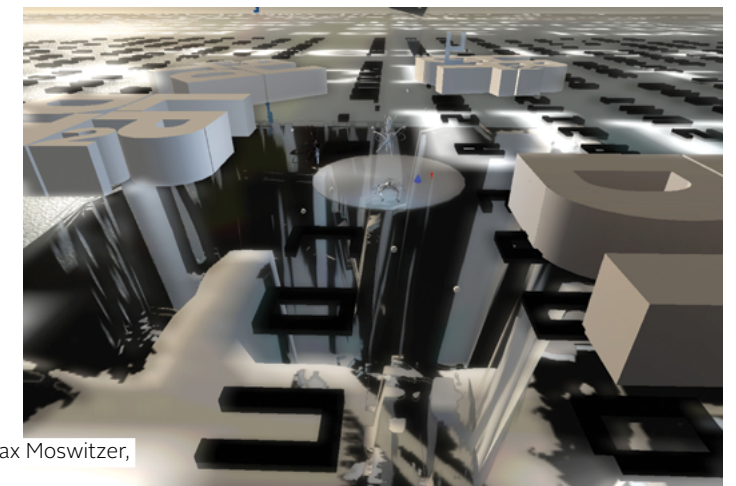
Selavy Oh has been created as an avatar in the virtual world of Second Life in February 2007. Since then, she showed her work in various exhibition both inside the virtual world and in mixed-reality shows.

LPDT2 is the Second Life incarnation of Roy Ascott's new media art work *La Plissure du Texte* ('The Pleating of the Text'), created in 1983. *LPDT2* does not attain its textual input from discrete individuals but from generative text which is being harvested from the online Gutenberg Project. Thus the project brings together the voices of many authors and epochs, pleated into a poetic waterfall of distributed authorship that is mapped both onto a three dimensional metaverse architecture as well as its (robotic avatar) inhabitants.

LPDT2, 2011, Roy Ascott, Elif Ayiter, Max Moswitzer, Selavy Oh. "The Lettercube" and the LPDT2 avatars.

LPDT2, 2011, Roy Ascott, Elif Ayiter, Max Moswitzer, Selavy Oh. "The whisper plateau".

ROY ASCOTT, ELİF AYİTER, MAX MOSWITZER, SELAVY OH

LPDT2, 2011, Roy Ascott, Elif Ayiter, Max Moswitzer, Selavy Oh. Installation photo from Kasa Galeri exhibition. (Photographic documentation by Elif Ayiter.)