ISEA 2011 ISTANBUL

17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
ISEA2011 Istanbul

UN CONTAIN ABLE

SENIOR EDITOR & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Lanfranco Aceti

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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and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid.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

ROMAN VEROSTKO

Screen images for "Geometries of the Sublime" transform the poetry of algorithmic pen & ink drawings into a poetry of architectural light.

Roman Verostko, a founding member of the algorists, is best known for his richly colored algorithmic pen and brush drawings. Primarily a painter in his pre-algorist work, he also created electronically synchronized audio-visual programs in the 1960s. In the 1970s he followed a course in *Fortran* at the Control Data Institute and exhibited his first fully algorist work, *The Magic Hand of Chance,* in 1982. His generative software controls 14 pen plotter stalls achieving exquisite penmanship and expressive brush strokes guiding both ink pens and brushes with plotters. His recent show at the DAM in Berlin, "Algorithmic Poetry", celebrates nature via visual forms generated with brushes and ink pens driven with his algorithms.

Distinctions. 2009 SIGGRAPH Distinguished Artist Award for Lifetime Achievement; Artec '95, Recommendatory Prize, Nagoya, Japan; Golden Plotter Award, Germany, 1994; Professor Emeritus, MCAD, 1994; *Prix Ars Electronica,* Honorable Mention, 1993; Director, ISEA 1993; Bush Fellow, Center for Advanced Visual Studies, MIT, 1970; Outstanding Educators of America, 1971, 1974.

Green Cloud for a Three Story Drawing Machine, 2011, Roman Verostko, algorithmic pen & ink drawing on paper, 8 hour video document of the line by line drawing process for a 3 story wall.
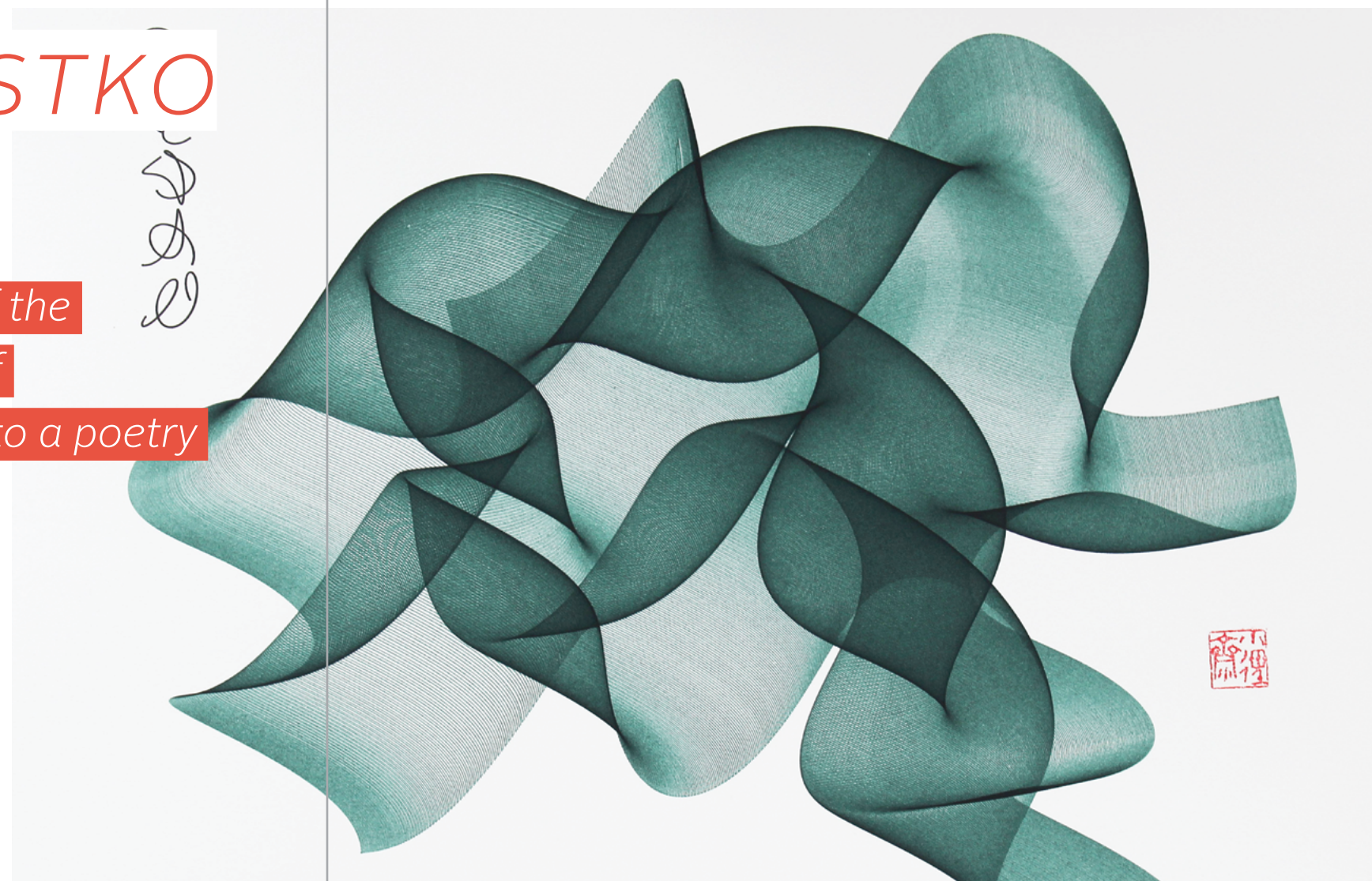
Algorithmic Poetry, Autumn Reverie, , 2010, Roman Verostko. Algorithmic pen & ink drawing on paper. Detail for light show projection in "Geometries of the Sublime," Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 2011.

ROMAN VEROSTKO

Green Cloud for a Three Story Drawing Machine, 2011, Roman Verostko. Media Facade of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb. (Photographic documentation by Tomislav Šmider.)