

ISEA2011
Istanbul

17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
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UN CONTAIN ABLE

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EDITOR & CURATOR Özden Şahin

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Andrea Ackerman

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ISEA2011 Istanbul

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ISTANBUL

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and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid.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



NILS VÖLKER

One Hundred and Eight is a wall-mounted installation mainly made out of garbage bags and cooling fans. The bags are selectively inflated and deflated in controlled rhythms, creating wavelike animations across the wall.

Nils Völker is an artist and communication designer living and working in Berlin. He creates artworks with the means of physical computing somewhere at the intersection of technology and art. Often his work consists out of large amounts of everyday objects combined and rearranged in an unusual way.

One Hundred and Eight, which was exhibited in ISEA2011 Uncontainable, was also the starting point for a series of installations based on inflating and deflating of cushions made from different materials. The largest one was made from 252 large silver bags for the exhibition *Captured – a Homage to Light and Air* followed by further site specific installations like *Thirty Six* for Art Lab Gnesta, *Forty Eight* for the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, *Seventy Five* for Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts in Taipei and *Eighty Eight* commissioned by the Gewerbemuseum Winterthur, Switzerland. Nils Völker's most recent work is *64 CCFL*, a light installation that is mainly made from so called cold cathode fluorescent lights which normally are used as backlights for computer screens. Currently he's working on the first large scale work that will be placed permanently outdoors as part of a sculpture park in Hangzhou, China.

One Hundred and Eight,
Summer/Autumn 2010,
Nils Völker, cooling fans,
plastic bags, MDF, custom
electronics, 240 x 180 cm.



One Hundred and Eight (detail).

NILS VÖLKER



One Hundred and Eight, Summer/Autumn
2010, Nils Völker, cooling fans, plastic bags, MDF,
custom electronics, 240 x 180 cm. (Photographic
documentation by Korhan Karaoysal.)

