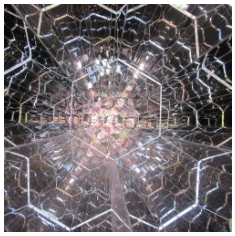
<!DOCTYPE OpenDocument Text "Size 39KB//Total Editing Time: 07:01:28//EN"
"http://www.adashboard.org/colapsekode" "http://www.objscrs.org">
<meta readers-equiv="Summer 2011, Belo Horizonte Brasil, Residency
Marginalia+Lab, FLOSS, Research, Notation, Performance, Collaborative,
Transdisciplinary" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8"/>

<article>
<head>
<title>
!Co LAPse KoDe @ Marginalia+Lab
From the North Sea to the Atlantic, from the theatre to an office, from a performance to an exhibition
</title>



<writing>
An Mertens for !Co LAPse KoDe
</writing>
</head>

<body>
<origin>[1]
There is a promising land for free software, for improvisation and for the low-tech-creativity known as gambiarra. It is also promoted as the land of successful transculturation and multiculturality. Some call it the land of the future. We celebrate when we get the news that this land will offer the context for the CoLAPseKode-project during a period of two months. No matter what will happen to us, we know it will be a great learning experience.
</origin>

<aim>
<general>
!Co LAPse KoDe is a research on how the use of a free motion tracking software tool[2] radically changes a performance practice. The open nature of the tool invites us to execute (x), read (r) and write (w). This hands-on-technology approach induces different practices of performance and notation, protocols, experiences and relationships. We use the software as a negotiation platform in a transdisciplinary collaborative creation process with dancers, musicians, programmers, storytellers. The software is developed in close collaboration with the performers, which makes the programmers sometimes turn into choreographers and improvisers. The performers get contaminated by parameter thinking and terminology.
!Co LAPse KoDe will reach a final stage end of January 2012 with a packaged software, downloadable on a Debian platform. The software will come with a manual based on a particular practise and a methodology.

1 Objscrs, the software we work with generates the scores we create as xml-documents. During our stay in Marginalia, we looked closely into their structure and the way tags provide a grammar for them. Thinking about this specific notation system and the way narratives are organised led to following testimony: view-source:http://www.adashboard.org/coLAPseKoDe_games/marginalia/almost_forked.html

2 The software is called objscrs (Object Scores), initated by Simon Yuill and downloadable here: http://www.objscrs.org

We will also provide the scores we created. They will be published under a free license allowing people to execute, change and redistribute them.
Picture
</general>

<specific>
Since January 2010 we work with regular intervals in a studio space offered to us by our next door neighbours of De Pianofabriek Kunstenwerkplaats[3]. The set-up we have there is in the high-tech environment of the theatre black box. The main reason for this is that the software requires a stable light situation. It fits the experiment, but it also limits us in finding ways to think out-of-the-box. We were curious to see how an experiment in another environment would influence us and bring us perhaps closer to the way we originally dreamt of using the software: as a low-tech set-up in public space connected to existing surveillance cameras. We wanted to be submerged in the gambiarra culture of Brasil in dance, music, storytelling and programming. We wanted to open up our residency to local artists during a series of workshops and enlarge the community of developers/users around *objscrs*.
</specific>
</aim>

<report>
<the_ocean>
Choreographer Dorothé Depeauw was the full time artist in Marginalia during the 2 month residency. Four other members of the collective organised themselves for shorter periods around specific aspects of the research.
The first period with programmer Pierre Marchand concentrated on the software, the code, the installation and included a workshop to open up the software for local developers and users. Part of the residency we would work in parallel with the Brussels team. We opened up the software with the following: we created a git-repository, a developers and users mailing list and provided the necessary access. By doing so, the developers could and still can easily work synchronously and commit the changes they make via the repository.
Picture
Even if an ocean can bridge activities on a desktop computer using the ssh protocol enabling Pierre and Simon to work remotely on the project computer, the distance is felt in terms of communication and time zones. We experienced the first steps of authentic professional dispersed co-presence and were impressed by it. We also noticed how it slows down the process a lot. And face it, the local contexts have an influence on global communication. Compared to the way things are organised in

3 http://www.pianofabriek.be/spip.php?moturl=1&lang=en

Brussels, Brasil has a culture of Very Last Minute organisation. We started using words like *floating*, *misty, zen* and practised the art of continuously adjusting aims, ways of working and contexts.

Picture

<fact>[4]
For a while I watch the machine in action, manipulated by a human who is sitting at a desk thousands of miles away, at the other side of the ocean. I just touched the machine and ruined his update command. I take a break, use the bathroom. I continue watching, this time I look at the ants crossing the floor of the bathroom of Marginalia. Undisturbed they march along. When they get-together an obstacle, they create a side path. I realise I should do the same. While Pierre is killing one bug after the other, I am taking them as examples. I will not focus on machines nor software anymore, but I'll focus again on my search for beauty. I google for more BH graffiti artists. I remember the link Ludi sent us before we left, a mail with the topic 'brazz graffs'. The ideas of François Chastanet fill me with joy.
</fact>
</the_ocean>

<house-hunting>
Picture Dorothé moves from space to space looking for the best place to organise the workshop and the final presentation. Height and light are major factors in order to have a large enough stage setting for a multitude of players and a stable tracking system. The final presentation will be in Espanca! For the set-up of a workshop with dancers and storytellers we choose the theatre-in-construction Suspensa just outside Belo Horizonte. When storyteller An Mertens and choreographer Lot Jansen have arrived, we drive to the gorgeous village of Vale do Sol. The soil is red, the air is pure, the sun is bright and we're in a dark room inside.
Picture When the camera is finally up in the air, we notice the image it sends is wavy, beautiful but useless. We report the bug and start looking for the answer by testing all possible parameters that could cause it. With a multimeter we discover the tension of the fridge plug is more stable than the tension of the camera plug and decide to sacrifice the fridge. But the solution lasts less than five minutes. We learn about non earthed electricity and the electricity network outside of the city.
Picture While digesting the conclusion we will have to move back to the office of Marginalia, we focus on the work of Suspensa's air choreographies using a rope attached to the ceiling. We enjoy the fact

4view-source:http://www.adashboard.org/coLAPseKoDe_games/marginalia/almost_forked.html

they work with the same pyramidal architecture as we do. A point of view that conditions the movements.
Picture
</house-hunting>

<the_weather>
Once back in the Marginalia office we realize the powerful source of the winter sun of Belo Horizonte. From 10 to 18h it provides us with the perfect stable light the software needs! This luxury would allow us to go one step further into our ideal set-up, to start using the public space and connect the software to existing surveillance cameras in the street.
Picture

<transcription>[5]
<fragment>
L: And I think to have spent one whole day on trying out the settings of the tracking, I think it is useful also for the users (performer, musician, storyteller...) to understand it ... In the beginning it is frustrating because it takes really a long time to search, to understand but now it is useful. It's not lost of time, maybe frustration time at that moment but now it does really value things to have the knowledge of how it works and how you can adapt.
A: Can you describe a bit how you spend that day? What did you do exactly?
L: We tried to put all kind of numbers
D: First we put the camera up in the patio of Marginalia Lab. In this patio there is also a post office, and different shops and we filmed this entrance. It was on 6m of distance.
A: That means that you adapt the tracking to the light?
L: Yeah. To the outside light.
D: The sun light! First we used the people that where passing by accident, they had to be in the shops so we used them to see if they had tracking or not and than we tried to have a stable tracking while following them.
M: And then you said to them, can you please stand back in this position, can you go ..
L: No
ALDM: Hahahahahaha
D: When we tried to do this than we
L: did it ourselves. And we adapted it in the settings. We just tried every combination, and we wrote it down.
</fragment>
`</transcription>`
</the_weather>

5 Recorded discussion in Brussels as an afterthought on the residency: http://vimeo.com/31421110

<get-togethers>
<get-together item="1">
<invitation>
*Time: 16th till 18th June, 19h to 22h
*Place: Marginalia+Lab
*Desirable Knowledge: interest or knowledge on programming
*Material: your computer (with Linux OS), a webcam (recommended) and other material of your choice, like image, video,.. that you would like to use with Objscrs
Workshop - motion tracking traces
The workshop will unfold three main aspects of motion tracking as found in the OBJSCRS program.
\Input
Motion tracking is based on the analysis
of differences between images. We'll offer the attendees to explore how these differences are built in OBJSCRS, then trace new paths from the video input to the actual motion tracker.
\Output
Often kept as an internal object, the resulting data structure of the tracking process will constitute the subject of the second part of the workshop. We'll build visualizations out of this data structure, whether on a screen or in any possible form.
\Events
At this point, we'll play with the specific way the program deals with event triggering by means of scores. OBJSCRS offers a large palette of objects, though extendible, that can react to motion tracking. These objects range from video overlay to arithmetic operations. We'll dedicate this last part of the workshop at writing new scores, and possibly new objects, which will be played by the program in interaction with attendees.
\Coordinator : Pierre Marchand - artist and software developer.
</invitation>

<generated_knowledge>
http://www.adashboard.org/colapsekode/?p=459
Pictures: one, two, three, four
</generated_knowledge>
</get-together item="1">

<get-together item="2">
<invitation>
*Time: 12th till 15th July, 19h to 22h30
*Place: Teatro Espanca! - Rua Aaroã Reis, 542 -Centro – Belo Horizonte, Brasil

*Target Audience: Artist and professional in performing arts
*Material: For musicians with acoustic instruments, bring your microphone if you have them. If you work with PureData, bring your computer.
Workshop - After motion tracking traces
The collective !Co LAPse KoDe holds its second workshop, this time focusing on improvisation, collective creation and behaviour in an environment coded by the motion tracking software OBJSCRS, possibly extended by Pure Data. They will present and work with various aspects of the software, which will be used as a tool for improvisation, organization, negotiation and mutual influence between performers, musicians, dancers and software.
*Coordinators: Dorothé Depeauw – choreographer / Matthias Koole – musician / Lot Jansen: choreographer and visual artist
</invitation>

<generated_knowledge>
This get-together was an exchange between dance performers, a circus artist, a musician, a visual artist and the software objscrs. After presenting the general possibilities of the motion tracking software and trying out some scores, each of the participants pointed out a personal fantasy to follow.
Reality and superimposed reality were explored using the grabbing object (record the scene) and animation object (playback the recording as an overlay on live image) and the element of speed and delay in movement, image and sound.
Through improvisation the participants explored the screen, the stage and the use of objects. The dialogue between the different disciplines was another important element.
Pictures: one, two, three
</generated_knowledge>
</get-together item="2">

<get-together item="3">
<invitation>
http://marginalialab.com/en/events/mostra-marginalialab-2
</invitation>

<specific_aim>
Previous get-togethers were very specific and meant for a particular public with a precise background. The closing event of the Marginalia residency was more open, no foreknowledge was required. One participant of the previous meeting, Thembi Rosa, joined us for this adventure.
In previous set-ups we have already been experimenting with

ways to create the best possible environment for this type of short public get-together. The idea is that everyone present feels invited to play and experiment in the fairly new universe we propose. By recording their experiences we collect their generated knowledge, which gratefully we take with us to the next gathering. Therefore we look into popularly known protocols of public events that are less intimidating than the theatre protocol of the professionally trained performers on a stage and thus inviting an audience to climb up the stage.
</specific_aim>

<generated_knowledge>

Pictures: one, two

<beginning>

One could say the get-together started when the image of the surveillance camera, our Big Brother Eye surveilling the ground floor of Espanca, was being projected on a large screen.

But a person who knows the performers, could say the meeting started when D put the first object in the space, a tv screen. Someone who does not know the project at all would say it only started when all objects (1 tv screen and 3 computers containing the documentation of the process) were put down in the space and were being connected one by one. On top of that she realised she only heard the guitarist playing when someone would come near the electricity plug of one of the objects. This said, a person with foreknowledge present that evening would say it had already started a lot earlier: when D put the first object in the space, the camera surveilling the space was already grabbing her movements in order to play back the recording later.

This fragmented perception of a beginning lowers the threshold of entering an unknown space. The universe is built up while everyone is present and the way it is constructed quotes the itinerary of an exhibition. By having one person who consciously goes around in the space as the master of ceremony, closely examining each of the objects separately, she leads everyone into the familiar process of people waiting to visit something that looks like an exhibition.
</beginning>

<presenting>

While other persons with foreknowledge join the master of

ceremony, the previous recordings are played back over the actual scenery and create the lovely confusion of being in a space where you can virtually touch a projection of your own body on a screen.
The surreal reality is blurred by gradually blacking out the projection screen until only the white contours of the moving bodies are still present.
The performers start playing with objects. The space is divided into two zones, one where the performer can play around with the pitch of the guitar, the other zone being connected to the pedals of the musician.
</presenting>

<sharing>
The persons with foreknowledge of the project hand over the objects they were playing with to the uninitiated public. They invite them personally to play and experiment. This opens up the performance. One person asks whether she can pick up the headphones connected to one of the computers and listen to the object. This opens up the exhibition. The way people move in the space and played around with the objects has been recorded, stored as fresh data generated by people who, just as we do, like to discover.
</sharing>

<conclusion>
The exhibition set-up allowed us to show the creation process as the central element of the presentation. Gently building up the scenery in public, without being explicit, allows people to understand clearly the nature of our work. As a result we were contacted by people interested in collaborating. It is clear this kind of get-together leaves an impression. It is great to see how some people react.
</conclusion>
</generated knowledge>
</get-together item="3">
</get-togethers>
</report>

<afterthought>
Picture Due to the nature of this project, it is always a balancing act to spend a lot of time resolving technical issues versus the need we all have to be creative, able to play and express ourselves. De-contextualizing ourselves and moving out of our comfortable residency space in Brussels was confronting. We tend to be quite demanding, wanting to set high standards, forgetting sometimes the path we walk is more important than the goal we want to reach.

We have learned enormously and are very grateful to have been invited by Marginalia. Thanks to everyone who made this adventure possible and participated in it!
</afterthought>

</body>
</article>