



Project for Participation in Overseas Media Arts Festivals

Works to be presented at the transmediale 2014 media art festival in Berlin, Germany

The Agency for Cultural Affairs organizes participation in various overseas media arts festivals etc. through projects planned and managed by NHK International Inc. The aim is to introduce outstanding works in such fields as media art, video, the websites, videogames, cartoons and comics. Exhibitions, screenings, presentations and so on are arranged at foreign festivals and other venues with their focus on award-winning works from the Japan Media Arts Festival.

We are now pleased to present a selection of Japan Media Arts Festival works at the transmediale 2014 media art festival in Berlin, Germany from Wednesday, January 29th to Sunday, February 2nd 2014. The director for this selection is Mr. Gabin Ito, a veteran of the Japan Media Arts Festival Executive Committee and jury member in the Entertainment Division, for the past three years. He is known as a content editor and producer active in many fields.

Transmediale 2014 *afterglow* has a highly collaborative format featuring over 80 artists, hackers, programmers, and designers in its Art Hack Day (AHD) from January 27th, before the main festival opens, to the 29th, which then continues to develop all through the festival period.

In addition to the AHD, completed works will be also be on display in exhibition areas during transmediale and there will be lectures and performances as well. Several artists from the Japan Media Arts Festival participate.

■ Festival overview

Festival: transmediale 2014

Place: Berlin, Germany

Term: Monday, 27th to Wednesday, 29th January, 2014 Art Hack Day Berlin

Wednesday, 29th January to Sunday, 2nd February, 2014 transmediale

Venue: Haus der Kulturen der Welt (John-Foster-Dulles-Allee 10, 10557 Berlin, Germany)

Admission: 8 euros (other prices available by ticket type)

Number of visitors: About 20,000 in 2013

■ Program outline

Exhibitions, presentations, talks by artists, and other related events on the theme of *exodus from the formal internet*.

Venue: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, exhibition hall, foyer stage, café global stage

Admission: free

Organizer: transmediale - festival for art and digital culture, Berlin

Co-organizer: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan

Administration: NHK International, Inc.

Planning director: ITO Gabin

Project advisor: David d'Heilly

Official URL: <http://jmaf-promote.jp/global/en>

[Inquiries] NHK International, Inc.

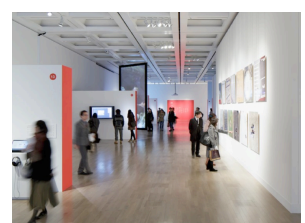
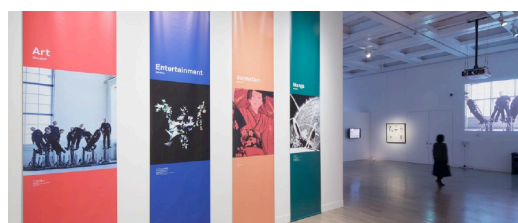
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1. The Japan Media Arts Festival

The Japan Media Arts Festival is a comprehensive festival of Media Arts (=Media *Geijutsu*) that honors outstanding works from a diverse range of media—from animation and comics to media art and games. The festival gives awards in each of its four divisions: Art, Entertainment, Animation, and Manga. It also provides a platform for appreciation of the award-winning and other notable works. Since its inception in 1997, the festival has recognized significant works of high artistry and creativity, and in addition to a yearly Exhibition of Award-winning Works has held other events, such as symposiums, screenings, and showcases. This year the 17th Festival received a record 4,347 entries from 84 countries and regions around the world, demonstrating its continuing evolution as an established annual international festival.

Award-winning works are exhibited both in Japan and abroad through various projects and events organized by the Agency of Cultural Affairs with the goals of promoting the creation, development, understanding, awareness, and appreciation of the Media Arts.



The 16th (2013) Japan Media Arts Festival
Exhibition of Award-winning Works

2. About transmediale 2014

Transmediale is a media art festival of exhibitions, symposiums, screenings and workshop programs that grew out of its predecessor, the Video Film Fest, which goes back to 1988. Transmediale is held every year in Berlin, Germany on the weekend before the Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin. As the name suggests, transmediale has evolved beyond video to explore art and digital creation that transcend any single genre or format. Each year, there is a chosen theme for reflecting on the state of contemporary culture. Kristoffer Gansing was appointed artistic director in transmediale's 25th anniversary year of 2012.

The theme for 2014 is *afterglow*, referring to the resonance of the digital, traces of the pre-digital in the digital era, and traces of the digital which seem to spill over into a post-digital age.

The Internet, an important theme for early media art, is today so integral to our lives through such devices as smart phones that it seems somehow tarnished. This year's transmediale will present works which explore this shift, both through retro- and futuristic works and others which explore the role of DIY technologies in preference to the perpetual pursuit of high tech consumerism.



■ Art Hack Day, Berlin

The AHD format is predicated on creative risk. We can look forward to seeing the participants' creativity challenged, and unexpected developments born of the inspiration and perspiration of many of the world's leading media art practitioners coming together in a shared creative space.

Since the first AHD presented artworks and live performances in New York, USA, in 2012, artists, engineers and activists have also gathered at AHD's in Boston, San Francisco, Stockholm, and Berlin. <http://arthackday.net>

■ About the role of the Participation in Overseas Media Arts festivals at transmediale 2014

The Participation in Overseas Media Arts Festivals project is supporting the production and presentation of artworks and other related events within transmediale 2014, *afterglow*. Planning director Mr. Gabin Ito has compiled a selection of artists based on past winners of awards at the Japan Media Arts Festival whose works pertain to the theme of *exodus from the formal internet* in our lives today. Rather than showing already existing works, leading-edge contemporary media art practice, progressive methods and approaches, and critical engagement will be highlighted as each participant produces new works in the highly collaborative transmediale AHD environment.

exodus from the formal internet

Planning Director ITO Gabin

Remember when people thought of the Internet as a place of liberty? When people regarded it as a frontier where they could gather in search of freedom? When we dreamed of its utopian future? We did indeed enjoy some new degrees of freedom and empowerment, and it seemed the technology would support the sort of future we desired. That all seems now mostly in the past. As the Internet become ubiquitous, through smart phones and home electronics, and took root in our homes, the initial thrill departed and left us with only an incredibly restricted space.

Now anything we say can and will be used as evidence against us, both in and out of court. One slip of the tongue, and we're a laughing stock. If we show so much as the slightest sympathy for someone in a legally grey zone, we may be held culpable to the full extent of their supposed crimes. Today, we have to reflect on every impulse before we dare to go on-line, because the consequences can be dire. Today we must be at our most guarded and bland on-line.

How did we get here?

Reviewing the artworks, and artists, who have participated in the Japan Media Arts Festival, I found some who conformed to those restrictions and others who sought liberation from them. They are the ones who became the core of my directorial plan.

Also, my curiosity was piqued by those who having tried digital expression afterwards reverted to analog modes. These are artists who have done more than merely traverse the world of media arts. They have come out on the other side.

ITO Gabin :
Editor / Creative director
Born in 1963. Ito has worked as an editor of computer hobby magazines since his student days. Edited the computer hobby magazine *Login* issued by ASCII Corporation. Established BOSTOK, Inc. in 1993. Active in a variety of fields with focus on editing, writing, CG creation, image creation, TV production, videogames, software development, etc. Currently professor of design at the Joshibi Junior College of Art and Design.



3. Participating Artist

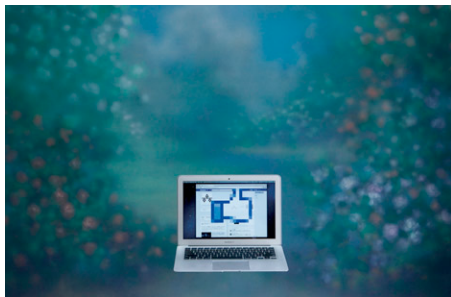
*Participating artists are responding to the *afterglow* theme of transmediale 2014, by making new art works inspired by these earlier works:

Whatever Button, IDPW

Web (Japan Media Arts Festival Entertainment Division New Face Award 2013)

The *Whatever Button* is an extension of the Google Chrome web browser that can be added to Facebook, the world's largest social networking service. The Facebook "Like" button, an extreme form of low-res information (users just click on it to show their approval of a Facebook post), has swept the Internet with astonishing speed. With the *Whatever Button*, users can "Like" everything — the good, the bad, and also the things they think they ought to like. With a single click, they can automatically click every "Like" button on the screen!

(Software: Google Chrome extension) <http://idpw.org/porto/w/000001/>



©IDPW

The *Whatever Button* hit the bull's eye of afterglow sensibility in the post-internet era of ubiquitous social media, and received much publicity in Japan. How will people react in Germany, with its very high Facebook penetration? The exposure of work so closely identified with Japan in other cultures helps us identify the true nature of our own sensibilities. We look forward to re-capturing the essence of the *Whatever Button* by revisiting it again at the transmediale 2014.

IDPW :

This is a voluntary organization functioning as a web-based secret society that has existed for 100 years "awaiting the Advent of the Internet." At present the group's members, several dozen in number, are working behind closed doors. Holding monthly gatherings in the guise of a party, they produce irrelevant things via the PORTO application-distribution platform. <http://idpw.org/>

VideoBomber, exonemo/Shibuhouse/Maltine Records

Application software, Media performance

(Japan Media Arts Festival Entertainment Division Jury Selection 2014)

The original video-jockey(VJ) app, *VideoBomber*, produced a new dynamic VJ style that combined moving images with an aggressive physicality to project images wherever the user wanted using portable projectors. Liberated from the limitations fixed screens, the images are projected freely on any surface. *VideoBomber* was created in search of new possibilities for image expression through the questioning of media technology and its liberation from entrenched conceptions. <http://exonemo.com/iPhone/videobomber/>



©exonemo / shibuhouse / Maltine Records

Computer graphics have developed beyond the things we see with our naked eyes, and the resolution of video displays only continues to increase. The projectors and other output devices (including even smart phone movie apps) are shrinking and becoming ever more intrinsic to our general surroundings. *VideoBomber* is a way to hack video expression itself, a fantastic highjacking which sweeps aside preconceptions about the uses of technology and what the latest gadgets are for. We pursue new modes of expression and skills that we derive from our surroundings while also maximizing the mobility and adaptability of the *VideoBomber*. (exonemo)

exonemo:

Formed in 1996. Art unit of Kensuke Sembo and Yae Akaiwa based in exonemo.com. Crossing over freely between the digital and analog, the world of computer networks and the real world, they reveal the relationships between the technology and its users. Their many experimental projects generate funny and innovative artworks which portray effects of the digital media on modern society. *The Road Movie* won the Golden Nica in the Net Vision category at Prix Ars Electronica 2006. Organizers of IDPW in 2012. <http://www.exonemo.com>

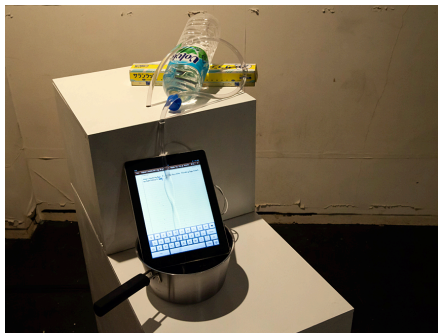


objects thinking too much, TANIGUCHI Akihiko

Media Installation (2013)

Taniguchi's oeuvre includes work which re-contextualizes both this side and the other of our daily screens, especially those of such appliances such as iPads and iPhones. Using standard software configurations, existing touch panel and screen rotation functionality, and built-in GPS the artist derives a surprising range of expression from minimal interventions. Without relying on gimmicks or tricks, Taniguchi subverts assumptions about the nature of our devices, namely our own preconceptions about technology and our relationship to it. Within his pointed ambiguity we sense that perhaps "objects, people – objects thinking too much."

<http://okikata.org/exhibition/001/>



©Akihiko TANIGUCHI

Today we live in a world of ubiquitous portable devices, of smart phones in everyone's pocket, which connect us constantly to the Internet. They have become the core mode of our intercourse with others. Media technology has merged with everyday life. Our event horizon includes activities taking place within computers and networks. It does not stop at the screen interfaces. Rather, these activities are contiguous to our physical life. The sculpture of thinking things is composed using minimal operations on devices from everyday life that give quiet, visual form to these themes. (TANIGUCHI Akihiko)

TANIGUCHI Akihiko:

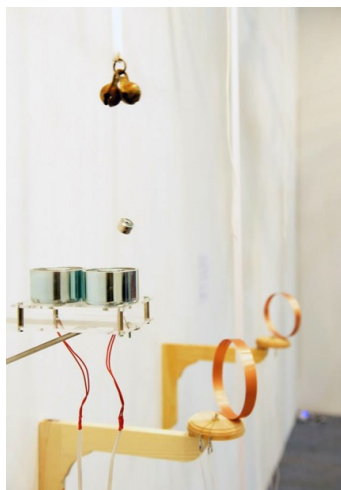
Born in 1983, Taniguchi produces installations, performances, Internet art, sculpture, and video works. He has exhibited in group shows, including Internet Art Future: *Reality in the Post-Internet Era* (2012, NTT InterCommunication Center [ICC]), *overthinking things* (2013, Iidabashi Bunmei), and the Materializing Exhibition: *Information, Material, and the Between* (2013, The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of The Arts). <http://okikata.org>

Calls, MOHRI Yuko

Media installation (2013)

Calls is an installation which uses magnetism, a power outside of our perceptual range, to drive objects "which call for something." In previous versions, South Korean shrine bells, Laotian animal bells, and Taiwanese forks and wine glasses have each played a part in this installation series. With the generation of a magnetic field around a compass, flickering needles are set in motion and the sound resonates irregularly within the exhibition space.

<http://mohrizm.net>



©Yuko MOHRI

"Over the past several years, I've been presenting installations which combine basic phenomena (light, gravity, noise, etc.) with small, locally-sourced objects to highlight trivial phenomena within the exhibition space. I want to redirect people's attention in new directions, for them to see the spaces differently. I consider my installations a way to awaken layered histories and special phenomena created within the building structures, which are already present within these spaces and buildings yet easily overlooked. In transmediale, I will attempt to invoke something of the place that is used as the stage for the AHD and transmediale 2014, utilizing tools which have been used to "call" human beings and other life forms since ancient times. (MOHRI Yuko)

MOHRI Yuko :

Born in Kanagawa Prefecture, in 1980. Mohri combines musical instruments and other tools, to produce unique spatial sound and light creations. Her focus is on how each element of the installations seems to behave as a distinct living organism. Recent exhibitions include her solo show, *OROCHI* (2013, waitingroom, Tokyo), group show, *MISUGOSHITEKITAMONO* (2013, Sendai Mediatheque, Miyagi), group show, *Anonymous Life* (2012, NTT InterCommunication Center [ICC], Tokyo), solo installation, *Circus* (2012, Museum Of Contemporary Art Tokyo), and group show, *x_sound* (2012, Nam June Paik Art Center, South Korea).



3. Related Events

The Japan Media Arts Festival is also organizing presentations, artist talks and other events at the main transmediale venue, the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (House of the Cultures of the World).

Artist Presentations

All Japanese artists participating AHD and other projects will be on stage for the opening of transmediale 2014 *afterglow*.

Date: Wednesday 29 January 19:00-

Venue: Exhibition hall, HKW

Participating Artist: exonemo, IDPW, MOHRI Yuko, TANIGUCHI Akihiko, etc.

Artist Talks

Part One: Hitchhiking away from utopia

The early Internet inspired dreams of liberty, a new utopian alternative to mass media's Big Brother. Members of Internet artist groups exonemo and IDPW talk with editor and creative director Gabin Ito about the new possibilities created as the Internet becomes controlled, uncomfortable, and unsatisfying, and paradoxically vanishes ubiquitously into all aspects of our lives.

Date: Friday 31 January 16:00-

Venue: Foyer stage, HKW

Participating Artist: exonemo, IDPW / Moderator: ITO Gabin

Part Two: Somewhere beyond calculation: Where we arbitrarily "recognize" life

Akihiko Taniguchi and Yuko Mohri are artists whose practice is in creating technological phenomena seemingly imbued with the breath of life – bridging different uncanny valleys to the recognizably "alive" without any reference to "soul," "embodiment," "artificial intelligence/life," nor robotics. A discussion on where they seek "de anima" with editor and game designer Gabin Ito.

Date: Saturday 1 February 19:00-

Venue: Foyer stage, HKW

Participating Artist: MOHRI Yuko, TANIGUCHI Akihiko / Moderator: ITO Gabin



Internet Yami-ichi (Black Market) Berlin

An art project to buy and sell Internet-related products and services directly in actual space, the *Internet Yami-ichi* was developed by exhibiting artist collective IDPW, known for their experimental Internet culture creativity. It has been held twice so far in Tokyo. A flea-market like event which brings creators, artists, programmers, and others together. It represents an old and new way to create the products, services and communities we typically find on-line. This popular gathering will be one of transmediale 2014's closing events. <http://berlin.yami1.biz/>

Date: Sunday 2 February from 12:00-20:00

Venue: Exhibition hall, HKW

Participants: artists participating in transmediale 2014, Berlin-based artists etc.



©IDPW

The Internet Black Market is a basically a market, where people can buy and sell goods and services, a gathering point for Internet flotsam and jetsam. Borrowing practices of PR firms, visitors can purchase praise on twitter at cut-rate prices from dubious persons, and share apps which didn't make it to the iTunes store in a face-to-face environment. It's a BtoB or PtoP hive of *monozukuri* knowledge for the digital set, an homage to Japan's comic market culture, a celebration of commercial activities which are legal but rapidly being eliminated in the gentrification of the Internet.

Desktop BAM, exonemo

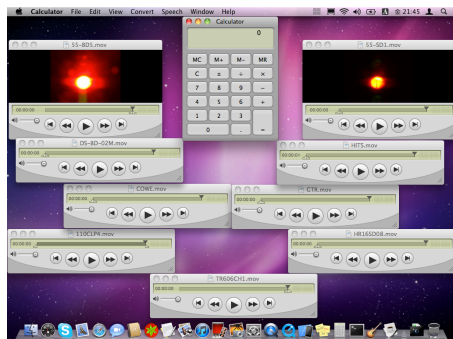
Live Performane (2010)

Desktop BAM is a live performance piece which exonemo first performed in 2010. Desktop images of notebook PCs with multiple QuickTime player windows will be projected on the walls of the venue. Mouse cursors controlled by software scripts race continuously between the files, far faster than any person possibly could use it, generating an array of patterns that imparts a sense of uncontrollable post-physicality and vitality. <http://exonemo.com/>

Date: Sunday 2 February, 20:00-20:15

Venue: café global stage, HKW

Performer: exonemo



©exonemo

Desktop BAM is a performance piece in which a mouse cursor plays across desktops. It's a direct homage to turntablism, born from using turntables in unconventional ways. The title BAM is taken from Afrika Bambaataa, a pioneer of early hip-hop. The dynamism of the piece is created by the motion of the cursor, which moves faster and more precisely than a human operator could control. The movements trigger the audience's sense of its own physicality, at the same time suggesting the physicality of computers controlled by people, too.



■ Documentation

***BCCKS*, MATSUMOTO Gento**

BCCKS is an online service for reading, making, stocking, and selling both electronic and bound books. From a single interface, capable of both fully professional and largely automated design work, *BCCKS* can automatically generate and publish in multiple formats, including iPad, iPhone, android, PC, and professional Print-On-Demand books. The events of the day can thus be published immediately in something more substantial than a blog.

At transmediale, Matsumoto will undertake a series of documentary design projects from individual artist profiles to portfolios, essays on the production process, and records of the festival's vitality in multiple formats. The resulting *BCCKS* will be available for free online on the "BCCKS" site. <http://bccks.jp/>



BCCKS COO Gento Matsumoto will use BCCKS to maximum effect to producing three types of publication: Profil - a flash-card series of artist profiles; Anmerkung - documentations of production processes for each artwork; and Buch - a report on the entire festival, all of which will be released during the festival in both electronic and paper versions.

NHK International Inc. furthers the development of Japan's Media Arts by planning and managing participation in overseas media arts festivals etc. under the auspices of the Agency for Cultural Affairs Media Arts Festival.