

AFK

AWAY FROM KEYBOARD
29 JAN - 1 MAI 2011



Press release

AFK (Away From Keyboard)

Artists: Marco Cadioli, Paul Chavard, Collectif Atopia, Angela Di Paolo, Julien Levesque, Albertine Meunier, Nicolas Sordello, Flavien Théry and Christine Webster

From 29 January to 1 May 2011 Casino Luxembourg is hosting an exhibition of Human Atopic Space presented in the "Aquarium" and the basement. The members of Human Atopic Space are highlighting artists at the centre of an exhibition where virtual realities are either at the heart of the creative process or are vectors of a reflection which engages them.

The exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)* presents a journey to the heart of a series of artworks which are displayed with all their technical wanderings, in the unconventional existence of the Internet network. This open and non-hierarchical system reveals artworks in which the realisation of the visitor comes about through interactivity and sometimes through playful involvement. The artistic field remains open to the exploration of the unknown, the invisible and the possibilities of this unexpected creative process the artists offer us a glimpse at.

The collective Human Atopic Space, initiator of the project *AFK*, aims to promote contemporary creation in the field of new media and offers artists a platform for research and experimentation through multiple activities. Another aspect of their work involves awareness-raising and educating the general public about new forms of art.

In the framework of the exhibition at Casino Luxembourg, a **cultural programme** coordinated by Human Atopic Space is now in place including two **conferences**: *Les mondes virtuels : réappropriation et détournement par les artistes contemporains* [Virtual Worlds: reappropriation and subversion by contemporary artists] (Saturday 29 January 2011 at 4.30 p.m.) and *Le Machinima : entre expérience vidéoludique et nouveau genre cinématographique* [Machinima: Between videogaming experience and new cinematic genre] (Sunday 27 March 2011 at 4.30 p.m.). The two conferences are given by Margherita Balzerani, the artistic director at the heart of Human Atopic Space. An introductory **workshop** on virtual art is on offer to adolescents and adults and during the easter holidays.

Three **projection evenings** are also scheduled (Thursday 10 February 2011 at 7 p.m., Saturday 26 March 2011 at 4.30 p.m. and Thursday 22 April 2011 at 7 p.m.), presenting a transversal selection of films which highlight the aesthetic and script potential of *Machinima*. A *Machinima* – the name of which is formed by the contraction of the words machine (for computer), animation and cinema – is a movie produced by filming the inside of a virtual world or a video game. *Machinima* designates both an artwork and a technique. The first feature-length film of the history of *Machinima* – *VolaVola* by Berardo Carboni (2009) – shows great originality and poses the now topical question of the potential that virtual worlds offer today, with requirements for production and post-production that are minor compared to the classical cinema industry.

AFK (Away From Keyboard)

Exhibition: 29 January 2011 – 1 May 2011

Opening: 28 January 2011 at 7 p.m.

8.30 p.m.: *Sommeil paradoxal de la matière obscure* performance by Kanika Langlois and Maud Chabanis

7–11 p.m.: Veste DJ set

A project by Human Atopic Space | www.humanatopicspace.com

Curator: Margherita Balzerani

Architect et scenographe: Laura Mannelli

Metadesigner and designer: Frederick Thompson

Project manager and responsible for partnerships: Mathilde Mallen

The exhibition **AFK (Away From Keyboard)** is realised with the support of:



Partners of the Atopia project:

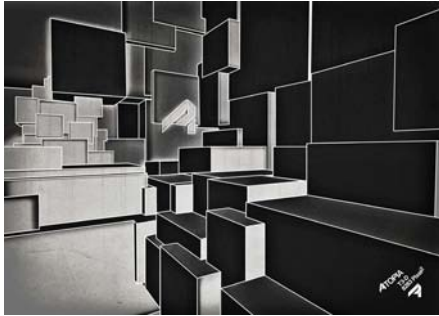


Partners of the opening performance:



AFK (Away From Keyboard) – The exhibition

Collectif Atopia, *Atopia* (2010). Persistent and interactive virtual world.



Collectif Atopia (Laura Mannelli, Frederick Thompson, Kanika Langlois), *Atopia*. Persistent and interactive virtual world. In collaboration with O-labs, Amédé & Joinup, Francogrid. LUX/FR, 2010.

The “Atopian” space brings together those humans who, as *Meta-wanderers* (vagabonds of the network) and aware explorers, have colonised a part of the network to coexist in an atopian/utopian space, meaning a sort of heterotopia, another place, called the “world of Atopia.” The world of Atopia (literally: without place) is defined as a ubiquitous, persistent and autonomous presence on the network. Its architecture is designed as communicating organism through which spaces of different natures – artificial (an Internet site, a social network) but also material (a communicating object, an exhibition space) – are linked with it. These interactions form a *datascape*: an ecosystem of metadata entirely based around artists, their artworks and network digital culture. The aim of this virtual world is to familiarise internauts and the public, in situ, to the different themes and issues dealt with in the exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)*. It is also the presentation of a journey: how to go from a real visit to a virtual visit and vice versa. The world of Atopia is an extra dimension to discover, before during and after the exhibition.

Log into Atopia and continue your visit:

In the exhibition space, visitors have access to more information by using the *Junaio iPhone app* (available on *iTunes*, *Android Market* or on www.junaio.com) together with the Mobilecode QR type.

At home, the may dialogue with the virtual world on the website www.humanatopicspace.com/atopia.

Or find Atopia region on Francogrid: <http://francogrid.org> (tutorial: <http://jacksweb.slicer.fr/tutoFG.html>).

Marco Cadioli aka Marco Manray, *Remap Berlin* (2010). Photographs.



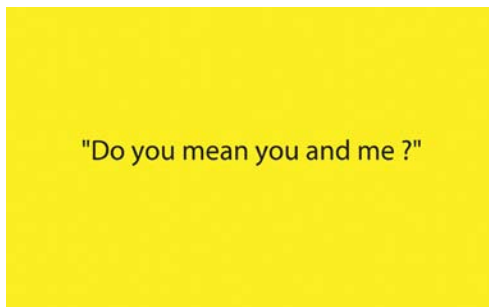
Marco Cadioli (aka Marco Manray), *Oranienburgertrasse*, Berlin. Digital print on paper, 80 x 45 cm. IT, 2009.

Marco Cadioli aka Marco Manray produces photoreportages within the network. The net, much more than a new medium with a new language, is a collateral reality that grows; in other words it is part of the world. For *AFK (Away From Keyboard)* Marco Cadioli presents a series of six photographs taken in *Virtual Berlin* and geolocated in *Google maps*.

Video presentation of the *Remap Berlin* project: <http://www.marcomanray.com/remap-berlin/concept.htm>

Marco Cadioli: www.internetlandscape.it

Paul Chavard, Julien Levesque and Nicolas Sordello, *Gossip Bots* (2010). Installation.



gossipbots.com

Gossip Bots is an Internet project allowing several chatterbots to chat together. A chatterbot or chatbot is a computer program designed to simulate an intelligent conversation with one or more human users via auditory or textual methods. *Gossip Bots* is built as a composite application or mashup to create unique discussions by connecting two different chatterbot services. The website's interface thus allows users to discover what robots talk about when they meet. The website records all the conversations and stocks them in a database that Internet users can consult. This collection of artificial intelligence gossip, ranging from funny to surreal, is not without a certain emotional quality. The project is showing here an art installation displaying the results of the many conversations held between the different artificial intelligences. The installation is continuously supplied by the website with new dialogues impregnated with a mechanical poetry.

The interactive "dada" machine on: <http://gossipbots.com/>

Nicolas Sordello: www.sordello.net/

Julien Levesque: www.julienlevesque.net/

Angela Di Paolo, *Penetralia* and *L'avversario* (2010). Photographs.

"Our era, that mythical time, has arrived and we are merely hybrid ghosts of machines and organisms theorised then manufactured; in short, cyborgs." Donna Haraway, *Cyberfeminist Manifesto*, 1991.



Angela Di Paolo, *L'avversario 1*. Dibond, 100 x 100 cm. IT, 2004.

In the exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)*, Angela Di Paolo presents a series of four photographs (new productions) bearing witness to a formal reflection on man-machine body hybridisation. In the work of the artist, the body is a vector of cyborg mutation which seems to inherit the words of the *Cyberfeminist Manifesto* by Donna Haraway – "The cyborg is a condensed image of imagination and material reality combined, and this union structures all possibilities of historical transformation – and heralds the genesis of post-genre era". In the dyptich *Penetralia* and *L'avversario*, the artist translates the elaboration of an identity that undoes classical dichotomies such as feminine/masculine, nature/culture, living/artefact, and bears witness to futuristic bodily emancipation.

Albertine Meunier, *À petits pas vers l'Annonciation* (2010). Internet installation.



Albertine Meunier, *À petits pas vers l'Annonciation*, 2010.

The Annunciation of Mary is one of the themes frequently treated in western art. Particularly prevalent during the Italian Renaissance, annunciations revealed the subtleties of geometric perspective. Some say we are living in a totally new era, often associated with a new Renaissance, a digital Renaissance. The installation *À petits pas vers l'Annonciation* is interpreted by a ballet company of 12 angelinos. A dancer, a prisoner in a musical bottle, comes alive and dances to a little melody when an angel passes on Internet and more precisely when an angel passes on Twitter. Each angelino comes alive in response to a predefined word for each dancer, extracted from the text *The Annunciation of Mary* (the Gospel according to Luke 1:26–38). The ballet company of 12 angelinos dancers is made up of the following: the dancer #1 comes alive to the word "angel"; #2 to "Gabriel"; #3 to "Nazareth"; #4 to "virgin"; #5 to "grace"; #6 to "god"; #7 to "son"; #8 to "Mary"; #9 to "shadow"; #10 to "Holy Ghost"; #11 to "eternally" and #12 to "impossible". Every minute Twitter is consulted the dancers come to life and dance if "their" word is detected. The apparatus of the dancers is nevertheless a manual mechanism. Indeed, the musical bottle of the angelino consists of a musical box wound by hand. The viewer or internaut can also act on

the angelino from a distance of his/ her choice in order to make a particular dancer turn, by posting a message on Twitter with the word "chosen".

With the support of the DICRéAM, apparatus for multimedia artistic creation, Ministry of Culture and Communication (France).

Project Internet site: www.albertinemeunier.net/a-petit-pas-vers-l-annonciation/

Video presentation of the project: <http://vimeo.com/16866750>

Flavien Théry, *Lunettes* (1999). Pairs of glasses.



Flavien Théry, *Interior vision glasses*. Gilded brass, red leather, 250 x 200 x 40 mm. FR, 1999.

Interior vision glasses (Gilded brass, red leather)

Evoking an inverted gaze, as if turned towards the interior of the skull, two globes press on closed eyes, provoking the apparition of "phosphenes". It concerns "luminous sensations that result from the stimulation of retinal receptors by an agent other than light (shock, internal or external compression of the ocular globe, electrical stimuli)" (*Le Robert*). The interior experience of visual perception we create approaches the real nature of light (of colour), indistinguishable from consciousness.

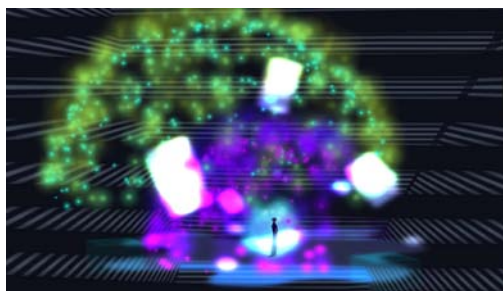
Glasses for experiencing the world backwards (Nickel-plated brass, acrylic)

While black designates shadow, it can also render light visible, as in the case of mirrors used for divination. It is in this mode that these glasses offer us an inverted vision of our environment, as if their surface constituted the frontier of a parallel universe where we see ourselves develop in the air, walking on the ceiling or through walls.

Illuminated glasses (Copper and gilded brass, pyrex, argon / vapour of mercury, electrical transformer) Illuminare translates as "render vision". This optical instrument thus aims to dazzle us, in order to make us subject to visions. Is blindness, paradoxically, the necessary condition for clairvoyance, as the legend of Saint Lucy tells us?

Flavien Théry: <http://doud.objets.lumiere.free.fr/>

Christine Webster, *Limbic*, (2010). Build Object and Scripts by Frederick Thompson. Digital multimedia artwork.



Christine Webster, *Limbic*, Digital multimedia work. With the support of the DICRÉAM, apparatus for multimedia artistic creation, Ministry of Culture and Communication (France), by Wang Xiang Tuxing and Human Atopic Space. Build Objet et Scripts de Frederick Thompson. FR, 2010

Digital multimedia artwork. *Limbic* is an electroacoustic composition shared in a three dimensional virtual space – on multiple planes of reality – and based on the principles of topological music. Visitors are invited to undergo an immersive and ludic sound experience in *Second Life* that borrows from the principles of the digital video game and generative electroacoustic composition. The viewer, in the form of an avatar from limbo, moves through a visual and aural setup via an available computer station. Crossing different fields and musical propositions, s/he listens to them in order to determine his/her trajectory and actions. The musical artwork is contained within the 1000 m³ that constitutes this virtual topological sound space. The artwork is made accessible and becomes a real experience through the avatar. Without the avatar as a medium, *Limbic* would not exist. This piece is therefore a collaborative space of composition, shared by the vision of the artist and the path taken by the avatar.

Christine Webster: www.soundwebster.com

AFK (Away From Keyboard) – Cultural programme

Friday 28 January 2011 at 8.30 p.m. (opening of the exhibition)

Sommeil paradoxal de la matière obscure, **Performance** by Kanika Langlois (video artist) and Maud Chabanis (lyrical singer).

www.sommeilparadoxaldelamatiereobscure.com

Saturday 29 January 2011 at 4.30 p.m.

Conference: *Les mondes virtuels : réapprobation et détournement par les artistes contemporains* (F) by Margherita Balzerani, curator of the exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)*. In the presence of the exhibition artists.



Marco Cadioli (aka Marco Manray), *Remap Berlin*, 2009. Digital print on paper, 80 x 45 cm. IT, 2009

The exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)* presents works by contemporary artists who make new media both the subject of their work and their means of expression. Digital platforms, Internet sites and 3D virtual universes become spaces of creation and exploration of new forms of art and cinematic writing. The speaker will underline the aesthetic issues and the creative possibilities related to virtual worlds and the Internet. Free entrance.

Thursday 10 February 2011 at 7 p.m.

Screening of a selection of *Machinima* short films



Harrison Heller, *Stop, Rewind*, *Machinima* (8 min.) realised in *Half Life 2*. USA, 2010

A *Machinima* – the name of which is formed by the contraction of the three words machine (for computer), animation and cinema – is a film produced by filming the inside of a virtual world or a video game. *Machinima* designates both an artwork and a technique. Today, with several thousand *Machinima* created from the most popular video games (*Halo*, *Sims*, *World of Warcraft*, etc.), it is the first cinematic genre to arise from virtual worlds.

Free entrance.

Saturday 26 March 2011 at 4.30 p.m.

Screening of a selection of *Machinima* short films.

For further information, see 10 February 2011. Free entrance.

Sunday 27 March 2011 at 4.30 p.m.

Conference: *Le Machinima : entre expérience vidéoludique et nouveau genre cinématographique* (F) by Margherita Balzerani, curator of the exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)*.



Kate Lee & Sherwin Liu, *Incubus*, *Machinima* (20 min.) realised in Moviestorm. USA, 2010

A *Machinima* is a film shot inside a virtual world or video game. Long produced for and by hard core gamers, this cinematic genre subverts the characters, decors and sequences of video games to transform them into fiction. After ten years of existence, original, poetic and politically committed artworks have come about, today displaying an unexpected maturity and heterogeneity. Free entrance.

Thursday 21 April 2011 at 7 p.m.

Screening of *VolaVola* by Berardo Carboni (2009). Produced by Arnaldo Guido, Cinesicilia and Isabella Arnaud
VolaVola by Berardo Carboni is the first feature-length film of the story of *Machinima*. It is a choral story about the numerous facets of the contemporary world. Three couples, three different life styles, the feelings and visions of three generations. The development of the story leads the characters to link themselves to each other like members of the same family. Free entrance.



Berardo Carboni, *VolaVola*, produced by Arnaldo Guido, Cinesicilia and Isabella Arnaud (95', Italy, 2009).

From 21 to 23 April 2011 from 2 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.

Workshop for teenagers and adults: *Machinimaniaks* (F).

Admission: 40€. Max. 9 participants. Booking required per T (+352) 22 50 45 or e-mail visites@casinoluxembourg.lu

Introductory workshop to 3D virtual worlds via the discovery and elaboration of virtual spaces, afferent navigation, the creation of avatars, etc. This workshop explores the range of characteristics of these new territories and gives participants a first overall impression, as well as the instruments enabling them to construct their own virtual space. Workshop suited to beginners.

Human Atopic Space

The association Human Atopic Space, founded in 2008, under the presidency of Maître Pierre Cornette de Saint Cyr, curator and president of the Palais of Tokyo, aims to aid creation, support and promote artists by offering means to all the participants in new artistic forms and new media.

Following a logic that is simultaneously European and international, pluridisciplinary and transversal, the association exists as a platform for research, innovation, consciousness-raising, experimentation and promotion. It can give advice, training and appraisal and refurbish customary service provision activities.

Atopic comes from the Greek *a* (without) and *topos* (place). This word is an invitation to become a “vagabond of the network”, to discover contemporary artists through the Internet site and the virtual 3D real time platform. Virtual but also real meetings are offered, in France and elsewhere, including here, in Luxembourg during the exhibition *AFK (Away From Keyboard)*.

The “Atopian” team is made up of experts with diverse skills including interactive art, network art, R&D into virtual worlds, the production of innovative artistic projects, new uses of the everyday, new architectural expressions, the development of virtual worlds, new forms of museography, futurology, and event design.



www.humanatopicspace.com