



Autoshop™ v1.0.0. Written by Adrian Ward and Autoshop™.

GM Manifesto by

Auto-Illustrator™. Written by Adrian Ward and Auto-Illustrator™.

The STI Consortium.

The Spector Project.

GM.

Welcome to MEDIASPACE 9. This edition explores and documents some digital production activities, which fall happily into the emerging category of 'generative' and 'auto-generative' art. Opening with two of the most innovative generative software products available on the web today, Signwave™ Autoshop™ and Signwave™ Auto-Illustrator, this edition of MEDIASPACE maps out cross disciplinary domains [computer imaging/DTP, digital audio, artificial intelligence - satellite imaging, narrative/telematic writing/performance] where generative activity is defining key cultural shifts in terms of the production and consumption of digital work. The GM Manifesto, for instance, highlights the impact generative media is having on the music industry [a warning for all media production industries] and places the futures of digital audio clearly in the realm of algorithms and data. A place where, in many ways, the performers and the audience are peripheral...

The STI Project engages with a new dimension unveiled by autonomous digital activity and exposes the 'image' as the primary reason for our cultural aphasia. There was a time when the integrity of an image viewed through a lens was deemed illusory, now our understanding of the material world is dependant on images viewed through technology, images of; the end of the Universe, faces on Mars, Earth, foetuses, bacteria, atoms, and even consciousness. In the search for the 'image' as truth the precarious and ominous assumptions of alchemists, phrenologists and eugenicists are being replayed, all negligent of the fact that the image is a symptom of a complex process...

...and the Spector Project engages with the impact on our ability, a symptom of our Twenty First Century hyper-linked minds, to operate across a range of media spaces. The construction of these media spaces/places creates stress on the traditional framing and articulation of the narrative form. A word that no longer seems to be able to contain, adequately explain or incorporate synchronous and asynchronous multi-location interactivity within a single framework...

...all of these activities can be found on the various websites indicated in each of the sections, and of course linked from the MEDIASPACE website at www.CAIIA-STAR.net/projects/MEDIASPACE

BTW...this is the last edition of MEDIASPACE to appear as part of Digital Creativity. MEDIASPACE will still exist on the web and for the occasional satellite/web cast. MEDIASPACE is being consumed by STAR New Media Publishing activities from within the Institute for Digital Art and Technology at the University of Plymouth. My thanks to everyone who has helped assemble these and past pages... and, if you have been, thank you for watching.

Mike Phillips, February 2001: mike@soc.plym.ac.uk

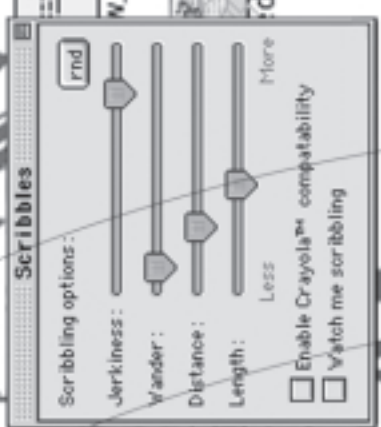
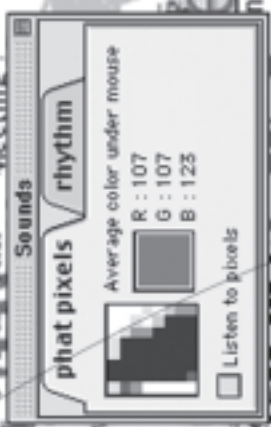
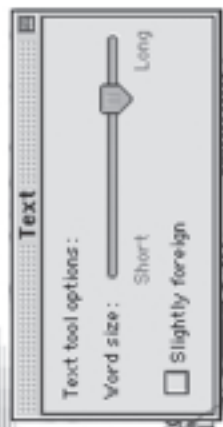
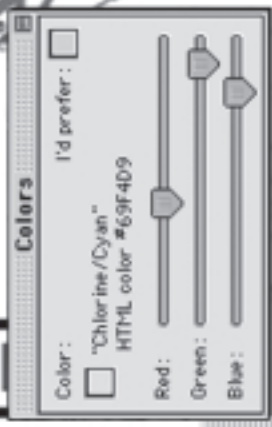
How I Drew One Of My Pictures

Adrian Ward BSc, Sidestrean, London

email: adn@westream.org

end...

... appears in it's original form... the Signway... atoshop signwave.co.uk) ... written and present... at the... in Milan, Italy recently. The newer essay... titled "The Authors... at <http://www.sidestrean.org/ea99>



Signwave™ Autoshop™ 1.0 v1.0.0

Written by Adrian Ward. Contains portions from: REAL Software, Inc. RBColorPicker plugin © Copyright 1998 Alex Kuznetsov. GrabWindow68k plugin © Copyright 1998 Steve Schacht. GetHouseXY/FAT plugin © Copyright 1998 PERGAMON interactive visual design.

© Copyright 1999 Signwave. All rights reserved. <http://www.signwave.co.uk>. This software forms part of a project for the Media Theoretical Frameworks module at M.L.A. Not to be exchanged for money. This is parody software and must not be distributed as commercial software. For further information see the Autoshop web site <http://autoshop.signwave.co.uk>

The process of creativity

An extract from 'How I Drew One Of My Pictures' by Adrian Ward BSc, Sidestream, London email: adrian@sidestream.org. 'How I Drew One Of My Pictures' accompanies the Signwave Autoshop application (available from <http://autoshop.signwave.co.uk>) and has been re-written and presented at the Generate Art '99 Conference in Milan, Italy recently. The newer essay (entitled 'The Authorship of Generative Art') can be found at <http://www.sidestream.org/ga99>.

Signwave™ Autoshop™

This project is a computer program that seeks to explore this creativity and capture my personal creative act as a programmer. It will perform creative tasks that I have delegated to the computer. Some (most) of these tasks may well have been impossible without the use of the computer - but this does not influence the focus of creativeness. The creative act is with my programming. Therefore a large amount of my documentation will surround the process I undertook to create Signwave™ Autoshop™ generative system. I have aimed to document the majority of my creative act, mostly as a series of short documents with instructions on how to achieve certain 'creative' tasks. It can be quite technical in nature at times - due to the technical nature of the medium.

Interfaces: The interface of a computer system (in professional circumstances) should generally be dictated by the processes the system is undertaking. "Multimedia" does not obey this rule.

When you see an hourglass, the system is busy. When you drag an icon, the system moves the resource represented by that icon. Why then is multimedia allowed to abandon these ideas? Because they are not "good"?

How can we justify representing an audio sound as a colour or shape on a computer system - just because the computer system allows us to? This is not rigorous. Why should a system turn a flowing grid of polygons into an array of ambient sounds - because it "can"? No.

New Media has discovered a niche of juxtaposing different existing mediums together to find new expressive forms of communication.

The Anti-Interface

As a final gesture of ironic, satirical and sarcastic expression, the Signwave™ Autoshop™ project will seek to destroy the myth of "Interface Condescension" (the notion that just because a system does something new, it should find an entirely new, patronising - and alien - interface).

Signwave™ Autoshop™ will portray the clean-cut, well-researched and founded guidelines of any Apple design-guideline abiding, industry standard, commercial software interface. It deliberately will appear to look like a well-known commercial piece of software (without breaking any copyright infringement laws). It will appear to be a nothing "special". However, because Signwave™ Autoshop™ is a two-sided project (see Introduction) it will be performing creative and experimental acts of generative systems through a very dry, clean-cut interface.

It will satirise the endless race to express "creativity" through interface design by making statements regarding juxtaposition of modes of operation: Signwave™ Autoshop™ will put "wild" creativity right up alongside technical design. It will hopefully cause amusement for the user, but more importantly, should question the whole ethos of "creative design".

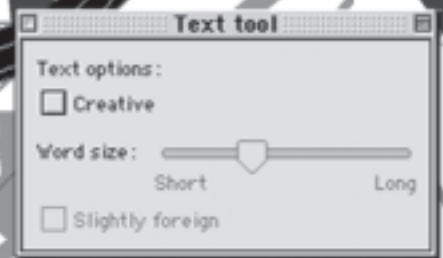
Reasoning: Autoshop™ firstly is capturing my creativeness in code structures. Secondly, it is automating creativity. It is a 'machine for drawing' (in reference to the Oulipian 'Machines for Writing') which takes the strict instructive codes of the true creator and replicates them automatically. Many of the Oulipo techniques invented by the surreal members of the movement could be described as 'machines' in the sense that as soon as you derive creativity into instructions, (regardless of whether they're carried out by a mechanical machine, computer, or even a human following the instructions precisely) you have automated a creative process. Many of the following "How to" sections could be carried out by a human being without going near a computer.

The "randomness" which I have imbued upon many of the routines in Autoshop connotes a less mathematical or formulaic approach to creativity. It is understandable that one could argue that when a routine makes use of a 'random' factor, the work suffers a loss of creative rigour, because you are surrendering your 'creativity' to the whims of an unpredictable function. It takes the domain of control away from the artist and gives it to the computer. However, it is paramount to point out that a computer can only move data about. It cannot - under any circumstances - generate a truly random number by itself. Computers generate random numbers by following a complex mathematical formula, which is 'seeded' with a starting value. If you give a computer the same 'seed' every time, it will generate the same sequence of random numbers. When you programmed a PC, you often had to tell it which seed to start with, on a Macintosh the system sets the seed from the current clock time. Thus, it stands to reason that should two people start up two Macintoshes at exactly the same time (providing both have exactly synchronised clocks, CPU and internal data bus speeds), and run the same program (again at the exact same time), that both Macintoshes would produce the same random sequence. Unlikely, but true.

Now compare this with Tristan Bastit's Vanishings of L.V.Gogh, an interactive computer-based artwork which utilises the user's sex and name to 'seed' the values to which it generates composites of artworks. Bastit's program has a seed that generates 98,304 different possibilities. Most computer seeds are 16-bit, which makes 65,536 different possible sequences of random digits. It follows therefore, that by using a computer's built-in random routines is no less creative than asking a user for their name so that the rules of composition can be generated. Autoshop merely automates the process one step further - by not requiring you to specify a starting seed - it uses the current time.

Finally, to claim that a system is Artificially Intelligent requires some form of validatory argument. AI has traditionally implied an automated ability to mimic intelligent response. Recently it has been appropriated to include the notion of self-awareness, manifested in most AI code as feedback. If a system is able to feed data back into itself, it becomes a chaotic, complex and dynamical system that is as unpredictable as sheer creativeness.

miocheótkég



SW™
Signwave

4516-7824-4248-5281r
DEVELOPMENT PRE-RELEASE. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE
DEV 0.1d-1S MacOS



Signwave™ Auto-Illustrator 0.1d

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Written by Adrian Ward (adrian@signwave.co.uk)

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Made with REALbasic

Known Bugs

- Mac: Some Mac users have experienced Out of Memory errors when printing, even though they have allocated sufficient amounts of RAM to the application. Hopefully the new object hierarchy in the upcoming 0.1d will solve this strange problem.
- Shockwave SWF export sometimes creates damaged SWF files that can crash your browser/plugin/flash player/ computer (oops!)
- Win32: Double-clicking a file throws an exception error.
- Win32: Application beeps when quitting (?!)
- Win32: Binary Lines sometimes appear to work (although they really don't).
- Win32: Pressing CTRL+V causes a beep (even though it still works).
- Win32: some printers report an error occurred during this operation for Page Setup calls (non-fatal, can be ignored).
- Win32: Shift and alt keys are ignored.
- Win32: keyboard entry for text items is malfunctioning.
- Win32: Quicktime routines totally unstable. Please report your findings.
- Win32: Some (PostScript?) printers don't print properly ... I need some feedback.
- Win32: Copy-FoF-Export doesn't appear to work for Freehand, although it works for pasting the artwork as paths, rather than rendering them, (again, please send me some feedback on this is for your feedback stub on the web).
- Win32: Bugs have been impossible for some time. A bug Report tool doesn't appear to work any more.

Next release 0.1d-r17 (no release date)

Completely re-implemented internal object hierarchy to much easier to implement vector-based effects and rendering. Possibilities for improvements include:

- brand new data format (much more compact)
- support for arbitrary fonts (this means that DOCUMENTS, SAMPLES, and ALL OTHERS WILL BE UPLOADED TO THE SERVER)
- also be scrapping the plug-in architecture (something a bit more modern)

- revised document window now looks much nicer
- paths no longer need to be closed
- rounded ends (per SWF standard)
- stroke weights (per SWF standard)
- new stroke inspector palette (it's much easier to use)
- new flash screen (ie, the most important change)

- corrected printer margins inaccuracy

- brand new document setup dialog. Rather than a new printer being created with a default printer selection (which was causing problems for users without a default printer installed), you may now preview the document before the document is created. This resolves other problems with documents being created that had incorrect dimensions (8.5x11, etc) which was very handy for all those who were drawing for alternative dimensions...

- new style like Setup dialog. It's much easier to use. (Set-Up dialog and it allows in-region editing)

because we love you, you can now control the object properties through the object properties dialog. This is a fixed bug that caused objects to migrate to different windows.

- fixed bug that caused objects to migrate to different windows.
- fixed bug that caused objects to migrate to different windows.
- fixed bug that caused objects to migrate to different windows.

Convert backwards compatibility. Break paths - split into segments. Montage - copy and paste separately.

Separate objects into separate windows. Subsequent windows are created automatically.

the next time you open the application. The next time you open the application.

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GM manifesto *

A spectre is haunting the music industry -- the spectre of generative music. All the powers of the established 'music' industries have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: performers, composers, distributors, technicians, record companies and police-spies. Auto-generative systems have established the possibility of advanced music production that disposes of the need for all these characters with their fixed role-play and narrow creative parameters. More than simply aiming to stimulate spontaneous creative activity and to diminish the significance of the performer or artist, GM experiments run against the grain of the music industry as a whole. Where is the opposition that has not hurled back the reproach of generative music, against the more advanced combinations of art, music and the application of science and technology? Clearly at this point in time, there is a state of flux with performers undermining the established production and distribution paradigms, and yet for the most part, the performers themselves still rely on very conventional compositional and performative strategies, fawning fans and merchandise. GM opposes this approach. Two things result from this fact:

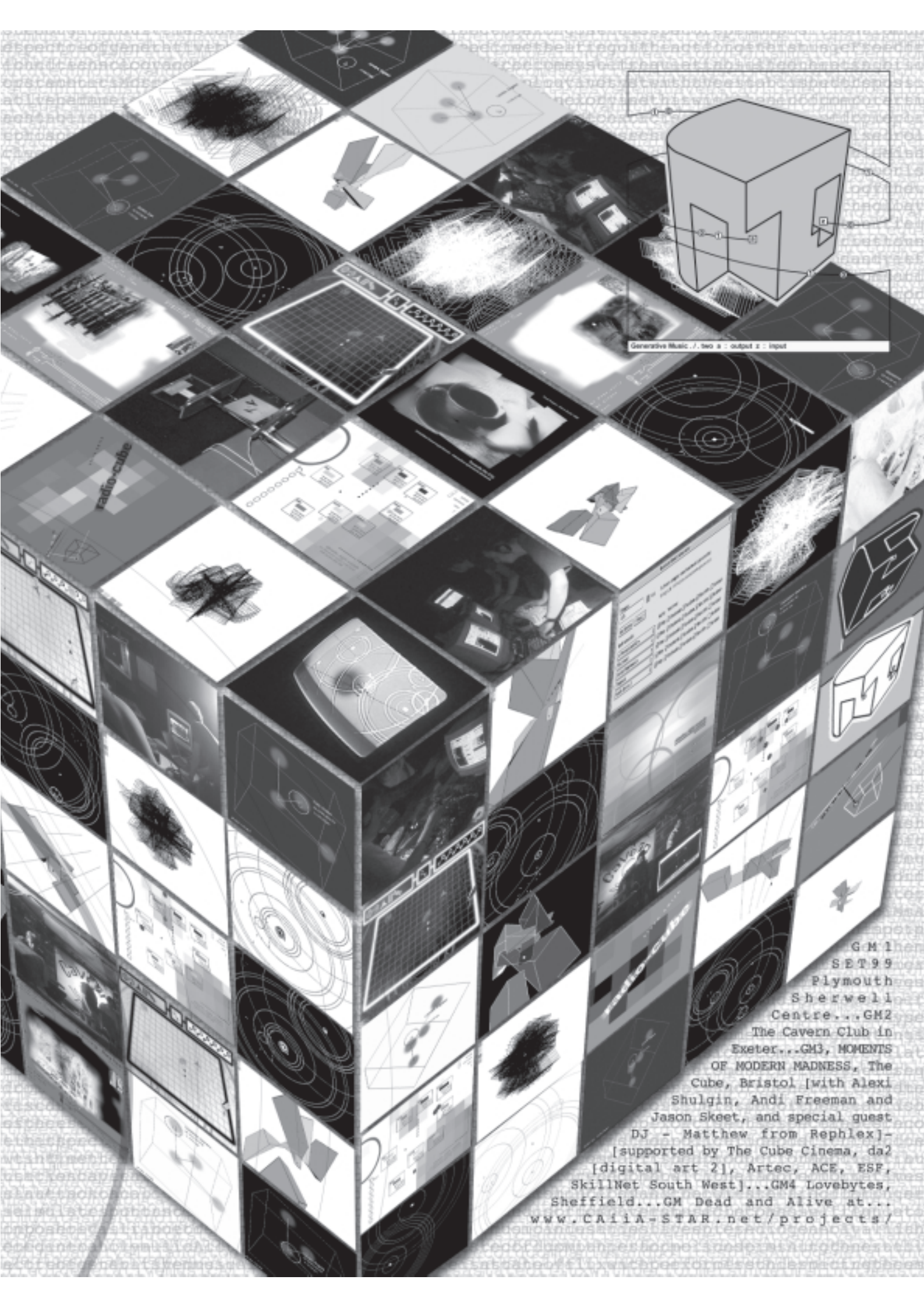
I. GM is already acknowledged as an attack on capitalist values and the commodity form.

II. It is high time that the so-called avant-garde recognised that radical potential lies in the link to technology and consumption, and that sound is always experienced in space and time.

To this end, GM investigates the creative possibilities of auto-generative systems. GM says that creativity should integrate art and sound production with the advances of science and technology, and that with the aid of computers, music becomes 'self-regulating', 'self generating' and 'self consuming'. The listener and spectator, always situated (auditorium, club, online, en masse or in private), can have a direct bearing on the action of this music. Freed from the tyranny of the rewind/play button, from the ions and grooves of recording media, listener and sound are now equal components of the auto-generative system. Receivers and transmitters of a digital-genetic code: transmit, stream, cast - go forth and multiply. Audio of the world auto-generate.

GM 2001





Generative Music /, two a : output z : input

GM1
SET99
Plymouth
Sherwell
Centre...GM2
The Cavern Club in
Exeter...GM3, MOMENTS
OF MODERN MADNESS, The
Cube, Bristol [with Alexi
Shulgin, Andi Freeman and
Jason Skeet, and special guest
DJ - Matthew from Replex]-
[supported by The Cube Cinema, da2
[digital art 2], Artec, ACE, ESP,
SkillNet South West]...GM4 Lovebytes,
Sheffield...GM Dead and Alive at...
www.CAiiA-STAR.net/projects/



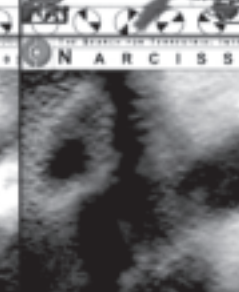
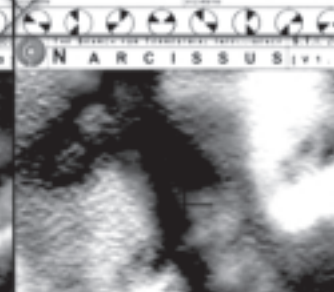
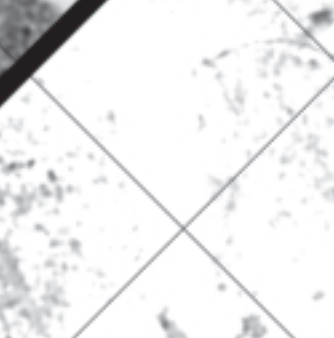
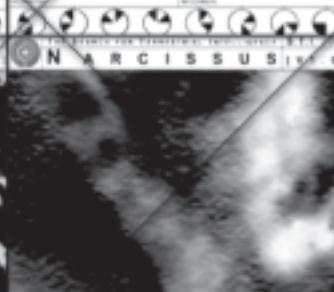
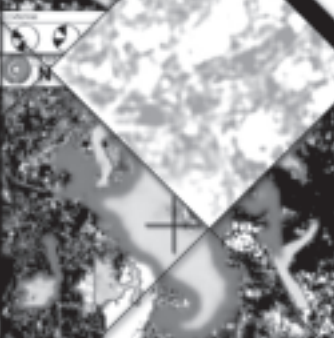
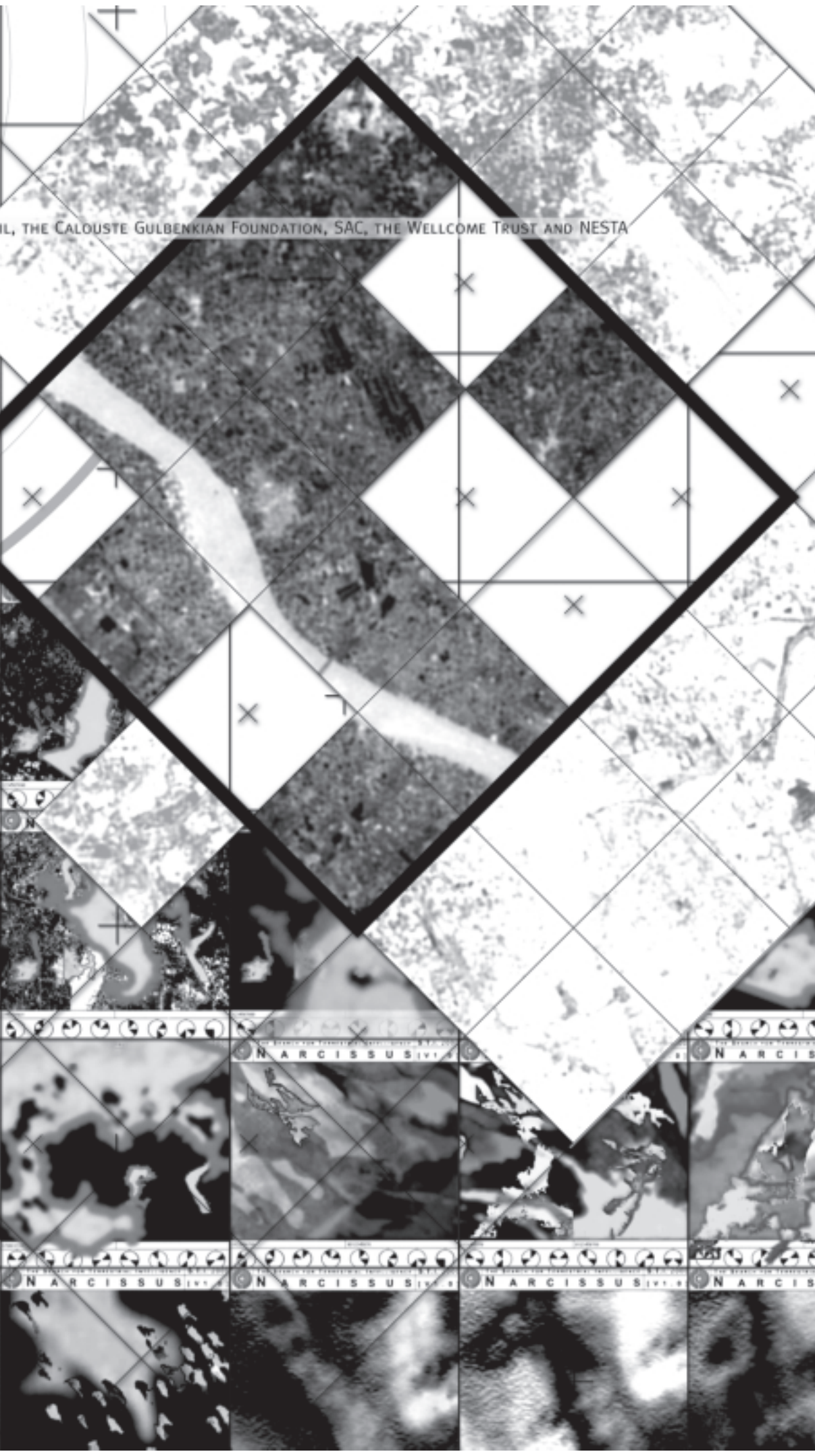
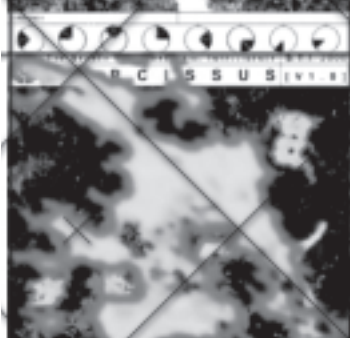
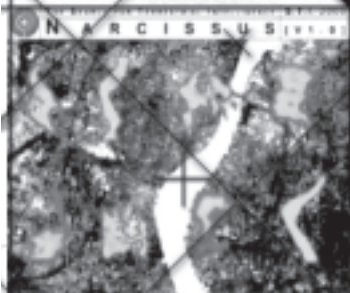
S.T.I. IS FUNDED BY THE SCIART PROGRAMME (SUPPORTED


- The S.T.I. Project: The Search for Terrestrial Intelligence -

S.T.I. turns the technologies that look to deep space for Alien intelligence back onto Planet Earth in a quest for 'evidence' of Terrestrial Intelligence. Using satellite imaging and remote sensing techniques S.T.I. will scour the Planet Earth using similar processes employed by SETI (the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence). Looking at Earth from space the project will develop processing techniques using autonomous computer software agents. In their search for evidence of intelligence the agents will generate new images, animations and audio (which may produce more questions than answers) which are publicly accessible on the S.T.I. website (www.CAIIA-STAR.net/STI). The S.T.I. Project Consortium brings together artists, scientists and technologists from four research groups (STAR, CNAS, ATR, NRSC) based in three organisations, the University of Plymouth, ATR Media Integration & Communications (Japan), and the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC). The S.T.I. Project is constructed by a Development Committee, which consists of eight individuals, they are: Mike Phillips (Project Co-ordinator), Geoff Cox and Chris Speed from STAR © University of Plymouth; Dr Guido Bugmann and Dr Angelo Cangelosi from the Centre for Neural and Adaptive Systems (CNAS), © University of Plymouth; Christa Sommerer and Laurent Mignonneau from ATR Media Integration & Communications; Dr Nick Vack: Technical Director, National Remote Sensing Centre. S.T.I. establishes a common ground for the consortium by sharing the collective knowledge of remote sensing, imaging technologies, autonomous agents (AI and Neural Networks), and On-Line interaction. The Project fuses this knowledge into a challenging exploration of planetary data analysis, through a process of experimental prototyping of a number of autonomous data analysis agents that reside on the S.T.I. website. Vision dominates our culture and lies at the heart of scientific and artistic endeavour for truth and knowledge. Increasingly the dominance of the human eye is being challenged by a new generation of technologies that do our seeing for us. These technologies raise critical questions about the nature of the truth and knowledge they elicit, and the way in which we interpret them. The S.T.I. Project goes beyond the irony of the search for terrestrial intelligence on Earth by engaging with our understanding of the 'real world' through our senses, whether real or artificially enhanced. Will these autonomous systems 'know' the 'truth' when they 'see' it? The S.T.I. Project engages in critical issues surrounding the shift from the hegemony of the eye to the reliance on autonomous systems to do our seeing for us. This shift has an equal impact on scientific processes and creative endeavour. By turning away from 'outer space' to an examination of 'our space' the project also engages public interest, as expressed in the popular imagination through science fiction (X files, etc), in the alien within our midst. Do we recognise ourselves when seen through our artificial eyes. For example: 'Face on Mars'. The blurred and faded images sent back by the 1976 Viking Orbiter reveal little to the naked eye, until they are digitally processed. The processing slowly reveals a skull like face that stares blankly from the surface of mars. The technology strips away the grain and fuzz and re-visions. The 'face' becomes gradually un-obscured, progressively un-veiled, with features suggestive of eyes, a ridge-like nose, and a mouth, its 'truth' emerging through the technology. Maybe the processing techniques employed allow us to see more clearly the images we nurture inside our heads. Maybe they bring into sharp focus the things we want to see. The output from the S.T.I. project will generally conform to the Open Source definition (Version 1.7), ie: free redistribution, distribution in source code as well as compiled form, allowing modifications and derived works, no discrimination against persons, groups or fields of endeavour, etc.

- The S.T.I. Project: The Search for Terrestrial Intelligence -

BY THE ACE, THE BRITISH COUNCIL, THE CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION, SAC, THE WELLCOME TRUST AND NESTA





The Spector Project explores the impact of telematic technologies and virtual reality structures on the production and consumption of a narrative that is performed by actors, avatars and autonomous objects/texts bound up within an online generative framework. The narrative structure explored through the Spector Project takes on an architectural significance, a moment fractured across a distributed space only to be re-constructed by the passage of an audience moving through it. Within the Spector Project narrative and telematic forms converge within a broader architectural form. The grand narrative of Chaucer's 'The Canterbury Tales', (specifically the 'Millers Tale') provides a 'holding-form' for the Spector Project through a series of episodic but inter-associated narratives drawn from each of the character entangled within the Tale.

The Spector Project can be found at:
www.CAiiA-STAR.net/projects/SPECTATOR
The Spector Project is funded by DA2 and STAR and involves limbomedia, Mike Phillips, Peter Ride, Liz Swift, Simon Turley, Laura Watts, Karen Wheatley.

"But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem..."
(Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales)



The Miller's Tale

A rich carpenter, called John, lives in
They take in student called Nicholas
has skill as an astrologer – he special
predictions. He puts fruit and b
sweet smelling. He own be
friends) he also posse
way with him, alm
the perfect co
- he has
full

The world of the Spectorator is the indefinable place in which stories are told: the place of storytelling. Like the pilgrims, everyone entering this world has the potential to be a storyteller, or to interject or challenge any story element. The interest is as much in the act of telling of the tales as it is in the actual story itself. The various elements that make up the Millers Tale are distributed through the Spectorator structure. The VRML environment is constructed from many separate worlds, each containing a coherent element of the narrative. Each fragment represents an aspect of the story, the listeners, characters, props and text, and by fragmenting the whole, the VRML worlds provide a series of discreet experiences, all revolving around the moment where red-hot iron meets skin, or the tub crashes through the floor, or the love pact is made. The moment of the narrative is fragmented into a spectrum of separate elements, which are brought together for the viewer as they traverse the worlds and interact with others.

