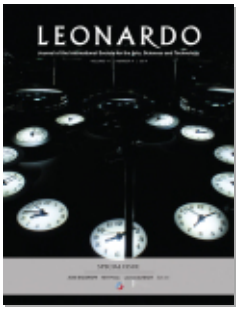


Introduction

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Leonardo, Volume 47, Number 4, 2014, pp. 396-397 (Article)

Published by The MIT Press

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Introduction

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In the sea of ever-changing conditions of multiple realities, there is no single or homogenous approach, but a diversity of resisting mechanisms and artistic strategies. Therefore, *translation*, as a term and as a tool, generates plenty of potential fields for art production in disconnected trajectories. Furthermore, these fields have the capability to cover and merge with other fields of knowledge. Translation indicates a detached and forward movement from the source. It is also a freeing act, which paradoxically contains a burden of responsibility for the source. Therefore, this movement has limits and fine borderlines, yet it could designate "more" than the source. Translation is a call for other realities and also another way to see other realities. Translation can also blend "fact" with fiction by blurring the difference between them. In this vein, translation as a term could be interpreted in multiple ways on different layers of perception. While this term indicates a mechanical act, it may also refer to global and local societal developments such as resistance movements, alternative economies, information leaks, migration flows, and mobility.

Works in the Art Gallery have several common approaches and angles. While some of them position the viewer as the witness of what the work is, criticizes, and/or processes, others encourage the viewer to be part of their content through interactive approaches. Some works inhabit experiences with different media and formats, while some produce inquiries about technological developments and their political, ideological, cultural, and economic implications.

Points of View (2013–2014) by Zohar Kfir is an ongoing interactive database-driven web documentary that represents a collaboration between the artist and B'Tselem's Camera Distribution Project (The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, www.btselem.org). The work enables viewers to navigate through a variety of scenes, locations and timelines in the West Bank and Gaza from multiple points of view. *Points of View* is a perfect example of translating traditional cinematic techniques with interactivity, layering visuals, compressing and expanding time, and fracturing narrative. The project both conveys the day-to-day lives of Palestinians and documents some of the human rights violations that occur in the region. *Subway Stories* (2013) by Alon Chitayat is another work about personal stories and how they are merged with daydreaming and imagination. The work also inhabits a strong criticism of control mechanisms and isolation, experienced on a daily basis: the "conductor's box" enables the viewer/user to control the projection and its focus point. While one handle is controlling the train's speed, the other handle sets the camera zoom. The thoughts and sounds of the passenger in focus are heard according to the movements and decisions of the viewer/user.

Paul Stout's *Apparition* (2014) is an installation composed of many contrasting materials including glass, plastic, electronic components, wire, brass, steel, LCD screens, and preserved plant and animal matter. The work eliminates the interaction factor by positioning the viewer as "the witness" of its continuous course. *Apparition's* content is articulated by observing and exposing a set of natural processes envisioned as elaborate machines. Ecological catastrophes are also the subject of Rachele Riley's *The Evolution of Silence* (2013). The work is a web-based archive, visualizing the scale of damage brought about by nuclear testing at the Nevada Test Site. By navigating through this archive based on a non-linear map, the viewer experiences this restricted desert landscape as a personal voyage.

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Yunsil Heo's *Levitate* (2013) is a kinetic sculpture, directly related to one-to-one translation. The sculpture is composed of levitated ping-pong balls in acrylic tubes that are activated by audience interaction. His other gallery work, *Modern Video Processor* (2013), is about the political and ideological language of technology through 1980s-style wooden video effector modules. This interactive, loud, and amusing work not only questions our limits to control technology today, but also underlines the gender-based inclinations of the power nodes that control, filter, and disseminate technology. Likewise, Emilio Vavarella's work *TRANSICONMORPHOSIS* (2013) questions the transformation of our perception along with new forms of communication technologies. A simple chat with emoticons is the nucleus of the translation depicted in this work: With a series of electrodes connected to the face of a viewer/user, the emoticon received through the chat is translated into electrical impulses. Through the electrodes, the viewer's/user's facial features are forced to mimic the expression of each emoticon. The work also subtly detects the control mechanisms beneath the technologies of daily life. On the other hand, *Speculatorum Oculi (The Eyes of Spies)* (2014) by Erik Brunvand presents an exaggerated reaction to current surveillance activities. Huge surveillance cameras, monitoring an architectural model with no action, along with those monitoring the monitored site by randomly switching the views, clearly depict the ironic situation that we all accept to live in. The work runs with black humor orbiting around the policies and the conditions of surveillance, data collection, and privacy.

Inmi Lee's *Mother* (2013), as a series of generative sculptures, demonstrates a layered translation with multiple steps: based on research, the work presents a series of translations from verbal and aural language to body language through hand gestures, then translates those data to 3D forms with a prototyping machine. The end result, which appears as minimal and abstract sculptures, clearly shows an independent new lifespan and existence of strong forms by concealing their references. *Lineographs* (2014) by Joseph Farbrook is also based on gesture and motion. This poetic work mimics the process of ink drawing with a series of electronic displays. In the same line of thought, *SeeMore* (2014) by Sam Blanchard is a kinetic sculpture based on the process of parallel computational thinking. The work processes the act of translation on multiple layers by translating and correlating movements with the parallel algorithms of an animatronic 256-node Raspberry Pi computer cluster. On the other hand, *Looking Glass Time* (2013) by Yoichi Ochiai is an experimental animation that is "not" based on any recording media, but appears as a critical and cynical approach to the interdependency of current time-based applications and controlled lives.

With the accumulation of these outstanding works, ultimately the main focus of the SIGGRAPH 2014 Art Gallery revolves around the readings, responses and perceptions of "the act of translation" as a productive tool based on criticality.

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