



M O G A

Museum of Glitch Aesthetics

featuring the life and work of The Artist 2.0

“For me, art and life are all about style, and my own style is in constant metamorphosis. It’s about filtering the data and then rendering into vision the next version of creativity coming.”
—*The Artist 2.0*

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MUSEUM OF GLITCH AESTHETICS

Museum of Glitch Aesthetics *[the unofficial catalog to the transmedia narrative* *featuring the life and work of The Artist 2.0]*

THIS ARTICLE HAS MULTIPLE ISSUES. PLEASE HELP IMPROVE IT OR DISCUSS THESE ISSUES ON THE TALK PAGE.

*THIS BIOGRAPHY OF A LIVING FICTION ROLE-PLAYING ITSELF AS A DIGITAL FLUX PERSONA **NEEDS ADDITIONAL CITATIONS** FOR VERIFICATION.

*IT **NEEDS ATTENTION FROM AN EXPERT ON THE SUBJECT.**

*ITS MYTHOLOGICAL USE OF NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES CAMOUFLAGED ART HISTORY MAY NOT FOLLOW STANDARD POLICIES OR GUIDELINES.

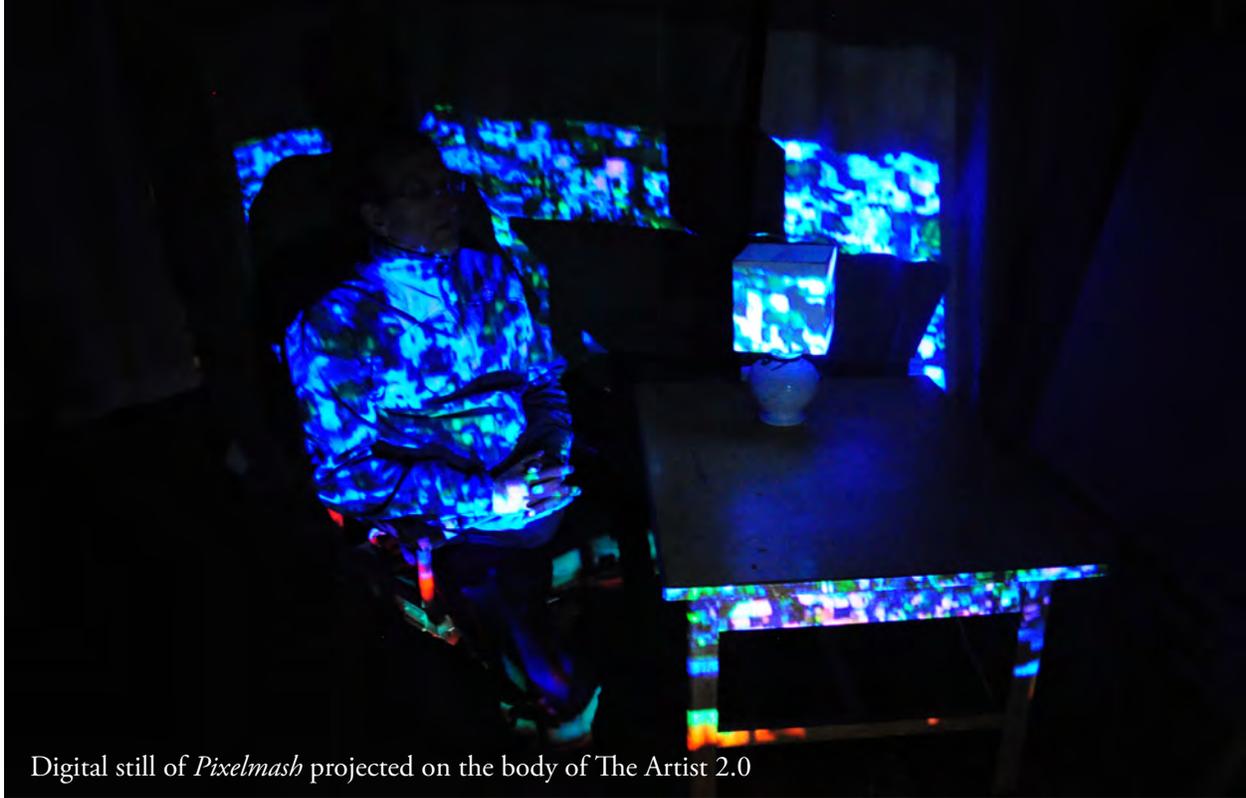
The Museum of Glitch Aesthetics features the life and work of The Artist 2.0.

The Artist 2.0 is the eponymous figure whose early 21st century oeuvre is featured online in the *Museum of Glitch Aesthetics* (MOGA). Presented as an “open persona” whose practice is a composite of hundreds of artists and hactivists all over the world, the story of The Artist 2.0 is playfully documented via the experimental transmedia narrative created by the artist Mark Amerika as a new commission for the Abandon Normal Devices festival in the Northwest of England and in conjunction with the London 2012 Olympics and Cultural Olympiad.

For reasons that remain unknown, “The Artist 2.0” persona was created to indicate how an emerging form of art making associated with social media practices and an emerging New Aesthetic are simultaneously

challenging conventional art world exhibition contexts as well as embedding themselves in the art historical canon. In this regard, The Artist 2.0 is perhaps the first fictional figure whose body of work grows out of the emerging networked and mobile media culture and whose career trajectory is now part of a continuum of academically sanctioned, avant-garde art history dating back to the late 19th century.

In a curatorial essay about the artist written by online curator Francesca Nilsson, she was quoted as saying that “[t]he contradictory and complex readings of the work created by The Artist 2.0 reinforces its ongoing relevance to multiple audiences. More than ever, identity is malleable and fluid, and his role as a post-production or remix artist, especially as he plays with issues of performance, presence, and persona, confirm this.” *[citation needed]*



Digital still of *Pixelmash* projected on the body of The Artist 2.0

In this same essay, Nilsson doubles down and suggests that “perhaps what is most interesting about 2.0’s body of work is that it doesn’t tell you what to think. Rather, the work is so rich in meaning that everyone can develop their own ideas in relationship to both the work and the artist. Everyone reads something different into it.” [citation needed]

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Historical Overview

In late 2005, while participating in ad hoc art exhibitions in alternative spaces throughout the Northwest of England, The Artist 2.0 launched his first series of social media sites on Myspace, Blogger, Flickr, and YouTube. The works that were found on these sites, many of which no longer exist but some of which are now documented and exhibited at the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics in a different form, included a mixture of digitally manipulated still images, animated GIFs, Net art, mobile phone videos, glitchy audio-tracks, and experimental electronic literature.

Once new Web technologies began permeating mainstream culture and social media practice became an indispensable part of everyday life for artists and non-artists alike, The Artist 2.0 further expanded his

practice and began exploring software programs like Google Earth.

Some of his most famous works include *Lake Como Remix*, a glitchy, long form music video composed of experimental navigations through Google Street View in Northern Italy, *The Comedy of Errors*, a long form comedy album featuring the mock comedic performance of one of his art professors (Mark Amerika), and his *HD Streaming* series of high-definition artworks that were originally thought to have been located exclusively in the Lake District of England but that have recently been found on the Internet in locations as diverse as Bahia (Brazil), Colorado (USA), and Hawaii (USA). Most of the *HD Streaming* works explore the relationship between water, data and the concept of flow.

Other celebrated works created by The Artist 2.0 include the *Lake District Walks* that record and subsequently postproduce his aesthetic “walkthroughs” in the heart of the NW of England, his very early *.gif(t) economy* series of minimalist animated GIFs that are generally considered some of the first works of moving image art ever created on a mobile phone, and his later works such as *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*, a two channel digital video work that remixes footage from his earlier *Lake District Walks* series with experimental 3D imagery.

According to one of the artist’s most prominent collectors, pop star Princess Bi, The Artist 2.0 has intentionally gone “off the grid” and is now in hiding somewhere in the Bahia region of

Brazil. [citation needed] The recent release of the short video *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U* is attributed to 2.0 and contains both Google Earth imagery and found footage said to be captured in various regions of Brazil.

The Artist 2.0's Glitch Aesthetics

Whereas it's true that the avant-garde artists and writers of the 20th century served a variety of artistic, social and political purposes, The Artist 2.0 is historically canonized in the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics as a collaborative and pseudonymous creative force whose collective body of works, though limited in number, have been able to employ networked and mobile media communication strategies unavailable to his radical predecessors. According to online curator and performance artist Margot Kittler, the main aesthetic strategy of The Artist 2.0 is to create "an alternative dream world of inclusion where a utopian collective, comprised of networks of like-minded artists and intellectuals, use all available new media technologies to intervene in and/or disrupt global capitalist flows." [citation needed] The fictional personae who drive the energetic activity that powers these networks often turn to what Kittler refers to as "glitch aesthetics" as a way to undermine "the predictable protocols of exclusion" found in the upmarket commodity culture generally associated with the art market. According to Kittler, "artists like 2.0 are on an aesthetic mission to disrupt mainstream perceptions of how these art market venues stage faux objective standards in determining the aesthetic value of a work of art." [citation needed]

"These creatively inclined hacker networks, particularly those that operate over Internet and mobile media protocols," Kittler writes, "work against this idea of scarcity and challenge us to rethink the Benjaminian concept of 'aura' as something to be measured vis-à-vis sharing and the collaborative remixing of source material instead of focusing on the unique art object located in a specific space and time." [citation needed]

Thus, rather than being understood only as a young renegade whose entire social media art practice is a hoax aimed at gaining widespread international recognition that can then be cashed in on once the art world is paying attention (see **Banksy**), The Artist 2.0 has rapidly become a positive "metamediumystic figure" (Kittler) who embodies "the cut and paste lifestyle of transmedia storytellers and network performance artists all over the world." [citation needed] [improper synthesis?]

Gabrielle Whitebread, the lead curator at the the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics, describes the "author function" of The Artist 2.0 and his glitch aesthetics in a conversation with museum director Nigel Foster:

"The glitch aesthetic, at least in the context of what this entire museum project is founded upon, relates to the minor disturbances -- intentionally executed or not -- that disrupt the flow of data and that introduce glitchy digital artifacts for aesthetic effect. Sometimes it means just setting up various parameters that create random glitch effects and then allowing those effects to remain in the work...And let's not forget that the artist always has the option of intentionally causing or creating glitch from scratch, that it need not just be an unintentional outcome of some technical malfunction, but that the 'meaning,' if there is any meaning to be found in the work, can be located just as much in the noise generated by the glitch process as in the actual images or sounds being exhibited by the artist. And for him, this intentional glitch could manifest itself in the transmission of the work into the field of distribution. This is where 2.0 takes the work of Conceptualism into uncharted territory." [citation needed]

According to Whitebread, experimenting with the network distribution model as a venue to stage his public performance as a "digital flux persona" and "nomadic Net artist" becomes the primary (and ongoing) activity in the artist's conceptual oeuvre. Employing the strategy of "transgressive shareability," Whitebread has written extensively about how the artist uses the Internet as an evolving medium to develop "a social media performance art practice." According to Whitebread, 2.0 "initiates a spatial practice, one where he becomes self-consciously aware of the fact that by marking the Net as a collaborative and gift economy, he is simultaneously capturing the attention of the art market but also isolating himself from the 'real life' protocols it depends on for creating exclusivity in elitist social circles under oligarchic economic conditions." [citation needed]

As early as 2002, various mainstream museum curators such as Nicholas Bourriaud had already begun to appropriate the languages of DJ culture, computer programming, and Net artistry to further their own economic and cultural agendas while simultaneously creating relevance for artists who still maintained an adherence to the more traditional, material and craft based museum culture (see **relational aesthetics**). The rush of high profile mainstream curators to

appropriate the language of network and remix/mashup culture for their own economic and cultural agendas eventually led to a parallel strain of “Internet-aware” art composed primarily by second-generation digital artists who studied Internet-based art in art school but who still felt the need to compete in the traditional gallery context and, according to an article on the popular *Rhizome* website, “were quick to try and commodify their practice in commercial art gallery contexts.” [citation needed] Although there are no indications that The Artist 2.0 ever felt the need to fully engage with this parallel set of peers whose commodity oriented strain of offline art practices may have bored him, his work has made limited appearances inside conventional museum and gallery spaces.

Having said that, The Artist 2.0 is clearly aware of his place in art history and has even written about the tensions most media art curators acknowledge is a defining moment in the digital culture. According to an early writing attributed to The Artist 2.0 and originally published on the now inactive (but archived) Alternative-X (Alt-X) website:

“I totally understand how a curator might use these PR forms of narrative mythology to ‘make’ art history since I too perform a similar function in my own work but, needless to say, I do it in a totally different, DIY way, i.e. I just go online and remix myself again and again by exporting my creative energy through a wide range of conceptual filters that are programmed to attack genres and formats that I find culturally constipated and in need of a good flushing.” [citation needed]

Later, in the same article, he writes:

“The Conceptual artist of the 21st century should be addressing questions like, ‘What are the most innovative ways to continually remix yourself into the field of distribution? What does it mean to create a value-added social media network and how does this relate to both your public persona / presence and your right to privacy and freedom of speech? Designing work that you visualize as clever enough to penetrate the art market runs parallel to triggering unconscious modes of self-censorship. The opportunity costs go both ways, but in the final analysis, you have to ask yourself, ‘How much is your unfettered creative practice really worth?’”

Not all of the artists of his generation have agreed with the theories or political positions of The Artist 2.0 and

some have even shown defiance while using the Net to engage his philosophy and artwork in ongoing flame wars, especially as talk of a museum devoted solely to his work started leaking out to the art press.

Tracing the trajectory of works said to have been created by The Artist 2.0 and that are now featured in the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics, the emerging conceptual personae the artist employs in his “open source lifestyle practice” all rely on the Internet and/or mobile media devices to express a 21st century digital vision of what it means to hack the data of everyday life. The works reveal the artist’s propensity to capture, manipulate, and distribute images of landscapes, portraits, nature scenes, social events, and industrial wastelands as well as audio-visual source material created by others with whom he directly or indirectly collaborates. These thematic concerns and the various glitch filters he develops to form each new body of work, figure prominently in the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics.

Museum of Glitch Aesthetics

The Museum of Glitch Aesthetics (MOGA) covers seven primary phases or themes of creative work produced by The Artist 2.0: *The Early Years*, *Art School Studies*, *Lake District Walks*, *Google-Assisted Living*, *HD Streaming*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and the *Later Works*.

The Early Years

The first documented work of art created by The Artist 2.0, and that art historians generally consider the earliest example of his signature style glitch effect, is *Pixelmash*, a digital video projection inside a small installation space in the derelict Winter Gardens building in Morecambe, United Kingdom. The building, now under repair by the Friends of the Winter Gardens, has occasionally been used for ad hoc “pop-up” exhibitions and it is believed The Artist 2.0 projected this moving image glitch work inside the venue as part of an alternative exhibition put on by local and regional artists tied to the region’s audio/visual performance and Net art scenes. In addition to the museum’s exhibition of a poorly compressed video documentation of *Pixelmash* captured on a first-generation mobile phone, there are also a few higher resolution digital still images of the work being projected in a different part of the building. One particular digital still shows the work being projected on a man sitting on a chair near a desk in a very darkened room.

Some believe that this figure being projected on to is The Artist 2.0.

In the past, the artist's own online video channels have included a cluster of poor quality video images that appear to come from the same type of mobile phone that documented the exhibition in the Winter Gardens. These short works, generally referred to as the *.gif(t) economy* series of animated GIFs, appear to be a mix of "mobile video studies" that include street scenes, tourist videos, and experimentally composed images appropriated from the Web including images of paintings by Goya, close-ups of historically relevant avant-garde film works, and famous 1980s pop stars like Madonna and Marilyn Manson. This interest in darker artists like Goya, avant-garde moving image artists, and pop stars like Madonna point to future works including his glitch portraits of figures such as Britney Spears, Franz Kafka, Marcel Duchamp, and Arthur Rimbaud, his overt remix of the filmic style of Chris Marker in *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U*, as well as his long form dark comedy album entitled *The Comedy of Errors*.

Many of the works in the *.gif(t) economy* series are thought to have been made by slicing stills from what are thought to be longer video loops and then reinserting these same stills into readily available GIF animation software to create short, flickering loops that the artist then distributes in various locations and cultural contexts across the Web. These animated GIF experiments eventually open up new threads of artistic development for the artist, including his live VJ performances, as he begins to explore his signature glitch style in more direct and assertive ways.

Another important work created during these early years of development include a series of Flash-based experiments in language-based Net art or what has since been labeled electronic forms of literature. Among the works created during this time period is a contemplative textwork titled *Verse Versus Versions*. These works are often considered derivative of early Net artworks from artists such as Young Hae-Chang Heavy Industries, jodi.org and American artist Joel Swanson whose *Sext* is generally viewed as a breakthrough work in what various 21st century American art history and literature scholars refer to as codework. [citation needed]

Perhaps the most significant early art project that the artist began around the same time he was composing his initial animated GIFs is a Blogger site that historians believe went through various iterations and titles but that the artist eventually used as a pre-Tumblr site to exhibit his earliest collection of digital still images,

or what he then referred to as "data captures," where he has manipulated the binary data inside his image files to create handmade glitch effects. These digital still images include portraits (Kafka, Rimbaud, Einstein, and random unknown others) as well as landscapes, urban scenes, and mock still-life images. There are also incongruous references to much older works such as Cezanne's *Mount Victoire As Seen From Basel* and Duchamp's *In Advance of the Broken Arm*.

It is speculated that soon after he had been accepted into art school he re-titled the blog *Glitch Aesthetics* which is now the name of the museum venue devoted exclusively to his body of work. This blog site continued to grow once he entered art school lasting exactly one year with one image being posted per week, and is now contained in the "Art School Studies" area of the museum website located at glitchmuseum.com.

Art School Studies

Many believe the Artist 2.0 is a former art student who went to school in the Northwest of England. Although no one has successfully identified exactly who the artist is -- there are even discussions that it's really the work of numerous artists who have created a faux persona to embody their collective ambitions and aesthetic interests in glitch methodologies -- many of the early mobile phone video artworks, as well as subsequent works, were shot in recognizable Northwest locations such as the Lake District, Manchester, The Lowry, Crook O' Lune, and the Heysham Nuclear Power Station.

Work from this period, shot primarily on a Nokia N93 or N95 mobile phone video recorder, as well as subsequent works shot on what appears to be a portable, high-definition video camera, accentuates both the artist's playful, experimental handheld techniques as well as his more cerebral and, in some cases, serene meditations on the interrelationship between nature and industry. Referring to the near-still life mobile phone video landscape works that integrate industrial sites into the picture frame, Whitebread believes the artist is indirectly appropriating the work of LS Lowry as a way to highlight his own connection to a decidedly DIY and folksonomic aesthetic:

"...as we know, Lowry was himself somewhat obsessed with factory life in the Northwest of England during his working life in and around Salford. His 'matchstick men' and unaffected industrial landscape paintings have been the subject of great controversy if not outright ridicule. But 2.0 felt a kind of allegiance to Lowry due to his own

naiveté on all things art world or art market related and in some ways, reveals himself to be a kind of DIY videographer and photographer using nothing but his mobile phone to capture data and do the upload thing.”

Other works from this time also use the mobile video recorder to create more experimental video imagery, including a beach landscape many believe he shot during a vacation to Cornwall, and an intentionally jerky and experimentally edited video that captures a tram ride on the Manchester-Salford route.

Lake District Walks

After art school, The Artist 2.0 began making and self-exhibiting more mobile phone video footage from the Lake District of England. These works, simply titled *Lake District Walks*, were shot primarily on a Nokia N93 where the artist appears to have taken full advantage of the portable device’s unique swivel design. The slightly disorienting angles and lightly manipulated video that reveals both the in-camera glitch as well as the artist’s own self-conscious datamoshing in his laptop studio, build on his earlier investigations into the nature of technology and the technological apprehension of nature as image. The moving images in these mobile video works are literally being accessed as part of a pre-designated “walkthrough” not unlike the work of established British artists such as Richard Long and Andy Goldsworthy. According to Whitebread,

“Long has created these aesthetically appealing walkthroughs where, as we know, he spends days on end walking through various landscapes around the world. These walkthroughs are also what I would term ‘durational achievements,’ although our experience of them tends to come in the form of some aestheticized documentation, including what Long refers to as textworks or sculptures... For the Artist 2.0, these over-aestheticized artifacts are all unnecessarily encumbered by an art world system that he finds absolutely problematic or, at the very least, a kind of administrative nuisance since he just wants to record his walks until his phone’s smart-card runs out of space or he just turns it off. He’ll then take the phone loaded with its video data back into the studio, and by that I mean his laptop -- he really is not a studio artist anymore -- and after bluetoothing the files on to his hard drive, he’ll either post-produce the data into a video art clip or in some cases doesn’t do anything at all with the data, just compresses the raw source material as a video file that he automatically uploads to his online channel.”

Close readings of the *Lake District Walks* series reveal both video works that are captured as is and videos that have layers of intentional glitch effects being post-produced into the viewing experience. One of 2.0’s later works, *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*, contrasts video source material from the *Lake District Walks* series with a simulated moving image created in a 3-D game design program that playfully mimics the mobile video imagery. These two streams are then fabricated into a two-channel work that further problematizes the relationship between walking through nature, navigating through computer-constructed worlds, and imagining new modes of augmented or (re)mixed reality.

These radical Web 2.0 research and development methodologies incorporate the use of digital tools that blur the distinction between the professional commercial artist and the amateur or DIY artist who often goes unheralded while introducing the art world to new vernaculars that point to a revolutionary moment in the history of creativity. Hugging the fine line between amateur and auteur, the experimental video artworks found in The Artist 2.0’s *Lake District Walks* series mock the notion of “high production values” and instead undermine preconceived expectations of what a work of contemporary art is or can be.

According to the freelance curator Melissa Bent, “2.0 exploits the tense relationship between the easy to buy, off-the-shelf hardware and software found in most shopping malls and/or freely downloadable software packages taken directly off the Web, and the artist’s playful intention to make this technology do things it was never meant to do.” [citation needed]

Google-Assisted Living

According to art critic and independent philosopher of new media culture, Brian Hale, The Artist 2.0 “operates on a number of simultaneous and continuous tracks that run parallel to each other and enable him to creatively process his various conceptual personae.” Hale believes these conceptual personae are intentionally constructed as part of the artist’s ongoing “pseudo-autobiographical performance,” one that he composes as an on-the-fly remix and that he continually updates in the various digital and social media editing environments that he immerses himself in.

Some of the most profound works created by The Artist 2.0 and that are on view at the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics are a result of his experiments with both the Google Earth and Google Street View platforms.

Various works, such as *Lake Como Remix* and the documentation videos for his live *Satellite Cinema* or *Cinécriture* performances are considered rare instances where the artist is intentionally revealing his source material. In *Lake Como Remix*, the artist uses the Street View program to navigate a particularly narrow and tunnel-filled ride around Lake Como. His on-screen recording of this Google-assisted motion through the landscape is eerily reminiscent of his earlier *Mobile Conduction* handheld mobile phone video art remix of a tram ride in Manchester, England. However, instead of capturing the images of an urban landscape with what was then experimental handheld mobile phone videography, in the *Lake Como Remix*, the artist playfully uses the online navigation software provided by Google Earth to move through the virtual cartography where he cleverly exposes the glitch within the landscape. Houses become ships at sea and tunnels become abstract expressionist forms of a dark Suprematism while the road itself is sometimes rendered as nothing more than a heavily pixelated Italian Futurist painting. [*improper synthesis?*]

The documentation of the *Satellite Cinema* or *Cinécriture* performances indicate to art historians and appreciators alike the degree of secrecy that entombs the online trajectory of The Artist 2.0. It is widely believed that on three separate occasions, The Artist 2.0 performed live audio-visual remixes of what was then one of the earliest versions of Google Earth. Playfully employing 3-D glitch effects by simply navigating the Earth at speeds the network could not accommodate while simultaneously mixing live electronic sounds from his laptop, The Artist 2.0 not only invented an entirely new form of live cinema but also transformed this otherwise 3-D mapping program into a clever VJ software platform to perform postproduction sets that used a simulated version of the entire world as primary source material. The work is controversial in that American-Brazilian artist, Rick Silva, was already touring parts of the globe with what he referred to as his *Satellite Jockey* audio-visual performances. For festivals he was invited to but could not physically attend, Silva arranged to send pre-packaged video edits of some of his best glitch performances using Google Earth. These videos were then transformed into interactive installations where visitors could mix live audio to Silva's video remixes of his *Satellite Jockey* performances. One of these videos was featured in the 2006 FutureSonic festival in Manchester. The Artist 2.0 would have been in the area at the time of Silva's installation.

The director of the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics, Nigel Foster, sees these works, sometimes referred to as the *Google-Assisted Living* series, as part of The Artist 2.0's "digital lifestyle practice" and the museum curator, Whitebread, has written that these specific Google-influenced works reveal the nomadic tendencies of the artist [*citation needed*]. Some critics see these works as derivative of content already explored by the Situationists, particularly in relation to concepts such as *dérive* and *psychogeography*. Hale and Whitebread have even referred to these works as "cyberpsychogeographical." [*citation needed*] Others suggest that while the work is indebted to Situationist tactics, the "look and feel" of the images as filtered through The Artist 2.0's signature glitch aesthetics, as well as its playful use of emerging Web 2.0 technologies, clearly distinguish it from 20th century art practices and point toward some of the weaknesses in the more didactic philosophical musings of the Situationists.

HD Streaming

This fascination with the way technology interferes with the transmission of what is generally referred to as nature as well as the role played by the technological sublime within our imaginary constructions of nature, is further expressed in The Artist 2.0's *HD Streaming* series of artworks. The series title refers to works of high-definition video being shot on and, at times, simultaneously streamed from his smart phone with a built-in mobile phone application that allows for the video to stream over the Web. Many believe this is the first series of works designated as "art" that deliberately used this technology for aesthetic purposes. The ensuing glitchification of artifacts that would result from trying to port live video data through the network at this time in Internet history are said to be consistent with the artist's desire to indicate the way our experience itself is now a highly mediated event that over time begins to feel more natural than what a scenic resource has to offer. In a rare print-only interview with the artist in *Interview* magazine [*citation needed*], 2.0 touches on the *HD Streaming* series of works by saying, "When I see a beautiful scene in front of me, I almost can't believe it. I want to immerse myself in it the way I would a novel or film. But to interrupt my gaga eyes with the purely technical need to capture these environments as streaming images that I then feel compelled to share with my distributed network -- that's when my relationship to nature, to what is seen, becomes problematized. It becomes less about what the artist sees per se and more about what it means to see the way digital devices see, and to respond to ones surroundings with a supplementary machinic vision

connected to the network of others I am sharing my life with. Sometimes I call these works *Site Unseen*.”

According to the new media art collector and pop star Princess Bi, “In most of these glitchworks, the artist has committed himself to go against the grain of a mainstream culture masquerading as a totally natural phenomenon that one must accept as their given reality. This is what first attracted me to his work. All of this mainstream media masking hides what the artist finds unreal -- which is where his aesthetic interests finally lie. He refuses to substitute ‘normalized’ conditions with art historical forms, and resists translating the so-called reality of the world into an image of the world which in turn presents itself as if composed according to ‘the evident laws of the natural order’. But is there really an order to these things? I am a huge international success, but as focused and organized as I may be, the work itself is usually composed after having smoked a few joints and synchronized my entire body with what I call a radicalized disorder. This is a sensibility I think I share with 2.0 which is partly why I support his work so much.” [citation needed]

The *HD Streaming* works are now part of an undocumented history but out of these initial experiments, the Artist 2.0 has also handcrafted various nature scenes that include manipulated forms of glitch within the digital moving image. These glitch effects or datamoshing techniques are particularly employed in that area of the moving image where we see water flowing and have titles such as *The Flow of Data Captured in An Idyllic Scene* and *The Water of Information (Data Flow Capture #36)*.

In the podcast transcript included in this catalog, the museum director, Nigel Foster, discusses the themes of the *HD Streaming* works, particularly the use of water in relation to the concept of data flow. Most 2.0 historians believe these HD works aim to reveal the meditational qualities of the artist’s practice during this crucial transitional period between art school, his reclusive life in the Lake District, and what would soon become a more nomadic lifestyle focused on collaboration, live audio/visual performance, and investigations into hallucinogens and esoteric forms of mysticism.

Recently, art historians and fans of The Artist 2.0 have presented online evidence that the *HD Streaming* series has expanded far beyond the UK and parts of the USA, and there are indications that the artist is still anonymously streaming data from remote locations all over the world [citation needed].

The Comedy of Errors

Perhaps the most enigmatic work in the long trajectory of glitch projects identified with The Artist 2.0 is *The Comedy of Errors*. The work is generally considered a unique sound artwork that remixes the formatting and stylistic tendencies of a live comedy album but with customized audio glitch effects. It has also been referred to as an experimental audio book whose central character is an imaginary art professor-turned-stand-up comedian [citation needed].

Throughout the length of the piece, we hear the voice of the anonymous comic deliver his routine on many relevant topics including sex, money, art school, e-commerce, experimental forms of art and literature, and the increased corporatization of the university apparatus. Other subjects broached in the comedy act include the complexities of expressing ones own free will in the age of global capitalism, the relationship between being an artist and nurturing ones self-esteem, and what the comic refers to as “creative class struggle.” Some of the “routines” are considered so dark they are no longer funny. In this regard, they have been compared to the hard-edged social commentary of comedians like Lenny Bruce and writers such as William Burroughs. [improper synthesis?]

The voice we hear in the work is the artist, novelist, and media theorist Mark Amerika, whom The Artist 2.0 is said to have briefly studied with after having left the UK toward the end of the Noughties. Originally released as a podcast on the Internet, *The Comedy of Errors* quickly circulated in various media formats on the Web and became an underground Web sensation. One review of the work that came out as soon as it was released and that some suspect is written by The Artist 2.0 or perhaps Mark Amerika, reads “if one listens to the entire work from start to finish, the first thing that becomes apparent is that the voice of the comic is consistent with a comedian performing a routine in a mid-size entertainment venue. As the work progresses, though, the audio deteriorates, glitches, loops, stutters, and on occasion turns into noise. But the presence of both comic and the artificial audience members is always audible and this further confounds the performance as an attempt to both satirize the social, economic, and political issues being addressed in the stand-up act as well as the comedy album format itself.” [citation needed] Amerika’s unmistakable voice is presented as an unusual hybrid of stand-up comic, seminar professor, spoken word poet, and neurotic Woody Allenesque character. The work has since been remixed by Amerika and others and redistributed in different media contexts.

On the now-defunct “webcomedy” e-mail list, Abraham Golam posted a note suggesting that the work resonates with a few earlier comedic sound experiments, writing that “listening to *The Comedy of Errors* is like experiencing a mashup of the playful interactivity one finds in Albert Brooks’ *Comedy Minus One* and the satirical jam session of The Residents’ *The King and Eye*. But the real core of influence in the work lies in the anti-tradition of the black arts including figures like Jonathan Swift, Count de Lautréamont, and even Lenny Bruce.” [citation needed]

The original script to the album, which the artists clearly digressed from in postproduction and was briefly made available for free on the Internet, pokes fun at the art market and the general economic conditions in a Post-Great Recession global context. On the track “Creative Class Struggle,” the voice of the comic is scripted to say:

“I mean, do you believe this bullshit enterprise they call the global economy?

Even a wiggly experimental artist like me could see that shit coming down the pike.

I was WAITING for it.

[laughter]

Besides, how is a 21st century avant-garde artist posing as the Next Hot Thing in the global art market SUPPOSED to survive in this bullshit economy?

Oh, I know, I got it.

The creative class [laughter] - that’s what they call it.

The CREATIVE class.

[laughter]

No, seriously, have you heard?

Artists spur on economic development.

[laughter]

No, really!

We’re part of the CREATIVE CLASS.

[laughter]

Seriously. Stop laughing.

[laughter]

You guys just can’t control yourselves tonight, can you?

The creative class ...

It ends up that just by being creative we have VALUE.

[laughter]

See that unemployed schmuck typing away at his laptop in Starbucks?

[laughter]

HE’S a cultural amenity.

[laughter]

He makes life worth living.

[laughter]

No, really, according to the theory, that schmuck is why doctors and lawyers and investment bankers and entrepreneurs of all stripes move to places like Austin or San Francisco or Boulder.

Because he’s sitting at Starbucks being creative and creativity attracts alternative cultural options that you can’t get in Topeka.

[laughter]

So if you’re an unemployed schmuck typing away on your laptop in a Starbucks in Topeka, screw it, you’re just another worthless creative type!

[laughter]

Using Amerika’s voice and original recording as his source material has led to great speculation on the relationship between The Artist 2.0 and one of the early pioneers of so-called net.art. At first, many deduced that The Artist 2.0 was in fact Amerika himself and that the album was remixed by Amerika’s long-time collaborator and internationally renowned sound artist Chad Mossholder, but the historical consistency

of some of the early works as well as the documented testimonials of some of the figures who have collaborated with 2.0 since 2005 have said that this is impossible. Still others have suggested that 2.0 is a “composite characterization of what a second-generation Net artist could be” and that Amerika is but one figure among many, including current and former students of his, who have playfully contributed to the construction of 2.0’s identity.

In her book *Remixing Persona: The Life and Work of The Artist 2.0*, Whitebread has gone so far as to suggest that “The Artist 2.0 is really just a 2.0 version of the contemporary artist’s potential identity ... similar to figures such as DJ Spooky who sees persona as shareware, or Eleanor Antin who once said that her personae helped her create ‘a marvelous art-making machine,’ 2.0 has successfully modeled an open source lifestyle practice, one where he develops a cut-and-paste as-you-go Net presence that distributes endless variations of his signature glitch effects into the field of distribution.”

Later Works

One of the most recent works to circulate through social media networks and generally attributed to The Artist 2.0 is titled *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*. The work is a split screen digital video that literally remixes one of the early *Lake District Walks* with a virtual walkthrough rendered in a 3-D game engine. Media theorist Brian Hale has said that, “Similar to an artist like Bill Viola, The Artist 2.0 can’t help himself: he absolutely must engage with 3-D software, and specifically game engines, to see what it would be like to traverse the desert of the real and investigate emerging developments in virtual-synthesis perspectives. If these newly released works are indeed made by 2.0, then I now imagine his next move will be to find a way to teleport his creativity to aerial space, to literally mashup the concept of *dérive* with the act of flying as if ascending to higher phases of experience.”

This move into 3-D game space appears to have opened up a new thread of scholarly research into the game-like quality of some of the artist’s work including the way he playfully transforms our notions of both what it means to develop a contemporary art practice and the exhibition context his artwork is distributed in. The work’s title, *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*, is an obvious reference to both the British artist Richard Long and the Situationist act of drifting. Mashing up these two seemingly unaffiliated sources resonates with much of The Artist 2.0’s glitch aesthetics. He

performed a similar feat, albeit in a totally different format, with the unusual postproduction techniques he employed when making *The Comedy of Errors*.

The question of who The Artist 2.0 is or where the artist is presently located at any given moment in time has always remained a mystery. Even as historians have plotted his early career movements through the Northwest of England, parts of Europe, and the United States, soon after the release and unexpected viral success of *The Comedy of Errors* which many insist temporarily placed the artist in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States, no one is exactly sure where the artist is presently located. This has led to further speculation that The Artist 2.0 as a sole persona never really existed.

According to various discussion groups on the Internet as well as news reports quoting the artist’s primary collector, Princess Bi, traces of the artist’s movement have recently been identified in the Bahia region of Brazil. The most recent work acquired and now on exhibit at the MOGA website is entitled *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U*. An active community of 2.0 scholars and art historians as well as fans of The Artist 2.0 see this as yet another work associated with both the *Google-Assisted Living* series and some of the earlier experiments with mobile videography and literary remixing. Similar to Chris Marker’s *Le Jette* and *San Soleil*, which some think the work is an homage to, the video consists of still images most likely captured via Google Earth and Google Street View. The specific images used in the film are all said to have been captured in Brazil. The narrative text that accompanies the images situates the story as an investigation into what the female voiceover, spoken in Portuguese, refers to as “trance-plantation” and how “we find ourselves rapidly becoming a networked apparatus of Mediums.” In the story, the subtitles translating the voice of the Brazilian woman who narrates the video for us, read:

The strange and strong feeling
he was having soon subsided,

and he awoke in a place
he had never been.

In a body he had never been.

As a Medium he had never been,

but was now always
in the process of becoming.

He was oscillating between alertness
and the effects of radical slumber.

This feeling of being trance-ported
was still resonating.

His neural instrument was tuned,

the sense of imminent arrival
had triggered yet more digital images,

and he had once again created a story,
another prosthetic dream device.

Now if only he could rest,
come down from the experience

and let the memory of its intensity
resonate throughout his body.

This newly discovered video gleans texts from various sources and transforms them into abstract subtitles that double as philosophical musings on, among other things, what it means to become “the living embodiment of another time.” The work is punctuated with an experimental glitch soundtrack consistent with some of The Artist 2.0’s other video and sound experiments and some curators believe that the mystical tinge to the overall narrative as well as its suggestive subject matter on issues related to alien life forms and extraterrestrial inhabitation, indicate that the artist has possibly joined an esoteric Brazilian cult and may, in fact, have transformed into one of its spiritual leaders. Many believe that even though the *WeRMediumzGo-MetaOn-U* video maintains the playful quality found in much of the artist’s work, it is actually being used as a propaganda tool to attract new recruits to the cult.

According to Nigel Foster, Director of the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics, “whether the artist lives in Brazil or Hawaii, the UK or the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, or is evenly distributed across all of those geographical regions and many more we’re still discovering, the point is that he -- or she, or It -- is not the kind of artist we have come to identify in traditional art historical contexts. This artist is the 2.0 version. A next generation version of whatever it was the artist may have been before everything became so mobile and digitally networked.”

“I have a passionate relationship with the land. The energy and life flowing through the landscape vibrates through my body and this, in turn, stimulates my creative measure.”

—The Artist 2.0

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

Portrait of the Artist as a Live Remix

by Cynthia Kitchen

“Does it really matter who The Artist 2.0 is? What you’re telling me is that I need to identify a brand name signature and attach it to a specific body of work by one artist who is uniquely qualified to carry the mantle of young, hipper-than-thou, Internet artist? That would mean we are really not interested in what the current, mind-blowing paradigm shift is all about -- that what we’re really consumed with is how we will use the same technological tools and processes that go into making product displays for supermarkets to determine who the Next Big Thing is, and that we need to focus our attention on mythologizing The Artist-as-Value-Generator in this hedge-fund environment we still call art history.”

—Anonymous curator responding to the now-defunct “Technomadism” listserv

The works brought together in the *Museum of Glitch Aesthetics* project are conceptual, glitchy, beautiful, pedagogical, humorous, and at times political reflections on the role that networked and mobile media communication systems play in today’s digital culture. The Artist 2.0’s unique trajectory through network-mediated art history includes works of remote digital photography, Flash and GIF animation, Net art, low resolution and high definition digital video, live audio-visual performance, installation, electronic music, spoken word and comedic art, 3D game design, and conceptual writing. His body of work is now

internationally acknowledged as a large scale transmedia hack and his continuous transmission of conceptual personae throughout the digital networks indicates his desire to critique an elitist art market that goes out of its way to acknowledge both the appeal and seduction of accumulating artwork that is canonized in the annals of art history. His work plays with the open source mantra of hacking into the post-human condition -- particularly the way we create our digital flux identities through multi-platform performances. These performances are intuitively postproduced in various digital editing environments as if teleporting our *in and out states of presence* through a database of creative potential where random factors, such as contagious retweets and/or the DIY dissemination of viral videos, are able to change ones status as a cultural icon in a matter of hours if not minutes.

Experimenting with an array of software programs that circulate within these digital editing environments requires more facility than learning the same wheel-throwing or darkroom tricks over and over again. Improvising his interactive engagement with Photoshop, Final Cut Pro, iMovie, Garageband, Blogger, Google Earth, YouTube, and live audiovisual programs like VDMX and/or Ableton Live, not to mention 3D game design programs like Unity, is par for the course. In stunning, quirky, creative, oddball, counterintuitive and intentionally provocative ways, The Artist 2.0 knowingly connects his disruptive forms of expression to both the modernist and

postmodernist artistic agendas associated with 20th century avant-garde art and writing movements as well as the nonstop dissemination of self-reflexive info-spam camouflaged as Facebook updates or direct messages. By going meta with the data, The Artist 2.0 calls into question the legitimacy of both these avant-garde movements as well as the social media culture that prioritizes its like/dislike status reports resulting from the sheep-like tendencies of most participants in digital youth culture. In addition to making work that recalibrates what it means to be avant-garde in Twitter times, he also challenges the social value of what is sometimes perceived as an unnecessarily dense and esoteric jargon driving the more academically-minded art school programs and, in the process, suggests that we must propel everything-we-do-now into a higher, yet more accessible, rhetorical framework.

Developing his own new media vernacular while simultaneously emulating prior artistic practices and methods associated with a range of aesthetic forms such as the novel, photography, video art, the comedy album, Net art, and online games, The Artist 2.0's portfolio of digital personae, all of whom embrace emerging media technologies *while working against* those same apparatuses as a political gesture, highlight the ways in which we are all becoming co-dependent on digital tools to operate in today's automated world. By intentionally bypassing the traditional protocols associated with commercial gallery culture and participating in various "communities of interest" that align themselves with the Internet's so-called gift economy, The Artist 2.0 and many other amateur practitioners are calling into question the safety net of the more commercially oriented art-about-art objects that permeate the contemporary collector landscape. For example, his ongoing performance as an ever-morphing set of conceptual personae circulating in the networked field of distribution, triggers a remixological practice that self-consciously politicizes the *social* role of the artist in network culture. How would an art market find a way to commodify this performance? Perhaps the only model we have to turn to here is someone like Paris Hilton who, for \$100,000, will come to your party.

Which isn't to say the Artist 2.0 is immune from creating his own network distributed version of art for art's sake. His stylistic tendencies, though, appear to want to agitate the predictable ways that this art gets made and locates its audience. For almost a decade now, The Artist 2.0 has produced work that is meant to challenge the studio artist-as-genius model that has suffocated the breathing space of digital artists hoping to advance the interventionist capacities of their

practice-based research. Although very little is known about the artist's particular family or work history, what we do know is how passionately he has explored the use of digital technologies, particularly mobile phones and the Internet, to create a wide range of media projects that play with the idea of tapping into ones creative potential outside of the normal and normalizing institutions of culture that serve as an elitist backdrop to what is considered "fine art." Whereas many of his celebrated works are computer-generated experiments that blur the distinction between image, text, code, concept, sound, and performative gesture, he also intentionally corrupts the Benjaminian sense of *aura* as part of a larger philosophical attempt to mashup what he has termed "the auteur as amateur, the amateur as auteur."

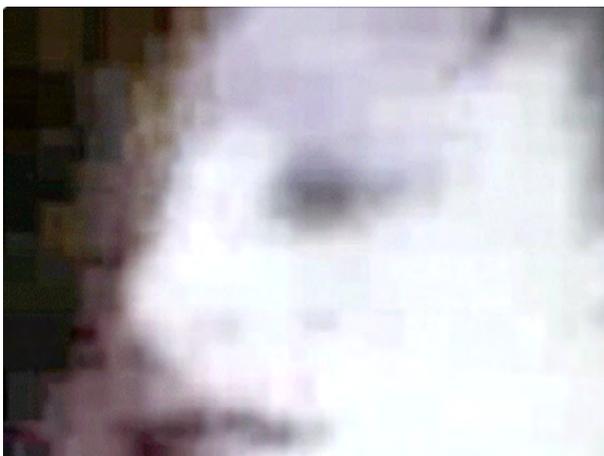
Although we never see the actual gadgets the artist has successfully put to use to create his digital signifiers, one can assume that, for the most part, the technologies he employs while making his work often become commercially obsolete before he even has a chance to fully explore their research potential. Having said that, it has been noted that The Artist 2.0 does keep an archive of technological gadgets that he turns to over and over again for specific aesthetic effect. This use and re-use of older or what some call *dead media* technologies, as well as the flagrant use of his own prior artworks as source material for new remixes, makes it difficult to trace a full historical accounting of what artworks were made when. Still, what the art historian or collector might find difficult and frustrating is, for The Artist 2.0, a major thematic subtext in the artist's body of work. What many of us now realize is that The Artist 2.0 wants to challenge the cultural context his work gets distributed in and to amplify the perceived absurdity of having to follow a particular historical trajectory that would then feed into a ready-made artistic identity that can be easily consumed by curators, collectors, teachers, and art history students studying the profound changes taking place in the digitally networked and social media culture they too, like the artist, have been born into.

Managing Expectations

The Artist 2.0 addresses our fetishization of mobile technology by satirically undermining our ability to manage our expectations of it. He does this by both defamiliarizing the way we use these widespread media gadgets and readily accessible software programs as well as by capturing and releasing disfigured *content-*

as-art that in a different era might not ever make it on to the walls of an average coffee shop in Preston. In his prolific digital projects, viewers are invited to interact with the content once it is freshly uploaded to a YouTube channel, a Blogger site, or Flickr-like photo dump site. The ease with which he releases his work and the apparent disregard for distinguishing between what is significant and what is not, frequently results in even the most open-minded art appreciator feeling a deep frustration at what is being wrought.

This brings up another theme in the networked and mobile media artwork created by The Artist 2.0 and that is the tension between the process of making digital artworks with off-the-shelf software products and what Duchamp once referred to as the artist's "creative act." Does using a first-generation mobile phone video recorder to capture Internet images of famous pop stars like Madonna as viewed on his laptop indicate a provocative art historical moment? Is he making a self-aware artistic gesture that places his experimental work into the lineage that connects Picasso's *Le Femmes d'Alger*, de Koonig's *Woman*, and Warhol's *Marilyn*? Or is this demonstrably glitched, looping image of the Material Girl simply what it appears to be: the end result of an intuitive compositional process performed by this young man, alone with his mobile phone, and in need of doing something that makes him feel important in the world? What happens when the glitchy but aesthetically pleasing image-loop can be read as a literal documentation of a man using his "handy" (i.e. his mobile phone) as a penis substitute to jerk before his laptop screen in one last gasp of sexual transference?



Equally important to The Artist 2.0's practice is the fluidity with which he moves between high-concept aesthetic content and do-it-yourself (DIY) and do-it-with-others (DIWO) execution. Perhaps this com-

bined intellectual and street cred prowess is at the core of the artist's strength as a contemporary practitioner. With professional hardware and software tools now readily available for cheap prices over the Internet and delivered to your door within a day so that you *never* have to get out of your pajamas, the definition of who may be considered a fine studio artist is up for grabs. By playfully mixing the technological with the *thoughtographical*, the transmission of data with the prophetic release of information aesthetics, and the performance of various digital flux personae as a live audio-visual remix of just-in-time identity severing itself from the constraints of an overdetermined Cartesian subjectivity, the artist consistently blurs the boundaries between all of these realms and more.

The name of the new museum that now links to many of The Artist 2.0's Net-distributed works, *Museum of Glitch Aesthetics*, refers to the popular art form of corrupting data for data's sake. While none of the works in the museum can be attributed to the artist with 100% accuracy, the museum name captures The Artist 2.0's signature style effect of asserting an intentionally malfunctioning aesthetic presence in the transmission of a digital signal meant to be distributed to a receiver at the other end. The *Museum of Glitch Aesthetics* does, in fact, present itself as a museological space for the curation of data-defective art "objects" and could be read as a humorous twist on the artist's playful acknowledgement that all forms of digital creativity grow out of larger technological protocols and processes that are ridden with potential glitches in their very transmission.

In fact, by choosing to focus on the glitch poetics of The Artist 2.0 as a decidedly aesthetic form, the founders of MOGA are, in a sense, indicating to online viewers all over the world that we have now reached a point in art history where we can begin to address a critical media dialectic that opens itself up to the inclusion of error within the false forms of consciousness implied by historical progress. Perhaps what is most valuable to art historians is how, with the introduction of MOGA to the international art world, we are now able to reposition the nomadic Net artist as a self-aware, *social media practitioner* who cleverly utilizes the glitch format to curate a new artistic lifestyle full of self-promoted online exhibitions, collaborative and interdisciplinary performances, live audio-visual remixes, realtime publications, multi-platform and interactive installations, and other unrepeatabe events in time.

“Exactly what are you referring to?”

Art-historical references are also an important part of The Artist 2.0's oeuvre. His works self-reflexively point to many artists such as Goya, Paul Cézanne, Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dali, LS Lowry, Nam June Paik, Richard Long, Chris Marker, Mark Amerika, and an ever-growing network of younger Web 2.0 artists who are still in the process of making their marks on the palimpsest of art history. He is also known for using his work to mashup and defamiliarize the central tenets of experimental art movements such as Dadaism, Situationism, Fluxus, Conceptual Art, and the early historical period of Net art not to mention numerous literary and cinematic art movements as well.

In *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*, the artist humorously employs the two-channel video format to highlight a subtle point about the relationship between the self-conscious recording of his walks via mobile phone videography and the *virtual flâneur* who traverses the experimentally rendered 3D game environment -- not to mention the tense dialog between what we still call nature and what has often been referred to as *the technological sublime*. In The Artist 2.0's case, his intervention into multiple modalities and movements through both the mobile video version of nature and the 3D game construction of “nature,” questions the relationship between what the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead referred to as “Process and Reality.” Processing his own on-the-fly *remixed realities* as a way to navigate the datasphere he now calls home, the artist's ongoing investigation of *digital moving thinking* signals to the viewer their complicity in going wherever it is the artist decides to take them as they navigate their way through this *thoughtographical landscape*. At once a tip of the hat to the Situationist drift into deeper forms of topographical *thinking-as-making* as well as an homage to the work of UK artist

Richard Long, *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)* reminds us of the poetic possibilities of walking through the woods, “lovely, dark and deep,” and the Thoreau-like meditation of *becoming nature* as if immersing oneself in “absolute freedom and wildness.” Yet, in the end, one is only *watching* this two-channel journey, and not actively triggering its ultimate direction. That is to say, they are not steering themselves the way committed cybnauts should, and this begs the question: “Is this freedom and wildness now being substituted by the urge to record ones every moment or, worse yet, to escape into the massively multi-player online game environment known as the social network?”

The work *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U* is one of the latest works attributed to The Artist 2.0 and is clearly an homage to an art historical form that the artist feels compelled to remix into his own personal mythology: *the cinematic essay*. Although the work appropriates a part of popular culture that has elements of shamanic spiritualism, cheesy science fiction, and self-help books, and expresses itself in a more popular, vernacular video form, one cannot overlook the fact that it also borrows its narrative rhythms and sequences from the work of Chris Marker, particularly Marker's twin classics, *Le Jette* and *Sans Soleil*. The Artist 2.0 tells a much different story than Marker, though, this time focusing on “the city of the future” inhabited by a group of devoted artist-mediums that metamorphosize into spiritual entities and/or altermodern forms of aesthetic energy. These Mediums eventually ascend to outer space as part of their continuous search for a visionary city of the future. Their ultimate search is not for preconceived forms of meaning nor readymade answers to queries that successfully access the requested information via optimally programmed algorithms that affiliate themselves with commercial forms of online advertisement. Instead, The Artist 2.0 and his network of artist-mediums are searching for *a more dispersed, out*





of body and autohallucinatory revelation. In this sense, the search at the heart of this post-cyberpunk remix of philosophifictional subtitles, glitchcrack sound, and satellite imagery, imagines what it might mean to enter a higher realm of experience. This higher realm of experience conceived by the artist is idyllic, utopian, and oftentimes over-aestheticized, and is absolutely bound by the logic of immediacy or what Pound referred to as the *direct presentation* of the thing. But what is this experiential *thing* that the artist hopes to compose as part of his generative destinarrativity? An object-oriented ontology packaged as the next New Aesthetic? By the end of *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U*, The Artist 2.0 rejects the return to computational media and literally *becomes* a Medium that channels the ultimate, error-free transmission ever known to Man and, in the process, disappears altogether.

The digital field of distribution as conceptual art space

One series of works attributed to The Artist 2.0 explores the concept of the readymade in the context of both virtual cartographies and the art-historical links between various strands of 20th century art practice. The Artist 2.0's *Lake District Walks* series is a hybrid work of conceptual, performance, video, glitch, and earth art that traces his perambulation through the walking trails near Rydal in the British Lake District. Here the artist uses off-the-shelf mobile phone video technology, specifically the Nokia N93, to rotate the swivel camera in unusual angles that indicate the artist's self-conscious and playful attempt to emulate what it might be like to create an unseemly sequence of ongoing crossfades between his walking aesthetic sensibilities, the body's tendencies toward intuitive

forms of proprioception, and the use of prosthetic devices to simulate machinic vision. The videos are designed to capture both the simplicity with which we can all now document our movement in space as well as transmit these documented movements as an evolving form of network distributed performance art and augmented video reality.

The Artist 2.0 is very self-aware of the exhibition and performance context his work is circulating in. Encountering the *Lake District Walks* series in the online space is much different than, say, viewing a work of video art in a conventional gallery context. Exactly where is the receiver of the artwork while they are viewing the work? Are they watching it on their own mobile phone? Are they themselves mobile? Are they walking -- or in a moving vehicle? Perhaps they are strapped to a desk trying to discern the meaning or aesthetic value of such a work. One cannot avoid thinking of works by Long, but also performance artists and poets like Vito Acconci and Sophie Calle, since both of these artists are often times focused on tracking their own movement through an always emergent spatial practice that recontextualizes their persona-presence-performance as *art per se*, but are also, simultaneously, questioning the way the data gets captured, transmitted, and recontextualized into an aesthetic framework.

Rather than creating a physical object that, like most ironic art of the late 20th century, celebrates art-about-art, and that grows out of the readymade work of Duchamp, these *Lake District Walks* as well as much of the other work exhibited at the *Museum of Glitch Aesthetics*, are more concerned with blurring the lines of distinction between art practice, spatial practice, and social media practice. The common denominator that seems to bind these various processes and

practices together for The Artist 2.0 is his continued diligence toward changing the ways in which the artwork gets *transmitted*. After viewing all of the work in the ongoing MOGA exhibition, I found myself wondering just who exactly the audience is for this kind of work and if a) the art historical references that are bound to attach themselves to his oeuvre are necessary and, b) is the story we are invited to piece together too reliant on the exhibition context rather than the works themselves? But then I find myself listening to *The Comedy of Errors* for the umpteenth time, or playing some of the early mobile phone video loops on my iPad, and consequently remind myself that yes, these works are part of a larger mosaic of interconnectedness that speaks volumes about the history of networked and mobile media art and, in a totally unexpected way, would be impossible to appreciate were it not for the art-historical circumstance they grow out of.

Given the strange resonance between the artist-as-medium and the network as field of transmission, what is the relationship between a systematic distortion of the communication signal and a more poetic, systemic derangement of the senses? As the artist puts it, his glitch work is “like the aesthetics of crumbling information. You could think of it as schizophrenic imagery where the disturbed artifacts come to the surface and essentially glitch the image. The thing about beauty today -- about disturbing the formation of beauty -- is that the image never really has time to become an image in this environment.”

The almost obsessive cut-and-paste remix culture contemporary artists are immersed in these days and the ease with which they can get their hands dirty and intervene in the coded scripts that program the interfaces we encounter when accessing information on all of our digital appliances, is also at the core of what is perhaps The Artist 2.0's most enigmatic work, *The Comedy of Errors*. A mock comedy album, if such a term is even possible, that defamiliarizes the popular format we generally recognize as the stand-up routine, the work deliberately challenges us to listen closely to the role we, as audience, play in the reception of the work. In *The Comedy of Errors*, 2.0 remakes the comedy performance genre most identified with social satirists like Lenny Bruce, George Carlin, and Mort Sahl, as well as contemporary comedic artists such as Sarah Silverman and the various players on Jon Stewart's and Stephen Colbert's daily programs distributed on the US-based Comedy Channel. 2.0's long-form audio project reconstructs the rhythms and delivery mechanisms associated with a “routine” but fills the space with satirical content specific to the art world,

especially in relation to the gentrification of media art via discipline, the value of going to art school, the finicky and unpredictable value propositions that evolve in the art market, and the constant *creative class struggle* that contemporary practitioners are known to experience regardless of their talent. This work, which features the voice of US-based artist Mark Amerika, is notable for both its outstanding technical proficiency as well as its articulation of polyphonic sound textures. The recording is a state of the art master-mix that features not only Amerika's mock comedic delivery and spoken word glitch poetics, but also experimental filtering and editing techniques that turn the audience into a glitch-laden and, at times, disorienting environmental soundscape meant to highlight a Brechtian distancing effect (*Verfremdung*) that then transforms the listener into both social critic and creative accomplice.

As a core aspect to his entire practice, 2.0 is also interested in allowing the transmissive capability of the both the artist *and* network as distribution medium to propel the work as a continuous experiment in digital forms of conceptualism while playfully acknowledging the inevitable obsolescence of the work he is distributing into the social media environment. For example, an undocumented Twitter account that he is said to have occupied for exactly 100 days, sent out one tweet a day and then disappeared from the Net altogether. Screenshots of the performance indicate some of the micro-missives he had sent out, including “The data world is suffused with fate,” “Marketing fate,” and “Demo(graphics) or die.” As curator Gabrielle Whitebread points out, “presumably there is nothing really impressive about this now defunct Twitter performance. But these simple social media works are part of a larger attempt to infuse his oeuvre with a language-based art practice that plays with the potential of performing his *punctual* poetics, a poetics that makes connections most of us are not capable of making in such an improvisational yet profound way. Any behavioral neurologists looking into the synesthetic qualities of the creative artist's unconscious projections and meaning-laden connections across media formats, would have a field day with this stuff.”

The Artist 2.0 is particularly interested in highlighting the role that the transmission of his work into the digital field of distribution -- via online social networking and collaborative forms of remix and postproduction -- plays in the reception of an artwork and suggests that its *the materiality of the network protocol itself* and its codependence on complex technological processes that provide the canvas for new forms of aesthetic

alchemy. At the same time, all of the works featured at MOGA present an ironic art historical commentary to those familiar with the multiple strands of art history and movements that the artist grows out of. Perhaps the most obvious area of meta-referencing takes place in the realm of appropriation, manipulation, remix, mashup, and media recontextualization. Are these not the primary aesthetic strategies employed by most of the successful artists of the 20th and 21st century? This is especially true as it relates not just to the dual issues of originality and, in 2.0's case, the inevitability of built-in obsolescence, but to how the methods of making art via established artistic practices have been increasingly affected by the emergence of networked and mobile media technologies. These widespread digital media enable anyone with a need to personally express themselves to instantly create works of art that not only (post)produce provocative content (that can itself then be *further* postproduced), but can be immediately distributed to audiences of like-minded individuals located all across the network and who might have never conceived of themselves as artists, curators, art collectors, or art-appreciators.

It is for these reasons and many others that I have not touched on here, that I believe The Artist 2.0 is the most significant artist of our day. To remix the American poet Wallace Stevens, whom 2.0 is said to be fond of and who often remixed or self-plagiarized his own poetry for critical effect, "The Artist 2.0 is that necessary angel in whose sight we see the earth anew."

It's just that now the artist composes his new vision of the world as if lost in the virtualities of a trance ritual transfigured in time.

Cynthia Kitchen is the owner and director of Kitchen Appliances: A Net Art Gallery.

“The two big influences on my life are water and data. Something I have come to realize, over time, is that there are always these obsessive forms that you can establish a connection with, and that these forms are constantly shape-shifting into some new experience that then resonates with my feelings of being connected. You could go so far as to say that my work is literally rooted in the landscape. For me, this is what it means to be network connected.”

—The Artist 2.0

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Nigel: Welcome to the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics. I'm Nigel Foster, Director of the museum. And with me is Gabrielle Whitebread, author of *Poetic Wisdom in the Age of Glitch*, an in-depth study of contemporary glitch aesthetics. Gaby is also Professor of Art History at Lancaster University where she directs the new Program in Social Media Art. Gaby is also about to publish her next book, *Remixing Persona: The Life and Work of the Artist 2.0*. Welcome Gaby.

Gaby: My pleasure, Nigel.

Nigel: Right, so Gaby, let's cut to the chase. Each work of art being exhibited in the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics is, if I understand you correctly, investigating the poetic wisdom to be found in digitally networked and mobile media culture, and in some way reveals to us how the Artist 2.0 positions his online conceptual art practice so that it challenges the systemic powers that be, whether they be societal, political, or corporate, not to mention the elitist upmarket commodity culture that drives the institutionalized art world.

Gaby: There can be no question that 2.0 self-consciously intervenes or *hacks* into the standard operating procedures we usually associate with studio-based art practice. To me, he quite naturally, it seems, just by being himself, models another kind of 21st century artist, one that eludes simple categorization and, in the process, somehow resists canonization and historicization.

Nigel: No matter how hard we try --

Gaby: -- and that's just it. His work won't allow it. Instead, he uses the network or what he calls the digital field of distribution, to interfere in the historicization

process. One thing we can say for sure is that 2.0 excels at creating aesthetic forms of *interference* and we'll never really get the complete picture of who he is or what he is making, nor what his ultimate trajectory might be.

Nigel: Regarding these ongoing interventions and intentional hacks into mainstream art and culture, would you agree that they sometimes feel too clever? Clever for clever's sake?

Gaby: There is a bit of that. But isn't there always? Think of the Dadaists, the Fluxus movement, or even the Sensation show. I guess the difference here is in the execution of the work or, in his case, the life practice he evolves over the course of his career.

Nigel: And besides, we can see the effects of his glitch poetics on the larger cultural scene and one can't help but think of him as a Glitch Master. Am I right on that?

Gaby: Yes, you're quite right on that one, Nigel. Lately, these gorgeous glitchworks appear to be everywhere these days. I have seen them on the Web, on mobile phones, in live audio/visual performances, films, music videos, hip TV shows targeted at the 25-34 year old demographic -- and now I'm just waiting for the cool car commercial. But what makes The Artist 2.0 so important for our times, is that he sees this all-encompassing glitch environment as the ultimate experiential context for nomadic Net artists to perform their daily rituals in. For this artist, it's all about turning the field of distribution itself into a kind of transfigured Museum of *Atemporal Art*.

Nigel: Oh right, not so much *con*-temporary, as in *with* or *of* our time, but *a*-temporal, as in distributing alternative versions of ones persona as an ahistorical presence occupying different durations. It's part of his pataphysical practice, one that gets camouflaged as a social media performance that feels very *now* but that is also retro-fitting the present into the past while simultaneously intuiting future forms of art.

Gaby: Yes, that's true. This is the kind of work that continuously draws from the various atemporal flows one encounters when surfing through the Internet. It gets accessed and experienced as if in *another* time that runs parallel to the one we're presently living in. So this intervening feedback system that we all program ourselves to perform in every day as a kind of ritualized social media practice, where we hope to hack reality and render into view our vision of the world, is really all about how we manage the environmental context we structure our survival mechanisms *in*. What the Artist 2.0 shows us is that this ritualized, social media practice we're all losing ourselves in is infused with an ongoing glitch aesthetics, one that takes place in an *always already* parallel-processed atemporality. It's quite literally changing the plasticity of our brains which means we are not only *thinking* differently, but creating different *things* in the process.

Nigel: And these different things that we're creating are often times emerging in unexpected contexts which can at times feel accidental, in which case it's up to us to sense it's immediate value so that we can then *do* something with it in realtime as part of our ritualized social media gestures.

Gaby: Exactly. We need to constantly process the data and make our decisions accordingly. For the Artist 2.0, these decisions are usually made as part of an on-the-fly performance in shifting digital editing environments. You could almost just refer to it as *a way of life*. But still, you need more than a good eye to *envision*, to literally *see* the poetic wisdom in every decision you make.

Nigel: The seer sees, Gaby, no doubt about that. And this ability to pounce on the unexpected -- to sense beauty or poetic wisdom in the accidental discovery -- this is what the Artist 2.0 does best, is it not?

Gaby: No question about that, Nigel. 2.0's glitch aesthetics permeates all aspects of his work and, as we'll see, is totally connected to the non-conformist lineage of art history -- the so-called Rival Tradition that he -- one might argue -- intentionally situates himself in,

or at least identifies with *while* making his work. Of course, it's up to us, the curators and preservers of art history to inform others how to make that connection as well. The question is: "Do we want to go there?"

Nigel: Yes, by all means, Gaby, let's go there!

Gaby: Good, let's do go there, but let's also keep in mind that we all, every one one of us, must believe in this "credible impossibility," that is, this belief that there is some remnant form of *truth itself* worth revealing within this body of work. Within this *oeuvre* of glitchy art production. Because what we will soon find out is that not only does The Artist 2.0 practice the revolution of everyday life, but the *way* he develops this revolutionary practice is partly dependent on his ability to radically reconfigure his relatively minor output into that rare ore of unquestionable art historical value which, we have to admit, does not just appear out of thin air.

Nigel: Yes, exactly, that *rare ore* you speak of requires us to drill deeper into the crux of what we imagine this body of work to *mean*. There's no question that it's a cultural form of exploitation, similar to mining the earth for any other rare mineral. This is how we create an artist's value out of thin air. Guilty as charged.

Gaby: Do go on, Nigel.

Nigel: But it's not just a rare ore we are excavating here. We also hope to tap into his potential to reveal to us a "rare *aura*," one that surrounds an otherwise fleeting, network-centric, objectless, post-studio arts practice that is much more embedded in life processes than any narrowly channeled artistic process.

Gaby: Well said.

Nigel: Gaby, since there's no question that The Artist 2.0 has successfully rendered into our network culture a kind of eponymous art meme, one that has enabled him to genuinely invent his own persona *as* a viral art world figure even as we know, or think we know, this is the farthest thing from his mind, how would you *place* this work in an art historical context?

Gaby: That's a fair question, Nigel, although I think we'll see as we venture deeper into his work that the art historical contexts he operates in and manipulates are not the furthest thing from his mind. In fact, they may be central to his overall practice.

Nigel: Could you elaborate?

Gaby: In the my new book, *Remixing Persona: The Life and Work of the Artist 2.0*, I refer to this process of fluid self-invention as *always-becoming-artist*. What I mean is that his value-added, network brand has now even created market expectations where we just assume he will transform his ongoing and recognizable outcomes into easily contextualized works of art that feed into his growing mythological narrative. Whether the work appears on his websites or in bookstores or via social networking sites or even, God forbid, in conventional gallery spaces, really doesn't matter. What matters is that the overarching themes of his *oeuvre* can be properly articulated in the marketplace of ideas. And yet these recognizable outcomes are *only* recognizable when articulated in their proper context.

Nigel: Exactly. That's it. That's where we come in.

Gaby: Exactly. You could say this is when we, the context providers, become social sculptors, in the sense Beuys wrote about, and that we're in the process of performing both our curatorial and theoretical work as some kind of migratory, conceptual art installation.

Nigel: Good! So by way of introduction, and before we move on to the actual work, perhaps I should start by asking you just exactly *who* The Artist 2.0 really is?

Gaby: Yes, well, this is where it all goes wrong, doesn't it?

Nigel: Right.

Gaby: I mean, on the one hand, there is this sense that just by his having entered the Net art scene and successfully performed his online role-playing persona, as well as his ability to circulate these digital traces of his own life as a kind of *always present* work-in-process -- we would have a readymade answer to that question. But, in fact, we don't. Contrary to most young artists who *work the scene* and try to circulate in as many emerging art world circuits as possible, 2.0 does not have a public presence in the physical sense of that term. Which doesn't mean we have absolutely no information or nothing to say about him. "Who is The Artist 2.0?" This is the question we all would love to have the answer to, isn't it Nigel?

Nigel: This is exactly why I think we have to ask it right up front.

Gaby: But this is the beauty of his work. In some ways, it no longer matters *who* the artist is, rather, what matters is *what the artist is doing*, and if what the artist

is doing can even be *considered* art anymore or if it's just a more self-conscious and aesthetically inclined version of creating a digital practice in our mobile and hypermediated culture.

Nigel: Well, that's the rub, isn't it? My sense is that The Artist 2.0 is more like the aesthetic actualization of a particular data stream circulating in the network culture than, say, a conventionally rendered, pseudo-successful art figure per se. I mean, how can you flourish in the resale market if your whole *modus operandi* is that you don't commercially sell work in the first place. Which isn't to say he never sells his work, and we'll be speaking with one of his collectors later, but it's not really what drives his creativity, is it? His work requires us to move beyond the conventional approaches that most art historians take when making a move toward defining an artist's career and, instead, invites us to reconsider what it means to be human again -- albeit human with a wi-fi connection and fully charged smart phone.

Gaby: So that he can oscillate between being both human *and* post-human.

Nigel: Right, and this relates, I think, to something he once wrote -- and I'm quoting directly from your first book -- "We are all born avant-garde, that is to say, both OF our time and AHEAD of our time." What do you think he meant by that? I mean, we all get the avant-garde part. That's a straightforward definition. But why would he find it necessary to self-identify himself as such and suggest that it's a kind of birth-right or even biological condition? Especially given his reluctance to participate in the old, commercial art world contexts?

Gaby: Yes, that's a good question. If you recall, after making that obvious reference to the avant-garde, he then goes on to suggest that it's our "being-programmed" -- his words -- that kills our avant-garde tendencies so that we essentially lose touch with our capacity *to create*. This, by the way, indicates to me that he has been influenced by the writer William Burroughs.

Nigel: Well, there's no doubt that he's been influenced by a number of radical literary figures and, if I get you, you're saying that for him, being avant-garde is not just about being both *of* and *ahead* of ones time, but being on the edge of ones own existence as a moving field of creative agency, and that there are all of these external forces that are programmed to halt that moving field of creativity dead in its tracks so that it will submit to the -- what would Burroughs call them? -- the reality police.

Gaby: Yes, that's it Nigel. It's back to that difference between being *con-temporary* or *temporary*, but also being atemporal. In the case of The Artist 2.0, he is perhaps the first networked artist to really figure out how to be atemporal. What I mean is that he quite literally performs his art-life remix as if he were not even with us, or is with us in multiple guises and historical configurations, sort of like a Thomas Pynchon character.

Nigel: Well, maybe not a Thomas Pynchon character as in a character from a Thomas Pynchon book, but literally a character *like* Thomas Pynchon.

Gaby: Right, and as we know, Thomas Pynchon is a character like no other. The Artist 2.0 at times appears to be *so* far ahead of his time that we cease to even see him as an artist *per se*. He becomes something more like what Duchamp once referred to as a *medium*, seeking his way out toward a clearing. But even if the clearing makes itself apparent, as it does during his reclusive stay in the Lake District or, perhaps later during what we imagine to be his deep immersion into Afro-Brazilian culture which we still know very little to nothing about, one cannot help but see how the artist runs up against insurmountable glitches of his own making that he then feels compelled to creatively remix into his ongoing works-in-progress.

Nigel: For example, this most recent video we are identifying as part of his Later Works -- I am thinking specifically of the online video titled *WeRMediumzGo-MetaOn-U*.

Gaby: Exactly. But as we will see, he too cannot escape the fact that some of the glitch images he is capturing reveal their own form of beauty and, whether intentional or not, he knows that they will find their way into the market and that he too will eventually succumb to a very real need to advance his own practice by feeding off the teat of capitalism, as it were.

Nigel: As it were indeed. Salivating at the succulent bait. Let's take a look at some of his work, shall we?

Gaby: Brilliant. I'd love to.

Nigel: So, Gaby, where do we start?

Gaby: Let's start with what some believe is his first publicly displayed experiment in glitch.

Nigel: You are referring to his one night installation at the Winter Gardens in Morecambe.

Gaby: Exactly. The work is called *Pixelmash* and the only documentation we have from the exhibition is a very early mobile phone video recording of the installation and a few digital stills from the actual work.

Nigel: Can you describe the work for us?

Gaby: I can certainly try. Second hand accounts of the exhibition indicate that the work was, first of all, a digital video projection, about a minute or two long, running on a continuous loop. The work itself looks like a hyperbolic glitch transmission, as if watching a video stream over the net just as video was becoming a viable format to distribute across the World Wide Web.

Nigel: Do we know what the source of the stream is?

Gaby: Unfortunately, we don't. And what we see in this completely blurred and naturally glitched mobile phone video documentation further problematizes the issue. At a certain point, you just have to watch the imagery and take it at face value. Perhaps what's even more interesting, at least from an art historical perspective, is where the exhibition takes place.

Nigel: Yes, the Winter Gardens. Can you tell us more about that venue?

Gaby: Sure. The first thing to understand is that at the time of the exhibition, Morecambe is really a shadow of its former self. The Winter Gardens Theater, where the exhibition -- titled *Hauntologies/Ontologies* -- takes place, is in total disrepair. Its rich history as an entertainment venue throughout parts of the 20th century is legendary and the space itself is magnificent if not a bit creepy. Occasionally, some students and local artists have been able to work out a deal with the Friends of the Winter Gardens and put on their exhibitions in a kind of pop-up gallery format. The space inside lends itself to experimental installations in some of the darker regions of the building.

Nigel: And our artist, 2.0?

Gaby: He brought in his gear and set up the looping video projection for the length of the evening. For him, it's what we would now call a BYOB event.

Nigel: Bring your own beamer.

Gaby: Exactly. But apparently he plays with the beamer and tries it out in a few locations throughout the building. There's even a higher resolution, digital

photograph of the glitch video being projected on to a body sitting in a darkened room.

Nigel: Which begs the question --

Gaby: -- right, is this an early image of the Artist 2.0?

Nigel: Is it?

Gaby: Honestly, we just don't know. But what we do know is that this event is attended by students studying art at Lancaster and this is when he first connects with a local, and in many cases alternative, Net art scene that then must have played into his decision to attend art school.

Nigel: What else is the Artist 2.0 making around this time?

Gaby: Well, all indications are that this pop-up exhibition and, in his case, glitch video projection, is an outlier. What he's really focused on at this time is making work on his laptop and experimenting with the beginnings of a conceptual practice that wants to intervene in the online field of distribution.

Nigel: So obviously this means that he turns to the Internet.

Gaby: And in turning to the Net, he begins to admit to himself that what he is going to prioritize is his conceptual personae and how they perform within the context of a distributed network environment.

Nigel: So what are the early Net, or in his case, 2.0 Web works that first start appearing?

Gaby: We believe that he starts capturing and curating a series of digital images that attempt to differentiate his net practice from the early 1.0 practitioners who were overly concerned with issues of hypertext, interface or browser art, and aesthetically pleasing forms of data visualization. He is also very clearly trying to demarcate a difference between his online work and the more social media-oriented uploads of his other friends who, like him, are discovering the new technological protocols but are basically using the media to communicate and share information and not necessarily investigate the potential of the Internet as an artistic medium.

Nigel: You mean he is beginning to play with the idea of aesthetically filtering or defamiliarizing the look and feel of the social media apparatus?

Gaby: Well, there's a bit of that. He seems quite comfortable working within the mainstream protocols and platforms that are being developed by the entrepreneurial tech scene. For example, his initial series of images were found on what many believe was his first Flickr account.

Nigel: And for those of us who don't know what a Flickr account is, what can you tell us about that?

Gaby: It's an online photo dump shop from the early days of Web 2.0. Anyone could upload their images to the site and share them with whoever they wanted. A bit later, once smart phones became all the rage, artists of his generation were able to capture images from their phone and immediately post them on the Net using image blog sites like Tumblr.

Nigel: It sounds a bit like vanity exhibition.

Gaby: That's certainly one way to look at it, but then again, what *isn't* a vanity exhibition in the Post-Print Culture? An exhibition is really just a matter of pushing buttons on a computer and generating context for the work being uploaded.

Nigel: As opposed to the traditional gallery culture which seems primarily in the business of manufacturing demand for unique objects created by the individual studio artist as genius.

Gaby: Exactly. His generation has been weaned on the social value of developing a public or creative form of self-exhibitionism and I believe his early Flickr site, which is no longer available, is not so much an early indication of his vain attempts to bring attention to himself but to experiment with bringing his work into the public eye. Now, granted, exactly who that public *is* is always open to question. I mean, just because you put your work online does not mean an audience is waiting to formally experience it.

Nigel: Right, your audience is not everyone on the World Wide Web but, on the contrary, whoever you can reach.

Gaby: Exactly, so this is his exploratory reach, his initial gesture if you will, where, as a young man, just before entering art school, he decides to upload digital images that he must have felt revealed where his work was going at that time.

Nigel: Lots of glitch imagery tagged around very specific -- we might even say *recognizable* -- themes.

Gaby: Absolutely. Here is where we first get introduced to his early interests in portraiture, landscape, architecture, and especially nature -- and what he calls *scenes*.

Nigel: What do these early glitch images tell us about the Artist 2.0?

Gaby: Well, Nigel, as I write in my first book, here he is inviting us to contemplate the mixed realities he, and his generation, are being asked to reconfigure into aesthetic form. These images are asking us to ponder the very nature of things. And not just the nature of things, but *the image of nature as thing*. As digital thing-to-be-manipulated. This is where his work becomes very tricky, because if you just take it at face value, or what in an online interview he refers to as *interface value*, you might think that what he is doing here is just randomly capturing and manipulating data and then giving it almost mockingly significant titles like *A Painting that Speaks for Itself, Itself*, or *Quit Steppin' On My Glitch*, as if challenging us to challenge him for being so coy.

Nigel: Well, one thing we can say for sure about our Artist 2.0 is that he is very coy. Sometimes the titles of his work change within days or even hours of their initial release into the network.

Gaby: Yes, that's certainly something to look into. But I think what you see here, in the initial images he has uploaded to the Web and that eventually get reconfigured into his first blog site which he eventually dubs *Glitch Aesthetics*, is a sincere attempt to be both conceptual and aesthetically tuned in to the beauty of what surrounds him. These early images clearly show him immersing himself in his immediate surroundings which include nature, the Internet, the urban environment, and what may be family and travel imagery too, although who's really to say? There's this strange tension between what we might want to call the random and the intimate. These images feel like they are being tweaked by a very young, yet also very excited, artist who is thrilled to be able to manipulate the data he is capturing as part of his practice of everyday life.

Nigel: Like so many others of his generation, no doubt.

Gaby: No doubt -- and we can assume that most of these initial images were captured and manipulated as a way to develop what would later become his signature style of glitch aesthetics.

Nigel: Can you elaborate a bit on the relationship be-

tween the conceptual framework he operates in and the more aesthetically tuned-in qualities of his compositional style? This seems very advanced for such a young man who is barely out of high school. We can even see early signs of what would become his -- as you say -- signature glitch effects.

Gaby: Right, well, at this point he is probably barely out of high school. In my new book, I suggest that these early images place him firmly in the tradition of Duchamp. Except instead of the artist selecting industrial products as readymades, what you get are a seemingly endless series of readymade data captures that reflect his keen interest in the relationship between nature, architecture, landscape, portraiture, data, glitch and also mobility. Although he will never sample every possible image in the universe of technical images, that does not mean that they are not there, readymade -- or *ready to be captured*. Another way of looking at these images is that the artist is revealing to us that with his newfangled mobile phone device, these images are now in the realm of possibility. That the universe of technical images is expanding and that he is expanding with them.

Nigel: So he is very much, even at such a young age, a *media-savvy* artist.

Gaby: Absolutely, as is just about every other wannabe artist growing up in the 21st century. But what makes The Artist 2.0 so vital is that it almost seems as though he *really* wants to capture every possible image in the universe and is willing to show us the good with the bad or at least ask us to question how we make distinctions between the good and the bad. What you and I might determine is a quite unacceptable or disposable image due to its unresolved artifacts, one that could have been easily deleted *in-camera* before ever getting it uploaded and published for anyone in the world to see, may, for him, be the perfect snapshot of what it means to be an affective body role-playing an artist-medium navigating the environment he lives in.

Nigel: These initial images that are eventually transferred to his blog around the time he goes to art school, which we will get to in a minute, are just samples from -- how many of these images are there?

Gaby: We really have no idea how many total images were eventually included in this early body of work. The numbered sets that were originally on Flickr were titled "The Natural Order of Things" and until recently, we were only able to see what he actually uploaded, assuming he did not delete scores of other sets --

Nigel: -- assuming this is even really his work --

Gaby: -- exactly, but we believe that after having seen his Flickr account and a few other photo-bucket sites he initially dumped his images on to, as well as his later remixed and edited version of many of these images into his *Glitch Aesthetics* blog, where these images are reconfigured into yet another, different exhibition context where he uploads exactly one image per week over the course of a year, that it would have to be at least in the upper-hundreds if not thousands.

Nigel: Amazing output.

Gaby: Prolific, I'd say.

Nigel: What about the individual works?

Gaby: Well, as an example, the title for one of the images is *Rectified Nature Image Capture 43 (In Advance of What Comes Next, Even Meme...)*.

Nigel: Even meme. With an ellipsis.

Gaby: An obvious reference to Duchamp both in title and content where we see the snow shovel in the garden landscape, which is quite sophisticated for a teenager and points to his intuitive connection to digital forms of conceptual practice.

[Laughter]

[Unintelligible]

Gaby: Right, so the images on his original *Glitch Aesthetics* blog which were remixed from his earlier photo dump accounts, showcase his awareness of the art historical milieu his work grows out of. For example, we see a glitch rendering of Cezanne's *Mount Victoire As Seen from Basel* as well as other works of conventional portraiture overwritten with the sharp pixelation of saturated colors guaranteed to disturb our initial encounter with the work.

Nigel: And yet, these disturbances, the way he aestheticizes them, has been criticized as being *too slick*.

Gaby: Yes, which is somehow totally ironic, but let's not forget that these are his early works and as such, are really *ahead* of their time, so I find most of these criticisms to be a bit misguided. It's only *now* that we can go back and say, "Aha, there he is cleverly manipulating the painterly image by taking a digital photo of it and then manipulating it through his coding

interventions." It's the Jackson Pollack story all over again.

Nigel: And this is what's perhaps most impressive, is the way he is able to manipulate the data with his own filters and coded interventions.

Gaby: Filters that he himself has coded and experimented with so that he can alter each image for glitch effect. In most of these early glitchworks we can see that the artist has committed himself to go against the grain of a mainstream corporate culture masquerading as the most natural thing in the world.

Nigel: This really complicates both our *idea* of what nature is as well as what it is the artist is *discovering* in his own nature.

Gaby: His own *mediated* nature. All of this masking that he sees everywhere, this corporate and institutional art world masking, hides what the artist finds unreal -- which is where his aesthetic interests finally lie: the unreal. He clearly refuses to operate under these 'normalized' conditions that are embedded in art historical forms, and resists translating the so-called reality of the world into a representational image of itself as a faux form of nature. It's just not his shtick, and he is willing to risk everything, his entire future livelihood, in the process.

Nigel: What else is he saying to us with these images on the glitch blog?

Gaby: He's saying that someone who is willing to go into the code and play with the binary data is as much an agent of radical creativity as any painter or sculptor could ever want to be. He's also saying that if we look at some of the earliest images that he tags *Portraits*, he is quite comfortable wearing his influences on his sleeve by intentionally glitchifying the images of two artists whose work we think is at the influential core of his interdisciplinary practice: Franz Kafka and Arthur Rimbaud.

Nigel: Interesting.

Gaby: Very. Because, you see, with these glitch portraits, one focused on the otherworldly, dreamlike fiction writer who creates stories that spell out life's disastrous consequences, and the other focused on the synesthetic poet whose brusque and mysterious disappearance feeds into the contradictory details of his life that evolve in the aftermath of his youthful bursts of creative energy -- in some ways we see an aestheticized encapsulation of

the persona we have come to call The Artist 2.0.

Nigel: And how so?

Gaby: The world does not operate as smoothly as we would like. It's full of Kafkaesque incomprehensions that reveal a world where sense is no longer a reliable indicator of what it is we are experiencing. In this other world, the dream world *within* our world, where feelings are corrupted and there are bugs virally infecting the very biological systems that give birth to humanity, the artist is challenged to metamorphosize their own apprehension of life into a fiction.

Nigel: And so he creates his own life *as* fiction.

Gaby: Yes, but as Rimbaud writes, summoning the spirit of Manet: "Illusions are perhaps as innumerable as the relations of men between themselves, or of men with things."

Nigel: And so these illusions are a dime a dozen, unless he can storm the reality studio and show the errors of our ways.

Gaby: That's a beautiful way of putting it, Nigel. "The errors of our ways." The glitches that reveal to us the man behind the curtain who dispels our realities *for* us.

Nigel: This is where the glitch portraits become particularly revealing. Do you think The Artist 2.0 is in search of some kind of impossible Truth?

Gaby: That's a good question. A recurring theme in his work is that the glitch itself signals a psychic disturbance at the moment of discovery. It's as if the glitch is needed to set off *the possibility* of experiencing what we would otherwise call Truth, capital T. He wants to launch this Truth into the network. For him, glitch is the only way of getting at this Truth. It's his eureka moment.

Nigel: It's almost as if his heavy investment in glitch aesthetics assumes that we all must trust in the fact that there is no permanent truth in the field of aesthetics generally, and that by allowing our minds to interact with these very composed digital artifacts streaming through the network, we are somehow giving birth to the *possibility* of reconfiguring our relationship to everything we see, to how we see it, and how we may want to further manipulate the image *ourselves* by initializing our own signature style effects while processing reality.

Gaby: Yes, and not just our own signature style effects but what the Artist would probably refer to as our own *aesthetic filters* -- and this is what I find remarkable about his early work, especially the way he manipulates code and in some instances, even the naming conventions of traditional image files. These are artistic gestures that really pave the way for what comes next.

Nigel: And what *does* come next?

Gaby: Well, if you like, we could start by discussing the animated GIFs he released as part of the *.gif(t) economy* series as well as take into account some of his early glitch experiments in mobile phone video art throughout parts of the UK. This is during a time when, I think, he really began making his early technical breakthroughs --

Nigel: -- such as with the experimental handheld mobile phone techniques --

Gaby: -- absolutely, but was also, in addition to these innovative camera techniques and customized hacks into the codecs he was playing around with -- seriously questioning his identity as an artist, as a sometimes student, and as a human being living in the network society. I call this his *Nervous Period*.

Nigel: Very interesting, Gaby. Why do you refer to 2.0's early art school projects as his Nervous Period?

Gaby: That's a good question, Nigel. What I think I'm getting at here is how his entry into a more formalized social setting that he now has to contextualize his practice in creates this new set of parameters that he has not quite anticipated and everything about him -- and more importantly, his work -- seems to suggest that he is going through some kind of emotional upheaval.

Nigel: You're talking specifically about his entry into art school?

Gaby: Yes, but it's more than that. It's as if he's destined to sync up with the technological apparatuses of his time, but apparatuses that are perhaps going through the fastest transformation during any art period in history. And so, like clockwork, as soon as he enters art school he starts expanding his practice beyond the blogs, beyond the Flickr sets, and he begins producing new work that we might categorize as short form mobiles. Not mobiles in the sense of Calder's large scale wire installations, but short video and audio works that he produces using his mobile phone

while simultaneously going through the motions of art school. What we find is that, as with many other artists who have broken out in art historical terms, 2.0 has this natural ability to both sync with his time, but is also always ahead of his time, a totally difficult feat given how fast things are changing all around him and how much of his attention is being narrowly channeled into the demands of going to art school and, for example, being forced to take courses like life drawing.

Nigel: This is the dilemma most art school students were facing at that time and are still facing today, yes?

Gaby: Yes, but my sense is that most students, perhaps to appease their professors but also because of their desire to work within safer boundaries, are quite happy to maintain an allegiance to crafting objects that can then be exhibited in traditional gallery contexts. For these more traditional contemporary artists, the Internet is not an artistic medium. Rather, it's a space to communicate, to hunt for and gather information, to socially engage with their network when they can. Although, of course, like all of us, eventually they succumb to the network's seductive forces and before you know it, they are living a double life -- on the one hand, living on the network full-time as a creative communicator and, whenever they can find the time, crafting their art objects.

Nigel: But is it really like that, Gaby?

Gaby: Well, Nigel, there's no question that the very idea of an art school has been dramatically called into question with the advent of the Internet as well as smart phones and Web 2.0 technology, and this has led to the rapid dissolution of real world significance in the art schools, especially in regard to their ability to really push the forms, the entire field of art, further. I mean, how do you life-draw with your mobile phone? How many found objects can you meld together and put on the floor before they all start looking the same? In fact, 2.0 enters art school around the time all of higher education was being called into question.

Nigel: Like all of the disciplines, art school did not escape from these massive technological changes.

Gaby: No, in fact, it is this rigid approach to the disciplines, as you call them, that have been at the root of the disease. When 2.0 enters art school, it's the beginning of the collapse of their influence in determining who the next generation of significant artists would be. It was not too long ago that art schools were where you went to find the real cutting-edge stuff, but then the

intensity of technological change overtook their agendas and now art schools are even having trouble just *reflecting* what is happening in the lives of the students who are keeping the institutions afloat. It's really been this way for over a decade.

Nigel: And how did The Artist 2.0 respond to this troubled inevitability?

Gaby: He basically began doing what a lot of his friends and others were doing: using his laptop, experimental software, and eventually other portable devices like mobile phones to blur the distinction between art and life while using the school environment as a social environment to locate others to commiserate with while developing new work.

Nigel: So this remixing of the social environment with the art school environment with the Internet environment led to the blurring of the distinction between art, education, and life -- a bit of a nod to Allan Kaprow, and perhaps Joseph Beuys too, yes?

Gaby: Absolutely, and what we begin seeing in his series of distributed outcomes, or pseudo-outcomes, was that The Artist 2.0 never really saw himself operating in the world of the "as is" but quite clearly uses his mobile phone and laptop connections to challenge his peers to take that next, uncertain step into the "as if."

Nigel: *As if* there were some kind of creative momentum worth pursuing. To me his early art school projects read as though he were coming to the realization that whatever ties his work may have had to the history of art per se, what really mattered more than anything, was the quite literal *pursuit* of a more complex creative practice that moves his life work beyond mere artistic development or, what in the past, we would have called the creation of art for art's sake.

Gaby: Yes, he really steers clear of that. True, his work is *always* about art, he can't help himself, for an investigation of art is correlated to an investigation of what it means to be an artist, but then this too feeds into his creative process in general, and what it means to be human in inhuman, or inhumane, times.

Nigel: Or, as you were saying earlier, post-human times.

Gaby: True.

Nigel: And so what he gives us then are these mobile traces of nervous, handheld glitchiness. The images themselves are a kind of nervous projection.

Gaby: Absolutely. He's all about projecting. This early work is, in many ways, about exposing whatever it is that's on his nerves. For example, his work *Mobile Beach*, was made on one of the earliest mobile phones that came with a semi-decent video recorder, the Nokia N95, and foregrounds his signature style, the quick wrist-flick motion, the one he has since been using throughout his career to generate these gorgeous abstract expressionist effects.

Nigel: Pure genius, if you ask me.

Gaby: In my book I refer to these early mobile video works like *Mobile Beach* as investigations into the nature of the *bodyimage* --

Nigel: -- that's one word -- *bodyimage* --

Gaby: Yes, exactly.

Nigel: What do you exactly mean by that term?

Gaby: What we see in a lot of these early image works, starting with the Flickr images, many of the images on the blog, and these mobile phone video images, is not the body of the artist himself but images as if they were being projected by the body as it processes nature, as it *captures* the mobility of the body processing and augmenting nature *as* image and image *as* nature. These all add up to a very intense look *back inside* the body where these projections are being triggered.

Nigel: Please elaborate!

Gaby: Well, as we look at these images, what we are seeing are, in a way, deep interior projections being triggered by what we might call the *data-matter* and its forever-filtered layers of *live memory*.

Nigel: Well, that's a mouthful -- but a beautiful mouthful that reminds me of a Bergsonian bouquet of rich, floral, philosophical insight.

Gaby: Very funny. But you are hitting on something here, and that's the relationship between body and memory, or *muscle memory*, and how this relates to proprioception and the way 2.0 simultaneously projects and choreographs his movement through space. It's as if his entire body were a kind of *autohallucinatory* vehicle projecting the unconscious imagery he was *made* to deliver. In this regard, we should note that he was fond of that Flusser quote where he wrote, "Images don't show matter, they show what matters." For The Artist 2.0, images show what matters *while*

moving. While gesturing toward that "clearing" that Duchamp spoke so eloquently about.

Nigel: Perfect.

Gaby: Yes, and the artist himself once wrote, in relation to his work, that "the images we see are the result of an ongoing body-brain-apparatus achievement." For me, the experience of seeing these early moving images is both tactile and dreamlike. It's almost as if he wants to melt into the images but, knowing this to be impossible, he figures he may as well play with whatever instruments he has at his disposal, play with them as if improvising some kind of co-creative composition.

Nigel: A kind of jam session between his body, his gadgets, and all of nature.

Gaby: Yes, and let's not forget the creative, or mediumistic, unconscious too. For me, this work is also signaling to us the beginnings of what, in my book, I refer to as his erotic relationship with nature and the objects he intuitively accesses while fictionally constructing different versions of identity into the digital fields of distribution. One could have a Lacanian psychoanalytic field day with his trajectory of developments. In my new book, we'll see how this both complicates, but also passionately connects with, his relationships with the women in his life.

Nigel: But as we know, even before he works with the Nokia N95, he is already, as a teenager, working with an even earlier, perhaps first-generation, Nokia phone with video recording technology, and this technology is so bad it's actually quite good.

Gaby: That's right, it's essentially where he begins to discover his love of the glitch. What these early works from the *.gif(t) economy* series as they are called, do, is show him that the technology will be there for him as long as he has the passion to intuit the formal investigations he needs to address in order to evolve as an artist -- as an art historical figure. He plays with the mobile phone and realizes, "Hey, I don't really have to re-invent video glitch. I'll just shoot this as is and then cut it -- and recontextualize it -- perhaps *loop* it -- as well as play with the field of distribution and see what network -- what audience -- wants to tap into its potential value." Of course, he's very young, so he is totally unaware of, say, the early Pixelvision works of Sadie Benning or, even further back, artists like Nam June Paik and the Vasulkas.

Nigel: And so for him, he's just going with the technological flow, as it were, as if he were happy to play with whatever mobile phone video recorder he has access to.

Gaby: Yes, although what we see in the more advanced mobiles like *Mobile Beach*, is that he is becoming more aware of the technology's relationship to his body, to his own technique, and how this relates to the artist's gesture. This is something that he must have spontaneously discovered as part of his experimental creative process and, upon seeing the results come in, being pleasantly surprised at the quality of the imagery he was capturing -- and by this I don't mean high definition quality, which clearly these early mobile works are *not* producing -- but the *aesthetic* quality of the image itself and, I think, how the more pixelated some of the images are, the more painterly they appear to be.

Nigel: Which again relates back to the early image blogs, and his use of the corrupted digital still as a material representation of his emerging aesthetic.

Gaby: Exactly. A colleague of mine, a well-known video artist here in the UK, looking at some of 2.0's earlier work now available at the museum, recently remarked how amazing the flickering imagery just *looks*, aesthetically, and that they could imagine scores of gorgeous prints being made out of *Mobile Beach* alone.

Nigel: But then there are these other video works made on the N95, the so-called post-industrial landscapes. This brings us to a wholly other, parallel track of development for the artist at this time -- his series of works that grew out of an early fascination with LS Lowry. In your book, you remind us that as a teenager, The Artist 2.0 spent a great deal of time in The Lowry at Salford Quays, of all places.

Gaby: Right, well 2.0's relationship to Lowry, a semi-controversial figure in British art history and specifically Northwest British art history, is revealing, especially in relation to his mobile phone works at post-industrial sites all around the Northwest of England as well as his glitchy remix portrait of Lowry's own Ann.

Nigel: Talk to us about the post-industrial landscapes.

Gaby: Well, as we know, Lowry was himself somewhat obsessed with industrial factory life in the Northwest of England during his working life in and around Salford. His "matchstick men" and unaffected industrial landscape paintings have been the subject of great controversy if not outright ridicule. But 2.0 felt a kind

of allegiance to this work due to his own naiveté on all things art world or art market related and in some ways, reveals himself to be a kind of DIY videographer and photographer using nothing but his mobile phone to capture data and do the upload thing.

Nigel: The upload thing.

Gaby: Exactly. So if we look closely at 2.0's two most discussed postindustrial works, *Power* and *Deep Interior Landscape*, both of which are in MOGA, we can see how these works are actually close readings of Lowry, but the filters he uses to process these close readings are actually all mediated by, first, the Nokia N95 and, secondly, the Internet, and specifically his YouTube channel. Or at least initially this is where the work was to be found.

Nigel: Can you briefly discuss these works in more detail for us?

Gaby: Sure. They are very different works. *Power* is a actually part of a series of works that capture the gloom and potential doom of the Heysham Nuclear Power Station in Lancashire. If you look at the rubble in the foreground, the undoubtedly polluted water, and the actual nuclear facility in the near distance, you can't help but see that 2.0 is playfully responding to what comes after Lowry's own industrial wasteland paintings.

Nigel: There are certainly no matchstick men in these mobile videos.

Gaby: Hardly. They are all dead and gone.

Nigel: And yet there is something about his sense of *Power* in the image itself. In what it conveys.

Gaby: Well, this is why the complementary yet completely different *Deep Interior Landscape* mobile video capture resonates as part of this strange body of work. In *Deep Interior Landscape*, the doom and gloom is still there. The skies are just as grey and unrelenting in their repression as they have ever been in the Northwest of England, but there is also this very glitchy and twitchy imagery with the lone boat in the foreground. There's something beautiful about it and yet we know it's anything but.

Nigel: Fascinating stuff, Gaby. And before we end this discussion of the artist's Nervous Period, perhaps we should just briefly touch on his *Portrait of Ann Remix*. This work, which we actually include in the

Early Years section of the exhibit since it's consistent with the work found in the *.gif(t) economy series*, even though it's not necessarily part of that series, is controversial because it's not so much a close reading as it is a *literal inhabitation of the original Lowry work hanging on the wall*.

Gaby: Exactly -- and so he sneaks his N95 into The Lowry and jams with Lowry's paintings the same way he had purposefully used the earlier Nokia 6660 to playfully capture images off the Web for the *.gif(t) economy* works. In some ways, he's like any other art tourist of the time who finds value in using their mobile phone to capture image data of preexisting artworks in whatever museum they happen to be strolling through. But 2.0 is different. He is not just taking a quick snap to say "I was there - I was in front of this important work of art." Hardly. What he does is he creates a digital cubist remix of Lowry's *Portrait of Ann* which reveals why his early GIF works are considered classics. Nobody was doing this kind of work at the time.

Nigel: It's almost as if he were using his handheld gesture as a kind of psychologically revealing brushstroke, if that makes sense.

Gaby: It does. In fact, you could say that what he does is take the rather tame portrait of Lowry's young woman and, using his mobile phone, mashes it up into a strange remix of not just Cubism, but perhaps more importantly, abstract expressionism --

Nigel: Willem de Kooning seems most present in this incredibly short video loop.

Gaby: No question about it. And the artist acknowledges this in his subtitle, *After de Kooning*. In painterly terms, one might say that de Kooning is the Father of Glitch. 2.0's image takes the facial features of its subject and dismembers any sense of cohesion. Already you can see the signature style effects of his experimental handheld techniques beginning to distort and disrupt the data that he is capturing and, in the process, expand his glitch practice further. In fact, some think the handheld experiments result in a kind of mobile phone, abstract expressionism with dramatic psychological resonance consistent with de Kooning's *Woman* series.

Nigel: Really, fascinating stuff, Gaby, but it's time to move on -- just like the artist himself does right after graduating from art school and relocating himself into the poetic wilderness of Britain's Lake District region --

Gaby: -- where a whole new body of work, walking work, nature work, water work, mobile video work and experiments in what we believe he referred to as some of the earliest examples of *augmented video reality*, all make their appearance. It's also where he turns into a kind of networked recluse, to remix Wordsworth.

[Unintelligible]

Nigel: Gaby, before we dig deeper into the artworks made around the time of his residency in the Lake District, I wanted to address something you and I discussed the last time we met, when we were talking about how, by creating more open works that he essentially distributes for free over the Internet, The Artist 2.0 is able to trigger other inferences of potential meaning that relate to issues of transmission and the changing exhibition context of contemporary work, not to mention the *re-materialization* of the object as digital artifact. This begs the question, and that is: "Can we view the digital distribution process itself a material transmission of art?"

Gaby: I think I understand what you're asking, Nigel --

Nigel: -- right, I guess what I'm wondering is, is it possible that the digital artist of today is a kind of curator of events that are mediated by networked forms of technology? The reason I ask this is because there is this sense that the interface itself is on a fast track to disappearing altogether so that we can eventually experience the work as a total immersion into the data sphere, *sans* goggles. Can you help us understand how this relates to a lot of network based art in general?

Gaby: Sure, Nigel. This is an important point for us to really grasp when considering the entire *oeuvre* of the Artist 2.0. First, we cannot assume that his particular trajectory was part of some strategic plan. In fact, he was once quoted as saying something like "the plan is to have no plan."

Nigel: Right, and that resonates with another quote of his: "The important thing is to annihilate the important thing."

Gaby: Which in many ways is exactly what he does.

Nigel: How so?

Gaby: Mostly by just being himself. And this is what I mean when I suggest we should not assume that his particular trajectory was part of some strategic plan. You see, Nigel, the Artist 2.0 operates under the

premise that all artistic activity takes place in the field of distribution. This is not very far-fetched when we see *how* he exhibits his work. His work is primarily exhibited via the Internet, which for him is first and foremost a conceptual art space. But he is also quite happy to extend that conceptual practice into live performance spaces as well as the traditional gallery or museum space, albeit with different repercussions.

Nigel: A bit ironic, given our own *museum* of glitch aesthetics.

Gaby: This relates to some of our earlier conversations about the “as if,” specifically in the sense that Martha Rosler has used it to suggest that the Conceptual, capital C, in contemporary art, cloaks itself in multiple disciplines or itself becomes interdisciplinary. For the Artist 2.0, this means oscillating between the image and the text, the online and the offline, the DIY scene and the mainstream art world, as well as that fuzzy boundary space between practice and theory, which for him, is a strange hybrid of philosophy, poetics, and even critical media literacy. It’s almost as if the content of the work itself is irrelevant and what matters most is what he *does* with it, how he uses his digital formation to *re-invent* what it means to live, aesthetically, in the network society.

Nigel: So how does this relate to his customized approach to glitch aesthetics?

Gaby: Well, let’s not forget that for him, as he starts his digital practice, a DIY exhibition context like the Internet is only *peripherally* part of the mainstream art world, but that in a very short period of time, and particularly a few years after the turn of the century when the early pioneers of Net art have, in many instances, already come and gone, a new phase of Net art slowly becomes one of the predominant features of the art world, at which point he then becomes one of its principal stars. So “in the beginning,” let’s call them the Net Art 1.0 days, there was first the artist and then a Net connection. And out of this grew what we might call Net Art 2.0 and a new interest in exhibition as digital transmission and digital transmission as performance. Social media performance -- and the Net was now a space for his thought processes to circulate in the total field of distribution.

Nigel: The total field of distribution. This reminds me a bit of McLuhan’s total field of action. Perhaps we could say that social media performance art takes place in the total field of network action and that this is what it means to be a contemporary digital artist?

Gaby: Yes. His entire practice depends on being able to transmit his thoughts to a Net distributed audience, or whatever audience he can reach, and he knows this. The important thing for him is that the transmission not go through the traditional channels of elitist, art world culture. He refuses to model his success on that typical formula, or at least on the surface it appears to be a refusal, but as always it’s much more complicated than that.

Nigel: As always, there’s this issue of surviving, of sustaining a Conceptual practice in the networked space of flows.

Gaby: Absolutely, and there are still these more exploratory, digital forms of expression which can be conceived of as a kind of ongoing performance art project -- and this is itself very Conceptual in nature, right?, Rosler’s capital C Conceptual, and so this gives him an opening to play with that transmission which is where glitch comes in, both the version that is the end result of an accidental process of information corruption that leads to aesthetic discovery, as most authentic glitch is or can be, and *the artificially constructed glitch transmission* -- which he sees becoming more popular in digital culture and that he can no longer ignore.

Nigel: But when he was starting all of this, no one quite knew what he was doing or why he was going about it the way he was.

Gaby: You can say that again. He certainly felt no need to carve out some kind of identity as *the* glitch artist. It’s as if he was developing his Conceptual practice regardless of what the world thought of his digital hijinks and then the world, the *art* world, but also the margins of the mainstream pop culture, decided to label him *the* glitch artist, and although he never really embraced it, he didn’t resist it either. He just kept making art which, for him, was bound by his glitch aesthetic.

Nigel: Can you elaborate a bit on this basic concept of the glitch aesthetic?

Gaby: Sure. The glitch aesthetic, at least in the context of what this entire museum project is founded upon, relates to the minor disturbances -- intentionally executed or not -- that disrupt the flow of data for aesthetic effect. Sometimes it means just setting up various parameters that create random glitch effects and then -- as if running aesthetic experiments -- allowing those effects to remain in the work.

Nigel: So by not excising them because they don't conform to a narrow standard of what is beautiful or aesthetically pleasing, the artist keeps them in the mix for their *extra*-aesthetic qualities.

Gaby: Yes, because they are in and themselves quite beautiful, or can be conceived that way. And let's not forget, that the artist always has the option of intentionally causing or creating glitch, that it need not just be an unintentional outcome of some technical or creative process. We could also say that the meaning, if there is any meaning to be found in the work, can be located just as much in the noise generated by the creative process as in the actual images or sounds being exhibited by the artist. And for him this intentional glitch could manifest itself in the *transmission* of the work into the field of distribution. This is where 2.0 takes the work of Conceptualism into uncharted territory.

Nigel: Yes, well, let's talk about that in relation to the *Lake District Walks* as well as our recent addition to the collection from this period, the video *Glitch Lake*.

Gaby: Perfect segue, Nigel.

Nigel: Thanks, Gaby. So help us understand the *Lake District Walks* and how the customized glitch aesthetics he transmits for us in these mobile phone videos fit into The Artist 2.0's unusual trajectory.

Gaby: Right, so, for example, in his *Lake District Walk: Code Mosh*, one can see how he intentionally glitchifies the moving image. Some of the glitch comes from the camera itself, a Nokia N93 with its ultra-cool swivel design that works quite well with the video recorder and invites the artist to experiment with his own proprioception as a kind of "un-steady" cam -- one that is readymade for angular perambulation. But as we view the video, clearly the artist has gone back into the postproduction studio and, if you will, intentionally begun hexing the data, by disturbing his movement via both random datamoshing effects as well as more straightforward glitch imagery of the kind that we find everywhere nowadays and that we see in his early *Glitch Aesthetics* photo blog.

Nigel: And why do you supposed he does that?

Gaby: You mean the intentional datamoshing?

Nigel: Yes. Why hex the data?

Gaby: It's hard to say. Mostly he wants to deliver to us

a creative work that, by embracing the glitch, invites us to reposition our relationship to both artistic intention and random or aesthetically composed accident. As McLuhan once said, "The medium is the message." For the Artist 2.0, we could remix that into: "The glitch artist *as* medium is the error message."

Nigel: I see. And how does a moving glitch work like those we find in the *Lake District Walk* series investigate the concept of *duration*?

Gaby: Well, Nigel, given the content, the duration of these works, of which we only see an excerpt most probably because the mobile phone runs out of juice, must first be an homage to Bergson -- who the artist seems deeply indebted to the way that Alfred Jarry was also indebted to the French philosopher -- but in an odd way, they also point to the film work of Warhol.

Nigel: You mean Andy Warhol's *Screen Tests*?

Gaby: Yes, these *Lake District* videos somehow remind me of the Warholian *Screen Test*, perhaps a few minutes longer.

Nigel: But in Warhol's case, the artist uses a 16 millimeter film camera to shoot near-still film portraits, so that he's essentially eavesdropping on the banality of life as expressed by his subjects doing nothing but modeling their ennui for the camera. In The Artist 2.0's *Lake District Walks* videos, though, there is movement, sometimes erratic movement at that, and it's all -- or so we assume -- it's all coming from the perspective of the artist walking.

Gaby: Yes, you're right, and we can see that happening in the *Lake District Walk* video which he subtitles *Raw Source*. For me, though, the Warhol connection is more about the banality you mention, the pre-determined duration, and the realtime recording of the event as it happens. The real Warhol connection is in the artist's acceptance that life itself plays at 24, or in this case, about 30 frames per second, and all one needs to do is push the record button so that they can reveal the world of the artist for what it is. Except once he has the data, he then feels free to intentionally manipulate it so that we once again have to ask ourselves what is it about the contemporary -- or we might even say *temporary* -- artist that feels the need to aesthetically alter our experience of the raw data they are using as their primary source material? Is this all still really rooted in the construction of digital forms of identity?

Nigel: Well, this feeds right into a discussion of *Lake*

District Walk: Augmented Video Reality. A strange title but one that really anticipates the future, especially in relation to what will eventually become the burgeoning field of augmented reality apps used in conjunction with smart phones.

Gaby: Exactly. This particular video is really playing with the frame and, if you like, the experiential mashup of the artist capturing mobility through nature, as if the mobile phone video were somehow a *real* documentation of his movement -- and the shifting geometric-glitter glitch effects of the light being aesthetically corrupted vis-à-vis digital processes.

Nigel: He's clearly playing with the concept of *vital beauty* in so many different ways here.

Gaby: No doubt about that, Nigel. It's a deep investigation into the relationship between phenomenology and aesthetics as they relate to what he terms *augmented video reality* or AVR. This AVR is very painterly in its execution and eventual performance and is really anti-aesthetic in nature.

Nigel: You mean literally anti-aesthetic *in* nature.

Gaby: Precisely. The sublime effects of nature on our seeing are now being reversed and we can start to see the lower resolution mobile phone video documentation of a walk in the woods transformed into a kind of alternative reality, one that is experienced as a documented *dérive* inside the *mind* of nature itself as it becomes more exposed to digital light and consequently gets ported through various remix or coded filters generated by the artist.

Nigel: Very interesting, Gaby, but in addition to these experimental digital techniques, there are other artists we can try and make a connection with here. For example, Richard Long.

Gaby: Of course. Long has created these aesthetically appealing walkthroughs where, as we know, he spends days on end walking through various landscapes around the world. These walkthroughs are also what I would term *durational achievements*, although *our* experience of them tends to come in the form of some aestheticized documentation, including what Long refers to as *textworks* or *sculptures*. This kind of trailblazing conceptual work, like so much capital C Conceptual Art, has found its way into gallery and museum culture in the form of wall texts, photos, earth sculptures, and the like.

Nigel: Our artist does not buy into all of that, does he?

Gaby: No, at least not at this point in his own personal history. For *The Artist 2.0*, these overaestheticized artifacts are all unnecessarily encumbered by an art world system that he finds absolutely problematic or, at the very least, a kind of administrative nuisance since he just wants to record his walks until his phone's memory runs out of space or he just turns it off. He'll then take the phone loaded with its video data back into the studio, and by that I mean his laptop -- he really is not a studio artist anymore -- and after bluetoothing the files on to his hard drive, he'll start postproducing the data into a stand-alone piece of digitally processed time-based media that he can then upload to his online channel. In the pieces we are showing in the museum, we are highlighting three of his *Lake District Walks*, one that plays with augmented video reality, the other with DIY datamoshing effects, and one that appears to remain in its raw state, but that is also filled with various glitch effects or lossiness generated by the mobile phone's video camera.

Nigel: Gaby, do you think our viewing of the video is essential to our appreciation of the work as a 2.0 version of a walkthrough? With Long, we don't go on the walk with him. Instead, we just get the conceptual ephemera as a kind of aestheticized aftermath.

Gaby: As we often do with most 20th century Conceptual art. This is especially true of Long's line-walking pieces where all we really see are photographs of the lines he made tramping over the same bit of land over and over again, or even photographs of lines in the landscape that are basically military formations of his walking boots. These are fine examples of Conceptual Art 1.0 and share a very similar performative element that we find in the *Artist 2.0's* walking work, but for Long there's still the need to bring it all back into this art world or art gallery and museum context.

Nigel: Whereas 2.0 is really not the force behind our own museum project even though he is its ultimate subject. Who else walks the aesthetically resolute gallery line?

Gaby: Well, that's a tricky question, Nigel. We should at the very least note that Andy Goldsworthy apparently made an early line in the landscape at what is now the Storey Institute while an art student in Lancaster in 1976. This is when it was called Preston Polytechnic. He too has a photo as the end result. He once said that his work is rooted in the landscape and that his photos do the talking about his art practice. This

relates to something The Artist 2.0 once said: "Video is the way I talk about my walking practice."

Nigel: Almost a verbatim remix of Goldsworthy.

Gaby: But this is not really the Artist 2.0's *modus operandi*. The socially networked or shared video clip of the *actual walk itself* changes all of that. This is what's radical and what makes it hard for art historians such as myself to successfully absorb into the canon --

Nigel: -- which then, I guess you could say, totally skews the canonization process, because there's really no way to recuperate this work unless we put it into a museum.

Gaby: Well, that's the message, isn't it? What I sometimes used to wonder when viewing his online video channel was why he even bothered uploading this work. Why do you suppose he is using his mobile phone to capture images of himself taking a long walk in the Lake District? Is it for the purpose of tracing his trajectory as a 21st century artist? What is he really doing here? Is he performing? Capturing source material? Documenting? But then I think of Long, Goldsworthy, and other walking artists -- as well 2.0's interest in the poetry of William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens for whom nature is a *thing* to be both played with and experienced, poetically, and wonder if there is something more at stake here.

Nigel: Whatever his intention, he certainly seems to have embraced the work once he's uploaded it. He's married to it. And then there's the double-whammy of mobile phone-induced video glitch and artist-generated glitch aesthetics that takes place in the post-production studio. It also occurs in other works of this time including *Glitch Lake*, the new work we recently acquired from this period and one that initializes his early interest in the relationship between water, data, flow, time, and memory.

Gaby: An excellent point, Nigel.

Nigel: Would you say that 2.0, as well as other artists who have gone down similar yet individually unique paths, have, in fact, embraced a self-conscious move to turn the glitch into some form of commodity fetish?

Gaby: Yes, that's very possible. Maybe they can't help themselves. But I am not sure how it becomes a commodity fetish when it's so freely available on the Internet. I would have to think about that one.

Nigel: I mean there are elements of the work that are just so damn pretty to look at, you almost want to *own* them. *Glitch Lake* feels like it belongs in the lineage of works connected with Monet's *Twilight, Venice* or even some of Seurat's *Pointillism* but now experienced as a kind of New Aesthetic Pixelism. Could a work like *Glitch Lake* be an homage to the painterly past?

Gaby: That's possible, Nigel. Like those early handheld, mobile phone experiments of the beach created while at art school, or the large scale digital images that we identify as abstract expressionist stills captured from his mobile phone. Or we can think back to that *very* early installation of the glitch projection at the Winter Gardens, including the video where he -- or whoever he has sitting there -- has the work projected on to their body as if *becoming* or *embodying*, the work. And then there's also what we now know to be his live VJ or visual jockey performances at various clubs in Manchester around the same time we place him in the Lake District.

Nigel: The energy that surrounds all of these works is phenomenal.

Gaby: Yes, and around this time in the artist's personal history, what we are finding is that there is often this desire to turn the glitchy image -- as well his experimental sounds too -- to turn them all into a pleasurable, audio-visual experience.

Nigel: But getting back to works like the various *Lake District Walks*, do you think that there's any chance the person ambling through this footpath is actually *not* The Artist 2.0? And with *Glitch Lake*, again it seems as if it's more about the aesthetic effects of transmitting data than any other specific homage to a particular lake. In fact, this work could even be titled *Generic Glitch Lake* -- and I would *still* love to view it over and over again.

Gaby: Honestly, Nigel, it's hard to say who is doing the walking and where exactly these works are being generated. I mean, we never do *see* him, do we? I think there's a quick bit in one of the videos, I think *Lake District Walk: Code Mosh*, where we see some walking boots for maybe about four or five seconds, and possibly a shadow here or there, but as far as I know, that's it. From what I have researched, no one has ever really seen an actual recording of him that was taken while he is walking, but my sense is that all of the *Lake District* videos were, in fact, created while he was living as a kind of networked recluse not far from Wordsworth's Dove Cottage. I think these video

works were his way of grounding himself out again, of getting back to earth while maintaining a connection with his core practice and signature-style effects.

Nigel: And technically speaking?

Gaby: Technically, something very interesting happens with this series of walking works, in that although the technology is changing very fast around him and there are ample opportunities to upgrade the quality of the mobile phone video recorder, he continues to make these walkthroughs with this older mobile phone, the Nokia N93, and has temporarily put off the more robust, higher definition versions just now coming on the market.

Nigel: Why do you suppose he does that?

Gaby: Again, it's hard to say, but most mobile phone artists would say that the Nokia is easier to handle and does give the artist more flexibility as far as movement goes. The difference is quite subtle, but something he would have picked up on and just gone with as a personal preference. Let's not forget, there is an e-mail interview he once conducted with a collector -- I believe it was the Milan gallerist Cara Varelli, which she has now documented on her Web site -- where he referred to the Nokia mobile phone video camera as a *prosthesis*, and in the e-mail dialog, he samples from the philosopher Vilém Flusser, who he was reading at the time, and refers to "the universe of technical images" as a haptic space where "the eye touches rather than sees." It's also interesting to note that in another one of his rare e-mail interviews around the same time -- I believe it was with *Rhizome* -- he spoke of "going in blind while holding your eyes in the palm of your hand."

Nigel: "Going in blind while holding your eyes in the palm of your hand." Again, so poetic, yet theoretically, expressing what it's like to *make* work in the 21st century.

Gaby: Exactly. I think he saw this movement with the camera, and specifically the Nokia phone, as a kind of structured improvisation that he co-created with his natural surroundings, and that he was capturing this data flow while sliding between embodied forms of proprioception and machinic-vision.

Nigel: Heavy stuff, all.

Gaby: Indeed, Nigel. The Artist 2.0 is a very heavy artist, one whose role-playing performance takes place in a space where a de-objectified movement fuses with

a de-subjectified observer.

Nigel: What you see is not necessarily what you get.

Gaby: Or is it? That is the question.

[Interlude]

Nigel: Joining Gaby and I now is the Guardian media art critic and author of the controversial book, *The Internet Is Dead: Long Live the Internet*, our own Brian Hale. Welcome, Brian.

Brian: Many thanks for having me, Nigel. It's great to be here.

Nigel: Gaby, before we bring Brian into the discussion I just wanted to touch on this next body of work we are about to take a closer look at.

Gaby: Absolutely, Nigel. Whereas the series of works made under the title of *Lake District Walks* clearly indicates the artist's attempt to reconfigure his relationship with so-called nature, and we assume he is, in fact, becoming something of a reclusive figure, in actuality, he's still operating on many different levels. So before he can even situate his trajectory in relation to the landscape he is now immersing himself in, what we discover is that 2.0 begins experiencing some unexpected success as a result of his walking videos becoming viral videos in the art world and beyond.

Nigel: And how does he respond to this success?

Gaby: As always, this is when he feels the need to *walk away* from them as well.

Nigel: Typical Artist 2.0 if you ask me. Here we have this pseudonymous figure who appears to morph his practice at will. In this regard, I am thinking about how he transitions from the *Lake District Walks* series to his experiments in what he himself has referred to as cyberpsychogeographical, a mouthful if ever there was one.

[group laughter]

Gaby: Brian, you have actually written about this a bit.

Brian: Yes, well, he of course takes the term *psychogeography* from the French art and philosophy movement known as Situationism, and adds yet another prefix, *cyber*, which as Tim Leary reminds us, refers to the one who navigates or pilots their persona into the

Great Unknown as part of a practice committed to the exploration of unauthorized forms of artistic and technological innovation. So a cyberpsychogeographical work of art would be one that uses new media technologies, and the networked media environment in particular, to steer both the artist and art-appreciator -- or co-conspirator -- toward conceptual media art spaces they may have never interacted with before.

Nigel: And do you consider The Artist 2.0 to be a kind of *cybernaut*, to use Leary's term?

Brian: Well, these terms can come off a bit bland and predictable, if you ask me. Lately, the preferred terminology focuses more on the concept of *deep topography* and what some mischievously refer to as *digital thoughtography*. Leary actually went beyond the idea of cybernaut and started thinking of these rare visionary types as *the wave people*.

Gaby: Wave people! How interesting, especially given the artist's work in relation to water and data flow. Maybe we should be looking at it from the perspective of waves.

Nigel: So, Brian, what exactly is a wave person?

Brian: Well, Nigel, I really do prefer to look at it in the context of *wave people* since it seems to be a set of shared characteristics distributed among a select few of each generation who are able to go against the grain of authoritarian culture to create their own, if you will, remixed realities that make a point of hacking into mainstream perceptions of what it means to live one's life to its fullest. The original sense of the term "wave people" is actually from the Japanese legend of the *ronin* which referred to the samurai who had left the service of their feudal lords to become -- what we might call -- warriors without masters.

Gaby: Wow, sexy.

Nigel: Wavy gravy.

Brian: Right, so let's talk about how this all relates to his work.

Gaby: Oh, right, I knew we were here for something!

[laughter]

Brian: OK, so let's start by discussing some of his initial attempts at alternative forms of Google Street Photography as well as some of the Google Street

View video remixes where he is tearing through these virtual cartographies while filtering what it is he sees when speed-drifting through the digital world -- and here I use the word *drifting* as a trigger to indicate his awareness of the Situationist *dérive* which plays into various aspects of his digital practice as well. This all relates to his philosophical interest in *deep topography* and what has since been referred to as the New Aesthetic but is *really* more like the digital version of Jarry's pataphysics.

Gaby: Ah, the New Aesthetic.

Nigel: Meet the New Aesthetic -- same as the old one.

Gaby: Well, the first thing I think of when looking at some of the Google Street Photography, and I am specifically referring here to the just released 8-bit works that he captures on April Fool's Day of this year and that he titles *8-Bit Heaven*, is the alien phenomenology that threads throughout these digital compositions. In his world, everything is suffused with data. The streets of Soho in London, illegible signposts, a dog, a dark alleyway, bits of corrugated steel, parked bicycles, and lots of people walking through the landscape. And not really wave people, but people in general, en route to their final destiny.

Nigel: We see this in the new *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U* video too: both the 8-bit and Google glitch images are loaded with digitally dubbed objects whether they be sci-fi vehicles, prostitutes, food carts, tunnel graffiti, and all manner of so-called nature and architecture. Everything he captures and edits for us is ported through this retro-filter that somehow still speaks to the way our seeing is now augmented by technological processes that we have, for the most part, already lost individual control over.

Gaby: I would agree with you on that, Nigel. This is partly why The Artist 2.0 seems to defy easy categorization and, in fact, reveals to us a personal narrative that is driven by his own, mystical operating system, one that he employs to design these image-experiences as a kind of visual poetry.

Brian: That's just what I was thinking too, Gaby. And I love your idea of a mystical operating system that uses the glitches in the system to achieve transcendence as part of a larger autohallucinatory experience. For 2.0, poetry should not aspire to the condition of music but to the condition of corrupted data feeling the pain of transmission.

Nigel: And you can see precisely *that* in many of these images included in the *8-Bit Heaven* series. I almost want to refer to these works as object-oriented in their ontological framework, something he suggests in his early *Glitch Aesthetics* blog in 2006, and you can also sense a real love of the drift in these works, or what Brian refers to as the cyberpsychogeographical *dérive*, and the necessity of navigating the street as an erotic spatial practice.

Brian: There's this permeating sense of productive idleness in all of these works, but it really comes out in these *Google-Assisted Living* pieces.

Nigel: Perhaps we could think of it as *Strasseblickfernweb*, or Street View wanderlust.

Gaby: Nice one, Nigel, but in a way, 2.0 is really the last artist in the world who needs these labels to identify his practice. There is a certain *glitch momentum* - if you will - that just catapults his trajectory into these Cities of the Future which, ironically, are portrayed in the retro-styles of a computer history that has already passed him by.

Nigel: Yes, these 8-bit images have this futuristic, otherworldly look and feel to them and are also quite experimental in their compositional style. It's not as if they are trying to mimic or situate themselves in any particular strain of photo art history.

Brian: Right, and this is what makes the work fascinating. First, its connection to a kind of unitary or mobile urbanism which, ironically, we first pick up on during his time in the Lake District where we sense that he was probably missing the city or at least was feeling the need to reconnect with it virtually from his outpost in the woods where he clearly maintained his net connection.

Nigel: As Cicero might have said were he alive today, "If you have a garden and an Internet connection, then you have everything you need." But why would 2.0 be cyberpsychogeographically drifting through these virtual cartographies in the first place? Strictly out of boredom, or to stop himself from going mad?

Gaby: Not at all, Nigel. As we were saying, he really sees poetry as a living condition where it's the artist's sacred duty to emulate the flow of corrupt data feeling the pain of transmission. He performs this cyberpsychogeographical drifts because he is reassessing ways in which the city as a conceptual art space, or virtual *chora*, can influence ones thinking and how it

resonates with their creative process.

Brian: That's true -- and so with this very recent series of images, *8-Bit Heaven*, we see him experimenting primarily with automobiles, figural apparitions, and what, for lack of better, I would term *glitch architecture*. And let's not forget that these images we see on the Web are the ones he selected for us to view. If you think of what his process must have been like, i.e. navigating the aerial views and streets of different parts of the world and searching for the perfect image to capture, collect and pin to the Web, we start to see what his editing philosophy is all about.

Nigel: They're actually quite gorgeous in and of themselves.

Brian: And as we have now seen, he is able to revisit this editorial aesthetic in the new *WeRMediumzGo-MetaOn-U* video just included at the end of the exhibition in his so-called Later Works.

Nigel: For him, making a film, if we can even still call it that, is not about shooting video per se, but is really about navigating cyberspace, capturing data, and playing out his social media performance art in various digital editing environments.

Brian: Exactly. It's a cut-and-paste as-you-go digital lifestyle practice.

Gaby: Brian, if I understand what you're suggesting, the important thing for us to consider here is how the various works are composed and edited. Not necessarily manipulated beyond the actual screen capture, but manipulated in the way the image is addressed, or *steered towards*, as the case may be, almost *challenging* the image to give up something it desperately wants to hold back but that, after minor tweaking and teasing during the compositional act, it eventually succumbs to, and then that's it, that's when the artist takes exactly what he needs. Exactly what he wants for his glitch performance.

Brian: Yes, the glitch aesthetics, as you call it, really shine here, and when blown up into print form and hung on a wall which, I might add, goes against the grain of everything we might think The Artist 2.0 stands for, really play with both the looseness *and* lossiness of data and how what you see is not necessarily what you always get.

Gaby: But then you *do* get beauty in all of its early, 21st century glitchified glory. New Aesthetics *par excellence*.

Nigel: And let's not forget that the images we have chosen for the MOGA exhibit are primarily taken -- or shot -- or should we say captured? sampled?

Gaby: -- *sampled* is good --

Nigel: -- yes, these sampled 8-bit images exhibited at MOGA are primarily captured in Manchester and London, with a couple from Morecambe as well --

Gaby: -- and yet we know that he also sampled images from Brazil --

Brian: Ah, Brazil! Well, we really haven't even touched on that yet, have we? Nigel, when we last spoke, you mentioned that his foray into Google Street Photography signals his attempt to create a kind of sci-fi city of the future. And, so, what better place to play with that idea than Brazil? Of course, the inside joke here is that the popular phrase, "Brazil is the country of the future and always will be," is now much more complicated than ever since the artist, having lived in the UK, North America and is now, we all assume, holing up somewhere in South America, is under no illusions and sees Brazil as the *future-now*, which is another way of saying the ultimate cyberpunk nation.

Nigel: Can we assume that these image captures, both the stills from the *8-Bit Heaven* series and the most recent *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U* video, are created from his new headquarters somewhere in middle of Brazil?

Brian: Absolutely.

Gaby: When did he move there, Brian?

Brian: Let's face it, Gaby, we really have no specific data on exactly when or why he moves to Brazil, or even if he's still there. This is all speculation. There has been considerable talk that he may have ended up near the capitol, Brasilia. There are even rumors of him joining a cult or becoming a kind of avant-garde cult leader, whatever that is.

Nigel: An "avant-garde cult leader" -- this relates to the last video we just posted at MOGA.

Gaby: *WeRMediumz*.

Brian: Exactly. This work could be read as a work of creative non-fiction that documents his life in Brazil today. The line between fiction and fact, or *faction*, is what's most curious about all of his work to date.

Nigel: This goes right to the heart of his creative process.

Brian: No question about that. All of these virtual cartographies that he's mapping and remixing in these cyberpsychogeographical drifts are meant to suggest the power of creative visualization and its relationship to processing -- or filtering the data of everyday life into a cohesive lifestyle practice.

Gaby: You first have to *make* life if you somehow hope to *live* life.

Brian: But make it while distributing, or transmitting, your conceptual personae through the network. You can't call yourself 2.0 unless you are fully immersed in and embrace your role-playing performance as a social media artist.

Nigel: This is what it means to conduct a *digital lifestyle practice*, as he refers to it.

Brian: Yes, exactly. *Open source lifestyle practice* is another phrasing of his.

Gaby: *Cut-and-paste as-you go lifestyle practice*. But I feel we're getting repetitive here. It's really about moving-remixing-rendering-distributing alternative states of presence.

Brian: If you think about it, he actually operates on a number of simultaneous and continuous tracks that run parallel to each other where he creatively processes his various conceptual personae. It's quite obvious now that he is deftly aware of the digital editing environments his practice is being deployed in and is more than ready to filter whatever source material he finds useful for his own autobiographical -- or what he terms *pseudo-autobiographical* -- performance.

Gaby: For him, as for all remix artists, it's what you *do* with the data that counts.

Brian: Most definitely. So he's quite happy to sample material from the Internet, capture random bits on his mobile phone, or just rip things from other pre-existing media and then *com-postproduce* it for whatever atemporal reality he is in the process of creating for himself. He does this a lot during his time in the Manchester area. For example, we can look at an early video work of his titled *Mobile Conduction*, where he uses his mobile phone to capture a tram ride from Media City in Salford back to Manchester.

Gaby: I love that piece. It's so poetic. So chaotic-poetic.

Brian: It really is and, I think, reveals to us his indebtedness to early avant-garde artists and movements like Vertov's *A Man and His Movie Camera* not to mention the obvious nod to both Futurism and Cubism in the look and feel of the imagery.

Nigel: I suppose we could look at it as a very DIY *Man and His Mobile Phone* remix. And I guess there's also the proto-Situationist instinct to de-rail, if you'll excuse the pun, his preordained movement within an urban environment. The way he angles the camera-phone and playfully flicks the apparatus with his experimental handheld techniques opens up our eyes to images of the city we would otherwise never see.

Brian: That's for sure, Nigel. This isn't a nod in the direction of surveillance cameras or any of the other politically oriented works we see from a lot of the other Net artists that came before him. It's part of his evolution as a deep topographer who intentionally creates a counter-movement that feeds into his ongoing glitch performance.

Gaby: And yet, there is still an implied political edge to the work in that he is showing us how the apparatuses we all depend on for our daily communication rituals are also magical image making devices that can help us screw our perception of the real, and in the process he once again challenges us to play with the available source material everywhere as a kind of revolutionary practice of everyday life. In some ways, I think his glitch performances in pieces like *Mobile Conduction* and the experimental works in the *Google-Assisted Living* series are a 21st century version of what we used to call *political street art*.

Brian: This is really what is at the core of his practice as a Net artist. He imagines himself to be a kind of nomadic, network conductor who mobilizes his persona through an audio-visual space of flows. You could say that he is a new kind of performance artist or what I am calling a *conceptual persona* whose social media practice remediates our idea of what it means to *be* an artist.

Nigel: The whole concept of remediation is central to his practice. In fact, some cultural philosophers and theorists are now insisting that the New Aesthetic movement is a remix of what in the past we referred to as remediation.

Brian: No doubt. But it's also about *remixing persona*, to borrow from the title of Gaby's book. A lot of the work we're discussing here is meant to orchestrate dif-

ferent versions of the larger network narrative without specifically signing it as his own, especially since he is more than self-aware that the subject he is working on is bigger than he'll ever be. And yet there are traces of *his*, the Artist 2.0's, resonant energies everywhere you look. It's what differentiates him from the millions of other Net artists out there in that he is cleverly situating his work so that it resonates with the creative forebears canonized in the histories of modern art.

Gaby: His work canonizes itself.

Brian: Absolutely. He certainly doesn't need us to do that for him. In a work like *Mobile Conduction*, he is really just laying bare what the camera-phone and artist gesture will allow us to see as part of a simple journey back to the city. But he is also staking a claim on his place in the annals of sanctioned art history.

[Unintelligible]

Gaby: Brian, I was hoping you could elaborate on what you have previously written about in relation to the Artist's speed-drifting through these virtual cartographies. What's going on there?

Brian: My sense is that some time soon after the artist finishes his *HD Streaming* series and the *Lake District Walks*, he begins charting his next move and starts conducting research into potential locations for his next body of work. The isolation becomes too much for him. Yes, at heart he's a kind of Anglo-American transcendentalist. He once wrote that he would love to be one with nature but that so far he's only managed to become about .25 with nature --

[Unintelligible]

Brian: -- and he's clearly found it valuable to pursue the life of a networked recluse who is trying to build an alternative online persona and who is every bit as engaged and even recognized in the art world as any emerging gallery artist would be. But there is so much more to his story than that. For example, we know he has a deep, abiding love for African culture, especially its music and religious mysticism, as well as women of African descent, and so it comes as no surprise that he -- at least we *think* that he -- is now zeroing in on the Afro-Brazilian state of Bahia for his current productions. And let's not forget, as we were just saying, images in *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U* were clearly captured in Brazilian cities like Rio and Sao Paulo and possibly Belo Horizonte, suggesting that he still revisits the urban environment, virtually

and metaphorically if not quite literally, and is almost using his online wanderlust to locate potential sites of aesthetic occupation --

Nigel: -- and let's not forget that while he imagines his "country of the future," he has also, earlier in his career, captured these Google Street View images in other parts of the world as well, including the European continent.

Brian: A work like the *Lake Como Remix* immediately comes to mind.

Nigel: It's one of my favorites. Brian. What can we say about this work? In terms of location, it seems to be the odd man out, but on closer reflection, especially now that we know he spent some time in Milan, it fits right in to what we would have to call the artist's trajectory.

Brian: Well, I'm not 100% sure there really *is* a specific trajectory that he's on. A lot of these Net artists are just playing with the technology to see how far they can push it before it breaks, and then when it does break, it's like striking oil. It's their Eureka moment that they will milk for as long as the social network will allow them. And clearly this relates to the fun he is having with the *Lake Como Remix*.

Gaby: Yes, this idea of breaking the technology, of capitalizing -- if you will -- on the golden glitch aesthetic -- who was it that said, "We crash your browser with content"?

Nigel: Content indeed. So, Brian, you were saying about this *Lake Como Remix*?

Brian: Right, well, there's really no getting around it. It's as if he's using the Internet as a fantasy engine, a space to not only constantly reinvent himself as an artist, as a creative agent navigating his avatar through the social network, but that he is also now using the Internet to augment his visualization process. You can see this in *Lake Como Remix* which, as you suggest, is really a breakthrough work that basically solidifies him as one of the most important pioneers of the cartographical remix.

Gaby: Brian, at some point these works that are referred to as the *Google-Assisted Living* series of which the *Lake Como Remix* is part, grow out of his live satellite cinema work.

Brian: Of course! How could I forget?

Nigel: Well, there's just so much, isn't there?

Gaby: Yes, so so much. The live, satellite cinema performances I am referring to are where he uses Google Earth as both source material and a live remixing software platform while performing his live audiovisual remixes in front of small audiences in Manchester under the name Saint Erth (e-r-t-h). No one knew who this performer was. It was just assumed that it was a young artist from the Northwest who had this unique VJ set where they remixed their live navigation through Google Earth and it's only now, in retrospect, that we can see quite clearly that Saint Erth was in fact the Artist 2.0.

Nigel: Amazing, that.

Brian: Well, this is what I find so fascinating about his work at this time. He is sneaking back into the urban environment performing just a few gigs here and there -- how many total have we been able to document?

Gaby: -- three --

Brian: -- precisely, so here we have this artist who nobody is sure who he really is or what he looks like, he's gaining notoriety for his online glitch art that is being documented here and there by those who have been exposed to his prior work, and now, unbeknownst to most of us, he's slipping into Manchester under cover of night and performing these wild Google Earth sets in front of smallish yet very devoted and influential crowds of digerati. And we don't even know it.

Gaby: Those early, live A/V sets using the first released version of Google Earth captured some stunning glitch work. Again, it's as if it's all part of the same performance art project yet, instead of relying on older media like other run of the mill VJs who do the predictable layering of found footage for pedantic montage effects, he is demarcating the difference that *makes* a difference, almost drawing an imaginary line in the imaginary sand and making it clear that the world -- literally *the entire world* that we are now living in -- can be used as source material for a more epic *dérive* that builds on Bergson's idea of *duration* -- and remixes it into the kind of art experience we never would have imagined possible.

Brian: This is why I find his use of the loop and repetition so complex. It's a simultaneous and continuous fusion of intense aesthetic data that plays with our relationship to both process and augmented forms of reality.

Nigel: Brian Hale, we'd like to thank you for these incredible insights into the work of the Artist 2.0.

Brian: My pleasure, Nigel. You and Gaby are doing a fabulous job with this.

Gaby: Thanks, Brian.

[Unintelligible]

Nigel: Let's talk about the *HD Streaming* works. To begin with, we know they are high-definition works, the first ones to really emerge in any significant way in his oeuvre. I don't think there can be any question that these works brought an unexpectedly high amount of attention on his practice and, although he felt as though he had successfully infiltrated the contemporary art scene from the vantage point of the cybernated outsider, he no doubt also felt that things were moving a bit faster than he wanted them too, and even a bit out of his control.

Gaby: Well put, Nigel. What's happening is that he is trying to reconnect with nature per se, and is summoning the technological as a way to signal his keen interest in issues like what it means to maintain a kind of *fidelity* to nature. This is what perhaps further complicates his move into *high-definition* mobile videography. And yet around this time all of the critics are boxing it in as part of the so-called New Aesthetic.

Nigel: And yet, to me it seems that it really *is* part of the so-called New Aesthetic, and that he is totally aware of the fact that his creative agency, as it were, has become quite problematic in the way he *must* structure his entire artistic persona within the context of a life underwritten by the forces of global techno-capitalism. This pervasive digital realism that infuses his every waking moment is what causes him to wonder what it is that really feels *unnatural* to him.

Gaby: There is this undercurrent of market driven forces greasing his entire practice.

Nigel: Of course, he does not always come right out and say it, but his work is really a reflection of his total disgust with these operational modes of being that are driven primarily by the execution of financial algorithms that then create this almost robotic co-dependency on all things market-driven. And this includes the art market.

Gaby: Yes, and again, you can see this in his choice of media and methods. Everyone is using these mobile

media gadgets and social networking protocols to essentially get ahead in life while simultaneously role-playing these alternative personas whom they want others to identify with so that they may then become attractive.

Nigel: So it's all about becoming attractive?

Gaby: Yes, attracting attention is probably a better way of putting it.

Nigel: And you can read this into his work?

Gaby, I think that what he's doing in works like the various *HD Streaming* landscapes, is playfully distancing himself from anything market or success driven. At least on the surface. On the surface he's saying "See, I can use my mobile phone just like anyone, but I choose to use it to capture these long-form views of nature." He's saying, "I will persist to the end times. I'm not going anywhere any time soon -- and neither is the environment that I am locating myself in."

Nigel: Right, he's being very clear: "There's no such place as 'away' and we're here to substantiate the creative process by tracing our lives *in* it, by marking our presence in the flow of data."

Gaby: That's it.

Nigel: His work speaks volumes, that's for sure. These *HD Streaming* works take up a lot of bandwidth. It's as if he's using his hacked iPhone set-up to congest the commercial flow of transactional finance that permeates these global networks --

Gaby: -- Electronic Disturbance Theater --

Nigel: -- yes, and this brings up an important aspect of his work that I would like you to address, and that would again be the issue of *duration*, but in this instance its possible relationship to *hacktivism*.

Gaby: Oh, yes, make no mistake, Nigel, there is something going on here, a kind of live, interventionist performance of the artist as hacker who quite intentionally streams his poetic rendering of *data flow* or *the water of information* as he calls it, over the net, almost as a kind of *moving visual thinking* that we might think of as a kind of mantra. Let's call it cleansing-as-healing.

Nigel: Cleansing-as-healing. An almost Zen-like response to the issues faced by the contemporary artist suffused in the hegemonic universe of multi-national corporate capitalism.

Gaby: It's funny, I think someone once referred to him as a networked Buddha-bot operating on autopilot. Of course, the comment was made semi-tongue in cheek, but you can see the connection between this work and, say, the work of Nam June Paik, for whom the God contemplating himself on TV is itself a kind of mock-religious situation comedy. In these HD streams, everything is impermanent and all is in flux.

Nigel: It's at that point in his trajectory where the artist quite literally is *becoming* a medium.

Gaby: As Borges once wrote in his remarkable essay "A New Refutation of Time," "you cannot step into the same river twice," or like Duchamp once wrote: "In time the same object is not the / same after a 1 second interval" which he referred to as "the identity principle." He, Duchamp that is, was investigating what he called the *infrathin*, which he maintained was an adjective and not a noun. 2.0 actually refers to this in a rare online interview as "micro-editing existence as if porting your body through the infrathin slivers of an hallucinated time."

Nigel: Quite poetic.

Gaby: Well, Nigel, there can be no doubt that 2.0 is many different things to many different people, but at his core, he is a kind of visual poet or, even more importantly, a data poet, someone who is able to manipulate the flow of data via an intuitive, interventionist, on-the-fly mashup of aesthetic elements that, when felt as an ongoing sense of measure, lead him into higher, or more intense, phases of experience.

Nigel: Works like *More Data Under the Bridge (or how to imagine the way it used to be)* clearly identify with this more intense flow of data you keep referring to.

Gaby: Yes, this rhythmic impulse to express what is alive as well as the decision-making process that goes into intuitively knowing where to nestle the phone-as-video-recorder, the relationship between streaming and buffering and intervening within different flows, not to mention the datamoshing of high-definition source material, are all feeding into what is by this time in his career a signature-style effect.

Nigel: It all seems to come back to this idea of *transmission* as an art form.

Gaby: All of these images, the devices that capture them, and the creative agent who then later uses the network to cease being an artist per se and

instead quite literally *becomes* a kind of distribution medium, a transmitter, these are all part of a larger state of impermanence that transfigures our sense of time. And really, if you look at some of these works long enough, you find that they have the potential to transport you too into an ecstatic state of meditation and timelessness.

Nigel: We've only barely touched upon how this work jives with the early video artwork of Nam June Paik and Bill Viola, both of whom experimented with or are at the very least identified with some form of Buddhist practice.

Gaby: That's true, but I do discuss more of this in a forthcoming article titled *Creativity and Otherness: Using Art to Make A Connection*.

Nigel: Fantastic Gaby, can't wait for that one. Before we move on, I was hoping you would briefly talk a bit more about the role water seems to be playing in his work during this period of HD streaming?

Gaby: Yes, well, as you know, we do not have a lot of information at our disposal since there are very few traces of notes, interviews, and of course hardly anything resembling reviews or catalogs, which is I guess partly why we're having this conversation in the first place --

Nigel: -- no question --

Gaby: -- so I am mostly speculating here, but on the Myspace social networking site we think he was at one time active on and that, though inactive for many years was, until recently, still cached online, he lists among his many "likes" the American poet William Carlos Williams. This, I believe, reveals a lot. I would say that he was very self-conscious of the role water, particularly waterfalls, play in the poetic imagination. When we think of something so violent, expansive, and powerful as a full-on waterfall, it must have felt like the perfect data set for him to hold on to as a way to feel the full force of his own gushing creativity.

Nigel: Strong terms, all.

Gaby: Of course, these are all very masculinist, we might even say *hyper-masculinist*, metaphors, but we can't ignore them. Williams speaks of "throwing his energy around" like a waterfall which I find both cocky and relevant in relation to these HD works since they are made at a time when 2.0 is defiantly disengaging himself with mainstream art culture, but also while

he's deliberately positioning himself in the middle of nature and, as a mid to late twenty-something man full of testosterone, quite literally throwing his energy around.

Nigel: What other books do we know he was reading as a young man?

Gaby: In addition to the Williams' books that he lists as part of his "likes," and particularly the five-volume narrative poem *Paterson*, there is a book of essays by the poet Wallace Stevens titled "Reality and Imagination" and the cosmological work of Alfred North Whitehead, particularly his *Process and Reality*.

Nigel: So if we were to mash-up those last two books we could say he was diving into the relationship between reality, imagination and process, perhaps the reality of immersing oneself in the creative process as only the imagination will allow.

Gaby: No surprise there.

Nigel: No, not at all, at least as subject matter -- but what about these specific selections?

Gaby: Interesting that you should ask, Nigel --

Nigel: -- well, I'm starting to think that's my job --

Gaby: -- indeed. So what happened was, I dug in a little bit deeper and I found that there was a course being taught at his art school during the time he would have been there, and the course, which had the unusual title *The Nature of Creativity*, had four books assigned, including the books by Williams, Stevens and Whitehead.

Nigel: Amazing. And I have to ask -- what was the fourth book?

Gaby: Actually, it was another Whitehead book titled *Religion in the Making*, though I have never really seen a reference to it in any of the research on 2.0.

Nigel: So, to recap, we have been talking about the Artist 2.0, his series of streaming video works shot on HD, or high-definition, and their relationship to the flow of water and the flow of data, and more particularly the sinister flow of capital, while at the same time looking at some of his early reading material including poetry and philosophy books whose subject matter is primarily about creativity, reality, imagination, process and, in the case of Williams, water.

Gaby: Which makes the title of some of these HD works all the more fascinating: *The Water of Information (Data Flow Capture #36)*, *The Flow of Data Captured in an Idyllic Scene*, *More Data Under the Bridge (or how to imagine the way it used to be)*. The relationship between water, the source of life, and data or source material, and again this almost obsessive and, I am tempted to say, Buddhist affiliation with the concept of flow and -- I'm speculating here -- impermanence, suggests that 2.0 was very self-aware that he was developing a decidedly non-commercial, post-studio networked art practice at a time when all of his colleagues were developing their strategic communication skills so that they could take the more traditional art market by storm.

Nigel: So it sounds like you're suggesting that he resists the elitist tendencies of the upscale art market, even as he knows that he too must somehow survive in the information economy.

Gaby: Correct.

Nigel: And what does this all have to do with glitch aesthetics?

Gaby: Well, to start, the kind of HD streaming he was curating -- if I can use that term liberally here -- was being ported through the network at a time when very few artists would even consider doing this and so, my guess is that he imagined that the glitch would come naturally during the streaming download. I remember watching some these works while I was writing an early version of my first book and the data would buffer and collapse in on itself and create these beautiful glitch effects, perhaps more beautiful than anything I had ever seen on the Net before, especially the water. Of course, now, as part of our museum's collection, we have these more refined works that simulate the original experience.

Nigel: So the videos we have in our collection are really not proper representations of the original streaming experience. But having said that, where did we get these pristine recordings?

Gaby: The Artist himself put them up but only after having essentially stopped the high-definition streaming works that you could only view in realtime.

Nigel: They were like realtime installations of very limited duration.

Gaby: Exactly. It's funny, because now these simulated

works have also been bought for private and institutional collections but the artist, like so many second generation Net artists, insists on putting his own copy or digital proof, if you will, on the net, for free. So that's what we have.

Nigel: Which then leads to the work proliferating all over the Web in different files, formats, etc.

Gaby: Exactly. It calls into question the whole notion of ownership and aura, as well as what it means to literarily support an artist. Whereas discussions around "originality" per se have gotten to the point where we're kind of beating a dead horse, nowadays the issue is really ownership. How do these very composed replicas of high-def nature streams transform into digital objects that then feed into streaming revenues?

Nigel: As if saying all currencies are counterfeit and it's less about the flow of global capitalism and more about capitalizing on the flow of data itself.

Gaby: Yes, and for the artist, these counterfeit currencies create unique opportunities to further complicate his practice. For example, we should note that we are only now discovering that there may have been many HD streams being transmitted by the artist and that we can imagine unearthing yet more of these high-def postproductions.

Nigel: By *many* you mean --

Gaby: -- it ends up that he was anything *but* a recluse in the Lake District. He's not Wordsworth. For example, there's one particular work that I should mention that has been identified as having been captured in the Rocky Mountains near Boulder.

Nigel: Well, that makes sense. We now know that he ended up in Boulder for a short time working with an important early Net artist and new media theorist who I'll mention in a minute. And the title of this HD work from Boulder?

Gaby: *Falls From Grace (Or The Future of Water)*. Basically, what you get are more waterfalls getting heavily datamoshed as a kind of looping megamix. The sound alone transports you to another space.

Nigel: Well, Gaby, since we're already discussing his time in Boulder, and his eventual collaboration with another major Net artist who lives there, perhaps we should discuss his co-produced glitchcrack comedy album.

Gaby: Absolutely. What we're talking about now is *The Comedy of Errors*.

Nigel: A classic work of 2.0.

Gaby: No doubt about that, Nigel. What we are about to see is that this man *definitely* gets around -- and that he is actively transforming what we used to think of as an artist into something else completely different, because not only is he gaining respect as a Net artist who occasionally intervenes in the gallery and museum culture, but he is now launching his own DIY Web label and releasing some very avant-garde sound artworks that are totally unexpected and force us to once again design a reappraisal of all of his work.

[Unintelligible]

Nigel: I suppose now would be the perfect time to introduce our next guest. She is the mega-successful avant-pop recording artist and experimental media art collector, Princess Bi. We are thrilled to have you here with us.

Bi: Hi, Ni.

Gaby: Hi, Bi.

Bi: Gaby, dear.

Nigel: Bi, can you tell us how you first got turned on to the work of the Artist 2.0?

Bi: Certainly. I think it was in a pop-up gallery in Manchester, connected to an early Net art festival. I was still experimenting with Net art myself back then, I mean seriously pursuing it as the mainstay of my practice before accidentally becoming a reckless pop star [laughs at herself], and I remember watching his live performance in this otherwise nondescript space where he quite literarily remixed sounds he was accessing directly off the Web while simultaneously performing a live remix of his navigation through what we now all know as Google Earth.

Nigel: Do you recall the title of his performance?

Bi: I believe it was called *Glitchcrack*.

Gaby: Yes, *glitchcrack* is a term that keeps coming up. As if one had become addicted to the aesthetic malfunctioning of data flow.

Bi: Right, and I simply *adore* this kind of work, as

you know. What most of my fans assume are crowd-pleasing interferences in my live video signals during my stage performance are really my way of exhibiting the kind of artwork that I most respect right now --

Gaby: -- as if you knowingly want to integrate these avant-pop video artworks into your own, ongoing Total Work of Collaborative Art --

Bi: -- exactly, but it's also really my lame attempt to reclaim the history of experimental film and electronic sound art into my *oeuvre*. Back in the late 90s and into the turn of the century, we were all intentionally exploring glitch and granular synth, but not with quite the same intensity as the sounds and visuals being made by artists like the Artist 2.0. I should say that his intensity was not always apparent, at least not on the surface of the sound itself.

Gaby: I remember his initial mp3 tracks coming on to the Web. It was only later, after the professional mastering, that some of these glitch effects really made their presence felt.

Bi: Oh, yeah. Sometimes, in the beginning, with the streaming audio work, you had to listen to his sounds really closely, with headphones on, but even then it was hard to distinguish what was intentional glitch and what was just ad hoc glitch that was really just the result of him pushing through a lot of data and the network buffering creating these unintentional glitch-upon-glitch effects.

Nigel: Glitch-upon-glitch. I rather like that.

Bi: Well, for me, when I first encountered his work, this was his *raison d'être*. Of course, there was a little bit of transference going on there, as I think there always is between both the artist and the collector, real *or* imagined, and let's not forget that he was always working in other media as well, and expanding his glitch aesthetic so that it corrupted all aspects of his output, which really connected with me as well, especially as I started thinking seriously of collecting Net artwork in general, and then later, *his* work in particular.

Nigel: So this was not really a big deal for you then -- to collect work that actually *lived* on the Net, or could live on the Net?

Bi: Not at all. Why would it? My idea as a collector is to not hog the work or stash it away forever in some undisclosed location. It's to *share* the work. This is what the Net empowers us to do as collectors -- to

share the work with our distributed network. I know that most collectors like to *own* art as an investment, and some like to share what they own as part of a social need, or even as a way to assert their presence in an influential civic scene, and so there is gifting to institutions that then hide the collection in storage.

Gaby: Or temporarily lending to institutions for specific one-off exhibitions.

Bi: Sure, but then there are those of us who actually find it important to support the artist's *activity* -- to essentially sponsor their practice wherever it may take them, the way a committed producer of films in, say, the 70s, might have raised money to sponsor the artistic vision of an auteur creating what were really, truly, independent forms of cinema, not this predictable, quirky, *dreck* that passes for independent cinema these days.

Gaby: Yes, I know exactly what you mean -- the faux independent film we see everywhere today that is, in the end, still bound by the old Hollywood models of production and distribution.

Bi: Yes, although even that is changing, and the more successful, open-minded producers today understand the necessity of being both length-agnostic and platform-agnostic or even embracing the concept of *transmedia narrative* or *multi-platform storytelling*. It's possible, you know, to tell a story the way an auteur like Bergman or Antonioni might have done 30 or 40 years ago, without ever shooting it on film nor distributing it in theaters.

Gaby: Which feeds right back into our own reading of the oeuvre of The Artist 2.0. I and others have found his collective output to be almost cinematic in its execution and open-mindedness to collaboration yet at the same time anything *but* film per se. Yet if we look at the array of work that is being made and the ways it's getting distributed these days -- even the kind of audiences its attracting -- there can be no question that *everything* is becoming transmediated. Even this transmedia approach for the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics project we're hosting this conversation for would fit into this --

Nigel: -- sounds to me like it's time to go "meta" --

[laughs]

Gaby: -- really, exactly *who* is directing this non-filmic cinematic experience we call MOGA?

Bi: Well, you're both very right-on with this "going meta" style, as it clearly relates to *The Artist 2.0*. In fact, a lot of the works of his that I own, or not own per se but support as part of my online playlists and channels, are very playful in their approach toward going meta.

Nigel: For example, the comedy album.

Bi: Yes, exactly, *The Comedy of Errors* -- the perfect title really, for such a strange comedy album that he made using the voice of one of his professors from art school, that is, when he temporarily went *back* to art school.

Nigel: You're referring to the artist Mark Amerika.

Bi: Of course.

Gaby: It's funny, but having initially run across this work on 2.0's website, I had thought that he was just appropriating the voice of some unknown comic, or lecturer, and manipulating it for faux comedic effect, a kind of social satire on the whole art school thing -- on the whole "being an artist" thing -- which he then filtered through his customized yet quite subtle glitch apparatus.

Bi: Yes, well, I see what you mean about the faux comedic effect. The truth is that the work is not particularly funny in the more entertaining sense of the term. It's more about taking on certain delivery rhythms and loading them with personal content that may or may not have relevance to the listener and then playing with the sound and syntax as a kind of dark matter.

Nigel: Dark matter, dark comedy.

Bi: Exactly, Nigel. The work is black. But the way the material is manipulated de-familiarizes the way we engage with what in the past we would have called black comedy.

Nigel: Perhaps it's experimenting at that razor's edge of a border between black comedy and what some have called the black arts.

Bi: Right, but to be clear, we should say the black arts here do not refer to, say, African-American art per se, but the black arts associated with magic and the occult. It's really more of an abstract expressionist investigation into negative space. The fact that there are all of these references to digital pop culture and the contemporary art market are almost beside the point.

Gaby: And so, in this long form sound work, *The*

Comedy of Errors, this darker and deeper approach to an applied glitch aesthetics is almost used as a form of exorcism. Technically, we can say that he intentionally foregrounds the flaws in the digital sampling and remix process and uses his expert editing and sound design skills to generate a form of art that's never really been released before --

Nigel: -- certainly not that I know of --

Gaby: -- and we can only assume that the artist he is remixing here, net.art pioneer Mark Amerika, has never performed these comedy routines before a live audience but that these vocal tracks were all created in a recording studio. Bi, could you tell us more about the voice of the artist-professor-turned-comic, Mark Amerika?

Bi: Well, Amerika is one of those early Net artists who defies the traditional trajectory of a contemporary artist. He never shows in galleries -- or I should say *rarely* shows in galleries. He's not very keen on creating objects for collectors and so he's not in the resale market either. But what's funny -- or maybe funny is not the right word -- what's interesting, from a sociological perspective, is that he's very active on the Internet as a conceptual artist, a poet, a theorist, and as a new media innovator who is willing to experiment with whatever consumer-friendly technologies emerge into the scene. Gaby: This all sounds familiar.

Nigel: It's our 2.0 man all over again. Like Borges wrote about artists creating their own precursors.

Bi: Yes, except in this case the second generation version is really a totally unique persona whose precursor is a retro-remix of himself. Like *The Artist 2.0*, Amerika is very DIY, and by that I mean he approaches the creative act as an *amateur*, a lover of media with a passionate art making agenda, someone who wants to see what he can do with these emerging technologies as a way to maintain his own investigation into issues around narrative, personal mythology, alternative histories, and what has been termed pseudo-autobiographical metafiction.

Nigel: In this way, he sounds *very* much like our own Artist 2.0.

Bi: Indeed. That's why he was attracted to Amerika's work. And why he must have felt it necessary to contact Amerika directly when he knew he would be in the Rocky Mountain region.

Gaby: But when did he go out and study with Amerika?

Bi: It was just for a semester --

Gaby: -- before he moved to Brazil?

Bi: If he moved to Brazil, then yes, it would have been right before.

Nigel: So before Brazil but also sometime soon after he leaves the Lake District.

Bi: From what I can tell, he at first leaves the Lake District and tramps around Europe before settling into Milan --

Nigel: -- perhaps as an homage to Joyce? --

Bi: -- perhaps, but he soon heads out to the States to lose himself in the American desert. It's just that he never makes it to the desert. Instead, he passes through Boulder to meet Amerika, whose work had influenced him, and ends up staying for almost six months.

Nigel: Ah, that explains it.

Gaby: Explains what?

Nigel: The Gap. The missing six months.

[small pause]

Gaby: Honestly, I never noticed a gap, but then again we really still do not have a specific, or I should say, linear history that can help us define the trajectory of this artist.

Bi: The thing about 2.0, and a few others of his ilk who I also collect, is that they are not bound by the traditional art historical trajectories and tend to resist the gallery mechanism that makes it easy to put things in historical perspective. Their work, like Amerika and other early Net art practitioners, is all over the place, time-wise. He may create a glitchy animated GIF later in his career and meanwhile would have shot some high-def video when that first became available and intentionally degraded it for glitch effect *early* in his career. You could say that he, like some of these other network-centric artists, is atemporal and quite accustomed to cheating on -- to technologically manipulating his personal mythology as a form of historical infidelity.

Nigel: So here we go again: it's not contemporary art, it's temporal or even *a*-temporal art.

Bi: I believe so. Or both. But I think that the idea of creating atemporal or even temporary forms of art goes with the job. The job of being The Artist 2.0. Whoever you may be. And this is what makes it timeless -- and for me, absolutely valuable.

Nigel: But we still haven't properly discussed the glitchcrack comedy album, *The Comedy of Errors*, or any of the sound works actually.

Bi: That's true, but then again, I find that it's better to just listen to the work and make of it what you will.

Gaby: Still, one cannot help but think of these sound works in relation to everything from Luigi Russolo's *The Art of Noise* manifesto to the early works of an artist like Christian Marclay, to the whole "Worship the Glitch" Wire magazine electronic music scene that was essentially built around these circuit bending, autistic intonations.

Bi: Did you say "autistic"?

Gaby: Hmmm. I guess I did.

Nigel: Funny, that.

Gaby: What I meant was --

Bi: -- look, these *artistic* or *autistic* or *auratic* -- whatever you want to call them -- artworks are meant to corrupt the too-slick-for-its-own-good perfection of the digital recording and editing environment. It's like when artists shoot with advanced HD cameras -- who really wants to see all of that data in such detail? Art is about creating discontinuity in the universe of false representation, and that's exactly what the Artist 2.0's sound works do. They creatively turn signals into noise and open up the work to more thoughtful interaction as a result.

Nigel: I was wondering if you could comment more on *The Comedy of Errors*.

Bi: Sure. In some ways it's his most important work. Certainly his most important sound work. In fact, it's many things at once. It's a comedy album -- or at least it is structured around the idea of a comedy album.

Nigel: I think I read once where he said he had "reverse engineered" the structure of a comedy album and used all kinds of audio effects to purposely de-familiarize the experience of listening to a live comedy album.

Bi: Absolutely. In fact, this is what makes the work so brilliant. It's not the comedy -- or the jokes -- or lack thereof. It's the way the work plays with the rhythms of the comic's delivery, the feedback mechanism already ingrained in the experience of performing before a live audience, and the way we are conditioned to respond to humor as a collective experience that accentuates life itself as a cruel joke.

Gaby: I guess we could say that the audio -- the audience -- is transformed into electronic music, some of it noise or glitch or environmental soundscape, and that this changes our listening experience as we try to relate to what the comic is satirizing.

Bi: Yes, for sure. And this also complicates the way we experience the work as a genre-defying production. Yes, it's a so-called comedy album. But it's also an experimental audio book featuring a social satirist as the first-person protagonist. It's also a very avant-garde sound art composition.

Nigel: And how do you buy such a work, Bi?

Bi: In this instance, I remember going to his website and there was a PayPal link there, and I followed the link to make the purchase and feeling really good about it. I think *The Comedy of Errors* -- a fantastic title, by the way -- totally Artist 2.0 in the way it relates back to Shakespeare but also looks forward to the way glitch can be used to disrupt our experience of the world -- *The Comedy of Errors* is a really funny, yet creepy, remix of old Lenny Bruce and George Carlin routines but then his character, played by Mark Amerika, also sneaks in little bits of monologue that could just as well have been introduced in a graduate seminar on the changing role of the creative artist in digitally networked culture. In fact, I think 2.0 once let it slip that that's how the project started.

Gaby: As a graduate seminar?

Bi: As a "close reading" conducted in a grad seminar by Amerika but that then expanded into a dark comedy routine.

Gaby: And as I know personally from having visited your home, there are other sound art collaborations where he remixes Amerika's voice.

Bi: Yes, there are. I think 2.0's sound pieces are still a kind of mock gesture, in the Duchampian tradition, in that he uses the voice of a collaborator as his readymade source material and then remixes it into a

different aesthetic context. He even does this with rare Duchamp recordings.

Nigel: Interesting.

Bi: Yes, he uses Duchamp as source material. Duchamp's words become the readymade source that the Artist signs with glitch effects. You could almost call it a "close reading" of Duchamp's *Green Box*, and in that way some of the work can be perceived as essayistic, but rhetorically rendered as a sonic argument, although argument is the wrong word. Perhaps you could call these sound works *rhetorically rendered remixes*.

Gaby: Just like *The Comedy of Errors*.

Nigel: That's a very heavy way of looking at it and I can now see why you were so compelled to start collecting his work so early on.

Bi: Absolutely. His work is very self-aware of the connection between making art and making art history. It's actually a struggle for him personally because he makes the work as an intuitive gesture but then he also knows that it can and will be read as a work that is concerned about one's possible ascent into the historical canon. It's really a kind of incomprehensible prejudice.

Nigel: The canon?

Bi: Oh yeah. It's something that both *pre*-cedes the artist's intention but that *pro*-ceeds from their unconscious creative practice. It's something that I myself have been too shy to discuss directly with him. I have, however, briefly discussed with him the idea of producing work via a procedural composition style that is much more complex and randomized than we would otherwise think. It could be out of the artist's hands, so to say, which means that at a certain point they can no longer shape their own destiny. The context providers -- like those of you who are building the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics -- will have already taken care of that for them. Or not.

Nigel: Bi, before we go, can we briefly listen to an excerpt from one of these tracks you have posted up on your playlist?

Bi: Absolutely. Anything in particular?

Gaby: How about something from *The Comedy of Errors*? Could you introduce it for us?

Bi: Ah, yes, of course. Appropriating the voice of the so-called master, in this case, his former professor, a noted 1.0 Net artist who is himself always working on the next persona upgrade while trying to limit the amount of bloatware that tends to overload systems as they mature.

Nigel: I guess this is what it means to be a seasoned electronic poet in the early 21st century.

Gaby: Or not.

Bi: Well, that's just it. You get the feeling that he, the Artist 2.0, is intentionally accentuating the *just-in-time* philosophy he's been patiently circulating within the networked space of flows for what by now is almost eight years.

Nigel: This is his counter-dynamic. His pata-physical flow.

Gaby: At some point we have to ask ourselves, "What does it mean to let the language speak itself?"

Bi: Well, I have the evidence right here. Shall I press play?

Nigel: That would be wonderful, Bi. Thank you Princess Bi for taking time out of your busy schedule to discuss the work of The Artist 2.0.

Bi: My pleasure, Ni.

[excerpt from *The Comedy of Errors*]

Nigel: Gaby, before we finish up our discussion on the life and work of The Artist 2.0, I think we really must acknowledge to our listeners that we, in fact, cannot pinpoint with 100% accuracy that all or, indeed, *any* of the works included in the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics are 2.0 originals. We have quite a bit of evidence that suggests they are created by the same persona but, in the end, we're really just making it up as we go along.

Gaby: That's right, Nigel, although I can say with great confidence that many of the works included in the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics are remarkable no matter who made them. The important thing for us to recognize is that this is a celebration of a creative life that highlights what is most beautiful and totally fucked up in the process of transmission. And for that we can only be thankful to the artist or at least those kindred spirits with whom the artist identifies.

Nigel: So, before we finish up our dialog, I thought it would be appropriate to briefly touch on those recent works that are now being attributed to The Artist 2.0, specifically two recent additions to our collection: *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)* and perhaps the oddest work in the bunch, the just-released *WeRMediumzGo-MetaOn-U*.

Gaby: Great, so, the first work you mentioned, *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*, is quite spectacular in its aesthetic appeal.

Nigel: No question about it.

Gaby: This is where The Artist 2.0, as artist *and* persona, flips the script on us. You'll recall that when we were discussing the *Lake District Walks* series of works, we were focusing first on the intentional glitch aesthetic being thrown into the mix -- or into the video as the case may be. The Lake District videos are mobile phone recordings of the artist ambling through the natural landscape and capturing the surrounding data from a variety of handheld angles. These perambulations are then tweaked periodically throughout the work as we are reminded again of exactly *who* is doing the walking -- or is at least editing the data that visually represents these walks.

Nigel: But here, in *Getting Lost*, we now have a split-screen with the unedited, that is to say, un-glitchified *Lake District Walk* on the left, and a parallel 3D walk-through on the right.

Gaby: Exactly, and the addition of the 3D rendering of nature which is now super-glitched, especially where the trees become mountains and the navigation itself is now experienced as a kind of *virtual synthetic perspective*, to use Brian Hale's phrase, changes our own perception of both the original walk, but also our rendering of the artist who shares these walkthroughs with us.

Nigel: That's just it, Gaby. In the past, we go into the game assuming that it's *the artist* who will render the landscape for us, whereas here it's quite clear that *it's the 3D game engine that now renders the artist for us*.

Gaby: The artist as nomadic medium drifting through imaginary landscapes that are captured and post-produced in digital editing environments.

Nigel: In some ways, it's the fluid movement through these digital editing environments that changes everything.

Gaby: As with a lot of his early work, where he plays with celebrity, aura, nature, landscape, portraiture, and the corruption of data -- both during the recording process but also during the editing process -- we can see how this work particularly asks us to reconfigure our relationship with nature, experience, and even proprioception.

Nigel: You mean the way he asks us to move through the landscape with him? It's as if we are navigating the borderland that problematizes both our imaginary interiority *and* our external awareness of the phenomenological universe we teleport our bodies through.

Gaby: That's a good way of putting it, Nigel. These two channels, one captured by early mobile phone video recording technology and the other rendered by a rather contemporary game design program, I think it's Unity, point back to the artist's early fascination and continued connection with 19th century American transcendentalism. Think of Emerson's eloquent treatise on *Nature* or *Experience*. What would a 21st century Net artist *do* with these same themes? And how would they express themselves in extra-literary terms? We can begin to see some possible answers to these questions while viewing *Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)*.

Nigel: And as others, like Brian Hale, have mentioned, this work also relates to the earlier work in the *Google-Assisted Living* series, especially in relation to Situationist *psychogeography* and *dérive* -- I mean, it's right there in the title: *the long dérive*.

Gaby: As is the reference to Richard Long, who is obviously one of the inspirations for the artist's various walkthroughs that experiment with this idea of producing counter-geographies as a collaborative form of landscape-making.

Nigel: Yes, well, before we run out of time, this idea of landscape-making also relates to the various experiments *The Artist 2.0* plays with while traversing the virtual cartographies made available on the Web. As we discussed earlier, 2.0 uses these readily available programs to produce imagery for his live performances, his video art remixes and, now, or so it appears, his most recent excursions into the philosophical and spiritual abundance he finds in various locations throughout Brazil.

Gaby: Or so we all think.

Nigel: Indeed. Tell us about this last work we are now

tagging as having been made by *The Artist 2.0*.

Gaby: Of course, you're talking about the recent addition of *WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U* to our collection. The work is really quite straightforward. I read it as, first, an homage to two Chris Marker films: *Le Jette* and *Sans Soleil*, but even more, as a direct expression of the DIY or amateur roots of the artist's practice. The images appear to be remixed data captures off his laptop while, again, using a satellite mapping program like Google Street View. This, of course, is not particularly new. As we have said, he was doing this years ago and was most likely influenced by other Net artists who were experimenting with the live remixing of Google Earth imagery and who creatively postproduced what has sometimes been referred to as Google Street Photography. What's important for our interests here are the images he chooses to sample and tweak, the sound track he employs, and the subtitled texts that go with the work.

Nigel: And the precise rhythms he's riffing on as well, like the Marker films you mention.

Gaby: Right. So, the work is composed of digital stills, but the images are an odd combination of satellite footage, glitchy urban street views and stills from amateur mobile phone videography.

Nigel: As you were saying, technically it seems pretty straightforward. But what can we deduce about the artist's current state of mind -- that is, why this work, and why now?

Gaby: That *is* the \$64,000 question, isn't it Nigel? Is he playing with us or are we to assume that he has, in fact, ended up in the heart of Brazil, has joined a rather freaky religious cult that practices a complex mix of doctrines associated with mysticism, syncretism, Candomblé, and extraterrestrialism -- and is pursuing his work, as he always has, as an artistic medium, but just operating under a different order?

Nigel: Perhaps we should let our visitors to the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics determine that for themselves?

Gaby: I could go with that. I mean, why impose a reading of the artist's trajectory on the audience when really, if you think about it, we really aren't sure why he made this work at this particular point in time.

Nigel: Or even if he made it.

Gaby: Or even if he is a he. Why is it always a he, even when we really don't know?

Nigel: That seems like a good place to end it, Gaby. I'd like to thank you for these wonderful insights you have shared with us and I'm sure everyone else who hears this will agree with me that we are quite lucky to have such a devoted curator and scholar focused on this historically significant body of work.

Gaby: It's been my pleasure, Nigel.

Nigel: We do sincerely hope that you will visit the work of The Artist 2.0 at glitchmuseum.com. On behalf of lead curator Gabrielle Whitebread, and our guests Brian Hale and the lovely Princess Bi, we would like to thank you all for joining us. I'm Nigel Foster, Director of the Museum of Glitch Aesthetics.

“The flow of data, the water of information, is continuous, and I am a multilayered part of the mix. The flow does not ever really need me, but I totally need it. It roots me. It channels my creativity in ways I have no control over.”

—The Artist 2.0

Q&A WITH 2.0

Art History Per Se: An Interview with The Artist 2.0

by Ana Honig-Watson

I have never been a fan of the e-mail interview. Most interviews conducted over the Internet tend to read like bloviating, authorial essays where the interviewer merely plays the role of an auto-prompt that the interviewee then uses as a convenient PR mechanism to distribute their latest self-propaganda.

But given the notorious mythological circumstances surrounding the life and work of The Artist 2.0, how would I ever find myself in a situation where I could actually meet with him face to face and record a candid dialog? Still, I resisted the urge to track him down and inquire about an e-mail interview. I'm just not that kind of girl.

As luck would have it, one cold winter morning in December 2011, somewhere in the midst of all of the endless spam that filled my inbox, there was a message from someone identifying themselves as "Creative Class Clown" that I accidentally opened before I could delete it. The message was short and to the point:

"Hey, I read your article on my *Google-Assisted Living* series and thought you might like to have a quick interview with me.

I'll be in London next Tuesday and could meet between 3:00 and 3:30 at Tamesis Dock."

The e-mail was signed "2.0" and I immediately agreed to his offer. Of course, I had no idea if this was a prank

being perpetrated by another online persona. I had been duped once before, by an anonymous London "Net art activist" posing as the artist Mark Amerika. In that instance, when I arrived at what was then called "backspace" near The Clink, there was no Mark Amerika, just a bunch of clever computer programmers wearing the mantle of disaffected wannabe art world sensations.

Hopefully, this time would be different. When I arrived at Tamesis Dock, he was waiting for me. I have since agreed to include no descriptions of our meeting. The interview was quick and to the point. What follows is a verbatim transcript of our very short chat recorded on my iPhone Voice Memo app:

AH-W: You seem rather young to be The Father of Glitch.

2.0: My work is really not about glitch per se. It's an investigation into presence, persona, performance, nature, data and flow. And the way language is manipulated to create value while simultaneously constructing so-called art history.

AH-W: Art history per se.

2.0: For some, history is historicism. For others, it's just more source material to be manipulated in realtime. As if the past were a necessary evil informing the swelling present that takes on all of these eclectic forms.

AH-W: Your work seems to intentionally go out of its way to -- how can I say this? -- tease the market.

2.0: Are you calling me a tease?

AH-W: Well, yes, I guess I am. It's something I have noticed with a lot of digital or Net artists. You focus a lot of your attention on details related to how one engages the market, but also your potential role in history, and how best to position yourself in the lineage -- the avant-garde lineage of 20th century modernism and postmodernism and whatever it is that comes after.

2.0: Monetization. That's always what comes after. You either monetize or you die trying to monetize.

AH-W: But won't that kind of attitude eventually kill you as an artist anyway?

2.0: Exactly. That's the point. Isn't it funny how some artistic activities are easily commodified while others are critically marginalized?

AH-W: Being critically marginalized, as you call it, and being commodified, are not necessarily mutually exclusive. There are a lot of artists who no one really takes seriously except for the fact that they make loads of money selling their art. It's the selling that's the story. And then there are artists such as yourself who until recently were very marginalized in the critical spheres of the art world and who have never had a successful mainstream gallery show and yet, somehow, still manage to stay on the radar as an important artist of international reputation.

2.0: True.

[pause]

AH-W: I guess this has to do with the Internet?

2.0: Possibly. It's a weird space to operate in. I'm not making new work so that I can then go out and try to sell it, so obviously if there's really nothing tangible to sell then the chances of coming to market are lower. But that's cool with me. I am still making history. Making it up as I go along and out of necessity embracing my role as the glitch in the system.

AH-W: Can you elaborate a bit more on this idea of the artist operating as a glitch in the system?

2.0: What's weird about a glitch is that it can be manifested as both the result of a fucked up data transmission and, simultaneously, a beautiful artifact. The beauty part is what first freaked me out when I started making this kind of work. I thought I was doing an end run around beauty so that I could investigate the ugly underside of what passes off as image information. But I was wrong. It's the metadata or even the metafictional life of data as tangible image information that houses contemporary forms of beauty.

AH-W: And so once you hit the beauty button, are you then bound to simultaneously launch the monetization program?

2.0: The monetization of glitch art relates to its appealing aesthetic value in the world of things to be seen. Anyone who streams information now knows what glitch looks like and has had an aesthetic response to it. It's totally connected to the rise of new media technologies and the heavy data loads we try to stream over the networks. You could say that we are retraining our eyes to see like digital machines.

AH-W: This is something you have been investigating since you -- what?

2.0: My late teens. First with handwritten fiction and poetry, and then experimental audio and text animations, but eventually video too and, to my surprise, various mobile phone experiments too.

AH-W: And the 'Google-Assisted Living' series which I just had to write about.

2.0: Yeah, those Google-assisted works are actually quite complex performances. The truth, though, is that I would have never been able to compose those works if I had not already experimented with the different laptop performances I was conducting as part of my nomadic Net art practice. Don't forget, in the beginning, I was attracted to much lower tech versions of glitch before anyone was really paying attention to it. I was one of the first artists of my generation who self-consciously bought a shitty mobile phone with first generation video recording technology embedded in it and just went, "Wow, that looks totally fucked up and I love it. This is better than painting."

AH-W: Pixels as paint?

2.0: More like the aesthetics of crumbling information. You could think of it as schizophrenic imagery

where the disturbed artifacts come to the surface and essentially glitch the image. The thing about beauty today -- about disturbing the formation of beauty -- is that the image never really has time to become an image in this environment. It's more like what I call *image information* or *visual codework*. It's something that's always in process and always *being* processed by the receiver. This means there's really no stability and so what we're doing now, all of us, whether we wish to identify ourselves as artists or not, is adjusting our bodies to this instability. And where the body goes, the mind will follow.

AH-W: But this is not your old school data visualization art style, is it?

2.0: Not in the traditional sense of that term. Data visualization is usually thought of as -- well, it's self-explanatory, it's data that's visualized into some representation that communicates the information graphically. But my visual codework is not graphical like that. It's much more connected to unconscious processes and the way we embody information, the way we visualize movement as we navigate the datasphere.

AH-W: So visualizing movement is what leads to the glitch.

2.0: Not exactly. It's more connected to the way we capture the image information and create on-the-fly remixes of it as part our construction of persona, and how various technologies leak information in the process, especially while navigating the networked environment.

AH-W: Leaking information. You almost make it sound like feeling emotional.

2.0: Something like that.

AH-W: So, then, some of your works, like *Power* and *Deep Interior Landscape* intentionally play with the lack of movement and how that relates to capturing information.

2.0: You could say that it's an aesthetic investigation that looks into how we unconsciously generate images while operating in different states of presence. Mobility versus immobility would be one obvious example.

AH-W: And the technology feeds into this as well.

2.0: Absolutely. That's why I play with different image capturing devices at different points in my own

personal history. Not just because I want to play with whatever new technology is coming out while I am creating my new works of art, but also because I am hoping to understand the differences, the aesthetic differences that each apparatus allows me to explore -- and how this relates to the changing ways of seeing.

AH-W: This is consistent with a number of artists of your generation.

2.0: Definitely. In some ways, I feel like my entire trajectory is a kind of composite of numerous practices that have evolved in the collective performances of different Net artists over the last 15 years. But there exists today a gap -- a real generation gap -- where an emerging network of artists are focused more on the conceptual heft of the field of distribution itself and the power of social media networking. That's different than when the early Web artists were getting their toehold into the digital culture back in the 90s. Now there's really no need to be identified as part of some direct Modernist lineage although I'm sure some will try.

AH-W: Can you talk more about the power of social media networking and how that may relate to your performance as an artist?

2.0: The true social media artist of today resists historicization and canonization. They are much more concerned with the fluid performance of their persona in the now -- in the networked and mobile media environment they role-play in. They do not want to see their work become co-opted by scholarly forms of meaning. That holds very little value for them. And more and more they are finding they do not want to be cast under the spell of curatorial value. That's totally old school. Old art school.

AH-W: Old school, art school. This is something you tap into in the long-form comedy album, *The Comedy of Errors*, that you collaborated on with the pioneering Net artist Mark Amerika.

2.0: There's basically too much going on. We live in a different world than the generation prior to ours. I know every generation of artists says the same thing, and especially as the technology advances, artists in the future will claim that their world is different than the artists who came before them.

AH-W: So what's different now?

2.0: A lot is different. The incoming data is overwhelming, so all you can do is go with the flow and process it. Fine tune your filtering mechanisms and customize your bullshit detectors. Basically, you have to go with the flow and remix your own history as realtime persona performance. It's a very atemporal approach to identity construction that feeds into the unconscious way we materialize our practice.

AH-W: This seems to be the theme of who you are -- of what you make.

2.0: It's the only art form worth investing your energy into. It's called the practice of everyday life -- and it's a spatial practice too. One that I intend to keep programming for the duration.

“My work is really not about glitch per se. It’s an investigation into persona, performance, nature, data and flow -- and the way language is manipulated to create value while simultaneously constructing so-called art history.”

—The Artist 2.0

“Video is the way I talk about my walking practice.”

—The Artist 2.0

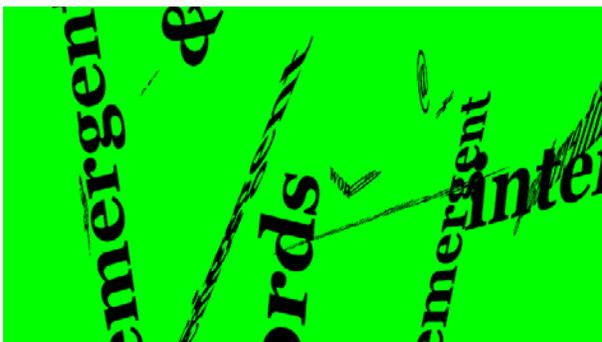
LIST OF WORKS

Early Works



Pixelmash
digital video projection, 2005

included in the exhibition:
video documentation of *Pixelmash*
digital still images from *Pixelmash*
digital image of *Pixelmash* being projected on body (possibly the Artist 2.0)



Verses Versus Versions
Internet art, 2005



.gif(t) economy series
animated GIFs, 2005–2006

works included:

Battle of the Sexes

Nature Mort

Zen, Captured

Use of Force (Goyaglitch 2)

Cookie Monster (Goyaglitch 1)

Box of Eye Candy

Nature Mort

Battle of the Sexes 2

Orientations

Blocky

Lines of Seduction

The Dancing Now Man

Pop Ambient

Impression, soleil levant

Core Duo

Portrait of Ann Remixed (After de Kooning)

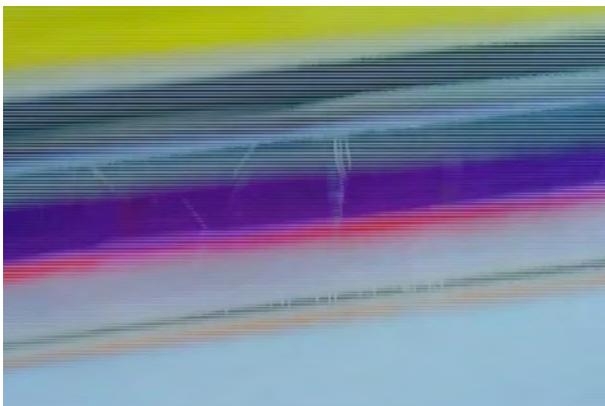
Art School Studies



Glitch Aesthetics
Internet art - Blogger site, 2006–2007



Power
mobile phone video, 2007



Mobile Beach
mobile phone video, 2007



Deep Interior Landscape
mobile phone video, 2007



Mobile Conduction
mobile phone video, 2007

Lake District Walks



Lake District Walk: Augmented Video Reality
mobile phone video, 2007–2008



Glitch Lake
corrupted video, undated



Lake District Walk: Code Mosh
mobile phone video, 2007–2008



Lake District Walk: Raw Source
mobile phone video, 2007–2008

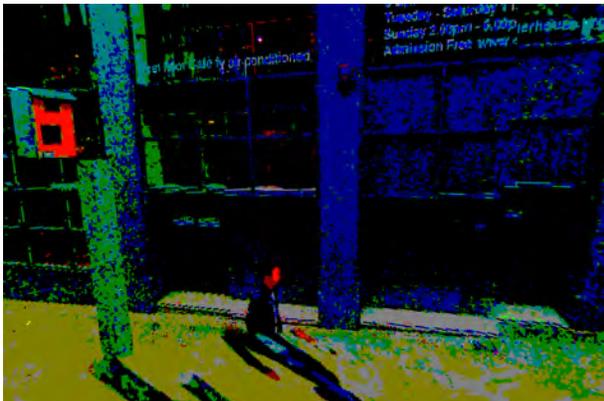
Google-Assisted Living



Cinécriture
live audio/visual performance, 2007

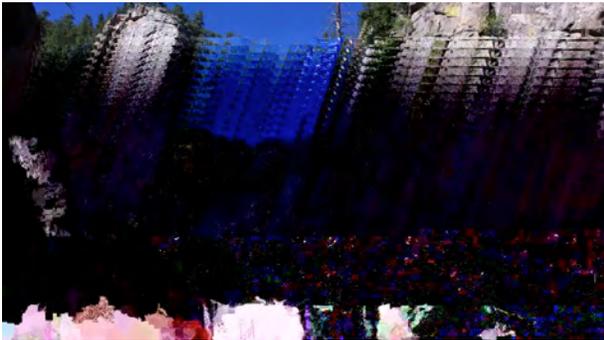


Lake Como Remix
digital video, undated



8-Bit Heaven
Internet photography, 2012

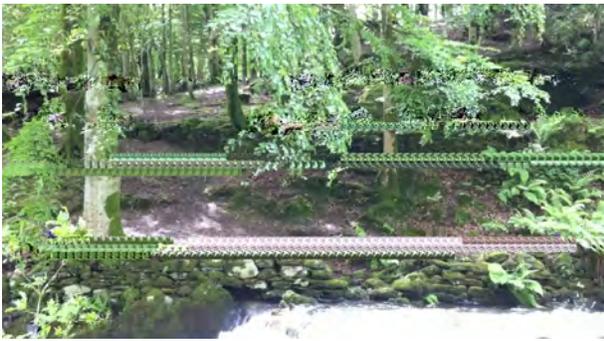
HD Streaming



Falls from Grace (Or, The Future of Water)
high definition video, date unknown



More Data Under the Bridge (or how to imagine the way it used to be)
high definition video, date unknown



The Flow of Data Captured in an Idyllic Scene
high definition video, date unknown



The Water of Information (Data Flow Capture #36)
high definition video, date unknown

The Comedy of Errors



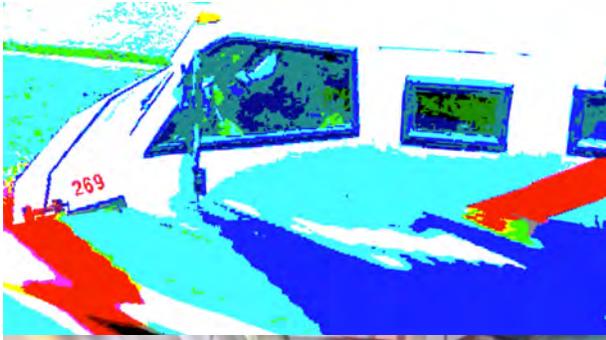
The Comedy of Errors
digital audio, date unknown

Later Works



Getting Lost (The Long Dérive)
digital video and 3D animation, 2012

WeRMediumzGoMetaOn-U
mixed digital media, 2012



“Isn’t it funny how some artistic activities are easily commodified while others are critically marginalized? What’s weird about a glitch is that it can be manifested as both the result of a fucked up data transmission and a beautiful artifact.”

—The Artist 2.0

“The social media artist resists historicization and canonization. They are much more concerned with the fluid performance of their persona in the now -- in the networked and mobile media environment they role-play in.”

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CREDITS

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Director: Mark Amerika

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