No Space for This Time

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"Actual and virtual coexist,
and enter a narrow circuit which constantly brings back one to the other for us."
Gilles Deleuze [1]

I wrote a first text for ISEA in 2006 about the context of the Shanghai World Expo.[2] This event is an urbanisation process, emerging in an endless and unlimited city that is under discussion for 2010. Consequently, what is being prepared at Shanghai is not simply an immaterial bridge between a universal-type event and a planetary dimension. It will be a setting for utopian realities. These will take form thanks to technologies and existing projects. The purpose is not to present a performance or an enviroment but to assert a new vision to remove the current borders existing in the world. Our research connections: from reality limits to invisible data for "rendez-vous" that are beyond our conception of space. As we said, we do not propose to add projects. We only use them to imagine and create another way of thinking up data transmissions. If physical networks and data processing exist in unlimited space, what are the new temporal limits and how can we bring them into visibility?

## From the Philips Electronic Pavilion to urban digital life

At the time of the electronic revolutions in 1958, the creators Le Corbusier, Xenakis and Varèse, were solicited to build a pavilion for the Brussels World Expo, financed by Philips. Even if the architectural structure[3] was destroyed after the expo, the *Electronic poem*[4] is the audio-visual trace. This memory transfigures the disciplines of architecture, music and visual arts, in resonance with the technology of this period. This realization has remained singlular since this event.

The next World Expo will take place in China from May 1 to October 31, 2010. The topic of this international celebration, which awaits 100 million visitors and 165 countries, is *Better City Better Life*. Jacques Ferrier, the architect of the French pavilion, retained since March 2008, speaks about this project in terms of "technicality and sensuality, between creation and permanence, innovation and quality, action and thought, city and territory". He is trying to erase "the sterile opposition between traditional and modern France". He proposes, in the center of the pavilion, a French garden that "will be reinterpreted vertically. A soft inclined path will offer a way from the top towards the bottom".[5] Each pavilion, like a national window in a universal future-district, is thought of as a scene from a performance that we will be invited to experience or traverse.

However, new relations between human beings exist. We projected this message on an urban giant screen in Paris in 2005 with this poetic message: "You are the Network! MOBILE WIRELESS DIGITAL". In the same way, in 2006 we created a tribute to the universal architect of modernity Claude Nicolas Ledoux by staging an event on the communication networks and not by building a construction, placing this project of theatre not at the heart of the city but on a planetary perspective.[6]

For the Hanover World's Fair in 2000, the Parisian group Bleu Lumière, responsible for the IBM pavilion *Planet of Vision*, introduced in the on-line presentation of their project. Jacques Polieri's definition of scenography: "a set of pictorial, visual, technical and theorical features which allow for the creation of an image, a two or three-dimensional construction, or the setting in place of the action, in particular related to the performing arts".[7] More than ever, at this time of contemporary technologies, it is a scenographic vision across the artistic disciplines which can only create a *Better City Better Life*.
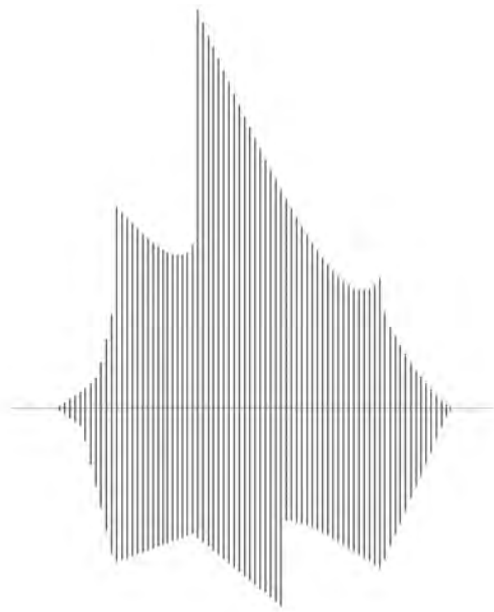
Virtualization 2008 of the Philips Pavilion 1958, Claire Morel & Franck Ancel, Paris.

From the border transmissions to a planetary vision

In his biography of Edgard Varèse, Fernand Ouelette recounts his unrealized symphony Espace, initiated in Paris in 1929: "Varèse had imagined a performance of the work being broadcast simultaneously in and from all the capitals of the world. The choirs, each singing in its own language, would have made their entries with mathematical precision. The work would have been divided up into seconds, with the greatest exactitude, so that the chorus in Paris — or Madrid, or Moscow, or Peking, or Mexico City, or New York would have come onto the air at exactly the right moment".[8]

If Varèse imagined to transcend the distances between the cities through the radiophonic medium in the 1920s and to transcend artistic borders with Le Corbusier and Xenakis in the 1950s, the various pavilions in Shanghai

2010 could be put into a network, not with a "symphonic poem" nor an "electronic poem" but certainly with a "digital poem".

At this time of "digital atmosphere", everyday data-processing and numerical networks, from one point to another on the planet, exceed at the same time not only the national borders but also the physical ones. Some of these objectives — artistic, economic, political, etc, the interface and other interactive processes, devices of collecting of data and movements, information transport, messages, texts, visual or sound designs do not deliver automatically a symbolic opening towards others and/or a free vision of the world.

The current question is not to create a relational aesthetics related to technologies but to imagine the means of connecting territories, actual and virtual, creating a world from the infinitely small to the infinitely huge, towards a sustainable development in the heart of the human cosmos. In 1958, the exchanges between the Phillips company and the creators Le Corbusier, Xenakis and Varèse were succesful in taking this direction.

The great issue of Shanghai 2010 will be a collaboration between companies and researchers to open new forms of transmission. For this reason, it is obvious that the anticipations of Bruce Sterling on the objects of tomorrow like the fascinating SPIME[9] propose one of the possible keys. The performance of *Better City Better Life* goes beyond the architecture, the dance, the music, the theatre, the visual or contemporary arts...

It is the entirety of the data-processing devices, along with news telecommunications, through its concentrated nature and its setting where there will be interaction with the visitors, via the waves and other invisible frequencies, (from Wifi to Gsm) on the site of the World Expo of Shanghai 2010 which will keep up, symbolically and concretely, the true possibility of universal creation, to try out solutions for now and for the future.

1   Deleuze, Gilles. 1995. *Dialogues*. Paris: Champs Flammarion, p. 184.

2   This paper is also available on Internet. http://www.intelligentagent.com/archive/ia6_2_interactivecity_ancel_shanghai.pdf

3   Hundreds of pictures are available on the Internet using Google images.

4   This video document can be found on the internet:

    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rC3OXai7W9I

5   Extract of Internet site presenting the current French project for 2010.

    http://www.pavillon-france.fr/?lang=en

6   This video document can also be found on the internet:

    http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xsayr_tuut-ledoux-200

7   Ancel, Franck. 2004. "Rules for Scenography." In *Jacques Polieri Scenography and Technology.* The French National Library, p. 9.

8   Fernand, Ouellette. 1973. *Edgard Varèse*. London: Calder & Boyars, p. 132.

9   More information about SPIME is available on the internet:

    http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Casey_Marshall/Spime