

TEN YEARS AFTER

Franck Ancel

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"Ten Years After" was originally conceived as a combination of three proposals, a panel discussion, and a workshop over an article. It has resulted in a piece of text as it is now, because it was unable to receive the funding it would require after submitting various proposals to different French Institutes and bodies for international grants. (1) This is not the first time I have encountered such disappointing situation. For both the 2006 and 2008 ISEA conference, the French institutions were not very generous towards my participation in the ISEA.

Undeterred, I still tried my best this year, to propose a round table discussion, a workshop, together with this single text, exactly ten years after the events of September 11 in New York, here in Istanbul. Through words, I hope to imagine another way of inhabiting this planet; and through networks, I hope to look to the future as well as the past, and come up with a very concrete proposal.

At the last Web-Biennale in 2010, which was founded and directed by Genco Gülan since 2002 and held in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art in Istanbul, I was invited among other curators to participate in such alternative exhibition, and proposed a "**Zero Pavilion**".

My "Zero Pavilion" consists of ten links (2), all with a theme relating to the idea of 'zero' in the contemporary sense. These 10 links ranged from William Gibson's latest novel "Zero History", to "zero pollution", an idealistic environmental goal for private companies; from the experience in zero gravity in space, to the birth of the art group Zero, which is preparing a Guggenheim retrospective in 2013 in New York. There is an introductory text to explain of my intention, where everyone could contribute to the web pavilion through its open-frame nature.

Please be reminded that the theme of this Web-Biennale in 2010, was "anti-censor". For that I have specially presented the "Zero Pavilion" as a platform with 10 links to express my vision of a "Better Web Better Wor(l)d" designed with an open framework. This enable participatory updating from the public,

through which the pavilion could continue to renew itself. My proposal echoed the Shanghai World Fair 2010, during I initiated a virtual project to synchronize with the event. (3) Confronted by the fact that the French government invested the 50 million euros on building the French pavilion without offering a single place for artists, I created a proposal with zero euro on June 16, 2010 at the Art Fair, Volta, during which "Celestial Hopscotch", a performance I made, was broadcasted live on the Internet, between Switzerland and Iran, from Basel. (4)

It has been more than 15 years since the democratization of the Internet. Such change has revolutionalized the process of art making. "Net Art" has emerged since then around the world. It has been recognized and successfully absorbed into the discourse of Western Art, continuing the vein of life of a history, of which now is mostly confined to the walls of museums. And we know, Art can be without these walls and screens.

The current proposal "The Museum of Non-Visible Art" by James Franco from the United State will soon be presented in a cultural event in Europe. In many ways, it has revived a lot of principles inherited from the Fluxus, which has an ephemeral conceptual approach to art. So far these fluxus ideas have been manifested in the world of networks, but not yet in the museum, without wall or screen. The idea of the "Museum of Invisible Art" has redefined the concept of the museum and renders it an invisible ephemeral condition, extending its definition and reality to the state of concepts, thoughts and imaginations.

Another model for zeroness, which has also created a dialogue between the real and the virtual, is the digital database posted on the project of the Memorial Museum on September 11 in New York. Its mission is to provide a gathering place within a virtual gallery for artworks which are created in response to the 9/11 catastrophe by members from the community, ranging from seasoned professionals to inspired individuals from the public. It is the first time perhaps, for the public to express their reactions to 9/11 through multiple media: visual, tactile or auditory. (5)

In 2001, as a response to the New York 911 event, I had tried to put these different media and perspectives into my project, called "Aporie 11", which aimed to be collaborative and rhizomically free in structure. Not aiming to confine to one well-defined medium, it also did not seek for a catharsis. Apart from that, I have engaged with the event indirectly so that it questioned and challenged a lot of presumed irrefutable facts. It was an attempt, to move away from the traditional medium of art, the duality of the interior and exterior, the walls and screens, in order to point to a new direction for artistic research.

To respond to the dramatic event is what seemed to us almost essential. For it has updated a lot of questions and concepts about the world, such as the idea of eternity and its centre. **World-eternity-center** was the name of our ephemeral internet website, and together with a mail art project, which has

lasted six months. There was a monthly meeting on every 11 day of each month, so we have named it "Aporie 11".

To produce my research, theory and practice, I have allowed myself ten years of time, to focus on questions and answers not confined to only the physical walls of museums and / or the virtual screens of the Internet. The influence of the history of the avant-garde and neo-avant-garde has been decisive and critical to me until today. One of its founders, Marcel Duchamp had opened the door to other practices as a symbolic economy in art with the help of an invisible network of his contemporary and friends. Recent research by Miss Daniela Alina Plewes in this field through her university thesis is illuminating the relationship of the artistic exchange existing at that time. (6)

Marcel Duchamp has imagined a « failure system », not as an enterprise or business, to gain money at the Monaco Casino in 1925. For him to be permitted to play, so to live, Duchamp had spent a total bills of 500 francs (at an interest rate of 20%) as a starting capital. Each bill was signed by Marcel Duchamp and his female pseudonyme Rose Selayv. His friend, the photographer Man Ray has also been solicited to create the bill, with a reproduction of Duchamp as a devil. This work from Man Ray is a Dadaist joke. However, only Jacques Doucet and Marie Laurencin have been poetic enough to understand and invest in this action that relates art practices with economy.

To be specific, I tried to bet the last ten years of my life at the Casino of French Culture in a total failure. That is to say I have invested some money and time, to produce dozens of appointments and collaborations that seemed relevant between the reality and virtuality. Yet this creative freedom was met with futility in finding the space to work. However, sometimes I have satisfied some fetishistic collectors by selling them plexiglass boxes containing DVDs, remixing the arts from Yves Klein or Vladimir Mayakovsky.

In order to achieve my goal, I do not need any office, any infrastructure, but just a platform for collaboration, emails exchange and a banking account. Recently, the global news has urged me to conceptualise and realise two projects, with iPhone as an ideal medium of choice. One responds to the Fukushima catastrophe, named "Deserto Rosso" (7) while the other called "Space 140" (8) in resonance with the Tunisia uprising.

After more than ten years of activities, in fact, soon a quarter of a century, I still continue my research with humor, where now I have defined a new paradigm with the term the post-scenographic zerography. (9)

Looking at the operation of ANAT [Australian Network for Art and Technology], and from my experience, the whole world is at a crisis in almost every aspect, politically, economically, ecologically and culturally.

We are indeed at a critical point where actions need to be taken to envision a new economy based on a vision of the 21st century. This vision should not merely inherit from the past, but be radical and daring enough to create a break and rupture, for a more positive and creative future. And that is my good wish for the world.

Also, for the ten years of "Ground Zero", I would like to create a price "**Round Zero**", endowed with 10,000 euros. This allocation could be selected at random, like a virtual roulette. Though like a virtual roulette, it is with real money invested in it, and a concrete realization, without any constraint of curator or border in art.

The periphery of the art fair in Basel with its EuroAirport, the three countries, Switzerland, Germany, France, in the heart of Europe are ideal in providing the perfect place and context to showcase such a price. Of course, the creation of the artist will be chosen by drawing lots, and will take the form of an audible or visible action in the form of augmented reality. The production will be dependent on him, understood in these 10 000 euros.

In order to achieve that, I am looking for a company to develop an application on the iPhone / iPad or Android, and a cultural center and / or a gallery to produce and hold this event, which I consider a very serious artistic vision.

In regards to the proposal, the application we designed will accept an annual admission of 1000 subscribers. The price to download the application is set to a symbolic price of 10 euros. We identify the subscribers as voters with each having a chance to nominate one artist. From the 1000 subscribers to this club, together with donations accepted worldwide, we have 10 000 euros to create a scholarship for an artist drawn from the nomination list of registered voters. The EuroAirport (10) would be the ideal site in our context to create the first immaterial Art Fair, for the architectural site is composed of transparent glass walls that will inspire the provision of accounts and members open for this application/creation.

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I am not boycotting the ISEA. But I defend for myself as an artist, and protest against the way the French Institutions allocate its fundings: please take note my empty chair as an invisible strike.

Now, if not too much, I only ask of you ten minutes, to meditate on my "Art of Silence" here: **OOOOOOOOOO** per minutes.

Lastly, thank you: Space and Love!

Corrected translation by Miss Heidi Ting

References and Notes:

1. *Four others were planned for these three developments ISEA : Pauline de La Boulaye - Critic ; Rodolphe Alexis - Compositor ; Benjamin Gaulon - Artist ; Emmanuel Mahé – Theorist.*
2. <http://www.webbiennial.org>
3. <http://turbulence.org/blog/2010/06/13/live-stage-the-celestial-hopscotch-online>
4. <http://tumblr.com/xbg3912j7u>
5. <http://www.911memorial.org>
6. "Les Arts transactionnels - L'Art comme échange de valeurs et conversion de capital", thesis, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2010. English translation <http://www.transactional-arts.com>
7. <http://www.intersection-lab.com/intersection/desertorosso.pdf>
8. <http://www.remu.fr/space140/accueil>
9. "From Scenography to Zerography", communication, Prague Quadriennale, University of Philosophy, 2011. French translation <http://tumblr.com/xbg352tfr4>
10. <http://www.euroairport.com>