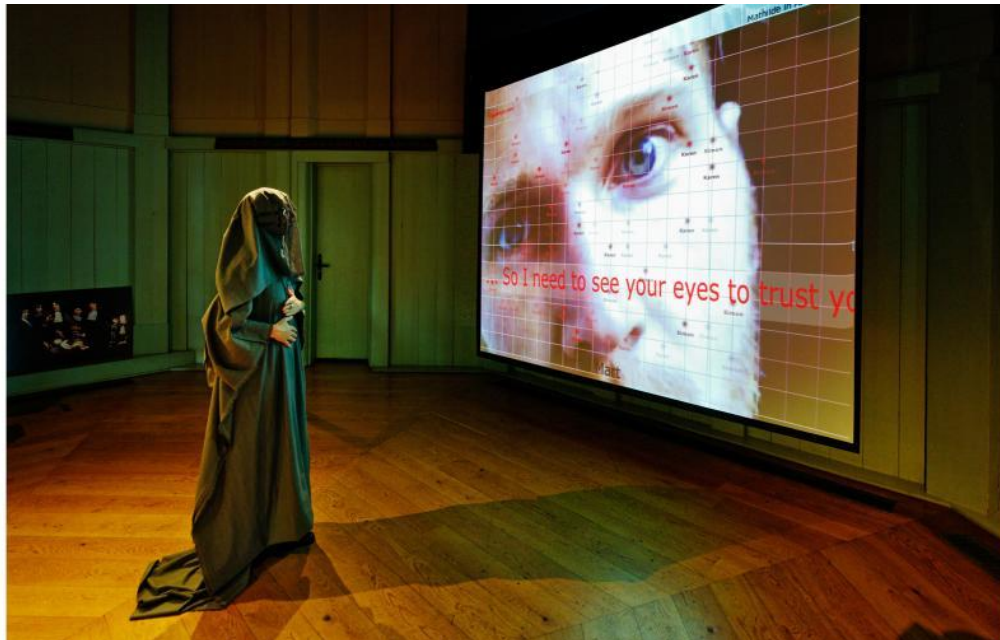


## TELE\_TRUST FOR NETWORKING BODIES

**Karen Lancel**

Lancel & Maat explore our perception of augmented 'reciprocity', 'presence' and 'trust'. In an iterative research process they match theoretical insights with experiential data in a series of artworks, designed as 'Social Labs' in smart city public spaces. Experimenting with tangible interfaces and participatory systems, new insights, innovative technologies and the human body meet to inspire (yet) unimaginable types of engagement.



*Fig 1. Tele\_Trust, 2010, Lancel & Maat, photo by Pieter Kers. Location: Waag Society for Old and New Media Amsterdam. The 'DataVeil' is a smart textile wearable tangible interface connected to a free smartphone app; for an intimate networked body experience. Audience members wear the DataVeil.*



*Fig 2. Saving Face, 2011, Lancel & Maat, Photo by Maat/Lancel. Performance Installation 'Saving Face' is a smartphone app connected to networked urban screens. The smartphone app functions as a 'touching-body-scan'; with which one can create together a non-controllable composed 'networked identity' through the act of touching and caressing one's intimate face. Development with the Waag Society for Old and New Media Amsterdam and Dutch Media Fund.*



*Fig 3. Tele\_Trust, 2010/2011, Lancel & Maat. In Festival 'ElectroSmog', photo at BNMI Canada. Six Tele\_Trust DataVeils are networked through an online database and smartphones in three different public spaces and time zones: Netherlands, Canada; New Zealand.*

*'I am part of the networks and the networks are part of me...I link, therefore I am. '[1]*

How do we trust each other as networking bodies?

In our contemporary networked society, interaction increasingly takes place through wireless, social networked media. The possibilities of tele-presence have made place and distance irrelevant for the experience of social proximity and allow 'networking bodies' to be present at several locations, temporalities and social settings at the same time. At the same time the public space turns into a 'smart environment' that increasingly interacts with the electronically and digitally enhanced body. These developments cause profound changes in the role of the body and physical presence since mediated presence leaves little or no room for touch, face to face encounters, and body language that are core components for the building of trust and reciprocity, which are in turn the foundations of social structures.

Tele\_Trust is a research into how in mediated and tele-present society bodily based experiences of presence, reciprocity, and trust can be generated, mediated and maintained. It is a critical and sensitive exploration in how we can intensify networked affective experiences in relation to the mediated body. It looks for new forms of interaction, participatory and multi actor systems and interfaces, in which the conditions for 'reciprocity' and 'trust' can be recognized and acknowledged or differently perceived. In Tele\_Trust new insights, innovative technologies, and the human body meet to initiate and inspire (yet) unimaginable types of intersubjective engagement.

Tele\_Trust is an inter-disciplinary research. It is developed, tested, shown and published in collaboration with universities and (art) academies; tech-labs and media institutes; in museums, festivals and conferences. It is an iterative research process in which theoretical insights are matched with experiential research data:

A. *Theoretical context.* The theoretical context includes media-theories emphasizing the central position for affective and receptive sensory processes in the body experiencing the world - and perceiving the other. Among others it relates to texts of Donna Haraway, Caroline Nevejan, William J. Mitchell, Michel Foucault, Paul Virilio, Mark B.N. Hansen.

B. *Art works - 'Social Labs'.* The experiential research takes place in art works designed as technically smart 'Social Labs' in dynamic public spaces. For these 'Social labs' Lancel and Maat deconstruct existing social interaction models and subsequently reconstruct them into new models for semi-compatible multi-actor systems. They build on these systems because through the gap of incompatibility they experience a drive for creative, audience engaged experiment. The social labs develop as follows:

1. Firstly parameters for designing networking body presence and body proximity are distilled from theory and translated into model-drawing and 3-d maquettes.
2. This leads to the development of a series of 'Social labs', containing networked wearable devices and bio-interfaces. Examples of these 'Social Labs' are 'Tele\_Trust', 'StalkShow' and 'Saving Face'; visible on <http://www.lancelmaat.nl>.
3. The 'Social Labs' provide the context for obtaining research data; through the networked devices and interfaces we test parameters for networked body presence and trust. With participants we discuss their experiences, perception, needs; and their gained physical, spatial and social knowledge. The 'Social Labs' take place in various social geographical cultures.

4. 'Social labs' participants contributions are added to a data-base and website, creating an engaging, intercultural agora on the notion of networked trust, reciprocity and presence systems.

### **Case Study: Social Lab 'Tele\_Trust'**

How do we trust as networking bodies? Do you need to see my eyes to trust me or do we need to touch?

The social lab Tele\_Trust is a performance installation. It creates an engaging agora researching new parameters for online trust. In Tele\_Trust we are faced with a paradox: while we increasingly demand transparency in our changing social eco-system, we cover our bodies with personal communication technology. Tele\_Trust it invites the audience in a semi-compatible social system for an innovative, reflective embodied encounter. In a visual poetic way, the artists research contemporary emotional and social tension in smart cities - between visibility, presence, privacy and trust.

*How does it work?*

Tele Trust networked performance-installation takes place in dynamic city semi-public spaces, like train station, museum, festival. Here the audience meets in an interactive DataVeil. This DataVeil is a tangible body interface for 'scanning online trust':

*DataVeil.*

The DataVeil is a full body covering garment, Gender neutral, and One size fits all. Its design is inspired by eastern and western traditions, like a monks' habit, a burqa, Darth Vader, and a 'trustworthy' chalk stripe business suit.

When wearing the DataVeil it functions as a second skin. Flexible, invisible touch sensors woven into the smart fabric of the veil, transform your body into an intuitive, tangible interface. It is a membrane for scanning an intimate, networking body experience:

*Smartphone connected to a DataVeil.*

Can I touch you now? By touching your body in the DataVeil, you meet strangers online through their smartphones. Inside the DataVeil you may be unidentifiable but before 'disappearing' your portrait is added to an online database. By gently caressing their screens, anonymous smartphone users worldwide can unveil your face online. In an intimate body experience and real time audio, you share emotions and statements of trust, about the questions: Am I here with you? Who is watching who? *Who is controlling who? In what identity and in whose body?*

*Database.*

In an ongoing process, user generated content is continuously added to the Tele\_Trust database. With the DataVeil the artists collect knowledge about 'privacy' and 'trust' in different social-geographical cultures. Stories from different cities weave together into an exchanging narrative -

*Everyone can wear a DataVeil.*

*Tele\_Trust interactive DataVeil and free smartphone app* are developed with V2\_Lab for unstable media Rotterdam Netherlands; Banff New Media Institute Canada, Technical University of Delft Netherlands.

### **References and Notes:**

1. William J. Mitchell, *ME++: The Cyborg Self and the Networked City* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003).

*With generous support of:*

*Mondriaan Foundation, V2\_Lab for unstable media; Banff New Media Institute Canada; Fund BKVB for Visual Art, Design and Architecture; Lumineus Amersfoort; Amsterdam Fund for the Arts, Artists-in-residency BNMI Canada, Amsterdam School for the Arts.*

*Tele\_Trust performance-installations 2009-2011:*

*ISEA2011 Istanbul; V2 Lab for UnstableMedia Rotterdam; Banff New Media Institute Canada; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; Festival a/d Werf & PSI Utrecht; De Balie Amsterdam; ADA-network Dunedin New-Zealand; Waag Society for Old&New Media Amsterdam; Technical University of Delft; Lumineus Amersfoort; Tschumi-Pavillion Groningen; Expositorium Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; Gogbot Enschede; ARTEZ Studium Generale Enschede.*

*Tele-Trust reserach on conferences:*

*Leonardo@ARS-ELECTRONICA Linz; Shanghai World-Expo 2010 - Mobile City, Virtueel Platform, DCC; Sonic-Acts XIII Amsterdam; PSI and University of Utrecht 'Camillo 2.0'; University of Amsterdam and NIMK Amsterdam 'The Bodily Turn'; University Sabanci Istanbul ISEA2011; University of Utrecht 'Vrede of Utrecht - Utrecht Interactive'.*