peter HORVATH

Transient Passages
March 29 - May 4, 2007

ACA Gallery of SCAD
1280 Peachtree St. NE
Atlanta, Ga. 30309

www.acagallery.org
On behalf of the Savannah College of Art and Design, it is my pleasure to introduce Peter Horvath: Transient Passages at the Atlanta College of Art Gallery of SCAD in Atlanta. Horvath’s profoundly innovative development of browser-based video has transformed our gallery and created a wonderfully immersive environment. He truly epitomizes the core of our mission for the ACA Gallery of SCAD, and I am very excited that our students and community have the opportunity to see and experience this work.

Dedicated to the impact and exploration of contemporary art, the ACA Gallery of SCAD, Woodruff Arts Center, Atlanta, exists to inspire and challenge the SCAD community and the greater art audience with programming from established national, international and regional artists. Continuing and supporting SCAD’s commitment to artistic diversity and innovation, the ACA Gallery of SCAD provides an educational forum for current trends in contemporary art. The Exhibitions Department is devoted to fostering dialogue and acting as a catalyst for artists, the College and the public.

Lance Tawzer
Director of Exhibitions
Savannah College of Art and Design
Curator’s Statement

Transient Passages presents a survey of the work of Peter Horvath. Horvath is an artist who produces “non-linear, video based narratives that run on the Internet.”¹ His work can be seen on his Web site www.6168.org as well as through prominent Internet art galleries including the Whitney Artport and Rhizome, and in formal gallery spaces on monitors, LCD screens and via large-scale projections. The work is perhaps most accurately defined as Web cinema: they are (mostly) non-interactive pieces that use the artist’s own video and animation in addition to found sound and film footage to create highly textured audio-visual sequences. The choice to remove interactivity from within his video work was a decisive one that attempts to situate it within a cinematic realm, albeit one that defies easy categorization. Unlike the majority of Internet art practice, they are also distinctive in their deeply personal, autobiographical content and the subsequent feeling of intimacy to which this gives rise. This exhibition presents Horvath’s browser driven videos projected within specifically built spaces that try to maintain this sense of closeness. The show also premieres Boulevard, 2007, a three-channel, site-specific video installation that is a new extension of the artist’s work. Subtle and meditative in tone, the works in this exhibition seek to investigate alternative strategies for creating and experiencing art cinema.

For several years, Horvath has been interested in the use of pop-up windows within the Web browser as a framing device for multilayered video. In Unexpected Launching of Heavy Objects, 2003, hundreds of empty pop-ups rapidly unfold, encasing scenes of fascism that subsequently merge into images of atomic bomb tests. For Horvath then, the appropriation of the pop-up window has acted as a means of subverting the familiar visual language and usage of the Internet, while also addressing broadband restrictions. The pop-ups produce an assortment of sequences inspired more by the collage based work of Hannah Höch than Sergei Eisenstein’s montages.² But they are also particular to the Web: The browser frame is always present, and they tier in such a manner that they fill the border of the screen, making us conscious that the context is emphatically that of the Web. Such dense layering of video is enhanced by Horvath’s use of music, sound and word: written and whispered, readable and obscured, which converge to realize the rich potential of the medium.

Horvath’s textured use of audio-visual space not only investigates the possibilities of the medium but seeks, he argues, to emulate random memory acts and suggest unfolding consciousness,

As a medium, the web stimulates the environment of the mind, offering frenetic and multiple displays of stimulus. In my work, windows open and close in the same manner that thoughts enter our minds, play out, and disappear, making room for new thoughts. In this way, my pieces mimic the thought process.³

Memory, life cycles and waking dreams are recurrent themes in his work, and feature prominently in Either Side of An Empty Room, 2002. In this 14-minute work, Horvath explores the slippage between waking life, dreaming and memory in the context of a ‘day in the life’ in which we witness time, less as a study of progression and more as a reoccurring series of multipaced moments that fast forward, flicker and reverse. As viewers, we pass through undefined city spaces — the underground, supermarket, and bars — all in a matter of seconds and without the security of a destination or sense of purpose. Interspersed throughout this urban drifting are photographic stills and film footage of the artist’s family life, and surrealistic animations, which foil the consideration of the city as a private, ambient experience.

The public uncovering of deeply personal secrets is also a subject addressed within Intervals, 2004, a 10-minute, Web-based video, featured in this exhibition as a projected installation. The interval is a brief moment in which each character reveals their most intimate selves through accounts of lost innocence, fear of the unknown, masculine ritual and the mystery of love. Here identity is subject to visual and textual slippages, distortions, and to filmic alter egos that mimic, echo or subvert their subjects’ account. Tenderly Yours, 2005, an eight-minute, Web-based video, revisits

¹ Interview with the artist. December 2006
² Interview with the artist. March 2004
³ Interview with artist. October 2005
the themes of love, loss and memory in a visual language which simulates the personal, casual and ambiguous approach of French new wave cinema. Here we also encounter a series of filmic ‘doubles’ — of French new wave cinema rendered as Web cinema and in turn, of Web cinema resituated in the context of the art gallery.

Most of Horvath’s works are also lengthy: 12 or so minutes, and in the case of Triptych: Motion, Stillness, Resistance, 2006, the work can potentially run indefinitely. Subsequently, the works require a pause, a slowing down, and a protraction of the hyperbolic speed of the Internet. Triptych is a silent Web-based video comprising of panels that express the states of motion, stillness and resistance. Motion largely explores the themes and conditions of movement through the city. It lacks distinctive context and disorientates geographical specificity by moving the user through a series of familiar yet indistinct urban markers. The central frame, Stillness, concentrates our vision on subtle images of skies, seemingly unchanging shots of cityscapes as well as quiet private and domestic scenes, that are equally without the particularities of place. They are comparable to Wolfgang Staehle’s continuous images of place and although not modified, appear to suspend and elongate time. Like Staehle’s work, Stillness also seeks to capture distant locations for immediate, local consumption, reminding us of the desire for infinite access to images that the Internet has fostered. The third panel is Resistance and explores instances of urban drama and conflict – couples arguing, people protesting, and states of agitation. The randomly selected sequences that continuously juxtapose these conditions create unending narratives, passages and pathways that glide the viewer between the here and there, the present and the inestimable future.

The viewer’s ambient experience of Horvath’s anonymous cityscapes is comparable to the Situationist International notion of the dérive, “a technique of transient passage through varied ambiences,” a concept closely associated with psychogeographies.

The Situationists developed tactics that doubled both as game and sedition, such as the dérive, which is aimless drifting through urban streets, preferably in groups, employing the psycho-geographical method to understand the psychological affect the buildings and built forms have on the dériver, while hunting for environments that issue suitably exciting and passionate atmospheres.

Implied within this process is a ‘drift’ that mediates the creative and conceptual boundaries of the specific locality of the viewer, the presence of ephemeral and emotively significant urban markers within the works and the globalized, mapless topography of the medium itself. Furthermore, we do not wander aimlessly, as did the Surrealists, but encounter habitual psychogeographical attractions, which in Horvath’s work are the rapid and troubled encounters within and through the city.

Boulevard, 2007, a three-channel video installation, running 12-minutes, is Horvath’s first non-browser work. It has a strong sense of cinematic presence, transitioning from the visual language of collage to scripting and directing a highly intense narrative. Located in Los Angeles, we follow a striking woman, the passenger of a convertible car, driven by an unidentified driver through the city, passing its generic streets, billboards and motels, with an unknown destination. There is a voice-over, presumably hers, that exposes her feelings of obsession. Running parallel to the piece is a dialogue between a man and woman in intimate, but casual conversation about love. The video sequences are frequently suspended, disjunctive and blurred, distorting our visual and emotional sense of place. At once lyrical and intoxicatingly beautiful, we pass through discrete emotive atmospheres experiencing ambiguity, desire and longing.

Celina Jeffery, Ph.D.
Senior Curator
Savannah College of Art and Design


Conceptually my work derives from and revolves around my unchanging curiosity about the nature of identity and consciousness. To me, identity is related to and generated by what belongs to the spectrum of one's history: subjective or objective, microscopic or macroscopic, private, familial, and socio-political. Through my work I attempt to address the difference between conscious and subconscious identity and drives.

My work mirrors the individual's attempt to deal with history, which is at once intimate and far reaching, through the use of my archives that reflect my personal history and life experience. I work from the premise that people, regardless of their geographic and cultural identity have fundamentally the same emotional experiences (i.e. grief, joy, love, fear, jealousy). When I create my work, I aspire to universality: in the materials I collect and in what they reference.

In the world of video and Web technology I have found a medium that encompasses and expands the lush, pluralistic and multi-layered qualities of my previous dada-inspired photomontage work. Freed from the restricting two-dimensional context by technological advances, I engage in fragmented narratives and sub-narratives that form and reform as multiple windows open and close. I orchestrate layers of history, including journal entries, sketches, written records, video, photographs, music, voice and general sound loops, resulting in a atmospheric investigation into states of being.
intervals

I went on top of the roof of my school.

I don't want to feel pain no more.
tenderly yours
triptych
He begins discarding remnants of their time together.
SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

SOLO

2007 “Peter Horvath / Transient Passages” ACA Gallery of SCAD, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
2006 “Inventory of Being” Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, Canada
2005 “Tenderly Yours” 64 Steps Contemporary Art, Toronto, Canada
2004 “4 Artworks for the Internet” Pace Digital Gallery, New York City, USA
2003 “Either Side of an Empty Room” Neutral Ground / SOIL Digital Media Gallery, Regina, Canada
2000 “Head On Collision” SPIN Gallery, Toronto, Canada
1993 “Colour Photographs II” Tanashima Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
1991 “Colour Photographs I” Roschar Gallery, Toronto, Canada
1990 “Black & White Objects” Roschar Gallery, Toronto, Canada

GROUP

2007
“Lines of Flight” Hunter College, New York City, USA

2006
“Pixel Pops” C2C Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic

“Rhizome Commissioned Works” New Museum Bookstore, New York City, USA
“Reflections” La Galerie d’art Stewart Hall, Pointe-Claire, Canada
Seoul Net/Film Festival, Seoul, Korea

2005
“Il International Festival of Electronic Art 404” Rosario, Argentina
“Lumen Eclipse” Harvard Square Gallery, Somerville, USA
City Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, USA
“Threading Time” The Siggraph 2005 Art Gallery, Los Angeles, California, USA

Seoul Net Festival, Seoul, Korea
“Subrealities” University of Texas, Dallas, USA

Festival Toshare, Torino, Italy
Japan Media Arts Festival, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan
18 Stuttgarter Filmwinter, Stuttgart, Germany

2004
Sala 1 Centro Internazionale D’art Contemporanea, Rome, Italy
CY NET ART_04 8th International Festival for Computer Based Art, Dresden, Germany
Festival International Nouveau Cinéma Nouveaux Médias, Montreal, Canada
File 2004 Electronic Language International Festival, São Paulo, Brazil

New Forms Festival 2004, Vancouver, Canada
Video Zone International Video Art Biennial, Tel Aviv, Israel
9th Split Film Festival, Split, Croatia
VI Salon Internacional de Art Digital, Havana, Cuba
“Pause” Interaccess Electronic Media Arts Centre, Toronto, Canada
“Pause” Oboro Gallery, Montreal, Canada
Thailand New Media Art Festival, Bangkok, Thailand
“Little Stabs At Happiness” Clint Roenisch Gallery, Toronto, Canada
17 Stuttgarter Filmwinter, Stuttgart, Germany

2003
File 2003 Electronic Language International Festival, São Paulo, Brazil
ChiangMai First New Media Art Festival, ChiangMai, Thailand
“War Time” Interactive Arts Centre at the Woodlane Campus, Falmouth, Cornwall, UK

2002
“War Time” Ritzy Cinema, Brixton, London, UK
“Ellipse. L’art sur le Web” Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Québec City, Canada
“Matter+Memory” OBORO Gallery, Montreal, Canada
“Chroma” Hamilton Artists Inc, Hamilton, Canada
“Stir” SOF House, Toronto, Canada

2001
Gallery Artists, SPIN Gallery, Toronto, Canada
“Sights Un-scene” Harbourfront Center, Toronto, Canada

2000
“Three Times Removed” Archive Inc., Toronto, Canada
“Three Times Removed” Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Kitchener, Canada
“Dream” SPIN Gallery, Toronto, Canada
“Love and Other Ubiquity” TIW Gallery, Toronto, Canada

1988
Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada

1998
NET ART

2006
Rhizome Commissioned Works, “Triptych: Motion Stillness Resistance”
http://rhizome.org/object.rhiz?36533

2005
“ArtStream: Exhibitions of Web Art” http://w3.cfa.arizona.edu:9006/artstream/
“Popup, A Net Art Exhibition at Turbulence.org”
http://turbulence.org/curators/popup/index.htm
“Tenderly Yours” http://turbulence.org/studios/horvath/tenderly/

2004
“Intervals” http://turbulence.org/Works/horvath/
“Album” http://www.6168.org/album
Year Zero One Splash Page Project, http://www.year01.com

2003
“The Presence of Absence” Whitney Museum Of American Art Artport,
http://www.artport.whitney.org
“Remix Reconstruction Zone” Horizon Zero, http://www.horizonzero.ca
“Ten Seconds” http://www.turbulence.org
“Either Side of an Empty Room” http://rhizome.org
She's filled with experience she'd sooner forget.
image credits

1. *Boulevard*, 2007
   3 Channel DVD Installation. Running Time 12 Minutes

2. *Intervals*, 2004
   Web Based Audio-Video. Running Time 8 Minutes

3. *Tenderly Yours*, 2005
   Web Based Audio-Video. Running Time 10 Minutes

   Web Based Video. Indefinite Loop

5. Installation Still, *Tenderly Yours*, 2005
   Web Based Audio-Video. Running Time 10 Minutes

   Web Based Video. Indefinite Loop

   3 Channel DVD Installation. Running Time 12 Minutes

   Chromogenic Color Prints Mounted On Dye Bond, Edition 1 Of 3
Named the “Hottest for Studying Art” among “America’s 25 Hottest Colleges” by Kaplan/Newsweek, the Savannah College of Art and Design is a distinctive, multi-campus, international university. SCAD is recognized as a leader in art and design education, emphasizing learning through individual attention in a positively oriented environment. The international faculty and student body have come from all 50 states and more than 80 countries. The college has locations in Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia, and in Lacoste, France. Accredited degree programs also are offered through SCAD e-Learning.

The Savannah College of Art and Design is a private, nonprofit institution accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097; 404.679.4501) to award bachelor’s and master’s degrees. The five-year professional M.Arch. degree program is additionally accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board.

For more information, call 800.869.7223 or visit www.scad.edu.
E-mail may be sent to info@scad.edu.

Celina Jeffery, Kent Knowles and Andres Salgado for their astuteness, dedication and attention to detail in the creation of this exhibition; Ingrid Veninger, Michael Montes, Ashley Tate Hatton, Marc Cohen and Pamela Neal for contributions to Boulevard; Ed Burtynsky, Brent Kitagawa, Meileen Son Hing, Nichola Feldman-kiss, Gariné Torossian and Max Dean for their continued support; Patti Shaw for support over many years; my family.