Conversations with Stelarc’s INTERNET EAR

By STELARC & Morten Søndergaard

Abstract
Casts of the EAR ON ARM, embedded with electronics was Internet enabled in four international locations: Paris (F), Moscau (RUS), Copenhagen (DK) and Aalborg (DK).

By speaking into the ear on the arm, your voice is heard and seen as text projected in the other locations and also accessed on the Ear On Arm website. Webcams monitor each location and image the interactions on the website. The result is a looping cacophony of modulated voices and projected text, ebbing and flowing in density and intensity over different time zones. The international installation will not be about explicit exchanges, but rather about acoustical affect and ephemeral text.

The following is based partly on a text by the artist, some text written for the exhibition, and excerpts from the conversations conducted by the Internet Ear from October 14 2010 and until January 7 2011 in the context of the exhibiton BIOTOPIA – Art in the Wet Zone in Aalborg (DK). ¹

1. Introduction

With Internet Ear the Australian artist Stelarc ventures into a controversial area: the fusion of the human body with technology. By means of a lengthy surgical process the artist had an artificial human ear implanted in his forearm. A subsequent operation then installed microscopic electronic equipment in this third ear, with a view to both transmitting and receiving sound. Because of the danger of possible infection it was impossible to give the ear a technological “sense of hearing” and the equipment was removed. But the ear is still attached to Stelarc’s arm; Thus, Ear on arm is a mute reality.

Internet Ear, which was commissioned for the BIOTOPIA exhibition (Aalborg, Denmark 2010), launches the Ear on Arm project onto the Internet. Software and the Internet transform Internet Ear into a listening arm. You can listen along with it from (and to) Moscow or Paris, or whatever corner of the globe you happen to be in.

Stelarc’s Internet Ear has its own blog (www.earonarm.net), where anyone can contribute to the ear’s dialogue with itself. Internet Ear is an exploration of technological sensuality and the

¹ Internet Ear was commissioned for the exhibition Biotopia - Art in the Wet Zone, curated by Morten Søndergaard in the context of the PORT 20:10 Festival of Contemporary Art and Social Technology and KUNSTEN – Museum of Modern Art in Aalborg, Denmark.
technology of the senses. Furthermore it is an open channel for listening to the world, a fusion of human being and machine, biology and bytes.

The other factor at work in *Ear on Arm*, the exploration of technological sensuality, becomes a distributed and expanded sensuality; a sensual technology disconnected from its original “host” and, in principal, beyond its control. We can hear with Stelarc’s ear!

In *Internet Ear*, the body is not 'itself'. It is not useful as general reference framework for understanding the world. The body is "obsolete", in the words of Stelarc whereby he expresses the belief that as a static entity in a soul-and-body dichotomy without paradoxical implications and (self) relationships, the body is antiquated. Outdated.

Stelarc insists that the body is a 'physical experience of Ideas'.

The following is an expressions of that very notion… a conversation with Stelarc and the world through the Internet Ear.

2. Conversations

2.1 ORGANS WITHOUT BODIES

2010-10-15 09:22:36 Anonymous Hi!
2010-10-15 09:48:06 Aalborg sting from all the
2010-10-15 09:48:07 Aalborg all
2010-10-15 09:48:13 Aalborg are
2010-10-15 09:48:18 Aalborg are
2010-10-15 09:48:19 Aalborg half
2010-10-15 09:48:23 Aalborg are
2010-10-15 09:48:24 Aalborg off
2010-10-15 09:48:28 Aalborg are
2010-10-15 09:48:43 Aalborg bodies are obsolete
2010-10-15 09:48:48 Aalborg are
2010-10-15 09:53:40 Aalborg one testing 123 bodies are obsolete testing testing
2010-10-15 09:55:00 Aalborg the cabinet of the time that I've
2010-10-15 09:55:01 Aalborg ended june era
2010-10-15 09:55:04 Aalborg long
2010-10-15 09:55:08 Aalborg a home
2010-10-15 09:55:14 Aalborg along
2010-10-15 09:55:18 Aalborg home
2010-10-15 09:55:21 Aalborg or even
2010-10-15 09:55:23 Aalborg long
2010-10-15 09:55:25 Aalborg and
2010-10-15 09:55:29 Aalborg home and
2010-10-15 09:55:33 Aalborg long
2010-10-15 09:55:38 Aalborg long
2010-10-15 09:55:47 Aalborg how the body is obsolete
2010-10-15 10:16:21 Aalborg intimate here
2010-10-15 10:23:31 Aalborg oracle
2010-10-15 10:23:35 Aalborg, that is the only reason
2010-10-15 10:23:41 Aalborg he has
2010-10-15 10:23:47 Aalborg long accused nothing
2010-10-15 10:23:53 Aalborg we have to have the following was omitted us a few
2010-10-15 10:23:56 Aalborg real-life
2010-10-15 10:24:00 Aalborg -size
2010-10-15 10:24:05 Aalborg IE or 15 points a
2010-10-15 10:24:15 Aalborg event was a ease
2010-10-15 10:27:22 Aalborg the body is obsolete

2.2 FRACTAL and PHANTOM Flesh

2010-10-15 12:42:23 Aalborg other
2010-10-15 12:43:02 Aalborg counties by a commission
2010-10-15 12:43:10 Aalborg Moscow come a long
2010-10-15 12:43:17 Aalborg, all of the
2010-10-15 12:43:28 Aalborg long
2010-10-15 12:43:29 Aalborg haul
2010-10-15 12:51:52 Aalborg tough time in the
2010-10-15 12:51:56 Aalborg valley have to leave the healing like it or
2010-10-15 12:52:02 Aalborg where they saw a list of
2010-10-15 12:52:10 Aalborg minutes of fame
2010-10-15 12:52:19 Aalborg feeling here is really
2010-10-15 12:52:23 Aalborg knows what will
2010-10-15 12:52:29 Aalborg win the respect of ways
2010-10-15 12:52:30 Aalborg these
2010-10-15 12:52:40 Aalborg who is going to be
Moscow until this is a lot of you-all of these are kids that he was brings home the point body is obsolete the body is obsolete when if you feel when he she makes the walls are others like it or you are the days of his points or less years or so are you a lot going on here we can't win the own a cost of 20 2020 THS and a whole or any of these body on the client or see in one of only one of the ink was a student is a
2010-10-15 12:56:56 Aalborg been three
2010-10-15 12:57:03 Aalborg or early
2010-10-15 12:57:08 Aalborg season
2010-10-15 12:57:16 Aalborg with a
2010-10-15 12:57:32 Aalborg call when the public image-
2010-10-15 12:58:12 Aalborg less
2010-10-15 12:58:18 Aalborg likely to replace either body is obsolete
2010-10-15 12:58:20 Aalborg body is obsolete
2010-10-15 12:58:33 Aalborg without a doubt anything about that idea
2010-10-15 12:58:51 Aalborg at the end zone
2010-10-15 12:59:03 Aalborg or when it says are not already are
2010-10-15 12:59:14 Aalborg Oilers all
2010-10-15 12:59:16 Aalborg the way
2010-10-15 12:59:20 Aalborg home
2010-10-15 12:59:51 Aalborg that I doubt they'll live
2010-10-15 13:00:20 Aalborg some of our lives of the rights of the lines are
2010-10-15 13:00:22 Aalborg right
2010-10-15 13:00:34 Aalborg in with one of the year to year-over 71 o'clock o'clock on a
2010-10-15 13:00:42 Aalborg death penalty if they are
2010-10-15 13:01:04 Aalborg lots
2010-10-15 13:01:10 Aalborg of the
2010-10-15 13:01:34 Aalborg avocado is obsolete the body is blurring of a distorted taking all the
2010-10-15 13:02:09 Aalborg money
2010-10-15 13:02:16 Aalborg home
2010-10-15 13:02:19 Aalborg all
2010-10-15 13:02:19 Aalborg call
2010-10-19 14:54:37    julien    hi Stelarc Aalborg & Moscow...
2010-10-19 14:54:48    Aalborg    , a hole in the
2010-10-19 14:54:53    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 14:54:55    Aalborg    will
2010-10-19 14:54:58    Aalborg    the long
2010-10-19 14:55:00    Aalborg    haul
2010-10-19 14:55:03    Aalborg    along
2010-10-19 14:55:08    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 14:55:13    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:03:23    Anonymous    hi julien . greetings from aalborg
2010-10-19 15:03:34    Aalborg    E long
2010-10-19 15:03:39    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:03:41    Aalborg    you,
2010-10-19 15:03:44    Aalborg    along
2010-10-19 15:03:46    Aalborg    you
2010-10-19 15:03:49    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:03:51    Aalborg    you
2010-10-19 15:04:16    AnonymousMontreal    Editing wide format version of Ear On Arm surgery at Concordia:\n
2010-10-19 15:04:16    AnonymousMontreal    Hmm, too much uninteresting feedback, sound will need to be turned down.
2010-10-19 15:04:31    Aalborg    along
2010-10-19 15:04:35    Aalborg    a year long
2010-10-19 15:08:40    Aalborg    what is the ear futur? witch application?
2010-10-19 15:08:45    Aalborg    and
2010-10-19 15:08:50    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:09:57    AnonymousMontreal    What\'s important is that important text is not lost...
2010-10-19 15:10:01    Aalborg    a year
2010-10-19 15:10:05    Aalborg    and a law
2010-10-19 15:10:10    Aalborg    you are
2010-10-19 15:10:15    Aalborg    a long
2010-10-19 15:10:16    Aalborg    been a
2010-10-19 15:10:20    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:10:25    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:13:06    Concordia    What\'s important is that important text is not lost...
2010-10-19 15:13:12    Aalborg    the
2010-10-19 15:13:15    Aalborg    long
2010-10-19 15:13:21    Aalborg    long
Volume of sound needs to be turned down to minimize feedback.

true, it's too high

Where

he,

along

long

long

Is someone listening, ha ha ha?!

yes for sure

Hugh

long

long

hugh!

Good that you are listening and agree. A few lines of feedback is OK but too much loses the contributed and meaningful text.

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<th>Text</th>
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<td>Volume of sound needs to be turned down to minimize feedback.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>true, it's too high</td>
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<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>Where</td>
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<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>he,</td>
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<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>along</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>long</td>
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<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Concordia</td>
<td>Is someone listening, ha ha ha?!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>yes for sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>Hugh</td>
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<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
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<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>long</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>hugh!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-19</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Good that you are listening and agree. A few lines of feedback is OK but too much loses the contributed and meaningful text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 The CADAVER, the COMATOSE and the CHIMERA

2.3.1 The Cadaver

que son temps et en

les cellules Ryan

et ?
l'aquitaine et quand m' me

de la p'che et syndicaux

snsm

2010-10-22 21:38:47 Cornflake Girl: Je comprend rien a cette oreille mais bon si elle veut bien m'écouter... Les chemins n'existent pas, ils se creent en marchant.

2010-10-22 21:39:36 Teva: Sympa la photo, hier. Merci Stelarc!

2010-10-23 04:20:52 Montreal: Sounds good Anonymous...

2010-10-23 04:22:43 Stelarc: Hey, Teva no probs!

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>, he added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>ici le ciel est bleu\n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>he who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>you are not sent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>paris</td>
<td>Paris st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>paris</td>
<td>their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>paris</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-16</td>
<td>gaetan</td>
<td>Could'you tell me if it's possible to have an extra ear too</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2010-10-15 17:12:34 paris: v?lo stella amstel femme est la r?gle ou dans les eaux du Rhin et remis hier ?

2010-10-15 17:12:43 Aalborg: a law, and more, and you

2010-10-15 17:13:53 paris: les enlever 11 souris ont mis vendredi 11 jours et il serait faux de six

2010-10-15 17:13:56 paris: 100 leur r?le leur faudrait alors

2010-10-15 17:14:23 Aalborg: along

2010-10-15 17:19:34 paris: que les pays en voie des armes

2010-10-15 17:20:19 Aalborg: long

2010-10-15 17:20:20 Aalborg: love

2010-10-15 17:20:24 Aalborg: along

2010-10-15 17:20:29 Aalborg: along

2010-10-15 17:31:07 Stephane: Hi Stelarc Are you here, in the depth of your blood vessels and in the maze of your nervous system? So far, the connection is not obvious.

2.3.2 The Comatose

2010-10-16 13:24:31 Stelarc: where is morten?\n
2.3.3 The Chimera
movies
that it has for the 13th taft
are
cost us via video
off the list of worries me off the bench
-a-year-
old enough
see you on the
to life,
EC in Moscow sometimes we are only a staff to listen
and lively rights of innocent
if a-half
of her
life
long
have lost and anything that
the mustangs
small home:
Moore was the
all
in the wings of the
elite to regal
onto one of the
when you are going
, or
call since the
heels of the year when of all
have the
money he said
if he wins:
a, and we also visited for
a UN-self or a
hi, Sonya
judge\'s
ruling
sets of
creature: three
levels
always says
the world\'s
and no world
S-two overall policy, usually one of our lives on the arms of the lis
killed or
might check 1 to 1
Moscow as of early
The body is now a fluid and FLOATING SIGNIFIER whose meaning is unstable and constantly being recoded and reconfigured. The body becomes simultaneously a ZOMBIE and a CYBORG. It performs involuntarily and it becomes increasingly automated. What it has always been and what it has already become. Rather than seeing the body as augmented and extended by its instruments, the body itself now becomes a prosthesis to enable its avatars- an INVERSE MOTION CAPTURE SYSTEM.

EXTRUSION AND EMPTINESS- As surface, skin was once the beginning of the world and simultaneously the boundary of the self. But now stretched, pierced and penetrated by technology, the skin is no longer the smooth and sensuous surface of a site or a screen.
2.4 THE SPLIT BODY

2010-10-23 21:39:13 GuinnessSmoothie and the third eye ;)
2010-10-23 22:21:34 Anonymous listening to the traffic in a small town smothered by heat
2010-10-24 02:05:11 Anonymous watching the Big Apple Circus on PBS
2010-10-24 04:51:40 Montreal Meetings with Brian Massumi as well as with Arthur and Marilouise Kroker. Going to see a Jenny Holzer exhibition and a walk around the old part of the city.
2010-10-24 09:37:41 Aalborg day to
2010-10-24 10:50:54 Anonymous hej camilla
2010-10-24 10:51:35 Anonymous Hi Camilla
2010-10-24 10:52:12 Anonymous Hi Camilla, how are you?
Aalborg know
Aalborg I can not speak english
Anonymous I hope this will end up with a great assignment
Aalborg that you
Nina Why is there no computer in here
Nina Is there someone out there?
Nina How are you
Camilla I am writing
Camilla I am hungry
Nina there should be a chair in here
Mosecow love
Mosecow no one
Mosecow of the new
Mosecow at one
Mosecow point during the
Anonymous whom
Mosecow stupid year
Mosecow stupid
Mosecow have
Mosecow starring
Mosecow salary
Mosecow salary
Mosecow that have fallen
Mosecow down its own
Mosecow data phone
Mosecow line of
Mosecow lab
Mosecow non
Mosecow crazy
Mosecow you are crazy
Mosecow one year
Mosecow love
Mosecow Ireland the
Mosecow home are you
Mosecow on long
Mosecow long long as you
Mosecow IE love you
Mosecow I love you
Mosecow and your
Mosecow and zero
Mosecow and then you
Mosecow are
Mosecow noon
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 10:38:50</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>blah blah blah blah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 10:38:53</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>it is going to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 10:39:00</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>be as going to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 10:39:06</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>the ms colleague, it's going to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 10:39:07</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>the installer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:37</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>has been actively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:39</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>asked about the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:44</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>SID has the backing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:46</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:51</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>scheme skiing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:55</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>by elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:57</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>all</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:45:58</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>and NT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:46:03</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>and NT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:46:16</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>CBO as CBS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:46:18</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>airline</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:46:20</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:46:21</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>I stammered</td>
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<td>2010-10-21 11:47:03</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>us,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:53:09</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>hello\n</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:53:13</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>and</td>
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<td>2010-10-21 11:53:17</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>all</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 11:53:22</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>along</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 12:09:09</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>the way you've been told by the year of the ground,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 12:09:10</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>and I</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 12:09:16</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 12:09:20</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-21 12:09:33</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>mankind is once again I know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-20 02:36:07</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Circulating flesh, bodies are blurring. Near dead bodies need not die, dead bodies need not decompose. This is an age of the cadaver, the comatose and the chimera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-20 02:36:13</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>long</td>
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<td>2010-10-20 02:36:20</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>room and love you</td>
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<td>2010-10-20 02:36:22</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>and me,</td>
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<td>2010-10-20 02:36:25</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>and E, or</td>
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<td>2010-10-20 02:36:32</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>long</td>
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<td>2010-10-20 02:36:35</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>where</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-10-20 02:36:37</td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-10-20 03:04:47</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Hi Paris and Moscow- turn down the volume of the speakers so you minimise (but not completely eliminate) the &quot;feedback&quot;. At present it seems that the more meaningful contributions are hidden in lines of often just single words. &quot;Feedback&quot; of several lines would suffice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Internet Ear was developed specifically for the exhibition "Biotopia - Art in the Wet Zone" in the context PORT 20:10 Festival of Contemporary Art and Social Technology, October 15, 2010 - January 10, 2011 in Aalborg, Denmark.

2.5 Biotopia(n) Ear

Hello Mr. Stlarc \nquelle est la suite des opérations\nWhich is the continuation of the operations

, a year or the groove or you are and where are mal

Ours noir Aalborg ? demain what do you hear ear?

Having coffee with Arthur and Marilouise Kroker in old Montreal

Visited the Jenny Holtzer exhibition. Had certain misgivings about the strange complicity of art in the commemorative space of the machinery of torture.

Chatting with Brian and Erin

is the log

owned and black

Iraqi here are some

key is a truly

Moscow\'s being

monument

to go into more lenient

good money

call

MENIMOLTANT AKOUW \nERXOMAI

Mr. Mas: speaking

to stay in

seen as
six months
since the
that in mind
if the EU
the latest
visit as if
he's
what's at issue
was not
his
philosophy is trying to
use
some of my face
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that have
of the body

The FLOATING HEAD installation will open at Usine C in Montreal at 1:00 pm. This is a collaboration between Stelarc and NXI Gestatio (Nicolas Reeves and David St-Onge).

accident
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of Italy are the
I'm going to have a
It's raining here today. The Krokers are returning to Victoria tomorrow.
raining and Denmark to
It is raining very heavily in Copenhagen. We got very wet returning from lunch half an hour ago.

Is it raining very heavily in Copenhagen? We got very wet returning from lunch half an hour ago.

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Balloon

The vision tracking system now works with the lowered cameras. The FLOATING HEAD installation is looking good, especially with the 10,000 ansi lumens projector.

Hi Stelarc - great to see you! Sitting here with Leslie thinking about a tangent for Inflexions...

Hi Erin, flying to London this evening. Great to see you and Brian. Way to go Leslie ha, ha...

4:25 pm near Concordia University thinking about

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2 This passage is the Internet Ear listening to OK Computer by Radiohead.
inverse embodiment, atoms up, inside out.  
Structures in cellular spaces with nano-sensor surveillance.

Fractal / Phantom Conversations – by Stelarc.

We are living in an age of excess and indifference. Of uncertainty and ambivalence. Of prosthetic augmentation and extended operational systems. An age of ORGANS WITHOUT BODIES. Of organs awaiting bodies. There is now a proliferation of biocompatible components in both substance and scale that allows technology to be attached and implanted into the body. Bodies are blurring. Bodies are no longer fully alive (pacified and pierced with prosthetics) nor really dead (no longer needing to decompose). Bodies are blurring. Flesh is circulating, FRACTAL and PHANTOM flesh is proliferating.

By Fractal Flesh, I mean bodies and bits of bodies spatially separated but electronically connected generating recurring patterns of interactivity at varying scales. And by Phantom Flesh, I not only mean avatars, but with the increasing proliferation of haptic devices on the internet we will be able to generate more potent physical presences of remote bodies.

Blood flowing in your body today might be circulating in my body tomorrow. An artificial heart circulates blood without pumping. A person is alive but the heart does not beat. We can take the skin cell from an impotent male and reengineer it into a sperm cell. More interestingly, the skin cell from a female body might be made into sperm cell.

Organs are extracted and exchanged. Organs are engineered and inserted. Limbs can be reattached and reanimated. The face of a donor body becomes a third face on the recipient. Cadavers can be preserved forever with plastination whilst comatose bodies can be sustained indefinitely on life-support systems.

Cryogenically suspended bodies await reanimation at some imagined future. Ova are fertilized by sperm that was frozen. Partially living entities are engineered in-vitro. The dead, the near-dead, the undead and the yet to be born now exist simultaneously.

This is the age of the CADAVER, the COMATOSE and the CHIMERA. Of proliferating liminal spaces where what becomes important is no longer what it means to be alive, but rather what constitutes being dead. The chimera is the body that performs with mixed realities. A biological body, augmented with technology and telematically performing with virtual systems. The chimera is an alternate embodiment. An extended operational system that performs simultaneously as a SPLIT BODY. Simultaneously becoming a possessed and performing body.

Voltage-in/Voltage-out. The body acts with indifference. Indifference as opposed to expectation. An indifference that allows something other to occur, that allows an unfolding- in its
own time and with its own rhythm. An indifference that allows the body to be suspended with hooks into its skin, that allows an inserting of a sculpture into its stomach and that allows a ear to be surgically constructed and stem-cell grown on its arm.

With an implanted microphone connected to a wireless transmitter, internet enables the ear in any wifi hotspot. The EAR ON ARM becomes a mobile and accessible organ for people in other places. And perhaps what is now needed is not a Second Life, but rather a THIRD LIFE.

Instead of avatars being prompted, a human body might be interfaced, accessed and actuated by its avatar. An INVERSE MOTION-CAPTURE SYSTEM where a human body becomes the host for an avatar, where a human body becomes a surrogate body, a prosthesis that manifests the movements and emotions of an artificial and intelligent entity in Real Life.

At present, the artist is surgically constructing and cell-growing an ear on his arm. The EAR ON ARM is still a work in progress. Further surgical procedures are need to lift the helix, creating a conch and growing a soft ear lobe with the artist’s extracted adult stem cells. Once a 3D structure of an ear is achieved, a small microphone will be embedded in the ear that connected to a wireless transmitter and server will Internet enable the ear, allowing people in other places to listen in to what the ear is hearing.

Credits:

INTERNET EAR is an installation that has been generated by the EAR ON ARM project and alludes to this work in progress. It will be simultaneously an intimate and extended interaction that explores the dynamics of sound as an internationally circulating and connecting experience.

Curator and conceptual co-development of the Internet Arm Project: Morten Søndergaard, DK.

Technological and conceptual co-development: Mogens Jacobsen, DK

Cast and copies of Stelarc’s arm: Olivier Goulet, FR.

International Venues:


LABORATORIA Art&Science Space, Moscow, Russia. Organizers: LABORATORIA Art&Science Space (Moscow) and The National Centre for Contemporary Arts (Kaliningrad branch, Russia); Curator in Moscow: Dmitry Bulatov.

Utzon Centre, Aalborg, Denmark. Biotopia - Art in the Wet Zone.