

*the Interaction '99*  
E x p a n d i n g   t h e   H u m a n   I n t e r f a c e

The World Forum for Media Culture  
Produced by IAMAS

*the Interaction '99*  
Expanding the Human Interface

From 5th March 1999 The World Forum for Media Culture will be presenting The Interaction'99. Following on from the exhibitions The Interaction'95 and The Interaction'97, the 3rd biennale will introduce new works from internationally active artists who work in the varied world of contemporary media art, particularly those working with interactive installations and audience participation. The exhibition will focus on the works of younger artists who are exploring new ways of dealing with interface design and the bridge between audience and artwork. And there will also be works by pioneering artists, showing their interest in a deeper cultural tradition. This variety will evoke a discussion about the direction and the broad possibilities for interactive media art in the future.

## Outline of the Exhibition

**Dates:** March 5(Friday)–March 14(Sunday), 1999

**Place:** Softopia Japan Center  
4-1-7 Kagano, Ogaki, Gifu / Phone: +81-584-77-1111

**Events:** International Symposium, Artist Talk  
Dates: Sunday, March 7, 1999 [Artist Talk]  
Monday, March 8, 1999 [International Symposium]  
Place: Softopia Japan Center, 1st Floor, Seminar Hall

The graduation exhibition of IAMAS

Dates: March 5 (Friday)–14 (Sunday), 1999

Place: Ogaki Information Studio (by Softopia Japan Center)

**Chief Curator:** Itsuo Sakane

**Sponsored by:** The World Forum for Media Culture (Ogaki, Gifu)

**Additional Funding by:** The Japan Foundation

**Supported by:**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, National Land Agency, American Center Nagoya, Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Italy

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Like the title says, the works in this exhibition are interactive art, experiential works in which the spectator will only discover the full meaning through active participation. Indeed, if the viewer does not take an active role, they will miss the deeper meaning and interest of the work. On the other hand, depending on just how he participates the viewer may even create expressions that the artist herself had not considered.

Compared to the last two “Interaction” exhibitions, the artists taking part this time are considerably younger, though. The artists last time were what could be called the first generation pioneers of the interactive art world, who started working in the early 80’s, while this time the feeling has been completely rejuvenated and there are artists among the group who are still graduate students. These are young artists who express their newer talents through their innovative programming or interface design works. They include students and teachers from MIT and ITP (Interactive Telecommunications Program) of NYU, and also artist and member of the Interval Research Corporation in Palo Alto on the West coast of the USA, all artists working on the boundaries between art and technology.

The artists-in-residence here at IAMAS will also be showing their new works. And in complete contrast, there is a series of works by the Italian group Studio Azzurro, who have been active worldwide creating video installations since the 1980’s. The work presented this time is a recent piece based on the classic painting of the mid 15th century, and will leave a profound impression on the viewers. This variation in the works will be a special feature of the exhibition. Unlike with standard video installations, Studio Azzurro too have recently been working with new interfaces and have begun to make interactive art works that require audience participation. If you look closely at their work there is a very subtle difference in their use of the interface, or the thinking behind it, compared to the other artists. In fact the very existence of these complex, varied works makes us stop and rethink the potential for interactive art in the future.

Contemporary multimedia art, whilst depending to a greater or lesser extent on digital technology behind the scenes, if anything is pushing the computer into the shadows, and more and more artists are pursuing works that anyone can docilely enjoy. Whilst holding the future legacy for artist's traditions and spirit, one gets the feeling that these are artists who, in order to appeal to the hearts of as broad a group of people as possible, have shrugged off the stiff, forced nature of much art, and are moving towards creating more human works, that one can experience with one's whole body, using one's 5 senses. And in that case, it is going to be more and more important to come up with skillful interface designs that connect that digital technology in the shadows with the analog senses that the human body has to work with. This exhibition aims to be a show that raises the question of the future of that media art with the audience.

## **The Artists**

**Christa Sommerer / Laurent Mignonneau** (IAMAS artist-in-residence)

### *Haze Express*

Become a passenger on a train travelling through fog-enveloped space, and with a brush of your hand alter the scene reflected in the window-panes. One minute it's a fantasy street, the next you're in outer-space.....

**Tamás Waliczky** (IAMAS artist-in-residence)

### *Focus*

A blurred photo of a crowd. You choose one person from the mass and gradually the people around will begin to come into focus.

**David Small / Tom White**

### *Stream of Consciousness*

The flow of water in a small pool in a gravelled rock-garden. A column of letters

flutter in its current. If you touch a small soft pad by the water's edge, lights begin to glint in the water and as they hit the letters, like a word association game, words and connections begin to appear.

**Motoshi Chikamori + Kyoko Kunoh**

*Kage-Kage*

Touch your hand to the cones sticking out of the walls on both sides of you, and all kinds of "shadows" begin a whimsical dance, jumping around between the walls, and sometimes passing right through your body.

**Scott-Sona Snibbe**

*Boundary Function*

If more than two people stand in the square of light, the space between each person is partitioned of by a boundary line that appears on the floor. Even if you try to jump over it, or have a race with one another round the area, the strange movements of the boundary line will be sure to catch up with you.

**Elaine Brechin**

*Windgrass*

Blow, and the flame from a bundle of incense begins to flicker. The existence of an unseen interface triggers a gentle conversation with nature.

**Emily Weil**

*Screen Play*

Stand in front of the screen swaying slightly and your silhouette or body-shape will appear and a portrait or design drawn before you. Or hold up your hand and the whole body will move in that direction, and a portrait floating in space will be born. This is a test-run for this innovative and playful software.

**Daniel Rozin**

*VideoPaint Easel*

With just a brush of the canvas, a portrait is automatically created. Change the pose or include the distant scenery, from the image taken by the camera you've the freedom to create a multilayered masterpiece.

**Ronald MacNeil / William Keays**

*MetaField Maze*

Stand on the floor area and a giant maze sways like a see-saw. Find your balance and a globe will guide you to the goal in this simulation game that makes it necessary that you even remind yourself of the unseen gravity field around you.

**Studio Azzurro**

*Frammenti Da Una Battaglia*

From a pool dug into the earth, a sandpit, a mound of fallen leaves and a bamboo thicket, all sorts of scenes of the human body in conflict appear in response to the spectator's voice or handclap. The fighting instinct of humanity is shown lying in piles, grasping at the air, somersaulting through space. 4 works will be shown from the spectacular video-installation series by Studio Azzurro based on the motif of a 15th century painting and created in the ancient fortified town of Lucca in Italy.

\* The exhibits and details listed here are based on our pre-show schedule, and are subject to change over the course of our preparations. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience should such a change occur.

## Exhibits



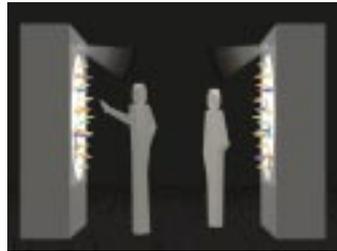
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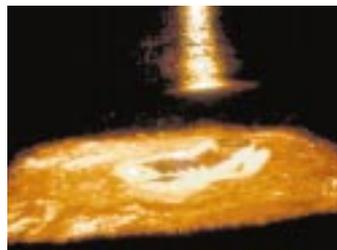
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