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Density of Signs and Minimal Changes (A Postconceptual Zombie Tactics)

In the narrow sense, the works in **2D MutantZombies** project are created in 'digital image production', 'algorithmic art' and 'new media'. Digital 'image' is a visual configuration generated, corrected or transformed in a computer. Algorithmic art is a praxis that stems from the concept or plan, that is, from the performative algorithm within a given technological environment. *New media* are always these media that, being shifted from their 'original' art discipline, get problematized as a new or alternative technique.

In a broader sense, the works in this project are the works of *post-conceptual art*. The expression *post-conceptual art* commonly denotes an art oriented toward procedures of *media analysis*, *interpretation* and *deconstruction* of popular culture, identity, everyday life, economic and political propaganda, that is, a production of ideology as an *envelope of reality*.

We are dealing with the art in the age of culture.

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Zombies are grey and move slowly and randomly before they perceive something that moves in their vicinity, and then start approaching it. After a while, their motion is, again, totally erratic. Humans are pink and *five times quicker* then zombies. When humans see a zombie they run away and panic. Panicking humans run much faster than other humans. When other humans see the panicking humans, they panic themselves. Affectation shifts from the subjective to the inter-subjective. The relation between the subjective and the inter-subjective is essential to the works in this project.

We are dealing with a production of affect for the subject and between the subjects.

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The acts (performances, actions, behaviours) of post-conceptual artists are directed toward identifying reality, action and thinking through constant verification of *mental* and *physical* existence of the artist as an organism, as a body, as an individual and as a subject. The artist is positioned between the idea (organism, body, individual, subject) and the matter (natural and social environment) thus becoming the protagonist of the 'event' and integrating with the actuality through direct temporal and spatial development of static and dynamic images. The process itself becomes determinant because in it, the work is developed materially, technically, in its appearance and concept. The process of realization is a *dynamic basis* on which the work forms and evolves, on which it defines or breaks its boundaries. The work is defined as a production construct (animation of static images) and the work is created in post-production praxes of analyzing the cultural models of representation, reception and identification. The density of signs in a minimal animated form between the static and dynamic image is a potential provocation of 'meaning'. Namely, the meanings of *identity* are being provoked. Who is it here? How does 'it' (he/she) manage the identities? Which identity is a dominant one? How the presented identity faces the organism, the body, the individual and the subject? And what will, in the end, the subject say? I am *****!!! The identity is created through identification, and identification is performed in indication and interpellation. Indication is an act of visual manifestation and instancing of the intensity of corporeal appearance. As a viewer, I see that body as 'such' and 'such' (gender, race, ethnicity, generation, profession, etc.). The interpellation is a statement –

the voice that says „I am *****!!!“. **2D MutantZombies** project is conceptualized throughout this gap between the visual appearance and the voice that could say „I am *****!!!"

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Everything that happens on the screen is an *animated affectation* that effects the viewer through numerous stimuli. An *information polyphony* in a simple exemplary structuring of static-as-dynamic surface. A multitude in a system of minimal changes, overlays, layers, that is, in an illusion created by animation/simulation. Long ago, an artist (R.M.) wrote: „Simple forms do not necessarily imply the simple experience behind them". Here, a high density of signs is achieved in a restricted system of visual moves, changes and layers. That is theatrical! That is a screened happening of the „narrative-minus-text" formula. By technical procedure – animation – a high *density of signs* and *sensual stimuli* is generated on the screen. That is the unifying perception of sensual 'samples' – gestures, tones, distances, substances, lights, affectations, intensities, overlays, crystallizations – emerging on the surface of abundant externalized promises to the eye and, certainly, to the body. The body and the eye are linked in a regulatory relation.

We see a face changing. We see faces changed by the layering of an image. Animation transforms the faces into one another, and the instability of the perceived scene – of the facial representation – becomes increasingly important. Who is that in the picture? Who appears and who disappears? How 'me' changes into 'you', and how 'you' disseminates through the ocular image? Me-or-you 'image' is the effect of one technique: image animation. Portrait animation. An *algorithmic performance* of small differences. Small differences produce significant effects for the eye. Dissemination of information in shifting images and sensual stimulation. Action of unchangeable intensity, that is, an affectation that addresses the Other.

The presentation of the face is 'cold' or non-expressive. Non-expressiveness indicates the absence or latency of emotion. There is no 'visual personalization' of some particular *mental state*, but instead there is an alienation from 'emotion'. The continuity of photographic instance is important. The visual continuity of that particular photograph, with that particular face is important, and then the shifting between photographs, and then the interlinking of photographs into a signifying chain S_1 and S_2 with the promise of S_n. The signifier exists only in its relation with other signifier(s). An aspect points to another aspect. An aspect is a face in the representational system. The sign becomes the signifier, and the density of signs is the density of signifiers which anticipate the possible meanings to the subject. Every viewing of a 'screen event' informs the new meanings. Anticipation occurs. The animation is a tool for interlinking of photographs and for the discrimination between the aspect/face and the movement. An aspect is modified, mutated into movement.

There begins the *allegorical zombie narrative*. **2D MutantZombies** is a screen-based production and postproduction of the affective mutated/animated or layered image event with a changing face. But somewhere in its erased and suppressed layers, the word *zombie* has referent meanings. *Zombie* is a 'dead' that was brought back to life by grudge or magic (*voodoo*). Abstracted, a concept of *zombie* indicates that 'zombie' is any *dead thing* that is animated, that moves, that unemotionally effects the viewer's eye... Stillness provides movement. The movement is the intensity of affect. It can be the final instance of invigorating what is alienated. Or, an animated photograph is a *zombie*, that is, a *2D zombie* because it simulates the photograph's movement/mobility on the screen. This 'dead photograph', as R.B. once wrote,

now becomes as if alive in front of the living body watching the screen. And that is why this dead photograph becomes a *mad* photograph, a memory of human body, of you, of her, of them.

The discrimination of aspect and the relationship with the body raise the questions of uniqueness, specificity and identity. Digital morphing is 'just a technique' but it is also a performative procedure for the work that is no more *manual*, while still being corporeal. Technical image and living body are in an entwined system of interrelations.