

1. Russian Mail Art: Serge Segay and Rea Nikonova

Charlotte Greve, University of Aarhus

In this paper, I will study the Russian Mail Art artists Serge Segay and Rea Nikonova's participation in and contribution to the international Mail Art network of the 1980s and 1990s. The Mail Art network served as a forum for (via the postal system) the exchange of primarily strongly experimental works of art and visual poetry. The contributed items were multiplied by the participating artist with – most often – low-technological methods of reproduction and sent to the editor of an "assembled magazine". In return, the participators received a copy of the magazine. As such, the network was an exhibition space outside the official publishing-, gallery- and exhibition circuit.

My investigation of the participation of Russian artists in the network makes clear the possibilities and limitations of the network. The focus will be on how the network (at least in the 1980s and 1990s) balanced on a fine line between stable forms (language, archive and history) and Fluxus idealism (an entropic a-historical event). It is my thesis that from the network's figures of repetition, signals and signatures, a net of signs emerges, which makes it possible for the individual artist to formulate an identity (a signature). This identity is dependent on and draws on the network's common language, history and archive.

2. The Power of Limited Self Will – Cage's silence vs. Ghostigital's noise

David A. Stefansson, PhD student, Reykjavik

In this paper I will examine the works of Icelandic electro-punk band Ghostigital (<http://ghostigital.com>) and unveil both differences and similarities between their music and the aesthetic theories of John Cage. The main focus will be on Cage's ideas about creating rather strict directions for the artists performing his pieces, but nonetheless always leaving ample space for the artists to influence the pieces and take altering decisions. Cage, in many ways, seems to put himself in a semi-godlike position by creating the microcosms contained in each of his musical pieces. Yet, if this is indeed a godlike position, than Cage is not an interventionist god but one who merely creates the basic settings and forces the artists to use their own self-will to make the best they can out of the settings and the material.

Ghostigital use, in many ways, a similar approach to their music-making. Playing live, Curver (Birgir Örn Thoroddsen) and Einar Örn Benediktsson are usually accompanied by musicians who use regular instruments to play preconceived musical structures. Curver, however, mixes the music directly into his computer on stage and uses pre-created computer programmes to alter the outcome. The aim is less to control the outcome, than to allow for something to emerge that no-one can control, neither the composer, nor the artists, nor the audience. Both Curver and Benediktsson have an artistic background, although they belong to different generations. Benediktsson was one of the founding members of the surrealist group *Medúsa* in the 1980's, which later became an important part of *Smekkleysa* (Bad Taste Ltd.). Curver, also a visual artist and a part-time teacher in that field, has for many years studied the general nature of sound and made a series of art pieces that use performances on a personal level as well as the documentation of media.

Although Cage's main interest was silence and Ghostigital's main interest is noise, both share a vivid interest in the unexpected and the uncontrollable, they represent an aesthetic which is based on the firm belief in the sound of music and the dynamic interaction between order and chance, between composer, artist, and audience. The result can be seen in the creation of art works that no-one controls – not even time, since this kind of music is perishable, belonging only to the moment.

3. Norwegian radio avant-garde. New and old? – Sverdrup/Norheim: *Her bor vi så gjerne* (1963) and Fosse/Cranner: *"Hertervig!"* (2004)

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There is a common conception that while the avant-garde played an important role in Swedish radio during the 1960s and 70s, there was more scepticism towards the experiment in Norwegian Broadcasting (NRK) during this period. Norwegian avant-garde composers such as Knut Wiggen immigrated to Stockholm. One possible explanation is the clearly didactical intentions of the state channel NRK, often under-estimating the radio listeners. For a period during the 1960's, when several British, German and French avant-garde radio plays, such as Nathalie Sarraute's *Le Silence* (1966) or Peter Handke's *Kaspar* (1972) where translated and broadcasted on NRK, they were introduced by a voice warning the listeners that these plays were "modern" or "avant-garde", giving them some kind of a receipt of how to listen to them. What was here meant by avant-garde? And how is the modern to be understood in this case? Tillman Hartenstein has claimed that with few exceptions there was no radio avant-garde in Norway until Cecilie Løveid's *Måkespisere* in the mid 80s. However, there were also some plays produced by Norwegian authors and composers for NRK during the 60s and 70s that could be called avant-garde. One is *Her bor vi så gjerne* (1963) with Harald Sverdrup and Arne Norheim, a travel through a housing estate accompanied by electronic music, as an allegory of the modern society. I will give a short introduction to this play, representing the *old* avant-garde. I have also selected a radio play to represent the *new* avant-garde movement in NRK. *"Hertervig!"* was directed by Morten Cranner and broadcasted on NRK in 2004. Based on Jon Fosse's novel *Melancholia I* (1995) the radio play investigates the progressing mental illness of the Norwegian landscape painter Lars Hertervig (1830-1902), being a tormented art student in Düsseldorf, and after escaping from the lunatic asylum Gaustad, Norway, where Hertervig was committed with the diagnose melancholia in 1856. The radio play is the first NRK has ever produced in surround 5.1 sound, creating a surreal soundscape where the listener is plunged inside Hertervig's madness, intensified by a rhythmical sound track with clear intertextual references to Ammer & Einheit *Crashing Aeroplanes* (2001).

4. Love and the doppelgänger – about film and Henry Parlands *Sönder*

Caroline Haux, Stockholm university, Dep of Comp Lit

My article deals with how the appearance of the doppelgänger in the novel *Sönder* allegorizes literatures incapability of storing bodies and identities during an era of media technology. In *Sönder* an "author" is writing a story (which is also, according to the "author", the story we are reading) about a past loveaffair with his – now dead – girlfriend, Amy.

The idea is to relate the problem of representation with the animated or "motorised" mirror image of the protagonist, a doppelgänger that he fails and/or refuses to recognize as such, and of whom there are – at least from the perspective of the protagonist – no identifying features, just traces and signs (a hat and a coat). Here are problematized the ways in which a text remembers or stores information/data at a time when film and photography have the right of precedence in storing individuality; since the reproduction is produced, authenticated and thereby guaranteed by the very object itself (as opposed to writing). The difficulty in identifying the doppelgänger is intrinsically related to the narrative structure of the text, to the uncertainty over which is the framing- and framed story. If lack of recognition derives from the protagonists refusal to do so, the so called "rival" (Amy's possible lover) is also a rival of perspective. The paranoia of the protagonist/"author" is then

due to the fear of being reproduced in somebody else's story. This would be an effect of the possibility that they might both be copies, in an era of technological reproduction where there is no original. The fear is not unfounded: To see your doppelgänger is to see yourself fragmented, totally alienated without that wholeness which is your (false) self image – or soul – created during the mirror stage. *Sönder* thus becomes a psychomachia where the battle over Amy (the name means soul and/or love) also is a struggle, in an "authors" project, to be a poet at a time when the word poet is an anachronism.

5. Sound and Documentary Potential in Nicolas Rey's *Les Soviets plus l'électricité*

Ilona Hongisto Dept. of Media Studies, University of Turku

This paper deals with sound, narration and experimental documentary. In the context of documentary film, sound has often had an explanatory role: it has been used to seal images with signification. However, experimental – or avant-gardist – filmmaking practices have certainly changed the uses of sound in documentaries.

The aim of the paper is to ponder on the sound strategies of Nicolas Rey's documentary film *Les Soviets plus l'électricité* (France 2001) and to relate Rey's sound practice to a wider discussion of documentary possibilities. The paper will reflect on *how sound practices extend documentary potential?*

It is clear that sound elements can be used to construct a narrative, and the narrative can be conventional or avant-gardist, but the focus of this paper is on *how the uses of sound extend the narrative function and move the paradigm of documentary sound away from the premise of explanation*. Nicolas Rey's film – shot with Super-8 film and recorded on a cassette with a portable Dictaphone – contextualizes the problematics: the film proposes a move beyond narrative sound structures and evokes new possibilities for conceptualizing documentary sound practices.

6. Rytmsystem – temporala och spatiala aspekter

Professor Eva Lilja, Litteraturvetenskap Göteborg

Fillic Lena Hopsch, Chalmers Arkitektur

'Rytm' har använts som beskrivningskategori för alla konstarter, bild, dikt och musik. Avser man då samma fenomen eller används ibland beteckningen 'rytm' metaforiskt? Den kroppsliga upplevelsen av att vara i rummet är utgångspunkten för rytmupplevelsen. Med denna utgångspunkt antar vi att 'rytm' är en adekvat och inte en metaforisk kategori. Rytmer fungerar såväl spatialt som temporalt. Detta kan förklaras med att 'rytm' i musik, dikt och bild går tillbaka på samma fenomen, nämligen rörelse. Det tydligaste exemplet är det antika Greklands berömda *mousiké* – en konstform som förenade musik, dans och poesi. Den dansande kroppen är samtidigt rumslig och tidlig.

Man har utgått från att skulptur och måleri är rumsliga konstarter och att poesi och musik är tidliga. Emellertid sker tillägnelsen samtidigt i båda dimensionerna. Rytmer har både tidliga och rumsliga aspekter - ibland dominerar temporaliteten, ibland spatialiteten.

Under senare år har internationell forskning kommit till insikt om att olika kulturer versifierat dikt enligt skilda verssystem. I analogi därmed har vi prövat att indela rytmerna i skilda rytmsystem. Tills vidare räknar vi med tre slags rytmsystem: seriell rytm, segmentell rytm och dynamisk rytm. Analys av exempel visar att konstverk – musik, dikt, bild – vanligen har inslag av två eller tre slags rytmisering. En teckning av Kandinskij kan bestå av tecknade sekvenser eller segment i dynamiska spänningar. Ett musikstycke

av Cage eller en dikt av Bengt Emil Johnsson kan bestå av segmentföljder med seriella inslag.

Vi tar som exempel Lawrence Ferlinghettis dikt "sweet and various the woodlark" och Naum Gabos skulptur *Linjär komposition i rymden no 2*, båda från 50-talets modernism.

7. Objects of Repetition: Computer Viruses and the Simulacra of Digital Culture

Jussi Parikka, Cultural History, University of Turku

Repetition, reproduction and viral multiplication of images, texts and sounds is a key theme of modernity and avant-garde, well analysed e.g. by Walter Benjamin; repetition is the mode of being and becoming of the art and consumer object in technological media cultures.

Interestingly, this theme is very much present in the contemporary technological theme of digital self-reproducing software (worms and viruses) and especially recent net art projects that deal with this phenomenon of reproduction and copying.

The presentation focuses on a recent net art virus, the Biennale virus, which was released during the Venice Biennale of 2001. Programmed by two net art / hacker groups, *0100101110101101.ORG* and *epidemic*, the virus can be understood from various directions. On the one hand, it contextualizes as part of the media activism of recent decades, where the emphasis is put on overturning and recontextualizing the everyday media technologies of capitalist society. In Italy this has been an especial theme connected to e.g. radio and television activism and the desire to articulate post-fordist forms of resistance.

Similarly, the virus connects to a genealogy of modern avant-garde in its spectacular nature. The infectitious nature of the virus was not restricted merely to its technical program code, but functioned also as a simulacrum of the everyday understanding of viruses. Aiming at a Situationist-like détournement of the virus scare, the Biennale program can be seen epidemic in its focus to act like "[...] an angiogram showing the typical arrangement of veins." In other words, it produced a strategic kind of a simulated accident that brought visible the medial infrastructure that upkeep these kinds of cyberrisks. In this, the virus lived its virality not merely on the level of the program code, but increasingly with the aid of capitalist-media culture and the viral logic of modern media technologies themselves. In addition, following Benjamin's ideas, the anxiety inducing object of virus was turned into a kitsch-like object of consumerism, sold on t-shirts and CD-ROMs.

References

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8. Avant-Garde and the Technologies of the Self

Jan Løhmann Stephensen, ph.d., Afd. for Æstetik & Kultur, Århus Universitet

In recent years the notion that the avant-garde project and visions will be realized sooner or later, if not already, within or at least in the vicinity of new technologies, media, etc., has received renewed attention. However, as in the case of Lev Manovich's *Avant-Garde as Software* (1999), this approach immediately entails questions regarding the specific character and nature of these very visions as well as the historically applied means to get there. Though most likely not presenting any final answers to these questions, this paper aims to question the idea put forward in the above mentioned thesis, pointing out what is specifically omitted: namely, the impact different avant-garde movements have had on (seemingly) another level; that of work, the everyday, and the position, role and nature of the subject in all this. Evoking

Foucault's concept of "technologies of the self" this paper will eventually seek to point out how the more romantically or idealistically oriented avant-garde "breed" through its insistence on the centrality of *creativity* and its diffusion (that is, through the recurrent attempts at approaching art to life and vice versa) has radically altered the ways we perceive our (working) lives and the meanings we ascribe to it, as well as pointing out how the increasing emphasis on this sought after faculty / quality of the human "self" has come to play a significant part in replacing previous modes of disciplinary orchestration of primarily manual work (e.g. *Scientific Management*) with a more subtle regime of control and self-motivation within the (admittedly: to a large extent technology related) expanding field of so-called immaterial labour.

9. The Distorted Voice – Music, Technology and Trauma

Torben Sangild, Institut for Kunst- og Kulturvidenskab, Københavns Universitet

Herbert Eimert's sound work *Epitaph für Aikichi Kuboyama* (around 1960) is based exclusively on an electronically distorted voice reading the epitaph of the first victim of the nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean. As well as being a highly political statement, the sound material is organized in accordance with the strict techniques of serialist music. The technological fragmentation and severe distortion of the voice balance between detached dehumanization and mimetic screams. I will analyze Eimert's work in the context of a tendency to employ electronically fragmented voices in order to express trauma, as well as in a broader art historical suggestion of an "objective sensibility" in the neo-avant-garde.

10. Technologos. The Palingenetic Universe of F.T. Marinetti

Sascha Bru, University of Ghent

It has frequently been pointed out that the prolific career of F.T. Marinetti as the impresario of Futurism (his success as an editor of magazines, astute capacity for publicity, and so on), would not have been possible without an encroaching mass market machinery. Cheap paper, the rotary press, the Linotype machine, it is difficult to imagine Futurism's (inter)national renown without these technological advances, indeed. The role of the machine itself, as a figure in Futurism, too, would appear to have little secrets in store. "Machinolatria," "automobilism", these are just some common characterisations of Marinetti's poetics and work. Hal Foster, like Cinzia Sartini Blum and a few others, has recently brought out the repressed anxiety Marinetti felt for technological advances, however. In this paper, I would like to scrutinise this anxiety more thoroughly, tracing its impact on the poetics of Marinetti's early work, for a re-evaluation of Futurism's literary "machinism", I hope to show, may well be in order.

11. Paracinema

Eivind Røssaak. Ass. Professor of literature and creative writing at HiT, Bø, Norway. He is currently doing Ph.d-research on a scholarship at the Department of Media and Communication,

Many neo avant-garde art practices in the late 20th Century took place in a space between the sensible and the conceptual through strategies of appropriation and displacement. I will look at film-projects such as Ken Jacobs' *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son*. In an interview in the 1970s he called his works *paracinema*. "Para" is a double antithetical prefix signifying at once proximity

and distance, similarity and difference, interiority and exteriority, something simultaneously this side of a boundary line, threshold, or margin, and also beyond it. In what way can moving images become a thing in "para"?

12. "For an 'Arrière-garde'"; Jean Epstein's Theory of Art and Technology

Trond Lundemo, Stockholm University

In a key text of his work, The French film theorist and director Jean Epstein criticizes the avant-garde movement of the 1920s for a technological amnesia. In striving to challenge the conventions of representation and narration of the time, a feature of the avant-garde as well as modernist art more generally, the avant-gardes forget the aspects of abstraction and *verfremdung* always implied in media technologies. In a more contemporary terminology, one could say that Epstein intervenes in the art debates by saying that the avant-garde lacks a theory of the *dispositif* of, in this case, cinema. Since this criticism is stated by someone who is often grouped in the avant-garde movement of the 1920s himself, this may cause us to apply the label more cautiously. But more importantly, it should lead us to ask which theoretical positions towards technology are implied in the discourses on the avant-gardes.

I will in this presentation outline how Epstein's philosophy challenges the more popular view of his time, that of technology as a tool for artistic creativity. I will argue that this position remains an alternative to the implied relationship between the subject and technology in the art discourses also of today, and trace how Epstein's writings intersect with key concepts of a contemporary theory of technology and media.

13. How to Become an Avant-Garde Artist? Monuments of Unageing Intellect in M. A. Numminen's Novel *Helsinkiin*

Jyrki Nummi, Helsingfors

M. A. Numminen is one of the last representatives of the Finnish avant-garde of the 1960's. His late novel *Helsinkiin* ("To Helsinki", 1997) is a thinly disguised autobiography of a young and naïve student Juho Niitty who comes to Helsinki to study at the university. The hero's real, serious ambitions lie, however, elsewhere. He wants to live unconventionally, make friends with unconventional people, liberate himself (and some other people) sexually; he wants to concentrate on anything else but serious and normal, carry on his musical and other artistic activities, and, above anything else, he aims to become a great avant-garde artist.

The novel is also a diary-like personal account that carefully reports on many important artistic events and phenomena that took place in Helsinki during the first four years of the decade: the emergence of electronic music, happenings, new kinds of artistic events and performances, the literary and art scandals and the endless debates and discussions in flourishing new magazines and publications. Within these historical frames the main character of the novel embodies some of the basic issues of avant-garde as an artistic phenomenon.

In the beginning of the 1960's avant-garde had securely established itself in the art world; it had built a tradition, produced classics of its own and formed a canon, in brief, it gained artistic legitimacy. Against these historical facts Juho Niitty has to face a fundamental problem. He would like to join the noble garde, but he is conscious of his utterly difficult position: what is, after all, left for him to achieve, when all is done and done so perfectly well;

how is one to be unconventional, fresh and ingenious, if all possible artistic innovations has been made and there is not one single tone free in the system to play?

The paper will deal with Niity's solutions, which may be divided into three parts. Firstly, he modifies himself to a role of a naïve dilettante. Secondly, he seeks new areas in Finnish popular culture, for example, such mass culture phenomena as tango culture and turn them into "art". Thirdly, he finds the infinitely rich resources of camp, bad literature, bad art and kitsch. Through these themes Numminen attempts to depict the many-layered nature of the exiting years of his main character's youth, when there was still something to rebel and ridicule, when there was so many things that could be felt fresh and new.

14. The tuned Avant-Garde: On the Technological Amplification of Avant-Garde Poetics in Digital Poetry

Anna Katharina Schaffner

Technology has always played a vital role as stimulus for avant-garde and neo-avant-garde innovations on numerous levels. In the case of digital poetry, a shift can be traced from technology functioning purely as a conceptual inspiration to its use as an instrument of effectuation: new media technologies allow for the literal realisation of many concerns of the historical avant-garde and concrete poets.

This paper explores the degree to which the new possibilities of staging, exploring and manipulating linguistic signs in digital space opened up by the advent of the new media allow for both a technologically advanced effectuation as well as a further development of lines of poetical enquiry which originated in the historical and the neo-avant-garde. Concepts explored, envisaged or anticipated by the literary forerunners, such as a preoccupation with movement, dynamism and the activation of the recipient, the blurring of genre boundaries, language dissection, the exploration of spatial structures and the reflection upon the material and physically perceptive dimensions of the linguistic sign, are taken up again by contemporary digital poets and lifted to a new, technologically enhanced level of enquiry. Digital poetry, it seems, is not a reprise or mere repetition of outdated avant-garde aesthetics, but rather a technologically updated continuation and refinement of a quest which is still of significance.

15. Technology and the Immanent Avant-Garde of Superflex and Bourriaud

Troels Degn Johansson, Ass. Prof, Centre for Design Research, Köpenhamn

This paper seeks to identify the notion of avant-garde in Nicolas Bourriaud's theory of art with special reference to contemporary art group Superflex. Although Superflex explicitly distance themselves from a concept of avant-garde, it is difficult not to identify an avant-garde profile in the way they apply new technologies—or "tools" as they have it—in order to "empower exposed groups" (tropical farmers in Thailand and Brazil, elderly working class people in Liverpool, etc.). The paper seeks to defend the thesis that Superflex' particular avant-garde profile is characterized by a certain principle of immanence, and that this principle of immanence may be developed from Bourriaud's relational aesthetics in his treatment of concepts of form, system, and interstice. This principle of immanence allows Superflex to operate as a kind of "simulated" yet "sincere" avant-garde in the "middle" of society, locally, rather than from a "frontier".

16. Fluxus Haptics – On Haptic Visuality and Visual Strategies of the Fluxus Movement

Karl Hansson, PhD-student, Department of Cinema Studies, Stockholm University

This paper will offer a discussion on the concept of haptic visuality and the use of visual technologies to engage our bodies and the sense of touch in the context of a primarily visual experience. I will use the work of the Fluxus movement as a point of comparison for different ideas on the haptic and how it relates to intermedial strategies, new media technologies and an “embodied” visual experience. I will place the work by several Fluxus artists in relation to some recent tendencies in new media and documentary filmmaking where the multisensory and the experiential in different ways engage us in a more bodily form of knowledge and aesthetic experience. The hypothesis I will discuss is that this bodily experience often works through a haptic mode of vision that unfolds in what you could call a border zone between abstraction and representation. I will build the argument on some art historical connections regarding the sense of touch (taking up for example Alois Riegl’s distinction between the optic and the haptic), but also on recent developments in media theory by Laura U. Marks and Mark B. N. Hansen. A development of the theoretical work on haptic visuality may contribute to our understanding of large parts of the visual flow of images that today inhabits the gallery space, but also of visual culture in a broader sense (where elements of a haptic visuality seem to be important for example in many commercial films and music videos).

17. The Same but Different: ‘Found’ Material, Technological Reproduction and Cross-Media Experimentation in the Films and Texts of Andy Warhol.

Lisa Otty, PhD Edinburgh

In 1968, with the use of his new, cutting edge tape-recorder, Andy Warhol created a book entitled *a: a novel*. Two years previously he had put together his ‘feature’ film, *Chelsea Girls*. The novel is a compilation of typed transcripts of tape-recordings, while the film consists of un-cut reels spliced together in random order. The material chosen, in both cases, consists of recordings of the artist’s immediate day to day environment. Both pieces, in other words, adopt the avant-garde strategy of taking ‘found’ material and placing it in new contexts to provoke and challenge the audience. The novel, furthermore, again drawing on avant-garde techniques such as montage, uses an almost identical method of construction to the film. This paper explores how the constraints and potentialities of the technologies used affect the ‘found’ material and how it is presented and how this, in turn, alters interpretation of the works in different media.

While Warhol’s paintings and films have received a considerable amount of critical attention, *a; a novel*, like Warhol’s other textual works and his forays into television, video and journalism, has been dismissed by critics as unimportant and irrelevant to the artist’s wider catalogue. I argue that, on the contrary, it is the tension between the works in different media, the dynamic between works produced by different technologies, that is the most interesting and vital aspect of Warhol’s production.

18. Working through technology: Else Marie Pade

Erik Granly Jensen, University of Copenhagen, Dep. of Comparative Literature

The paper will present the Danish composer Else Marie Pade’s (1924 -) work for radio *Symphonie magnetophonique* (1958-59). In Pade’s work the intricate relationship between art,

technology and everyday life is pushed to the limit. It will be my aim to discuss how Pade through the recorded and distorted noises and sounds of Copenhagen pursues a political gesture that both questions and contributes to the notion of the historical avant-garde.

19. Sound Art, Music and Modes of Listening

Simo Alitalo, ph.d. Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, Dep. of Postgraduate Studies.

The beginning of 20th century was an era of artistic experimentation. Sound art emerged out of experimental projects of dadaists, futurists and surrealists. It finds its footing in the areas that official musical culture has defined as meaningless. Another midwife to sound art was the explosion of different sound technologies at the end of 19th century.

My paper will consider the relationship between sound art and music. How accurately different theories of listening that have been developed within musical aesthetics can be applied to sound art? Why for example sound installations, that some commentators consider to be a sub-genre of experimental music, are so difficult to document while documenting musical works has always been relatively easy? Why music could dominate the domain of sonic arts so long while in visual arts new expressive technologies and methods very quickly gave birth to new sub-genres of visual arts.

20. E-Poetry – Literary Experiments in the Digital Medium

Marianne Ølholm, Ph.D. København

Through readings of extracts of some examples of digital, poetic works the relation between poetry as a literary genre and the digital medium will be discussed. The focus of the paper will be on the experiments with the digital medium as material in the poetic works and their consequences for the reader's approach to them. Computer technology and the Internet create certain conditions for the production and distribution of literary texts and for the reader's experience of them which differ from those of the printed text. For instance, a digital work displayed on the Web can be changed at any time, and the text is not a static object which can be made the subject of repeated close readings, but a dynamic and interactive process. Many of the experiments taking place in e-poetry are continuations of experimental practises of innovative, printed poetry. Among them are experiments exploring the visual aspects of written language and the materiality of the text, and methods of composition challenging linearity and the central perspective of the poetic voice. With the introduction of the electronic medium new technological possibilities have been presented and the field of experimental practice has been expanded.

21. Bengt Emil Johnson – after Concretism

Johan Alfredsson, Dept of Comp Lit, Gothneburg university

Bengt Emil Johnson was one of the most prominent poets of the short-lived yet highly vivid Swedish concretist movement of the early 1960's. Like most of the poets involved in this movement, he too went on to other manners of writing, in his case perhaps more successfully than for most of his former colleagues. In this paper I will try to show in what way, and to what extent, the radical writing strategies that were used by Johnson early in his authorship, have stayed with him, in his writing.

Using a few textual examples, I will compare Johnson's poetic writing from the 1980's to the manifestos written by him, Öyvind Fahlström, and others connected with

concretism, in the 1950's and 1960's. These manifestos were using a rhetoric which, in various ways, was aiming at connecting technological and scientific breakthrough to artistic breakthrough. My aim is to study how Johnson transformed these ideas into poetics, and how some of these poetics have lingered in Johnson's authorship since, even after he left the radical, avant-garde ideals behind him. In general, his manner of writing poetry changed immensely from the mid-sixties to the eighties, but a number of the specifics of his earlier, concretist writing still lingered on.

22. Iannis Xenakis and the Mechanical Paradox

Andrej Slavik, Dept of History of Ideas, Gothenburg university

Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001) is often characterised as one of the foremost pioneers of modern music. By the mid-fifties, he had broken away from the Bartók-inspired style of his earliest work, and instead turned to modern mathematics as a model for musical composition. By the beginning of the 1960s, this new path had also led him to commence a series of computer-based experiments, utilizing state-of-the-art technology, which resulted in a series of compositions, instrumental as well as electro-acoustic. Xenakis has been described as the only composer whose 'sound' did not change from the transition to the new medium – and, as a matter of fact, his electronic music often seems to produce the sensation of natural vigour and organic growth, while his pieces for traditional instruments instead give an impression of mechanical objectivity. It is this paradox that I wish to elucidate in my presentation, by way of an analysis of the machine metaphor and its setting in the musical philosophy expounded in Xenakis' theoretical works. Sound examples will provide the backdrop to my line of argument.

23. Noises From the Reality-Machine

Staffan Larsson, Dept of Linguistics, Gothenburg university

I present two short video works which explore the double nature of language as abstract structure of social reality and as physical materiality, and the relation of the latter to music. Both works take as their starting point the everyday, the unreflected, that which is so obvious to us that we cannot see (or hear) it. Putting linguistic theory and technology to work, these video pieces try to subvert the invisible machinery of reality.

The first piece, "nusic" (2003), explores the possibility of modifying speech by changing its fundamental frequency (which in ordinary talk rarely stays on one frequency but instead moves up and down in glissandos) into harmonic steady tones in a musical spectrum, and

combining several speaking voices into a polyphony of voices. Can we think about everyday language as music? Can we listen to language as mere sound? Can we listen to anything as mere sound? These questions of course go back Cage and other artists working with concrete music and language, such as Åke Hodell. The second piece, "På spåret" (2004), starts from an idea from the 60's by Steve Reich to stretch out a single word over a whole minute.

"nusic" was shown at Transit gallery in Göteborgs konsthall in March, 2003. "På spåret" was shown at BellmanLarssonLindströmNord in December 2004.