

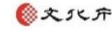
August 18 (Tue) – October 11 (Sun), 2020
B1F Exhibition Gallery/2F Lobby, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum



Online venue: www.topmuseum.jp/un-dead-link

Organized by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Nikkei Inc.

Supported by the Project to Promote the Archiving of Media Arts 2020, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan



exonemo: UN-DEAD-LINK is an exhibition that consists of a physical venue at the museum and an online venue.

The exhibits at the museum, which consist of artwork and documentation, are arranged in chronological order except for *Signature, 2020* and *The Kiss*. Each exhibit is also tagged with one of five thematic keywords proposed by the artists – Internet, Platform, Interface, Random, and Boundary – that link them to other works.

Meanwhile, the online venue (www.topmuseum.jp/un-dead-link) showcases exonemo's back catalog, along with the two online works being shown at this exhibition: *Realm* and *UN-DEAD-LINK 2020*. All these are presented in an interactive timeline that chronicles the duo's activities, offering further insight into their art. The timeline provides extra background information about the artworks, each tagged with various keywords that allow visitors to discover new connections.

Notes: Exhibits are classified into "artwork," "documentation," and "video documentation." / Information has been arranged in the following general order: artwork title; year of production; form of exhibit (artwork/documentation); materials used in exhibit; technique; medium (in case of works of net art, operating system/software/programming language, etc.); collection; keyword; work description. / Where unspecified, works are held by the artists.

1 *Signature 2020* 2020

Mixed media: LCD monitor, etc.

Support: MAKI Gallery

This work is a signature that spells the word "exonemo" out of media and materials regularly used by the artists, such as the screen showing an "M"-shaped line that charts the fluctuating value of Bitcoin. It stands as a statement of exonemo's style, which incorporates a wide array of media.

2 *KAO* 1996

Video documentation: CRT monitor

Net art (Java applet, CGI/Perl)

exonemo's first foray into net art, *KAO* is an interactive program in which viewers select and position facial features to compose a face of their own design, then submit it to the server. The face combines with another face on the server to generate a new "child" face that inherits characteristics of both; this then combines with the next user's submission to create the next face, thus passing down the genes successively. Internet-based artwork that integrated viewer interaction was a rarity back in 1996, and *KAO* was featured in various magazines and TV programs to enthusiastic response. It won top prize in the artistic expression category at the Internet Association Japan's Java Technology, Application, and Expression Awards '97.

#Internet #Platform

3 *DISCODER* 1999

Video documentation and artwork: CRT monitor, keyboard, computer mice

Net art (Java applet, CGI/Perl)

This application enables users to create apparent inconsistencies in any web page, infiltrating its HTML code and syntax by typing on their own keyboard. Different keys cause different actions – inserting a bug into the website's HTML code, removing a bug, making bugs interact with each other, and so on – resulting in inconsistencies that gradually alter the web page. The work interferes with the internet's system, destroying the consistency of a website's code in an experience that evokes hacking. Originally created for Shiseido's online gallery CyGnet (1995–2003), it was first presented in 1999, receiving widespread attention as a unique artwork that incorporated a game element. exonemo exhibited an installation version of the work at International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2000, before going on to show it at numerous other venues at home and abroad.

#Internet #Interface #Random

4 *FragMental Storm*

2000 (Installation/desktop application); 2002 (Desktop application); 2007 (Installation); 2009 (iOS app)

Artwork: projector, computer

Net art (Adobe Director, CGI/Perl [2000, 2002]; Java, CGI/Perl [2007]; Objective-C, CGI/Perl [2009])

This software searches the web for any keyword entered by the user, then cuts up the images and text found on the web pages yielded by the search, creating an animated collage out of them in real time. The work, which caught people's imaginations with its dizzyingly fast-paced, randomly generated visuals, was presented several times in the form of installations, and even released as an app for iOS.

#Internet #Random

5 *rgb f_cker* 2003

Artwork: Projector, computer

Net art (Adobe Director [2003], Adobe Flash [2007])

This tool allows anyone to become a creator, designing visual animations composed of colorful flickering planes and sharing their creations with others through its platform. Users are invited to let their imagination take charge, given only minimal parameters to set: the rectangles' dimensions, colors, and flicker speeds. Rectangles can be drawn in any size, shape, and placement with a simple click-and-drag motion of the mouse. Each rectangle flickers between the three primary colors of light – red, green, and blue (RGB) – and the brightness of each color can be set freely, along with the rectangle's flicker speed. Users can control these settings to produce artworks that flash in a wide range of patterns and rhythms, as well as view the artworks shared by other users.

#Internet #Platform

6 *Natural Process* 2004

Documentation

Mixed Media

The Natural Process project follows the development of *A Web Page*, exonemo's painting of Google's main page. The work has been presented in many forms, including installations comprised of the painting and its surrounding systems. In the installation, a webcam live streams the painting at the venue along with the visitors and the setting, calling to attention the shifts in value between cyberspace and real space. The work, which physically depicts a web page in its entirety, is both a work of painting and a digital object rendered in analog form – or, as the artists themselves put it, a "landscape of the web" viewed from a browser window.

A Web Page courtesy of Google LLC

Painting support: Inagaki Masayuki

#Internet #Interface #Boundary

7 *ZZZZZZZapp* 2004

Video documentation: LCD monitor, parametric speaker

Net art (Java applet)

This program automatically collects and broadcasts images from web pages linked to in spam emails, which are received by exonemo's website on a daily basis. The artists converted the images while creating glitches in the process, and also converted the raw image data into sound. The work represents "information that's forced on us unsolicited, and a jamming system for customizing it."

#Internet #Random

8 *The Road Movie* 2005

Video documentation and artwork: LCD monitor, origami bus

Online installation

Website by tomcat

Webcams mounted on a moving bus were set to capture images of the surroundings every five minutes, and to send this data to an online server where the images were recorded and mapped onto a template of an origami bus. Users could download the template from the website, print it out at home, and fold it into a bus displaying the views surrounding this actual bus at a given time. The resulting three-dimensional reproduction is at once an interior object and a window that shows a distant landscape from across the web.

#Internet #Boundary

9 *Object B* 2006

Video documentation and artwork: LCD monitor, three-dimensional structure

Mixed media: PC, power tools, game software, etc.

Support: Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]

Object B is an installation that combines a modified online shooter game and a robot-like object comprising power tools. Controlled by a computer, the robot moves unpredictably and strikes a mouse and a keyboard, which prompts the avatars within the game to move in unexpected ways. Viewers can also participate through a console that allows them to experience the work in a virtual space. In shooter games, players usually cannot see their human opponents, whose existence remain unidentifiable and imaginary. exonemo recreates this inherent nature of the internet, presenting a bizarre object controlling the gameplay on the other side.

#Interface #Random #Boundary

10 *Danmatsu Mouse* 2007

Video documentation: computer, broken mouse

Mixed media (PC, original software)

Collection of Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

Danmatsu Mouse is a software artwork that documents the destruction of computer mice, along with their cursors' movements on the desktop as the destruction occurred. When a user launches the software, the video of a mouse's demise begins to play, while the user's own mouse cursor replicates the on-screen death throes of the destroyed mouse.

Although the physical mouse cannot be restored once destroyed, its cursor is a digital being that can be resurrected again and again, repeating the same motion. The work thus

stands as a juxtaposition of physical and digital death.
#Interface #Random #Boundary

11 *Supernatural* 2009

Video documentation and artwork: LCD monitor, three-dimensional structure
Mixed media (PC, metal, video camera)

Supernatural connects a spoon, which has been divided as if by psychic powers (à la Uri Geller), by placing one half at the venue and the other at the artist's home, and live streaming them side-by-side. Like the two pieces of the spoon, the two remote locations are reconnected using media technology in a "seemingly natural, probably supernatural" manner.

#Internet #Boundary

12 *Spiritual Computing: Pray* 2009

Artwork: laptop computers, optical mice, stands
Collection of Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

Spiritual Computing: Pray involves structures consisting of two optical mice, each connected to a computer. The artists discovered that the light emitted by the mice's sensors interfered with each other, making the cursors move around of their own accord on the screen. The mice are placed back to back, a position that evokes hands pressed together in prayer; the cursor's movement, then, is like a miracle brought about by this prayer. Though this sculpture is built out of ready-made computers and mice, its substance lies in its power to make us envisage the abstruse flow of data within the devices, and bring to mind spiritual associations.

#Interface #Random #Boundary

13 *Antibot T-shirts* 2010

Installation: T-shirts/on-demand T-shirt printing service
Net art (CAPTCHA)

Support: Hirado Sanpei

CAPTCHA technology was invented as an online verification system to prevent malicious bot programs from infiltrating websites. The Antibot T-shirts online service allows people to design T-shirts using CAPTCHA images – distorted letters and numbers that are legible only to humans, not to bots – as their graphic design. As the title suggests, these T-shirts are intended as statements of one's refusal to be decoded by bots; as such, it presupposes a world in which humans and bots coexist, a setting that is straight out of science fiction.

#Internet #Platform #Random #Boundary

14 *Fireplace* 2014

Artwork: LCD monitor, media player, bricks
Single-channel video

Collection of Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

This video work shows optical mice and keyboards burning in a fireplace. In the old days, the fireplace was at the center of the living room where the whole family would gather, but it has since been replaced by the television. In today's era, there are popular programs showing live broadcasts of fireplaces, while individuals carry around their own smart devices. Using legacy devices as tinder, exonemo has created a new fireplace for an age when everyone can watch it on their personal display screens.

#Interface

15 *HEAVY BODY PAINT* 2016

Artwork: Acrylic on LCD monitors with 4K output
Single-channel video

Collection of Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

A follow-up to *Body Paint*, *HEAVY BODY PAINT* is a series in which exonemo paints directly onto LCD monitors that are playing video footage. Each LCD screen shows a video of a jar of paint, and the screen is painted over in the same color as the paint, leaving just the jar visible. In contrast to the stiff texture of the dried acrylic paint, the handheld camera adds a subtle shake to the footage, producing a three-dimensional visual effect. The high-definition 4K (3840 × 2160 pixels) video also blurs the boundary between the video inside the monitor and the painting outside it, creating the illusion of a real paint jar.

#Interface #Boundary

16 *I randomly love you / hate you* 2018

Artwork: LCD monitors, single-board computer
Support: WAITINGROOM

This work shows a conversation on a messaging app, an endless exchange of the sentences: "I [adverb] love you" and "I [adverb] hate you." The adverbs are selected randomly from 300 or so options, and some of the generated expressions barely make enough sense, while others result in uncommon or awkward wording. The monitors are set up such that its interlocutors express the opposite emotions to the interlocutors on the corresponding side of the other monitor. The work shows up the contrast between the strong human emotions represented by the words "love" and "hate," and the impersonal processes by which machines process that information.

#Interface #Random #Boundary

17 *Shotgun Texting* 2019

Video documentation and artwork: computer keyboards, LCD monitor
Mixed media

Private collection

Support: WAITINGROOM

This series consists of computer keyboards that have been fired at with a shotgun. Each keyboard bears a title – whatever sequence of keys was entered by the pellets upon impact – which is engraved on a metal plate, while footage documenting the process plays next to the keyboards. The term "shotgun texting" is internet slang for sending the same message to a large number of people simultaneously. The idea also draws inspiration from William Burroughs' "shotgun art," in which he shot spray paint cans to create paintings. The work might be said to be a contemporary take on the proverb "The pen is mightier than the sword," and is very much a product of exonemo's current working environment: the United States.

#Interface #Random #Boundary

18 *Realm* 2020

Artwork (online exhibit): projector, website

Online installation (HTML, JavaScript, Node.js server [WebSocket])

Commissioned by HeK_Basel (Switzerland)

Equipment provided by Canon Marketing Japan Inc.

Realm is a net-based artwork that can be accessed via two platforms: smartphones and computer web browsers. When users access the same URL through these different channels, they encounter different images and experiences, accompanied respectively by the words "You can't see there from your mobile" and "You can't touch there from your desktop," which emerge at the bottom of each version's screen. The images of invisible natural landscapes and beautiful graves hint at an environment where two totally contrasting elements coexist. exonemo experienced the lockdown in New York City imposed amid the spread of COVID-19, a period when people were unable to see anyone outside their families. It was their daily visits to a nearby cemetery during the lockdown that inspired the idea for *Realm*, which they went on to shape into a poetic expression only achievable through the medium of net art.

#Internet #Platform #Interface #Boundary

19 *UN-DEAD-LINK 2020* 2020

Artwork (online exhibit): self-playing piano, website, smartphone

Online installation (Unity, Node.js server [WebSocket], MIDI)

Support: Sakamoto Ryuichi, Kab Inc., Yamaha Music Japan Co., Ltd.

The original *UN-DEAD-LINK*, presented at Basel's plug.in gallery in 2008, was a work that connected a 3-D game world with objects in the real world: whenever a character died inside the 3-D shooter game, notes would go off on a grand piano. The artists experienced a blackout in Tokyo caused by a Self-Defense Force jet that had crashed; later, during the Iraq War, they drew a connection between that experience and the US air raids in Iraq, and created a work addressing these grim times in which human deaths have come to feel less real.

The newly updated *UN-DEAD-LINK 2020* finds its seeds in the current coronavirus crisis, in which many are becoming numb to the reality of death, despite the media's daily reports of cases and casualties.

#Internet #Random #Boundary

20 *The Kiss* 2020 ※20 is exhibited in the second floor lobby.

Artwork: LCD monitors, 3-D printed sculptures, etc.

Installation

Commissioned by Aichi Triennale 2019

Collection of Tokyo Photographic Art Museum [exhibited in the second-floor lobby]

Cooperation: MagnaRecta, Inc., Mitsui Chemicals, Inc.

Smartphones have become ubiquitous over recent years, and many of us now hold these devices in our hands as though they were an extension of our bodies. The vast information that floods through their modest screens have the power to rock our emotions, creating new encounters, misunderstandings, divides. exonemo produced this work – commissioned for Aichi Triennale 2019: Taming Y/Our Passion – departing from the question of what a monument symbolizing such an age might look like. Though the sculpture of two large hands recalls the didactic monuments of socialist regimes, these hands hold up screens that each display a face, pressed against one another as though engaged in a kiss. In reality, however, these are just two separately taken photographs of people with their eyes closed. The sculpture's hand parts have been created by 3-D printing, a technology that allows for easy reproduction, enlargement, and reduction. This lends the sculpture a certain lightness unseen in ideological monuments, rendering the artwork's message more uncertain and abstract.