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The following text is taken from the original proposal, presented to the Kajaani Art Gallery in May 1992.

Telematic Dreaming

Proposed telematic installation for the 'Koti' exhibition at the Kajaani Art Gallery, Finland.
By Paul Sermon, May 1992

This proposal will deal with the 'ecstasy' that Baudrillard discusses directly through the use of tele-conferencing - the transmission and communication of audio and video data through fibre-optic telephone lines, a system that allows us to use video cameras and monitors as an alternative communications interface to the traditional telephone.

By installing a 2MB ISDN or Digi-Net fibre-optic telephone cable into the Kajaani Art Gallery it will be possible to communicate, through video and audio data, with over twenty tele-conferencing studios throughout Finland. My proposal is thus, I will install a fibre-optic telephone line and tele-conferencing system into the Kajaani Art Gallery. The video camera input will be suspended from the centre of the Gallery ceiling. The video monitor output device will be replaced by a video projector, also suspended from the Gallery ceiling together with the video camera. Both the video camera and projector will be pointing down towards the Gallery floor. A large double bed, covered in white bedding, will be situated directly underneath the video equipment, nothing else is in the Gallery space. A microphone audio input device will be concealed in the right hand side pillow, and a speaker audio output device will be concealed in the left hand side pillow, both these audio input and output devices are connected directly to the tele-conferencing system. The Gallery is now ready to transmit and receive.

I will be situated in a tele-conferencing studio at the Telegallery in Helsinki, where I will be lying down on a double bed covered with a blue sheet. A video camera will be situated directly above me, picking up an image of my body lying on a blue sheet, this image is then passed onto a chroma-key video mixing device. The chroma-key system will replace all the blue area within the video image with an image from another video source, such as a tape which is concurrently playing on a VHS deck and fed into the chroma-key system. This system can create the illusion that the body on the studio floor is lying on the grass, floating on the water or flying in the sky. Audio output from the video tape and my voice, via a microphone, is also fed to the chroma-key mixing device to be levelled and combined as one output. The mixed video and audio output is now ready to be passed on, from the chroma-key system, to the tele-conferencing studio and through a 2M ISDN or Digi-Net telephone line to the tele-conferencing system at the Kajaani Art Gallery.

The situation is set, the performance can begin. A person walks into the Gallery space in Kajaani, and they will be presented with a bed in the centre of a very dark large space where a video projection is being made on the bed. To get a better view of this video projected image they will have to walk closer to the bed. When they finally walk into view finding area of the video camera, suspended from the ceiling with the video projector above the bed, I will be able to see them on a video monitor in the tele-conferencing studio outside Kajaani. I can now attempt to make my initial contact by offering a hand of reassurance and guidance to walk even closer towards the bed. If the viewer still fails to realise this is a live event, and not a pre-recorded video tape, I will attempt to make my first voice contact with them. The sound of my voice mixed with the sound track from the chroma-keyed video tape will be played on a speaker concealed inside one of the pillows at a very intimate level. I will try and entice the viewer even closer and closer towards the bed to eventually talk to me by speaking into a microphone concealed inside the other pillow. The eventual situation is possible when the Gallery viewer is finally lying beside me on the bed. Through the interpretation of the video images that are chroma-keyed underneath me, we can discuss my dreams in intimate detail. The video tape holds all the boundaries to this discussion and is as varied, ambiguous, surreal and as much like virtual reality as I believe my dreams to be.

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Die Installation "Telematic Dreaming", die von Mai bis September während der "Koti" Ausstellung in der Kajaani Galerie in Finland aufgebaut war setzt sich mit dem Begriff der "Ekstase" auseinander, den Jean Baudrillard in seinem Text "The Ecstasy of Communication" über optische und akustische Kommunikation durch Datenleitungen, geprägt hat. Zwei Doppelbetten werden, räumlich voneinander getrennt, durch Datenleitungen verbunden. Über einem blau bezogenen wird eine optische Aufnahmeeinheit angebracht, deren Output auf die zweite projiziert wird und die ihrerseits von einer Kamera aufgenommen wird. Darüberhinaus besteht eine akustische Verbindung über ein Mikrophon im jeweils rechten Polster und einen Lautsprecher im jeweils linken. Ich befinde mich auf dem blau bezogenen Bett, sodaß man das Bild von mir, das auf die weiße Bettoberfläche in der Kajaani Galerie projiziert wird über eine Blue-Box mit Hintergründen aus einem VHS-Video überlagern kann. Sobald sich im Ausstellungsraum in der Kajaani Galerie jemand dem Bett nähert, den ich über die Videoverbindung beobachten kann, versuche ich mit ihm in Kontakt zu treten. Ich fordere ihn auf, näher zu kommen. Es ist dadurch möglich, daß der Galeriebesucher neben mir im Bett liegt und mit mir den Inhalt meiner Träume bespricht, die durch die Blue-Box eingespielt werden. Das unterlegte Video bildet markiert die Grenzen unserer Unterhaltung und ist ebenso unterschiedlich, zwiespältig oder surreal wie ich glaube, daß meine Träume sind.

PAUL !

PLEASE COMPARE TO THE
ORIGINAL ! THANK

C. W. L.