

ENERGY PARASITES

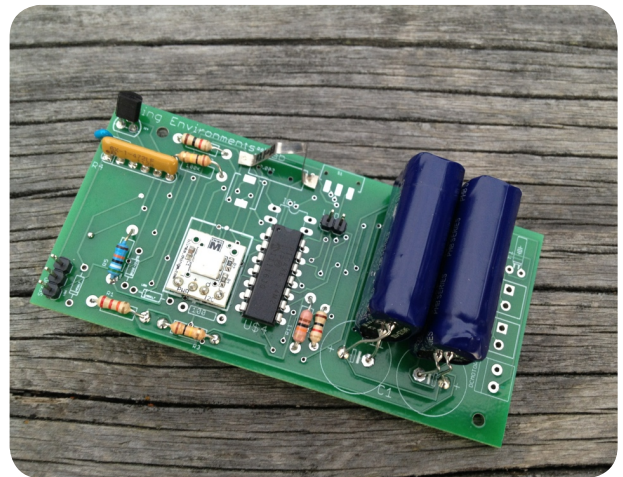
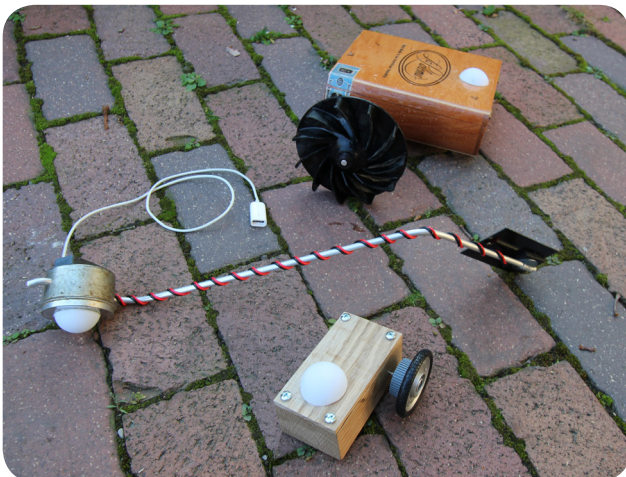
REDIRECTING ENERGY USAGE

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We must not be exclusively concerned with visible relations of forces on a grand scale, but also take into account molecular domains of sensibility, intelligence, and desire. - Félix Guattari in *The Three Ecologies* (1989)

The authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced.
- Walter Benjamin *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936)

Energy parasites are handcrafted objects designed to opportunistically harvest small bits of energy across public landscapes. Agnostic to energy origin or ownership, these artifacts redirect their captured energy through a variety of means including expressing it or storing it for later reacquisition and usage. Central to this experience is the materiality of energy.



The Energy Parasites are best experienced in the accompanying video. In it three examples of Energy Parasites are demonstrated. These are functional objects. At Ars Electronica, we would bring a collection of 25+ of these artifacts. They would be positioned around the city and at various venues through the city. Beyond the examples shown would be versions that:

- attach to Linz tram with solar panel
- attach to Linz tram with wind harvesting
- a version for a child's swing (and perhaps other playground objects)
- attach to buildings
- attach to revolving (or swinging door)
- etc

We would place these around the city to be observed and discovered by others through Linz and attendees to Ars Electronica. Several of these would also have connections that invite and allow others to "sap" the harvested energy through a USB/Phone charging connector. An example of this can be seen in the headlight example in the video.

Energy Parasites foreground energy use and opportunities for re-use. They are both adversarial and helpful and question ideas of energy ownership and opportunities for energy harvesting. Central to this is the reframing of energy as a materiality that can be infused and embedded with properties such as when, how, and the texture of the energy production. Is tram energy different or more valuable than playground swing energy? At least one location at the festival would be more overt to expose a legibly to the piece and invite discovery of other such objects around the city.

The technology involves custom hardware that we have constructed (see below) that allows for energy harvesting and storage in high energy density super capacitors. These are fully functional objects and have been exhibited in 2011 at 319 Scholes Gallery Ecologías Correlativas in Brooklyn, New York, USA.

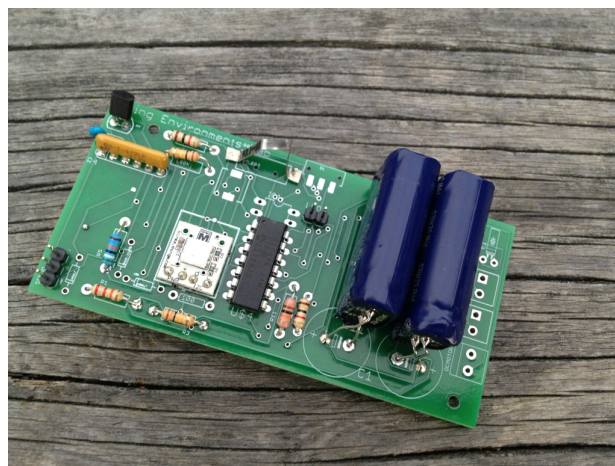


Figure 1: Energy Parasite internal circuitry

