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Cultural actions and digital media

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Luciana Santos Roça holds a BA degree in Audiovisual and is researcher at Nomads.usp. She researches about the use of sound interfaces in urban spaces, seeking to integrate Sound Studies and Architecture disciplinary fields.

Priscilla Marchetto is architect and researcher at Nomads.usp. She pursues research in ways of living diversity, addressing the coexistence in hybrid instances issue from communication processes using digital media, under a biased gaze by Antropology studies.

For several years now, some researches of Nomads.usp, the Centre for Study of Interactive Living, University of Sao Paulo, which publishes **V!RUS**, have been caring about exploring the application of digital media on the design and the use of daily life objects and places. They want to make visible or even encourage the emergence of relations in the reality otherwise barely noticeable, and not less important. Extending this idea, the Center has more recently sought to determine possible uses of digital media in enhancing cultural diversity of populations within a same district, a city, country or even among populations of different countries, through the cultural actions proposed by the Hybrid Territories Project, a research project in Public Policies (www.nomads.usp.br/territorios.hibridos).

Especially for that reason, for this seventh edition of **V!RUS** we decided to deepen the reflection on the subject, seeking dialogue with people from outside the Centre. The editorial review preferred to present more than operational modes of these practices, sought to focus on processes and their role of stimulating thoughts of people and communities. By gaining

importance in cultural and social terms, digital media can become structural and contribute to the goals of social transformation of the cultural policies of State.

As in every issue of **VIRUS**, we juxtapose different approaches on the proposed topic. Thus, in the Invited Papers section, two contributions present considerations on important cultural issues and parallels with the use of digital media. First, biased by a plural and multifaceted look at the possibility of actions relating to social cultural issues, **Gesche Joost and Tom Bieling**, researchers at the Design Research Lab at the Berlin University of the Arts, understand design as an activity able to provide changes in the social sphere, in their article *Design against Normality*. In the same section, the text of **Georges Teyssot** *The Diagram as Abstract Machine* discusses the use of diagrams as tools in the process of creation in design and architecture.

In the interview section, the members of the Collective Gambiologia **Fred Paulino and Lucas Mafra**, from Belo Horizonte, deal with the use of digital media inspired by the Brazilian tradition of improvisation and workaround, discussing some of the concepts that support their group activities, such as the notion of indeterminism and the use of elements of street culture in producing art and design.

The articles in the Submitted Papers section, intentionally less numerous from this edition, usually present a variety of approaches on the issue's theme. **Santiago Cao** discusses relations between body and performance within the context of digital media through the work *Espacios [In] Seguros*, presenting an interesting theoretical course about understandings of spaces, performance and body.

Going beyond the photography's character of registration, **Carolina Moreira de Hollanda** discusses its use in the understanding of peculiar urban situations, using the image as a research technical support.

Also addressing the effervescence and cultural diversity of urban centers as exploratory possibilities, **Hannah le Roux, Nonthokozo Muhlangu and Stephen Hoffe** carry a challenging and rather unconventional reading of cultural aspects in a particular area of Johannesburg, South Africa, from procedures that are beyond traditional methods. The paper presents local cultural issues using the fashion and comics narratives as keys for understanding aspects of cultural dimension in the surveyed areas.

In the Brazilian context, **Alex Garcia, Heloisa Neves and Paulo Eduardo Fonseca** write on the first workshop on digital fabrication aimed at children in Brazil, with the Fab Lab Kids Project, linked to the international laboratory Fab Lab at MIT - Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The text presents the workshop held in the city of Guarulhos, developed as a cultural activity using digital technologies for drawing and manufacturing in design.

Closing the section of Submitted papers, **Graziele Lautenschlaeger, Rita Wu and Daniel Kutschat** present the interactive installation “De Novo, Ercília”, first assembled in LabMis Exhibition 2011 as a possibility for understanding urban issues such as culture, population and organization logics through interactive elements based on digital media.

In addition to strictly academic papers, **VIRUS** seeks exploring each issue’s theme through free format texts, in the Carpet session. Therein, **Diego Pimentel** brings a brief discussion on digital interfaces and their use as a media.

Christoph Walther presents the WeSea project, through a text collaboratively written with other project coordinators. WeSea focuses on the recovery of Baltic Sea region, based on the establishment of a communication and exchange network aimed at creating a structure to bring people together, stimulating collaborativeness and the implementation of cultural projects in this region.

Also in the Carpet section, the text Trans(formations) by **Ricardo Rodrigues and Maithe Bertolini** briefly presents the history of the collaborative multimedia festival Contato, held every year since 2007 in the city of São Carlos. The festival’s collaborative organization seeks bringing to the city, for free, independent artists from music to multimedia art. Still within the scope of collaborativeness, **Mariana Felipe and Val Rocha** present an integration of virtual and concrete instances through play, in the practices of Elos Institute.

The text by **Djalma Ribeiro Junior** looks at the use of digital media in the construction and dissemination of audiovisual productions, critically exploring how these productions can be put into service to education and communication in different cultural contexts.

According to the **VIRUS** objective of exposing results of Nomads.usp researches to readings and questionings, in the Nomads Papers session, **Daniel Paschoalin and Anja Pratschke** revisit the conception of dialogue and aspects of the Conversation Theory, putting it in relation to cultural actions that use digital media as an structuring element.

Karla Brunet in the Projects section discusses a decentralized model of culture network through P2P, identifying the P2P as a model of collective exchange, cooperation and recreation. Thus, Karla Brunet takes as an example the *Submidialogia* network, which has as base the decentralization of the contents also looking for a balance between theory and practice.

In the Review section, exceptionally also written by a Nomads.usp researcher, **Luciana Santos Roça** presents a panorama over some hybrid sound interventions – endowed with concrete and virtual instances – intended to emphasizing less visible spatial features.

At last, we note the images alternating in the journal main page’s background, in the Summary session. They show instants of cultural actions Nomads.usp has been carrying, using

diverse digital media, within the **Hybrid Territories** Project for public policies (www.nomads.usp.br/territorios.hibridos). The images can also be seen in the sessions' background in this issue, and can be appreciated altogether in the essay bellow.

We wish you an excellent reading!