AffeXity: Capturing Affect with a handful of techne by Jeannette Ginslov

And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane
by those who could not hear the music.

Nietzsche

AffeXity Phase #02 Green Screen (2011)
Performer: Niya Lulcheva

May 14 2012, Jeannette Ginslov, Medea's Artist in Residence Spring 2012, gave a Medea Talk: AffeXity - Capturing Affect with a handful of techne. Ginslov is the videographer for the AffeXity project and is researching affect and AR (Augmented Reality) in collaboration with Prof Susan Kozel at Medea.

AffeXity is an interdisciplinary pilot choreographic project examining affect, screendance mobile networked devices and cities. It is a project of embedded choreographies, beginning in the city of Malmö Sweden, accessed by Argon or Aurasma, AR applications for use on smart phones and other mobile devices. Affexity is a play on both 'affect city' and 'a-fixity.' It is has several intended outcomes, two of them being: a pilot choreography embedded in urban spaces using location based videos and open source socially networked choreographies.

AffeXity Phase #01 Carlesberg (2011)
Performer: Wubkje Kuindersma

AffeXity Phase 01 Red Wall Dreaming (2011)
Performer: Wubkje Kuindersma

From concept to delivery this project is concerned with the necessary techne to deliver non representational artistic encounters reflecting experiential encounters of connected resonances via the internet. The project explores the notion of affect, that according to Kozel emerges and comes into existence at the moment of convergence of and "between minute movements and decisions" and a "performance through the tension and the flicker of motion." (cited in Kozel 2012 p 6) It is our hope that these affective encounters are felt at the moment of reception by viewers responding to the outside world via mobile devices.

AffeXity Phase 01 Delicate Passage (2011)
Performer: Wubkje Kuindersma

As a team we have undergone three phases of development so far and the most important questions for me as videographer were about my ability to understand affect, how to tease this out from the performer in front of the camera, how to become aware of the moments

when the performer generated affective motion, how to capture affect with the video camera in combination with my proprioceptively engaged body. And finally if the affective moments, that were present at the moment of capture, were amplified through the edit and finally if they were still tangible when they unfolded into the connected virtual layered spaces on the mobile devices.

AffeXity MEDEA Event 16 December (2011)
Geotagged video on Panorama viewed on iPad

Furthermore, I need to ask whether the video material needs to be adapted to the AR platforms in order to elicit affective responses from the viewer? What affordances of the techne do I need to change ie. choreographic choices, performance of these choices, location choices, camera movements, editing, fx, locations and the positions of the video in real locations. These locations will be crucial to the reception of affect as certain locations are more imbued with affect than others. How will the selection of locations before and after capture affect the reception of affect via AR? Can the notion of affect be performed, directed, captured, uploaded and felt by the viewer in the location where the primary performance was first captured?

AffeXity Proposal Video(2011)
Performer: Susan Kozel

Later as a team of developers I think we we need to be asking: does the AR platform and the mobile device change the appreciation of affect, does it pose a challenge in terms of the devices size and manner in which the viewer engages with it – at arms length? Will

there be a learning curve in the reception of imagery viewed at arm's length, as when audiences learnt to "read" cinematically in theatres nearly a century ago? Will the positioning of the arms length media amplify experiential and reciprocal reception? Will this and smaller screens amplify affective resonances? Will the subtle nuanced affective gestures be readable on small screens or will they act as a magnifying glass, pulling into focus subtle and smaller moments of affect?How will this change the way I eventually choreograph and shoot those moments?

AffeXity Proposal Video(2011)
Performer: Susan Kozel

Finally we need to be asking ourselves in the next ten years:

As this technology becomes more ubiquitous and more affordable, it is thought that in the next few years AR will be the modus operandi by which instant, immediate information will be generated and streamed. How will this affect personal decision making?

Will the reception and engagement of the overlays on reality encourage new non linear and non representational engagements with the world around us?

Will the engagement with instant accessible information make us more active or passive as we digest more and more information directly through our mobile devices?

If the positioning of the user changes can this encourage more active feedback and/or engagements, responses, in the hope of sharing affective moments instead of binary driven fact?

What degree of playfulness can we introduce to the AffeXity project to encourage more imaginative affective engagements and media production by the user?

Why is this engagement important to us and the user/viewer?

Will this engagement with virtual and augmented realities make us into better people?

What benefit to humankind does it ultimately serve?

References
Kozel, S. AffeXity: Performing Affect with Augmented Reality. 30 July 2012
Screen Grabs of Videos: *AffeXity Phases 01, 02, AffeXity Proposal Video and AffeXity MEDEA Event 16 December.* Shot and edited by Jeannette Ginslov (2011)
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