

Melentie Pandilovski  
in-conversation with...

**Ian Haig**

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**Q: In your artistic career spanning more than two decades you have worked across media, from video, sculpture, drawing, technology-based media and installation artwork.**

**Can you summarize the concepts you have historically explored through your work?**

**Is there a single concept that connects these diverse, but complimentary fields?**

*David Cronenberg said years ago that the body is ground zero....everything begins with the body, without the body there is no culture, no art, no politics, so it makes sense that contemporary art goes there and explores the body. In terms of a single concept that underpins much of my practice, it is probably the idea of the confrontation of the body.*

*Together with a general refusal to accept that aspects of so called low culture and the base level body are somehow without value and cultural meaning.*

**Q: At the Experimental Art Foundation in Adelaide in 2005, you presented *Dirt Factory*, a gallery installation featuring dual video screens flashing slogans and strobing drawings, sculptural found objects encrusted with Corn Flakes and demented drawings on paper, exploring the fanatical founding philosophy of the Kellogg's empire. Your body-obsessed work can be seen as dealing with the Bio-political, as the themes you deal with revolve around issues relating to the changing perceptions of the physical body itself, to the contemporary media sphere and its relationship to the visceral body, the degenerative aspects of pervasive new technologies, to cultural forms of fanaticism and cults, to ideas of attraction and repulsion, body horror, the de-familiarisation and confrontation of the human body.**

**What enticed you in the first place to create artworks which comment on Bio-politics in general?**

*That exhibition in particular was really coming from this idea of the denial of the base level body, which also is very much part of my current work also. The Kellogg story is also so strange that I felt I had to make a work about it. This seemingly popular and innocuous breakfast cereal has a very body obsessed back story, with Kellogg establishing all these cleansing regimes for the body and where he viewed masturbation as evil, this was in the early 1850s after all.*

*There is kind of schizophrenic relationship we have to the body, we are ok with the exterior body but the interior of the same body is instantly repellent to us.*

**Q: What was the moment in your work (artistic or theoretical) where you were most openly critical of the developments in technology, and when you have directly raised a critical voice towards the tech companies?**

*I am always surprised that artists aren't more critical of technology, for some years now media art in particular has functioned as a kind of affirmative action of digital media in general, this is quite problematic, artists are too invested in the technology at times to put a critical lens onto it.*

*There is a real belief system in the currency of technology, its newness, its possibilities which is increasingly also the territory of the tech companies. So as an artist working with technology I think you need to take some kind of position on this otherwise you are simply rehashing the same narrative of Sony and Apple under a different guise - where it's all about the possibility of what the technology can do... I've always been less interested in this kind of engineering imperative of technology of what it can do and really thinking about technology as just a form of cultural material that can be screwed and perverted with in different ways*

*Technology comes hardwired with a use value before artists even get their hands on it...so the challenge for any kind of art that uses technology is to subvert that use-value, to take it somewhere else and not simply accept it.*

**Q. I was particularly impressed by your Augmented Reality iPad artwork walk and demonstration of Fleshify the World (which you re-imagined Augmented Diseased Reality), presented at the Simon Fraser University, in Vancouver, for ISEA 2015. The work explores a media sphere that is increasingly cast as part of our bodies, taking the idea to an extreme by fusing an iPad with human flesh in the form of silicon. The question you ask is if our technologies are extensions of our body, then what does it look like if those technologies share our disease? Fleshify the World makes this idea literal, taking the seductive, slick and tasteful design of the iPad into the realm of the visceral, bodily and monstrous. You have worked with medical scientists in order to create this work. How did it come about that this work was created? Did the actual collaboration meet the expectations of your concept a priori, or were you inclined to alter it for the realization part of it? How did you see the whole situation surrounding the project, and what were the constraints in putting it together? Can you tell me more about this project and its outcomes?**

*The work came about at the end of a PhD I did on Body Horror and technology...It was also a direct critique of the seductive quality of Apple's range of iPhones, iPads, I wanted to produce something that was more diseased, an iPad that appears to have cancer or some horrible growth which has overtaken it.*

*Increasingly as our bodies are more augmented by various forms of technology, the logical extension of that is that our*

*technologies take on more human conditions like disease, it's a very Cronenbergian idea in a way and was central to the ideas behind Feshify the World. The work also is really about viewing the purity of the white cube gallery as a kind of hospital setting, where different kinds of hidden pathologies in the space can be revealed through AR.*

**Q: We can certainly see the AR I-Pad installation “Fleshify the World” as an Interface. What other interfaces are you mostly interested in, and you use in your art works? Can you name them?**

*I explored the territory more in previous works a while ago, interfaces like toilets, (where you could choose a constipation or diarrhoea audio visual experience) machines for producing bad posture, sperm donation machines, sex toys made from vacuum cleaners to more recent things like the diseased iPad of Fleshify the World. All of these were perverse alternative interfaces in a way.*

*The history of media art in some ways is the history of the interface, of triggers, sensors, interactive sound, and these kinds of behaviours. I feel the whole construction of interactivity is a fiction - all you are doing it choosing different choices made by the artist, but it's often presented as this highly sophisticated system. I wanted to screw with that, critique it and make dumb interfaces for the body.*

**Q. You have been suspicious towards the non-critical acceptance of Technology in general. Do you believe that your artworks have contributed to a raised awareness about problems we are facing with the development of Technology?**

*I am critical of the idea of the supposed 'sophistication' of media art and the use of high end technology as somehow being equated with value more so than than technology you buy from K-Mart, to me this is just a form of cultural*

snobbery. In the 1990's you saw lots of artists gravitating towards multimedia, which was all part of Paul Keating's 'creative nation' push, so many of those works while exploring new technology weirdly also promoted this government cultural policy of 'new media'. This is why in the 1990s I made a work like *Web Devolution* which was really about this uncritical digital evangelism happening at the time.

**Q: Let's assess the current situation. Bio-political battles are being fought in the real and virtual world, by governmental and private, national and global corporations. At the core of Bio-political conflicts are a range of issues from gene technologies practice and regulations, genetic engineering, stem cell research (one of the key issues of the 2008 US elections), bio-patenting, human rights and biomedicine, bioethics, abortion, euthanasia, lucrative market deals over new seed products (e.g. the current battle between Monsanto and DuPont over various GE lines of corn as a source of food, animal feed and ethanol), and patenting (Technological and pharmaceutical companies are finding the new US patent bill reform legislation favours High-Tech companies). Power relations of all sorts are being established. These observations tend to show that a Bio-political Apparatus is being formed currently with all of its paraphernalia (In this case, by Bio-politics I refer to a political spectrum reflecting the socio-political consequences of the Technological revolution). Would you agree with this observation?**

*There is probably an uncritical acceptance of all things pharmaceutical for sure....we are all being over medicalised, because there are huge profits to be made there....this kind of fear campaign of disease, the idea that you will instantly die if you don't get your flu shot, so yes new forms of bio political power are well and truly here.*

**Q: If so, wouldn't it be useful to side with Vilém Flusser who claims that that Apparati are based on technical and political programs, which are highly ideological and always biased?**

*Yes, all of our technologies are culturally loaded and have pre-existing cultural narratives encoded onto them, part of the role of art is to reveal those encodings*

**Q. In Phenomenology, an issue of utmost importance is “lived experience”. Therefore I would like to ask you a few questions which should clarify the domain of “lived experience” in your art practice. For this purpose, I will use Max van Manen’s division of the lived experience into the four categories of spatiality of Media Artworks (referring to the “lived space”), the corporeality of Media Artworks (referring to the “lived body”), the temporality of Media Artworks (referring to the “lived time”), and the relationality of Media Artworks (referring to the “lived other”).**

- **The lived body refers to the embodied experience. We experience the Media Artworks through our bodies, as we experience the world through our bodies. Can you define your embodied (corporeal) experience when interacting with your artworks, such as Fleshify the World? How did you perceive the work when conceptualising it? How did you perceive the work when it was produced? Was there any difference in the experience of the work in different art spaces?**

*The work was designed to function in the hygienic white cube...as this was a big part of the concept of the work, to visualise simulated diseases in the gallery...As it turned out the most interesting outcome for the work was when I showed the work in Corfu in Greece recently in a previous asylum, and the idea of AR device revealing previous pathologies of the space. This context really brought a lot to the work I felt and was probably more interesting than the conventional gallery.*

- **The lived time refers to temporal issues such as the subjective time opposed to the objective time. What are in fact the issues of temporality which we face with your artworks? Do they involve perception of time distortion, speeding up, or slowing down? Are there any other issues of temporality involved?**

*Many of my works are time based and durational, the idea of static art, while I also work in this area it sometimes seems at odds with the speed of contemporary culture. I am also interested in the audio visual relationships in many of the works.*

*I am somewhat critical of video art that really comes out of a painting practice, which is often more about stasis, slow motion etc...like we can only understand video through the language of painting? I find this entirely problematic.*

- **Can you also comment along the lines of the lived space and the lived interrelations when interacting with your artworks, such as *Fleshify the World*?**

*I am interested in the whole material/immaterial binary that seems to have emerged in lots of contemporary art...the idea that technology and the digital is somehow immaterial, but we experience it with our bodies and often it can have a profound effect on our bodies  
...so in some ways much of my work including *Fleshify the World* is also about 'immaterial' digital media eliciting visceral, bodily, material like responses in the viewer*

**Q. You have been one of the leaders in the field of new media art arts. Can you describe your perception of the experience of providing leadership to the art world, if you feel that this is the case?**

*I don't really feel like a leader of anything! So much contemporary art looks just like contemporary art... post minimalism, identity politics, globalisation all of these themes and approaches have been done to death. I've always been interested in making work that doesn't look immediately like contemporary art, that takes the conversation and the aesthetic experience somewhere else. I see no point in making art that resembles art in any way, this is a real driving force in my practice – if it looks too much like art, I tend to avoid it, as we already know what art is and what it looks like.*

*My work comes out of an obsession with ideas around bodies, technology, culture... it was J.G. Ballard who said you should always follow your obsessions no matter where they go*

**Q: Does the fact that you live and work in Australia have any specific context within your work?**

*Australia is a long way from anywhere which I have always thought was interesting, this kind of weird distorted distance onto things...but increasingly I am finding it much easier to show my work internationally. If I show my work in Europe I am just another artist, if I show my work in Australia I have '1990s media artist' stamped on my forehead and I am normally categorised as this.*

*I also honestly feel curators and institutions in Australia are possibly more conservative than anywhere else in the world! There is a kind of a risk adverse mentality, a real timid approach to themes and, ideas in art here. Recently I have been in a number of exhibitions in Germany and the theme was meat...I can't ever imagine a contemporary mainstream art institution in Australia putting on shows like these...*

**Q: You often speak about Bio-political issues (such as infection, contagion, and immunisation paradigms), and problems of the non-critical acceptance of Technology. You have maintained the position of an artist who offers important alternatives to the polarised debate about genetic engineering. Can you summarize the concepts you have historically explored through your work?**

*My work is primarily concerned with simulation, often hyper visceral simulation of the body. I don't want the works to be real....I guess this is really Baudrillard 101, our reality is a constructed hyper real one, and simulation or the fake is the new real in a way.*

*While there is some connection to bio art in my work, and there is some interesting and freaky work done in that area for me bio art and science in general is too grounded in the real world and less about simulation....I am more interested in pseudo science, fake science or science fiction, which is kind of like science after it has been processed and transformed by pop culture. ...I figure too science has a use value, it has currency in the world. I don't want my work to have a use in that way.*

*My work therefore is less connected to 'real issues' and my practice is more via the lens of the filter of popular culture. Many of the themes you mention like infection, contagion, and immunisation paradigms for me come much out of the cinema of body horror, where often such themes are explored in ways that on one hand are part of an entertainment narrative but they are also grounded in more speculative scenarios of science fiction or horror and less grounded in the real world. This idea of cinema simulation and the cinematic prosthetic body has a major impact on my work.*

*I too find it odd that in one form of cultural production like a TV series or films we tolerate, accept and even expect the destruction of the body or elements of body Horror, but this is not the case with contemporary art. There is a plenty of art that deals with themes of the body, but less so the horror of the body I feel.*

**Q: What should we expect to see for your exhibition “The Institute of the Fungus”, at the Riddoch Art Gallery, opening on 6 October, 2017?**

*A bulk of the works are part of a project I have been working on for the last few years, which I refer to as Body Horror 2.0 and also a recent multi screen video piece which I made recently during a residency. Body Horror 2.0 is basically about the confrontation of the body, but specifically how the omnipresence of technology leads to the confrontation of our bodies, technology is this rational, logical, ordered thing, the opposite of our bodies, which are irrational and messy, technology reminds us of how we are trapped in our meat bodies, so many of the video works explore this idea of body horror and the horror of our own bodies in the context of our mediated reality.*

*One of the major pieces in the show is Untitled Syndrome, a 3 screen video work I recently produced, it draws connections with the disfigurement and distortion of the face common in modernist painting and sculpture to that of digitized dysmorphic disorder and the idea that our bodies somehow don't adhere to normal or standard images of the body, so the work visualizes this idea of facial dysmorphia set against the modernist white cube gallery.*

*Another recent piece in the exhibition Organophilia (lover of organs) depicts this kind of super evolved fantasy organ, part liver, colon, adrenal glands complete with emoji's...in addition there are numerous other video works that deal in hyper visceral simulation of the body, a live streaming video work and an AR work – Fleshify the World.*

**Q: I would like to ask you about metaphors. The used metaphors in Media Arts have the potency to become crucial in interpreting what Media Arts stands for. Lakoff and Johnson in “Metaphors We Live By” say, “New metaphors, like conventional metaphors, can have the power to define reality”. They claim that we not only use metaphors in our language but these same metaphors shape our language. In this respect, can you point out on what metaphors does your Media Artwork base itself? Do you use the “metaphor” in your Media Art, and if yes which are the metaphors you use?**

*I actually think my work is more literal...sometimes I figure this is possibly why people have problems with it, it's less a metaphor of the thing and more the thing itself, even though much of the work is about simulation, the simulation of the real and the real as simulation.*

*Hal Foster said something interesting about abject aesthetics in art and asked can the abject even be exposed in culture? because culture has value and the abject sits outside of value...this has kind of stuck with me, so my works are really about the representation or the simulation of the quasi abject, almost a caricature, a B-grade version of the abject, I kind of figure that's all abject based art can ever be, a simulation of the real.*

**Q: Embodiment issues are obviously connected to Media/Technological Arts. An example of this would include even how we experience the Media Artwork through our body. Some Media Artists are obviously interested in extending the possibilities of the physical body. An obvious example would be  $\frac{1}{4}$  Scale Ear by TC&A and Stelarc, shown at the EAF in Adelaide in 2004. It is clear that human biology interacts with robotics, AR&VR, opening up completely new horizons. On another level, I would like to ask if the human – machine interfaces represent an actual extension of the human body, or does this extension become a physical space itself? A sub question could be formulated as “Are you yourself interested in extending the possibilities of the physical body”?**

*To me this question is too grounded in an engineering imperative...the possibilities of improving or extending the body etc. are possibly too based in the idea of a use value of art and an applied research approach to things... the human machine /interface is of interest but I am really less interested in 'improving' anything and probably more interested in deforming or distorting that relationship, this to me is more the role of art practice...*

**Q: Media Artwork is after all an artistic and aesthetic experience. Aesthetics seems to have been a generally dying discipline until the arrival of the digital age, and then Aestheticians jumped on the band wagon and started writing about Digital Aesthetics. Is there today a place for an 'Aesthetics of Technology, or Aesthetics of Genetics'”? Should one be written? What would its rules be? Are we today successful at aesthetising the Technological revolution?**

*My own work operates with a kind of aesthetic of excess...I am interested in maximalism opposed to minimalism...the idea of minimalism seems very contrived to me, we don't*

*like in a minimalist cultural environment, everything is set to 11 on the volume dial in a way, this is very much the case with digital aesthetics - one only has to look at the confusing aesthetics of Facebook's newsfeed, this in a way distils the idea of a digital aesthetic. I think an artist like Ryan Trecartin here is really relevant for his oversaturation and overloaded videos of selfie culture*

**Q: How important is for you the physical appearance of the Media Artwork itself? Being an artist, you are naturally interested in your work being displayed in the white-box of a contemporary gallery. If so, when thinking about positioning your artwork in the gallery, how concerned are you with directing the viewer in terms of navigating through the artwork, as well as directing his/her gaze.**

*I think the aesthetic experience is important, I mean this is why people go to galleries isn't it? Otherwise just look at the work as a Jpeg online, which I am also ok with... the white cube art gallery is very precious and still seen as the be all and end all for contemporary art production. Working with media art your work can operate in different contexts, galleries, screenings, Vimeo, You Tube....In terms of thinking about the gallery I am really much more interested in a cluster fuck type effect, really lots of different things happening at the same time, just like we experience this stuff in contemporary culture, I dislike the revered, purity of the gallery, that seems very banal and somewhat dated to me.*

**Q: Do you believe that your work as artists has been criticized adequately? Much of the criticism you have received was very positive. Still, critics can be very harsh to artists, and curators, especially if they haven't been trained in the specificities of Media Art. Have you felt that some of the criticisms you got in your career were undeserved and hostile?**

*I am all for hostile reading of art work! I think curators and institutions are actually far too polite. So much contemporary art presents us with ideas that are already known. This is why I am cynical of art that explores identity politics for example or the environment, or political art. It's simply about reaffirming what the audience already knows and agrees with, it's the social media echo chamber effect. There is nothing at stake in this kind of work, it's all entirely validated by institutions, curators, audiences and funding bodies.*

*Increasingly technology is really synonymous with popular culture, to talk of viral memes, YouTube, social media algorithms you are talking as much about the tech as pop culture, they are becoming the same thing...Art institutions increasingly appear like shopping centres, with their tote bags and kids activities...In terms of media art, it took a while for things like video art to be validated in those kinds of spaces, the art world really does travel in slow motion. Cory Arcangel made the comment there is cultural/technology time and art world time and the two are always out of sync, I think this is very true.*

*Thirty or so years after post modernism, there is a perception within institutions that some popular culture is accepted but other forms are still excluded. So I believe cultural snobbery is very much alive and well. In some ways my work is all about recognising this non hierarchical culture spawned on by things like post modernism in the 1980s... so my work goes there to the lowest aspects of pop culture: gore, body horror, splatter, the body opened up and is really saying 'ok we now live in a flattened culture' just deal with it.*

*To a degree I think many people see my work and just respond to the ick factor, and possibly leave it at that and possibly dismiss it at that! The content possibly puts them off from thinking about it any further.*

**Q: Your work contains a strong social message. In your work you examine information, movement, and the human relationships to disease, evolution, and medical research. It would seem to me that social issues in fact constitute an essential part of the philosophy of your work. Can you elaborate on your connection with sociology, and whether you feel that its role has changed over time?**

*Art doesn't take place in a vacuum it takes place in culture, so it makes sense to me that an art practice draws on the culture around it, references it in different ways and tries to unpack it and understand it...I am really less interested in an approach to art, where its all about just exploring the form or material for its own sake...to me technology is cultural material*

**Q: How successful are you in collaborating with art institutions and research centres? Can you point out to some of the successful projects, or collaborations, that you have been involved with art centres?**

*There is a tendency I think for lots of art and technology particular in an education, research environment to have some kind of applied research element to it, ie: I am using this technology to investigate this issues or problem etc...I am really at odds with this. This kind research is very problematic to me. This places me very much in a weird position within the institution, I don't want to solve problems, I don't want to help anyone, or make the world a better place...I want to make work that screws with people's preconceptions of what art it, this kind of approach doesn't slot into a research paradigm that easily. Art doesn't solve problems it makes problems! Any kind kind of art that attempts to solve a problem, probably isn't very interesting art!*

**Q: What does the process of collaboration mean for you?**

*I am all for collaboration, much of my work is collaborative in nature from working with programmers, fabricators. Collaboration is reality accepted in one form of culture production like film but in contemporary art there still seems resistance to it. There is still so much investment in the singular artist's vision and the brand of the artist, probably more for the art market than anything else.*

**Q: Do you believe that the experiments you have done are interesting to the scientific/technological circles?**

*Possibly, but it's not really my field. Art Science crossovers are sometimes problematic for me. I can't help thinking sometimes there is a degree of validation involved, i.e.: the art work is now of value because it is associated with the use value of science and the science is now sexy cause its associated with art. I know not all art/science collaborations are like this and there is some generally freaky and perverse work done in this area, people like Adam Zaretsky come to mind...I just resist anything where there is a use value or applied research attached to it which can sometimes occur with science.*

**Q: Is there a possibility for improvement of the collaboration models we have now between arts and sciences?**

*Sorry, I am not interested in 'improving' anything*

**Q: Does the fact that you are an artist who has also worked in scientific establishments have any specific context with your work?**

**Q: What do you consider to be the most important and most radical exhibition you have developed and presented? Can you elaborate as to why you think this is the case?**

*I was very pleased with the AR work *Fleshify the World*, as I felt it distilled many of the themes and approaches in my body centric work...it was also using the technology of AR in a more perverse way. I have shown this work overseas a number of times but haven't been able to show it any where in Australia...until this show at Riddoch*

**Q: What project would you like to be remembered by?**

*For doing my own thing*

**Q: You have received your doctorate, and you are a Senior Lecturer at RMIT University in Melbourne. What other roles besides being an artist and educator do you occupy? Do you also express yourself in the different roles of curator and workshop leader?**

*I exhibit work, curate, write, and teach, in many ways they all feed into and off one another. My main focus is making work and exhibiting it.*

**Q: Art institutions, art schools included, especially in the new media arts sector (and even more so in the arts/science sector) face numerous issues, many of which are of a funding nature (which can be seen as substantial cornerstones of the art programs) including plain survival. Organisations go about this in numerous different ways, and very often their approaches include attempting to get support from international arts foundations, corporate or private donations (various banks), complexities of private/public ventures, and other municipal or governmental funding sources. I would like to ask you about your experience. Are you able to find funding for your complex media artworks and environments?**

*I have been very lucky with cultural funding over the years...however I am also very mindful of the fact just how experimental can an artwork be if it is funded by the government? how radical can anything really be if there is government money attached to it ? funding does at times seem at odds with experimentalism. I would assume the same would go for corporate funding, while funding is critical for the arts, I also figure having no funding forces you to take the work in different directions that are possibly less pre-scribed by funding agendas.*

**Q: Has the role of the artist changed with the advent of the technological society?**

*Absolutely... Douglas Coupland talks about how the internet has re-wired our brains and by definition has re-wired what art is. Mark Lecky talks about how images now only make sense in the context of other images, of them being part of network....However in my experience of teaching in an art school there is a real reactionary position to the ubiquitous digital screen, almost a return to older forms of materiality. Art schools have strangely become places where you go to escape the constant bombardment of digital culture. It's almost as if the digital revolution we had in the 1990s was too successful and a certain generation are reacting against it.*

*This puts me in a weird position because I am interred in these technologies as cultural material I find myself in the very odd position of rationalising them in an art practice in 2017! within the context of the traditional art school, this is something I would never have expected to happen*

**Q: Do you think that the situation today for young and emerging artists/ curators is more favourable than it was a decade ago?**

*I think there is more potential to explore other forms of creative cultural production, non-contemporary art forms of production...*

**Q: What does the situation look like now in terms of new major projects and initiatives in Media Arts? Are there any? What do you think of the state that Media Art is today internationally?**

*To be honest I think media arts as a genre is still trapped in the 1990s! media arts during this time was very po-faced and serious and less interested in popular culture to a degree and this is still the case with lots of media art.*

*There are also cracks appearing in the mainstream art world where technologies like VR or AR are being explored through the lens of a contemporary art discourse which I think are interesting, in some respects the whole idea of a ghetto of media art seems slightly dated to me. Technology needs to be enmeshed in culture for sometime for various cultural narratives to emerge around it...when artists are using new technology that hasn't been part of a cultural narrative, the result is sometimes a demonstration of the tech*

**Q: Where do you see the biggest experiment generally happening in the arts today?**

*I am drawn to the developing conversations around post contemporary art, post internet art, the new aesthetic. I am also interested in many 'non art' forms of cultural production, these can be just as experimental and at times more radical than lots of contemporary art*

*This is why I am drawn to things like post internet art, it is less about the technology and more the narratives of popular culture around the technology which in some ways has always been the case with my own work.*

**Q: Is the validation according to the Western Art Canon still important to Media&Technology Art?**

*That's an interesting question.....the ground is shifting I think, contemporary art is no longer the major cultural form, there are so many more modes of cultural production these days, that are equally as interesting and complex as contemporary art....cinema, TV, you tube, games...in some respects the whole fraternity of contemporary art seems from another era. I think my own work plays with this territory a bit...the end of art, the end of aesthetics and a complete collapse of high/low etc.*

**Q: Are the prospects for Media Arts at the international art market expanding in general? How is the art market responding to your Media Artworks in particular?**

*I don't really participate in the art market...it's part of the art world that I am not really part of...In some ways my work is not really compatible with the art market, which I don't really have a problem with, its really a double problem for me, my work often has some element of technology and also has a visceral aesthetic, two things the art market or collectors aren't really into.*

**Q: How do you see the current state of art criticism about Media Arts?**

*I think the critical discourse around media arts needs to be very mindful of the affirmative action syndrome, simultaneously promoting digital culture while also talking about it critically is sometimes a real issue...In some respects I think the term new media art is very problematic, it's a name that has a use by date attached to it, if its new its now old, and new media art is from somewhere in 1996*

**Q: Do you believe that art today is more socially responsive, being affected by the crisis of global capitalism?**

*There is a real sense of contemporary artists being on the ground and being in touch with the real issues as they are happening...I don't buy it personally. I don't believe artists are special people, they have no greater insight into issues of the world than anyone else, however it is often presented and accepted that artists have some special, cultural or scientific insight, I don't actually accept this. Artists can create discussions and propositions, that's about... the idea of socially responsive art implies a kind of validation of those practices or a use value for the art, of it having some kind of instrumental, educative or curative function in the world.*

*Art is just this weird and odd activity in the world that people do and look at and think about.*

*Really that's all it is....To a degree I like the fact that it's almost an entirely useless activity, I think that is interesting, it's one of the only areas in society where you can get away with something that is this strange activity that is largely meaningless to the larger population, this is why I am drawn to being an artist.*

*I am also very much aware that this position is entirely at odds with art institutions, curators, galleries, where there is an almost fanatical push for artists to be socially responsible individuals, exposing the hypocrisy of the world for the greater good.*

*This kind of position doesn't really occur in other modes of cultural production, like music, or cinema: this need at all times to be forward thinking and responsible. The world is in crisis and who are you going to call? The artists? I fear this way of thinking about art practice has become a rampant disease in the world of contemporary art, which my own work reacts strongly against.*



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