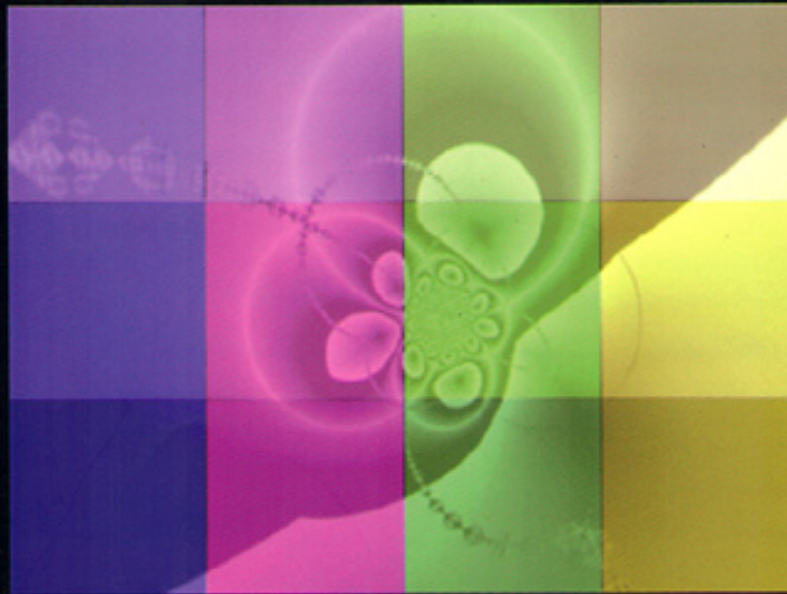


# Computer Art Congress

## [CAC.2]

Emerging forms of computer art: making the digital sense



Proceedings of the 2nd international congress  
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Edited by Khaldoun Zreik and Everardo Reyes Garcia

# Under Construction

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**Visual Artist**

**MA Contemporary aesthetics theory - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona**

Art Work Title: Under Construction

Artist name: Sandra Alvaro

Used technique: Interactive device with sound, programmed with flash. Flash shockwave. (Available for PC and Mac)

Presentation support: Projection to a wall screen from a computer with Macromedia flash player 8 software installed and connected to a projector and loudspeakers.



## Art work description

### Concept

En Construcció (Under Construction) is an art-device that focuses on the construction of the urban landscape in an environment by the actions of his citizens. This conceives the city as a continuously-changing environment. The city is not only a physical space but also a mental space that is being constructed and reconstructed by the uses and appropriations that its citizens make of the urban landscape.

The urban space is not only a physical space, planned and organised following a utopian plan that must be realised in the future, but it is a perceived and lived space.

Contrary to the promise of a future to come, that obliges to plain the space, there exist a real lived time that we have to built with our own experiences. Our culture doesn't think about a utopian future but our subjectivity develops based on the present where we have to accomplish our experience and meaning. And this experience needs a space that can't exist previously to the culture and politics, and space created according to the collective point of view. This space for the temporality is always under construction and, for this reason; it can be constructed again and again.

Therefore, the city is an open and accessible space that leaves room to the creative power of the subjective desire, becoming a plural and changing place where multiple situations burst out of the uses and needs of the citizens.

Citizens create occasional appropriations, forms of sociability that can create structures that are more accurately defined and that affect the configuration to the landscape. Because of this, is the use of the space that creates sociability and anthropological value, no the previous city plan.

The city becomes a temporal space for changes, allowing the creation of several alternative spaces for a self-managed life.

As Foucault said: "We are at the epoch of simultaneity. We are at the moment when our experience of the world is less that a long life developing though time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein". (Heterotopia)

## Media

The computer format chosen for this project is a Flash program supported on Shockwave. It provides a media that enables to go beyond the conventional linear narration.

Linear narration, as well as the central perspective, focuses in an area or group of related facts only. That procedure excludes everything that happens all around.

It can't express the complex interrelationships established by man with his environment- the media, industry, and landscape.

that the high level of interactivity provided by Shockwave offers the viewer many simultaneous options, that's why the result doesn't need to unfold at the same pace nor in the same order, breaking up any semblance of linear order.

This enables the reflection work on the plurality and complexity of our reality, whilst, at the same time, shows how the individual is not only a passive spectator of what is happening around him, but it actively participate in the creation of his environment by means of the relationships that he establishes.

The flash programme allows the creation of a situation, a space created with pieces of reality, where the spectator can experiment and create new compositions that are at the same time new spaces for possibility, being an actively part of the work.

This work has been conceived in a way that the participator's decisions determine the form that the work takes, establishing both the order and temporality of the events, and giving space to a great amount of possible meanings. You must also take into consideration the fact that the work is experienced in a public space, which it is also unpredictable due to its nature.

It is not offered as a finished work just to be contemplated but proposes a scene for experimentation and the generation of activities where everybody can construct their own stories by using their own experiences. A space where different realities can be generated from a same material, the day to day life.

The day to day life appears as images taken from reality, and therefore by taking images that belong to the collective imaginary the art work does not become an autonomous and original work to be contemplated but a way to know how to use the existing, that offers new visions and meanings. And it becomes a tool to guide and create new activities and offers new possibilities. This is described by Borriaud in his work Postproduction.

This format allows the creation of a second virtual reality, a Heterotopia, a space that has the property of being in relation with all the other spaces, like a mirror or reflect, and that is capable of juxtaposing, in a single real place, several spaces that are incompatible themselves.



## Description

Under Construction, offers the viewer the possibility to create its own city and to convert a collective space into an individual one, by means of a trip impossible to follow with a map, in which space is constructed according to what appears. As the nomadic passer by Deleuze and Guattari, the spectator plans his journey at the same time he executes it.

Via a drifting journey, not a planned trip but a journey without destination or purpose. A play-based and constructive action, The spectator comes across different images taken from the reality and that belong to different cities and environments. The interacting person follows his impulses and chooses among different options that appear as typical urban elements in the represented landscape. This way the images are put together to give shape, with each click, to new and unpredictable cityscapes.

These cityscapes are made of pieces of different cities, thus reflecting that all cities can become another one. How the mobility and communication has become the main agents for guaranteeing global uniformity.

This mobility creates a diffuse city with multiple centres, a labyrinth net of communications always ephemeral that takes place when occasionally ways of sociability appear. The public space is the space where nothing is permanent. And the first experience that we have to it is the experience of fluidity, co presence and conversation, Isaac Joseph expresses this idea in his work "the passer by and the public space".

The work is made of 160 images taken from photographs of various land and cityscapes. The combination of all these images give birth to more than 400 possible landscapes that are created according to the selections of the viewer who is also guided by the sounds emitted by the different elements he clicks. These sounds are recordings taken in these different environments.

The urban landscapes that appear are formed, therefore, by clippings of our present reality. Most of the elements come from environments that can be found in any city, but others are taken from cities of different cultures and continents and that we know thanks to tourism and mass media. Those elements are registered in our memories and affect our perception of the environment and the way we use it.

The environment/landscape is not only the place where man is located, but it is also what surrounds him and it is given to man depending on his intentionality: it is defined and takes sense according to the experiences and situations he has been through.



That way, this project attempts to pierce the linear narrative and to find a way to express the complexity and plurality of the relationships between the man and his environment. It is a way to enter in the geographical space defined by the urban environment and change it into an existential space.

Michel de Certeau said that walking is the mechanism of constructing citizenship, indeed for constructing the city as opposed to the panorama city.

This project is supposed to be a simulated trip where the spectator can choose his way and where different forms of what surrounds him appear step by step. He will look at the landscape that changes and introduces new elements coming from other parts. He will discover how the new forms and structures that he carries with him from his travels and experiences are integrated in this environment to create a new space more global and more comprehensive. .

At the same time that we go through different places we feel the need to construct these different places, to make them a place to live and a place that can serve to our needs.

Pierre Bourdieu: the space is the result of a collective cultural construction at the same time that culture is articulated like a collection of different spatial relationships.



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