

THE NERVOUS MANIFOLD

ANNA AROV IN CONVERSATION WITH MATTI KALLIOINEN

Anybody invited to realize a project in 1646 is asked to engage in conversation with a previously unknown correspondent.

This conversation takes place via e-mail and stretches through the whole period during which the artists develop their initial idea into final results. 1646 invites the correspondent at the other end of this contact to figure his/her way through this actual process.

In trying to picture what result the artists' work is going to, such exchange can become a reflection on the amount of otherwise untraceable choices of the moment which make up to the artists' practice.

This issue is part of the exhibition by Matti Kallioinen, *The Nervous Manifold*, April 4 2014 in 1646.

This artist
Matti Kallioinen

This correspondent
Anna Arov

Concept and design
Nico Feragnoli

1646.

Boekhorststraat 125, 2512 cn, The Hague
The Netherlands

<http://1646.nl> - info@1646.nl

21 MARCH: Anna Arov [AA] - Matti Kallioinen [MK]

Dear Matti,

I read in the description of your work that there are links to religious cults and science fiction, both of which terrify and intrigue me simultaneously. Can you tell me a bit about when you came in contact with either. By contact, I don't mean receiving signals or being abducted by aliens into a religious cult spaceship, but the moment you become aware of their role in your life. Unless you have had actual contact, in which case I want to know about that.

And of course, it's very nice to meet and converse with you in this email 1646 space. Regards,

Anna

22 MARCH: MK - AA

Hi Anna,
that is a good question.

I should say, the links are mostly indirect, and so is my interest for these phenomena (sci fi and religious cults) I am interested in human beings and the dreams that we dream about ourselves, our communities and the universe. I am certainly not a mystic, I find science much more mind blowing and than anything of the occult.

The capacity of the brain to have trancelike and "mystic" experiences is something that I want to study with artistic means.

But i should confess that there are some reoccurring themes in old sci-fi that I find really touching, all the creative attempts to visualize the first meeting with space people for example. Like the spaceship door that slowly opens with blinding light and smoke coming out of it ... it works, even if I was never abducted myself.

/Matti

25 MARCH: AA - MK

I totally agree, science is much more mind blowing than anything of the occult. To me, the human fascination with the occult is more interesting that the thing itself and I am always drawn into the enthusiasm of people who claim to have seen signs of alien life. These people can be so convincing that it's contagious. The light of those doors opening gets me every time. Something about that much light is magical and comforting. Maybe even tempting.

When you say you want to study the trancelike experience, do you mean in yourself or your audience? How does the music or sound come into this equation?

Best, Anna

27 MARCH: MK - AA

Hi Anna,

It begins with myself having an experience, it can be a light, a sound or movement of a certain quality that catches me. Then I think about how I can automate it (or the essence of it) and use it in a multi sensory orchestration, to make it available to other people.

I think in musical terms, it is like music with a physical spatial dimension, an abstract automatic ballet.

To some extent, I see myself as working in the tradition of abstract animation ("visual music") pioneered by Oskar Fischinger, the Whitney brothers and others.

Animating in physical 3d space is still in its infancy, there is no 3d shaping synthesizers or kinetic clay yet, so I have found my own primitive methods.

It is surprising how very simple abstract patterns can generate a sense of meaning when auditive and visual signals are synchronized in time and space. It feels as if communication was invented all over again, from scratch.

31 MARCH: AA - MK

Hi Matti,

It sounds to me like you are talking about poetry, maybe a visual poetry of sorts. Experience needing to go through a distillation to give it form, makes a lot of sense to me. Especially when you frame it as communication.

The idea of communication being invented from scratch takes me back to our original reference to sci-fi. What would be the most important concept to communicate? The symbols that we have all around us are universal, yet we have learned their meaning in the context they are presented in. For example, an arrow can mean so many things. Of course music provides context, which combined with symbols gives them a new meaning, but the symbols in turn change the meaning of the music. As an arrow found on the inside of a cave will make us look at the cave with new interest and contemplate the meaning of the arrow. Patterns and repetition become an experimental vocabulary, which is best explored in it's delivery to an audience. I wonder if this synchronization, as you call it, can transcend over a cross section of cultures and life forms. I suppose this is what we struggle with as scientists and artists. How does one agree on beauty and it's manifestation as a symbol?

The way you talk about music makes me think of choreography but then of sound, which makes the experience tangible. I wonder if this is what you mean by a third dimension? Though, I also get the feeling that you actually mean to fill a space with shapes. Kinetic clay would be an exciting innovation! What are the primitive methods you use to overcome this limitation?

Best, Anna

MK - AA

Hi Anna,

I think the concepts I reach for are just as basic as the arrows you discuss.

If you zoom in on any part of my work it should be as basic as an arrow or a musical note, or any other form just below the threshold of specific meanings.

I certainly struggle to transcend the cultural cross section you are talking about! I try hard to go beyond culturally specific concepts to find the more basic building blocks that I am convinced they are made up of.

And yes, the space will be filled with slowly breathing shapes, at times they take over the space completely!

My primitive methods involve an overlock sewing machine, parachute fabric and DMX- controlled ventilation fans. And some really strange homemade sewing patterns that produce interesting kinetic effects!

all the best Matti

2 APRIL: AA - MK

The fluidity of parachute fabric would make it the perfect membrane for a moving organism! I can only imagine how much work would go into getting the consummate shape of such magnitude. The way you describe the dominance of these shapes makes me wonder who has control, the art or the maker, and of course that grey area in between.

The idea that the gallery space will be overwhelmed with breathing forms, which will be communicating with each other and the audience is very compelling! I am really excited to see your work on Friday (unfortunately I can't be there for the preview).

MK - AA

Thanks Anna,

I look forward to see you on friday, it has been fun chatting with you!

matti