

The Reflux Project
- event of a geotronic revolution

Artur Matuck

abstract

"The Reflux Project encompassed a long series of telecommunication art events from January 1991 to March 1992. Aesthetic discourses were exchanged through fax, computer, telephone, and videophone.

Reflux was designed in terms of its informational flow. Participating nodes would conceive proposals of dialogical art (Influxes) and send them to the network. Each node, after receiving responses (Fluxes) to its proposal, was to collect and resend them to the network, completing a movement of Reflux.

By August 1991 the Reflux network included two production centers - at the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh, USA and at the 21st São Paulo International Biennial, in Brazil. Furthermore twenty-six nodes were interconnected forming a worldwide electronic community.

Reflux proposals were quite varied in scope since the protocols did not limit themes or media. Most proposals, however, stressed the collective creation of texts and images. Teleactive media events also connected Reflux nodes from September 1991 to January 1992. Refluxers devised original interactive forms of teleconferencing and teleperforming using videophone, fax, telephone.

Featuring individual and collective performances, including artists, intellectuals, and children, the exchanges invariably generated a strong sense of long distance companionship. Refluxers felt they were sharing a privileged aesthetic experience, participating in a planetary neural connection."

"Network artists utilizing telecommunication media are redefining the geographical frontiers of our planet. They are taking the initiative of using the telecommunications media to establish connections between individuals beyond existing frontiers, transbordering institutionalized governments and state structures. They are challenging geographical, linguistic, political, and cultural limits, instituting new models for intercommunication and interactivity between cultural agents."

Artur Matuck, 1991

1. Introduction

The Reflux Project encompassed a series of telecommunication arts events that spanned one and half years from January 1991 to March 1992. Reflux reached hundreds of people all over the world forming a community of artists working together. Works were exchanged through fax, computer, telephone, videophone, or through regular mail, allowing for the active use of telecommunications for art and language research.

Reflux was designed and coordinated by the author (1), during his fellowship at the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, an experimental center for art and technology at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States. Maria Matuck (2) acted as executive producer for the Project and has completed Reflux Interactive, a Hypercard electronic catalog, that summarized the interchanges and the events.

2. An emerging media art

The constant transformation of new communication media as well as the expansion of creative processes in the arts have required new strategies, new planning methodologies and therefore a whole new concept of writing and scripting for the media. While experiencing and reinventing processes provided by new media, artists expand their traditional functions as artisans, manufacturers of auratic and unique objects or even as industrial producers of sounds and images.

The evolving artist, adapting to the fodder of the new electronic age, has become a programmer, a designer, an architect of media systems, a composer of media processes. These new compositions invite collective performances and unheard-of interactions between artists, technologies and audiences.

The development of the specific language of this emerging artist, and the investigation of this metalinguistic form of artistic expression, was the program that gave birth to Reflux.

3. Reflux concept

The Reflux Project evolved out of the idea that large scale telecommunication art events could be designed in terms of their informational flow. Its main objective was to build a structure to entail different creative teams from around the world to generate dialogical or interactive art works. Successive phases were designed covering every aspect of the art event, from inception to closure.

The Reflux Project differed from other telecommunication events in that it proposed a decentralized structure, suggesting an alternative model for intercommunication on a planetary scale. The concepts of decentralization and interactivity were supposed to inform every successive phase so that the network community would generate an event as a distributed ecosystem, without a supervising center.

The project postulated that participating groups and individuals on each node would have the autonomy to conceive their own proposals of dialogical art -- Influxes -- and send them to the whole network, spread throughout the planet. Each proposing node, after receiving responses -- Fluxes -- to its proposal from other nodes, was to collect and resend them to every node in the network, completing a movement of Reflux.

The event opened up to remote participants the opportunity to form a node, propose a theme, a media format for interchange, and to initiate exchanges with any other node. Furthermore, the ensuing informational flow

would in the end be synthesized and redistributed to everyone, in the form of a catalogue and/or an electronic database, the Metafluxes.

4. Project design

A complete version of the original project design was forwarded to prospective participants of the Reflux network on July 1991. An slightly abstracted version of the document is presented in this section:

"REFLUX PROJECT

An art telecommunication event

A learning environment for decentralized interchange

June 1991 to February 1992

A project by Artur Matuck

1. Concept

Reflux aims to install a decentralized interchange of aesthetic discourses through telecommunication networks. Reflux is designed to operate as an open system, an architecture of interconnected channels allowing full participation for each creative team.

Reflux, as a project, provides only a structured network of participating teams connected through commonly shared telecommunication media and coordinated by a sequence of dates for interchanges.

Reflux will accept conceptual, systemic, and thematic propositions from any node in the structure. Each terminal will work as an emitter as well as a recipient of information. Participating teams will propose themes and suggest modes for media operation within the basic structure of Fluxes, Refluxes and Meta-Fluxes.

The network will allow for the active use of telecommunications for language and art research, providing a vehicle for intercultural expression. A sequence of interchanges will provide for the exercise of fluxes and refluxes, propagating pulses and impulses of information. As a structured yet intermittent connection, Reflux is intended to create a micro-process of cultural propagation, mirroring the analogous process of cultural diffusion and change which occurs in large scale.

The interactive process must entail a cultural responsiveness, a confrontation of codes and attitudes, a flowing of non-compulsory interactivity. The implemented network will act as an instrument for collective symbolic production reflecting the voice of a community scattered throughout the planet.

2. Fluxes and Refluxes

Reflux will be coordinated by the initiating node, the team operating from the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The STUDIO group will also function as a service node redistributing information whenever necessary.

Each node must generate a corpus of artistic information which will be successively absorbed by the hosting institution in the form of an on-going exhibition. Each node will be designed to perform both as a viewing area as well as a media performance space, with operating media technology eventually accessible to the public.

Participating groups will face the challenge of creating propositions, suggesting new media interchanges to be played through the electronic network, involving remote teams and eventually individual players around the planet.

The propositions will ideally entice spontaneous forms of public participation and intercultural expression generating new kinds of human experience through aesthetic interaction and dialogue. Texts, images, projects, propositions, and other forms of aesthetic discourses will be exchanged in order to create interactive forms of collective art-making.

Participating artists must be aware that their individual contributions will be part of a larger collective text and that upon entering an aesthetic discourse into the exchange they are automatically granting permission for their entries to be copied and redistributed through the network and reproduced in the final catalog.

3. Project Timeline

Network Formation

The creation of a worldwide network of communicating artists is the first step in the process. The objective is the formation of an electronic community through which information can freely flow fostering interpersonal ties and furthering feelings of trust and responsiveness. When the structure becomes operational, a decentralized decision-making process is initiated.

Interactive Planning

The electronic community defines a set of parameters: a common calendar, the media or their combination, the modes of media operation, the sharing of responsibilities, and specific themes for the interchanges. Once commonly shared protocols are defined, a process of Fluxes and Refluxes follows.

Interactive Art Production

In order to install an interactive art making process through the network, every team will follow a sequence of movements: influx, flux, reflux, metaflux. During the performing of the sequence, every terminal's team will alternate functions, acting both as a proposing team as well as a responding one. The basic concept of the plan is to leave to every team the responsibility of being an active initiator of informational exchanges, of responding to every other's dialogical propositions, and to inform the whole network of the informational movement occurring at its site, resending to every participating team the totality of responses received.

Influx

Every proposing terminal sends to all the others an initial dialogical proposition, detailing the theme for exchange, modes of media operation, and all the information necessary for the exchange plan to be accomplished.

Flux

The network, that is, all the other participating teams, responds to the proposing terminal by sending aesthetic propositions, thereby implementing an interactive process.

Reflux

The proposing terminal sends back to the network the entire set of received propositions, making available to every node the most complete vision of the network response to the original proposition. Each terminal will be receiving the totality of the exchanges from every other node acquiring a complete view of all and every exchange within the system.

Exhibitions & Media Events

A Media art exhibition is installed at every node making available to the public the material exchanged within the network. This is a time and an occasion for special media events, synchronous telecommunications, teleconferences and media laboratories. It will also be an occasion for a freeflux, an unrestricted flowing of discourses, a random exchange, eventually including public participation.

Meta flux

The event winds down with a documentation process. The nodes will confront all former interchanges, and the process as a whole, produce and send meta-propositions about the event itself. The objective of the Meta Flux interchange is the reunion of a set of propositions, images, and texts of a critical, analytical, descriptive, and/or subjective nature. The material will

translate the experience of the event from the most diverse perspectives, forming the core of a future catalog.

5. Reflux Network

The response to the project was overwhelmingly positive. Important feedback arrived from Japan. Professor Itsuo Sakane from Keio University affirmed on an email message: "It [Reflux] sounds [like a] very ambitious and provocative project which would be the prototype for the future model of such communication art." Professor Kunihiro Nakagawa, from the Tokyo University of Art and Design, sent a fax-letter in response to the proposal commenting that: "I am personally interested in the mixing of hetero-cultures in order to have a cultural mutation. It is very important to enrich the original cultures which are to be re-constructed by this mutation."

By June 1991 several groups and individual artists have committed themselves for participation. The Reflux network was then transbordering the United States forming an electronic community with a widespread geographical distribution and cultural diversity.

By August 1991, the Reflux network grew out to include two production centers and twenty-six nodes. The production centers functioned as coordinators, information distributors and hosts of special events. The nodes were defined as any place that sent or responded to proposals, or participated in the special events.

The STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University was the first irradiating center and the sponsor for the whole project. The STUDIO provided the technical facilities and personnel, computers, fax machines, telephones, and the so necessary funds for transmissions, turning the dream of a worldwide art community into a tangible reality. The excellent electronic mail system at CMU was an indispensable tool for the creation, institution and development of a worldwide electronic community.

The STUDIO also sponsored several workshops on digital image exchange gathering dispersed researchers on a concentrated effort to gain control on the technicalities of encoding and decoding images over computer networks.

At the STUDIO, the Reflux project proved to be attractive enticing a group of artists, professionals and students into a flurry of activity conducive to creative collaboration. A strong team was formed (note) which developed a steady effort to turn telecommunication technology into a viable vehicle for artistic expression.

The STUDIO team (3) received and distributed information to all other nodes, acting as a service node, facilitating the task of refluxing information. In the process, faxes, photos, drawings were scanned, digitized and sent via email while images received via email were printed and sent as faxes to nodes with no access to computer or email.

Email was also an indispensable tool for the establishment of a support team in São Paulo for the upcoming participation of Reflux in the 20th São Paulo Biennial. Since July up to September a succession of teleconferences connected São Paulo to Pittsburgh linking the STUDIO team to the newly formed São Paulo Reflux committee.

The opening of the Reflux pavillion at the Biennial on September 21th provided a new production and distribution center for the project diverting the focus from North to South. In Brazil, Reflux provided extensive participation for the Biennial visiting public during two months. The Reflux pavillion at 21st. São Paulo International Biennial, SP, Brazil, was operational from September to December 1991.

The Reflux network extended from North to South, from East to West, circling the planed. (3) It included nodes in the United States, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, and Israel. Most of the nodes however were located in the United States, particularly in California, reflecting a situation of easier access to media technology.

6. Proposals

Since the start of the influxing process some text-based proposals have already been electronically mailed to all nodes with computer access. On August 1991, the STUDIO collected, edited, published and sent to every participating node a catalog of influxes providing to every node in the network the dialogical propositions created by the network itself. This process permitted the beginning of a process of interaction among the nodes.

The Reflux project unleashed a decentralized interchange of ideas and artistic concepts. Its protocols did not limit the themes or mediums that participants could suggest. Consequently, the proposals submitted were quite varied in scope, utilizing several communication methods and exploring a wide range of issues and interests.

In this section we show the collection of Proposals, or Fluxes, as defined on the original design, and a collection of Responses, which we call Influxes.

Stephen S'Soreff, the editor of *Avant Garde Art Review*, submitted the first proposal by phone, asking "What will art be like in the future?" This was an appropriate beginning for *Reflux*. As additional proposals circulated through the network, they became answers to Soreff's question. *Reflux* artists created art for the immediate future using telecommunication technologies and process.

Brian Andreas' intriguing proposal, "Geography of the Intimate," asked participants to share personal stories and images secret dreams secret and fetishe through electronic mail. The proposal was intended to investigate "... ways in which our selves can use e-media as a means of psychic/spiritual connection with a larger human world." It was a great success with the public at the SP Biennial, eliciting several spontaneous responses.

"Hydra" was proposed by Vernon Reed as "a new entity, composed of multiple personalities and residing in the computer networks." "Hydra" constituted itself on an electronic mail conference held from August to October, 1991, on the Well/ACEN Network. Participants were supposed to assume one or more personalities, providing a personality sketch when responding for the first time to the topic. This electronic mail conference centered more on the educational possibilities of such a system of anonymous collective communication.

Three superimposed texts became one on an untitled poemgraphic proposal by Juan Gomes-Perales from the Montreal node. The unified discourse interwove a description of a file encoding/decoding process with other texts reporting the disappearance of a friend and a doctor's examination of a cataleptic patient. The final composition was not explicitly a proposal. However, the juxtaposition of disparate unrelated texts could be interpreted as an open invitation for others/readers to add their texts recreating a more intricate text-ure.

Jeff Mann from the InterAccess/Toronto node sent "Handshake," a Hypercard stack of a virtual handshake in animated text, graphics and sound. Participants were encouraged to send a handshake back to InterAccess, which received several responses via electronic mail and fax.

Robert Dunn, in "Currency of Language," invited participants to "trade virtual money and share in the poetry of prosperity." The analogy between transmission of value and transmission of meaning was a case in point within the context of a teleart project. As a response, an Australian bill was faxed to Robert Dunn in Pittsburgh. The artist erased part of the bill emphasizing devaluation in the "exchange" rate. Ironically, the artistic value of the work is now reportedly exceeding the face value of the Australian currency (sic).

"Non-Mainstream Art" by Peter Maxwell asked for textual and graphic submissions dealing with similarities and differences between "mainstream" and "non-mainstream" art at every node location around the world. The aim was to better understand the relationship between art and culture mainly among ethnic groups.

"Messages From the Blemyae," by Artur Matuck, asked participants to describe the adventures of the mythical creature Blemyae as he circulated the network. The monstrous race of the Blemyae, men lacking heads and necks, with their faces on their chests, came from the margins of Eurocentric medieval time as a drawing of a human being, to visit the present day electronic world of communications. The Blemyae visit was aimed at investigating how electronic media could facilitate common understanding among cultures without prejudgments.

BLEMYATIZATION OF THE OTHER

"The enemy is the Blemyae, a mediatic creation. Blemyae, Sciopods, Antipodes are representations of the Other, inhabiting the borders. To blemyatize is to interpret the skin, the facial expression, body language, behavior and attitude as different than ours and therefore as undeserving humane treatment or mercy". Artur Matuck

"The unusual races of men .. represented alien yet real cultures existing beyond the boundaries of the European know world from Antiquity to the Middle Ages ... Populating the outermost edges of world maps and resting uneasily in neat frames on the pages of the great illustrated encyclopedias." John Friedman - The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought. Harvard University Press, 1981

Anna Couey, in "Cybersculpture: Communicating Across Borders," asked network participants what they felt the state of telecommunications was in their countries and what their ideal networks would be. Couey hoped that such discussion would encourage greater involvement in electronic communications leading to development and improvement of existing networks.

Artur Matuck continued his explorations into intercultural communications with "Langterra." The proposal asked participants to submit artistic and literary creations simultaneously containing several languages. It aimed at utilizing the potential of computer communication to generate new meanings, languages, symbols, and words to further multicultural and international understanding leading to a "language of the earth."

"Dymaxial Terrestory," by Matuck and Robert Rogers, faxed to Refluxers four adjacent equilateral triangles forming the flat plan of a tetrahedron. One randomly chosen triangle was filled with an image relating to a territory on a map or a recent political media event. Participants were asked to fill the remaining triangles "with imagination." The images received at the STUDIO were assembled into icosahedrons and displayed at the Hewlett Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University.

"Traces," by Gilberto Prado, asked nodes to alter an image of the planet and then send it to two other nodes by fax. Prado traced the

evolution of the image as it circulated along the network and planned to present a final animation of the transformation of the image.

CleveNode, under the leadership of Wayne Draznin, submitted "Mozart's Picnic." Participants were to present sound manipulations of and images suggested by K 504, a musical composition by Mozart as part of an experiment in intersemiotic translations across the network. The Clevenode was also instrumental in bringing up questions of a sociopolitical nature to the forefront of the Reflux Network.

Lowry Burgess asked "What is the sound of Mercy?" as part of an electronic mail conference on the Well/ACEN Network held in September, 1991, in the Hewlett Gallery. There were eighty responses to the question, ranging from serious replies to more humorous suggestions as to what the "sounds of mercy" were. These were the first 10:

*"Yes!"
I will help!
Take your time.
No need to panic.
I'll get up with David. Go ahead and sleep.
Help yourself to more!
Deep sleep.
Open hand to fill.... close hand to grab!!!
Why yes, we did make a backup.
I feel that way, too!*

The Artsnet node, coordinated by Sue Harris and Phil Bannigan, intended to involve Australian artists in teleart as well as to discuss socio-political dimensions of the emerging network art environment. Their proposal was intended to entice the participation of Australian artists, challenging them to immerse themselves into the network and, with a few hours training, to come up with responses to Reflux proposals.

Koncern°, the Reflux connection in Denmark, chose to participate only through fax. Each day they transmitted documents to participating sites and asked that responses to them be sent back for display at the Royal College of Arts in Copenhagen. Their cryptic, amusing 'verbo-visual' concepts reached the entire Reflux fax network.

"Making Art On-line" was a database collected by Judy Malloy of artists' texts reporting their experiences on data transmission systems. Malloy keyed the artists' statements by subject and generated a collaboratively written paper that was later published online through Fine Art Forum.

The Reflux Antipodal Art Project, or "TRAnAP," by Artur Matuck, aimed at promoting international cooperation and understanding through telecommunication technologies. TRAnAP collected names, postal and electronic mail addresses, voice and fax numbers, as well as interests,

backgrounds, and so on, of whoever was interested in finding his or her antipode, or counterpart on the other side of the globe. TRAnAP also requested that any and all antipodal contacted send a report to the STUDIO node. Surprising responses were received reporting antipodal contact and willingness to engage on those upside-down connecting links.

7. Special Media Events

Special teleactive events interconnected Reflux nodes from September, 1991 to January, 1992. Events occurred primarily between the São Paulo node at the 21st International Biennial and the STUDIO node in Pittsburgh, although several other nodes participated, including Cleveland, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, San Diego, Berkeley, Yosemite, Santa Monica, Toronto, Montreal, Copenhagen, Aix-en-Provence, Paris and Jerusalem. Reflux artists devised original creative forms of teleconferencing and teleperforming using videophone, fax, and the telephone itself.

Events such as the Multi-way Teleconference Call gathered speakers from five different cities including Sao Paulo, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Toronto and Copenhagen in a spontaneous conversation. Later events included an exchange of faxed and voice-recorded self-portraits between Sao Paulo and Aix-en-Provence in Southern France, and an exchange by children of city landscapes among Jerusalem, Sao Paulo and Pittsburgh.

September 26 and 27
***Clothesfax* - Teleperformance**
Fax & Videophone exchange
Concept: Otavio Donasci
SP Biennial Node.

Email distributed to the Reflux network in September:

"CLOTHEFAX (FAXFAXION!)

INFLUX FOR INTERACTIVE PERFORMANCE

XEROXED CLOTHING PIECES WILL BE FAXED TO EVERY
 NODE IN THIS NETWORK ACTION.
 IN THESE NODES THERE WILL BE
 WOMEN OR MEN USING THE INCOMING CLOTHEFAXES;

CLOTHES MUST BE XEROXED OPENWIDE SO THAT
 CLOTHEFAXES CAN BE REASSEMBLED AND WEARED
 BY MODELS IN THE NODES."

Sao Paulo & Pittsburgh report:

Performances were simultaneously held in the Reflux pavilion at the SP Biennial and in the Hewlett Gallery in Pittsburgh. Models and participating artists were wearing xeroxed clothes and custom jewelry received by fax.

The CleveNode sent a piece of "Underwear", a biomedical illustration depicting inner human organs of the upper body. Laura Schultz sent from Yosemite a Bridal Gown divided in hundreds of fax sheets. Gilberto Prado in Paris created a griffe - JoiaFax - which produced and sent fax "baubles and bangles" and other accessories.

Performers enjoyed wearing costumes that came right out of the machine. During the videophone exchanges they posed and played with their reconstructed paper clothing.

A picture of Maria Matuck wearing the "Underwear" at the Hewlett Gallery while talking on the telephone was printed in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Friday, September 27, 1991. The caption read:

"Maria Matuck wears 'Transparent Fashion,' an outfit faxed from Cleveland, while telephoning Brazil for more fax transmissions. Carnegie Mellon University's Studio for Creative Inquiry is taking part in Reflux, an art telecommunication event for intercultural expression. Artistic teams are sending images and messages from numerous U.S. cities, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, France and Japan." (sic)

September 29

***Preaching as Art* - Videophone exchange Teleperformance by Phriar Phil of the First Church of the Disenfranchised Transmitted from Pittsburgh to Sao Paulo**

Phil Roztek, a DAX group member, performed as Phriar Phil. He was first seen wearing a business suit, shirt and tie. He removed them to expose an undershirt with the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary on it before baring his chest to put on the hood and robes of the phriar. The next sequence of images focused on the Phriar's face surrounded by words from the Roman Catholic Mass Prayer for the Dead written both in Latin and in Portuguese.

"MEMENTO ETIAM [in Latin]

MEMENTO ETIAM, DOMIN FAMULORUM FORMULARUMQUE TUARUM
NEWTON ET DESCARTES, QUI NOS PRAECESSERUNT CUM SIGNO FIDEI ET
DORMIUNT IN SOMNO PACIS."

The performance continued with the Phriar inviting questions from the Brazilian audience. Questions were answered with a random selection of an inventory of pictorial responses ranging from a dead bird, a carpenter level, and world peace postage stamps.

The piece proceeded by showing a number of printed images of Saint Francis alternated with faces of participants in Pittsburgh and Sao Paulo.

The Phriar later observed that: "The interjection of Newton and Descartes into the intentions of the opening prayer would see dualism and reductive logic as belonging to the spiritually dead; a dead deserving our respect and compassion but a dead which now offers little in the way of a viable thought process in today's world. Exchanged dialogue as a form of rupture, in its all inclusive and Franciscan sense, is seen as preferable - simultaneously being a wish for fulfillment and an invitation to anarchy."

September 29

***Virtual-Creature* - Videophone exchange**

Teleperformance by Otavio Donasci

Transmitted from the Reflux/Sao Paulo Biennial Node

The Virtual Creature was conceived by Otavio Donasci as a kind of telematic video installation piece. He proposed to integrate videofaces created in Pittsburgh with a "videoheaded" mannequin in Sao Paulo.

A tight close-up of either an actor or an actress facial expression produced in Pittsburgh would be transmitted through the videophone to Sao Paulo to be shown in the monitor head of the video-mannequin.

The videophone exchange happened as planned. The motionless human figure was animated from Pittsburgh through the faces arriving by videophone.

October 4
Global Frontiers for Art - Videophone exchange
Teleconference by Lowry Burgess, Dean of College of Fine Arts,
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh.

Transmitted from The Hewlett Gallery, Pittsburgh to the Reflux Pavilion, 21st. International Sao Paulo Biennial.

Excerpts from original text:

"Axiological shifts will engender movements within the arts and at the same time provoke expanded roles for the arts in the coming generation.

Radical shifts in the environmental and sociological structures give unique impetus to the arts participation in the global context and simultaneously within inner regions of individual and group consciousness. These immediate pressures are augmented by massive technological innovations with all of their individual and social displacements overarched by a communications inundation of extraordinary power.

These multiple and synchronous shifts imply the need for new frameworks of integration so that individuals and groups may guide themselves toward creative objectives".

"Digitalia" is a new computer-based continent rapidly developing its own inward and outward reality. Its constant drive is toward higher and higher forms of simulation, simultaneity and synesthesia, all moving toward the formulation of fourth dimensional gestalts. Digitalia is waking to its capacity to dream and artists of all kinds have the abilities to gestalt these first inchoate dreams. This powerful transformative presence will be complementarily balanced by an intense drive for an inner poetics. Art will expand its roles both in relationship to inward search and also in the process of reifying new states of consciousness. It will expand traditional roles to develop objects and procedures which will be of intense immediate value balanced against the perceived technological winter. New gestalts of inner connected dynamic forms addressing internal necessities, i.e., redemption, propitiation, liberation, transcendence and ecstasy. There will be inwardly directed artistic action to make internal forms, communications and meanings: a process of internalization in which the art form exists inwardly. These internalized forms will reach outward through alternative forms of communication. This internalized poetic will be driven by the desire to transform the world into a feelingful construct"

"Our survival is profoundly encoded in our capacity to develop adequate artistic formulations. One of these new formulations can be called the " Global Studio". The interconnections are live satellite, fax, slow scan, computer networks, etc, to open two way transparent interaction between artists situated in different cultures, in distant sites in the world. This fourth dimensional studio would encompass both hardware and software development and integration; a new kind of "creative work station.

With artists in diverse fields and projects including: video, performance, poetry, music, drama, architecture, and design, the idea is to provide sufficient time and technology to allow the development of a new form of globally interactive creative experience that could model new forms of global consciousness. (seeing through the earth, links to space and planetary information systems as well as outer space imaging systems)

The aesthetic and philosophical purpose is to dissolve traditional culture-space-time boundaries and be able to explore the nature and possibilities of a new global fourth dimensional consciousness wrapped within the emerging poetic frame."

[unedited selected segments]

October, 6

Black Consciousness - Teleperformance

Videophone exchange featuring American and Brazilian Black artists

Teleconference by Ulisses Jenkins and Paris 68

Transmitted between Oakland, California and the Reflux/Sao Paulo Biennial node

Sao Paulo report:

We could see Ulisses Jenkins and Regina Mouton sitting around a table at their "Other Visions" Studio in Oakland, California. Jenkins introduced himself informally to the SP audience, as did Mouton. Jenkins alternated video images of the kalimba, an instrument known as the African finger piano, with telephone transmissions of its exquisite sound, delighting the SP audience.

Jenkins also told us about former videophone contacts he had had with Black people from South Africa. He mentioned that they would stop talking or move to another topic when a sensitive issue was mentioned. Jenkins sensed that they feared that someone else would also be listening to the conference.

The Brazilian group of expressionist dance "Paris 68", composed of Black dancers Anabel Andres, Sueli Andrade, Claudinei Roberto and Anselmo Luis Lins do Prado, responded with a complex choreography entwined with a critique of nationalist icons, such as a Brazilian flag that they wrapped around themselves like a fancy dress. Their very angry text finalized the presentation:

"In this tragic situation - misery, education lack, no health [care], no food, racism, corruption - faith, rock and samba are few of the ways people attach themselves to believe [that] life's still possible..."

Ethical Heroes are missed ? Parameters?
What about the composers, good football players, artists and specially the poets of our team?

No, we won't say goodbye.
What we do need is a battering ram against these terrible times.
A mythology of Xavantes, Iracemas, Palmares...New romantics and (various) black Homeros.

Don't say Goodbye, Say Hail!"

October 9
Videophone Exchange
Teleperformance among art students from
Ontario College of Art, Canada &
School of Communications and Arts
at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Coordination: Jeff Mann in Toronto &
Artur Matuck in Sao Paulo.

The video dialogue was initiated by the Sao Paulo node. Students from the University of Sao Paulo circled around a lit candle, protecting a flickering small fire with their hands, creating a succession of touching images and conveying a sense of magic and community that travelled across continents.

Later on, a response came from Canada. Using the possibilities of rapidly changing stored images in the videophone internal memory, Toronto students were able to recreate at a distance an amazing and amusing animation. They surprised the SP audience by asking them to repeatedly press the memory review button to animate a succession of formerly transmitted still images. The videophone became a flip book showing a woman swallowing a little man.

October 9

***Improvisation Study. Videophone exchange
Teleperformance by Ricardo Karman and Otavio Donasci ?
Companhia Teatro Multimidia de Sao Paulo
Transmitted from Sao Paulo to Inter-Acess, Toronto, Canada***

quotation of original text read from
text needs to be found
it will not be included in the ArtCom version!!!

In a videophone transmission from the SP Bienal to the Ontario College of Arts in Toronto, Karman alternated a series of humorous clown like faces of himself with spoken text. During his performance, he noted that his physical and biological identity did not exist as an absolute but in memory, and life is only continuous remembering, that electronic media such as videophone and fax allowed individuals to "travel" across the world in the "remembering" of the image. The intriguing concepts presented in his lecture contrasted with the clown noses he kept changing during his presentation.

October 24

***Satisfaxion - Virtual Party
Concept: Artur Matuck, Reflux/Sao Paulo Biennial Node.***

E.mail to the Reflux Network, October 22:

"S A T I S F A X I O N ! ! ! PARTY CIPATE IN THE PARTY FAX !

Yes, we can have some SATISFAXION! It will be on October 24, 1991, next Thursday! 7 pm! Sao Paulo time!

At the Reflux Biennial pavilion in the Ibirapuera Park, Sao Paulo City, there will be a great festafax, or in other words, a funky reception to our friends, sponsors, journalists, thus if you happen to be around that day stop by! But if you are not around you can still participate serving our guests with your food, spices, dressings, drinks, utensils. We would really like to serve your typical food to our/your Reflux guests in the Biennial. So be creative.

We are waiting to taste, smell, see, touch your delightful culinary preparations. But also remember AHIMSA! and that, naturally, vegetarians taste better. Much better! Artur & Maria"

Email from Maria Matuck, SP Biennial Node, October 25

"Satisfaxion was nice. We were all very happy, and the energy around was very good. The Biennial did not allow us to serve drinks or food in the

pavilion (they say no to everything) but we had a virtual party, with virtual sandwiches and drinks, and also ice-cream. It was beautiful."

November 9 and November 16
***Children's Interchange* - Fax and email exchange**
Coordination: Maria & Artur Matuck in Sao Paulo, Brazil;
Robert Dunn & Melanie Carr in Pittsburgh, USA; Nurit Shilo-
Cohen in Jerusalem, Israel
Nodes: SP Biennial Node, Sao Paulo; Studio Node, Pittsburgh;
Israel Museum, Jerusalem

Sao Paulo report:

The incredible number of children visiting the SP Biennial and the Reflux pavilion prompted us to organize a children's exchange. We wanted them to have a first hand experience of long distance communication with their peers.

Maria Luiza Saddi, an art educator, volunteered to organize a visit to the Biennial with children from an experimental school she directs in Sao Paulo. At the "Enturmando Sao Remo," low income children from the Sao Remo "favela" are taught visual arts, theater, and circus. On November 9, the children came to the Biennial. They were asked to say something about themselves and about their cities as a means of initiating a dialogue through words and images. They were invited to introduce themselves by email or fax and to draw a skyline of their cities to be sent by fax. The children dictated their messages in Portuguese, which were translated to English and sent to Pittsburgh via email. They also drew a skyline of Sao Paulo which was faxed to Pittsburgh.

In Pittsburgh, students of Jim Reinhard at from Ingomar Middle School, sent their written answers to these messages by fax. The images were sent to Sao Paulo and Jerusalem through the STUDIO node.

In Jerusalem, children utilized fax to send images of "cityscapes" with their names and stories written above the buildings of the imaginary skylines. The drawings were sent to both Pittsburgh and Sao Paulo.

On November 16, the children from the "Enturmando Sao Remo" returned to the Biennial to see the responses.

Email message sent from Sao Paulo to Pittsburgh on November 9:

"Hi Pittsburgh.

We are here at the Biennial of Sao Paulo. Now is 3:52 pm, its raining outside. Today is hot, but there is some wind.

Some of us belong to Sao Remo, which is a program created by the "Secretaria do Menor," a special city department taking care of children."

Letters from Sao Paulo children:

"How is your world, the world you live in? I am 12 years old. I am studying fine arts na "Enturmando" (a school of theater, circus, and arts). I live in Jardim Sao Remo, Sao Paulo."

Maria Lucia

"Hi. How are you? I would like to know where do you study? How is your world? Would you like to come to Sao Paulo city? My name is Silvana, 11 years old, I live in Jardim Sao Remo, in Sao Paulo. What I like the most is to make drawings. I have just made a drawing in the computer. I like it a lot."

Silvana

Santana

"I would like to know how is your country. Which color do you like the most? I am 9 years old and my name is Camila. In Sao Paulo it is good, it is a pity that there is no beach but it is good.

It is a nice place but there is too much robbery."

Camila

Leite

November 21

Fax to Face, Voice to Voice, en Tete a Tete

Fax and Voice Exchange

Concept: Varia Qua Dca (Pierre Granoux, Anne Vidal, Sarah Vaughan)

Transmitted between Sao Paulo, Brazil & Aix-en-Provence, France

Concept:

"Face to Fax" is a proposition for the fluxing and refluxing of artist's identifications and self-presentations.

Image: "Face to Fax"

Fax exchanges of self-portraits (photos, drawings, texts).

Voice: "Voice to Vox"

A telephone line, with an answering machine, will be available for oral self-portraits in the language of origin of the artists.

Sao Paulo report:

"The event took place on the evening of November 21. A series of fax self-portraits were exchanged between Brazilian participants in the Reflux Telarte Workshop in SP and the French and American partners at the Aix-en-Provence Ecole d'Art in southern France.

The exchange was completed with a sequence of vocal self-presentations transmitted by phone and recorded at the other end.

The fast paced self-presentations in Portuguese and in French created an incredible exhilaration. Hearing distant voices and sounds of known and unknown friends was an inestimable experience for everyone, either as a performer or as a listener.

The self-presentations assumed twists of humor, tinting them with a gentler way of expression."

Aix-en-Provence report:

"The french half of the Reflux exchange on November 20, 1991 between the Sao Paulo Bienale and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Aix-en-Provence, France was led by a group of three artists: Pierre Granoux, Anne Vidal, and Sarah Vaughan. They live and work in Nimes, France, but made weekly treks to Aix-en-Provence to work with students at the art school in Aix. I and Elizabeth Meadows, two American students from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, joined the Reflux group in October of 1991. With the exception of one Brazilian student, the others were French.

Our work commenced with planning for the exchange and readying self-portraits so that we could send our "faces" in the Face to Fax portion of the project. With the exception of Pierre, Anne, and Sarah, none of us had taken part in a fax art exchange and we looked forward to it, unsure of how one conducts a fax art exchange. In retrospect, I believe we handled the event in a spontaneous way, making decisions as we went along. The first of these decisions on the evening of Face to Fax involved turning the art school offices into a sort of "command post" after the staff left school for the day. We moved in extra desks, set up fax and telephone message machines. During the course of the night, from 8 p.m. through the early hours of the morning, we transformed this office area from its usual appearance into a telecommunication art studio.

We were all so excited for the arrival of the first incoming message from Brazil that when we heard the machine start to click into action we all gathered round the fax. From then on out we spent time alternately sending, receiving, responding, and querying the sometimes confusing images we received. We removed paintings from the walls and hung pages of incoming and outgoing images in their places. Pierre Granoux busily calculated phone line charges all the while. We felt fortunate to have Brazilian, Rogerio Monteiro, there to help with translating portugese, though most of the faxes had messages written in English. One that we found very interesting came through in individual pages each with a drawn body part and a question; an ear-"can you hear me?", an eye-"can you see me?", lips-"can you kiss me?". Other faxes were not of an inquiring nature but told us of their maker.

We sent and received in pre-arranged alternating fifteen minute intervals. Of the images we sent, I remember most clearly a moment at which Pierre Granoux, pointing to either end of a page passing through the machine, turned to me and said, "You see? This half is in France, and this, in Brazil". Somehow that hadn't ocured to me until then, and though it is obvious and explainable, I believe there is still some quality of magic in that notion.

After receiving and sending all of the "portraits" we excitedly awaited a telephone call from the Brazilians in which they were to leave a "voice portrait" on our answering machine. When the phone did finally ring our attention to the message was intense as we heard what seemed to be a prank call from a heavy breather. We looked around the room, noticed that one of our members was absent and realized as a laughing Pierre Amatore walked through the door, that he had capitalized on our anticipation for the Brazilians call and had played the joke on us. In a short while, however, we received the actual call and they, one after the other, left their voice portraits. We returned their call in a like manner, offering name, nationality, and any other identifying message we wished.

At around 1 am the event was finished and Elizabeth Meadows completed photo documentation of the work and the office's appearance. We discussed the possibility of leaving our work on the office walls in order to show the school what had gone on in that space during the night. We went so far as to rehang the paintings in their customary sights on top of the faxes that covered all available wall surfaces. Finally, we decided to return the room to its original appearance and did so, knowing that though the work might remain as evidence, our experience and the intensity of feeling we shared about what took place could not be imparted so easily."

November 22

Local Image, Global Image - Fax exchange

Concept: Karen O'Rourke, Art Reseaux node, Paris, France

Local and time-specific images (influxes), from Paris, Sao Paulo, and Pittsburgh will be sent via e-mail and/or fax to network members around the world the day before the November full moon on November 20.

Participating artists will interpret these images in light of their own local situation and sensibility, and then send their interpretations (fluxes) to Paris, Sao Paulo, and Pittsburgh during the next four days--November 21, 22, 23, 24).

All works received will be exhibited at the three sites. At la Vilette they will also be entered in computer memory as part of a hypermedia file to be accessed by visitors.

"Please interpret this image taken from the Parisian daily newspaper *LIBERATION* and fax your interpretation to: [list of nodes and fax numbers]. All images received will be exhibited at the Cité des Sciences de la Villette in Paris, at the 21st Biennial of Sao Paulo and at the Hewlett Gallery in Pittsburgh."]

Sao Paulo reports:

The event actually happened on November 22. Participating in the event were the Art Reseaux/Paris node, the SP Reflux node (that time located at "Oficinal Cultural Oswald de Andrade"), the STUDIO/Pittsburgh node, the San Francisco State University node, the San Diego node, and Varia Q'ca at Aix-en-Provence.

After a long discussion, an image of a graffitied message on the Museum of Independence, one of the most important monuments in SP, was chosen to represent the city. Youth gangs in SP and Rio de Janeiro had just declared a graffiti war. The image was evidence of another monument of institutional culture hit by an emerging unrestrained cultural form of expression.

In Pittsburgh, Maria Matuck produced her first visual intervention into the network, faxing a xeroxed image of the plate of her car YSF 715 in which Pennsylvania, the Keystone state, is publicized.

Art Reseaux faxed to the participating nodes an impressive scene of the war in Yugoslavia, which drew some interesting responses. An old Croatian woman passing along a pile of corpses in the Yugoslavian city of Vukovar deeply impressed the networkers, prompting them to add their vision to an already charged image of our times.

It is amazing how a crude newspaper image can be esthetized, becoming an artistic object when "tokenized", fragmented in digital dots, with glimpses of Moire streams.

January 17, 1992
***WRAP, UNWRAP* - Parcels interchange**
Concept: VARIA QU'A D'CA, Pierre Granoux, Anne Vidal, Sarah
Vaughan
Aix-en-Provence, France

Concept:

"WRAP, UNWRAP proposes an exchange of parcels between the nodes utilizing only traditional mail services. Each parcel may contain a sculpture, an object, a text, a photo, a cassette, a videotape, etc., within the limits of one kilogram (2 pounds) per parcel. From the moment the parcel leaves the artist/sender it belongs to the network. (So NO copyrights).

When the parcels are received they must NOT be opened immediately. Near the end of the Reflux project the opening of all the parcels received will be the subject of a simultaneous planetary Happening/Grand Opening."

Report from the STUDIO node:

At the Studio we received several large parcels from Aix-en-Provence. We decided to respond sending back a video of ourselves at the Grand Opening.

On January 17, commemorating Arts Birthday, we all sat around the large table at the STUDIO conference room: Artur Matuck, Maria Matuck, Robert Dunn. We also invited our friends - James Althucer and Anne Loney. - to participate in the Grand Parcel Opening Celebration.

As we gathered around the large table, Toby, a professional cameraman from Germany, video-recorded the session.

We were pleasantly surprised with the craftsmanship involved in the production of the objects, in writing, labelling, packaging.

We became very nostalgic as handwritten poems, cardboard sculptures, wine bottles, and regional almond candies pop up at our table involving us with their puns, irony, humor and friendship.

When our guest James opened a certain one, we told him, that the author of that art-parcel was sitting just by him: Anna Loney. She had recently arrived from a semester long experience at Aix-en-Provence where she worked with Varia Q'ca D'ca. Now, she was getting to know the Reflux people at the other end of the line.

Finally we shared the wine of a bottle, tagged Flux, sent by Pierre Granoux. The others, tagged Reflux and Metaflux, were appropriately left for a later time.

Another pleasant, yet anonymous, surprise arrived from Sausalito, California--a flower bulb accompanied by a carefully written message: "Don't travel to Paradise — rather, make paradise in the place you live."

Later we received from Thomas Holan, our Czechoslovakian connection, an interesting email: "Yes, I am receiving messages - and more!: some weeks ago I got an envelope containing a root of some plant without sender's address, only with word REFLUX and small label: "Don't travel to paradise, make paradise on the place where you live" (or something similarly nice, I don't remember exactly the words). Don't you know something about it? Yours, Tomik"

After reviewing our performance and laughed about ourselves a bit, we packed it and mailed to Aix-en-Provence, where we hope it will be shown on a coming exhibition on the Reflux project Pierre and Anne are preparing.

In the end, a magic circle was completed. And a phrase of an anonymous poet keeps coming back to my internal ears as if its simplicity would hold an unknown power: "Don't travel to Paradise..."

8. Exhibitions

Exhibitions are an important issue in a telecommunication art project. During these exhibitions, when a new art-work arrived it was immediately displayed. In this way, the public could experience the simultaneity that is inherent in the telecommunication project.

And more importantly, in most of the exhibitions of this kind, the public could participate by responding to the proposals or even create new ones.

Reflux had two large exhibitions (São Paulo and Pittsburgh), and several smaller ones at some nodes. We showed the proposals and the responses side by side, and opened the electronic mail lines for the public response. Besides the exhibitions, Reflux held a total of 21 Special Events.

Reflux at Hewlett Gallery.

College Fine Arts, Carnegie Mellon University, September 17th - 29th, 1991

Message from Maria Matuck to the Refluxers, by electronic mail:

"In Pittsburgh, the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, one of the Production Centers of the Reflux Project exhibits the works exchanged with artists of several countries and several american states, beginning on September 17th, at the Hewllet Gallery. More than a hundred of Images, proposals, texts, dreams, documents, graphisms, sounds and many other forms of artistic expression, exchanged via fax and computer during July and August, will now be exhibited.

Furthermore, the audience could also participate in teleconferences via computer and dialogue with artists of more than 20 countries!!

Visitors to the Hewlett Gallery will also be connected with ArtCom, an online database about Telecommunication and Art which has hundreds of different items to be researched. The "Computer Display Updated" exhibits in "Slide" effect, the first images received from the Reflux network. Artists from the Reflux STUDIO node will also be recording teleconferences and teleperformances in order to send images to other nodes via computer.

Furthermore, the Pittsburgh node includes in its programming, several special events".

Message from Robert Dunn to Thomas Hollan, Czechoslovakia by electronic mail:

"The gallery walls are filled with work. We have a color MAC II used as a display system, showing works, we have a MAC II used as a workstation and workshop machine, we have a MAC connected to the network called the WELL, and video display of documentation and computer animations running in the gallery. Robert Rogers has built a large pyramid in the front area with an upside down world globe suspended by clear wire just above it, the globe is kept spinning...enlarged color print outs of the re-worked color map fill the back wall.... This place has energy to it...CMU classes drop in and participate, high school class has been here, and kids from the inner city of Pittsburgh, so there is some exposure to a broader public..."

Reflux at The 21st. Biennial of São Paulo, Brasil.

September, 21st to December, 10th, 1991

Message from Maria Matuck to the Refluxers by electronic mail:

"The Reflux exhibition space was located at the entrance of the SP Biennial pavilion. Works were placed on the walls of the stand, with Reflux proposals and responses hung side by side. In some cases, Portuguese translations were provided to help the Brazilian public better understand the displays.

The Reflux project in SP was sponsored by Itautec, a large Brazilian company that specializes in electronic equipment. Itautec provided computers, fax machines, a printer, and a photocopier, allowing the Biennial visitors to interact and respond to the proposals. The idea was to generate as much interaction as possible among artists at the SP node, visiting artists, the general public at the Biennial, and the Reflux network. This interaction proved to be a great success, with several responses to the proposals generated each day.

Attendance at the Biennial averaged about 4,000 people a day. People came from across Brazil and many other Latin American countries. Many of the visitors knew very little about telecommunication arts. Because of the diversity of background, it often was hard for visitors to understand the proposals, but a solution was found.

Each day, one proposal was chosen to be presented to the public. Visitors then could focus on understanding and responding to that specific proposal. This method worked well. In addition to the displays and electronic mail dialogues, the public also participated in special events utilizing videophone and fax machines".

9. Metafluxes

9.1 Some notes on the Reflux Project

excerpt by Wayne Draznin, Cleveland Institute of Art

".....I saw Reflux as an opportunity to test the boundaries of the communications networks....(and) to what extent technical issues would inhibit or enhance the creative process.

CleveNode's concerns: "How is a non-hierarchical system of free information exchange to be maintained? Does the net challenge or reinforce first-world cultural dominance? How do multiple media translations effect information?" What would it take to send images and sounds over the nets to people working on a wide range of platforms?

This latter issue proved to be Reflux's greatest stumbling block. Several weeks were spent communicating on methods of translating and encoding binary files. It quickly became clear that the network interfaces were not designed for easy use.

Reflux did produce interesting work. Space Gallery's vestibule was filled with streams of text output and prints of imagery. Perhaps more importantly, Reflux exposed the possibilities and limitations of using the networks for interactive art-making. There is tremendous enthusiasm for this type of communication, which challenges traditional relationships of art producer and recipient. Current technology makes such communication quite possible; but the structure of that technology continues to make it very difficult."

9.2 Metaflux from San diego by Peter Maxwell

"Food fax was a project conceived by Artur whereupon each node would fax a food dish from their respective location to São Paulo. An 'international dinner' was created at the Bienal to illustrate foods from around the world. The fax I sent from San Diego of a chicken breast sandwich, half an avocado, and a cup of coffee is seen on page 62. This show was very successful, as the Bienal participants at the Reflux booth appreciated the computer/fax/food concept.

Clothes Fax, consequent to Food Fax, was originated by Maria Matuck, Artur's wife. As with the previous Food Fax, again the contact was via fax transmission, as the name implies. Each node sent assorted articles of various clothing to São Paulo.

Maria planned a modelling session at the Bienal, whereupon she attached this faxed clothing to herself and demonstrated fashion designs and patterns from around the world. The handkerchief, shirt top, and top I faxed to Maria for her show are portrayed on pages 63-65. Maria shared that she warmly

received in her modelling presentation and that the Reflux booth had established itself as an interesting place to view computer-based art at the Bienal.

"Image Locale, Image Goblale" was a third work involving collaboration in San Diego with the Bienal. In this instance, Karen O'Rourke of the Art-Reseaux, Cité des Sciences de La Villete, Paris, France, Artur from the Bienal in São Paulo, Maria, who had returned to Carnegie-Mellon, and I worked together to plan this interchange. Artur was aware of my interest in French cinema and knew that I had spent two weeks in Paris during the summer of 1990.

Whereupon previous interaction of Flux and Reflux transmissions had basically been point-to point as a node-to-node exchange, the concept this time was to involve multiple locations around the world over a two-day period via art and fax. The original copy of the text and photographs used for this undertaking, on page 75, was in turn photocopied for fax transmission to Karen in Paris, Artur in São Paulo, and Maria in Pittsburgh.

The photograph of the dish antennae at KPBS here on campus at SDSU reflects how satellite communications have been integral to the faxing process and the relaying of electronic information around the world. The Paris photo strikes a view across the Seine River atop Eiffel Tower from my journey in 1990.

Together, the two photos document San Diego/Paris and their relation to the Pittsburg locale and the Reflux process. This fax from San Diego was displayed during the exhibition in late November at Art Reseaux, Cité des Sciences de La Villette in Paris as well as the Bienal in São Paulo."

9.3 A Final Report by Artur Matuck

The actual exchanges of the Reflux Project can be characterized as a multiplicity of proposals and a somewhat limited number of responses. Since Reflux promoted a system of non-compulsory interactivity, this distribution of activity was simply seen as a characteristic of this Reflux experiment.

One node however did prompt the generation of a large number of responses to Reflux proposals: the Reflux node at the 21st International São Paulo Biennial. Everyday, the mostly young audience was introduced to a new proposal and asked to respond. They were eager to use a computer, surprised by the notion of telecommunication arts, intrigued by the possibility of participating, and flattered to be involved in an international project.

Interaction and spontaneous dialogue had also sprung naturally out of several videophone connections and fax exchanges. Video communication through videophone, although until then limited to transmission of

motionless videoframes, enticed interaction and dialogue. In this alternate voice/video mode a new art medium is arising, a new video language is being created. In the virtually shared space of the videologue interactivity is implicit, a natural behavior evolving out of telephone conversations.

Simultaneous presence through a virtual space represents an evolving format for interactive performance art one that will certainly breed new unexpected works. What we have seen in Reflux was certainly a step in that direction.

Fax exchanges, where as they do not require instantaneous remote presence, can work as graphically enhanced answering machines. Fax exchanges do not necessarily lead to interaction, although simultaneous remote presence sensed through fax transmission can also trigger telesthetic imprints.

And the telephone itself with its voice transmitting capability was a pleasant surprise within Reflux, providing an opportunity for an incredible experience of teleconferencing and later for an exchange of audio self-portraits, in which people described themselves in melancholic, humourous ways, created a myriad of sensations in the other terminal leading to an incredible sense of companionship.

The Reflux openness, where remote artists created their own interactive proposals, created an incredible opportunity for learning to use media and language as a means to think, to interact, and to enhance human relations. In the process, a concept had crystalized - telesthesia - synthesizing the incredible sensation that has connected all of us, now telesthetically imprinted.

Reflux would never have happened without the support of the University of São Paulo and the Carnegie Mellon University, more specially The STUDIO for Creative Inquiry. And also without the participation of the teleartists who believed that such an endeavor could be possible.

I sincerely thank all participating teleartists for turning Reflux into a planetary event. Through Reflux I was able to meet telematically with people all over the world. Each one of them had left a telesthetic imprint in my mind and my heart. Through them I was able to fully realize the notion of Hridaya Dravyan, the Richness of the Heart, of our hearts.

For a brief moment in time our hearts and minds were electronically connected.

Telesthesia!

Footnotes:

(1) Artur Matuck is a professor of art at the School of Communications and Arts at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. His visit to the United States was sponsored the University of São Paulo and the Interamerican Development Bank.

(2) Maria Matuck was a Research Affiliate at the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry in 1991/92. She has worked as an advertising writer and holds a Bachelor degree in Mass Communications from the School of Advertising and Marketing in São Paulo, Brazil.

(3) The Reflux Project Team: Coordination: Artur Matuck; Executive Production: Maria Matuck; Imaging Coordinator: Robert Dunn; Exhibition Architect: Robert Rogers; Office Coordinator: Jennifer Brodt; Network Consultants: Timothy Anderson, Larry Arnstein, Robert Dunn, Charles Glassmire, Jay Kramer, Gordon Lucht, Vilson Sarto, João Luiz Terreiro.

(4) The Reflux network reached the whole world. The following participating nodes, identified by their coordinators and institutions, represented the international community: Sue Harris & Phillip Bannigan, Artsnet Electronic Network (Australia); Fredric Litto, School of the Future, University of São Paulo (Brazil); Juan Gomes-Perales, Concordia University (Montreal, Canada); Jeff Mann, Inter/Access (Toronto, Canada); Tomas Holan, Charles University (Prague, Czechoslovakia); Jan Backlund, Soren Andreasen, Jakob Jakobsen, Jorgen Michaelsen, Koncern (Kopenhagen, Denmark); Bianca Barmen, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (Kopenhagen, Denmark); Karen O'Rourke, Gilberto Prado, Isabelle Millet, Art Reseaux (Paris, France); Anne Vidal, Pierre Granoux, Sarah Vaughan, Varia Qu'a D'ça (Nimes, France); Nurit Shilo-Cohen, The Israel Museum (Jerusalem, Israel). The United States held most of the participants: Chuck Welch, Hans Ruedi Fricker (Connecticut); Stephen Ssoeff, Avant Garde Art Review (New York); Wayne Draznin, Spaces Gallery & Computer Arts Program, Cleveland Institute of Art (Ohio); James Kocher, Phil Rostek, Matthew Wrbican, The DAX Group (Pensylvannia); The Pittsburgh Children's Museum (Pensylvannia); Vernon Reed, Elektrum Studio (Texas). But the State of California was the most represented of all: Anna Couey, Carl Loeffler, Fred Truck & Gil Minamora, ArtCom (San Francisco); Kit Galloway and Sherry Rabinovitz, Electronic Cafe (Santa Monica); Judy Malloy, Internacional Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology (Berkeley); Brian Andreas, JFK University (Orinda); Peter Maxwell, San Diego State University (San Diego); Stephen Wilson, San Francisco State University (San Francisco); Ulises Jenkins, Other Visions Studio, (Oakland).

(5) John Friedman - The Monstruous Races in Medieval Art and Thought. Harvard University Press, 1981

(6) "MEMENTO ETIAM" in English: REMEMBER ALSO, O LORD, YOUR SERVANTS AND HANDMAIDS, NEWTON AND DESCARTES, WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US WITH THE SIGN OF FAITH, AND REST IN THE SLEEP OF PEACE."