



Wired: Beyond the Beyond

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Motion Comics

<http://www.guttergeek.com/page184/october2008/motioncomics/motioncomics.html>

“The biggest issue of motion comics may be that they’re trying to fill a niche that simply doesn’t exist.”

Henry Jenkins' notes on interstitial arts

*Okay, first, just have a look at THIS:

"Tears of the Black Tiger," a modern Thai cinema effort:

[http://henryjenkins.org/2009/11/
on_the_pleasures_of_not_belong_1.html](http://henryjenkins.org/2009/11/on_the_pleasures_of_not_belong_1.html)

(..."

"Paradoxically, though, genres have had a tighter hold on our imagination in recent years as the range of cultural choice has broadened and audiences have fragmented. Film historian Rick Altman tells us that far from imposing rigid boundaries between genres, the old studio system depended on the idea that the same film could appeal to multiple audience segments at a time when pretty much everyone in the country went to the movies once or twice a week. Hollywood films rarely fit into some narrowly composed category: the same film had to appeal to men as well as women, the young as well as the old, by signaling different entertainment elements ("Comedy. Romance. Action. Exotic Locales. Singing. Dancing....")

"Over the course of the 20th century, however, genre categories have become ever more specialized as media industries refine techniques for monitoring and targeting particular clusters of consumers. (...)

"Just as there are systems of cultural production where audiences express confusion if a work straddles genres, there are others where artists thrive upon and audiences anticipate mixing and matching genre elements. Take for example the so-called "masala films" that come out of the Bollywood film industry in India and are popular across Asia, Africa, and increasingly the west. The same film might move between historical and contemporary settings, might mix comedy and melodrama, might follow an intense (and disturbing) action sequence with a musical number, might mix the most sudsy romance with social uplift and political reform, and might acknowledge both Hindu and Islamic traditions. The descriptor "masala" refers to a mixture of spices used in Indian cooking. Just as one would be disappointed if an Indian dish only contained one spice, the Bollywood spectator would be disappointed if a Hindi film contained only one genre.

"We are seeing greater cultural churn as more and more works move across national borders, get picked up by new artists and audiences, get combined in new ways, paving the way for nouvelle culture in the same way that the global availability of spices and ingredients has led many of

our best chiefs to experiment with radical departures from and reinventions of traditional cuisines. The anthropologist Renato Rosaldo has contrasted a classic understanding of cultures as so many exhibits in an ethnographic museum with a more contemporary notion of cultures as garage sales, where people push, pull, and paw over other people's used stuff before taking it home, trying it on for size, and altering it to suit their needs.

"Many young American consumers are using the web in search of Korean dramas, Japanese anime, Latin American telenovelas, or Bollywood films, anything that takes them outside the parochialism of their own culture. The result really does defy any classification: look at something like *Tears of the Black Tiger* which starts as a classic Thai novel, throws in a little opera, adds a much more intense color palette, and tells the man's story as a western and the woman's story as a '50s style melodrama to suggest that the two protagonists are living in different worlds. (((That's what you just saw up there. Man, Henry Jenkins is the guru.)))

"Globalization is simply one of a number of forces which are breaking down the tyranny of genre classifications and paving the way for experimentation within popular storytelling...."

(((Well, that about sums it up, folks. Back to editing the English-language Serbian memoir here in Italy while listening to Indian electronica from the *indianelectronica* podcast.)))

Avatar Machine

Avatar Machine [LONDON] 2008 from MARC OWENS on Vimeo.

http://www.marcowens.co.uk/index_frame.htm

“Avatar Machine is a system which replicates the aesthetics and visuals of third person gaming, allowing the user to view themselves as a virtual character in real space via a head mounted interface.

“The system potentially allows for a diminished sense of social responsibility, and could lead the user to demonstrate behaviors normally reserved for the gaming environment....”

via @_neural

Kundalini Shock Attack

*American pop music used to be full of white middle-class Anglo kids who had taken some LSD and gotten all “weird.” Nowadays we’ve got pop music by extremely dissociative, utterly globalized networked kids who enjoy backpacking in the Hindu Kush while contemplating Italian Futurism. With ProTools. And they can cook.

<http://www.myspace.com/kundalinishockattack>

(...)

“Ashvin and Yousuf are both avid cooks as well, the old KSA song “Botch It Up Boccioni” being a culinary reference to the Italian Futurist painter Umberto Boccioni. The song is an accompaniment to a dessert tray designed by KSA boasting such creations as Iceleen Maru, Bisleri Halva, and Mumphali Fataka.

“There were parallels between the Futurists and KSA Art Movement, a point that Ash drives further when he captured a still from an Enrico Prampolini set design for the 1920’s futurist film *Thais* and cut it up and further treated it with KSA stylings for the cover of the KSA album “Lakulysha Moteek.”

Both Yousuf and Ashvin spent much time in mountains, deserts and villages of the Hindukush and Karakorums, Thar and Rajasthan. Yousuf bent time and space wandering the hills of the North West frontier in search of himself and having met with various tribes and mystics along the way from the plains of Deosai to lakes of Naltar, ending search in the plateau of Potohar. Gathering lights and sounds to race towards an inner awakening....”

The joy of intimidating peacenik troublemakers through their license plates

*Hey wow! Neat surveillance hack!

*Can't wait to see the law and order surge as girlfriends of prominent Tory politicians are marked "of interest." That would sure make great fodder for another anti-Tory "desperate housewives" sex blog.

*In fact, given the fact that "mission creep" in this system is so promising, why not mark ALL Tories "of interest?" Marking peace demonstrators "of interest" is sort of ridiculous, because they don't matter and nobody ever listens to them.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/oct/25/surveillance-police-number-plate-recognition>

Activists repeatedly stopped and searched as police officers 'mark' cars

Paul Lewis and Rob Evans
guardian.co.uk,
Sunday 25 October 2009 20.52 GMT

The roads were empty when Linda Catt and her father drove their white Citroën Berlingo into London on a quiet Sunday morning. They could not have known they were being followed.

But at 7.23am on 31 July 2005, the van had passed beneath an automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) camera in east London, triggering an alert: "Of interest to Public Order Unit, Sussex police". Within seconds Catt, 50, and her 84-year-old father, John, were apprehended by police and searched under the Terrorism Act.

After filing a complaint, the pair, neither of whom have criminal records, discovered that four months earlier, a Sussex police officer had noticed their van "at three protest demonstrations" and decided, apparently on that basis, it should be tracked.

The two anti-war campaigners were not the only law-abiding protesters being monitored on the roads. Officers have been told they can place "markers" against the vehicles of anyone who attends demonstrations using the national ANPR data centre in Hendon, north London, which stores information on car journeys for up to five years.

Senior officers have been instructed to "fully and strategically exploit" the database, which allows police to mark vehicles with potentially useful information such as drink-driving convictions.

The use of the ANPR database to flag-up vehicles belonging to protesters has resulted in peaceful campaigners being repeatedly stopped and searched.

Documents released under the Freedom of Information Act reveal Kent and Essex police deployed mobile ANPR “interceptor teams” on roads surrounding the protest against the Kingsnorth power station, in Kent, last year.

The files reveal the pressure police placed on the local Medway council to assist with the installation of cameras on lamp-posts. Sergeant Keith Waymont, Kent police’s ANPR manager, wrote to the council three months before the demonstration to complain its officials were not co-operating. He wrote: “When I put this to my bosses, they were less than impressed, given the importance of this operation as the new power station build is likely to create a considerable number of jobs for Medway.”

But council officials had reasons to object. Internal emails reveal they were concerned temporary cameras could “alienate the community”. One wrote: “I agree – under what powers are they looking to do that? Everyone has a right to drive down a road unless we are returning to the miners dispute tactics of the 1980s.”

Police eventually succeeded in mobilising the Kent ANPR system, which appears to have been used to monitor protesters since four years ago....

Futurist Fantascienza: La fina del mondo, 1921

*I consider myself fairly hip about Italian futurismo, but I never before heard a whisper about a futurist space-travel novel in 1921 involving a genocide on Jupiter.

<http://www2.hum.uu.nl/congres/futurisms/abstracts.htm>

Kyle M. Hall (Harvard University): Poetics, Politics and 'La fine del mondo': Volt's Futurofascist Apocalypse

"Vincenzo Fani Ciotti, known to history under his Futurist pseudonym 'Volt', strode into Futurism relatively late, publishing his *parole-in-libertà* collection *Archi voltaici* in 1916 after meeting Marinetti earlier in that same year. After several manifestos published in various Futurist vehicles, including *La teoria sociologica della guerra*, he was moving beyond a strictly Futurist stance when he published what would later be described as a "romanzo di fantascienza futurista", *La fine del mondo*, in 1921.

"Dedicated to Mussolini, this book utilized little of the poetics typically associated with the Futurists in favor of a fantastic development of Futurist political thought. Looking to the year 2247, Volt applied Futurist ideas on war to what he saw as the logical conclusions that would arise from the Treaty of Versailles. This is no utopia, as Volt sees the positive capacities for human development being stifled by a secular world government that would prevent intergalactic space colonization rather than eradicating the native inhabitants of Jupiter. Our sickly hero, imitating the tuberculosis that would take Volt's own life at the age of thirty-nine, takes it upon himself to clear the way for the conquering and colonizing of Jupiter, blowing up the world parliament and himself in an apocalyptic explosion that leaves no doubt as to the necessity of conflict in the human experience. This paper examines the way in which Volt mixes Futurist ideology with a more traditional poetics that looked beyond the avant-garde towards a popularized Fascist politics that would soon bear itself out in the coming decades."

Spime Watch: ProForma

*ProFORMA: Probabilistic Feature-based On-line Rapid Model Acquisition." It's generating 3D models from real objects, live, with just a webcam.

<http://mi.eng.cam.ac.uk/~qp202/>

Via Fabbaloo.

Predictions 2010: The future of Twitter, Google, everything else

*Okay, these Seattle venture-capital guys are blowing smoke, but I like it that they're blowing such specific smoke. It's like they're blowing smoke-rings.

http://www.techflash.com/seattle/2009/11/predictions_2010_twitter_netflix_and_more_from_the_crystal_ball.html

On the panel were Kelly Smith, founding partner, Curious Office; Greg Gottesman, managing director, Madrona Venture Group; Glenn Kelman, CEO, Redfin; Bill Bryant, venture partner, Draper Fisher Jurvetson; and Andy Sack entrepreneur and general partner in Founders Co-op.

Read on for notes from the panel, gleaned from John's recording.

Let's say you're the CEO of Twitter in 2010. How do you make money?

Kelman: Charge for search, building on new partnerships with search engines. In general, Twitter is overvalued. The company is going to continue to grow, but people are paying too much attention to Twitter, and not enough to Facebook. That is still the dominant social network.

Sack: Twitter will make a lot more money than Facebook in 2010.

Kelman: You think Twitter is going to go from zero to \$300 million in one year?

Sack: Yeah, sure. They've sold the search feed to Microsoft and Google. Twitter is a promotional vehicle. Facebook is a social vehicle. Twitter has more potential to make revenue.

Bryant: Twitter is not mainstream, and the traffic numbers suggest it's not going to get there.

Gottesman: If I was the CEO of Twitter in 2010 I would sell. There are a lot of buyers out there, including Microsoft, who have the perception that they could do a lot more with Twitter than Twitter can do by itself. (((Like chase all the Twitter tweeples screaming into the wilderness of the Pacific Northwest, where they will live off nine-inch banana slugs)))

Smith: I completely agree with Greg. You're a lunatic if you think Twitter is going to become a profitable company before its sold. Twitter is going to sell a bill of goods to a prospective buyer, convince this big company of its potential value. It's going to be absorbed by a big

company and it's ultimately going to go nowhere. The signal-to-noise ratio on Twitter is completely unmanageable. If it's going to be useful, experience has to be totally different.

Google's stock price is currently around \$577. Where will it end up in 2010?

Sack: \$701

Smith: \$720; based on the strength of a Google-branded phone.

Gottesman: About where it is now.

Kelman: \$650; Huge shift to Google in the enterprise.

Bryant: \$500; Google is still a one-trick pony. They have not historically demonstrated any other revenue stream.

Microsoft is currently around \$30. Where will it end up in 2010? And will Steve Ballmer remain CEO?

Sack: Ballmer still CEO, \$31.75

Kelman: \$32, and if he hasn't left by now, why would he leave in 2010?

Gottesman: Ballmer will stay. Stock price will run up in 2010, with Windows 7, but will decline to current level by end of year.

Smith: Windows 7 a giant step forward. Will help them maintain market share. Azure cloud service gaining traction, and Bing has generated ability to take market share from Yahoo. About \$40.

Bryant: Price will at least touch \$40 with Windows 7 tailwinds.

Amazon currently around \$130 a share. Has been on a great run. Where do they end up?

Sack: I'm a shareholder, and I think the stock is going to continue to go up. International expansion, core-ecommerce. \$155-\$160.

Kelman: Agreed. Amazon the most entrenched brand on the Internet.

Gottesman: I just feel like the stock market has run up like crazy, so I'm a little less bullish on the macro stock market. That's why I think Amazon will be around where it is today, like the other ones.

Smith: Probably \$150.

Bryant: Amazon will buy Netflix and Hulu and close the year by buying Blockbuster, renaming them all as Amazon stores. Stock price: \$152

Cook: In 2008, Bryant predicted Amazon would buy eBay. So take his predictions with a grain of salt.

Major mergers and acquisitions in 2010?

Gottesman: There will be some big deals, Cisco buying EMC for VMware. Locally F5 could get acquired by Cisco. Microsoft could buy RIM. If Microsoft wants to win in mobile, they have to do something like

that.

Sack: Picnik will be purchased by Adobe, and ICanHasCheezburger will be bought by Rupert Murdoch.

Redfin will get purchased, no idea by whom.

Bryant: By the National Realtors Association.

Smith: comScore will get acquired, following Adobe's acquisition of Omniture.

When will Chinese companies start buying U.S. tech companies? ...

The Coming Uranium Famine

*That ought to prove interesting, if there's anything to it.

*Inevitable peak-uranium pro-nuke / anti-nuke cranks are invited to go comment on the Technology Review blog, where you'll find plenty of flame-flinging company to assure you that you have no idea what you are talking about, because any five-year-old child can determine the fate of the nuclear industry with a four-minute Google search, etc etc.

<http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/arxiv/24414/?nlid=2521>

"The world is about to enter a period of unprecedented investment in nuclear power. The combined threats of climate change, energy security and fears over the high prices and dwindling reserves of oil are forcing governments towards the nuclear option. The perception is that nuclear power is a carbon-free technology, that it breaks our reliance on oil and that it gives governments control over their own energy supply.

"That looks dangerously overoptimistic, says Michael Dittmar, from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich who publishes the final chapter of an impressive four-part analysis of the global nuclear industry on the arXiv today.

"Perhaps the most worrying problem is the misconception that uranium is plentiful. The world's nuclear plants today eat through some 65,000 tons of uranium each year. Of this, the mining industry supplies about 40,000 tons. The rest comes from secondary sources such as civilian and military stockpiles, reprocessed fuel and re-enriched uranium. "But without access to the military stocks, the civilian western uranium stocks will be exhausted by 2013, concludes Dittmar.

"It's not clear how the shortfall can be made up since nobody seems to know where the mining industry can look for more.

"That means countries that rely on uranium imports such as Japan and many western countries will face uranium shortages, possibly as soon as 2013. Far from being the secure source of energy that many governments are basing their future energy needs on, nuclear power looks decidedly rickety.

"But what of new technologies such as fission breeder reactors which generate fuel and nuclear fusion? Dittmar is pessimistic about fission breeders. "Their huge construction costs, their poor safety records and their inefficient performance give little reason to believe that they will ever become commercially significant," he says.

“And the future looks even worse for nuclear fusion: “No matter how far into the future we may look, nuclear fusion as an energy source is even less probable than large-scale breeder reactors.” ...

Blogger Donkey Hooligans

*via EDRI.

*Y'know, it's the donkey angle that really makes this all-too-common story. The "violence" angle is neither here nor there, as the secret police send plainclothes goons to publicly wallop people, and then accuse them of violent hooliganism when they get off the ground.

*A situation like this sounds interestingly political-theoretical, but somewhere there are a couple of smartmouth blogger guys in actual prison suits in an actual prison eating actual prison food.

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8. Azeri bloggers abusively sentenced by the Baku court

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On 11 November 2009, two Azerbaijani bloggers were found guilty on hooliganism and violence charges by a court in Baku and sentenced to two years and two years and a half prison respectively.

Bloggers and political activists Adnan Hajizade and Emin Abdullayev were arrested on 8 July 2009 on false charges of "hooliganism" after they had posted a video on YouTube mocking the purchase of donkeys from Germany by the Azeri Government. The sentence comes after four month of pre-trial detainment during which international organizations, institutions and individuals continuously asked for the release of the activists.

Many freedom group protested against the arrest and the detention of the two, considering the action was violating the freedom of expression. Reporters Without Borders said the case disregarded all the norms of the European legislation and Freedom House considered the case was "a disturbing pattern".

The situation of the two bloggers was also discussed on 1 October 2009 during the meeting between Elnur Majidli representing the Alumni Network, Chingiz Ganizade, the Chairman of the Committee of Human Rights and the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe Thomas Hammarberg. Both Majidli and Ganizade asked that the Council of

Europe

intervene in the human rights field in order to assist in the situation of the two young men.

The High Commissioner mentioned that the Council of Europe was following the trial and that the case was one of the main concerns in Azerbaijan.

Miklos Haraszti, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, considers the sentence as a political one. "The severity of the sentences for these young bloggers and other journalists who have criticized the authorities, including the President and the Interior Minister, is self-revealingly political," said Haraszti who added in a letter sent to the Foreign Minister: "These new imprisonments cement Azerbaijan's image as the pre-eminent jailer of journalists in the OSCE region. Five journalists are currently in prison, several of them on clearly trumped-up charges following organized provocations and unfair trials."

After the sentence, Abdullayev called on the audience to use all means to spread the reality of the situation in the country regarding freedom, justice and their case. Hajizade is said to have stated that the decision was framed in falsehoods and called on youth to change themselves and to work together for a better Azerbaijan.

The Verdict (11.11.2009)

<http://flyingcarpetsandbrokenpipelines.blogspot.com/2009/11/verdict.html>

Thomas Hammarberg: Bloggers case of our main concerns in Azerbaijan (10.2009)

<http://ol-en.blogspot.com/2009/10/thomas-hammarberg-bloggers-case-of-our.html>

Azerbaijan bloggers found guilty (11.11.2009)

<http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/content/view/528/2/>

OSCE media freedom representative protests sentence handed down to Internet

journalists in Azerbaijan (11.11.2009)

<http://www.osce.org/item/41288.html>

EDRi-gram: Azeri online activists framed for hooliganism and put in
prison
(15.07.2009)
[http://www.edri.org/edri-gram/number7.14/azeri-online-activits-
jailed](http://www.edri.org/edri-gram/number7.14/azeri-online-activits-jailed)



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