科技遊民游到哪去?

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2009年 playaround workshop 工作坊的主題是科技遊民 (TechNomads)，從學員開始網路報名時，就已經開始接觸這個主題，科技遊民的主題原先是關懷全球經濟危機下的弱勢族群，探討這些族群如何使用數位科技，後來逐漸轉變成為應用科技與媒體的使用者，如同流浪者在數位媒體的領域中遊走，該遊往哪裡去呢?抱持著自由、開放與分享的態度，一個全新的微生物世界觀察與思考，環境細微聲音的聆聽與再製，擷取網路訊息的機械控制，通電的肉體穿戴上運算中的織物，還是一個 pd 程式的串接邏輯，這些都是參與遊民(學員)們遊走的線索與提示。

09年的 playaround workshop 工作坊課程結構，共有五組課程內容，分別由李駿 (台灣) 主持課程 A. PureData、林欣傑 (香港) 主持課程 B. 電子身體 (Wearable Physical computing)、樂恬寶 Kiilo (德國) & 亞哈思 Yashas Shetty (印度) 主持課程 C. 體感電訊 (Network via Physical computing)、馬克博士 Dr. Marc R. Dusseiller (瑞士) & 亞哈思 Yashas Shetty 主持課程 D. 駭生物 (hackteria)、劉佩雯 (台灣) 主持課程 E. 我聽故我在? (I hear, and I remembered?)。這些課程都可以透過 PureData (PD) 的視覺語言程式銜接，讓各組的課程可以彼此交流與跨領域合作，講師們也讓學員們參觀了解其他正在進行中的課程，這是 playaround 工作坊的目的，讓不同領域的學員們可以一起自由創作。肢體的動作參數可以觸發燈光與聲音，電子顯微鏡下的生物動作能夠提供遊戲角色的現身與消匿，環境的聲音與舞者肢體的即興演出，資訊同時控制家電的開啟與音樂的播放等。

一個遊民待在結合電子聲響、互動程式、網路訊息、實體運算、穿戴媒介、DIY 電子電路、生物科技等跨領域的大型工作坊，除了密集的課程外，還需要與不同組別的遊民交流，同時準備最後一天的創作與成果展演，無論是遊民 (學員) 本身、講師、助教、攝影、行政工作人員等都是絕佳 (累) 的學習體驗與經歷。不同領域的遊民該如何連結起來？溝通、溝通還是溝通，手臂彎曲的數值可以抓到，微生物的動作可以算出座標，聲音的波長參數等待數值，遊民在這裡發現了原來可以集體游動，而且游得範圍更大更廣。工作坊其實不僅在教授實作課程，更重要的是認識合作的模式，主題的意義一直在那裡，從來就沒有消失，如果學員們誤以為課程只是在學習一種技術而已，就完全忽略籌劃者刻意放了個大浮標，學習技術然後與不同領域溝通，了解串接後的意義，接著思考這個組裝的科技表皮下，藝術在哪裡?生存的價值在哪裡?如此游民們也許更清楚該游向何處?

科技遊民的出發點是凝聚幾個講師的主要原因，一種說不清的共識與社會現象關懷的論調，當藝術創作與教育結合時，不得不承認工作坊的形式是遊走教育系統邊緣的一個著力點。我們所處的大環境正以無人趕得上的速度變遷著，昨天的重口味新聞，今天的包油條紙，所謂

的科技未來是活生生在我們眼前蛻變，無形的附著在我們的生活裡面，但被動式的麻木不仁成為面對蛻變的安全模式，亦或慣性的錯把商業訊息當成知識，這些是提倡 FLOSS 精神的 playaround 工作團隊該考慮的社會現象、該關心的論調。

2008年底深冬，第 25 屆混沌傳播年會 (25C3) 慣例在德國柏林由混沌電腦俱樂部 (Chaos Computer Club :: http://www.ccc.de) 舉辦，這個全球駭客的盛會其中一個講座為 “DNA 的反向工程 Reversed Engineering of DNA”，主講者提出一個很重要的觀念；當基因再製的知識只掌握在少數人手裡時，更重要的是如何將這些知識以 FLOSS 共創的精神分享出去，並例用反向工程的練習得取相關知識。當下說來，基改植物威脅著原生種的生命與生態環境，人們貪婪地、大片大片地種植基改植物，以供食用動物或人類飽食用，雨林不見了、氣候改變了、都市擁擠了、許多人無家可歸成為經濟或氣候遊民，記憶中的風和日麗再也聽不到了；讓什麼填滿了？Playaround 討論中心是創作主題之間的出世與入世，手法與工具只是技術層面不可或缺的一個重要環節與實現方法。

感謝今年的playaround workshop的所有支持者及參與的學員、講師與工作人員讓這次工作坊圓滿成功，明年再見！！-1科技游民游到哪去？　蔡宏賢/劉佩雯

Where do TechNomads Go?

By Tsai Hong-hsien and Liu Pei-wen

The theme for the 2009 playaround workshop was TechNomads. Contact with the theme began at the moment students register on-line. The original starting point for the TechNomads theme was to highlight the plight of disadvantaged communities in the midst of the global economic crisis, and to discuss how these groups use digital technology. This gradually evolved into an exploration of technology and media applications, whose users roam like Nomadic travelers within the realm of digital media. Where do they go? With a free and open attitude of sharing, with new methods for microcosmic observation and analysis, by listening to minute environmental sounds and then recreating them; by mechanically controlling the extraction of network messages; or via a tandem pd programming logic -- these each provided clues and tips for participating Nomads (students).

The structure of the workshop curriculum included five sectional courses. These were: Course A: “Pure Data,” taught by Lee Jun (Taiwan); Course B: “Wearable Physical Computing,” taught by Keith Lam (Hong Kong); Course C: “Network Via Physical Computing,“ taught by Kiilo (Germany) and Yashas Shetty (India); Course D: “Hackteria,” taught by Dr. Marc R. Dusseiller (Switzerland) and Yashas Shetty; and Course E: “I hear and I remembered?” taught by Liu Pei-wen. These courses were made available through PureData (PD) visual language programming interface, enabling cross-disciplinary cooperation between the courses. Lecturers also encouraged students to visit and understand the other courses in progress. The purpose of the playaround workshop was to enable students from different fields work together with creative freedom: Body-movements that can trigger lights and sound; organisms under the electronic microscope that cause gaming characters to appear and vanish; environmental sounds performed alongside improvisational dancers; and information simultaneously controlling home appliances and transmitting music, etc.

In addition to intensive coursework, a Nomad participating in the larger workshop -- of electronic sound, interactive programming, network messaging, physical computing, wearable media, DIY electronic circuits, bio-technology, etc. -- must also work with other Nomads from other sections to prepare for a creative performance project as they publicly present their results for the final day. Whether for the Nomads themselves, the lecturers, the teaching assistants, photographers or administrative staff -- this has been an excellent (and exhausting) learning experience for all.

How do Nomads from different areas connect? Communication, communication, communication. The values involved in an arm-bend can be captured; coordinates from

the motion of microbes can be calculated; the wavelength parameters of sound can be measured. Here, Nomads discovered that they can actually roam together, and cover ever-greater areas. The workshop didn't just teach practical courses, more importantly, it helped participants recognize models for cooperation. The theme was always there, ever present. If students misunderstood the courses to be merely learning a new technique, they have missed the larger target that was deliberately put in place by the organizers: Learn the technologies, to then communicate with other disciplines and to understand the logic that follows. Contemplate beneath the surface of the technology: Where does Art exist? Where is the survival value? This is how Nomads find out where to go next.

The starting point of TechNomads was the main reason for the cohesion of the selected lecturers. There was an indescribable consensus and a tone in discussing social phenomena. When art and education come together, it is impossible to deny that the workshop format is a focal point on the precipice of the education system. The larger environment we live in is changing at a pace that no one can keep up with. Yesterday's headlines become today's fried-dough blotting paper. Technological futures are unfolding in front of our eyes, and attaching themselves invisibly to our lives. But the safe default of passive desensitizing ourselves as we face these changes, or the reflexive habit of treating commercial information as knowledge -- these are societal phenomena that the playaround team and FLOSS members need to consider and discuss.

The 25th Annual Chaos Communication (25C3) Convention was held in Berlin, Germany in the Winter of 2008 by the Chaos Computer Club (http://www.ccc.de). One of the lectures in this global hackers' extraveganza was entitled "Reversed Engineering of DNA." The main lecturer raised an important concept: when the knowledge for genetic re-mastering is in the hands of a few, it is even more important to distribute these ideas in the spirit of FLOSS. He used the example of reverse engineering to illustrate how related information was gathered. Today, genetically engineered plants threaten not only their original species as well as the larger ecological environment; and human greed has resulted in huge tracks of land being used for genetically engineered plants to supply food for animals and human consumption. Meanwhile, rainforests are disappearing, the climate is changing, urban areas are overcrowded, and more people have become homeless due to the larger economic and climatic environment. The sunny skies and breezy days from our memory are long gone. What has replaced them?
Central to the discussion in playaround was the origin and rise in creating a theme; the methods and tools were only an indispensable part to the technical requirement for its realization.

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported playaround this year, and the students, lecturers and staff who contributed to the success of this workshop. See you next year!