

in the gallery

## Distributed.Nerves

Running concurrently with *subrealities*, Distributed.Nerves presents the next generation of digital art from students in the Art and Technology Program at UTD. While relying upon computer processes or the digital alteration of imagery, these young artists engage in a dialogue with familiar forms such as photography, video, painting, and installation. The U.T. Dallas students participating in the exhibition include **Kelly Brown, Will Dooley, Megan Foreman, Beverly Grose, Don Huff, Sara Ishii, Cynthia Parry, Jeff Senita, and Amber Wigant.**

subrealities  
+  
distributed.nerves



live at UTD

## Speakers

### april 6 – Lev Manovich

7:00 p.m., Jonsson Performance Hall, JO 2.604

One of today's most influential thinkers in the fields of media arts and digital culture. His book, *The Language of New Media*, has been described by reviewers as "the most suggestive and broad ranging media history since Marshall McLuhan" and "the first rigorous and far-reaching theorization of new media."

### april 13 – Natalie Bookchin

7:00 p.m., Jonsson Performance Hall, JO 2.604

A leading Internet artist, Rockefeller Foundation Fellow, and creator of online games such as Metapet and agoraXchange. Reviewers place Bookchin's work in the larger context of social engagement, "For Bookchin...art is literally action—making things happen, one way or the other."



annette weintraub  
john freyer  
peter horvath  
sharon daniel  
david crawford

## subrealities + distributed.nerves

**exhibition dates:** march 18 – april 16, 2005  
**curated by:** Dean Terry and Marilyn Waligore  
**opening reception:** friday, march 18, 6:30 to 9 p.m.  
**art talk:** 7:30 p.m.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS  
SCHOOL OF ARTS & HUMANITIES  
VISUAL ARTS BUILDING, MAIN GALLERY

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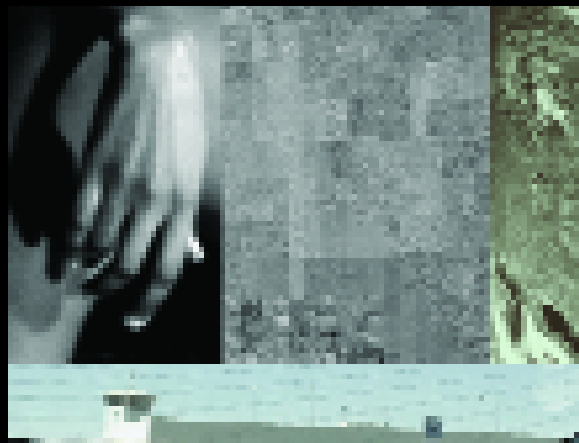
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Cover images:  
Top: Lev Manovich  
Center: Natalie Bookchin  
Bottom: David Crawford



[subrealities.utdinteractive.net](http://subrealities.utdinteractive.net)





Sharon Daniels



John Fryer



Peter Horvath



Annette Weintraub



David Crawford



## Submission | Submersion | Time

“One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution,” George Orwell wrote, rather “one makes a revolution in order to establish a dictatorship”.

The waves of Internet and digital “revolutions” that are combinations of genuine change and well financed marketing hype offer not only possibilities for new forms of expression but also new forms of control. Successfully negotiating the barriers demands submerging one’s self beneath structures that define the context of creative manifestation.

And part of this submersion includes redefining what digital time feels like. Though measured precisely, digital time can become more like lived time: indefinite, shifting, and variable.

The technologies that form the distributed experience mediated by the internet, software, and hardware form a commercial matrix of technologies that function effectively as an authoritarian regime of method. Students, especially, are forced into particular patterns of action and behavior. They adopt software designer’s ideas about what “editing” and “selecting” and “compositing” mean, and learn in the maniacally compressed duration of computer or “Internet time.”

Hence many of the problems encountered by young artists are the same ones that afflict content and expression of all kinds that has become digital. Mismatched ideas about property and uniqueness and place continue to slow the growth of our understanding of art and digital gestures that have become relational and distributed across multiple spaces and times. Where the “art” is often what is *in between* objects, rather than the objects themselves; a perception of passing rather than an observation of particularity.

The openings in the wired and wireless array of evolving technology are many. Video can be further extracted from its linear bindings. Text can become more image-like, fluid, and unstable as it exists in our thoughts. Time can be reconstructed based on personal and shared context, rather than the demands of commerce.

Most time spent on computers is regulated, observed, mechanical, and highly specific. Computer mediated arts should free us from this delineated time and place us in the unspecified duration of lived experience. The felt time of Henri Bergson’s *durée* where the oppression of mechanical time is replaced by the possibilities of freedom and authenticity of despatialized time.

In that place/time, the clocks on our metaphorical desktop disappear, the email is forgotten, the to-do reminders never pop up, and we are allowed to flow uninterrupted into authored experience, rather than fragmented among pragmatic tasks. We submerge ourselves beneath them.

And before they can rise above, these new artists must dig down, deep, underneath assumptions about what art practice and experience is. To “go under” as Nietzsche insists. The inherited reality needs to be dug up, gone under, with the artist subsumed, submerged, creating, as we have here, an matrix of *subrealities*.

Notes by Dean Terry

The artists in *subrealities* generate visual narratives in response to the intensity of our contemporary lives. Meanwhile, the layered, interactive nature of these works rely upon our ability to negotiate increasingly complex forms of information. As guides, both John Freyer and Sharon Daniel set parameters and await our arrival. In Sharon Daniel’s *Narrative Contingencies*, the throw of the dice introduces chance and random processes into storytelling. Images of hand gestures and fragments of clothing, coupled with snippets of text, prompt reflection on human relationships. Embedded into *Narrative Contingencies* are excerpts, referencing the perspectives of women, from Marguerite Dumas’ novel *The Ravishing of Lol V. Stein* and Susan Rubin Suleiman’s theoretical text *Subversive Intent*.<sup>1</sup> For Daniel, the online activities of reading and writing redefine the role of the participant in determining the meaning of a text. In her online projects she investigates potential applications of technology in order to foster collaboration within communities.

John Freyer’s site *Allmylifeforsale* generates new stories from the sale of his personal effects via the Internet. Parallel to the drive of Fluxus artists to merge art and life, Freyer exposes his own life to examination, and encourages others to follow. His request of each buyer, that he/she forward an update and photograph, extends the tale surrounding each object sold. Freyer’s creative description is often matched by an odd, fictional story penned by the object’s new owner, initiating an ongoing public exchange.

David Crawford, Annette Weintraub and Peter Horvath embrace the use of multiple planes to layer images and information in their net.art environments. In Peter Horvath’s *The Presence Of Absence* the viewer encounters small virtual windows that open and close, following what Lev Manovich describes as spatial montage, where “time becomes spatialized, distributed over the surface of the screen.”<sup>2</sup> The human face functions as the interface or key for navigating these alternating images. Exchanges of dialogue and video imagery imply travel and separation, suggesting an emotional connection strained by physical distance. Annette Weintraub also adopts variations of montage in *Life Support*. Her line drawings describe frames for translucent photographs while they also delineate interiors. Four animations pan austere hospital environments, while merging past and present through the superimposition of imagery. Weintraub’s project, accompanied by the deep, monotone voice of the narrator, critiques the architecture of institutional health care environments, questioning their appropriateness as places for convalescence.

*Stop Motion Studies – Series 13* reveals David Crawford’s fascination with the urban spaces of subways. He documents parallel realities, in particular the visual contrast between the pensive rider and the harried commuter. *Stop Motion Studies*—the title serving as a contradiction in terms—points to the visual tension created by the difference between stasis and motion, from the barely perceptible movement of the straphangers to the blur of textures signifying a passing train or rush of commuters. In these videos, windows and doors function alternately as frames and mirrors to highlight the shared experience of everyday life that often remains overlooked.

These artists locate new models within digital media for the fusing of image, sound, and text to address questions of subjectivity and human relationships, and identity within social institutions. *subrealities* points to the reality below the surface, which can be referenced through simultaneity and the intersections that occur as media elements overlap and collide.

Notes by Marilyn Waligore

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Langlois Foundation. “Sharon Daniel.” *Centre for Research and Documentation Database*. (2000): Online. 15 Jan. 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001) 325.