

WILL HAVE DONE

[19/11/05 - 17/12/05 / FRI - SUN 12-6PM / SIMON BLACKMORE / FOUR TET / PIL & GALIA KOLLECTIV]

These works present a critique of, and alternative to, the retreat into ersatz nature/cultural heritage as a way of compensating for the disenchantment brought about by advanced technology. This is driven by a combination of futurology and nostalgia as seemingly defunct social forms and methodologies are presented using hi-tech and experimental techniques. Aspects of artificial intelligence and the ambiguous relationship between the human and both the alienation fostered by both technology and the increasing disengagement from the natural world in Western civilisation are examined. The view of the humanity presented here is uncertain in its relation to both our creations and our environment but it certainly suggests that any hope for our future lies in the more playful aspects of human nature.

Simon Blackmore, *Weather Guitar*, 2005

The Weather Guitar is a robotic guitar player that responds to variations in weather conditions. The focus of this project is an attempt to draw parallels between the scientific inquiry of measuring and quantifying the natural elements, and the romantic notion of the weather acting as a source of artistic inspiration. The concept of music generated by natural forces is as old as mankind, from Aeolian harps to Tarrega's *Recuerdos de Alhambra* to contemporary examples of sensor-controlled synthesis. This lonesome guitar player adds to this tradition in a humorous and playful way.



Central to this project is a Cuenca flamenco guitar. A wood and metal contraption is clamped onto the guitar allowing the attachment of a number of actuators that play the strings. The strings are plucked by six stepper motors with picks fixed onto them that pluck each string individually.

Each stepper motor is controlled by a circuit containing a Pic16f84 microcontroller and a number of other electronic components. These circuits are sequenced by a Parallax Basic Stamp 2. This Stamp is connected to two hand made wind sensors, an anemometer, which measures wind speed and a wind vane that measures the direction of the wind. The anemometer is currently fitted with one magnetic reed switch and the wind vane is fitted with six switches. The Basic Stamps can be programmed to activate the motors in response to these switches in any number of ways. The notes of the guitar are changed by a combination of levers and servo motors; these are controlled by a separate Stamp. This Stamp is connected to a light dependent resistor that determines when the servo motors are activated. Further work by Simon Blackmore; www.simonblackmore.net

Four Tet, *She Moves She*, dir. Ed Holdsworth, 2004; *As Serious as Your Life*, dir. Dougal Wilson, 2003

These videos were produced outside of the art-critical context of contemporary art as music promos and are, as such, outside the usual frame of art production. How important this intention is is open to question but these videos present a third method of production outside that of either the single artist or the art collaboration. Both films present a synthesis between the abstract electronic music produced by Keiren Hebden and the interpretation of the respective directors. *She Moves She* consists of footage shot through the window of a train in an undisclosed far-eastern metropolis, this footage is manipulated so it takes on both an organic and digital quality suggestive of either genetic mapping or circuits of a complex machine. The subtle beauty of this is disrupted by patches of coherent cityscape that act as a reminder as to the source of the images.

As Serious as Your Life takes video clips from a Morris festival in a picturesque English village that are cut up and re-spliced in time with the electronic soundtrack. This takes an affectionate look at the eccentricities of disappearing rural life and the artificialities of the heritage industry along with a sideswipe at mainstream electronica producers who get ordinary people to dance in their videos. Further work by Four Tet; www.fourtet.net



Pil + Galia Kollektiv, *I a Machine*, 2004; *ASBOs*, 2005

Pil & Galia Kollektiv are interested in exploring the aesthetics of politics in everyday life, the absorption of high modernism into popular culture and the tension between high and low forms of cultural production. Much of their work is based in collage animation, influenced by Russian constructivism, early European cinema and children's television cartoons from the '80s, Pil & Galia use appropriated imagery to produce anthropomorphic metaphors of violence and desire, decay and regeneration. They are interested in urban life from the perspective of the objects that define it, the way the buildings, cars and surveillance cameras that we construct look back at us and mirror our desires, fears and perversions. Finding animal and human forms within these objects and environments, they have tried to evolve them into creatures with their own habitat and social structures.

The CCTV camera installation *ASBOs* uses 'real' dummy surveillance equipment to mimic birds in a park with wall spikes for grass, pecking mobile phone key seeds or looking at a dead dog. Embedded in contemporary urban architecture, we think of surveillance equipment as part of our habitat, Pil & Galia's work transforms it into an active protagonist, questioning the passive role we normally assign to it. Further work by Pil & Galia Kollektiv; www.kollektiv.co.uk

The preview of *Will Have Done* was followed by the Manchester launch of a new comic:

Daniel Baker presents

THE GIANT VACUUM CLEANER

The first episode of *DONKEY HEAD*: a Brand New Comic.

