Yoshi Sodeoka

⚙ Tools ▾

📎11 Added by <u>Michelle Snow</u>, last edited by <u>Michelle Snow</u> on Apr 30, 2008 (<u>view change</u>)

User Since Forever: Yoshi Sodeoka

by **Michelle Snow**

Visit the artist's homepage: <u>c505.com</u>.

Artist's biography: "Yoshi Sodeoka is a multidisciplinary artist, designer and musician based in New York City. Over the past decade, his projects have been featured in books and magazines (I.D. Magazine, Res, IdN, Artbyte), DVDs (Nike Presto Spirit of Movement, Reline 2, RUGA), web sites (Whitney Museum's Artport, Turbulence.org, Rhizome. org, Wired.com) and exhibitions across the world (Haifa museum Israel, San Sebastian's GlasKultur, The Creative Time Holiday Light Show at New York's Grand Central Terminal, Berlin's Transmediale, Poland's Krakow Film Festival, WNET Reel NY). Sodeoka has received grants from the likes of the Greenwall foundation and his work is part of the permanent collections of the San Francisco MoMA and New York's Museum of the Moving Image.

Sodeoka has lectured at the School of Visual Arts, Parsons School of Design and the Pratt Institute. He's juried design awards for the Art Director's Club, the One Club, the Webby Awards, the Society of Publication Designers, and the .MOV Festival by Shift Japan.

He's also a member of the experimental noise audio/visual duo, KNBS. They've performed internationally, in places like Sapporo, Singapore (Design Edge festival), Valencia and Barcelona (OFFF festival, Sonar festival)."

Keywords: Recycle, Turbulence, Distortion

One reviewer wrote: "Many of the articles on Yoshi like to point out that 'he's a man of many hats' which makes it a little hard to pin-point a portrait of what his work is. He has many projects under many names and combined this makes for an awesome web experience."

Fake data or real data, surveillance cameras or internet spy software, in the end, Yoshi Sodeoka is tracking the aesthetic vibe of the interface itself. He's not interested in the slick, digital, Adobe-software-generated interfaces of the commercial web. He's not even interested in the neo-dada, binary-happy ascii interfaces of jodi.org et al. Sodeoka is more interested in the marriage of a late 1950s missile guidance system and a mid-'70s Moog Synthesizer. The heavy, gliding roll of the chrome knobs on an old Marantz amplifier; the feel of that reassuring plastic CLICK as you insert an Asteroids cartridge into an Atari gaming console -- these are Sodeoka's muses. Is there a concept behind all this interface fetishism? McLuhan said that previous media become the content of current media... which is a nice sound byte, but tangential to Sodeoka's work. Brian Eno hits much closer to the mark: *Although designers continue to dream of 'transparency' - technologies that just do their job without making their presence felt - both creators and audiences actually like technologies with 'personality.' A personality is something with which you can have a relationship. Which is why people return to pencils, violins, and the same three guitar chords.*

Yoshi Sodeoka's work as a musician also greatly influences his netart. As a purveyor of noise, what is called lowercase sound, Sodeoka filters, modifies, recontextualizes, mashes, manipulates and frames what is otherwise aural pollution. He recycles images and sounds that circulate in pop culture, sometimes literalizing their latent messages for new meanings, other times putting them in collision with technologies and aesthetics they would otherwise never encounter.

Let It Bleed (Left) Let It Be (Right), The Stones And The Beatles Getting Tweaked At The Same Time

Video and MP3, 2008

Most recently exhibited at the Esther M. Klein Gallery in Philadelphia from March 14-April 28, 2008, as part of "Given Enough Eyeballs."

From the exhibit description: " The artists in the exhibition, Given Enough Eyeballs, explore, in varying degrees, concepts of open-access and sharing, individual versus community, and ownership and appropriation, as it relates to the idea of open source software, software that is free to use and free to be adopted any way the user sees fit.

The title of this exhibition refers to Eric S. Raymond's essay, The Cathedral and the Bazaar*, which details two different types of software engineering methods, one where source code development is restricted to a select group of developers and the other, created over the internet in full public view. In the essay, Raymond states that "given enough eyeballs, all bugs are shallow", which he terms Linus' law and which means the more widely available the source code is for public testing, scrutiny, and experimentation, the more rapidly all forms of bugs will be discovered.

While open source is a term often applied to software, code and intellectual property under a strict set of rules, this philosophy/way of working is applicable to a wide range of objects and activities. Wikipedia, a web-based, free content encyclopedia is one of the more famous examples. This exhibition, curated by Annette Monnier, takes the idea of open source software and applies it to art and artists' practice. Using both traditional and new media, including online applications and specially created software, the artists in the show approach a problem/task, collaboratively, and find a common way to "work it out."
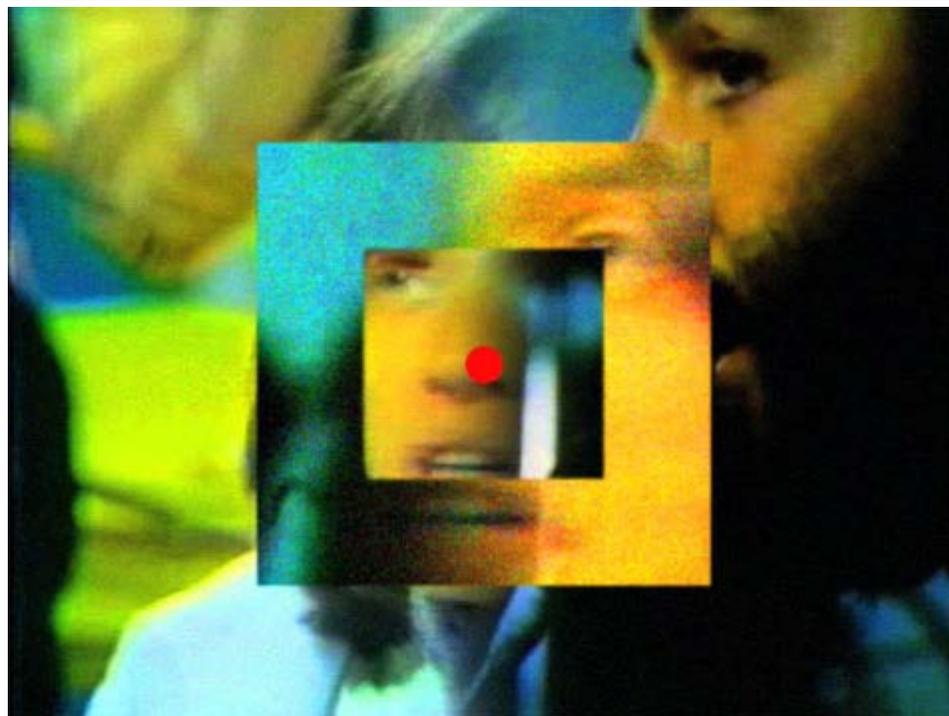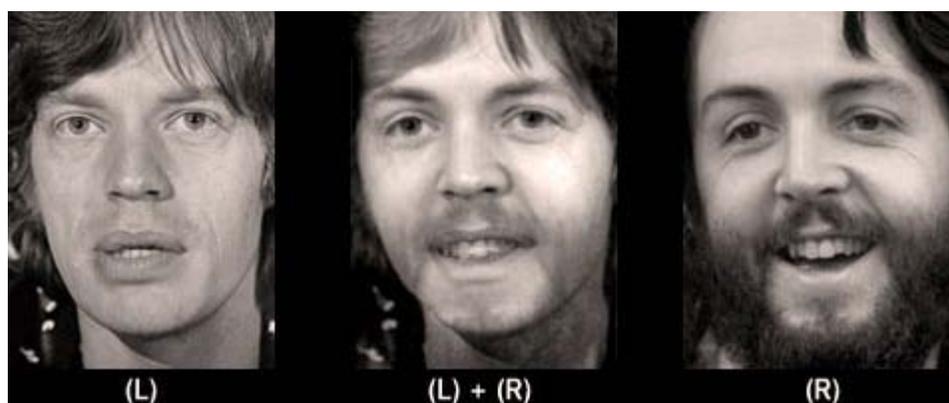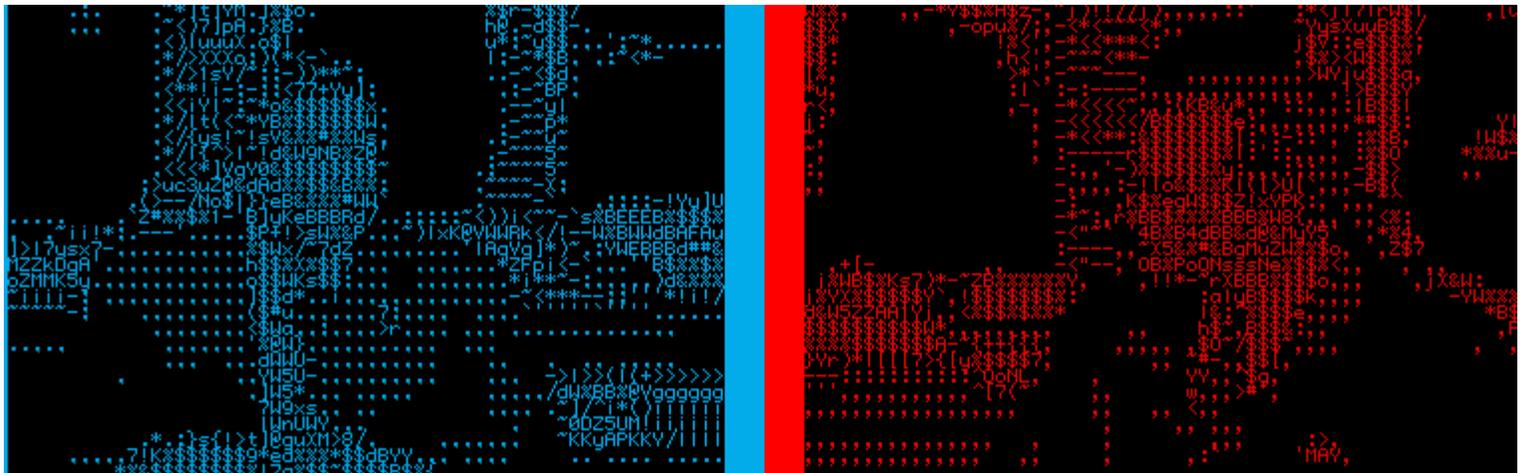
The entire track is constructed out of two of the most well-known songs in the history of music, Let It Be by Beatles and Let It Bleed by Rolling Stones. Each track was sliced up into small pieces and rearranged. Let It Be is panned on the right channel, Let It Bleed is panned on the left channel.

ASCII BUSH

Link to project.

re- cy- cle
tr.v. re- cy- cled, re- cy- cling, re- cy- cles

1. To put or pass through a cycle again, as for further treatment.
2. To start a different cycle in.
3. a. To extract useful materials from (garbage or waste).
   b. To extract and reuse (useful substances found in waste).
4. a. To use again, especially to reprocess: recycle aluminum cans; recycle old jokes.
   b. To recondition and adapt to a new use or function: recycling old warehouses as condominiums.

From the website: "ASCII BUSH is an ascii video rendition of two State of the Union addresses — one delivered by George W. Bush on January 12, 2003 (just before the current Iraqi war); the other by his father, George H.W. Bush, on March 6, 1991 (right

after Operation Desert Storm).

The basic goal of this project is to make art from the debris of our culture by recycling these dreadful and painfully long presidential oration. The speeches are not edited--just digitally filtered. And like I said, they are very lengthy. ASCII BUSH is definitely boring enough to be interesting!!!"

Prototype #44:

[Link to project.](#)

#44 Review in RHIZOME
May 3, 2004

Don't Touch That Dial!

Surveillance culture isn't a new thing really. Remember the Cold War - nuclear proliferation, international espionage, all that? Well now you can experience all those feelings of alienation and paranoia but with a new media twist. Brought to you by Turbulence.org, founding member of New York based C505 Yoshi Sodeoka's Prototype #44, Net Pirate Number Station takes you back to the Cold War era when shortwave radio anticipated the internet's capacity for anonymous, surreptitious worldwide communication. The 'numbers stations,' it is believed, were used by military powers to broadcast coded number sequences to spies in the field. Delivered in a repetitive monotone, usually by a female voice, the eerie transmissions developed a cult following and infiltrated the arts through jazz and electronic music. Sodeoka's project uses the numbers stations as a model for a tongue-in-cheek, James Bond Meets Kazaa critique of new art culture itself, in which text "pirated" from websites! is converted into numbers and delivered to visitors by three prerecorded video host personalities. Cold, detached, and just boring enough to be interesting, this station might be the new big thing. - Peggy MacKinnon

#44 Review in Neural
June 22, 2004

Net Pirate Number Station, numerical-verbal abstraction.

The encoding of information, besides masking its meaning, determines a structural transformation which has his own aesthetic, easy to perceive when it's translated in audio form. This was noticeable in Free Radio Linux, an audio stream of the source of the Linux kernel read by a computer, a project reminiscent of the 'code stations' popular in the Eighties, pirate radios which broadcasted software. Net Pirate Number Station, instead, is connected to the historic techniques of transmission of enciphered messages using numerical codes. It's the latest work by Yoshi Sodeoka commissioned by Turbulence.org. Using a television interface, particularly dear to the author, there are three possible views of the numbers generated from web pages. The numbers are then read aloud by concatenating pre-recorded sequences spoken by many different women, and the numbers lose their

identity in an endless repetition and become sound, a mantra of digits, interrupted by faint white noises. It's a rhythm which flows uninterruptibly, drawing a shifty and obscure perspective which reveals a non-conventional approach to the use of data and to their organization and enjoyment.

Satanic Messages in Digital Videos

Created in open source media player, VLC.

Quote

Q: Are there already enough net art websites offering data-related content? Does yours "mean" anything?

These are more questions that you will have to answer by yourself. Ultimately, we can only say that we hope you, the user, will look for meaning where there may not seem to be meaning. Like the medieval man before you who ate moldy bread that was full of witch juice and got messed up, we want you to see the world in a new way. We understand that it was probably easier to see the world in a new way a long time ago. But still, did you ever fall asleep on the subway? And when you woke up you had missed your stop but everything felt so good that you wanted to go back to sleep again? That's kind of like what we are going for here with our number station. Instead of just riding the subway like everybody else, we want you to be a different person. Does that make sense?

Closing

Yoshi Sodeoka's work has an initial charm, the "awesome web experience" the reviewer I quoted in the beginning talks about. His projects take the methods and practices of open source to engage with the images and sounds that constitute popular culture. He takes no immediately critical stance about any of his subject matter. Rather, what is most compelling about his work is that it is the result of a prolific, dutiful, playful and skillful web user. He does not take for granted the glosses and interfaces applied to the everyday experience of the web, rather uses raw data along with 'finished material' (songs, videos, pictures) to create new and interesting products. The conceptual richness and originality of his work is debatable. He is an eminently surf-able artist, engaging in collaborations across media with many artists and writers. If many of the artists we've studied this semester grapple head-on with the issues teeming in open source culture, Sodeoka works within the questions of what an open source art would look like. His is a wide and diverse art of practice, what happens when open source becomes more than a directive, or a challenge, but a given. His art foregrounds blips and noise, what results, or is underneath, or is carried with, or is part of, or is around, or is over, or is taken for granted, or is cut away, or is separate from, or is together with, sounds and images.

Links:

[Yoshi Sodeoka on Wikipedia](#)
[Yoshi Sodeoka on Rhizome](#)
["The Interface Is the Massage"](#)
[The Esther M. Klein Art Gallery](#)

Yoshi Sodeoka – Course MCM 1700N: Open Source Culture – Brown University Wiki