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Interview: Pat Badani

Agricola de Cologne (AdC) interviews Pat Badani [PB]

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Pat Badani

is an US artist

- [artist biography](#)

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Interview: 10 questions—>

AdC:

You belong to an art scene using new technologies, you are an active representative of a genre dealing with Internet based art, called “netart”. When those artists started who are active since a longer time, the education in New Media was not yet such advanced like nowadays, often they came from different disciplines and had an interdisciplinary approach, those young artists who start now have partially this more advanced education, but rather not much experience in other disciplines.

1.

AdC:

Tell me something about your educational background and what is influencing your work?

PB:

I received a BFA Degree in studio arts from the University of Alberta in Canada and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. I am an intermedia artist. My work is at the juncture of a number of practices that engage net.art, performative and interactive situations, photography, video, installation and cultural research. My current work explores interventions in public space where network media interact with the analog world. I put different media and methods at the service

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of ideas that explore the home, the city and virtual territories as locations where culture is inscribed. These ideas are closely linked to my nomadic biography and my anxiety about place and belonging, specifically lost place, the place regained, the projected ideal place (or merely better) and the search for it through displacement. I often create discrete communicational spaces that allow citizens-at-large to become actively involved in a knowledge-building process through their participation. Recent works create a forum for dialogue and engage new media. Some of my questions are: "How do new technologies create ties between people?" and "To what extent is the act of connecting with others at the heart of artistic experience in the field of new media?" I can trace the genealogy of my hybrid practice to Fluxus and the Situationists; to notions of the Flaneur from Beaudelaire to Manovich; to pioneer artists involved with interactivity and the immaterial like Brazilian artist Lygia Clark, and to visual documentary in ethnographic practice.

2.

AdC:

The term "netart" is widely used for anything posted on the net, there are dozens of definitions which mostly are even contradictory. How do you define "netart" or if you like the description "Internet based art" better,

-do you think your work belongs to this specific genre,

-do you think "netart" is art, at all, if yes, what are the criteria?

Are there any aesthetic criteria for an Internet based artwork?

PB:

You are right in saying that there are various definitions of net.art, web art or internet based art, ranging from purist definitions to the hybrid. Because I tend to favor hybridity in general, and because net.art depends upon an evolving technology, I see it as a genre of experimental art that generates contradictions, as experimental art always does.

- I personally adhere to the more open definitions of internet based art as an evolving genre that has a place in my own intremedia practice. A net.art definition would involve experimental art within a range of categories that include works that aim to disturb linear narratives, netactivism, web-conferencing, and more recent incarnations that use PDA's and cell phones. A general feature of internet based works is that they depend on electronic networks for their existence, they are interactive, often multi-user and participatory.

3.

AdC:

What kind of meaning have the new technologies and the Internet to you, are they just tools for expressing your artistic intentions, or have they rather an ideological character, as it can be found with many "netartists", or what else do they mean to you?

PB:

All my work has an philosophical/ideological motivation, whether net.art

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Brunet

Interview: kyon

Interview: Letizia Jaccheri

Interview: Luke Duncalfe

Interview: Matthew
Williamson

related or otherwise. I generally do not consider my tools in advance but find them through my preoccupations. It follows naturally that if one is preoccupied with the questions of your “times’, these will be embodied in the technologies of your times.

4.

AdC:

Many “Internet based artists” work on “engaged” themes and subjects, for instance, in social, political, cultural etc concern.

Which contents are you particularly interested in, what are the subjects you are working on and what is your artistic message(s), if you have any, and what are your personal artistic visions for future artworking (if you have any).

PB:

I am interested in visual culture and interdisciplinarity, in new media and in visual ethnography. I focus on popular, or vernacular expressions of contemporary culture, as vehicles to study identity issues.

-I search for complexity and hybridity in notions related to multiculturalism, exploring spaces between national identity and globalization, between art and ethnography, between individuality and collectivity, between the multiplicity of media and the unity of art, between structure and randomness.

5.

AdC:

“Art on the net” has the advantage and the disadvantage to be located on the virtual space in Internet which defines also its right to exist. Do you think, that “art based on the Internet”, can be called still like that, even if it is just used offline?

PB:

The interesting feature about new media works is that they can mutate, they can have various incarnations/ transcriptions and still be valid. I would apply the same logic to works generated via the Internet that are presented offline. Naming, or labeling new media works in general is a problem, because the boundaries between categories are fuzzy due to their mutable characteristics.

6. a) Dealing with this new, and interactive type of art demands an active viewer or user. and needs the audience much more and in different ways than any other art discipline before. How do you stimulate the user to dive into this new world of art?

-Interactive works, whether Internet based or otherwise place demands on viewer/participants that not everyone has the knowledge, time, interest nor patience to engage. As these types of works – which now are ghettoized in experimental new media presentation environments- get absorbed into mainstream art (as with photo and video), they will have greater exposure and thus attract a more varied, larger audience, better equipped to understand and engage a new language.

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Interview: Nadja Kutz

Interview: Natalie Perrin

Interview: Pat Badani

Interview: Päivi Hintsanen

Interview: Peter Lind

Interview: Raivo Kelomees

Interview: Randy Adams aka runran

Interview: Reiner Strasser

Interview: Richard Jochum

Interview: Robert Kendall

Interview: Robert Sloon

Interview: Roberto Echen

Interview: Russet Lederman

Interview: Ryan Gallagher

Interview: Sachiko Hayashi

Interview: santo_file

Interview: Seth Keen

Interview: Sharkar Barua

Interview: Tamara Lai

Interview: Tautvydas Bajarkevicius

Interview: Timo Kahlen

Interview: tobias c. van Veen

Interview: Tomasz Konart

interview: UBERMORGEN.COM (Lizvix/Hans Bernhard)

Interview: Vytautas Michelkevicius

Interview: Yvonne Martinsson

Survey: Alison Williams

Survey: Domenico Quaranta

Survey: Ian Page-Echols

Survey: Jeremy Hight

Survey: Juan Manuel Patiño

Survey: Katty Vandenberghe

b)

AdC:

What do you think, represents an appropriate environment to present net based art to an audience, is it the context of the lonesome user sitting in front of his personal computer, is it any public context, or is it rather the context of art in general or media art in particular, or anything else?

PB:

The one-to-one-at-home relationship to Internet based works is what I personally favor as a 'user.' I rarely spend much time navigating through net.art at Festivals, Museum of Gallery presentations, although I think that these presentation environments are essential for the "distribution" of such works, specifically because these make them visible to a larger audience within a cultural validation system without which many of these works would not be considered at all.

c)

AdC:

If you would be in the position to create an environment for presenting this type of art in physical space, how would you do it?

PB:

a comfortable presentation environment -lounge-type, with laptops where visitors can access a database of net works from hyper-linked icons and brief descriptions.

-in this space -if it is a gallery/contemporary art center or museum, there would be regular screenings with navigational walk-throughs given by a staff member that would initiate traditional audiences who may still prefer to enter the work from a traditional viewer position.

7.

AdC:

As Internet based art, as well as other art forms using new technologies are (globally seen) still not widely accepted, yet, as serious art forms, what do you think could be an appropriate solution to change this situation?

PB:

This has always been a problem with any emerging technology or experimental art, and it is usually a matter of time before these works are absorbed into the mainstream. One solution would be access: diversifying net.art's presentation environments.

8.

AdC:

The Internet is called a kind of "democratic" environment, but the conventional art practice is anything else than that, but selective by using filters of different kind.

The audience is mostly only able to make up its mind on second hand. Art on the net might potentially be different. Do you think the current practice of dealing with Internet based art

Survey: Panos Kouros

Survey: Patrick Lichty

Survey: Philippe Langlois

Survey: Rahima Begum

Survey: Salvatore Iaconesi

Survey: Sonya Rademeyer

Survey: Tamar Schori

is such different or rather the described conventional way through (also curatorial) filtering?

Do you think, that speaking in the terms of Joseph Beuys, anybody who publishes anything on the net would be also an artist?

PB:

Net.art in the 90's was seen as a Utopian new place for art. Interestingly the same hopes were held for video when it was the new media of the times. Net.art's democratic ideal is plagued with issues of access to technology, and increasingly filtered through traditional curatorial art practices and validating systems, both of which limit both its production and its dissemination.

9.

AdC:

Do you think, the curators dealing with net based art should have any technological knowledge in order to understand such an art work from its roots?

PB:

Curators should have knowledge of art history, new media history and visual culture, in addition to technological knowledge.

10.

AdC:

It is planned, to re-launch

JavaMuseum – Forum for Internet Technology in Contemporary Art www.javamuseum.org in 2007 in a new context, very likely even in physical space.

What would be your personal wishes and expectations connected to this re-launch ?

PB:

All of what I have outlined above!

AdC:

Thanks for taking your time.

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