**Chapter 4: Principles from 2D and 3D Art and Design**

# INTERVIEW: Anthony Rowe of Squidsoup

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

My practice is mainly within an arts/design collective called *Squidsoup*, that I founded in 1997. *Squidsoup* has metamorphosed many times over the years. In the late '90s we operated as a digital design agency, working primarily in the commercial sector. With the dotcom collapse of 2001, we moved into more of an experimental arts scene, working on commissions and exhibitions. Later, this was supplemented with academic research. *Squidsoup* now operates at the overlaps between research and practice, producing exhibited artworks that also contribute to academic knowledge.

The personnel in *Squidsoup* have changed over the years. We currently have a core of five people, including myself. The other members are Gaz Bushell, Chris Bennewith, Liam Birtles and Ollie Bown. We all bring something specific to projects, but exact roles are hard to define as it is a collaborative process. My own vaguely defined role is to act as a kind of conductor, trying to pull everything together into something meaningful, with a trajectory and purpose.

As we are based around the globe, much of the collaboration is remote, communicating using Skype etc. We then come together at crucial points for short periods of intense development.

**Please describe your work on *Submergence* from your point of view.**

*Submergence* is the latest in a series of experiments into the possibilities of creating immersive experiences where the media component occupies physical three-dimensional space. We use arrays of individually controllable suspended LEDs as voxels, or pixels in space, to recreate abstract imagery that people can walk through and be enveloped within. Exact roles within the conceptual and technical development of the piece are hard to define, and blur within the mists of time. The original idea was inspired by the 'penetrable' works of Jesus Rafael Soto, and the low resolution video works of Jim Campbell (that I first saw in Japan in 2002), and an ambition to combine the two.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

Generally the responses have been very positive and, as we'd hoped, more about the experience than the technical aspects of the work. We worked hard to minimize the prominence of 'technology'. Clearly, the LEDs are tech, but the responsive/interactive elements are not generally advertised and so people approach the work in a different way - as an experience, rather than a technical situation to understand, or set of problems to solve.

One particularly memorable response, though not verbal, was that someone made a hangman's noose out of one of the LED strings within the piece - not sure if that was random creativity or a direct comment on the work...

Somebody posted on Flickr that having seen *Submergence*, their child went home and built their own version with a cardboard box and some Christmas tree lights.

**Please name three artists/designers you are influenced by and why.**

The early work of John Maeda was a big influence for me personally; the simplicity, minimal aesthetic, yet retaining humanity and warmth. I was also blown away by Char Davies' *Osmose* as a beautiful immersive virtual reality experience. Add to that Jesús Rafael Soto and Jim Campbell, mentioned above.

**What are you currently working on?**

*Submergence* has proved to be popular. A lot of my time is currently going on touring the piece. We are also adapting it for outdoor exhibition, and looking at building a new but similar work that is influenced by external factors other than the passage of people. I have also just completed a PhD, closely related to the work on *Submergence.* Finally, we are at the early stages of experimenting with the use of smoke and haze as components of an immersive experience.

**What is your dream project?**

To make a massive iteration of the *Submergence* project that fills a truly large space, indoors or out.

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

Such a broad question. I recently saw Ray Lee's *Chorus* at a festival here in the UK. I was familiar with the work from books and online documentation but the reality exceeded my expectations. It is a wonderful amalgam of spatial sound composition, performance and immersive multi-sensory experience.

# INTERVIEW: Justin Lee Martin

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I grew up in Montana. The rural landscape and the people it creates has always interested me. I have a vested interest in how geological locations such as Montana or any other places I have lived played a role in the historical development and the collapse of community(s). Walking has always been incorporated into the process in which I work. So many questions arise from the simple act of wandering. It is through this process that I gain an understanding as to how the self and others experience a constructed space. I use the public space as a place to shoot video, perform, and or make audio recordings. My studio is where I do the post-production aspect of my work.

**Please describe your work on *TEN FEET TALL* from your point of view.**

The woodsman was a prominent figure throughout my youth. Mythical legends containing woodsmen seemed to be born in my backyard, the Rocky Mountains. In addition to this figure, my hometown like many towns in America is captivated by local sports; in Missoula, Montana it has always been college football. For *TEN FEET TALL*, I started to question how gender roles were constructed in these types of environments. I wanted to construct a video that incorporated elements of masculinity, which for me are identified with the lumber industry and football games. I wanted to see a lumberjack under stadium lights splitting logs in the middle of a forest. There is no climax to the performance, just me splitting wood. Although, I wanted to set the viewer up to feel as if something bad was about to happen even though nothing does.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

Janet Cardiff is one of my earlier influences. Her ability to blur real-time with pre-recorded time still intrigues me. I like how Cardiff merges film and reality, memory and perception, artificial and natural, virtual and bodily, the self and other. Public art work that is seen hanging in a gallery space only asks the viewer to interact with it at most a few minutes, however some of Cardiff’s walks can last up to an hour.

Max Neuhaus’ public sound works have always interested me; particularly projects that focus on creating an awareness of environmental sounds. For example, his installation *Time Piece*, exhibited in 1983 outside of the Whitney Museum, using live feed microphones. Neuhaus took found sounds, altered them by processing them through computers and then projected them back out into the streets. This type of work intrigues me because it uses everyday materials that exists in our public sphere and turns them back on us, heightening our consciousness of our surroundings.

Francis Alÿs (see my answer for my favorite 4D artwork).

**What are you currently working on?**

I'm currently working on recording vocal scores that I have composed based on ear cleansing observations from several locations in the Seattle area. I intend to create a vocal soundscape of Seattle just primarily using my voice. This transformed soundscape may share similarities to Dada sound poems.

**What is your dream project?**

To keep making work.

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

I came across Francis Alÿs work when I was a graduate student at the University of South Florida. He really helped push my practice outside of the studio. *Paradox of Praxis (Sometimes Doing Something Leads to Nothing)* 1997, was one of the first works I had came across by Alys. There are many layers to his performance that interest me. One is how he reveals Mexico City and it’s workers through the poetic act of pushing a block of ice through the hot and dusty streets. Many of his works are about exposing some type of physical condition or regional temperament. The 5-minute video is not just documentation of Alys's performance but more or less a statement about place and it's relationship to the people that inhabit it. In the end, the ice melts and nothing is left to show for it. This performance much like his other works creates dialogue about human welfare and makes us question our stance as viewers.

# INTERVIEW: Ryan Austin of Sparksight

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

There are a lot of really incredible artists and designers that develop their own unique style and are able to produce all their projects in that. There's definitely a place for that but for what I do and what I'm interested in, I work in a different style for almost every project. Our clients always want something different from one another so the team at Sparksight really gets to play with something new almost every time.

I really enjoy this way of working since it forces me to research the look more and it's freeing. You're not stuck in the same color scheme or design so you're constantly working those creative muscles that don't always get exercise.

**Please describe your work on *10 Reasons to go ShoreTel* from your point of view.**

This piece was a lot of fun. With Overview Videos (explaining the product or service a company offers) they can often get out of hand and fall into too much detail or too little, but once the concept of "10 Reasons" came up it suddenly had a great organization to it.

I really wanted to simplify it and focus on getting elements to morph into the next image and see how much I could do with simple shapes. It just alternates in it's color scheme and there's only a few elements created outside of After Effects but putting that restriction on myself focused my attention on the motion design.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

The client was very pleased with the video and told me that they had it looping on their main screen when you walk into their building. That's always nice to hear that your work is being seen regularly and by more than just their people. Anyone who is visiting for a meeting or otherwise gets to looks at it as well.

**Please name three artists/designers you are influenced by and why.**

1. Fraser Davidson is a really incredible motion graphics designer. He's able to pack so much into his animations without them looking cluttered. The pace is relentless and it's a joy to watch. I don't know how he comes up with it all.

2. Phil Borst is just a master of motion. He crafts the most incredible animation that looks impossibly smooth.

3. Giant Ant is Sparksight's favorite agency. We love pretty much every animation they produce and really strive to push ourselves the way they have.

**What are you currently working on?**

We have a lot of projects in the works right now but currently I'm starting the next CollegeWeek Live video. We love doing animations for CollegeWeek Live because they really let us get creative and design fun characters and animation.

**What is your dream project?**

Right now I've been wanting to go old school and design an 8 bit animated video in the style of an old Nintendo video game. So I'd have to say anything that would let me do that and would also give me all the time in the world to perfect it.

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

In Austin, TX there's a great improv theater troupe called *Parallelogramophonograph* that will improvise entire plays from scratch. They had this one run of shows where they all played old timey snake oil salesmen and the entire show took place in real time. They'd interact with the audience and tell stories in character but it never broke away to another scene, it always played out as one single, unbroken scene. I like seeing people rearrange and fold time in narratives but it's also neat to see performances like this where time is allowed to be exactly what it is and we see what happens in that world when it exists in real time.

# INTERVIEW: Vitùc

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I was born in Luxembourg in 1966. Vitùc is my artist name. My parents were from Apulia, Italy. They immigrated to Luxembourg in 1958. My father was forgeron d’art, an artist blacksmith. He did amazing things with his hands, a true artist. I am autodidact. Ever since a boy, I always wanted to create things: I drew, I invented, I experimented. Painting color, fusain painting has long remained my favorite hobby.

Later on I wanted to bring life to my frames and find a way to express myself other than through drawing or painting. So I began to film impressions and I tried to see the world through the eyes of a kid. I discovered that everything around me could be inspiration for my images. I regularly produce short films, and all my videos can be found at Vimeo.com/vituc.

I work in visual storytelling, poetry, fragments of life, minimalism, poetry, experimental, short films, music videos & more. Also, I always have a camera with me and I try to take photos everyday.

I try to capture the invisible to make it visible. My photos are posted regularly at Instagram.com/vituc. I use all kind of cameras: iPhone, DSLR, GoPro. Sometimes I improvise, sometimes I have a concept before shooting. I only shoot when I am inspired and when I feel something about my subject. I like to work alone, in silence and in the night.

I like simplicity and minimalism. I do not need a lot to tell a story. Working with people means having to deal with complicated situations, problems and other stuff that takes your positive energy away. You need positivity to be creative. But sometimes you have to work with a crew for bigger projects, such as my two short films and one documentary.

What I most like in the film process is editing. Editing means bringing a story to life... you can reinvent a hole story or tell different stories with the same pictures; putting one scene before or after the other can change everything. I work very fast. I edit the films like making sketches with fusain, guided by the emotion. The sound and the music are also important for my images.

**Please describe your work on *Chiaroscuro* from your point of view.**

*Chriarscuro* is an experimental film... the third short of the hipstographic film series, after *YESTERDAY* and *LIFE FRAGMENTS*. It was shot with an iPhone with the wonderful Hipstamatic App and one specific effect included in the app (old photography burn effect). I wanted to create emotion through stop motion photography and through this effect. Playing with light and shadow …chiaro (clear) and scuro (dark), the pictures were taken in Italy during a vacation. I took overs 5000 pictures to make this film. The film has a dreamy touch…a visual poetry. I also used the music of my pianist friend David Ianni. I chose black and white to bring more melancholy to the ambiance.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

The film has over 16000 views on Vimeo. I received a prize in Luxembourg national contest. The people say that it is a visual poetry.

**Please name three artists/designers you are influenced by and why.**

I like the world of David Lynch because in this world there are no borders…and it is full of mystery and symbolism. I also did this clip for him and won a prize https://vimeo.com/18431229. I like the minimalistic music of Philip Glass because it’s simply beautiful and hypnotic. I like the world of Kubrik and his framing and one point perspective… and a lot more…like Tim Burton’s world and characters

**What are you currently working on?**

I am working on a music clip for cello. Coming soon. Here is the teaser https://vimeo.com/100934254

The next film be another little documentary.

# INTERVIEW: John Baldessari

**Please describe your work on *Baldessari Sings LeWitt* (1972) from your point of view.**

I've had numerous positive responses from around the world.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

I've had numerous positive responses from around the world.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

I don't want to answer that

**What are you currently working on?**

New Work, too early to say what.

**What is your dream project?**

I have none currently.

# INTERVIEW: Steve Roden

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I am an artist who works with painting, drawing, sculpture, performance, film/video, writing and sound. You are the first person to ask “how do you work?” which is a great question. For me, the hope is to create a situation of creative thinking and/or creative making. I generally begin with a seed or a spark, and begin without knowing what the endpoint might be. I have little interest in straight-forward fabrication, and I believe that both the process of making work, as well as the resulting work, are equal in importance. Through an influence of John Cage, the Fluxus movement and my experience in being in a punk band in the late 70’s, the ‘how’ is probably the most important aspect of my practice. Many people tend to work in the same mode for most of their life, refining a technique in order to make the next one better than the last one… but for me, the process of making is also a process of exploring mental and physical evolution… sometimes the process is more interesting than the resulting work, and sometimes the work seems to make itself without my input! When I was in the punk band, none of the so-called musicians could play their instruments ‘properly’, yet we still managed to make music that felt important to us, and we believed in the value of self expression, regardless of the fact that we were terrible! sometimes making art is not about making the best thing, but learning through the process of doing and making. When I make things, I not only want the objects to be meaningful, but the ‘how’ also has to be meaningful… the experience of making is a time for learning, feeling, tinkering, thinking, etc. so the “how” just might be the most important part.

**Please describe your work on *Bird Forms* from your point of view.**

*Bird Forms* was an early site-specific sound installation. It was created for a courtyard with trees at the center of the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. I was interested in the fact that these trees were usually filled with birds and birdsong. I have always felt that if sound is going to play in a public space, the artist must be conscious of the existing sonic landscape, so I am interested in creating works that integrate, rather than segregate. I used several recordings of birds on 78 rpm records, from the 1930’s as a kind of shadow or memory of those anonymous singers who passed away long ago, in an attempt to allow them to sing again in the trees. I manipulated many of the recordings, via guitar pedals and other analog devices, so that the sounds seemed to be birds but not quite. (I am not a fan of work that is too literal). I worked without a computer or digital tools - as I like objects, situations or sounds that aren’t cleaned up. When I work with any tools, I tend to gravitate towards the artifacts of the medium - whether it be a cassette tape or guitar pedals or electricity. It’s kind of like allowing your face to age naturally, as opposed to having plastic surgery simply to look younger… it isn’t real.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

The best responses were that the birds that inhabited the trees would sing along with my recordings. They were my best audience! I also liked the fact that the piece was subtle, and that most people never even realized they were listening to recordings. I feel that making subtle works is an alternative to the language of popular culture and media, which bombards.

**Please name three artists/designers you are influenced by and why.**

George Nelson, who was the head designer for the Herman Miller company in the 1950’s - 1970’s. While Nelson was a fantastic industrial designer, he also did a lot of writing about design, and along with his physical designs, he was quite a thinker, who tended to offer very different points of view. For example, he wrote an essay about looking at chairs while lying on the carpet - looking up at the bottom of the seats. Sure, it seems a bit silly, but his ideas suggested that people should look closer at ordinary things… and to find one’s own point of view… he truly saw ordinary things differently.

John Cage was a huge influence for his use of chance operation, and his radical ideas about how music can be created, as well as questioning what music is (or is not). In his composition *4’33”* a performer sits at a piano for four minutes and thirty three seconds, and the only thing the musician does is open and close the piano lid. While many people saw this act as a joke, Cage offered his audiences the possibility of hearing sound differently. It doesn’t matter if you think the wind is sound or music… the point is to listen. When I say Cage used chance operation it means he set up a series of parameters or situations that he would use to determine his choices while creating the score. In many cases, he would consult the *I-ching*, and so that the score consisted of certain rules, that would generate a series of decisions for the performers. Even with *4’33”*, each performance would be different, based on the conditions of the sound in the space… no two performances would ever be the same.

R. M. Schindler was an architect, who came from Vienna to Los Angeles to work with Frank Lloyd Wright. What I love about Schindler’s work is that he never created a signature style for his work, and each of the houses he designed was different than the others. He constantly experimented with new forms and new materials, and he wasn’t afraid of color. His sense of geometry is idiosyncratic in a deeply personal way.

**What are you currently working on?**

I am working on a series of small paintings based on a comic book from my childhood, drawn by Neil Adams (who was one of my childhood heroes). I find it fascinating that comic book pages were penciled by one person and inked by another - so that the inker would determine the final images (like the paintjob on a car). At the time, 1969, it was rare in that an artist did both the pencils and inks. I am also working on a series of collages and photographs related to a box of old magazines that belonged to my father - in an effort to explore the space between material that is both generic and highly charged emotionally. I am writing a book length poem based on Kenneth Clark’s the nude (my grandmother’s copy), using chance operation. I am working with a modular synthesizer to create a composition for a choreographer, and on the opposing side, I’m working with acoustic objects for the soundtrack of an animated film; and finally, I’m creating a series of drawings based on a notebook that belonged to my grandfather’s younger brother. it was a notebook of math and handwriting exercises, so I am drawing on top of his drawings - conversing over time, from 1928 - 2014.

**What is your dream project?**

Wow… that is a tough question. I suppose it would be to create a sound installation in Philip Johnson’s glass house or in Corbusier’s *Ronchamp*!

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

It would have to be *4’33”*, specifically because in 2012 I performed it every day for a year, and it moved from a musical situation to a ritual situation - and most importantly every single time I performed it, the piece was different… certainly, it is about the passage of time, but what is also quite wonderful is that it can be performed anywhere by anyone and one does not need to know how to read music, nor how to play an instrument, so it is not elitist, and quite possibly the most democratic western musical composition. And most importantly it asks questions, rather than offering answers.

# INTERVIEW: Ryan Berg

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

My background is in ceramic sculpture and painting and through the years my work gravitated towards performance, costuming and film. My practice has greatly changed over the years from a traditional studio practice where I made things/objects on a daily basis to the current model of project-based pieces with my group Glitter Chariot. I also work as a production designer for film and television which has shifted my focus to design and interior spaces.

**Please describe your work on *Should Have Been Blonde* from your point of view.**

The song and video for *Should Have Been Blonde* started from hearing a song that triggered the idea of what it is like to fall in love with a voice or something that isn’t whole. It is about feeling both the highs of the falling in love, and the lows of realizing the experience as a real one, once learning that the voice isn’t what you felt it to be. It’s about high expectations that one can over-create for themselves.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

Mike Kelley, Jeffry Mitchell, David Bowie

**What are you currently working on?**

Just recently finished another TV show and working on a new show idea for Glitter Chariot. One that is more spooky and dangerous!

**What is your dream project?**

The Glitter Chariot video album movie.

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

Disneyland. It’s perfect design with sound, reality and fakeness all wrapped into one.

# INTERVIEW: Cesar Martinez

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I’m an Illustrator and art director from Mexico City based in Vancouver, I’ve been a graphic designer for 8 years now but I’m aiming to do more personal projects nowadays to explore new styles and techniques, but mostly to create projects with true passion involved.

**Please describe your project, *A Rather Lovely Thing*.**

It’s a story about love and adventure, It started as a personal story to tell and a chance to do animation without a team involved. During the production of this video, it became more like a universal feeling and a universal story to tell.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

It has been my most successful project so far. It has been published in important magazines and blogs all around the globe but (it might sound cheesy) the greatest response has been from the people. I´ve received lots of awesome messages from people thanking me for my piece of work, most of them saying they feel related and identified with the story.

**Did you use the element of direction purposefully at the time of creation, or did it become important after the work was created?**

It was part of the experimentation process, this project was made in less than 1 and a half months and I didn’t have too much time to plan it. Scenes like these didn’t work the way they were. This was rearranged during the production at the very last minute by reanimating the camera and all the assets.

**Can you describe a work by another artist that also uses the element of direction quite well?**

I love how the villains were portrayed in the Batman TV show during the 60s. It was over used but It´s definitely what it makes it so unique storytelling-wise.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

Beside being and artist, Jim Flora’s designs are a perfect combination of clean minimal layout and awesome stylized character design. Very unique. As a huge fan of vintage illustration, art /design, Tavis Coburn was the one of my main inspirations to create my own 60’s revival illustration style. Ash Thorp has being an inspiration for me lately, a multidisciplinary art director that can be very eclectic in his artwork is almost like a role model of what a designer should be nowadays.

**What is your dream project?**

One with loose deadlines and creativity freedom.

# INTERVIEW: Jonathan Rattner

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I consider the practice of time-based media as an opportunity to be reflective and mindful. I treat my process like a ritual, in which each step allows me to feel more present, active, and conscious of the world around me.

During production, I work very much like a photojournalist. I travel to locations, wander, observe, conduct interviews, and gather images and sounds. For the most part, I work alone, and I tend not to follow a script. I rarely use a tripod or lights, and I often shoot long durational shots without moving the camera (panning) or changing the focal length (zooming). While I’m recording sounds or images, I try to take in all of the sensory information around me; feel my body, listen to sounds, and look for visual patterns and rhythms in the environment. I’m interested in experiencing what I may have ignored without my camera.

In post-production, my approach is akin to that of a collage artist, juxtaposing images and sounds from different locations and times. My editing decisions are not preplanned, and a short work can take months to complete. Like production, editing is very much a meditative act in which I repeatedly review sounds and images as different constructions until a concept or story arises.

**Please describe your work on *End, End, End* from your point of view.**

*End, End, End* is an experimental film that mimics the fragmentary nature of thoughts and memories. I made this work when someone in my life was dying. Reviewing it now, I think it has to do with my inability to know how to appropriately interact with losing a loved one. Conceptually, I was striving to make something meaningful out of a jumble of images, words, and sounds that are — on their own — (arguably) meaningless.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

I have had a variety of reactions to this work. I ask a lot from viewers emotionally and mentally, in a really short amount of time. I ask viewers to be participants in the work, to have a silent conversation with me, and to interact with different images, sounds, and ideas from one moment to the next. In this work, I present viewers with long durational shots of cows, a succession of water images, and talk about coffee, and death. The dots that I’m asking people to connect can be frustrating. I’ve seen some viewers close off and become disengaged, but I’ve also seen people trust the work and emotionally connect to the intensity of the piece.

**Please name three artists/designers you are influenced by and why.**

Beyond Dada, The Situationist International, and Fluxus, three artists that I continually return to are Chris Marker, Jean Rouch, and Nam June Paik.

I think of Chris Marker as a rule breaker, an artist who ignored accepted cinematic structures and made work (as well as presented work) in his own, unique way. He seemed to understand cinema as a growing, changing art form with endless possibilities for construction. Marker’s films are challenging. They ask a lot of questions and make you reflect and feel. But his films never give you answers. In this respect, Marker had a lot of respect for his audience, asking us to participate in a conversation rather than simply be passive viewers. Marker’s films also have the amazing ability to be both politically and socially aggressive, and still convey a sense of humor. Having a range of different ideas and emotions in one piece is so hard to achieve and something I strive for in every one of my works.

Jean Rouch coined the term Cinéma Vérité, however his idea of cine-reality was different from how many understand it. Rouch believed cinema does not merely capture the reality in front of us, but rather has the ability to create a new reality - a hidden reality - one in which both the filmmaker and subjects filmed are altered emotionally and psychologically. Rouch’s films have definitely impacted the way I make and think about my art practice. Rouch inspires you to rethink participation and collaboration, the importance of process, and the boundaries we construct not only socially, and politically, but also in the arts.

Nam June Paik has taught me to take risks, experiment, and be adventurous. There’s a lot one could say about Paik, but what stays with me is his consistent ability to express ideas with simplicity, and thoughtfulness.

# INTERVIEW: Heidi Kumao

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

Generating artistic spectacle through the intersection of cinema, sculpture, theater and technology, my work reframes ordinary gestures to explore their psychological underside. My interests have manifested a wide range of hybrid art forms including: a game interface which empowers users to hack live CNN broadcasts, provocative electronic clothing, electromechanical girl’s legs that “misbehave,” surreal stop motion animations, and narrative video sculptures. While my work uses technology, it is not about technology. Technology is a tool for telling stories- and I mine each media for its unique properties to do so. Currently, I am working on a series of video installations that combine shadow play, documentary, and optical illusion to poetically frame political and historical stories about surviving extreme confinement.

I work to sculpt an experience that causes viewers to rethink ordinary events of life including: traditional gender roles, mass media, incarceration, historical stories of survival, and issues of the nuclear family. I reorient perspectives through time-based media: forms that unfold over time, ideas that become clearer with repetition, videos that reveal the synergy between image, object and movement. When synthesizing the experience, I become the theater director, conducting the performance of objects, re-staging memories, and ultimately exposing the theatricality underlying so many aspects of our lives. Through these animated tableaus, I demonstrate how small gestures, even the most private and poetic, can become significant acts of defiance.

I start projects because I have a strong physical or emotional response to a particular news story, personal experience, or historical event. I “sketch” by recording short videos or photos of ordinary acts such as jumping or sweeping. Through playful layering of these I create image composites that I sculpt into a poetic and visually complex narrative. My studio activities include: shooting video and photos, recording audio, editing video/audio on a computer, projecting video, internet research, construction with wood and metal using hand tools.

**Please describe your work on *Swallowed Whole* from your point of view.**

*Swallowed Whole* is a somber, animated, experimental film about surviving extreme isolation and physical limitations as a result of traumatic injury. After breaking my back in a sledding accident, I was forced to lie supine on the couch for 3.5 months during which my mind often descended into a desolate, disorienting dreamscape. Feeling stifled, I imagined that I was trapped under a frozen lake; life continued on above me while I looked up from below. This sensation became the kernel from which I created this film.

*Swallowed Whole* draws a parallel between the exploration of this suspended state and Arctic exploration. The Arctic is a completely foreign landscape to most people, a place in which time slows down, activity of daily life is transformed, and human capabilities are tested by its physical extremes. These characteristics could just as easily be used to describe the physical and psychological experience of recovering from a traumatic injury. Both journeys require the navigation of harsh new territories and possess unlimited blank space for thoughts, hallucinations, dreams, and nightmares. *Swallowed Whole* weaves together photos, animations, videos and sound recordings and takes the viewer on an abbreviated journey through the physical and psychological landscapes of hospitalization and recovery. Some of the imagery and sounds were collected during The Arctic Circle 2013 Summer Solstice Expedition, an international research expedition for artists, writers, and scientists.

I edited the video to emphasize the physical impact of dropping, crashing, and slamming; repeated vertical frame-rolls from analog TV metaphorically replay the impact that literally broke my back. I wanted to create a video that viewers would feel; the bone-crushing sounds and jarring movement echo throughout the film mirroring the repetition of trauma, and the trauma of repetition, commonly associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. The recurring instability of the image reflects the fragility of my injured body while providing a palpable experience for the viewer. The piece is inspired in part by Joan Jonas’ *Vertical Roll* (1972) which uses a common analog television set malfunction to create a shifting stage of activity. “Swallowed Whole” uses fragmentation to both tell and disrupt the story and serves as a window of empathy into PTSD repetition compulsion.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

People wince and display a visceral connection to the first slamming sound that is echoed figuratively throughout the piece. That sound was carefully sculpted from at least 4 different layered sound sources including: a piano lid and door closing, guitar feedback, and rocks dropping. When I see that response I feel I have successfully translated a very personal and internalized experience into a tangible piece that can be understood by the general public.

**Who are three artists that influence your work and why?**

Artists who use art to tell stories—stories that often examine the personal lives of women. Their work is visually pared down and emphasize the darker, psychological aspects of life that they have lived or observed in detail.

Louise Bourgeois—I have always been struck by her use of ordinary and found materials to create dark narratives. She created narrative work that was incredibly personal and emotional, had physical presence and psychological weight, and was accessible to the general public. She worked across media and on so many scales, yet the miniature, hand-sewn, distorted figures have as much impact as the building sized structures and spiders. I strive to create work that is as visually spare and powerful.

Ida Applebroog—A lot of her paintings have multiple panels like a graphic novel or comic, creating a progression of events much like a film storyboard. In these visually pared down and often empty rooms, her female characters are experiencing an awkward, emotionally complex, and revealing moment. While they may appear to be “just” figurative paintings, they broach difficult topics and, like Bourgeois, are striking. Their effect on me lingers long after I have viewed the work.

Mona Hatoum- Her work always resonates for me from the coexistence of beauty and violence. Exquisitely crafted objects reveal deeply disturbing stories about domestic life, life as a woman. Political, feminist, transformed objects tell troubling tales; one piece in particular possesses all of these characteristics. *Traffic* is made from two used suitcases sitting about a foot apart. Long brown hair emerges from tiny holes in the side of one suitcase and disappears into the side of the other suitcase. Haunting and unmistakably feminist, Hatoum provides a profound image of human trafficking, immigration, and the vulnerabilities of being a woman in these situations. I admire how she can distill really big political issues into elegant and gorgeous visual objects.

**What is your dream project?**

Rehab a house or building in Detroit in which every aspect of it is “artified.” It’s a community space, a gallery, an artwork, a classroom, a movie theater, a wifi café.

**What is one of your favorite time-based artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

Christian Marclay’s *The Clock*, a 24-hour film constructed of thousands of movie clips. The film itself is a real-time clock with the movie clips each referencing a specific minute of the day. The time in the movies corresponds exactly to the time of day you are watching the film. If it’s 8:05 am in the movie clips, you must be sitting in the theater at 8:05 am.

You’d think it would feel forced or jagged, but the beautiful part of the whole project is how the film clips smoothly segue from one moment to the next. For example, at around 6pm, many of the clips show people making dinner. In one clip, a woman in a 1950s film is putting a casserole in the oven. The next clip shows a woman in a different film taking a dish out of the oven. Hollywood and popular cinema reveal themselves to have patterns of activity that take place at certain times of the day. It is both a clock and an in-depth deconstruction of film through the 20th century.

# INTERVIEW: Tapio Rosenius of Lighting Design Collective

**Please describe your work on "Silo 468" from your point of view.**

The project is a conversion of oil silo into light art piece and a public space. It sits by the sea facing central Helsinki, Finland. Prevailing winds well known to residents are strongly present. The natural light, wind and the movement of light on the water formed the principles for the lighting concept. Walls are perforated with 2012 holes referring to the Helsinki World Design Capital 2012 year.

The lighting signifies the start of a major urban redevelopment for the City of Helsinki. It functions to draw focus to an unknown district and creates a landmark and a marketing device for the City. Maybe most importantly, through the use of natural and artificial light, it created a unique civic space for the citizens to use. Furthermore, it set a precedent for a new district for 11,000 people to become the “district of light”. During the first years the silo was mainly viewed from a distance when the area started to get built. 1280 LED domes in 2700K white were fitted inside the silo behind the cut-outs and visible from several kilometres away.

LDC developed a bespoke software using swarm intelligence and nature simulating algorithms that refresh responding to parameters such as wind speed, direction, temperature, clear night and snow. The system dials out every 5 minutes for new data. The patterns are fluid, natural in feel and never repeat. They are slow but speed up in relation to the wind speeds creating a constantly changing mural of light. At midnight the exterior turns deep red for 1 hour. The color refers to the former use of the silo as a container of energy. At 02:30 when the last ferry goes past to Suomenlinna the lights go off.

The interior gains importance as the area gets populated. Inside is painted deep red. Daylight seeps through the pattern derived from original rust patterns on the walls. North facing wall has no perforations. 450 steel mirrors moved by winds are fitted behind the holes. With sunlight the silo appears to glimmer and sparkle like the surface of water. The warm white LED grid reflects light indirectly via the red walls into the space. The moving patterns read as halos racing across the walls. The Silo is a civic space for the citizens of Helsinki. A floor, rigging infrastructure, power, water and emergency & cleaning lighting were added. This light intervention has created a new space for people.

During normal use the installation uses about 2kw of power, which is approximately 2W per square meter. The software creates a particle system that combines motion behaviors from birds, insects, and fishes to create organic and non-repetitive animations for the lighting system, in a 128 x 10 LED grid. These animations are being generated using current data from the local weather, specially wind speed and direction, to create a vast and unpredictable array of light movements that give the viewer a visual representation of the weather sensations in the city. The control application was developed in OpenFrameworks, an open source c++ toolkit for creative coding, and runs in an e:cue Lighting Control Engine mx server.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

People tend to lose themselves within this work and begin to “see things”. I find that brilliant because it allows something that has industrial scale and materiality to become subtle, sensitive and personal. I believe the sole reason for that is the movement of the lights. If they were static I don’t think we would get that response from people. The element of time is completely the central issue here. It also must be something about the frequency of the movement and the non-repeating nature of it. It feels familiar, natural, acceptable, calming.

One very memorable event was when a Finnish couple requested to have their wedding inside the silo. We got a glimpse of the ceremony at the end of our movie about the project. It was amazing to see the piece transformed into a venue for all the rituals associated with a Finnish wedding.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

Sacha Vierny for his ability to create ambience, mood and tension with lighting on his movies. Jesus Soto for his pioneering work on kinetic art. Brian Eno for his concept of “surrender” in context of gallery based light art work and his experiments with algorithmic visual and audio generation.

**What are you currently working on?**

We are developing participatory light art interventions for urban context. This is a big topic for us. How to breathe life and excitement into the night-time built environment.

**What is your dream project?**

No such a thing. Every project is a dream project.

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

Although this might sound like a strange example in a context of highly technical and digital work that we do, I am a huge fan of Andy Goldsworthy. Most of his work deals with time beautifully. He has a book called *Time*, and all the pieces in that book are very interesting.

# Interview: Siqi Song

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I'm an animation film-maker who mostly works with stop-motion techniques. My work mostly comes from observation of life and people. It contains lots of media like paintings, illustrations, videos, animation, etc. And the concepts all came from the things I have experienced or seen in my life. The reason I choose stop-motion animation is that I love the power of bringing objects to life during the film-making process.

**Please describe your work on "Food" from your point of view.**

This is an animated documentary about food. I love food. I also love bringing stuff to life in stop-motion animation, so naturally combining the two loves was bound to happen. After speaking with different people about food and their preferences, I was surprised to find how different their opinions were and how much food affected their lives. By interviewing vegetarians, vegans, pescetarians, and meat eaters, I recorded their statements and then edited the soundtracks and rebuilt the conversations using stop-motion animated foods to speak for themselves. The film brings into discussion various topics related to the food industry, including factory farming, urban environments, and life choices.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

Nick Park, Jan Švankmajer and Adam Elliot. They are all great animation artists, whose work brought me into the stop-motion world. I didn't even realize I was influenced by them until somebody pointed out FOOD is like the combination of Nick Park and Jan Švankmajer. Yes, I don't deny it. I always like Nick Park's storytelling, the humor within his film. About Jan Švankmajer, his influence to me is the creative way of using materials in stop-motion.

**What is your dream project?**

I haven't thought about this question yet. I think, for now, my dream project is to have enough money to make a film. You can see all the films I made before are self-funded, I didn't have too much money to buy all the materials and equipment. It definitely reduces the quality of the film.   Therefore I'm trying to find funding or investors for my next film. I think this is also the dream project for all independent film-makers.

# INTERVIEW: Hunter Jonakin

**Tell us a little bit about yourself as an artist/designer. What is your practice like; how do you work?**

I mostly just follow my interests. I am process oriented, in that I like to learn new things. I get a lot out of solving problems, and complex projects give me a great deal of satisfaction when they are completed. I work with any and all media and I am particularly drawn to creating interactive work.

**Please describe your work on *Jeff Koons Must Die!!!* from your point of view.**

*Jeff Koons Must Die!!!* came about in my last year of grad school when I was realizing that the art world was a complicated space to navigate. I wanted to create a piece that was conceptually layered and instill in it the possibility of shifting a viewer’s ideological viewpoint while they were interacting with the work. Obviously, everyone reads art differently, but, at the very least, I wanted to create the space for that shift. The work is meant to seem didactic and polarizing, but I wanted to give viewers a chance to question their own destructive tendencies. In the end all of us are implicated in the carnage, the struggle for power, overreaching ambitions, and need for acceptance.

**Have you had any memorable responses to this piece? And if yes, please describe.**

I think the most memorable reactions are the people who are giddy about being able to (virtually) destroy Jeff Koons’ art. They seem to have so much angst related to his work and his studio production process. Most have told me that they found the game to be cathartic. I have also had reactions where people stopped playing the game because they thought they were being made fun of in some way. This reaction was by far the most peculiar.

**Please name three artists you are influenced by and why.**

Marcel Duchamp is the godfather of conceptual art. He was brilliant, playful, and subversive. He truly was ahead of his time and worked to push the boundaries of what art can be. James Hampton seemed to be able to completely disconnect his work from his ego. So much so that no one knew he was even an artist until after he passed away and his family members found a throne, an altar, and several other items that he had been constructing for thirteen years. The pieces were made of detritus he had collected as a school janitor. Hampton made things because he was driven to do so. There is perfect creative purity in that notion. And lastly, Rodney Mullen. Mullen gained fame in the 80's as a freestyle skateboarder and is viewed by most as the father of modern street skating. His trick innovations as a teenager living in rural Florida have influenced the cultural fabric of skateboarding as we know it, as well as the technical aspects of how people ride skateboards to this day. There is something beautiful and profound regarding the fact that he was able to achieve so much just by pushing the boundaries of the status quo and being unafraid to do so. Art is everywhere and it is everything.

**What is one of your favorite 4D artworks, or pieces of design, and why?**

I like Ryan Trecartin's *K-CoreaINC.K (section a)* (2009) a lot because it perfectly mirrors popular culture, scrambles it, and serves it back up to you. It is mesmerizing. There is no narrative to speak of but it seems like there is a narrative. I feel like it is trying to tell me something very important but I just can't quite figure it out. In the end, I think it's telling me something I already know. The white noise of information is just re-packaged in a new container and placed just out of reach. Interesting visuals, jump-cuts, and graphics overlays make this video difficult to stop watching.

**What is your favorite quote?**

“Bad taste is real taste, of course, and good taste is the residue of someone else's privilege.” -Dave Hickey, Air Guitar