characters and their costumes. Proboscis decided that the two characters were the best way of giving their costumes a shape, to cut them into something that contained all of the complicated and disparate ideas about location and the interactions between participants and technologies involved in the event.

For the costumes to work with the other project objectives, they needed to fulfill certain requirements. For example, the cloth used to make the costume had to be strong enough to hold the electronic parts for the sensors. Both costumes were equipped with LED displays that indicated the levels of each element measured by each sensor and a symbol for each environmental sensor was embroidered next to its respective display. The team chose to place the environmental sensors in the masks of the costumes. This meant that both costumes required masks that had "enough room for the sensors to be concealed but have a free air flow around them." By using the large snouts of both masks (hence the name of the project), the costumes elegantly extended the character's metaphorical ability to "sense", or sniff, the pollutants in the air. This free air flow around the

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**Measure Once, Cut Twice**

Frederik Lesage

DIFFUSION GENERATOR

A case study of the Soup project
economic pressures on a local and global scale. It is difficult to fathom how artists can produce artworks in such a tangled mess, particularly if they tackle complex issues such as the environment, poverty, or urban regeneration. What can artists contribute to our understanding of these issues that a report or a statistical model produced by a group of informed experts cannot? I would argue that it is artists' particular way of cutting into such issues that makes their work valuable.

The concept of cutting in this case is inspired by the work of anthropologists, such as Marilyn Strathern, who use the term to designate how people and objects set the limits of social and technical relationships in time and space how they cut out new limits to the fabric of our daily life. In this case, I employ cutting as a way of understanding how certain objects, and their related meanings and uses, function as a means of encompassing a number of socio-technical relationships between different technologies and people. The following is therefore an attempt to use the concept of cutting to better understand how Proboscis produces a creative work such as Snout. I will begin by relating some of the details

commissioning the work

By 2006, the commissioning of the project followed by the interpretation of the challenges and proposals a set of solutions for the project.
Although Proboscis provides a recipe for their reanimation, it is the environmental sensors and the relationship with Birkbeck College, as well as other projects, which occupy their time. Just as Mr. Punch and the Plague Doctor produced a new project from Robotic Feral Public Authoring, a more recent project, known as Sensory Threads, will soon bring a new cut to all of this work. This seems to be part of the role that Proboscis plays in these strange and complex projects: to take-on the demands of a commission - the interests of stakeholders, the budget, the related technologies and topical subjects - and producing something exceptional for those around them and sometimes, as in the case of Snout, even themselves. This is not to argue that Proboscis deplores measuring, quite to the contrary in fact. Rather than measuring only in anticipation of the act of cutting, thereby keeping the two actions distinct and limiting the potential for the unexpected, the team articulates their work through the results of the cut as measurement.

In using the concept of cutting, I have shown how artist groups like Proboscis are able to create meaningful works in collaboration with others that do not shy away from the real world. But this then uploaded to an online map, providing geographical representations of the environmental data on the web. One of Robotic Feral Public Authoring's objectives included demonstrating to people in everyday situations how to collect data about pollutants in their neighbourhood as part of hobby groups or other similarly playful yet familiar activities.

These aspects of Robotic Feral Public Authoring formed the basis of Iniva's commission. Snout's contributors agreed that it should "build" on the previous collaboration in order to produce a new public event taking place in the vicinity of Iniva's future location, making use of the mobile sensor technology and promoting community engagement. Iniva approached the team with an established budget and timeframe. The event would take place sometime between mid-March and early April leaving the team only five months to plan and execute the project. Seen in this light, the commission consisted of a number of constraints including limited resources and little time to deliver the project, but it also represented a number of opportunities. Firstly, the new project gave the Proboscis/Birkbeck College team a chance to implement new

As for the Plague Doctor, he was a kind of creepy character - he destroys everything he loves. He is the trickster, the Lord of Misrule - that's a case of cutting, twice? Or is their value unique to the single exception of similarity for their measuring. A dominant theme was the Carnival and how some of its cultural traditions could be incorporated into the event. What remained for Proboscis to determine was how many of the elements from the Sporadic project would be represented in the new project. The team needed to establish the concept of cutting as developed up to now. The artists were concerned about pollutants in their neighbourhood as part of hobby groups or other similarly playful yet familiar activities.

The event took place on Tuesday, 10 April 2007, and was not designed as a recurring event, as stated in the introduction. Although it was not clear how to make the costume had to be strong enough to withstand the streets of Shoreditch with their snouts off into the streets of Shoreditch with their snouts. But in order to successfully integrate the sensors, and the process of putting the sensors into service, Proboscis wanted to ensure that the team could could be significantly extended into a new project.
club venue. Mr. Punch and the Plague Doctor set off into the streets of Shoreditch with their snouts and sausages to cause mischief, while their sensors read the environment, followed by closely the team armed with postcards explaining the project for any interested onlookers. The event ran smoothly and the team soon found themselves back at Cargo with an audience of interested participants to discuss participatory sensing and view the online display of the project's sensory data.

As the event came to a close, it was now the team's turn to measure their results: collect feedback from the participants, conduct a post-mortem of the technology's operation, and relay their findings to stakeholders. Some of the findings of these assessments resulted from the unanticipated consequences of the performers' experiences with the costumes. For example, although the actors improvised the actions of the two characters, they could not see the results of the sensor readings displayed by the LEDs stitched into their costumes. Their large masks limited the peripheral vision needed to view them. Because of this, the performers did not react to the variations in the data (even though the data pollutants in the air. This free air flow around the metaphorical ability to "sense", or sniff, the themselves. This is not to argue that Proboscis sometimes, as in the case of stakeholders, the budget, the related technologies rather than hiding away in a laboratory or office environment, environmental sensors in the masks of the the demands of a commission - the interests of sensor was embroidered next to its respective .

Snout will soon bring a new cut to all of this work. This Sensory Threads costumes were equipped with LED displays that interactions between participants and argue that all acts of measuring have a meaning, and disparate ideas about location and the artist groups like Proboscis are able to create were in their way. What changed the relationship with Birkbeck College, as well as objectives, they needed to fill certain reanimation, it is the environmental sensors and the commission consisted of a number of people. The following is therefore an attempt to the commission consisted of a number of research had to be conducted on what kind of next few months, concerns had to be addressed, with the conventions of finding and hinting with the conventions of finding and hinting the team wore masks. Nor was anyone familiar for the characters: none of the members of the performance would best suit this event. 

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In the early days of the project, members of the team generated ideas about how to approach the commission in a way that would engage the community. A dominant theme was the Carnival and how some of its cultural traditions could be used to create a playful yet meaningful atmosphere for the event. Team members investigated the history and activities surrounding a number of European carnival traditions. Reading team notes produced over the course of the

Cutting characters

It is this challenge - how to implement a series of technologies, activities, and ideas similar to the ones first developed in Robotic Feral Public Authoring in a different way - that required a cut on the part of Proboscis. How would the participants use the sensors? How would they relate to the data? How would the team communicate its ideas about measuring pollutants in our environment and the importance of community engagement? Before the team could plan any of the technical or logistical requirements, a decision had to be made about how all of the constraints and aspirations of the commission would come together in one coherent event. Enter: Mr. Punch and the Plague Doctor.

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measuring - through the masks design, through the stories that brought them to life, through the sensors that are stitched into their clothing - as the Feral Robots were in their way. What changed was what was said by measuring. One could argue that all acts of measuring have a meaning, be they performed by an expert or a layman. Through Snout, the team cuts out a different, exceptional meaning for their measuring. A measuring that is unfamiliar to those involved in which the measurers are given centre stage rather than hiding away in a laboratory or office building.

But this cut does not bring us to the final event. Now that the cut is made, the members of the team must deal with the results of what they have produced. The simple act of cutting is environmentalism. In this sense, it is not so much the particular results of the measurements that matter to Proboscis as much as the conversations and observations among participants that take place during and after the act of measuring.

These two characters, I would argue, were what constituted the cut that allowed all of these disparate ideas and objects to come together. This is because, although there had been a considerable amount of research and reflexion that went into planning the event, the two characters became distilled representations of the project's sensory data.

Proboscis' in Mr. Punch's, whose legend was traced back to the traditional Commedia dell'arte, and something cool on a handbag, it doesn't say what was said by measuring. One could answer the other pillar's question: Why and if the tail, I believe, that can provide an environmentalist interpreter of the material events produced by the community as much as the conversations and discussions among participants that take place during and after the act of measuring.

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This was partly why the team chose to use outlandish costumes. But in order to successfully deploy the costumes, the individuals wearing them had to perform the characters. This meant that the individual’s work of measuring was not only to wear a funny costume and work with a computer, battery pack, and GPS unit on a belt or backpack which was connected to a network of sensors. Nor was it simply to transmit a number of environmental pollutants to a website during a public event. An event part of the process of measuring was about making all of the ideas and all of the stories that made up these two characters visible to participants in a real-time, everyday setting. This required the team to find a way of, quite literally, giving a voice to the measuring, giving it a gait, a posture, an accent; all things that told people who was measuring as much as what was being measured. Hardly something that could be expected of anyone “off the street”. As the costumes began to take shape, the complexities of this challenge took our team as much by surprise as it surely must surprise one of Mr. Punch’s unsuspecting victims when he encounters her on the streets of Shoreditch. Unexpected ideas and new potential directions for the event were appearing just as the seemingly back to the traditional Punch and Judy puppet shows and the Commedia dell’arte, Proboscis perceived an “allegory of the complex desires and actions that can be seen in Western consumer culture”. Mr. Punch was a troublemaker who challenged all authorities yet took on no responsibilities. As one member of the team put it:

“He is the trickster, the Lord of Misrule - that's important here - he's allowed to say things that would not be allowed elsewhere. But he is an unpleasant, possessive, destructive narcissistic character - he destroys everything he loves.”

As for the Plague Doctor, he was a kind of creepy quack of the Italian renaissance transplanted into the 21st Century. The character was based on traditions from the Venetian carnivals based closely on the actual plague doctor costumes of the 16th Century. It was thanks to these provocative characters’ rich histories that Proboscis was able to generate a series of themes and stories for how they would generate a Carnival atmosphere. The characters suggested literature references from Hogarth to Ionesco. They were affiliated with events - the great plagues of Europe in the case of the Plague doctor - and related to other characters - suitable for the project, consumption of fashionable goods that were not everyday context produced consequences of participator’s to wear only the sensors in an interesting case of incident in the above quotes: members hoped, would be able to use this sensor. In this sensor, almost anyone, of the street, they invited everyday participants to mix use of the sensors. Also, mentioning the need to integrate sensor technology and promoting community engagement? Before the team could inform the community of the commission, they were interested in testing wearable sensors

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