Human Echoes

The issue of renewable energy is often discussed in terms of creating less destructive means of transforming matter into energy to power industry and consumer devices. This focus, at a remove from the human body, sidesteps the fundamental questions of consumption and how, in human beings, matter is transformed not only into kinetic energy but into conscious thought, creativity, hope, aspirations and imagination.

Creativity is an area of human development that encompasses the future of our planet. Traditional ways of seeing the world and dealing with social issues no longer seem adequate. Clearly we are in need of new and creative approaches to our problems. Thomas Homer-Dixon, The Upside of Down

ENVIRONMENT • noun

1 the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates
2 (the environment) the natural world, especially as affected by human activity
3 computing the overall structure within which a user, computer, or program operates

Travelling Through Layers

thoughts on ecologies, mobilities, environments and technologies

by Alice Angus, Giles Lane, Orlagh Woods
Proboscis
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Travelling through Layers was inspired by the discussions that took place during and after Paralelo: Technology and Environment, a Meeting Point for Artists, Designers and Researchers in 2009.

Credits:
Photos of Mr Punch and The Plague Doctor, Thierry Bal 2007.
The images are from Proboscis' projects: At the Waters Edge, Everyday Archaeology, Expressing Emotions, Lattice, Landscapes in Dialogue, Perforation, Proboscis Forum, Snout, Senses, Sounds, Sound Scavenging, Storytellers.

Definitions from askoxford.com

COMMUNICATION • noun
1 the action of communicating.
2 a letter or message
3 (communications) means of sending or receiving information, such as telephone lines or computers.
4 (communications) means of travelling or of transporting goods, such as roads or railways.

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In towns and cities all over England, what was once public is now private … So there will be no begging, no being homeless, no wearing hoodies. There will be no busking, and often there will be no sitting either, except in designated areas. You will eat and drink where you are told to ... And as for political demonstrations – don’t even think about it.

Paul Kingsnorth, Cities for Sale, The Guardian

In the immanent world of data we can occupy places by proxy: building our own imaginary (and yet real) architectures.

Giles Lane, Tweetomes: some epithets on practices of pithy exchange

In a world where media is global, social, ubiquitous and cheap. In a world of media where the former audience are now increasingly full participants. In that world, media is less and less often about crafting a single message to be consumed and more about being a space where the former audience can engage to share their own experiences, build their own narratives, find their own answers.

Clay Shirky, TED@State conference

The new Inuktitut term for internet, Ikiaqqivik or ‘travelling through layers’, refers to the concept of the shamen traveling across time and space to find answers.

Katarina Soukup, Canadian Journal of Communication

I frequently hear music in the heart of noise.

George Gershwin

Sensory Threads

What are the ethics involved in developing and promoting biosensor technologies? How does this affect wider social and cultural issues, such as privacy laws? Who is making the decisions regarding use of biosensors? How do we open up this debate to a wider public? What are the environmental impacts and costs of the production of such sensors?
Movements and migrations of people, changes in dialects, languages and working lives serve as profound barriers between the generations. The loss of traditional skills and distance from the sources of our food serve to disconnect people from their link with land and nature. How can traditional and experiential knowledge of the environment be transferred to subsequent generations in the liquid space of contemporary culture?

I thought of a labyrinth of labyrinths, of one sinuous spreading labyrinth that would encompass the past and the future and in some way involve the stars.

Jorge Luis Borges, *The Garden of Forking Paths*

MOBILITY • adjective
the quality of being mobile

1 able to move or be moved freely or easily
2 (of a shop, library, etc.) accommodated in a vehicle so as to travel around
3 able or willing to move between occupations, places of residence, or social classes
4 (of the features of the face) readily changing expression

CULTURE • noun
1 the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively.
2 a refined understanding or appreciation of this
3 the institutions, customs and achievements of a particular nation, people, or group.
4 the cultivation of plants, breeding of animals, or production of cells or tissues.
5 preparation of cells grown in an artificial medium containing nutrients.

I was born before the industrial revolution, and am now about two hundred years old. But I have skipped a hundred and fifty years of them. I was really born in 1737, and till I was fourteen no time accidents happened to me. Then in 1751 I set out from Orkney to Glasgow. When I arrived I found that it was not 1751 but 1901, and that a hundred and fifty years had been burned up in my two days journey.

Edwin Muir, *The Story and the Fable*
and Nature

Jules Pretty, Agri-Culture:
Reconnecting People Land and Nature

it was not until the advent of
the agricultural and industrial
revolutions ... that food produc-
tion in some countries began its
drift away from the majority
of the population ... (today) we
are largely disconnected, and
because of that we are less likely
to notice when the environment
is further degraded.

Jules Pretty, Agri-Culture: 
Reconnecting People Land 
and Nature

At the Waters Edge

We are connected to each
other through water, by our
common need for water and
to the networks, economies
and powers that control,
regulate and assign access to
water.

Georges Perec,
Species of Spaces and Other
Pieces

The air is the same, the soil
is the same but the road is no
longer entirely the same, the
graphics on the signposts have
changed, the bakeries are not
the same as those of a moment
ago, the loaves are a different
shape, the cigarette packets that
have been thrown on the ground
are different ... The boundary
lines have been redrawn on the
ground, the borders are different
the scale on the map of a moment
ago is the same but the road is no
longer the same, the same, the
boundaries are not

Georges Perec,  
Species of Spaces and Other 
Pieces

Lattice

The turbulence of urban
growth and migration paint
a complex picture of what
environmental sustainability
might mean. What happens
when people migrate to the
city? What environmental
knowledge is lost, or
created? The challenge is
to bring these urban realities
into focus weaving a lattice
of interventions, imagining
the city through the eyes of
those who live in it; creating
physical and virtual projects
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