

Cyberpsychogeography (An Aimless Drift in Twenty Digressions)

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Writing takes on the shape of somnambulistic codework as soon as I connect myself to the digital apparatus I compose with. Once it is turned on and I am plugged into this live, creative act of composition, there is nothing to stop my naked words from running across an empty screenal interface that my body willingly loses itself in. From the perspective of narrative, I see my body becoming this free-flowing sensation of *otherworldly drift* as it moves out toward an imaginary horizon, a nonplace place where the first-person (second-person, omniscient) narrator is always unreliable, a cyberpsychogeographical jockey teleporting his unconscious maneuverings throughout the wide-open spaces of the wild wild west (WWW) forever in search of clicking connectivity.

And yet this naked body of words just now starting to play out its creative potential is not really my own. It's part of something much larger than me—some kind of dynamic, shape-shifting intersubjectivity where I am always losing sight of myself as I improvisationally interact with The Network and, without thinking about it, intuitively manipulate the pulse of Time (*as if such a thing as Time could actually exist*).

Time can seem totally irrelevant when writing out words from inside the body. Yesterday I was in Colorado preparing for a long trip, and by the time my plane took off it was evening, Mountain Standard Time. But what makes it

standard, especially given my own natural tendency to refute time itself by losing myself in timeless acts of creative composition? When I land in Australia less than twenty-four hours later, somehow *two* days will have passed, and I'll be having a soy latte and organic blueberry muffin for breakfast at a café in North Bondi Beach. Sleeping on the plane, my body will write itself out in some elaborate dreamtime script that continuously improvises other lives for me to role-play in, and after the morning coffee and muffin at the beautiful beach Down Under, I will intuitively come to realize that there is, in fact, a sensible regularity to my self-imposed lifestyle discipline, even though I occasionally feign a kind of *occupational difference*.

For example, in Boulder, where I supposedly live and work, I go to sleep around midnight. If everything is the way it should be, I will wake up the next morning around eight or nine, spend the day and night making art (*living life*), and then, by the time midnight falls again, aimlessly drift back into the kind of alternative states of mind that, as a romantic poet-dreamer (artist-researcher), help me pay the bills. Having said that, there can be no question that these dreamlike, aimless drifts happen periodically throughout my waking life as well, and I can't help but wonder if this is not what I, as an artist-researcher, am particularly talented at—that is, finding ways to teleport my turned on and plugged-in body into states of altered consciousness *no matter what time it is*, locating my creative potential and its complementary poetic thrust wherever necessary, just so long as everything is defamiliarized and relatively timeless, which then makes it easy for me to invent on-the-fly imagistic events never before imagined.

Perhaps this is what it means *to become an artist-medium nurturing the field conditions for my creative potential to unconsciously play in*. These trance narratives that float through my body as I sleep or write or navigate my various digital art personas through the cyberpsychogeographical regions of The Network are an essential part of this everyday life I am constantly launching my asymmetrical phrasings and rephrasings in. This is the experiential space, full of rapidly reconfigured sense data, that I feel most at home in and will do anything in my power to have access to at all costs. I know I'm in the process of activating its full readiness potential when my internal superclock makes me feel pregnant with the synchronicity of everything happening right now, in realtime, although my intuition tells me this is not realtime at all but something that resembles realtime even though I know it's totally fake. It's what I would call *unrealtime*.

The feeling of living in unrealtime is one that takes the artist-medium beyond improvisation or living on the edge of forever. It's something more akin to hyperimprovisational Life Style Practice, an intuitively driven creative class struggle that cannot be captured in any media-specific analysis. What it needs is *social network synthesis* that breaks away from the prying need to always understand itself and, instead, refocuses all component energies on exploring its own creative/readiness potential. Think of it as writing out the anticipatory moment of surging creativity as it projects itself from inside my body in a perpetual state of hyperintuition or what the Situationists might have called *avant-garde presence*—one that TAKES PLACE in the revolution of everyday life.

This avant-garde presence that circulates throughout my day-to-day life feels both OF its time AND ahead of its time. Just like the phenomenon in the 1980s that we called *cyberpunk* explored imaginary worlds simultaneously happening in the present as well as the immediate future, this avant-garde presence enables me to operate in the machinations of the working world and its preset itinerary of bureaucratic functions, even as I imagine myself proactively engaged in a yet-to-be-invented future-tense practice that resists the contemporary situation I am always positioning myself to move beyond. But there are still other worlds or states of mind where I work or, once I'm there, play, and they tend to lose all of their presets. In these alternative spaces, I no longer have to worry about what it would be like to become that other thing that wants to bureaucratize me. Instead of designing my more intuitive, internalized, readiness potential so that it consciously plays to the regimen of always being ON time while answering TO corporate, university, or otherwise bureaucratic callings, I customize its settings and preferences so that my state of avant presence is playing IN time and feels *more engaged than ever before*.

Think of what we used to call a mad scientist who is now envisioned as a fully tilted artist-researcher swimming in the intersubjective waters of the fluid intelligentsia—or the artist-researcher as a *pseudo-autobiographical work in progress*. This is extreme role-playing, a gig that was MADE for me, where after years of nonstop dress rehearsal, I am now situated as the perfect person to play myself *as is*, although the pseudo-autobiographical work in progress cannot help himself and is always turning the role of the *as is* into the always premiering *as if*. Role-playing the *as if* allows the transmitting nerve centers of my processual image filters to initialize a performative thrust of narrative

momentum that resists the machinations of Time itself so that I may continue distributing my many digital flux personas. These digital flux personas are a multiverse of possibility and are experienced as something else entirely different from what I thought I was when I started the day, when I woke up in the familiar environment that I, for lack of better, call home. Home for me is not really the place I live in (Colorado) or the temporary autonomous zone I create for myself while living in Sydney. Rather, *it's the day that never was* and that I am constantly losing myself in as I construct new digital art personas to disperse throughout the compositional field I operate in.

Many times these digital flux personas—which I role-play via e-mail, Web chat, spontaneous Net art creations, VJ performances, mobile blogging, and the like—often overlap and even converge into the one digital flux persona that my audience has tagged with the easy-to-remember name Mark Amerika. To me, this digital flux persona that goes by the name Mark Amerika intuitively becomes an indeterminate loci of readiness potential that *precedes* consciousness while transponding the fluid metamorphosis of a radical *inter-subjectivity* to the point where there is no longer an *I* or a place to call home. There is only a networked SPACE of flows for my creative self to wander nomadically through as I invent my life as an artist at this particular moment in time—as if there could even *be* a particular moment in time. Think about it: it just passed us by. Was it ever really there in the first place? We have already disproved that. What I mean to say (as I begin to remix all of my lines of transcontinental flight into a running trajectory of naked words leaving their digital traces on the forever expanding magic writing pad) is that this process of metamediumistic self-invention taking place in an always emergent, interconnected space of flows can mean only one thing. I am under the influence of self-induced jet lag—or what I have come to call *jet-lag consciousness*. This is a consciousness that no longer depends on flying to different countries around the world to be experienced and can be achieved anywhere at anytime.

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Jet-lag consciousness expands the playing field for my imagination to fictionalize its avant-garde presence in. It happens not as a result of sci-fi time tripping but as timeless tripping or technomadic wandering. It's all about getting into the ZONE. As an altered state of *being becoming something else*, it could be