

Alyse Stepanian . Philip Mantione

collaborations (1998 – 2018)



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Stepanian and Mantione in the *Drainage Room* (2004), Collaborative Concepts, Beacon, New York

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

BOX 1035

Alysse Stepanian and Philip Mantione have been collaborating on videos, installations, multimedia performances and music for over two decades. BOX 1035 emerged from the gradual melding of their ideas as individual artists. In combining the perspectives of the visual arts and music they have created work that is multisensorial, static and temporal, ephemeral and timeless. Their work is multilayered with social, political, philosophical and psychological references. Desire, obsession, fear and anxiety have been recurring subjects.

In 2005 we abandoned the idea of having a home to pursue international projects. Our Post Office Box 1035 became a symbol for non-permanence, a nomadic existence motivated not by the needs of survival, but by an interest in experience and movement. Risk and uncertainty are perversely attractive, and in a sense this is life, imitating art. As John Cage said, "Art is an opportunity for self-alteration, not self-expression."

L.P. Streitfeld has described BOX 1035's work, "Utility of Obsession: All Things Orange," as "...a wry and profound commentary on the conflicted state of America's emotions."

"Don't be afraid, be ready" was originally created during their three-month residency at Imagine Gallery and included video, sound, and water sculpture. In June 2006, they were invited to create a new installation at the Islip Museum of Art in New York. In October of that year, they began a one-year residency at Kunsthaus Tacheles in Berlin. Between 1998 to 2003, BOX 1035 collaborations were presented at venues such as the Podewil in Berlin; cinéma l'Arlequin in Paris; wiggled.net; Fig Gallery, Jan Baum Gallery in Los Angeles; VOID, Art in General, and Dixon Place in New York City; Leeds International Film Festival in the UK; HAY-Art Cultural Center and Armenian Center for Contemporary Experimental Art in Yerevan, Armenia. For more recent venues see Stepanian's bio, as Mantione has created sound design and music for all of her videos and performances.

Alysse Stepanian



Stepanian is a Los Angeles-based and Iranian-born transmedia artist and independent curator. Her creative work, research and writings are focused on the effects of nationalism and politics of fear, and the importance of intersectionality in fighting injustices such as racism, sexism and speciesism. She works with a variety of media, including 3D animation, video, performance, text and installation. For her art is about creative problem solving and finding unexpected connections between concepts and events, a sort of philosophical mathematics that expands human consciousness.

Stepanian has participated in over 330 events in 48 countries and has lectured about interconnected oppressions concurrent with her co-curated exhibition of video art by 20 Iranian women at the Pori Art Museum in Finland (2015), Malmö Konsthall in Sweden (2014), and Museo Ex Teresa Arte Actual in Mexico City (2013). Her exhibitions include MADATAC at Centro Conde Duque (Madrid, 2017), solo show with performance at DEUX [dø] Gallery (Marseille 2016), The State Darwin Museum (Moscow 2016), Perez Art Museum (Miami 2016), Museum London (Canada 2013), Freies Museum (Berlin 2012), and Contemporary Museum (Baltimore, USA 2011).

Stepanian is the Founder and Editor of Autonomous Agency (autonomousagency.us), highlighting the necessity of creative action against various expressions of bigotry and oppression, with an online publication that was launched in July 2018. She is also the creator and curator of Manipulated Image video art screenings and multimedia events, and URBAN RANCH PROJECT, an "animal" advocacy and social and environmental activism arts venue based on Facebook. Her collaborations include residencies and multimedia installations created with Philip Mantione under the name BOX 1035 at

Kunsthaus Tacheles (Berlin 2006-7), Imagine Gallery (Beijing 2006), and the Islip Art Museum (New York 2006), with an emphasis on post-9/11 color-coded politics of fear.

Website: <http://alyssestepanian.com>

Philip Mantione



Mantione is a Los Angeles-based sound artist, composer, sound designer, guitarist, computer musician, educator and multimedia artist whose career spans over two decades. His work includes music for orchestra, chamber ensembles, computer, fixed media, interactive performance, multimedia and sound installation, and music and sound design for experimental video. He writes custom software to meld field recordings, samples and computer-generated sounds into unique sonic textures. Through the extrapolation, superimposition and integration of external structures, data sets and found sounds, he sculpts musical forms that provide the framework for engaging and unexpected content. Mantione is the recipient of two Meet the Composer grants and a recent commission from New Music USA for *Riverside Whistles and Bells*, an extended site-specific piece for hand bell choir, carillon and live electronics.

Mantione's music has been performed at venues such as Merkin Concert Hall, New York, NY; Bing Theater, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Centre de Cultura Contemporània, Barcelona, Spain; FILE Festival, Sao Paulo, Brazil; and Festival Futura, Crest, Drôme, France. In 2018, he was selected as an Artist-

in-Residence at the renowned Djerassi Resident Artist Program located near San Francisco, California. He is a contributing author of software reviews, articles, and video tutorials for The Pro Audio Files.

Website: <http://philipmantione.com>

Other work sample: *Riverside Whistles and Bells* was an extended live performance on the rooftop of the Riverside Art Museum in California, made possible by a grant by New Music USA:

<https://philipmantione.bandcamp.com>

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COLLABORATIONS

#MemoryoftheUniverse (#1)

Syria Planum: For Water for Oil

video: Alysse Stepanian

sound: Philip Mantione

2016. 7:22 min. color. 3D animation with Maya

More information: <http://alyssestepanian.com/memoryoftheuniverse>

ABOUT THIS VIDEO:

As more humans and other animals are displaced due to climate change and drought, petropolitical wars will be overshadowed by urgent needs such as access to fresh water. *Syria Planum: For Water for Oil* is the first edition of #MemoryoftheUniverse, a work of speculative fiction combined with real-life events. It covers intersectional social and political issues in a posthuman world. Some subjects explored are the Anthropocene, petropolitical and water wars, colonialism, politics and ethics in science and technology, drones and “militainment”, refugees, and exploitation of humans and other animals. Historically, the bodies and reproductive organs of women and cows have been subjugated in patriarchal societies. The mythopoeic protagonist in this work is half-human, half-cow. She wanders the desolate Martian landscape, including the Syria Planum, and bears witness to the destructive behavior of humans. As the world looks away from crimes that are unmet with restitution, their aftermaths resonate in the dark recesses of our minds and metaphorically, continue to live in the memory of the universe, eternally recurring, until we find ways to change our consciousness and current state of affairs.

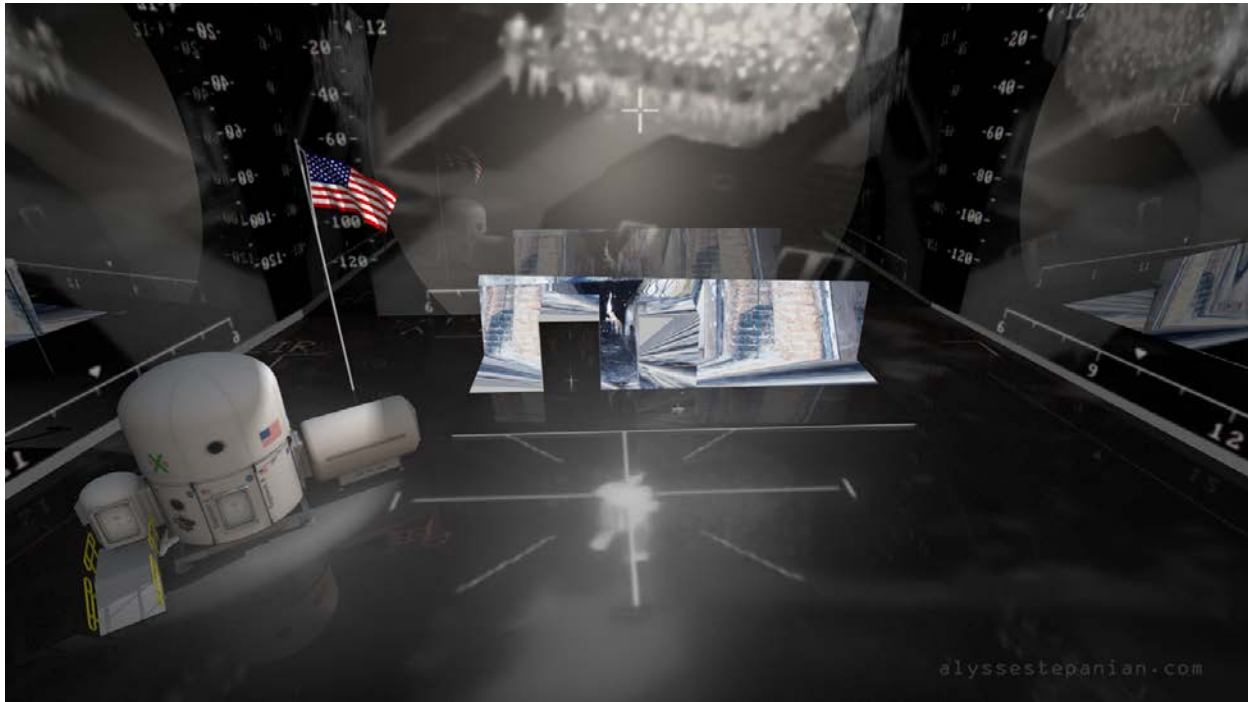
The first edition was accompanied by a performative presentation (video projection/ text/ performance – see below).



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#MemoryoftheUniverse observes and absorbs!

(lecture/performance/video)

Nov. 8, 2016, 20 minutes

Galerie Deux [dø] in Marseille, France (Instants Vidéo Numériques et Poétiques)

Video, concept and performance by Alysse Stepanian

Music and sound design by Philip Mantione

More information: <http://alyssestepanian.com/memoryoftheuniverse-observes-and-absorbs>

A performative presentation about Stepanian's fictional character created in 3D animation, a half-human, half-cow mythopoeic creature, and the possibility of breaking free from a destructive human-centered world. It was presented on Nov. 8, 2017 at Galerie Deux [dø] in Marseille, France, organized by Instants Vidéo Numériques et Poétiques: 29th Festival Les Instants Vidéo (Nov 8 – Dec 3, 2017). This work was supported in part by the Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant based in New York City.





#MemoryoftheUniverse (#2)

Personhood

video: Alysse Stepanian . Music & sound design: Philip Mantione
2018. 7:58 min. color/blk & white. sound. 3D animation with Maya
More information: <http://alyssestepanian.com/personhood>

“*Personhood*” is the second edition of #MemoryoftheUniverse, a series of 3D animations and performances of speculative fiction combined with real life events. It examines the for-profit mass-incarceration system and its relationship to nonhuman animal abuse, slavery, colonialism, and the potential for the manipulation of collective memory in technologically advanced societies. The normalization of the abuse of nonhuman animals and the lowering of the status of colonized humans to the level of the non-person “animal”, has facilitated the denial of their right to exist and the ongoing obliteration of their histories. As the world looks away from crimes that are unmet with restitution, their aftermaths resonate in the dark recesses of our minds and metaphorically, continue to live in the memory of the universe, eternally recurring, until we find ways to change our consciousness and current state of affairs.

Historically, the bodies and reproductive organs of women and cows have been subjugated in patriarchal societies. The protagonist, MOTU, is a half-woman, half-cow mythopoeic superhero that is the embodiment of the memory of the universe. I like to think of her as the female version of Nietzsche’s Übermensch (Superhuman, Above-Human) – she represents hope amidst despair. The sunflower, a plant native to the Americas and a source of food and sustenance, is a recurring motif in my work. One of the fastest growing plants, tall and erect sun-like sunflowers reach for and face the sun, and are said to symbolize nonconformity, strength, vitality, loyalty, love, beauty, happiness and enlightenment.

Currently Stepanian and Mantione are working on a performance to accompany both videos above.

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Friend Hullabaloo

2016, 2:06 min. color. stereo. 3D animation

Video / voice: Alysse Stepanian

Sound design: Philip Mantione

Text: Friedrich Nietzsche (Thus Spake Zarathustra)

Watch here: <https://vimeo.com/172652830>

This work was created by invitation for the ECVF Vol. 5 [Exquisite Corpse Video Project], Crisis + Utopia and has been presented in several venues around the world.



The Magician King and the Apprentice

2013, 3:34 min, black/white/sepia, stereo, no dialogue



Video: Alysse Stepanian

Sound design: Philip Mantione

Performed by: Alysse Stepanian, Nietzsche the dog. **Watch here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCnNm0MI7bk&feature=youtu.be>

This work was created by invitation for a project by Magmart: 100x100=900 (100 video artists to tell a century) and has been presented in dozens of venues around the world:

<http://www.magmart.it/900/artists.php>



Having lived in Iran and in the U.S., I have come to realize that dictatorships and democratic power structures have more in common than meets the eye. Patriarchal societies are built upon the hierarchical systems that they are designed to protect, holding economically advantaged human males in dominant positions. Borrowing from the cinematic style of the popular trick films produced around

1900, this work exaggerates and brings attention to power relationships such as master/slave, male/female and human/animal. The Edison Company's trick films benefited from the innovations of the French filmmaker Georges Méliès also known as the first "Cinemagician". The light bulb and simulated electric currents in this video foreshadow Thomas Edison's 1903 attempt to discredit his rival, Nikola Tesla's alternating current system by demonstrating its dangers via the electrocution of Topsy the elephant and other animals. The background painting is part of my early investigations of the power of the flag, nationalism and patriotism as a means of control. The music is by my life partner, Philip Mantione (excerpts from 4Minus4, 2010). It was made from sound samples of antique music boxes and a Wurlitzer jukebox. Ordinarily I don't favor the use of nonhuman animals in art; however, Nietzsche the dog was not harmed in the making of this work and he received many treats, much praise and playtime.

What is My Name, Sister?

2011, 24:57 min, color, stereo, HDV, 16:9, single or 2 channel projection

Video and direction: Alysse Stepanian

Music and sound design: Philip Mantione

Full credits, press, screenings and more info: <http://alyssestepanian.com/what-is-my-name-sister>

Watch video: <https://vimeo.com/20944628>



This video presents a series of scenes are culled from a dream journal that I kept shortly after leaving post-revolutionary Iran in 1979. This was a period of many transitions in the country, which disrupted any sense of cultural continuity, and overturned and replaced existing socially accepted hierarchies. In this work, surreal scenes created in the subconscious world of dreams guide my search for understanding the past, in order to find a place in an erratic world built upon shifting values, expectations, and identities.

The opening scene, “Roghieh” paints a surreal picture of the early stages of the Iranian Revolution, when it empowered the underprivileged that had a significant role in the overthrow of an elitist regime. A cleaning lady’s broom becomes a weapon symbolizing newfound strength. She jumps into the revolution from the wall-less bedroom of a young girl caught in the middle of social changes and role reversals. The subsequent surreal scenes completed over a year later reflect upon war, displacement, and a search for a place, identity, and peace.

(by Alysse Stepanian)

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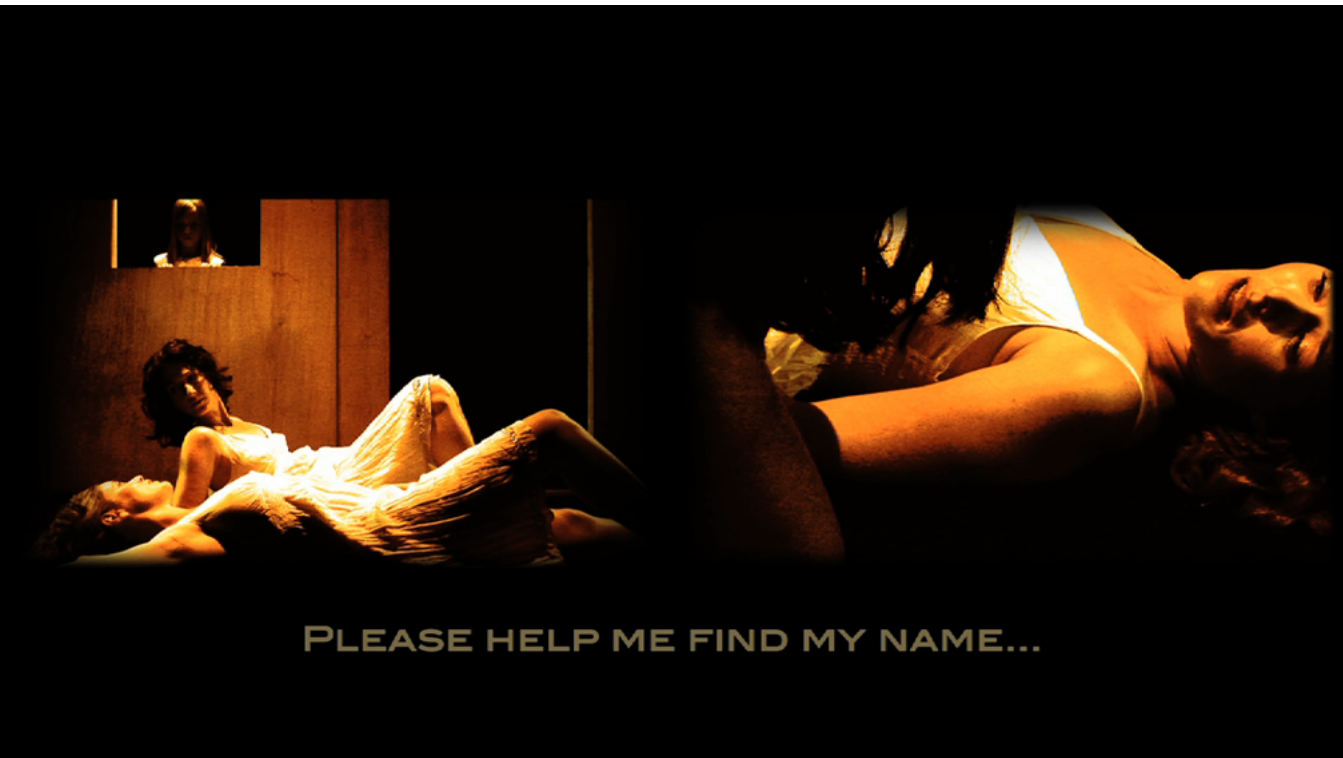
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THIS BABY IS YOU...



PLEASE HELP ME FIND MY NAME...

FREY

Video: Alysse Stepanian

Music: Philip Mantione

2009, 3:37 minutes, color, stereo, DV, 4:3

List of screenings: http://alyssestepanian.com/v_frey.html

Watch video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbIHp0kU6Eo>



Television static engulfs the image of a woman rolling, crawling, and spastically retracing her own steps. In a communication dead-end, nothing is broadcast. The mirroring effect comments upon the reflections of one's self echoing into nothing, never-ending.... The sound was created by manipulating samples recorded with contact microphones on various surfaces. Short sounds from the freesound.org project were also used by triggering them rhythmically and randomly from a MAX/Msp patch, enhancing the rich layering and repetitive energy of the images.





ImXCocteau

Video: Alysse Stepanian

Music: Philip Mantione

2009, 13:12min, color, stereo, DV

Watch video here:

<https://vimeo.com/6027694>

While manipulating footage from Jean Cocteau's "Blood of A Poet", I sensed an excitement about the new technology that Cocteau must have felt eighty years ago, when he experimented with manipulating images through filming tricks and available technology of the time.



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T = 2.7K

Oct 25, 2008

Center for Contemporary Arts (CCA) *Oscillate/Osculate Concert Series* in Santa Fe, New Mexico

45-minute video by Stepanian for new music & computer interactive performance by Philip Mantione, and improvisations by trumpeter Ron Helman on custom-made instruments by Mantione.

More information: <http://alyssestepanian.com/t2-7k>

Video excerpt #1: <https://vimeo.com/8747723>

Video excerpt #2: <https://vimeo.com/8747498>



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e-postcards

Nov 23, 2005 – April 11, 2007

In 2006, Philip Mantione and Alysse Stepanian gave up their home and lived in different countries for short periods of time. Their post office BOX 1035, also their collaborative name, became a symbol of non-permanence and nomadic existence that was motivated by their interest in experience and movement. Throughout their travels Stepanian created *e-postcards*, a detailed online photo journal, updated on a daily basis. In a way, e-postcards became a surrogate home for them.

Like frozen memories and caged movements, the “e-postcards” found on box1035.com allow friends, family, and anyone else in the world to access a selection of our choreographed experiences. This documentation acknowledges that throughout our state of transience and movement, we remain bound to memory and relationships where there is constant interplay between the tangible world, illusions and predispositions.

Follow the e-postcards link on www.box1035.com – If you are unable to view this old Flash-based website, select from the links in the “Recent archives” page below to view sample movies made while browsing the site. On the original project site interface, the artist residency “projects” correspond to the dates and locations directly across on the left column.

Original project site: <http://www.box1035.com>

Recent archives: <http://alyssestepanian.com/e-postcards>

Buffalo Weekly Videos
July 14, 2006 - September 30, 2006

- Week 1: Buffalo Psychiatric Center on Forest Ave.
- Week 2: - Liz and Hannah - Butch the cat
- Week 3: Michelle @ a dog-friendly bar
- Week 4: - a day on Tori and Kenny's boat - Niagara Falls
- Week 5: "good boy Kayo"
- Week 6: Lafayette Square
- Week 7: - Elmwood Arts Festival - Silver Creek: Kayo swimming
- Week 8: Raising the flag in Brockport
- Week 9: Sorry...no videos this week!!
- Week 10: Alysse wrecked a Rent-A-Wreck!
- Week 11: time to move again...

© 2006, Alysse Stepanian



Glitter, glamour and glory: HUNDE VERBOTEN

Oct 3. 2006 – Jan 7. 2007 (6-month residency at Kunsthaus Tacheles, Berlin)



Multimedia installation created during a 6-month residency as BOX 1035 at Kunsthaus Tacheles for *Werkschau Internationales Kunsthaus Tacheles* at the Neue Galerie in Berlin:

Governments and religions are very adept at prescribing what is moral and what is not. Killing is fine if it is for fashion or the spread of democracy. Torture is okay if it prevents terrorism or if no one knows about it. One person's atrocity is another's job.

Recent archives: <http://alyssestepanian.com/hunde-verboten>

Old project site: www.box1035.com/hundeVerboten.html

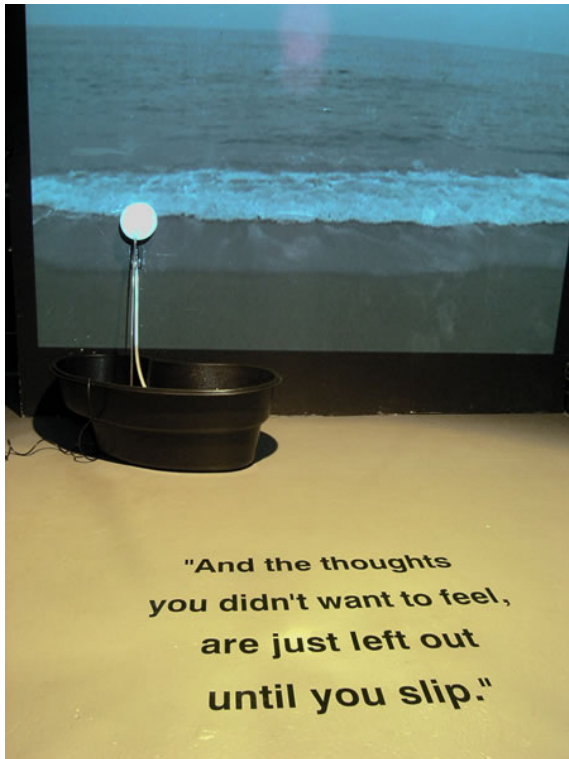
Documentary video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bu-H7liJMA>



“... until you slip”

June 10 – July 30, 2006 (Islip Art Museum, New York)

Installation created during a distance residency as BOX 1035, with instructions sent from Barcelona and Beijing for *Site Specifics '06*:



Having given up their permanent address, the artists now describe themselves as nomads. They travel the globe, yet maintain permanent residence on their web-site. Through e-correspondence, they created an installation in the Carriage House that comments on pollution, global relations and the simple act of keeping in touch with friends and family. (By Karen Shaw, Senior Curator)

“e-postcards” was also part of this exhibition, displayed in a laptop. (see above)

Recent archives: <http://alyssestepanian.com/until-you-slip>

Old project site: www.box1035.com/UntilYouSlip.html

Documentary video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXG8KvuKLL>



“Don’t be afraid, be ready”

June 4 – 28, 2006 (3-month residency at Imagine Gallery, Beijing, China)

This installation was listed as the #1 exhibit by Beijing’s *City Weekend Magazine*.

In this installation, BOX 1035 uses the colors of the terrorist alert system adopted by the US government after 911, as a reference to hyper-vigilism, induced paranoia and an Orwellian attitude that has threatened to permanently undermine American civil rights, while paradoxically claiming to protect them. The “Color-coded Threat Level System” ensures that at no time is it possible to live without some level of fear.

Recent archives: <http://alyssestepanian.com/dont-be-afraid-be-ready>

Old project site: www.box1035.com/beready.html

Documentary video here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_8uyXzxRbw&lr=1



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"Don't be afraid, be ready"
"准备好，不要怕"



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Utility of Obsession: All Things Orange

Aug 26 – Oct 7, 2005 (Branchville Gallery, Outdoor Project Space, Ridgefield, Connecticut, USA; curated by Margaret Roleke)

Collaborative installation created as BOX 1035, with kinetic sculptures and video.

Voice and performance: Alysse Stepanian. Sound design: Philip Mantione.



The video:

A video in a pod shows a woman in the woods in an orange shirt during a heavy snowfall. In the soundtrack, a voice absurdly sings lyrics reflecting her obsession

with the color orange.

Recent archives: <http://alyssestepanian.com/all-things-orange>

Old project site: alyssestepanian.com/orange.html

Documentary video here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94TMxLvn-f8>

ABOUT THE WORK:

A construction of stacked, bright orange bedroom nightstands in a doorless cave-like space, alludes to the notion of insecurity and assaults on privacy. Buckets and drawers with holes are denied their typical function and act as conduits in a self-perpetuating system of recycled water. Wire pods hanging from the ceiling hold unrelated orange objects, reminiscent of the way spiders wrap their prey. An open wire pod looms over a circular platform that holds partially filled glasses and an artificial snake. The entire structure vibrates, animating the objects and the pod. A video in another pod shows a woman in the woods in an orange shirt during a heavy snow fall. Her clothing adds color to the white landscape, as if professing her identity in a colorless vacuum. In the soundtrack, a voice absurdly sings lyrics reflecting her obsession with the color orange.

In this installation obsession has been consciously used both as a conceptual point of departure and a process to inspire the creative act. By limiting the color to orange as an object of a synthetic obsession Mantione and Stepanian have created a sense of order and focus.



The media preys on public obsessions and insecurities, as a means of influencing their opinions. Simplifying complex ideas with symbols or colors makes messages palatable to a large audience, creates a sense of purpose, and unifies multiplicity. In an oppressive society they can be triggers for instilling fear and enforcing power, and in revolutions they may be reminders of the presence of resistance. The utility of obsession relates to the elimination of uncertainty by identifying certain synthetic truths. As the politics of orange alerts arouse fear, and fashionable colors encourage conformity, the drive for self-preservation and comfort of belonging maintain the system.



The Advocate & Greenwich Time; L.P. Streitfeld; "Americans and security: Wanting our cake and eating it"; Sunday, September 18, 2005, Pg. D3:

... Utility of Obsession: All Things Orange, a wry and profound commentary on the conflicted state of America's emotions.

... The opposites - anxiety and desire - ... are united when Utility of Obsession: All Things Orange enters the conversation. ... the sound of running water is as calming as the shrieking from the orange-obsessed woman in the video is alienating. The nerves are further frayed by the machinations of a vibrating table, ... A plastic snake is a surface reminders of the primordial dangers inherent in blockages unleashed by flooding. Additional orange colored symbols such as a baseball bat ignite the conflict between public/private, security/liberation and flow/blockage. The nerve-racking effect

strikes at the heart of America's values, which have been summed up since 9/11 by Orange Alert, orange representing the color of the second chakra, where emotional attachments and blockages are formed. And haven't we indeed become attached in America to our security needs?...



Drainage

May 8 – Sept 6, 2004; Inaugural site-specific installation created for Collaborative Concepts' Project Space in Beacon, New York.



With Alysse Stepanian, Philip Mantione and Kayo the dog.

Drainage is an interactive installation with gravity-driven mechanics, sound, sculpture and video. Using building materials such as aluminum flashing and gutters, Drainage is a visually and aurally enticing environment that invites viewer interaction and rewards it with immediate feedback. The drainage process relates to the energy expended in the act of desire and can exist only as long as there is some source that feeds the system at a rate that equals the rate of depletion over time. The drainage process is insatiable

and self-fulfilling. Drainage questions the superiority of human beings when the power of reason is confronted with desire.

Recent archives: <http://alyssestepanian.com/drainage>

Old project site: alyssestepanian.com/drainage.html

Documentary video here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUGQxIIAWLs>



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D r aiⁿag e



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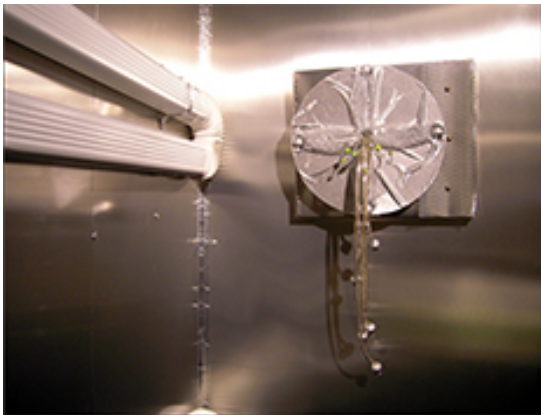
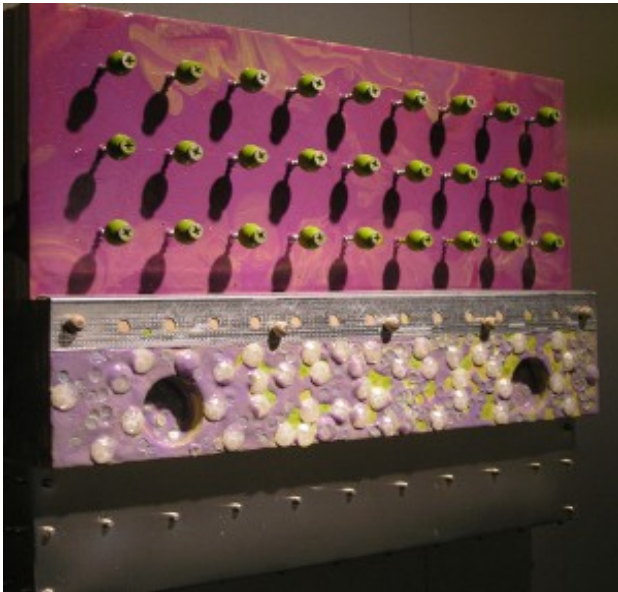
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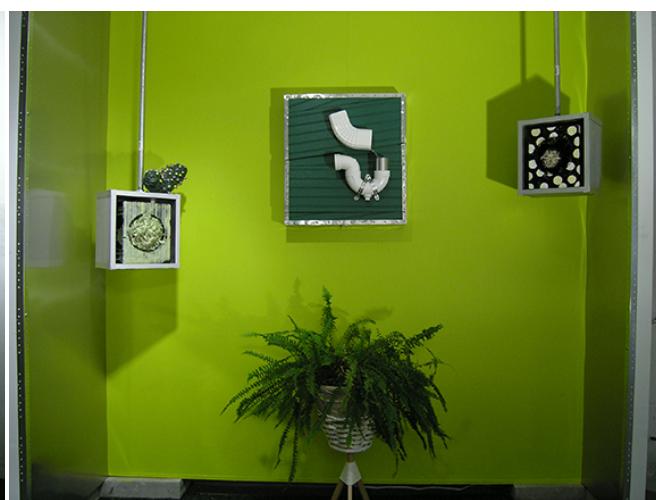
Tough Love in Drainage
- a BOX 1035 installation -
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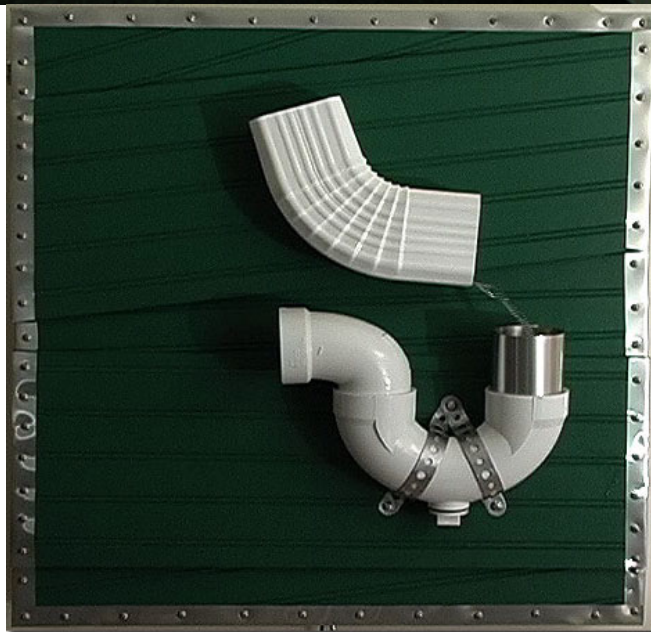
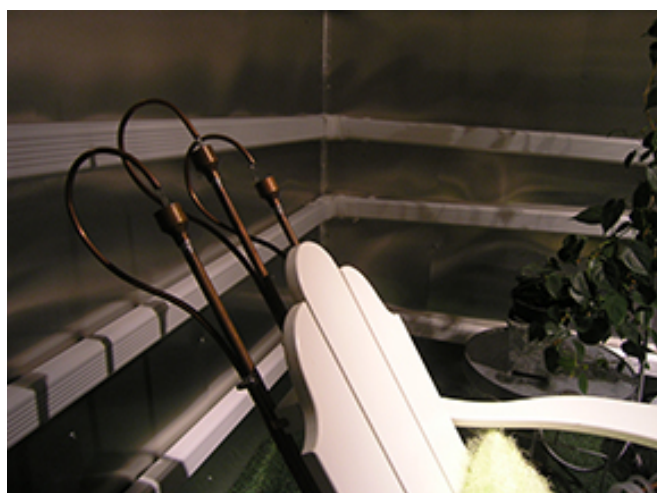
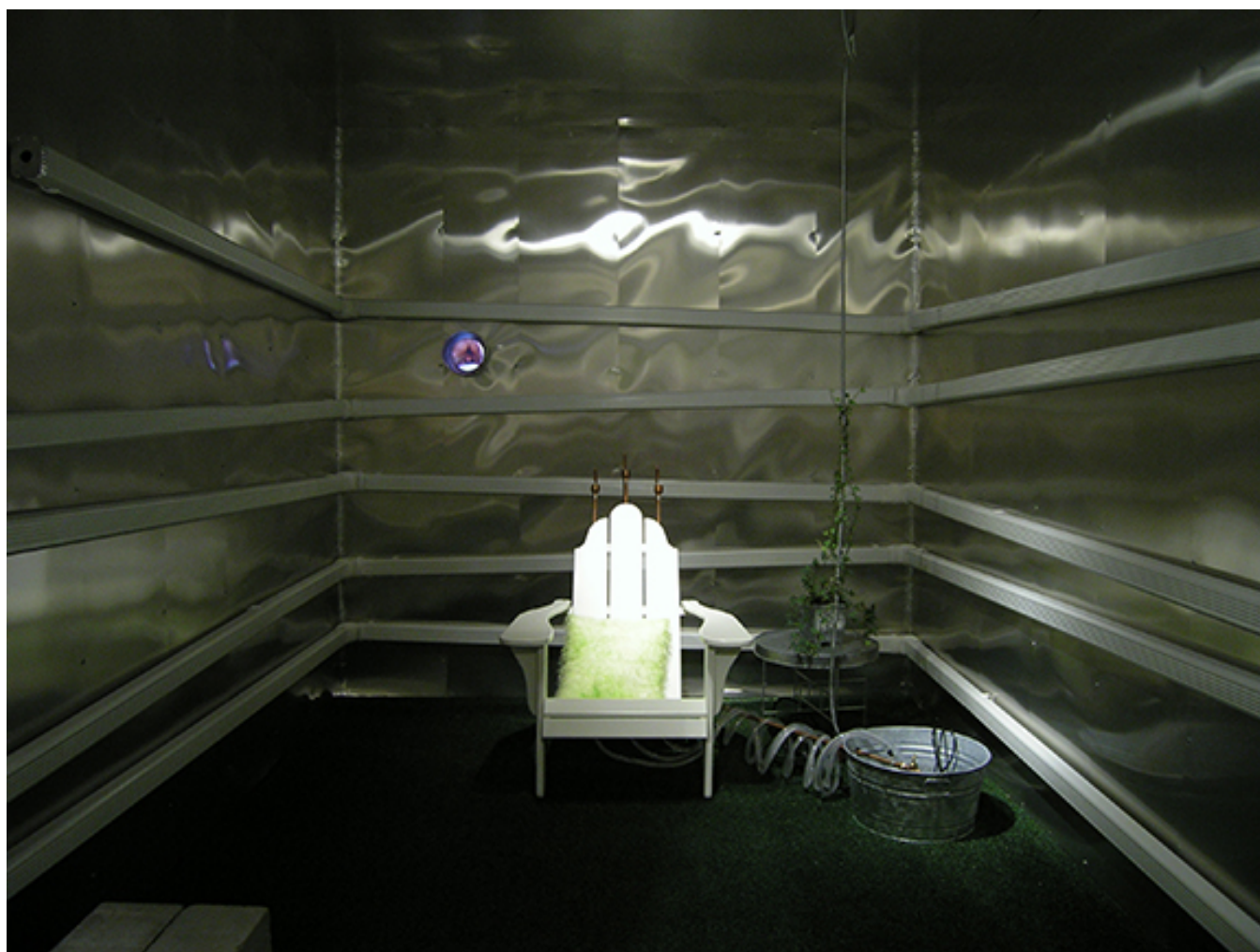


ALYSSE STEPANIAN . PHILIP MANTIONE

Collaborations. Los Angeles, California, USA

<http://alyssestepanian.com> <http://philipmantione.com> <http://box1035.com>

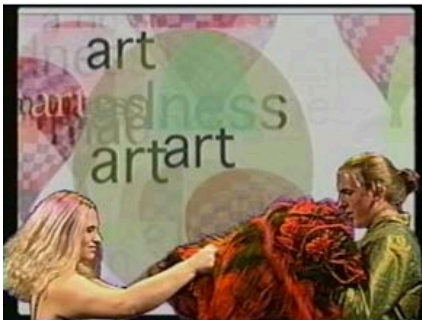
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liveReal

Sept 24, 2001, 45:37min

Multimedia performance broadcast live on Manhattan Neighborhood Network & dctvny.org and performed for live studio audience at DCTV Cyberstudio for the Arts in New York City.



Alysse Stepanian: director, producer, camera/audio/video editing, animation design and additional sound

Philip Mantione: producer, music, audio engineer, animation and design

In collaboration with Lisa Carpenter.

Full credits: <http://alyssestepanian.com/livereal>

Watch short excerpt: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NG-aCbTlv8o>



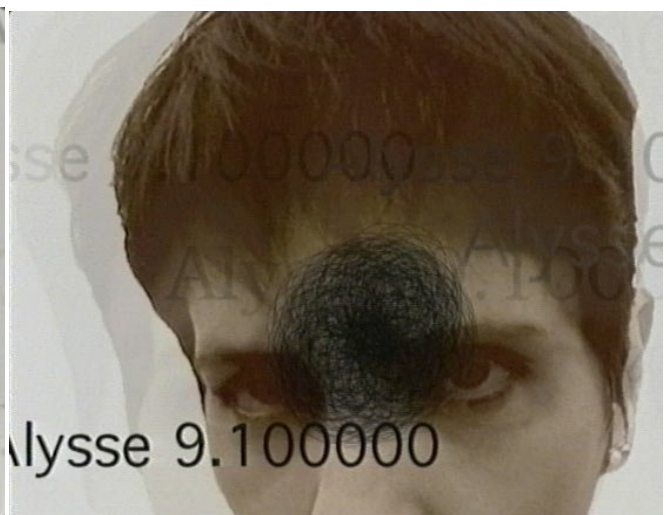
Preconceived notions determine the success of rituals, such as a wedding, a TV show or a performance, as if their purpose is to fulfill themselves. Is an experience more valuable if witnessed in the moment as opposed to a reproduction of the moment? Is a convincing illusion more real than an obvious fake? Footage from a wedding inspired this work. Later the married couple collaborated in this project and participated in the performance.

alysse 9.1 and *The Way of Water* were also part of *LiveReal*.

Watch *alysse 9.1*:

<https://vimeo.com/44182617>





auditionherefreebeer

Performance with audience participation and with resulting video

2000, 24:28, color & blk/white, stereo (collaboration between Alysse Stepanian and Philip Mantione)

For exhibitions see: http://alyssestepanian.com/v_auditionhere.html



This was a collaborative performance between Alysse Stepanian and Philip Mantione in Cremolata Flotage, a show organized by Sue Spaid on November 21 of 1999, aboard the Andrew J. Barberi Staten Island Ferry in NYC.

Free beer and a certificate of “interestingness” were offered to those passengers willing to audition for a video. The instructions were to “say or do something interesting.”

A section of the seating area was roped off, a camera, light, and video monitor were set up, and a sound track created by Philip Mantione was played to solicit volunteers. A poster describing the audition rules was displayed along with a sample of the certificate.

This project reversed the roles of spectator and artist, and explored the elusive meaning of the word, “interesting.” The resulting video blurs the boundaries of public/private space, sometimes capturing the participants off guard.



eggpoem

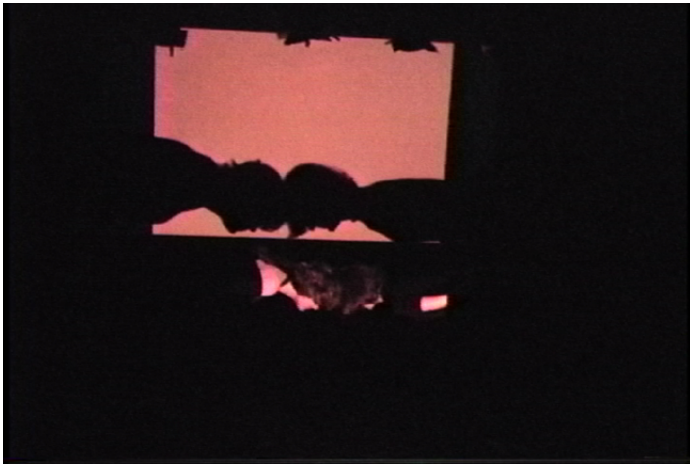
2000, 9:17 min, color, stereo
directed by Alysse Stepanian
sound design by Philip Mantione
conceived and performed by Alysse
Stepanian & Philip Mantione
narrated by Richard Northcutt

In *eggpoem* the participants artificially displace themselves, partly in the hopes of changing for the better, and partly to challenge the possibility of change at all by taunting and mocking the boundaries of their situation. Text, appropriated from vacation brochures and campground regulations is read by an

unseen narrator who embodies the voice of enticement and limitation, schizophrenically alternating between the two.



The sound track was composed from material sampled from a recording of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto, field recordings and vocalizations.



scourge.org

1999, Dixon Place, New York city

scourge.org, collaborative performance with Sue Spaid, with sound design by Philip Mantione

scourge.org explores the resultant tensions, joy and humor underlying complex friendships.

Having grown up as outsiders in Islamic societies, A-girl and Swede attempt to provoke each other's different perspectives.



The performance is in 4 sections. Part 2 is *The Field* video, starring the two performers. Part 3 emulates a chatroom, where A-girl (Alysse) and Swede (Sue) talk to Tima and question her cultural values. The conversation is seen on the large visual projection of the chatroom, and is heard from the prerecorded voices of the performers.





Out of Line

1998, 15 min, Hayden Auditorium (Greenwich House) New York City
(Performance with video, electronic sound and live acoustic music)

ALYSSE STEPANIAN: performance, costumes, text, video

PHILIP MANTIONE: music

JOHNNY REINHARD: conductor

STEVE COHN: improvisations on shakuhachi, hichiriki

PAULINE KIM: violin

VICTORIA VORONYANSKY: viola

CURTIS WOODSIDE: cello

JAMES MARENTIC: speaker

Out of Line is a multi-media performance with videos, costumes, and live and recorded music. I act out my fantasy of freedom from the burdens of society. In one section I appear to mesmerize, challenge, and seduce the video projection of a line gone awry. At first I make greeting gestures and dance to the accompanying rattling noises of Mantione's recordings. The reflections from the silver dots of my long dress and the video of the crazed zigzags jumping around in excitement send sparkles around the stage. Then in silence I outsmart my challenger, when I turn to reveal my figure through the transparent fabric. The line then quietly withdraws and disappears in horizontal submission. This work deals with resisting the pressures of conformity and remaining true to the self. (by Alysse Stepanian)

The live music and recorded sounds were created by Philip Mantione. He used non-synchronous

ALYSSE STEPANIAN . PHILIP MANTIONE

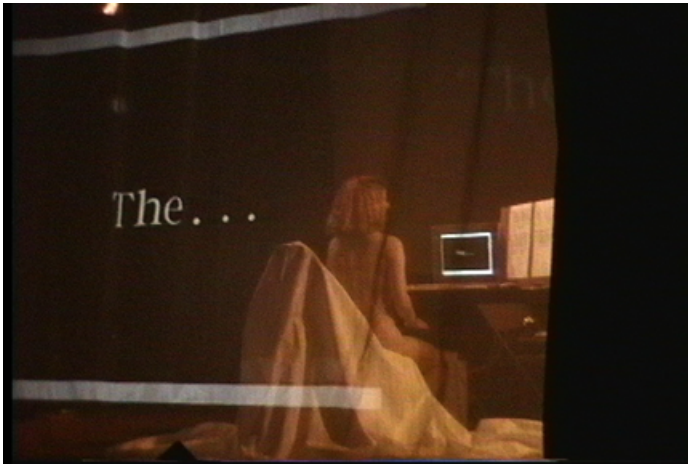
Collaborations. Los Angeles, California, USA

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individual musical gestures, improvisations on shakuhachi by Steve Cohn, recorded samples of the writing on a chalkboard and the percussive effects created by a sound machine (a device he built from the spare parts of an old VCR). The ending of the piece was based on an ancient Greek melody.





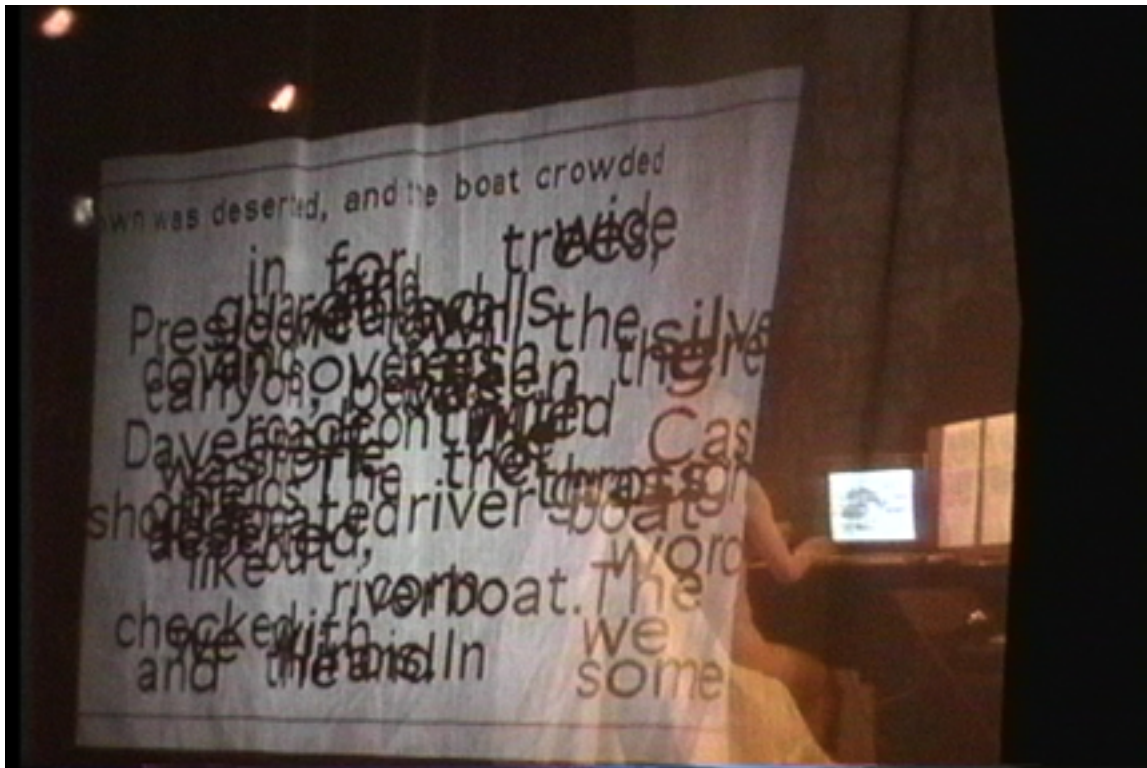
Music for Typist

1998; 12:00 min, Hayden Auditorium
(Greenwich House) New York City
Performance with interactive computer music

ALYSSE STEPANIAN: performance, set
design

PHILIP MANTIONE: music, computer
programming, concept and design

Music for Typist is a computer-interactive work created by composer and multimedia artist, Philip Mantione. It uses the structure of the English language as a starting point for a process that juxtaposes order, randomness, and the natural rhythms of the typist. The text is composed of excerpts from the dream and travel journals of Stepanian, as well as from random words taken from the dictionary. Each of the twelve sections of the piece are the result of distinct sub-programs that manipulate the input in various ways. The way in which letters, punctuation marks and space bars are treated is continually altered. The rhythms and durations created by the typist, coexist with automated processes that employ randomness as a basis for variety. The effect of timbre is somewhat neutralized by limiting the sounds to a few generic synthesized voices. Black letters, which may or may not reflect what is being typed, are projected on white sheets surrounding the nude performer. She types on a keyboard, creating textures that resonate the intimacy between the nude and the machine.



72 Hours: Acrobat's Little Leap

1998, 8:50 min, color & blk/white, stereo

Video, performance: Alysse Stepanian

Sound design: Philip Mantione

(Performative endurance video)

I deprived myself of sleep for 70 hours, and documented a set of activities in random intervals. The title of the piece was inspired by an experiment conducted by the US military, under the code name "Acrobat's Leap". Sixty-four highly motivated soldiers volunteered to stay awake for over 80 hours, anxious to prove that they could complete their military tasks as usual. I reinterpreted this bravado through balancing acts, boxing, and counting the passing seconds. This was an absurd test of endurance, an exercise of will, and a reclamation of control over my own body. I chose to censor the lesser taboo part of my nude figure, while leaving the more forbidden area exposed. Just 2 hours short of my set goal, I fell asleep on hour 70!!

The sound, created by Philip Mantione, was derived entirely from a field recording of a marching band in a parade. The Marines Hymn and other military/patriotic music was contextually transplanted to a new medium and given a new meaning. Music intended to instill pride, honor and duty, and it was twisted to the point that it underscored the absurdity of the visual images with a sarcasm equal to its original propagandistic intentions. (Stepanian, Oct. 14-17, 1998)



PRESS:

“ART THOU: Enduring the latest ‘Endurance’ exhibit”

Nov 22, 2009

Montgomery Media, By Andy Stettler - Staff Writer

<http://montgomerynews.com/articles/2009/11/22/entertainment/doc4b043950f31af621031082.txt/>

Stepanian’s film documents the naked artist’s 72 hours of aerobics. The camera falls upon the artist’s manic stare as she glares into the lens before pounding her swelling fists at an unknown foe to the drilling sound of a typewriter.

My head, beneath the headphones, begins to relinquish its own sanity as Stepanian glares again into the lens, hypnotizing this writer in a sick, demented way. Suddenly I was on the verge of joining this “Endurance” exhibit as my ears blister to the “bang, bang, bang” of the typewriter sound. To take the headphones off, to release myself from the grip of Stepanian’s drilling hypnotism, is no less than a relief.

Her naked body is covered only by a black censor strip which we later see is not added by the content editor but instead is a physical black rectangle that the artist has taped to her breasts.

Fierce

Video and performance: Alysse Stepanian

Music and photographer: Philip Mantione

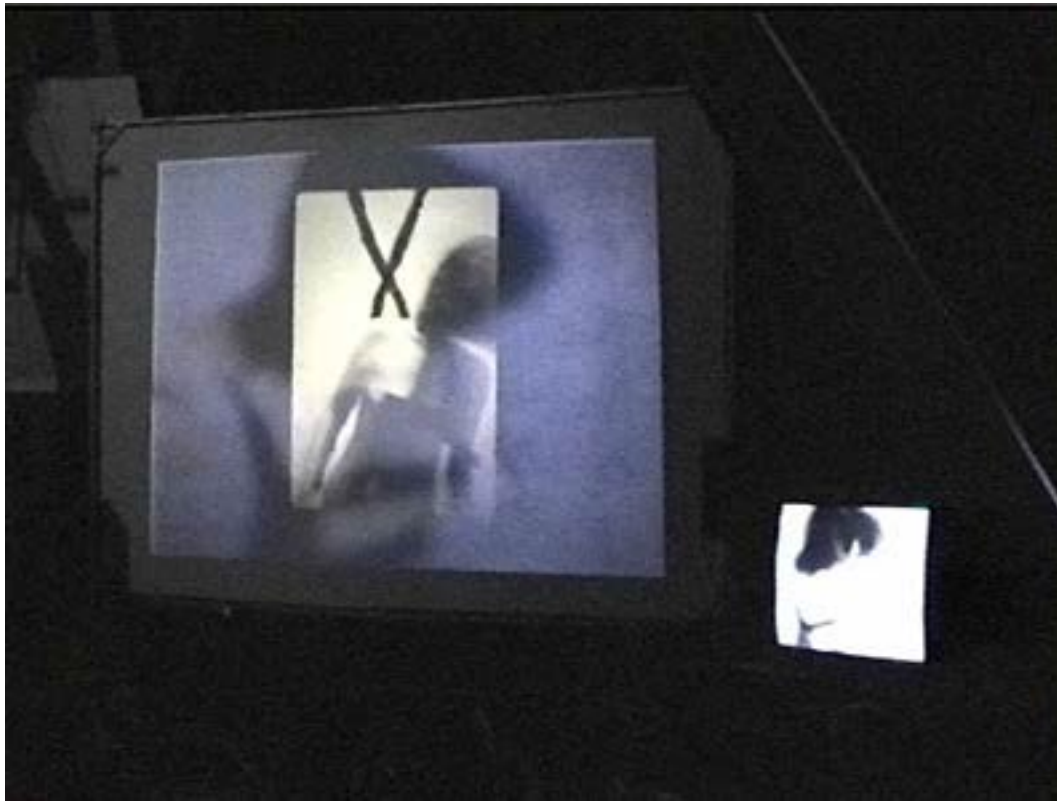
1998, 53 images and looped video

First presented as *50/50* (slides & music) at the *non sequitur festival* organized by Composers

Collaborative at Here in New York City.

Fierce includes a performative video accompanied by a progression of fifty-three (now digitized) 35mm slides, and music by Philip Mantione composed of hundreds of sound fragments melded into a continuous “dynamic” drone. *Fierce* is about the struggle for sovereignty, both on a personal level, with issues such as masculinity, male domination and gender-specific stereotypes, as well as on a national level, with Western European and American ethnocentrism and hegemony. It was made just seven years after The Republic of Armenia had declared independence from the former Soviet Union.





OTHER COLLABORATIONS

Mantione has created sound design and music for all of Stepanian's videos. For more video collaborations see: <http://alyssestepanian.com/videos>

1999

- *cutting* video by Alysse Stepanian for a collaboration with composers Philip Mantione and Douglas Geers, and shakuhachi player Steve Cohn; Columbia University & Dixon Place, New York City
- *snippet* performance with Alysse Stepanian, Philip Mantione, Larry Weeks; *OnetoMANYthree* event by MANY; Dixon Place, New York City

1998

- *Steps* collaborative video with music for alto sax and tape by Philip Mantione; performed by Styliani Tartsinis; *TwoMANYtwo* event by MANY; DCTV, New York City