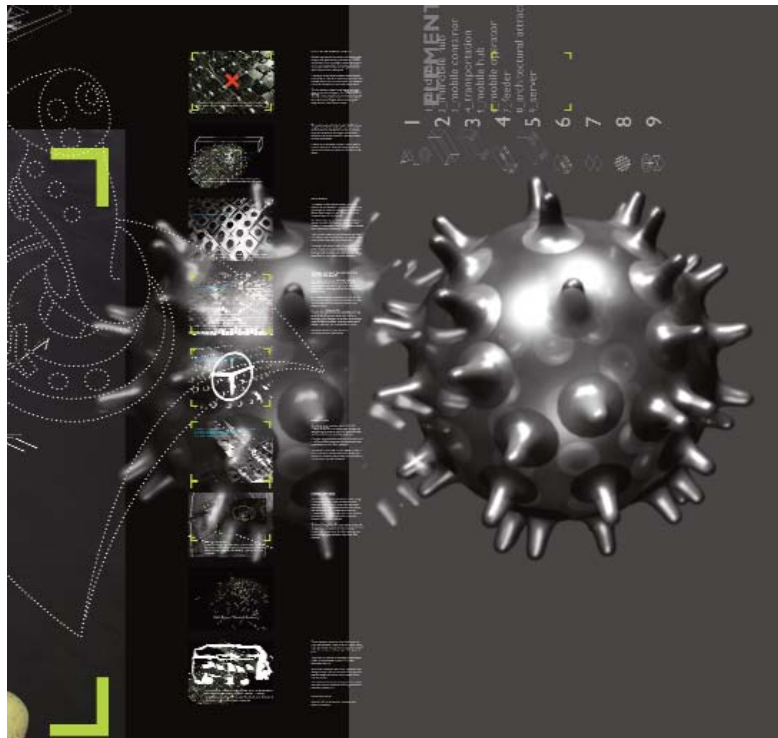


HYBRID SPACE LAB .NET



Prof. Elizabeth Sikiaridi and Prof. Frans Vogelaar founded **Hybrid Space Lab**, a r&d and design practice focusing on the hybrid fields that are emerging through the combination and fusion of environments, objects and services in the information-communication age. The scope of our development and design projects ranges from those on urban games and planning to buildings, architectural interiors and industrial design applications and wearables.

Hybrid Space Lab is an interdisciplinary environment with an innovative and integrated approach to spatial issues. The focus of our work lies in fusing digital and analog environments, in embedding media networks in urban/architectural, social and cultural spaces.

Hybrid Space Lab is a lab and a network in which architects, urbanists, landscape architects and environmental planners, designers, soft- and hardware engineers collaborate in the development of projects for combined analog and digital, urban, architectural, design and media spaces.

Our work has been presented at international congresses and exhibitions and has been published internationally: Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Italy, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Switzerland, Singapore, Spain, The Netherlands, Turkey, UK, USA.

At the moment our international travelling exhibition "NATURE-TECTURE" is touring Korea, see: www.naturetexture.de

Prof. Frans Vogelaar founded in 1998 at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne the first Department of Hybrid Space worldwide. His department has been awarded international prizes: YAHOO! University Design Expo 2007 prize, the Cologne International Design Prize 2008. Frans is also member of the advisory board of the international technical trend research agency TrendOne and a professor at the CCNU in Wuhan within the framework of the "111" excellence program of the Chinese government.

INTRO

Hybrid Space Lab (Prof. Elizabeth Sikiaridi und Prof. Frans Vogelaar) ist eine interdisziplinäre Plattform, die sich auf der Grundlage einer innovativen und ganzheitlichen Haltung räumlichen Aufgaben widmet.

Im Rahmen von Hybrid Space Lab arbeiten Designer, Architekten, Urbanisten, Landschaftsarchitekten und Umweltpfleger mit Software- und Hardware-Ingenieuren sowie Medienkünstlern an kombinierten analog-digitalen urbanen, architektonischen und Design-Projekten zusammen.

Hybrid Space Lab kombiniert Forschung, Entwicklung und Entwurf und konzentriert sich auf die hybriden Felder, die durch die Kombination und das Zusammenkommen von Umgebungen und Objekten mit Netzwerken und Dienstleistungen heute, im Informations- und Kommunikationszeitalter, entstehen.

Der Begriff „hybrider“ Raum steht für dieses Zusammenspiel von medialen und physischen Räumen.

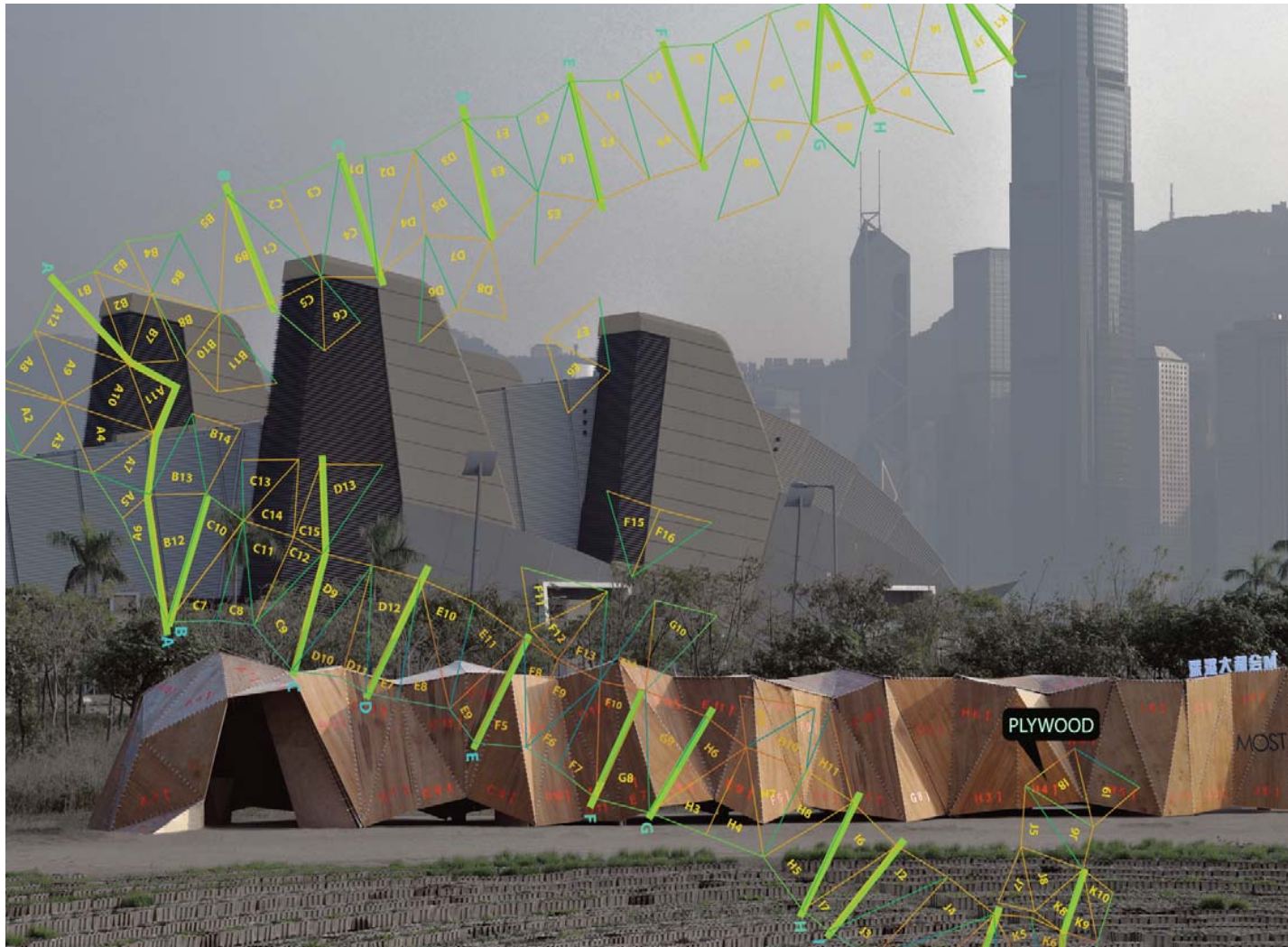
Beispiele solcher hybriden Räume sind überall in unserem Alltag zu finden, in den Kommunikationsräumen der Mobiltelefonie, die private Inseln im öffentlichen Raum schafft, im städtischen Raum, der mithilfe von Monitoren kontrolliert wird, oder nicht zuletzt beim Auto, dem connected car, das zur Schnittstelle zwischen realem Raum und virtuellen Netzen wird.

Hybrid Space Lab Berlin
Schlesische Strasse 29/30
Aufgang M, 4. OG
D-10997 Berlin
Germany

office@hybridspaceclab.net
www.hybridspaceclab.net

© HYBRID SPACE LAB

HYBRID SPACE LAB .NET



office@hybridspacelab.net

DIY PAVILION

BUILD YOUR OWN PAVILION 2010 a flexible mobile exhibition platform

The exhibition pavilion “Winter-worm Summer Herb” consists of triangular plywood plates sown together with the help of cable binders. At a very low cost and low technology construction the pavilion is also a flexible mobile structure that can be very easily disassembled, transported, reassembled and sown together again, adjusting to the size of the site and the local requirements.

It was first presented at the waterfront promenade of Hong Kong within the framework of the Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism and Architecture 2009-2010. After the closing of the Biennale the pavilion was set up at the Hong Kong Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre (March-April 2010) and at the Kwai Tsing Theatre in Hong Kong (May 2010), to travel afterwards as a mobile exhibition space around mainland China.

Curator: Andrew Lam, MOST

Photo Credits: Andy Tam

© HYBRID SPACE LAB

HYBRID SPACE LAB .NET



office@hybridspacelab.net

DIY PAVILION

BUILD YOUR OWN PAVILION 2010 a flexible mobile exhibition platform

The pavilion as a flexible platform for community education: Videos on urban issues are projected on the triangular crystalline structure of the pavilion's interior.

The pavilion, as a mobile and flexible platform, transgresses boundaries, infecting its urban surroundings by moving to a series of different locations for community education.

Curator: Andrew Lam, MOST
Photo Credits: Andy Tam

© HYBRID SPACE LAB

HYBRID SPACE LAB .NET

I.1 What is Hybrid Space Lab?

Frans Vogelaar (FV): Hybrid Space Lab is an interdisciplinary environment characterized by an innovative and integrated approach to spatial issues. It specializes in strategic research and high-end design. It is an R&D and design practice that focuses on the hybrid fields that are emerging through the combination and fusion of environments, objects and services in the information/communication age. "Hybrid" stands for our strategy of combining fields, "Space" reflects our expertise and "Lab" stands for our innovative and experimental approach. Our web address ends in ".net", suggesting our working practice of involving a network of specialists.

I.2 What concept does the name reflect?

Elizabeth Sikiaridi (ES): Mixing fields and combining expertise's and considering environments in their multiplicity of dimensions is for us a method for finding new relevant solutions to increasingly complex spatial design challenges. We investigate actual developments in the general fields of culture, communication, production, exchange (markets) as well as technological innovations, not to foremost monitor market development but in order to generate visions.

FV: The starting point and spearhead of our work lie in the fusing of digital and analog environments, in embedding media networks in urban, architectural, social and cultural space. Our environments are today being rapidly transformed by medialization - and hence globalization. Today's technological developments are accelerated by the fusions of information technology, nanotechnology, biotechnology and neurotechnologies (brain technologies) and their convergence into new hybrid technology platforms such as DNA computing, nanobiotechnology, synthetic biology and neuro-engineering...

FV: **We approach these technological developments from the perspective of the designer, the architect and the urbanist, by "inhabiting technology", by transforming these technological developments to meet the way we want to live.**

ES: Innovation is not a goal in itself, but a means of coping with and steering developments. Hybridization is an evolutionary strategy to develop new solutions for the changing environments in our fast-moving world. I remember an early reading of an essay entitled "Race and History" that Claude Lévi-Strauss wrote for UNESCO in 1952. Lévi-Strauss contrasts cumulative, dynamic, "moving cultures" with "static", non-developing cultures and argues that intercultural connections and cross-fertilization are crucial to the development of differentiated civilizations.

I.3 What kind of projects do you work on and initiate?

FV: Hybrid Space Lab is a lab and a network in which designers, architects, urbanists, landscape architects, environmental planners, software and hardware engineers, and media artists collaborate to develop projects for combined analog and digital, urban, architectural, design and media spaces. The relationship of digital service environments and artifacts to our architectural and urban surroundings and objects is central to our strategic research and design agenda. The research and development projects range from urban games and urban planning to buildings, architectural interiors and industrial design applications and wearables.

ES: We also have a long track record in consultancy; we were part of a think tank for the Dutch government and have advised corporations, local authorities, and cultural, educational and research institutes. We developed the project idea for the Urban Dinners on the main highway of the Ruhr region for the RUHR.2010 Cultural Capital organization. Our working method is to merge analytical investigations with synthetic design processes. **We apply Design Thinking to a very extensive range of issues and fields.**

INTERVIEW

Interview by Inga Wellman, published in „Governance der Kreativwirtschaft“, Bastian Lange, Ares Kalandides, Birgit Stöber & Inga Wellman (editors), transcript, 2009.

Hybrid Space Lab Berlin
Schlesische Strasse 29/30
Aufgang M, 4. OG
D-10997 Berlin
Germany

office@hybridspacelab.net
www.hybridspacelab.net

HYBRID SPACE LAB .NET

FV: We work internationally. At the moment we are busy with a project for the Tschumi Pavilion Foundation in Groningen in the Netherlands, consisting of a programmatic plan, a business plan, an urban strategy and an architectural design for a new Media and Performing Arts Centre. We are also in the final stages of a project for the Torino World Design Capital 2008, geared to security in public space – politically, a heavily abused issue in Italy. Our approach is based on the appropriation of public space by proposing and designing a series of services that strengthen and encourage public involvement in the open spaces of the city. Last but not least, we are curating an international touring exhibition on cityscape and sustainability and designing a "Media Camp" due to be built in Shenzhen by the end of 2009.

2. Where does the Hybrid Space Lab come from (your background story/out of what need did you set the ground for the HSL),

ES: Frans studied industrial design and architecture and urbanism; I studied architecture and urbanism. Before setting up our practice we had already gained professional experience in many different fields, including architecture (OMA/Rem Koolhaas, Behnisch & Pa.); industrial design (Studio Alchemia/Alessandro Mendini); and fashion (trend research in Paris), as well as urbanism; landscape architecture and urbanism; material design, food design and exhibition design; interior architecture; media design...

We both have hybrid cultural backgrounds and have lived and worked internationally: I was born in London, grew up in Athens, studied at the École d'Architecture de Belleville in Paris and at the Technical University of Darmstadt. Frans was born in the Netherlands, grew up in Zimbabwe, studied at the Design Academy in Eindhoven and at the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA) in London.

FV: We were aware from early on that the ICT developments, the "rise of a network society" as Manuel Castells puts it, would have an immense impact on the way we live and work, accelerating globalization, the flexibilization of lifestyles and the development of the creative economy. The new production and communication tool of the networked computer provides a common working instrument for a broad range of creative professions. It is also transforming creative processes and products and paving the way for a series of hybrid professional fields.

ES: At first, when people were thinking in terms of the polarity of media and physical space, it was difficult to communicate our 'hybrid space' approach, which considers the physical environment in the context of and in relation to the networks that it belongs to and interacts with. We started with self-initiated artistic research projects. These led to consultancies and research and development and design assignments.

3.1 Where do you locate yourself within the broader context of the creative economy?

ES: The creative economy is, by definition, dynamic. The traditional disciplines will develop, transform, mutate, fuse. **We see our 'undisciplined' laboratory as a catalyst in this process and as a space for development and experimentation.**

3.2 What are your strategies in overcoming outdated structures or practices?

FV: When we started, we did have a communication problem as we did not fit neatly into the predefined territory of the distinct disciplines. We were repeatedly asked "What exactly are you? Designers, architects, urbanists, landscape urbanists, researchers... or media artists?" We responded with an offensive strategy, by defining our office as a hybrid laboratory.

4. What definition or interpretation of the „hybrid“ do you feel is of relevance for contemporary phenomena in the economical, social and cultural sphere?

INTERVIEW

Interview by Inga Wellman, published in „Governance der Kreativwirtschaft“, Bastian Lange, Ares Kalandides, Birgit Stöber & Inga Wellman (editors), transcript, 2009.

Hybrid Space Lab Berlin
Schlesische Strasse 29/30
Aufgang M, 4. OG
D-10997 Berlin
Germany

office@hybridspacelab.net
www.hybridspacelab.net

HYBRID SPACE LAB .NET

ES: In the times of the Aristotelian categories, the notion of the "hybrid", the crossbreed, had a negative connotation. Today the notion of the "hybrid" is everywhere. Hybridization is becoming an increasingly important issue in the cultural field. Look at the attention paid to world literature; think of the 2008 Nobel Prize for Literature. Today, you have hybrid cars, hybrid businesses, hybrid securities, hybrid plastics, hybrid plants, hybrid pigs... all reflecting a cultural shift away from a mindset based on clear-cut categories towards a flexible approach based on intermixtures, on interconnections and networks.

FV: Hybrid space is everywhere in our daily lives. Take, for example, the private (communication) space of mobile telephony, which creates islands of private space within public urban space. Or monitored environments, where cameras keep watch over open areas. The tele-workplace is becoming an integral part of the home, the office is becoming a space for encounters, with a meeting lounge atmosphere, the (connected) car is becoming a mobile extension of our networked existence, to name only a few examples.

ES: "Hybrid" defined as the combination – the fusion – of the analog and the digital is a good starting point. As Frans just mentioned, medialization and globalization are transforming space, activities and professional fields. Hybrid retail, integrating e-commerce and physical stores, changes the shop into the experiential space of the "point of sale". Hybrid publishing is closely entwined with citizen journalism. In new business models customers are co-creating and co-developing products. Think of the Lego Digital Designer that enables users to create, share and improve the design of the building brick toys.

FV: The days when people were defined by their profession and remained with the same employer and in the same professional field throughout their working life belong in the past.

FV: Together with my students at the Academy of Media Cologne we are developing strategies for "hybrid practice". The aim is to generate new practice models for the multi-job strategies and the patchwork biographies of the "project workers" of today and tomorrow.

5. In the past, who and what were the forerunners and idols of today's hybrid practice?

ES: One of the pioneers was the Greek and French music composer, media artist, architect and engineer Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001). In the 1990's we worked with Xenakis in his personal archives in Paris and interviewed him on his work and artistic concepts. What is interesting about Xenakis is the way he implemented structures in different fields and transferred them from one field to another: from engineering and mathematical-scientific research to music, from music to architecture and to visual events. Xenakis worked on the "poetics of the electronic age" and on a general discipline of form, a "General Morphology", integrating the new, universal, electronic tools of the computer in his artistic oeuvre.

FV: Another pioneer is the American designer, architect, author and visionary inventor, Richard Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983), who was deeply concerned with sustainability issues.

6. And, with regard to the book title, what do you consider important for the governance of the creative economy?

ES: It is important to reflect on and discuss these themes. We still need to develop not only working business models for the creative sector but also **social strategies to support the sustainable development of a creative society and economy.**

FV: We believe that it is important to strengthen the interdisciplinary networking platforms and support creative environments of encounter because they foster innovation. **One cannot underestimate the strategic value of cross-over spaces and hybrid laboratories.**

INTERVIEW

Interview by Inga Wellman, published in „Governance der Kreativwirtschaft“, Bastian Lange, Ares Kalandides, Birgit Stöber & Inga Wellman (editors), transcript, 2009.

Hybrid Space Lab Berlin
Schlesische Strasse 29/30
Aufgang M, 4. OG
D-10997 Berlin
Germany

office@hybridspacelab.net
www.hybridspacelab.net