

ISEA 2011
ISTANBUL

17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
ISEA2011 Istanbul

UN CONTAIN ABLE

SENIOR EDITOR & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Lanfranco Aceti

EDITOR & CURATOR Özden Şahin

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Andrea Ackerman

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IMPRINT

Catalog of the
17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
ISEA2011 Istanbul

This publication appears on the occasion of the ISEA2011 Istanbul,
17th International Symposium on Electronic Art,
14 September-20 November, 2011.

ISSN: 1071-4391
ISBN: 978-1-906897-19-2

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ISEA2011
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17th International Symposium on Electronic Art
ISEA2011 Istanbul
14 September – 20 November, 2011
Istanbul, Turkey

*The exhibition Uncontainable was part of the
Official Parallel Program of the 12th Istanbul Biennial.*

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Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul: Some Thoughts After The Fact

When talking about ISEA2011 Istanbul one of the things I believe will remain as a legacy of the symposium is its magnitude. ISEA2011 was the most attended to date with almost 1500 attendees, the last count we had was of 1489, and it had over 100 artists – the ones we could account for – who participated and engaged with the city in multiple ways, authorized and non.

Overall ISEA2011 responded to the idea that we crafted for the event: a sprawling series of art events, exhibitions, initiatives, encounters, talks and performances that would reflect the sprawling uncontainable nature of the city of Istanbul. It was also about the 'uncontainable' nature of contemporary digital media which cross over physical borders and interfere with the local cultural order. These interferences may at times have generated conflicting relationships but in doing so also spurred development and innovative approaches.

ISEA2011 Istanbul proved how the lines and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid. Concepts of identity, cultural identifiers, nation state and belonging, as well as place and time, are challenged in both real and virtual contexts.

As Artistic Director for this exhibition – together with Özden Şahin, the Program Director – I wanted to showcase the complexity of contemporary social

interactions and the role that technology is playing in redefining contemporary aesthetics.

The exhibition *Uncontainable* was part of the official Parallel Program of the 12th Istanbul Biennial, which allowed participating artists and curators to provide diverse perspectives on contemporary developments within fine arts aesthetics.

For this reason I am very grateful to all of the artists and delegates that supported ISEA2011 Istanbul through what at times was a difficult process in a difficult economic climate. Turkey does not have public funding for the arts – as for example in European countries – and ISEA2011 Istanbul was made possible by our solicitation of a long string of private sponsorships, institutional support and donors.

In the end the variety of the venues and programs provided a colorful framework that allowed artists to engage not only with one another and the public, but also with the Istanbul Biennial, the art market held during two wonderful boat journeys across the Bosphorus, and with the city of Istanbul itself.

For the first time in the history of ISEA an electronic art exhibition program was officially part of the parallel program of an international biennial. The electronic exhibition and its artists were publicized in the press package of the 12th Istanbul Biennial, together with initiatives and events dotted across the city and internationally.

The art program was therefore conceived as an artistic itinerary across the city that placed art events in proximity to the major tourist attractions of the city, creating an electronic/new media/digital layering that interacted with the socio-political history of the city. The art program did not limit itself to the ISEA conference period – September 14 to 21, 2011 – but continued with its events until November 2011.

This catalog becomes a way to place an order to all of the events and activities, creating a record of the participating artists and the invited curators, for whose contributions I am extremely grateful. It is a snapshot of the city and of the event itself, which has signaled, we hope, a milestone in the history of the ISEA Foundation.

Lanfranco Aceti

Artistic Director and Conference Chair
ISEA2011 Istanbul

Istanbul, May 5, 2012





ISEA2011 Uncontainable exhibition banner in Taksim Square, Istanbul, September 14 – October 7, 2011.
(Photographic documentation by Ender Erkek.)



ISEA2011 Uncontainable Curatorial Concept

The lines and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid. Concepts of identity, cultural identifiers, nation state and belonging as well as place and time are challenged in both real and virtual contexts.

In the 21st century the idea of creating cultural products that are solely a reflection of a localized and isolated space is without any logical foundation; it denies the reality of contemporary mediated lives and the reality of physical routes, that crossing the sea of information, reach diverse audiences in the four corners of the world.

For its exhibition ISEA2011 Istanbul intends to focus on the relationship between real and virtual as a process *en route* in the transformation of the artwork's multiple cultural contexts that are ungraspable in their complex interactions.

These are cultural practices "in an increasingly media-saturated world [...] where such technologies radically bring into question not just the way in which art galleries and museums operate, but the very notions of history, heritage, and even time itself upon which they are predicated."¹

ISEA2011 Istanbul will be the locus where these different art signs and cultural products – expressions of the transformation of contemporary societies across the globe – will travel to and coexist for a period of time – in a state of continuous production and flux – across the historical, geopolitical and contemporary layers of the cityscape.

The contradiction of 'containing' the uncontainable will bring to light that the processes of contextualization, interpretation and re-contextualization of ideas and cultural productions, should no longer be conceived as static elements, but rather as evolutionary products of the transformation of envisaged futures and realities, as they move across geopolitical space and time.

Lanfranco Aceti
Artistic Director
ISEA2011 Istanbul



NOTE

1. Charlie Gere, "New Media Art and the Gallery in the Digital Age," *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art*, ed. Christiane Paul, 14 (University of California Press, Berkeley: 2008).

ISEA2011 Uncontainable, Istanbul, September 14 – October 7, 2011.

(Photographic documentation by Barbaros Gökdemir.)

DISLOCATIONS

SO: AN AUDIOVISUAL PERFORMANCE

GEOMETRIES OF THE SUBLIME

UNCONTAINABLE: BROKEN STILLNESS

UNCONTAINABLE: HYPERSTRATA

UNCONTAINABLE: SECOND NATURE

UNCONTAINABLE: TERRA VIRTUALIS

TERRODROME: SIGNALS FROM OUTSIDE

WORKING CONTINGENCIES

UNCONTAINABLE: SIGNS OF LIFE: ROBOT INCUBATOR

UNCONTAINABLE: THE WORLD IS EVERYTHING AND THAT IS THE CASE

NOT THERE

GLITTER AND GLORY: ABOUT THE LONGING FOR GLAMOUR

INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL MEDIA, ANIMATION & MOVING IMAGES SCREENING

SOUTHERN OCEAN STUDIES

ART MARKET

NURU ZIYA ARTIST LOUNGE

SENSUAL TECHNOLOGIES

PHILL NIBLOCK AND THOMAS ANKERSMIT PERFORMANCE

NAME READYMADE

KURYE VIDEO: SPACE INVADERS

Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul 14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 Uncontainable, Istanbul, September 14 – October 7, 2011.
(Photographic documentation by Özden Şahin.)

Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul
14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 cards printed for the 12th Istanbul Biennial press package.
(Photographic documentation by Stephanie Paine.)

Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul
14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 program booklets. (Photographic documentation by Stephanie Paine.)

Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul 14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 cards printed for the 12th Istanbul Biennial press package.



ISEA2011 exhibition poster on the boat pier. (Photographic documentation by Deniz Cem Önduygu.)

Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul 14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 Uncontainable, detail from the artwork caption. (Photographic documentation by Deniz Cem Öndüğü.)

ISEA2011 detail from the program booklet. (Photographic documentation by Stephanie Paine.)



Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul 14–21 September 2011



Detail from the ISEA2011 program booklet. (Photographic documentation by Deniz Cem Öndüğü.)

