Part one of this issue are papers presented at the International Symposium on Electronic Art invited-panel "Passing and Peril in the Information Super Highway" held in late July in Singapore. ISEA, "initiated in 1988, is the world's premier media arts event for the critical discussion and showcase of creative productions applying new technologies in interactive and digital media. Held biannually in various cities throughout the world, this migratory event is being held in Asia for the second time in its history..."[1]

As "escalating numbers and increasing awareness of online sting operations, videogaming avatars, and social networking websites, have come under hard scrutiny." the panelists were tasked to discuss "issues of identity and race in cyberspace within the contrasting perspectives of their own diverse cultures."[2] The panel was chaired by independent curator Kóan Jeff Baysa, who invited the four panelists, three of whom decided to read papers. Often presentations given in such events are almost always never made public beyond the panel discussion itself. It is for this reason that these papers are being published in this issue. Jiayi Young reflects on Chinese contemporary society by focusing on representations of indentity found in Internet games. Mina Cheon writes on "Kenkanryu, the Hate Korea Wave*"* First found in Japanese mangas, it is now deeply rooted and alarmingly gaining ground in cyberspace. Roopesh Sitharan focuses on self-representations of Malaysian political bloggers. Issue editor Judy Freya Sibayan also took part in this panel. Not having done any studies on self-representation and identity construction in Asian websites, Sibayan stayed close to home and discussed how Ctrl+P has represented itself thus far as an online art journal.

The second part developed around Ctrl+P's decision to accommodate an advertisement for the very first time. Silverlens, an art gallery in Manila currently participating in a good number of international art fairs, mentioned Ctrl+P to the organizers of the Asian Contemporary Art Fair New York as a possible publication open to advertising them. No payment was made for the one-page ad of ACAF NY in this issue. Instead they offered to do an exchange. For their one page ad in this journal, Ctrl+P gets a page in their catalogue and a booth in the fair. We first had second thoughts about the offer primarily because Ctrl+P is a not-for-profit enterprise. But since there was no financial remuneration and because we didn't want to forgo being promoted in the context of an art fair, we did the ad but not the booth. Finding the situation timely considering the current world financial crisis, we took it as an opportunity to address head on the problematics of the art market and the value of art.

Ana Prvacki talks on her art practice as an "act of functional benevolence,"—an act of gifting. While Varsha Nair offers an image to represent her deep sadness faced with the situation of losing close artist-friends who have compromised their practice in the wake of commerce co-opting their art-making. "Term: *Mehrwert*" is Marian Pastor Roces' review of *On (Surplus) Value in Art* by Diedrich Diederichsen recently published by Witte de With and launched during the "Rotterdam Dialogues: The Critics," a symposium organized by Witte de With and attended by some thirty editors and writers of established and newly established art journals from all over the world. Not surprising, many of the discussions focused on the place of the critic now that the art market more than ever has circumvented critical discourse in the valuation of art. One of the editors of Ctrl+P was invited to take part in the panel on how new media is changing the readership of art criticism. Sibayan did not hesitate to make the point about Ctrl+P operating within a gift econmony—publishing as cross-border goodwill hunting.

Finally, Ctrl+P in its promise to do reviews had Sara Haq and Olivia Altaras talk via Skype contributing the conversation as a review of *Or*, an exhibition by a group of artists called The Readymaids.

---

1. Retrieved from http://www.isea2008singapore.org/index.html October 18, 2008.
2. Retrieved from http://www.isea2008singapore.org/conference/conf_panels.html#koan October 18, 2008.

KOAN JEFF BAYSA

Lisa Nakamura (Kolko, Beth E., Lisa Nakamura, and Gilbert B. Rodman, Eds. Race in Cyberspace, New York: Routledge, 2000), analyzed advertising strategies employed by hi-tech corporations that create concepts of cyberspace that replicate, restructure, and reinforce Anglo centric narratives of colonialism, consumerism and tourism, deeply embedded in the American dominant ideology.

Fast forward to ISEA Singapore 2008, where the panel addressed cyberdentity and racial "passing"—within Asia social networks, internet gaming—MMORPGs, sting operations, identity theft and internet gaming-associated deaths.

Text-based bodies created with keyboards and cursors perform in cyberspace through internet users who represent themselves in virtual mutations, ranging from physical trait augmentation to complete dissociation from their corporeal selves. The online visible presence, or avatar, can be an idealized projection of individual identity or the result of experimentation with a new identity. Fabricating personae in internet drag and passing are means to an end: taking a holiday from real identities and locales, lurking as a cyber tourist, or prowling the web for netsex.

MMORPGs (massively multi-player online role-playing games)
• Gamers don't necessarily go to virtual worlds to fly from reality
• John Sula (Identity Management in Cyberspace, 1996) believes that one must strive to gain some form of (positive) consciousness in the construction of identity to become a better person online
• Although some of the avatars are wholly idealised, a number also fairly resemble the player in real life

Refracting Rather Than Reflecting
• Racial difference are digitally representation of
• The new frontier of cyberspace forces the redefining of borders and what now constitutes the Other.
• Race and cyberspace are not biological creations but virtually constructed phenomena, shaped by sociopolitical and cultural interventions.
• The Internet more than "mirrors" ideology from the culture at large.
• Its interfaces "refract" more than "reflect" because of its distinctive aspects as a communication technology
• Its interfaces make some identity choices unavailable/less available

The Erasure of Race in Cyberspace?
• The perception of a default white well-educated middle class English-speaking heterosexual male.
• Profiles (e.g. neo confederate websites) are actively constructed.
• Kali Tai: "in cyberspace, it is possible to completely and utterly disappear people of color" in a phenomenon that she terms "whitinizing." (The Unbearable Whiteness of Being; Wired Magazine, October 96).
• "Simulated killings of other races have become a form of 'entertainment' in computer games being sold via the internet." (Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission)
• The presence of hate groups and community activism online proliferate and co-exist in the Internet.
• "The faith in colorlessness is one of the great racist conspiracies of the late twentieth century, and a vision of a raceless future is a racist future." (Tara McPherson, USC)

In the arguably democratizing, levelled playing field of cyberspace in the West, the typical Internet user is white, male, middle class and well educated. Asia, China, Japan, South Korea and India lead the way in numbers of internet users. The new frontier of cyberspace forces the redefining of borders and what now constitutes the Other.

Changing Demographics
• Asian Americans are no longer classified as disadvantaged.
• Multiple surveys confirm that females outnumber males online in the US, with "no significant gender gap in Internet usage."
• Asia, China, Japan, South Korea, and India lead the way in numbers of Internet users.
• After US Americans, the Chinese have become the second biggest user group.
• The majority of content on the net is no longer in English.

Through the escalating numbers and increasing awareness of online sting operations, identify theft, MMORPGs (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) avatars, social networking websites (My Space, Facebook), and virtual worlds (Second Life), the issues of social plasticity problematising identity and race in cyberspace strain prior definitions.

Facebook is a social networking website launched on February 4, 2004. Due to the open nature of Facebook, several countries have banned access to it including Syria and Iran. The Syrian government cited the ban was on the premise that the website promoted attacks on authorities.

MySpace is a popular social networking website offering an interactive, user-submitted network of friends, personal profiles, blogs, groups, photos, music and videos for teenagers and adults internationally. The 100 millionth account was created on August 6, 2006 in the Netherlands and a news story claimed 106 million accounts on September 8, 2006, and the site reportedly attracts 230,000 new registrations per day. The Chinese version of MySpace, launched in April of 2007, has many censorship-related differences from other international versions of the service. Discussion forums on topics such as religion and politics are absent, and a filtering system that prevents the posting of content about Taiwan independence, the Dalai Lama, Falun Gong, and other "inappropriate topics" has been added. Users are also given the ability to report the "misconduct" of other users for offenses including "endangering national security, leaking state secrets, subverting the government, undermining national unity, and spreading rumors or disturbing the social order."

Second Life is an Internet-based virtual world video game launched on June 23, 2003, At the end of March 2008, approximately 13 million accounts were registered, although there are no reliable figures for actual long term consistent usage. In January 2008, residents spent 28,274,505 hours there; so on average about 38,000 residents were logged on at any particular moment. Second Life is currently available in several languages; the main ones at the moment are English, German, Japanese and Korean.

What hegemony? Which perspective?
The digital divide, created by differences in Internet access and computer literacy, is but one border. For example, a divided egalitarianism is created by the gap in computer skills between different users that results, for example, in the creation of either an inferior or formidable avatar, and consequent viability or elimination online.

The Digital Divide, Responsible Digital Media, and Requisite Skills for Internet Access and Use
• Access to the technology may not be as critical as having the skills of what to say, how to say it, and how to communicate it to others
• The internet is still a textual medium; poor reading skills are the primary barriers to access. One has to be a good reader, be verbally confident, and undaunted by pages of type.
• In the early 1980s, the maldistribution of computers in educational environments significantly shaped the Anglocentric orientation of the internet.

One Laptop Per Child
• Mission Statement: To create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children by providing each child with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self-empowered learning.
 • OLPC was founded by Nicholas Negroponte with a core of Media Lab veterans, but quickly expanded to include a wide range of exceptionally talented and dedicated people from academia, industry, the arts, business, and the open-source community
• The laptops are sold to governments, [40] to be distributed through the ministries of education with the goal of distributing "one laptop per child". The operating system and software is localized to the languages of the participating countries.
•The Internet and the web have a role in building and maintaining minority communities
• There is always the challenge of providing greater access to digital media for disadvantaged groups in cyberspace.
• The gap in computer skills can result in result in the creation of an inferior or formidable avatar, and consequent viability or elimination online.

This is further complicated by the fact that real money can be made in MMORPGs. Morbidity and mortality have been reported related to prolonged playing periods, with real deaths in China and South Korea attributed to dehydration, exhaustion, with possible drug abuse and deep vein thrombosis; convulsions have been reported, as well as violence: suicide, murder, and child neglect.

Internet addiction is a common disorder that is proposed to be classified as an obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorder with its own DSM-V code (diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders).

Other issues to be explored:
• How does religious tourism manifest itself?
• When race is detached from the body, what is the utility of race as a category?
• How does cyber-racism manifest itself in Asia?
• What is the effectiveness of community activism on the internet?
• How is the Internet policed differently in Asia?

Reflections of Contemporary Chinese Society: Representations of Chinese Identity in Cyberspace

JIAYI YOUNG

This paper looks into Chinese identity representations in cyberspace, focusing on those found in Internet games—representations that are reflections of contemporary Chinese economic, social and political conditions. Despite extreme state control over the media, the Internet has become a medium of self-expression, and a way of realizing the dreams of those who engage in these cyber games.

According to the iResearch Consulting Group, the first professional market research company in China, the latest release of the "2008 Second-Quarter Chinese Internet Game Market Monitoring Report" [1] indicates that the second quarter of 2008 Chinese Internet game market size grew 66.6% over the same quarter last year, a 9.2% growth over the previous quarter breaking for the first time the 5 billion Yuan current earnings. The report indicates a rapid growth in comparison to the same period last year. The report further predicts that the Chinese Internet Game market size will reach 20 billion Yuan in the third quarter of 2008.

These astonishing figures are attributed to China's unique economic, social and political climate. Economically, the needs of China's huge population are increasing