

PRESS RELEASE

World Premiere of new Live Computer Game "See You in Walhalla"

September 14, 2006

**IME Industrial Performing Arts Complex
Athens (Greece)**

And two other European cities (Sofia and Amsterdam) connected live through the Internet.

The Athens based performance group **amorphy.org**, with support of the EU Culture 2000 Funding Scheme, is proud to present the world premiere of "See you in Walhalla," a distributed live performance game connecting three cities – Amsterdam, Athens and Sofia. This multi-media dance/theatre project, collaboratively created by artists and designers from four different European partner sites in Greece, The Netherlands, Germany and Bulgaria, presents the unusual journey of a video game "avatar" through a haunted urban industrial landscape composed of digital fragments from the spectacle of Europe.

The audience in Athens is invited to witness the exciting premiere of the first live 3D computer game enacted by three dis/located performers simultaneously, with Ermira Goro playing the "avatar" on location in Athens, while Nancy Mauro-Flude and Ivaylo Dimitrov are streamed via web-cams into the game but are located in Amsterdam and Sofia respectively, and watched by local audiences in those cities. At the same time, "See you in Walhalla" can be witnessed live on the Internet, where online players can log on to offer their comments and reactions to the performance/game. The Athens premiere represents the first leg of a European tour scheduled for 2006-2007 seasons.

Description of the new work:

An average man. Slightly obsessive, familiarly lonely. He eats his green apples, rendered phosphorescent in the glow of his computer screen. A new video game, *See You in Walhalla* – “in this place everyone who is not in jail works for the police.” He creates his avatar. The game’s purpose - to guide this avatar, born as an “empty” shell, through various journeys taking place in an imaginary city-scape morphed out of Amsterdam, Athens and Sofia, with the final goal of rendering the avatar into a more “human being”, capable of surviving the density, danger and psychosis of urban existence, at a time when Europe is undergoing its own nightmares of economic and political integration. Paradoxically, integration in this haunted and visually disturbing game is experienced as a series of physical and psychic dissociations. The Player gets more involved with the game, losing a sense of reality and becoming more socially autistic, while his avatar slowly recovers a sensibility for human inter-action which is punished by the pressures and regulations, as well as the hyper-euphoric spectacular image-scapes, of which the urban rhythms of existence are determined.

I am Amalia, if you hurry me I will say I am Molly, I am her, locked up in the big house, desperate, pursued by Rosas’s mazorca, I am Irish, I will say then, I am her and I am also the others, I was the others, I am Hipolita, the gimp, the little cripple, I tottered slightly when I walked, Hipolita, I say to him, and he smiles, Hipolita, with “the gloves on her small hands”, she ran away with the psychopath, the big castrated psychopath who could tell the future on Tarot cards, he had a scar on his groin from here to here.

Three performers inter-connected, a complex web of fantastical events seen from pre-recorded film, live-web cam and audio streams from Amsterdam and Sofia, interactively controlled sound and video based determined by movements of the performer in Athens, and unpredictable site-specific performances in Sofia and Amsterdam – these components compose the 3D live game environment which promises Player and Avatar a life after death (*Walhalla*).

The protagonist of this game is not an ego-shooter, but a *flâneur*, a cyber wo-man who discovers herself as an anonymous face in the multitude, but who is free to probe her surroundings for clues and hints that may go unnoticed by the others. The Avatar-wanderer does not abandon herself/himself in the crowd, but actively participates, observes, revolts, and intervenes in her surroundings, and just as she experience her “unbearable lightness of being”, she is nearly killed in

an accident.

This theatrical computer game explores the “system” of deadly possibilities that lurk in the entropic cities of late capitalism, amongst the facades of glamour, heroic icons and consumer fetishes which, like a dream, do not exist in reality or can fall apart in a moment, setting fire to the outskirts of our imagination or flooding our delusional consciousness.

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Initial Concept by: Tzeni Argyriou, Ioanna Tsinividi, and Ash Bulayev

Logistics:

Date: September 14th, 2006

Time: 21:00 (Athens/Sofia) & 20:00 (Amsterdam)

Locations:

Athens/Greece (Πολιτιστικό Κέντρο Ελληνικός Κόσμος,
Πειραιώς 254 - Κτίριο 5)

Amsterdam/Netherlands
(Waag Society, Nieuwmarkt Square)

Sofia, Bulgaria
(Red House for Culture & Debate,
15 Ljuben Karavelov Street)

Info: www.amorphy.org/imap

* For press photographs or any other information regarding the show or project, please contact: info@amorphy.org

Development History

With funding support of the European Culture 2000 Framework Program, the project development of “See you in Walhalla” began in September 2005, and after extensive filming on location and digital choreography and computer programming workshops in the various partner sites, the new work will be shown as a live networked performance on September 14th, 2006 in Amsterdam, Athens, and Sofia.

The collaborative project, implemented through a trans-European network of four participating media art organizations, is dedicated to fostering new and innovative works of art through effective integration of interactive technologies and live performance practices.

Collaborative Network of Co-Organizers

- **Cultural Center of Kifissia** (Athens, Greece)
- **amorphy.org** (Athens, Greece) – www.amorphy.org
amorphy.org is a non-for-profit organization devoted to production of original works of live performance and installation, through constant pursuit of practical investigation fusing media art technologies and live performance practices.
- **InteraktionsLabor** (Göttelborn, Germany) – <http://interaktionslabor.de>
InteraktionsLabor, under the direction of Johannes Birringer, is an organization which focuses on research in communications technologies, interactive media, performance and virtual environments.
- **InterSpace** (Sofia, Bulgaria) – www.i-space.org
InterSpace is a New Media Art Center that works for the establishment of a social attitude to new media art forms, through the development of alternative means and possibilities of artistic expression in new media technologies.
- **De Waag** (Amsterdam, Holland) – www.waag.org
Waag Society for Old and New Media is a knowledge institute operating on the cutting edge of culture and technology in relation to society, education, government and industry, established in 1994.

Associated Partners

PACT Zollverein - Essen, Goethe Institute, Red House For Culture and Debate, IKS, IME Research Facility, Ipsilon Production Company, Brunel University, i-DAT/University of Plymouth.



Culture 2000

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