

## PicturePile

PicturePile is my digital portfolio, which I use in presentations and lectures to be able to quickly (or slowly) show pictures, video fragments and sound samples about my work and projects. The oldest image is from 1987, I started working on it in 2000, and now there are in total over 700 images and sounds.



### Background

The portfolio is made in Macromedia Director, because it is easy to place and shape the various media. However, it is also quite a pain to make a dynamic presentation with Director as it is very much tied to the timeline, betraying its roots as an animation program. The structure needed for an interactive application should be very different, in my case it is a kind of star topology (occasionally in layers), which results in many jumps in the timeline using 'goto'. I remember from my programming lessons during my engineering degree that the 'goto' was a 'nogo'. It is ironic that the main tool for making 'interactive media' is so ill-suited for this purpose.....

But anyway. The advantage of using my PicturePile in lectures over a slide show (such as PowerPoint) is that all material is at hand, making it possible to create any order of presenting the material, I can jump all over the place, go into depth on certain issues or skim over others fast. This is of course also the weakness, it is very easy to get lost, run over time, or on the other hand forget to mention the most important issues. So recently I started to use a slide show tool again. (Using Apple's Keynote, as it not just *tolerates* video as PowerPointless does, but really asks for it. The Director presentation crashes if you attempt to even play two videos at once, while in Keynote or QuickTime or Jitter six videos or more play simultaneously.) Also it is notoriously difficult make text appear nicely in Director. The most recent projects are not in it, they are on display elsewhere.

I made a stand alone version of PicturePile for this occasion, you can play with it and explore (and get lost). Being a presentation tool, it lacks explanatory text as it is meant to be accompanied by me talking. Perhaps the audience can help each other to fill in the gaps, many projects involve the people invited.

### how to use it:

Point and click (!) with the motion-sensitive mouse (it has gyroscopes in it). Click and hold the switch on the down side of the mouse, with your index finger, and move your wrist (either hand). Click any button on the top with your thumb to select icons.



You will get lost, but the PicturePile icon (usually in the top left hand corner) gets you back at the start level. Most navigation can be done by the small picture icons, and sometimes other pictures are active too.



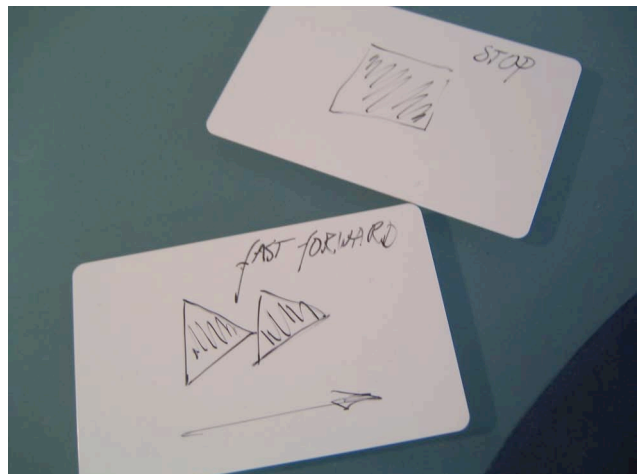
## ***Extended reading table***

On the reading table several books, papers, flyers etc. are spread out. Picking up an object and holding it near the 'interactivation spot' on the table, triggers a video that belongs to the reading object. For instance, the proceedings of the first conference on New Instruments for Musical Expression (NIME02), which has a paper about the Video-Organ in, triggers a video of the performance we did with the instrument at the conference.



The videos are in DV quality, documenting projects and performances I carried out together with Yolande Harris, such as the Video-Organ and the Meta-Orchestra (co-founded with Jonathan Impett in 2000 as an European Project). The videos are documentary, summarising the performance by showing highlights and attempting to keep the flow as well as giving a sense of the space, overall experience, etc. Most of the videos are edited by Yolande.

There are also several 'action objects', tokens which control the playback of the video, such as Pause, Play, Fast Forward, Mute, etc. Some videos can be triggered not only by a book or paper but also by an objects that belongs to the documentary contents, for instance an Intrumentlet of the Video-Organ.



The reading items and action objects on the table contain RFID tags, each with a unique number which in the software (Max/MSP/Jitter) that reads the tags (through a Phidget) associates with certain content and actions. The Max patch is visible on the screen of the PowerBook on the table.

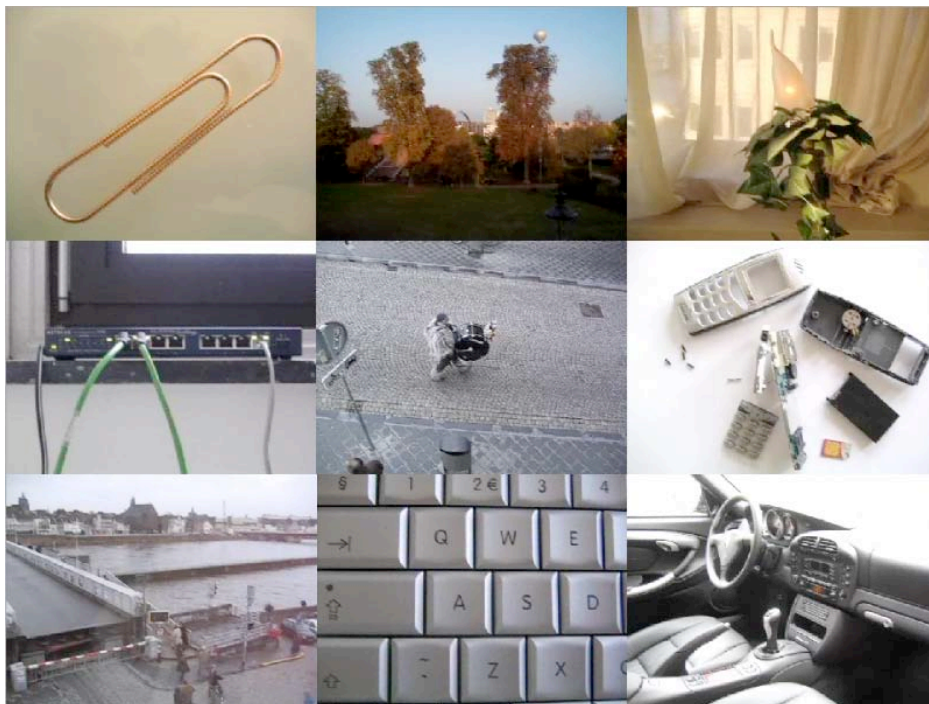
The Reading Table can be extended in the future, connecting objects to other media such as web sites, files, etc.

## ***Cahier videowall***

The little book I wrote in 2004 about the electronic ecology, published by the School of Journalism and Communication in Utrecht, contains a CD with 10 videos. They were meant as 'wall paper', to accompany the reading with images (stills and video) to do with the contents of the book.



In the installation 9 of the videos are arranged in a 3x3 matrix (they were not designed to be viewed on one big screen), playing simultaneously. The videos are of different lengths, different juxtapositions are created when playing for a while. There is a good balance between changing stills and videos.



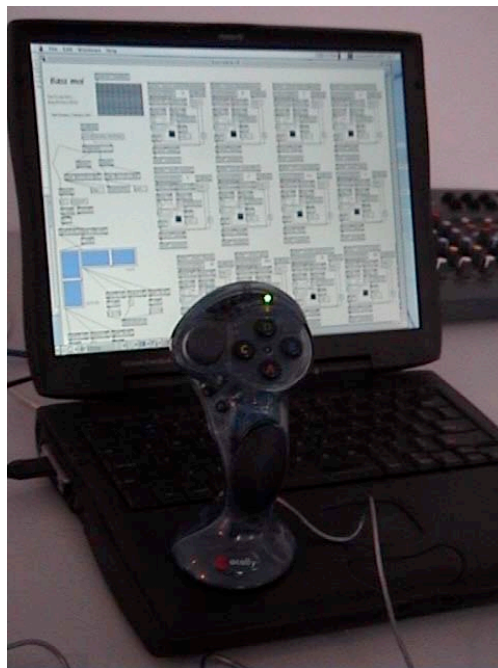
## ***Drum 'n Bass Stick***

After having developed many high-end, specialised and personalised instruments, I felt it was necessary to create a very simple instrument. Also I wanted to experiment with mapping, not only developing an instrument but also the content. Working in Barcelona, and missing my bass guitar, I decided to use short loops of bass licks of other players (Bootsy Collins, Squarepusher, Me'Shell NdegéOcello) and fragments (SFeQ, Machito, Rachmaninov, Tom Waits). The fragments were adjusted to create smooth loops. As input device I used a cheap game controller (MacAlly Airstick, 35€), which has many buttons and a motion/tilt sensor with 2 DoF. The buttons trigger the loops, the motion around the axis control the speed and direction of playback. The idea was to use the electronics and build it into another instrument, but this hasn't happened.

It was made as an installation in the Zeppelin Festival at the CCCB in Barcelona, as part of the Walk-In Orchestra in 2002. The installation was then called Bass Moi.

I have also made a version based on the Logitech Wingman game controller (but this controller is not in production anymore).

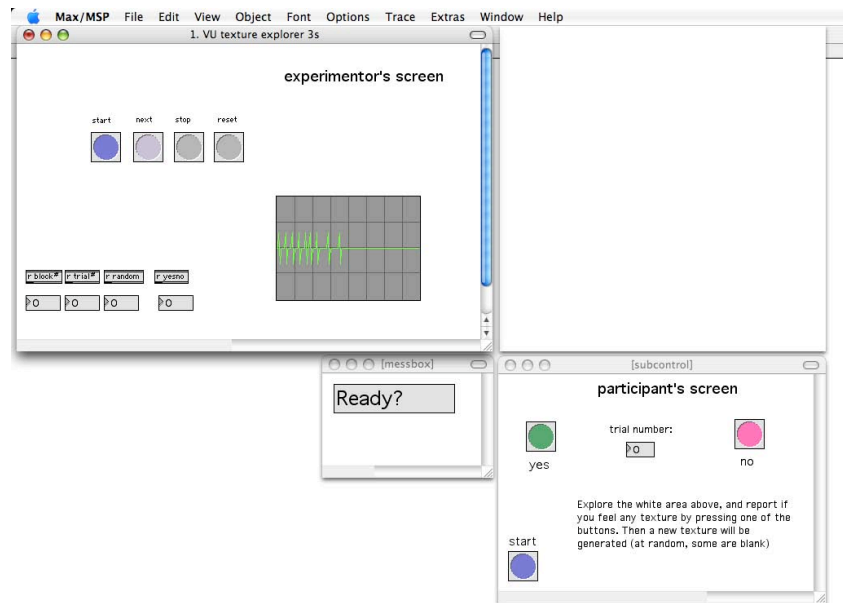
In 2004 student interns Sylvain Vriens and Bart Gloudemans made a new version, which works under Mac OSX (using the 'hi' object to read the game controller instead of the 'insprock' object in the original OS9 version). They also added a number of loops, organising the sounds in banks.



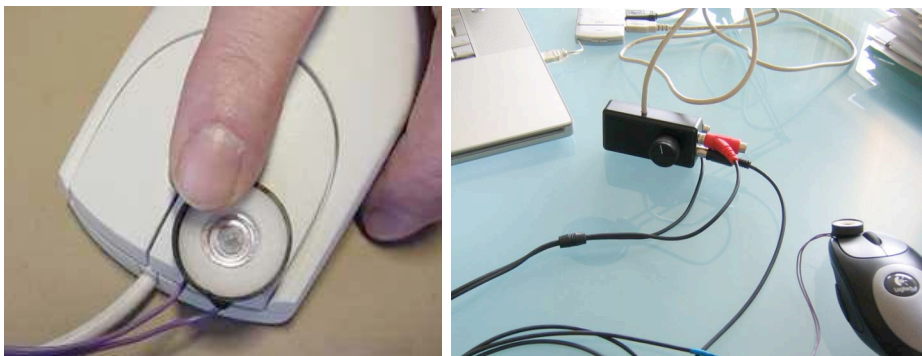
## Palpable Pixels

In the thesis several haptic feedback projects are presented. In this installation the feedback can be felt.

In experiments I normally have two screens set up, one for the experimenter and one for the participant. For the installation I made some single screen versions of the experiments carried out at the Vrije Universiteit in 2003. The experiments are described in the thesis in chapter 5.3.



The small speaker with a protection ring (the tactile explorer) is attached to a mouse. The vibrations are generated as sound in Max/MSP, depending on the movement of the mouse.



## ***Trainflow***

(under development)

Video installation. Over the last years I have assembled many small video clips made with a little camera. I am fascinated by the patterns, motions and layers one can see particularly when travelling on the train, but also I have material from cars, boats, on foot and on the bicycle.

Being on the same train journey several times enabled me to practice some of the shots, or choosing the optimal weather conditions, or repeat shots in different seasons. At other times though I encountered unique patterns or occurrences of layers for which I had to act quickly. Having a small camera always at hand enabled me to do this, though compromising a bit on the image quality. (Using a Canon IXUS II camera, at a resolution of 320x240 pixels, 15 fps and motionJPEG compression and a maximum of three minutes.)



The video material often moves slowly and takes time to take in. In a next version, another level is entered by changing the speed and direction of the movements. I will be linking the playback parameters (speed, direction and choice of material) to activities of the audience. Also the juxtaposition of material of various content is interesting. For this first version of the installation I will use only one screen, with one image at the time.