



**PIXXELPOINT 2009 – 10<sup>th</sup> International New Media Art Festival**

***Once Upon a Time in the West***

**December 4 – 11, 2009**

**Nova Gorica (SI) – Gorizia (IT)**

**Curator: Domenico Quaranta**

**Organization:** Kulturni dom Nova Gorica

**Partners:** Associazione Lucide, Gorizia  
DAMS Gorizia, Università di Udine  
Zavod Kinoateljje  
Istituto italiano per la cultura in Slovenia, Ljubljana  
Ambasciata Olandese in Slovenia  
Fondazione Cassa di risparmio di Gorizia

**Kulturni Dom Nova Gorica** (Slovenia) is proud to announce the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the International New Media Art Festival Pixxelpoint, that will open at the Mestna galerija Nova Gorica on **December 4, 2009, at 8.00 PM**. The festival will take place from December 4 to December 11, 2009, and will have two venues: the **Mestna Galerija Nova Gorica**, every day from 9.00 AM to 7.00 PM; and the **Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Gorizia** (Via Carducci 2, Gorizia), every day from 2.00 to 7.00 PM. Furthermore, Web based works have been collected in an online gallery designed in collaboration with **Club Internet** ([www.clubinternet.org](http://www.clubinternet.org)) and proudly hosted by **Padiglione Internet** ([www.padiglioneinternet.com](http://www.padiglioneinternet.com)) – a project by Miltos Manetas for the Venice Biennale. The online exhibition, open every day, 24/24, will be screened in the two venues of the festival as well.

Pixxelpoint, now celebrating its **10<sup>th</sup> birthday**, has become an internationally established New Media Art festival, well known in Slovenia and abroad. Its primary interest is to bring information technologies and New Media Art to a broader audience, and to help new generations in developing an alternative, more “mature” use of the computer.

## THE FESTIVAL THEME

### *Once Upon a Time in the West*

We keep on talking about “new media”, while in actual fact these media are anything but new. The Net is twenty years old, if we start counting from the advent of the Web, forty if we start from Arpanet. *Spacewar!*, the first videogame ever, is more or less the same age. Virtual worlds are the updated, lighter versions of a technology acclaimed as “the future” when Second Life programmers were still in diapers; social networks are the bastard sons of Fidonet. As for the computer, it is younger than Lord Byron, but certainly not than his daughter Ada.

Once upon a time there was the electronic frontier, an abandonware myth which was able to regenerate itself thanks to the continuous advance of the frontier itself. Like in space, in technological progress there's no ocean at the end of the trip. But, unlike the space race, the race to the next technology is endless, and endlessness is boring.

Yet, while we got used to innovation and the day-after rhetorics, we have never got used to the loss of the past. We look back to what was new yesterday and is trash today, and we feel a deep sense of nostalgia. Commodore 64 and 386dx. The first Apple Macintosh. Bulletin Board Systems. Animated gifs. Glittering images. Web buttons. Super Mario. Doom. Napster. Jennicam. Mosaic. ASCII art. MIDIs and MOOs. Not to mention VHS, vinyl, audio cassettes, cathode tubes, portable radios, faxes. It is the kind of nostalgia that we feel for a relative who died young, once the pain abates: you are left wondering what kind of man he would have been. Or for someone that, once grown up, does not live up to his or her promise. Sometimes nostalgia develops into historical research, and becomes media archeology. We don't look for the technologies that we once loved, but those we have never seen in action.

But in both the cases, in the artistic field this sentimental look at the past is producing some brand new, interesting stuff. Reviving dead media and obsolete technologies, retrieving and rekindling their aesthetics, making them do things they were never expected to do, and telling stories about them with other means is proving to be a sound artistic strategy – undoubtedly more so than “the exploration of the artistic potential of new media” which became the mantra of most New Media Art. This happens because, when you give up on the rhetorics of novelty, what is left on stage is the human element: the man of the past who domesticated the media, put his own life into them and was changed by them; and the man of the present, who looks back on that past with the same sentiment as the venerable Sergio Leone looked to the West.

Indeed in spaghetti westerns, as in this show, nostalgia is just a minimal part of the whole thing. The decision to use obsolete media reveals can be act of cultural resistance against the present and this marketing strategy, as well as proprietary software and hardware; a way to make something new with old means; the result of the choice to work with a defined set of

constraints. In some cases, it is the juicy fruit of a steampunk imagination; in other cases, looking back to the history of the media goes hand in hand with looking back to your own personal history.

Dr. **Domenico Quaranta** (1978, <http://domenicoquaranta.com>) is a contemporary art critic and curator who lives and works in Brescia, Italy. He focused his research on the impact of the current techno-social developments on the arts, with a specific interest in art in networked spaces, from the Internet to virtual worlds. As an art critic, he is a regular contributor to *Flash Art* magazine; his essays, reviews and interviews appeared in many magazines, newspapers and web portals. His first book titled, *NET ART 1994-1998: La vicenda di Āda'web* was published in 2004; he also co-edited, together with Matteo Bittanti, the book *GameScenes. Art in the Age of Videogames* (Milan, October 2006) and contributed to a number of books and publications.

He curated and co-curated a number of exhibitions, including: *Connessioni Leggendarie. Net.art 1995-2005* (Milan 2005); *GameScenes* (Turin 2005); *Radical Software* (Turin 2006); *Holy Fire. Art of the Digital Age* (Bruxelles 2008); *For God's Sake!* (Nova Gorica, 2008); *RE:akt! | Reconstruction, Re-enactment, Re-reporting* (Bucharest – Ljubljana - Rijeka 2009); *Expanded Box* (ARCO Art Fair, Madrid 2009); *Hyperlucid* (Prague Biennial, Prague 2009). He lectures internationally and teaches "Net Art" at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan.

## EXHIBITING ARTISTS:

**AIDS-3D** (Germany): *Forever Heath Death*, 2009

**Mats Andren & Anders Carlsson** (Sweden): *HT Gold*, 2008

**Michael Bell Smith** (USA): *Grid Panic*, 2006

**David Blackmore** (UK): *Cracked LCDs*, 2009

**Ian Bogost** (USA): *Guru meditation*, 2009

**BridA / Tom Kerševan, Sendi Mango, Jurij Pavlica** (Slovenia): *Nanoplot*, 2009

**Wayne Clements** (UK): *The Best and Worst of Possible Worlds*, 2009

**Vuk Ćosić** (Slovenia): *ASCII sculpture*, 2009

**Chris Coy** (USA): *Chariots of Mortal Combat Fire*, 2007

**Florian Cramer** (The Netherlands): *Floppy Films*, 2009

**Olle Essvik** (Sweden): *Devices*, 2007 – 2008

**Vladimir Frelih** (Croatia): *Katalogue*, 1998 – 2000

**Darko Fritz** (Croatia): *Home*, 2002 – 2009

**James Houston** (UK): *Big Ideas (Don't Get Any)*, 2008

**IOcose** (Italy): *Floppytrip*, 2009

**Tom Jennings** (USA): *Alan Turing made flat*, 2000

**Oliver Larić** (Germany): *787 Cliparts*, 2006

**Les Liens Invisibles** (Italy): *Never Ending Happy End*, 2008



**Olia Lialina** (Germany): *Animated Gif Model*, 2005  
**Paul Matosic** (UK): *Deconstructed New Technology*, 1995 – ongoing  
**Eilis McDonald** (Ireland): *Lo-fi Wi-fi*, 2008  
**Rosa Menkman** (The Netherlands): *Happy Birthday Goto80*, 2009  
**Rafael Rozendaal** (The Netherlands): *RGB*, 2002  
**Thatisaworkaround** (Greece): *The Enemy Agent and You II*, 2009  
**Thisgasthing** (Italy): *CABOTRONIUM*, 2009  
**Eugenio Tisselli** (Spain): *Childhood Games*, 1984 – 2009  
**Tonylight** (Italy): *Space LED*, 2009  
**UBERMORGEN.COM** (Austria): *Black 'n white*, 2000 – 2009  
**Harm Van Den Dorpel** (The Netherlands): *Bison.gif*, 2008  
**Windows Media Players** (UK): *Graphic Interchange Series: Victorian Device*, 2009  
**Math Wrath**: *While Playing Astro Grover in 1989*

**FOR THE FULL PROGRAM, CHECK OUT:**

<http://www.pixxelpoint.org>

**MORE INFOS:**

<http://www.pixxelmusic.com>

<http://domenicoquaranta.com>

**PRESS:**

IMAGES 1 (zip, 8.1 MB) - [http://domenicoquaranta.com/public/PRESS/PX09\\_press\\_pack1.zip](http://domenicoquaranta.com/public/PRESS/PX09_press_pack1.zip)

IMAGES 2 (zip, 8.2 MB) - [http://domenicoquaranta.com/public/PRESS/PX09\\_press\\_pack2.zip](http://domenicoquaranta.com/public/PRESS/PX09_press_pack2.zip)