

Zoltán Szegedy-Maszák:
VISUAL COMMUNICATION - HOMMAGE TO JONATHAN SWIFT
Interactive Installation, 2008/2009



Technical requirements

1. Requirements at the exhibition location:

- at least 4x4 m (preferably open) space (lighting is irrelevant)
- a chair and a table with approximately 70x150cms to place the monitor, computer and plates (perhaps along with the descriptive text and instructions, see below)
- continuous 220V power supply, 5 outlets required (the computer and the camera should run 24 hours during the entire exhibition period, only the monitor and the lamps can be switched off. In case of a power failure the system starts up normally, but consequent failures can damage the computer.)

2. Items transported from Budapest to the exhibition location:

- 1x shuttle xpc computer + powercord
- 1x 22" Lcd monitor+powercord and VGA cable
- 1x Sony Dv handycam+powersupply and firewire cable
- 1x wooden tripod
- 2x photo lamps
- 2x lamp tripods

2x set of 6 two sided plates with geometric patterns
(one set for use in the installation and a spare one)

3. Maintenance

The installation should run without regular maintenance for the entire period of the exhibition. The only maintenance issue is the replacement of the plates with the printed geometrical patterns as they become dirty after a while. Replacement is very easy: the patterns should be printed out using a regular printer on A4 sticker paper which have to be glued over the old patterns. A spare set of the 6 double sided plates is included in the transported package, which should be used in the installation while the refurbished set with the new printouts gets ready. The patterns are available in printable (pdf) format.

4. Subtitling and instructions to be displayed in the exhibition

The following title, instruction and descriptive text should be placed near to the installation (the best practice is to glue it on the table). The instruction "To explore the work, please sit down at the table, and show the cards placed on it to the camera." should be emphasized as much as possible. (Please contact me at szmz@c3.hu if you need the following in pure text format - rtf or doc - rather than pdf)

Zoltán Szegedy-Maszák:

Visual Communication – Hommage to Jonathan Swift

interactive installation, 2009

To explore the work, please sit down at the table, and show the cards placed on it to the camera.

The title of the installation refers to the following excerpt from Gulliver's Travels:

"We next went to the School of Languages, where three Professors sate in Consultation upon improving that of their own country. The first Project was to shorten Discourse by cutting Polysyllables into one, and leaving out Verbs and Participles, because in reality all things imaginable are but Nouns. The other, was a Scheme for entirely abolishing all Words whatsoever; and this was urged as a great Advantage in Point of Health as well as Brevity. For it is plain, that every Word we speak is in some Degree a Diminution of our Lungs by Corrosion, and consequently contributes to the shortning of our Lives. An Expedient was therefore offered, that since Words are only Names for Things, it would be more convenient for all Men to carry about them, such Things as were necessary to express the particular Business they are to discourse on. And this Invention would certainly have

taken Place, to the great Ease as well as Health of the Subject, if the Women in conjunction with the Vulgar and Illiterate had not threatned to raise a Rebellion, unless they might be allowed the Liberty to speak with their Tongues, after the manner of their Ancestors; such constant irreconcilable Enemies to Science are the common People. However, many of the most Learned and Wise adhere to the New Scheme of expressing themselves by Things, which hath only this Inconvenience attending it, that if a Man's Business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged in Proportion to carry a greater bundle of Things upon his Back, unless he can afford one or two strong Servants to attend him. I have often beheld two of those Sages almost sinking under the Weight of their Packs, like Pedlars among us; who, when they met in the Streets, would lay down their Loads, open their Sacks, and hold Conversation for an Hour together; then put up their Implements, help each other to resume their Burthens, and take their Leave.

But for short Conversations a Man may carry Implements in his Pockets and under his Arms, enough to supply him, and in his House he cannot be at a loss: Therefore the Room where Company meet who practise this Art, is full of all Things ready at Hand, requisite to furnish Matter for this kind of artificial Converse.

Another great Advantage proposed by this Invention, was that it would serve as a Universal Language to be understood in all civilized Nations, whose Goods and Utensils are generally of the same kind, or nearly resembling, so that their Uses might easily be comprehended. And thus Embassadors would be qualified to treat with foreign Princes or Ministers of State to whose Tongues they were utter Strangers."

Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift, PART III: A VOYAGE TO LAPUTA, BALNIBARBI, LUGGNAGG, GLUBBDUBDRIB AND JAPAN, CHAPTER V.



Images and text for the catalogue

Please contact me (at szmz@c3.hu) for high resolution images for the catalog. The text for the catalogue is the following (please contact me if you need it in pure text format - rtf or doc - rather than pdf):

Zoltán Szegedy-Maszák:

Visual Communication – Hommage to Jonathan Swift

interactive installation, 2009

An installation is placed in the exhibition space, which resembles the photographic apparatus used in photo studios for taking identity card photos. The only difference is that there is a table in front of the model, with a monitor on its top - resembling the usual video-telephoning apparatus of our time. Lying on the table, there are a few A4 size cards with unintelligible geometric patterns.

The visitor receives the following instruction: sit down at the table, and show the cards placed on it to the camera. Settling by the table, the visitor will see her/his own mirror image shown by the video camera that replaces the photo camera. When the visitor lifts the cards and shows them to the camera, s/he will notice something unusual: in addition to the view given by the video camera, there are virtual three-dimensional objects floating in front of the simple

black and white patterns. These react to the movement of the cards as if they were real objects.

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Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift, PART III: A VOYAGE TO LAPUTA, BALNIBARBI, LUGGNAGG, GLUBBDUBDRIB AND JAPAN, CHAPTER V.