



Lenka Chludová

MISPLACED  
SURVIVAL

*Misplaced Survival* is a series of performative and interactive artworks in which live actions trigger and respond to a technology embedded environment. It activates spaces where we may rediscover our primal self, and equipped by this centered sense, make choices within our contemporary life.

The artworks explore our primal self not as a romanticized original pre-technological entity, but as self bound and informed by its physicality and driven towards its spirituality. The explorations bring forth our ambiguity. While experienced as particular to each of us, our bodies consist of the same elements and processes as the rest of nature. The sounds of air and water within us are no different from the sounds of these elements in the environment from primordial to technological time. While vulnerable, we are designed to endure. The instincts to lick our blood or refrain from harmfully loud actions guide us even when we are not consciously clear on how to act. And while the primal self is reliable, we can ignore it, such as when the determination to keep moving as fast and for as long as possible can silence alerting signs of the body in abnormal conditions.

Our primal self is constantly being tested and redirected by the pressures and currents of our contemporary life conditions. The anxieties we feel in the face of constant change make us susceptible to accept established strategies that supposedly assure safety from discomforting change. We put ourselves under such pressures to participate in these strategies that much of what we have to do now is merely trying to survive the consequences of what we began to do in order to survive in the first place. This is a **misplaced survival**. As the primal selves, we know that there is more to a human life than moving as fast and for as long as possible, because at the end of that move are no fanfares of victory, merely a collapse.

The situations of the *Misplaced Survival* series face us with the same choices as the contemporary condition, but in a language that bonds the primal self with the technological contemporary condition. In live events technology is used to construct a logic for sonic and visual space so that we are related to the environment by feedback, the basis of intelligence. In interactive installations we can influence what video and sound fill the space and react to the results created. In these experiences of feedback relationship to the environment, multiple layers of our primal self, that is the intellectual, emotional, bodily and subconscious layers, are addressed and activated to fuel a **decisive intelligence**, which in turn may be the source of developing an **alternative** to our current condition of misplaced survival.

## As fast and for as long as possible



The video *As fast and for as long as possible* is a reaction to a requirement, which seems to characterize our lives in contemporary society. The act is carried on all fours for two reasons. The impetus for it comes from an animalistic sense of an ever potential collapse a person living under such command may have: "I might not be able to go on, I am just going to drop here and then crawl or walk on all fours". The motion on all fours is also a cumbersome movement for the human body and in that is a parallel to the obstructed character a human life has under the requirement "as fast and as long as possible".

Duration of this act: 48 minutes, video: 5 minutes

Camera: Brian Budak

## Homopharmacognosy



The title of this video is an alteration from zoopharmacognosy, the process by which animals self-medicate. We are driven by the instinct for self-preservation. Our primal self has a strong sense of self-reliance and self-guidance in making decisions on how to adapt to continuously changing conditions.

## Trees and Wires



This piece came about from seeing wires in the shadows of leafless trees. It is an interactive installation wherein the way persons make sounds influences whether their skyscape is filled with images of trees or wires and their soundscape with sounds of birds or metal. The natural and technological have an equal standing in the duality of this space and the viewer is in a dynamic relationship to the sounds and images.

## NebeZemě



What if the sky was the earth and the earth was the sky? In Czech, “Nebe” is the sky and “Země” the earth, but written together it means 'not without me'. This video piece is a space for our imagination, without which the earth could not be the sky and the sky the earth. In *NebeZemě* imagination gains power from our ability to constantly reconfigure our spatial understanding of ourselves in the environment.

## Primordial



*Primordial* is an interactive installation created to heighten the experience of breathing air and drinking water. It is conceived as a breathing and drinking organism, which intensifies as we move into its inside and as if conjoin our inner air and water with that of our surrounding.

## It Burns



The performance *It Burns* is inspired by the sound envelope of a match striking the matchbox, and burning: the fast attack at the strike, the silence during the burn, the air rush at the put out. The sound is amplified to enhance audiences' experience of this small action. The aim of the action is to burn as many matches as fast as possible without getting burnt.

Having taken as deep breath as possible, I clip my nose shut with a clothespin and take as much water into my mouth as I can fit. Only spitting water on it can put out each match, and only in the instance of spitting water can I breathe in again before clipping my nose shut again. Since this is only a short moment, I am gradually deprived of oxygen. As the water depletes it gets harder to put out the next match, until finally, with no water left, it burns me.

Documentation from a performance on November 18, 2008

## Adaptation



The performance *Adaptation* embodies our interdependency with the environment. The actions of seeking cover, water, food, warmth and shelter are at first meaningful for our survival, but overdone to the extent where we struggle to survive the consequences of what we began to do in order to survive in the first place.



The environment in *Adaptation* is primarily sonic. The materials and the five actions are increasingly louder and amplified in a way that sounds feedback on themselves. The feedback grows throughout the performance to the point of audibly unbearable, forcing the performer to adapt to, instead of disrupt the environment. To calm down the environment, the performer attempts to return to the original state by shedding the accumulated layers of protection. Having undergone a transformation through the experience however, only a new state is available. A state fueled by the experiential awareness of our interdependency with environment.

Documentation from a performance on April 14, 2009

RESUME // Lenka Chludová  
Lenkadu@gmail.com // www.lenkadu.com

## EDUCATION

2007-2009

Masters of Fine Arts, Studio for Interrelated Media department,  
Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA, USA.  
Graduation in May 2009.

2005-2006

Bachelor in Fine Arts, Audiovisual Department of the Gerrit Rietveld Art Academy,  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

2003-2005

Masters in Applied Ethics at the University Utrecht, The Netherlands.  
Graduated Cum Laude in August 2005.

2000-2003

Bachelor of Arts, University College Utrecht, The Netherlands.  
Graduated Cum Laude in May 2003.

1998-2000

International Baccalaureate, the United World College of the American West  
Montezuma, New Mexico. Graduated in May 2000.

## PERFORMANCES AND EXHIBITIONS (\*indicates curated events)

2009

\**April 14*: Adaptation performance, Pozen Center, Massachusetts College of Art and  
Design (MassArt), Boston, MA

2008

- \**December 5*: The Next Generation, Huret & Spector Gallery, Boston
- \**November 18*: Stories, A Jointissue Collaboration, Pozen Center, MassArt, Boston
- \**May 5*: Feels Like Home, An Evening of Performances, Videos and Installations,  
A Jointissue Collaboration, Pozen Center, MassArt, Boston
- \**April 17*: Bend Your Time, Eventworks Festival 2008, Godine Gallery, Boston
- \**April 3*: The Origin of Cooperation, with Andrew DeVecchio, Doran Gallery, Boston
- \**March 18*: Dissipation performance Godine Gallery, Boston
- \**March 14*: Nature Super Nature group exhibition, Eilo Gallery, Porthsmouth, NH
- \**January 19*: Performance Over Indulgence group event, Sticky Bun City at the  
Firehouse 13 Gallery, Providence, RI

2007

- November 30*: Cas, Doran Gallery, Boston
- November 28*: Something Changing, A Jointissue Collaboration, Pozen Center,  
MassArt, Boston
- \**October 19*: Works on Paper, group exhibition, Doran Gallery, Boston
- \**September 11*: Hello My Name is..., Doran Gallery, Boston

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Jill Slosburg-Ackerman	Enrique Rosa
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### Photos

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by Gregory Vershbow

<http://www.gregoryvershbow.com>

Booklet Design

by John E. Kerr

[john@iokafilm.com](mailto:john@iokafilm.com)