TOOLS/

TOOLS/

INTRODUCTION/

In their projects, SUPERFLEX provide tools that are based on their specific interest in social and economic commitment. The starting point for creating a tool is a belief in a heterogeneous, complex society. The set-up is developed in co-operation with diverse experts who, in turn, add their own specific interests. It can then be taken over and put into operation by various users. The tools invite people to do something: to become active. Tools are framed by and shaped in specific social and local situations and generate their meanings out of this specific context.

Through the tools SUPERFLEX investigate communicative processes in which power, hegemony, assertion and oppression, the gain and loss of terrain become evident. Various parties, individuals or groups, enter the scene with strong personal and specific interests. They constantly influence how the tool is constructed and/or used. The set-up structures can be redefined by users, which can finally lead to changes in the tool itself. The resulting scenarios, a constantly changing succession of possibilities and meanings, are then continued as long as the interest remains alive. The use of the tools mirrors the contradictions and contentions of the users and their commitment in economic, cultural and political discourses. When SUPERFLEX assemble not only the project and development team, but also the users, they take into account the specific interests of individual groups, their different opportunities for articulation, their interests and projections. All tools share the aspect of empowerment: e.g. having their own energy supply, becoming an independent producer of energy, having their own Internet TV channel, joining a political/economic discussion. Taken in this sense, artistic praxis means a concrete cultural intervention that mediates between different interests or at least, makes them visible. In their tools SUPERFLEX attempt to create conditions for the production of new ways of thinking, acting, speaking and imagining. To this end, they make as much use of their aesthetic proficiency as of their social commitment.

This book consists of three main sections: tools, texts and activities. The first section, which is primarily picture based, contains brief descriptions of the tools and introduces some of the users. In the second section a number of authors present diverse reflections on tools and their uses. Finally the third section focuses on SUPERFLEX´s activities and the people involved in them. This book is intended as both a fund of information and a tool in its own right. Read and use!

The Editors

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TOOLS/
SUPERGAS/

SUPERFLEX has collaborated with Danish and African engineers to construct a simple, portable biogas unit that can produce sufficient gas for the cooking and lighting needs of a single family. The system was originally adapted to meet the efficiency and style demands of a modern African consumer. It is designed to match the needs and economic resources that we believe exist in small-scale economies.

The orange biogas plant produces biogas from organic materials, such as human and animal stools. For a modest sum, a family will be able to buy a biogas system of this kind and achieve self-sufficiency in energy. The plant produces approximately 4 cubic metres of gas per day from the dung from 2-3 cattle. This is enough for a family of 8-10 members for cooking purposes and to run one gas lamp in the evening.

VALVE

GAS TO THE KITCHEN OR LAMP

1. Organic material such as cow dung is deposited in the biogas system once or twice a day.

GASCHAMBER

INLET

OUTLET

REACTOR

VALVE

GAS TO THE KITCHEN OR LAMP
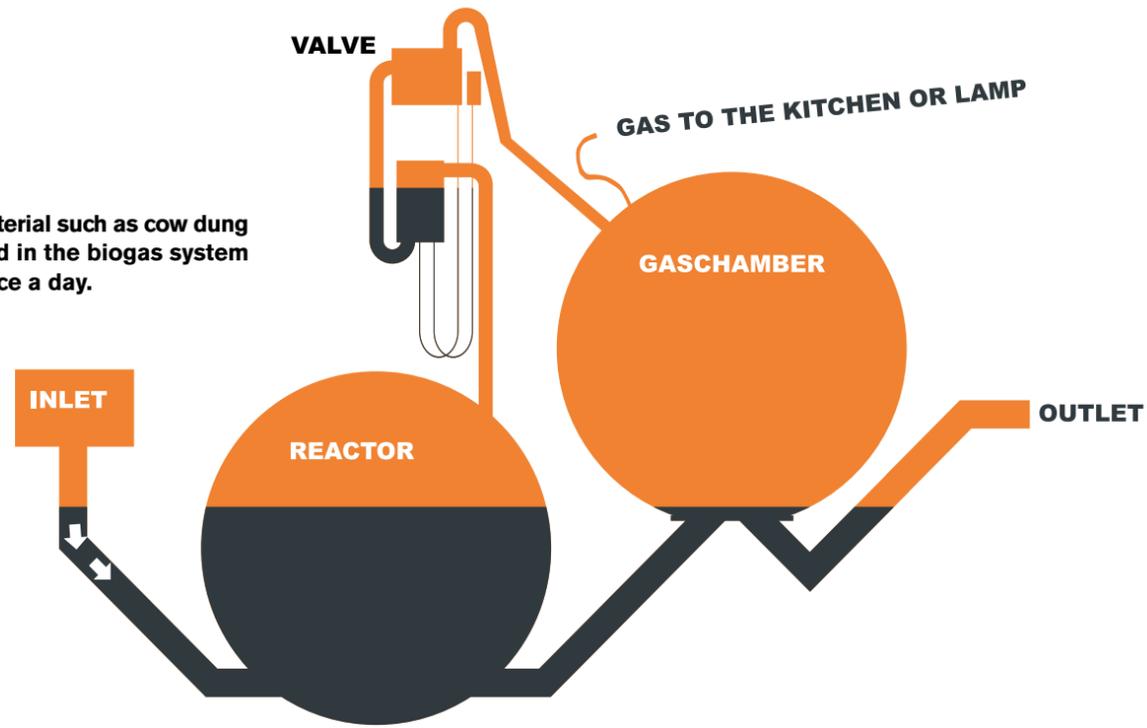
2. The biogas production builds up pressure inside the reactor and forces a portion of the organic material up to the gaschamber.

GASCHAMBER

INLET

OUTLET

REACTOR

---
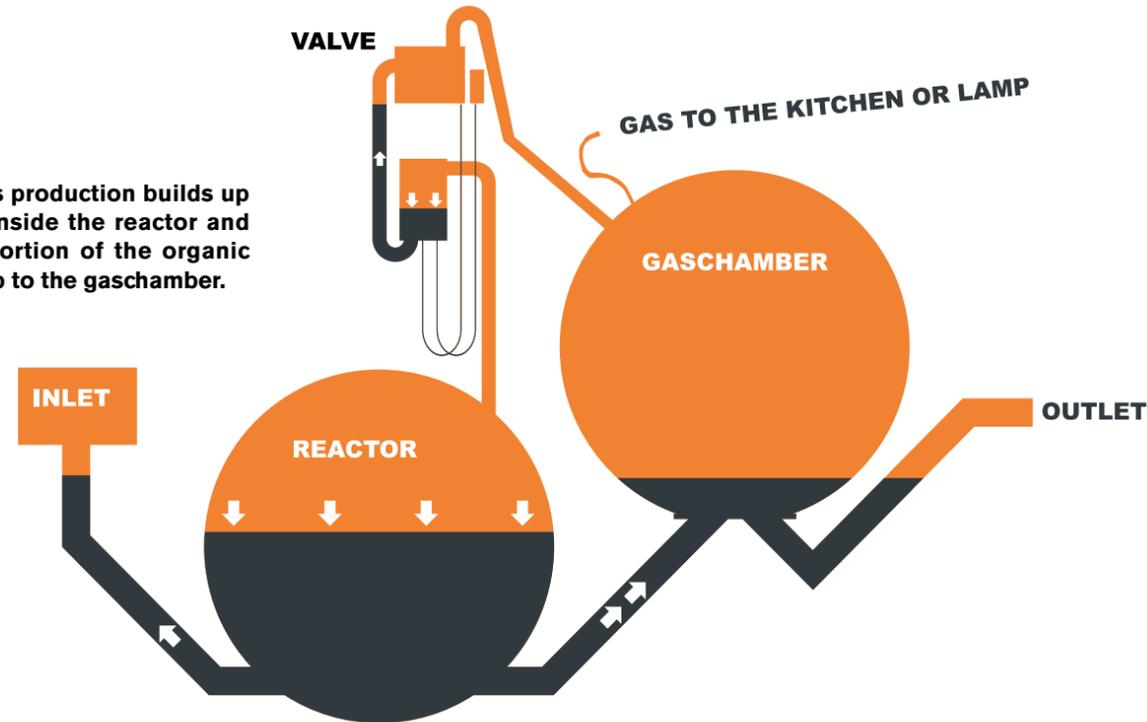
3. After approximately four hours the pressure reaches a high level and starts to push out a small portion of the material. This material works very well as fertiliser on the fields.

VALVE

GAS TO THE KITCHEN OR LAMP

GASCHAMBER

INLET

OUTLET

REACTOR

---
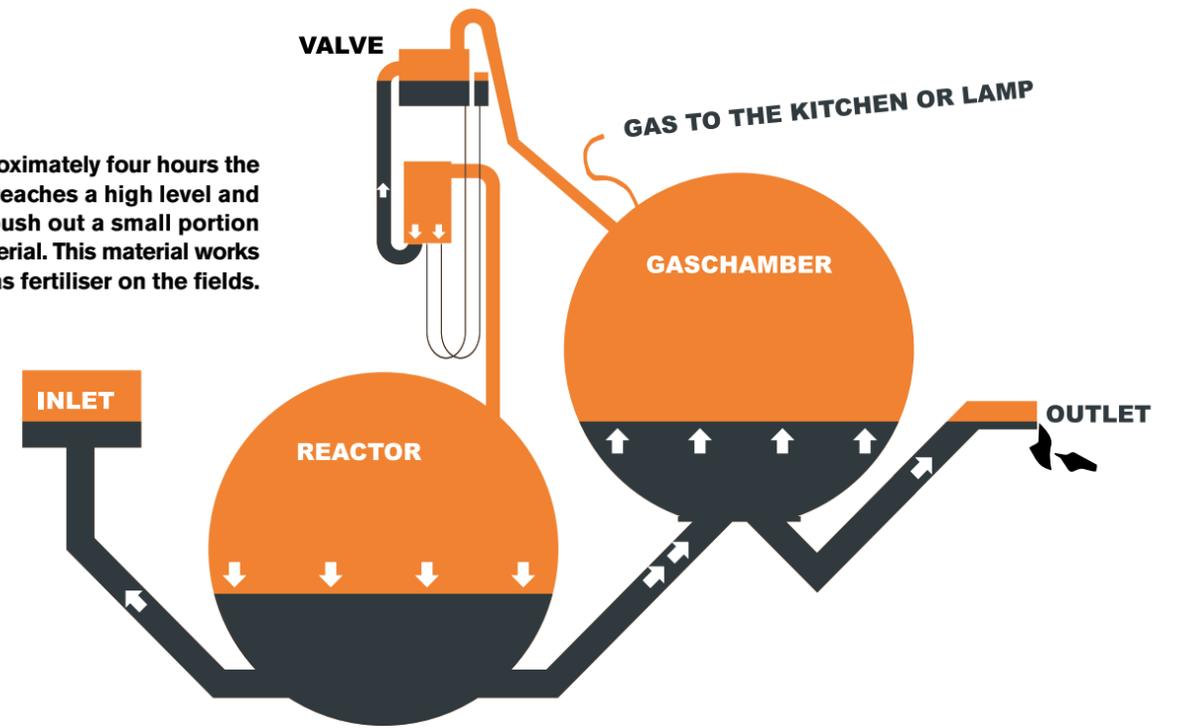
4. At the high pressure level the hydraulic valve opens and the gas escapes from the reactor to the gaschamber. Because of this all the material that has been moved up to the gaschamber will move back to the reactor.
This stirs up the organic material and old material mixes with the new input. This cycle happens 6-7 times a day so that it is possible to make 2-3 times more gas than in traditional systems.

VALVE

GAS TO THE KITCHEN OR LAMP

GASCHAMBER

INLET

OUTLET

REACTOR
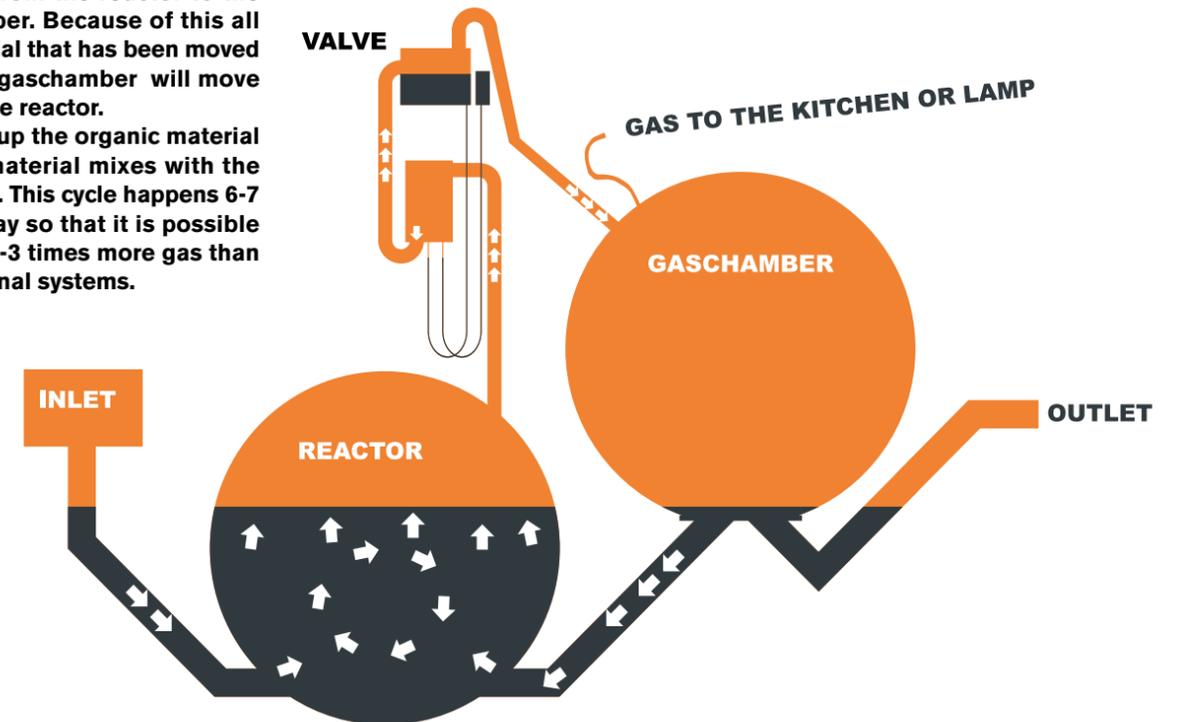
USER/
MASSAWE FAMILY

The pilot project for the biogas system was installed in the home of the Masawe Family in Morogoro, Tanzania August 1997, and is being used by them for cooking.

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERGAS/ MASSAWE FAMILY

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERGAS / MASSAWE FAMILY

USER/
SUPERGAS Ltd.

Engineers and investors have together with SUPERFLEX formed a shareholder company, SUPERGAS Ltd.. This company is responsible for the commercialisation and further development of the biogas system.

Among the shareholders are Jan Mallan, Peter Eriksen, SURUDE and SUPERFLEX.

Reg. no. CVR-no. 21254843   Serial no. ....   DKK: 1.000,-

SHARE CERTIFICATE

Supergas A/S

which is registered in the municipality of Copenhagen, Denmark, hereby acknowledges that .... or the person to whom this share certificate has been duly transferred possesses shares in the company for the amount of

DKK: 1.000,- which amount has been fully paid.

The shareholder holds a proportionate share in the company according to the company's Articles of Association valid at the time of acquisition.

The shares shall be issued to registered holders and recorded in the company's register of shareholders.

Any transfer of shares requires prior consent from the board of Directors.

If the shares are acquired by transfer the voting right is conditional upon the shareholder being recorded in the company's register of shareholders or the shareholder notifying and recording his acquisition prior to notice of the general meeting.

Lost share certificates shall without judgement be declared nill and void by the Board of Directors according to article 4 in the Articles of Association.

Reservations are made that after the issue of the share certificates the company's Articles of Association may have been changed in a way that changes the legal position of the shareholders.

Copenhagen   2000

Board of Directors:

Johannes Jacobus Mallan   Peter Eriksen

Bjørn Bjørnestjerne Christiansen   Jakob Fenger   Mikael Rasmus Nielsen

USER/ SURUDE

SURUDE is a farmer – based nongovermental organization (NGO) primarily concerned with the promotion of management of renewable natural resources at grass root level. The aim is to demonstrate the potential of farmer demand driven technology development and transfer as the means of improving the standard of living of rural people.

SURUDE has its headquarters at Lungo village in Turiani about 100 km from Morogoro town, Tanzania. At the centre there are facilities for farmers' training. Proven technologies like artisan sugar production, draught power, low cost biogas, tree nurseries and zero grazing systems are demostrated.

While most of the activities undertaken by SURUDE are aimed at promoting technologies which are economically viable and technically and socially feasible, some of the activities are supported by credit schemes to enable poor menbers of the community to acquire them.

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERGAS/ SURUDE

BIO-GAS - DON'T WASTE WASTE

IT IS WONDERFUL TO DAY FOR MR. MKUDE TO BE HERE AT THIS TIME ON SATURDAY!!

YOU ARE RIGHT, HE USUALLY GO FOR FIREWOOD

MY FRIENDS, THIS IS A NEW CENTURY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY...

I'M NO LONGER USING FIREWOOD I'M USING BIO-GAS

WHAT? BIO-GAS?

...YES BIO GAS, I'M COLLECTING THE GAS FROM COW DUNG. YOU NEED TO HAVE ONLY TWO OR THREE COWS TO GET ENOUGH GAS.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT TECHNOLOGY?

I GOT IT FROM SUPERFLEX'S "WAZUNGU"

BUT THIS "WAZUNGU" THEY MUST BE VERY RICH AND CLEVER, HOW COMES THEY KNOW OUR PROBLEMS AND WORK HARD TO HELP US TO SOLVE THEM?

OH! YOU BOY, "WAZUNGU" ARE NOT HELPING US, BUT WE ARE HELPING EACH OTHER

FOR EXAMPLE, I PAYED 120,000/= FOR THIS TECHNOLOGY YOU SEE

HOW, TELL ME?

NOT ONLY THAT BUT ALSO THE EFFECT OF DEFORESTATION IS GLOBAL, SO WE OUGHT TO JOIN HANDS TO MINIMIZE DEFORESTATION.

'WAZUNGU' is means WHITE MEN.

Drawings by Athman Mgumia

THAT MONEY IS ENOUGH FOR ONE LITRE OF KEROSENE

THAT ACCORDING TO NEW PRICE, THIS IS WHAT YOU DESERVE

WE ARE GOING TO COLLECT FIREWOOD ARE YOU READY?

NO THANK YOU, LOOK OVER THERE? THAT IS BIO GAS ENEGY FOR COOKING, LIGHT AND EVERY THING!!
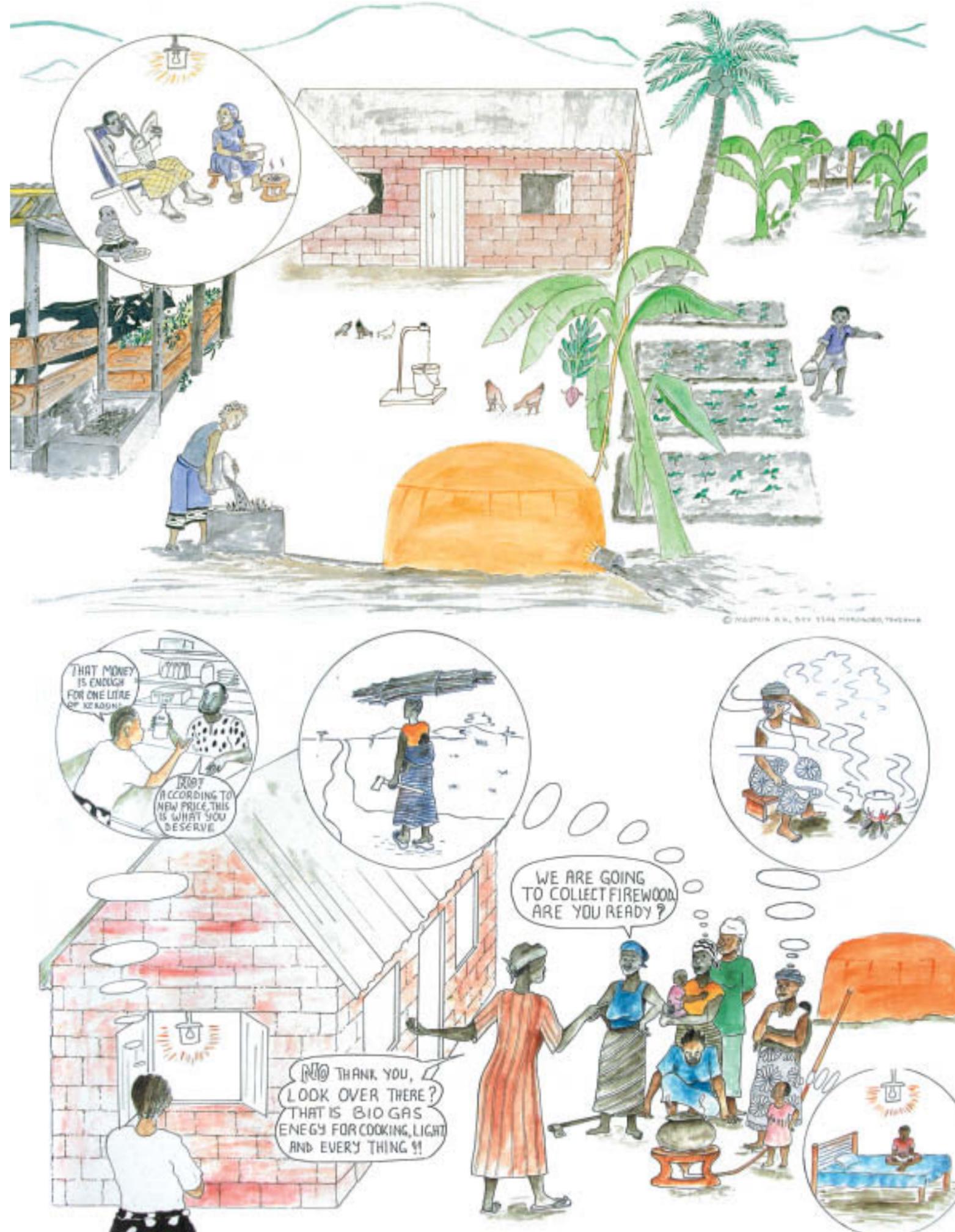
USER/
CMS
ENGINEERING Ltd.

SUPERGAS Ltd.
is collaborating with
the Thai company,
CMS Engineering Ltd.,
in an investigation of
the use of the biogas
system for waste-water
treatment in small pig
farms in Thailand.

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERGAS/ CMS ENGINEERING LTD.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as MOU) made and effective as of 17.09.1999 by and between:

CMS Engineering & Management CO. Ltd.
68/95-96 Moo 5
Rama 2 Road, Jomthong
Bangkok 10150
Thailand
(hereinafter referred to as CMS)

and

SUPERGAS A/S
Frederiksholms Kanal 28A
DK-1220 Copenhagen K.
Denmark
(hereinafter referred to as Supergas)

WITNESS

WHEREAS CMS is a company engaged in The company is a multi-disciplinary consulting company established by a group of professional engineers.

WHEREAS Supergas is a company engaged in the development of appropriate technology in the field of biogas related activities.

WHEREAS both parties consider that they would mutually benefit from a joint venture with a focus on biogas plants adjusted to the needs in Thailand.

WHEREAS CMS and Supergas have expressed their mutual interest in joining their complementary strengths to achieve their respective goals by establishing a joint venture in Thailand.

WHEREAS both parties consider that the establishment of a joint venture will have a specified and substantial positive environmental impact and is commercially viable.

WHEREAS it is the intent of both parties that the cooperation will be on a long term basis and will be implemented in successive phases.

THEREFORE, in consideration of the above mentioned premises, CMS and Supergas agree as follows:

Article 1. Follow-up visit

In order to explore the possibilities for establishing a joint cooperation, the parties have agreed to arrange a follow-up visit at CMS's premises in Bangkok, Thailand.

Article 2. Time Schedule and Implementation Plan

CMS and SUPERGAS agree to the following flow of activities and time schedule:

1999		Responsible
July-October	Negotiations of structure for co-operation	CMS/SG
November	Match-making visit in Thailand	CMS/SG
December	Preparatory Study	External

2000		
January	Feasibility study	External
March	Establishment of legal contracts.	CMS/SG
April	Drawings and preparation of tests	SG
July	Establishment of tests in Thailand.	CMS (ass. by SG)
August	Final product development.	CMS (ass. by SG)
September	Commercial partners and buyers found.	CMS
October	First contracts signed	CMS/SG

Article 3. Secrecy

The parties agree that all information, whether technical, commercial, financial or of any other kind shall be kept strictly confidential.

Article 4. Consultation

The present MOU does not constitute a binding agreement between the parties, but the mere expression of their mutual interests and intent at the time of its execution.

The parties shall settle in good faith and spirit of cooperation and in mutual consultation any and all questions arising from the implementation of the MOU.

USER/
UNIVERSITY
OF TROPICAL
AGRICULTURE

Test carried out in collaboration with the University of Tropical Agriculture (UTA) in Cambodia, exploring the possibility of developing a biogas system using local materials and implementing it in integrated farming schemes.

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERGAS/ UTA
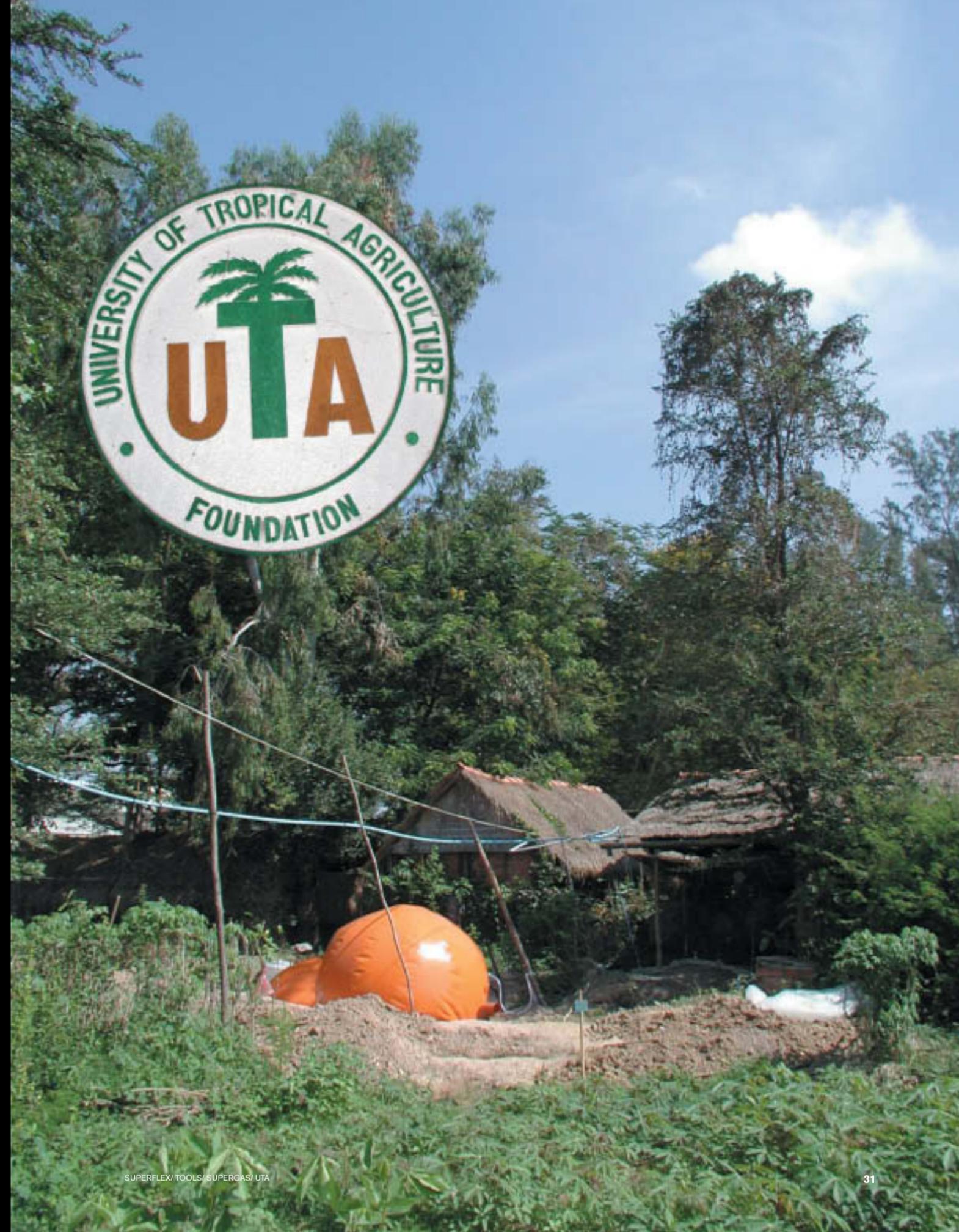
USER/
ARKEN MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

– acquired for the collection in 1999

Title: SUPERFLEX
Biogas in Africa, 1997

Mixed media: Balloon, 3 videos, 3 serigraphic prints, blueprint, photo-graph, table, aquarium, goldfish, chairs.

TOOLS/
SUPERSAUNA/

USER/
FRIENDS,
BERGEN

ORANGE SAUNA

USERS MANUAL
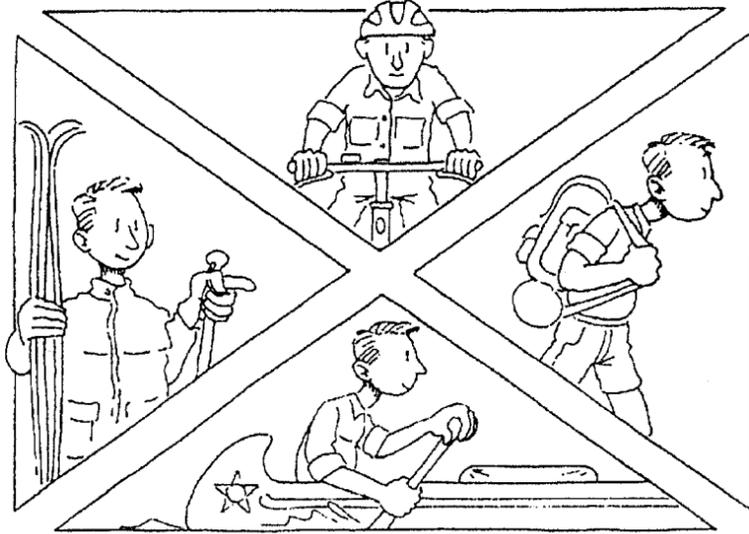
HELLO, AFTER A LONG TRIP IN THE NATURE I NEED TO RELAX IN MY ORANGE SAUNA. THIS IS HOW I PREPARE MY SAUNA
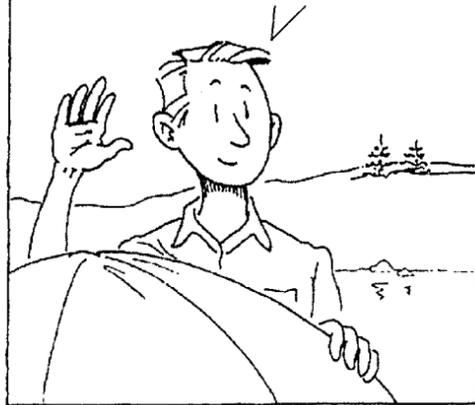
FIND A NICE PLACE WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A FIRE AND COLLECT STONES
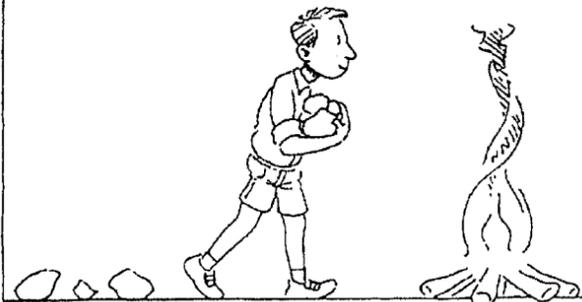
PUT THE STONES INTO THE FIRE AND START TO DIG A HOLE, IT SHOULD BE ABOUT 25 CM DEEP
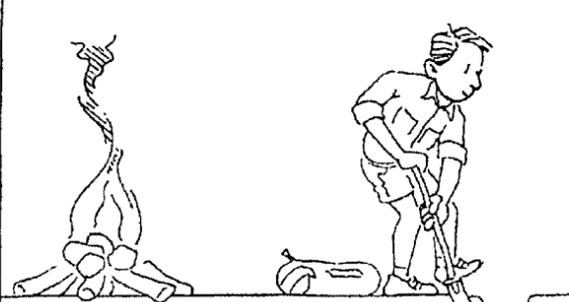
ARRANGE YOUR SAUNA

PUT THE GLOWING STONES IN THE HOLE AND PLACE THE SAUNA ON TOP

NOW YOU ARE READY TO ENJOY YOUR ORANGE SAUNA. POUR WATER ON THE STONES FREQUENTLY, THE SAUNA WILL BE FILLED WITH WARM STEAM

a product especially for scandinavian people

S
SUPERFLEX

USER/ FRIENDS, MØN

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERSAUNA/ MØN

USER/
COPENHAGEN
OFFICE,
THULE

USER/
GLOBAL TEKNO,
PARIS
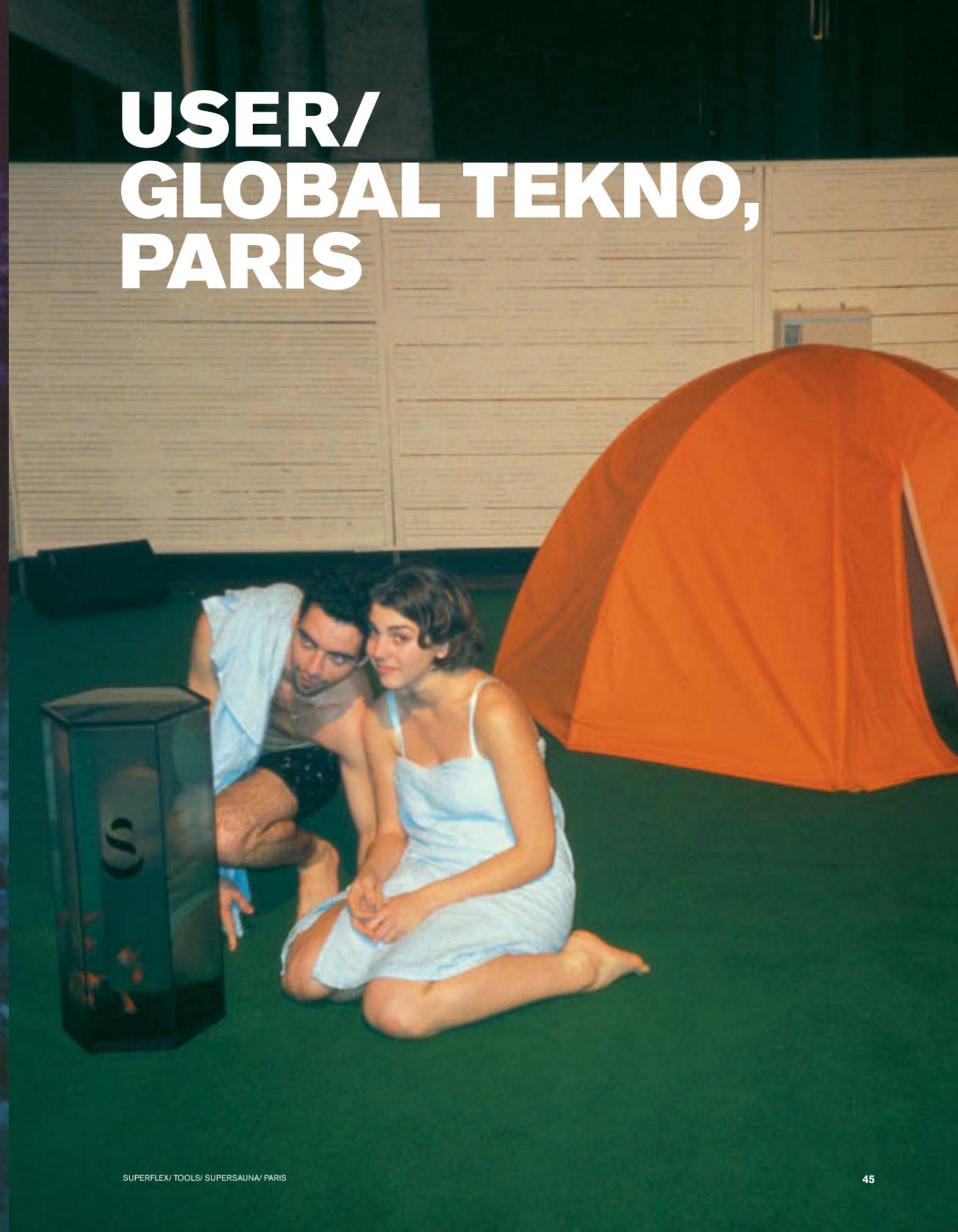
TOOLS/
SUPERCITY/
KARLSKRONA2/

This is a digital copy of the city of Karlskrona in Sweden. This copy is accessible to the citizens of the city via the internet, where digital representations of themselves (avatars) and the streets and buildings of the city centre create a virtual version of the structure and personal relationships in Karlskrona (the real city).

Karlskrona2 started as an exact replica of the city but as the virtual citizens meet and interact things have changed: the functions of buildings can be redefined, social hierarchies can change, laws can be reconstituted and renewed. The virtual Karlskrona is visible to the real city through a large-scale video projection in the main square. Here citizens gather in real space to follow the activities of their avatars and consider the divergences between Karlskrona and Karlskrona2

The project is designed as a research experiment, using the internet as a local network rather than a global communication tool. Karlskrona2 is a 'free space', in the sense of not having to obey the legal, economic or social rules of Karlskrona. At the same time, it is inhabited by at least part of the same community of individuals as the real city, bringing the challenges of virtual reality into the lives of neighbours and friends.

To what extent is it fulfilling individual or collective fantasies? To what extent does it conform to the pattern of Karlskrona? What new possibilities does the internet's 'free space' offer to an existing community?

K2 is a collaboration between SUPERFLEX and Architect Rune Nielsen.

SUPERFLEX in discussion with THE MODERN INSTITUTE
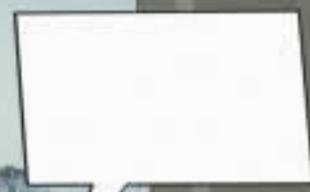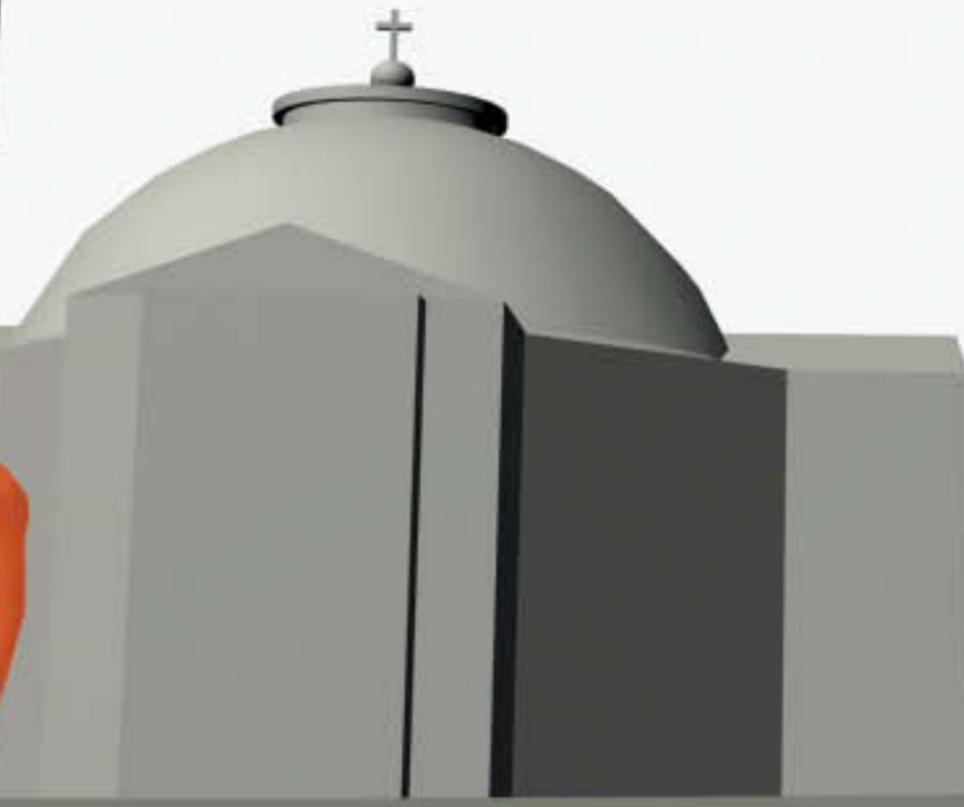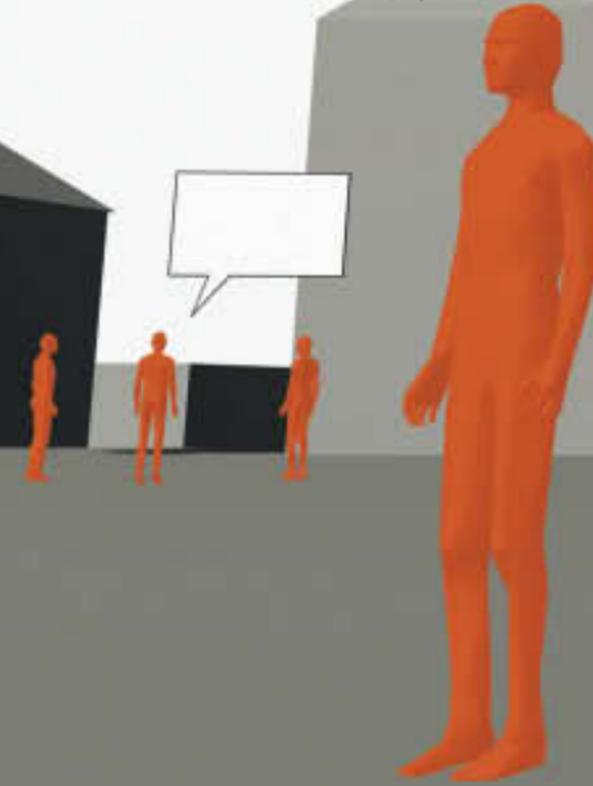
USER/
KIMSTER

USER/
HAMID

USER/
TROELS

This is me irl
and in k2 ...

USER/
SAMUEL
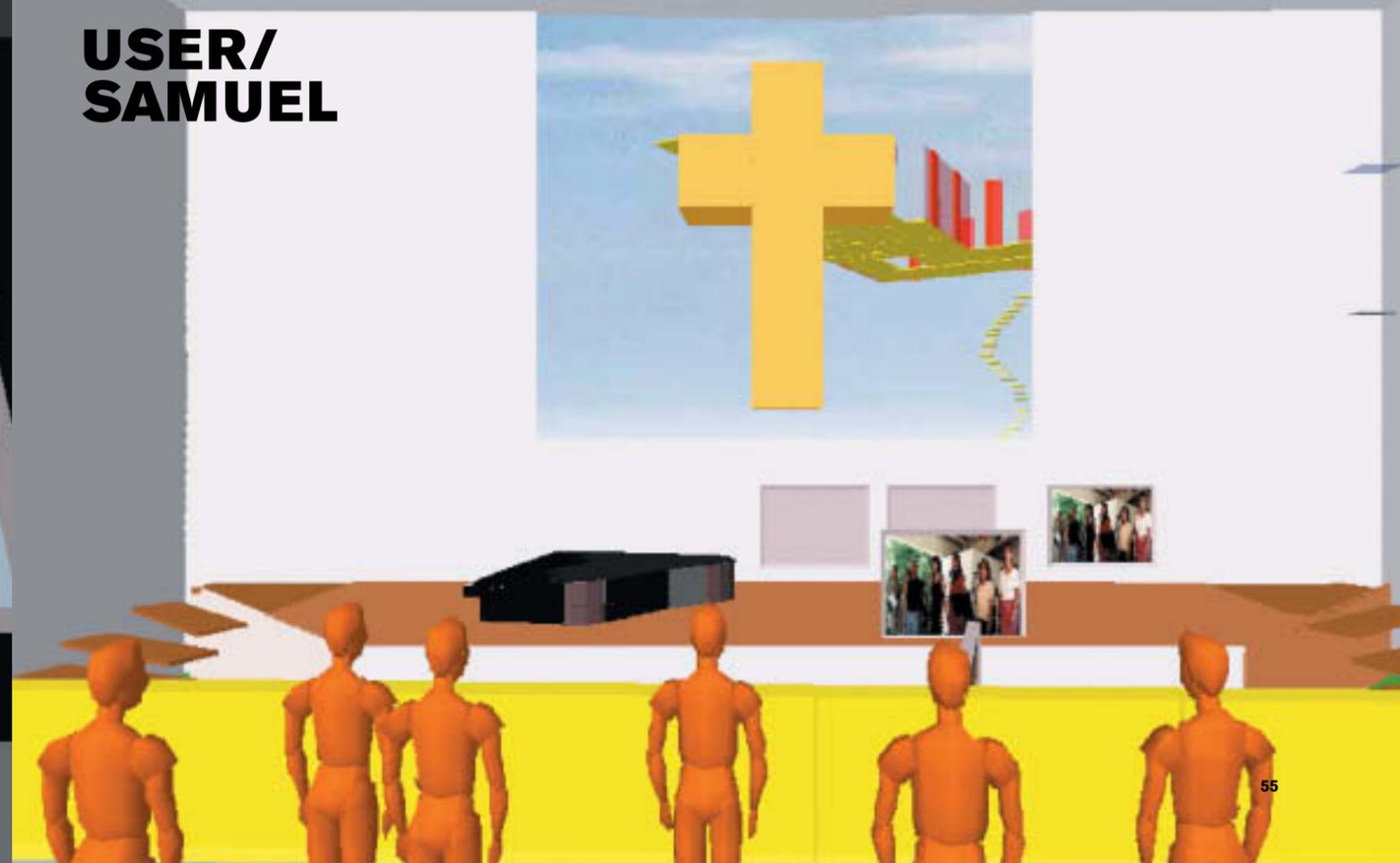
K2 CITYSCAPE
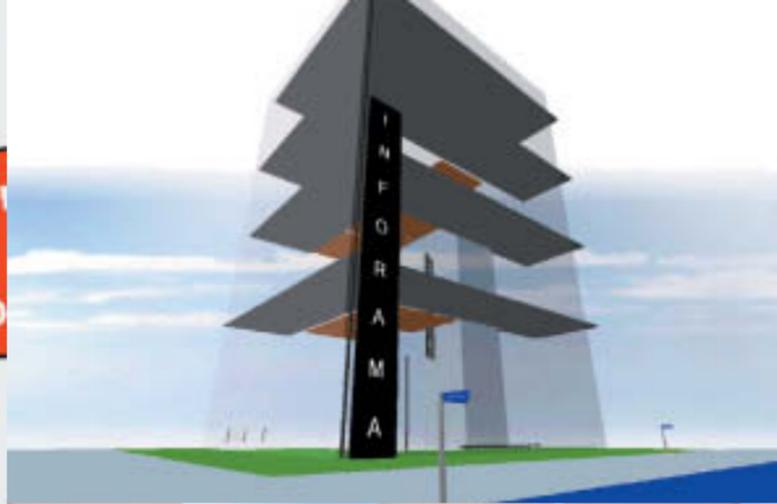
USER/ DZAP

USER/ TOBBE
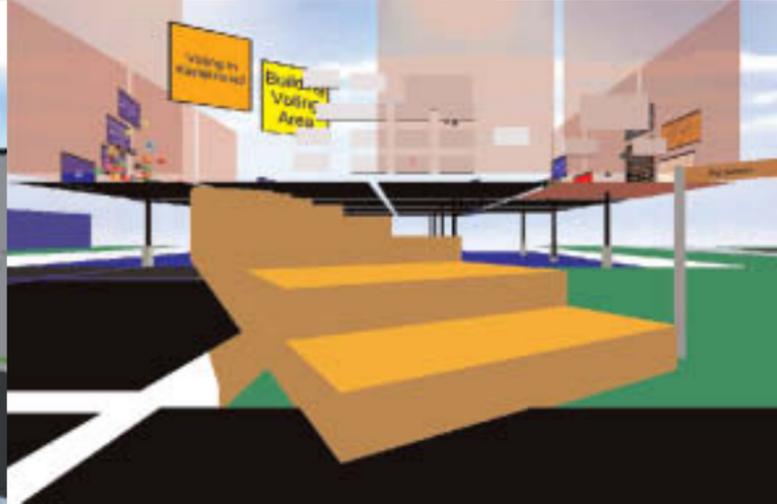
USER/ DZAP

USER/ TOBBE

K2 COUNCIL

USER/ COSMO KRAMER

USER/ DIZZY WHEELS

USER/ GABRIEL

USER/ DJ ERE

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERCITY/ KARLSKRONA2
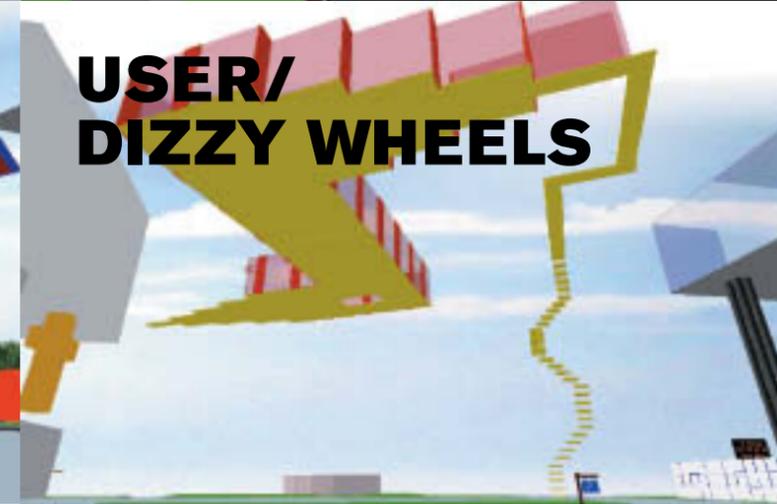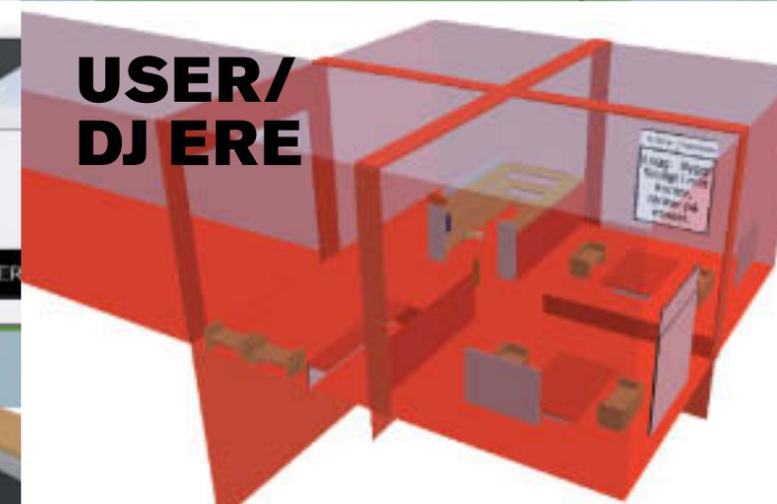
USER/
MATS JOHANSSON,
Mayor of Karlskrona

USER/
ARAGORN, K2 Mayor

My name is Martin Algo, but in K2 I am Aragorn. I am 16 years old and started to use K2 two years ago. Actually on the 23rd of June 2000 at 23:02 :-) I found the project very interesting and also it was free, which is very rare for virtual spaces. Anyway I continued using K2. On December the 3rd 2001 I was elected the second Mayor of K2 after Kimster. My task as mayor is to keep track of what is happening and to keep things in order. I clean up objects that are not functioning and I run the meetings. And I help those who need help. Right now I am busy with my assignment in school – it has to go well so I can get in to high school. But soon it's summer vacation and I can start to be more active in K2 again :-) /Martin

My name is Mats Johansson and I am the mayor of Karlskrona. To me this could become a democratic project – it could become a democratic project if we succeed in making it a platform for public participation as we are hoping. It could also become an anarchistic project, in that case it would have a different value. I am more worried if everybody keeps their mouths shut and remains calm than if we get a lot of silly proposals, awkward ideas, since I believe that it is these ideas that eventually have the potential to change our perceptions, to change the world. Eventually the silly ideas can be refined but I believe we need more of this to be able to open our eyes. This is where I see K2 could become an exciting arena.

If everything turns out the way I would like it to, in K2 and elsewhere, political leaders will function more as process leaders – initiative takers, coordinators, sparring partners and visionaries – than just as representatives of organisations, administrations and bureaucracy, which they are today.

I think there will be a lot of ideas in K2 that we can use in the work with the municipality, the communal planning process. And I think that eventually the two parallel cities will have some influence on each other. I have already seen this happen. We are planning new areas for living or housing in this city. In this planning process you can see that the professional planners have already adopted some of those methods in their planning. And I will say that was born in K2.

I hope that we have reached a time where we have an environment where it is allowed to think thoughts in this way and where we are able to be open and to embrace these ideas, to shake up and rethink already existing conventions.

If we can succeed in making this a reality chat then I am very pleased, and if we can make it a youth reality chat too then I am even more pleased since if there is anything that belongs to the future it's the youth, and if we can couple youth with something that is not exactly always very interesting, that is to say, 'communal planning', then I think we have really achieved a wonder.

But let's see what the process will bring and for once just say, we don't have all the answers, but let's just try it out …

(Transcription from video interview)

Isolationscelle for patienternes partnere

Mental Anstalt

Mental Anstalt

Mental Anstalt

Mental Anstalt

USER/
MARIT

Letter to the Mayor of Karlskrona from a Karlskrona2 Citizen. Personal Reflections and Suggestions for Measures to Activate the Project.

Dear Sir

My name is Marit and I am in a minority in Karlskrona2. There are not many immigrants with a background similar to mine: I am a woman and live together with my husband and child. At any rate I haven't met any others so far. But that doesn't bother me, on the contrary, because if K2 were filled with mothers around the age of 35 the project would have lost its main advantage, that is, the possibility of meeting and getting to know new people from different backgrounds and of different ages.

Every town and every person should have the chance to wander around in a virtual world, colliding with other people that you can then have all sorts of conversations or discussions with. It is fascinating to see how social structures are formed as new immigrants are integrated, how they develop between the people that actively inhabit K2 and leave their mark on it.

I would like to try to give you a picture of the spirit that pervades this project and that makes it so interesting that you, too, will wish you could take part in it. It's like a pioneering spirit, a love of exploration, a wonderful curiosity that leads to ideas and situations that you would never have thought possible. It can involve your feelings too, good and bad alike. Every time a new person arrives and is integrated into the group that already lives there, the whole situation changes. This leads to a kind of network, a network of social contacts.

When I logged in the first time, K2 was a grey place with a lot of visitors generally getting lost in it, not knowing what it was actually supposed to be or what it was for. But simply knowing that this was uncharted territory made me massively keen to explore it and to find some meaning in the whole thing. The result of that was that I kept logging on to K2 and soon I had got to know some people that I found interesting. Together we created a social structure and a part of K2 which we called Eastvillage. I didn't play a particularly large part in building Eastvillage but I did do a lot when it came to establishing a social structure in K2. I feel that a social structure is extremely important. Because that can create an atmosphere where new immigrants feel welcome and are shown around by some of the others who have already been there for a while. You can get help building things, you can find out about activities and new objects. The integration of new and old immigrants works best when the roles that you can choose are clearly allocated. Which also means that each person also accepts a certain responsibility for introducing others and for doing their best to see that they also come back time after time, just as each of us was introduced by other immigrants.

K2 is a project where freedom reigns. This freedom lies partly in the fact that new immigrants can choose for themselves how and what they want to build. But in a sense there are limits to this freedom because there is a superior avatar who can expunge improper or racist objects. The whole procedure is very democratic, specifically because it is based on the notion of freedom. There is a Council which meets in the evening every two weeks. But some immigrants feel that the democratic system is not running well enough. They say that it is difficult to get information and that there is a chance that some people may exert undue influence. But my response to that is simply to say that K2 did not come as a ready-made package, but that it was constructed over the summer and the autumn by all the people that had ideas and suggestions for it. And that only works if you do it like these immigrants do, that is to say, by discussing any deficiencies one might have noticed, and then trying to work together on the development and modification of the democratic process and its overall cohesion. K2 – is its immigrants. Without immigrants it would just be an empty stage and of no further value.

A part of this development process was the launching of the web paper Eastnews. I would like it to contain all the information that matters to the immigrants or to visitors to K2. It should contain background information on projects (in Swedish), information about SUPERFLEX, a presentation on Karlskrona, interviews, tips, articles by immigrants and help on how to proceed in a whole variety of situations, e.g. if one wants to build something. I feel that these articles don't

necessarily have to be about K2 itself. The criterion should be that the author is either an immigrant or a tourist in K2. The idea is to tempt people to explore K2 and awaken their interest in possibly immigrating themselves. There are all sorts of activities that could help to increase the number of immigrants. I could put together a list of these ideas and later draw the connection between these ideas and the course of events.

This suggestion is made in the hope that when this project has carved out a place for itself as a community and our IT laws have had an effect on the whole town, that K2 would have its own unmistakable IT profile in Sweden. The construction and development of a virtual Karlskrona would be perfectly suited to that, after all what town has such a perfect background and a completely newly created atmosphere?

Centre: When you log in to K2 you find yourself in a cold, sterile centre. These days people are totally stressed out and need a moment to catch their breath, before they can properly take in information and what is happening. I think that we lose a lot of visitors because of our featureless centre. There are two ways that this problem could be solved. Firstly the centre could have a new lay-out. The buildings that are there just now should stay of course, but since there are interesting organisations and enterprises in these buildings in Karlskrona, there should be access to these buildings in K2 and the possibility of using them. There should also be help with building new objects so as to be more appealing to new users.

But the option that I would prefer and which I think would fit in well with the spirit of K2, would be a centre purely for information, without advertising or buildings. This is where changes would have to be made. Information presented in the centre could encourage people to wander around more in K2, perhaps inspiring them to immigrate or at least to log in again.

People's interest could be aroused by videos, readings, questionnaires, participation in the democratic process where opinions are conveyed via forms or websites. All the information presented in the centre should tempt people to visit other places in K2 where you could read more about a particular theme or come across new things that might interest one.

The Karlskrona Community Council should have its own building where you would have access to links and information about everything that is happening in Karlskrona. This could be put together from existing material, but the Community's own website should have a new lay-out, one suited to a town with the IT that Karlskrona has.

HE College: "Research activities at the College are notable for their commitment to IT and close collaboration with business and society. While the main emphasis is as yet on technology, IT is an ever-expanding area of research, also in the Humanities. The Humanities and a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach are paramount in the College's activities." Thus the mission statement of the Blekinge Tekniska Högskola.

The College could raise its profile by putting up a building

of its own in K2, providing information as well as a venue for films and discussions. If they wanted, students and teachers could meet to discuss group projects and other questions. Information could be available on courses and any other relevant matters.

Another idea would be to set up a college in K2 itself.

Information centre: an infohouse would be a great idea.

The involvement of the media for educational purposes: they could present films, photos and other ideas in the infohouse. The media could be offered guided tours of K2 and they could be asked to think how this virtual world could be developed and at the same time how it could help to promote their own projects. The same could be done for the College: a house with different rooms for presenting video-clips, images and links to existing websites.

There could be an internet cafe in the house, where people could log in to K2, as well as a TV screen showing the centre, where you could follow conversations that are happening in particular places. For example, where everyone starts. All the people who smoke stay there and have to be informed as to whether others can follow their conversations.

Societies: An approach could be made to different societies offering them a guided tour through K2 plus information on the project. They could be invited to build something and to put out information in K2 on their society. A society could present itself with a music or video clip.

A new music society has been set up in Karlskrona. It is called Elwerket. The object of Elwerket is to work with 'alternative' electronic music and electronic art and to put on evening performances of electronic compositions.

Our evenings take place in 'Porslinan' in Karlskrona, and we hope that we will also be able to organise something in Ronneby.

The core group in Elwerket consists of students from the college in Karlskrona/Ronneby. The idea of founding a society like Elwerket came from Electrovalvet in Trollhättan and Code2 in Västerås.

Culture: There are cultural initiatives aplenty in Blekinge that could be involved in this project. They could all use K2 if there were a reasonably large house for cultural events where everyone would have the chance to present their work. In Blekinge there is already a cultural network that could simply be extended to K2. The people already working in that network could also be offered a guided tour; subsequently discussions could be held with them about ideas and developments.

These are just some of the ideas and thoughts that I have about the K2 project and which I would like to take further. I hope that they may contribute to the thinking around the project and its future development.

Yours sincerely

Marit Hakkala

SUPERCITY/
WOLFSBURG2/
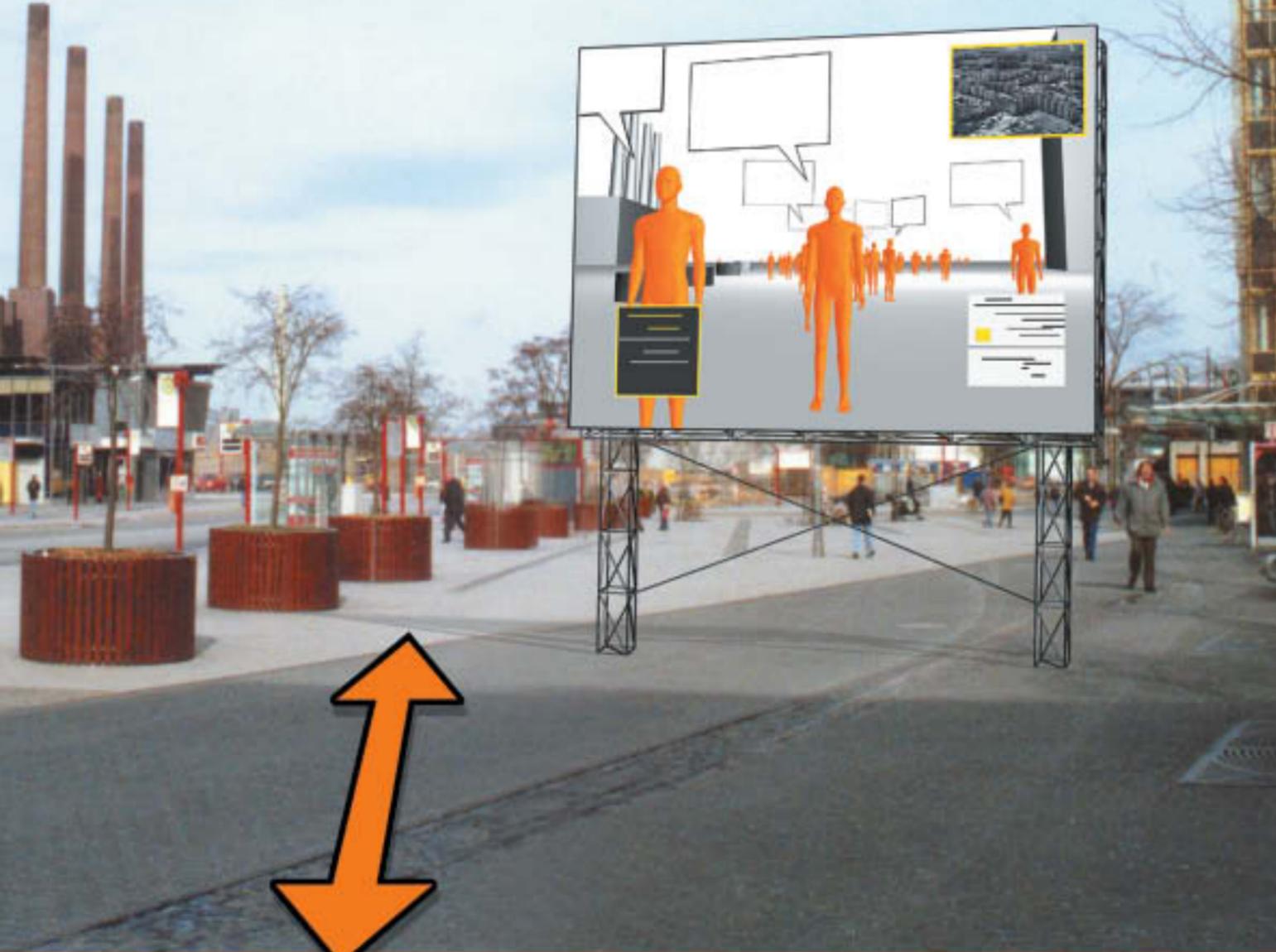
A similar project was also implemented in Wolfsburg, Germany.

TOOLS/
SUPERCHANNEL/

SUPERCHANNEL is a network of local studios used by people and communities as a discussion forum, presentation medium and a physical gathering place. It is a tool that enables one to produce internet TV directly engaging users in the creation and evolution of content.

SUPERCHANNEL is a growing number of channels producing their own interactive TV programmes on the internet. During live productions the viewers can communicate directly through a chat with the producer and with other viewers. All productions are archived, so viewers can continue to watch and discuss them.

The first SUPERCHANNEL started as an experiment in a gallery space in Copenhagen. The second studio was opened in a tower block in Liverpool. Since then more than 20 studios have been opened in very different locations.

SUPERCHANNEL is a collaboration between SUPERFLEX and Sean Treadway.

USER/
FIRST
SUPERCHANNEL

USER/
CORONATION
COURT

In the 50's and 60's the tower block proposed an exciting new model for living – housing for the masses in chic and comfortable streets in the sky. Half a century later, its cachet of modernity evaporated, the tower block – in Britain at least – is largely considered a failed utopian experiment.

Coronation Court – Liverpool's oldest tower block. Located in a Liverpool suburb, some seven miles from the city centre. Ten floors high, with ninety residents in 104 dwellings, linked by labyrinthine corridors and stairwells. Whilst some people think the block is ugly, cumbersome and inaccessible, those who live in it are passionate about their home.

The site is about to undergo a major refurbishment, and its occupants will move out temporarily to other sites around the city. When the Housing Action Trust first discussed this redevelopment, one of the primary concerns that residents had was to keep the community together. This has been the impetus for a partnership between FACT's Collaboration Programme and the HAT that will create a series of new media projects with tenants.

Coronation Court is now the site of the UK's first SUPERCHANNEL, involving tenants in producing shows about their lives, their homes and their community for global broadcast – from debates about the future of high-rise living to online, from campaigns for tenant rights to tea dances. More importantly than this, the SUPERCHANNEL presents residents with a set of new media tools with which to maintain and develop their community links and to influence decision-making about their future.

The HAT and FACT are now working together to get each of Liverpool's remaining tower blocks onto the web, so that Coronation Court will be just one community within a larger online community. Eventually each block will have its own web-cast facilities, so this SUPERCHANNEL will be a prototype, the communications model for every tower block in the city.

USER/
SUPA MIKES
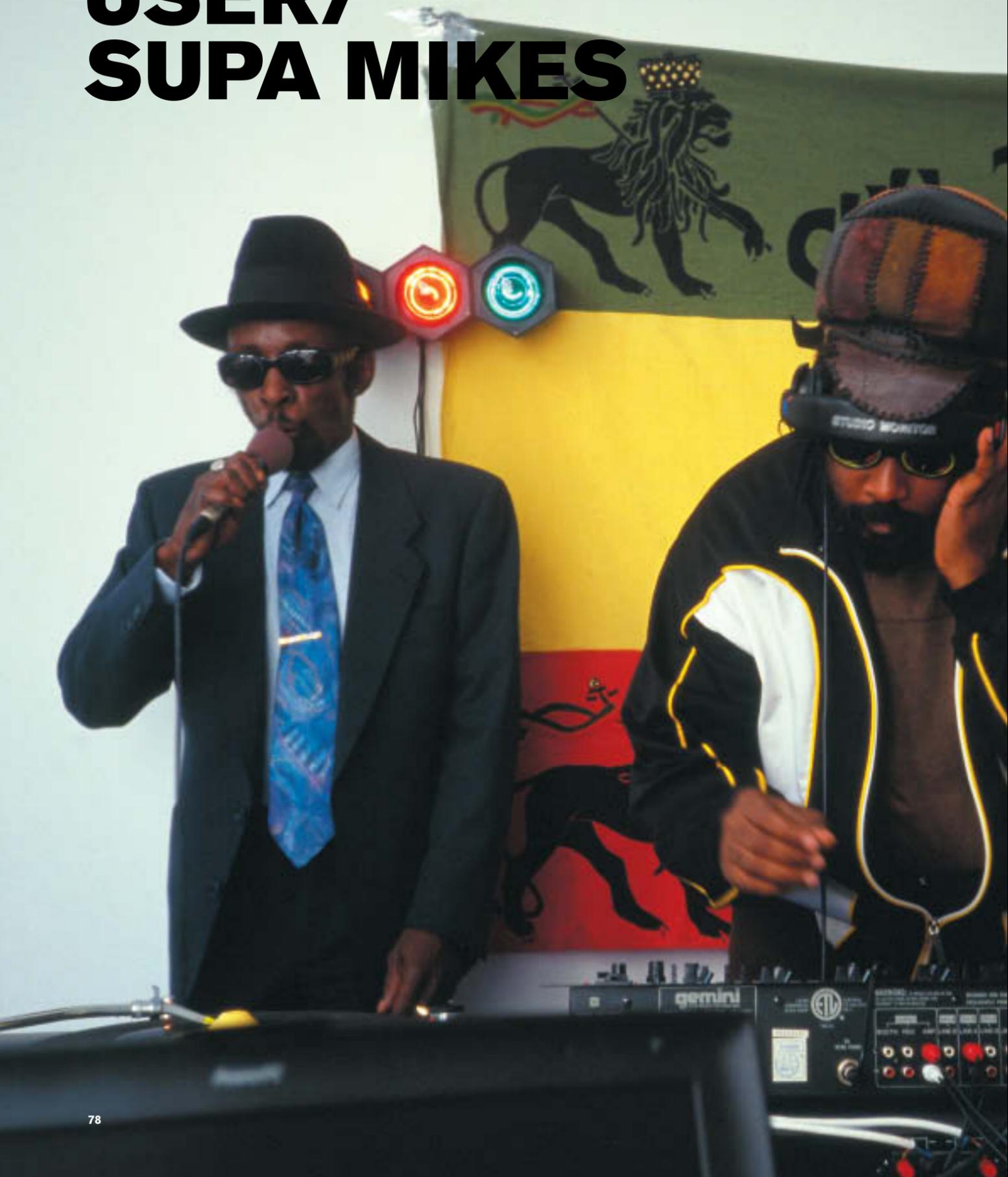
"Also, I wanna tell you that you're tuned into www.superchannel.org and we're in the studios of Situflex 11B Blaagaardsgade, and this is a show where you can interact, so, for the people that get – you know – feel like, you know, ya' like the vibes, and things like that, that become cut up – stay tuned, you get cut up again, and I'm going to tell you something, you interact with ME, that you can go on your keyboard, you can go into the chat room, and TYPE on your computer, and ask me any question you WANT, or you can tell me anything you wanna tell me … Right about now we was tuning into Don Penn, and we're going to continue with Don Penn, and a thing called, No, No, No, for all you reggae fans all over the world, if ya' calling in from Brazil, Ecuador, talking about Germany, I'm also talking about Scandinavia, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark where we're sending from, this is … Don Penn." (Music)

USER/
OLGA AND KATH

"THE RECYCLED TEENAGERS"

Beans on toast and DJing in the studio: during Tenantspin's visit to Copenhagen when they met up with other elderly groups in Denmark.

USER/
SITUFLEX

The Situflex Studio is established as an experimentation platform. It's an open studio which invites groups/ individuals to participate. The Situflex Studio is a place from where people can launch their own channel and is the demonstration site for the SUPERCHANNEL concept.

USER/ EUROPA?

The studio was an open access situation focusing on the current political and democratic developments in Europe. The channel was hosted by Kunsthalle Wien. Groups, institutes or individuals that have a specific interest in the discussion could broadcast from here.

"We invite you to participate in the discussion either through direct inter-action during live shows, the discussion groups, or by making your own show. We also invite you to use the SUPERCHANNEL studio at Kunst-halle Wien in the period 25 May until 17 September for your own activities and to get the experience of webcasting ..."

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ SUPERCHANNEL/ EUROPA?

Make your own internet TV channel
www.superchannel.org

Name of channel

Description of channel

Reason for channel?

Your email

USER/
THE MODERN CHANNEL

The Modern Channel is an open access web TV station for live performance currently based at the Fruitmarket Gallery in Edinburgh. The channel is programmed by local musicians and performers. All live performances are free and open to the public.

WANTED

DJ'S
EXPERIMENTAL AUDIO
DISCUSSION GROUPS
LIVE BANDS
LIVE ACTS TO PERFORM IN PUBLIC FO

SUPERCHANNEL

PERFORMERS
ANYSTYLE

MC'S

WWW.SUPERCHANNEL.ORG

between 10th June - 19th July

F YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE YOUR OWN BROADCAST

CONTACT: tv@moderninstitute.demon.co.uk

or Fruitmarket Gallery 0131 225 2383

USER/
ECHIGO-TSUMARI
CHANNEL

The Echigo-Tsumari Channel is run jointly by six small cities in Nigata region of Japan to promote their cultural significance. The studio is based in one of these cities, Tokamachi.

May – July 2002 – all shows 2pm

LIVERPOOL HIGH RISE TENANTS GROUP (HRTG) INTERNET TV CHANNEL

tenantspin

Wed 22 May	DOUBLE ACT	Significant Selves - continued series looking at HAT tenants' lives
Wed 29 May	HRTG	High Rise Tenants Group - exclusive elections update
Wed 5 June	GREY PANTHERS	Pensioners' activism and 50 years of the Liverpool - Cologne twinning
Tues 11 June	HOW TO BE AN ARTIST	Bill Drummond & tenants in an exclusive live discussion
Wed 12 June	WAYS OF SEEING 3	Tenants chat with Static Gallery's Paul Sullivan about the Liverpool Biennial
13-16 June	SPIN ON TOUR	tenantspin live from New York's New Museum of Contemporary Art
Wed 19 June	WRITING ON THE WALL	Collaboration with Liverpool's literary festival and Brookside script writers
Wed 26 June	WORLD CUP SPECIAL	In the Net - on the air straight after the second semi-final
Thur 27 June	ARCHITECTURE WEEK	Sequel to last year's Towers of Joy show on the Woolton sculpture
Wed 3 July	HRTG	High Rise Tenants Group - the Childwall Compact
Wed 10 July	WAYS OF SEEING 4	Tenants in conversation with an artist from the Liverpool Biennial
Wed 17 July	OH, OH, SHEVEN!!	The shteamy sheductive Sean Connery look-a-like, Nick Richmond
Wed 24 July	SUPPERCHANNEL	Ready, steady, scran! Big tasty bytes, chips with everything & a chocolate mouse

Tune in at www.tenantspin.org
Look out for Friday broadcasts at 2.00pm

USER/ TENANTSPIN

Liverpool high rise tenants' group internet TV Channel. Tenantspin is a studio managed by and for tenants of Liverpool's Housing Action Trust in collaboration with the Foundation for Art & Creative Technology.

Tenantspin aims to promote resident participation in regeneration and social housing issues through constructive debate, the sharing of experiences and the encouragement of responsible free speech.

Launched in March 2001, Tenantspin webcast – long shows minimum once a week, looking at issues such as rent increases, resident participation and technology, landlords, demolition, the built environment, high-rise living, regeneration and beans on toast.

Everything that you see on Tenantspin has been developed, produced and promoted by tenants. That means research, camera work, computer operation, publicity, presentation, training and studio management!

USER/
TENANTSPIN/
NEW MUSEUM, NEW YORK
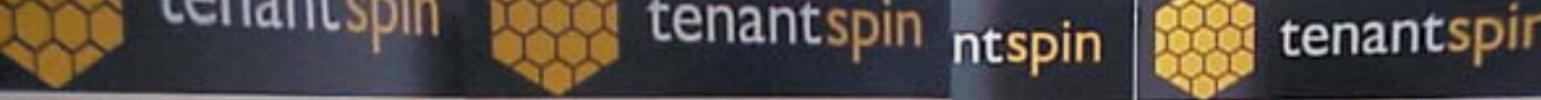
USER/ MOONCHANNEL

Broadcast from the 5th. International Bienniale in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. – Live from April the 17th – 27th 2001.

The studio was open for any visitor or artist at the Bienniale. Studio-manager Christoffer Bruun produced, in collaboration with various persons, more than 25 shows during 10 days covering poetry, architecture, happenings, talkshows, Sharjah sight seeing etc. The project was combined with an pictorial studio environment created by the Danish painter Stig Brøgger, the Danish sculptor Øivind Nygaard and the Danish graphic artist Annemette Larsen. The project was curated by Dorte Dahlin.
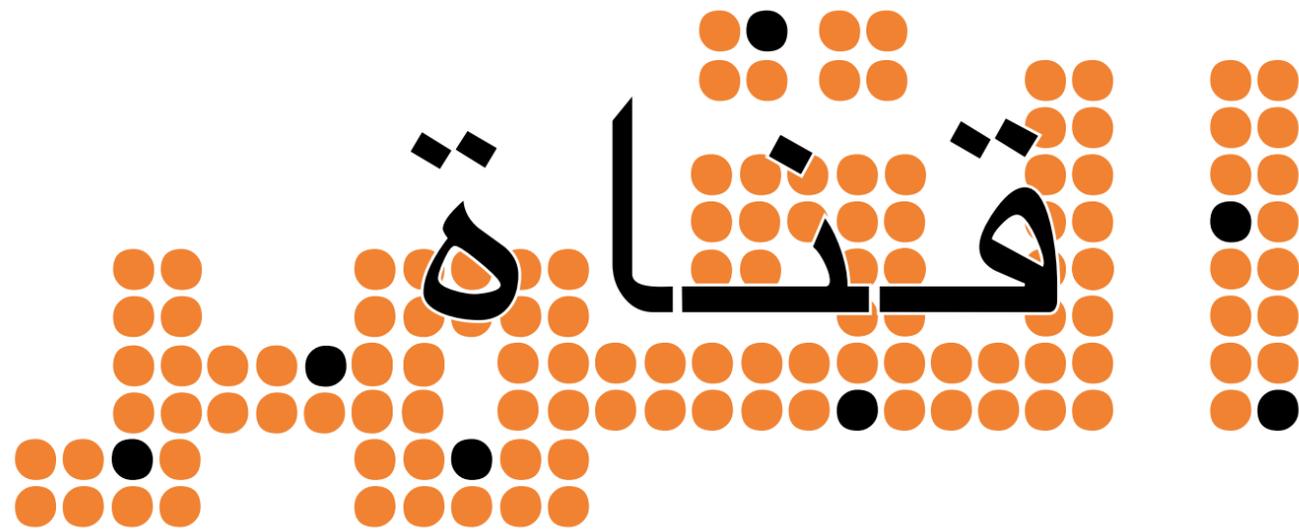
USER/
PUSH-bbC

WWW.SUPERCHANNEL.ORG

PROPOSE YOUR OWN INTERNET TV CHANNEL

NAME OF CHANNEL

Push bbC (bbC=Berlin Balkan Connection)

DESCRIPTION OF CHANNEL

Who is it? Push bbC is an association from Berlin witch connects people for cultural exchange. The association works close together with organisations in other European countries, particularly the countries of former Yugoslavia Push bbC creates a network from within and due to common projects arises. The projects are chiefly realised with people on the goal face, especially in the spheres of audio, video, Internet and music.
The first steps in former Yugoslavia - Push bbC organises the installation of altogether 3 studios in different cities in former Yugoslavia.

First channels are:

Sarajevo in cooperation with WUS
Zagreb in cooperation with MAMA
Belgrade in cooperation with REX
Berlin - in Berlin Push bbC has established a coordinating studio (recording)

REASON FOR CHANNEL

Why Yugoslavia? The aim is a network for cultural cooperation that will be used by all e[...]cal groupings. The possibilities, which are given by using superchannel, accelerate the int[...]tion of the complex innerethnic situation. In spite of the background of single people, the studio is used in a creative and productive way, in witch the multicultural atmosphere can have their various expressions and be revived in a positive way. The activities from the studio should bring up an enlarged communication between the different ethnic groups. For young people the offer shall improve also the possibility to express and the consciousness for responsibility by realising own projects.

Cause and effect in and around the studio. The main emphasis is not based on the camera of superchannel, but on the interaction.
The people from the respective studios will organize happenings, such as Workshops (new media, video and film, music) exhibitions (for modern art, light and video installations), communication centre (meetings, discussion, project developments).
All this creates an interaction platform in and around the studio, which sets the cause for moving people up closer again.

YOUR NAME

Push bbC

YOUR E-MAIL

push-intervibes@gmx.[...]

USER/
KANAL 11

The installation was acquired for the GfZK Collection 2001 (Leipzig).

KANAL11 is an internet channel which was installed to broadcast events from the gallery and permits live discussions with participants outside the gallery. But mainly it is intended to be a place for an engagement with art. It was formed after the model of SUPERCHANNEL which can be used and bought by different groups and institutions. When it was bought by GfZK it was given the name KANAL11 which is derived from GfZK's address.

GfZK have been using KANAL11 for broadcasting their activities but also to form a link to the gallery's exhibitions and programme. It is also supposed to link the institution with its surroundings. The channel works as a mobile unit which is stationed in the gallery for the time being and serves as an instrument for discussing the various facets of institutional work. Once a month there will be guests from politics, economy and culture invited into GfZK to talk about their work. Political, economical and social aspects will be discussed as well as the subjective perception of the participants.

98

99

USER/
TRAPHOLT
SUPERTEENS

SUPERTEENS is an internet TV channel that was created and managed by a group of teenagers during the exhibition Pyramids of Mars in 2001 at the Trapholt Museum of Modern Art, in Kolding, Denmark. The group designed the identity and created the physical space of the studio.

During the exhibition 56 very different programmes where produced. The first show on this channel was "Tøzeznak – Tøzens krop" followed by "Tøzeznak – Teenagetalk". These two shows give a good picture of the profile of this channel – they can be found in the archive.

USER/
SUPEREUKABEUK

Chiang Mai Art Museum proudly presents SuperEukabeuk TV, a web-based independent TV channel. SuperEukabeuk TV is initiated by the working group of Eukabeuk, Chiang Mai Social Installation, a public art event organised by Chiang Mai based artists and cultural workers with the aim of integrating contemporary art in unconventional spaces around the cities of Chiang Mai area. The Eukabeuk team collaborated with SUPERCHANNEL to create an independent TV station in the website in order to provide public access to independent media, and broadcast their independent voices to both local and international community. Our idea is to give the public more access to media for people from every group of interests. It will start to broadcast during the event, "Follow the Footsteps of Traditional Craftmen (Sala)", organised by the Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University, the CMU Art Museum in cooperation with the City of Chiang Mai on the 10th April, 2002.

The Chiang Mai Art Museum is approaching the notion of making the museum a place for a cultural-together learning process as well as a place that can prepare resources for net-work of people to develop their own cultural definitions in relation closely to value of life, and believe, it is important that the Chiang Mai Art Museum has to have its own media. These will gather together all artists, social projects, and some new invention of cultural ideas, and their outcomes in the northern province of Thailand as well as from other parts of the country.

Cultural activists will be presenting their projects in the museum and also give us their project motivations, and ideas – then we will keep them as the museum archive. All activitists are welcome to use this channel – no matter they are individuals or groups. This channel will also be a place that people can create some online projects in art. And it also will help supporting the E-Learning project in art and culture of the Department of Fine Arts, and other departments. Other cultural projects from other universities in the northern province are welcome to this channel as well.

SuperEukabeuk TV locates at the 1st Floor of CMU Art Museum. Participants of the SuperEukabeuk TV consisted of different groups of community including craftmen, Midnight University Project, theater groups, NGOs Upper Northern Area network, artists/art students with their initiatives TV programs to name a few. The opening will be a presentation of the project, and the introduction of the on-going activities which will run regularly during the three months period.

For those who are interested in voicing their opinion and wants to participate in this project both with live broadcast and/ or archive, pls. feel free to contact A. Uthit Atimana, Narumol Thammapruksa at the museum during office hours. For further information about the SuperEukabuek TV pls. visit the website WWW.SUPERCHANNEL.ORG and WWW. CMU – MUSEUM.org Office Hour ; 9.30 – 5 p.m. everyday except Mondays and Holidays.

ซุปเปอร์
อึกกะบึก - ทีวี
WWW.SUPERCHANNEL.ORG
SUPER
EUKABEUK-TV
WWW.SUPERCHANNEL.ORG

USER/
3M

Channel 3M is situated at Villa Maria, one hour's drive from Turin, Italy.

The studio is run and organised by a group of young immigrants from Morocco. 3M is a reference to the national Moroccan TV channel 2M.
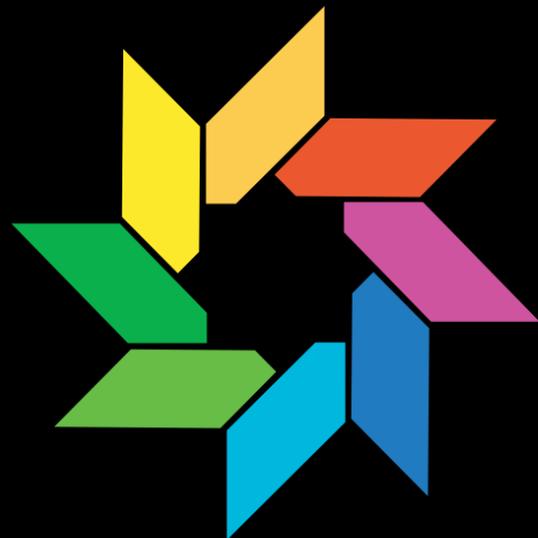
USER/
ABOUTTV

About**TV** is a non-profit, web-cast station, based in Bangkok, Thailand, developed by About Art Related Activities (AARA) in collaboration with SUPERCHANNEL.

About**TV** aims to function as an open platform for local people and communities to produce and participate in the production and broad-casting of interactive Internet TV. The contents of About**TV** focuses on interrelated issues and various disciplines in the field of contemporary art and culture in Thailand and reflects current issues and movements in both the local and the international art scene.

TOOLS/
SUPERTOOL/

SUPERTOOL is a set of parameters based on SUPERFLEX's existing working methods. These parameters act like kernels that can be used as a starting point for different users. Users draw on the parameters as an open source for different activities

SUPERCOLOURS – the first parameter for SUPERTOOL has been defined by SUPERDESIGN (a collaboration between Koch&Täckman and SUPERFLEX)

SUPER-COLORS.

SUPER-ORANGE.

PANTONE	PANTONE 165
CMYK	C:0, M:65, Y:100, K:0
SCREEN	PANTONE N 4-03
	R:255, G:102, B:0
3M FOIL	SCOTCHCAL 100-14
	CONTROLTAC 100-14
RAL	RAL 2003
NCS	NCS S0585-Y50R

SUPER-WHITE.

PANTONE	-
CMYK	C:0, M:0, Y:0, K:0
SCREEN	PANTONE N 30-01
	R:255, G:255, B:255
3M FOIL	SCOTCHCAL 100-20
	CONTROLTAC 100-10
RAL	RAL 9016
NCS	NCS S0500-N

SUPER-BLACK.
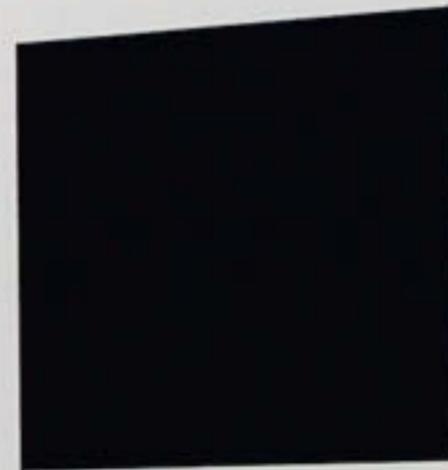
PANTONE	PANTONE BLACK
CMYK	C:50, M:50, Y:50, K:100
SCREEN	PANTONE N 30-06
	R:0, G:0, B:0
3M FOIL	SCOTCHCAL 100-22
	CONTROLTAC 155-32
RAL	RAL 9004
NCS	NCS S0585-Y50R

USER/
4-TRACK DEMONS

SUPER-
ORANGE.

SUPER-
WHITE.

SUPER-
BLACK.

PANTONE
CMYK
SCREEN

3M FOIL

RAL
NCS

PANTONE 165
C:0, M:65, Y:100, K:0
PANTONE N:4-03
R:255, G:102, B:0
SCOTCHCAL 100-14
CONTROLTAC 180-14
RAL 2003
NCS S0585-Y50R

PANTONE
CMYK
SCREEN

3M FOIL

RAL
NCS

PANTONE
CMYK
SCREEN

3M FOIL

RAL
NCS

PANTONE BLACK
C:30, M:40, Y:00, K:100
PANTONE 1C30 IR
R:2, G:2, B:2
SCOTCHCAL 100-30
CONTROLTAC 100-30
RAL 9006
NCS S3085-Y50R

Hey! I was visiting Rooseum on your pre-vernissage in March, and I even saw a pro-gramme about it on television today. The thing that hit me back then and again today with the SUPERFLEX colour project is that these colours, orange, white, black are exactly the colours that we have chosen for our rock band, 4-Track Demons. It started with an orange guitar and a white drum-set, then white overalls and an orange, white, black record cover. When people talk about the fact that the new Rooseum should be open for more than fine arts – like music – it's not strange to come up with the idea of collaboration. I'm not quite sure if it's within the framework of what you're thinking of doing, but for our part we would really like to go down to Malmø and do some-thing in your room with our orange, white, black band. If you want to know what kind of music we are playing you can visit our homepage, where it's possible to download tracks. There are three of us, guitar, bass, drums, and vocals, and we play rock music with references to Velvet Underground and PJ Harvey. Well, look and listen and see what you think, and please let us know if you'd like more information.

Jan Risheden, 4-Track Demons

LUK BARSE-BÄCK

BJØRNSTJERNE CHRISTIANSEN / JAKOB FENGER / RASMUS KOCH / RASMUS NIELSEN / PULSK RAVN / ADRIAN TÄCKMAN

USE THE SUPERTOOL

The supercolors are the first parameters of the supertool. You are invited to use the supertool for your idea or project.
Your proposal will be integrated in the supertool room at Rooseum - Center for contemporary art in Malmö and be part in the further development of supertool.

SEND YOUR PROPOSAL TO:

Rooseum / The Supertool (www.supertool.dk)
Gasverksgatan 22 / Box 4097 / S-20312 / Malmö

SUPER-ORANGE.

PANTONE	PANTONE 165
CMYK	C:0, M:65, Y:100, K:0
SCREEN	PANTONE N4-03
	R:255, G:102, B:0
3M FOIL	SCOTCHCAL 100-14
	CONTROLTAC 180-14
RAL	RAL 2003
NCS	NCS S0585-Y50R

SUPER-WHITE.
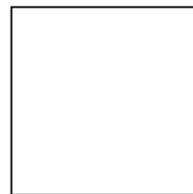
PANTONE	-
CMYK	C:0, M:0, Y:0, K:0
SCREEN	PANTONE N 36-01
	R:255, G:255, B:255
3M FOIL	SCOTCHCAL 100-20
	CONTROLTAC 180-10
RAL	RAL 9016
NCS	NCS S9000-N

SUPER-BLACK.

PANTONE	PANTONE BLACK
CMYK	C:50, M:50, Y:50, K:100
SCREEN	PANTONE N 36-06
	R:0, G:0, B:0
3M FOIL	SCOTCHCAL 100-22
	CONTROLTAC 155-32
RAL	RAL 9004
NCS	NCS S0585-Y50R

USER/ TOR+TOH

I found a short-story from the beginning of making shoes idea: me and Tor had spent the night together on the way back home after a hard party in Bangkok, suddenly I step on a whole big shit, it sound so bad, and the smell stuck on my shoes forever. Then after while we thought it would be nice if you are always hearing sound as stepping on the shit, or kind of that sound - and we had been searching for something to make a stepping on shit sound, but just found a funny sound-pipe, and talked to a guy (who repairs shoes with his mobile shoes box on street in BKK) but we didn't get our goal, and still attempt to find the right thing for this project, but whatever, it would be really nice if you just put this conversation in the book:

Late night on the way back home in Bangkok:

Tor: What did you just step on, Man!?
Toh: Well, I just don't know what, Oop! maybe...............
Tor: Ah! Stinky sound. ha ha!!

117

USER/
COPENHAGEN
BRAINS

The Random AudioBrain Player is an application which holds 3 audio players. Each player will at random pick an audiofile and loop it 3 times, then it will at random pick another (or the same) file. All 3 players are running simultaneously and will mix into each other. None of the players is in sync with either of the others. This makes the chance of the player repeating itself minimal, even with very few audio files. The visual design of Random AudioBrain Beta 0.1 follows the guidelines of SUPERTOOL/SUPERDESIGN.

The Files/ The audio files can be in any audio format (i.e. mp3, wav, aiff, etc.) and can be swapped at any time by Random AudioBrain user. The files can vary in length, level, style and origin. Random AudioBrain does not prefer any one file to any other.

The Concept/ The intention was to create a tool to compose pieces of audio: a tool with no preferences to audio other than what is available and with a very intuitive interface. Another focus was Copenhagen Brains' interest in the random factor regarding computing. By letting the computer 'decide' what to mix at random, the output will differ from more calculated compositions. This will force the user to use new strategies for working with audio

The sourcecode Random AudioBrain Beta is programmed in Visual Basic by Copenhagen Brains and is at the moment only available for Windows. The sourcecode and the application are released for free downloads on the websites of Copenhagen Brains and SUPERFLEX.

The Status/ Random AudioBrain is currently in a Beta 2.0 version.

USER/ COPENHAGEN OFFICE/

SUPERBLOCK

INTENTION

The aim of the project is to generate a building volume through a collective design process. SUPERBLOCK places the design process in the hands of the inhabitants – the users of the space. In today's building industry the architect, entrepreneur and the investor have the primary responsibility for the final design of a building. The dweller, whose involvement is usually limited to selection of floor tiles or appliances, now has the possibility to alter structural and rudimentary spatial configurations. SUPER-BLOCK creates the possibility for anyone to become his own entrepreneur, a designer as such, not of an isolated problem, but of a new collaborative spatial possibility. The development happens at a local volume as opposed to an overall space plan approach. Economically this is feasible, because each individual is designing smaller parts of a greater whole. SUPER-BLOCK has no one ideal user, but encourages a gamut of dwellers believing this contributes to a dynamic living unit. SUPERBLOCK is interested in the overlap of space, the space between the dwellers and how the participants react to this overlap. SUPERBLOCK is the diagrammatic point of departure for individual subprojects. Design parameters are tailored according to the specific requirements of the projects. SUPERBLOCK becomes a set of tools, provided by the parameters, which facilitates building but still remains open allowing for individual customisation. The user sets off constructing, however, he/she is quickly required to interact with neighbours to further build. Interaction is in the form of dialogue and is the only insurance of building progress. The first design parameter of SUPER-BLOCK is: DISCUSSION.

PARAMETERS

The SUPERBLOCK parameters are designed as spatial tools derived from SUPERTOOL. The medium for SUPERBLOCK is a specific volume subdivided into smaller spaces: Lumps. Each participant acquires a number of Lumps, and starts to freely position these within the volume, through discussion. No one individual can build in the volume before all participants have been selected.

1. DENSITY. The density of the overall building volume will be predefined. The number of participants depends on the amount of density this volume can obtain. The correct com-

bination of density to participants guarantees interaction and dialogue. The density ratio for a specific volume could be as follows:
20 % is specified for AIR (A).
60 % is specified for Built volume (B).
20 % is specified for Shared Space (S).

2. COLOURS. A maximum of three external colours include SUPERBLACK, SUPERWHITE and SUPERORANGE, set by the first parameter for SUPERTOOL. These colours can be used in any combination and any relation to each other. A maximum of three internal colours are specific to each individual and of the individual's own choice.

3. FACTOR X is the variable that ensures both the possibility for hybrid, shared spaces and an active participation amongst the dwellers. For example a multitude of diverse interests could create a hybrid spatial production.

PROJECTS

Two specific projects have been executed:
The virtual flat: SUPERBLOCK_01 and HOMEBASE, a new strategy for student housing. Future projects to be undertaken will be e.g. new homes for elderly people. The home in its variations is the selected building type for the first testprojects, however, SUPERBLOCK is not restricted to residential use.

The virtual flat: SUPERBLOCK_01 EXPERIMENT. SUPERBLOCK_01 is currently being tested in an Active Worlds virtual environment. This project provides the flexibility of working globally yet remaining site-specific. At SUPER-BLOCK_01 the dweller's wants and needs must include specific shared spaces, which have to be developed in agreement with neighbouring dwellers. It is in this manner that the volume is developed as one complete collaborative building. SUPER-BLOCK_01 is designed to encourage interaction where spaces collide and overlap. There is the possibility for unconventional use at the moments where hybrid spaces occur. The users affected by the overlap must negotiate the exact possibility of the space. http//:www.copenhagenoffice.dk/superblock

1   Most people have aspirations and dreams for a future and better home.

2   Through dialogue and interaction, the collection of individual aspirations becomed fused into an idea with one common goal. Individual desires are not compromised at the expense of the community.

3   The introduction of three parameters ensure the correct proportions, density and content. The parameters are meant to be refined according to

DENSI–

COLOUR

FACTOR X/CON–

compilation of

Individual ideas transform into three dimensional volumes, and common goals develops as (overlapping)shared spaces.

4   A structure is introduced into the project. Dialogue within the structure facilitates the building process .

5   The individual building projects are assimilated within the structure transforming into one communal project with

SUPERTOOL/
USER/
NAKYOUNG SUNG

USER/ SUPERDESIGN

SUPERDESIGN is a design entity consisting of SUPERFLEX and the design studio KOCH&TÄCKMAN. The main objective of SD is to create strict functional design based on the use of lateral parameters. This leads to a relative result defined from a certain number of regulative design parameters – a SUPERDESIGN tool.

In setting up the regulative design parameters SD focuses on creating a flexible and scalable character for the tool – ensuring maximum adaptability in any given circumstance – from micro to macro. Using the tool initiates a forum for amplified debate and discussion.

BOOK DESIGN.

BOOK DESIGN.

BOOK DESIGN.

BOOK DESIGN.

BOOK DESIGN.

BOOK DESIGN.

The TOOLS book is based on regulative design parameters such as flexible and scalable type specifications, text format specifications, grid and colour specifications – ensuring maximum adaptability and flexibility. The rational and functional nature of the design is intended above all to allow the project and the content of the book to speak for themselves, and ultimately to initiate future debate and discussion.

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Working agreement between Rooseum and SUPERDESIGN.

SUPER-DESIGN PROPOSAL
/ Identity programme for Rooseum.

WHITE PHASE

The who,
the why
and when

Through dialogues between the institution and SUPERDESIGN, a budget, time schedule and vision for the whole project will be set up.

White phase will involve research and requirement analysis in order to establish an overall design strategy.

Total sum - white phase
100.000,00 d.Kr.

ORANGE PHASE

Experimentation
Sketching
Innovation

Experimentation and sketching will take a major part of this phase.

Different ideas for logotypes, typefaces, colour usage and institutional logistics will be presented and test implemented.

Total sum - orange phase
100.000,00 d.Kr.

BLACK PHASE

Production
Implementation
Realisation

Production of the logo, corporate typefaces, correspondence material, signage and visitor related publications (e.g. posters, magazines, catalogues) etc.

Black phase concludes with a SUPERDESIGN Tool, setting up the parameters for further development of an institutional self-concept.

Date of presentation:
December 2001

Total sum - black phase
100.000,00 d.Kr.

RIGHTS AND OWNERSHIP.

All concepts and visual presentations remain the property of Super-Design.
Upon payment of all fees the services provided by

Super-Design under this agreement shall be for the exclusive use of Rooseum other than for the promotional use of Super-Design.

_____   _____
Date   Rasmus Koch / Super Design   Date   Charles Esche / Rooseum

Furniture concept for a SUPERCHANNEL studio consisting of three 1m³ cubes.

Each cube composed of 4 parts offers a variety of possibilities in establishing a flexible and iconographic studio environment.
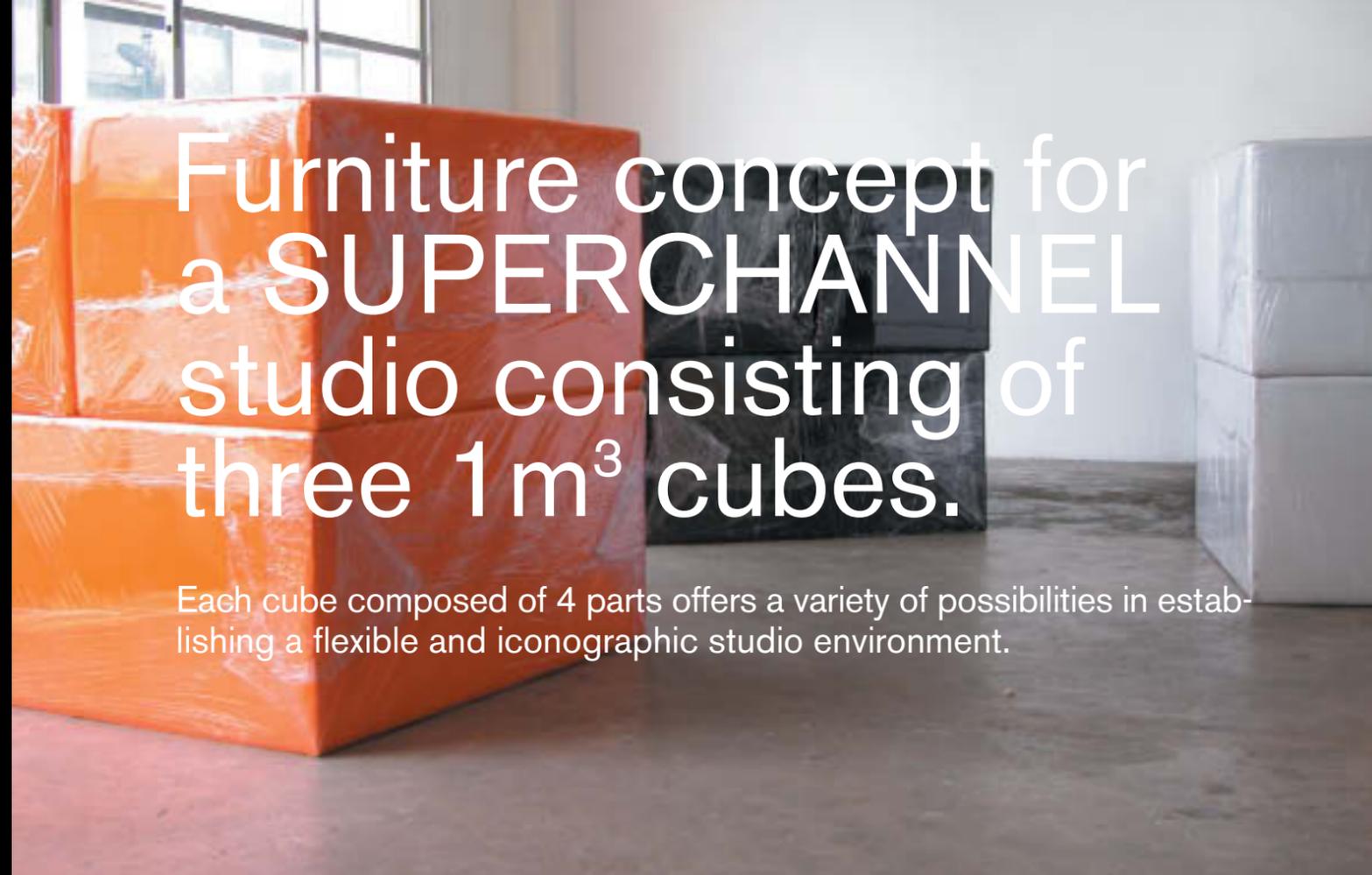
Koch&Täckman
Student workshops

The design studio Koch&Täckman have been using the SUPERTOOL at numerous workshops in Denmark and abroad. The workshops have ranged from producing basic communicative languages to simulated interactive communities. The workshops have been concentrating on social interaction as well as on solid craftsmanship.

SADNE

AGGRESSIVNESS

NEUTRALNESS

SURPRISEDN

SUPER EGO
APPLICATION
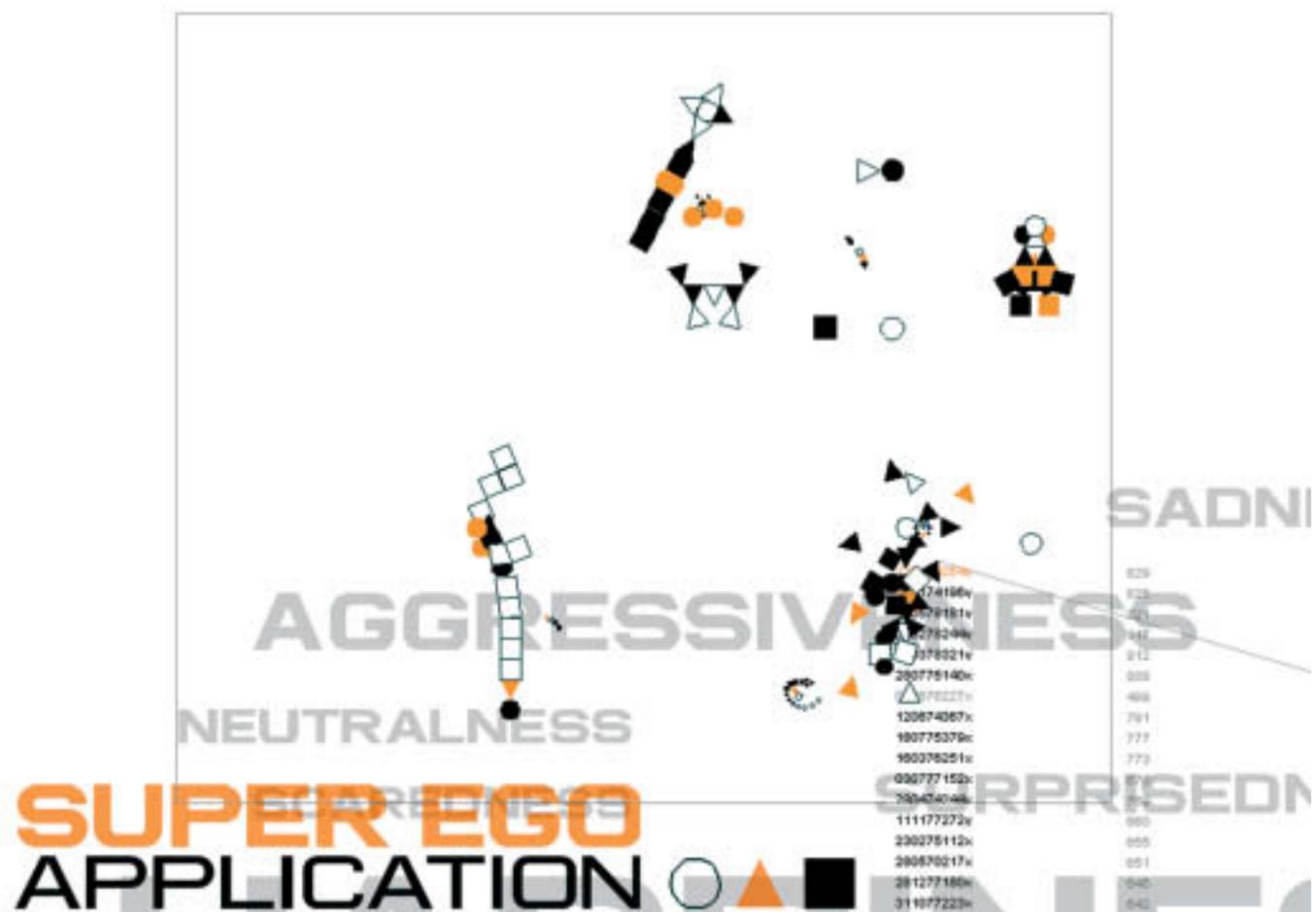
SUPERFLEX TOOLS + COUNTER-STRIKE

Exhibition at Rooseum, Malmö, 25.05 – 21.07 2002

Presentation of SUPERFLEX tools and various users. Furthermore a game cafe environment where people could play the computer game COUNTER-STRIKE and watch documentaries, fiction films about social and political change, where people have organised themselves collectively in order to achieve their aims. The exhibition was designed by SUPERDESIGN using the supertool parameters.

Photos : Vegar Moen

TOOLS/
SUPERCOPY/

BIOGAS PH5 LAMP/

The PH5 lamp designed in 1958 by Poul Henningsen is a glare free system of perfectly formed graduated reflector shades ideally scaled for home use. It provides a soft ambience with a completely uniform symmetrical lighting distribution. It is the most desired living room lamp in a Danish middle class home and was recently declared the best Danish design object of the last century.

This PH5 lamp has been modified into a biogas lamp, to be used by people living in areas with no access to electricity. The biogas PH5 lamp is modified in Bangkok, Thailand.

LACOSTE/

In 1927 tennis champion René LACOSTE was nicknamed "the Alligator" by the American press after having made a bet concerning a suitcase made from alligator skin. Later his friend Robert George drew an alligator which he then had embroidered on the shirt he wore on the court. In 1933, René LACOSTE & André Giller, set up a company to manufacture the logo-embroidered shirt. This was probably the first time a brand name had ever been visible on the outside of an item of clothing. Today the shirt continues to offer the same quality, comfort and solidity on which it built its name and which constitute its uniqueness.
    LACOSTE SUPERCOPY was presented for the first time at the HANSENMADSEN catwalk (Copenhagen Fashion Fair 2002) and is produced in Thailand

LACOSTE/ USER/ HANSENMADSEN

Alongside the genuine and expensive brand products there are millions of imitations. They exist so that people with lower purchasing power can still acquire the real thing and share in its symbolic status value. An interesting aspect is that the copies actually make the original better known and more desirable by flooding the market. In fact copy products could be seen as a first class branding strategy for the original production companies, whose products will still be desired as an original. However, imagine if you could create a copy that became more attractive than the original – a SUPERCOPY.

TOOLS/
SUPERMUSIC/

TOOL01+02+03/

TOOL01: A CD, called Hello DJ!, a seventy-minute soundtrack with animal noises which sound randomly while the DJ is playing his or her set. DJs can put it on, so that the animal sounds interfere with their set. In fact, anyone can use the CD at home while they are listening to the radio.

TOOL02: A vinyl with a selection of animal sounds from Africa, prepared specifically for DJs to use in their sets. It has mainly been used by hip-hop DJs for scratching, and was made in collaboration with August Engkilde.

TOOL03: A vinyl with a mix of sounds chosen by DJ Kruzh'em, August Engkilde and SUPERFLEX. It is made up of traditional hip-hop sounds mixed with others that are not often used by DJs.

TEXT/

PARTICI-PATION AS A FRAG-MENT OF FUNC-TION-ALISM

ANDREAS SPIEGL (Written in 2000)

• This essay concerns a phenomenon that is not only welcomed on (almost) all sides but which has also entered the discourse of art today: participation. The intention here is to focus on the relationship between participation and functionalism, and hence to derive a critical concept of participation.

Functionalism is based on a notion of reality that consists of elements whose prime object is to fulfil a task. These tasks are in turn defined by what that reality as a whole is to produce, be it no more than reproducing itself. Thus functionalism instigates a state of interdependency between elements and tasks as well as a value system that assesses these according to their usefulness or otherwise: anything that fulfils a purpose is good, anything that is dysfunctional or appears to be without purpose is rejected. Functionalism is indifferent to specific goals and is thus compatible with the most diverse of ideological applications. And so it is that the industrial society and Modernity availed themselves of functionalism in just the same way as the fundamentalist ecology movement was to do in its early days. For functionalism only ever reaches its limits when the effects it produces and the consequences it leads to in fact militate against its own conditions. Therefore everything that is

produced in the context of a functionalist approach is ultimately based on reproduction and reproducibility. However different functionalist products may be in their form and function, they are forever beholden to the principle of usefulness. Functionalism itself becomes metaphysical when it attributes a function to each and everything, making sense of everything, as it were – a principle that knows no exceptions. In functionalist argument there are neither remainders nor even death. The history of psychoanalysis and its success owe much to this functionalist approach, which ultimately finds a purpose for thoughts and experiences that at first sight would appear to be dysfunctional.

While the darker sides of functionalism and its expulsion of seemingly functionless 'elements' have led to doubts as to its social and political legitimacy, at the same time these suspicions have been allayed by system theory which sees a function even in things that appear contradictory or dysfunctional. As such, functionalism takes on the mantle of an ethical principle in that it assumes at least one function where none was previously apparent. And thus its underlying maxim is: if in doubt, assume the probability of function. And art, too, owes its existence to this maxim, for art has often spoken out explicitly against functionalisation and has laid claim to a right to dysfunctionality.

Paradoxically enough, it was the failure and/or the (postmodern) admission of the failure to create a binding and universal code for the entirety of social reality that was crucial to functionalism and its evolution. It was only in the face of the irreconcilable nature of different world views and with the acceptance of the reality of certain contradictions that functionalism and its immanent logic of interdependence took on global dimensions. (By way of an aside: it also seems paradoxical that with the failure of the so-called 'great narratives' (Lyotard) nihilism also met its end.) What is left of functionalism is not so much an awareness of what reality as a whole produces, but more the notion that all things are at least connected somehow and impinge on each other. The paradigm that may be extrapolated from this now unites once-modern antagonisms. Every effort is made to create as much that is new as possible, only (thereby) to simultaneously preserve and archive as much as possible. In this state of interdependency, the new is as important and functional as the old, and the distant is as present as the near. Theoretically.

In practical terms, i.e. from an economic and a political point of view, the contradictions within this functionalism are negotiated via power-structures. And when no direct functionalisation ensues, the contradictions are either eliminated or aestheticised – that is to say, they are re-assigned as a change or a rest from functionalism. Thus, for instance, cultural differences under 'protection' in reserved zones fulfil a task for the leisure industry and tourism. If certain attitudes do not appear to be functional per se, they can always meet the need for exoticism, thereby serving as an image of alterity. This problem is not unknown in art, above all when its critique of the prevailing conditions in the reception and marketing of art dwindle into mere deviation from the everyday. What was intended as a critique, even functionally, becomes institutionalised as a dysfunctional exception. In this sense critique is not safe from being perceived as mere 'change'.

This situation leads to a seemingly paradox challenge for art praxis today: while the practising artist may recognise the increasing societal difficulties arising from the global accumulation of exceptional situations and thereby of people who cannot be integrated into a functionalist structure, nevertheless the artist tries to legitimise his/her own position within this context by attempting to re-functionalise these leftover functional shreds and surpluses. The key word – which is itself rooted in functionalist argument – is 'participation'.

There is an automatic assumption that individuals will 'partake' of the interdependence that is immanent to functionalism. However, this 'partaking' becomes problematic when it does not involve actively 'taking part' in the system – a system that one in any case cannot escape – for then it becomes a burden, just as much for the system as for those who cannot or will not fit in to it. Seen in this light, all those who do not find a place in a particular system become disturbing misfits who must take responsibility for and cope with the exclusion they have brought on themselves.

To the extent that art attempts to undermine the mechanisms of social exclusion by presenting itself as an opportunity for participation, it confirms its own functionalist intentions – albeit well meant. In this sense participation acts as a form of medication to alleviate feelings of alienation. The new shibboleth is that victims must become actors who will take their fate into their own hands and organise their own room for manoeuvre, thereby carving out a place for themselves in society:

help towards self-help is the name of this endeavour to leave behind the colonialist assistance of the past which only ever succeeded in setting up a form of modified dependency. Now the aim is to leave it up to the new participants; how and by what means they find a way to integrate themselves into a (globalised) situation and hence into the prevailing power structures – with the emphasis on self-integration because the striving for independence is not regarded as absolute but as an optional, self-chosen pattern of dependency. This also includes that *sensus communis* which proclaims worldwide economic interdependency as the basis of our continued existence and co-existence. The hegemony here is the inevitability of the economy that puts this existential basis at our disposal. Thus the path to independence is often depicted in terms of the individual (small) business plus a plea for a niche-economy. The argument is: once the conditions for economic independence have been achieved, then there is no reason why ideological, cultural and ethnic differences should not flourish side by side. No mention is made of the fact that these same differences and contradictions have been relegated to a secondary, relativistic level. As long as the primary demand for economic integration is obeyed, the insistence on ethnic or cultural differences is legitimate. It is then hardly surprising to see the reaction that follows when these differences re-emerge as aesthetic concepts: clad as spectacle, even ideological disagreements and the disputes of realpolitik become acceptable and marketable. By way of an aside: there is a close proximity here between the communication of cultural or religious differences as art and folklore and Schlingensief's theatricalisation of the drama of realpolitik. For our purposes here, the point is that the cry for participation in the process of social valuation can be implemented – through the transformation of a difference or a contradiction into a matter of aesthetics. As laudable as such re-functionalisation may at first seem, it becomes equally problematic when this transformation on an aesthetic level is not seen as a pointer or as a challenge, but glibly accepted as a solution. The temptation to regard the transformation of a problem into an aesthetic issue as a solution is always greatest when this in turn leads to commercial success. Commercial success means that the relevant enterprise becomes largely self-financing, thereby fulfilling the demands of functionalism and its ultimate goal, namely reproducibility. This criterion also characterises artistic projects that not only see to it that margin-alised or excluded groups can participate in them, but which also seek their own legitimation as a form of service industry. In this context it is worth noting the shift of erstwhile activist art projects – which fought for the rights of marginalised or excluded groups, without being profit-driven – in the direction of artistic brand names that are organised along the lines of business enterprises and which operate both in the art market and as a competitive company in the 'real world'. In other words: today we are faced with a generation of younger artists who have long since internalised functionalism and the parameters of the market economy as the *conditio sine qua non*.

In the sense that artistic praxis thereby moves closer to the contradictions and requirements of ordinary life, this must be a welcome development. Above all in view of the tendency for artists to dysfunctionalise even their critical artistic interventions by re-functionalising them as 'change' – and as long as the project in question does indeed have the appearance of a business-like enterprise – the work is guaranteed a certain sense of reality. These brand-name projects not only provide an opportunity for participation, but they themselves participate in the advantages and disadvantages that come with this symbiosis. Indeed this merger with the demands of ordinary, everyday life can go so far that the question as to the artistic input on a project seems either secondary or not relevant to the intended function. Obviously it would make no sense to replace functionalism with a new formalism that would clearly display its supposedly artistic element. It would seem much more urgent to actuate a form of nominalism, which is often the last signature by which an artistic undertaking can be distinguished from what is merely a creative niche-industry.

There is no need here to dwell on the fact that in a situation which is plagued by a permanent legitimacy deficit due to its inherent contradictions and disadvantages, the proximity to art and its associated 'values' becomes highly sought-after territory. These values notwithstanding, which may be associated with critique or emancipation or simply with conscience per se, the mere designation of a project or a work as 'art' implies a certain aspiration. Besides suggesting various levels of legitimacy, this nominalism implies first and foremost an element of distinction which, in economic terms, functions as symbolic capital. And this distinction not only operates externally, i.e. dividing the artistic from the

non-artistic enterprise, but above all it operates internally: that is to say, while an artistic project can be structured and can operate like a conventional business enterprise, it can at the same time intentionally present a likeness of such an enterprise and a likeness of its consequences. However, an illustrative likeness of this kind will have a particular relationship to its subject, and this relationship can be accurately documentary or it can display an implicitly ironic or critical perspective. Since commercial success alone cannot vouch for the artistic quality of a work, in this context it has to be assessed primarily on its illustrative powers along with the questions raised by the latter. How does it illustrate and reflect the prevailing balance of power, the dependency structures and the social and political consequences of a business enterprise, and how do these relate to the institutional parameters of the discourse on art itself? If a project is successful, who is then participating in which and in whose success? And moreover: What does measurable (commercial) success really mean in terms of the quality of an artistic work?

The mention of illustration here inevitably recalls the question of the aesthetics of the work. However, in this context, 'aesthetics' refers not to the design of a project, but to the perceptibility of a critical relationship that a 'real' – possibly even pragmatically structured – business has with itself. The visible presence of such a relationship is all the more important when artistic works – closely intertwined with reality – cast aside distinctive formal attributes and rely solely on the nominalism previously alluded to. Merely being exhibited within the framework of an art institution may highlight the illustrative quality of a project and its otherwise invisible difference to some functionalist *alter ego*, but this alone is too little to counteract the equally possible aestheticisation of political or economic issues.

Aestheticisation results when socially marginalised or excluded participants in an artistic project themselves end up as pictures in an exhibition, and their different fates and problems function as a classical mode of distinction – in other words: when they are not integrated into an artistic process as actors but as the motif.

And aestheticisation also results when the division of functions remains intact despite the part played by the participants: that is to say, when the artistic entrepreneurs see to the representation of a project within the framework of the discourse pertaining in art institutions, while the parti-

cipants are simply responsible for the production. For then the participants become more or less voluntary employees, who bring not only their commitment and interest but also their problems to the valuation process, without themselves being able to participate in the symbolic and/or economic capital of the nominalist distinction. And with that we find ourselves up against admittedly well-meaning functionalism, which can no doubt productively extend the circle of participants to the benefit of both sides, but which takes no account of the existing balances of power nor of the implicit questions regarding the politics of representation.

Yet none of these arguments is sufficient to cast serious doubt on the notion of participation. To date there are no signs of any better alternatives or strategies for countering the ever-growing mechanisms of social exclusion. Meanwhile the relationship between participation and functionalism is a separate issue. As we saw at the outset of this essay, functionalism tends to treat reality as a totality, like a sum with no remainders. Yet at the same time, if projects are devised which invite the participation of marginalised or excluded individuals, so that these may be reintegrated into the functional interconnections of society, then we are faced with the seemingly paradoxical danger that success will simply obscure existing contradictions and the unequal balance of power in certain situations. Instead of putting differences up for discussion, functionalism always suggests an over-riding 'common sense', i.e. a solution that is valid for everyone. Thus, any critical notion of participation begs the question as to how participation in a project can be organised in such a way that it is possible to reflect the reasons and differences that caused the original marginalisation, and hence the contradiction to smooth functionalism. The real significance of the aesthetics of a work and of nominalism – that we touched on in our argument – is to make these very differences visible and negotiable. If these projects can indeed do something towards improving the lives of the participants, then it is well and good that the question of art should come second, although it should not be entirely forgotten. For only then does our reliance on nominal differences have a chance of surviving as a means of critical distinction. In order to avoid the danger of further aestheticisation, there is paradoxically still a need to elucidate the resistance and contradictions that always accompany and endanger success in realpolitik and its attendant functionalism •

WORKING WITHIN CONTRA-DICTIONS

BARBARA STEINER

• In 1998 Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, Jakob Fenger, Rasmus Nielsen (SUPERFLEX) and Jan Mallan applied for two Danish patents: "Plants for anaerobic processing of organic waste" and "Automatic pressure equalisation system for process gases from pressure chambers". These form the basis of a biogas device initially developed for Tanzania. This can be manufactured in smaller units for a small number of users, such as a (farming) family. In November 1998 SUPERFLEX registered "SUPERGAS A/S" with the Danish Chamber of Commerce; the financial advisor Peter Eriksen was the fifth shareholder – after SUPERFLEX and Jan Mallan. The main focus of the company (A/S = Shareholder Company) is on "development", "patenting", "production" and the "sale of biogas containers and the associated technology". Investors such as the "Teknologisk Institut" and the "Teknologisk Innovation A/S" provided financial support for the first two years of the project's existence.

'SUPERFLEX' was registered in 1999, 'SUPERCHANNEL', an interactive internet transmitter was registered in 2000 as a limited company (*anpartselskab*). In 2000 the group appointed Kenneth Jensen as its studio manager. In March 2000, discussions were held with students from the Economics Department at Bard College in New York on share

issues as well as on how biogas could be distributed and put on a firm socio-economic footing. In summer 2000 SUPERFLEX entered into negotiations with Swedish Telecom on the financing of their plans to create Karlskrona2, a virtual city. These negotiations came to nothing. Nor did Wolfsburg2 get beyond the planning stages and a pilot project. In 2000 and 2001 SUPERCHANNEL sold a number of licences to diverse users. Negotiations regarding a large-scale production plan for biogas in Thailand and Vietnam are taking unduly long, despite interest in the project on the part of government officials. Now in 2001 the companies SUPERFLEX and SUPERCHANNEL are experiencing serious financial difficulties.

What looks like a classical start-up enterprise is also – primarily – an artistic project, initiated by three people who studied at the Academy for Visual Arts in Copenhagen and have a classical training in art behind them. By founding companies that develop various 'tools', administer them and offer them for public use, SUPERFLEX are implementing a notion of art that is based on concrete intervention in society and social structures and which incorporates economic factors from the outset. There may be a yearning for social effectiveness here as well as a desire to be (financially) independent of the art market and its constraints. At the same time, also being part of the art business has advantages; on one hand the artists can turn to the grants and awards available in the art world (in addition to the customary financial support for start-up enterprises); on the other hand the institution of art functions as a discursive arena that can be used for reflective scrutiny of one's own position. Unlike the situation that prevailed during Modernism, art and economics are no longer conceived of dialectically whereby the former, in the bourgeois mind of the 18th and 19th centuries, was taken to be free of economic considerations; it was there to provide aesthetic edification and education, to promote the "natural development" of the human being towards a higher ideal. In the first instance this notion applied to "inner development" since the "organisation of this world by means of the capitalist labour process … has turned the development of the individual over to economic competition and has left it up to the commercial market to meet the individual's needs" (Marcuse, 1965, 76). The soul, which has no "exchange value" is pitted against economic values, non-alienation against alienation. And in the process art is elevated into an "ideal place", an (unredeemable) promise to put an end

to the alienation of the human being. Nowadays it is ever harder to see oneself as somehow outwith economics. [1] The museum, once conceived as a centre of resistance against capitalist appropriation, has long been infiltrated by economic interests, as is readily evident from the outside: art institutions are increasingly under pressure to organise themselves as commercially viable enterprises, to market themselves and their 'goods'. This has to do with the way society has developed in recent decades, the fundamental changes in the nature and conditions of work (including artistic work): 'factory regime' and 'factory discipline' have left the factory in the narrow sense of the word and have permeated the whole of society which now, for its part, obeys the "specific rules of capitalist conditions of production" (Negri & Hardt, 1997, 14). The lines of demarcation between social, economic, legal, political AND cultural issues are becoming increasingly blurred, with the result that we now have a "subordination of society to capital": "Capital, subsuming society, no longer simply determines the players in the orchestra, but in fact appears, like the self-glorifying composer, on the stage of social production" (Negri & Hardt, 1997, 21). [2] This has a major effect on the active individual: subjectivity no longer counts as detrimental, but has become a condition of the work process. (Unlike the time when conveyor belts dominated factory work, and – as we can see from workers' protests and tough negotiations – subjectivity was perceived by some as disruptive while others were determined to reclaim it for themselves.) Today the individual is recognised for his or her creative subjectivity: personal commitment, a willingness to work round the clock, individual creativity and risk-taking, flexibility and mobility count as virtues in the new world of work. Leading the way in these developments (involuntarily) then as now are artists, for whom a steady income is the exception rather than the rule. They move through times when they are earning and not earning, just as they shift from one activity to another. The result is pressure to increasingly realise the financial potential of one's own skills and achievements at work. Their whole life takes on something of a 'corporate' air. More and more the artist's income pattern is regarded as a social model worth copying; according to Andrew Ross "the 'mentality' of artistic work is increasingly sought after" (Ross, 2000, 270). At times this even goes so far that the "job markets for art and publicists" are discussed as "models for a future world of work", as suggested for instance in a

report from the Berlin Centre for Social Research in 1999. Boris Groys even sees the institution of culture per se – by virtue of its inherently innovative dynamic, where values are constantly being re-evaluated – as a "prototype of economic logic" (Groys, 1999, 15). In view of this it is only natural that contemporary artists should not simply be aware of their implication in economic circumstances but specifically want to 'reallocate' existing roles and ways of functioning and to operate where economic matters are settled: in (their own) business.

Back to SUPERFLEX: in light of the scenario outlined above it seems only logical that artists are interested in economic processes and take these as their theme. Can they prevent themselves involuntarily signing up to a capitalist logic of commercialisation, can they stop their critique and innovative skills bolstering a system that they actually want to change? Is it at all possible any more to make a different mark by taking a dissident stance? And if so, if the different mark hits home as different-ness, is it not simply fulfilling the very demands of a commercial system based on difference?

Biogas: SUPERFLEX develop a viable project, that takes local and cultural specifications into account right from the outset. For this pur-pose SUPERFLEX engaged in research during the preparatory phase along with SURUDE (Sustainable Rural Development), a local NGO, founded by two university professors and two farmers: the aim was to determine whether and in what form a product of this kind might be needed and whether it would be culturally acceptable in view of the taboo that generally attaches to human and animal excrement. Advice was also sought from anthropologists. In addition SUPERFLEX also worked with the local NGOs to devise different methods of handling credit and distribution. From the very beginning disparate views, work-ing methods and cultural backgrounds were incorporated in the devel-opment of their biogas system.

Karlskrona2/Wolfsburg2: In this project for a virtual town the residents of Karlskrona and Wolfsburg are given the chance to participate direct-ly in the processes of municipal decision making. They alone can access the virtual scenario and change the town, everyone else is classed as a tourist. The range of possible interventions goes from online discus-sions to real changes in the fabric of the town. Political, economic and social laws and behavioural norms are under constant review in this

project. With this project SUPERFLEX want to explore, amongst other things, the effect of the 'virtual' town on the 'real' one and of the 'real' one on the 'virtual' one: to what extent do virtual decision making processes influence the urban space, that is to say, what consequences does this project have for the residents, to what extent do everyday experiences and reports in the press and media shape the thinking of the users? SUPERFLEX are aiming at the direct involvement of the residents in Karlskrona and Wolfsburg so that suggested changes could also be directed against the economic and political interests of the municipal administration.

SUPERCHANNEL: an internet platform devised for people and/or institutions who want their contributions to help to bring about change in political, economic, social or cultural attitudes. Users range from a group of psychologists (e.g. Situflex) to musicians (e.g. supah mikes) and artists (Rirkrit Tiravanija), political interest groups, the British 'Housing Association Trust' and diverse art institutions (Galerie für zeitgenössi-sche Kunst in Leipzig); the programmes deal with politically sensitive themes and can help to establish the identity of a particular region. They can be used to promote art (Joachim Hamou) and music projects or to set up a different form of distribution. Potentially interested parties have to outline their motivation, which is then publicised. All the programmes are collected in a virtual archive, so that it will also later be possible to gain an insight into the different motivations and interests of the users. SUPERCHANNEL provides a mouthpiece for small, even tiny, groups in the internet which would otherwise have little or no chance of mount-ing a large-scale public presentation of their concerns. The 'tools' listed here – Biogas, Karlskrona2/Wolfsburg2, and SUPERCHANNEL – were developed in collaboration with various partners, tested out in a pilot phase and then offered for sale. The takings from sales are then invest-ed in developing new or existing projects. The tools can and should be used by groups with a whole variety of interests. Both in the develop-ment and in the implementation phase the different political, economic, cultural and social notions of the various participants collide and have to be negotiated. At this point SUPERFLEX take on the role of a partner whose role is to coordinate and act as a moderator. The art institutions function primarily as places for discursive debate, where the projects are not only presented and discussed, but the various uses of

the tools can be investigated by others – as for instance in the exhibition by SUPERFLEX in the Kunstverein Wolfsburg in late 1999/early 2000. The anthropologists Klaus Høyer and Birgitte Feiring, the graphic artist Mgumia, the psychologists who make up the group Situflex, the architect Rune Nielsen, the communications expert Troels Degn Johansson, the musicians of supah mikes and the Housing Association Trust ("HAT") were invited to present their various uses of SUPERFLEX's tools. Different cultural notions inscribed into presentation and representation came just as vividly to light as did the different expectations, longings and values that the users attached to their use of the tools.

In the exhibitions it also became clear that SUPERFLEX primarily see artistic praxis as a form of cultural intervention that mediates between different interests or perhaps brings these to light in the first place. This necessarily means that concrete socio-political activities are interlocked with discursive discussion, and that the two are mutually influential.

SUPERFLEX's commercial praxis can aptly be described in the words of Jakob Fenger: "Small scale economy is big scale economy." And he goes on: "Normally companies make products for people who have a lot of money and who are already part of their market. In this sense we would like that other companies look differently at the econo-my of African families as something that is powerful as well. But they do not look at African families as powerful people." This outlook is largely in keeping with the views of Yunus and his Grammeen Bank in Bangladesh: here a system of micro-credits provides financial support for even the smallest enterprises. ₃ This practise is based on the idea that anyone with a valid business idea, however small-scale it may be, can play a part in the commercial world and benefit from economic suc-cess. At first sight this seems a promising notion. It would seem that everyone is able to have a stake in an economic system, even those who were previously excluded due to their inability to invest in their own business. This means that every human idea is potentially open to com-mercial exploitation, and it also means that commercial premises are recognised from the outset, even required. SUPERFLEX confirm this when they say: "We have this capitalistic system and it is controlled mainly from Europe or America" (Interview with Jakob Fenger in this vol-ume). SUPERFLEX are interested in changing economic structures based on Western capitalist thinking, which has to be accepted as a

basis in order to be changed at all: "Not everybody can be on our level of economy, it does not make sense. But if the people in Africa start to be a part of our economic system then maybe our economic system has to change. This is like a far-out dream. But this might change the all-over economic structure" (Interview with Jakob Fenger in this volume). Different (economic) systems and the expectations and longings they produce are intentionally confronted with one another: 'large' global economy comes up against small 'local' needs, Western values encounter the so-called 'Third World'. Differing notions of efficiency compete and refuse to be reduced to a common denominator, individual interests oppose supra-individual business interests, local and global specifics intertwine only to unravel again a moment later.

The contradiction inherent in supporting and advancing capitalist structures with their own praxis at the same time as undermining them is an intrinsic aspect of the work of SUPERFLEX. When they argue their case on the basis of critical mass – a large body of individuals with little money can constitute an interesting group in economic terms – then this perfectly meets the expectations and thinking of potential investors who can thus penetrate a new market without having to make any fundamental changes to their usual capitalist procedures. At the same time, this leads to quantifiable shifts in economic structures: the poverty of the inhabitants of Tanzania, Thailand or Vietnam, to name but three, may at last be alleviated because they are taken seriously as play-ers in the economic field. For the first time they can start to walk away from the one-sided economic dependency they have suffered so long. Hitherto not regarded as financially viable customers, they were only ever the 'objects' of profitable businesses, never the beneficiaries. Now, with their biogas system, SUPERFLEX are helping to change notions of development aid by shifting the argument from social issues to eco-nomics. Moreover, by virtue of the fact that people in Tanzania, Thailand and Vietnam buy biogas plants, a product for which there is a real need and that uses readily available resources, SUPERFLEX also manage to distance themselves from the traditional benefactor/beneficiary rela-tionship which has formed the basis of development aid for decades. More recent projects in the field of development aid, similarly seeking to avoid dependency relationships, have sought to promote individual creativity and initiatives in the local area and as such share the same

thinking as SUPERFLEX. **4** If, for instance, a farming family is interested in biogas, ways and means are worked out with the local NGOs to facilitate the investment, at the same time incurring as small a financial burden for the family as possible. The local farmers become customers and potential clients, casting aside their role as supplicants. One problem remains: criticism expressed during the projects either directly or indirectly – whether of existing economic conditions or traditional development aid – is always welcome and can readily be integrated into the capitalist practice of review and assessment. Constant adjustment and correction of one's own position and that of others is the only way to expose the weaknesses in any system, so that measures can be taken to modify outdated structures and hence to remain viable. When SUPERFLEX claim that one obvious difference between themselves and larger concerns lies in their capacity for self-criticism, then they may well be right at present: "We include the discussion, whereas they (e.g. Siemens, Volkswagen etc.) try to be on top of the discussion all the time. They do not try to work on the parameters for a discussion and see what influence it can have on themselves. They try to avoid real discussions because this would mean that they have to give up their position from time to time." (Interview with Jakob Fenger in this volume) Nevertheless businesses can learn: it is thus perfectly possible to imagine a situation where companies cease to dominate the discussion in order not to inhibit the productivity and creativity of the participants. Admittedly not in the spirit of individual emancipation.

SUPERFLEX's practice of taking existing, presumably stable economic structures as their starting point and then dismantling these, step by step, not only sheds light on the way these function but also lays the foundations for possible change and the construction of new conditions. It brings to mind thoughts of the mode of 'deconstruction' described and practised by Jacques Derrida. SUPERFLEX's methods can also be compared to a deconstructive act, in the spirit of Derrida's "mighty shaking of a building" – in this case the institution of a basically capitalist economic system. **5** Derrida saw 'deconstruction' as a method to shake structures without destroying them, simply laying bare their existing weak points and gaps. He directed his own efforts primarily against the edifice of metaphysics that is built on instability even when it claims to be stable. For it stands on brittle rock: "The territory is elusive and changeable, mined

and undermined. The ground is largely an underground." (Derrida, 1988, 34, as cited in Wigley 1994, 47). **6** For Derrida 'deconstruction' is "analytical work", "determining a position within the political and institutional structures that facilitate and govern our praxis, our competencies and our activities." Yet it should not be separated from "political and institutional problems", instead "it should undertake a new search for responsibility, question anew the ethical and political codes handed down to us from the past." (Derrida, 1984, 41) With his method of 'deconstruction' Derrida not only changes the "edifice" called philosophy, but also the one that it describes. SUPERFLEX take a similar approach to the 'edifice of economy'. They investigate structures/institutions – in effect institutional authority – until any structural weaknesses have been identified and breaking point has been reached. In this process both the structure and its limitations are similarly uncovered. To a certain extent SUPERFLEX study the tricks by which an edifice gains authority – in this case the capitalist economy as an institution – so that they can then drive a wedge into that authority. Thus they do not destroy traditional structures but – wholly in keeping with Derrida's deconstructive method – they pinpoint the contradictions on which the structures are founded. Yet this in itself does not dispel those contradictions – they are still both visible and palpable. In that sense SUPERFLEX both describe and demonstrate what it is to be caught up in an economic system. Notwithstanding: the structures themselves are stable and instable in one, and therein lies our chance •

NOTES

1 In fact the bourgeois museum was always permeated by economic interests, even when these may have been hidden: "The freedom of the soul was used to excuse the misery, martyrdom and servitude of the body. It served the ideological extradition of existence into the hands of the capitalist economy." (Marcuse, 1965, 77)
  Andreas Spiegl neatly sums up the problem as follows: "not all questions of a social and political nature . . . can be reduced to economic problems, but the areas that are of social significance and are not involved in some form with distribution struggles are rare." (Spiegl, 1997, 4)

2 Examples of the global positioning of capital are the introduction of production sites into the Third World, their relocation from north to south, the interdependence and permeability of markets and progressive interconnection of monetary movements.

3 SUPERFLEX, as artists, can also be counted amongst those with low incomes but with considerable potential for innovation. In that sense they are no different from any other blithely hopeful company founders.

4 This may explain why anthropologists and development workers are equally interested in SUPERFLEX. It was in this spirit that the anthropologist Klaus Høyer proposed developing "anthropology in action".

5 Derrida's notions can readily also be applied to other institutional discourses. He himself applies 'deconstruction' to philosophy and later to architecture too. Mark Wigley goes into the relationship between Derrida's 'decon-

struction' and architecture in his book *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*, (Wigley, 1994)

6 Here Derrida is in step with Martin Heidegger's deliberations on 'ground'. In his search for the grounds underlying the principle of laying out the ground, Heidegger comes full circle and discovers that the underlying principle of the ground has itself become groundless. (see Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 1992, 21)

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SUPER-FLEX'S TOOLS

DORIS BERGER

• SUPERFLEX describe their artistic projects as tools. They see their work as something to be put to use. Thus the artists become tool-makers; they take note of the way the tools are used and have a partial say in their use. At the same time they also avail themselves of certain tools found in social and artistic praxis.

It is the intention here to turn SUPERFLEX's notion of a tool back on itself: to shed light on the conditions of production, the influences, areas of discourse and strategies – the tools that is – that SUPERFLEX use in their own artistic praxis. And to ask, what discourse informs their work, what methods do they use, how do they fit into an art-historical context? In doing so it will only be possible to touch on wider themes since their function here is simply to encourage a multi-faceted approach to the work of SUPERFLEX.

Let us begin by glancing into the SUPERFLEX tool box, to glean an insight into the discourse that applies to their work.

• Rhizomatic Work Patterns

Firstly, on the construction of the group SUPERFLEX: it is structured as a network whose members work in a "rhizomatic" manner. There is no linear, hierarchically planned procedure, rather an interchange of

knowledge and conditions. Thus Deleuze and Guattari explain that "The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, off-shoots. … the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight.." [1]

SUPERFLEX describe their own work configurations in similar terms: To quote Rasmus Nielsen: "You put your questions in and you try to change something. This you can do through the construction which is called SUPERFLEX… SUPERFLEX offers me the possibility to work with different things. It's like a frame or a tool. We have different interests, we are three different people and we all can use this frame or tool to work with."

Or Bjørnstjerne Christiansen: "I also gain a lot of new input through the involvement of the others. The way we work is always that one of us comes up with an idea. And then we correct each other, come up with new input and then we end up with something like the biogas project… So, there is constant correction, but also constant input… I think the quality of SUPERFLEX is that we need those other inputs. We cannot only rely on SUPERFLEX. I am interested in getting new knowledge constantly… So most of our things are connected to meeting and discussing and letting other people contribute. If we know that a person has some special knowledge that we could learn from, we invite him/her to a meeting." [2]

The configuration of the group should itself be seen as a tool that is subject to constant change. Thus, just like the projects, it is and was always developing and being changed, corrected or taken a stage further.

• Collective Work Methods

The authorship of an artistic work cannot be separated from social developments. In the 1930s it was already clear to Walter Benjamin that the producer of a work of art has a particular relationship to society. In 'What is an Author?' Michel Foucault analysed the function of the author. For Foucault the individuality of the author is just as problematic as the term 'work' and the concomitant notion of a finished entity or of closure. Thus the name of an author need not be that of a single person but can also be used by a group of individuals. "It [the name of the author] indicates the status of this discourse within a society and a culture. It has no legal status, nor is it located in the fiction of the work; rather, it is located in the break that founds a certain discursive construct and its very particular mode of being." [3, 4]

Foucault makes a plea that interest should no longer centre on authenticity and originality but on the existential conditions of discourses.

Collaborative authorship as the stamp of collective work practices has become a heated to pic of debate since spread of the internet. [5] It is no longer always possible to identify one original, individual author. This phenomenon also has an effect on social practices. Through the formation of collectives, in the internet for one, alternative public groupings can form which can then establish an oppositional network within the structures that rule that society. Thus, for instance, in Austria in 1999, before the new government was formed by the right-wing FPÖ, a group of Austrian artists and activists set up the internet platform "gettoattack", as an information forum with the latest news and commentaries on their homepage; in addition it put out calls to demonstrate against the formation of a right-wing government and itself launched a number of political actions. SUPERCHANNEL, devised by SUPERFLEX, functions along similar lines: different groups and institutions without access to the public media channels (as in the case of HAT, the Housing Association Trust, in Liverpool) are given the chance on one hand to discuss certain themes and, on the other, to include other internet communities in their discussions, who can contribute statements of their own in a chat room.

• Participatory Projects and the Question of Responsibility

In participatory projects the viewers become the co-producers of an artistic work. Connections are thus created on various different levels. "Art that realizes its purpose through relationship – that collaborates consciously with the audience and is concerned with how we connect with others – can actually create a sense of community." [6]

Suzi Gablik describes this as a participatory aesthetic, which in her view consist of a mixture of aesthetic and social issues that have generally been regarded as opposites in the modern era. "A central aspect of new paradigm thinking involves a significant shift from objects to relationships… Then meaning is no longer in the observer, nor in the observed, but in the relationship between the two. Interaction is the key that moves art beyond the aesthetic mode." [7]

Through interaction between the artists and their collaborative partners the decisions needing to be taken during the production process are up to a number of different individuals. Hence the responsibility for the success of an artistic work no longer exclusively falls to the artists but is shared by their collaborators. Different notions of a successful work come up against each other, since the participants (the artists, the collaborators, the institutions etc.) have their own different expectations and projections. These various expectations mostly only come to light during the course of the project and can even be the downfall of a project.

The position taken by SUPERFLEX is usually geared towards developing new ways of changing social structures (for instance the participation of a large proportion of the population of a town in planning decisions, as in Karlskrona2/Wolfsburg2, or measures to set up autonomous energy production processes for single families, as in the biogas project). But real, functioning changes demand different infrastructures for their implementation than those that, e.g., art institutions or the artists themselves can offer. And as such, art institutions are also up for discussion in projects like Karlskrona2 or Wolfsburg2 – more of which later.

On the other hand, participatory projects can also be used, or bought, by political groupings as a means to improve social structures, giving marginalised groups a voice that they would otherwise not have.

- Community-Based Art

If participatory praxis is combined with discourse from the realm of site specific art, the results can lead to projects that work with a whole community. Here the main focus of attention is on the social situation of a particular group and on the type of collaboration.

But even well-intentioned projects can elicit harsh criticism: appropriation by the artists and the art business or the "colonialisation of difference" (Miwon Kwon) is one accusation heard in the context of collaboration between artists and marginalised groups "which become the object and the co-producers of their own self-appropriation". **8** Miwon Kwon pointedly outlines the dependencies, complex entanglements and power political dangers of community-based art projects in her article 'Ortung und Entortung der Community': "In the context of community-based art, the interaction between the artists and existing groups is not based on a linear relationship but is inscribed in a com-

plex web of motivations, expectations and projections on the part of the various participants." **9** A community comes together for the purposes of a specific project in order to discuss particular social questions and/or to actively pursue change within the parameters under discussion. In doing so, alternative procedures may be developed within that specific context.

As part of the Wolfsburg2 project, the Kunstverein Wolfsburg in cooperation with SUPERFLEX put on a series of workshops (for school groups right through to the town planners). The aim was to find a way of setting up this project/tool on a community level **10** and to establish it as an online forum where the politics of urban change could be discussed. However, it was impossible for Wolfsburg2 to reach certain groups of the residents of Wolfsburg and thereby become an 'independent' platform for citizens' views. The plan was to put in place a permanent group with representatives from the town who would meet at intervals and confer on strategies for implementing the project. But it never came to that, since on one hand there were insufficient funds available and on the other no-one (neither amongst the artists nor the citizens) took, or was able to take, the matter determinedly enough in hand. For various reasons this project received too little attention at a local government level and never progressed beyond stimulating discussion and playful fantasising about possible buildings. Wolfsburg2 does still exist in the internet as a platform for urban development but has been mothballed for the moment due to miscalculations as to the input needed locally. The reasons for this lie in the differing notions and projections that various parties had of the project.

The best case scenario for the project (how it should function, be disseminated and used) as SUPERFLEX proposed it did not match the actual status which was, however, crucial to the mediation and credibility of the project outside the art institution. The planned technical possibilities could only ever be partially realised, which in turn made communication with potentially interested parties difficult. Presentations of the project could thus only ever be backed up by hypothetical evidence since it could only be fully realised once a certain level of funding was in place. A vicious circle in fact.

On this level the idea of the project and the reality of its state of development were on a collision course and caused immense problems

in communicating the concept. Thus the tool on offer, still requiring further development, never managed to leap over the wall of the art world.

- New Economies

It is becoming increasingly common for artists to use labels rather than group names; these are not only used in the field of art but also find their way into the world of trade and commerce. Some artists and/or groups put their label on a professional footing by founding a firm in order to make better commercial sense of their various activities.

SUPERFLEX, for instance, have founded two firms, one for the bio-gas project and one for SUPERCHANNEL. Since SUPERFLEX projects involve few aesthetic objects that could find a place in the art market as works of art, SUPERFLEX – like other artists who work in community-based art – are mainly supported by a variety of organisations (award-giving bodies, sponsors). Some artists' groups (like, for instance, Critical Art Ensemble) prefer not to accept this kind of support because they fear that there would then be no chance of taking autonomous action. Yet, this immediately raises the question as to whether there is any such thing as room for autonomous manoeuvre and whether it would be desirable? For any work involves transaction and action to realise a particular intention.

SUPERFLEX make this process visible. They take numerous photographs of their business meetings, be they in Denmark or Tanzania or Vietnam. The photographs are shown in an art context where they serve both to document the group's working methods and to highlight structural changes in what artists do.

In other areas art practice has long since shifted closer towards the commercial world, one need only call to mind the work patterns of artists who work round the clock. The demands of the so-called New Economy allow, or rather, require its workers to keep flexible hours which de facto often leads to them working 24/7 (24 hours/7 days). Workers in the culture industry have long lived like this, although it is never seen as such, since self-motivated work can also be fun and is therefore not regarded as work. The separation of work and leisure time becomes blurred as the two areas merge into each other. Phenomena that are seen in the commercial world as new and futuristic (but also as alarming) have long been an everyday part of the artist's life.

- Art Activism. Interventions and the Effects Thereof, in Social Issues

"Cultural activism might be defined simply as the use of cultural means to try to effect social change. Related to activist programs initiated by artist, musicians, writers, and other cultural producers, such activism signals the interrelatedness of cultural criticism and political engagement." [11]

The inter-relationship that Brian Wallis is referring to here does not always manifest itself in the same way. Hans Haacke has aptly summed up the mutual influence of the two: "As naive as it is to imagine the 'revolution' would start in the art world, if we would only behave like good little revolutionaries (which we of course do not do), then it seems to me that the view that what happens in the art world can have no external consequences is just as naive." [12]

It is unrealistic to expect immediate political change to ensue from artistic work. But this in itself leads many critics to dismiss activist projects as well-intentioned or utopian. Thus expectations determine people's assessment of the results. Very much aware of this, Group Material, for instance, wanted to set off a chain reaction with their projects which in the best case would lead to a change in social and societal deficiencies. In this sense the actual potential of activist project may be seen in their catalytic effect, as an incitement to change. In the best case the suggestions are so appealing that an independent interest group, of citizens perhaps, would come together and would implement those same suggestions by engaging in the real-life political situation in that place.

The effect on those from outside the art world is, however, dependent on the chosen places and media. A shop in a residential area or an internet chat room generally reaches a different public to an established art institution. The question of the local and medial dissemination of the work plays an important part with regard to the possible, real consequences of activist projects. The successes of these projects are, however, not normally measured against the same standards as apply in the art world, commercial world, or as in social improvement etc.

An indirect but no less important part can be played by suggested alternative strategies that could have a stimulating effect on socio-political decision-making processes. Indeed "all SUPERFLEX's works intervene in real terms in social conditions" [13] and endeavour to suggest at

least one alternative to the existing situation. This in itself brings to mind the invitation sent out by Group Material: "We invite everyone to question the entire culture we have taken for granted." **14** Even if they no longer exist as a group, their exhortation should be taken seriously, now as then •

NOTES

1   Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, transl. with an introduction by Brian Massumi, London, 1988, p. 21

2   Doris Berger, 'Tools', *Infosite no. 5*, Kunstverein Wolfsburg 1999, pp. 17f.

3   Michel Foucault, 'What is an author?', in: *Power*, ed. by James D. Faubion, transl. by Robert Hurley, London 2002, pp. 205–22 (after a lecture held at the French Society for Philosophy on 22.2.69).

4   Michel Foucault, ibid., p. 211.

5   One can make use of documents and even develop certain programmes further as in the case of Linux, a software programme developed collaboratively and available to anyone.

6   Suzi Gablik, *The Reenchantment of Art*, New York 1991, pp. 157 f.

7   Suzi Gablik, ibid., pp. 7 and 151.

8   Miwon Kwon, 'Ortung und Entortung der Community', in: Christian Meyer, Mathias Poledna (eds.), *Sharawadgi*, Cologne, 1999, p. 202.

9   Miwon Kwon, ibid., p. 203.

10 That would have meant the town or different citizens' groups putting out advertising for it in a number of media, making terminals available to the general public (which happened to a certain extent) and erecting a large screen in the real town of Wolfsburg so that the virtual discussions could be disseminated in the real town.

11 Brian Wallis, 'Democracy and Cultural Activism', in: Brian Wallis (ed.), *DEMOCRACY – a project by Group Material*, Dia Art Foundation no. 5, 1990, p. 8.

12 'Der Haacke-Effekt, Hans Haacke im Gespräch mit Peter Friedl/Georg Schöllhammer', in: *springer*, vol. III, part 3, 1997, p. 35.

13 Barbara Steiner, 'Anthropologie in Aktion', in: *Kunstforum*, vol. 152, Oct.–Dec. 2000, p. 216.

14 Group Material Statement in a press release issued in 1989, Archive of the Museum of Modern Art.

RRRRRRR RRADICAL CHIC (GIVE ME BANANA, I'LL JUMP LIKE A MONKEY)

MIKA HANNULA

• The concept of radical democracy has a funny, even strange sound in it. Somehow it connotes with notions and sentiments which you tend to recall and recognise, but which you cannot seem to put your finger on. Ambiguity, uneasiness and fascination are the connotations. It injects a sudden rush of hope, but for what? Does it refer to the famous student demonstrations of the end of the 60's or does it imply the hotly hyped possibilities provided by the new media? And even more importantly: is there any substance in it?

To be sure, radical democracy begs and demands very varied interpretations and definitions. (See, for example, Laclau & Mouffe) The way I will proceed here, and the way I believe SUPERFLEX want to support it, is to see the content of radical democracy as two interlinked acts of questioning and analysing. On another level, radical democracy is also about bringing back politics into the domain of everyday life. In terms of space and usage of space, the aim is to revise the trend and to repoliticise the public domain which is being turned into a privately controlled zone by neo-liberal arguments and ideologies.

As ever, to state what it is not makes the framing of the content easier. In other words, the concept of radical democracy does not refer

to any kind of a radical change such as overthrowing government, sacking the board of trustees or offering an alternative to capitalism. The word radical stands for a rethought and revisited version of democracy. It is in its fanciest and most powerful form when it stands for concrete and practical openings of possibilities – be they new, misunderstood or forgotten ones.

In considering radical democracy and linking it with the practice of contemporary art, I will focus on a particular project of SUPERFLEX. The project has the name Karlskrona2, or in its shorter version, which I will use henceforth: K2. Its background signifies the starting point, the project being a virtual remake and transposition of the city of Karlskrona into the internet environment. It is not, and this is extremely important, a one-to-one version of the city, but an experiment which wants and tries to construct a new, different version of Karlskrona. It is an experiment in city planning, community building and in radical democracy. The aim of SUPERFLEX, as in most of their projects, is to get the given location, this time people in Karlskrona, involved in the making of K2.

SUPERFLEX chose Karlskrona for special reasons. It is a small coastal city in Sweden, mostly known for its Baltic Sea navy complexes and its fishermen. Lately, the area has grown into one of the most dynamic centres of concentration of IT companies and new media businesses in Sweden. The point being that in a community of circa 60,000 inhabitants, and with the de facto existence of substantial ground knowledge of the internet environment, this experiment is planted in fruitful soil. It would hardly make sense to try to restructure a new version of a huge city such as London or Berlin – as it would be scarcely sensible to try to introduce this type of internet activity into new unaccustomed territories.

The K2 project has two phases. At the beginning, an open programme was launched in the internet which provided a version of Karlskrona. SUPERFLEX constructed about 1/5 of the city area, not willing to make the framework larger, but stressing the necessity of the people themselves participating, later on as the need arose, to extend the available area of K2. During this first phase, everyone interested was able to log into K2 and to start to make the city.

The first results of the project were very promising. There was a great deal of activity in the site, which daily drew between 300–500 visitors. As expected, a lot of the action led to various levels of chaos and confrontation when people were building on top of each other, with little control and collaboration or common rules. Participants also started up their own K2 internet newspapers and different social clubs. Moreover, quite soon certain types of loose rules of behaviour began to be formulated and followed.

In its second phase, taking place in the near future, K2 is to be fully available only to people living in the real Karlskrona and who register with the project. People from outside will still be able to visit the internet city as tourists, but they do not have the right to decide and to vote on the contents of K2. At this point, a big screen showing the current situation of K2 is to be set up in the main square of Karlskrona, reflecting the changes and differences to its 'real' version, from now on referred to here as K1.

As mentioned above, the radicalism of the approach of SUPERFLEX is not in the claim that activity in K2 in itself would immediately lead to something significant in K1. SUPERFLEX are very aware of the plain ridiculousness of the most avid comments and hopes which see internet and participation via it as a new radical form of democracy. Internet in itself is just a tool, a means of communication which can be used and abused in endlessly varied ways. What's needed is critical distance; self-evidently, the content comes from outside the medium of communication. Nor is this to deny that the internet has obviously affected and dramatically changed the lives and habits of people today.

The radicalism of the K2 project is to question and to analyse. It is a way to experiment with the new medium in the context of meaningful topics and matters already present and operating in the 'real' world. And one of these themes is democracy; especially how we want to understand it, and what kind of alternative ways and possibilities are embodied in it. In short, it is about how people decide to deal with each other, what kind of community do they establish and sustain, and how? Who is included, who is excluded, how much flexibility and uncertainty can it tolerate, and why? The radicalism is seen in the way the project opens up new horizons and means of acting and being together. When successful, it adds up and opens up new means of participating in the act of making and maintaining a community. Thus, it is to return politics and politicisation back into the daily routine of choosing or not choosing.

It is about taking the chance of responsibility and freedom seriously.

K2 is a simulation of a city in a new environment. As a simulation, it enables the participants to experiment and to take risks which are not possible in K1. To put in bluntly, in K1 things have their own important history and past, while in K2 the past is very recent and it does not limit choices to the same extent. Another important aspect is the question of ownership and money. In K1 these aspects also have an important history leading to the present tense, in K2 they are up for grabs, flexible and more than less constructable.

Looking into my magic bowl filled with ice-cold raspberry vodka, the future seems indeed sensationally blurry, but it does have some clearer variations in it. On the face of it, the people in K2 (and in every similar experiment) must very quickly make some important and long-lasting choices. Otherwise why bother spending time in just another version of endless but superficial role-play-games. The bag of troubling questions has the following line-up: Are they going to make certain clear rules and regulations for activity within the net? Or are they going to allow, and for how long, a certain level of anarchy and chaos? We have to remember that it is up to them, the participants in K2 to decide. SUPERFLEX take an active part in the discussions, but they are very aware of their role. Their task is to lure the others to add to and create the new city of K2.

Just imagine the possibilities? The city centre can, for example, be made car free, office free, planned only for dead cheap housing, fabulously wild clubs, superb restaurants and all the rest of the fun. Or the city centre can be made available for only the real sweet-and-sour Swedes, or only for people with a high enough income and level of intelligence. The rules can be such that they do not strive for consensus but that conversation is seen as a constructive way of facing and confronting various problems and views. Or the whole city collapses into endless quarrels and fights between the inhabitants.

Not wanting to speculate any further on these generalising aspects, let me return to the presuppositions of this experiment. Of course, K2 is not a neutral and completely free zone where anyone and everyone can participate to the same extent. This again underlines that experiments in the internet are always partly connected to the so-called real world. Whether we want to admit it or not, it is de facto only people with the

powerful enough computers (K2 as yet only functions in PC format), the knowledge and time to use them who can participate in full. Similarly, the forces behind the experiment are not only showing good will. There are many different interests simultaneously at play, some keeping their distance and staying under cover for the moment. The aims of SUPERFLEX are perhaps already relatively clear. The other institutions involved, the city of Karlskrona and the Swedish telephone service provider Telia, both main sponsors of the project, obviously have and had their own needs and interests.

The interests of the other institutions can be outlined as follows. For the city of Karlskrona, and its Mayor, the project is about daily politics and the image of a city, and about proliferation of the city into an even more credible hot-house for hip-hop new media. And it is not too hard to see what was in it for the telephone company. It was a way for them to promote their expertise, to advertise themselves and to act as a sponsor for artistic activities using state-of-the-art internet facilities. That is until they got cold feet, and backed out of the whole Super-Telia deal.

Their reasons were very telling, revealing the highly volatile character and deep inner anxieties of contemporary market forces. All of a sudden Telia seem to have realised that K2 is not only about fun-loving internet consumerists. K2 in fact could contain material, which a publicly listed company would not want to be associated with – whether it goes under the name of art or not. As a sordid anecdote, the company had extra special problems with a certain feature in K2 where you are allowed and able to kick, hard and heavy, the other avatars: the other participants in the experiment. At this turn of the events, after heated discussions, Telia only calmed down when SUPERFLEX wondered whether they would try to forbid people cursing on their mobile phones.

Telia's reaction was partly motivated by the sudden severe drop in their share value, but it is rather clear that their reasons went deeper. Telia had understood that they had entered an unknown world in which they cannot even dream of having control. And this is the crucial point, the intersection where radical democracy (questioning, analyses and politicisation) is not compatible with the demands and wishes of a stock market company looking for fat profits, a positive image and as much control as possible. The point is that, as in any 'real' society, K2 could equally well turn out to be a neo-hippie camp, a gay dad meeting, an

Afro-American Nazi convention or a gathering point for people who refuse to pay taxes to the government. This is crucial: K2 must stay open, and face the risks. K2 has to mutate and grow into unknown fields, which is something a huge global player seems not to be able to come to terms with – neither practically nor ideologically.

Looking back at this mighty fight between the poor good and the unbearable rich evil, in the case of SUPERFLEX vs. Telia, it was the supercompany that got scared. However, does this mean that super-artists beat the supercompany on their home turf? Undisputedly, SUPERFLEX made an event out of a stock market phenomenon, stripping off the clothes of the structures of the global stock market. It was an aspect of radical democracy at work. It was, for sure, unintended, but the action showed how a stock market company would not tolerate experiments, tolerance and plurality of values when the profits were in danger. SUPERFLEX laid bare the hollowness of the rhetorics of the global player in question, underlining the difference between what they say and what they really do.

With Telia gone, SUPERFLEX must find another sponsor, because the technology that makes K2 possible is expensive in the extreme. It is technology that divides the haves from the have-nots, making the gulf between them most likely to widen in future. Not only in the axis of north and south, but within each and every centre and periphery. Companies such as Telia make huge stacks of money with the new technology. And, of course, in itself there is nothing wrong with that. The problems for the artists and the people who want to analyse and criticise, ultimately to open new visions and possibilities, is how their views fit with the content of global companies running after glorious global profits. The question is how much openness, uncertainty and room for mistakes is allowed and possible in the whole project, ranging from what takes places in K2 to the question of the financial and technological framework in which K2 is realised.

In other words, what will always remain is that when SUPERFLEX is using technology paid for by a major business player, it is not without its difficulties – for both sides. On the other side there is the open-ended, actually anarchic, not so democratic process and platform of the internet where networking is almost completely horizontal and deterritorialised. There is no central point of control. The controlling aspect is very much apparent on the other, the oligopolistic side where we have seen a huge amount of consolidations and mergers such as Time and Warner. What we are witnessing is a major centralisation of control through the unification of the main players in the information and communication power structures. A structure which is turning into a quasi-monopoly. (See Hardt & Negri)

But, to stress it once more, it is these difficulties which make it interesting and also hopefully a worthwhile project. As is the case with democracy (as in common rule based on participation, continuation, responsibility, accountability and the system of checks and balances), there hardly can be any sudden major change or improvement, but partial and slow improvements for the better. And in this process you cannot overcome the global business players. The point is how do you collaborate with them?

One way to hit the nail on its head (with hands deep down in your pockets) is to be aware of the type of collaboration and the inner relationships within it. The distance from a critical attitude to affirmative action and plain 'kissing ass' is not so terribly far, and not always so easy to see or to avoid. And to be sure – it happens to all of us. Some-times the task of deciding what is the colour of one's tongue is not a pleasant task. The dimensions of contrasts in the case of K2 are just enormous. The counterpart is the global business player, who is constantly out looking for the cultural legitimation for its activities. The global rather unregulated market economy needs its cultural symbols and artists. Of course, it will also get them, but at what price? To put it a little differently: is there any real possibility of critical distance and alternatives?

In general, and especially within the frames of SUPERFLEX project, I honestly do think that there are. But the possibilities are not vis-à-vis the global players. It is not us against them, but about us trying and being forced to refigure the ways and means of constructive resistance in today's global economic situations. It is possible, if not too probable, and it is very difficult. And it is a little more complicated than changing from one brand of chocolate chips to another.

Resistance against the all-mighty capitalist forces gained a proud public face in the recent large-scale demonstrations from Seattle to Prague and back, following world-wide all the main conferences of global organisations such as the IMF, the World Bank and the Group

of Eight. In the light of the generally shock-effect prone media, the protests might seem only to try to block the conferences or suffice with throwing rotten eggs at the baddies of corporate multinationals, but often there is a lot of serious work behind the opinions and actions. And this is said without a kilogram of extra-sympathy for any tree-huggers.

The protesters seem to be most effective when they are able to concentrate on one single brand, branch or company. The sneaker king Nike has learned – in a bitter lesson – to acknowledge this. Anti-Nike campaigning has grown into a large scale protest movement, mainly protesting against the working conditions, for example, their widely known use in developing countries of labour paid less than the minimum wage. The Canadian journalist Naomi Klein offers a conclusive view on such action by analysing the attitudes and working methods of both the companies behind the superbrand and their protesters.

Amid the hullabaloo she raises in favour of the protesters, Klein is also perfectly aware of the limits of consumer-based protests. The consumers are mostly in the developed countries, able to criticise and to act against the ad campaigns, but those mostly negatively affected are never the consumers but the workers in the sweatshops in Jakarta and Manila. In the Age of Shopping, consumer-based criticism turns too easily into a sophisticated variant of the famous but pathetic burden of the white man. This said, while the activities of the protests are by no means useless, they do have strict limits.

On a more theoretical level, one of the main and most ambiguous problems is the rhetorics of multiculturalism and pluralism. The demand, made by cultural and post-colonial critics, feminist and postmodern writers, for greater diversity and acknowledgement of it, has been met with wide-open arms from the side of global capitalism. Cultural diversity as in plurality of ways of producing and products, ability to ship products all around the globe is exactly what makes the global capital system tick and churn out more profits. Diversity has long since become a best-selling product, making it very problematic to consider only the themes of identity politics and the politics of representation. The double-edged motto must be remembered: every difference is an opportunity. Global market capitalism has consequences in which one must take into serious consideration economical questions. Amid vast tracts of lame deconstruction and self-congratulatory emancipation, this has been

lacking too long. Klein herself nicely reflects the attitudes of the 90's: "we were too busy analysing the pictures being projected on the wall to notice that the wall itself had been sold."

However, returning to K2, my intuitive and wishful claim is that K2 is more than just a game, a simulation of architecture and city planning. It is more than just an opportunity to play around with various virtual chances. It is a brilliant way to be particular, to localise the vast problems and questions at hand, to confront within a specially framed context the demands and risks of global realities.

K2 is first of all political – and political in the sense that it is about opening a door to the process of redescription. And this is political, obviously not as in party politics, but as in each and everyone of us trying to describe and redescribe ourselves and our surroundings in accordance with our values, interests, wants, wishes and fears. (See Hannula) Theoretical, but personally lived-through back-up can be recalled from writers such as Albert Camus and Salman Rushdie, both of whom, even if in different time periods and contexts, have stressed that the most effective type of power available for an individual is the power of redescription. But it is a very demanding kind of way of telling one's story. Shouting out loud that you are a hustler, faggot or a skin-head (or even all of them at once) is not really saying too much. The point is what kind of an A, B or C you are – and why.

This process of shaping and making the content of concepts is politics as in politicisation. It is about making things political, questioning them and forcing them to openness. It is about the participation of the people in the K2 project. It is very vital that their participation is directly connected to a real situation. A comparative situation which makes the motivation of participation higher – and also raises the level of difficulty.

In my view, what is more in K2 is how it necessarily binds people into an experiment. An experiment which loses its driving force very soon without the commitment of the participants. The commitment comes only at a huge price. Firstly, there is the energy, which must be put in without any guarantees of success or pay-back. Secondly, it is a compromise. An endless, always continuing compromise which the participants in K2 have to agree upon. And to everyone's great surprise, here comes the concept of radical democracy into the picture again. Not as in any type of utopia, but as in a certain unique style of romanticism

based on hope. The hope of being able to figure out better compromises of being and living with one another.

There is another source of power, something extra to rely on in K2. It is called experience. It is the experience of both individual and collective sense, which participation within K2 provides and encourages. Herein lies its very strength. It is an experience of doing something together – a sensation which most of the commercial applications of internet desperately try to use but fail to achieve, because a common face-to-face experience is always more than just consuming a product.

All of a sudden, even in the internet environment, we reach the age-old questions of a community. It must be an inclusive, flexible and tolerant community, which seeks to overcome the problems of exclusion based, for example, on race, religion or sexual preferences. Participation and compromises all come down to the process of being-with. It is essential that the activities and non-actions are bounding, launched with a sense of history of place and time, and reciprocal responsibility within the realm of K2. And here, once the rules and regulations start to develop, it will be very fascinating to see what kind of checks and balances the participants in K2 are willing or able to form. The possibilities are enormous, opening up paths for critical but positive and constructive political activity.

There is much more to K2 than building another support group to oppose multi-national companies selling soda pop. It can be about very basic concerns of organising and running a local community – as in deciding how long the buses run at night. Or it can be, as in an existing experiment in the USA – in the state of Texas, of all places – about managing people's needs in internet. This means, for example, instead of queuing at the government offices, being able to renew your fishing license via the internet. An action, which does not change the world, but does perhaps make your daily realities a little more pleasant.

So the chances and the risks are there. It is all very much up in the air. For sure, when the compromises get tough in the virtual world, and when the house eventually burns down, the rats in this virtual boat will indeed almost effortlessly jump into the next experiment. But, does the experiment leave any traces on the person who clicked in and out? And yes, how many internet experiences of experiments do we need? Is there any faint possibility of learning from one's mistakes? •

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TOOLS AND MANI-FESTOS

CHARLES ESCHE

• I guess the worst thing I can say is that I'm writing this on the 1st of May – International Workers Day. I should be out marching or something – but for what and with whom?

I didn't realise it before, but May Day was officially declared a celebration as early as 1889, and has grown ever since as an international holiday. All that nineteenth century creativity somehow puts the following hundred years to shame. What was the big idea in the 1900s? Science and Technology? Free Markets? Pragmatism? Mass Murder?

Anyway, in England, the country of my birth, they have a typical compromise for May Day where the holiday actually falls on the Monday nearest to the 1st of May, so most people just treat it as a day off. If they want to march they have to take a day's leave from work, on the holiday itself there are no rallies, there is no testing of the powers of the state, no politics, just more consumption opportunities. If the 1st of May could be seen as one of SUPERFLEX's tool proposals (let's make a holiday for revolutionaries and see what happens), then the Brits already know how to disarm it. It goes back to Edmund Burke I think, and the conservative reaction to 1789. It wasn't always true, remember Oliver Cromwell – but it is now, and seems assured of staying that way.

So, forget Britain, and see what tools could do in places less confident of themselves and all they have already achieved. At least, that's what I said to myself 18 months ago when I moved to Denmark/Sweden (Malmöhagen, as someone said recently). Of course SUPERFLEX were one of the main attractions to the area. I could work with them, as I am, and maybe use their idea of 'tools' to think through some ideas for the art institution itself.

'Tools', in their terms, seem to me to be an idea about underlying structures – about how things can be different if you do something with the engineering of a situation, and then stand back to watch the results. Applied to an art hall, the approach has to be equally deep-rooted in terms of what and how things are managed. It means changing the purpose of spaces in order to investigate their possibilities again. In the Rooseum in Malmö we have a building, a little money, a provincial city and a reasonably dynamic region. To adopt (and adapt) the SUPER-FLEX methodology, we have to ask what we can do with these raw ingredients – though it can start to sound too much like cooking now.

How can we have a 'real' and relevant role in this place and with the people here? How can we reasonably impose art culture or expect people to seize the opportunity we try to provide? How can we be friendly while still staying difficult – because difficulty in the end cannot be avoided, can it? How can we turn the Rooseum from a place with set expectations and limited possibilities into a tool for a community – be that local, regional, artistic or whatever? I don't want to answer that question here – it's for another time and place – but simply to point out how the approach (the philosophy) of tools can be put to use – and not only regarding the actual ones SUPERFLEX themselves provide. At the least, thinking about tools in this way tells us that we can certainly no longer be guardians of a fixed cultural legacy, nor confident arbiters of taste, at least not in any way other than as capricious gatekeepers of palaces for calm continuity.

What thinking about these questions also provokes is a need to have some polar opposites, or dialectics, with which to juggle. For me, two quotes from an artist and a philosopher provide one set of columns on which things can be constructed. Vito Acconci in 1980 spoke rather prescriptively about the "… gallery as a place where a community could be called to order, called to a particular purpose…". But only twenty years later, in a discussion on hospitality, Jacques Derrida seems to have completely opened out the question again. He now talks about the necessity to simply say yes: "Let us say yes to who or what turns up, before any determination, before any anticipation, before any identification, whether or not it has to do with a foreigner, an immigrant, an invited guest, or an unexpected visitor, whether or not the new arrival is the citizen of another country, a human, animal, or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female." This call seems more urgent than ever in the light of recent political events in Europe. How can we start to put a value simply on saying 'yes', on welcoming and being welcomed, on hospitality for its own sake? Only, it seems, by speaking clearly of its significance in our lives, of the pleasure of providing for others that global capitalism can only phrase in terms of charity. If we can make places in the world where the diversity of a city or a community is a key to its richness, where identity is based on 'cosmopolitanism' rather than ethnic essentialism, then we can maybe celebrate globalism rather than oppose it as a tool of profit-driven expansion. And saying yes to the stranger, even in an art institution, could be its beginning.

Again in relation to SUPERFLEX, I have used another term to describe what they and a few other artists seem to be doing. It also has some application in relation to institutions. 'Engaged autonomy' seems to me to provide a way of on the one hand avoiding the Greenbergian reductivism that is, at least in today's depoliticised artists, a certain (privileged) space to do their own thing. What it can mean is best described in terms of specific artistic autonomies, such as the economic autonomy granted by state funding for research or culture, combined with a low level integration of market opportunities. The SUPERGAS project in which shares are sold whilst the research is sponsored through both the art system and independent aid agencies is a perfect example. Other 'engaged autonomies' function in similarly ambivalent spaces that are, as with the 'tools', mostly identifiable at a structural level. For instance, they may exist where institutional critique crosses with an individualist, ironic and perhaps humorous detachment, or where the production of the praxis of life in an art institution confronts sociological or anthropological research (look at the way people behave in an art bar). These different forms of 'engaged autonomy' provide the means by which the slippery enclosure that is contemporary art can have some purchase

on the world without falling into crassness or affirmation of the status quo, something that is a constant danger once market mechanisms are adopted or art-life barriers are crossed. In terms of institutions themselves, 'engaged autonomy' provides exactly that combination of real local effectiveness with a leftover modernist aspiration to utopian escapism without which the sites of art can also descend into a related kind of affirmative populism. Utopia of course should remain a problematic term, not least because it can provide vain intellectuals with an excuse to endlessly postpone their ethical judgements of present actions. Yet its purchase on the imagination makes it hard to reject out of hand, and the genuine aspirational desire for such a thing has been behind most of the last century's greatest artworks, as well as its worst political tragedies.

Perhaps the most appropriate role for utopia today is as a ghost or a spectre. It cannot be a coincidence that Marx, in the opening lines of the Communist Manifesto, refers to Communism as a spectre haunting Europe, an already dead idea revived for a new age. Maybe the ghost can gain some weight and substance again today. Sitting in an office in Malmö – a city that, as William Burroughs noted, is built around a graveyard at its absolute centre – I wonder how those polarities of local and international, relevance and experiment, nihilism and possibility might be negotiated now. And I see in SUPERFLEX and their tools some ways to move between these rocks and hard places. They can help us to move beyond the legacy of modernism, to get behind the institutional surface – not as a form of negative critique but as a way of investigating other possibilities of what such places might become. I remember the cry of the old Socialist Workers party, "Neither Washington nor Moscow but International Socialism". Well, I don't have the end, but "Neither Utopia nor Affirmation…" seems a good start today •

TOOLS/
ACTIVITIES
1996-2002/

SUPERFLEX Rasmus Nielsen, Jakob Fenger & Bjørnstjerne Christiansen started working together in 1993. This section comprises a chronological list of SUPERFLEX's activities interspersed with exhibitions, other presentations of their work and interviews with collaboration partners.

SUPERGAS/ RESEARCH, Mozambique 1996

SUPERFLEX make their first research trip to East Africa (Mozambique and Malawi). They visit various aid organisations, exploring the global north-south divide, pursuing a specific interest in the methods of self-presentation used by Western aid organisations in Africa.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS MEETINGS, Spring 1996

SUPERFLEX meet the plastics manufacturer, Freddie Bruzelius (August Olsen's eftf.), to discuss SUPERFLEX's idea of using plastic membranes for spherical biogas digesters. August Olsen eftf. suggests that SUPERFLEX should meet Jan Mallan, one of the leading biogas engineers in Denmark – see interview. Work begins on the development of the basic principles of the pressure equalisation system for small-scale biogas digesters.

JAN MALLAN

Engineer and partner of SUPERGAS Ltd.

DB/ We would like to know how you met SUPERFLEX? Did they come to you and ask for your support, your technical expertise?

JM/ I was working with biogas for a company called August Olsen's eft.. August Olsen's built biogas plants and later on produced other things in connection with biogas. I think it was SUPERFLEX who knew August Olsen personally very well.

BS/ And through him they met you?

JM/ He said that SUPERFLEX would like to build a biogas installation. They needed somebody who could help them with the technique to produce biogas. Normally it's very expensive to build small biogas plants. But SUPERFLEX had a concept to build the whole thing in Copenhagen, so small you could transport it on your bicycle.

I felt it was a good idea; then we talked about what it should look like and what the purpose was of the installation in Tanzania. So we found out about the problems in Tanzania. They have no good biogas there. They use it but it's not working well. There are still many problems. So we discussed how we could make something for the same price, but something that would work. I think we have succeeded in producing such an installation. It's still running in Tanzania, it's not perfect, but we're still working on it.

BS/ So you have an interest in improving it?

JM/ The first installation in Tanzania didn't work absolutely perfectly, but we needed a documentation. The idea is to achieve a very cheap, man-made mass-product. And for mass-production you need documentation to prove that everything is working well.

DB/ Did you install a sort of prototype?

JM/ Yes, the one in Tanzania is a prototype. We also have other contacts. In Vietnam there's an institute for test-

UFF, Danish NGO, campaign photo

ing small biogas installations. It belongs to the University of Ho Chi Min City. They have very good communication via the internet and all the research can be seen on the internet.

BS/ Do you think that it will soon be ready for mass-production or does it need more time for development?

JM/ I think the documentation will take about 7 months, and then we will start production. But we also need a production place in Asia, it's very cheap there, much cheaper than in Denmark. You cannot produce cheaply in Denmark.

DB/ The idea is to produce the biogas there?

JM/ You see, there is also the question of a sales organisation. The people don't have the money to pay, so you need a bank. You need to work together with experts in this field and we hope that the first mass-produced installation will be ready perhaps in a year, perhaps in a year and a half.

BS/ The problem is that the technical development is linked to the social situation, to the cultural situation, so you have to be aware of all these aspects and not only of the technical problems.

JM/ You see, one could produce a lot of small biogas plants but there is very little money. It's mostly NGOs – non-governmental organisations – that are usually working with these things. This is the first time I've worked in this field, normally I work in industry on bigger installations.

DB/ What was your motivation for working with SUPER-FLEX. Is it different from what you did before? What did you mean when you said, "Yes, I am interested in the project"?

JM/ SUPERFLEX phoned me and said they would like to know something about biogas. I said, "You're welcome. The first time I won't cost anything, but next time I will." I wanted to be paid, I didn't really believe in their plans and they told me they had no money. So I phoned Freddy Bruzelius from August Olsen and asked him about SUPERFLEX and their ideas. He wasn't sure but he thought that it would be interesting to carry on. So I changed my mind and said they didn't have to pay. But I said that when they started work, I wanted to take part in the project.

BS/ So, if this is successful you will get a percentage of the success. That's only fair.

JM/ They are serious about the project and they work hard. No, I'm not sceptical any more, I believe it will succeed. I think we can raise enough money. There is a lot of goodwill for SUPERFLEX and a lot of connections. I think when we are working seriously and show results it will be possible to reach the target.

BS/ In effect, you joined them because you wanted to find out what was possible and what was not possible?

JM/ No, I thought it would be interesting not to work for industry and that one could work on a project differently to the way it's done in industry. I was interested to make something which could be used differently compared

to what I had done before. There are a lot of other aspects which you don't find in industry where you can always use money to make improvements. But it's more interesting to make it simpler and cheaper. That's also different from industry. In industry you don't ask whether there is any money. Of course, there is. But here you know there's no money. I believe it's a very good idea of SUPERFLEX's to make small biogas plants for families with only two or three cows and some chickens.

DB/ Have you been to Africa with them?

JM/ No, never, but I heard a lot from SUPERFLEX. They have often travelled to Africa, and there is a lot of literature about developing countries.

BS/ Why have you never been to Africa?

JM/ Because such a small installation can be erected by a family itself. When you make a bigger plant it's necessary for the engineer to be on the spot. And in Vietnam the institute takes care of everything.

BS/ Did you ever ask yourself why SUPERFLEX develop such projects within the field of art?

JM/ Of course. They are artists, not engineers, that's perhaps difficult to understand. But it's not just engineering, it's also a thought, an idea. They made an installation at the Louisiana Museum of Art and it's very good that such an installation can be used not only as an artist's sculpture. There's more behind it. In Holland you have organisations where scientists, artists and others are working together to develop new ideas. I believe the initiative there came from an engineer. Here it's the other way around. The artists come to the engineer. SUPERFLEX asked me, I didn't ask SUPERFLEX. When they first asked me, I didn't think it was a good idea. But we've succeeded in making the installation work. And I believe that there is a good possibility that the use of biogas could be made more popular in these areas.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS IN AFRICA, *Proms III,* Brandts Klædefabrik, Odense 1996
The installation consisted of a three-dimensional orange light box in the shape of a map of Africa plus small printed cardboard figures of Africans and of SUPERFLEX, showing different situations from a research tour in Mozambique in 1996. There were Biogas graffiti tags in the toilet of the art institution as part of the exhibition. The catalogue included an introductory text on the project and photographs from the trip.

SUPERFLEX MUSIC/ Copenhagen 1996
SUPERFLEX Music production in Copenhagen with animal sounds in a collaboration with August Engkilde. The main production is based on tools for DJs and musicians.
First release is the CD "WARUM SOLLTEN WIR ANGST VOR GROSSEN TIEREN HABEN?".

Superflex Music.
Warum sollten wir Angst vor großen Tieren haben?

SUPERFLEX
MUSIC
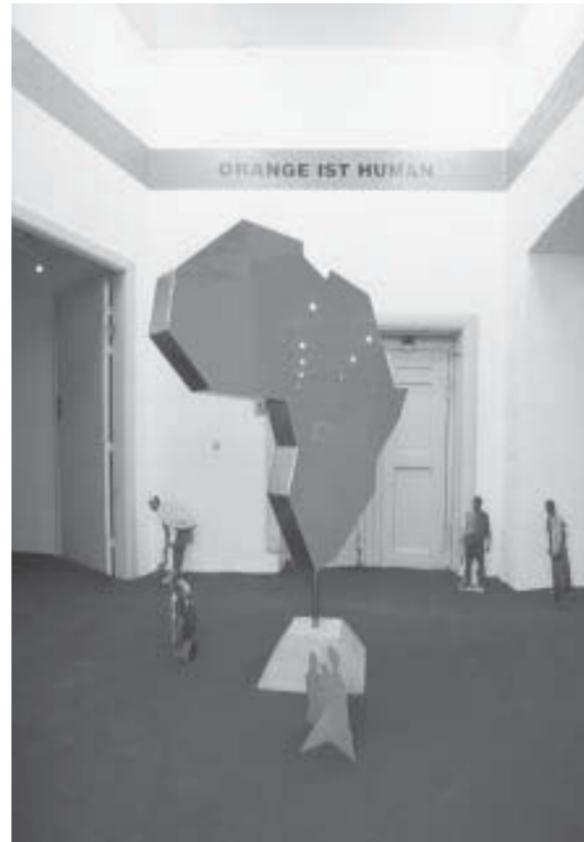
SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS IN AFRICA, *ArtGenda*, Øksnehallen, Copenhagen 1996
The installation included a large orange wall with the slogan "Orange ist human" [sic], an aquarium-like donation box with small pictures (plus text) of the research trip in Mozambique, and an additional text which read: CULTURE IS ABOUT GIVING. As it was presented, the project closely resembled the presentation models used by aid organisations.

SUPERGAS/ SURUDE, Copenhagen 1996
SUPERFLEX and Jan Mallan meet Prof. Lekule and Dr. Sarwatt of SURUDE (Sustainable Rural Development, Morogoro, Tanzania) in the Avenue Hotel, Copenhagen, to discuss possible cooperation between the two groups. SURUDE and SUPERFLEX agree to work together to develop a new biogas system for rural areas in Tanzania.

Footnote: SUPERFLEX first met SURUDE at a seminar on integrated farming and sustainable energy in Denmark.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS IN AFRICA, *Cruising*, Kunstforeningen, Copenhagen 1997
The installation included a presentation of clothes designed by SUPERFLEX and Aase Hansen, later worn in Tanzania in autumn 1997. There were also sketches of the future biogas project on the wall and a presentation by the Ugandan artist, Rose Namubiru Kimuvira. A text presented Rose's view of the idea of the biogas principle.

In addition there was a cardboard cow (5 x 4 metres) displayed in the exhibition space. A flame was symbolically coming out of the cow's rear. The image of the cow was taken from the SURUDE logo and the flame was added by SUPERFLEX. On the reverse side of the cow Rose presented her perception of the relation between aesthetics and function in a Ugandan context. She constructed various tools, for instance wooden vessels with symbolic patterns, and fixed them onto the cow. At the opening of the show an African dish was served from a large pot over a gas flame.

Footnote: One art critic accused SUPERFLEX of just riding on a "post-colonial wave". Others said they couldn't cook in the exhibition space because there was another artist already doing this.

SUPERGAS/ 1st BIOGAS TEST/ Tanzania, July–August 1997
The first biogas installation in Bigwa, Morogoro in Tanzania. On the initiative of SURUDE, the Massawe family agree to a trial run of the SUPERFLEX biogas plant in their household. SUPERFLEX stay with the family for six weeks, installing and testing the plant, until it is fully functioning. This period also includes meetings with women's committees and local government officials, participation in an agricultural seminar, and two safari trips.

SUPERGAS/ SURUDE, Tanzania, July–August 1997
While SUPERFLEX are installing the biogas system in Tanzania, cooperation between SUPERFLEX and SURUDE is discussed;

the organisation which emerges from this is named SUPER-RUDE; the name itself initially causes some consternation but is, after careful consideration, accepted by Prof. F. Lekule and Dr. Sarwatt.

FAUSTIN LEKULE
Professor at the SUA University, Morogoro, Tanzania and co-founder of SURUDE

EH/ How and when did you meet SUPERFLEX? What were the circumstances?

FL/ I met SUPERFLEX in Denmark when I was attending a development workers' seminar at Tune, I think it was 1995/96. They expressed their interest in the biogas technology so we arranged to meet at my hotel. We had further discussions there about the possibility of modifying our plastic bio-digester in order to improve its durability. We agreed that they arrange to come to Tanzania and see our design and to help us develop a more reliable biogas system.

EH/ Did they contact you or was it a chance meeting?

FL/ I believe they had some information about my visit to Tune.

EH/ Tell us something about your own background and about the experiences you bring with you from your work in the past.

FL/ I am a specialist in livestock production and have been heavily involved in research in rural areas which led to my initiation of founding an NGO (SURUDE – Sustainable Rural Organisation) of which I was the first chairman. SURUDE was formed in 1994 and from its formation we have been involved in various activities related to rural development. The technologies promoted revolve around livestock and hence the biogas technology.

EH/ Tell us something about SURUDE and what it has to do with the biogas project.

FL/ SURUDE is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) working to improve the livelihood of rural communities. Biogas was introduced to conserve the environment and get cheap energy from animal waste in rural areas.

EH/ Are you aware that SUPERFLEX is an art group?

FL/ Yes.

EH/ There's a certain kind of polarity between economy and art; how can this serve the purpose of the biogas project or be adverse to it?

FL/ Art can be used to disseminate information faster.

EH/ Have you seen SUPERFLEX's photo series?

FL/ Only some.

EH/ What role do they play in the project from your point of view?

FL/ They could inspire newcomers to the technology.

EH/ Tell us something about the economical, social, anthropological and cultural situation in Tanzania pertaining to
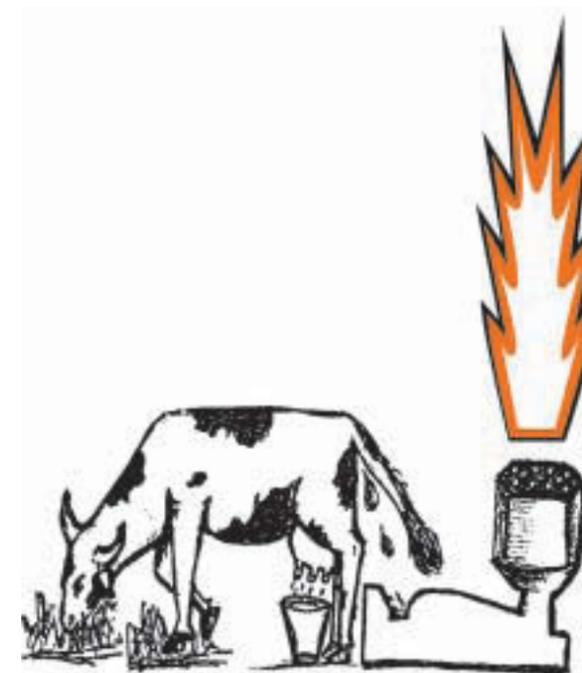
the introduction of such biogas plants. About the, no doubt, complex problems.

FL/ Biogas has no social attachment. Economically it is used to reduce expenditure on other energy sources.

EH/ What are the sociological advantages and disadvantages for the biogas project?

FL/ It imparts important knowledge on the need to conserve the environment. After all, SURUDE biogas is just one of the several options for protecting the environment. It has, however, several limitations like cost, the need for water, need for livestock, complexity of many designs etc.

EH/ What kind of people and/or organisations are interested in a biogas plant by SUPERFLEX?

FL/ There is only one SUPERFLEX plant in Tanzania

EH/ What do its users like about it?

FL/ More durable and easy to transport.

EH/ Could biogas plants be mass-produced in Tanzania?

FL/ The price is what many people cannot afford.

EH/ Would there be a market?

FL/ Better market would be for urban and peri-urban farmers, not rural areas.

EH/ What are your personal interests in cooperation with SUPERFLEX (I mean rather the ideological than the economical side)?

FL/ Eventually come up with a cheap but durable biogas plant.

EH/ What do you think about SUPERFLEX's working method of discussing everything extensively in the group? Do you enjoy the fact that the talks might not always be entirely serious?

FL/ Good. Yes.

(Following this interview, further questions were e-mailed to Prof. Lekule by Edda Hoefer.)

EH/ We've had more talks with SUPERFLEX about the book and there are some more questions we want to ask you. Could you describe how the normal biogas system (the tube digester) which you are using works and what problems it presents.

FL/ The tubular plastic bio-digester works on the principle of continuous flow. Like other biogas systems it uses animal excreta as a substrate and produces biogas.

Problems:
1) Fragility of plastic, needs to be well protected.
2) Easily damaged by sun: must be protected.
3) Gas production not sufficient for large families.

EH/ Please explain why you are interested in SUPERFLEX's biogas system.

FL/ It is more durable, easy to transport and install.

EH/ How can a farmer finance a biogas system?

FL/ Establishment of a revolving fund. Initiating a heifer in the trust scheme and include a biogas plant in the package.

SUPERRUDE

DON'T WASTE WASTE

EH/ What small scale economy models does SURUDE offer to finance for instance a biogas system or a cow?

FL/ Credit scheme as indicated above.

Final update November 2001:

FL/ I am still working with SUPERFLEX. Looking back on those past two years I can say about our work that it has been encouraging, but there is no clear indication on how to sustain it. We are still searching for a more durable but relatively cheap biogas system that can easily be transported, sold and installed.

For the future I hope for more awareness creation, more institutions promoting the biogas technology, more NGOs dealing with biogas and hence more farmers adopting it. Success will come once the use of biogas has become an integral part of the whole farming system.

SUPERFLEX MUSIC, Tanzania, July–August 1997
Several recordings of animal sounds.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS IN AFRICA, The Louisiana Exhibition. *New Art from Denmark and Scania* 1997, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk 1997
The contribution of SUPERFLEX to this group exhibition showed a documentation of the first installation of their biogas system in Africa, combined with video interviews with SURUDE, also showing the installation process.

The Tanzanian graphic designer Mgumia was invited to illustrate his perception of SUPERFLEX's biogas project. The Mgumia paintings were presented in the form of 2 light boxes (each 2 x 3 metres) and a poster showing campaign material was offered to the audience. In addition, texts, photos, drawings, an aquarium with a number of goldfish, and the orange biogas balloon introduced viewers to the project. A small booklet described the project, including anthropological and economical aspects; it also contained a text by Mohammed Yunus (founder of Grameen Bank) on micro-credits.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS IN AFRICA, Helsinki, Winter 1997
SUPERFLEX were invited to Helsinki by two different institutions: The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art, and Artheneum Museum (now KIASMA).

One exhibition was located in a post office using the function and the infrastructure of this institution. It was primarily used as an information centre about the biogas project. The other exhibition was located in the Artheneum Museum. SUPERFLEX presented the biogas project in Tanzania, using basically the same material as in the Louisiana exhibition but showing it in a different set-up. Additionally they showed a large video-projection of the first biogas test in Tanzania. In front of the projection they placed the orange balloon, an information table, and goldfish in an aquarium (as in Louisiana).

SUPERFLEX made use of the different possibilities the post office and the museum offered. While people didn't view the information stand in the post office as art, the presentation in the museum certainly was viewed as such. In each case the context was crucial to the public's perception of the project.

Footnote: The goldfish (the neat, aero-dynamic formula one version) swimming in the aquarium have become an integral part of most of SUPERFLEX's presentations. They create a relaxed atmosphere where people should feel comfortable to go through all the materials SUPERFLEX offer in their installations.

BIRGITTE FEIRING
Anthropologist, advisor on development issues for various organisations

DB/ How did you meet SUPERFLEX and how did you become involved in the biogas project?

BF/ I met Rasmus at a party, but I had heard about SUPERFLEX before because my husband is an artist and is kind of familiar with what they are doing. Rasmus and I, we had a lot of discussions that night because SUPERFLEX framed the biogas invention in some kind of development context. I've been working in the development business for many years, so I got interested in this from the development perspective – SUPERGAS as a development project. From an initial interest in the issue I helped them to overcome some of their limitations in the development world because it's a kind of specialised business and you have to know which buttons to press and how to address the issues. They are very good as artists at selling their ideas in different contexts, but still, for instance, they had to convince Danish bureaucracy. We tried to address the European Union to get financial support for the broader dissemination of the biogas plant. In order to do that they had to fill in a form with many pages. I worked with them on many specific issues like a consultant.

DB/ Klaus Høyer, who is doing the organisation for SUPERFLEX, told us about his general interest in development aid and about the differences between now and some decades ago in what was thought could be useful for people in other countries. And that a lot of things had changed, e.g. the idea of what aid could mean.

BF/ The whole concept of development aid has changed.

BS/ Did you meet Klaus at university?

BF/ Yes, at university. I have a kind of a reverse career, you could say. I had been working with development for many years and then as a consequence of my work I started to study. So it was the other way round.

DB/ So you went from practice to theory instead from theory to practice.

BF/ Sometimes that is a very big advantage. If you ask about my interest in the SUPERGAS project, I would say first

of all, it's great fun because it's different. And then on the other hand, what Klaus probably discussed with you, the whole concept of development is not that easy, we can't just go there and help them. Because the original idea of aid was to help them create themselves in our image. That idea has been recognised as extremely ethnocentric and outdated. Sometimes it's very difficult to discuss development because you set the frame for your discussions.

BS/ *What do you find interesting in the biogas project bearing in mind recent ideas about development?*

BF/ There are two things. One is linked to the general discussion about the development concept and what effect intervention has and in which framework you have to situate development as such. Sometimes the discussions are very difficult to take from the inside because you have to set up some kind of a frame. You take for granted that development should be there because you live from it. Therefore, it's very healthy to have people from the outside challenging the work you are doing, the foundation on which you build your work and your ideas. That's the one thing: that the SUPERGAS project challenges development and raises the discussion to some kind of meta-communication about development because SUPERFLEX are not just creating a biogas system, they are at the same time communicating their experiences in the process – which for me is the fun part of it. It's very amusing and I think they do it in a very talented way, e.g. the photo series from their discussions with African partners.

BS/ *They deal with different expectations, desires and images, also with parts of our imagination.*

BF/ They constantly reflect on their own role and they use their part as well because development is also doing something to them because of the expectations of their African counterparts and so on. They are reflecting on a lot of things which most of us who work with development don't do. We don't have this additional space which they have as artists." That's one point of it. The other point which is a basic idea of SUPERGAS, in my opinion, is that they are using new technology, they are using their position as well-off Westerners with an academic education to address some of the very urgent needs of people in other parts of the world. In a way, they bring accountability into the whole question of the development of technologies and the aim of inventions.

DB/ *Your motivation was that you saw a kind of challenge to your own practice?*

BF/ Yes, sure.

BS/ *Twice you have mentioned 'fun'. Sometimes it's not easy to find that within one's own discipline because one knows a lot and because of all the codes and parameters one has to deal with. Through the work of SUPER-FLEX a shift in roles is introduced. It's possible to look at a project from a different point of view. It seems that all the projects of SUPERFLEX change everybody,*

THE SUPERGAS PROJECT CHALLENGES DEVELOPMENT AND RAISES THE DISCUSSION TO SOME KIND OF META-COMMUNICATION ABOUT DEVELOP-MENT BECAUSE SUPERFLEX ARE NOT JUST CREATING A BIOGAS SYSTEM, THEY ARE AT THE SAME TIME COMMUNICATING THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THE PROCESS.

including themselves.

BF/ They're playing with that. This doesn't happen accidentally. They go to Africa dressed as though they were going on safari. They're trying to fulfil their expectations, they are kind of throwing images in our face. And as we react to them, they react to us. It's a very dialectical process. I don't think they have a very clear idea what will be the end-product of this process. In that way they're playing with the whole project.

BS/ *Because it's not only up to them. When there are so many others involved you can never foretell the result. There is no result, there is a product which functions more like a tool. It's also changing through the different contexts. I'm sure it makes a huge difference whether the biogas project is taken to Tanzania, Vietnam or Thailand. Again, there is a need in these countries for the product but for different reasons. SUPERFLEX have to do their research all over again. Even if the technical problems are solved, there are still other problems, e.g. anthropological ones. If people accept, why do they accept and, if not, why do they refuse? Can they afford the product which SUPERFLEX offer? The social problems are the more complex ones, I suppose.*

BF/ That goes for all kinds of development projects, that would even go for bicycles. What is special about this is that they discover that even hot material products have a social side. They focus more on communication, they make their own social side very visible in the process. In the government business we tend to forget that we are cultural and social beings. That is one of the leftovers from the old development paradigm.

BS/ *It brings a lot of hidden things into consciousness. That's really fascinating.*

DB/ *What do you as an anthropologist think of their photographic documentation and their video documentation?*

BF/ That's a very amusing part of it. But I will say that SUPERFLEX haven't been very visible in the development community as such. So maybe, I would say to them, "Go out and communicate your project." I understand why it's important to communicate their project in the art context. You will know better than me. To present the biogas plant is also to challenge the art context, but I would like to introduce the artistic side of process into the development context.

DB/ *That hasn't been done yet, not really.*

BF/ You have to do it some other way, you can't go to a development exhibition.

BS/ *You advise them to go deeper into the development context, to spread their ideas there. We spoke to the engineer yesterday and he said, we must make a really perfect, functional product. And we should sell the product. The economist is interested in a perfect economic structure and, of course, in economic success. The people in Tanzania have a practical interest, the product should simply work. There are so many different ideas about biogas. There is the economic, the anthro-*

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/ BIRGITTE FEIRING

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BF/ SUPERFLEX can see that they have managed to create something which has a lot of links to different worlds and that all of us involved want to think more about their ideas in our context. That's very positive.

DB/ And motivating.

BF/ It's a big success even if they haven't sold a biogas system to anybody. It has been taking on board a lot of different concepts.

BS/ The work of SUPERFLEX has caused a lot of discussions in different disciplines. During all the meetings we saw that this is the starting point for many things. It's really working.

BF/ We're now trying to get money from the EC to finance the biogas systems for different parts of the world. And that's not just a way of broadening the process in terms of getting practical experience with the plant in the field. If SUPERGAS goes to the EC and the EC commits itself to financing them – that would be another scene which is opened through this kind of project. I would love to go to Brussels with them to negotiate a contract with the EC.

DB/ Could you tell us more about your work apart from what you are doing with the SUPERFLEX project?

BF/ For many years I have been working with what are called indigenous peoples; these are colonised peoples who are by definition excluded from participation in decision-making processes concerning their own lives.

DB/ In different countries?

BF/ My starting point was Latin America, the Amazon, and I've worked in different regions there. I started as a kind of activist. I was 'swallowed' by development as were many of my indigenous friends because this development thing is an all-embracing and growing monster. It now mediates almost all the interchange between different regions. If you want to invite an African artist you won't ask the Ministry of Culture but the Ministry of Development. A number of issues are brought into the whole development context. After some years in a development department – taking as my point of departure personal relations with indigenous people and sympathy for their political cause – I ended up as a kind of administrator for development money, and they ended up on the other side of the table trying to pull money out of me. That was a very, very frustrating position. Then I started to study anthropology to better understand what I was doing.

DB/ Have you finished your studies yet?

BF/ No, not yet, because I've been working as well all along. In 1997/98 I worked in the EU on a task-force for an indigenous peoples' development corporation. My work is now more closely linked to international political processes, and also concerned with indigenous peoples, opening up some space in the United Nations.

I THINK, THEY'LL HAVE TO RELEASE THE PROCESS. UP UNTIL NOW THEY HAD THE PROCESS IN THEIR HANDS, BUT THEY CAN'T

HAVE THAT ANY LONGER BECAUSE IT HAS GROWN TOO FAR AND TOO BIG ...

BS/ That is a huge amount of work. You've entered so many fields in recent years. You know the activist point of view, the administrative one as well. There are not many people who have such different experiences within a huge field of administration, how to get money, how to ask for money. I can also see within your work – like in the work of SUPERFLEX – a constant shift in roles and functions which you have done or are still doing.

BF/ The administrative part and the insight into project management and funding opportunities, the working of the big bureaucracies, this is the part I want to leave. I'm very much interested in the political processes: how you open doors in a world which is organised on the principles of nation states. We all know that nation states cannot consider the diversity of human beings. How do you open doors for a reorganisation of the world as a level playing field, that's really interesting? In a way, you can draw parallels to the SUPERGAS project because some people on the Pacific Islands or in the Amazon get an idea, they find out that they can join a meeting in the UN system, then they attend that meeting every year, they draw up a document and they present that document in a lot of different settings. And suddenly they've started a process which begins to accumulate some kind of political momentum and to build some bridges over the years. You have to see that in a ten, fifteen, twenty years' perspective. It changes the world just a little bit.

BS/ But, of course, you really have to know how administration works. You are part of bigger systems. This is not comparable to SUPERFLEX. I wouldn't call them naive, but part of their enthusiasm comes from not knowing exactly how things might work. They are aware of this and I think that is one reason why they are so keen on involving others.

BF/ It's also a strength to see where your own limitations are. SUPERFLEX are much better at having good ideas than if they were under bureaucratic management.

BS/ That could become a crucial point as well. Now, there are a lot of problems overwhelming them in a certain sense. The economic part is growing too fast.

BF/ The problem is the interaction between the three of them and the whole apparatus they have to set up to manage all their ideas in terms of really establishing a system which can ensure them the necessary backup without losing the dynamic of what they are doing together.

BS/ They see the problem clearly but they don't know how to deal with it at the moment. They are not sure how to proceed. From the beginning until now it has been rather simple but now they have to make decisions with a lot of consequences for their own practice. If they make the wrong decisions they can lose a lot of their quality. I am very curious to see what they are going to do.

DB/ They have other projects going on. SUPERGAS is not the only company they have.

BF/ But this is part of the same process, to develop a tech-

nological system which will work in Africa, in Tanzania. You also have to develop some kind of an organisation or set-up which will work.

BS/ But they are simply not professionally trained to do this.

BF/ They are not trained to develop gas systems either.

BS/ Sure. It's not a question of professionalism. It depends more on what they want. If they want economic success it will be a tough business. The openness will probably not be possible any more. It has always fascinated me that they adapt different strategies but they don't take over the economic system one to one. They offer other possibilities within the economic discourse. Now it will depend on how they can manage to live with economic pressure because this will definitely be growing.

BF/ At the moment all three of them show up at meetings. My first suggestion would be to send one of them and the others can do all the work that has piled up. It's a very sensitive process but it's very interesting.

BS/ If only one of them goes to a meeting only one is informed, the others are not, so very quickly a hierarchy will form within their own group. How can they maintain a constant exchange amongst themselves – that's important. We shall watch the process.

BF/ They're watching the process as well. I very much hope that they're aware of what's happening to them in terms of management structure and how they organise things like that.

BS/ Maybe they've been watching the process too long, maybe they've arrived at a point where this is no longer possible. Now they have to come up with a lot of decisions. And, of course, they have to be much more precise in their issues.

BF/ I think, they'll have to release the process. Up until now they had the process in their hands, but they can't have that any longer because it has grown too far and too big. And look at their agenda, they're completely crazy, they're travelling all over the world, they turn up everywhere.

BS/ If they do so they cannot continue with their way of thinking and working. Their constant discussions are an important part of the work. I like their idea of a research level: a team generating ideas. But maybe they would also need a partner for the research work. The realisation and organisation could be done by professional managers. But then how to control the managers?

BF/ I'm sure that Klaus has told you about this discussion. His problem is, he's not there to make decisions but sometimes he has to make decisions for things to work. This is not a good way to get around things. If SUPER-FLEX get rid of the process then they should do it consciously.

DB/ I think that Klaus is not very sure about his position. Of course, he knows what he has to do. But as you mentioned, sometimes he has to decide but he can't. There is an obvious tension between him and Jan Mallan who is a shareholder and between Klaus and SUPER-

FLEX because of different ideas in administration. He has to push them to decide.

BF/ A defining characteristic of bureaucracies is that they are always restructuring themselves, it's a constant process of redefining roles and responsibilities. So in that sense you can say that SUPERGAS or SUPER-FLEX has already become a bureaucracy. They fulfil the criteria for being a full-grown bureaucracy in the process of restructuring.

DB/ Do you know the organisation SURUDE?

BF/ No. I just learnt about them from SUPERFLEX.

DB/ None of you was with them, when they went to Tanzania?

BF/ No. They went by themselves. I became linked to the project after they had installed the first gas plant in Tanzania.

DB/ When did you join the project?

BF/ 1996, 97, I can't remember. I'm kind of a marginal person. Sometimes they ask me very specific things and then there is a long break. One of my frustrations is that I keep repeating the same things to them. There's an obvious lack of institutionalisation of experiences and information. I can draft a report for them and recommend what to do and what not to do and after six months they will come back to me with the same question. "But that's what I answered in the last report I wrote for you!" "But we don't know where it is. Do you remember where we put it?" Their capacity to respond, to feed back to partners is sometimes lacking.

BS/ Because each of the projects is growing fast. The Karlskrona2 project started some months ago. SUPER-CHANNEL is at its beginning. Could you imagine what might happen if all their projects became economically successful? Nobody can handle so many projects – not even SUPERFLEX.

BF/ Another aspect is their personal commitment. I'm really impressed when I hear about their plans and when I see their agenda. I couldn't work without a private space where I can retire. This is where I cook, where I sleep and this is where my kids are sleeping, things like that. They have an impressive lack of need for privacy. They throw themselves fully into the projects.

BS/ We aren't sure but it seems that they separate their private lives carefully from their business lives. They all have girlfriends.

BF/ They must be very, very patient. . .

BS/ Don't you think that they spend much time with them?

BF/ No. Oh, no.

DB/ So, how would you define the challenge of working with SUPERFLEX?

BF/ It's the process of the project which interests me most. You throw a little ball and it starts accumulating. It's a very open process and we all attach our own ideas to it.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

SUPERGAS/ MEETINGS, Denmark, Spring/Summer 1998
Various meetings are held with the Danish Minister for Development Aid, plastics manufacturers, investors, Birgitte Feiring and others, focusing on product development, future implementation and funding.

SUPERFLEX/ SEMINAR/ Remarks on interventive tendencies – meetings between different economies in contemporary art. Copenhagen, Spring 1998
Seminar arranged in collaboration with Henrik Plenge Jakobsen, Lars Bang Larsen and DCA.
Contributors: Rasheed Araeen, Ute Meta Bauer, Plamen Dejanov and Swetlana Heger, Okwui Enwezor, Jens Haaning, Henrik Plenge Jakobsen, Lars Bank Larsen, Aleksandra Mir, N55, Toby Webster and The Modern Institute, Andreas Siekmann and Alice Creischer, Barbara Steiner, SUPERFLEX.

KARLSKRONA2/ THREE PUBLIC PROJECTS, Karlskrona, Sweden, 1998
SUPERFLEX are invited to carry out a public project in Karlskrona by Statens Kunstraad (Sweden) in summer 1998. After a research trip and after the first of many meetings with the residents, representatives from companies and schools, they decided to develop a project with a focus on IT development in Karlskrona and on identity questions linked to that. In late autumn 1998, SUPERFLEX propose setting up Karlskrona2 (K2) in cooperation with the architect Rune Nielsen. During his subsequent visit to Karlskrona, Rune Nielsen made a video-documentation, talked to city planners and received digital plans of the city.

RUNE NIELSEN
Architect and partner in Karlskrona2

Q/ How and when did you meet SUPERFLEX?
RN/ I've known SUPERFLEX from the start because Rasmus is my cousin. So that's the way I was introduced to their work.
Q/ You are an architect?
RN/ I'm in my last year studying architecture in Aarhus.
Q/ What was the moment you really got interested in their work?
RN/ I think, the first introduction was when I helped them to do their home page. This was how I was first integrated into their works. That was about the time the African Tanzania biogas project started, and since then we have talked about all kinds of stuff. Karlskrona came up and I was introduced to it, too.
Q/ They didn't involve you from the beginning? They had the idea and they needed someone to visualise this idea?
RN/ In this case, it was like that.
Q/ They approached you because they knew that you were familiar with their work?
RN/ They knew that we had kind of the same 'language',

I guess, and some of the same interests. They had to build up the Karlskrona project, or rather the concept of it, and then we began to talk about the development. So, I dropped into the project in the middle of the starting process.
Q/ Could you tell us more about the town of Karlskrona?
RN/ We all went to Karlskrona to see it and to get a feeling of it. There were some meetings where SUPERFLEX wanted to introduce me to the local museum, a museum of local history and architecture.
Q/ Had they already made contact with the museum people there?
RN/ Yes, but at that time they hadn't talked to all the people important for the project. Of course, we still don't know whether we've met all the people we have to meet. We're still making new interesting contacts.
Q/ What exactly did you do then?
RN/ We talked about how to mediate the idea, because we had to present our thoughts of a virtual Karlskrona. SUPERFLEX knew that I had been working with computers.
Q/ And apart from this you are an architect and obviously interested in urbanism.
RN/ Yes, that is another aspect of it. Maybe SUPERFLEX thought that it could be useful. We worked out the concept of an animation. That was the part I did. I designed and animated the avatars and the virtual city. Together we decided what part of the building should be visualised, what would make sense and what wouldn't knowing the history, the urban features and the architecture of Karlskrona.
Q/ Could you tell us something about your ideas on Karlskrona? What do you find interesting about this project?
RN/ Regarding the visualisation or the concept?
Q/ Both.
RN/ There are several interesting things about the project. One is that the global net is used for a local use, another that you have to be a resident in Karlskrona in order to participate in Karlskrona2. This makes for a physical relation to the virtual space. And then there is the idea of the big screen located in both towns, the virtual and the real. Those are aspects that make the project very strong in my opinion. I've been working with virtual communities a little, and there's a lot of crap on the net. Very often there are no social, aesthetic or architectural relations between the physical world where people live and the virtual spaces where they communicate. I hope that this experiment will create a much stronger bond between Karlskrona 1 and 2.
Q/ What are your interests in relation to architecture? Not necessarily in connection with Karlskrona.
RN/ If I had to put it in a nutshell I would call it communication design. I'm interested in using the net in a new way. I want to use the tools which are already given, but use them differently to the way they are used today. When you look at all the crap that exists, an aesthetic and

social connection is really needed to work out a better way of communication.

Q/ To what extent do your ideas have an impact on the discussions in architecture today?

RN/ I can tell you, none at all.

Q/ Can you link this project with your studies, with your profession?

RN/ This is where SUPERFLEX can help me because they are connected to so many interesting people. In some mysterious way they always get to know the right people, which is quite fantastic. I know, I can get some links to some of my interests through working with SUPER-FLEX.

Q/ Do they know about your ideas with regard to work that you do apart from them?

RN/ I should think they do. A fellow student and I have been doing a project which is linked to one of SUPERFLEX's tours to Mozambique. It's also about communication design. In that case we were using each other for discussions and installed some kind of a forum where we could try out ideas, to see if they were working or not.

Q/ I heard, that there were some technical problems with the Karlskrona project. What were these exactly?

RN/ At the moment it is more a question of time and money. One square metre of cyber space costs a lot of money. It depends on how you want to build the project, what kinds of tools and systems you want to use. It's very complex when you want to introduce a multi-user space on the net.

Q/ So the problems could be solved if there were enough money?

RN/ Absolutely. We've done some research on multi-user worlds and what is possible today, what we have to buy and how much money and time we need to make Karlskrona2 work.

Q/ It's an ongoing project and there are other cities which become interested. We, for example, are thinking of inviting you to Wolfsburg. Because of its history, it's a young city with a weird mono-structure: Volkswagen dominates everything. They make their own rules. And there is a lack of identity in the town. That's why we think that it could be interesting to work on a "Wolfsburg2". It is not only SUPERFLEX we want to invite. We're working on an exhibition which will be called *The Unhomely Home*. We see that there is a lack of identity, people do not like their town, there has sometimes been more identification with Volkswagen. But that has changed in recent years.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

Update November 2001:

Q/ Do you still work with SUPERFLEX, participating in any of the projects?

RN/ Yes, I'm still a part of the Karlskrona2 and Wolfsburg2
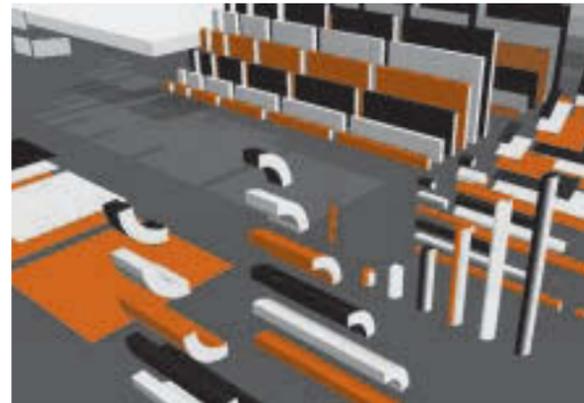
projects as a discussion partner, 3D-modeller, designer and administrator.

Q/ What can you say about your/their work looking back on those two years?

RN/ As far as Karlskrona2 and Wolfsburg2 are concerned, the work is still in progress and still developing. A whole town can be a big, slow piece of machinery to talk to and negotiate with. Working with an urban collaboration partner is generally relatively slow – especially if the project is more than just a matter of implementing beta-versions or digital mock-ups, but progresses and becomes a real tool for discussion and participation.

Q/ Has your work with SUPERFLEX had any effect on your thinking and/or on your professional life?

RN/ Yes, what SUPERFLEX do apart from them has been a returning reference, which still has a lot of influence on the way I think about and relate to my own work, and other work in which I am involved.

KARLSKRONA2/ THE MODERN INSTITUTE, Glasgow, Summer, 1998

Together with the Modern Institute in Glasgow (Toby Webster, Will Bradley and Charles Esche), SUPERFLEX develop introductory and discussion texts on K2. The texts, in comic strip form, show expectations and desires for the K2 project. They also link K2 to utopian projects of the 1960s and later.

SUPERGAS/ COMPANY, Copenhagen, Autumn 1998

SUPERGAS Ltd. is founded. The shareholders are SUPERFLEX, Jan Mallan and the economist Peter Eriksen, SUPERFLEX's accountant – see interviews. SUPERGAS develops small biogas systems and related technologies.

SUPERGAS/ BUSINESS, Copenhagen, Winter 1998

SUPERFLEX apply to the Institute for Technological Innovation (TI) in Copenhagen (founded by the Danish Government) for support to develop the commercial possibilities of the biogas project. This organisation helps people to realise ideas, and to progress their ideas to the production stage.

SUPERFLEX develop a business plan and hold meetings with various people. Technical consultants evaluate the project; among these there is a financial supervisor who has experience in Africa. Following official recognition of the project as a technological innovation, SUPERGAS receives a financial loan, which has to be paid back if and when the project should become a commercial success (double the amount of the original loan if the project is profitable, but never more than 10% of the annual profit). Part of this loan is used to employ a secretary, Klaus Høyer, with the specific task of developing an efficient business model.

SUPERGAS/ PATENT APPLICATION, 1998/1999

In June 1998 SUPERGAS submits an application to the Danish National Patent Agency. It turns out that the invention can be patented. SUPERGAS go on to apply for a general PCT appli-

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA

PATENTS ACT, 1978

CERTIFICATE

In accordance with section 44 (1) of the Patents Act, No. 57 of 1978, it is hereby certified that

SUPERGAS A/S

has been granted a patent in respect of an invention described and claimed in complete specification deposited at the Patent Office under the number

2000/7072

A copy of the complete specification is annexed, together with the relevant Form P2.

In testimony thereof, the seal of the Patent Office has been affixed at Pretoria with effect from the **30th** day of **January 2002**

Registrar of Patents

[21] 申请号 99807775.5

[11] 公开号 CN 1306497A

中国专利代理(香港)有限公司
蔡民军 黄力行

说明书 8 页 附图页数 5 页

cation in May 1999. The reason for playing along with the international system of patents, which is in itself highly problematic, was not a fear of potential copying but to generate interest in the project from investors by showing its serious business potential. "The claimed invention relates to a system for the anaerobic treatment of fluid organic material. The object of the claimed invention is to provide a biogas system that does not require a supply of electricity. This object is achieved by a pressure-controlled, pressure-equalising device integrated in the system, which device functions without external power." A PCT patent has been granted in several countries.

KLAUS HØYER
Anthropologist, former employee of SUPERGAS Ltd.

DB/ How did you meet SUPERFLEX? Did they come to you?

KH/ SUPERFLEX approached me on the suggestion of Birgitte Feiring who is a friend of mine. She had been helping SUPERFLEX to get to grips with their biogas project and one of her recommendations was that they needed someone to help doing the daily things, somebody to 'be' the structure, so to speak. She had been talking about SUPERFLEX earlier on and we had had a shared interest in development aid for seven years. She had been suggesting earlier on that we should join up and do something that was quite different, something of the kind SUPERFLEX were actually doing. But instead of joining forces as partners I have become like an employee, which is actually much easier.

BS/ So, you see a lot of possibilities within their structure which suit you and your interests?

KH/ Yes. There is an interest in the ethical dimension, there is an interest in simply having a nice job as well as in doing interesting things – I am a student of anthropology.

BS/ That's perfect!

KH/ There's a strong anthropological element in the biogas project, and I see it almost as an experiment in an anthropological project. You know, twenty years back there was a tradition of trying to look at society as a whole, but the attitudes with which we used to approach other societies were purely our own and they don't work in other societies. Traditionally people have not looked at the different socio-economic levels or tried to see how they could be connected in ways totally different to what we usually think is possible. This is exactly what SUPERFLEX are doing. And this is what is so interesting about the SUPERGAS project. To some extent it's meant to be an anthropologist doing field work, 'anthropology in action', trying to go out and crunch the borders of the different spheres and see the reactions. Almost like using yourself as a measuring tool for what happens when you cross borders.

DB/ Do you talk about the biogas project at university?

KH/ I haven't used it, yet. Of course, I have been talking to people about it. The funny thing is that you can feel the borders very clearly as you cross them, because it's our own constructs we cross. I've had many funny reactions.

DB/ Like what? Funny in what way?

KH/ For example, the other day I was talking to a student who was obviously from the academy here – I didn't know her, I met her at a party – I said, I was employed by a small company developing biogas. And she said, "That sounds like SUPERGAS." "Oh yes, you know it!" To which she replied, "But it's not a company, it's just a pro-forma thing, there's no company at all. Everything is bought by a museum."

BS/ If people think it's art, they think, it cannot work like a company usually works. Or it could not be art . . .

KH/ because it works like a company …

BS/ … and, therefore, has nothing to do with art. In our experience a lot of people in the art field have more problems with the work of SUPERFLEX than others who are not involved in art discussions. But it works both ways.

KH/ Exactly. Usually it's the other way round. You see somebody from a bank and they say no, no, no. Here I can see the structure of a company. In development aid you would start discussing if it wasn't ruined by its economic potential. "Isn't it making everything a bit corrupt?" – that is what people in development would start saying. "You are doing this for your own advantage. Trying to make money out of it."

BS/ Coming back to your anthropological interests: What are the most interesting things you find in the work of SUPERFLEX? You have touched on it slightly. You told us that some years ago there was this export of European or Euro-centrist ideas towards developing countries – our criteria being applied to the others who, of course, have different ones. Could you be more precise about your interests in SUPERFLEX?

KH/ There are several aspects to it. Some of my motivation is that I would like to contribute something. What I find interesting is that the project tries to cross different borders. I find the whole aim of the project interesting: trying to do a good thing for people by means of the existing structures such as market principles. I find it mistaken to dismiss all development efforts simply on the grounds that some of them are not sustainable. You might carry out very nice projects in regions in great need of assistance – and so the projects do not imply sustainable results in the sense that the project continues, it was a successful project because it saved lives or improved living conditions for a while.

BS/ But 'unsustainable' projects don't encourage the people to trust in their own activities and that they could do things by themselves.

KH/ No, it would be better to use the terms of trade and the existing economic structures as a fact from which you must depart if you want to change things. This is what SUPERGAS is doing. They don't try to change the

1. ANTHROPOLOGY IN ACTION

Action with reflection

Anthropology in action is the lens through which I have viewed Supergas. The discipline – an issue in itself – involves two dimensions: reflection and action. By way of action new kinds of knowledge are created – a new room for reflection is formed. By acting in diverse spheres of society (e.g. economy, aid and art) the spheres are experienced as mutually repellent. By acting as an agent of art in the sphere of finance, or an agent of finance in the sphere of aid, or an agent of aid in any of the former, I have come to see for myself how people fight to protect the domain to which they think they belong. Crossing the boundaries between the spheres is seen as a violation of their purity. People usually react in one of two ways: Either they declare the agent – the crosser of boundaries – unclean, dangerous and taboo. Or they try to rule out the part of the project that do not belong to their own sphere of society, thereby reinstalling the purity.

THERE'S A STRONG ANTHROPOLOGICAL ELEMENT IN THE BIOGAS PROJECT.

whole existing structure by means of ideology. We have to be aware of the market principles if we want to do something that will really make a change. Then we will work not only according to an ideology but along existing structures as well. It is a realistic quest. This is so interesting with SUPERGAS. SUPERFLEX don't say, "If the world works according to market principles we will only do whatever makes profit." That is another ditch into which one could fall. I think it's very important to remember that one of the basic things in economics is what people want, and people want more than money. They have an ethical and a moral stand.

BS/ It seems that SUPERFLEX's concepts go very well with your ideas. There is more than a common denominator. You really share similar interests. What did you mean when you said that you can contribute something to their project?

KH/ For instance, I write more easily or I am probably more structured. It's important to add this dimension.

BS/ And you are responsible for the coordination of SUPERGAS?

KH/ I did an analysis of the organisation because I thought there was a kind of problem about who was taking responsibility for what. The engineer and the economist suggested that I should take the role of the Managing Director which would give me a position of responsibility. I think it's much better for SUPERFLEX themselves to take care of this, also because it's not an easy project to manage. Therefore, one of them is going to be Managing Director. It was very much the resolve of my organisational analysis to show up the deficiencies of this organisation, and that it lacks delegation of responsibility areas. We haven't decided yet what might really happen.

DB/ Have you finished the analysis?

KH/ Yes.

BS/ Could you give us a short summary?

KH/ I found one main problem. The board (SUPERGAS, Jan Mallan and Peter Eriksen) was regarded as responsible. There were five people sitting there, but five people cannot take responsibility as a group. We have had some decisions where everybody thought that somebody else would keep track of how it was progressing. Also, somebody will have to keep track of the visions and the strategies otherwise we might slacken in too many different areas. I wanted to introduce some checks and balances, that somebody would be responsible to somebody else instead of five people having the same responsibility. Now nobody is really accountable. I wanted to make the organisation able to work faster, to make quicker decisions. A Managing Director would be responsible and the board would give a mandate to the Managing Director. Their jobs would not be the same, of course. Everything depends upon the five people meeting and discussing. Like this water machine we were discussing for one and a half months. If everybody was paid 100

Kroner an hour, we would have spent about 2000 Kroners. Somebody should have the mandate to say 'yes' or 'no', but nobody felt they could say 'yes' or 'no'. Everybody just said, "Well, what do you think?"

BS/ Don't forget, it's not part of their working method. In all the other projects they did, everything was based on discussion, debate and struggles. There isn't one dominant person who says 'yes' or 'no' and that is one quality of the work itself. It could be a crucial point if you demanded that one person should decide without any discussion because, in my opinion, that's absolutely against some of their ideas. For the organisation itself, it is necessary. I feel there's a certain tension in the necessity of having such a person who says 'yes' or 'no'. They involve a lot of people and there's a constant negotiation between different interests.

KH/ There is a tension between the art side and the financial side where things have to be efficient. And there's a tension between SUPERFLEX as an organic body and me asking, "Who is going to take care of this?" It's a tension we have felt very clearly and I have tried to be very aware of it. But at the same time there are certain things which are necessary if you need to operate amongst people.

BS/ But it looks as if the company really has become commercially successful, which might not leave enough time for productive discussions. The tension between the concept and the different expectations, the process of negotiation and economic success is getting stronger and stronger. There's a need for hierarchic and strong management.

KH/ Yes, but there doesn't have to be a hierarchy as we know it from other companies.

BS/ If one person says 'yes' or 'no' – that means there's a hierarchy.

KH/ But he should have a mandate to act upon things. He will always be evaluated by the group. It's just that somebody has the possibility of saying 'yes' or 'no' when the phone rings. Right now we have to say, wait a couple of weeks, everybody has to meet. We cannot make a decision right now. There's nobody who's capable of making a decision. There definitely is a tension. We have had a lot of discussions about the ways to have meetings. SUPERFLEX have very open meetings where they use silence as a tool, not saying anything in order to make people come back with new ideas. This kind of having meetings has to do with their adjustment to a floating kind of conversation. But when you have a meeting, for instance, in development aid organisations they are so busy, they don't have time for people saying, "Well, I don't know why I came, let's find out if we have something in common." They would let you take part but they would expect you to have something prepared. This is something I am very strict about. If I participate in a meeting I like to know what the aim of this meeting is. One of the experiences that I bring along from my past is that if you

SUPER-FLEX HAVE STARTED A SNOW-BALL WHICH IS SUPER-GAS.

know what your aim is, the possibility of reaching this aim is ten times bigger. I would really like a meeting to be focused because it means we can persuade people to follow our ideas. But before that, we have to decide upon those ideas in a meeting of our own.

BS/ Sometimes decisions have to be made. And sometimes it is necessary to say 'yes' or 'no'. It's really difficult to find the limits of each procedure. What is possible when or necessary when. It's very difficult to decide when you should discuss and when you should decide without any discussion.

KH/ Yes, specially because SUPERFLEX have started a snowball which is SUPERGAS. This snowball has run into different people and is kind of leaving SUPERFLEX, it's becoming independent now. We are all pushing and we are all changing the structure.

DB/ And the project cannot stay exactly the same if it goes further in the direction of different developments.

BS/ That's definitely a positive quality. There's a certain kind of polarity between economy and art but that doesn't really mean that art is open and business is structured. Through the work of SUPERFLEX you begin to understand some of the mechanisms in the field of commerce. There are ideological struggles within commerce as well but usually you are not so aware of them. Through the work of SUPERFLEX you understand a lot more about these mechanisms and strategies. I am absolutely not against success and I am not against commerce. Everybody, even artists, has to deal with commercial questions. This idea of 'the art is somewhere else', this splendid isolation – freedom but without any effect on society – is a stupid idea. It's an interesting question whether it will be possible to proceed with the tension between commerce and art or whether a rigorous organisation is necessary. So, coming back to what you were saying a moment ago, are you interested in structures in general?

KH/ I have been working with structures. I have got a Master in African Area Studies. I have done field work in Tanzania. So I have some very specific experiences that can be used. I have also been working with development anthropologically and with Africa. I had an interest in Africa because it is anthropologically deeply fascinating, and teaches us about the epistemological side of how we experience the world and the morals or ethics of obtaining know-how. We are constantly formed by what we want to know.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

Update November 2001:

EH/ Are you still working with SUPERFLEX

KH/ At present I do not have any engagements with SUPERFLEX/GAS. I believe I worked with them for about one

year. It was an inspiring and thought-provoking environment, but also a place which lacked the kind of professional engagement and problem-solving attitude that I have found in other agencies. I found it very frustrating when 'real problems' needing immediate attention were neglected in order to attend the art scene. Whereas I initially liked the idea of the multiple dimensions of the project, I grew into a more sceptical attitude as I found that some dimensions occasionally hampered others.

I learned a lot from the pleasant and inspiring company of SUPERFLEX, and I'm glad that they do what they do – and that I joined them for a while. However, though I still think action and reflection can be successfully fused in a project – which is what SUPER-GAS is very much about in my opinion – I prefer other set-ups where the priorities are clearer. One of the two must be subordinated to the other, and if reflection is the main goal, economic engagements should be minimal. You need to have an overall vision – a goal – about what you do. If you have too many 'interesting perspectives' you reach very few goals.

EH/ Has your work with SUPERFLEX had any effect on your thinking and/or your professional life?

KH/ Working with SUPERFLEX must definitely have had some kind of influence … but I am not sure if I am fully aware of it. It pushed me right back into the academy some might say. I have also found pleasure in some more conventional consultancies for established development agencies because there you see such clear and immediate results. But this sounds rather negative … I have also felt a positive influence, not least concerning stimulating inspiration. What I am trying to say, is that I was frustrated about the meagre results of the biogas project, but found intellectual inspiration in it. I looked upon it as a kind of anthropological fieldwork during which I learned a lot about not only myself and them, but also about the way different kinds of symbolic capital (art/money/aid) respond to each other's presence.

I do register intellectual success, but I have not followed the practical results closely enough for a long while to say anything about the developmental impact of the work.

KARLSKRONA2/ *CITIES ON THE MOVE,* Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, 1999; also at KIASMA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki 1999
SUPERFLEX showed an animation and two prints – a comic strip and an introduction with text and pictures – on the upcoming K2 project.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS IN AFRICA, *New Life,* Hillside Gallery, Tokyo, Japan 1999
The installation included a meeting table, the biogas balloon, videos and posters on the project (and goldfish). In addition a

technical drawing of the biogas system was displayed in the street window of the gallery.

During the exhibition period, meetings took place in the gallery with JICA (a Japanese national development organisation), at which the future possibilities of the project (including investment and cooperation) were discussed. Additional meetings were held with critics, investors and curators.

MUSICSYSTEM/ TOOL.1 CONCERT, Tokyo, Japan 1999
In a live concert in Tokyo, the Japanese DJ L?K?O used the Tool.1 record as the main component in his set. The Japanese label Cha-Bashira recorded the concert and subsequently published it.

KARLSKRONA2/ RESEARCH, Karlskrona, Sweden 1999
The material from the exhibition is subsequently used to present K2 in Karlskrona to city planners, to an IT high school, to developers, the mayor, and to IT coordinators in the region in South Sweden.

SUPERCHANNEL/ SEAN TREADWAY, Copenhagen 1999
The idea of an internet TV channel first emerged summer 1998. In January 1999 SUPERFLEX meet the programmer Sean Treadway and begin realising the idea – see interview with Sean T.

KARLSKRONA2/ 3 PUBLIC PROJECTS, Karlskrona 1999
For the opening SUPERFLEX decided not to put on an open presentation for the scheduled press conference, instead they talked to journalists, politicians and economists who could be instrumental in the realisation of their ideas.

Footnote: SUPERFLEX conducted interviews with people in the streets. Those they approached were asked if they could imagine another Karlskrona, and if so, what it would be like.

SUPERGAS/ CMS, Copenhagen, Spring 1999
Research and Matchmaking Visit by CMS in Denmark.
In their search for a water purification treatment system for small pig farms in Thailand, CMS Engineering, having visited a number of large engineering companies in Denmark, find their way to SUPERGAS.

Footnote: SUPERFLEX give them free tickets to Tivoli. After a pleasant evening at Tivoli and some meetings at home, CMS decide to collaborate with SUPERGAS, whose approach they feel is most appropriate to the requirements of the situation, both economically and technically.

JAKOB FENGER

Discussion between Jakob Fenger, Barbara Steiner, Doris Berger and Edda Hoefer, Berlin, 3.10.99

DB/ We would like to find out about your motivation for being part of SUPERFLEX. What are your interests in the group?

JF/ First of all, I see a great benefit in working with other people because I can do different things than I could do on my own.

BS/ Is there anything else apart from not having to do things alone?

JF/ Within SUPERFLEX we have a place for discussion. The social construction of SUPERFLEX allows discussion and makes it possible to do more work and bigger things. You couldn't do a biogas project in Africa on your own. Of course, you could work with other people, you could just hire engineers. But still, the mental space within SUPERFLEX is very important.

BS/ So, you like to have a space for discussion, development and research. But why don't you say: I'll join a group for this project and for the other project, I'll join another group.

JF/ I see a benefit in our discussions because it is a closed situation, in a way. There are only the three of us and we have not changed this internal configuration. But we always have an input from the outside and that is constantly changing the overall constellation.

DB/ Have you never thought of including another person in this inner circle?

JF/ No. I guess, it is a very personal thing that you can work together so well. I also think, it's important that from the beginning we had a common interest in different things than for instance the other people at the art academy or people from the art world.

BS/ But you were the first one to attend the art academy. The others joined later. First you attended this photography school?

JF/ We all did.

BS/ Why did you decide to go to the academy and why did the others join you later?

JF/ They also tried, Rasmus tried at the same time as me, Bjørnstjerne tried later. We actually started working together in the photography school. We did these experiments in a bigger group than we are now. We were supposed to do photography and we were supposed to learn about aesthetics. That was the guideline of the school. We began to feel this way of working was ridiculous and in a way unsatisfactory, so we started to make experiments.

DB/ What did you actually do?

JF/ Normally, if you did documentaries in a photography school you would go out and find someone who is on a different social level to you yourself. We started to do social experiments, for instance, by pretending to be beggars, trying to get money in the street. It was very much like a game, but it didn't produce anything visual.

EH/ You didn't take pictures of your experiments?

JF/ No, we just decided to do something instead of concentrating on making these aesthetic photographs of handicapped people from the suburbs of Copenhagen or whatever. The point was that we were playing roles. Trying to be blind and walking in the street, going from

WE USE AESTHE-TICS AS A TOOL.
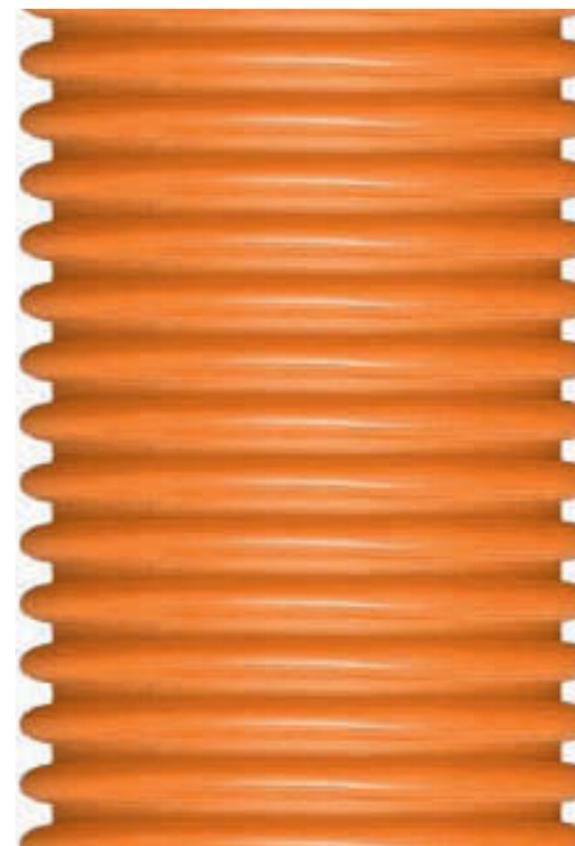
one town to another and asking people for help.

DB/ You got onto the other side of the game. As a documentary photographer you would be interested in taking pictures of blind people walking in the street. And now you were the ones who were being photographed.

JF/ Yes, you could see it that way.

BS/ It seemed to be a kind of research for yourself, to figure out how something could be.

JF/ This was the starting point for our way of working. The way we work is not that we think of something aesthetic in the first place. We work on a different level.

BS/ Could you be more precise?

JF/ A different level is the economic level or the political or the social one, and they are not traditionally artistic. Aesthetics may come in later. We use aesthetics as a tool.

BS/ We heard that you were living together in a house and that you were attending the academy. What did you do at the academy at that time?

JF/ Nothing. Of course, I followed the lectures. You come to a new place and you have to see what's going on. But I found out very soon that I had much more in common with Rasmus and Bjørnstjerne than with anyone at the academy. They were very trained in art. It was like walking into an office but having this feeling of having walked into the wrong office.

BS/ So you felt the academy was the wrong place?

JF/ No, I felt it was the right place.

EH/ But the wrong people?

JF/ You couldn't say they were the wrong people either, but the connection with Rasmus and Bjørnstjerne was much stronger. It was more important for me to work with them than to try to work with the people at the academy. Rasmus and Bjørnstjerne were not at the academy at that time.

DB/ Did you connect the things you were doing together with the art world?

JF/ Not at the beginning, but maybe half a year later. In the academy you have to present something and so we were forced to present something as well.

DB/ What did you present? Do you remember?

JF/ A tube. That was the starting point.

BS/ No doubt somebody asked you what this was supposed to be. What did you tell them?

JF/ They were asking a lot of things. For us it was research. We had started researching the way architects work when they build roads, landscapes, architecture, etc. We didn't think of it so much as an object, more as a statement in relationship to all the other artists. They presented things they had been working with, and this tube was just a tube and we hadn't worked with this tube.

BS/ I'm sure it was not just a tube. It was a kind of statement surely, what were the others supposed to think about the tube?

JF/ I'm not sure if at that moment we were very aware of what the others would think of the tube. We were focus-

ing on our own way of working, on our own interests. And our interest was not within the normal art world in this particular context but more in an entrepreneurial kind of thinking, we wanted to present something more from an engineering way of thinking.

BS/ The tube was as you found it, you didn't change the colour?

JF/ No. It was already our colour. It was a hard tube with a diameter of about 15 cm, 5 metres long and orange. When you have electricity in the ground you use that kind of tube to put all the cables inside.

BS/ How did you avoid the others looking at this tube as a ready-made, as an aesthetic object, as a sculpture? Did you care about that?

JF/ We didn't care. We were in a research period and we didn't really care what the art world would think about this piece.

DB/ But you wanted to continue with your class and you had to attend the course.

JF/ You have to understand that the academy in Copenhagen is very flexible. We started a company there and we were also working as a company, but they didn't throw us out of the academy. There would have been many reasons for throwing us out but they didn't. If you present something it's not to prove that you are a good student, it's just something that is required by the administration.

BS/ You have to show that you're interested in participating?

JF/ Yes, otherwise they can kick you out. The only reason why they would throw you out is if you do not present anything. This is a very formal presentation and there is not much discussion about things. Anyway, there is a lack of discussion in Copenhagen. Of course, the professors talked about this tube, but it was not a big thing. Probably none of them thought that this tube meant anything or could be anything or grow in any direction. They thought that we were just fooling around in a corner.

DB/ Was this presented by SUPERFLEX? Or was it you as Jakob Fenger who presented this?

JF/ There was some discussion because I didn't want to be Jakob Fenger. I wanted to be SUPERFLEX, so it was presented as SUPERFLEX.

BS/ Do you remember where the name came from?

JF/ It was on our way to Sweden. I think we went to Sweden because we wanted to establish or isolate ideas about who we were. So we were looking for a name and there was only one name popping up and that was SUPERFLEX. We were very interested in a company, in the way companies were structured. We also did a little research in how companies were doing presentations and how they work with aesthetics. SUPERFLEX was like an all-over company name.

EH/ Was it before or after the road event?

JF/ That was before. Because the road was announced as our road, the SUPERFLEX road.

EH/ So the tube represented your interest in construction work?

BS/ Or in the way companies work?

JF/ Also how companies work but more in the way they design things. They obviously design things and we found out that they were using the same terms as people at the academy. The other students were discussing paintings and they would use the same words as the guys from the highway company did. There was a certain connection and we were interested in this. But there is a huge difference in the effect.

BS/ It seems that you were interested in the ways these companies work because they function similarly but not the same and, of course, they use a lot of visual things, they also use aesthetics.

JF/ They are conscious of visual appearance but perhaps not of aesthetics as such, you might say.

BS/ But the bigger difference is that they try to hide mechanisms or strategies, they hide their production of dreams and desires, otherwise nobody would buy or accept their products.

JF/ That would be one thing that companies could learn from us – to keep things more open. If they could overcome this way of thinking, they could also overcome the critique. Traditionally they do something and then get the critique later. But most try to avoid any critique, and do not see how they might make use of it.

BS/ You think they should and would include critique?

JF/ Yes, they should include critique in the development of their work, for example in the case of a car manufacturer, they should critically examine whether we need cars at all and make that one of their starting points for their production. Of course they do engage in market research but the way they do it is not open to public discussion.

BS/ But what about the Siemens Kulturprogramm? They do critical exhibitions, critical projects, they incorporate critique.

JF/ Yes, they see the benefit for their image but that's a very, very small thing. One of the differences between Siemens and us – there are lots of other differences, of course – is that we include the discussion, whereas they exclude the discussion by putting it in their 'Kulturprogramm'. They will always try to be on top of any discussion. Their discussion is a fake.

BS/ Yes, of course, it is fake critique and fake discussion. That is the danger. Don't you think that companies like them could instrumentalise your principle?

JF/ But they already do that, it's not a danger. This is how it works all the time.

BS/ But then why should they really want to learn from you? Everything is working so perfectly.

JF/ It works perfectly in a simple economic sense. If they tried to use the discussion as a tool for themselves, in order to be more productive or do other things, I think they could be even more powerful. But at the moment

ONE OF THE DIFFER-ENCES BETWEEN SIEMENS AND US … IS THAT WE INCLUDE THE DISCUSSION, WHEREAS THEY EXCLUDE THE DISCUSSION BY PUTTING IT IN THEIR 'KULTURPROGRAMM'. THEY WILL ALWAYS TRY TO BE ON TOP OF ANY DISCUSSION. THEIR DISCUSSION IS A FAKE.

they don't want to do that because they have lots of money and they don't see a need for a change.

BS/ Do you really want to make them that powerful?

JF/ I don't, that's not what I mean. I mean, they could use the discussion as a tool. We use it in order to express ideas and we make people react to these ideas. We are stimulating a discussion.

BS/ Don't you think this can only be used within a smaller scale company? The bigger and the more successful your projects become and grow, the more difficulties might arise. You have already felt that. You would, maybe, need some other structure and a certain hierarchy might come in and there might be simply no time for discussions.

JF/ I don't think that a larger company could do it. At the moment I don't think so. But for a newly starting company I definitely see this as a way of working. I think it could be a tool and I think it could be a powerful tool also in an economic sense.

DB/ So it could work in a good or in a bad way.

EH/ And your motivation is not necessarily to teach other companies to work in that way just because you are interested in working like that?

JF/ Of course, we are interested in changing how other companies think. With this idea about small scale economy you try to change the way of . . .

BS/ …large scale economy?

JF/ Small scale economy is actually large scale economy. For example, there is a great deal of product development for the traditional markets in Europe, America and rich countries in Asia. It's much easier to develop new products for these areas because the consumers there are wealthy, and there is a lot of experience and research on how to proceed. The areas populated with people on lower incomes are not yet considered to have any real market potential and therefore the products available there are very limited. When working in Africa we often experience a lack of even the simplest products, for example a well-functioning gas lamp made for biogas systems – this is something a lot of people would have a need for. The reason that you can hardly find a suitable gas lamp is not that they are complicated to make but simply the lack of interest from bigger companies in this market.

When focusing on the needs of the modern African consumer we turn this situation upside down, and a lot of discussion is created. This discussion moves into many different areas of interest – concerning NGOs, manufacturers, engineers and others – and is kept public. This in turn tells us a lot about different needs and how we could move around as a company with a product in this field. We find it very strange that not more companies are doing this, because this market is potentially huge and it is here that you could really start to talk about the small scale economy being large scale economy. One of my main interests in working with the biogas system is to challenge the current structures of

power. If the people in Africa start to be a real part of our economic system then the current economic system would have to change. This is like a far-out dream. I would like to change the overall economic structure. Obviously, if somebody starts to develop well-functioning products for poor people, then there is an enormous market with millions of consumers. And this would change the living conditions for a lot of poor people, and could also make a lot of sense from a business point of view.

BS/ The final question that we are asking all three of you: How do you handle your personal involvement in SUPERFLEX? We know that all of you are very much involved. It seems to be very difficult to spend time on something else. Do you think that this way of working needs such a personal involvement?

JF/ The problem is that it's very difficult to stop working. I have tried to go home at five. But then you're at home for an hour and it's very difficult to relax because there are things that you have to do and that you want to do. The way I try to do it is by biking in the forest. That's a way of getting somewhere else. It will be very important for us in the future to keep this kind of privacy. It doesn't have to be a lot at the moment, but it has to be there. There are also other things – I have a girlfriend, for example. I work a lot, but I also like to work a lot. But it is definitely difficult to put away the work when you come home because it's in your mind, it's difficult to switch off the brain. One way is, by being very physical, then the brain somehow switches itself off.

SUPERCITY/ KARLSKRONA2/UTRECHT2, Casco Gallery, Utrecht 1999

In March 1999 SUPERFLEX presented K2 at the Casco Gallery in Utrecht. On this occasion they also proposed a 'Utrecht2'.

In addition to the K2 presentation (including images, comic strips, animation), plans for a new urban area in Utrecht (Leidsche Rijn) were presented. This included visual material and a video made by local city planners describing their vision for Leische Rijn. During the installation of the project several meetings with planners took place, discussing the idea of a Utrecht2. Computer games like Sim City and Active World, which could be used by the visitors, were also presented in the gallery. Screen prints from browsers were fixed on the walls (e.g. Virtual Paris, Virtual Amsterdam).

SUPERCHANNEL/ FIRST SUPERCHANNEL, Artspace 1%, Copenhagen 1999

Artspace 1% invited SUPERFLEX to present an exhibition from May to July, for which SUPERFLEX proposed an open internet TV studio. SUPERFLEX posted the studio schedule in the display window of the gallery, thereby inviting the public to "directly engage in the creation and evolution of content". During the two
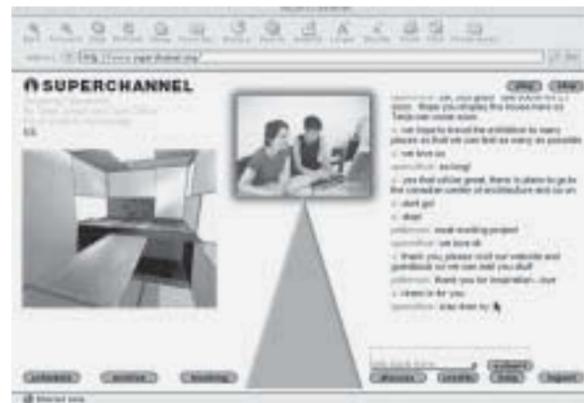
and a half months of the exhibition, people could sign up for broadcasting. The offer turned out to be most attractive to DJs, artists, anthropologists, psychologists and music promoters.

Footnotes: In August 1999 (until March 2000) the channel moved to SUPERFLEX's office at Frederiksholmskanal, where numerous discussions on the organisational structure took place. In June 2000 SUPERFLEX and Sean Treadway formed the company SUPERCHANNEL APS. Through the experiences in Artspace 1%, SUPERFLEX and Sean felt there was potential in the diversification of SUPERCHANNEL. They decided to initiate and encourage more specific channels.

ERIK LANGE
Co-owner and CEO of The Factory (streaming media host)

DB/ First of all, we would like to know how you met SUPER-FLEX?

EL/ I think they called me and said they were going to start this SUPERCHANNEL project – these interactivity stations – and they needed technical hosting, that means, a kind of server which we have here which broadcasts.

**DB/** They knew you already?

EL/ They had heard about our business here. We are still the only company selling this service of video hosting in Denmark. We don't call ourselves an ISP – an internet service provider; we call ourselves a CSP – a content service provider. That means, if people have some content and need services, they can contact us. If they need a paper flyer to hand out, a shiny catalogue, a web page or a TV programme, we can help them.

BS/ Did you start in television?

EL/ I worked for television for over 10 years and I trained as a video-tape editor. Five years ago I bought the first functioning and payable non-linear professional video editing system, the first in the country where you could actually edit in a professional quality and broadcast. At about the same time I heard about the internet, people sending mails to each other and the first web pages which consisted only of text. It was a way of publishing something electronically that quickly spread. I also did a lot of company profiles and stuff like that. These things were still distributed on VHS tapes.

BS/ So what did you propose instead?

EL/ I thought that there had to be a better way. The master tape that I delivered to the client was then copied on to a thousand VHS tapes and that alone cost a lot. And then you also had to send out the tapes. An enormous amount of money just went into distributing. So I was wondering whether I couldn't take this master disc, put it on a web page as it was and distribute it for my client to his customers. You should have heard them in 1995 when I first called the only internet provider in Denmark at that time. I asked him, "Could you envisage sending
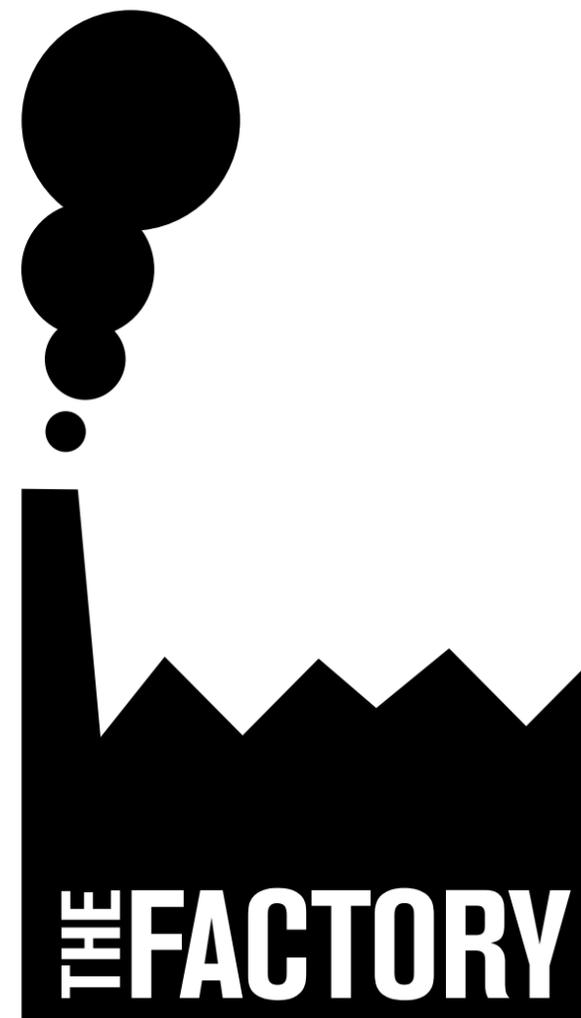
mails with pictures? I have these pictures, they fill about one and a half megabytes which is about a floppy disc full and there are 25 for each second. Would this be possible?" I often tell this story because I can still hear him roaring with laughter. Then I had this editing company and we decided to set up a web server and make some experiments, we did websites for the clients we worked for.

DB/ How do you see the cooperation with SUPERFLEX?

EL/ We always do experiments. That has always been the main drive, to experiment with new ways of distribution and new ways of using the media.

BS/ So they bring in some new ideas even for you?

EL/ I need that. They are the ones who are using the media, they are the ones who are inventing this at the moment. Companies who have their company profile on video tape are not inventing any new stuff. I need these showcases for the technology to get a commercial market. Somebody has to develop the market, and it's developed by the people who make improvements. If I make money, I also get money for people who get these new things done. To give SUPERCHANNEL the option to use the facilities and create new contents is important for me.

BS/ That means, you've offered them a new platform and the technical possibilities, and they bring in some ideas and use what you offer them. If they develop something you could use commercially what would you do? Would you pay them, is there a kind of contract, if they should discover something with which you could make a lot of money? Have you ever thought of that? It seems to me that it could become a problem.

EL/ It doesn't have to be a problem, not if we are all aware of it from the beginning. We have talked about that. Sean Treadway is extremely competent and skilled. But one man cannot do everything. We have for instance some people doing graphics and programming. We can offer to take some of the load and do the more manual work on SUPERCHANNEL, making the borders and getting the graphics to fit and cutting the page up. That means that we have some sort of exchange the other way round. We've talked about the way we might misuse SUPERCHANNEL commercially. My idea has been that in exchange for services like this and that, we can use Sean, the programmer, as a resource for developing programmes for us. Then we found out that we were actually sitting and developing the same kind of programmes. So instead of Sean jumping around, wouldn't it be more efficient to put it together and call it a joint product? From the beginning I've learned to pay attention to who has done what and how. Otherwise there could be the problem that they feel used, if they felt they were the ones who had invented everything.

DB/ Sean has already had similar experiences. He's quite familiar with big companies and the exploitation that can occur.

I BELIEVE, THAT MANY OF THE TECH-NIQUES THAT A PERSON DEVE-LOPS FOR A SPECIFIC CONTEXT CAN ALSO BE USED AND MISUSED IN ANOTHER CONTEXT.

EL/ I believe, that many of the techniques that a person develops for a specific context can also be used and misused in another context.

BS/ Yes, but with different consequences.

EL/ I try to back up people who have something to say in the technical way, when they are trying to get hold of people who have something to say in an editorial manner.

DB/ Do SUPERFLEX have a room here where they can work when they want to?

EL/ They can use an office here. Sean has started to programme here. I offer the internet connection and other office facilities. They can have the studio at certain times, at off-times, meaning when it's not booked for commercial purposes.

DB/ Are you constantly in contact with Sean?

EL/ He only started to work here 2 weeks ago. We had some big projects last week, live sessions and so on, for one of the big Danish banks. So we haven't had much time to get everything into place yet, but we will. We also have another interest in this. We have called our office Factory, named after the Andy Warhol Factory. I like the idea that people would go there and say, "I've just written this text and it's fantastic," and another guy would bring some things to look at and a third guy would say, "I've got this camera, I want to make a film," and Warhol would stand in the middle, look at these three and say "Let's do it. You take his text, you act it and you film it."

BS/ What do you think is the difference between your Factory and Warhol's Factory?

EL/ My mission will be accomplished when there is no difference, when we will actually be doing that. Anybody should be able to come in and say, "I have this, I want to communicate it." We can then help to communicate that message in whatever way is best suited for the idea.

The difference is that I don't want to understand everything coming out of here as a Factory product. That's not what is important for me. What's important for me is that the people who need it, know where to come.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

Update April 2002:

EL/ I believe you wrote me some time ago, and asked if I am still are working with Sean – and I'm sorry for not answering that mail – everything was a bit chaotic at the time :–(

My company, The Factory, was bought by some venture capitalists in 2000, and unfortunately (or fortunately) they didn't agree with my ideas, so I was fired from The Factory in 2001. I have used the last year to build up a new company, MM Manager, where we're developing content management systems for streaming media as Open Source. I see this as a natural development of the

discussions I had with Sean at that time, which are also referred to in the interview, about a "shared product" – see: http://www.mmmanager.org – so you could say that I've experienced a set-back, but am now 'back on track' :–)

We call ourselves BTW and are still occasionally using Sean on a freelance basis.

KARLSKRONA2/ FREMTIDS TRO, Blekinge Museum, Karlskrona 1999
A public terminal with an animation of K2 was available for the visitors. The book *3 Public Projects* was launched to coincide with a public seminar about the project.

KARLSKRONA2/ SEMINAR ON INTRANET, October 1999
Participants came from different ministries (such as the Ministry of Defence), from companies like Erikson, Novo Nordisk, and Post-Danmark.

EBC (European Business Centers) invited SUPERFLEX to present K2 within a business context. The main focus was to demonstrate the local use of the internet (intranet) through animation and talks. SUPERFLEX asked the participants to discuss the potential of the project within their own organisations – which led to heated debate.

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ Kunstverein Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany, December 1999
In December 1999 SUPERFLEX invited users of SUPERGAS, SUPERCHANNEL and Karlskrona2 tools to present (in any form) their use of any of these tools in the Tools exhibition; the users were: Klaus Høyer, Birgitte Feiring (see interviews) and Mgumia (SUPERGAS), Rune Nielsen and Troels Degn Johansson as users of Karlskrona2 (see interviews), and Supa Mikes, the Coronation Court Channel organisers and Situscience (SUPERCHANNEL). An introductory video (by SUPERFLEX) to SUPERGAS, Karlskrona2, and SUPERCHANNEL were screened in the gallery cinema.

Complementing the introductory video by SUPERFLEX, Nielsen and Johansson installed a news group for discussions around city planning in the virtual space. During this the possibilities for a 'Wolfsburg2' were also discussed.

Birgitte Feiring presented a typical development aid office set-up, humorously highlighting some of the problems experienced in the collaboration between SUPERFLEX and SURUDE. Supa Mikes presented an example of a live broadcast on SUPERCHANNEL, promoting Reggae culture and giving reasons for using SUPERCHANNEL. Rune Nielsen and Troels Degn Johansson set up a discussion forum for Karlskrona2. During the exhibition live broadcasts were produced on SUPERCHANNEL by Situscience, presenting their theory for individual and community participation in SUPERCHANNEL.

Footnote: In February 2000 Rune Nielsen came to Wolfsburg to conduct a number of interviews with city planners and journalists. There he also acquired a digital map of the city.

TROELS DEGN JOHANSSON

Professor at the Department of Digital Aesthetics and Communications (DiAC), engaged in the development and application of Karlskrona2

DB/ How did you meet SUPERFLEX?

TDJ/ On the internet, obviously! Well, actually, I first came across SUPERFLEX at the Cities on the Move exhibition at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Copenhagen, 1998. Among many other things it featured SUPERFLEX's documentation for the Karlskrona2 project. Since I am currently doing research on web-based virtual environments for public planning communication, I immediately went home to find their web-page and subsequently made contact via e-mail. I was delighted to learn about such a vivid approach from the art scene to planning communication which at least in Denmark often seems opaque and static. To a large extent it's even neglected by public authorities and the media. Using the World Wide Web to improve synergy and communication in the most immediate sense seems like such an obvious thing to do in order to try out what we would like our cities and landscapes to look like in the future. Perhaps it takes a third, neutral part, say art, to develop that synergy. So eventually, I got in touch with Rasmus, Jakob and Bjørnstjerne. And those friendly and generous entrepreneurs taught me in a very modest and discreet manner about their approach to things.

BS/ What is your main interest in Karlskrona2? Is it the communicative aspect?

TDJ/ Yes, certainly, that is why I think this project is particularly interesting. Today, owing to the development of graphic user interfaces, internet and on-line media, information technology is becoming available for communication in a much more immediate fashion than before. For me this makes a phenomenological approach to communication relevant and necessary. We are short of a good communication model to understand new modes of internet communication such as the geographical 3D multi-user domain of Karlskrona2. Personally, I prefer the communication environment metaphor which suggests that communication is about facilitating and interacting in a common space. Karlskrona2 is at least a good visualisation of this metaphor, and I think that this alone will improve the possibility of actually starting debates and communities on the Internet.

DB/ In what way are you involved in Karlskrona2?

TDJ/ I'm not involved in the art project Karlskrona2 as such. I just approach it as an enthusiastic critic. However, I am involved in a project which is a bit similar, "Digital Bridging and Virtual Agoras" for the Öresund University Research Foundation. Here we encourage Masters students from media studies departments from both sides

PERSONALLY, I PREFER THE COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT METAPHOR WHICH SUGGESTS THAT COMMUNICATION IS ABOUT FACILITATING AND INTERACTING IN A COMMON SPACE.

of the Sound to study the local, or regional dimension of cyber-culture and at the same time to take part in a 'virtual university', that is to make use of conference systems, etc. to prepare their essay projects. We don't have that many local cases yet, so we are starting by both analysing and using different internet media. In this manner, basically our cases are also made up with what we are doing ourselves. Of course the notion of digital bridging refers to the Öresund bridge which, by the summer of 2000, will provide a fixed link between Denmark and Sweden, Copenhagen and Malmø. In a sense the project aims at testing the hypothesis whether the internet will improve the building of this region, which has separate ethnic, national and linguistic backgrounds. In any case, Scania in southern Sweden was part of the kingdom of Denmark until the mid-17th century, and the local languages spoken are actually very similar. We easily understand each other although we speak different languages.

BS/ We read about it in the newspapers. It's a big thing, everybody is talking about this bridge.

TDJ/ I think the building, or developing, of this region will be highly beneficial to us in both Sweden and Denmark – that is, if it ever takes place. Obviously, a bridge is not enough. There have to be the right catalysts. I think SUPERFLEX might be a good catalyst in this sense. One of the things I really like about SUPERFLEX is that they have – I wouldn't call it innocence – but a very sincere wish to involve themselves as a neutral partner in various contexts. If they chose to involve themselves as catalysts in local region-building, that, I think, could be rewarding for all parties. Not least because they, as artists, aim at making us think of the entire process a bit more critically.

DB/ Would you take SUPERFLEX as an example?

TDJ/ Yes, SUPERFLEX's Karlskrona2 and SUPERCHANNEL are very good examples of how to develop a local dimension of cyber-culture. I am also trying to find funding to do something like the Karlskrona2 project in the Copenhagen-Malmø area. I think it's very important simply to have a map that people can relate to for an understanding of the area as a cultural entity. Such a map would have to transgress the borders of national states and the land masses of the local geography, that is, the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula of Sweden and north-eastern Zealand in Denmark. It would have to develop a new boundary for a city that is divided by the Sound. Anyway, I think that you get your idea of your spatial home through maps. And this idea might be stronger if it were visualised in three dimensions.

BS/ What field do you come from?

TDJ/ Film and media studies. I used to teach this as an assistant professor. I am currently connected to the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the Danish Forest and Landscape Research Institute, and we are investigating how web-based 3D visualisation media

can be applied in public planning communication.

DB/ Do you write about the project on your own home page? Or do you write in magazines?

TDJ/ Yes, I use my home page a lot for project information, publications, etc., I also write for various journals, and I have contributed to anthologies within the field of media studies, art, visual culture, etc.

BS/ Was it possible to study media in Denmark?

TDJ/ Yes, there is a fine film and media studies department at the University of Copenhagen. However, I have also done studies in psychoanalysis and film studies at the University of Kent in Canterbury, England.

DB/ That's an interesting link.

TDJ/ Yes, I'm also very interested in subject theoretical issues regarding visual media such as cinema and web-based visualisation. I don't practise clinical analysis at all. The most important question for me in this respect is more generally what it's like to be a subject in a virtual communication environment on the internet.

BS/ So you know something theoretically which is useful for your interests?

TDJ/ Yes, of course, I am supposed to know about those things. My work is all about connecting relevant theoretical problems with actual cases of web-based visual communication pertaining to public planning communication. However, I should also stress that I'm working for an applied research institute under the Danish Ministry of Environment and Energy; an institute that seeks to come up with some very concrete and applicable suggestions as to how to use technology for the benefit of society. However, working together with SUPERFLEX has made it possible for me to distance myself a bit further from the academic environment at the university – from the ivory tower, that is – although I always found it very flattering when people said that I had withdrawn to the ivory tower. Still, I like to involve myself in the world now and then.

BS/ Did SUPERFLEX encourage you to partly leave the university?

TDJ/ Yes, in a sense – or, at least, to have an entirely new, neutral dimension put into my field of work. SUPERFLEX have not only provided me with some good examples but they've also introduced another mode of involvement which is easy for me to relate to since it also maintains a certain kind of distance, or abstraction, namely that of art. Art provides us with a space for a different approach. In the planning world you have too few agents, and their parts are to a large extent given in advance. There are only the planners, the politicians, and the citizens.

BS/ That is rather limited, it sounds hermetic.

TDJ/ Exactly, a closed circuit. I hope, through working with SUPERFLEX as a kind of catalyst this will change. They simply make things happen or start things which would be impossible otherwise. This is the main reason why I am so interested in bringing them into this area. I'm

also interested in commenting on what they do but my new approach here is to bring them into this area and make them function.

BS/ There is a discursive field that they share with other artists, but not with many. That is why we are so interested in their work because they challenge the different disciplines a lot. It seems that everybody who becomes involved in the various projects gets some new ideas. Maybe because of the mental space they offer.

TDJ/ I agree with you, they make things happen in the art scene.

BS/ Not only there, also in other fields. In the art world, in the ways communities relate to each other, in decision making, economics, politics and development. There are so many disciplines they touch.

TDJ/ Well, yes. I am not sure as to how they touch upon that of art criticism though. That's a good question. For me, however, working both as a critic, a theorist, and in applied research, I can certainly confirm that SUPER-FLEX and their ways have made a difference to me.

DB/ Are you a kind of adviser for Karlskrona2?

TDJ/ No, not at all. I'm using Karlskrona2 as a case study and an idea, and I'm also kind of distanced from it as a critic. This distance is also about the fact that the project has not yet been realised. They've made a demo video, and they've had a lot of meetings with the local municipality. Of course, this is an interesting and important process in itself. Obviously, for me, however, it would be most interesting to see what happens when it is finally realised and worked through by the public. I'm not only interested in the project concept but also in the results.

BS/ Are you familiar with the other projects?

TDJ/ SUPERFLEX's? Well, I know about the biogas project in Africa and their music production company, and I took part in the SUPERCHANNEL project. We put on a seminar to discuss the moving images that you can find in the SUPERCHANNEL. The whole film set at the gallery was very different to what one is used to, and the seminar tried to analyse this particular situation.

DB/ Was it also broadcast?

TDJ/ Yes, it was broadcast live just like the other SUPER-CHANNEL shows this summer ("Framed", July 8, 1998). Basically, I'm interested in all their work. They are turning everything upside down. It's both very conceptual and very social. They are showing new roads, and that's why I am happy to be involved in this way.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

Update November 2001:

TDJ/ My cooperation with SUPERFLEX has been continuously growing since 1999. I have also written a number of articles on SUPERFLEX for various contexts since 1999. And now I am happy to announce, that I have just been
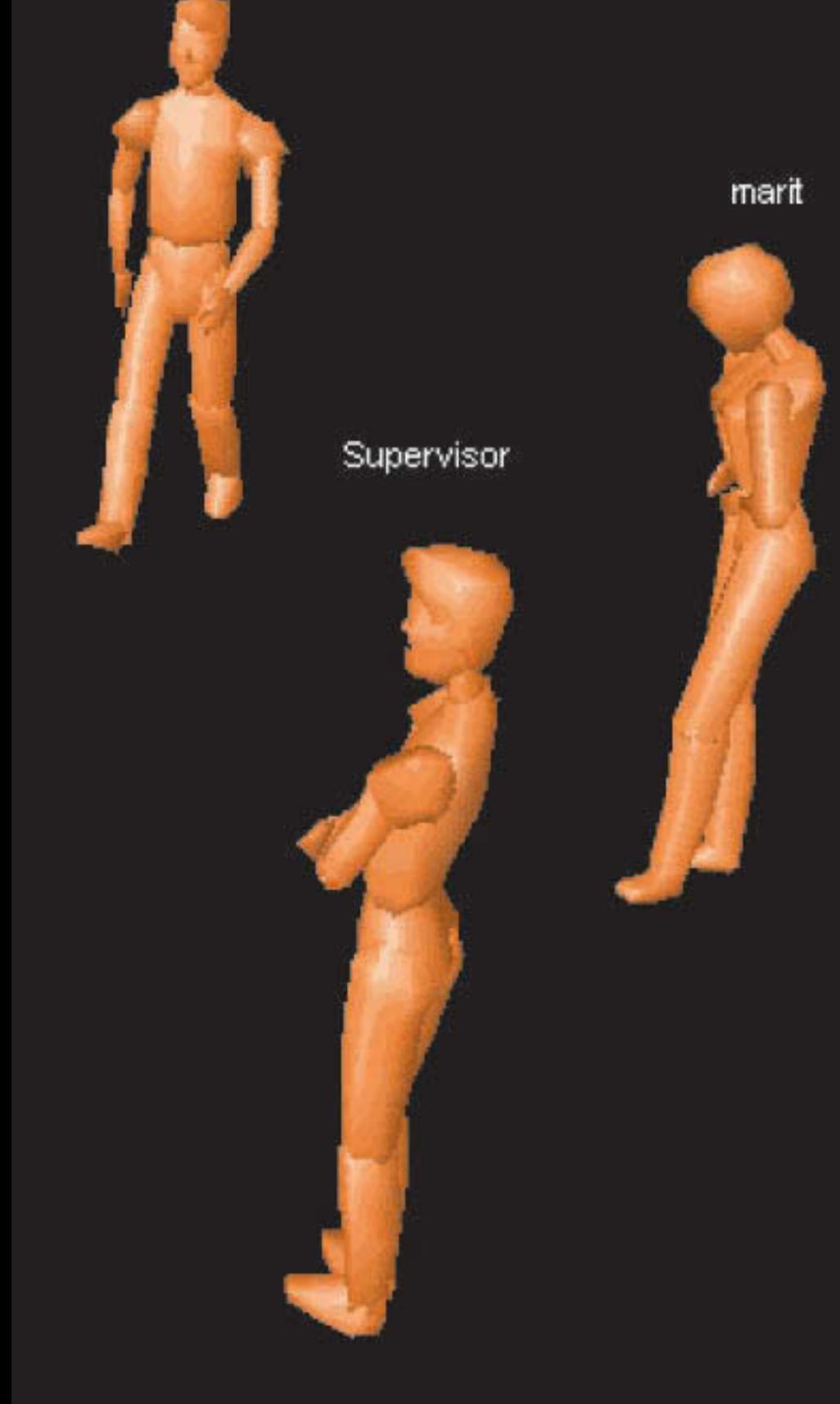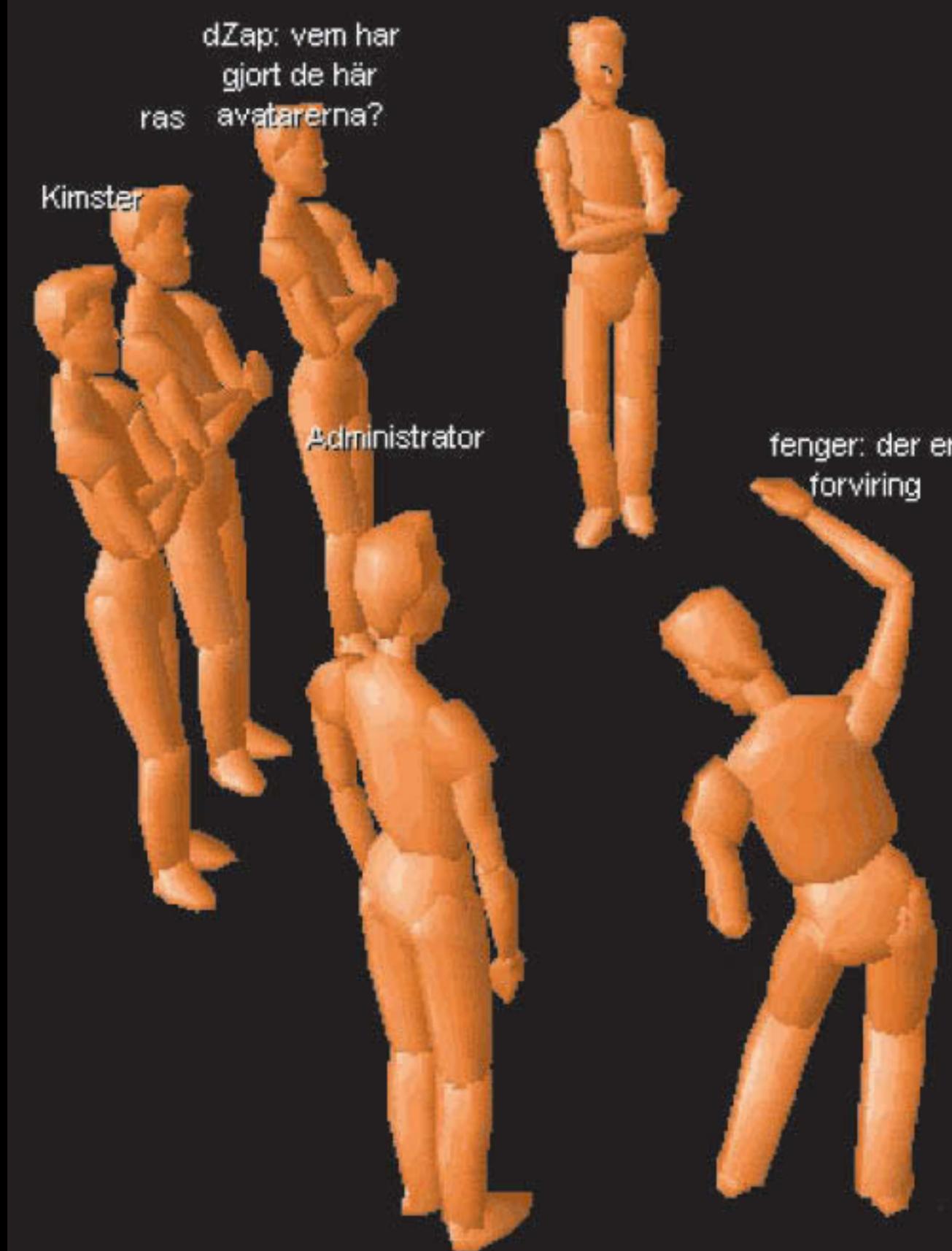
appointed as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Digital Aesthetics and Communications at the IT University of Copenhagen. This job is the perfect platform for further cooperation with SUPERFLEX which will probably have a central part in my future research.

SUPERGAS/ CMS, Thailand, Bangkok, December 1999
Return Matchmaking Visit by SUPERGAS to CMS in Thailand SUPERGAS (SUPERFLEX and Jan Mallan) make a trip to Thailand to discuss future collaboration with CMS with the aim of producing and distributing the SUPERGAS model in Thailand. On this visit the members of SUPERGAS are introduced to Thai pig farmers and to other possible users. The partners agree to undertake market research for the Thai market.

During their stay in Thailand SUPERFLEX meet with different people related to the art scene in Bangkok.

PETER ERIKSEN
Economist and Shareholder in SUPERGAS Ltd.

BS/ Tell us when and how you met SUPERFLEX?
PE/ In 1996 they were looking for an accountant.
DB/ How did they get to know you?
PE/ My wife's eldest son is an artist, and I had done his tax declaration for some years. In 1995/96 he got a lot of tax money back and then all his friends came and asked me to do theirs, too. SUPERFLEX also did. That was the beginning. Now I have about 40 young artists as clients.
BS/ You are very familiar with the field of art through your son and his friends. And you've met all the other artists asking for your help.
PE/ And today it's just the same. A big percentage of my new customers come that way.
DB/ How did you become involved in the biogas project? You are a shareholder now.
PE/ I heard about it and we discussed it. SUPERFLEX wanted to form a separate company. And they didn't have too much money, so they asked me if I could think of anyone who had some money. I said, I had some money and then we set up this firm Supergas Ltd., as it is called.
BS/ What was the motivation for you to become more involved and to be one of the shareholders? What did you find so interesting?
PE/ The project itself, and what one can do for poor people.
BS/ Is it a more or less normal investment for you?
PE/ No. It is more idealistic.
BS/ Jan Mallan said that at first he didn't trust the idea. He wasn't sure that this would really work. But now he thinks that it will become successful, he is absolutely convinced. And it seems that you also think that Supergas might be successful.
PE/ Yes, I think so. And as Jan probably said, we work with small systems for the poor. We have made contracts

now in Thailand for bigger systems. So there could be more than one product and more than one product size for a greater variety of customers, abattoirs for instance.
BS/ So there will be different products for different contexts. They are useful for these countries but there are cultural differences. Could you tell us more about your position in this context? What you did and what you plan within the company?
PE/ I've been on the financial side all the time. I knew the lawyer who drew up the papers for Supergas Ltd. I was in the negotiations when we set the firm up. Actually, from the start I've been the Managing Director of the firm. Now we need a Managing Director who is here all the time, so we are changing to Jakob or Rasmus. We don't know yet who, but one of them. It will be some time soon.
BS/ The structure of the company will have to be changed, then?
PE/ It has to become more of a firm. We want to have a Managing Director to whom the board can say, it wants a certain thing done. And then he will have to do it and he will have to have the money for it.
BS/ But you would still be part of the board.
PE/ Yes, I am still part of the board. The five of us make up the board.
BS/ Because of the art context that you are familiar with, I suppose, it was not a big surprise for you that artists do projects like Supergas. A lot of people in the art context wonder why.
PE/ I didn't wonder why, but I did wonder.
BS/ Why they developed such a project?
PE/ The other projects I know are more artistic. With SUPERFLEX it's different. They are making a product and that's not normal for artists. So I wondered. I hadn't seen anything like it before.
BS/ Because it's very close to the mechanism of commercial companies, because it's more like the production in a company?
PE/ Perhaps.
BS/ What did you advise them to do first? They had some vague ideas about running a company. But they are not lawyers, they are not economists, so there were a lot of things they couldn't know.
PE/ I've worked as an administrator in bigger firms with much more money. I advised them to make a foundation, which is more like a piece of paper setting down the structure, the board of directors, etc.
DB/ So, to set down the structure was the first step. And what was next?
PE/ The firm had to be registered, you have to get a number, and so on. All these formalities.
DB/ That was your part.
PE/ Yes.
BS/ Do you specialise in founding companies?
PE/ No, not at all. I'm an accountant. But I knew a good lawyer who does specialise in these things and we used

him for it. You could say, I was the contact man in those first months.

BS/ So you are a specialist in finances?

PE/ Which was why it was very appropriate that I should be the Managing Director. But now we have to move on and do other things. Now, we are looking for another Managing Director. I just keep doing what I've done all this time, looking after the money and making the payments and so on.

DB/ How much time do you put in for SUPERGAS?

PE/ Not so much.

BS/ And if the project becomes successful…

DB/ …will all the hours be paid?

PE/ We hope so.

DB/ It also seems to be very interesting for all the different people who are involved in the project, otherwise they wouldn't work without money, would they?

BS/ Jan Mallan also said that it was interesting for him, because working with SUPERFLEX is not like working with huge companies. That makes the difference, and that's exactly what he's interested in. He sees other possibilities. He can do things he cannot do with big companies. But maybe it's not the same for you, maybe you just do what you usually do.

DB/ Do you also consult with the economic adviser, Lars Eskesen?

PE/ With Lars, yes. The whole board does. That's the official place for discussion and writing.

BS/ How much time as a percentage, if it is possible to say, do you spend on the biogas project for SUPERFLEX?

PE/ It's not much. It's perhaps two to four weeks a year.

BS/ You are based in Copenhagen?

PE/ Yes. And the things I do for SUPERGAS are the same things I do for my other clients. It's the same thing for me, paying and banking and taxing, advising, etc. There's nothing special. It's the same thing I always do.

BS/ You treat them like all the other clients, but there is one important difference, they don't pay you like all the other clients.

PE/ SUPERGAS doesn't pay me, but SUPERFLEX do.

DB/ So they are two clients?

PE/ You know that SUPERFLEX have also a music company. That is also my client. And I am paid when I work for them.

BS/ Does it really make sense to split all this up? There is no SUPERFLEX company, but it seems there are a lot of smaller companies: the music company, the biogas and the SUPERCHANNEL. Wouldn't it be better to have only one meta company and their different branches?

PE/ There is SUPERGAS Ltd., there is Music together with August Engkilde and there is SUPERFLEX Ltd., too. All things that are not in SUPERGAS and in music are in SUPERFLEX. That is the 'art place'.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger.

MUSICSYSTEM
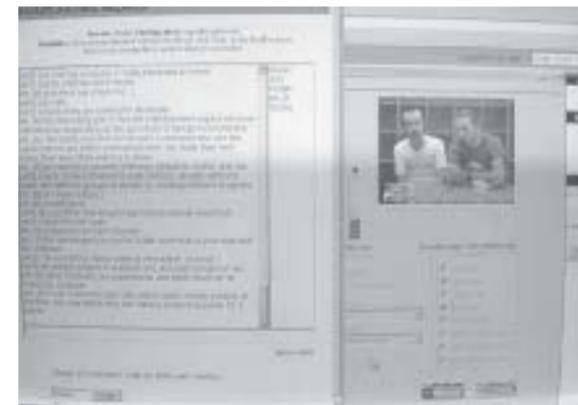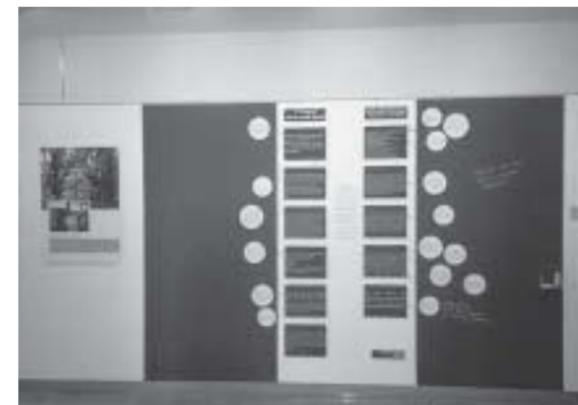
Update December 2001:

PE/ I am still working with SUPERFLEX and still a shareholder. Looking back there has been lot of work and no outcome – yet.
Effects: It brings prestige to be a part of SUPERFLEX.
Impact: There is a growing interest for using art in business or vice versa.

SUPERFLEX MUSIC/ February 2000
SUPERFLEX music becomes MUSICSYSTEM and is now a company with three new members: Mikael Brain, Kruzh'em and B9, making a total of seven.

First releases are: Tool.1 is animal sounds/beats, Tool.2 is beats/weird sounds; both are vinyl and made in such a way that they are perfect for scratching.

SUPERGAS/ SUPERCHANNEL/ SUPERFLEX
IN COMPANY/ECONOMIC POTENTIALS, CCS Bard College, New York, USA, 2000
SUPERFLEX was invited by Tracee Williams, a student from a curatorial course, to realise a project at the Bard College.

SUPERFLEX offered the students the possibility of developing one of the projects further. Tracee Williams was interested in biogas and through discussions, economic issues around the biogas project came up. The department for developing economies was asked to join the project. They focused on research into economic models in relation to the SUPERGAS biogas system. One student, Mini, included these subjects in her thesis.

SUPERCHANNEL was used to discuss the biogas project with the students before SUPERFLEX's arrival in N.Y.

The exhibition was located in the entrance hall of the college, which functions as a meeting point. Mini gave a presentation on micro-credit systems and other matters relating to the subject. Additionally there was an exhibition of the biogas tool with the balloon text diagrams and videos by SUPERFLEX and a workshop offered by them for interested students from the economics department.

SUPERCHANNEL/ CORONATION COURT, Blue Coat Gallery, Video Positive, Liverpool 2000
The exhibition was divided into two parts: most importantly a studio was opened in the Coronation Court tower block. At the same time, in the Blue Coat Gallery SUPERFLEX showed video-interviews with the residents of the tower block and, on a free-standing wall, a large-format photoprint of the building. On the other side of the wall, there was written information about the project, photographs of the tenants in their studio, and the schedule of the TV programmes they were making.

Additionally two computers where visitors could participate online were arranged on a table together with a goldfish aquarium. The gallery was used as a public presentation space to introduce the basic ideas of the project. It also functioned as a discussion space. The architects (BIQ) drawing up the refurbishment plans for Coronation Court were invited by SUPER-
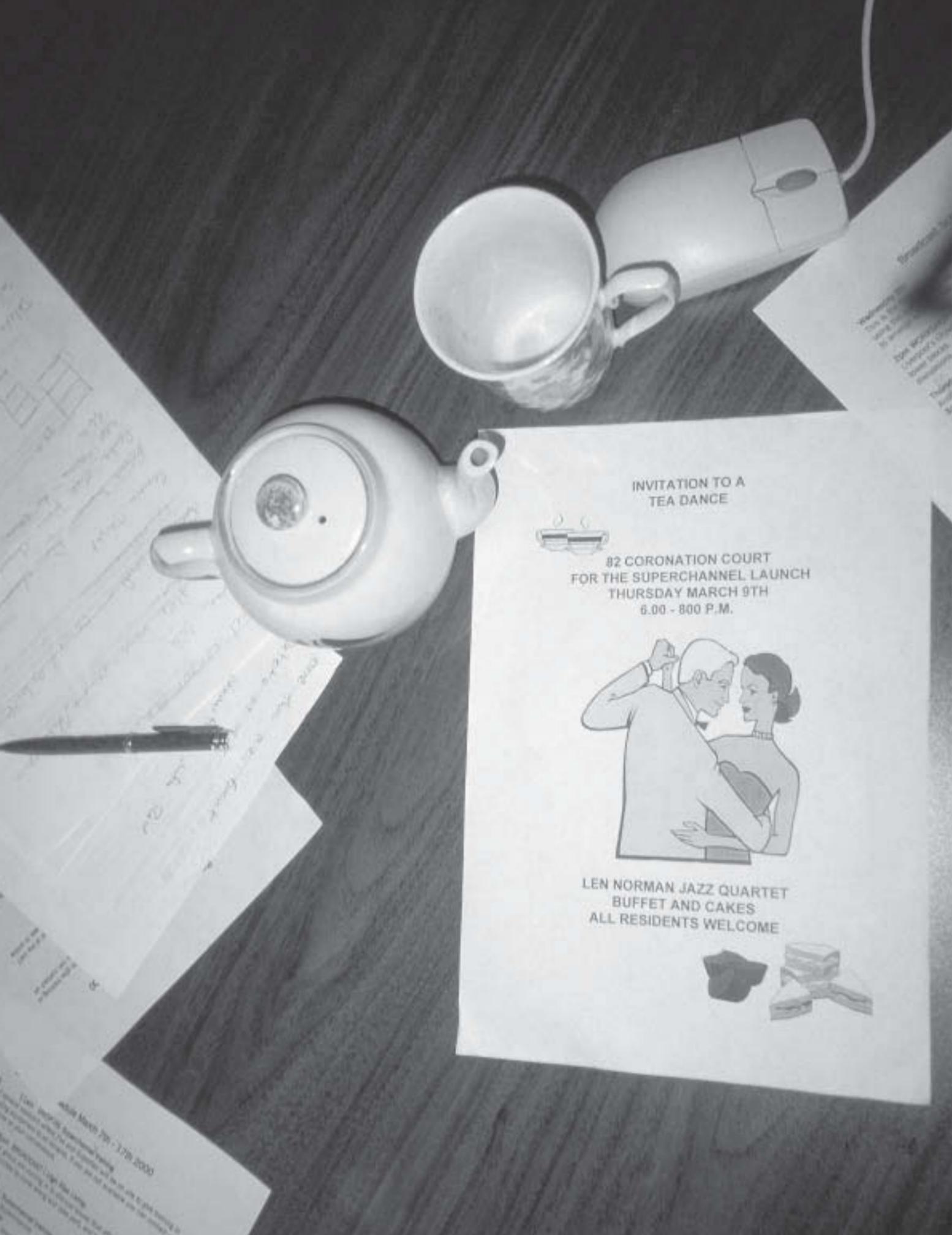
FLEX to take part in the exhibition. They brought in classical architectural drawings and texts were displayed on the table. Public meetings were held in the exhibition space during live broadcasts from Coronation Court.

The exhibition in the gallery ran for two months, the studio in the tower block is still thriving.

SUPERFLEX/ March 2000 – New office for SUPERFLEX
Having finished their studies at the art academy, SUPERFLEX move to another part of Copenhagen. The new office is a 200 square metre store with large front windows. The main reasons for having a large space with windows to the street are that SUPERCHANNEL can test the open studio aspect and that all the SUPERFLEX activities are represented at one place with the possibility for all partners to use the space.

SUPERCHANNEL/ SITUFLEX STUDIO, Copenhagen, May 2000
The Situflex Studio is established as an experimentation platform for SUPERCHANNEL. SUPERFLEX and Sean Treadway hire a manager to run this studio – Kenneth Jensen – who is himself a former user of the facilities; his intention is to use the studio on the basis of a theory by Situscience, which was presented in the TOOLS exhibition in Wolfsburg.

SITUFLEX
– now SITUSCIENCE
Morten W. Ejlshov, Kenneth Jensen, Tine Jensen and Estrid Sørensen together form Situscience, a group of psychologists and researchers investigating social design

BS/ How and when did you all meet SUPERFLEX?
KJ/ As far as I remember I met SUPERFLEX in May 1999. At that time SUPERFLEX had located their SUPER-CHANNEL activities in the Artspace 1% in Copenhagen. Morten, a colleague of mine and long-time friend of Jakob, introduced me to SUPERFLEX. After the introduction mediated by Morten, we started working together on a project about using the Internet TV channel for team reflections and problem solving.
TJ/ I first heard about SUPERFLEX when they were exhibiting SUPERGAS at Arken in Copenhagen maybe a year before we were contacted – I can't be sure. I thought this was one of the most fascinating things I had ever seen. The whole concept of art-non-art with a social inclination was extremely interesting to me. Of course at the time I didn't dream of ever working with them since I don't move in art-circles. But when Morten told me about SUPERCHANNEL I was immediately caught by the idea of doing a show. Like Estrid, I never imagined, that it would turn into a long-term collaboration, like it did.
ES/ Tine, Morten, Kenneth and I are participants in a group called 'Snapel P'. It's a group of psychologists and psychology students who all know each other from their

studies at the University of Copenhagen. We meet 4–5 times a year, discussing whatever psychological issues we find interesting. We are also good friends, so we also meet because we like to chat with each other.

In spring 1999 Morten wrote to this group to ask if anybody was interested in participating in a broadcasting show at SUPERCHANNEL (Morten and Jakob have known each other since childhood). Tine, Kenneth and I are very interested in technology, so the three of us responded to Morten that we were interested. First we met with each other discussing the content of the show. Then we went to see the studio; at that time it was located in the Artspace 1%. I don't remember who the person showing us the technology was, but I don't think it was any of the superguys. And I really don't remember when we met them for the first time. Maybe it was not until we were actually broadcasting the first show – then, I at least remember Jakob and Rasmus being there. But I may be wrong. I believe we didn't think of it as if we were going to develop a longer relationship with the superguys – we thought we were just there for the one time, and I guess I didn't think too much about trying to get to know them. Maybe that changed a little after the show when we went to a bar and talked about what we had been doing – there, all three of them were there, I remember. I think that evening I got a little more interested in who they were and what they were.

BS/ What is your motivation for working with SUPERFLEX? What do you gain for your own work out of it?

TJ/ Let me answer the two questions in one. When we first met SUPERFLEX I was working as a consultant and very frustrated with my job, even though I should have been satisfied, since in many respects it was a dream job. But still, I was frustrated, stressed out and angry. One of the most frustrating things was that my company was endorsing a concept called "Hard Fun", meaning that work in the information era must be rewarding as well as challenging, and above all FUN. If it meets these criteria it's no problem if it's hard, and money comes second place.

Watching the superguys who are actually living and breathing "Hard Fun", and taking a look at myself from the outside, made me realise that I wasn't 'walking the talk'; my job was just hard, and not much fun. Also, working together with my good friends in Situflex (later Situscience) showed me that it's extremely rewarding to do things you really like together with people you really care about. The process itself is the most rewarding part of working like this. Always looking forward to the next meeting. This was not something that was common in my consultant-life.

This helped me to re-evaluate my life and to go after a long-standing dream of going back to the University to do a PhD. This is also hard, and frustrating, and in many ways more demanding than my previous job, but it's also definitely more FUN!
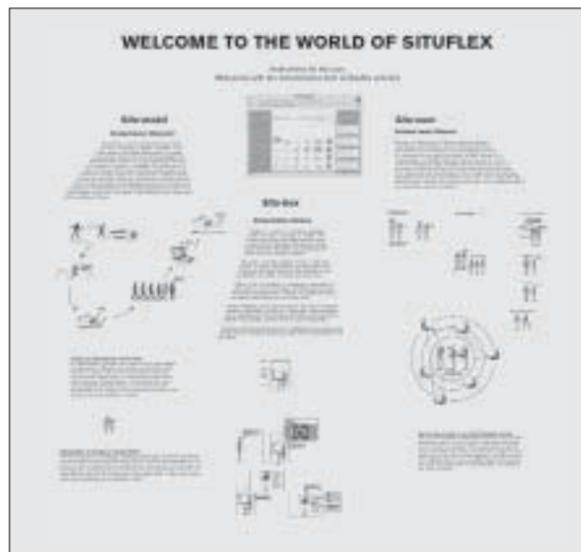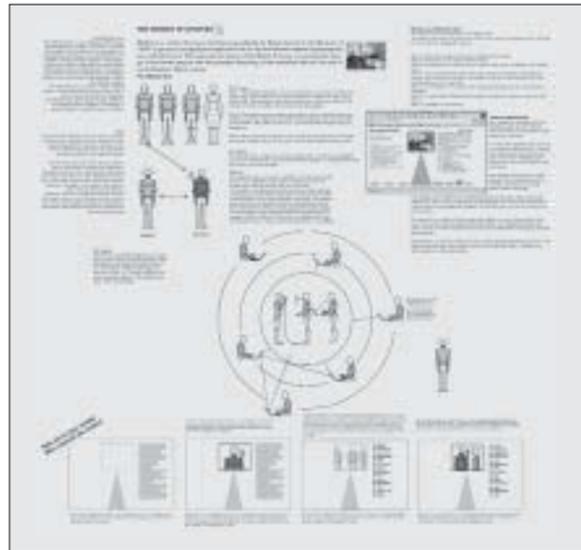
IF SUPERFLEX ARE A SEALED AND CLOSED BAG THAT MIGHT CONTAIN THE NEXT GREAT ADVENTURE AND COOPERATIVE 'PARTY' THEN I'M EXCITED TO PARTICIPATE AND MIGHT BECOME AN ADDICTED REGULAR.

Apart from the gain in my personal life I also benefit on a professional level from the thoughts and concepts that we develop in cooperation with SUPERFLEX. Like Estrid, I feel that I have a lot in common with SUPERFLEX in terms of cultural, social and technological approaches. Working with SUPERFLEX has been a great source of inspiration to my work, on a practical as well as a theoretical level.

ES/ Some of what I get out of it is this: finding surprising, interested questions in my email inbox. This is pretty characteristic for my motivation: you never really know what happens, but it always seems to be fun and inspiring, and at the same time it's never a duty, never like a heavy weight on your shoulders. This is not to say that it's not hard work, and that I do not sometimes wish we could be over with it faster. I guess the easiness and quality of the work with SUPERFLEX is largely due to the contrast to the other difficult, binding, heavy, necessary areas of my life. It's a feeling like, whatever you do, it will always be appreciated. In my work life, private life etc., there is always the risk of not being good enough, doing things wrong etc. And doing things wrong has vast consequences. Working for SUPERFLEX is just much more comfortable – whatever you do, it's good, and it doesn't seem to have any negative consequences (except that it takes time from other parts of my life, where I need the time to prove my worth). I guess all that is my motivation.

So, for my work, the discussions, ideas etc. that we have in Situscience/Situflex are integrated more or less directly into my own work, because many of the reflections are very close to what I do at work. And much of what the SUPERFLEX guys talk about is also very interesting for me, because they seem to worry about the same things that I do, but from another perspective (art, which they would hate to hear), and this other perspective adds a new angle to my viewpoint and makes me go on reflecting. And I also get ideas that I take home (to work) and use directly – I have got many ideas on how to do my research, what technologies to involve, what to focus on etc.

MWE/ Having just arrived back home from holiday, I found this enquiry in my mail-box. This is fun. My original motivation was double-sided. On the one hand I thought of this project as a chance to test some of the methods, that I've been working with for a long period, in a new setting, or context. I've been working with reflective team methods for a while, trying all of the different positions in the team, and having done theoretical reflections upon the method in my final thesis at university. What was new and motivating for me, was the idea of trying to work with this method on the internet. To explore and to be surprised about new possibilities, new positionings, new ways of communicating etc.

On the other hand, this was also a possibility for me to go out to 'play' with Jakob in a new playground. We've

been friends for several years, and have spent a lot of time together – travelling, discussing, playing music and thinking about things, but our professional working lives have always been separate, since our primary interests lay in two different fields: art and psychology. When Jakob proposed this project, it was an opportunity to melt the two together in a common project.

And what have I gained for my own work? Well, I'm working as a consultant in public sector organisations dealing with topics such as organisational development, personnel and management. In terms of learning, this project has given me a chance to experiment with new methods – sometimes it's very hard to get away with experiments in large organisations, where the management and the employees tend to choose the beaten track, for fear of what might happen if …

KJ/ Working with SUPERFLEX creates a space without the usual constraints that I'm socialised to regard as a must. Limitless and constantly flowing in new directions and yet not losing focus of what could become important issues in our cooperation with SUPERFLEX gets my adrenalin pumping and my mind swirling. On the other hand working together with a three-headed elf has to have some consequences of course, it can be rather mind-boggling at times just to have normal social interaction through letters, telephones and, not the least, emailing. I wonder why?

Could it be because I'm usually cooperating with more precisely defined subjects – maybe! As a collective subject SUPERFLEX is a bit like a 'phantasm' or rather a group of 'phantasms', I think! Sometimes they act like a giant screen ready to be illuminated by your thoughts and ideas, do they really want this themselves? If SUPERFLEX are a sealed and closed bag that might contain the next great adventure and cooperative 'party' then I'm excited to participate and might become an addicted regular.

In my different areas of work I gain ideas, inspiration, and an idea of how to enrol working-partners without controlling too much or dictating what the outcome should or could be! Although sometime it's very hard not to impose some kind of structure and ruling for what should be achieved in my own working-process. I've worked as a youth-teacher in teaching go-carting to mostly young boys and I found it very de-stressing not having to be the decision-maker and the one with total responsibility all the time. So, employing the distributed decisions techniques, I've achieved a healthier life and have enjoyed my work in a different way.

This interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner.

Update November 2001:

Unfortunately we no longer work with SUPERFLEX. But we have fun memories to reflect back on whenever
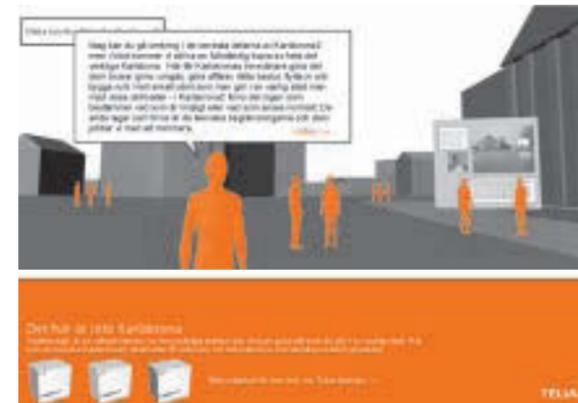
academia becomes too boring :–) Working with SUPERFLEX definitely had an effect on our thinking and we hope they will keep up their inspiring work.

SUPERCHANNEL/ PLAN B, De Appel, Amsterdam 2000 / DEMOCRACY, Royal College of Art, London 2000
Both exhibitions were intended to show and discuss the potential of SUPERCHANNEL by presenting the Coronation Court Channel and inviting possible new users to make further use of it. SUPERFLEX left it up to the curators to choose possible future users and to invite these for discussions. The presentation followed the Liverpool model at the Blue Coat Gallery; in addition there were also discussions and lectures.

DE APPEL: During the exhibition RAZO (a radio station run by people from former colonies) was invited by the curators to present their ideas and to discuss different reasons for having SUPERCHANNEL. RAZO set up their channel in May 2000, albeit with little success.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART: Tenants' organisations were invited, and the producers of the Coronation Court Channel came to the RCA to present their channel and discuss the use of this tool.

KARLSKRONA2/ WHAT IF…, Moderna Museet, Stockholm 2000
SUPERFLEX used their invitation to the exhibition as an opportunity to present K2 to possible cooperation partners. They showed an animation, a comic strip, and texts about the project. Additionally they presented the system, Active World, to show the technology they are using for K2, plus a first version of K2 (beta version) and a video interview with the Mayor (Mats Johansson) about his expectations for K2.

Footnote: In the meantime Tesch & Tesch, an IT ad company, had contacted SUPERFLEX. The ad company had read about the project in *NU*: (Nordic art review) magazine. They suggested setting up a link with Telia, because the latter is one of their clients. Tesch & Tesch proposed to Telia a different way of promoting their products; they saw some possibilities in SUPERFLEX's K2.

Tesch & Tesch chose K2 in order to focus on a project which uses cutting edge technology in a visionary way. The ad campaign was put in newspapers, magazines and the internet for 14 days. Alongside the campaign the first working version of K2 was launched. There were thousands of visitors to K2 during the first month.

SUPERCHANNEL/ EUROPA?, Norden, Kunsthalle, Vienna 2000
Because of the specific political situation in Austria SUPERFLEX decided to install the SUPERCHANNEL. They wanted to initiate discussions on the recent political situation in Europe and especially in Austria. The studio was installed in a box-like building outside – but close to – the Kunsthalle. The building had a display window made to look like a huge orange monitor. The opening hours were from 5–10 p.m.

During the exhibition flyers were distributed in the public

space to announce SUPERCHANNEL and its possibilities. On one side there was a blank form to fill in if people wanted to propose their own channel, on the other side there was an introduction to SUPERCHANNEL and an invitation to use it.

Before the project started in Vienna SUPERFLEX undertook preliminary research to find some facilitators/cooperation partners for SUPERCHANNEL. The channel was then given to students from the Academy (part of the resistance-group), to political scientists and Radio Orange. Over a period of three months a number of shows were produced, like the series 'Resistance Wear'.

Footnote: A serious problem was that the Kunsthalle was not particularly forthcoming during this period, which in turn made it very difficult for the local partners to use the studio with all its potential; despite this circumstance we want to thank the partners for their enthusiasm and hard work.

SUPERCHANNEL/ THE ORGANISATION, Jan. – Dec. 2000
Several meetings take place with IT venture companies, Tele companies, TV stations and organisations. During this period different consultants are hired and 2 different managers are employed. Many volunteers are involved in experiments with the concept, and SUPERCHANNEL is presented at many conferences in Denmark and abroad on media convergence, TV in the future, and IT democracy.

LARS ESKESEN
Economist and onetime banker

DB/ How and when did you meet SUPERFLEX?
LE/ It must have been around March this year. I met them through Henrik B. Andersen, Bjørnstjerne's professor. I had left the Management Board of Denmark's second largest bank in February 1999, after 18 years. I was the person who was most interested in art and we had commissioned sculptures from Henrik B. Andersen, among others, for the new headquarters.
BS/ You were officially responsible for the art collection, or was it your private interest?
LE/ I am finalising the work now. The building will be finished in a couple of months. When I joined the bank we started to build up an art collection. There were six buildings and you had to have something on the wall. So I took up this task.
DB/ Where do you present the collection or can people have the works in their offices?
LE/ Basically the works are not in the offices so much as in the meeting rooms, the foyer, the reception areas.
BS/ Could you tell us something about your specific interest in art. What do you find so fascinating in art?
LE/ I find it stimulating, I like beautiful things, I like design etc. But I could not be an art dealer because as an art dealer you have to be able to sell everything. I only buy

ONE MIGHT SAY, THEY WORK IN DIFFERENT AREAS, IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, I GUESS, THEY HAVE A GENERAL IDEA, AND THEY ARE TRYING TO BRING TOGETHER ALL THESE DIFFERENT STYLES. THE WAY THEY ARE WORKING DEMANDS A SPECIFIC ECONOMY. SUPERFLEX HAVE ALREADY PUT A LOT OF THOUGHT INTO THIS. BUT THEY HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL HOW THEY STRUCTURE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES.

what I like and so it would be a bit difficult.
BS/ It seems that you separate your economic work from your interest in art.
LE/ My interest in art has nothing to do with money, not at the moment, at least. Maybe in 50 years time. It would be nice for my children if there were not only beautiful but also valuable things. But my problem is, I buy things because I like them. My interest started in the 1970s. If I had been a bit more focused at that time I would have a different collection now.
BS/ When did you become involved in the work of SUPERFLEX? They practice a different kind of art from what you have been collecting.
LE/ Henrik B. Andersen asked me if I would act as a sort of economic adviser for SUPERFLEX. Bjørnstjerne will finish his studies this year.
DB/ So, you are a kind of tutor, I suppose, academies have this but usually they are not economists.
LE/ That fits in with the idea of how SUPERFLEX work. It is art, of course, but how could one define their practice? They work within such a broad context. The basic idea, as far as I know, is to influence people more directly than through a painting, for instance. I like the more or less holistic approach they have. What I have seen was mostly from catalogues, also the installation they are going to have in Sweden – Karlskrona2. One might say, they work in different areas, in different directions, I guess, they have a general idea, and they are trying to bring together all these different styles. The way they are working demands a specific economy. SUPERFLEX have already put a lot of thought into this. But they have to be very careful how they structure their various activities. You need some financing, of course, with the biogas project you need donors and in the other fields it will be more the traditional sponsoring. My advice to them is to be very careful to keep the different activities well structured.
BS/ They have reached a crucial point at the moment …
DB/ … especially with the biogas project. They've founded a company called SUPERGAS.
BS/ Different structures are required now. And they have to think about their roles, what they really want. How they want to proceed. They involve a lot of people. But one has only a certain amount of energy.
LE/ The feeling I have is that they are working all they can. They work harder than anyone I've met before. They were up in my summer house in late June and Bjørnstjerne said he was taking four days holiday for the first time in three years. You're right, they have to be careful now. One day they might find a pot of gold, I don't know. But until then they need some financing. Some of the things they're working on could be worth a lot of money one day, like the project they have on the internet, the SUPERCHANNEL. I have a general interest in the art world but my role as an external tutor at the Academy is something else. The reason why I was brought in, was that

I might help them and make some contacts for them. For the SUPERGAS project I put them in touch with the Danish Industrialisation Fund. That could be a great help for them if that project is going to fly.

BS/ They've developed a lot of alternative models and they have a lot of influence in the disciplines they are dealing with. There are a lot of additional disciplines and professions but they would lose a lot of their quality if everything was brought to an economic level. They offer the kind of space which makes things possible that you can't do within normal business life because of hierarchies, efficiency etc. But they are very efficient, although they don't have this economic pressure that you find in normal business life.

LE/ Now they are in a different situation. As students they had access to the premises belonging to the academy, I don't know how they are financed, I think that they have used a lot of their own money. If they want to go on in the structure they are thinking of, SUPERFLEX would then be an umbrella. One thing they have to address is how they will finance this structure. I suggested some help. I have contact with some funds and trusts where they might get a substantial amount for the next few years. They will need this to maintain their structure. And also they will have to be careful, because they have been together for quite some time now, I think for six years. What will happen in five or six years time, when their interests might differ? If you marry it's a good idea to write down what's going to happen if you are not married any more. Their situation is a bit the same. And, of course, the whole idea is to stick to this space they have created.

BS/ I think that they are very much aware of that. Is there any influence of their work on your idea of art? Has it changed anything?

LE/ I haven't had time to really get acquainted with it. Of course, I have read a lot of things. But I would like to get to know their art better. You see that my interest in art is more traditional. I have seen their practice, of course, and I also went to the Biennale in Venice this year. There were so many installations, far too many, maybe. This is a part of the art world that I haven't been so familiar with and haven't had so much interest in.

DB/ Could you imagine that SUPERFLEX could be a kind of entrance to another part of the art world?

LE/ I can easily imagine this. For me there is a kind of feeling, not that you like art from this century or that century, it is the kind of feeling, do you like it or do you not like it. I think I'm rather flexible.

BS/ Isn't it interesting that the work of SUPERFLEX brings your economic interests and your private interest in art together?

LE/ I have always thought that there are many interconnections. Art, design, architecture, it all affects people directly and indirectly. That's clear to me although it's impossible to measure it.

THE CRUCIAL THING IN MY OPINION IS NOT PRODUCTION, IT WILL BE DISTRIBUTION.

DB/ Could you tell us a bit more about the economic advice you gave to SUPERFLEX? What precisely did you offer them or suggest to them?

LE/ We are still in the process. We have had three meetings since we started. I can say that the really important things will be discussed in the meeting this autumn. So far I have given them some contacts which they would not have had otherwise, primarily for the biogas project. We started with the biogas project. They had a very nice presentation of their work but I suggested, "Why don't you use some of the structures that are known in my world. If you want to approach the stock market or raise money you have to have your own business brochures." So I gave them some business brochures from other companies to look at.

BS/ Could you give us an example?

LE/ I'm afraid, I don't have any to hand. I gave them three or four brochures from some high-tech companies. The advantage is that it forces you to be very stringent and precise in the way you present yourself, which I think would be to their advantage when one day they are seeking some funds. I've always worked that way, trying to write things down, to be very precise. You have to describe your history and your management strategies. You have to make clear what your activities are, what safeguards you have on the financial side. I got hold of some of these examples and I think they could see the rationality in it and the idea. If you have the right product and if you have made it clear through analysis how you approach the market – then there will be a market. The crucial thing in my opinion is not production, it will be distribution. Especially if you are going to operate in Africa. But I haven't really given them that much advice because they had already done most of the job. It would be nice if they could get this project running in some of these very poor African states. It's a challenge.

BS/ There are many other questions linked to anthropology, social conventions, political questions etc. It's really a very complex situation and with an art background alone the situation there cannot be handled. So you need a lot of people who know more about the specific situation in these countries.

LE/ The second stage would be, when they have all the things more or less in place, to get a fair description and grasp of how they are going to distribute these and what the market will look like. Then we can move on to the financing part. I wouldn't say that financing is easy but it's more straightforward, and for this you need a description like the brochures I mentioned. You can find people around the world who are willing to come up with substantial amounts of money. Even industrialists would take a risk, albeit only a calculated risk.

BS/ But sometimes it seems to be necessary to take an uncalculated risk.

LE/ This is something we have lost in this highly taxed welfare state.

BS/ I cannot agree – I think it is more a problem of liberal systems. I trust non-private support more. You can take contemporary art as an example: State institutions like the DCA (Danish Contemporary Art Foundation) partly finance risky projects. But I don't know any private person who would do that. 99% of potential financial partners have a very traditional idea of what art might be.

LE/ To finish answering your question, my advice to them would be to get something down on paper on how to tackle events they do not foresee now, and also to try to keep SUPERFLEX as a kind of holding company. You have SUPERGAS and I don't know how many other activities besides. It's much easier to find financial interest for single projects.

DB/ You mean, it would be simpler to get money for a certain project and develop other projects on the holding level?

LE/ They should be aware that there might be one of their activities with which they might be able to generate some funds. That's also where I think I could give them some advice when I know them a little better. Up to now we have focused mainly on the SUPERGAS side. Discussions were mostly on how to structure it. Let's talk about this again in a year's time and see what kind of advice they have followed.

The interview was conducted by Barbara Steiner and Doris Berger

SUPERCHANNEL/ The Modern Channel, *Pyramids of Mars*, The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, May 2000
SUPERFLEX invited the Modern Institute to make their own channel which functioned primarily as an open access performance channel for musicians, DJs, presentation of a magazine, and so on. Flyers were distributed in Edinburgh (in collaboration with young promoters) with the text "Wanted: performers". In the gallery itself there was a studio designed by the Modern Institute, Dan Peterman and SUPERFLEX. Recycled modules by Peterman were used as elements in the studio.

Footnote: The Show was curated by Lars Bang Larsen and the Modern Institute.

SUPERCITY/ WOLFSBURG2, *The Unhomely Home*, Kunstverein Wolfsburg, Germany 2000
In June 2000 during the group exhibition *The Unhomely Home* one square kilometre of Wolfsburg2 was launched using a similar browser as for Karlskrona2. Public terminals were installed in a meeting zone of a real estate company (Neuland), in a public library, and in the Kunstverein. Banners with the slogan: "Wollen Sie ihre Stadt verändern?" ("Do you want to change your town?") were put on these buildings. Meetings with potential cooperation partners also took place.

SUPERCHANNEL/ ECHIGO-TSUMARI-CHANNEL, Tsumari Region, Japan, July 2000
SUPERFLEX were invited by Art Front Gallery to do a project

Festival
in
"Wolfsburg2"
am 6. 9. 2000   um 19.00 Uhr
im Internet unter www.wolfsburg2.org
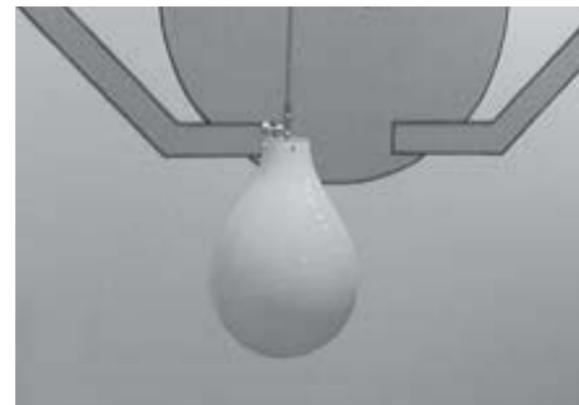
in the Echigo-Tsumari region. SUPERFLEX proposed setting up a SUPERCHANNEL, jointly run by six small towns, presenting themselves, the region and their visions for the region. The coordination group, consisting of local people, decided to locate the studio in a public library and called it 'echigo-tsumari-channel'. The group was also responsible for the presentation. SUPERFLEX & Sean Treadway functioned as advisors and discussion partners. During their stay SUPERFLEX & Sean Treadway ran a workshop with the users.

Footnote: see the show with Miss Tokamachi presenting the soba noodles of the region.

SUPERGAS/ BIOGAS TECHNOLOGY, Bontex, Denmark, Autumn 2000
Pressure equalisation system improved in collaboration with Bontex. The pressure equalising valve is then further improved in collaboration with the inventor Rene Bondy.

SUPERGAS/ MORE WORKS ABOUT BUILDINGS & FOOD (in collaboration with Rirkrit Tiravanija & Tobias Rehberger), Oeiras, Portugal, November 2000
Our title for the installation was: "Superportagasfloorkitchen without building – more works about the project that we can ship back to the land in Chiang Mai, so it can be used in comfort."
   The show presented ideas on how to integrate the biogas system into a domestic kitchen environment later to be used in the country in Chiang Mai. It consisted of a 1:1 model landscape of the environment including a floor (8 x 12 metres) that uses the weight of people standing on it to create the pressure needed to supply gas for cooking purposes. The model comprised: one biogas system / mattress / gas storage / wooden floor / kitchen / camping chairs.

Footnote: during this period a Tobias Rehberger lamp originally designed for the city hall in Hamburg was redesigned as a biogas lamp.

SUPERDESIGN/ December 2000
SUPERFLEX meets with Koch&Täckman – see interview with Rasmus Koch, a graphic design agency based in Copenhagen. The intention is to develop a new overall identity tool for SUPERFLEX. Hitherto the colour orange, the name SUPERFLEX and a logo designed in 1995 by Per Arnoldi have been used in various combinations.

RASMUS KOCH
Graphic designer and partner in SUPERDESIGN

EH/ How did you came in contact with SUPERFLEX?

RK/ I have a professional graphic design studio. My studio was known to them as one of the most progressive studios. Working as a graphic designer means working closely together with a lot of artists and creative people. In my daily work I have many creative people running in

and out of my studio, such as stage and film directors, writers, musicians, photographers, and artists. With Copenhagen being quite small and because we're all operating in the artistic scene, it was obvious that we should meet. I knew SUPERFLEX through my friends and had met them several times socially.

EH/ How did the actual contact come about? Did SUPER-FLEX come to you and ask for your support?

RK/ Since my main field of work is corporate design, Bjørnstjerne called me up and asked if I could help. He asked whether I had a professional view on a logo for SUPERCHANNEL. But I told them that that wasn't how I worked. Working with corporate design is based on grasping the whole content of a company's brand and translating it into a mainly visual language. Instead, I proposed that we should look at the whole of SUPER-FLEX's visual appearance in all of their projects. Then maybe we could find a key to solve the puzzle.

EH/ Do you work in other areas besides corporate design?

RK/ Yes, corporate design is just part of our business. The range of commissions goes from type design through film titles – i.e. title sequences – signage, to posters and book design. But what's most important for us, we also teach. We've been doing workshops, student assessment, lectures, etc. at the Royal Academy and many design schools in Denmark and abroad.

EH/ Tell us more about how you began working with SUPERFLEX.

RK/ It was clear to me after the first discussions that – besides producing a new logo for SUPERCHANNEL – what they really needed was some kind of overall visual guidance. I suggested that we might do a SUPERDESIGN project which would enable us to work on lots of different tools, not just SUPERCHANNEL, which was the issue at the time.

An interesting fact is that although I work in the commercial area, my work is primarily based on producing parameters, rather rigid tools, and narrowing down the range of possibilities to be worked with. In a way SUPERFLEX were doing the same and this gave me an interest here.

Also, I found it quite intriguing, from today's perspective, that as a professional graphic designer I was asked for guidance by an art group. But in fact, in the old days my line of work was not called graphic designer but commercial artist, so perhaps it's not so strange after all.

When we began talking I told SUPERFLEX about the strength of a corporate image. At first, I looked at the situation with strictly business-focused eyes. I had been called to solve a problem but it turned out that through dialogue and discussions we might be able not only to solve the problem but also to establish a new connection. In the course of this process we established SUPERDESIGN.

EH/ How long have you been working in the field of graphic design?

RK/ My business partner, Adrian, and I have been working professionally in the field for something like eight years, in our own company, Koch&Täckman. We are both trained graphic designers, Adrian from the Royal Academy of Art. Graphic design is part of the Department of Architecture there. And I went to the Danish Design School. We started our own business right after school, first in partnership with old school colleagues – in a company called E-Types – and later, when it became too successful and the general aim was to earn more money rather than expanding the field of graphic design, we felt it was time to move on and we started a new, smaller company. Generally you could say, that our approach to graphic design is done with a very inquiring outlook. Since we haven't been employed by big, settled companies, our approach is still very open, straightforward, you could even say unspoiled.

EH/ Why are you working with SUPERFLEX? What's the challenge?

RK/ The way SUPERFLEX work is that they start a train of thought and then engage other people to carry on with it. In some sense our educational work is done in a similar manner. In a workshop we have maybe 30 students. In order to establish their confidence we have to teach them how to find a way for themselves, to set certain parameters, to narrow down the choices for them, so the process becomes obvious to them. Educating is a kind of didactic tool for self-understanding. It gives us a verbally critical mind and it sharpens our understanding. You have to take a stand. In some ways SUPERFLEX do the same. Having arrived at the same approach and also being entrepreneurs in the field of language there is a definite link.

EH/ What would you consider to be the difference in your working methods and SUPERFLEX's?

RK/ My own work is done in a professional context. In that sense our ways of working are different. My work for clients is very much concentrated on the matter in hand. I have to create a language that speaks with the client's voice and is respectful to the client's soul. It's primarily based on solid craftsmanship.

Working with SUPERFLEX, on the other hand, is based on more lateral thinking. When creating tools and parameters I have to think in a global context. The parameters we make have to be adaptable from small-scale to big-scale in every sense. For instance, when we do a corporate manual we have to decide what typeface to use, to make a lot of type rules, e.g. typeface usage, typeface size, colour of typeface, etc. In a SUPERFLEX parameter we can't be that rigid. The type rule may be something like a scaleable parameter and a sentence saying like "In any given circumstance we should use the type that has the lowest common denominator". For example, if we work in a high technology environment with a lot of typefaces available in the computer, the lowest common denominator would be a clear and beautiful

AN INTERESTING FACT IS THAT ALTHOUGH I WORK IN THE COMMERCIAL AREA, MY WORK IS PRIMARILY BASED ON PRODUCING PARAMETERS, RATHER RIGID TOOLS, AND NARROWING DOWN THE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES TO BE WORKED WITH. IN A WAY SUPERFLEX WERE DOING THE SAME AND THIS GAVE ME AN INTEREST HERE.

typeface. In a non-high-tech environment it would be drawing in the sand with a stick or painting on the wall with a brush. It's quite interesting that looking at these parameters, wherever you are situated, you find a language to suit your surroundings. In the commercial world you wouldn't have this freedom and adaptability.

On the other hand there are more similarities between art and business than differences. They both operate with various mathematical terms, believe it or not. If you like structures, forms, points and numbers, you will probably find both areas fascinating in one way or other.

EH/ What else is it that interests you in SUPERFLEX?

RK/ The social aspect is very important. We have a great time together.

EH/ SUPERFLEX always have a lot of discussions about all of their work amongst themselves. Are you involved in some of these discussions?

RK/ I have to be, since I establish a kind of corporate identity for them. This can't be done without discussion at the top level.

EH/ What do you think about the position of SUPERFLEX's work in the art world and/or in the business world?

RK/ I don't really bother about it. Formerly, I was fascinated by the art world but I've found out that the art world is even more commercially driven than the field I'm working in. For me it seems that many artists are like puppets-on-a-string and the curator is the director. That I find quite scary.

I think that SUPERFLEX are very aware of this and they're able to differentiate and to block out this institutional 'regimism'. They've been working in company-like structural settings – SUPERFLEX, SUPERGAS, SUPERCHANNEL, MUSICSYSTEM and SUPERDESIGN. Therefore they are very familiar with the mechanisms of the professional world and they're not easily tricked.

EH/ Are you involved in any other of their projects?

RK/ SUPERDESIGN, also a bit of SUPERTOOL. As I've mentioned, I developed SUPERDESIGN in order to create aesthetic rules for the SUPERFLEX projects in general.

EH/ What effect would you say SUPERFLEX and their way of thinking have on your life?

RK/ My professional work is of course influenced by this lateral thinking – but maybe we can come back to this in 5 years time.

This interview was conducted by Edda Hoefer.

SUPERFLEX/ 2000 ONWARDS – Discussions at Rooseum, Malmø, Sweden
SUPERFLEX and Charles Esche have long been discussing the future of art institutions, and how/if an art institution can be an engaged autonomous entity. Charles Esche: "The museums are the new public forums; the remaining party, the politicians,

try to go there to make their point, but mostly production and distribution take care of themselves, administered by the few who still take pleasure in the treadmill of wealth creation."

SUPERFLEX/ Discussions at Rooseum, Malmø, Feb. 2001
Planning meeting between Charles Esche, Liam Gillick and SUPERFLEX takes place.

SUPERDESIGN/ Copenhagen, February 2001
The identity tool discussed earlier with Rasmus Koch is ready for use. It consists of a few design parameters such as colours, font, font size relation (1,2,4), etc. The tool is named SUPER-TOOL. The designers and SUPERFLEX decide to start SUPERDESIGN, the intention is to develop identity tools for interesting clients or situations.

SUPERGAS/ UTA (University of Tropical Agriculture), Phnom Phen, Cambodia 2001
SUPERFLEX accept an invitation from Thomas Preston to install a biogas system at the UTA research centre. The intention is to exchange know-how in biogas production Thomas Preston has sold 10,000 simple biogas systems in Africa, Vietnam, Cambodia; these systems have a short life-span and low output, but are cheap. UTA will conduct tests and compare the two systems in a cost/benefit analysis.

Footnote: Within one week UTA makes a copy of the SUPER-GAS system with local materials, price $ 30.

SUPERMONUMENT/ Washington, USA 2001
Invitation to propose a redefinition of the concept of memorials and monuments. Three-day visit with guided tours to different neighbourhoods and visits to special monuments organised by city planners and government employees. Guided tour of the night life in Washington by Paul and Martha including a special visit to Vicky's House Club.

Footnote: Two proposals were made.
1) SUPERMONUMENT with a group-related activity, i.e. a soccer field.
2) SUPERCHANNEL at Vicky's House Club.

BJØRNSTJERNE CHRISTIANSEN

Discussion between Bjørnstjerne Christiansen and Barbara Steiner, Berlin, 3.10.99

BS/ When did the concept of SUPERFLEX first show up?
BC/ It started at the photography school we all went to. One of the last projects at the school was to make a video. It was a Monty Python kind of thing, we experimented with the equipment.
BS/ What exactly did you do?

SUPERMONUMENT

WASHINGTON DC

BC/ We had a video teacher at the photography school who wanted us to use still images and make them into video. We did that, but then we felt that there wasn't any meaning in it. We were all sitting with our paper copies of still images and were supposed to make a video out of this. We started to discuss the situation and tried to make a kind of Monty Python thing. You have a still image and then you put something else on top of it, e.g. you take this and then you put the tiger on it and it becomes part of the story although it wasn't part of the story originally. Then we tried to put some fire in the video by lighting a match and seeing what kind of effect this would have. The video only lasted 3 or 4 minutes.
BS/ And the photographs you used …?
BC/ … as a background.
BS/ Were they the kind of photographs you were doing at school?
BC/ Actually, we took them out of newspapers, anything we liked. It was really only fooling around. These were the first small preparations. But we never discussed forming a group.
BS/ There was never any discussion of the name SUPER-FLEX?
BC/ It was just amongst us three – trying something out, becoming friends. We had a common sense of humour. Me and Rasmus, we knew each other from school. We were all looking for a place to stay. First me and Rasmus, we moved together with my little sister and Katrine, who is Jakob's girlfriend now. We needed one other person to move in, so we asked Jakob.
BS/ Jakob was the first one to start at the academy, wasn't he?
BC/ Jakob was the first to start at the photography school, then Rasmus went, then I went. Jakob had an interest in photographs before the rest of us. I was travelling for a year before I went to photography school. Rasmus was also travelling.
BS/ Where to?
BC/ To Thailand, Indonesia, and I also stayed in Berlin for a bit. When I came home from all those trips I met Rasmus again, he had just started photography school. I had always wanted to do something with photographs. When I travelled around Indonesia I took a lot of photographs. Rasmus told me about the photography school and I applied and got in too.
BS/ Did you like the school?
BC/ Very much.
BS/ I heard that there was some disappointment, at least for the others. Maybe not for you?
BC/ Most of the other students were doing documentaries, I didn't do that because I just didn't want to. I was doing more experiments, for instance, I made up a story called 'The Man on the Moon'. There was a sand pit and I went there with my brother. He looked like the man on the moon. When we started at the photo school, we were supposed to go out and find one person and then take a personal photo of that person. It was a stupid thing.

I tried it but I didn't have any interest in it. So, I started to make my own small stories.

BS/ Why did you become interested in the small stories instead of the portrait stuff? What did you find wrong with the other concept?

BC/ I felt uncomfortable with people I didn't have anything to do with, I couldn't understand why I should do it. I was more interested in having an idea and in translating this idea into pictures or in telling a story. Once the whole school went to Poland. We were just shooting around and I couldn't do anything with that. Finally I found a balloon which had the face of Mickey Mouse. I went around with that balloon and photographed Mickey Mouse in a lot of situations. It was Mickey Mouse confronting the Polish people, e.g. Mickey Mouse and architecture – there was Mickey Mouse looking out of a building, and so on. I did small stories.

BS/ Did none of your teachers complain about your work?

BC/ It was a very good school. You had to be able to explain why you did things. Even if you did a stupid reportage, you had to explain why you had done it. That I found very interesting and very good.

BS/ This is why you are so well trained in rhetoric.

BC/ This is where it all started. Every Friday each person had to come up with something. Of course, we also had a lot of tests, had to take pictures, etc. You had to show what you did and to discuss why you did it, and the other students were of course interested in arguing with you. The most important part at the school was to discuss, more than being a good photographer or a good artist. I found this very important.

BS/ What did you do between the school and the academy? Because you started at the academy later, didn't you?

BC/ After photography school we all applied for the academy, I didn't get in in the first year, Rasmus didn't either. As I was interested in film and media, I started working voluntarily at a very famous film institute called Nordic Film. They used to make great black-and-white movies.

BS/ Why did you decide to go there?

BC/ Because I was interested in making films. I wasn't sure about being a photographer.

BS/ Because of your interest in stories?

BC/ Probably. But the movie industry is really stupid. You have to start as a volunteer, then you have to do a lot of crappy work, I started as a requisiteur. If somebody wants to make a talk show, you have to find out what that talk show should look like, aesthetically. I did that. I didn't have experience, but I did it because they invited me. There were so many stupid TV shows, you can imagine, talk shows. But I learned a lot about how the media function.

BS/ And how to use them.

BC/ Yes. There was a current affairs and entertainment programme every Friday which I was part of. Talk-show, music-shows with the latest music. We had one and a half million viewers every Friday. It was the biggest show.

WE MADE A LOT OF EXPERI- MENTS.

And every time you had a new musician coming to Copenhagen, they had to be in that show or they wouldn't get into in the charts. I also learnt how the journalists were thinking, how you invite a person, or how you invite two people who disagree, e.g. two politicians or a porno queen and a pimp or whatever. I also learnt that in such a show a person doesn't get the chance to say what he or she really wants. The show has a good researcher and the researcher has already talked to the person, then he tells the interviewer what to say and when to cut. If the person goes in a direction they don't want they cut him/her off. I could hear all these things because we all had headsets.

BS/ So you got all the background information?

BC/ I was part of constructing the image and the aesthetics. I did that for a year and a half. In the meantime we had started SUPERFLEX.

BS. Do you remember how it started?

BC/ I think we started when Jakob entered the academy and he had moved into the apartment. We started discussing the academy structure and we also started going to all these openings. We felt we had a common interest. We made a lot of experiments like going around in the city in the evenings and doing stupid things like some youngsters who steal the sign from a bar and have fun doing it, and the experience of doing this. If you take a picture you can convey a lot of meaning just by signs. So, we started stealing signs, we didn't use them for anything, we just had them. This is, maybe, a part of my story and the others fell into it.

BS/ Do you remember how you found the name SUPER-FLEX?

BC/ We went to all these exhibitions and a lot of people personalized art very much. I wasn't so interested in the art nor were the others. We were more interested in the discussions where you could have very intense situations. Actually the name, I think, came from a trip to Sweden. Rasmus had a house there and we went up there for experiments, just to be in a different place and to have time for discussions. We were getting closer to each other. There could be various subjects. It all started from photography and then we started using ourselves in the photography. We were all three in the photographs, in all kinds of situations. I think we talked about the highway and the tube. But the name came a little bit before that. Very soon we decided to work together, so we needed a name for this structure.

BS/ But why this name?

BC/ There was actually a ferry to Sweden called 'SUPER-FLEX'. We saw this name and we thought immediately, that's it! It was the only name we ever discussed – SUPERFLEX. There was also a discussion about how things were presented, shops, fashion, a lot of things. We felt we needed a clear name. Super was a word you could connect to a lot of things, a kind of timeless name because there are a lot of products named super-some-

thing. So it was SUPERFLEX. Somebody thought it meant super flexible. But it didn't. It was just a timeless name, a name that you could use for many structures.

BC/ First of all, there is this dynamic situation. For example, when I was working on my own with the story-telling I would take a specific direction. And then later, at the school, I would be confronted with the question why I had done this. Now, by being in a group, I am confronted immediately when we are sitting at a table and discussing why I had this idea, what was my aim, what were my intentions and so on.

BS/ You have to correct some of your ideas through the others.

BC/ You have to correct some but you also get new input. And then I have to think about why I'm interested in this.

BS/ It pushes you more towards an edge and you have to be more careful about what you are going to do?

BC/ Exactly. And I also gain a lot of new input through the involvement of the others. The way we work is always that one of us comes up with "Maybe we'll do this" in the course of the discussion. All of us say, "That's a fantastic idea," and then all of a sudden one says "No, maybe it's not such a good idea." And then we correct each other, come up with new input, and then we end up with something like the biogas project. But then this is corrected too and goes in many directions. So, there is constant correction but also constant input.

BS/ In all these years, have you ever thought of including anybody else?

BC/ No, we've never discussed it in the SUPERFLEX group. There's enough input as it is. And also, we're different but still we have a common . . . I wouldn't say goal – it's more a common interest. We come from different directions, I have a different background to Rasmus or Jakob. But all the same, our interests are quite similar. For instance, one of us might be interested in one specific part of a problem and put a lot of thought into that, but in the end he'll let the others discuss it. We gain from each other's knowledge because initially one of us was most interested in a particular thing. Or one of us meets somebody, e.g. Jakob met Sean at a party. When they were talking, Jakob immediately knew that this guy could be interesting. Jakob got some information from Sean and then he came with this input for the group. We discussed it and then we confronted Sean and opened up the group for Sean to work with us. At the beginning he was maybe just an input partner or someone to solve a specific problem but then he became more and more involved. I think the quality of SUPERFLEX is that we need those other inputs. We cannot only rely on SUPERFLEX. I am interested in getting new knowledge constantly. It gives me satisfaction to gain knowledge but also to give others the possibility to add to this or give them the feeling that their input can be used in other directions than they would normally have thought possible. For example … Jan Mallan, he would never have

I THINK THE QUALITY OF SUPERFLEX IS THAT WE NEED THOSE OTHER INPUTS. WE CANNOT ONLY RELY ON SUPERFLEX. I AM INTERESTED IN GETTING NEW KNOWLEDGE CONSTANTLY. IT GIVES ME SATISFACTION TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE BUT ALSO TO GIVE OTHERS THE POSSIBILITY TO ADD TO THIS OR GIVE THEM THE FEELING THAT THEIR INPUT CAN BE USED IN OTHER DIRECTIONS THAN THEY WOULD NORMALLY HAVE THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

come up with the idea of doing a simple biogas system. So we were giving him input but at the same time we were letting him come in with his input. We are giving him a new position. I find that very satisfying, because I know there's a real exchange and not just me thinking about doing this or that.

BS/ It is a real quality to work like this.

BC/ All our projects started with discussions like this, trying to get a lot of information, as for instance with the highway. The interesting part was to have discussions with the builders and the architects. It was not only the media event. The whole process of convincing these people that there could be other aesthetic ideas, more philosophical ideas in constructing a highway was much more interesting. Through that we obtained more knowledge and we could use that for the presentation or argumentation with other people or for our way of working. So most of our things are connected to meeting and discussing and letting other people contribute. If we know that a person has some special knowledge that we could learn from, we invite him/her to a meeting.

BS/ That means a lot of personal involvement. Rasmus for instance said that his biggest desire was to go home at five o'clock, which is, of course, not possible. How do you handle this problem that you have become so much involved that you think of the SUPERFLEX idea all the time. What do you do to escape?

BC/ When we were all living in this house, we all had girlfriends and even when my girlfriend was there, whenever we were all sitting together, there was nothing but SUPERFLEX in our heads. It was impossible to discuss anything else. You'll know it from the others, they always complained about it, we can never discuss anything else. When one of the others or my sister would say something about the media or that they were dissatisfied with the way the social system was working, we would connect that immediately to a discussion within SUPERFLEX.

BS/ But this is because of your very open system and I think it is a definite quality. You gain interest from a lot of things going on around you and that is normal for you, isn't it?

BC/ Completely normal. But we have a way of thinking, that everything could have an influence, a complete influence on a project. Could it bring new lines into a project, e.g. the biogas project: We were sitting and discussing and my sister came up with social structure. We thought that we could probably use that in regard to the family structure in Africa.

BS/ What sports do you do? I heard, that the sports aspect, the hobby aspect, plays a certain role in all your lives.

BC/ I've played a lot of football and squash, and I've cycled, but in the last two years I haven't had much time for that. The sports aspect becomes more and more important because you get more energy. It's a basic thing in your head. If you feel that physically you are not at a certain level, you can't work as you should.

BS/ So do you find you have the energy to do everything

that is necessary for this kind of work?

BC/ No. We have Klaus, who works for us as a secretary. But I haven't reached a level where I feel good telling another person to do something. I feel better if they immediately come with an input to what I am asking them to do. So that is an important part of my way of working. I need that, that somebody comes with an input. Otherwise, I get really bored. It's like becoming too much part of a structure, too much part of the system and that's what I'm trying to avoid.

BS/ What could SUPERFLEX offer to others? There is this product level, but what else apart from this. What do you find especially interesting?

BC/ Through our projects we are in a position to invite people. Take Jan Mallan, for instance. He is being put in a position where he has to think differently. He has to take another direction. This is our theoretical and practical offer to our collaboration partners. That's something we offer through our projects, I think. If people go into a museum and they see one of our projects then they are immediately confronted with the many lines in it, there is not just a single statement. So, that might give them another direction. Or, there is the business community, the people who talk about profits in regard to Africa. There are other ways of thinking about economic structures. For instance, if we find an investor, another company, we show them that things can be done in a different way through our involvement. If they invest, they become financially involved. And that brings in another level of SUPERFLEX's activities. There is also the matter of convincing and getting people into the projects; that's a challenge for us.

Very early we decided that we wanted the structure of a company, we weren't interested in being an alternative society. We wanted to be part of some social structure. We needed that structure of being a company, not only theoretically but also practically. That would put us on an equal level. In the structuring stage we did an experiment where we had a product but you couldn't actually see what the product was. It was hidden. We had orange plastic objects; we never showed the actual product. There was only this orange object.

BS/ What did that mean?

BC/ We went to these big companies: construction companies, entrepreneurs, design companies, and started discussions about product presentation. During the talks we only had this orange thing on the table. The meetings were immediately interesting. Through this experiment we tried to figure out how these business-people were thinking. We were defining a theory about that hidden product.

BS/ And they did not ask you what it was?

BC/ Oh yes, they did. But we said, we have this thing and we cannot present it to you. It may have an interest for you but we think it's important that we start discussing whether you would enter into a project with us.

BS/ The object was a kind of door-opener?

BC/ Yes, it was a door-opener also for them. Because this is a normal working procedure for them. If they have been contacted by a company who works in a similar field as they do, that other company will not present the invention they have made. They say, we have something, that goes in such and such a direction, what can you offer, what are your expectations. It also has a psychological aspect. The purpose of the test was to gain knowledge about their way of thinking.

BS/ Bjørnstjerne, I'm so sorry – just when it's getting interesting I have to go …

SUPERCHANNEL/ o VER CHANNEL/ *The Kitchen Magazine Station*, in collaboration with Rirkrit Tiravanija, Kunstverein Wolfsburg, Germany, March 2001

SUPERCHANNEL/ KITCHEN STUDIO/ *Germania*, collaboration with Rirkrit Tiravanija, Palazzo della Papesse, Siena, Italy, February 2001

A mixture of Wolfsburg2 and SUPERCHANNEL/o VER channel. The intention was to have citizens from Siena exchange with the large Italian community in Wolfsburg using the Wolfsburg2 and the o VER channel as their common platform. In Siena students from the Media Academy situated in the Palazzo della Papesse were asked to design the studio using the same building methods as in the Wolfsburg2 tool. In the Kunstverein Wolfsburg a copy of the room (the kitchen studio at the Palazzo) was the frame for the project. Both institutions agreed to produce shows and exchange these, but only the Kunstverein Wolfsburg produced shows (3 in total).

Footnote: this project made SUPERFLEX realise that an active tool like the SUPERCHANNEL cannot rely on an activity source only from the institutions, that it is necessary to have committed partners with a specific reason for participation and continuation beyond representation: "Make sure that the tool can also work as a model without being activated."

SUPERCHANNEL/ SUPERMANUAL, Liverpool 2001
In collaboration with FACT, Liverpool, a manual is published describing the Coronation Court Channel and SUPERCHANNEL in general. It includes a list of guidelines that highlight what SUPERCHANNEL can or cannot provide for its users. These guidelines were developed by Situscience. The manual also includes essays by Eric Kluitenberg, Charles Esche and others, plus information on how tenants already use the channel.

Footnote: Maria Brewster did a great job as the editor of the SUPERMANUAL.

SUPERCHANNEL/ TENANTSPIN, Liverpool 2001
The highrise tenants' group within HAT decided to open a new channel. The studio is situated in the Cunard building where HAT has its headquarters. During the opening days a workshop

between SUPERFLEX and the TENANTSPIN production team took place, various shows were made, such as a profile show, interviews with guests, and a bingo show where tenants from several blocks were online (some using telephones to shout "BINGO"). The TENANTSPIN studio will move to the FACT HQ during spring 2001.

SUPERTOOL/ ROOSEUM, Malmø, Sweden, March 2001
Invitation from Charles Esche and Åsa Nacking to use a work-space/research space for the duration of one year. The idea was to let other people use SUPERFLEX parameters for their own purposes. This could open up a dialogue on SUPER-FLEX's working/structuring methods. Most users of the SUPERTOOL decided to collaborate with SUPERFLEX to develop new projects.

SUPERCHANNEL/ MOONCHANNEL, Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates 2001
Collaboration project with Christoffer Bruun. Together with students from the local university and various artists, he produced 30 shows in 10 days. The studio installation was a collaboration between Øivind Nygaard, Stig Brøgger, Annemette Larsen and SUPERFLEX.

SUPERCHANNEL/ PUSH BBC CHANNEL, 2nd Berlin Biennial, Berlin, April 2001
A community built around a youth culture exchange between Zagreb, Sarajevo, Belgrade and Berlin. The channel is initiated by Push from Berlin who approached SUPERFLEX with the idea. SUPERFLEX decided to use the Biennial venue for this project. The studio and the concept were developed by Push with advice from SUPERFLEX.

Footnote: 40 shows were produced in the exhibition period, after this the channel became ++berlin blue++ and was run by York Wegerhoff.

SUPERCHANNEL/ "THE SUPERTEENS", *Pyramids of Mars 3*, Trapholt, Kolding, Denmark, May 2001
SUPERFLEX invited a local school class to initiate a channel designed/conceptualised/managed by themselves. Following excellent collaboration between the museum and the teenagers, a studio concept was developed and publicly presented. The studio ended up as a weird combination of a girl's bedroom and a youth club with cows.

Footnote: The opening show was called *tøzens krop* and was about g-string underwear.

SEAN TREADWAY
Programmer and partner in SUPERCHANNEL

DB/ How did you meet SUPERFLEX and when did you start working together?

ST/ I met SUPERFLEX in a social context. Signe (my girl-friend) and I went over to Jakob's house for a house-warming dinner. I hadn't met them before this but had heard a little bit through Signe and my flat-mates Lene and Ulrik.

Jacob had just returned from Japan and was still pretty jet-lagged. With a little small talk about, "Hey, what do you do, why were you in Japan, blah blah," I found out that they wanted to do something on the internet with chat and video and other things. In Seattle my last job was with RealNetworks which provides tools for streaming media over the internet. I told them about using this technology and how they could possibly set stuff up to get it done (on the back of an envelope…).

A couple of weeks later they called me up and asked if I would like to work on it with them. I thought a little about it and decided that I could maybe help out. Things led to things, we spent some time hanging out together and connected socially, which ended up with us connecting professionally.

We spent a lot of time talking about what they had in mind and the purpose of the project. I felt inspired because I had worked on making the products that we were going to use. I could now get a feeling for the purpose of what I had been doing back at RealNetworks. Their social perspectives inspired me, and since I was looking for work (or rather, residency through work), it seemed they could provide that as well as purpose in the work that I would do.

So I guess we met around the end of January and started working together around the middle of February.

DB/ So, they motivated you through their project to develop something in your field?

ST/ I would say that they motivated me into exploring the potential of what was possible in my field. I knew how all the tools worked but didn't have a good idea about what was possible with combining the tools for a purpose. What SUPERFLEX are good at is generating ideas and they had plenty of ideas for the SUPER-CHANNEL.

The motivation came from that (exploring an aspect of my field), and working with some cool guys to do something valuable in a way not related to money, i.e. making a difference. Money has been the last thing on our minds when developing the concept and site.

BS/ How does your cooperation with SUPERFLEX work? Are you involved in the discussions about the use, the future of SUPERCHANNEL etc.?

ST/ I am with this cooperation. I feel like I am able to be involved to any degree. Currently we are doing some long-term planning. I don't really think of the project as THEM and ME. More like US. The planning is and has been a joint effort.

Along the process we have had the feeling like we all want the same things for the SUPERCHANNEL and only recently we have vocalised that, confirming that we are all thinking in the same direction.

```
import string
import DateTime
from select import select
from socket import *
from OFS.ObjectManager import ObjectManager

__doc__="""Superchannel Class BroadcastBase
$Id: BroadcastBase.py,v 1.8 2002/04/25 10:25:29 seant Exp $
"""

__version__='$Revision: 1.8 $'[11:-2]

READ_TIMEOUT = 5.0 # seconds


###############################################################################
#  Functional interface

###############################################################################

def increment_date(date, unit):
    unit = string.lower(unit)
    if unit == 'day':
        unit = 1
    elif unit == 'week':
        unit = 7
    elif unit == 'month':
        curmonth = date.month()
        unit = DateTime.DateTime._month_len[(curmonth + 1) % 12 or 12]
    return date + unit

class BroadcastBase(ObjectManager):
    """Product object implementing the functionality"""

    live_state_map = {
```

BS/ What exactly did you do at RealNetworks?

ST/ I was an intern, then contractor for the core server development team. I did a number of projects. The two big ones are: I started developing a proxy for their old and new protocols PNA, and RTSP. A proxy takes the data from one place and moves it to another, and is very useful in situations where there are security or bandwidth issues from one place to another. It is sold as a solution for network administrators to give their users a better experience.

This is marketed as the "RealProxy". Ironically, the RealProxy is going to be something that the SUPERCHANNEL is going to need in the near future. It will allow us to build the SUPERCHANNEL into something more accessible to more people in the world.

I also designed some plugins that interact with other media clients that mostly exist in the Unix world using the network protocol multicast, and the streaming protocol RTP (Real Time Protocol). There are a couple of different philosophies on how to stream media over the internet, especially when it comes to live events. What I did was proof-of-concept that the RealSystem G2 (the Server, Client, and programming interface) could be extended to accommodate any streaming media task.

This is marketed as "Scalable Multicast" So, to sum it up, I worked with the 'plumbing', everything behind the scenes, the moving of the media from one place to another. I left Real (to come to Copenhagen) before the projects were completed, but I believe they were left in good hands. I also had a great time. The place was one of the best corporate environments I have been around, and I was surrounded with some of the smartest people in the field. It takes something special to be able to survive as a computer company with Microsoft in the world. Real has done a great job at that by keeping the company feeling alive.

DB/ How did you link your experiences with SUPERFLEX's activities?

ST/ I went to Jakob's house-warming party and sat down with him talking about what SUPERFLEX were doing. I mentioned what I did with Real, and over a period of time they asked me to help out with the project. The project was in the early/conceptual stages and I helped with the proof of concept and initial exhibition at Artspace 1%.

DB/ And what differences do you see between your work at Real Networks and your work now for SUPERCHANNEL.

ST/ That's a bit like comparing apples and oranges. At RealNetworks, I was a worker, doing things for other people. The thing that made Real great was that, as a worker, I felt that I could make a difference. I was given tasks to perform, but could be creative in how I solved them. They depended on me for a schedule – rather than imposing a schedule upon me – and I could keep my own hours. With SUPERFLEX, I feel less like the

decisions I make shape the company/projects. Rather, I feel like the discussions and communication lead the company/projects in a particular direction. Working with SUPERFLEX is organic and unmanaged. The dynamic we share as people translates into our 'professional' relationship, meaning that we relate around business much like people relate around personal issues.

If something is on my mind, I bring it up with SUPER-FLEX, initiating what would be called a 'meeting' in the traditional workplace.

Communication is the key to the success of my experiences with Real and SUPERFLEX. For both, I feel like I can approach the people I have issues with. When working with SUPERFLEX, the issues feel more personal and at Real the issues mostly had to do with skills and limitations.

You said in the first email interview that SUPERFLEX have motivated you to explore the potential of what was possible in your field. Could you tell us a bit more about the potential of SUPERCHANNEL?

ST/ When I was working at Real, I had a narrow view. I worked on very specific solutions to very specific problems. These problems didn't really require knowledge of how my solution would fit with others' solutions. So I knew of this component and that component, but never put them together, they were all solutions to problems that other people had. When I had to put them together to build the SUPERCHANNEL, I soon discovered that 'people' used these things, and these things affected 'people'. This is the potential I wish to explore and where SUPERFLEX come in.

I knew enough about the RealSystem and how streaming media worked to make it technically possible to fulfil the ideas that SUPERFLEX already had. So I initially approached the situation similarly to how I did at Real: they had a problem and I came up with a solution. Soon I discovered that we began to work in a much different way. When we would work together the division of problem and solution became much more hazy. It was more like idea and motivation. So, the more they learned about the system, the more ideas they came up with, and the more I learned about the art world, the more ideas I came up with. The ideas that excited us the most motivated us to pursue the realisation of them, rather than approach them as a problem that needed to be solved.

The way we worked together in the development of the SUPERCHANNEL is the potential of the SUPER-CHANNEL. The SUPERCHANNEL is turning into a framework to do the same kind of 'mindsharing' that came naturally for me dealing with SUPERFLEX. I hadn't realised the parallels until now … So, part of the potential of the SUPERCHANNEL is providing a medium to exchange ideas.

BS/ In the interview with Erik Lange from The Factory he mentioned that the SUPERCHANNEL could be

IN A COM-MERCIAL PERSPEC-TIVE, MOST OF THE PRO-JECTS ARE FAILURES, BUT MEASUR-ING THE SUCCESS FROM A CULTURAL OR SOCIAL

VIEW, THEY ARE QUITE SUC-CESS-FUL…

commercially interesting for the future. This would also fit with the economic interests of SUPERFLEX. Have you talked about that with your cooperation partners? What do you propose: When should the question of money be involved?

ST/ We have talked with The Factory about this and we've come up with an agreement. The process was very difficult because we have to value what we make and they have to value what they give. Given that we are in the same 'business' the overlaps of what we make and what they give could cause competition.

We and The Factory agree that competition in this area is healthy. The more attention to streaming media, the more customers we will both get. We have decided to not cooperate on the business aspect with The Factory; however, they still provide a hosting service for the SUPERCHANNEL as it is today. Erik started to feel like he needed to see something in return for hosting the SUPERCHANNEL, so we agreed to pay for what they thought it was worth. It was funny that it came down to money, maybe that is the common tongue of business. . .

So the issue of money has come up between The Factory and us, and has been resolved.

DB/ Do you also work for other companies in Denmark?

ST/ I'm currently working on an internet project with a company called iSolve. I'm writing a small programme that will synchronise address books to and from email programmes. This has been a great experience because I have met some like minds in the country, plus there is hope for a partnership around the technology developed from the SUPERCHANNEL.

DB/ Are you planning to go back to the States one day concerning your professional career?

ST/ It's tempting because of the amount of money in the States, but right now I need to develop personally, and find that easier and much more rewarding here in Europe/Copenhagen. The biggest thing I miss about the States is the wild.

This interview was conducted by Doris Berger and Barbara Steiner.

Update November 2001:

ST/ I'm still working with SUPERFLEX, but our work relationship has become better defined now. Specifically, I am working primarily with the SUPERCHANNEL project that we started together. We have 4 people working on this project, mostly on their own.

I have become a bit tired of working with SUPER-FLEX over these two years. It's a combination of my own personality, a misunderstanding of the roles in what we are doing, and a confused sense of authority. Being an entity and 3 individuals, it is frequently difficult to maintain accountability for actions. During the start of work-

ing together, we worked closely together. When I communicated something to one person, a couple of days later I would hear the same thing from another. This gave me the impression that I could treat any of the individuals as the whole. As time progressed, I gained a better understanding of the individuals' strengths within SUPERFLEX and would go directly to those people if I had a wish that I needed fulfilled by SUPERFLEX. But frequently those wishes weren't fulfilled. Kind of like trying to call them, and never getting an answer. :–)

The intent of the SUPERCHANNEL project was to initiate an experimental space for broadcasting media. The way that we applied for the grants to get the project off the ground included a plan to bring the project into the commercial sector after a year. It has been over 2 years since the project started and we are struggling to keep the project going without the grant. I accept partial responsibility for starting late on the transition from an art project/experiment but even though we all agreed that steps needed to be taken, a concrete plan on how we would achieve our goals never made it onto paper.

SUPERFLEX are great to brainstorm with but when it comes down to setting long term goals and working towards them, I find it difficult to work with them.

We have found a good leader to head the SUPER-CHANNEL project, Signe Koefoed. She is a strong motivator with a clear and communicable vision that is rooted in reality. Describing the project, she keeps her tone in the present, describing what we have, not what we are aiming towards. This is critical in dealing with business partners, and I feel that SUPERFLEX tend to focus on the possibilities of the project rather than what it actually provides. I don't know how it's received by the people we present the project to, but if I believed what SUPERFLEX said when they presented the project, and later looked at it myself, I would be greatly disappointed by their description. Sure, the possibilities are there, but it's difficult to work in the business world with things that don't exist.

The work we have done together has come out of a very natural progression. We let the ideas run uninterrupted and are open to other interpretations the use of our work. Much like the way concept-car designers create cars to meet a mix of needs, wants, and desires, SUPERFLEX's projects do the same for work that brings people together. The concept-cars rarely make it to the factory but they have a strong impact on the industry they are created for.

I believe that SUPERFLEX may not be as successful as they could be in the art world because of a resistance to modify the financial model the art world depends on. As I understand it, the art world is making a transition from a product-based economy (selling physical objects, commissioning the creation of physical pieces), to a service-based economy (selling the promise of self-
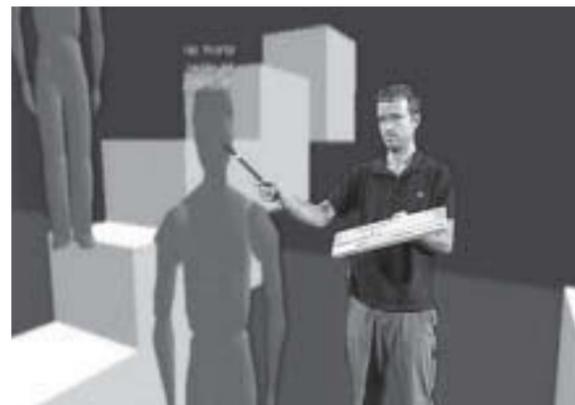
BEING AN ENTITY AND 3 INDIVI-DUALS, IT IS FRE-QUENTLY DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN ACCOUNT-ABILITY FOR ACTIONS.

enlightenment, world understanding, a sense of 'awe', 'aesthetic', 'design', 'innovation'). This takes time, and I think the art producers are outpacing the art consumers, while the curators are stuck in the middle.

I believe the projects are moderately successful, only because they focus on the potential of the idea and not the implementation. Measuring the success in a commercial perspective, most of the projects are failures, but measuring the success from a cultural or social view, they are quite successful because they push the boundaries of what is permitted, understood, and assumed. SUPERFLEX do a good job on focusing on these aspects of their projects, representing the initiative behind the implementation.

I feel like I could have been more successful. A mix of personal issues, particularly with moving to a foreign land, leaving my peer group of programmers, accepting a new way of working and finding a living in a different economic climate has taken its toll. In hindsight, I feel like I could have done much better if I had taken more initiative on the SUPERCHANNEL project, set my prejudices of valuable technology behind me, stuck to a more focused vision of the project, and demanded more compensation for my involvement.

Right now I'm not doing much else other than SUPERCHANNEL. I've been doing other work for money, but mostly dry business stuff. I taught a couple of courses in streaming media and offer other services around my expertises.

KARLSKRONA2/SUPERCHANNEL/SUPERHOME/CAVI Center for Advanced Visualization and Interaction, Autumn 2001
SUPERFLEX were invited to experiment with the CAVI virtual studio system. SUPERFLEX proposed a TV concept combining Karlskrona2 and SUPERCHANNEL, the online avatar interaction, a studio host and 3D graphics streamed via SUPER-CHANNEL. The experiment was carried out in collaboration with Rune Nielsen and Andreas Lykke-Olesen, and with assistance from Esben Nielsen. The experiment was later presented in various conferences about interactive TV.

SUPERFLEX/ ARKEN/ PROPOSAL, Ishøj, Denmark, November 2001
Proposal for a new logo for the Arken Museum of Modern Art. The name and architecture of the museum are based on the biblical story of the ark, and the museum is located in one of the first large multicultural communities in Denmark. SUPERFLEX propose adding the Arabic name of this story to the logo, since the same story also appears in the Koran. The Museum rejects the proposal for fear of appearing too tied to the locality.

SUPERFLEX/ BANGKOK OFFICE/Klong-San, Thailand, January–April 2002
SUPERFLEX spend four months in Bangkok. There are several reasons for being in Bangkok: the business collaboration with CMS engineering, the land project by Rirkrit and Kamin.

ARKEN سفينة

SUPERCOPY
SUPERCOPY
SUPERCOPY

SUPERCOPY/ BIOGAS PH5 LAMP/ Meetings with copy designers in Bangkok, January 2002
The intention is not just to copy but rather to change the use and design of the PH5 lamp for a specific purpose, i.e., to create a biogas lamp. Using the materials available at the time, the lamp is designed and tested over a period of one month.

SUPERFLEX TOOLS/ SUPERDESIGN/ Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, Korea, March 2002
Using the SUPERTOOL parameters the presentation was designed as a graphic space with white walls and floor and large scale orange/black texts and video projections of SUPER-CHANNEL/TENANTSPIN and SUPERGAS/Cambodia, the SUPERCOPY/biogas PH5 lamp was presented for the first time. Miss Nakyoung Sung, a Seoul based designer, was invited to use the SUPERTOOL to design a living environment for SUPERFLEX.

SUPERCOPY/ LACOSTE/ Copenhagen Fashion Fair, March 2002
During their stay in Bangkok SUPERFLEX were inspired by the copy industry in Thailand and the cultural identity debates taking place locally around this industry. Together with hansenmadsen (a clothing design group in Copenhagen), they were invited to take part in the opening show at the Copenhagen Fashion Fair. Having decided to use the SUPERCOPY tool for their presentation, they presented three catwalk models dressed in copied brands with SUPERCOPY stamped boldly on the outside of the fabric; all the clothing was bought at a market in Bangkok.

SUPERCHANNEL/ SUPEREUKABEUK TV, Chiang Mai Museum, 2002
Uthit, director of cmm, together with a group of others, including Kamin, has been experimenting for several years now with "Eukabeuk", a self-made definition for art and cultural activities. These experiments are often organised as open platforms for participation and exchange, e.g., opening a marketplace, an open air theatre/film site, midnight debates at local universities, etc. Uthit is interested in offering an independent media production facility for organisations in Chiang Mai, and SUPER-FLEX agreed to open a channel/studio in the museum. The first three months were used to present various craftsmen, cultures and indigenous groups.

The studio design was by SUPERFLEX: 3 mobile wooden platforms measuring 300 x 300 cm (black, orange, white), the walls and floor covered with bamboo mats. T-shirts were produced with the logo of the SUPEREUKABEUK channel printed on top of locally sold T-shirts with images of popular figures or Thai icons such as Che Guevara, Thai elephants, Osama bin Laden, the King of Thailand, and so on.

SUPERCOPY/ BIOGAS PH5 LAMP, The Land, Chiang Mai, April 2002
Rirkrit Tiravanija and Kamin Lerdchaprasert, invited SUPER-FLEX to use a piece of land, which they had bought and changed into a community site, to experiment with the biogas

system and to build a house. The Biogas PH5 lamp was tested with the farmer and his family living on that land.

SUPERCHANNEL/ ABOUT TV, About Cafe, Bangkok, Thailand 2002

During SUPERFLEX's stay in Bangkok, they have several discussions with Meo, director of About Café/ About Studio, on how an art institution in Thailand could be organised and how it might be possible to develop an interesting local artistic context to work within. About/ About Studio regularly organises various discussion events and it is therefore natural to start a channel that can support and archive these events.

A SUPERCHANNEL exhibition then opened at the end of May at About Café, introducing the SUPERCHANNEL Tool through a video projection presenting the user TENANTSPIN, wall texts and the concept for the About TV channel. The About TV studio design is by SUPERDESIGN and consists of three furniture objects (black, orange & white).

RASMUS NIELSEN

Discussion between Rasmus Nielsen, Barbara Steiner, Doris Berger and Edda Hoefer, Berlin, 2.10.99

BS/ We are interested in your involvement in SUPERFLEX. When did you meet your two colleagues?

RN/ I come from the same part of Denmark as Bjørnstjerne and we used to go to the same school. So we've known each other for a long time. Jakob, I first met in Russia. That was before 1989, and we were doing political work in Russia. I was working on a *kolchos* farm digging potatoes.

BS/ How can digging potatoes be political?

RN/ Maybe political work is not quite the right word. It was more like a youth group from Denmark working in exchange with people from the former Eastern Bloc. It was a very idealistic project. I was on this farm digging potatoes with a lot of Russians.

EH/ Was it your idea that you wanted to help the Russians or to teach them something?

RN/ The idea was simply to get to know the people from the 'other side' and at the same time to do some kind of activity. Digging potatoes was not only digging potatoes but helping with the harvest, together with Russian students who were sent out to do the harvest.

EH/ So it was done in order to get to know them and their ways of living and thinking.

DB/ Jakob and you were digging potatoes together?

RN/ No, I was working as a coordinator in this organisation and Jakob was doing a music tour. They played all over the region which was called Komi and is close to the Ural Mountains. Jakob was travelling around with this Danish rock group. But it was part of the same project for the same purpose. There was a meeting in the capital of the district, and three or four years later when we

met I found out by chance that Jakob had been there too.

BS/ So, there was this Russian story, but what happened later?

RN/ That's a long story.

DB/ We are interested in this story.

RN/ After I came back from Russia I did a lot of different things. I was in South-East Asia for quite some time. Jakob was doing different things as well. We had nothing to do with each other at that time.

EH/ What did you do in South-East Asia?

RN/ I worked on a boat and I worked for the Catholic Church. I spent a lot of time in Malaysia with some others.

BS/ So there has always been this interest in other cultures?

DB/ You told us earlier that you also lived in Polynesia during your childhood.

RN/ I lived there with my family. We returned to Denmark when I was about ten years old. Later I dropped out of secondary school and went back to Polynesia for about a year.

BS/ Were you there alone? How old were you?

RN/ I was seventeen or eighteen. Yes, I went there alone. But maybe I should go back to the question you were asking me.

BS/ It's all part of the same story.

RN/ But it's only my story.

EH/ It's about your motivation to do what you do.

BS/ And it says a lot. Your interest is part of your work, isn't it?

DB/ And this work is part of SUPERFLEX.

BS/ There are the three of you who form SUPERFLEX: you, Bjørnstjerne and Jakob. We are trying to find out about the motivation of each one of you. You are talking precisely about the things we are interested in. So, later on you decided to live together. When did this happen?

RN/ When I came back from South-East Asia there was this chance; it was coincidental that Katrine's family (Katrine is Jakob's girlfriend) had bought a house in Copenhagen. We all moved into this house. Jakob was there, of course, and we asked Bjørnstjerne to come and join us. This was in 1992 and all three of us were together in this school for photography. The type of photography we did there was a kind of personal documentary reportage. That was taught there, and we all worked with this kind of photography in the school until it broke down.

DB/ The school broke down?

RN/ No, the concept of documentary photography broke down for us. We just found that we lost interest in this way of working, so we stopped doing it.

BS/ What became so problematic for you with this way of working?

RN/ I realised to what extent these pictures were actually constructed. When you start doing this type of pictures you are not aware of that, although it's called documentary photography, it's very much constructed. When

you realise to what extent it's constructed, the next step is that you worked with this construction. To work with this construction can only be – on a very banal level – to be in the picture or arrange the picture or arrange the situation.

BS/ Like arranged photography?

RN/ The image you create is constructed and you are aware of this. Well, but SUPERFLEX was not a conscious construction. It was more that we started doing different activities together which became a part of living together. Activities like doing up the house and how we lived in this house or simply doing things together.

EH/ You sort of pooled your activities.

RN/ Yes. But after this school of photography we were all engaged in different things. Bjørnstjerne was working with big media television, I was studying languages in the East Asian Institute.

BS/ That explains a lot. So, you lived in this house together but otherwise you did different things.

RN/ And we were telling each other what each of us was doing. Jakob was in the art academy, I was sitting in the library reading old Sanskrit letters and Bjørnstjerne was doing these flashy TV programmes.

DB/ So, there was not an exact moment when SUPERFLEX was founded. Could you tell us when the name came up and why you chose this name?

RN/ I'm not quite sure. But we did a lot of things together, like arranging a party in the house or going to a house in the forest in Sweden for a month. I remember when we were coming back from Sweden and were travelling on the ferry from Sweden to Denmark. It was a big industrial ferry which at that time was the cheapest way to get from Sweden to Denmark. The ferry was called 'SUPERFLEX Bravo' and all the sailors were running around with their SUPERFLEX Bravo logos all over their overalls, it was like a uniform. We laughed a lot about that, it was very funny. You can also find the name 'SUPERFLEX' on toothpastes, protein pills, it's all over, it's a very common name.

BS/ Is it a brand name?

RN/ No, it's more like a description, if you want to make something which sounds scientific without saying what is really in it. But the way it was founded was not, "Let's found a conceptual, ecological artists' group with a company name." We never thought that.

EH/ You virtually slid into it. And the same obviously happened with the name.

BS/ I see a lot of parallels with your way of working now. All the projects, even the meetings, everything is more or less comparable to this beginning, it is very . . .

EH/ … fluid.

DB/ What was your first project? Did you plan anything or did you slide into that too?

RN/ No, not everything was fluid. I think it was the highway thing we did. We took over a highway in Denmark. There was this piece of highway being built. We went down there, we had these SUPERFLEX uniforms and we

THE FERRY WAS CALLED SUPER-FLEX BRAVO.

went out and talked to the people who were working there. When the road was opened, we were the ones who were rolling out the tape to be cut by the politicians. We were sort of claiming to have built this piece of highway.

EH/ It was a kind of performance?

RN/ I suppose it was – of the best possible kind. . .

EH/ How long did you do this?

RN/ Just for a couple of months. Me and Jakob and Bjørnstjerne, we were even interviewed by the media.

EH/ When those guys interviewed you, did they realise that you were not there in any official capacity? Were they all seriously interviewing you?

RN/ Yes. It was a kind of game: how far can you go, and how far can you go with the media?

DB/ It really worked?

RN/ Yes. We talked about this piece of highway as a kind of monument for the future with no actual use, just a kind of aesthetic thing in the landscape.

BS/ You were talking about it as one usually talks about art. You made an aesthetic object out of something very practical – a highway.

RN/ Yes, exactly. We never showed it in a gallery but it became like a story. It hit the newspapers. Once we made the front page of the cultural section with these interviews and these clothes and talking about this piece.

DB/ What clothes did you have?

RN/ We had these orange uniforms like the construction workers.

EH/ With SUPERFLEX on the back?

BS/ And nobody stopped you?

RN/ No. It just fitted in. When it came to the opening, with a military band and the minister of traffic, we would ask – because of our clothes – the military band to move over a little bit. And a guy came with a tape to roll out and I said, "Let me take it." So, we used what was there and changed the context of this super-functional thing.

BS/ And nobody figured out what you were doing, there was never a discussion about it, not even later?

RN/ Maybe later.

DB/ Why and when did you decide to go to the academy? It wouldn't have been necessary for your working together and doing your projects.

RN/ It seemed to us a space that we could work in, a white space where you could do things. So we decided to try it out. We applied to the academy, Jakob was there already.

EH/ And the other two also got in?

RN/ I applied first and the year after Bjørnstjerne applied.

BS/ Then all three of you attended the academy and the other projects started – the projects we all know. It was all under the name of SUPERFLEX when you were at the academy?

RN/ Yes.

BS/ What fascinates you most with SUPERFLEX? What does it offer to you personally?

RN/ It offers me the possibility of working with different things. It's like a frame or a tool. We have different interests, we are three different people and we can all use this frame or tool to work with. My personal interest is that I can probably put different things into SUPERFLEX than the others.

BS/ You have been talking about tools. What do you use them for?

RN/ For development work, for example.

BS/ Do you think offering tools can change something within this field?

RN/ You go into it, you work with it, you put your questions in and you try to change something. This you can do through the construction which is called SUPERFLEX. It's difficult to pick out one particular desire for working in SUPERFLEX because there are different projects and there are different personal desires in the project, and different angles of working with each project, e.g. the biogas project. There's an interest in these things and from that come interesting questioning and rearranging and changing.

EH/ Which one of you was it who brought the development angle into it?

RN/ Usually the ideas or the projects are developed through discussion. It's not that somebody comes up with a brilliant idea, this is not how it works. The way our projects come up is usually through a long process. In the beginning there's a vague idea, we disagree, we have to talk. During the discussions we change positions maybe three or four times. And then you work out what you think is important. This is how the projects are usually constructed.

BS/ How do you handle your personal involvement? It came up in other interviews and everybody mentioned that you are so deeply involved in SUPERFLEX that it becomes part of your life. It seems that this involvement is getting worse and worse in a positive sense because of the growth of the projects.

RN/ Personally I don't like this idea of art and life completely mixed up. I am more fascinated by the idea of going home from work at five o'clock, starting to cook or play table tennis or something else, but this doesn't work. We can't go home at five o'clock and even if we do the thoughts still go round and round in your head.

DB/ Would you like to change it?

RN/ Last year we discussed this because we found we needed some other mental space. So we forced ourselves to do something else, like a hobby. You have to have a hobby. Jakob started cycling, I started scuba diving, Bjørnstjerne plays football. But unfortunately somehow these hobbies were integrated, expropriated into some projects and I haven't found a solution to that problem. But I hope it will get better.

BS/ I don't think that's so bad. I don't quite believe you that you want to go home at five o'clock. If you did it for months and years you would really hate it.

THE WAY IT WAS FOUNDED WAS NOT, "LET'S FOUND A CON-CEPTUAL, ECOLO-GICAL ARTISTS' GROUP WITH A COMPANY NAME."

/ RASMUS NIELSEN

EH/ If you really wanted to do it you could. Nobody would be keeping you.

DB/ You made a decision by joining SUPERFLEX.

RN/ Yes, yes. You can't do both. You can't work this way and go home at five. You have to find something else.

BS/ But it still remains a desire of yours?

RN/ Yes. But still, I wouldn't change the way we are working and living just now.

SUPERCHANNEL/ 3M, BIG TORINO BIENNALE, Turin, April 2002

2nd collaboration project with Christoffer Bruun. A channel was proposed, to be installed in a youth prison in Turin, in order to focus on how society punishes its young offenders today, and to give the young inmates an opportunity to produce shows/stories about their interests or personal histories; this channel was to be called SUPERPRISON. After protracted negotiations with the Ministry of Justice in Rome and a number of research trips, the SUPERPRISON project was cancelled. A new version of the project was then developed focusing on the huge numbers of under-age illegal immigrants to Italy, mainly children from Morocco and Albania. This channel is called 3M.

SUPERCHANNEL/ 3M STATEMENT by Sued Bewkhdim, Turin 2002

"Abandoned minors. Second generation immigrant minors.
The European Union Council resolution, approved on June 26th 1997, established that an unaccompanied foreign minor is: 'A child who is neither an Italian citizen nor a citizen of any other European Union member-state, who has not applied for asylum, and is for unknown reasons in the country. They are neither assisted nor represented by their parents or by other adults who are, according to Italian law, legally responsible for them.' 3M has become a communal living space for young Moroccan children and SUPERFLEX.

Minors at risk.
Minors are at risk in terms of age and experience. Their lives are a daily struggle for survival. They have no homes, and no-one to care for them. The only place where they can find refuge is a derelict house in Turin. Defenceless and frail, they are easily drawn into local organised crime. They have no adults to help them through life.
In SUPERFLEX's establishment they have found a place where they can openly express their feelings and emotions. This has been supported by the Danish artists who are great educators and sincere companions for these troubled kids, and to whom thanks should be given.

Second generation Moroccan immigrant girls.
For the first time, these girls have stepped outside the rigid rules family customs have. For the first time, thanks to SUPERFLEX, these girls have felt like protagonists of emancipation in immigration."

SUPERFLEX/ FOREIGNERS, *The Global Complex,* Grazer Kunstverein – Austria, Vollsmose – Denmark, Copenhagen – Denmark, Malmø – Sweden, 2002

In view of the continued presence of right wing movements and on-going cultural identity discussions in Europe, SUPERFLEX presented a poster statement in various cities in Europe. In Graz the statement was also painted on the wall (4 x 5 metres) in the Kunstverein and posters were handed out free.

SUPERCHANNEL/ TENANTSPIN WORKSHOP, Hacking (4-day workshop), New Museum, New York, May 2002

5 tenants from the TENANTSPIN channel and SUPERFLEX invited seniors' and tenants' organisations in New York to participate in an exchange during broadcasts in a temporary studio in the museum. The installation was a copy of the TENANTSPIN studio in Liverpool, plus wall texts explaining the SUPERCHANNEL concept.

SUPERFLEX TOOLS + COUNTER-STRIKE/ ANYTHING CAN BE A TOOL AND EVERY TOOL IS A WEAPON IF YOU HOLD IT RIGHT, Rooseum, May 2002

SUPERCOPY/ BIOGAS PH5 LAMP, Copenhagen, June 2002

Copyright discussions take place between Louis Poulsen Lighting A/S and SUPERFLEX. Louis Poulsen Lighting A/S have the copyright to the *PH5 lamp* and want to protect their product. As a starting point they want the *Biogas PH5 Lamp* removed from the TOOLS exhibition at Rooseum, Malmø. SUPERFLEX argue that the *Biogas PH5 lamp* is just an extension of the original idea of the designer, Poul Henningsen, a cultural activist who believed that this lamp should be for everyone. After negotiations it is agreed that the project can continue under certain conditions.

MUSICSYSTEM/ RELEASE/ELECTRIC, Copenhagen, July 2002

Recently most of the partners in MUSICSYSTEM have been producing electro music and a double album has been released, with work by some of the most interesting producers on the international scene, such as Pulsinger, Le Car, etc. SUPERFLEX's contribution is an electro version of the foreigners' statement (voice: Christine Andersen).

MUSICSYSTEM/ ELECTRIC

COPENHAGEN BRAINS/ THE SEDUCERS/ TUE TRACK/ FUNKLECTRIC/ JEANS TEAM/ LE CAR + PULSINGER + TUNAKAN/ KRUZH'EM/ PAMELA SELECTOR/ AUGUST ENGKILDE/ PATRICK PULSINGER/ B9/ ELEKTRAZZ/ BJØRN SVIN/ OMNIVAC/ SUPERFLEX/
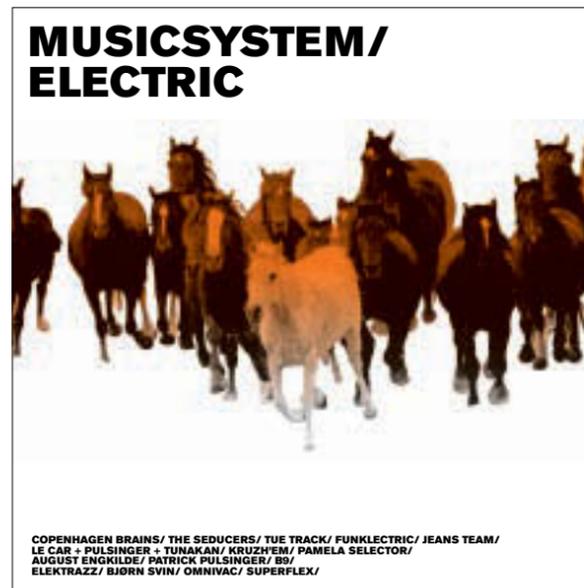
ROOSEUM

SUPERFLEX/ TOOLS/ +COUNTER-STRIKE

5.5.-21.7 2002
ons-fre 14-20
lör-sön 12-18

A TOOL CAN BE ANYTHING AND EVERY TOOL IS A WEAPON IF YOU HOLD IT RIGHT

TOOLS/
PEOPLES LIST/

ADRIAN TÄCKMAN/ ALAN DUNN/ ANDREAS SPIEGL/ ANNE HOLMFRED/ ÅSA NACKING/ ASBJØRN MOLLY/ ÅSE HELENA HANSEN/ ATHMAN MGUMIA/ AUGUST ENGKILDE/ BARBARA STEINER/ BENNY ROBERT JØRGENSEN/ BIRGITTE FEIRING/ BULA/ CHARLES ESCHE/ CHRISTINE ANDERSEN/ CHRISTOFFER BRUUN/ CMS/ DAN CAMERON/ DAN PETERMAN/ DORIS BERGER/ EDDA HOEFER/ EDDIE BERG/ ELSE MARIE BUKHDAL/ ERIK LANGE/ ESBEN MØLLER NIELSEN/ ESTRID SØRENSEN/ EVA/ FAUSTIN LEKULE/ FEE PLUMLEY/ FIBBER/ FIONA ELLIOTT/ FREDDY BRUZELIUS/ GRIDTHIYA GAWEEWONG/ HANNE MADSEN/ HENRIK KUBEL/ HENRIK PLENGE JAKOBSEN/ JAN MALLAN/ JESPER JØRGENSEN/ JESPER NYMARK/ JIMMY BONNER/ JITENDER SHAMBI/ JOACHIM HAMOU/ JOHN BONNER/ JØRGEN FENGER/ KAMIN LERD-CHAPRASERT/ KATJA/ KELD+TINA/ KENNETH JENSEN/ KENT HANSEN/ KIM HANSEN/ KIMSTER/ KLAUS HØYER/ LARS BANG LARSEN/ LARS ESKESEN/ LARS GRAMBYE/ LEN NORMAN JAZZ QUARTET/ LENE CRONE/ LOUISE GRIFFIN/ LUKE FOWLER/ LYLIAN RODRIGUEZ/ MADS NØRGAARD/ MÅNS TESCH/ MARIA BREWSTER/ MARIT HAKKALA/ MARTIN ALGÖE/ MARTIN KJEMS/ MASSAWE & FAMILY/ MATS JOHANSSON/ MEO YIPINTSOI/ MICHAEL THOUBER/ MIKA HANNULA/ MIKAEL PEDERSEN/ MIKAEL SCHUSTIN/ MOGENS MØLLER/ MORTEN EJLSKOV/ NAKY-OUNG SUNG/ OLGA BAYLEY & KATH/ PAIVI ERNKVIST/ PAUL KELLY/ PER ARNOLDI/ PER ZETTERFALK/ PETER ERIKSEN/ PETER KRUZH'EM ANDERSEN/ PETER LASSEN/ PULSK RAVN/ RASMUS KOCH/ RENE BONDY/ RIKKE ANDREASEN/ RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA/ ROSE CHALALAI/ RUNE NIELSEN/ RUNE OLSEN (CAVE)/ SAN THY/ SARAWAT/ SASCHA COGEZ/ SEAN TREADWAY/ SHUNSUKE KONDO/ SIGNE KOFOED/ SUED BEWKHDIM/ SUPA MIKES/ SURUDE/ TANJA JORDAN/ THE TENANTSPIN GROUP/ THOMAS (FASAN)/ THOMAS DALVANG-FLEURQUIN/ THOMAS PETERSEN/ THOMAS PRESTON/ TINE JENSEN/ TOBIAS REHBERGER/ TOBY WEBSTER/ TOH/ TOR/ TROELS DEGN JOHANSSON/ TULLAN GUNER/ ULRICH HANSEN/ UTHIT ATIMANA/ WILL BRADLEY/ YAS KUMAGAI/ YORK WEGERHOFF/

FOREIGNERS, PLEASE DON'T LEAVE US ALONE WITH THE DANES!

Education and Culture

Culture 2000