

ISEA 2011  
Istanbul

17<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Electronic Art  
ISEA2011 Istanbul

# UN CONTAIN ABLE

**SENIOR EDITOR & CURATOR** Lanfranco Aceti

**EDITOR & CURATOR** Özden Şahin

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR** Andrea Ackerman

**... extracts from the original book ...**

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ISEA2011 Istanbul

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ISEA2011  
ISTANBUL

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# UN- CONTAIN- ABLE



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# Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul: Some Thoughts After The Fact

**When talking about ISEA2011 Istanbul one of the things I believe will remain as a legacy of the symposium is its magnitude.** ISEA2011 was the most attended to date with almost 1500 attendees, the last count we had was of 1489, and it had over 100 artists – the ones we could account for - who participated and engaged with the city in multiple ways, authorized and non.

Overall ISEA2011 responded to the idea that we crafted for the event: a sprawling series of art events, exhibitions, initiatives, encounters, talks and performances that would reflect the sprawling uncontainable nature of the city of Istanbul. It was also about the 'uncontainable' nature of contemporary digital media which cross over physical borders and interfere with the local cultural order. These interferences may at times have generated conflicting relationships but in doing so also spurred development and innovative approaches.

ISEA2011 Istanbul proved how the lines and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid. Concepts of identity, cultural identifiers, nation state and belonging as well as place and time are challenged in both real and virtual contexts.

As Artistic Director for this exhibition – together with Özden Şahin, the Program Director – I wanted to showcase the complexity of contemporary social

interactions and the role that technology is playing in redefining contemporary aesthetics.

The exhibition Uncontainable was part of the official Parallel Program of the Istanbul Biennial, which allowed participating artists and curators to provide diverse perspectives on the contemporary developments within fine arts aesthetics.

For this reason I am very grateful to all of the artists and delegates that supported ISEA2011 Istanbul through what at times was a difficult process in a difficult economic climate. Turkey does not have public funding for the arts – as for example in European countries – and ISEA2011 Istanbul was made possible through a long string of private sponsorships, institutional support and donors that we solicited.

In the end the variety of the venues and programs provided a colorful framework and allowed artists to engage not only with one another and the public but also with the Istanbul Biennial, with the art market held during two wonderful boat journeys across the Bosphorus and with the city of Istanbul itself.

For the first time in the history of ISEA an electronic art exhibition program was officially part of the parallel program of an international biennial. The exhibition with its artists was publicized in the press package of the 12<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial together with initiatives and events dotted across the city and internationally.

Therefore the art program was conceived as an artistic itinerary across the city that placed art events in proximity to the major touristic attractions of the city, creating an electronic/new media/digital layering that would interact with the socio-political history of the city. The art program did not limit itself to the ISEA conference period – September 14 to 21, 2011 – but continued with its events until November 2011.

The catalog becomes a way to place an order to all of the events and activities, creating a record of the artists participating and the invited curators, to whom I am extremely grateful for their contributions. It is a snapshot of the city and of the event itself, which has signed, we hope, a milestone in the history of the ISEA Foundation.

**Lanfranco Aceti**

*Artistic Director and Conference Chair*  
ISEA2011 Istanbul

Istanbul, May 5, 2012





ISEA2011 Uncontainable exhibition banner in Taksim Square, Istanbul, September 14 – October 7, 2011.  
(Photographic documentation by Ender Erkek.)



## ISEA2011 Uncontainable Curatorial Concept

The lines and borders of contemporary national states present the observer with ideological and cultural frameworks that are no longer valid. Concepts of identity, cultural identifiers, nation state and belonging as well as place and time are challenged in both real and virtual contexts.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the idea of creating cultural products that are solely a reflection of a localized and isolated space is without any logical foundation; it denies the reality of contemporary mediated lives and the reality of physical routes, that crossing the sea of information, reach diverse audiences in the four corners of the world.

For its exhibition ISEA2011 Istanbul intends to focus on the relationship between real and virtual as a process *en route* in the transformation of the artwork's multiple cultural contexts that are ungraspable in their complex interactions.

These are cultural practices "in an increasingly media-saturated world [...] where such technologies radically bring into question not just the way in which art galleries and museums operate, but the very notions of history, heritage, and even time itself upon which they are predicated."<sup>1</sup>

ISEA2011 Istanbul will be the locus where these different art signs and cultural products – expressions of the transformation of contemporary societies across the globe – will travel to and coexist for a period of time – in a state of continuous production and flux – across the historical, geopolitical and contemporary layers of the cityscape.

The contradiction of 'containing' the uncontainable will bring to light that the processes of contextualization, interpretation and re-contextualization of ideas and cultural productions, should no longer be conceived as static elements, but rather as evolutionary products of the transformation of envisaged futures and realities, as they move across geopolitical space and time.

**Lanfranco Aceti**

Artistic Director  
ISEA2011 Istanbul



### NOTE

1. Charlie Gere, "New Media Art and the Gallery in the Digital Age," *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond: Curatorial Models for Digital Art*, ed. Christiane Paul, 14 (University of California Press, Berkeley: 2008).

Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul  
14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 cards printed for the 12<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial press package.  
(Photographic documentation by Stephanie Paine.)

# Uncontainable – ISEA2011 Istanbul 14–21 September 2011



ISEA2011 program booklets. (Photographic documentation by Stephanie Paine.)

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# ISEA2011 UNCONTAINABLE & UNTITLED

TAKSİM CUMHURİYET SANAT GALERİSİ

14 EYLÜL-7 EKİM, 2011

ZİYARET SAATLERİ: 10:00-18:00

BAŞ KÜRATÖR/SENIOR CURATOR **LANFRANCO ACETI**  
KÜRATÖR/CURATOR **ÖZDEN ŞAHİN**

SANATÇILAR/ARTISTS **THOMAS ANKERSMIT & PHILL NIBLOCK; ART IN PROCESS (BELLO BENISCHAUER & ELISABETH M. EITELBERGER); GAVIN BAILY, SARAH BAGSHAW & TOM CORBY; DAVID BOWEN; AYOKA CHENZIRA; PAOLO CIRIO; DARKO FRITZ; MURAT GERMEN; BARUCH GOTTLIEB; JANE GRANT; IAN HAIG; JANEZ JANŠA; KUUKI (GAVIN SADE AND PRISCILLA BRACKS); KAREN LANCEL & HERMEN MAAT; TEOMAN MADRA; YOTA MORIMOTO; KILIAN OCHS; ESTHER POLAK & IVAR VAN BEKKUM; DAAN ROOSEGAARDE; SCENECOSME (GRÉGORY LASSERRE & ANAİS MET DEN ANCXT); TAMIKO THIEL, CEM KOZAR & IŞIL ÜNAL; PATRICK TRESSET; SANDER VEENHOF; PIETER VERHEES & JOHANNES WESTENDORP; NILS VÖLKER.**

SANAT DİREKTÖRÜ VE KONFERANS BAŞKANI /  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CONFERENCE CHAIR  
**LANFRANCO ACETI**

KONFERANS VE PROGRAM DİREKTÖRÜ /  
CONFERENCE AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR  
**ÖZDEN ŞAHİN**

# UNCONTAINABLE & UNTITLED



*Akousmaflora* by Scenocosme at *ISEA2011 Uncontainable & Untitled*,  
Taksim Cumhuriyet Art Gallery, Istanbul, September 14 – October 7,  
2011. (Photographic documentation by Özden Şahin.)

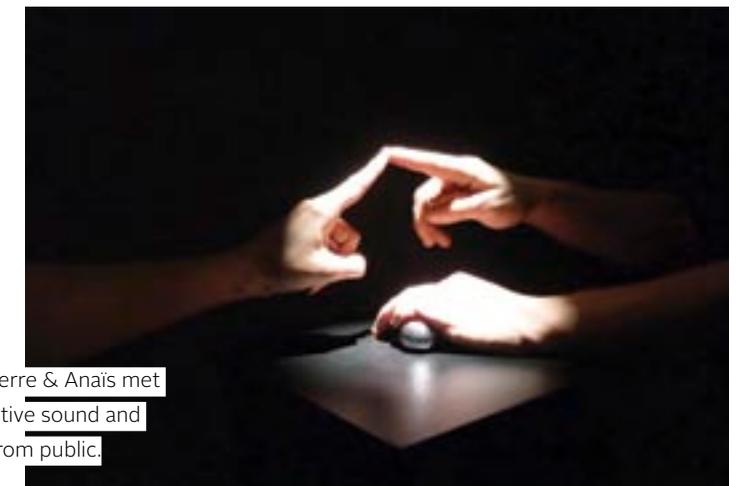
# GRÉGORY LASSERRE & ANAÏS MET DEN ANCXT A.K.A. SCENOCOSME

Exploring invisible relationships with environment: feeling energetic variations of living beings, and designing interactive stagings where spectators share sensory and amazing experiences.

Gregory Lasserre and Anaïs met den Ancxt are two artists who work together as a duo with the name Scenocosme. They use interactive art, music and architecture. With multiple forms of expression, they invite spectators to be in the centre of musical or choreographic collective performances. Scenocosme invents sonorous or/and visual languages: artists translate the exchanges between living beings and between the body and its environment. Materialised, sensations are augmented. Scenocosme's artworks react to the electrostatic energy of the human and uses the body itself as a continuous sensorial interface with the world. Thus, Scenocosme creates a dramaturgic space in which the different approaches of postural communication generate sonorous reactions with plants, stones, water or human body.

In 2007, Scenocosme created *Akousmaflore*, which offers original sonorous interactions by touching plants. In 2009, Scenocosme created *Lights Contacts*, an interactive installation where contacts between spectators create sounds and light according to the electrostatic energy of their bodies. In 2010, this artwork received the Visual Arts and New Technologies award at the Bains Numeriques festival.

*Akousmaflore*, 2007, Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt a.k.a. Scenocosme. Sensitive and interactive musical plants.



*Lights Contacts*, 2009, Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt a.k.a. Scenocosme. Interactive sound and light installation with body and skin from public.

# GRÉGORY LASSERRE & ANAÏS MET DEN ANCXT A.K.A. SCENOCOSME



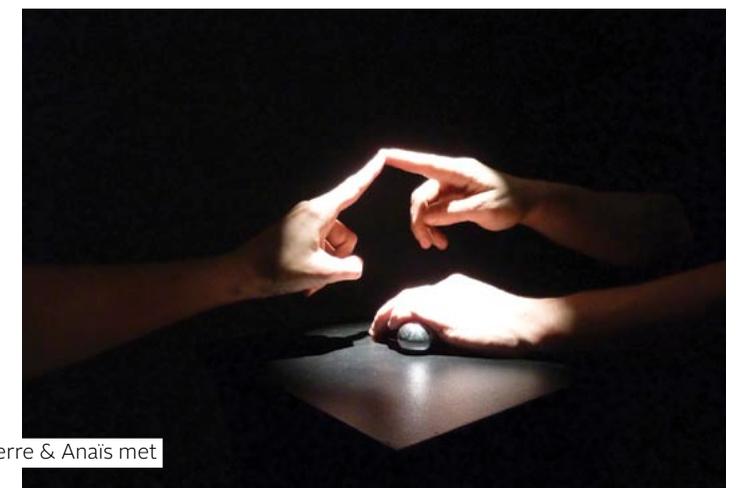
*Lights Contacts*, 2009, Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt a.k.a. Scenocosme. Interactive sound and light installation with body and skin from public. (Photographic documentation by Korhan Karaoyosal.)

# GRÉGORY LASSERRE & ANAÏS MET DEN ANCXT A.K.A. SCENOCOSME

Gregory Lasserre and Anais met den Ancxt are two artists who work together as a duo with the name Scenocosme. They use interactive art, music and architecture. With multiple forms of expression, they invite spectators to be in the centre of musical or choreographic collective performances. They also explore invisible relationships with our environment: they can feel energetic variations of living beings, and they design interactive stagings where spectators share sensory and amazing experiences.

They have exhibited their interactive installation artworks at ZKM (Germany), Villa Romana of Firenze (Italy), Museum Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (Canada) and in many international biennals and festivals : BIACS3 - Biennale of contemporary art in Sevilla (Spain), NAMOC / TransLife - Triennial of Media Art (China), INDAF (Korea), Experimenta (Australia), C.O.D.E (Canada), ISEA (Belfast), Futuresonic (UK), WRO (Poland), FAD (Brasil), Citysonics (Belgium), Ososphere, EXIT, VIA, Scopitone, Seconde-nature (France), in various art centers : Kibla (Slovenia), Utsikten Kunstsenter (Norway), Centre des arts d'Enghien-les-Bains (France)...

*Akousmaflore*, 2007, Grégory Lasserre & Anais met den Ancxt a.k.a. scenocosme.



*Lights Contacts*, 2009, Grégory Lasserre & Anais met den Ancxt a.k.a. scenocosme.

GRÉGORY LASSERRE &  
ANAÏS MET DEN ANCXT  
A.K.A. SCENOCOSME



*Akousmaflore*, 2007, Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt a.k.a. scenocosme.

# About Editors & Curators

## Lanfranco Aceti

*artistic director & conference chair*

**Lanfranco Aceti** works as an academic, artist and curator. He is Visiting Professor at Goldsmiths College, department of Art and Computing, London; teaches *Contemporary Art and Digital Culture* at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabanci University, Istanbul; and is Editor in Chief of the *Leonardo Electronic Almanac* (The MIT Press, *Leonardo* journal and ISAST). He was the Artistic Director and Conference Chair for ISEA2011 Istanbul and works as gallery director at Kasa Gallery in Istanbul. He has a Ph.D. from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London. His work has been published in *Leonardo*, *Routledge* and *Art Inquiry* and his interdisciplinary research focuses on the intersection between digital arts, visual culture and new media technologies. He is the founder and director of the LEA digital media platform and of the research center ORADST (Operational Research in Art, Design, Science and Technology).

Lanfranco Aceti is specialized in contemporary art, inter-semiotic translations between classic media and new media, contemporary digital hybridization processes, avant-garde film and new media studies and their practice-based applications in the field of fine arts.

He has worked as an Honorary Lecturer at the Department of Computer Science, Virtual Reality Environments at University College London. He has exhibited works at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London and done digital interventions at TATE Modern, the Venice Biennial, Neue Nationalgalerie, the ICA and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

Previously an Honorary Research Fellow at the Slade School of Fine Art, Dr. Aceti has also worked as an AHRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Birkbeck College, University of London, School of History of Art, Film & Visual Media and as Visiting Research Fellow at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

## Özden Şahin

*conference & program director*

**Özden Şahin** received her BA from Boğaziçi University in 2007 and her MA in Cultural Studies from Sabancı University in 2009. Her thesis entitled *Censorship on Visual Arts and Its Political Implications in Contemporary Turkey: Four Case Studies from 2002-2009* sought to explore cultural manifestations of recent art censorship in Turkey through the narratives provided by artists. Her main research interests are visual culture and new media art curation.

Ozden currently works at Sabancı University Kasa Gallery as the Vice-Director and In-house Curator, developing and executing the annual exhibition and publication program.

In 2011, she was the Conference and Program Director of ISEA2011 Istanbul: The 17<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Electronic Art, the leading world conference and exhibition for art, media and technology.

Since 2009, she has been working as the Co-Editor at the *Leonardo Electronic Almanac* (The MIT Press, *Leonardo* journal and ISAST), the peer-reviewed, electronic arm of the leading art-science-technology journal *Leonardo*.

