



“video bridge prishtina-belgrade”

A project proposal by
N3KR Ltd / 1904.CC / Manuel Schmalstieg
May 2007



OK

1. Introduction



The project is very simple and straightforward.

It can be described as a re-contextualisation of the historical video-installation "Hole-in-Space", by Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz, who in 1980 connected two public spaces in the US (NYC and Los Angeles) through a video bridge, which provoked a strong response from the audience and passers-by.

Now, in 2007, such a live video link can be very easily set up, using at each end a computer, a USB webcam, and connecting them through Skype.

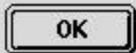


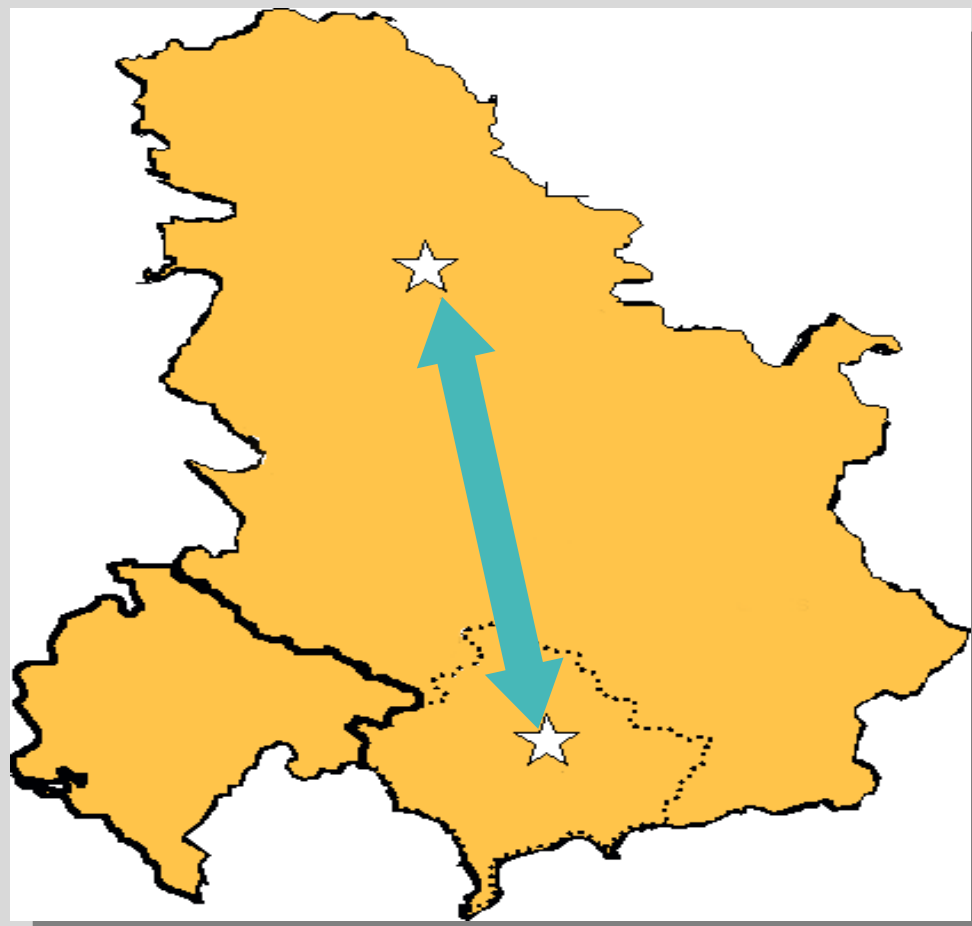
2. Context



During a field trip through southern Serbia and Kosovo, the idea emerged among members of the media arts collective N3krozoft Ltd to create a new version of this basic telecommunication project in the geopolitical context of Serbia and Kosovo.

This specific context will move the focus away from the “novelty” effect of technological innovation, as the main challenge of the project will consist in linking symbolically two cultural spheres that, after 20 years of tragic political evolutions, have reached a unique state of cultural isolation.





OK

Project: Video Bridge Prishtina-Belgrade – May 2007

3. Implementation

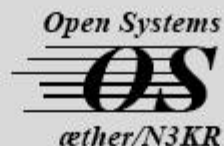


The video-bridge will be set up in the context of a working meeting between artists from both Kosovo and Serbia, which will take place in Belgrade, 12-14 October 2007. This meeting will be the continuation of a workshop organised in Prishtina during May 3-7 2007, which gathered 18 artists from both countries.

The locations for the transmission are being actively researched. It is important to stress that the screening places have to be accessible to the general public, and not only to workshop participants. Ideally, an open and popular venue will be chosen.

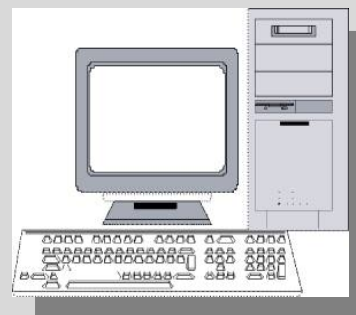


Technical Requirements



System requirements (on each end):

- PC running Windows 2000 or XP (or Mac OSX). The computer should have at least a 1GHz processor, 256 MB RAM.
- Speakers and microphone - built-in or separate.
- Webcam.
- Monitor or projector.
- Internet connection (broadband is best, GPRS is not supported for voice calls, and results may vary on a satellite connection).



4. Credits



To be completed...



Project: Video Bridge Prishtina-Belgrade – May 2007

Biographies: Manuel Schmalstieg



Born in 1976, Manuel Schmalstieg operates on the borderline between video, performance and software art. After experimentation in the fields of graphic novel, animation film and audio production that he carried out during his studies in Geneva (ESBA/atelier zero1) and Krakow (Academy of fine arts/animated film department), he turns at the end of the nineties towards realtime video. In 2001, he founds the media collective N3KROZOFT Ltd. Through his performances and installations, he explores issues of surveillance, control and censorship, confronting the viewer with uncomfortable truths and concealed motivations.

Recent works: ÆTHER 9 (remote video workshop, Mapping Festival, Geneva, 2007). ONYX.0+66 (video-conference, ART + COMMUNICATION Festival, Riga, 2006). BABEL PROJECT (new media workshop, 2nd Bucharest Biennale, Romania, 2006). BALKAN PROMENADE (audio-visual performance, presented in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia-Montenegro and Slovenia, 2004).



Project: Video Bridge Prishtina-Belgrade – May 2007

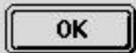
Biographies: N3KR Ltd



N3KR (N3KROZOFT) Ltd is a collective research project gathering digital artists, media experts, performers, researchers in cognitive sciences and biometry. The Geneva-based administrative headquarter links the autonomous cells which have been established in several emerging regions.

In addition to being a global leader in application areas such as on-the-fly data visualisation, non-linear video processing and digital storytelling, N3KR Ltd is currently focussing on the development of non-commercial real-time media architectures.

The internet platform www.n3krozoft.com functions both as an information outlet and a source of downloadable artifacts that are reliable, fully functional, unexpensive, and packaged with documentation and source code.



Project: Video Bridge Prishtina-Belgrade – May 2007

Appendix: Artistic use of telecommunication protocols - historical overview



1980: Hole-in-Space: Video link Los Angeles - New York.

1984: Electronic Cafe: communication link between five ethnically diverse L.A. communities.

1986: Ponton Medienbus at Ars Electronica: collaboration with East European artists.

1992: Documenta 8: **Piazza Virtuale** (Van Gogh TV) connects participants from Western and Eastern Europe live on television.

1993: First release of **CU-SeeMe**.

1991-1995: ZaMir Network

1996: Radio B92 is taken off air and starts transmitting via the internet.



Appendix B: Historical overview

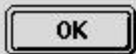


1980: «Hole-in-Space»

Media artists Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz create a video-link between two public locations in Los Angeles and New York.

1984: «Electronic Cafe Project»

As part of the Olympic Arts Festival, Galloway and Rabinowitz designed Electronic Cafe, which utilized a variety of communications technologies to link five ethnically diverse L.A. communities. Local residents communicated with each other, creating art, discussing the world, and sharing words and images using the equipment.



Appendix B: Historical overview

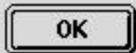


1991-1995: «ZaMir Network»

Human right activists Eric Bachman and Wam Kat set-up the ZaMir network, a computerised messaging system (BBS). Between 1991 and 1995, nodes are set up in Zagreb, Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Pristina and Skopje.



At the end of 1995, the network has more than 2500 users of which about 500 are organizations. With the end of the war in Bosnia, the Soros foundation stops supporting ZaMirNet.



Appendix B: Historical overview



1995: «OpenNet»

Amsterdam Internet provider xs4all (established in 1993 by a group of activists) agrees to host the website of Radio B92. OpenNet.Org, Belgrade Radio B92's Internet site, opens on November 14, 1995. OpenNet is the first Internet Service Provider (ISP) in Belgrade, and the only provider in Serbia until March 1996.



In December 1996, radio B92 is banned for the second time in its short history. xs4all puts the Belgrade radio station B92 online using streaming audio technology. The signal is picked up by the Voice of America and transmitted back into Serbia.



A similar scenario repeats in March 1999, when B92 is shut down by the authorities as soon as the NATO air strikes begin.



References



Iain Guest: *Wiring Up Kosovo – The Internet and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia*. ON THE RECORD Kosovo Vol. 9 No. 8, October 1999
http://www.advocacynet.org/news_view/news_158.html

Robin Hamman: *A Brave Fight to Save B-92*
The Independent, 12 April, 1999
<http://www.independent.co.uk/net/990412ne/index.html>

Eric Bachman, Ivo Skoric, Ed Agro: *ZaMir – Peace Network in the War Zone*
<http://balkansnet.org/MF-draft/ztn0.htm>

Matthew Collin: *This is Serbia calling*
Serpent's Tail, London, 2001

