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VOL 17 NO 1 A collection of articles, reviews and opinion pieces that discuss and analyze the complexity of mixing things together as a process that is not necessarily undertaken in an orderly and organized manner. Wide open opportunity to discuss issues in interdisciplinary education; art, science and technology interactions; personal artistic practices; history of re-combinatory practices; hybridizations between old and new media; cultural creolization; curatorial studies and more.

Contributions from
Frieder Nake, Stelarc, Paul Catanese
and other important cultural operators.

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Reflections on 'Archives in Progress' by Darko Fritz

by

Saša Vojković

Without really dovetailing to Jacques Derrida's *Archive Fever*, in his *Archives in Progress*, Darko Fritz examines the technical mechanisms for archivization and for reproduction. [1] Taking into account the multiplicity of regions in the psychic apparatus, this model also integrates the necessity, inside the psyche itself, of a certain outside, of certain borders between insides and outsides. This outside can also be understood in Manuel Castells' terms, as a culture of "real virtuality". [2] The culture of "real virtuality" presupposes a collapse of a symbolic environment on our everyday reality. While the experience of reality has always been virtual because it is always perceived through symbols, the specificity of the system in question is that here, reality itself (that is, people's material/symbolic existence) is entirely captured, fully immersed in a virtual image setting. In other words, a mechanism which operated implicitly, as the hidden foundation of our lives, now, with the new technology, becomes explicit. The emergence of the previously concealed "symbolic order" has crucial consequences

for "reality" itself. As a result, and as Darko Fritz's work shows, social discourse becomes reflective in triple sense: it can be traced on the level of the media texts, the level of the public sphere, and our memories affected by both.

A culture of real virtuality brings about the mixing of tenses to create what Castells calls a forever universe, a 'timeless time', and this is exactly the way Darko Fritz uses media technology – to escape the contexts of its existence. Media texts affect the mnemic archive, but the archivization process is affected by the combination of electronic images, printing, and writing; all this becomes a prosthesis to our mnemic reserve, or hypomnestic technique as Derida calls it. *Archives in Progress* echo Derrida's concepts because Fritz's work shows that the archive is not only a place for storing and conserving an archivable content of the past, but just as Derrida asserts "the technical structure of the archiving archive also determines the structure of the archivable content even in its very coming

into existence and its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event. This is also our political experience of the so-called new media". [3] As a result, the mnemic scars can be recircumscribed and recircumcised, whereby the limits of what lends itself as a storage place or "home," becomes extended and redefined. The symbolic network based on technologies of representation and communication lends itself to a multiplicity of universes. *Archives in Progress* demonstrate that the question of memory is not a question of the past. Derrida argues that this "is a question of the future, the question of the future itself, the question of response, of promise and of responsibility for tomorrow. [4] There is no political power without control of the archive, Derrida adds, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the public's participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution and interpretation. Accordingly, due to their capacity to expand the techniques for storing and producing memories, Darko Fritz's media texts have a significant role to play in the remaking of future histories. ∎

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