

We are Legion Changing Rooms

An anthropological investigation into contemporary mixed realities

We are Legion is an anthropological research project involving a mixed reality changing room and a constructed band. Conceptually, our project experiments with and researches emerging mixed reality ecologies arising from the mass imbrication of the virtual (in the form of social software based activities) in the so called 'real' world. *We are Legion* is at once a work of performance art *and* a penetrating investigation into the production, consumption and distribution of contemporary media, sound and the Sensible itself through social media technologies such as MySpace.

"Each technological extension involves an act of collective cannibalism. The previous environment with all its private and social values, is swallowed by the new environment and reprocessed for whatever values are digestible [...] Our natural bias is to accept the new gimmick (automaton, say) as a thing that can be accommodated in the old ethical order¹".

Frequently new technologies act as extensions of utopian visions, and are complicit in the transmission of power and the distribution of the Sensible (*partage du sensible* as Jacques Ranciere puts it). That is to say, the social individual that is MySpace is very much involved in the partitioning of the world into that which can and cannot be said, heard, felt, known, experienced, and lived. *We are Legion* challenges hegemonic distributions of the sensible by engineering experiential encounters with one's online and offline environment(s) that involve 'mashing up' sounds, images, words, and other cultural productions.

The researchers (Leon Tan, Amanda Newall, and Antti Sakari Saario) operate as practitioners, artists and predominantly as *Reality Jockeys (RJs)* spinning out their online, offline, and non linear methods and intensities into the social space of a city. The artists act as nomadic guides and mapmakers, employing the malleability of the virtual in a return to affect and the actual through remapping, resituating and remixing the sonic and sensible environment (online, on location, on going).

City as Multiple Character: We are Legion Changing Room

The public changing room is a portable rig set up in public spaces in a city. The room brackets a local space within which we stage the birth and becoming of a multiple character that is the face, sound, and image of a city. This is done by involving and engaging local residents in cultural productions on location². The changing room is always stocked with costumes that seek to subvert dominant and stereotypical cultural identities relevant to the city. The public are invited to assemble something to their liking and to produce something that speaks to and of the city. The public are especially invited to consume and regurgitate something of the city environment – sound, music, image, words, actions. Media content produced by the city's public is then fed into the Reality Jockey machine as well as onto the specially created MySpace profile for that city.


¹ Marshall McLuhan (1964). *Notes on Burroughs*. Originally in *Nation* 28 December 1964, pp. 517-519. Retrieved from: <http://realitystudio.org/criticism/notes-on-burroughs/> on 12/06/07.

² Social media productions by the public are enabled by portable media production kits including laptops and wireless net connections.

The Hollywoods - Reality Jockeys in an Age of Social Media

MYSPACE MUSIC

hollywoods
Experimental / Alternative / Folk Rock



LONG ISLAND CITY,
New York
United States

Profile Views: 7

Last Login:
11/06/2007

View My: [Pics](#) | [Videos](#)

Contacting hollywoods

- Send Message
- Forward to Friend
- Add to Friends
- Add to Favorites
- Instant Message
- Block User
- Add to Group
- Rank User

MySpace URL:
<http://www.myspace.com/hollywoodsband>

hollywoods: General Info

Member Since	11/06/2007
Record Label	Indie
Type of Label	Indie

Hollywood is a self-perpetuating cornucopia of simulacra and decadence. *The Hollywoods* are the artists acting as Reality Jockeys in the Age of Social Media. Composed of fictional identities and costumed characters, The Hollywoods are a band with a MySpace profile. The band tours with the *We are Legion Changing Room*, alighting in each city with the mission of remixing the city and remapping the sonic and social media terrain.

“Everybody splice himself in with everybody else. Communication must be made total. Only way to stop it³”.

The Hollywoods function as an experimental band working with sound, music, and wider media. Each visit to a city is announced as a ‘Secret Show’ on MySpace to fans. Through MySpace and the secret shows *The Hollywoods* explore the unpredictable, celebrate volatility, rest in silence and make space and deface. *The Hollywoods* maintain the ‘local line’ and feedback the abstract to the abstract, reclaim the corporeal and empower the physical core by communicating directly and driving inhibitive tension to the extremities. The ability to change, to shed the skin, now and always, is the principle path, method and destination of multiplicity.

Summary – Anthropological research into Mixed Reality Social Sculpture

We are Legion Changing Rooms, including the RJ machinery called *The Hollywoods*, instantiate a mixing of virtual and real lifeworlds in unexpected ways. This is a new participative research project investigating the production, distribution / mashup, and reception of creative vectors backwards and forwards along the virtual – actual continuum. In a sense, this project returns to an earlier notion of social sculpture, seeking to explore the ways in which mixed reality activities actively shape and sculpt the institutions and spaces of the world.

Check out the Hollywoods at [http://www.myspace.com/hollywoodsband!](http://www.myspace.com/hollywoodsband)

³ Burroughs (1968/2001). *The Ticket That Exploded*. London: Flamingo, pp. 129.