FAR AND WIDE

By Lanfranco Aceti and Omar Kholeif
This catalog is a LEA production with FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology). It follows the first major retrospective on Nam June Paik in the UK with an exhibition and conference organized by Tate Liverpool and FACT. The exhibition Nam June Paik, December 17, 2010 to March 13, 2011, was curated by Sook-Kyung Lee and Susanne Rennert.

LEA acknowledges and is grateful for the gracious support provided to this publication by the Estate of Nam June Paik. In particular special thanks go to Ken Hakuta, Executor, Nam June Paik Estate.

Also, special thanks go to Mike Stubbs (Director/CEO of FACT) for his support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lanfranco Aceti</td>
<td>The Global Play of Nam June Paik: The Artist That Embraced and Transformed Marshall McLuhan’s Dreams Into Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Omar Kholeif</td>
<td>The Future Is Now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Emile Devereaux</td>
<td>To Whom It May Concern: Nam June Paik’s Wobbulator and Playful Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Tom Schofield</td>
<td>Data Materialism in Art Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Gabriela Galati</td>
<td>The Electronic Representation of Information: New Relationships between the Virtual Archive and its (Possible) Referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Jamie Allen</td>
<td>Traveling at the Speed of Paik: An artist-researcher visits the Nam June Paik Art Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Jeremy Bailey</td>
<td>A Statement on Nam June Paik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Richard H. Brown</td>
<td>Zen for TV? Nam June Paik’s “Global Groove” and “A Tribute to John Cage” (1973)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contents
What else can be said of Nam June Paik and his artistic prac-
tice that perhaps has not been said before? My guess is not very
much... and while I write my first lines to this introduction I realize
that it is already sounding like a classic Latin ‘invocatio,’ or request
to assistance from the divinity, used by writers when having to
breathe complex waters.

Nam June Paik and Marshall McLuhan are two of the numerous art-
ists and authors who inspired my formative years. If one cannot deny
Paik’s love of play and satire imbued in popular culture and used to
disguise a real intellectual and conceptual approach to the artwork,
then I found the best framework in one of Paik’s artworks that was pre-
sented for the first time in the United Kingdom, at FACT, in Liver-
pool, thanks to the efforts of both Stubbs and Kholeif.

My fascination with the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication in Liverpool
was immediate and I wanted to reflect in the publication, albeit sym-
bolically, the multiple possibilities and connections that underpinned
the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication and its medium, as well as Paik’s and
McLuhan’s visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
lasers. The laser is actually an acronym; it stands for Light Ampli-
fication by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Nam June Paik un-
dertook a residency with Bell Labs, who were the inventors of the
laser. It was here that he created his 1966 piece Digital Experi-
mentation by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Nam June Paik un-
derstood the stark contrast between digital and analogue and his fascination with technology in its material
form. His work with Bell Labs, exploring the stark contrast between digital
and television as we know them signals a transformation of our visual culture.

When Mike Stubbs and Omar Kholeif approached me to create this
book, the challenge was to create a structure for the material but
also to keep the openness that characterizes so many of Paik’s art-
works and so many of the approaches that he has inspired.

I found the best framework in one of Paik’s artworks that was pre-
sented for the first time in the United Kingdom, at FACT, in Liver-
pool, thanks to the efforts of both Stubbs and Kholeif.

My fascination with the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication in Liverpool
was immediate and I wanted to reflect in the publication, albeit sym-
bolically, the multiple possibilities and connections that underpinned
the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication and its medium, as well as Paik’s and
McLuhan’s visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
lasers.

The construction of this hybrid book, I hope, would have pleased
Paik for it is a strange construction, collage and recollection, of
memories, events, places and artworks. In this volume collide pres-
ent events, past memories, a conference and an exhibition, all in the
name of Nam June Paik, the artist who envisaged the popular future
of the world of media.

The Laser Cone’s re-fabrication and its medium, as well as Paik’s and
McLuhan’s visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
lasers.

The word laser is actually an acronym; it stands for Light Ampli-
fication by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Nam June Paik un-
derstood the stark contrast between digital and analogue and his fascination with technology in its material
form. His work with Bell Labs, exploring the stark contrast between digital
and television as we know them signals a transformation of our visual culture.

When Mike Stubbs and Omar Kholeif approached me to create this
book, the challenge was to create a structure for the material but
also to keep the openness that characterizes so many of Paik’s art-
works and so many of the approaches that he has inspired.

I found the best framework in one of Paik’s artworks that was pre-
sented for the first time in the United Kingdom, at FACT, in Liver-
pool, thanks to the efforts of both Stubbs and Kholeif.

My fascination with the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication in Liverpool
was immediate and I wanted to reflect in the publication, albeit sym-
bolically, the multiple possibilities and connections that underpinned
the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication and its medium, as well as Paik’s and
McLuhan’s visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
lasers.

The word laser is actually an acronym; it stands for Light Ampli-
fication by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Nam June Paik un-
derstood the stark contrast between digital and analogue and his fascination with technology in its material
form. His work with Bell Labs, exploring the stark contrast between digital
and television as we know them signals a transformation of our visual culture.

When Mike Stubbs and Omar Kholeif approached me to create this
book, the challenge was to create a structure for the material but
also to keep the openness that characterizes so many of Paik’s art-
works and so many of the approaches that he has inspired.

I found the best framework in one of Paik’s artworks that was pre-
sented for the first time in the United Kingdom, at FACT, in Liver-
pool, thanks to the efforts of both Stubbs and Kholeif.

My fascination with the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication in Liverpool
was immediate and I wanted to reflect in the publication, albeit sym-
bolically, the multiple possibilities and connections that underpinned
the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication and its medium, as well as Paik’s and
McLuhan’s visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
lasers.

The word laser is actually an acronym; it stands for Light Ampli-
fication by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Nam June Paik un-
derstood the stark contrast between digital and analogue and his fascination with technology in its material
form. His work with Bell Labs, exploring the stark contrast between digital
and television as we know them signals a transformation of our visual culture.

When Mike Stubbs and Omar Kholeif approached me to create this
book, the challenge was to create a structure for the material but
also to keep the openness that characterizes so many of Paik’s art-
works and so many of the approaches that he has inspired.

I found the best framework in one of Paik’s artworks that was pre-
sented for the first time in the United Kingdom, at FACT, in Liver-
pool, thanks to the efforts of both Stubbs and Kholeif.
This catalog became a tool to mirror and perhaps ‘transmediate’ the laser installation “made of a huge green laser that [...]”  FACT with Tate Liverpool. Travelling 800 metres as the crow flies, the beam of light [...] made a symbolic connection between the two speed of contacts, the joint exhibition of connecting a variety of media as easily as connecting people from all parts of the world. In this phantasmagoria of connections it almost seems possible to visualize the optic cables and WIFI that like threads join the people and the media of McLuhan’s “global village” and the multiplicities of media that Paik invited us to use to create what I would like to define as the contemporary “bastard art.”

Lanfranco Aceti
Editor-in-Chief, Leonardo Electronic Almanac
Director, Kiso Gallery

The catalog is in itself a work that reflects the laser connections, the speed of contacts, the joint exhibition of connecting a variety of media as easily as connecting people from all parts of the world. In this phantasmagoria of connections it almost seems possible to visualize the optic cables and WIFI that like threads join the people and the media of McLuhan’s “global village” and the multiplicities of media that Paik invited us to use to create what I would like to define as the contemporary “bastard art.”

Lanfranco Aceti
Editor-in-Chief, Leonardo Electronic Almanac
Director, Kira Gallery

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF

Far and Wide

For me personally this book represents a moment of further transformation of LEA, not only as a journal publishing volumes as in the long tradition of the journal, but also as a producer of books and catalogs that cater for the larger community of artists that create bastard art or bastard science for that matter.

For me personally this book represents a moment of further transformation of LEA, not only as a journal publishing volumes as in the long tradition of the journal, but also as a producer of books and catalogs that cater for the larger community of artists that create bastard art or bastard science for that matter.


6. Art as a bastard is interpreted, in this passage, as something of uncertain origins that cannot be easily defined and neatly encapsulated in a definition or framework. “Art is often a bastard, the parents of which we do not know.” Nam June Paik as cited in Florence de Meredieu, Digital and Video Art, trans. Richard Elliott (Edinburgh: Chambers, 2005), 180.

7. This catalog became a tool to mirror and perhaps ‘transmediate’ the laser installation “made of a huge green laser that [...]”  FACT with Tate Liverpool. Travelling 800 metres as the crow flies, the beam of light [...] made a symbolic connection between the two speed of contacts, the joint exhibition of connecting a variety of media as easily as connecting people from all parts of the world. In this phantasmagoria of connections it almost seems possible to visualize the optic cables and WIFI that like threads join the people and the media of McLuhan’s “global village” and the multiplicities of media that Paik invited us to use to create what I would like to define as the contemporary “bastard art.”

Lanfranco Aceti
Editor-in-Chief, Leonardo Electronic Almanac
Director, Kira Gallery

ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES


6. Art as a bastard is interpreted, in this passage, as something of uncertain origins that cannot be easily defined and neatly encapsulated in a definition or framework. “Art is often a bastard, the parents of which we do not know.” Nam June Paik as cited in Florence de Meredieu, Digital and Video Art, trans. Richard Elliott (Edinburgh: Chambers, 2005), 180.
The Future Is Now?

Far and Wide: Nam June Paik is an edited collection that seeks to explore the legacy of the artist Nam June Paik in contemporary media culture. This particular project grew out of a collaboration between FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology, and the Tate Liverpool, who in late 2010-2011 staged the largest retrospective the artist’s work in the UK. The first since his death, it also showcased the premieres of Paik’s laser work in Europe. The project, staged across both sites, also included a rich public programme. Of these, two think tank events, The Future is Now Media Arts, Performance and Identity after Nam June Paik and The Electronic Superhighway: Art after Nam June Paik, brought together a forum of leading artists, performers and thinkers in the cross-cultural field together to explore and dissect the significance of Paik within broader culture.

This programme was developed by a large group of collaborators. The discursive programme was produced by FACT in partnership with Caitlin Page, then Curator of Public Programmes at Tate. One of our primary research concerns was exploring how Paik’s approach to creative practice fragmented existing ideological standpoints of our primary research concerns was exploring how Paik’s approach to creative practice fragmented existing ideological standpoints about the visual arts as a hermetically sealed, self-referential canon. Drawing from Bruno Latour, Norman M. Klein and Jay David Bolter, we could ask Paik: who is the artist charged with bringing so much openness to the visual arts, while Allen surveys a series of tendencies in the artist’s work, developed since his death? There is much that remains unanswered, and that, we can only speculate. Far and Wide does not offer a holistic biography or historical overview of the artist’s work or indeed its authority. Rather, it serves to extract open-ended questions about how far and wide Nam June Paik’s influence may have travelled, and to consider what influence it has yet to wield.

Omar Kholeif
Editor and Curator
FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology

I'm rather dumbstruck after hearing John talk, he was a fascinating and knowledgeable speaker whom it was incredibly interesting to listen to. My practice involves, firstly, musical performance and composition; but I also make films, videos and scores that function as visual works. I have a particular interest in the Fluxus performances of the 1960s, and I myself sometimes perform to those pieces. I was going to perform one for violin solo today, but sadly health and safety restrictions have prevented me from doing so. That may in fact be a good thing, it is quite dangerous.

AUDIENCE: To play the violin is dangerous?
No, but this performance involved smashing the violin.

AUDIENCE: Oh right.
Yes, that old chestnut. But, actually, the lady's question about rhythm interested me, because rhythm is about movement; the movement of sounds and images. I think we often consider rhythm as a fast thing, but of course it can also be a very slow thing. It changes when it is slowed and then we have the minuea of movement, which can be fascinating as well. The video I'm going to show is a realization, by myself, of a card from a collection of events put together by George Brecht in the 1960s. I'm interested in the musical outcome of Fluxus performances as opposed to their gags and pranks, although they are very much a part of the experience. George Maciunas himself said that really it was just messing around, although I think that was a bit tongue in cheek.

More specifically, I'm very interested in the sound outcome and the almost ritualistic aspect of Fluxus performances. It is interesting to note that several Fluxus performers were originally composers. Nam June Paik was a composer, he studied composition and was an assistant of Stockhausen. Actually, I'm not sure that's correct, he may have been a student as opposed to an assistant. Either way, they were friends and colleagues. I think Stockhausen liked to have people working for him, because other people, Cornelius Cardew for one, worked as assistants to Stockhausen. In addition to Paik, we have Dick Higgins who studied electronic music under John Cage at the New School in New York. So, returning to the video, this is a realization of a card called Empty Vessel by George Brecht lasting twelve minutes.

The next thing: I'm going to perform now. I saw a box, an object made by Paik, which is essentially a wooden packing crate with strings on it and a sonating tin can attached to the side; I think it is called Primitive Music. It got me thinking about the vast sonic potential of this primitive object, and I wanted to make something in response. At the same time, I was also thinking about pixels of sounds and mixing in his tape work.

I also have my primitive box. I am half Lithuanian and this instrument here is a kanklės. It has five strings and is usually used to play indigenous folk music in Lithuania. It is supposed to be plucked, but I don't just pluck it, instead I use it for improvisation and for the creation of other types of music.

This performance then, is a response to the Paik object and it lasts for ten minutes and twenty seconds. ■