Gail Wight

Title Personal Zoo

Genre interactive responsive installation

Applicant's Role in Production all design and implementation of zoo creatures' behaviors and physical appearance, as well as design and oversight of construction of zoo cages

Production Format live interactive installation involving simple robotics

Brief Project Description (do not exceed space given below)

Personal Zoo is a collection of small fantastical creatures, figments of my imagination, which respond to the visitors of their clinical, lab-like zoo. At the first, their new forms, extra parts, and odd behaviors suggest that they emerge from current experiments in genetics. Yet while they are most likely not "alive", they do exhibit intelligent behavior, evoking an emotional response, a connection, to their visitors. As an earlier generation imagined and feared a brave new world in the thrall of a robotic superclass, the current generation does the same with the specter of genetics.

The creatures in Personal Zoo use simple responsive electronics gleaned from a burgeoning world of consumer robotics to come alive. Responsive, interactive, optical, aural, and communicative, these easily available components take on a life of their own in the Zoo's inhabitants. Visitors to the Zoo can walk among clear cages (the outer envelope of our disjunctured relationship), and observe these creatures up close. Some cages have gloved openings for petting. Motion, touch, shadow, sound and proximity are the spectrum of the creatures' responses to visitors, as they coo and whine, wriggle, plead, snarl, or hide. The responses are subtle but unmistakable. For instance, the mechanism that causes a walkway light to snap on when a visitor approaches can also make a pair of eyes snap open, but the two responses are worlds apart in the human emotions they trigger.

It's this simple yet subtle communication that Personal Zoo investigates. Intelligent behavior is disturbingly and delightfully simple to mimic. The form of these creatures suggests new genetic creations, yet their responses to our behavior - and visa versa - suggest age-old complications in communication. Our emotional relationship to other living things remains largely unexplored, but becomes a critical factor when we take on the responsibilities of constructing wholly new genetic and transgenic bestiaries.
New Media Fellowships
2005 Sample Work Form

Gail Wight

If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Rodentia Chamber Music (work in progress!!) & Rodentia Violoncello

Year 2004

Technical

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<th>Original Format</th>
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Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

_x_ URL www.notochord.org/artindex.html (if more than one please list them below)

_x_ Browser requirement(s)

_x_ Plug-in requirement(s) QuickTime

_x_ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)

_x_ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing:

In Left frame, choose "Other Species Collaborations" (at the very top left), and then from Top frame, choose "Rodentia Violoncello" (third of first column) and then "Rodentia Chamber Music" (top of first column)

The diagram for "R. Violoncello" is a rollover image, revealing the finished cello. Please run through images for both and then play the larger video under "R. Chamber Music". "R. Chamber Music" is a work in process!

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

"Rodentia Violoncello" was created for Homemade Instrument Day at the Lincoln Center, NY. Mice living within the cello triggered whisker switches to play short recordings on computer chips of cello music. "Rodentia Chamber Music," commissioned by Cornerhouse of Manchester, England is an expanded ensemble, adding a piano, drum, harp and carillon to the cello. The switches within each instrument play music by responding to typical mouse behavior, using motion detectors, tilt and whisker switches, magnet switches triggered by running wheels, and piezo elements that pick up scuffling sounds.

Relevance to proposal: Where the cello allowed mice to trigger sounds in their environment by constructing switches that took advantage of typical mouse behavior, "Personal Zoo" allows visitors to trigger movement, sounds, etc. by taking advantage of the psychology of communication. "Personal Zoo" would also use similar sensors and switches, making use of the natural movement through the "Zoo" environment.
If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Kings Play Cards...

Year 2003

Technical

Original Format
_x_ Software
_x_ Web
_x_ Installation
__ Other__________

Format Submitted for Viewing
_x_ Software
_x_ Web
__ VHS
__ Other__________

Preferred OS
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_x_ Mac
__ Unix
__ Other__________

Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)
_x_ URL________www.notochord.org/artindex.html________ (if more than one please list them below)

Browser requirement(s)

Plug-in requirement(s) QuickTime

This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)

_x_ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing:

In Left frame, choose "Genetics..." (third down from top left), and then from Top frame, choose "Kings Play Cards..." (top of first column). In the original work, the text was easily readable, and the images were generated by user selection. Please play through still images and then play the larger video.

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

This interactive projection explores the impact of the Human Genome Project on academic communities. Using interviews with UC Berkeley faculty, archives of the UC system, public documents and other areas of university life, this work aims to reveal relationships and repercussions in areas effected by the Human Genome Project yet not often associated with it.

From the comfort of beanbag chairs, visitors to this installation can navigate through a series of audio, video, animations, and text records using a wireless mouse. Each of 23 Petri dishes has a number of videos, etc. nested within it, and as the viewed touches each dish, one of its contents will play.

Commissioned by UC Berkeley Art Museum.

Relevance to proposal: Like "Personal Zoo, this is another work comprised of many small pieces – collected anecdotes, interviews, historical documents, gene discoveries and patent records – that come together in an interactive installation. While the method of interaction is more direct in "Personal Zoo", both allow visitors to navigate their own way through the work. "Kings..." is constructed using Director, a software program with scripting language closely related to Flash, which I'll be using to program behaviors via Teleo modules in "Personal Zoo."
Gail Wight

If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Spike

Year 1999

Technical

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<td>___ VHS</td>
<td>___ Unix</td>
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<tr>
<td>___ Other</td>
<td>___ Other_catalog - views of individual elements</td>
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</table>

Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

___ URL www.notochord.org/artindex.html (if more than one please list them below)

___ Browser requirement(s)

___ Plug-in requirement(s) QuickTime

___ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)

___ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing:

In Left frame, choose “Other Species Collaborations” (at the very top left), and then from Top frame, choose “Spike” (second down in third column) Please play still images and the larger video. There’s also a catalog that gives details that should be passed around. This video was of a smaller version shown in San Francisco, and was shot on the last day, when most of the exhibit had been rearranged/eaten/destroyed by Spike.

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

A large Plexiglas maze contains a time line built of miniature tableaux accompanied by text and image on building blocks. Together, these describe the history of how we came to conceive of ourselves as electrochemical creatures. From Plato and Galen to transgenics and neural prosthetics, electrochemistry becomes the theme that binds together war, drug abuse, healing, social priorities, creativity, inquisitiveness, and horror. “Spike” is a lone rat living in the maze, and over the course of the exhibit, he rewrites history, consuming and rearranging the individual elements A few of the tableaux respond to Spike as he passes by – for instance, Spike can trigger a motion sensor causing Pavlov’s dog to howl.

Commissioned by Ars Electronica & the O.K. Center for Contemporary Art, Linz.

Relevance to proposal: Like “Personal Zoo,” “Spike” pulls together a large number of diverse elements into a coherent theme, as “Personal Zoo” will do. It was responsive (minimally) to its inhabitant. I felt that the responsive elements were very successful, and “Personal Zoo” will elaborate on exactly this aspect. It is also the first large project I built using Plexiglas.
New Media Fellowships  
2005 Sample Work Form

Gail Wight

If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Cabinet of Curiosities: Meditations on Evolution

Year 2001

Technical

Original Format  Format Submitted for Viewing  Preferred OS
_x_ Software  _x_ Software (the work itself) *  _x_ Windows
__ Web  _x_ Web (installation views)  _x_ Mac
_x_ Installation  _x_ VHS  __ Unix
__ Other  __ Other  __ Other

Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)
_x_ URL www.notochord.org/artindex.html (if more than one please list them below)

__ Browser requirement(s)
_x_ Plug-in requirement(s) QuickTime

__ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)
_x_ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing:

In Left frame, choose "History of Science" (second down from top left), and then from Top frame, choose "Meditations on Evolution" (second in second column) Please play still images and larger video. The video attempts to give a feel for interactivity, interspersed with better resolution images that more accurately represents the viewer's experience. *A cd-rom of the entire work is included as supplemental material. It was not meant to be projected, which causes some color artifacting. I've also had difficulty rebuilding this to be windows-friendly...

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

Based on "cabinets of curiosities, " the 17th century precursors to natural history museums, each curio leads to a small anecdotal musing on evolution. Encompassing both biological and technical evolution, these anecdotes tend to address the unanswerable, the places where science becomes speculation, technology infects biology, and visa verso.

Visitors interact with a touch screen set into an old-style museum case. Choosing an object in the cabinet leads into an anecdote. A few tell stories on their own, while most can be further navigated and manipulated by the viewer.

Relevance to proposal: This is a work similar in process to Personal Zoo in that it collects anecdotes on a topic and then presents them as a coherent whole using interactive computer driven electronics through an environmental theme (in this case, interactive multi-media in a museum setting). I built "Meditations" in Director, making extensive use of its scripting language, Lingo. I would be doing similar scripting in "Personal Zoo" to control Teleo devices, using Flash, which is essentially a counterpart to Director.
Gail Wight

If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title Hereditary Allegories: A Study in Genetics

Year 1995

Technical

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<th>Original Format</th>
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Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

___ URL ______ www.notochord.org/artindex.html ______ (if more than one please list them below)

___ Browser requirement(s)

___ Plug-in requirement(s) QuickTime

___ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)

___ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information For Viewing:

In Left frame, choose "Other Species Collaborations" (at the very top left), and then from Top frame, choose "Hereditary Allegories" (top of fourth column) Please just show still images. Sadly, there's no video documentation of this work.

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

Hereditary Allegories, commissioned by Capp Street Project in San Francisco, explored the history of genetics using 35 mice and a canary. The mice lived in environments that depicted a particular event in the study of genetics, accompanied by clipboards that gave a synopsis of that event, though each was given a little twist to provoke the imagination. Over the course of the exhibit, the mice rebuilt their environments, frequently exaggerating aspects of their event’s depiction.

Relevance to proposal:

Superficially, "Hereditary Allegories" shares a great similarity with the proposal for "Personal Zoo." "Hereditary Allegories", though, was an investigation into the history of genetic science, and the "Zoo" explores the future. Also, "H. Allegories" was inhabited by mice who reacted to their environment. The "Zoo" is inhabited by creatures that react to their visitors. Both present an external reference to contemporary science while, at their heart, investigate the specter of that science in the human imagination.
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Title: Cabinet of Curiosities: Meditations on Evolution
Year: 2001

**Technical**

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<td>Web</td>
<td><em>x</em> Web (installation views)</td>
<td><em>x</em> Mac</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installation</td>
<td>VHS</td>
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<td><em>x</em> Other small electronic wall pieces</td>
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**Web Information** (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

- _URL_________________________________________ (if more than one please list them below)
- _Browser requirement(s)_
- _Plug-in requirement(s) QuickTime_
- _This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)_
- _A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application_

**Special Information For Viewing:**

I tried rebuilding this for you to run on Windows, but had some quirky difficulties. So, I'm submitting it as supplemental material, to be played on a Mac if possible. Apologies!

**Description of Work** (use an additional sheet if necessary)

Based on “cabinets of curiosities,” the 17th century precursors to natural history museums, each curio leads to a small anecdotal musing on evolution. Encompassing both biological and technical evolution, these anecdotes tend to address the unanswerable, the places where science becomes speculation, technology infects biology, and visa versa.

Visitors interact with a touch screen set into an old-style museum case. Choosing an object in the cabinet leads into an anecdote. A few tell stories on their own, while most can be further navigated and manipulated by the viewer.

Relevance to proposal: This is a work similar in process to Personal Zoo in that it collects anecdotes on a topic and then presents them as a coherent whole using interactive computer driven electronics through an environmental theme (in this case, interactive multi-media in a museum setting). I built “Meditations” in Director, making extensive use of its scripting language, Lingo. I would be doing similar scripting in “Personal Zoo” to control Teleo devices, using Flash, which is essentially a counterpart to Director.
artist statement

In attempts to understand *thinking*, I have:

made maps of various nervous systems, practiced art while under hypnosis, designed an artificial intelligence to read my tarot, read for hours to fish, conducted biochemical experiments on myself and others, stolen linen from the Nobel ceremonies in search of laureate DNA, executed medical illustrations in black velvet, documented dissections of humans, dissected machines and failed to put most of them back together, freely made up vocabulary as needed, removed my teeth to model information systems, induced phobias in myself concerning consciousness in the plant kingdom, donated my body to science and then requested it be returned, observed nerve development in vivo, choreographed synaptic responses, translated EEGs into music, conducted a cartesian exorcism on myself, and attempted to create cognitive models of my own severely confused state.

The interplay between art and biology, theories of memory, mental illness and cognition form the groundwork for my thoughts. How much of the body is brain? In what ways do we resemble worms? What thoughts am I unable to express because my language doesn't acknowledge them? To what extent do complex dynamics shape our ideas? Is a machine more or less reliable due to its lack of endorphins, emotions, and opiate addictions? What does compassion look like at the neuroanatomical level? These are the sorts of questions that infect my thoughts, expressed in a wide range of mediums.

I've become obsessed with the history of western science. Historical frameworks express themselves in concepts about the nature of existence as well as upon the tools that emerge out of scientific research. As an artist, I'm intrigued by the way those tools carry their ideologies with them, moving from the scientific to the social sphere and impacting the art-making process. Computers dictate our movements through hierarchies of data; military GPS and RFID equipment has moved from field work to lab work, becoming the standard for observing biological behavior; DNA extraction becomes so mundane that kits are sold in toy stores. In recent work, I've attempted to bring aspects of laboratory practice into a museum-like context through interactive kiosks and charts, and innovative use of video, exploiting an obviously inauthentic yet authoritative patina of age and institution.

In 1998, I taught a class with a friend called “Animal Other” that explored artworks addressing our conception of and relationship to animals. We did extensive research for this class and curated an evening of film as part of that effort. Since then, I've taught an “Art & Biology” course on a regular basis. In conjunction with reading science texts, where a very different portrait of animals emerges, I've found myself obsessed with our attitude toward other members of the living world. A recent exhibit called “The Evolution of Disarticulation” addressed this relationship, focusing on the ways in which we disassemble the living world in our attempts to comprehend it. This feels like the beginning of a new focus and direction for my work, one that has begun to permeate my thoughts, from the food I eat (and don’t eat) to the ways I traverse my environment, from the sounds I hear (and don’t hear) to the ways in which I communicate.
I spend a lot of time reading science materials - everything from textbooks to trade journals, pop-science portraits to hegemonic science histories. A wealth of anecdotal treasures are constantly accumulating in my mind, and every now and then, a group of these anecdotes will suddenly take on a life of their own, and a project emerges.1 Personal Zoo is one of these projects.

Two current fields - robotics and transgenics - both focus on the creation of new life forms, and I believe they are bound to converge. My mind confronts the potential horrors and ethical dilemmas that might entail with an absurdist’s sense of humor at first, and then hastily attempts to reapply all the potential beauty and wonder of these misbegotten hybrids as a problematic lipstick. Personal Zoo indulges this twist of mind literally, wrapping simple robotic creatures in seductive skins with pathetic behaviors; others with brittle and sharp exteriors evince compelling seductions.

While the creatures of Personal Zoo are ostensibly allegories for the creation of new species, they are equally concerned with our confused relationships to other living things. This latter aspect is critical for me, and sets Personal Zoo apart from a simple exercise in building goofy robots. In this way, the Zoo offers a way to address issues that have emerged for me in working with other species,2 from audience reaction and caretaker concerns to my own intense desire to understand other states of being, and the focus needed on my part to coax out even the smallest sense of communication.

Physically, Personal Zoo is comprised of a series of “zoo habitats,” stand-alone cages on tall slender legs. These cages are built of plexiglas3 to create an ethereal yet clinical living space, and to keep the focus on the creatures within. Most have bars (see drawing), but some (the petting zoos) are like incubators, with gloved-hand openings. In this way, the zoo’s creatures live in the ultimate panopticon, visible from above, below, and all sides, their cages a literal embodiment of our relationship to them. Altogether, I’m anticipating about a dozen cages, each about 30” square and 18” in height, inhabiting a carefully lighted and spacious room4. Each cage holds an individual “species” with a small handful of creatures - between two and ten, depending on size and type - in each cage. As zoo creatures develop, however, I may add a few more cages. The total number should collectively provoke an awareness of communication and response, while avoiding a
cacophony of novelty.

The creatures themselves are extractions of specific characteristics that humans tend to respond to. For instance, one habitat harbors creatures with very tiny lumps for bodies—just big enough to hold a micro-controller, tiny motor, and a few small gears—dominated by a cluster of twitching tails that thrash continuously. Another group of creatures respond to proximity, and whine plaintively whenever they sense someone close by. Others respond to sound, and chirp in response when spoken to, or display our own image in their LCD eyes. Aesthetically, they evoke a sense of reality—of real claws, real fur, real scales—with visible technologies merged in an organic fashion. A common topic among artists working with responsive technologies is the validity of the “it sees me” phenomenon in interactive art. In Personal Zoo, this human tendency is central, tapping into our insatiable desire to communicate, to be recognized, to have our own creations respond to us with sympathetic gestures, cooing sounds, simulated meaning.

As visitors move among the cages, their presence elicits responses from the zoo’s creatures, triggered by movement, proximity, the sounds of feet and of voice, and even cast shadows. In addition, the gloved cages allow visitors to interact directly, petting and feeding the Zoo’s inhabitants as they might with farm animals at a county fair.

The technology that drives these creatures is a combination of computer-driven electronics and analog sensors. The computer electronics will rely primarily on Teleo and Basic Stamp micro-controllers. I’m comfortable with both of these, as well as analog electronics, and could build all of the creatures in Personal Zoo entirely with these tools. However, I’d love to use this opportunity to advance my skills with micro-controllers and to investigate the growing world of wearable technology, integrating some of the new responsive and communication-based technologies into these creatures. Even without these additions, consumer electronics offer an astounding range of life-like behaviors—many of which I’ve used before in other unrelated projects—and the capability to respond to humans. In combination, these devices evince even more nuanced behaviors. Even a slightly unpredictable response from a creature suggests a complex relationship with the viewer.

While much sophisticated work has been done in the field of robotics, I’m not qualified to contribute to the engineering of this field. Rather, by taking advantage of the ease-of-use in emerging technologies, I hope to draw attention to the very desire to create these life-like behaviors to begin with. I’m deeply intrigued by our fascination with building new
creatures, amidst the seemingly casual disdain for the still-mysterious flora and fauna that surround us in our day-to-day existence.

In scope, Personal Zoo is similar to "Rodentia Chamber Music", "Kings Play Cards...", "Meditations on Evolution", "Spike", and "Hereditary Allegories". These pieces all involved extensive electronics, programming, and construction, and all were successfully completed within 6-12 months. I'm confident that this project is achievable, and completes an important relationship for me between electronic experiments and my interests in working with other species (in this case, imaginary ones).

While the budget would be largely taken up with computer device control expenses, electronics and construction costs, the New Media Fellowship budget is generous, and would also allow me to put aside some funds for an advanced workshop in Basic Stamp technology and attending an upcoming conference in wearable technology. I've also had some contact with the Technology and Self lab at MIT this past year, where there's interesting research on the psychology of devices used to provoke an emotional response (i.e. robotic baby dolls used in nursing homes and rehab centers). I would love to integrate a trip to their lab into this project, to learn of new technologies but more importantly for valuable feedback. Finally, it would be a great luxury to be able to hire an assistant. I would love to be able to focus on the electronics and their integration into these imaginary animals, and allow for some help with the construction of the cages. Finally, while I have no doubts about the contribution of this effort to my own personal dialogue concerning human/animal communication and the creation of new life forms, I can only hope that this project would have meaning for a larger audience. The issues do seem timely, and also, timeless.

NOTES
1. Meditations on Evolution, Spike, Hereditary Allegories, and Gray Areas came about in this way.
2. Creep, Rodentia Violoncello, Supertramps, Crossing, Live Live Oak, Spike, Slime Trace, Hereditary Allegories, Residual Memory, School of Evolution, & Dissemination Study
3. a material I've used extensively (Rodentia Chamber Music & Rodentia Violoncello, Ghost, and Spike)
4. The university gallery where I teach would be a possible venue if something else didn't come up.
5. I teach electronic art classes (analog & digital) as well as a class on art and biology. I often ask students to hunt for simple electronics that exhibit life-like behaviors. I've filled my studio, over the years, with bits of talking, spinning, pulsing electronics.
### Gail Wight

**Budget Proposal for Personal Zoo**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<td>sensors</td>
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<td>$2,700.00</td>
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<td>Teleo</td>
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<td>6 multi I/O x $160</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 video mod.</td>
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<td>sm. batches, unique molds</td>
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<td>stipend for assistant</td>
<td>500 hrs. x $20 hr.</td>
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<td>stipend for self</td>
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<td>$6,500.00</td>
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<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>Basic Stamp workshop, Los Angeles 2/05</td>
<td>workshop fees</td>
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<td>Local one-day workshop on Flash robotics</td>
<td>airfare</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
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<td>using Teleo</td>
<td>room &amp; board</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Visit to Technology &amp; Self Lab, MIT</td>
<td>airfare</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
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<td>room &amp; board</td>
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<td>5th Annual Intelligent Appliance &amp; Wearable Computing Conference 6/10/05 Columbus, Ohio</td>
<td>conference fees (not listed)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>room &amp; board</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total** $35,000.00

Numbers are based on 12 cages with an average of 5 zoo creatures per cage (for a total of 60).
Gail Wight

**education**

1991 - 1994  
M.F.A. : Jacob K. Javits Fellow, New Genres, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA.

1984 - 1988  
B.F.A. : Studio for Interrelated Media, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA.

**selected exhibitions**

2004  
YOUgenics  
"Free Range"  
robotic chickens

Wonderful  
"Rodentia Chamber Music"  
installation & musical performance with mice

when the cats are away...  
"Rodentia Chamber Music"  
musical performance with mice

Process  
"Creep"  
video installation

Machinista 2004  
"Crossing"  
dvd screening

2003  
The Evolution of Disarticulation  
"The Aurelians," "Crossing," "Recursive Mutations,"  
series of charts, & small retrospective of past work  
(solo exhibit)

Gene(sis)  
"Kings Play Cards..."  
interactive video installation

Homemade Instrument Day  
"Rodentia Violoncello"  
mixed media cello with electronics & mice

Paradise Now: Picturing the Genetic Revolution  
"Future Flight"  
video installation

2002  
Fast Forward II  
"Future Flight," & "Zoo Kit"  
video installation, sculpture with DNA

Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world  
"A Tale of Two Slimes"  
mixed media installation with video

High Tech/Low Tech: Hybrid Art in a Digital Age  
"Cabinet of Curiosities: Meditations on Evolution"  
"Linnæus Unbound," "Star Struck"  
interactive installations, installation with electronics & video

Organic/Mechanic  
"The First Evolutionary Occurrence of Pain"  
mixed media installation with sound & light

Evidence  
text & image from performance with fish

Paradise Now: Picturing the Genetic Revolution  
"Future Flight"  
video installation

2001  
Self Propelled  
"A Bitter Bestiary"  
five remote control creatures
selected exhibitions continued

Life Like
"Linnaeus Unbound," "Star Struck"
interactive chart, installation with electronics & video

Natural Forces
"Spike"
mixed media installation with electronics, rat

Neural Notations
"The First Evolutionary Occurrence of Pain"
mixed media installation with sound & light

Paradise Now: Picturing the Genetic Revolution
"Future Flight"
video installation

Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world
"A Tale of Two Slimes"
mixed media installation with video

2000
Paradise Now: Picturing the Genetic Revolution
"Future Flight"
video installation

Endgame: Artists Confront the Machine
"Brain of a Hen," series of 4 "Head Games," "Zoo Kit"
interactive furniture & games, sculpture with DNA

Technology & Identity
"Brain of a Hen," "Passing Through," "Zoo Kit," & "Cerebral Sonata"
interactive furniture, sculpture with DNA, book,
mixed media installation with EEGs and audio

High Touch/High Tech
"Thought Sweat" in Ted Purves' "Projects for Water"
ongoing text piece collecting thoughts & sweat

Particle Accelerators: At the intersection of photography, science, and technology
"Spike (II)"
www interactive timeline

Neural Notations
"The First Evolutionary Occurrence of Pain," "Honey,"
& "Neural Primers"
interactive & mixed media installations, books

Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world
"A Tale of Two Slimes"
mixed media installation with video

1999
Corporeal Sky
"Cerebral Sonata"
mixed media installation with EEGs and audio

Ars Electronica 99
"Spike"
mixed media installation with electronics, rat

Romancing the Brain
"Honey"
interactive sculpture with honey, electronics, human brain

New Langton Arts
San Francisco, CA
San Francisco Arts Commission
in conjunction with The Lab
San Francisco, CA
The Physics Room
Christchurch, New Zealand
Office/Gallery
San Francisco, CA

traveled to: Tang Museum
Skidmore College
Sarasota Springs, NY
traveled to: Environmental Center
University of Chicago
Chicago, IL
Exits Art
New York, NY
Spaces
Cleveland, OH
Duncan Gallery of Art
Stetson University
Deland, FL
Refusalon
San Francisco, CA
Photographic Resource Center
Boston University
Boston, MA
Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery
UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA
& San Francisco Art Commission
San Francisco, CA
traveled to: Virginia Art and Space Center, VA
Tryon Center for Visual Art, Charlotte, NC

Artspace
Woooloomooloo, Australia
O.K. Center for Contemporary Art
Linz, Austria
Pittsburgh Center for the Arts
Pittsburgh, PA
Gail Wight

selected exhibitions continued

Corporeal Sky
"Cerebral Sonata"
mixed media installation with EEGs and audio

Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world
"A Tale of Two Slimes"
mixed media installation with video

1998
Flugged In
"Residual Memory"
mixed media installation with CPUs & microbes

Art & Biology
"Zoo Kit" & "Neural Primers: The Octopus"
sculpture with DNA; book

Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world
"A Tale of Two Slimes"
mixed media installation with video

1997
Bay Area Now
"The Dreams of Dust Mites"
video installation

Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world
"A Tale of Two Slimes"
mixed media installation with video

Earart
"Cerebral Sonata"
mixed media installation with EEGs and audio

1996
Turbulent Landscapes: the natural forces that shape our world
"A Tale of Two Slimes" & "Slime Trace"
mixed media installations with video, slime mold

Mortal Coil: Mourning Becomes Electronic
"The History of Wishing" & "Emotionill"
mixed media installations

Integrated Hemispheres
variation on "Hereditary Allegories"
mixed media installation with mouse

1995
Hereditary Allegories: A Study in Genetics
mixed media installation with mice, canary
(solo exhibit)

Carbon Nation
mixed media installation
(solo exhibit)

Neural Primers & other stories
artist books, installation
(solo exhibit)

Veered Science
"Cerebral Sonata"
mixed media installation with EEGs and audio

Access
"Neural Primers" & "Salts Protected the Guinea Pigs from The Urine of Maniacs"
mixed media, books, performance

Virtual Female
"The Developmental Spectrum"
collaboration with neuropsychiatrist Kristine Yaffe
mixed media installation with audio, video

The Physics Room
Christchurch, New Zealand

traveled to: Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, MI
Ontario Science Center, Ontario
Miami Museum of Science, FL

Cheryl Haines Gallery
San Francisco, CA

University Art Gallery
Mt. Pleasant, MI

traveled to: National Science Center, Augusta, GA
McWane Center, Birmingham, AL
COSI Toledo, Toledo, OH

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
San Francisco, CA

1078 Gallery
Chico, CA

The Exploratorium
San Francisco, CA

Sesnon Gallery, UC Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, CA

Blasthaus
San Francisco, CA

Capp Street Project
San Francisco, CA

International Gallery of Contemporary Art
Anchorage, AK

The Archives
San Francisco, CA

Huntington Beach Art Center
Huntington Beach, CA

Southern Exposure
San Francisco, CA

The Lab
San Francisco, CA
selected exhibitions continued

Diving Into the Gene Pool
“Floraphobia” performance
The Exploratorium
San Francisco, CA

1994
Revolving Histories/Elusive Scripts
“The History of Wishing” mixed media installation
SF Camerawork
San Francisco, CA

Site of Crisis: Artists Look at Women’s Health Issues
“Somatology Blisters” mixed media installation with neurotransmitters
Works/San Jose Gallery
San Jose, CA

Alternating Currents: An Exploration in Spirituality & Technology
“Cerebral Sonata” mixed media installation with EEGs and audio
Richmond Art Center
Richmond, CA

Color in the Shadows: Bay Area Cyberart
“The History of Wishing” & “Somatology Blisters” mixed media installations
Oliver Art Center
Oakland, CA

1993
Floraphobia performance (solo exhibit)
Habitat Institute
Belmont, MA

Diana Rudsten & Gail Wight
“Residual Memory” & “Aesop & the Artificial Intelligence” mixed media installations with CPUs & microbes, audio
Diego Rivera Gallery
San Francisco, CA

Prescriptive Memory & the Residual Body
“Residual Memory” mixed media installation with CPUs & microbes
Victoria Room
San Francisco, CA

Moments of Perception
“Aesop & the Artificial Intelligence” & “Somatology Blisters” mixed media installations
Gallery Here
Oakland, CA

An Evening of Performance
“Floraphobia” performance
Gallery Here
Oakland, CA

9th Annual National Juried Exhibition
“One Hundred Links: for Rousseau” interactive installation
Berkeley Art Center
Berkeley, CA

1992
Afterthought
“One Hundred Links: for Rousseau” interactive installation with neurotransmitters
Diego Rivera Gallery
San Francisco, CA

10th Annual SFAI Artists’ Book Contest
“Gray Areas: a treatment of cognition” artist book
Walter McBean Gallery
San Francisco, CA

1991
Boston Film & Video Festival
“The Purpose of Washing” single-channel video
Coolidge Theater
Brookline, MA

Humor in Video Art
“The Purpose of Washing” & Video Dictionary” single-channel video
The Space
Boston, MA

1990
The Blood/Brain Barrier performance (solo exhibit)
Space 46
Boston, MA

Video at the 88 Room
“The Purpose of Washing” single-channel video
88 Room
Brighton, MA

1989
The Big SIM Show
“FLY (100 fleeting thoughts for Harris)” mixed media installation
Longwood Theater
Boston, MA
selected exhibitions continued

1988
Neuroanatomy, Perspective & Exorcism
installation and performance
(solo exhibit)
Art Camp
Boston, MA

Computer Decisions
"Digital Rom"
interactive computer installation
Thompson Gallery
Boston, MA

sign means sign
"walking on words" & "C.I.A."
installation and video
Space 46
Boston, MA

Night Shift
"Video Dictionary"
independent video program
WCBS-TV
Boston, MA

1987
Snowball Project
"Art is to bread as..."
technologies collaboration
cdf-Documenta 8
Kassel, Germany

Souvenir Highway
"Video Dictionary"
video piece in an installation by Jerry Beck
Capp St. Project
San Francisco, CA

Le Palais Ideal
technologies collaboration
Biennial of European Art Schools
Toulouse, France/Boston, MA

Tri City Inter-Action
technologies collaboration
Pittsburg/Richmond/ Boston

MCA Film & Video
"Video Dictionary" & "C.I.A."
single channel video
Boston Center for the Arts at Cyclorama
Boston, MA

First Night
"Digital Rom"
interactive computer installation
Boston University
Boston, MA

awards & honors

Wired Magazine Rave Award Nominee for Art, 2004
Adaline Kent Award, San Francisco, CA 2003
Anonymous Was A Woman Award. New York, NY 2002
Wallace Gerbode Visual Arts Award. San Francisco, CA 2001
Headlands Center for the Arts Studio Award. Sausalito, CA 1994-1995
Chauncey McKeever Fine Art Award. San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA 1994
Murphy Fellowship Award. San Francisco Foundation, San Francisco, CA 1993
Mixed Media Award. 9th Annual National Exhibition, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA 1993
Best of Show. 10th SFAI Artists' Book Contest, San Francisco, CA 1992
Dondis Travel Fellowship. Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA 1988
Albert Munsell Award. Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA 1987
Massachusetts College of Art Recognition Award. Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA 1987
Gail Wight

Grants

Meg Quigley Research Grant. Mills College, Oakland, CA 2001
Irvine Technology Grant. Mills College, Oakland, CA 1999
Gerbode Professional Development Grant. California College of Arts & Crafts, Oakland, CA 1998

Residencies

Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Study & Conference Center, Como, Italy 2004
Headlands Center for the Arts, Project Space Residency, Sausalito, CA 2003 (in collaboration with Dr. Lucia Jacobs) 2003
Oxbow School Artist-in-Residence, Napa, CA 2002
Art & Technology Center/Albuquerque High Performance Computing Center Artist-in-Residence, Albuquerque, NM 2002
Mutter Museum Artist-in-Residence, Philadelphia, PA 2001
Exploratorium Artist-in-Residence, Turbulent Landscapes, San Francisco, CA 1996
Headlands Center for the Artist-in-Residence, Sausalito, CA 1995-1996
Capp Street Project Artist-in-Residence, San Francisco, CA 1995
Exploratorium Artist-in-Residence, Genetics, San Francisco, CA 1995

Teaching & Related Work

2003 - present  Assistant Professor. Stanford University, Department of Art & Art History. Furthering the development of a media arts program with the inclusion of science related art and other interdisciplinary efforts. Courses taught: Digital Media I; Electronic Art I; Art of the Archive; Art & Life Forms; Graduate Concept Seminar.

1997 - 2003  Assistant Professor. Mills College, Oakland. Fine Arts Graduate & Undergraduate Program, Intermedia Arts Program, Electronic Arts. Creating new Electronic Arts courses and Intermedia Arts Program within the Fine Arts Graduate and Undergraduate Division, and building both analog and digital electronic arts facilities. Courses taught: Constructing the Technological Other; Topics in Contemporary Art; History of Intermedia & Electronic Arts; Electronic Arts 1&2; Social & Theoretical Issues in New Media.

1997 - 1999  Assistant Professor. California College of Arts & Crafts, Oakland. Assisted in the creation of a new interdisciplinary graduate program incorporating new media. Interdisciplinary and new media courses taught within the Sculpture, Photography, and Film/Video/Performance Departments at both graduate and undergraduate level. Independent graduate studies with students throughout the Fine Arts Program. Courses taught: Film/Video/Performance Graduate seminar, The Biology of Art, Digital Photography, In the Realm of Light; Participating in Art: Interactivity in Time-based Media; Senior Intermedia Seminar; Time & Media.


1988 - 1991  Research Assistant. Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Design Lab, Cambridge, MA. Educational research project involving faculty, educational specialists, and students of all ages. Responsible for developing experimental concepts and situations; written and video documentation; computer instruction for all participants; classroom and project assistance.
### Teaching & Related Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
<th>Institution and Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>1988-1990</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>Rosa Parks Alternative School, Cambridge, MA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988-1990</td>
<td>Independent Instructor</td>
<td>Cambridge, MA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Videographer</td>
<td>Boston, MA.</td>
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<td>1986-1988</td>
<td>Production/Post Production</td>
<td>Research and production assistant for Antonio Muntadas's international exhibition, The Boardroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987-1988</td>
<td>Video Lab Technical Assistant</td>
<td>Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA.</td>
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### Selected Lectures & Panels

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Panelist, When Art Meets Genocide: Challenges and Innovations</td>
<td>Pacific Film Archive, CIMAM annual conference, Berkeley, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disarticulating Taxonomies.</td>
<td>Center for Digital Art &amp; Experimental Media, University of Washington, Seattle, WA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Study for the Dome.</td>
<td>Art &amp; Technology Center, U. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Classification in Art and Science.</td>
<td>Copia Center for Wine, Food, and the Arts, Napa, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diagnosing Charcot.</td>
<td>Art Department Gale Lecture Series, U. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recent Projects.</td>
<td>Grand Rounds, UC San Francisco Medical Center, UC San Francisco, San Francisco, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depressed and Ornery Animals.</td>
<td>Philosophers Club, Santa Barbara, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Evolution.</td>
<td>Imaging Workshop, Albuquerque High Performance Computer Center, U. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Panelist, Odyssey.</td>
<td>WBEZ, Chicago, IL Live talk forum hosted by Gretchen Helfrich on Art &amp; Science.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depressed and Ornery Animals.</td>
<td>Salon Series, Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Panelist, ZAP.</td>
<td>Moderator for discussion on the future of art and technology, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Recent Projects.</td>
<td>Oxbow School, Napa, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nervous Structures and Recent Projects.</td>
<td>Networked Nomadic Artforms, Art Department, UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Panelist, Neural Notations.</td>
<td>Moderator for discussion among artists and scientists on neurology and mental illness, UC Santa Cruz, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High Touch/High Tech.</td>
<td>Future Visions session, art and technology conference, Oakland Museum &amp; Kala Institute, Oakland, CA</td>
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<td>The Desperate Poetics of Electrochemistry</td>
<td>Art, Technology, &amp; Culture Colloquium, University of California, Berkeley, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The obsession to make art is a neurological disease.</td>
<td>Interval Research, Palo Alto, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recent Projects.</td>
<td>Art Practice Department, University of California, Berkeley, CA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Panelist, You Are Here.</td>
<td>Discussion on the state of non-profit and alternative spaces, SF MoMA, San Francisco, CA</td>
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selected lectures & panels

1998

In the Head of an Artist. Vetenskap som Vanster X Conference. Uppsala, Sweden
Genuine Artifice. Arts of the Artificial Lecture Series. SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe Institute, & Santa Fe Art Institute. Santa Fe, NM
Material Witness. Music Department. California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA
Memory Patch & other devices. Art Department. Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA
on being broken. Mind Symposium. Exploratorium, San Francisco, CA
Invisible Landscapes. Salon Series. Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA
Art, Science, Performance. Art Department. UC SantaCruz, Santa Cruz, CA
Panelist. Bubble Rap. Discussion on new Bay Area art & criticism. San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA

1997

Salts Protected the Guinea Pigs from the Urine of Maniacs. Consciousness Reframed Conference. Center for Advanced Inquiry in the Interactive Arts, U. of Wales College, Caerleon Campus, Newport, Wales
Tinkering with Neurochemistry. The Tinkers Workshop. Berkeley, CA
Recent Projects. Graduate Seminar. New Genres Department, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA
The History of Electricity. Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar. Graduate Program, California College of Arts & Crafts, Oakland, CA

1996

Recent Projects. Fine Arts Visiting Artist Lecture Series. San Jose State University, San Jose, CA
Cognitive Science & Art. Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar. Graduate Program, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA

1995

Science, Images & Text. Salon Series. Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA
Researching the Nature of Science. Capp Street Project. San Francisco, CA
Salts Protected the Guinea Pigs from the Urine of Maniacs. Southern Exposure. San Francisco, CA

1994


1993

Research. Focal Point lecture series. San Francisco Arts Commission, San Francisco, CA
Memory, Image, Object. Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar. Graduate Program, California College of Arts & Crafts, Oakland, CA
Memories are made of This. Beginning Video. New Genres Department, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA

1992

Imagining the Body. Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar. Graduate Program, California College of Arts & Crafts, Oakland, CA

1991

Machine Life & Perception. Advanced Seminar: Selected Topics in Computer Art. Studio for Interrelated Media, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA
The Blood-Brain Barrier. Graduate Seminar. Studio for Interrelated Media, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA

exhibition catalogs & books

Reichle, Ingeborg. Where Art and Science Meet (Springer Verlag Wien, New York 2004) [due out in Oct. 04]
Witzgall, Susanne. Kunst nach der Wissenschaft (Verlag fur moderne Kunst Nurnberg, Germany 2003)
Gail Wight: The Evolution of Disarticulation (San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco 2003)
exhibition catalogs & books continued


Tanner, Marcia. Lifelike (New Langton Arts, San Francisco 2001) pp. 8-9, 11-12

Heiferman, Marvin & Kismaric, Carole. Paradise Now: Picturing the Genetic Revolution video catalog (Exit Art 2000)

Purves, Ted ed. “Thought Sweat” Projects for Water (Contributions to Knowledge #6) ((0,0) Editions 2000)

Neural Notations (Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery. UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA 2000) pp. 20-21


Heiferman, Marvin & Kismaric, Carde. Now: I+~ the evolution (catalog and exhibition) (Exit Art 2000)


Neural (Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery. UC Santa Cruz, CA 2000) pp. 20-21

Kac "GMg'iiSI (O.K. Centrum fur Gegenwartskunst 1999) pp. 7-35


Osborn, Ed ed. Electricity Arts Both Ways From Heaven (Artspace Australia 1999)

Stock, Gerfried & Schopf, Christine, eds. LifeScience (Ars Electronica Center, Linz 1999) pp. 314-315

Ascott, Roy, ed. CAiA: Consciousness Reframed: art and consciousness in the post-biological era (Univ. of Wales College, Newport 1997) pp. 94-95

Bay Area Now (Center for the Arts Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco June 1997) p. 48


Knodel, Marilu ed. Veered Science (Huntington Beach Art Center. Huntington Beach 1995.) pp. 40-41, 49-50, 58

selected reviews & articles

Webster, Mary. “Gail Wight at the San Francisco Art Institute” (Artweek November, 2003) pp. 17-18

Tromble, Meredith. “Gene(sis) at BAM” (Stretcher.org Oct. 2003)


Golou, Berin. “The Studio as Laboratory” (Artweek October 2002 vol. 33) p. 15

Tromble, Meredith. “Peripheral Vision” (Artweek October 2002 vol. 33) p. 28

Wetter, Terri D. “Making Art in the Digital Age” (Diablo Arts April-June 2002) pp. 16-20


Wright, Nik. “Neural Analysis” (Art Reviews January 31, 2001) p. 30

Helfand, Glen. “Artificial Instigators” (San Francisco Bay Guardian July 11-17, 2001)

Koppman, Debra. “‘Neural Notations’ at the San Francisco Art Commission Gallery” (Artweek February 2000) p. 24

Chiapella, Julia. “UCSC art show has lots of brain” (The Sentinel April 9, 2000) p.C4

Nelson, Julie. “Neural Notations” (New Art Examiner June 2000)


Raap, Jurgen. “Gail Wight: Verehrungsallegorien” (Kunstforum March-April 1999 #144) pp. 165-166

Amirreizvani, Anita. “High-tech tools form Wild West art field” (Contra Costa Times June 25, 1999) pp. 32-33

Judmayer, Irene. “Per Rattenklick zum Hamstertraining” (OONachrichten, Sept. 4, 1999)


Kramer, Thomas. "Viele Lahme beim Wettkampf der 'ultimativen' Gen-Künstler" (Die Presse, Sept. 6, 1999)

Crane, Margaret. “On-Line at the Art Institute” (San Francisco Art Institute Magazine Fall 1999 vol 3 #1) pp.2-3
selected reviews & articles  continued

Walker, Hollis. "Designing the Future: Discovering Patterns - The interface between art and science" (SFI Bulletin vol. 14, #2 Fall 1999)

Sylwan, Peter. "Manniskans mest manipulerade organ" (Dagens Nyheter August 2, 1998)

Sylwan, Peter. "Virkeligheden - et faelles projekt" (Information August 10, 1998)

Jarrett, Dennis. "The Wight Stuff" (Santa Fe Reporter October 21-27 1998) p. 28


Stairs, David. "ART + BIO" (Leonardo vol 31 #4 1998.) pp. 263-269

French, Michele. "Here's an art show you've never heard before" (Enterprise-Record May 24, 1997)

Martin, Bonnie. "Bay Area Now Celebrates Emerging Artists" (North Beach Now July 1997)


Rappopori, Sonya. "Color in the Shadows: Bay Area Cyberart" (Leonardo vol 28 #1 1995.) pp. 77-78


Baker, Kenneth. "Within Photos Raise the Dead" (San Francisco Chronicle May 9, 1995.) p. e4

Curtis, Cathy. "A Show Mr. Wizard Would Be Proud Of" (Los Angeles Times August 15, 1995). f2


Topiary, Samuel. "Virtual Female" (Camerawork fall/winter 1995.) pp. 30-32

Tuer, Dot. "a dream is just a dream... or is it?" (Border/Lines fall/winter 1995) pp. 16-20

Watten, Barrett. "Science Fair: Color in the Shadows: Bay Area Cyberart at CCAC" (Artweek February 17, 1994.) pp. 11-12

De Sa, Karen. "At the Soul of Art: Challenging exhibit uses technology to reflect spirituality" (Richmond Times August 2, 1994.) f1

Harry Roche. "Critic's Choice: Alternating Currents" (San Francisco Bay Guardian August 17, 1994.) p. 63

Nixon, Bruce. "High Anxiety: Alternating Currents at the Richmond Art Center" (Artweek August 18, 1994)