

## *Ripple*

By Nathaniel Stern + Pall Thayer

### ARTIST STATEMENT:

Ripple explores tension, dispersion and interference across real and virtual worlds. Its bodies live in three domains: in Second Life, as 3 male and 3 female standard 3D avatars, sitting in a circle and facing outward; at a "real-world" gallery, as a square grid of 16 multi-colored wax sculptures, modeled on said avatars; and online, as an evolving diptych of dynamic images, continuously pulled from flickr photos tagged with "body" and "avatar." Using real-time seismic data as a trigger and catalyst in all three spaces, our six avatars' appearance and skeletal features refract and deform, with trickling, but lasting, effects that become more and more drastic over time; simultaneously, warm lights pointing at the center sculptures flicker with the Earth's core, slowly melting the wax and rippling it out towards the other "bodies" on the grid's edge; and online, our dynamic images continuously 'smudge and overwrite,' in a real time feedback loop: an undulating call and response between the seismic data, and flickr's photos. Each space will have periodic documentation of the others, through pictures and/or links.

By slowly and steadily transforming its various-but-connected, material-and-immaterial, "bodies," Ripple investigates our simultaneous couplings with the worlds and environments we inhabit, and literalizes the experiential shifts in embodiment that occur when wading through them. It scales geophysical time and space down to human-sensible measurements, accenting earthly connections, which might otherwise have gone unnoticed, as affective and efficacious across multiple domains. Ripple turns invisible interactions into visible interrelations. Quakes and stasis are picked up in the Earth's tectonic structure, interpreted online, and spread out as waves and stillness across Ripple's virtual, real and networked bodies, washing over them with dislocation and coincidence.

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### BIOGRAPHY:

Nathaniel Stern (USA / South Africa, born 1977) is an experimental installation and video artist, net.artist and printmaker. He was born and studied in the states, is a permanent resident of South Africa, and currently pursues an art and research PhD at Trinity College, Dublin whilst teaching digital studio practices at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. He's produced and collaborated on projects ranging from interactive and immersive environments, networked art and multimedia physical theatre performances, to digital printing and collage, stone lithography and slam poetry. He's won many awards, fellowships, commissions and residencies between South Africa, America, and all over Europe.

Pall Thayer (Iceland) is an Icelandic artist. He graduated from the Icelandic College of Art and Crafts in Reykjavik, Iceland in 1999 with a background in mixed-media. As a Nord-Plus grant recipient at the Helsinki Academy of Art, he began experimenting with computers and the Internet as artistic media in 1997. Since then he has created several works that explore different methods of interaction in the creation of generative, real-time audio/visual abstractions on the Internet. His current work focuses on the automated appropriation and mixing of material rather than direct user interaction. His work has been exhibited widely at festivals and group

shows such as Nordic Interactive in Copenhagen, Transmediale in Berlin, The Boston CyberArts Festival, Hipersonica/File in Sao Paulo and PixxelPoint in Slovenia. He has lectured and participated in panels at the Icelandic Academy of the Arts, PixxelPoint and ISEA2004. In 2004 he organized the Trans-Cultural Mapping: Iceland Inside and Out workshop in locative media for Lorna, The Icelandic Organization for Electronic Arts, of which he is an active member. Since 2000, he has taught courses in digital arts at the Reykjavik School of Art. He is currently pursuing his MFA at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec.

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