

Shellhouse - [living portable]

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Abstract

The massive appropriation and uses of new Technologies had made a whole World change in a dramatic way. Social and economic evolutions lead by Internet, made reality, time and space to be different concepts today. Now and there is not what it used to be, distances and mobility thanks to the development of networks, allow us to have access to a sort of constant location.

Technology is ubiquitous, for all of us, even though not all of us have conscious access to it.

Shellhouse is a Project about these ideas, it combines opposite poles, to built in one object, a portable address, that can provide of shelter to homeless people.

Shellhouse is a concept, an idea that could be feasible depending on our own participation, but that it also make us questions about technology and its development, about technology and literacy. Technology and location.

Keywords: Sustainability, Participation, Property, Location, Technology, Consumerism, Access.

1. Introduction

SHELLHOUSE-[living portable] is collapsible cardboard shelter with radio devices for homeless people, providing them of a portable address.

The cardboard is grabbed from the streets and the shelter-radio circuit can be build by *following the instructions given at the url (shellhouse.org)*.

Make shorter the gap between people with and without access to technology: the social impact that a virtual group could make on the physical world, will enable social networks to re-focus and open a new category: DIYFSE (do it yourself for someone else).

SHELLHOUSE- living portable is generated from a thought that combines 1s and 0s: access and exclusion, poverty and abundance, consumption and waste.

Each shelter contains one 9 volts battery and a radio, all mounted on a circuit board. The radio signals go to a central that enables de visualizations of the calls (2 calls given by the colors blue and orange) from each shelter, on a screen that shows these colors in real time.



Figure 1. Instructions Shellhouse.

Shellhouse-[living portable] is the starting point of a way to introduce mobile communications to people without access making the p2p production possible between them and online communities. Social impact can be expand to other groups of people in different emergency situation around the world.

Now like never before, real time is a strong element that allow people's communication to be done in a single moment, providing fast responses.

Each shelter contains one 9 volts battery and a radio, all mounted on a circuit breadboard. This construct transmits radio frequencies to a base compound by a 9 volts battery, a radio, a micro-controller and an mp3 player, as it first version was translating the radio signals into audio samples.

The second version will be a P2P network system that will communicate the shelters with each other and with a central that will convert the radio frequencies into visual signals. In real time and online, one would be able to see the shelters moving.

Context: a new type of housing.

Contemporary lifestyles make us rethink about the present crisis of the postmodern metropolis.

The reorganization of society, which has given priority to induced needs of the architects, typical of a post-industrial society rather than basic and real needs.

The fragmentation of society and the changes that have occurred due to the presence of migrant communities and dynamic challenge previous mono-cultural lifestyles (Fig. 2). An orderly and divided into classes society has been replaced by a society composed by groups, a new and multifaceted reality and the particular sensibility for rapid change.



Figure 2. Portable shelter.

Even as pilot projects, originating trends and taken by schools, concepts such as property, customization of space and nomadism, are also theme in the work of contemporary artists. The utopia that Cage and Fuller already proposed in the 60's, interdisciplinary work and collaboration among different fields in pursuit of a universal mind, where chaos and arbitrariness, in conjunction with the use of technology, could generate the new art and the real changes in society.

2.1 Time as a variable, property v/s flux.

As Paul Virilio says on his book "Open Sky", "now" is everywhere. Thanks to the development of networks, we can access to a teleconference, teletransmission etc. in seconds. The information provided for all in a snap and with multiple diffusion, makes our physicality to be divided like atoms in space, our attention not focused on a single thing, a division between mind and body. Art has taken these ideas and used territories that were exclusively of Science and Mathematics, using advanced technologies as means to raise new questions and representative methods, without occupying the place of painting, sculpture or photography, but to become "other," a hybrid discipline that combines time, space and matter. Where a new language is created, an identity that establishes a relationship with property (property is now not just one thing and is bound to the concept of use, consumption, and more importantly, its waste, Fig. 3)



Figure 3. Trash on W 4th street, New York City. Cardboard. Prototype

In a vast majority, laws exist to protect property, to give us the confidence that the one thing will remain available in the future. This break in the ownership and protection is applied to anyone who owns something. Anything, from a large fortune to a rusted car.

What happens when the threat of deprivation is removed? The property is no longer necessary and the laws are useless. A good example of this is the supermarket trolley [1] : no one feels the need to own one because there are many available for common use.

It is frequently discussed that ownership or the possession of anything, is necessary as a means of competitive personal expression. Material acquisition these days has an essential function: it is the economic engine of the consumption economy. The wealth of a national free market is the size and diversity of its consumers. The consumerism economy is a dynamic system that goes against the static. It is not what one has that contributes, but what one consumes.

This explains why the fastest growing sector of the economy is information. An intangible that can not be possessed or taken over.

Our economy will increasingly be based on products that can not be bought and more and more, such as ownership issues and other laws, shall be taken as appliances and are recognized as obstacles.

2.3. The absence of greed and the presence of complete generosity.

The SHELLHOUSE- living portable project is generated from a thought that combines 1s and 0s: access and exclusion, poverty and abundance, consumption and waste. Fig. 4-5



Figure 4. Shellhouse under the Brooklyn Bridge, 2007.



Figure 5. Shellhouse, Astoria Bridge, 2007.

Using these chances of operation and the fusion of art and technology, SHELLHOUSE-living portable raises questions about shelter, mobility, address, location, sustainability and access related to technology development.

The rationalism of 1930 developed a tendency to balance the role of living with mechanical functions. Just as the automobile industry produces massive car, also a new industry of building homes would be equipped to produce in series. At the time the "typical home" reflected the classifications of a society defined by economics. The fact that such equipped to produce in series. At the time the "typical home" reflected the classifications of a society defined by economics. The fact that such classifications no longer apply to present day society is clearly visible in the lack of response by areas of the public unwilling to identify with the lifestyles offered by the market.

In addition, the inflated consciousness is a world that is built considering the limited natural inhabit with lifestyles less calm and more mobile, creating new answers and solutions for temporary lifestyle, emergency shelters, home do-it-yourself to those for special users (students, homes for single mothers, floating populations, state workers, etc.). the requirements of a construction and environmental compatibility between nature and the need to invent types of space that are more flexible.

3. Location: global migration and human mobility.

While migration is an ancient phenomenon, the current scale and characteristics make it a global emerging topic in the 21st century.

Immigration in the United States and Western Europe are part of a comprehensive system of population movement. Throughout the world, about 200 millions people are now living outside their country of origin. Migration today use contemporary transportation and communication technologies to maintain ties with their families, these same technologies facilitate outward movement and the coming of "circular migration".

Migration occurs by economic opportunity, political turmoil, family, war and environmental crises. Migration flow have profound economic, social and cultural impact on their countries of origin, transit and destination. While globalization has made possible for barriers to international movements be increasingly lower in terms of goods and capital, the movement of people is still official subject of control ties.

3.1. Technology

We can say that any object we use today has technology, if we begin to understand that the term is decomposed into "tekne", technical or trade and "logos" or set of knowledge. Or as Marshall McLuhan said: "Technology is the creation of a media that we did not possess when we were born."

The rapid advance of the media, have allowed that the development of technology to be advanced and that we now can have a computer, for example, an object that based on integrated circuits, is capable of carrying out the instructions or routines that are delivered on an orderly, organized and systematized, with great speed and accuracy.

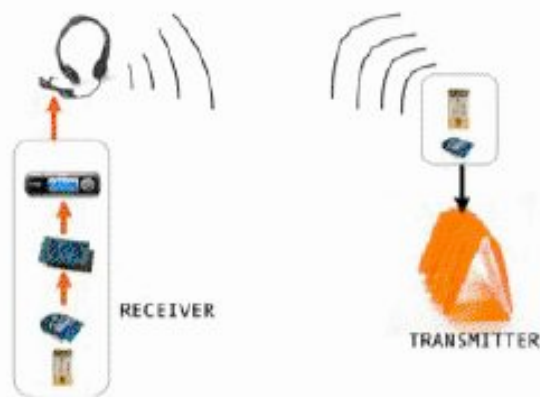
This machine has helped improve various tasks throughout the fields of every day life. Its massive use had made it increasingly imperceptible by us, who have already adapted our requirements had been adapted to technologies or new technologies.

It is true that we can turn off the computer, or heat food in a pot of cooking fire, leave the mobile home and live without technology or at least without it as an element we count on daily, but its use is impossible to avoid, we like it or not these days. Technology is ubiquitous, and we don't even repair on its presence. Today, as an example to which we are accustomed to, are the surveillance cameras: in supermarkets, banks and some city streets, use of credit cards, data logging and monitoring of our movements by the use of cards locomotion that records and stores data of our walks frequency of purchase, trajectory, etc... A cup of coffee and the paint the wall, promise to sense and process information in the future. Be invisible, but be everywhere.

RFID (radio frequency identification), GPS (global positioning systems, linear system perspective and mesh networking (mesh networks): they all measure presence, location, identity and availability (Fig. 6-7).

In cities of high technological development such as Tokyo and New York, we can find complex network systems at different scales that control entry, exit and movement flows in subway networks, the stock markets and work in office spaces.

Figure 6. Shellhouse radio circuit, first controller.



Information can be collected and should be accurate in order to develop new technologies that are becoming more specific for different needs. Specificity is directly related to behavior [2]. The consciousness that we have to interact in everyday life with everyday objects such as handles to go up the stairs, height of each step, angle of the backrest of the chairs we use, cutlery handles, tones of voices and gestures with several other people, tends to disappear when invisible technology becomes present. Then design disappears in the behavior. It is not impossible to think that talking on the cell phone will no doubt be just talk. The object cell phone and not just disappear and not precisely because it will be more ergonomic or thinner, but it will be completely invisible. (Fig. 7).

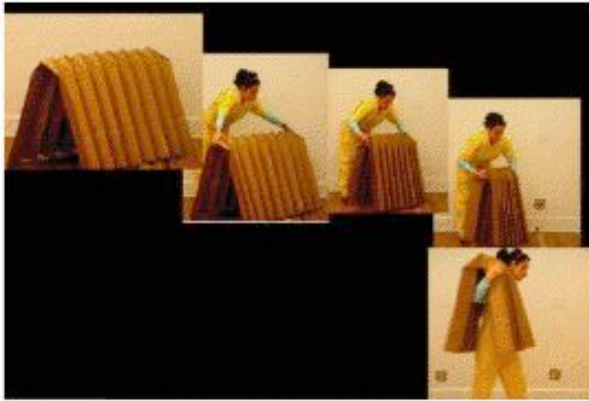


Figure 7. Carrying Shellhouse.

Such interactions are felt or experienced by us as "right" as "humane". Data and networks are becoming more accurate and they are built today more than ever before, as a perfect matrix, which includes microchips inside ID's that will follow every move we make.



Figure 8. Visual signals on the screen, turn blue/orange the calls from the shelters

4. Information v/s Representation.

Computer but majorly cell phones, had made possible to take millions and trillions of images each second of everyday. Words, numbers, videos, music and all kinds of data taken and register to be consumed by people around the World. Do we need to store information? Why should we?

4.1. Images and bits.

Drawing was the main tool of representing men's life. Images were a representation of what was happening on reality. Time was a major element that would not give any the eye to act freely, as the hand was moving itself trying hardly to dialogue with the eye, but unfortunately its nature was slower. When photography arrived on 19th century, a new path to making the process fast, accurate and mechanic, was open.

This time, the hand just shoot when something interesting appeared on the eye's target. Time was a main factor as well, that did not leave many seconds to make these two organs act, react or dialogue together. Each one of them, made its own work, perfectly. Images were now, taken from reality, exactly like reality, except that they were not reality.

Again, representation was a great issue among artists, art theorists and philosophers.

Photography then took a century to make a perfect job: make the relation eye/hand even closer, by accelerating the process even more, making perfect, faster and better machines: digital cameras were all together competing to customize space, time and put a final period to analog photography.

Now, when we count on great machines that make our reality to be more than real, registered each second, from different angles, and when we count with networks to spread these images around the world, is when the discussion turns interesting.

Eye and hand are out of the field. This time, images are not representation, they are information. (Fig. 8)

They are made of bits, numbers. Binary codes take the place of light. Images are data, and data is not representation.



4.2. Art, get out of here!

Figure 9. Shellhouse demo. Astoria, NYC – 2007.

Representation was an important theme of discussion.

Information revolution came to change it all, even Art.

Art is driven today by these “new” technologies, but more than a replacement of tools, technology is a medium itself, and had come to make new questions to artists, that have to deal today with many topics, related to issues out of Art as they knew before. Climate, economic and social changes are directly moving Art towards new topics, necessarily engaged with technology. (Fig. 9)

To talk about art itself is taking climate, economic social or educational issues as topics, giving solutions, and putting the word out about these issues.

1. In the book “*Object to be Destroyed*” Pamela Lee gives the example of the supermarket cart which illustrates the idea of availability, and the idea of an undesired option, because of its same condition of always there to be used.

2. *How to interact with us and other living things and objects. This behavior is known as interaction.*

5. Biography

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