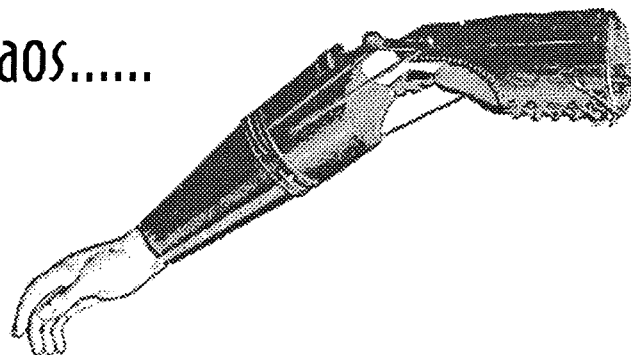


December 6 & 7, 1997

Science and art at the brink of chaos.....



Flesh Eating *Technologies*

... a weekend of heady stuff on science gone crazy!



Hosted by the Banff Multimedia Institute, Media and Visual Arts Department
Box 1020, Station 40, Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0C0

Telephone: (403) 762-6180 or 1-800-565-9989 • Fax: (403) 762-6345

E-mail: arts_info@banffcentre.ab.ca

Website: www-nmr.banffcentre.ab.ca

Flesh Eating Technologies

Introduction

As we round the bend towards the millennium, there is a widespread sense that it's too late - for just about anything. On this threshold of despair, a strange ecstasy has appeared, emerging in all forms of popular culture. We gasp for breathable air, giddy with irrational glee in the grip of high-tech culture, while the fringes of science take root in mainstream culture.

Flesh Eating Technologies is a two-day seminar that explores this ecstasy. It features debates about the future and limits of science, the outer edges of rationalism, viral capitalism, the technological spin-offs of science (including artificial life/death); robotics; leaky experiments; and the crazy organization of knowledge about the human body (in morgues, slaughterhouses, embalming procedures, grafting procedures).

Crazy science leads to barbarism and hypertechnology, pitting brain-stem impulsiveness against excessive cerebral activity. In this battle, humour and anxiety can't help but surface, becoming manifest in alien invasions, cannibalism, vampirism, survivalism, self-extermination, nature and nanotechnologies, viral economies, war games, technologies of violence, delirium, and compulsion. Flesh devours technology and technology takes over flesh.

This seminar, and the subsequent publication that will emerge from it, will be a collage of ideas from science, theory and art. This will be a new volume of *Semiotexte*, edited by Sylvère Lotringer and Sara Diamond, and co-published with the Banff Centre for the Arts.

Flesh Eating Technologies

Schedule of Events

Saturday, Dec. 6	All events will be held in the Rice Studio, located in the Jeanne and Peter Lougheed Building ("JPL").
9 a.m.	COFFEE
9:15 a.m.	Greetings
9:20 a.m.	Opening Remarks Sara Diamond - Moderator and Convenor Artistic Director, Executive Producer, Television and New Media, Media and Visual Arts, The Banff Centre
9:35 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.	Eternal Life/Eternal Death Natalie Jeremijenko , Artist Jane Prophet , Artist Charles Ostman , Artist
11:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	COFFEE BREAK
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Keynote Address Gayatri Spivak
12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	LUNCH
1:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.	Channeling Science Chris Dornan , Director, Carleton University School of Journalism and Communications Bob Dobbs , Founder of the Church of the Subgenius Heath Bunting , Artist
3:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	COFFEE BREAK

3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.	Affective Invention Catherine Richards , Artist Pedro Meyer , Artist Louis-Philippe Demers/Bill Vorn , Artists
5 p.m. to 6 p.m.	Flesh Eating Films <i>Virilio interview</i> <i>Morgue and Crime Scene</i> films
6 p.m.to 7:30 p.m.	DINNER
7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Performance Ritual Allucquère Rosanne Stone , Author and Professor of New Technology and Culture
8:30 p.m.	Reception Walter Phillips Gallery Glyde Hall, The Banff Centre "Beauty and the Beast" exhibition
Sunday, Dec. 7	
9:15 a.m.	COFFEE
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Doubling Effect Sylvère Lotringer , Writer, Editor, and Contributor to <i>The Village Voice</i>
10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.	BREAK
10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Rabid Art Alison Murray , Artist Josh Portway , Artist Edin Velez , Artist Joel-Peter Witkin , audio interview
12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	LUNCH

1:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Body Voyage Alexander Tsiaras , Medical Journalist and Author of <i>Body Voyage</i>
2:45 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.	Viral Cultures I Celia Pearce , Games designer and Author of <i>The Interactive Book</i>
3:20 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.	BREAK
3:35 p.m. to 4:35 p.m.	Enter Vulva Carolee Schneemann , Artist
4:35 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.	Viral Cultures II Robert Enright , Writer, Editor, for CBC, <i>The Globe and Mail</i> , and others Mark Dery , Cultural Critic and Contributor to <i>The Village Voice</i>
5:45 p.m.	Closing Remarks Sylvère Lotringer and Sara Diamond

Flesh Eating Technologies

Presenter biographies

Heath Bunting

is an artist from London, England, whose digital work has travelled around the globe. He was the organizer of *Digital Chaos*, held in Bath in 1996 and *Anti with E*, in London the next year. Though difficult to pin down, he has presented his work and lectured throughout Europe. Each month, his e-mail address changes, just one aspect of his efforts to subvert rational space and time, and create disbelief with insurrection.

L.P. Demers/Bill Vorn

Louis-Philippe Demers and Bill Vorn are artists from Montreal. Louis-Philippe Demers is a lighting designer, software engineer and independent electronic art artist. He is currently working on interactive robotic installations and control software and is the president of Kunst Macchina Production, a company specializing in lighting and show control. Bill Vorn is an artist and Ph.D. student in Communication and Media Studies at UQAM (Université du Québec à Montréal). His thesis project is about Artificial Life as Media. He also teaches audio-related techniques at UQAM, and has been working as a music composer and sound designer for more than fifteen years.

Mark Dery

is a cultural critic whose writings have appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Wired*, *Suck*, *Salon*, and *Feed*. He wrote *Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century*, a critique of fringe computer culture that has been translated into seven languages, and edited the essay collection, *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture*. His OpenMagazine pamphlet, *Culture Jamming: Hacking, Slashing, and Sniping in the Empire of the Signs*, has infested the Net. He is currently at work on *The Pyrotechnic Insanitarium*, a book about madness and mayhem in millennial America.

Sara Diamond

is Executive Producer/Artistic Director of Media and Visual Arts at the Banff Centre for the Arts. At Banff, she has acted as executive producer on more than sixty independent video productions, as well as Web and CD-ROM projects, and is responsible for the residencies, workshops, co-productions, work-study and publishing programs and the Walter Phillip Gallery. Her own work in television and video has been recognized in national broadcasts, a retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada, and solo exhibitions at the Vancouver Art Gallery among many others. Her tapes have been screened around the world. Among her most recent honours was the 1995 Canada Council Bell Canada Award for excellence in video. She is an active lecturer, curator and critic who has been published in numerous anthologies and periodicals and is a prominent member of boards, juries and task forces.

Bob Dobbs

was born in Paris and after WWII worked with international intelligence agencies for many decades. He surfaced in 1987 on CKLN-FM in Toronto and began whistle-blowing. Two interpretations of Dobbs are circulating in the popular media: one is through the Church of the Subgenius that Dobbs inspired in 1978 in Dallas; the other is on two CDs. These are *Bob's Media Ecology* and *Bob's Media Ecology Squared*, put out in 1992 by Timeagain Productions, early students of Marshall McLuhan. The best presentation of Dobbs' work is in his book, *Phatic Communion with Bob Dobbs*. Today, he travels the world explaining his/our victory over the Android Meme, and the tracings of these activities are regularly published in *Flipside* magazine.

Chris Dornan

is Director of the School of Journalism and Communications at Carleton University. He has published and lectured extensively on science journalism and has been instrumental in publicizing concerns about communicating science to the public.

Robert Enright

works at the CBC in Winnipeg. He is editor-at-large of *Border Crossings* magazine and a frequent contributor to *The Globe and Mail* on visual art and culture. He has written extensively for periodicals across Canada and the United States. His book, *Peregrinations: 32 Conversations with Contemporary Artists*, is a collection of interviews published in *Border Crossings* over the past decade.

Natalie Jeremijenko

is an artist and theorist who is well known for her critical work on the Human Genome Project. She starts from the premise that technologies are tangible social relations and therefore can be used to make social relations tangible. Her art piece, *The Suicide Box*, has been exhibited widely, and was recently selected for the Whitney Biennial. Currently she teaches in Arts and Media Projects at Stanford University.

Sylvère Lotringer

is an editor and cultural theorist, credited with "bringing French theory to America." He is the founder and publisher of *Semiotexte*, an imprint that is responsible for a remarkable selection of contemporary art and theory. He is the author of several books, including *Pure War with Paul Virilio*, *Forget Foucault with Jean Baudrillard*, and *Overexposed and Antonin Artaud*. He divides his time between New York, where he teaches at Columbia University, and Los Angeles. He recently organized the "French Theory in America" conference at New York University and the Drawing School.

Pedro Meyer

A life-long innovator, Meyer was among the first photographers to move into the digital realm. He was responsible for creating the important Latin American Colloquiums of Photography now in their twentieth year and also founded the Mexican Council of Photography from which other major photographic institutions in Mexico have all stemmed. He created the very first CD-ROM with photographs and sound ever produced, *I Photograph to Remember*. Most recently he has been involved in creating a bilingual Web site dedicated to photography known as ZoneZero. It was recently named one of the five best Web sites in the world in the area of art by *NET* magazine.

Alison Murray

was born in Nova Scotia and ran away to London, England, when she was fifteen. Her short dance-based films have received critical acclaim, and include *Kissy Suzuki Suck*, *Wank Stallions*, *Pantyhead*, *Sleazeburger*, *Horseplay* and *Bad Mood Woman*. In 1996 Alison made *Bloody Mess*, physical theatre for the camera in which violent screen fantasy meets real life responsibility, for BBC 2/Arts Council of England, and *Teenage Rampage*, a look at ill-fated romance in South London, for Channel 4. She has been a jury member for several international film festivals, and artistic activities have spanned from video installations for nightclubs to choreography for the Royal Opera House Garden Venture.

Charles Ostman

is an electronics, physics and computers specialist at the forefront of evolving technologies. He is a senior fellow at both the Institute for Global Futures and the Foresight Institute and maintains an editorial role on several publications, including *Mondo 2000*, *Midnight Engineering*, *MicroComputer Journal* and *Robotics Digest*. He is an expert on nanotechnologies and the future of science, and a member of the science advisory board of Nanothinc. He founded his own company, Berkeley Designs, and pursues his current interests in self-evolving machines. Currently, he teaches at San Francisco State University.

Celia Pearce

is a writer and conceptual designer for theme parks, games and interactive worlds. She wrote the script for the high-end theme park attraction *Virtual Adventures: The Loch Ness Expedition*, and has written several scripts for virtual reality projects, 3D movies and ride films. In addition to developing conceptual designs for full-scale themed attractions, she wrote and co-designed interactive theatre for *Biosphere 2* and recently completed a card game design for Brenda Laurel at Purple Moon. Celia Pearce is the author of *The Interactive Book: A Guide to the Interactive Revolution*.

Jane Prophet

is a British artist who works in video and digital media. Her interests in digital systems and artists' use of computer imaging was the focus of her Ph.D. at Warwick University. These concerns are evident in such pieces as *TechnoSphere* and *The Heart of the Cyborg*, which are accessed on the Web and explore audience interaction. Installation works including *Swarm* and *Sarcophagus* look at the audience relationship to artefact in a gallery setting. The landscape, the body and its virtual presence, and issues of representation in her work build on her background in installation and performance.

Joshua Portway

has worked in the video game and new media industries for fourteen years. His first computer game, *Sim*, was published in 1983 and became a bestseller in Britain. Since then he has worked as a game designer, animator and artist. His installation work has been exhibited in the UK, United States and Denmark, and his animation work (including work for Peter Gabriel, MTV and others) has been shown at festivals and on television worldwide. In 1993 he formed Flux Digital, a multimedia production company specializing in interactivity design, broadcast animation and effects, tool design, and research. In 1995 he left Flux and joined Realworld multimedia to direct CD-ROM projects. He is currently working on *Drum*, an investigation into interactive music.

Catherine Richards

is an artist whose interventions in the territory of art, culture and new technologies deliberately cross many boundaries of art practice, theoretical projects and primary research. Among the pioneers of virtual reality art and theory in Canada, her video and installation work explore issues around advanced technology and have been exhibited in Canada, Japan and England. In 1993, she received the Canada Council for the Arts Petro Canada Media Arts award for demonstrating outstanding and innovative use of new technologies in media arts and specifically for her work on the virtual body. She was co-author of *Bioapparatus*, a ground-breaking residency project and book on emerging technology. Her interactive installation, *The Virtual Body* (1993), received Honourable Mention in the Prix Ars Electronica Festival for Interactive Art in 1994. Her most recent work is at the National Gallery in Canada, where she has been an artist-in-residence.

Carolee Schneemann

Originally a painter, Carolee Schneemann propelled the paint stroke as event into performances and installations incorporating motorized sculptures and projection systems. In the 1960s, she stripped the historic nude from its canvas, using her own body as visual material to question conventions surrounding images of the erotic and taboo. She was the first artist to collaborate with Experiments in Art and Technology in 1966, constructing an anti-Vietnam War performance environment in which visual and audio systems were electronically controlled by the audience. Her work is characterized by research into archaic visual traditions and the body of the artist in relation to technological materials. *Known/Unknown - Plague Column*, her 1996 video and photographic installation, examines flesh-eating cellular

pathologies. Recent work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and Centres Georges Pompidou in Paris. Her 1997 retrospective at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, *Up To and Including Her Limits*, has been selected by the International Association of Art Cities as the best show originating in a New York museum. Forthcoming publications include *Body Politics: Notes and Essays of Carolee Schneemann* for MIT Press.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

is widely known for her early work as a translator of Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and subsequent work in post-structuralist literary criticism, deconstructivist readings of Marxism, feminism and post-colonialism, and translations of the Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi. She has published *In Other Worlds* and *The Post-Colonial Critic* (a collection of her interviews edited by Sarah Harasym). Currently, she is Avalon Foundation professor at Columbia University, where she teaches in English and Comparative Literature.

Allucquère Rosanne Stone

is the author of numerous science fiction stories and several books on new technology and culture, including *The War of Desire and Technology at the Close of the Mechanical Age*. She has written, lectured and performed extensively on the topic of technology, cyberspace and the body, and has had hair-raising adventures in neurology, music recording, film and computer science. She is founder and director of the Advanced Communications Technologies Laboratory and teaches in its Austin program at the University of Texas; is director of the International Conference on Cyberspace; and is a Founding Fellow of the Santa Cruz Institute. Depending upon whom you believe, she may or may not have started the field of Transgender Studies.

Alexander Tsiaras

is President and CEO of Anatomical Travelogue and concurrently holds the positions of Director of Scientific Visualization and Associate Professor in the department of Surgery at Yale University School of Medicine. He has over twenty years of experience in the fields of medical photography and art and is recognized as a world renowned photojournalist, artist and writer. He is the author of *Death Rituals of Rural Greece*, *Body Voyage*, and the co-author of *Information Architects*. A recipient of numerous press and art direction awards, including the World Press Award and the Art Directors Award for photography, his work has been featured on the covers of *LIFE*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Discover*, *Smithsonian*, *GEO* and the *London Sunday Times Magazine*. He is recognized internationally as both a technological innovator who developed the lens which enabled the first photographs of human fertilization, and as an artist whose technical abilities enable him to "paint" the anatomy using complex algorithms. In addition to his cerebral endeavors, he is an accomplished athlete who was a contender in the 1984 Olympic Games.

Edin Velez

is an artist originally from Puerto Rico now based in New York. He has been active in video art since 1969 and recently completed his first film loosely based on the myth of Columbus for PBS national broadcast in 1996. His work has been exhibited at Documenta8, Stedelijk Museum, Louvre Museum, New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Biennial, Image Form in Japan, La Sept in France, ORF TV in Austria, NHK TV in Japan, and elsewhere. He lectures at universities and museums and has taught at the School of Visual Arts, New School for Social Research and Cornell University. Currently, Velez is working on computer manipulated photographs based on urban and rural Japanese landscapes and a feature film script.