

# EMPAC

TALK

**Riccardo Manzotti**

The Spread Mind

THU / DEC 04<sup>TH</sup>

7:00 PM



# EMPAC

CURTIS R. PRIEM EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA  
AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

ON VIEW : DEC 04-06

## **The Vision Machine**

Melvin Moti

*A kinetic light sculpture that produces a short film based on the behavior of light in prisms.*

TALK : DEC 04, 7:00 PM

## **Riccardo Manzotti**

The Spread Mind

*In this talk, Riccardo Manzotti will make the case for “externalism,” or consciousness that spreads beyond the brain, out into the world. Our minds exist both in front of our eyes and behind them. The individual doesn’t see a world; he is part of a world process.*

MUSIC / SOUND : DEC 05, 8:00 PM

## **Pharmakon**

*An intensely intimate and confrontational performance by Pharmakon, a death industrial music project from Margaret Chardiet.*

PERFORMANCE : DEC 06, 7:00 PM

## **A Possibility of an Abstraction**

Germaine Kruij

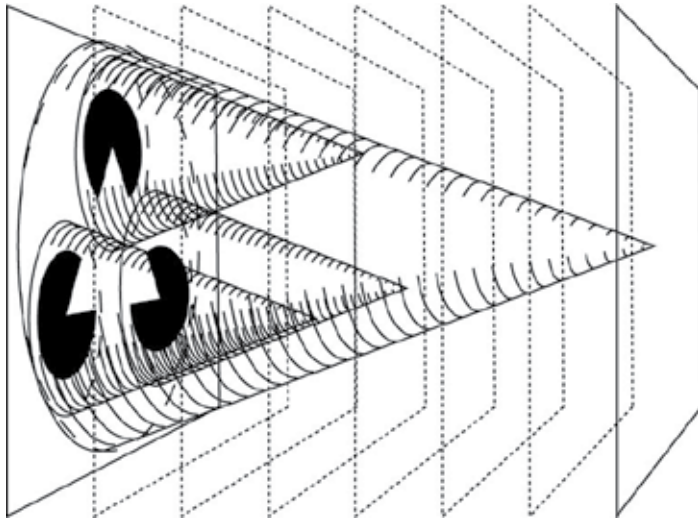
*An EMPAC-commissioned production that transforms the theatrical space into a field of cinematic experience. It is a play of perception, where shadow, reflection, architecture, and stage become the characters in a filmic experience created in the moment itself.*

PERFORMANCE : DEC 06, 9:00 PM

## **Bloopers #1**

Michael Bell-Smith, Sara Magenheimer, + Ben Vida

*“The artists blend props, video, and electronic music to play with the social power of different kinds of media.”*



## Riccardo Manzotti

### The Spread Mind

#### *How to Locate Consciousness in the Physical World*

According to popular wisdom, consciousness takes place inside the mind, something with which Galileo, neuroscience, and the movie *The Matrix* would all agree. How are neurons able to create this internal mental world? Scientists have gone so far as to conclude that most of what we see around us exists only as an acquired image in the mind of the spectator, separated from what is perceived.

In this talk, Riccardo Manzotti will make the case for “externalism,” or consciousness that spreads beyond the brain, out into the world. Our minds exist both in front of our eyes and behind them. The individual doesn’t see a world; he is part of a world process. To support this claim, Manzotti will demonstrate a causal account of the object, examining several “internalist” arguments (e.g., illusions, phosphenes, hallucinations, Charles Bonnet syndrome, phantom limb pain, and dreams), showing how each is actually compatible with an “externalist” view of the mind.

Manzotti will contrast this externalist view with known empirical evidence and the most widespread models of the mind, both in philosophy and in neuroscience, to show that our minds cannot be said to have any one true owner.

**PRESENTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH MELVIN MOTI’S INSTALLATION THE VISION MACHINE**

## Biography

**Riccardo Manzotti** is a philosopher, psychologist, and artificial intelligence scholar. He earned his PhD in robotics and is currently a Fulbright visiting scholar at MIT’s Department of Linguistics and Philosophy. His work has made significant contributions to the problem of consciousness, the possibility of outlining a physical model of phenomenal experience, and the relationship between mind and world. Much of Manzotti’s research has focused on the concept of the “Spread Mind,” which challenges the traditional separation between subject and object. This view suggests that the conscious mind is larger than any single body.

Manzotti has published more than 100 scientific papers, and has written two books that explore the place of consciousness in the physical world: *Conscienza e Realtà* (2001) and *L’esperienza* (2008). He also co-edited two books for Imprint Academic: *Artificial Consciousness* (2008) and *Situated Aesthetics* (2011).

Born in Parma, Italy, Manzotti attended the University of Genoa, where he received degrees in computer science and philosophy. He conducted postdoctoral research on artificial vision and artificial intelligence at the LIRA-Lab in Genoa, Italy, and has held positions at Northwestern University, Trinity College, and KAIST in Dajeon, South Korea.

**CURATOR: EMILY ZIMMERMAN**



ON VIEW

# The Vision Machine

Melvin Moti

**DEC 04<sup>TH</sup>** / 12–9 PM

**DEC 05<sup>TH</sup>** / 12–9 PM

**DEC 06<sup>TH</sup>** / 12–10 PM

*The Vision Machine* is a kinetic light sculpture that produces a short film based on the behavior of light in prisms. Drawing on optics and material science, this optical box harnesses the same physical principles that give rise to everyday atmospheric effects such as rainbows and sundogs by shining light through a series of rotating prisms and focusing it back onto a wall with a lens.

*The Vision Machine* is conceptually based on Riccardo Manzotti's idea of the "Spread Mind," which proposes that consciousness is spread between physical phenomena and the individual. The viewer doesn't see the world; he is part of a world process. In the installation, diffracted light serves as a metaphor for our consciousness as an interrelated process of worldly phenomena, partly external and partly internal, but never static.

Melvin Moti worked collaboratively with a team of Rensselaer undergraduate physics and engineering students to create *The Vision Machine*.

**CURATOR: EMILY ZIMMERMAN**





MUSIC / SOUND

## Pharmakon

FRI / DEC 05<sup>TH</sup>

8:00 PM

An intensely intimate and confrontational performance by Pharmakon, a death industrial music project from Margaret Chardiet. Chardiet describes her drive to make noise music as a kind of exorcism, making it possible to express her “deep-seated need/drive/urge/possession to reach other people and make them FEEL something [specifically] in uncomfortable/confrontational ways.” In addition to being one of the few females working in a male dominated noise scene, Chardiet stands out for her meticulous rigor and attention to form, with every performed element methodically planned out in advance for maximum emotional impact.

**Margaret Chardiet** was born and raised in New York City. She has been making power electronics/death industrial music under the name Pharmakon for five years. As a founding member of the Red Light District collective in Far Rockaway, NY, she has been a figurehead in the underground experimental scene since she was 17. Several projects emerged from the Red Light home/venue during the four years Chardiet lived there, including *Yellow Tears* and *Halflings*, among others. She notes that the environment there among so many other experimental artists inspired her to keep pushing herself and making increasingly challenging work. Pharmakon is her opportunity to exorcise demons and examine wild thoughts by pushing them outside of her head.

**CURATOR:** ARGEO ASCANI



PERFORMANCE

## A Possibility of an Abstraction

Germaine Kruip

SAT / DEC 06<sup>TH</sup>

7:00 PM

*A Possibility of an Abstraction* is an EMPAC commissioned production that transforms the theatrical space into a field of cinematic experience. It is a play of perception, where shadow, reflection, architecture, and stage become the characters in a filmic experience created in the moment itself. Recalling pre cinematic traditions of shadow play, and what Ken Jacobs termed paracinema (denoting experimental film practice from the 1960s in which films lacked material or mechanical elements), Kruip creates an atmospheric film like effect without actually using film, accomplished by manipulating light across the proscenium stage that serves as a stand in for the screen. Shifting between the cinematic, the theatrical, and the sculptural, *A Possibility of an Abstraction* creates a meditative space at the edges of our perception with optical illusions and the passage of time.

*A Possibility of an Abstraction* marks the artist's renewed engagement with theatrical technology and dramaturgy. After winning the Prix de Rome in 2000, Kruip turned away from scenography to concentrate on visual arts, producing works that brought the theatrical elements of light, temporality, and the stage into a new architectural scale at galleries and museums. Often manipulating daylight with moving geometric sculptures and simple framing devices, her artworks transform the architecture they inhabit, turning each location into a sensual but abstract stage.

CURATOR: VICTORIA BROOKS



## Biography

Germaine Kruip

Germaine Kruip's artworks often take the form of "architectural interventions." Manipulating daylight with geometric, kinetic sculptures, these interventions transform each site into a stage, with the audience as actors in a play of substantive absence. Kruip's work has recently been exhibited at Parra & Romero, Madrid, Spain; List Visual Arts Center at MIT, Boston; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Art Basel 41, Basel, Switzerland; the Approach, London; Museum De Paviljoens, Almere, Netherlands; the Centro Cultural Montehermoso, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain; Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf; the David Roberts Foundation, London; Hiroshima Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; the Drawing Centre, New York, and in the MARZ Gallery, Lisbon, among others.

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**COMPOSER:** HAHN ROWE

### **TECHNICAL TEAM**

**LIGHTING:** LAURA MROCKOWSKI, ASSISTED BY ALENA SAMORAY AND DAN SWALEC

**DRAMATURGY:** BART VAN DEN EYNDE

**AUDIO ENGINEER:** TODD VOS

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:** JOHAN VAN DER WOEL

**RIGGING/FABRICATION:** GEOFF ABBAS, BILL FRITZ, MICHAEL WELLS,  
CARL LEWANDOWSKI, DAVID DELAROSA

A POSSIBILITY OF AN ABSTRACTION IS SUPPORTED BY MONDRIAAN FUND




PERFORMANCE

## Bloopers #1

Michael Bell-Smith,  
Sara Magenheimer,  
+ Ben Vida

SAT / DEC 06<sup>TH</sup>

9:00 PM



*Bloopers #1* is the newest iteration of the performance-driven collaboration by artists Michael Bell-Smith, Sara Magenheimer, and Ben Vida. Presenting a joyously subversive take on popular culture and the social connections produced through sound and music, *Bloopers #1* takes the question “Why do we hate some objects and love others?” as its starting point, and uses set pieces, dance-pop, cinematic cliché, and live performance to playfully tease the boundaries of language, crowds, and the nature of things that draw them.

CURATOR: VICTORIA BROOKS





## Biographies

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**Michael Bell-Smith** is an artist and musician based in Brooklyn. His work has been exhibited and screened in museums and galleries internationally, including MoMA PS1, NY; Museum of The Moving Image, NY; SFMOMA, San Francisco; the 2008 Liverpool Biennial, UK; the 5th Seoul International Media Biennale; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, ES; The New Museum, NY; Hirshhorn Museum, DC; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; MoMA, NY; and Tate Liverpool, UK. His work has been featured in *Art Forum*, *Art in America*, and the *New York Times*. As a member of the punk band Professor Murder, he has performed music across the US and Europe.

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**Sara Magenheimer** lives and works in Brooklyn. Language, music/sound, and objects comprise a large part of her video-based practice. From 2004-2010 Magenheimer formed two bands, Flying, and WOOM, touring extensively and releasing five records. She received her BA from Tufts University, her BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and her MFA from Bard College. Magenheimer has screened video work and performed at CANADA Gallery, the Berkeley Art Museum, MoMA PS1, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and ISSUE Project Room, among others.

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**Ben Vida** is a Brooklyn-based artist and composer. He has been an active member of the international experimental music community for the past 17 years with a long list of collaborations, bands, and releases to his credit. In the mid 1990s he co-founded the group Town and Country and has worked as a solo artist under his own name and as Bird Show, with releases on such labels as PAN, Alku, Thrill Jockey, Drag City, Amish, Bottrop-Boy, Hapna, and Kranky. He has presented his work in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, South Korea, and Japan. Recent activities include performances at The Kitchen, NYC with David Behrman, and the debut of the Tyondai Braxton/Ben Vida Duo at the Sacrum Profamun festival in Krakow, as well as solo performances at Electrónica en Abril festival in Madrid and Akousma Festival in Montreal. His exhibition, *Slipping Control*, was presented at Audio Visual Arts in Manhattan, NY in spring 2013. He was a 2013 artist-in-residence at ISSUE Project Room in Brooklyn and at the Clocktower in Manhattan.

**VIDEO ENGINEERS:** ERIC BRUCKER, RYAN JENKINS, MICK BELLO

# EMPAC

The Curtis R Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) is where the arts, sciences, and technology interact with and influence each other by using the same facilities and technologies, and by breathing the same air.

EMPAC hosts artists and researchers to produce and present new work in a building designed with a sophisticated architectural and technical infrastructure. Four exceptional venues and studios enable audiences, artists, and researchers to inquire, experiment, develop, and experience the ever changing relationship between ourselves, technology, and the worlds we create around us.



## STAFF

Johannes Goebel / Director  
Geoff Abbas / Director for Stage Technologies  
Eric Ameres / Senior Research Engineer  
Argeo Ascani / Curator, Music  
David Bebb / Senior System Administrator  
Peter Bellamy / Senior Systems Programmer  
Michael Bello / Video Engineer  
Victoria Brooks / Curator, Time-Based Visual Arts  
Eric Brucker / Lead Video Engineer  
Ash Bulayev / Curator, Dance + Theater  
Michele Cassaro / Guest Services Coordinator  
John Cook / Box Office Manager  
Roxanne DeHamel / Web Developer  
David DeLaRosa / Production Technician  
Zhenelle Falk / Artist Services Administrator  
William Fritz / Master Carpenter  
Kimberly Gardner / Manager, Administrative Operations  
Ian Hamelin / Project Manager  
Katie Hammon / Administrative Specialist  
Ryan Jenkins / Event Technician  
Shannon Johnson / Design Director  
Pamela Keenan / Production Technician  
CathyJo Kile / Business Manager  
Eileen Krywinski / Graphic Designer  
Carl Lewandowski / Production Technician  
Eric Chi-Yeh Lin / Lead Stage Technician  
Stephen McLaughlin / Event Technician  
Josh Potter / Marketing and Communications Manager  
Alena Samoray / Production Technician  
Candice Sherman / Business Coordinator  
Avery Stempel / Front of House Manager  
Kim Strosahl / Acting Production Administrative Coordinator  
Jeffrey Svatek / Audio Engineer  
Dan Swalec / Master Electrician  
Todd Vos / Lead Audio Engineer  
Pete Wargo / Manager, Information Systems  
Michael Wells / Production Technician  
Emily Zimmerman / Associate Curator



*EMPAC 2014-2015 presentations, residencies, and commissions are supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and The MAP Fund, a program of Creative Capital, primarily supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; additional funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Community Connections Fund of the MetLife Foundation, Boeing Company Charitable Trust, and the New York State Council for the Arts. Special thanks to the Jaffe Fund for Experimental Media and Performing Arts for support of artist commissions.*

# EMPAC

## Upcoming Events

An updated schedule for the 2014 Fall season is available online at [empac.rpi.edu](http://empac.rpi.edu). Check back often for more information.



TALK

### DIETER ROELSTRAETE

Dust to Digital: Loose Remarks  
on the Economy of “Craft”

Wednesday, December 10 / 6:00 PM

FREE



FILM / VIDEO

### LAURIE ANDERSON

New Film (a personal essay)

Friday, December 12 / 7:30 PM

FREE

*Today's residencies are tomorrow's world premieres.*

While the fall 2014 season continues to debut newly commissioned work from a roster of international artists, researchers, and thinkers, the EMPAC studios, theater, and concert hall are buzzing with activity as this season's arts residencies develop boundary-pushing works in progress. Keep an eye on [empac.rpi.edu](http://empac.rpi.edu) for all of the projects happening behind the scenes and for the announcement of our spring 2015 season.