



AKSIOMA

Institute for Contemporary Art,
Ljubljana

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Ljubljana, 27 March 2012

MEDIJSKO OBVESTILO

Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana,
presents:

Julian Oliver in Danja Vasiliev

Newstweek

Media-hacking intervention

www.aksioma.org/newstweek

<http://vimeo.com/23075736>

Aksioma | Projektni prostor

Komenskega 18, Ljubljana

11 - 26 April 2012

Opening of the Aksioma media-hacking centre: Wednesday, 11 April 2012, at 7 p.m.



“Media is the nervous system of a democracy. If it’s not functioning well the democracy can’t function.”
(Jeff Cohen, Director of the Park Center for Independent Media)

Images available for free download:

www.aksioma.org/press/newstweek.zip



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Julian Oliver in Danja Vasiliev *Newstweek*

Newstweek is a device for manipulating news on major news portals in the country. In public places with free wireless access to the Internet, the artists will build a small device into a wall plug, making it appear as part of the local infrastructure. During the public intervention, the gallery will be turned into a press center where visitors and agents will remotely edit news read on laptops, phones and tablets without their users knowing. Hotspots manipulable by *Newstweek* include cafes, libraries, hotels, universities and city-wide wireless networks. In the Ljubljana edition of the project, wireless hotspots with *Newstweek* transmitters built in them will be at the *Bi-Ko-Fe* bar (Židovska steza 2, Ljubljana) and *Kavarna SEM | Slovenski etnografski muzej* cafe (Metelkova ulica 2, Ljubljana).

Newstweek is one of the most insightful socially-engaged hacking projects of the year. Last year it won the authors the prestigious Golden Nica Prix in the Cyberarts category at the Ars Electronica festival in Linz, Austria. This year the authors will install the device into the Ars Electronica Center as part of its festival collection, and before that they will perform their public intervention in Ljubljana.

Newstweek emerges as a symptom of our increasingly corporatized and mediated democratic reality. While news is increasingly read digitally, it still follows a traditional, top-down distribution model and thus often falls victim to the same political and corporate interests that have always sought to manipulate public opinion. *Newstweek* intervenes in this model, providing an opportunity for citizens to have their turn at manipulating the media, “fixing facts” as they pass across a wireless network. In this way *Newstweek* can be seen as a tactical device for altering public reality on a per-network basis.

Newstweek also signals a word of caution, that a strictly media-defined reality is always a vulnerable reality; that along the course of news distribution there are many hands at work, from ISP workers, numerous server administrators and wireless access point owners. Moreso, with the increasing ubiquity of networks and their devices comes greater ignorance as to their function, offering a growing opportunity for manipulation of opinion, from source to destination (from server to screen).

Julian Oliver is a New Zealander based in Berlin. He has been active in the critical intersection of art and technology since 1998. His projects and the occasional paper have been presented at many museums, international electronic-art events and conferences, including the Tate Modern, Transmediale, Ars Electronica and the Japan Media Arts Festival. His work has received several awards, ranging across technical excellence, artistic invention and interaction design. Julian has given numerous workshops and master classes in software art, augmented reality, creative hacking, data forensics, object-oriented programming for artists, virtual architecture, artistic game-development, information visualization, UNIX/Linux and open source development practices worldwide. He is a long-time advocate of the use of free software in artistic production, distribution and education. Find out more at: <http://julianoliver.com>

Danja Vasiliev is a Russian born computer artist currently living between Berlin and Rotterdam. Working with diverse methods, technologies and materials Danja ridicules the contemporary affection for digital life and questions the global tendency for cyborgination. Works of the artist often described as *technological interventions*, be those hardware, software or conceptual pieces.



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Famous recent works include a mechanical web-server that is accessible over the Internet (“m/e/m/e 2.0”, 2009), Linux distribution that joins and questions the concepts of Turing machines and Singularity (“RE:buntu”, 2009), human-puppetry installation that disconnects bodies and consciousnesses of its users (“Master/slave”, 2007). Network and Internet technology, especially in regard to the *Network as the new World*, is the latest affection of Danja Vasiliev. He is currently developing several special devices that will become the new tools of a digital interventionist. Find out more at: <http://k0a1a.net/>

In partnership with:

Kavarna SEM, Metelkova ulica 2, Ljubljana
<http://www.etno-muzej.si/sl/muzejska-kavarna>

Bi-Ko-Fe, Židovska steza 2, Ljubljana
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/BI-KO-FE/195564620484096>

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