

# Paul Ramírez Jonas

# IKON









# Longer Day

Digital Video, running time: 20 minutes Courtesy of the artist and LFL Gallery, New York

1997

I woke up at dawn in New York, got in a car, and headed west. The plan was to drive as far as I could until sundown. The change in time zones would extend my day, perhaps for one hour, but evening would in any case arrive. As the sun began to set on the western horizon, I was on a highway somewhere in middle America. I turned on the video camera to capture my race against sundown — a futile attempt to make the day last forever. I succeeded in extending the sunset a minute longer than if I had stood still.

# **Another Day**

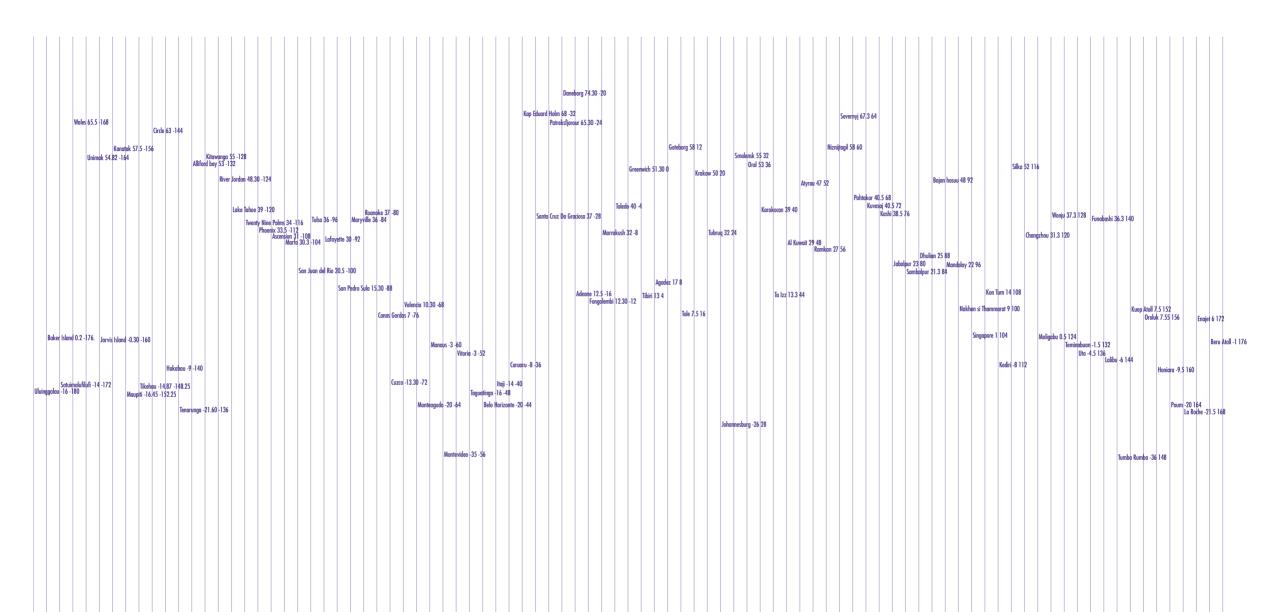
Computer device, 3 video outputs Courtesy of the artist and LFL Gallery, New York

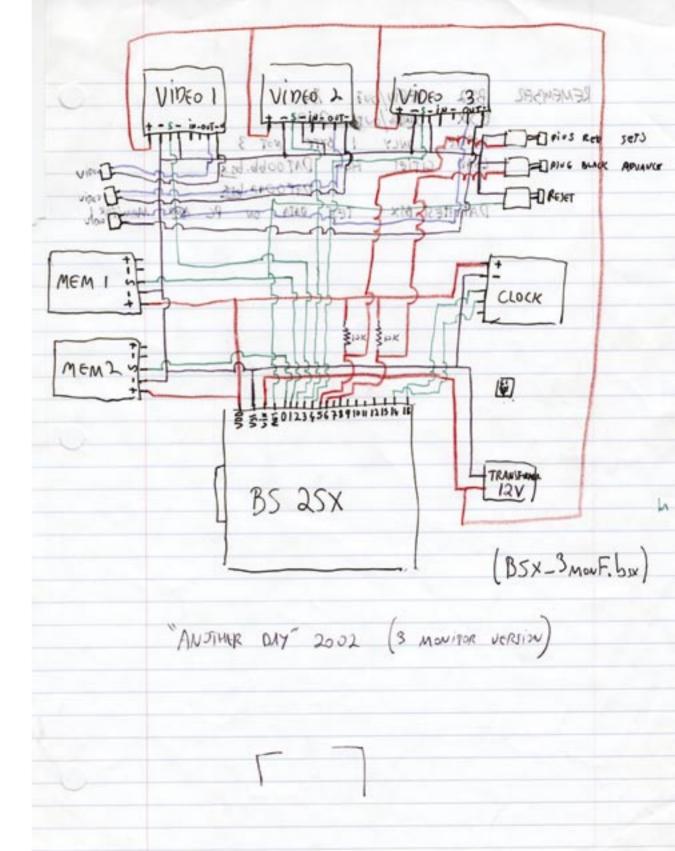
2003

The computer device of this work, can be connected to three monitors, screens or other types of display. It tracks the sunrise of 90 cities that are evenly spaced along the Earth's every fourth meridian. The form is modelled on an arrival and departure board display of an airport or train station, but instead, its mechanism actively performs a countdown to indicate the time remaining to sunrise at each of the cities listed. At any one time, each monitor has a listing of 9 different cities, which are ordered chronologically based on their expected time of sunrise, e.g. cities listed on top of the list are closer to daylight. When the timer announces that the sun has risen in the city atop, the countdown momentarily pauses, the line of that city and its timer disappears, and the list is updated: another location is added.

→ Another Day, installation view at LFL Gallery, New York, 2003







← 90 cities spaced along every fourth meridian of the Earth, and listed in Another Day

→ Diagram of the mechanism used in Another Day to track the sunrises of 90 cities

# Magellan's Itinerary

Dimensions of each page 8 ½ x 11 inches (21.5 x 28 centimetres); edition of 3 Courtesy of the artist and LFL Gallery, New York

1995

Six-computer printout pages of a flight itinerary that emulates the first circumnavigation of the globe led by Ferdinand Magellan in 1519-1522. If no airport existed at the site where Magellan's fleet originally came ashore, the travel agency programmed the trip using the nearest airport to that location.

### SALES PERDON: 44 TT CUSTOPER MBR: 01L0004015

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103 WORLDIER TRAVEL 111 WATER STREET NEW HAVEN CT 06511

FOR! MAGELLAN/FERDINAND

| 12. | TER  | 95 - NEDNESDAY   |   |  |   |                                     |
|-----|------|--|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
|     | AIR  | a de la constante de | FL1:2906                                | BUSINESS   |   | BREAKFAST                           |
|     |      | LU SEVILLA   |   | 1035A  |   | EQP: 727 STRETCH                    |
|     |      | AK TENERIFE REINASFI   |   | 1150A  |   | NUN-STOP                            |
|     | 419  | IBERIA   | FLT:957                                 | BUSINESS   |   | SNACK                               |
|     | 1000 | LV TENERIFE REINASFI   | 20229340575                             | 525P   |   | EQP: BUEING 757                     |
|     |      | AR MADRID  |   | 905P -   |   | NON-STOP                            |
| 16  | FED  | 95 - THURSDAY  |   | a second second  |   |                                     |
|     | AIR  | 1BERIA   | FLT+6811                                | BUBINESS   |   | BREAKFAST                           |
|     |      | LV MADRID  |   | 1220A  |   | EQP: BOEING 747                     |
|     |      | AK RID DE JANLIRD  |   | 720A   |   | NUN-STOP                            |
|     | AIR  | AEROLINEAS   | FLT+253                                 | MUSINESS   |   |                                     |
|     |      | LV RIO DE JANEIRO  |   | 2544   |   | EUP: MD-80                          |
|     |      | AR BUENOS AIRES EZE  |   | 10100  |   | NON-STOP                            |
| 17  | FEB  | 95 - FRIDAY  | 1                                       | 20.00  |   |                                     |
|     | AIR  | AEROLINEAS   | FL 11684                                |  |   |                                     |
|     |      | LV BUENOS AIRES ALP  | · · · · ·                               | #1030A   |   | EQPI BOLING 727                     |
|     |      | AR COMO RIVADAVIA  |   | 12558  |   | NUN-STOP                            |
| 21  | FEB  | 95 - TUESDAY   |   | 11.72  | 3 |                                     |
|     | AIR  | TRANSP. NEUQUEN  | FLT:702                                 | COACH  |   |                                     |
|     |      | LV COMO RIVADAVIA  |   | 10000  |   | EGP: MEIND TPROP                    |
|     |      | AR PUERTO DESEADO  | e. 11                                   | 10304  |   | NON-STOP                            |
| 24  |      | 95 - FRIDAY  |   | and the second s |   |                                     |
|     | AIR  | IRANSP. NEUQUEN  | FLT=704                                 | COACH  |   | and the second second second second |
|     |      | LV PUERTO DESEADO  |   | 1050A  |   | LOPI MEIRO TPROP                    |
|     |      | AR COMO RIVADAVIA  |   | 1120A  |   | NON-STOP                            |
|     | AIR  | AEROLINEAS   | FLT1635                                 | COACH  |   |                                     |
|     |      | LV COMO RIVADAVIA  |   | 125P   |   | EQP: BOEING 727                     |
|     |      | AK BUENOS AIKES AEP  |   | 3301   |   | NON-STOP                            |
| 25  |      | 95 - SATURDAY  | 12.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. |  |   | 12000000000                         |
|     | A?K  | LADECO AIKLINES  |   | CUACH  |   | BREAK AST                           |
|     |      | LV BUENOS AIRES EZE  |   | 600A   | + | ERPI BOLING 737                     |
|     |      | AK SANTIAGO SCL  |   | 810A   |   | NUN-STOP                            |

FILE COPY

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| WORLDTEK   | 111 Water Street<br>New Haven, CT 06511          | Telephone:<br>(203) 772-0470                             | WORLDTEK   | 111 Water Street<br>New Haven, CT 06511 | Telephone:<br>(203) 772-0470              |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| SALES PERSON: 44<br>CUSTOMER NBR: 01L0004015   | ITINERAKY<br>SKSGEW                              | DATE: 01 FEB 95<br>PAGE: 02                              | SALES PERSONI 44<br>CUSTOMER NBRI 01L0004015   | ITINEKAKY<br>SKSOEW                     | DATE: 01 FER 95<br>PAGE: 03               |
| TO: WORLDTEK TRAVEL<br>111 WATER STREET<br>NEW HAVEN CT 0651:  | ı.   |  | TO: WORLDTEK TRAVEL<br>111 WATER STREET<br>NEW HAVEN CT 06511  |   |   |
| FOR: MAGELLAN/FERDINAND  |  |  | FUR1 MAGELLAN/FERDINAND  |   |   |
| 25 FEB 95 - SATURDAY<br>AJK LADECU AIKLINES<br>LV SANTIAGO SCI<br>AK PUNTA AKENAS                    | FLT+79 BUSINESS<br>900A<br>1154                  | BKLAKFAST<br>EQP: BOEING 797<br>1-STOP                   | 10 MAR 95 - FRIDAY<br>AIK AIR MARSHALL ISLAND FLT<br>LV TARAMA<br>AR NADI                                    | 111 COACH<br>945A<br>525P               | SNACK<br>ERPT HANKER TPROP<br>1-STOP      |
| 26 FEB 95 - SUNDAY<br>AIK LAN CHILE S A<br>LV PUNTA ARENAS<br>AK PUERTO MONTT<br>AIR LADECO AIRLINES | FLT:80 COACH<br>800A<br>1005A<br>FLT:70 BUSINESS | EQP: BOEING 737<br>NUN-STOP<br>DINNER                    | 11 MAR 9% - SATURDAY<br>AIM AIM MAKSHALL ISLAND FLT<br>LV NADI<br>AK MAJURD                                  | 12 CUACH<br>800A<br>615P                | BREAKFAST<br>EGPI HAWKER TPROP<br>2-STOPS |
| AIR LAN CHILE S A<br>LV SANTIAGO SCI<br>AIR LAN CHILE S A<br>LV SANTIAGO SCI                         | 530P<br>710P<br>FLT133 BUSINESS                  | LOP: BULING 737<br>NON-STOP<br>DINNEK<br>EOP: BOLING 767 | 14 MAR 95 - TUESDAY<br>Alk CONTINENTAL AIKLINES FLT<br>Majurd-Guam Operated by<br>LV Majurd<br>Ar Guam       |   | SNACK<br>EGPT 727 STRETCH<br>4-STOPS      |
| 27 FEB 95 - MONDAY<br>AN PAPELTE   | J 2504   | 1-STOP   | 15 MAK 95 - WEDNESDAY<br>AIR CONTINENTAL AIRLINES FLT<br>GUAM-MANILA OPERATED BY                             | 1077 @051815                            | BREAKFAST                                 |
| AIR AIR NEW ZEALAND<br>LV PAPEETE  | 111447   | DINNER<br>EDP: BOEING 767                                | AR MANILA<br>AR MANILA<br>AIR PHILIPPINE AIR LINES FLT   | 215A<br>1050A<br>1050A                  | LUPI 727 STRETCH                          |
| AR HADI  | 8554   | 1-STOP   | AK CEBU  | 220P<br>339P                            | EOP: AIRBUS A300<br>NON-STOP              |
| 04 MAR 95 - SATURDAY<br>AJE AIR MARSHALL ISLAND<br>LV NADI<br>AR TAKAWA                              | FLT+12 CUACH<br>BOOA<br>330P                     | BREAKFAST<br>EOP: HAWKER TPROP<br>1-STUP                 | 16 MAR 95 - THURSDAY<br>AIR PHILIPPINE AIR LINES FLT<br>LV CEBU<br>AR MANILA<br>AIR PHILIPPINE AIR LINES FLT | 1000A<br>1110A                          | EQP: AIRBUS A300<br>NUN-STOP              |
| 07 HAR 95 - TUESDAY<br>Alk Alk NAURU<br>LV TARAWA  | FLT+220 CUACH                                    |  | LV MANILA<br>AR BANDAR SERI BEOWN  | 300P<br>625P                            | EGP: BUEING 737<br>1~STOP                 |
| AK CHKISTNAS ISLAND<br>MIR 95 - WEDNESDAY<br>AIR NAUKU<br>LV CHRISTMAS ISLAND<br>AK TAKAWA           | FLT:217 COACH                                    | NON-STOP   | 17 MAR 95 - FRIDAY<br>AIR RUYAL DRUBEI FLT<br>LV BANDAR SERI BEGNN<br>AR MANILA                              | 1687 BUSINESS<br>6354<br>8359           | EUP: 767-300<br>NON-STOP                  |
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| WORLDTEK |  |
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DATES OI HEB 95 PAGE 1 05

TO . WORLDTEK TRAVEL 111 WATER STREET NEW HAVEN CT 06511

LORS MAGELLAN/FERDINAND

| 18  | HAR    | 95 - SATURDAY        |              |  |   |             |
|-----|--------|----------------------|--------------|--|---|-------------|
| 0.0 | AIK    |                      | FLT:187      | CUACH  |   |             |
|     |        | LV MANILA            |              | 1010A  | EOP: BOEING                             | 737         |
|     |        | AK CUTABATO          |              | 1140A  | NUN-STOP                                |             |
|     |        |                      |              |  |   |             |
| 12  | IIAR   | 95 - SUNDAY          |              | 10000  |   |             |
|     | AIR    |                      | FLT+188      | CUACH  | 94.0 - Sel 340                          | 12525       |
|     |        | LV COTABATO          |              | 1240P  | EGP: DOEING                             | 737         |
|     |        | AK MANILA            |              | 2101   | NON-STOP                                |             |
|     | AIN    |                      | FLT+125      |  |   |             |
|     |        | LV MANILA            |              | 3205   | EQP: BUEING                             | 737         |
|     |        | AR ZAMBOANGA         |              | 520P   | NON-STOP                                |             |
| 20  | MAR    | 91 MUNDAY            |              |  |   |             |
|     | AIR    | PHILIPPINE AIR LINES | FLT:124      | COACH  |   |             |
|     |        | LV ZAMBOANGA         |              | 70%A   | EQP: BOLING                             | 737         |
|     |        | AR MANILA            | و الماليان ا | BINA   | NON-STOP                                |             |
|     |        |                      |              |  |   |             |
| 21  | MAN    | 95 - TUESDAY         | Sec. 4       | A CONTRACTOR OF THE OWNER OWNER OF THE OWNER OF THE OWNER OF THE OWNER OWNER OF THE OWNER OWNE |   |             |
|     | AIR    |                      | FL(173       | BUGINLUS   |   |             |
|     |        | LV MANILA            |              | .9154  | EOP: A1KBUS                             |             |
|     |        | AR SINGAPORE         |              | ANGEL  | NON-STOP                                |             |
|     | AIR    | SINGAPORE AIKLINES   | PLT=1:6      | BUSINESE   |   |             |
|     |        | LV SINGAPORE         |              | 1000   | EODI VILLE                              | A310        |
|     |        | AK JAKARTA COK       |              | 1309   | NON-STOP                                |             |
| 22  | BAK    | 95 - NEDNESDAY       |              |  |   |             |
| 20  |        | SEMPATI AIR          | FLT:866      | COACH  | SNACK                                   |             |
|     | 0.000  | LV JAKARTA COK       |              | 900P   | EGPI FOKKER                             | 100         |
|     |        |                      |              | 0.0000   | 100000000000000000000000000000000000000 | 0.825       |
| 23  | NAK    | 95 - THURSDAY        |              | 233925   | 1000000                                 |             |
|     |        | AK ANDON             |              | 350A   | 1-5108                                  |             |
| 29  | HAR    | 95 MEDINESDAY        |              |  |   |             |
|     | AIR    | POUKAR AIKLINES      | FLT+531      | CUACH  | SNACK                                   |             |
|     |        | LV AMBON             |              | 910A   | ERP: HAWKER                             | <b>IPRO</b> |
|     |        | AR TERNALL           |              | 1050A  | NUN-STOP                                |             |
|     | AIR    | BOUSAG AIRLINES      | FLT#550      | COACH  | SNACK                                   |             |
|     |        | LV TEKNATE           |              | 1120A  | EUPI HANKER                             | TPRO        |
|     |        | AR BANADO            |              | 1125A  | NUN-STOP                                |             |
|     |        |                      | CONTINUES    | ON PAGE 5  |   |             |
| - 2 | FILE C | OPY                  | CONTINUED    | ON PHOE V  |   |             |
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| Harr of ar                  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| EQP: DOEING 737<br>NON-STOP |  |
| EOP: BUEING 737<br>NON-STOP |  |
| EOP: BOLING 737<br>NON-STOP |  |
| EQP: AIKBUS A310            |  |

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FORT MAGELLAM/FERDINAND

| 30    | MAR         | 95 - THURSDAY     |  |              |                  |
|-------|-------------|-------------------|--|--------------|------------------|
|       | Alk         | GARUDA INDONESIA  | FLT:741                                  | BUSINESS     | LUNCH            |
|       |             | LV MANADO         |  | 200P         | EGPI AIRBUS A300 |
|       |             | AK UJUNG PANDANG  |  | 3306         | NUN-STOP         |
|       | AIR         | GARUDA INDONESIA  | FLT1745                                  | BUSINESS     | BREAKFAST        |
|       |             | LV UJUNG PANDANG  |  | 5301         | EUP: 737-300     |
|       |             | AR DENPASAR BALI  |  | 650P         | NON-STOP         |
| 31    | MAK         | 95 - FRIDAY       |  |              |                  |
|       | AIR         | MERPATI NUSANTARA | FLT1644                                  | COACH        |                  |
|       |             | LV DENPASAR BALI  |  | 1000A        | EGH-1 DC-9       |
|       |             | AR KUPANO         |  | 1140A        | NON-STOP         |
| 02    | APR         | 95 - SUNDAY       | 3011                                     |              |                  |
|       | AIR         | MERPATI NUSANTARA | 11T= 4910                                | CONCH        |                  |
|       |             | LV KUPANG         |  | 700A         | EQP: CASA TPRUP  |
|       |             | AR ALOR           |  | HIDA         | NON-STOP         |
|       |             |                   |  | 12           |                  |
| 03    | APR         | 95 - MONDAY       |  |              |                  |
|       | AIR         | MERPATI NUSANIARA | FLT:611                                  | COACH        |                  |
|       |             | LV KUPANO         |  | 122"P        | LOP: FUKKER F20  |
|       |             | AR DENPASAR BAL   |  | 20.1         | NON-STOP         |
|       | AIN         | GAKUDA INDONESIA  | FI.T: 97E                                | COACH        | DINNER           |
|       |             | LV DENPASAR BALI  |  | 6109         | EQP: AIRBUS A300 |
|       |             | AK PERTH          |  | 1000P        | NUN-STUP         |
| 04    | APR         | 95 - TUESDAY      |  |              |                  |
|       | Alk         | SUUTH AFRICAN     | FLT:281                                  | BUSINESS     | BREAKFAST        |
|       |             | LV PERTH          | 10000                                    | 1235A        | EQP: BOEING 747  |
|       |             | AK JOHANNESBURG   |  | 525A         | NUN-STUP         |
|       | AIR         | SOUTH AFRICAN     | FLT:503                                  | BUSINESS     | BREAKFAST        |
|       | C. S. S. S. | LV JOHANNESBURG   | 1. | BOOA         | EUP: AIRBUS A320 |
|       |             | AR UURBAN         |  | 900A         | NON-STOP         |
| 67    | APK         | 95 - FRIDAY       |  |              |                  |
| 10.03 | AIR         | SOUTH AFRICAN     | FL1:516                                  | BUSINESS     | SNACK            |
|       |             | LV DURBAN         | 1999-1997-1997-1997-1997-1997-1997-1997  | 300P         | EDP: AIRBUS A300 |
|       |             | AR JOHANNESBURG   |  | 4004         | NON-510P         |
|       |             |                   |  | 1.403/503/14 |                  |
|       |             |                   |  |              |                  |
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|--|------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
|  |            | ITIME   | RAKY                              |   |                              |
|  |            | TO: WORLDTEK TRAVEL<br>111 WATER STREET<br>NEW HAVEN CT 065 |                                   | 004004  |                              |
| - 01   | R1 76      | AGELLAN/FERDINAND   |                                   |   |                              |
| 07   | APK<br>AIR | 95 - FRIDAY<br>South African<br>LV Johannesburg             | FLT:201                           | BUSINESS<br>800P  | EUP: BUEINH 747 400          |
| 08   | APR        | 95 - SATURDAY<br>AK SAL                                     |                                   | 200A  | NUN-STOP                     |
| 09   | APR<br>AIR | 95 - SUNDAY<br>TAUV-CARBO VERDE<br>LV SAL<br>AR L1SBON      | FLT:602                           | BUSINESS<br>450P<br>1130P                                   | EQP: AIRBUS A310<br>NON-STOP |
| 10   | APR<br>A1K | LV LISBON<br>AK MADKID                                      | FLT: 700                          | BUSINESS<br>040A<br>945A                                    | EQPI AIRBUS A320             |
|  | AIR        | IBERIA<br>LV MADRID<br>AR SEVILLA                           | -11-106                           | 1120A<br>12259  | I UPI BUEING 727             |

## **Heavier than Air**

1993 – 1994

At the turn of the Twentieth Century, a number of scientists, inventors, and individuals attempted to create the first successful human flying machine what was later was known as the aeroplane. For testing, it was customary to build kites as prototypes of these machines. Between 1993 and 1994, I rebuilt thirteen prototypes that might have advanced the history of the flying machine, but were not fundamental to the invention of the aeroplane. Each kite was equipped with a disposable camera including a self-timer. During the flight of the kites, the camera took a picture of the tether leading back to my hands, documenting on every occasion both the capability of these objects to fly, as well as my performance of re-enacting the historic test flights.

→ *Heavier than Air*, installation view at Postmasters Gallery, New York, 1994 Each kite is exhibited along with the photograph shot by its camera.



*Box Kite, after Lawrence Hargrave*, 1993 Kite: 68 x 18 x 58 inches (173 x 46 x 147.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, New York



Compound Kite, after Samuel F. Cody, 1993 Kite: 29 x 61 x 37 inches (73.5 x 155 x 68.6 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Mikael and Pia Karlson, Stockholm Courtesy Roger Björkholmen Galleri



*Four Winged Box Kite*, 1993 Kite: 35 x 72 x 48 inches (89 x 183 x 122 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, London



War Kite, after Samuel F. Cody, 1993 Kite: 34 x 80 x 48 inches (86.4 x 203 x 122 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, Switzerland



Ladder Kite, after Joseph Lecornu, 1994 Kite: 53 x 18 x 48 inches (134.5 x 46 x 122 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of the artist



*Hexagonal Box Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell*, 1994 Kite: 42 x 48 x 70 inches (107 x 122 x 178 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Robert J. Shiffler Foundation, Ohio



Multicell Square Box Kite, after Joseph Lecornu, 1994 Kite: 62 x 18 x 62 inches (157.5 x 46 x 157.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection



Four Cell Tetrahedral Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell, 1993 Kite: 120 x 26 x 24 inches (305 x 66 x 61 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, Brazil



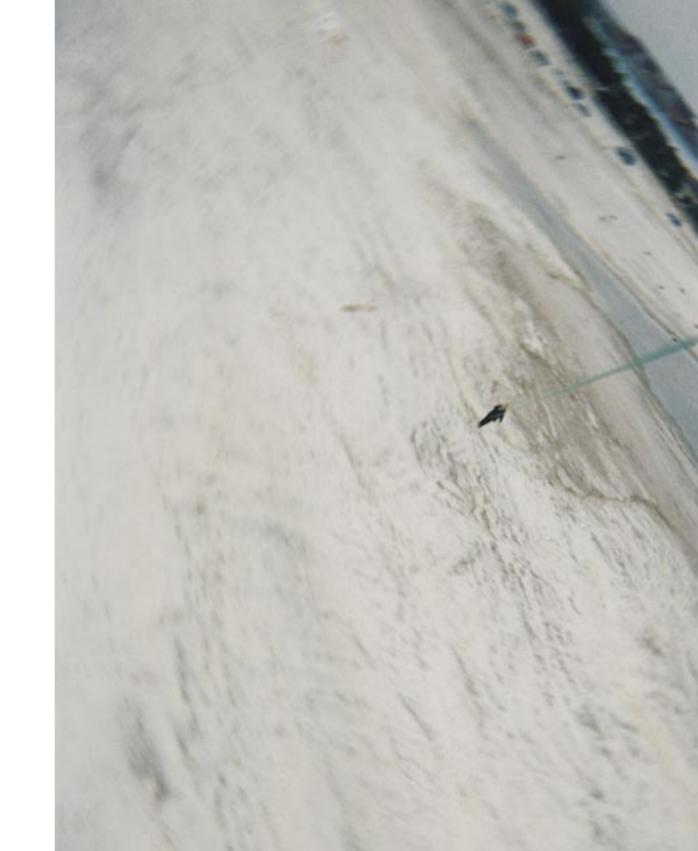
*Circular Box Kite, after Lawrence Hargrave*, 1994 Kite: 37 x 37 x 86 inches (94 x 94 x 218.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Dariush Ghatan, Stockholm Courtesy Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm



3 *Flaix Kites, flown 'in train'*, 1994 Kites: 30 x 30 x 30 inches each (76 x 76 x 76 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection Courtesy of White Cube, London



Radial Winged Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell, 1994 Kite: 170 x 132 x 64 inches (432 x 335.5 x 162.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of the artist



*Kite, after Walter Brooks*, 1993 Kite: 45 x 45 x 45 inches (114 x 114 x 114 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Sandra Gering, New York







Box Kite, after Lawrence Hargrave, 1993 Kite: 68 x 18 x 58 inches (173 x 46 x 147.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, New York



Compound Kite, after Samuel F. Cody, 1993 Kite: 29 x 61 x 37 inches (73.5 x 155 x 68.6 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Mikael and Pia Karlson, Stockholm Courtesy Roger Björkholmen Galleri





Four Winged Box Kite, 1993 Kite: 35 x 72 x 48 inches (89 x 183 x 122 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, London War Kite, after Samuel F. Cody, 1993 Kite: 34 x 80 x 48 inches (86.4 x 203 x 122 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, Switzerland



Ladder Kite, after Joseph Lecornu, 1994 Kite: 53 x 18 x 48 inches (134.5 x 46 x 122 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of the artist Hexagonal Box Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell, 1994 Kite: 42 x 48 x 70 inches (107 x 122 x 178 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Robert J. Shiffler Foundation, Ohio 

 Multicell Square Box Kite, after Joseph Lecornu, 1994



 Multicell Square Box Kite, after Joseph Lecornu,
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 1994
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 Kite: 62 x 18 x 62 inches
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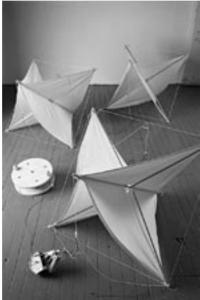
 (157.5 x 46 x 157.7 centimetres)
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 Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres)
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 Private Collection
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Four Cell Tetrahedral Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell, 1993 Kite: 120 x 26 x 24 inches (305 x 66 x 61 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection, Brazil





Circular Box Kite, after Lawrence Hargrave, 1994 Kite: 37 x 37 x 86 inches (94 x 94 x 218.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Dariush Ghatan, Stockholm Courtesy Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm 3 Flaix Kites, flown 'in train', 1994 Kites: 30 x 30 x 30 inches each (76 x 76 x 76 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Private Collection Courtesy of White Cube, London





Radial Winged Kite, after Alexander Graham Bell, 1994 Kite: 170 x 132 x 64 inches (432 x 335.5 x 162.5 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of the artist Kite, after Walter Brooks, 1993 Kite: 45 x 45 x 45 inches (114 x 114 x 114 centimetres) Photograph: 24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.5 centimetres) Collection of Sandra Gering, New York

## Men On The Moon

#### Tranquility 1992

398 wax cylinders, recording machine, and transcript book Tom Patchett Collection, Santa Monica, California

#### **EVA** 1996

200 wax cylinders, recording machine, and transcript book Collection of Dariush Ghatan, Stockholm, Michael Karlson, Stockholm, Peter Jansson, Stockholm and Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm Courtesy Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm

#### Rest Period 1998

533 wax cylinders, recording machine, and transcript book Courtesy of the artist and LFL Gallery, New York

#### **Return** (Ongoing)

Projected: 250 cylinders, recording machine, and transcript book

Since 1990, I have been re-recording and re-transcribing the radio communications of Apollo 11 and NASA during their first journey to the Moon on July 20-21, 1969. For the recording process, I made a replica of the phonograph designed by Thomas Edison in 1877, the first sound recording and playing device. Edison's phonograph recorded sounds onto wax cylinders. The replica also uses this mechanism. In *Men on the Moon*, the original audio archive of the Apollo 11 space mission is recorded onto wax cylinders. Each cylinder records approximately 50 – 70 seconds of sound. Every one of these is dated and indexed by the second.

The complete project of *Men on the Moon* consists of four catalogued and successive chapters in accordance with the space mission: *Tranquility, EVA, Rest Period*, and *Return*. All chapters include a transcribed text-version of the recordings. When the four chapters are completed, this work will register in sound and text the 23 hours of radio communications that this space mission spent on the surface of the Moon, including the static and silent moments. To date, I have recorded and transcribed 19 of the total 23 recorded-hours, realizing three of four chapters of *Men on the Moon*.

# MEN ON THE MOON

July 20 1969 10 PM ES.T

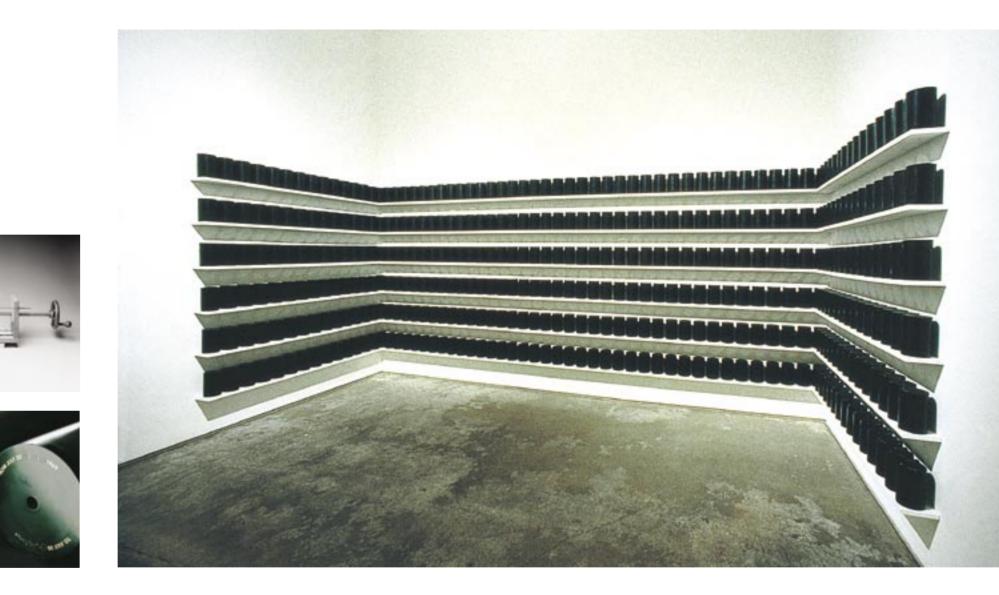
E.V.A.

LMP, Lunar Module Pilot - Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin CDR, Mission Commander - Neil Armstrong CMP, Command Module Pilot - Michael Collins

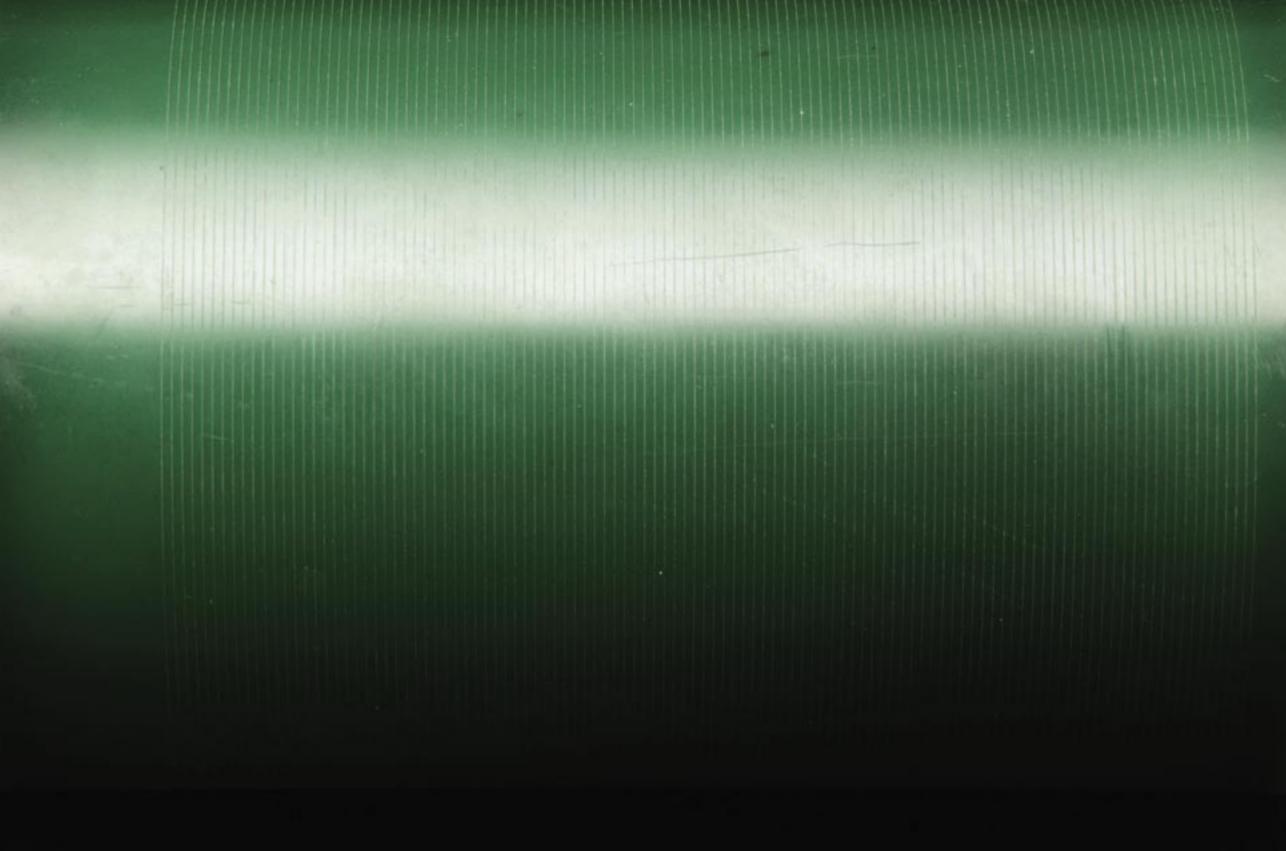
PRES. NIXON - President Richard Nixon

TRANQ - Tranquility Base, on the Moon COLUM - Columbia, orbiting station CC - Command Control, Houston

|   | 56:13 | CDR (TRANQ) | I'm going to step off LM now.   |
|---|-------|-------------|---|
|   | 56:48 | CDR (TRANQ) | That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.  |
|   | 57:00 | CDR (TRANQ) | And the - the surface is fine and pow-<br>dery. I can - I can pick it up loosely with<br>my toes. It does adhere in fine layers<br>like powdered charcoal to the sole and<br>sides of my boots. I only go in a small<br>fraction of an inch, maybe an eight of an<br>inch, but I can see the footprints of my<br>boots and the threads in the fine, sandy<br>particles.   |
|   | 57:30 | CC          | Neil, this is Houston. We're copying.   |
|   | 57:45 | CDR (TRANQ) | There seems to be no difficulty in moving<br>around we suspected. It's even perhaps<br>easier than the simulations at one-sixth g<br>than we performed in various simulations<br>on the ground. It's actually no trouble to<br>walk around. Okay. The descent engine<br>did not leave a crater of any size. It has<br>about 1 foot clearance on the ground.<br>We're essentially on a very level place<br>here. I can see some evidence of rays<br>emanating from the descent engine, but<br>a very insignificant amount. |
|   | 58:54 | CDR (TRANQ) | Okay, Buzz, we ready to bring down the camera?  |
|   | 58:59 | LMP (TRANQ) | I'm already. I think it's been all squared away and in good shape.  |
|   | 59:03 | CDR (TRANQ) | Okay.   |
| 3 |       |             |   |



- Men on the Moon: Tranquility, installation view at Postmasters Gallery, New York, 1994
   Phonograph recording and playing device for Men on the Moon, modelled after the original design by Thomas Edison in 1877
   Detail of wax cylinders of Men on the Moon
   ←View of pages 6-7 of transcript book, Men on the Moon: EVA, 1996
   Surface view of wax cylinder #399, from July 20 10:56:48 1969 to July 20 10:57:45, of Men on the Moon: EVA, 1996









It's a world of laugh - ter, a world of tears



It's a world of hopes and a world of fears



There's so much that



share

ber

we

Ar - ise ye wor-kers from your slum -



That it's time we're a-ware, it's a small world af-ter all

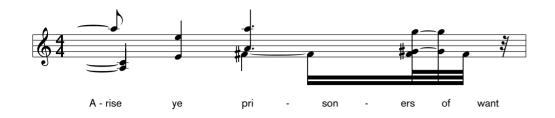


# Rocinante

Bass drum, snare drum, cymbal, tambourine, 43 pipe organ, air pump, PVC pipes, monitor, computer device, solar panels 63 x 84 x 84 inches (160 x 213.5 x 213.5 centimetres) Collection of Wim Delvoye, Belgium

#### 2003

A musical automaton that pretends to be a satellite for all the countries that lack a space program. The body of the satellite is adorned with these countries' flags. The sculpture is composed of musical instruments such as drums, organ pipes and other percussive elements, driven by an air powered system. Rocinante is equipped with a small television monitor displaying a one-hour countdown, and when it reaches zero, the instruments begin playing a composition that intermixes the music from *L'Internationale* and Disneyland's *It's a Small World After All*. While it plays the monitor flashes the jumbled lyrics.









а

now

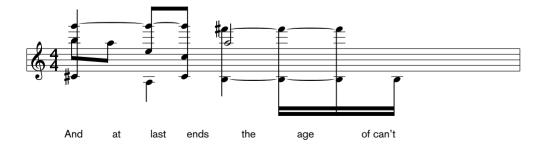
thun - ders

all



re - volt

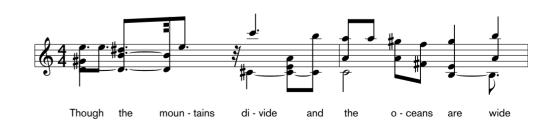


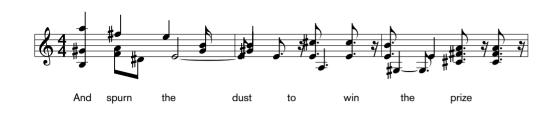












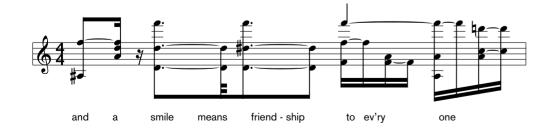






Sun,

There is just one Moon and one gol-den





The In - ter - na - tion - ale u - nites the hu - man



race

There's so much that we share that it's time we're a-ware



A - rise ye work - ers from your... Small world af - ter all



A - rise ye work - ers from your... Small world af - ter all





Proceedings of the Institute of Radio Engineers Volume 21, Number 10

October, 1933

#### TECHNICAL PAPERS

#### ELECTRICAL DISTURBANCES APPARENTLY OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL ORIGIN\*

Br

KARL G. JANSKY (Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc., New York City)

Summary -Electromagnetic waves of an unknown origin were detected during a series of experiments on atmospherics at high frequencies. Directional records have teen taken of these waves for a period of over a year. The data obtained from these words show that the horizontal component of the direction of arrival changes apcorimately 360 degrees in about 24 hours in a manner that is accounted for by the saily rotation of the earth. Furthermore the time at which these waves are a maximum and the direction from which they come at that time changes gradually throughout the year in a way that is accounted for by the rotation of the earth about the sun. These facts lead to the conclusion that the direction of arrival of these waves is fixed in space; i.e., that the waves come from some source outside the solar system. Although the right ascension of this source can be determined from the data with coniderable accuracy, the error not being greater than ±7.5 degrees, the limitations of the apparatus and the errors that might be caused by the ionized layers of the earth's stmosphere and by attenuation of the waves in passing over the surface of the earth are such that the declination of the source can be determined only approximately. Thus the value obtained might be in error by as much as  $\pm 30$  degrees.

The data give for the coördinates of the region from which the waves seem to come a right ascension of 18 hours and a declination of -10 degrees.

#### INTRODUCTION

URING the progress of a series of studies that were being made at Holmdel, N. J., on the direction of arrival of atmospherics at high frequencies,<sup>1</sup> records were obtained that showed the presence of very weak but steady electromagnetic waves of an unknown origin. The first indications of these waves were obtained on records taken during the summer and fall of 1931. However, a comprehensive study of them was not begun until January, 1932. The first complete records obtained showed the surprising fact that the hori-

\* Decimal classification: R114. Original manuscript received by the Institute, June 22, 1933. Presented under a different title at the meeting of the American Section of the U.R.S.I., Washington, D. C., April 27, 1933. Revised for publication and presented before Eighth Annual Convention, Chicago, Illinois, June 27, 1933.

<sup>4</sup> Karl G. Jansky, "Directional studies of atmospherics at high frequencies," Page, I.R.E., vol. 20, p. 1920; December, (1932). The waves referred to are those of group three in the above paper.

# Electrical Disturbances Apparently of Extraterrestrial Origin (Radiotelescope)

Wood, copper pipe, short wave radio 328 x 13 x 13 feet (100 x 4 x 4 metres)

1995 - 1997

In 1933, Dr. Karl Jansky began an experiment in search of the source of static being picked up by telephone wires at the time. For his research, he created and used a giant antenna that eventually became the radiotelescope. After two years of listening to the static with this antenna. Jansky concluded that the stars were emitting radio waves causing the telephone wire interference. In his seminal text, Electrical Disturbances Apparently of Extraterrestrial Origin, he proposed that one could "see" the stars by "listening" to radio emissions, marking the beginning of radio astronomy. Drawing from his text, scientific research, and plans. I rebuilt Jansky's massive radiotelescope. When exhibited a wire runs from this antenna into the exhibition space and is plugged in to a short-wave radio. The radio, which amplifies the waves of outer space that are received by the sculpture, is mounted on the gallery's window as to create a visual and aural relationship between the antenna, the radio, and the transmission.

#### 1388 Jansky: Electrical Disturbances of Extraterrestrial Origin

zontal component of the direction of arrival of these waves changed nearly 360 degrees in 24 hours, and at that time this horizontal component was approximately the same as the azimuth of the sun. These facts led to the assumption that the source of these waves was some how associated with the sun.

Records of these waves have now been taken at frequent interval for a period of more than a year. The data obtained from these record contrary to the first indications, are not consistent with the suppotions made above relative to the source of the waves, but indicate the

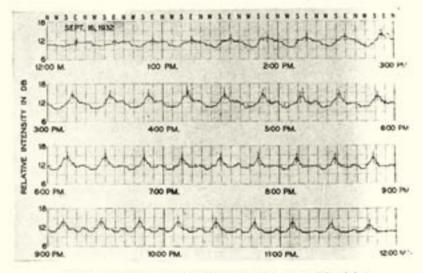


Fig. 1-Sample record of waves of extraterrestrial origin

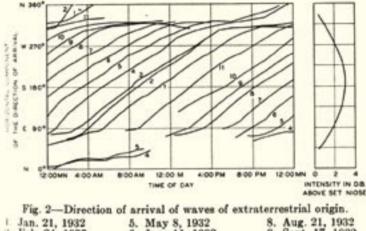
the direction of the phenomenon remains fixed in space, that is to so its right ascension and declination remain constant.

#### APPARATUS

The apparatus used and the type of records obtained were describin detail in a former paper.<sup>1</sup> Briefly, however, the apparatus consiof a rotating antenna array, a short-wave measuring set, and an aumatic intensity recorder. The array is highly directive in the horizonplane and is rotated about a vertical axis so that data obtained w the system, like that obtained with a loop rotating on a vertical axgive the horizontal component of the direction of arrival of signbut tell nothing directly about the angle the direction of arrival methwith the horizontal plane. The operation of the recorder is synchronicwith that of the rotating array so that the records show directly the berizontal component of the direction of arrival of signals as well as their intensity. The apparatus was tuned to a wavelength of 14.6 meters during all the experiments.

#### RESULTS

Fig. 1 shows a sample record of the waves of unknown origin obuned with this apparatus. The time at which the array was pointed a the direction from which the unknown waves come is clearly indiated on the record by the humps in the curve. The direction of the arrest at those times can be determined from the scale along the top time record.



| 2 Feb. 24, 1932 | 6. June 11, 1932 | 9. Sept. 17, 1932 |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| March 4, 1932   | 7. July 15, 1932 | 10. Oct. 8, 1932  |
| - April 9, 1932 |                  | 11. Dec. 4, 1932  |

If, now, the horizontal component of the direction of arrival is bitted against the time of day a curve similar to one of those of Fig. 2 detained. Thus, data from the record just mentioned constituted if of that from which curve 9 of this figure was obtained. The figure have curves for eleven different days spaced approximately one outh apart during the year 1932. There is no curve for the month of howember. These curves were obtained by averaging the data taken it several consecutive days so as to eliminate the errors made in the several consecutive days so as to eliminate the errors made in the several consecutive days so as to eliminate the errors made in the several the records. The day assigned to a given curve is the middle word the group over which the data for that curve were obtained. The state at the right in the figure shows the variation in intensity of the lines plotted against the direction of arrival.

This figure shows: first, that the horizontal component of the direc-

there is a uniformly progressive shift of the curves to the left from month to month which at the end of one sidereal year brings the curve back to its initial position. These facts show that the waves come, not from the sun, but from a direction which remains constant throughout the year.

#### Discussion

To show that this is the necessary conclusion it will be necessary to digress a little from the subject and discuss the celestial sphere and celestial coördinates.

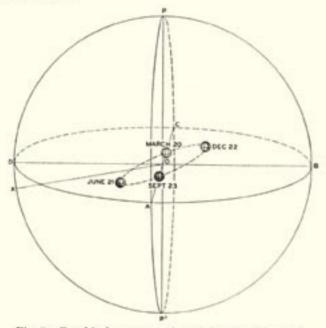
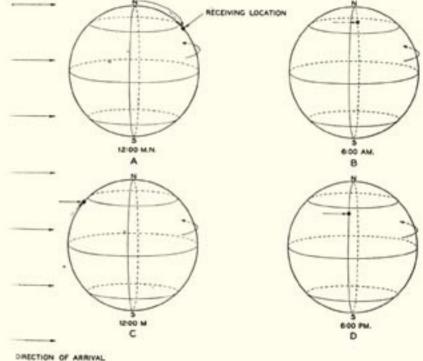
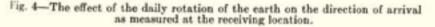


Fig. 3-Graphical representation of the celestial sphere.

The celestial sphere is that hypothetical sphere surrounding the earth upon which all the stars, whatever their distances, appear to be located. The direction of a star, then, is described by giving its apparent position on the celestial sphere, and its position on the sphere igiven in terms of a pair of angles called the right ascension and declination of the star. Fig. 3 shows a graphical representation of the celestial sphere with the earth in its orbit ar und the sun at the center. The plane *ABCD* represents the plane of the celestial equator and *POP*<sup>+</sup> the axis of the celestial sphere.<sup>2</sup> Right ascension is measured in houraround the circle ABCD eastward from the line OA as reference. The line OA is determined by the direction of the sun from the earth at the time it crosses the equator on the first day of spring. Thus the line OAlies at 0 hours, OB at 6 hours, OC at 12 hours, and OD at 18 hours; 24 hours of right ascension being equal to 360 degrees. Declination is measured in degrees above or below the equatorial plane, plus, if it is above the plane and minus, if below. The positions of the earth with



OF WAVES IN SPACE



respect to the sun for the first day of each season are shown. Since the diameter of the earth's orbit is so small with respect to the distances to the stars, it is assumed that the earth is always at the center of the sphere at 0 and the rest of this discussion is based on that assumption. Accordingly, the plane of the celestial equator coincides with that of the earth's equator and the axis of the celestial sphere coincides with the earth's axis.

Now, if there were radio waves coming from a direction fixed in space and from a source so far removed from the sun that the direc-

<sup>\*</sup> For a more complete explanation of the system of coordinates used in thidiscussion see Russell-Dugan-Stewart, "Astronomy," vol. 1, chap. 1 or the opening chapters of any textbook on astronomy.

tions of propagation throughout the whole solar system were substantially parallel, if there were no distortion in direction suffered by the waves during their passage through the ionized layers of the earth, if these waves had the ability to bend around the earth, and if there were no other unexplained phenomena taking place, then, for this idealized case, the horizontal component of the direction of arrival as measured at the receiving location would change 360 degrees during one complete rotation of the earth. Let us assume for the sake of argument that the right ascension of the direction of arrival of these idealized waves is 18 hours and its declination 0 degrees, that direction

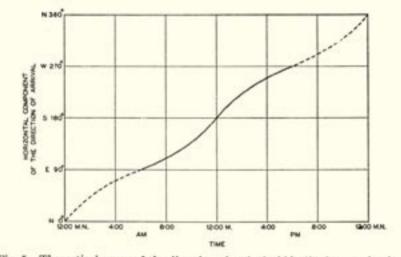


Fig. 5—Theoretical curve of the direction of arrival of idealized waves having a right ascension of 18 hours and a declination of 0 degrees.

represented by the line DO in Fig. 3. Then at midnight on the first day of winter, the relation between the direction of arrival and the location of the receiver will be as shown at A in Fig. 4. Since the receiver lies in north latitude 40 degrees 22 minutes and the declination of the direction or arrival of the waves is 0 degrees, then at the instant represented the horizontal component of the direction of arrival would be north as shown by the broken arrow. Six hours later the condition shown at B would exist and the horizontal component of the direction of arrival would coincide with the true direction and would be east. After another six hours, the direction of arrival would coincide with the meridian of the receiver, and its horizontal component would be south as shown by the broken arrow at C, after six hours more if would be west as at D, and finally after a complete rotation of the earth it would be back to north again. Or, if this horizontal component of the direction of arrival were plotted against time of day, a curve like that shown in Fig. 5 would be obtained. The curve is dotted for that portion of the time during which the earth would be between the source of the waves and the receiver. As will be seen from the figure, the horizontal component of the direction of arrival changes 360 degrees in about 24 hours, or in exactly 23 hours and 56.06 minutes since that is the time required for the earth to make one complete revolution with re-

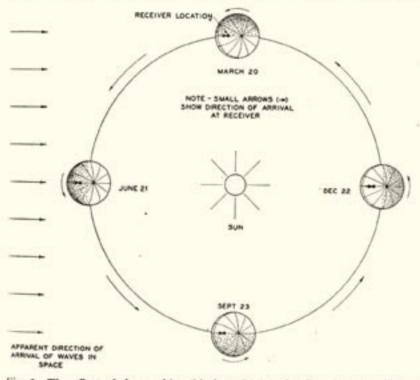


Fig. 6—The effect of the earth's orbital motion on the direction of arrival as measured at the receiving location.

spect to the stars. It is this difference between the length of the sidereal day and the mean solar day (3.54 minutes of solar time) that accounts for the uniformly progressive shift of the curves of Fig. 2 to the left.

Fig. 6 will illustrate just how this shift takes place. This figure shows the earth in its orbit around the sun as seen from above. If, as has been assumed, the direction of arrival of the waves has a right ascension of 18 hours, they can be represented by some such group of arrows as shown at the left in the figure. When the earth is in the position shown for June 21 then, regardless of the declination of the direction.

tion of arrival of the waves, the time at which this direction of arrival will coincide with the meridian of the receiver will be at midnight. On September 23 this time of coincidence will occur six hours earlier at 6:00 r.m. On December 22 it will occur another six hours earlier or at 12:00 noon and on March 20 it will occur at 6:00 A.M. Consequently if a curve like the one of Fig. 5 is plotted for every month of the year a family of curves like that of Fig. 7 will be obtained where each curve occurs approximately two hours earlier than the one for the preceding month. Note the similarity between this family of curves and that of Fig. 2.

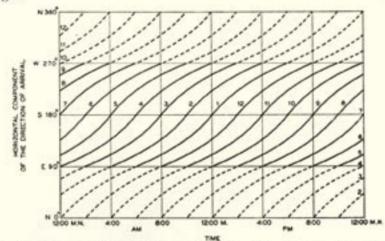
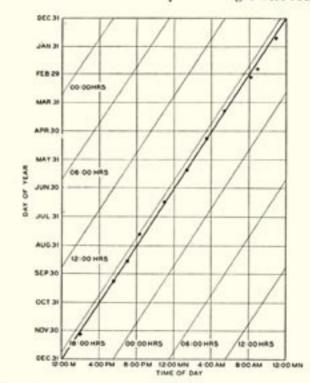


Fig. 7—Theoretical curves for twelve months of the direction of arrival of idealized waves having a right ascension of 18 hours and a declination of 0 degrees.

| 1. Dec. 22                | 5. April 21 | 9. Aug. 22   |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| <ol><li>Jan. 21</li></ol> | 6. May 21   | 10. Sept. 23 |
| 3. Feb. 21                | 7. June 21  | 11. Oct. 23  |
| 4. March 20               | 8. July 22  | 12. Nov. 22  |

It will be shown later that for idealized waves having a direction of arrival the declination of which is between -40 degrees, 22 minuteand +40 degrees, 22 minutes the horizontal component of the direction of arrival is south when, and only when, the direction of arrival coincides with the meridian of the receiver. Therefore, the times at which the curves of Fig. 7 cross the line whose ordinate is 180 degrees (south are spaced approximately two hours apart, and if these times are plotted against the day of the year represented by each curve the pointwill all lie on a straight line<sup>3</sup> the slope of which will be 365.25/24 dayper hour.

<sup>3</sup> Strictly speaking the line should not be exactly straight. Of the man reasons why this is so the most important is that the earth's motion in its orbit. It will be shown later that the declination of the direction of arrival of the waves detected by the measuring equipment is between the values of -40 degrees, 22 minutes and +40 degrees, 22 minutes. Consequently, if the right ascension remains constant then points obtained from Fig. 2 in a manner exactly similar to that just explained should fall on a straight line the slope of which should be 365.25/24 days per hour. It was in this manner that the points of Fig. 8 were obtained. The



Fiz. 8-Time of coincidence of the direction of arrival and the meridian of the receiver for the different days of the year.

correspondence of the points with the heavy line, the slope of which is 265.25/24 days per hour, cannot be accidental and proves that the right ascension of the direction of arrival of the waves is constant. The Position of this heavy line on the graph is determined by the value of the right ascension. Thus the position of the curves corresponding to right ascension of 0 hours, 6 hours, 12 hours, and 18 hours are shown by the light diagonal lines on the figure.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>+</sup> hot uniform. However, the effects are all so small that the greatest deviation build be scarcely perceptible on the curve so they will not be considered in this fiscussion.

From the relative positions of the heavy line and the light lines it will be seen that the measured direction of arrival occurs at a right ascension of approximately 18 hours, 30 minutes; however, because the mechanism of the recorder takes a finite time to record the field strength values, the directions measured on these records lag behind the true directions by a value varying from 4 degrees to 9 degrees. If the measured values are corrected for this error the right ascension of the direction of arrival becomes approximately 18 hours.<sup>4</sup>

Referring to Fig. 3, if the direction of arrival has a right ascension of 18 hours then it must lie in that half of the plane PDP'B to the left of PP'. One such direction is represented by the line XO in the figure.

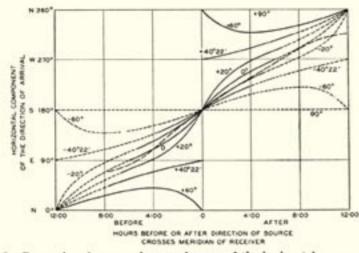


Fig. 9-Comparison between the actual curve of the horizontal component of the direction of arrival and the theoretical curves for different declinations.

The curve of Fig. 5 was drawn for the idealized waves having a declination of 0 degrees. Obviously, the shape of the curves would be considerably different for waves having different declinations. Fig. 9 shows the theoretical curves for several different declinations. In thifigure the horizontal component of the direction of arrival is plotted against time, but here the time is given not in terms of the hours of the day but in terms of the time interval before and after the direction of arrival coincides with the meridian of the receiver. The values of declination used for the different curves are given in the figure. Abefore, the curves are dotted for that portion of the time during which the earth would be between the source of the waves and the receiver.

For the purpose of making a comparison between these curves and those of Fig. 2, an average of the curves of Fig. 2 is shown in Fig. 9 by the broken line. It will be seen that for the greater part of the time during which the direction of arrival is above the horizon it lies between the curves for a declination of 0 degrees and -20 degrees, giving a value of roughly -10 degrees for the declination of the direction of arrival of the waves. In Fig. 3 the line XO is drawn with a declination of -10degrees and right ascension of 18 hours so that it represents the apparent direction of arrival of the waves.

Beyond the point where the direction of arrival drops below the horizon, the average curve is not at all similar to the theoretical curves of Fig. 9. However, for that portion of the curves the intensity is very weak (see the curve at the right in Fig. 2) and the directions cannot be measured very accurately. Furthermore, as the time interval before or after the direction of arrival coincides with the meridian of the receiver is increased, the waves must travel through an increasing thickness of the earth's atmosphere so that any bending of the waves caused by the ionized layers would increase also. At the time the direction of arrival mincides with the meridian of the receiver this bending is confined to the plane determined by the right ascension of the direction of arrival, and will therefore cause no error in the measurement of the right ascension if the data used for its determination are taken at this time, as has been done. It may, however, affect the measurement of the dedination. At all other times, whatever bending the waves suffer will cause errors in both measurements and this bending might be the cause of the difference between the theoretical and actual curves noted.

It may very well be that the waves that reach the receiver instead of coming from a single point fixed in space originate in the earth's atmosphere, but are secondary radiations caused by some primary mays of unknown character, coming from a source or sources fixed in space, and striking the earth's atmosphere. If this is so the disturbance measured by the receiver is probably the summation of very many waves of various intensities coming from secondary sources in the tarth's atmosphere that are scattered over a considerable area. In this take the declination of the source of the primary rays may be considerably different from that obtained from the curves; however, the measarement of its right ascension would not be affected appreciably if tande in the manner described above.

On the other hand it may be that the waves/that reach the reinver are the primary waves themselves coming from a great many inverse scattered throughout the heavens. In this case the direction

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The limit of error has not been exactly determined but is certainly begreater than  $\pm 7.5$  degrees, which is equivalent to  $\pm 30$  minutes of right assession.

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measured would be the direction of the center of activity, and as before, the value of the right ascension would be accurate in spite of the bending of the rays in the ionized layers, and the declination would be in error by an amount equal to that for a single source at the center of activity.

From a consideration of the data and the method of interpretation it is believed that, in spite of the possible errors mentioned in the above cases, the declination of the source or center of activity, if there is more than one source, as measured would be accurate within an error not greater than  $\pm 30$  degrees.

The apparent direction of arrival of the waves has not as yet been definitely associated with any region fixed in space; however, there are two such regions that should be seriously considered. The point on the celestial sphere of right ascension 18 hours and declination -10 degrees, the direction from which the waves seem to come, is very near the point where the line drawn from the sun through the center of the huge galaxy of stars and nebulae of which the sun is a member would strike the celestial sphere. The coördinates of that point are approximately right ascension of 17 hours, 30 minutes, declination -30 degrees (in the Milky Way in the direction of Saggitarius). It is also very near that point in space towards which the solar system is moving with respect to the other stars. The coordinates of this point are right ascension 18 hours and declination +28 degrees.4 Whether or not the actual direction of arrival of the primary rays coincides with either of these directions cannot be determined definitely until some method of accurately measuring their declination is devised and the measurements made.

In conclusion, data have been presented which show the existence of electromagnetic waves in the earth's atmosphere which apparently come from a direction that is fixed in space. The data obtained give for the coördinates of this direction a right ascension of 18 hours and zdeclination of -10 degrees.

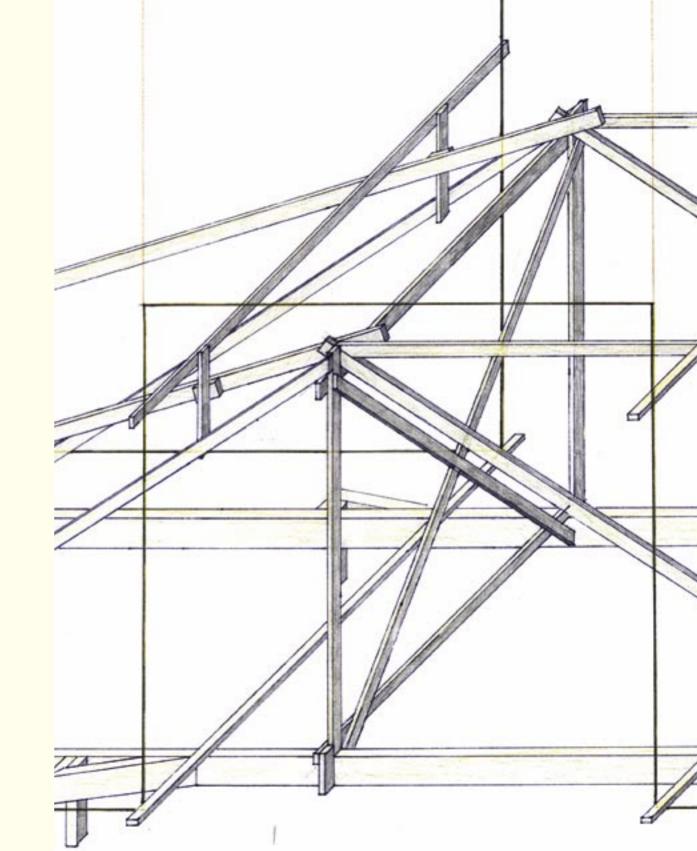
The experiments which are the subject of this paper were performed at Holmdel, N. J. (Latitude 40° 22' N and Longitude 74 10' W) during the year 1932.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to acknowledge the help of Mr. A. M. Skellett also of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, in making some af the astronomical interpretations of the data.

<sup>5</sup> H. Spencer Jones, "General Astronomy," pp. 358, 359; Forest Ray Moulton, "Astronomy," pp. 479, 504-509.

<sup>4</sup> Russel-Dugan-Stewart, "Astronomy," vol. 2, p. 661.



• Electrical Disturbances Apparently of Extraterrestrial Origin (Radiotelescope), installation view, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland, 1997

1 212

← Detail of Paul Ramírez Jonas' sketch plans for Electrical Disturbances Apparently of Extraterrestrial Origin (Radiotelescope)

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# Album: 50 State Summits

Unbound book with 55 pages, including cover page, table of contents, and mounted photographs Dimensions per page: 24 x 19 ½ inches (61 x 49.5 centimetres); each photograph 20 ½ x 16 ¾ inches (52 x 42.5 centimetres); edition of 3 Courtesy of the artist and LFL Gallery, New York

2002 – Ongoing

I have been hiking, climbing, walking, and sometimes simply driving to the highest point in each state of the United States of America. Upon reaching the highest point in each state, I hold or wave a flag that reads, "OPEN," and take a self-portrait. This project takes the form of an oversized photo-album. For each state summit, there is a page with a caption indicating the location. If I have reached the summit in that state, the page includes a portrait and the date of my arrival. Locations yet to be visited also have their page, in anticipation to their corresponding photograph.

This book lays out possibilities, influences my future, and provokes the continuation of this expedition. As in most of my works, I follow in other's footsteps. I read existing texts, plans, maps and directions. Since my body or my hands retrace the trajectory of another, there is a possibility of experiencing the originator's feelings and thoughts.



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|------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2.         | ALASKA, Mount McKinley             | 20,320'           |
| 3.         | ARIZONA, Humphreys Peak            | 12,633'           |
| 4.         | ARKANSAS, Magazine Mountain        | 2,753'            |
| 5.         | CALIFORNIA, Mount Whitney          | 14,494'           |
| 6.         | COLORADO, Mount Elbert             | 14,433'           |
| 7.         | CONNECTICUT, Mount Frissell        | 2,380'            |
| 8.         | Delaware, Tower Hill               | 448'              |
| 9.         | FLORIDA, Britton Hill              | 345'              |
| 10.        | GEORGIA, Brasstown Bald            | 4,784'            |
| 11.        | HAWAII, Mauna Kea                  | 13,796'           |
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| 14.        | INDIANA, Hoosier Hill              | 1,257'            |
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|            | MAINE, Mount Katahdin              | 5,268'            |
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|-----|---|---------|
| 52. | Furthest from home (Point D'Entrecasteaux, Australia)         | 0'      |
| 53. | 50 YEARS FROM CONQUEST OF MT. EVEREST (11:30 am MAY 29, 2003) | ?       |

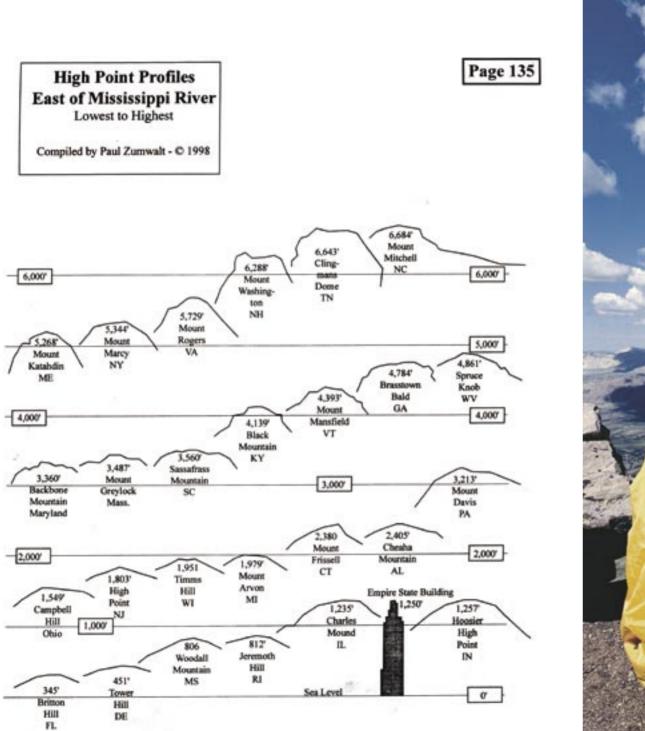




• Album: 50 State Summits, installation view at LFL Gallery, New York, 2003









# Paul Ramírez Jonas

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# Foreword

The inventiveness of Paul Ramírez Jonas is manifested in his continual engagement with technology and ideas of technological progress. Significantly his work is often low-tech or transparently mechanical in nature, embodying redundancy. "My brother was a tinkerer," he writes, "and I just watched. And of course I wanted to be like my brother, I was good at taking things apart, but I couldn't put them back together again." A sense of futile endeavor has pervaded his subsequent artistic practice as has an almost perverse celebration of failure, the unwritten history of technology providing a basis for meditations on much broader concerns; in particular, the passage of time, memory and loss.

The exhibition *Heavier than Air. Paul Ramírez Jonas* includes five sculptural pieces made by Ramírez Jonas during 1993-94 for a project poignantly entitled *Heavier than Air.* They are replicas of kites from the turn of the twentieth century designed by inventors such as Alexander Graham Bell, Walter Brooks and Lawrence Hargrave. Originally intended as prototype flying machines, their development was quickly abandoned following the Wright Brothers' breakthrough in manned flight. The replicas constitute an homage to forgotten scientific achievement, as the artist explains: "Although in our eyes they seem unable to fly, they flew in the past and are able to fly now." Attached to each kite is a clockwork camera that takes a photograph of him standing on the ground below, the string providing an umbilical connection with the sky. The image of the artist, isolated in an expansive landscape, conveys an aspiration to some transcendental condition, a modernist romanticism whereby the tyranny of natural forces is broken by technology.

In a more recent work, shown here, Ramírez Jonas attempts to move beyond the normal constraints of time and space, to prolong the hours of daylight by driving into a sunset. Shot through the windscreen of a moving car, *A Longer Day* essentially is a film of a fading horizon. The day is lengthened by almost a minute. The effort is, of course, ultimately hopeless – we are all continually lengthening and shortening our days in equal measure as we travel east and west, perhaps even occasionally tripping over the international date line– but we readily identify with an individual travelling hopefully. The artist's drive west is at once an assertion of human mortality, a desperate dash of someone not going gently into night, funny and sympathetic.

This exhibition thus gives rise to a wealth of meaning as we have the privilege to engage with it actually as something in our space and our time. In addition, it communicates a spirit of generosity that is matched by the artist's relentless spirit of adventure and inspiring vision for which we are particularly grateful.

# The Empiricist's New Clothes

## Paul Ramírez Jonas in dialogue with Kirby Gookin

# KG

I am thinking about your handmade kites (Heavier than Air, 1993-1994), the musical satellite (Rocinante, 2003), and your ongoing project to climb to the highest points in the fifty states of America (Album: 50 State Summits, 2002-), and one thing that comes to mind when surveying the work is your devotion to a do-it-vourself [DIY] aesthetic or mode of creation. While for some artists this can be an end in itself-as a didactic or moralising proposition that tries to persuade the viewer to adopt a political position, be it anti-technology, anti-establishment, anti-capitalism, or whatever-it seems that your particular methodology emphasizes the empirical and personal nature of experience. In trying to prolong your day by chasing the sunset (Longer Day, 1997), capturing your image in an aerial photograph taken from a flying kite, or trekking to and then proclaiming each state's highest summit to be "open," your participation is crucial. You are often the art's focal point. Thus, I am wondering whether you might like to take a moment to discuss how you describe or define your audience and the nature of their experience with your work.

# PRJ

If the work were to be made just for me, it wouldn't need a form. It could remain immaterial. It is the presence of a viewer that necessitates form. As an artist, my most basic premise is that the viewer precedes the existence of the work. Paradoxically, I also believe that the viewer remains unknowable. That is why I often use an aesthetic strategy that I call "the wide spectrum treatment." For example, much of my work has a performative aspect to it. Sometimes I present the viewer with a potential performance, as with *Magellan's Itinerary* (1995), which is simply a flight reservation. At other times, the work does a live performance, like in *Rocinante*, or for a performance by the viewer, as in *His Truth Is Marching On* (1993), where the audience can use the sculpture to play a song. And sometimes, a performance has taken place and is presented as a discrete object, as in *Heavier than Air* or *Men on the Moon* (1992–). This multiplicity of approaches addresses what I imagine are the different temperaments of the viewer, and in it I recognize that one size does not fit all.

The DIY aesthetic draws the viewer in a different way. I don't want to mystify my making. Rather, I want it to inspire. I don't want people to say, "my kid could do this." I want them to think that they can do it or even better: that they can fail in this way, too. I want them to realise that at times we may be interchangeable. Thus, for Heavier than Air I did not use historically accurate materials, nor did I use rare or uncommon resources. Instead, I took a pragmatic approach. I purchased all the materials at a local hardware and fabric store. I wanted it to be clear how it was made, how easy it was to remake a historical kite. I always have the faint hope that someone will make the piece for himself or herself, much in the same way that I remade the work of someone else. How many people have made the same object, and how different are they from one another?

# KG

I must admit that ever since I saw your video *Longer Day*, it is impossible for me to drive toward a sunset without stepping on the gas just a little bit harder. In this way, your work has affected my consciousness in everyday experience. Yet, in attempting this, I can also say that I experience a sense of futility suggested by the impossibility of ever successfully cheating time. The same can be said about your re-creation of such failed inventions or projects as the kite designs of Alexander Graham Bell and Lawrence Hargrave, which never fully realised their desire to achieve human flight. The same is true for

the impossible, albeit utopian, mission assigned to *Rocinante*, your homemade satellite dedicated to all the countries without space programmes that is supposed to be launched into orbit to serenade the heavens with musical renditions of "L'Internationale" and "It's a Small World." With these works in mind, I'd like to ask you to elaborate about these "failures" and the implication that there is, perhaps, an element of "folly" in your work. I am referring to the kind of intentional folly one finds in baroque gardens and picturesque ruins that were designed to entertain, while simultaneously demonstrating the folly and humility of their owner.

# PRJ

Your question makes me wonder if folly means finding the humor in futility. Most human actions fall outside of history. Inventing a quasi-aeroplane, brushing one's teeth, and freezing to death on the way to an abstract spot in the map all occupy the same non-hierarchical space outside of the master narrative. I am deeply in love with this pile of events that refuse to become a story. I imagine we all recognize our own un-heroic lives in this pile. Likewise, there is some terror involved, because it truly is the pile of oblivion. I sometimes have the perversely pleasant feeling that I am in some sort of rescue mission that is so improbable that it will also end in that pile. It is very sad, really.

## KG

For me, this aspect of folly adds a layer of humility and, therefore, humanity to your artistic project, and by extension to the human intellectual enterprise in general. Your art taps into the endless possibilities that lay dormant in the hardware store or the home workshop. I am left with the sense that if these and other projects can all be re-created with readily available materials, as you have done; perhaps we, the public, can be tempted into realising not only past projects, but contemporary or even futuristic ones. In essence, the past becomes a catalyst toward an active present and future. This realisation throws me back to *Anything But the Present*, the public conversation that we had during your exhibition at Beaver College in 1998 where we discussed your interest in re-creating past works. At that time, I asked if you were afraid of the present or the future. I now realise that by provoking action, which is the essence of being in the here and now, your art is actually an expression of the present moment if not a call to "Arise ye workers from your slumber" for "it's a small world after all."

# PRJ

I remember that question, and I remember that it rattled me a bit. It is the future or, more precisely, death that I am terrified of. Since *Anything But the Present*, I have come to think more and more that the future, or the time when I will no longer exist, is not unlike the time before I existed. The past and the future are not all that different; but why do we fear one more than the other? The exciting thing about this train of thought is that it is opening the future, science fiction, and utopia as new areas to make work from. Your reading of my attitude toward the present is very generous, but as you can see, my attitude remains one of "anything but the present."

# A Leap Backwards into the Future

### Inés Katzenstein

During what we could broadly call modernity, the idea of the inventor, the discoverer, and the artist has embodied the prospect of innovation, the search for the unknown, and the avant-garde. We tend to imagine these figures alone and obsessed, tirelessly pursuing exorbitant goals, yet they were emblematic of the possibility of revolutionising our world, both materially and symbolically. This utopianism is most evident in the case of the scientific inventor, whose experiments aspire to radically modify the way we live. The scientist's achievements would mark a before and after, a concrete betterment of human life. They would feed "Progress."

It was from the mantle of the scientist that the modern artist inherited the idea of the experimental as the path to the new, but the efficacy of that premise was, in the case of the artist, reduced to the realm of the symbolic. Because of this fundamental limitation, Theodor Adorno maintained that the modern work of art was determined by an impossibility of utopia.

Paul Ramírez Jonas's work reclaims something of the optimism and heroic excessiveness of the experiments and discoveries of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the artist has echoed the ambitions of certain inventors and discoverers from past centuries by methodically reconstructing their prototypes or pursuing their challenges based on historical accounts. And yet, as Ramírez Jonas painstakingly re-enacts those grand moments, he simultaneously strips himself of all pride by deliberately yielding the singularity of the experience to another "I" and to another time. In the work that he has developed in recent years, the historical role of the inventor and the discoverer collapse, and this breakdown coalesces with the artist's performed anti-heroism: his tasks are practically reduced to reading a script, reconstructing, copying, following another's footsteps. "I am a good student of the 1980s,

particularly in considering the idea that originality does not exist."<sup>1</sup> Ramírez Jonas savs. "The map is closed, originality dead, invention futile, progress suspect. And why should more be done? Why add to the excess? We are sitting on a rich bed of fragments, most of them unread. There are enough pre-existing texts already."<sup>2</sup> Like the character in "Pierre Menard. Author of the Quixote." a story by Jorge Luis Borges, which was a key reference for a number of appropriation artists working during Ramírez Jonas's formative years, the artist has almost defined his artistic practice through the humble ambition of replicating other people's achievements. His is a paradoxical gesture that aims to produce a signature through different exercises of the capitulation of the "I".

For Men on the Moon, a work begun in 1990, Ramírez Jonas reconstructed the phonograph designed by Thomas Edison in 1877, the first machine that could record and emit sounds. Edison's phonograph had two diaphragm-andneedle units, one for recording the sound vibrations onto a metal cylinder covered with tin foil and one for playing the sound back. Edison's new phonograph, which operated with wax cylinders instead of tin-foil surfaces, was praised as a paramount innovation. But it had a serious limitation that soon made it obsolete and forgotten (this limitation was one of the main attractions for Ramírez Jonas). These cylinders are able to store sixty seconds of sound for a (supposedly) endless period of time. However, when the sound is released, it is erased; to listen to the sound once stored on the cylinder is to lose it.

When Ramírez Jonas first heard the sound playing from the old failed phonograph he had reconstructed ("reconstruction" here meaning the ability to reproduce not only the machine as object but also its performance), he immediately thought of the research he had already begun on Apollo 11's expedition to

the moon. He then began a still-unfinished process of mutual infiltration of the two stories: through the phonograph designed by Edison, he rerecorded the twenty-three hours of radial communications that were transmitted on 20 July and 21 July, 1969, from Apollo 11 to NASA during its expedition to the moon. The installation of *Men on the Moon* include a series of shelves that exhibit hundreds of handmade wax cylinders, the Duchampian-looking reconstruction of Edison's phonograph, and three books made by the artist containing the transcripts of those twentythree hours of sound. Relating to the conceptual work of the 1960s, the installation presents the same information in three formats: the recording of Apollo 11's expedition onto wax cylinders; a minuteby-minute literal transcription of the conversations between Apollo 11 and NASA; and the technical instrument (the phonograph reconstructed) required to listen to the cylinders' recordings.

Between 1993 and 1994. Ramírez Jonas created Heavier then Air, which consisted of meticulous reconstructions of nineteenth-century kites made as precursors to the aeroplane by inventors such as Samuel F. Cody, Lawrence Hargrave, Joseph Lecornu, and Alexander Graham Bell. He re-created a series of twelve kites in their original sizes and materials (wood and fabric), attaching to each one a small, disposable camera. On windy days between 1993 and 1994, the artist flew the kites one at a time from a beach west of John F. Kennedy International Airport, on Long Island. Through a triggering mechanism, the cameras captured aerial shots after fifteen minutes of flight. Each kite is then exhibited along with the aerial photograph taken during its flight. These photographs depict a shoreline, the kite's string that connects the device to the artist, and, in most cases, the silhouette of the artist in the distance, as small as a dot, standing on the empty beach while manoeuvering the kite. If there are two performative instances in this work (to build, to fly),

these photographs absurdly document the flying moment in reverse. By portraying the artist on the ground holding the string instead of the kite in the sky, these pictures register the solitary act of a paradoxical author, thus functioning as a kind of coy signature. The object is not the kite, but the artist engaged in his performance.

Placed on the floor of a gallery, inert, rigorous, and bold, the reconstructed kites have the resonance of a monument. It is through the sculptural aspect of these eccentric devices (i.e. their materiality and form) that we immediately connect them to something temporal, to the idealistic pragmatism that they were based on and that we, today, seem to have lost.

Because of the anachronism of the artifacts reproduced and the way in which the artist presents them, *Men on the Moon* and the various kite sculptures of *Heavier than Air* can be considered exercises of superimposed identification with both the history of technology as well as with certain chapters of recent art history.

When the artist makes the artifact work, there is, in his experience, a restitution of the feeling of "revelation" inherent to the original discovery. During the re-enactment, "you are a hostage of time," says Ramírez Jonas. And he continues. "When the invention works, you are as happy, as if you had really invented it. When you reconstruct something from scratch, you cannot be ironic about it. As I reproduce these acts, as I read the text, as I reach the summit, I have feelings and thoughts that must sometimes overlap with the original-when that happens, who am I?"<sup>3</sup> For the artist, the act of building something old and making it work again confirms the pre-eminence of an immutable objectivity over the changes of the temporal. Through these acts of reconstruction and re-enactment, he

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proves that some things are impervious to time and that as a subject at a specific moment in history, he actually fades away.

Another way in which his practice connects with history comes from the fact that several of his works refer directly to American art from the late 1960s and early 1970s. This is evident in the fascination with display, quantification, and perception of time that is characteristic of conceptual art, especially in the case of *Men on the Moon*. Another clear link to this period is Ramírez Jonas's interest in the formalism inherent in early technological inventions, an interest that seems to be directly informed by the work and writings of artist Robert Smithson: his bizarre retro futurism and particularly the kind of connections he used to make, for instance, between designs by Graham Bell and Buckminster Fuller.

An analysis of Ramírez Jonas's projects is further complicated when one considers the type of inventions that he chooses to replicate. While Edison's phonograph and the inventor's kites might have advanced the history of a given aspiration, they were not turning points in those histories. These artifacts did not revolutionise in the way that their creators had hoped. They were flawed, incomplete, or simply surpassed by later developments that made these predecessors obsolete. In an evolutionary conception of history, these technological relicsproto-recorders or proto-aeroplanes-are located in a time before the origin, they are what took place before the object achieved both the indispensable utility of the commodity and its name (the recorder; the aeroplane, etc).

The entropic mood that Smithson saw in the work of his contemporaries—in his own words, "mistakes and dead-ends often mean more to these artists than any proven problem,"—also characterises Ramírez Jonas's inclination toward failures.<sup>4</sup> In

this sense, not only does he shake the notion of the artist as innovator by being a plagiarist, he also does so by selecting objects that are near-misses, failed innovations, almost milestones in the history of Progress. In this respect, if it is true that Ramírez Jonas identifies with the artist as handyman, and that he, like Chris Burden, insists on "actuality, on doing something, really,"<sup>5</sup> he does so by abolishing the idea of authorship. If Burden's fantasy while designing and putting together his ultralight B-Car (1975) was "to add the name of Burden to the list of Ford, Honda, Bugatti, [or] Citrôën,"6 Ramírez Jonas has no interest in the genius of his own creations (however practical they may look to an art audience) but rather in other people's failed creations. His is a movement of double removal from genius.

#### That Second, the Earth Stood Still

Ramírez Jonas later produced a series of projects on the same premise as his reconstruction works (mainly, repeating certain things or actions) but which are not literal reconstructions or reenactments. Like the Apollo 11 or the invention of the aeroplane, there is another body of work by Ramírez Jonas inspired by one of the most astonishing expeditions in human history: Ferdinand Magellan's circumnavigation of the globe in 1519–1522.<sup>7</sup> But in *Magellan's Itinerary: A Reproduction* (1995), *Longer Day* (1997), and *Another Day* (2003), the artist addresses only Magellan's mandate to "go west."

Using the name Ferdinand Magellan, Ramírez Jonas called the travel agency Worldtek Travel in Connecticut to reserve a series of connecting flights that would take him as close as possible to each of the locations where Magellan landed in his expedition. Departing from Seville, Spain, on 15 February, 1995, the flight itinerary includes almost forty airports spread across the coasts of South America, Oceania, and Africa before returning to Seville on 10 April, 1995; the itinerary entails almost two months of uninterrupted travel. *Magellan's Itinerary: A Reproduction* consists of the six printed pages of the flight itinerary as prepared by Worldtek Travel. This piece marks a crucial moment in Ramírez Jonas's career, as he decides that the actual reenactment of the journey is not necessary. Like the sound of the Apollo 11 conversations recorded on Edison's cylinders, this piece is the pure potentiality of the trip: the idea of the heroic journey translated into the bureaucratic code of contemporary tourism.

Longer Day is another work based on Magellan's initiative of "going west." Ramírez Jonas woke up at dawn in New York and drove west until sunset. Just before sunset began, on a flat highway in the Midwest, he shot a video from the car's window "rushing to meet the sun in a vain attempt at making the day last forever." Unlike Magellan's Itinerary : A Reproduction, here the challenge is not spatial, but temporal: to gain time by moving west. The profits. alas, are meagre considering the effort: In his journey westward, Ramírez Jonas shot twenty minutes of the sunset while driving and, in the process, gained one minute of sunset (had he stood still in the car park when the sun started to set, the sunset would have lasted one minute less). Even though this work takes to an extreme a romantic trope par excellence-the melancholic fixation on the scene and duration of the sunset-it actually points to an economic issue: the disproportion of the profit-effort equation implicit in an experimental practice. In a world in which "making the most" of your time is the basis for a rational life, the artist's endeavor, i.e. his race against the inevitable sunset, is emblematic of a stubbornness, which, however revolutionary it may turn out to be, is based on a nonsensical kind of calculus.

Another Day, the third piece that departs from Magellan's idea of "going west," takes this

opposition between romanticism and quantification to a different level by means of the conceptual strategy of addressing an absent image through an administrative language. The work consists of three video monitors that track, through an almost identical airport arrival-departure display, the moment of sunrise in ninety cities around the world. Each monitor displays a list of cities, the one on the top indicates the location where the sun is currently rising. The other cities are lined up, waiting for sunrise. The perpetuity and pointlessness of the device becomes almost comic: a mixture of an everyday-is-another-day optimism and an exasperating reminder of the inexorable passage of time.

Is there more to this predilection for failure than a critique of a conception of history as an escalating succession of discoveries and conquests? Is it not in the failed enterprises and dead-ends that one can better perceive the exorbitance of individual obsessions and, therefore, the prospect of utopia? These works, with their insistence on old fantasies and challenges, address a contemporary lack of hope, which, not paradoxically, is transfigured onto our time's technological arrogance. As Martha Rosler recently wrote. "Obsolescence and the obsolete, making their millionth reappearance in this period without horizons (if not dystopian fears), may represent the effort of the moment to break the hypnotic tranquility of silent assent to the internal order of things."8

Adorno, in connecting this referred absence of horizons to the problem of art that these works identify, usefully writes: "The concept of originality, which is that of the originary, implies the very old as well as that which hasn't existed yet; it is the trace of art's utopianism."<sup>9</sup> If Ramírez Jonas's works seek to recover certain individual figures who were close to a moment of genius (but didn't reach it) and restitute the existence of certain almost revolutionary artifacts, they do so by suspending the impulse to invent that is intrinsic to modern artistic creation; and through that suspension, they signal the impossibility of utopia in contemporary artistic practice. He works on the artistic and technological closure of innovation and originality. And he does so with a joyful pragmatism, firm on the task of identifying himself with those who did not give up the risk of imagining something new and, at the same time, full of a sadness that comes from having only nostalgia as the path for the future.

#### ENDNOTES

1 Interview with the artist. New York, January 2004.

2 E-mail correspondence with the artist, March 2004.

3 E-mail correspondence with the artist, March 2004.

- 4 Flam, Jack, ed. Robert Smithson. The Collected Writings. (California: University of California Press, 1996): 11-12
- 5 Singerman, Howard. Chris Burden. A Twenty-Year Survey. (California: Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1988): 20
- 6 Burden, Chris and Alexis Smith. B-Car, The Story of Chris Burden's Bicycle Car. (Los Angeles: Future Studio for CHOKE Publications, 1977)
- 7 Needless to say that besides its final success—discovering a channel connecting the Atlantic and the Pacific, finding an alternative route to the colonies, and proving that the Earth was round— Ferdinand Magellan's trip has its own quota of failure. Magellan did discover the channel but died almost a year before his ship arrived back to Spain.
- 8 Rosler Martha October 100 Spring 2002 7-13
- 9 Adorno, Theodor. Aesthetic Theory. (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Orbis, Hyspamerica, 1983). Citation is translated from the Spanish to the English by the author.

# Routes

### Paul Ramírez Jonas in dialogue with Sandra Antelo-Suarez

# SAS

In a way, your work is extremely romantic. Somehow you make sculptures to freeze, contain, or go back in time. Tell me how this began. Tell me about the first sculpture you ever made.

## PRJ

There are so many options to point out as my "first" sculpture! There is, for example, the first sculpture I made while I was in art school, but I don't want to put you to sleep. To answer this guestion, I prefer to tell you a story: one of my first memories is the bombing of my hometown, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, by the Salvadoran Air Force during the summer of 1969. A third of their air force fleet (a total of two single-engine propeller fighter planes!) was sent to bomb Tequcigalpa's airport. With the exception of the airport, which was lit as bright as a sunny day, the entire city went into a blackout. The whole neighborhood was out on the streets or in their gardens waiting for the bombing. But the bombs missed their target by several kilometres, and no one was able to see them or hear them. Many years later, as a teenager, my friends and I spent countless afternoons riding our bikes near the airport in search for the mythical bomb craters. We never found them. The candid and genuine desire to locate these incidental earthworks-alleged mythical war remnants that, to this day, I am unsure ever existed—is the earliest thing I did that I can relate to sculpture.

# SAS

It is like trying to contain the impossible. You concentrate on the event pressed between its success and failure, between existing and disappearing. I think this is the phantom that really exists in your sculptures—a type of beauty found

in the instant or space between the creation and erasure of something. In your new work, you use yourself as the re-visitor to places originally visited by a "hero." What takes you on those routes?

# PRJ

Being pressed between existence and disappearance can generate a wonderful image but also a terrifying one. Disappearance is a void that is both seductive and entrapping. The thought of it affects me, causing very strong and confusing emotions. So it is a fear of sorts, say, of disappearing, that takes me to these routes. As I revisit other's journeys, I may disappear into anonymity; however, I also inscribe myself into an existing route. I guess I prefer disappearance to the immaterial. Disappearing implies prior existence. The immaterial, on the other hand, conceals an underlying puritanism that rejects the pleasure of form. It has taken me a long time to differentiate between these two concepts.

# Everybody One at a Time All the Time

## Paul Ramírez Jonas in dialogue with Daniel Bozhkov

## DB

You once gained a minute of sunset by driving west on a freeway. This preoccupation with the inevitable trickling of time points tenderly to the heart of human condition. Humankind might be the only living species on Earth who is aware of its own dying. By keeping the discussion of immortality alive, every culture has developed its unique ways of extending life into eternity. The idea of progress itself can be seen as a time-gaining project. Ever since God "died" (only to be replaced by the paradigm of science and technology), individuals have been trying to rescue a few more seconds from the everlasting nothingness of eternity. The perpetual technological advancement of the speed and efficiency of travel, communications, and information flow are few of the many attempts to prolong life. Projecting our minds into machines that do not enter biological cycles or breaking nature's codes to ensure continuous renewal are both telling manifestations of our fear of death

I think you act as a reader of civilization and its evolution, of its numerous texts, charts, and inventions. But you face history and mortality with a kind of tender bitterness. Or is it that you face temporality with a hidden passion for the inevitable? (I am reminded that Jorge Luis Borges looked at the stars as individuals. He remarked that, as all individuals, stars also perish.) What do you think happens when you retrace others' attempts to transcend humans' natural limitations beyond individual time?

## PRJ

I think that when I retrace other's endeavors. I am not merely making a copy. In a very real sense, I become implicated and imagine that I am sharing the similar feelings and thoughts as the original source. Something guite frightening happens in this process. In some measure, individual time is destroyed. What I mean is, while at first I might be seeking to regain time or to recapture the past, what often happens is that the distance between the past and present is blurred. This does not only happen by making my work. Sometimes I get the same feeling when I go to a museum and see an extremely old object that still today has traces of its making. In a few instances, I can feel an overwhelming feeling of identification with its maker. I can be taken over by a lack of differentiation between myself and that other me of a couple of thousand years ago.

# DB

Are you rewriting existing technological developments in order to redistribute potential benefits, as in *Rocinante* (2003), where you give a place on your spacecraft to the nations that lack a space programme?

# PRJ

I don't want to be outside of history. It is not so much that the nations of the world that are being incorporated into the story as much as I am, the individual. I often use myself in this doubling way: It is an "I" that could easily be you. For example, in most of my photographs, like those from *Album (50 State Summits)* [2002–], or the photographs taken by the kites of *Heavier than Air* (1993–1994), I am obscured, small, or facing away. I am a figure that is standing in a place where someone else stood, and where you may stand as well. In other works, like 100 (1995), I wanted "portraits," not "figures." I took one hundred portraits of one hundred different people, from newborns to age ninety-nine. In other words, the first photo shows a baby of age zero, the second a one-year-old, the third a two-year-old, and so on, until the last portrait shows a ninety-nine-yearold person. The viewer sees the timeline and may find "their" place within it. One can project the span of one's own life (one's past, present, and future) into all the individual faces. It is similar to the use of myself in the work, because the individual, although unique, becomes interchangeable.

## DB

Are you saying that this interchangeability is a kind of Borgesian realisation that "one man is another man"?

# PRJ

Although I find this idea very threatening and I would like to disagree with it, my work often puts me in a position of interchangeability and identification with another. I want to believe in individuality, and that uniqueness is possible. But then again, how unique is the sunrise?

## DB

Do you think that your projects are affected by the unfulfilled goals embedded in them? Are they better by not completely or efficiently delivering on their promise? Who, or maybe what, is the ghost in your video *Ghost of Progress* (2003)?

# PRJ

The Concorde, which is the protagonist of the *Ghost* of *Progress*, runs out of time. This plane embodied an idea of progress. It was a literal manifestation of these ideals. It was proof that we had the technology, if not the will, to create that future. It kept flying well past the time when people believed in the future and became both nostalgic and futuristic at the same time. In the end, everyone was sad to see it retired, but no one could afford to keep it flying. In this video, the ghost flies (but never lands) across an undefined city that, like many places in the world, has simultaneously given up and kept the faith.

# Timeline

Paul Ramírez Jonas

Born in California, raised in Honduras
Begins taking English language classes at the
Instituto Hondureño de Cultura Interamericana
1965
1974
1974
1983

Flies first kite

Moves to the United States of America



Solo exhibitions

Group exhibitions

Works and performances in collaboration

|   |  |  |           | <i>nent</i> , performance in collaboration with<br>Finch at Brown University, Providence,<br>land                        | <i>Telephone</i> , performance in collaboration with Spencer Finch at Jack Tilton Gallery, New York, NY  |
|---|--|--|-----------|--|--|
|   |  |  | with Spe  | <i>nelling</i> , performance in collaboration<br>ncer Finch, Benefit Street Post Office,<br>ce, Rhode Island             |  |
|   |  |  |           |  | Fluxus Attitudes, The New Museum, New York, NY   |
|   |  |  |           |  | Detour, International House, New York, NY  |
|   |  |  | Selection | as 49, The Drawing Center, New York, NY  |  |
|   |  |  |           |  | Christopher Grimes Gallery (Project Room), Santa<br>Monica, California   |
|   |  |  | from the  | es with a Master of Fine Arts in Painting<br>Rhode Island School of Design,<br>ce, Rhode Island                          | Whirligig, White Columns, New York, NY   |
| Takes computer science class with<br>Andy Van Dam | Graduates with a Bachele<br>from Brown University, P<br>Studies under Tom Laws | rovidence, Rhode Island  | BACA D    | New York City. Begins working at<br>owntown, Brooklyn Council for the Arts,<br>k, and becomes its visual arts curator in | Participates in a summer Artist in Residence<br>programme with Fred Tomaselli, Laura Miller, and<br>Janine Antoni at the Art Awareness, Lexington, New   |
| Learns printmaking with Jane Kent                 | artists Janine Antoni and  |  | 1990      |  | York. Flies first kite as art.   |
| <br>1984 1986                                     | 1987   | 1988   | 1989      | 1990   | 1992   |
|   | class with Kenneth Baker   | Begins collaborations with Spencer<br>Finch. Circles Spain on a bicycle  |           | Spencer Finch facilitates the acquisition of the Collier's Encyclopedia  |  |
|   |  |  |           | Becomes visual arts curator  | 1991   |
|   |  |  |           |  | Brooklyn, Jack Tilton Gallery, New York, NY<br>Improvements? On the Ordinary, Randolph Street  |
|   |  | Collaborative performance and installation<br>with Spencer Finch at Sol Koffler Gallery,<br>Providence, Rhode Island |           | AMANAPLANACANALPANAMA,<br>Artists Space (Underground Project<br>Room), New York, NY                                      | Gallery, Chicago, Illinois   |
|   |  |  |           |  | Masterpieces Without the Director, self-guided   |
|   |  |  |           | Selections From The Sculpture<br>Center's Unaffiliated Artist Slide File,<br>The Sculpture Center, New York, NY          | audio tour for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New<br>York made in collaboration with Spencer Finch.<br>Commissioned by Creative Time Inc., New York, NY |
|   |  |  |           | The Coupline Center, New TOR, NT   | Enemies of Promise, performance in collaboration   |

Enemies of Promise, performance in collaboration with Spencer Finch at 142 Greene Street, New York, NY

120

1993

*Applesauce*, performance in collaboration with Spencer Finch at Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut

NYSP, Galeria Camargo Vilaça, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Lost in Thought, Manes, Prague, Czech Republic

Paul Ramírez Jonas and David Shaw, Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica, California

Heavier Than Air, Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY

Heavier Than Air, White Cube, London, England

Space of Time. Contemporary Art of the Americas.

Jack Tilton Gallery (Project Room), New York, NY

The Americas Society, New York, NY; Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida (1995)

*Fever*, Exit Art, New York, New York; Wexner Art Center, Columbus, Ohio (1994)

Nancy Megford, Gay Outlaw, and Paul Ramírez-Jonas, New Langton Arts, San Francisco, California

Add Hot Water, Sandra Gering Gallery, New York, NY

American Gothic, Art in General, New York, NY

Apples and Oranges, performance in collaboration with Spencer Finch at The Gramercy International Contemporary Art Fair, The Gramercy Park Hotel, New York, NY



*Contrafigura*, Studio Guenzani, Milan, Italy

Inclusion: Exclusion, Künstlerhaus, Graz, Austria

Between the Acts, Icebox, Athens, Greece; C/O Gallery, Oslo, Norway



Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY



1996

Teaches a fall semester at New York University, New York

#### 1995

Meets artists Patrick Killoran and Anissa Mack. Stops working at Sarabande Press, New York.

Studio Guenzani, Milan, Italy

Threshold, Fundacio Serralves, Oporto, Portugal

*Campo '95*, part of the Venice Biennial 95, Venice, Italy

*Volatile Colonies*, part of *Africus: Johannesburg Biennale*, Johannesburg, South Africa

Signs and Wonders, Kunsthaus, Zurich, Switzerland; Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago de Compostela, Spain *Speed*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, UK; The Photographer's Gallery, London, United Kingdom

Double Trouble. The Patchett Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Instituto Cultural Cabañas and Museo de las Artes in Guadalajara, Mexico

*Disappearing Act*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

Not the New, Not the Old, but the Necessary, Beaver College Art Gallery, Glenside, Pennsylvania

Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm, Sweden

Meets artist Daniel Bozhkov. Climbs tallest mountain in Vermont.

1998

Teaches at Rhode Island School of Design,

Providence, Rhode Island (until 1998)

Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY

Projects: Ceal Floyer, Ellen Gallagher, Paul

Ramírez Jonas, Wolfgang Tillmans, Gillian

Wearing, Yukinori Yanagi, Irish Museum of

A Quality of Light, organized by St Yves

Art Gallery, Tate Gallery St Ives, and inIVA,

International, Cornwall, England, with The Newlyn

Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland

London, among other venues.

1997

#### 1999

Artist in Residence International Studio Programme in Stockholm, Sweden

Teaches a fall semester at California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts), Valencia, California

*Duration and Whenever*, Angles Gallery, Santa Monica, California

Panorama 2000, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, Holland



*Sendero*, photograph in collaboration with Janine Antoni

*Always New, Always Familiar*, two-channel video installation in collaboration with Janine Antoni

# *Migration*, two-channel video in collaboration with Janine Antoni



*Media\_City Seoul 2000*, Seoul Biennial at Seoul Metropolitan Museum as well as various electronic billboards and subway stations in Seoul, Korea

Wånas 2000, Wånas Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden

*Ideal House*, Museo Alejandro Otero, Caracas, Venezuela; apex, New York, NY (2002), New International Cultural Center, Antwerp, Belgium (2002); among other venues.

Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm, Sweden

Ellen de Bruijne Projects, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Beings teaching at Columbia University in New York (until 2003), and again at New York University



2001 Visits Honduras and lectures on his work at the

Instituto Hondureño de Cultura Interamericana

*Globe>Miami<Island*, Bass Museum of Art, Miami, Florida

*Every Day*, project installed at 5 different locations in New York City, Public Art Fund, New York, NY

Special Projects, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Spaghetti Western, Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, Denver, Colorado

*Altoids Collection*, The New Museum, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA, (2000); among other venues.

Pictures, Patents, Monkeys, and More... On Collecting, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Akron Art Museum, Akron, Ohio,

Initial Spectrum, Spectrum, Perth, Australia



among other venues.

Participates in the Artist in Residence programme at Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia. Teaches a summer course at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts. Participates in the Artist in Residence programme of the Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, Florida.

2002

#### Mirror, sculpture in collaboration with Janine Antoni



Roger Björkholmen Galleri, Stockholm, Sweden

*The Earth, Seen From Above*, Feldman Gallery, Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, Oregon

Heavier than Air, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, England

2004

#### 2003

Begins teaching at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

24/7, Siuolaikinio meno centras/Contemporary art center, Vilnius, Lithuania

*The Square Show*, Bloomberg Space, London, England

*The Paper Sculpture Show*, Sculpture Center, Long Island City, New York; Diverse Works, Houston, Texas; Gallery 400, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; among other venues.

*Cultural Territories International*, Gallery for Contemporary Art Leipzig, Germany

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Cameron, Dan. *Threshold*. Oporto, Portugal: Fundacio Serralves, 1995.

Curiger, Bice. *Signs and Wonders*. Zurich, Switzerland: Kunsthaus, 1995.

Fortes, Marcia. *NYSP*. São Paulo, Brazil: Galeria Camargo Vilaça, 1994.

Luard, Honey, ed. with an essay by Liam Gillick. *White Cube.* Vol. 1-2. Germany: Steidl Publishers, 2002.

Malasauskas, Raimundas, Kestutis Kuizinas, and others, eds. *24/7 Newspaper*. Vilnius, Lithuania: Center for Contemporary Art, 2003.

McParland, Brenda. *Projects: Ceal Floyer, Ellen Gallagher, Paul Ramírez Jonas, Wolfgang Tillmans, Gillian Wearing, Yukinori Yanagi.* Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 1997.

Millar, Jeremy and Barbara London, eds. *Media City Seoul 2000*. Seoul, Korea: The Organizing Committee, 2000. Peterman, Dan. *Improvements? On the Ordinary.* Chicago: Randolph Street Gallery, 1991.

Richard, Frances, Mary Ceruti, and others, eds. *The Paper Sculpture Book*. New York: Independent Curators International, 2003.

Schwarz, Michiel, Jeremy Millar, and others, eds. *Speed: Visions of an Accelerated Age.* London: Photographers' Gallery; Trustees of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1998.

Weibel, Peter, ed. *Inklusion: Exclusion*. Graz: Steirischer herbst 96, 1997.

Wachtmeister, Marika, ed. *Konsten på Wånas*. Sweden: Byggförlaget, 2001.

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Birnbaum, Daniel. "A conversation between Daniel Birnbaum and Paul Ramírez Jonas," *TRANS>media .arts.culture*, no. 7 (2000): 180-184

Brodow, Anna "Objekt om tid och död," *Svenska Dagbladet* (Sweden), 2 September 2000, 1(F)

Carrara, Monica. "Ramírez Jonas: alla ricerca dell'arte perduta," *L'Informazione* (Italy), 15 March 1995, 45 Commandeur, Ingrid. "Pause and Play," *Tubelight*, no. 12 (December 2002–January 2001): 6-7

Ericsson, Lars O. "Poetiska rullar och laddade skulpturer," *Dagens Nyheter* (Sweden), 30 November 1996

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Hagen, Charles. "Paul Ramírez Jonas," New York Times, 4 February 1994, 21(C)

Iannacci, Anthony. "Paul Ramírez Jonas," *Das Kunst-Bulletin* (May 1995): 6

Landi, Ann. "Making Progress," *ARTnews* (June 2001): 122-124

Laster, Paul. "Paul Ramírez Jonas," *Time Out*, New York, 6–13 February 2003, 53

Mahoney, Robert. "Paul Ramírez Jonas," *Time Out*, New York, 28 February–6 March 1996, 26

McLaren, Duncan. "Urban Spacemen," Contemporary Visual Arts, no. 30 (2000): 48-54

Melrod, George. "New York Reviews," *Sculpture* (May 1994): 68

Myoda, Paul. "Paul Ramírez Jonas," *Frieze* (May 1996): 76

Ostrower, Jessica. "Paul Ramírez Jonas at LFL," Art in America (June 2003): 119

Smith, Roberta. "Paul Ramírez Jonas," New York Times, 1 March 1996, 20(C) Taylor, Simon. "Paul Ramírez Jonas at Postmasters," *Art in America* (June 1994): 100

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Volk, Gregory. "Paul Ramírez Jonas, Ricci Albenda," *Zing Magazine*, no. 3 (Autumn 1996-Winter 1997): 222-224

Weiner, Emily. "Makeshift Steps for Mankind. Transmissions from Paul Ramírez Jonas." *Museo*, no. 6 (2003). http://www.columbia.edu/cu/museo/6/jonas

#### Art projects in magazines/journals

"AMNESIA," ZingMagazine, issue 17, 2003

"Magellan's Itinerary. A Reproduction" *ZingMagazine*, issue 16, 2002

"When Nature Becomes History" (artist multiple; journal print run 5000), *Trans>arts.culture.media*, issue 9/10, 2001

"Paper Sculpture Show" (curated by Matt Freedman), *Cabinet*, issue 4, autumn 2001

"100," ZingMagazine, issue 14, 2000

# Contributors

Sandra Antelo-Suarez is an independent curator and founder and editorial director of *Trans> arts.cultures.media*, a journal and non-profit gallery space in New York City for contemporary art and culture. Since 1992, she has included the work of Ramírez Jonas in various exhibitions, and featured his work in *Trans>*.

**Daniel Bozhkov** is a Bulgarian-born conceptual artist based in New York City, whose work involves multidisciplinary collaborations and combines a range of media, from performance to video to painting. He is represented by Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York.

**Kirby Gookin** is a writer, curator and public artist who teaches Critical Studies at New York University in the Department of Art and Art Professions. For the past ten years he has been lecturing and writing on bioethics, eugenics and the social challenges presented by contemporary genetic technologies.

**Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy (editor)** is curator and programmes manger at Art in General in New York City, a nonprofit gallery and laboratory for contemporary art founded by artists in 1981. She has developed a number of exhibitions and programmes focused on artistic collaborations and independent initiatives by artists in the Americas.

Inés Katzenstein is a writer and curator, recently appointed curator at the Museo de Arte Latinoamericano - Colección Costantini, Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is the editor of *Listen, Here, Now! Argentine Art of the Sixties: Writings of the Avant-Garde* (forthcoming), The Museum of Modern Art, New York. -1:0:1<sup>™</sup> is a young design studio based in Monterrey, Mexico. They have provided graphic design solutions for exhibitions at Programa Art Center in Mexico City, The Project, New York, and The Americas Society in New York City, and have published artist publications presented in conjunction to exhibitions at the Tate Modern in London and other venues. They work with artists, musicians, and other cultural producers, and publish the bimonthly magazine *Doméstica*.

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# Paul Ramírez Jonas

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#### Cover Image

Paul Ramírez Jonas Men on the Moon: EVA, 1996 200 wax cylinders, phonograph, and transcript book Detail: top of wax cylinder #399, from July 20 10:56:48 1969 to July 20 10:57:45

#### **Back Cover Image**

Paul Ramírez Jonas Men on the Moon: EVA, 1996 200 wax cylinders, phonograph, and transcript book Detail: base of wax cylinder #399, from July 20 10:56:48 1969 to July 20 10:57:45

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