

Sina Seiffee

- 1982 Born in Tehran
- 2000 Started undergraduate study of Applied Mathematics in Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran
- 2004-2008 Studied Visual Arts in Charsoo Institute of Art with Saeed Ravanbakhsh in Tehran. Courses in drawing, painting, animation, and sculpture, conceptual arts with the additional emphases and specialization in my case in the digital arts.
- 2005 Started a long term experiment and practical study of the Iranian traditional music with Soroush Dabiri; Setar based on Radif, the collection of many old melodic figures preserved through many generations by oral tradition.
- 2006-2008 Participated in an experimental theater group with Reza Ravanbakhsh, a long term practical study within physical acting and other forms of theatrical creativity.
- 2006 Won the 2nd Prize of Kish Island Residential Complex Architecture Competition, as designer and presentation associate
- 2007 Designed and conducted a yearlong experimental animation workshop in Charsoo Institute of Art
- 2008 Started as freelancer computer programmer and designer for visuals in film and theater
- 2010 Started an experimental and self-tutoring electronic and noise music making
- 2011 Started postgraduate degree course in Media Arts at Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln
- 2012 Won DAAD-Prize for outstanding performance of foreign students at German universities
- 2012 Won KHM-Prize for outstanding artistic achievements

Selected Exhibitions:

- 2005 The 5th Annual Exhibit of Art Galleries And Cultural Heritage, Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization, Tehran
- 2005 Charsoo 4th painting group exhibition, Museum of Contemporary Arts, Isfahan-Iran
- 2006 Painting exhibition, Sina Seiffee & Foad Farahani, Laleh Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2008 Photography exhibition, **Space, Painting and Photography**, Elaheh Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2008 Charsoo drawing group exhibition, Haft-Samar Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2009 Panjshanbeh group exhibition, video installation sound print sculpture, **Manifest of Panjshanbeh**, Tarahan Azad Art Gallery, Haft-Samar Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2009 Solo video installation exhibition , Tarahan Azad Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2010 Charsoo drawing group exhibition, Aria Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2011 Contemporary art exhibition, video installation printmaking, **The Approach**, Fravahr Art Gallery, Tehran
- 2011 Video and interactive installation group exhibition, **The 1st Tehran Annual Digital Art Exhibition**, Mohsen Art Gallery in Tehran
- 2012 Multimedia group exhibition, **Architekturteilchen - Modulares Bauen im digitalen Zeitalter**, Museum für Angewandte Kunst Köln
- 2012 Publication in Offtopic Zeitschrift für Medienkunst, 'Sketch for a modular Construction with a cellular Automaton'
- 2013 Group exhibition of contemporary art from Tehran and London, **Tehran calling: London / London calling: Tehran**, londonprintstudio in London
- 2013 Multimedia installation, **ARTISTS' BOOK: BOOK AS BOOK**, Mahe-Mehr Gallery, Tehran
- 2013 Multimedia group exhibition, **Neue Nummer**, video book performance drawing, Raum für alle I ganz schön Kalk, Köln

I began my artistic practice as a painter. At the time I was interested in the qualities of space, where the creativity occurs and is experienced as an image. Right now I am examining this space by altering and disturbing simple elements of what constitutes our experience of the space, one can say the way we encounter it, whether in performative or installational dispositions. I am still very much interested in images, but how an image is situated and how an image lives and creates in relation to our social and physical conditions is my focus of interest at this point of my career. This critical situatedness can be playful and very serious at the same time and could occur between worlds of analogue and digital, human and computer. I use discursive, pictural and verbal strategies, performance and different techniques of image making to experiments with the mentioned ideas.

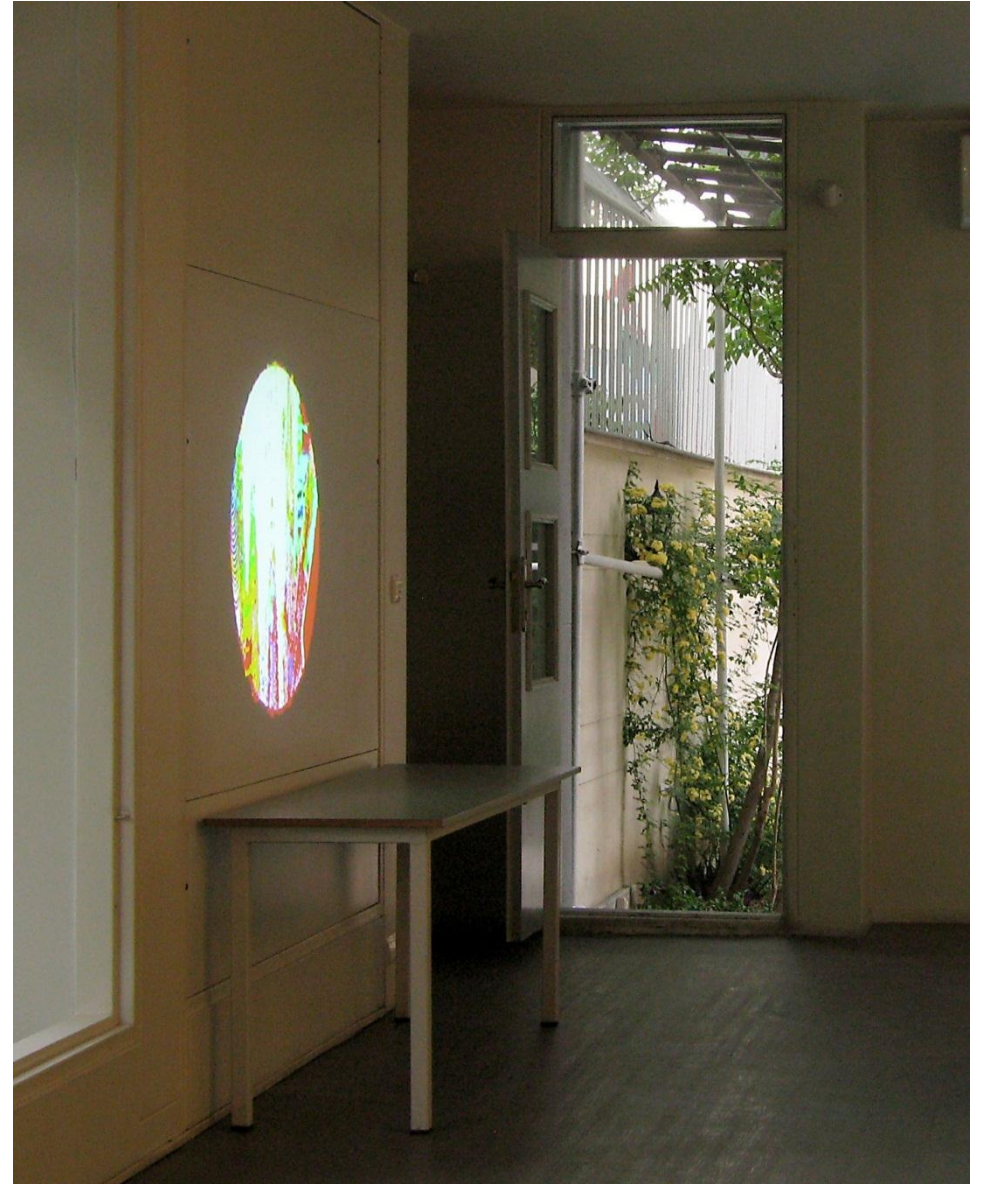
Sina Seifee, 2013

In our painting exhibition in Tehran 2006 with Foad Farahani, the gallerist hired welders to 'fix' the gallery during the show. Their activity with the space contained welding pieces of the pipes which generated bright light, heat and low frequency noise. The resulting performance in the room and the animation of sharp light was an extension to the forms that we were actually studying on the canvas, but without the grace of framing. The 'performance' was continued while we showed the gallerist our anger, for the damage they were making to our 'aesthetic conditions'. The exhibition was finished in a sense of irritation and incompleteness.

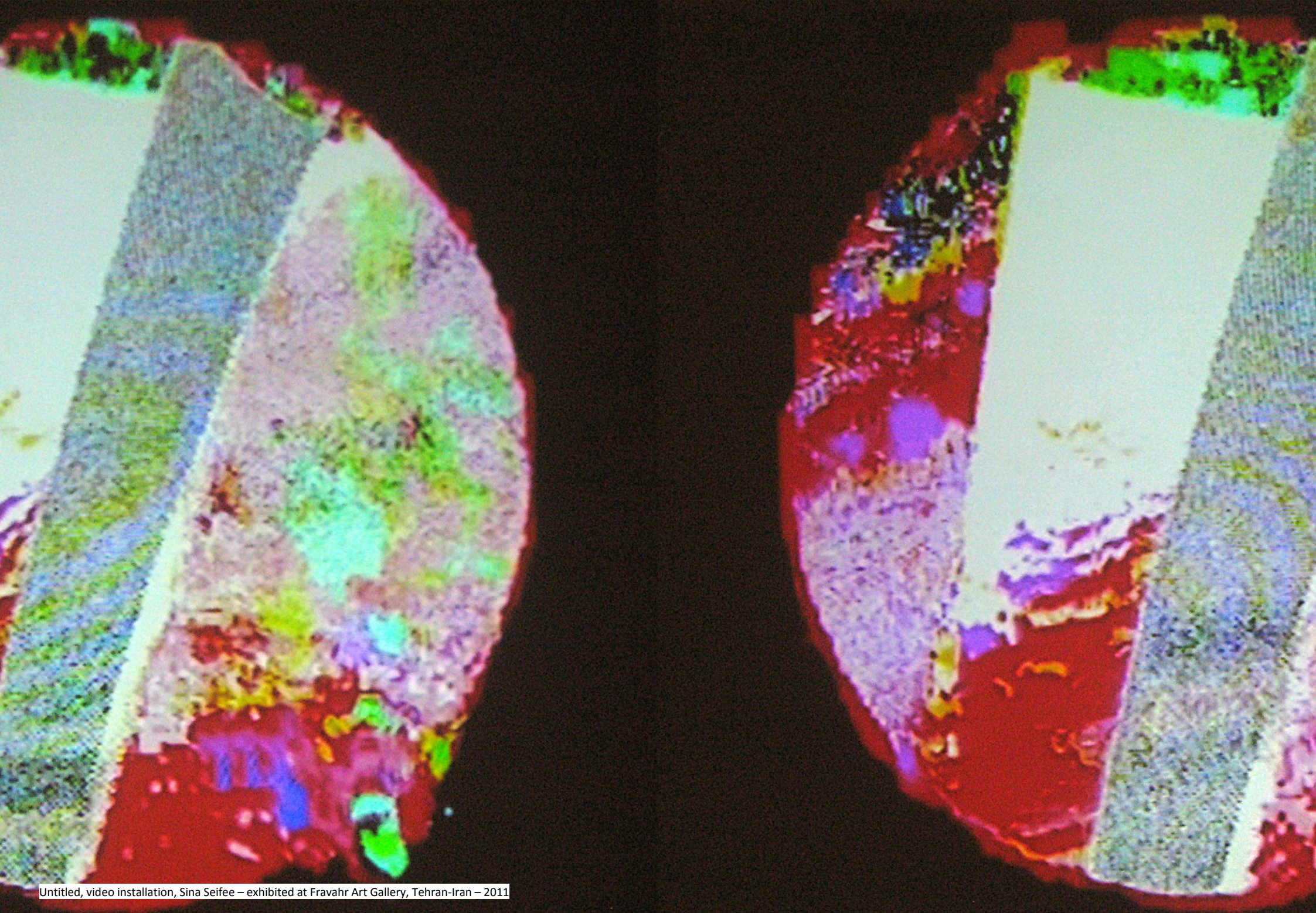


Laleh Art Gallery, Tehran-Iran – 2006 – painting exhibition, Sina Seifee

In a Print-Making exhibition in Tehran 2011, the customary techniques and presentation of print making traditions were challenged by our individual and mixed media strategies and approaches. In my video installation, the temporarily of the light beams creating an ephemeral sequence of abstract images, which were generated by a complex computer error benefiting process, was not exactly what was being taught as print making. My work was merely stream of energy and data. But still I emphasized on calling it 'print'.

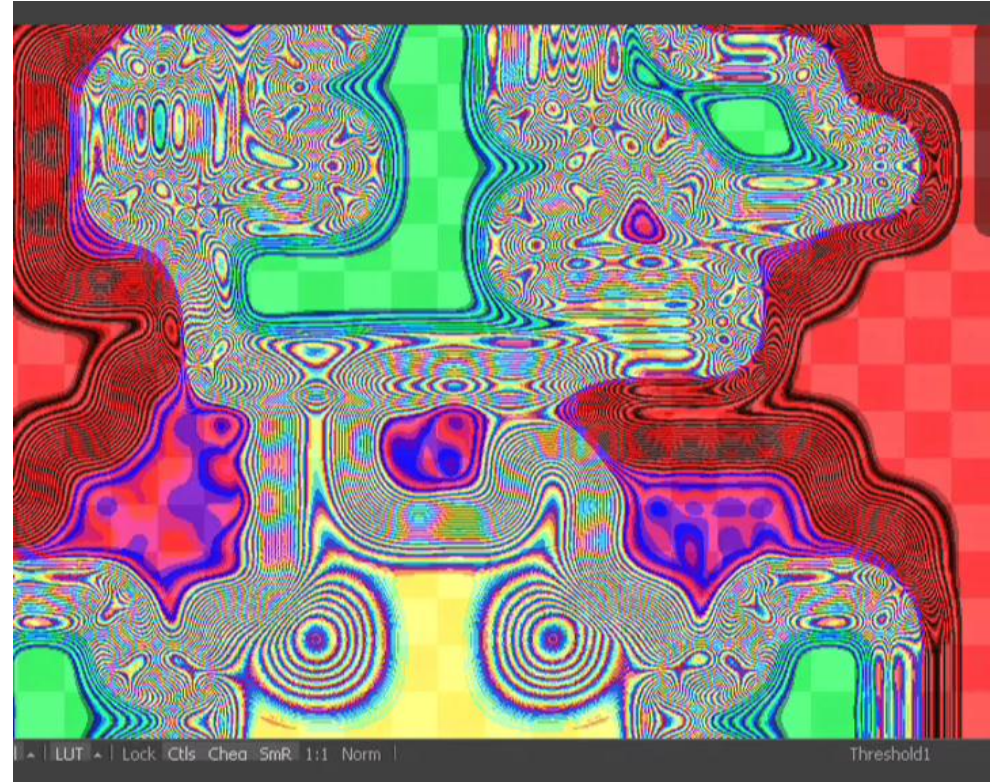


Untitled, Sina Seifee – Fravahr Art Gallery, Tehran-Iran – 2011 – video installation



Untitled, video installation, Sina Seif-ei – exhibited at Fravahr Art Gallery, Tehran-Iran – 2011

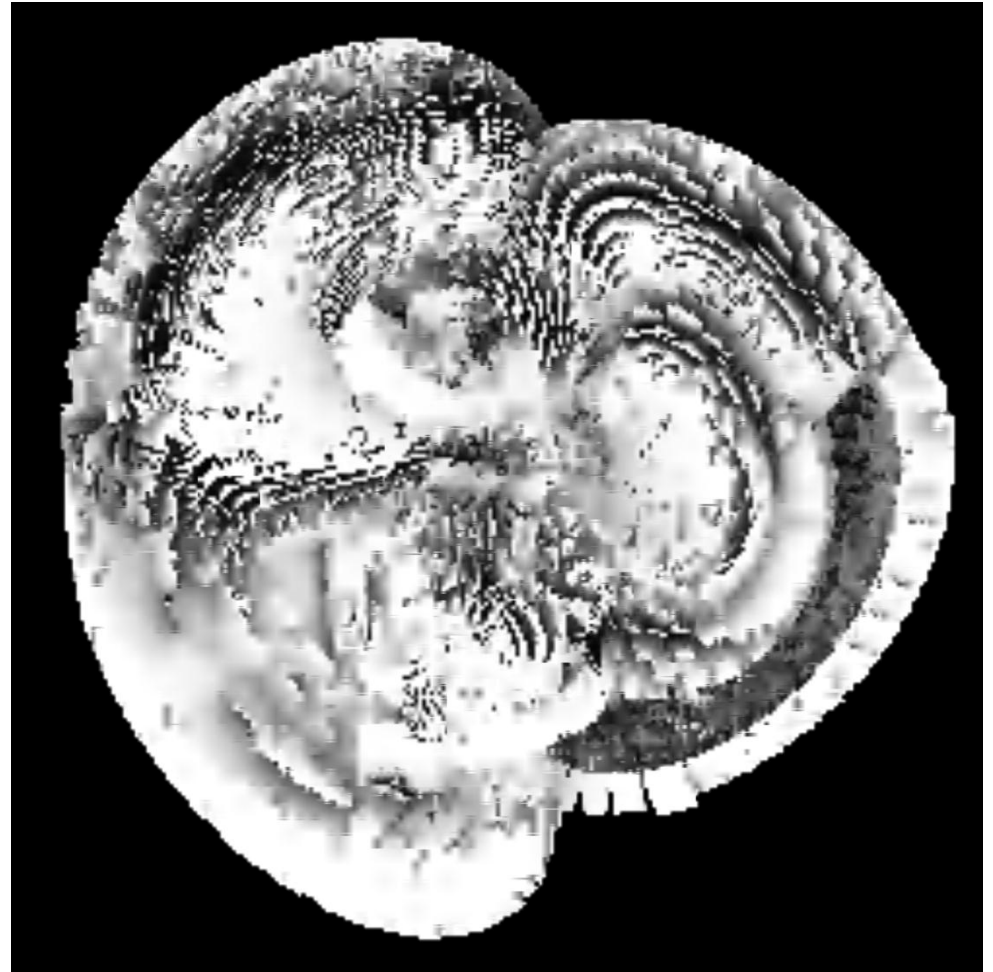
Short film, made from the video archive of screen recordings of my PC, mixed with 17th century Japanese Haiku translated to Persian by Ahmad Shamloo and E. Pashayee. The poet's perception, in encounter with the natural world in haiku's literature manifests itself in the very surface of the physical world, in the collision with his/her sensorial faculties. The poet is seeing 'the interface' and delivers it with lingual sharp cuts. In the video, music functions as a smooth continuous element that I used consciously to emphasize again the cutting. The music is played carelessly and the voice over is relaxed, quiet and non-assertive.



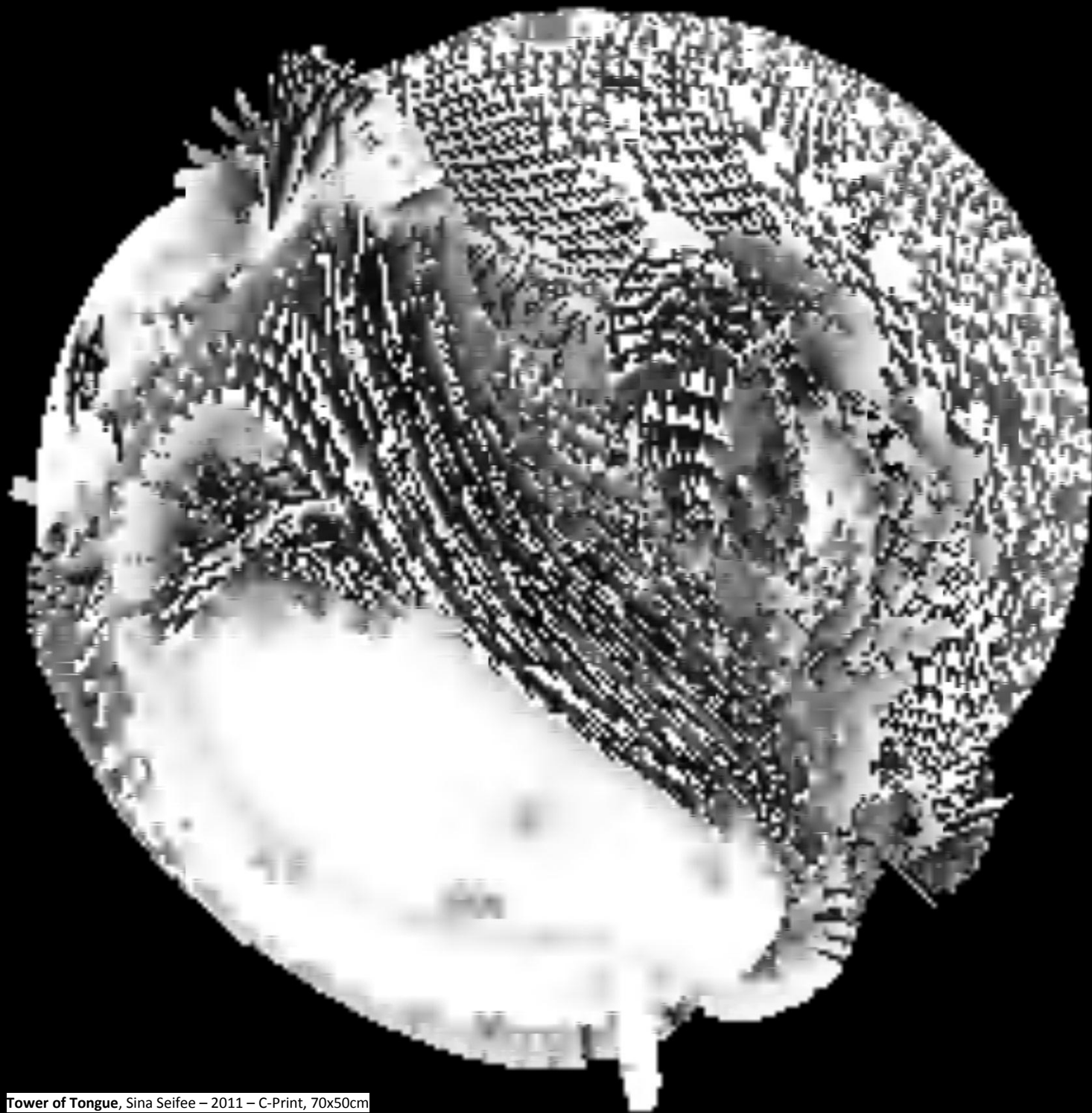
Haiku, Sina Seif – screened at Mohsen Art Gallery, Tehran-Iran – 2009 – single channel video, 7'30"

The tower of Babel is a constant reformation of shape and possibility. Babel is babbling in form, uncertainty of shaping and articulation of architecture. What babel as architecture articulates? What is it as an architectural gesture? Babel tower exist as an image of a once existing destruction of a thing. It exists as text for a destroyed image. Babel is not just destroyed, it has always been destroyed. Babel is a model for informe and unshapeability, uncertainty of space. Tower of Babel is impossible; it rebuilds and performs its space.

In the image series I reach out for an accentuation in terms of an architectural dystopia in the language of a computational virtual utopia. I created a generative modeling system in a 3D computer graphics software, converting super complex NURBS (surfaces defined by mathematical formula) to Polygon (surfaces defined by the coordinates of vertexes in a database), to play with degradation and glitch in different modes of digital creation.



Tower of Tongue, Sina Seif – 2011 – C-Print, 70x50cm



Tower of Tongue, Sina Seifee – 2011 – C-Print, 70x50cm

As a cold virtual solid abstract structure is endlessly generating on the screen behind, I sit down and read out very peacefully in microphone, a text also algorithmic generated. The text supposedly addresses me as an art student and lists what have ever influenced me with a stack of completely randomized references in the history of art. The text goes on with its rigorous structure to reach insanity. The over-usage of the names of artists, thinkers and singers in an automated way in combination to the uncertainty of form in the video, tries to generate an absurd statement in digital arts.

As Gregory Bateson puts, 'a self-correcting system which has lost its governor, spirals into never-ending, but always systematic, distortion', his view touches some of the important points of my performance. Cybernetics with its roots in the word 'government' was developed first in the field of control and communication theory, for machine or animal. It is interesting that the communication and control are paired in cybernetics. In *Postgraduate Harmonies* I am playing with this mutual human-machine instrumentality in a communicative scenario. I lose control of the structure and meaning of the words and images, at the same time my presence and voice inevitably transcends the act.



Postgraduate Harmonies, Sina Seife, performed at C60 Collaboratorium, Bochum-Germany – 2012 – video lecture

Excerpt from the text:

[...] *My work explores the relationship between postmodern multimedia experience and vegetarian ethics. With influences as diverse as Buckminster Fuller and Roy Lichtenstein, new synergies are generated from both constructed and discovered structures.*

Ever since I started doing witchcraft I have been fascinated by the essential unreality of my so called forefathers. What starts out as undefined soon becomes corroded into a dialectic of distress, leaving only a sense of obsolete virtuality and the dawn of a frightening new beginning.

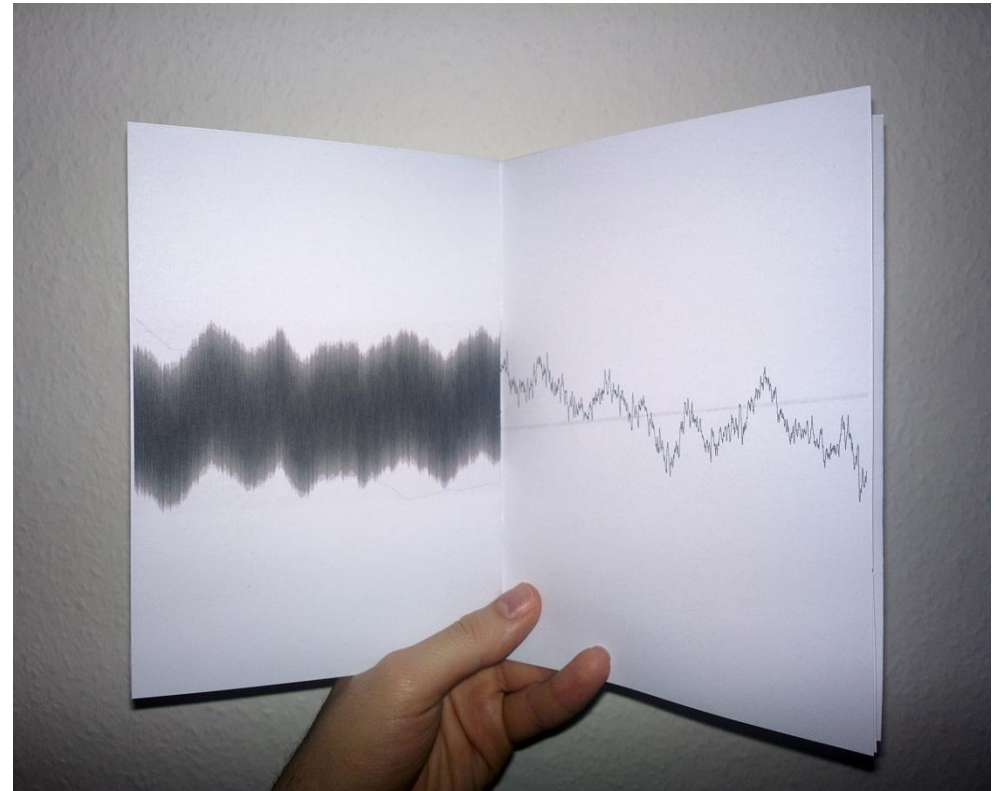
As wavering derivatives become distorted through diligent and academic practice, the viewer is left with an insight into the horizon of our hereafter social construct.

My work explores the relationship between consumerist fetishism and skateboard ethics. With influences as diverse as Machiavelli and L Ron Hubbard, new synergies are manufactured from both mundane and transcendental textures [...]

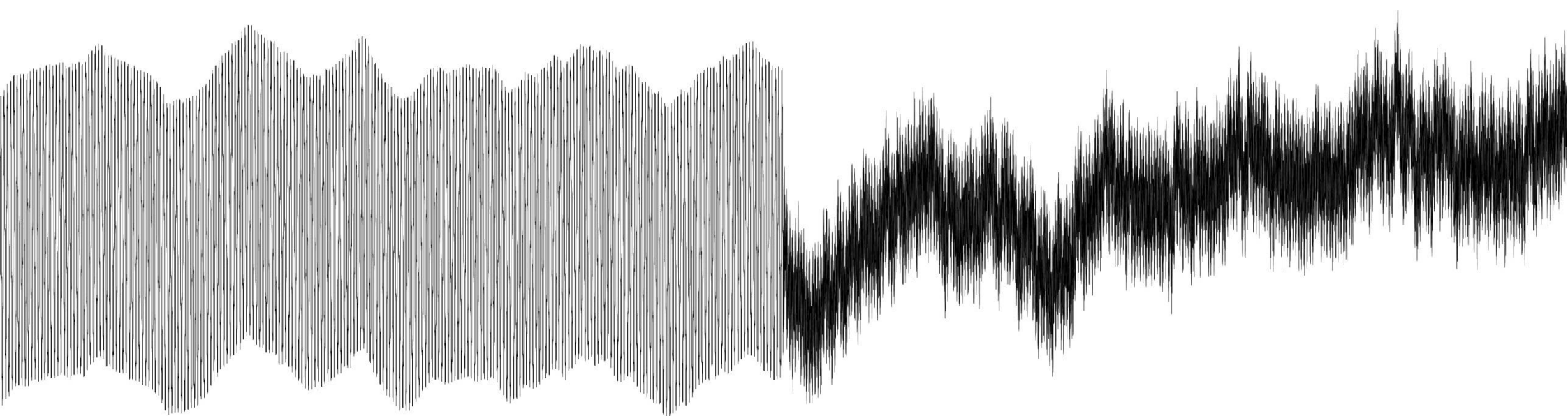


Postgraduate Harmonies, Sina Seif – 2012 – stills from video

Sadistic Statistics doesn't have a simple or single meaning or purpose. It is simple and coherent in form as a small booklet. Starts with an introduction and follows with a series of diagrams on each page, which come from my brain waves, my voice and stress level. In the introduction section of the book, I talk about mathematics, nature, substitutive instrumentality, fictive observations, mapping sadism, transition and translation, voices of catastrophes, ratios of movement, obsessions and measurement. 'Statistical diagrams are heart breakers', because they are proofs, objects of evidence and truth. A diagram is a rigorous fact that must necessitate the truthfulness of its argument. Is there a fetishistic relationship between science, diagram and truth? In the book I have put different energies next to each other, as ghosts of what they might represent. In the introduction I try not not to detach the factuality and scientificity of the diagrams, and I do not say that they are computer generated.

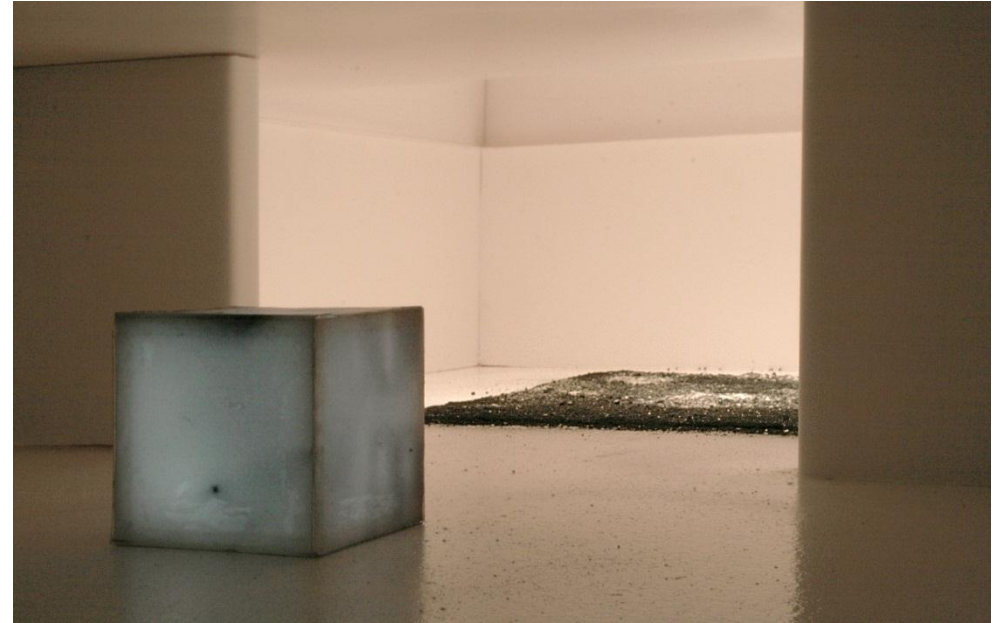


Sadistic Statistics, Sina Seif – 2012 – booklet, digital print, 42 pages, 14x21cm



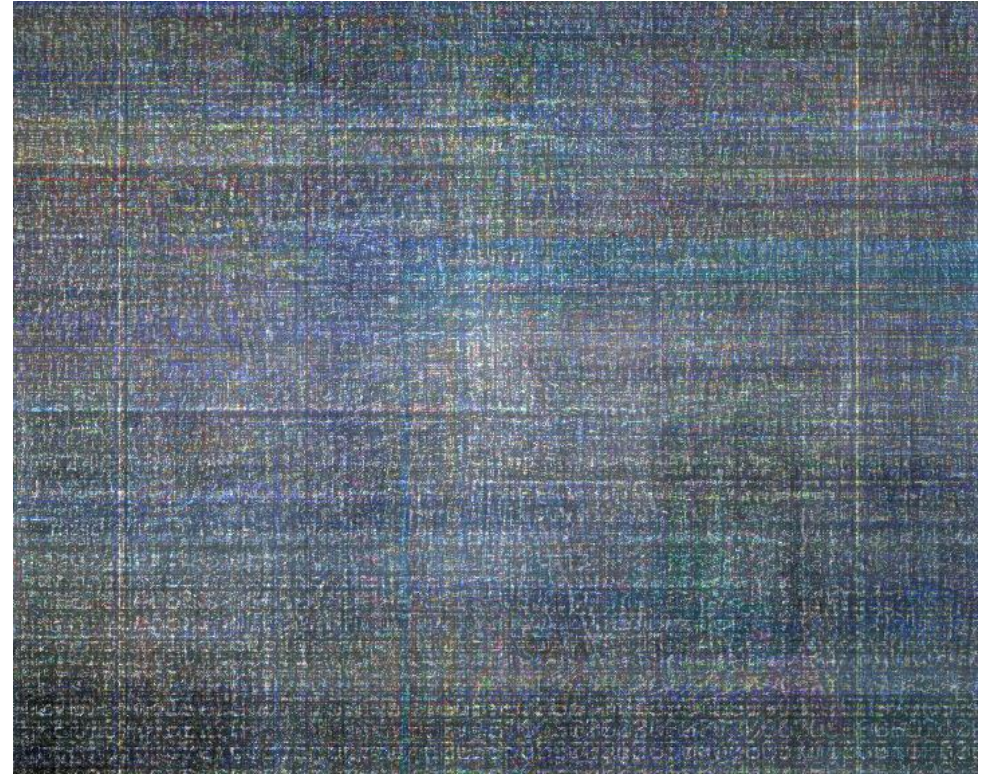
All the evil in the world comes from our inability to sit quietly in a room, comes from my interest in ancient Persian poetry and all the mystical system that is associated with this specific literature. At the time I recognized my relation to the world and being, as in a form of ethical relation to space. I found myself working with ideas of containment, interiority and separation, where the poetry was examining notions of movement, transformation and transcendence. But mostly than having a literally ascribable thing to a certain poem I am now using a sense of it to articulate and form a kind of responsibility in space.

The idea is to have two rooms connected with a rather wide opening. In the center of the first room, sits a one square meter cube, lit scarcely from inside. The texture on the cube is rendered of a virtually reversed room, with shadows of invisible objects randomly positioned inside the cube. In the second room, a square portion of the floor is covered in ash. The ash was supposed to propagate gradually in the course of the exhibition due to movements of the public. The cube is an undividable unit as if it being a foundation of space, while having hard edges and precise surface, for keeping seclusion and generating a separation between inside and its outside. The ash is open to chaos, has a different kind of randomness and resists the generation of boundary, it transpasses by going inside the audience body, through the air into their lungs.



All the evil in the world comes from our inability to sit quietly in a room, Sina Seiffee – 2009 – maquette for installation

I have been archiving screenshot of my computer desktop for years. Here, by digitally overlaying and averaging them I create a kind of historiography in compression instead of decompression. The images are 'time' seen by me; they are traces of my presence in digital. I leave a trace every time I save a screenshot in jpeg. But the trace can be tracked down and the code can be hacked. The sum of the images exposes what the retina of my eye has been exposed to; in other hand it conceals the personal information to make room for an organic visuality. The project is creating and hiding the trace, the evidence, on the back of my eye's retina.



Everyday Prince, Sina Seiffee – 2010 – single channel silent video, 20min looped



Short film based on an ancient Persian text. The story is an excerpt from Ajayibnamah: Aja'ib al-makluqat wa ghara'ib al-mawjudat (meaning: Marvels of creatures and Strange things existing) by Muhammad ibn-Mahmoud Hamdani, written in 1375. The story narrates the sending of a condemned criminal into a deep hole on top of the mountain to rescue a fallen child. The story ends absurdly with him hanging after days of floating downward in darkness.

The book is probably the earliest work of cosmography (an ancient science that maps the general features of the cosmos or universe, describing both heaven and earth). The music of the piece is a modification of Tartuffe (Murnau 1925) film soundtrack. Images are computer generated. The three constitutive components of the film (image, sound & text) are all found, from different times and sources; German expressionist cinema, ancient Persian cosmology and the language of digital artifact. The images are result of a 3D simulation, studies in digital animation and problems in rendering algorithm. The abstract forms of the computer generated animation in black and white work with the verticality of his movement and the observatory state of his task in the story. He is sent down to look in darkness and horror of a never ending deepness, to find the child or truth, or for mere curiosity.

"بر کوه اصفهان چاهی ست
قعر آن پدید نیست.

کودکی در آن افتاد.

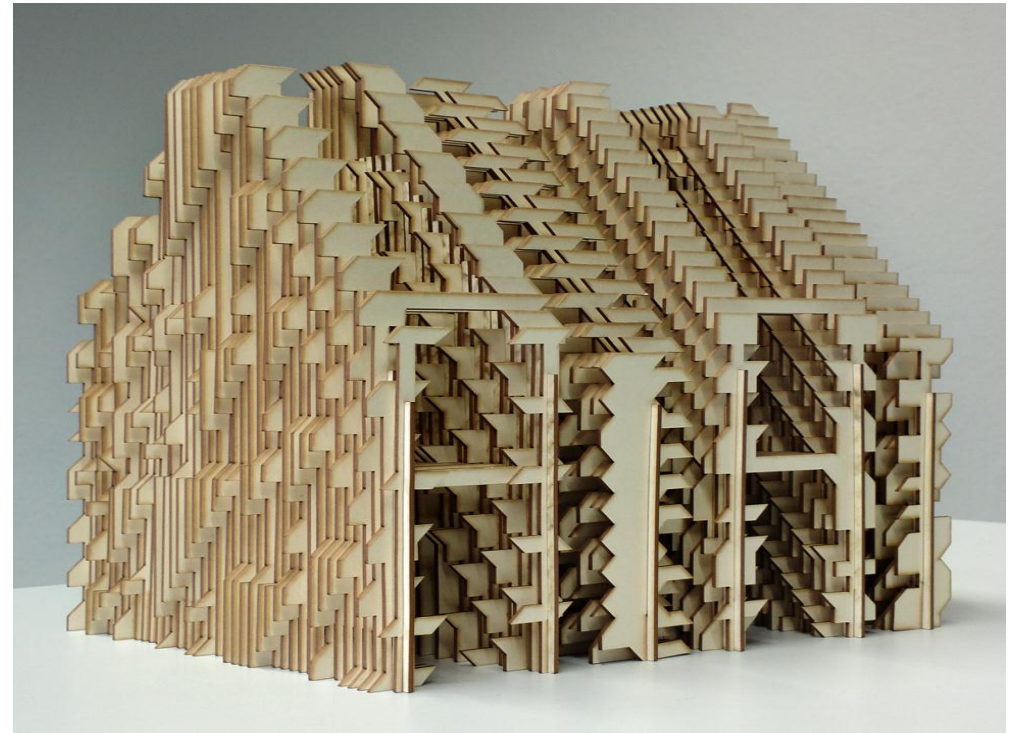
به روزگار اسحاق سیمجوری. ۱-

On the pile of Esfahan there is a hole, depths can not be seen.
A child fell in. In time of Eshagh Simjuri.



About Pits, Sina Seiffee – 2010 – stills from short film, 3'25"

The mathematical framework of 'Cellular automaton' (discovered in 1940s) is a generative modular system suited for drawing in discrete spaces. It is an example of evolutionary computation, where through iterations within the system, simple rules and conditions can result into immense complexities and irregular behaviors. By programming inside a framework of a 3D application and letting the computer to generate the space, I was able to look into the mathematics, move around in this computational universe and discover unexpected and new structures. The initial exploration was written within the virtual environment, and later exported selected buildings were cut out with laser and constructed together.



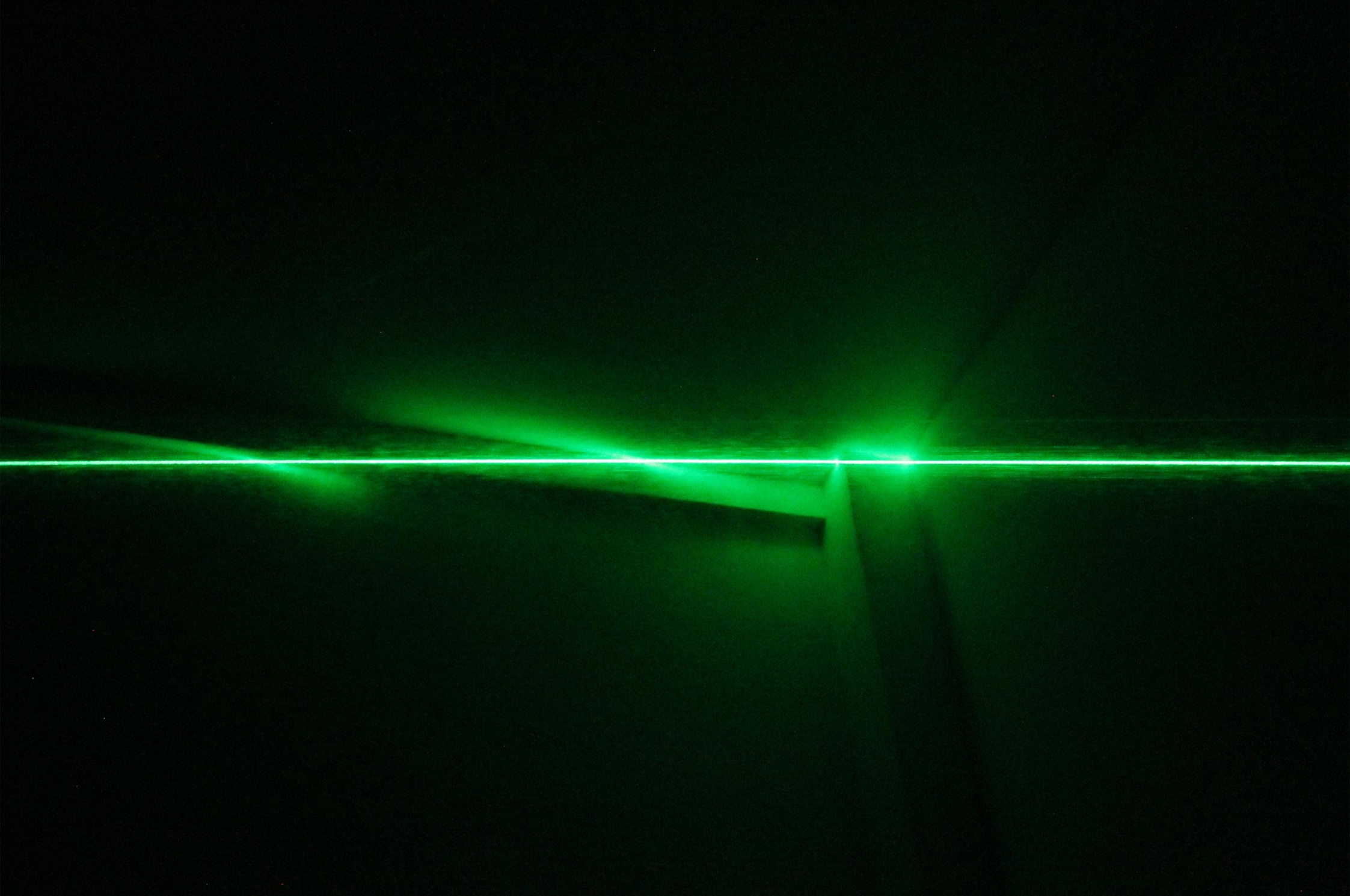
Sketch for a modular Construction with a cellular Automaton, Sina Seif, showed at Museum für Angewandte Kunst Köln – 2011 – cardboard, each 40x30x40cm

Point in mathematics is an accepted undefined. Point and line are two fundamental undefined concepts in geometry upon which many other concepts may be defined. So the point of mathematics is undefined right in its beginning in Greece. For Greeks geometry was an unsurpassed intellectual exercise which is ideal, immaterial and eternal. They were not interested in what a line might represent, but the line in itself was the matter of their arguments. Similarly when they model or draw objects, which may themselves have images in shadows or water, they use them in turn as images, endeavoring to see those absolute objects which cannot be seen otherwise by thought. This makes it an interesting element to work the space. For this reason I am using laser to come close to a physical possibility of the mathematical notion of point. A projected Laser beam may embody here the convergence of ideas and ideals of ancient geometry, Illuminationist philosophy and high tech optics.

A laser pointer (shooting at the center of the frame) or a laser line (shooting vertical or horizontal to the frame) attached firmly to the body of a camera, so that the laser always points at the center of the field of view during the recording. The camera moves and explores slowly in a darkened room and it scans the objects in the room. The laser precisely hits the space and the architecture of the room is slowly revealed and transformed by the camera's perspective.



Pointless Topologies, Sina Seiffee, screened at Raum für alle | ganz schön Kalk, Köln – 2013 – one channel video
70min looped



This work started when *Volume* (magazine for architecture) called for essays for an urban interdisciplinary research project. My initial interest in the project was very structural. When I was living in Tehran a cheap way of transportation was Taxi. I started recording while I was traveling inside the city, by looking out from the car's window. The resulting images were transitory and mixtures of textures in rapidness, so fast that the direction of the movement was erased to some extent. During the editing I added another sense of transition. The entire video is a 'fade-in' from black to the recorded image sequence. The sound is made of overlapping sine waves, sustaining a tone for long, which very slowly fades down until the end. There is no temporal cut in the music. In the other hand the picture is filled with cuts, that each don't last more than half a second. But these cuts in the image are due to the interaction between the surface of the city and the camera's angle in the moving car. I was trying to separate two perceptual modes in the course of a single channel video, separation of sonic and visual, while dealing with the interfaces of my mediums, city and camera. I wanted to examine that dramatic moment of the 'fade', I wanted to stretch it to its extent in order to see the affect.

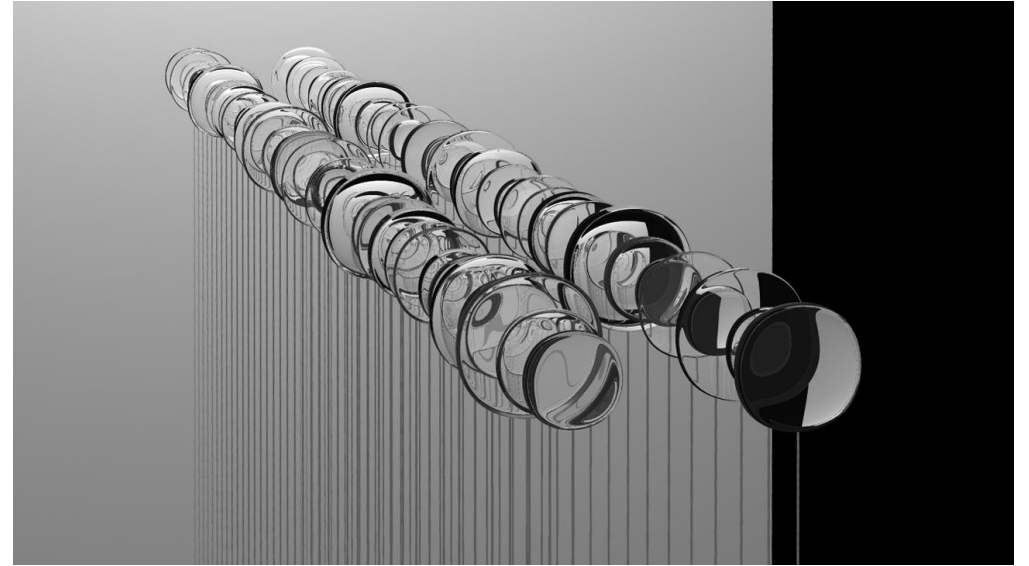


Vagabond, Sina Seif, Screened at Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln – 2012 – one channel video, filmed in Tehran 2010, 18min

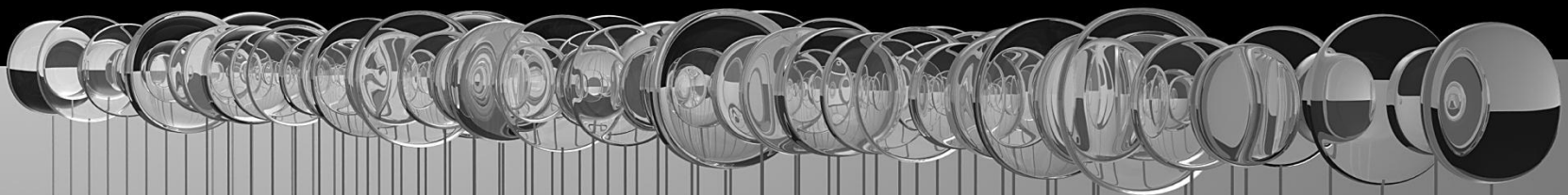


Vagabond, Sina Seifee – 2010 – entire video as frame sequence starting from top-left corner

Italo Calvino in his novel 'The Invisible Cities' explores the imaginable through the medium of the city, as described for Kublai khan by Marco Polo in his journeys. The cities are texts read and reread by the traveler and the emperor; they live in language as possibilities for worlds. The cities described and lived by Marco are secrets unfolding in memory and dream, verbal acts performed by him. The stationary positioning of the emperor and his ambassadors as eyes and agents with the ability to move in the whole empire, they communicate with each other through letters that has to travel for months till they reach him; this works as a model for the book itself in the hands of the reader. In this installation I put two arrays of glass lenses in different sizes in the viewer's eye level. Lens is a reading device and can also be part of a projection or observational apparatus. The accumulation of lenses disturbs the black and white horizon painted in the room and generates an complex optical landscape.



Invisible Cities, Sina Seiffee – 2011 – sketch for installation of specs lenses, 200x40x180cm



Two oval mirrors on top of one of the KHM buildings, face the inner courtyard where the students gather and socialize. Trying to extend the architecture of the school to a more dynamic and reflective faculty in relation to the presence and movements of the people around it, I wanted to create a more negotiable environment for my fellow students. The wild plantation on the roof which is usually invisible becomes visible and part of the experience in the courtyard, and in time the growth and generation of the organic plants redefines the sense of the building.



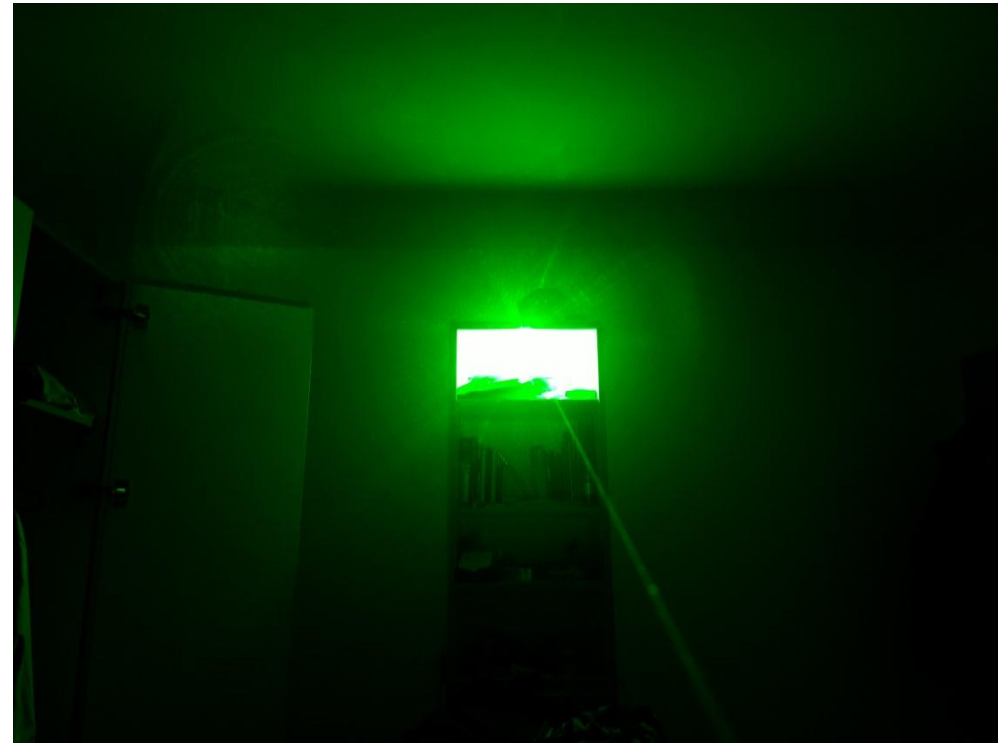
Garden's Mirror, Sina Seife – Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln – 2013 – installation, acrylic mirrors with wooden stand, 2.42x140cm



Garden's Mirror, Sina Seifert – Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln – 2013 – installation

Using light and words, in a small room, where the bodies of the audience has to fit together and fill the room, I handle a laser pointer in the interior of this darkened and charged room and simultaneously tell a half improvised story; the space of the words and the space of the laser (as it hits the architecture of the room) would merge and play out primary elements of a shared spatial experience. In this performance I experiment with the spoken word as it plays freely between semiotic, linguistic, pictural and mental domains and dimensions. I was already into the geometrical absorptions of the linear architecture, but how words (or rhetoric) can shape the consciousness (smoothness) within this linearity and dimensionality, was interesting and shocking for me.

Different narrative structures are used: science-fiction with black holes and gravitation, descriptive narration of an abstract mathematical geometrical environment, a story about eyeballs, man with the X-ray vision, description of an outer/inner elsewhere, dialog of directionality, pointing monologue, ray tracing, etc.



Star Dust, Sina Seif – Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln – 2012 – performance

I started drawing very early. I was fascinated by the transformation of space that happens between what the eyes see and what the hands see. Very soon I discovered that drawing is not just dealing with imagination and mental transmission, but more, it is a very serious form of possibility. To draw is pure creation of possibility, it permits a correction of consciousness, it is not a detached contemplative conceptual activity; drawing is worlding and to connect things. In this sense, I believe it is precisely political.



Drawing, Sina Seifee – 2010

