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Remnants: Within an age of digitalism

Marchelo Vera

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

The College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

School of Art

In Candidacy for the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts

Remnants: Within an Age of Digitalism

by

Marchelo Vera

May 18, 2012
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Thesis Abstract

21st Century civilization allows a glimpse into the progressive art paradigm that encompasses our constantly transforming technological advancements. These ideas explore the global network of our modern times and the interrelated possibilities within it. My collaborative and interdisciplinary methods give a glimpse into the future of digital/print media, augmented reality, and interactive environments. My artwork explores the hybrid, identity, culture, and an evolving reality within an age of Digitalism.

http://marchelovera.blogspot.com
http://www.printeresting.org/tag/marchelo-vera/

Marchelo Vera
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Artist Statement

21st Century civilization allows a glimpse into the progressive art paradigm that encompasses our constantly transforming technological advancements.

My work is a reaction to my life experiences and reflects my interests in the synthesis of media, history, and technology. I explore society through traditional and digital methods that constantly push me to alter my surroundings and visual language.

I am interested in the global network of our modern times and the interrelated possibilities within it. I produce artwork that utilizes generative elements and formulas found in nature, while being inspired by universal symbolism, conditions of the ruin, and ideas stemming from the realm of unconscious thought.

My contemporary printmaking and design methods create abstract environments and imagery that explore identity, culture, and an evolving reality within an age of Digitalism. •
Goals and Objectives

My current work explores a world of illusion, identity, and an evolving reality within an age of Digitalism. My goal is to place the viewer within a suspended space and time. Through the use of hand drawn and computer generative elements, I can create infinite possibilities. I choose to leave out reference of the figure in order to better connect my Synthesis process to the viewer as a constantly shifting and expanding environment.

The interactive portion of the work is a collaborative effort in using innovative technology that I believe will one day connect the realms of augmented reality and virtual spaces with our everyday surroundings. Being inspired by composers John Cage, Steve Reich, and Karlheinz Stockhausen, I have worked back and forth between the interpretation of sound and image.

The sound element of this collaborative work was composed by translating the unique mark making found within the Intaglio-Type prints into audible frequencies that were turned into sound compositions.
Introduction: Makings of an Artist

Growing up, much of my life consisted of moving and being in-between places. By the time I was thirteen my parents moved from an industrial blue-collar city neighborhood to a home in the middle of lakes and forests. As a young child I grew up within a diverse community consisting of many nationalities that included Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, African Americans, Italians, Ecuadorians, Thais, Vietnamese, Chinese, Uruguayans, Chileans, and Columbians. I lived in an apartment complex known as the projects not much different from any other low income housing environment. Life was pretty boring and uneventful because I never compared it to anything else, I didn’t know any better.

My parents were always working, which left me with a lot of time on my hands. Unlike most kids, I would always do my homework right away after school. I have always found myself drawn to books based on history rather than fiction. As a child I wanted to be an archeologist because they were able to recreate exhibits from the traces of ancient civilizations. When I was young I learned to draw Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles from my friend Joseph in first grade. I later would blindly redraw book covers such as Charlotte’s Web and the giant porcelain elephant that was on the living room table. (My mother’s most prized possession, any damage to it and I knew life would be over.) Sometimes I would sell the drawings to my mother for a quarter or two and I would buy candy or ice cream.

Running around the neighborhood I learned a skill set of street smarts much different than the typical adolescent child. It’s not that I knew it at the time, but seeing different cultures living together and going to school with kids that spoke different languages while practicing various traditions would have an impact on me in the future. Unlike many kids that went to art school, I never had a formal art class until my senior year of high school. Somehow, I managed to stay away from many dangerous situations while growing up. Not that life was terrible at all; I remember many great things like vanilla wafers, eclipses, bike riding, and Nintendo. But if it weren’t for my family and, especially my mother, I could have easily wound up on the other side of where I am
today. (Catholicism was another typical practice for my family that in many ways instilled within me traditional values.) I was not a stranger to drug dealers, criminals, or gangs while growing up. Seeing the way that these networks were interrelated at a young age probably sparked my interests in sociology and the human condition. Many of these people were actually very intelligent in their own way; they simply followed and functioned with behaviors unacceptable to mainstream society.

In my early teens, my mother relocated our family to the suburbs on the borders of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Her fear was mainly that I would be gang influenced by the time I made it to high school. It was at this point that I noticed a big difference in my new environment; everyone for the most part was blonde or had dark straight hair with blue or brown eyes. It was a small population of less than ten thousand with no downtown or outlets. The three Latino families in the entire town all lived in the same corner of the same road, and there was only one black family that I knew of in the area. For the first time in my life I felt different from everyone, this would be the first place that I would ever hear derogatory names and experience racial tensions. Needless to say, being a quiet kid in a new neighborhood is never easy. By the time I graduated middle school I was being suspended for fighting in self-defense so much that it felt like every other week my time was spent with in-school suspension. Naturally, I became familiar with all of the other outcasts and delinquents which socialized me into yet another subculture.

Realizing the differences between American and Latino society ultimately affected both my life and perspective regarding the underlying structure of my art practices. Growing up, I was not only made very much aware of my differences but also understood the similarities found within both systems of city and suburban culture. At a very young age, from my viewpoint I began to consider universal elements that were found throughout all of nature. I became sensitive to these aspects of life, not much different than any naïve child who questions the world around them. The idea of the universal would later be incorporated into my work while utilizing “X” variables and mathematical formulas. (Such as the fundamental stroke weights and design elements found in my Synthesis works that utilize restructured components for each individual part of the series.)
During the time spent working and preparing for my MFA thesis exhibition, I became reflective and critical in regard to my art making practices. I collaborated more and more with individuals of varying skill sets and from different programs. I realized that perhaps the reason I work so naturally with multimedia is due to the happenstance of my social background. It never occurred to me that not all artists were interested in other media or with experiencing new and different perspectives. In fact, during my thesis defense it was pointed out that some artists do dedicate themselves to one medium or claim to be a particular kind of artist. (Which I am uninterested in.) I find that the major artists that have influenced me such as Duchamp, de Kooning, Warhol, Rauschenberg, and Paik were all very aware of their diverse surroundings, many of whom had small town beginnings and later relocated to international cities.

As a young teenager my outlet for a time became my first PC computer; it was at this point that I became immersed with computer hacking. This was at a time that computer security was particularly second rate, even when dealing with multimillion-dollar corporations. It innocently began with irc.psychic.net a server that provided online chatting services. I became intrigued with coding, l0pht and 2600 magazine. Coined terms such as l33t and r00t were particularly appealing to computer geeks of the 90’s and Hackers (1995) featuring Angelina Jolie was extremely popular. Through #T eenchat (One of the main chat rooms on the server.) I became wrapped up in a tech underworld that was different from my day life. I became familiar with online users that used names like MagicFX, boomy, HydroFlow, and AquaHelix. Through this experience, I became aware of the defacements and security flaws found within corporations that included eBay and Lycos.

Later I learned that “MagicFX” was really Jerome Heckenkamp, a gifted computer intellect who was only a few years older than I. The government had charged him with gaining access to sensitive information illegally. (He was an engineer for Los Alamos National Laboratory, the nation’s top nuclear weapons research facility at the age of 21.) By the time I was a sophomore at the vocational technical school I attended, I changed my major from Electronics to Information
Technology. At one point, all of my friends were expelled for computer misuse. Soon after, I changed my major again to Graphic Communications, where I became completely influenced by technology in new and productive ways.

Learning troubleshooting and creativity found within hacking technology and graphic design has affected my artwork today. In my work I use computer glitches that are combined with hand drawn elements. Many of the techniques that I incorporate into my artwork come from life experience. I like to creatively work outside the normal usage of certain computer technologies. This alternative style of working allows me to incorporate new trends in image-making with traditional processes.

**Convergence of Art & Technology**

Craig Owens (b.1950-1990) lead the way to an innovative foundation of contemporary art theory through his many essays stemming from his years at Yale University. Before passing, his art criticism reached the pages of scholarly journals such as October and Post Modern Culture, along with his contributions to Art in America as senior editor. *The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism (1980)* is an insightful perspective into (Post) Modernism and our emerging global society.

The term *hybrid* has become a significant description of the innovative and progressive technologies that have become the paradigm for 21st Century civilization. Through the evolution of concepts from Modernism to beyond a (Post) Modernist era, the act of creating artwork is undeniably faced with aspects of new forms of technologies. Merging together the practice of craft with fine art now includes elements of not only traditional media such as painting and printmaking but also extends to embrace interactive media, graphic art, coding/scripting, hacking, lighting, and circuitry.

The *Allegorical Impulse* highlights the destruction and impermanence that is found in antiquarian classical art. Through what Owens coins as *doubling*, the contemporary artist has the opportunity
to rework ideas and artworks from the past, while transforming them to fit the innovative
dialogue of modern times. “An appreciation of the transience of things, and the concern to rescue
them for eternity, is one of the strongest impulses in allegory.” (Owens) Doubling promotes the
recontextualisation of artwork by changing an original meaning that presents new viewpoints to
the viewer and which echo evolving forms of communication. Through reflection and at times
by appropriation the work takes on new significance. “The allegorist does not invent images but
confiscates them…he does not restore an original meaning…he adds another.” (Owens) Through
the convergence of art and methods by which the new generation combines various mediums,
hybrid works are continuously redefining art history.

Civilization has always reflected upon art and technology. The High Renaissance marked the
classical traditions of the workshop, apprentice, and mentor. Even today, to create the colossal
works of our times one needs a team to devise the methods by which to produce, install, and
maintain such artworks. The engineer has become just as important as the creator of the idea.
Utilizing classical traditions passed down in the Renaissance provided craftsmen the ability to
develop the best of their existing technology. It was because very entrusted and specific methods
of mixing pigments and the use of optics were passed on to them that artists succeeded in creating
beautifully rendered frescos and paintings during this golden age.

The Body of Work (Contemporary Printmaking)

Contemporary Printmaking lends itself to the sensitivities of mark making mastered by drawing
practice and the craft of traditional painting. Through the evolution of innovative printmaking
methods, Intaglio-Type combines conventional ways of working with ground-breaking techniques
that embrace modern photography and digital media. As the modern studio becomes more
aware and concerned with health and sustainability, the methods devised by Keith Howard fit the
essential needs of the contemporary artist.
Having come to Rochester Institute of Technology for the first time in 2002 to pursue a BFA in Graphic Design, I was already well aware of the school’s reputation in having state of the art facilities and technology. Previously, I attended Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School where I was trained on commercial printing presses that included an A.B. Dick, Ryobi, and Hamada. While there, I became well acquainted with the pre-press fundamentals related to image setting, color separation, multi plate registration, plate making, and pantone color mixing.

However, it was at RIT that raster imaging instructor David Jay Reed first introduced me to the fine art aspects of printing. Having learned about my background and interest in merging art and design, he suggested that I take “Pixel to Print,” a printmaking elective that used principles of four-color separation. Soon after, I would go on to meet Keith Howard, head of Contemporary Printmaking & Research. It was at this time that I first experienced the non-toxic practices that revolved around his developed Intaglio-Type techniques. Having a passion and the insatiable drive of a teenager, I found myself in the printmaking studio on countless nights, which got me involved in the research dialogue alongside graduate students Justin Myer Staller and Adam Werth. These were great times to be at RIT, regarded by many professionals to house the leading non-toxic printmaking facility in the world.

Unbeknownst to me at the time, my undergraduate environment set up one of the most critical and significant opportunities of my career. I experienced a model that catered to a dialogue of not only self directed artistic growth but also practical experience in regards to research and development through the Akua ink research that I participated in for Susan Rostow’s first generation of water soluble inks.

Remnants: Within an Age of Digitalism

The process of printmaking provides the artist an outlet to work in multiples. Unlike traditional painting by which an artist continually reworks a canvas and loses different stages to layering, Intaglio-Type lends itself to multiple avenues of development. After years of working with
traditional drawing mediums, I began to concentrate more on vector and raster based image-making and experimentation. By scanning graphite drawings and then reworking them using Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, the potential of line and image took on new meaning. Through these processes it became possible to easily resize and combine both digital and traditional elements seamlessly together. I fell in love with the aesthetic and tactile quality of digital output combined with the hands on approach of printmaking. The strength of reworking and repurposing an image became apparent not only through digital means but also through the ability to rework the printing plate.

In my series *Remnants: Within an Age of Digitalism* I explore the connections and characteristics of mark making, printmaking, photography, and painting. Much of my work methodology is a constant reworking of my environment and visual language. I have always been a collector; nothing has been a better asset than my archive of imagery, textures, and objects from everyday life.

In *Smoke & Mirrors (2011)* I was interested in the relationships between the analog and digital systems. In order to create and progress I needed to be open to destruction; this image reflects the history of civilization. In history, ancient cities are lost to time and war, while each civilization builds upon the ruins of the other. Technology advances through discovery and the exchange of ideas; mankind always finds

*Marchelo Vera, Smoke & Mirrors 4c Intaglio-Type*
a way to move forward. Nothing is as beautiful as the dreamer; greater progress occurs no faster than in times of war. In this work my interests of sociology and the human condition are layered with the technological achievements of the human species. Ruin and decay by way of fire, are one of mankind’s first discoveries. My imagery is layered with metaphor. Upon closer inspection, a viewer may take note of the abstract line work found within the top left portion of *Smoke & Mirrors (2011)*. This treatment is a mixture of hand drawn and digitally rendered line work that is combined with the photographic representation of a network of electronic cables. It references many of the elements found within the appropriated print montages by Robert Rauschenberg, who combines commercial media images with hand drawn components such as found in *Skyway (1964)* and also in combines such as *Monogram (1959)*. Within the everyday landline phone that has become a relic of the past, there are connections that echo the social framework of our society. Living within the dawn of the 21st Century I am surrounded by wireless technology, enhancing for me an intrigue in the transformative revolution of our times. Similar influences can also be found in the work of Nam June Paik who uses neon lighting, circuit boards, and television

*Nam June Paik, Electronic Superhighway 1974 – 1995 Source: Artstor, Larry Qualls*
Robert Rauschenberg, *Skyway* 1964

Source: Artstor, Dallas Museum of Art
monitors to connect old and new technology. This way of working brings attention to the way we communicate and interact in today’s globalized world.

Andy Warhol was known for the repetition of his images that utilized Serialization patterns. One can place emphasis on an image through repetition, alteration, and by methods of production. In this respect, I choose to replicate *Smoke & Mirrors (2011)* and *Specimen B (2011)* as digital prints to alert the viewer to be aware of their underlying structure. Each artistic process and medium holds within it traits that make it unique. By blurring these lines as I did by duplicating the images in a different medium, a hybrid work can take on new meaning. The convergence of art allows artwork to share elements from various media; this process becomes the foundation for intermedia. One used to look at a painting and credit it as such, however with the advancement of technology, what is apparent is not always what it is. Choosing to transfer my work onto canvas by way of inkjet printing was to make a point in this regard. Canvas has been tied to painting for hundreds of years and this work raised the question of what characterizes and defines a medium. By combining digital and hand drawn elements, my aim was to balance the composition and allow viewers to experience the work without complete conviction as to how the work was created. By doing so, I believe the work becomes more successful and full of possibilities through which the art can evolve and take on new forms.

Lost in Translation

This is my readymade; repeating imagery and creating a context that is constantly evolving. Through the four-color separation process one notices the printmaking characteristics found within the edges of each color, the embossing of the paper, and the slightly off target registration. Building an image using the CMYK process inspired from commercial publishing leaves certain elements within the work tied to both tradition and innovation. Modern civilization has without a doubt become a global network. The blurring of mediums in my work reflects the merging of nations and has ties to an underlying theme of blended cultural identity.
Having been born American and Latino by way of Puerto Rican parents, I have always been treated as belonging to two worlds. My Caribbean heritage was an inspiration in previous works. I still remember the industrial decay left behind by an abandoned past. Aguirre P.R. (The origination of my family roots.) has strong historic ties to the American entrepreneurs that developed the area for the harvesting of sugar cane crops. Few know that it was in this small town that the first post office, movie theatre, and golf course were developed on the island. Growing up, my summers often consisted of flying between the United States and Puerto Rico for school vacation. When I was home I was Spanish, and when I was abroad I was American; this duality would affect my life. By the time I earned my undergraduate degree I had already become very aware that I was too much of a designer for the artists and too much of an artist for the designers.

In this regard, I discovered a fundamental connection within the way I worked and began to question how much of my life experiences positioned me to feel most comfortable in the space between that of an artist and a designer.

In Specimen B (2011) I continue to specifically explore the connection of photography and printmaking. I used photographic imagery to explore the stroke quality of line and to create heavy and delicate variations of line work within the space of the digital canvas. Through the alteration of layering affects in Photoshop and pixel editing of mark-
making, the image begins to take on a new form different from its beginnings. Process is important in my work. By the time I have a final image I have already gone through numerous revisions and variations. (Much like the work of Andy Warhol whose prints and drawing editions vary tremendously.) Early in my artistic career I became intrigued and saw value in the manipulation of technology. Through hacks, glitches, and exploits in technology I could achieve interesting results. In this case I noticed the subtle texture within the image captured from scanned Polaroid edges. On the bottom is a distinct bar that runs completely through the image, an artifact of the digital process, much like the edge markings typical to the prints and textures of mixed paints.

In this example I found the dark tones a challenge to reproduce using printmaking methods. It is much easier to recreate bright and saturated colors than to replicate dark tones without having them appear washed out or muddy. Again, I am interested in the change of color, keeping in mind the color profiling of imagery that is often calibrated to a monitor or printer. The printmaker with experience has some control over these factors by means of under or over development of the plate, mixing customized inks, or through manipulating the digital halftone. In my process it is not important by which method I commence a work, regardless of it being digital or traditional, I invariably find myself working back and forth between various techniques and mediums.

Over the Looking Glass (2011) is digitally rendered from a session of observational figure drawing. Using a Wacom tablet, I am capable of not only drawing but am also given the option of continuously reworking the composition, changing colors, and manipulating line stroke quality. (Much like the vectorization of hand drawings carried out by the apprentices hired to produce the works of Takashi Murakami.) Although this digital process has a different aesthetic quality than traditional methods, it allows me to rework the image and work with a considerable number of variables in a series. The digital transfer process introduced to me by Alan Singer, a professor in the Fine Arts Studio program at RIT, uses transparency film that is run through an inkjet printer. Using different printers affects the profile and color tones that are produced. Utilizing a flatbed printing press, the image is transferred to a sheet of paper that has been soaked in a water bath and
then blotted. In the top left corner, the viewer may notice an ink pattern that is a direct result of the film having been jammed within the printer. In much of my undergraduate work these marks are visible and created by different processes. I find these artifacts interesting as they become an important feature in my compositions; they also allow the trained eye to understand my methods. In this work the figure is doubled and is set in front of a mirror, referencing illusion and the dreamer.

**Collaborative Methods**

*(Intermedia Sculpture)*

In *Illusions of Time (2012)* I teamed up with Jon Fila (Computer Graphic Arts) to create an intermedia piece based on the desire of working between 2D and 3D environments. Having enrolled in a glass elective for the first time, we initially decided that we would go all out, which led to much failure. Reassessing our goals and interests I initiated the idea of trying something that neither of us had done before. With Jon’s expertise in 3D Design, we worked out a model that would be reproduced using a 3D printer from the Industrial Design department. The pattern was created using a starch additive process that was then coated with multiple layers of polyurethane. Innovations in 3D printing are currently in the beginning stages of revolutionizing the way in which sculpture-based artists work. The prospects of creating a pattern from the inside out will surely transform the way in which this media is treated in the future. In some cases, these techniques allow artists to create objects that are

*Marchelo Vera, Over the Looking Glass Digital Transfer*
Illusions of Time, Cast glass, 3D modeling, Digital projection
Patterns for Lost Wax Process
Wax Model
otherwise impossible to build by human hands.

After creating multiple molds from the patterns, I poured waxes that would later be used in the lost wax process. My familiarity with this method allowed me to create iron poured versions of our original model. We then continued to experiment and work towards adapting our process for the pouring of glass molds. The aesthetics of the intermedia sculpture began to transform through each initial phase. Seeing it cast and reworked in multiple media, I began to observe more and more the characteristics of the materials used. The original plan for the work was to create an organic sculpture that could be cast by incorporating multiple sections. The pieces would be visually tied together through their arrangement; having multiple pieces that shared similar elements such as the bulbous forms that allowed the work to grow seamlessly. The concept was to have these universal geometric forms integrate seamlessly together like an expanding network. It took countless hours to create and polish all of the separate parts that were then secured together. Using glass allowed me to project a field of changing colors and images through the bottom-polished portion of the sculpture, taking advantage of the reflective qualities of the glass. This idea came from my interest in using light and projection as a new form method; it also juxtaposed and appropriated printmaking elements that were transformed from tangible media into light and digital pixels. (An underlying theme in my work that echoes multiculturalism and convergence.)

**Modularis: PXP-701 (Interactive Environments)**

Through the exploration of various media, I was drawn to the concept that universal elements make up the composition of constellations, planets, and all living species. Reworking multimedia in various ways inspired me to become an architect of sorts. My intent was to create my own environments, inspired by the collisions of matter throughout an expanding universe. (In some ways, the works of Jackson Pollack who regarded himself as a vessel by which to combine nature and art inspired this series.)

By combining hand drawn and computer generative elements of design, I was able to create
a dialogue that gave my compositions life through interactivity. Inspired by the works of John Cage, I experimented with the influences that sound and music can have on the drawn stroke and elements of 2D design. My aim while creating these universal spaces was to be subconsciously affected by musical surroundings. (An immeasurable act.) Beyond the intent found within the strokes of my drawings, there are elements achieved by chance (A technique often used by Cage.) or with the aid of a machine or software exploit, as demonstrated in the Synthesis Series (2012). Utilizing the resources of technology such as a Wacom pen, tablet, or computer increases the amount of prospective compositions that can be repurposed. I am capable of transforming any vector or raster formatted artwork to fit the conditions required for entirely different media.

The titles of my Intaglio-Types in this series reflect the process of Synthesis. The final stages of each print all share similar characteristics, inspired by the various planets within our solar system that are composed of the same elements. Each Synthesis shares an aesthetic quality with the other, while maintaining a unique character. Every final Intaglio-Type in the series is assigned a number much in the same way a researcher labels a specimen. The given title name of each synthesis

Marchelo Vera, Modularis
Synthesis No. 2030 Susano

Yuya Takeda & Marchelo Vera, Interactive Development
Yuya Takeda, Opening Reception Demonstration

Artists, Yuya Takeda & Marchelo Vera
Modularis: Interactive Environment
Modularis: Interactive Environment, John Remo

Modularis: Interactive Environment
process loosely expresses a personification and supports the classification of future specimens in the series.

Having been introduced to tangible media, a user interface in which a person interacts with digital information through the physical environment. I met Yuya Takeda, an incredibly talented 3D designer from Japan. Our shared interest in an interdisciplinary work environment was suited for a highly experimental collaborative project. Putting together our skill sets allowed us to create work that integrated our passion for technology and art. I had originally been influenced by sound in my exploration; Yuya’s background in sound production facilitated the reworking of my visual prints into audible frequencies. With the aid of computer software it was possible to convert the mark making within my Synthesis prints into audible frequencies, which generated music compositions. This joint process of image making, sound creation, and fine-tuning led to the music compositions that are unique to each individual Synthesis process. In respect, pioneers such as John Cage and Steve Reich inspired our ideas, “I don’t understand my environment, I simply experience it.” Allan Miller & Ruth Leon, John Cage: I Have Nothing to Say and I’m Saying It (1979)

The interactive component of the work was made possible by the use of a Kinect system that was connected to motion tracking software. This allowed the user to get a sense of how their physical gestures interacted with elements contained within the digital environment. The interactive feature of the collaborative project enhanced what we had both been individually working towards. Originally, the developed Intaglio-Types were mapped around spheres that represented planetary systems. While using projections to enlarge the original printed works into an environment that a user could experience as a space, we saw the potential for an interactive component in the work. Ultimately, each synthesis process became a component of a multilayered environment that was receptive to being visually explored by the viewer through the use of their direct hand gestures. Within a tangible media and new forms dialogue, professors Shaun Foster and Tom Lightfoot encouraged our exploration relating to the potential interactive components of our work. We documented not only our collaborative efforts in making the series, but also the user experience of our audience as they encountered an interactive hybrid work for the very first time.
Thesis Conclusion

Through the use of innovative technology artists are capable of creating works that constantly redevelop and challenge the dialogue of art history. The digital artist can re-contextualize concepts and works for mediums and art making methods that are only beginning to develop.

My thesis exploration of personal work and the development of collaborative projects clearly articulate my original intent of the examination of culture and technology. My initial goal was to integrate analog and digital processes to metaphorically express an expanding global network that is reflective of international boundaries and civilization. Through the development of each individual artwork, there is a consistent integration of aesthetic and conceptual considerations that have gone into the oeuvre. In this way, I tried to concentrate on a fundamental theme that would be reflective of an organic/mechanical apparatus that is found in both nature and within the structure of human civilization. Although, at times, I was very unsure if the end results of my efforts would be successful, the experiences of my failed attempts were very inspiring and critical in expanding my working methods. From this I learned many new skills, found personal growth, and formed many new friendships along the way.

The most successful components of my body of work are the areas that were collaborative and which transpired through joint efforts with my colleagues. The opportunity to network and combine different skill sets greatly magnifies the possibilities of art making. (As demonstrated in the principles of Bauhaus design and that are found throughout (Post) Modernism.) The areas of 3D computer modeling and interactive design are fields that I believe will be very influential on artists of the next generation. By allowing viewers to collectively come together and experience my collaboratively created spaces, my goal was to highlight an underlying system that integrates the masses of individuals found within a universal network.

Through the execution of my thesis exhibition new processes and techniques challenged me. Putting together the tools and methods by which I produced artwork allowed me to better understand my own progression. As the work evolved I advanced with it in regards to technical skill and conceptual development.
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Img. 16. Marchelo Vera, Synthesis No. 2667 Ureilassius, 2012 Intaglio-Type, 36” x 24”

Img. 17. Marchelo Vera, Synthesis No. 2047 Nanai, 2012 Intaglio-Type, 36” x 24”

Img. 18. Marchelo Vera, Synthesis No. 2030 Susano, 2012 Intaglio-Type, 36” x 24”

Img. 19. Yuya Takeda & Marchelo Vera, Interactive Development

Img. 20. Artist, Marchelo Vera & Remnants Series

Img. 21. Tom Lightfoot, Marchelo Vera, & Keith Howard at Opening Reception

Img. 22. Yuya Takeda, Opening Reception Demonstration

Img. 23. Artists, Yuya Takeda & Marchelo Vera

Img. 24. Marchelo Vera, (Self), 2012 Modularis: Interactive Environment

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the dreamer.
May they find their sunshine.

“The best thing about a picture is that it never changes, even when the people in it do.”

– Andy Warhol