

ART +
GAMES
WORLD TOUR

THE ART AND VIDEOGAME WORLDTOUR

by Isabelle Arvers, curator and game artist

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INTRODUCTION

To celebrate her 20 years as curator in the fields of art and video games, Isabelle Arvers proposes to carry out in 2019 a world tour of art and video games in order to meet digital artists and independent developers in more than 15 countries of the world.

"Her design: to engage from June 2019 to March 2020 in a tour of the world to meet artists, actors and developers of video games outside the American and European beaten paths to build a project on the diversity of video game And highlight the women in the sector. Activist of an art that is emancipated from the international majors of the genre, Isabelle Arvers advocates for independence, for forms of experimental art that help "out of the unique vision". Sébastien Acker¹

If Western countries have recently realized the need to promote gender, sexuality and race diversity in video games with the organization of events such as GaymerX or Rainbow Arcade, to name a few, what about the rest of the world?

ART+GAMES WORLDTOUR aims not only to discover new talents and different ways of dealing with the issue of diversity, but it also proposes to create connections and to initiate collaborations with the worlds of game art, independent games, games DIY art in **Asia, India, the Middle East, Latin America and Africa**. The purpose is to meet the actors of this field of artistic exploration, to take the time to share the working methods and the ways to conceive the world, to exchange and share in order to develop a totally new concept of the **"working together"**. Moreover the whole project is based into bringing as much as possible into the spotlights the **female, queer and decolonial** practices and works.



Evolution of Gaming, Center for Digital Media, Vancouver, 2013

¹ La Nouvelle République, 18.01.2019

THE GENESIS OF THE PROJECT

In 2017, Isabelle Arvers spends 15 days in New York. She meets many artists as well as professionals in the art and video games field, visits workshops, and tours exhibits. She reports on this enriching and immersive experience in her article on the New York art and video game scene in november 2017²:

<http://www.isabellearvers.com/2017/11/i-am-a-curator-im-an-art-games-curator-im-a-curator-in-new-york-oh-oh/>

A few months later, in August 2018, she is welcomed in residence in **Platohedro** in Medellin and spends three weeks giving machinima workshops to communities close to Platohedro and LGBTI **Mesa Diversa Comuna 4**. At the same time, she presented lectures on art and video games in three universities and art schools (MIT, EAFIT, Universita de Antioquia).



In this context, she meets many artists working on video, the hacking of technologies and free software as well as independent game developers and virtual reality research labs. Stunned by the creative abundance she observes, she decides to organize a special edition of Art Games Demos³ on site.

Imagined by Isabelle Arvers and Chloé Desmoineaux, Art Games Demos is a festive event dedicated to the exhibition of creations touching near and far to video art and video games.

The works presented during this evening can come from emerging or confirmed artists, local or international, with video projections, demonstrations of independent, experimental or artistic video games as well as performances, lives, chiptunes music concerts and DJ Sets.

² see the article in the appendices

³ <http://www.kareron.com/art-games-demos/>



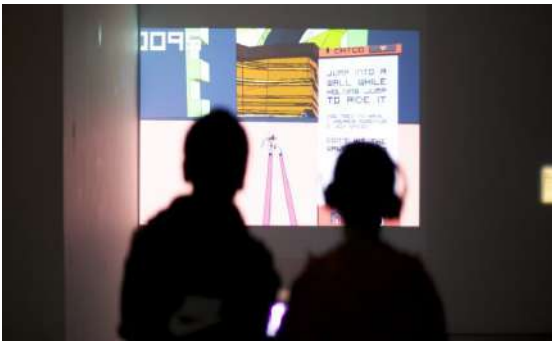
Art Games Demos, Platohedro, Medellín, 2018

This grounding experience focused on highlighting the issues of **diversity, gender and decolonization**, while analyzing the working and exchange methods of the different communities in order to highlight their innovative and inspiring nature. It thus gives impetus to imagine an even more inclusive, transversal and ambitious project:

the ART+GAMES WORLDTOUR

THE PROJECT

For ten months, Isabelle Arvers will travel the world and stay between two to three weeks in each of the selected countries. She will meet the communities of artists and independent developers, most of them unknown in Europe or the United States, making it so possible to make an **extensive inventory of the state of the art projects in the world of the game, the hack, and all forms of digital activist art.**



*Games reflexions exhibit
Le Carreau contemporary art center, Paris, 2013*

These meetings are also an opportunity to **exchange and share** about the raised issues throughout specifically designed for this purpose **workshops** and **conferences** in universities and schools of art and video games. The trip will also offer the opportunity to attend the various specialized events and to visit the centers of creation [places of demonstration of digital art and video games, universities and schools of art and video games, art and new media centers, hacklabs, fablabs, indie meetups, gamejams] and to expand the network by strengthening links across borders.

To achieve this, Isabelle Arvers relies on the multiplicity and variety of networks she has gathered around her in 20 years of active and intensive practice⁴ : **feminists, cyberfeminists, queer, independent games, game art, technology diversion, hackerspaces, DIY technologies, student in art and video games, computer development** etc.



Machinima workshop, UCLA Game Lab, 2016



Machinima workshop and exhibit in a farm, San José de Barrero, Brasil, 2015

⁴ <http://www.kareron.com/>

THE GOALS

The goals are multiple:

- discover innovative projects still unknown in Europe and the United States;
- report on the state of the art in video games and contemporary art;
- broaden the knowledge of a form of artistic expression that is widespread as a practice but still confidential when it comes to diffusion in the art market;
- highlight the current effervescency of these areas and the richness of their possible crossings off the beaten tracks and networks already perfectly identified in a transversal approach that can inspire other art forms as to the adoption of collective and innovative methods of creation and promotion;
- promote innovative and inspiring modes of collaboration, new ways of doing things that can point the way to new ways of relating to others, work and the virtual world;
- connect video game artists and developers around the world;
- promote the development of cross-fertilization between Western European networks and those in Latin America, Africa and Asia;
- showcase women, feminist, queer and decolonized art works through the promotion of diversity in the creation of video games and digital art;
- documenting for the future this historic moment in the development of digital practices and return it to enrich the documentation of a history of art being written.

THE OUTPUTS

Several moments and types of restitution are planned allowing a valorization all throughout the project of the sponsors, patrons, financiers of all horizons that support the project.

Beside the gender and decolonial aspects, a specific emphasis will be placed on participatory works and projects: physical games, urban games, experimental and artistic games, interactive shows, workshops, performances, interactive installations, games in VR, etc.

MONTHLY ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

Throughout the trip, each visit will result in a report including portraits of artists, game designers and developers, as well as reviews of exhibitions or events. Each month, Isabelle Arvers will publish a video / writing article of all her meetings, in partnership with a media.

THE ESSAY IN THE FORM OF AN ARTBOOK

These reports, enriched with all the collected documentation [photographs, recordings, videos, memorabilia, articles, texts, derived products etc], will constitute the basic material for writing and designing an essay on the current video and game art. It will come in the form of an art book.

This paper art edition aims to portray the creators and creatives encountered and to offer a critical look at the "art and video games" production today in the world. Designed throughout the trip, structured around the published reports online, it proposes a more comprehensive version of the texts matured on this occasion and will serve as a basis for the development of the exhibition catalog.

TWO DAYS FESTIVAL

To celebrate the long journey and give a first opportunity to discover the selected works, a festive art and video game event in the form of a two-day festival will be organized. Will be on the menu performances, discovery of games, internet links with authors around the world, video projections, DJ sets etc.

THE NOMADIC INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION ART AND VIDEO GAMES

The selection of works and artists coming from all over the world will be presented to a wider European audience during an itinerant international exhibition "art and videogames".

THE EXHIBITION'S CATALOG

The exhibition catalog will again enrich the essay of new and specific materials specially conceived for the traveling exhibition.



Game art workshop and lecture, Fayoum Art Center, Egypt, 2014

THE DESTINATIONS

Asia

South Korea
Taiwan
Japan
Thailand
Indonesia

Africa

Nigeria
Senegal
Ivory Coast

Latin America

Brazil
Argentina
Mexico
Colombia

India

Middel East

Israël/Palestine
Lebanon
Egypt

THE SCHEDULE

PREPARATION

Search for funds, partners and co-producers (media, material, travel, accommodation etc)	December 2018 - April 2019
Making contact with communities in the different countries	January 2019 - May 2019
Development of the communication tools [logo, website, social networks]	March 2019 - April 2019
Hardware purchase [camera, audio recorder, laptop, hard disc drivers etc]	May 2019
DEPARTURE !	June 2019

TRAVEL

South Korea	June 5 - 25, 2019
Taiwan	June 26 - July 15, 2019
Japan	July 16 - 30, 2019
Thailand	July 31 - August 25, 2019
Indonesia	August 25 - September 14, 2019
India	September 15 - October 5, 2019
Israel/Palestine	October 6 - 23, 2019
Lebanon	October 23 - 31, 2019
Egypt	November 1 - 9, 2019
Colombia	November 10 - 25, 2019
Brazil	November 26 - December 10, 2019
Argentina	December 11 - 23, 2019
Mexico	December 24, 2019 - January 25, 2020
Nigeria	January 26 - February 17, 2020
Senegal	February 18 - March 10, 2020
Ivory Coast	March 11 - 25, 2020

OUTPUTS

Design of the art book	April - July, 2020
Preparation of the Festival	April - July, 2020
Official announcement of the program to the media	June, 2020
Festival	September, 2020
Preparation of the exhibition	April - August, 2020
Production of the exhibition	August - November, 2020
Launch of the Art Book	December, 2020
Exhibition N°1 Installation	January, 2021
Itinerant exhibition	January - March, 2021

ISABELLE ARVERS



Pioneer of game art and retrogaming in France with the organization of Playtime, the playroom of Villette Numérique in 2002 at the Grande Halle de la Villette, Isabelle Arvers has since developed a career as international curator, in the fields of game art, retrogaming and machinimas.

EXHIBITIONS ART, VIDEO GAMES AND MACHINIMA ABROAD

Art Games Demos, Medellin, Colombie, 2018
Machinima selection in Mash Up, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada, 2016
Machinima selection, UCLA Game Lab Festival, Los Angeles, USA, 2016
Machiniglitch, Festival Vector Art + Game, Toronto, Canada, 2014
Evolution of Gaming, Centre for Digital Media, Vancouver, Canada, 2013
Machinima selection, UCLA Game Lab Festival, Los Angeles, USA, 2015
Gameplay, Itau Cultural, Sao Paulo & Mostravideo, Belo Horizonte, Brasil, 2009
Machinima selection, Symposium Imagine the Future, Neuchatel, Suisse, 2009
No Fun games and the gaming experience, Bergen, Norvège, 2007
Machinima selection, Ciant, Cinema Svetozor, Prague, Tchéquie, 2007
Gametime Reactivate, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australie 2004
Mind control Banana RAM, Molle Valentina, Ancona, Italie, 2004

EXHIBITIONS ART, VIDEO GAMES AND MACHINIMA IN FRANCE

Genesis, Exposition de Game Art Djeff Regottaz, Fondation Vasarely, Aix-en-Provence, 2018
Art Games Demos, Fabulerie à Marseille, 2018
Art Games Demos (Thématique : la ville), Octobre Numérique, Arles, 2017
Art Games Demos (Thématique : frontières et migrations), Subsistances, Lyon, 2017
Art Games Demos, Equitable Café (Thématique : queer & feminism), Marseille, 2017

Art Games Demos, VV, Marseille, 2017
Games Reflexions, Médiathèque de Sorgues, Sorgues, 2015
Machinigirrlzzzz, Gamerz 10, Fondation Vasarely, Aix en Provence, 2014
Games reflexions, Centre d'Art contemporain le Carreau, Cergy, 2013
Jeux rêve, Semaine Digitale, Mairie de Bordeaux, 2013
Political games at "Play again", Imaginarium, Tourcoings, 2013
Game Camp, Machinima workshop, La Maison des Metallos, Paris, 2013
Machiniglitch, Gamerz 09, ARCADE, Aix en Provence, 2013
Identity, otherness, games & machinima, Festival Gamerz 8, ARCADE, Aix en Provence, 2012
Pirate Kart at Gamerz, Galerie de l'Ecole d'Art d'Aix-en-Provence, October 2011
Salon numérique, Maison Populaire, Montreuil, 2011
Game Heroes, Pixellissime, Alcazar, Marseille, 2011
When games reflect reality, Gamerz 7, ARCADE, Aix en Provence, 2011
Gamerz 6, ARCADE, Aix-en-Provence, 2010
Gamerz 05, Fondation Vasarely, ARCADE, Aix en Provence, 2009
Machinima selection, Récréations, Scène Numérique, Aix-en-Provence, 2009
Machinima selection, Animation Film Festival, Annecy, 2007
Playing to real, Médiathèque de Meudon, Meudon, 2007
Machinima selection, Flash Festival, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2006 - 2007 - 2008
Mal au Pixel, a french-finnish festival, Mains d'Oeuvres, Paris, 2006
Némo Festival, Espace Cartier, Paris, 2006
Machinima vs Demos, Pompidou Center, Paris, 2005
Playtime - the gaming room of Villette Numerique, Paris, 2002
Image and game content gallerist, Gizmoland.com, Paris, 2000
Les États Généraux de l'écriture Interactive, Art 3000, Forum des Images, Paris, 1999

PUBLICATIONS

Since the beginning of her career Isabelle Arvers has written more than sixty texts: press articles, curatorial statements, critical articles, interviews with artists, etc.

accessible here : <http://www.isabellearvers.com/category/texts/>

the ART+GAMES WORLDTOUR

is a project by



Isabelle Arvers

KARERON
ART AND GAMES LOVERS

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CONTACTS

Isabelle Arvers - iarvers@gmail.com +33661998386
www.isabellearvers.com - www.kareron.com

Annakarín Quinto - contact@nousavonstantapartager.com +33661415662

APPENDICES

I am a curator, I'm an art & games curator,

*I'm a curator in
New York Oh ! Oh !*

par Isabelle Arvers

In November, I went to New York to attend the two screenings retrospective the Anthology Film Archive dedicated to Nathalie Magnan. I spent ten days in New York meeting a lot of friends and professionals and artists and I also visited some exhibitions and art galleries and this article might give some perspective on the actual art and video games scene in New York.

First I was hosted by Chris Burke, alias [Glomag](#), chiptunes musician, alias Laecedemion, the great host of [This Spartan Life](#), a machinima show in Halo, and also part of the duo [Foci + Loci](#)¹, with the amazing [Tamara Yadao](#), featuring futurism and fascism inside a live sound and gaming performance in Little Big Planet. I was super well welcomed and so happy to see them again that I felt

that my family has now been extended.

Two days after my arrival, I had a meeting with my dear friend Kathy Brew and enjoyed so much our lunch together, discussing our mutual projects: her curatorial work on documentary at [MOMA](#), as well as her new [documentary on Seward Johnson](#). We also discussed about my upcoming project Art Games Demos related to borders and migration and

1 - Cf. <https://vimeo.com/116813005>

Kathy told me about a great short film, *489 Years*², directed by Hayoun Kwon, that I hope to be able to show in our next AGD.[`]

As I was invited in New York by Reine Prat, Nathalie Magnan's wife to attend Nathalie's retrospective at the [Anthology Film Archive](#), we also spoke about cyberfeminism and gender and Kathy sent me her amazing short video artwork she directed in the 90' *Mixed Messages*³, a collage, mixing animation and found footage about gender stereotypes in popular culture. I loved this film as it well so much in tunes with the short doc directed by Nathalie Magnan: *Internautes*, *Lesborama* or her film about Rumors.

Before to go, Kathy advised me to visit [The World is sound](#), a sound exhibit at Rubin Museum and I enjoyed the sound body sculpture (*Le Corps Sonore*, an immersive, site-specific installation composed by artists Éliane Radigue, Laetitia Sonami, and Bob Bielecki, as well as the Collective Oms in the OM Lab (software and 3D sound design by Terence Caulkins of Arup), all the sound experimentations related to mantras and extatic sounds were super relaxing, but I couldn't stay very long as I had to go for an other mysterious meeting with Bob Stein, who asked me to come along with Chris Burke for an experiment, at TED Talk building, as Bob is actually in a TED Residency⁴.

Bob Stein, defined as « one of the founding fathers of new media (Criterion, Voyager, Institute for Future of the Book) welcomed us and asked us to get in a tiny room full of objects, pictures, files, Laser disks... and we had 5 minutes to wander in these objects in order to be able to ask him questions about these objects. He came back and began to answer our questions. Mine was about the

[Guerrilla girls](#) for whom Bob realised a CDROM as well as their first website around 93 or 94... I also asked him about some papers left by her mother about all her former partners before to get married and all the hotels and ballrooms where she went. And Bob told us stories about himself, about his partner in love Ashton Applewhite who just got a lot of rewards for her book about ageism : [This Chair Rocks](#): a manifesto about ageism, about his activist past. It was actually an experimentation about storytelling and putting objects in context. A very inspiring experience that also left me in the 90' era for a little while.

After a very nice diner at the [Cow Girl](#), eating Cajun's food for the first time in my life, we went back to Brooklyn and attended the [No Quarter exhibit](#), a games exhibit curated by [Robert Yang](#) featuring games by Auriea Havrey, Droqen, Pietro Righi Riva, and Kitty Horrorshow. It was a cool party and we met a lot of indie games folks and NUY Game Center students. I had a very nice talk with [Kyle Kutshel](#) who was one of the curator of the Artcade Con at la [Mama](#) who also develops a nice AR App. I briefly met Robert Yang who was busy being the curator of the exhibit, but we had some fun about machinima being dead except in my workshops;)) I then had the pleasure to meet some indie dev like [Kaho Abe](#) who creates a lot of physical games and also [Droqen](#) who I previously met at [Vector Art + Games Festival](#) in Toronto some years ago. I also had the pleasure to see again [Heather Kelley](#) who was just coming back from [Indicade Europe](#), telling me that she now teaches at Carnegie Mellon University;)

On saturday morning, I joined Tamara Yadeo and Chris Burke for a brunch and we waited for [Haeyoung Kim](#) to enjoy some Bloody Maries and we talked about the future project of Foci + Loci that I would love to produce if it is possible, dealing with futurism but also about [Claude Cahun](#) We also

2 - Cf. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qad-hmC4t7M>

3 - Cf. <https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/mixed-messages-gender-stereotyping-popular>

4 - Cf. <https://vimeo.com/221839114>

talked about the good old days when [Lab-au](#) asked me in 2003 to receive Chris and Haeyoung alias Glomag & Bubblyfish to play chiptunes music in Paris. I asked the help of [Dinah Bird](#) and we hosted one of the first chip tunes gigs in Paris and [Marie Lechner](#) wrote a one page article in Liberation which made famous this event.

In the evening, with Tamara and Chris, we went to [Babycastles](#), for a special event dedicated to the game [Bleep space](#) by Andy Wallace and Dan Friel, a really cool free sequencer toy. I was very happy to meet Lauren Gardner, who is part of Babycastles team, introduced to me by my dear friend [Sabrina Kamen](#) who recently published a book *Toxoplasma*⁵, that traveled with me in Brooklyn. Lauren also told me about an other project in which she is also involved that I finally didn't have the chance to discover : the [School for poetic computation](#), a new type of school « organized around exploring the creative and expressive nature of computational approaches to art and design. The school approaches writing code like creative writing — focusing on the mechanics of programming, the demystification of tools, and hacking the conventions of art-making with computation. » I really enjoyed being at Babycastles as I have been following their projects for so many years and love the way they present games, prototypes of games and in progress games in custom arcades which are beautiful. One of the best source of inspiration for me when we imagined Art Games Demos with Chloé Desmoineaux. That night I also met people from [The Death By Audio Arcade](#), multiplayer arcade cabinets produced by local indie game developers that originate from Death By Audio, Brooklyn's influential DIY music venue.

On sunday evening, I attended the first [Nathalie Magnan](#)'s screening untitled [Media Jams](#) at the Anthology Film Archives, curated by Isabel Carlier

5 - Cf. <https://lavoite.net/livres/toxoplasma/>

and Reine Prat, Nathalie's love. The screening began with a nice talk by [Catherine Lord](#), first Nathalie's lover.

We then watched the amazing interview⁶ of Nathalie for la Revue Monstre, interviewed by Cyril Thomas and had the pleasure to watch *Internautes, AVEZ-VOUS VU LA GUERRE ?* And *IL N'Y A PAS DE FUMÉE SANS FEU ET EN PLUS C'EST VRAI*⁷.

There was a talk after the screening and [Deedee Halleck](#), co-funder of Paper Tiger TV and [Deep dish TV](#), who worked with Nathalie on some [Paper Tiger TV](#) broadcasts mentioned that there was an other lecture of *Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden*, by Donna Haraway, talking about Roosevelt and Teddy Bear that would have been shot by Nathalie, but which was remaining unpublished nor edited. Getting back home, I checked Nathalie's archives inventory and found the tape, it was a great moment to get back to Deedee with this good news.

The day after ended with the second screening of Nathalie's films, untitled [GENDER TRANSFORMATIONS: NO SMOKE NO MIRRORS](#). It began by *BORN TO BE SOLD: MARTHA ROSLER READS THE STRANGE CASE OF BABY* in presence of [Martha Rosler](#), a Paper Tiger TV about class and gender bias on the courts, then it was followed by *UN HOMME SUR DEUX EST UNE FEMME* about gender disparities in French politics, it was followed by *L'ÉPROUVANTE ÉPROUVETTE* and the screening ended with *LESBORAMA*, a great short doc directed by Nathalie for the Gay and Lesbian Canal + Night.

The day after, thanks I had the pleasure to meet [Franck Lantz](#), the director of the NYU Game Center and we had an amazing conversation about the relationship between the art world and the games

6 - Cf. <https://vimeo.com/236061530>

7 - Cf. <https://vimeo.com/122434444>



world and he made my day and made me laugh, talking about DJs playing music in an art gallery, which according to him made totally sense but didn't need a label besides the DJ giving its name, date and explaining the sense of its mix... I will make him a special dedicace during the next Art Games Demos. He showed me few books from his office bookshelf, like *Play Matters* by Miguel Sicart, *The aesthetic theory and the video games* by Graeme Kirkpatrick and *Works of Game, on the aesthetics of games and art* by John Sharp. This book is about the intersection of art and video games, which is so much related to my curatorial practice that I asked Franck to put me in touch with John. We ended our meeting by saying that we would do something together soon.

On wednesday, I decided to visit the New Museum as there was a gender exhibit I wanted to see, but what really kept my attention is an art film by [Kahlil Joseph](#): *Shadow Play*, a collage about "Harlem's past and present". A sentence is still in my mind: "if you don't see the happiness, at least you see the black" This film was strong full of daily

real found footage mixed with shot scenes and beautiful, as well as the sound environment in which the audience was immerged. I then entered the exhibit [Trigger, Gender as a Tool and a Weapon](#) which was a bit erratic with some strong works and some of them that can be forgotten... I was only attracted by the video artworks, mainly focusing on queer culture. I particularly enjoyed the video in loop *Lost in the Music* by Reina Gossett and Sasha Wortzel, showing a travesti reading: "I am not saying it is easy to shine, to love, to twirl; I am not saying it don't hurt to be awake in this world", I loved it.

In an other room, I was also attracted by the video artwork made by [Patrick Staff](#): *Weed Killer*. What is interesting here is that this work was inspired by Catherine Lord's memoir *The Summer of Her Baldness* on her experience of cancer. It kept my attention first because there was a trans actor singing *To be in Love* by Masters at Work, which is a song from my rave party era... and this interpretation was quite deep, emotional and then I listened to a trans actor speaking about her chemotherapy and the disaster the sickness is operating on her body



Richard exhibit of his [computer virus paintings](#) from 1993.

“The Computer Virus Project’s initial goal was to produce physical paintings by using algorithms implementing «viral» processes. It is based on a simulation tool which allows Nechvatal to virtually introduce artificial organisms into a digitized reproduction of an earlier work of his, and let them transform and destroy that original image.”
Stéphane Sikora

It was a pleasure for me to meet Joseph and his wife and to re-discover his paintings also related to the idea of virus with seemed to be one of the key word of that day... I then joined [Amanda McDonald Crowley](#) at her place for an amazing dinner, the best of my stay in New York. It was great for me to have the opportunity to better know Amanda, that I previously met in more pro/official conditions at [Eyebeam](#) where she was the director. This time we really had the occasion to better know each other and exchange more ideas and passions.

Amanda was hosting some of her friends and professional partners as she is currently working on *Swale*, an amazing project of public space gardening on a barge with the artist [Mary Mattingly](#). It is an open project on a floating boat as collective gardening in public spaces are not allowed in New York. Our cook that night was the amazing [Vibha Galhotra](#), an indian artist who works a lot on collaborative practices, land art and food or environment related projects. The dinner was simply amazing...One of her friends was also there from Australia: [Mandy Ridley](#). Mandy is a visual artist and we should see each other again soon in Marseille. It was a beautiful sharing moment of artistic and curatorial thoughts on art, nature and collaboration over the world. As I told them about our next Art Games Demos about borders and migration, Vibha told me the name of two artists: [Amar Kanwar](#) and [Naeem Mohaiemen](#) who is currently showing a movie at PS1 MOMA,

and mind. I then read the artwork description and discovered it was linked to Catherine’s book and also that in this video Patrick Staff suggests “that the experience of cancer patients and those of trans people are linked”.

Finally, the last video installation I particularly appreciated is *Toxic* by the artists [Pauline Boudry and Renate Laurenz](#), featuring the drag queen Werner Hirsh and the androgynous punk Ginger Brooks Takahashi talking about toxicity, virus, waste, hormone altering medication... an other strong and glittering work shot at les Laboratoires d’Aubervilliers in 2012.

Later in the day, I was invited by Kathy Brew to join her to the opening of [Joseph Nechvatal](#) Gallery

commissioned by Documenta: *Tripoli Cancelled*⁸.

On thursday I was invited by [Eric Zimmerman](#) in his Game Design MFA class at NUY game Center. It was a wonderful moment. Especially to see students games experiments in public space and the way they are able to provide a constructive critic towards each other's work. I was seduced by the fact that Eric taught them about situationism, dadaism, surrealism, fluxus in relationship to game theory. All their projects were located somewhere in the Game Center or in the courtyard in front of the building. I really enjoyed the outside projects which gave a poetic touch using an artistic project as a location and pushing us to get inside a natural ritual. Many of the projects were also inciting us to reflect on our daily lives: getting inside an elevator and our behavior, interacting with anonymous people in the streets or in a corridor, our behavior in the toilets, etc... Eric also offered me to present my curatorial practice related to art and video games and what it means to curate video games in an art context, I enjoyed the exchanges with the students a lot. One of my favorite moments!

We had a nice lunch in a street market and I was happy to discover new Eric and [Nathalie Pozzi](#) games installation project: *Waiting Rooms*, somehow closed to immersive theater but a real "Multi-room installation where Visitors move through a series of absurdist waiting rooms, each room a kind of social experiment where you can be cooperative or collaborative. The rooms are connected in a network of lines, and you pay and earn pennies and tickets as you move through the spaces." We also spoke about the [Metagame](#), originally a card game about games he has been working on for several years now, with John Sharp among others and which is now a card game about art and games.

Later in the day I visited [Rafael Rozendaal](#) studio to have a tea and discuss the good old days. To

8 - Cf. <https://vimeo.com/211026832>

have this meeting the same day I saw Eric was for me making a 15 years loop. In 2002, I curated *Playtime a gaming room*⁹ at la Villette where I presented Eric's game: *Sissyfight 2000*¹⁰ and also organised a network performance with [Miltos Manetas](#) in New York, [Mai Ueda](#) in Osaka and invited Rafael Rozendaal, [Angelo Plessas](#) and [Andreas Angelidakis](#) to join me in Paris in order to speak about art like in the Socratic times and exchange [Neen](#) artworks inside [Active Worlds](#).

It was my first encounter with Neen and artists I really felt in love with their artworks. So 15 years after seeing two persons related to that exhibition on the same day was quite funny;) I love Rafael's art, we discussed about the evolution of his art, becoming more abstract, the way he works with a developer, the fact that I am now becoming an artist myself.

And we talked of course about our dearest common friend [Nikola Tomic](#) who – by the way and among many other things – created my website. Nikola was the "serbian"/acerb side of Neen, a poet, an artist and a triathlete and now is a dad with an amazing family but above that he is a brand guru;) I was also very happy to discuss with Rafael about something that I kept in my mind for many years, feeling a bit awkward without being able to ask him. Some years ago, [Anne Roquigny](#) created a software – [WJ-S](#) – which allows you to create performances creating a narration using websites displayed on large screens, surrounding the audience, in order to immerge people inside online creations. I had multiple types of performances – art & games, [psychogeography](#), online games – and I was also doing performances around Neen. For me doing WJ-s performances was somehow curating live net.art.

So I did some performances displaying Neen online artworks and showing the works of Miltos

9 - Cf. <http://www.isabelleavers.com/2002/12/play-time-the-retrogaming-room-of-villette-numerique/>

10 - Cf. <http://www.ericzimmerman.com/projects/#/sissyfight-2000/>



Manetas, Rafael, Angelo, often I was giving a conference at the same time explaining what I was showing, doing in that sense my job of curator. But my awkward feeling was coming from the fact that I wasn't showing my own work, but other people's works and I couldn't fix my mind about it, rather it was right or wrong, so I finally asked Rafael about it and he reassured me that if I wasn't doing money with it it was ok...

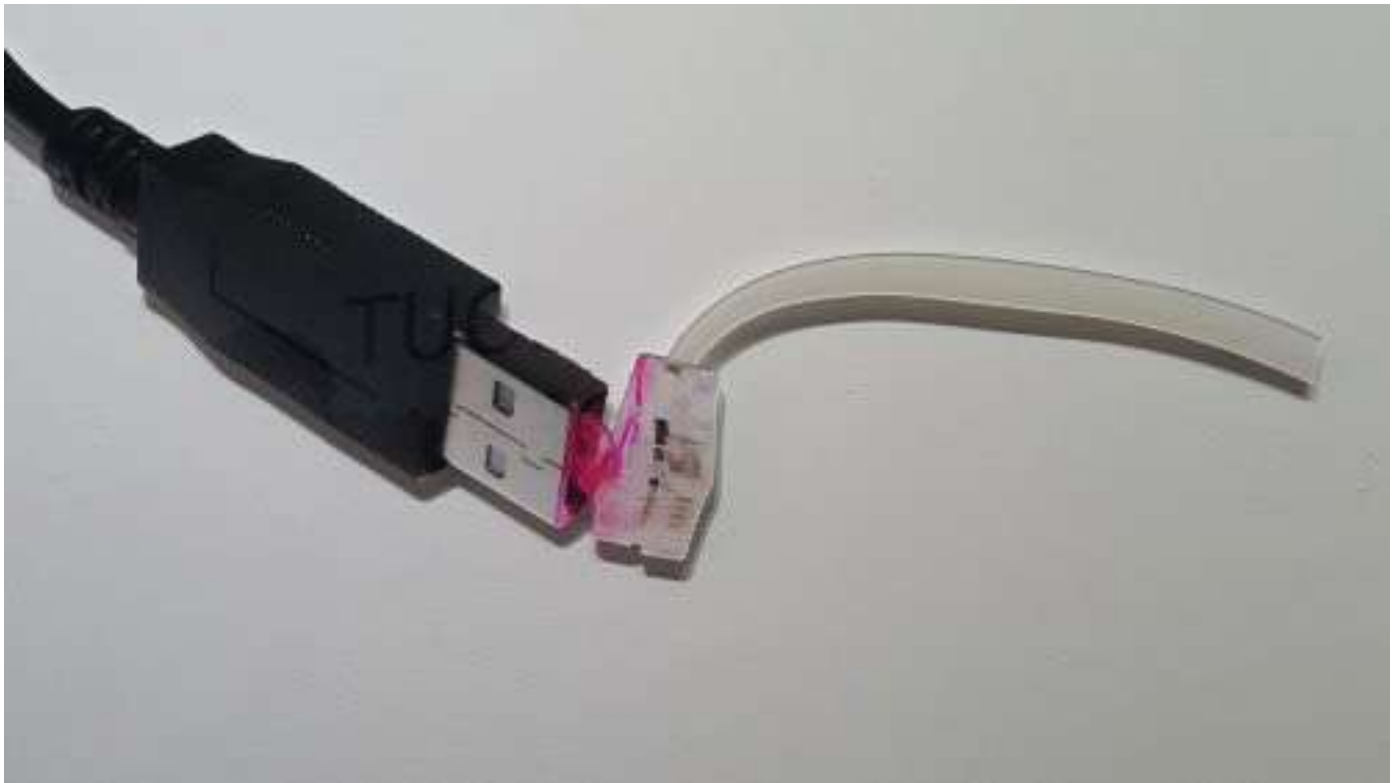
This day ended by the performance : [Linqox Criss on The River Ilissus](#), by artist Amanda Turner at Poha SOHO20 GALLERY in Brooklyn. I have to admit that I almost missed the performance as I arrived late but had the occasion to see her Second Life machinima and read the text *The gender in sound*¹¹ read during the performance.

On friday, a very cold day, I went to PS1 MOMA and watched with attention Tripoli Cancelled by [Naeem Mohaiemen](#), it is actually the project I preferred. Inspired by a real incident that happened to Naeem's father, once arrested at Athens airport

11 - Cf. <https://fleurmach.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/carson-anne-the-gender-of-sound.pdf>

and blocked in between borders. In this movie, a character drifts inside an abandoned airport and talk in non functioning phones and plays in broken aircraft. He walks alone on the tarmac, seats on a dead escalator. The images captivated me, I would love to be able to work with this artist one day. I would say that Kahlil Joseph and Naeem Mohaiemen are the two most beautiful discoveries I made during my stay in New York.

I just had the time to cross the bridge in order to be on time at my next meeting with [John Sharp](#) at Parson's school where he directs the [Petlab](#) – the Prototyping, Education and Technology Lab. We talked a lot about the relationship between art and video games and it was interesting for me to understand that we all believe that our country is late in the encounter between artists and indie game dev but John had a very interesting remark saying that we should avoid these terms when they meet and present everybody as creators to avoid a hierarchy in between each speciality. It was quite interesting to understand the differences between the two universities I visited in just two days and how game design at Parsons is perhaps more



mixed with digital art practice than at NYU. John also told me that many of his students are creating physical games as well as alternative controllers as well as interactive installations. Before to go I received the new version of the Metagame and an exemplar of Works of Game that attempts to define what is game art, what is an art game and also how artists are creating games. On my way back I met a student and also a teaching assistant – [Paolo PV](#) – in the elevator and we spoke very quickly about the Metagame I had in my hands and as soon as I pronounced the word machinima, he told me that he used to be in the Rooster Teeth team, the company that made the very famous series *Red vs Blue*¹².

Finally I had a meeting with [Mark Denardo](#) at Pratt University. Mark is a [musician](#), used to play a lot of chiptunes music, he is also a very good friend of Chris Burke and he went to Paris many years ago to work with Jacques and Thierry from the music label [Relax Beat](#), who were chiptunes producers, working with Malcolm McLaren at that time. I had some projects with Jacques and Thierry in the beginning

of the years 2000 as we wanted to organise a digital vintage event together, mixing my art and games content with their chiptunes artists;) We had a very nice meeting with Mark sharing cheese and good wines and speaking about honoring the gifts we have been given.

My trip in New York ended with the visit of the [Transfer gallery](#) in Brooklyn, showing *Speculative flesh*, a solo show by [Faith Holland](#) and it was funny for me to finish this trip with a woman artist work related to our fetishism towards technologies and especially with one of her artworks untitled *chander changer*. It made me think to Nathalie Magnan cyber feminists workshops during la Zelig 14 years ago. A nice way to finish this amazing trip made to attend Nathalie's retrospective.

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<http://www.isabellearvers.com/2017/11/i-am-a-curator-im-an-art-games-curator-im-a-curator-in-new-york-oh-oh/>

12 - Cf. <http://roosterteeth.com/show/red-vs-blue>