

Published in: September 2006

Physical toy interfaces connected to surveillance software

Interview

"The keywords they are spying are now controlling them"

Jonah Brucker-Cohen
Researcher and digital artist
(US)

Tools

Interview

Question: Could you introduce yourself by telling us a bit of what you do and what you are working on at the moment?

Question: The project you are showing here, Police State, is related to RSG's project called Carnivore. What is the connection between them in a technical and conceptual way?

Question: Do you think the use of this specific hardware is giving a bigger perspective of your project and the concept behind it?

Question: Is there any other meaning behind the police cars you are using as hardware apart from the immediate one? Could you tell us why you chose radio control police cars for this project?

Question: Do you think Carnivore software and the artistic projects related to it have a social feedback?

Question: And the Police State project, do you think it promotes some kind of social feedback? On the other hand do you think people could take it as a game to play with?

Question: Do you have some other project in mind? Are you into any research or specific investigation you could tell us about?

Full video

Abstract

They are creatures that can hear us and who can hear each other. They have microphones. They have graphical bodies that they can move around and they make sounds by moving their bodies in the same way as animals make sounds by moving their bodies. So these creatures can hear us and they can hear each other and they have a life span of about three minutes, and during that time they learn from their acoustic environment and try to model it and they try to work out what is going to happen. So initially they start off quite blank and then they build up models of what is in tandem based on material that is already in the colony. Then, once they accumulate enough they begin to play it and towards the end they incorporate new material only very slowly. So sometimes you will hear whole fragments transported from one creature to another. Sometimes it will be a call and response; it will be very clear, other times it will just slip slightly. So these creatures are quite complicated creatures but they have enough intelligence that they can build very simple expectations about the way the world works. They have very simple ideas of boredom, very simple ideas of what they should be paying attention to.

Marc Downie is working on interactive installation, interactive music, machine learning and computer graphics. He studied natural science and physics at Cambridge and media art at MIT and MIT's Media Lab.

Interviewed by Pau Waelder (co-director of Artactiva), at Ars Electronica 2003.

Keywords

police, self-surveillance, network, subversion, protection, Carnivore

Related links

[Jonah Brucker-Cohen web site](#)
[Honorary Mention at Ars Electronica 2004](#)

Some projects by Jonah Brucker-Cohen

[Sound Toys](#)
[Media Lounge](#)



We use our own and third-party cookies. The data we compile is analysed to improve the website and to offer more personalized services. By continuing to browse, you are agreeing to our use of cookies. For more information, see our [cookie policy](#).

[Close](#)

Recommended citation:

BRUCKER-COHEN, Jonah (2006). "Physical toy interfaces connected to surveillance software". *Artnodes*, issue 5 [interview online].
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7238/a.v0i5.748>