

appendix B

meta4walls

net-art by lucas bambozzi

technical info:

title: meta4walls

part of the 4walls project by lucas bambozzi

programming: Dan Harris and limbomedia (UK)

url's

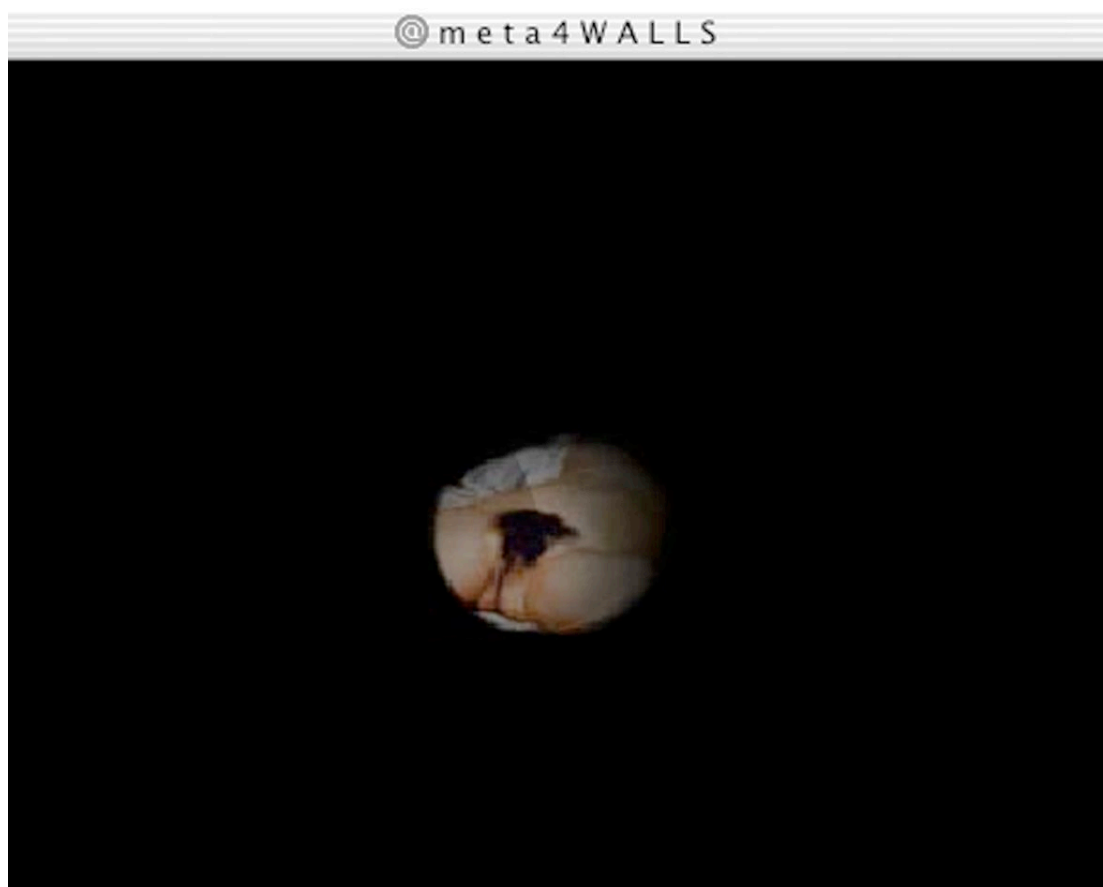
<http://www.comum.com/diphusa/meta> [original]

<http://rhizome.org/artbase/2857/meta/index.html> [Rhizome's artbase]

<http://www.bienalsaopaulo.terra.com.br> [25th São Paulo International Biennial]

browsers: Internet Explorer 5, Mac ou PC [not optimized for Netscape or Safari]

plug-ins: Flash 5



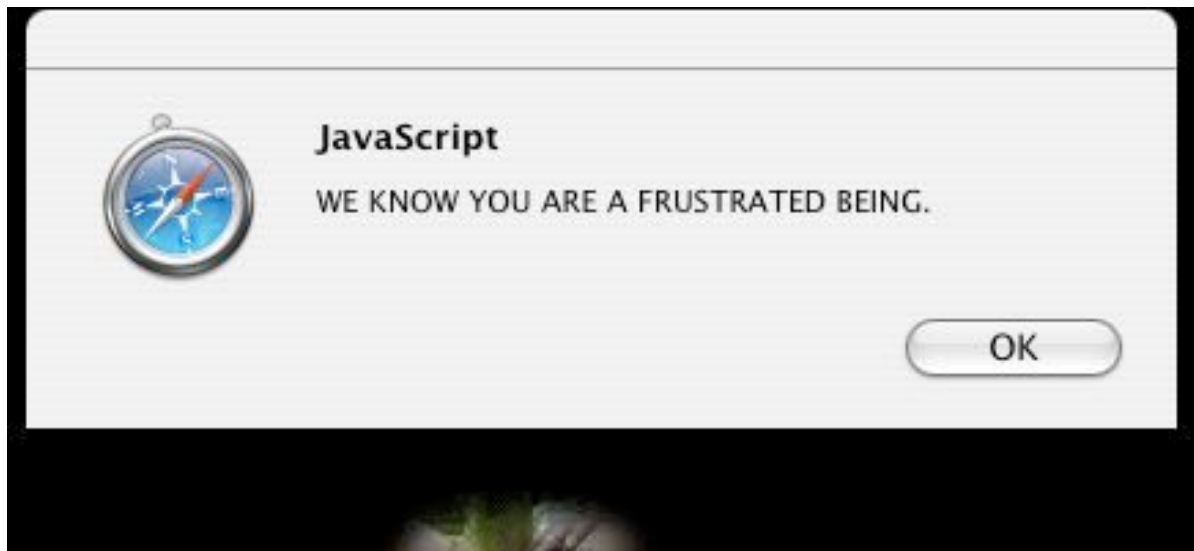
description

meta4walls is a web-based work simulating a sort of meta-surveillance on the Net as a public space. It employs mechanisms widely used to collect personal information through cookies, forms and questionnaires. Scripts generate automatic feedback that appear in the foreground despite the sites the user is navigating through.

It is entirely made by using content received via unsolicited e-mail. Inviting the user to visit a range of illicit links or to access 'secret' information in a displaced context, it suggests to visitors the feeling of being observed and having their privacy endangered – as they will experience their personal data being collected.

meta4walls is part of the 4walls project, which was developed during a residency from 2000 to 2002 at the CaaA-STAR Centre (currently operating as Planetary Collegium - UK). These projects are part of a MPhil research initiated in 2001

meta4walls project was originally developed as a prototype put together with the presentation of a paper on intrusive system at the XII Videobrasil International Electronic Art Festival (São Paulo, 2001). It was partially commissioned by the festival, where it was first presented to the public. It got many reviews and featured in exhibitions such as the 25th São Paulo International Biennial (2002) and Arte Nuevo InteractivA'05 2005 (Merida, Mexico). It was also presented as a study case at the meeting Intimate Technologies/Dangerous Zones (Banff, Canada 2002). Apart from such formal invitations and exhibitions, several web sites and net art publications have pointed to the work, placing it in more informal shows.



reviews and additional info:

This review by Suely Rolnik was written spontaneously and followed the launching of meta4walls over the Internet:

In *meta4walls* Lucas Bambozzi works with the living product of this relationship between receptor and image. Nothing to do with another offer of interactivity where the receptor is included in a game of marked cards, once that is excluded, the goal is exactly the perverse game of inclusion/exclusion.

It is not just any image that Lucas privileges as a support of his work. It is just about this vast universe of commercial emails, especially those offering sexual delight, that invade compulsively computer screens in a true harassment of the soul. Instead of the automatic gesture to delete all this junk that the market dumps on us, the artist collects them, forwards them, not without producing some interruptions in the flux of the offer and consumption using discrediting comments about privacy. In these unexpected insertions the receptor is caught in the act, not only in his/her sexual misery and onanist transaction with images, which is the most obvious; but also and more disturbing, in his passive submission to the harassment of images: he/she discovers that is being controlled even when he/she thought they were in their most intimate privacy, his/her most hidden erotic dreams, in the remote veins of their unconscious. It is the actual junk from the virtual market used as a weapon against its tyranny in the subjectivity of the receptor. The tables were turned.

meta4walls is the confluence and the development of the best in Brazilian art. Among others, a Cildo Meireles and a Lygia Clark from the 70s now cybernetic, are mixed in the genealogy of this art work. (...) The *Insertions into the Ideological Circuit* by Cildo which were carried out through objects of a "physical" nature such as Coca-Cola bottles or banknotes expand into cyberspace and move on to include the circuit of virtual objects.

The *Structuring of the Self* by Lygia intermediated a physical relationship between artist and receptor by equally physical *Related Objects*, and mobilised in the receptor the potential to be affected by the world and to participate in its creation, it expands now into cyberspace and starts including a virtual relationship between artist and receptor, intermediated by equally virtual objects.

The work is this event in the relationship between the receptor and the image, the commodity, the electronic media, sex, art. It is impossible to predict if it will happen or not. One thing is certain: when the work happens a small but, powerful invisible sudden change will have taken place between four walls.

Suely Rolnik, September 2001



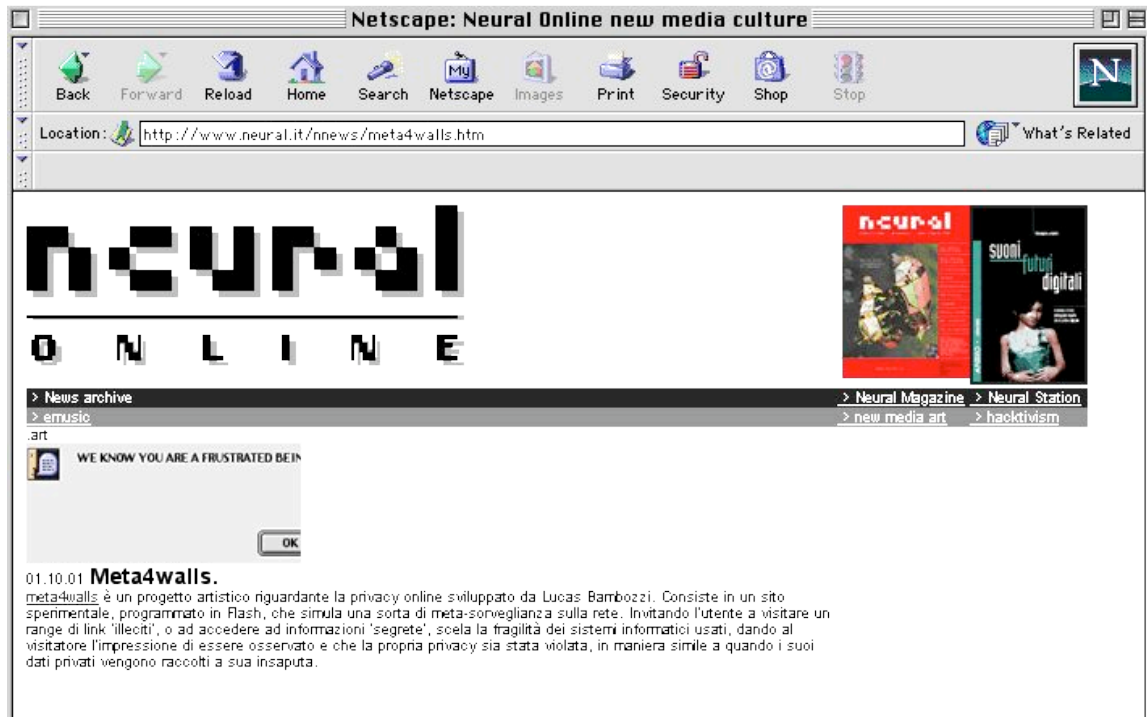
meta4walls reviewed by Random Exibart <www.exibart.com> 2002

25.X.2001 Meta4walls: avete mai la sensazione di essere spiati?



Meta4walls è un progetto web che indaga sulla sorveglianza elettronica, spingendo l'utente a riflettere sulla scottante questione della privacy on-line. Il suo autore, il brasiliano **Lucas Bambozzi**, ha realizzato un sito in flash che offre al visitatore una serie di links a presunte pagine "illecite" o contenenti scottanti informazioni riservate, lasciandogli allo stesso tempo la continua impressione di essere "osservato" e controllato, simulando un'intrusione nei suoi dati personali.

Links
[Meta4walls](#)



meta4walls reviewed by Neural Online <www.neural.it>

interveiw/statement:

Excerpt from an interview to art critic Christine Mello

¹ LB: [...] This work is a portal where some bizarre things would gather. It would attract a kind of public that normally feels embarrassed to go after pornography and all kind of dodgy content. The work is a kind of trap, a catch to make people believe that they are going to a site of 'good taste', but in fact, the site will take them to the 'real and wild world' of Internet, at least the world I consider real in the Internet, where everything can be sold: happiness, marijuana, pornography. [...]

Christine Mello: You keep these messages, How do you keep other things, like you keep your images when you had an image data bank, the way you kept your shavers, hotel cards?

LB: 'I usually keep the messages that catch my attention the most, because they are strange. The first time I saw someone offering to fix a chair in the Internet, I kept it, because that was a kind of business that appeared unexpected, contradictory to the online principles by then. For instance, I did not produce any image for meta4walls. It is totally done with images that circulate in the Internet and were appropriated, most of them found on my own e-mail box. From Courbet's image to the image of a girl masturbating, all those images came from this universe, this junkyard from the Internet.'

Christine Mello, February 2002

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The screenshot shows the Rhizome.org website interface. At the top left is the Rhizome.org logo. The top right indicates the user is logged in as **lbambozzi@comum.com** with links for [Preferences](#), [Log Out](#), and [Help](#). Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar labeled "QUERY" and a list of links: [fresh](#), [artbase](#), [alt.interface](#), [subscribe](#), [store](#), [events](#), and [links](#). The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column features a "this week" section with links to "Post Media Network", "On Web Animations", "IdN Magazine--Design Contest", "Net Art News", "Rhizome Digest", and "911--The September 11 Project". Below this is the "artbase" section, an "archive of internet art" with entries like "Playing an orchestra with a mouse" by joao bonelli, "Voxels" by mike salmond, and "[phage] (downloadable app for the PC)" by mary flanagan. The right column displays the details for the "meta4walls" art object by Lucas Bambozzi. It includes a "Statement" section describing the project as a series of on-line privacy projects, a "Technology Used" section listing Shockwave, JavaScript, Java, HTML, Flash, and Email, and a "Description" section explaining the project's focus on surveillance, appropriation, and subversion. The page also features a "CLONED ART OBJECT" icon in the top right corner.

meta4walls at the Rhizome's art base archive

curatorial statements:

Introduction to the exhibition **Cyphorg Citizens & Unwitting Avatars** at New Langton Arts, Winter 2005, curated by Richard Rinehart

Cyphorg Citizens & Unwitting Avatars

The boundaries between individual, corporate, and civic spaces have shifted dramatically, driven by technological advancements in data-mining, data-surveillance, sensors, and other tracking technologies. These shifting boundaries provide opportunity and danger on all sides. From encryption for the common person, to companies tracking our every habit with membership cards and internet 'cookies', to advancements in military/law enforcement data-mining and surveillance, elements of our identity are increasingly translated into code, creating a new "data-self". This data-self leads a second life and mediates our experience within the new civic, corporate and private worlds. Our data-selves are nearly invisible yet have little privacy. They are vulnerable in very real ways. Identify-theft, credit record errors, and medical information sharing all affect us directly. Prick our data-self and we bleed.

This exhibition goes beyond digital avatars created out of choice for purposes of entertainment, education, or socializing in the form of video games or online chat forums. The exhibition focusses on the data-self that is an unself-conscious and unwitting by-product of the common person's everyday activities. This data-self can be pictured as a cyphernetic or information organism (cyphorg), an updated version of the industrial age hybrid, the cybernetic organism (cyborg). Without taking a simplistic or polarized dys/utopian stance, this exhibition explores the process whereby citizens are represented as data or physically tracked with devices that attach codes to our bodies. The art projects in this exhibition map the new civic and private territory in which our data-selves live. The artists in this exhibition also ask how we can take control of our data-selves, guiding them between the benefits and dangers of these new territories? Is there such a thing as a healthy cyphorg-citizen?

Richard Rinehart, curator

selected exhibitions:

2001 - **Videobrasil** International Electronic Art Festival . São Paulo, Brazil

2002 . **25th São Paulo International Biennial** . Net.art . São Paulo, Brazil

2002 . **Intimate Technologies/Dangerous Zones** – New Media Institute, Banff, Canada (presented as a case study)

2004 . **Videoformes** . XIX Manifestation Internationale d'art vidéo et nouveaux médias - Clermont Ferrand, France

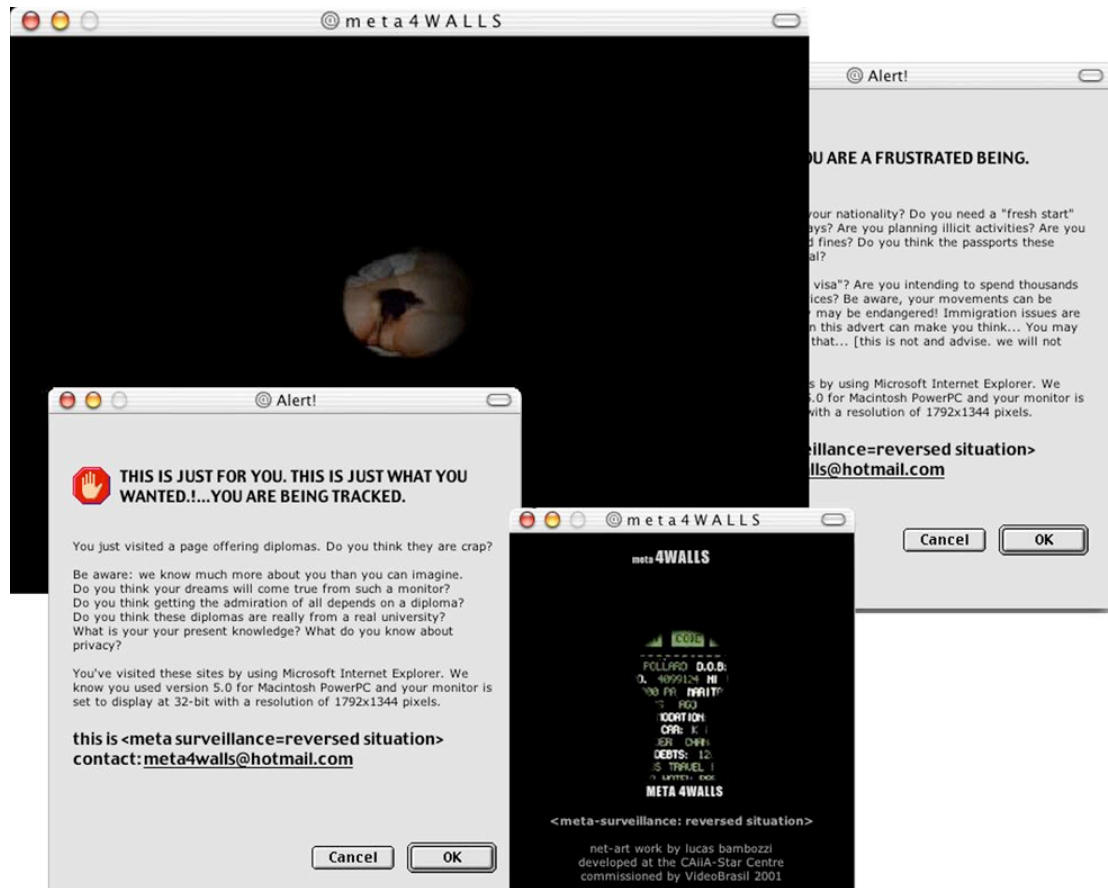
2004 . **VAE8 – Video/Arte Electrónico** – Realidad Visual – Galeria CCPUCP – Peru, Lima

2005 . **New Langton Arts** . Cyphorg Citizens and Unwitting Avatars . Net Art Exhibition with Lucas Bambozzi, Radical Software Group and Brooke Singer . Curated by Rick Rinehart – Berkeley, USA

archive direction:

http://www.newlangtonarts.org/view_event.php?category=Network&archive=1&displayYear=2005&&eventId=239

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credits

Concept, creation: Lucas Bambozzi

Development: Limbomedia/Dan Harris

Support: Conceived during a residency at CAiiA-STAR Centre (currently Planetary Collegium) University of Plymouth from 2000 to 2001.

Additional support: Ministry of Culture, Government of Brazil – resources for the residency.

Commissioned by Videobrasil 2001