

THE E.G.

— Anyone Incapable of Taking Sides Should Say Nothing —

GUEST EDITORS:

GENERATORcommittee

GORDON DOUGLAS

Hologram-2pac in
33AD

KATY CHRISTOPHER

It's Only True if it's on
Google

LUCAS BATTICH

Cover Image

DEAR READER,

This is the half way publication of The E.G & hope it's doing you good. Nobody is on suicide watch here.

In the 'real' world, Miley Cyrus 'twerks' her way to infamy & Obameron thinks about going to war with Syria.

'Why is this not reflected in your e-papers?' you ask. Our model of newspaper is slightly different from- I'd guess -mainstream press is in the sense we have no need to cover these on-goings if our press team don't want too. To explain, the 'editors' don't have as much say as the 'writers' ,bwho have almost full autonomy to write on what they want.

Also, the IMPACT 8 (& related events) are under-way. Expect 'reportage' in the coming days. We had a look at the schedule today and nothing seemed to grab us as 'E.G' worthy. Remember we can't make our reporters report (!) With many events happening in Dundee culminating in a week of heightened cultural activity the beginnings of our investigations have begun, however.

With us (yesterday) was art critic Giles Sutherland who held a crit with our news team. He has been working on developing the writings and criticism of our team. He has worked for The Times as a critic as well as currently writing a PhD on 'The artist as Explorer' & will be presenting a talk at the weekend at IMPACT 8.

In today's paper, expect to see Lucas Battich's glitch filled images form a cosmic world of light-years ago, juxtaposing the distant past and our not so technically savvy present, a present of the imperfect digital experience. Dennis J. Reinmuller re-appears with more mock 'mocking of the system in the spirit of The E.G & Tu-pac's hologram is philosophically mapped.

This perhaps means coming back slightly from the revolutionary aims of yesterday's publication, sadly, as we have directed ourselves back on the track of investigating the digital/analogue divide through critical discourse.

In the coming days, most of the talks and discussion we have been partaking in will be 'published' via our project blog.

Again, if you have any 'reader's letters' for us, please send them to: mail@generatorprojects.co.uk

Expect not see reports on Gareth Bale's move to Madrid in any of the following papers

James Lee
GENERATORcommittee, The Editorial Team

The GENERATOR Printhouse Complaints Commission Code of Conduct

Accuracy

- i) The Press cannot be held responsible for any inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures. Artworks can be one or all of these things.
 - ii) A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion once recognised is available to be corrected, after due discussion. No apology will be published.
 - iii) The Press is free to be partisan.
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IT'S ONLY TRUE IF IT'S ON GOOGLE

"I am a product of digital culture"

Words by Katy Christopher

The development of a new technology alters the way a society reads and interacts with the world. Alexander Provan states, "Every era has its interface, and every interface determines how we relate to the world."^{*} The invention of photography challenged society's sense of reality. Many found they could not trust what a camera could see. For many a painting was a more reliable representation of reality than photograph. Many felt the camera separated the viewer or painter from the physical world, and therefore intervened with our view of reality. However photography became widely accepted and despite the use of Photoshop, is still seen as a reliable source of what is real.

In the age of digital culture, our interface is a computer, smartphone or tablet screen and therefore what is real for us IS digital. For many of us (maybe even most) we have become more comfortable with the digital representation of a physical thing than the physical thing itself. For example, last year I had the amazing opportunity to visit Niagara Falls, a breathtaking force of nature that's presence is indescribable. Like many others who have visited Niagara Falls, I had seen many images and video documentation of the Falls before my visit, so much so that the physical waterfalls themselves felt unreal. They were amazing, powerful and awe-inspiring but unreal. The

virtual imagery I had put together in my mind was for me, a more true representation of reality.

I am a product of digital culture; I was born in 1991 and therefore have grown up in the age of digital culture. My reality has been built up of digital representations. Very rarely will I visit a new place without seeing it first on Google Street View. I feel more comfortable typing into my laptop or smart phone than I do writing with a pen and paper. So much so that a swipe on a smartphone has become second nature, a reflex that I, like many others, do unconsciously. The digital world is something that is gradually (although the pace is increasing) becoming more apart of our lives. Our smart phones and tablets are an extension of ourselves. Our memories are made up of digital images easily accessible at a touch of a button. Our knowledge extends onto the Internet, creating collective information that can be realized with a simple Google search. In recent history our sense of what is real has changed from what we perceive and remember, to representations of what artists or writers document, to a simple machine recording directly what it sees, to finally today, an amalgamation of digital information. Reality has changed and will rapidly change again. As soon as the next technology creates a new interface in which we interact with the world, our sense of reality will inevitably change again

^{*}Provan, A. (2013) 'Gestural Abstractions' Art Forum. March 2013. <http://artforum.com/inprint/id=39392> [accessed 11]

AFFIRMATION is wonderful

HOLOGRAM-2PAC IN 33AD

"What is complex about the situation at Coachella is that Hologram-2pac is not the original performer, but an original performer."

Words by Gordon Douglas



I want to bring the audience's attention to the resurrection of 2pac this past Spring.

On 15th April 2012, at Coachella Music Festival, a surprise appearance transpired during Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre's set. Dubbed by the media as 'Hologram-2pac', the apparition provided the ideal platform to allow a man, whose voice was tragically silenced at the age of twenty-five, to perform and to broadcast his music once more.

The stage is dark, a figure appears to rise from a platform below the stage, growing

bright as his life force is restored through the technology that is reproducing him: Hologram-2pac commands the stage with his mere presence. He raises his arms up at his sides forming a crucifix with his body, calcifying his common existence with Jesus Christ. As the electronic piano kicks in, its smooth and soulful broken chords provide backing for his reunion with fellow artists, Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre, who are sharing the stage. At the end of his set, consisting of two songs, Hail Mary and 2 of AmeriCaz Most Wanted (the second of which he duets with Snoop Dogg (fig. 4)), Hologram-2pac raises his hand holding the

fig. 4, Snoop Dogg duetting 2 of AmeriCaz Most Wanted, with Hologram-2pac, published on Butter Yo Bread website. URL: < <http://butteryobread.wordpress.com/2012/04/18/hologram-tupac-poses-questions-for-fu-ture-music-tours/> >

two fingers for peace high above him. He returns to his starting position, hands by his side, looking down at his feet. His golden chain weighs heavy on the artist's chest, and he knows his time is at an end. A powerful flash of light illuminates the artist and atomises him to a series of fragmented glowing lights which dissipate on to the stage. Again, the stage returns to darkness.

This five-minute period could well be one of the most telling mo-ments in both the industry and live performance. The entire ordeal situates itself in a time when musicians, and their teams, are making more revenue from the gigs and concerts they perform at, in comparison to the proceeds from selling albums, singles and records. The advent of free music streaming platforms such as Soundcloud, Youtube and Spotify (the holy lineage of myspace.com) has opened up a new age for the democracy of the availability of music - heralding a shift towards the pay-for-'aura' (1) experience.

What is complex about the situation at Coachella is that Hologram-2pac is not the original performer, but an original performer. The authentic experience is warped by the inclusion of a, not only pre-recorded, but computer generated intruder. The technology here immortalises the body and exacts an 'aura' of itself, it is an awe of electrical prowess that we as an audience are subservient to. The bringing back to life of the individual becomes an action that we can now comprehend and begin to believe. Even the 'aura' of the dead can be disregarded.

It is suitably fit that 2pac be the one who is revived, an artist who makes numerous references to himself as the Messiah. In the final song the artist released, Hail Mary, the first verse concludes with:

And God said he should send his one
begotten son,
to lead the wild into the ways of the man,
Follow me; eat my flesh, flesh and my flesh.
(2)

With the announcement in these lyrics, 2pac insinuates he is the son of God: he references the bread eaten by the disciples at the Last Supper, symbolising the sharing of the Saviour's flesh. It is an interesting parallel to construct between Hologram-2pac and the performance artist, Joseph Beuys. Beuys, whose practice was characterised by his declaration of himself as a 'healer' was not as explicit as 2pac, but still implied he had a divine power and authenticity. The body of work that Beuys accomplished over his lifetime highlights the rediscovering of the 'aura' in the perception of the performance artist. Beuys was able to abuse his unattainability by only performing to small groups, with the works existing on the broader platform of art history through stylised and heavily mediated photographs. His awareness of his comparability with a Messiah is displayed in *Zeige Deine Wunde* (Show Your Wounds, 1976). The installation consists of several pairs of objects, duplicable ready-mades, evocative of meaning rather than speaking of art. The work and its potential meanings are discussed in Jan Verwoert's essay 'The Boss: On the unresolved Question of Authority in Joseph

1. I have focused my understanding of the word 'aura' on Walter Benjamin's writing 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. The work is commentary to the development of cinema and its relationship to live performance; this is mirrored in the relationship between the artwork and the representation of it. For Benjamin, the 'aura' is the notion that something exists but is inaccessible and cannot be seen, exulting a presence through rumor and speculation. He goes on to express, that the concept of the 'aura' in the visual arts is affixed to a culture pre-photography. For music, this 'aura' can still exist as the originality of the performer, and is something that is exploited by the industry, in the already mentioned increase in gig

revenue. With Hologram-2pac, the inaccessibility of the performer, through them being deceased, is ignored and the performance can be repeated indefinitely. See Benjamin, Walter 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', (1935) published in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, (2008), pub. Penguin: London. trans. Underwood, J.A. Originally pub, in 1936.

2. Lyrics from Tupac Shakar's song Hail Mary (feat. Kastro, Young Noble and Prince Ital, (1996), published on the A-Z Lyrics website, URL: <<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/2pac/hailmary.html>> [accessed 18/11/12]

Beuys' Oeuvre and Public Image' (3):

In the Christian tradition, the act of showing the wounds is the gesture in which Christ reveals himself to his disciples as the resurrected Messiah. Strictly speaking, therefore, there can only be one person who is entitled to show his wounds: the Saviour himself. The title of the work, however, is an appeal addressed to another person. Beuys here effectively changes the monologue of the messianic revelation into a dialogue and thus multiplies the available speaking positions: anyone who feels addressed by the appeal is here invited to adopt the messianic position.”(4)

What is a clear difference between the restoration of 2pac in his technological form and Jesus Christ in his revived state are the wounds on the body of the latter. From this rev-elation of the biblical story, we can determine that Hologram-2pac cannot be the Messiah but an idealised version of his former self. One that is still marked by history (implied by the inclusion of his tattoos by the designers at Digital Domain), but one that is not simply a performing corpse scarred by the bullets that killed him in 1996. This stylised ‘zombie’ (5) performer then displays himself as how we best remember the late rapper, a

combination of his many media appearances, album covers, posters, and performances. His reappearance marries old recordings of live performance with CGI to create a product of historical accuracy.

The design company's choice not to expose the scars or wounds could be down to a variety of reasons, the desire not to offend family members and friends probably being the most likely. The fact that an image of the reality would be too fictitious for an audience to believe is another. The unavailability of forensic imagery in the media of 2pac's body provides us with no suitable spectacle to attach the fact to. Thus, the imago in our heads of the event is a fiction based on headlines and what we have been exposed to via the media. The showcase of reality would be too unreal for an audience to actually identify with, as it would directly conflict with our individual perceptions. Part of the strength of the non illustrated myth is our perceptions and invented images are usually much more real than the reality would seem if it was replayed to us. In the myth of the Messiah, we see a truly unattainable figure, but one with the potential to return. This faith in the ‘aura’ is one of the reasons that Christianity is the largest religion on the planet today.

3 Marcel Duchamp and his inclusion of the ‘readymade’ into the tradition of art was very different from the way in which Beuys chose to apply readymades. Duchamp saw his readymades as chosen, almost in a curatorial manner; he selected objects from everyday life and placed them in the art gallery to debate the terminology ‘art’. Beuys uses his readymades to symbolise meaning correlating almost as sculptural algebra. These would stem from his experiences when he crashed his fighter plane in the wilderness and was rescued and healed by the nomadic Tartar people. See Buchloh, Benjamin H.D., ‘Beuys: The Twilight of the Idol’, (1980) published in *Artforum*, vol.5, no.18 (January 1980), pp.35-43.

4 Verwoert, Jan, ‘The Boss: On the unresolved Question of Authority in Joseph Beuys’ Oeuvre and Public Image’, (2011), published on the e-flux website. URL: <<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-boss-on-the-unresolved-question-of-authority-in-joseph-beuys-oeuvre-and-public-image/>

[accessed 18/11/12].

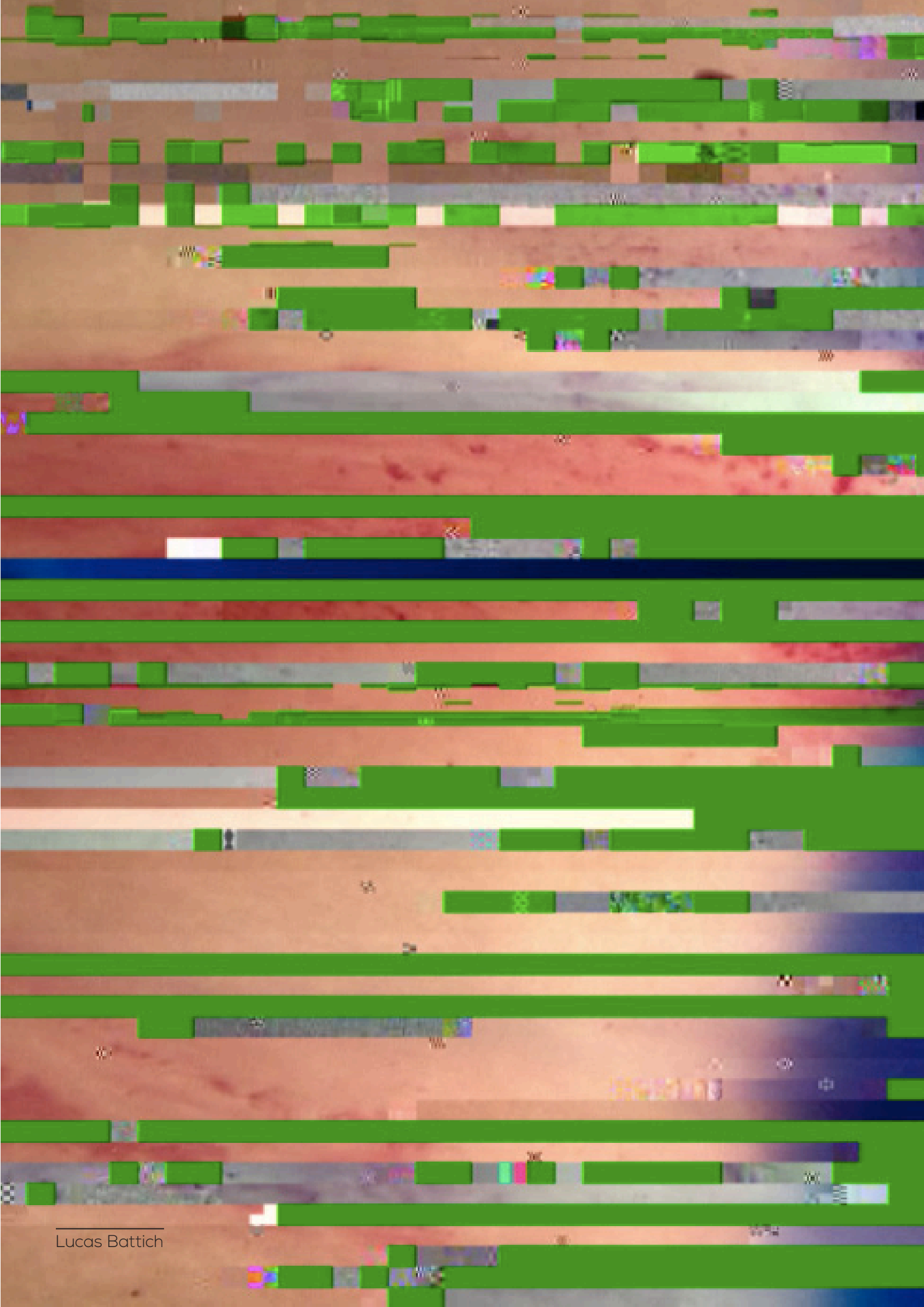
5. When I write Zombie here, I am alluding to ‘the uncanny valley’, a concept developed by Masahiro Mori detailing the familiarity that humans feel towards robotic and still replicas of themselves. It follows that as the likeness to us increases, our familiarity and rapport with the replica increases. Then as the replica gets to a point just before perfect replication, there is a slump (or trough valley, if plotted on a graph) as we feel uncomfortable, and the feeling of uncanny takes over. This feeling of the uncanny is because we are presented with something that appears alive but we know is not. But as the replica approaches and reaches perfect (footnote 5 cont’d) representation our affinity with the creation reaches its optimum. See Mori, Masahiro, ‘Bukimi no tani’ (1970) pub. *Energy Journal* #7(4) pp. 33-35. Published in English as ‘The Uncanny Valley’, trans. K. F. MacDorman & T. Minato

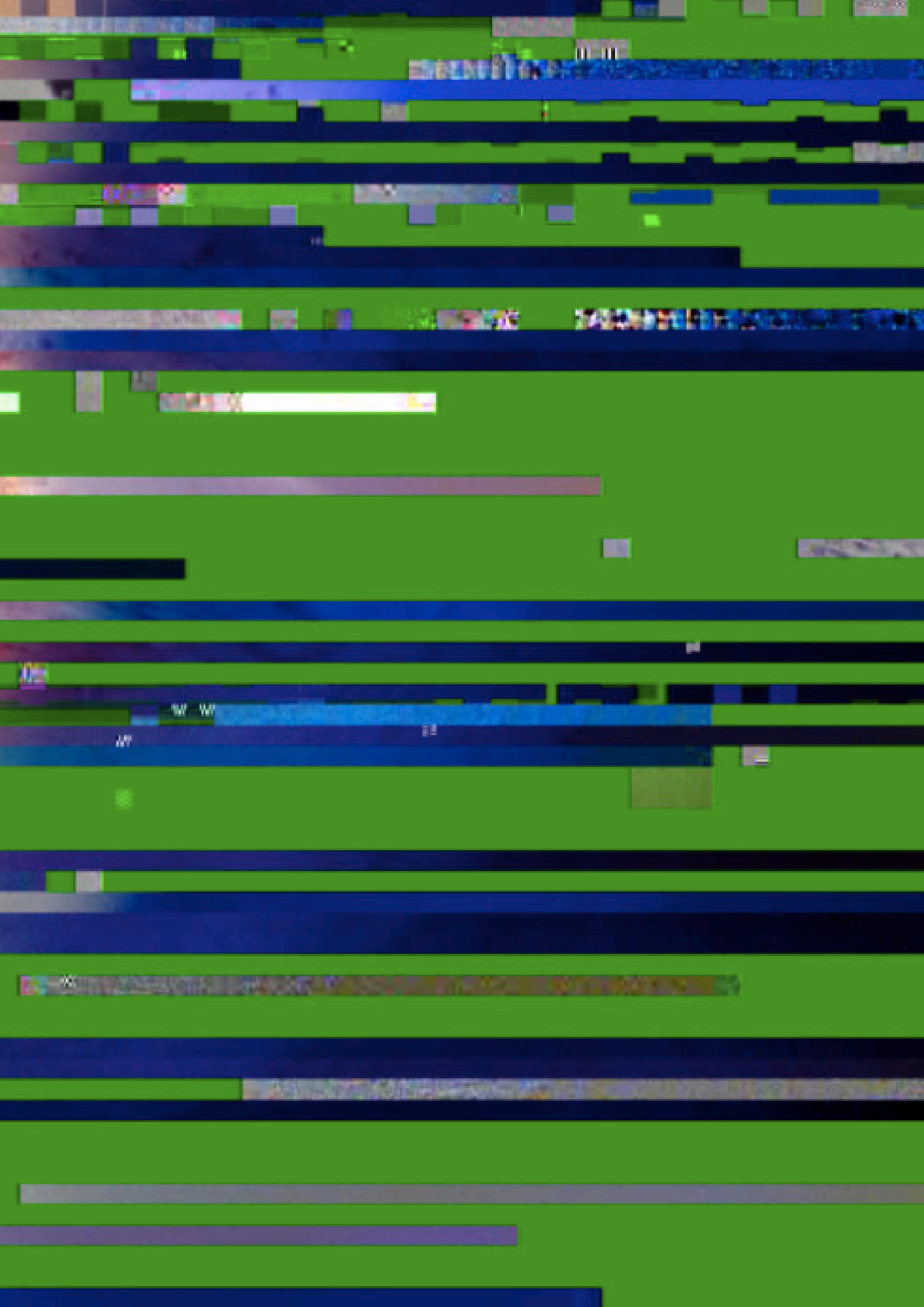
What I must stress however, when it comes to reenactment and the phenomenon of Hologram-2pac, is that this event was not a reenactment at all; the phantom's opening line, 'What the fuck is up Coachella?' should make this abundantly clear (6). It was a stylisation of an entire career, a simulation of what we wanted to see if we had the opportunity to see 2pac perform again. An exercise in shaping an alternative reality based on both the multiple faces of 2pac across his diverse appearances in an all-media archive, and the nostalgia-tinged memories of people who saw him perform first time around. In this sense, the performance is messianic, just non-canonical with reality. The

illusion then becomes part of a 'viral ontology' (7) that Tupac Shakar began when he was alive, his entire body of work providing a template and pattern for multiple and infinite appropriation. Through the re-canonising and introduction of auratic figures from history, we are open to the potential for allegory as reality: what does the inclusion of 2pac in the land of the living, say about our society today? This is a question I will not answer here, but I am willing to emphasise my concern over our eagerness to consume the visual replica and the 'aura' it represented: our eagerness to consume the dead in order to reactivate the living.

6 2pac passed away in 1996, three years prior to the Music Festival's initial production in April, 1999. This chronology of events means that the voice of the rapper was a simulated production and could not have been lifted from any media interviews, historic performances or soundbites. See 'Tupac Hologram Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre perform Coachella Live 2012' published on youtube.com by user westfesttv, Snoop Dogg's official youtube channel. URL: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGbrFmPBV0Y>> [accessed 7/12/12]
7. In Christopher Bedford's essay 'The Viral Ontology of Performance', the author regards performance art documentation as what he deems viral in Art

History. By focusing on Shoot, 1971 by Chris Burden, he is able to follow the chronology of the many appearances of the performance within current debate. With this analysis he is able to come to the conclusion that performance art is not solely about the present live act, but about a single event that can re-enter debate in the future to come. Bedford, Christopher, 'The Viral Ontology of Performance', (2012), published in *Perform Repeat Record: Live Art in History*, (2012) ed. Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield, pub. Intellect: Bristol, UK & The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, USA pp. 77-87







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