Press Packet

For immediate release

EXHIBITION: *LIVE*

LOCATION: The Beall Center for Art and Technology

OPENING RECEPTION/MEET THE ARTISTS: April 3, 2008, 6:30 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

ADDRESS:
University of California, Irvine
Claire Trevor School of the Arts
712 Arts Plaza
Irvine, CA 92697-2775

HOURS:
Tuesday - Wednesday, 12 – 5 p.m.
Thursday - Saturday, 12 – 8 p.m.

GENERAL CONTACT:
(949) 824-4339
http://beallcenter.uci.edu

BRIEF OVERVIEW
What is the meaning of "live" in today's virtual world? The Beall Center for Art and Technology is pleased to present *LIVE, an exhibit which features nine artists who* sample and transform data, photographs and video from the Internet and incorporate it into their sculptures and installations. The *LIVE exhibit will be open to viewers* **April 3 – June 7, 2008. In addition,** Family Day, May 3rd, 2008, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. allows younger audiences to participate in hands-on arts and science projects related to the current exhibit.

The Beall Center for Art and Technology at the University of California Irvine explores relationships between the arts, sciences, and engineering, promoting new forms of creation and expression using digital technologies. The Beall Center is free and open to the public.

CURATOR'S STATEMENT
The title of this exhibition poses a question—how do we define and experience what is live when the majority of our daily interactions are increasingly mediated and reconfigured by various technologies? And how does this change our perception of what is considered real or actual versus what is virtual? *Līve* features nine artists who sample and transform data, photographs and video from the Internet and incorporate it into their sculptures and installations. Either extracting live footage or transmitting data in real time, they cull from diverse sources including Congressional speeches from C-Span, websites with Iraqi war casualties, a critique of consumerism from a peer-to-peer network and on-line video surveillance. As the artists isolate ideas and images from the steady stream of unrelenting data, they produce thought-provoking, aesthetic and "līve" works of art that also challenge our ideas of real and virtual experience.

In 1889 in *Time and Free Will*, the philosopher Henri Bergson suggested that the "real" and the "unreal" do not exist, there is only the *actual* and *virtual*—the actual is that which science describes and quantifies, while the virtual is what we process in our minds. As we take in the input of the *actual* world through our senses and process a series of physical and quantifiable information, it is transformed into conscious and unconscious responses, as our minds become a repository of *virtual* experiences.

As communication technologies such as telegraph and telephone were invented, there was suddenly a great physical distance between the sender and the receiver. The innovation of radio and television broadcast media increased this spatial displacement even further, transforming one-to-one personal communication into live events experienced by masses of people. The

advent of recording technology increased displacement not just the spatially but also temporally: recordings became like memories fixed in both form and time, just as writing allowed speech to be fixed as text. As Plato noted in his famous account of conversations between Socrates and Phaedrus, throughout history the direct experience and dialogical nature of live speech has always been privileged over recorded text.

Even today it is always emphasized and privileged when any event—a breaking news story, a natural disaster, a sports match or a performance is presented "live." Since the 1990s with the omnipresence of the Internet and more recently, Web 2.0 technologies such as You Tube, Flicker and social net-working sites, the notion of live experiences has become more spontaneous and democratized. Artists noticed these changes in the mid-1990s in the first generation of web-based artworks.
The artists in *Līve* build upon this early work, but expand that vocabulary, extending their art from the web page into the gallery. Their wide range of approaches, forms and methods explore the space/time displacements of mediated events and how those events are both transmitted and remediated.

MTAA & RSG's *Want* consists of 900 video clips in which individuals declare something that they desire, which are then triggered by search requests from a peer-to-peer network. When someone on the peer-to-peer network requests an item matching one of these 900 video clips, that clip is displayed live in real time in one of six projections.

Karen Finley's *Business as Usual* installation looks like an office, with the prerequisite computers, LCD screens and printers. On each of two tables a computer churns out print-outs with the casualties in the Iraqi War, one for the Americans and the other for the Iraqis. As one sees the print-outs piling up and hears the printer's incessant printing, the live report of the dead brings the magnitude of the death in this tragic war into the gallery and the viewer's consciousness.

Siebren Versteeg's *BOOM (Fresher Acconci)* uses Internet protocol to endlessly display random images using a video trope borrowed from Vito Acconci's *The Red Tapes* (1976). Presented on an older computer and crt monitor without keyboard or mouse, this work clearly also references the early cathoid ray tube TV sculptures of Nam June Paik. Like many of the works in this exhibition, there is a sense of an endless transmission.

Natalie Bookchin's *All that is solid* utilizes images from online security cams that are openly accessible on the web. Using this source material, she re-edits images into mysterious, surreal observations of both interior and exterior space that are overlaid with a soundtrack of recorded personal conversations also found on the internet, and originally transmitted over the airwaves – the telephone and the radio

Ben Rubin's Two Lanes, 8th Avenue at 40th Street, October 27, 2007 also culls data from on-line security cameras from this particular date and location in New York City. This data is transformed into two long sculptural tubes that with LED lights that move according to the traffic pattern.

Aphid Stern and Michael Dale's *MetaVid* is a web site that draws data from CSPAN and processes the closed captioning through software they designed, allows the user to search content by key word and to find all the speeches that match that subject. When a specific speech is selected, it is played, allowing the user to hear about specific issues from the representatives who are deciding public policy.

Philip Auslander's book *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (1999) describes both live action and remediated elements in performance. Arguing that mere corporeal presence is not the only criteria for something to be perceived as "live," he observes that works incorporating video or digital images can be just as present. In this exhibition each artist approaches the idea of "live" in different ways: they all use pre-existing data from the Internet, however, some transform it through constant change and updates, while others remediate that data into an entirely new experience. In either case, they create dynamic, "live" works that project an immediate presence where the actual meets the virtual in real space.

—David Familian

ARTIST'S STATEMENTS
Radical Software Group (Alexander R. Galloway) and MTAA (Mike Sarff & Tim Whidden)
"Want"
Want (2008) intervenes in a number of areas important to contemporary culture: the question of privacy on the internet and the threat of surreptitious spying; a new culture of narcissism in which "me" (MySpace) and "you" (YouTube) rule the day; and the ease with which desires can be voiced and satisfied. The piece uses algorithmic triggers to generate a limitless video narrative between a number of different characters.

Natalie Bookchin
"All That is Solid"
All That is Solid (2005-7) is part of a series entitled Network Movies that uses footage captured from data flows of images from online security webcams from around the world. The webcams are found through Google, which, because of an unintended glitch in their search engine technology, indexes the webcams whether or not they are intended to be public. The series offers unusual portraits of contemporary global landscapes, revealing a world that can be traversed in a few mouse clicks, where physical distances no longer determine travel times across continents, where time zones become visual signs rather than bodily experiences, and where boundaries between private and public shrink as wired private locations and personal stories join a global public network. They depict a world of often unspecified locations, potentially traceable only by faces, signs, architectural details, or domain names, and sometimes not at all. Jumpy, mechanical movement and low-resolution images reveal the technological conditions that produce the images, which, despite their high-tech origins, are reminiscent of early cinema and photography. These marks of technology, resulting from the limitations of real-time image transfers over networks, can remind viewers of the sometimes enormous distance between the local spaces and our seemingly unlimited global access. There is, at times, a quiet, accidental beauty in these

remote, real-time views of unspecified locations, where the camera relentlessly records time passing by.

Michael Dale & Aphid Stern
METAVID
Metavid is a web-based community archive of US legislative footage. This project redeploys video and closed caption text captured from cable television rebroadcasts of government-produced video. The goal of Metavid is to not only to make these records to visible to the public, but to expose them to the full range of creative and analytic tools available to today's citizenry.

Developed as an open source extension to Mediawiki, the same software that runs Wikipedia, this project enables citizen/users to engage congressional video in a number of ways. Media can be searched based on date, speaker name, spoken text, or semantic data (user provided &scraped from the web). The text layer can be annotated and extended with categories and links to outside information. Furthermore the text can be edited, corrected, translated and (re)transcribed. The video itself can be viewed online, or downloaded for posterity or re-use.

Karen Finley
"Business as Usual"
In this installation, two computers on the screens present an ever ending listing of the deaths as they continually print the death tolls of both Iraqi and American soldiers, evoking an eerie and empty feeling. The distant and haunting sound of a printer that never stops producing lists is the only sound that can be heard. When each printer runs out of paper, a pile of lists is stacked in the corner. The idea is that this is the reality Americans face when we hear of soldiers dying. Here we see that this is a business, this is merely someone's job, just another day at the office.

Siebren Versteeg
BOOM (Fresher Acconci)
Internet connected computer program output to Sony video monitor
The implications of digital technology (web 2.0) continue to unveil a sublime, mass subjectivity that may be apprehended by human consciousness as an apocalyptic point of saturation; or better, a meaningless and indifferent singularity. As the conditions of real-time continue to propagate transfer speeds that eliminate the space/travel/journey between individual subjects, the notions of self and other blur as well. The images presented herein are being downloaded and presented continuously in real time via Google image searches of words that are randomly selected from a dictionary within the computer program. As very the nature of the images presented by the work is random, the artist assumes both all and no responsibility for their content. Boom borrows its auditory and visual form from a noteworthy scene in Vito Acconci's "The Red Tapes", (1976). In the short original clip, Acconci presents the viewer with a series of photographs depicting scenes from American history that seemingly address a "boom" (industrial and population expansion, an increase in crime, and a reciprocal increase in surveillance punishment). "Culminating in the 'The Red Tapes', Acconci's video works trace a

trajectory from psychological investigations of subjectivity to examinations of the cultural, historical and social construction of the self - what two decades later would be termed identity politics."

Ben Rubin
Two Lanes, 8th Avenue at 40th Street, October 27, 2007
This work studies the movements of cars, trucks, busses, and yellow cabs as they made their way up 8th Avenue one rainy day last October. I've reduced these vehicles to linear pulses of color rendered on two LED tubes; each tube displays one lane of traffic. The piece alternates between periods of stillness and motion that reflect the timing of the traffic lights at this intersection.

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHY
LIVE showcases work by Radical Software Group (Alexander R. Galloway) and MTAA (Mike Sarff & Tim Whidden), Natalie Bookchin, Aphid Stern, Michael Dale, Karen Finley, Siebren Versteeg and Ben Rubin. The following is info on each of the individual contributors:

Founded in 2000, **Radical Software Group** is a collective of programmers and artists working on experimental software products. The New York Times recently described their work as "conceptually sharp, visually compelling and completely attuned to the political moment." RSG is author of the data surveillance system "Carnivore," and a 2002 Golden Nica winner at the Prix Ars Electronica.

Artists M. River and T. Whid formed **MTAA** in 1996 and soon after began to explore the internet as a medium for public art. The duo's exhibition history includes group shows and screenings at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, Postmasters Gallery and Artists Space, all in New York City, and at The Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. International exhibitions include the Seoul Net & Film Festival in Korea and Videozone2 - The 2nd International Video Art Biennial in Israel. In *New Media Art* (Taschen, 2006), authors Mark Tribe and Reena Jana describe MTAA's work as "a deftly transparent demonstration of new media's ability to manipulate our perceptions of time." The duo has also earned grants and commissions from Creative Capital, Rhizome.org, New Radio & Performing Arts, Inc. and The Whitney Museum of American Art.

Natalie Bookchin is an artist based in Los Angeles. She is internationally recognized for creating art work that used the Internet as both material and site. From 1998 to 2000 she was a member of the collective ®TMark. Her recent videos sample and archive data flows of images from security webcams around the world, creating unusual portraits of global landscapes. Her work has been shown widely in international venues including PS1, Mass MOCA, the Generali Foundation, the Walker Art Center, and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. She has been commissioned to make projects for the Whitney Museum, the Tate Museum, the Walker Art Center, and Creative Time, among other venues. She has received grants from Creative Capital, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Durfee Foundation, the California Arts Council, the Rockefeller Foundation, California Community Foundation, New York State

Council for the Arts, Daniel Langlois Foundation, Andy Warhol Foundation among others. She is the Director of the Photography & Media Program in the Art School at Calarts where she has been teaching for the past ten years.

Michael Dale is a Research Associate at University of California Santa Cruz, where he received both a double BA and MFA. He is the lead developer for the MetaVidWiki project. Michael has been involved in open media adoption on the web, helps organize the FOMS (Foundations of Open Media Software) conference, is on the board of the Annodex Foundation, and has been pushing for open media support in web browsers. Funded by a Sunlight Foundation grant for the last year, Michael has been working on the MetaVidWiki project.

Abram Stern (aka Aphid) is a net.artist whose work has primarily dealt with issues of authorship and aesthetics of participation. He received a BFA from San Francsico Art Institute and a MFA from the University of California, Santa Cruz. His work has been shown at New Langton Arts, Works:San Jose, and Rhizome.org's artbase. He is currently a Research Associate at UCSC.

Karen Finley is a New York based artist whose raw and transgressive performances have long provoked controversy and debate. She has appeared and exhibited internationally her visual art, performances and plays. Her performances have been presented at Lincoln Center, New York City, The Guthrie, Minneapolis, American Repertory Theatre, The ICA in London, Harvard, The Steppenwolf in Chicago, and The Bobino in Paris. Her artworks are in numerous collections and museums including the Pompidou in Paris and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Finley attended the San Francisco Art Institute, receiving an MFA and honorary PHD. She has received numerous awards and fellowships including a Guggenheim, two Obies, two Bessies, MS. Magazine Woman Of The Year, NARAL Person of the Year (which she shared with Anna Quindlen and Walter Cronkite), NYSCA and NEA Fellowships. She currently is an Arts Professor in Art and Public Policy at Tisch School of the Arts, New York University.

Siebren Versteeg was born in New Haven Connecticut. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn. Solo exhibitions include Max Protetch Gallery, Bellwether, New York; The Museum of Contemporary Art and Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago; The Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; The Ulrich Museum, Wichita; as well as an extensive survey and catalog in 2005 with University Galleries, Normal IL. Versteeg's work has also exhibited in The International Biennale of Contemporary Art, Prague; Optica, Montreal; The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia; 25000 Cultural Transmission Center, Beijing; The Renaissance Society, Chicago; ExitArt, New York. Writing on his work has appeared in numerous catalogs and publications including Art Forum, Art in America, The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune, The Miami Herald, and ArtUs. He holds a BFA in Art from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from The University of Illinois at Chicago in; In 2004, he attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. In addition to creating his artwork, Versteeg teaches at Brooklyn College and contributes his energies towards a multitude of collaborative projects. This spring, Versteeg's work is included in The Cinema Effect at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington DC.

Ben Rubin is a media artist based in New York City. He is the creator (with Mark Hansen) of "Moveable Type" (2007), a large-scale public artwork for the lobby of the New York Times headquarters building. Other recent public artworks include "San Jose Semaphore" for the city of San Jose, California, and "Four Stories" for the Minneapolis Public Library, both completed in 2006. Mr. Rubin's work has been shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the MIT List Visual Arts Center, the Skirball Center in Los Angeles (in a show organized by the Getty Museum), the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the San Jose Museum of Art. He has been a frequent collaborator with artists and performers including Laurie Anderson, Diller+Scofidio, Ann Hamilton, Arto Lindsay, Steve Reich, and Beryl Korot. Rubin's installation Listening Post (2002, with statistician Mark Hansen) won the 2004 Golden Nica Prize from Ars Electronica as well as a Webby award in 2003. Mr. Rubin received a B.A. from Brown University in 1987 and an M.S. in visual studies from the MIT Media Lab in 1989. Mr. Rubin teaches at the Yale School of Art, where he was appointed critic in graphic design in 2004.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, IMAGES, AND RESOURCES

http://beallcenter.uci.edu

http://r-s-g.org/

http://mteww.com/

http://bookchin.net/

http://aphid.org

http://karenfinley.com

www.siebrenversteeg.com/

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