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# Heterochrony

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2012

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Project by fabric | ch

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Art competition by invitation: outdoor installation for Festival de la Cité (CH). 1<sup>st</sup> prize

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Location: Lausanne (CH)

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Exhibited during the Festival de la Cité, summer 2012 (Lausanne, CH)

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- Perceptual shift
  - Split public park environment, two mediated times
  - Architecture as a sensing and recording device
  - Molecular monitoring of users' activities and presence
  - Monitored data "shadow" of the park and its activities
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- Heterochrony interfaces and software. Environmental monitoring/recording



[Img. 1]



[Img. 2, 3]



[Img. 4]



[Img. 5]



[Img. 6]



[Img. 7]



[Img. 8]



[Img. 9]



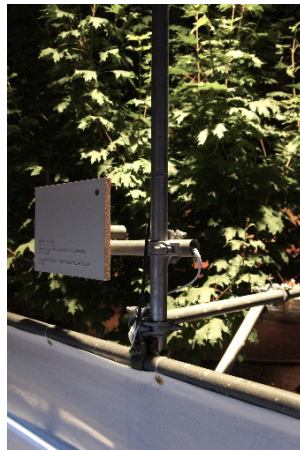
[Img. 10]



[Img. 11]



[Img. 12]



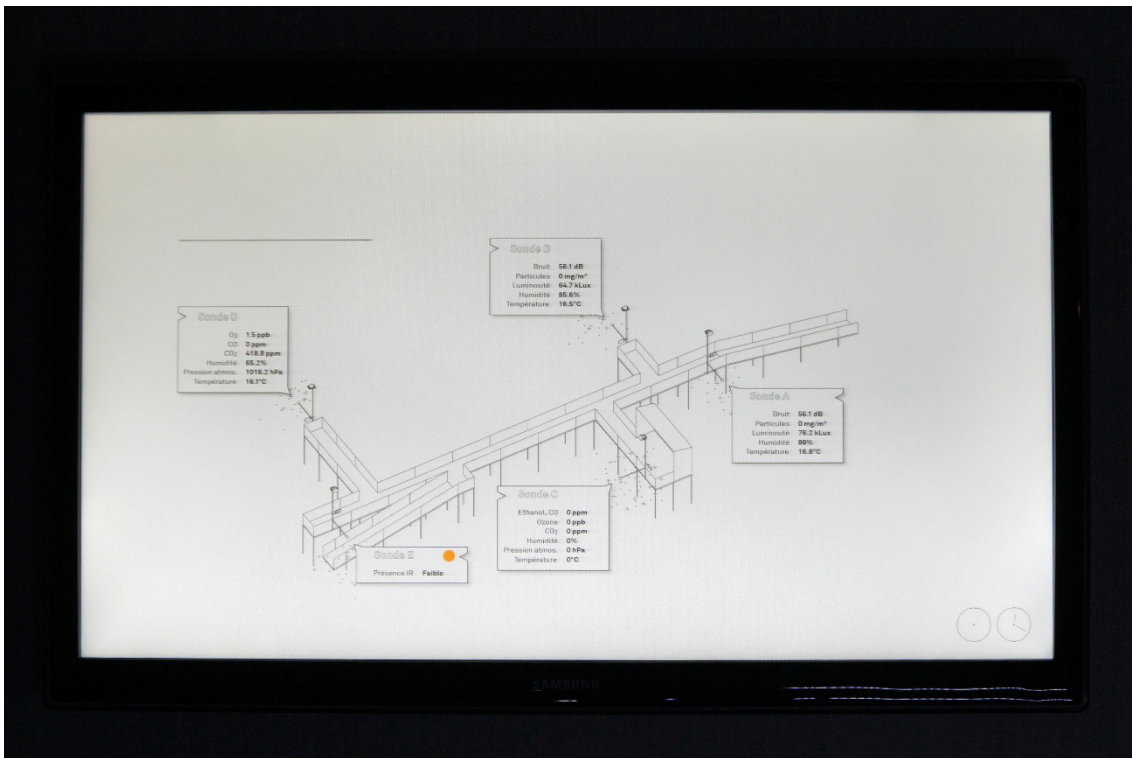
[Img. 13, 14, 15]



[Img. 16]



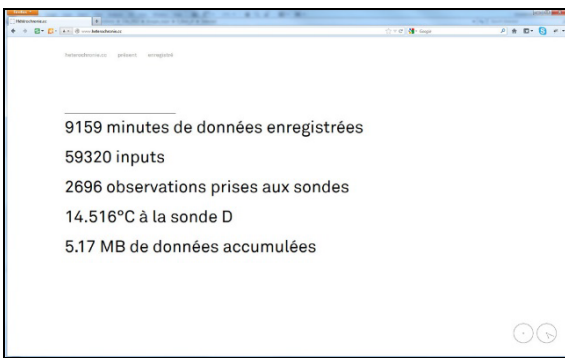
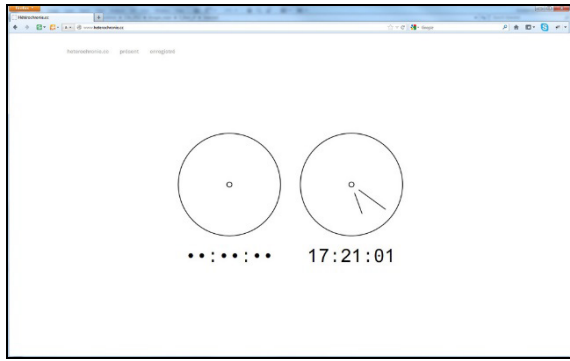
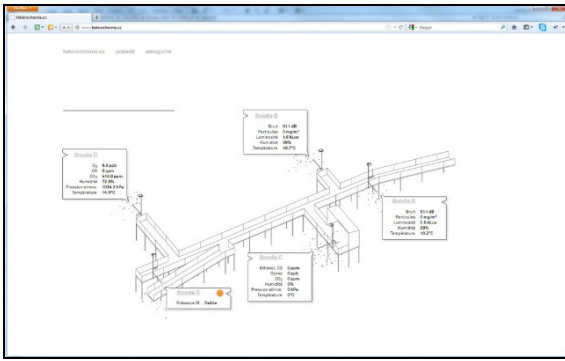
[Img. 17]



[Img. 18]



[Img. 19]



heterochronie.cc présent enregistré

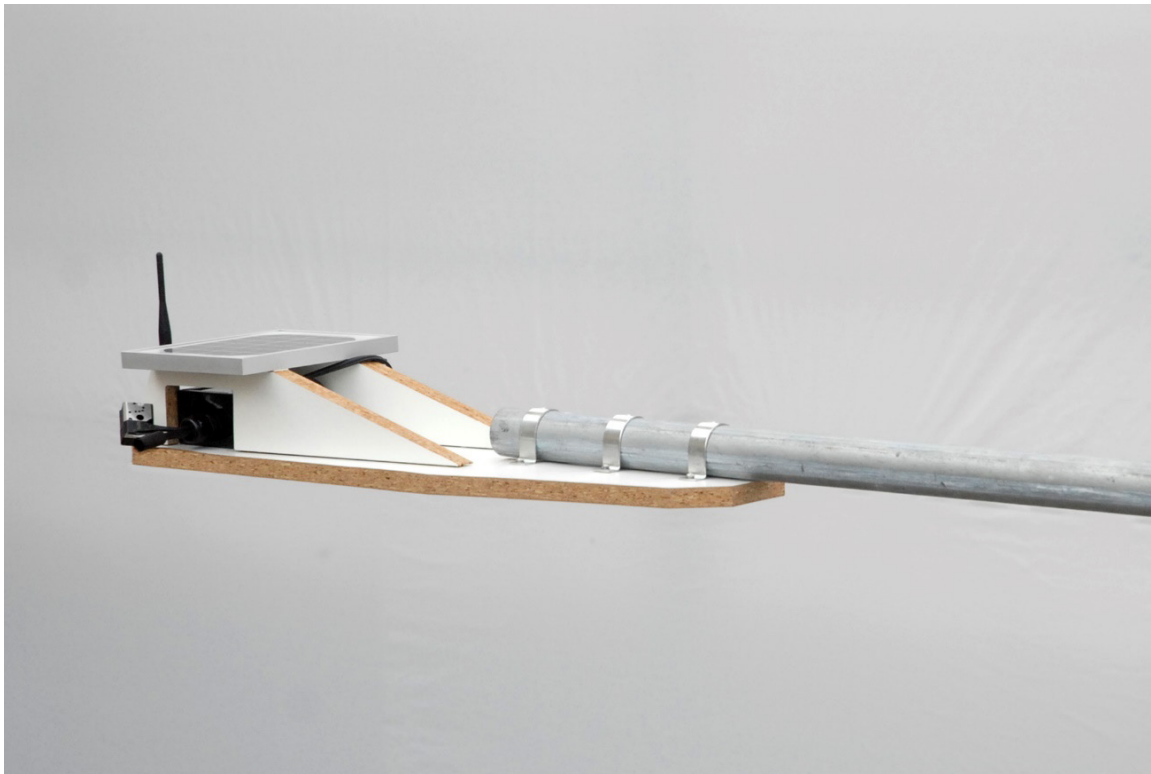
Le serveur du projet Hétérochronie regroupe toutes les données du « présent » qui fut enregistré dans le parc public, semble-t-il en 2012. Celles-ci, rapidement mises en accès libre suite à l'expérience et dans un format non crypté, sont toujours accessibles ICI.

Vous pouvez les télécharger et les utiliser.

Sur ce site, maintenu depuis, les 6 jours que durèrent l'expérience se rejouent sans fin, sous forme de données.

Hétérochronie est un projet de fabric | ch.

[Img. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24]



[Img. 25]



[Img. 26]



[Img. 27]



[Img. 28]



[Img. 29]



[Img. 30]

Image captions:

- [Img. 2] An "observer" at two different "observation points," overlooking the surrounding environment and, while doing so, unwittingly triggering the illumination of a strong projector on the park and its users, as well as the recording of dedicated data.
- [Img. 4] The passageway architecture over the park, with observation points, probes, strong spotlights to illuminate the observed areas. The deck organizes semi-fluid areas in the square with dedicated pop-up or emerging uses over time (a bar, a scene, a park, a street, rest areas, and so on). Each of these areas/functions is topped by an observation point on the deck.
- [Img. 7] The passageway architecture over the park, an area that can become a scene.
- [Img. 8] Inside the observation deck: a long central pathway connecting the entrance of the square to its exit, with radiating paths toward observation points or the "control room."
- [Img. 9] Inside the observation deck: view from the other end.
- [Img. 10] The overall lighting of the 52 LED bars is driven by data analytics in such a manner that the data is produced by the monitored environment. The lights on the platform behave like a data graph in the sense that the more data which is collected in an area (observation point), the stronger the lighting. The overall lighting remains stable though, meaning that the data mitigate the intensity of the lighting in different areas. At some time (every three hundred inputs), a "glitch" occurs in the lighting to reset and synchronize everything.
- [Img. 13] Observation points on the deck, with their spotlights (oriented towards the surrounding environment) activated by the presence of observers, also triggering the recording of the data on the servers. The probes which equip each observation point can detect presence, molecular and gas composition, temperature, humidity, pressure, light and noise. They also have title panels showing what's being monitored, observed, and replayed in loops ("(...) around the beginning of the 21st century").
- [Img. 17] "Control room" with screens, interfaces, live data variations and visualizations.
- [Img. 18] On stage in Caen (FR).
- [Img. 19] Detail on "Control room" with screens, interfaces, live data variations and visualizations.
- [Img. 20] The website of the project remains accessible and the recorded data downloadable ([www.heterochronie.cc](http://www.heterochronie.cc)). It runs now in loops, endlessly replaying the week of the experience.
- [Img. 25] A probe equipped with various wireless environmental and presence sensors.

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# Txt

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## Heterochrony

Heterochrony is a temporary architectural device and new project designed by fabric | ch, office for architecture, interaction & research. It has been completed, exhibited and lived during the Festival de la Cité 2012 (Summer 2012) in Lausanne.

*"Two distinct times, two "presents" were observing each other, close to one another: the present of a public park with its "scene", its "garden", its "bar", its "festivalgoers" and the present of a second place, the footbridge or "almost archeological" path that overlooked the whole, allowing one to openly structure, observe, sense and record it.*

*Seen from this observation platform, a possible scientific device equipped with a multitude of presence detectors, of atmospheric and gas sensors, the present time of the park and its users seemed to be situated in an indefinite past or maybe in a parallel present, at a different time. Or was it rather that all these recorded events were replaying in loops for a long time?*

*The traces left by comings and goings, the ones of the molecules of the "party" and the present moment had indeed been monitored and recorded, stored, and kept indefinitely on a data server, somewhere, for a utopian future or past replenishment. (...)"*

Heterochrony consists of a 40m-long passageway, or rather an "archaeological" observation deck: an architectural device that overlooks a public park (existing) which connects paradoxically its entrance directly to the exit – so as to have the opportunity to become an "observer" of what is happening in the park and walk through the square without really entering it, as in archaeological gangways -- ... , opens to contrasting atmospheres and tries to reorganize the different spaces/common uses on the grounds with minimal physical touch and maximal visual transparency.

The peculiarity of the project consists in the fact that it also tries to generate a dual perception and a temporal disruption, which leads to the title of the work, Heterochrony: if the present time of the park and its users is, in fact, the "archeology" to be observed and monitored from the deck as well as recorded on the project's servers and therefore a potential "past," then the present time of the passageway becomes a possible "future" viewed from the ground ... It's an attempt to materialize such a mysterious temporal zone, induced by the combination of two different referential in the same space.

The architectural device itself (the deck architecture) is equipped in five selected areas (observation points) with many multisensory monitoring devices. The sensors

record as much data as possible over time, these being generated by the ever-changing conditions, presences in and uses of the park (its climate, atmosphere, molecular and gas composition, sounds, users, usages). The data are then stored on Heterochrony's servers and endlessly replayed in loops on the computers in the form of bits of information as part of the overall architecture. It is a "recorded moment," in some ways "frozen" on data servers, which can potentially replay itself forever or is waiting for somebody to reactivate it.

The data are kept publicly accessible on the servers, with the utopian aim that they could allow one to regenerate the "present" in another time (if a present, indeed, can still be identified within this project), thus reinforcing the feeling of time disruption. A "data center" on the deck, with its set of interfaces and visualizations screens, lets the visitors-observers follow the process of recording.

The work could be considered as an architectural proposal that is built upon the idea of a massive production of data which will very soon come out (be monitored) of our environment, be stored, mined (for whatever -- good or bad -- immediate, near and far-future uses). Every second, our world and lives are producing/will produce massive amounts of data, stored "forever" in some distant data centers, like old bubbles of gas trapped in the ices of the polar caps for millennia... The project can undoubtedly be seen as a reference to the novel of A. Bioy Cassares, "The Invention of Morel," which resonates with the idea of monitoring/recording the real (and, to some extent, to the recent "The City and the City," by China Miéville, for its dual and densified space).

As such, the project tries to introduce doubt about its true nature: could it be, in fact, possible that what is observed from the platform is already a recorded present from the past? A ghost situation? A present regenerated from the recorded data by an unknown scientist or maybe by the machine itself (the architectural recording device)? Could it, in fact, also run endlessly in loops for years?

fabric | ch, September 2012

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