



INTERVIEW WITH ROZHovor S

V Diane McCarty sa prirodzene stretáva kultúra, technológie a feminizmus v rizóme, ktorá ešte viac posilňuje jej beztak kúzelnú osobnosť. Známa kyberfeministka a kultúrna agentka dnes pracuje v berlínskom nezávislom rádiu Reboot.fm a okrem neho stála s Pitom Schultzom pri zrode miestneho centra sieťovej kultúry, Bootlabu. V rozhovore sa vracia do polovice 90. rokov a rozpráva o objavovaní Webu a dvoch *coming of age* udalostiach európskej sieťovej kultúry: budapeštianskej konferencii MetaForum a založení mailing listu Nettime.

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DB: *Začiatkom 90. rokov si sa presťahovala zo Spojených štátov do Budapešti. Aká tam panovala atmosféra? Čo kultúrny šok?*

DM: Pochádzam z Nového Mexika a chcela som odísť na rok do Európy, do Anglicka, Španielska, atď. Podľa pôvodného plánu som mala skončiť v Turecku. Keďže som nemala dosť peňazí, zmenila som to na Prahu. Ešte v Amerike som u zubára v čakárni natrafila na časopisový článok o americkej kultúrnej scéne v Prahe a pomyslela si, „OK, do Prahy nejdeš, musí to tam byť strašné“. Nakoniec som sa rozhodla, že Budapešť bude cez zimu správnym miestom. Nevedela som o nej veľa, okrem toho, že majú dobrú kinematografiu. A to bolo to, čoho som chcela byť sú-

časťou. Do Budapešti som prišla v októbri 1993. Nikoho som tam nepoznala. Mala som knihu s frázami v rôznych jazykoch, okrem maďarčiny, skrátka som prišla úplne naprázdno. Ale mala som šťastie. Cez spoločubývajúcu na hosteli som sa zoznámila s neterou Györgya Petera, významného maďarského mediálneho teoretika. Napojila som sa na maďarskú intelektuálnu scénu. Prostredníctvom tohto dievčaťa, ktoré sa vrátilo z Kanady a malo maďarských rodičov, som sa zoznámila s veľa ľuďmi, ktorých by som pravdepodobne stretla tak či tak, ale trvalo by to oveľa dlhšie.

DB: *Stretla si sa aj s ľuďmi z okruhu Béla Balázsa Studia?*

DM: Áno, no... Trávila som veľa času v mes-

te. Bol október. Veľa dymu, smogu, áut, najmä trabantov a pár nových áut. Budovy sa renovovali, mesto očividne prechádzalo raným procesom transformácie. V jednom univerzitnom bare v centre som sa zoznámila s divadelníčkou, vďaka ktorej som potom začala pracovať na prvom maďarskom gay a lesbickom filmovom festivale, ktorý organizovalo filmové štúdio Béla Balázs Studio [BBS]. Festival sa konal už začiatkom novembra, všetko šlo veľmi rýchle. Robila som dobrovoľníčku. To mi otvorilo dvere na maďarskú scénu. Vďaka festivalu som sa zoznámila s Jánosom Sugárom, jedným z jeho organizátorov, ktorý bol aj v rade BBS. Spolupracoval s Katedrou intermédií na Akadémii výtvarných umení a bol súčasťou *Media Research Foundation*. Niektorí festival kritizovali pre absenciu vý-



DIANA MCCARTY

Diana has a talent for interweaving the culture, technology, and feminism in an organic rhizome which furthers her charming personality. Cyberfeminist and cultural agent, today she works at the Berlin's independent radio Reboot.fm and earlier together with Pit Schultz she also started the network culture centre Bootlab. In our interview she comes back to the mid-90s and talks about discovering the Web and two *coming of age* events of the European network culture – Budapest's MetaForum conference and the founding of Nettime mailing list.

DB: *In the early 90s you moved from the States to Budapest. Can you describe the atmosphere in the city? Did you experience any culture shock?*

DM: I'm from New Mexico and I planned to leave for a year-long trip to Europe. England, Spain and so on. The plan was to end up in Turkey. I didn't have enough money, so I later planned on Prague. Then in my dentist's office in the US there was a magazine about the American culture scene in Prague which made me think "OK, don't go to Prague, it must be horrible." Later I decided that Budapest would be a good place for the winter. I knew not so much, but I knew they had a good film scene. And that's actually what I wanted to get involved in. I arrived in October '93. I didn't know anybody there. I had

a European language book with phrases and it had every language except Hungarian, so I really arrived with nothing. But I got very lucky. I stayed in a hostel for a few days as a tourist and through my roommate I met a girl who was a niece of György Peter, who's very important media theorist in Hungary. Important point of that is that I got connected with Hungarian intellectual scene. Through this young girl who'd come back from Canada with Hungarian parents I somehow met loads of people that I probably would have met but it would have taken a lot longer.

DB: *Did you meet people from Béla Balázs Studio?*

DM: Yeah. Well. I was hanging around

in the city. It's October. It's kinda smoky, smoggy, lots of cars like Trabants and just very few new cars. Buildings getting renovated, the city is clearly going through the early process of transformation. And then there was a bar, a part of the University downtown where I met a woman from a theatre and through her I started to work on the first Hungarian gay and lesbian film festival that was organized by Béla Balázs film studio [BBS]. The festival happened in the first days of November, it was very quick. I volunteered and ran around and did things. And that was my entry into the Hungarian scene. Through this festival I met János Sugár who was one of the organizers, and who was on the board in BBS. He worked with the Intermedia Department of the Academy of Fine Arts and

chodeurópskych filmov. On na to reagoval v zmysle, že aj vo východnej Európe sa robia filmy s gay a lesbickou tematikou, no tá je viac medzi riadkami a je lepšie predstaviť otvorenejšie filmy. Pri jednom dlhšom rozhovore mi ponúkol, aby som s ním a Geertom Lovinkom pracovala na konferencii Metaforum. Všetko to išlo veľmi prirodzene. Stačilo chodiť do kaviarní alebo kina a debatovať s umelcami a intelektuálmi.

DB: *Stretávala si veľa cudzincov?*

DM: Nebolo ich málo, ale oveľa menej ako povedzme v Prahe. Ľudia prichádzali a odchádzali a veľa cudzincov bolo integrovaných v scéne, aj keď tá bola koniec koncov vždy maďarská. Mnohí z umenia a kultúry z Východu prichádzali do Budapešti len na stretnutia, stretávala som ich v baroch. Taktiež prichádzalo veľa ľudí z Juhoslávie kvôli vojne.

DB: *Prvá konferencia Metaforum sa konala v roku 1994. Ako vznikla?*

DM: Myšlienka vzišla od Geerta a Jánoša. Holandsko-maďarská kultúrna výmena mala silné zázemie a oni dvaja predtým spolu organizovali sympóziu *The Media Are With Us* o úlohe televízie v kontexte rumskej revolúcie [1990]. Táto akcia mala sčasti zásluhu na založení *Media Research Foundation*, ktoré fungovalo ako umelecká skupina. János Sugár, Katalin Timár, Suzy Meszoly, Miklós Peternák, aj Gábor Bora sú všetci osobnosťami maďarskej umeleckej scény. V jej stopách pokračovalo Metaforum s myšlienkou sústrediť sa na CD-ROMy. Nemali sme ešte názov, iba predstavu o tom, že usporiadame konferenciu o multimediami. Prípravné debaty boli neformál-

ne, ja som dostala na starosti organizačnú rolu, fundraising, atď. V priebehu niekoľkých mesiacov sme fungovali ako tím. Nebolo to tak, že by som nemala akékoľvek skúsenosti. Už v Amerike som pracovala s filmom, v Novom Mexiku som viedla kino. Spomínam to, lebo cudzinci, ktorí prišli na Východ, sú často obviňovaní z toho, že nemajú čo ponúknuť a mali len šťastie. To nebol môj prípad. V minulosti som robila viaceré kultúrne programy, nebolo to pre mňa nič nové. Takže sme robili výskum, zháňali informácie. Zoznámila som sa s človekom, ktorý vytvoril CD-ROM o známom maďarskom básnikovi Attilovi Józsefovi v siedmich jazykoch. Bol to taký čudák, čo žil so svojou matkou a mačkami v dome zakrytom tenkou fóliou, s veľa počítačmi. Bolo to v období transformácie, keď si Západ a Východ boli k sebe čoraz bližšie, takže niekedy pre mňa bolo jednoduchšie nájsť si k ľuďom cestu práve vďaka vzájomným rozdielom. János bol v Maďarsku dosť známy a tento človek by s ním asi jednal úplne inak. Takže tímová spolupráca fungovala výborne. Vytvorili sme zoznam ľudí, s ktorými sme sa mali stretnúť a kontaktovali ich. Začali sme spolupracovať s prvým maďarským CD-ROM časopisom *ABCD*, ktorý vznikol na pôde Katedry sociológie Maďarskej technickej univerzity. Z Gábora Kelemen a Andrása Nyírő sa v Maďarsku neskôr stali internetoví experti.

V roku 1994 sme na Metaforum pozvali Heiko Idensena. Nemohol prísť, ale zmienil sa o *World Wide Webe*, ktorý sme s Gáborom Kelemenom začali skúmať. Ja som mala nakoniec na starosti programovanie webu Metafora, Gábor vytvoril vizuály. Bola to celkom vtipná spolupráca, predtým som s počítačom nikdy nerobila. V období

1993/94 existovala len akademická sieť. *Media Research* nemal vlastné priestory, takže sme pracovali z kancelárie Béla Balázs Studio a Katedry intermédií a neskôr i sociológie, pretože sme tam mali prístup na internet. Neexistovalo dial-up pripojenie, len univerzitný prístup. Cez *ABCD* som získala povolenie využívať kanceláriu v noci. Katedru zatvárali o piatej, všetci šli domov, ja som prišla na internet. No a tak som chodila po stránkach, hľadala veci, čokoľvek, čo tam bolo.

V roku 1994 sme mali celkom produktívny konflikt s firmou MATAV, ktorá nezákonne predávala internetové pripojenie. To, čo robili, bolo verejným tajomstvom. Vedeli o tom len ľudia, čo sa zaujímali o internet. Mali dve vizitky s dvomi rôznymi telefónnymi číslami, ale rovnakou kanceláriou. Pozvali sme ich hovoriť. Viacmenej sme to odhalili a nasledovala veľmi zaujímavá, oduševnená debata.

Takže v noci som chodievala do Technickej univerzity, kde som mohla využívať internet, pretože vtedy nebola šanca mať pripojenie doma. Mali tam obrovské počítače Silicon Graphics, ale bez softvéru — vlastne typické pre celý Východ. Pracovala som na jednom takomto stroji a musím povedať, že to bolo úžasné obdobie. Metaforum bolo čiastočne financované cez *Autumn Festival*, ktorý bol pozostatkom kultúrneho festivalu ešte z čias pred politickými zmenami. Organizoval ho Peter Mate prostredníctvom kultúrneho centra v Bude. Zo začiatku som mohla používať ich kanceláriu. Bolo to skvelé, bola tam kopírka zamknutá za mrežami a keď som niečo fotila, musela som spraviť ďalšiu kópiu pre ich záznamy. Skoro by som na to zabudla. Sú to také tie

he was also part of the *Media Research Foundation*. There was a criticism that there were no East European gay or lesbian films in a program. He made a comment that “of course you could say that some films coming out of Eastern Europe were gay and lesbian, but it was so much between the lines that we felt it’s better to introduce a proper gay and lesbian film program.” We had a long chat and he asked me to work on Metaforum conference with him and Geert Lovink. Things were very easy in a way. You hung around in these cafés or cinemas and had discussion with artists and intellectuals.

DB: *Were there very few non-Hungarians around?*

DM: Not very few, but if people think about Prague and this whole takeover thing, it was not like that either. There were a lot of folks coming in and out and around, and lots of foreigners in the city. There was definitely the overlap, but it was still the Hungarian scene. And in a way many people from art and cultural scene across the East were just coming to Budapest for their meetings. I met a lot of those people at night in bars. Lots of people were coming from Yugoslavia because of the war.

DB: *The first Metaforum conference took place in 1994. How did it happen? Where did the idea come from?*

DM: The idea developed between Geert and János. There was a strong connection to a lot of Dutch–Hungarian cultural exchange and they already worked together on *The Media Are With Us* symposium about the role of television in

Romanian revolution [1990]. That event was partly where the *Media Research Foundation* came about and which was ran as an artists group. János Sugár, Katalin Timár, Suzy Meszoly, Miklós Peternák, and Gábor Bora are all Hungarian art figures. Metaforum was its follow-up and the idea was to look at the CD-ROMs. We didn’t have a name, only an idea to do a conference on multimedia. It came to a very informal discussion and I was asked to take an organizational role, do fundraising and so on. Within a few months we worked together as a team. I didn’t come in with totally no experience, I worked through film collectors and ran a cinema in New Mexico. I mention it because foreigners coming to the East were sometimes accused they had nothing to offer and then just got lucky. That was not my problem. I’ve done a lot of cultural programs before so it wasn’t new to me. Anyhow, we slowly looked around and began doing research. Later I got into touch with a guy who did the CD-ROM about a famous Hungarian poet József Attila in seven languages. Total weirdo living with his mother and many cats in a house covered with a thin film and lots of computers. It was the transformation period, the East and West coming together, so sometimes it was easier for me to talk with people exactly because of this mutual difference. János was a fairly well-known artist in Hungary and this guy would have probably done with him very differently. So we worked very well as a team. We made a list of people to talk to, talked to them. We started working with *ABCD*, which came out of the Sociology Department of the Hungarian Technical Universi-

ty and was the first Hungarian CD-ROM magazine. There were Gábor Kelemen and András Nyíró who became one of the internet experts in Hungary.

In '94 we invited Heiko Idensen for Metaforum. He couldn’t come but told us about the *World Wide Web*. And so with Gábor Kelemen we started researching what this was. I ended up doing most of the programming for the Metaforum website, he did the imagery. That was a very funny collaboration because before that I didn’t work with computers at all. In '93–94 there was only this academic network. *Media Research* didn’t have an office, so we worked out of the Béla Balázs Studio office, out of the Intermedia Department and then also out of the Sociology Department because that’s where we had Internet. There were no dial up connections and only the University had access. Through *ABCD* I had a permission to use the office at night. So when the Sociology Department closed at five, everyone went home, I went in. And I was doing, you know, web pages, searching around, finding whatever was there.

And in '94 we had a quite good, productive conflict with MATAV which was illegally reselling Internet. It was an open secret what they were doing, only people who cared about the Internet knew about this. There were two business cards, with two different phone numbers but the same office. We invited them to speak. And we sort of uncovered that and there was a very nice, very heated debate.

So I would go at night into the Technical University and have my internet there. That’s how we’ve done with it. There was



no chance to have a dial up connection at home. And I think it's typical throughout the East in this time — there were really massive Silicon Graphics machines but no software. I was working on one of these gigantic machines and I have to say it was a very amazing time. Metaforum was partly financed through the *Autumn Festival* organized by Peter Mate, which was kind of leftover cultural festival from before the political changes, organized through a cultural center in Buda. I could use that office in the beginning. And it was great. There was still this copy machine locked in a cage room and if I made a copy I had to leave a copy of what I copied for the records. This was a fascinating thing for me, I almost forgot about it. It's like looking at how you've done with what kind of technology. I was using Intermedia for faxing, BBS office for copies, and Sociology for Internet. Getting the enormous stuff done going throughout from Pest to Buda to the other side of Buda. You had to go through the whole city to take care of all these different communication media.

DB: *There was a Nettime meeting in spring '95 in Venice and there were Geert, Pit and Nils bringing people there. It laid a foundation for a mailing list which was to become a ground for network culture and net criticism. Was there anyone from Budapest coming?*

DM: Yeah, me. There was a plan that more of us would go. When we finished the first Metaforum in '94, and the illegal monopoly on the Internet by MATAV and reselling of the University networks was exposed, for us it was completely clear that the next conference would be about the internet.

We started *Közhely*, a public meeting point, which was modeled on XS4All. The idea was to start a nonprofit internet provider. It failed miserably, although it was still a very productive time. Then Geert and I drove to Venice for the meeting.

DB: *What did you think of the Venice meeting?*

DM: Well, the Venice meeting was extremely important. After being hosted by the *Next 5 Minutes* conference in Amsterdam it was the second Nettime meeting. This is where the name "Nettime" emerged. The meeting was really amazing. You know, three days of very lightly pre-configured discussions. There were teams but it was very open, people bringing ideas, books, things to the table. Metaphorically and physically to share. Lots of magazines. There was a big Italian participation, the Strano Network, Tommaso Tozzi, Federico Bucalossi. Those are people that I still have contact with here and there. The very important thing is that there was the first crossover with Paul Garrin and a moderate clash of European and American media list posters. There was a really beautiful moment when Paul Garrin was just talking too fast and he would not let the Italian guys with their extremely awful English speak. He spoke way too quickly for anybody who's not a native speaker to understand and Nils Roeller just started speaking Italian. He switched the discussion language into Italian. It was one of the most beautiful gestures I've ever seen in terms of how a small group of people communicate with each other. I've found that my notebook on the Nettime meeting was scribbled down with the ideas.

We talked a lot about hypertext. Lot of literary things and then looking at what could the Internet culture be, the politics of Internet, how then net would be gentrified at some point and what could be positive form of gentrification. I think that was my point actually. Gentrification. You can have different sort of interests merging together to create something better. What was interesting is that we really described what in fact did happen. Whole commercialization of the Internet space, how it would be an alternative zone for a little while, how to define that, and at least make an analysis so something could remain afterwards.

The meeting laid a base for Metaforum, for dealing with other events, and for creating this little space for important discussions. It remains with me, the idea that you have three days for intensive discussions without a public. That gets lost, but it's a very important space to have.

The Nettime list resulted out of it which Pit Schultz started on his own little weird computer in his room with some weird Internet connection. We used it as a pre-channel for Metaforum in '95 and I think we were the first conference to do that. Everybody had access to the texts of the others, so each next real life meeting had much more focused discussion.

DB: *Do you remember any particular talk or discussion that somehow stuck in your mind, or some particular ideas?*

DM: Well, the whole thing was. I didn't sleep for those three days. I met nearly everybody I still know in Berlin at that time.

spomienky na zážitky, ako sa človek vysporiada s ktorou technológiou. Katedru intermédií som mala na posielanie faxov, BBS na kopírovanie, Katedru sociológie na internet. Chodila som z Pešti do Budy, a zas na opačnú stranu Budy. Človek musel prejsť celé mesto, aby mohol použiť rôzne komunikačné médiá.

DB: *Na jar v roku 1995 v Benátkach prebehlo stretnutie Nettime, na ktoré Geert, Pit a Nils pozvali rôznych ľudí. Položilo základ pre mailing list, ktorý sa stal živnou pôdou pre sieťovú kultúru a jej kritiku. Bol tam aj niekto z Budapešti?*

DM: Ja. Aj keď pôvodne bolo v pláne, že nás pôjde viac. Po prvom Metafore v roku 1994, keď sa prevalil nezákonný internetový monopol MATAVu a predaj univerzitných sietí, bolo nám úplne jasné, že ďalšia konferencia musí byť o internete. Založili sme *Közhely*, verejne prístupný priestor pre diskusie podľa holandského modelu XS4All. Ideou bolo založiť neziskového poskytovateľa internetového pripojenia. Skončilo to fiaskom, ale prišli sme na nové veci. S Geertom som potom šla do Benátok.

DB: *Aký si mala zo stretnutia pocit?*

DM: Malo nesmierny význam. Po hostovaní na konferencii Next 5 Minutes v Amsterdame šlo de facto o druhé Nettime stretnutie, kde vznikol aj samotný názov. Miting bol skvelý. Tri dni sa diskutovalo v tímoch, ktoré boli otvorené, ľudia prichádzali s novými nápadmi, knihami, kopou časopisov. Talianska participácia bola značná — Strano Network, Tommaso Tozzi, Federico Bucalossi,

s ktorými som stále v kontakte. Kľúčové bolo, že nastala prvá konfrontácia s Paulom Garrinom a tiež menší konflikt medzi európskymi a americkými prispievateľmi na mailing list. Bol tam krásny moment, keď Paul Garrin hovoril veľmi rýchle a nedovolil tak Talianom s ich slabou angličtinou, aby sa dostali k reči. Nils Roeller zrazu začal rozprávať po taliansky a prepel celú diskusiu do taliančiny. Bolo to jedno z najkrajších gest, aké som videla v komunikácii v rámci malej skupiny.

Veľa sa hovorilo o hypertexte, literatúre, o tom, čo by mohla byť internetová kultúra, politike internetu, o jeho prípadnej gentrifikácii, a aká by bola jej pozitívna forma. S gentrifikáciou som, myslím, prišla ja. Môžeš mať viaceré záujmy, ktoré prichádzajú do kontaktu, aby vytvorili niečo lepšie. Zaujímavé je, že to, čo sme vtedy popisovali, sa neskôr stalo skutočnosťou. Komerencializáciu internetu, ako bude dočasne alternatívnou zónou, ako ju definovať a analyzovať aspoň na to, aby po nej niečo zostalo.

Podujatie položilo základy pre Metaforum i realizáciu iných akcií a vytvorilo priestor pre dôležité diskusie. Myšlienka, že máš tri dni intenzívnych diskusií bez prístupu verejnosti, je stále so mnou. Ten priestor sa stratí, no pritom je zásadný.

Zo stretnutia vzišiel Nettime mailing list, ktorý spustil Pit Schultz zo svojho malého podivného počítača u seba doma s padajúcim internetovým pripojením. Používali sme ho ako prípravný kanál na Metaforum v 1995 a mám pocit, že sme boli prvá konferencia, ktorá to urobila. Všetci mali prístup k textom ostatných, takže každé následné stretnutie „naživo“ šlo hneď k veci.

DB: *Zaujala ťa nejaká konkrétna diskusia, myšlienka?*

DM: Celé to bolo zaujímavé. Tri dni som prakticky nespala. Spoznala som tam veľa ľudí, ktorých stále stretávam v Berlíne. Boli tam všetci z umeleckej skupiny Botschaft. Zaujali ma diskusie o vytváraní diskurzu a o tom, ktorý diskurz by mal byť relevantný, i keď sme tento termín vtedy nepoužívali. Ako nájsť svoj „kmeň“, ako zistiť, kto robí na podobných veciach, a ako to zdieľať, ako vytvoriť priestor, ktorý môže byť zdieľaný a ako udržať úroveň. K týmto témam môžu byť námietky, no myslím si, že sú dôležité.

Tiež sme riešili, ako vytvoriť kultúru, ktorá by prežila nápor kapitalistického rozpredaja, ktorého nástrojom sa internet neskôr mal stať. Pozoruhodné je, koľko z našich predpokladov sa nakoniec ukázalo pravdivých. Hovorili sme o net arte, aj keď sa ešte vtedy tak nevolal. Kathy Huffman rozprávala o úpadku videa spôsobeného jeho nedostatočnou distribúciou. Internet mal svoje vlastné distribučné kanály. Distribúcia ako taká existovala, ale bolo potrebné identifikovať jej slabiny a možný vývoj. No musím povedať, že sa nám nepodarilo vypichnúť všetky potencionálne problémy. Nettime stále funguje, ale je úplne iný. Dnes je skôr spravodajským médiom než priestorom na zdieľanie ideí.

Úloha prípravného, pred-publikačného kanálu, bola kľúčová. Nettime mal byť miestom, kde ste mohli publikovať svoje myšlienky v rámci komunity so zdieľanými záujmami a dostať spätnú väzbu, kritiku, na základe ktorej ste ich mohli reformulovať a znovu zverejniť. Samozrejme,

All the Botschaft people were there. Discussions that were interesting for me were about how do you create the discourse and what would be a relevant discourse, but we didn't use this term. How to find our tribe, how do you find out who else is doing stuff, and how do you share that, how do you create the space within that can be shared, and then how do you keep the level high. These were things that can be criticized but I think they are important.

And then how do you build up a culture that can exist or survive the onslaught of capitalist selling that the Internet would become. What's interesting now is how much we really saw what would happen. Net art got discussed, it just wasn't called net art yet. Kathy Huffman told about how video had been killed by its lack of distribution means. So Internet would have its own distribution, like net art or even texts, you already had the distribution covered, but you have to look for the weak points and what can come. But I would say we kind of failed in having identified all the potential problems. Nettime still exists, but it became a totally different thing. It's a good newspaper. But it's not a space for sharing ideas and so on.

Pre-publishing channel was very important. To have Nettime as a place where you can put the ideas out within a community of shared interests and intellectuals, get feedback, have them criticized, reformulate them, put them out again. Yeah, it cost lots of flame wars and arguments at that time but it also opened up an incredibly interesting space of ideas and I think that's what people really appreciated that were participating in that, like

Brian Holmes, Steve Kurtz. That part of Nettime was the most beautiful thing that came out of the Venice meeting. You didn't just send the finished text there, but you were really participating in a broader discussion, in a discourse zone. That was a main point of being different from The Well. I still think that you can say that's an American culture. There is not proper discussion on a level that could be called discourse. Nettime had a few years of a discourse zone and it was extremely rich in its ideas in a way that ideas got better through sharing of them.

DB: *Do you remember what books were read at that time, what kind of literature was discussed on Nettime, in Budapest?*

DM: That's a good question. There were mostly articles. We were reading *Wired*, *Mediamatic*, and following up. László Tölgyes in Budapest was editing the *Gondolat-Jel* journal with Ágnes Ivacs and she's also one of the editors of *Bulldozer*. Then they did the special issue on new media. I remember we were translating Donna Haraway, and that was really terrible. So Donna Haraway was read. It's funny because I thought it was completely boring and I didn't understand a thing. Now as I read it I find her very funny and interesting. I would say that *Mille Plateaux* was the most important book that was discussed. Flusser was definitely important. There had been the Flusser conferences in Prague and in Budapest. Bifo was important, although he was not part of the network. McLuhan was discussed, but not in a big way, more criticized. Like we were not McLuhanians. That was an

important thing that we were not a bunch of mad McLuhanians.

DB: *Was Richard Barbrook already writing at that time?*

DM: He had written the *Californian Ideology*, a very important text. In '96 we had Richard Barbrook and Manuel DeLanda. And I would say that was me putting them together and sending them each other's texts, so they were really very well prepared for their fight. And they had really brilliant exchange.

DB: *Why did you do it?*

DM: Because in the end I like Richard's conclusions in *Californian Ideology*. In general I like the conclusions that he comes up with although he's a very dry academic. Manuel DeLanda is a self-trained academic and I really love his way of writing and I love the way he thinks, but I don't like his conclusions. To put these two people together just made sense. They had a really brilliant exchange and their talks are well documented.

DB: *What was the atmosphere of the discussions at Metaforum '95 if you compare it to Venice a couple of months before?*

DM: We went to all the different conferences, some of us were for example at Ars Electronica in '95 when they did their *Welcome to the Wired World* symposium. We could see what was happening, not happening, not getting discussed and follow up on it, take that opposite theme. In '95 we had JP Barlow and Hakim Bey discussed things, Matt Fuller, Marleen Stikker,

stojí to veľa flejmov a ostrejších výmen, no zároveň to otvára neuveriteľne zaujímavý priestor pre myšlienky. Myslím, že ľudia ako Brian Holmes, Steve Kurtz a ďalší oceňovali hlavne tento aspekt. Tento aspekt Nettime bol tým najlepším, čo vzišlo z be-nátskeho stretnutia. Nešlo o to poslať hotový text, ale skutočne participovať v širšej diskusii, v diskurznej zóne. To nás odlišovalo od projektu *The Well*. Myslím, že pri ňom sa dá stále povedať, že ide o americkú kultúru. Neexistuje tam diskusia, ktorá by prebiehala na úrovni diskurzu. V rámci Nettime niekoľko rokov fungovala diskurz-ná zóna, ktorá bola nesmierne bohatá na idey v zmysle toho, že myšlienky sa vylepšovali ich zdieľaním.

DB: Aké knihy sa vtedy čítali, o akej literatúre sa hovorilo na Nettime, v Budapešti?

DM: Dobrá otázka. Väčšinou šlo o články. Čítali sme *Wired*, *Mediamatic*, atď. László Tölgýes v Budapešti editoval žurnál *Gondolat-Jel* spolu s Ágnes Ivacs, ktorá bola jednou z editoriek *Buldozeru*. Vydali špeciálne číslo o nových médiách. Prekladali sme Donnu Haraway, bolo to strašné. Takže sa čítala Donna Haraway. Vtipné bolo, že som vtedy jej texty pokladala za veľmi nudné, nerozumela som ani slovu. Keď ich čítam teraz, prídu mi veľmi vtipné a zaujímavé. Najväčší ohlas mala *Mille Plateaux* [Tisíc plošín]. Tiež Flusser. V Prahe a Budapešti sa o ňom konali konferencie. Bifo bol tiež dôležitý, aj keď nebol súčasťou siete. Diskutovalo sa o McLuhanovi, ale skôr kriticky. Neboli sme McLuhanisti. To bolo dôležité, že nie sme partia trafených McLuhanistov.

DB: Publikoval už v tej dobe Richard Barbrook?

MM: Napísal kľúčový text *Californian Ideology*. V roku 1996 sme hostili Richarda Barbrooka a Manuela DeLandu. Dala som ich dokopy ja, posielala som im články toho druhého, boli na svoj súboj dobre pripravení. A bola to nezabudnuteľná výmena.

DB: Prečo si to robila?

DM: Páči sa mi Richardov záver v *Californian Ideology*. Mám rada závery, ku ktorým prichádza, aj keď je suchý akademik. Manuel DeLanda je zas akademický samouk. Milujem jeho štýl písania a myslenia, ale nepáčia sa mi jeho závery. Bolo logické spojiť tieto dve osobnosti. Ich konfrontácia bola úžasná a ich vystúpenia sú dobre zdokumentované.

DB: Aká atmosféra panovala počas debát na Matafore v roku 1995 v porovnaní s Benátkami?

DM: Chodili sme na rôzne konferencie, napríklad na Ars Electronicu v roku 1995, keď organizovali sympóziu *Welcome to the Wired World*. Videli sme, čo sa deje, čo nie, čo sa nediskutuje a obchádza a inšpirovali sa tým, zaujali opačný postoj. V 95-tom sme pozvali JP Barlowa a Hakima Beya, Matta Fullera, Marleen Stikker a viacero osobností z Holandska. Rok 1995 bol neuveriteľne intenzívny. Tiež sme hostovali ďalšie stretnutie Nettime. Ľudia z EastEdge sa pohádali s ľuďmi z Digital Szigetu z Budapešti, čo zas súviselo s Közhely. Existovalo veľa takýchto malých internetových skupiniek. Nevie, či ich nazývať aktivistami, ale boli to aktívne skupiny, ktoré využívali internet a niečo vytvárali. Medzi Szigetom a jednou budapeštianskou skupinou vypukla takmer virtuálna vojna

a na Matafore sme ich potom spriatelili, to bolo fajn.

Témou Matafore v roku 1995 bol „Prístup všade“ – od „Prístupu pre všetkých“ [*Access for all, XS4All*] k „Prístupu všade“ [*Access to all*], čo súviselo s gentrifika-ciou internetu. Na našej akcii prebehla prvá verejná ukážka internetu v Maďarsku. Mali sme niekoľko terminálov, ktoré fungovali. Boli pomalé, ale fungovali. Mnohí si mysli-a, že to bolo na akcii *Butterfly Effect* začiatkom roku 1996, ale nebolo to tak. Mali sme prvý verejne prístupný internet, ktorý si ľudia mohli sami vyskúšať.

Riešili sme aj autorské právo. Prišli ľudia z Fido-Netu, ktorí čelili policajným raziam. Fido bola alternatívna sieť, ešte pred WWW. V Taliansku bola práve pri moci prvá Berlusconiho vláda, ktorá skonfiškovala počítače so systémom BBS, pretože poskytovali priestor informáciám, ktoré považovala za nezákonné. Autocenzúra bola veľmi bežná, pretože získať zhabaný počítač späť bolo veľmi ťažké. Ľudia radšej sami vymazávali informácie. Existoval aj shareware. Slapic [Krisztián Czakó] upozornil na veľmi dôležitú vec, že polícia nevedela, ako má kontrolovať internet. Bol to priestor, v ktorom kapitalistická forma vlastníctva nefungovala tak, ako predtým. Polícia niečomu takému, ako je shareware nerozumela, takže im to všetko pripadalo nelegálne. Vyskytli sa prvé prípady zhabania BBS serverov v Maďarsku. Rozoberali sme, s akými novými formami kontroly máme do činenia. Šlo o veľmi skoré diskusie o autorskom práve a vlastníctve, ekonómii a open source. Niektoré termíny vtedy ešte neexistovali, ale o týchto témach sa diskutovalo.



lots of Dutch. '95 was extremely intense, there was also another Nettime meeting there. The guys from EastEdge had a fight with the guys from Digital Sziget in Budapest, which was also somehow connected with Közhely. There were all these different little groups of the Internet. I don't know if to call them activists, they were people that were active and using Internet and setting things up. There was almost a cyber war between the Sziget guys and one Budapest cell and we made them make friends at Metaforum, that was nice.

The topic of Metaforum '95 was "Access to all", from "Access for all" [XS4All] to "Access to all". What it meant had a lot to do with gentrification in the Internet. Our event was the first place which had a public demonstration of Internet in Hungary. We had little terminals that did work, they were very slow, but they worked. A lot of people think it was the *Butterfly Effect* event, which was organized in early '96, but we were the first with public Internet. People came in, get on the computers and looked at the Internet.

We talked about copyright, there were the Fido-Net people who had police raids. Fido was the alternative network before the World Wide Web. Also, Italy had the first round of Berlusconi government which confiscated computers running BBSs because they were hosting the information that they considered illegal. There was a lot of self-censorship going on, because it was such a pain in the ass to get your computer back. People would rather take down the information posted on the Fido network themselves. There was also shareware. Slapic [Krisztián Czakó] brought up very important point that the police didn't understand how to control Internet. The place where the capitalist forms of ownership didn't function like before. Police didn't understand something like shareware, so all of that seemed illegal to them and there were already the first cases of police seizures of BBS hosting computers in Hungary. We looked at how new forms of control were coming into place. These were very early discussions of copyright and ownership, of economy and open source. Some terms didn't exist yet and were not in use but these discussions were there.

It already came up in '94. We had a very funny fight between two CD-ROM camps. Józso Attila was very concerned about the copyright and what kind of problems they would have if they would want to sell their CDs in other countries. ABCD guys said the copyright is not important, so in Hungary we're gonna copy everything. And my joke in '95 was that there's one copy of Windows '95 registered to Hungary. In '95 there was

Zaoberali sme sa tým už v roku 1994 pri úsmevnom konflikte dvoch CD-ROM táborov. Józso Attila bol znepokojený autorským právom a problémami, ktoré by mohli mať, keby chceli svoje CD predávať v zahraničí. ABCD tvrdilo, že copyright nie je dôležitý a že v Maďarsku sa bude kopírovať všetko. Zvykla som žartovať, že v Maďarsku je registrovaná jediná kópia Windows 95. V rovnakom čase mal Microsoft kampaň o tom, že ľudia majú morálnu povinnosť hlásiť susedov, ak používajú pirátske kópie Windows 95. Alex Shulgin napríklad v roku 1995 vystavoval svoj pirátsky softvérový trh ako umelecký projekt, takže už vtedy sme sa venovali témam ako pirátstvo a autorské právo.

Nerozlišovali sme medzi obecnstvom a prednášajúcimi. Tí viacmenej iba nastavovali určité témy. Rok 1995 bol skvelý, boli sme nabití energiou, pocitom spolupatričnosti. Do Budapešti vtedy prúdili ľudia z celého sveta, Olia Lialina, Alexei Shulgin, Rachel Baker. Definovala sa netartová scéna.

DB: *Zúčastnili sa aj študenti z Katedry intermédií Miklósa Peternáka?*

DM: Žiadna maďarská netartová scéna nakoniec nevznikla. Existovala ale veľmi silná sieťová kultúra, ktorá vznikla oveľa skôr a bola silnejšia než v niektorých iných krajinách, stále je silná. Boli sme v kontakte s Akadémiou výtvarných umení, hosťovali konferenciu. Organizovali sme ju z kancelárie Katedry intermédií a iste, študenti tam boli. Z tých, čo sa pohybovali v okruhu Katedry intermédií v tom čase vyrástla veľmi úspešná generácia maďarských

umelcov. Hajnal Németh, Tamás Komoróczy, ktorý už vtedy bol umelcom, Little Warsaw to sledovali a neskôr robili vlastné projekty. Boli prítomní, a nepovedali ani slovo. Povedala by som, že je to typické... Maďarskí študenti vo všeobecnosti veľmi nekladú otázky.

DB: *To sa týka celého Východu...*

DM: Všimla som si to. Nerada zovšeobecňujem, ale rada by som videla, ako sa maďarský študent na niečo pýta. Ale študenti tam vtedy boli a občas nám pomáhali. Vždy sme sa snažili zapojiť mladých ľudí do našich aktivít.

DB: *Boli tam aj ľudia z lotyšského E-Labu (neskôr RIXCu)?*

DM: Áno, v roku 1995 boli v Budapešti.

DB: *O niečo neskôr začali pracovať na streamovacím projekte.*

DM: V 95-tom prišla Rasa autobusom z Rigy. Rok nato som šla vlakom do Rigy ja. Cesta trvala tri dni na vlastnoručne vyrobenom lístku...

DB: *Interrail...*

DM: V Maďarsku bolo veľa zaujímavých mediálnych projektov, ale neboli to výslovene internetové projekty. Zahŕňali internet, ale nebolo to internetové umenie, resp. net art. Nieкто vyrobil vlakové lístky a tak som mohla cestovať po celej Európe za 100 nemeckých mariek. Nikto nemal peniaze. Ale tieto veci šlo robiť aj bez peňazí. Napríklad, keď si šiel do Linzu, jeden človek mal rezervovanú hotelovú izbu, ale

spalo ich tam osem. To boli pekné ľudské gestá. Ľudia zdieľali všetko, čo mali, informácie aj zdroje.

DB: *Ako si vnímala zvukovú scénu, ktorej súčasťou bol aj E-Lab a ktorá sa sústreďovala okolo siete Xchange? Čiastočne sa prelínala s Nettime, no šla vlastnou cestou...*

DM: Pokračovali sme v mediálnom výskume, organizovali workshopy a mali celoročný program. Časť aktivít bola zameraná na zvuk. ParaRadio, ktoré stále existuje, vzniklo z Metafora a fungovalo prostredníctvom C3. Prišiel sem aj Erik Davis, ktorý bol v Rotterdame, Linzi, Budapešti a potom Rige. V Budapešti mal prednášku, ktorá bola streamovaná do Rigy, a v Rige zas prednášal o „akustickom priestore“. Táto prednáška výrazne ovplyvnila RIXC. Hovoril o zdieľaní a priestore, ktorý vzniká prostredníctvom zvuku cez siete. Veľmi mluhanovské, ale Erik je taký skvelý hipisák, že to všetko dáva zmysel. Je skutočne bystrý a má veľmi osobitý štýl myslenia.

Poznámka: Plnú verziu rozhovoru nájdete na stránkach <http://www.monoskop.org>.

a Microsoft campaign to have a moral duty to inform on your neighbors if they were illegally using pirate copies of Windows '95. Alex Shulgin had presented his pirate software market as an art project in '95 so we were already looking at issues of piracy and copyright.

We didn't make a distinction between the speakers and the audience. Speakers were more like in a way to put some themes out. '95 was amazing. There was super intense energy. Very strong feeling of coming together. Lots of people came to Budapest, from all over. Olia Lialina, Alex Shulgin, Rachel Baker. Net art scene got defined.

DB: *Were there any students from Miklós Peternák's Intermedia Department present?*

DM: In the end no real Hungarian net art ever came out. What you did have was a very strong Hungarian net culture, which is very early and much stronger than in lots of other places and is still very strong. We were having the contacts in the Academy of Fine Arts, the conference took place there. We organized it out of the office of Intermedia Department and students were certainly all there. People that were in and around the Intermedia Department at that time became a very successful generation of Hungarian artists. Hajnal Németh, Tamás Komoróczy was already artist, Little Warsaw, they were certainly following these things and then making their own work. They were there, they didn't say a thing. I would say it's typical... I mean Hungarian students are not really asking lots of questions.

DB: *It's also something about the East..*

DM: I mean, sorry. I did notice this. I don't like making generalizations but I have yet to see a Hungarian student to ask a question. So they were actually there. Sometimes really helping out with the conference and stuff. We were always getting young people to help out doing things.

DB: *Where there people from E-Lab (early RIXC) attending?*

DM: Yeah, they were in Budapest. In '95.

DB: *They were about to start the streaming project later on.*

DM: In '95 Rasa came by bus from Riga. In '96 I went to Riga. By train. It was a three day train trip with a self made train ticket so...

DB: *Interrail...*

DM: There were really nice media projects in Hungary but there weren't Internet-specific things. Really interesting happenings with Internet but not Internet art and net art. I mean, we were able to travel because someone made their own artificial train tickets. So I could travel all over the Europe for 100 Deutsche Marks. DIY tickets. Nobody had any money. But you could still do these things without much money. You went to Linz and one person had a hotel room and 8 people slept there. Those were the nice human gestures at that time. People shared everything they had, information and the resources, very nicely shared.

DB: *How did you perceive the moreless sound scene RIXC has been part of and which gathered around Xchange network? It was slightly overlapping with Nettime but still went its own direction.*

DM: We continued doing media research, different workshops and program throughout all year. Some of them were for the sound. ParaRadio came out of *Metaforum* and ran through the C3. And it still exists. And that was a bunch of the Szeged guys moving to Budapest. Erik Davis came and he was in Rotterdam, Linz, Budapest and then Riga. And he gave a talk in Budapest which was streamed to Riga, and then in Riga he gave the "acoustic space" talk which had been transcribed and which became very influential for RIXC. He mapped out the way of how things get shared, what kind of space gets created through sound, through the networks. Very McLuhan but he's such a brilliant hippie that it makes sense. I mean he's really smart, he has a very special way of thinking things through.

Note: The full version of the interview can be found on the Monoskop website: <http://www.monoskop.org> .