Filip Visjnic

Output 1 Creative Applications Network (CreativeApplications.Net, CAN) Website and related platforms

Abstract

CreativeApplications.Net (CAN) is a web-based project that includes a blog, digital applications, live events and a print magazine. It was launched by Visnjic in October 2008, with the primary aim of creating a current, open source, online sharing and collective 'scenius' aimed at developing the intersection of art, technology and design. The project is driven by a number of research questions: What are the implications for open source, online sharing and collective 'scenius' on the future of art, technology and the culture of design? How are contemporary digital technologies and computation tools part of design production and development? How may digital media be used to develop projects, people, events and organisations? How may print media and events be used to compliment on-line collaboration and exchange? CAN's online presence, amounting to over 20,000 users, allows it to drive the conversation in the art/design/digital technology arena. It is ranked 1169 of most influential sites by Technorati and used very often as a source by other respected technology blogs such as Wired US, Wired UK, The Creators Project, Gizmodo, Engadget and many others. The Resonate Festival organized by Visnjic each year since 2012 to complement CAN's online presence attracted 1,000 participants in 2012 and 1,600 in 2013, and its print journal HOLO will go into circulation in October 2013. Since 2010, Visnjic has been regularly interviewed or invited to speak about the project at academic institutions and technology festivals and events.

Key Words

Blog, art, technology, design, computation, events

Context

To paraphrase Marshall McLuhan, art functions as a 'distant early warning system' that reveals cultural transformations that are already underway to the broader population. Whereas this observation was originally made in relation to abstract expressionism, it is as relevant in an era characterised by open-ended, critical exploration of technology. CreativeApplications.Net (CAN) is an early warning system for sprawling, diverse and adventurous technologies. It undermines disciplines and formulates new career typologies: artist, designer, hacker, engineer, impresario, activist, visual designer, interface designer, architect. It serves as a global interface for open dialogue. Its online presence, amounting to over 20,000 users, allows it to drive the conversation, question the relationship of design to digital technology and set the path for how to think about technology and the impact it has on design.

General Description

CreativeApplications.Net is a web-based project launched by Filip Visnjic in October 2008. Today it is one of the most authoritative, widely read, online digital blogs. The site tirelessly reports innovation across the field and catalogues projects, tools and platforms relevant to the intersection of art, media, design and technology. It is known for uncovering and contextualising noteworthy work featured on the festival and gallery circuit, executed within the commercial realm or developed as academic research. Contributions from key artists and theorists such as Casey Reas, Joshua Noble, Jer Thorp, Paul Prudence, Greg J. Smith, Marius Watz, Matt Pearson and CAN's numerous festival involvements and duration engagements are a testament to its vital role within the digital arts world today.

Research Questions

The following research questions drive the CreativeApplications.Net project:

1) What are the implications for open source, online sharing and collective 'scenius' on the future of art, technology and the culture of design?

2) How are contemporary digital technologies and computation tools part of design production and development?

3) How may digital media be used to develop projects, people, events and organisations?

4) How may print media and events be used to compliment on-line collaboration and exchange?

Aims and Objectives

1) To create a current, open source, online sharing and collective 'scenius' aimed at developing the intersection of art, technology and design.

Scenius is a term coined by Brian Eno to convey the extreme creativity that groups, places or scenes can generate. His actual definition is 'Scenius stands for the intelligence and the intuition of a whole cultural scene. It is the communal form of the concept of genius.' (http://www.kk.org/thetechnium/archives/2008/06/scenius_or_comm.php). CAN's central objective is to facilitate a productive 'scenius' that nurtures creative intersections, exchanges and networks between practitioners in art, media, design and technology. To do this, it searches for and publicly documents a multitude of hitherto unpublished projects, computational tools, people and organisations, curates events and publishes a print magazine that provide open platforms for dialogue, feedback and response in diverse media.

2) To make the tools and technologies enabling the realisation of digital design production apparent and publicly accessible.

Open source culture is playing a major role in shaping contemporary digital design production, but computational tools and technologies enabling the realisation of ideas often remain in the dark. With increased advances in software and its influence on how ideas in design develop, it is imperative that tools are apparent and accessible and able to drive the work itself. CAN provides a platform and teaching and learning resource for this. Some of its content is rich in detail about the making process, revealing both technical and design decisions while other content is lighter and more news related. On the web site, an education section includes tutorials, event listings and 'tips and tricks.' This facilitates rapid exchange of products, tools, techniques and ideas.

3) To curate events, including talks, workshops, fairs, festivals and more that facilitate face-to-contact between researchers, designers and technologists and promote collaborative learning in a stimulating environment.

In addition to its online streaming, CAN curates events between artists, designers, architects, critics, writers and organisations. These bring together those working at the intersection of art, media, design and technology in ways that foster collaborative learning and teaching, providing direct benefits to the art/design/technology community. The most significant and high impact of these is the Resonate Festival that has taken place in Belgrade since 2012. Resonate allows visitors a chance to relate practical applications of technology to a sound theoretical base and understand the full scope of technological processes and creative strategies that shape the potentials of multimedial artistic expression. Targeting the 18 to 35 year old age group, the core aim of the programme is that young people benefit from exposure to the latest wave of accomplishments and trends noticeable on the multimedia/technology/light design scene, as well as from active participation in educational activities. By bringing together artists, creative professionals, light designers and online content creators, innovators and trendsetters, the festival creates a platform for networking and mutual support that could initiate long-standing international cooperation. In addition, its location in Belgrade is intended to have far-reaching consequences for the internal development of the media/technology industry of Serbia and for its image around the world. Apart from sending a message that it is possible to use technology to improve society and build a personal career, the event also provides hands-on tools with assistance from people who have already mastered (or sometimes even pioneered) the technologies.

4) To complement the online CAN platform with print media.

In order to deepen its analysis and extend its scope, CAN will launch HOLO, a new print journal in October 2013. Each edition will be themed and its magazine section will catalogue, provoke and problematise work, ideas and opinion around the thematic topic. This will provide editorial counterpoint to HOLO's extensive artist features and provide an opportunity for article-by-article experimentation with visual storytelling. The first edition, New Perspectives, will survey emerging representational and perceptual paradigms. Visnjic is the editorial director of HOLO.

5) To develop and publish applications

CAN is actively involved in building relationships with artists and designers for the purpose of computational development. In addition to its own online store, this takes advantage of online platforms such as Apple's AppStore, which allows small organisations like CAN to reach large audiences. To date around half a dozen applications, some created by others, some created collaboratively, but all exclusive to CAN have been published. These include: GD3D, SKTCH, PRTCL, Accidental News Explorer and others.

Research Methods

Ever since the launch of CAN in 2008, Visnjic has been at the forefront of the platform's research activities. This is conducted in four ways: through online research, through the development of computational tools and platforms, through collaboration with other artists designers and writers, through interviews and discussions and through the curation of an interactive festival for knowledge production and exchange.

Online research includes sourcing material, writing commentaries and reviews, interviewing artists and commissioning writers. This involves following and reading more than 100 internet sites daily, selecting and commenting on them and communicating with editors, writers, artists and designers. HOLO will involve more extensive research into thematic topics, editorial writing and visual story telling and include exclusively commissioned articles, photography, essays and opinions by some of the leading artists, writers and educators in the field of art and technology.

Central to CAN's impact is on-going research into and development of the interactive digital experience, through the design or adaption of computational tools and code writing.

Unique to CAN is the curation of the Resonate Festival in Belgrade, which has taken place since 2012. This translates the virtual space of the CAN platform into a live event. Held over 3 days it brings together artists, designers and educators to debate the position of technology in culture and the arts through lectures, workshops, panel discussions, performances, screenings and concerts. Devised and curated by Visnjic, Resonate's programme brings creatives and intellectuals from different countries together to take advantage of the global movement towards digitisation and electronic networking. Most significant in terms of CAN's aims and objectives are its workshops. Technology-driven workshops are seen as a powerful agent of social change and one of the pillars of the programme. They represent the deepest level of interaction between participants and international guests, realised within a well-structured context with predefined agendas. Participants are provided a chance to work individually with workshop leaders and exchange ideas with the entire group, gaining valuable insight into the field of their preference and finding answers to challenges they encounter in practical work. Even if one-day workshops are too short to serve as skill-building instruments on their own, it is expected that participants will use the experience to accelerate the learning process by continuing to explore new media and starting their own projects based on hints first received at the event. In addition to transferring technical skills to participants, workshop leaders serve as role-models for young creative professionals eager to find an outlet for expression. One of the main obstacles to development of the creative industry in Serbia is lack of available educational capacities; the event provides a viable alternative for anyone with sufficient interest to practice and learn. Having the skills to utilise web-based tools or to visualise real-life events is a prerequisite for participants to consider what social issues are relevant to them and how can they best express their own opinions and attitudes through available technological means. In 2012, the festival was attended by 1,000 visitors and in 2013 by 1,600, with participants coming from Europe, Asia and the USA. Following the first festival, a new online platform (http:// resonate.io) was created to provide ongoing education, information and knowledge exchange.

While not all of these activities count as traditional research in REF terms, together they constitute a mode of creative design practice, producing one of the most unique and influential forums for art, media, design and technology on the web today.

Dissemination / Impact

Dissemination of the project is widespread. Visnjic is regularly interviewed and invited to speak about the project at festivals and symposia. These include:

2013
Creative Applications Network Panel Discussion, Node Forum (February 2013)
<http://node13.vvvv.org/program/creative-applications-panel-discussion/>
Participation at EYEO Festival in Minneapolis (June 10-13, 2013)
Presentation at Bartlett Nexus (July 5, 2013)

2012
The Resonate Festival, ArtZona, Serbian Television feature (March 2012)
<http://vimeo.com/41210146>
Next Berlin (May 2012)
<http://nextberlin.eu/person/11227/>
The British Council's International Architecture and Design Showcase (July 2012)
<http://designdiplomacy.blogspot.co.uk/>
Chayka, Kyle. 2012. 'A New Media Festival Thrives in Belgrade.' Hyperallergic, Nov 8
<http://hyperallergic.com/59912/filip-visnjic-resonate-new-media-festival-belgrade-serbia/>

2011
Dublin Art and Technology Association, Dublin (February2011)
<http://www.data.ie/events/data-event-46-0/>
Open GDNM 2011, University of the creative Arts, London (June 2011)
Let's Feed the Future Workshop Collaborative, OFFF Festival, Barcelona (June 2011)
<http://www.creativeapplications.net/offf2011/>
Pop-Up-City interview (July 2011)
<http://popupcity.net/featured/blogger-interview-4-filip-visnjic-creative-applications/>
Post-digital Culture Symposium, London Alpha-ville Festival (September 2011)
<http://www.alpha-ville.co.uk/reporting-back-from-the-first-international-post-digital-symposium/>
Amsterdam Dance Event, Amsterdam (October 2011)
onedotzero adventures in moving image, London (Nov 2011)
KIKK Festival, Namur, Belgium (Nov 2011)

2010
Flashbelt 2010, Minneapolis, MN USA (May 2010)
eTapes Magazine interview (June 2010)
<http://etapes.com/lequipe-detapes-rencontre-filip-visnjic>
Amsterdam Dance Event, Amsterdam (October 2010)
onedotzero adventures in moving image, London (Nov 2010)

The CAN website statistics as of September 2013 are: Monthly Unique Visitors: 150,000; Monthly Page View: 400,000; RSS Subscribers: 30,000; Facebook fans: 40,000; Twitter followers: 30,000

The following are a selection of comments about CAN and the Resonate Festival :

'London is at the centre of today's emerging tech-art scene and its best guide is the architect and creative coder Filip Visjnic. His blog, Creative Applications.net , has become the platform of record for people who are equally comfortable talking about A1 or aesthetics … The future of art and design arrives just a bit earlier on Visjnic's feeds.' Wired Staff, 2013.

'Great festivals don't have 'themes' - the best assemble interested folk and hopefully allow them to exchange ideas. (Big tick to Resonate on that front.) But if there was a motif that ran through the festival it was this: that if this is an age when computation affects pretty much everything - not least design, then there seems to be a strong theme emerging around how 'a human element' can join in that affectation.' Richards, J. 2012. Guardian UK. 23 MArch
<http://resonate.io/main/2012/03/28/computer-meet-your-maker-guardian-uk/>

'Low-cost event to go to that offers high-quality insights. Julia Eichler With its second edition, the Serbian festival – a meeting point for technology and art – establishes itself as a sounding board for a mature and growing scene.' Roberts, A. 2013. Domus. 6 April
<http://www.domusweb.it/en/design/2013/04/4/resonate_festival.html >

A real highlight for us was the other attendees, all from a range of countries, backgrounds and disciplines, all doing incredibly interesting work and sharing a passion for types of work on display at the festival. Reactify Music
<http://reactifymusic.com/news/events/resonate-2013/>

Evidence

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Press

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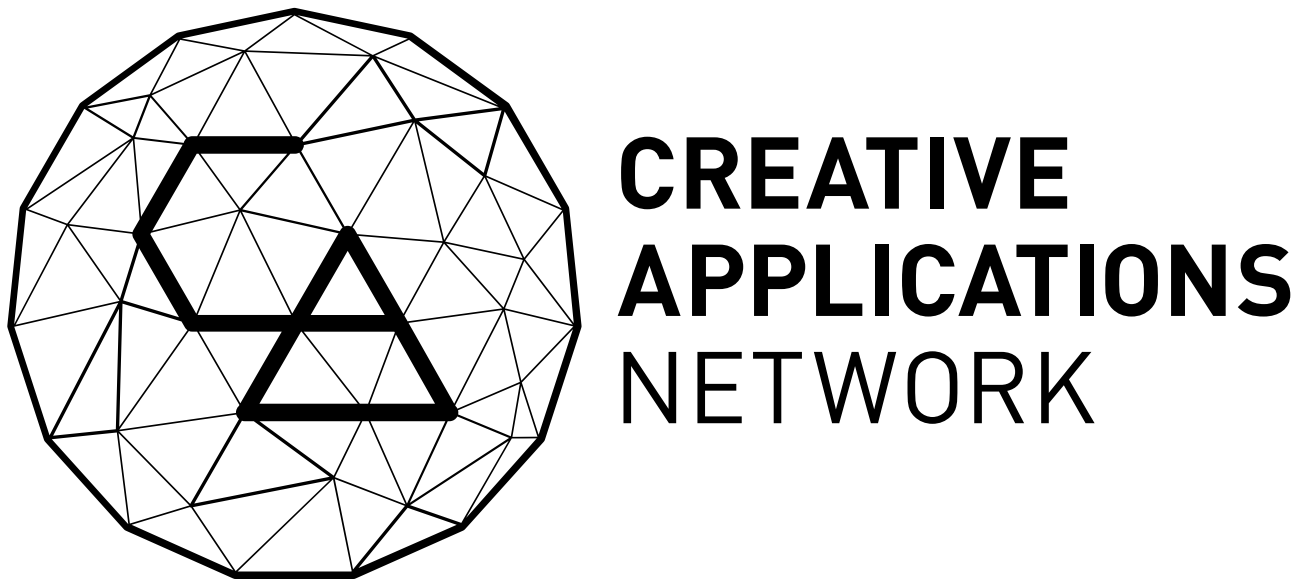
<http://www.domusweb.it/en/design/2013/04/4/resonate_festival.html>

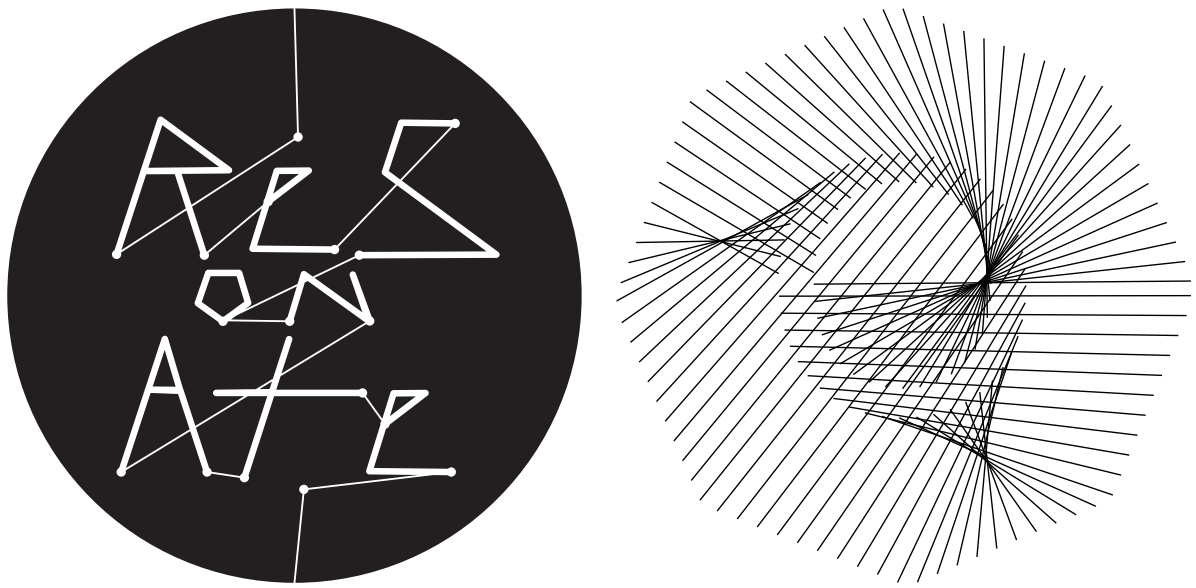
P.02 Richards, J. 2012. ‘Computer Meet Your Maker.’ Guardian, 23 March
<http://resonate.io/main/2012/03/28/computer-meet-your-maker-guardian-uk/>

P.03 Chayka, K. 2012. ‘A New Media Festival Thrives in Belgrade.’ Hyperallergic, Nov 8
<http://hyperallergic.com/59912/filip-visnjic-resonate-new-media-festival-belgrade-serbia/>

P.04 Wired Staff. 2013. 101 ‘Signals. These are the best reporters, writers, and thinkers on the internet – the people who understand what’s happening.’ Wired.

P.06 Technorati Ranking 2013





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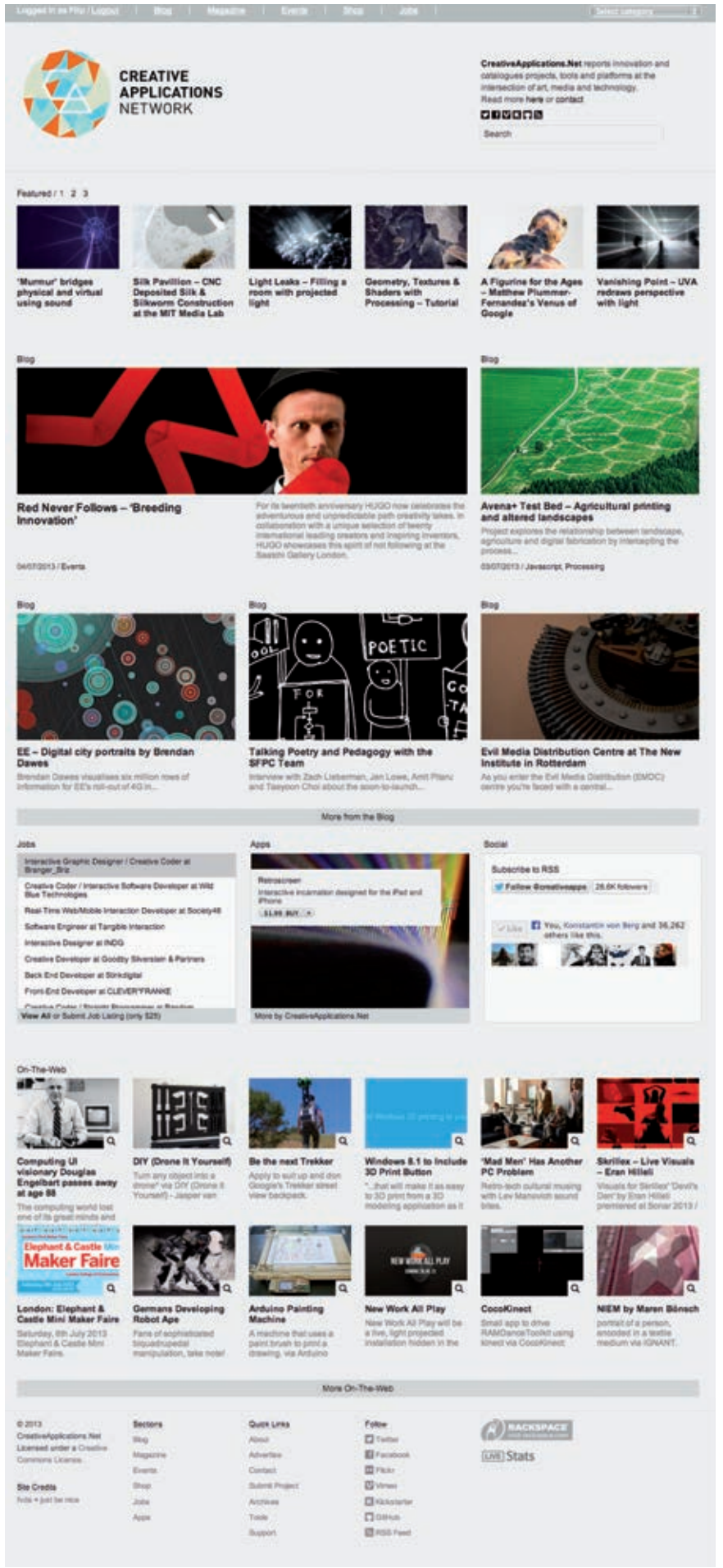


Fig.04 Creative Applications Network, Blog Page

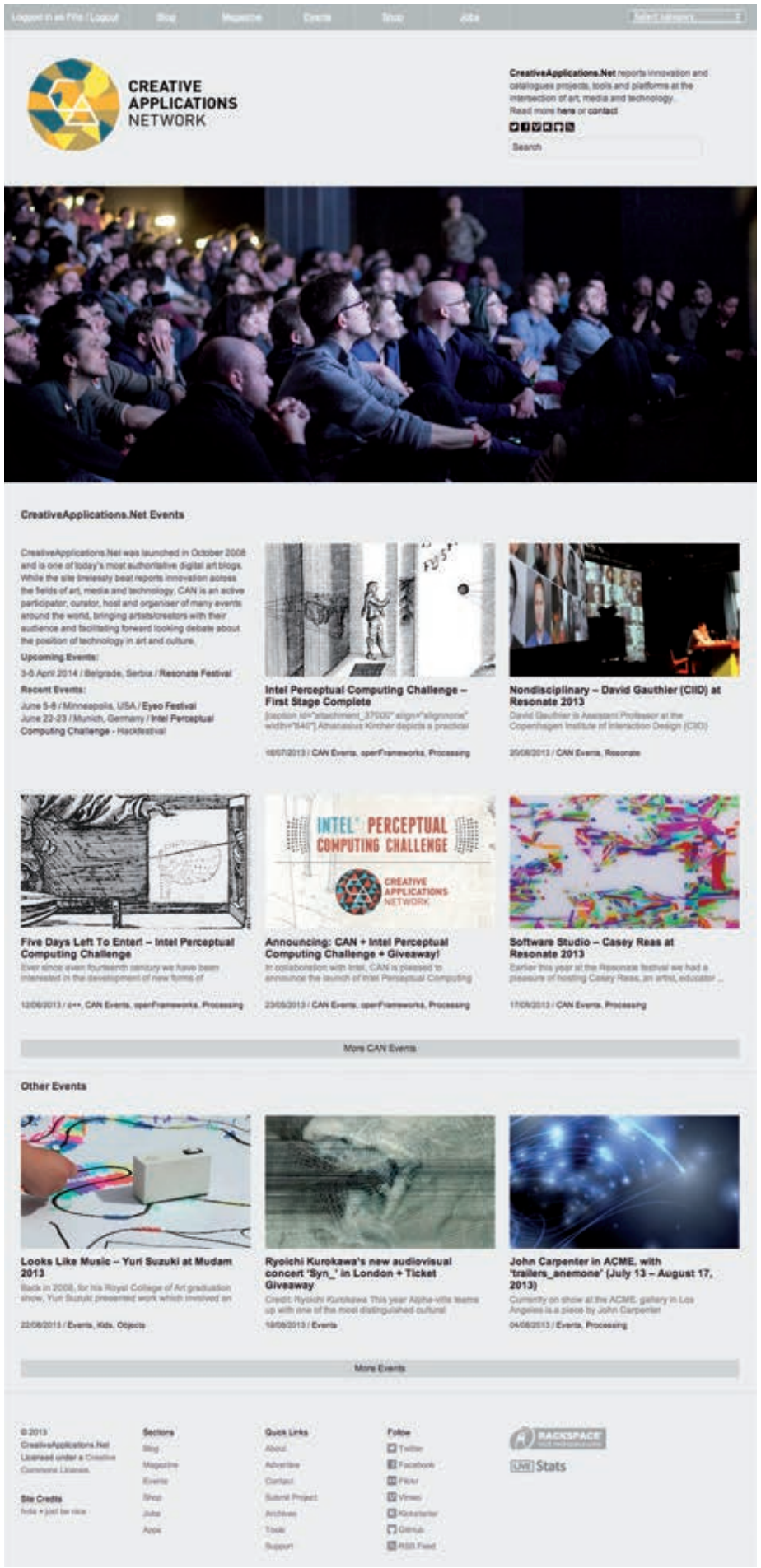


Fig.05 Creative Applications Network, Events Page

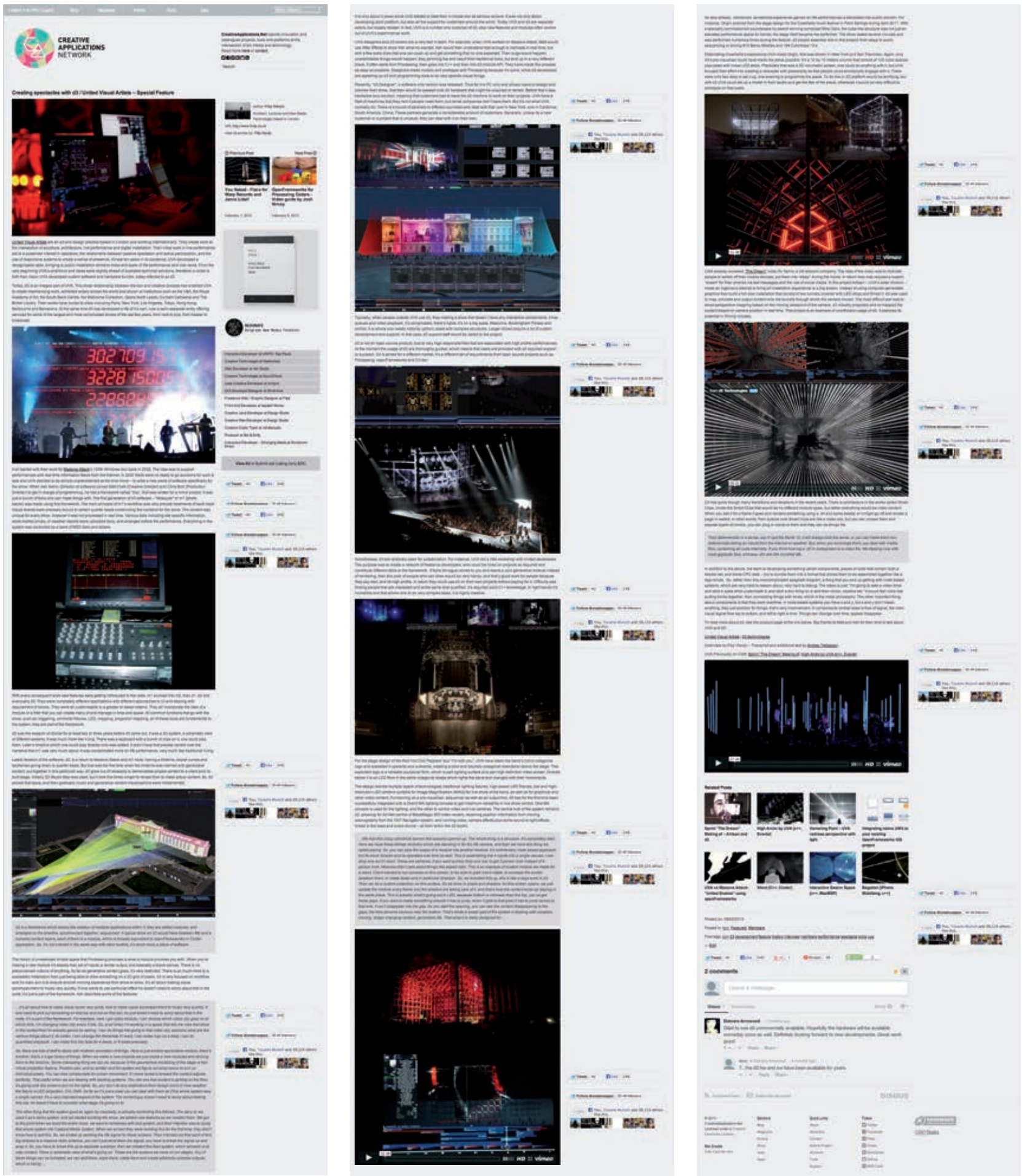


Fig.06 Creative Applications Network, Special Feature: Creating spectacles with 3d/United Visual Artists

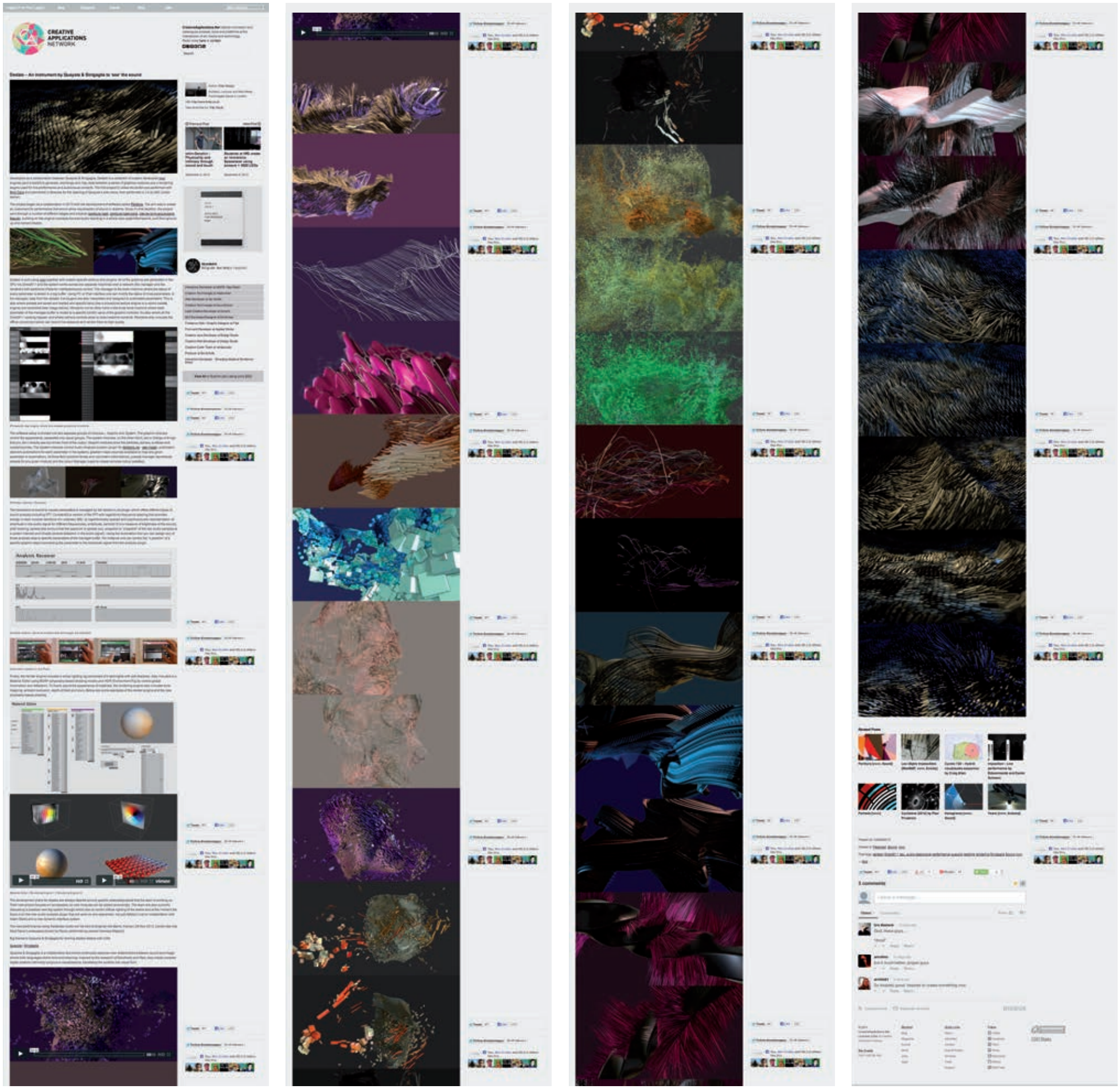
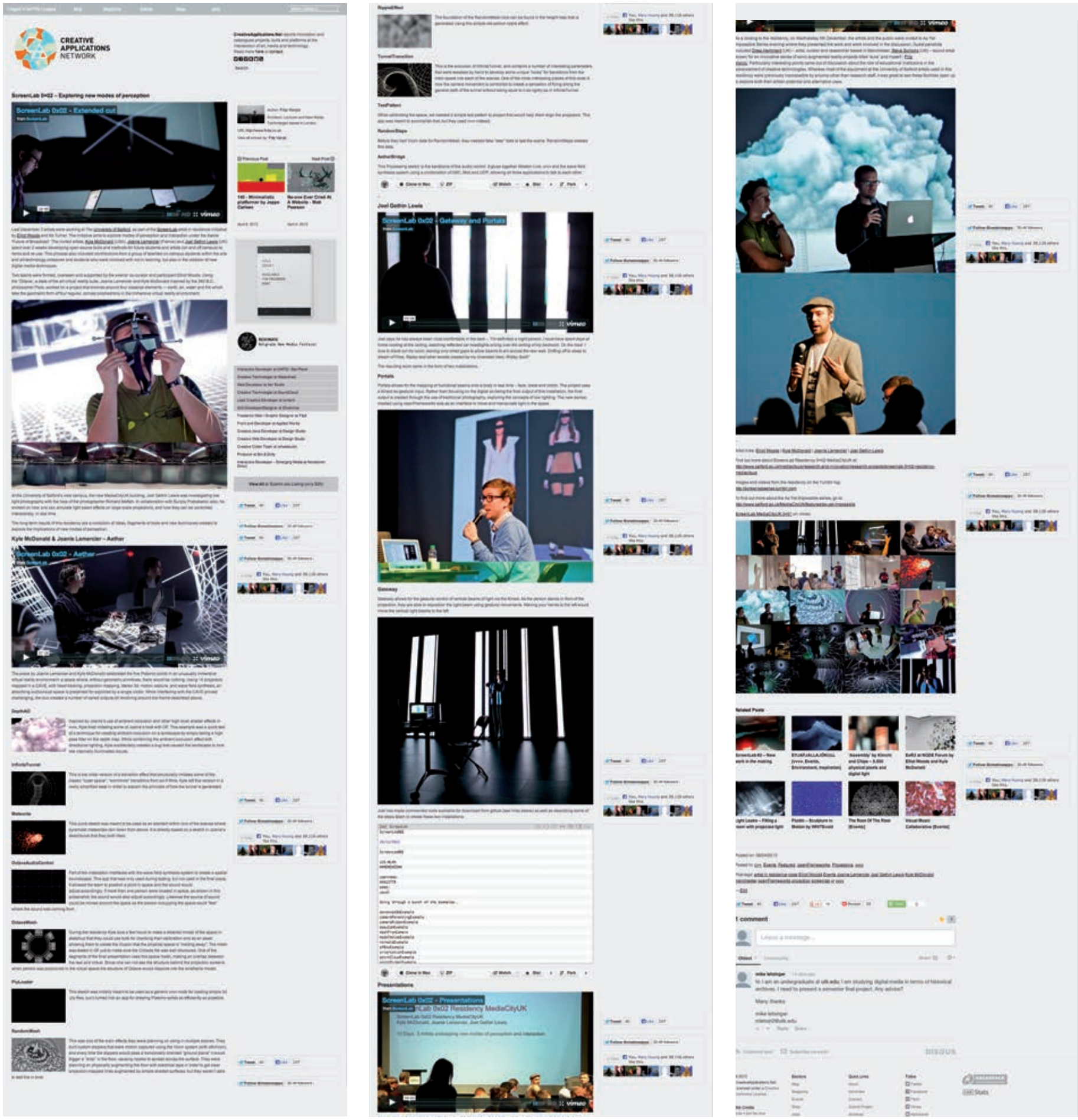


Fig.07 Creative Applications Network, Special Feature: Dedalo – An instrument by @Quayola & @NatanSinigaglia to 'see' the sound



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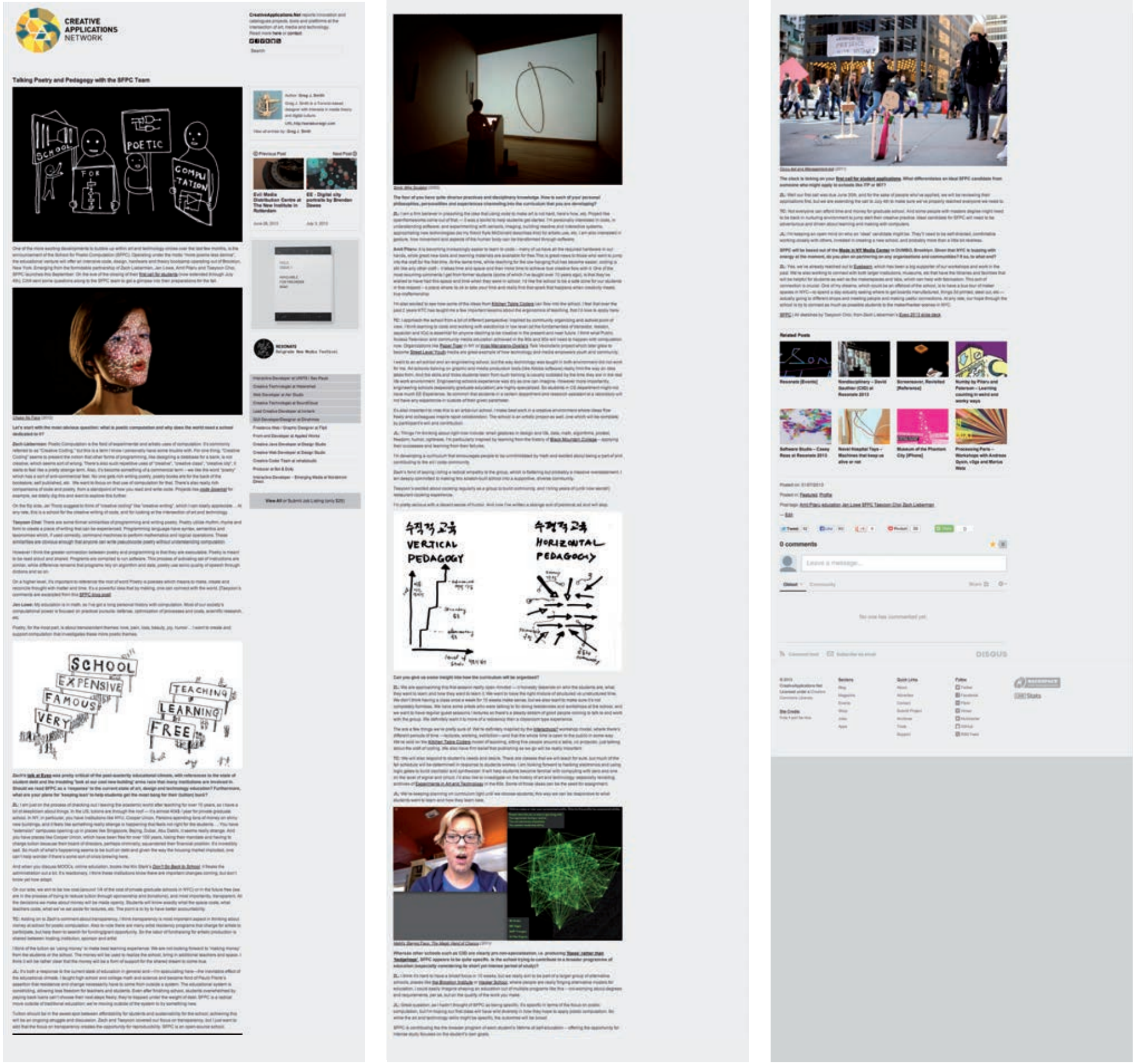
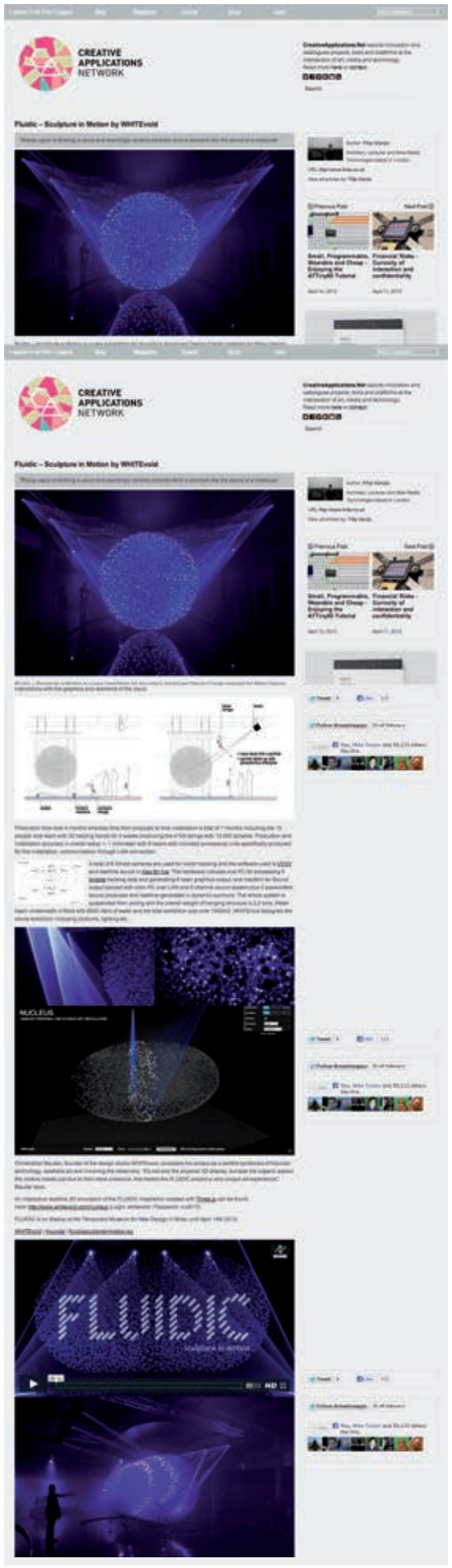


Fig.09 Creative Applications Network, Talking Poetry and Pedagogy with the SFPC (@SFPC_school) Team



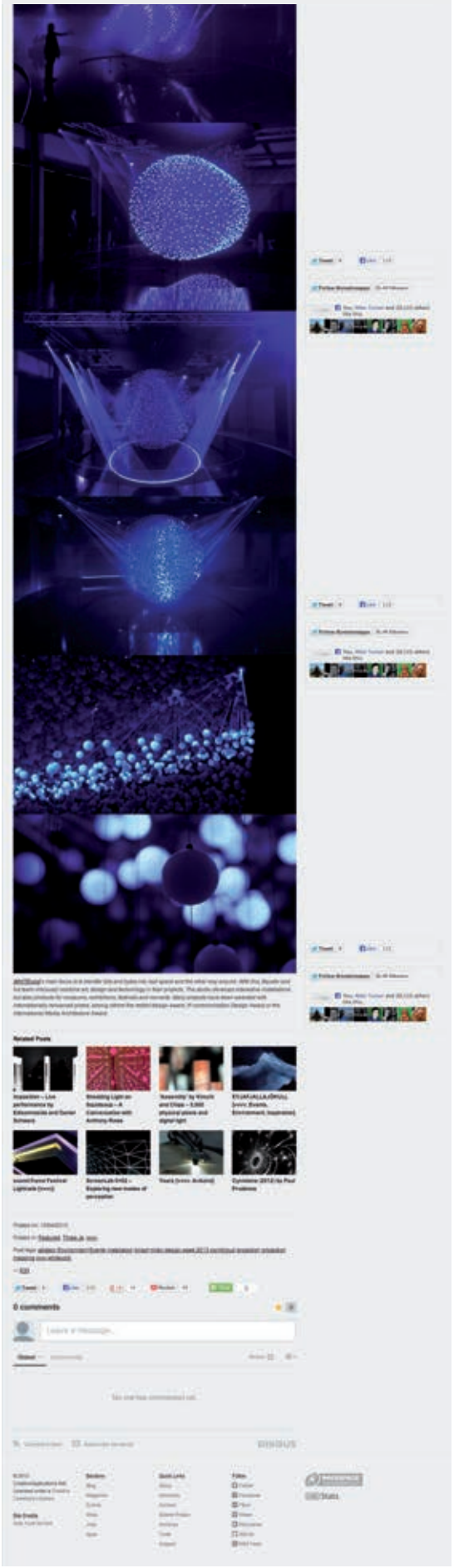


Fig.10 Creative Applications Network, Fluidic - Sculpture in Motion by WHITEvoid #milandesignweek

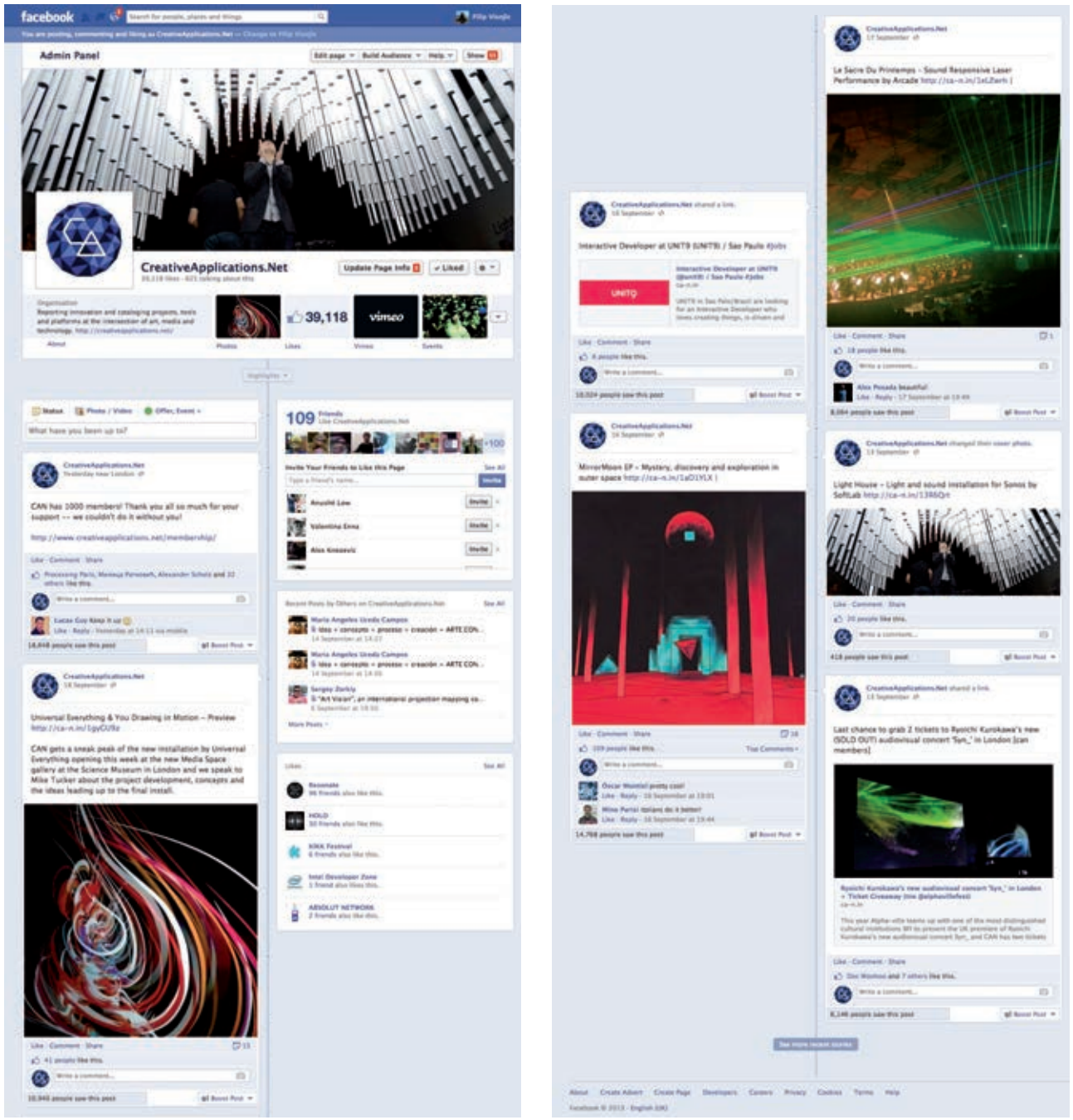


Fig.11 Ceative Applications Network, Facebook Page

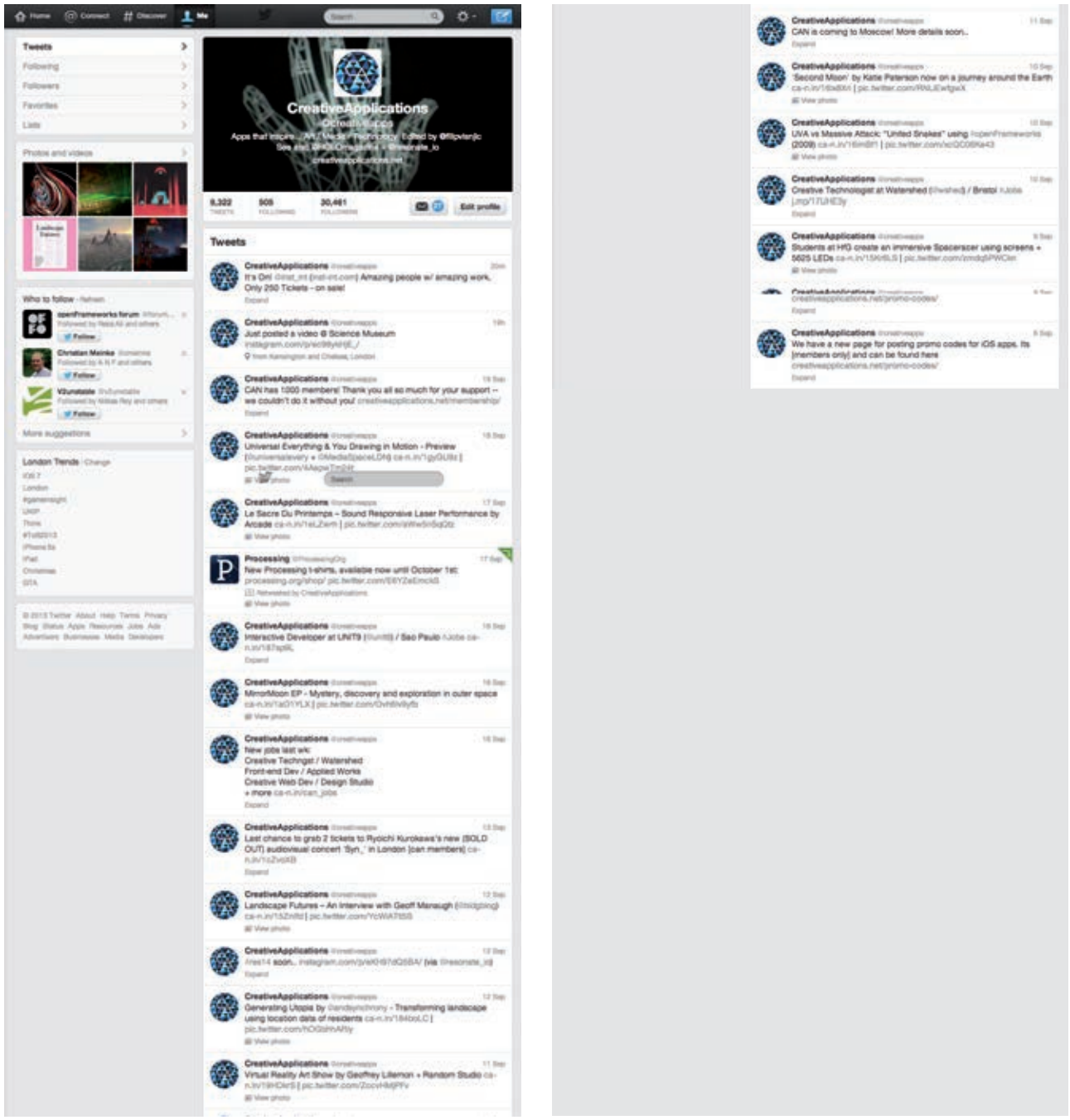


Fig.12 Creative Applications Network, Twitter Feed

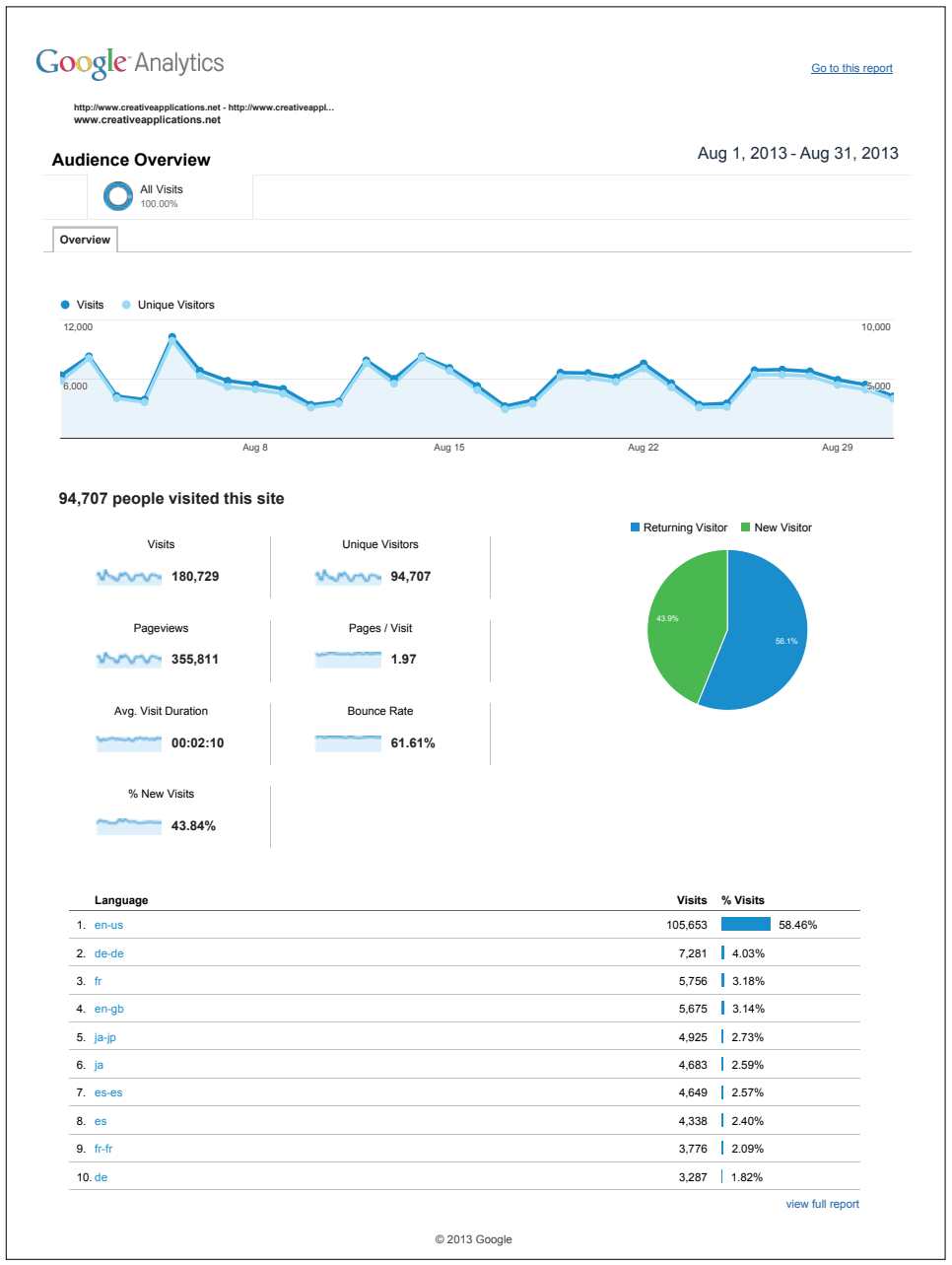


Fig.13 Creative Applications Network, Google Analytics 1 month

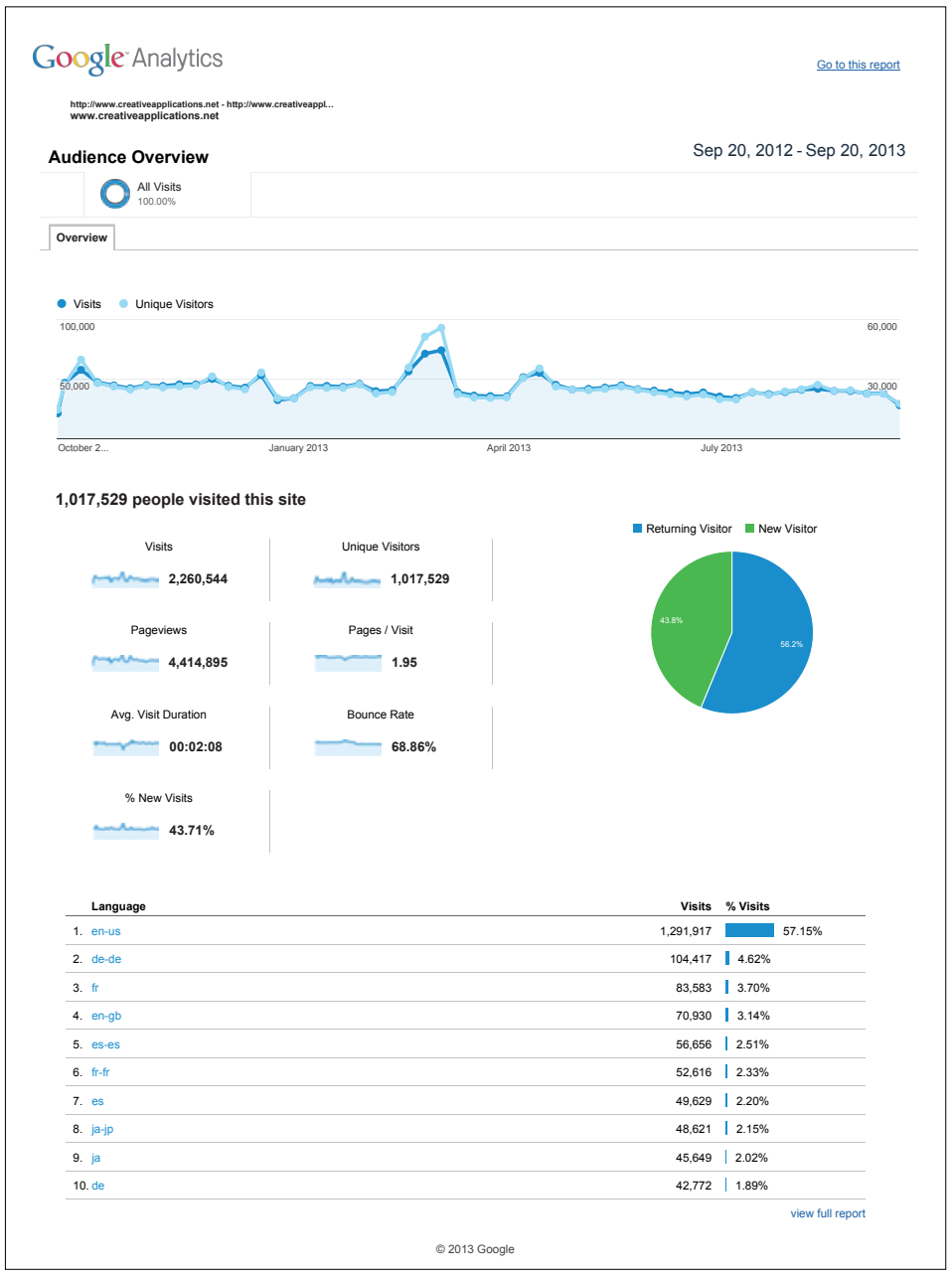


Fig.14 Creative Applications Network, Google Analytics 1 year

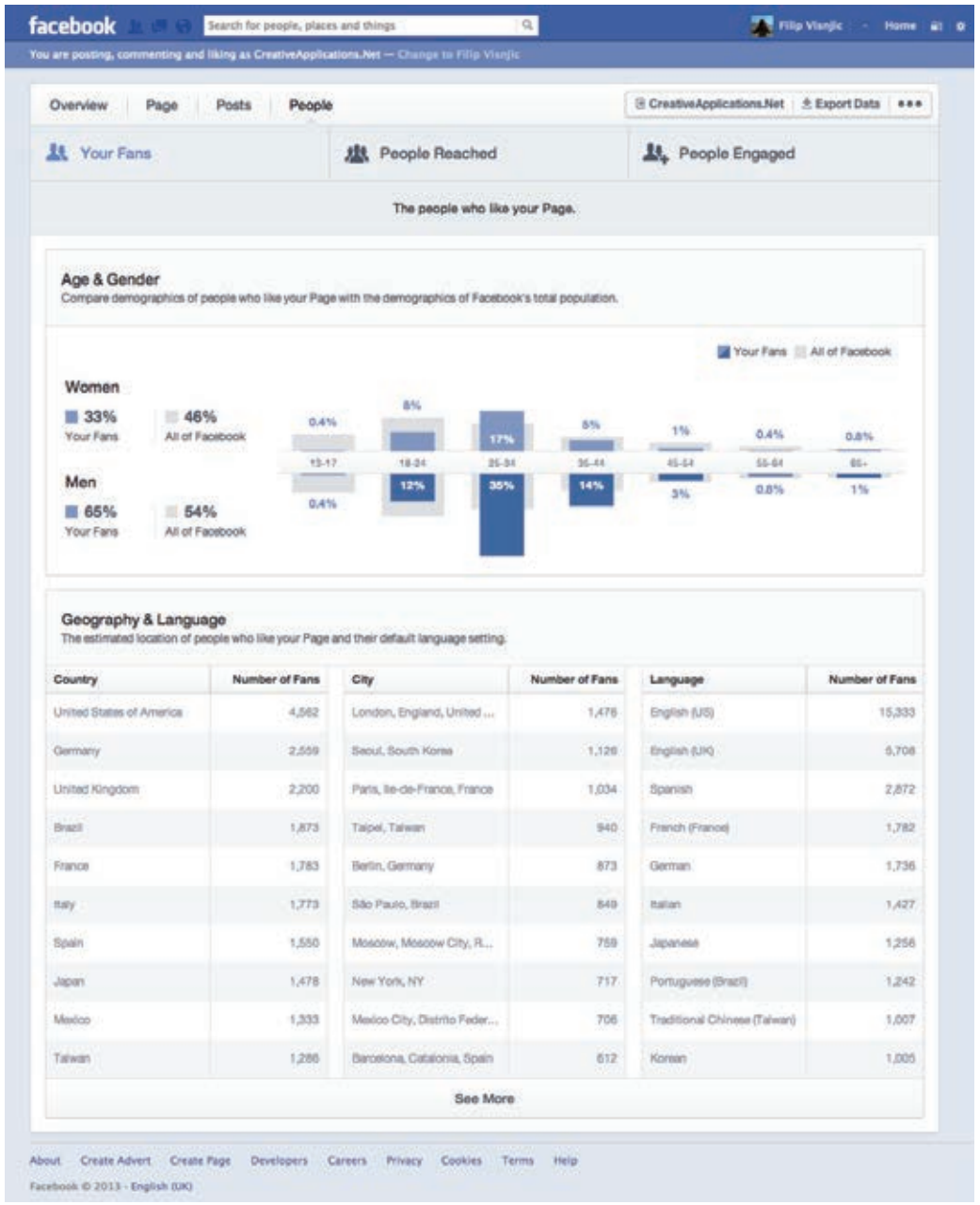


Fig.15 Creative Applications Network, Facebook Stats

Fig.16 Creative Applications Network, Vimeo Stats

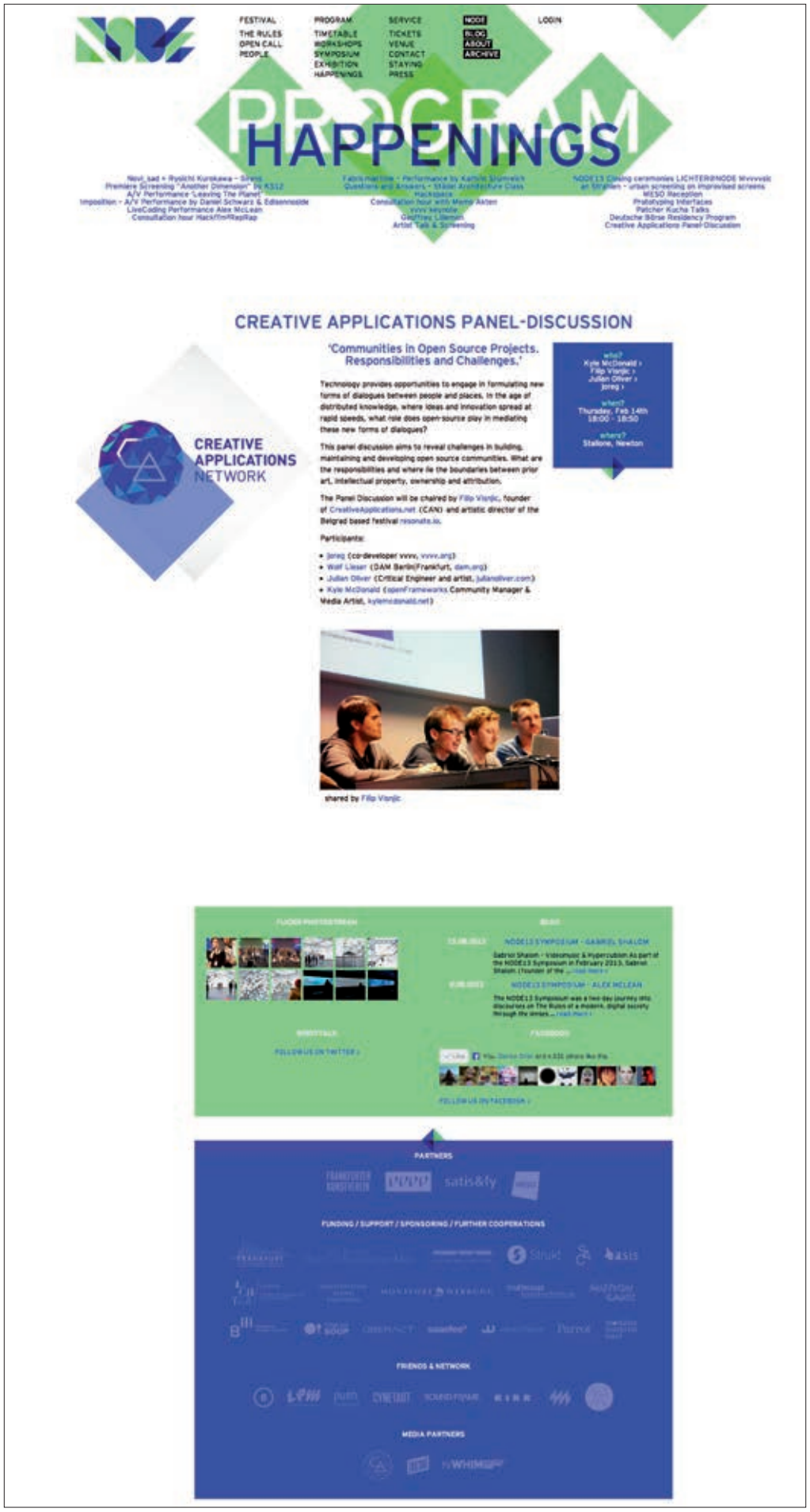


Fig.17 Creative Applications Network, Panel Discussion Node 2013 Forum, Poster

Fig.18 Creative Applications Network, Panel Discussion Node 2013 Forum, Event

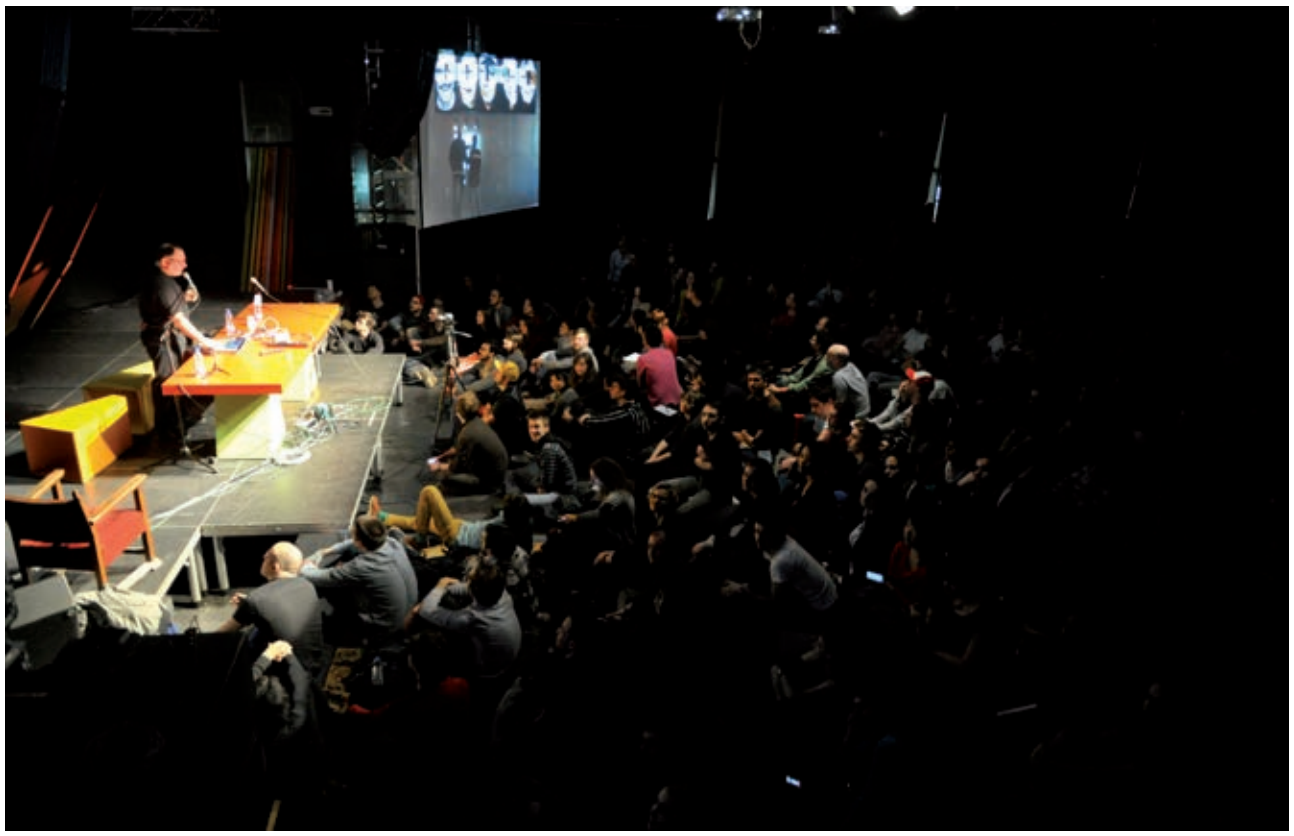


Fig.19 Resonate Festival 2013, Talks

Fig.20 Resonate Festival 2013, Talks

Fig.21 Resonate Festival 2013, Talks

Fig.22 Resonate Festival 2013, Talks

Fig.23 Resonate Festival 2013, Workshops

Fig.24 Resonate Festival 2013, Workshops

Structure

Stream

A topical overview of essential new projects that you should know about.

→ People

A series of visits to the studios and workspaces of accomplished and emerging digital artists and technologists

Grid

Galleries, media labs, hackerspaces and festivals – on-location reviews of key nodes within a global digital arts network.

→ Perspective

Focused analysis, curated photo essays, timely research and opinion – a selection of extensive (MACRO) and pin-pointed (MICRO) views on the state of art and technology.

Com

A window into the offices and practices of toolmakers and creative businesses that operate at the intersection of art and technology.

Fig.25 HOLO, structure

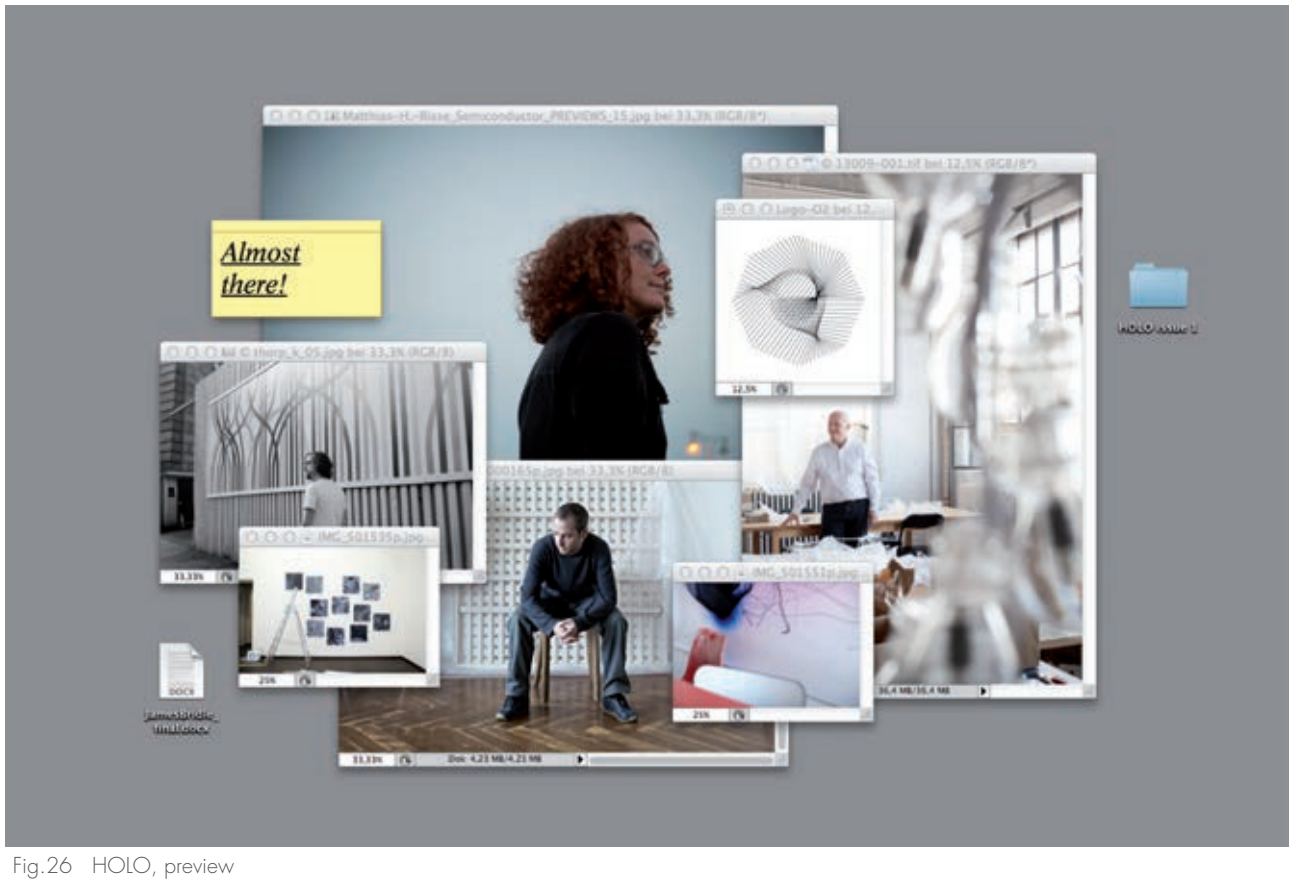


Fig.26 HOLO, preview

Fig.27 HOLO, shoot

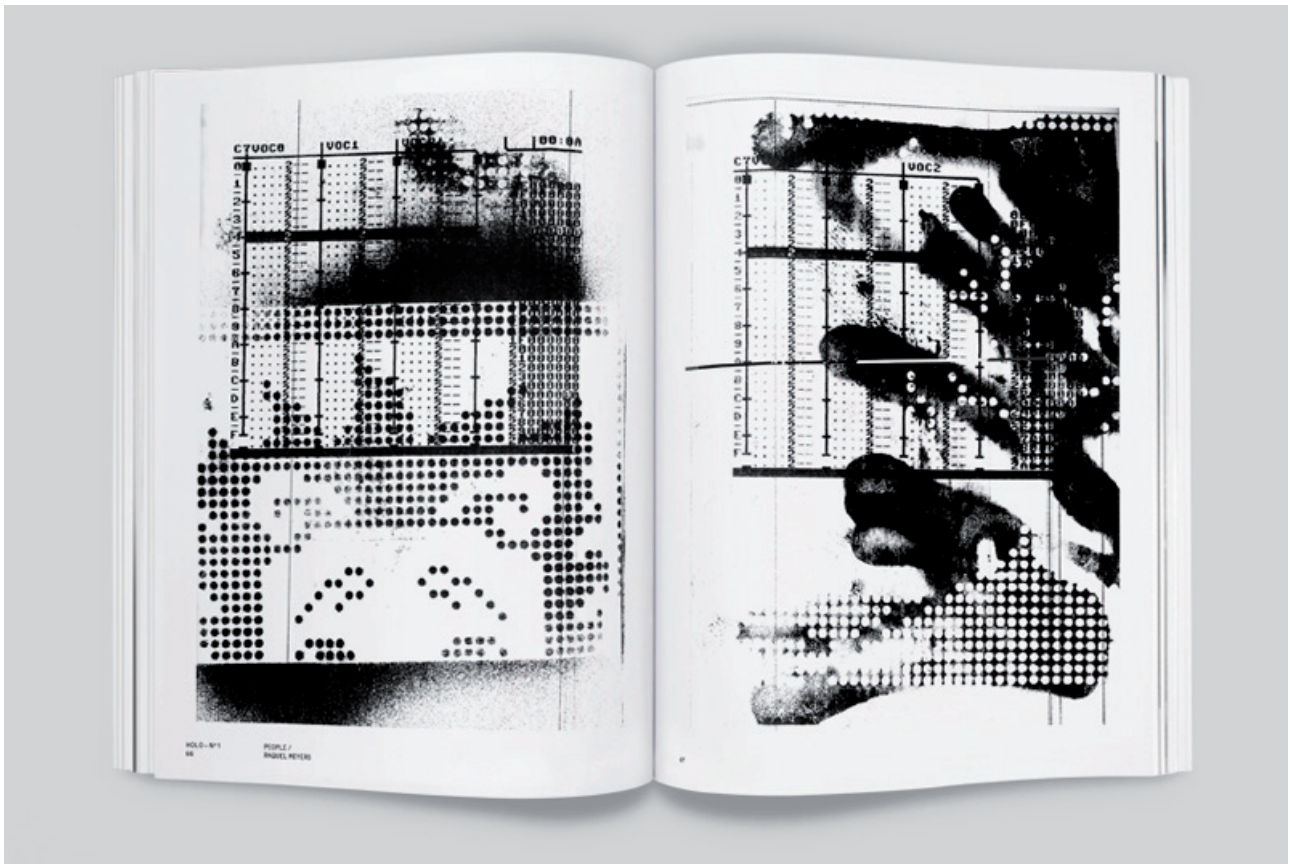


Fig.28 HOLO, spread 1

Fig.29 HOLO, spread 2

Fig.30 HOLO, spread 3

Resonate was founded in 2012 by Magnetic Field B and the Creative Applications network, in an attempt to provide the visual arts world with a new platform for discussion. The event focuses on the role of technology in art and culture, and especially on the connections between the disciplines that these areas involve. The 2013 edition took place from March 21 to 23 in the *Dom Omladine* cultural space, close to the city's Republic Square. More than 1200 visitors attended the event, which was already sold out several days before the opening.

The first day was devoted to a rich and varied assortment of workshops – open to all selected participants – regarding the analysis of the available tools (hardware and software) for video mapping, data visualization on different media, the design of cross-platform applications, or even the choreography of (flying) drones.

† Top: Resonate Festival, Belgrade, 2013. Projection during the debate with Memo Akten, Rainer Kohlberger, Eno Henze and Shane Walter. Above: Golan Levin during the "Computer vision in interactive arts" workshop. Photo courtesy of Resonate

The next two days were dedicated to a full program of 44 lectures and video projections. The general impression is that there is a panorama of versatile designers who can carefully hybridise different disciplines and tools – marrying electronic engineering with products, landscape with graphics, analogical techniques with digital media. These designers are bolstered by the freedom to experiment that distinguishes those who are not pigeonholed within a specific category. The profession's evolution and, more generally, a look at the recent past, were leitmotifs of some of the most interesting projects presented

Examples range from Memo Akten, Golan Levin and Joachim Sauter, who are now ready to offer an engaging retrospective of their projects, to the much admired by the public Meet your creator, Free Universal Construction Kit and Kinetic Sculpture.

The audience in the main room at Dom Omladine during the festival. Photo courtesy of Resonate

Similarly, a lively debate followed the talk by artist and interaction designer Zach Gage. Is it possible that the "game" – understood within a broader realm than the videogame – has not yet found the right place to be preserved, celebrated and narrated?

† A view of the Building Klub, where many of the festival's performances took place. Photo courtesy of Resonate

Participants were moved by London-based architect, critic and curator Liam Young's future scenarios and landscape mutations. Projects like Silent Spring dampened that blind faith in technological advancement that permeated the festival. The work by professors in Europe's most popular Interaction Design courses was of great interest, in particular Anthony Dunne from the RCA in London, David Gauthier from CIID in Copenhagen and Alain Bellet from ECAL in Lausanne. These schools have overcome the unnecessary separation between the humanistic and scientific universes, while in Italy the legacy left behind by Benedetto Croce still paralyses many university courses.

† Debate participants during the second day of the festival: Memo Akten, Rainer Kohlberger, Eno Henze and Shane Walter. Photo courtesy of Resonate

It is striking that there were no Italian presenters given the number of European speakers. This is probably due to the Italian design world's reluctance to accept the digital sphere. However, some undisputed masters were mentioned: Luigi Serafini, whose *Codex Seraphinianus* has become an international case study, or Bruno Munari's work in design teaching.

† A view of Memo Akten's "How I learnt to stop worrying and love the drones" workshop. Photo courtesy of Resonate

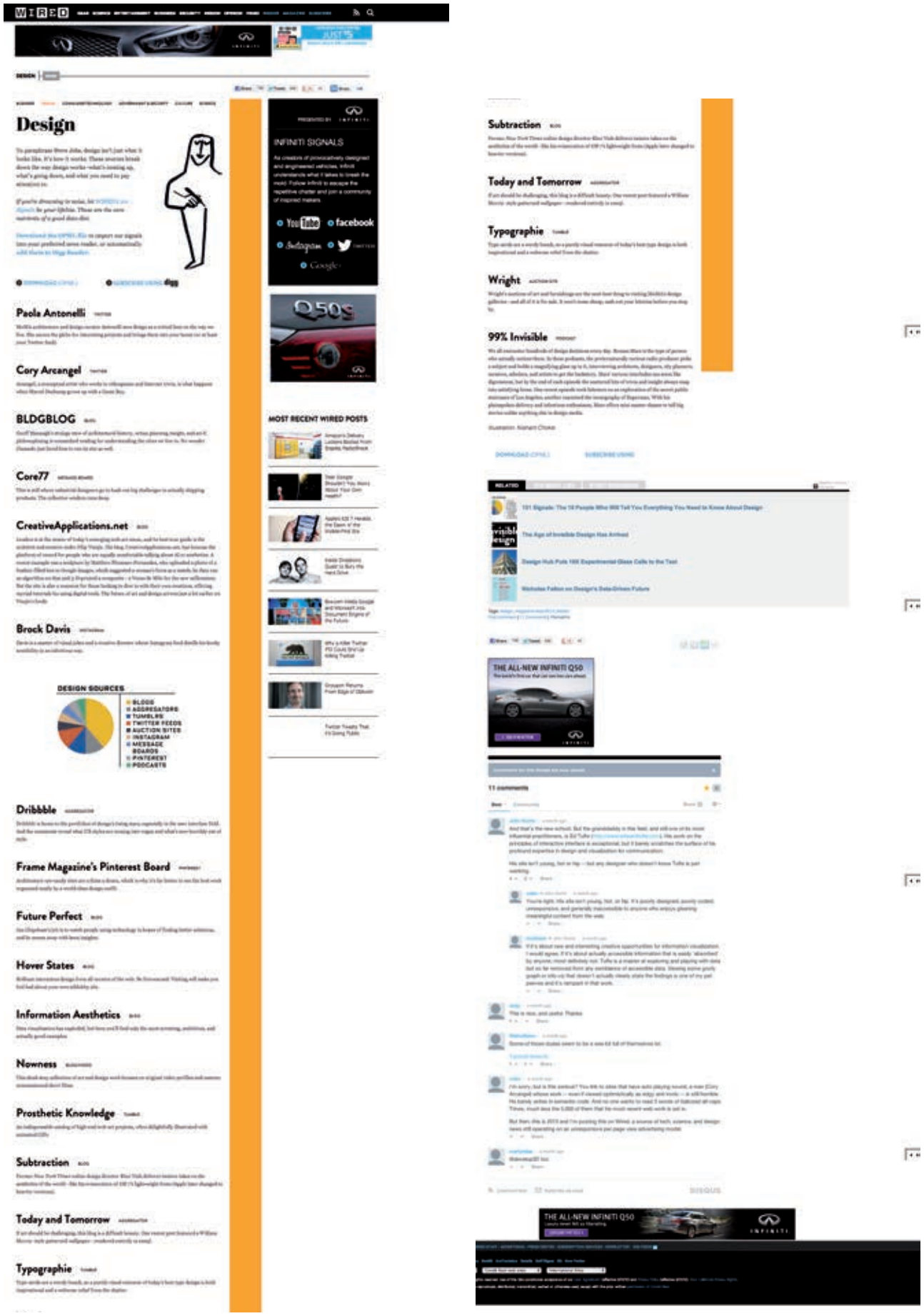
It became evident that childlike curiosity is fundamental in developing languages and tools. Many festival speakers dared to compare their more mature projects with images from their childhoods, so it is no coincidence that a statement by Carl Sagan's was heard several times during the festival: "Every kid starts out as a natural-born scientist, and then we beat it out of them. A few trickle through the system with their wonder and enthusiasm for science intact." *Roberto Arista*

P.01 Roberts, A. 2013. 'Resonate Festival.' Domus, 6 April <http://www.domusweb.it/en/design/2013/04/4/resonate_festival.html>

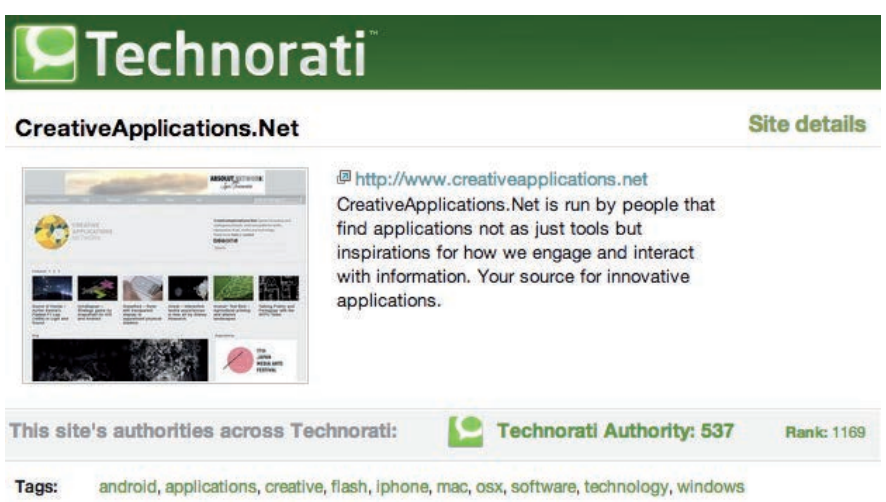
P.02 Richards, J. 2012. 'Computer Meet Your Maker.' Guardian, 23 March <http://resonate.io/main/2012/03/28/computer-meet-your-maker-guardian-uk/>

P.03 Chayka, K. 2012. 'A New Media Festival Thrives in Belgrade.' Hyperallergic, Nov 8 <http://hyperallergic.com/59912/filip-visnjic-resonate-new-media-festival-belgrade-serbia/>

P.04 Wired Staff. 2013. 101 'Signals. These are the best reporters, writers, and thinkers on the internet – the people who understand what's happening.' Wired.



P.05 Wired Staff. 2013. 101 'Signals. These are the best reporters, writers, and thinkers on the internet – the people who understand what's happening.' Wired.



P.06 Technorati Ranking 2013