

Projected Solutions

When Matthias Strobl from theNightLab is mixing live, you won't hear any music, but see shapes and structures, which let the room shine in billions of colours.

(05/2002)

Franziska: Tell us about your Artistic Concept...



Matthias: My concept is based on projections. I have the goal to create enlightened rooms which are more than the sum of their components. An aura shall arise. In the center of my work there is a self-made projector. With this projector I can create special images, which I call „lightmotiv". Basically lightmotiv is the enlarged Projection of colourful liquids, mixed in a petri-dish. I find the ingredients in my surrounding, most products are for the household requirements like colour-pigments, edible oil, detergents, etc. I always find more and more... You can never foresee to 100% percent how the images will look like. Because in the end the laws of nature will decide in which way the structures will be formed. That's so special about these images. That means, the order of the structures will never repeat itself and therefore every moment, every image is unique.

Franziska: So everybody who look at this spectacle will see how the substances react with each other?

Matthias: Yes and no. You will see the different chemical, physical and biological reactions. This different colours and energetic forms will be shown as a 20 meter high projection. But you can „see" or discover even more than what I've just described. The consciousness is used to decode information. The consciousness tries to remember forms, which it has recognized once. Because the structure of the liquid solutions never repeats, the consciousness is constrained to compose new associations. There is no message which can get decoded. Whatever you discover in the projections are your own thoughts.



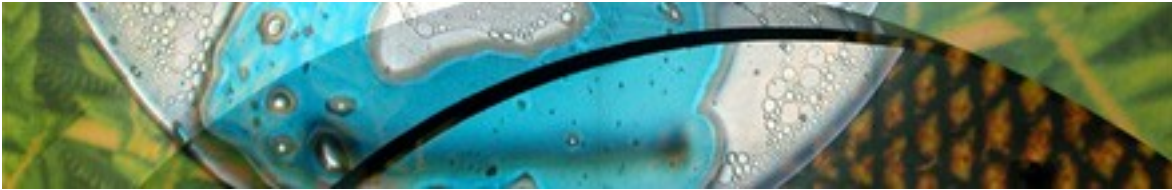
Franziska: How did you get this idea?

Matthias: The idea with the projector developed little by little. I was always fascinated from light, colours and nature and liked to do handcrafted stuff. Nearly 4 years ago everything joined together: I took a bowl with a salad-dressing inside, put it on the Top of an upside-down flower pot. Inside the flower pot I put a light bulb which projected the dressing onto the ceiling of my living room. What I've seen there fascinated me until now and never let me off. That was definitely more than a salad-dressing...

Franziska: Do you try to express or to bring about something with it?

Matthias: I would describe the message with something like „fascinating reality". I'm often fascinated for hours just by watching the processes and structures which are created by the laws of nature. With our eyes we can pick up more information than with our other senses. The importantness of visual impressions can't get overrated.

And the pictures, which I'm facing every day in our wonderfully coloured customer's world don't impress me any more. They behave like they were made for machines. I need a balance. I want to look inside, want to create a room for my phantasy by the images, always new and recreating. For me, lightmotiv is a bubbling source of inspiration and positive thoughts.



Franziska: What inspires you?

Matthias: The interface between chaos and order. If an impression is too organised, I feel bored, if it's too chaotic, I don't get an overview. Between these there is a point which kicks me. Not important if it's in music, pictures or anywhere else. I can feel inspiration only if my surrounding area admits that and lets me relax. Then I'm open for the impressions which my surrounding area has to offer. It's great when I'm outdoors in the nature or at partys. There my eyes can deal with forrests, mountains and water, but also with impressions from a party. Thereby I discover structures, coherences of the objects, repeating samples, but always a little bit different. There are so many visual impressions, no moment is reproducibile. You just have to notice it.

Franziska: Are you doing it live, too? If you perform at an event, do you let yourself inspire from the Event?

Matthias: Fore sure! It's very easy with the lightmotiv projector. You can choose the substances, but also the movements. You can contol the speed and the direction according to the music. With the selection of the colour and the substances I let myself influence through the party's atmosphere. But at the moment, the music makes the rhythm of the party and the visuals have to orientate on it. Because of that I would be pleased if there could be more interaction with the DJ's. By a videoprojection it's not so important, because you can't influence it a lot. But the projector gives the possibility to influence directly what is happening at the moment. And this could be used, if there is more interaction with the DJ's. Well...I question of time I guess...

Franziska: Which connection do you see between your art and the music?



Matthias: I see a lot of afinity. Music streams into one direction - the liquids also. The liquids get mixed together - the music also. At both the "colour" is changing, the speed, the complexity, and because of their continuos changing both influence the atmosphere of the room. For me, at a party, music and visuals are connected together inseparably, like hearing and vision is connected togehter for our sense. After all they

are the same principles, only for other senses. Interisting for me is the question of the interfaces, cause only if these are existing and the exchange between optics and acoustics is happening, the party will be an asthetic experience. The projector has a few possibilitys, because you always can influence the events directly, but I see a big potential for development. I'm dreaming of a „sound/ light - universe", in which the hearing and the vision permanently revolve each other, interactively and therefore the senses are carried away. Or expressed in "german party slang", I'm dreaming of an everlasting, persistent „Mega-Flash".

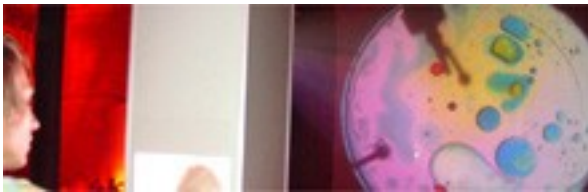
Franziska: In fact, it's possible to live on what you're doing?

Matthias: Complicated question. But at the moment it's not enough to have a constant assured income. I want to change it immediatly, because I have to keep an eye on myself, too. And with money there are more possibilitys to realize the ideas I have and I would like to do it. But if the question is based on the content of my work, I'm very happy with it, because it's a good feeling to have a work which make sense for me.

Franziska: In fact, I'm driving at the little `R' behind lightmotiv... You have build up a little company. Tell us about the company and how does it work?



Matthias: The first thought „Wow, it's so phat - others should be able see it, too" became more and more a concrete thought like "how can I publish the idea of lightmotiv". I patented the invention of the projector so the idea couldn't be stolen. So then I had to decide, if I want to continue my handcraft work, like tinkering with flower pots, or if I want to realize my idea consistently and build up a little company. For me the decision was clear very fast: if I want to publish the idea of lightmotiv without any deductions, I have to build up the organisatoric infrastructure and build up a company. So one and half year ago I engaged with some others in this challenge. And together we will go through it. In the beginning we spend a lot of time with discussions and sitting in front of the „projections". After that, we started other activities step by step: renovating rooms, writing concepts, convince banks, built projectors. That's the point where we are now. Of course I didn't fall out of „inventors-heaven" with knowing everything, in fact we have to deal with the reality of market-economy everyday. It's a tough business and it's not easy to find the right place in this reality. We have a product, which the people have never seen before and you can't explain it in a short time. But at all it's a very informative experience for me which I don't want to miss. By the way: Here I want to thank everyone who spreads the idea of "lightmotiv".



Franziska: Outside of our scene, how do people react to this kind of images?

Matthias: Most people like this images. But if they look at pictures, most people are following a certain pattern, "are the images nice or not" ok they are nice and then the people are moving on. That's not an

informative reaction. I think these reactions have to do with the abstract and organic forms of the nature, which are familiar to our aesthetic sense. Some people from the area of the chaos-analysts and the recreation-psychologists are interested in it. And the demand for sitting collectively in front of these projections for hours is rather seldom outside the scene.

Franziska: On which sort of events do you work?

Matthias: The events can be so different. There are events like corporate events, fairs and expositions, VJ-meetings and birthday-partys of friends and of course trance-partys. But you don't have the same amount of fun at each event, that's for sure... Really smashing would be a session with a music artist in a cinema, where the images and music are there for an hour or so.

Franziska: At your company, is there a cooperation with other visual-artists, in the sense of a network character?



Matthias: Yes, of course. We see us as a meeting-point in a network of visual-artists. Together we are strong. And you can distribute products like posters or DVD's much better with a central platform than as a single person. The name of our company is the**NightLab**, the short version is tnl, and this name is our programm. A nocturnal lab, in which we are experimenting to create visual content, which we call „psychonaut

food". The network consists of lighting-designers, VJ's, photographers, video-artists, graphic designers and of course of people, who have knowledge in the area of projection-technology and production processes for content. Basically we are working together with people who are also specialized in the area of projection and who we can help with our technical resources. For example Tina Zimmermann. She is doing her work independently of our work, but if she needs technology, she calls us and we organize her a beamer or whatever she needs. The same way we help each other with the sales or with doing jobs at events. Visual artists who feel adressed by this are invited to contact us...

Franziska: Are there combined works?

Matthias: Mainly with Tina we did some projects. If everything goes right, we will be working together at „Waldfrieden Wonderland" and at some other outdoor events. Besides we are working at a collective DVD production and posters. Beyond this we are working as event- organizer and working together with the people of Waldfrieden more often.



Franziska: What kind of visions for the future do you have for you and your little company?

Matthias: Eventually I want to write a book about my visions of the future... So many ideas come up, I can't express that in five sentences. I think the importance of visual content will rise up enormously. Before screens became a part of our reality, the amount of visual content was very manageable. But now there are so many displays, which want to be fed with content. Over all there is a tendency, where less and less displays are showing the same content parallel, like in the TV today. The big content channels, which are working like a one-way street and are dominated by commercial interests will fortunately belong to the past. The offer of content will rise up. The technical resources, which are necessary to make photos or videos, overwork and publish them, were available only for few people. Today many people decree about this technical resources and everybody can make photos and videos, overwork and publish them, and, if they want, print the photographs as a wallpaper. There will be an inflation of visual content and at this point tnl will be an interesting kind of a media lab. Because we have the lightmotiv-projector and we want to bring it on the market in home-edition. This projector can make images independently from Screens or Data. And we have the content, which dilates the consciousness and which we've developed together with some visual-artists in our media lab. Well, at this point I have some wonderful future-visions of collective visual events, of installations for the living room or for locations in major cities, which will allegorize a chill-out side of the city-life. One of my most enjoyable imaginations is, that one day people will be at home in front of the lightmotiv projector and they'll enjoy it as much as I do.

Franziska Gangloff 2002

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