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Antek Walczak
October 23rd – December 19th 2010
Opening Reception Saturday October 23rd 7-10 PM

"What number of products of products of products of products of products of products of products of products was the number of products of products of products of products of products of products of products of products of products?"

This statement has 2,044,900 (1,430 X 1,430) syntactically correct interpretations. I owe the citation to a footnote in one of the many books by that mad giddy futurologist, Ray Kurzweil, who is championing The Singularity, a new Terminator kind of class war where the technologically rich will be a bunch of hard drives attached to bodies. In other words, 3D Robot Party in the USA.

"Tearing down the boundaries between disciplines" is one of the many slogans adorning the new MIT Media Lab building, according to a Wall Street Journal Video report from last spring. Biomechatronics - human physical augmentation, one day artificial limbs will be better than natural limbs and people may elect to amputate in order to get that transplant. Neural and skeletal implants, things of that order. They are able to test their work on injured soldiers from the war.

While all this happened behind my back beyond my years, I'm not sure I wasn't part of the same process dropping unnamable by-processes, like smart, sustainable cities. In the 90s, I wish I could say that I was living in Amherst, MA, going to screamo shows with bands like Frankfurt School Massacre, but I was in fact submerged in a permanent fog around several layers of reincarnations of downtown New York, wearing a thriftstore 3-piece suit with a dead eye trained on anti-fashion, carrying a notebook with scribblings: Community becomes a value the more it mutates; Natural processes? History + energy, Encounter, Research, Development of projects, Ass, New playing field, Collective work, Bitch, Dialogue!

Empire State of Machine Mind, 2010

Whereupon, to casual inquiries about the work, I'll have to pull out the Lempel-Ziv data compression schemes, and how a text to be compressed is always a message to be transmitted (to your friend, to a laser printer). The paintings are a cartoon-like example of encoding. As the text proceeds, it is parsed into segments, and instead of transmitting the letters of the text itself, the compression just transmits references to places in the text where each segment was encountered before. Here the text is a mean-spirited anthem about success in New York from Jay-Z that happened not too long ago. The point or pointlessness of the effort is just an act of re-processing. A kind of recognizable engine of today's culture. Although my dopamine levels tend that way, I don't necessarily want to feel that this time is stagnant. Quite the contrary, it's a brave new world to discover a way to abandon.