

these fictional conceptions provide fodder for further reflection on a variety of topical issues.

Take, for example, *Project for New Development (Ghost Version)*. A toy concrete truck stands on its end, raised up and supported by a seemingly never-ending tower of concrete. Playful with a serious undertone, this model takes a satirical poke at the rampant development driving Vancouver's overheated real estate market, as well as the CO₂ emissions that result from concrete production.

In *Project for the Tar Sands (Recirculating Crude Oil Fountain for Fort McMurray)*, Snider offers another environmental critique or, at the very least, a cautionary comment about the negative impact of large-scale oil extraction at the Athabasca Tar Sands in northeastern Alberta. In its circular, tiered arrangement and tenuous-looking construction, his fountain resembles another visionary structure, Vladimir Tatlin's utopian *Monument to the Third International*.

While Tatlin's unbuilt monument was proposed as the headquarters of the Communist Party, Snider's fountain is more ambiguous. Does this lopsided tower of bubbling and re-circulating oil celebrate the economic potential of the tar sands or warn us about our dependence on a fuel source that damages the earth's climate?

In *Project for a Holocaust Memorial*, Snider uses the railroad car as a potent signifier of the Holocaust, referencing the method used by the Nazis to move millions of Jews into concentration camps. Two model freight cars bisect at their midpoints to form a Greek cross. Seen from above, the X-shape graphically represents the cancellation or negation of lives. The cars sit on tracks that lead nowhere, with no visible means of access or egress, offering no possibility of escape. Like the full-size freight cars on exhibit in many Holocaust museums, Snider's renditions offer a tragic reminder of a hopeless situation and its inevitable outcome.



Public spaces need more projects that challenge the status quo with humor and intelligence, that engage and dazzle with their daring. *Project for a Public Fountain* does just that. Snider proposes a huge rock magically held aloft on a thick torrent of water that cascades into a basin below. Referencing Noguchi's stone sculptures and Zen rock gardens, Snider's fountain, if installed in a public place, would confound expectations while encouraging meditation and reflection. *Public Fountain* is one visionary project that surely needs to be built.

—Rachel Rosenfield Lafo

HELSINKI

Terike Haapoja

Amos Anderson Art Museum

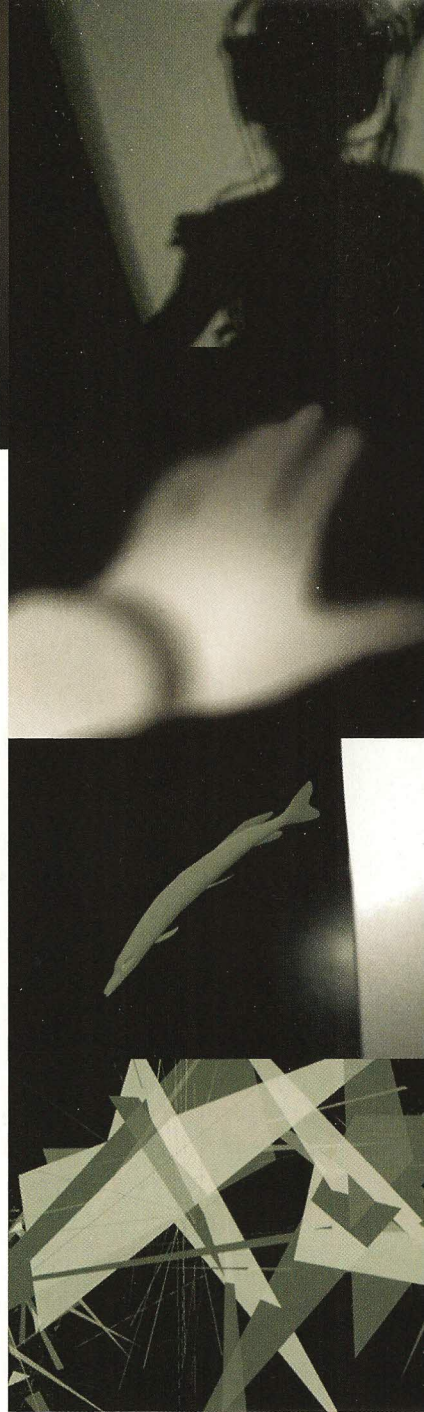
Entropy, mazes, memory, and zones of electromagnetic radiation residing just beyond the visible spectrum play an important role in the work of Terike Haapoja. Investigating mortality, as well as themes of co-existence and communication between individuals, she harnesses media technologies and mobilizes various kinds of expert assistants to develop works that bridge nature and technology, science and art. In *Edge of the World* (2011), she has partnered with a scientist, sound designer, engineer, animator, and 3D modelling specialist to create a labyrinthine installation that must be navigated in the dark, one visitor at a time.

A wall-mounted monitor showing Haapoja's "Field of View" series (2011) forms an introduction to the labyrinth. An essentially colorless picture, this excerpt depicts a wooded landscape in stark relief and fuels

Above and details: Terike Haapoja, *Edge of the World*, 2011. Mixed-media, computerized installation.

expectations of what will be seen inside. One soon receives an invitation from a curtained doorway to enter a staging area where museum staff help visitors don head-mounted display units (HMDs) and backpacks containing computers before directing them to the first in a sequence of rooms. Suddenly immersed in darkness, viewers find themselves grappling with unfamiliar sensations. Sight and sound are now mediated by the HMD. The loss of traditional points of reference and peripheral vision forces us to take short, cautious steps and use our hands like tentacles. We instinctively reach out for the walls, and contact instigates assurance. We soon become aware of a dim light in the distance, which guides our movement.

And so it goes, door to door. Along the way, we encounter various kinds of objects and creatures. There are chairs that seem too small for adults. I bump into one and sit in it, but the second one—a virtual seat—startles me with its sudden appearance. The HMD enables the perusal of a host of specters—visions of butterflies, pike that swim about one's legs, and a tabletop fan that produces no air flow. Despite the soundtrack, which changes from room to room, and animal movements, a tangible stillness pervades the atmosphere. We experience wonder and a sense of release toward the end of the expedition when we emerge at a landing—a literal precipice—that projects into a seemingly limitless dark space.



This austere, solitary journey stands apart from most museum exhibitions in that one relates to it in a very private manner. Though Haapoja considers the work a prototype, *Edge of the World* already impresses. Its success derives from its balance of physical, perceptual, and psychological experience, as well as from its revelatory nature. One starts off feeling very vulnerable, but exits in a state of fascination, secure in the knowledge that a remarkably unusual destination has been reached.

—John Gayer