

## **BFFA3AE**

This and that thought.

BFFA3AE's newest project "This and that thought." takes the form of a narrative. Visually, the project consists of the hex codes of the 216 web safe colors and a colorless box next to each, arranged in a grid. The arrangement is based on the van der Corput sequence which orders the colors from black to white through an unintuitive trajectory. The user is invited to click on any hex code which triggers an aural narration based on a fictional narrative of an episodic nature, jumping from subject to subject through connections sometimes obvious, sometimes oblique. Each segment of the narrative is visually associated to one of the colors by a reveal in sync with the narration. Furthermore, attached to each segment is its own unique introduction to the story. Depending on what color is activated, the user experiences a variable story in so far as the introduction and length of the narrative will change. If the user happens to click on black, then the narrative will be "whole" in the sense that the story will utilize all the segments created for the project, whereas any other color incorporates only every color between itself until the end color; white. All other elements remain the same, including the order of the colors and their associated phrase within the narrative.

"This and that thought." is used to highlight the structure of the Internet and contemplate our experience within it. More and more our use of the medium becomes mediated by different factors, mostly in the service of corporate interest. We are directed towards what we are supposed to view and are given suggestions and recommendations based on prior knowledge of our interest. As we partake in surfing the web, we are unaware of this mediation, it is disguised, an unintuitive trajectory; a path from black to white. While in reality a filter like a mathematical formula, in this case the van der Corput sequence, is placed on our experience of this information and always precedes and concludes in a similar fashion; the analogy of the color white in our project. The formula proves appropriate because of its practical use in extracting individual data elements from audio and visual files and organizing this information so that the individual components of the whole may be recognized and analyzed. "This and that thought." creates an arbitrary link between each phrase and its color, thereby placing hope in the context of the experience. The information, presented in consideration of what preceded and succeeded it, intends to trigger a thought process completely independent of the structure the user is unwittingly forced into. While we may be experiencing the Internet in a predetermined manner, we glean and interpret from it in a subjective way, creating a meaningful experience of the data.

BFFA3AE (Daniel Chew, Micaela Durand, Maximiliano Ferro, Matthew Gaffney) was formed in 2007 as a net art collective. On their shared blog and website ([www.bestfriendsbestfriendsbestfriendsbestfriends.com](http://www.bestfriendsbestfriendsbestfriendsbestfriends.com)), an ongoing dialogue occurs that explores the implications of the Internet on culture and life. A particular focus is placed upon the way in which their generation is being socialized through this medium and its effects on mass culture. Using a syntax that transcends language, their website speaks through the use of a variety of formats available to the technology, including pictures, videos, sound, and code. Acknowledging the reach of the Internet into the physical world, the group has since expanded beyond its initial impulse to include work in a variety of mediums including film and performance. This has allowed them to tackle the same issues and further their conversation by viewing the medium from a different perspective.