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Announcing an Interactive Art Concert

"Compositions for Bit"

A tribute to the original *Tron* on the eve of its sequel

Two Nights Only
Thursday, December 16, 2010, 8 PM
Friday, December 17, 2010, 9 PM

Judson Church
55 Washington Square South
New York, NY 10012

Tickets at the door
\$15 suggested donation

With millions of fans counting down the days until the release of *TR2N: Legacy*, new media artist Katherine Behar will bid farewell to the original *Tron*, Disney's techno-nostalgic cult classic, on the final day before its sequel hits the theaters. Behar's interactive art concert brings together giant computer "bits," lasers, video mixes, sound scores, and other relics of arcade culture, promising to transport the audience back in time to the golden age of *Tron*.

The performance "Compositions for Bit" features one of the smallest characters in *Tron*: Bit, the animated polyhedron who becomes Jeff Bridges' sidekick on his video game adventure. Three larger than life sculptures of Bit each hold a dancer wearing interactive video game sensor technology. As the Bits and their dancers move, they affect sound and video, making it possible to see sounds being generated. Three composers,

Suzanne Thorpe, Silvia Ruzanka, and Shelley Burgon, have created original sound scores, "Compositions for Bit," which the Bits will perform live during this three-part interactive concert.

"I am nostalgic for *Tron* not only for its cult value," Behar explains, "but because this early vision of computer culture—however absurd it appears today—depicted the digital as vivid and physical." *Tron* was made in 1982, before the development of the advanced special effects and 3D imaging technologies that will feature prominently in *TR2N*. The original movie retains a material, even handmade quality in rendering the digital game world. Only portions of the movie were produced digitally. An example is the character Bit who is the first computer generated movie character.

Looking back, *Tron* seems to have one foot in the digital world and one foot in the analog world; in the early 1980s, most people were not yet fully immersed in the new technology. For Behar, the mathematically illogical nature of the character Bit embodies this in-between condition. "In the process of making *Tron*, no one stopped and said you can't have a Bit with three states. So we end up with a non-binary Bit with three, not two states. Bit is yellow when it says Yes, red when it says No, and blue when it is silent. That captivated me and became the basis for this performance."

Reflecting on this past moment sheds light on our current understanding of technology. "Today, we associate bodily presence with the analog world," the artist comments. "I want to show how digital processes are also grounded in physical stuff." As today's digital technologies get progressively smaller and thinner, it's easy to imagine them dematerializing completely, but as Behar says, "Bits are real."

"Compositions for Bit" will be performed at Judson Church on December 16th and 17th. A longtime home for avant-garde dance and art, Judson Church was the birthplace of the Judson Dance Theater, which revolutionized the dance world in the 1960s. The Judson Dance Theater incorporated pedestrian choreography to show dancers' physical, weighty presence as a way to undermine the illusions of virtuosic weightlessness that dominated classical dance. "Compositions for Bit" follows in this tradition, offsetting digital virtual illusions through the material presence of Bits and the physical gestures of dancers.

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