ASCII FIGHTER (BOX) – PAUL LITHERLAND

PRESS RELEASE ASCII Fighter - DONALD GOODES, May 2004

Paul Litherland's performance series, *ascii Fighter*, features 3 new works. Two boxers are wired to a computer interface that allows the fighters to write evocative messages using text and video.

Paul's friends are surprised these days when they find out that he's taken up boxing. "Boxing! What's with that? Paul's such a nice guy."

For him, boxing is a way to experience negotiation under the most difficult and intense circumstances—trying not to get hurt yet trying hit back without wanting to hurt them. When he does take a hit the hardest thing is to not let the despair affect the next moment, not take it personally, the feelings of failure, not be overwhelmed by vulnerability, not break down and cry. And when he lands a punch, not to feel superior, get caught up in the power, not to admire the work, nor desire recognition. Because these too distract and betray the intent of the match: a fair and exciting exchange.

Paul leads us into the difficulties of being in his world. In *ascii Fighter* we see him looking for a way to communicate honestly with us, while submerged in the complex demands of technology and socialized human relations.

Paul Litherland is known for his quirky multimedia performances and video works. Skydiving is one of the unusual activities that has appeared repeatedly in his art. His new performance *ascii Fighter* introduces another extreme sport: boxing. Many people are into thinking about intense experiences, others like to just live them straight up. Paul does both.

He and sparring partner Sally Scott will be at the Design Exchange on May 13th, 2004, at 8:30 p.m., as part of the Digifest conference.

In boxing you are scared; you have to keep from falling apart in spite of the fear.

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PRESS RELEASE ASCII Fighter – PAUL LITHERLAND, May 2004

ASCII fighter is a performance art work about language structures and the articulation of gut emotions.

Two boxers equipped with contact sensors are wired to a computer which translates their exchanges into audio, video and text signals. Punches are thrown, a message is sent.

The struggle to say something coherent emerges. The struggle to say anything meaningful at all becomes clear.

Boxer/Artists Paul Litherland and Sally Scott bring you ASCII fighter, a multimedia performance that combines communications technologies with the vocabulary of boxing.

Using cumbersome technologies to express and transmit messages, the performers explore the possibilities of expression in challenging or dangerous circumstances

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PRESS RELEASE ASCII Fighter – PAUL LITHERLAND, May 2004

Communications breakdown got you upset? Need to go non-verbal? Maybe ASCII Fighter is what you need. ASCII fighter is a multimedia boxing performance produced by Montreal artist Paul Litherland. Along with Blue Cat boxer Sally Scott, artist/programmer Andrew Brouse, and assistant Karen Trask, Litherland and Scott duke it out in a tension filled pugilistic ballet that mixes anger management, violence and communications technologies into a new dangerous brew. Watch out, the poetry is in the punch!

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DESCRIPTION of BOX – PAUL LITHERLAND, Performance in Québec City, September 2006

Box is a multimedia boxing performance by Paul Litherland. Using gloves hooked into wireless Gameboy controllers, two boxers control videos via programs written using MAX/MSP/Jitter by Patrice Coulombe. It is being presented as part of the Rencontre Internationale d'art Performance in Québec City on September 22, 2006.