Invisible Instruments
Matt Roberts and Terri Witek

Project URL:
http://mattroberts.info/invisibleinstruments

Description:
Using a digital microscope and custom video mapping software, participants project microscopic parts of themselves coupled with randomly matched short poetic texts onto large architectural objects. This collective public performance with three layers—edifice, miniature, and wandering signage—-shows what happens when a public space is overwritten by an ephemeral and intimate one. *Invisible Instruments,* a collaboration between new media artist Matt Roberts and poet Terri Witek, hopes to short-circuit the transactions dictated by global capitalism which often shape our civic spaces.

Artist statement:
In this interactive project, a collaboration between new media artist Matt Roberts and poet Terri Witek, passing participants are invited to project microscopic parts of themselves coupled with poetic textual fragments onto large architectural objects. The resulting collective public performance uses three layers—edifice, miniature, and wandering signage—-to demonstrate

how a public space can be overwritten by a more and ephemeral and intimate one. *Invisible Instruments* combines contemporary technologies (digital microscopes, video projection mapping, and custom software) with ancient arts (architecture and writing) to inspire human actions that don't wound, capture, or colonize. By self-citing and recombining microscopics parts of themselves in a shared space, participants will demonstrate how we might literally re-make ourselves to connect vertically through time. This radical reimagining of unlike things is an effort to re-shape communities for brief moments as neither hierarchical nor in conflict. Rather, the small projections offered by the participants build a visual DNA that combines accidentally with text to suggest a new vision of the modern city.

The work can be adapted to a variety of architectural spaces, and the live microscopic imagery will be recorded and added to a collective archive. Over time, *Invisible Instruments* hopes to suggest that by deploying strategies both very contemporary and very ancient, and radically mixing disciplines and bodies, we might collectively imagine more sustainable, more intimate, and more peaceful interactions in public space.

Technical description:
This project uses custom software written by new media artist Matt Roberts to combine real-time digital microscope video and fragmentary texts suggested by museum signage (composed by poet Terri Witek). The project requires a Macintosh laptop, usb microscope, and video projector. If shown outside on a large architectural surface, the projector requirements are 10000 lumens or higher, depending on outside lighting conditions, and the project should be ideally shown at night. If the project is shown inside with controlled lighting, a projector of 7500 lumens or lower can be used. As suggested by the site-specific nature of *Invisible Instruments,* dimensions will be variable, depending on the size of the projection surface and the focal length of the projector lens. Electricity 120 or 220 is needed for the project, as well as a small table for the laptop and other small equipment. A stand or table may be needed for the video projector, depending on the space in which the project is performed.