

Artist Strategies for Web 2.0

The Context

The Techno Viking project is an example for the reordering, reediting and remaking of an „original“ video in the internet. The original video is in analogy to genes called a meme. As such the original and its first clones, start to circulate within social networks, where the original mutates, competes with other originals and inherits. Becoming multiplied in this way, the original video becomes successful by reproducing itself, through various recycling techniques.

In this way the Techno Viking project questions the creation's origin of such an internet hype. The popular result is not the beginning, but the the original + n, after being altered and filtered several times through a chain of actions and reactions.

The potential of public attention such clips raise, brings also attention to the role of such major companies as Google. Google as the owner of YouTube provides the basic technological structure not only to enable and control, but also to profit from such creations. If the creation is based on “free” social information networks, the product is commercialized through a monopole company. In this way the Techno Viking is a perfect example to illustrate such new ways of production and distribution within user generated networks.



The Techno Viking

The Techno Viking is a tall, muscular, charismatic, intimidating German man in his 30ies, that danced in front of the camera at the Fuckparade in Berlin in 2000. The Fuckparade emerged as a reaction to the music restriction (e.g. the exclusion of other techno styles as Gabber, Speedcore, Hardcore Techno or Punk music) of the Berlin Love Parade and its increasing commercialization, as well as a public demonstration against the shut down of the famous techno club "Bunker," (which serves as a home for a private art collection today.)

The Techno Viking became famous firstly through the "Kneecam" video. A girl with heavy blue dyed hair is dancing to the rough techno beats, while a rather unruly looking guy, crashes unfriendly into her. That accident is causing the Techno Viking to demonstrate his physical power. He snatches the guy's arms and pushes him back from where he came dancing from.

Pointing straight at another man and dominating him with his fiercely glance the Techno Viking produces an aura of fear, which brings the man to leave the situation. Only that incident enables the Techno Viking finally enough space to start dancing freely. His dance moves are wild and expressively but perfect in form. Soon he seems like the king of the street, having even fans, serving as "pop servants," supplying him with water bottles.

At You Tube the fascination with the Techno Viking is expressed in several statements. One of the most famous lines started to reappear with the countless remakes of the "original" footage itself: "The Techno Viking doesn't dance to the music, but the music dances to the Techno Viking".

After a definition published by Mister Neutral on Feb 16, 2008

rated: 1151 up (love it), 24 down (hate it)

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Techno%20Viking%20>

(Date: June 21st 2009)



The Archive

The original 4 min video "Kneecam No.1" was discovered in 2007 by the YouTube community and posted by users in various other platforms. After being linked and discussed in different web sites and internet forums, the footage got uploaded on www.break.com, a big american media portal. On this website with a clear male audience the video had it's peak on September 28th 2007, when more than a million viewers were looking at it in only one day. Yet within the following 6 months more than 10 Million people were watching the video under it's new name "Techno Viking." The new name appeared together with the hundreds of remix versions and responses to the original video, when the fans of the original, started to imitate the video's dramaturgy, reenacting it in their homes, at clubs or on the streets.

I was following those developments with great interest and researched the internet history of the video. In this way I documented its trajectory from its original production until it became a popular internet video multiplied by countless users. The archive of the Techno Viking contains now images, emails, blog and forum discussions, merchandising products and a selection of more than 100 categorized video responses. To give an inside view on the career of the video and to show recycling strategies at Web 2.0 I am presenting the archive in form of installations and lectures.



Following a selection of the most interesting video responses:

Short after the main hype moderated clips as the one from „Rocket Boom“ were created to provide information about the new meme. A mixture of statistics, quotes and jokes make it easy to consume the semi documentation:

Know Your Meme: Technoviking



0:16 / 1:50

★★★★★ 560 ratings 153,524 views

Know Your Meme: Technoviking

Results 1 - 30 of about 440,000 for [techno v](#)

SUCKS OR RULES

Technoviking Vs The Whole Chinese Army

who is the most powerful force on the face of planet earth...

Technoviking VS The Chinese Army

Created by [user]

1:26 / 1:50 153,524 views

1:21 / 1:50 153,524 views

Another moderated clip from the internet television channel “Revision3” introduces “rawcores” video response to the Techno Viking as a new cult video itself:

Lil' Internet Superstar - Episode 7 - TechnoViking



0:01 / 2:48

★★★★★ 5 ratings 667 views

Lil' Internet Superstar - Episode 7 - TechnoViking



Martin Sargent
Lil' Internet Superstar

0:08 / 2:48

★★★★★ 5 ratings 672 views

The captured version of Techno Viking from YouTube user "rawcore" reached itself more than 4 million viewers on YouTube, www.break.com and other platforms

TECHNOVIKING! (Captioned)



0:49 / 4:02

This is a video response to [KNEECAM](#)

★★★★★ 4,381 ratings 1,579,345 views

The peoples fascination with Techno Viking's dancing skills creates clips as the one from the "AE Thesis Lab" where a group of students is exercising the dancing technique.

AE Thesis Lab Techno Viking



0:01 / 2:47

★★★★★ 1 ratings 227 views

The most interesting genre of recycling memes is the recreation of the clip's dramaturgy by reenacting it in private and public space all over the world.

Techno Viking - High School Edition



0:36 / 1:25

This is a video response to KNEECAM No.1 - The Original TechnoViking Tape (High Quality)

★★★★☆ 91 ratings 17,157 views

Junkyard Viking



1:18 / 2:14

This is a video response to KNEECAM No.1 - the original Technoviking tape from 2000

★★★★☆ 93 ratings 18,185 views

Techno Viking spoof



0:22 / 0:54

★★★★☆ 3 ratings 726 views

Adam as Techno Viking



0:36 / 1:47

★★★★☆ 3 ratings 134 views

Pat Barry vs Techno Viking



0:34 / 1:26

★★★★☆ 97 ratings 36,217 views

Castalla Techno Viking



0:25 / 2:19

★★★★☆ 7 ratings 1,289 views

Techno viking parody



0:07 / 0:41

★★★★☆ 8 ratings 2,766 views

Techno VIKING de MAKEAS



0:34 / 2:28

★★★★☆ 9 ratings 965 views

Techno Viking even finds his way into the 3D worlds like here, where the Techno Viking like character „Mattias“ from the shooter „Mercenaries“ was animated to the exact dance moves of the Meme.



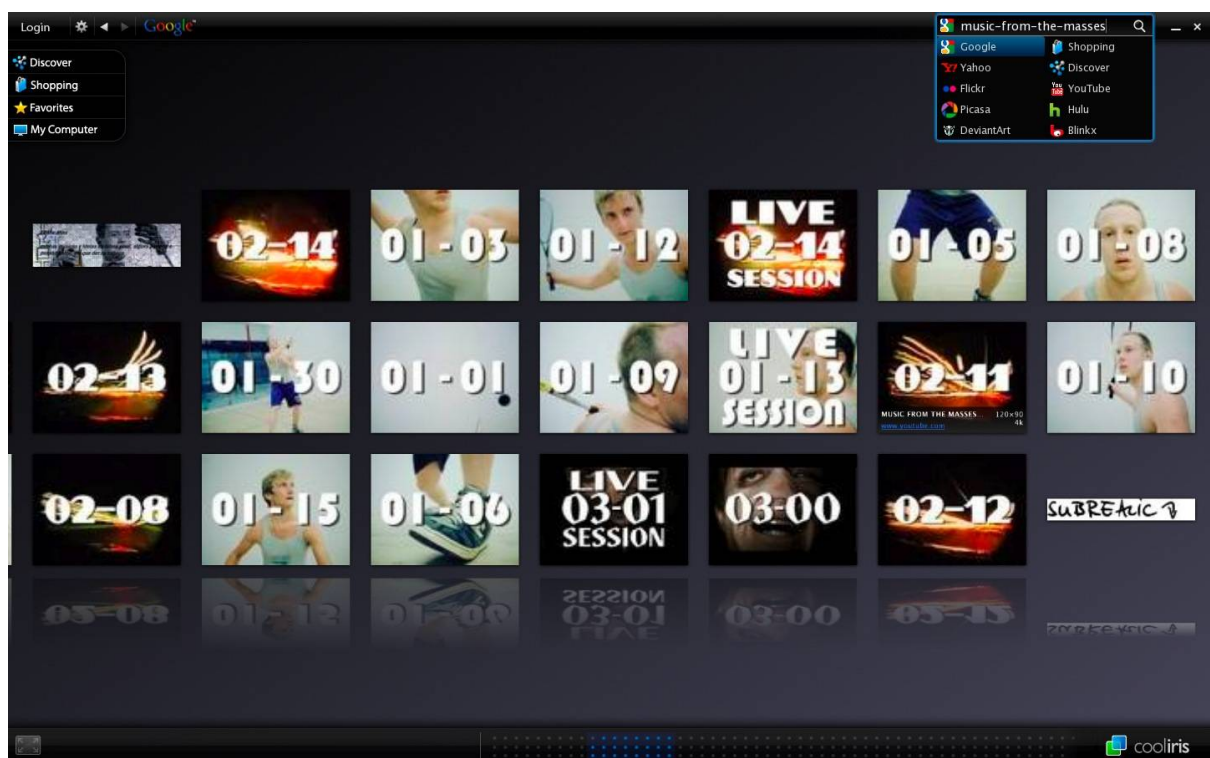
The combination of one meme with another can raise the attention within the fan community and creates an overlapping mass to other internet hypes. Here it is throughout the use of Vernon Koekemoer and Chuck Norris in a “Streetfighter” lookalike clip...



...or the collages with “Little Indian Boy” or the main character of the cult movie “300”



From my experience with the TechnoViking phenomenon I developed the Work “Music from the Masses.” I started to publish silent movies in the internet along with an open call for composers, musicians, sound designers and everybody else to create soundtracks accompanying the silent clip. The submitted contributions I published in the internet in combination with the video as music clips, while the work is an open edition, and will not have an calculated end. It will be furthermore possible to add always new compositions and variations. This generic model of recycling and resembling is producing a situation I call “Youtube-Reality.” It is a reality where the setting of an original identity is in constant and uncontrollable aesthetic modification.



More information can be found on the artist's website

<http://subrealic.net>

All images are taken from the Technoviking Archive by Matthias Fritsch 2009

The clips can be found by name search on the website <http://www.youtube.com>