

front cover -
.m.o.d.e.l.:
the manual/manifesto
produced by mark richardson & lee gumieny

title page –
.m.o.d.e.l.:
the manual/manifesto
produced by: mark richardson, lee gumieny
T.M. Press
Philadelphia, PA

back of title page –
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Philadelphia, PA
tmproduct@hotmail.com

First Printing

Table of Contents

Prologue: "T.M. Productions and the .m.o.d.e.l.: A Historical Perspective"

The Experience

The Roles: "O-P-C]"
Origin: "The Birth of Tension and the Stuff of Creativity"
Role/Responsibilities

Process: "Ownership: Adopting the Other(s)"
Role/Responsibilities

Control: "Tension and Temporality"
Role/Responsibilities

Epilogue: "About Identity"

PROLOGUE:

T.M. Productions and the .m.o.d.e.l.: A historical perspective

Riding home on the train, something entered my brain. I didn't notice it till I got home.

It was the lonely summer of 1997. I dug up the old keyboards and started to scribble phonetic gibberish on paper. I wanted a new language and to showcase that language against a layer of sound and beats. Syllables and pauses can be used to communicate different emotions or bring to consciousness certain experiences. That is what I wanted to do – words are joined-syllables that evoke emotion and memory; my new language would be no different. My father built a pigeonhole system to hold all the keyboards and equipment. An Avaton or a Model? My sister said I should go with the model, so did my father.

The premiere of the .m.o.d.e.l. was August 10, at my spacious home in Southern New Jersey. One sister was turning 16 and a second one helped with harmonies and also made the .m.o.d.e.l. more pleasing to look at. My sister's friends did not really get into it.

I fell asleep for nearly one-half year. *Again, something entered my brain. I didn't notice it till I went to my room and started talking.*

It was February cold of 1998. A much needed catalyst for the development of the .m.o.d.e.l. was the input and vision of other people. I felt good about getting it out of me and letting it be tested and pulled by friends and others. It was a pleasant surprise – and it was no longer my responsibility.

The second appearance of the .m.o.d.e.l. was hosted in Philadelphia by T.M. Productions, a group of several idea-owners/collaborators who were into expression and video. The show was a celebration of relationships and had quite the same effect on those who attended my sister's party: people stared at things and didn't think to applaud until the end. "We could use curtains", I thought.

It was decided to do a third show in Grantham, though it was not an attractive proposition to any of us. The basement made us feel better, once it was decorated and sound and video filled its empty space. A fifth track has been added, though we got into a car accident on the way up. I admitted to myself, "we are not a rock group". The art was expanded this time, Claudie did a sketch for homework. Everyone sat quietly on the floor, much like a social demonstration, but without the sex and polarization.

Every time we decided to do it, we thought it would definitely be the last time. For real, this time, not like last time.

Thanks for accepting the responsibility of being honest. I think it is good that people have different things to say. It helps us all to remember things we forgot.

THE EXPERIENCE:

The .m.o.d.e.l. is not a concert. The .m.o.d.e.l. is not music.

The .m.o.d.e.l. is both entity and experience. We (Origin, Process, Control) are the .m.o.d.e.l. and the .m.o.d.e.l. is that which happens when we all converge at the designated nexus: particular time, particular space. The .m.o.d.e.l. is both community and individual. The .m.o.d.e.l. is something which happens to us, the .m.o.d.e.l.

Just as importantly, the .m.o.d.e.l. is something which happens to the audience. But the audience is not an audience at all – not stagnant, passive beings which effect nothing; they are Participants and therefore essential to the Experience. It is their perceptions and reactions which make meaning and define our actions.

The Experience begins for the Participants the moment they step into the environment. The first element which the Participants encounter shall be the Controllers. From the very beginning, the Controllers shall attempt to influence the Participant's actions and therefore Experience with incentives and suggestions (most often of no particular consequence). No one shall be forced to do anything against his/her will but the Controllers will provide incentive for the Participant(s) to commit actions they would not normally consider (i.e. reduced entrance fees for receiving a stamp on forehead instead of hand).

Incorporated into the appearance/attire of the Controllers (and other Members of T.M. Productions) will be uniform(ed) elements which will designate the identity and responsibility of each Member.

The next stage of the Experience shall be the preamble to the music element, when Participants shall observe/interact with environmental stimuli created by the T.M. Productions. Audio and video signals, combined with three-dimensional constructions inhabit this stage. Ideally, the elements comprising this stage will be thematically unrelated and/or contradictory (i.e. science fiction scenery with gospel music), so as to reinforce the idea of diverse and oppositional stimuli.

When all has been made ready, the Origin will enter and position themselves in the center of the area, surrounding the physical Model (keyboard structure). Processors shall take their assigned positions in relation to the Origin. Once the Origin begins the audiophysics, the Processors shall begin the creation of their respective objects.

Video feeds will play simultaneously with the music. Lighting changes will reflect the speed, tone, and structure of the music. When possible, the experience is to be videotaped for future uses and potential integrations into the Experience. When the Origin concludes the presentation, all other members of T.M. Productions shall cease their assigned activities as well.

The Experience shall be concluded by an informal epilogue of video (ideally footage just shot during the Experience itself) and more music (usually comprised of pieces from the diverse sources which have influenced the music and philosophies of the .m.o.d.e.l. and T.M. Productions). As before, a mixture of environmental stimuli should be present to challenge.

THE ROLES:

[O-P-C]
Origin-Process-Control

When we speak of Origin, we mean Singularity – there is nothing more fundamental or Common to the Growth*Process – like a Slow River from which all things find their Start.

When we speak of Process, we mean Tension and Emergence – it is expression: pushing forth life from Life, meanings from Deep Meaning, and so on.

When we speak of Control, we refer to Guidance and Constraint – of which there are two intentions: to enable and to disable.

ORIGIN:

The Birth of Tension and the Stuff of Creativity:

In the beginning, a small seed appeared in the Soil.

*The Seed was quickly consumed by the natural theatrics of the Growth*Process.*

*In a natural environment, no two Seeds are exactly the same in appearance or Growth*Process.*

The quality of any Seed lies in its fruitfulness. More clearly, they are judged by the ease with which the latent life livens to Activity.

Role/Responsibilities:
The music gives birth to everything that is during a performance. So this means two things. One, it is very important that we show up and play the five tracks. Two, it is not important how it sounds or if we forget lines or play foul notes. Why? Because we are creating an organism that corrects itself – with time and with energy. Is this plain enough to understand?
Other things: It is preferred that we do not laugh or show emotion or move our bodies too much. But before that, I must express the need for each member of the Origin to truly do his or her own thing. That is, in terms of music performance and anything else. I do not worry about matching up music tempo/crescendo with the visual pace of things. Let them match themselves if it is to happen at all. People will think it does or it doesn't whether it does or it doesn't. Isn't this hilariously true?

Lastly, one thing. We are in the Centre – at the center of the ideas, the area, and the stimulation being handed out. All other activities and participants pan outward from us like wings of birds or arms of a Ferris wheel. Here is the Tension – what is a Ferris wheel without the arms and make-out cabins, and what bird has no wings? (Please do not think of exceptions). The point here is to illustrate the inter-relatedness and the correspondence necessary for t.m.p. to excel in transcendence and exhilaration.

PROCESS

Ownership: Adopting the Others(s):

The philosophy and ideal(s) of the .m.o.d.e.l. are most easily observed visually. The aesthetic of the .m.o.d.e.l. (its beauty values and preferences) is present in many aspects of the Experience: the physical environment of the performance, Member uniforms, aural stimulation, the propoganda set forth promoting the experience and the live creation of "processed art."

Processed art is the resultant creation of physical objects "inspired" by the sum stimuli of the .m.o.d.e.l. Experience. Processed art is created by a select group of participants known as Processors. The Processors are the personification of a creative dynamic which is influenced by outside sources, yet maintains the integrity of a individualistic procedure.

The foremost and ultimate operating dynamic for the visual (re)presentation of the .m.o.d.e.l. is tension. Tension may exist on many levels but is designed to parallel a tension of ideas present in the philosophy of the total .m.o.d.e.l. conception at large. We define tension as mental stress/effort to synthesize ideas which have been traditionally conceptualized as unrelated or in opposition.

Some important concepts incorporated throughout the .m.o.d.e.l. and the way in which they relate to its visual aesthetics are as follows:

- **Control:** aesthetics are constrained by the historical context by which they were birthed (the history of art, the individual, the environment of the .m.o.d.e.l., etc.)
- **Freedom:** though constrained by varying control components, each individual is encouraged to express/synthesize, personally and subjectively, the reactions which arise from those contexts
- **Old:** this is the temporal parallel to the Control concept; aspects which constrain necessarily due to the influence of precedents.
- **New:** the temporal parallel to Freedom, previously non-existent ways of synthesizing the competing influences of the Old

The total environment which the .m.o.d.e.l. creates is meant to express certain emphasized ideas in tension; for example: religious symbols/imagery to invoke Tradition; technological creations to suggest the New/Future. This environment will be composed of the sum accumulation of sound, (physical) structure, lighting, Participants, creative materials, etc.

The layering of and simultaneous exposure to contrasting images/representations is ideally structured to foster a creative and insightful dynamic resulting in a new "middle ground," balance or synthesis for each individual (T.M. Productions and Participants). Synthesis may take the form of impressions or expressions. The environment shall ideally be assembled in such a way as to suggest no single these/meaning/message, but challenge the mind to make sense of certain proposed ambiguities; to create order from chaos. If possible, we strive to capture the kerygma, or common fundamental truths, which exists within each of these diverse influences.

Roles/Responsibilities:

The Processors shall be responsible for and participate in assembling the Experience's physical environment. Thinking about and working out the physical surroundings into a harmony with the .m.o.d.e.l.'s idea(l)s and values will be a warm-up to all men's is a foundational truth, a necessary enigma. But somewhere in the necessity of all this existing, living, creation and expression, we each manifest differently. No one has lived what we've lived; no one has been where, heard what, felt how I have. And the unavoidable is that you will necessarily take what is you and I and We and internalize and reverse and inflict it back upon me and we and us, creating the endless possibilities which shall turn upon us again. And once more.

In the past, painter-Processors reinforced the ideas of tension and parallel by functioning in relation to the conception of Old, in terms of technique. Other, more "traditional" art forms should remain integrated by select Processors to maintain this function. The New shall be captured/expressed via live video recording, pre-recorded video, technical manipulations and other non-traditional art-forms.

The live-video-technician-Processor(s) should also incorporate the previously discussed parallels and tensions. This tension may be expressed by, but is not limited to, contrasting recognizable "objects" with unrecognizable, abstract features (colors, shapes, movements), etc.

CONTROL

Tension and Temporality:

Control: in the eye of the beholder

Though I have not yet seen them, I can envisage streams and rivers in both low and high places where the rushing of the water is socialized by the presence of large rocks in the water body. I should describe the particular rocks I see: they are ancient and of one or two colors, made from hard earth of different locales and seasons. I assume they are there from rolling down or over or from coagulating from sediment in the river belly. The trend of the water follows a loose course around, through, and over top of these earth-masses. The river and the rocks exchange blows: the rocks lose some face, the rivers some force. But this is only normal in the natural world.

Can we translate this natural theater into the political language of what is traditional and what is progressive? As with the use of any metaphor, there are some gains and losses in the process. But this is only natural.

Of one's mind (even society) is like a river – constantly in flux, integrative, and organic – we can also envisage large build-ups of rock standard and sediment sentiment protruding its body. These earth-birthed things represent the creations of a certain geography and time period. "At this time in the metaphor, one may either opt to frame the picture of challenge the existence of the current-obstructions. Because we are discontented and hungry, we shall take up the latter.

We are given certain truths and non-thinkables by our parents, priests, teachers, and by our friends. We are told that these truth-artifacts represent the way the world is. Some who-bodies even claim to remember the day the truth rolled down to them from the heavens. Many of us can bear witness here. These inherited-historical sites pepper our river-body and solidify the banks and the depths. But, as god would have it, our minds are integrative organs that thrive on the familiar and the waiting. For example, immediately upon leaving our mothers we take up art, philosophy, architecture and tragedy. When one awakens to the majesty and the tragedy engendered in everyday life, the powers of the river intensify and focus upon the Signs of Tradition (S.o.T.), seeking to deface them. A clean operating system becomes the objective (a sleepy river, on the other hand, is content to follow the default growth-exchange schedule). This is not achieved easily.

What is needed to dislodge the S.o.T. from their regal sanctuaries? – nothing short of a worldwide flood. A great flood of maximum magnitude violently brings natural renewal, re-writing the physical reality. The terrain is re-imagined, names for mountains and valleys are exchanged, and old water-bodies follow along new wrinkles. Tremendous courage is needed to survive such a comprehensive manual re-write. But great and new excitement follows. There are now new theatrics, the old dust and wood have been stirred with the younger ones, and the rivers settle old scores with their older foes. Life gives way to new and fuller life.

What happened to our stout and stubborn towers (the S.o.T.s) which claimed infallibility and transcendence? I imagine they are broken up into much smaller pieces of standard, less intimidating and more productive for the Collective. In a frightening twist of beauty, they now are a part of the Flow they once stood vainly to oppose. So what is control?

Role/Responsibilities:

The wonderful secret in life is that some curses can be transcended. The Controllers appear in dress and operate as if they are part of a narrow, dominating campaign. However, this is only an illusion, as "delinquent" Participants will find out. The groupings of Participants and the physical limits separating and isolating one group from another are separating and isolating to those who choose to believe so. We feel this is a central idea in confronting our self-imposed limitations and our ideas of self-evidence and certainty.

The head controller will present "orders" in between tracks to effect the Participants to move to other designated quadrants of the environment. The guides assigned to each group will at that time remove the barriers, suggesting Participant through behavior only. They are not to coerce. There is to be no subversion of the human will to transcend, to be unbounded, to revolt. This may mean the decay of the boundaries and areas of neutrality, but that is a welcome development.

The Controllers, as mentioned before, will have a certain militaristic quality, performing their duties in an emotionless, routine fashion. Acts of deference to the head controller would be in order, for instance, saluting/kowtowing, etc. These are open to suggestion and modification.

EPILOGUE:

About Identity

The .m.o.d.e.l. initiated with a single concept: meaning making. That concept was inevitably several concepts, ideas such as God, man, history and culture. The .m.o.d.e.l. was selective. The criteria was/is Everything. In speaking of the/a .m.o.d.e.l., it is important to recognize that your basis is not only "I" or "They" or "You", but also "We": the community of the inclusive, unavoidably incorporating the singular "I."

The .m.o.d.e.l. is the most recent occurrence – it has been a long time in coming. Everything that has ever been has culminated in the .m.o.d.e.l.. But the .m.o.d.e.l. is not omniscient; it often forgets what it is, where it has been.

The .m.o.d.e.l. embraces the universal yet asserts none. We value and uphold the miracle of the One: both You, you, we, and I. To be human is to struggle with the affirmation of contradiction. At times we give in. Often we defy. "All things to all men" is a foundational truth, a necessary enigma. But somewhere in the necessity of all this existing, living, creation and expression, we each manifest differently. No one has lived what we've lived; no one has been where, heard what, felt how I have. And the unavoidable is that you will necessarily take what is you and I and We and internalize and reverse and inflict it back upon me and we and us, creating the endless possibilities which shall turn upon us again. And once more.

We crave knowledge and claim ignorance. The .m.o.d.e.l. is exploration. We have no textbook or guidelines. We are instructed by impulses and hunches. Some directions are dead-ends, others are boundless. We claim the right to explore them all and determine what they/we mean. To us. Here. Now. Essentially and relatively, we are all blank and inviting, but in different ways: the endless variety of what has happened only to Me and me and me.

We are "old" and we are "new." We are "religious" and we are "scientific."
We are "conservative" and we are "liberal."

We don't know the meanings of those words.

We are defined anew every moment.

We are part of something. A bigger something.

But we are separate. Distinct. I set forth no agenda but the one(s) you discover in the process. The .m.o.d.e.l. is entirely Process.

The .m.o.d.e.l. is alive. The .m.o.d.e.l. is defined in negative terms. The .m.o.d.e.l. is not art and the .m.o.d.e.l. is not philosophy and the .m.o.d.e.l. is most certainly not music. The .m.o.d.e.l. is the culmination of all this plus infinity and our mission, the conceived of experience and ideal of the .m.o.d.e.l., is to barrage itself with every competing and complementary influence in order to create something totally unique in your synthesis of the stimuli.

The .m.o.d.e.l. is amplification. Amplification. Listen well.

For this is the way we become the .m.o.d.e.l. .

As you are the .m.o.d.e.l. .

As I am the .m.o.d.e.l. .

As the .m.o.d.e.l. has been transformed. And is transformed. At this very moment.

inside back cover

From: jw1176@messiah.edu Save Address Block Sender

Date: Mon, 12 Oct 1998 13:15:41 -900 (PDT)

To: Mark Richardson<mail.tj@slu

Cc: jgumieny@hotmail.com

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"...if the model is to take every variety of form then the matter in which hte model is fashioned will not be duly prepared unless it is formless and free from the impress of any of those shapes which it is hereafter to receive from without."

>dialogue with timaeus –plato

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back cover

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