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GERI WITTIG

INTERVIEW: ETOY

Interview with etoy

By Geri Wittig

Although it may not have reached the media saturation of the millennial spectacles that unfolded around the world and across our TV screens this past New Year's Eve, the etoy vs. eToys precedent setting lawsuit has definitely produced a notable display of fireworks across the media landscape during the final month of 1999. It erupted with particular intensity across our computer screens - the windows into the cyberspace that this situation has such potential to impact. The good news is etoy is holding strong in the battle of the rhizomatic, decentralized Internet community vs. the overwhelming forces of e-commerce that have taken the net by storm. But as they say, money isn't everything, as it looks like there's a possible acquiescence by the eToys Goliath in the works. As reported in the Washington Post on December 31st, "In conciliatory faxes to the artists' attorney, an eToys lawyer pledged to "take all necessary steps" to allow etoy to reestablish its domain, www.etoy.com, which has been shut down by court order since Nov. 29." But as of the latest court date, which took place on January 10th, eToys had not dropped the lawsuit. So until eToys makes good on its PR pronouncements, the TOYWAR rages on.

For a comprehensive listing of media coverage go to:

http://dmoz.org/Society/Activism/Media_Activism/Culture_Jamming/etoy/Media_Coverage/

Following is an interview with the etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER, which took place during the heat of battle on 12/10/99.

etoy.DISCLAIMER: this interview was recorded over a bad TCP/IP connection in the middle of the night between 01:00 and 04:00 GMT+1 on December 10, 1999 after a six hour meeting with the etoy.LAWYERS in Switzerland and 12 shots of nitrous oxide. The etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER accepts no liability for mistakes and sentences that don't make sense.

Geri Wittig: etoy's now in its seventh year - any seven year itch?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Could you explain this term? I'm not familiar with this.

GW: I wasn't sure if that was just an American term. It's a term that especially applies to marriages, but it could really apply to anything. It's the idea that there's a certain cycle, or a tendency at seven years, for people to get bored with something and want to move on.

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: We've always had huge changes in the operation. It's actually difficult to say when the seventh year is. etoy was founded in October 1994, but there was a pre-history. There was a time before the official founding, when a few people started to prepare the operation and started to operate under different names. So it was 1992 when the whole thing started in some capacity, but in 1994 it became etoy. Of course we've always had changes in the group and in the concept of etoy, so 1992-1994 was something like a pre-etoy era. Looking at it in a timeline format, the years from '94 to early '97, could be called the hijacking period. We did the digital hijack and also other hijacks. There was the television hijack, when we hijacked a television show in Switzerland with lots of television viewers. There were 1.8 million viewers when we hijacked the television show there. We just jumped on the stage and were talking to the show master about the Internet. After 10 seconds, the agent who did the hijack left the stage and the show master was left alone to wonder what had just happened. After the hijack we had the first sort of crash. We had problems in the crew because there were different ideas to go on, so there was something like a crash. At this point we concentrated on our internal operations. It was during this time period that we started to develop the database work you were interested in. We developed internal office structures, in the etoy style, not standard solutions. More like absurd, very surreal, internal platforms to develop things. And we had the idea that if we developed a very, very strange, special and experimental working environment, then this would lead to another aesthetic and new ideas. Because we are convinced that the environment you work in is responsible for your output. We invested a lot of time, energy, and money into these things and a lot of people didn't understand that. They wanted to see us hijacking forever, because it was funny. This was a hard time, because we didn't have a lot of surface. Lots of people were waiting for our next super product and heist, but we were totally focused on internal strategy. And of course for a long time we didn't show these things to people - for about a year. I mean we had one show in Budapest, which was very good, but it was a preview or very early idea of what we will release in a few days or weeks, which is called TOYWAR.com. This is a very database oriented project. It's the domain, which is presently for the resistance. Right now it's just a platform to allow people to subscribe, so we can collect addresses and communicate about

what's going on. But this will change as soon as TOYWAR is released. We will release sort of an action entertainment game, which is a multi-user game. People are part of a huge battlefield, where they can fight against eToys Inc. People will have their own character and will have an income - if they work hard they get etoy.SHARE options. They will also decide what's going on - what the next step will be, because the shareholders will decide whether to sell etoy or not.

GW: How long have you been developing this? I mean it seems like you must have accelerated the development because of everything that's happened in the past month or so. Were you planning this back in September when the lawsuit first happened?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: No, as I told you we started to do something that was called "protected by etoy" and we released a very early version in Budapest. We showed it there, but it was a really early test. We had the show in a gallery and it was a one night event that was organized like a party. People were invited to the party and at the moment they entered the gallery, they had to pass a special desk where they had to log in. They had to leave their names and fingerprints to register. The whole thing turned into a huge database - the whole party was represented on a database and we were thinking more of the database aspect, than what was going on at the party. It was more important for what was going on on the computers. Every person was represented. There were screens in the gallery space and projections, so people could see themselves represented as numbers. They all had a special event number and they could see them moving in these projections. The interesting thing was that it was called "protected by etoy" it was a whole absurd surreal protection situation. People always had to walk in and identify themselves. If they didn't do that there were alerts and special etoy agents knew when an alert started, which number hadn't logged in and we would remove this person from the gallery space. There were people with cars outside waiting who brought these people to another place - they were removed. An interesting thing was people had to consume nitrous oxide and we were following their behavior. It was really interesting. On the database and the projections you could see how many shots or how many injections a person had had. We could see which people didn't take any shots, or which people abused the stuff and got addicted to it. We had control over a combination of factors. So this was just a test to see how we could visualize a community or an amount of people doing something. Of course database stuff is often a little bit boring. So we usually add something spectacular or dangerous, so people are then really interested in the information. Because information alone is often boring, unless you're perhaps an expert who is interested in statistics, but we found out that people are not

usually interested in that. So we usually try to connect it to some kind of interesting topic.

This was a show we did in return for our time as artists in residence at the Center for Culture and Communication in Budapest. It was good as an interesting research event, but we are more interested in the Internet, so this was kind of a test area.

GW: And this research fed into TOYWAR.com?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: The TOYWAR project has some roots in this idea, but of course it's a totally different story. From a technical side there are a lot of ideas which we could transfer into the TOYWAR project. TOYWAR doesn't have a physical presence - it's Internet based, which is very important because it has allowed for a resistance community from all over the world to join and subscribe. There are many hundreds of people subscribing at the moment and they are all located in different cities.

So yes we started to program and work on this back in '97, but of course during the last few months we saw that this lawsuit was coming. It's very difficult because we can never really make any forecasts because it's always changing. It depends on the court decisions, it depends on the attorneys, on the enemy's attorneys and it also depends on our attorneys - we cannot make a forecast for any situation, so it's very flexible and it's always changing. But we saw that this topic has the potential for a huge impact, because the whole lawsuit is really a precedent setting situation.

GW: Right - I was going to ask you about that. Does etoy embrace that precedent setting situation - in that it's actually possibly a good thing in terms of your legacy, because you could become part of something that sets a legal precedent.

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Yeah - of course that's important. It's a complex thing. As I mentioned before, it's so complex - the good and the bad things are also blurring the lines between all these aspects. On one side it's a real problem - it's a real unfair thing that's going on, because it's just stupid and ridiculous. And we hope that this will turn around as we enter another court and find judges who will really have a look at this situation and they will find out that we really have priority rights.

GW: How is it that a U.S. court can have jurisdiction over a European based operation?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: That's just because the Internet is global and the office that manages the .com domains is also in the

United States. Of course they tried to stop the whole share thing, but they can't stop it because we can do it in Europe. But they forbid us from selling shares in the U.S., especially not in California. But the Internet domain, is the biggest problem for eToys Inc. - they say we're interfering with their American trademark. They say it's a violation of trademark law. That's not true, that's the biggest part here, the most important part, because also in trademark law we are not wrong. We also have trademark rights. They came up with another company that they say is older than we are, but no one can prove it up to this moment and it really looks like they are just using this argument to destroy us on a financial level. Because it takes a long time until the situation is that far, that developed that the courts can really analyze the actual situation, who was there when and so on. That happens at a later stage and it's very expensive to get there. They just speculate that we cannot really survive up to that moment. It's really a strange situation. They also say they bought this trademark from another company, but they just bought it this year, so it's really strange.

GW: The next hearing is scheduled for December 27th, which seems very convenient since it's two days after the Christmas shopping season ends. What's going to be taking place during that hearing, what's the next step in the litigation? (This hearing was actually postponed until January 10, 2000.)

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Right now we are checking, because it's such a bad thing as you said that they scheduled the next court date between Christmas and New Year and it's just impossible to get flights for this date. Of course you can go to L.A., but it would cost us at least \$2000 a person to go there. Also all types of holiday obligations are coming up, so it's the worst date you could set for such a thing when you have international people involved. What we heard from the last court hearing was just insane and ridiculous, they just listened to the attorneys for a short while and then the judge took out a prepared statement and signed it and that was it. There was no chance to do anything. The next court date on the 27th, the same judge will be hearing this. This is really bad, but that's not the end of the story of course, it's just another thing. There are many articles hitting the newspapers and the Internet at the moment. There is a huge resistance community preparing for a fight against them on all types of levels, a lot of levels that we have no influence over. I mean we definitely would not hack their system or anything like that. Some people expect that from us, they say, "hey you can hack them." We definitely wouldn't do that we are not stupid or naïve. If we hacked them, we would end up in jail for sure. If they can take our domain with such a bad legal background, they can also put us in jail the next time we arrive in America. So we are careful, we don't do

anything illegal - we never did. The hijack was not illegal. But of course with this whole media thing, they provoke a lot of people who have really bad ideas, sick dreams, some of these people send these dreams to us or these ideas that they have. And we can just feel that if they go on like that they have to be careful that their company is not going down. Some people told us that they will fail if they go on with this thing, because they rely completely on the Internet. If their servers are not working during the Christmas season, no one will go back to this shop anymore. If their servers are not working for a few days, it can be millions and millions in lost revenue. That's the good thing, they can be hurt by bad public opinion. On one side they can attract bad people who can hurt them and on the other side their customers get angry and don't buy there. Of course, their big, big business has not yet been established. Last quarter they lost 40 million dollars. They don't have a huge income, but of course it's all projected in the future. They hope to win all the customers who do their shopping there, but if they have a bad image, they will not be successful. Especially in this market, in the children's toy market they rely on a good image. That's our insurance. That's the thing we can use against them.

GW: There's been a resistance movement from the artworld and etoy fans that has rallied and it seems like there's an alliance between etoy and RTMark - it looks like RTMark is in part sponsoring TOYWAR.com. So I'm interested in your relationship, because at Ars Electronica you presented them with a sizeable contribution. Do you see your relationship maybe analogous to something like Microsoft and Apple and are there any plans for any hostile takeovers?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Of course we are playing around with these aesthetics because there are many net artists out there, but RTMark is probably the closest to us in terms of the ideas and inspiration behind the concepts. We really like their way of operating and we feel really close to each other because of this corporate style and stock market idea. They came up with these mutual funds and all that type of thing and that's a really smart and important thing. Because we think that's more interesting than just the formalistic or abstract visual approach. One of the biggest impacts is this huge change in the financial world - all these Internet startups and not just the isolated companies, also the whole way they are traded. The classical stock market is disappearing and it's all done on virtual stock markets like the NASDAQ. People can interact really fast and it's somehow interesting that the dealers in between disappear somehow and it's also not true that people have that control. It's a very strange gambling thing that's going on and it's not so clear what kind of goals or what the result of all this will be - will it be a huge

fucking crash or what? Because a lot of these companies really gamble, definitely gamble around the money of other people. But it has a huge impact on what we are surrounded with. For instance as artists or as people who work with technology, and nearly everyone has to work with technology on some level today in our world where we live; I mean Europe and America. I'm not talking here about other areas like Africa where it's another situation, but our culture is totally defined by all these tools that these corporations produce. We don't say that all these corporations are bad or good, but we want to use this kind of thing as a topic as artists, we think it's much more interesting than all the other things which are going on. So from this point of view, it's logical that this whole lawsuit has a good impact on the whole world, because somehow it makes it intense and a lot of people are now trying to understand what the whole etoy.SHARE thing is as an art piece. Before it was just a diagram and people thought - "yeah it's a diagram and it doesn't interest me because I don't know how to read the diagram or it's just like some type of stock market thing and I'm not interested in that. Art should be more fun or more intense or have more intention." Like a good movie or something. I mean the hijack, our first so to speak hit was interesting, because it worked with action elements, media hacking ideas, friendly abuse of the internet and search engines, that are boring on the first glance. Now that the whole share concept has also turned into something that is intense, that can produce tension, people are following the value and the crashes and the rising of the share value. Did you follow the community effect during the past few days - there is a huge community which is mailing, people are mailing to each other, to the press, to the eToys CEO and they are always making comments on the stock market? Did you follow the stock market in the last week?

GW: Yes, I've been following the discussion on Rhizome and the eToys share value.

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Just now eToys lost again, they've been losing money and it's really interesting, people are totally excited by that. We think that it's a good thing that's happening, because these topics enter art.

The etoy.SHARE-VALUE gets compared to the eToys value on the NASDAQ which is absurd, but exactly the type of thing we wanted. It's a twisted story about value, about revenue, cultural value, and Internet companies. Our idea and concept is to make people think about these things. We produced an insane story placed in this stock market world, which is if you take a close look, as twisted as the etoy.REALITY. eToys lost much more in a few months - about 10 million - than we lost. Both corporations are just brands with projected values of huge revenues somewhere

in the future - it's a cool plot. Even if they cause a lot of damage to our system at the moment, we think that we can turn the situation around and make a very interesting media "art play" out of this. Because they've put a lot of money into this (estimates are about half a million dollars since the beginning) it is really intense.

GW: How's the lawsuit affected etoy.SHARE-VALUE?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: First of all it crashed totally because we lost our domain. Of course when people saw that we weren't around a lot of them thought that we were gone. Some people thought that we had been bought out. The eToys stock value was at 67 dollars a share when the preliminary injunction was signed at the court in L.A and if you check it right now, the value is at 45.43, so that's really nice.

GW: And the etoy.SHARE-VALUE, has it gone up?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Yeah sure. We had 47,000 hits in one day on the TOYWAR site and a lot of people are subscribing and spreading this media virus around the world and mailing to their friends, the eToy's executives, CEOs, and shareholders. This mail is posted all over the net. People post their messages, and it's really good. In terms of our share value of course, we are more famous than ever before. The idea is really traveling through the net, so that's a good thing.

GW: When the IPO was released in '98 there was a lot of trading activity, but in '99 it kind of leveled off. So do you think this is actually a beneficial thing for the share value - a shot in the arm for the share value?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: We always sold shares, but this summer more people were interested in the etoy.SHARE concept. Now we're overloaded with requests, because people are really starting to understand what this is all about - that this is a comment about the world and the situation on the Internet (startup companies, speculations, NASDAQ, etc.) There was an exhibition planned, but we couldn't do it because we didn't have time. But now it's definitely interesting because of the huge impact it generates and we also stopped working on everything else. We've also hired people to work on this. So we've put it all on this situation, because it's costing us a lot of money anyway. This lawsuit is super expensive. eToys wants to destroy us, but during the last few weeks we found solutions to finance our defense and it's a huge risk for us. But it's also a very good chance to affect something that can really have a huge impact on the world. We don't like the idea of being totally isolated from the

rest of the world as artists. We don't want to just work in our room and do something that is totally cut off from the world. So this will be a really interesting thing. Plus it's the hottest topic - NASDAQ and all these companies - their and our aesthetics and our culture, counterculture. We don't like the idea to just have something like a counterculture that is isolated somewhere in a cave - featuring a few bars and music and whatever. We want to really have an impact and change this whole thing.

GW: So where did you find financial backing?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: We sold a lot of shares during the last week. People really are supporting us. The share is now in the center again. Lots of people see that it's not just a certificate, that it represents something absurd. It's somehow absurd, but at the same time it's real somehow and also surreal on the other side. That may be very important if you want to describe etoy. We always try to take a situation or a code or whatever, or a platform and use this platform to really turn it into a surreal thing, to blur the lines between reality and virtuality. Virtuality is also surreal somehow, not just virtual in a digital sense; it's also surreal. Certain things become surreal. And we are working with this and if you take the hijack for instance, this is not just a story it really had an impact. I mean we hijacked one and a half million people on the net and these people saw this product and these people were confused and had to think about the way they navigate on the Internet and how they use search engines. It really had an impact, yet on the other side it was totally surreal because how could you get hijacked on the Internet? The same thing with the etoy.CARGO-TANKS. A major slogan was "etoy - leaving reality behind" and a lot of people were totally confused. We got a lot of critics who said, "Yeah and why are you now producing cargo containers? You're moving ten tons of steel around the world if you say you're leaving reality behind?" But that's just another thing which fits definitely into the etoy concept. We want to turn this situation into a surreal thing and of course if we became bigger and bigger we have to have offices, but it's not that funny if we invite people to a standard office in Zurich or when we were in San Francisco in San Francisco. So it's much better to show in a very direct way that our offices are totally surreal - our offices are these cargo containers, these orange boxes without windows, just cables going in the containers, bringing light and electricity into the container, nothing else - no windows or anything, just a door.

GW: I wanted to ask you something along that line. You speak about it as surreal, but I guess I was thinking about it as etoy projects a certain complexity or ambiguity in your strategy that blurs the line between irony and sincerity. There's a certain level of uncertainty that surrounds etoy actions, because the irony is

layered. Just looking at some of the statements that were on Rhizome this week and also the assistant director of C3 in Hungary had the same sentiment, that at first they weren't sure if the lawsuit was a hoax because they expect you guys to screw around with the systems. So how does that affect the way you present that complex balance of meaning? Because in the lawsuit you have to represent yourself as artists and it has to be pretty straightforward, but the way you guys operate is much more complex in terms of what the meaning is. So how does that affect how you project yourself to the world at this point when you're dealing with a lawsuit?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: I mean there are different layers. On one side we have to talk to our attorneys all the time and that's really fucking serious - more serious than we can handle sometimes. We have very very long meetings with our attorneys and there's financial pressure and of course we don't have the resources that these guys the enemies have. We're fighting with really really limited resources against a giant, but we have also decided to fight on the level of the giant somehow. A lot of people said we shouldn't fight against them on their level, but that's exactly what etoy has to do. In a standard situation or in a standard resistance situation, it's always good, if you're the small party, to reject the rules of the giant. Just fight your guerilla fight, and on some level we do that, but at the same time because etoy is built on very different complex layers, there is the serious, professional layer. So we are able to handle levels which another guerilla organization probably has to avoid because it's dangerous. Maybe it's also dangerous for us to start counter suing, etc., but that's exactly what's very interesting from the art aspect as well as from the concept aspect of etoy - that we blur these lines. We don't step back and let our domain name go and then fight back on a total underground level. We also think that we can provoke a precedent setting case and this will totally blur every line.

GW: I noticed in your history that you've had a few personnel crises. How do you avoid job burnout and keep the etoy talent from jumping into what's a really hot market?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: We're better trained now. We have experience in handling these things and we try to manage our resources. But again in the past we also knew that for us there is also a kind of rock and roll aspect, so it's always dangerous and you're always in danger of burning yourself out. There's an edge game here - we're always on the edge of all these things. But that's the thing we do. We try to manage this very difficult game, to travel on this borderline. Yeah somehow we have our problems with that like other people have problems like selling their toys, whatever. In every job you have your problems of course. We are

now in Switzerland because our attorneys are here, but the whole thing is also going on in the United States. I mean the whole media - we give about five interviews a day in America at the moment and during the nighttime we were guests of two radio shows, one for National Public Radio and the other one for Emmanuel Goldstein's show, "Off the Hook". These were live shows, so it's really exciting, but on the other side it's also difficult to manage. But that's what's also interesting for other people to watch. It's somehow an entertainment product, or we turn it into an entertainment product. For us entertainment and art are really close together. Not all the time of course, there is entertainment out there that I would never consider as interesting or as an interesting art thing, but there is also a lot of art which is not interesting for us. The most interesting art pieces or artworks are also entertaining for us. One person we definitely consider interesting is Matthew Barney and he is on this borderline somewhere between entertainment and something really surreal. We like this approach to art.

GW: Your look and your stance exudes a very stylish, militaristic quick response tactic. How does etoy view control of the information supply lines and how do you know that you don't have double agents?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Yeah, that's a certain risk. We have certain people subscribed to our mailing list who are employees of eToys Inc. and we know that. They can be spies for us or they can be spies for the enemy. We can't really know that, but it's definitely interesting to work exactly with this thing. I mean for instance the lawyers are also trying to get information and of course we block the IPs. We can see in the log files, which IPs they are using and so we set our system with special HTML documents just for them, so we delivered special documents to them. We just confused them - there are a few people who were checking the site every 15 minutes; do you have any idea what this costs? If a law agency is doing 24 hour surveillance, it's really expensive. We would never work with the attorneys, but with employees that's interesting. Because you can't know maybe they're also spies, we are careful with them, but I mean I'm sure of 400 people not everyone is really 100% loyal there.

GW: Another etoy personnel issue I was also interested in is equal opportunity employment. etoy, in terms of the agents at least, is all male. What is that about? Is that intentional or is that just circumstance?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: This was a certain period. We were working with ideas of virtuality and interchangeability, so it was important that there was a uniform look. We started first as a

group of a guys and we also thought about working together or placing women, but then it turned out it was much easier to play this confusing game if everyone looked about the same. We were in the same jacket and the same clothes. This was not just about uniform it was also about being interchangeable. This was a certain period, then about the beginning of '98 when we began the whole share idea we dropped this concept. It was not important anymore who was an agent and who was not, the important people became the shareholders. So etoy opened up, it's more like a corporation now. People are interchangeable because they are employees. There are lots of people involved in etoy now, they are all employees working for the etoy.SHAREHOLDERS.

Before we had the whole corporation share thing going on the idea was already very corporate, the style and corporate identity and all that, but the crew was definitely much more important than it is now. It's important to see it's a development - first we just tried to avoid a standard or traditional image of the artist for several reasons. One reason is the artist in a classical sense is often portrayed as an individual genius working alone and is often isolated. We don't like this idea. We think this doesn't fit into our time. If you want to do something that is important for other people today, you have to work with lots and lots of people. You have to work with people who are somehow on the same level. There is not one genius with the rest of the people being there to manage or realize the ideas of the genius. That's totally far away. Of course there are still artists out there who work like this, but we don't think that this is a future oriented solution. If you look at the music scene you have a lot of DJs for instance, who are really stars and are very important for cultural development. But they are not playing on stage, they are closer to the listeners or to the audience. A lot of people don't know the names of these people. I think it is blurring, a lot of very important things come from people who are not that famous. Maybe their project is famous, but you don't know how they look or who they really are. I think there is a stream going into this direction. We are just observing this, working on this, and so the first step in this development was to make a brand name famous and not a single person. No one remembers my name, I guess maybe a few people who are following really close know that I'm related to etoy, but a lot of people if I say I'm from etoy then they know me, etoy's what's famous, not my name. So this is the first step and we think that this was important just to start this idea of leaving this image of the genius artist behind. Just to make clear there is no genius artist. Then on the next step we were bored with that and we were also bored with being these boys. It's too limited. It's good for a certain time, it's like you're playing in a film, but it's very bad to play the same sitcom or same series for the rest of your life. It's also limited in that everyone who enters the group has to look like that. So it makes it impossible for women to enter the group, or

for black people to enter the group, because it would destroy the concept. Because of all these things and after we played it really intense for a long time, we saw we could change and opened it up to a shareholder thing. Then we found out that this was even more interesting and fits in better in our time.

GW: I wanted to ask you about two other projects the ZERO GRAVITY and etoy.ETERNITY plan - can you elaborate on these?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Of course right now we are a bit tied back to reality - virtual pseudo NASDAQ law agency courtroom reality. It's still something that's there, but it's transferred into something else. TOYWAR is now the operation that is the most important thing that's going on at the moment.

GW: Was there anything in the workings for some kind of etoy.2000 millennial project that has to be pushed aside for now?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Yes, we planned to produce something like this with RTMark. We sponsored the RTMark millennium project. In Linz, when we invested money in RTMark we invested into a kind of millennium project. But that's now changing a little bit. One thing is that RTMark is working on their own project in the context of this whole etoy case, but we have to be careful there because we want to win in court, so we cannot really be involved in those kinds of operations.

GW: With this issue of Switch focusing on database was there anything else you wanted to say about database and your ideas about database?

etoy.PRESS-SPEAKER: Of course for us database became more and more important, because you can manage huge complex amounts of data and bring them back into a visual form again. One very simple example is the whole etoy.SHARE-VALUE of course. That's basically a huge database project, just to show how different data streams are processed and turned into this etoy.SHARE-VALUE diagram. Of course we have other projects related to the idea, but TOYWAR will really bring it to the point. There you will really be able to see it.

DATABASE

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