Performance Research Seminar Series
fall 2019
Theatre – Brunel University London

Wednesday October 23: 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Drama Studio, Gaskell Building 048

Allen Sondheim (filmmaker/musician, Providence, Rhode Island):

“Somatic Ghosting”
Alan Sondheim will explore the somatic - bodies in relation to music making (possibly demonstrating this live, also talking about the dutar and Uyghurs (and showing a video of his dutar playing, with Azure Carter singing 'Human Smoke'), and then open that up to the grit of the body in relation to altered mocap - show/talk about video - then into the material from virtual worlds, the ‘America piece’, as well as those pieces where the land changes “losing” the avatar. The talk may also veer into discussing refugees, genocides, a far cry from the safety of digital / virtual representation – and what to do with brutality, strongmen – when nothing makes sense in the political theatre and we are working w/in the senseless. Sondheim will also address the ideas of malleability input / transformation / output- in relation to 1. Constraints--what bodies do--reading the inputs and outputs - 2. Related to gamespace--edgespace—blankspace - 3. Related to real bodies, bodies under stress--the analogic, idiotic real.

Alan Sondheim’s books include the anthology Being on Line: Net Subjectivity (1997), Disorders of the Real (1988), .echo (2001), Vel (Blazevox, 2004-5), Sophia (Writers Forum, 2004), The Wayward (2004),[4] and "Writing Under” (2012),[5] as well as numerous other chapbooks, ebooks, and articles. Sondheim has long been associated with the Trace online writing community, and was their second virtual-writer-in-residence. His video and filmwork have been widely shown. Sondheim was an Eyebeam resident. He co-moderates several email lists, including Cybermind, Cyberculture and Wryting. Since 1994, he has been working on the “Internet Text,” a continuous meditation on philosophy, psychology, language, body, and virtuality. His artwork can also be found within Second Life.[9] In 1996 he was keynote speaker for the Cybermind96 Conference in Perth Western Australia - one of the world’s first conferences specifically organised around an email discussion list. In 2012 he was a presenter and active participant at the CyPosium, a one-day online symposium on cyberformance. Sondheim is the developer of the concept of codework wherein computer code itself becomes a medium for artistic expression. His poetico-philosophical writings deal with the notion of embodiment and presence in cyberspace, loosely based on the work of postmodern philosophers Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida. He explores notions of the 'abject' in the masculine and feminine online, and more recently has dealt with the machinic using the language of computer code to articulate novel forms of identity in cyberspace. His work crosses over between philosophical explorations and sound poetry and more recently he has returned to the language of music using the tonalities of a wide range of ethnic instruments. His poetry has spanned several decades ranging from avant guard beat poetry and stream-of-consciousness of the late 60’s and 70's and soundscape poetry, maturing into a complex melding of multiple representational forms.