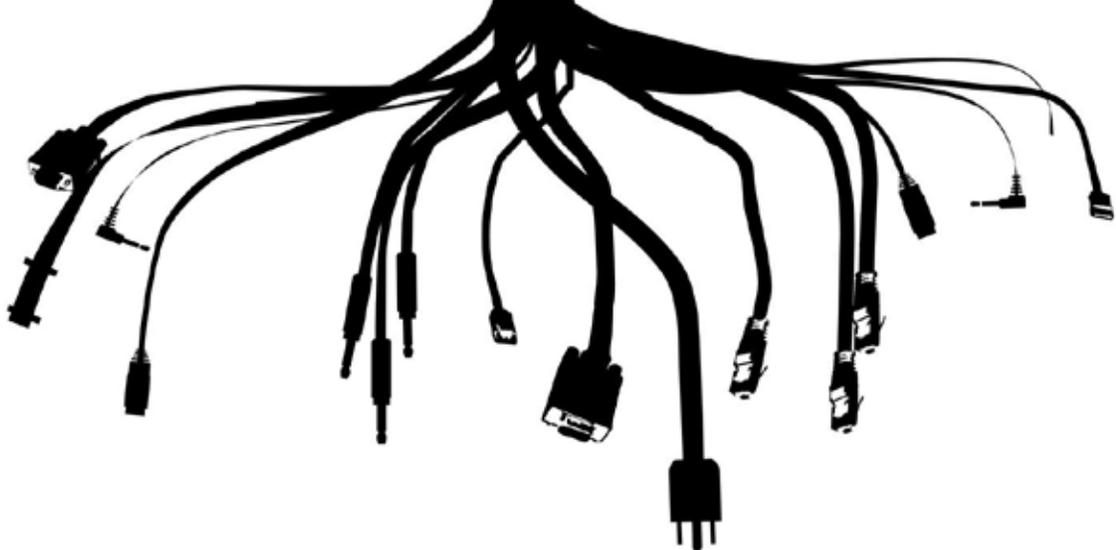


BIOMODD

www.biomodd.net

[LBA²]



BIOMODD

THE EXHIBITIONS

www.biomodd.net

Los Baños

UP Los Baños Student Union Building

August 5-20

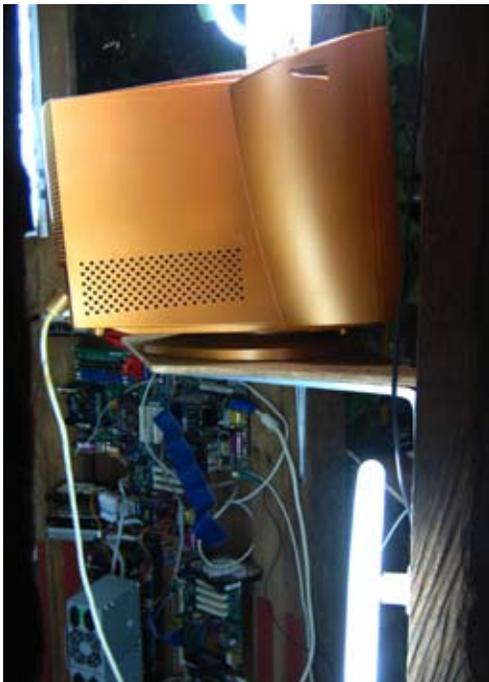
Opening - August 5, Wednesday
at 6pm

Manila

Museum of Contemporary Art and
Design / mcad (College of Saint
Benilde)

September 1-25

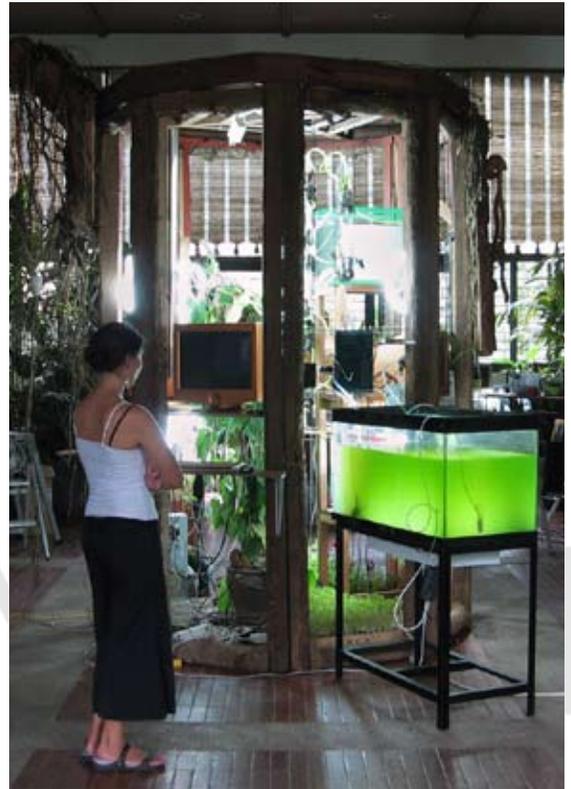
Opening - September 1, Tuesday
at 6pm



BIOMODD: Biological Art with a Twist

Imagine this: a computer that breathes life into plants, while simultaneously providing warmth to fishes, all encased in a wooden sculpture made by local artists. By using the computer to play a game, people can interact with the ecosystem and contribute to its growth. In a nutshell, that is what Biomodd physically is. It is, however, more than that. Touching on different disciplines such as sociology and environmentalism, it is a project that is one part art, one part science, but mostly, it is a tool for discourse on pressing issues such as e-waste, culture preservation, and even the conflict between tradition and modernization.

The fusion of nature and technology, and the seemingly paradoxical concept of combining art and science have made Biomodd not your typical art installation piece. It is, in its most basic definition, a case mod (computer casing that has been enhanced or modified) composed of recycled computer parts, with the heat generated from the machines stimulating the plants to grow. The casing itself will be carved in wood and will be made to reflect the history and culture of the environment where it is being created.



What started as an idea by Belgian biologist turned artist Angelo Vermeulen, Biomodd is now an international collaboration, with installations being set in different countries. The first piece was made in Athens, Ohio in 2007 when Vermeulen was an artist in residence at the Aesthetic Technologies Lab. At present, Biomodd is here in the Philippines, with the production ongoing at the University of The Philippines Open University (UPOU) lab in Los Baños. Eventually, other Biomodd versions will also be launched in Singapore and Brazil.



BIOMODD [LBA²]

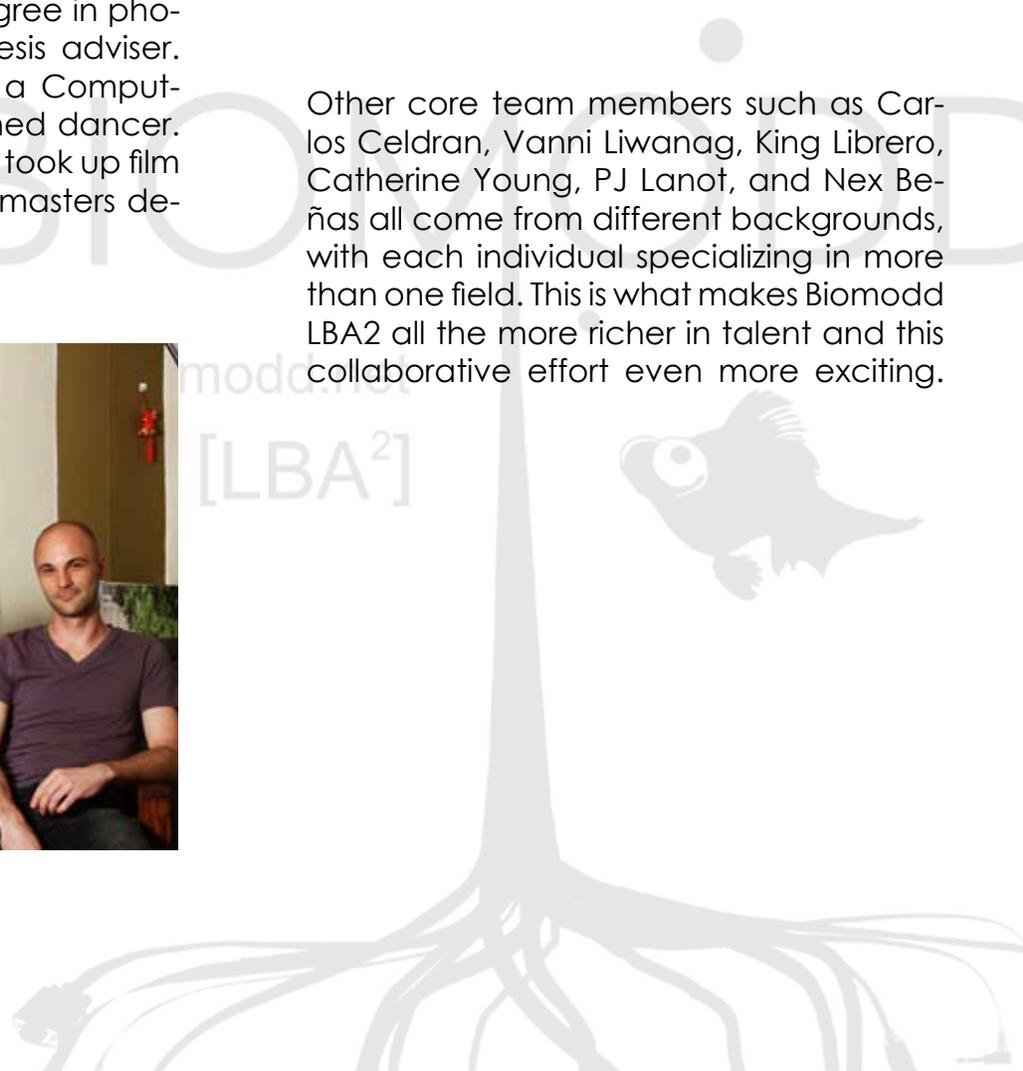
www.biomodd.net

So why a **Philippine Biomodd**? The answer to that question is as fascinating as the project itself. Vermeulen met Martha Atienza, a Filipino-Dutch artist, in an art festival and was convinced that the Philippines would be a great place to create the sculpture. Atienza introduced him to filmmaker Waise Azimi, who in turn, introduced him to multi-media practitioner Diego Maranan. From these encounters, Vermeulen decided to visit the Philippines and together with Maranan, set out in composing a team to build Biomodd LBA² (short for Biomodd Los Baños Version 2.).

The people behind the local version of Biomodd is as diverse and multi-disciplinary as this collaboration. Aside from having a PhD in Biology, Vermeulen has a degree in photography and is a Fine Arts thesis adviser. Meanwhile, Diego Maranan is a Computing Science graduate and trained dancer. Project Manager Lai Del Rosario took up film in college and is working on a masters degree in Museum Studies.



Other core team members such as Carlos Celdran, Vanni Liwanag, King Librero, Catherine Young, PJ Lanot, and Nex Beñas all come from different backgrounds, with each individual specializing in more than one field. This is what makes Biomodd LBA2 all the more richer in talent and this collaborative effort even more exciting.



BIOMODD COLLABORATIONS

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With its pool of artists, scientists, students, and art enthusiasts all working together to make the project happen, Biomodd LBA² is well on its way to being completed and exhibited in September this 2009. Currently, the team is working on getting a tree to use as a central structure for the case and is building a wooden mock-up to explore creative cooling, heat capture, and irrigation systems. They are also looking into collaborating with the Araos family and Cagayat woodcarvers in Paete.



BIOMODD ALL OVER

www.biomodd.net

Aside from the creation of the installation piece, Biomodd LBA² also aims to promote dialogue and discourse amongst its audience. To spread the word and encourage people to take part in this effort, a Biomodd Summer Party was held in M Café on April 17. This fundraiser was attended by about 500 people, and most of them not only partied, but also donated their time and resources to the project. A similar event took place on May 23 at Green Papaya Art Projects, where the Biomodd group gathered interested individuals to donate old computers and parts --- equipment that will, in turn, be incorporated into the installation.

What is **next** for Biomodd? Aside from the aforementioned exhibit in September and the eventual iterations in Singapore and Brazil, Biomodd is really something that addresses the future --- it is a concept that can be modified by anyone to suit their own version.



people Mastering Hybrid Art

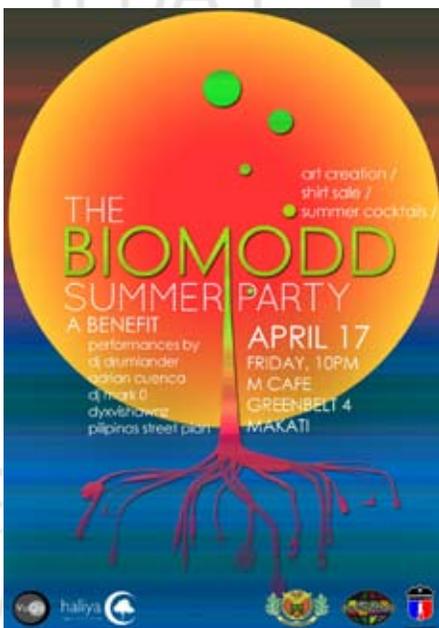
By Jeffrey H. Choi

As a social project, Biomodd has no definite direction except that toward hybrid culture. "It brings the core concept to the point that I have no control," says Vermeulen. He plans to bring Biomodd to Singapore and Thailand. In the Philippines, however, he is not undeterred by the lack of a clear direction.

As a Vermeulen fan, the Biomodd is being shared by others, and this is being shared by others. In the Philippines, he is being shared by others. In the Philippines, he is being shared by others. In the Philippines, he is being shared by others.

Back in Belgium a year later, he began experimenting with video projections and installations, and reached a point where he was doing contemporary art in Antwerp. It was then when he started to experiment with work and within a traditional context, in particular, with hybridized techniques. He recalls the moment when he realized that he would not be able to do it on his own, and he decided to ask for help.

Vermeulen defines the title of his work as 'art creation / shirt sale / summer cocktails'. The Biomodd Summer Party is a benefit performance by a multidisciplinary group of artists, including a DJ, a live band, and a street performance.



MORE OF BIOMODD

www.biomodd.net

Since its inception in 2007, this art/science hybrid has generated buzz from different groups, most recently, the European Space Agency (ESA) through its Micro-Ecological Life Support System Alternative (MELISSA) team. Space exploration for longer periods of time makes food production on board a spacecraft necessary, and ecosystems similar to Biomodd, where plant life is dependent on electronics and oxygen is produced, will be a requirement. Vermeulen has been invited by the ESA to visit their headquarters this June.



For more information, visit the Biomodd site at www.biomodd.net or e-mail biomoddlba2@gmail.com.

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