

Del 2012 **Parallel Session 2**



Wed 5 September



2:30 - 4:00



Stream 2A Room HH202

Learning max as a designer tool; visual programming as a form of prototyping

Nicolas Marechal

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The opportunity to prototype their ideas is essential to design students. They can demonstrate their knowledge of design and their ability to find solutions to specific issues. It is even more important in interactive design where the students are expected to present their work in the context of its use. Programming is a possible route when you want the audience to experience an interaction. In the BA design for interaction and moving image course at the London College of Communication, we have chosen to use a software called Max to approach this learning goal. Max is a visual programming environment where you build a program by connecting objects together. It has been developed by a team of musicians, visual artists, tutors and programmers at a company called Cycling'74 (www.cycling74.com).

Creating an application for a student in design is a difficult task. As their tutor, I continuously have to expand my knowledge and improve my delivery to facilitate their learning experience. My goal is to make it as accessible as possible and since the time to teach softwares is very limited on our course, I needed to create a simple learning tool. In 2009, I started a patch (a program in Max) called the IMI Max patches to support their ideas and help them explore simple processes (e.g. drawing) and advanced computer technologies (e.g. face recognition). After three years, the tool has been made open source and available on the Internet through the code sharing platform GitHub (<https://github.com/imi/IMI-Max-patches-for-Max6>).

The result is that students now can experiment with a whole range of programs then think on how to connect them together. At the beginning, they hack more than they build but as they go along with it, they start to work more independently and ask more specific questions thus avoiding the flow of basic questions.

The demo will be a presentation of the patch. It is divided in 24 categories and has patches to explore video, sound, drawing, physical computing, text, matrix (arrays of numbers), video camera, video effects, computer vision (2 parts), video projection, video exhibition, internet and design by numbers (2D, 3D and 3D advanced). In total, it is more than 200 patches. It would take days to present all of them. So, instead, I propose to present the basics of visual programming in Max, then how to build a patch to read video and finally how it was used in a recent brief called "Re-Imagining Cinema". For this brief, students came with ideas that led me to create new patches to improve their learning experience. Students would witness the progress of a new application and experience at first hand the eventual failures of a program in the making. A mise en abyme of their own prototyping process that they should be able to integrate in their future projects.

Open education in practice. Hard and soft skills for creating open educational resources (OERs) and open content communities

Chris Follows

University of the arts London

In this workshop participants will explore together the challenges, limitations and benefits of 'being open online' using <http://process.arts.ac.uk/> an open online resource sharing day-to-day arts practice and research of art, design and media staff, students, alumni and practitioners. We will learn by doing and try out various essential live online practical OER experiments that question what being open and online means to us our practice and identities.

As education merges in the rapidly expanding field of social and cultural technological change, maintaining progressive practice in these new digitally enhanced learning spaces can present new expectations, anxieties and challenges for all, being open online forces us to evaluate our web literacy skills. The technical skills or (hard skills) for developing or creating our personal and professional online environments can be achieved or learnt through various courses or online resources, although keeping pace with new and evolving applications and systems demands constant engagement. As teachers and students we are socialised into a restricted, uncreative, unfamiliar and closed mode of being online, the VLE or institutional repository is built to conform to 'old and closed' conventional academic structures and processes. There is a huge leap to be made from the formal closed VLE into the 'new' open online 'edusocial' (educational social networked) open space, a leap into the unknown. There are currently no rules in this new open educational space and it's something we are not being socialised into, we need to learn it ourselves and learn by doing.

As creative practitioners we are attracted to the unknown and the challenges of the new, as with other significant and historical technological movements such as TV and cinema the language of the media/practice can be defined for us by others. The open educational movement presents a challenge to the sector as a whole; we have the opportunity to define our own new modes of educational practice.

Workshop

Chris Follows, DIAL project manager (Digital Integration into Arts Learning) <http://dial.myblog.arts.ac.uk/about-dial/> will draw from resources developed during the DIAL project from the many groups who have been engaged in the JISC funded digital literacies (DL) project at University of the arts London (UAL). DIAL explores the pace of technological change and its impact on the day-to-day practices of its staff and students and aims to address improved graduate employability and cultural change by developing confidence and capability in the adoption and integration of digitally enhanced learning for staff and students.

Chris will summarise UAL's experiences and perspectives of developing open educational resources (OERs) and Open educational practice (OEP) through involvement with JISC UKOER programmes and creating <http://process.arts.ac.uk/>.

[process.arts](http://process.arts.ac.uk/) emerged from grassroots activity, since 2006 it has maintained a sustainable and independent system of development, through agile web development. The project fully relies on individual and group participation and is managed and developed through a combination of voluntary participation, research secondments and fellowships. The overall concept is to support 'open practice' cross college and sector communication and knowledge sharing.

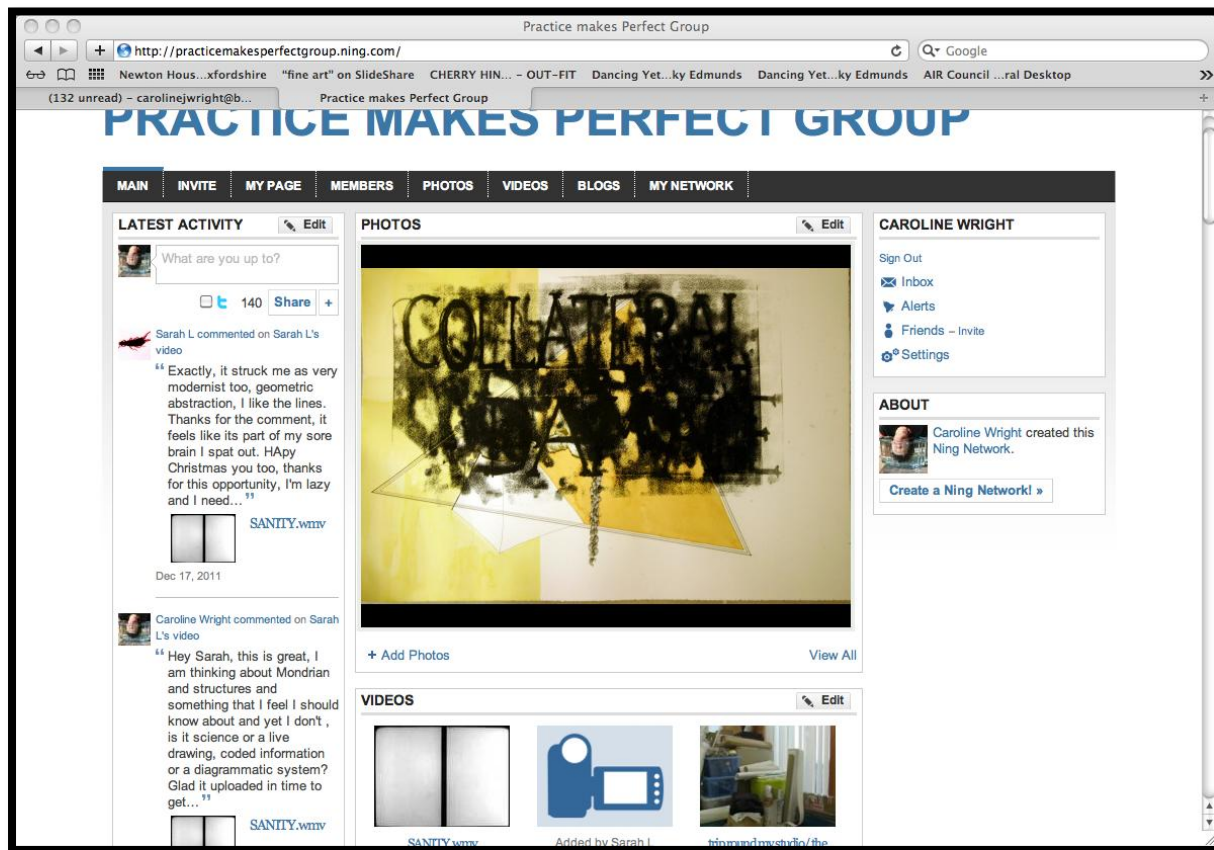
[process.arts](http://process.arts.ac.uk/) is not a repository or a VLE and courses are not represented in this space. [process.arts](http://process.arts.ac.uk/) provides an alternative environment for informal open content experimentation, mostly small pieces of content that do not have to represent a course, be designed for learning, accreditation or represent an institution. [process.arts](http://process.arts.ac.uk/) provides a new 'open learning' space that straddles the institution (formal learning) and the social (informal learning) therefore allowing a space for open educational practitioners to develop a new open academic social practices/language without conforming or being influenced by pre-existing academic structures and processes.

Participants are encouraged to create accounts on [process.arts](http://process.arts.ac.uk/) prior to the workshop <http://process.arts.ac.uk/user/register> and please bring along some image, text and video resources to upload if possible.

Practice makes perfect: making creative practice/process visible in an online course (MA Fine Art)

Caroline Wright and Ellen Sims

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Introduction

The 'Practice Makes Perfect' study took place within and in response to the circumstances of an MA Fine Art course delivered wholly online through distance learning and was specifically undertaken both to support a student for whom a practice based subject was not her first degree and to examine the integration the tutor's making and teaching practice. This research, undertaken as part of a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Art and Design, sought to answer the following:

'Will structuring an online intervention in which the teacher shares her creative practice help students recognise, value and share their own making processes?'

The study investigated the benefits of a shared and mirrored working period of process based activity through a 'making day' where all participants engaged simultaneously from their respective locations in a self-directed making task.

Sharing, exchanging ideas, process based decision making and disciplined, extended working time were seen by participants as benefits to learning. In addition, the perceived benefit from a greater understanding of the tutor as a practitioner was shared by the entire group. For the tutor, the experience afforded a greater empathy with the endeavours of the students and making work coupled with the extended length of the session allowed observation of the learning approaches (Biggs, 1999) of each student.

Methodology

Regular communication via Skype, email and online chat regulated and interrupted the process to enable sharing of visual and verbal material. A NING online site was set up as a repository for and record of work made during the project. Furthermore, the relationship between tutor and student was shifted by a common stance as artist, removing all possibilities of hierarchical positioning. The Praxis model from Australia, which integrates practice and theory and particularly, mixing of emerging artists with practicing artists, was a model for this study.

The fostering of the development of a community of practice (Wenger 2006), initiated immediately through the first Skype meeting, established an immediate group kinship and cooperative spirit with a sense of trust and openness - an ideal climate to foster learning. There was a collective intention for shared learning through group interaction and pooling of knowledge.

All participants were asked to write a short proposal for the work they intended to make on the day. It was suggested that the proposal should extend his or her practice in some way and incorporate one making/process element that was new to each person. These and all documents were posted onto an online shared community website (NING) for all to see in advance. The NING site was a growing repository during the making day and continues as a library of the intervention.

Results

The competence/confidence questionnaires presented a mixed set of results. However, further judgements highlighted the positive experience of the day for participants whether or not they felt their personal confidence or competence had benefited. For some it was an inhibiting process to be making work in a 'public' manner. The argument that some students enrol on a distance learning course because of shyness and the intimidation of public fora is a strong one. However, negative connotations within the project's public facing aspects were confounded by the overwhelmingly positive responses to working alongside the tutor as artist.

An unexpected outcome was the benefit to all participants of a long period of time dedicated to making work and in the knowledge that others are going through the same experience simultaneously. It seems the making day went some way to assist in offering an imposed discipline to working practices. Other findings include greater cohesiveness within the group of four student participants.

Discussion

From the artist/tutor perspective, the day was revealing in terms of student processes and approaches to learning, understanding student needs in more depth and bringing personal artistic practice into the virtual classroom (a levelling exercise). This was a solid step towards deeper group cohesiveness, something an online course can preclude without careful management of a cohort.

By far the most significant benefit was revealed in the responses from all students to a question about the experience of working with a tutor as a co-learner. In particular, increased confidence, reassurance, improved confidence in constructive criticism, being witness to the tutor's artistic direction, broken down barriers between student and tutor and finally a reduction in negative self-judgment and a corresponding increase in confidence.

On request, similar sessions will be incorporated into the curriculum and the course team are planning to integrate their approaches to making, research and evaluation and to bring examples of their work into group crits and study of professional context.

The model of a shared day's activities could be the basis for the following foci:

- to enhance technical making skills
- to increase engagement and cross cohort exchange of theoretical texts
- to develop critical skills and thinking
- to encourage peer learning and exchange

Observation of the Practice Makes Perfect Session

As noted in the introduction, this research was undertaken as part of a Postgraduate qualification in teaching in HE. An element of the course is for participants to be observed by their tutor and a peer. Observation of online teaching presented challenges for both the tutor and tutee, for example integrating static, asynchronous and synchronous exchanges and developing a sense of the 'place(s)' in which to contextualise the teaching. The observation noted a free flow of exchange with the teacher picking up on points for further discussion or illuminating with examples from her own practice. Situating the teacher as a participant was innovative and successful in terms of the aims for the session.

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Del 2012 Parallel Session 2



Wed 5 September



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Stream 2B Room HH203

🗨 Introduction to visual studies instructional art videos: a tool for hands-on art making

Anna Divinsky

The Pennsylvania State University

Problem

Art 10: Introduction to Visual Studies, an online course developed by Anna Divinsky and the eLearning Institute in 2006 is a great example of how art education has expanded beyond the confines of a classroom, since it is now offered to over 150 non-art majors from all over the world each semester through the College of Art and Architecture at the Pennsylvania State University.

While providing the fundamentals of both, theory and practice, the course focuses on fostering students' independent thinking and personal style. But most importantly, it pushes them to face their fears of the Visual Arts by hands-on art making. As a result, students learn the importance of expressing their views and reacting to art issues visually and conceptually, becoming part of a contemporary art dialogue.

Even though the students received detailed assignment guidelines, a range of previous student artwork examples and constructive criticism to help them improve the quality of their work, they were still unable to connect to the instructor and meet all of the technical requirements. There was an immediate need for another form of communication with the students that would relate to them all of the course expectations as well as explain the techniques, materials, and ideas for each assignment.

Methodology

In order to reach out to the students on a personal level, the course instructor collaborated with the College's eLearning Institute to produce two types, or styles of instructional videos. These videos were posted in an application referred to as the Art Demonstration Studio. By integrating this virtual studio into the course website, we could require the students to watch each one in order to progress with the course's reading and assignments. To help support the course, two styles of video were developed:

1. The first style of videos had the instructor demonstrate different techniques and mediums, while explaining the nature of graphite, charcoal, kneaded eraser, ink, pastels, watercolors, acrylic, mixed media, and photography. These videos also covered how these tools and mediums could be utilized to draw basic elements of art such as versatile uses of line, shape, value, texture and color. Finally, craftsmanship and presentation of artwork were also stressed.
2. The second style of videos focused on the instructor addressing each of the course assignments, specifically explaining the concept behind each project, demonstrating different creative ideas and approaches by actually making the work before the students' eyes.

Conclusion

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss how the incorporation of the instructional videos in the course has allowed students to have better connection to the instructor and a much more accurate apprehension of the studio art requirements. More specifically, the presentation will focus on how the videos created a bond between the students and their instructor, encouraging the students to experiment with new mediums, techniques, and ideas. Furthermore, attention will be paid to plans for how we plan to incorporate additional videos into the course, which will focus on viewing, understanding, critiquing and creating contemporary art.

💬 Videoscanning (in) an art school community; a pivotal creative tool becomes a medium of collective (self) reflection and curriculum development

Dr. Peter Purg

University of Nova Gorica, School of Arts

The »New media« module in the first year introduces undergraduate students of the Digital Arts and Practices BA programme at the University of Nova Gorica, School of Arts to the assignment of »videoscanning«. Therein every student should produce a short video on any of the school's events that s/he deems significant – this might be a workshop, a guest lecture, or just enjoying coffee break with colleagues. The video is then first evaluated in an internal forum, then posted on the school website. The practice started three years ago, and has grown into a school-wide norm, since all major school events now often get spontaneously »videoscanned«, and the final edits are used for (collective) self-reflection, promotion, archiving as well as for instructional purposes (if containing longer skill-based demonstrations in step-by-step manner).

Some of the »videoscans« are developed into so called »module-clips« (as annual video-digests) by peers or even by teachers, reflecting the entire process of a course, or a larger project, involving several authors as material contributors and one or two final editors. Apart from discussing them at meetings and in online forums, all these videos are made publically available through the school's web-TV channel, a vital part of the ePlatform, encompassing the institution's social-media oriented website with a wider public claim, and its instructional intranet. There videoscans appear alongside other film or video works and documentation materials from students, mentors and also external (online) community members. In terms of production approach, these videos are often done in collaboration among two or more students, their output aesthetics could be considered as different blends of video art, short documentary, experimental film, some even bear features of music videoclips or commercial spots (rather as spoofs). Besides enabling students to see what they perhaps missed – or what to expect from a course before enrolling it – these videos have proven an important tool both of collective self-reflection (e.g. at semester shows or in connection to »crit« meetings) as well as valuable international promotion materials, since they rarely depend on verbal language, and often involve innovative video-production aspects.

After introducing videoscanning as an academic community practice, the article will discuss the potential of this poly-functional methodology for curricular development: some of the videoscanned BA level courses at the School of Arts are presently being developed onto MA level in an international curriculum development project among four universities from four countries, Croatia, Austria, Italy and Slovenia. The project ADRIART (Advancing Digitally Renewed Interactions in Art Teaching and Training, www.adriart.net) is developing a double-degree international Master of Media Arts and Practices programme covering the selective areas of (video)film, animation, photography, intermedia, scenography and new media. The complete two-year implementation cycle with short location-specific course runs, strongly supported by digital media and e-learning methods, is aimed at tailoring the degree not only to regional student mobility, but also to the participation of most relevant mentors and students from around the world. Among four countries and in five languages, the programme will seek to treat site-specific (demographical, social, cultural, ecological, migratory etc.) topics in interdisciplinary ways, while stimulating multi-cultural academic exchange and graduates' development towards self-sustainability.

The article will thus show how the practice of videoscanning affected specific aspects of curricular design and stages of course (syllabus) development, essentially by comparing cases of three courses. Not only piloting run evaluation of these courses, but also their promotion (among prospective students, as well as other stakeholders, e. g. local art-related NGOs) importantly depends on videoscans: After two months of research-based script development the location-specific course Hidden Live(r)s of Venice gathered students from three universities and several countries in the floating city to produce 6 short documentaries about Venice, its interesting professions and personalities, all under the leadership of a renowned film director, and a host of mentors. The Making of... videoscans entered the final DVD that was broadly disseminated due to the surprisingly high quality of the produced short films (considered they were made by year 2 and 3 BA students, most of which did not study film). The syllabus concept is now being developed into one of the Videofilm carrier-module related »Studio« course runs of the MA programme. Quite similarly, the local vŠUM cross-module, research-based intermedia production process at the School of Arts – consisting of several convergent exploratory workshops and a premiere at a prominent venue in Ljubljana, with subsequent site-specific festival developments – has been pilot run towards a »Studio« for the Intermedia / Contemporary Art Practices carrier module since two years, not least with the help of an intensive and dense videoscans activity. And thirdly, the international Komiža New Media Port summer school in Croatia can be considered as another regularly videoscanned future »Studio« environment that will encompass the Videofilm and the Intermedia carrier modules of the Media Arts and Practices master programme.

Several other local courses at the School of Arts were also regularly videoscanned so far, and used for curriculum evaluation and development, so the contribution will also briefly touch upon most significant examples of these. The full article (as well as its live presentation) will include short analytical and comparative treatments of selected videoscans cases, setting them against a theoretical background of media ecology: we will attempt to conceive this school-cum-online community practice as a social and creative (eco)system, and discuss it along selected theoretical aspects of (new) media (ecology).

AMI and Ed: implementing artists' moving image practices within education

Mark Smith

Loughborough University

The AMI and Ed. (artists' moving image) doctoral research project focuses upon the implementation of artists' moving image practice within education. Using video and audio as visual ethnographic tools, the AMI and Ed. education action research tackles two interlaced interrogations. How might a digital learning resource (focused upon artists' moving image) impact upon pedagogic practice in the art and media secondary school classroom? And how might the findings of the AMI and Ed. research project impact upon art, design and media pedagogic understanding and strategies in the UK? A broad-based ethnographic approach to video and audio data collection has elicited responses from primary, secondary and tertiary level educators, initial teacher training educators and trainees, gallery educators, learning resource producers, artists, and young learners who have experienced artists' moving image practices as part of a formal learning programme. The AMI and Ed. video documentary which has emerged from these interrogations has centred upon the implementation of one innovative learning resource in particular. This is the Australian resource, MOVE: Video Art in Schools, a DVD collection which has been widely distributed by state education departments throughout Australia. Essentially then, the AMI and Ed. research project has realised a series of visual ethnographies which are founded upon the praxis of education action research, and are underpinned by the two aforementioned research questions. Questions which are both challenging and timely for UK educators.

Challenging because artists' moving image is not commonplace in formal teaching and learning in UK secondary schools. Reasons for this absence range from technological barriers, to a lack of interest on the part of the teacher (Smith, 2010). For example, with painting and drawing remaining the principal modes of visual expression throughout Key Stage 3 lessons, the canon of artists to which students are introduced is unlikely to include the likes of video artist Gillian Wearing. This is despite the number of accolades and awards attracted by this very British luminary's work over the past two decades (ibid).

Timely, in that successive governments have expounded upon the need to implement contemporary digital and multimodal creative practices within the UK education system (New London Group, 1997). Such progressive activity in the classroom both complements the progress of technological advancements (NACCCE, 1999) and supports the oft-touted UK creative economy. Multimodal practices are manifold throughout contemporary art, design and media practices, and most notably within those hybrid, multidisciplinary art practices which utilise moving image technologies. Yet, though ostensibly the UK education system is developing a multidisciplinary and multimodal approach to learning and teaching, the evidence paints a different picture. Of complacency and privileged inertia within many of those institutions which are responsible for delivering art, design and media educations (Design Commission, 2011). The AMI and Ed. project aligns itself with those pedagogies that embrace theoretical positions regarding the potential of transformative action upon systems and individuals (Freire, 1972, 1995; Foucault, 1980), the profound need for education action research (hooks, 1994) and critical examination of art and design education (Atkinson, 2008).

The AMI and Ed. documentary introduces a wide range of commentaries regarding AMI learning resources. Using ethnomethodologies honed by documentary film-makers, and placing myself within the AMI and Ed. research project as the friendly (but critical) artist teacher, this data has been collected over the past two years in a variety of settings. AMI and Ed. is effectively a 'trigger documentary'; an audiovisual presentation which presents information and opinions collected from carefully selected research participants in order to 'trigger' elicited commentaries from audiences composed of educators, curriculum planners and learning resource producers from the primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors. Moreover, the intended audiences of the AMI and Ed. documentary include educationalists working in organisations which operate outside of the state education system, such as art galleries and film institutions. AMI and Ed. includes a selection of commentaries which will impact upon a broad range of educational perspectives. For instance, comments from Peter Naumann, Head of Education and Public Programs at the Australian National Art Gallery, are likely to interest gallery educators, as well as visual arts teachers.

In addition to showing excerpts from the AMI and Ed. documentary, the presentation will also include a brief introduction from an online learning resource, presently being developed as part of the AMI and Ed. research project. This will be published in late 2012, via the *artistsmovingimage* website, where the full AMI and Ed. documentary will also be available for viewing. A notable difference between the MOVE (Australian) resource and *artistsmovingimage* is the choice of artworks displayed. The *artistsmovingimage* resource includes examples of artists using painting and drawing as a means of producing moving image works. These examples are included in order to provide a curriculum and medium-crossing bridge (for both teacher and student) between the 'traditional' use of pencil and brush in the classroom, and the digital moving image media used to realise the finished moving image artworks. In contrast, artworks included in the MOVE resource are predominantly live-action based, and any hand-drawn elements of creative practice that were used to produce the works are deliberately hidden behind layers of professional production. The presentation itself will be performative in nature, as I will be reading from my paper as if I were responding to those questions elicited by excerpts from the AMI and Ed. documentary and glimpses of the online *artistsmovingimage* resource. This approach is intended to provide the audience with a number of starting points which might assist with the formulation of questions during the subsequent Q&A session. As the research is founded upon education action research and visual ethnography methodologies, the success of my presentation is to be gauged by the quality of the questions which it provokes within the immediate community created by the DeL 2012 conference.

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