Virtual Entity

METADATA SYSTEM PROJECT

This infrastructure is a non-compulsory possibility for releasing digital files allowing identification, communication and exchange. It is a form of a decentralised archive whose growth will be peer, spontaneous and uncontrollable.

CONCEPT

Digital entities are nature, they do not belong to anyone.
The net is a morphing distributed body mirroring current human culture.
Any digital immaterial creation can be instantiated in an infinite number of copies identical to the original native file. Culture does not have owners.

Virtual Entity is an attempt to
– track history of digital media art on the net, transformations, works-chains, artists (mapping)
– allow direct connection and dialogue between users, creators, viewers, artists, listeners, voyeurs and people in general
– contain instructions and suggestions on best usage, digital file destiny and fate
– feedback on art and communication, develop discussion about content, aesthetics, philosophy, art

It is is not about
– royalties
– laws
– property
– distribution
– sustainability

DEVELOPMENT

Virtual Entity aims to develop a software system that provides the possibility to twin any file with a 'Soul'.
The soul of a file is a set of metadata plus an editable and unlimited space for information inter-change.
The souls repository will be accessible via browser or command line.
From every instance of a file you can access its soul, therefore the metadata.
Any addition to the soul will be readable from every existing instance of the file entity.

THE SOUL OF A FILE = KERNEL + LOGS
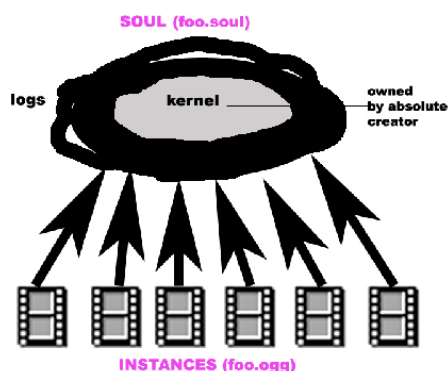
kernel = written by the file creator
aura = logs, editable by anybody

Metadata are editable by the original creator.
The aura is similar to a wiki, open for comments, logs and documentation; this space can be used by any user of the file. Virtual Entity is a non-compulsory possibility: no user is obliged to read or edit the Soul.
Since the Soul is separated by the file instance, for accessibility every file copy has to contain the address of the soul.An MD5-like authentication system will check the file integrity.

The use of this system easily permits mapping of genetic relations between files (DNA). A spread use of this system will create a self published media data history and archive. Infact, every single Soul can point to all the souls of the sub-files that are contained in the file represented.

The Aura will contain a simple authentication key to prevent spam, the Anti Poltergeist System (APS).

Virtual Entity as a Licence

Virtual Entity is a practical solution to the problem of metadata compatibility, and a possibility for licensing immaterial works. If we imagine a licence as a confronting platform open for discussion around culture and communication, as a place for instructions, best usage, digital file destiny and fate, then Virtual Entity is a new, simple, technical answer to the problem of attribution of digital creations. As well, this system aims to consider each work as a peculiar, non unique entity, and manifest specific what specific is.