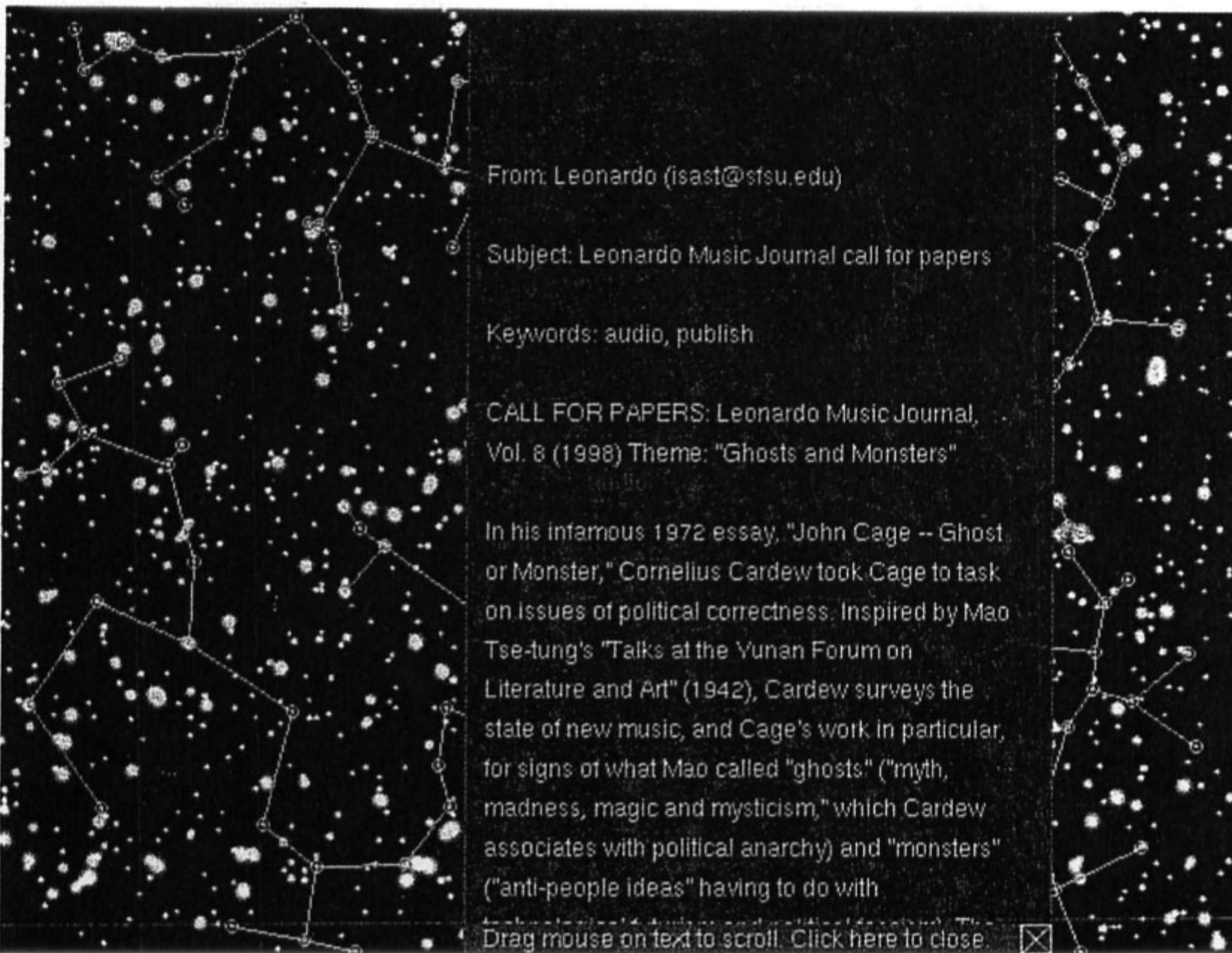
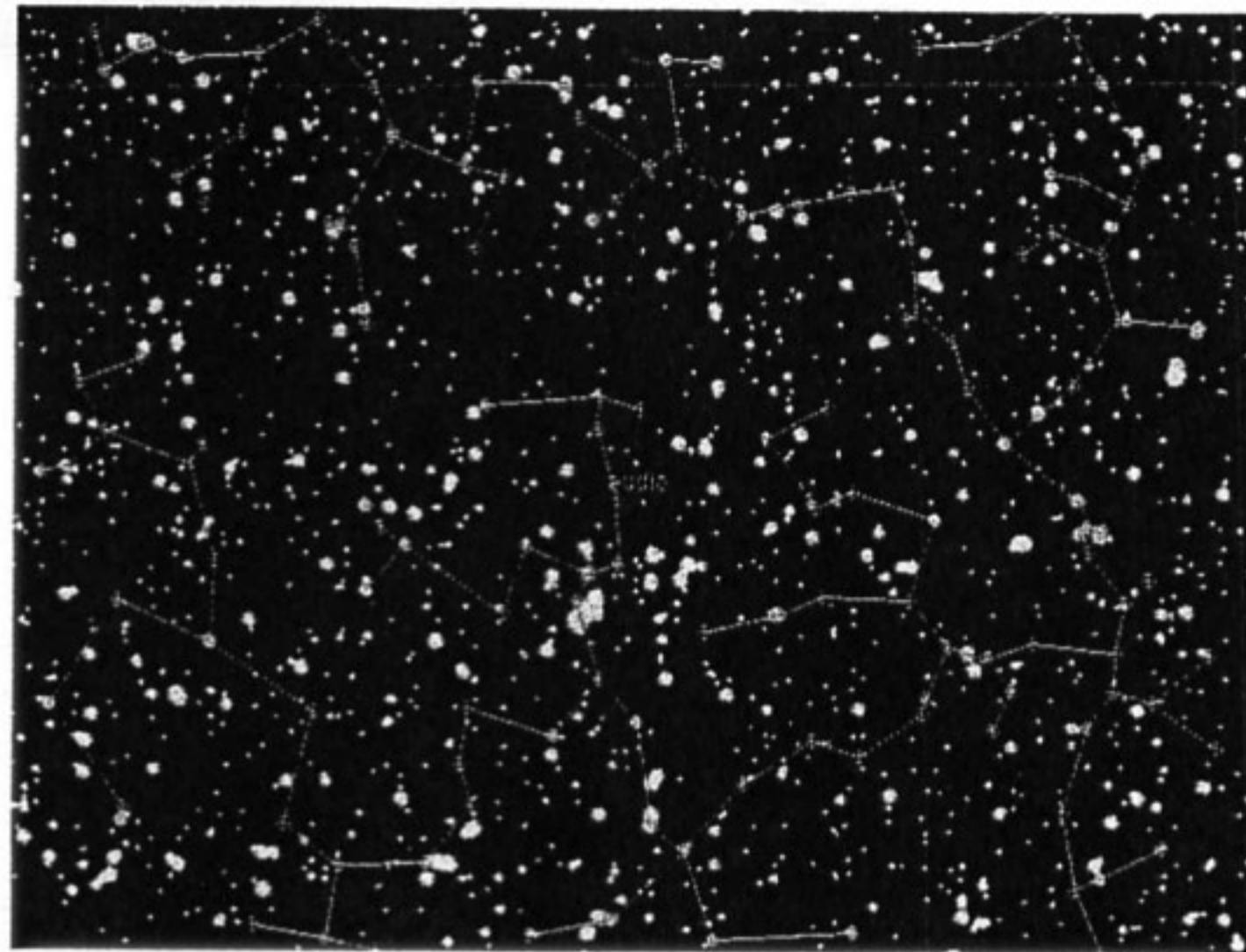


Out of artistic chaos emerges the asymmetrical order of human connectivity.



starrynight

As one of the elder statesman of the online-arts community, the nonprofit and non-hierarchical Rhizome.org has been operating since 1996 as a crossroads for reviews and exhibition announcements in the international digital-art world. Community members post thoughtful critiques and notices and even use Rhizome to present their work. The elegant StarryNight interface is both a nod to van Gogh's 19th-century masterpiece and a 21st-century experiment in making the Rhizome community a generator for art.

StarryNight is an alternative interface to Rhizome's database of stories, turning it into a star-map. When a posting on Rhizome is read, it's converted into a single, dim star in StarryNight's inky black "space." As more people read it, its representative star glows brighter, with the most popular texts in the database glowing the brightest. Dragging the mouse over a bright star reveals a pop-up list of keywords that the text shares with others. Thus, when users select a keyword, a constellation is drawn, linking all the stars that share that specific keyword.

Created in Perl and Java and conceived by Rhizome founder Mark Tribe and technology director Alex Galloway, StarryNight intrigued our jurors with its ability to present meta-information—information about information—so efficiently and aesthetically.

"It's an understated but effective use of the community to build and change the site over time," said juror Tom Klinkowstein. "It does what art should do: reveal the character of a point in time. There's a connected intelligence about this piece that struck me in the heart."

AUSTIN BUNN

category Software Applications

design Rhizome.org, New York: Mark Tribe, principal; Martin Wattenberg, Alex Galloway, designers

hardware/software Perl, Java

url <http://rhizome.org/starrynight>