Resonant Pedagogy and Practice in "The Everywhen": New Directions at AMPD, Toronto, Canada.

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Abstract

Teaching electronic arts in art schools and universities has always involved temporal experimentation, as educators seek ways to evoke interrelated histories of technologies, genres, disciplines, movements, subcultures, and communities of practice that are constantly remediated, rediscovered, and reborn. This temporal experimentation is further intensified as electronic artist/teachers reach outside the classroom, to partner with communities on pedagogical explorations that also engage with radically different local understandings of history, time, and place, through "resonant" approaches to ecology, environment, and cultures in change. At the School of Art, Media, Performance, and Design, at York University, Toronto, Canada, the past five years have been marked by new kinds of partnered learning and research experiences in electronic arts, taking place across our fine arts departments, and shaping our brand-new Creative Technologies program (launching in September 2024). This institutional presentation shares new initiatives at AMPD and invites ISEA delegates and their local partners to imagine new kinds of connections between our programs and their own work. The institutional presentation showcases electronic arts work from our resource sharing, pedagogical partnering, and technology management, and shares some of our current global community-based partnerships.

Keywords

electronic arts, pedagogy, temporality, futurism, socially-engaged art, community, partnership, immersive, creative technologies, immersive, XR, Indigenous, metaverse

Introduction

Teaching electronic arts in art schools and universities has always involved temporal experimentation, as educators seek ways to evoke interrelated histories of technologies, genres, disciplines, movements, subcultures, and communities of practice that are constantly remediated, rediscovered, and reborn. Garnet Hertz suggests, for example, that underwritten histories from areas such as "DIY electronic art revive[s] these lessons from the past to point a new path forward for artistic practice and design work." [1] This temporal experimentation is further intensified as electronic artists/educators reach outside the classroom, to partner with communities on pedagogical explorations that also engage with radically different local understandings of history, time, and place, through "resonant" approaches to ecology, environment, and cultures in change. [2] As Indigenous scholar Dylan Robinson reminds us, "the "fevered" place of consumption for knowledge resources" can be "placed aside in favour of new temporalities of wonder, dis-oriented from antirelational and nonsituated settler colonial positions of certainty." [3]

New Directions

At the School of Art, Media, Performance, and Design, at York University, Toronto, Canada, the past five years have been marked by new kinds of partnered learning and research experiences in electronic arts, taking place across our fine arts departments, and shaping our brand-new Creative Technologies program (launching as part of the new Markham campus of York University in September 2024).

Digital/new media artists in our School have been bringing their students and colleagues along in an uncharted journey into 'The Everywhen'. Our artist/teachers, for example, are examining what kinds of new temporalities can emerge through partnered education programs co-creating augmented reality layers for First Nations land-markers, or from building a new youth and Elder-led metaverse that shares community stories for Indigenous culture and language learning. [4]

Through mentoring our students to place 360-degree cameras in the hands of disadvantaged youth in our neighbourhood to capture the histories and present realities of social housing, AMPD artists have been playfully co-disrupting traditional temporal narratives of diasporic place-making. [5]

New course design builds opportunities for students and professors to create new "Futurism from the Margins" together. They can make work that responds to contemporary artists who mix old and new ideas of linearity, continuance and intercultural notions of time in their material approaches to 3D printing and VR; where "technological innovation and expression is a vehicle for ancestral ways of knowing and infusing the diasporic community with decolonial understandings of their subjectivity amid the pressures of global migration and a vision of a future of possibility." [6]

Award-winning VR and XR works and exhibitions bring together makers from inside and outside the academy to present media artworks at the intersection of art, science, Indigenous worldviews, and technology that speculatively and poetically use multimodal storytelling as a vehicle for

interpreting, mattering, and embodying more-than-human ecologies. [7]

New research partnerships are starting which support new kinds of intergenerational communities of practice in BIPOC digital asset creation. Others have begun to examine the new forms of attentiveness possible with AI tools, that can listen across and between disparate understandings of spatiality and temporality.

Our School is also working on international research partnerships in electronic arts including a $318.4M CAD initiative called Connected Minds, which aims to mobilize transdisciplinary expertise to develop socially responsible technologies. [8]

Through new forms of pedagogical design and development, and our local, national and global research partnerships, our School asks: How can wider communities of makers (students, professors, local artists, community leaders) collaborate to diversify electronic arts to better reflect, respond to, and challenge linear and colonial ideas of knowledge, art, and technology? What might new forms of pedagogy mixing art, engineering, and social engagement offer our field, to train new kinds of electronic artists and scholars to be confident navigators of/in The Everywhen?

This paper (and its presentation and accompanying reception event at ISEA 2024) documents some of these new initiatives at AMPD and invites ISEA delegates and their local partners to imagine new kinds of connections between our programs and their own work. We mobilize electronic arts and research work from our teachers/artists/researchers, graduate and undergraduate students and partnered projects, detail our experiments with space and resource sharing, pedagogical partnering, and technology management, and share some of our current global community-based partnerships. We invite delegates to continue connect with representatives from AMPD to discuss future networking, exchange and partnership possibilities.

More About the School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design at York University

Our world increasingly needs creative thinkers to ignite bold new ideas, invent transformative experiences and develop innovative solutions for global challenges. As one of North America's premier centres for education in the arts, York University's School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design (AMPD) unleashes creativity and prepare students to thrive in a world where the single most valuable asset is creativity.

Debra Brown (Cirque du Soleil choreographer), David Quilico (Vice-President of Sony/ATV Music Publishing Canada), Georgiana Uhlyarik (Associate Curator of Canadian Art, Art Gallery of Ontario) and Hael Kobayashi (Executive Director of Creative Intelligence, University of Technology, Sydney), are all York AMPD graduates, uniquely defining what creativity means today and how it will be imagined tomorrow. Our School is committed to excellence, experimentation and leadership. Learning by doing is the hallmark of our programs. We offer intensive professional training and in-depth academic studies in dance, design, digital media, film, music, theatre and visual arts.

But disciplinary rigour is only one part of the AMPD experience. Guided by award-winning artists and leading scholars with real-world experience, we push the boundaries between artistic media, explore emerging technologies and discover the creative side of other fields. AMPD's new Creative Technologies program is a partnered program launching in September 2024, where students, faculty and partners focus on collaboration and explore electronic arts, social justice and ethics, and project management towards reshaping the creative industries. You can find out more details about AMPD's award-winning research, teaching, and impact in our annual report, available online. [9].

References

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Author Biographies

Rebecca Caines) is an interdisciplinary community-engaged artist, scholar, and curator, who works in contemporary performance, sound art, and installation, and new media art. She is currently a Project Lead for the new Creative Technologies program, at York University, in Toronto. Caines has staged large-scale community-based art projects in Australia, Northern Ireland, Canada, China, and the Netherlands. She researches (along with her community partners) the role of art and technology in social justice, contemporary understandings of community, and the fragile promise of ethical connection through improvisation and new ways of listening. Together with a team of artists and partners across Canada, she

has just completed a project called multiPLAY supporting improvising, social-engagement, and digital arts, with a focus on immersive practices. https://multiplay.ca/

Michael Darroch is Associate Professor of Cinema and Media Arts in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design at York University, and served as Associate Dean, Academic from 2020-2023. He previously served as Associate Dean in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Windsor, where he taught courses in media art histories, visual culture, and urban ecologies in the School of Creative Arts. He has held a Visiting Fellowship at the Centre for the Study of Cultural Memory (University of London, 2015), a Humanities Research Group Fellowship (University of Windsor, 2016-17), and a McLuhan Centenary Fellowship (iSchool, University of Toronto, 2016-18). He is Co-Director of the research-creation hub IN/TERMINUS focused on participatory art interventions and exhibition curation in the Windsor-Detroit urban borderlands. He co-edited *Cartographies of Place: Navigating the Urban* (MQUP 2014), an interdisciplinary collection that situates different historical and methodological currents in urban media studies.

Marissa Largo (she/her) is an assistant professor of Creative Technologies in the School of Art, Media, Performance & Design of York University. Her research/research-creation focuses on the intersections of community engagement, race, gender and Asian diasporic cultural production. She earned her PhD in Social Justice Education from OISE, University of Toronto (2018). Her forthcoming book, *Unsettling Imaginaries: Filipinx Contemporary Artists in Canada* (University of Washington Press) examines the work and oral histories of artists who imagine Filipinx subjectivity beyond colonial logics. Her projects have been presented in venues and events across Canada, such as the A Space Gallery (2017 & 2012), Open Gallery of OCAD University (2015), Royal Ontario Museum (2015), WorldPride Toronto (2014), The Robert Langen Art Gallery (2013), Nuit Blanche in Toronto (2019, 2018, 2012 and 2009), and MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels) (2007). She also collaborates with community organizations that connect policy engagement with creative/ social practice.

Hector Centeno Garcia. As an artist, Hector's focus is on the aesthetic potential of immersive digital sound, visual and interactive experiences that seek to engage the audience into a reflection of existence, place relationship and the phenomenology of place. Among his artistic activities are national and international presentations of multi-channel sound art, interactive installation art, live sound and video performances, virtual reality experiences, virtual cinematography (virtual production), and virtual photography. As a software and interactive system developer and designer, he has worked on virtual and augmented reality interactive experiences, video game mechanics and simulation systems, hardware sensors and micro-controller interactive systems for art installations, and spatial audio software tools. The organizations he has been involved with include New Adventures in Sound Art, Impossible Things, and for multiple independent interactive media artists. Hector teaches in the School of Cinema, and Media Arts and is part of the new Creative Technologies program.