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1ST SYMPOSIUM ON

DIGITAL ART IN IRELAND

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK & THE LORD MAYOR'S PAVILION, FITZGERALD'S PARK

THURSDAY JUNE 2ND 2022

CHAIRED BY
DR JAMES O'SULLIVAN & AOIBHIE McCARTHY

PROGRAMME & BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

the arts council an chomhairle ealaíon 70 YEARS

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The *1st Symposium on Digital Art in Ireland* is a collaboration between Sample-Studios and the Department of Digital Humanities and Future Humanities Institute, University College Cork

Sample-Studios

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland

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PROGRAMME

Thursday, June 2nd

THE SHTEPPS, THE HUB, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

9am

OPENING REMARKS

9:30am - 11:00am

SESSION I

THE DIGITAL AS THE EVERYDAY IN THE WORK OF CONTEMPORARY IRISH ARTISTS

John Thompson (University College Cork)

PLATFORM PROTOCOL PLACE

Paul O'Neill (Dublin City University)

PIXELATED PRESENCE: THE VIRTUAL AS PERFORMANCE SPACE

EL Putnam (National University of Ireland, Galway)

SIMULATION AND MODEL: A FLUSSERIAN READING OF JOHN GERRARD'S ARTIFICIAL WORLDS

Laurence Counihan (University College Cork)

11.15am - 12.45pm

SESSION II

THE INTERNET MADE ME, I WILL DESTROY YOU

Crash Stop (Format C, Zagreb)

AFTER FORETHOUGHT

Frank Wasser (University of Oxford)

EPHEMERAL FAILURE

Sinéad O'Donnell-Carey (Atlantic Technological University, Sligo)

TECH GUY SPIEL

Catherine Harty (Cork Artists Collective)

2pm - 4pm

SESSION III

THE WEB REVIVAL AND THE FOLK LIFE OF VIRTUAL WORLDS
Daniel Murray

ELECTRONICS AS A MEMBER OF THE ENSEMBLE
Kerry L Hagan (University of Limerick)

INTERMODAL AND INTERSENSORY POTENTIAL OF INTERACTIVE AUDIOVISUAL PERFORMANCE
Renata Pękowska

SYSTEMS INTERFERENCE ART: ARGUMENTS, SAMPLES, NEW WORK
Micheál O'Connell (University of Sussex)

EARLY-CAREER IRISH ARTISTS FEATURED IN HYPERTEXT AND THE HYPERTEXT EXHIBITION MAP
Enid Conway (Bloomers)

MARKIEVICZ MARK 1
Joanna Walsh

4.30pm - 5.30pm

PANEL

ON THE PROBLEM OF *DIGITAL* IN ART PRACTICES
Giuseppe Torre & Robin Parmar (University of Limerick)

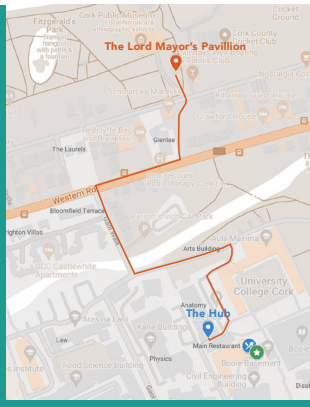
EXHIBITION



DIGITAL ART IN IRELAND EXHIBITION
Curated by Conor McGarrigle

THE LORD MAYOR'S PAVILION, FITZGERALD'S PARK
EXHIBITION CONTINUES UNTIL JUNE 25TH 2022

Image Credit: Detail from #RiseandGrind (2018) from its installation in Screentime at the Green on Red Gallery Dublin in 2019



ABSTRACTS

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE IN THE PROGRAMME

THE DIGITAL AS THE EVERYDAY IN THE WORK OF CONTEMPORARY IRISH ARTISTS

JOHN THOMPSON (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK)

In this paper I analyse how a number of contemporary Irish artists document our contemporary digital landscape in a less than direct manner. I am interested in the digital as an aspect of works that are not about the digital per se, i.e. they do not show their device nor do they create a programme or engage in coding. Rather, I am interested in works where the digital is a minor theme whose minority precisely shows us how the digital is incorporated as a part of the everyday.

These moments of works include places where a work has an online component by chance, where a website or platform does some work in the artwork itself without being the focus of that piece. The moments help us see how the digital environment acts to facilitate and form the central themes of these works.

In Cork artist Lily O'Shea's Slow Puncture (2021) for instance, a work dealing with the precarity of contemporary existence as an artist (and more broadly), digital platforms such as 'Indeed' and formats like 'JPEG' are referenced as parts of the environment faced by the precarious artist. I want to place a bit more focus on reading into digital platforms in this context.

The artists and works I analyse and survey in this paper include Lily O'Shea's Slow Puncture (2021) and Catherine Harty's 600 Euro a Month Max. (2010), a work dealing with the housing crisis which used appropriated images from DAFT.ie.

The artists I engage in this paper are of varying ages and career stages but all work has been produced in post-crash Ireland.

PLATFORM PROTOCOL PLACE

PAUL O'NEILL (DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY)

This presentation will focus on a body of practice-based research developed as part of my doctorate study entitled *Platform Protocol Place – A practiced- based study of critical media art practice (2007 – 2020)*. This body of work is split into three distinct themes. The first, *platform*, references the dominant tech platforms of our current networked era, the second, *protocol*, engages with the technical and bureaucratic systems that regulate network communications and the final theme, *place*, acknowledges the physical and material world of the digital.

This work, which includes automated online bots, public wi-fi interventions and participatory walking tours of Dublin's urban internet infrastructure, are informed by two distinct subfields of digital art practice and theory, tactical media and media archaeology, and also draw from overlapping histories of media art and hacktivism. These subfields and histories cultivate a critique of our current networked era and are realised within this research project through a combination of artistic and technological methods such as hardware hacking, wireless spamming, remixing and open source intelligence gathering.

The dominant tech companies of this era and their extractive operations encroach on all aspects of contemporary life, with enormous political, economic and environmental consequences. Consequently, there is a need for cultural and social spaces and actions, both online and offline, that critique this encroachment whilst suggesting alternative ways in which to engage with networked technologies that protect and empower the user. This body of practice-based work serves as an example of such a critique.

PIXELATED PRESENCE: THE VIRTUAL AS PERFORMANCE SPACE

EL PUTNAM (NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY)

When the COVID-19 pandemic required the introduction of drastic public health measures to reduce human contact in order to quell the transmission of this novel, highly contagious strain of the coronavirus, digital technologies provided the solution to our contact needs. For years now, digital technologies have enabled a means of visual and aural communication while remaining physically distant. In live performance, the virtual has been used in experimental works of performance art, dance and theatre, with practitioners contributing to technological innovation (Salter 2010; Dixon 2015; O'Dwyer 2021).

Generally speaking though, prior to 2020, performances that engage with the virtual have been treated as an inferior alternative to human contact — a minor means of engagement when it was not possible to connect in-person or a novelty that is more valued for its technological play than its aesthetic significance as performance art. As restrictions loosen and public spaces open up, including theatres and art galleries, it is vital not to neglect how artists have engaged with the virtual through performance practice during the pandemic, instigating aesthetic encounters that have experimented with the affordances and constraints of the digital technologies. In a manifesto published in October 2021, the international research group Futur Stage argue that virtual spaces need to be considered when conceptualising the stage: "the future stage needs to be intimately entangled with the other stages on which contemporary life is performed, from the streets and sidewalks to TikTok and Zoom to the workplace to cultural festivals and fairs" (Futur Stage 2021).

In this paper, I discuss a number of works produced by Irish and Irish-based artists during the pandemic where the virtual functions as a site of performance, rather than simply a means to present performance work digitally. In particular, I consider the Performance Monthlies of the Belfast-based performance collective Bbeyond, Day Magee's video portraits, and my ongoing series Emergent (2021 to present), discussing how these works engage with Futur Stage's notion of liveness plus, which is an expanded notion of liveness that is not restricted to physical presence, but "conditions that blur the boundaries between presence and tele-presence, between the embodied and the mediated, between human actions and flows of data, between consciousness and the metaverse" (Futur Stage 2021).

Drawing from the philosophy of Gilbert Simondon (2016), I argue how through performance, these artists cultivate aesthetic encounters within the virtual, which exceeds quantifying and calculating metrics, challenging emphasis of digital media as content generation. Instead, these works point to the need to value the unique phenomenologies of liveness that the virtual produces, which invite new means of technological engagement through performance. Art created with the virtual as performance space unsettles our relations to technologies, where the aesthetic encounter reveals the relational milieu of engagement as it contributes to and modifies it.

Art and aesthetics, as relational encounters with difference, introduce the necessary traction to acknowledge and engage with social paradoxes, which are entwined with the transformative processes of our becoming individually and socially during these shared times of crisis.

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Simondon, Gilbert. 2016. On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects. Minneapolis, MN: Univocal Pub.

SIMULATION AND MODEL: A FLUSSERIAN READING OF JOHN GERRARD'S ARTIFICIAL WORLDS

LAURENCE COUNIHAN (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK)

In our contemporary reality the reorganisation of institutional and epistemological fields have become increasingly conditioned by the prevalence, and continued acceleration, of large-scale computational systems and networks. The planetary breadth of these algorithmic operations progressively employ advanced models and simulations that are utilised to map the trajectories of everything from ecological change, the volatility of economic markets, predictive patterns of political ideologies, and the spread of viruses. Correspondingly, this rise — which ostensibly seeks to give order to complexity — has also been accompanied by a general obfuscation of the technical mechanisms that govern these increasingly abstract systems. All is hidden within the innards of impenetrable black-boxes whose emergent properties recede from view.

Philosopher Manuel Delanda has identified the middle of the 19th-century as the origin for "the modern concept of emergence" (Philosophy and Simulation: The Emergence of Synthetic Reason, Continuum Publishing, 2011), with this idea eventually developing into theories of simulation and computational modelling that are used today. Incidentally, the same time period also saw the initial development of various photographic techniques, with the technology itself eventually ascending to the apex of mimetic representation.

These distinct, but still interconnected, genealogies can be said to exert a significant influence over the work of Irish artist John Gerrard. For the past 15 years, the artist's practice has involved the construction of meticulous, photorealistic virtual environments which delicately play with the concepts of representation and simulation. These artificial worlds are rendered — with the help of a team of programmers — using software designed for the development of three-dimensional video game environments, and are depicted with an intense level of realism which suggests a cool, austere, clinical, and almost detached, illusionistic model. For despite their outwardly natural appearance (situated along the historical continuum of figurative representation), Gerrard's worlds are virtual simulations whose operations accord with the cold logic of algorithmic procedures.

Exploring this tension, and transition, between epistemological and aesthetic models of representation versus simulation, is a central theme of Vilém Flusser's theories on photography. For Flusser, a technical image — any image made by an apparatus — is never, foundationally, a causal representation of the mimetic reality that it depicts, but is instead linked, in the first instance, to the calculatory thought of the machine which produced it. Accordingly, whilst initially grounded in an elaboration on photography, Flusser's writings on technology and the universe of technical images proves to be especially amenable to an analysis of computer based visualisations.

Drawing upon this formalisation of the technical image, this paper proposes a reading of Gerrard's work which expands particularly upon Flusser's concepts on models and calculatory processes. Herein, the intention is to probe the distinction between representation and simulation, and the potentialities (and inherent limitations) of aesthetic attempts to depict the invisible mechanisms of algorithmic structures.

THE INTERNET MADE ME, I WILL DESTROY YOU

CRASH STOP (FORMAT C, ZAGREB)

Provocative times need provocative titles. My presentation will cover topics such as:

1. Aesthetic vs academic – the rise of net art and glitch art in particular have called into question the need for or relevance of academic institutions and qualifications to practice an art form that institutions and the art establishment in Ireland either seek to ignore or subvert to their own purposes , watering them down and realigning them to the traditional art historical agenda , the travesty of the 'post internet' label cooked up by galleries to institutionalise and profit from net art.
2. Contrasting of ways of working though co-operation online in social media groups such as Glitch arts collective , the sharing of ideas and tools and methodologies in a free and open-source way , self organising events in contrast to the way the traditional art world works ie the Wrong Biennale, Spamm Super Modern art museum , online exhibition spaces created during the pandemic such as Fubar 2020 and Fubar 2021 modelling buildings and environments to recreate no longer accesible spaces.
3. Open source tools and knowledge of coding, scripting, software and hardware/operating systems /networking (physical or social media corporate or fediverse) as being the new artistic literacy and spaces of importance in opposition to the traditional tools, perceived route of approved learning and spaces of legacy art which are required by afk old school tie networks and privilege.
4. The current state of the digital and netart spheres being ignored by established bodies In Ireland other than that which can be easily academicised in favour of Creative Ireland like agendas which seek to turn Irish arts into heritage rather than think of where the arts In Ireland could be going , or that can be codified into yet another academic paper or jargoned up for the latest open call.
5. Burning down the house – why regionalism and identity or country of origin are peripheral to the making of digital art in 21st century Ireland with reference to my own practice and experiences.

AFTER FORETHOUGHT

FRANK WASSER (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Forethought, Inc. was a computer software company, best known as developers of what is now Microsoft PowerPoint. In late 1983, Rob Campbell and Taylor Pohlman founded Forethought, Inc in order to develop object-oriented bit-mapped application software. In 1984, they hired Robert Gaskins, a former Ph.D. student at the University of California, Berkeley, in exchange for a large percentage of the company's stock. He and software developer Dennis Austin led the development of a program called Presenter, which they later renamed PowerPoint. This presentation (lecture-performance) is a performative analysis of the provenance of the digital tools (in particular Powerpoint) that support and supply the form of many digital presentations.

The presentation will take the form of a lecture-performance. A lecture-performance is a hybrid performance form or style that merges the presentational/ showmanship aspect of lectures and the often self-reflexive commentating of performance art. Very little has been written on what exactly constitutes as a lecture-performance. The lecture-performance can also be called a performance-lecture. The difference between the 'performance-lecture' and that of the 'lecture-performance' has not been extensively analysed. However, the nature of the term 'lecture-performance' or 'performance-lecture' refers to the composite that combines two terms 'lecture' and 'performance' each with its own definition and each with its own history, that of the lecture and that of performance (Dirksen, 2009, 9).

The noun "lecture" dates from the 14th century, meaning "action of reading, that which is read," from the Latin lectus , meaning "to read." The verb "to lecture" can be dated back to 1590. (Friesen, 2014, p.137) Lectures remain to be the cornerstone of educational institutions and teaching methods, most universities have not yet found practical alternative teaching methods for the large majority of their courses and as such the formal components and characteristics of what constituted as a lecture back in 1590 still exist within the dominant structures of the contemporary model of a University.

In her key text 'Rethinking University Teaching: a framework for the effective use of educational technology" Diana Laudrillard argues that the form of the lecture is rooted in ancient oral traditions that are the foundations of rituals, etiquettes and ultimately cultural preservation.

If we forget the eight hundred years of university tradition that legitimises them (lectures) and imagine starting afresh with the problem of how to enable a large percentage of the population to understand [...] complex ideas, I doubt that lectures will immediately spring to mind as the obvious solution' (Laudrillard, 93). The environments and discourses that led to the proliferation of the lecture-performance form initially during the counter-culture revolutions of the nineteen sixties were heavily determined by artists seeking to expand upon the idea of what could constitute as a work of art. These tendencies in art making gave way to Conceptual Art and in many cases conceptual art broke away from ideas of cultural preservation.

The lecture has been much maligned as a pedagogical form. It has been denigrated as a 'hot medium' that has long been superseded by the cooler dialogical and televisual forms, most recently through the mechanics of PowerPoint, TED Talks and the Internet (Friesen, 2014, p.138). This presentation will analysis the provenance of the design of the digital software used to create lectures and lecture-performance's in the context of education and contemporary art.

EPHEMERAL FAILURE

SINÉAD O'DONNELL-CAREY (ATLANTIC TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SLIGO)

Failure is an alternative outcome from the intended denouement. Charu Maithani states is a 'failure confronts the medium with its limitations'. This paper investigates failure in the artistic process and failure as art through my own work 'Slip'. The site-responsive play is devised using witness testimony from Irish 'Lunatic' asylums and patient casebooks. Digital and information art will be projected on surfaces and actors during rehearsals and performances. Images capture the slippage between memory, photograph, and the institutionalised ghosts for an immersed audience. The asylum system was created to house 'undesirable' people for potential rehabilitation in the 1800s, but the institutions ultimately failed them. Utilising glitch and digital error will represent the failure of people, systems using photography and architecture through various shots of landscapes, archives, photographs of patients, staff and the asylum buildings.

Through developing my work, I examine the experiments of early photographers such as Thomas Wedgwood and Humphry Davy. They successfully created a photographic image in the late 1700s using silver nitrate on white leather. Yet, they failed to make it a permanent photographic impression, giving up on their experiment that only ever existed in their memory of it. 'Equilibres' (1984-6) by Peter Fischili and David Weiss is a series of photographs with household objects balanced before falling or failing to maintain their balance. The photography captures the exact moment preceding that failure. These examples depict a theatrical loss of narrative and stability as the inevitable outcome of failure. Through these examples, among others, I investigate Giles Deleuze's theory of 'Difference and Repetition' to hypothesise how failure is crucial in repeating a process with error until achieving success. In parallel with that is Carolyn Kane's theory that error, noise, and glitch are embedded in modern creativity. Art utilises failure both intentionally and unintentionally simultaneously.

Investigating examples of failure emphasise the collective phenomenon of immersive theatre with digital technology that can appropriately represent and address past failures. The purpose of this paper is to examine how fleeting failure is the core of artistic process and production through a practice-as-research methodology. Using signifiers of glitch and error as a creative component in the recovery of failure re-presents the past in the present.

TECH GUY SPIEL

CATHERINE HARTY (CORK ARTISTS COLLECTIVE)

A monologue to the empty zoom room. The speaker, in a somewhat robotic voice, relays their opinions and perspectives on upgrading themselves. The video engages with the question of what it means to go post-human, trans-human or perhaps even human+.

The cosmos flickers in the background, the monologue sometimes breaks off as technology itself breaks down. The rudimentary and the hyperbolic intermingle.

Tech Guy Spiel is a short video; utilizing an appropriated text (from a magazine interview with a "tech-millionaire") a monologue is delivered. It is recorded using Zoom's recording feature; the footage itself dates from near the beginning of the Covid pandemic lock-down phase and expresses utopian hopes in technology entangled with a disappointment with fleshy human existence.

THE WEB REVIVAL AND THE FOLK LIFE OF VIRTUAL WORLDS

DANIEL MURRAY

Time within technology moves at a different rate to our reality; the root of my work is this temporal dissonance, that leaves 3D design from 30 years ago looking like the work of an ancient civilisation; as we surf the web we become the ghosts that haunt those ancient places, and as those places go on to define the virtual worlds of the future, we become the mythos of tomorrow.

Web design is the gateway to all digital art; it is the folk art of the internet; it is the point at which the internet becomes art, art becomes technology, and no clear boundary can or should exist between the two.

In 2016, while repeating my final year in computer science, I created the Lil Melon Kingdom and GifyPet; two old styled websites that were reactions against the modern web, with its sterile flat design and exhausting obsession with brands and monetisation. In doing so I had found myself at the epicentre of a new web revival happening in a community called Neocities, a reincarnation of the early web pioneer community of Geocities; filled with artists, writers, furries, programers, witches, geeks and all sorts of other misfits fleeing the doomed ship of social media. Web design for all its limitations, was the medium that opened my eyes to the possibilities of digital art.

Today I consider myself a digital artist, a computer scientist and a game designer. My work exists within the interplay and inseparability of these disciplines; I use 2D and 3D worlds as a means of exploring the mythos of technology; a mythos that is created from our memories, but mostly from the timeless memories of the world around us.

This talk will be a brief outline of my new work and current thinking, along with some context surrounding the wider web revival scene.

ELECTRONICS AS A MEMBER OF THE ENSEMBLE

KERRY L HAGAN (UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK)

I am a composer and researcher working in both acoustic and computer media. I develop real-time methods for spatialisation and stochastic algorithms for musical practice. My work endeavours to achieve aesthetic and philosophical aims while taking inspiration from mathematical and natural processes. In this way, each work combines art with science and technology from various domains. As a researcher, my interests include real-time algorithmic methods for music composition and sound synthesis, spatialisation techniques for 3D sounds and electronic/electroacoustic musicology.

Many of my works are mixed, written for traditional orchestral instruments and computer. Most composers approach the electronic part as equal to the ensemble as a whole or as an accompaniment to the acoustic instruments, thus making the electronics more important than any individual instrument. In my work, I aim to make the electronics equivalent to one part, integrating it into the overall piece. This practice remains relatively uncommon.

The consequences of the computer as an ensemble member, rather than as an accompaniment, impact notation, sound design, software design and performance. A combination of traditional notation and graphic elements represents the computer part in my scores. It requires a trained musician to trigger sounds in time with the ensemble. The 'liveness' of the computer part requires a generative approach to the software, making it responsive to the musical interpretation of the ensemble and its conductor. The electronic part needs to be flexible enough so that the computer performer's favoured interface (their physical, digital instrument) can pair with the software easily. And the computer part must have the range and timbres suited to the ensemble, capitalising on its extensive affordances while blending. In this way, elements of orchestration come into play in the sound design of the computer's materials.

In this presentation, I compare the use of the computer in my work "requiem" (2014) for clarinet and computer, "Agus í á bá," (2019), for orchestra and computer, and "Quintet", for string quartet and computer (in progress), to demonstrate the role the computer plays in my mixed works. I will share my scores, discussing how performances are conducted and how the computer contributes in the overall work.

In "requiem", the computer part mixes with the clarinet as a duo. In "Agus í á bá,", the computer part is only one instrument, not equivalent to the entire orchestra, and it primarily functions like an incredibly versatile percussion instrument. Finally, in "Quintet", the computer part blends with the strings, extending the quartet without overpowering it.

In all cases, the computer with the instruments serve musical ideas that exist independently of the instrumental technologies (whether acoustic or digital) employed.

INTERMODAL AND INTERSENSORY POTENTIAL OF INTERACTIVE AUDIOVISUAL PERFORMANCE

RENATA PĘKOWSKA

Digital realtime technologies have greatly expanded the range of achievable effects for audiovisual performances. Within contemporary discourse, the historical concept of "visual music" is understood as possessing the quality of the audio-visual combination, achieved through structural reference to musical composition, transcoding sound into images (or vice versa), or performing sound and images live, following the rules of musical improvisation. Other used terms for such combined media are transmedia, or metamedium, a result of an "active" mix of media, as opposed to multimedia seen as a mere addition of media.

My inquiry centred around the potential of real time technologies to create instances of audiovisual intermodal binding, and intersensory perception, in the context of historical examples of artistic attempts to create "visual music". The project included selected contextual theories such as phenomenology, as well as its own line of research, together with the development of the visual components of the performance.

The analysis accounted for both the contingency and the subjective nature of the integrated audiovisual experience, taking as its centre the multimodal event of a live performance as an intersubjective interplay between two players and two modalities, and consecutively between its structure and the perceiving audience.

The primary research part of the project aimed to establish a loose set of indications for live visuals, grounding the inquiry in the specifically Irish context, by means of a short survey which consisted of two open-ended questions about remembered, memorable bodily experienced audiovisual performances. The survey analysis focused on instances of what Merleau-Ponty referred to as the reappearing of the original unity of the senses.

The intersensory experience is rarely accounted for within the existing models of perception. The research took as a point of departure the perception of audiovisual performance, and looked into synaesthesia as a manifestation of the nuances and the wide spectrum within intersensory perception, arguing for the recognition of the intersensory as a demonstration of the potential of human sensorium and its possible creative interpretations.

SYSTEMS INTERFERENCE ART: ARGUMENTS, SAMPLES, NEW WORK

MICHEÁL O'CONNELL (UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX)

This presentation paper problematises received wisdom about what can constitute digital art, and provides background to my set of approaches to the technological landscape. Specific attention is given to new work commissioned by the Arts Council of Ireland for a touring exhibition, beginning at the West Cork Arts Centre in September 2022.

Rather than fixating on image manipulation only, and the capabilities of latest digital tools or apps aimed at designers, I advocate for use of and interaction with the ubiquitous technologies about us. For the most part, anyway, the former results in what Joanna Zylinska terms 'style-transfer'. Secondly, whilst much attention is given to the straightforwardly algorithmic, I am interested in the fact that computational flows are directly reflected in changes to older tangible networks, such as the road system. Heavy goods vehicles move materials from distribution centres, through warehouses, and courier companies of many sorts are in operation, shifting real packages, in ways that are analogous to the famous 'packet switching' in communication networks.

Appropriation and attempting to unearth the poetic in these every-day, often dysfunctional, technologies, systems and bureaucracies are key to my activities. Strategies include misuse, misunderstanding and tinkering. A 'disrupter' firm like Deliveroo appears, new apps and interfaces are developed, agreements are discussed behind the scenes, and suddenly, the streets are peppered with cyclists and scooter riders with turquoise-coloured cubic boxes on their backs. One activity of mine involved being 'onboarded' as a Deliveroo rider. Another used courier company parcel-tracking information, and specifically collections of 'point of delivery signatures' (PODS). Supermarket self-checkout machines were used to buy nothing, and a short instructional video produced to demonstrate how. A project involved sending money flowing unnecessarily between bank accounts, daily, via standing order. I set my phone handset up as speed camera, and acoustic symphonies were created through simultaneous use of sat-nav software and maps-apps whilst driving.

In West Cork I have been considering the impact of traffic, but also other utilisations of the rural and semi-rural (or perhaps pseudo-rural) landscape. The way car usage has gradually come to dominate, is given less critical attention than the increasing presence of wind turbines, say. Space is prioritised for other purposes too, sport and leisure, golf for instance or the old – arguably bottom-up disruptive – Cork and Armagh game of road bowling.

One aspect of the new work arises from the thought-experiment that golf courses could be turned into wind farms. I have been posting this proposal on TripAdvisor sites for clubs in Ireland and globally, along with rudimentary mock-up artists' impressions of what the improved game would look like. Google translate is helpful for converting the 'reviews' into the local language. Trump International Golf Course in Dubai, wrote back thanking me for the trip, and inviting me again, though I'd been clear that the visit was a virtual, and not real, one. A resort was even found in (a former section) of Amazon rainforest. A second activity treats golf courses as potential campsites. These and other recent examples of 'mild hacking' are discussed further in the paper.

EARLY-CAREER IRISH ARTISTS FEATURED IN HYPERTEXT AND THE HYPERTEXT EXHIBITION MAP

ENID CONWAY (BLOOMERS)

"When we think about the union with new technologies, particularly ones that supersede us, their fears are not that the human body will change, but that the structures that exist within society will remain the same." - Hypertext, Bloomers Magazine Issue 06, December 2020.

"Hypertext" is a printed publication which explores visual art and texts by early-career artists and writers in Ireland that illustrates our biological and technological interconnectivity from a feminist perspective. It investigates modes of examining the interface between the organism and technology – emphasising how these ideas concern storytelling, languages and meaning-making processes we use. Contextualising these works within the research of an Irish feminist publishing collective allowed Bloomers to place each work against our unique shared political history and the structures within society we endeavour to overcome.

Aoife Dunne's pixelated illustrations made using an nintendo DS reiterates our use of technologies to measure what we are eager to understand. Posited like windows over seas and skies, our relationship with technology is a lens through which we explore new and uncertain futures. Similarly, Ellie Niblock investigates the relationship between the physical and digital worlds and how they co-exist. Niblocks "The Birth Suit" is a silicone suit imagined from the year 3024 which echoes the preservation of our species and our collective dependency on technology, as made abundantly clear in the past 2 years. Aoibheann Bradys chatbot is a tool that confronts the challenges we reconcile with when uniting with Artificial Intelligence and explores the nature of what a machine can truly learn about us - our definitions of memory and the consequences of its preservation, imitation and preciousness are brought to the fore. When one asks the machine "How are you?" the response, "Fear of the future is a big one I would say for me. It's a big question I have."

This project also extended into geographically embedding these narratives through the Hypertext Exhibition Map - a Cork city wide, site specific exhibition was made accessible via scanable QR code stickers, plotted on Google Maps, curated by Bloomers co-director Kim Crowley. The Hypertext Exhibition Map was an outdoor, social-distance friendly, walking exhibition - that positioned the work of emerging women artists who are creating digital art and moving image pieces in areas of Cork city in turn reiterating or adding new dimensions to the works motive.

The tension between the digital and biological is exacerbated by events where we are reminded of our humanity, the organisms we exist as and the pursuit of preserving parts of our being and evolving other parts – to ultimately overcome the biology we strive to protect. As we navigate a world dramatically altered by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are confronted with the porousness of the boundary between organism and technology and our acceleration toward the digital sphere. In this presentation, Artistic Director of Bloomers, Enid Conway will discuss key examples from the Hypertext Project and how they simultaneously describe and inscribe our contemporary cyborgian condition.

MARKIEVICZ MARK 1

JOANNA WALSH

An Artificial Intelligence sits at the end of the world. Post-humanity, she is in dialogue with a past that no longer exists, reading the personal writings of Irish women—eyewitness accounts, interviews, letters—to generate new writing. A future sibyl, she is programmed to continue to write even when there is no one left to read.

"An AI gendered (f), am I

a thought experiment about being a writer

Or

A thought experiment about being a woman?"

I will present work funded by my 2020 Markievicz Award for a proposed text-based project. The grant enabled me to expand my practice from print publishing and writing and toward digital/performance/installation, which I had already begun during my recent PhD, when I created the interactive digital narrative, seed-story.com.

For my Markievicz Award project, I programmed an AI to generate text from the prison letters of Constance Markievicz, plus interviews with 20th century Dublin women collected by Máirín Johnston in her 1988 book 'Dublin Belles' . The AI is hosted on a website, miss-communication.ie, where it produces text on demand, in response to visitors' prompts, in the person of an oracle which, like many in ancient Greece, is unsteadily gendered female.

The website also hosts a choose-your-own-critical-theory-adventure essay investigating language, autonomy, creativity, and gender identity via the works of Roland Barthes, Gayatri Spivak and Honoré de Balzac, as well as the prophecies of the oracle at Delphi, Samuel Beckett's Texts for Nothing, Kemplen—creator of the Mechanical Turk-—'s 'speaking machine', the histories of Bell Labs' generative art project E.A.T. and the first computers built at Manchester University.

I both programmed the AI and wrote the essay, but how much am I in control of either 'work'?

The essay and some of the AI's writing is also published as a book (JOAN: https://joanpublishing.org/Joanna-Walsh), a project that demanded that I solve the puzzle of making a digital project work for the page. Both were launched at the ICA London on 8 March 2022, where I was in conversation with Caroline Campbell's Loiterbot, who spoke the words of my AI.

Besides considering the ways women have been historically heard, recorded and commemorated, my project has allowed me to consider some of the political and economic questions surrounding contemporary writing practice as 'work'. A 'decomodified' artwork (see Leigh Claire la Barge's Wages Against Artwork), my AI's writing resembles 'work' as process, and produces 'a work', but both process and product float free of conventional notions of value and remuneration, simultaneously expanding and threatening conventional notions of human creativity, as well as the ability of contemporary writers to sustain creative careers.

Working from Maria Vischmidt's (Goldsmiths UOL) proposal that 'anything that is not work can be art', writing via an AI, a new kind of creative practice is produced that slyly questions the validity of works assumed to be produced by humanist subjectivities. A modest proposal: AIs producing artwork generated from the work of women and non-binary practitioners could quickly reverse the continuing imbalances in many art collections.

ON THE PROBLEM OF *DIGITAL* IN ART PRACTICES

GIUSEPPE TORRE & ROBIN PARMAR (UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK)

Any discussion of digital art must be grounded in an honest problematisation of the term. How, then, can we define the digital? Is it simply the idea that reality is mathematically representable? What bearing does this have on the arts practitioner and the digital world she encounters? Contemporary post-digital practices include artistic approaches that often highlight a disenchantment with the digital. Can and should digital art be redeemed?

The debate will seek the active engagement of the audience and will depart from two contrasting views as presented by Dr. Giuseppe Torre (University of Limerick, Ireland) and Dr. Robin Parmar (University of Limerick, Ireland) :

Giuseppe Torre wrote:

"Digital means only to discretise a flow of electrons in time so as to count things one wants to give a number to. For digital art practitioners this means something terrible, namely that anything we do is a count – including all of our action through it ... so that at the end of a journey that moves from input to output we come out not recognising ourselves anymore ... because we are not numbers." (Torre 2021)

Robin Parmar wrote:

"Our anxiety concerning the digital is based on its discontinuous structure. Knowing that digital data streams are composed of ones and zeroes, we follow Zeno of Elea in worrying over the impossibility of integrating a continuous phenomenological experience. [...] My thesis is that such discontinuities are not a new characteristic of digital technologies, but were always already present, not only in previous analogue processes but in our very perceptual apparatus. Corpuscular theory [...] reveals such gaps to be profoundly generative." (Parmar 2015).

References

Parmar, Robin. 2015. "Digital anxiety dispelled: Granular synthesis and the paradox of discontinuity," in Jean Baudrillard: Fest für einen Toten, Germany: Ventil Verlag.

Torre, Giuseppe. 2021. An Ethico-Phenomenology of Digital Art Practices. London: Routledge.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE IN THE PROGRAMME

JOHN THOMPSON is a PhD student at University College Cork with supervision through the Departments of French and Philosophy as well as the department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies. His research project is on the ways in which conceptual art practice can illuminate areas of materialist philosophy, and vice versa. His broader interests are in aesthetic theory, the history of materialist philosophy and contemporary art. He also practices visual and sound art and has written art criticism and philosophy reviews for a number of publications including the journal Art History, Enclave Review, Visual Artists Newsheet, Corridor 8 and Marx and Philosophy Review of Books.

PAUL O'NEILL is an artist and researcher currently based in Dublin, Ireland. His practice and research are concerned with the implications of our collective dependency on networked technologies and infrastructures. He has exhibited and presented his work at various cultural institutions and events including Science Gallery (Dublin), Ars Electronica festival (Linz) and Inspace (Edinburgh), and his writing has featured in publications from the Institute of Network Cultures (Amsterdam) and ANNEX – Ireland's representative at the 2021 Venice Architecture Biennale.

EL PUTNAM is Lecturer in Digital Media at National University Ireland Galway where she is director of the MA in Digital Art, Design and Cultures. She is an artist-philosopher working predominately in performance art and digital technologies. Recent publications of note include an affiliated issue of the International Journal of Performance Art and Digital Media, co-edited with Dr. Conor McGarrigle (June 2021), and the research monograph The Maternal, Digital Subjectivity, and the Aesthetics of Interruption (Bloomsbury 2022). She is a member of the Mobius Artists Group (Boston) and member of the International Association of Art Critics.

LAURENCE COUNIHAN is an Irish-Filipino writer and critic based in Co. Kerry. Currently a teaching assistant and PhD student in the History of Art Department at University College Cork, his research is located at the intersection of art history, media archaeology, and continental aesthetics. His essays have been published in *Circa Art Magazine, Paper Visual Art, Enclave Review, Visual Artists' News Sheet, Mirror Lamp Press, Hz Journal,* and *Yearbook of Moving Image Studies.*

CRASH STOP produces work based around the ideas of remix culture introduced by Lawrence Lessig and the reuse of old hardware and software trying to use only that which is open source publishing his work under creative commons licence. He has participated in national and international glitch art exhibitions online and sometimes irl, and is an associate member of Format C arts organisation, Zagreb. He does not use Facebook or Apple products.

FRANK WASSER is an artist, writer and educator from Dublin currently based in London. Wasser is a DPhil (PhD) researcher at University of Oxford. Wasser has exhibited and lectured nationally and internationally. Recent activities and projects include a residency at the Salzburger Kunstverin, Salzburg, Austria (March 2022) and a solo show at Pallas Project Space (Dublin, Ireland; November 2022, upcoming). Wasser teaches Fine Art and Critical Theory at University of Oxford and London Metropolitan University. Wasser is an educator at Tate Modern and Tate Britain. Wasser has recently contributed writing to Flash Art, Art Review, Art Monthly, Burlington Contemporary and Visual Artists Newshe;et. Wasser is supported by Arts Council of Ireland.

SINÉAD O'DONNELL-CAREY is a theatre maker, production designer and researcher from Dublin living in Donegal, Ireland. Trained in theatre design, Sinéad has explored digital media technology for theatre and performance art, combining visual art practices with the body in the space. Her current work includes Slip, a site responsive and devised performance using digital media has been awarded the 'Time at the Well' bursary from The Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo 2022 to fund this project.

Sinéad is a PhD candidate at Atlantic Technological University, Sligo examining social historiography of places and spaces through performance with augmented reality interventions. Sinéad has an MA in Film & Theatre from NUI Galway and BA in Performing Arts and Theatre Design from IT Sligo. She is on the committee for Prague Quadrennial for 2023 and exhibited her work in the Irish Student and Graduate section of the PQ 2019. Sinéad was the Yeats Design Resident in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin in 2017. More information can be found at www.fide.ie

CATHERINE HARTY is a contemporary artist, whose practice employs a diversity of media and techniques, among them painting, video and performance. She is a member of the Cork Artist's Collective (CAC), and has written art criticism for CIRCA, VAN and Enclave Review. She holds an M.A. in 'Art in the Contemporary World' (Theory) from N.C.A.D. Dublin and a M.A. in 'Fine Art' (practice), from Birmingham School of Art, UCE, England

DANIEL MURRAY is a Cork-based digital artist and computer scientist. His work focuses on the dream space of digital worlds; Exploring the emotion and mythology of our digital lives and associations with technology through nostalgia, video games and the web. Received a BSc in Computer Science from UCC in 2017 and an MSc in Games & Virtual Reality from the Glasgow School of Art in 2021, is a member of Sample-Studios in Cork, and can be found at melonking.net.

KERRY L HAGAN presents her music and research in international conferences and festivals such as the International Computer Music Conference, the Sound and Music Computing Conference, New York City Electroacoustic Festival, BEAST FEaST, Electroacoustic Music Studies Conference, New Instruments for Musical Expression Conference, and many others. She performs regularly with Miller Puckette as the Higgs whatever, and with John Bowers in the Bowers-Hagan Duo. Puckette and Hagan recently published Between the Tracks: Musicians on Selected Electronic Music, an edited volume from MIT Press. She is a lecturer in computer music at the University of Limerick, Digital Media and Arts Research centre and the Principal Investigator for the Spatialization and Auditory Display Environment (SpADE), She currently serves as President of the International Computer Music Association. In 2010, Kerry led a group of practitioners to form the Irish Sound, Science and Technology Association, where she served as President until 2015.

RENATA PĘKOWSKA is a visual artist, independent researcher and writer, and art educator within the museum and art gallery context, based in Dublin, Ireland. She holds a degree in craft design (National College of Art and Design) and postgraduate degrees in contemporary art critical theories (National College of Art and Design) and creative digital media (Technological University Dublin). Her main research interests include book arts within contemporary arts discourse, light art, phenomenology of embodied and situated cognition, affect theory, and intersensory potential of audiovisual performance. Her artistic practice projects include visual intermedia for live sound performance and digital animation.

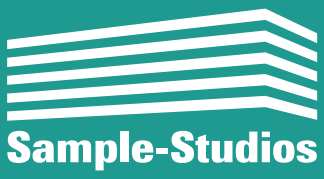
MICHEÁL O'CONNELL, who often operates under the moniker Mocksim, is an artist working in Ireland and Britain, a lecturer and researcher at University of Sussex. His work has been shown in project spaces, established locations, and via online channels. An early project, Contra-Invention, which re-presented the photographs traffic wardens capture (as part of their daily duties) of poorly parked cars, would be the first of a series of similar hacks, carried out in the decade afterwards. Contra-Invention had been selected for Les Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles, nominated for the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize (2012), toured, and the catalogue for it was included in Martin Parr's Best Books list. Since completing a practice-led PhD, entitled 'Art as Artificial Stupidity', O'Connell has been actively intervening again, under the banner of 'Systems Interference Artist'. In 2019 he was awarded a Develop Your Creative Practice (DYCP) grant (UK), then Commissions and Touring awards by The Arts Council, Ireland (2021/22).

ENID CONWAY holds an MA in Arts Administration and Cultural Policy from Goldsmiths University London and BA in Fine Art from Crawford College of Art and Design. Her MA dissertation More Than Human : Meaning-Making processes in the Digital Age Museum focussed on how museums meet the challenges of digitally generated cultures and how this impacts the symbolic meaning-making. Conway is the founding director of Bloomers, an Arts Council funded, feminist, visual art organisation and publishing collective. Active since 2018, Bloomers have produced over 8 printed publications documenting the perspectives of early-career visual artists, writers and practitioners based in Ireland

JOANNA WALSH is a multidisciplinary writer for print, digital and performance. The author of eleven books, she also works as a critic, editor and university teacher. She is a Markievicz Awardee, a UK Arts Foundation fellow, and the founder of #readwomen (2014-18), described by the New York Times as 'a rallying cry for equal treatment for women writers'. She currently runs @noentry_arts, changing the conversation around arts and ageing. Her latest book, Girl Online, was published in May 2022 by Verso Books.

GIUSEPPE TORRE is Lecturer of digital art practices at the University of Limerick. His research interest lies at the crossings between digital art practices, open source technology/culture and philosophy. These interests respond to a questioning of the relationships between technology and art, code and aesthetics, numbers and self; a process that has so far led him to question under what forms and forces truly creative efforts may, or may not, arise. He is the author of An Ethico-Phenomenology of Digital Art Practices (Routledge, 2021). His academic writings feature in journals and books by publishing houses such as MIT Press, Springer, Routledge/Taylor & Francis. As an active digital art practitioner, his works and performances have been showcased nationally and internationally. He is an advocate of FLOSS (Free and Libre Open Source Software) in the teaching and professional practice of all digital arts.

ROBIN PARMAR explores the phenomenology of place and the poetics of memory using non-narrative film, generative installations, and environmental composition. Research interests include psychoacoustics, visual music, field recording, audio synthesis, radiophonics, and epistemologies of nature. He has released eleven albums, on Silent Records (USA), Gruenrekorder (Germany), and his own Stolen Mirror (Ireland). "Music for Glaciers," a generative performance, debuted on Culture Night 2019. His film "The Swerve" premiéred at Light Moves: Festival of Screendance 2018. Awards include an Invisible Places residency (The Azores, 2017) and an Arts Council Bursary (2017). Robin has a doctorate in Sonic Creativity from De Montfort University (Leicester, UK) and is Lecturer in Video, Film, and Visual Communication at the University of Limerick (Ireland). He is Vice-President of the Irish Science, Sound, and Technology Association (ISSTA) and guest editor for *Interference: Journal of Audio Culture*. Visit robinparmar.com.


Sample-Studios


UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh