



Media Arts and Technology
Graduate Program
University of California, Santa Barbara

MAT200A Arts & Technology Seminar Fall 2004:

“What is Digital Media Arts?”

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What is Digital/New Media Arts?

- An umbrella term covering a wide range of practices in which digital technologies are integrated into the artmaking process to create works of art
- Digital Media implies the production of art with technological media
- Focus on the technological process as source for research

What is Digital/New Media Arts?

- A technologically driven project that synthesizes within it meaningful cultural questions: who are we, what are we doing, where are we going?
- Requires knowledge from multiple disciplines. Digital media art is a hybrid. Part art, part social science, part science
- Digital media artists are generalists in contrast to the scientific specialist
- Collaborative approach is the rule, reaching out across disciplines

Some Components & Methods of Digital Art

- **COMMUNICATION:** share information through phenomena, narrative, metaphor and other means
- **IT IS CULTURAL:** make visible something that has yet to be given a name, to be put into words
- **IMPACT:** New form of information, or communication may destabilize, or confront. Intent is to breakdown audience's comfort zones to create communication
- **Aesthetics** is a complex form of understanding, a feedback mechanism to make sense of the world

Examples of Practices & Approaches

- Physical Spaces and objects: Interactive Installations (intelligent space), Robotics (sculpture), etc.
- Virtual: NetArt (internet based), Virtual Reality, etc.
- Some are narrative based (tell a story in some way)
- Others create phenomena (create an experience)
- Other projects reflect on the condition of what it means to be a digital artwork project (analytical)
- Many are time based processes, algorithmically driven

Some Art-Science Research Areas (Steve Wilson)

Kinetics & Robotics, Sound, Virtual Reality, Motion, Gesture, etc, Artificial Intelligence, Information Systems, Speech, Computer Media, Telecom - radio, Telephone, Wi-fi, Telepresence, Web Art , Microbiology, Animals & Plants, Ecology, Body & Medicine, Math, Algorithms, Artificial Life, Particle Physics, nanotechnology, Dynamic Systems, Geology, Chemistry, Rapid Prototyping, Space Science, GPS, etc.

Tool or Medium? | Investigation of the Medium

- Focus on technology as a medium where the artwork produced with the technology produces a result that could not have been achieved without the technology

Methods

- Meta-level analysis of digital media technologies
- Digital Media as cultural practice
- Interdisciplinarity and hybridization
- Advanced skills in technological processes
- Focus on the technological process as source for research
- Computer programming as artistic practice and authorship

Digital Media Arts as Research

- Investigate unexplored questions, complexity in content, perception, aesthetics through doing (project production, experiment, artwork, etc)
- By-products: New methods, concepts, aesthetics, perceptions, cultural reflection, tools, etc.

How may an Artwork be Differentiated from a Scientific Research, or Business Project

- Pure (free form) research: driven by “need to find out”, or personal interest
- May explore areas discarded by science research or market
- Content and process driven, rather than product based
- External goal defined by practitioner
- Public & evaluation: specialized audience and institutions

- To be continued.....