George Legrady Studio

Building on a conceptual approach to still photography, George Legrady acquired computational skills in the studio of the Artificial Intelligence artist Harold Cohen in the early 1980s on a DEC PDP-11 mainframe computer. Legrady is considered a pioneer in the field for integrating computation with photographic imaging, semiotics, and Information Theory in the mid-1980s when the first image processing analog-to-digital raster image capture technology became available (the AT&T Targa Truevision graphics hardware).


Throughout his 45-year artistic career, Legrady has presented his work initially within the alternative gallery network, moving on to museum installations with works featured across a broad interdisciplinary context, intersecting fine arts photography, digital media arts festivals, and contemporary art in North America, Europe, and Asia. His five most significant projects include the “James Bay Cree Photography Documentary” (1973), “An Anecdoted Archive from the Cold War” (1992), “Pockets Full of Memories” (2001), “Making Visible the Invisible” (2006), "We Are Stardust” (2008).

Major Art Projects

1973  James Bay Indigenous Cree Photographic Documentary

1975  Catalog of Found Objects, a work that explores semantic classification. First exhibited in "West Coast Conceptual Photographers", curated by Lew Thomas for La Mamelle, San Francisco (1976) https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/fo/found_obj.html


1980  Artificial Intelligence, a commissioned publication project for the art journal Parachute 22, Montreal, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/parachute/para22sm.pdf


1992 *Equivalents II*, an interactive installation and early artwork that introduced natural language processing, positioning digital algorithmic design in relation to Alfred Stieglitz's 1922 photographic series Equivalents. The custom software used a 2D fractal mid-point synthesis algorithm to create organic abstract images shaped by text input by the user. All phrases contributed by users remained with the work to function as reference for the feedback process when words in the user's phrase were compared to those in the data pool. Exhibited in "Iterations" at the ICP, NYC (1994), Ansel Adams Center SF (1996), and in the travelling exhibition "Fotografie nach der Fotografie", by the Siemens Kultur Programm (1995-1997) https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/equivalents/Equi.html

1992 *An Annotated Archive from the Cold War*, A multi-linear database, over 60 stories and objects in the artist's possession are classified according to the floorplan of the former Hungarian Communist propaganda museum in Budapest. An installation work and CD-ROM publication that addresses the archive as multi-linear narrative and the intersection of personal and official documents in Stalinist Hungary. Commissioned by the Yerba Buena Center, SF (1992). Widely exhibited internationally including Palais des beaux-arts Brussels, with Chris Marker, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/anecdote/Anecdote.html

1995 *the [clearing]*, A hunting image representing the Bosnian war crisis is subdivided into sections each holding clusters of news topics of the war during the 1993-1994 period based on Western news clippings. Viewers uncover the texts by rolling over the image. Exh. At New Langton Arts, SF (1994). https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/clearing/clearing.html


2001 *Pockets Full of Memories*, a data collection installation commissioned by the Centre Pompidou consisting of contributed images of objects by the public that are continuously organized by the unsupervised Kohonen artificial neural-network algorithm so that all objects are spatially placed between each other based on their semantic metadata. https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/pfom2/pfom2.html


2005 *Making Visible the Invisible*, A data visualization at the Seattle Public Library that may be the longest operational data visualization. The hourly aggregated checked-outs by library patrons are analyzed and visualized through 4 animations to give a sense of what are the key topics of interests at each hour, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/k/k.html

2006 *Kinetic Flow*, A permanent commission by the LA Metro Rail visualizing subway riders’ demographic information processed by the Ising mathematical model. https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/k/k.html

2007 *Cell Tango*, An interactive installation that features a dynamically growing collection of cellphone images tagged by contributors' metadata to be visually organized by a bin-packing algorithm, a computational complexity theory problem. Multiple exhibitions including the National Academy of Sciences, Washington DC (2007), and the Poznan Art Biennale, Poland (2010). https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/celltango/cell.html

2008 *We Are Stardust*, Commissioned by the NASA Spitzer Science Center at California Institute of Technology, and the Art Center of Design in Pasadena - two projections retrace with data and a
military grade infrared camera the angle-of-views of the sun orbiting NASA Spitzer telescope through the full sequence of 34,000 observations. Exhibited in Art Center College of Design (2008), Vancouver Winter Olympics (2010), and "Infosphere" at the ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany.

https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/st/stardust.html

2008 Data Flow, A data visualization on 3 separate screens in the corporate space of the Corporate Executive Board, dynamically analyses incoming members’ emails to visualize in real-time statistical analyses of the incoming language. Various algorithms such as bigram analysis determine the data selection, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/ceb_/ceb_.html

2009 Studies in ReTelling, explores the synthesis of literary form and computer engineering in narrative construction inspired in part by the author Raymond Queneau's multiple retelling of a simple story in Exercises de Style to determine how the positioning and scaling of images creates changes in meaning. Two screens continuously re-organize their images and at some point exchange them. Shanghai eArts Beyond (2009) https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/rt/retelling.html


2014 Swarm Vision, 3 cameras autonomously scan and analyze the space they are in for visual details of interest. Custom machine-learning software provides each camera with a history to compare current views with previous ones. Two large visual projections feature camera performance and images captured featured in 3D virtual space. Exh. Siggraph (2013), Heidelberg Kunstverein (2015) https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/sv/swarmvision.html


2018 Digital Giverny, Photographs taken at Monet's Giverny garden are processed by a style transfer algorithm which references industrial rust surface panels, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/dg/digitalGiverny.pdf

2018 Algorithmic Fontainebleau, Photographs of the Fontainebleau nature processed by a sinusoidal algorithm used to get detail out of the Shroud of Turin, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/Projects/fb/shroud.pdf

2020 Anamorphic-Voronoi, A series that simulate organization of visual elements within a virtual 3D space, https://www.mat.ucsb.edu/~g.legrady/glWeb/projects.html
Awards & Grants

2021  Canada Council for the Arts Explore & Create grant
2019  Graham Foundation Advanced Studies in Fine Arts
2016  John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship
2011/15  Robert W. Deutsch Foundation Fellowship
2012  National Science Foundation Arctic Social Science
2011  National Science Foundation Intelligence & Information Systems Grant
2003/05  Computer Integrated Media Awards from the Canada Council
2003  Honorable mention, Prix Ars Electronica
2002  Creative Capital Foundation (Emerging Trends)
2000  Daniel Langlois Foundation for the Arts, Science and Technology
1996  Computer Integrated media Awards from the Canada Council
1996  Honorable mention, Prix Ars Electronica
1995  Creative Capital Foundation (Emerging Trends)
1995  Artslink, National Endowment for the Arts
1994  National Endowment for the Arts Visual Fellowship
1989  Canada Council Paris Studio
1988  Honorable mention, Prix Ars Electronica
1972-82  Various Canada Council Arts and Ontario Arts Council Awards

Public Collections

2020  McIntosh Gallery, Western University, London, Ontario
2019  Santa Barbara Museum of Art
2018  Los Angeles County Museum of Art
2015  Centre for Art and Technology, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany
2012  San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
2012  21c museum, Cincinnati
2009  Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Vernon Collection Acquisition
2008  D.E.Shaw & Co Consulting, NYC
2008  Corporate Executive Board, Arlington, Virginia (Commission)
2008  Pro Ahlers Arte Foundation, Hanover, Germany
2006  Seattle Public Library (Commission)
2006  Los Angeles Metro Rail Santa Monica/Vermont Station (Commission)
2005  Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa
1996  Centre for Art and Technology, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany
1992  Centre Georges Pompidou musée d’art moderne, Paris
1990  Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa
1987  American Museum of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC
1986  National Galleries of Canada, Ottawa
1984  Musée d’art contemporain, Montreal

Academic Affiliations

George Legrady received the Masters of Fine Arts degree in Photography from the San Francisco Art Institute (1976). He is distinguished professor of digital media in the Media Arts & Technology graduate program at the University of California, Santa Barbara since 2000 where he directs the Experimental Visualization Lab focused on data visualization and computational photography. He has held faculty positions at the Merz Akademie, University

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