

Emerging Platforms for Artist Interaction

Andrew Demirjian

Hunter College
ademirji@hunter.cuny.edu

Xtine Burrough

University of Texas
xtine@utdallas.edu

Dr. Heidi Boisevert

Harmony Institute
heidi@xth.io

Abstract

Emerging Platforms for Artist Interaction is a panel that explores new ways artists use emerging media to fulfill traditional human communication strategies for exchanging ideas, expanding resources, critiquing new work, providing/receiving emotional support and developing communities.

Emerging Platforms for Artist Interaction

This panel discussion investigates how artists use widely available platforms like Loomio, Creative Disturbance, Meetup, Google Hangouts/Drive and Concept Board in resourceful ways to nurture human connection. Four distinctly different methods are shared by representatives from each group in a discussion format to unearth what is unique to their approach and the surprising interaction outcomes resulting from their use of emerging platforms as the basis for connection.

Collectively, these groups are self-organizing to meet the challenges of our time starved, spatially divergent environments, countering the harsh climate of global capitalism and terror. The conversation is geared around the emotional and psychological work that these platforms provide to sustain community and intellectual curiosity and to help artists nourish well being and human connection in their lives and practice.

Ellen Pearlman: Volumetric Society

Ellen Pearlman, PhD Candidate at the School of Creative Media at Hong Kong City University, will describe her experience directing and curating an art and technology group, the Volumetric Society, with more than 2,300 members in New York City. The platform Meetup is one of the main resources she uses to organize weekly hardware hacks, lectures, performances, exhibitions and product demonstrations. The community members meet face-to-face enabling participants to experience and

Ellen Pearlman

Hong Kong City University
ellen@volumetric.co

Cassini Nazir

University of Texas
cassini@utdallas.edu

collaborate on projects. The discussant will focus on the use of non-hierarchical structures in enabling collaboration amongst artists and technologists, as well as forming and facilitating collaborative endeavors across social-economic backgrounds.

Cassini Nazir: Creative Disturbance

Creative Disturbance is a platform developed in response to the need for a rupture in the arcane networks that currently connect creative people. Creative Disturbance is an international, multilingual network and podcast platform supporting collaboration among the arts, sciences, and new technologies communities. It operates through a podcast channel system, whereby transient or ongoing subject-matter channels are developed, produced, and disseminated. Each channel includes at least one podcast on a niche topic, as well as a repository of field-based "additional information." Representing Creative Disturbance is Cassini Nazir, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Arts and Technology Program at the University of Texas at Dallas. He will analyze the technical and design challenges for nurturing crowd sourced conversations and share his experience with the podcast series. Prof. Nazir will also describe how unlikely connections emerge on this platform and how they incorporate feedback and suggestions into the site design.

Andrew Demirjian: Videokaffe

The third discussant is from the international media art and sculpture collective Videokaffe. This group uses the Loomio and Concept Board platforms to connect and facilitate communication between their members who reside in Finland, Germany, and the United States. Loomio is an online tool for asynchronous collaborative decision-making and Concept Board provides a visual online environment for collaborative project development. Videokaffe member, Andrew Demirjian,

Assistant Professor at Hunter College in the Film and Media Department, will share anecdotal results showing how these platforms have enabled members of their collective to participate in preparing for exhibitions, discussing potential collaborative projects and assessing exhibitions. He will feature case studies of particular examples of the steps and decisions using Loomio and Concept Board.

Dr. Heidi Boisvert & Xtine Burrough: Virtual Artist Salon

Dr. Heidi Boisvert, artist and CEO of futurePerfect Lab and Co-founder of XTH, and Xtine Burrough, Associate Professor in the Art and Technology Program at the University of Texas at Dallas, will be discussing their participation in the Virtual Artist Salon. Virtual Artist Salon provides internationally exhibiting artists a digital safe-haven to share new research and ideas in a supportive environment for brainstorming and emotional support. This group uses Google Hangouts to meet once a month to participate in critical studio visits with the members regarding projects they are developing. The members will discuss how they use these tools to provide insights and valuable criticism for artistic projects that are in various stages of development. They will describe the process that has developed to work effectively in this environment, what preliminary work is done prior to their meetings and how Google docs/drive and Slack are used to provide context and references to related artworks or connecting theoretical threads.

Attendees of this panel will glean valuable insights regarding the cultural and communal gaps that these alternative spaces fill. They will witness how others have developed a more sustainable and rewarding artistic practice through community engagement (online or in real space), see how to engage with global artists with related interests, learn how to cultivate thriving communities in their local area using new tools to foster inclusivity and diversity.