

Research Statement

Applicant :: Dr Mitchell Goodwin

Portfolio :: mitchgoodwin.com

Contact :: oldmateo@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

My research profile is predominately practice lead with a focus on the abstract [properties](#) of moving image production and the aesthetics and politics of digital communication design. My most recent work, [Mineral Machine Music](#), is indicative of my interdisciplinary approach to art making and was shortlisted for both [MADATAC06](#) and the prestigious [Lumen](#) Digital Arts Prize and is currently part of a touring exhibition visiting Athens, New York, Amsterdam, London into mid-2015

My PHD [thesis](#) was accepted – without changes - in September 2014 through Griffith University, Australia. The key finding of my thesis, that a dark Gothic quality permeates the narrative and visual constructs of the mediated image, continues to be the primary focus of my ongoing scholarly activity and critical thinking.

Previous examples of my creative and academic output can be found on portfolio [site](#) and the JCU Research [portal](#).

PHD PROJECT SUMMARY

My PhD project, *Dark Euphoria: [The Neo-Gothic Narrative of Millennial Technoculture](#)*, investigated the material fabric and visual aesthetic of the digital media object, its modes of production and its recent histories. Specifically the thesis was concerned with the relationship between early 20th Century developments in technology (cinema, acceleration and electricity) the corresponding art movements of the period (particularly Cubism and the Futurists) and their reflection in contemporary image making. I suggest that there is an evolving cultural anxiety in contemporary forms of moving image production and that the Utopian idealism of millennial technoculture emerged from the 20th century already fully formed as a dark Gothic articulation of [the machine](#).

The project was delivered in two parts in which the theoretical text was the major component providing the theoretical context for a series of media art works that were produced between 2011 and 2012 in response - as much as in parallel - to this analysis. These creative works are archived at the exhibition site, [Dark Euphoria: Unclassified Media](#), and should be viewed in a non-traditional sense – a research-led practice component – contextualised by the broader theoretical narrative exposed in the thesis. Together, these two components produce a visual communication analysis of historical events, cultural artefacts and media art and the artists who produce them to reveal the nature, attraction and power of the dark euphoric temperament inherent in millennial technoculture.

Framing this examination are critical observations by a range of media theorists including Zygmunt Bauman's "liquid modernity", Manuel Castell's "space of flows", Jean Baudrillard's notion of the "weak event", Geert Lovink's critique of contemporary net culture, Bruce Sterling's notions of "dark

euphoria” and “gothic high-tech”, Paul Virilio’s “teleobjectivity” of the broadcast image loop and Slavoj Žižek’s present-future state of “endlessness”.

THREE YEAR RESEARCH PLAN

In line with my expectation of working in an interdisciplinary setting within another academic institution that values and supports research, I have prepared a brief outline of a three-year research plan which includes both scholarly activity and creative practice based outputs.

Scholarly Writing & Presentation

- My first goal for 2015 will be to refine (and update) my thesis while exploring avenues for its publication as a **book** with an accompanying **electronic resource**;
- As a part of this process (2014-2016) I will exploit the core themes of the thesis (as listed above) and shape them into book chapters, conference papers and/or journal articles. I have targeted the following near term opportunities:
 - **Conference** presentation at *SXSW Interactive* entitled *The Writing On the Wall: Our Liquid Ambient Future*, March 2015 (see: <http://mitchgoodwin.wordpress.com/2014/12/05/sxsw-2015/>);
 - Chapter proposal for **edited volume** *Transformative Light: essays on light technologies and art*, June 2015 (see: <http://www.aah.org.uk/job/1539>);
 - **Conference** paper submission for *The Balance-Unbalance conference* on *Water, Climate, Place: Re-imagining Environments* at Arizona State University, March, 2015 (see: <http://www.balance-unbalance2015.org/>);
 - *ISEA 2015*, Vancouver, Canada, August, 2015 (see: <http://isea2015.org/call-for-proposals/papers-posters-and-panels/>);
 - *In My Computer* **ebook proposal** for the The LINK Center for the Arts of the Information Age, January, 2015 (see: <http://www.linkartcenter.eu>);
 - Paper proposal for *xCoAx 2015 conference* in Glasgow, Wales in June, 2015 (see: <http://xcoax.org/>).

Research Lead Practice

As was the case with my PhD project my theoretical investigations inform my creative practice which is increasingly focused on the ‘fabric’ of the moving image and the aesthetic relationships between shape, colour and form as dictated by the medium of digital video capture and display.

- I am committed to producing a significant body of creative work once every two years that is suitable for a solo show of considerable scope;
- In between such endeavours I will continue to show new work at festivals and galleries in what I believe to be an important ongoing engagement with audiences and industry. I am currently designing a new exhibition for presentation in late 2015 / early 2016;

- I also wish to make my research as visible as possible and would hope to continue delivering public presentations similar to my recent [appearance](#) at Umbrella Studios in Townsville and my ongoing association with [SXSW](#) in Texas, USA.

ONGOING RESEARCH STRANDS

Now that my PhD is complete I realise that the thesis was only an introductory study of a much larger investigation. What has emerged from this process is a distinct set of themes and theoretical territory that warrants deeper interrogation and observation. This is especially true in several core strands of my research which I have identified for future projects and publication opportunities. Briefly, these include:

- The blue liquid electric aesthetic (data ambience and the origin parable of A.I.);
- The notion of falling (Tom Junod and Bruce Sterling);
- The return to earth scenarios depicted in popular culture (Andrei Tarkovsky and Alfonso Cuarón);
- The influence of machine vision on the lowering of the horizon line and our collective turning away from the stars (Paul Virilio);
- The relationship between early 20th Century Futurism (Delaunay, Boccioni, Marinetti, et al) and the chromatic colour aesthetics of the corporate branding and Futurist myth making of Google, Microsoft, Sony, et al;
- Millennial culture and corresponding political narratives (Peter Sloterdijk, Mark Fisher and Slavoj Žižek).
- The “anticipated strangeness” of rapid technological change (Kim Stanley-Robinson);
- Watching the watchers - the militarisation of the vision machine and the work of Trveor Paglen, James Bridle and McClean Fahnstock.