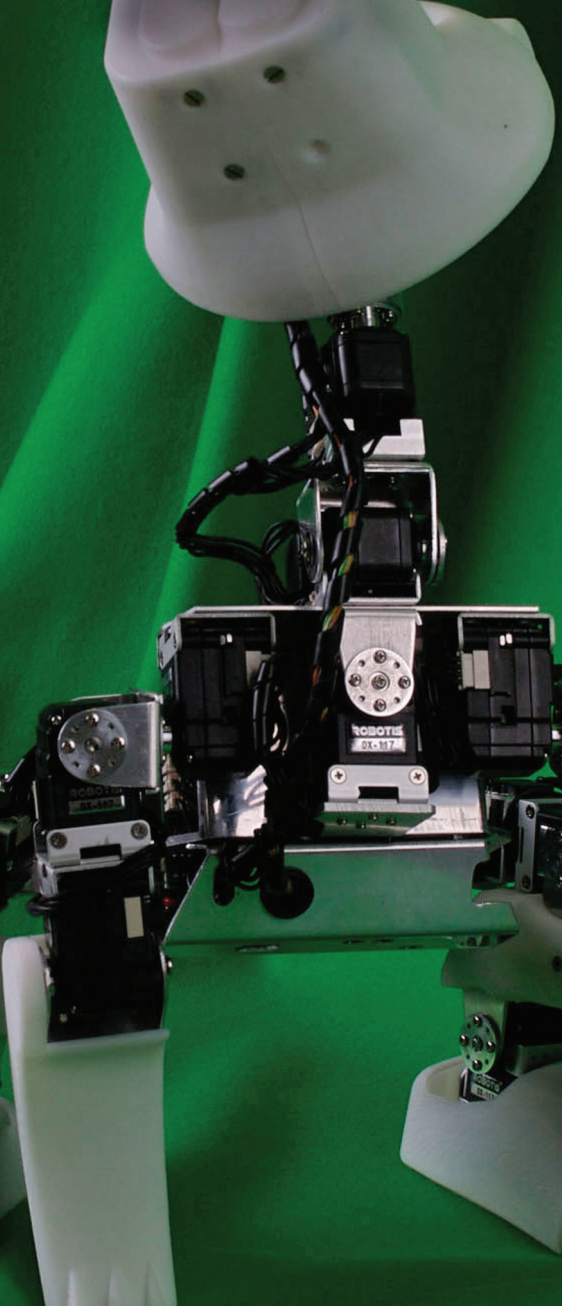


DESIGN, INFORMATION AND HUMAN COMMUNICATION



OVERVIEW

Design, Communication and Information Technology are all areas currently undergoing dramatic social, cultural and technological change. These changes range from the technical possibilities of automating areas of media production, to the generation of new media objects and forms. Along with these urgent concerns, the traditional formal understandings of human communication remain the solid basis for research as practice and research into practice. The focus on the making of mediated artefacts (poetics), the shaping of the necessary elements into a usable form as a representation of self and society (dramaturgics), and the sensori-emotional and cultural values (aesthetics) associated with human communication also allows for the development of alternative research methodologies which can make the work of this emergent research group internationally distinctive.

The core disciplines involved in the group are design, communication and media, and information technology. There are a number of schools of thought operating within each of these disciplinary areas worldwide. While each of these schools of thought brings a history of distinctive research approaches, utilising a variety of quantitative, qualitative and phenomenological methodologies, the amalgamation of this research group at the School of DCIT in Newcastle allows for new combinations of work to be undertaken.

FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



This research group is engaged in the generation of new media objects and forms and the analysis of the processes that generate those objects and forms. They explore the technical possibilities of automating areas of media production and focus on the poetics, dramaturgics and aesthetics of human communication while allowing for the development of alternative research methodologies. Their research explores the making and analysis of mediated artefacts within an investigation of the practice of media production in its social and cultural contexts.

OBJECTIVES

This group is currently being supported in the development of a research culture within the School of DCIT. This development will see the progressive completion of higher degrees by the many staff involved with this emerging group. The group is attempting to establish an exhibitions structure and production structure that will allow the current work of the group to be viewed properly as research. To further support this development, the group is developing an editorial structure to allow for an on-line journal and a series of key conferences. This programme of cultural development is also being supported by visiting fellows.

While this kind of cultural development is long term, the shift in attention within the group is, at the same time, facilitating the development of new research interests through publications. The development of RHD candidates, along with the expansion of the skills of supervisors in the group is a vital part of the overall development of this emerging area.

EXTERNAL COLLABORATORS

External Collaborators have included:

- Newcastle City Council
- Fort Scratchley Historical Society
- Newcastle Region Maritime Museum
- National Gallery of Australia
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Powerhouse Museum

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Research support has been given to this group by the Arts Council, ABC Regional Production Fund, the Hunter Institute of Mental Health, and various internal University Grants.



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EXAMPLES OF CURRENT PROJECTS

Apart from conventional academic research this group has produced major original creative works. Some examples include: a CD collection of a series of radio programs, Swell Dreaming: Surfing in Australia, funded by the ABC Regional Production Fund; The Living History of Fort Scratchley project run in collaboration with Newcastle City Council, resulted in a DVD production, a website and a published historical monograph and has been instrumental in publicizing this historical and important site; The group is also engaged in numerous exhibitions of their design work as well as the commercial manufacture of these designs. Many of the members have exhibited locally, nationally and internationally in cities such as London, New York, Cologne, Washington and Berlin.

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

You can see examples of the groups research work on various websites such as:

- www.artpoem.com
- www.texasradio.com.au
- www.fortscratchley.org
- <http://www.abc.net.au/radio/rpf/stories/s1309007.htm>

The making of some of these websites are themselves the focus of research activity by members of the group. Many of these researcher's creative services have also been called on not only for websites but also for posters and promotional materials.

Their professional skills have been used in graphic art, marketing and promotional material and book design. As well as the production of major creative works, such as videos, sound recordings, radio documentaries, and exhibitions the group continues to publish traditionally. They have producing a number of journal articles and continue to present their work in national and international conference settings. This ongoing research is funded by a number of internal University grants and this emerging group has received funding from the Arts Council as well as other funding bodies, such as the ABC, as well as applying for a number of ARC grants.

RESEARCH TOPICS

- Aesthetics, Poetics and Ethics of Design Communication.
- Media Production.
- Creative Practice as Research.
- Multimedia, Design Learning and Communication Tools in Education.
- Comedy and Discontinuous Narratives.
- Construction of Meanings in Public Relations.
- Design and Foot Fetishism.
- Creativity and Cultural Production.
- Graphic Imagery in Marketing Wine.
- Technology and Education.
- Cultural Identity, Representation and Interpretation.
- Video art, Digital intermedia and the World Wide Web.
- Political Ecology, Media and Politics.
- Media and Communication.

GROUP MEMBERS

Mr Michael Dickinson
Mr Roger Dunstan
Ms Daniela Glassop
Dr Melanie James
Dr Susan Kerrigan
Mr Chris Lawrence
Dr Phillip McIntyre
Mr Michael Meany
Dr Allan Morse
Dr Keith Russell
Mr Paul Scott
Dr Richard Tipping

CONTACT

Group Facilitator
Dr Phillip McIntyre
School of Design, Communication & IT
University of Newcastle
Callaghan NSW 2308 Australia

Phone: +61 2 4985 4522

Email: Phillip.McIntyre@newcastle.edu.au