


Official, Unofficial, Research,
Global, Unfinalized, Autonomous,
Funded, In Progress, 2021, 2022



Ferment.AI

www.ferment.ai

[@ferment.ai](https://twitter.com/ferment.ai)



About Ferment AI

Kasra Goodarznezhad / Prachi Khandekar /
Jerrold McGrath / Greta Grip + Lee Jones /
Milton Lim / Yasmeen Nematt Alla / Erika Jean Lincoln /
Kadrah Mensah / Michael Bergmann

Ferment AI is (unofficially) an arts collective formed in Canada that is seeking to become (officially) a DAO or DisCO in structure. Ferment AI was incubated through UKAI Projects and provides a structure and brand identity for projects organized in response to questions about artificial intelligence and algorithmic culture.

Ferment AI is (officially) cross-disciplinary and polyphonic. We are not interested in binary positions, or the abstracted ethics debated on social media. We are seeking a more nuanced approach to ethics, aesthetics, and technology, focusing on the design, delivery, and sociality of AI systems that prioritize agency and the occupation of the world around us.

Ferment AI is (unofficially) a kind of sack or carrier bag to hold and share all the adventures and misadventures we encounter in our work. Fermentation is not particularly heroic. It is slow, smelly, and often messy. Sometimes we are rewarded with beer, kimchi, or cheese to share with our friends and neighbors. Sometimes we can only learn and move on.

Ferment AI is (unofficially) a digital home for the work we do. However, every digital project has a real-life counterpart, and vice versa. Our hope is that a visit here takes you outside to encounter

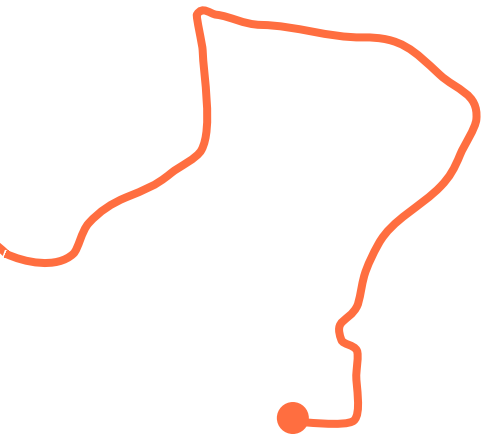
the work and that an encounter outside brings you back here to learn more. We are committed to forging and keeping relationships with places.

Ferment AI is (unofficially) a way of exploring and decolonizing metaphor. Fermentation, for us, represents an approach to cultural production and rituals of processing. The vessel is clean, but the contents are messy and sometimes surprising.

Ferment AI is (unofficially) an exercise in convincing you that we can be trusted with your money, your ambitions, and/or your time. We recommend sniffing cautiously. Some of what we do is an acquired taste. Some of what we do isn't fit for consumption. Sometimes things get out of hand.

Ferment AI is (unofficially) a way to complicate official or authoritarian stories. We embrace carnival. We prioritize polyphony. We mix ingredients.

Ferment AI is (officially) a home for art but (unofficially) art is more a useful category we occupy to try new things.



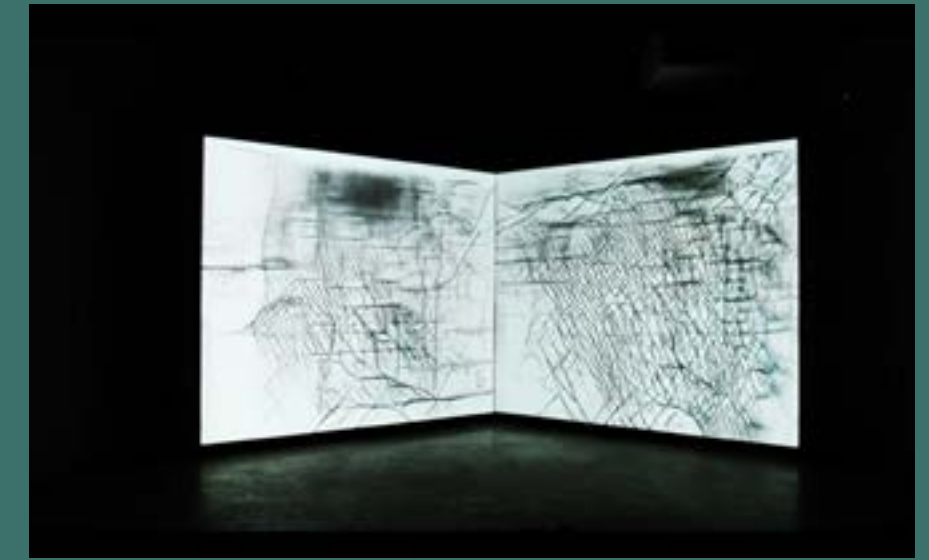
Kasra Goodarznezhad

www.cassraa.com

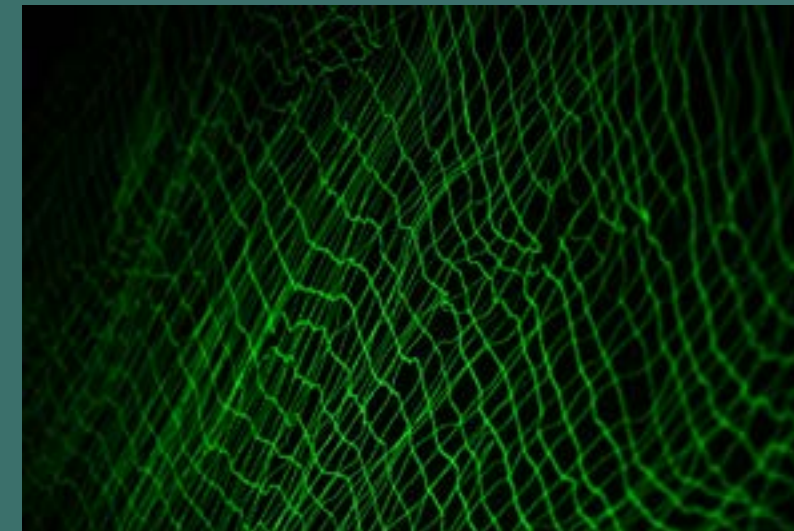
Kasra Goodarznezhad is a new media artist based in Toronto. His main focus is Performance and Installation. After studying Graphic Design in Tehran, Iran, he came to Toronto to continue his studies at OCAD University and graduated from the Integrated Media program, winning his major's medal award. Throughout his career as a new media artist, Kasra has participated in various research and results based residencies, and has managed to secure grants for his solo and collective projects.

Kasra is the co-founder of 2 Ontario based QTBIPOC collectives, Komite

and Displaced collective. Reflecting on growing up in Iran and immigrating to Canada in 2015, Kasra's work deals with concepts of displacement, repression, memory and censorship. In his work, Kasra looks to explore the subjective complexities of being an individual living in a society that forces you to behave in ways sanctioned by those who hold power.



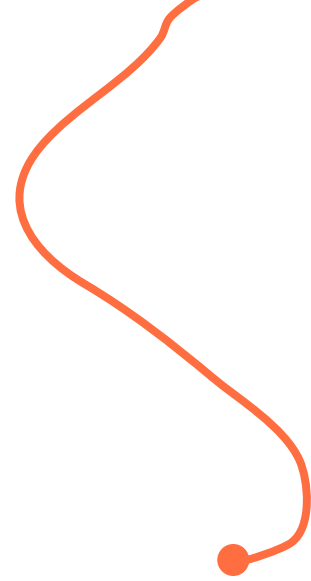
Kasra Goodarznezhad: *Evolving Maps: A Collective Memory* (2021-2022). GANs trained on hand-drawn maps of places one can no longer pass through due to displacement, exile, barriers, destruction, border mobility, etc.



Kasra Goodarznezhad: *(dis)appearance*, (2020) Interactive Lighting, Mixed Media



Kasra Goodarznezhad: *Archiving Propaganda War Media* (2021)



Prachi Khandekar

prachikhandekar.com

Prachi Khandekar is a Montréal-based curator, designer, and writer. She conceives and creates exhibitions and multimedia projects.

A line of enquiry that runs through her projects is “How does the cycle of obsolescence, observed in both material and non-material aspects of our lives, affect our psyche?” Through this question, she examines our tech- and brand-driven culture. She’s particularly interested in its ability to produce polarities of comfort and pain: laughter, isolation, nostalgia, anxiety, and everything in between.

Prachi holds an M.A. in Design Criticism from the University of the Arts London, UK.

She enjoys the collaborative process of giving form to ideas and presenting them in settings that foster reflection.

Prachi has lived in India, Oman, Canada and the UK. These cultures / contexts continually inform her work.



Prachi Khandekar: *Flight Mode* (2019). Antiprism by Lily Jeon

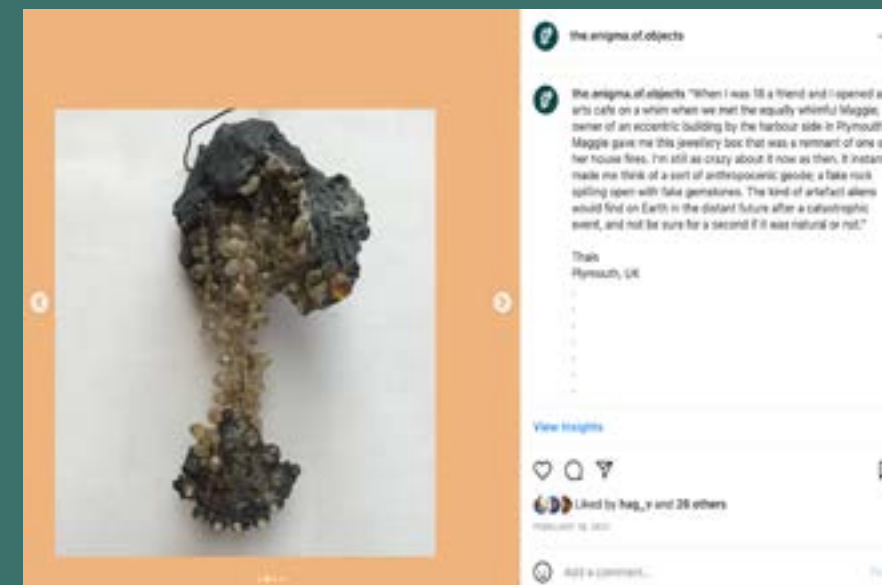
Flight Mode: An exhibition about the erosion of solitude from contemporary culture. Two immersive installations housed in shipping containers invited passing pedestrians to reflect on what we readily give up in pursuit of constant connectivity.

<https://savac.net/flight-mode/>

Curator: Prachi Khandekar
Artists / Installations: Ecolocation by Hagop Ohannessian and Antiprism by Lily Jeon



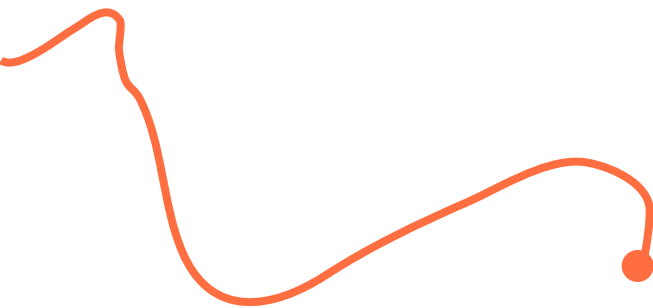
Prachi Khandekar: *Flight Mode* (2019) Ecolocation by Hagop Ohannessian



The Enigma of Objects: A curatorial project that invites photos of objects from personal collections, with reflections on why they remain special and what they evoke.

Submissions are curated on Instagram, offering a peek into contemporary material culture through crowd-sourced artifacts and stories.

Curator: Prachi Khandekar Writing and Photography by Various Contributors



Jerrold McGrath

www.ukai.ca

Jerrold is curious about how we are organized by the world and the power of unofficial ideologies to complicate systems and structures that no longer serve us.

Jerrold is a former program director at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and Artscape Launchpad. Much of his work has focused on alternative ways of producing and sustaining culture.

Since 2018, Jerrold has focused on the implications of automation and artificial intelligence on culture. In 2020 and 2021, Jerrold served as program lead for Goethe-Institut Toronto's

Algorithmic Culture programming.

Jerrold is curious about 'games' as frameworks or forms of incompleteness and is currently developing AI-augmented experiences of ritual and sociality through the application of natural language processing.



Jerrold McGrath: *The Computer is your Redacted* (2022). Podcast. Featured player: Yasmeen Nematt Alla

The Computer is Your Redacted was a 3-episode podcast series produced in partnership with Goethe-Institut Toronto in which experts in culture and technology were invited to play the 1980s dystopian roleplaying game *Paranoia* which was then edited into three podcast episodes. Featuring Yasmeen Nematt Alla, Martin Ryan, Ian Garrett, and Catherine Stinson. Voice of the computer was Jess Forrest.



Migration (2020) supported eleven culturally-specific non-Western performance organizations to image approaches to translate their practice into digital formats. Too often, platforms and digital business models assume creative practices that are Western in derivation, commercial in orientation, or both. This program allowed creators to reflect on aspects of their practices that needed to be preserved in its translation to digital formats. Outputs included VR experiences of dance and calligraphy, movement-based storytelling derived from South Asian dance, and a haptic feedback suit for Japanese taiko drumming.

New Not Normal (2020 - 2021) provided a community-tagable map of emotional responses to COVID-19 as well as opportunities to share local projects from around the world that sought to address isolation. Three artistic residencies addressed related themes for nineteen additional artists.



Greta Grip + Lee Jones

gretagrip.com / leejones.ca / everydaytextiles.com

An artist duo since 2019, Greta and Lee enjoy engaging community with participatory artworks that evolve over time and require involvement from the audience.

We live in a world in which data mining is a hidden practice, and the digital traces we leave behind are collected and used without our knowledge. By contrast, Greta and Lee's textile artworks are transparent in their conversion of selected data into something tactile. In past projects, the data sources have varied from human activity, biofeedback, to environmental sensors.

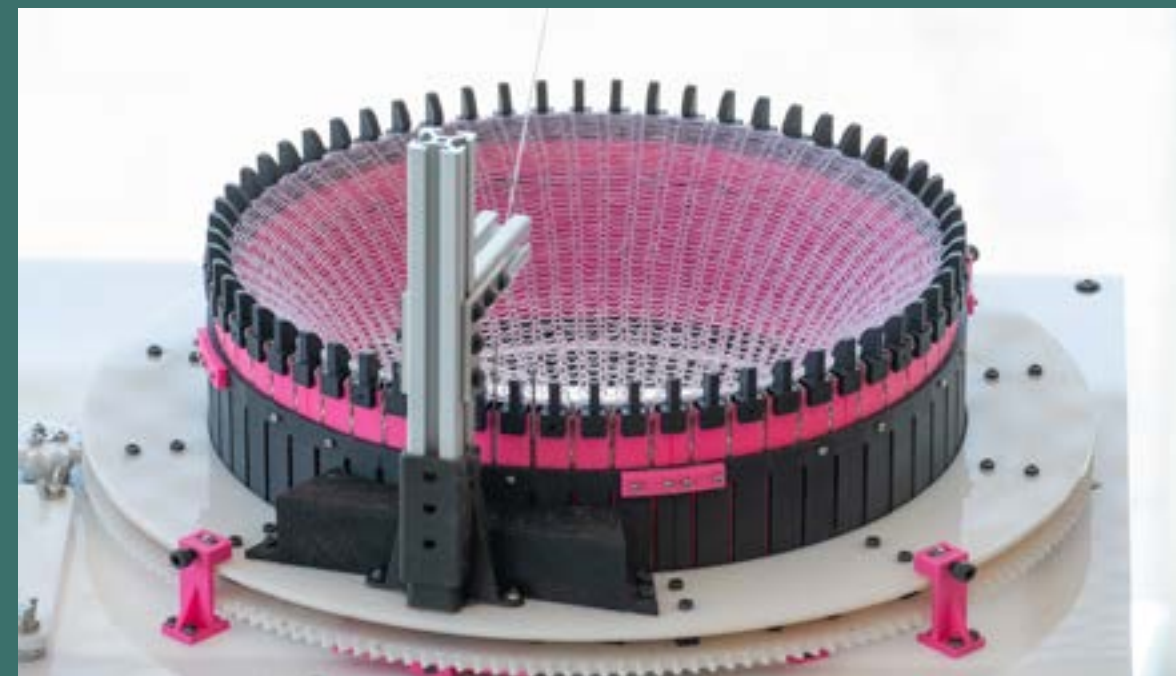
Greta Grip enjoys pulling the strings of what is traditional knitting and winding

it around the digital age. Grip knits with her hacked knitting machine, hacked by removing its original brain and replacing it with an USB port. Focused on a practice of exploring the use of layering texts and symbols, colours and textures; Grip's work challenges the understanding of what knitting is supposed to look like.

Lee Jones is an e-textile researcher who uses participatory design and creates easy-to-use toolkits so that individuals can build prototypes and have a say in the direction of their own technologies. She also loves running e-textile workshops in makerspaces, art galleries and community organizations.



Greta Grip and Lee Jones: *The Life of a Building* (July 2021-July 2022), a commission of the Ottawa Art Gallery (Photo credit: Justin Wonnacott)



The Life of a Building (2021-2022) visualizes the "recovery" year and the community experience at the Ottawa Art Gallery through a soft, tangible record of knitted stitches. When individuals enter the building, their presence is sensed and a row of stitches added to the knitted record. Equally, individuals can also participate in the artwork by clicking a button online and then watching the machine knit their row through the livestream. This artwork highlights both the tangibility that we missed during our year and a half online, as well as the benefits of the online environment such as greater inclusion and expanding our community beyond our local city.

Milton Lim

miltonlim.com

Milton Lim (he/him) is a digital media artist, game designer, and performance creator based in Vancouver, Canada. His research-based practice entwines data, interactive digital media, and gameful performance to create speculative visions and candid articulations of social capital. This line of inquiry aims to reconsider our repertoires of knowledge aggregation and political intervention in the contemporary context of big data and algorithmic culture. Milton holds a BFA (Hons.) in theatre performance and psychology from Simon Fraser University.

His work has been presented at festivals, venues, and galleries in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Seattle, San Francisco, Buenos Aires, Edinburgh, London, Hong Kong, Singapore, Darwin, and more. In 2016, he was awarded the Ray Michal

Prize for Outstanding Body of Work at the Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards.

He is an artistic associate with Theatre Conspiracy, founder and archivist with the videocan national archive, and co-creators of *culturecapital*: the performing arts economy trading card game.

Milton is interested in the overlapping logics of (p)la(y)bour, the non-human, game cultures (both analogue and digital), AI, public data, and sociopolitical currents of the past being pulled into the present. Games in particular, offer him a window to examine and reflect on the various systems that we perpetuate through participation; the increasingly automated and experiential scaffoldings that govern and guide us.



culturecapital is a live art project that takes the form of a collectible card game using public funding data and interview information; the game takes the form of informal games, massive public tournaments, and e-sports inspired final matches. *culturecapital* strives to create a context in which players can question, understand, and celebrate how value is determined, shifted, and produced within theatre, dance, and live arts.

whitepages is an object-oriented multimedia installation examining the phonebook as a living archive of human migration. Consisting of projected datasets, generative sound, twelve phonebooks arranged as a telephone keypad, and an overhead camera sensor, *whitepages* samples a decade of common Chinese surnames in phone books to consider who was permitted to own land, who was recognized as a citizen by the government, and where migration moves.



asses.masses is a custom-made video game (RPG) about labour, technophobia, donkeys, and sharing the load of revolution, designed to be played on stage by a live audience, one person at a time. The narrative follows the epic journey of unemployed asses as they navigate the perils of a post-Industrial society in which they've been made redundant.

assesmasses.work
co-created with Patrick Blenkarn



Yasmeen Nematt Alla

yasmeennematt.com

Yasmeen Nematt Alla (she/her) is an Egyptian immigrant and settler living in Tkaronto, Turtle Island (colonially known as Toronto, Ontario). She has a BA in Fine Arts from the University of Waterloo and is an MFA candidate and a Gilbert Fellow at Cranbrook Academy of Arts.

She has most recently exhibited at the Bronx River Art Centre in Bronx NY, Heaven Gallery in Chicago IL, and Xspace Cultural Centre in Toronto ON.

She has previously been an artist resident in the Banff Centre, ACRE, STEPs Public Art, UKAI Projects, La Centrale Galerie Powerhouse, and is currently an artist resident at Ferment AI and HXOUSE Creative Think Tank.

As an artist worker, she supports art organizations in creating accessible and anti-racist modes of communications in their day-to-day operations.

Yasmeen Nematt Alla's practice centres alienated collectivist narratives from an immigrant's and an interpreter's perspective. Nematt Alla's practice often is an analogue of immigrancy—of the desperate need to seek out the collective, in ways that transform our intergenerational traumas into intergenerational care and intergenerational joy. In order to emigrate, one must leave a community behind, and in order to immigrate, one must be received. The existence of the immigrant is the seeking out for the collective. It is the confession that we are lonely and in search of more, that we have a desire to become more than the sum of our parts. As someone who lives between cultures—an immigrant—she deciphers language barriers attached to togetherness through textiles, performance, and reactive sculptures that are often situated in social practice.



Yasmeen Nematt Alla: *Not Traumatic Enough for a Shock Blanket (Exhibition Shot) (2022)*, Embroidered Felt, Dimensions Varied



Yasmeen Nematt Alla: *Commuting and Other Lonely Thoughts (2021)*, Cards, posters, banners, text chain, Dimensions Varied

Commuting and Other Lonely Thoughts is an ode to asking questions. An ode to crying on buses, on trains, on subways, in the middle of crowds that have somewhere to go. The time spent in transition and transit lets us wander, lets us yearn, and lets us become lonely as we exist under the systems that have forced our isolation from one another. So I left you a text on a bus on my way home. I hope you find it. I hope you text me back. tion that was authored by the artist where they provide some of their loneliness in exchange for some of the audience. The number is currently still live.

Erika Jean Lincoln

lincolnlab.net / 49° 53' 42.2772" N 97° 8' 18.4236" W

Erika-Jean is an artist, researcher, and mentor living in Winnipeg-Treaty 1 territory, the original lands of Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation.

Along the Mississippi migratory flyway, on the bed of an ancient glacial lake, at the northern limit of the monarch butterfly's migration, 300 km from the geographic centre of Turtle Island.

Over the past 20 years Erika-Jean has been challenging conventional knowledges and ideologies embedded in symbols, systems, and objects. Her

method of artmaking speaks from a perspective of cognitive difference in the style of non-conformity, un-doing, mis-fitting, and troubling. She is currently researching artificial intelligence framed by the concepts of extended cognition, neurodiversity, and crip technoscience.

Erika-Jean recently collaborated with the Manitoba Neuroscience Network and MAWA in a neuro feminist learning partnership. Recent exhibitions include the University of Winnipeg, Science Gallery (Ireland), MAT-UCSB (USA), Boston Cyberarts Gallery (USA), and The Bauhaus-Archiv (Germany).



Erika Jean Lincoln: *Neural KNot: Syncopated/Synaptic/Syncope*, (2021). Kinetic sound sculpture exploring disability and brain function in relation to sound.



Erika Jean Lincoln: *Fugue State OF: A Composition 4 a Wacked Out Satellite-IF...I whisper up towards the stars-THEN...Would you fall from the sky into me.* (2019). An interactive sound sculpture.



Erika Jean Lincoln: *Floe: Expression of an IceCap in 30 Measures* (2014) Kinetic sculpture, movement based on NOAA Arctic Sea Ice dataset.

Kadrah Mensah

kadrahmensah.com

Kadrah Mensah is a Canadian interdisciplinary artist, photographer, and creative technologist. Her work explores technological intimacy as a site of freedom, escape, and identification.

By leaning into the frictional paradoxes inherent to survival, she uses humour as a source of relief and reconciliation to greet mounting absurdity.

Kadrah is currently a resident artist of Ferment AI. She holds a BFA in New Media from Ryerson University. Most recently, her work was shown at The Music Gallery, Xspace Cultural Centre, and Whippersnapper Gallery.

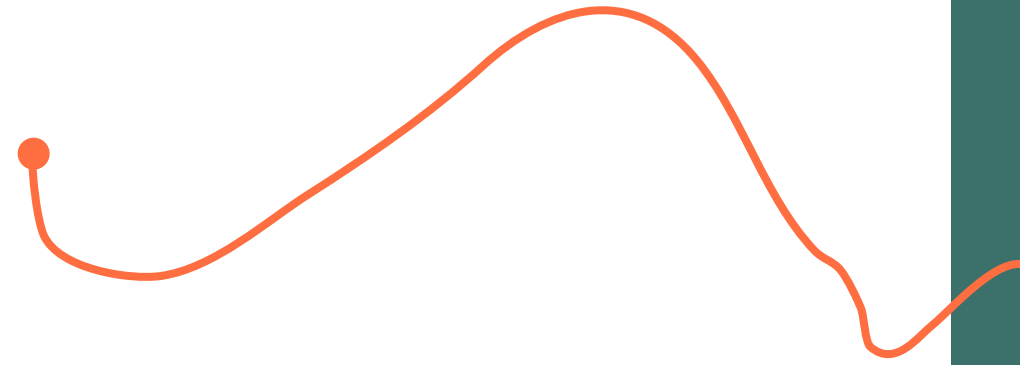


Kadrah Mensah: *KiKi Kanboulay*, video installation that blurs the lines between carnival and ball culture by exposing the historical suppression of queer gender identities, and sexualities, in the Caribbean.

Kadrah Mensah: *Dark and Lonely*, a sculptural installation that reveals the link between the beauty industry, mental health, and access to capital.



Exquisite Departures (2020), Created in collaboration with 20 other artists and musicians during the 2020 lockdown, the work came together to create free-flowing surrealist music videos that capture a playfully collaborative snapshot of Toronto's creative music & video art scene in a time of physical distance.



Michael F Bergmann

bergarts.com

Michael F Bergmann (he/they) is a techno-optimist and enjoys exploring novel technological approaches to storytelling and performance. His research and creative practice aims to apply the principles of improvisational practices and critical discourse to human-robot and human-AI interactions and communication with a goal of fostering empathy.

Their mediums of engagement include theatre, dance, installations, robots, video games, virtual and augmented reality, and exploration of the metaverse.

His physical being is mostly located in Toronto and is a faculty member at the School of Performance at The Creative School, where they teach and conduct research through their Technological Research in Performance Lab (TRiPL)



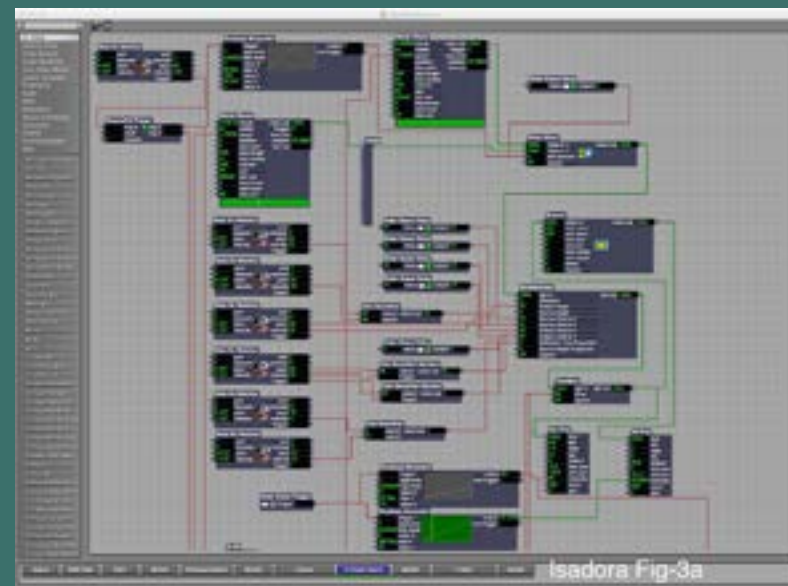
The Uncanny Robots Project, A research-creation project that examined the interaction between a human dancer and an industrial robot. The 15-minute performance was created by scanning the human dancer, and reinterpreting the information into choreography for the robot, and devising the movement vocabulary from the interplay between them.

Collaboration with: Linda Zhang, Louis Laberge-Côté, Belinda McGuire

Uncanny Text, An experimental text, based on the Uncanny Robots project. Edited versions of dancer Belinda McGuire's choreographic notes are presented alongside the robot's position data stream, creating a conversation between the human and robot movements in a written form.

Collaboration with: Belinda McGuire

Rotate your palms and your face to the left and return,	568.44520	-543.61660	2769.36960
Rotate your ribs to the right, and return,	758.93600	-37.78056	2778.61280
Rotate your torso to the left and return	723.14560	428.96856	2747.28272
Rotate your torso to the right and twisting the arms right under left to go around.	564.20800	174.67888	2729.62560
Sip the head underneath.	1801.86996	272.88488	2735.38580
To left leg around.	764.87888	-54.18365	2773.48880
left arm gets caught around the ribs around tillis your axis reaches the right hand axis it up to undo to then retro the twist. Carrying the diamond around reach the left arm. Change the axis of the left arm to change the axis of the body to a point.	754.81836	-687.78480	2834.91680
Rotate, roll to long and then undo to slice across.	741.87760	428.56690	2745.61250
left in parallel, touch the ground and then an unfold through the vertical.	781.87760	428.56690	2745.61250
Fun back, rotate around the base. Fold at the hip. To return	774.66426	288.24897	2764.96878
	679.20720	378.35953	2843.14880



AlgoRhythm, AlgoRhythm was a video and music performance where improvisation and algorithmically devised composition techniques were used to create a score upon which I created a framework of quasi-generative visuals based on icons of early digital technology. The performances maintained an element of randomness and pseudo-improvisation by the programs, providing a unique performance every time.

Composer: Matt Otto

Heidi Boisvert

heidiboisvert.com

Heidi Boisvert (PhD) is an interdisciplinary artist, experience designer, creative technologist, and academic researcher who interrogates the neurobiological and sociocultural effects of media and technology. Simply put, she studies the role of the body, the senses, and emotion in human perception and social change.

Boisvert is currently mapping the world's first media genome, while taking great care with its far-reaching ethical implications. She founded futurePerfect lab, a creative agency and think-tank that works with social justice organizations to design

playful emerging media campaigns to transform the public imagination. She also co-founded XTH, a company creating novel modes of expression through biotechnology and the human body.

Presently, she is working with David Byrne on Theater of the Mind, a new immersive theater piece. Boisvert is an Assistant Professor of AI & the Arts at the University of Florida. She is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Norman Lear Center, a research affiliate in the Open Documentary Lab at MIT and a member of NEW INC's Creative Science track.



Lizardly is a live, mixed reality play created by Heidi Boisvert and Kat Mustatea that explores AI, environmental collapse, and interspeciesity. Vincent and Rebecca's marriage is falling apart as they brace for an oncoming hurricane and simultaneously turn into lizards. Set in post-anthropocene Miami, humans have not been wiped out, so much as they have adapted to rapid environmental shifts by mutating into reptiles. Vincent and Rebecca have no choice but to weather the storm inside their smart-home, a technological remnant named June.

[radical] signs of life is a large-scale multi-media experience employing biotechnology to integrate networked bodies and interactive dance. The work externalizes the mind's non-hierarchical distribution of thought through responsive, rule-based choreography and a database of phrases. Music is generated from the dancers' muscles and blood flow via biophysical sensors that capture sound waves from the performers' bodies.



Walking Wounded is a multimedia performance that gives voice to unspeakable experiences of trauma through generative sound and live drawing stemming from dancers' internal milieu and unique gesture vocabulary. It offers a safe space for healing through kinesthetic engagement and the restoration of interpersonal connection established through touch.



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