connected communities

United We Act a scoping study and a symposium on connected communities

Edited by Joëlle Bitton, Andreia Cavaco, Lalya Gaye and Ben Jones

Symposium

The international symposium on the topic of connected communities took place from the 12th to the 14th of September 2011 at Culture Lab Newcastle.

Our intention was to bring international theorists and practitioners to Newcastle over a period of three days to discuss and share views about digital creative practice and communities. Culture Lab is indeed a facility that has the unique combination of being an interdisciplinary research laboratory and a venue for engagement and public talks, workshops and events.

In an era where digital technologies have supported transnational forms of connectedness and the efficiency of grassroot movements, communities are once again looked at as innovative fertile grounds for alternative social organisation.

As these trends can be manipulated by current governmental agendas, the Connected Communities symposium called for expressions of interests for talks and projects that explore notions of community as evolving with the creative uses of digital technologies. Interest came from varied disciplines such as art, design, history, politics, sociology, journalism, and hacktivism, among others. Through this transversal mix of genres, we triggered open and broad views as well as provocative and deep discussions on the range of ways in which communities are addressed in contemporary society and culture.

Focus was specific to – but not restricted by – the following topics:

- Effects of digital technologies on community formation, self-realisation, and development;
- How creative use of technology potentially fosters micro-communities, empowers marginalised groups and enables new forms of cultural expression;
- Socio-political impact of community connectivity on society, in particular during a period of economic change.

The symposium consisted of:

- A conference over 3 days, with talks grouped under the topics of:
  Day 1 - Collective Action, Participative Platforms, Engagement
  Day 2 - Economies, Transnational, (Hi)stories
  Day 3 - Technology & Society, Co-Creation, and Community Art
- An exhibition at Culture Lab OnSite (Culture Lab's off-campus project space), centred on the notions of community and digital media. This included documentation of community-based design workshops, video art, ethnographic projects and interactive installations. The exhibition ran until the 18th of September.
- Two hands-on workshop sessions using the symposium as a temporary community of practice to explore deeper questions of community.
- A social event entitled 'Beats & Pieces' that took place at the iconic local community space Star and Shadow.

The response of the participants and of the audience to the conference was overwhelmingly positive, documented by our internal evaluation. We argued for an interdisciplinary format, inviting practitioners and theorists alike, from both academic and non-academic backgrounds, and were rewarded with an incredibly rich and diverse debate.

This section of the publication is a proceedings of the expressions of interest of our presenters and artists.

Conference

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Collective Action

Day 1.1

Enabling Citizens Régis Lemberthe
(Enable Berlin)

We are building a physical platform where people meet to solve social challenges. Our tools are collective thinking, collaborative action and open processes. Our aim is to trigger citizens into becoming activists, entrepreneurs, doers; to enable them to take meaningful and effective action.

We first started with the Enable Sessions, during which 20 people from different background associate to tackle a socially-relevant brief. The sessions are designed in a way that comforts the group into sharing insights, gathering experiences and generating concepts which will inspire possible solutions for that specific challenge. The results of every session are video-documented and shared under Creative Commons license, so that those who might be interested can learn from it.

With over 10 events in our records on topics as varied as human rights or future housing, Enable Sessions are now a well-functioning model and ready for the next step. In our last session Visions For Mobility we not only worked on envisioning future mobility solutions, but also fostered start-ups around the best concepts thanks to the implementation of a kick-starter fund, and by presenting the videos to authorities in charge of developing actual infrastructures.

We are inspired in how the open-source movement is changing the way complex issues are addressed, from top-bottom to bottom up; we now want to create the physical space where this process can be both initiated and developed further.

Enable Session VIII - Life Edited (Sam Muirhead / Enable Berlin)

Bio
French designer Régis Lemberthe graduated with an MA in 'Humanitarian Design and Sustainable Living' at Design Academy Eindhoven. He has since settled in Berlin, dividing his time between a crafts design practice, and facilitating collaborative design events such as those organized by Enable Berlin. His research activities mostly investigate the possibilities of Pedagogical Design to create objects as props for enforcing social and behavioural changes.

Whichever topic he chooses to address, he strives to give open-design processes and heirloom knowledge a prime importance. This interest in alternative, non-expert production processes have taken life through various cooperations.

www.socoamsterdam.nl
www.makerlab.info
www.enableberlin.org

OrsayCommons, Building a Micro-Community of Museum Hackers Julien Dorra

(OrsayCommons, Paris)

An unjust, top-down, ban

Mid-2010, Orsay museum in Paris decided to ban picture taking. It was a unilateral decision, without dialogue with any visitors (users!) of the museum. People strongly protested, pointing that the artworks were both state property and public domain. Then the outrage turned into a quieter resentment. Nobody acted, neither legally nor directly.

You start with one fan, then two, then…

Late November 2010, five days before the free day at French museums, I contacted a couple of bloggers to launch *OrsayCommons*. The principle? Gather inside Orsay, overtly take photos, and share them on the web. *Pro-Photo, Pro-Remix, and Pro-Public Domain*

And that's how 10 strangers met for the first time. Inside the museum, we took and instantly shared photos with the 30 persons following and retweeting online. Our core community was a varied group of bloggers, photographers, museum employees, artists, teachers, designers, students and scientists, all passionate about museums. It was a modest start. But a web-fast one!

Community is an action verb ;-)

Multiple *OrsayCommons* have been staged since then, with different people coming, and very different moods. The most populated had 20 participants taking photos, actually lifting the ban as other visitors started to take photos too.

We have a growing web community, 300+ strong. For example MayaMilky, member of the *OrsayCommon* facebook group, organized *OCNight* – making Orsay museum an unwilling participant of *MuseumPics*!

In terms of reach, we observed the classic progression: twitter followers, blogs, online news, and then our first print article in a major art magazine. Aside from the media coverage, *OrsayCommons* restarted the conversation about taking photographs in museums, with social scientists, curators, and donors participating.
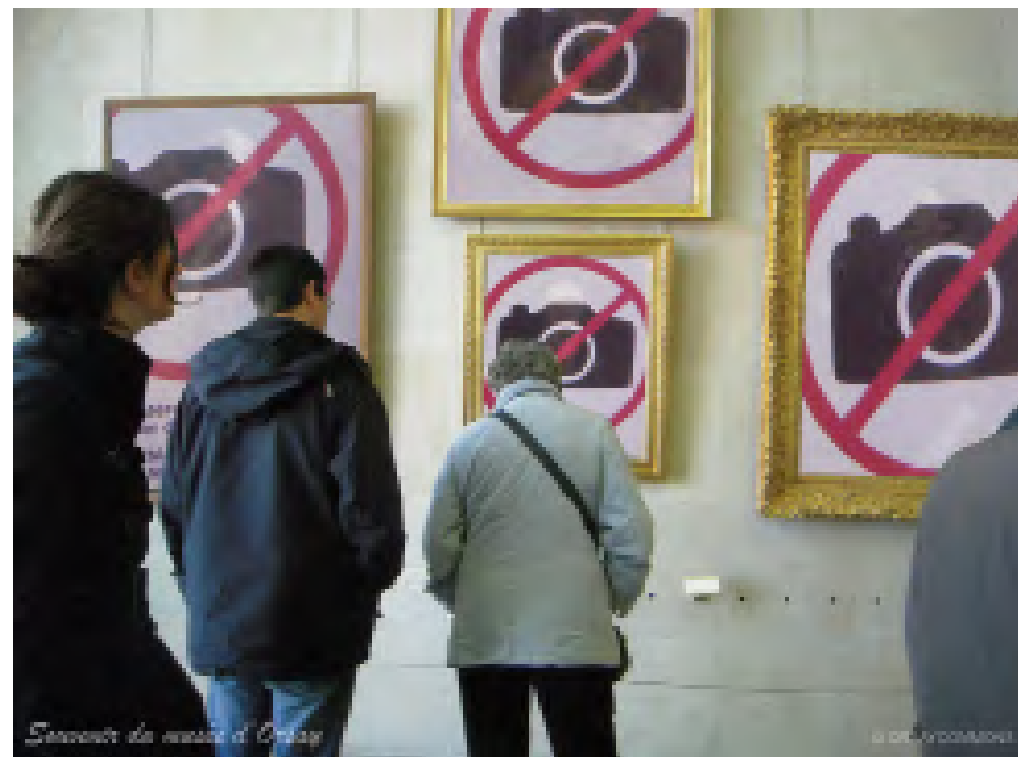
Souvenirs du musée d'Orsay (Bernard Hasquenoph)

Tying web community and in-real-life events

From the start, the goal was to *take* something back from the museum and to share it online. The real space events are strong engagement drivers, including for people not physically present. At the same time, *OrsayCommons* wouldn't exist without the web and the sharing culture it embed.

As a personal note, I feel lucky to experience first-hand the growth of a playful, inventive community that address serious questions about public domain, art and sharing.

Additional questions raised by OrsayCommons:
- Why framing a direct action as an art performance
- Museum visitors or museum users?
- Why does twitter fans care for the physical participants? Is retweeting engagement and endorsement?
- Is Facebook a golden cage for micro-communities?
- How not to suffer of community-boredom?

Bio
Julien Dorra designs creative events where people turn their ideas
into digital creations: ArtGame weekend, Switch On Switch Off,
Museomix. He is at the crossing of digital art, the web community,
and event design. He can talk fluently with artists, coders and
entrepreneurs. He teaches web video at Paris 1 and De Vinci and is
a member of Dorkbot Paris. He setup the mentoring program for Le
Camping, first start-up accelerator in France. He currently has two on-
going art projects, Le Sac à Main and Blind Model.

You can follow Julien on twitter here - **www.twitter.com/juliendorra**

Seeds to Soil Lien Tran
(Parsons New School of Design, New York City)

Seeds to Soil (S2S) is a grassroots initiative addressing inadequate
access to affordable healthy food in specific urban areas by providing
community members a shared experience of planting and caring for
food plants. Anyone in a given neighbourhood can engage in S2S seed-
starting events and receive plant care information gratis. They then
care for their plant at home and subsequently share questions and
progress with each other online. These virtual interactions raise new
awareness for other members in one's community and lead to group
understanding and future collaborations.

Central Harlem in New York City has a neighbourhood history of
institutional racism, and structural violence towards the neighbourhood
has severely impacted the residents' trust in each other as well as
their access to basic public services including fresh affordable healthy
foods. This deficiency has impacted community members' health and
well-being and has created food injustice. Interested in addressing this
problem S2S considered the question 'what are ways we can engage

the Central Harlem community in food justice together and sustain
this participation?' S2S responded with a no-barriers-to-entry public
intervention in the neighbourhood by providing anyone – regardless of
ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic class, or language – the means and
awareness to start and the feeling of empowerment from growing their
own food.

At the core of S2S is a participatory design initiative started in April
2011. The project's form has and will continue to evolve with the input,
cooperation and collaboration of its target users. While the community
website has demonstrated the potential to bring together S2S members
in a virtual space to foster connections that can extend into the real
and physical world, this technology has yet to be a driving element
for community growth. Nonetheless, S2S has connected with the local
community and is partnering with local groups to run more outreach
events for youth on environmental sustainability, including but not
limited to food access. It is S2S's overall vision that the community
understands the impact and power of their actions, lead by example,
and ultimately engage positively with each other on a united front.

Central Harlem community members participate in Seeds to Soil seed starting event
(Lien Tran and Liz Kauff)

Bio

Lien Tran is an interaction designer whose work centres on humanitarian and participatory design. She is a MFA candidate in Design and Technology at Parsons The New School for Design and received her BBA in Information Technology from The College of William and Mary. Lien's design work includes games, physical interactions, design advocacy, and web- and print-based information design. She was a 2010 Open Society Foundations (OSF) Design Fellow and has worked on projects for the U.N., Games for Change, Parsons PETLab and Parsons Humanitarian Design Lab.

www.lienbtran.com

Participative Platforms

Day 1.2

Cinematographic Circuit Bending: the Cine Falcatrua Collective, a Grassroots Film Society Between Pirate Media and the Institutions of Art Gabriel Menotti
(Cine Falcatrua, London)

This is a case study of Cine Falcatrua, a pirate cinema collective from Brazil that was active from 2003 to 2008. Falcatrua is a Portuguese word that means 'hoax' or 'scam'. The group started as a grassroots film society, downloading movies from the Internet and screening them in public spaces, employing domestic equipment such as personal computers and DLP projectors. In that sense, it created a complex integration between the local community and the online peer-to-peer network of cinephiles. In the beginning, Cine Falcatrua was based in the Federal University of Espírito Santo, and consisted of a cooperative endeavour of several BA students from different departments. The organisation and the audience of the screenings were completely mingled. However, after a lawsuit from some Brazilian film distributors, the collective was reduced to a core group of about ten people. This situation also caused a dramatic change in the focus and mode of actuation of the collective.

Then, Cine Falcatrua departed from discussions about cultural appropriation and alternative copyright and started doing more and more experimental works in the form of exhibitions, installations and workshops. It became a group that 'do cinema without making movies' – that is, that establish creative operations in an expanded field of the cinematographic circuit. In that sense, we would like to compare Cine Falcatrua's activity to a socio-technical form of 'circuit bending' - 'the creative short- circuiting of electronic devices to create new musical or visual instruments and sound generators.' This new path tightened the links of the group with Brazilian new media and contemporary art institutions, without reducing the illegal character of its activities. Thus, we propose that Cine Falcatrua's enterprise articulates different levels of contamination between local and networked publics, as well as between pirate economy and the art world, exposing the complex negotiations of authority and value between these settings. The analysis of the group's history and operative tactics can shed a new light on the relations between different cultural institutions and media channels in Brazil, as well as allow another point of view on traditional theories about these subjects in a global perspective.

Cine Falcatrua screening, 2004

Bio
Gabriel Menotti is engaged with different forms of cinema, contemporary art and grassroots media. He has organized pirate movie screenings, remix film festivals, videogame championships, porn screenplay workshops, and installations with super8 film projectors, generative art exhibitions and academic seminars. Among the most recent events in which he has participated are the 29th São Paulo Art Biennial; Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin/Madrid; the 8th Mercosul Biennial and Transmediale. He also holds a PhD in Media and Communications from Goldsmiths University of London.

Secure environments
(François Naudé, Kerry Snodgrass, Tessa Case)

Open playgrounds
(François Naudé, Kerry Snodgrass, Tessa Case)

Goodbye People. Hello Profile.
François Naudé (alt.sense, Cape Town)

Soweto met Singapore while discussing sticker art. Dr.coFFice wrote pulp poems and Damienchu uploaded pictures of his baby. This was alt.sense — a space where ideas could become articles or animated gifs, where dialogue encountered diversity and people entertained differences. This was a decade ago.

Active between 2000 and 2003, alt.sense (**www.altsense.net**) was an independent website that developed without a formal conceptual or production strategy, but through a process of exploring code and online media. Starting with a birthday calendar, other projects were added over time that included discussion forums and eventually an area where people could upload images or create their own photo albums.

A primary focus of alt.sense was to provide an open space that encouraged communication and personal expression through contribution to these various projects. To facilitate this, the interface was minimal and lacked many conventional functionalities. For example, users couldn't become members or create profiles, nor was personal information required to interact. Participation was anonymous or through the use of a pseudonym (people rarely used their real names). Furthermore, it was an unmoderated space and administrative

functions related mostly to maintenance. Instead of chaos and abuse, this fostered an environment where users expressed themselves through meaningful contributions and creative use of limitations.

Using an archived snapshot of alt.sense as a case study of 'networked. CULTURE' at the turn of the millennium, this talk tells the story of its unique development and the spontaneous community that formed around various projects. It also serves as a point of reference for looking at changes in the digital landscape between 2000 and 2011.

Today, a strong emphasis on institutionalised standardisation, the proliferation of software libraries with ready-made functionalities and the growth of publishing platforms progressively inhibit 'tinkering', 'hacking' and the creation of sites outside established frameworks. Advancements in digital infrastructure and development tools increasingly place importance on security and identification, with the creation and maintenance of a personal, verifiable profile becoming a common requirement for interaction with digital technologies, and often for strategic purposes as well.

It isn't always necessary for users to formulate a predefined identity to participate, contribute and form relationships. An approach to counter existing trends would be to develop independent and unrestricted 'playgrounds' instead of secure environments that preempt and direct behaviour. Technology and strategies need profiles, people don't.

Bio
François Naudé is a designer, programmer and multimedia artist based in Cape Town, South Africa where he actively explores digital technologies and the possibilities it offers for creating alternative ways of expression, interaction and communication. A primary motivation for his work is informal research and a keen interest into the ways people experience and use digital media and networked environments.

Ingredients of Social Exchange
Helen Pritchard (Lancaster University)

This paper traces an ontology of the social exchange of 'code', looking at the historical case studies of community cookbooks and FLOSS communities. It explores the use of their methods as a process to create both online and co-located Communities of Practice. The paper also reflects on a practice based research project informed by these studies, The Recipe Exchange, an on-going project that began in September 2010 in Farringdon, East Devon, which explores the potential of Open Source methods as a tool to create community dialogue through co-inquiry. During the project an online and offline sharing space was developed and '**therecipeexchange.org**' was designed to serve as a common resource and a platform through which participants can read and share advice with their neighbours, in the form of recipes. The aims of the project were to co-host a series of skill sharing events and establish an online archive of practical know-how.

Since the development of Free/Libre/Open Source Software (FLOSS) communities, FLOSS members identified they had created organizational forms and principles that could be adopted in other fields with success. Much research on these forms and principles has focused on the potential outcomes for industry. Instead this project addresses the concept of code sharing as Communities of Practice (CoP's)[1] through an art based research project 'The Recipe Exchange'.

Expanding on the notion of a recipe, 'The Recipe Exchange' draws on the historical models of code sharing practice in projects such as

The Recipe Exchange, Helen Pritchard 2011
Top *Your Know-How* (Kate Green)
Bottom left *How to create a footpath* (Kate Green)
Bottom right *How to say Hello to a Horse* (Martha Crean)

Community Cookbooks and Linux. In these models of code sharing practice detailed information is shared socially and rules are situated and variable. During the six-month project residents of Farringdon (a rural hinterland village in East Devon) developed an online and offline archive of 'know- how'. This archive served as a common resource, a catalyst for initiating dialogue locally and an open platform for exchange on which desires for innovation and change could be expressed. Participants contributed a number of diverse recipes for actions including 'How to create a footpath', 'How to say Hello to a Horse' & 'How to Clone Plants'. Together the residents selected which of the contributed recipes they would want to become collective events and during the project a series of events were co-hosted by the participants in which exchanges of information, ideas and practical advice were explored.

The Recipe Exchange was commissioned by Spacex as part of their off-site programme, and this paper was developed as part of postgraduate studies at HighWire, Lancaster University. RCUK Grant EP/G037582/1.

1   Lave, Jean; Wenger, Etienne (1991). Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bio
Helen Pritchard is an artist and researcher in Social Exchange, Digital Technology & Innovation. Her projects explore the potential of 'Being Open' as a way of 'Being Together' through public activities of making, sharing, assembly and conversation. Her work has been exhibited at galleries, festivals, and museums internationally, including Writing Machines (HK), East Street Arts (UK), Sonic Peripheries (DE), Transmodern Festival Baltimore, (USA), Teak (Fin), UKS Oslo, (N), RKS Stavanger (N), Spacex (UK), Conical Gallery (Aus), ACA Florida, (USA) and National Review of Live Art (UK). She is currently PhD student in the HighWire DTC.

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www.highwire-dtc.co.uk

Engagement

Day 1.3

Fostering New Creative Communities
Yves Bernard (iMAL, Brussels)

Active for more than 10 years in digital cultures, iMAL has been stimulating intensively the construction of communities of creative people exploring technologies in Brussels. Our first 'community stimulation' tools started in 2001 with the organisation of workshops and masterclasses under the direction of well-known artists (e.g. Casey Reas, David Rokeby, Jasch, Julian Oliver, HC Gilje, Zachary Lieberman, Marius Watz). With these, iMAL initiated a first generation of local artists and developers into creative digital tools and art practices while connecting them to the global 'new media' art world.

In 2005, with some of them becoming experimented and able to transmit their knowledge, we started the yearly Summer Digital Art workshops, during which artists, art students, designers, videographers, teachers, active unemployed people ... are invited to learn Processing, Arduino, Pure-Data, Max/Msp, WordPress, Drupal,... Today these summer workshops gather many participants from Belgium and nearby countries.

In 2007, when iMAL moved to its new venue, we elaborated a new programme to stimulate the connection of usually disconnected micro-communities in Brussels: hobbyists and DIY's, hackers, developers, artists, academics, scientists, students, curious people, art&culture lovers... The physical encounters emerging from these regular 'rendez-vous' in our venue are as important as their online (social) presence and continuation. In today's connected and mediated world, we believe that meeting face to face, in a friendly atmosphere, is a key component to foster new creative communities.

The programme includes frequent events, which stimulate the local communities while connecting them to global ones. Practically, iMAL became the meeting place for people doing strange things with electricity (Dorkbot BRU events), live audio-visuals (SHARE BRU jam sessions), creative programming and electronics (Code, Arts & Crafts workshops). This creates a positive crossover effect, inviting the scientist to attend a Dorkbot meeting, the hobbyist to assist to an Arts&Science lecture, the sculptor to follow an Arduino workshop, the developer to team with an artist.

Installation The Gate at iMAL, 2007 (Sascha Pohflepp)

By being a recognised hub in Brussels, iMAL offers, to a variety of creative people, a platform to present their projects, exchange with peers and often inciting new collaborations and opportunities. However, iMAL not only promotes grassroots creative cultures, it also aims to develop new collaborative tools to empower them.

In 2012, iMAL will launch 3 new tools for the creative communities: WikiMAL, FabLabiMAL and iMAL agency. WikiMAL is a new web sharing platform for the dissemination of projects, tools and tutorials for a creative use of technology, with the main purpose of compiling information and knowledge exchanged during our workshops and meetings. In a time when social media become generic, we are determined to bring it back to a local level, stimulating personal exchange and discussion between true peers, while remaining open and visible on the global web. The FabLabiMAL will be the first creative FabLab open to Brussels people willing to share and learn about the revolution of digital fabrication. And iMAL Agency is our professional service for distributing our artists art works to a large audience.

Bio
iMAL (interactive Media Art Laboratory), is a non-profit association
created in Brussels in 1999, with the objective to support artistic
forms and creative practices using computer and network technolo-
gies as their medium. In 2007, iMAL opened its new venue: a Centre
for Digital Cultures and Technology of about 600m² for the meeting of
artistic, scientific and industrial innovations. A space entirely dedi-
cated to contemporary artistic and cultural practices emerging from
the fusion of computer, telecommunication, network and media.

iMAL = a European Contemporary Art Centre + Media Lab
iMAL (interactive Media Art Laboratory), is the unique integration of
an Art Centre producing various public events (exhibitions, lectures,
concerts/performances) with a Media Lab for artists to research,
experiment, share and exchange with and about new technologies in
Brussels.

The iMAL team: Yves Bernard (director), Marie-Laure Delaby (coordi-
nator), Yannick Antoine (developer)

www.imal.org

Lend an Ear support group, Huddersfield (Brian Cross)

I Heart Texting Andrew Wilson
(Thumbprint Co-operative, London)

This talk described a number of examples of communities using text
messages and explored why texting is so useful. The talk outlined the
range of expected and unexpected outcomes of these projects so far,
and tried to isolate and discuss what it is about the character of text
messages that lends itself to these outcomes, particularly examining
their intimacy and integration in everyday life. The reasons can be
summarised as:

- Everyone has a mobile
- Everyone has it with them all the time
- Everyone has taught themselves how to send and receive texts
- Texts are very welcoming - people aren't expected to write a lot, to
  spell perfectly or to stand up in meetings
- People mostly receive texts from friends and family, so they feel
  connected in the same way to organisations who communicate by
  text

These opportunities are emphasised and perhaps most effective when
used in the contexts of communities that are spatially defined, and the
examples described all work within a geographical neighbourhood as
much as a community of interest: Ordsall Creative Texting, a creative
writing project using text messages; Where Do I Feel Unsafe?, in
which a neighbourhood police team tried using texts as a way to open
conversations with local residents; Hoot Texting, in which an arts and
mental health organisation are sending positive text messages; the
Newsome Community Allotment mailing list and Birkby News, a text
message newsletter run by a local council community worker.

The discussion reviewed the fourth and fifth of the listed reasons
for the power of texting, and defined these as the 'literary' qualities
of texting as a medium, the way that they allow people to write in
their own voice. Insights about the literary qualities of texting were
derived from early projects exploring text messages and creative

writing, in particular the City Poems project in Leeds, UK in 2003: **www.fisharepeopletoo.blogs.com/1/2011/02/why-i-still-heart-text-messages.html**. The initial grounding for the City Poems project came from observing the work of The Poetry Business **www.poetrybusiness. co.uk**, an organisation that takes an inclusive approach to creative writing, emphasising the use of everyday contemporary language and imagery in poetry, along with encouraging writing and reading as an ongoing practice in which 'practice makes perfect'. The lessons from these early creative writing projects have proved surprisingly robust and wide ranging, applicable to lots of contexts in which the medium of communication used is texting but which aren't directly about 'creative writing'.

The talk ended by asking why, given some of the potential uncovered so far, texting isn't used more often as a medium for connecting communities in the UK, and looked at the structures needed to enable community use of texting.

Bio
Andrew Wilson has been using mobile phones for creative participation for more than 10 years, and his work includes the Guardian's SMS poetry competition; 'City Poems' in Leeds and Antwerp, commended in the British Interactive Media Awards, and 'Free All Monsters!' a game for children, families and even grown ups, using a Monstervision Machine, a monster spotter's guide and the Fluffy Orange Pencil Case. He is director of foldup, a community interest company using all sorts of technology to tell handmade stories, and a founder member of Thumbprint Co-operative, developing new ways to use mobile phones and the Internet for public participation and civic engagement.

www.thumbprintcity.com/help/casestudies

Connected Communities in Virtual Worlds in the Arab World and the Impact of Arab Cyber-Revolutions on Arts and Cyber-Arts
Wafa Bourkhis (Universities of Tunis and Artois)

Since the 14th January 2011, we live in a reality that cannot be denied after the Tunisian Revolution. By using virtual worlds like Face Book, Twitter, Second Life and mailing lists, Arab societies are connecting to search for their freedom. Young people in Tunisia have understood the importance of virtual worlds to create another area to make their revolution, by connecting with each other in the cyberspace, which was censured by the former Tunisian government. Despite this, they challenged the dictatorial system and they collaborated to make their revolution in digital space by using proxy programs and sending videos from real places to show the world how they live.

These amateur videos were filmed via phones and uploaded on Youtube, Dailymotion and essentially Facebook and Twitter to demonstrate the horror of the repression by the Tunisian government, especially after Bouazizi's immolation and the first protests in the street. Artists, Bloggers and Internet activists like 'Slim Amamou' and 'El Général' played an important role in this revolution, by creating videos and blogs that protested against censorship and manipulation of the masses.

The Tunisians influenced young Egyptians, and they followed soon after, with freedom taking place on 5th February 2011, after 18 days of protests. The Arab world uprising can have a big impact for socio-political system all over the world as well as the arts.

Through these revolutions, we must understand how important it is to connect communities with each other, to create revolutions against dictators and the need to clean the entire world of them, so communication is very necessary. In this talk, I will show some of artworks that influenced the Arab world and how these revolutions have influenced post-revolution artworks by the emergency of a new mind based on freedom of expression.

The talk will include an analysis and presentation of:

1   Pages from social networks, blogs and websites that played a fundamental role in the Arab revolution.

2   Video-Clip 'Raîs Lebled' of the Tunisian artist of RAP: 'El Général'. **www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jdE_LpmAIQ**

3   Wafa Bourkhis' artworks 'Cyber-med War' (Before 14th/01) and 'Free Tunisia' (After) – 'AUME' virtual community gathering Mediterranean artists. **www.digitalarti.com/fr/blog/wafa_bourkhis** **www.museodelmetaverso.it/video/cyber-medwar** **www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hbh5BYgrFNI**

4   The artwork of Abderazak Okasha: 'Okasha's train': a revolutionary Egyptian paintings.

5   The artwork of Selim Tlili: 'Art for tunisia – operation Bouazizi painting - online sale of pixel-shares for Tunisia'. **www.artfortunisia.com**

6   Street Art by Egyptian and Tunisian artists such as Akram Meloman.

7   Exhibition of revolutionary photography 'Finally we are Free' by Wassim Ghozlani and Hamideddine Bouali and other artists.

Bio
Tunisian artist (painter, engraver, cyber-artist), art critic, researcher on virtual worlds since 1999: MFA in Fine Art, 2005: Master Degree on documentary cinema. Currently finishing a PhD dissertation on Virtual territories having worked with many international artists, such as Fred Forest (France), Wafa uses Second Life art, and virtual social networks to collaborate with many cultural events.

Selected exhibitions
Biennale of Egyptian revolution 20-30 June 2011
Biennal Outdoor Cerveira in Portugal, 16 July -17 Sept 2011
Symposium Always already new, Deep involvement in education,
NABA Milano, 18-19 November 2011
New York Biennale, October 2012

Zone Bleue, Code 23
(Wassim Ghozlani,
Tunisia, 2011)

Poster of the Documentary film 'No More Fear'
(Directed by Mourad Ben Cheikh (Tunisia, 74', 2011)
Produced by Habib Attia, cinetelefilms **www.cinetelefilms.net**)

Economies

Day 2.1

The Community Stack: Design Principles for a Community Centered Solution Stack

**Adam Hasler, Kawandeep Virdee &
Benjamin Sugar** (Boston)

The significant financial and intellectual capital once required for research, development, and distribution of new products has hampered innovation, and industrial revolution-era paradigms continue to set the terms of civic engagement. Open source hardware and software, as well as initiatives to make large data sets available to the public, have challenged that status quo and provided a new source of creative solutions and quality design. These great ideas come from the entrepreneurs, artists, and scientists who populate the growing maker and DIY communities worldwide, not from the formal research and development environments of years past.

Inspired by our own professional experience and research in the fields of social enterprise, human-centred design, international development, and complexity and network science, we propose the development of an interoperable 'Community Stack', akin to the notion of a 'solution stack' in software. Like Linux or Drupal, this 'stack' would comprise programs and design principles that support the endeavour to build resilient and productive community networks and promote collaboration. At the heart of the 'user experience' we intend to create lies the concept of serendipity—the chance encounter with information or experience that one doesn't seek, but finds valuable and inspiring nonetheless. This contrasts with mainstream social networks that entrench the ties one already has and rarely exposes the user to an unanticipated experience.

In our contribution to the symposium, we will discuss the community in Boston and Cambridge that has come together around the challenge to create and support these economic and social changes, which includes groups like Code for America, Public Laboratory, MIT's D-Lab and maker collectives Sprout and Artisan's Asylum.[1] We will also discuss the questions associated with the support of a community through the use of digital tools, such as the measure and character of a healthy and productive community and our definition for the protocols and data on which our proposed system will rely. We intend to unveil our system at the symposium.
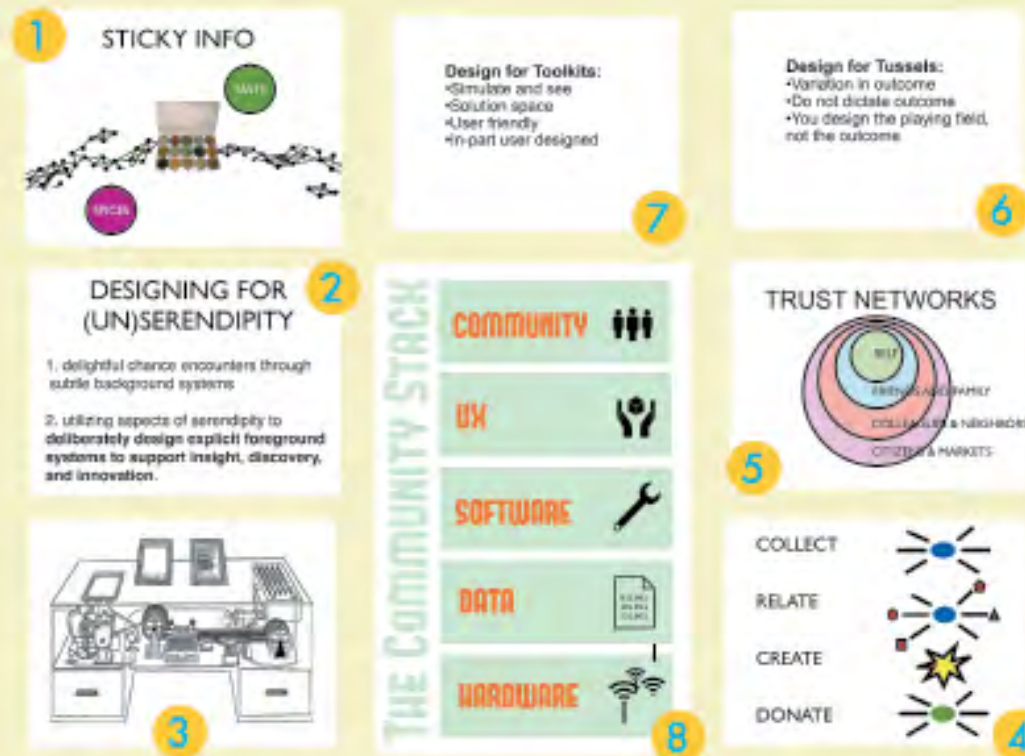
The Community Stack

[1] The toolkits approach to solution development reduces the cost of transferring sticky information by shifting need-related product development to users equipped with toolkits. [2] Designs which facilitate serendipity focus on encouraging chance encounters at the expense of foreground systems to make use of those encounters. [3] Inspired by Vanaveer Bush's Memex, Ben Schniederman advocates for a revolution in creativity support tools which promote and generate excellence - Genex. The Genex framework requires tools that support [4] four phases of creative work and [5] allow people to interact with networks varying in size and trust. [6] Areas of intense competition on the internet called tussles, mirror tussles society; design should leverage and accommodate this reality. [7] Toolkits are coordinated sets of user-friendly design tools that enable users to develop new product innovations for themselves. [8] To fully negotiate the tussles of society, the community stack must include tools that preserve access to the flow of information moving through the Genex framework.

The Community Stack
1, 7 von Hippel, E. and Katz, R. (2002), Shifting Innovation to Users via Toolkits. Management Science, 48, 7 (Jul. 2002), 821-833
2 Paul André, M.C. Schraefel, Jaime Teevan, and Susan T. Dumais. 2009. Discovery is never by chance: designing for (un)serendipity. In Proceeding of the seventh ACM conference on Creativity and cognition (C&C '09). ACM, New York, NY, USA, 305-314
3, 4, 5 Shneiderman, B. Leonardo's Laptop: Human needs and the new computing technologies MIT Press, 2002
6 Clark, David D, John Wroclawski, Karen R Sollins, and Robert Braden. 2005. Tussle in cyberspace: defining tomorrow's Internet. IEEE/ACM Transactions on Networking 13, no. 3: 462-475

1   **www.publiclaboratory.org/home**, **www.thesprouts.org**,
    www.artisansasylum.com, **www.codeforamerica.org**, **www.d-lab.mit.edu**

Bios

Benjamin Sugar works as an artist and entrepreneur in collaboration with 826 Boston, The Greater Boston Employment Collaborative, and Between the Bars.

Formerly a café owner, **Adam Hasler** built interactive art in Buenos Aires and writes professionally about innovations in international development strategy (**www.amhasler.com**). He also organizes Dorkbot Boston.

Kawandeep Virdee researches complex systems at the New England Complex Sciences Institute and creates hackable tools, social environments, and generative art through his organization Which Light (**www.whichlight.com**).

Makerhood: Local Making Meets the Web
Karen Martin & Kristina Glushkova
(Makerhood, London)

Traditional town marketplaces are spaces that are open to all and support community life, where sellers and buyers have a relationship that goes beyond their immediate transactions. At a market of this kind you can not only find goods, but also get a sense of what is important to people in the area and a feel for the social life of the place. While these spaces are increasingly threatened or at risk of disappearing in the physical world, the web has opened up exciting opportunities for new local exchanges. The recent blossoming of hyper-local websites has shown an appetite for the exchange of information, news, skills and knowledge within geographically defined communities.

Inspired by traditional marketplaces we have created 'Makerhood', an online marketplace for those who live or work in five areas of South London – Brixton, Camberwell, Clapham, Herne Hill and Stockwell. Here, makers of any kind - both professional and hobbyist - can set up stalls to sell their goods to people who are looking to buy unique items made locally. The 'Makerhood' website also has social spaces; forums for people to discuss their projects and skills they are interested in and to share knowledge and promote events, and a workshops area where people can advertise workshops and courses they are organizing.

'Makerhood' stands at the intersection of three themes: making, community, and physical objects. In traditional cultures, our social and economic roles were strongly interlinked; skills were passed down through generations and provided a sense of identity to members of a community; stories of objects were part of a shared collective history and embedded in our everyday lives. As a result of globalised mass production we have lost much of this. At 'Makerhood' we hope to restore some of the meaning, pride and connectedness that our purchases can give us by providing a space where stories of makers, buyers and objects can be told and shared.

'Makerhood' is guided by input from many parts of our local community and the approach we took emerged from these conversations. Starting small and local, 'Makerhood' is a grass-roots project that, if it proves useful here in Brixton, can be adopted elsewhere by adapting the site in ways that make sense in each new locality. 'Makerhood' spans the on-line and offline worlds, helping relationships and friendships to develop as well as providing a new space for supporting existing networks.

Many questions still lie ahead. What is the right balance between community and market aspects of the site? How can we ensure that 'Makerhood' is truly open and inclusive of different parts of the community, including those with fewer online skills or those who are currently off- line? We look forward to finding the answers to these and many others as we go along.

Makerhood: An online marketplace embedded in the local community (Anand Sagoo)

Bios

Karen Martin spends her days researching the relationship between people, space and technologies, which is also the subject of her ongoing EngD studies. Since she was very young Karen has been asking 'What can I make today?' and she believes making is an empowering and fun activity. Things Karen has made in her life include interactive art installations, dance performances, websites and socks. She loves meeting makers in Brixton where she has lived for five years.

Kristina Glushkova's background is in new media – her day job is at mySociety working on Mapumental. Before that she worked in research, policy and business roles in the digital media sector. She grew up in a place where things – food, clothes, and furniture – were often made or grown from scratch, by family and neighbours helping each other. This might explain her passion for promoting making and skills in South London, which has been her home for 10 years.

Kristina Glushkova and Karen Martin started the '**Makerhood**' project last year, since then they've been joined and advised by many other people in the community. Other important members of the 'Makerhood' team are Andy Broomfield, Carolina Vallejo, Aoife Ní Mhóráin, Emily Wilkinson, Damian Radcliffe and Kim Winter.

Transnational

A batik made by one of the Mercy Centre's children depicts an iconically Bangkokian scene: a tuk-tuk zooming along a canal, with temples and stilt houses in the background (Amanda Williams)

Local Community, Global Hub: Organizational Tactics of a Slum
Amanda Williams (Wyld Collective, Montreal)

During seven months from October 2007 to May 2008, I engaged in ethnographic participant observation at a community centre/school/orphanage/hospice in Khlong Toey, the oldest and perhaps most politically organised slum in Bangkok, Thailand. Established in 1976, the Mercy Centre is deeply embedded in its local community thanks to such low tech techniques as frequent home visits, strolling around the neighbourhood, and keeping an ear on local gossip. Increasingly, however practices around digital photography and photosharing play a role in augmenting local bonds between the Mercy Centre and their neighbours.

But in order to be able to intervene with authorities on their community's behalf, the Mercy Centre must have significant resources. Recognition from powerful people and, most of all, money, are crucial elements contributing to the organisations influence. This is accomplished increasingly by cultivating a transnational support network through digital media.

The Mercy Centre's website, notably, is primarily in English rather than Thai, reflecting the origins of the majority of the personal donations they receive. The purposed of the website and its photo galleries is not just to induce donors to throw money at a charity, but to create a connection that feels intimate despite its distance. Donors receive news, children's art, regularly updated photo albums, and other such emotionally laden content in exchange for their donation. The centre puts a great deal of effort into providing current updates on the goings on at the centre, humanising themselves and their community by putting names and accomplishments to particular children. Inviting transnational donors into the life of the Mercy Centre required the creation of virtual, mediated 'windows' by selecting images and constructing a compelling narrative around them. Meanwhile, the infrastructure of transnational connectivity – Paypal, sister charities, web hosting – is maintained by volunteers on multiple continents.

The Mercy Centre connects a local community with a global network. This unique positionality allows them to gather the money, resources, and political clout necessary for large-scale programs while maintaining the detailed local knowledge needed to act effectively.

But Khlong Toey was always already a connected community, a hub where international shipping cargo gets loaded into regional truck networks, where poor labourers flocked from Thailand's countryside, Vietnam, Burma and Cambodia and continue to send money to their families back home. Digital technologies are not what connected this neighbourhood to its wider world, rather it adds a new dimension to the ways in which people enact these connections.

Bio
Amanda Williams is a founding shareholder at Wyld Collective Ltd.
She received her PhD in Information and Computer Sciences from
UC Irvine in 2009. Her research centres on space and mobile bodies,
and the ways in which they interpenetrate with, construct, and are
reconfigured by computational technologies and media. She deals
with tangible interaction, physical/social/spatial embodiment, DIY,
and ubiquitous computing in urban environments. Because she has
never been able to decide her disciplinary affiliation, she does design
and ethnography, software and hardware hacking.

Top left *Action shot from Cameras for Communication,* Top right *Posed shot from Cameras for Communication* Bottom left *From the video section of the Cameras for Communication course,* Bottom right *Pamela McLean at 'Teachers Talking' in Nigeria* (Dadamac Team photos)

Dadamac's Connected Communities:
Fun We've Had and Lessons We've Learned
Pamela McLean (Dadamac, UK / Nigeria)

My interest in connected communities is practical and theoretical. I lead
the Dadamac connected community. Like any community or extended
family it's easy to see its centre and harder to define its boundaries.
Different people come together for different reasons. Some people are
always in close contact (face-to-face or online) others less so.

'Connected community' means different things to different people. To
me it's a group with a shared 'community' identity, and the 'connected'
element is because the community could not have existed before the
Internet. The Dadamac community came into being informally around
2001 through personal friendships that could only be sustained through
email. People were based in Nigeria and UK. The Dadamac name
combines surnames from both countries. Gradually the range of people
involved and the kinds of online communication that we use have
increased.

Dadamac's first group outreach was in 2004 when John Dada and I
initiated an online Teachers Talking (TT) working group. Within two
days the group had gathered its first twelve members (who joined
from Canada, India, Nigeria, Uganda, USA and UK). The TT 'connected

community' was created to support an ICT course for teachers in rural
Nigeria. It influenced how I presented the course, and it supported
similar work in subsequent years. It had 70-80 members at its peak.

The lessons I learned through TT influenced my subsequent work in
the Dadamac community. My presentation includes glimpses of work
done during TT, and during a Dadamac 'Cameras for Communication'
initiative.

Given my teaching background I'm attracted to initiatives related to
practical learning, or discovering how to do new things. As a teacher
I'm interested in motivation and in barriers to learning. These interests
help me understand some of the problems that people have when they
come together in connected communities.

I've developed a simple diagnostic diagram, which is included in the presentation. The diagram helps me understand the dynamics of connected communities. It's relevant beyond Dadamac's various groups and initiatives. Used well it helps to shed light on:

- The real shared interests that define the initiatives of the collaborative community.
- Cultural differences within the group that may affect understanding and collaboration.
- Issues around the technology used by the community.

The Dadamac community can be explored further online:

www.dadamac.net
www.dadamac.co.uk
www.meetup.com/Dadamac

Bio
Pamela McLean created her first online community in 2004, to help a friend in Nigeria who was organising ICT training for teachers. Called Teachers Talking (TT) it attracted a dozen people from four continents in the first couple of days and grew to around seventy people. She has created and nurtured other online communities since. She has been involved in communities run by others since 2001.

She is interested in:
- social aspects of online community building
- training needs of people using online spaces
- relationships between online communities and local communities
- how online activity can encourage and support collaboration

Twitter **@Pamela_McLean**

(Hi)stories

Day 2.3

The Culture Shop! in Eldon Square shopping centre in Newcastle, part of the project public screening of Culture Shock! digital stories (Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums)

Culture Shock! Alex Henry
(Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, Newcastle)

> *"This did more for me than statutory services have done in ten years because it saw me as a person, not as a problem or a collection of symptoms to be managed or a target to be met, but as a person"* **Participant**

The Culture Shock! project has used the motivational power of museums to make a difference directly in the lives of nearly 600 people who have created their own digital stories as part of the project, and indirectly many thousands more who have viewed the stories online or at broadcast events across the region.

In 2005, Culture:Unlimited (formerly CLMG, the Campaign for Learning in Museums and Galleries) set out, in their manifesto 'Culture Shock', a vision for how museums could contribute to cultural identity, cohesion and citizenship, and how this was relevant to the core purpose of museums. The vision suggested that by collecting new stories and artefacts, and by storytelling and showcasing people's experiences museums can 'cross the barricades between cultures'.

In response to this manifesto, Culture Shock!, the project, was developed. It has been an exciting three-year project based in North East England collecting digital stories from people across the region. Nearly 600 people have engaged in digital storytelling workshops to create their own personal digital stories, learned skills in IT, creative writing and communication and taken part in group dialogue and discussion with one another.

> *"Culture Shock! opened a window in people's minds and then they just talked, and listened, for four days!"* **Participant**

Culture Shock! is currently one of the largest digital storytelling projects to take place in the world. All of the Culture Shock! stories have been inspired by museums and galleries or are inspired by heritage and things that are important to people. All the finished stories have been permanently added to museum collections, broadcast online and at special events.

The stories aim to raise awareness of the diverse heritage of the people of the North East and encourage people from similar and different backgrounds to explore, document and share their heritage with each other and the wider North East community.

Culture Shock! has helped to make museum collections more relevant to the lives of people living in the region and creating these new digital stories will mean that people can capture elements of their lives in museum collections for people to enjoy for years to come.

> *"It's been like a mini version of The King's Speech (Oscar-winning film of 2011) where suddenly people can hear me"* **Participant**

Bio
Alex Henry has worked at Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums since 2002. She joined the new Outreach team when it was formed in April 2004 as Assistant Outreach Officer working with community groups and organisations on bespoke projects inspired by museum and gallery collections. In June 2008, Alex became the Project Coordinator for the Culture Shock! project.

Alex has a particular interest in community engagement and has extensive experience of working with hard-to-reach groups on museum outreach projects, in particular, digital storytelling, oral history projects and contemporary collecting projects. She is also interested in exploring the ideas of what the personalisation of culture means from the input (collecting) side of museum practice and the consequences of collecting being more participatory (crowd-sourced), plural, and personal.
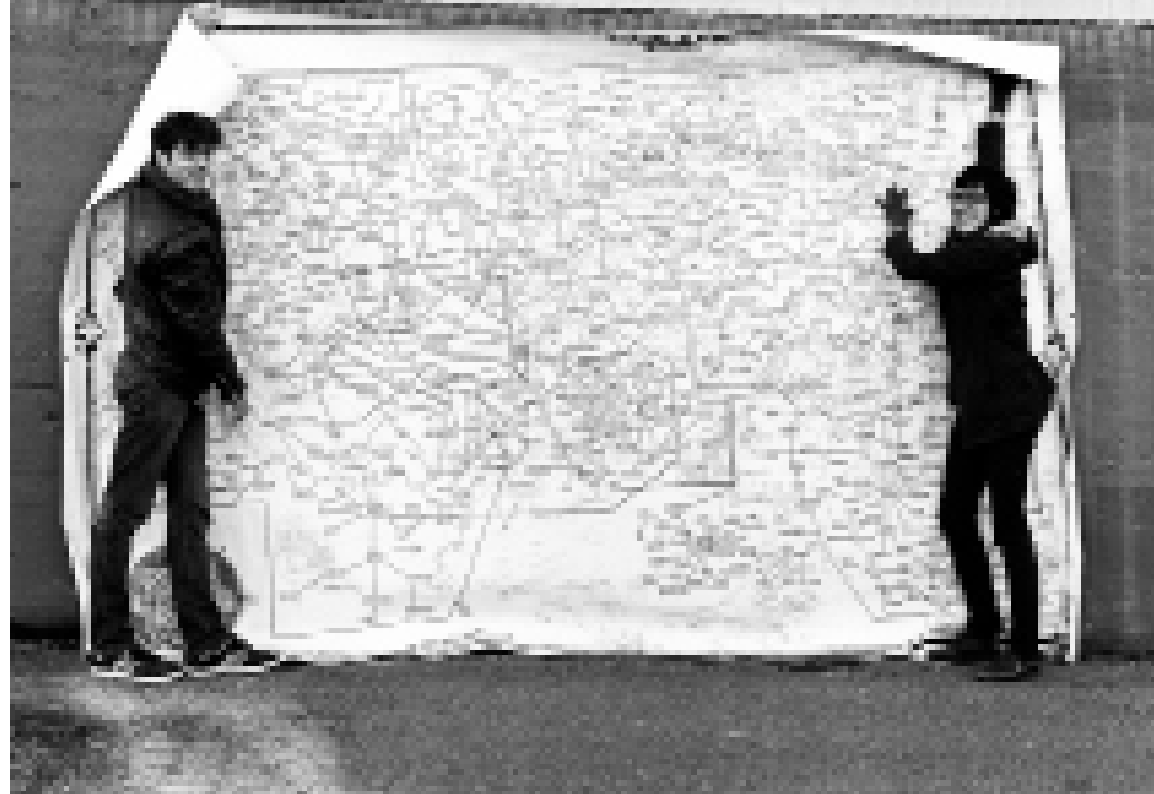
Band Map Founders Rachel Ratner and Keith Whiteman (Kyle Johnson)

Seattle Band Map: Mapping the Evolution of Seattle's Artistic Relationships
Joanna Berry & Rachel Ratner
(Newcastle University / KEXP, Seattle)

'Seattle Band Map' is a real time, 'crowd-sourced' map of the relationships and interrelationships between musician and bands in Seattle and outlying areas. Initially emerging from analogue, 'back-of-an-envelope' exercises, through to a fully formed, Council-funded art installation, the map was recently (February 2011) established as a fully interactive website - **www.seattlebandmap.com**.

The conception and development of the project will be described in detail, and the potential for its evolution will be considered not only geographically, but also contextually. Musical collaborations are common, but there are similar, regionally embedded networks of relationships within, for example, design, art, film and electronic games. These relationships also touch upon musical collaborations and activities at a variety of points. The paper will therefore consider

how the project might expand to cover other forms of individual and collaborative artistic and cultural expressions.

Through a series of semi structured interviews with the creator, a variety of her funders, collaborators, and members of the city's council the paper will reveal how this technologically mediated project adds a rich layer of understanding of the city's artistic and cultural communities. It illustrates how the website not only reflects current linkages between individuals and communities, but also how it is supporting the creation of new communities in the musical life of the city, across a wide variety of musical genres from marginal to major. Interviews and cases of other cultural and artistic sectors already noted above will also be brought in where appropriate to reflect how this project has reflected, supported and influenced community connectivity.

The theoretical foundations of the paper lie in Granovetter's 1975 seminal concept of 'The Strength of Weak Ties' as well as the author's

own doctoral work on the changing nature of value frameworks in the music industry in her PhD thesis. Porter's 1990 notion of cluster theory and subsequent developments in that school will also be brought into play to assist in unpicking the various relationships that cross boundaries of culture, technology and society in this case.

Bios

Joanna Berry's research interests are centred on the personal and professional opportunities and challenges created by technological developments across science, business and the creative industries (in particular music). Current research covers analysis of changing value frameworks and business models across these sectors. Joanna teaches Strategic Marketing to EMBA students, Social Media Marketing to Stage 2 undergraduates, and is Senior Tutor for BA Marketing and Management. Her PhD studied emergent music industry business models. Joanna is Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and Vice Chair of the North East Regional Board of the CIM. She is also a Fellow of the Institute of Business Consultants.

Rachel Ratner founded the Seattle Band Map in 2009. She is a social worker, musician and on-air host on KEXP 90.3FM. She has spent the past 10 years in Seattle, Washington working at record stores, booking shows, planning events, and performing in local bands.

The Role of the Cassette Tape in Connecting Musical Micro-Communities of the Former East Germany
Elizabeth Skadden (Berlin)

In the 2005 documentary Ost Punk, Cornelia Schleime, vocalist for the band Zwitschermaschine, described the punk scene in Communist East Germany (German Democratic Republic) as providing an 'escape from reality' (translation mine). In the GDR, there was no fun, no future, and no future of having any fun - except for underground punk. Music

Examples of East German cassette tapes as part of Collecting (2011) at the Connected Communities Exhibition (Elizabeth Skadden)

shows were spontaneous, practice spaces were kept secret, and music from America was distributed on the sly (sometimes cassette tapes were thrown over the Wall from West to East). At the same time, spies infiltrated and reported on fellow band members; in 1979, the first punk was sent to jail; and by 1984 the East German Secret Police (Stasi) had registered 900 punks within the GDR. Under a regime determined to maintain order at all times, punk band members and their followers used ingenious means to achieve their desired goals.

Within the punk subculture of the GDR, a unique system of music distribution formed. Forbidden Western music was smuggled in and then dubbed to hundreds of tapes for distribution within the scene. When punks met, cassette tapes of new bands and music would change hands. These cassette tapes are now mostly extinct as their owners usually threw away the Eastern counterparts to Western records they were able to access after the Wall fell. I am most interested

in documenting through my artistic practice the networks that existed to distribute these tapes as well as the subtle variations between each tape and how they create the personality of the music for the listener. They were often dubbed many times and their hisses and glitches are telling remnants of a moment. By looking at the tapes, many secret codes of where they came from and how they came to be made can be interpreted. Part of an interview I did with a distributor in Poland details these variances - **www.collapsingnewbuildingz.blogspot.com/2010/12/polish-punk-tapes.html**

My art practice is concerned with the resurrection of abandoned media and places. As the specifics of East German life are lost with the passage of time, I believe artworks are necessary to preserve the specifics of the punk scene community under a Communist system. Please see examples of previous related works at: **www.elizabethskadden.com**.

Bio
Elizabeth Skadden's past work includes short documentaries about DIY bands and personal documentaries about people she is close to. Her films have screened in different film festivals including Sundance, SXSW, and Edinburgh. Elizabeth is a winner of the RISD Awards of Excellence and curator of 'Lapse of Time' at the Gelman Gallery at the Chace Center. Her all-female band Finally Punk toured America, Europe and the UK. She was a resident in Liverpool England at the Saatchi-sponsored A Curriculum: A Foundation Artist Residency. She has worked extensively with bands, including the Flaming Lips, No Age, and Voxtrot, having recently created live visuals for and toured with No Age in Europe and America. She is currently the staff photographer for NPR's Berlin Stories.

▶ See artwork **Page 105 |** Exhibition

Technology & Society

Digital Inclusion as Social Connection – a Socio-Political Analysis of the Role of Local Online Centres Hannah Goraya & Ann Light
(Sheffield Hallam University)

> "*When Tony Blair came into power he said that everybody in the country should have an email address by such and such, so that was the catalyst for this centre, and there were six actually, set up all at the same time.*"
> **Centre Manager, Neighbourhood Case Study Interviews, 2010**

The interviewee goes on to explain that his is the only remaining project of these six in it's original form, now almost a decade later they too face closure after the removal of significant funds.

The Digital Inclusion in South Yorkshire project conducted four neighbourhood case studies, interviewing 11 managers and staff working in projects delivering activities to help local residents engage with technology. Throughout these interviews many demonstrate an active awareness of the direction political leaders are taking. This is in no small part due to the influence of national politics on funding and their centres heavy reliance on external support.

The need for communities to have local centres in which they access IT has diminished over the last ten years with a shift from the majority of the population not having access to a computer and the internet at home, to the majority having access (Ofcom, 2009). However, the centres we visited represented much more to their communities than merely a place to 'log on'. Often alongside developing the confidence and skills of their participants they played an active role in surrounding activities such as neighbourhood forums and housing regeneration schemes. Reflecting on the interviews, we will consider the role computer centres have held thus far and the future role of the local computer centre in communities. In particular we look at the impact of national politics and community politics and how they interact with each centre's mission. Through this analysis we critique how digital inclusion has been understood in Britain to date.

The Digital Inclusion in South Yorkshire research project is a two-year Knowledge Transfer Partnership between Sheffield Hallam University and the four South Yorkshire local authorities, jointly funded by the South Yorkshire Local Authorities and the technology strategy board.

Images from South Yorkshire residential areas (Digital Inclusion in South Yorkshire project, 2011)

Bios
Hannah Goraya is a Digital Inclusion Researcher for Sheffield Hallam University and the four South Yorkshire local authorities of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. Her interests include: inclusion; learning styles; learning experiences; motivations for learning; co-production; public sector relationships with public; designing services.

Ann Light is a Reader in Interaction, Media and Communication at Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and visiting researcher at the University of Sussex, and Queen Mary University of London. She manages a project on Digital Inclusion in South Yorkshire and specializes in exploring the social impact of technology and the politics of participation in design. She publishes on social innovation, human-computer interaction and cross-cultural methodology.

NeWS: Inclusive Technology's Impact on Society through Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Budi Arief, David Greathead, Chris Smith, Aad van Moorsel, Lynne Coventry & Phil Butler (Newcastle University / Northumbria University)

Computer systems have become so ingrained in our society that many of our social interactions have been transferred to the Internet. This trend is made even more palpable with the prevalence of mobile devices – smartphones, tablets and other handheld devices. This ever-increasing reliance on computer systems (mobile devices in particular) calls for careful investigation into the effects that these systems have on our society, as well as on ways to improve these systems for the benefit of society.

We are currently preparing an interdisciplinary research proposal to investigate the impact of a socio-technical system on society, and vice versa. We will focus our research on a case study involving the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (NeWS), by adapting this scheme to the Internet age in order to attract more participation from a wide range of age/ethnic/education groups in society. The NeWS has been around in the UK since the early 1980s. The scheme provides an opportunity for people from local communities to work together with local authorities, such as the police, to improve certain aspects of a neighbourhood, such as safety or aesthetics. These improvements can increase the quality of life of the people within the neighbourhood, improving their physical and emotional well-being (e.g. reducing the fear of crime). On top of encouraging a community spirit among the people involved, the scheme can help them in protecting themselves against crime (or fear of crime) through information sharing (tips or reports on suspicious activities) and close collaboration with the local police.

The proposed empirical study will gather data from volunteers through our links with the South Tyneside Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and with the Design Evaluation Tea Parties organised by the Psychology and Communication Technology Lab at Northumbria University. The work will include:

Design Evaluation Tea Party (David Greathead)

- Initial requirements gathering from volunteers through focus groups and questionnaires.
- Design and development of a software system (a social networking tool) that can be used to better facilitate the interaction and collaboration among NeWS participants, based on the information obtained from the requirements-gathering study.
- In-situ data collection through the deployment of this NeWS software system at the participants homes or as a mobile app (the latter is likely more attractive for younger participants).
- Assessment and evaluation of the NeWS software systems success/ failure.
- Redesign and redevelopment of the NeWS software system.
- Further deployment and in-situ data collection, followed by second round of assessment and evaluation.

The research focuses not only on the technological aspects of the problem, such as how to build trustworthy systems which are secure, available and perform acceptably, but also on the social aspects of the problem, such as how to build systems which are trusted, and moreover have the desired social impact. The success of this research will pave the way for more general investigations into the social impact of technological systems.

Bios

Budi Arief is a Research Associate in the School of Computing Science at Newcastle University.

David Greathead is a Senior Research Assistant in the Psychology and Communication Technology Lab at Northumbria University.

Chris Smith is a Research Associate in the School of Computing Science at Newcastle University.

Aad van Moorsel is a Professor in the School of Computing Science at Newcastle University.

Lynne Coventry is the Director of the Psychology and Communication Technology Lab at Northumbria University.

Phil Butler is the Director, External Relations of The Centre for Cybercrime and Computer Security.

ICTs and Connectivity in Minority Communities in Wales Panayiota Tsatsou (Swansea University)

In my talk I will present an on-going review of research into Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and connectivity of minority communities in Wales, funded by the AHRC Connected Communities Programme.

The overall aim of the research review is to gain an understanding of the impact of ICTs on changing cultures and patterns of connectivity within and between minority communities and the potential of

multifaceted digital divides in constraining or shaping these forms of connectivity in Wales. It focuses on ethnic minorities and disabled groups and aspires not only to identify potential gaps in existing research into the impact of ICTs on those communities' connectivity but also to enhance engagement between stakeholders and researchers in the field.

The research review encompasses a range of activities including a desk-based review of existing literature around digital exclusion and the connectivity of minority communities, a review of ICT and digital exclusion policy within the UK, as well as a comprehensive search, collection and analysis of existing empirical research data concerning ICTs and minority communities. The empirical data will provide the basis for a research database that will be hosted on the project website.

The outputs of this research review will inform policy-makers, communities and academics of the impact of digital exclusion on minority groups and the design of policies to promote digital inclusion of ethnic communities and disabled groups in particular. The empirical findings will also be of practical value in providing policy makers and practitioners with an evidence-based picture of these issues in Wales. The findings will be formally presented in November 2011 in the following forms: a discussion paper, a final project report and a policy paper. In addition, the review findings will be disseminated via an end-project dissemination event, three academic conference papers, a dedicated project website and a series of publications.

More information about the research review project can be found at: **www.wiserd.ac.uk/research/cc**

Left The project website, **Right** The project title, logo and involved institutions

Bio
Panayiota Tsatsou (BA, MA, MSc, PhD) lectures media and
communication at Swansea University, United Kingdom. Her research
lies in the areas of information society, Internet studies, digital
divides, media policy and regulation, media and children, media
and gender, and digital ecosystems. Her research work examines
various phenomena in relation to information and communication
technologies, with an emphasis on regulation and policy creation,
as well as on the role of ordinary people (e.g. women, children)
as ICT/Internet users and actors in the information society. Her
publications aim to report on innovative and evidence-based
solutions to issues arising in the information society. She has been
granted AHRC funding to research digital inclusion in Wales and has
been co-investigator in British Academy funded research on digital
identity and economy in Wales. She has been involved in the COST
Programme collaborating with researchers across Europe in the areas
of broadband society and cyber bullying. In addition, she has been
working for many years in various European projects researching
information and communication technologies and their complex socio-
cultural and policy ramifications.

Co-Creation

Day 3.2

The BiebBeep project: Supporting the library community (Marije Kanis)

Co-Design in Real-World Settings for Addressing Varying Community Needs
Marije Kanis (Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences)

Technology has shown to have the potential for empowering and enriching communities. However, technology-facilitated social interactions, particularly novel and ambient (invisible) ones, may not always particularly suit the individual needs of community members.

The work presented focuses on identifying and addressing the diverse needs of community members through the co-design and evaluation of novel technology in real-world settings. The following cases are presented to contribute to the multifaceted analysis and critical discussion of collaboratively designing for technology-connected communities by using the real world as our living lab.

BiebBeep - *supporting the library community:* The main goal of the BiebBeep project is to improve the information and social services within the public space of the library in the new city Almere. Via an interactive touch screen, which has a prominent place in the new library, the library and its diverse local community can inform and connect with each other. The system's distinctive feature is that people can add information to the screen themselves, such as tweets, photos and information about local events. Interactions facilitated by the system, such as Twitter postings, are observed and analysed to assess different levels of group interactions taking place within the Almere community.

Senior Create-IT - *engaging the community:* This project aims to actively engage medical care staff, technical specialists and particularly the elderly in the design and development of ambient-assisted living technology in the home. User-centred design tools, such as interactive dollhouses have been developed and used as a tool to visualize, discuss and study the desired workings of an activity monitoring system. Furthermore, a study has been conducted to identify the information sharing needs between different community stakeholders. As a result of this study process, the parties involved have become more democratically and consciously active in the design of the monitoring technology that is now (being) installed in the elderly participants' homes.

Bio
Marije Kanis' work is about people and their needs, realizing futuristic scenarios, creating and studying (social) technologies for positive effect.

She is currently working as researcher ambient interaction at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. She earned an Interaction Design degree (Cum Laude) at the Utrecht School of the Arts for which she is now also working for in the Design for Playful Impact group. Her background includes a MSc in Informatics from Leiden University, NL and a PhD from Brunel University, UK. She has held various positions, such as researcher within the Human Connectedness group at MIT's Media Lab Europe.

Designing for Mars Giovanni Innella
(Northumbria University, Newcastle)

Let's suppose that you are part of a design task force sent to a very different context from the one you are familiar with. Let's also suppose that you have less than two months to gather useful information on the local cultural and social ground as part of filling a gap created by the imminent deployment of new technology in this context.

In this situation conventional research methods, such as collecting demographic and ethnographic data or cultural probes, or even observations noted in a sketchbook, may prove tremendously time-consuming.

Conventional methods also risk expanding the field of research when instead you need a more focused and constrained investigation. This article describes the technique adopted by a team of the Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute (M-ITI) in just such a situation. Giovanni Innella, in collaboration with Franco Papeschi, has been sent to the red planet Mars on a spaceship that resembles an Air France Airbus, rather than a NASA shuttle. Still, the M-ITI team reached a land unexplored by western service designers, a land where technological innovation is about to lead to big changes in services and in society itself. The land we are talking about goes under the name of Burkina Faso, but surely the red sands of this African country are like those of the red planet. If not the sands, then the overall context is at least as exotic. Therefore, during the preparation and execution of the project we referred to it as Mars, keeping in mind that for the locals we were the aliens.

The major fallacy that can occur in this design process is the one of thinking there's some similarity between the Western world and Burkina Faso; doing so would lead to assumptions and preconceptions that most likely would affect creative thinking or even thinking itself.

Convincing ourselves of the possibility of a copy-and-paste process between our world and the red planet of Burkina Faso would probably bring us to the misconception of the African country as a 'backward nation.' This concept might be true if the Western and the African culture were progressing on the same line of development, but in a more open-minded vision the line of progress of Burkina Faso, as in many other African countries, is more likely orthogonal to the one we are used to. It is a system where simple and advanced technologies

Participant Ollé prototyping a drum lessons on Skype with a user located in Europe (Giovanni Innella)

are plugged in without following the Western chronology. Therefore the same technologies can take on very different connotations; technology and culture always mediate each other, after all.

Bio
Giovanni graduated in Industrial Design at the Polytechnic University of Turin in 2004. Since 2003, Giovanni has been assigned numerous workshops and international cultural exchanges financed by the European Community, in Europe and in Africa.

After freelancing as a graphic designer and visual designer for a many clients, Giovanni began to work with the design sector Area Progetti (e1) of Interaction Design Institute Ivrea.

From 2005 to 2006 Giovanni has been working for Interaction Design Lab as a designer. In 2008 he graduated from the IM master course at the Design Academy of Eindhoven. His work has been exhibited at the Droog gallery in Amsterdam, the Netherlands Architecture Instituted and the Stedelijk Museum among other places. Currently Giovanni is pursuing his PhD in Design at Northumbria University.

The Paper Orchestra & Sampler-Cultureclash

David Littler & Berit Greinke
(Queens Mary University, London)

The starting point for 'sampler-cultureclash' and for exploring ideas of community through textiles and sound was to bring two very different communities of interest together: embroiderers and DJ's. We wanted to see what conversations we would have; whether we'd get on; what the differences were and what the commonalities might be; and if, and what, we would create through collaboration. The literal meaning of community 'to give among each other' is at the heart of our approach.

In order to understand and further explore how temporary communities can be formed through combining crafts and sound technology, we developed the idea of a 'collaborative instrument'. For the Paper Orchestra workshop, we hacked a beatbox stylophone, to transform it from an instrument usually played by an individual into one that could be played by up to five people at the same time. We wanted to provide an environment that would make it easy and quick for people to join in. Therefore, the hacked stylophone was prepared beforehand. We didn't want participants to focus on the technology - how it was working - but instead to concentrate on how they were playing it, and how they might create a composition together.

The workshop was an open drop-in session that encouraged people to build a simple 'musical instrument' using folded paper and graphite pencils. The paper instruments ranged from simple on-off buttons to large and elaborate shapes to be played by two people, and worked as conductive switches when they were connected to the stylophone. Each switch, and therefore each participant, controls one key of the instrument. Different groups of participants worked together to build rhythms by combining their individual sounds. The resulting sounds were sampled live through Ableton Live, distorted and looped in order to build evolving compositions. The performers judged whether each performance had been successful depending on whether they felt they had created a coherent beat or an interesting sound texture together. Through the personality of each participant and the structure of each paper instrument, combined with the process of live sampling and layering, each performance had a different style.

The Paper Orchestra, Connected Communities workshop (Berit Greinke)

We found the Paper Orchestra to be a very successful way of encouraging people to form temporary communities through active participation and collaboration.

Untitled (Leonard Forsberg & Possu Huang)

Co-Created Creative Expression
Olle Bjerkås (Co-Lab, Göteborg)

I am Olle Bjerkås, an art, culture & business creative person with a passion for openness, collaboration and life.

I want to talk at the connected communities symposium because I have a lot to tell about how to get people involved in activities of creative expression. My talk will be touching different projects that I have been, and am involved in. Examples include:

- The Grand Flat Piano which is the world's largest electronic piano. 25 meters long, built in Göteborg, shipped to Burning Man and back in 2010.
- Giganting spontanfest I Göteborg / Gigantic Spontaneuos Party in Gothenburg: How to gather thousands of people to share food, laughs, love and party with just one hour of preparation.

- Borderland: Swedish version of the Burning Man festival. A co-creative festival where the content is created by all of us who are participating. Borderland is a prototype workshop for our dreams, with the purpose to get our hands really dirty and start sharing the realisation process for making dreams come true. It premiered in the last week of July 2011 in an abandoned scrap yard and included 100-200 participants.
- Guerilla Gardening. How swarms of people can pulled together to make a city flourish by using Facebook. 100,000 sunflowers in Göteborg.
- Other projects that will be taking place soon.

My statement is that anyone can start a creative revolution, if you make it simple enough for people to participate and swarm. Everyone can participate in making a city flourish, if we let go of our fears of what is allowed and what is not. The future is in our hands, each action we take leaves a print and there are lots of ways to leave prints in a non-harmful way that enriches the environment.

There will be a movie of Borderland. We have a budget for it but at the moment I can't promise anything since we don't really know what is going to happen at the festival and how the movie will turn out.

Media attention: **www.facebook.com/note.php? note_id=421018227186**

More info about each project:

Gigantisk Spontanfest
www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=121077911255773
www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=188585077859225Borderland
www.facebook.com/pages/The-Borderland/395104629713
www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=116870301719438

Grand Flat Piano
http://www.facebook.com/GrandFlatPiano

Guerilla Gardening & 100 000 sunflowers in Gothenburg
www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=120996671258427&ref=ts
www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=206323149379690

Bio
During the daytime Olle runs a small creative agency called Co-Lab,
mostly organizing innovation & design competitions. He is also keen
on building social communities. For the Burning Man festival as an
artist, he is the Swedish regional contact and local organizer. He is
also the founder of a city farmer and guerrilla gardening network in
Göteborg to name a few. His background stretches from organizing
pedagogical role-playing events for hundreds of school children,
to designing serious games and running nightclubs and small
festivals. He is 28 years old, lives in Göteborg, mostly auto-didactic
competencies, and with an education in game design and project
management.

twitter.com/buzzmash
facebook.com/olle.b

Community Art

Day 3.3

Critical Friends Out on a Limb? Performing Connected Communities through Socially Engaged Art Sophie Hope & Elaine Speight
(University of London)

In recent years, the commissioning of socially engaged art has become accepted as a means to produce connections within, and between, specific communities. As a relational practice, it is often employed to engender social cohesion within predefined and marginalised communities, whilst simultaneously opening up channels of communication between 'local' communities and 'official' decision-makers. At the same time, policy-makers emphasise the potential of digital technologies to produce 'new forms of creativity' through increased social connections.

But are such connections really created in practice and, if so, to what ends? We will draw attention to the possibilities and limits of socially engaged art by re-visiting two projects from our individual practices: *Critical Friends*, a three year evaluation of socially engaged art projects in North Greenwich, London, developed and carried out by a 'community' of participants, and *Out On A Limb*, an online storytelling project developed in a Housing Market Renewal area of Merseyside. Taking these examples, we will problematise the notion of community and challenge commonly held assumptions about the social impacts and applications of digital technologies and socially engaged art. By examining creative processes and interrogating the political and social conditions in which the projects were produced, we will seek to address the following questions:

- Where does the impetus for connecting community's lie and whose purpose does it serve?
- In what ways are artists perceived as agents of connectivity, who are they connecting and why?
- Do digital technologies really produce new forms of creativity and connectivity, or do they simply 'remediate' existing practices?
- To what extent do digital technologies re-enforce, strengthen and facilitate existing links and networks, and how is this useful?
- How do art projects allow for contradictory, dissonant voices to emerge and how can they resist reductive notions of 'community'?

Above all, we will examine if, by focusing on 'connected communities' we are in fact turning a blind eye to the systemic problems in society.

Critical Friends, Exploring the Greenwich Peninsula, London, 2008-11
(Critical Friends, **www.criticalfriends.org.uk**)

Are alternative modes and technologies of social organisation taken seriously and can 'connected communities' ever be more than marginalised performances of active citizenship?

Bio
Elaine Speight and Sophie Hope are practice-based researchers based in the Department of Media and Cultural Studies at Birkbeck, University of London. They will present their respective projects, Critical Friends, a three year evaluation of socially engaged art projects in North Greenwich, London, developed and carried out by a 'community' of participants, and Out On A Limb, an online storytelling project developed in a Housing Market Renewal area of Merseyside.

www.sophiehope.org.uk
www.elainespeight.net

The Status Project, Helix Arts, 2009
(Heath Bunting)

Digital Narratives and Communities
Toby Lowe (Helix Arts, Newcastle)

I have a background in the political theory of community. I developed a thesis which states community is defined as a group of people who share identity-forming narratives. In other words, a community is a group of people who share narratives that are so important to them that they define their sense of who they are using them. The content of these narratives may concern the story of a particular place (e.g. a village, city or country), the expression of an idea or philosophy (such as the academic community) or adherence to a faith (such as the Muslim community).

These narratives provide the lens through which we see the world:

- They filter our perceptions, literally what sense data we pay attention to and what we don't.
- They provide archetypes for roles and behaviours – how people are supposed to act in different situations, our sense of right and wrong.
- They shape our sense of what is possible – what our future might possibly be.
- Collectively they form our culture.

I am interested in how such narratives are formed and maintained. In particular, I am interested in the way in which participation in arts activity helps people to identify and explore their own narratives, and the processes by which they are formed and maintained. Participation in high quality arts activity puts people in touch with their spontaneity, their use of language, the characters and landscapes of their stories, the way they hold their body and the music and rhythms and symbols and images to which they are drawn and which they create – these are the ways in which the arts help people to explore, reflect on and share their narratives, and in so doing to affirm or evolve existing communities, and to build new ones.

I would like to talk about:

- The narrative conception of community, and why it is the right framework to understand what community is.
- Narrative formation processes – how shared identity-forming stories come into existence, and how they are maintained and developed.

- The role of participatory arts in helping people to explore, reflect on and share their own narratives – how it empowers them to grasp and shape their own culture.
- The potential of digital technology to create new narrative formation and transmission mechanisms.

Bio
Toby Lowe has a doctorate in political philosophy from Newcastle University, which explores the concept of community. Since graduating, he has worked in the voluntary sector, in the development of public policy, and in the arts. He is currently Chief Executive of Helix Arts, a participatory arts organisation in the North East of England that specialises in enabling disadvantaged and marginalized people to explore, reflect on and share their personal and collective narratives.

www.helixarts.com

'Homelands'. How ISIS Arts Uses Visual and Media Arts Projects to Connect Artists and Communities Sharon Bailey

(ISIS Arts, Newcastle)

ISIS Arts is a visual and media arts organisation that has an international programme of commissions, residencies, projects and events. Its core ethos is to support artists to facilitate international and inter-cultural exchange, support and promote diversity and engage as wide an audience as possible in dialogue with artists and contemporary art and media.

ISIS Arts engages with artists to produce and present new work that explores identity and challenges prejudice, creating projects of both international relevance and local significance. We advocate for the value of the arts and media as a tool for change and better understanding of people from diverse communities.

Top *We shall Overswim (*Borjana Venzislavova, produced by ISIS Arts as part of their transnational project 'At Home in Europe')
Bottom left *Homelands, Matus Story, 2011, Slovakia & Newcastle upon Tyne, UK* (Marek Sulik)
Bottom right *Homelands, The Message for Benene, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK* (Marek Sulik)

ISIS Arts have a keen interest in working with international artists who work with diaspora communities, particularly in the North of England. Our international programme has developed from our interest in cultural identity and the view that cultural diversity agendas are inherently internationalist.

A seminal project for ISIS was *Home: Exploring the routes of our identity*, the project explored what it means to be English, and how immigration (over the centuries) has influenced the nature of 'Englishness' in different parts of our region. Our current *Homelands* project is bringing international artists to the North East to build new

relationships with diaspora communities beginning with Slovakian and Czech Roma families in the city. Working with Slovakian artists Zuzana Hruskova and Marek Sulik we are using film and media to relay, both virtually and in person, digital 'postcards' between separated families and present this to local people, to challenge some of the myths and prejudices that exist about Roma people.

ISIS Arts presents artwork innovatively within the public realm, attracting new and diverse audiences to contemporary arts practice. ISIS Arts' projects blur physical and virtual boundaries and are presented in diverse community situations, relevant to their context and content. ISIS Arts have a passionate commitment to promoting access to the arts and engaging with local audiences that may not visit art galleries and other cultural venues.

The Big M, our highly stylised inflatable structure, was designed to present contemporary work in communities. It functions as a temporary and mobile venue for the presentation of video and digital media and has toured challenging contemporary visual and media artwork to communities in rural and urban settings in the UK and internationally. In this way we reach new and diverse audiences and those who may not necessarily visit traditional gallery and museum spaces.

Bio
Sharon Bailey is a founder member and director of ISIS Arts where she oversees programme development and initiates projects with a range of regional and international partners. She is committed to socially engaged practice and is a successful freelance photographer best known for her work with frail older people and young people from diaspora communities. She has carried out many commissions and residencies in the region and has published two books.

www.isisarts.org.uk

Exhibition

Exhibition

Artists

The Senior Create-It Project: Engaging the elderly community (Marije Kanis)

BiebBeep Marije Kanis, Wouter Meys, Maarten Groen, Mettina Veenstra
(Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences)

Video, 2'31 / Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (2011)

The work presented focuses on identifying and addressing the diverse needs of community members through the co-design and evaluation of novel technology in real-world settings. The following case is presented to contribute to the multifaceted analysis and critical discussion of designing for technology-connected communities.

The BiebBeep project aims to improve the information and social services within the public space of the library in Almere city. Via an interactive touch screen and social media features, the library and its diverse local community can inform and connect with each other.

Examples of East German cassette tapes as part of Collecting (2011) at the Connected Communities Exhibition (Elizabeth Skadden)

Cassettes of East Germany (Punk)
Elizabeth Skadden (Berlin)

Table, chair, cassette tapes, cassette player / Berlin (2011)

Collecting creates a personal collection of dubbed tapes from a time period that can no longer be experienced, the music scene of former East Germany. I have collected a database of the tapes that still exist and thereby created my own collection to share.

Viewers experience listening to music from sources unknown that has no external identity except for what they can ascertain from the cases.

Oporto-Brooklyn Bridge
Naomi Kaly & Alyssa Casey (New York City)

Video documentation of an interactive sound installation,
Conductive thread, custom electronics, speakers, wood, silver bead
270H x 400L x 25W cm / New York City (2009)

Oporto-Brooklyn Bridge explores the thin line where two linguistic and cultural territories connect and engage in conversation. The fruit of an on-going collaboration between Naomi Kaly and Alyssa Casey, the installation explores ways in which technology fosters new forms of communication, meant to bridge cultural, linguistic and ethnic gaps. Prior to installation, and in consideration of Heidegger's interpretation of a bridge ('The bridge is a location'), pedestrians crossing the Dom Luis I Bridge in Oporto, Portugal and the Brooklyn Bridge were asked questions designed to reflect personal interpretations of the notion of bridge. Fragments of this audio—syllables, words and sentences - collected, processed, and edited—merge together into a hybrid conversational space: local visitors bring to life distant people and remote locations, challenging notions of community, proximity, connection, and interaction.

In homage to the histories of communication, the installation is comprised of two poles connected by a system of conductive threads, providing for deep reflection on the metaphor of wire in today's digital society. One wooden pole contains a custom-made circuit, responsible for decoding the location of the silver bead on the threads. At the heart of the circuit is an Atom microcontroller, programmed to analyse the participants' movement, and playback the specific audio track. Amplified, the designated track is played through the proper speaker (one in each pole) depending on the language.

Sliding a small bead along the conductive threads, participants trigger a program that scans, deciphers, and plays the encoded audio. The conductive thread is mapped into sections each encoding a pair of English and Portuguese audio tracks that create a carefully selected dialogue according to content, identity of the speaker, or voice intonation. For example, the final Portuguese track, spoken by an elderly gentleman, 'Now I'm waiting for the last bridge to take me to the other side' pairs with a young woman, 'To see the people from your past'.

Diana Cardoso, sound assistant, interviewing on the Dom Luis I Bridge (Naomi Kaly)

As viewers slide a bead along the threads, their linear gesture is translated into a non-linear sonic narrative. The illusory continuous audio offers points of transition; hardware and software allow readers to explore and manipulate the usually inaccessible intersection between two tongues - a confluence of Portuguese and English voices symbolically pair the two remote sites. These conductive bridges make room for a 'thought bridge' bringing forth a psychic space and initiating a hybrid community.

www.futureplaces.up.pt/2009/doku.php?id=exhibition:naomi_kaly_alyssa_casey

Bio
Combining traditional with digital tools, Naomi Kaly, an Israeli New Media artist, and Alyssa Casey, an American painter and paper-maker explore the deconstruction and reconstruction of traditional conventions related to language. Their work has been presented nationally and internationally, including AIR Biennial in New York, curated by Lilly Wei, and the Museum of Electricity in Lisbon. Their public sound installation, Oporto-Brooklyn Bridge won second prize at Future Places, Digital Media and Local Cultures Festival, a juried competition in Oporto, Portugal.
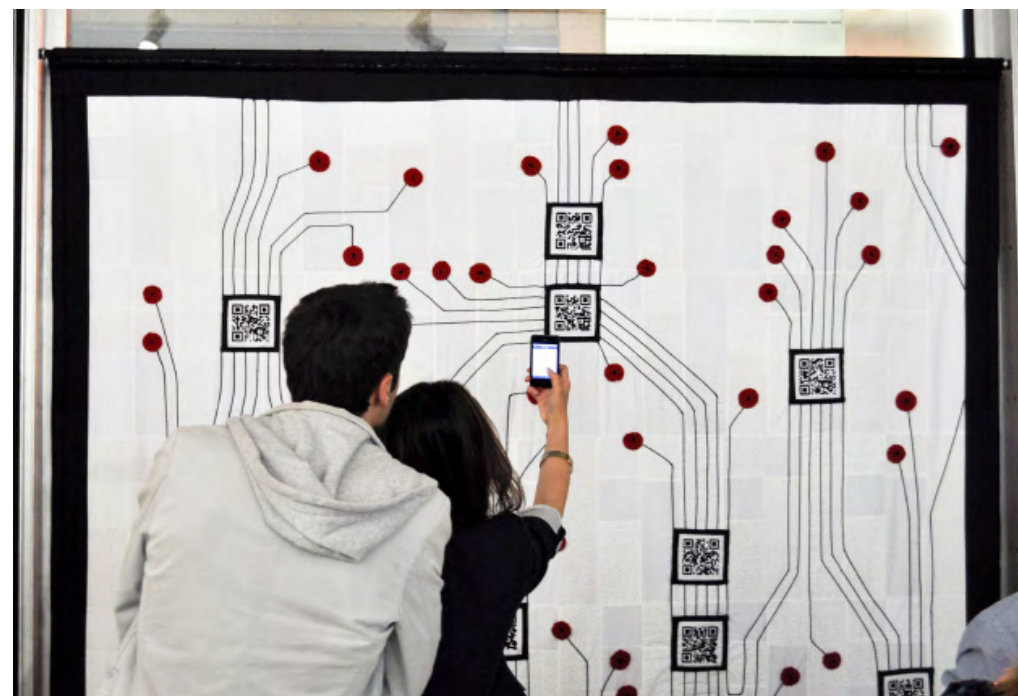
Embroidered Confession: an Interactive Quilt of the Secrets of Strangers

Julynn Benedetti (Parsons New School of Design, New York City)

Users scanning a QR code from the quilt to access the Embroidered Confessions website (Julynn Benedetti)

Embroidered quilt, 2.26 m x 1.77 m / New York City (2009)

Embroidered Confessions is a visual narrative in the form of an interactive quilt that collects and curates the secrets of strangers from across the Internet. Through the weaving of the stories and secrets of strangers from the Internet into a material artefact, *Embroidered Confessions* visualizes the duality of digital information, which has the duality of digital information, which has the perception of being ephemeral and fleeting, when in reality it is constantly being stored, archived and collected. It is a physical reminder of the immortality of the musings, indiscreet personal disclosures, and heart felt declarations that exist and are archived in the digital stratosphere.

The genesis of *Embroidered Confessions* comes from myths that are found throughout history and across cultures. In this myth, a man greatly burdened by a secret that could be told to no living person on pain of death, digs a hole in the ground, whispers his secret into the hole and then covers it back up with mud. However, he had deposited his secret into a bank of a river, and the following spring, reeds grew up and began betraying secret into the wind.

If in our contemporary day, the Internet is the bank of the river in which strangers deposit their secrets, *Embroidered Confessions* are the reeds that sprout as the physical relic of secrets planted on the web. The quilt, visually, represents a circuit board and digital communications, but it also represents the plant-like reeds that reveal the secrets and confessions of strangers.

Embroidered Confessions is comprised of two interfaces. The first interface is a quilt, with 10 QR codes that have been embroidered and encoded with URLs that link to a web interface. These embroidered QR codes are in and of themselves, visual secrets manifested in physical objects that evoke tradition and craft, but must be decoded in an interaction that is technologically dissonant yet visually congruent.

Each code is linked to a different collection of mini-narratives and themes. Each time a user scans a code with a smartphone QR code reader application, they receive a different secret from a database of curated confessions on **www.embroideredconfessions.us** from within that theme.

Bio
Julynn Miller Benedetti is a recent graduate of the MFA, Design
+ Technology program at Parsons the New School for Design, and
currently an interactive design intern at frog design in New York. Her
work explores how to create connections and drive actions between
the digital and physical worlds. She was part of an international team
that won the 'Best Scene in Town' competition, which was presented
at the 2010 Picnic Festival in Amsterdam. She received an MS in
International Relations from Webster University while serving as an
officer in the US Air Force. She also holds a BA in French and History
from Texas Christian University.

www.julynn.net

A Walk on the Digital Sublime
Paul Guzzardo (Geddes Institute For Urban
Research, Dundee)

The dystopic kid, **Video, 2'28 / Dundee (2011)**
The collector muses, **Video, 3'27 / Dundee (2011)**
The ARCO Media Box interview, **Video, 22'57 / Dundee (2011)**

'A Walk on the Digital Sublime' installation series proposed a
McLuhan(ish) update on Patrick Geddes's 'map and biopsy' city
protocol. The series demonstrated two recursive protocols. The
protocols are oppositional. One protocol uses the street as: 1) an
evolving search engine, a tableau you drift through, synthesizing as
you move, 2) a platform to assemble networks to critique the network,
and 3) a probe into how digital kit edits-us. The other protocol uses the
street as a beautiful girl or guy uses a conversation; they keep turning it
back on themselves.

The 'Walk' series bored into a St. Louis Missouri urban design praxis.
Exhibition videos and accompanying graphics framed a struggle of
getting onto the St. Louis Street, and manning way-stations to navigate
through a digital fog. The two protocols are now snared in litigation.
St. Louis is where Marshal McLuhan did foundational media work.
McLuhan anguished that the 'privileged diet for the elite' would thwart

University of Dundee, Dalhousie
(Paul Guzzardo)

art as radar. 'A Walk on the Digital Sublime' tracked how a bogus idea of community provoked a lawsuit, and why a St. Louis elite decided to forfeit and obliterate McLuhan's St. Louis legacy. And do it in time to celebrate his 2011 Centennial.

Venues: After 'A Walk on the Digital Sublime' opened at Culture Lab OnSite it moved to the University of Dundee. It was exhibited at the Dalhousie Building and the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art. The Geddes Institute For Urban Research in the School of the Environment produced the University of Dundee installations. The installation cycle was also the subject of talks sponsored by PLACE; The Architecture and Built Environment Centre for Northern Ireland, and the University of Ulster School of Architecture and Design. The installation then travelled to the United States and was presented at the Western Illinois University Conference 'Intersections: Literature, Technology, Science'. Most recently it was displayed at the West Central Illinois Arts Center. The Walk installations and events surrounding the cycle are being edited into the documentary 'Posses, Protocols and Perp-Walks'. The documentary will be shown at the 2012 Ulster Festival of Art and Design Festival.

Bio
Paul Guzzardo is a designer and lawyer based in St. Louis and Buenos Aires, Guzzardo maps the devolving state of the American public sphere. He is interested in epistemology and where urban designers, creative practitioners and collectors fit, and/or don't, in a zoomed out digitized culture. His research is out on the street. His design praxis includes: nightclubs, outdoor multimedia projections, street-front media-labs, street theatre, remix concerts, gallery installations and documentary film. He exploits these venues and disciplines to design epistemic gear maps for navigating through this digital minefield. He is a Fellow at the Geddes Institute for Urban Research.

Seattle Band Map Founder Rachel Ratner at the Connected Communities Symposium Exhibition in September 2010 (Trent Coahran)

Seattle Band Map: Mapping the Evolution of Seattle's Artistic Relationships
Rachel Ratner (KEXP, Seattle),
Keith Whiteman (Real Fake Productions, Seattle) **& Golf Sinteppadon** (University of Washington, Seattle)

Website demo, 1'5 & Map, 2.43 m x 3.65 m / Seattle (2009 - ongoing)

Rachel Ratner started sketching out how her band was connected to her friends' bands on paper, and this quickly took a life of its own, turning into a visual representation of the collaborative connections between in Seattle. The Seattle Band Map, now 8 ft x 8 ft was first publicly shown at Cairo Art Gallery in Seattle, WA as an interactive piece; attendees were invited to add new connections and in two

days 600+ new bands had been added. With funding from the Seattle Mayors Office the map was reprinted on durable vinyl, and showcased at different festivals in the summer of 2010. The map reached capacity at 2000+ bands on its 8 x 12 ft canvas. To develop the map, Ratner and Whiteman recruited University of Washington Computer Science student Golf Stimpatadon to build an online interactive version. As of July 2011 over 4,000 bands are connected on **www.seattlebandmap.com**

Bios

Rachel Ratner founded the Seattle Band Map in 2009. She is a social worker, musician and on-air host on KEXP 90.3FM. She has spent the past 10 years in Seattle, Washington working at record stores, booking shows, planning events, and performing in local bands.

Physical Map artist: Keith Whiteman performs with three local bands and operates a screen print press and poster/art design company, Real Fake Productions. His poster and design work has been shown at the 2009 Seattle Theater Group Bumbershoot Poster Exhibit at Grey Gallery, the 2009 Stranger's Poster of the Week Exhibit (five pieces hung) at the Vermillion Gallery, and the Bad Ideas Art Exhibit at the Society and Co. Gallery.

Website Developer: Golf Sinteppadon is a senior in Computer Science at the University of Washington and a part-time web developer. His work can be seen on his portfolio, **www.golfsinteppadon.com**.

Workshop used plasticine as one of the tools to facilitate communication (Giovanni Innella)

Designing for Mars Giovanni Innella
(Northumbria University, Newcastle)

Book, 3 copies / Newcastle (2009)

In many African Countries a revolution is happening: for the first time fast Internet connections are being broadly available. This technology push is creating new opportunities for adoption of Internet services in developing Countries. This paper reports a design research study in Burkina Faso where Local people were exposed to Internet technologies and stimulated to generate concepts for local services.

Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute, with the support of Regione Piemonte, invested in a two months field study in the North of Burkina Faso. In this book Giovanni tells about antennas, guns, gold mines, chairs, mercenaries and other stories. It's service design, baby!

Real life mockup Illustration (Adrian Stanula)

MILK, SUGAR & TWEETS. Using Twitter and Facebook to Experience Social Translucence in Coffee Shops
**Stephan Baumann & Adrian Stanula
(C4, Berlin)**

Video, 6'30 / Berlin (2011)

Geo-located microblogging is popular. People love to share their favourite places, routes and they like to be awarded with a status of being 'major' of certain hot spots in their hometown or even elsewhere. Although people are aware of the public nature of such platforms they might struggle if the absence of time and space is re-introduced into this kind of media. To do so our installation publishes tweets to the

physical places they belong to and even more we offer the opportunity for visitors and fans of such places to tweet while present and converting the anonymous nature of tele-presence into real life.

In order to embed this idea into real places special 'smart glass' windowpanes are extended to interactive displays. The window can be transparent and opaque. In the opaque state, it can be used as projection surface. The combination of the look through and the possibility, to use the window as an extended screen, is particularly interesting for existing buildings. Existing windows can extend their role, without having to change their appearance - the external appearance is retained. With this technology windows of bars and clubs are able to visualize information of visitors and of the internal events. This process of information visualization can be generated autonomously, but visitors can also influence it interactively. The public, which passes by outside, has the opportunity to respond to this information and even to influence it too.

Currently we show a mock-up of 'Milk, Sugar & Tweets' with a live Twitter connection to everyday people at several public events in our hometown. After analysing the feedback of these people we plan to deploy a prototype at the coffee shop with a connection to Twitter and the Facebook fan page of this shop. In parallel we try to partner with international collaborators to find coffee shops in other countries that are willing to set up such a prototype. In this way we hope to conduct some inter-cultural studies on this topic.

Bios

Stephan Baumann is heading the Competence Center Computational Culture (C4) at the German Research Center for AI in Kaiserslautern (DFKI). He is currently engaged in working on the cutting-edge in the Social Web. He did a PhD on Artificial Listening Systems at DFKI and IRCAM/Paris. His current research interests are Social Media Mining, Pervasive Games and Emotional Music Recommenders.

Adrian Stanula studied Virtual Design at the University of Applied Sciences in Kaiserslautern. He finished his study with a Bachelor of Arts thesis on the topic 'Learning with Multimedia'. Adrian Stanula is supporting the C4 team as interaction designer where he is currently working in different projects such as 'Milk, Sugar & Tweets'.

United We Act brings together an investigation into the topic of connected communities by the Creative Media group and the Social Sciences Perspective of the Social Inclusion through the Digital Economy (SiDE) research project based at Culture Lab, Newcastle, UK.

This publication gathers together the main aspects of the study consisting of the final report 'Situating Communities through Creative Technologies and Practice' and the expressions of interest of the participants for the September 2011 international interdisciplinary symposium.

The report explores the relation between creative uses of digital technologies and the notion of connected communities; and the symposium expanded on this by opening up the dialogue on the topic to international experts from various disciplines, grassroots community workers, and the general public. In addition we provide an extended bibliography as a research tool on the topic and suggestions for future research.

SiDE
Social inclusion through the digital economy