

COLABSQUARE

UT Austin | Portugal

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATORY FOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, CoLAB



futureplaces 2011

The fourth annual futureplaces festival hosted community workshops, technology labs, digital media art exhibits, performances, and more from October 19-22 in Porto. Since 2008, the festival has featured speakers from around the world as well as local community activist groups, internationally renowned artists, and researchers. In 2011, futureplaces focused on the continuation of existing community projects that appeared in previous festivals, and on panels that addressed one of the most important issues in digital media today—copyright. Additionally, on Friday, October 21, the festival hosted an all-day doctoral symposium in which students of the UT Austin | Portugal program shared their projects and research.

The festival's website, futureplaces.org, was completely re-designed for the 2011 edition. It now hosts a wider variety of content, such as a thorough archive of essays pertaining to the festival's activities, both past and present. Some of the essays reflect on the actual experience of the festival, while others dissect specific research or creative projects, and others still address wider social, cultural and technological issues.

As in previous years, futureplaces offered practical, hands-on technology labs. Jeanne Stern, an MFA graduate of UT Austin and award-winning artist, taught a course titled Experi-



The members of the community workshop chairs



Digital Media Doctoral Symposium, Prof. Nuno Correia

tal Animation: Ghosts of Spaces. Over two days, participants used a variety of media to create innovative animated films that were later presented at the festival. Brett Caraway, a recent PhD graduate of UT Austin, led another intensive lab, where he introduced participants to Blender, an open-source 3D modeling application. Participants' projects, developed during two intensive days of instruction, were also later presented.

Citizen Labs were a series of workshops curated by Heitor Alvelos that focused on social and cultural participation through new media, and were extremely well-attended. Most Labs were organized in coordination with various festival partners, such as the Paredes Municipality, Asociación Cultural Visible, or Radio Zero. A selection of the outcomes is now available via the festival's website, futureplaces.org. These projects will now function as a permanent online extension of the festival, and will welcome online contributions and participation, thus consolidation the motto of digital media fostering the development of healthier social and cultural fabrics.

A key aspect of the festival's mission, building bridges between urban communities, was further explored this year. The festival hosted the "Cabaret of Complexity", a participatory concert that gathered contributions from the CCStop musicians collective,

a Car Tuning association using their cars as instruments, and two independent radio stations operating in Porto; the “**Type the Future**” Lab welcomed the participation of an association for under-privileged youth, working side by side with graffiti artists and MA students from the University of Porto; and the “**Will You Marry Us**” Lab and exhibition explored the emotional connections that may occur randomly between people who, despite belonging to different social and cultural strata, inhabit the same geographical spaces.

The doctoral symposium featured over a dozen theoretically and technically innovative projects currently conducted by UT Austin | Portugal Digital Media PhD students from UNL and U.Porto. Many faculty and students gathered to learn about research on haptic art, tools for automated music generation, and interactive video systems supporting environmental activism, among many other topics. The symposium provided a snapshot of the diverse cutting edge research and technological development occurring within the doctoral program and gave students from the partner universities an excellent opportunity to engage with one another.

The **futureplaces 2011** exhibition was curated by **Pedro Branco** (University of Minho) and was a showcase of some of the best media art currently being produced in advanced degree programs in new media within various Portuguese universities. Various installations permeated the Maus Hábitos cultural space, inviting visitors to interact, discuss and think of digital media as a driving force for creative development and innovation.

The festival hosted several prominent speakers on digital media and copyright, including activists, educators, and policy experts. Elizabeth Stark, a Lecturer in Law at Stanford Law School, where she started the “Ideas for a Better Internet” program, gave a keynote address at the opening of the doctoral symposium, where she and other audience members gave feedback on students’ projects. Stark is a Visiting Fellow at the Yale Information Society Project and has extensive experience in free culture advocacy, co-founding the Open Video Alliance and serving as a producer of the annual Open Video Conference, which is dedicated to promoting free expression and innovation in online video.



Elisabeth Stark and Peter Sunde Kolmisoppi



Cabaret of Complexity



Jeanne Stern's animation lab

On Saturday, October 22, the festival featured morning and afternoon discussions on digital media and copyright. Stark appeared in a panel with Peter Sunde Kolmisoppi, co-founder of internationally renowned BitTorrent indexing site **The Pirate Bay**. Sunde is also the founder of Flattr, an online micropayment and money-sharing service that allows users to support Internet sites, including those of authors and activists. Stark and Sunde addressed The Pirate Bay’s development, industry and government reactions to the site, and, more generally, shifting attitudes and conditions surrounding intellectual property and digital media.

Another panel focused on copyright featured **Teresa Nobre**, Legal Project Lead of Creative Commons Portugal, **Gregg Perry**, a faculty member teaching Digital Media Management at Austin’s St. Edward’s University, and **Sérgio Branco**, a professor of intellectual property law at Fundação Getúlio Vargas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The international panel presented a discussion on “**Copyright, Creativity, and Change**,” addressing emerging trends in intellectual property, including digital content industry strategies and developing models of free culture. The three speakers were also featured at the University Technology Enterprise Network’s Copyright Workshop for the Creative Industries in Porto, which directly preceded the festival. Professor Sharon Strover of UT Austin moderated the panel. The copyright sessions attracted large crowds of interested festival participants and resulted in highly engaged discussions among speakers and audience members.

Yet another key festival address was presented by **Portuguese collective GANA**, the authors behind viral-animation-gone-mainstream Bruno Aleixo, who provided their first ever public talk on the processes behind their creative projects. The talk was extremely well-attended and served as a shining example of new paradigms in media production and consumption via digital media, through aesthetic appropriation, online communities, brand subversion, historical references and the use of humor to convey issues of local identity.

Overall this was the most successful edition yet of futureplaces in terms of attendance, engaged community participation, and the scope of proposed activities.

■ ZON and UT Austin review achievements in film, animation and digital media education

Evaluating the ZON UT Austin Experiment: Two years of business-university cooperation in the development of script-writing and digital animation competencies was held at Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias on October 20th.

The event gathered participants from the ZON Intensive Script Development Lab at UT Austin (2010), the ZON Digital Animation Advanced Lab at UT Austin (2011), representatives from ZON, the University of Texas at Austin, and the UT Austin | Portugal program, as well as the ZON Award winners who received scholarships from FCT to study in Austin.

The conference explored aspects of business-university cooperative programs, particularly those in digital media domains. The collaboration between ZON and the UT Austin | Portugal Program has brought 28 candidates to the University of Texas at Austin and supported the completion of about 15 projects of fiction and animation.

This partnership between ZON and the UT Austin | Portugal Program has resulted in two laboratories offering international training for Portuguese students. The highlight of the



Nuno Rocha

collaboration is the short film "Vicky and Sam" produced in Austin by Nuno Rocha, winner of the ZON Creativity in Multimedia Award 2008, which has received awards in various national and international festivals, including the Zacuto (USA), Shortcut, "Caminhos do Cinema Português" and Ovarvídeo. Currently there are about 10 projects in post-production which originated in the ZON Digital Animation Lab@ UT Austin and will be entered in competition for the ZON Creativity in Multimedia Award 2011.

Through partnerships like this one with the UT Austin | Portugal program, ZON aims to support national talent, allowing students to receive training in a multicultural environment with a strong professional component. The University of Texas at Austin is an international leader in the technology and audio-visual sectors and Austin is home to the South by Southwest festival the renowned celebration of digital creativity.



Nuno Cintra Torres, Sharon Strover, Manuel Damásio and Pedro Madeira

Ana Martins

■ Students from the Radio-TV-Film Department at the University of Texas accepted to the U.Frame International Academic Video Festival

Three Master's of Fine Arts students from the Radio-TV-Film Department at the University of Texas were accepted to the U.Frame International Academic Video Festival held this October in Porto. Ivete Lucas contributed *La Lupita*, a story of a Mexican teenager, newly arrived in the United States, falling in love at a flea market. Other accepted University of Texas MFA program entries were Nathan S. Duncan's *Great Outdoors*, a film revolving around a father and son canoe trip, and John Moore's *Untitled Moon Project*, a comedy portraying the Soviet Union's final efforts to win the space race of the 1960s.

Submissions from three students from the University of Porto were also featured at the festival: Ana Temudo Gaio Lima's *Corpo Difuso e Outros Gestos*, Raquel Azevedo Moreira's *Pescado*, and Hernâni Reis Baptista's two films *Imposição* and *Execuções*.

The three UT Austin students arrived in Porto October 5 and stayed for the duration of the festival. Lucas, a filmmaker and visual artist born in São Paulo, Brazil, began her filmmaking career in Mexico, where her short film *Asthma* was nationally released in Mexican movie theaters and shortlisted for the Mexican Academy Awards.

Her documentary and narrative work has screened at the New York Latino Film Festival, among other US festivals, and toured Switzerland, Peru and Mexico. She is currently a fellow of the Mexican National Fund for Culture and the Arts. Regarding her experience at U.Frame, Lucas stated "It was



Ivete Lucas



Nathan Duncan, Ivete Lucas and John Moore

wonderful to travel with my UT colleagues to a beautiful city where we could share our academic processes with other film students from Europe and South America. I really hope more people attend to this festival! I will definitely keep sending my films."

Her fellow attendee John Moore likewise found the experience culturally and artistically enriching, resulting in what he anticipates to be lasting creative relationships. He commented, "[The festival] attracted student filmmakers from around the world. The greatest experience of my 4 days in Portugal was before & after sharing each other's movies, when we would walk through the streets of the amazingly vivid city of Porto, conversing and comparing our lives in our respective countries. These are folks I anticipate staying in contact with as I continue you make films and exhibit them."

The annual festival is held alternately in Porto and Galicia. It is sponsored by universities in Brazil, Singapore, the US and Spain. UT Austin has provided faculty jurors, speakers and student entrants to previous festivals. In 2010, UT Austin students Angela Chen and Angela Torres each screened films at the festival in La Coruña.

Fatakra, by UT Austin Radio-Television-Film program graduate Soham Mehta, won the award for Best Fiction film at U.Frame. *Fatakra*, Mehta's MFA thesis film, has also won a Student Academy Award.

■ UNL Professor Organizes Digital Inclusion Conference

Digital inclusion and participation is perhaps one of the most critical social issues of our time. Whether or not someone uses the Internet has consequences that extend far beyond media use: persons who don't go online are at a disadvantage for jobs, future educational opportunities, and social support. Cristina Ponte, a professor at UNL, organized a one day conference in Lisbon that examined these in detail.

The "Conferência Diversidade Digital" or Digital Diversity Conference took place at UNL's FCSH campus on November 4. It featured research presentations from members of the Digital Inclusion research project, which is funded through the Digital Media program. Ponte is the principal in-

vestigator of the Digital Inclusion project, and her co-PIs **José Azevedo of U.Porto and Joseph Straubhaar of UT Austin** joined her to moderate a panel and presented research from the project.

In addition to the members of the Digital Inclusion research team, the conference has drawn researchers from across Portugal who are working on issues related to digital inclusion and participation.

For more information see:

http://digital_inclusion.up.pt/index_files/Page1128.htm

■ UTEN CORNER

UTEN workshops in October

"Copyright for the Creative Industries" was the theme of the 5th UTEN Workshop for 2011, which took place at the University of Porto on 21 October 2011. The aim of this workshop was to understand the new challenges of managing intellectual property in the creative economy. Three renowned experts in Copyright for the Creative Industries participated in this Workshop: Gregg Perry (St. Edwards University, USA), Sérgio Branco (Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brazil) and Teresa Nobre (Creative Commons, Portugal). The Workshop was hosted by UPTEC/PINC.

The following week, on 25 and 26 October, UTEN hosted Training Week #3, entitled "From the Lab to the Market: Deep Analysis of Real Cases", which was took place at the University of Algarve in Faro. This training week consisted of two sessions addressing critical issues driving technology from the laboratory to the market, including "The startup experience and support role of the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem" and "Practical experience in the valuation of intangible assets and deal negotiation". Greg Pogue (IC² Institute, The University of Texas at Austin) was the invited expert and the case discussions were presented by Navalha (NECTON, A4F - Algafuel) and Helena Vieira (President and CEO, Bioalvo). This Training Week was hosted by the CRIA, University of Algarve.



UTEN workshops in October

■ UTEN Annual Conference 2011

14th November 2011, FEUP, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal

The 2011 UTEN Annual Conference will be aimed to deepen our understanding of related emerging challenges and opportunities in times of special financial constraints at a global scale and will involve technology transfer professional, researchers and students, technology transfer professionals, entrepreneurs and investors and industry and policy makers engaged in technology transfer and commercialization.

The UTEN Annual Conference 2011 takes place in co-location

with the "Iberian Expert Workshop - Strategic Approaches for Knowledge Transfer and Intellectual Property Management from Universities and Public Research Organizations", organized by the European Commission. Both the morning session and the closing session of the two events will take place jointly, while in the afternoon both events will proceed in separate and parallel sessions.

For more information please visit

<http://utenportugal.org/events/conf-2011/>.

■ Research Roundup

The start of the semester has seen a variety of activity related to the research projects the Digital Media Program selected for funding. Last month, **Professor Jorge Peña of UT's Department of Communication Studies traveled to Lisbon to meet with his fellow researchers on the INVITE project. There he met with the project's principal investigator, Rui Prada of IST. The goal of this project is to see how a networked digital environment could be used to teach interpersonal "soft skills".** During Peña's time in Lisbon, the team drafted a paper titled 'The Role of Social Identity, Rationality and Anticipation in Believable Agents', which they submitted to the AAMAS2012 conference.

On November, another one of the research projects, ImTV, will be the subject of a day-long work meeting. On November 16th, eight of the researchers on the project will gather in Lisbon to discuss the progress of the research and present software demonstrations. Organized by principal investigator João Magalhães, this meeting will give students and faculty the opportunity to showcase their work with their colleagues. The ImTV project examines market opportunities for interactive TV systems and potential interfaces for future services.

■ Internship Update

The Digital Media Leadership Program has placed all of its interns for the Fall 2011 semester and looks toward placing students in the spring. Starting in mid-October, Diana Castilho will begin an internship with new DMLP partner Mercury Mambo, which develops digital marketing campaigns targeting Hispanic audiences. Diana comes to this role from ZON Multimedia, where she has been engaged in marketing and corporate communications. The DMLP is currently looking for organizations that will have a need in early 2012 for a mobile-gaming animator or a sound producer. If your organization or one of your contacts might be interested in learning more about our program, please contact Jonathan Daniels at jonathan.a.daniels@gmail.com.

Digital Media Doctoral Student's presentation

Last month, it took place at FCSH/ UNL, the presentation of the Digital Media Doctoral Course to the students who are now starting the 2011 academic year. In this meeting, Prof. João Mário Grilo, Prof. Nuno Correia, Prof. Jorge Rosa, Pedro Madeira - the CoLab Executive Director, and Prof. Sharon Strover from the University of Texas at Austin, were present. The UT Austin | Portugal program wishes them all greater academic success.



New students



Prof. Nuno Correia (FCT/UNL), Prof. João Mário Grilo (FCSH/UNL) and Prof. Sharon Strover (UT Austin)



Prof. Jorge Rosa (FCSH/UNL), Prof. João Mário Grilo (FCSH/UNL), Prof. Sharon Strover (UT Austin), Prof. Pedro Madeira (CoLab Executive Director)

Events

- **UTEN Annual Conference 2011**

14th November 2011, FEUP, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal

More information at: <http://utenportugal.org/events/conf-2011/>

- **4th Annual Conference of Video Games**

2-4 December 2011, Porto

The Conference of Video Games is the home of creativity and science that lies behind the promotion of video games and interactive experiences. The main objective of this event is to stimulate discussion in the field of video game development and to reduce the gap between academia and the entertainment industry. The event organization invites to submit high quality scientific research to help create the basis and set the trends of the future of the videogame industry in Portugal.

More information at: <http://www.dcc.fc.up.pt/~videojogos2011/>

- **TEI 2012**

19th to 22nd February 2012, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

TEI 2012 is the sixth international conference dedicated to presenting cutting edge research in tangible, embedded, and embodied interaction. The work presented at TEI addresses design challenges, theories, experiences, systems, and new developments, with specific emphasis on all the physical aspects of human interaction with computing technology. The intimate size of this single-track conference provides a unique forum for exchanging ideas and presenting innovative work through talks, interactive exhibits, demos, hands-on studios, posters, art installations and performances. The theme of this year's conference is "fold unfold".

More information at: <http://tei-conf.org/12/Main/Home>

Useful links

www.utaustinportugal.org

www.fct.mctes.pt

www.utexas.edu

www.ic2.org

www.ati.utexas.edu

www.austin-chamber.org

<http://colab.ic2.utexas.edu/dm/>

www.utenportugal.org

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