

# COLABSQUARE

UT Austin | Portugal INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATORY FOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, CoLab



## FUTUREPLACES 2012

Engages, Entertains and Emancipates!



The annual FUTUREPLACES Digital Media Festival has celebrated its fifth anniversary! Since 2008, the Porto festival has explored digital media and local culture, with exhibitions of artistic work, workshops, panel discussions, and performances. Organized by the original team of co-curators Heitor Alvelos and Karen Gustafson and project manager Fátima São Simão, now coordinator of UPTec-PINC, the 2012 edition ran from October 17-20 and featured several improvements on thematic and logistical levels.

This year the festival continued a shift towards research and development, and demonstrated a growing emphasis on participant engagement and consolidation of citizen involvement. This was especially reflected in the highly successful Citizen Labs, which boasted record attendance this year. The original motto of social and cultural development through new media has therefore become more relevant and evident in the multitude of projects proposed and presented.

Daytime activities including the doctoral research symposium were moved to the University of Porto creative industries incubator UPTec-PINC. The festival featured presentations from emerging startup companies fostered there, in addition to a plenary session of the Citizen Labs and a U. Porto Multimedia Masters session that included a presentation of work from the course archives and a welcome session to all new students (coordinated by Carlos Oliveira and Soraia Ferreira), as well as an introduction by new course director António Coelho. Evening events including several performances and concerts took place at Maus Hábitos, one of Porto's primary cultural spaces and a longtime host of the festival.

The festival opened with a doctoral research symposium featuring sixteen graduate projects and keynote addresses from Heitor Alvelos of U. Porto and Luis Francisco-Revilla of UT Austin. The evening reception of the symposium included a trans-atlantic concert via Skype, by Tiago Videira (PhD student in Digital Media) and José Maria Lopes (Professor of the University of Porto).



Negativland

Citizen Labs comprised a very significant part of FUTUREPLACES this year, engaging participants from diverse backgrounds. The opening session of the Labs was a full house, as each team of organizers described their projects' proposed goals. All projects depended on highly committed teams, and each approached digital media and local cultures in a unique way.

The Museum of Ransom challenged its members to transcend the "official" narratives of Porto by collecting stories and moments from the city's everyday life, using their own video recording devices. Stories of Chairs continued the exploration of narratives of the country's Northern region's traditions of furniture industry and products and, in doing so, also examined communication design in the development of local community involvement. The Forgotten City Lab documented the proliferation of abandoned homes around Porto using mapping technologies and constructing a website inviting ongoing public participation, while Depict Portugal once more asked participants to collaborate on the creation of contemporary iconography representing Portuguese identity, this time using illustration as the primary medium.



Join Citizen Labs - Jorge Pereira and Marta Bernardes

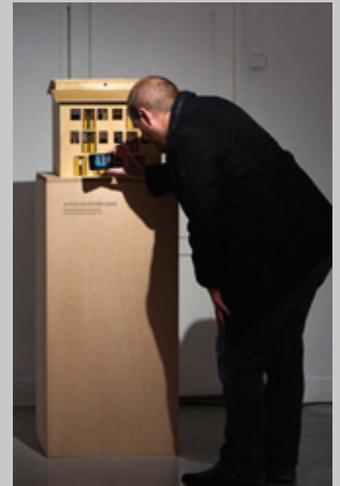


Flash Symposium Beka Guifi.net

Two Labs focused on sound: Rádio Manobras Futuras broadcasted festival activities throughout the four days, and explored the challenges of community radio and potential solutions. Rádio Manobras Futuras is part of the FUTUREPLACES heritage; the project was incubated at the festival in 2009 under the name of Radio Futura, and now broadcasts on FM around the clock - the first independent Portuguese to do so since the late 1980s. 3:33, organized by invited speaker Phillip Marshall and festival curator Heitor Alvelos, playfully interrogated themes of commercial cultural production, challenging participants to take part in a "sweatshop," and complete 33 pieces of music in 3 hours and 33 minutes by mashing up 3 sound pieces at a time. A concert following the same principle of random collage followed the same evening.



Occupy The Future



Showcase



Phillip Marshall interview

PIU, or Promoting Urban Interaction, sought to transform urban spaces into opportunities for dialog, inviting the public to engage in speech through writing on placards carried around the streets by participants, or through sending messages to Twitter, which then appeared on video monitors. Finally, Call for Problems was a private lab dedicated to companies incubated at UPTec-PINC, and aimed at a higher level of group dynamics and efficiency in start-up environments.

Several talks were hosted at Maus Hábitos, including "Occupy the Future," presented by designer and cultural activist and returning festival guest "plus minus" (an alias of designer Miguel Januário). FUTUREPLACES music

coordinator Anselmo Canha hosted an entertaining and informative interview with Phillip Marshall, an internationally acknowledged web and print designer and media publisher, and local cultural producer Marianne Baillot gave a performance introducing her new work "Outros Portos: A bad guide to Oporto." On the closing evening,

Jon Leidecker, a member of experimental music and copyright activist group Negativland, gave a keynote talk on sampling and music collage, followed by an engaged discussion on intellectual property and music creation with festival participants. Negativland later performed its new show "A Booper Symphony," which was attended by a large and enthusiastic crowd. The festival ended with the by now customary performance of the FUTUREPLACES Impromptu All-stars Orchestra, this year an acoustic ensemble.

The festival again included a Digital Media Showcase, curated by Pedro Branco of the University of Minho, gathering some of the best installation and audiovisual work currently being developed in Portuguese universities.



Flash Symposium - Marianne Baillot



Join Citizen Labs



Lab Call For Problems



Radio Manobras Futuras team



Futureplaces Impromptu Allstars Orchestra



Closing Remarks - Karen Gustafson



Sweatshop

School, the Spanish free network Guifi, and the Global Voices blogging collective.

New festival partners this year, to be added to the extensive list of fellow universities, NGOs, cultural agents, local institutions and sponsors that have joined the festival throughout the years, included UPTec (University of Porto Science and Technology Park), Manobras no Porto, Galeria Dama Afrita, EAC Theater and Performing Arts

In acknowledgment of the festival's fifth anniversary, the next edition of this newsletter will offer an in-depth look at five years of FUTUREPLACES by Heitor Alvelos and Karen Gustafson. In addition, further information, documentation and essays will be appearing regularly at futureplaces.org, including photography by Luís Barbosa and a video documentary by Riot Films, both long time collaborators of the festival.

## ■ Doctoral Students Participate in Research Symposium

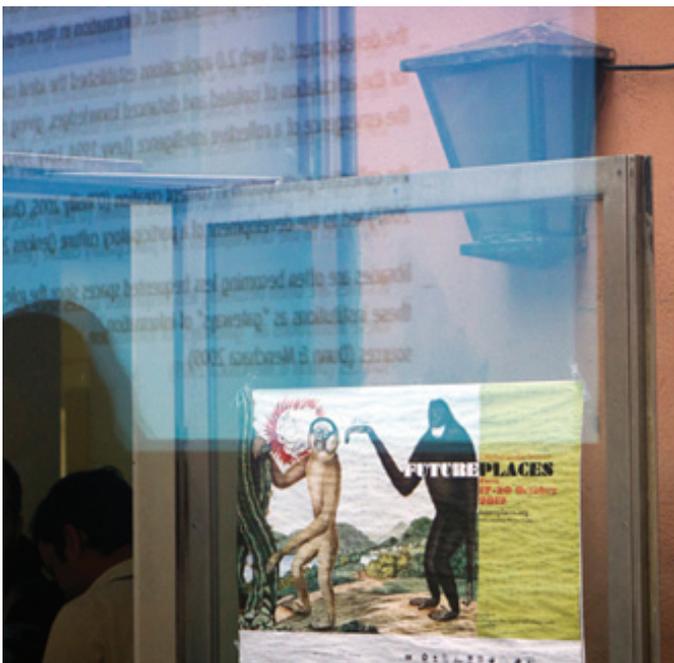


transatlantic concert - Tiago Videira and José Maria Lopes

The 2012 FUTUREPLACES festival kicked off this year with a second annual doctoral research symposium, on October 17. Students from the New University of Lisbon and the University of Porto presented a wide range of research, from innovations in current communication design theory to digital animation and virtual marionettes. Nuno Correia of UNL led the organization of the symposium. The event opened with an address from Heitor Alvelos of U. Porto, acknowledging the overall festival's five-year heritage and progress towards fostering constructive engagement among different communities.

Student presentations covered a broad range of topics, from site specificity in music to interactive television to virtual marionettes, and demonstrated the impressive diversity of the program's areas of study. Sixteen projects were presented, some developed by research teams and others by individuals. Teams also presented progress on sponsored research projects including INVITE and LIFEisGAME.

The presenters included Paulo Fontes of U. Porto, who discussed how guerilla marketing and social media may improve public engagement with science; Cláudia Lima, whose research looks at how public libraries are using Web



Heitor Alvelos Keynote



Luis Francisco Revilla Keynote

2.0 technologies to more effectively reach out to users; Fernando Nabais, whose project addresses theatrical robotics and social robotics development; and Pedro Bastos, who presented on the development of an optimized facial rigging system for key frame animation. A full list of students and projects may be found on the festival website [[www.futureplaces.org/program](http://www.futureplaces.org/program)].

The presentation series concluded with a keynote talk from Luis Francisco-Revilla of UT Austin's School of Information. Francisco-Revilla, a human-computer interaction specialist who has taught multiple short courses and seminars for the Digital Media program, spoke on human-centered computing and design to empower users to intensively engage with increasing amounts of online information.

## ■ Summer Institute Animators Win Prize



Dulce Gonçalves & Rodrigo Carvalho's film, "Spectrum Optical Disorder" won the animation category in Gardunha Fest [<http://gardunhafest.blogspot.com/>] at Fundão. The filmmakers' work was produced as a final project in Jeanne Stern's 2012 Summer Institute class Experimental Animation. Carvalho described the film as developing an "ambience of sci-fi, space and time abnormalities, incomprehensible events and governmental conspiracy." The film innovatively uses anaglyphic (red and cyan) 3D glasses to hide and reveal visual elements, creating an effect that underlies the overall theme of the film, drawing the audience into the narrative.

"Spectrum Optical Disorder" is about sightings of the strange and unusual, and authorities' attempts to explain these phenomena. Gonçalves explained the nature of the work: "This short film is aimed at interacting with the

audience in a way that the "Spectrum Optical Disorder" is experienced. In some way it is related to some educational films; the role of the narrator as to 'guide' the audience through the exposition of the 'disorder', as well as all the paranormal audiovisual documents that we have in our collective memories. We were trying to find distortions, strange events and uncanny things." The film is available for viewing online [<http://vimeo.com/45761118>]. This and other films from the summer course appeared recently in Austin in a public screening organized by Stern and the Austin School of Film. been pursuing his own research with the company, reports, "We have been collaborating for over a year now and this relationship has been mutually beneficial, in the sense that we have developed these new applications and methodologies and they have helped us with our data gathering and interpretation."

## ■ Call for Submissions: Blender PT Conference 2013

PROBlender, the Portuguese Blender Association, has issued a call for submissions for its 2013 conference, organized with the Catholic University of Porto. The conference, scheduled for April 6-7, is co-chaired by Pedro Bastos, a Digital Media doctoral program student at FEUP who specializes in facial rigging and animation research. The other co-chairs are Ricardo Pereira of Kohta Creative Studio and Rui Pereira, a specialist in computer engineering and alumnus of the University of Beira Interior. Blender is a popular 3D content creation tool that is free and open source. Primary conference topics include concept design, animation, modeling, rigging, interactive 3D, and more. The conference is accepting both theoretical and practical submissions until December 10, 2012.

The Blender PT conference is also holding a Game Contest, with the intention of stimulating the game and digital entertainment industries of Portugal. The competition includes 3 age categories, with different submission requirements: Game developers under 16 years of age are asked to submit game proposals, developers between 16-17 years old are asked to submit a game produced using Blender, and developers

of all ages are invited to submit games created by actually using Blender's game engine. The deadline for contest submissions is February 20 and winners will be announced April 6. For more information about the conference and contest, please see the website [<http://problender.pt/conf2013/>].



## ■ UTEN CORNER

### SAVE THE DATE! UTEN CONFERENCE 2012

***"Entrepreneurship and Technology Commercialization: building Portugal's Future"***

***- 17th December 2012, Lisbon (Lisbon, Portugal)***

What is the roadmap for Entrepreneurship and Technology Commercialization in Portugal? The 2012 UTEN Annual Conference gathers researchers and students, entrepreneurs and investors, industry and policy makers in order to discuss the future of Portugal in these two fields.

The 2012 edition of UTEN's Annual Conference will focus on four major themes: the entrepreneurial journey, internationalization, the entrepreneurial economy and technology transfer networks. This year's event will have a panel of excellence, including experts from both the United States of America and Europe.

Confirmed names for the event include entrepreneurs, such as Gary Hoover (Founder of Bookstop, Hoover's Inc., TravelFest, and Story Stores), Vinit Nijhawan (Tara Networks, Kinetic Computer, Payload Systems), Laura A. Schoppe president of Fuentek, LLC and elected one of the top 25 businesswomen in the Research Triangle

Park region of North Carolina as well as the Portuguese Helena Vieira (Bioalvo) and João Barros (Veniam). Higher Education representatives will include Boston University, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Texas at Austin, the IC2 Institute (UT Austin), the Institute for Innovation and Technology Transfer of Nuevo Leon, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (TEKES) and UNU MERIT. Top level representatives of networks such as RedEmprendia, the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) and ProTon Europe will also join the discussion about the power of technology transfer networks.

The UTEN Survey on Technology Transfer and Spin-offs will be a case for discussion of this last conference panel "The Power of Technology Transfer Networks".

Leonor Parreira, Secretary of State of Science Technology and Higher Education and Carlos Oliveira, Secretary of State of Entrepreneurship, Competitiveness and Innovation have already confirmed their availability to be part of the event.

Save this date in your agenda!

## ■ Innovation and Entrepreneurship as Key Economic Drivers

On 30 and 31 October 2012, the Pittsburgh Regional representatives were in Portugal to show how innovation and entrepreneurship can go hand in hand to become key economic drivers not only for the Pittsburgh Region, but for the United States in general. Their intention was also to show that innovation and entrepreneurship function as an international business attraction magnet for the region as global companies with innovative technologies are seeking global growth using soft landing in the Pittsburgh region.

Taking advantage of the presence in Portugal of Suzi Pegg, Vice President, International, Pittsburgh Regional Alliance (PRA), and DeWitt Peart, Executive Vice President, Economic Development, Allegheny Conference on Community Development; President, Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, an affiliate of the Allegheny Conference, UTEN Portugal and the Carnegie Mellon Portugal program organized a Strategic Session, entitled "Entrepreneurial and Regional Growth: Connect with Pittsburgh", with the PRA representatives as Keynote speakers.

The event was held at Universidade Nova de Lisboa, on 30 October 2012.

The guest speakers stressed that Entrepreneurship for the sake of entrepreneurship is no longer the answer to achieve regional growth, and that the future of regional growth that is tied to entrepreneurship comes from the efforts to connect regional participants and to further integrate larger and more established businesses all the way into the research activities of universities.

The Pittsburgh region was presented as being the home to many materials companies who are leaders in their field, while the University of Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania State University develop world leading research in materials science. Therefore, if the researchers are interacting with the appropriate business leaders, there will be more awareness on the research and market problems can be considered.

Targeting policy makers, public authorities, university management, technology transfer officers (TTOs), start-up companies and researchers, as well as the general public, the session was an opportunity to share new visions on how Entrepreneurship can be used to achieve economic and regional growth.

The event welcomed more than 35 participants.



Suzi Pegg



DeWitt Peart

## ■ Regional Innovation Policy (RIP 2012) Seminar and UTEN Portugal Executive Committee meeting

Dr. David Gibson, UTEN Austin, presented "The Key Role of the Research University in Sustainable Technology-Based Development: The Case of Austin, Texas 1980-2012" to the 7th International Seminar on Regional Innovation Policies, hosted by INESC TEC, October 11-13, 2012. The Chair of the Scientific Committee was Mário Rui Silva (Faculty of Economics of the University of Porto - FEP-UP) and included Engineer José Carlos Caldeira, Director at INESC Porto (the coordinating entity of INESC TEC).

The research seminar, which was held at the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto (FEUP-UP), addressed the importance of key regional actors in contributing to or inhibiting regional technology-

based development and the creation of high value jobs. According to Gibson, key participants in an effective regional innovation ecosystem include the research university and other educational institutions, entrepreneurs and start-up ventures as well as established businesses, city government, and support groups such as business angles, professional managers, IP attorneys, and technology incubators. INESC TEC was emphasized as a great example of incubating and linking cutting-edge university research --- professors and students --- with regional business for enhanced innovation. During the seminar, RIP 2012 attendees visited INESC TEC's Microgrids and Electric Vehicles Lab and heard an overview presentation by Prof. João Peças Lopes, Director at INESC Porto (see photo).



Sónia Pinto, Marta Catarino, José Manuel Mendonça, David Gibson, José Paulo Rainho, Gonçalo Amorim, Fátima Ramalho, Nuno Silva, Sofia Vairinho, Maria Oliveira

During his visit to INESC TEC, Dr. Gibson also attended a UTEN Executive Committee meeting that was chaired by UTEN Portugal Scientific Director, Professor José Mendonça and Maria Oliveira, UTEN Portugal Executive Director. Meeting participants included Fátima Ramalho and Sónia Pinto, from UTEN Portugal; Gonçalo Amorim, Audax, ISCTE-IUL; José Paulo Rainho, UATEC, Unidade de Transferência de Tecnologia da Universidade de Aveiro; Marta Catarino, TecMinho, UMinho; Nuno Silva, UL Inovar; and Sofia Vairinho, GAPI/CRIA, Divisão de Empreendedorismo e Transferência de Tecnologia da Universidade do Algarve. The Executive Committee discussed current UTEN programs and activities and made plans for UTEN's Annual Conference that is scheduled to be held in Lisbon, December 17, 2012.



## ■ Events

- **UTEN Conference 2012**  
17th December 2012, Lisbon

More information at:  
<http://utenportugal.org/>

- **17th International Conference on Tangible, Embedded and Embodied Interaction**  
February 2013, Barcelona

TEI 2013 is the seventh international conference dedicated to presenting the latest results in tangible, embedded, and embodied interaction. It will be held 10th to 13th February 2013 at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, in Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain.

The work presented at TEI addresses HCI issues, design, interactive art, user experience, tools and technologies, with a strong focus on how computing can bridge atoms and bits into cohesive interactive systems. 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.

TEI is sponsored by the ACM SIGCHI.

More information at:  
<http://tei-conf.org/13>

- **Blender PT Conference 2013 Promoting, Bridging and Sharing Digital 3D**  
April 2013, Porto

An event gathering researchers, professionals and freelancers to promote the open-source 3D digital tool Blender, debate about its real impact at an academic and professional level and build bridges between digital 3D communities in a knowledge sharing environment.

More information at:  
<http://www.problender.pt/en/conf2013>

- **1st VIsion Understanding and Machine Intelligence School**  
July 2013, Porto

Visum 2013 is the first VIsion Understanding and Machine intelligence (visum) School that targets to gather at Faculdade de Engenharia da Universidade do Porto, Portugal, Ph.D. candidates, Post-Doctoral scholars and researchers from academia and industry with research interests in computational vision and machine intelligence.

More information at:  
<http://www.fe.up.pt/visum/>

## ■ Ongoing Opportunities

- **Advanced Digital Media Mobility Awards**

Awards for Digital Media faculty and student travel to UT Austin.

More information at:  
<http://utaustinportugal.org/calls/dm-travel>.

### Useful links

[www.utaustinportugal.org](http://www.utaustinportugal.org)

[www.fct.mctes.pt](http://www.fct.mctes.pt)

[www.utexas.edu](http://www.utexas.edu)

[www.ic2.org](http://www.ic2.org)

[www.ati.utexas.edu](http://www.ati.utexas.edu)

[www.austin-chamber.org](http://www.austin-chamber.org)

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

[www.utenportugal.org](http://www.utenportugal.org)

We want to hear from you! Want to share your doubts and concerns about something you read? Want to see other topics featured in next month's newsletter? Want to contribute with articles or art? Please send all your feedback to [carolina.enes@fct.unl.pt](mailto:carolina.enes@fct.unl.pt).