What is the Digital Draw?

DRAWING ROOM

What is the Digital Draw?

Monday 18 April 2016

This seminar examines the challenges and opportunities posed by new digital processes and platforms to contemporary drawing. Bringing together key thinkers in the field, the day-long event will feature presentations and panel discussions exploring what 'the digital' means for drawing today. Contributors include: James Bridle, writer, artist and technologist; Douglas Dodds, Senior curator of V&A Digital Art Collection; Paul Flannery and Tim Steer, Opening Times co-founders; Rozsa Farkas, independent curator and founding director of Arcadia Missa; Professor Frederic Fol Leymarie, Professor of Computer Games and Entertainment at Goldsmiths College; Margarita Gluzberg, artist and reader in Contemporary Visual Production at the Royal College of Art; Charlotte Webb, artist and researcher; Lucy Sollitt, Creative Media Manager for Arts Council and an associate for Rhizome; Nimrod Vardi, curator and director of arebyte gallery. Chaired by Rachel Falconer, independent writer and curator. *What is the Digital Draw?* has been programmed by Laura Eldret, artist.

SCHEDULE

10.30am: *What is the Digital Draw?*

- **Introduction**
  Laura Eldret

- **Welcome and *What do we mean by drawing today?***
  Mary Doyle, Drawing Room co-director

- **What do we mean by digital art?**
  Rachel Falconer, independent writer and curator

- **Early Computer Art**
  Douglas Dodds, Senior curator of V&A Digital Art Collection
  Computer art of the 1960s and '70s is an important precursor to contemporary digital art practice. Dodds will provide a brief history, looking at how these digital pioneers worked directly with computer hardware and software to create increasingly sophisticated images. His talk will focus on artists such as Frieder Nake, Vera Molnar, Manfred Mohr, Harold Cohen, Paul Brown, Darrell Viner and Roman Verostko, all of whom used drawing machines to create their artworks. Followed by Q & A.

11.30am: Tea break

11.45am: *Digital Mediums and Methods*

- **Drawing the Network**
  James Bridle, writer, artist and technologist
  Bridle will talk about art and the internet, and 'The New Aesthetic'. He will discuss what it means to draw the contemporary world in all its complexity and occasional invisibility.

- **Drawing on and behind the screen**
  Paul Flannery and Tim Steer, Opening Times co-founders
  Addressing the open-ended nature of digital practice in relation to drawing – how digital production affords multiple and simultaneous kinds of media and what it might mean to 'draw' within a digital landscape that allows different and blurred medias.

- **Drawing with the Web**
  Charlotte Webb, artist and researcher
  Webb will discuss the generative potential of using the web as a medium and location for art practice. She will question what it means to 'draw' with data.

- **Text & Craft**
  Rozsa Farkas, independent curator and founding director of Arcadia Missa
  Rozsa will talk about artists after the internet as engaging with a form of recrafting and narrative-based practices. Looking at the way that representations of 'women's work', tied with text, is presented in some feminist online practices.

  Followed by Q & A panel discussion chaired by Rachel Falconer

1.30pm: Lunch

Available to view in the Outset Study:
Cognitive Bias: Visual thinking for a digital age. Plan chest display curated by Rachel Falconer
Flickr Nude or Noodle Descending a Staircase (2013), Charlotte Webb's web application.

2.30pm: *Humans and Networks*

- **Organisational Approaches to Art Online**
  Lucy Sollitt, Creative Media Manager for Arts Council and an associate for Rhizome
  How are organisations like the Drawing Room relating to networked art and audiences? Lucy will explore shifts between distribution and circulation in the ways arts organisations, including Arts Council England, are approaching programming online.

- **Perception, Computing and Robotics**
  Frederic Fol Leymarie, Professor of Computer Games and Entertainment at Goldsmiths College
  Frederic will discuss how studies in visual perception intersect with the practice of drawing, what insights and challenges this may provide, and how computing offers a playpen to test models and ideas, while robotics offer an extended reach to better understand human behaviours by the embodiment of such models.

- **Between Technology, the Body and Human Experience**
  Nimrod Vardi, curator and director of arebyte gallery
  Vardi will examine the relationship between technology, the body and human experience. Focusing on notions of freedom and how rules are constructed, tested and broken in internet art - all areas that he is exploring in arebyte curatorial theme for 2016 'Legal Aesthetics'.

  Followed by Q & A panel discussion chaired by Lucy Sollitt

4pm: Tea break

4.15pm: *Devolving Digital*

- **The Digital Analogue**
  Margarita Gluzberg, artist & reader in Contemporary Visual Production at the Royal College of Art
  By looking at contemporary and historical visual territories, this presentation questions the
  distinction between that which is defined as digital and that which is defined as analogue.

- **'Doing something again is not the same as still doing it' Drawing like before Digital after Digital?**
  Klaus Speidel, art and image theorist, art critic and curator
  Examines relationships between drawing and digital: how the digital aspect of the world has
  become a subject for drawing; how digital tools allow new drawing practices to emerge; how their
  regular use of digital tools may have transformed the drawings of artists who still (or again) draw
  traditionally and how everybody's constant use of digital tools may have transformed the ways the
  world looks at drawings not made with computers.

  Summary of proceedings by chair Rachel Falconer, and Q & A plenary panel discussion with all the
  day's contributors

5.30pm: Drinks

BIOGRAPHIES

James Bridle is a British writer, artist, publisher and technologist currently based in Athens, Greece. His
work covers the intersection of literature, culture and the network. His work has been shown in solo and
group shows worldwide, and he has been commissioned by organisations including the Victoria & Albert
Museum, The Southbank Centre, the Photographer's Gallery, Artangel, the Istanbul Design Biennial, the
Oslo Architecture Triennale and Guimaraes 2012 European City of Culture. He received an Honorary
Mention at the Prix Ars Electronica 2013, and in 2014 he was awarded the Excellence Award at the Japan
Media Arts Festival, the Graphics Award at the Design Museum Designs of the Year. He has been a
resident at Lighthouse (Brighton), the White Building (London) and Eyebeam (New York), and an adjunct
professor on the Interactive Telecommunications Programme at New York University. In 2011, he coined
the term 'New Aesthetic', and his ongoing research has been discussed worldwide. He has written for *the
Guardian*, *White Review*, *Frieze*, *WIRED*, *ICON*, *Domus*, *Cabinet*, *The Atlantic*, *New Statesman* and many
other publications, and wrote a regular column for the *Observer* on publishing and technology (2011-15).

Douglas Dodds is a Senior Curator in the V&A's Word & Image Department. He is responsible for
developing the Department's digital art collections, which range from early computer art to recent digital
works. Douglas also leads a project to digitise the Department's prints, drawings, paintings and
photograph collections.

Drawing Room is the only public, non-profit gallery in Europe dedicated to the investigation and
presentation of contemporary drawing. Initiated in 2002 by curators **Mary Doyle**, Kate Macfarlane and
Katharine Stout Drawing Room delivers an ambitious programme of solo, group and touring exhibitions
that include established, emerging and historical artists. The programme incorporates a wide range of

ideas and media, from the traditional to the experimental, expanding the parameters of international drawing practices. **Outset Study** is Drawing Room's free, open-access research hub comprising of a specialist contemporary drawing library and study room. Online resources are also available, including videos, essays, study lists, exhibition guides, artist directory and Outset Study library catalogue. Drawing Room strives to provide a unique resource for the promotion of drawing, its practice, theory and methodology – proving opportunities to examine, produce and research drawing today.

Laura Eldret is an artist based in London. Solo shows include *The Juicers 50/50* and *3| The Juicers 1/50* (2015) for Fig-2 at ICA, London; *Gotas* (2015), Annka Kultys Gallery, London; *Hey!* (2014); *Rough Play, South London Gallery* (2013); *Power Plays*, The Gallery, Bournemouth (2012); and a residency at Camden Arts Centre (2011). Group exhibitions include Ikon, Birmingham; Drawing Room, London; Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea; Crown Street Gallery, Darlington; Jerwood Project Space, London; Glasgow International; Musée des Beaux-arts de Nantes, France; BALTIC, Gateshead; and Five Hundred Dollars, London. She was also co-founder and co-director of CollectingLiveArt (2007–10). Eldret's disparate practice spans performances, video, drawing and textiles. She explores the production of materials and events as a process of social exchange, and the agency of art within a broad cultural sphere. She is currently developing a 'digital' commission with UP Projects and is part-time Communications Manager for Drawing Room. www.lauraeldret.com

Rachel Falconer is a curator, writer and active researcher with an interdisciplinary background in fine art, industrial design, gaming, broadcast media and viral advertising. As a curator her focus is on the critical intersections of process-led practices, including; Post-War contemporary art, neuroscience and AI, distributed information systems, speculative architecture, convergence technologies, software studies and networked culture. She has conceived and delivered multi-scale interdisciplinary exhibitions and alternative curatorial frameworks for organisations including Furtherfield, V&A, Barbican and the RCA, and has been invited to speak at and chair critical public debate in her field for institutions such as Tate, Goethe Institute, Mozilla Fest and the Nordic Culture Point. Her writing has been published across a number of platforms including Routledge, Dazed Digital, The White Review, and the Guardian.

Rózsa Zita Farkas is a curator and the founder of Arcadia Missa gallery and publisher. Rozsa has curated and co-curated various projects and exhibitions such as *Rehearsals in Instability* for Vienna's 'Curated By' festival (2015), *The Posthuman Era Became a Girl* at the South London Gallery (2014) and *Re-Materialising Feminism* project across the ICA and other spaces (2014 & 2015). She has recently curated *Ways of Living* at David Roberts Art Foundation, and *Finding the Body* symposium at Central Saint Martin's. She is associate lecturer for MA Fine Art, Chelsea College of Art and for BA Fine Art Dissertations at Camberwell College of Arts (both UAL).

Professor of Computing **Frederic Fol Leymarie** is co-director of the Post-Graduate program MSc Computer Games and Entertainment at Goldsmiths College, which he founded with William Latham in 2008. He previously created and led the MSc Arts Computing (2004–07). He received his B.Eng. in Electrical Engineering, with honors in aeronautics, from the University of Montreal, his M.Eng. from McGill University in Computer Vision and Biomedical imagery, and his Ph.D. from Brown University (in 3D shape representation and computational geometry). Frederic has initiated several 'shape-based' projects mixing the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Computing, including CyberCity and CyberMonument (late 1990s), Digital sculpting (with the Mid-Ocean Studio, 2002-5), and Digital archaeology (co-founder of the SHAPE lab. at Brown University, established in 1999). He has co-founded and directed two R&D projects: AIkon focused on sketching and portraiture, and AutoGraff focused on graffiti and calligraphy. www.gold.ac.uk/computing/staff/f-folleymarie/ www.folleymarie.com

Margarita Gluzberg is currently Reader in Contemporary Visual Production, Royal College of Art, London. Solo exhibitions include: *Consumystic*, Unseen Photo Fair, Amsterdam (2012); *Avenue des Gobelins*, Paradise Row, London (2011); *Phonographicon*, Zonca&Zonca, Milan (2010), *Captive Bird*

Society (Dublin Edition), Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin (2009). In 2014 Gluzberg showed a performance-installation piece *Rock On Bones* at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill. Recent group exhibitions include: *Double Take*, Drawing Room (2016); *House For Hanging*, WestminsterWaste.Biz, London (2015); and *Flights of Fancy*, Babylon Cinema Mitte, Berlin (2012). Ongoing project: *Captive Bird Society*, performance-installation at MAC/VAL, Musée d'art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne, Paris (2009); and Wysing Art and Music Festival (2014). Her practice ranges from painting and drawing, to performance, sound installation and slide projection.

Opening Times is a not-for-profit, digital art commissioning body and platform for artworks whose primary means of encounter is online. *Opening Times* commissions new digital and online artwork, research into digital and online art practice, online residencies, a guest-edited reading resource, website take-overs and a screening programme.

Lucy Sollitt works at Arts Council England, leading on creative media for the London Office. Lucy works across the arts, creative and technology sectors to develop projects aimed at advancing artistic practice and supporting arts organisations to utilise and explore the impact of digital technologies. Lucy also works as London Associate for Rhizome, a leading art/tech organisation dedicated to the creation, presentation, preservation, and critique of emerging artistic practices that engage with technology. She has previously worked at Tate Modern, the Royal Society of Arts, Design for London and is a Clore Fellow. Lucy has a BA in Combined Arts and an MPhil in continental Philosophy.

Klaus Speidel is an art and image theorist, an art-critic and curator of *Drawing after Digital* at XPO gallery, Paris (2016), Klaus wrote a Ph.D. in philosophy on the topic of visual narrative at Sorbonne University. He now directs an empirical research project at the Lab for Cognitive Research in Art History (CReA) at the University of Vienna, where he uses eye-tracking and interviews to better understand how narrative still images are perceived. Klaus writes on image theory, drawing and contemporary art in journals, catalogues and magazines. In 2015, he won the AICA France prize for art criticism.

Nimrod Vardi is the director and curator of arebyte gallery in Hackney Wick, East London. His practice revolves around new media and performance arts. arebyte gallery is a cross-disciplinary space working mainly in performance and new-media arts researching the relationship between the body and technology. arbyte gallery works with local and international artists on-site and online, promoting new and innovative means of engaging the public and facilitating participation.

Charlotte Webb is an artist and researcher studying for a practice-based PhD at Chelsea College of Art. Her doctoral research focuses on the effects of the internet on the artist's authorship and agency. As a member of Glasshouse Collective, she was recently commissioned by The Space to produce *The Work We Want* – a project examining how the web is transforming the world of work for the Southbank Centre's *Web We Want Festival*. She blogs about technology and culture for the *Huffington Post* and reviews networked art projects for Furtherfield Gallery. She has spoken at a number of international conferences, and was a spotlight speaker at Online Educa 2016, where she outsourced the delivery of her presentation to a friend in order to explore the notion of online 'authenticity'. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Screening Scholarship Media Festival, Pennsylvania and Block 336 Gallery, London.