

Thanks to Tom, Ros, Susan, and Beth for realizing tonight's event; and Tim Garson for supporting this vision.

It speaks well of this Project that our launch event has more the form of a question than a statement, and that the fruits of collaborations we might initiate tonight are at this moment so unknown.

I've been here just 3 1/2 years, and so I have a limited scope, but it does seem to be a great time to live in C'ville—where we have venues for the arts presenting both traditional & untraditional fare; this University and PVCC, where Beryl Solla is so active; the McGuffey Arts Center; the Bridge, the Garage, Wunderkammer, and Charlottesville Lady Arm Wrestlers.

I'm a composer, and I teach in the music dept. in the program in Composition and Computer Technology. My colleagues Judith, Matthew, and myself, and Dave Topper, the technical director of the VCCM, are all engaged with projects at the intersection of the arts and technology. We've developed outstanding collaborative relationships with folks in CS, Engineering, Psychology, and Architecture, among others. The first dissertation we passed was on physical modeling synthesis; and our doctoral students are deeply involved in areas such as net art, circuit-bending and musical robotics—inspired by Troy Rogers.

Music has tended to be a very mathy art: from Bach's fugues to serial music to computer music today. [Babbitt's dissertation at Princeton was sent to the Department of Mathematics—which also didn't know what to do with it. He wasn't awarded his doctorate till nearly 50 years later—post-Pulitzer.] It's very common—both in acoustic and electroacoustic music—to generate material, gesture and form, using genetic algorithms, Markov chains, cellular automata, Brownian motion, fractal equations, and so on. Our work very naturally acquaints us with DSP, the Fourier transform, information theory, the psychology of perception and cognition, Gibsonian affordances, &c. You probably can't find a composer who doesn't use the Fib. series somewhere, and most have magical thinking around it. And basic conceptual stuff, too—for example, the photoresistors in *Ping* attend to the amount of light that falls on them; but also to change in the amount of light—the derivative of light with respect to time [*i.e.*, calculus].

It's not surprising that one finds the same ideas and models in science as in music and the other arts, because this stuff is just in the air. Broadly speaking you might say that various propositions occurring at the turn of the last century—Einstein's relativity, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, Gödel's incompleteness theorem, Husserl, Ives, Satie, cubism and

Duchamp's *Fountain*, all speak to or shout at then-conventional notions of objective reality; they all underscore the critical importance of subject position; they set up postmodernism. And, of course, like memes run through everything else: theory, communication, literature, political ideology. They form our culture, our language, and the thought-forms that are given to us. The lines of influence from one discipline to another aren't always clear, and that's fine.

There's a lot of innovation and expansion to be had by mapping the world of one discipline to another. Personally, I'm a fan of rigorously developed misunderstandings of subjects it turns out you know little about—logically consistent systems based on false premises—because they can make for compelling art [not to mention most science to date]. But even, or 'especially', skilled, good-faith mappings made by people who know what they're talking about tend to reveal dissonances: terms in one system that don't line up just right with terms in another. And it is precisely *there*, through imagining and experimenting with the resolution of these dissonances, that the involved parties learn, refine, shift, evolve, grow.

I'd like to conclude by saying that my own collaborative work, whether acting as the artist or the scientist, has been an incredible amount of *fun*. We should absolutely build spaces in our community where *interdisciplinary teams* of people work together. In the context of institutions—and not incidentally, I think—they tend to support themselves; and I'm thinking of the MIT Media Lab, for instance. But even as ends in themselves, in terms of the manners of humanity they propose, such spaces, spaces such as the one we're standing in at this very moment, are utopian in the very best sense.