

Institution: University of Wolverhampton
Unit of Assessment: 34
Title of case study: CADRE research cluster - Digital Theory, Technology and Practice (DTTP): FROM ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF TECHNOLOGY
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>In the fast changing era of digital technology this cluster's research impacts upon audiences locally and internationally. Through experimental films and videos, interactive media and performances its outputs engage and challenges audiences in cinemas, galleries and on the worldwide web. As well as galvanizing public consciousness on climate change (Franny Armstrong) and engendering greater understanding of synaesthesia (Sam Moore), a significant dimension to the impact focuses upon the transition from analogue to digital technology. While the moving image and performance work (Guy Sherwin and Paul Harrison) also expands the boundaries of moving image technology in the spatialised context of galleries.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>DTTP brings together practioners and theorists who experiment with the technological, performative and interactive potential of the moving image. From analogue to digital, single screen to multi-screen, performance based or interactive, the cluster's practice-led research is all public facing. Disseminated through exhibition, campaigns, publications, DVD's, artifacts in public collections, performances, film festivals and screenings, television broadcasts and through a wide range of social media DTTP's research centres on moving image and digital technology, investigating the complexities of the move from analogue to digital technology.</p> <p>The early profile of the cluster's research was in analogue film and video. Guy Sherwin (Senior Lecturer, joined 1983) has been a practice-led researcher at Wolverhampton for over 30 years. He began his experimental filmmaking practice, single screen, installation and performances, in the 1970's when he set out to challenge the immediacy of mainstream moving image aesthetics, foregrounding the visual, aural and technologically mediated artefact. First presented in the 1970s, his performances bring live presence into film exhibition. Paul Harrison (Senior Lecturer, joined 1999) works in collaboration with John Wood. The duo began their studio-based work with <i>Board</i> (1993). Filmed and distributed on video, it defined their method of using technology and performance, of engendering the spectator's viewpoint through their use of space and duration: a minimalist aesthetic with a conceptualised humour. More recently digital formats have allowed their work to develop in other directions, such as the use of the long take. Sam Moore's (Senior Lecturer, joined 1999) research in representing the non-indexical through the animation-documentary explores the intensely subjective synaesthesia in collaboration with scientists worldwide. Her work changed direction when she began to use computer animation for her film <i>Success with Sweet Peas</i> (2003). The award-winning <i>Eyeful of Sound</i> (2010) was shown at numerous international film festivals, proving Moore a forerunner within the field of animated documentary.</p> <p>More recent cluster members have utilised digital media to disseminate research in differing contexts. Adam Kossoff (Reader in the Moving Image, joined 2004) originally made films for Channel 4 TV. In the 1990's he began investigating spatiality and technology in the moving image, making digital multi-screen works for the gallery. Like Moore and Armstrong, the experimental documentary forms a large part of his recent output and he recently completed a trilogy of experimental documentary films. Dew Harrison (Professor of Digital Media Art, joined 2007) has been a practice-led researcher since the mid-1990's. Her engagement with the virtual to real world activity, builds upon her early work which investigated conceptual art and 'hypermedial' technology. <i>Deconstructing Duchamp</i> (1998) interconnected 26 websites created by individual internationally sited artists and scientists specifically</p>

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for the piece. Franny Armstrong (Professor in Film, joined 2013) followed her film, *McLibel* (2005), on the Macdonald's libel case by directing *The Age of Stupid* (2009), a docudrama on climate change. Armstrong pioneered *Indie Screenings*, an online distribution program that allows exhibitors to pay according to their means. The Stupid team also covered the United Nations Climate Summit in Copenhagen in 2009, transmitting live internet programs.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. **Paul Harrison**, (2011) *Answers to Questions: John Wood and Paul Harrison*, Catalogue with text by Toby Camps, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, USA (The output is listed in REF 2).
2. **Guy Sherwin**, *Film in Space*, 14 Dec 2012 – 24 Feb 2013, curated exhibition, Camden Arts Centre, London, <http://www.camdenartscentre.org/whats-on/view/exh-25> (Listed in REF 2).
3. **Sam Moore**, *An Eyeful of Sound*, Wellcome Trust grant, 2008, animated-documentary, £30,000 (Listed in REF 2).
http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/stellent/groups/corporatesite/@msh_grants/documents/web_document/wtp052974.pdf
4. **Dew Harrison**, *Shift-Life* – Artefact, Arts Council England and Shrewsbury Museum Service funding, 2009, interactive installation, £27,184 (Listed in REF 2).
5. Peer-reviewed paper, selected and published in the Electronic Visualisation and the Arts 2010 conference proceedings, also available online.
(2010) HARRISON, D. Exploring Duchampian and Darwinian Ideas Through Interactive Means. In: *Proceedings for EVA*, London: British Computer Society <http://ewic.bcs.org/content/conWebDoc/36056>
6. **Adam Kossoff**, *Made in Wolverhampton*, 2012, film, <http://www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Heritage-Open-Days-2012-Programme-Brochure.pdf> (Listed in REF 2).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Though a recent member of the cluster, Armstrong reflects the overall research profile. Her film, *The Age of Stupid* (2009), utilised a technological perspective to convey its message on the future effects of climate change. New technology was also paramount in its online crowd funding and its distribution (raising over £900,000 overall): its history making global premier was in an eco-cinema in New York linked by satellite to 700 hundred cinemas in over 63 countries: "World's Largest Film Premiere Spanning Six Continents, More than 50 Countries and Uniting Nearly One Million People Worldwide for Climate Change Reform... World Leaders and Newsmakers Join Global Cinema Audiences for Satellite Premiere of Eco-Doc and Climate Change Panel During Climate Week NYC" (Reuters, 17 September, 2009). Another documentary practitioner, Moore's *An Eyeful of Sound* (2010) proved a forerunner in the field of animated documentary; "Moore's variety of animation... results in a film that is truly a sensual extravaganza and at the same time, an inquiry into the limitations of everyday human observation." (*Huffington Post*, June 2010). Screened at multiple festivals to a range of audiences around the world, it gained international awards (notably Nature Journal Scientific Merit Award at the Imagine Science Festival, New York, Scinema Science Film Festival, Australia, 2010) and has also been used as an educational tool in the sciences. Moore has subsequently been invited to workshop with animators and scientists in the USA and Australia.

In the field of experimental documentary, Kossoff's trilogy of films extends Walter Benjamin's theoretical ideas into practice, exploring how technology impacts on our mapping of the urban. Filmed on a mobile phone, due to its specific materiality, *Moscow Diary* (2010), screened internationally to large audiences (200 per screening), with engaged audience discussions and was programmed with Jean-Luc Godard's *Soft and Hard* at Festival International du Documentaire (FID) Marseilles.

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“Kossoff’s work is a kind of social and technological experiment that his subject and muse might have appreciated.” (Phillip Cartelli, Film International, September 2011). *Made in Wolverhampton* (2011), nominated for Time Out Best City Film at the Open City London Documentary Festival, 2012, screened internationally and to local and regional audiences, including Heritage Open Days by the Wolverhampton Art Gallery, 2012, and MakeShift, 2012, a community based event at the Lighthouse, Wolverhampton.

Negotiating the transition from analogue to digital, Sherwin’s experimental and performance-based work recently underwent a revival: “Sherwin’s continued commitment to exploring the rendering of imagery on film and the process involved... bestows great value to his work in the field” (*Aesthetica Magazine*, October 2011). Sherwin was invited to curate a survey of Expanded Cinema, *Film in Space* for the Camden Arts Centre, London (receiving 14,311 visitors, December 2012-February 2013). Focusing on the machinery of filmmaking, it was widely reviewed, including *Art Monthly* (January, 2013) and *Frieze* (March, 2013). His work has also been compiled and published by LUX; *Optical Sound Films 1971-2007* (2008) was published with a book, *Messages 1981-84* in 2011. Sherwin is regularly invited to run screening workshops, such as Melbourne International Film Festival, 2008 and WORM, Rotterdam 2011.

With collaborator John Wood, Paul Harrison has exhibited their moving image performance videos in over 40 national and international exhibitions since January 2008. Their recent US tour *Answers to Questions*, confirmed their world international status within the art community and the wider public: “Basic physics and gravity act as the protagonists in these videos... Considering themselves to be sculptors who use video as a medium to document their work, the artists characteristically use uncomplicated staging and filming techniques.” (*Art Daily*, February, 2012). Funding from the Arts Council enabled them to produce more ambitious work such as *Night and Day* (2008). The work has been shown internationally and has entered the permanent collections of Frac, Ile de France and Foundation de la Vache Qui Rit. Published work includes: *Nothing Special* a boxed DVD publication documenting works produced between 1993-2011, with an interview produced by Tate, London.

Exploring the Darwinian evolution of biological life forms with interactive digital technology, and highlighting issues around climate change, Dew Harrison (collaborating with Sam Moore, and two programmers) created a real world interface for artificial life within a fictional ecosystem. Part of the Natural History Museum’s international celebrations of The Charles Darwin bicentenary in 2009, ‘Darwin200’, *Shift-Life* (2009) was made for the Shift-Time festival of ideas (with over 100,000 footfall from national and international visitors) in Shrewsbury, Darwin’s birthplace, allowing people to affect the behaviour of the creatures in the ecosystem by directly changing the environmental conditions.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)**Guy Sherwin:**

- Review *Film in Space*, in *Frieze*, by Agnieszka Gratza, March, 2013, discussing how Sherwin foregrounds and uses moving image technology in the gallery space.

<http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/film-in-space/>

- Review in *This is Tomorrow, Contemporary Art Magazine*, by Karl Musson, (no date) outlining Sherwin’s use of the analogic form of the moving image.

<http://www.thisistomorrow.info/viewArticle.aspx?artId=1986>

Paul Harrison:

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- Review in *Art Daily* discussing Harrison's approach to video and performance, February, 2012
<http://www.gg-art.com/news/newsread/artnews89940.html>

- Blog; *Writer on Art*, (no date) commissioned by von Bartha Gallery on John Wood & Paul Harrison: There or Thereabouts, 2009
<http://writeronart.com/art/john-wood-paul-harrison-there-or-thereabouts-2009/>

Sam Moore: "Samantha Moore's film *An Eyeful of Sound* is an important, transformative work... For the past 300 years, numerous scientists, artists, and writers have tried, using their fields' unique and specific media, to explain what synesthesia is and show it. However, very few have been successful and audiences worldwide have remained eager for visual information. Fortunately for us, Moore's unique and sensitive combination of skills in art, understanding of neuroscience, and cutting edge work using current technology have given an international audience a very fine understanding of what a synesthete sees. Her film is timely, pioneering, and an extremely important contribution to the ongoing research in the field of synesthesia." Carol Steen, Founder/Board Member American Synesthesia Association, rednote2@gmail.com

- Blog from the British Medical Association, 26, January, 2010, discussing how Moore's film reveals the experience of synaesthesia to a lay person.
<http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2010/01/26/sally-carter-and-birte-twisselmann-imagining-synaesthesia/>

Adam Kossoff:

- Review by Phillip Cartelli in *Film International*, September 2011, writing about how *Moscow Diary* follows Walter Benjamin's concerns around moving image technology.
<http://filmint.nu/?p=2942>

- "In 2012 we screened 'Made in Wolverhampton' at St. Andrew's Church, Wolverhampton as part of Heritage Open Days. The screening was attended by around 60 people, many of whom were newcomers to contemporary art... In the audience discussion following the film several members of the audience spoke of how the film had changed their perspective on Wolverhampton. And the church rector later told me how people had subsequently discussed the film with him... giving them a new understanding of the city." Curatorial and Programme Manager, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Marguerite.Nugent@wolverhampton.gov.uk,

Dew Harrison:

- *Shift-Life DVD* of the installation with audience responses,
"Shift-Life proved to be a very popular installation with many visitors to Wolverhampton Art Gallery, especially families and also young people which we normally found hard to attract to the gallery. Everyday I witnessed different people interacting with the digital composition which was presented in a fun and light-hearted way through the use of a sandpit, watering cans and tiny creatures that could be spotted dancing around the area. The merging of the virtual and the real world really captivated our audiences as they tried to fathom what was real and what was 'magic' as some younger participants described it. Set in a white cube space, we took a risk as previously this work had been displayed at festivals and outdoor events, but it paid off acting as a way of attracting visitors who were unsure of getting involved to experiment and give it a go." - Email from Helen Oliver, curator at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, 2009, helen.oliver@birminghammuseums.org.uk