UT Austin | Portugal
INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATORY FOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, CoLab

DIGITAL BITS

Future Places Festival to Start Conversations in Porto

Intellectual property is one of the most important and divisive issues for digital-media practitioners and researchers today, and the Digital Media Program will offer a special opportunity to explore them this month. The annual Future Places Digital Media Festival will take place again in Porto this year from October 19-22, with esteemed US copyright attorney Elizabeth Stark giving the keynote address. The festival will also include a exhibition of student work, panel discussion, and educational workshops.

Elizabeth Stark is a lecturer at Stanford Law School and currently a visiting fellow at the Yale Information Society Project. Through projects like the "Ideas for a Better Internet" program and Open Video Alliance, she has advanced the cause of equitable copyright policies and digital participation. She will keynote a doctoral symposium organized by UNL professor Nuno Correia on Friday, which will feature the work of the digital media PhD students from both U.Porto and UNL. On Saturday afternoon she will be joined by Peter Sunde, a co-founder of The Pirate Bay, a notorious BitTorrent tracker, in a discussion titled "The Politics of Piracy," which will focus on the development, purpose and future of Pirate Bay.

Another panel, featuring Sérgio Branco of Fundação Getulio Vargas Law School; Teresa Nobre of Creative Commons Portugal; and Gregg Perry of the Digital Media Management program at St. Edward's University, Austin, will address what trends in intellectual property practices mean for artists. The panel, "Copyright, Creativity, and Change," will include a discussion of content industries' emerging strategies and developing models of free culture and open source. Professor Sharon Strover of UT Austin will moderate. Biographical sketches of the presenters are available at the Future Places website.

As in past years, Future Places will offer workshops in parallel to the other festival events. This year, two of the workshop instructors will be coming from Austin. Brett Caraway, a lecturer in UT's Radio-TV-Film department, will be offering "3D Modeling: an Introduction to Blender." The recent PhD graduate will be offering this for participants with little experience using 3D modeling software. In addition, Austin School of Film instructor Jeanne Stern will be returning to Porto for the workshop "Experimental Animation: Ghosts of Spaces," where participants will learn how to integrate tactile methods like cut paper and hand-drawn assets into digital animation. In addition to the formal workshops, this year Future Places will also be facilitating Citizen Labs, no-cost workshops developed by participants. Citizen Lab titles include "Mobile, Digital, Cooperative : radiate yourself," "Will you marry us," and "Stories of Chairs." For registration and more information about the workshops, please visit the Future Places website.

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, is organzing a one-day conference next month in Lisbon that will examine these in detail.

The Conferencia Diversidade Digital or Digital Diversity Conference will take place at UNL's FSCH campus November 4. It will feature research presentations from members of the Digital Inclusion research project, which is funded though the Digital Media program. Ponte is the principal investigator of the Digital Inclusion project, and her co-PIs Jozé Azevedo of U.Porto and Joseph Straubhaar of UT Austin will join her to moderate a panel and present 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. Registration for the conference is open at the Digital Inclusion project site, and information in English is available here.

U.Frame Festival Returns to Porto

Film and video students may dream of one day having their projects screened at major festivals like Sundance or Cannes, but the festival

experience is not out of reach for student filmmakers. This year, the U.Frame International Academic Video Festival will be held in Porto from October 6 to 8.

In its fourth year, the U.Frame festival alternates between Porto and La Coruña, Galicia. This year, three students and two alumni from UT Austin had projects accepted into the festival and three will be traveling to Porto to attend the festival. In addition, three students from U.Porto will be screening work at the festival. In addition, three students from U.Porto will be screening work at the festival. For more information about U.Frame, please visit http://uframe.org/.

PhD Visitors Scout UT Austin on Exploratory Visit

The Digital Media Program continues to coordinate exploratory visits by PhD students from Portugal, and September saw a raft of visitors come through. Five Digital Media doctoral program students from UNL Andreia Teles Vieira, Dora Santos Silva, Luís Fernandes, Bruno Nobre and André Correia made an exploratory visit to the UT campus last month. During exploratory visits, PhD students in the Digital Media Program meet with UT faculty members and graduate students to see how a stay in Austin might advance their research.

These students met with faculty working in a variety of fields including Radio-TV-Film professors Kathleen Tyner, Joseph Straubhaar, film scholar Tom Schatz, and UT Austin-Portugal Digital Media Director Sharon Strover. In addition, students met with Rosental Alves of the School of Journalism, Luis Francisco-Revilla of the School of Information, Paul Resta from the College of Education, and Dan Olsen of the Department of Art and Art History.

In addition to these students, Alcimar Queiroz will be joining the Telecommunications and Information Policy Institute as a visiting researcher this fall. Queiroz has attended each iteration of the Gary Chapman School on Digital Transformation, and he will be assisting on various topics related to media and social change efforts globally.

ZON Awards Now Accepting Submissions

The ZON Creativity in Multimedia Awards is now accepting submissions in the areas of short film, digital animation, and multimedia content and applications for the 2011 prize. This prestigious contest awards the largest monetary prizes for a multidisciplinary competition. In 2010, three of the ten finalists were affiliated with the UT Austin | Portugal Digital Media Program. The winner of the short film category, Pedro Resende interned in Austin at 501 Post and returned to Austin to shoot what became the winning film, "Talvez."

The ZON Awards competition is open to residents of Portugal and Portuguese nationals. To apply for this year's competition, visit the ZON website, and submit the online application. Applicants then must mail or hand-deliver their projects to ZON on a CD, DVD, or Blu-Ray disc. The deadline for applications is November 6, 2011.

The ZON intensive summer labs at UT have received much praise from its students over the past few years, and participants have gone on to be finalists in the ZON Awards. This month will see a special event providing a public evaluation of the program, which offered intensive screenwriting and animation labs at UT Austin. The event takes place at 4:30pm October 20 at the Auditório Agostinho da Silva in Lisbon.

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 Belieavable Agents, " which they submitted to the AAMAS2012 conference.

Next month, 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.

UT-Austin | Portugal Digital Media Program
University of Texas at Austin
Department of Radio-TV-Film
1 University Station A0800
Austin, TX 78712-0108
www.utaustinportugal.org