

## **Detailed description and its relationship to the conference theme:**

### **Synaptic Leaps: The Interchange of Energies in Contemporary Printmaking**

Chair: Deborah Cornell, Boston University

Panelists: Sue Gollifer, University of Brighton, UK

April Katz, Iowa State University

Energy and information exchange have an intrinsic relationship. In the brain, information flows between neurons across a synapse. New modes of printmaking bridge the former gap between traditional and innovative approaches in many ways. After several decades of experimentation and development, new procedures and associations have created fusions among print media that are conditional and less definitive. Process no longer defines outcome, and outcome is influenced by many external factors and influences.

As the art environment expands - primarily in the area of communication and multimedia - attention has gathered around hybrid forms. Within printmaking, this expansion supports connections among mixed practices - touching, transforming, and even strengthening the familiar ones. At the same time, new imaging processes and conversations affect ways of thinking about making, and invite new participation in the print.

This “synaptic jump” can be observed in several arenas of activity, and this panel will consider two of them. First, with the availability of new technologies such as 3D printing and laser technology, the joining of digital means and tactile materials has broadened the scope of the print. This new hybridity poses the questions of pixels transforming to pigment, the brink where technology begins to transform nature, and what happens when experience is expressed in ones/zeroes.

The second area of transformation is in multi-disciplinary exchanges. Much energy has gathered in scientific, literary, and acoustic disciplines that supports new connection, inspirations, and discoveries.

This panel examines the current landscape of digitally-informed crossover and fusion forms in print facture, and some of the ramifications of their use; what has changed, what has been relinquished and what gained, what redefined, and how new techniques further the particular aesthetic of the print and its matrix.

Contributors include Sue Gollifer and April Katz. Gollifer is Principal Lecturer in Fine Art and the Course Leader for the MA in Digital Media Arts at the University of Brighton. Her own work is rooted in printmaking and her focus is on the impact of new technology within the practice of Fine Art. She is the President of the International Symposium of Electronic Arts, an organization that yearly presents cutting-edge electronically-generated works from around the world. She has curated (and shown work in) many exhibitions world-wide that have included traditional, technological, electronic and hybrid work. She will offer an overview of, and her observations on, the current state of digital forms in printmaking and on the influence of fusion forms.

April Katz is an accomplished printmaker, a Professor at Iowa State University, with an already versatile practice. Her most recent innovations have been around the development of a new skill set using computer-controlled devices such as CDC routers and laser cutters – generating tactile platemaking through her digital files. Currently engaged in creating a handbook for artists from her findings, she will present her observations on the usage of these types of devices, on

their effect on content, idea, and practice, and how they transform her notion of studio process – pacing, drawing, and redefining the digital mark and matrix.

Deborah Cornell has worked in digital media for over 15 years, including multi-disciplinary collaborations. She will present the work of contemporary trans-media printmakers including artists who historically work in multi-media such as Lesley Dill and Kiki Smith. She will also include recent practitioners such as Paul Catanese, author of the new book *Post-Digital Printmaking: Traditional, CNC, and Hybrid*, and Marilene Oliver, a British printmaker who works with technologies of the MRI and CT scanner, presenting issues of digitizing the body and space/flatness. Also included will be artists working across disciplines such as Francesca Samsel, an Assistant Research Professor at the University of Texas at El Paso, whose work balances art and science through collaborations with scientists and computer visualization specialists, and Susan Aldworth, Senior Research Associate at Swansea Metropolitan University and Artist in Residence at the Institute of Neuroscience at Newcastle University.

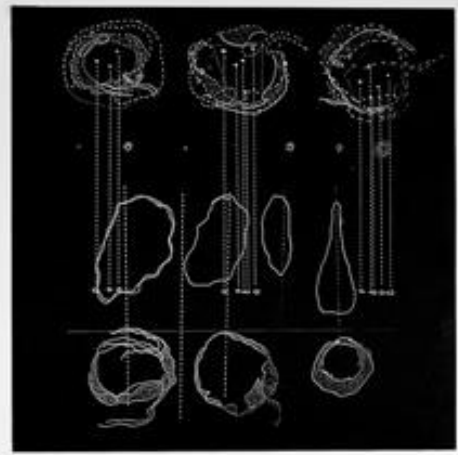
Consideration of the ways experience can be distilled in computational space, the transformative relationship of materials to idea through digital means, and the translational aspects of multi-disciplinary work is an exciting set of developments. This panel will investigate the vigorous exchanges offered by the contemporary hybridization of the forms of the print.



Lesley Dill, 3D lithograph



Marilene Oliver Laser-cut acrylic print



Paul Catanese Digital relief print



Susan Aldworth Etching

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