

Dejan Grba

RESEARCH STATEMENT

Interests and Methodology

My research is motivated by heterogeneous artistic, scientific and cultural phenomena relating to the conceptual, cognitive, technological, poetic and political aspects of visual arts, film, new media art and digital culture. I am especially interested in generative and consequential qualities of art and human creativity in general, including the constitution, representation and interpretation of the individual notion of reality in the symbolic and narrative structures. These interests have been informed by the insights in physics, biology, evolutionary and cognitive sciences.

My research methodology is based on empirical assessment, reiterative (self)critical thinking and awareness for human fallacies and biases which manifest in the arts, sciences, technology and everyday life.

Projects

My current research integrates three lines of activities which can be formalized as independent plans for grant project proposals.

1. Generative Art Book

With expertise in a range of new media art disciplines, I have been focusing my theoretical work on the critical exploration of generative art, and extending it into a book on generative art in collaboration with Vladimir Todorović, Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Australia in Perth.

We study generativity in the arts, review different concepts of generative art in the existing literature, and address generative practices in various areas of new media art such as visualization/imaging, animation, sound art, cinema, gaming, interactivity, performance, bio art, postdigital/postmedia art, design and architecture. We investigate the specific features of generative methodologies such as bricolage, intentionality, narrativity, creative discovery, emergence/unpredictability, epistemological value, technological entanglement, cultural relevance and museological status. Looking at the insights, implications, poetic, cognitive and ethical aspects of generative art, we discuss the ways in which it influences and changes contemporary art, culture and human lives. The book proposal is scheduled for fall 2019.

2. New Media Art Research Platform

This is a project for the infrastructure and methodology to create, maintain and evolve a robust, comprehensive, open-access online platform which will serve as an artistic, theoretical, teaching and learning tool in new media art.

The kernel of the platform is a database that I have been curating for my art production, research, writing and teaching. It includes an extensive set of interrelated media-rich material including the artists and art projects, institutions, several types of references (bibliography, filmography, web links, and chronology) and contextual data. It maps all main areas of new media art: computer art pioneers, imaging/visualization, infographics, sound art, animation, film, video, installation, interactivity, performance, generative art, gaming, Internet art, activism, bio art, design, architecture and postdigital art.

The project will develop a general methodology, and design the algorithms for contributing, curating, updating, expanding, optimizing and upgrading the platform contents and functionality online and offline. It will provide long-term flexibility, versatility and anticipation which will overcome the shortcomings of the existing, semi-functional or failed/expired databases on new media and digital art.

3. Transdisciplinary New Media Art Education and Academia

Focusing on the 4C principal skills—creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication—I am exploring the methodologies for diversifying transdisciplinary approach to teaching, practicing and academic work in new media art. I am looking for the comprehensive ways to coordinate the specific abilities of the artists, scientists, technologists, entrepreneurs and professionals from other fields into balanced, unbiased, engaged and effective involvement with new media art curricula, academic work, research projects, production and public outreach.

This research is motivated by the synergetic potential of well-defined and structured multidisciplinary collaboration, and by the fact that individual human creativity and expression get improved and empowered by the collective tools for applying and extending rationality.