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The 2008 Research Assessment Exercise placed Goldsmiths 9th in the UK for the percentage of ‘world-leading’ research (4*). www.gold.ac.uk/rae
“Technology is anything that wasn’t around when you were born”, Alan Kay observed some twenty years ago. What we mean by technology is deeply bound up with the cultures through which we experience it, not least experience it over time and place and generations. Those cultures are also fundamental to the ways in which we engage with technologies, imbue them with meaning, and embed them in our lives.

That is a good starting point for the latest report on some of the striking research that is undertaken at Goldsmiths. Last year we emphasised the fact that our research makes a difference. At a time when governments, under pressure of economic and financial crisis, are asking about the benefits of their investment in university research, the fact that our research really does make a difference is something of which we are proud. We need, however, to lift the eyes of government away from science, engineering and medicine alone and direct them to the breadth of all disciplines. The arts, humanities and social sciences in which Goldsmiths is so strong make very major contributions to the economy, society, public policy and cultural experience. In times of hardship all of those become even more important.

If there is a theme for the reports that follow, it may be that technology is too important to be left to technologists. Or perhaps it is too important to be left to those who believe fervently in what has come to be called ‘technology transfer’? Governments often see new technologies as the key to innovation and economic growth, yet we now understand that the knowledge that matters in a knowledge economy is much more than is bound up in new technologies. I’d go further and say that this belief in the dominant economic importance of new technologies may actually limit our capacity to be creative and to innovate.

You only have to read the pages of this report, to engage briefly with some of the exciting projects within it, to appreciate that some of the most exciting questions about technology derive less from how we learn to use it and more from how we conceive of what it might do. That is as true of the remarkable work in Computing at Goldsmiths as it is of the other departments whose work is reported here. The role of human creativity in technological innovation has been misunderstood: it doesn’t so much start the process of innovation, as engage with it late in the day to find uses for that technology that its progenitors rarely intended.

In their daily lives people have seized on digital communications technologies to reshape their own cultures, fashion new senses of privacy and intimacy, and find new ways of living urban space that the manufacturers of mobile phones or the providers of digital content could not have imagined. It is human creativity that enables technology to make a real impact, and the projects that follow give us a glimpse of that. To those who think that Goldsmiths is about arts, culture and social analysis and therefore far from the concerns of technology, I say read the pages of this publication. You’ll understand, I hope, that without research strengths such as those at Goldsmiths, technology would not only be little understood, it would be extremely limited. Through the imagination and interdisciplinarity of the kind we see at Goldsmiths, technology takes on new meanings and new potential.

This publication invites us to think in much more complex ways of the potential as well as the meanings of technology, and to abandon for ever the linearity of ‘technology transfer’. See what you think.

Professor Geoffrey Crossick
Warden
The Interaction Research Studio joined the Department of Design at Goldsmiths at the beginning of 2006 and since then has been exploring designs of computational systems for everyday life which has led to a number of exciting and pioneering prototypes being produced.

The practice-based research which takes place at the studio integrates design-led research methods with work on embedded and ubiquitous technologies to produce prototype products embodying new concepts for interaction.

Researchers at the studio have produced prototype systems for a number of projects which are now being tested with volunteers in their everyday lives. In addition, the group regularly publishes research articles and makes them available on their website and they are starting new projects with industry as well as with academic partners.

Many designs have been born out of the Interaction Research Studio including a Drift Table which enables people to slowly float over the British countryside from their own sitting room, a tablecloth which draws attention to the flow of objects over a surface in the home by signalling how long things have been left upon it, and a key table which gets a sense of people’s emotions from the way they put their belongings onto it. The team pursue research through the design of novel computational systems and devices, and their long-term research agenda is embodied in the form of multiple projects which explore particular topics and situations.

Projects are undertaken with support from industry and governmental funding councils, and over the past few years they have worked on projects with France Telecom, Hewlett Packard, Intel and IBM, as well as with support from councils such as the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, Art and Humanities Research Council and the EU.

Through their work, they have developed expertise in areas ranging from design-led user studies to using wireless sensor and microprocessor technologies. Their core concern, however, is with designing technologies to reflect – and help understand – what it means to be human. In particular, concern with the values and possibilities embodied by technologies designed for life outside the workplace.

How can we move beyond narrow concerns for utility and usability in designing for our everyday lives? What new sorts of values might technology support? What opportunities exist in between known genres such as tools, games and art? Can we design systems that people can appropriate for themselves?

It is through aiming to answer these questions, such products have been created as The Plane Tracker – which feeds transponder data from passing aircraft into the home – and The Local Barometer which culls want-ads, news items, or images from the web into people’s living spaces.

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Music / Computing

Audiovisual Cognition

Dr Mick Grierson is an experimental artist specialising in real-time interactive audiovisual research, with specific focus on cognition and perception. Based in both the Departments of Computing and Music, he works in film, music, and software development, both inside and outside industry, designing, developing and producing new approaches to creating audiovisual experience.

His Audiovisual Cognition research uses EEG (electro-encephalography) to gather data and information about how subjects respond to audio, visual and combined audiovisual stimuli.

The stimuli take the form of experimental abstract animations and sound compositions which are designed to evoke specific responses – Event Related Potentials (ERPs). Certain types of brain signals appear to reliably accompany specific types of visual and auditory stimuli with a very small degree of variance across subjects. Furthermore, there is evidence that these signals are cognition-related.

In order to demonstrate this hypothesis, he built a brain computer interface for the control of a musical instrument which works in close to real-time. The work is based on well-researched principles, but none of these principles have before been effectively applied to the audiovisual arts.

This process allows the stimulus design to adapt to the subject in real-time, and can be used to create interactive/adaptive audiovisual stimuli (including adaptive psychological tests). It can also be thought of as a form of experimental audiovisual composition.

The three main objectives of the project are to explore combinations of different Audio, Visual and Audiovisual material with a variety of subjects; to create more reliable methods for interrelating subject response with audio, visual and audiovisual stimulus, and to improve ERP signal detection methods.

The results of this research have a high degree of interdisciplinary applicability, and have already been used to create a freely available visual music interface for the deaf and hard of hearing.

In addition, brain computer interface technology could vastly improve the quality of life of those with limited mobility. Beyond this, the research has high potential impact on the field of experimental audiovisual art, composition and technology.

As such, this research is a mixture of scientific inquiry and arts practice that actively contributes to a number of research fields, benefiting the academic community, industry, and the public at large.

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This project researched the use of cyber technology in writing for performance. The 'Don Juan. Who?' production used technology in the service of generating live theatre rather than to explore cyberspace as a theatrical environment.

Conceived, directed and produced by Anna Furse, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Drama, with her company Athletes of the Heart, the project was also an innovative co-production with the renowned Slovene laboratory theatre Mladinsko Gledališče in Ljubljana.

From the outset Furse wished to explore the intimacy of cyberspace as a tool for generating textual material on the subject of contemporary gender relationships. With a grant from the British Council, she commissioned a ‘cyberstudio’ from a Slovene designer. This assembled various programmes into one environment in which the geographically dispersed company of performers, dramaturg, translator and director could write together live, online, anonymously, on the theme. The Don Juan archetype and all its cultural artefacts – plays, poems, operas, films – were used as a collective reference point. The company worked together in weekly writing sessions for eighteen months. The 500-page result was then whittled down to a 30-page draft scenario that was taken into an extensive rehearsal period in Ljubljana in 2007. A company of seven performers then made ‘physical/textual’ theatre from this material, working as an ensemble and as a chorus in a production that employed 1000 feather pillows as its principal scenographic device.

The project premiered at the Mladinsko theatre in July 2007, receiving very favourable reviews and national TV coverage. The piece then previewed in London at the Shunt Vaults in November 2007. Further performances took place in Ljubljana in 2008, and the production premiered in London at Riverside Studios with the FeEast festival 2008. This version, stretched to the widths of a large stage, included the participation of a chorus of performing extras and technicians from Goldsmiths’ Department of Drama. The production company as a whole – totalling 22 members – also included Visiting Tutors to the Department.

The UK contribution to the project was funded by the British Council, the British Academy, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Arts Council England and the Victoria Halls Foundation. The Slovene contribution was from this theatre’s annual City and Ministry of Culture budget.

Furse continues to develop and disseminate the outcomes of this project, running workshops in other HE colleges and one at Goldsmiths working with students on the new MFA in Art Writing. She will be conducting a master class workshop with Soho Theatre writers in May and is aiming to collaborate with this theatre and Dr Marian Ursu in the Department of Computing at Goldsmiths for further development of the cyber studio’s design. This would build a more elaborate, aesthetically appropriate and user friendly version for the potential use of the global performance making community.

The sui generis writing that the cyberstudio permits is only one fascinating use of such a potential resource. As theatre and performance increasingly include geographically dispersed collaborators (such as graduates from the MA in Performances Making), such a resource has enormous potential benefit. Methuen books is currently in discussion with Furse about publishing the text.
Enhancing human performance and brain function, maintaining youthful abilities into later life, or remaining healthy and resilient in the face of stress are all preoccupations of the new millennium.

Some popular options include smart drugs, brain training exercises with home computers, diverse practices of alternative and complimentary medicine such as Reiki or visualisation, and so on. At Goldsmiths in the Department of Psychology Professor John Gruzelier is investigating such claims with rigorous scientific studies, with validation at the heart of his studies.

Brain wave training is one such avenue of investigation. In the late 1960s biofeedback was discovered which involved learning to self-regulate one’s physiology, such as blood pressure or heart rate, by having the ongoing level of function fed back in real time. The pitch of a tone may go up and down contingent on the increase or decrease in blood pressure or heart rate. One learns to adjust one’s physiology and eventually gain control of it. The same could be done with brain wave activity, as was demonstrated in epilepsy to reduce seizures. However, while biofeedback with peripheral physiology entered mainstream clinical practice, brain wave training was largely abandoned in the 1970s. Gruzelier’s research team has contributed to putting brain wave training, or neurofeedback as it is now called, centre stage in contemporary science, and a European scientific society has also been established to help further the research (www.applied-neuroscience.org).

In keeping with Goldsmiths’ reputation for creativity and innovation, and his own personal interests, he has chosen a particular focus on enhancing creative potential in the performing arts. With funding from the National Endowment for Science, Technology & Arts (NESTA) earlier research in collaboration with the Royal College of Music has been extended through collaboration with the Department of Music at Goldsmiths and the Trinity-Laban conservatoire. Professionally significant improvements have been repeatedly demonstrated in the three domains of music performance: artistry, technique and communication.

With support from the European Union’s research framework programme on New and Emerging Technologies, Virtual Reality innovations have been introduced to increase the immersive qualities of the neurofeedback training. This has been achieved with partner collaborators in London and Barcelona. In one such application involving creative acting performance, the actor’s brain activity is connected with a depiction of an acting space – a theatre auditorium as seen from the stage. This theatre space may be programmed on a computer screen in 2D, which is the conventional method for training in neurofeedback. It may also be viewed in 3D by wearing a Head Mounted Display, or alternatively ‘total’ immersion may be experienced through a whole room display in what is termed a Computer Assisted Virtual Environment, CAVE, at University College London.

Other controlled neurofeedback studies have involved contemporary dancers at Laban, trainee eye surgeons at the Western Eye Hospital, and demonstrable improvements in sustained attention have been obtained in children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
Led by Professor James Curran, Professor Chris Berry and Dr Natalie Fenton from the Department of Media & Communications, the Goldsmiths Leverhulme Media Research Centre is running an interdisciplinary five year research programme, funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

The programme was established to explore the significance of new media economies and cultures in relation to broader economic, social and cultural transformations. The research is composed of five individual projects which involve a range of departments from Goldsmiths:

**Spaces of News**
With massive changes in the media environment and its technologies, interrogating the nature of news journalism is one of the most urgent tasks we face in defining the public interest today. Located within the Department of Media & Communications, this project explores the ways in which technological, economic and social change is reconfiguring news journalism and shaping the dynamics of the public sphere and public culture.

**Metadata in The Age of Ubiquitous Data**
Bringing together expertise from the Centre for Cultural Studies and the Department of Computing, this project investigates the properties of metadata in software to both enable and block various forms of connectivity. This project explores metadata via theories that come out of cultural studies, media theory and philosophy and through ethnographic research, interviews and experimental software.

**Mediating Place: with focus on London’s spaces**
This is a Department of Design project focused on an exploration of the ways in which various 'locational' media affect the way we relate to our world(s). Our environment is increasingly mediatised – infused with media technologies and their content. This project is concerned with how this 'media-full' environment re-mediates our relationships to the objects and spaces to which we are connected.

**Europe in Motion**
Media spaces are becoming at once globalised and transnationalised. Through Internet cafés, phones and multi-channel digital television, migrants in Europe may spatially zoom in on, and participate in, the cultures from which they have been dispersed. This project, in the Department of Media and Communications, asks how the ability of migrants to be simultaneously in Europe and at home through media is transforming the European public sphere.

**Tracking the Moving Image, Mapping the Screen**
Digitalisation has wiped out the technological distinctions between film and television. Located in the Department of Media & Communications, this project tracks the changing location and use patterns of moving image screens in selected neighbourhoods of London, Shanghai, and Cairo to explore the very different cultural and political contexts into which new screen technologies have been appropriated and in what ways this has conditioned their role in different locations.

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Mediated storytelling has traditionally been carried out by linear immutable narration, right back from when stories were carved in stone, through the invention of paper and, much later, radio and television. The Narrative and Interactive Media (NIM) research group led by Dr Marian Ursu in the Department of Computing believe that storytelling doesn’t have to be linear. The NIM group is pioneering research in computational and technological underpinnings of interactive mediated narrativity, particularly by moving-image, considered in the whole spectrum: from the artistic end, as a means of creative expression, to the pragmatic end of informal communication between people separated by space and time.

NIM’s research is interdisciplinary being positioned at the confluence of computer science with narrativity theory, media studies and interaction design, with a strong focus on combining artificial intelligence with digital media technologies. Its collaborators outside Goldsmiths include research groups in different disciplines from both the academic and commercial worlds.

Since its inception, in 2004, NIM has received approximately €2.25 Million in external funding by participating in research projects totalling over €25 Million, such as the EU Integrated Projects NM2 (New Millennium, New Media), which ran between 2004 and 2007, and TA2 (Together Anywhere, Together Anytime), running from 2008 to 2012.

As a result of the collaborative work carried out in NM2, NIM has created the first computational representation language for interactive mediated narratives, called Narrative Structure Language, the core of the ShapeShifting Media Technology. ShapeShifting Media provides the first production and genre independent technology dedicated to authoring and delivering interactive moving image narratives.

An interactive documentary, called ‘Films of Fact’, was more recently realised with the ShapeShifting Media technology by the Science Museum, London, in collaboration with NIM and the Future Content group from BT, and appeared at the Science Museum, in April 2009. The ShapeShifting Media technology opened up opportunities for the development of better means of communication mediated by moving-image between spatially and temporally dispersed groups of people. This endeavour is carried out in the TA2 project.

TA2 will develop new more natural moving-image-based communication technology which will allow family and friends situated in different locations to share moments of fun whilst playing social games or recounting past memories, seeing and hearing each other, as if they were together in the same space. This will go far beyond the static face to face video conferencing communication model, and will include cinematic techniques, similar to those employed in the production of good quality TV narratives, that will be automatically applied to the capturing and editing of the content. Refining the required intelligence and developing software that can reason with it is NIM’s main responsibility.

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Project e-scape is a research and development project based in the Technology Education Research Unit (TERU) at Goldsmiths, University of London.

The project is funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families through Becta and run in association with Awarding bodies, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, subject associations and schools, concerning the assessment of learner performance on-task in real activities.

E-scape uses emerging digital technologies to enable learners to build – dynamically – an online e-portfolio of their performance, demonstrating their capability as it emerges through the activity. E-scape also provides teachers with a radical and simple means to assess the evidence of capability in the e-portfolios.

The project started in 2003 under the title ‘Assessing design innovation’ and since 2005 has progressed through a number of phases of development in which the scale and potential use of digital technologies has widened. In 2009, Awarding Bodies will run national awards using the e-scape system.

E-scape works as learners undertake engaging activities which inspire them to create their very best work in a range of subjects, both as individuals and in teams. These activities are created by teachers and/or awarding bodies in an electronic ‘authoring tool’ which is capable of building high-stakes assessment activities.

As learners undertake their tasks the system collects all kinds of performance evidence – writing, sketching, data handling, photos of models, audio and video – uploaded automatically from PDAs, digital pens, mobile phones, cameras, PCs, etc, and learners’ digital portfolios emerge dynamically in a secure website where they can be viewed and assessed anywhere, anytime. The system facilitates the application of a different and more secure approach to assessment using comparative pair judgements.

While supported and funded by central government, the e-scape project has been developed at every step with classroom teachers, awarding bodies, technology groups, and above all, with learners. As such it has responded directly to grass-roots concerns about the quality and validity of coursework assessment, about the need for flexibility in network systems, and about the need to restore the professional confidence of teachers in creating, managing and assessing learning.

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Left to right
Prof Richard Kimbell (Director TERU) and Tony Wheeler, Senior Research Fellow
E–Static Shadows is an experimental cross–disciplinary research project by designer and researcher Dr Zane Berzina and architect Jackson Tan from insquarelab in collaboration with TITV – Textile Research Institute Greiz in Thüringen, Germany, the Department of Computing at Goldsmiths, and Queen Mary University of London.

The project is based at the Constance Howard Resource and Research Centre in Textiles at Goldsmiths and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Arts Council of England. The design and technology developments on the project are supported by OSRAM Opto Semiconductors and Elektrisola.

The E–Static Shadows project creatively explores the speculative arena of electrostatic and its possible readings in relation to physical space and the poetic potential of static electricity surrounding our everyday interactions. By doing so it also advances the potential for technology that allows us to interact with the omnipresent but hidden electrostatic forces.

This collaborative project across the disciplines of art, design, craft, science and technology is concerned with the development of new interactive textiles systems which are capable of sensing static electricity generated by people and translating it into audio–visual patterns on the surface of the architectural fabric membranes.

Equipped with tiny OSRAM LED lights, transistors and woven electronic circuits seamlessly integrated into the electronic textiles structure, the installation is able to create transient shadows on the textile display in areas which detect a presence of electrostatic fields, feeding on the charges created by viewers and objects. Simultaneously it acts as a simple sonic instrument in response to the presence and intensity of charges, human proximity and touch. The prototype provides opportunities for new speculations regarding the role of static electricity within a built environment and intelligent communications in cloth with potential for sustainable design solutions for lit environments using soft display systems.

The project also has a potential to make an impact on the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad as the outcomes could be transferred into creative applications for the Olympics.

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INCITE (Incubator for Critical Inquiry into Technology and Ethnography)

Based in the Department of Sociology and led by Dr Nina Wakeford, this project provides a creative interdisciplinary space for research that explores the socio-cultural dimensions of technology use and design, and experiments with visual methods.

INCITE works collaboratively with researchers from a range of institutions including the Royal College of Art, Intel, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Oxford Said Business School. Recent research has explored subjects such as technology as a means of sensing place and identifying community, performativity and design, gender, sexuality and mobility, cultures of access and non-access, urban knowledge-making, Internet and digital subjectivities and material culture. INCITE has a particular interest in ways of visualising technology and its networks of use. Researchers and students draw on a range of disciplinary traditions, not just sociology, but cultural anthropology, art practice and design.

The group aims to investigate the intersections between traditional academic modes of production and the practices of designers, engineers and artists, whether in universities or industry. It also seeks to develop innovative methodological ‘tricks of the trade’ for social and cultural research, and to challenge both the traditional frameworks of academic technology studies and industry practice by emphasising critical perspectives, such as feminist studies of technology, and collaborative projects.

Projects
Wakeford currently holds an ESRC funded fellowship to develop and write about INCITE’s studio practice. This project, ‘Beyond Translation’ builds on INCITE’s existing industry collaborations and looks at the ways knowledge is created and represented in research collaborations. It is particularly concerned with the use of visual models and prototypes in social research and design and with exploring new modes of dissemination including exhibitions and installations.

Intel Research has a long-standing relationship with INCITE, and has recently funded two projects which focus on art and visual practices. ‘Understanding European Art/Design Cultures: how the creative class encourage technology adoption’ investigated the ways in which interaction designers and new media artists in Finland and the Netherlands acted as cultural intermediaries of new technologies. ‘It’s About Time’ focused on bike messengers in London. The aim was to explore the uses of visual methods in conveying the experience of time and mobility in the city. It resulted in a site specific installation in the Intel research labs in Portland, Oregon.

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The study of Indian culture and society has been a focus of some of Goldsmiths’ interdisciplinary research in recent years, spanning culture, society, human rights and media. This research helps build our understanding of India as well as enriching and informing the rest of our work at Goldsmiths.

Professor Sanjay Seth in the Department of Politics has published in the fields of modern Indian history, political and social theory, postcolonial theory and international relations. He is particularly interested in how modern European ideologies and modern Western knowledge more generally, ‘travelled’ to the non-Western world, and uses an Indian archive to raise and pursue this and other social, cultural and epistemological questions.

In the Department of Sociology, Dr Kate Nash recently published work on the comparative political sociology of human rights (The Cultural Politics of Human Rights: Comparing the US and UK Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009), she is now planning a research project on human rights in India, especially focussing on how the Supreme Court has turned social and economic policy and regulation into legal rights and the effects of this judicial activism on subjectivity and political imagination.

Dr Uttara Natarajan, from the Department of English & Comparative Literature, has edited a book that sheds light on the struggles for equality among the lower castes in southern India. The book, ‘Plain Speaking: A Sudra’s Story’, covers the early history and later writings of her grandfather, the late A N Sattanathan, who in 1969 was appointed Chairman of the first Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission and made a lasting impact on the state’s policy of affirmative action towards lower castes.

In the Department of Anthropology, Dr Alpa Shah’s research is devoted to the investigation and analysis of efforts to address inequality. Her forthcoming monograph to be published by Duke University Press, ‘In the Shadows of the State: Indigenous Politics in Jharkhand, India,’ explores the case of indigenous rights and development representations and practices.

Professor John Hutnyk from the Centre for Cultural Studies is presently pursuing research on television and terror reporting in South Asia, as part of a long-standing interest in media, which reaches from TV and cinema through to music (music-television) and representation in general. His work for the past twenty five years has engaged with political cinema in India, with special reference to the city of Kolkata. In summer 2009, Hutnyk will be speaking at a conference on 50 years of Indian Television with a talk titled ‘News Media or Politics Show: Terror Reporting and the Box.’

Dr Talat Ahmed, from the Department of History, is a modern historian whose work focuses on the intellectual and cultural history of South Asia. Her research interests lie in the fields of anti-colonial intellectuals and empire, uses of cultural space as resistance and colonial and post-colonial literary interpretations of South Asian history.
The Business Development Office at Goldsmiths works with staff and students to connect people and organisations outside the College with the research and know-how to address their unique challenges.

**Psychology: Cross Wise Project**

The research carried out by Professor Frank Bond and his team in the Department of Psychology at Goldsmiths on the Cross Wise project, is designed to help dramatically improve the cross-platform media content at the BBC.

The project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), will benefit innovation development at the BBC and aid its production of cross-platform media content.

For innovative organisations such as the BBC, the aim is not just to make a television programme, but it also to create, for example, websites, interactive on-line games and blogs that extend and develop that programme.

Creating innovative content for each of these platforms at the BBC is a high priority. However, like many organisations the BBC struggles to be consistent with how it specifies criteria for innovative outputs and how it should best use criteria.

This inherent ambiguity makes it hard to create comprehensive innovation development programmes, produced and evaluated by multi-platform producers, such as the BBC. Such a situation challenges the sustainability of the UK’s position as a producer of highly creative media content as these new domains are perpetually changing and we need to develop flexible concepts to support the industry through these changes.

As the BBC is the flagship producer of such content, and widely viewed as such across the world, it is not surprising that they wish to undertake a systematic investigation into how to meaningfully define and, most importantly, promote innovative cross-platform media content.

To do this in an effective manner, BBC Multi-Platform and BBC People have developed the Cross Wise project with Goldsmiths. The combined undertaking will provide the BBC with academic theory and research that can inform innovation development; and provide researchers at Goldsmiths with an understanding of the needs of the BBC and other multi-platform content producers.

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**Further information**

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To find out more about business and research, please contact the Business Development Office, tel 020 7919 7692.

Image courtesy of the BBC
Research at Goldsmiths is sometimes part-funded through donations from partner organisations; this provides mutually beneficial targeted research and collaboration.

One example is the partnership between the Department of Psychology at Goldsmiths and the healthcare provider the Huntercombe Group, who run the local Blackheath Brain Injury Rehabilitation Centre and Neurodisability Service (BBIRCNS). Their annual donations of £20,000 have part funded a lectureship in the Department. This funding allowed the creation of the innovative MSc in Cognitive and Clinical Neuroscience and the development of a programme of clinical research at the BBIRCNS. Goldsmiths researchers can involve clients at BBIRCNS in research studies and students are able to gain practical experience by working in the unit.

The Centre for Visual Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology receives £25,000 per year (for five years) from a private donor in the US in support of photographic and filmmaking activities conducted by staff, students and Fellows in the Department. A film of the Tohono O’odham waila musician Gertrude Lopez was completed (and is being shown at ethnographic film festivals in Europe and N America) and a film about ecological housing in South East London is currently in production.

For more information on how you can help with funding future research projects, please visit www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/giving-to-goldsmiths or contact:

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Left to right
Michela Magas & Professor Mark d’Inverno
We all fantasize about that perfect piece of music – the one that’s exactly right for the moment. The tune, the timbre, the style, we know it’s out there. But where? Imagine a service that could find it! This is the mission of the Department of Computing’s £750,000 OMRAS2 project, funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, and led by Professor Mark d’Inverno.

What OMRAS2 technology does is take a look at all the music you have in your collection – when you played it, in what order, how often and so on – then go off into the ether and discover that gem for you: a track that closely matches your music taste. Without OMRAS2 you’d have had to trawl yourself through every CD catalogue ever made.

OMRAS2 technology enables us to begin to analyse a track to discover the key of the piece, the style, the way it’s recorded, the use of samples, the instrumentation from other pieces and so on. By analysing music to understand these fundamental features this kind of automatic search could become possible in the not too distant future. And once we have this all kinds of possibilities open up for musicologists interested in the scientific examination of music, for online services dedicated to retrieval and for people to navigate their own music collection.

Imagine then sending our analysers into a very large music collection to look at all its tracks that you hitherto knew nothing about. It’s an enormous computational task, that will generate vast quantities of data (or descriptors as we call them) that summarize each of the unknown track’s segments and which can then be queried as to how similar they are to other segments.

“What’s really exciting is that this technology allows us to ask questions of music that were simply not possible before” says Professor Mark d’Inverno. “For example, one of our current case studies it to look at the improvised solos of a particular jazz musician such as Bill Evans or Charlie Parker and see just how much of a solo is made up of stock licks or patterns? Or to put it another way; just how much of a jazz pianist’ improvisation is really improvisation?”

This technology is sufficiently cutting edge that one of the leading internet companies is experimenting using it not with music but with images. You can analyse a digital image in more or less the same way you can analyse a piece of music. The idea being that you can provide an image and try to locate other similar images within a large collection. Members of the Department are also now talking to the many cultural institutions including the National Theatre about how the technology could be employed. One of the ideas is to analyse the different styles of performers.

“This is a really good example of the kind of interdisciplinary research in our department,” says Mark d’Inverno; “the new technology we’re developing is forcing us is to design novel interfaces for the online navigation of music, photo and film collections.”
Curating Architecture
A research initiative set up by the Curating Programme in the Department of Art, Curating Architecture starts with the premise that the routines of artists and architects share many practical and theoretical concerns and have entwined histories. The project aims to interrogate ideas proposed by recent and recurring influences of architecture on curatorial practice through the joint development of critical discourse and curatorial commissioning processes.
For more information visit www.gold.ac.uk/visual–arts/curating–architecture

Faith Literacy Grant
Professor Eve Gregory from the Department of Educational Studies at Goldsmiths, together with Dr John Jessel, Dr Charmian Kenner, Dr Vally Lytra and Mahera Ruby, were awarded £620,000 by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to examine children’s participation in faith literacy activities. The research aims to develop collaborative ethnography, whereby both children and older members of each faith will participate in data collection and analysis. Over the three years, the research will: build up a detailed picture of language and literacy practices in each setting; analyse ways in which children aged between five and 12 go about learning in formal and informal contexts; investigate the change in faith literacy practices over time through an intergenerational book making activity; and examine the importance of faith literacies in children’s everyday lives.

Simon Bedwell – The Asphalt World
Supported by the Department of Art at Goldsmiths, University of London and the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Simon Bedwell’s ‘The Asphalt World’ was shown at Studio Voltaire from January to February 2009.

Goldfish 2
A new anthology of writing by MA Creative and Life Writing students from the Department of English & Comparative Literature – named Goldfish 2 – introduced a fresh wave of new writers to publishing agents and editors from across London at its launch early in 2009. The MA in Creative and Life Writing programme is designed to meet the needs of committed writers who are interested in exploring and exploiting their own possibilities as writers, and in critically examining their own writing.

Performance Matters
Performance Matters is a three-year creative research project based in the Department of Visual Cultures starting in April 2009, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Bringing together artists, curators and academics to investigate the cultural value of performance, the project is a collaboration between Goldsmiths, Roehampton University and the Live Art Development Agency.

Centre for the Study of the Balkans
An inter-disciplinary Centre for the Study of the Balkans, attached to the Department of History, has been established. It will bring together the existing regional expertise at Goldsmiths (mostly concentrated in Anthropology, History, Politics and Sociology) and will establish collaboration with similar research centres in the UK and internationally. The Director of the Centre is Dr Dejan Djokic (History).

Social Work Project
In the Department of Professional and Community Education, a project titled ‘Diversity and Progression among Social Work Students in England: An Explanatory Study’ examines the experiences of black and ethnic minority, disabled, and lesbian and gay students, on social work programmes as part of the Department of Health’s Social Care Workforce Research Initiative. The team working on this are Dr Claudia Bernard, with Anna Fairtlough and Joan Fletcher.
Our Mission

We offer a transformative experience, generating knowledge and stimulating self-discovery through creative, radical and intellectually rigorous thinking and practice.

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Goldsmiths is one of 15 universities across England and Scotland participating in phase three of the Carbon Trust’s Higher Education Carbon Management (HECM) programme, highlighting a commitment to cutting carbon emissions and reducing energy costs.