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Thank you very much to everyone for joining me here today and sharing your thoughts in what I hope will be a creative and challenging discussion. And thank you to the small, extended community who have joined us remotely via video conferencing. If I can remind everyone to use their microphones when they speak, we will be able to include those who weren’t able to join us here in person. I want to welcome you all to the Inclusive Design Research Centre. I’m very pleased to be able to present my work here, in this place where it was initially conceived alongside and was influenced by my day-to-day inclusive design research.

I will keep my formal remarks quite brief; we have all seen the videos now, and have all read the paper, and so I’m particularly interested in the conversation, critique, and discussion that emerges from this work, rather than in simply summarizing the videos and music or the theoretical arguments I have placed alongside them. Instead, I will elaborate on a few key ideas within my paper, and attempt to situate this project within the context of both the history of computation as well as alongside the work of experimental film and video artists who are germane to my practice.

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So, speaking of design. As I mentioned in a footnote in the paper, I often connect design and artistic practice together in this project. My use of the term “design”—particularly when referring to my software development activities—instead of, for example, terms like “software art” or “computational arts” is partially an acknowledgement of the way that these ideas and practice have grown up in the context of inclusive design here at OCAD. But at the same time, my conception of design is informed also by McKenzie Wark’s idea of design as a practice that encompasses all kinds of creative activities, including the fine arts. For Wark, design entails the creation of new forms and vectors of creativity; forms that are cultural, technological, and social in nature. Forms that are practical or aesthetic; that enable new modes of expression and perception. In this era of the Panama Papers, where the link between the ultra-rich and the art market is clearer than ever, I am happy to avoid retreating into a romanticized concept of art as somehow sheltered from the spectacular economic and utilitarian constraints of design, and rather to understand art and design as at least coexisting amongst and alongside each other as creative forces—as catalysts for aesthetic, technical, and embodied transformation—even when their linkages are occasionally uncomfortable and ambivalent in my own practice.

So here, I want to pick up this concept of adjacency, which informs the bulk of Section 1 of the thesis and try to elaborate on what’s at stake. My initial motivation stems from a desire to establish a theoretical model of practice in multiple disciplines that avoids what I see as two sides of the same flawed conceptual coin of interdisciplinarity: the idea that disciplines must either be in harmony with each other—synthesized—or must inevitably perform the hierarchies and antagonisms amongst disciplines. Adjacency is an attempt to prevent myself from reading the relationships amongst my video, music, and software practices within any kind of all-encompassing framework—as somehow, deep down, “the same thing.” No, I want there to be enough space within my own work to accommodate the *difference* between disciplines and practices—the different modes of working and seeing and thinking in each discipline—and to envision these differences as potentially generative of new kinds of relations and effects that emerge from the gap between them, from the cracks in the disciplinary establishments. Just last week, I presented a portion of my work on Flocking to a European Commission review panel comprised of computer and information scientists. And there, the kinds of arguments I have made in this project regarding the values, purpose, and potentials of my work simply will never translate. It’s another system entirely, complete with customs, terminology, and methods that integrally reinforce and co-constitute each other. To imagine that the two disciplines—computer science and art—could be resolved via direct communication and translation leads, I argue, only towards intellectual tourism or imperialism. And so I have attempted to shift my focus here towards the oft-overlooked energies—the ripples and wake—produced by disciplinary activities. My movement around and amongst these disciplinary thickets occasionally catalyzes something new—often indirect and difficult to place—in one or the other areas of my practice.

Indeed, even the failure of one practice to produce results in the other—for example, a computer program that fails to produce useful aesthetic results—often has productive side-effects. The negative drive to get away from the hopeless abstraction of the computer and out into the world to just *watch* helping to produce, and subtly affect my seeing of, the largely non-computational works such as, for example, *Everything is awake!* or *How Long Will We Live?* or *Indian Horse*.

Adjacency, then, is not an argument for the lack of influence amongst disciplines in my practice, but rather a means of asserting that these relations need not be strictly defined by concepts of *unification* or *presence*. I think the terminology of second order systems theory here is entirely apt. Rather than assuming that concepts travel across disciplines unscathed, in some kind of direct communication with each other, I imagine instead that they perturb and irritate in ways that can be variously creative and detrimental, significant or subtle. So, in a work like *In Passing,* where sound and image largely don…

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Next, I’d like to briefly address the specific technical operations that are at play in my work, and the larger technological context that they operate within. In the paper, I argued for a different conceptual approach to computation and the digital from what I see as the prevailing rhetoric of abstraction, information, and generalizable representations. These intellectual currents are felt throughout, and inform the discourse of, computer science, information visualization, and design practices (among others) today. Jeanette Wing, Professor of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon, argues in her influential 2006 article, “Computational Thinking,” that computational methods and models are “universally applicable” and “a fundamentally applicable skill for everyone” characterized by the values of “solving problems efficiently,” “correctness,” the use of “abstraction and decomposition,” and “thinking in terms of prevention, protection… [and] damage containment”(33-4). Most crucially to my project, Wing argues that Computational Thinking is characterized by “ideas, not artefacts” (35).

In contrast, I have attempted to establish a framework for thinking about computation within creative practices as being distinctly material and artefactual; as being

• lensing comes in here as a way to account for the material, embodied effects of the digital in the world, and to recognize technology’s coupling with and constitution of our own embodiment—lensing as a multidirectional set of influences and forces.

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Lastly, I’d like to take a moment to more clearly situate my videos within a context of film and video. It starts, most crucially for me, within