Sentimental Expressions of Code

The School for Innovative Folk is pleased to announce Sentimental Expressions of Code, a new and exciting class that will run this winter. Students with a basic working knowledge of code will gain an opportunity to see code as an medium for self expression through its applications in historical practices and in naturally occuring systems.

We pride ourselves on our ability to grow build a student body based on empathy and connectivity as we explore concepts that are typically void of care. We'll take the ethos of human centered design and extend it to the natural world around us to ensure that students graduate with a deep comprehension of the trust, care and humanity that goes into the maintenance of a networked society. The act of presenting and communicating the technology is just as important as the tech itself - one break in the chain and the system could collapse. In order to build a mindful computing practice, students will learn computation through the analysis of living things and society.

Through socially traditional and academically non-traditional means, students will achieve a true understanding of computation. Each week will focus on a different associated skill that will act as a experiencial reference point, including but not limited to the study of binary and data through fibre weaving and hair braiding, an exploration of algorithms through the investigation of bee space in the hive, loops and functions through the lens of bee dance communication, and a demonstration of conditionals through the means of plant microorganisms found in our forest.

Weekly Schedule

WK 1 - History of Systems

In addition to the commonly known histories of mechanical computation we will also discuss how organized systems of female and cultural folk practices have laid the foundation for computational processing. We will learn how these systems were applied through the measures of weaving to communicate information but also to cloth and care for a society.
Explorations: Weaving as code, binary, shapes on a plane

WK 2 - Loops

Through the exploration of a repetitious system like our beehive, we'll discover the ways in which many simultaneous loops work in tandem to govern the operation of a system. We'll analyze the loops present in the hive and draw analogies to the loops we will build on screen.
Explorations: hive societal structure, bee "dance" communication, for loops, while loops

WK 3 - Conditionals

This class will take a deep dive into the network of fungi and simple cell organisms. Investigating mycelium will aid in fostering a deep understanding of patterns and logic gates.
Explorations: logic gates, AND, OR, foraging, naturals systems, fungi, mycelium

WK 4 - Functions

We'll respectfully walk the forest in search of plants and fungi to understand the manner and ways in which they grow in one space and do not grow in another. Students will learn about the symbiotic nature of plants and animals and understand the ways in which the layers of a computation network could serve to pass tasks and information.
Explorations: Custom functions, objects, fungi, plant combining as medicine

WK 5 - Basic Algorithms and Data

We'll explore the ways in which data has been represented in the traditions of North African hair braiding as well as the cultural practice of moving the body to express information or carry a story in a linear or non-linear manner. Through this, we'll learn how data can appropriately convey information.
Explorations: Indigenous dance, black hair braiding as data, meaningful math, JSON

WK 6 - Final Project Presentation

Students will present a sentimental expression of a coded system based on any medium or subject matter presented in the class.
Final Projects Due