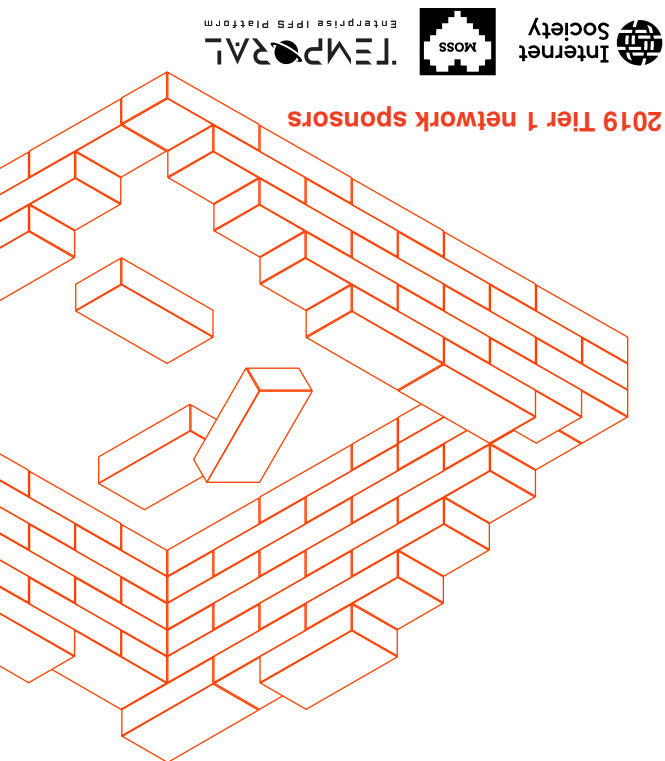our: networks

# RE: Infrastructures
## September 20–22

Toronto Media Arts Center
32 Lisgar Street

## About the conference

RE: Infrastructures explores the collective care and maintenance of alternative networking practices—new protocols, peer-to-peer connections, offline-first computing, and community-based governance.

How can these emerging *Infrastructures of ...* provide spaces to imagine radically different futures, resist easy co-option by the forces of late-stage capitalism, and work in solidarity as plural networks seeking emancipatory change?

How can our networking be reparative? In what ways can we remediate existing communication infrastructures? Are there uncooptable computing reconfigurations? How can we reconstruct technology after refusal? What are regenerative approaches to resist status quo tech?

## Network history in the Great Lakes Region and Tkaronto

Toronto has a layered history of internet and wireless access projects...

Wireless Nomad and Wireless Toronto, date back to the early 2000s, have been identified by Christian Sandvig (2004) as the first wave of European and American community wireless which largely did not challenge the structure or function of the internet.

More recently, in what Alison Powell and Leslie Shade (2006) identify as a second wave in mid-2000 on, Community Networks developed around practices and discourses of what Powell describes as "contextualization and politicization of Wi-Fi as an open network built by and for citizens." In Toronto this includes the reBOOT reLAY pilot project in Parkdale. These networks rely upon technical discourses of grassroots infrastructure decentralization, open source/hardware, and network engineering.

However, to make "networks" only hardware reduces their reach. There were activist communications projects notably Dao, or the THE OAT COLLECTIVE (Organize, Autonomize, Triumph), who provided free, safe, and secure communications tools in a model similar to Riseup and other autonomous and alter-globalization media organizing.

Non-profit internet service providers (ISP), including Toronto Free-Net, have also operated in the city for over 20 years. Low-cost internet and digital literacy projects, including those from community information hubs and the Toronto Public Library, have been active recently through a hotspot borrowing program and in-kind partnerships with major ISPs.

## Places

CN Tower—Whose purpose during planning and construction phase was to help with communication services, although now it serves mainly as a tourist attraction.

University of Toronto SciNet—Canada's largest supercomputer centre, which provides resources for Compute/Calcul Canada, a national infrastructure for supercomputing-powered research.

Toronto Free-Net Office—A non-profit ISP, and one of the oldest, serving the greater Toronto area (GTA) since 1994, when few people could afford internet service or had access outside of research networks.

Colocation Facility—Navigata/TNW Networks housed in the Northern Ontario Building, built in 1925 by Chapman & Oxley. "In the heart of Toronto's business and financial district, our Toronto colocation facility is an ideal location to colocate your critical servers."

Cogeco Peer 1—Cogeco Inc. is a Canadian telecommunications and media company headquartered in Montreal, Quebec.

151 Front Street—Canada's largest carrier hotel owned by Allied Properties REIT, previously didn't have a history with in telecommunications. Michael Emory, who bought 151 Front St. West for $192-million in 2009.

The site of Toronto Internet Exchange Community (TorIX), a not-for-profit Internet Exchange Point (IXP). As of September 2019, TorIX has 257 members and peak traffic rates of 684 Gbps.

905 King Street—151 Front Street's sister facility, home of Canada's first electric telegraph, inaugurated on the 19th of December, 1846 (plaque at St. Lawrence Market). Used by the Niagara electro-magnetic telegraph company.

CBC Building, 251 Front Street—Formed from CRBC in 1936 by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). CBC was originally controlled by the national government, and funded largely by Taxes (licence fees) from owners of radio sets.

## Land acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the sacred land that Our Networks takes place on—it has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island.

The "Dish" or sometimes it is called the "Bowl", represents what is now southern Ontario (from the Great Lakes to Quebec and from Lake Simcoe into the U.S.). We all eat out of the Dish—all of us that share this territory—with only one spoon. That means we have to share the responsibility of ensuring the dish is never empty, which includes, taking care of the land and the creatures we share it with. Importantly, there are no knives at the table; must keep the peace. [1]

[2] "The Great Lakes region takes its name from the corresponding geological formation of the Great Lakes Basin, a narrow watershed encompassing The Great Lakes, bounded by watersheds to the region's north (Hudson Bay), west (Mississippi), east, and south (Ohio). To the east, the rivers of St. Lawrence, Richelieu, Hudson, Mohawk and Susquehanna form an arc of watersheds east to The Atlantic.

> [1] Land Acknowledgements: trc.journalism.ryerson.ca/land-acknowledgement/
> [2] Wikipedia: wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Lakes_region
> Toronto for All: torontoforall.ca/indigenous-peoples-of-tkaronto/
> Native Canadian Centre of Toronto: ncct.on.ca
> First Story App: firststoryblog.wordpress.com

## New spirit of networks

On 2019-02-14 12:41 a.m., someone smarter than us wrote:

"Maybe the real mesh network is the friends we made along the way"
—Max Veytsman, Our Networks 2018

"Resistance is constructing everything that we need to maintain the life of our people"
—Zapatista community member quoted in Sylvia Federici, Re-enchanting the World, 2018

"On one hand.... [we live in] an always-almost-falling-apart world. On the other, a world in constant process of fixing and reinvention, reconfiguring and reassembling into new combinations and new possibilities—a topic of both hope and concern.... The fulcrum of these two worlds is repair: the subtle acts of care by which order and meaning in complex sociotechnical systems are maintained and transformed, human value is preserved and extended"
—Steve Jackson, Rethinking Repair, 2014

"The repair or replacement of broken infrastructure is...necessary for any form of sociality to extend itself"
—Lauren Berlant, The Commons: Infrastructures for Troubling Times, 2016

"values are the facts of the future.... Our world was shaped by the values that presided over its creation. Technologies are the crystallized expression of those values."
—Andrew Feenberg, Technosystems, 2017

"Being the change you want to see in the world does not imply a complete rejection of society, it means to stay in the zone of creative tension between the ideal vision and the way the world works right now."
—elavoie, %Vt1AveLw0qsGdy2iJXne9Jxt7P6vxMCt-NLyziqYewA8=.sha256, on SSB, 2019

# 2019 Program

## Code of Conduct

Our Networks is dedicated to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, religion or technical skill level.

ournetworks.ca/code-of-conduct

## Media policy

The rule of thumb is: Do not photograph, video, or audio record anyone at Our Networks without their express permission, sought in advance.

ournetworks.ca/filming

## Wi-Fi          Experimental Mesh

TMAC          tomesh.net
tmaction      <no password>

## Exhibited works

**Made in Iran**
> Farhad Bahram

**Currency**
> Sphere Collective

**Channel channel, a network for VPN access**
> Biyi Wen

**The Magi system, exploring the aesthetics of network infrastructure**
> Tobias Williams

**Torrents of sex**
> Nahee Kim

## Outdoor screening

**A Tour of the AC-1 Transatlantic Submarine Cable**
> Lance Wakeling

**Just Browsing**
> Joanne McNeil

**After Scarcity**
> Bahar Noorizadeh

**Geocinema Network**
> Asia Bazdyrieva, Alexey Orlov, Solveig Suess

**Mechanical Turk Workers**
> Brett Wallace

## Saturday

| | Main Room | Gamma Workshop Space | Zine Library |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9:00 | Registration | | |
| 10:00 | Opening remarks | | |
| 10:15 | **Whose future are you serving?: Interrogating frontier imaginaries within P2P technologies** > Laniyuk | | |
| 10:30 | **Waiting for NIN in New Orleans** > Jennifer Seaman Cook | | |
| 11:30 | Coffee break | | Screenprint our swag |
| 11:45 | **DHT, BFT, OMG: Know your building blocks for decentralized applications (2019 edition)** > Kirill Pimenov | | |
| 12:30 | **Collective resistance to state controls on information** > Cecylia Bocovich | | |
| 13:00 | Lunch | | |
| 14:00 | **Trouble in the bubble: Tech workers organizing in the industry** > Danny Spitzberg | **Publishing your first decentralized website with Dat** > Georgiy Shibaev | **Hotglue on Dat workshop for non-techies (kid-friendly!)** > Gottfried Haider |
| 16:00 | Coffee break | | |
| 16:15 | **Cryptoeconomics: Towards mass behavioral engineering or a network commons?** > Jaya Klara Brekke > Dan Hassan | **The future for workers** > Brett Wallace | |
| 17:00 | **Social, artistic, and theoretical experiments with decentralized festivals** **> Andreas Dzialocha** | | |
| 18:00 | **Keynote panel: May First, technology and revolution** > Alfredo Lopez | | |
| 20:00 | Outdoor screening | | |

## Friday

| | Main Room | Gamma Workshop Space | Zine Library |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12:00 | **March for our futures: Youth climate march** Queen's Park 47 Queen's Park Crescent E | | |
| 13:00 | Registration | | |
| 14:00 | **Meshing around: DIY internet** > Jillian Murphy > Scott Rasmussen | **[PROTEST_BAR]** > Brett Ian Balogh | |
| 15:00 | **Hands-on networking** > Grant Gallo | | |
| 16:00 | Screenprint our swag | | |
| :30 | **Regulationism and the need for a digital postmodernism** > Corey Abell | | |
| 17:00 | **Spectacular grammar: Infrastructure as a Universal language** > Renée Reizman | | |
| :30 | **Remaking the web: Competing visions of decentralization** > Jack Jamieson | | |
| 18:30 | **Keynote: Dr. Jennifer Wemigwans, A Digital Bundle Protecting and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Online** | | |
| 19:30 | **Kickoff party** **On the wire** > Adam McFillin **Pale Eyes** > Ben McCarthy | | |

## Sunday

| | Main Room | Gamma Workshop Space | Zine Library |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9:30 | Registration | | |
| 10:15 | **Building a modern Memex** > Andrew Louis | **Resistant networks with retro-tech** > Libi rose striegl | |
| 10:45 | **Solar powered website** > Marie Otsuka > Lauren Traugott-Campbell | | |
| 11:15 | Coffee break | | Screenprint our swag |
| 11:30 | **Mesh lightning talks** | **Radical internet futures: Let's draw them together** > Elisabetta Ferrari | |
| 12:15 | **A technical introduction to IPFS** > Hector Sanjuan | | |
| 13:00 | Lunch | | |
| 14:00 | **Lightning talks** | **Collaboratively backing up IPFS content with IPFS Cluster** > Hector Sanjuan | |
| 15:30 | **Coffee break** | | |
| 16:00 | **Networks as sculpture** > Lai Yi Ohlsen | **Feedback as exploratory self-research** > Sam McGarva | |
| 17:00 | **Amazonification: Decoding scarcity as weaponized precarity** > Hiba Ali | | |
| 17:45 | **Closing remarks** | | |