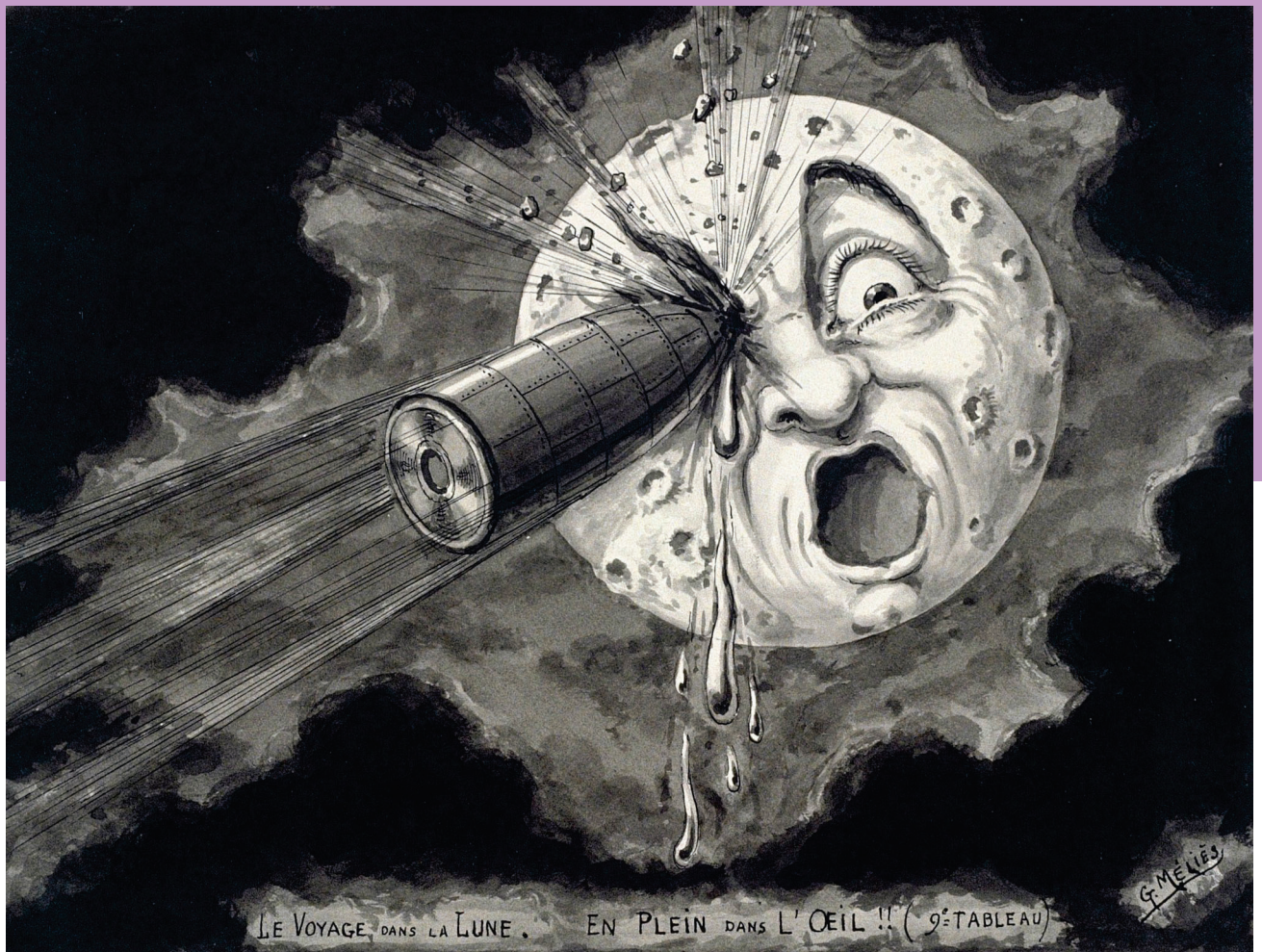


RETRO-FUTURISTIC VISIONS LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD



THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE OF **YOOBEE COLLEGE OF CREATIVE INNOVATION**

25 – 27 October 2023

Wellington Campus
Pipitea Pōneke Wellington
Aotearoa New Zealand



Retro-futuristic Visions: Looking Back to Look Forward

**The 2nd International Academic Conference of
Yoobee College of Creative Innovation**

2023

25 – 27 October

Wellington Campus

Pipitea, Pōneke Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand

Conference Convenor, Coordinator and Organiser:

Dr Kathryn A. Hardy Bernal, Head of Research & Postgraduate Studies, Yoobee Colleges Limited, New Zealand

Campus Manager and Event Organiser:

Mads Breum Nielsen, Manager Yoobee Colleges Limited, Wellington Campuses, New Zealand

Event Media Representative, Content Creator, and Programme Cover Designer:

Jesika Rose Dropich, New Zealand Management Academies (NZMA), Auckland, New Zealand

Event Graphic Designer (delegate badges): https://www.instagram.com/geeval_/

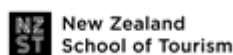
Gino Valencia, Tutor, Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, Auckland, New Zealand

Programme Cover Illustration:

Georges Méliès (Marie-Georges-Jean Méliès b. 1861 – d. 1938, Paris, France), *Square in the Eye*, 1930.

Recreated drawing by Georges Méliès of his preparatory study, *Le Voyage dans La Lune, en plein dans l'œil!!*, for his film, *Le Voyage Dans La Lune (A Trip to the Moon)*, 1902 (public domain):

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Le_Voyage_dans_la_lune.jpg#/media/File:Le_voyage_dans_la_lune_drawing.jpg



Programme

Opening Event: Wednesday 25 October 2023

Wellington Club

88 The Terrace, Wellington CBD, New Zealand

09:00 – 10:00

Arrival and Check-in (Morning Tea and Coffee)

10:00 – 10:15

Welcome

Mads Breum Nielsen

Campus Manager, Yoobee Colleges, Wellington, New Zealand

10:15 – 10:45

Official conference launch

Ana Maria Rivera

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Yoobee Colleges, New Zealand

10:45 – 12:00

Chair: Kathryn A. Hardy Bernal

Isobel Joy Te Aho-White

(Ngāti Kahungungu ki te Wairoa, Rongomaiwahine, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Irakehu)

Invited guest keynote presentation: “Pūrākau Māori in the modern era”

12:00 – 13:00 (Midday – 01:00 p.m.)

Lunch

13:00 – 14:30 (01:00 -02:30 p.m.)

Panel 1

Chair: Stephen Garner

Rachel Wen-Paloutzian and Laura Poladian

Histories and futures colliding: Learning in liminal spaces of archives and rhetoric

Priyan L. Jayamaha

“I walk backwards into the future”: Opportunities for historical storytelling

Carol Xu

Embracing the future: Museum digital learning initiatives at Te Papa Tongarewa and beyond

14:30 – 16:00 (02:30 – 04:00 p.m.)

Bangalore, India: Wednesday 25 October 07:00 – 08:30 a.m.

Panel 2

Chair: Malcolm Doidge

Kiran Gandhi

Passing through the dark spiral: Unveiling the work of Junji Ito

Richard Hardack

The past that never was: Retro-futurism in the work of Philip K. Dick

Alicia Jacob

Towards a sustainable future: Retro-futuristic food representation in The Menu (2022)

16:00 – 17:30 (04:00 – 05:30 p.m.)

Welcome Drinks

Thursday 26 October 2023

UP International College

Wellington Railway, Level 1, 2 Bunny Street, Wellington CBD, New Zealand

09:00 – 10:30

Bologna, Italy: Wednesday 25 October 22:00 – 23:00

Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom: Wednesday 25 October 21:00 – 22:00

Panel 3: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Tim van Eyssen

Rosina Martucci

Dante Alighieri and the Divine Comedy: Between past and future

Chris Deacy

Retro salvations: Nostalgic and wish-fulfilment fantasies and healing narratives in film

Stephen Garner

Graphic media and religious nostalgia

10:00 – 10:30

Morning Tea and Coffee

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:30 – 12:00 Windsor, Ontario, Canada: Wednesday 25 October 17:30 – 19:00 Sydney, New South Wales, Australia 08:30 – 10:00 a.m. | |
| Panel 4: Meeting Room 1 Chair: Richard Hardack | Panel 5: Meeting Room 2 Chair: Mohammad Norouzifard |
| Douglas Kneale <i>The use of memory</i> | Amr van den Adel <i>Securing smart cities in Industry 5.0: An integrated framework for enhancing resilience and robustness</i> |
| Lana L. Ryles <i>Threads of light: Neural networks of vision</i> | Mohammad Norouzifard <i>Detection of OKN in eye-tracking data using a 1D-CNN network</i> |
| Malcolm Doidge <i>Double takes</i> | Fozia Zeeshan <i>Predicting cryptocurrency prices: Assessing accuracy using standard evaluation metrics</i> |

12:00 – 13:00 (Midday – 01:00 p.m.)

Lunch

13:00 – 14:30 (01:00 – 02:30 p.m.)

Panel 6: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Natascha Díaz Cardona

Naomi von Senff

Gothic interpretations of operatic performances through reinterpretation of nostalgia

Ava Fairhall

Fantasy map making: Charting retro-futuristic visions

Nicholas J. Weston

Steam, silk, and spice: Post steampunk and the south seas

14:30 – 16:00 (02:30 – 04:00 p.m.)

Panel 7: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Laurel L. Barr

Donna O'Donnell

The Kiwi experience: Adult reflections on the longer-term effects of participating in high school study tours

Becky Stokes

Breaking up with the movies of the past to save our romantic future

Natascha Díaz Cardona

Unleashing the power of imagery: A dynamic approach to acting education

16:00 – 16:30 (04:00 – 04:30 p.m.)

Afternoon Tea and Coffee

16:30 – 18:00 (04:30 – 06:00 p.m.)

India: Thursday 26 October 09:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Panel 8: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Natascha Díaz Cardona

Kathryn A. Hardy Bernal

La moda Lolita Mexicana y Día de Los Muertos: A Hallowe'en celebration

Areef Shaik and Zewei Li

Embracing indigenous wisdom for adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable fashion design: A case study approach

Aditi Basu

Reaching new heights in the 21st century: Saree diplomacy and Indian soft power

Panel 9: Cancelled

19:00 (07:00 p.m.)

Conference Dinner (Optional Extra): Thistle Inn

3 Mulgrave Street, Thorndon, Wellington, New Zealand

Friday 27 October 2023

UP International College

Wellington Railway, Level 1, 2 Bunny Street, Wellington CBD, New Zealand

10:00 – 10:30

Morning Tea and Coffee

10:30 – 12:00

Panel 10: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Donna O'Donnell

Leigh Quadling-Miernik

Reflections of the first year of the online campus at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation

Laurel L. Barr

Stories of success: Neurodivergence in the tertiary classroom

Tim van Eyssen

Education in data journalism

12:00 – 13:00 (Midday – 01:00 p.m.)

Lunch

13:00 – 14:30 (01:00 – 02:30 p.m.)

New York, New York, United States: Thursday 26 October 20:00 – 21:30

Tokyo, Japan: Friday 27 October 09:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Flagstaff, Arizona, United States: Thursday 26 October 17:00 – 18:30

Panel 11: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Richard Hardack

Hisashi Ozawa

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and retro-futurism

Debra Edgerton

Life extended: Community building, community resistance

14:30 – 16:00 (02:30 – 04:00 p.m.)

Madison, Wisconsin, United States: Thursday 26 October 20:30 – 22:00

Hyderabad, India: Friday 27 October 07:00 – 08:30 a.m.

Panel 12: Meeting Room 1

Chair: Nicholas J. Weston

Jen Dalsen

Looking back at social interactions in online games: What can we learn now?

Kevin Phillips

Space Invaders: Shaping the growth of the gaming industry and its impact as a pop culture icon

Ayush Anand

Negotiating the past for a better future: The city of Revachol in Disco Elysium

Abstracts

Isobel (Izzy Joy) Te Aho-White

(Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Wairoa, Rongomaiwahine, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Irakehu)

Celebrated artist, muralist, graphic designer, musician, and award-winning book illustrator

Pōneke Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand

<https://www.thesapling.co.nz/ga-with-isobel-joy-te-aho-white/>

[Isobel Joy Te Aho-White \(@izzyjoyart\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/izzyjoyart/>

Invited Guest Keynote presentation: Pūrākau Māori in the modern era

Ko Tawhirirangi me Ōteauheke te maunga

Ko Mohaka rāua ko Awa Iti ōku ngā awa

Ko Takitimu te waka

Ko Waipapa-a-Iwi me Ōnuku te marae,

Ko Ngati Pahauwera me Kāti Tarewa te hapū

Ko Ngāti Kahungunu rāua ko Kāi Tahu te iwi

Ko Ngāti Pakehā ki West Country UK me Denmark au

No Whanganui-a-tara e noho ahau

Ko Isobel Joy Te Aho-White tōku ingoa

Tītiro mai, tīhei mauri ora!



“I am an artist of Māori, British and Danish Ancestry. My tribal affiliations are Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Wairoa, and I whakapapa to matakite and healers. I see myself as part of a fabric that is made up of my tupuna – this guides how I experience the world around me. I currently live and freelance in Pōneke/Wellington city and hold a bachelor’s degree (hons) in graphic design majoring in illustration from Massey University.

I’ve always expressed myself through illustrative art, and often work in a variety of mediums, both digital and traditional – ink, watercolour, acrylic, oil and gold/silver leaf, or a combination of these. My experience with technology and networking means that I often find work in the fields of illustration and graphic design.

Most of my work incorporates kowhaiwhai and plantlife that is native to Aotearoa New Zealand and explores themes such as mana wahine/the sacred feminine, kaitiakitanga, te taiao and ancestral healing.”

Reference

Te Aho-White. I. J. (2023). Isobel Joy Te Aho-White: Art and Illustration.

<https://www.izzyjoyart.com/>

Aditi Basu

Independent Researcher

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Reaching new heights in the 21st century: Saree diplomacy and Indian soft power

India is popularly known to possess innumerable cultural assets like Bollywood, Hindustani classical music and dance, *yoga*, art, literature, language, food, and fashion. Under the category of “fashion”, the role of the *saree* (or *sari*) is undeniable. The *saree*, or the Indian single piece of unstitched fabric draped over by a woman, has conquered the world, of late. According to the number of pleats tucked inside the petticoat, the *saree* represents the Indian culture of “unity in diversity”, since different states within the country drape the fabric in different ways.

No other attire can beat the elegance and versatility of the *saree*, which attracts the attention of international fashion designers and gurus, consequently, leading to exhibitions and fairs being organised on foreign lands. As a symbol of Indian womanhood, it signifies the empowerment of women and creation of identity. An instrument of India’s soft power, the *saree* has been explored worldwide as “a site for design innovation and an empowering vessel for self-expression in India today”. Recently, the *saree* has received global impetus after the former prime minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, wore a *saree* when meeting with the Indian diaspora of her country. As political leaders and prominent representatives across the world are seen to wear this traditional South Asian garment in formal and social gatherings, the *saree* is demonstrated to become a progressive fashion statement. Therefore, beyond India, the *saree*, as a “cultural and aesthetic signifier”, adds lustre to the nation’s cultural diplomacy.

Reference

Whitehead, A. (2023, May 30). *The soft power of the sari*. The Wire. <https://thewire.in/world/the-soft-power-of-the-sari>

Aditi Basu is an independent researcher. She holds a Master of Political Science from Jamshedpur Women’s College, Jharkhand, India. Her research interests include Indian Foreign Policy, International Relations, Feminist Power Politics, Soft Power Diplomacy and Climate Diplomacy. She has presented papers on India’s cultural importance and climate initiatives in influencing foreign policy at conferences and workshops in the USA, Canada, Serbia, Croatia, and South Africa. Most recently, she has presented on India’s renewable energy politics in Bangkok, Thailand, and on India’s space diplomacy at the Transplanetary Ecologies Workshop by the Centre for Outer Space Studies, at University College, London, United Kingdom.

Alicia Jacob

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Towards a sustainable future: Retro-futuristic food representation in *The Menu* (2022)

Retro-futuristic representations of food in films are often presented as innovative culinary concepts that integrate technological interventions with foodscapes. These imaginative and futuristic dishes go beyond the boundaries of what is considered practical. Examples range from altered or genetically mutated produce to technologically amplified ways of production and unconventional modes of consumption. Retro-futuristic films showcase artificially manufactured food, such as synthetic noodles and genetically engineered meat, in *Blade Runner* (1982), and in *Back to the Future Part II* (1989), the concept of rehydrated pizza. A more recent production, *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatball* (2009), creates a whimsical and visually stunning foodscape through a malfunctioning technological food producing device. However, food in retro-futuristic films often remains a passing reference that lacks depth.

The Menu (2022) is an American comedy horror film directed by Mark Mylod that revolves around the production and consumption of food in an exclusive restaurant on a private island owned by celebrity chef, Julian Slowik. Although not conceptually a retro-futuristic film, the depicted foodscapes and culinary interventions draw on current food polemics and present a retro-futuristic vision of food production and consumption. This paper analyses food representations in the film, *The Menu* (2022), and draws parallels to a contemporary vision of a sustainable foodscape for the future that relies heavily on the practices of the past.

Alicia Jacob Alicia Jacob is a third-year Doctor of Philosophy research scholar in the Department of English and Cultural Studies at Christ University, Bangalore, India. She received both her master's and bachelor's degrees in English Language and Literature from the University of Calicut, Kerala, India. In 2019, she was awarded the Junior Research Fellowship by the University Grants Commission and has gained two years of experience as an Assistant Professor of English. Her ongoing doctoral research is interdisciplinary and includes the areas of Food Studies and Gender Studies, exploring gender-based and cultural disparities that exist within the terrain of Food Studies. She has presented papers both nationally and internationally and has publications to her credit.

Amr van den Adel

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Securing smart cities in Industry 5.0: An integrated framework for enhancing resilience and robustness

As we move into the era of Industry 5.0, urban landscapes are evolving into technologically advanced smart cities. These cities leverage the power of cyber-physical systems, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT), which promise efficiency and sustainability but also bring forth complex security challenges. This paper presents a comprehensive and innovative framework that directly addresses these challenges to secure smart cities in the Industry 5.0 context.

Recognizing the interdependencies and the critical importance of urban infrastructure, the framework is strategically designed as a layered approach to security. This design accounts for the multifaceted nature of smart city technologies and their inherent vulnerabilities, proposing four key layers: proactive Threat Intelligence, realtime Risk Management, Resilience Planning, and the fostering of public-private partnerships. Proactive Threat Intelligence involves identifying and analysing potential threats before they can cause harm. Realtime Risk Management underscores the need for constant monitoring, quick response, and adaptive measures to manage risks effectively. Resilience Planning provides strategies to prepare for, respond to, and recover from incidents, thereby ensuring the continuous operation of smart city services. Lastly, public-private partnerships are highlighted as essential to ensuring a collaborative and integrated approach to security.

This paper provides a thorough exploration of each layer, including their underlying principles and key elements. It also offers practical examples, illustrating how this framework can be applied in real-world scenarios. Additionally, it discusses potential implementation challenges and proposes solutions. The end goal is to offer a detailed guide that enables stakeholders, urban planners, and policymakers to bolster the security, resilience, and robustness of smart cities in this new era of Industry 5.0.

Dr Amr van den Adel is Senior Lecturer in the School of Computing at the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIS), Auckland, New Zealand. He is an accomplished researcher with a focus on utilizing technology to improve learning, educational IoT systems, fog computing, and the future of industry 5.0. His research has appeared in numerous high-profile journals, including the *Journal of Big Data*, *Journal of Cloud Computing*, and *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*. In his recent publication, "Future of industry 5.0 in society: Human-centric solutions, challenges and prospective research areas", Adel investigates the challenges and opportunities of Industry 5.0, a human-centric model for the future of manufacturing. The article provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of Industry 5.0, its challenges, and potential solutions, providing insight into future research areas in this field.

Areef Shaik

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Zewei Li

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Embracing indigenous wisdom for adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable fashion design: A case study approach

This paper explores the imperative aspects of *adaptability*, *inclusivity*, and *sustainability* in fashion design through the lens of indigenous knowledge. Case studies are presented, demonstrating how two designers integrate the construction methods and working mechanisms of traditional garments into innovative, versatile, and sustainable fashion pieces tailored to meet contemporary customer demands.

The first case study focuses on the development of a one-size-fits-all life jacket inspired by the traditional Indian sari. Designed to cater to flood-affected communities, the garment highlights the significance of considering diverse cultures and body forms for enhanced accessibility and comfort. By incorporating indigenous knowledge from the construction and wearing of the sari into the development of the life jacket, the designer aims to preserve traditional wisdom, enriching future fashion solutions.

The second case study delves into historical Chinese robes and skirts renowned for their ability to accommodate diverse body dimensions. Leveraging this time-tested adaptability, the study explores the development of a transformative duster robe, ingeniously designed to double as a draped shirt. By implementing these ancient principles, the study explores zero-waste pattern cutting techniques, minimizing fabric waste, and prolonging textile life by offering wearers multiple versatile looks.

Embracing indigenous wisdom enables designers to transcend technological boundaries, fostering inclusivity and responsibility in fashion creation. Both case studies exemplify designers' ingenuity in combining conventional approaches with adaptive design principles and sustainability. This harmonious fusion of heritage and innovation shapes a more adaptable, inclusive, and sustainable fashion landscape.

Dr Areef Shaik holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Design from Massey University and is a teaching fellow in fashion design at the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. He has over seven years of international experience in teaching, research, and development of functional apparel. His research interests include product development, functional apparel, and creative patternmaking. Some of his previous research outputs include sensory garments for autistic children, anti-suicide uniforms for UK prisoners, and a multi-purpose backpack for Syrian refugees. His projects focus on improving the quality of life for people with fit and comfort issues, and special needs through design solutions that combine both function and fashion.

Zewei (Michelle) Li is a Doctor of Philosophy candidate at Massey University, College of Creative Arts, New Zealand, and a tutor in the School of Design Innovation at Victoria University of Wellington. Passionate about pushing the boundaries of sustainable fashion, her research journey centres on the innovative realms of creative fashion patternmaking and 3D seamless weaving. With an insatiable curiosity and a drive for environmental responsibility, she delves deep into the intersections of fashion, technology, and sustainability, seeking to revolutionize the industry's practices. Through her academic pursuit, she aims to bridge the gap between aesthetics and eco-consciousness, exploring novel ways to reduce waste and minimize the environmental impact of fashion production.

Ava Fairhall

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Fantasy map making: Charting retro-futuristic visions

Near the heart of retro-futurism lies the enchanting realm of fantasy map making, where imaginary worlds are brought to life through captivating cartography. This presentation offers a broad overview of the processes and the valuable insights gained from personal experiences. Moreover, the presentation delves into the technical and creative considerations that aspiring cartographers must keep in mind when embarking on their own artistic endeavours, from conceptualization to refining intricate details.

A significant aspect of fantasy map making is the interplay between world-building and storytelling. The presentation examines the age-old debate of whether to prioritize the map or the narrative when developing a fantasy world. It presents contrasting perspectives, considering the merits of crafting the world's geography through the narrative versus allowing the map to inspire the story and advocates for individual creativity, acknowledging that either approach can lead to remarkable outcomes.

Ava Fairhall teaches Narrative Studies for the Bachelor of Animation and has taught 3D animation and modelling for the Diploma of Animation at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, Wellington, New Zealand. She has published a couple of short stories and has designed maps that are published in books for two local fiction authors, Eileen Mueller and Denika Mead. Currently, she is in the final stages of publishing her own fantasy novel. Her interests are diverse, from writing fiction, world building, and roleplaying, to baking bread, biscuits, fudge and muffins, bush walks, sketching, DIY, gardening, and medieval history. She loves learning and taking a crash course in an interesting topic, be that in designing worlds and characters, or learning about science or history, and then incorporating those ideas into crafting a story.

Ayush Anand

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Negotiating the past for a better future: The city of Revachol in *Disco Elysium*

Disco Elysium (DE), a role-playing, murder-mystery game (RPG), sets itself apart from the canon of video games by beginning after major world-defining events have transpired. It investigates the fragility of human life and questions the authority of the state: The protagonist, a police officer, is always disrespected and could die due to extreme discomfort, sitting in a chair. The protagonist is our *tabula rasa*, unburdened by his own past. Self-induced amnesia, though a convenient trope and at times cliché, becomes an important device. The protagonist is free from the restraints of history, allowing him to look at the past more objectively.

Lacan's mirror stage will be employed here to understand how the self gets created alongside the polyphonic voices that exist within, as well as the characters and objects around the city, all of which have a voice of their own. There are game mechanics that help in the creation of this new self; for example, the Thought Cabinet captures this essence, by internalising thoughts as they arise throughout the gameplay; although, there is a limit to the number of thoughts that might be internalised, essentially, hinting at the limit of the human psyche. The inner self is constructed on the basis of understanding the world by isolating thoughts, which encapsulates them and creating its own worldview. The realm of DE and the psyche of the protagonist can be best explained as fragmented, and, at times, these worlds seem shattered beyond repair. However, exploring the world helps the player grapple with the city's past as well as the protagonist's search for a personal identity. It is the alignment of personal history with the grand narrative of the city which will unlock its future, which is in conflict due to political forces as the whole world is under the threat of a mysterious entity, Pale. Similarly, the inner world of our protagonist is plagued by self-destructive thoughts of suicide and self-harm. Nonetheless, there is a glimmer of hope for both the worlds, a chance of redemption at the brink of destruction, which could implode any second. This paper is an attempt to understand such a relation and to link it to the real-life conditions of post-socialist countries, which were once part of the USSR.

Ayush Anand completed his bachelor's degree at The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and is currently a master's student at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, India. He is captivated by video games, which have long been a part of his life, and integrates this passion with his critical literary studies. He believes that, although video games are at times portrayed in a negative light, they have become one of the new media forms that, through storytelling, expand horizons of perception in an attempt to understand dystopian worlds with a sense of hope.

Becky Stokes

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Breaking up with the movies of the past to save our romantic future

This study investigates how beliefs obtained from romantic movies have affected the real-life dating experiences of adolescent audiences as they age. By reflecting on the past, it allows us to understand the long-term effects that romantic films have on adolescent audiences. This research assists teachers in developing an effective curriculum plan for RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) classes. Additionally, parents can gain a better understanding of how their children interpret what they watch, leading to more effective communication.

This study employs qualitative methods, using both an electronic survey and one-to-one interviews, and inviting adults (age 18-35) to reflect on their early dating ideas, and the influence that romantic movies had on them in their pre-teen/teen years (approx. age 11-14). The online survey offered access to participants across New Zealand, receiving 91 responses. The survey was followed by 11 semi-structured interviews conducted in person. The combination of surveys and interviews provided the opportunity to gather a broad range of data and for participants to share deeper and more personal insights into the research topic. The evidence from the survey and interviews suggests that the influence movies have on adolescent audiences can be broken down into two main areas. The first is on-screen representation, with participants expressing beliefs formed about what was socially accepted when it came to physical appearance, sexuality and interracial relationships. The second is observed behaviour, such as communication styles, conflict resolution, and gender dynamics. Participants expressed how both of these areas of influence shaped their beliefs about what was 'normal' behaviour when establishing, and during, a relationship as well as who deserved to receive love.

By looking to the past, this study establishes a guide to understanding how romantic depictions in movies influence our real-life beliefs and experiences. New Zealand educators can use this knowledge to better equip students with the skills to critically analyze relationships presented in films and challenge unrealistic or unhealthy ideas and expectations. This approach empowers young individuals to navigate real-life relationships with a more balanced and informed perspective.

Rebecca (Becky) Stokes is a fulltime lecturer at Whitecliffe College, Auckland, New Zealand, where she educates and mentors students in digital technologies, motion graphics, and design thinking. She has previously held similar positions at Auckland University of Technology and Yoobee Colleges. Becky holds a Bachelor of Communication Studies in Digital Media and Advertising, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Communication Studies, from Auckland University of Technology. Her experience extends beyond academia. She has worked in London as a Content Marketing Coordinator at WATG and Wimberly Interiors, and her freelance business, specialising in videography, has led to collaborations with Bali Zoo, Young Publishers Society of London, and Corinthian Sports.

Chang Xu

Independent Researcher

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Embracing the future: Museum digital learning initiatives at Te Papa Tongarewa and beyond

In the ever-changing landscape of the twenty-first century, museums are faced with the challenge of educating and entertaining audiences while embracing rapid technological advancements. To address this challenge, the concept of “edutainment” has emerged, defining museums that successfully merge educational and entertainment elements (Rahimi et al., 2022). This convergence is made possible by leveraging digital technologies that facilitate the integration of diverse resources and tools, creating interactive and immersive learning experiences for visitors while connecting them to the taonga¹ that museums care for.

Digital innovations, such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), touchscreens, 3D imaging, multimedia presentations, and mobile applications have gained global recognition for their transformative potential in enhancing educational experiences within museum settings (Fagan, 2023). The popularity of international museum digital learning programs underscores the widespread interest in utilizing technology to engage students and foster creativity (Tang et al., 2022). These programs prioritize collaboration between museums and educational institutions, utilize multimodal and embodied environments, and strive to continuously improve the overall learning experiences of visitors.

Among the pioneers in this endeavour, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, situated in Wellington, has taken a leading role by implementing two ground-breaking educational initiatives known as Hīnāture Learning Laboratory and Raranga Matihiko. These initiatives are specifically designed to strengthen digital learning and promote cultural understanding among students. By employing technology as a medium to enhance the educational experience, Te Papa enables students to interact with digital platforms and resources in an immersive and interactive manner.

This presentation looks back to the roots of traditional museum education while looking forward to the limitless possibilities that technology offers. By harnessing the power of digital innovation, museums like Te Papa are shaping the future of education and ensuring that learning remains an exciting and enlightening journey for generations to come.

Note

Taonga: (noun) treasure, anything prized – applied to anything considered to be of value, including socially or culturally valuable objects, resources, phenomena, ideas, and techniques.

References

- Fagan, T. (2023). Weaving learning and digital technologies at New Zealand museums. *Childhood Education* 99(1), 24–31.
- Rahimi, F., Boyd, J., Eiserman, J., Levy, R., & Kim, B. (2022). Museums beyond physical walls: An exploration of virtual-reality-enhanced experience in an exhibition-like space. *Virtual Reality*, 1–18.

Tang, C., Mao, S., Naumann, S., and Xing, Z. (2022). Improving student creativity through digital technology products: A literature review. *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 44, 1–15.

Dr Chang (Carol) Xu completed her Doctor of Philosophy at Toi Rauwhāangi College of Creative Arts, Massey University, Aotearoa, New Zealand. Her doctoral research centred on fostering greater involvement of creative practitioners in children’s museum and gallery education while promoting collaboration among various roles within art museums. Chang’s passion lies in the realm of collaborative and interdisciplinary research, with a particular focus on digital transformation and innovation within museum education.

Chris Deacy

University of Kent, Canterbury, England, United Kingdom

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Retro salvations: Nostalgic and wish-fulfilment fantasies and healing narratives in film

The aim of this paper is to examine whether there is a direct, causal relationship between nostalgic yearning and future hope with specific reference to the possibilities engendered by cinema. It will explore whether our identities are constructed out of ways we are predilected to eulogize particular eras, as representing a “golden age”, with the loss we feel in the present, both a corroboration that life was in some sense more wholesome and edifying, “back then”, and also that we might be able to reclaim that past, if only temporarily, in the liminal space of a favourite television show or film.

It does not matter, I would argue, whether the past “happened” in the way that we witness on screen. The media products fill a hole and enable us to sustain the loss that our present experience is engendering, with visual cultures especially amenable to the task of recycling and propagating nostalgic moods. Various nostalgic emotions are triggered as the past on screen becomes indelibly linked to, colonized even, by one’s own biography, prompting not only a longing to return to those purportedly halcyon days but the regret that the past was not different or better than it was in actuality. We are taken somewhere that we want to recapture and (re-)live, with all of the capacity for healing or restoration that is afforded. There is, therefore, nothing passive about this re-engagement with the past as it becomes, rather, a means for the creative refashioning of the past in our own image, in which we are taken somewhere we not only want to go to but, in going there, we ache to return to.

The notion of “nostalgia-as-religion” will be examined with reference to films, including *Grease* (Randal Kleiser, 1978), *Back to the Future* (Zemeckis, 1985), *Reminiscence* (Joy, 2021) and *Greatest Days* (Giedroyc, 2023), in terms of how a combination of memory, history and nostalgia all coalesce in a way that mediates our relationship to the past. The suggestion will be made that, in keeping with Fred Davis’s seminal work on Nostalgia from the late 1970s, nostalgia is far from illusory, or a delusional construct, if it is also “deeply implicated in the sense of who we are, what we are about, and... whither we go”, as well as one of the ways in which we undertake the “never-ending work of constructing, maintaining, and reconstructing our identities” (Davis, 1979, p. 31).

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Dr Chris Deacy (PhD, University of Wales) is Reader in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Kent, UK. He works at the interface between religion and popular culture. Publications include *Screen Christologies: Redemption and the Medium of Film* (University of Wales, 2001), *Screening the Afterlife: Theology, Eschatology and Film* (Routledge, 2012), and *Christmas as Religion: Rethinking Santa, the Secular, and the Sacred* (Oxford University Press, 2016). He has completed a monograph on nostalgia and runs a weekly podcast called *Nostalgia Interview with Chris Deacy*, as well as a weekly film review programme on KMTV, Kent, UK.

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Life extended: Community building, community resistance

An ecological community is a group of actually or potentially interacting species living in the same place. A community is bound together by the network of influences that species have on one another. Ecologists describe types of interactions that depict interconnection among species. Primary interactions include mutualism (both species benefit), commensalism (one benefits, one unaffected), competition (each affects negatively), and parasitism/predation (one benefits, one is disadvantaged). Using this scientific ecological system of understanding community, I reference these categories to examine the complex relationships between African Americans' contribution to the building of America and the benefits and disadvantages caused by this affiliation. Through a series of collected and painted images from freshwater ecosystems, I will create a body of visual imagery that maps how social structures mirror those of ecological communities.

This paper compares parallel interactions among microscopic organisms with human interactions and hierarchy. I focus on understanding interactions between the macroscopic green algae that grow in freshwater streams and diatoms that live on them. Alga-like *Cladophora* hosts a complex epiphytic assemblage comprised largely of diatoms. Ecological interactions within this matrix span the range from mutualistic to parasitic and can change through seasons. I juxtapose the concepts used to describe ecological interactions as a framework to illustrate and depict, through visual media, the relationships between African Americans, their contributions to the construction of America, and their interactions with other communities in the United States.

Cymbella/*Epithemia* diatoms are reminiscent of images of overview diagrams of slave ships. Viewed side by side, they evoke parallels between the relationships between slave labor and New America and the relationships between *Cladophora* and potential symbiosis with *Epithemia* (a diatom that utilizes resources from the *Cladophora*). My paper connects race and hierarchical class systems with ecological community interactions. Connecting organic community identifications with African Americans' relationships to the construction of the United States using microscopic visual images of *Epithemia*, I show the parallel of connection of the current with the past and demonstrate how past human relationships reoccur in present times.

Debra Edgerton is Assistant Professor in the School of Art at Northern Arizona University. Her work speaks to issues concerning identity, perception, race politics, and environmental justice. She received her MFAs at the San Francisco Art Institute and Vermont College in Interdisciplinary Art. She has received numerous grants and awards for her work, including the Provost Award for Faculty Excellence in Global Learning, Commission on the Status of Women Outstanding Achievement and Contribution to Diversity, Arizona Commission on the Arts Research and Development Grant, the VanDenburg Grant, Contemporary Forum Artist Grant and, most recently, the 2022 McAllister Fellowship and Scholarly and Creative Activity Grant.

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The Kiwi experience: Adult reflections on the longer-term effects of participating in high school study tours

For many years school children in Aotearoa/New Zealand have participated in experiences outside the classroom. Individuals often reminisce about their school days and cherish memories of their school trips, people and places visited. School trips have now expanded and include international study experiences. However, despite these fond and cherished memories, little is known about the longer-term effects of these trips. The purpose of this research was to explore the longer-term effects on high-school students (five to 25 years after their trip). A constructivist grounded theory approach was utilised. Semi-structured interviews allowed both the students and teachers the opportunity to personally reflect on their individual experiences and nostalgic memories to be explored.

The findings from this research demonstrate that international study tours have a diverse range of lasting influences, serving as spheres for personal transformation, fostering cultural understanding and opportunities for participants to shape their individual and social identity. Longer-term, these life-skills and personal characteristics are sustained and influence educational choices, employability, and career success. Furthermore, affordability emerges as a key factor reflecting the uniqueness, challenges, and complexities of the international trips from both a teaching and participant perspective. From the research, the theory of “it’s the difference that makes a difference” was developed, which encapsulates the profound and differential impact of international study tours on adult New Zealanders who took part in high-school study tours earlier in their lives.

Dr Donna M. O'Donnell is employed in Tourism training at the New Zealand School of Tourism (NZST) and is the official Representative for Tourism on the Research Committee of Yoobee College of Creative Innovation. She has been dedicated to the tertiary education sector for over twenty-five years. In 2012, she won the faculty award for Excellence in Teaching at Auckland University of Technology, where she was tenured for sixteen years. Donna is a grounded-theorist researcher, with a specialisation in Tourism Education, for which she holds a Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Tourism Studies (first-class Honours), and Bachelor of Arts. Overall, her research prioritises the perspectives of students, tourism educators, and associated stakeholders, to consider meaningful experiences.

Douglas Kneale

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The use of memory

I begin with four establishing shots to get our bearings.

Shot 1: Ancient Greek thought is that we don't move forward facing the future; we actually face the past, with our back to the future. We cannot see the future; we can only look at the past and, even then, only through a glass darkly.

Shot 2: The English poet, Wordsworth, writing his epic autobiography, *The Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind*, takes as a central metaphor the image of himself as a boy stealing a rowboat. As he rises upon each stroke of the oars, he faces where he has come from, but his back is pointed at where he is headed. He rows – and writes – with his back to the fore and his eye on the aft. Rowing backwards is what autobiography looks like.

Reverse shot 1: But then we have the 18th-century optical device called a Claude glass. Named after the French painter, Claude Lorrain, the glass was a small convex mirror that artists would hold up to capture the reflection of a particular landscape. Tinted a dark colour, it was sometimes called a black mirror, the title that the Montreal band Arcade Fire chose for a 2007 song about the self and its reflections in the world today.

Reverse shot 2: And, in 1968, the Canadian perceptual artist, Jack Chambers, experienced a Claude moment when, as he was driving eastbound on highway 401 in Ontario, he saw the landscape stretching out behind him in his rear-view mirror. Taking a snapshot from the highway overpass, he turned that original mirror image into his 6 x 8 foot painting, *401 Towards London*.

How do we reconcile the shot-reverse-shot paradox that the past is something in front of us, yet always already behind us?

As we orienteer through the Southern Alps of the imagination, I propose to set some cultural fore-and-back-bearings to give us 180-degree reference points that bring past and future shots into the frame. "The burden of the past" may lead to an anxiety of influence, to a future repetition-with-a-difference, or to a deliberate and absolute forgetting that defines modernity. What, then, is the use of memory?

"This is the use of memory", says T. S. Eliot: "For liberation... liberation / From the future as well as the past".

Dr Douglas Kneale has served as Provost and Interim President of the University of Windsor, Dean of Humanities at Brock University, and Chair of English at Western University, Canada. His research spans English Romanticism, literary history, critical theory, psychoanalysis, and rhetoric. His books include *Monumental Writing: Aspects of Rhetoric in Wordsworth's Poetry*; *Romantic Aversions: Aftermaths of Classicism in Wordsworth and Coleridge*; and (Ed.), *The Mind in Creation: Essays on English Romantic Literature in Honour of Ross G. Woodman*; and his articles have appeared in *PMLA*, *ELH*, *Studies in Romanticism*, *Modern Philology*, *ELN*, *Ariel*, *English Studies in Canada*, *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*, *Psychoanalytic Books*, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, *European Romantic Review*, *Journal of Contemporary Thought*, *Criticism*, *Review of English Studies*. His current work in progress, tentatively entitled *Common Humanities*, draws on his academic and administrative experiences in relation to culture and the university today.

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Predicting cryptocurrency prices: Assessing accuracy using standard evaluation metrics

Cryptocurrency is a digital form of currency that operates on a decentralized network, meaning its value is not controlled by a central authority. However, the price of cryptocurrencies can also be determined by market sentiment and supply and demand. A blockchain, which is essentially a digital ledger that maintains track of all cryptocurrency transactions in a secure and transparent manner, is used to capture cryptocurrency transactions.

The market capitalization of cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin, Ethereum, Tether, and Ripple has reached hundreds of billions of dollars in recent years. Due to its high volatility, investing in cryptocurrency can be hazardous, despite its popularity. Consequently, forecasting cryptocurrency prices, volatility, and indexes has become a topic of significant interest among academics, investors, and financial institutions.

There are numerous techniques for forecasting cryptocurrencies, including technical analysis, fundamental analysis, and machine-learning-based methods. The field of forecasting cryptocurrency indexes using machine or deep learning, as well as predicting cryptocurrency volatility, has been generally neglected by researchers. To address this gap, this research examines the demand for forecasting cryptocurrencies and evaluates the performance of various metrics for assessing the accuracy of forecasting models. It emphasizes the absence of standardized evaluation metrics and the need for additional research into forecasting prices, indexes, and volatility, using machine or deep learning. Therefore, this study contributes to the field by focusing on the evaluation of accuracy when using standard assessment metrics such as mean absolute error (MAE), root mean square error (RMSE), accuracy (R2), mean absolute percentage error (MAPE), and correlation coefficient (r2). By evaluating the accuracy of forecasting models with standardized assessment metrics, we hope to contribute to the field of cryptocurrency forecasting and shed light on the most effective methods for predicting cryptocurrency prices, indexes, and volatility.

Fozia Zeeshan teaches Software Engineering at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, Christchurch, New Zealand. She is currently undertaking her Doctor of Philosophy at Lincoln University, Canterbury, New Zealand. Her doctorate explores the prediction of cryptocurrency prices and indices using AI, deep learning, and machine learning. She holds a Master of Computer Sciences from Arid Agriculture University, Lahore, Pakistan, a Master of Science (Computer Sciences) from Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan, Punjab, Pakistan, and a double graduate degree, a Bachelor of Computer Science from BZU, and a Bachelor of Education from the University of Education, Lahore, Pakistan. Before joining Yoobee Colleges, Fozia was a public graduate college Associate Professor of IT in Sahiwal, Pakistan, Bachelor of Science Programme Supervisor, Exam Controller, and IT Department Head. Fozia co-chaired the College Council and Admissions.

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Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and retro-futurism

This paper aims to re-evaluate Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818, rev. 1831) from a retro-futuristic perspective by observing its visions of the future and influences of these visions on subsequent examples of utopian and dystopian literature.

Frankenstein has established its status as a classic of science fiction and has repeatedly been discussed in association with utopian and dystopian literature. However, its vision of the future is not often examined by critics. One of the reasons is that, unlike another of Shelley's novels, *The Last Man* – which, because of its prophecy of the pandemic of the 21st century, has recently been re-evaluated as a dystopian classic – *Frankenstein* is not a story set in the future but in the same age. However, *Frankenstein* is certainly full of hopes and fears for the future, one of which can be found in Doctor Victor Frankenstein's nightmare of a future in which human beings will be threatened by the descendants of the monsters he creates, as “a race of devils... propagated upon the earth, who might make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror. Had I right, for my own benefit, to inflict this curse upon everlasting generations?”, he asks (Volume 3, Chapter 3).

This paper positions *Frankenstein* within a retro-futuristic context by analysing its vision of the future, while observing its position on gender, sexuality and race, and comparing the novel with other important utopian and dystopian works through these lenses.

Dr Hisashi Ozawa is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Letters at Hosei University, Japan. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy from King's College, London. He specializes in twentieth-century English literature and utopian writing in the modern and present-day eras. In 2014, Ozawa won the Second Peter Edgerly Firchow Memorial Essay Prize in Aldous Huxley Studies, and the 30th Fukuhara Award (Research Grant Division) from the Fukuhara Memorial Fund for the Studies of English and American Literature in 2022. His articles and chapters have appeared in journals such as the *Aldous Huxley Annual* and *Studies in Victorian Culture* and his books include *Orientalism and Reverse Orientalism in Literature and Film* (Routledge, 2021). He is the co-translator into Japanese of *An American Utopia* by Fredric Jameson et al., and *Fat Boys* by Sander L. Gilman.

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Looking back at social interactions in online games: What can we learn now?

From LAN parties to MMORPGs, how we engage and participate in gameplay is transformed by technological advancements in virtual environments. Players have more freedom to express themselves through personalized characters and connect with each other online. This technological evolution in gameplay systems means players are no longer restricted by a single console or physical communities to play games together. However, what led players to gain this type of freedom is the result of developers and designers spending years understanding, reworking, and revisiting the underlying social mechanisms built within their games.

Early gameplay research by scholars reveals how MMORPGs like *World of Warcraft* provide spaces for players to learn from each other. More recently, other researchers have explored ways that popular games such as *Fortnite* have opened the door for various communities of practice. However, these online environments are not without challenge or concern, with groups questioning whether these titles provide more harm than good. What happens when players don't get along with each other? Are these environments suitable for all ages? How are communities forming guidelines and to what degree? These answers are largely answered through trial and error over the past few decades.

This presentation outlines the evolution of different gameplay systems and social interaction within the past forty years, with a closer examination at titles ranging from *World of Warcraft* to *Fortnite*. A closer look at how these games encourage social interaction, the challenges faced during the early days of online gameplay, and what future developers might learn from these experiences is explored at length.

Dr Jennifer Dalsen graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction. Her dissertation focused on games-based learning for individuals with disabilities in informal environments. She has served as a disability expert for several organizations and continues to advocate for more accessible services. Her most book-chapter, "A history of disability in gaming character design", is featured in the publication, *Gaming Disability*.

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La moda Lolita Mexicana y día de los muertos: A Hallowe'en celebration

The image of a grinning skull wearing a large, feathered hat is ubiquitous in Mexico. The popularised figure of Catrina, *la calavera* ("the skull"), first appeared as an illustration by the Mexican political satirist and lithographer, José Guadalupe Posada, in about 1910, and was later appropriated by the radical Mexican artist, Diego Rivera. *La Catrina Calavera* has become a mascot of *Día de Los Muertos*, or Day of the Dead. *Día de Los Muertos* is a time of remembrance and celebration of those who have passed to the afterlife, and a chance for the souls of the deceased to revisit their loved ones in the earthly realm. Associated with the Catholic feast days of All Saints and All Souls, as well as Hallowe'en, *Día de Los Muertos* has also evolved from pre-Hispanic traditions. The customs of the festival have thus emerged from the syncretism of colonial and indigenous belief systems.

Resonating from this hybrid landscape is the alternative fashion-based identity of the subcultural Mexican Gothic Lolita. Developed from Japanese streetstyle foundations, the Mexican Gothic Lolita style draws from the original model in weaving together sartorial sensibilities of the Rococo, Romantic, and Victorian eras, historical mourning dress, twentieth century goth style, and neoromantic, neogothic fashion movements. However, it has evolved to reflect its own cultural flavour. The Mexicanised example introduces an eclectic fusion of local indigenous, historical, and contemporary influences, inspired by Mesoamerican, Spanish colonial, Catholic, Gothic, Baroque, and Hispanic iconographies, motifs, and spiritualities.

This research stems from my completed doctoral thesis, which utilized ethnographic field studies and surveys, undertaken in Mexico and online, in order to recognize the contributions of the subculture's participants, to hear their voices, and discuss their inspirations in context. Also explored were the ways in which the Mexican movement reflects, and differs from, the philosophies of the original Japanese movement. This paper addresses some of those aspects, while analysing complex symbolism embedded in the innovative subcultural expressions of *La Catrina Lolita* and the Gothic Lolita in the Mexican environment.

Dr Kathryn A. Hardy Bernal is Head of Research and Postgraduate Studies at Yoobee Colleges, incorporating Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, South Seas School of Film and Television, New Zealand School of Tourism, Elite School of Beauty and Spa, and the Cut Above Academy. She is the convenor of the international academic conference, *Retro-futuristic Visions: Looking Back to Look Forward*. She is a critical theorist in the fields of art, design, fashion, film, subculture, gender studies, psychoanalytical anthropology, and cultural history; publisher of international book chapters and academic journal articles; and has had over thirty years' involvement in the arts sector, including tertiary teaching, editorial management, and curatorial practice. She was previously tenured at Auckland University of Technology as Programme Leader for the Department of Fashion and Textiles and Coordinator of Contextual and Theoretical Studies.

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Space Invaders: Shaping the growth of the gaming industry and its impact as a pop culture icon

This paper explores the significance of *Space Invaders*, a ground-breaking video game created by Tomohiro Nishikado in 1978. It delves into its historical context, analysing how its introduction revolutionised the gaming industry by providing simple yet influential concepts and gaming mechanics that have become a staple in the field. Also highlighted is the game's broader impact as a pop culture icon, permeating various aspects of society through references in media, fashion, and art. Discussion is focussed on how *Space Invaders* has become a recognisable symbol, bridging the gap between gaming enthusiasts and the general public. Ultimately, this paper celebrates the game's lasting legacy, not only as inspiration for subsequent game developers but also in shaping the growth of the multi-billion-dollar gaming industry we see today.

Kevin Phillips is a lecturer in 3D and Visual Effects at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, Auckland, New Zealand. Having a career background in both the IT and digital arts industries since the early 1990s, he has been teaching creative skills and delivering technical training in these fields for over two decades. His research examines the historical relevance of game development and design with an emphasis on the preservation of vintage home computing technology. Outside of the educational environment, he is passionate about preserving vintage computer games and gaming history, and actively develops and documents personal games software using old 8-bit technology. Kevin's work has been published in the two books: Warner, S., Phillips, K., & Albee, T. (2007). *Essential Lightwave V9: The fastest and easiest way to master LightWave 3D*. Jones & Bartlett Publishers; Beckwith, W., Warner, S., & Wood, R. (Eds.). (2004). *LightWave 3D 8: 1001 tips & tricks*. Wordware Publishing, Inc.

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Passing through the dark spiral: Unveiling the work of Junji Ito

This paper examines the macabre world of renowned Japanese manga artist Junji Ito and his influence on my own work and perspective on the human condition as a visual artist.

Junji Ito (b. July 31, 1963, Gifu Prefecture, Japan) is a renowned Japanese manga artist and author, known for his contributions to the horror genre. His works often explore the grotesque, surreal, and psychological aspects of fear, leaving readers with a lingering sense of unease.

The allure of Junji Ito has always resided in the deepest recesses of my mind but gravitated towards me as I was going through a transition with my own art practice while discovering more about what sustains my creative vitality. While being mesmerised by his elegant line work, I found a connection with his troubled characters navigating the perplexing world around them while struggling to distance themselves from decisions that lead to horrific consequences.

I took the opportunity to meet Junji Ito at the Overload Anime expo in 2019 and to my delight I discovered a shy, kind, giggling to himself artist who wholeheartedly embraced the warm community that had found solace and inspiration in his work. The work of Junji Ito doesn't shy away from the cataclysmic dark ending, while my presentation sheds light on hope, creative sustainability and the collective conversation that brings us together.

Kiran Gandhi is the Team Leader for the Bachelor of Animation and Bachelor of Software Engineering programmes at Yoobee Colleges Wellington campus. Kiran has been invested in the creative education sector for twenty-five years, dividing his energy towards tertiary institutions and advocating for marginalized communities. Before Yoobee, Kiran was both the Team Leader for M. A. D., the Marketing and Design team at The Learning Connexion, and Art Tutor for their Correctional Facilities art programme where he worked one to one with learners with varied sentences. Kiran is no stranger to diverse learner types and has had significant experience in the Mental Health sector, reconnecting learners and artists to their practice during their periods of unwellness. This was exercised while he was a tutor for Pablos Art Studios, a not-for-profit Community Creative Space.

Kiran has taught a variety of degree level disciplines from Graphic Design to Moving Image production. Of these, one of his highlights has been Lecturing on the Critical Studies course for four years at WelTec. Kiran's creative practice involves a prolific cycle of traditional drawing, graphic fine liner work and painting. He is heavily informed by popular culture, specifically Cyberpunk, Horror and Neo-noir themes. Currently, his creative philosophy is to sustain his inner "Stranger Things" persona, the kid who would draw enthusiastically with his mates after watching cool movies and a day out biking.

Lana L. Ryles

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Threads of light: Neural networks of vision

By the time of the Upper Palaeolithic era, the period in which societal traits such as cave painting appeared, the mind had become intimately fused with the development of magic, shamanism, and medicine. In the evolution of the hominid, the numinous mind was “delicately interwoven into an intricate feedback circuit between brain and behavior that guided the continual modification of human consciousness” (Oubre, 2013, p. 14). Upper Palaeolithic art revealed the human dimension for self-reflection, symbolic thought, and the capacity for cognitive abstraction. The “numinous savants” of early societies offered insights into the nonmaterial and biological origins of human consciousness.

The origins of transcendental or mystical perception can be understood in context with Rudolf Otto’s concept of the *numinosum*, as he implies that the numinous is “independent of its existence as an outer phenomenon” and, in this sense, is defined as the “supernatural” or “divine”, a “deeply spiritual or mystical effect” (Oubre, 2013, p. 7). The graphic systems of prehistoric caves embody biological depictions of neuroaesthetic derivations and are the locus, and meeting point, of the numinous. This paper looks to the historical origins of the numinous by examining ancient rock art, and examining the links between the neuroscience of hallucination, geometry, and abstract art to biological geometric systems, namely cave art and the supernatural.

The making of formal images and patterns creates a conceptual and practical relationship between the arts and sciences. This fusion of mind and vision is present in the shamanic works of Brion Gysin and his co-invention, *Dreamachine*, which enables experimentation using the flicker effect, whereby the eye is stimulated by a flickering light that produces hallucinatory geometric patterns.

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Lana L. Ryles is a practicing and exhibiting artist who lives and works in Sydney. She is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Sydney under the primary supervision of Dr Madeleine Kelly and Dr Ian Greig. Her latest research stems from her PhD thesis in Visual Arts, which explores the intersections of art, neuroscience, and philosophy through her painting practice.

Laurel L. Barr

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Stories of success: Neurodivergence in the tertiary classroom

At Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, teaching staff members have followed the journey of a contingency of students working on their Bachelor of Animation studies and have taken time to reflect on their experiences. This programme has demonstrated high achievements for our neurodiverse students. Through research, we have recognized that neurodivergent students often fall through the cracks in tertiary study and that dropouts are prevalent, whereas we have found that our preparations and systems have allowed students to be very successful.

This presentation highlights results of case studies and responses to interviews, allowing for us to pinpoint elements of best practice while analysing stories of success. Through feedback, advice is given regarding strategies we bring to the inclusive classroom. This research looks at the wider scope of student support and gives insight into the learning journey that students take from the past, from the childhood classroom onwards, that may later affect tertiary student outcomes. Through reflections and awareness this presentation shares what is working regarding new directions for the student environment.

Laurel L. Barr is the official Representative for Animation on the Research Committee at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation. She is a regularly exhibiting artist and teacher of twenty-five years. She holds double Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees, in Painting, and in Art Education, and a Master of Science in Art Education from Syracuse University, New York. She currently lectures on the Bachelor of Animation for which she teaches professional practices, contexts, animation history, creative studio, investigative and capstone classes, as well as working with Honours students. Her strengths and knowledge are mainly in creativity, academic writing and practices, theory, art history, and fine arts skills. Her research is in art production in a variety of art fields, including conceptual art, installation, and traditional art practices. The major focus of her research is how science and art intermingle, particularly in the field of health communications and the doctor/patient relationship.

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Reflections of the first year of the online campus at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation

In its inaugural year of 2022, the Online Campus at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation saw quick growth, which resulted in changes and development. During this time, the Online Campus focused on building a positive and engaging learning environment as well as building a collaborative working relationship between the team members. From processes to actions and extending to learning about ourselves and our operations, the Online Campus built it all. A small qualitative research project was designed in early 2023 to gather valuable insights to support the campus with direction and goal setting for the future.

Through a five-question survey, all staff linked to the Online Campus were asked to reflect on 2022. The questions centred on the following areas: their role and their processes, relationship building with students and colleagues, and creating a supportive learning environment. This presentation outlines the findings of this investigation and closes with a “where to from here”.

Leigh Quadling-Miernik is an official member of the Research Committee at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation. She has worked in education in various roles, as teacher, teacher trainer, trainer of trainers, learning support, and programme development, in various countries. She completed her Master of Education (e-learning) in 2017 at Massey University and is currently progressing towards her Doctorate in Professional Practice through Capable NZ/Otago Polytech. Her passion is in “creating better learning”, both for the student and for the tutor. Her research interest is in professional identity development of a tertiary educator.

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Double takes

This paper introduces the “Janus problem” from Hito Steyerl’s recent essay, “Mean images” (2023). Janus was a two-headed Roman deity who looked back to the past and also forward to the future. I will discuss this metaphor in relation to digital algorithms forming an Artificial Intelligence (AI) inflected “retro-futuristic vision”. This vision is generated by the contemporary visioning technology, “stable diffusion” (SD), which provides a randomised, algorithmic appropriation at pixel level collaging digital images archived in cyberspace. These are then reimaged using human instructions written in the future tense.

The Janus metaphor also concerns embedding incongruous visual digital mistakes, for example, a 2D reconstruction showing two heads on one body. Unlike romantic incongruity associated with Steampunk retro-futuristic visions, SD’s Frankenstein-like collaging provokes a gothic flavoured polemic. It poses the question: “Is black box AI a utilitarian innovation, a technological sublime beneficial to many, or a transcendent system of corporate extortion extracted from the unwitting?” Perhaps SD visioning is simply a paratactical mode of retro-futuristic imaging in a collage-like manner.

What can be said to exist ontologically, regarding SD imaging, is that these possess no indexical reference to a specific object/subject. Regarding SD as a retro-futuristic vision renderer, the visual metaphor “Janus face” also renders archived data weirdly — an uncanny virtual ontology — a generative mode of doubling and random assignment gesturing toward a future of recursive human exploitation.

This presentation takes retro-futurism in an idiosyncratic direction, an autobiographical double-take framed by a ‘gothicky’ vignette, an algorithmically circumscribed future tense. Addressing this and the question above, I resurrect a personal trajectory that revisits recent digital projects and decades-old images from an earlier pre-digital life.

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Dr Malcolm Doidge was awarded his PhD (Design) by Massey University, College of Creative Arts, Toi Rauwhāangi, in 2022. He exhibited his postgraduate research and installation, *Inside Arcadia*, with The Performance Arcade 2022, on Wellington’s waterfront. He also taught creative technologies and fine arts for over a decade at Te Auaha. Recent publications include co-authoring “New Faith in Fakes: Out-takes from a false scenography”, for a special issue of Italian architecture magazine *Urban Corporis X*. He has also contributed an article for the “Unbuilt” edition of *Drain* magazine 2022 titled, “Clipping out”. Malcolm is currently teaching and working on a contribution to the collaborative project “The Chronicle of <_____>”.

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Detection of OKN in eye-tracking data using a 1D-CNN network

This study proposes a 1D convolutional neural network (CNN) to classify eye-tracking signals with Optokinetic nystagmus (OKN) patterns. We used a dataset of 225 signals for training, validation, and testing of the network. Valid OKN signals included at least two consecutive or three individual OKN patterns. The 1D-CNN framework was used to improve the processing speed and deal with limited and imbalanced input samples. It utilized the raw eye displacement signal without requiring feature extraction, selection, and dimension reduction. The proposed 1D-CNN with 24 layers achieved an average precision of 0.94 for the test dataset (34 signals) and overall performance metrics of 0.9, 88% for F1 score, and accuracy for the test dataset, respectively. Therefore, the proposed 1D-CNN model can accurately classify eye displacement signals.

OKN (Optokinetic nystagmus) is an involuntary eye movement that occurs in response to drifting patterns. OKN detection is attracting recent renewed interest because of its potential use in the measurement of visual function in non-verbal adults and young children who may not have the attention or cognitive ability to participate in standard eye assessment. Our own interest has been in measuring the OKN response to estimate visual acuity, the ability to resolve fine details and a key diagnostic in the assessment of eye disease in these populations. In this application, the presence of OKN indicates visibility of the stimulus, whilst absence indicates the stimulus was not seen. Identifying OKN patterns based on subjective assessment of eye displacement signals is an established method for visual acuity measurement.

We have developed a deep learning model for detecting OKN signals from eye displacement data using a 1D-CNN. We used 1D-CNN on simplified data (velocity signals) to extract features automatically by convolutional layers. We proposed an approach to classify eye-tracking signals with a minimum of two consecutive or three individual OKN patterns using the velocity of eye-tracking signals to assist visual acuity estimation.

Clinical Application: OKN detection can be used in place of a verbal response. OKN has an application in the measurement of visual acuity in patients who are nonverbal or young children.

Dr Mohammad Norouzifard holds PhD in Computer Sciences, MSc in Engineering (Artificial Intelligence and Robotics), and a BSc(Hons) in Software Engineering. He is currently a faculty member of the School of Technology at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, New Zealand. His research interests lie in artificial intelligence, software engineering, and advanced technologies such as deep learning, natural language processing, advanced image processing, computer vision, data visualization, and data analysis. He is currently investigating eye displacement pattern recognition for visual acuity estimation using AI and machine learning algorithms.

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Gothic interpretations of operatic performances through reinterpretation of nostalgia

Musical nostalgia occurs when a musical phrase is utilised to create an emotional affect in the listener. This is of significance when folk tunes are incorporated into theatrical or pop music, lending an aura of authenticity to the composition. The influx of opera's reinterpretation of classic Gothic stories, such as Shelley's *Frankenstein* in Richard Meale's *Mer de Glas*, Poe's *Fall of the House of Usher* in the Glass opera, Offenbach's *L'Contes d'Hoffmann*, and Weber's *Der Freischütz*, demonstrate the cyclical nature of interpretation through costuming, stagecraft, and reallocation of roles to the opposite sex, to create an ongoing performative evolution of the Gothic.

Naomi von Senff is a Master of Philosophy candidate at the University of New England, Australia. She holds a B.Crim/B.Laws, B.Mus.(Hons) Opera, B.A.(Hons), B.A. in Humanities, and an Associate Diploma in Music. She has studied Italian and Opera at the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg, Vienna, Austria. Naomi is an operatic soprano, currently singing with River City Voices. She is also an Assistant Coroner and Operational Expert Panellist (Metro) for New South Wales Coronial Jurisdiction. Her research interests include Popular Culture, Gothic and Vampire Studies, Egyptology, Opera, and Costume Studies.

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Unleashing the power of imagery: A dynamic approach to acting education

In recent years, the landscape of acting education has undergone a significant transformation, shaped by the ever-evolving trends in modern media and entertainment. With the rise of social media platforms, particularly YouTube and TikTok, a new generation of young individuals has been exposed to an influx of content, featuring self-made internet celebrities. As a result, the sources of inspiration and initial aspirations towards acting have shifted, leading to a potential deviation from traditional routes, such as classic films and actors renowned for their powerful acting craft.

This conference paper draws from ongoing research on acting training and pedagogy, which I started in 2022, enquiring into the challenges of teaching professional acting in tertiary education. I identified three critical points that are fundamental in acting training: learning to be present, dropping off the social mask, and cultivating imagery. For this presentation, the focus will be directed towards the latter – building up imagery. While not a universal condition, it is increasingly evident that contemporary students lack exposure to the classic works of literature, plays, and film, which have long served as invaluable references for actors.

Theatre director Declan Donnellan (2012) notes that “without the ability to make images, we would have no means of accessing the outside world” (p. 15). This observation highlights the crucial role of imagination in an actor’s craft, allowing them to interpret and imbue meaning into the world of a script. By looking back at the foundations of acting education while simultaneously looking forward to integrating contemporary influences, we can begin to explore and cultivate a refreshed approach to acting education. Such an approach seeks to bridge the timeless essence of acting with the demands of the modern era, empowering actors with the necessary tools to navigate the ever-changing landscape of the acting realm.

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Dr Natascha Díaz Cardona is Team Leader of the Screen Acting Diploma, which she also teaches at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, Auckland. She earned her Doctorate in Theatre and Performance Studies at Auckland University of Technology. She is from Colombia, where she also obtained her Master’s in Creative Writing and Bachelor’s in Performing Arts. Her research interest focuses on the performance of violence, both in theatre and on the street, and acting pedagogy. Natascha has more than sixteen years of experience as a theatre practitioner. Her professional expertise includes acting, playwriting, drama tutoring, university lecturing, and creating and developing artistic and educative programs.

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Steam, silk and spice: Post-steampunk and the south seas

Since the term Steampunk was coined by K. W. Jeter in 1987, the movement has evolved, and new perspectives have built on the original scientific romance-inspired model. This growth upon the original conceptual framework has resulted in the appearance of new sub-genres, for example Silkpunk, which envisions a Steampunk world grounded in China, Korea, and Japan; and Spicepunk, which takes the same approach to South and South-East Asian cultures.

In a contemporary, de-colonising mode, and given the continued popularity of Steampunk in Aotearoa, this presentation seeks to frame an aesthetic that re-contextualises the Steampunk eigentropeplex in terms of the great voyages, migrations and stories of the Pasifika peoples.

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Nicholas (Nik) Weston, BVA (pronouns: xe, xem, xyr), is currently Learner Success Coordinator for the New Zealand School of Tourism (NZST), Auckland Airport, and at South Seas Film and Television School. Xe is a filmmaker, motion graphics artist, and designer. Since 2016, Nik has also been an advocate for the autistic, allistic, neurodivergent, and rainbow communities. Xe is also an active member of the New Zealand Steampunk community. Nik's research in the neurodiversity field is focussed on the lived experience of autism in the tertiary educational environment, both as a student and as a member of teaching staff. This has guided xyr work on communicating the needs and worldview of the autistic community. Nik's endeavours are to create a suitably supportive environment for students and staff of various neurotypes to be able to flourish, and to develop strategies at an organisational level to support the learning success of autistic students.

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“I walk backwards into the future”: Opportunities for historical storytelling

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua: “I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past” is a “proverb which speaks of the Māori perspectives of time, where the past, the present and the future are viewed as intertwined” (Rameka, 2017). This proverb guides us back to our history in order to shape our future.

In 2022, the Ministry of Education reintroduced New Zealand History to the national curriculum. The new curriculum aims to educate young learners on the key aspects of the nation’s history and how it has influenced and shaped Aotearoa New Zealand. Although learning history is critical to shaping our present and our future, engaging the interest of students, especially when teaching history at the primary school level, can be challenging.

This paper discusses my development of a narrative tool that combines Mixed Reality technologies, such as Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality, with real-world activities, in order to learn about historical concepts in an interactive and engaging way. This prototype allows students to play, explore and interact with digital and real-world objects through interactive storytelling. The project is designed to build imagination, creativity and empathy by fostering a connection to our history.

With the power of stories to reimagine and rebuild connections and empathy, storytelling possesses an ability to teach history in an interactive way. Through historical storytelling, we have an opportunity to help shape the future of Aotearoa New Zealand with guidance from our ancestors.

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Priyan L. Jayamaha is Lecturer in Animation at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation. He holds a Master of Technological Futures and has over twenty-years of experience in the creative industries. He is currently exploring mixed reality technologies in order to facilitate the teaching of historical concepts through storytelling to Primary School students in New Zealand.

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Histories and futures colliding: Learning in liminal spaces of archives and rhetoric

In a first-year course that forms future speakers and writers through a return to the 450-year-old Jesuit rhetorical tradition of *eloquentia perfecta* (understood as the good person speaking well for the good of others) (Gannett & Brereton, 2016), Rhetorical Arts students enter the library's Archives and Special Collections section at a university in Los Angeles to learn with unique artifacts. Pedagogies of object-first inquiry (Stripling, 2009) and archival frameworks on radical empathy (Arroyo-Ramírez et al., 2021) offer us new ways to experience old technologies and, in this case, physical media.

The “archival turn” across fields of knowledge (Maxwell, 2019) invites us into liminal spaces – the in-between spaces – of learning. Building upon the idea that human agency and material agency both contribute to liminal learning experiences (Mulcahy, 2017), liminality is enacted with learners and instructors in archival spaces as we encounter: 1) archival objects suspended in space and time, informing and questioning each other in dynamic intertextualities; 2) transformative emotions, tensions, and movements in ourselves invoked by the objects and our contexts; and 3) communicative opportunities that extend from the objects to ourselves, with each other, and in the wider world.

In these collaborative experiences of meaning and memory making, learners practice *eloquentia perfecta* when they pull back to reflectively examine themselves within their own contexts while pushing forward into the direction of more humanistic, justice-oriented thinking and action. Centring on topics of water, land, and communities, we share our work with students in archives through classroom activities and exhibition curation.

For our presentation, we use available technologies to recreate object-first encounters with archival objects from our local context as a Jesuit university in Southern California. Participants will have the chance to enter into experiences of liminal spaces through archival materials – historical objects made accessible through digital platforms. In turn, we will have an opportunity to bring the place-based work we do into conversation with educators across Australasia.

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Rachel Wen-Paloutzian and co-presenter **Laura Poladian** have collaborated for seven years to bring the rhetoric classroom into the library's archives and special collections at Loyola Marymount University (LMU), Los Angeles, California, USA. As the Archives and Special Collections Instruction Librarian, Rachel partners with faculty to incorporate special collections and primary sources into the academic curriculum. She facilitates active learning with students in library instruction workshops using a wide variety of rare materials, such as cultural artifacts, archival records, and visual materials. Laura Poladian, a Rhetorical Arts instructor at LMU, previously worked as a graduate English intern in Archives and Special Collections and has been teaching, researching, and writing about rhetoric since 2014 as a part of the university's core curriculum. Rachel and Laura collaborate on pedagogical practices and research of experiential and embodied learning in Archives and Special Collections spaces.

Richard Hardack

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The past that never was: Retro-futurism in the work of Philip K. Dick

In this paper, I situate the work of the novelist Philip K. Dick as a nexus for much of the retro-futurism of contemporary science fiction and culture of the U.S. For example, in his 1959 novel, *Time Out of Joint*, Dick's protagonist thinks he is living in an idyllic small U.S. town in the 1950s but is actually living in a dystopian future in which he is unwittingly predicting the strikes of nuclear bombs (a conceit Pynchon plagiarizes in the character of Slothrop in *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973)). The film, *The Truman Show* (1998), was also loosely based on Dick's novel).

This sense of living in a simulacrum, often a closed-off alternative universe, set in a fake small town of the past that is somehow also the future, has become a mainstay of contemporary television productions, from *The Loop* (2020) to *Night Sky* (2022) and *Don't Worry Darling* (2022), of which the aesthetics again rely on fifties retro-futurism. The premise in many of these shows is that the present is not real, a revelation that comes through the nostalgia for a reconstructed past.

This thematic construction is likely evident to many through the quintessential U.S. theme park, Walt Disney World, which has long combined fantasies of tomorrowland and futureworld – as dramatized, for example, in Richard Powers' novel, *Prisoner's Dilemma* – with fabricated nostalgia for a sanitized Main Street past that never existed.

Another of Dick's novels, *Ubik* (1969), takes place in a future in which the character is suspended in animation but imagines his world is temporally regressing into the past, a conceit Dick uses in to critique the function of planned obsolescence in the U.S. economy. The original *Blade Runner* film (1982), based on Dick's novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (1968), featured another mix of futurism and atavism, evident in the replicant Rachel's posture as a neo-noire femme fatale from a 1950s Los Angeles.

I examine the cultural function of such fantasies that conceive of a future always tethered to a fantasized past, and how these temporal nodes interact. Such extrapolations backwards and forwards often serve similar functions, evident, for example, in the laughably execrable television show, *La Brea* (2021), set in a partly futuristic version of 10,0000 BCE. I also document the ways that cartoons, such as *The Flintstones* (1960) and *The Jetsons* (1962), rely on similar forms of retro-futurism, with past and future equally anachronistic. As Žižek might note, many of these texts use the future retroactively to posit a past that never was and construct a nostalgia that reifies that fantasy.

Dr Richard Hardack received his doctorate in English and J.D. (Law degree) from the University of California, Berkeley, California, United States of America. He has taught at Berkeley and Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges, published more than fifty articles in American Studies and Law, and presented at more than one-hundred conferences in over twenty countries. His first book, *“Not Altogether Human”: Pantheism and the Dark Nature of the American Renaissance*, which focused on Melville and Emerson, was published by the University of Massachusetts Press, in 2012; and he is completing two more books, *Coming Between Africa and America: Transcendentalism and the Transcendence of Race, from Emerson to Morrison*, and *Your Call is Very Important to Us: Advertising and the Corporate Theft of Personhood*, forthcoming from Rowman & Littlefield, in May 2023. He is also project editor for the history of NASA’s Juno Mission to Jupiter.

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Dante Alighieri and *The Divine Comedy*: Between past and future

The centuries-old diatribe on the actuality of Dante has fatally reignited on the occasion of the impressive events dedicated to the celebration of seven hundred years since his death (1321-2021). The opposing opinions of the supporters of his medievality versus his contemporaneity demonstrate, if ever there was a need, the perennial vitality of Dante’s text, and its ability to stimulate a dialogue, not only between past and present but also within contemporary culture itself. In other words, it is a reconfirmation and a revival of its classicism. “It can be observed that even in medieval culture there was a well-developed ‘theory of reception’ that pivoted on the assimilation skills of readers: *‘Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur’* (‘what you receive is received according to the capacity of the recipient’) recites a famous aphorism of St. Thomas Aquinas that thus condenses a canonical line of thought in Scholasticism”. But the Medievalists, like Umberto Eco reminds us, “tended to stress the points of convergence and unity, overcoming the contradictions by faith and hope. Their aesthetics, like all their thinking, expressed an optimum synthesis. They saw the world with the eyes of God”.

Discussing the modernity of *The Divine Comedy*, the Italian writer and poet Giovanni Papini (1881-1956) called it “the instrument-book”, “the hammer-book”, “the whip-book”, “the wing-book”, and “the gifted-medicine-book”, endowed with a “metamorphosing power capable of generating universal reverberations”; hence the consideration that the author is “alive”. *The Divine Comedy* is a work of poetry, in which the themes, such as the journey of discovery, the moments of passion, the relationship between the artist and society, the denunciation of the oppressors, and the presence of a visionary condition, make it one of the most interesting works of human expression, a work surely destined to walk through the centuries.

Dr Rosina Martucci graduated with a degree in Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures (English, French, German) at the Orientale University, Naples, Italy. She obtained her Doctor of Philosophy in Italian Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Salerno in 2017. She taught English and French Language and Literature at high school level in Italy. Her research interests include Emigration Studies, Italian and Comparative Literature, Canadian, English, French, Medieval Literature and Art. She has published several papers on these related topics. She is also the co-author of the following textbooks used in Italian schools: *New Trends*, *New Trends Plus* and *New Trends Millennium*. She participates regularly in International Conferences.

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Graphic media and religious nostalgia

Nostalgia can be thought of as “the wistful yearning in space and or time for a home that is no longer accessible” (Deacy, 2020, p. 267) and many others, religious communities and their members, carry with them a range of nostalgic narratives about times past, both real and imagined. People tell stories of crowded places of worship, spiritual experiences, religious and community values in harmony, and visions of a “golden age” to be recovered. These nostalgic accounts sit in uneasy relationships with other contemporary and historical narratives, which are themselves imbued with various values and kinds of nostalgia. Comics and other graphic media also manifest nostalgia in various ways, from the use of the medium to narrate nostalgia through to community reactions to disputes over canonicity due to retroactive continuities concerning characters and fictional histories. Even the categorisation of comics into different “ages”, such as Golden (1938-56), Silver (1956-70), Bronze (1970-85), and Modern (1985-present), carries with it clear elements of nostalgia.

In this paper, the intersection of comics and religion with nostalgia is explored, focusing particularly on Christianity, including how nostalgia is used to advocate for particular religious values and sensibilities through comics, as well as highlighting how the graphic medium is used to challenge those narratives and provide alternative narrative trajectories for those both within and outside of religious communities.

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Dr Stephen Garner is Academic Dean and Senior Lecturer in Theology at Laidlaw College, Auckland, and a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian College of Theology, Sydney. His research focuses on theology, technology, and ethics, and religion, media, and popular culture. His current projects include work in digital theology, artificial intelligence and ethics, and religion, comics, and graphic media.

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Education in data journalism

Information and data are everywhere, and now more than ever it is important to be able to understand and navigate this landscape. This paper explores the growing industry of data journalism and the impact it has on the presentation of data and information both in and out of newsrooms. The presentation will elaborate on the key areas of data journalism as a multidisciplinary industry, with the inclusion of journalism, data science and design. It will be situated around the education of future data journalists, required skills and learning, in order to successfully navigate the world of data journalism.

Tim van Eyssen is a lecturer on the Bachelor of Digital Innovation at Yoobee College of Creative Innovation, Wellington, New Zealand. He has a decade of experience as a freelance graphic designer, working with companies such as Downer NZ, Citycare Group, and Brews Liquor. His teaching areas and experience include a wide range of topics related to graphic design, information design, marketing, and business, at Auckland University of Technology and Yoobee Colleges. His interests include Lego, Star Wars, music, learning, self-improvement, storytelling, information design, graphic design, and journeying alongside learners and teachers in their educational pursuits. Tim is currently working towards his Master of Design, investigating multidisciplinary pedagogies in the field of data journalism.

