Yale artists leave mark at biennial conference on the moving image

By Mike Cummings | DECEMBER 7, 2017

A still from Johannes DeYoung's "Raft," which is inspired by Theodore Gericault's painting "The Raft of the Medusa."

Faculty and students of Yale's Center for Collaborative Arts and Media (CCAM) recently presented their work and shared their ideas during the opening week of the B3 Biennial of the Moving Image (http://www.b3biennale.de/index_en.html) — an international conference in Frankfurt, Germany, that highlights trends and developments in the use of the moving image in art, film, gaming, design, and other related fields.

Three CCAM-affiliated faculty — Johannes DeYoung, Federico Solmi, and Sam Messer — had new works featured in the biennial's central exhibition, which included works by 80 artists from 20 countries exploring the theme "ON DESIRE" through video installations, short films and feature films, computer games, and mixed-reality experiences. Willie Stewart, a master's candidate at the Yale School of Art (YSA), also has work on display at the conference, which runs Nov. 28-Dec. 20.
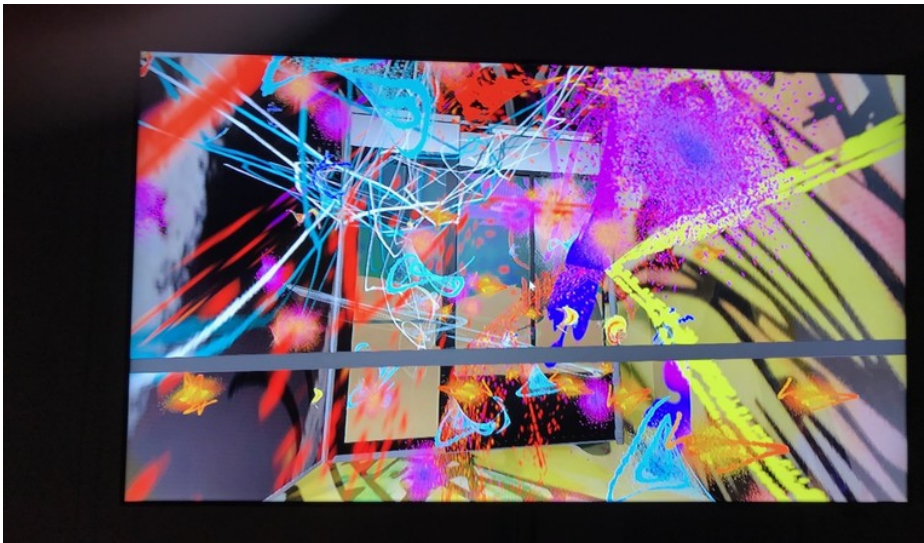
"The Sands," designed by Justin Berry, Valentina Zamfirescu, and Ilana Savdie, combines work by 16 artists into a virtual reality experience.

"The Sands," a virtual reality experience designed by Justin Berry, a member of CCAM's core faculty and a critic at Yale School of Art, with YSA students Valentina Zamfirescu and Ilana Savdie, who are members of CCAM's Blended Reality Collective — a research project that incorporates 3D design, augmented reality, digital imaging, and 3D printing/fabrication technologies. The project draws together works by 16 artists, including participants of CCAM's "Blended Reality" summer workshop.

More than 43,000 visitors attended the biennial during its first week, according to the conference's organizers.

DeYoung, CCAM's director and a senior critic at YSA, exhibited "Raft" (http://www.b3biennale.de/Johannes-DeYoung-EN.html) (pictured above), a three-minute looping animation that depicts a wayward voyage at sea. Drawing inspiration from Theodore Gericault's painting "The Raft of the Medusa" (1819), the work is a kinetic expression of struggle, hope, and despair, and a search for emblematic resonance in contemporary time.

Federico Solmi's "A Great Farce" was projected onto the facade of Oper/Schauspiel, downtown Frankfurt's opera and playhouse.

Solmi's "The Great Farce," a video installation that shows political leaders in an amusement park where historical events are re-enacted for their entertainment, was projected onto the facade of Oper/Schauspiel, downtown Frankfurt's opera and playhouse, from Nov. 28 to Nov. 30.

Messer, associate dean of YSA, exhibited "Reflecting of Red Darkness, 1982-2017," (http://www.b3biennale.de/Sam-Messer-EN.html) an animated film using stop motion and made entirely with hand-colored etchings, relating to the first two stanza's of the

late Denis Johnson's poem "Red Darkness."

A still from Sam Messer's "Reflecting of Red Darkness, 1982-2017," an animated film made with hand-colored etchings.

The Yale-affiliated artists also participated in panel discussions.

Launched in August 2017, CCAM is an interdisciplinary arts research center that bridges diverse arts disciplines and fosters critical inquiry at the intersections of visual art, design, film, music/sound, performance, and computer science. Its programs promote interdisciplinary inquiry, discourse, production, and research across expanding fields of arts practice. The center supports collaborations in arts research across disciplines with an open door policy to all Yale students — graduate, professional, and undergraduate students alike.

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