



XR/XF: EXTENDED REALITIES, EXTENDED FEMINISMS

MI ARTS INITIATIVE

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

March 23 - April 14, 2024
www.xrxf.net

XR/XF: Extended Realities, Extended Feminisms brings together local, national, and international artists to create a site-specific multimedia exhibition and series of events on the University of Michigan campus and across the city of Ann Arbor. The exhibition takes place in various locations, including a shipping container - the XR/XF pod - that will travel between 2 locations in Ann Arbor during the first two weeks of April.

The city of Ann Arbor has always been feminized. The story goes that in 1824, John Allen and Elisha W. Rumsey founded the town and named it after their wives, who were both named Ann. Since then, the city has been anthropomorphized as a feminine body throughout the years. In the 1980s, the University of Michigan's football rivals in Ohio invented the infamous slogan, "Ann Arbor is a Whore!" as a method to jeer at the opposition. Since then, this offensive slogan has spread across the US and reappears every Fall during football season in Ann Arbor, proliferating through both physical and digital objects. As one recent social media commenter notes: "That's what happens when you have a chick name for your city."

With this project, we strike/suspend gender from the city's name: Ann Arbor is neither trophy wife nor whore. Instead, we pose Ann Arbor as a feminist cyborg, a feminist map, and a creative, participatory organism. We construct the body of the city differently, with artistic intervention and cyberfeminist means: physical and digital installation, activations of public space, music, performances, and workshops. From the Bell Tower on central campus to the parking lot of the Liberty Annex, we offer a creative activation that is both physical and digital and a fluid/complex/distributed image of the city through both XR and feminist means.

CURATED BY ALINA NAZMEEVA AND YVETTE GRANATA

IN COLLABORATION WITH TIFFANY NG, TYLER MUSGRAVE, JULIE ZHU, AND ANIL ÇAMCI

Pop-up Exhibition

APRIL 3-7, 12-6PM

XR/XF Pop-up Exhibition, Part 1
Ingalls Mall North, Shipping Container
University of Michigan
(in front of Burton Tower)

APRIL 4-5, 12-6PM

Otsi'tsistó:sera: Native Plants and Planting Songs
Carillon Open House Event
Ingalls Mall North
University of Michigan
(inside of Burton Bell Tower)

APRIL 10-14, 12-6PM

XR/XF Pop-up Exhibition, Part 2
Liberty Research Annex
305 W. Liberty Road
Ann Arbor, MI
(in the parking lot)

Music & Performance

APRIL 3, 12-12:30PM

bellevoix, 2024, performance
by Julie Zhu
Burton Tower, Ingalls Mall North
University of Michigan
Open to the public

APRIL 6, 11AM-2PM

Walking Her Path, Sound Walk
by Zeynep Özcan
Ingalls Mall North, Meet at the Shipping Container
University of Michigan
Sign up: <https://bit.ly/WalkingHerPath>

Workshops

MARCH 23, 11AM-4PM

Building Cyberfeminist Artifacts for XR
With Anil Çamcı & Yvette Granata
Scan to RSVP required (Limited Seats)



MARCH 30, 1-4PM

features Worldbuilding Workshop
With Alina Nazmeeva & John David Wagner
Scan to RSVP (Limited Seats)



APRIL 1, 2:30-3:45PM

XR/XF For Black Femmes
With Tyler Musgrave
Scan for link to online Webinar



WORKS

Anatomy of an Intergenerational Router (WebVR, 2022)
Alice Yuan Zhang

The contemporary world is filled with many apps, devices, and algorithms built on the promise of hyperconnection. Yet for many, "community" feels more fragmented than ever, while the economics of such infrastructure often accelerate the legacy of extraction and exclusion by unjust globalized systems. What is technology, beyond the linear logic of Silicon Valley innovation? Through more life-affirming cosmologies, might we embody the combinations of skill, knowledge, practice, and ingenuity to weave and sustain the communities we need?

In a looping 3D self-portrait titled *Anatomy of an Intergenerational Router*, I draw from ethnobotany, traditional acupuncture, cultural traditions, and Buddhist upbringing to illustrate subjective ways that my body is an entangled and adaptive site for socioecological connectivity. The piece borrows the digital medium to propose a naturalistic approach to networks of community and technology that flow with sacred cycles of life, not against. My racialized migrant body floats in all its know-how while defying knowability. A mere representation fossilized by photogrammetry, this polygonal bundle fails to capture the body as a living process. Instead I turn this inquiry toward the viewer — what potentialities of community do you also hold in your body, in everyday motions across the organismal, cultural, and ecosystemic? In what ways do we parse each others' signals, and what is the rhythm of our solidarity?

bellevoix (Performance, 30 minutes, 2024)

Julie Zhu
Wednesday, April 3, 12-12:30pm
Burton Tower

bellevoix is a site-specific performance created for the Burton Tower on University of Michigan's central campus. Instead of broadcasting songs, the carillon has a speaking voice. Artist and performer Julie Zhu talks through a convolution of her voice and bell sounds to passersby, surprising them with specific details surveilled from the tower, goading them into conversation. When a carillon cyborg finally acquires language, what will she say? How might listeners—who don't have a choice whether to listen—react to the authority of a public musical instrument who necessarily has opinions? *bellevoix* makes obvious the specific social contract between the carillon and the community it serves, woos, or antagonizes. Who is the carillon? And why do we bell? April 3, 12-12:30 pm at Burton Tower, Ingalls Mall North

Local Binaries (Augmented Reality, 2022)

Lauren Moffatt

Every person you meet holds a world inside them, what does yours look like? This was the question artist Lauren Moffatt asked nine women from across the world in order to define the blueprints for the collectively written universe inside *Local Binaries*. This is a virtual space that can be explored by the viewer in miniature scale via augmented reality.

Drawing inspiration from therapy techniques that encourage embodied mindfulness — like body mapping — participants were asked to focus on their inner state and interpret it as a landscape. They imagined geological forms, sounds, plant-life, weather systems and architectures to delineate the physiological and psychological sensations they felt. They then relayed the scene to the artist as if describing physical surroundings. The artist recreated elements from each testimonial using a game engine, collaborated with artificial intelligence to visualise, hand-paint and digitise the described elements and then interweaved them into a sprawling landscape that audiences can interact with via handheld devices. Made with support from Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Rijeka and from CPH:DOX Lab.

Visitors are free to roam in *Local Binaries*. As in nature, there is no beginning and end, no preordained path to be followed. They only need the curiosity and observational skills required to explore its corners to find all of its hidden details: a voyage that will take them on a parallel journey into the colours and contours of their own inner universes.

Floxotron9000, GEORDELLZEE, & 🐉 [Dragon Emoji] (AR filter series, 2023)
Huntrezz Janos

Floxotron9000: the ultimate accessory for interdimensional exploration. Named in homage to the avant-garde Fluxus movement and the Classic Film 'TRON' and imbued with the mystique of a distant era, these sunglasses redefine style with their retro-future vibe and myriad antennae. The neon-green tinted lenses reflect chaotic and colorful energies, while the void-like black eyes offer a glimpse into the abyss of possibility. With Fluxotron 9000, wearers embody the spirit of transgression, evoking the iconic imagery of Super Sentai as they navigate the interstellar expanse with unparalleled style and flair.

GEORDELLZEE: Crafted from 3D scans, this filter resurrects Ramellzee's iconic sculpture, "Rammellzee: Gothic Futurism," transforming it into a colorful and reflective crown of rebellion and reverence. Chromostereopsis and chromatic aberration weave a tapestry of visual intrigue, defying the boundaries of perception. The golden visor of Geordi La Forge from Star Trek's Next Generation glimmers along with it as a holographic emblem of the transcendence beyond natural vision, merging past and future into a singular expression of Afrofuturist defiance.

🐉 (Dragon Emoji) a whimsical ode to trans-cultural metamorphosis. In celebration of the Lunar New Year, this filter breathes life anew into the ancient myths of the dragon. With emerald lips and rose-tinted scales, the majestic creature embodies the essence of defiance and magic. Inspired by the pointed visages of African masks, and breathing stars from its nostrils, 🐉 is a symbol of the power of cultural hybridity. As wearers don the mantle of the dragon, they embark on into cosmic jest, rewriting the narrative of tradition with each flicker of their pink lashes.

The Seasons (Video, 11 minutes, 2007)
Claudia Hart

"The Seasons" portrays a room in which a slowly evolving sculptural figure gradually transforms. In this animated loop, a variety of visual, temporal and conceptual cycles are offset and overlaid so that their movement is obscured. All is in flux but time seems to stand still, as in life. In "The Seasons," a seated woman in a pose of erotic abandon cycles clockwise on a rotating pedestal. As she cycles, she decomposes, a vine of roses surrounding her, blooming and then fading away. The room also revolves, though counterclockwise, while the animation camera pans back and forth. These movements function in counterpoint, to appear only on the edge of perception. Sound for the piece is of crumbling paper. The color scheme is white on white.

You are on Anishinaabe Land (Multimedia, 2023)
Yvette Ramirez

Settler colonialism is a structure, not an event. Thus we—settlers and Indigenous people alike—live in a "settler colonial present". We inhabit and occupy Indigenous land, some of which was forcibly taken. So, as we reflect on "public space" through activities like walking and map-making, what opportunities does this present? What embodied constructions are created? This sonic walk explores ways of being in the world and explores what building networks of relationality with Indigenous peoples from both North and South could look like. Walking as and with becomes a collaborative practice to acknowledge positionality, create solidarities, and better understand the land we are on through our respective lived experiences. There is no singular Indigenous experience but many: landed, rooted, nomadic, local or globally interconnected. Indigenous histories also involve mobility, contrary to what the term may suggest. As such this piece not only examines space but also considers what movement means within varied Indigenous spatial politics.

The accompanying sound and visual materials used for this sonic walk include photographs and ambient recordings recorded by the artist during her time in Ann Arbor, Michigan, her hometown of Queens, New York and ancestral home of Quillasuyu (La Paz, Bolivia). Some are also voice recordings from family members. These sounds, accompanying the stops on the walk, share both a historical context as well as psychogeographical connections from the artist's perspective.

For Black Femmes (Animated Video, 2024)
Tyler Musgrave

For Black Femmes, a docu-animated project, is an interdisciplinary exploration between academic publishing and creative inquiry that explores the often overlooked narratives and experiences of Black women and femmes within the digital landscape. Rooted in qualitative interviews with Black women and femme co-conspirators featured in the CHI 2022 paper, "Black Women and Femmes Experiences with Harm, Healing, and Joy" by Musgrave et al. Through creating a docu-animation short film, For Black Femmes seeks to engage in the practice of translation, making academic insights accessible to a broader audience. Beyond this, For Black Femmes strives to advocate for a safer digital ecosystem by shedding light on the unique experiences of Black women and femmes facing online harm. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the design of a black feminist digital aesthetic that not only highlights the challenges but also pays homage to the inherent virtuality and futurity of Black women and femmes.

Pre-Game (XR Installation, 2024)
Alina Nazmeeva & Yvette Granata

Pre-game is an immersive installation that pairs physical objects and an XR essay. Simulating and subverting the experience of tailgating and the spectatorship of football games, pre-game probes the connection between life and animation, physical and digital bodies, physical motion and its digital capture through a cyberfeminist lens. Set against the backdrop of Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan, a hotbed of football fandom and culture, pre-game uses football and tailgating culture as an entry point to discuss the notions of embodiment, gender, and "the masses."

Digital bodies are multiplicitous, multiple data sets joined together. They are a composite of skins, faces, skeletons, rigs, motions, emotions, and physics simulations. Bodies, both physical and digital, are sampled, fragmented, cut, their properties and attributes taken, copied, pasted, applied to others. Meshes, skins, and motions are gendered in ways that perpetuate the stereotypes of feminine and masculine. They'll go easy on you if you play a female avatar in World of Warcraft. If you are assaulted in cyberspace, they'll cast it off as "fake" or "whiny." In this context, Pre-game examines how digital embodiment can both perpetuate and challenge gender norms, spectatorship of bodies, and power structures.

DESCENT (Video, 2023)
Carlina Duan

I wrote this poem, "Descent," after visiting my aunts and my grandmother abroad for the first time in five years. This poem honors—even takes pleasure in—collisions of time. It also celebrates matriarchal lineage and inheritance. At the heart of the poem, a question pulses: how much of history becomes / fabrication? I am interested in the materiality of history: in its liquid moments, its quivering, and its shapeshifting through stories recorded by hand and passed through the mouth. As an Asian American poet raised in the Midwest, I am also constantly thinking about the dissonances, surprises and strangeness afforded those of us who are living diasporic lives.

In this video-poem, I decided to juxtapose lines from the poem alongside images of my own making, walking, and weaving in Michigan. I was interested in the ways that the poem—which records generations of women linked across verbs, across time, and across oceans—also offers interiority and solitude to the hand which does the making. The timelapse moments of the video show me creating poemaps ("counter-maps"), a concept inspired by Chamorro poet Craig Santos Perez, of my own embodied experiences in Michigan. These are paper map experiments of Michigan and the Detroit River that are cut and woven/tied together with various natural objects (pinecones, pine needles, leaves, stones, and tree branches) found across Southeast Michigan.

The idea of diasporic dissonance hums throughout this piece.

Otsi'tsistó:sera: Native Plants and Planting Songs at the Carillon
(Multi-media event, 2024, April 4-5: Open House, Burton Tower, 10th floor)

Tiffany Ng, Dawn Avery, Beverley McKiver, Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra, Grace Jackson, and Carson Landry

The sonic/ecological exhibition *Otsi'tsistó:sera* takes its name from a new carillon composition by Dawn Avery, a composer of Mohawk descent, based on planting songs that Haudenosaunee women of the turtle clan sing to the seeds and plants as they grow their gardens. During this two-day "open house," visitors may enter the carillon all day and experience a belfry filled with music by Indigenous women and lush with native plants in both organic and virtual forms. Explore the ecology of local native plants and keystone species and their Indigenous significance, discover visual remnants of Michigan's pre-logging forests, and hear Avery's *Otsi'tsistó:sera* as well as piano or carillon performances of Beverley McKiver's Canadian Floral Emblems during live carillon concerts and at an on-demand listening station.

Performances and recordings by Tiffany Ng, Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra, Carson Landry, Grace Jackson, and Beverley McKiver. With special thanks to forest history consultant Hillary Pine, BA '11 (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians). More info at: xrfx.net/carillon

Oceanic, Portal (Film/Augmented Reality, 2023)
micha cardenas, Cynthia Ling Lee, Susana Ruiz, Gerald Casel, Huy Truong, Ian Costello & Anna Friz

Oceanic considers how in this moment of COVID and climate change can we mourn the loss of people, places and capacities, and build new queer abolitionist futures. Oceanic is a multidisciplinary art project that includes poetry, dance, installation and Augmented Reality (AR) to engage with landscapes and aquatic species threatened by climate change, stitching the line from colonization to neoliberalism to racial capitalism through holographic dance performances captured with volumetric video. Oceanic presents audiences with the coast of the Pacific Ocean at Natural Bridges State Beach, with a series of performances that consider how climate change is a racial justice issue. The creation of this project includes volumetric video of dance performances by Cynthia Ling Lee, Gerald Casel and micha cárdenas, in collaboration with Susana Ruiz, Huy Truong, Anna Friz and Ian Costello.

Oceanic presents volumetric, or 3-D, video of movement performances, alongside 3-D LIDAR scans of ecotonal coastal environments which are disappearing due to sea level rise. These scans include other species who live on the coast, including starfish and sea urchins. Oceanic will also present words from chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa, who wrote about this beach to think through solidarity across identities in women of color feminism, such as the former exclusion of trans women, which she tried to undo.

Walking Her Path (Soundwalk, 2024)
Zeynep Özcan
Friday April 6, 11am-2pm, Ingalls Mall North
Sign up: <https://bit.ly/WalkingHerPath>

Participants will engage in the exploration of their sonic environment, with a focus on listening from a perspectives shaped by the experiences of womanhood and gender dynamics. This activity involves walking, listening and recording, serving as an intentional exercise in auditory examination. During the soundwalk, participants will be invited to actively listen to both the cacophony and the subtleties of everyday life through a feminist lens. They will be prompted to tune into sounds that may symbolize the experiences of womanhood, empowerment, or oppression. For example, the sound of footsteps might symbolize independence and determination, whereas the noise from construction sites or the abrupt blare of car horns might be seen as symbolic of societal interruptions or aggressive intrusions. Attendees will be equipped with handheld field recorders and encouraged to capture sounds that resonate with them personally. Moreover, participants will be encouraged to provide narrations during the soundwalk, articulating their reasons for selecting particular sounds and what those sounds represent to them.