



OVERVIEW

THE EMERGENT OBJECTS DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE RESEARCH CLUSTER PROVIDES A PLATFORM FOR THE INTER-DISCIPLINARY EXPLORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE AND BRINGS TOGETHER RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS FROM ROBOTICS, PERFORMANCE, NEW MEDIA, DIGITAL ARTS AND URBAN REGENERATION TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE THAT PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE COULD PLAY IN RELATION TO UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY DESIGN, THE PRACTICE OF DESIGNING AND ITS OUTCOMES.

Activities

April 2005: 2-day event. Cluster members witnessed each other's research through presentations, workshops and performance activities. Ideas on and examples of working practices, theoretical frameworks and common key terms were exchanged in order to begin mapping the basis for researching the design / performance relationship.

August 2005: Website launched to facilitate communication, provide information and invite external users to engage with the cluster's work. It provides an information hub on performance and design with a bibliography, glossary, message board, details of cluster activities and external links.

October 2005: 1-day event. Developing an emerging conceptual framework, the 'design-perform-provoke' seminar invited key practitioners in the fields of performance and design to present on and debate three concepts of mutual interest to design and performance: play, space and translation-communication.

It has been important to develop understanding through doing. A broad range of practice-based knowledge and practice as research is represented in the cluster and knowledge exchange has been taking place. Attempts to locate terms and concepts which can facilitate useful dialogue between design and performance have also been important.

Insights

The Cluster approach has enabled researchers and practitioners from a broad range of disciplines to explore the potential value of performance knowledge for design. Through necessity we have concentrated on exploring common ground in working processes and subject knowledge. During the course of the year, new members have been attracted and now within the cluster, smaller sub-clusters are beginning to form to develop practical projects.

In parallel it is intended that the meta-level mapping process which Emergent Objects has facilitated will continue. Future plans include a two-day workshop focussing on the performativity of metaplay in emergent technology design (Feb 2006). The event will involve a playful approach to audiovisual performances and performativity in interaction design. The aim will be to prepare the cluster's bid to the next Research Call.

Key questions:

- How can performance inform the collaborative design process?
- How can designers learn from performance knowledge (play, participation, embodiment, space, communication)?
- How can performance knowledge be used in design processes, e.g. simulation?
- How can the mobilisation of tacit knowledge through performance inform design processes?