UC SANTA BARBARA

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Hybrid Works

Their program weaves together diverse fields into cutting-edge works that transcend the way we see the world. And with their end-of-year show — the culmination of research in electronic music, emergent media, computer science, engineering and art — it will be on display for all to see.

In one of its biggest shows to date, UC Santa Barbara's Media Arts and Technology (MAT) graduate program will present "MADE [at] UCSB," featuring more than 50 installations, performances, concerts and technical presentations by artists, engineers and scientists. Free and open to the public, the exhibition will be held Friday, June 7, from 5-9 p.m., at the California NanoSystems Institute in the campus's Elings Hall.

The department known to push boundaries in the name of innovation marks another first with its 2019 exhibition by showcasing special tracks in two emerging research fields within MAT — artificial intelligence and fabrication — to present work at the cutting edge of art and engineering. Curated by doctoral candidates Fabian Offert and Mark Hirsch, respectively, the AI track will investigate the recent intersection of machine learning and the arts, while the fabrication track will feature new modes of fabrication with novel materials and machines.

"Cutting edge research — be it scientific or artistic in nature — is not often part of major museum exhibitions. Rather, museums show well-established artists and well-established topics," said Offert, also organizer of the student-run show. "The End of Year Show showcases works that use new technologies (like, for instance, machine

learning) in novel and surprising ways. Multiple works in the AI track, for instance, demonstrate the creation of VR worlds with machine learning tools, like generative adversarial networks (GANs), which goes far beyond the kind of ‘AI art’ we have been seeing in museums for a while now.”

By highlighting graduate student work that connects media arts, design and engineering, Offert said, “MADE [at] UCSB” reflects the overall mission of MAT: to enable the creation of hybrid work that informs both scientific and aesthetic discourses.

The diverse selection of work in the show spans themes such as virtual reality, robotics, quantum physics, machine learning, electronic music and many other transdisciplinary subjects. The exhibition also includes tours of the AlloSphere Research Facility: a three story, large-scale, audio and visual immersive instrument and laboratory.

“The End of Year Show is where the hybrid character of the MAT program really shines: engineers, artists, scientists and transdisciplinary researchers come together to work on a single event,” Offert said. “Engineering prototypes and contemporary art works not only peacefully coexist in the show but inform one another.”

It all kicks off with a special pre-opening event Thursday, June 6, at 3 p.m., in Elings Hall, Room 1605, with a guest lecture by Meredith Hoy of Arizona State University’s Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. John Majewski, the Michael Douglas Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts in UCSB’s College of Letters and Science, and Professor Marko Peljhan, MAT department chair, will make opening remarks.

Tags
Artificial Intelligence

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