

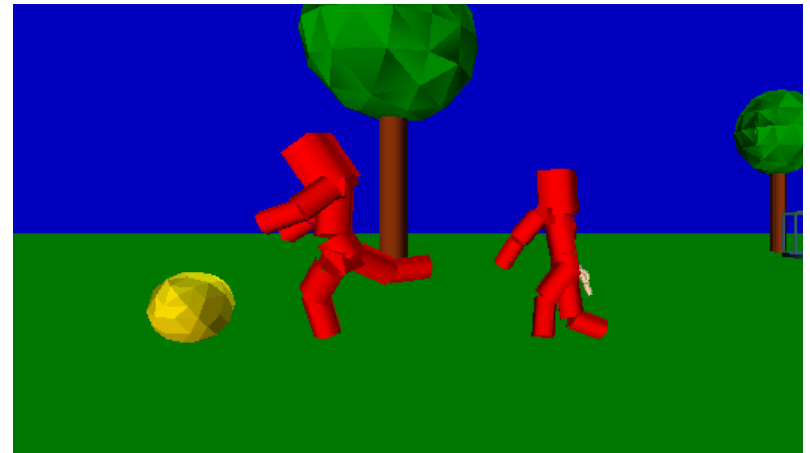
Ian Horswill

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Interdisciplinarity is hard: Who knew?

My background

- Trained in computer science
 - **Artificial intelligence** and robotics
- Working on
 - **Emotion** and **personality** simulation
 - Psychology, neuroscience
 - Interactive **narrative**
 - Thinking about **genre**
 - **Farce** (Punch and Judy)



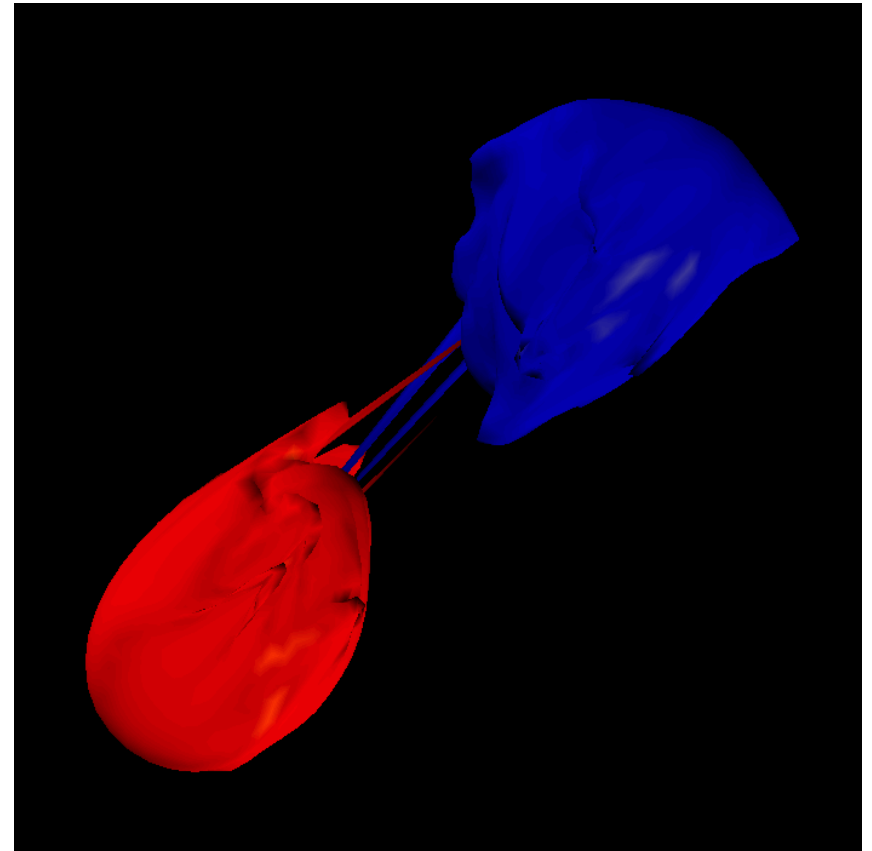
Education

Three tries at art and technology

Center for Art and Technology (1998-2004)

Minor built from **existing courses**, plus:

- Artist talks
- **Capstone** course
 - Take seniors in engineering and art
 - Tell them to collaborate
 - What could possibly go wrong?



Pr!ck, interactive installation, Yim, Novak, and Horswill

Postmortem

What went **right**

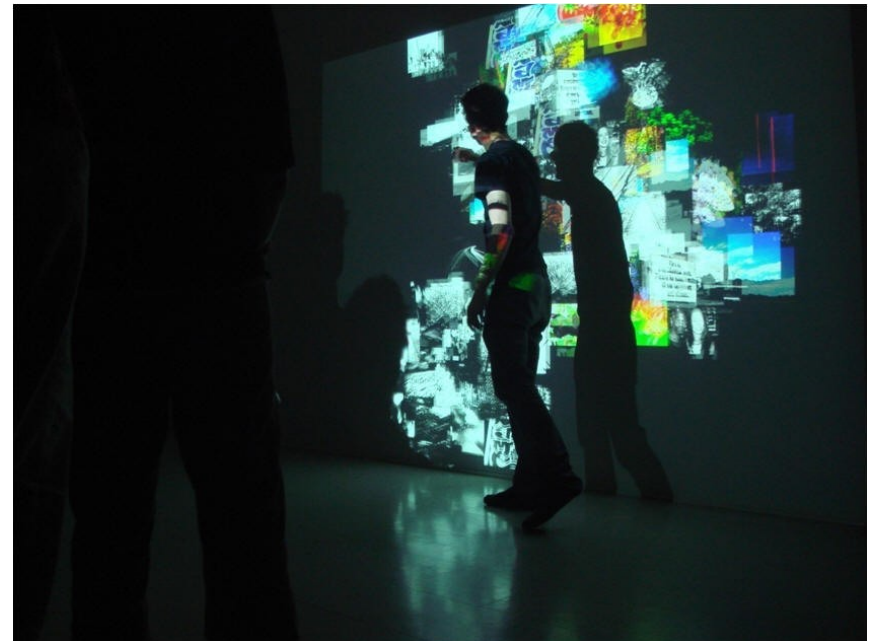
- **Community** building
 - Focus for students
 - Focus for faculty
- Good for the right kind of student
- Relatively **inexpensive**
 - Economically sustainable

What went **wrong**

- Little **cross-learning**
 - Programming curriculum designed for engineering students
- **Culture clash**
- Mutual **instrumentalization**
 - “I’m making a game; will you paint my textures for me?”
 - “I want to make a ”
- **Faculty didn’t learn** anything new

Animate Arts (2004-2010)

- Goal: **liberal artist-technologists**
- Social engineering
 - Get students early
 - Bring them into **both cultures**
- Integrated curriculum
 - Visual design, sound design, cinema, art theory, narrative theory, game design, computer science
 - Loosely based on **Bauhaus Vorkurs**
 - **Team taught**
- 2 quarter senior project
- **Faculty seminar** used to prototype curriculum



Observed, interactive installation, Eric Mika, 2007

Postmortem

What went **right**

- Interdisciplinary **teams**
 - Atmosphere of mutual **respect**
- Faculty **walking the walk**
- **Devotion** to program
 - Many students viewed it as their “real” major
- Got a lot of students **jobs**

What went **wrong**

- 2 years not enough
- Team teaching is **expensive**
- **Differing goals** between faculty and students/admin
- Institutionally difficult
 - Joint between **four schools**
 - **Not a priority** for any particular department
 - Heavy **faculty attrition**
 - 80% of participating faculty left university
 - Weren't replaced

Creative Art and Technology Studio (2011-???)

- **Student** group
 - No formal curricular component
 - Minimal load on institution
 - High load on student volunteers
- Focused on
 - Short courses
 - Community building
- Good at **generating interest**
 - 80 students in first week
- Hard for them to devote large **blocks of time**



Research

Lessons learned

(or at least biases documented)

Problems, not professions

[Feyerabend's epistemological Dadaism]

Methodological promiscuity

Protect making as a mode of inquiry

Thanks to Patrick Winston for this marvelous phrase

Tyranny from below

The challenge:

**None of this is how a modern,
neoliberal, US university operates**