

CRCA New Media Arts Alert: Art And Bio-Informatics Infiltrate UCSD's Cal-(IT)²

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University of California, San Diego Center for Research in Computing and the Arts (CRCA) announces the first inter-divisional artist-in-residence between the biological sciences and the arts at UCSD. CRCA represents and facilitates new media arts activities within the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology [Cal-(IT)²] and recently brought on artist and researcher Ruth West as a CRCA research associate. While in-residence West will work with the Digitally Enabled Genomic Medicine layer of Cal-(IT)² to further her work in art and bioinformatics.

West will discuss her work, including a collaborative project titled *Ecce Homology*, in a public lecture co-sponsored by CRCA and the Department of Visual Arts on Tuesday, May 4 at 7 p.m. in the Visual Arts Facility at UCSD. The lecture is free and open to the public. A reception for the artists and scientists of *Ecce Homology* will precede the lecture at 6:30 p.m.

Working predominantly with computer-based media, West explores the relationship between genetics and culture. A self-taught painter, West received her MFA in Design/Media Arts at the UCLA School of the Arts. In addition to her training as an artist, West has a background as a molecular genetics researcher, received her undergraduate degree in microbiology and genetics, and holds a Masters degree in clinical psychology.

West is currently collaborating with the National Center for Microscopy and Imaging Research at UCSD utilizing her expertise in human-computer interfaces to redesign their web pages, portals and workflow designs for the Telescience, Cell Centered Database and Biomedical Informatics Research Network projects. As a CRCA Research Associate, West will continue to develop her work while exploring avenues for possible long-term collaboration on multi-resolution imaging of cells and tissues in concert with Cal-(IT)².

West is also the founder of *in silico v1.0*, an art-science collaborative that bridges the disciplines of bioinformatics, computer science (vision and graphics) engineering, performance, proteomics, molecular biology and new media arts. The group aims to create works that contribute simultaneously to the realms of art and science while retaining the rigor of each discipline's specific practices.

Showcasing the project *Ecce Homology*, West and her collaborators will discuss and demystify the relationship of art and genetics research during the public lecture on May 4. *Ecce Homology*, a physically interactive new media installation that was developed at UCLA by the collective *in silico v1.0*. The group includes West; Jeff Burke and Eitan Mandelowitz of the UCLA HyperMedia Studio; Dr. Cheryl Kerfeld, a protein crystallographer in the UCLA-DOE Center for Genomics and Proteomics; software developer Tom Holton of the UCLA Molecular Biology Institute; computer graphics researcher JP Lewis of the USC Integrated Media Systems Center; Ph.D. candidate Ethan Drucker and Weihong Yan manager of the Bioinformatics User Facility at UCLA.

West's work has been published in the American Journal of Human Genetics, Genomics, and the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, among others. She has been featured in publications such as *Artweek*, *Genome News Network* and *The Scientist*. She conceived the seminar, "Genetics and Culture: From Molecular

Music to Transgenic Art" at UCLA where she lectures in the Department of Design/Media Arts. For more information about Ruth West, go to www.viewingspace.com or for more information about *Ecce Homology*, go to www.insilicov1.org.

The **Center for Research in Computing and the Arts (CRCA)**, one of the oldest arts research programs in the country, is an Organized Research Unit of the University of California, San Diego. CRCA facilitates the invention of new art forms that arise out of the developments of digital technologies. Current areas of interest include interactive networked multimedia, virtual reality, computer-spatialized audio, and live performance techniques for computer music and graphics. For more information about UCSD's Center for Research in Computers and the Arts, go to <http://crca.ucsd.edu>.

The **California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology** is one of four institutes created by the State in late 2000 to ensure that California maintain its leadership in cutting-edge technologies. Cal-(IT)²'s mission: to extend the reach of the current information infrastructure throughout the physical world enabling anywhere/anytime access to the Internet. More than 220 professors and senior researchers from UC Irvine and UC San Diego are collaborating on interdisciplinary projects. For more information, go to <http://www.calit2.net/>

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