

Near-Future 'Film' to Premiere at Opening of UCSD Tech Facility

Audience Invited to Bring Cell Phones and Laptops for Interaction with Live Performance

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A live, site-specific multimedia event - written and directed by telecommunications media artist Adriene Jenik - will premiere Oct. 28 at the University of California, San Diego.

Called SPECFLIC and described by Jenik as "speculative distributed cinema," the project uses cutting-edge transmission and display technologies to examine the social costs and benefits of those same technologies. Version 1.0 will show from 9 p.m. to midnight in the courtyard and on the surfaces of the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (Calit2).

SPECFLIC, which is part of the daylong dedication of the new Calit2 building at UCSD, showcases the creative possibilities enabled by the high-tech facilities and interdisciplinary culture of Calit2 and its new media arts flagship, the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts (CRCA), Jenik said.

Like speculative fiction, a sci-fi genre to which the project partially owes its name, SPECFLIC imagines and investigates a possible near future.

Set in 2030, SPECFLIC portrays a radically re-envisioned UCSD: The university has moved almost entirely indoors and is now housed in a giant networked high-tech lab-tower. Sponsored by BioNeuroNanoComm, education "Inside" is offered free of charge in exchange for student labor and participation as test subjects in scientific studies. Communications, even of the most intimate kind, take place through mediating gadgets and devices. Meanwhile, "Outside," lurks a group of self-exiled characters who threaten the new-order status quo.

SPECFLIC will feature live and pre-taped performances streamed through mobile video platforms, monitoring and sensor networks, as well as an array of asynchronous media forms. These will be mixed and clustered by Jenik and projected onto a variety of surfaces - ranging from giant rear-projection and LED screens to Calit2's main elevator tower and brushed-steel facade.

Allison Janney, Emmy Award-winning actress of the TV series "West Wing," will play the role of the 2030 Chancellor. Other featured performers include Ricardo Dominguez, Richard Jenik, Lisa Brenneis and Nao Bustamante. Additional text is by science fiction writer and UCSD alum Kim Stanley Robinson, author of the Hugo and Nebula Award-winning Mars Trilogy.

"SPECFLIC is not just told, but experienced," said Jenik, an associate professor of computer and new media arts in the UCSD visual arts department. "Like most of my work, it is about creating a space where people can *enter* an idea and engage issues critically."

Contributing to SPECFLIC's innovative public interaction modules - or "textural elements," as Jenik calls them - are: Reality Flythrough by computer science Ph.D. candidate Neil McCurdy; Sousveillance Grid by UCSD alumnus Andrew Collins (Interdisciplinary Computing Arts Major); Community Built Display by visual arts

MFA candidate Robert Twomey; live streaming audio by/on radioactiveradio.org; and a "quasi-gourmet buffet," prepared by performance troupe DoEAT from food picked out of supermarket dumpsters.

The audience is encouraged to participate in the whole SPECFLIC spectacle by dressing as though it were Halloween 2030 and by bringing laptops and camera cell phones. A scene-setting "prologue," which includes a bonfire (as well as the opportunity for the audience to connect to SPECFLIC's interactive network), begins at 8 p.m.

A variety of other new-media art and music projects will be showcased at the Calit2 building dedication by CRCA. These include, for example:

In the immersive visualization CAVE: a virtual reality installation called Special Treatment, by Todd Margolis, CRCA technical director, which takes viewers on a chilling train ride to a sparsely populated camp pieced together from artifacts of Auschwitz II/Birkenau, Poland.

In the Black Box space: DJ/VJ performance RESPAM, by graduate students Tim Jaeger and Alex Dragulescu, which makes novel use of email spam.

In the courtyard and the pedestrian tunnel known as "the wormhole": Music for Courtyard, a sonic installation by composer and sound designer Shahrokh Yadegari, assistant professor in the UCSD department of theater and dance.

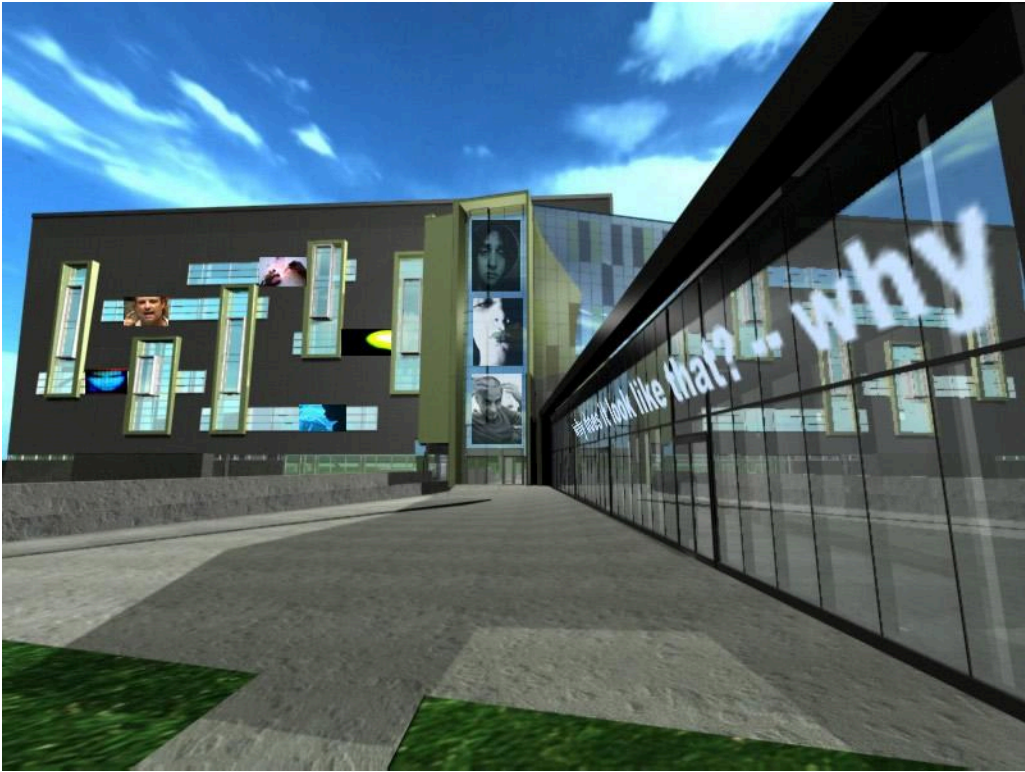
For more details and for other CRCA projects being showcased Oct. 28: http://www.crca.ucsd.edu/events/Calit2_Opening/

For more about the Calit2@UCSD building dedication: <http://www.calit2.net/UCSDCeremony/index.html>

For more about SPECFLIC or to log on to a live stream of the main narrative on Oct 28: <http://www.specflic.net/>

SPECFLIC 2.0 - the second iteration of the ongoing project - will be launched in August in conjunction with the 2006 Inter-Society for Electronic Arts (ISEA) symposium in San Jose.

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SPECFLIC

Speculative
Distributed
Cinema

directed by Adriene Jenik
28 October 2005
specflic.net

