

REFRESH!

First International Conference

on the Histories of Media Art, Science and Technology

September 29th – October 1st, 2005

TESTIMONIALS

The interaction with individuals through the REFRESH! Conference was superb. Sara Diamond and Susan Kennard, as well as their support staff, made the opportunity for interaction with those attending the conference and discussion of new media history comfortable and informative on many levels. With these types of support systems the subject of the conference was the primary focus and stayed so throughout the 3-day conference and 2-day summit.

Everyone involved rose to the occasion.

Thank-you

Todd A. Davis

Executive Director

Open Space

Victoria, British Columbia

The Refresh! Conference at The Banff Centre has been a truly remarkable experience which has been challenging and thought-provocative in every possible way. The settings provided the perfect surroundings for immersing oneself in the conference topic.

Kristin Veel

Ph.D. Candidate

Modern and Medieval Languages, German Department

University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

I much enjoyed the days of the Refresh! meeting at the Banff Centre for the Arts. There was a great scenery, comfortable rooms, wonderful food (way too much), a generally friendly atmosphere, and interesting people to meet. Challenging topics, often with too little time to discuss seriously. The days I was allowed to spend constitute a very worthwhile experience.

Frieder Nake

Professor, University of Bremen

Germany

This was a fabulous, intense, intellectually stimulating conference, and the location, facilities, and staff of the Banff Center and BNMI helped to make that possible. The Banff Center is truly world-class and it is an honor and a pleasure to participate in events held here. I look forward to my next visit!

Edward A. Shanken

Professor of Art History

Savannah College of Art and Design

Georgia, USA

BNMI presented once again a significant benchmark in the ongoing history of new media. The concept of the Refresh conference focusing on media art history - is timely and called for as evidenced by the on site as well as post conference discussions on a variety of related topics. The overwhelming desire by the participants to continue Refresh! serves as a clear indication of the community's confirmation of BNMI's summit plans and realization.

Nina Czegledy
Artist, Curator
Critical Media, ISEA
Toronto, Canada

My time at the Banff center was incredibly rewarding academically, professionally and intellectually. The resources are of the highest order and the entire conference went without any noticeable technical or organizational hitches. Given the Centers' location in the mountains the mix of aesthetic natural beauty and innovative technology was very conducive to a rich learning environment. Personally I feel that the Center's reputation is reflected in the willingness of many participants to travel from all over the world to attend this conference.

Michael R. Salmond
Assistant Professor - Digital Arts
Center for the Arts
North Carolina, USA

Emailed from an online viewer:

Dear hosts and organizers,

From Amsterdam, The Netherlands, I greatly enjoyed the Refresh! conference. My compliments with the quality of the contributions. In particular I found Jon Ippolito, Christianne Paul and others very insightful on the problems of archiving and conservation.

Thank you making things available on streaming video. Are the presentations still available to be played afterward on your website. Some sessions conflicted with my working schedule, some others did not come through apparently for technical reasons. It would be great to be able to return to the inspiring contributions.

Are you planning proceedings shortly?

Best wishes,

Gerard Alberts
Radboud University of Nijmegen

[Refresh! had] participatory and immersive environment.

Yara Guasque
UDESC
Itacorubi. SC. Brazil

The conference Refresh! was extremely well organized and provided a wonderfully concentrated atmosphere and context. Especially the streaming quality and concept was very good! Thanks for this.

The only drawback had actually nothing to do with the organizers but with the structure of panels that in too many cases didn't allow for discussion or more detailed lectures. We will improve on that the next time.

With my best regards

Rudolf Frieling

Researcher/Curator

Center for Art and Media

Karlsruhe, Germany

It was a fantastic conference thank you very much for giving me the chance to participate. All the financial and other considerations that were given to me with respect to travel and room assignment did really help in my making it to Banff. This experience has been invaluable for me in terms of the support I received from my peers and in realizing new issues which need to be addressed in this field of new media art.

I wished there were more participants from developing countries as that would have certainly changed a lot of the directions of conversations and provided a broader global perspective to this issues that this conference was attempting to address.

It would have also been good to have some artists, maybe a few of the students at Banff talk about their work because we saw the facilities but it did seem as if we were separated from the rest of the creative activities going on at this wonderful place.

Some short workshop options would also have helped those of us who don't have any chances to utilize these facilities have first hand experience with them.

Atteqa Malik

Freelance Digital Artist/ Scholar in Media Studies

Karachi, Pakistan

The conference was an extraordinary opportunity to exchange ideas in an atmosphere which was inspiring and in which our needs were taken care of. The equipment worked flawlessly, the food was great, and the atmosphere brought out the best in people. I'd love to have every conference at Banff.

Will Straw

Associate Professor, Dept. of Art History and Communications

McGill University

Montreal, Canada

The REFRESH! conference was outstanding and the Banff environment was a major contributor to the productivity of the event. Historians and practitioners were able to present their work in excellent conditions and the facilities promoted interaction and dialogue.

Roger Malina

*Chairman, Leonardo/ISAST
Germany*

I must say that the technical staff did an absolutely exceptional job. And despite many challenges with different standards, equipment, language differences and expectations, I did not see the support staff even once come close to losing their temper. And they would have been justified in doing so from what I saw! I think they are greatly to be commended. The facility is fantastic. And I loved the artworks – really very lovely.

Tobey Crockett

*Candidate, PhD Program in Visual Studies
University of California, Irvine, USA*

The Banff Center was a wonderful oasis – a real treat to belong to and be a part of even for a conference. During dinner I was able to meet artists in residence who were far afield from the conference topic that I was attending (new media). Dining with other artists, it is apparent that the interests in one another's creative endeavours are strong. It was nice to meet people who were in process during a conference where people were reporting on progress. The environment and the grounds are so inspiring, it is a place to think clearly and recognize expanding horizons.

Margaret Dolinsky

*Assistant Professor and Research Scientist
Indiana University Bloomington, USA*

I very much enjoyed my stay at the Banff Centre and found the staff there excellent in facilitating the many needs of the conference participants. Everything felt as if it were attended to, it was only us delegates that fouled up the timing! The Banff Centre is an exceptional environment, a unique gem of a place, especially in this day and age.”

Andy Polaine

*Head, School of Media Arts, College of Fine Arts
The University of New South Wales, Australia*

An excellent conference and an outstanding venue. The technical support and facilities were outstanding. Events and sessions were well organized and preparation was thorough. An impressive event from start to finish!!

Dr. Chris Meigh-Andrews PhD (RCA) MA
HDCP Electronic & Digital Art Unit
Faculty of Design and Technology
University of Central Lancashire
Preston, England

The conference was a necessary steep in discussing media art histories at the international level and filling the gap between media art and contemporary art discourses.

Darko Fritz
Artist/Curator
Netherlands/Croatia

It was very important for me to present my project Web Biennial 2005 at the Refresh Conference, in front of an international community and I am grateful to Banff Center for providing me an opportunity to do so. It not only important as my project Web Biennial is first of its kind, but also I felt that I was representing more than 100's of artists that participated to the project. One of them is Myron Campbell and he was living in Banff and I met him physically for the first time at the Banff Center as coincidence. Furthermore, it [was a] great experience to meet with such important artists and scholars from all over the World. Some parts of the world were about to be under represented in the conference and your support for them increased the overall diversity. Last but not the least it was different being with important scholars in such a beautiful environment, eating, talking or even swimming with them rather than just discussing in the conference halls. I will strongly recommend The Banff Center to all my scholar and artist friends.

Genco Gulan
Director
Contemporary Art Museum, iS.CaM
Istanbul, Turkey

I found the conference an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and meeting people. The overall quality of presentations and papers was higher than we usually find with conferences in this field. Most presentations were professional and well defined. The feedback from the audience was active in many cases.

It was a great beginning for the Refresh! which we hope to continue. As a part of the organizing group I feel it was really a right decision to organize it at the Banff Centre, with its facility, atmosphere, and dedicated staff who supported the conference.

Machiko Kusahara

Professor, School of Letters

Arts and Sciences, Waseda University

Tokyo, Japan

Being remote is not necessarily a bad thing. Especially not, when remote means Banff. My experience of The Banff Centre is that of an open and innovative environment that is constantly buzzing with the input it gets from its many visitors.

Torben Olander

Artificial.dk

Copenhagen, Denmark

I found the “Refresh!” conference at Banff to be extremely valuable and rewarding professionally and personally. I greatly appreciated the way the set up and setting of Banff promoted collegial exchanges with colleagues and provided opportunities for informal exchange in addition to the more structured experience of the conference sessions themselves. The technical support and set up was terrific. I greatly appreciated the great patience and warmth shown by all the Banff staff members. Everybody was terrific at fulfilling their roles and couldn’t have been more personable or professional. I look forward to my next opportunity to visit Banff.

Anne Collins Goodyear

Assistant Curator of Prints and Drawings, National Portrait Gallery

Smithsonian Institution

Washington, DC, USA

The experience of living for some days in the Banff Center was unforgettable. The atmosphere both physical and intellectual was outstanding. The Banff Center deserves the fame it has as one of the best Centers for the development of media art and technology in the world.

Lucia Santaella

São Paulo Catholic University

Professor and Director

Center of Research in Digital Media

Brazil

Sara Diamond has done a good service to the art/science community to have a Refresh! conference. And there were some good speakers. However, I read on your form that the primary goals of the Banff New Media Institute are to enhance artists' careers and to maintain a high level of artistic integrity for artistic endeavors. Well, if that is what Banff wants to do, it is my testimonial that This artist concern focus certainly did not happen at Refresh 05. In this respect Refresh! failed miserably in supporting artists in any substantial way.

The only real supporter of artists at refresh was Roger Malina of Leonardo; and he certainly has the track record to prove it. I was in a very animated discussion with one of the keynote speakers, we thought it was absurdly comical that there were very few artists attending, let alone presenting. It seems that the conference was basically about promoting the art history agenda, that is ok, but that is certainly not about getting an artistic perspective from serious working artists. It was very sad and unfortunate that the art making part of art and science was not able to be presented by artists who actually work as artists. It is very true that ideas, concepts, notions, practices about art and science are being transformed, and the very sense of what an artist may be could be in question. But, don't you think that it would make sense to have artists present and presenting at a future refresh conference to discuss and explore these issues. If I were you I would keep refresh at Banff, let Banff assert its identity as involving artists, and then maybe go on European soil. And I would highly recommend Roger Malina and/or his organization (Leonardo) to help you do this.

Sorry I did not have better news.

Thanks for letting me give my perspective , I wish I would have had some opportunities to present my intellectual perspectives , in a serious way , as in presenting at Refresh.

Steven J. Oscherwitz

MFA the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Art/Techno-Science Researcher

University of Washington and Fred Hutch Cancer Institute

Seattle, USA

My experience at the Banff Center was excellent. The Refresh! Conference was very very interesting. The staff was almost without exception extremely helpful. In fact, nearly all were preemptively helpful and extremely diplomatic. The breakfasts and the desserts were the highlights of the culinary offerings.

Keith Sanborn

Lecturer in Visual Arts, Princeton University

Princeton, USA

The REFRESH! Conference was exhilarating both for the ideas it generated and the people who attended. I met a number of people who had until now only been illustrious names -- artists, academics, writers, curators, etc. -- and made wonderful contacts. The setting and the Center itself were inspiring as a venue. I wish I had reserved a space early enough to stay at the Center so as to be more fully involved -- and also because you have a swimming pool, which I didn't know about! Your administrative staff was exceptional -- extremely professional, friendly, and helpful in every way. I would single out Luke but everyone else was terrific as well. It was also great that the art gallery cooperated with the conference and mounted a fine exhibition that totally complemented the conference's topics and concerns. Your bar was a welcome refuge after the intensity of the conference and a lively place for informal conversation.

Marcia Tanner
California, USA

The Refresh! Conference provided a terrific opportunity to meet other colleagues in this highly interdisciplinary field and learn about what they are doing and where they think we should go next. The conference was beautifully organized in an even more beautiful location!

Timothy Lenoir
Kimberly Jenkins Chair for New Technologies and Society
Duke University, John Hope Franklin Center
North Carolina, USA

I took part in Refresh! with a very big pleasure and satisfaction. The level of debates and discussions was very high. The material origination was without reproach. I will not miss to make my colleagues to know about Refresh!

Edmond Couchot
Emeritus Professor of Universities
Paris, France

Excellent conference.

Ron Burnett
President
Emily Carr Institute
British Columbia, Canada

The Banff Centre, with its spectacular setting, and that warmth and enthusiasm of its staff, provides a remarkably fertile place for artists, musicians and writers to work. The Centre is exceptional in its commitment to fostering creative talent, and in a most practical way. It must be acknowledged as a major sponsor in the world of the arts.

Jasia Reichardt
Writer and Curator
London, England

The presentations that I saw in Refresh were of a very high caliber, and the discussion was stimulating and rigorous. There was opportunity to identify emerging issues in new media, which have implications for all contemporary creative producers and cultural theorists. As an artist, I would encourage you to promote the attendance and participation of more artists at the next Refresh conference, and to allow the “poster” sessions to be digital presentations in a conference hall- there is absolutely no reason why those presenters should be restricted to hard-copy on bulletin boards.

I would also encourage you to publish the transcripts of the conference so that those not able to attend can still participate in the ongoing discussion.

Thank you for a challenging and fruitful event!

Annie Martin

Artist, Assistant Professor

University of Lethbridge

Alberta, Canada