



COLAB IS PROUD TO PRESENT
"AGAINST FREEDOM" - A DISCUSSION PANEL
Tuesday, July 28th, 6pm-9pm
Galatos 17 Galatos Street, Newton, Auckland

Student Fee: \$5.00, regular Fee: \$10.00
(includes a complimentary wine or beer)

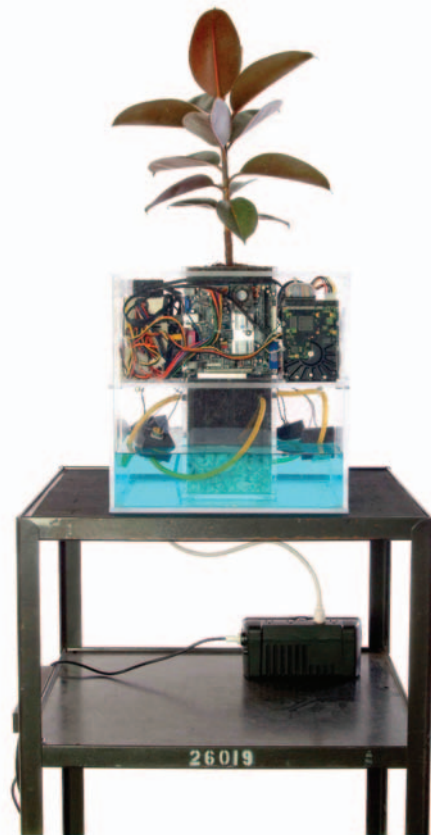
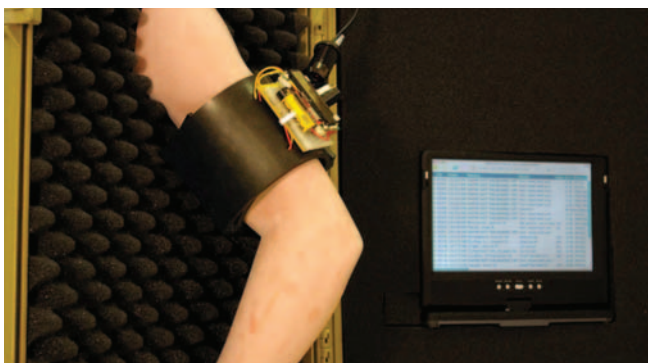
Please visit www.colab.org.nz to register for this event.

Against freedom

Technologies have emerged that radically enhance contemporary governments/corporations ability to collect and manage individual citizen/consumer's images and data. These developments have taken place in a landscape of increasing anxiety regarding corporate profits and national security. In conjunction with the residency of Matt Kenyon with AUT's Co-Lab and the concurrent exhibition of his collaborative work with the SWAMP collective at MIC Tio Rerehiko, we are staging a panel discussion aimed at extending a critical engagement with some of the key concerns exhibited by SWAMP and keenly articulated by Matt. This discussion invites scholars and artists from widely different disciplines to explore this theme and its continued implications for our lives today.

SWAMP (an acronym for Studies of Work Atmospheres and Mass Production) attempts to redirect the configuration of contemporary culture, and in the process reveal flaws and contradictions prevalent in its systems

A recurring concern for the collective is the corruption of popular culture at the hands of sensationalism, mass media and corporate entities like fast-food chains and big box retail; things which themselves construct the very foundations of everyday culture. For the panel discussion, Swamp artist's Matt Kenyon and Doug Easterly will explore notions of 'consumer freedom' by presenting a series of the collective's guerrilla new media artworks.



But why the thematic title "Against Freedom" for this panel discussion? There is a double register here that should not be missed, and a key aim of the panel presentation and subsequent discussion is to engage with that double register. On the one hand, and along the lines of the projects and concerns of SWAMP, the liberation discourses of commodity cultures disclose "freedom" within circuits of exchange, or precisely as the fluidity by which we enter the flows of exchange both material and immaterial. Our degrees of freedom are measured by our immersion or exclusion from exchangeability as such. On the other hand, we recognise that the emancipatory projects or processes by which "freedom" secures its ground, its primordial status as that which is constitutive of an outside to mechanisms of repression or control is and has been chimerical since the inauguration of the West's project of enlightenment.

The conducts of power and counter-conducts of resistance have never really operated as if there is an outside to force that would constitute the topos of freedom. This panel aims to engage with the aporia of freedom in these two respects: as that to be most resisted in its dispersed material and immaterial registers and equally as that to be resisted within a legacy of emancipatory idealism. Being against freedom on these two counts demands us to ask by what measures do we provoke or invoke contemporary political agency.

SPEAKERS

S.W.A.M.P



SWAMP is an organization whose primary goal is to find creative expression within elements of culture that are inherently counter-creative. Clusters of fast food chains are proportioned around residential subdivisions like feedbags strapped to the demographical heads of the middle class. Shopping malls

tesselate around the structures of the automobile, leaving our phantom limbs to sleepwalk strapped in our seatbelts. At home, social spaces are replaced with control spaces: chairs and sofas rotate to obsequiously receive the glowing radiation from hundreds of channels whose collective voice weaves "BUY-NOW" messages into every facet of the meme-machine mislabeled 'creative programming'. www.swamp.nu or click [here](#) for an Interview recording.

Hasan Elahi



Hasan Elahi is an interdisciplinary artist whose work examines issues of surveillance, simulated time, transport systems, borders and frontiers. His work has been presented in numerous exhibitions at venues such as the Centre Georges Pompidou, Sundance Film Festival, Kassel Kulturbahnhof, The Hermitage,

and at the Venice Biennale. Elahi recently was invited to speak about his work at the Tate Modern, Einstein Forum, and at the American Association of Artificial Intelligence. His awards include grants from the Creative Capital Foundation, a Ford Foundation/Phillip Morris National Fellowship, and an artist grant from the Asociacion Artetik Berrikuntzara in Donostia, San Sebastian, Spain. His work is frequently in the media and has been covered by The New York Times, Forbes, Wired, CNN, ABC, CBS, NPR, Al Jazeera, and has appeared on The Colbert Report. He is an assistant professor at San Jose State University. He is also 2009 Resident Faculty and Nancy G. MacGrath Endowed Chair at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture.

<http://elahi.sjsu.edu/>

Dr Judith Symonds



Dr Judith Symonds is a Senior Lecturer at AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand and serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Advanced Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing (IJAPUC). Judith has published internationally, and currently serves on editorial boards for the Journal of

Electronic Commerce in Organisations and the International Journal of E-Business Research. Judith will question whether modern miniaturised ubiquitous technologies (such as radio frequency identification (RFID) tags and wireless sensors) are the mark of the beast. Wireless technology and RFID are being used to identify everything from freight packages and produce through to workers. Some would argue that such technology

has the potential to be used against us, to spy on us without our knowledge and to launch sophisticated personalised mobile marketing campaigns similar to those portrayed in the film, *Minority Report*. However, could it be argued that wireless sensors and RFID tags are already and will become increasingly integral to ensuring our safety? Judith's presentation will explore contemporary applications of wireless sensor and RFID tag technologies for public safety, with particular relevance to New Zealand contexts.

Dr. Mark Jackson



Dr. Mark Jackson is currently Associate Professor of Design in the School of Art and Design and Associate Dean (Research & Postgraduate) for the Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies at AUT University. Prior to this he has held lecturing positions at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Adelaide and at the Sydney

College of the Arts, the University of Sydney. He gained his PhD in Architecture at the University of Sydney in 1994 and was a Visiting Scholar in the Faculty of Architecture at MIT in Boston in 1996, and a Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Architecture, University of Karlsruhe, Germany in 2003-04. He has published in the fields of design history and theory, the visual arts, film and media as well as architecture and landscape architecture. He has had a number of film and video works exhibited internationally. His current research focus is on ethics and design cultures.

Natalie Robertson



Natalie Robertson (Ngati Porou, Clan Donnachaidh) was born at the foot of Putauaki Maunga and raised in Kawerau, Bay of Plenty. Established as an exhibiting photographic artist and experienced educator, Natalie is currently Post-graduate Co-ordinator Maori and Pasifika at AUT University. Over the past decade Natalie

has been making photographic and moving image works that contest colonial survey mapping practices and explore impacts on the oral mapping, cultural landscape and knowledge practices of Maori. Natalie has recently been creating moving image works that explore oral storytelling through moteatea [traditional chant], waiata [song] and korero [talk] about topical political issues, with a particular focus on environmental and cultural injustice.

Natalie has exhibited extensively in public institutions throughout the Pacific and internationally, most recently in Geomatics and Ecomatics: Three Stories at the Third Shanghai International Science and Art Exposition, Pudong Expo, Shanghai and Our People, Our Land, Our Images - International Indigenous Photography at the Burke Museum, Seattle and a solo show at the Whakatane Museum. Her work is held in many significant public collections including the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Auckland City Art Gallery.