

UT Austin | Portugal

DIGITAL BITS

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATORY FOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, CoLab



Future Places Draws Talent, Attendees

The fourth annual Future Places festival hosted community workshops, technology labs, digital media art exhibits, performances, and more from October 19-22 in Porto. In 2011, Future Places focused on the continuation of existing community projects that appeared in previous festivals, and on panels that addressed one of the most important issues in digital media today—copyright.

The festival hosted several prominent speakers on digital media and copyright, including activists, educators, and policy experts. Elizabeth Stark, a Lecturer in Law at Stanford Law School, where she started the “Ideas for a Better Internet” program, joined a panel with Peter Sunde Kolmisoppi, co-founder of internationally renowned BitTorrent tracker The Pirate Bay. For an audience of about 150 attendees, Stark and Sunde addressed The Pirate Bay’s development, industry and government reactions to the site, and, more generally, shifting attitudes and conditions surrounding intellectual property and digital media.

In addition to formal workshops, Citizen Labs were a series of workshops curated by Heitor Alvelos, that focused on social and cultural participation through new media, and were extremely well-attended. Most Labs were organized in coordination with various festival partners, such as the Paredes Municipality, Asociación Cultural Visible, or Radio Zero.

The festival’s website was completely re-designed for the 2011 edition. Hosting a variety of content including Citizen Labs outcomes and essays inspired by the festival, it is available at futureplaces.org.

Portuguese Doctoral Students Show Research at Symposium

During the Future Places festival, the Digital Media program also hosted an all-day doctoral symposium. At the event, students of the UT Austin | Portugal Digital Media Program shared their projects and research.

The doctoral symposium featured over a dozen theoretically and technically innovative projects currently conducted by UT Austin-Portugal Digital Media PhD students from UNL and U.Porto. Many faculty and students gathered to learn about research on haptic art, tools for automated music generation, and interactive video systems supporting environmental activism, among many other topics. The symposium provided a snapshot of the



diverse cutting edge research and technological development occurring within the doctoral program and gave students from the partner universities an excellent opportunity to engage with one another.

Finnish Academy Assesses Digital Media Program

The Digital Media Program has been hard at work expanding the range of educational and research opportunities available to the Portuguese people. Now its work is up for review. The Portuguese government has contracted Academy of Finland to evaluate its three academic programs (Carnegie Mellon, UT-Austin, and MIT) . During the months of October and November, the academy is surveying and speaking with various representatives of the programs in order to help the Portuguese government determine their value. This effort will play a role in whether the government wishes to continue the programs with these universities in the future.

ZON Event Presents Achievements of Digital Media Partnership

Last month the public was offered a glimpse of the ZON Labs at an event in Lisbon. Titled “Evaluating the ZON UT Austin Experiment: Two years of business-university cooperation in the development of script-writing and digital animation competencies,” it was held at Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias on October 20th.



The event gathered participants from the ZON Intensive Script Development Lab at UT Austin in 2010 and the 2011 ZON Digital Animation Advanced Lab at UT Austin, representatives from ZON, and staff from the UT Austin | Portugal program.

The collaboration between ZON and the UT Austin|Portugal Program has brought 28 candidates to the University of Texas at Austin and supported the completion of about 15 projects of fiction and animation. The highlight of the collaboration is the short film "Vicky and Sam" produced in Austin by Nuno Rocha, winner of the ZON Creativity in Multimedia Award 2008, which has received awards in various national and international festivals, including the Zacuto (USA), Shortcutz, “Caminhos do Cinema Português” and Ovarvídeo.

The conference explored aspects of business-university cooperative programs, particularly those in digital media domains. Through partnerships like this one with the UT Austin | Portugal program, ZON aims to support national talent, allowing students to receive training in a multicultural environment with a strong professional component.

Guedes is in residence in Austin this fall as a Fulbright fellow, and this month he presented a piece at the fall EARS recital. The Electro-Acoustic recital series is presented each semester by Pinkston and includes musical compositions by UT faculty and graduate students.

This December professor Rosental Alves of the UT School of Journalism will travel to Porto for the [7th annual SOPCOM conference](#). This is a national conference that examines Portugal's media and communication industries. He will be presenting on the role of journalism in the new digital media environment.

UT-Austin | Portugal Digital Media Program

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