



November 11, 2024, 2:00–5:00 pm

Workshop by Ren Loren Britton

Rehearsing technology in trans-crip-technoscientific time

In this workshop, participants will be invited to rehearse crip technoscientific technologies. We will study some histories of political coalitions between trans, crip, and anti-racist movements that have hacked and engaged technology with their own values. The workshop begins with a screening of the video work *Coalition Bouquet: 504 Sit-In* – this artwork sets the stage for participants to think through, write, tell, and prototype their own stories and experiences through which unlikely technologies have emerged and enabled collaborative work. An example from the *Coalition Bouquet* film is when, during the 504 Sit-In – a disability-rights protests that took place in the United States in 1977 – a medicine cooling refrigerator was created from a cardboard box, an air-conditioning unit, and tape. In this workshop we will take a wide perspective on technology and zoom in to the technological artifacts that may have otherwise been invisibilized in our stories about working across differences.

Questioning which practices become historicized or canonized as the »right« pasts to refer to, this workshop will invite participants to remember lesser historicized stories of when things have gone well between disabled, racialized, queer, lower class, and otherwise othered coalitions. Together we will closely explore the hacked, invented, and prototyped improvisational technologies that have been invented to support coalitional groups. Examining the history of the 504 Sit-In, telling a story about the CIL (Center for Independent Living) Activists and the BPP (Black Panther Party); exploring the work of Giuseppe Campuzano and their DNI (De Natura Incertus) project (zooming in to holographic lenticular printing techniques); and taking examples from stories shared in the group, we will explore memory, and practice prototyping technologies that open spaces and possibilities to render the probable possible.

Participants: max. 20 in-person, max. 10 remote

Ren Loren Britton is a trans*disciplinary artist-designer who holds values that reverberate with trans*feminism, technosciences, radical pedagogy, and disability justice. With loving accountability, their work practices collaboration, accessibility, trans*gender politics, and critical technical praxis. <https://lorenbritton.com/>.

November 12, 2024, 2:00–5:00 pm

Workshop Lecture-Performance by Sarah Ciston

The practice of threading: computation, crochet, (machine) learning

Through iterative practice, we program ourselves. Through gesture, we encode dimension. Through processing, we create anew with our bodies.

Taking up crochet as a technology practice, this workshop explores machine learning's size and scalability. When crocheting, one repeats a pattern, performs an algorithm, and produces an output. The repeated activity reveals how body and labor are not separate from experiences of digital »ephemerality.« Often labeled as a domestic or feminine activity, crochet can help challenge stereotypes in craft and code. It points to unacknowledged contributions to computing made particularly by women of color, and to the alternative potentials for imagining machine systems. In the first phase of this workshop, we start from scratch, learning crochet together in an easy, non-intimidating environment. If you've never crocheted before, you'll learn with others; if you have prior experience, bring something you're working on. Together we will find and defy patterns in our bodies and our threads, transforming material and process into three-dimensional structures. Once we have the rhythm of the embodied practice, you are invited to relax, continue crocheting, and listen to a lecture-performance about craft and machine learning, (un)raveling the connections between them. Afterward, we can discuss and reflect on what we have created.

Participants: max. 20 in-person, max. 12 remote



Sarah Ciston builds tools to bring intersectional approaches to machine learning. They are the author of »A Critical Field Guide for Working with Machine Learning Datasets« and hold a Ph.D. in Media Arts and Practice from University of Southern California. They were recently named an AI Newcomer by Gesellschaft für Informatik and an AI Anarchies Fellow at Akademie der Künste. Ciston is currently working with the Processing Foundation to create a Critical AI Kit for p5.js, supported by Google Season of Docs.

Further information

Registration for Workshops

Please register in advance for the workshop program. The number of participants is limited. To register, send an email with »Registration for Workshop [title, date]« in the subject line to Nataša Vukaljović at digitalsolitude@akademie-solitude.de by October 27, 2024.

Program overview

<https://www.akademie-solitude.de/en/event/unlearning-bodies/>

Language

The program will be held entirely in English.

Admission

Admission to all events on-site and online is free of charge. Registration is required for the on-site and online workshops. The lecture performances and discussion are open to the public.

Location

Württembergischer Kunstverein
Schlossplatz 2
D-70173 Stuttgart
(Please use the entrance on Stauffenbergstraße.)

Accessibility

Württembergischer Kunstverein is barrier-free and accessible, with a wheelchair-accessible restroom.

Access copies including prescribed parts of the workshops will be handed out in English and German.

Livestream

For people who do not wish to attend the events physically, parts of the program will be livestreamed via Zoom. Please find more information in the program overview.





Glossary

Crip

The term »crip« was adapted and reworked from its origin in the derogatory word »cripple.« The term should only be used with permission from the community or person who is being referred to, or regarding crip theory and practice. There is discussion about whether crip refers only to the physical disability community, or other experiences as well. (adapted from the Critical Disability Studies Collective, University of Minnesota <https://cdsc.umn.edu/cds/terms>)

Crip theory

Made popular by scholars like Robert McRuer and Carrie Sandahl, »Crip theory« as an academic field derives from critical disability studies and merges with queer theory. Crip theory explores how the social pressures and norms around ability intersect with the social pressures and norms around gender/sexuality. Crip theory and practice entails sustained forms of coming out and recognizes that a more accessible world is possible, one in which disability doesn't contest liberationist notions of acceptance and tolerance.¹

Crip technoscience

Crip technoscience offers a potential clarification to the limitations of Assistive Technology productions and to systems that marginalize non-normative body-minds as pointed out in the »Crip Technoscience Manifesto« (2019). Acknowledging that military-industrial research and development, imperial and colonial relations and ecological destruction produced technologies that have enabled disabled people to gain access to the social world, Haimraie and Fritsch claim nevertheless that technoscience can be a transformative tool for disability justice.²

Crip technoscience harkens back to Feminist technoscience and other forms of technoscience, or »critical knowing-making«: 1) pursuing liberation and community care. The »making« here can involve practices of critique, alteration, reinvention, and creation, but it can also involve dismantling and »world-remaking« in the face of an oppressive status quo.

¹ Alison Kafer: »What's Crip About Queer Theory Now? Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability, by Robert McRuer.« in: Sex Roles, 60(3-4): pp. 291-94, p. 292.

² Aimi Hamraie and Kelly Fritsch: »Crip technoscience manifesto,« in: Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience, Issue 5 (volume 1), pp. 1-34.