Inhabiting and Interfacing the Cloud(s)

Fireside Talk 2
Thursday
January 28

outputs strengthens our proposal to publish «research through design» results in the existing and efficient diffusion system of art and design.

I&IC (Inhabiting and Interfacing the Clouds) is a joint design research (HES-SO) project that investigates counter-proposals to the current development of «Cloud Computing», particularly in its forms intended for designers and other end users («Personal Cloud»). It is an ongoing project led by Prof. Patrick Keller (ECAL) and Prof. Nicolas Nova (HEAD) that includes institutional partners (EPFL/Alice, EPFL + ECAL Lab) as well as independent designers and scientists (Dr. Christian Babski – fabric | ch, James Auger – Auger-Loizeau, Matthew Plummer-Fernandez – #algopop, Dev Joshi – Random International, Sascha Pohflepp).

Prof. Christophe Guignard, Prof. Patrick Keller,
Media & Interaction Design unit, ECAL, CH

Based on the analysis of «Cloud Computing», an infrastructure of services mainly developed by corporate interests and envisioned as a functional and centralized setup, I&IC has three main objectives:

to explore and propose alternative usages of this iconic infrastructure of our modernity practiced by designers, architects, artists; to deliver open source decentralized tools to designers, architects and ethnographers to develop projects including cloud computing technologies out of the usual centralized services provided by the main actors of this domain (Amazon, Google, Apple, Microsoft and Dropbox); to experiment a «research through design» methodology with transdisciplinary partners from the fields of interaction design, architecture, computer sciences and ethnography.

The results of the first phase of this research project were shown last summer at HeK (Haus der elektronischen Künste, Basel) in the very heart of «Poetics and Politics of Data», an exhibition curated by Sabine Himmelsbach. A corpus of data interfaces, interaction design and territory management proposals stood alongside with artworks and design installations within a scenography designed by fabric | ch for I&IC.

The positive feedback from visitors and researchers about this interconnection of works created by renowned artists and designers with research

Christophe Guignard

is Professor at ECAL (University of Art & Design, Lausanne). Since 2000, he has been teaching design studio and theory in the Media & Interaction Design unit. He has also been involved in several HES and European research projects.
In parallel to his academic activities, Christophe Guignard is also one of the founding members of fabric | ch, a studio for architecture, interaction and research based in Lausanne. In collaboration with the other members of fabric | ch, he has been designing projects that combine physical with digital spaces in the cross-cutting fields of architecture, art and information technologies. The works of the studio have been exhibited in Switzerland and in many other countries.
Christophe Guignard studied architecture at EPFL (Swiss Institute of Technology, Lausanne), as well as in Montreal and New York. He completed his education with a series of philosophy seminars at UNIL before obtaining a postgraduate degree in computer graphics in the EPFL research laboratories.

Patrick Keller

is Professor at the University of Art & Design, Lausanne (ECAL) where he teaches design in the Media & Interaction Design unit. He was in charge and helped initiate this unit between 2001 and 2004. In 2007, he led the design research Variable_Environment that united designers from ECAL and scientists from EPFL (design & science research).
Patrick is also founding member of fabric | ch, a studio for architecture, interaction and research. As part of his activity as creative director for the studio, he formulates new space proposals that combines digital, physical and environmental dimensions. Oscillating between devices, installations, experiments and productions, the work of the collective has been exhibited and published internationally, so has presented in numerous talks.