

**** Apologies for cross posting ****

CUTTING EDGE : LASERS AND CREATIVITY

One-day symposium at Loughborough University exploring lasers in Art & Design and their contribution to making artefacts

Date : 4 November 2009

Organisers: Kerry Walton and Janette Matthews in collaboration with the Textile Research Group and the Drawing Research Group

Venue: Loughborough University School of Art and Design, Loughborough, UK

Contact: K.Walton@lboro.ac.uk

Information : http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ac/mainpages/Symposium-CuttingEdge/symposium_cutting_edge.htm

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS AND ELECTRONIC POSTERS

Laser processing of metals, acrylics, wood, textiles and other materials is a well-known industrial process for cutting and marking. Equipment is becoming more accessible and even commonplace in academic institutions for use by Art & Design and Design Technology departments. As is often the case with emerging technologies, there is a requirement for the potential to be fully understood before the process can be exploited. A number of practitioners, designers and technologists are involved in exciting work that moves the laser process beyond just a cut or a mark in a material. This one-day symposium will explore the laser process in Art & Design and the relationship of practitioners to the technology.

Through a series of illustrated presentations and panel discussions by leading artists, designers, researchers and technologists, it will show how the process is being exploited through innovative practice and demonstrate that laser processing is more than a means of cutting. The relationship between laser technology and its impact on underlying practice will be questioned. Advances and emerging trends in the development of laser technology and the consequent impact on practice will be explored through the following enquiry:-

- Lasers are used for both speed and repetition and as creative tools for experimentation. What methods and approaches enable experimentation and result in innovation?
- Lasers can enable transferability of art work between a variety of materials. How is this best achieved and what are the potential opportunities and limitations of this approach in terms of design quality and practicalities?
- Working with lasers creates a physical distance between the artist/designer and the artwork/design. What affect, if any, does this have on the sensibility of the final piece? How does this compare with other automated devices used in

art and design for example other digital technologies such as printing? How is this 'distance' exploited or mitigated in the creative process?

- Does software mediate this distance between the artist/designer and the artwork/design in laser work? How central is the creative use of software to innovate design/art that employs lasers?
- Laser operating procedures are necessarily 'safe', again creating a physical distance from the cutting/marking process. How can happy accidents be encouraged/facilitated in such situations? Or are the safety procedures enabling?
- To what extent does knowledge of materials science and/or the fundamentals behind laser processing inform creative work? If so, is it necessary to learn individually by trial and error? Would a designer friendly 'handbook' be useful? Do different approaches result in different outcomes facilitating creativity?
- What are the advantages of lasers over other cutting and marking technologies? What new opportunities do they afford beyond speed and repetition?
- Relevant to art and design, what other opportunities exist beyond cutting and marking in regard to laser technologies? How do practitioners become aware of these technologies in sufficient detail to exploit them and explore at the boundary edges?

We invite contributions from both practitioners and researchers from different disciplines to respond to these questions.

SUBMISSIONS

Contributions to the symposium may be made in the form of academic papers and/or illustrated presentations. There is also the opportunity for the submission of 3 minute rolling PowerPoint presentations.

We are now inviting the submission of abstracts in response to the above questions. Abstracts of 250-400 words (excluding references) and up to three images may be submitted for :

- Papers from researchers
- Illustrated presentations from practitioners
- 3 minute rolling PowerPoint electronic posters from emerging and established researchers and practitioners.

Submissions which do not address at least one of the symposium questions will not be considered. Although it is expected that authors will participate in the symposium in person, we welcome electronic poster submissions from practitioners and researchers not resident in the UK.

Authors of selected abstracts will be invited to submit full papers or presentations. Abstracts should be sent as plain text and images must not exceed 1MB in size in total. Submissions should be sent via email to K.Walton@lboro.ac.uk.

The symposium will be documented to provide a record of the day and potentially published in an ISSN/IBSN format.

IMPORTANT DATES

8 April 2009	Submission of abstracts open
30 June 2009	Submission of abstracts ends
30 July 2009	Notification of acceptance of papers and presentations
30 September 2009	Submission of full papers and presentations
4 November 2009	Conference

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