

I trained as an artist and theorist and orient myself as an experimental researcher of emergent cultural practices. My books, essays, videos, multimedia presentations, courses, workshops, and especially the collaborative media initiatives and interdisciplinary networks through which I work constitute a program of applied research in cultural, technological, and organizational performance, instantiated in the global institution of higher education. In Austin's terms, this research seeks to do things as well as report on things done, and it generates knowledge at both the infra- and superstructural levels; i.e., I produce knowledge networks, platforms, and services, as well as books, articles and videos. The closing of archives, libraries, and academic departments register the stakes of this *infrastructuralist* approach, which also informs my collaborative work on the Digital Humanities Initiative, DesignLab, Digital Studies, Media Studios, Digital Salon, and Design Summits 1, 2, and 3.

The program for this research is outlined in the final chapters of *Perform or Else* and maps on to the three levels comprising the general theory of performance introduced in its earlier chapters. My praxis unfolds via: 1) *the audiovisual refunctioning and digital remediation of performative statements and embodied performances*; 2) *the transversal networking of cultural, technological, and organizational performance research paradigms—and disciplinary fields more generally*; and 3) *the spatio-temporal navigation of historical formations of power and knowledge, specifically modern disciplinarity (Foucault) and postmodern performativity (Lyotard)*. The praxis entails a tangled hierarchy or what cognitive scientist Douglas Hofstadter calls “strange loops” that recursively connect these levels:

1) *the audiovisual refunctioning and digital remediation of performative statements and embodied performances*. **Written essays** on high performance education, experimental performance, experience design, and extra-judicial torture all theorize the ways human subjects are articulated and broken apart via discursive and scopic operations of specific sociotechnical systems—educational, artistic, commercial, and sovereign. By contrast, **music videos** explore the affective dimension of thought at a more intimate level by mashing up (refunctioning) audio and video clips in order to test my hypothesis that “the secret to theory is a good set of subwoofers.” What are the proper moods for practicing environmental studies? or cosmology? The **video essays** *Space Races*, *This Vile Display*, and *The Revelations of Dr. Kx4l3ndj3r* operate in-between, using dramatic conceptual personae to remediate or translate critical arguments and historical evidence into multimedia forms through highly-charged montages of image, word, and sound. These video essays have been shown at international conferences and festivals, usually framed by a lecture and discussion. I have collaborated with Austrian artist Ralo Mayer on a multimedia **lecture performance** at Stanford University, and in fall, 2013, HOB0 Art Foundation and the New Theatre in Warsaw co-produced a theatrical **concert lecture** that refunctioned *Perform or Else* and *The Revelations of Dr. Kx4l3ndj3r*.

Infrastructurally, my research on this level extends to collaborative study of all the emerging scholarly genres or **smart media** that DesignLab supports (video essays, theory comics, graphic essays, Pecha Kucha, audio narratives, etc.) and many of those we do not (e.g., TED Talks, R5Animates, Dance Your PhD). I am thus interested not only in generating research but also building platforms that help others become 21st-century researchers by enhancing

their conceptual, aesthetic, and technical know-how, while also addressing issues such as intellectual property, copyright, fair use, and Creative Commons. Inspirations include Walter Benjamin's "Author as Producer" and *Arcades Project*, Antonin Artaud's "Theater of Cruelty," Chris Marker's *La Jetée*, Jacques Derrida's *Glas*, and Laurie Anderson's *United States: Parts I-IV*; as well as traditions of ethnographic media, graphic novels, and artist books, and the avant-garde work of the Guerrilla Girls, Critical Art Ensemble, and Gregory Ulmer. My smart media experiments have led to workshops at the Dutch Theatre Festival in Amsterdam, the Grotowski Institute in Wroclaw, Poland, and the Mellon School for Theatre and Performance Research at Harvard.

2) *the transversal networking of cultural, technological, and organizational performance research paradigms—and disciplinary fields more generally.* The **Digital Humanities Initiative** (DHI) began on a napkin, grew via a **Faculty Development Seminar**, and later gathered 40+ faculty, librarians, and technologists. Collaborating with the Libraries, I created the **Media Studio** in College Library and establish the annual **Digital Salon** student exhibition. Under my direction, DHI developed the interdisciplinary **Digital Studies** certificate program, whose successful MIU proposal I authored while also gathering the support of students, faculty, deans, and alumni. The next year I led another group in developing an MIU proposal for **DesignLab**, a digital composition center now helping students make smart media for their courses, student activities, and professional development. I also traveled to Washington, DC, Tucson, and San Francisco as a member of UW-Madison's **Project Bamboo** team, working on this Mellon-funded initiative to create a cyberinfrastructure for arts and humanities research. With the office of UW's CIO (Chief Information Officer) and the ITC (Information Technology Committee), I helped organize the **Research Computing Symposium for the Humanities and Social Sciences**. Working with an Engineering alumnus, I also helped initiate a network of design faculty which has organized three **Design Summits** where faculty, students, and staff explore and workshop ideas for enhancing the research and teaching of design on campus and in the community. In Spring, 2014, we gathered designers from Trek, Kohler, and Filene Research Institute together with faculty and top administrators to explore ways that design thinking can enhance research,, teaching, service, and outreach, and I will soon co-chair a campus task force for a **Center of Design Thinking and Innovation**.

The interdisciplinary and geographic breadth of my performance research has connected me with international networks of researchers from many different fields. Most important has been **Performance Studies international (PSi)**, which served as a key site for gathering most of the contributors of my co-edited volume, *Contesting Performance: Global Sites of Research*, whose outline I sketched on a long taxi ride from Zagreb to Graz. A second PSi research network is the **Performance Design Working Group**, composed of architects, theater designers, urban planners, and media designers interested in how considerations of the body can inform the design of spaces. I was a keynote speaker at its first gathering at the Danish Institute in Rome. A third, emerging PSi network I am involved with is the **Performance and Science Working Group**, which seeks to connect performance studies approaches to the performance concepts introduced by Bruno Latour, Donald MacKenzie, and other Science and Technology Studies researchers. Outside of PSi, I was the keynote speaker in 2011 at the University of Birmingham's **Health Services Management Center's Cultural Performance**

Seminar, which explored the applicability of the general theory of performance to the commissioning and assessment of UK health services. That same year, I was invited to speak on the “Compose or Else” panel at the **Conference on College Composition and Communication**.

3) *the spatio-temporal navigation of historical formations of power and knowledge, specifically modern discipline (Foucault) and postmodern performativity (Lyotard)*. At this third level, performativity entails the legitimation of knowledge via optimization of input/output ratios (rather than through modern grand narratives of Progress, Liberation, or Revolution) and corresponds to Deleuze’s society of control, Virilio’s dromosphere, and Hardt and Negri’s Empire. All of my work is situated in this shift from disciplinary to performative power/knowledge. Significantly, my guiding question has been: *what becomes of the lecture machine (university) in the digital age of global performance?* Within our local context, the question is: what does the Wisconsin Idea—an idea born within the Progressivist grand narrative of public education— become in a world dominated by analytics and assessment? MOOCs, MIU, Administrative Excellence, New Badger Partnership, Education Innovation ... these inform the “perform—or else” imperatives shaping our research, teaching, and service. What shall we make of them?

The most concrete instantiation of my research at this level is **DesignLab**, whose mission is *to democratize digitality just as public education democratized literacy in the 19th century*. DesignLab is the first general-access media design consultancy in higher-ed and embodies the general theory in the cultural, technological, and organizational performances of our daily operations, our training of TA consultants in design principles, smart media genres, software programs, and the art of consulting; our production of instructor workshops and online resources; our on-going critical reflection on ideas, forms, processes, and our annual MIU assessment; and, most crucially, our crowd-sourcing of highly specialized, disciplinary knowledge to create general, practical knowledge that supports emerging scholarly genres. *DesignLab operates in the gap between disciplinary and performative knowledge, as all contemporary institutions increasing do*. Our design philosophy stresses human-centered design, so we recognize that the disciplinary training of most faculty and students is mono-medium (writing) and thus they lack cognitive frames for producing and evaluating multimedia knowledge. Yet paradoxically, researchers use digital tools throughout the research process, and we routinely present our research for public discussion and evaluation through performances of conference papers, poster presentations, and job talks .

Looping back to level 1: alongside smart media, important research now may lie in the development of cognitive frames that bridge disciplinary and performative knowledge, connect textual composition and media design, and enable values of cultural efficacy and experimentation to balance those of technological effectiveness and organizational efficiency.