SEEYouth conference:
Mirroring communities through Art and Design

Dates - 30 November - 3 December 2021
Venue - University of Lapland, with parallel online exhibition and presentations
Website - https://www.ulapland.fi/seeyouth2021

Conference theme

With the aim of bringing together a range of arts and design-based activities, perspectives and approaches the University of Lapland will host a hybrid conference and exhibition to foster collaboration, and share and develop new ideas in response to the ongoing global turbulence which is impacting most significantly on youth in marginalised contexts and their communities. We hope to contribute to the ongoing debates around the value of arts-based action and research in achieving sustainable change, social and economic marginalisation experienced by youth and how we might work together to anticipate and confront challenges which urgently require innovative ideas, methods and outcomes.

In particular, the conference invites proposals and contributions from communities, their members and leaders, alongside designers, academics, practitioners and policy experts so that we can build collaboration that confronts and tests the potential for change that emerges from dialogue which is driven by shared experiences and skills. To do this, the conference aims to make use of a concept of 'mirroring' as the means both to reflect upon the diverse set of contributions and also as a way to facilitate new connections and inspire new relationships.

Central to the conference is a core question: **'What might a model or methods of 'mirroring' mean and become through its development and application through art and design research?'**. We hope to encounter a variety of ways that participants and contributors can demonstrate diverse and wide-ranging uses of this idea which will help reveal the potential for further possible practices of mirroring. We also look forward to opportunities for discussion and the development of the mirroring concept as a way to establish spaces and build bridges for dialogue, conversation and collaboration among global youth when it is applied across geographical distances. We are keen to explore how mirroring might be further used as a potent political tool across the arts and in terms of design so that it can help inspire or influence social movements. We also hope to encourage innovations which explore how care, responsibilities and relationships might become central to our ways of approaching and utilising mirroring in the contexts of arts-based and design methods.

The concept of mirroring has much to offer in terms of how it can be utilised within and outside of individual academic contexts or disciplines. It allows us to recognise or acknowledge empathy, intersubjectivity and understanding in our own actions, and in those of others (Zahavi 2012). Neurologically, the large scale networks and mirroring mechanisms in the human brain create the basis

for a social mirroring (Iacoboni 2007) while also contributing to motion, emotion and empathy which create the aesthetic experience (Freedberg & Gallese 2007).

Interpersonally, mirroring can embody action which, when used as movement in performance or dance, can create emotional understanding and empathy for others (McGarry & Russo 2011). We can also see instances of mirroring in structural and organised social relations through our interactions or correspondences as members of a community, and through society and culture. Indeed, since mirroring acts upon social perception multidimensionally, its potential can expand beyond straightforward comparison (Hřebíčková, Graf, Tegdes & Brezina 2017).

Mirroring, therefore, can contribute to achieving social empathy and an understanding of others (Segal 2018), and can be practiced as part of a variety of tacit social interactions (Hasson & Frith 2016). Further, through acts and actions which work to mirror our own views, values and ideas with those of others we are able to learn socially. Such a pluralistic and heterogeneous approach, we believe, will promise and contribute more to creative processes and solutions than if we continue to remain fixed upon homogeneity and the limitations of 'singularism' (Wals 2010).

Call for contributions – papers, posters, visual essays and exhibition

We welcome proposals for contributions across a variety of formats, including:

1. Long (academic) paper – 2000-3500 words
2. Short (report) paper – 500-1500 words
3. Visual contributions (posters, visual essays etc.)

Your conference proposal might include (but is not limited to) any of the following themes or applications of the mirroring concept:

mirror(ing) as reflection
mirroring as representation
mirroring as positioning
mirroring as protection
mirroring as knowing
mirroring as showing & seeing & (multi)sensing & feeling
mirroring as spying/playing
mirroring as solidarity
mirroring as care
mirroring as a portal or entrance (to another world?)
mirroring as history and future
mirroring as learning, unlearning and relearning
mirroring as visual practise

We are also excited to receive proposals for contributions which seek to explore the opportunities for developing visually-led narratives (posters, visual essays, short films etc.) which make use of modes of critical enquiry and storytelling as a means to explore ideas of mirroring.

For instance, **posters** can be used as a method to communicate research results, processes, ideas and/or concepts using primarily visual content (ex : charts and figures, drawings, paintings, collages, graphic design, photographs, infographics…), with accompanying text describing the research on which the poster is based using language understandable by a non-specialist audience. The **visual essay** format allows for a narrative to be developed which uses scale, composition and sequence to present an overview of a project or research activity based largely on a selection and curation of images. We would recommend a maximum of five pages for any visual essay, and a use of text and typography which complements the narrative of the chosen images.

Presentation formats for visually-led contributions will be detailed on the conference website later - the first stage for submission requires only a written abstract (as detailed below).

Submissions

For the first stage of submissions, we invite contributors to submit **an abstract of 400 words** which outlines the context and focus for your proposal. We encourage all submissions to suggest how they address the concept of mirroring as part of their abstract and would also request that you submit no more than six keywords with the abstract to help us identify and develop possible conference themes.

All submissions at this stage must be anonymous and not include any reference to the author(s) name(s) or any affiliation. They will be subject to double-blind peer review and contributors will be notified of the acceptance of their proposal, together with suggestions and feedback so that all contributions benefit from opportunities for dialogue with conference chairs in the development of their conference submission (what we think of as *dialogical revisions*).

Please send your submission to seeyouth@ulapland.fi. The submission should be attached to the email in a PDF format and the text shouldn't contain any name of the author(s) or affiliations. Name the PDF file with the author's name (this will be changed to a code name before being given to the reviewers). In the email text field you can add all of your contact details.

Conference format, programme and 'mirroring' approach

The conference contributions will be organised around a series of themed panels which will be programmed on the basis of the keywords and content of each of the accepted proposals. As mentioned, given the nature of the conference, and our desire to emphasise the positive opportunities for dialogue and discussion among the panel and between attendees, for each of the programmed sessions we will invite all contributors to pre-record a 5 - 7 minute presentation which summarises their contribution. This will allow each thematic panel to be focused upon a discussion of the possible connections between

contributions, and that the development of these would take place within the conference itself so that this dialogue and its consequences for 'mirroring' is at the heart of our endeavours. The collaborative conversations and discussion that results from the thematic panels will be edited, published and distributed as a 'proceedings-in-process' at the end of each day, so that any opportunities to pick up or cross-reference the previous day's dialogue is available for all participants.

Timeline and key dates

14.05.2021 – Launch of Call for Papers / Contributions
06.06.2021 – Deadline for submission of abstracts
27.06.2021 – Notification of acceptance, together with suggestions for *dialogical revision*
15.08.2021 – Final deadline for *dialogical revisions*
22.09.2021 – Revision period ends
10.11.2021 – Organisation to collect abstracts, prepare design, prepare presentations

Conference schedule

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

SEEYOUTH

TIME (EET)	30.11.2021		1.12.2021			2.12.2021			3.12.2021
4PM	WELCOME		EXHIBITION TOUR AND PRESENTATION			KEYNOTE #2			CLOSING SESSIONS
4:30PM	KEYNOTE #1					KEYNOTE #3			
5PM – 5:15PM BREAK									
5:15PM	PANEL #1	PANEL #2	PANEL #3	PANEL #4	PANEL #5	PANEL #6	PANEL #7	PANEL #8	
6:15PM	POLICY MAKERS WORKSHOP		YOUTH PANEL						
7PM END OF SESSIONS									

Conference proceedings

Formal conference proceedings will be produced afterwards so that the full range of contributions and their development within the conference is documented and disseminated. Publication will take place across two tracks, reflecting our wish to include a range of contributions – there will be a peer-reviewed special issue of Deep Journal accompanied by a collation of contributions, artwork, fragments of dialogue and real-time responses which will be generated before and over the course of the conference itself.

Chairs
Conference Chair: Satu Miettinen
Academic Chair: Mari Cecília Loschiavo dos Santos
Program Chairs: Jean-François Vachon and Anne Marchand
Proceeding Chairs: Rosana Vasques, Paul Wilson and Tang Tang
Exhibition Chair: Katri Konttinen
Poster Chair: Solen Roth
Student Volunteer Chair: Rafael Szafir Goldstein

The SEEYouth Project

The conference is part of the SEEYouth (Social Innovation through Participatory Art and Design with Youth at the Margins: Solutions for Engaging and Empowering Youth with Trans-Atlantic Mirroring) project and is co-ordinated as one element in the Trans-Atlantic Platform initiative for social innovation. SEEYouth research is focused on developing new ways to prevent youth marginalization, improving youth employment and facilitating opportunities for youth through design methods and Art Based Research (ABR). Our multi-disciplinary project uses expertise from both the social sciences and arts to develop our concept of the Trans-Atlantic Mirroring (T-AM) method.

The SEEYouth project is funded by the Finnish Academy, UK Research and Innovation, Fonds de recherche du Québec—Société et culture (FRQSC) in Canada and Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP) in Brazil. It collaborates with regional and local organizations directly involved with the youth at the margins, such as on the streets in Brazil and with refugee or asylum seeker background in Finland. The collaborative partners in Finland are the Educational department of Kemi City and SOS Children's Village, Espoo.

References
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