TPM update report 25th November 2010

Between April and November the TPM programme continued to make awards, (see summary below). The website went live in May, (<http://towardspervasivemedia.ning.com/>) proving to be a valuable space for promoting events and finding out about the different projects funded by the TPM programme. At the midpoint of the programme (September 15th and 16th) a sandpit event was held at the Priest house Hotel, Castle Donington. The event was well attended with 20 participants taking part. A series of networking activities and mini workshops were run over the two days, culminating in a competition for funded Feasibility Studies, where teams presented their research proposals to a panel of judges. Helen Hurman, Head of Research Business Development, RIS and Prof. Judith Still, Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies joined Prof. Steve Benford on the panel. Awards of up to £3,500 were made to all 4 competing teams. The event was supported by the Towards Pervasive Media Team; with Steve Benford as director, Dr Paul Grainge, Prof. Andrew Hoskins and Prof. Roberta Pearson as mentors and Sally Bowden, Lisa McCabe and Samantha Stapleford facilitating the event.

Attention has now turned to planning the end of programme events. In February 2011 (date and venue to be confirmed) a showcase is planned. This will be an opportunity for Feasibility Study award holders to show their projects to an audience of both internal and external guests. Other TPM award holders are also invited to showcase their projects.

A TPM symposium will be held in March 2011. Hosted by CAS, the event invites an internal audience to learn about the programme, specifically the interdisciplinarity and the mechanisms used.

**Summary of awards April-November 2010**

**Julian Stringer,** (School of American and Canadian Studies) was awarded makefest funding in April 2010 for “**Screen Research Lab**” Theme: The production and consumption of pervasive entertainment. The planned new fully peer-reviewed academic journal, Screen Research Lab (hereafter SRL) – a pioneering multi-media concept for the digital age – is one tangible manifestation of the partnership between the British Film Institute and the University of Nottingham. The uniqueness of SRL will be its use of embedded film clips, and other illustrative materials, sourced from the BFI National Archive – the largest film and television library in the world - to accompany articles (and potentially to be circulated in other ways). This one-day Makefest will bring staff members and PhD students from several units at UoN together with external participants from the BFI and elsewhere to explore the feasibility and challenges of SRL in relation to research into new business models and the impact of leading edge technologies on users and on platforms. Hands on ‘makefesting’ will allow participants to consider other relevant models of online journals or web resources, such as In Media Res (<http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/imr/>) and FlowTV (<http://flowtv.org/>), in terms of their potential or achieved value and pervasiveness.

**Theresa Caruana** was awarded a residency in June 2010. ***Time Place Make*** aims to explore how the public can both consume and contribute to a public digital artwork, and how the public can do so both at the site and time of an artistic installation as well as remotely. This novel proposition makes an important contribution to considering the growing interrelationship of location, technology, content, audience and author implicated in public interactive artworks, experiences and systems. ***Time Place Make*** focuses on the context of the content, particularly the relationship between where content is from and where the content is displayed. Although initially studio based the residency is an integral component of a large-scale public artwork for Nottingham in November 2010 ensuring ***Time Place Make*** not only benefits from but also contributes to the local community and congruent Horizon researchers.

**Feasibility Study Summaries**

**Hidden Histories**
The project is a feasibility study towards a longer-term three-way collaboration between scientists with an interest in mobile media and informal learning opportunities, including its evaluation, and both professional and community-based historians interested in enhancing public understanding of selected aspects of the history of the city. It is concerned with enhancing historical literacy, historical ‘empathy’, and the user’s ability to draw informed conclusions about contested historical subject matter. Specifically, the project will ask whether mobile devices providing an audio track can be used to enhance historical engagement as part of an already existing community-based project.  The historical subject matter is the famous 1830 ‘Reform Riots’ in Nottingham, around which a community history group, ‘People’s Histreh’ is designing a guided ‘history walk’.
Project members and their roles:
Michael Craven (MATCH): Developing and applying appropriate evaluation methodologies
Liz Fitzgerald (LSRI): Developing and applying mobile devices for informal learning
Claire Taylor (School of History): Identifying types of ‘historical learning’ in public engagement with historical subject matter
All: Engaging with the community historians in evaluating and enhancing historical learning through their ‘Riot Walk’ project.

**Urban Mediator – ‘Anywhere 2’**
The project is a feasibility study to develop and test a software application to run on a mobile phone that is capable of delivering a curated urban experience or ‘artist’s walk’, while also gathering input from participants. A sample interactive tour of a part of the city of Nottingham will encourage users to consider the notion of the ‘urban unconscious’ – presenting and engaging participants in a dialogue on the nature and significance of place, ideas of history, memory and experience as embodied in the built fabric of the city, and the underlying processes at work in shaping and reshaping the urban scene. With input from researchers in the Mixed Reality Lab at Nottingham’s School of Computer Science and several artists in residence already working with the TPM project, a working prototype will be trialled with members of the public based on content developed by staff and students from the Dept of Architecture and Built Environment.
Project members and their roles: Coordination: Dr Jonathan Hale, Steering Group: Dr Nick Baron; Dr Gary Priestnall, Main artist input: Theresa Caruana, Additional artist input: Lawrnence Bradby (Townley + Bradby); Jeremy Gardiner, Computer programming and technical assistance: Ben Bedwell; Holger Schnadelbach

**Moving Experience: Narrative and Locative Media**
Moving Experience seeks to explore how audiences engage with narrative forms across a range of spaces and technologies. It brings together filmmaker Rik Lander (<http://www.you-are-here.co.uk>) with academics from a variety of disciplines including film and television studies, music, performance studies, social science and computer science in order to create a pervasive drama experience that incorporates film, theatre, audioplays, music and opera in a public space. In doing so it raises the potential of ‘experiential drama’ in which the audience is placed directly into a narrative in ways unseen in more traditional entertainment and art forms. By combining multiple narrative forms and different kinds of experience, the project seeks to answer key questions concerning the nature of those forms and audience engagement with them. By creating an experience in public space, the project also seeks to explore questions concerning the relationship between engagement and physical context. How do different media forms lend themselves to different kinds of engagement? How do audiences shift between ‘emotional’ engagement and ‘intellectual’ engagement? Can this shift be used to raise awareness or understanding of particular social issues? How does the geographic and spatial context of a narrative experience shape its effectiveness? How does participants’ sense of belonging to ‘an audience’ shift across different narrative forms and through different spaces? The project seeks to work with charities, museums and technological partners in order to examine how different narrative forms can aid an individual’s understanding of the world around them.
Project members and their roles: Rik Lander – Artist, Liz Evans (CFM) – Coordinator. Sarah Hibberd (Music), Nanette Neilsen (Music), Robert Jones (Horizon DTC), Patrick Brundell (Horizon DTC), Jo Robinson (English), Jim Moran (English), Cathy Johnson (CFM)

**Soul tracking: how might artistic visualisation be used to understand physical & emotional displacement?**

 This project is a collaboration between artistic motivation and research into text analysis to derive information about mood, and its association with personal position and displacement.

The artistic motivation is built on the phrase that “the soul travels at walking pace” and hence that, in our fast paced life, a sense of displacement is generated because our soul is forever catching up. Given that Dan records his GPS trail through life, can we therefore reconstruct where his soul has travelled to and through? Since Dan’s partner, Sophie, also records her GPS trails can we examine Dan’s separation from Sophie, physically and by soul distance, to explain feelings of separation?

How do we measure “feelings of separation” or more broadly, mood? Here we propose two approaches to be inter-compared as well as compared with the soul tracks. Firstly we propose that Dan and Sophie should, as much as possible, self-report on their mood (in this feasibility project this would probably be by manually noting it). We also propose to examine mood from linguistic analysis of Dan and Sophie’s text messages. How do the self-reported and text-mined moods correspond? And how is this linked to separation? If we can derive or even predict undesirable moods, can we suggest artistic interventions (e.g. text messages) directed to Dan/

The research elements here are as follows:

* From the Dan and Sophie’s GPS trails, to construct the “soul points” that track Dan and Sophie’s positions at walking pace (or possibly a tuneable speed). This is similar to a flocking algorithm.
* Develop a measure of separation through time. Simplest is the distance between Dan and Sophie’s GPS locations with time (albeit we need to handle drop-outs in the recordings). We can also explore other measures based on the soul points, e.g. Dan’s soul point to his physical location, between his and Sophie’s soul points, etc.
* What indications of mood can we actually extract from Dan and Sophie’s SMS archives?
* How feasible is it to report one’s mood continually?
* How do we compare the self-reported and text-mined moods? How do we compare either with the measures of separation?
* What inspiration can be gained from this inspiration towards dramatic reaction and intervention?

Finally, the aim is to feed the derived data back to Dan to create a new artistic rendering of his and maybe Sophie’s locations, informed by the soul point(s), moods and separations.

Project members and their roles:

Jeremy Morley, Centre for Geospatial Science – GPS trail analysis

Svenja Adolphs, School of English Studies – textual analysis

Gordon Ramsay, School of English Studies – to examine the SMS text data to consider the dramatic interventions that might be feasible

Dan Belasco Rogers – GPS & SMS tracking; artistic visualisation of the tracks and “soul points”