

**Graduate Symposium at UC Irvine  
Life By Design: Everyday Digital Culture  
Panel: Translation**

**Artist talk by: Heather Schatz/ChanSchatz  
The Effects and Opportunities of "Translation" on Artistic  
Production**

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A new economy has evolved around the digital product. Digital output is capable of creating numerous physical and virtual products. As digital information it is storable, retrievable, transferable. As image materialized, it is tangible, exhibitable and wearable. As both it is saleable. The hand and the machine made product continue to converge with new definitions of production and consumption, image and information, the physical and the virtual; artifacts of a converging digital culture.

In this multivalent environment, the products of digital production raise questions of commodification and commerce both inside of and outside of art-space. What new definitions are being created in an economic system that commodifies both data and material objects?

Our (ChanSchatz) artistic practice proposes a re-ordering of image creation, informational systems, and contemporary production in ways that benefit from the accessibility of digital technology as a shared site of experience; designed to set up a conversation of art as commodity and a site for artistic identity. The projects I will present propose an emerging parallel practice: exploring artistic practice through context and identity in production, communication, information, art and commerce.

Utilizing the context of digital media, informational systems expand the role of the artist to that of an author in control of their own means of production, creative enterprise and market. The resulting narrative and chronology develop a relational and procreational process; a process where the physical product serves as a marker, not a goal, and the digital information, remains within the system to be used again.

The capability to produce goods and commodities, previously constrained by the specifications of serial production, as fixed and repetitive, accommodates change at a faster and faster rate via digital systems. Ironically the emphasis of digital technology is its ability to reproduce exactly or to clone: a copy of a digital file is not actually a copy it is another original. Regardless of the inherent rhetorical argument, it has been established that there can be an identical duplicate produced. However, flawless reproduction is but one manifestation of our digital reality. Digital systems are designed to commodify and capitalize on change rather than repetition and duplication.

Human control of pivotal decisions results in a human-digital hybrid process that responds and reacts as it evolves. The resulting hybrid system exhibits a portrait of the consciousness required to both control and utilize technology, human interaction, customization and data resources, to build an intelligent and changing system that produces a constantly changing product.

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Customization is preparing our culture for new models of change i.e. evolution. Change is a click away. Click here for this; click there for that. Databases of recorded clicks build up to create infrastructures of data-minable choices. The possibilities of infinite variation and by implication, a digital original, remain to be the largest and most impactful paradigm of our emerging global culture. Unique numbers, often combinations of alphanumeric sequences, form another definition of unique. The unique object may bear a resemblance to its neighbor in the production cycle, but with differences initiated by user/participant customization.

## **Artist Projects**

The following artist projects set up a discussion of digital production within the contexts of the arts and industry. In the first, the subject of artistic control and participant interaction are elements that develop a unique system and a unique product. The resulting artist project, both a mirror of its making and a model of the concept of customization, re-use and appropriation, presents a contemporary production cycle. In the second, an industry-sponsored digital studio contributes to a new model of artistic production and object making.

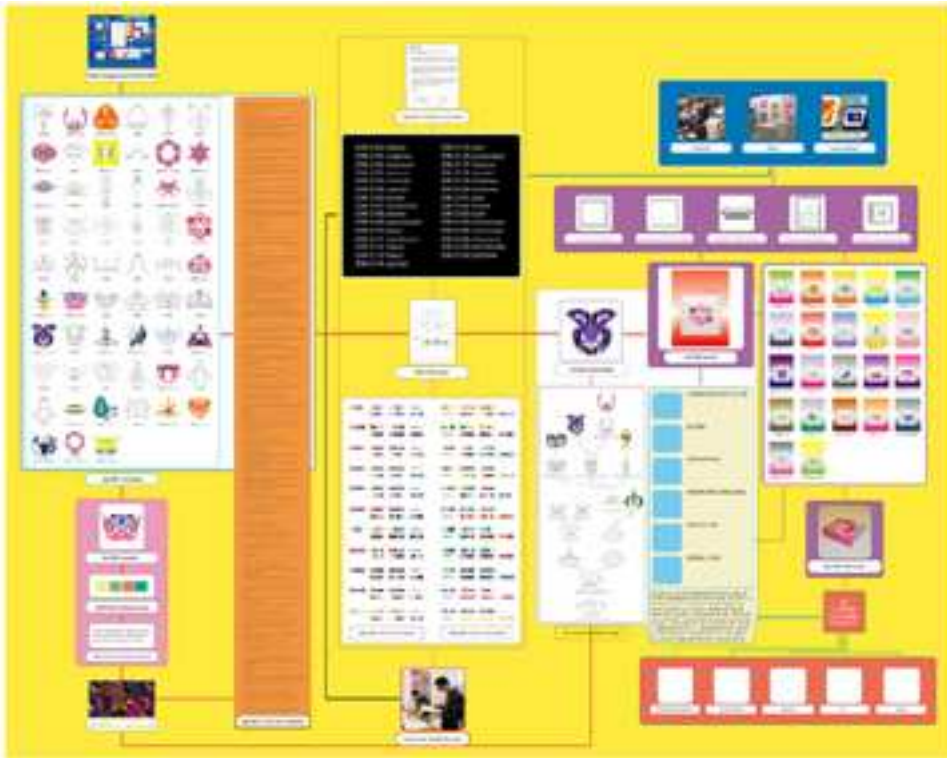
The projects contribute to a discussion of institutions and commercial markets as environments reflecting the incorporation of the digital straining to accommodate the demands of the shifting contexts within which they are based.

As we move further into a realm where the physical demands of digital production necessitate substantial sponsorship, what are the consequences? Can and should authorship, production and distribution be shared in this complex digital production environment? What is the ultimate value of the original? Is something "unique" defined by its physical or informational properties?

These and other related issues are compounded by the complexities of defining the discourse and transdisciplinary boundaries of the digital work of art.

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Project 1: Interface from ChanSchatz dsp.31



Project 2: Interface from ChanSchatz dsp. 06

