**Project Title:** The Emergent Theatre: Developing live emergent narratives by bringing together emerging immersive technologies and performance arts.

**Background:**

We are looking to invest in research that helps us to develop mixed project work that incorporates a dynamic use of technology in order to present performances and stand-alone work of the highest standard. We are working with the dance company Northern Dance, composers, lighting engineers, choreographers, artists, musicians, costume designers and film makers. One of our current projects, *The Ephemera Project* is exploring the use of the Gesture and Media System (GAMS) motion tracking system in a contemporary dance context and we are looking further our understanding the use of this technology and to present this performance at a wide variety of venues, nationally. This is an ongoing project and we are seeking a PhD student working in the same domain to help us to diversity this and other projects. It will also help us explore and innovate with new technologies such as virtual reality. One of our primary concerns is the exploration of narrative which this project will help us to advance our knowledge in. This will provide valuable insights into performer and audience interactions and will help us to place Paper Dove as a forerunner of innovative performance.

**Project Rationale and Description**

This project examines new ways of creating and presenting Emergent Narrative (EN) as live performance. Advancements in immersive technologies – such as augmented reality, live motion tracking and virtual reality - open entirely new approaches to the production of the performing arts and associated performer and audience interactions; yet they also come with challenges with how to appropriately integrate these technologies into live performance. This PhD will attempt to address these challenges by examining the role of these technologies in helping performers to form ENs.

EN is narrative with little to no author agency. There are growing trends towards EN within the video game and film sectors, where producers are exploring EN by employing different rule sets to develop narrative from interactions between users and virtual agents. The research will explore immersive technologies in-order to create live ENs. Specifically, the project will aim to:

1. Generate new knowledge and insight around the use of immersive technologies – and in particular virtual reality headsets and the GAMS motion-tracking system – to create ENs for live performance.
2. Create new digital tools and techniques that enable performance artists to author and explore immersive worlds to support ENs.
3. Evaluate the impact immersive technologies and ENs have on audience-performer interactions and associated benefits on audience engagement.
4. Understand the potential opportunities these technologies and ENs present the live performance industry and the creative agency of performers.
The successful candidate will have a Masters degree in Contemporary Arts, Digital Media, Fine Arts, or a related discipline. He or she will also have excellent digital design skills, and expertise in the following areas: Augmented and/or Virtual Reality, Motion Tracking and/or Capture, 3D design (e.g. Unity), C+ programming, Narrative Theory.

Eligibility and How to Apply:
Please note eligibility requirement:
- Academic excellence of the proposed student i.e. 2:1 (or equivalent GPA from non-UK universities [preference for 1st class honours]); or a Masters (preference for Merit or above); or APEL evidence of substantial practitioner achievement.

For further details of how to apply, entry requirements and the application form, see [https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/research/postgraduate-research-degrees/how-to-apply/](https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/research/postgraduate-research-degrees/how-to-apply/)

Deadline for applications: midnight 1st July 2019
Interviews will be arranged to take place on 9th July 2019
PhD Start Date: 1st October 2019

Northumbria University takes pride in, and values, the quality and diversity of our staff. We welcome applications from all members of the community. The University holds an Athena SWAN Bronze award in recognition of our commitment to improving employment practices for the advancement of gender equality and is a member of the Euraxess network, which delivers information and support to professional researchers

Faculty: Arts, Design and Social Sciences
Department: Design
Principal Supervisor: Dr. Steve Gibson

Recent publications by supervisors relevant to this project


Funding Notes

The studentship is available to Home and EU students where a full stipend, paid for three years at RCUK rates (for 2019/20, this is £15,009 pa) and full Home/ EU Fees.