



Genres of Scholarly Knowledge Production



HUMlab Umeå University, December 10-12, 2014 #goskp2014

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Conference Description

The conference addresses the necessity to engage simultaneously with emerging, creative knowledge practices in the humanities and the critical-historical sensibilities about knowledge production embedded in the humanities. It is argued that there is often a lack of such combined perspectives and engagement in the digital humanities and the humanities more largely. Where do we find rigorous intellectual-material critique of knowledge production platforms such as Scalar, ThatCamps and visualization studios? Who questions the web as a default platform for digital humanities projects? How can knowledge infrastructure best support humanistic work? How can we better understand the interrelation between artistic work, academic installations and cultural heritage exhibitions? What lies beyond the visual? What is the epistemic context of different genres of scholarly knowledge production? What is the long and deep context of knowledge production in the

humanities and how does it have bearing on today's emerging genres of scholarly knowledge production?

The co-temporal exploration of making and critical awareness will be manifested through the setup and curatorship of the conference in HUMlab at Umeå University. The two lab spaces, one deeply embedded between the humanities and social science departments and one placed between design, art and architecture on the Arts Campus, will be used to host the conference and accommodate a mix of modalities, materialities and processes. The conference will host a range of first-rate scholars and makers from a range of disciplines, perspectives and practices.

Invited participants will be asked to enact their arguments/papers/presentations using infrastructure available in HUMlab, including an interactive screenscape with 11 screens. They will be provided with tools for uploading, simulating and situating such content (images, film and audio). The use of slideware such as PowerPoint and Keynote is discouraged/disallowed. Furthermore, specific sessions will be concerned with critically reflecting on the conditioning offered by the available (and other) infrastructures. The intention is also to publish a rich online manifestation of the conference as well as possibly a documentary book.

The conference is organized and supported by HUMlab, Umeå University and chaired by Professor Patrik Svensson. Important additional support comes from the Marcus and Amalia Wallenberg Foundation (through Patrik Svensson's chair) and the Media Places Project (Stanford-Umeå collaboration, funded by the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation).

Genres of Scholarly Knowledge Production is intended and hoped to be a warm, intellectually and materially sharp, and long-term engaging event.

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Scholarly statement

The cultural, institutional and material situatedness of the production of knowledge provokes a set of deep humanistic sensibilities and questions about matters such as the epistemic status of documents (Gitelman 2014), the media archaeologies of the moving panorama (Huhtamo 2013), psychological relationships between screens and social perceptions (Robles, Nass and Kahn 2009), modes of visual thinking (Carusi, Hoel, Webmoor & Woolgar, forthcoming), multisensory enactment (Betts and Graham, forthcoming), the epistemics of visualization (Drucker 2011), critical making (Ratto 2012) and the social and institutional foundation of scholarly publishing (Fitzpatrick 2011). Such work is important in its particularities, but also demonstrates that through history, technologically-inflected modalities, distribution channels and infrastructures enable and condition knowledge production. Without critical sensitivity and historical awareness, we cannot even begin to understand the situatedness and conditioning of contemporary knowledge production and knowledge infrastructures.

At the same time, emergent expressive modalities, the intertwining of digital materials and scholarly production, the centrality of spatially organized information and evolving artistic practices encourage humanists to engage with alternative modes and genres of scholarly knowledge production. One key challenge - at the heart of the conference - then becomes to inflect our own knowledge production and emerging practices with the critical sensibility that we typically recruit when engaging with other domains, knowledge communities and historical strata in our work.

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Conference themes

The conference is a one-track, dialogic and experimental event and will mix different modalities (presentations, workshops, critical making sessions, lightning talks, artist talks etc.). The exploration of such modalities is in itself an important part of the conference. Participants are encouraged to actively engage across the whole program.

The conference will be loosely organized around themes. The below list is not definite or final, and is likely to evolve over time as the program shapes up.

1. History and Context: Genres of Scholarly Knowledge Production
2. Making Knowledge
3. Critiquing Knowledge Production Platforms
4. Enacting Cultural Heritage
5. Artistic Exhibitions, Installations and Enactments
6. Mapping as Interpretation and Narrative
7. Academic events and presentation infrastructure
8. A critical discussion of the conference-specific infrastructure and processes

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Participants

Among confirmed participants are Jonathan Sterne (McGill University), Tara McPherson (University of Southern California), Lars Cuzner (artist, Oslo), David Theo Goldberg (UC Humanities Research Institute), Anne Balsamo (New School), Christer Nordlund (Umeå University), Nishant Shah (University of Leuphana & the Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore), Todd Presner (UC Los Angeles, via video link), Shannon Mattern (New School), Simon Lindgren (Umeå University), Erica Robles-Anderson (New York University), Fred Turner (Stanford University), Zephyr Frank (Stanford University), Anna Foka (Umeå University), Matthew Ratto (University of Toronto), Ben Kafka (New York University), Anna

Misharina (Umeå University), Eleanor Betts (Open University), Franco Moretti (Stanford University), Cecilia Lindhé (Umeå University), Jenna Ng (University of York), Steven Hartman (Mid Sweden University), Kelly Dobson (Rhode Island School of Design), Jennie Olofsson (Umeå University), Johanna Drucker (UC Los Angeles, via video link), Nicolò Dell'Unto (Lund University), Carrie Rentschler (McGill University) and Jonathan Worth (photographer, London).

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Program

A first version of the program will be posted in early October. The program will start 10:30 am, December 10, and will end in the (late) evening of December 12.

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Registration/proposals

The conference has open slots for about twenty participants. Every participant is expected to suggest a topic/abstract for a lightning talk (6 minutes) employing a HUMlab screenscape of 11 screens using one image/medium per screen (videos will be looped and all start as the lightning talk starts). See here: <http://bambuser.com/channel/humlab> for examples from an earlier event (but please do not let these examples constrain you). More technical details will be given at a later stage. Proposals should include a title, affiliation, abstract (no more than 3 paragraphs), a short description of the alignment with one of the session themes listed above (no more than 1 paragraph, or an argument for a new theme, no more than 2 paragraphs). This is a great opportunity to present research ideas, planned projects or completed work (of any kind relevant to the conference theme), and get constructive feedback.

Also, potential participants who are interested in providing a sustained critique of knowledge production platforms such as Scalar and HyperCities are asked to contact Patrik Svensson at patrik.svensson@humlab.umu.se by September 5. Please indicate the platform/s under consideration and describe the critical perspective/s you would like to bring to the discussion. We are primarily looking for participants who have not been directly involved in the making of the platforms to be critiqued. Please also include some background information about your own work and interest in the conference.

There is no conference fee, but full participation is expected. No-shows not indicated by three weeks before the conference (November 17) will be charged SEK 3000.

Ph.D. candidates (not Umeå University affiliated Ph.D.s) can apply for a travel stipend (maximum SEK 3500/person, limited number of stipends). Please indicate this information in your proposal (including a brief rationale).

Proposals should be emailed to goskp2014@humlab.umu.se by September 5, 2014. The proposals should be sent as a text file or a pdf file. Please incorporate your name in the file name. You will be notified for your participation by September 12.

Please direct any questions to goskp2014@humlab.umu.se.

Chair: Patrik Svensson. Conference coordinator: Emma Ewadotter. The conference is a HUMlab team effort carried out with the support of national and international partners.

Hashtag: #goskp2014

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