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# TRANSFORMING HOLLYWOOD

Alternative Realities,  
World Building &  
Immersive Entertainment

05.08.15

PRESENTED BY THE ANDREW J. KUEHN JR. FOUNDATION

Conference presented jointly by UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, USC School of Cinematic Arts and USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism



THE ANDREW J. KUEHN JR.  
F o u n d a t i o n

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

## WELCOME

9:00–9:10 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Denise Mann and Henry Jenkins, co-directors

## PANEL 1

9:10–11:00 a.m.

Prototype the Planet: How and Why Expansive and Immersive Worlds Are Taking Over Our Collective Imagination

Moderator: Henry Jenkins, USC

## PANEL 2

11:10 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Brand New Vistas: VR & AR Create New Frontiers in Art and Promotion

Moderator: Denise Mann, UCLA TFT

## LUNCH

1:00–2:00 p.m.

Dining options available on campus.

## PANEL 3

2:00–3:50 p.m.

Hip Deep in Knowledge:  
Virtual Museums, Immersive Journalism  
and Scientific Vistas

Moderator: Robert Hernandez, USC

## PANEL 4

4:00–5:50 p.m.

There's Art all Around Us:  
The Aesthetics of Immersive Experiences

Moderator: Jeff Burke, UCLA TFT

## SPECIAL PRESENTATION

6:15–7:30 p.m.

A Conversation with Jon Landau

Moderator: Tom Nunan, UCLA TFT

## RECEPTION

7:30–8:30 p.m.

UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television's James Bridges Theater

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

**DENISE MANN** is an associate professor and head of the Producers Program at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. **HENRY JENKINS** is provost professor of communication, journalism, cinematic arts and education at the University of Southern California.



As new digital technologies come and go, but the public's desire to engage with immersive storytelling worlds is here to stay. In 2014, Facebook and Google each entered the alternative realities game with a vengeance. Facebook spent \$2 billion to acquire the latest virtual reality (VR) hardware company, Oculus Rift, invented by Palmer Luckey. Google countered by acquiring augmented reality (AR) start-up Magic Leap, a firm that hyped its wares with a 23-second video clip of a lifelike elephant held aloft in a human hand.

Soon after, Microsoft jumped on board with its own AR offering, HoloLens. Samsung used VR to stimulate sales of its latest Samsung Galaxy Note 4 by making its Gear VR Innovator Edition incompatible with all other smart phones and devices. Not to be outdone, Sony announced Project Morpheus, a VR system to enhance game play on its Playstation 4.

Each of these Internet technology (IT) giants claims to have high-minded goals for their new platforms — as a means to enhance human capabilities in the worlds of education, science, medicine and the fine arts. Most likely, each of these Silicon Valley tech industries is looking to partner with Hollywood and Madison Avenue as part of a long-term monetization scheme. After all, both the content industries and the consumer brand industries are eager to whet the appetite of the millennial audience for the latest form of tech-fueled fun. At present, there's a glut of VR and AR gadgets and not enough content. Therefore, cutting-edge artists are stepping into the void, offering to experiment with these new immersive world-building tools, even if it means they must create an occasional Budweiser Margarita girl that morphs into a 4D hologram in order to pay the bills.

While dial-up modems created a generation that was addicted to email and search in the early days of the Internet, once broadband infiltrated our homes, a generation of digital natives became addicted to making, streaming and sharing content in the Web 2.0 era.

What else does the future hold? Futurists who spoke at the Mobile Media Summit in Barcelona in 2014 wondered out loud whether the “gigabit Internet” will create a generation hooked on augmented reality, holograms, virtual reality headsets and other “wearables” by 2025. Indeed, as pundits observed at the 2015 Consumer Electronics Show, brand marketers are placing bets not only on VR and AR, but also on our fascination with the “Internet of things” — smart devices (including sensory-driven thermostats, data-driven sleep monitors and self-driving cars) that communicate with us by means of our mobile phone. But what if “the Internet of things” isn’t just another way to seed consumer desire for superfluous gadgets and services?

Some see these new technologies and new experiential worlds moving us closer to that highly anticipated, if dreaded, moment when artificial intelligence outpaces human intelligence. Imagine, if you will, what would happen if iPhone’s Siri or Microsoft’s Cortana, like Spike Jonze’s Samantha in *Her*, outgrow their humans? In 1992, Neal Stephenson’s seminal cyberpunk novel *Snow Crash* imagined a future-world in which all of us are part of a virtual shared space. Those who chose to stay connected to this Metaverse via portable goggles and other equipment were called “gargoyles” for their outlandish appearance. It looks as if Stephenson’s vision is more prescient than we originally thought. Gargoyles, get ready to step out of the CAVE, strap on your Oculus Rift, HoloLens, Samsung gear or Morpheus goggles, for the future is now.

The tendency to discuss immersive entertainment in a breathlessly futuristic language, through metaphors of science fiction, masks the larger history of these techniques and practices across the 20th and even 19th centuries. Thus, a key strand of this year’s event involves bringing together the perspectives of technologists with those of historians who work on earlier moments of media change, a vantage point that can help us to qualify sweeping claims about the impact of these still-emerging (and often precarious) technologies by looking at how earlier generations sought to expand sensory perceptions, to map and explore complex worlds, to immerse themselves into multi-media presentations, or to create intense collective experiences that remove us from the constraints of the everyday. We are not the first generation of entertainers who wanted to create a sense of awe in spectators, of journalists who wanted to convey a more vivid sense of the world, of museums that wanted to bring their visitors into a more immediate relationship to remote corners of human knowledge, or artists who have sought to teach us new ways to see, touch, smell, taste or hear the world around us.

—DENISE MANN AND HENRY JENKINS

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# PANEL 1

## Prototype the Planet: How and Why Expansive and Immersive Worlds Are Taking Over Our Collective Imagination

From roots in aesthetic philosophy (Nelson Goodman) and science fiction/fantasy writing (J.R.R. Tolkien), the concept of world-building has become a core concept across many design fields in the 21st century, an aesthetic response to the complexities of a multidisciplinary and networked society, a means of creating content that serves the demands of transmedia entertainment. Both the brainstorming process of world-building and the worlds that emerge from that process have become sources of entertainment and education in their own right. In this opening panel, we bring together some key thinkers who will share with us their thoughts about why world-building has gained such interest in the current moment; how world-building is being deployed for entertainment and educational purposes; which processes best support the design and development of multimedia worlds; what's new about today's fascination with world-building and how it relates to older models of speculative fiction; what connections they see between world-building and the emergence of immersive and expansive media environments; and what they consider to be some of the most powerful examples of media worlds today.

### MODERATOR

#### **Henry Jenkins**

Co-Director, Transforming Hollywood;  
Provost Professor of Communication,  
Journalism, Cinematic Arts and Education,  
University of Southern California

### PANELISTS

**Ann Pendleton-Jullian** Architect and Professor, Ohio State University and  
Georgetown University

**Alex Rivera** Writer and Director, *Sleep Dealer*

**Brenda Romero** Director of Games and Playable Media Program, UC Santa Cruz

**Michael Saler** Professor of History, UC Davis; Author of *As If: Modern  
Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality*



**HENRY JENKINS** (Moderator) is provost professor of communication, journalism, cinematic arts and education at the University of Southern California. He is the author and/or editor of 17 books on various aspects of media and popular culture.

His most recent is *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (2013). Other titles include *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (2012); *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (2008); *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture* (2006); *Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture* (2003); and *From Barbie to Mortal Kombat: Gender and Computer Games* (2000). He has written for *Technology Review*, *Computer Games*, *Salon* and *The Huffington Post*.

Jenkins is the chief advisor to the Annenberg Innovation Lab, where he provides insights into transmedia practices, participatory culture and learning, and fan engagement. He was previously the founder of the MIT Convergence Culture Consortium, a faculty network that seeks to build bridges between academic researchers and the media industry in order to help inform the rethinking of consumer relations in an age of participatory culture. Jenkins has been an active participant for the past decade in the MacArthur Foundation's Digital Media and Learning/Connected Learning Initiatives, writing a white paper that established the initiative's focus on participatory culture and learning; developing materials for instructional use and professional development programs through Project New Media Literacies (at MIT) and Participatory Learning and You! (USC); and now, heading up USC's Media, Activism and Participatory Politics (MAPP) research team, which is using ethnography to document the political lives of American youth.



**ANN PENDLETON-JULLIAN** (Panelist) is an architect, writer and educator of international standing whose work explores the interchange between culture, environment and technology. She is currently a distinguished visiting professor at Georgetown University, and professor at and

former director of Ohio State University's Knowlton School of Architecture. Her work and affiliations consistently span across a tri-continental platform: South American, North America and Asia.

Pendleton-Jullian approaches design practice as a form of exchange between design and ideas, invention and action. Her efforts include commissioned work, speculative projects, teaching as research, authored books and papers, exhibitions, seminars, lectures and forums.

Notable projects include a house for the astronomer Carl Sagan; an award-winning prototypical bioclimatic house in Tenerife, Spain; and a system of action for the Association of Research Libraries to shape the future of research libraries in the United States and Canada. She is currently working on world-building the Downtown Los Angeles Innovation Corridor with the USC Annenberg Innovation Lab and the City of Los Angeles.

She has been a TEDx speaker, an invited participant to the Aspen Institute Ideas Festival and roundtables both in the U.S. and abroad, and is often involved with the Highlands Forums Group – a cross-disciplinary network of global leaders established in 1995 by the Secretary of Defense to examine questions of emerging interest.

Pendleton-Jullian received a bachelor of architecture degree from Cornell University and a master of architecture degree from Princeton University. She has also taught at Cornell, Princeton, MIT, and at Harvard and Yale universities, among numerous others.



**ALEX RIVERA** (Panelist) is a filmmaker, who, for the past 15 years, has been telling new, urgent and visually adventurous Latino stories.

His first feature film, *Sleep Dealer* (2008), a science-fiction drama set on the United States/Mexico border, won awards at

the Sundance Film Festival and the Berlin International Film Festival. It screened at the Museum of Modern Art and was released in the U.S., France, Japan and other countries.

Rivera is a Sundance Fellow and a Rockefeller Fellow. He was a Rothschild Lecturer at Harvard University and was named one of *Variety's* "10 Directors to Watch."

His recent collaborations have included work with musical artists Manu Chao, La Santa Cecilia and Aloe Blacc. He is currently co-directing a documentary, *The Infiltrators*; writing a feature script about neo-colonial relationships between Earth and a space colony; and developing a television series based on *Sleep Dealer*.



**BRENDA ROMERO** (Panelist) is an award-winning game designer, artist and Fulbright scholar who entered the video game industry in 1981. As a designer, she has contributed to many seminal titles, including the *Wizardry* and *Jagged Alliance* series and titles in the

Ghost Recon and Dungeons & Dragons franchises. Away from the machine, her analog series of six games, *The Mechanic is the Message*, has drawn national and international acclaim, particularly *Train* and *Síochán Leat* (The Irish Game), which is presently housed in the National Museum of Play. In 2015, she won the coveted Ambassador's Award at the Game Developers Choice Awards. In 2014, she received a Fulbright award to study Ireland's game industry, academy and government policies. In 2013, she was named one of the top 10 game developers by Gamasutra.com and *Develop* magazine listed her among the 25 people who changed games in 2013.

Romero co-owns Loot Drop and Romero Games and is also program director of UC Santa Cruz's Masters in Games and Playable Media program.



**MICHAEL SALER** (Panelist) is a professor of history at the University of California, Davis. He is the author of *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* (2012), a history of imaginary worlds from the late 19th century and the

ways in which fans transformed them into virtual worlds of the imagination.

*As If* was named one of the Best Books of 2012 by *The Huffington Post*.

He is also the author of *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: 'Medieval Modernism' and the London Underground* (OUP, 1999); editor, *The Fin-de-Siècle World* (Routledge, 2014); and co-editor, with Joshua Landy, of *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age* (Stanford, 2009). His reviews and essays have appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, *The Nation*, *The Washington Post* and other publications.

# PANEL 2

## Brand New Vistas: VR & AR Create New Frontiers in Art and Promotion

Imagine stepping into a rickety elevator, feeling a bracing, cold wind against your neck as you are whisked 700 feet straight up a steep incline. You walk along the edge, glancing down at the abyss below, only to realize that a flaming arrow whizzes toward you. Welcome to *Game of Thrones'* "Ascend the Wall" Oculus Rift experience, created by Relevent, Framestore and HBO marketers. A new generation of cutting-edge digital artists — Felix & Paul Studios, Kite & Lightning — and innovative marketing firms — Havas and Relevent — are eager to use VR and AR to immerse participants in vivid, arresting and sometimes nausea-inducing experiential universes. But who is going to pay for these experiments? Notably, advertisers are stepping up in record numbers, eager to give consumers an exciting new way to engage with their often-mundane consumer products or services. High-end automobile manufacturers such as Mercedes Benz, Jaguar and BMW invite consumers to test-drive the latest in luxury design using VR gear from the comfort of their home or office. Not sure if you want to go to Melbourne? Why not use social media to order up a virtual tourist guide and enjoy the sights and sounds of Queen Victoria Market, Arts Centre Melbourne, or a sunny beach? As one pundit writes, "The promise of virtual reality has always been enormous. Put on these goggles, go nowhere, and be transported anywhere. It's the same escapism peddled by drugs, alcohol, sex, and art — throw off the shackles of the mundane through a metaphysical transportation to an altered state."<sup>1</sup> But what if the tech content and brand industries see these smart technologies, sophisticated algorithms and immersive fun as yet another means to track consumer preferences from the cradle to the grave?

### MODERATOR

#### Denise Mann

Co-Director, Transforming Hollywood;  
Associate Professor,  
Head of the Producers Program,  
UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television

### PANELISTS

**Ian Cleary** Vice President of Ideation and Innovation, Relevent

**Ikrima Elhassan** Co-Founder, Kite & Lightning

**Erkki Huhtamo** Professor, UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture and  
UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television; Media Archeologist, Historian, Exhibition Curator

**Jez Jowett** Global Head of Creative Technology, Havas Media Group

**Kamal Sinclair** Co-Director, New Frontier (Lab Programs), Sundance Institute

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theverge.com/a/virtual-reality/intro>



**DENISE MANN** (Moderator) is an associate professor at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television (UCLA TFT) and head of the School's Producers Program (1996-present). Mann is the editor of *Wired TV: Laboring Over an Interactive*

*Future* (2014); the author of *Hollywood Independents — The Postwar Talent Takeover* (2008); and co-editor of *Private Screenings: Television and the Female Consumer* (1992). She serves on the editorial board of *Media Industries Journal* (2014-present) and was previously an associate editor for *Camera Obscura: a Journal of Feminism and Film Theory* (1986-1992). With Professor Henry Jenkins, Mann co-chairs the annual Transforming Hollywood conference (2010-present), which brings together scholars, industry professionals and creators to debate the future of entertainment. She routinely delivers scholarly talks at academic conferences and is invited to deliver industry talks at international film festivals and conferences, including the Tokyo International Film Festival and Shanghai International Film Festival; and at major universities in Asia and Europe such as Communications University of China, Beijing Broadcasting Institute, Shanghai University, Paris 1 Pantheon Sorbonne and Institut National de L'Audiovisuel (INA). Mann also serves as the principal investigator of the UCLA TFT Digital Incubator and Thinktank (DIT) funded by the Paris-based global media company Havas Media Group (2014-present).



**IAN CLEARY** (Panelist) is vice president of ideation and innovation at Relevant. There, he leads creative development of disruptive, immersive brand experiences that begin at the intersection of emerging technology, culture and place — and go on to drive

conversation everywhere. He has developed breakthrough work on behalf of some of the world's largest brands, including HBO, Marriott, Microsoft, Disney, AT&T, Stolichnaya, AMC and Virgin Atlantic. He writes both copy and code and has worked at the crossroads of digital, mobile and storytelling since before the iPhone. Prior to Relevant, he was part of the early business development team at location-based social network Foursquare. Prior to that, he was creative director and head of business development at Acoustiguide where he developed award-winning mobile content and experiences for some of the world's most renowned cultural institutions, including the Smithsonian, MoMA and the Forbidden City. He holds a master in interactive telecommunications degree from NYU.



**IKRIMA ELHASSAN** (Panelist) is a technical creative who has spent the last several years focused on the intersection of creativity and technology. His research focus is to bring film-quality rendering techniques

to real-time environments. Together with Emmy-winning Creative Director Cory Strassburger, he co-founded Kite & Lightning, a boutique creative development studio that focuses on virtual reality. Their work has spanned surreal art pieces such as *Senza Peso*, a mini opera created by world-class musicians and artists, to experiential 4D VR installations for NBC's *The Voice*. They recently completed a worldwide travelling VR cinematic narrative experience for Lionsgate's *Insurgent* movie franchise featuring actors Kate Winslet, Mekhi Phifer and Miles Teller.



**ERKKI HUHTAMO** (Panelist) is a professor at UCLA in the Department of Design and Media Arts at the School of the Arts and Architecture, and in the Department of Film, Television and Digital Media at the School of Theater, Film and Television. He is an internationally renowned media historian and theorist, and also a specialist in the history and aesthetics of media arts. He is one of the founders of an emerging approach to media studies known as media archaeology.

Huhtamo has published extensively, lectured worldwide and given multimedia stage performances using both modern and original 19th-century media technology such as magic lanterns. He has curated numerous exhibitions in the United States, Australia and Europe, including at Helsinki, Finland's Museum of Cultures where *Phantasmagoria. Time Travelling in the Moving Image* was presented in 2000, featuring Huhtamo's own extensive collection of antique magic lanterns, peepshow boxes, animation devices and other media archaeological artifacts.

Huhtamo is currently working on two books, a new monograph on the history of mechanical theaters and a volume tentatively titled *Media Archaeology as Topos Study*. He is the author of numerous books including *Illusions in Motion: Media Archaeology of the Moving Panorama and Related Spectacles* (The MIT Press, 2013).

Recent research articles have discussed topics such as the history of media displays in public outdoor spaces; "peep media," a notion Professor Huhtamo coined; the *trottoir roulant*, or the moving walkway at Paris' Universal Exposition of 1900; astronomical demonstration instruments as a challenge to "screenology," another concept he coined; the history of the Spirograph, a forgotten device that presents microcinematographed moving pictures from spinning discs; the invention and early reception of the Kaleidoscope; interactive museum displays as a contribution to what he calls "exhibition anthropology"; and the archaeological tradition in media arts.



**JEZ JOWETT** (Panelist) is the global head of creative technology at Havas Media Group, one of the world's largest media and advertising networks, employing 8,000 people in more than 100 countries.

Jowett is responsible for identifying, integrating and innovating the latest technologies with creativity, content and media, for many of the world's leading brands.

Currently based in Italy, Jowett was one of the early pioneers in the UK digital scene, through the '90s and '00s. He established one of the first digital and new media content and communications agencies — Cake Group — in 1999, producing viral and infectious digital content campaigns that blurred the lines between online and offline. To date he's produced more than 500 campaigns, with digital and disruption at their core. He has generated more than 2 billion views and engagements.

Jowett is a preacher, practitioner and passionate pioneer of immersive, transmedia and new realities.



**KAMAL SINCLAIR** (Panelist) is the co-director of New Frontier (Lab Programs) at the Sundance Institute, which supports artists working at the convergence of film, art, media and technology. New Frontier offers exhibition and programming at the

Sundance Film Festival; an annual immersive Story Lab for innovative projects; year-round alumni support; artist residencies; and day labs. Outside of her role at the Sundance Institute, Sinclair continues her work as artist and producer of *Question Bridge: Black Males*, a collaboration that has exhibited at more than 30 prestigious museums and festivals in the United States and Europe, including the Sundance Film Festival, Brooklyn Museum, Corcoran Gallery, Jack Shamin Gallery, Oakland Museum of California, Sheffield Docs Festival and the LA Film Festival.

Prior to Sundance, Sinclair worked at 42 Entertainment to develop transmedia projects for films, television and brands such as JJ Abrams' *Alcatraz* and Ford's 2013 Fusion campaign with Ryan Seacrest.

Sinclair's professional career began as a cast member of the off-Broadway hit *Stomp*; and her entrepreneurial skills were honed as the founding artistic director of Universal Arts, where she earned critical acclaim for her original plays *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* and *The Beat*.

Sinclair graduated cum laude with both a bachelor of fine arts in theater from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and a master of business administration from Georgia State University's Robinson College of Business.

# PANEL 3

## Hip Deep in Knowledge: Virtual Museums, Immersive Journalism and Scientific Vistas

Our capacity to imagine — and create — alternative worlds, often in highly immersive detail, is now being harnessed as a means of storytelling and conveying knowledge across a range of different institutions and practices. Journalists can create experiences for their readers that they could not — or perhaps would not want to — experience directly. Museums have been testing new media tools and platforms as they seek to share curated experiences with their patrons. Scientists are using wide-screen projection, among other technology, to take students into the outer limits of space; educators are using augmented reality approaches to get people to see their communities from different perspectives. Panelists will share cutting-edge research and experimentation in immersive journalism and virtual learning, inviting us to imagine new potential uses of these technologies to expand how we understand the world around us.

### MODERATOR

#### **Robert Hernandez**

Associate Professor of Professional Practice,  
USC Annenberg School for Communication  
and Journalism

### PANELISTS

**BC “Heavy” Biermann** Educational Technologist, Academic and Digital Artist,  
*The Heavy Projects*

**Nonny De La Peña** CEO, Emblematic Group

**Scott Fisher** Professor and Founding Chair, USC’s Interactive Media Division;  
Director of USC’s Mobile and Environmental Media Lab; Associate Dean of Research,  
USC School of Cinematic Arts

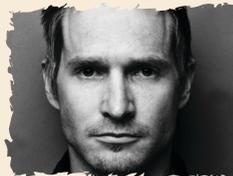
**Alison Griffiths** Media Studies, Documentary Film, Media and Technology,  
Baruch College; Author of *Shivers Down Your Spine: Cinema, Museums,  
and the Immersive View*

**Kate McCallum** Producer and Writer; Producers Guild of America  
National Board Member and New Media Council Board Delegate



**ROBERT HERNANDEZ** (Moderator), aka WebJournalist, has made a name for himself as a journalist of the Web, not just on the Web. His primary focus is exploring and developing the intersection of technology and journalism — to empower people,

inform reporting and storytelling, engage community, improve distribution and, whenever possible, enhance revenue. He is an associate professor of professional practice at USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, but he's not an academic...he's more of a "hackademic" and specializes in "MacGyvering" Web journalism solutions. He connects dots and people. He has worked for *SeattleTimes.com*, *SFGate.com*, *eXaminer.com* and *La Prensa Gráfica*, among others. Hernandez is also the co-founder of #wjchat and creator of the Learn Code for Journalism with Me project. He currently serves on the Online News Association board and is a lifetime member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.



**BC "HEAVY" BIERMANN** (Panelist) is an educational technologist, academic and digital artist living in Southern California. With a Ph.D. in humanities (intermedia analysis) from the Universiteit van Amsterdam, Biermann derives his alias

from his love for philosophical discussion. His interdisciplinary background comprises technology, philosophy and the arts. Biermann has worked both as a university professor and a tech developer in Anaheim, Prague and St. Louis. Since 2007, he has presented his academic work, which explores the intersection of emerging technologies and semiotics in public space, throughout the world.

As a kind of synthesis between scholarly inquiry and emerging technologies, Biermann founded The Heavy Projects to investigate how the fusion of creativity and technology can uncover new modes of relaying ideas. Building upon existing technological and theoretical frameworks, Biermann creates innovative interfaces between digital design and physical worlds in ways that provoke the imagination and problematize existing modes of communication, and current styles of art, design and interaction. Biermann has presented his tech and artistic work at such events as SXSW Interactive, ISMAR and TEDx Salon and his projects have appeared in such publications as *Juxtapoz*, *Fast Company*, *The Atlantic*, *Creator's Project*, *CNet* and *IEEE Spectrum*.



**NONNY DE LA PEÑA** (Panelist) has been called “The Godmother of Virtual Reality” by *Engadget* and *The Guardian*. For her pioneering work in immersive journalism, *Fast Company* named her “One of the People Who Made the World More

Creative.” As CEO of Emblematic Group, she uses cutting-edge technologies to tell stories — both fictional and news-based — that create intense, empathic engagement on the part of viewers. A Harvard University graduate and a former correspondent for *Newsweek*, de la Peña has more than 20 years of award-winning experience in print, film and TV. Her work with virtual reality has been featured by the BBC, *Mashable*, *Vice*, *Wired* and many others. Screenings and showcases around the globe have included those at the Sundance and Tribeca film festivals, the World Economic Forum in Davos, Formula 1 Singapore, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Moscow Museum of Modern Art and Games for Change. She has also garnered top awards at major gaming festivals such as Indiecade. De la Peña is an Annenberg Fellow at the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts.



**SCOTT FISHER** (Panelist) is associate dean of research at the USC School of Cinematic Arts and founding chair of its Interactive Media Division. He oversees SCA’s research activities and organized research units that include the Immersive

Lab, the Game Innovation Lab, the Mobile and Environmental Media Lab, USC’s Games Institute, and others. Fisher is an interaction designer whose work focuses primarily on mobile media, interactive environments and technologies of presence. He is well known for his pioneering work in the field of virtual reality at NASA. A graduate of MIT’s Architecture Machine Group (now Media Lab), he has taught at MIT, UCLA, UCSD and Keio University in Japan.



**ALISON GRIFFITHS** (Panelist) is a professor at Baruch College, The City University of New York and a member of the doctoral faculty in theater at the CUNY Graduate Center where she teaches film

history, visual and media studies and corporate representation in media. She is the author of the award winning *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology, and Turn-of-the-Century Visual Culture* (Columbia, 2002), which won the 2003 Katherine S. Kovacs Award and a Krazna-Krausz Moving Image Award honorable mention in 2004. Her second book, *Shivers Down Your Spine: Cinema, Museums, and the Immersive View* (Columbia, 2008), constructs a genealogy of immersive ways of seeing, tracing them to such spaces as medieval cathedrals, panoramas, planetariums and IMAX movie theaters. The author of interdisciplinary essays on museums, non-fiction film, medieval visual culture and audiences, her work has appeared in such journals as *Cinema Journal*, *Screen*, *the Journal of Visual Studies*, *Wide Angle* and *Visual Anthropology Review*. Her most recent book, forthcoming from Columbia, examines the penitentiary as a unique yet overlooked space of film exhibition and reception.



**KATE McCALLUM** (Panelist) is the founder and COO of Bridge Arts Media, LLC, a media development and production company. She is a producer, writer, and digital arts and media strategist with an emphasis in IP development, transmedia and new media technology platforms.

As a creative consultant at Vortex Immersion Media, which creates 360 immersive brand experiences, VR, interactive media and projection mapping, McCallum specializes in the development and production of full-dome 360/VR immersive content.

McCallum also writes, produces and consults as a specialist in transmedia and cross-platform storytelling. She has been contracted to chair, design and program international entertainment business conferences, focused on story and tech, trans-media and cross-platform storytelling, branded content and emerging tech.

McCallum spent more than 20 years at Universal and Paramount working in the production and development of feature films, and primetime broadcast and cable episodic television with some of the top showrunners and writers in the industry.

In 2006, McCallum was hired as the vice president of programming for the launch of an innovative visual music VoD channel featured on Comcast, where she acquired and licensed hundreds of hours of content, produced for the channel, and launched a boutique 360 arts and music label, The Art of Sound.

In 2004, McCallum founded the c3: Center for Conscious Creativity, a 501(c)3 arts and education organization, and in 2009 she was appointed chair of the Arts & Media Node of the Millennium Project, an international futurist think tank.

McCallum is a member and board delegate of the Producers Guild of America (PGA) New Media Council, the PGA National Board, and the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

# PANEL 4

## There's Art all Around Us: The Aesthetics of Immersive Experiences

Exploring immersion via the new technologies of an era has long been a part of the avant-garde in theater, film, architecture and other art forms. The panelists will share their ideas about what contemporary innovations by artists and technologists operating at the boundaries of commercial entertainment may herald for the future of immersive storytelling.

Key questions for the participants include: What are new ways to create (fictional) overlays on everyday life (e.g., Project Tango, Hololens)? What do these changes mean for world-building based storytelling? What will be the ongoing evolution of the film and television screen as each moves towards a mobile, context-sensitive and personalized media surface? What will these new screens, contexts and surfaces mean for storytellers? What are the implications of having the authorship of story and code increasingly paired in the creation of immersive experiences? And, finally, what next directions for immersion are suggested by direct interfaces between technology and the human body?

### MODERATOR

#### Jeff Burke

Assistant Dean for  
Technology and Innovation,  
UCLA School of Theater,  
Film and Television

### PANELISTS

**Ana Serrano** Chief Digital Officer, Canadian Film Centre

**Sara Thacher** Creative Lead, Walt Disney Imagineering Research and Development

**Barry Threw** Director of Software, Obscura Digital

**Fred Turner** Associate Professor, Stanford University; Author of *The Democratic Surround: Multimedia and Democratic Liberalism from World War II to the Psychedelic Sixties*



**JEFF BURKE** (Moderator) is assistant dean for technology and innovation at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television (UCLA TFT).

Burke is a three time UCLA alumnus (B.S., M.S., Electrical Engineering; MFA, Film, Television and Digital Media) who has produced,

managed, programmed and designed experimental performances, short films, new genre art installations and new facility construction internationally for more than 15 years. Burke has been a faculty member since 2001 and today, in addition to his role developing technology and innovation strategy at UCLA TFT, is co-PI and application team lead for the Named Data Networking project, a multi-campus effort supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and an international 25-member consortium to develop a future internet architecture.

In 2004, Burke co-founded UCLA TFT's Center for Research in Engineering, Media and Performance (REMAP), a collaboration with the Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science, which combines research, artistic production and community engagement. At REMAP, Burke's research has been supported by the NSF and NEA, Intel, Cisco, Trust for Mutual Understanding and the MacArthur Foundation, among others. From 2006-2012, Burke was area lead for participatory sensing at the NSF Center for Embedded Networked Sensing, helping to define a new application arena for mobile devices. In 2014, he received a three-year Google Focused Award on the "Future of Storytelling," for work that will explore the intersection of storytelling and coding through research and production of original, interdisciplinary digital media works at UCLA TFT.



**ANA SERRANO** (Panelist) is the chief digital officer of the Canadian Film Centre and founder of CFC Media Lab, the world-renowned and award-winning institute for interactive storytelling created in 1997. Serrano is driving the digital

transformation of the CFC into a unique blend of talent, product and company accelerator, and creative production house. Most recently, she launched Canada's first digital entertainment accelerator, ideaBOOST, with founding partners Shaw Media, Corus Entertainment and Google. To date, Serrano has directed the development of more than 130 digital media projects, mentored more than 50 start-ups, and has received numerous awards from the digital media, film and theater industries in both Canada and the United States. They include a Visionary of the Year DigiAward; a Best Canadian Feature Film award from the International Reel Asian Film Festival for her own transmedia production *Prison Dancer: The Musical*; and a Jim Blackaby Ingenuity Award for *Body/Mind/Change*.



**SARA THACHER** (Panelist) makes next generation immersive narrative and entertainment experiences as a creative lead at Walt Disney Imagineering Research and Development. Her

work combines creative approaches to storytelling that leverage digital tools and new technologies while prioritizing physical experience to turn audience members into participants.

Before becoming an Imagineer, Thacher was the senior creative producer at Nonchalance where she led design and production of “The Jejune Institute,” an immersive narrative experience embedded in the heart of San Francisco. There, she defined a new type of re-playable entertainment that used everything from an interactive 1970s pseudo-science “induction” office to low-power “pirate” radio stations — all to create a deep shadow world for participants to discover. More recently, in collaboration with designer Ken Eklund, she produced “Future Coast,” a National Science Foundation-funded participatory storytelling experience addressing climate change.

Thacher earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design and a master of fine arts degree from the California College of the Arts. Her projects have been covered by publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *Wired*. “The Jejune Institute” is the subject of a 2013 feature documentary *The Institute*.

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**BARRY TREW** (Panelist) is a designer and technologist working in spatial media, mutable architectures and interactive experience. Based in San Francisco, he works in collaboration with institutions, artists and organizations at the intersection of technology and culture. Focused on forward-looking artistic projects creatively (mis)using experiential technologies, he leaves behind installations, performances and artifacts.

Threw’s work has been presented in festivals around the world and his installations have been shown at such venues as the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China; the YouTube BrandLab in New York City; the Sacramento International Airport; the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology at UCSD; and San Francisco’s Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and Gray Area Foundation for the Arts. He has worked in collaboration such artists as Kronos Quartet, Oval, Edwin van der Heide, Egbert Mittlestadt, Biosphere, Camille Utterback, Signal, Monolake and Jon Rose, among others.

Threw has worked with a variety of organizations stationed at the crossroads of art and technology. He is currently the director of software at Obscura Digital, a San Francisco creative technology studio specializing in the design and execution of immersive and interactive experiences worldwide. Previously, he was the software director for Keith McMillen Instruments and software architect at Recombinant Media Labs. He sat on the board of directors for the BEAM Foundation, seeking to spark a Western new classical music movement based on the technologies and aesthetics of the 21st century; and was an advisor with the Gray Area Foundation for the Arts, an education and performance non-profit dedicated to building social consciousness through digital culture. He works with Fabricatorz to advance projects that evolve our cultural ecosystems through freedom and sharing.

Threw graduated from Boston’s Berklee College of Music with a dual degree in music production and engineering/music synthesis. He later received a degree in electronic music and recording media from Mills College in Oakland, Calif.



**FRED TURNER** (Panelist) is an associate professor in the Department of Communication at Stanford University. He is the author of three books: *The Democratic Surround: Multimedia and American Liberalism from World War II to the*

*Psychedelic Sixties* (University of Chicago Press, 2013); *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* (University of Chicago Press, 2006); and *Echoes of Combat: The Vietnam War in American Memory* (Anchor/Doubleday, 1996; 2nd ed., University of Minnesota Press, 2001). Before arriving at Stanford, Turner taught communication at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and MIT's Sloan School of Management. He also worked for 10 years as a journalist. He has written for newspapers and magazines ranging from the *Boston Globe Sunday Magazine* to *Nature*.

## A CONVERSATION WITH JON LANDAU

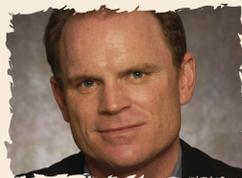
At the close of *Transforming Hollywood 6*, UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television Lecturer Tom Nunan, an executive producer of the Academy Award-winning film *Crash*, will speak with Academy Award-winning producer Jon Landau. They will cover subjects ranging from virtual production and intellectual property expansion strategies to Landau's groundbreaking work with filmmaker James Cameron and how it has influenced other technological advances in VR.

"Landau has learned how to make the surreal real, the impossible possible and as a result, he is recognized throughout the industry and worldwide as the visionary's visionary," Nunan says. "There isn't a more demanding creative job on earth than the task of producing a single *Avatar* film, let alone three sequels to Cameron's masterpiece, simultaneously, which is what he is doing now. The technological wizardry, digital mastery and entrepreneurial fearlessness that Landau has come to personify make him the perfect guest to cap off our *Transforming Hollywood* event."

### MODERATOR

**Tom Nunan**

Executive Producer of the Academy Award-winning film *Crash*  
Lecturer, UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television



**TOM NUNAN** (Moderator) is best known as founder and partner of Bull's Eye Entertainment. Nunan and his partners achieved worldwide fame and success for producing the multiple Academy Award-winning Best Picture *Crash*, along with *The Illusionist*, *Thumbsucker* and

*Employee of the Month*, among others. Nunan has also supervised the creation and production of numerous high-profile television projects including the small-screen adaptation of *Crash*, which was the first scripted drama on the Starz cable network and aired for two seasons. Prior to forming Bull's Eye, Nunan was president of the United Paramount Network (UPN), now known as The CW. Before that, he was president of NBC Studios, now known as NBCUniversal. Previously, Nunan was part of a small management team that helped create the Fox Broadcasting Company, overseeing its growth from a two-night a week programming service to the seven-night a week national network it is today.

Nunan began his career in TV movies, first as an executive for legendary producers Peter Guber, Chuck Fries and Jerry Weintraub. He then transitioned into the role of network executive, running movies for TV at ABC before joining Fox.

Nunan helped found The Joyful Heart Foundation, a non-profit created by Emmy and Golden Globe-winning actress and friend Mariska Hargitay. Nunan currently serves on its board of directors and has twice served as the board chairman. Nunan is a former board member, vice chair and chairman of the Hollywood Radio & TV Society and is an alumnus of the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. Nunan has taught at UCLA TFT's graduate-level Producers Program for 20 years.

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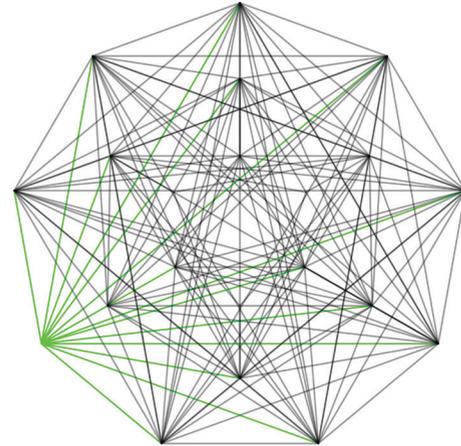
**JON LANDAU** (Guest Speaker) is an Academy Award- and two-time Golden Globe-winning producer who holds the distinction of producing the two highest grossing movies of all-time, *Avatar* (2009) and *Titanic* (1997). The combination of

Landau's thorough understanding of the most complex state-of-the-art technologies, his ability to work hand-in-hand with the highest caliber of creative talent, and his motivational abilities has enabled him to play a significant role in numerous major motion pictures.

Throughout his career, Landau has also been instrumental in the licensing and marketing of his films across all platforms around the globe. He has taken a hands-on approach to bringing innovation, diversity and showmanship to these areas of the process.

Never one to rest on his laurels, Landau is proactively working with companies and individuals throughout the entertainment industry to push technologies to new levels that will allow new stories to be told and then presented in more engaging and immersive ways.

# HAVAS MEDIA GROUP

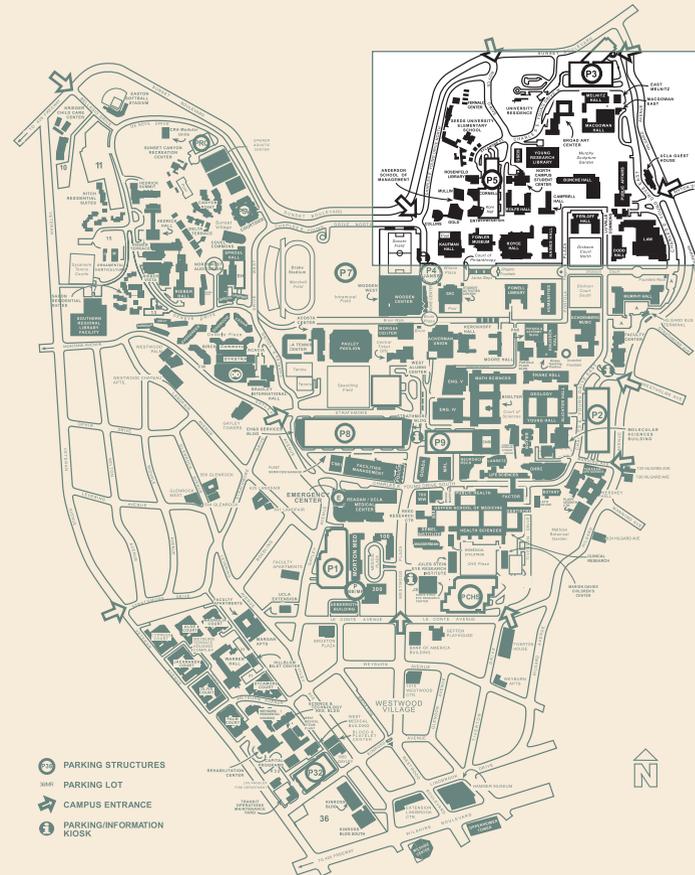
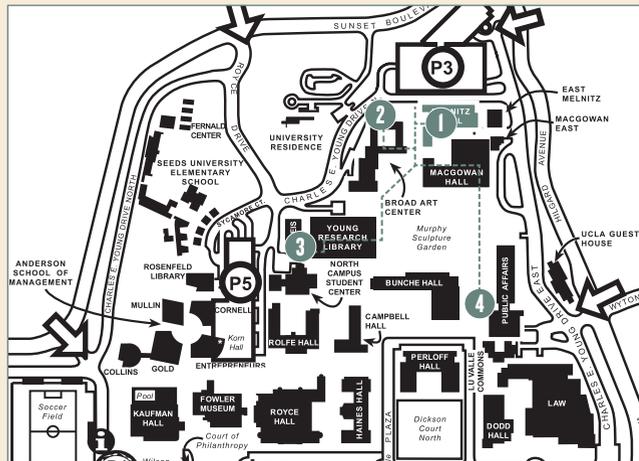


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Conference guests may find affordable and healthy lunch options at these nearby campus locations:

- 1 Stage Canteen in Melnitz/Macgowan Back Lot
- 2 Untitled Café in Broad Art Center
- 3 Northern Campus Student Center
- 4 LuValle Commons





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## WE ARE TRULY GRATEFUL!

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