

Forest of Stories: An Experimental Science Fiction Documentary

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Overview. This open forum will introduce a proposal for a new experimental documentary film project that features stories developed within an international cross-disciplinary community of scientists and mathematicians. The stories will be developed by using an online software-based chain story process inspired by a Surrealist technique called ‘Exquisite Corpse’ where words or images are put down on paper by one person in a group, the paper is folded to reveal only a fragment of text or image, then passed to the next person who adds to this fragment, folds and passes on the growing ‘body’. What makes each corpse ‘exquisite’ is the exploitation of accidental juxtapositions to create fantastic and provocative maps of the unconscious potentials within a community. The aim of the first phase of the project is to generate a ‘forest of stories’ that not only relates to actual research, but playfully cross-pollinates visions across disciplines.

For the film, fragments from this ‘forest of stories’ will be refined by screenwriters and produced as fiction scenes performed by actors alongside some of the scientist authors. The final film will combine these fiction scenes with observational documentary of participating scientists at work discussing the current state of their research and footage showing aspects of the chain story process.

The film aims to be a dreamlike glimpse of the future in the present. It hopes to trace some of the less obvious possibilities between the frontiers of rational knowledge and intuitive vision, between the specialist languages of mathematics and the inexpressible sum of collective human experience, and between humans as scientists and

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scientists as humans.

The open forum will include a participatory chain story experiment and an open discussion on various practical and conceptual aspects of the project.

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Brief Biography

Christine Cynn is a documentary filmmaker based in London. Having completed a Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology (special focus on film) at Harvard University, she went on to direct numerous films and documentaries including the 2003 “Globalisation Tapes” with Joshua Oppenheimer.