

Live Philosophy Workshop: New Concepts in Science, Technology, and Digital Art

Workshop Description

Contemporary human endeavor unfolds at ever-new levels of complexity. We need to understand not just the synthesis of numerous underlying technologies, but also how the qualitative dimensions of beauty and meaning are woven into science and technology. Everything we do now is technologized, aesthetically-designed, and engineered for meaning and affect. This first-of-its-kind live philosophy workshop gives you a straightforward set of philosophical tools for understanding and creating technology futures in exactly the way the world is now demanding: with grace, fluidity, and a deeper connection to human desire, creativity, and potentiality.

Workshop Format (1.5 – 2 hour session)

Lecture: Top 10 Philosophical Concepts in Science, Technology, and Digital Art¹ – 30 min

Competitive Team Exercise: Concept Innovation and Presentation – 60-90 min

In the live workshop, attendees will divide into five teams and each develop and present both a new philosophical concept and a technology product/service idea that implements their concept in one of the five SU-related areas below. Participants will vote to determine the winning ideas.

- Global Epistemologies: developing alternative voices, narratives, value systems, cultures, and knowledge-production structures
- The New Epistemology: proposing epistemic principles to accompany the production of new knowledge and new kinds of knowledge
- Principia Posthuman: envisioning the posthuman through philosophical principles
- Technology Enslavement or Enablement: Using philosophy to sharpen our sophistication in considering the impact of technology and biotechnology on our lives
- Being and Space: dwelling meaningful in new spaces in physical reality, online reality, and virtual reality

Exercise Iterations as time permits: 1-3 iterations (teams switch topics and take the former round's winning concept as the starting point for new concept development)

Workshop size: This workshop can accommodate any range of participants from 2-50

Materials needed: LCD projector and 3-4 easels or whiteboards with dry-erase markers

¹Excerpted from the “Digital Art and Philosophy” class developed and taught in 2013, slides available at: <http://www.slideshare.net/lablogga/presentations>

Instructor Bio

Melanie Swan is a philosopher, and science and technology futurist teaching at Singularity University since its inception in 2008. She has founded several technology and biotechnology startups including DIYgenomics which pioneered the crowdsourced health research study and has 14 such participatory studies in operation. One of Melanie's areas of expertise is in designing innovative interactive workshops such as “Live Prediction Markets Trading Simulation,” “Discontinuity Futures,” “Being an Entrepreneur,” and “The Trader's Pit.” Melanie has an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and a BA from Georgetown University. She is a faculty member at the University of the Commons, an Affiliate Scholar at the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, and an invited contributor to the Edge's Annual Essay Question. More information: www.MelanieSwan.com