



galerie **leonard**
& bina
ellen
art gallery

Filling in the Blank Spaces
Workshop Series
Conducted by Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC)



Image: *AbTeC Island*, machinimagraph, 2017. Courtesy of Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace

This workshop series, led by Skawennati, Jason Edward Lewis and the AbTeC production team, teaches participants tools and methods in the emerging technique known as machinima—filmmaking in virtual environments. Participants will learn to navigate the online virtual world Second Life, design characters, and discover the possibilities of storytelling in cyberspace.

AbTeC has led workshops in game production, machinima and character design with Indigenous youth, elders, students and artists in order to bring Indigenous storytelling to media technologies and create Aboriginally-determined cyberspaces. This workshop series is held in conjunction with the exhibition-forum *Filling in the Blank Spaces*, in which previous workshop outcomes including games and machinimas are presented together for the first time.

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO SECOND LIFE/ABTEC ISLAND

Tuesday, November 7, 10 am - 12 pm

WEEK 2: FUTURE CHARACTER DESIGN WITH INDIGENOUS PARTICIPANTS

Tuesday, November 14, 10 am - 12 pm

WEEK 3: INTRO TO MACHINIMA DEMO

Friday, November 17, 2 - 4 pm

WEEK 4: MACHINIMA WORKSHOP

Friday, November 24, 9 am - 5 pm

Saturday, November 25, 9 am - 5 pm

At the Gallery

In English

Free

RSVP required – robin.simpson@concordia.ca

Leonard & Bina Ellen Gallery

Concordia University

1400, boul. de Maisonneuve (ground floor)

ellengallery.concordia.ca

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO SECOND LIFE/ABTEC ISLAND

Tuesday, November 7, 10 am - 12 pm (2 hours)

This workshop will introduce participants to the basics of Second Life, a 3D online world, and how it can be used to tell Indigenous stories. Participants will get their own avatar, learn to navigate the virtual environment, and visit AbTeC Island, an Aboriginaly-determined territory in cyberspace.

Maximum capacity: 12

Instructors: Skawennati, Maize Longboat

Technical Specifications: Laptop required. Each participant must have a laptop that meets the system requirements to run Second Life (<https://secondlife.com/support/system-requirements/>) and are required to download Second Life onto their devices prior to the workshop.

WEEK 2: FUTURE CHARACTER DESIGN WITH INDIGENOUS PARTICIPANTS

Tuesday, November 14, 10 am - 12 pm (2 hours)

In this workshop, Indigenous participants are guided in designing futuristic characters.

Maximum capacity: 12

Instructors: Skawennati, Jason Edward Lewis, Maize Longboat and Suzanne Kite

Technical Specifications: Drawing materials will be provided. No laptop necessary. Participants are welcome to bring their own materials for use

WEEK 3: INTRO TO MACHINIMA DEMO

Friday, November 17, 2 - 4 pm (2 hours)

A machinima ("machine" + "cinema") is a movie made in a virtual environment, such as a video game. This workshop begins with a selection of clips from Skawennati's machinimas and is followed an overview of the tools used to create machinima. Participants will have the opportunity to try a 3D mouse and will shoot a short clip in Second Life. We will conclude with a basic lesson on video editing.

Maximum capacity: 12

Instructors: Skawennati and Darian Jacobs

Technical Specifications: See technical requirements for Workshop 1. In addition to this, participants must download each of the following free software programs onto their laptops prior to the workshop: Open Broadcast Software (<https://obsproject.com>) and OpenShot Video Editor (<http://www.openshot.org/download/>)

Prerequisite: Participants must have attended the Week 1: Introduction to Second Life/AbTeC Island in order to register

WEEK 4: MACHINIMA WORKSHOP

Friday, November 24, 9 am - 5 pm, (8 hours - lunch provided)

Saturday, November 25, 9 am - 5 pm, (8 hours - lunch provided)

Participants will work in small teams to each create a short movie (under five minutes long). When you arrive on day one, please have in mind a scene from a favourite movie, legend or fairy tale that we will recreate. Beginning with storyboarding, we will then assemble the characters and sets. We will consider sound design, shoot the movies, then, finally, we will watch our creations.

Maximum capacity: 12

Instructors: Skawennati, Nancy Townsend and Maize Longboat

Technical Specifications: See technical requirements for Workshop 3.

Prerequisite: Participants must have participated in Workshop 3: Machinima Demo in order to register

WORKSHOP INSTRUCTORS

Darian Jacobs

Darian Jacobs is a Mohawk student from Kahnawake. She is currently in her first year of Concordia University's Creative Writing program. She is an alumni of Skins 4.0 and has assisted Skawennati in machinima workshops in Montreal and Vancouver.

Suzanne Kite

Suzanne Kite is an Oglala Lakota performance artist, visual artist, and composer from Los Angeles, with a BFA from CalArts in music composition, an MFA from Bard College's Milton Avery Graduate School, and is a PhD candidate at Concordia University. Recently, Kite has been developing a body interface for movement performances, carbon fiber sculptures, immersive video and sound installations, and has recently launched the experimental electronic imprint, Unheard Records.

Jason Edward Lewis

Jason Edward Lewis is a digital media poet, artist, and software designer. He founded Obx Laboratory for Experimental Media, where he directs research/creation projects devising new means of creating and reading digital texts, developing systems for creative use of mobile technology and using virtual environments to assist Aboriginal communities in preserving, interpreting and communicating cultural histories. Along with the artist Skawennati, he co-directs Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace, Skins Workshops on Aboriginal Storytelling and Video Game Design and the Initiative for Indigenous Futures. He is a Trudeau Fellow, a former Carnegie Fellow, and currently sits on the board of the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Festival. He is the Concordia University Research Chair in Computational Media and the Indigenous Future Imaginary as well as Professor of Computation Arts at Concordia University, Montreal.

Maize Longboat

Maize Longboat is Mohawk from Six Nations of the Grand River and was raised in unceded Coast Salish territory near Vancouver, BC. He is in his first year of the MA in Media Studies program with the Department of Communication Studies at Concordia University and a Research Assistant with the Initiative for Indigenous Futures (IIF).

Skawennati

Skawennati makes art that addresses history, the future, and change. Her pioneering new media projects have been widely presented across Turtle Island in major exhibitions such as *Now? NOW!* at Denver's Biennial of the Americas; and *Looking Forward (L'Avenir)* at the Montreal Biennale. Her award-winning work in is included in both public and private collections.

Born in Kahnawake Mohawk Territory, Skawennati graduated with a BFA from Concordia University in Montreal, where she is based. She is Co-Director of Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC), a research network of artists and academics who investigate and create Indigenous virtual environments. Their Skins workshops in Aboriginal Storytelling and Experimental Digital Media are aimed at empowering youth. In 2015 they launched IIF, the Initiative for Indigenous Futures.

Nancy Townsend

As Associate Producer at AbTeC, Nancy contributes in some way to every project being considered. She assists in 3D artwork, compositing effects, video editing, general project management and is even happy to provide coffee once in a while if the staff is feeling down. With a BFA in Computation Arts, she previously worked as research assistant at three Concordia media labs until graduation and then ventured out into International Relocation Consulting, followed by freelance video editing and eventually project management at Minority Media. She has returned to AbTeC as a now seasoned professional, eager to exercise her creative side once more.