

Affecting Technologies, Machining Intelligences Latitudes/Longitudes/Frequencies

I, the [hu]man of color, want only this:

That the tool never possess the [hu]man.

—Frantz Fanon, “Black Skin, White Masks” (1952)

Fanon made this plea just as the first digital computers were being built in America. Almost seventy years later, information technologies built on artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) are being woven tighter and tighter into social and civic fabrics worldwide, encoding colonial injustices into global information infrastructures. The software tool has come to possess the human of color.

Who builds these tools? Much new work in AI and ML is informed by an understanding of AI and ML that is rooted in the cultural and legal values of the Global North. For example, American science-fictional tropes of the 1950s influence the popular imagination of these technologies as superhuman governing “intelligences” or subhuman servile “robots” floating in a placeless fog of information. The uses of AI and ML are situated in different cultural, political, and geographical localities, where there are also differences of power and agency amongst the people who are interacting with such technologies. Too often technological futures are being determined solely by those with advanced training in technological systems and with a flattened sense of the social landscape.

As Audre Lorde said in 1979, “The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” Thus our work, as critical researchers, artists, and activists, must start by dismantling these tropes to build a collective understanding of these tools together. For example, we might consider the following questions:

- What forms of “intelligence” are implicitly encoded and privileged in these technologies? How can we encode different, plural ways of knowing? How could we machine them to intelligently care for the human, more than human, and the planet?
- How are different kinds of resources, like minerals, information, and labor, exchanged across the planet to sustain these information technologies? How can we reshape these flows?
- How can we critically rethink the creative and social justice potentials and functions of non-human intelligences? What communities and questions are being underserved or overserved by these systems?
- How do the social and economic conditions of global competition shape the pedagogies of AI and ML? How can we develop alternative pedagogies that center questions of justice?

Informed by our work of unmaking the master’s tools, we will work together to build new kinds of tools that can build new kinds of houses. This summit proposes a creative reframing of the possibilities of machining intelligences, and works through three interconnected steps: *Delanguageing*, *Relanguageing*, and *Intervening*.

The invited guests work on and critically research questions of technology, computing, art, and humanities/social research. Most of the invited guests are connected to the Global South, and/or decolonial, feminist, and indigenous ways of thinking. They bring an activist and collaborative disposition, especially

through participatory and performative ways of constructing knowledge, research, and artistic practice. We intentionally focus on the voices of the colonized, oppressed, and marginalized, which are so often left aside from technology discourse and development.

Co-Organizers: Katherine Ye, Dalida Maria Benfield, Bruno Moreschi, and Gabriel Pereira

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Schedule

	5th of February / Wednesday	6 of February / Thursday	7 of February / Friday
Morning 10 - 12:30	<p><i>Introduction to the convening</i></p> <p>SHARING: DELANGUAGEING (at IEA USP, Sala Alfredo Bosi)</p> <p><u>[This session is open to the public.]</u></p>	<p>SHARING: RELANGUAGEING (at IEA USP, Sala Alfredo Bosi)</p> <p><u>[This session is open to the public.]</u></p>	<p>SHARING: INTERVENING (at IEA USP, Sala Alfredo Bosi)</p> <p><u>[This session is open to the public.]</u></p>
Afternoon 14:00 - 17:00	<p>MAKING + DISCUSSING (at InovaUSP, Sala do CAIA - Centro de Arte e Inteligência Artificial)</p>	<p>MAKING + DISCUSSING (at InovaUSP, Sala do CAIA - Centro de Arte e Inteligência Artificial)</p>	<p>MAKING + DISCUSSING (at InovaUSP, Sala do CAIA - Centro de Arte e Inteligência Artificial)</p>
Evening 18:30 -	<p>GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER (Location TBD)</p>	<p>LEARNING (at InovaUSP, Sala do CAIA - Centro de Arte e Inteligência Artificial)</p>	<p>FINAL GATHERING + PERFORMING (at InovaUSP, Sala do CAIA - Centro de Arte e Inteligência Artificial)</p> <p><i>Closing</i></p>

Sharing sessions (Delanguaging / Relanguaging / Intervening):

Each talk will be 15 minutes, and will have a Q&A period for one question. We will keep notes in a common doc.

5th of February / Wednesday:

10 - 12:30 – Sharing: Delanguageing.

Our conversations about computing are, of course, shaped by the words we use to talk and think about it. This language necessarily comes freighted with its own context—which becomes visible in a pair of quotation marks.

“tool” “artificial” “intelligence” “human” “inhuman” “machine” “cyborg”
“technology” “media” “bias” “ethics” “regulation” “humane”
“empathy” “design” “partner” “citizen” “app” “data” “error”

In this sharing session of talks/presentations, we invite our participants to delanguage and rethink our vocabulary. Some driving questions may include: What are our epistemologies of critique? What do the epistemologies and ontologies of these concepts make possible, or impossible? What do they take for granted, and what are their goals? How are these concepts being enabled by colonial, quantitative, unequal, and technology-centric paradigms?

Presenters are: Rafael Grohmann, Teixeira Coelho, Katherine Ye, Amanda Chevtchouk Jurno and Gabriel Pereira.

14:00 - 17:00 – Making + Discussing.

We'll be facilitating discussions and making sessions with participants. This is going to be horizontal, dynamic, and constructive. As such, it will take the shape that participants make of it. Our proposed ideas for working groups include:

- Creating collective publications (e.g. zines)
- Developing syllabus (or other pedagogical outlines)
- Defining questions and directions (i.e. agenda-setting)
- Defining new languages or vocabularies (e.g. dictionaries)
- Creating collaborative artistic constructions, such as a play (theater of the oppressed — speaking from different voices, or points of view)

18:30 – Getting to know each other

We'll be doing a social activity to get to know each other, to be determined.

6th of February / Thursday:

10 - 12:30 – Sharing: Relanguageing.

How might we think about machine intelligences considering the values and paradigms of plural ways of thinking and knowing from different localities (i.e. those whose perspectives have been marginalized or erased)?

What are the ways that these ideas are being expressed and reworked by plural communities? How are they appropriated?

In this sharing session of talks/presentations, we invite our participants to relanguage, by sharing their experiments/projects of imagining and centering other words/worlds (or using the normative words/worlds in a different way. This reframing may involve new language, such as justice, community, decolonizing, pluralities.

Presenters are: GECID group (Bruno Moreschi + Guilherme Falcão + Bernardo Fontes), Sabelo Mhlambi, Tais Oliveira, and Dalida Maria Benfield.

14:00 - 17:00 – Making + Discussing.

(ibid)

18:30 – Learning

This session will be run as parallel workshops, to which everyone is invited to participate. (No prior applications necessary).

- Bernardo Fontes: Synthesizing new Faunas – Explorations with image-to-image
- Lucas Nunes and Rafael Tsuha: A Crack Inside the Museum - Problematizing the Computer Vision of Commercial AIs

7th of February / Friday:

10 - 12:30 – Sharing: Intervening.

What do we want machine intelligences to do for us, now and in the future? How are we, and how could we, center diverse human knowledges in our conception of what they might do? How could we machine them to intelligently care for the human, more than human, and the planet?

In this sharing session of talks/presentations, we invite our participants to share their projects that aim at intervening and changing realities in regards to machine intelligences and computing. This may involve activist, policy, research or artistic projects, among other pedagogical spellings and literacizations of knowledge.

Presenters are: Silvana Bahia, Jennifer Lee, Didiana Prata, Gisele Beiguelman, and Rodrigo Ochigame.

14:00 - 17:00 – Making + Discussing.

(ibid)

18:30 – Final Gathering + Performing

This will be the time to informally share what we have worked on during the event. As such, the organization of this will be responsive to our work together. We'll make space for mini-installations and performances, for example.

We'll also have performances with sound by Gabriel Lemos + André Damião ("Guerra Não Linear"), and other performances TBA.