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Of Technologies and Trajectories: Montreal New Media Artists

This paper explores the multiple ways in which technologies are appropriated by new media artists, and how these processes influence their digital art practices. New media artists are cultural workers. Nevertheless, their professional activities and trajectories have some strong specificities. Technology appropriation accounts for a large part of the activity of new media artists studied in Montreal. New media artists often have to master highly complex technologies in freelance trajectories, going through very different working contexts, logics and sectors, whether commercial or artistic, or connected to teaching institutions. It is not possible to localize the techno-crafting practices resulting from a specialized university curriculum, or sticking to the values and know-hows of an elusive digital artist community. The constant evolution of the technological aspects of digital art practice leads to an on-going reconfiguration of the practice and of its social embeddings, and requires a specific work of articulation.