

MONDAY, MARCH 14 @5 pm

the digital image as material object

Archaeologies of Computer Graphics

The computer is not a visual medium, and yet computation as we know it today has been fundamentally shaped by computer graphics. It was the desire to make computation legible and accessible to human users that drove researchers to develop systems for graphical human-machine communication, and while visual representation is in no way essential to the theory of computing or the practice of procedural calculation, computer graphics played a significant role in the development of the computer as a technical medium, and for shaping our modern understanding of what computers are for and can do. This talk engages this seventy year history, arguing that computer graphics mark a transformation in the very notion of what computing is through the imposition of a formal logic tied to a theory of the world as a structure of visible, interactive objects.



Jacob Gaboury is an Associate Professor of Film & Media at the University of California at Berkeley, specializing in the history of digital image technologies and their impact on our contemporary visual culture. His work has appeared in a range of popular and academic publications, including *Grey Room*, *the Journal of Visual Culture*, *Camera Obscura*, *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, *Rhizome*, and *Art Papers*, and has been supported by a number of fellowships and organizations in the history of science and technology, including the ACM History Fellowship, the IEEE Life Members Fellowship, the Charles Babbage Institute, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. His first book is titled *Image Objects: An Archaeology of Computer Graphics* (MIT Press 2021), and it traces a material history of early computer graphics through a set of five objects that structure the production and circulation of all digital images today.