

*Editorial by Amy Ione*

## Celebrating the Art, Science and Technology Community

As my tenure as the chair of the Leonardo Education Forum draws to a close, I find myself thinking it has been a remarkable year! With this in mind, and in light of Leonardo journal's 40th anniversary, I have decided to use this space to reflect on our field in general and on the Leonardo Education Forum in particular.

Founded in 1967 with the goal of becoming an international channel of communication for artists who use science and developing technologies, Leonardo is now a thriving community. Our group, moreover, is a tribute to this objective. What impresses me most is the way the seed has matured. For example, the Leonardo community seems to mesh light with geology, sculpture with genetics, digital projects with group identity, ethics and more. As a painter with academic interests that range from historical connections among art, science and technology to recent research combining art and cognition, I also find my perspective is quite at home among our global, eclectic, cross-cultural interests. Indeed, our range seems to underscore that Leonardo's mission absorbs "an infinity of combinations." Looking for a metaphor to describe this kind of actively unfolding connectivity, the multi-limbed figures frequently seen in Indian art come to mind. The multiplicity of heads, arms and eyes is a convention that grew out of imagery conceived by Vedic sages to explain creation. Art-science-technology people seem to embody this kind of dynamic energy. It is as if we grow new appendages as we reach out to grasp diverse possibilities, simultaneously turning sensed options into solid projects.

The Leonardo Education Forum is an example of this dynamic at work. Established in 2003–2004 as an affiliate of the College Art Association (CAA), we initially aimed primarily to integrate art, science and technology with the CAA. We have done this—and we have expanded our mission to many other academic environments as well. Although young, our group has sponsored several panels and exhibitions at CAA's annual meetings, presented at the Society for Literature, Arts, and Science, organized student mentoring

sessions, and has continued to brainstorm for venues and projects through which we can further our mission. (Visiting our blog at <http://fm.hunter.cuny.edu/lef/> will acquaint you with our activities.)

It is fitting that the Forum is an arm of Leonardo, since this organization's journal has always given space to innovative projects, circulated academic scholarship and encouraged commentary. Now, as the Forum seeks to further integrate the art-science-technology field within the larger academic community, we are perhaps seeing the "Leonardo effect." Previously, many academic disciplines were too narrowly defined for the spectrum Leonardo embraces. Projects centered within our paradigm are becoming more the norm, as is evident at each CAA meeting I attend and in many of the articles in CAA's *Art Journal*. Now that the art-science-technology interface speaks to a larger audience, it is easier to build the kinds of networks that effective scholarship and project development require. This is a welcome change.

With this in mind, I would urge others to participate in the Leonardo Education Forum. I would also hope to see us further broaden our appeal. It has become more and more common for artists to work with engineers and computer scientists. Increasing the representation of people from the natural sciences would further advance our aims and objectives. I would also like to see more discourse between art historians and professionals in the history of science. Finally, in our crazy world, it is noteworthy that Leonardo has not neglected social issues. How we can most effectively integrate creative projects that address societal concerns is no doubt a question for another day. Still, it certainly is one worth including in our thoughts as we celebrate the growth of the art, science and technology community.

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