



Center for
Media, Arts &
Performance

2023 year in review

ATLAS



Engineering & Applied Science
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER



Research & Innovation Office
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER



2023 was a banner year for the B2 Center for Media, Arts & Performance. We welcomed faculty and students from four campus colleges. We hosted eleven extraordinary residencies, a series of public performances and three public festivals. I'm enthused about our "Free Swim" workshops initiated by B2 faculty director August Black. The workshops cultivate a community of artists and engineers who can use the array of advanced performance tools in those spaces: 40.4 spatial audio, live motion tracking and 360° projection. We'll hold more in 2024, so please join us and bring your friends and students.

Our mission in practice

The B2 mission is to support novel work that leverages the unique tech we have, and like the rest of ATLAS, that challenges conventional boundaries. For example, last summer, visiting artist and engineer Derrek Chow worked with Brad Gallagher using Touch Designer to implement a system to make the controls for our lighting system and spatial audio more accessible.

A growing community

B2 must be more than a venue. We're equipped with sophisticated audio and video technologies, and with that comes the responsibility to cultivate an expert community of ambitious artists and engineers skilled at making exceptional creative and technical work. To continue in this tradition, we must engage more people across campus and beyond.

Investing in the future of B2

Staffing B2 is costly, and compared with our peers, we do a lot with a little. Over the past few years, ATLAS has supplemented B2 base-level funding from campus with funds from the College of Engineering and Applied Science. We've made this strategic investment in B2 because — frankly — campus funding isn't enough to sustain the staffing B2 merits. But the new campus budget model makes it harder for ATLAS to augment campus support at the current level. Therefore, we're recruiting a cadre of student apprentices whose passions center around B2 to become experts in immersive audio and video technologies.

Coming attractions

Faculty director August Black began a two-year term last fall and plans an exciting 2024 with visiting artists and international collaborations in addition to residencies and workshops. We also acknowledge the efforts of outgoing faculty director, Steven Frost, who contributed so much to programming and community building. We will continue to support cross-campus initiatives as we always have, believing in the power of B2 to build an inclusive community united in pushing creative boundaries through technology.

We are excited to share the complete picture of these efforts in this report, which details B2 programming over the past year and the resources involved. Please review it and reach out with questions. We look forward to seeing you at our spring events!

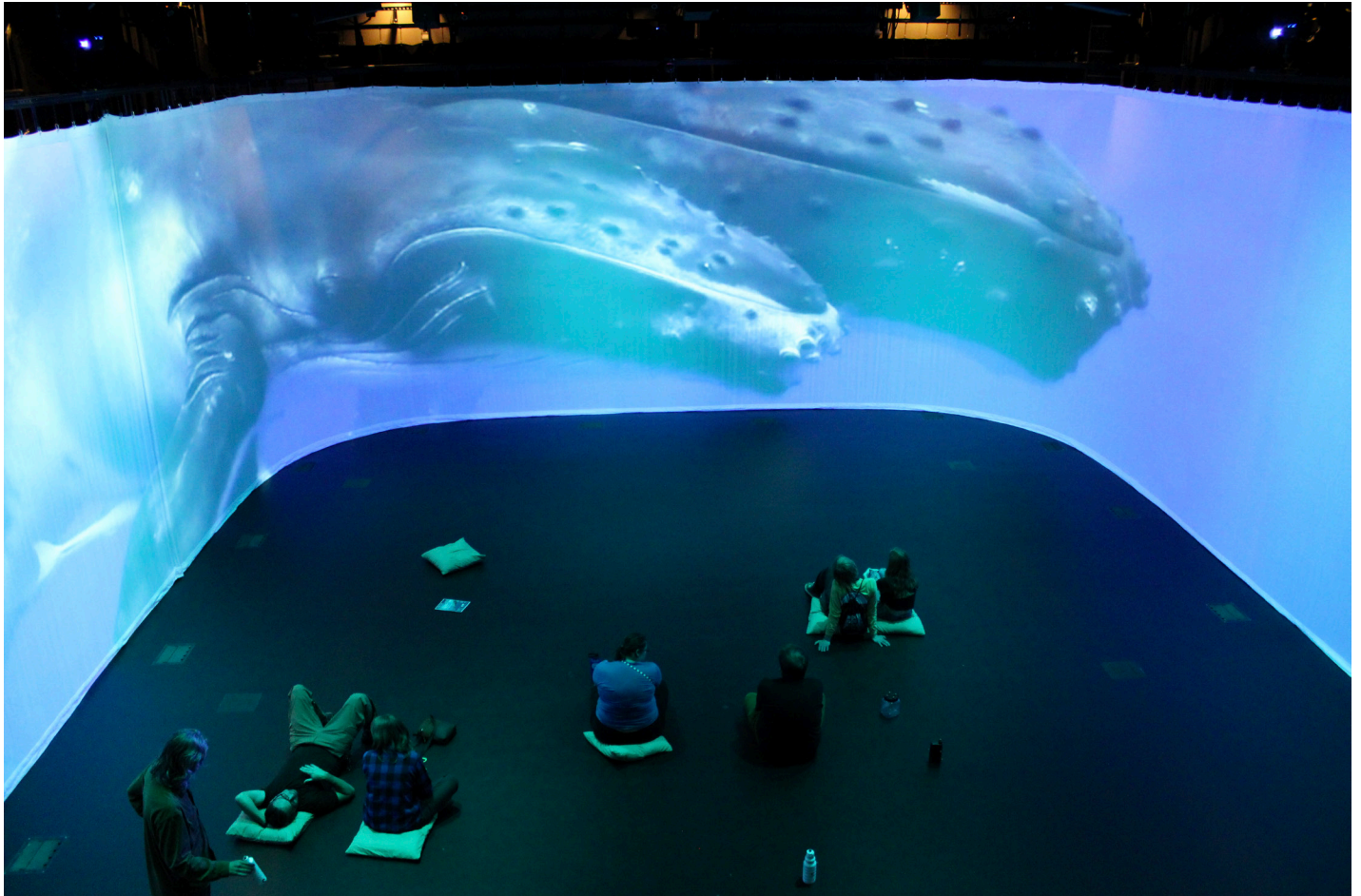


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B2 in Brief

The mission of the B2 Center for Media, Arts and Performance (CMAP) at the ATLAS Institute is to advance and support interdisciplinary experimentation and radical creativity at the intersection of art, technology, media, science and performance. Creative work, research and performance residencies in a range of disciplines can incorporate highly-specialized equipment, including fifth-order ambisonic speakers, wave field synthesis, 360-video projection and motion capture technologies, enabling an array of innovative projects.

The B2 staff includes **August Black**, Faculty Director; **Ondine Geary**, Managing Director; **Bret Mann** and **Chris Petillo**, Technical Staff; **Brad Gallagher** and **Sean Winters**, Lecturers; and **Brook Vann**, Graduate Student Assistant (Department of Critical Media Practices); as well as student hourly employees who support events, projects and operations.



Creative & Research Residencies

We aim to drive innovation and discovery in technology and the arts. Our **Black Box Experimental Studio** and the three newly-outfitted **Studio Labs** leverage an unparalleled constellation of technology and equipment along with a growing community of practitioners who facilitate this work. These studios serve as an important incubator where cutting edge interdisciplinary work originates. The resulting creative output or performance is shared among a dynamic B2 community, friends, campus collaborators, as well as the broader world, thereby raising the reach and reputation of the work that happens here.

Every year, B2 invites residency proposals from constituents across campus who are interested in working to develop mission-aligned research and creative projects. In 2023, B2 held **eleven art+technology residencies**, which gave students and faculty from colleges across campus dedicated access to B2 resources, technical support and creative problem solving for on-site work ranging from 6-14 days. Through the collaboration between the dedicated B2 technical staff and partner artists, nine residencies culminated in public performances and two resulted in high-quality recordings used by the artists to further advance their work and careers.



Open Experimentation & Workshops

B2 has offered new initiatives that advance our vision of delivering unique media and technologies into the hands of more people, build a **dynamic community** around art & tech, and expand applications of B2 resources. These exciting opportunities result in new areas of creative experimentation, interdisciplinary thinking and novel ideas in the arts.

Throughout 2023, B2 hosted more than 30 faculty, students & guest artists during a two-week open-experimentation period dubbed "**Free Swim**". The event allowed the community to experiment with Black Box Experimental Studio technologies with support from B2 technical staff. Additionally, B2 hosted five workshops on technical topics and creative expression.

First offered as summer classes in 2022, B2 now offers **courses in performance technologies** each semester, including motion capture and immersive audio, which further expands opportunities for students to learn, experiment and collaborate.

Workshop: Humanature Relationships During the Anthropause

Joanne Marras Tate, Roberto Azaretto & Steven Frost



Embodying the Spirits

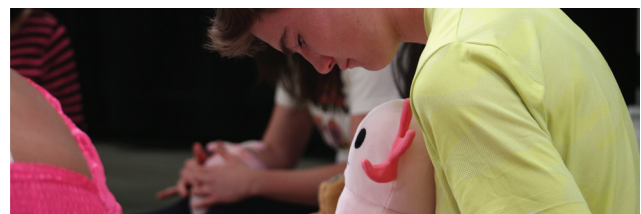
Intro to the BUTOH Dance

Iván-Daniel Espinosa & Joan Laage



Alien Nation Roll Call

Iván-Daniel Espinosa & Harlan Rosen



Community Engagement

Continuing the rich tradition of engagement and outreach in the community, B2 partners with internal and external partners hosting **larger events** that draw local audiences to campus and the Roser ATLAS Center.

This year, those events included:

Love Letter to a Rave

An evening of electronic music, video projections and dancing in partnership with the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (**Shaz Zamore**, faculty)

Slay the Runway

A gathering and rehearsal space for a fashion workshop for LGBTQIA+ teens in partnership with Longmont's Firehouse Art Center (**Steven Frost**, faculty)

40.4 Festival

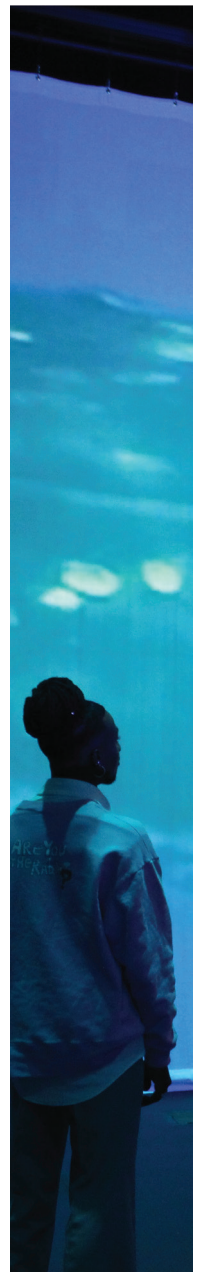
An audio-forward intermedia sonic summit, including workshops, artist talks and live performances (**Sean Winters**, faculty)

Mimesis Documentary Festival

An artist-focused event encompassing short, feature, experimental and documentary films (**Eric Coombs Esmail**, faculty)

Whaaat!?! Festival

Games, alternative interfaces, immersive experiences and talks by featured game designers (**Danny Rankin**, faculty)



Curricular Support

B2 comprises several areas, including the Black Box and the Studio Lab (SL1) with production capabilities, which continue to offer curricular support and supplemental learning opportunities for multiple partners and units.

Over the past year, B2 has supported **Cinema Studies** (College of Arts and Sciences) courses and **Journalism** (College of Media, Communication and Information) courses, in addition to new **ATLAS** courses offered in B2 production technologies (College of Engineering & Applied Science). In sum, SL1, the primary learning lab, was used for nearly **900 hours** by students and faculty for projects, classes and research.



Campus-wide Partnerships

In 2023, B2 advanced the work of students & faculty from four of CU's colleges:

College of Media, Communication and Information

Media Studies residency
Media Studies community event
Intermedia Art, Writing and Performance residency
Critical Media Practices residencies (2)
Critical Media Practices festival
Communications residency
Communications workshop
Journalism curricular use for courses (3)



College of Arts & Sciences

Cinema Studies & Moving Image Arts residency
Cinema Studies & Moving Image Arts courses (6)
Theatre & Dance residencies (2)
Theatre & Dance workshops (2)

College of Engineering & Applied Sciences

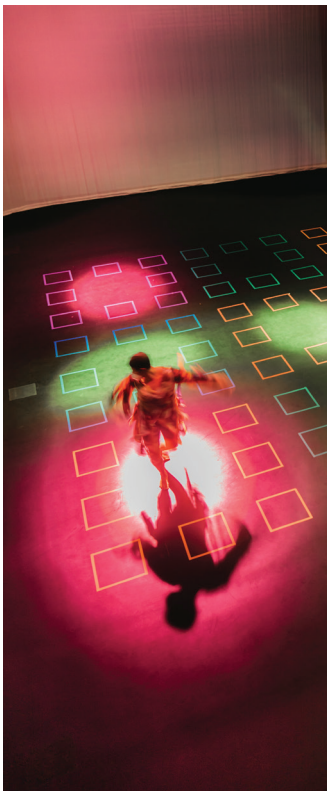
ATLAS residency
ATLAS festivals (2)
ATLAS community events (3)

College of Music

Composition residencies (3)

Budget

In 2023 B2 expenditures totaled over \$500,000. Over 90% of these funds went to supporting the B2 staff. Approximately half of these funds were provided by the Provost through the Research and Innovation Office (RIO) and half were provided by the ATLAS Institute, through the College of Engineering and Applied Science from revenues generated by ATLAS faculty teaching.



2023 in Review

| month | coordinator | title |
|-----------|----------------------|---|
| January | Jesus Munoz | La Mamá de mi Mamá |
| | Ben Morris | Colorado Sky |
| February | Anya Cloud | it's the love in between |
| | Sandra Ristovska | Through the Lens of the Law |
| | Egemen Kesikli | Soundworks |
| March | Sean Winters | 40.4 Festival |
| April | ATLAS | ATLAS Expo |
| | Brad Gallagher | Parrotfish |
| | Conor Brown | Spaiksa |
| June | Steven Frost | Slay the Runway |
| August | Eric Coombs Esmail | Mimesis Documentary Festival |
| September | Mark Gross | Sketching in Hardware Conference |
| | Joanne Marras Tate | Humanature Relationships During the Anthropause |
| | Joanne Marras Tate | Workshop: Humanature Relationships During the Anthropause |
| October | Iván-Daniel Espinosa | Embodying the Spirits |
| | Danny Rankin | Whaaat Festival |
| | Jason Gnerre | Recurrent |
| November | Hanna Shell | Climax |
| | Iván-Daniel Espinosa | Alien Nation Roll Call |
| | Shaz Zamore | Love Letter to a Rave |
| | B2 | Free Swim |
| December | Laura Devendorf | A Table Weaving |
| | Laura Devendorf | Community Weaving: A Table Weaving |



What's Next?

In 2024, we look forward to maintaining the tremendous momentum of the past year and continuing to grow an active B2 community, build rich interdisciplinary partnerships, and solidify our reputation as a leader and innovator in art tech.

We will look to **new initiatives** to enable all this exciting work to continue, while establishing a more consistent revenue stream to support further growth. And we hope that each of you will join us on the journey as an active part of the B2 community.

Please keep an eye on our calendar for amazing events and calls for participation happening this spring, including:

2024 Creative Residencies advancing the work of faculty and students, including from Music, CMCI, ATLAS, and Theatre & Dance

More opportunities for experimentation and exploration during the spring Free Swim

The third annual 40.4 Festival and Sonic Summit

Learn more about all our upcoming events: colorado.edu/atlas/news





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