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The 8th annual Phoenix Experimental Arts Festival displayed captivating performances

[Rachel Thompson](#), Fine Arts Editor, Puma Press
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Arizona State University dance faculty John D Mitchell, Paradise Valley Community College Fine Arts Division faculty Tony Obr, Mesa Community College faculty Chris Todd, Community College Fine and Performing Arts faculty Tom Fumihiro Kikuchi, Jamey Garner, Yingzi Liang, Sharon McCamon and Sandra Schoenewald “Untitled (Super-Sexy Artifacts)”, in Paradise Valley Community College’s Performing Arts on Feb. 20 at the 8th annual Phoenix Experimental Arts Festival

Center for Performing Arts on Feb. 20 at the 8th annual Phoenix Experimental Arts Festival. [Thompson](#)
([Rachel Thompson](#))

The 8th annual Phoenix Experimental Arts Festival was held at Paradise Valley Community College on Feb. 20. The festival is a showcase featuring music, dance, video and interactive technology.

This year's event displayed distinctive and engaging works of art. The festival consisted not only of works by PVCC faculty and students, but also of art from different colleges in the Phoenix area.

Faculty from PVCC; Glendale, Scottsdale and Mesa community colleges; and ASU participated in the event. ASU students included in the festival were dancers and percussionists from the ASU Percussion Ensemble.

This year's festival included performances such as "qsqsqsqsqqqqqqq (2009)" performed by Jacob Adler, Ashley Oakley, and Aleksey Izotov. This electro-acoustic musical performance featured three miniature toy pianos and specially constructed speaker cones to playback three channels of 1-bit electronics.

The second performance of the night was "SIFTT" performed by Casey Farina (visual design and coding) and Jeremy Muller (percussion and sound design coding). This work is an electro-acoustic performance and a multimedia embodiment of real-time Twitter data. The Twitter data creates a generative graphic score that is interpreted by the performer. Audience members were encouraged to participate by including the hashtag #SIFTT in their tweets during the performance. Tweets that included the #SIFTT influenced the algorithms that generate the audio and visual components of the work.

The third performance was called "Untitled (Super-Sexy Artifacts)" performed by Keith Kelly on woodwinds and Tony Obr on electronics. It's an improvised work that seeks to blend the timbres of woodwinds and a modular synthesizer.

"Intoxia (moonflower)" was performed by John D Mitchell on computer, analog synthesizer and woodwinds; Tony Obr on computer, modular synthesizer and saxophone; Chris Todd on live visuals; Fumihiko Kikuchi on live lighting; Jamey Garner, Yingzi Liang, Sharon McCamon and Sandra Schoenewald doing movement creation and performance. It is a live, improvised, interdisciplinary work that blends artistic disciplines. The work was inspired by notions of perception, reality and truth as experienced at the convergence of the digital and analog domains.

The work "Omonia" was performed by the PVCC band Crossing 32nd Street including Robert Esler, Doug Nottingham, Brett Reed and Lisa Tolentino on snare drums. This performance combined specific constellations (listed by Ptolemy) mapped as musical material and visual stimuli to create a graphic score that can be read in any direction.

"Blink" was performed by dancers Mary Fitzgerald and Eileen Standley; computer musicians Barry Moon and Doug Nottingham, and Cari Koch on lighting. It's a real-time collaborative performance between two dancers, two musicians and a lighting designer. These five artists come together to compose a piece with light, music and dance in real-time.

"Timber (2009)," performed by the Arizona State University Percussion Ensemble, is a minimalist, polyrhythmic work, clocking in at around an hour in length. It is scored for six graded wooden simantiras (wood slabs). "Timber" contains of three main parts. The first is a stream of fast 16th notes that move, cascading from one player to the next, with dynamic expansions and contractions. The second part sees polyrhythmic cascading, moving in a similar way, (with dynamic swells) from the use of one subdivision for each player. In the third and final section, the performer's hands are given two conflicting rhythms, which then cascade from one player to the next.

The festival also had lobby and gallery installations: "PLAY" by PVCC's Performing Arts Division chair, Christopher Scinto, and Nathan Feller. "PLAY" is an interactive sound installation featuring a theremin and several audio filters to alter sound via guitar effects pedals. Visitors were invited to play the theremin and engage the guitar effect pedals to create unique timbres.

"D!G" by Barry Moon and Jessica Rajko is comprised of 22 self-contained microprocessor, sensor and speaker assemblies. Each assembly utilizes a micro SD card to store and playback sensor data and a LiPo battery for power. Other features of the installation included a subsonic vibrating bench and tablets preloaded with an Android app. All elements work with the concept of the measurement, capture and representation of movement.

There was also a live electro-acoustic music performance featuring acoustic musical instruments and electronic components, filters, compressors, effects, units and computer software. PVCC commercial music faculty members Jacob Adler and Tony Obr lead the performance and held a question and answer session with audience members.

On what Experimental Arts means, PVCC's Scinto said in an email interview, "We define experimental as works of art that are created in collaboration with multiple disciplines and that rely on the use of new technology in the creation and or performance of the work."

Tags: [Arizona State University](#), [Arizona State University Percussion Ensemble](#), [Arizona State University staff](#), [Arizona State University students](#), [Arts Festival](#), [Christopher Scinto](#), [Crossing 32nd Street](#), [Experimental Arts](#), [GCC staff](#), [Glendale Community College](#), [Mesa Community College](#), [Paradise Valley Community College](#), [phoenix experimental arts festival](#), [PVCC staff](#), [SCC staff](#), [SCC students](#), [Scottsdale Community College](#)

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