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Mentor's Introduction

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mentor's introduction

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Mia Johnson is one of a new breed of art educators, for whom the computer is not just a sophisticated problem-solving device, but is instead one manifestation of a whole new way of living, thinking and reflecting. Her Master's thesis made it quite clear that the language my generation had grown up with was simply inadequate to describe the processes or evaluate the products of computer artists. The taken-for-granted attitudes that she has developed as a member of this "new breed" have given both of us a new appreciation of how the adviser-student relationship may be defined.

While, even in traditional settings, one expects to see some exchange of readings between student and adviser, as both come to grips with the dissertation topic, in Mia's case I can honestly say that I have been given more to read than I have assigned. The result has been, for me, the unusual sense that Mia's dissertation will in some ways reflect my own efforts to grapple with an area that I still only dimly understand.

In situations where I am often stumbling to catch up, the role of mentor is, then, something less than authoritative. Nevertheless, I can at least draw on fairly extensive past experience with graduate students in identifying Mia Johnson as an art educator of promise, whose work is on that new frontier where technology and sensibility are continually redefining each other, and where, it is not too fanciful to say, new directions in the field are likely to be set.