

HEATHER D. FREEMAN

RESUME (2025)

Professor of Digital Media
Department of Art + Art History

University of North Carolina at Charlotte
9201 University City Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28223 USA
heatherfreeman@charlotte.edu | <http://www.heatherdfreeman.com>

DIGITAL MEDIA | VISUAL DESIGN | HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Experienced interdisciplinary scholar-artist seeking PhD study in the humanities with a focus on digital storytelling, spiritual histories, and public engagement. Over 20 years of integrating creative technology and critical theory through animation, podcasting, games, and immersive media. International exhibition record and proven leadership in public humanities, collaborative scholarship, and media-rich pedagogy.

A full, academic CV (over 50 pages) is available upon request.

SELECTED EMPLOYMENT

Professor of Art in Digital Media, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Assistant Professor 2006-2011 | Associate Professor 2011-2017 | Full Professor 2017 – Present

EDUCATION

MFA, Visual Arts — Rutgers University (1998-2000)
BA, Studio Art & German Studies — Oberlin College (1993-1997)

SELECTED RESEARCH PROJECTS

[Magic in the United States](#) (podcast series, 2023–24)

PRX-produced podcast on marginalized religious, spiritual and magical practices in American history. Podcast writer, primary researcher, and host. PI on NEH Media Projects Production Grant (\$388K). The global average was 8,87 downloads within the first 7-days of each episode's launch(a key metric of success). It also reached the 90th and 95th top percentile several times.

[Familiar Shapes](#) ([podcast series](#) 2020, [20-minute film](#), 2021)

Podcast series comparing how the Early Modern moveable-type press spread ideas about the witch's familiar in similar ways that social media of the twenty-tens spread dis- and misinformation. A short 20-minute film was also completed a year later. This series and film appeared in several festivals and the podcast also won or was nominated for several awards.

[Mosaic](#) (digitally-native cartomancy application, 2024)

Mosaic is an experimental and natively-digital divination system created collaboratively between Heather Freeman and Tres Henry. The downloadable app is free to the public and works on Mac, Windows, and most Linux machines.

[Decan Walk](#) (Unreal Engine 5 exploratory world, 2023)

This interactive world-building project used UE5 to present the thirty-six astrological decans (corresponding to the pips of the Tarot). The project was halted after several months to work full time on *Magic in the United States*, but Freeman is currently building on the approach to create the twelve astrological houses as an explorable world.

[Öccane](#) (mixed media prints on paper / generative AI, 2023-2024)

This is a series of mixed-media prints on paper using watercolor, graphite, salt, and ink as part of an interaction with a local (and early) instance of Stable Diffusion. The generated images were desaturated, brightened and printed on watercolor paper.

SELECTED GRANTS

NEH Media Projects Production Grant – *Magic in the United States* podcast series (2023-2024 totaling ~\$388,000)

UNC Charlotte Diversity Grants – Multiple projects (2006–2020 totally ~\$18,000)

UNC Charlotte Faculty Research Grants – Multiple projects (2007–2022 totally ~\$35,000)

A&S Council Regional Artist Project Grants – Multiple projects (2010-2014 ~roughly \$4000)

USA Projects Crowdfunding – *Flederhund* interactive children's book (\$7,305 in 2013)

SUMMARY OF EXHIBITIONS, SCREENINGS, AND AWARDS

100+ film festival screenings for *Familiar Shapes – The Film* (2021), *Artemis* (2016) *Quinn's New Video Game* (2012), and *Pennipotens* (2011)

30+ solo, two-person, and three-person gallery exhibitions of prints, drawings, mixed media, films, and interactive works including most recently:

100+ national and international group exhibitions, most of prints, drawings, mixed media, films, and interactive works.

40 awards and nominations for films, interactive works, and prints.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Heather D. Freeman. *Moving Image Workshop: Introducing animation, motion graphics and visual effects in 45 practical projects*. Fairchild Books / Bloomsbury Academic (2015).

Heather D. Freeman. *The Piedmont Path: A Witchcraft Oracle of Contemporary North Carolina*. Theurgical Studies Press. (2021) 15-page risograph zine of poetry and art.

Alex Cabral, Heather Freeman, Robby Sachs, Tom Schmidt & José Gamez. "DIY in Pandemic Times: Design Leadership During COVID-19", *Technology | Architecture + Design*, 4:2, 140-143. (2020)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND LECTURES

20+ invited lectures and artist talks, including most recently:

- "Magic in the United States: A Conversation with Heather Freeman." *Gnoseologies*. Harvard Divinity School. Hosted by Giovanna Parmigiani (online), April 10, 2024.
<https://cswr.hds.harvard.edu/news/upcoming-events?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D172638436>
- "Unveiling The Digital Occult: Forty Super-Duper Ancient Years of Arcana." *Last Tuesday Society*. Viktor Wynd Museum (online) November 28th, 2023.
<https://www.thelasttuesdaysociety.org/event/unveiling-the-digital-occult-forty-super-duper-ancient-heather-freeman/>
- "Familiar Shapes – Early modern witch familiars and social bots today." Invited by Nicholas Christakis, Director of the Human Nature Lab, to speak on this research group about my research-in-progress which resulted in the podcast series and film *Familiar Shapes*. April 5, 2018

20+ conference presentations and panel discussion including most recently:

- "Exploring Creativity in the Age of AI: A Conversation with Head of U.S. Copyright Office Shira Perlmutter with Panel Discussion: Diverse Faculty Perspectives on AI's Impact." University of North Carolina Charlotte. Panel discussion moderated by Arnetta Girardeau,

J.D. with panel participants: Dr. Gordon Hull, Dr. Sabri Gökmen, Heather Freeman, Dr. Kyoung Hee Kim, Dr. Srijan Das, Miriam Lord, J.D. (April 2, 2025)

- “Magical Technologies, Technological Magic: Digital Praxis” as part of the “Contemporary Paganism, Magic, and Online Worlds: Cyberhenge at 20” round table. American Academy of Religion (online conference). (June 26, 2024)
- “Digital Signals and Genus Locii.” Occulture 2024. Anomalie Art Club. Berlin, Germany. (October 21, 2023)
-

TEACHING SUMMARY

Over 20 years teaching art, design, and related humanities classes in higher education.

Selected undergraduate courses: BFA Studio Art Senior Seminar and Thesis, Animation, 2D Game Design, 3D Game Engines, Podcasting, Digital Foundations, 3D Modeling and Animation, Video, Installation Art, and Drawing.

Selected graduate courses include: Art and Technology, Critical Issues in Visual Rhetoric, Problems in Design, Graduate Studio Thesis

Selected PhD Thesis advisements (Graduate Faculty Representative):

- Todd Dobbs, "Art Authentication In An Untagged Art Database" Doctoral Dissertation in the Department of Computing and Information Systems, College of Computing and Informatics. (May 2022)
- Johanna Okerlund, "A Critical and Reflexive Investigation of HCI's Promise of Democratization in the Making Phenomenon." Doctoral Dissertation in the Department of Computer Science, College of Computing and Informatics.
- Alberto Gonzalez, "Explorability, Satisficing, and Satisfaction in Parameter Spaces." Doctoral Dissertation in the Department of Computing and Information Systems, College of Computing and Informatics. (May 2015)

Selected Masters Thesis Committee Member.

- Lina Taheri. "'Story of Storrs': Memory of an Architectural Space, Memorializing Human Interactions within the Space." Design Computation Dual Masters in Architecture III / Information Technology. College of Arts and Architecture (May 2018)

UNC CHARLOTTE DIRECTORSHIPS

Director, Center for Magic, Esotericism, and Occulture (2024 – Present)

- New initiative to highlight and support diverse faculty and student research on marginalized religious, spiritual, esoteric, and magical practices and beliefs.
- Center for networking with national and international academic programs including the University of South Carolina, Exeter University and CAS-E at the University of Erlangen

Acting Director, Charlotte Night Owl Interactive Design Co-Operative (2023 – Present)

- Led educational technology initiatives including student-driven game design and interactive AR projects.
- Designed and implemented XR, interactive narrative, and game development curricula across art, design, and computer science.

Co-Director, Digital Arts Center (D+ARTS) (2014–2021)

- Designed interdisciplinary curricula and collaborative projects bridging digital technologies, the arts, and community engagement.
- Created and review CFPs to the College of Arts + Architecture for collaborative, grant-funded projects using digital technologies

-

SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Administrative Service and Other Leadership: Served on numerous department, college, and university committees, from curriculum development, part-time faculty welfare committee, an ad-hoc eSports planning committee, and numerous faculty and administrative search committees.

Community Outreach: Extensive workshop facilitation and community teaching, from stop-motion and animation workshops for middle and high school students, to visiting artist workshops at universities and community organizations, to participation in public arts events.

Professional Service & Affiliations: Member and advisor roles for both professional and student-centered organizations including the Society for Photographic Education, Women in Animation, Higher Education Video Game Alliance, as well as ad hoc professional service such as the evaluation of professional dossiers for faculty applying for associate or full professorships.

-

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Software and hardware skills: Unity, Unreal Engine, Adobe Creative Suite, GameMaker, Blender, assorted generative AI tools, 3D printing, laser cutting.

Languages: English (native), German (very good; formerly fluent).