The Bauhaus meets the Lambda Calculus: Northwestern's Animate Arts Program

In spite of the increasing convergence between computing, communication, and the arts, there is still a significant divide, both in training and in culture, between artists and programmers. Northwestern University's Animate Arts Program provides a unique, team-taught, tightly integrated curriculum, designed to train a new kind of student, the liberal artist-technologist, who is at home in both worlds.

I will discuss the program's philosophy, its computer science curriculum, the issues of teaching programming to students with a limited technical background, and the institutional challenges involved in launching a program that spans four different schools within the university.

Bio:

Ian Horswill is an Associate Professor of Computer Science at Northwestern University. He is director of the Animate Arts Program, a joint project of the Northwestern's Schools of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Communication, Music, and Arts and Sciences. He is a member of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, where he is director of the Division of Graphics and Interactive Media, and a member of the Department of Radio/Television/Film. His research interests include autonomous robots and technologies for virtual characters. He received his PhD in Computer Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1993.