

"The term 'digital art' becomes virtually meaningless"

from our US correspondents [James and Maria Huntley](#)



Photo: [Creative Commons](#) | Directed by Scott Ligon | [scottligon-art.com](#)

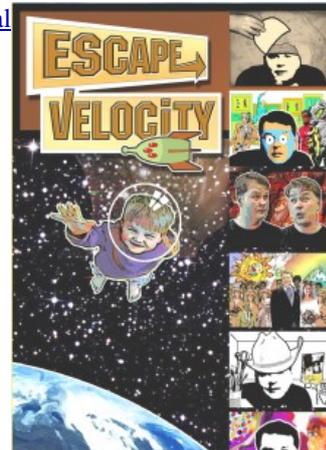
As coordinator for the digital foundation for curriculum at the Cleveland Institute of Art, Scott Ligon has been on the forefront of emerging technology in [fine arts](#). As both a digital artist and professor, he has seen students and colleagues explore this new way of making art.

'Digital technology' is, by definition, disruptive,' said Ligon. It changes the way that creative endeavors can be conceived, experienced, and publicized. This is a time of a true paradigm shift. There are many rewards and opportunities of being a digital artist in these pioneering times. Not only are there galleries showing [digital art](#) of some kind, but [digital technology](#) opens up new methods for showing and selling art, enabling the artist to bypass the gatekeepers to some extent.'

Many in the contemporary art world see [digital art](#) beginning to make its impact. Ligon sees the boundaries being stretched. 'The traditional gallery system relies on the idea of one-of-a-kind objects that have perceived value because of their scarcity. Anything that is created digitally can be replaced endlessly with no loss in quality. People can create web-based work or post images or video on the web,' said Ligon.

He also feels that one of the biggest attributes that digital artists can have with the Internet is networking with others. 'Many creators do this on a regular basis so they are getting better at their craft instead of waiting for someone's permission to get started. They develop an appreciative audience who tell others about the work, which results in an even larger audience,' he continued. 'We have entered an age where digital technology is becoming more and more integrated with the physical world. Digital interfaces are becoming more mobile and more intuitive.

As mobile devices become more and more powerful, we will increasingly see 'digital



[technology](#)' as an enabling quality that enhances our lives and our creative endeavors, as opposed to something separate from our regular lives that is created in a windowless computer lab. I foresee a time when the term 'digital art' becomes virtually meaningless because technology will be more and more imbedded into real world creative endeavors.'

While [digital technology](#) and the contemporary art world is merging, Ligon acknowledges that some in academia view these trends with mixed opinions.

‘If anyone introduces an original idea about digital art or technology in an academic setting, there are some fairly predictable reactions,’ Ligon continued. ‘A few people will dislike [digital technology](#) entirely and feel that it is having a negative effect if it replaces a previous technology that they are more familiar with.



Others will embrace [digital technology](#) but feel that you are introducing the wrong type of technology or emphasizing the wrong aspects of technology.’

Ligon feels processing power is constantly expanding and new territories are constantly being pushed. ‘[Digital technology](#) is simply ones and zeroes that we never interact with directly, like atoms in the real world,’ he said. ‘These ones and zeros can look or behave in an unlimited variety of ways. Because it’s so vast and adaptable, people who are interested in [digital technology](#) can have many different opinions and points of view.’

Ligon is currently working on his first feature film, a documentary about the 21st century convergence of creativity, technology, commerce, and creativity, called ‘The Big Picture.’

For more background information on Ligon and up-to-date information on his current ‘happenings?’. check out the following link: Scott Ligon's bio ([PDF](#), 230 Kb)

Official website: <http://ligon-art.com/>

Digital artists that Ligon recommends?

Kasumi (<http://www.kasufilms.com>) a video artist who creates moving images that can be triggered using a turntable so she can react to dancers and musicians in real time. She’s done collaborative works at Lincoln Center with the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall with the American Composers Orchestra.

Jared Bendis (<http://jaredjared.com/>) is an artist that does installation art using [digital technology](#) and is a lecturer on subjects related to [digital technology](#).