

This item has been filed in | Features, Freeze Frame, News

Print This Post

Reboot: Artist Transforms Tech into Art

(No Ratings Yet)

By [Meredith Camel](#)
[UM News](#)



CORAL GABLES, Fla. (August 21, 2014) —When Miami artist Patricia Van Dalen saw the motherboards, microprocessors, and heat sinks in storage at the University's Center for Computational Science (CCS), she didn't see an electronics graveyard.

"Instead I saw a 'liveyard,' with endless possibility," she says.

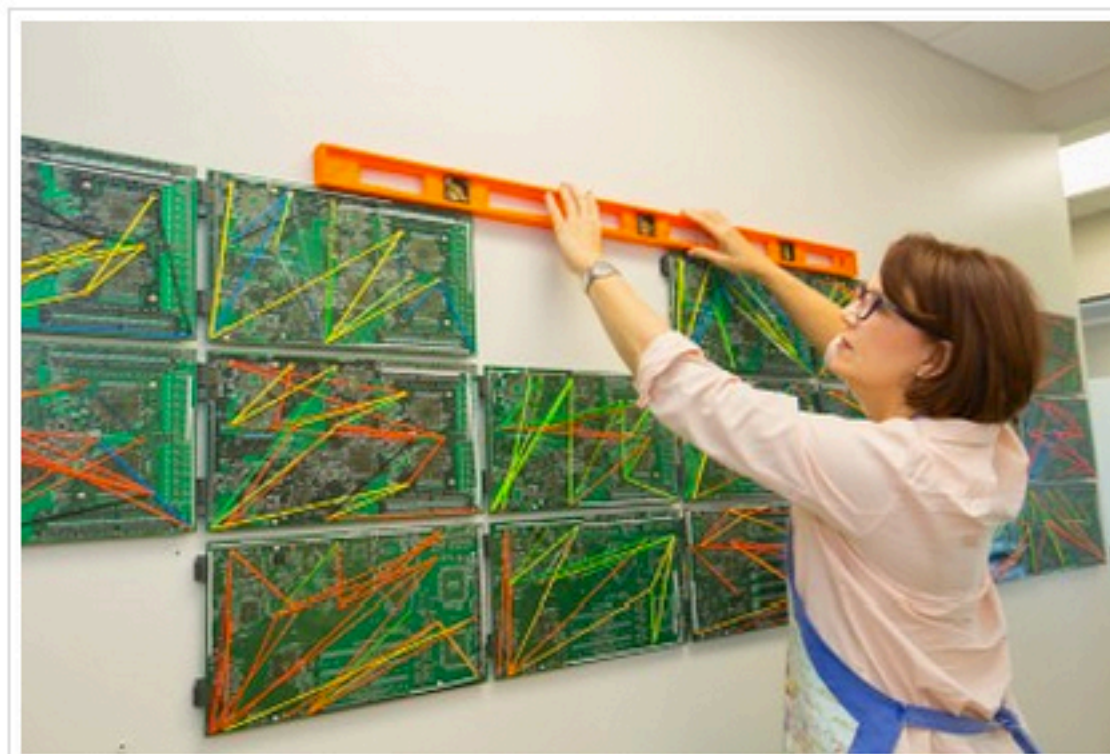
The components are the remnants of CCS's first IBM-built Pegasus supercomputer, disassembled in 2013 to make way for Pegasus 2, which is five times faster than its predecessor. Now the hardware enjoys a second life as part of *Data Hall*, an art installation that adds color and kinetic energy to CCS's main office on the sixth floor of Gables One Tower.



Miami artist Patricia Van Dalen transforms a motherboard into a piece of a mural that now hangs in the main office of the Center for Computational Science.

Van Dalen's recent works include *Natural Intersections*, a vast network of bright pink ribbons at The Kampong, and her homage to power grids and wires in *High Voltage*, an Art Basel satellite exhibit. Sawsan Khuri, CCS director of engagement and assistant research professor in the Department of Computer Science, recommended Van Dalen for a commissioned work at CCS after taking note of the artist's approach to mapping connections in science and nature.

Data Hall begins on one wall and wraps around to the adjacent corridor, each motherboard a canvas for zigs and zags of blue, yellow, red, and green plastic lacings. Van Dalen built this color palette using only those hues found in the wires and data cables of Pegasus. Her goal was to infuse the boards with the lively spirit of data processing, reminding observers that these components once carried trillions of data per second on investigations of the human genome, cancer, engineering, music, climate, and more. *Data Hall* may seem like a mixed media sculpture, but for the artist it's a mural.



Data Hall, which was installed last week, will be on long-term display on the sixth floor of Gables One Tower.

"These are drawings," Van Dalen explains. "It's me painting without a brush—applying color and establishing a sense of balance with the direction of the lines. At one point they all seemed to have too much personality, like a screaming teenager. So I added white vertical and horizontal lines to create boundaries."

Van Dalen will return to campus October 2 to speak on a panel with fellow artists Nela Ochoa and Xavier Cortada about how science inspires their art. The panel is part of *Places & Spaces: Mapping Science*, a scientific visualization exhibition of images that prompt discussion about the meaning of data and the art of infographics, hosted at the University of Miami during the fall 2014 semester.

Posted on 21 August 2014

Tags: [Center for Computational Science](#)

« ['Thomas A. Spain—A Retrospective' Now on Display](#)
[Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist Thomas Friedman Challenges Students to Find Their 'Unique Value Contribution'](#) »

Comments are closed.

Related Stories Tags Popular Subscribe

- [Places & Spaces Will Change How People See the World](#)
- [Graduate Students and Postdocs Invited to Present Their Work at Places and Spaces Lectures](#)
- [Mindful Living](#)
- ['Thomas A. Spain—A Retrospective' Now on Display](#)
- [Network and Complexity Scientists Paint Big Picture of Cultural History](#)

Related Sites

'Canes Calendar

Hurricanes Athletics News

UM News Center

University of Miami Homepage

UM Facebook

University of Miami on Facebook

UM Twitter

University of Miami on Twitter