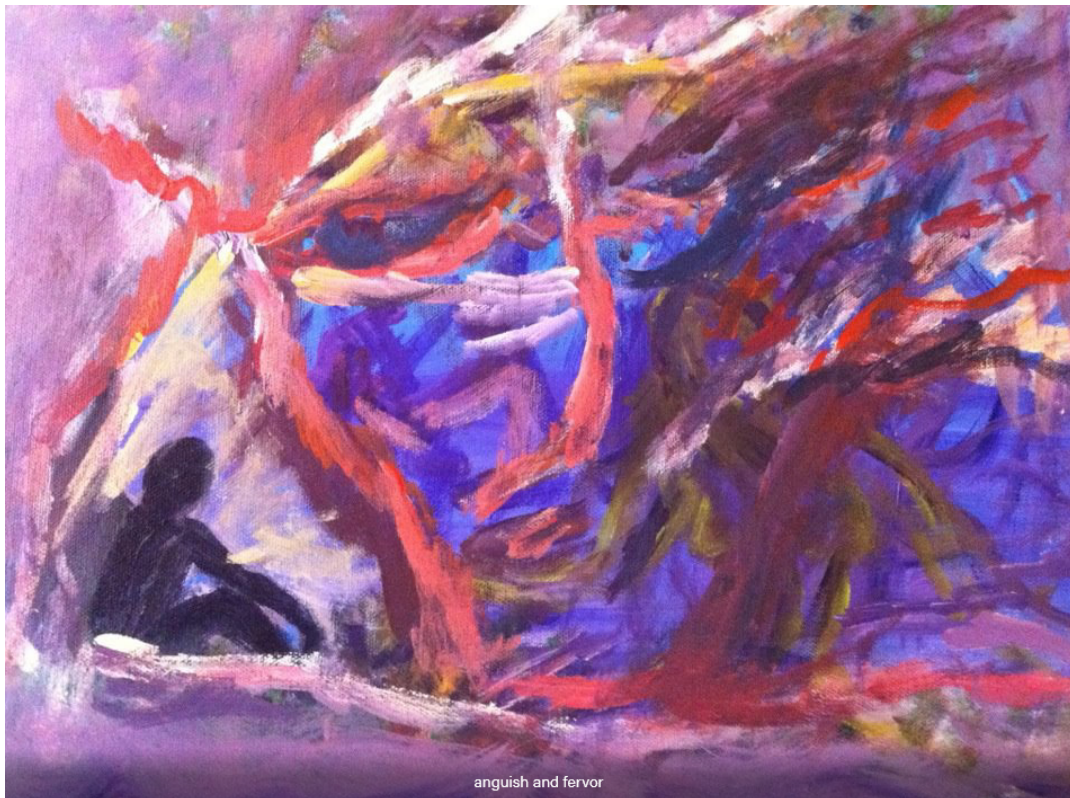




Aryabrata Basu

Diversity Statement

"Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the ability to investigate systematically and truly all that comes under thy observation in life." - Marcus Aurelius



anguish and fervor

Origins

The year was 2011 when I took my roommate's easel and brush and started painting randomly. That evening, I painted myself from an exo-centric perspective, trying to project my anguish at the failure to implement an electromagnetic tracking sensor fusion algorithm for my Ubiquitous wearable VR interface. The result is a rather banal painting depicted above.

I quickly realized that the painting I was drawing evolved very promptly from using one or two primary colors to the full gamut, much like a diverse set of people is necessary to push the boundaries of Science and Academia.

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Exclusivity is a problem

Computer Science (CS), as a field, has a diversity problem. I believe that the area has come a long way to address its exclusivity by increasing exposure, but the progress has been slow. Historically, the field is wrongly associated with the *aloof person in a basement playing videogames* stereotype. This perpetuated outlook is very detrimental to CS and thus its exposure.

Improving inclusivity

I believe that diversity is crucial in establishing an inclusive academic environment welcoming in nature to all ideas irrespective of the gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and ethnicity of the ideator [ideate*or]. I take creating an inclusive, highly flexible, yet engaging classroom environment very seriously. My current teaching responsibilities at Emory University involve introducing 3D modeling, texturing, and interactive visualization using real-time game engines such as Unity to a diverse group of students from all majors. I have achieved a fair bit of success in teaching this course by stripping off any pre-requisites that may hinder students from taking it and making this course available to all majors. Furthermore, to lessen the fear of object-oriented programming to non-CS majors, I deliver all my programming lectures in a bite-size relational pseudo-code that translates the logic (or purpose of the function/script) in a human parsable format, thus transcending a larger group of students.

To strike a balance in diversity, my class should be fundamentally rooted in equality. My general rule of thumb regarding grading is to grade the student's honest intentions and subsequent actions taken towards the final project. I typically like incrementally building my course to trace back each student's progress throughout the course accurately to give transparent and impartial feedback to my students.

Closing Statement

To summarize, I believe that diversity is essential to the growth and evolution of Computer Science and its ability to solve complex problems. I strive hard to ensure that all my students are encouraged to succeed and treat everyone with respect, dignity, and fairness.

A diverse group of people/students are essential in sustaining Academia, much like a wide array of colors are needed to complete any painting.

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