

COURSE NUMBER GS/FILM 6246 FUTURE CINEMA II: Applied Theory**COURSE DIRECTOR: Caitlin Fisher****OFFICE: 303F GCFA****OFFICE HOURS:** Thursdays 1:30-2:30 and by appointment**E-MAIL:** caitlin@yorku.ca**CLASS TIME:****Thursdays 10:00-1:00 p.m.,** LOCATION: 309 GCFA, Augmented Reality Lab**Thursdays open lab/production time: 1:30-4:00** (optional – but the lab space will be available for your use)**WEBSITE:** www.yorku.ca/caitlin/futurecinemas

*please sign up for an account. I may need to sign you up manually owing to the huge volume of SPAM I am battling ;-)

"I'm just interested in exploring the apparatus I'm being threaded through..." Robert Smithson

"We stand now at the intersection of lure and blur. The future beckons, but we're only partway through inventing it. We can see the outlines of a new art form, but its grammar is as tenuous and elusive as the grammar of cinema a century ago." Frank Rose

"It would never have occurred to the pioneers of cinema to dissociate research on film from research by means of film." -Jean Painlevé, Scientific Film

Course Description

This hands-on course gives you an opportunity to learn about new screen technologies, approaches and techniques in a lab environment. You will work in the lab to build prototypes that will function as a testing ground for both new technology and future cinema theory. Our method is iterative: you are encouraged to be both theorists and practical experimenters, to research while doing, understanding that the process of exploring firsthand is an important step toward knowing what kinds of knowledges and ways of understanding these new digital tools and artefacts demand, encourage or make possible.

In 2014, the course will give you the opportunity to engage with Augmented Reality storytelling and GPS cinema on both a practical and theoretical level to understand, create and imagine new kinds of storyworlds. Augmented Reality combines virtual content with the physical environment, allowing users to interact with these combined physical/virtual worlds in situ. GPS Cinema is the name given to our own in-house software that allows film clips to be triggered on a smartphone at specific locations. The course will expose you to some easy-to-use software solutions and encourage you to think about the limits of current technology and to think beyond those limits. These simple, evocative technologies will, I hope, suggest new ways to think about future forms, story, moving image, mobile media, new literacies, new audiences and the physical world. We will read cinema and media theory relating to augmented reality, alternate reality gaming and transmedia storytelling and you will work on both individual and group projects.

Throughout the course we will be reading theoretical texts to help us think with the objects we create in the lab and put these new technologies into historical and theoretical context even as we try, collectively, to imagine moving images and screens of the future.

Students with backgrounds in film, visual design, theatre, music, architecture, video production, and visual storytelling are welcome, as are students with significant programming, HCI or computer graphics backgrounds. Knowledge of Unity or intermediate proficiency with computers will be a distinct advantage, but don't worry if you don't have this kind of technical background. Simple pre-made architectures will be

provided to you. Above all, creative thinking with and through technology is the most important asset that you can bring to this course. I understand this seminar and its associated lab component to be very much an experimental think tank and its success very much depends on your collective enthusiasms and active engagement.

Required Texts

Online Reading kit (available through the course website). The course website has been used for five+ years for both Future Cinema 1 and 2. In addition to housing many of the required readings for this course, the site is searchable and you can have access to a rich variety of posts that students have offered over the years – artist works, reading summaries, a record of conferences and exhibitions in the field and discussions of emerging technologies. Please consider the site to be an important resource for your work. I will assign some texts for the first half of the course now, and once group projects are chosen I will assign additional readings that I believe resonate with your interests and will help to contextualize them.

Siobhan O'Flynn *Transmedia, Multiplatform, & Convergent Resource Kit*:
<http://www.tmcresourcekit.com/>

Jane McGonnigal *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World*
and her website <http://realityisbroken.org/>

Frank Rose *The Art of Immersion: How the Digital Generation Is Remaking Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the Way We Tell Stories* W. W. Norton & Company 2011 ISBN 0393076016

Mark Wolf *Building Imaginary Worlds* London: Routledge 2013

Alternate Reality Gaming Network <http://www.argn.com/>

Recommended

Greg Kipper, Joseph Rampolla *Augmented Reality: An Emerging Technologies Guide to AR*

Tracy Fullerton, *Game Design Workshop*, Second Edition: A Playcentric Approach to Creating Innovative Games 2nd edition, Morgan Kaufman, 2008. (Now available as a PDF)

We also have a number of specialized texts available for loan – augmented reality handbooks, creating vr worlds for games etc.

Specific Requirements

In order to participate fully in this course you must be able to log in regularly and contribute to the course website. Having access to a computer at home will be an advantage (we use macs in the lab). Supervised lab time in room 309 will be available to this class on Thursdays. You must be prepared to meet with your final project group weekly.

Associated/Ancillary Fees

None.

Evaluation and Grading (contract grading will also be available to you. This option will be discussed on the first day).

- Class participation, team contributions and online contributions, including responses to classmate's work and ideas: 20%
- Handheld/Snapdragon story: 10%
- Seminar summaries and posted questions: 10%
- Final Project: Total 60%
 - Group Pitch: 5%
 - Group Design Project: 40%

- Final Presentation, documentation: 15%

Assignment descriptions:

1. Participation Being part of an intellectual community means attending class regularly and punctually, reading thoughtfully in advance, being prepared to share your work with others and involving yourself in class discussions in a way that enables you and other students to learn. You will also be graded on the quality of your responses to other's work and ideas and on your effective functioning in your group.

2. Handheld story (Flartoolkit AR) pop-up book or Snapdragon project - due class #2

This short, one-week exercise serves as an introduction to one form of augmented reality – a marker-based project that can be viewed online (Flartoolkit) or on a mac (Snapdragon). Examples will be shown in class and a simple architecture will be provided for you. Use this assignment to get your hands dirty, to think beyond the traditional cinematic screen and to think about scale – this is a small, handheld project with limited interactivity. Later you will work on a large dispersed narrative that leverages the storytelling power of specific real-world locations.

3. Major Group Project – mobile cinemas and worlds – Toronto 2030? likely GPS Cinema, possibly Vuforia

The project will be done in groups of 4. Teams will be formed by the second class, and an initial project pitch will be done by each team in class 4 or 5. You will be supported in the use of one of two technologies: GPS Cinema / Vuforia. I will assist groups in thinking about what constitutes effective group participation and in communicating with me and to each other how the division of labour is working (or not working).

Group Project pitch – oral presentation and short written piece (1 or 2 pages not including sketches etc. posted online to the class blog) Due class week 3

The Pitch will be short (10-12 mins) with additional time (5-10 minutes) include time for questions and feedback. Your presentation should include concept art and storyboards and maps, to better convey your idea. The focus should be on the core idea of the project, and the experience you would hope for someone engaging with your work to have, as well as practical issues such as who will do what, what resources you will need to use, etc. You will post a more detailed version that you will have time to present.

Presentation on the final day + Documentation -- Blue Sky bible for the project – concept sketches, notes, code, ambitions,

The more fully realized the project is, the better (this year is, in part, an experiment to move beyond the short exercises of past years to allow students to engage more meaningfully and in depth with a single project), but I am also very interested in your careful and creative documentation of ambitious plans that cannot be realized yet – storyboards, ideas for interactivity, components for AR, ARGs you would like to have included, tech wish lists (what if everyone had Google glass?), etc. Did you accomplish all that you set out to do? (What) were there barriers to success? If you were to continue making this piece, how would it grow? Tell me about scale, interactivity, story, time, media theory. Tell me your ideas about future forms and the kind of technology that would need to be invented in order to achieve your vision of a really compelling piece.

4. Thursday Seminar presentations

Each week you will be responsible for posting to the class blog a one page critical engagement with one of one of the major assigned texts and for responding to at least one of your classmate's posted pieces (this needn't be on the same week's readings). You must also craft three compelling questions *and be prepared to ask these in class and take charge of student discussion around them*. Use both your blog entries and your questions in class as an opportunity to ignite conversation. Your posted piece should summarize the major points or themes of the text or project, compare and contrast the viewpoints expressed in the piece with those of other artists and thinkers and critically assess the piece and its relationships to the broader

themes and issues considered in the course and, later, your own project. Pull out ideas that will be useful as you move forward with your projects. You may use point form. You are encouraged to engage in multi-modal scholarship if you feel comfortable doing so – to post slides or a video presentation instead of writing all your ideas down, for example.

Students are evaluated on the quality of ideas and material presented, the ability to actively engage seminar participants and respond meaningfully to the interventions, questions and ideas of others.

Last date to drop course

Please note that the last date to drop a Winter Term course online without receiving a grade is March 7th.

Statement on Academic Honesty: Students are subject to policies regarding academic honesty as set out by the Senate of York University. Breaches of academic honesty include such things as the submission of one piece of work to satisfy two assignments without prior informed consent by both course directors, plagiarism or the appropriation of someone else's work and presenting it as one's own, and obstruction of the academic activities of another. Penalties for academic dishonesty are serious and can jeopardize your academic future.

Procedures For Submitting Work: Students must submit work to the instructor at the beginning of class on the day it is due – either posted to the class blog, submitted on a data key (accompanied by a cover sheet and clear identification) or mounted on the class folder on the main lab computer. Please don't just email your assignment to me! I get a lot of email and I don't want to miss your assignment. Students are required to post all assignments or video documentation of assignments to the course website so that others may benefit from your work. In the event of medical illness or personal emergency, please contact me to make alternate arrangements.

Ethics Reminder

If your final project will involve human participants (*e.g.* conducting interviews with anyone outside of the class; videotaping people for your project etc.) you will need to demonstrate familiarity with the ethics requirements of the university when you submit your proposal. You can find the university policy regarding ethics here: www.yorku.ca/ffares/Ethics.htm

Attendance Policy

Please see participation requirements, above. It will be impossible to do well in this course if you cannot attend regularly.

Seminar Schedule (subject to change)

I will make every effort to follow the syllabus as outlined, but reserve the right to make scheduling changes when further discussion of a given topic is required, to take advantage of unforeseen events and opportunities or in the event of technological challenges (yes, that's a euphemism for equipment failures;-) Readings have been assigned until reading week and will be added throughout the term to reflect the class' interests and needs. Please check the class blog for up-to-date scheduling information and last minute changes.

Class 1, January 10th, Introduction to the course New stories for new screens and challenges to cinema

Class intro -- pace of the course, groupwork, What is contract grading?
+ lab show and tell

Tech: Computer vision based augmented reality Flartookit – small storyworlds or Snapdragon
Make: Handheld story/Snapdragon piece Assignment 1 -- Due next Thursday. Students will be selected at random to show/discuss their work, so please be prepared to discuss. A video how-to and a guide to making this project will be available online.

View:

52 card psycho <http://52cardpsycho.com>

Requiem

OSC pop-up pieces

Toronto Museum Project

<http://www.tmcresourcekit.com/glossary-of-terms/>

Class 2 Thursday January 16th

DUE: assignment #1 due – be prepared to share your project (10%)

Read: *Reality is Broken*

Pay particular attention to the kind of projects outlined. Go online to research ARGs, mobile media pieces that you find interesting or challenging. How do they work? What do they encourage participants to do?

Explore: Works on the Alternate reality Gaming Network <http://www.argn.com/>.

In class:

5D worldbuilding workshop intro

Gene Becker Experience Design for Mobile Augmented Reality

Nine Lives documentation

Do: Form teams

Intro to GPS Cinema and Vuforia (show and tell of lab and student pieces that use these technologies)

Class 3 Thursday January 23th

Guest speaker: Dr. Siobhan O’Flynn

Read:

Mark Wolf *Building Imaginary Worlds* London: Routledge 2013

Explore examples of transmedia projects in Siobhan O’Flynn *Transmedia, Multiplatform, & Convergent Resource Kit*: <http://www.tmcresourcekit.com/>

Due: Project pitch

Class 4, January 30th

Read: Frank Rose *The Art of Immersion: How the Digital Generation Is Remaking Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the Way We Tell Stories*

Class 5 February 6th

Read:

1. Jay Bolter “The aesthetics of flow and the aesthetics of catharsis” (online)

2. Adriene Jenik and Sarah Lewison: Moving in Place

The Question of Distributed Social Cinema” in Third Person Authoring and Exploring Vast Narratives (online)

4. GPS Film Nine Lives: experimenting with new forms of narrative and moving pictures, An

interview with Scott Hessels Karla Schuch Brunet; Marilei Fiorelli

Class 6 February 13th

Read: Michael Longford: "Territory as Interface: Design for Mobile Experiences" Wi, 2.1
Norman M. Klein, "Spaces Between: Traveling through Bleeds, Apertures, and Wormholes inside the Database Novel" in Third Person Authoring and Exploring Vast Narratives (CW)

View: Norman M. Klein; Bleeding through Layers of Los Angeles or Tracing the Decay of Fiction:
Encounters with a Film by Pat O'Neill

Project documentation: Voices of Oakland

Feb 15-22 – READING WEEK

Readings for classes post-reading week are TBD, dependent on your projects and our conversations.

Class 7 February 27th

Class 8 March 6th

Class 9 March 13th

Class 10 March 20th

Class 11 March 27th – work on final projects

Class 12 April 3rd 9:30 – 4 p.m. (?) Please allow for a full final day of presentations, retreat and reflection. We will test projects, have a pot luck and may possibly need to travel off-campus to experience some of the projects in action.

You will present your project, including showing a short video (less than five minutes) posted to the blog documenting what you have accomplished. You should also present what you learned; what did your project do and did not do; what you would do differently. Tell me where you think this work will be in 10 years. Be a futurist – make predictions – if there were no technical barriers, what storyworlds would you like to imagine, inhabit and create?

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