

**GS/FILM 6245
Future Cinema**

CLASS TIME: Wednesday 9:30-12:30 p.m.
LOCATION: GCFA 309
COURSE DIRECTOR: Prof. Caitlin Fisher
OFFICE: 303F GCFA
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 10-12 p.m.
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Classes start	Sept. 10
Last date to announce components of final grades	Sept. 24
Last date to drop course without receiving a grade	Nov. 9
Last date to submit Fall term work	Dec. 7
Fall classes end	Dec. 7

WEBSITE: www.yorku.ca/caitlin/futurecinemas *Please sign up for an account today*

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it” – Alan Kay

“The physical universe is not all that decays. So do abstractions and categories. Human ideas, science, scholarship, and language are constantly collapsing and unfolding. Any field, and the corpus of all fields, is a bundle of relationships subject to all kinds of twists, inversions, involutions and rearrangement”

– Ted Nelson

“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

Course Description

This course examines the shift from traditional cinematic spectacles to works probing the frontiers of interactive, performative, and networked media. Drawing upon a broad range of scholarship, including film theory, communication studies, cultural studies and new media theory, the course will consider how digital technologies are transforming the semiotic fabric of contemporary visual cultures. The great realist film theorist André Bazin predicted that the future of cinema would be a holographic form without boundaries. In this moment Bazin’s vision is beginning to be realized, but co-exists with its opposite: frames within frames that foreground the materiality of the screen. The course will begin with the phenomenon Gene Youngblood described four decades ago as ‘expanded cinema’, i.e., an explosion of the frame outward towards immersive, interactive and interconnected forms of culture. With an emphasis on immersion, connectivity and mobility, we will consider the new models and metaphors that theorists from Marshall McLuhan to Gilles Deleuze have used to address the changed status of the moving image and concomitant transformations in screen technology. Our trajectory will be framed by a series of questions that are both ontological and epistemological in nature: what constitutes the ‘new’ in new media? How are digital aesthetics different from film aesthetics? What new forms of spectatorship and storytelling, political community and commodity production are being enabled? While the course is concerned with recent

developments in cinema technology and digital poetics, these are framed by an understanding of the digital not simply as a technology but also as an experience of space and time tied to capitalism (Bauman 2000).

A range of popular and experimental media will allow us to situate these questions across different contexts of convergent and unstable media cultures. Students will be encouraged to explore these questions through both theoretical reflection and practical experiments using old and new media technologies.

Required Texts

Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel, *Future Cinemas: The Cinematic Imaginary After Film*, MIT (out of print, but if you can find one, grab it – but note that the articles we are reading have been scanned and uploaded)

Mobile Nation Ladley and Beezly eds. Riverside Press

Public 40: Screens: <http://public.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/public/issue/view/2058/showToc>

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

Marshall McLuhan *Understanding Media* MIT 1994 (1964) (any edition is fine. widely available second-hand and in library)

Lev Manovich, *Soft Cinema: Navigating the Database* and associated website <<http://www.softcinema.net/>>

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

Siobhan O'Flynn *Transmedia, Multiplatform, & Convergent Resource Kit*:

<http://www.tmcresourcekit.com/>

Online Reading kit (available through the course website). The course website has been used for ten 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. Nb – some assigned readings may not have been uploaded to the site – but you can find most of these assigned texts via a google search. If you find a good source for a reading, please post and tag.

Evaluation

Participation: Ongoing evaluation, 20%

Being part of an intellectual community means attending class regularly and punctually, reading thoughtfully in advance and involving yourself in class discussions in a way that enables you and other students to learn.

Assignment 1: Short screens paper, 10%

Produce a quick conceptual model of a screen for future cinema– this should take you no more than a couple of days to prepare. You can produce a page of writing, a sketch, or a model. (How) does the screen itself affect audience? Would it support different kinds of narratives/experiments? (in other words, what would this new screen enable?) Be prepared to discuss your work. **Due week 2, September 23rd**

Assignment 2: Research Proposal, 10%.

Students are required to submit a research proposal with bibliography. This will be presented orally in class on **Week 5, October 14th**. Final written proposal due **Week 8 November 4th**.

Assignment 3: Oral presentation of one of the assigned readings and written summary **due at least two days before oral presentation**, posted to class blog 15%.

These will be assigned the second week of classes. You will be required to summarize the major points or themes of the text, compare and contrast the viewpoints expressed in the piece with those of other authors and critically assess the article and its relationships to the broader themes, issues and practices considered in the course. You are asked to prepare three to four questions from the reading to facilitate class discussion and extend the ideas expressed in the article with at least one moving-image example. Students are evaluated on the quality of ideas and material presented and the ability to generate stimulating conversation.

Each student must summarize the above in written form and distribute it to the class in advance of the discussion, via the website. The contents of the written summary should not be more than four double-spaced pages. You are encouraged to upload images and video, as appropriate. The oral presentation of your text should not exceed 15-20 minutes in length, followed by 20 minutes of discussion.

Assignment 4: show and tell 5% (pass/fail)

As the name suggests – at the beginning of each class at least one of you is invited to share a work that resonates with the course – a film or game that you admire, an installation you saw, technology in the news that we should all see - discussing your own future cinema-related work is definitely encouraged! Also, in addition to being responsible for making a larger effort at least once, and committing to a day to do so, please feel free to share this kind information via the class blog at any time!

Assignment 5: Paper or Project 40%.

Students undertake a research essay or a research-creation project directly pertaining to the theoretical and creative work discussed in this class. An artist statement and bibliography must accompany creative work. Please note that while many kinds of creative projects might be acceptable, equipment and lab time is not provided part of this studies course. Final projects and paper topics must be approved by the professor. **Due Week 12, December 2nd - last day of class.** Students should also be prepared to present their final papers or projects briefly to the class.

Ethics Reminder

If your final project will involve human participants (*e.g.* conducting interviews with anyone outside of the class; videotaping people for a hypermedia project), 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 do not 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 or to take advantage of unforeseen events and opportunities. Web resources will be added throughout the term for enrichment and to reflect students' interests. Please check the class blog for up-to-date scheduling information and last minute changes.

Week 1 September 16th, Introduction to the course/Labyrinth

Required:

Peter Weibel "Preface" (Future Cinema - FC)

Timothy Druckery "Fugitive Realities" (FC)

To screen:

The Evolution of Cinema and the Birth of a New Art Form: Tom Perlmutter (FoST 2013)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlaZWrmz8A>

Film Technologies Changing Cinema | Future 5

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nL0gfk1ANbM>

<http://cinemaexpo67.ca/>

<http://vimeo.com/immersiveltd>

Ada/Ava Main Stage Performance - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/manual-cinema/>

Hollywood as futurist: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ixhH48PhhI>

NPR: How are Screens Changing us?

<http://www.npr.org/2015/09/11/439199892/what-happens-when-we-step-inside-the-screen>

PUBLIC EVENT you should attend: FIVARS September 19-20th

<http://vrfocus.com/archives/21389/manslaughter-the-night-cafe-more-heading-to-fivars-canadian-vr-film-fest/>

FIVARS - the inaugural **Festival of International Virtual and Augmented Reality Stories** is the first Canadian festival of its kind. Here in Toronto for two 8-hour days.

FIVARS will showcase a new wave of filmmakers and content producers who push the boundaries of virtual reality (VR) narrative forms. The two-day festival runs from September 19-20, 2015 at UG3 Live (77 Peter Street) from 11am-7pm. Advanced tickets \$10, door price \$15. This is a 19+ event. [Please get your tickets here.](#) **And enter the discount code: "VANGARD" for 20% off!**

MansLaughter, the world's "first feature length VR film," will have its world premiere at the festival. The film, viewed in 15 minute segments, details four characters' experiences to total a 60 minute run time.

The festival features an interactive series of 15 international short VR films with capacity for up to six viewers at a time. FIVARS brings the best in VR films from around the world including New Zealand, Russia, US, UK, Germany, Norway and Canada.

To see the complete lineup and ticketing information visit the official site at <http://FIVARS.net>

Week 2, September 23rd, Screens

Due: Short reflection paper

Required:

Josef Svoboda "Polyvision" (FC)

Peter Weibel "Expanded Cinema" (FC)

Randall Packer "Pepsi Pavillion" (FC)

Andre Bazin "Myth of Total Cinema"

Sobchack Meta-Morphing "At the Still Point of the Turning World" and Meta Stasis".

Chris Salter, The Projected Image: Video, Film and the Performative screen, *Entangled: Technology and the transformation of Performance*

Screens: Public 40 - <http://public.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/public/issue/view/2058/showToc> (no need to read everything – explore 3 or 4 or the very short pieces)

<http://www.npr.org/player/v2/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=3&islist=true&id=57&d=09-11-2015>

Week 3, September 30th Virtual Reality

Oliver Grau, “Intermedia Stages of Virtual Reality in the Twentieth Century”

Anne-Marie Duguet “Jeffrey Shaw: from expanded cinema to virtual reality”

Eduardo Kac “Beyond the Spatial Paradigm: Time and Cinematic form in Holographic Art”

Agnes Hegdus “Configuring the Cave” (FC)

PHIL CHEN: VIRTUAL AGENCY

Unlocking VR’s Potential

<http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/phil-chen-virtual-agency/>

1979 Revolution Game (2015)

By Ink Stories (Navid Khonsari and Vassiliki Khonsari) Produced by Jeff Birns, Jason Schreiber, Andres Perez-Duarte, and Adam Neuhas. Experience the Iranian political upheaval of the late 1970s as young photojournalist Reza, making life-or-death decisions in a game of personal betrayal and social disorder.

Clouds Over Sidra (2015)

By Gabo Arora and Chris Milk Directed and Produced by Gabo Arora and Barry Pousman. Produced by VRSE.works. Presented in partnership with the United Nations. Commissioned by the United Nations, Clouds Over Sidra was created at the Za’atari refugee camp in Jordan. Twelve-year-old Sidra leads the user around the camp, home to 84,000 Syrian refugees, as she goes about her day.

<http://vrse.com/watch/index.html?id=121>

Nonny de el Pena Journalism in the Age of Virtual Reality - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/journalism-in-the-age-of-virtual-reality/>

Week 4, October 7th, Augmented Reality

Required:

Jason Farman, Mapping and Representations of Space Mobile interface theory: Embodied Space and Locative media

Blair McIntyre, Jay Bolter, Maribeth Gandy “Presence and the Aura of Meaningful Places” (online);

DART – Georgia tech (online)

<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/projects/ael/projects/dart.html>

Judith Barry “Imagination/Dead Imagine” (FC)

GM Hoyagimyan “Notes on Immersion” (FC)

Michael Heim, “The Cyberspace Dialectic” in Lunenfeld, *Digital Dialectic (online)*

Gaston Bachelard *The Poetics of Space*

Lev Manovich “poetics of augmented space”

Screen in class:

Beau Lotto: Understanding Perception - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/beau-lotto-understanding-perception/>

Gaia Dempsey: Knowledge Transfer - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/gaia-dempsey-knowledge-transfer/>

Untitled on Google Cube (2014) »

By Google's Creative Lab, Sydney and Semi-Permanent Directed by Steve Ayson and Damien Shatford. Produced by the Sweet Shop. Google Cube is an experimental interface for interactive films. In Untitled, viewers navigate among six plots mapped to the six sides of the Cube. The stories, which range from tales of rebirth to tragedy, unfold simultaneously; turn the Cube to discover how they connect.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJ7XDrpkliw>

Meta: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b717JuQXttw>

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

Circle

OSC pop-up pieces

Toronto Museum Project

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

Recommended:

Walter Benjamin "Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (online)

Mobile Bristol (online)

Immersive environments lab <http://gears.aset.psu.edu/viz/projects/vr/iel/>

immersive media telemersion system (spherical video) www.immersivemedia.com

Week 5, October 14th, Hypermedia/narrative/digital storytelling

Due: Presentation of possible projects and essay topics (this is an opportunity for you to receive feedback from the entire class in order to assist you in framing and writing your proposals).

Required:

Vanevar Bush "As We may Think" (online)

Grahame Weinbren "Another dip into the ocean streams of story" (FC)

N. Kathryn Hayles "Timely Art: Hybridity in new Cinema and Electronic Poetry" (online)

Michel Chaouli "How Interactive Can Fiction Be?" (online)

Adalaide Morris "New media Poetics: As We May Think/How to Write" in *New media Poetics: Contexts, Technotexts and Theories*

Screen in class: Interactive Video 101 - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/interactive-video-101/>

Recommended:

"Interactive Cinema group, MIT Media Lab" (FC)

Lumiere festival of interactive film and storytelling www.hyperbole.com/lumiere/entries.html

Welcome to Pine Point (2011/2015)

By the Goggles (Michael Simons and Paul Shoebridge) and the NFB Digital Studio Vancouver. Produced by The National Film Board of Canada. Pine Point was a mining town in Northwest Canada that was abandoned

when its mine closed. This interactive web documentary brings Pine Point back to life using interviews, photographs, text, and home videos to construct a digital scrapbook of the town.

<http://pinepoint.nfb.ca/#/pinepoint>

Week 6 October 21st, Database Cinema

Required:

Martha Kinder “Designing a Database Cinema” (FC)

Lev Manovich “Soft Cinema (FC)

Lev Manovich “database/narrative” (online)

Chris Marker “Immemory” (FC)

Thomas Elsaesser, “The New Film History as Media Archeology.”

www.korsakow.com

To be screened in class:

Soft cinema CD-ROM

Immemory CD-ROM

Korsakow cinema examples

Possibilia (2014)

By DANIELS (Daniel Kwan & Daniel Scheinert) Presented by Xbox Entertainment Studios. Produced by PRETTYBIRD in collaboration with Interlude In *Possibilia*, a man and a woman are having a fight directed by you. This interactive short film, starring Alex Karpovsky (*Girls*) and Zoe Jarman (*The Mindy Project*), lets you determine the tone and actions of a couple breaking up.

<http://www.sundance.org/projects/possibilia>

Bear 71

<http://bear71.nfb.ca/#/bear71>

Bear 71 (2012)

By Leanne Allison, Jeremy Mendes, and the NFB Digital Studio Produced by the National Film Board of Canada. A 20-minute interactive film, *Bear 71* tells the story of a female grizzly bear in Banff National Park, dubbed Bear 71 by the park rangers who radio-collar and track her.

Week 7 October 28th Game Narratives and Architectures

Required:

Espen Aarseth “Ergodic texts” (online)

Noah Wardrip-Fruin First Person : New Media as Story, Performance, and Game (excerpt)

Burnett, “Computer Games” (online)

“Massively Multiplayer Online Games” (online)

To screen in class: Tracy Fullerton, Game Designer, Interactive Media Division, USC School of Cinematic Arts <http://worldbuilding.institute/videos/building-worlds-pt-3-tracy-fullerton>

Descent to the underworld – the game film

Play As Process Feb 15, 2011 // **Play As Process** // 5D at the 2011 Berlinale Talent Campus

“Game Design as Narrative Architecture” (Jenkins)

Recommended: <http://www.machinima.com/>

Blur + sharpen; time machines www.iml.Annenberg.edu/blursharpen

http://www.gamespot.com/news/2005/03/10/news_6120167.html -- emily dickinson game

Noah Wardrip-Fruin *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*, MIT 2004

Espen Aarseth *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature* John Hopkins University Press, 1997

Week 8 November 4th Games2

Due: Paper/ project proposals.

Jane McGonnigal *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World*

Tracy Fullerton *Game Design Workshop: Designing, Prototyping, & Playtesting Games* (Gama Network Series)

Creating for the Multi-Platform context *Mobile Nation*

Screen: *Way to Go* (2015) By Vincent Morisset with Philippe Lambert, Édouard Lanctôt-Benoit, and Caroline Robert. Produced by Hugues Sweeney and Boris Razon in association with the National Film Board of Canada. *Way to Go* is a playable film that rewards the curious on a walk through a mysterious, colorful, 3-D forest.

<http://a-way-to-go.com/>

Amy Fredeen <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/world-games/> the first indigenous-owned video game company.

Chris Charla: Level Up - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/level-up/>

<http://www.gonehomegame.com/>

Connected Immersion - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/connected-immersion/>

Explore: Alternate Reality Games: Majestic, Yellow Arrow, I Love Bees

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

“Storytelling in New Media: The case of alternate reality gaming, 2001-2009” (Jeffrey Kim, et. al.)

Portal: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TluRVBhmf8w>

Week 9, November 11th Mobility/Connectivity/Distributed networks

Required:

Kathy Rae Huffman “Video, networks and Architecture; some physical realities of electronic space”;

Deleuze “Conclusions” (Cinema II—The Time Image) (online)

Sabine Himmelsbach “The Interactive Potential of Distributed Networks” (FC)

Blast Theory Can you see me now? Barcelona (online);

Steven Shaviro “Connected” (online).

Jean Baudrillard, *The Ecstasy of Communication*.

Being there: uncanny medium, methodological multiplicity and proliferative embodied creativity in The Haunting *Mobile Nation*

The Haunting: voices from beyond in mobile experience design *Mobile Nation*

Connected Immersion - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/connected-immersion/>

Screen: SMART STORIES

Storytelling and Big Data

Artist Matt Adams's work playfully explores the storytelling potential of new technologies. His present fascination is big data. How will stories be influenced by our ability to learn personal details about our audiences? What are the limits of personalization?

<http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/smart-stories/>

Recommended:

YouTube

Julian Bleeker WI-FI Bedouin

www.blasttheory.co.uk

Andrea Zapp (ed.) *Networked narrative Environments as Imaginary Spaces of being*

LiveCinema "expressive interface for cinema editing as live performance" (online)

Office Voodoo – interactive film installation for two people (online)

Birdman project – interactive dance 5 sites from US, 5 from Brazil (online)

Week 10, November 18th, Digital Cinema/animation

Required:

Virtuosity, Special-Effects Spectacles and Architectures of the Senses, *Neo-Baroque Aesthetics and Contemporary Entertainment*

Manovich – what is digital cinema? (online)

Vivian Sobchack "Nostalgia for Digital Object"

Ron Burnett, "Reanimating the World";

Sean Cubitt, "Vectors of Effect"

Screening:

Glen Keane: Step Into the Page - <http://futureofstorytelling.org/video/glen-keane-step-into-the-page/>

George Lucas on media convergence, Siggraph 2005

Recommended:

Lev Manovich: Little movies (online)

Nora Barry "telling Stories as Screens: A History of Web Cinema"

Week 11, November 25th, Translocality/Globalization/Tactical Media

Required:

Galloway "Tactical Media" in *Protocol*;

Gloria Sutton "Stan Vanderbecks Movie Dome" (FC);

History and Histrionics: Vision Machine's digital poetics

Gene Youngblood "A Manifesto for the Internet".

Norman Klein "The Future of the Cinematic City" (FC)

Screen in class:

Conversation on *Global Networks/Urban Spaces* Norman Klein

Urban Networks/Global Networks

Saskia Sassen

Week 12, December 2nd: Final class

Party and mini conference

Final projects due

Classes end December 7th, 2015