

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION**57043 New Media Aesthetics**

Course Name:	Graduate Program in Media Arts and Production
Level:	400
Number of Credit points:	8
Prerequisites:	None
Grading:	Graded

HANDBOOK DESCRIPTION

In this subject students will explore New Media Aesthetics. The main focus will be multimedia and the Net, but other hybrid works such as sound/performance/multimedia installation will also be considered. Interface design, use of sound, and the ways that new forms are being and can be developed will be addressed critically and theoretically. Students will examine their own work (including in production) and other works to tease out why certain forms are being re-produced and what creative developments in new media aesthetics are possible.

CONTRIBUTION TO GRADUATE PROFILE

Students completing this subject:

- Have some knowledge of aesthetics and new media industry issues, within the landscape of media production general.
- Have had the opportunity to develop some conceptual skills and critical thinking in relation to various areas of media production.
- Are able to develop and critically revise their own work.

OBJECTIVES

- a) To enable students to develop skills in critically engaging with and analysing new media works.
- b) To introduce students to contemporary concerns in new media through presentation of new media works and readings.
- c) To introduce students to new media industry issues, within the landscape of media production in general.
- d) To address theoretical issues through in-depth discussion of case studies.
- e) To encourage students to engage with issues of aesthetics in their own production work.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Weekly seminars and flexible learning

An extensive audition/viewing program of new media works

Reading and analysis of texts

Student presentation of seminar papers and participation in workshops

Student online activities and projects

Major project, such as an essay or net.art project

CONTENT:

Introduction to questions of new media and aesthetics

Digital aesthetics: affects and the senses

Precursors to new media art

Interactive cinema

Hypertext

Questioning Technology and Art

Net art + CD Rom art + electronic art

Locative media

Emerging forms

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Item 1: Leading tutorial discussion

Objectives: a, b, c, d, e

Value: 30%

Due: Continuous first 7 teaching weeks. Lead the tutorial discussion in one of weeks 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, working with other students for that week

Tasks:

- Consult with other student presenting in your week to avoid overlap and use the discussion time productively.
- Lead the tutorial discussion by:
 - 1) preparing your summary (about 300 words altogether maximum) of 2 or 3 significant arguments from one of the **Readings** (this is not to be a summary of the entire reading, but of some of the arguments);
 - 2) fostering a dialogue around the readings / issues raised;
 - 3) preparing 3 questions for class discussion of that reading.These are to be **handed in at the end of the class**.
- Prepare 3 questions or discussions issues around one of the case studies listed or another that you find and present. These are to be **handed in at the end of the class and posted to UTS online**.

Assessment criteria:

- Use of the concepts discussed in the lectures and readings;
- Thoughtfulness, depth of reading, and quality of argument
- Ability to work effectively with other students.

Assessment Item 2 Reflection on aesthetic issues in production work

Objectives: a, b, c, f

Value: 30%

Due: Continuous, weeks 9, 10, 11, - class presentation. Submission of written reflection at end of class presentation to lecturer and to UTS online.

Students engage with aesthetic issues in new media production work, through reflecting on their own new media practice, or on new media art / culture or industry (either in Australia or internationally). Students make a 10-15 minute presentation to the class, where they analyse and reflect on: either their own practice and the issues and concepts motivating them; or work in an exhibition, installation, online or wireless environment and the issues and concepts the work gives rise to. The report must refer to at least 2 of the readings or references. Approximately 300- 500 words. Students can utilise additional a/v materials eg files, images, animations etc where appropriate.

Assessment criteria:

- Use of the concepts discussed in the lectures and readings
- Engagement with the work both on its own terms and in relation to the student's concerns

Assessment Item 3 Major project

Objectives: a, b, d, e

Value: 40%

Due: Last week of class. Approval of form (essay or net work) and topic from lecturer by last week before the break

Task: Develop a major project, such as to produce a new media work or essay which takes into account theoretical concepts from the readings and discussions. If an essay is the form, it must be around 2,500 words. If an essay, the topic will be framed by the student (with approval from lecturer by the end of week 8) around issues of digital aesthetics raised during the semester. This may involve analysis of their own practice or in depth research /analysis of other work or groups of work.

If the work is new media art (with approval from lecturer by end week 8), it must be accompanied by, or contain an analytical discussion of approximately 750 words in which they refer directly to readings from course outline and their own research to discuss the theoretical and empirical basis of the project. This discussion is not an essay but rather an exegesis – an elaboration and summary of the research/conceptual process that went into production.

N.B.: UTS does not provide any resources or production support for production work for this subject.

Assessment criteria:

Demonstrated ability to:

- Use and engage with the concepts discussed in the seminars and readings
- Engage with the new media art work both on its own terms and in relation to the student's own concerns
- Undertake sustained research
- Successfully complete an extensive conceptualised, researched and argued project, either as a Net work or essay

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Attend 9 of classes. Satisfactory submission of all assignments

TEXT AND REFERENCES

Sean Cubitt, *Digital Aesthetics*, London: Sage, 1998.

Ctheory, <http://www.ctheory.com/articles/>

Ken Goldberg (ed.), *The robot in the garden : telerobotics and telepistemology in the age of the Internet*, Cambridge, MA : MIT Press, 2000.

Randall Packer and Ken Jordan, (eds), *Multimedia: From Wagner to Virtual Reality*, NY: Norton, 2001,
Susan Buck-Morss, "Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered", *New Formations*, no. 20 (Summer, 1993).

Peter Lunenfeld (Editor) *The Digital Dialectic : New Essays on New Media* MIT Press, Leonardo Book 2000

Eve Sedgwick and Adam Frank, *Shame and her Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995.

John Johnston, "Machinic Vision", *Critical Inquiry* 26 (Autumn, 1999)

Lev Manovich, "The Paradoxes of Digital Photography",

http://www.apparitions.ucsd.edu/~manovich/text/digital_photo.html

Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 2001

Timothy Druckrey (ed.) *Electronic culture : technology and visual representation*, New York: Aperture, 1996.

Timothy Druckrey (ed) *Ars Electronica: facing the future: a survey of two decades*, Linz: Ars Electronica, 1999.

Paul Virilio, *The Information Bomb* London: Verson 2000

Manuel de Landa, *A Thousand Years of Non-Linear History* Zone Books, 2000.

Friedrich Kittler, "There is no software", *literature, media: information systems*, London: Routledge, 1997

Verena Andermatt Conley (ed), *Rethinking technologies*, Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

Margaret Morse, *Virtualities*, 1998.

Peter Weibel and Timothy Druckrey (eds.), *Net-condition : art and global media*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001,