

The Art, Theory & Techniques of Free Software

Jaromil's Journal of Musings

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This course will introduce students to the aesthetics of the free software creative universe, to the instruments adopted and in course of development. We will explore source code with a linguistic approach, looking for possibilities to define and adopt new languages for practical and conceptual creativity and description, deconstructing the established syntactic and semantic rules imposed by applications on the consumer market.

The practical part of the course will focus on using and customising language based tools for the creation and publication of audio, video and text, among them: FreeJ¹, Fluxus², Context Free Art³, Emacs⁴, Muse-el⁵, Latex⁶, TBT⁷.

For the theoretical part, participants are requested to read and comment on the following texts:

- "Constructing Media Spaces", Josephine Bosma, Medien Kunst Netz (2006)⁸
- "Words Made Flesh", Florian Cramer, Piet Zwart Institute (2005)⁹
- "I Love you", digitalcraft (2004)¹⁰
- "Software, Art, Aesthetics", Andreas Broeckmann, Runtime Art (2004)¹¹
- "Read_me, run_me, execute_me", Inke Arns, Medien Kunst Netz (2004)¹²
- "Not Just Art", Saul Albert, twentiethcentury (2003)¹³
- "Digital Code and Literary Text", Florian Cramer, Freie Univ. Berlin (2003)¹⁴
- "Smash the Surface / Break Open the Box / Disrupt the Code", Eric Kluitenberg, ProContra / CFront (2000)¹⁵
- "net.art on nettime", Robert Adrian X, Ljudmila Medialab (1996)¹⁶
- "Art, Power, and Communication", Alexei Shulgin (1996)¹⁷

¹<http://freej.dyne.org>

²<http://www.pawfal.org/Software/fluxus/>

³<http://contextfreeart.org/>

⁴<http://www.gnu.org/software/emacs/emacs.html>

⁵<http://mwolson.org/projects/EmacsMuse.html>

⁶<http://www.guit.sssup.it/>

⁷<http://tbt.dyne.org>

⁸http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/public_sphere_s/media_spaces/

⁹<http://pzwart.wdka.hro.nl/mdr/research/fcramer/wordsmadeflesh/wordsmadefleshpdf>

¹⁰<http://www.digitalcraft.org/iloveyou/catalogue.htm>

¹¹<http://runtimeart.mi2.hr/TextAndreasBroeckmann>

¹²http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/generative-tools/read_me/print/

¹³http://twentiethcentury.com/saul/not_just_art.htm

¹⁴http://cramer.plaintext.cc/essays/digital_code_and_literary_text/digital_code_and_literary_text.pdf

¹⁵<http://amsterdam.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-0006/msg00132.html>

¹⁶<http://www.ljudmila.org/nettime/zkp4/37.htm>

¹⁷<http://sunsite.cs.msu.su/wwwart/apc.htm>

0.1 Target audience

This course is intended for MA students coming from either a technical and humanistic studies backgrounds (even better if with mixed classes) willing to engage the novelty of free software approaches from both a theoretical and practical perspective. It requires basic knowledge of GNU/Linux/BSD systems and the interest to approach activities of design and invention taking into account both cultural and technical implications.

Recommended study background:

- Architecture
- Media studies
- Art and Design

0.2 Topics explored

- Cooperative (non competitive) development
- Interdisciplinary thoughts, symmetrical anthropology
- Characteristics of existing programming languages
- Object oriented development patterns
- Licensing and ownership in digital art
- Basics of game design and free software tools
- Dramaturgy in new media
- Design for Commoning, Bricolabs, DIY culture

0.3 Host schools

School	Course	Period	Lenght
WDKA ¹⁸	MDMA	Oct-Dec 2008, 2010	72 h
NABA[2]			
D3D		May 2008, 2009	12 h

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¹⁸Willem de Konig Academy, Rotterdam [2] Nuova Accademia delle Belle Arti, Milano