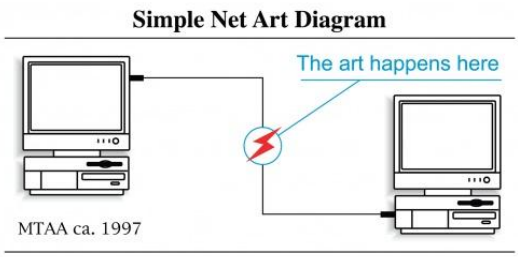
NΞT ΛRT && CULTURΞS

FVNM 3235-001 (1579)



The Web represents a grand emotional, sensory, and intellectual adventure for anyone willing to explore it actively. [...] For artists, ignoring the imperative to grasp the cultural implications of the Internet means risking irrelevance. [...] As human discourse adapts to its new home, everything we do and think as human beings will be and is being shaped by new values. [...] If it's ever fair to say that anything has "changed everything," it's fair to say so about the Internet. — Virginia Heffernan

Course Description

We generally accept that computers and the Internet evolved outside of fine art contexts, in fields like science and mathematics. That said, the history of these technologies is a history of creative individuals collaboratively shaping one of the most important narratives of our time, "the Internet is the great masterpiece of human civilization" (Heffernan). In this studio course, we'll learn what the Internet is, how it works, how it got here and how to engage with it as an artistic medium. This means we'll be learning how to craft it from code, specifically HTML (hypertext markup language) and CSS (cascading style sheets), but also studying its aesthetics, conventions and practices. We'll be drawing inspiration from various Internet art movements, from the net.art scene of the 1990s, to the digital folk art of GeoCities at the turn of the century, to the Web design and CSS art scenes of today. The goal of this course will be to cultivate our own piece of Internet art, informed by the research, discussions, exercises and experiments we'll make along the way.

```
where:                  ONLINE ;
when:                   Thursdays;
professor:              Nick Briz ;
email:                  nbriz@saic.edu ;
office hours:           by-appointment-only ;
class website:          http://netart.rocks ;
```

Learning Goals

- Foundational understanding of what the Internet is and how it works (specifically the Web)
- General background on various canonical and niche cultural figures, movements and ideas which have informed the development of Internet art
- Working knowledge of HTML and CSS, specifically how to hand craft works of Internet art as well as how to publish them on the Web

The Schedule

- `09.02.2021:` Class Calibrations
- `09.09.2021:` WTF is the Internet?
- `09.16.2021:` Internet Travelogue
- `09.23.2021:` What is Code?
- `09.30.2021:` net.art: when artists discovered HTML
- `10.07.2021:` CSS art: Irrational Virtuosos
- `10.14.2021:` CSS art: continued
- `10.21.2021:` midterm planning 1-on-1 meetings
- `10.28.2021:` midterm planning 1-on-1 meetings
- `11.04.2021:` midterm experiment critiques
- `11.11.2021:` Digital Folklore: home pages vs profiles
- `11.18.2021:` Web Design: tropes, trends, techniques
- `11.25.2021:` final project planning 1-on-1 meeting
- `12.02.2021:` final project planning 1-on-1 meeting
- `12.09.2021:` *crit week, no class*
- `12.16.2021:` final project critiques

Class Structure

It goes without saying this is going to be an unconventional semester. Rather than seeing our new remote learning context as a compromised version of the original course, we're going to embrace and experiment with our online environment. Given the experimental nature of the course this semester, keep in mind that the following format and proposed schedule are very much subject to change. If and when such changes occur, I will communicate this to the class via email as well as update the class website. **You should always refer to the class website for the most up to date schedule, tutorials and assignments.** If at any point you feel disoriented, frustrated or confused send me an email. I'm always available (asynchronously) via email to help address any issues or concerns pertaining to the class. But it's up to you to let me know what you need.

Asynchronous Tutorials and Experiments

We'll be learning to code (HTML and CSS) through online tutorials. My goal is for these to be **interactive Web based tutorials**. These tutorials will take place on https://netnet.studio an online code editor and hypermedia tutorial system I produced with my collaborators at netizen.org. Most of these tutorials will be followed by coding assignments. These assignments aren't meant to be finished art pieces, but rather **creative coding experiments,** digital sketches. These interactive tutorials are very difficult and time consuming to make and so it may not be possible for me to make every tutorial interactive, I may occasionally fallback on more conventional video or text based tutorials.

Synchronous Class Discussions and Individual Meetings

Our allotted synchronous class time this semester is scheduled for Thursdays (Sept 2 - Dec 16) from 9am to 4pm Central (Chicago) Time on Zoom (visit class canvas for link). This time will be used primarily for class discussions, synchronous studio time and one-on-one meetings. I will also occasionally give a lecture/workshop over Zoom, but the vast majority of lectures/workshops will be done asynchronously (for homework) on https://netnet.studio.

Class Materials

In order to participate in this course you will need to have a decent computer (desktop or laptop with 8-16GB of ram or more) and a modern Web browser like Firefox, Brave, Chrome or others (**do not use** Internet Explorer or Safari, those are subpar browsers).

You will not need to purchase any additional materials for this class. We will be using an online code editor and hypermedia tutorial environment I built called netnet.studio to produce our work this semester (although you will have the option to use your own code editors if you prefer). All videos and readings will be provided on the class website. You will, however, need to create a free GitHub profile, we will be discussing in class how to connect your GitHub profile to netnet.

Evaluation

Receiving credit for this course will be determined according to the following:

- As is common at SAIC, our primary mode of evaluation will be **the class critique of your midterm and final projects**. These critiques will take place virtually on our Zoom video chat on Nov 4th (midterm) and Dec 16th (final). It is essential you participate in these critiques. We will discuss in more detail towards the niddle of the semester the specific expectations and format these critiques will take. Much like the code sketches that will precede it, **the midterm** will be an experimental CSS art sketch. **The final project**, however, will be a completed piece of Internet Art (hand crafted HTML/CSS accessible on the Internet through a web browser). You will have the option to make a "digital garden" (a concept we will discuss in class) or expand on a prior creative coding sketch from earlier in the semester (including the midterm experiment).

- While the midterm and final are the two most important projects, you will also be expected to complete **homework assignments** throughout the semester and submit them through the class website. These will mostly (though not always) consist of creative coding sketches.

- **Participation in class discussions** is also important, this will be the primary space for receiving feedback from your peers on your weekly creative coding sketches and other assignments.

Attendance

SAIC policy states that students are expected to attend all classes regularly and on time. If a student arrives to class more than 15 minutes after or leaves more than 15 minutes early, it will be considered a half absence.

Students should miss class only with reasonable cause. **If a student needs to miss class with reasonable cause, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor before the date of the class being missed to receive instruction for how to make up for the missed class**. A reasonable cause to miss a class might include:

- Illness or hospitalization (the student should contact Health Services, who will relay information to the faculty in whose class the student is enrolled)
- Family illness or death
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Professional opportunities

If the student misses a class for other than a reasonable cause (communicated prior to the absence) the student will fail the class. **If a student misses MORE than three (excused) classes, the student will fail the class.**

- Add/Drop deadline: Sept 14
- Deadline for withdrawal from class: Nov 02

Extended Absence and Notification Assistance

If a student believes they will miss multiple sessions of in-person activity in a class due to illness, and/or feel too ill to participate in out-of-class activity/requirements, the student should contact Health Services (312.499.4288) to discuss their situation and, if necessary, may ask Health Services to send an Extended Absence Notification to their faculty.

For an extended absence due to other circumstances, students should contact Academic Advising (312.629.6800). If appropriate, Academic Advising may, at the student's request, email an Extended Absence Notification to the student's instructors informing them of the student's absence.

Extended Absence Notifications can begin a conversation with faculty about a situation when the student is receiving support from Health Services or another staff member in the Office of Student Affairs, such as Academic Advising. Please note that this communication is for informing faculty of a situation only; it does not absolve students from their responsibility to make up work that they may miss while absent.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes both plagiarism and cheating, and may consist of: the submission of the work of another as one's own; unauthorized assistance on a test or assignment; submission of the same work for more than one class without the knowledge and consent of all instructors; or the failure to properly cite texts or ideas from other sources. Academic misconduct also includes the falsification of academic or student-related records, such as transcripts, evaluations and letters of recommendation. Academic misconduct extends to all spaces on campus, including satellite locations and online education.

Academic integrity is expected in all coursework, including online learning. It is assumed that the person receiving the credit for the course is the person completing the work. SAIC has processes in place, including LDAP authentication, to verify student identity.

Accomodations

SAIC is committed to full compliance with all laws regarding equal opportunities for students with disabilities. Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) to schedule a virtual appointment. DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you and your instructors with a letter outlining the approved accommodations via email. You must request accommodations for each course before any accommodations will be implemented. You should contact the DLRC as early in the semester as possible. The DLRC can be reached via phone at 312.499.4278 or email at dlrc@saic.edu.

Audit Policy

Per SAIC's policy on non-credit enrollment, auditing this course is possible, space permitting and provided the student proposes an acceptable audit arrangement. Interested students should review SAIC's policy on non-credit enrollment to review options and process, and then contact me to discuss specifics.

'Unofficial' auditing of this or any course i.e. 'sitting in' is prohibited. Participation in specific class activities by non-enrolled students is prohibited without advance, specific consent from the instructor.