Internet Art II

MAAD 23632 (Spring 2021)

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.details {
  where: https://netizen.org/classes/netart2;
  when: Mondays, 10:20AM - 01:30PM (synchronous video chats);
  who: Nick Briz (nbriz@uchicago.edu);
}
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> *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.*
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> — Virginia Heffernan (Magic and Loss: The Internet as Art. Simon Schuster. 2015.)

Course Description

Though the web was originally conceived as an online space for sharing hyperlinked documents, the modern Web browser has evolved into a creative coding playground capable of producing all manner of networked art and algorithmic compositions. In this course we'll learn JavaScript, the Web's defacto programming language. Throughout the quarter we'll experiment with various different Web APIs for creating generative and interactive Internet art including HTML5 video, Canvas (2D/3D animations) and Web Audio. We'll learn how to produce work that responds to various input sources (trackpad/mouse, touchscreen, keyboard, cameras, microphones) and how to fetch and incorporate data from external APIs elsewhere on the Internet.

Learning Goals

- Foundational understanding of web programming concepts, tools and working knowledge of the JavaScript programming language.
- General understanding of the web's creative potential, by learning how to produce interactive and generative compositions using the browsers native APIs (which may include the DOM, Canvas, WebGL, WebXR, WebAudio among others) as well as through creative libraries (which may include p5.js, three.js, tone.js, aframe among others)

Lectures and Tutorials

All of the course's lectures and tutorials are available on our class website and are meant to be taken at your own pace. Most of the videos and documents on the site will be required viewing/reading, but some of the material will be optional. On the first day of class I will introduce the material and explain where to start and how to engage with it depending on your prior coding experience.

Assignments

You will be expected to complete a minimum of 4 (out of 5) assignments this quarter, each of which have a specific prompt (see class website for details). Each assignment has a suggested due date, but because we'll each be going through the class lectures/tutorials asynchronously and at our own pace, some of us might submit our assignments a bit earlier or later than the suggested due date.

- 25%: Code Poetry Assignment (~2021.04.12)
- 25%: 10print Assignment (~2021.04.26)
- 25%: Form+Code Assignment (~2021.05.10)
- 25%: Algorithmic Music Assignment (~2021.05.24)
- 25%: Open Project (~2021.06.07)

In order to receive full credit for these assignments, your work should not only directly engage with each prompt but must also:

- be uploaded to your GitHub account as it's own repository.
- be hosted online (either via your repository using GitHub pages, or your preferred hosting provider), which means a viewer should be able to experience/interact with your piece by visiting a URL in a web browser (with the exception of the first 2 assignments)

Virtual Class Discussions

We'll be holding "virtual office hours" via our zoom URL (sent to everyone via email) every Monday this quarter during the time we would otherwise have been meeting in person: 10:20am – 1:30pm CDT (Chicago Time).

These are not mandatory, but HIGHLY encouraged. So much of what we're going to cover in class, both in terms of the theory and practice, can be gleaned through your own online research. The most valuable aspect of learning this material in the classroom (albeit virtually this quarter), rather than on your own, is the chance for realtime interactivity with your professor and peers. I can not stress enough how important it is to take advantage of class discussions. The focus of these discussions will be predominantly determined by questions and comments submitted by the class ahead of time on our shared doc.

Before every session I will be reviewing questions in our OPEN QUESTIONS DOC, so you are encouraged to write any/all questions (from specific technical questions to bigger conceptual ones) in that doc. You can leave your name but you can also use the doc to ask questions anonymously. You can of course just show up to the video chat and ask questions in realtime. If you have a time sensitive question, a private/personal question or otherwise can't show up to the video chats you are always welcome/encouraged to send me any/all questions via email.