

SYLLABUS – Media on the Internet

Course Number.....DA 610
Semester.....2015 Winter Residency
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Welcome

Welcome to Media on the Internet! This course will ask you to engage critically with the role of the internet in art production and distribution. What can the internet offer art? A wider audience, a DIY gallery, access to free content to mash-up? This will be a part-practical, part-theoretical course that will involve getting your hands dirty with basic HTML code and Javascript while also examining issues of streaming, intellectual property, and the art history of a rapidly changing medium that can truly be defined as avant-garde.

Main Course Topics

- The internet's challenge to the traditional right to copy
- Embedding and controlling audio and video on the web
- Emergence of net.art and the web as an art medium
- Using an API (Application Programming Interface) as a remix tool
- The birth of streaming services and alternative product models
- Introductory HTML5 and Javascript practices
- Formatting media for the web
- Creative approaches to the internet in the student's own work

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Optimize audio and video for streaming on the web
- Display content on the web with HTML5 <audio> and <video> tags
- Work creatively with the HTML5 <canvas> element
- Think critically about the “streaming model” and its alternatives
- Contextualize new networked art within a historical framework
- Engage creatively with the internet as an art medium
- Display your work on a forward-thinking website that you have built

Course Format

- 1 In-Class presentation
- 1 HTML and A/V formatting exercise
- 1 Interactive Net Art project
- 1 Synthesis project (final project)
- 1 Final project presentation (WebEx)
- Assigned readings
- Online links and reading resources

Assignment Instructions:

In-Class Presentation

Each student will present a short (5-10 minute) in-class presentation on an artist who is using the web in creative ways. I encourage you to focus on one or two artworks by the artist. You may use any media such as video, audio, and websites to accompany your presentation.

HTML and A/V website exercise

Demonstrate your expertise of digital media formats by creating a website that displays audio, video, and images with minimal load-time in all browsers. The website must include multiple formats of each medium, as discussed in class, to ensure that it will show appropriately to all internet users. This exercise will culminate our work with audio/video embedding and media conversion software.

You may use any image, audio, and video for this assignment, and you are encouraged to use your new HTML and CSS skills to develop an organized layout for your material. After you have added the media, upload the website to our domain using FileZilla.

Audio must be cross-browser HTML5, including **.mp3**, **.webm**, and **.ogv** (Ogg/Vorbis) sources. **Video** must be cross-browser HTML5, including **.mp4**, **.webm**, and **.ogv** (Ogg/Vorbis) sources. **Images** may be in JPG, PNG, BMP, or PDF format, but please be ready to provide reasoning for your choice of image format (i.e. I chose to use a PNG because the image is partly transparent).

Interactive Net Art Project

Design and code an interactive art project on the web using JavaScript interaction techniques. A successful project will have smooth and intuitive interaction and will interact with conventional web media in unconventional ways, resulting in an artwork that reflects somehow on your digital life. The project will be evaluated for its functionality, cleanliness of code, centrality of interaction to the artwork, and overall artistic gestalt. This will be a guided exploration into the creative use of interactive web tools.

Alternatively, if you would like more guidance in approaching the web creatively, you may recreate a classic piece of net art. Possible avenues for this could be:

Go Fly A Kite (1996) – John Maeda

Create a small digital kite that is “flown” with your mouse.

Reference: *Creative Code*

Tools: Javascript/HTML/(Canvas or JQuery?)

Single-Cell Digital Organism (1999) – John Maeda

Create an animated single-cell digital organism. What does this mean? Use your imagination, but make something simple, that looks “alive” or “emergent.”

Reference: *Creative Code*

Tools: Javascript/HTML and/or Canvas

Images That Feed Upon Themselves (1998)– Benjamin Fry

Processed image that distorts around the edges.

Reference: *Creative Code*

Tools: Javascript/Canvas

Word Processor With Automatic Indecision (1997) – Philip Torrington

Script that adds stuttering into a paragraph of text.

Reference: *Creative Code*

Tools: Javascript

Final Synthesis Project

Explore the new terrain of audio-visual synthesis on the web with <canvas> and/or the Web Audio API. Choose one (or combine any) of the following three options:

1) Canvas project

A successful <canvas> project might be a simple generative artwork or could involve interaction, and may be or do any or many of the following: make algorithmic visual patterns, manipulate video, involve key or mouse input, use getUserMedia for video input, be a simple game, be performative.

2) Web Audio API project

A successful Web Audio API project will be a online musical instrument or a short music composition created algorithmically with JavaScript. You may find several libraries such as Gibberish, Interface.js, or NexusUI useful for this project.

3) Major further development of Interactive Net Art project

You may continue your Interactive Net Art Project if you propose significant revisions/improvements and follow through on them.

Readings

"Art in the age of digital distribution" *New Media Art*, Mark Tribe & Reena Jana

"A Brief History of the Internet" *The Internet*, Lelia Green

Art as Experience, John Dewey (excerpt)

Society of the Spectacle, Guy DeBord

"The Art of Watching Databases" from *Video Vortex Reader II*

The Gift, Lewis Hyde (excerpt)

Sculpture, Stephen Ratcliffe (excerpt)

Vermillion Sands, J.G. Ballard (excerpt)

Related Websites

MTA.me by Alexander Chen
<<http://www.MTA.me>>

www.jodi.org by JODI
<<http://www.jodi.org>>

No one belongs here more than you . com by Miranda July
<<http://www.noonebelongsheremorethanyou.com/00025>>

100 Thousand Billion Poems by Raymond Queneau
<<http://nyll.com/queneau.php>>

Grading

Course Elements	Percent
Discussion and participation	25.00%
In-Class Presentation	15.00%
Media Formatting Exercise	20.00%
Interactive Net Art Project	20.00%
Web Synthesis Project (and WebEx presentation)	20.00%
TOTAL	100%

Grade Scale

A	93 or more points
A-	90 - 92 points
B+	87 - 89 points
B	83 - 86 points
B-	80 - 82 points
C+	77 - 79 points
C	73 - 76 points
C-	70 - 72 points
D	60 - 69 points
F	59 points and below

Course Policies

Communication:

Faculty will be available at their Goucher email address and will respond to queries within 24-48 hours. Course participants are responsible for maintaining continuous involvement with faculty, fellow students and student groups. In particular, participation in all online discussions is required. Ongoing communication allows you to gain deeper insights into the content, activities and assignments in the course. Please give notice of any obstacle that prevents this.

You are encouraged to ask questions whenever information needs clarifying.

For questions pertaining to your assignments: send an email directly to the instructor (please do not post personal questions on the discussion board).

For questions about assignments that may be interesting and helpful to other class members: please use the discussion board.

For problems with technical aspects of the website: contact helpdesk@goucher.edu (you may copy the instructor).

Missed Work:

You are responsible for material covered in the course. It is your sole responsibility to obtain any materials missed.

Late Policy:

For proper graduate student learning to occur, pacing of content mastery is critical. Therefore, assignments are to be completed on time. If extreme circumstances prevent an assignment to be completed in a timely fashion, please notify me before the assignment is due so a new date can be negotiated. Only follow-ups completed by the due date can be redone. Late assignments without such notification will be docked.

Academic Integrity:

All final work products are to be the independent work of each student and stored in the electronic portfolio. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be referred to the Academic Honor Board. For a full description of the code and what constitutes a violation of the code, refer to the Goucher Handbook or online at www.goucher.edu/x1292.xml.