GALLATIN SCHOOL OF INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY

Syllabus

Technology, Art & Public Space, Spring 2015

Course #: ARTS-UG 1440
Meeting Day & Time: Thursday, 6:20-9:00 p.m.
Location: 1 Washington Place, Room #432
Instructor: Terry Culver
Tjc202@nyu.edu/ (347) 224-1615
Office Hours: Thursday, 5-6pm & by appointment
(Please email or call in advance)

Course Description
This course will examine the relationship between technology, art and public space. We will consider the role that art and technology play in the public sphere in two ways: (1) the study of historical and contemporary case studies of artists and artistic movements with a focus on New York City; and (2) designing and creating works of public art that incorporate media and technology.

Objectives/Learning Goals
The course has the following objectives and learning goals:

(1) Examine cultural narratives that contribute to the ongoing dialogue about the role of technology in society;
(2) Study both contemporary and historical works of public art that either support or disrupt those narratives;
(3) Create a high-quality work of public art using digital projection technology that is informed by goals (1) and (2).
This course approaches public art as an important part of an ongoing dialogue about cultural values, commerce, politics and public life. We will become familiar with the role that contemporary artists and technology have played in shaping this dialogue by supporting or resisting political change. Special emphasis will be placed on understanding the role of technology and art in society and in defining public interaction. Also, the course will cover the impact, both direct and indirect, of certain technological developments on art and other media.

With a multidisciplinary approach, the course will examine the remarkable transformation of public art through history and the roles it has played to both support and to resist established political beliefs. Emphasis will be placed on defining public space, understanding the role of public art in society, and using public art as a prism to understand wider cultural and political trends. The course will examine selected historical examples of public art as well as contemporary ones, and take advantage of the public art throughout New York City.

**Coursework**

This is not a lecture course. This is combination of a seminar and studio course, requiring inquiry, intellectual curiosity and participation from each student. On certain occasions, the instructor will present case studies. Readings will be assigned each week.

The coursework will consist of:

1) **Readings.** To be assigned each week. It is important that students do the readings and come to class with two questions or observations to raise during class. These are to be emailed to me prior to class.

2) **Critiques.** For each reading, a student or group of students will lead a class discussion about the reading for a particular week. Each student must participate in leading a class discussion, and make a quality presentation. This means:
   - Present the reading and its main ideas
• Provide contextual material as needed
• Facilitate an insightful discussion about specific concepts that you think are important and interesting
• Be creative in your presentation. You can use slides, video, and other media
• Demonstrate fluency in the ideas presented in the readings

I will be available to provide advice and guidance on the presentations.

3) **Mid-term Project.** Each student will propose, create, and report on their own public art project. The proposals will be due February 12, and the projects will be presented on March 12, along with a 3-4 page review of the project with documentation. I will discuss the proposals with each student to offer suggestions and help.

**Please note:** illegal projects are not allowed. This means no graffiti without permission, sticker campaigns, etc.

The proposal should be a 2—3 page proposal for a public art project, and include the following:
• Description: who, what, when, where
• Rationale: why are you doing the project and who are you making it for
• How the project relates to the readings or artwork we have covered in class.
• Timeline

The Mid-Term project will be evaluated on:
• Creativity and refinement of the concept
• Research into related artwork and artists
• Consideration of context and audience
• Quality of execution
• Reflection on the project’s significance
4) **Final Project.** The class will collaborate on creating and installing a work of public art using digital technology and projection mapping software. Technology expertise is not required. The site for the project is Crosby and Houston Streets, above the subway entrance to the F and M Trains. It will be installed at the end of the semester.

**Grades**

Grades for the course will depend upon the following factors:

1. Attendance and full participation in class;
2. Quality of presentations and attention to assigned readings;
3. Submission of mid-term project;
4. Contributions to the final project.

**Academic Integrity**

As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website (http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/integrity.html)
CALENDER

January 29  Introduction

February 5  Site Visit: Eyebeam Annual Showcase
Gallery 216, 111 Front Street, Brooklyn, NY
Reading: *Digital Divide: Contemporary Art and New Media*, Claire Bishop

12  Emergence of Technology in Contemporary Art
Case Study: *The Sordid Tale of Civic Virtue*
Reading: *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin

19  Technology Narratives
Case Study: One-Laptop-Per-Child

Mid Term Proposals Due

26  Convergence
Case Study: *E.A.T., Citizen Artists and Engineers*
Reading: *Cybernetics and Art*, Edward Shanken

March 5  Technology, Utopia and the of Role Metaphor
Case Study: *Buckminster Fuller*
Reading: *Technopoly* (Selections), Neil Postman

12  Theory of Visual Culture

*Mid-Term Project Presentations*
Reading: *Introduction to Visual Culture*, Nicholas Mirzoeff

19  Spring Break/No Class
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>Visit to New Museum: Surround Audience Exhibition</strong></td>
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<td>Reading: <em>Art and Technology: The Panacea That Failed</em>, Jack Burnham</td>
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<td>April 2</td>
<td><strong>Spatial Politics</strong></td>
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<td>Case Study: Union Square: Political Power and Aesthetics</td>
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<td>Studio Work: Final Project</td>
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<td><em>Reading: Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics</em>, Rosalyn Deutsche</td>
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<td><strong>Taking Chances: Unforeseen Consequences of Public Art</strong></td>
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<td>Studio Work: Final Project</td>
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<td>Reading: <em>The Birth and Death of the Viewer: On the Public Function of Art</em>, Thomas Crow and Martha Rosler</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td><strong>Commerce and the Public Interest</strong></td>
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<td>Case Study: Times Square</td>
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<td>Studio Work: Final Project</td>
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<td>Reading: <em>Creating Democracy: A Dialogue with Krzysztof Wodiczko</em>, Patricia C. Phillips &amp; <em>The Education of the Un Artist</em>, Alan Kaprow</td>
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<td><strong>Going Viral</strong></td>
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<td>Case Study: <em>Creative Time Reports</em></td>
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<td>Reading: <em>Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011</em>, Editor, Nato Thompson</td>
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<td>Studio Work: Final Project</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td><strong>Final Project Installation/Assessments Due</strong></td>
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<td>May  7</td>
<td><strong>Final Class</strong></td>
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