

E/H/Art 89 New Media Arts in the 20th and 21st Centuries
Caltech, winter 2015, 9 units (3-0-6)
Wednesdays, 7pm - 10 pm, Baxter 127

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine artists' work with new technology, fabrication methods and media from the late 19th Century to the present. Major artists, exhibitions, and writings of the period will be surveyed. While considering this historical and critical context, students will create their own original new media artworks using technologies and/or fabrication methods they choose. Possible approaches to projects may involve robotics, electronics, computer programming, computer graphics, mechanics and other technologies. Students will be responsible for designing and fabricating their own projects. Topics may include systems in art, the influence of industrialism, digital art, robotics, telematics, media in performance, interactive installation art, and technology in public space. Artists studied may include Eadweard Muybridge, Marcel Duchamp, Vladmir Tatlin, John Cage, Jean Tinguely, Stelarc, Survival Research Laboratories, Lynne Hershman Leeson, Edwardo Kac, Natalie Jeremenjenko, Heath Bunting, Janet Cardiff and others.

ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Research And Writing

1. Write approximately 500 words in response to the lecture. Essay questions will be provided in class. Weekly writing will be turned in for review three times during the semester. You will get a single grade for all of your writing at the end of the semester.
2. Additional reading and film/video viewing will be assigned.

Project

Now is your chance to get credit for building that thing you want to bring to Burning Man 2015, the nonsensical app you've been dreaming of making, the wearable electronic musical instrument you wish you could play but doesn't yet exist, or otherwise have fun with your technical chops.

Create your own original new media artwork using technologies and/or fabrication methods you choose. Possible approaches to projects may involve robotics, electronics, computer programming, computer graphics, mechanics and other technologies. Students will be responsible for designing and fabricating their own projects.

1. Write an approximately 500 word proposal
2. Create informal design concept sketches
3. Loosely diagram fabrication plans
4. Fabricate project

REQUIRED BOOKS

All assigned reading and other materials are online. The instructor will provide PDFs and web site addresses each week.

Take notes in class on a spiral-bound notebook.

REQUIRED PROJECT MATERIALS

Students will determine the materials needed for their projects. Students will be responsible for obtaining their own materials.

GRADES

Grades only

Your final course grade will be based on the following percentages:

| | |
|-----|---------------------|
| 45 | Weekly Writing |
| 45 | Project |
| 10 | Class Participation |
| 100 | Total |

SCHEDULE (Topics TBC)

1/7 Week 1

Introduction to the class

Lecture/discussion: Forerunners of Media Art: Motion, Time and Space

Homework: Research and writing

1/14 Week 2

Lecture/discussion: Machines and Robots

HW: Research and writing

1/21 Week 3

Lecture/discussion: Prosthetics, Alter Egos and the Body

HW: Research and writing

1/28 Week 4

Lecture/discussion: Systems and Sound

HW: Project proposal: 500 words and concept design sketches due 2/5, project proposal meeting outside of class time

2/4 Week 5

Lecture/discussion: Dada, Media Critique and Tactical Media

HW: Research and writing, project fabrication

2/11 Week 6

Lecture/discussion: Collaborations Between Artists and Scientists, Computer Programming and Art, BioArt

HW: Research and writing, project fabrication

2/18 Week 7

Lecture/discussion: Field Trip?

HW: Research and writing, project fabrication

2/25 Week 8

Lecture/discussion: Work in progress presentations/critiques
HW: Research and writing, project fabrication,

3/4 Week 9

Lecture/discussion: Software Or "Generative" Art
HW: Research and writing, project fabrication

3/11 Week 10

Lecture/discussion: Video Game Aesthetics
HW: Complete project and prepare presentation

3/18 Exam Week

Project Presentations