

CTAN 522 John C. Hench Animation & Digital Arts Seminar Syllabus Wednesday 6:30-8:30 PM LUCAS 108 FALL 2008

Professor Kathy Smith | Production Supervisor Mar Elepano | Student Assistant Brian Lee

Creative research and production at Hench-DADA incorporates practice in traditional and digital media ranging from works of metaphysical expression and perceptual experience, to the exploration of dreams and narrative storytelling, visualizing science, and documentary animation.

Seminar

CTAN 522 Seminar serves as a weekly academic forum in which theorists, scientists, artists and industry discuss their research and ideas as it relates or intersects with animation and digital art.

It is hoped that exposure to USC faculty, international artists and industry guests will engage discourse around the art form and inspire students while facilitating a clearer vision of their own research and career goals.

BA Seniors and MFA thesis students are required to screen their work in progress for group critique during the semester.

CTAN 522 Schedule Fall 2008

- Class 1. August 27: Welcome, introductions and announcements. [Dean Elizabeth Daley](#) discusses the new Hench-DADA building. Seminar schedule and teams announced. Screening of Production I films and pizza party!
- Class 2. September 3: Hench-DADA Faculty Creative Research presentation:
[Tom Sito](#) -30 year animation industry veteran Tom Sito strives to pass on the legacy of the great animators of the past by focusing on their lessons on technique in the classic Hollywood style. He stresses performance and the continued relevance of the classic form to all modern media. Tom will also screen his new film *Adventures in NPM* and showcases some of his finest work.
- Class 3. September 10: Hench-DADA Faculty Creative Research presentations:
[Mar Elepano](#) describes his work as *my life as a moving image...personal expression, community and social issues, education explored and recorded through the language of film...and digital technology.*
[Lisa Mann](#) Lisa Mann is a visual artist whose installations, sculptures, performances, and films explore problematic social and cultural issues in contemporary society and in relation to her own experiences.

- Class 4. September 17: Hench-DADA Faculty Creative Research presentations:
[Kathy Smith](#)'s work explores the mystery of existence through the non-linear narrative of dreams while utilizing creative technologies to drive the perceptual experience. Concurrent and divergent narratives, structuring through images, time and consciousness are ongoing themes and elements in her work.
[Eric Hanson](#)'s career has been spent researching the intersection of art and technology within computer graphics, exploring the powerful potential of its medium. He considers himself a visual designer first and foremost, and he finds the nature and process of design to span conceptually across disciplines.
- Class 5. September 24: Hench-DADA Faculty Creative Research presentations:
[Sheila Sofian](#)'s films are a hybrid of documentary and animation. Utilizing a variety of techniques, her work explores social issues and animation's unique ability to viscerally communicate complex subject matter.
[Christine Panushka](#) Using associative and visual languages, Professor Panushka's art practice seeks to investigate the limitations of our ability to communicate non-verbal ideas. These notions relate to the body, emotional states, spiritual spaces and life cycles.
- Class 6. October 1: Award winning Australian documentary animator [Dennis Tupicoff](#) presents his body of work including *Dance of Death*, *Darra Dogs*, and *His Mother's Voice* He will also screen his latest film *Chainsaw*
- Class 7. October 8: Hench-DADA Faculty Research presentations: [Mike Patterson](#) Exploring the artistic blending of animation and live action has been a central theme in Mike's wide-ranging career as a director-designer- animator. From storytelling to abstraction, his work embraces animation art as a powerful force in entertainment, communication, and as an artistic laboratory for exploring visual-music in live venues and on TV.
[Candace Reckinger](#) Candace Reckinger's work explores time, landscape and voice. Originally trained in animation and ethnographic film, she relocated to Los Angeles where she got interested in experimental narrative and rephotography. While working on her MFA, she produced a pair of neo-feminist chronicles set in an apocalyptic urban landscape in the not-too distant future. She went on to direct music videos for MTV for the next 10 years which combined live action, animation and effects.
- Class 8. October 15: Center for Visual Music program [Rare Classics](#) introduced by CVM Director Cindy Keefer
- Class 9. October 22: Dr David Hanson: [Hanson Robotics](#) and the future of advanced artificial intelligence

- Class 10.October 29: The evolutionary nature of software creation as seen through [Face Robot](#) and [Softimage XSI](#). A presentation and demonstration by Jeff Wilson and Mark Schoennagel from Avid Technologies.
- Class 11 November 5: Animator [James Baxter](#) discusses the nature of the art form, the animation industry and shows his body of work. James will also highlight scenes from his latest [Dreamworks](#) production *Monsters VS Aliens*
- Class 12. November 12: CTAN 401 critiques
- Class 13 November 19: CTAN 594A critiques
- November 26: NO CLASS.: Thanksgiving break
- Class 14. December 3: Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences Screening
- Class 15 December 10: Team presentations and Xmas party

Seminar participation – postcards and teams

Each week (excluding classes 1, 12, 13 & 14) students will be expected to create a postcard interpretation of the seminar presentation or topic. This postcard will be uploaded to the team's blog page or deposited into a Team folder on HAL this will be directed by the team leader, a designated Annenberg Fellow. The postcard can also take the form of a brief critique or review.

Each student on every team is expected to prepare a minimum of two questions each week pertaining to the subject/presenter that can spark interesting discourse. Students will be asked at random to provide a question for the guest(s). It is recommended that students work consistently on their postcard interpretations and weekly questions.

Team leaders and assignment

The team leader will act as the editor and will be responsible for articulating a particular area of research that they feel is the most interesting or relevant for their team's final presentation. The team leader can pick from any seminar or multiple seminars and will be responsible for selecting the area(s) of focus.

The team leader will decide on the final team presentation which can be in any format e.g. blog site, flash animation, Acrobat PDF magazine, performance, lecture or website. The team leader will also pick the ten best postcards created by their members in collaboration with their group and present these in the final seminar.

Please remember to retain a 355 dpi tif format of every postcard image you create while downsizing to a jpeg format for presentation and upload to any sites.

Teams should be proactive and draw on research and ideas from a variety of sources to use as links or discussion points on their blog site. Permission to use images or research presented by the guests is the responsibility of each group.

Teams should meet every week to discuss their ideas, prepare questions and contribute their postcard image. The team leader will designate duties throughout the semester and once the final presentation format is decided.

The faculty will select ten postcard designs during the final seminar presentations and these will be printed by the division.

Participation and Attendance

Participation and attendance is mandatory. Students will sign in when they enter Lucas 108.

Cell phone calls or stepping out to take a call is not acceptable while seminar is in session. Please turn off all cell phones Bathroom breaks and food are recommended prior to attending seminar.

Grading

This is a **credit/no credit** class based upon weekly attendance, team participation and final presentation. Students will only be allowed two excused absences during the semester.

***** NOTE:**

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP.

Please be sure that the letter is delivered to the Professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

MISSING AN EXAM OR FINAL PRESENTATION, INCOMPLETES:

The only acceptable excuses for missing an exam or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform the professor before the exam and present verifiable evidence in order for a make-up to be scheduled. Students who wish to take incompletes must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor or teaching assistant before final grades are due.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of academic excellence and ethical performance from USC students. It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, submitting a paper to more than one instructor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. If you have any doubts or questions about these policies, consult "SCAMPUS" and/or confer with the Professor or your T.A.

Team 1**Deborah Allison Team leader**

Emily Henricks
Rena Radford
John Arellano
Colin McCall
Cecilia Fletcher

Team 2**Juan Camillo Team Leader**

Steven Day
Jacqueline Jocson-Bolanos
Nahomi Maki
Qingyuan Wang
Lu-Ping Taiwanese Scholar

Team 3**Sepehr Dehpour Team leader**

Elyse Kelly
Thomas Huang
Hyunjung Rhee
Lauren Brown
Alan Kinisberg

Team 4**Diana Reichenbach Team leader**

Tim Garbutt
Sara Spink
Malak Quota
Jordan Prieto
Tianran Duan

Team 5**Amanda Tasse Team Leader**

Chia-Chi Tseng
Laura Stephens
Willie Williams
Jacob Albers
Yin Tang

Team 6**Laura Yilmaz Team Leader**

Michael Fallik
Kendra Ryan
Kim Cagney
Chia-Lin Teng
Elizabeth Willy