SYLLABUS IML458 (37442) **2 units**

THE EMBEDDED STORY: DESIGNING DIGITAL LANDSCAPES & LANGUAGES

Wed. 10:00-12:50 SCI L104

Instructor: Professor Pablo Frasconi
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SCA415
Office hours: Thursday, 10:00am-12:00noon

Sallie Bowen, "Aerial View"

"Landscapes were the first human texts, read before the invention of other signs and symbols. –Anne Whiston Spirn, *Language of Landscape*

"The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book…which told it's mind to me without reserve, and its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice." –Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

"If you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are." –Wendell Berry

"Language is fossil poetry." –Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Poet*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Intermediate students will work collaboratively in a cross-platform environment, to create media that explores the imagined territories where languages and landscapes originate, converge, and are transformed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed for students who have begun to explore the relationships between verbal and visual literacies in *CTPR457 Creating Poetic Cinema,* and the relationships between the individuals, interactions with others, and the natural world in *IML456 Nature, Design and Media*, to merge and expand their studies in a collaborative, transmedia, conceptually based, learning structure.

Student-teams will explore shared concepts of verbal and visual literacies:

- Visual, verbal, and geographical patterns and metaphor;
- the relationship of the part to the whole;
- the transitory loop of meaning: media, the participant/viewer, and meaning
- the process of visual and verbal "reading and writing";
- a flow of processes and materials;

COURSE STRUCTURE:

The emphasis will be on in-person collaboration during scheduled labs. Each 3-hour class will begin with 1-hour of faculty (or student) presentations, followed by two hours of presentations & discussions.

Each student will work on four teams to create four projects during the semester. All projects will incorporate world-building, immersive and trans-media, and game-theory.

In a pod of 4, each student will be assigned to work in the interconnected and overlapping *metaphorical* roles below for each project (redefinition and re-invention of roles is encouraged in consult with faculty); rotating through four *metaphorical* positions, on four different projects, during the semester.

1. *Designer, 3D Space: "BERNINI*" (Baroque architect and sculptor)
2. *Designer, machine, time, interactivity: "FOX*" (British engineer, inventor of railyard switcher)
3. *Character/Icon/Avatar: "KI*" (Sumerian earth Goddess)
4. *Willful supernatural spirit: "JINN"* (Arabian spirit)

Leading Concept: The leading concept will shift (#1-4 above) for each of the four projects, allowing each student in a pod to explore different intersections of landscape & language, and to collaborate in different capacities.

TECHNOLOGY:
Tools will include: traditional 2D and 3D media (painting, sculpture and modeling); digital pre-viz software (such as *Sketchup)*; digital media (films, photographs, animation); digital magazines (such as *Flipping Book*); immersive environments; and interactive applications.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Anne Whiston Spirn, **Language of Landscape,** Yale University Press (2000)
Chapters: "Dwelling and Tongue: The Language of Landscape," "Survival and Imagination: Reading and Telling the Meanings of Landscape," "Artful Telling, Deep Reading: The Literature of Landscape," "A Rose is Rarely Just a Rose: Poetics of Landscape," "Polemical Landscapes"

BIBLIOGRAPHY: (faculty posted selected readings on-line each week)

Jodi Daynard, **The Place Within: Portraits of the American Landscape by Contemporary Writers,** W. W. Norton & Co., (1997)
Chapters: "Swamp as Metaphor," "Dreaming of Trees"

David George Haskell, **The Forest Unseen, A Year's Watch in Nature,** Viking, (2012)
Chapter: "January 1st – Partnerships"

John Brinckerhoff Jackson, **A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time,** Yale University Press (1996)
Chapter: "The Accessible Landscape,"

Lierre Keith, **The Derrick Jensen Reader,** Seven Stories Press, NY, (2012)
Chapters: "Listening to the Land," "A Language Older Than Words"

Thomas Moore, **The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life,** HarperCollins, (1996)
Chapter: "Magic and Enchantment"

Simon Morley, **Writing on the Wall: Work and Image in Modern Art**, University of California Press (2003)
Chapters: "Art as Idea as Idea: Conceptual Words I," "A Heap of Language: Conceptual Words II"

Raimon Panikkar, **The Experience of God: Icons of the Mystery**, Fortress Press Minneapolis, (2006)
Chapters: "Speaking of God," "The experience of God"

Frank Rose, **The Art of Immersion: How the Digital Generation is Remaking Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the Way We Tell Stories**, W. W. Norton & Co., (2012) Chapters: "Deeper," "How to Build a Universe that Doesn't Fall Apart"

Readings #1: Spirn, Daynard, Rose, Morley
Readings #2: Spirn, Jackson, Haskell
Readings #3: Spirn, Jensen (Keith)
Readings #4: Spirn, Moore, Pannikar

GRADING BREAKDOWN:
P1: contribution to the project in specific role 10%
P1: Collaboration (including leadership): 10%
P2: contribution to the project in specific role 10%
P2: Collaboration (including leadership): 10%
P3: contribution to the project in specific role 10%
P3: Collaboration (including leadership): 10%
P4: contribution to the project in specific role 10%
P4: Collaboration (including leadership): 10%
Articulating concepts in lectures, presentations & readings to creative work: 20%

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION
Assignments must be uploaded to the course WIKI by 9am on the day of class in weeks 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16.

POLICIES

Academic Conduct
Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity or to the Department of Public Safety. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Disruptive Student Behavior
Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX
Citation Practices
Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. Media Arts + Practice seeks to apply a reasonable working definition of fair use that will enable students and instructors to develop multimedia projects without seeking authorization for non-commercial, educational uses. Four factors that should be considered when determining whether a use is fair: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. In general, we regard the reproduction of copyrighted works for the purposes of analysis or critique in this class to be covered by the principle of fair use.

All projects will need to include academically appropriate citations in the form of a Works Cited section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The Works Cited is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your project. There are several different citation styles and practices; please ask your professor(s) what style manual s/he would prefer. Below you'll find some online resources for the most popular options.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week one: Lecture/Presentation: ***"Creativity in Transmedia Environments;"*** key concepts explained; *Readings #1* assigned (Spirn, Daynard, Rose, Morley; see chapters in TEXTS below); P1 teams and leaders assigned; first iterations due next week

Week two*:* Lecture/Presentation: ***"The Language of Collaboration: Intentionality, Artists' Statements, and the Self;" "Building & Planning:"*** view P1 first iterations in teams; discussion; second iteration assigned

Week three: view P1 2nd iterations; discussion of works; final iteration assigned

Week four: view final P1 iterations; critique works in view of concepts in *Readings #1*

Week five: Lecture/Presentation:***"World-building, Interactivity & Game Theory;"*** key concepts explained; *Readings #2* assigned (Spirn, Jackson, Haskell); P2 teams and leaders assigned; first iterations due next week

Week six: Lecture/Presentation: ***"Talking & Making: Prototypes & Iterations"*** view P2 first iterations in teams; discussion in view of key concepts & texts; second iteration assigned

Week seven: view P2 2nd iterations; discussions; final iteration assigned

Week eight: view final P2 iterations; critique works in view of concepts in *Readings #2*

Week nine: Lecture/Presentation: ***"Character, Player, Observer"*** key concepts explained; Readings #3 assigned (Spurn, Jensen)"; P3 teams and leaders assigned; first iterations due next week

Week ten: Lecture/Presentation: ***"The ineluctable modality of the visible"***;" view P3 first iterations in teams; discussion; second iteration assigned

Week eleven: view P3 2nd iterations; discussions; final iteration assigned

Week twelve: view final P3 iterations; critique works in view of concepts in *Readings #3*

Week thirteen: Lecture/Presentation: ***"Real & Divine Metaphors: knowing the unknown;"*** key concepts explained; readings #4 assigned (Spirn, Moore, Pannikar); P4 teams and leaders created; first iterations due next week

Week fourteen: view P4 first iterations in teams; discussion; second iteration assigned

Week fifteen: view P4 2nd iterations; discussions; final iteration assigned

Final week: Lecture/Presentation: ***"Self-Evaluation & Meeting the Public"*** view final P4 iterations: critique works in view of concepts in *Readings #4*