IML 605: From Cinema to Post-Cinema: History, Theory, Practice
Holly Willis || Thursdays, 10:00 – 1:00
Readings include Rosi Braidotti, David Roden, Cary Wolfe, Raymond Bellour, Katherine Hayles, Jack Halberstam and Giuliana Bruno…
Topics include expanded, live, interactive, mobile, hyper and neuro cinema, plus an aesthetics of the networked and posthuman…
This is the 2015 syllabus; I am currently updating the syllabus for fall 2017! I will send it to all enrolled students before June 1, 2017.

From Cinema to Post-Cinema and Beyond: History, Theory, Practice
IML 605 | 4 units
Fall 2015
Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., SCI 209
https://mapwiki.sca.usc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course explores the evolution of theories and practices of contemporary cinema as we move into what is being characterized as the post-cinematic, the post-human and the post-alphabetical.

Cinema has steadily been moving from the two-dimensional screen to the world around us, from the theater to museum and gallery settings, to architecture and the built environment, to mobile devices, websites and game consoles. The course argues that cinema, the primary vehicle for storytelling in the 20th century, and identification, the mechanism central to the cinematic apparatus, are both being redefined in a culture increasingly suffused with media and networks. The post-cinematic, understood in its most expanded sense, demonstrates new expressions of time and space as it dismantles the temporal and spatial codes of classical Hollywood cinema, and along with them, the illusion of coherence that they produce. These post-cinematic works offer new experiences of time beyond a linear model of temporal unfolding, and they give us new experiences of space beyond its common role as backdrop to human action. In short, cinema and its traditional representations of time, space and subjectivity are being reconfigured against a backdrop of a radical rethinking of what it means to be human in the 21st century.

This rethinking of the human is perhaps best characterized by the post-human, which offers a paradigm that may – or may not! – align with the post-cinematic. Posthumanism designates a shift in which the human no longer rests at the center, but is dispersed and networked. IML 605 proposes to investigate the post-
cinematic and the post-human in tandem, looking for alignments and incongruities, overlaps and displacements. Rather than proposing a strict thesis, the course instead invites participants to explore a series of trajectories, and to help configure the course as it evolves.

The goals of this course include the following:

- to define the emerging theoretical constructs of the post-cinematic and the post-human
- to map shifts away from questions of identity, subjectivity and knowledge in contemporary media theory
- to situate contemporary shifts in media art and culture within a larger historical context
- to identify, assess and theorize the key formal qualities of emerging forms
- and to identify the political and ideological implications of these shifts

As with all MA+P courses, *From Cinema to Post-Cinema and Beyond: History, Theory, Practice* integrates theory and practice; students should be prepared to read and discuss actively in class, and also to develop skills necessary for completing the assignments. Specifically, students will engage in collaboration, video capture, video editing, project planning and prototyping.

**READINGS / Required**


(Available as an ebook through the USC library.)

Choose one text from the Recommended list

Essays available on course wiki.

**READINGS / Recommended**

Doug Aitken, *Broken Screen Narrative: Expanding the Image, Breaking the Narrative*

Raymond Bellour, *Between-the-Images*

Giuliana Bruno, *Surface: Matters of Aesthetics, Materiality and Media*

Franco Casetti, *The Lumiere Galaxy: 7 Key Words for the Cinema to Come*

Catherine Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*

Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston, *Posthuman Bodies*

Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman*

Bruce Isaacs, *The Orientation of Future Cinema: Technology, Aesthetics, Spectacle*

Gertrud Koch, ed., *Screen Dynamics: Mapping the Borders of Cinema*

Rosalind Krauss, “A Voyage on the North Sea”: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition

Agnes Petho, ed., *Film in the Post-Media Age*


Elvind Rossaak, ed., *Between Stillness and Motion: Film, Photography, Algorithms*

D.N. Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*

Edward Shanken, *Art and Electronic Media*

Andrew Uroski, *Between the Black Box and the White Cube*


Gene Youngblood, *Expanded Cinema*

Not yet published

Marie-Claire Barnet, *Agnes Varda Unlimited: Image, Music, Media*

Michael Lawrence and Laura McMahon, eds., *Animal Life and the Moving Image*

Eva Lenhardt and Andreas Rauscher, eds., *Films and Games: Interactions*

Jason Sperb, *Flickers of Film: Nostalgia in the Time of Digital Cinema*
COURSE PROJECTS

Presentation / 25%
Each participant is responsible for making a presentation. The presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length, and may either review and interrogate one or more of the readings, introduce a new reading or concept, or explore artworks, tools, structures, etc.

Essay / 25% / Due Week Seven / October 8, 2015
Write a 1,500-word essay that is EITHER 1) a critical review of the text you’ve chosen from the Recommended Reading list or 2) that explores a topic related to posthumanism or the post-cinematic. In either case, your essay should include a clear framing question or thesis statement, a logical structure of argumentation, and conclusion, as well as citations using Chicago or MLA format.

Media-Rich Scholarly Work / 50% / Due Week Thirteen / November 19, 2015
One of the questions raised throughout this course centers on the changing nature of scholarship in a digital, networked culture. In response, you are invited to create a media-rich project that addresses a topic from the class. This could be a video essay, an audio project, or an essay composed in Scalar, among other options. A one-page prospectus is due Week Six; the project will be shared in class during Week Thirteen.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 // August 27
From Classical Hollywood to the Post-Cinematic
Introduction to the course, and examination of some shifts in the spatial and temporal constructions in recent cinema, intensified continuity and new narrative structures.

Week 2 // September 3
Another Cinema, an Expanded Cinema
Cinema: digital, dispersed, reconfigured.
Discuss:
“The Cinema Spectator: A Special Memory,” Raymond Bellour
“What Is Digital Cinema?” Lev Manovich
“Parallel Selves,” Brian Rotman
“Expanded Cinema, Video and Virtual Environments,” Peter Weibel
Suggested:
“The End of Cinema: Multimedia and Technological Change,” Anne Friedberg
“Battle of the Images,” Raymond Bellour
Lab: The Video Essay

Week 3 // September 10
Machines for Generating Affect
Discuss:
“Post-Cinematic Affect: On Grace Jones, Boarding Gate and Southland Tales.”
Week 4 // September 17

**Spectacular Times and Spaces**

Discuss:

"The Artificial Infinite: On Special Effects and the Sublime," Scott Bukatman
"The Ultimate Trip: Special Effects and Kaleidoscopic Perception," Scott Bukatman
"Intensified Continuity: Visual Style in Contemporary American Film," David Bordwell
"Permanent Metalepsis: Pushing the Boundaries of Narrative Space," Thomas Morsch

Lab: Video capture

Week 5 // September 24

**Posthumanism and Interactive Narrative**

Reimagining the nature/culture divide, non-dualistic thought and auto-poiesis.

Discuss:

"Introduction: Posthuman Bodies," Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston

Lab: Basic video editing

Week 6 // October 1

**Posthumanism, Live Cinema and the Spaces of Projection**

Media-Rich Scholarly Work Prospectus Due

Discuss:

"Sites of Screening: Cinema, Museum and the Art of Projection," Giuliana Bruno

Lab: Basic audio

Guests: Miwa Matreyek and Chi-Wang Yang, Cloud Eye Control

Week 7 // October 8

**Posthumanism, Virtual Reality and Immersive Storytelling**

Due: Essay

Discuss:

"The Power of Immersive Media," Frank Rose

Lab: Interactive scholarship

Guest: Eric Hansen of xREZ

Week 8 // October 15

**Posthumanism and Mobile / Locative Media**

Discuss:

Chapter Four: Posthuman Humanities: Life Beyond Theory, *The Posthuman*, Rosi Braidotti
"Urban Mobility and Cinematic Visuality: The Screens of Los Angeles – endless cinema or private telematics," Anne Friedberg
"Leaving a Movie Theater," Roland Barthes
"Locative Media and Spatial Narrative," Martin Rieser
"Locative Media and Mediated Localities: An Introduction to Media Geography," Tristan Thielmann

Lab: Introduction to Scalar
Guest: John Carpenter on designing interactive experiences.

Week 9 // October 22
Transmedia Storytelling and Worldbuilding
Discuss:
“Searching for the Origami Unicorn: The Matrix and Transmedia Storytelling,” Henry Jenkins,
“Why Transmedia Is Catching on Now,” Part Two and Part Three, Nick DeMartino
“Incorporating Second Screens Into Cinema,” Zachary Wigon
“Seven Myths About Transmedia Storytelling Debunked,” Henry Jenkins
“Computers as Theater,” Brenda Laurel
“Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature,” Espen Aarseth
“World Building,” Ann Pendleton Jullian
See Henry Jenkins’ Transmedia syllabus for further readings:
Lab: Work-in-progress review

Week 10 // October 29
Animals and Cyborgs
Discuss:
“A Cyborg Manifesto,” Donna Haraway

Week 11 // November 5
Hypercinema and Emerging Techniques
Full-dome, photogrammetry and high-resolution photography

Week 12 // November 12
Neurocinematics
Discuss:
“Introduction: Schizoanalysis, Digital Screens, and the New Brain Circuits,” Patricia Pisters,
from The Neuro-Image
“From Fixed to Fluid: Material-Mental Images Between Neural Synchronization and
Computational Mediation,” Mark B. N. Hansen
“How the Movies of Tomorrow Will Play With Your Mind,” Jennifer Ouellette

Week 13 // November 19
Due: Media-Rich Scholarly Work
Come to class prepared to share your project.
Discuss:
“Materialist Feminism for the Twentieth-First Century: The Video Essays of Ursula Biemann,”
Angela Dimitrakaki

Week 14 // November 26
Thanksgiving: No Class

Week 15 // December 3
LACMA Visit
Diana Thater’s show, “The Sympathetic Imagination”
Random International’s Rain Room
http://www.lacma.org
STUDIO / GALLERY / MUSEUM VISITS
• Oblong Industries / http://www.oblong.com
• Mirada / http://mirada.com/
• LACMA
• Velaslavasay Panorama / http://www.panoramaonview.org/

ACCESSING THE WIKI
https://mapwiki.sca.usc.edu

• If you are new to the SCA log-in system, use an SCA lab machine to log in using your student user name (the user name associated with your USC email address) and your student ID number for the password. You will be prompted to change your password.
• go to https://mapwiki.sca.usc.edu and select “wikis.” If you are formally registered for the class, the wiki for IML 605 will appear. Click and continue.

Statement for 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 the letter is delivered to your course instructor (or TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP
http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html
(213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General Principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, The Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/ Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/ Information on intellectual property at USC is available at: http://usc.edu/academe/acsen/issues/ipr/index.html

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis
In case of emergency, when travel to campus is difficult, if not impossible, USC executive leadership will announce a digital way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of the Blackboard LMS (Learning Management System), teleconferencing, and other technologies. Instructors should be prepared to assign students a “Plan B” project that can be completed ‘at a distance.’ For additional information about maintaining your classes in an emergency, please access: http://cst.usc.edu/services/emergencyprep.html