

**IML 477: Embodied Storytelling and Immersive Docu-Narratives**  
**Spring 2019 | 4 Units**  
**Tuesdays | 10:00am – 12:50pm | SCI 209**

**Instructor: Michael Bodie**

Contact Info: mbodie@cinema.usc.edu

Office: SCI 101

Office Hours: by appointment

**Teaching Assistant: Lisa Müller-Trede**

Contact Info: mullertr@usc.edu

Office: SCI 211

Office Hours: by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Artist storytellers continue to incorporate new technologies into their work in order to entertain and provoke their audiences toward discussion and action in addressing issues relevant to their communities. With the advent of digital media; film, performance art, and theatre have been quick to embrace new "interactive" and "immersive" platforms to enhance the work in their respective fields. In this process, unique aspects of live performance (people in a room, collectively witnessing a story unfold) have often been subsumed by these technological breakthroughs.

This course will introduce students to some of the artists that have been on the avant-garde of incorporating technology into their work and the effect that has had on their audiences. At the end of the semester there will be a public exhibition of the class project open to the broader community.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Using tools and techniques explored over the course of the semester, students will touch on the history of performance art, collaborate on developing, writing, designing a group project, and will stage an immersive 360° docu-narrative performance, open to the public, that delves deeply into the topic of their choice.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

Because so much of the class is based around in-class work and collaboration, it is important that students attend all class meetings. Accommodation for absences must be negotiated with professor.

**REQUIRED READINGS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS**

We'll read selections from the following, in addition to other readings, all provided on our course Moodle:

- Berghaus, Günter. *Avant-garde Performance: Live Events and Electronic Technologies*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Johnstone, Keith. *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre*. Routledge, 1987.
- Aitken, Doug, and Noel Daniel. *Broken Screen: Expanding the Image, Breaking the Narrative*. Distributed Art Publishers, Inc., 2006.
- Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. MIT Press, 2001.
- Bishop, Claire. *Installation Art*. Tate Publishing, 2011.
- Gambaro, Griselda. *Information for Foreigners*. Northwestern University Press, 1990.
- McKee, Robert. *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting*. Methuen Publishing, 2005.

## ASSIGNMENTS / GRADING BREAKDOWN

• Ideation #1: Topic Areas / Themes for Discussion	10%
• Ideation #2: Project Elements Presentation	10%
• Museum/Art Installation Site Report	10%
• Prototype Presentations: Wireframes   Storyboards   Scripts	10%
• Final Project Performance	20%
• Final Reflection & Performance Documentation	20%
• Participation (In-class   Site Visits   Set-Up & Strike)	20%

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### **Ideation #1: Topic Areas/Themes For Discussion – due week 2**

Each student is tasked with presenting on one topic they would like the class to consider as a basis for the final installation-based project. The chosen topic should tap into community issues that have either global or local resonance. Students must create a media-rich presentation that outlines the chosen topics, supporting research, and initial thoughts on how each idea might translate into a performance/installation setting.

### **Ideation #2: Project Touch Points Ideation – due week 3**

Each student will be assigned a specific area of research to perform that directly relates to the class' final project idea. Students must synthesize their findings into at least three interactive “touch points” that can be considered by the class for creation and inclusion in the final project. These interactive elements should be designed to either further story or the ultimate audience end goal as devised by the class for their 360° docu-narrative.

### **Installation Site Report – due week 4**

Selecting from a list of possible installations currently on display around Los Angeles, students must perform a site visit. After viewing the installation as a participant, students must then observe other visitors and staff and how they interact with the project. Students will also study and consider space, flow, environment, and mood as it pertains to the project's intended outcomes, and what, if anything, they might change to improve the installation. Students will create a brief report on their findings to present in-class.

### **Prototype: Story and Structure Documents – due week 9**

Building off of the work performed in the first part of the course, and working as a group, students must create a set of documents that they will use as instructions for the building of their installation and its various media elements. The documents may include, but are not limited to: narrative outlines, screenplays, storyboards, floor plans, website wireframes, audio/video transcripts, set-design elevations, and/or lighting plans. Each of these will be reviewed and discussed in-class for final approval.

### **Final Project Installation and Performance – due weeks 14 & 15**

Over the last five weeks of the semester, and working as a group, the students will create, film, edit, and build the necessary media, performance, and physical touch points they have devised for their 360 docu-narrative installation. During the final week of classes, they will set-up their final project in a soundstage in the School of Cinematic Arts complex, which will be open to the public, for two days, for review and discussion.

### **Final Portfolio/Project Documentation – due week 16**

A thorough, media-rich portfolio documenting the design, iteration, and performance of the final project must be created in conjunction with a final reflection essay that provides the student a forum for critical analysis of the entire experience.

**Weekly Assignments.** Over the course of the semester students will be asked to complete various small assignments that work towards a general understanding of core concepts and principles.

Typically these assignments will begin in class during the hands-on tutorial session. You will have to complete these assignments outside of class. The purpose of the in-class session is to get you started and to address any initial questions that you have.

All assignments must be accompanied by a 200-300 word reflection of the research and creative processes. This documentation should be posted to a Moodle page before the class on the date due.

### **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY**

All assignments should be submitted through the course Moodle/Google Drive unless otherwise defined.

### **GRADING TIMELINE**

Grading will be completed no later than two weeks after submission.

### **ABSENCE POLICY**

MA+P classes depend on group work and in-class critique, which makes attendance crucial. You are expected to be present for every scheduled class session. If you must miss a class, please be sure to get any notes and assignments from a classmate so you do not fall behind.

There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. Tardiness or leaving class early for (0 to 15 minutes) will be considered ½ an absence. Missing more than 30 minutes of a class is considered an absence. **After your second absence, each additional absence will lower your final grade by 5%.**

Please note that the grading policy makes it nearly impossible to pass the course should you miss more than three classes in a semester. If you anticipate attendance issues, please notify your professor immediately.

### **GRADING SCALE**

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

A	95-100	
A-	90-94	
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	
<b>C</b>	<b>73-76</b>	<b>MINIMUM PASSING GRADE FOR MEDIA ARTS + PRACTICE MAJORS</b>
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	
D	63-66	
<b>D-</b>	<b>60-62</b>	<b>MINIMUM PASSING GRADE FOR USC</b>
F	59 and below	

### **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

#### **Diversity Statement:**

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison,

<http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm>; e-mail [diversity@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:diversity@cinema.usc.edu). You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here <https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/>

### **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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

### **Statement on Fair Use:**

Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. MA+P projects are produced with fair use doctrines in mind using its four pillars: (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. Generally speaking, this means you must only use as much of a copyrighted work as is necessary to make your point, and you must cite your sources accordingly.

### **Citation Guidelines:**

We assert that work produced in our classes is covered under the Doctrine of Fair Use. In order to make this claim, however, all projects must include academically appropriate citations in the form of a References section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The References section is either included in the project itself or as a separate document, as appropriate. We follow the [Kairos Journal of Rhetoric, Technology and Pedagogy style guide](#) for citation purposes; Kairos uses a modified APA format, whose general guidelines and specific examples may be found here: <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/styleguide.html#apa>

### **Computer Code:**

Computer code is often shared and reused. This is appropriate in a MA+P course unless otherwise directed by the assignment. If you do use code, you should attribute it. Please follow these protocols from MIT which call for placing a comment in one’s code with a URL to the original source, a note if it was adapted, and the date of retrieval: <https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/writing-code>

### **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.

### **Support Systems:**

*Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710*

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

<https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*  
[engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086*  
[equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](https://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

*Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421*  
[studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*  
[dsp.usc.edu](https://dsp.usc.edu)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710*  
[studentaffairs.usc.edu/sssa](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/sssa)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*  
[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Trojan Food Pantry*  
<https://campusactivities.usc.edu/trojan-food-pantry/>

Any currently enrolled USC student who does not have a dining hall meal plan or whose plan's swipes have been fully used and is experiencing a food emergency/food insecurity qualify for the services of the Trojan Food Pantry.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*  
[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*  
[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu) Non-emergency assistance or information.

**PLEASE NOTE:  
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL  
SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX**

## **WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

The following weekly schedule is subject to change. Please consult the course Moodle for the most current information, assignments and due dates.

**Week 1:** Course Overview – Immersive Docu-Narrative Performance Discussion

**Week 2:** What is Installation Art? – Ideation #1 Due

**Week 3:** Avant-Garde Performance – Ideation #2 Due

**Week 4:** Museum/Art Installation Site Visit Presentations

**Week 5:** Story Structure and Point of View - In-Class Workshop – Final Project Refinement

**Week 6:** Public Interactives

**Week 7:** Designing Immersive Experiences

**Week 8:** World Building and Design

**Week 9:** Prototype Presentations – Story and Structure Documents Due

**Week 10:** Floor Plan and Touch Point Design

**Week 11:** Transmedia Story and Design

**Week 12:** In-Class Design Lab #1

**Week 13:** In-Class Design Lab #2

**Week 14:** Final Project Build-Out

**Week 15:** Final Project Presentation and Strike

**Week 16:** Final Portfolio and Reflection Due