SYLLABUS

DESCRIPTION

*Media Arts – an Introduction* is a broad survey of the media arts. It discusses the many ways in which artists have used new technology and media from the late 19th century to the present. Media arts will be presented within a broad cultural and historical framework. Intertextual ties to other cultural forms, including popular culture, will be pointed out and discussed. The course has several goals. First of all, it aims at clarifying the often confusing discourses on the “media arts” — in everyday use the meaning of this concept is often vague and its relationship to other related concepts, like “digital arts”, “technological arts”, etc. far from clear. The course provides the student a broad historical, cultural and aesthetic understanding of the forms and main achievements of the media arts so far. The topics that will be discussed include the uses of media art in public spaces, telematic art, art and artificial life, media performance and interactive installation art. The ultimate aim is to provide the student conceptual “tools” that can prove helpful in critical thinking, but also in one’s own art and design practices purporting to merge art, media and technology. Needless to say, the power and influence of media arts is gradually growing, both within the “art world” and the media culture at large. Understanding their roles and uses means understanding contemporary culture better.

SCHEDULE

Meeting 1 (Sep 28) Confronting Media with Media

*Keywords*: Heartfield, Found Footage, Situationism, Scratch, Patch.


Meeting 2 (Oct 5) The Urge to Destroy

*Keywords*: Futurism, Dada, Fluxus, Autodestructive Art, Gordon Matta-Clark, Survival Research Laboratories

Meeting 3 (Oct 12) Avant-Garde and the Moving Image. A commented review of key works including Entr’Acte (Clair and Picabia), Anémic Cinéma (Duchamp), Zygosis (a Documentary on John Heartfield), and the rare documentary Art For Tomorrow (1969).


Keywords: Konstructivism, Moholy-Nagy, Bauhaus, Cage, E.A.T., CAVS


Meeting 5 (Oct 26) The Lure of Artificial Life

Keywords: Cybernetic art, robotic art, art and A-Life


Meeting 6 (Nov.2) From Participatory to Interactive Art

Keywords: Shaw, Krueger, Rokeby, Iwai, Levin, Hoberman


(MIDTERM ASSIGNMENTS TO BE HANDED IN!)

Meeting 7 (Nov. 9) “Reach Out I’ll Be There”: from Telematics to Net Art

Keywords: Malevich, Klein, Ascott, Galloway & Rabinowitz, Van Gogh TV, Second Life


Meeting 8 (Nov.17) SPECIAL SESSION: a quest appearance by an internationally known media artist (name to be announced later)

------- November 23 Thanksgiving Holiday, no Lecture -------

Meeting 9 (Nov.30) Bridging the Physical and the Virtual

Keywords: Vanderbeek, Lozano-Hemmer, Fujihata, Sukumaran
Meeting 10 (Dec 7) Breaking (or Opening?) Up of the ‘Media Arts’ Paradigm?

Keywords: Software Art, Biotech Art, Device Art


(FINAL ASSIGNMENT + REPORTS TO BE HANDED IN!)

- In addition there will be three mandatory video screenings. Times, places and programs will be announced later.

- The student is also expected to attend at least two public lectures held at the EDA (Broad Art Center) during Fall Quarter 2007. Reports from the screenings and lectures (minimum 400 words each) must be submitted.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

There will be two assignments: a lecture diary and a final assignment. The lecture diary must include an entry of each meeting (minimum length of each entry: 400 words) that also deals with the assigned readings. The first five entries will be handed for grading on Nov.2., and the remaining ones, together with the notes about the screenings and the public lectures and the final assignment, on Dec.8. Grading is based on the lecture diary (15+15%), the final assignment (55%), and the notes about the screenings and public lectures (15%). More than two absences without the instructor’s permission will lower the final grade by one step per absence (-). Active participation in the class meetings may raise the final degree by a step (+).

TEXTS

REQUIRED READINGS:
- a course reader will be available for purchase at CopyMat, Westwood Village, 925 Westwood Boulevard (cross street Le Conte), tel. 310 - 824 5276. A copy will be on reserve at The Arts Library.
- In addition there are articles available on-line. See the course schedule (above) for details.

RECOMMENDED READINGS: The following books are recommended as additional readings. When possible, they will be on reserve at the Arts Library.


CLASS MEETINGS

Fridays 2-4:50pm at Broad Art Center 2100A

CONTACTS

Professor Huhtamo can be contacted after the meetings, by email (erhuhta@ucla.edu) or during his office hours (Thursdays, 12:30-1:30pm, Broad Art Center, room 3251). The T.A.s are Zach Blas (zblas@ucla.edu) and Jihyun Kim (jihyunkim@ucla.edu). Their office hours are THU, 1-2pm (Zach, Broad Art Center, room 3246) and FRI, 12:30-1:30pm (Jihyun, Broad Art Center, room 3246).

WEBSITE

The url of the class website will be announced later.