FA / YSDN 4002 3.0 Type In Motion

Winter Term | Academic Year 2009 – 2010

Design Practicum | Elective for Design Majors

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Summary and Goals

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the creation of narrative structures outside of print-based media. The projects are not specific to any particular "use" – e.g. film credits for a particular movie, or a mock television promo. To do so would be to rely on your preconception of what narrative structures are by what you have already seen in television, film or online. Instead, the assignments ask you to "tell stories" by reacting to your research and own experiences through self-expression. With practice, you will become comfortable being your own content generator, and creating original work by crafting engaging stories from your own perspective. By focusing on understanding the structure of narrative, from its most abstract to literal level, you will be capable of adapting to any requirement in the future, whether that is a product advertisement, a film title, or a public service announcement.

Course Assignments

Exercises are designed as brief assignments between classes to help you develop, direct and explore your own creative process, with a strong focus on research, stimulus sourcing, lateral thinking, creative ideation, content generation, narrative structure, and conceptual visualization. It is strongly recommended that you approach exercises as a research opportunity for your projects.

Projects are designed for the application of your research, ideas and content (original and/or sourced) within the experimental exploration of time-based media. **The quality of your ideas is more important than technical execution.** It is important to note that the quality of the work you will produce is directly dependent on the effort you invest in your creative process, content research, and experimental innovation.

In-class discussions, workshops, critiques and presentations are your opportunity to engage your peers and course director in your creative process. Your participation will be informed by the material you bring forth to contribute, as assigned through exercises or your own research.

Tutorials are available online and may also be arranged through your peers or the course director to assist in the learning of software. **Class time will not be devoted to technical instruction. It is your responsibility to seek out and use the resources available to you to complete your assignments.** It is strongly recommended that you begin to experiment with software techniques and tutorials as soon as possible to allow adequate time to learn the skills you will need to produce quality results in your projects. You are encouraged to include any learning experimentation as part of your process documentation.

Learning Outcomes

Exercise 1 introduces the concept of "essence". The origins of creativity are explored through analysis of an inspiring source. Expressive vocabulary for articulating abstract and emotive concepts is introduced. Artifacts produced through free-association ideation techniques and self-expression are used as content generation stimulus for project ideas.

Exercise 2 introduces storytelling and the structure of narrative. Relationship is examined between the form and function of myth-making, parti, moral premise and sequence. The subjective and objective nature of "good" is discussed through class presentation of inspiring material.

Exercise 3 is intended to ease you into the narrative possibilities of an image sequence. Equal attention is paid toward your critique of the narrative content as well as the formal qualities of the images themselves. The relationship between "subject" and "object" is examined through the human figure as representation, using context, staging, and drama to convey a story using only seven still frames. Experimentation with focus, depth of field, distance from the subject, colour treatment, lighting conditions and image manipulation to convey emotion is encouraged.

Project 1 is purposely confined to a 30-second motion investigation. By limiting the project to a short length, you can concentrate on learning how to create engaging relationships between a limited number of image sequences, while you familiarize yourself with using a DV camera and Adobe After Effects.

Project 2 is more significant in assignment length and complexity. It is intended to function as an investigation in content creation as much as a showcase of your abilities. Because this is a senior-level studio course, emphasis is placed on the development of your individual "voice" or individual mode of expression.