

ART 4484 New Media Art Theory
FALL 2008
Class meets Tues. 3 – 6, 408 Art Bldg.

Prof. Susan Ryan
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Oron Catts, Ionat Zurr, and Guy Ben-Arry, *The Pig Wings*, 2000-01,
pig bone marrow stem cells and biodegradable polymers

NEW MEDIA ART THEORY

New forms of artistic media are changing the landscape of art as we know it. Besides vastly expanding accessibility of all art works, the contents of museums and galleries, and art historical information, these new media have created new art forms that challenge received knowledge about how art functions in society. Students will learn an appreciation of the logic and meaning systems behind new media art forms, and become familiar with the language and ideas employed to discuss and critique them.

This will be a seminar style, reading intensive course emphasizing critical analysis, discussion of the discourses surrounding new media art, and student independent research. Classes will combine lectures, discussions, and student presentations.

For Fall 2008, a major segment of the course will be devoted to eco art and bio and genetic art forms and the questions and issues they raise.

Texts

Course will cover readings on reserve in Middleton Library and available on line.

Grading

20% Midterm

20% Leading class discussion

20% Class participation and contribution throughout the semester

40% Final project (25% paper, 25% oral presentation)

Graduate Credit: ??Graduate students will be required to lead class discussion for an entire class meeting on a specific topic listed on the syllabus.

Unit I: Introduction to New Media Art Theory

Week 1. General Background: What is New Media Art?

Science and Technology, Science Fiction, and Culture

Fritz Lang, *Metropolis*

Week 2. Fear and Love

Gilles Deleuze "Post Script on Societies of Control" (1988). In *The Cybercities Reader*, Stephen Graham, ed. (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 73-77.

"The Ecstasy of Communication," trans. John Johnston in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, WA: Bay Press, 1983) 126-134.

Paul Virilio, "The Third Interval" (1997). In Virilio, *Open Sky*, Julie Rose, trans. (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 9-21.

Roy Ascott, "Is There Love in the Telematic Embrace," in Ascott, *Telematic Embrace: Visionary Theories of Art, Technology, and Consciousness*, Ed A. Shanken, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 232-246.

Week 3. How We Became Post Human

N. Katherine Hayles, "Toward Embodied Virtuality" and "Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers," Chapters 1 and 2 in Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 1-49.

Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women, The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 149-181.

Access at:

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/HPS/Haraway/CyborgManifesto.html>

William Gibson, *Neuromancer: Remembering Tomorrow* (New York: Ace Books, 1984).

Access at: <http://lib.ru/GIBSON/neuromancer.txt>

Week 4. Media and Embodiment

Mark Hansen, "Between Body and Image: On the 'Newness' of New Media Art," in Hansen, *New Philosophy for New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 21-46.

More to be announced.

Week 5. Database Aesthetics

Lev Manovich, "The Database," in Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2001), pp. 212-286.

Robert F. Nideffer, "Game Engines as Embedded Systems," in *Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow*, Victoria Vesna, ed., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007, pp. 211-230

Week 6 Networks and Hackers

Mackenzie Wark, *Hacker Manifesto*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2004.

Access at: http://subsol.c3.hu/subsol_2/contributors0/warktext.html

Alexander R. Galloway, "Protocol Futures," in *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization* (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 2004) pp. 147-246.

Neil Stephenson *Snow Crash*, 1992.

Week 7 Networks (cont.) and Blogosphere

Geert Lovink and Florian Schneider, "The State of Networking," *Make World Newspaper #4* (<http://www.makeworlds.org>)

Access at:

<http://laudanum.net/geert/files/1077786189/index.shtml?1213466434>

Geert Lovink, "New Media: Art and Science," in *Empires, Ruins and Networks*, Scott McQuire and Nikos Papastergiadis, eds., Melbourne, University of Melbourne Press, 2005.

Access at: <http://laudanum.net/geert/files/1129753681/>

Geert Lovink, "Blogging, The Nihilist Impulse," *Eurozine* (January 2, 2007).

Access at: <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-01-02-lovink-en.html>

Week 8. Locational Media

Situationism as the background for locational media.

Reading to be announced

Networked Publics Blog

http://networkedpublics.org/locative_media/beyond_locative_media

Unit II: Ecotech and Biotech Art

Week 9. Environment and Land Art (History)

Paul Virilio, “The Perspective of Real Time” and “Grey Ecology,” in Virilio,
Open Sky Julie Rose, trans. (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 22-34 and 58-68.

Additional reading TBA.

Week 10. Eco or Green Art

Stephanie Smith. “Beyond Green” and Victor Margolin, “Reflections on Art and
Sustainability” in *Beyond Green: Toward a Sustainable Art* Chicago and
New York: Smart Museum of Art and Independent Curators International,
2006, pp. 12-29.

Week 11. Bio-Activism

Critical Art Ensemble (CAE), “Contestational Media,” from *Molecular Invasion*

Access at: <http://www.critical-art.net/books/index.html>

Week 12 Art and Biotech

Details TBA

Week 13. Student presentations

START-UP BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR ART 4484 Fall 08

UNIT I

Roy Ascott. *Telematic Embrace: Visionary Theories of Art, Technology, and Consciousness*, Ed A. Shanken, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture, Hal Foster, ed. Port Townsend, WA: Bay Press, 1983.

The Cybercities Reader. Stephen Graham, ed. London: Routledge, 2004.

Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow. Victoria Vesna, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

Alexander R. Galloway. *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004.

William Gibson. *Neuromancer: Remembering Tomorrow* (New York: Ace Books, 1984).

Donna Haraway. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women, The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1991.

N. Katherine Hayles. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Geert Lovink and Florian Schneider. "The State of Networking," *Make World Newspaper* #4 (<http://www.makeworlds.org>)
Access at: <http://laudanum.net/geert/files/1077786189/index.shtml?1213466434>

Geert Lovink, "Blogging, The Nihilist Impulse," *Eurozine* (January 2, 2007).

Access at: <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-01-02-lovink-en.html>

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Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2001.

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Mackenzie Wark, *A Hacker Manifesto*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.
Access at: http://subsol.c3.hu/subsol_2/contributors0/warktext.html

UNIT II

Art in the Biotech Era. Melentie Pandilovski, ed. Adelaide, South Australia: Experimental Art Foundation Inc., 2008.

Jean Baudrillard and Julia Witwer. *The Vital Illusion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Beyond Green: Toward a Sustainable Art. Chicago: Smart Museum of Art, and New York, Independent Curators International, 2006.

Arthur Kroker, *The Will to Technology and the Culture of Nihilism: Heidegger, Marx, Nietzsche*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.
Access at: <http://www.ctheory.net/will/>

Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism and Technoscience. Beatriz da Costa and Kavita Philip, eds. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008.

Websites of Interest:

<http://www.synapse.net.au/>

<http://www.neural.it/english/>

<http://www.mediamatic.net/>

<http://www.we-make-money-not-art.com/>

<http://www.greenmuseum.org>

<http://www.luminousgreen.org/>