

AVT 180 New Media in the Creative Arts

Professor Asma Chaudhary
achaudh7@gmu.edu | 703-975-3500
Spring 2015 MW 4:30-5:45 p.m.

George Mason University | School of Art (SOA)

College of Visual and Performing Arts
Art and Visual Technology
Office hours by appointment

“Why must art be static? You look at an abstraction, sculptured or painted, an entirely exciting arrangement of planes, spheres, nuclei, entirely without meaning. It would be perfect, but it is always still. The next step in sculpture is motion.” –Alexander Calder (American sculptor)

Course Description

New Media is a creative practice that investigates our physical and virtual realities that often become interwoven with socio-cultural objects, historical practices, and political events. Interestingly enough, these variables almost seem to influence our genetic code, relationships, global view, and existence. This class will be experimental in its approach to use software and techniques to create media that involves themes of activism, awareness, consumption, collaboration, desire, education, interactivity, physicality of objects, social networks, and performance art, etc. Students will not only use technology to craft their ideas but also experiment with fine art practices to enhance the aesthetic experience when presenting projects in a critique forum. The primary goal of this course is to provide an analytical, creative, and instructional working environment that supports each student in the making of meaningful, visual responses to the world(s) and culture(s) they live in. Students will be encouraged to follow their own interests and to examine their work within the broad context of contemporary art, new media art, and mediated culture.

Materials

- A portable USB or firewire drive to transfer and back-up project files.
- A digital camera. You may check cameras out from the STAR Lab (in the Johnson Center) for from the School of Art Photo Lab with your Mason ID (please see me for details).
- A sketchbook or binder to collect drawings, newspaper clippings, and ideas to support your projects.
- Most importantly, bring a good work ethic, curiosity, and a sense of humor.

Recommended Books

- *New Media Art* by Mark Tribe and Reena Jana; Taschen, 2006, ISBN: 3-8228-3041-0
- *New Media in Art (World of Art)* by Michael Rush, Thames & Hudson; 2nd edition (June 2005), ISBN-10: 0500203784
- *Digital Art (World of Art)* by Christiane Paul, Thames & Hudson; 2nd edition (October 2008) ISBN-10: 0500203989
- Any step-by-step guidebooks for the following software: Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, AfterEffects, Final Cut Pro, and/or QuickTime. We will do our best to sample each of these programs to give you more experience and discoverability when creating class projects such as image making, vector graphics, digital montages as well as some video editing and animation.

Information Technology Requirement

Please note that this course satisfies a General Education Foundation Requirement for Information Technology. The purpose of the information technology requirement is to ensure that students achieve an essential understanding of information technology infrastructure encompassing systems and devices; learn to make the most of the Web and other network resources; protect their digital data and devices; take advantage of latest technologies; and become more sophisticated technology users and consumers.

George Mason University and SOA Policies

Please turn off cell phones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his or her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cellphone, he or she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Attendance is mandatory! This is an experience class and growth comes only through continued active participation. In case of an unavoidable absence, please contact me immediately (email is best). You are responsible for all missed information. Excessive tardiness (15 minutes plus) and/or absence (more than two classes) will result in a severely reduced or failing grade for the course regardless of performance. Non-class open lab periods serve to provide additional work time outside of the classroom, which is recommended for the successful execution of projects. They do not serve as a replacement for scheduled class time.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an *intentionally* inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

Please note that as professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, *The National Association of Schools of Art and Design* (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

Please note that School of Art teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time, typically in the mornings, evenings, and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures, and schedules for studio use are established by the School of Art studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

Spring 2015 ArtsBus Dates (Saturday Field Trips to New York City)

21 February 2015, 21 March 2015, and 18 April 2015

ArtsBus Credit

Each School of Art major must have up to 5 AVT 300/ArtsBus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.

If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please visit: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need ArtsBus credit for graduation but may need to go on the ArtsBus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Spring 2015 Visual Voices Lecture Dates

Visual Voices is a lecture series by artists, art historians, and creative individuals about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursdays from 7:20-9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater. These events are free and open to the public. For more information, please visit: <http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>

- **22 January 2015, School of Art Graduate Students; *Loading Content***
- **29 January 2015, Ray Nichols and Jill Cypher; *A Colored Letter at the Bottom of a Ditch***
- **12 February 2015, Klaus Ottmann; *Art and Contemplation***
- **26 February 2015, Jame Anderson; *I Make Things***
- **5 March 2015, Steve Badanes and Linda Beaumont; *Jersey Devils***

Grade Breakdown

- All assignments count for 60% of your final grade
- Class participation, preparedness, and research count for 40% of your final grade

Critiques, Collaborative Projects, and Deadlines

Critiques are essential to artmaking and cultivating your ideas. All students must participate in critiques with insightful dialogue in order to receive a grade for their projects. You are expected to arrive to class prepared to work with any materials you need that day, this includes in-class reading assignments. In addition to the required technology and supplies, you are obligated to purchase specific materials as indicated within each assignment. If for any reason you are having difficulties with purchasing any materials required for a project, please see me and we will work out a plan. It is mandatory that you stick to the materials stated on the assignment sheets and purchase them before you arrive to class. Students who turn in assignments on time and participate for critique will be able to resubmit the project for a higher grade.

- **A = Outstanding** - Consistently exceptional work that raises the standards for one's entire peer group
- **B = Above Average** - Exceeding the requirements and expectations of the class
- **C = Average** - Meeting all class requirements
- **D = Below Average** - Completion of most, but not all, course requirements
- **F = Fail** - Failure to meet the requirements of the course

Important Deadlines

- Last Day to Add – **Tuesday, 27 January 2015**
- Last Day to Drop (No Tuition Penalty) – **Tuesday, 27 January 2015**
- Last Day to Drop (33% Tuition Penalty) – **Tuesday, 10 February 2015**
- Final Drop Deadline (67% Tuition Penalty) – **Friday, 20 February 2015**
- Selective Withdrawal Period – **Monday, 23 February-Friday, 27 March 2015**
- Incomplete Work from Fall 2014 Due to Instructor – **Friday, 27 March 2015**

Once the course add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for *late adds* (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed) , LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective *withdrawals* and *retroactive adds* (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the *Disabilities Resource Center* (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

University Honor Code Policy

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously.

No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is *plagiarism*, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*.)

The exception to this rule is information termed *general knowledge*—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is considered to be general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite." Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

A special note on art and digital technologies: Digital technologies are particularly suited to copy, sample, or appropriate, mash etc. previously created content. Many artists, visual, audio and literary, have used these techniques quite successfully in order to parody, celebrate or otherwise comment on cultural icons and what they represent. As a class, we will discuss techniques such as these and their relevance to copyright law and the university honor code, but as a rule students should always be up-front and honest with the class and professor as to what visual content has been sampled and how it has been manipulated or rearranged in any given project. Failure to do so will be considered an honor code violation.

Writing Center

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub

Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.