

Digital Arts: **CyberArts**

Realization (Fall '05/Sp '06)

INTRODUCTION

This class is a class in multi-disciplinary digital art. Begun in Fall 2004, the CyberArts class draws students and faculty from computer science, art and art history, architecture, music, and communications. Students are organized into cross-disciplinary teams to create a large work of art. The student teams will realize a work of art, making it robust enough for public display.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a project-based class. It is an intensive immersion in different approaches to digital art. It will be a studio class in that students work in teams to develop the year-long project. We emphasize the cycle of ideation/presentation/critique. Reviews look at not only the inventiveness of problem finding and problem solving, but the quality of expression found in the concept, form, and behavior of created artifacts. Students are encouraged to find their own interpretation of the project theme.

Projects involve creating and integrating hardware and software. Although working in teams, students will be expected to participate in all aspects of projects. Sensors, displays, and/or effectors will be integrated in a physical embodiment that reflects the intended setting, use and content.

We will draw on expertise and practices in art, communications, music, and computer science. In parallel with the project, there will be readings, discussions and a few lectures to frame and reflect upon the nature of technology-based art. Students are expected to keep up with assigned reading and contribute actively to our discussions.

EVALUATION

Structurally, the class is part seminar, part lecture, and mostly hands-on project development. Students will be encouraged to take this class pass/fail. For those needing to take it for a grade, students will be primarily graded on their team's project and their participation in its conceptualization, background research, aesthetic and technical exploration, and its implementation/performance. This will be assessed in team meetings with their faculty advisors, at least two presentations made to the class, a written report due at the end of each semester, and the work of art produced. Secondly, students will be graded on their general participation in class discussions and contributions to the collective knowledge of the class.

PREREQUISITE

This course is open to seniors and graduate students with an interest in technology-based art. This might include topics as varied as game design,

electronic music, animation, IRVE's, HCI, hypertext fiction, and digital cinema. It is a two-semester commitment.

SYLLABUS

The course focuses on issues of the arts, technology and culture by creating a thoughtful work of technology-based art. It is intended that the Cyberarts teams will create a product on this theme that will be "beyond the screen" and beyond the students' abilities to produce individually without the expertise of their fellow team members. They will be encouraged to use digital technology in the formats that best expand their concept.

There is no textbook, but readings are assigned to support investigation of some of the topics.

Topics:

The topics loosely break down into four main categories: process, skills, the history of technology and the arts, and meaning.

Process:

The problem finding / problem solving dynamic
The role of representations in the artistic process
Multi-disciplinary teams
Ideation/presentation/critique cycle
The art of review
Holistic realization (creating the environment, the object and the interface together)

Skills:

representation skills (sketching, storyboarding, model making, animation, 3d-sketching and prototyping)
digital visual tools: Maya, PhotoShop, and Flash
digital music tools: MIDI, Max
project planning
team building

Technology and the Arts:

EAT, Kluver and early technology-based art
Cross-cultural applications of technology
Readymades and handmades
Time-based art

Meaning:

Critical theory
Genres and meaning creation
Media and meaning
Irony
The tension between fine art and commercial art, insider and outsider art
Provocation and spectacle