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ARTS3125

Experiments in Performance and Media

Term One // 2019

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject Area: *Theatre and Performance Studies*

This course can also be studied in the following specialisation: *Media, Culture and Technology*

This course examines the shifting relationship between technology and performance cultures - from dancing robots to smartphone theatres. It considers the expanding field of digital culture and how its applications have transformed the parameters of performance and representation. You will observe a range of performance objects, activities, events and behaviours produced in the exchange between the body and new media. You will draw on leading examples to develop your own live experiments across platforms that use Twitter, mobile media, surveillance and YouTube. You will explore the convergence of performance genres, the remediation of art works, theoretical concepts such as posthumanism and cybernetics, and how live performance engages with contemporary cultural change.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Identify and discuss key developments in contemporary performance inspired by developments in technology
2. Evaluate the evolving relationship between technology and aesthetics
3. Assess the role of technology in performance history and in recent theoretical debates in the humanities
4. Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of different modes of performance and an appreciation of their cultural and historical specificity
5. Better undertake critical debate on contemporary cultural issues
6. Pursue individual guided research
7. Construct sustained critical argument in the form of reviews or essays
8. Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of selected theoretical perspectives and research methods

Teaching Strategies

Rationale

This course is designed to facilitate students' learning by establishing a multimodal teaching structure in which students discuss, research, present, participate and listen. The overall aim of the course is to enable students to maintain a deeper understanding of mediatised performance through facilitating connections they make between readings, case studies, presentations and screenings. Assessments reflect the expectations for excellence in research and inventiveness that this course seeks to establish. The topics the course covers reflect an ongoing commitment to teaching innovative, relevant and significant materials for the discipline of theatre/performance studies

Teaching strategies

This course is structured as a combination of lecture, workshop and student-led learning processes. The course includes a series of classes in lecture / workshop / discussion format, followed by a research and presentation approach, through which students are expected to integrate, apply and extend course

materials with and for their peers. Students are encouraged to actively participate in the thinking-through of key theoretical and pedagogical questions specific to this course, and to proactively deepen the terms of the course through self-led research.

SEMINAR FORMAT: The seminar will be loosely structured as: lecture + visual screenings, followed by student discussion and readings (although this may change from week to week). The aim of this class format is to integrate a number of student learning modalities. The lecture information provides a platform for students to then engage in student-led learning processes through the allocation of focus questions and / or set discussion tasks. Students are able to reflectively process other students' contributions in relation to their own, and to self-determine a critical and analytic research practice.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Analytical engagements 1 & 2	50%	21/03/2019 by 11.59 PM and 11/04/2019 by 11.59 PM	1,3,4,5,7
Group Project Presentation	25%	23/04/2019 02:00 PM	2,3,4,5,6,8
Individual Project Rationale	25%	30/04/2019 11:59 PM	1,2,3,4,6,7

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Analytical engagements 1 & 2

Start date:

Length: 1,000-1,250 words each, i.e. 2,000-2,500 words in total

Details: Two scaffolded analytical reports (1000-1250 words each). Students report on their engagements with and experiences of a selection of performance case studies. These are available as apps, in class or via on-campus excursion (iCinema). Detailed written feedback and rubric on report #1 enables students to improve before report #2 – feedback via grade and rubric only. Due weeks 5 and 8.

Additional details:

Please see Moodle.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Group Project Presentation

Start date:

Details: In class presentation (20 mins). Students work in small groups (3-5) on projects which involve concept development; historical research or a performance prototype. Rubric and brief comment provided via Moodle. Presented weeks 11 and 12

Additional details:

Please see Moodle

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 3: Individual Project Rationale

Start date:

Details: Evaluative justification of group project ideas in relation to critical concepts and case studies raised throughout the course. 1000-1250 words. Rubric and grade provided via Moodle. Due week 13. This is the final assessment for this course

Additional details:

Please see Moodle.

Attendance Requirements

Attendance of Lectures and Tutorials is mandatory in this course. Unexcused absence from more than 20 percent will result in the award a fail grade.

In the seminar, you will actively engage with core course content that enable you to demonstrate all eight Course Learning Outcomes: (1) Identify and discuss key developments in contemporary performance inspired by developments in technology; (2) Evaluate the evolving relationship between technology and aesthetics; (3) Assess the role of technology in performance history and in recent theoretical debates in the humanities; (4) Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of different modes of performance and an appreciation of their cultural and historical specificity; (5) Better undertake critical debate on contemporary cultural issues; (6) Pursue individual guided research; (7) Construct sustained critical argument in the form of reviews or essays; and (8) Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of selected theoretical perspectives and research methods.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 18 February - 24 February	Seminar	<p>Performance, New Media, History</p> <p>From the satellite to the iPhone, as new media technologies become increasingly entangled in our everyday lives, performance practices that explore, expand and critique the function of those technologies flourish. In this introductory seminar we set the exploratory tone of the course by mapping how 'new media dramaturgies' reflect the cultural shifts being catalysed by rapid technological change. Varyingly termed multimedia performance, virtual theatre, digital performance or cyborg theatre, new media dramaturgies are found in performance works that demonstrate an integral reliance upon and relationship to media technologies. Unstable and constantly changing, we work towards naming some dynamic and contingent frameworks of enquiry that will guide us through the course.</p> <p>Case studies: Robert Wilson, Charlotte Moorman, Laurie Anderson, Dumb Type and more. [see case study bank].</p> <p>Readings: Please see Moodle.</p>
Week 2: 25 February - 3 March	Seminar	<p>Big Data</p> <p>This week we look at data as structure, infrastructure and aesthetic for contemporary</p>

		<p>performance. We ask: how can performance respond to and represent big data? Can performance contribute to the project of data justice? Or it desinted to become another cultural dataset?</p> <p>Case studies: Rimini Protokoll's <i>100%</i> series; rawcus's <i>Catalogue</i> (2015); Julian Rosefeldt's installation <i>Manifesto</i>; and others.</p> <p>Readings and activities: Please see Moodle.</p>
<p>Week 3: 4 March - 10 March</p>	<p>Seminar</p>	<p>New Media Atmospheres</p> <p>This week we consider how contemporary performance aesthetics work with the materiality of image-based dramaturgies. We experience stage practices which generate immersive and affective scenographies, which is to say "atmospheres," through making light, sound or time (rather than narrative) the object of the aesthetic experience. We look at works by Societas Raffaello Sanzio, Chunky Move and Hiroaki Umeda. We also consider the immersive conditions of video work in the large scale installation practices of Bill Viola and Granular Synthesis. We finally consider works that operate on the 'edge of materiality' – works that involve chemical actors such as smoke or fog, works that decompose sound to the point of becoming 'microcosmic noise' or that move between the ephemerality of performance and performative architecture.</p> <p>Case studies: Bill Viola; The Weather Project; igloo; Glow; Societas Raffaello Sanzio; Granular Synthesis <i>Modell 5</i>; Hiroaki Umeda; works by Scott Gibbons and more.</p> <p>Readings and activities: Please see Moodle.</p>
<p>Week 4: 11 March - 17 March</p>	<p>Seminar</p>	<p>Robot and Alien Agencies</p> <p>This week we consider a range of performative protosubjectivities – from robots to algorithms to lively, non-human matter that 'senses' us in the room. We move from understanding the industrial function of robots as machines for productivity to understanding robots as 'hyperobjects' (Timothy Morton 2013) – as objects 'that exceed the usual parameters of objecthood' and that begin to demonstrate human-like characteristics. Here – we begin to consider the role of performance in examining notions of alien agency, robotiny (ie as</p>

		<p>opposed to humanity) and how robots with feelings work in uncanny ways.</p> <p>Case studies: Futile Labour, Chris Salter; the Tiller Girls by Louis Phillippe Demers; Kris Verdonck's Actor 1; Stelarc's early to recent body experiments; Critical Art Ensemble's play with powder and Eduardo Kac's GFP Bunny; Ballettikka Interettikka; Marie Velonki' sleepy robots; Annie Dorsen's Hello Hi There, algorithmic theatre and more!</p> <p>Readings and activities: Please see Moodle.</p>
	Assessment	<p>Assessment 1.1: Analytical Engagement due on Thursday, 21 March 2019, by 11.59 pm.</p>
Week 5: 18 March - 24 March	Seminar	<p>Theatre After Film: Hypermedial Performance</p> <p>In the Black Mirror episode 'White Bear' (S2 E2, 2013) the spectacle of live performance becomes the means by which the violence of livestreaming practices are socially critiqued. As disturbing as its themes are, the question of the function of live performance as a medium which allows us to examine and repurpose the screen is put into view. In this week's lecture we look at two contemporary performance works which use live performance to 'de-remediate' (Bryoni Trezise's term) or 'dismediate' (Martin Harries' term) screen performance. In doing so, the historical nature of gendered film scripts as well as the teleological development of film in relationship to theatre are revealed and explored.</p> <p>Case studies: Nat Randall <i>The Second Woman</i> http://iview.abc.net.au/programs/behind-the-second-woman/AC1724H001S00; http://thewoostergroup.org/hamlet-dvd</p> <p>Readings: Please see Moodle.</p>
Week 6: 25 March - 31 March	Seminar	<p>Textuality and Voice in Social and Distributive Media</p> <p>Social media platforms are radically changing the ways in which consumers (or spectators) relate to the field of production – in terms of who makes the art, its content and social relations more broadly. Notions of 'produsing' or viral media inform not only how the democratic vs. coercive potentials of social media are culturally understood – but point to shifts in how the development and circulation of performative texts, gestures and behaviours – both</p>

		<p>offline and online – are changing. These week we look at emerging genres of performance practice that engage with the new communities, temporalities, narratives and textualities that are emerging in digital life.</p> <p>Case studies: Theatre Replacement – Weetube and Town Choirs; Erica Scourti – Life in Adwords; Tim Etchells’ SMS performance http://timetchells.com/projects/thirty-nine-or-so-to-do/; Royal Shakespeare Company Such Tweet Sorrow</p> <p>Readings: Please see Moodle.</p>
Week 7: 1 April - 7 April	Seminar	<p>Mobile Theatres</p> <p>Performance practitioners increasingly work with geo-locative, mobile and ubiquitous or pervasive technologies. Their works interrogate and draw upon what Robert Payne has called the ‘promiscuous’ characteristics of smart hand-held devices which enable multiple interactions and functions that challenge ‘deep’ forms of attention. At times these works become large-scale, game-like events that – like <i>Pokemon Go</i> - command a whole territory or community. At times these works explore the isolating capacities of mobile media through their capacities for ‘one-on-one’ performance. This Artshub article gives a good summary of these emerging genres.</p> <p>This week’s case studies use performance to examine the ways in which mobile media shift cultural expectations around intimacy, story and our capacities for attention. We will use the principles operating in these works to develop some prototype performances of our own.</p> <p>Case studies: Ken Cameron <i>How Iran</i>; Fuel Theatre: <i>Everyday Moments</i>: https://fueltheatre.com/projects/everyday-moments; Dries Verhoeven’s <i>Wanna Play? (Love in the Time of Grindr)</i> http://driesverhoeven.com/en/project/wanna-play/ https://vimeo.com/123388670 [English Version]</p> <p>Readings: Please see Moodle.</p>
	Assessment	<p>Assessment 1.2: Analytical Engagement due on Thursday, 11 April 2019, by 11.59 pm.</p>
Week 8: 8 April - 14 April	Seminar	<p>Research and development workshop for groups to start their final projects.</p>

Week 9: 15 April - 21 April	Reading	No class; this is a Reading Week.
Week 10: 22 April - 28 April	Seminar	Assessment 2: Group Presentations to be done in class.
	Assessment	Assessment 2: Group Presentation is due this week in class, i.e. on Tuesday, 23 April 2019 at 2 pm.
Week 11: 29 April - 1 May	Assessment	Assessment 3: Individual Reflection is due on Tuesday, 30 April 2019 by 11.59 pm.

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Required and Suggested Readings are listed on Moodle. Readings may change, or new suggested readings added, so make sure to regularly check Moodle for the most up-to-date information.

Recommended Resources

Further resources can be found on Moodle.

Course Evaluation and Development

We welcome constructive feedback – especially written feedback (emails, notes etc.) on the course content, structure and assessment methods – not only at the conclusion of the course, but also as we go along. At the end of the course we will invite you to provide feedback using UNSW's course experience survey.

Many aspects of this course are the result of innovative student feedback from previous years. For example, the number and genre of case studies in this course has been changed in response to student feedback.

With the move to a 10-week teaching term this year, we have rearranged some content, changed some assessments, and introduced 4-hour seminars.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

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