

SM6333: WORLD MAKING: ARTISTIC STRATEGIES FOR CONTINGENT SYSTEMS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

World Making: Artistic Strategies for Contingent Systems

Subject Code

SM - School of Creative Media

Course Number

6333

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

System art, generative art, art as information ecology, automated thinking, autopoiesis: post World War II, the creative act underwent radical shifts in the wake of cybernetic and with the pervasiveness of machine cultures. The artists have to come to terms with the plurality of contingent systems which weaved into the fabric of contemporary life; The artistic agency has to take a step backwards and go meta. Through the concept of worldmaking this course aims to give a theoretical and practical understanding of contemporary artistic strategies developed in the context of contingent systems. 'Contingens' a medieval Latin term expresses the idea of possible, from the verb 'contingere' ("to touch, to meet, to happen attain to"). Contingent systems are not purely iterative entities. They are riddled with glitches, open-endedness incomputable horizons, and they reconfigure the distribution of the sensible world and what being sentient beings means. We posit the worldmaking impulse as a set of artistic strategies aiming at opening new perspectives towards pervasive contingent systems.

By the completion of the class, the student will be able to:

- Understand the modes of creation deriving from experimental approaches to art;
- Develop expertise in the contemporary artistic practices affected by the world-making creative paradigm (avant-garde and modern arts, theatre, literature, cinema, fine arts, architecture, fashion);
- Explore the contribution of screen-based media, interactive and non-interactive media, theatrical scene, performance arts, installation arts, architecture, and cityscape to worldmaking;
- Understand the intellectual tools artists use (philosophy and cultural critique) in relation to their artistic practices (Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Ranciere John Cleese, Jacques Attali Giorgio Agamben, David Couzens Hoy, Merleau Ponty Paul Virilio Jorge Luis Borges)
- Understand the possibilities and ideologies embedded in world-making practices;

Topics discussed: Hybridity; Aesthetics; Culture; Beyond Systems /Negentropy; U-Dystopia; Space Environment; Space Mapping; Time; Event; Characters.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	To identify critically world-making as an artistic practice. To classify, describe, list critically the artistic practices invoking world-making.		x		x
2	To memorize, identify, recognize the concepts at the crossing of world-making and critical new media studies. To hypothesize, reflect, generate new understandings of world-making.			x	
3	To have an understanding of the tension between systemic and creative elements in contemporary creative practices.			x	x
4	To be able to apply creatively the material from the class to work in collaboration with creative people doing world making practices.		x	x	x
5	Be able to articulate creatively concepts and empirical information in a diversity of contexts pertaining to world-making.		x		x
6	Be able to collaborate with fellow students to produce an innovative artistic strategy resting on one acception of the notion of world-making.			x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Presentation of an extensive number of artists whose practice invoke directly or indirectly the concept of world-making and provide an overview on relevant theoretical resources relevant to the practice of world-making	1, 2, 3	3 hrs/wk
2	In class presentation and discussion	Use the material from the lectures and readings to prepare the final project	4, 5, 6	30mn/wk
3	Mentoring	Preparing for the final term assignment	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	3 hrs
4	Individual search	Gathering theoretical and empirical material (online documentation)	1, 4, 5, 6	1 hrs/wk
5	Weekly readings	To get familiar with critical new media studies and world-making practices	1, 2, 3, 5	2 hrs/wk
6	Designing a art-project drawing on one of the acception of the notion of world-making	Using critically diverse artistic strategies opened by the notion of world-making	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	3 hrs/wk for 3 weeks

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Conceptual Hybridization	3, 4, 5, 6	5	-	Yes
2	In-class QUIZ	1, 2, 3	20	-	No
3	In-class QUIZ	1, 2, 3	20	-	No
4	In class group presentation	3, 4, 5, 6	15	-	Yes
5	Final project	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	40	-	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

Conceptual Hybridization (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Making

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Quiz (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Quiz (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive a transnarrative World proposal

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

In class presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Final project (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive a transnarrative World

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Conceptual Hybridization (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Making

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Making

Good

(B+, B) Good ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Making

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Marginal ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Making

Failure

(F) Lack of ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Making

Assessment Task

Quiz (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Good

(B+, B) Good ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Marginal ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Failure

(F) Lack of ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Assessment Task

Quiz (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Good

(B+, B) Good ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Marginal ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Failure

(F) Lack of ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings

Assessment Task

In class presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project

Good

(B+, B) Good ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Marginal ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project

Failure

(F) Lack of ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project

Assessment Task

Final project (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive an artwork drawing from the notion of world-making

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive an artwork drawing from the notion of world-making

Good

(B+, B) Good use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive an artwork drawing from the notion of world-making

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Marginal use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive an artwork drawing from the notion of world-making

Failure

(F) Lack of use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive an artwork drawing from the notion of world-making

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

World-Making; transmedial storytelling; interactive storytelling; narrative design; science fiction; fictional worlds

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Allison C Meier, (2018) Drawing the human animal. Physiognomy. Welcome Collection, 19 September 2018, https://wellcomecollection.org/articles/W1dX_SYAACYArPQ8
2	Freud, S. (1913). The dream-work (A. A. Brill, Trans.). In S. Freud & A. A. Brill (Trans.), The interpretation of dreams (pp. 277-310). MacMillan Co.
3	Duchamp, M.(1957). "The creative act," Art News, June-July-August
4	Ranciere J (2004) 'The distribution of the sensible,' in The Politics Of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible, Continuum, pp.1-30
5	Tobin Siebers (2010), 'Chapter 1 Introduction' in Disability Aesthetics The University of Michigan Press, pp. 1-20,
6	Aldama F., Lindenberger H. (2016) 'Preface' and Prologue' in Aesthetics of Discomfort, disquieting art University of Michigan Press, pp.1-20
7	Attali Jacques (2011) 'Ch IV: First Wave of the Future: Planetary Empire', 'Ch V: Second Wave of the Future: Planetary War', 'Third Wave of the Future: Planetary Democracy', in A brief history of the future. A brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century Arcade Publishing
8	Bernard Stiegler (2018) Escaping the Anthropocene, in The Neganthropocene Open Humanities Press, pp.51-63
9	Alice Carabedian. Le "Cycle de la Culture " de Iain M. Banks : l'utopie hors de l'i#le. Encyclo. Revue de l'e#cole doctorale Sciences des Socie#te#s ED 624, 2014, pp.129-144.
10	"Umwelt", "Tick "Agamben Giorgio. The Open: Man and Animal. 2002. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004."
11	Guy-Félix Duportail "Le moment topologique de la phénoménologie française. Merleau-Ponty et Derrida", Archives de Philosophie 2010/1 (Tome 73), pp. 47-65 (extracts)
12	Barikin A. (2012). "Topological Systems: An Economy Of Time" in Parallel presents: the art of Pierre Huyghe. The MIT Press.
13	Bernard Bénit (2021) "The image of thought and thought without image in Deleuze & Guattari" In Journal of the CIPH Volume 99, Issue 1, January 2021, pages 52 to 62 (Translated from French by Priyanka Deshmukh)
14	Stanimir Panayotov (2016) "Diagram", in New Materialism. How Matter Comes to Matter https://newmaterialism.eu/almanac/d/diagram.html
15	Deleuze G, Guattari F. (1987) "Introduction: Rhizome," in A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, pp.3-25
16	David Couzens Hoy, The Time of Our Lives: A Critical History of Temporality, MIT Press, 2009, 288pp pp.66-76
17	Reading: "El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan" "The Garden of Forking Paths" 1941 short story by Argentine writer and poet Jorge Luis Borges

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Terry Smith (2011) Currents of world-making in contemporary art, <i>World Art</i> , 1:2, 171-188, DOI: 10.1080/21500894.2011.602712
2	Nelson Goodman, <i>Ways of Worldmaking</i> Hackett, Indiana, 1978
3	Barikin Amelia. <i>Parallel Presents: The Art of Pierre Huyghe</i> . The MIT Press, 2012.
4	Jenkins, Henry. "Game Design as Narrative Architecture." In <i>First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game</i> , Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2006.
5	Whitelaw, Mitchell. <i>Metacreation: Art and Artificial Life</i> . The MIT Press, 2006.
6	Calvino, Italo. <i>Invisible Cities</i> . New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.
7	Ian Condry "Characters and Worlds as Creative Platforms," <i>The Soul of Anime: Collaborative Creativity and Japan's Media Success Story</i> (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).
8	Otsuka Eiji « World and Variation: The Reproduction and Consumption of Narrative, » <i>Mechademia</i> 5, 2010, pp. 99-116.
9	Noah Wardrip-Fruin Michael Mateas "Envisioning the Future of Computational Media" (<i>Media Systems</i>).
10	Mark J. P. Wolf, "World Structures and Systems of Relationships," <i>Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation</i> (London: Routledge, 2013), pp.153-197.
11	Scarlett Ashley, Lipton Lisa, "Contingent Systems: Art and/as Algorithmic Critique" <i>Afterimage</i> (2023) 50 (2): 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1525/aft.2023.50.2.1