

Module Title: History and Theory of Digital Art
(Arts Strand, Inter-institutional course)

Module Number: tba

ECTS Allocation: 5 ECTS

Module Coordinator: Matthew Causey, TCD

Teaching Staff: TCD, NUIG, NUIM, UCC, QUB

Format: Lectures/discussions delivered by telepresence (videoconference, chat, second life, etc), face-to-face and asynchronously.

Aims and Learning Outcomes:

The goal of this module is to establish the widest possible knowledge of the field of digital art, its historical narrative, cultural context and philosophical position. This module will focus students on in-depth research regarding the history of digital and technologized arts. This module will provide a detailed examination of the various histories and intersections of technology and art practice. This study will be centred on the history of technological supports for various forms of arts in the 20th and 21st century, including electric sound and image; computer graphics and music; internet; multimedia and other digital-based artistic practices.

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Identify the principle developments and paradigm changes in the history of Digital Arts;
- Describe the trends and practices of Digital Arts in relation to the adoption of core media technologies;
- Apply critical judgments on the appropriateness of the use of digital technology in artistic endeavours;
- Reflect on the future development of Digital Arts in response to current technologies;
- Demonstrate a critical engagement with the fundamental philosophical questions concerning digital and techno culture;
- Articulate the various issues surrounding the politics of identity and subjectivity in digital culture.

Working Methods:

Lectures and discussions will be facilitated through tele-conferencing and online environments (e.g. Second Life, Blackboard, Skype) so that students from the various partner institutions may participate. Readings will be assigned in advance and discussed during the class.

Typical face to face seminar schedule:

11.00 – 12.30 Presentations and discussion on participant's current research.

12.30 – 13.15 Lunch

13.15 – 14.30 Provocations and Debate (topics circulated in advance)

14.45 – 16.00 Response to the readings (circulated in advance)

Assessment:

One essay 6,000 words or equivalent project (by agreement with assessor).

Lectures:

1. Histories of Digital Art 1: The Historical Avant-Garde's Technological Innovations
(From Symbolism to Futurism)
2. Histories of Digital Art 2: Experimental Cinema, Multimedia, Video Art
(Brakhage, Wooster Group, Paik)

3. Histories of Digital Arts 3: Electric Sounds
4. Cultural Conditions of Digital Art 1: Identity and digital culture.
(From Telenet to Second Life to Facebook)
5. Cultural Conditions of Digital Art 2: Politics of digital culture.
(Digital Warfare, Revolutions, Subjectivity)
6. Philosophical Questioning 1: Technology, Art, Simulation
(Heidegger, Benjamin, Baudrillard)
7. Philosophical Questioning 2: Postmodernism to Post-humanism
(Zizek, Hayles, Agamben)
8. Philosophical Questioning 3: Digital Aesthetics
9. Digital Technologies of Representation 1
(Hybrid, Networked, Virtual)
10. Digital Technologies of Representation 2
(Interactive, Gaming, Web-based)
11. Digital Technologies of Representation 3
(Bio-art, Robotics, AI)

Select Bibliography:

- Auslander, Philip. *Liveness*. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Broadhurst, Susan. *Performance and Technology: Practices of Virtual Embodiment and Interactivity*, Palgrave, 2006.
- Broadhurst, Susan. *Digital Practices: Aesthetic and Neuro-aesthetic Approaches to Performance and Technology*, Palgrave, 2007.
- Causey, Matthew. *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture: from simulation to embeddedness*. London: Routledge, 2009.
- Dixon, Steve. *Digital Performance*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006.
- Giannachi, Gabriella. *Virtual Theatres: an introduction*, Routledge, 2004.
- Hayles, Kate. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Rush, Michael. *New Media in Late 20th-Century Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1999.
- Salter, Chris. *Entangled: Technology and the transformation of performance*, MIT Press, 2010.
- Stiles, Kristene. "Art and Technology" in *Theories and documents of Contemporary Art: a sourcebook of artists' writings*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Wilson, Stephen. *Information Arts: Intersections of Art, Science, and Technology*. New Haven: MIT Press, 2001.