LCC4730 Experimental Digital Media and Art

Maria Engberg
Fall semester 2011
Georgia Institute of Technology

Experimental Digital Media introduces students to a range of digitally mediated artistic and literary practices. It comprises a practical component in which the students will work in teams to create site-specific cultural applications for the Augmented Reality browser Argon http://www.argon.gatech.edu. We will also explore theoretical perspectives on narrative and expressive experiences in locative media. In addition to the primary work on the project, students will have reading and individual assignments.

Objectives
The objectives of the course are to introduce the students to various genres of experimental narrative practices in a wide range of media. The students will become acquainted with analytic frameworks for understanding experimental digital media for narrative and aesthetic purposes. In addition, the students will work with digital media design using Argon and related programming, e.g. html, Java, KML, Karma, as well as write narratives for location-based experiences.

Assignments and Grading
There will be one short test on the reading, an individually written final paper, group work consisting of creating an augmented reality application (in as complete a fashion as possible), and presenting the group project in an oral presentation with a slideshow presenting the main ideas and concepts. See percentages below.

I use Georgia Tech's letter grades A-F:
http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/5a.php

Individual:
Reading Test 20%
In-class participation 10%

Group work:
Project + AR application 40%
Oral presentation of project 10%
Written essay 20%

Schedule

Week 1
Aug 22
Intro to the course
Syllabus
Aug 24
Introduction to key concepts & themes
Watch the following about mobile AR browsers Argon & Layar:
http://www.argon.gatech.edu/project_vtg.html

http://www.argon.gatech.edu/project_cnn2.html
more videos about Argon, if you are interested:
http://www.youtube.com/user/AELatGT
Layar, promotional video
http://youtu.be/HW9gU_4AUCA
Aug 26
Introduction to Argon: Prof. Bolter participating
Read/Watch
Look at Google Earth tutorials (optional, for introduction):
http://kml-samples.googlecode.com/svn/trunk/interactive/index.html
http://earth.google.com/outreach/tutorials.html#tab2
Also look through Argon documentation + videos
http://www.argon.gatech.edu
https://research.cc.gatech.edu/kharma/
Week 2
Aug 29
Thinking about designing for location-based experiences
Read:
Löwgren, "Towards an Articulation of Interaction Aesthetics."
Landay, "Sketching Interfaces: Toward More Human Interface Design."
Kelley & Littman, "The Art of Innovation" IDEO essay
all in pdf in Resources folder
Assignment:
Write a short presentation of yourselves & your experience of design, programming, courses etc. in T-square.
Aug 31
Mixed Reality&AR
Read:
MacIntyre-Bolter et al "Augmented Reality as a New Media Experience."
Also look through Wikipedia entries on mixed reality and Augmented Reality

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixed_reality
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augmented_reality
Sep 2
Argon workshop: starting to look at code details & functions
Finish the kml assignment (see in Assignments-section)
Week 3
Sep 5
NO CLASS - official school holiday
Sep 7
Digital literature & art
Read:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_literature
Hayles, "Electronic Literature: What Is It?" http://eliterature.org/pad/elp.html(also in pdf in T-square)
"What Inspired You..." video http://glia.ca/2010/ELO/51responses.html
Sep 9
Argon workshop
continued discussion about design for AR. Material will be posted in the resources-folder.
Week 4
Sep 12
Digital Literature & Art
Talk about groups & ideas for projects.
Sep 14
Andrew Gallix "Is e-literature just one big anti-climax?" http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/booksblog/2008/sep/24/ebooks
Dene Grigar "Electronic Literature: Where Is It?"
http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/technocapitalism/invigorating
Browse the two Electronic Literature Collections: Volume 1
Volume 2
Discussing these works (from the collection and others):

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/carpenter__the_cape.html
http://www.inanimatealice.com/
http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/carpenter_inabsentia.html
http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/benda_senghor_on_the_rocks.html
http://www.txtualhealing.com/
http://www.z360.com/what/
http://polyaesthetics.org/AloneEngaged.html
Sep 16
Argon workshop: Pitch your idea-day: each group presents their idea-s & we discuss
Week 5
Sep 19
Graphic Novels & Comics
Read:
Will Eisner: excerpt from Comics & Sequential Art
Scott McCloud: excerpt from Reinventing Comics
Charles McGrath "Not Funnies" NYT article
Look at the following experiments using locative media and comics: GPS Comics
Tangible Comics @GT
Sep 21
Graphic Novels & Comics
Look at the following artists/cartoonists (all in pdf-format in Resources, except when there is a link to online material). We will discuss their storytelling styles from visual and narrative perspectives. Be prepared to discuss: Lynda Barry: Blabber, blabber, blabber, Picture This, What It Is Alan Moore & Kevin O'Neill excerpt from The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons: Watchmen Look at excerpt from Watchmen the motion comic: Chapter 1, part 1 -2 Think about how animation, image, narration, and text work together for the storytelling.
Sep 23
Argon workshop
Week 6
Sep 26
Reading test/quizz on readings: please see list & example questions in announcement

Sep 28
Innovative books: print & digital
Steve Tomasula, -The Color of Flesh-pdf
Steve Tomasula, TOC - go through website, look at images and videos. I will show the work in class: http://www.tocthenovel.com/
Sep 30
Argon workshop
Week 7
Oct 3
Innovative books: print & digital
McSweeney's, Mike Matas talks about designing Al Gore's Our Choice (TED-talk): http://www.ted.com/talks/mike_matas.html Read about the following experiments in books "between screen and page:" "Motion Book Explores..." "Storytelling 2.0: Open your Books to Augmented Reality" "Multimedia e-books"
Oct 5
Writing for location-based experiences
Anders Lovlie: "Textopia: Designing a Locative Literary Reader"
Implementation by Montfort and Rettberg: http://nickm.com/implementation/
Mark Marino et al. LA Flood: http://laflood.citychaos.com/
Look through some of Blast Theory's work (UK):
http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/bt/index.php
http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/bt/work_rider_spoke.html
http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/bt/work_flypad.html
Oct 7
Argon workshop
Week 8
Oct 10
Project update discussions. Have draft of your project description (work from the template in the Argon resources folder). Put
Oct 12
Cultural Heritage Experiences

Read: Dow et al "Exploring Spatial Narratives and Mixed Reality Experiences in Oakland Cemetery" Klaus Müller, "Museums & Virtuality" We will look at apps and sites such as What Was There & Historypin.
Oct 14
Argon workshop
Week 9
Oct 17
NO CLASS - Fall 2010 Student recess
Oct 19
Writing & Designing for location-based experiences
Rita Raley, "Mobile Media Poetics"
Johanna Drucker, "Language in the Landscape"
Games of Nonchalance, an ARG in San Francisco. Read about it, watch trailer: http://nonchalance.com
Jane McGonigal, "A Real Little Game.."
Be prepared to talk about and share some of the writing you do for your group project
Oct 21
Argon workshops, presentations until December. Please note that from this week on, we may still assign additional readings or Argon-related assignments, check updated schedule and announcements.