

LMC 8803/4600/3262 Digital Performance

Spring 2019

Tue/ Thu 1:30-2:45

Philip Auslander
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Room Skiles 308
3 credit hours

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office hours: Auslander: TR 11-11:45, 365 Skiles
Nitsche: Wed 11-12, TSB 316B

Outline:

What defines a digital performance? Where does it happen, who might be involved, and what does it evoke? How can we develop those specific qualities further?

This course will discuss various aspects of digital performance through readings, discussions, and a final hands-on project. It will not follow a historical approach but instead focus on critical discussions of key qualities and opportunities that open up in the merging of digital technology with performance art. To facilitate these discussions, the course first looks at the components of such a performance, from actors to technology to audiences. Then, we will investigate the operations and effects of such a performance, from new practices to roles of participants and experiences. Finally, students will exemplify core elements from these discussions in an end-of-term digital performance project.

If you are interested in expression through performance, in critical discussions that bridge media studies with HCI and Performance Studies, and in experimenting with digital media, then this course might be for you.

The course has no single textbook and all readings will be provided online.

Learning Outcomes for LMC:

Textual/Visual Analysis: Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret not only cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media, but also scientific and technical documents.

Interpretive Frameworks: Students will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations.

Communication Skills: Students will be able to gather, organize, and express information clearly and accurately, with sensitivity to will be able to do so both by using traditional media and by tapping the potential of new digital media.

Learning Outcomes for CM:

- Students understand and apply the mathematical principles and computational affordances appropriate to creative digital expression
- Students can create digital artifacts with an awareness of history, audience, and context.
- Students can appreciate and evaluate future trends in the development of digital media
- Students can work effectively in teams to accomplish a common goal

Workload:

This course will evolve around in-class discussions of assigned readings/ project/ media samples. Students are expected to arrive prepared to class and ready to engage into questions associated with the theme at hand. In addition to the theoretical and critical work, we will test our ideas in a final group project.

The last third of the course will feature small teams working on individual productions that have to be designed, implemented, and presented by students.

Additional film screenings and group meetings might be necessary.

Schedule:

Tue	1/8	Who are Auslander and Nitsche? And how is this course doing to work? (2 rough on the edges talks) Assignment: find a single image for what you consider to be a digital performance – print it out and bring it to class 1/10	
Thu	1/10	Who are you? Students introduction Due: single image examples (in print)	
What happened to existing Ideas of Performance?			
Tue	1/15	Components: participants Assignment: Analysis Performance Presentation How do the performance practices Dixon discusses problematize Schechner’s categories (if they do)?	- Richard Schechner, Performance Quadrilogue - Steve Dixon, Introduction to <i>Digital Performance</i>

		Start with Performers.	
Thu	1/17	Components: participants	- Auslander, "Film Acting and Performance Capture: The Index in Crisis" [https://thetheatretimes.com/author/p-auslander/] - Auslander "Live from Cyberspace"
Tue	1/22	Components: technology	- Cameron, David and John Carroll 2011 Encoding Liveness: Performance and Real-Time Rendering in Machinima. In The Machinima Reader, edited by H. Lowood and M. Nitsche, pp. 127-141. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA; London.
Thu	1/24	Components: technology	Example discussion
Tue	1/29	Components: audience	- McGonigal, Jane 2003 This is not a Game: Immersive Aesthetics and Collective Play. Paper presented at the 5th International Digital Arts and Culture Conference, Melbourne. - Freeman, Jason, Carl DiSalvo, Michael Nitsche and Stephen Garrett 2011 Soundscape Composition and Field Recording as a Platform for Collaborative Creativity. Organized Sound 16(3):272-281.)
Thu	1/31	Components: audience	Example discussion
Tue	2/5	Due: Analysis - Performance Presentation in class	
Thu	2/7	Due: Analysis - Performance Presentation in class Assignment: Performance Paper	

Tue	2/12	Components: performance place	- Peacock, Alan 2005 Being here: performative aspects of locative media. <i>International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media</i> 1(2):127-146.? - Gabriella Giannachi, "Performing Through the Hypersurface" (from <i>Virtual Theatres</i>)
Thu	2/14	Components: performance place	Example Discussion
Mo	2/18	Due: Analysis – Performance Paper	
In what ways do digital performances operated differently?			
Tue	2/19	Operations: Roles	- Read Goffman, "Performances" (from <i>The Presentation of Self</i>) - Hogan, B. (2010). The Presentation of Self in the Age of Social Media: Distinguishing Performances and Exhibitions Online. <i>Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society</i> , 30(6), 377–386.
Thu	2/21	Operations: Roles	Example Discussion
Tue	2/26	Due: Analysis – Student group presentation	
Thu	2/28	Due: Analysis – Student group presentation	
Tue	3/5	Group meetings with teachers and project discussion	
Thu	3/7	Group meetings with teachers and project discussion	

Tue	3/12	Problem Case: Tangible Media and Making in Performance	
Thu	3/14	Due: Groups present ideas for final project in class (ppt that covers the background research + initial ideation)	
Tue	3/19		
Thu	3/21		
Tue	3/26	Problem Case: Experience of Digital Art	
Thu	3/28	Operations: Experience of Digital Art	
Tue	4/2	Due: Technical prototype running (present to instructors/class)	
Thu	4/4	Due: Technical prototype running (present to instructors/class)	
Tue	4/9	Work on project	
Thu	4/11	Work on project	
Tue	4/16	Work on project	
Thu	4/18	Work on project	

Tue	4/23	Due: Final presentations of the digital performances/ Group projects	
Thu	4/25	Due: Final documentation due	

Main Assignments:

Analysis - Performance Presentation: Depending on the class size, either you will work individually or with another member of the class. Pick a performance piece that includes a live performer and some digital component, break it down into the elements that are specific for this piece; put them in context with our readings and a present a critical analysis in class as a 10min ppt.

Analysis – Performance Paper: Write a paper about the piece you analyzed for the previous assignment. If you worked with another person on the presentation, you should each identify different aspects of the performance on which to focus in your paper. Please use the provided template in preparing your essay.

Analysis – Group Presentation: The instructors will provide a selection of performance pieces to be analyzed in self-selected groups. Groups will present their analyses in class in the form of ppt presentations that use the provided readings as well as additional material in writings and media. Presentation length approx. 15 min.

Critical Production – Group Project Performance: We will form groups of ~4 students to work on shared final projects. Each project should lead up to a digital performance that exemplifies the key elements discussed in the course on a practical event. That means, each project has to include a digital component that is essential to the piece but this component will differ depending on the overall idea the group will develop. Your final presentation will be a particular form of “digital performance” - devised and implemented by your group.

The group project will consist of 4 stages:

- 1) research report on the project
- 2) idea presentation on the project
- 3) technical prototype presentation
- 4) final presentation

Your initial group presentation should include the background research, your idea, initial design, and future implementation (e.g. what technology you will use and in what way).

Participation in Piazza: There is an online forum for this course on Piazza. The purpose of Piazza is to provide students with a virtual space outside the classroom in which to raise questions about course materials and discuss them. Participation in Piazza accounts for 15% of

your grade for this course. This means that we expect you to post substantively to Piazza 12 times during the semester. "Substantively" means a decent paragraph, not just a sentence or two. Please note that we will not be grading your individual posts, though we will respond to them selectively on Piazza. As long as you contribute substantively by the stated deadlines, you will earn all of the points in this category. You will lose 1.7 points from your final grade for each posting deadline missed. If I feel that your contributions are not substantive enough to merit credit, we will contact you privately. You can access Piazza through Canvas, though you have to sign up by following this link: piazza.com/gatech/spring2019/lmc3262d. **The deadlines for Piazza posts will be on Saturdays at 11:59 PM beginning with 1/12. Dates on which no post is required: 3/16, 3/23, 4/13 and 4/27.** You will be expected to address the material and course work of the preceding week, though you are also welcome to post at any time during the week prior to the deadline.

Participation in class: Attendance and activity in discussions, collaboration, contribution to in-class debates and materials.

Graduate Students additional deliverable: Write a 3-4 page critical paper about the final project using the provided template. The paper should show your analysis of the work and be on the level of a possible submission of a Work In Progress for a PhD consortium/ conference. (this will be 10% of your overall grade which will be computed based on a total of 110 points max)

Grading:

	Percentage	Some relevant elements
Analysis - Performance Presentation	10	
Analysis – Performance Paper	10	
Analysis – Group Presentation	15	
Critical Production – Group Project Performance	40	
Participation on Piazza	15	
Participation in Class	10	

100-90% = A

89-79% = B

78-64% = C

63- = D

Grading of individual pieces will be expressed in percentages.

Late submissions lead to automatic reductions of the grade unless a valid excuse is provided in advance. Any 1 day delay, meaning anything after 5pm of the due day, will have 15% reduced from the grade; any 2 day delay will have 30% reduced, 3 day delays will not be accepted.

The Honor Code of Georgia Tech applies (see <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>).

Only absences officially exempted by the Institute (e.g., due to participation in official GA Tech athletics, to religious observance, to personal or family crisis confirmed by documentation from the Dean of Students) will be considered excused. All other absences are unexcused.

More than 3 unexcused absences will reduce the overall grade by 10%, each following absence by an additional 10%.

The use of mobile phones in class is not permitted unless you inform the instructor upfront about particular academic reasons why you would need this option.

The Communication Center

The Communication Center is located in Clough Commons, Suite 447. It is an excellent resource for any student (undergraduate or graduate) who wants help with a communication-related project. You can visit the center for help at any stage of the process for any project in any discipline. The knowledgeable and friendly tutors are available to help you develop and revise your projects. They are not available to “fix” your projects. Please do not ask the tutors to proofread or edit your projects. For information on making an appointment please visit this website: <<http://communicationcenter.gatech.edu/content/make-appointment> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.>. If you need assistance with the appointment system, you can call 404-385-3612 or stop by the center. All services are free and confidential.

Accommodations

Georgia Tech supports students through ADAPTS (Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students). Any student who may require an accommodation for a documented disability should inform me as soon as possible or as soon as you become aware of your disability.

Anyone who anticipates difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a documented disability should arrange a meeting so we can create a workable plan for your success in this course. ADAPTS serves any Georgia Tech student who has a documented, qualifying disability. Official documentation of the disability is required to determine eligibility for accommodations or adaptations that may be helpful for this course. Please make sure I receive a Faculty Accommodation Letter form verifying your disability and specifying the accommodation you need. ADAPTS operates under the guidelines of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Visit: Smithgall Student Services Bldg, Suite 210 on 353 Ferst Drive

Email: adapts@vpss.gatech.edu.

Call: 404-894-2563 (V); 404-894-1664 (TDD); 404-894-9928 (fax)

Academic Misconduct

One serious kind of academic misconduct is plagiarism, which occurs when a writer, speaker, or designer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, images, or other original material or code without fully acknowledging its source by quotation marks as appropriate, in footnotes or endnotes, in works cited, and in other ways as appropriate (modified from WPA Statement on "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism"). If you engage in plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, you will fail the assignment in which you have engaged in academic misconduct and be referred to the Office of Student Integrity, as required by Georgia Tech policy. I strongly urge you to be familiar with these Georgia Tech sites:

Honor Challenge — <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Office of Student Integrity — <http://www.osi.gatech.edu/index.php/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Statement on Diversity and Inclusion

In articulating the values of the Georgia Institute of Technology, the Strategic Plan makes the following statement regarding the nature of the Georgia Tech community as an environment in which we work, live, learn, and play. It says:

“We believe in and want to be known for having the following enduring values...: project a welcoming, inclusive culture; demonstrate mutual respect among faculty, staff, and students; celebrate uniqueness in thought, background, perspectives, and intellectual pursuits.” (9)

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts enthusiastically embraces these values. We take as inherent in all that we do that our policies and practices will demonstrate respect for all human beings, regardless of how those people may differ. The rights of all people to function with dignity are crucial, whether we are interacting within this vibrant intellectual community or with others across our streets and around the globe. We recognize that engendering a spirit of inclusiveness and respect and creating, thereby, a climate in which we can all thrive requires each of us to be socially conscious and culturally well-informed, and to operate with a keen sense of ethical responsibility. We believe that, when we accept that human excellence has the capacity to emerge from many, many sources, a strong and enabling sense of community can be set in motion, a belief that makes quite real an enabling of our greatest expectations. At Georgia Tech and in the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, we expect high performance and world-class achievements in research, education, and public action, and we believe that with an inclusive culture, these expectations become, not just possible, but predictable and sustainable.

References: