

INTRO TO VIDEO/MULTIMEDIA I and II

Tuesdays 10:00-1:20pm

Instructor: Jeff Thompson

Contact: mail@jeffreythompson.org

Office hours: Tuesdays by appointment

COURSE FORMAT

During the semester we will work on a variety of video and media projects that will introduce you to the technical as well as conceptual and historical methods available to you as film-makers and artists. Class time will be spent on demonstrations of software and hardware, work time for projects, and critiques and discussions.

This course is split into two simultaneous sections: Intro I and Intro II. As a result, there will be some days where we will be working on the same project (though sometimes with different goals or particulars) and other days when you will be working on different projects.

It is my hope that we can utilize this format to everyone's benefit. We will be doing several joint critiques where all students can see each other's work and provide feedback. In the past, a sense of community develops between the students, who are often working in the lab together giving feedback and technical help to each other.

COURSE DESCRIPTION - - INTRO I

This course is designed as an introduction to video and multimedia and will cover the technical, historical, and conceptual concerns needed for you to make films, video, and media work.

During the first part of the semester we will deal with using cameras and shooting video, editing in FinalCut Pro, and exporting your finished projects to DVD. During this time you will learn the basics of video as a medium not just for narrative film-making but also as a creative tool for making a wide range of art processes.

The final part of the course will be spent working on a final project of your choosing. Starting with a written proposal, you be asked to make a piece that incorporates the material covered during the semester.

COURSE DESCRIPTION - - INTRO II

Part 1 Advanced digital video with FinalCut Pro
4 weeks

The first section of this course, students will continue their work with digital video and FinalCut Pro begun in the first level, making projects that are largely self-designed while also continuing to show artists, film-makers, and others using video historically and as contemporary practitioners.

This section will emphasize experimentation with format and content; students are encouraged to explore multi-channel video, projection, live video, and installation in addition to traditional video formats and explore ideas and issues that are important to them as art makers.

Part 2 Special Topics: Sound
5 weeks

In this course we will explore sound as a powerful medium for making art. Different than music, the history of sound as part of artworks (installation, video, etc) as well as a sound-only medium (performance art, Dadist sound poetry, etc) extends back to the beginning of recorded sound and has followed the avant-garde through the 20th century.

During the course of the semester students will explore sound through a variety of projects designed to introduce techniques for recording, editing, and exporting sound. Projects will range from sound for video, multi-channel sound installation, radiophonic sound, and performance.

Using Apple's cheap and powerful GarageBand software, students will make projects that extend their conceptual understanding of sound, its technical production, and, through a series of presentations and readings, the historical and contemporary uses of sound by artists.

While students are not expected to be musicians or have previous knowledge of sound recording, an interest and sensitivity to the aural world will be of great benefit.

Part 3 Special Topics: Programming for Artists ** Video I will also participate in this section **
2 weeks

The final section of this course is designed as a brief introduction to the techniques and practices for making art using computer programming. We will scratch the surface using software capable of generating images, video, sound, and visualizations of data as well as interact with viewers, information and networks, and the physical world.

One could easily spend four years learning the software immediately accessible to artists. Due to time, we will begin this process with the Processing language, a free and open-source software developed at MIT. Designed for creating graphics and visual images, Processing is used by scientists to visualize data, by game designers, and being based on Java, for embedded web applications (amongst many, many other uses).

Students are not expected to come to this course with knowledge of programming, though a familiarity with languages like HTML will be of help. While this course is designed specifically for artists, a certain amount of math is required with any programming language and students should have at least a basic understanding of algebra and geometry.

Throughout this section students will be shown work by contemporary artists who engage programming, hacking, and modding as the tools for making their work. We will also discuss the ramifications of working with technology, both technological and conceptual.

Individual final projects
3-4 weeks

Individually-proposed final projects with a proposal, investigation and production, and final critique.

HOMEWORK

Homework is meant to be an extension of ideas covered in class and to allow for you to explore ideas, take risks, and most importantly add your own voice to class projects. A large portion of your grade will be determined by your homework projects (see below).

Most processes in video are slow, so be sure to start your projects early enough to allow for this. Though much of this class is technically-oriented, technical problems are not an excuse for unfinished homework. Videos must be rendered and exported as Quicktime (.mov) files, uploaded to the server, and ready to view by the start of class; printouts and other materials must also be ready at the beginning of class to be considered finished on time.

Late assignments will not be accepted; each week a project is late will lower the grade for that project by one letter. If you will be missing class be sure that you get your project on the server beforehand and get assignments given.

ATTENDANCE

As per Montclair and Art Department rules, attendance to this course is mandatory. Please see your student handbook for specific attendance guidelines.

Due to the condensed and technical nature of this class, there are no "excused" absences. You are allowed three absences per semester without penalty; more than three absences will result in an F for the course. Being late to class by more than 10 minutes is considered a tardy; three tardies equals one absence.

GRADING

The goal of this class is for you to improve. There is not a set goal-post that you are to achieve to get an A. Rather, I want you to show a commitment to becoming a better artist and to see improvement over the course of the semester. To get an A for the course you should be putting in at least three hours a week to the homework assignment, complete all assignments on time, participate in critiques and discussion, and show a willingness to take risks with your work and try new things enthusiastically.

Grades will be assigned under the following criteria.

Class participation	30%
Homework	50%
Final project	20%

EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT

The department has a number of video cameras available for checkout, as well as lighting kits, tripods, etc. Equipment can be checked out from "The Cage" which is just down the hall from the undergrad office. Adrian runs The Cage, and is very helpful. You will need a \$25 deposit and your student ID to check out equipment. The borrowing period is for two days: Mon-Tues, Wed-Thurs, Fri-Sun

BE SURE be sure to check the camera you are given to make sure it has batteries and a charger. Also be sure to ask for a firewire cable, since you will not be given one automatically.

You are welcome to use your own camera to shoot projects, though experimenting with 3-chip and HD cameras will be a useful experience and it's highly recommended that you make use of this resource.

LAB and SERVER ACCESS

The lab will be open specific hours during the week and weekend. A schedule will be posted outside the classroom. Please be advised that this schedule is subject to change (especially at the beginning of the semester) so check it often. Lab computers have software that wipes the hard drive daily.

A server has been set up for the class to allow you to save files, which can be accessed from the lab and (supposedly) anywhere on campus. Please make a folder with your name so that files can be kept separate.

To access the server

Server address: auset.montclair.edu

Username: MMVLABJT

Password: student

COURSE WEBSITE

I have set up a simple course website for you to get pdf's of assignments, PowerPoint files of lectures, and links to videos shown in class. You will also be able to download a pdf of this syllabus. The address for the site is:

www.jeffreythompson.org/video

REQUIRED MATERIALS

While making video is significantly cheaper than making films, there are still some materials you will be required to purchase for this course.

Mini DV tapes – this is what you will be recording your video onto; you can usually find these at drug stores, though ordering them from B&H Photo will probably be much cheaper.

Burnable DVDs and cases – since we have a course server you will not be required to make more than 2 DVDs during the course of the semester, but you may want to back up course work to a hard drive *and* DVD. Again, cheaper when you mail-order.

Headphones – everyone will appreciate not hearing you editing, and you can hear the sound much better.

SUGGESTED MATERIALS

Not required, but will make your life much easier.

A USB or Firewire drive – you can store your videos on class server, but you run the risk of your projects being deleted. A 250GB drive should be adequate, though the more memory the better. This also allows you to work from home if you choose. LaCie brand drives are very high quality and are recommended, though any drive will work.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Also not required, but great resources

In the Blink of an Eye by Walter Murch; Silman-James Press, 2001

A great text on the art of editing. Simply written and very readable, not a technical text.

Digital Filmmaking by Mike Figgis; Faber and Faber Inc, 2007

Short essays on making digital films from the director of Leaving Las Vegas.

Visual Quickpro Guide to FinalCut 6; Peachpit Press, 2008

A great resource for getting started in FinalCut.

COURSE CALENDAR

Date	Intro I	Intro II
Jan 20	Introductions, handouts	Introductions, handouts
Jan 27	Introduction to FinalCut, basic video editing, exporting video, server access Assignment: "Pickpocket" re-edit	Subtlety of editing, conceptual video editing Assignment: "Pickpocket" re-edit
Feb 03	Critique "Pickpocket" projects Introduction to video cameras, capturing Assignment: "Recreate Old Master Painting"	Critique "Pickpocket" projects Assignment: "Video and..."
Feb 10	Presentation on video art and installation Edit "Old Master" footage, advanced editing Assignment: Finish "Old Master" project	Presentation on video art and installation Work on "Video and..." project Assignment: Finish "Video and..." project
Feb 17	Critique "Old Master" projects Audio in FinalCut Assignment: "Disconnected Time"	Critique "Video and..." Audio in FinalCut, digital audio recorders Assignment: "Field Recording"
Feb 24	Edit "Disconnected Time" Assignment: Finish "Disconnected Time"	Critique "Field Recording" projects Intro to GarageBand, recording "real" instruments, exporting project as .aiff Assignment: "Three-track Audio"
March 03 Midterm	Critique "Disconnected Time" projects Assignment: Project TBA	Critique "Three-track Audio" Various audio formats, basics of MIDI Assignment: Project TBA
March 10	Demos as needed Edit project in progress No assignment	Demos as needed Continue audio project in progress No assignment
<i>March 16-22</i>	<i>SPRING BREAK, NO CLASSES</i>	
March 24	Introduction to DVD Studio Pro and Live Type Assignment: finish video project	Introduction to DVD Studio Pro and Live Type Assignment: finish audio project
March 31	Critique video projects Intro to Processing Assignment: "Breakout Mod" Assignment: Write proposal for final project	Critique audio projects Intro to Processing Assignment: "Breakout Mod" Assignment: Write proposal for final project
April 7	Processing continued	Processing continued
April 14	Group discussion of proposals Demos as needed Assignment: Shoot footage, begin editing	Group discussion of proposals Demos as needed Assignment: Begin project
April 21	Individual review of projects, work on finals Assignment: Continue working on finals	Individual review of projects, work on finals Assignment: Continue working on finals
April 28	Critique of final projects	Critique of final projects
<i>May 5</i>	<i>Tuesday day and evening classes do not meet</i>	
May 7-13	Exam period, final crit as needed	Exam period, final crit as needed

INTRO TO VIDEO/MULTIMEDIA I
Jeff Thompson

A BRIEF QUESTIONNAIRE

These questions will help tailor this course to what you already know and what you don't.

What's your name, where are you from, and what year and major are you at Montclair?

You email address (please please please print as legibly as possible)

What are your interests or goals as a film-maker/artist?

I usually hate this kind of question, but what are three films/works of art that inspire you the most?

Do you have experience using a video camera? Do you own a video camera and if so what kind?

Do you have a laptop and if so do you have FinalCut?

Have you ever edited video on a computer before? If so, what software have you used and how much experience do you have with editing?

Have you ever burned a DVD and if so what program did you use?

INTRO TO VIDEO/MULTIMEDIA II
Jeff Thompson

A BRIEF QUESTIONNAIRE

These questions will help tailor this course to what you already know and what you don't.

What's your name, where are you from, and what year and major are you at Montclair?

You email address (please please please print as legibly as possible)

What are your interests or goals as a film-maker/artist?

I usually hate this kind of question, but what are three films/works of art that inspire you the most?

Do you own a video camera and if so what kind?

Do you have a laptop and if so do you have FinalCut?

What are some specific areas that you feel you need to learn more about when it comes to video?

Have you ever recorded and/or edited audio, aside from using a video camera and FinalCut? If so, in what capacity (for film, as a musician or in a band, etc) and using what hardware/software?