

MEDIA STUDIOS

SEMESTER 2 2018

ENTANGLED MEDIA

An exploration of storytelling using multiple modalities

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Criticism, expertise and cultural value

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ENTANGLED MEDIA

An exploration of storytelling using multiple modalities

STUDIO PROMPT

How might we craft stories that weave in various modalities -- sound, vision, text -- to see connections in new ways? How might entangled media storytelling help us tell new kinds of stories in the face of massive changes like the Anthropocene?

QUOTE

"...Tangle is the texture of the world. Beings do not simply occupy the world, they inhabit it, and in so doing — in threading their own paths through the meshwork — they contribute to its ever-evolving weave." Tim Ingold 2011: 71.

DESCRIPTION

Tangle as texture suggests there is a beautiful messiness to being in the world -- and also to making media work about it. The idea that we are all threading our own paths also hints at the importance of context. It points both towards thinking about the relationships between things (people or otherwise), and between different textures of media making work (vision, sound, research, writing).

This studio will involve an inquiry into multimodal narratives, and a practical exploration of how to craft such media work. We will begin to consider the relationship between the material of particular stories, the process of creating or collecting material, and the ways in which that material might then be crafted. We will look at, listen to, and immerse ourselves in different modes of media; develop an inquiry; and collect material towards that inquiry. We will make many smaller works of entangled media, seeing what patterns emerge.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To begin to develop a critical appreciation of the affordances of different media and how they might be used in conversation with one another.

To begin to develop an understanding of how different kinds of entangled media might be used in different contexts; to tell different kinds of stories.

To develop a practice of collecting material through various media towards a question or story, noticing patterns as they appear, and crafting larger media work with those patterns.



'Threads' (2018) Sophie Langley

STUDIO LEADER

Sophie Langley is a fiction and nonfiction writer, sonic essay maker, photographer and sketcher. She has worked as a designer, a journalist, and a freelance writer. Her work is interested in the ways in which different types of knowledges, storytelling and media can be entangled to make new kinds of stories, particularly in response to some of the most urgent issues of our times, such as climate change. Her Masters thesis, which was a collection of entangled essays -- threading together 'creative' and 'academic' writing, recorded sound, and photographic image -- drew from multiple disciplines and explored what it would mean to live differently with food that might usually become waste, and to develop new embodied knowledges. She has been teaching at RMIT for the last few years.

EVERYONE'S A CRITIC

Criticism, expertise and cultural value

STUDIO PROMPT

What is criticism and how does it differ from other kinds of writing?

What is the role of the critic in contemporary culture?

QUOTE

"The critic has to educate the public. The artist has to educate the critic." Oscar Wilde, *The Critic as Artist*.

DESCRIPTION

The "decline" of print media and the proliferation of social media platforms in recent years has prompted frequent reflection on the fate of the critic. With thousands of online reviews at our disposal, do we still need a professional evaluation of the latest Marvel superhero film, or the city's newest burger joint? In this studio we will explore the role of the critic and the value of expertise in contemporary culture by investigating the historical and contemporary uses of different types of criticism and reviews, and through practicing the art of criticism via a range of different media.

We explore and reflect upon the differences between various areas of expertise, including film and television, music, art and food criticism, through a series of screenings, guest lectures and workshops with practicing critics. Alongside this reflection, over the semester you will produce a folio of critical review material including long-form written reviews, as well as radio/podcast, blog and television reviews. Our classes will include both mentor and peer-led feedback sessions to develop and strengthen your critic voice.

You will be assessed both on the folio of critical material you produce, as well as on your reflection on the theory and case studies we explore in class.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To investigate and interrogate the particularity of criticism as a form of writing.

To develop a portfolio of critical reviews in different media.

To develop a nuanced understanding of the role of the critic in contemporary culture.

To reflect on your own voice and persona as an emerging critic.



Roger Ebert & Gene Siskell by Kevin Horan, *People Magazine* c. 1980

STUDIO LEADER

Alexia Kannas is a writer and academic in the Media Program in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University, who works principally in the area of Cinema Studies. Alexia completed her PhD in Film Studies at Monash University, where she also taught into English Literature and Creative and Academic Writing. She is the author of *Deep Red* (Columbia University Press/Wallflower, 2017) and *Genre, Modernity and the Italian Giallo Film* (forthcoming 2018, SUNY Press), and has written for a wide range of print and online media. She writes (or has written) about cult cinema, film sound, cinematic modernism, food, memory and nostalgia.

IT'S NOT ROCKET SURGERY

Communicating complex ideas

QUOTE

"The accusations most often levelled at programme makers by scientists are that television simplifies and trivialises. Sometimes the accusation is valid, sometimes not. Even complex issues can be discussed on different levels without necessarily trivialising."

Taylor, R 'Science on Television', in A. Heck and C. Madsen (eds.), *Astronomy Communication*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003, p47.



Colin Clive and Ernest Thesiger in 'The Bride of Frankenstein' (1935) Dir. James Whale

STUDIO PROMPT

What are the challenges and creative possibilities in communicating complex ideas, scientific processes, or philosophical concepts to online video audiences?

DESCRIPTION

As communication professionals and media producers, we often take the task of communicating incredibly complex ideas to general or non-specialist audiences. Sometimes we barely understand the ideas ourselves! From quantum physics to the rules of popular sporting codes, our world is full of complicated concepts.

In this studio, we'll be working with leading experts in various fields to produce short videos that convey these ideas in ways that take advantage of your own expertise in media production.

We'll start by trialling different approaches for communicating scientific concepts, then broaden out to concepts that might be even more nebulous - philosophical, political, economic, or something else entirely.

We will be drawing on theories of visual communication, graphic design, cognitive science, and more. We'll analyse infographics, and consider the role of experimentation, humour and even haikus. Our motto is to push the boundaries while striving for clarity.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To understand what might constitute high quality content in this context.

To collaborate with experts in other fields, in a dynamic situation where your own media production skills are an integral element.

To explore and reflect on the political, ethical, and philosophical implications of these type of communication processes.

STUDIO LEADER

Liam Ward is a lecturer, a film-maker, and an activist. His recently completed PhD involved the production of a semi-fictional, part-autobiographical, opinionated, but historically accurate archival documentary, about Chinese furniture-makers in Melbourne at the turn of the 20th century. He is neither a Chinese furniture-maker nor 120-something years old. That apparently contradictory synopsis gives a good indication of Liam's curiosity and research interests, and the sorts of documentary ideas you might play with in this studio.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, (INTER)ACTION

Exploring the creation of interactive media art with sound and video

STUDIO PROMPT

What experiences can we create when we invite the audience to affect the things we make in real time? What is the role of the audience in making the meaning of what they see and hear; in both traditional, static forms, and using responsive technologies? How do we create work for unpredictable results?

QUOTE

"Telling purposeful stories is interactive. It's not a monolog.

Ultimately, purposeful tellers must surrender control of their stories, creating a gap for the listener(s) to willingly cross in order to take ownership." Peter Guber.

"We didn't need a special word for interactivity in the same way that we don't (yet) need a special word for people with only one head."

Douglas Adams.

DESCRIPTION

In all art, there are at least two people involved in deciding what gets experienced, and what that experience means: the artist, and the audience. As both our culture and technology have developed, audiences have gained more control, and become more aware of their agency in their aesthetic experiences. They have learned to turn pages, sing along, change channels, press buttons, touch, gesture, and speak at art and media, and expect ever more in response to these actions. At the same time, artists have gained more tools, and an awareness of audiences' changing expectations, and audience agency has become more and more part of the art work – another domain for creativity.

In this studio, we will explore both what the audience's agency is and means, and develop practical skills for integrating a variety of media, and making them responsive. Beginning by developing skills in the interactive media program Max (© Cycling74), we will experiment with what happens when we add interactivity into our existing mix of visual, sonic, and literary creative skills, and explore the kinds of meaning we can generate with them, sharing our discoveries, and critiquing and iterating our ideas.



'Wooden Mirror' (1999) Daniel Rozin

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To develop the skills necessary to create interactive media art, using the Max visual programming environment.

To experiment with making connections between various media, on technical and conceptual levels.

To experiment with methods of user interaction and control.

To explore audience agency as a domain of creativity.

STUDIO LEADER

Dr Camille Robinson is a musician, media artist, researcher, and educator. He has a diverse creative practice, and has made interactive art, instrumental music, songs, sound art, and sound design, independently and to commission for clients in film, theatre, dance, and museums. Camille has taught interactive art, sound editing and design, and music composition, history and theory, at the VCA, Melbourne Polytechnic, Collarts, and RMIT.

MATERIAL CHOREOGRAPHIES

Figuring bodies. Animating words.

STUDIO PROMPT

What does it mean to think and make materially with language, sound and moving image?

How do the materialities of the body, the camera and language choreograph one another?



'Horizon of Exile' (2007) Dir. Isabel Rocamora

QUOTES

"Material thinking offers us a way of considering the relations that take place within the very process or tissue of making." Bolt, 2006: 1

"Interdisciplinarity is always a site where expressions of resistance are latent." Kristeva, 1997: 3.

DESCRIPTION

This studio is a collaboration between Media and Creative Writing students. Students will work in teams that will produce short experiments in writing and moving image works.

In this studio we will be exploring alternative approaches to writing and making for and with moving images. We will do away with traditional scripts and explore what it means to think and create materially. The intention is to interrogate how composing materially with sound, moving image and language can open up new approaches to writing and making. We will be working away from representational work, away from linear narrative and plot-driven work in order to disturb our conventional or typical approaches to storytelling. We will be focussing on how we can write and create affective screen and literary works.

This studio will focus on the delivery of 4 briefs divided into 2 topic areas which will ask you to create short literary and moving image works. The briefs fall under 2 main topics: Figuring Bodies and Animating Words. In the first part we will be investigating the relationship between bodies and frames for non-cinematic spaces. In the second part of the studio we will be exploring the relationship between images and words and how this relationship can open up affective spaces of engagement for audiences. An ongoing reflective writing practice will structure an iterative making process.

The other important aspect of this studio is its collaborative design and the potential for cross-disciplinary collaborations. You will be making work for one another; transposing the works into different mediums; teaching one another skills and learning novel ways of creating works that will expand your own practice.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To explore various ways language figures in the process and production of moving image works.

To work outside of dominant frameworks of writing for screen and making screen works from scripts.

To investigate the potential of cross-disciplinary collaborations.

STUDIO LEADER

Dr Smiljana Glisovic is a researcher, educator and practitioner. She has worked across various mediums and forms, as an artist, actor, writer and filmmaker. She has published fiction and non-fiction, written for the theatre and for screen, and produced audiovisual works. The trajectory of her practice has been marked by formal interests and how the materialities of particular mediums open up novel possibilities for storytelling.

SCREEN AND SENSATION

Experimental screen production

STUDIO PROMPT

How do we translate our motivations and inspiration into exciting and engaging screen experiences?



'Blue Velvet' (1986) Dir. David Lynch

QUOTE

"Through a photograph you can make people believe anything. It's not really the camera's doing, it's the person behind it. Figuring out ways to tell lies through the camera ... it's more interesting to show perhaps what you might never see." Cindy Sherman.

DESCRIPTION

The central aim of this studio is to explore the process that guides what you want to produce for the screen and why. This motivation could be connected to an object, a location, a character, a message or simply an emotion. It provides direction and a common vision for the collaborative process. We will be on the lookout for the random connections and surprising revelations that breathe life into our creative endeavours.

There will be opportunities for both collaboration and individual work throughout the semester. Our method is to engage in an ongoing process of drafting and development. There will be multiple tasks, prompts and outcomes across the semester. This work is essentially practical but will be underpinned with theoretical and historical research and reflective writing. We will be creating a range of short experimental films throughout the semester.

If we can develop a deep understanding of our own original cinematic and artistic intentions, methods and practices we can be clear about who we are and where we are going as creatives in the film, tv, media and art industries.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To develop the core production competencies in both individual and collaborative contexts

To develop an understanding of the filmmaking process from story conception to edit

To explore the possibilities, constraints and challenges of short and experimental film aesthetics.

STUDIO LEADER

James Thompson is a filmmaker based in Melbourne, Australia. He has completed four shorts with an accompanying array of avant garde and experimental video and photography work which has featured in festivals such as Palm Springs International ShortFest (2016), MINA (Mobile Innovation Network Australasia - 2015), Austin Film Festival (2016, 2017) and received awards from the Los Angeles Film Review and the Zed Fest Film Festival and Screenplay Competition.

He is currently completing a practice led PhD at MADA (fine arts) Monash University.

SEEING THE UNSEEN V2

Noticing the world with media

QUOTE

A lot of filmmaking is about re-creating an idea that existed beforehand, even in documentary. There are not many films that actually 'look.'

Silke Panse, Land as Protagonist - An Interview with James Benning, 2013.



'Noticing' (2012), Hannah Brasier, Korsakow Film.

STUDIO PROMPT

How can media artefacts emerge through practices of attuned noticing?

DESCRIPTION

As cars drive past in Melbourne traffic, you wait for a tram, and so does that person over there, drops of water glisten as sunlight catches them on the glass barrier of the tram stop, woven baskets are stacked haphazardly on the footpath outside a grocery store, the sign above you says three minutes until the tram arrives, the tiny circular lights on a forty km/h speed limit sign flash on and off, smoke emerges out of pipes in the distance, the tram arrives, you hop on. In Seeing the Unseen you will explore how audiovisual media (whether sound, installation, film) can emerge through practices of attuned noticing.

Through researching noticing as a framework for practice this studio will look at how attuned noticing might become a way of unveiling patterns in the world. The types of things which often get left on the cutting room floor, when we create stories which simplify, minimise, subtract, and contract what is out there. By "actually look[ing]" your projects may come closer to performing the complexities of the world.

In this studio you will make audiovisual media through iterations of experimenting with what noticing can do. Through this process you will be exposed to experimental modes of making and distributing media. A subscription to Adobe Creative Suite and/or Korsakow may be required.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To grasp noticing as an experimental approach to making media.

To explore the creative possibilities of making media outside of traditional linear production methods.

To create media artefacts which come closer to performing the complexity of the changing world around us.

STUDIO LEADER

Hannah Brasier is in the final stages of completing a project-led PhD in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University. She is interested in how listening to notice the unnoticed sees the world as fragmented and relational. Hannah makes online interactive nonfiction which is about noticing everyday rhythms of the surrounding world. Hannah's body of films can be found at hannahbrasier.com/creative.

Hannah co-runs Docuverse, an ongoing bimonthly forum for expanded documentary projects, is part of the non/fictionLab, and has presented her work nationally and internationally at screen production and documentary conferences.

SMALL THINGS

The learning of filmmaking inspired by prompts and guided with constraints



'Agency Time' (2011)

QUOTE

"When we see a film of 500 shots, we also see 500 films."

Ruiz, Raul. 2007. Poetics of Cinema 2.

STUDIO PROMPT

Could a different approach to the learning of filmmaking – Working through a series of projects inspired by prompts and guided by constraints that investigate different facets of film production –



'Agency Time' (2011)

elicit better outcomes?

DESCRIPTION

Through a series of watching others work then planning, shooting and editing small projects we will be deepening our knowledge of each of the facets of film production and how they work together. You will develop the technical competencies required to work through each of these projects.

Each project will be inspired by a prompt and/or a constraint.

There will be time for discussion and feedback back from staff and your peers. In your own time you will be researching, reflecting and writing on the issues each of the projects gives rise to.

The second half of the semester you will initiate your own series of film projects that will be small and contained. This is the reverse of the usual film school model of loading all of your eggs into the last week mega project and smashing them all together into a dispirited mess.

The methods of collaboration and production will be designed as we progress through the semester.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To be able to critically analyse, through the making of film and reflection on that, traditional and industrial production methods.

To develop competency in production techniques and to think more expansively in relation to ongoing projects.

To incrementally and iteratively design your own method of working.

STUDIO LEADER

To be decided - we are interviewing at the moment. Whomever it is, they will be great.

SONIC MATERIALITIES

Experimental Sound Design

STUDIO PROMPT

How and why do we stratify and symbolise 'meaningful' and 'interfering' sounds? How can we creatively engage with technology, transduction and spatiality to construct affective audio works for media?

QUOTE

"Despite the fact that most of the world's sense-making occurs through various technological devices and sounds within physical spaces, the relationship between the output device and the room in which it is heard in the making of sense is rarely questioned. In other words, the actual 'sound' of media is ignored, as are the conditions of hearing it." Dyson, *Tone Of Our Times*, p.2.

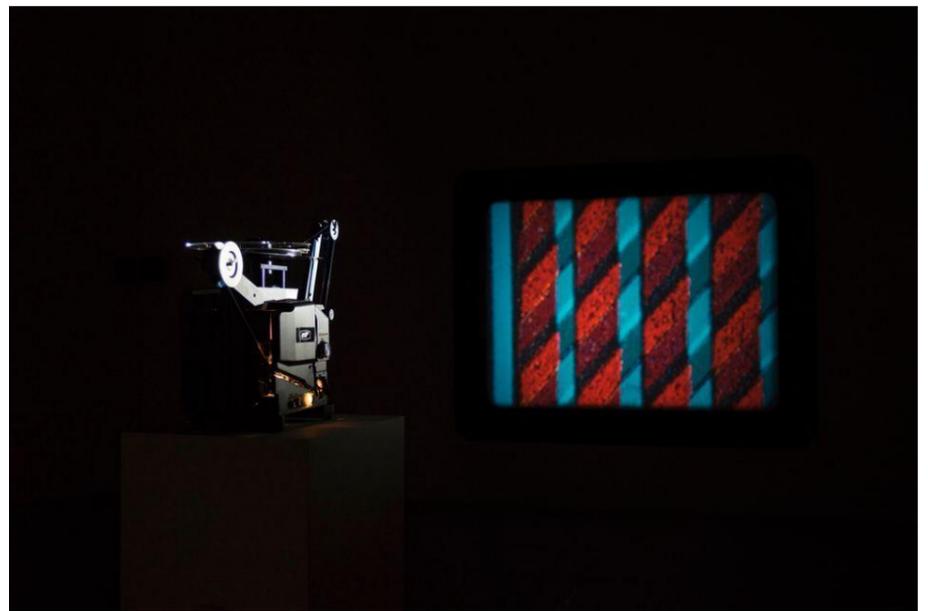
"There are channels and thus there must be noise." Serres, *The Parasite*, p.79.

DESCRIPTION

In this studio, we will focus on audio techniques and sound technologies/spaces to gain both critical and practical understandings of sound and composition. Sounds envelop us and are constantly interleaved with time, space and perception, however, the intricacies of these are often ignored or understood as 'interference'. Given the vast material and temporal influence of these 'interfering' elements (room reverberation, technological and acoustic mediators, bodies), this studio will examine 'sound' as never separate to 'interferences' and explore the possibilities of this re-imagining.

Through creative projects and theoretical engagement, we will explore the ongoing processes of sound and interleave them into our understanding of sound design in media. There will be a particular emphasis on techniques and works that subvert dominant ideologies concerning the 'invisible' medium(s) in sound production.

You will gain experience in recording, sampling and audio processing with analogue and digital devices and learn key terms and techniques for composition and editing. We will be listening and viewing sound works, as well as study the histories and aesthetics around experimental sound production. Projects will be done individually and collaboratively throughout the semester to encourage experimental and immersive sound design. The studio will facilitate the pairing of audio projects with your own visuals/film, as well as the creation of stand alone sound/ experimental music works.



'Dresden Dynamo' (1971) Dir. Lis Rhodes

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To understand concepts and histories associated with experimental sound design.

To explore the implied cultural implications of noise and spatiality and investigate their uses as affective devices in media.

To develop skills in composition, recording and sampling with both digital and analogue formats.

To employ practical skills in sound design and experimental composition and understand key terms and techniques with audio processing.

STUDIO LEADER

Georgia Martin is a PhD Candidate in the School of Media and Communication with research interests across sound, transduction and mediating technologies. She is an educator and artist in music and media and co-runs an independent record label in Melbourne specialising in digital, print and tape formats.

THE NEWS IS A JOKE

The persistence of television
comedy news

STUDIO PROMPT

What are the possibilities that
comedy news programs offer in
terms of public pedagogy, political
discourse, and television satire?

QUOTE

"News may seem to offer viewers information, but satire does more. Satire asks the audience to take a piece of news and play with it, test it, reflect on it, and question it."

Sophia A McLennen (2011) *America According to Colbert: Satire As Public Pedagogy*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York, p.74.

DESCRIPTION

The rise of satirical or comedy news in the 21st century has complicated the relationship between information and entertainment. In recent years there have been a number of prominent examples of comedy news programming, including *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart/Trevor Noah, *The Colbert Report*, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee*, *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, and, locally, Shaun Micallef's *Mad as Hell*, and *The Weekly* with Charlie Pickering. Appealing to younger audiences and designed to work within multi-platform contexts, news satire and parody "at least potentially, offers the possibility of defamiliarisation, allowing us to see the social and scientific anew" (Gray, Jones and Thompson 2009 9).

This studio will explore television news satire/comedy news through viewing, reading, discussion and making of various comedy news segments. Students will research, develop, script and produce segments for a comedy-news show over the course of the semester. They will also learn how to work within the multi-camera television studio, exploring the creative possibilities and challenges of this mode of production through the making of comedy news segments.



Behind the scenes, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee*, image via *Variety*

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To investigate the appeal of television comedy news as a form of entertainment, and how, as a form of television satire, it may contribute and respond to political discourse and social/activist issues.

To develop, research, script and produce a series of comedy news segments.

To work in and explore the creative potential of the multi-camera television studios.

STUDIO LEADER

Ruth Richards is a PhD candidate in the School of Media and Communication, whose research interests include animation, film and television studies, as well as emerging modes of live media production and comedy news programs. Ruth has crewed on a variety of productions for RMITV, including *Studio A* and *Live on Bowen*, as well as short films, and independent features. She has contributed film reviews for ABC Radio Perth

THE SCENE IN CINEMA

2018

Studies in camera coverage

STUDIO PROMPT

How is a drama scene constructed; and what are the traditions, functional imperatives, and expressive possibilities associated with the terms, "coverage" and "decoupage"?



'Il deserto rosso' (The Red Desert, 1964) Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni

QUOTE

"Through segmentation, the script or the written assemblage of visual ideas ceases to be literature and becomes cinema."

Luis Bunuel, "Decoupage, or Cinematic Segmentation" Essay 1928.

DESCRIPTION

The term "coverage" has, at the very least, two distinct meanings, with significantly divergent qualitative connotations. The first relates to the practice of capturing a dramatic scene as scripted: "Is the scene covered?"; "Do we have sufficient coverage?" This usage alludes to functionality and industrial efficiency, and is closely associated with the notion of the supremacy of a script, or text, as blueprint. The other (often parallel) meaning is more to do with the expressive potential, and uniquely cinematic application and effects of the process of segmentation.

Research and practical investigation in this Studio will revolve around the broadest possible understanding of the word "coverage" in relation to the cinema: the planned spatial and/or temporal fragmentation of a cinematic action or event (a scene) in relation to camera position, camera angle, choice of focal length, image size and camera movement, with a view to its (re)construction in post production; this, together with its implications for performance, lighting, production design and audio; and all these elements' potential influence upon that planning. It should be acknowledged also, that the process of decoupage conceivably begins with the overall structuring of a script or working text, as well as being planned and executed by a director and cinematographer in concert with all on-set personnel.

This studio will investigate coverage /scene construction / decoupage, from both an academic, theoretical perspective, and a practical one. Outcomes have the potential to contribute to a specific dimension in film appreciation and future academic research, together with a better informed approach to the problems of practical filmmaking. Therefore, our studies will involve film viewing, research and practical experimentation, but we will not be making a film. We will assist one another in that experimentation and share our ideas and discoveries.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

For students, engaged in practical work, to pursue original research with a view to developing an appreciation of film craft in cinema history and an informed theoretical perspective.

For theory and aspiration to be tempered and informed by practical experience.

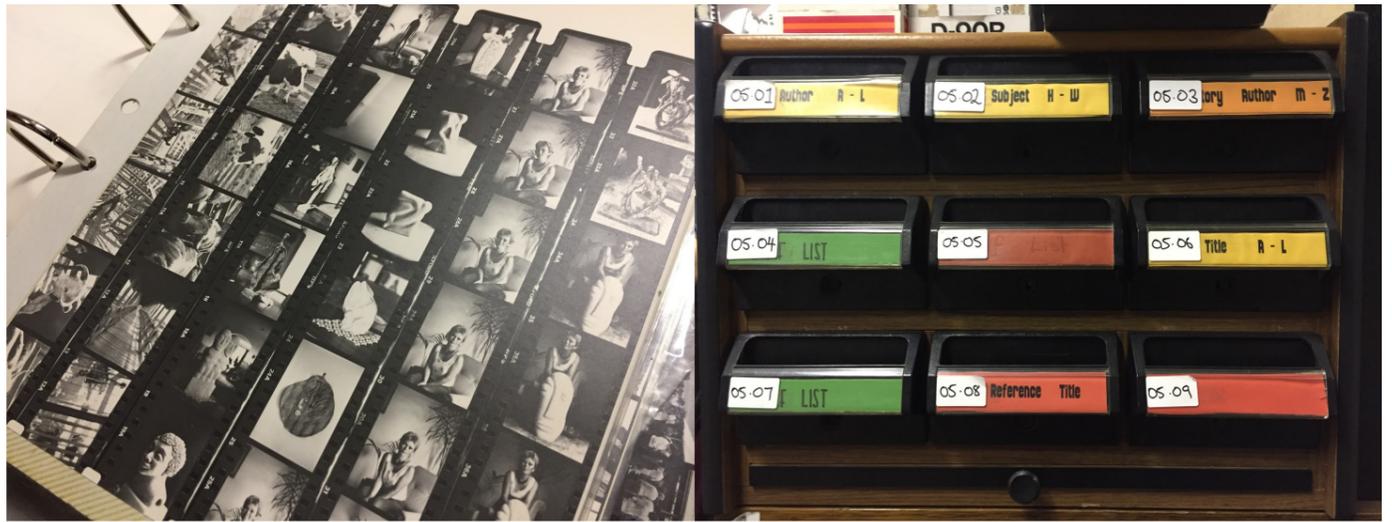
For film craft itself to provide the tools and impetus for theoretical, and practical, investigation and development.

STUDIO LEADER

Robin Plunkett is a cinematographer. He has worked in all capacities in camera departments for more than 35 years. He also has experience as a producer, director (of non-fiction) and editor. For the last several years he has been teaching elements of cinematography, and film production in general, at the VCA and RMIT.

UNTOLD STORIES: PEOPLE, PLACES & OPEN SPACES

A documentary collaboration
with Melbourne's Living Museum
of the West



Images of the archives at the Living Museum of the West: Kim Munro

STUDIO PROMPT

What stories are untold, obscured or forgotten? How can we make documentary media that challenges, disrupts and re-energises local sites, people and experiences as important parallels to dominant histories? How can archival material be repurposed to create relationships with the present to communicate ideas and experiences that are polyvocal, immersive and necessary?

QUOTE

"Open space new media documentaries operate in the interstices of complexity and ambiguity, creating dialogue and community in conditional, changing nodes along an arc of participation. Media do not function as arguments, artifacts, or objects but produce places to wander in and out of a landscape of histories, ideas, and networks."

Patricia Zimmermann and Helen de Michiel (2017, 13).

DESCRIPTION

This studio will collaborate with the Living Museum of the West to produce a range of creative documentary works for their website and museum. It is designed to give you autonomy in developing your own documentary projects. These can include: immersive audio experiences, short video documentaries, web-based or interactive projects or books or pamphlets. You will also organise a group exhibition event at the end of semester to celebrate your work.

The studio involves site visits to the Living Museum of the West in Maribyrnong and field work in the area, where you will research, observe and practice your documentary making skills. You will also explore audio and visual resources from their archive, local Indigenous history, contemporary places and people of the West and combine your insights and research with your own documentary material that you record.

This studio presents documentary making as a process of dialogue, collaboration, remix, experimentation and listening. It is based around unofficial and disruptive stories and draws on environmental, personal, ecological and observational forms of knowing in order to make your projects.

You will engage in the following forms of making:

- Make a new works for the museum's website
- Make audio or video works around local stories that will add to the museum archive
- Organise and have an exhibition or screening at the end of semester

The studio will focus on working collaboratively with communities and arts organisations, learning video and audio recording skills, researching and writing for documentary, interviewing, experimenting with creative techniques with archival source material. We will also look at various approaches to documentary practices and forms beyond the traditional and test what kind of projects can emerge from being emplaced in a site.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To learn the skills to make documentary projects; audio, video, installation, bookwork or interactive.

To explore and interrogate the relationship between historical events and current social, political and cultural climates.

To work creatively with an arts institution and produce content for them.

STUDIO LEADER

Kim Munro is a documentary maker, artist and educator. She has exhibited and had films screened locally and internationally as well as writing on documentary theory and practice. Kim is interested in non-linear, participatory, interactive, site-specific, experimental and live documentary.

WITNESS

Representing truth, proof and authenticity



A February 2010 protest at Labor MP Martin Ferguson's office, in support of Muckaty Traditional Owners, fighting to prevent the imposition of a nuclear waste dump on their land in the Northern Territory. Credit: Friends of the Earth, Anti-nuclear and Clean Energy (ACE) Campaign.

STUDIO PROMPT

How do we mediate place, historical events and our own memories as we bear witness to the changing conditions of the world?

QUOTE

"I will have spent my life trying to understand the function of remembering, which is not the opposite of forgetting, but rather its lining. We do not remember. We rewrite memory much as history is rewritten. How can one remember thirst?" Chris Marker (www.azquotes.com/quote/820606).

"It is important to act as if bearing witness matters." Maxine Kumin (www.azquotes.com/quote/1166281?ref=bearing-witness).

DESCRIPTION

This studio revolves around the notion of bearing witness. It proposes a relationship between looking and memory where personal remembrance becomes understood as historical knowledge.

It will look at the way we represent, construct, remember and imagine the past as a mediation of place, identity and historical event. And how these often function as a 'history' of loss or injustice in the public sphere.

It explores the interconnectedness between media and advocacy and the role of documentary storytelling and imagery in visual representations of gender, conflict, protest, trauma, human rights, environmental change, refugee experience, migration stories, disappearing cultures etc.

Through regular exercises we will be making work which investigates and preserves and bears witness. We will craft a moving image story into an exhibition as a series of documentary moments collected over the span of the semester.

In this studio we will capture moments and interview individuals who have born witness as an active moral engagement through a series of audio fragments, photographic images, social media platforms and video documentaries. We will look at the idea of collecting and preserving individual histories towards a more democratic history of the world. We will investigate how digitally enabled engagement has changed the witnessing practices of ordinary citizens. Whether it is about the idea of an eyewitness, a testimony from close proximity to an event, or the notion of immersive witness as a simulation of experience in 360degree VR they will all be representations of change which raise questions of truth, proof, and authenticity.

We will explore forms of witnessing practices through different documentary styles ranging from poetic to observational. Students might create stories of citizenship, surveillance, political advocacy, displacement, housing, identity politics, climate change, gentrification, contested sexuality, mobile population to name a few.

AIMS OF THE STUDIO

To explore documentary practices as tools for testimony and historical witness.

To experiment with a range of technologies and platforms including mobile phones, camcorders, internet and 360 degree filmmaking for expressing visual memories of personal knowledge as historical knowledge.

To create work and develop and curate an exhibition around a theme.

STUDIO LEADER

Kim Montgomery works in media education, video production and programming for television, exhibition and festivals. She was previously the Digital Programs Manager at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image and part of the team that created ACMI. At ACMI she conceived and created the Memory Grid, an interactive exhibition zone for community and student media. She was also previously the inaugural Programming Manager at Melbourne's Community Television Station Channel 31.

Her particular interests concern the ways in which emerging technologies offer new possibilities for individuals and communities to explore memories in cultural and educational contexts.