

# MEDIA STUDIOS

## SEMESTER 1 2022

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#### DIRECTING PERFORMANCE

Investigating acting performance as a core component on screen

#### DOING MOBILE MEDIA

Practice, Placemaking and Performativity

#### FIX THE APP

Understanding platforms with social theories; designing apps to make them better to live with

#### FUTURE MACHINA

Creating Contemporary Futurology with Film, Video, Audio & Immersive Art

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How financial constraints enable distinct creative solutions

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*Dig* (2016), dir.  
Sebastian  
Bertoli

# DIRECTING PERFORMANCE

**Investigating acting performance as a core component on screen**

“The greatness and ambiguity of art lies in not proving, not explaining, and not answering questions.”

Andrei Tarkovsky (1986/2003)

## STUDIO PROMPT

How do you draw out profound and nuanced performances from actors as a director? How can you build collaborative relationships on set, working together to breathe life into the characters in your story?

## DESCRIPTION

This studio offers a journey of discovery for directors in understanding character, communicating with actors and eliciting rich, nuanced performances from them. It will be a cultivated space where we will explore the imaginative, unexpected and connected work of performance and your role and responsibilities as a director in this space.

Techniques under investigation will include script analysis, script creation, improvisation and character backstory. In this studio you will gain insight into the processes of auditioning, rehearsals and performance.

Often in the filmmaking process there can be a myopic, and often reductive, focus solely on the technical aspects - at the cost of story and performance. In this studio we will be studying the journey of collaborating with actors to bring the stories you direct to life. Throughout the semester you will experiment, research, practice and discover processes utilised in directing performance.

Undertaking a series of experiments and investigations, studio members will broaden and deepen their understanding of directing performance through active and experiential learning strategies both in front and behind the camera.

In the last third of the semester you will initiate your own series of film projects, undertaking practical implementation of strategies we have explored to that point.

Working both in and out of class you will develop a common language, cultivating robust and synergetic relationships with your actors, breathing life into characters and inspiring truly memorable performances.

## STUDIO LEADER

Sebastian Bertoli is a filmmaker and actor. He has a background in directing film and theatre and editing commercial and narrative screen content. For the last 15 years he has worked as an actor appearing in productions by HBO, DreamWorks, Playtone, Bad Robot, Warner Bros Television, ABC, December Media, Fremantle Media and Seven Studios.



Image: Larissa Hjorth

# DOING MOBILE MEDIA

## Practice, Placemaking and Performativity

“If one can ask ‘big’ questions of ‘small’ data, then the difference between big and small disappears”.

Marilyn Strathairn (2004)

## STUDIO PROMPT

How can our smartphones become a space for critical making? How might we develop critical and creative methods for understanding mobile media?

## DESCRIPTION

Mobile media devices—from smartphones and laptops to apps and data—play a crucial role in many people’s lives globally. They are ubiquitous and yet intimate, shaping and being shaped by cultural practice. The rise of mobile media has significant implications for media and communication research, industry and practice. They have also become key portals for creative practice and activism.

The studio is divided into two parts—Part I: exploring existing case studies; Part II: exploring your own case study. The case studies will include ACMI, RMIT Culture (galleries) and art for mental health festival, The Big Anxiety Festival. Successful students will have the opportunity to make media or content for The Big Anxiety Festival in October 2022 which will run across various sites and spaces in Melbourne.

In this studio, apart from having fun, we will also consider some key questions such as:

- How can we use mobile media to engage audiences and publics in alternative ways? (i.e. playful resistance)?
- What does mobile media creativity look like? What makes mobile media art distinctive?

- How does mobile media shape media practice? What are its unique affordances and what opportunities do they provide?
- In an age of smartphones and IoT, what does it mean to do mobile media methods?
- What kind of concepts and theories shape and underpin and align with such methods?
- How can mobile media help us to rethink museum engagement practices beyond Instagram moments?
- How can mobile media be deployed to enact different types of urban storytelling and placemaking especially in light of indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing?

Through critical making we will reflect, make, design and play in ways that will change how you think about your far-from-humble mobile phone.

## STUDIO LEADER

Distinguished Professor Larissa Hjorth is a digital ethnographer and socially-engaged artist. Larissa has two decades of experience leading interdisciplinary and collaborative mobile media projects that use innovative methods to understand intergenerational relationships, play, grief, games and creative practice intervention.

To the people who are surprised that Apple made impractical choices with the iPhone, let's just remember that this is how you charge their mouse.



Image from [ME.ME](#)

## FIX THE APP

Exploring alternative media technology through analysis and making experiments

“Facebook defines who we are;  
Amazon defines what we want;  
Google defines what we think;”

George Dyson (2012)

“Finance defines what we have (materially, at least);  
And reputation increasingly defines our opportunities.”

Frank Pasquale (2015)

### STUDIO PROMPT

This studio investigates what's lacking in dominant media platform technologies (such as Facebook, Amazon, Google and so on) and experiments with new app designs to make positive changes.

### DESCRIPTION

Platform media can be viewed as a mixture of the classic three characteristics of the good, the bad, and the ugly. We are encouraged to celebrate the convenience and liberty brought by platform technologies, but have you ever experienced one of those funny ‘eyerolling’ moments when the hype doesn't live up to the actual experience - like an unfitting advertising recommendation, a misspelling from the keyboard autocorrection, mis-censored content, voice recognition's disregard of gendered or accented voices, or simply just a meme with some bad sense of humour going viral. Let's use these disruptive moments as our point of departure.

There are three parts to the studio – critical analysis, methods, and experimental design and entrepreneurship.

In the first part of the studio, we use critical studies of media technologies to query the many aspects of platform

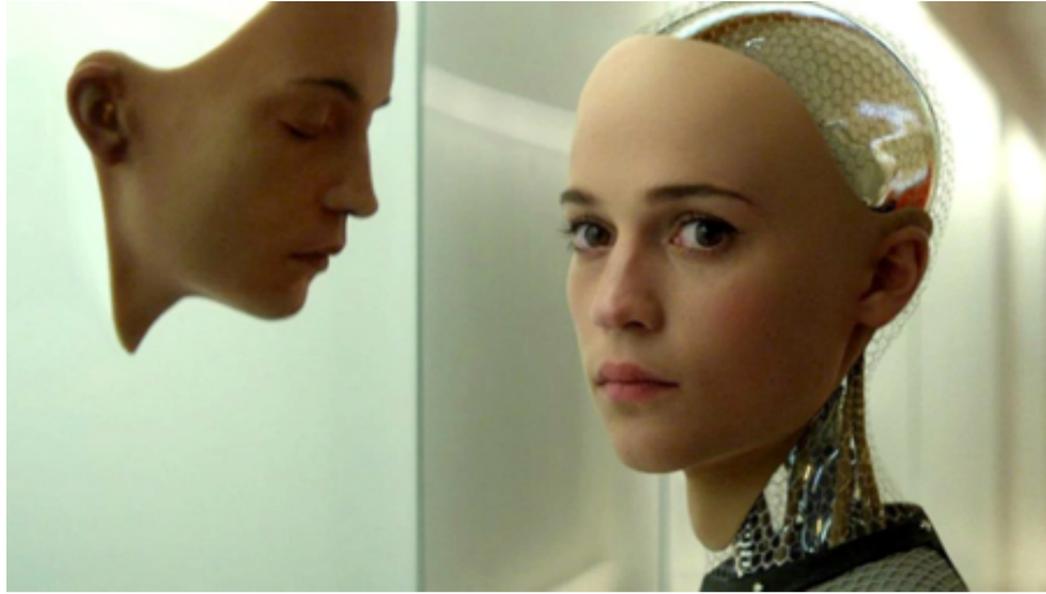
technologies that we have long been taking for granted and to figure out what makes ‘platform media’ historically distinct from older forms.

The second part is about perspectives and methods. What is our relationship to contemporary technologies – how do we use it and how does it use us? What about people with different experiences to us? To address these questions, you will need to ‘go out to the field’ and interview people about their experiences and perceptions.

With this knowledge about platform technologies and some empirical research on people's relationships with technologies under your belt, the third part of the studio will concentrate on facilitating and developing your techno-entrepreneurship skills. You will design alternative and more inclusive apps and platforms that remedy problems identified earlier in the studio. While these designs are in a sense prototypes, your presentation of their potential functions and application will see you draw on and showcase your media making and storytelling skills in an entrepreneurial mode that is an extremely useful element in any media creative's portfolio.

### STUDIO LEADER

Fan Yang researches and teaches in the intersectional areas of technology, postcolonialism, and ethnic media. She's currently finalising her PhD thesis on the internal operation of the WeChat-based Chinese-language media in Australia through the lens of human-technology mediation.



*Ex Machina.*  
Dir. Alex  
Garland, Perf.  
Alicia  
Vikander,  
Universal  
Pictures 2014.

## FUTURE MACHINA

**Creating Contemporary Futurology with Film,  
Video, Audio & Immersive Art**

“That's something that tends to happen with new technologies generally: The most interesting applications turn up on a battlefield, or in a gallery.”

William Gibson (2007)

“AI will be the best or worst thing ever for humanity, so let's get it right”

Elon Musk (2017)

### STUDIO PROMPT

How might media contribute to practices of futurology - the study and extrapolation of current economic, social and cultural trends in order to imagine possible and plausible futures?

### DESCRIPTION

Dystopian visions in films like *Ex Machina* (2014) and cautionary tales like *Her* (2013) are works of creativity that could be considered contemporary manifestations of an older tradition of “futurist art.” These types of films tackle complicated questions around technology, identity and what happens next. While the original futurist movement of the previous century was art-based and sought to revolutionise culture by aestheticising modern life, contemporary futurology has extended to industries like business, public policy and technology.

In this studio students will research, develop and produce stills, photography, film, video, audio and immersive art that explore the idea of Futurology.

In response to findings each week on key future-focused texts, students will be asked to:

- experiment with making connections with multi-media in an innovative, original way
- investigate the methods of cross-disciplinary applications
- explore questions around technology and identity

Students will develop the skills required to create stills, photography, film, video, audio and immersive art using a range of multi-media. This will potentially include an exploration of basic Chroma Keying, AR and Photo Animation Applications such as Assemblr, Hypervsn and Luminar 4.

### STUDIO LEADER

Cat Lew is a Video Artist, Sound Designer, Audio Engineer and Educator. She has a diverse creative practice, having produced video art and sound design for Melbourne Fringe Festival, West Projection Festival, Incinerator Gallery, Mesma Studio, Cinema Viscera, City of Melbourne and City of Maribyrnong. She currently teaches digital media, film & sound editing and design at VU Polytechnic, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image and RMIT.



Chloe Zhao directs actor Brady Jandreau playing a character based on his life in micro budget film *The Rider* (2018)

# PRODUCTION ON A SHOESTRING

## How financial constraints enable distinct creative solutions

“I think we can find solutions. And that limitation, that solution, is actually going to define us as a filmmaker, to allow us to find creative solutions that are going to be essential in forming our voice.”

Chloe Zhao (2021), Academy-Award Winning Director of *Nomadland* and *The Rider*

## STUDIO PROMPT

How do you successfully make a film on a ‘microbudget’ without sacrificing production value and constraining your creative voice?

## DESCRIPTION

By first understanding the full scope and reality of the filmmaking process, and all the elements involved, microbudget filmmakers are able to easier define their boundaries and take better creative control of their project. This studio aims to demystify the full the production process of a film, so that as a filmmaker writing a microbudget script you can truly understand what it will take it get it made successfully.

In this studio we will first view, discuss, and breakdown a number of popular case study films, including Chloe Zhao’s *The Rider* (2018) and Sean Baker’s *Tangerine* (2015), to define a microbudget film and understand all the elements involved in pre-production, production and post-production. Then using a microbudget short film example, we will look at how to realistically identify these elements and understand costs, scheduling issues, and plausibility for a microbudget production.

In a process of reverse engineering, once we better understand the production process and parameters for a microbudget film, we’ll then set out to each write our own short narrative microbudget film script.

In the second part of the semester, we refine our scripts and ready them to an industry standard for production.

The aim is that students leave this studio empowered with the knowledge of the production process to make smart creative choices for their early career film projects that can still be creatively bold whilst remaining on a realistic ‘shoestring’ budget.

## STUDIO LEADER

Tim Marshall is an award-winning filmmaker from Brisbane, Queensland. In 2013, his short film *Gorilla* won the Iris Prize in the UK, awarding him £25K for his next short. The outcome of this, *Followers*, screened at Sundance Film, SXSW, and MIFF in 2015.

At the start of 2021, Tim shot his first feature film as writer/director, queer horror *Closing Night*. The film stars award-winning queer actor Daniel Monks, with executive producers Dan Lake and Kurt Royan from Orange Entertainment Co. The film will be released in 2022.

In 2017, he won the WeScreeplay TV Pilot Script contest judged by Comedy Central, and placed as a semi-finalist in the Academy Nicholl Fellowship in 2014. As a screenwriter, Tim has learned from the very best - having developed his scripts with the assistance of script consultants including Meg LeFauve (writer, *Inside Out*), Andrew Ellard (writer, *IT Crowd*, *Red Dwarf*), Lynne Vincent McCarthy (script editor, *The Babadook*, *The Nightingale*), Ruth Atkinson (Sundance Screenwriting Lab script consultant), and Guinevere Turner (writer, *American Psycho*).

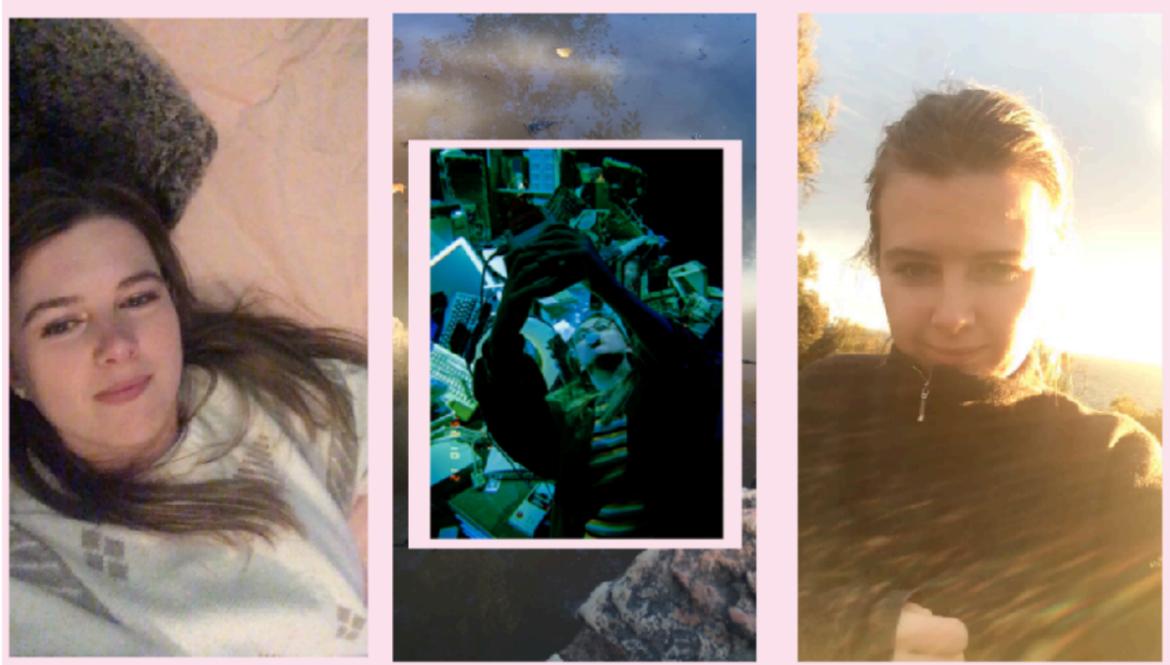


Image - Steph Milsom, iPhone 2018, 2018, 2019

# AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEDIA

## Making media art about the internet and the self

“We live in the age of the selfie. A fast self-portrait, made with a smartphone’s camera and immediately distributed and inscribed into a network, is an instant visual communication of where we are, what we’re doing, who we think we are, and who we think is watching... This is a very big deal for art.”

Jerry Saltz (2014)

## STUDIO PROMPT

How has the internet changed the way we make media about ourselves?

## DESCRIPTION

Personal media is everywhere. Through our phones and devices we generate an abundance of autobiographical media material daily. We can record and share most aspects of our everyday lives instantly. Our data is tracked, every move cached, every click accounted for. What can we do with the ever-expanding material in our digital footprint? In this studio you will mine your personal archives to make and exhibit autobiographical media art.

At the heart of autobiographical practice is a disruption of the private sphere, the disclosure of intimate details a point to examine our understanding of the public/private dichotomy. Lori Andrews (2012) states that “Facebook is unilaterally redefining the social contract – making the private now public and making the public now private”. If we are now so inundated with personal material through social media, reality television and celebrity culture, how have other artists responded to this shift? We will trace the self through cinema, media and art history to develop an understanding of different

modes of autobiographical making including self-portraiture, personal cinema and confessional art.

Through watching, reading and making we will question how we entangle and represent ourselves in our work and the effect the internet has had on self-representation. In this studio you will cultivate your personal practice, and negotiate skills for producing and analysing first person media and art.

## STUDIO LEADER

Steph Milsom is an academic and educator researching confessional screen practices. She teaches into the cinema studies program at RMIT, where she is also completing her PhD. Sometimes she is a librarian. Her research focuses on the autobiographical potential of internet metadata, which she uses to make weird films about herself. She is a solid half-back flanker and assistant coach of the Lomond Barracudas FC.



*Ten Skies*, still, James Benning (2004), [\[source\]](#)

## ECO VIDEO

### Crafting *ecological intimacy*

“Attuning...invokes a particular sensitivity — receptive and curious, careful and attentive. A deliberately hesitant engagement with other entities; from quivering butterfly wings to earth-shattering volcanoes. A kind of 'ecological intimacy'”

Maja Kuzmanovic and Nik Gaffney (2019)

## STUDIO PROMPT

How can we create ecologically conscious video?

## DESCRIPTION

We feel dangerously close yet physically distanced to what's happening in the environment, where media representations evoke a simultaneous understanding of the seriousness of climate change and failure to act. Media-makers in a recent ABC podcast considered facts inaccessible and story too subjective in capturing the complexity of climate change. What experimental approaches will allow us to feel shifting environments as a sensory experience? In *Eco Video* you will craft compelling media works which "feel, perceive, detect, apprehend [and] grasp with the senses" the environments around us (Demos, T. J. et al. 2021).

Through practices of noticing curiously, you will create videos which sense climate change intimately. To do this, you will perform weekly experiments and produce a major video work which attunes to the vibrant, precarious, entangled, damaged and dynamic qualities of the world. In *Eco Video* you will make experimental, documentary and interactive media which thinks critically about the world in flux, and leave the studio with the conceptual and technical skills necessary to craft ecologically conscious media.

## STUDIO LEADER

Dr. Hannah Brasier is a research-practitioner interested in how attuned noticing can be used to engage with the world ecologically. Her experimental interactive documentary films combine the everyday, travel, landscape and environment to create ecologically conscious media. Hannah teaches conceptual studios and cinema studies in the school of Media & Communication at RMIT, and has been doing so for the past seven years.

You can contact Hannah via [hannah.brasier@rmit.edu.au](mailto:hannah.brasier@rmit.edu.au).



Bottles, by Mali Maedar (2018), via Pexels.

# MAKE HASTE! FILM WASTE!

## Communicating the circular economy

“Waste is an opportunity. Circularity means going beyond recycling to ensure that value is maintained or upcycled, as well as reducing and avoiding the use of virgin resources altogether.”

Circular Economy Hub@RMIT Website

## STUDIO PROMPT

This studio is a partnership between RMIT Media students and the Circular Economy Hub@RMIT who are appearing at Melbourne Knowledge Week (10 - 14th May).

## DESCRIPTION

In this studio, students will devise, shoot and screen short documentary works which deal with the theme of waste and the circular economy. The finished documentary works will be screened as part of Melbourne Knowledge Week at the iconic Capitol Theatre or featured online as part of the Melbourne Knowledge Week digital program or RMIT Culture social media.

The first half of the semester will focus on “leveling up” media production skills to assist students to make a short documentary that is suitable for a public screening and considers the technical and content specifications provided by stakeholders - Melbourne Knowledge Week, Circular Economy Hub@RMIT, and The Capitol. Early class activities will focus on camera, sound, and lighting, and students will record interviews with experts and accompanying observational footage on campus and in the immediate surroundings of Melbourne’s CBD.

The second half of the semester finds students screening their works as part of Melbourne Knowledge Week and

reflecting upon finessing a work for the public. Students will also participate in an activity focussed on capturing/ documenting Melbourne Knowledge Week at The Capitol Theatre for RMIT Culture’s archive.

## STUDIO LEADER

Rohan Spong has worked as a sessional academic at RMIT for a number of years across a range of diverse classes including music video production, broadcast media, and documentary studies. When not feverishly drawing diagrams on the campus whiteboards, Rohan has devised, shot and directed three acclaimed feature length documentary films: *Winter at Westbeth* (2016), *All The Way Through Evening* (2012) and *T is for Teacher* (2009). Rohan's films have screened theatrically in cinemas in Australia, New Zealand and the USA, been broadcast on ABC, SBS, Foxtel and PBS/WORLD (USA), and appeared at numerous international film festivals including MIFF, Sydney Film Festival and DOC NYC. His films have also been programmed at a number of cultural and screen institutions including ACMI, MONA, Boston Museum of Art, Lincoln Center (NYC) and the US Library of Congress (DC).



*'Notes on Blindness'*  
Peter Middleton &  
James Spinney  
(2016)

## MEDIA BODIES

Exploring film and sound with technology, place and the body

“Making our way in the world, we hear among things, as we see among them.”

Tim Ingold (2005)

### STUDIO PROMPT

What is the relationship between our physical, embodied experience of our environment -- places, other people, technology -- and our mental and emotional selves? How might we make media works that evoke a strong feeling of what it is to be a body-mind in the world? What layers of meaning or interest might this exploration add to a media work?

### DESCRIPTION

Filmmakers, artists, writers, philosophers, anthropologists and sociologists alike have explored the relationship between the self we perceive internally in our own minds, and our physical, embodied experiences as we interact with the world around us. “An active body,” write sociologists Anne Marie Mol and John Law, “incorporates bits and pieces of the world around it”, and its borders become ‘semi-permeable’ (2004). Thinking about the body and the senses, argues ethnographer Elizabeth Straughan, can lead us to considering emotions and relationships between humans and other things and environments in the world (2010).

This studio uses the senses and the body as a starting point for noticing and exploring these relationships in film and sound works. In this studio we will watch and listen to existing examples of media work that begin to explore these ideas. We will also make a series of small exploratory works in a number of different media modes. These will be developed later in the semester into larger

works or collections of works in one or more media modes of the student’s choice.

We will experiment with how we might use different media making techniques to heighten the experience of the body, movement, and the senses in media works, and reflect on why this might be important to or interesting for a media making practice. Students will be able to develop and explore their own more specific areas of interest about the body, technology and place or environment as the semester progresses.

### STUDIO LEADER

Sophie Langley is a fiction and nonfiction writer, sonic essay maker, photographer, sketcher and PhD candidate at RMIT. Her work is interested in the ways in which different types of knowledge, 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 the climate crisis and social and technological changes. Her PhD project uses an entangled essaying approach, blending various media modes and ‘creative’ and ‘academic’ writing to explore embodied and material knowledges for patients in medical encounters. She has been teaching at RMIT for several years.



Photo by Morningfrost: Production control room at SKY Sport24, PCR. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Production\\_control\\_room#/media/File:SKY\\_Sport24\\_PCR.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Production_control_room#/media/File:SKY_Sport24_PCR.jpg) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

# READY CAMERA ONE

## Multi-camera studio production

“Screens abound, from your pocketbook to the wall, the ceiling, the corner, and the stadium. They bring images and sounds from elsewhere in order to tell journalistic, financial, historical, musical, dramatic, sexual, and athletic stories. That’s television. And it is likely to continue, subject to change and disruption in both local and universal ways.”

Toby Miller (2019)

## STUDIO PROMPT

What are the creative possibilities and challenges of multi-camera television production, and how can the practices and processes of the multi-camera production be applied beyond the studio?

## DESCRIPTION

Multi-camera television production is a persisting mode of television practice. A significant proportion of media content today, from sports coverage, news, special event television, variety/late night, reality and talk programs continues to make use of the multi-camera production format. This means much of the ‘editing’ is done ‘live’ or in-camera.

Through reading, viewing, discussion and practice, this studio will explore the creative possibilities and challenges of a multi-camera television production in a studio environment. Through a combination of ‘live to tape’ and non-live production exercises, you will investigate the different ways in which the multi-camera studio can be used. You will gain an understanding of TV studio production workflows and technology, developing your skills and experience through project work.

There will be a range of smaller projects produced in the studio that explore different possibilities and forms of multi-camera production, such as news, talk shows, and game shows. We will explore the ways in which television broadcast is adapting to new and emerging media contexts, and how we can adapt the multi-camera environment to suit these contexts.

## STUDIO LEADER

Dr Ruth Richards completed her PhD in Media and Communication at RMIT University in 2019. Her research interests include feminist film and television studies, women in film, television and animation, broadcast media and popular culture. Ruth has a background in multi-camera production and community television, having previously taught media studios in live media, news satire, and media disinformation. She currently volunteers with Senses of Cinema and served as the Floor Manager at the 2019 Antenna Awards live broadcast.



*F FOR FAKE* (dir. Orson Welles, 1973)

## REAL TO REEL

### Self directed non-fiction project

“I come across [the subject of each film] as a matter of chance, and maybe occasionally good judgment. I take the risk of shooting it because I think it might be interesting – then my job as an editor is to decide what it is saying, whether I want to use it, in what form, and where I’m going to place it.”

Frederick Wiseman (2018)

### STUDIO PROMPT

What creative and technical challenges arise whilst capturing the real world? And, what are the various ways that non-fiction materials can be arranged for different outcomes?

### DESCRIPTION

In *Real to Reel*, students will engage in a variety of studio activities (including screenings, discussion, practical exercises, reflective tasks and media production) to explore the various ways in which non fiction materials can be arranged for different outcomes and audiences.

The first half of the semester finds students researching and reflecting on various approaches to capturing the real world. In class, students will respond to the work of practitioners such as filmmakers Frederick Wiseman and Molly Dineen and photographers Eve Arnold and Martin Parr in a series of in class exercises. Along the way, students will evaluate and improve their media production skills.

The second half of the semester finds students working in small groups to devise, pitch and produce a major work (such as a short documentary of 5 minutes duration or a 1500 word photo essay containing 20-30 images).

### STUDIO LEADER

Rohan Spong has worked as a sessional academic at RMIT for a number of years across a range of diverse classes including music video production, broadcast media, and documentary studies. When not feverishly drawing diagrams on the campus whiteboards, Rohan has devised, shot and directed three acclaimed feature length documentary films: *Winter at Westbeth* (2016), *All The Way Through Evening* (2012) and *T is for Teacher* (2009). Rohan's films have screened theatrically in cinemas in Australia, New Zealand and the USA, been broadcast on ABC, SBS, Foxtel and PBS/WORLD (USA), and appeared at numerous international film festivals including MIFF, Sydney Film Festival and DOC NYC. His films have also been programmed at a number of cultural and screen institutions including ACMI, MONA, Boston Museum of Art, Lincoln Center (NYC) and the US Library of Congress (DC).



Source: Pixabay,  
via Pexels (2016).

## ROOM WITH A VIEW

### Broadcast radio as a collaborative space and enduring audio medium

“Radio’s present era is marked by a transformative new materiality, as digital platforms finally overcome the ephemerality that once made radio so hard to capture and assess as a cultural form; a new mobility, as radio moves across devices and into new spaces; and by a new globalism, as digital accessibility unleashes radio and extends it well beyond its former local and national boundaries. Radio has not only survived but revived, both as a creative medium and as a shared cultural experience.”

M. Hilmes (2013)

### STUDIO PROMPT

What is the role of radio in a globalised media environment that is dominated by screens? What forms and formats does modern radio take? And how can we produce compelling content for both “live” broadcast or streaming radio and on-demand listening?

### DESCRIPTION

For years now, critics have predicted the death of radio as a medium. However, despite these dire predictions, not only has radio endured - it continues to matter deeply to the almost 3 billion people around the world who tune into it weekly. In fact, in some parts of the world radio listenership has recently grown as people have sought company, community and vital information during the Covid 19 pandemic (Rodero 2020).

In this studio, run in partnership with Triple R FM, you will learn the skills required to produce live-to-air and pre-recorded radio, as well as consider the role of radio in the wider media landscape in Australia and globally.

Due to ongoing uncertainties caused by the pandemic, this semester’s Room With a View will take one of two possible forms.\*

Working both individually or in teams you will either:

a. Use the Triple R studios to produce and present an hour of live radio that will be streamed on the Triple R website.

OR

b. use the RMIT radio studio to produce an “as-live” pre-recorded radio show that will broadcast in the morning on Triple R FM.

You’ll also be asked to reflect upon questions around the social, cultural and political role of radio by examining concepts such as voice, representation, listening and accessibility - particularly in relation to community radio.

[\*A final decision on option a or b will be made at the semester’s start and will depend on whether Triple R management deems it safe for the studios to be made accessible to students.]

### STUDIO LEADER

Heather Jarvis is a radio & podcast producer, journalist, lecturer and PhD candidate in Media Studies at RMIT. In her extensive career at the ABC and also in community radio, Heather produced and presented programs spanning from music and magazine-style shows through to current affairs and sport. Her radio documentary *Fallen Angels*, produced for the ABC with journalist and academic Margaret Simons, was a finalist in the 2017 Amnesty International Australia Media Awards, and the 2017 United Nations Media Awards.



Artwork, *Untitled*,  
Linda Sterling

## SOCIAL VIDEO

### Designing and producing social video for art galleries

“Here’s the paradox. Moving with the software means learning to move the software.”

E. Manning (2009)

overlay material. Video post-production includes learning in Photoshop and Premiere: media asset preparation, how to cut interview dialogue and overlay material, the resizing of video frames, text graphics, colour grading, audio techniques, subtitling, making publication thumbnails and exporting.

### STUDIO PROMPT

What does social media software allow us to do with video when the brief is to profile artists and their artistic practice?

### DESCRIPTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has made art galleries shift online to showcase their exhibitions and art collections. Visual organisations like art galleries that work with highly creative artists are experimenting with interviewing techniques and creating social video content.

In this ‘partnered project’ studio, we collaborate with the not-for-profit McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery to produce social video content. This content profiles artists and their artworks in the McClelland collection. Studio outcomes include a reference acknowledging your work experience and potential published video works for your portfolio.

Studio participants will engage with McClelland staff and prominent Australian artists to devise the brief and respond to ongoing creative feedback. Production will involve recording A-roll by interviewing artists and B-roll visual

### STUDIO LEADER

Dr Seth Keen is a practice-led educator, researcher and consultant in the media program at RMIT University and a core member of [Digital Ethnographic Research Centre](#). Seth's teaching focuses on photo and video technologies and practices within interactive, mobile, and social media. He uses his research practice to engage with design and information technology specialists on the co-design of media platforms. Seth has decades of experience producing audiovisual media content, including primetime television documentaries, short films, experimental videos, video art installations, music videos, corporate videos, interactive documentary, social video, and bespoke video for research projects and media platforms.



Cerise Howard introducing *Ecstasy* (dir. Gustav Machatý, 1933) at the Czech and Slovak Film Festival of Australia, Melbourne Town Hall, 2018. Photo: Peter Bratuskins

# THE FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE

## Conceiving and mounting a film festival

“Listen, anybody who has a film festival has the right to show what they want.”

Abel Ferrara

## STUDIO PROMPT

To what ends do we launch and sustain film festivals, with what means, and driven by what motivations?

## DESCRIPTION

This studio will steep students in all that constitutes film festival culture. Students will work collaboratively to stage one or more film festivals in miniature. 2019’s studio spawned the Melbourne International Youth Film Festival, 2020’s the New Normal International Film Festival, while last year’s gave rise to the Melbourne Overlooked Film Festival. The latter two were held wholly online. What manner of festival might this year’s class inaugurate – and where?

The hows, whys and for whoms of festivals will be extensively probed, from the festivals of the international A-list circuit to boutique local offerings, whether site-specific (as had historically been the norm), held online or presented according to an onsite-online hybrid model.

To what extent are international, national or regional film festivals exercises in soft diplomacy, or even propaganda? Do they strive to serve audiences both diasporic and cinephilic? Or are they more driven by the imperatives of the marketplace? What about festivals nominally pitched at other communities, e.g. minoritarian identities?

This studio will explore how festival programming can differ from, or intersect with, that of commercial exhibitors, repertory cinemas and not-for-profit film societies, and will consider the manifold ethical and practical considerations when determining what makes it into a program, and under what rubrics. And whether staff even get paid! Branding, promotion, partnerships, contra deals... Guests, awards, jurors... Q&As, panels, workshops, conferences...

Running a festival, no matter its proportions, is a consuming undertaking. This studio will prime students for a film festive future. Participants will be assisted to forge industry networks and will blog about their experiences as an audience member, and as a producer, of film festival experiences.

## STUDIO LEADER

Cerise Howard is a co-curator of the Melbourne Cinémathèque who co-founded the Czech and Slovak Film Festival of Australia and was its Artistic Director from 2013-18. A co-founder also of tilde: Melbourne's Trans & Gender Diverse Film Festival, she has long been engaged with international film festival culture, whether reporting for Senses of Cinema on festivals from Abu Dhabi to Ukraine, reporting for a festival’s own daily newspaper in Karlovy Vary, participating in FIPRESCI juries or in programming and staging festivals in Australian cities.



*Il deserto rosso*

(The Red Desert,  
1964)

Dir. Michelangelo  
Antonioni

## THE SCENE IN CINEMA

### Studies in camera coverage

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

Luis Bunuel (1928)

### STUDIO PROMPT

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

This studio will investigate coverage / scene construction / decoupage in narrative film production from both a theoretical perspective, and a highly 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, creative filmmaking.

### DESCRIPTION

The term “coverage” has, at the very least, two distinct meanings, each with significantly divergent 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.

### 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.



Still from Lynne Sachs, 'A Month of Single Frames' (2019)

## THINKING WITH PICTURES

### The personal essay film

“... one way to think about the essay film is as a meeting ground for documentary, avant-garde and art film impulses” ”

Paul Arthur (2003)

“Straddling fiction and nonfiction, news reports and confessional autobiography, documentaries and experimental film, they are, first, practices that undo and redo film form, visual perspectives, public geographies, temporal organizations, and notions of truth and judgment within the complexity of experience”

Timothy Corrigan (2011)

### STUDIO PROMPT

The essay film is a hybrid form that falls between different genres of filmmaking. How can we work with this flexible form to make innovative, challenging films that speak about the world, and our place in it?

### DESCRIPTION

In this studio, you will each make a short personal essay film. The essay film has been used to explore everything from major political and social justice issues, to small scale, intimate films that engage with filmmakers' personal histories. It's a form that is hard to pin down – it's usually non-fiction, but not necessarily a documentary. It can

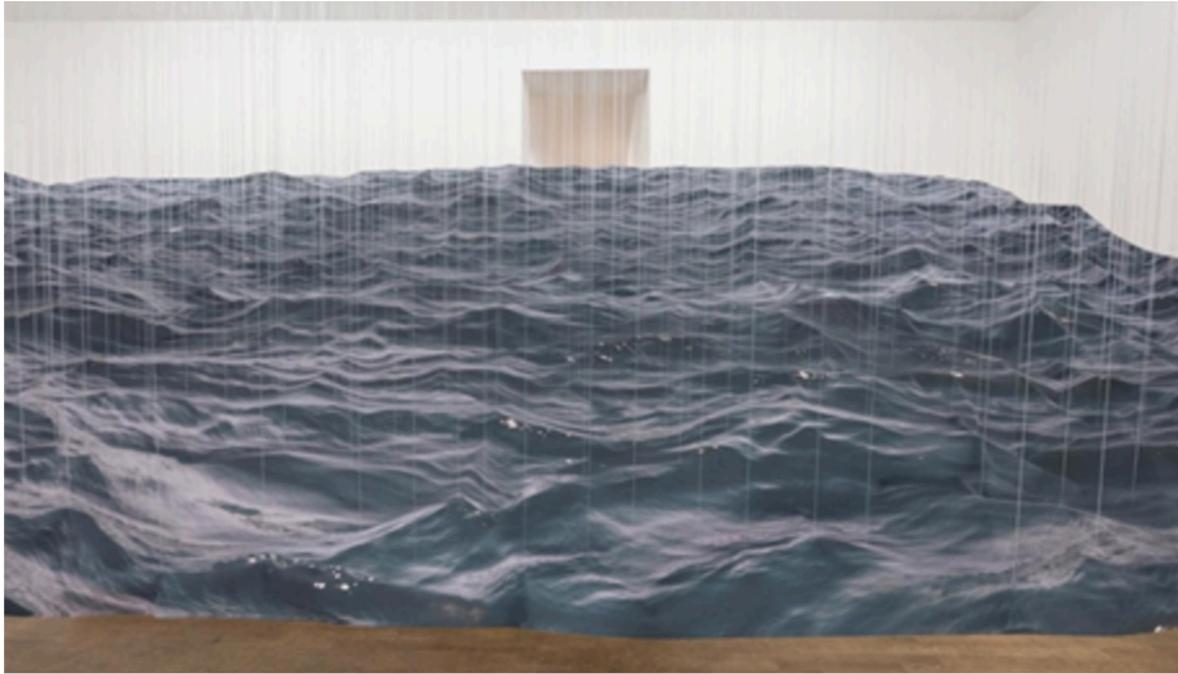
contain fictional elements, or it can seem more like an experimental film. It can contain different forms and styles in the one film, and combine them together in complex and compelling ways. Crucially, it's a form that values experimentation, playfulness, and the use of the filmmaker's personal voice. A key marker of the form is “an overtly personal, in-depth, thought-provoking reflection”. (Laura Rascaroli, 2009)

This studio brings together watching films, analysis, critical reflection, reading, writing, and practical filmmaking. Together we will develop your own five minute essay film, which you will make in the second half of the semester.

### STUDIO LEADER

Liz Burke is an award winning documentary maker and film producer. Her documentary work has covered topics, such as climate change, capital punishment, and disability activism. Her work includes *Just Punishment* (2006) for ABC-TV, *The First Wave* (2008) for Engage Media, *Missing in the Land of Gods* (2012), nominated for Best Australian Documentary at the Sydney Film Festival, and Best International Documentary at the International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam, *Helen Garner's Monkey Grip* (2014), for ABC-TV, and *Defiant Lives* (2017) for ABC-TV.

She has recently completed a practice led Ph.D. about the interactive film as a form of the personal essay film, which included the production of *Aliens Among Us: a Film about People and their Dogs* (2021).



*Elegy*, Miguel Rothchild, 2017

## TO BE AT SEA

### Making site-responsive media in uncertain times

“Being suspended need not be the same as being trapped or in perpetual stasis; rather, it may be a temporary temporal and spatial respite from the relentless forward momentum of “conventional good life fantasies,” ... or from demands to stay put or to relocate. Suspension as both a spatial and temporal category... may allow for a momentary vantage point from which to envision an alternative to the here and now.”

Gayatri Gopinath (2018)

### STUDIO PROMPT

How can we use time-based media to attune to site and creatively respond to the uncertainty of our times?

### DESCRIPTION

The opening action for this studio will be to question and look at examples of what we might identify as a site, and catalyst for our media making—could it be the body, a river mouth, a landfill, a discord channel, a building, a wound, an event, a bird’s nest or something else entirely?

This studio proposes that one of the most valuable, versatile and transferable skills in our current context and the discipline of media is attunement: an understanding and ability to sense, respond and interpret the worlds we are a part of. Our focus will accordingly be on cultivating the skills and sensibilities required to produce time-based media that has cultural significance, ecological value and is sensitive to the sites in which it is interested.

The studio invites you to explore, experiment, identify and communicate the importance of specific sites through time-based media—such as audio, video, image, text, digital media, installation and browser-based technologies. Drawing on examples of text, video works, games design,

listening exercises and soundwalks, we will explore techniques and ways of practicing attunement and reimagining our relation to everyday sites. Putting these practices into action, you will experiment with creating a sense of attunement through your own time-based media works and go on to produce a major site-responsive project.

Over the course of this studio, you will develop an awareness of your own sensibilities as a media practitioner, leading you to make meaningful media that provokes the sensation of discovery and interdependence, within yourselves and your audiences.

Together we will consider our roles and purposes as media makers at a discombobulated moment in time—questioning what if, rather than forging ahead with narratives of progress, we pause, in the open ocean, allowing ourselves to be present and suspended, to ask ‘what if our time is ripe for sensing precarity?’ (Tsing 2015).

### STUDIO LEADER

Amias Hanley is an artist and researcher whose practice uses sound and media to explore relations among queer ecologies, attunement, situatedness and speculative practices. Engaging forms of performance, installation, and collaboration, Amias' work is interested in audition as an affective practice and the possibilities of sound and technology to support and alter the sonic expressions of humans and more-than-humans.