

## CORE STUDIO: INTRO TIME-BASED MEDIA

BFA Design + Technology Program  
CDT Department, Parsons The New School For Design  
PUDT 1200.B (CRN# 2461)

January 26 – May 18, 2009 (\*Mondays/Wednesdays, 12-2:40pm, rm. 804 – 55W 13<sup>th</sup> St. 8<sup>th</sup> flr.)

### **Course Description and Objectives**

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Narrative is fundamental to our everyday existence. In this studio we will work with two types of narrative: your own story (and how you tell it), and stories beyond yourself. In the most basic sense you will be required to do a decent job of telling who you are and what you are doing: your autobiography. Then you will be asked to present stories about other things, using both realistic and abstract or conceptual approaches. You will learn to effectively craft the story's presentation. You will work with drawing and writing, video, sound, and animation. Most importantly, you will be asked to experiment and explore.

Technology transforms how we perceive time, and how we spend it. Traditional Hollywood approaches are embracing new narrative strategies, whether it's through television, games, or the web, or through ubiquitous technologies and interactive environments. This course explores the digital side of time-based media, including digital video, audio, and animation. The core of the class focuses on the development of skills in story telling, character development, motion study, videogames, abstract animation and computer graphics. The fundamentals, principles and nomenclature of classic video, sound, and animation will be explained.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. *Demonstrate a solid understanding of narrative elements and properties of audio / video media.*
2. *Expand your creative vocabulary in the thoughtful development of several forms of time-based media, from concept to reel.*
3. *Articulate your thoughts, both in your own design process and in applying critical feedback to others.*
4. *Develop your design process through concept articulation, planning, information gathering, collaboration, problem-solving and iteration.*
5. *Apply this knowledge towards your own creative development and design work.*

### **Instructor Information**

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Michie Pagulayan  
Email: pagulayM@newschool.edu

Office hours: By appointment – room 1107

### **General Course Policies and Expectations**

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- *Attendance:* Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. Attendance is critical to this class – 2-3 absences will receive an academic warning and 4 absences constitute failing. Students are expected to communicate with the faculty member following an absence to complete any missed course work or assignments.
- *Lateness:* More than 15 minutes late is considered a full absence and 2 late arrivals constitute 1 absence. Early departure will also translate into absences.
- *Critiques:* There will be critiques every week - so make sure you bring your work! Crits are the heart of a studio and your contribution/participation is essential. You should not miss a crit, even if you are not scheduled to present. Final Critiques require your mandatory attendance.
- *Participation:* Full participation in the studio and classroom experience is essential to the educational process. Students are expected to actively participate in all class sessions, discussions and during critiques.

- *Assignments:* Weekly and on-going assignments will be given throughout the course related to the concepts we are covering in class. This is an intensive program and students are expected to complete rigorous out of class assignments. These assignments are meant to increase both your conceptual and technical skills with the element of time. Because much of the technology will be new to you, we have created the “Tech Workshop”. It is crucial that you attend both the Core 2: TBM Studio and the Tech Workshop. It is also important that you get used to asking your peers for help. You will learn more from your fellow students than you ever will from any teacher.
- *Cell phones must be turned off during class at all times.*

## ***Grading***

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Your final grade will be given ONLY after you submit your final, revised works on DVD, accompanied by a list of works. More than 2 absences will lower your grade and four will constitute an automatic failing grade. All projects must be turned in the first day of critiques, and will be marked down 1/2 grade each day they are late. Emergency absences must be communicated to me, and documented if the absence is on a due date.

Grading for this course follows the New School criteria, with good work/participation/attendance in the B range; stellar/refined/original in the A range and competent work/participation in the C range.

- 40% - Projects
- 20% - Final Project
- 20% - Production notebooks/journal/class blog
- 20% - Participation/class exercises

## ***Required Reading***

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Almost every week there will be one or more required readings. Most of the readings will be posted in pdf form on [my.newschool.edu](http://my.newschool.edu) > my courses > core studio > [course documents](#). Assigned readings will be discussed in class and students will be asked to write something about it (should be posted on class blog or linked from student's web sites) - be prepared! We will read several chapters from “Film Art” by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson and “In the Blink of an Eye” by Walter Murch. Other readings will be available as a PDF on ‘[my.newschool.edu](http://my.newschool.edu)’, Internet, or will be handed out during class. Students will be expected to read and understand the “readings”. Material may appear in quizzes or other in-class discussions.

## ***Materials***

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You will need to purchase at least 6 mini DV tapes, 6 DVDs, acquire a media storage device with at least a 20 GB capacity. You are 100% responsible for backing up your work! Please do not tempt fate.

## ***Production Journal and blog***

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Each student is required to post weekly entries to a Web Log (Blog) or on each student's course site run on the Parsons Blog Server – should involve critical thinking and concepts covered in class. Student's class ‘blog’ or individual web site will have a section for the course that will document all project development/process, research, sketches, notes, etc., which will be checked regularly. Students can have a physical production journal but relevant and important materials such as production notes, sketches, etc. relating to assignments and projects must be posted on student's course blog/course web page/site. The blog/journal will be checked and discussed during one on one meetings.

## **PROJECTS (outline)**

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Additional information regarding projects listed below – details and deadlines will be given in a handout and updated on the course site.

- **NARRATIVE SHORT (4 weeks)**
  - 3 minute piece; original narrative; group project (3 student team)
- **SOUND (2 weeks)**
  - 1-2 minute piece; original narrative
- **EXPERIMENTAL (2 weeks)**
  - 1 - 3 minute piece; original narrative
- **TYPE IN MOTION (2 weeks)**
  - 30-second piece; open style
- **FINAL PROJECT (5 weeks)**
  - 5-minute piece; original narrative

## **Course outline**

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### **WEEK 1 (1/26 - 1/28)**

- General course introduction
- Overview of the following topics:
  - *Story*
  - *Plot*
  - *Mis-en-scene*
  - *Storyboard*
  - *Cinematography*
  - *Editing*
  - *Sound*
- Film:
  - *"Citizen Kane" by Orson Wells*
  - *"National Treasure" – opening sequence only & animatics*
- Readings:
  - *"Narrative as a Formal System" by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson ("Film Art")*
  - *"Storyboards" by Steven D, Katz ("Shot by Shot")*

### **WEEK 2 (2/2 - 2/4)**

- Storytelling: Narrative Form – “thinking in pictures”
- Pre-visualization: storyboards, sequences and animatics
- Intro to Cinematography:
  - *The camera: foreground/background, light and shadow, camera movement*
- Films (*only portions of the movies listed below*):
  - *"Pan's Labyrinth" by Guillermo Navarro*
  - *"Amélié" by Bruno Delbonnel*
  - *"Monty Python" TV series (select few)*
  - *"Se7en"*
  - *"Schindler's List"*
  - *"Empire of the Sun"*
  - *"Painted Veil" – directed by John Curran*
  - *"Rashomon"*
  - *Vertov's "Man with a Movie Camera"*
  - *"Apocalypse Now"*
- Readings:
  - *"The Shot: Mise-en-Scene & Cinematography" by David Bordwell & K. Thompson ("Film Art")*

- "Why Do Cuts Work?" and "Rule of Six" by Walter Murch ("In The Blink of an Eye")

### WEEK 3 (2/9 - 2/11)

- Editing Techniques: *Composing time, transitions, rhythm, cuts*
- Experimental Editing
- Films (only portions of the movies listed below):
  - "La Jetée" by Chris Marker
  - "Battleship Potempkin" by Sergei Eisenstein
  - "Dog Day Afternoon"
  - "Snatch"
  - "Pulp Fiction"
  - "Psycho" by Alfred Hitchcock

### WEEK 4 (2/16\* - 2/18)

\*FEB 16 (President's day) – NO CLASS

- FINAL CRITIQUE OF "NARRATIVE SHORT" PROJECT

### WEEK 5 (2/23 - 2/25)

- Intro to Sound
- Discuss radical radio ([neuro transmitter](#), [radio qualia](#)), sound doc ([Sonic Memorial](#)), sound narrative (Miranda July), sound art ([Alvin Lucier](#), [Scanner](#))
- Films:
  - "Lifted" – *animated short film*

### WEEK 6 (3/2 - 3/4)

- **More Sound:** *emotive response, sound mixing. Diegetic and non-diegetic, plus meta-diegetic sounds*
- Films (only portions of the movies listed below):
  - "Silence of the Lambs"
  - "Last of the Mohicans"
  - "Blue Velvet"
- FINAL CRITIQUE OF "SOUND" PIECE

### WEEK 7 (3/9 - 3/11)

- **MID-TERM REVIEW**
- *FIELD TRIP: "American Museum of Moving Image," Queens*

### WEEK 8 (3/16 – 3/19) –

**\*SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES! (3/16 - 3/22)**

### WEEK 9 (3/23 - 3/25)

- Abstract/Experimental film & animation: *color, formal qualities, special effects, abstraction*
- Films:
  - "The Dot and the Line: a romance in lower mathematics" (1965, Chuck Jones)
  - *Animated films of Harry Smith*
  - *ResFest*
  - "Se7en"
  - "Delicatessen"
  - "Run Lola Run"
  - "Requiem for a Dream" (only portions)
  - "Memento" (only portions)
  - "Time Code" (only portions)
  - "24" TV series (only portions)
  - *The Nines* (only portions)
- FINAL CRITIQUE OF "EXPERIMENTAL" PIECE

**WEEK 10 (3/30 - 4/1)**

- Introduction to Broadcast Design: basics of film graphics, type in motion, and titling
- Films:
  - "Thank You for Not Smoking" (title sequence only)
  - "Catch Me if You Can" (title sequence only)
  - "Delicatessen" (title sequence only)
  - "Panic Room" (title sequence only)
  - "Fringe" (tv series – portions only)
  - *Imaginary Forces Reel*
  - ... And many more...

**WEEK 11 (4/6 - 4/8)**

- Time in Space: *installation and time based projects*
- Works to be reviewed:
  - *Bill Viola*
  - *Gary Hill*

**WEEK 12 (4/13 - 4/15)**

- Games as narrative, Algorithmic motion, time as an interactive element
- Documentary Films
- Films:
  - "P.U.L.S.E." by Alice Aycock
  - "An Inconvenient Truth"

**WEEK 13 (4/20 - 4/22)**

- Individual conversations
- Films:
  - "Paris Je T'aime" (portions only)
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**WEEK 14 (4/27 - 4/29)**

- Final Project work-in-progress review

**WEEK 15 (5/4 - 5/6) –**

- Review final project final drafts
- Discuss final presentations

**WEEK 16 (5/13 – 5/15) – FINAL CRITIQUES**

- \*FINAL DVD DUE
- Hand in ALL of your Core Studio: Time-Based Media projects compiled/burned in a DVD
- Leave in my mailbox – CDT main office – 10<sup>th</sup> floor – 2W 13<sup>th</sup> St., rm 1007

*\*Syllabus maybe subject to change*