

Urban Media: Tactics and Performance

NMDS 5593 / CRN 4446, Spring 2019
6 East 16th St, Room 601
Thursdays 4:00 - 6:45pm

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Office: 79 Fifth Ave, 16th Floor, Room 1627
Hours: Wednesdays 3:00 - 6:00pm (by appointment)

Course Collaborator:
Visiting Scholar Idil Basural

Course Description

How do we make sense of the urban through sensory and embodied experiences? How can we investigate and engage in everyday places and contested sites in the city through tactical media, performance and artistic interventions? In this studio we explore these questions through experimental media, embodied performance practices, and site-specific projects. The course brings together perspectives from art, technology, urbanism, media and activism. We examine embodied practices from dance, ritualized movement and street theater, the use of bodies in public spaces for mass protests, sensory ethnography and artistic or media-based interventions conducted around the city. Students will work individually and in groups to devise their own sensory and artistic investigations of selected urban sites using sound, visual and embodied performances to better understand, disrupt or transform the historic narratives, memory or socio-political conditions in these places.

This is a hybrid seminar/production course as may be counted as either designation toward a student's Media Studies MA or Media Management MS degree.

Course Expectations and Grading

The production studio is designed to allow students to excel individually and collaboratively in ways that are most meaningful to their own learning goals. It seeks to foster a participatory learning environment through shared contributions and creative inquiry towards both collective and critical artistic projects.

1. General participation and engagement with activities in class: 15%
2. Responses to readings and contributions on the course blog: 20%
3. Completion of creative assignments & presentations in class: 25%
4. Midterm project presentations and written proposals: 15%
5. Final presentation of artistic design project and write-up (mixed-media essay): 25%

While group projects are expected, individual contributions will be carefully examined. All grades are final and are not subject to change. Incomplete or "I" grades are strongly discouraged.

Academic Honesty: By taking this course you agree that you will adhere to the New School University's Standards of Conduct, as well as the New School Academic Honesty policy. The work you do for any assignment should be your own and due credit should be given if developed in collaboration with others in or outside class.

Online Platforms:

Canvas will be used for course announcements: <https://canvas.newschool.edu/courses/1426932>

WordPress will serve as a blog for students to reflect on readings, share illustrative examples, and ongoing progress on their production work. <https://urbanmediatactics.wordpress.com>

Zotero will provide a shared online course repository for distributing readings and submission/peer-review of student papers. https://www.zotero.org/groups/urban_media_tactics__performance/items

Proposed Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Week: Date	Topic (Thursdays)	Assignments & Activities
Part I	<i>Understanding Self, Other and Place through Ethnography & Design</i>	
Week 1: Jan 24	Setting the Tone: Introducing, Moving, and Expectations	<i>Introduction of participants and interests, course overview and illustrative examples of themes/projects</i>
Week 2: Jan 31	Utopias and Heterotopias	<i>Conceptual readings on Utopias & Heterotopias and how they emerge in media and place-based settings Presentation by visiting scholar Idil Basural</i>
Week 3: Feb 7	Urban Tactics and Psychogeography	Assignment 1: <i>Conducting a derive in the city re-experiencing sites & placemaking, Shared through sensory, written or movement-based gestures</i>
Week 4: Feb 14	Conducting Sensory Ethnography	<i>Conceptual readings on visual ethnography and soundwalking + watching illustrative media examples</i>
Week 5: Feb 21	Designing Cultural Probes	<i>Readings on Cultural Probes and participatory design Assignment 2: <i>Conducting a form of sensory ethnography in everyday places & presenting in class</i></i>
Part II	<i>Embodied Interventions and Socially Engaged Urban Media Practices</i>	
Week 6: Feb 28	Participation, Performance and Street Protest	<i>Readings, discussion, films and Invited artist talk</i>
Week 7: Mar 7	Social Choreography and Site-Specific Interventions	Assignment 3: <i>Exploring Interventions in Public Places Students present interventions and site explorations</i>
Week 8: Mar 14	Interrogative Design: Interventions & Projections in Urban Spaces	<i>Discussing Readings + Emerging Project Concepts & Methodologies</i>
<i>Week 8 1/2: Mar 21</i>	<i>Spring Break – No Class</i>	
Week 9: Mar 28	Midterms: Presentation of Project Concepts + Critical Essay/Proposals	<i>>> Present compelling design proposals for artistic project concepts (as individuals or groups)</i>
Week 10: Apr 4	Media, Technology, Environment and Surveillance	<i>Discussing Readings + Project Updates</i>
Part III	<i>Working Production Studios</i>	<i>Discussing work-in-progress, creative investigations and design of production projects; sessions include brainstorming and hands-on workshops as needed.</i>
Week 11: Apr 11	Studio I: Rethinking Site – Historical, Social and Political Contexts	<i>Studio work + examining practices / invited artist work</i>
Week 12: Apr 18	Studio II: Aesthetics of Sensing, Intervening and Acting	<i>Studio work + examining practices / invited artist work</i>
Week 13: Apr 25	Studio III: Reflecting and Transforming with Audiences	<i>Studio work + examining practices / invited artist work</i>
Part IV	<i>Final Presentations</i>	
Week 14: May 2	Presentation of Final Projects I	<i>Complete peer-review of draft project papers</i>
Week 15: May 9	Presentation of Final Projects II	<i>Submission of Final Project Papers & Reflections (due by May 16th)</i>

Each session will consist of critical reflection on articles and artistic case studies and/or participatory learning through in-class workshops conducted. Articles relevant to the topics will be posted on Zotero each week, while students can share relevant articles as well. We expect all participants to regularly share illustrative examples, projects and reflections on the blog on a weekly basis. Experiences from fieldwork, activities and workshops outside class should be shared online and in class.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

We will read at least 2-3 articles as recommended readings each week, along with 1-2 artistic case studies. This is a partial bibliography, some of which will be assigned to specific sessions while others will be added later.

Week 2: Utopias and Heterotopias

Michael Foucault. Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias. *Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité*, October, 1984; ("Des Espace Autres," March 1967, Translated from the French by Jay Miskowiec).

Hye Jean Chung. Media Heterotopia and Transnational Filmmaking: Mapping Real and Virtual Worlds. *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Summer 2012), pp. 87-109

Marwan M. Kraidy. A Heterotopology of Graffiti: A Preliminary Exploration. *Orient-Institut Studies* 2 (2013).

Week 3: Urban Tactics, Dérive and Psychogeography

Michel de Certeau (1988). The practice of everyday life. Translated by Steven Rendall, *Berkeley: University of California Press*.

Guy Debord (1958). Theory of the Dérive, Translated by Ken Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 50.

Guy Debord, 'Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography, in Knabb, Ken (ed.) *Situationist International Anthology*, (Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1980), p. 5.

Duncan Hay. Transforming Psychogeography: From Paris to London. *Walled City*. October, 2012. (optional)

Tactical Urbanism: Short Term Actions, Long Term Change. The Street Plans Collaborative. (optional)

Week 4: Sensory Ethnography and Soundwalking

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pages 1 – 14 required.

Visual Ethnography (read either one)

Sarah Pink (2007). Walking with video. *Visual Studies*, 22(3), 240–252.

Sarah Pink (2008). Mobilising Visual Ethnography: Making Routes, Making Place and Making Images. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 9(3), Art. 36.

Soundwalking (read either one or both if interested)

Paquette, David and McCartney, Andra (2012). Soundwalking and the Bodily Exploration of Places. *Canadian Journal of Communication*; 37, 1; ProQuest, pg. 135.

Andra McCartney (2014). Soundwalking: creating moving environmental sound narratives. *The Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies, Volume 2*. Edited by Sumanth Gopinath & Jason Stanyek. 212-237.

Week 5: Designing Cultural Probes

Gaver, W.W., Dunne, A., & Pacenti, E. (1999). Cultural Probes. *Interactions vi*(1), 21–29.

Gaver, W. W., Boucher, A., Pennington, S., & Walker, B. (2004). Cultural Probes and the Value of Uncertainty. *Interactions*, 11(5), 53–56.

Simonetta Moro. The Peripatetic Box. 2011.

Week 6: Participation, Performance and Street Protest

Claire Bishop. "The social turn: Collaboration and its discontents." *Artforum* 44.6 (2005): 178.

Claire Bishop. Participation and Spectacle: Where are we now? in Nato Thompson (Eds), *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*. Creative Time Books, New York. MIT Press, 2012.

John Bell. Louder than Traffic: Bread and Puppet Parades. *Radical Street Performance*. Ed. Jan Cohen-Cruz. Routledge, 1998.

Guillermo Gomez-Pena. In defense of performance (Chapter 2). *Ethno-techno: Writings on performance, activism and pedagogy*. Routledge, 2005. (optional)

Week 7: Social Choreography and Site-Specific Interventions

Hewitt, Andrew. Social Choreography and Everyday Movement. Durham NC: Duke University Press; 2005.

Parviainen, Jaana. "Choreographing Resistances: Spatial-Kinaesthetic Intelligence and Bodily Knowledge as Political Tools in Activist Work," *Mobilities Journal* Vol. 5 No. 3, 1 September 2010,

Hunter, Victoria. "Introduction," *Moving Sites*, pp. 1-21. Routledge, 2015.

Somdahl-Sands, Katrinka. "Witnessing dance in the streets," *Moving Sites*. Ed. Victoria Hunter, pp. 274-292. Routledge, 2015. (optional)

Week 8: Interrogative Design: Interventions & Projections in Urban Spaces

Krzysztof Wodiczko. Designing for the City of Strangers (1997), in *Krzysztof Wodiczko*, Black Dog Publishing, 2011.

Krzysztof Wodiczko. *Critical Vehicles: Writings, Projects, Interviews*, MIT Press, March 1999. Why Critical Vehicles (Preface) and Projections (Chapter 2, pp. 44-75).

A Conversation with Krzysztof Wodiczko. Douglas Crimp, Rosalyn Deutsche, Ewa Lajer-Burchard, Krzysztof Wodiczko, *October*, Vol. 38, (Autumn, 1986), pp. 23-51.

Week 10: Media Technology, Environment and Surveillance

Bratton, Benjamin. "The City Wears Us. Notes on the Scope of Distributed Sensing and Sensation," *Site 1: Logic Gate, The Politics of the Artifactual Mind*, Glass Bead Journal, 2017.

Ned Rossiter, 2017. Paranoia is Real: Algorithmic Governance and the Shadow of Control, Media Theory.

White, John. "Intimate Encounters: Screendance and Surveillance," *The International Journal of Screendance*, Vol. 8, 2017.