

A workshop on Tactical Transmedia Fictions by Paolo Cirio.

More material and information about the workshop:
<http://www.paolocirio.net/press/recombinant-fiction.php>
Information about the artist Paolo Cirio:
<http://www.paolocirio.net>

The workshop will explore 'Cross Media' practices for producing fiction, such as 'Transmedia Storytelling', 'Alternate Reality Games' and 'Dispersed Fiction,' and how these products are changing cinema, theatre, marketing and games through internet platforms and networked devices.

Nowadays, these practices are leading the entertainment industry, from film schools to international film festivals. There are always more investments and attention to these new forms of ways to tell stories, which hybridize disciplines and media through audience participation.

The workshop will introduce major exemplary productions in Cross-Media and Transmedia, and the main international opportunities to present, raise funds and learn more about new developments in Transmedia.

In particular, the workshop will focus on how Transmedia storytelling can also be used for educational and political goals, thus for engaging people in social change and raising awareness about real world problems, or even for psychotherapy.

The artist who leads the workshop, Paolo Cirio, has been following and researching in Cross-Media field and related techniques for several years as a natural continuation of his studies in theatre and film theories, as well as his acclaimed practices in net-art and radical media interventions.

His theory of tactical Transmedia fiction with activist aims has been presented in several international new media academic conferences and it is related to two of his art projects, which have been exhibited in several museums and new media festivals.

On the theoretical side, the workshop will provide a wide presentation of various theories and practices, from aspects of the history of experimental theatre, to recent forms of participatory Transmedia. The analyses on previous practices will help to understand historic innovations in storytelling through the internet and other digital technologies, as well as the development of the use of new media in theatre and cinema.

The theoretical session of the workshop will also outline aspects in way to tell stories through new media, like explanations of the concepts of convergence, infosphere, interactivity, participation and manipulation in media, as well as identification of networked media species like Social Media, Personal Media, POD, Geolocation, etc.

Working in the Cross-Media field means operating with several media technologies, various types of content, linguistic methods and strategic tactics. There are several peculiarities in the way stories are told and how the characters are developed in different media. The workshop will focus on practical techniques and methods to create successful Transmedia projects.

Some examples and ideas will be proposed in ways so as to trigger the participation of the audience and engage people through infiltrating and purposefully changing daily realities by the use of fiction. Other practical indications will help to use media through producing Transmedia projects, from dealing with actors to creating characters on Social Media and writing storyboards for participatory and interactive plots.

Telling a story across multiple media platforms creates a different kind of experience for the audience. It's an experience that needs to balance the active – finding phone numbers, teasing out email addresses, solving puzzles, live events – with the pleasures of experiencing a story in more traditional ways, like watching video, reading text.

The practical session of the workshop will be a valuable exercise: the students will work together on a specific project in order to develop a Transmedia story. The two main aims of the production are to develop an awareness of historical and theoretical concepts, and to address technical and tactical problems in the use of media through engaging with audiences.

Participants in the workshop will try their hand at developing a unified storyline across multiple platforms. They will be given a base story on which to construct a design that involves elements including, but not limited to, web pages, blogs, social networking, printed posters, text messages, photos, videos and interventions in public spaces as well in the local media.

Making use of the opportunity to see many different theories and media technologies in action, the workshop will deliver a comprehensive analysis of the complexity inherent in the contemporary new media entertainment.

Program of the workshop in Transmedia fiction:

The workshop will be separated in two parts: a theoretical one in the morning, and a practical one in the afternoon, during which the students will develop a small project to try out Transmedia techniques. However the modules can be extended or cut, if required depending on the needs, time and resources of the host.

Module 1: Introduction to Transmedia:

Definitions, examples, industry, resources.

(1.1) - Differences and Characteristics:

*Cross-Media, Transmedia, ARG, Digital storytelling, Locative and Expanded cinema, etc.
Convergence, Pervasivity, Participation, Interactivity, Manipulation, Documentation, Fiction, etc.*

(1.2) - Crucial projects:

Major and minor projects of Transmedia that illustrate the field.

(1.3) - The industry of Transmedia:

International festivals, conferences, agencies, schools and resources.

Module 2: Politics and power of telling stories:

Theories, science, examples.

(2.1) - Human biological and anthropological dependence on stories.

Examples of Neurological, Psycholinguistic and Physiological studies through storytelling.

(2.2) - Use of storytelling for social control.

Propaganda, marketing, religions and storytelling.

(2.3) - Influencers of political Transmedia.

Invisible theatre by August Boal and Recombinant Theatre by Critical Art Ensemble.

(2.4) - Recent "Serious Transmedia" and activist strategies.

Groups and activists performing and promoting activism through storytelling.

Module 3: Brief history of the development of breaking reality by fiction.

Breaking the roles of stage, audience and general conventions of fiction.

Module 3.1:

- First example of breaking reality by fiction through power of "new" media.

Literature: "The castle of Otranto", Radio "War of the Worlds", Reality TV Allen Funt's Candid Camera.

- Origin and meaning of breaking the Fourth Wall, theatre avant-gardes.

Bertolt Brecht, Anton Artaud, Luigi Pirandello, Fernando Pessoa, etc.

- Happenings and Performance of seventy in North America.

Richard Shechner, Micheal Kirby, Living Theatre, Allan Kaprow, etc.

- Pranks and Hippies in North America.

Alan Abel, Abbi Hoffman, Jeffrey Vallance, etc.

- Research Theatre of eighty and ninety in Europe.

Fura dels Baus, Teatrini 90, etc.

Module 3.2:

From the mid eighty to end ninety, use of New Media in live narratives.

- Net-Art and Culture Jamming

Recombinant Theatre, CAE, RTMark, Luther Blisset, etc.

- Digital Storytelling, Web Cinema and MOO and MUD.

Joe Lambert, Abbe Don, Luca Barbeni, etc.

- Smart Mobs and Electronic Disturbance Theatre.

Howard Rheingold, Rodrigo Dominguez, etc.

- Expanded Theatre, Digital Narratives expanded in the unconventional spaces.

Blast Theory, Rimini Protokoll, IRAA Theatre, Improv Everywhere, Rotozaza, etc.

Module 3.3:

Transmedia Storytelling theories.

- Convergence Culture, Transmedia Storytelling and Supergaming.

Henry Jenkins, Jane McGonigal, Christy Dena, etc.

- Alternative Reality Game.

John Gosney, John Harrigan, etc.

- Serious ARG, fiction with social and educational approach.

Chris Dahlen, etc.

- ARG parlance and technical terms:

Puppepetmaster, Cloudmakers, Rabbitholes, TINA.

Module 4: Theory for Transmedia practice:

Designing and Producing Transmedia Fiction.

Technologies, content, structures and strategies.

(4.1) - Introduction to fiction development:

Drama structures, Characters structures and Scriptwriting.

(4.2) - Creating Transmedia through networked media:

Media Critics, Mediated identity and environments.

Drama, Characters, Stage in networked media.

(4.3) - Designing Transmedia storytelling:

Extending the story, characters, themes and experiences through a variety of media technologies.

Timeline, Plot, Characters, Atmosphere, Structure, Narrative Voice, Clues.

(4.4) - Configuring and orchestrating the narrative convergence:

Coherence and harmony among media, platforms, models and languages.

(4.5) - Building an audience and making storytelling participatory:

Dramaturgical Interaction, Collective Intelligence, Identification, Empathy, Emotions.

Tactics for engaging audiences and fostering participation.

(4.6) - Purposefully infiltrating daily realities and real-world patterns:

Strategies and tactics of reality manipulation.

(4.7) - Planning Transmedia fiction:

Which Media, Audience, Actors, Time, Space.

(4.8) - Planning the production:

Budget, resources, legal and timing issues of Transmedia productions.

Module 5: Practical development of a tactical Transmedia fiction.

Students will work in small groups or individually to develop several pieces of a simple story prosed by the artist and designed by the students in several media.

After the first phase of development the students will work as a group to bring the pieces of the story together, using interventions in media and public spaces to stage the Transmedia fiction and engage an audience in it.

Students' skills that can be used in the practical session of the workshop:

- Screenwriting - Video shooting - Video editing - Graphic design - Web design - Social Media