

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Creative Media  
with effect from Semester A 2017 /18**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Contemporary and New Media: An Archaeological Study

**Course Code:** SM5335

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** P5

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This course adopts Michel Foucault's concept of "genealogy" and "archaeology" to form the basis for critical revisionist historiography. On an art history level, the course adopts media archaeology as an alternative to the understanding of contemporary and media art. It seeks to develop a basic understanding of media art via an inter-disciplinary orientation. It provides an overview of the social context, aims and forms of contemporary art, with a strong emphasis on experimental film and video art, installation, performance, interactive and intermedia work, and modes of computational thinking in art practices. The main focus will be on *how media technologies are used in contemporary art practices*.

Beginning with a media archaeological approach and tracing developments in recording and presentation technologies, the course examines how media adds meaning and innovation to making art. The course also examines the conceptual threads of both media and art, and how media art making is part of a social practice contingent to a larger social-cultural-technological framework. Students are encouraged to explore media technology as an ever-changing variable that is open for scrutiny, recycling, transformation and subversion.

Key questions to be discussed pertain to the nature of artistic media, the interaction between art and technology, the ecology of information technologies, the social and political aspects of avant-garde art, the nature of experimentation, the meaning of interactivity, etc., all of which will be illustrated by key works from around the world. The course will also examine how the merging of art with science has occurred in various art movements over the past century and how the two are being linked today.

Students will conduct historical analyses of individual movements and artists, compare different theoretical perspectives, and familiarize themselves with key literature. A creative work could be an alternative by which students demonstrate an awareness of key conceptual and formal issues in contemporary and media art. Extensive class discussions and practical assignments will encourage students to reflect critically about the fundamentals of their activity as creative media artists.

## 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Identify the concepts of media archaeology and the social effects of early technological developments.			✓	
2.	Recognize how individual moments of art experiments used and reflected on media as part of their strategies		✓	✓	
3.^	Reflect on and theorize the ways media affect an artwork: particularly how new formal properties and meanings are possible using emerging media		✓		✓
4.^	Discuss the complexity and diversity of media art		✓	✓	✓
5.^	Conduct independent research from a media archaeology perspective			✓	✓
		100%			

^ Negotiated Learning Outcome (NLO) explicitly articulating the elements of Discovery oriented learning.

A1: *Attitude*

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: *Ability*

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

A3: *Accomplishments*

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

## 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Lectures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Discussions on assigned readings (group presentation)		✓	✓	✓			
Research Paper and/or New Media Artwork Proposal			✓	✓	✓		
Production of a New Media Artwork with an accompanying artist's statement describing the research process.			✓	✓	✓		

**4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)**

*(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)*

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Research Project or Paper that demonstrates and understanding of the course concepts			✓		✓			
Group presentations		✓	✓	✓				
A Creative project that addresses an issue of art from an interdisciplinary perspective + Project statements			✓	✓	✓			
Examination: 0% (duration: , if applicable)							100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Presentation	This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative</li> <li>- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management</li> <li>- Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter</li> <li>- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition</li> <li>- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Fair organization, weak structure and composition</li> <li>- Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Poor organization, structure and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- No organization, structure or/and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management</li> </ul>
2. Research Project/ Paper	Students should demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills to undertake independent research, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts, assumptions, and debates, demonstrating sound knowledge of the field</li> <li>- Rich content, exceptional ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;</li> <li>- Design and conduct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Firm grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts and assumptions</li> <li>- Adequate content, strong ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts</li> <li>- Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand</li> <li>- Design and conduct research which is built on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts</li> <li>- Weak content, with primary and secondary levels</li> <li>- Design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective</li> <li>- Marginal judgments about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poor grasp of materials</li> <li>- Inadequate content, without primary and secondary levels</li> <li>- Fail to design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective</li> <li>- Fail to make reasonable</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		<p>research which is firmly built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Evaluative judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of strong critical thinking skills</li> <li>– Strong ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools</li> <li>– Strong organization of research findings with effective organization and procedural clarity at the same time demonstrating the importance of the process</li> <li>– Insightful suggestion of how the research findings may lead to future research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Design and conduct research which is built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks</li> <li>– Appropriate judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of critical thinking skills</li> <li>– Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools</li> </ul>	<p>knowledge of theoretical frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Appropriate judgments about existing research</li> <li>– Weak ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools</li> </ul>	<p>existing research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Poor ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools</li> </ul>	<p>judgments about existing research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fail to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools</li> </ul>
3. Creative Project/ Technical Project/ Portfolio	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature</li> <li>– Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>– Minimal adjustment of</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		production – Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project – Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment	creative exploration – Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions	– Adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available	– Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available	plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

**Note: All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.**

**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Media archaeology, open work, indeterminacy, what is media art, medium specificity, intermedia, happenings, events and performance, improvisation, drifting, embodiment, the place of objects, participatory art, socially engaged art, and urbanism, art as forms of mechanical and digital reproduction, cybernetics, digital technology and social media, feminism and art, immersion, tactical media, documentation and archiving as art, art and anthropology, the archaeology of sights and sounds, expanded and future cinema, visual imaging in a digital age, sound as art, art and the machine, computational thinking in contemporary art, the use of photography, multisensory ethnography

**Indicative Course Outline**

The following is a suggested outline. It may vary or be reconfigured in different versions.

Week 1-2	Introduction: the curious stories of ‘media archaeology’: a different way to examine the histories of art; archaeology of 20 <sup>th</sup> –century art: innovations and frontier thinking; the place of photography and painting, conceptual art, space-oriented art
Week 3-4	The pivotal moments in 20 <sup>th</sup> century art and paradigm cases: Dada and the Fluxus, <i>The 9 Evenings</i> and Robert Rauschenberg’s <i>Open Score</i> etc.
Week 5-6	Art as critique of society and the intervention of everyday life; art as experimental action beyond the Fluxus: S.I., Blast Theory, hacktivism, mods, tactical and networked media
Week 7-8	Archaeology of sights and sounds; expanded and future cinema, generative cinema; sound -- an interdisciplinary view
Week 9-10	Cybernetics, computational thinking in contemporary art
Week 11	Immersive Environments and performative narrativity
Week 12-13	Anthropology and art, archiving as artistic practice, multisensory ethnography; from objects to archives to database

**2. Reading List**

**2.1 Compulsory Readings**

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

	*This reference list is to provide key texts that inform the multi-tropic syllabus as well as provide the basic resources for research-based in-class presentations, group projects and the semester-end research paper.
	<u>Archaeology (methodology and scope)</u>
1)	Benjamin, Walter (2008): <i>The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media</i> . The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London (UK).
2)	Huhtamo, Erkki; and Parikka, Jussi, eds. (2011): <i>Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications</i> . University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.
3)	Kluitenberg, Eric, ed. (2006): <i>Book of Imaginary Media: excavating the dream of the ultimate communication medium</i> . NAI Publishers, Rotterdam.
4)	Latour, Bruno (2013): <i>An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: an Anthropology of the Moderns</i> ; translated by Catherine Porter. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London.
5)	Lombardo, Vincenzo; Valle, Andrea; Nunnari, Fabrizio; Girodana, Francesco; and Arghinenti, Andrea (2006): "Archaeology of Multimedia"
6)	Lü Peng; Zhu Zhu; and Kao Chienhui, eds. (2011): <i>Thirty Years of Adventures: Art and Artists from 1979</i> . Blue Kingfisher.



7)	Parikka, Jussi (2012): <i>What is Media Archaeology?</i> Polity Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.
8)	Underberg, Natalie M.; and Zorn, Elayne (2013): <i>Digital Ethnography: Anthropology, Narrative, and New Media</i> . University of Texas Press, Austin.
9)	Zielinski, Siegfried (2006): <i>Deep Time of the Media: toward and Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means</i> . MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London.
	<u>Contemporary Art (general, history, discourse, theory)</u>
10)	Armstrong, Carol; De Zegher, Catherine, eds. (2006): <i>Women Artists at the Millennium</i> . MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London.
11)	Belting, Hans (2003): <i>Art History after Modernism</i> . University of Chicago Press.
12)	Bishop, Claire, ed. (2006): <i>Participation</i> (Documents of Contemporary Art series). White Chapel Gallery, London; The MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.).
13)	Buskirk, Martha (2003): <i>The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art</i> . MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London.
14)	Elkins, James (2008): <i>Six Stories from the End of Representation</i> . Stanford University Press, Stanford.
15)	Higgins, Dick (1984): <i>Horizons: the Poetics and Theory of the Intermedia</i> . Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale and Edwardsville.
16)	Hopkins, David (2000): <i>After Modern Art 1945-2000</i> . Oxford University Press, Oxford.
17)	Poggi, Christine (1992): <i>In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism, and the Invention of Collage</i> . Yale University Press, New Haven and London.
18)	Rainer, Yvonne (1999): <i>A Woman Who...: Essays, Interviews, Scripts</i> . Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, London.
19)	Robbe-Grillet, Alain; Morrissette, Bruce; Kirkpatrick, Diane; Racevskis, Karlis; and Leach, David (1983): <i>Generative Literature and Generative Art: New Essays</i> . York Press, Federicton, Canada.
20)	Rodowick, D. N. (2001) <i>Reading the Figural, Or Philosophy after the New Media</i> . Duke University Press, Durham and London.
21)	Stiles, Kristine; Selz, Peter, eds. (1996): <i>Contemporary Art: a Sourcebook of Artists' Writings</i> . University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.
22)	Tiampo, Ming; Munroe, Alexandra, eds. (2013): <i>Gutai: Splendid Playground</i> . Guggenheim, New York.
	<u>Cinema and its extension</u>
23)	Cubitt, Sean (2003): <i>Videography: Video Media as Art and Culture</i> . Palgrave.
24)	Curtis, David (2007): <i>A History of Artists' Film &amp; Video in Britain</i> . BFI, London.
25)	Elsaesser, Thomas, ed. (1990, 1992): <i>Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative</i> . BFI.
26)	EYE Film Institute Netherlands (2012): <i>Found Footage Cinema Exposed</i> . Amsterdam University Press.
27)	Grice, Malcolm (2001): <i>Experimental Cinema in the Digital Age</i> . BFI, London.
28)	MacDonald, Scott (1995): <i>Screen Writings: Scripts and Texts by Independent Filmmakers</i> . University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London.
29)	Margulies, Ivone (1996): <i>Nothing Happens: Chantal Akerman's Hyperrealist Everyday</i> . Duke University Press, Durham and London.
30)	Meigh-Andrews, Chris (2006, 2014): <i>A History of Video Art</i> ; 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition. Bloomsbury, New York, London, New Delhi, Sydney.
31)	Morgan, Robert C., ed. (2000): <i>Gary Hill</i> . Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London.
32)	Rees, A.L. (1999, 2000): <i>A History of Experimental Film &amp; Video</i> . BFI.
33)	Schlicht, Esther; Hollein, Max, eds. (2010): <i>Zelluloid: Cameraless Film</i> . Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt.
34)	Shaw, Jeffrey; Weibel, Peter, eds. (2003): <i>Future Cinema: the Cinematic Imaginary after Film</i> . ZKM, Karlsruhe; MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London.
35)	Svankmajer, Jan (2012): <i>Dimensions of Dialogue / Between Film and Fine Art</i> . Arbor Vitae, Revnice, the Czech Republic.

	<u>Sounds</u>
36)	Cardiff, Janet (2002): <i>The Walk Book</i> . Vienna: Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary.
37)	LaBelle, Brandon (2006): <i>Background Noise, Perspectives on Sound Art</i> . Continuum, New York.
38)	Schafer, R. Murray (1977, 1994): <i>Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Turning of the World</i> . Destiny Books, Rochester, Vermont.
39)	Sider, Larry; Freeman, Diane; and Sider, Jerry, eds. (2003): <i>Soundscape: the School of Sound Lectures 1998-2001</i> . Wallflower Press, London and New York.
	<u>Visuality and photography</u>
40)	Campany, David (2008): <i>Photography and Cinema</i> . Reaktion Books, London.
41)	Clarke, Graham (1997): <i>The Photograph</i> . Oxford University Press, Oxford.
42)	Elkins, James, ed. (2007): <i>Photography Theory</i> . Routledge, New York and London.
43)	Marien, Mary Warner (2002, 2006, 2010): <i>Photography: a Cultural History</i> ; 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition. Laurence King Publishing, London.
44)	Mitchell, William J. (1994): <i>The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-photographic Era</i> . MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London.
45)	Wells, Liz, ed. (2003): <i>The Photography Reader</i> . Routledge, London and New York.
46)	Wurzer, Wilhelm S. (2002): <i>Panorama: Philosophies of the Visible</i> . Continuum, New York, London.
	<b>Online Resources</b>
47)	Debalie Dossier on "media archaeology" at <a href="http://www.debalie.nl/dossierpagina.jsp?dossierid=10123">http://www.debalie.nl/dossierpagina.jsp?dossierid=10123</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erkki Huhtamo: "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd: towards an archeology of the media"</li> <li>• Richard Barbrook: "New York Prophecies: the future is what it used to be"</li> <li>• Timothy Druckrey: "Imaginary Futures"</li> <li>• Siegfried Zielinski : "The Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing through Mechanical Means"</li> <li>• Lev Manovich: "An Archaeology of a Computer Screen"</li> </ul>
48)	Experimenta Playground, International Biennial of Media Arts: <a href="http://www.experimenta.org/">http://www.experimenta.org/</a>
49)	Media Art History Archive: <a href="http://193.171.60.44/dspace/">http://193.171.60.44/dspace/</a>
50)	Media Art Net (Medien Kunst Netz): <a href="http://www.mediaartnet.org/mediaartnet/">http://www.mediaartnet.org/mediaartnet/</a> (home page) OR <a href="http://www.mediaartnet.org/themes/overview_of_media_art/">http://www.mediaartnet.org/themes/overview_of_media_art/</a> (overview of media art)
51)	Media art in Japan: <a href="http://plaza.bunka.go.jp/english/">http://plaza.bunka.go.jp/english/</a>
52)	Re:live, Media Art History 09, The Third International Conference on the Histories of Media Art, Science and Technology: <a href="http://www.mediaarthistory.org/">http://www.mediaarthistory.org/</a>
53)	Zielinski, Siegfried. "Media Archaeology" (1996) available at <a href="http://www.cttheory.net/articles.aspx?id=42">http://www.cttheory.net/articles.aspx?id=42</a>
54)	Stiegler, Bernard. "Organology of Dreams and Archi-Cinema." <i>The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics</i> no. 47 (2014), pp. 7-37.

## 2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Bernard Stiegler: <i>Technics &amp; Time</i> (volume 1-3)
2.	Walter Benjamin: <i>Arcade Projects</i>
3.	Michel Foucault "Part II, Chapter 2: Discursive Formations" (summary and analysis) <a href="http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/arch/section3.rhtml">http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/arch/section3.rhtml</a>
4.	Matthew Johnson, "New Archaeology" (chapter 2) and "Archaeology and History" (chapter 11). <i>Archaeological Theory: an Introduction</i> . Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.