Systems of Representation AMX-E7006

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During its 2023 edition the Systems of Representation course will focus on the notion of *Simulation*. A simulation is the imitation of something, real or not. The activity of creating simulations entails the design, modeling and, or reproduction of key characteristics and behaviors of a physical object or abstract system, often with the objective to achieve a better understanding of the thing itself.

Learning objectives

In the course we will study the use of simulations in the arts, humanities and sciences, as well as in industry and media for the creation of new products and in relation to contemporary artefacts, including architecture, games, historical reconstructions, to name a few. We will ponder about issues such as authenticity and reproduction in relation to uniqueness.

From a cultural-historical perspective, we will examine the use of simulations in the design and creation of (digital) *media artefacts* in order to:
1. 'Problematize' their 'sharing the world' with other species, including humans and
2. Tease out the ways in which these artefacts shape our perception, practices and values (ethics).

Methodology

The methods used in the course include:
1. Survey of cross-cultural examples which exemplify the use of simulation.
2. Presentation and discussion of post-phenomenology method that enables the researcher to deconstruct the simulation and analyze its components.
3. Researching and reading about aspects related to the topic of simulations.
4. Practice-led research leading to development and presentation of Case-Studies by the tutors as well as participating students.

Learning Outcomes

1. Achieve a general understanding regarding the notion of simulation and its potential use in art and design practices, including research.
2. Assemble a Learning Diary which documents the processes of reflection and doing throughout the course of a project.
3. Be able to design a simulation.
4. Be able to write a short, critical, essay regarding an aspect of simulations.

Assignments and evaluation

Task	Evaluation	Credit hours
*Design a simulation.**	25% or 50%	40
*Using a critical perspective, write a short essay about the process.**	25% or 50%	40
Complete a Learning Diary.	25%	40
Regularly present your ideas in class.	25&	40
Total number of credits: 6		160 hours

*Students can choose between realizing a project, writing an essay, or doing smaller versions of both.

Schedule

The class meets on Tuesday afternoons, from 13:15 on campus. Please note that we will be in different rooms on different occasions. Exceptionally for the first session on 31 January, we will meet in the lobby of The National Museum of Finland (*Suomen kansallismuseo*), Mannerheimintie 34, Helsinki

Date	Task/topic
31 January (*)	Visit to The National Museum of Finland, Akseli Gallen-Kallela exhibition Short-guided tour by museum guide The use of representation in the work of Gallen-Kallela (LDK)
7 February (Q203)	Review of the area of study About simulation – A survey of examples of use of digital simulation for exhibitions in the arts, humanities and sciences. How do we go about creating simulations? 1. The means, methods, and processes used to create simulations 2. The normative contexts in which they are created. 3. The primary uses and purposes served. (LDK)

21 February (Q203)	The concept of the original and the notion of form in digital media (LDK)
	Visiting lecture – obsolescence and archival strategies (xx)
28 February (Q103)	Simulation, further examples – space, time, memory (CM)
14 March (Q203)	Visiting lecture – Wang Chen, Senior Lecturer
21 March (L101)	Student presentations of refined concepts for exhibition (design, essay)
18 April	Working session touching base about work progress (design, essay)
2 May	Final student project presentations and evaluation with a guest reviewer

* The National Museum of Finland (*Suomen kansallismuseo*), Mannerheimintie 34, Helsinki – meeting in the lobby.

Class time

Students are requested to regularly contribute to the "What's new with representation?", a 30-minutes section in the class in which we present and discuss news items about the topic. This section is followed by presentations and lectures 30-45 minutes. At the end of each presentation there is a 30-minutes section for interactive discussion. There is a 15-minutes pause in the class. At the end of each class session students also present from the knowledge that is accruing in their Learning Diary.

13:15-14:00 – Presentations of independent work done during the previous week
14:00-14:45 – Lecture*
14:45-15:00 – Pause
15:00-15:30 – Discussion about materials presented
15:30-16:00 – Group work.

Note that the teachers reserve the right to schedule additional sessions if needed.

Readings

Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulacra and Simulation*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995. ISBN-0-472-06521-1
https://primo.aalto.fi/permalink/358AALTO_INST/ha1cg5/alma997551334406526

DeRosa, Robin (Editor), *Simulation in Media and Culture. Believing the Hype*, Washington, DC: Bowman & Littlefield, 2011. ISBN-978-0-7391-8458-5
https://primo.aalto.fi/permalink/358AALTO_INST/ha1cg5/alma999524418906526

Turkle, Sherry, *Simulation and its Discontents*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009.
ISBN 978-026-2012-706
https://primo.aalto.fi/permalink/358AALTO_INST/ha1cg5/alma995472204406526

Frasca, Gonzalo, *Simulation versus Narrative: Introduction to Ludology*, in *The Video Game Theory Reader,* Routledge, 2004.
https://ludology.typepad.com/weblog/articles/VGT_final.pdf

Interesting online resource,
"Story-Based Simulations: Art and Technology Masquerading as Life", *Transparency*,
https://transparencynow.com/complex.htm, (Accessed 16/01/2022.)

Note that we will ask for registration to be extended until 27 January.