JOINT SESSIONS DETAILS

SESSION 1 RESEARCH – 5 SEPTEMBER 2023	
MA Art and Media sessions for all students (all majors)	
9:15-10:00	Introduction to the course programme (Bassam El Baroni and Patrizia Costantin).
10:00-10:15	break
10:15-12:00	Keynote **Aslak Aamot Helm** / discussion.

SESSION 2 DATA – 12 SEPTEMBER 2023
Please refer to your major page on mycourses for details.

SESSION 3 CRAFT – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023	
MA Art and Media sessions for all students (all majors)	
9:15-10:15	Vitrines on Thinking Practices **Sheung Yiu** and **Rupesh Vyas**
10:15-10:30	break
10:30-12:00	Keynote **Antoinette Rouvroy** / discussion.
12:00-13:00	Lunch break
13:00-13:50	Group activity: 'reflection sessions' led by a facilitator/moderator. Groups split in different breakout rooms. Y229c – VCD - Moderator Mari Keski-Korsu Y307 – New Media and Game Design and Development - Moderator Andrea Mancianti Y308 – Art Education - Moderator Tina Madsen Y309b – Photography - Moderator Patrizia Costantin Details will be given in class.
13:50-14:15	Break and make your way back to Hall B - Y203a.
14:15-15:00	Feedback presentation and discussion on group activity.

SESSION 4 – 26 SEPTEMBER 2023
Please refer to your major page on mycourses for details.

SESSION 5 – 3 OCTOBER 2023	
MA Art and Media sessions for all students (all majors)	
9:15-10:15	Vitrines on Thinking Practices – 2 short talks. **Lucy Davis** and **Constantinos Miltiadis**
10:15-10:30	break
10:30-12:00	Guest Lecture **Benedict Singleton** - keynote and discussion.
12:00-13:00	Lunch break
13:00-13:50	Group activity: 'reflection sessions' led by a facilitator/moderator. Groups split in different breakout rooms. Y229c – VCD - Moderator Einat Amir Y307 – New Media and Game Design and Development - Moderator Andrea Mancianti Y308 – Art Education - Moderator Tina Madsen U406a – Photography - Moderator Bassam El Baroni

	Details will be given in class.
13:50-14:15	Break and make your way back to Hall C - Y205.
14:15-15:00	Feedback presentation and discussion on group activity.

SESSION 6 – 10 OCTOBER 2023
Please refer to your major page on mycourses for details.

Introduction to Joint Sessions

In this years' three joint cross-major sessions in the course 'Thinking Practices in Art & Media' we will be looking into the interconnections between three key notions that undoubtedly influence, shape and direct contemporary practitioners in the various fields, disciplines and specialisations of art and media. These are: research, data, and craft. Through the keynote lectures and 'practice vitrines' shorter presentation that are windows onto an individual practice emphasising how theory turns into practice and vice versa, as well as dedicated and structured time for group reflection we will examine the evolving roles and meanings of these key notions within the realm of contemporary art, design, and media. While data is often associated with the digital domain, objectivity, and analytical rigour, craft has been traditionally associated with manual skill, and the tactile manipulation of materials, although in today's computational ecology this understanding of craft has transformed. These two notions are increasingly intertwined and, the third key notion we explore, research, plays an important role in highlighting the ties between making, doing, action, practice, crafting, information, visualising, and data within the context of increasing data abundance.

The 20th century postwar era witnessed a radical transformation in the ways information was recorded and displayed, leading to the development of what has been called 'communicative objectivity,' which encompasses novel forms of observation, rationality, and economy centred around data management and analysis. Furthermore, as the 20th century slipped into the 21st century data-infrastructures and media further transformed. What distinguishes the prevalent media of this present century from previous forms is their monumental reconfiguration from technologies focused on recording the past into data-driven infrastructures for the anticipation of the future. Such transformations challenge us to reevaluate not only the value assigned to data but also the ways in which we train our perception, define reason and intelligence, and consequently, approach art and design practices.

In parallel, the realm of craft is experiencing somewhat of a renaissance, finding renewed significance across various spheres - artistic, economic, societal, and cultural. As the demarcations between different fields become increasingly fluid, the appropriation of craft extends far and wide, prompting a fundamental re-evaluation of its importance. While the traditional associations of craft with authenticity and a rejection of consumerism continue to be debated, there is an emerging consensus that its function is primed for redefinition in today's world. Additionally, analysing craft through the lens of 'craftiness' or 'cunning' provides a novel perspective on design and its historical trajectory that is important for thinking it's future. This approach positions design as a manifestation of ingenuity and a means for strategizing, consequently, redefining the boundaries between art, design, craft, and other practices.

In general, the joint sessions explore the dynamic relationship between data, craft, and research in the 21st century. This exploration attempts to not only illuminate the ways in which data, research, and craft intersect and influence the rainbow of artistic and design practices but also tries to paint a richer, more nuanced understanding of these complex, multifaceted concepts as an introduction to your postgraduate studies in art and media.

Day-to-Day Info and Details

*Please note some info/details might be missing and will be updated if/when possible!

5 September: Research

9:15-10:00
Introduction to the course by Bassam El Baroni and Patrizia Costantin
<< Break >>
10:15-12:00
Keynote Guest Lecture by Aslak Aamot Helm followed by discussion
Aslak Aamot Helm works on building alliances, experiments and organizations across art, science, advanced technologies and industry. He is the co-founder of Diakron, a studio for transdisciplinary research and practice, and Primer, a platform for artistic and organizational development housed in the global water- and biotechnology company Aquaporin. Aslak is currently a postdoctoral researcher with Medical Museion, Diakron and Serpentine Galleries. In the project titled "Re-energizing art institutions at the intersection of art, science and technology" he is working to study and further para-organizational missions and strategies across transdisciplinary cultural organizations and practices.

About Aslak Aamot Helm's Talk

Aesthetics of Under-determinism: Scries and Milky Ways

This presentation will outline two aesthetic approaches to working artistically with growing levels of scientific under-determinism and escalations of societal uncertainty. Both approaches have been developed collaboratively between the studio Diakron and a range of artistic, scientific and technological partners and two of the resulting artworks will be screened as a part of the presentation.

The talk aims to situate what has been termed 'contemporary objects' or 'object X' by philosopher Anne-Françoise Schmid within a discussion about the purposes of making art with new (and old media). What can be learned and made aesthetically from working across the multiple forms of knowing that compose objects of research such as 'the climate' or 'human digestion'?

The first example is a collaborative effort around the artwork Scries from 2021 by Danish artist Emil Rønn Andersen and Diakron in collaboration with American writer Elvia Wilk. To "scry" is to attempt to foretell the future through a reflective device, like the proverbial crystal ball. The work's title, Scries, appropriates this term to suggest the human desire to find meaning in patterns, to understand or predict the future, to bridge future to past, to connect the human-scale and the planetary scale, and to find relationships between the psychological and the cosmological. In developing Scries the artistic team were interested in remote sensing, data collection, and climate simulation as specific historical practices, and in the way these endeavors both construct and express certain paradigms for apprehending and hypothesizing climate change.

The second example is the 2022 film Milky Ways that was developed and produced by the Finnish artist Jenna Sutela and Diakron. The film travels through an artificial gut (Simulator of Human Intestinal Microbial Ecosystem) that has been fed with human milk. It meditates on recent studies around sugars within the milk (Human Milk Oligosaccharides) that interact with gut bacteria and seem to have psychobiotic potential. According to the film, our symbiotic microbial culture not only expands the limits of our consciousness, but also makes us interplanetary. The production of

Milky Ways has sheds light on complexity in life sciences – specifically how the increasing density and dimensionality of available data under-determines analytical and theoretical frameworks. This emergence of under-determination has been called a 'complexity crisis' or a 'wall of complexity' suggesting that the more it is technically possible to know in detail, the more difficult it is to form coherence across different sites, bodies and processes.

RELATED READING: On Contemporary Objects by Anne-Françoise Schmid
https://www.academia.edu/33984526/On_contemporary_objects_angl_doc

19 September: Data

9:15-10:15
Two Practice Vitrines each approx. 20 mins, followed by Q and A time, the presentations will be by Sheung Yiu and Assoc. Professor Rupesh Vyas.

Sheung Yiu (HK/FI) is a Hong-Kong-born visual artist and researcher, based in Helsinki. His artwork explores the act of seeing through algorithmic image systems and sense-making through networks of images. His research interests concern the increasing complexity of algorithmic image systems in contemporary digital culture. He looks at photography through the lens of new media, scales, and network thinking; He ponders how the posthuman cyborg vision and the technology that produces it transform ways of seeing and knowledge-making. Adopting multi-disciplinary collaboration as a mode of research, his works examine the poetics and politics of algorithmic image systems, such as computer vision, computer graphics, and remote sensing, to understand how to see something where there is nothing, how to digitize light, and how vision becomes predictions. His work takes the form of photography, videos, photo-objects, exhibition installations, and bookmaking.

Rupesh Vyas is an associate professor at Aalto University and head of Visual Communication Design Major. He is responsible for the information design focus area within the Visual Communication Design major. He also leads the practice-based research in information design at the Department of Art and Media. His areas of focus are information design, interaction design, user interface design, information experience design, and data visualization. The presentation will delve into his practice-based research and the use and visualization of data.

About Sheung Yiu's Talk
Ground Truth Trilogy: Exploring the Entanglement Between Photography and Computation

Computation complicates everything. 'Photography' can no longer sufficiently describe the diversity and complexity of image-making in the post-Internet age. There are images created neither by humans nor for the human eyes. In this talk, I will present Ground Truth Trilogy, my artistic research on larger-than-human technological systems and imaging practices. I will discuss interdisciplinary collaboration and image studies as an approach to studying the ever-more-complex visual culture by sharing my personal experience as a doctoral researcher in photography. Highlighting several key ideas and emerging fields of study I encountered in my artistic research, the presentation provides concrete examples of how data, algorithms, and computation influence photography and visual culture.

< Break >

10:30 -12:00
Keynote Lecture by Antoinette Rouvroy

In her writings, Antoinette Rouvroy has addressed, among other things, issues of privacy, data protection, non-discrimination, equality of opportunities, due process in the context of "data-rich" environments. Her current interdisciplinary research interests revolve around what she has called algorithmic governmentality in which she explores the semiotic-epistemic, political, legal and philosophical implications of the computational turn (Big Data, algorithmic profiling, industrial personalization). Her work explores the impact of algorithmic governmentality on our modes of production of what counts and accounts for "reality", on our modes of government, on the modalities of critique, resistance and recalcitrance, and on processes of individual and collective subjectivation or individuation. Rouvroy is a permanent research associate at the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS) and senior researcher at the Research Centre 'Information, Law and Society,' Law Faculty, University of Namur (Belgium). She is Doctor of Laws of the European University Institute (Florence) and a member of the French CNIL (Commission Informatique et Libertés)'s Foresight committee as well as an appointed expert for the Consultative Committee of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data.

< LUNCHTIME >

13:00- 13:50
Group activity: 'reflection sessions' led by a facilitator/moderator. Majors split in different breakout rooms. Each group is assigned a doctoral level facilitator to support a constructive reflection on the content of the vitrines and keynote lecture of the day, the facilitator-moderator will compile notes and moderate the discussion, supporting each major to articulate their feedback on the ideas, concepts, and perspectives of each day. More details will be given at the start of the course.
< Break >
14:15 – 15:00
Feedback presentation and discussion on group activity.

3 October: Craft

9:15-10:15
Two Practice Vitrines each approx. 20 mins, followed by Q and A time, the presentations will be by Assoc. Professor Lucy Davis and Constantinos Miltiadis.

Lucy Davis (she/her) is a visual artist, art writer and founder, in 2009 of the collaborative, transdisciplinary multi-award winning Migrant Ecologies Projects: www.migrantecologies.org. Davis is currently Associate Professor at the Visual Cultures, Curating and Contemporary Art (ViCCA) major Aalto University, Finland. Davis was a founding member of the School of Art Design & Media, Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore 2005-2016.

About Lucy Davis's Talk
More-than-human making/thinking, crafting/worlding: Perspectives from Migrant Ecologies Projects

How is Language Porous?
What might it mean to talk in trees?
How to draw you outside of yourself like the sudden call of a bird?
How to tell stories like shadows through leaves?

These are some of the questions Migrant Ecologies Projects have worked with and through in recent years. I founded Migrant Ecologies Projects in 2009 as an umbrella for collaborative, transdisciplinary inquiries into questions of art, ecology and more than human connections, primarily but not exclusively in Southeast Asia. Migrant Ecologies Projects bring together daughters of woodcutters, seed gatherers, memory trackers and song mappers in processes, situated between salvage and speculation. Our stories are drawn by soundings, echoes, shadows and spirits of more than human political movements, across this planet.

In this presentation for your Thinking Practices course, I will share a couple of examples where more-than-human encounters provoke specific ways of thinking in and with practice. In-so-doing I will hope to demonstrate how Migrant Ecologies DIY efforts to nurture artistic processes from more-than-human interactions, evolve in time into crafts or methods. I will also show how these specific crafts or methods inevitably transgress modern dualisms between human and non-human, mind and body, intellect and material.

Constantinos Miltiadis is a transdisciplinary architect and researcher, occasionally also programmer, media artist, curator, teacher, and librarian. His work focuses on aesthetic phenomena between technology and culture, and more specifically on spatiotemporal environments inconstructible in the physical world, specific to and experienceable through technological mediation. His work has been presented in seminars and exhibitions, published in academic conferences and journals as well as by international press, and received awards in international competitions. He has developed and taught courses on creative programming and experimental VR videogame design in both academic contexts and festivals. Between 2015 and 2019 Constantinos was assistant professor at the Institute of Architecture and Media of TU Graz, while since 2019 he is a doctoral researcher between the Departments of Design and of Architecture at the School of ARTS of Aalto University in Helsinki, part of the "Experience Design" project funded by the Academy of Finland.

About Constantinos Miltiadis's Talk
Space-Time-Craft: Notions of digital craft and design practice in contemporary research
What is contemporary craft? Unlike vernacular notions of craft – involving situated knowledges of a place and its available material which are cultivated over generations and performed by masters – the notion of craft in our times poses a challenge, even more so in the context of research. The presentation will discuss notions of digital craft based on my research that investigates virtual space and movement through exploratory design experimentation. While virtual environments are ubiquitous, digital media such as virtual reality and videogames are lacking formal foundations or discourses pertaining to their design and development. In my work I approach virtual space as a 'contemporary material', something that necessitates practical experimentation for investigating its capacities and potentials. I develop experimental prototypes to investigate virtual environments that are experienceable, however, impossible to construct or come across in the physical world. The aim of this practice is twofold: the exploration of the design space of such media through experienceable artifacts which also serve as research objects while at one and the same time investigating what is possible to experience within a post-computational world. Lastly, the presentation will discuss design prototypes and 'playable artifacts' as an emerging field of research.

< Break >

10:30 -12:00
Keynote Lecture by Benedict Singleton

Benedict Demiren Singleton is a partner at Rival Strategy, co-founded in 2016 with Marta Ferreira de Sá. Rival works on contemporary strategic problems. Some current and recent projects include AI strategy at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute at Harvard; co-founding the Future Art Ecosystems programme at Serpentine Galleries; bootstrapping a start-up building AI for regenerative agriculture; and strategy for a major new cultural institution dedicated to art and technology in Berlin, opening 2024. Prior to Rival, Benedict completed a PhD on the philosophy of intelligence, directed an award-winning graduate architecture studio at the Royal College of Art, and worked as an independent strategist.

About Benedict Singleton's Talk
The Long Con/Hard Fork the Art World
This talk will span two decade-long projects, the first leaning toward design and philosophy, the second art and strategy, and how one turned into the other.
The Long Con tells a different story than we're used to about design, one in which it is primarily considered a manifestation of ingenuity and a vehicle for cunning. Building on sources largely lost to or ignored by more conventional understandings of design, it develops an alternative lexicon of concepts for creative action in general (amongst them, the trap, plot, twist, and kick), and redraws boundaries between art, design, craft and other practices characterised by the operation of a mobile and subversive intelligence, such as strategy.

The second half of this talk will address the latter through the work of Rival Strategy, co-founded by Benedict and Marta Ferreira de Sá in 2016; and specifically, via one of our projects, Hard Fork the Art World. HFAW analyses how, on the one hand, a generation of artists have created new means to produce and distribute work, secure revenue and protect their interests; yet on the other, assumed permanent fixtures of the art landscape (curators, collectors, critics, cultural institutions) barely seem to acknowledge these phenomena, let alone see in them an existential threat. This will be a high-speed tour of an epic plot twist in real time, and an object lesson in recognising the future when it walks in the door.

RELATED READING:
Benedict Singleton, (Notes Towards) Speculative Design:
http://xenopraxis.net/readings/singleton_speculativedesign.pdf
Benedict Singleton, Maximum Jailbreak:
https://www.e-flux.com/journal/46/60088/maximum-jailbreak/
Benedict Singleton, The Long Con:
Please download uploaded document to MyCourses

< LUNCHTIME >

13:00- 13:50
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Feedback presentation and discussion on group activity.