Course Specifications
Valid as from the academic year 2019-2020

Media-Archaeology of Visual Strategies (A005295)

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)

- Credits: 5.0
- Study time: 150 h
- Contact hrs: 50.0 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2019-2020

A (semester 1)
- Dutch
- self-reliant study activities: 1.25 h
- integration seminar: 1.25 h
- excursion: 2.5 h
- lecture: 45.0 h

Lecturers in academic year 2019-2020

- Daems, Aurelie LW17 staff member
- Driesen, Pauline LW17 staff member
- Stalpaert, Christel LW17 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2019-2020

- Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies) 5 A
- Master of Science in Teaching in Social Sciences (main subject Communication Science) 5 A
- Master of Science in Communication Science (main subject Film and Television Studies) 5 A
- Master of Arts in Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies 5 A
- Exchange Programme Art Science 5 A

Teaching languages
- Dutch

Keywords
- Visual culture, film, photography, video art, sound art

Position of the course

Following the pictorial turn in the 20th century (Mitchell), this specialized course aims at elaborating the potentials of the media-archaeological method in contemporary audiovisual and digital culture research (theories and concepts by Thomas Elsaesser, Erkki Huhtamo, Siegfried Zielinski, Wolfgang Ernst, Jonathan Crary and Jussi Parikka). The new media cultures are investigated through insights from past new media, with an emphasis on inventions, artistic practices, and apparatuses.

Contents

This specialized course aims at elaborating the potentials of the media-archaeological method in contemporary audiovisual and digital culture research. To obtain systematic analytical insight in the matter, the course focusses on the following topics.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IMAGE
a. de pictorial turn and the rise of visual culture studies (Mitchell, Foster, Jay)
b. media-archaeology of the senses: audiovisual, affective and algorithmic (o.a. scopic regimes of modernity, Downcast Eyes, M. Jay, time images and affection images, G. Deleuze, sound and noise, D. Roessner, J. Parikka, ...)
c. media-archaeology of the object: new materialism and posthumanism (Haraway, Braidotti, Latour, Agamben, Parikka, ...)

II. THE EVOLUTION OF THE IMAGE: media-archaeology of technological
developments and inventions
(a.o. flip book, camera obscura, daguerrotypie, chronophotographic experiments by Muybridge, ...)

III. HOW DOES THE IMAGE WORK: media-archaeology of visual strategies
a. portrait photography (Roland Barthes, Cindy Sherman, Facebook)
b. absorption and theatricality: pastoral modus and action-modus (Fried)
c. mediumspecificity, intermediality en remediation (Greenberg, Bolter & Grusin, ...)

IV. THE POWER OF THE IMAGE: political and ethical aspects of the apparatus
(Althusser, Debor, Agamben, Zizek)
a. Perspective (Bleeker, Sturken & Cartwright)
b. Panoptism and surveillance (Foucault, Chan, CCTV-art,... )
c. Reproduction, authenticity, simulacra and hyperreality (Benjamin, Baudrillard, Elsaesser, Badiou, Zizek)

V. THE ARCHIVE IN A DIGITAL ERA: software culture & digital heritage (from dance notation to MoCap, ...)
A number of art centres, festivals and/or exhibitions are visited (in group or on an individual basis), with artistic practices illustrating the discussed theories and concepts.
To stimulate the interactive learning environment in an integration seminar, the students weekly get (reading) assignments in preparation of the tackled theories and concepts in the lectures.

Initial competences
Basic knowledge of aesthetics is recommended.

Final competences
1. To have insight into the technological developments of media and to be able to reflect on the social and cultural implications.
2. To have an analytical insight into the visual language and visual strategies of old and new media.
3. To have a theoretical knowledge with regard to visual culture studies and be able to implement it in the analysis of a contemporary audiovisual and digital artistic practice.
4. To be able to formulate and defend a theoretically founded point of view with regard to the way a particular image (a visual strategy) works.
5. To demonstrate a critical perspective on the aesthetic and philosophical writings that inform the reading and writing assignment.
6. To be able to formulate factual and theoretical research problems in the domain of visual culture studies, and to tackle it from a personal perspective, concerning genre specific as well as intermedial aspects.
7. To be able to process the different aspects of independent research for the reading and writing assignment, as well as for the preparation of the written exam.
8. To demonstrate, in the writing assignment and the written exam, the competence of a theoretically founded analysis of an image (visual strategy).
9. To be able to formulate a theoretically founded conclusion on a research question.
10. To be able to plan, independently, a research assignment, with regard to the reading and writing assignment.
11. To be able to write a well-structured paper, with a clear methodology, testifying of a mature research attitude, and taking into consideration aspects of language and style.

Conditions for credit contract
Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract
Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods
Excursion, lecture, integration seminar, self-reliant study activities

Extra information on the teaching methods
Lectures: about 1) specific media-archaeological theories and concepts and; 2) the way audiovisual artists (i.e. photographers, video artists, movie directors and sound artists) experiment with images, visual strategies and visual narratives, with reflective moments on the iconographic sources and/or video fragments.
Integration seminar: students weekly get (reading) assignments in preparation of the aesthetic and philosophical issues concerning visual strategies that are tackled in the lectures. This interactive learning environment guides students in operationalizing theoretical concepts through case studies and in formulating a theoretical point of view.
Individual assignment and excursion: students are stimulated to extend their
individual visual experience with regard to old and new media with the course-supporting programme of the University Film-Club Film-Plateau at Kaskcinema. (see http://www.film-plateau.be/)

**Excursion:** the students are invited to attend the symposia related to visual culture, organized by the research centre S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts & Media). Guided excursions to arts centres, festivals and/or exhibitions are expulsory. Depending on the cultural programme, other excursions are offered to the students, with the artistic practices being discussed in class.

**Individual assignment:** students write a paper that is evaluated.

**Learning materials and price**
- Syllabus with essential articles available at TopCopy
- Handbook:
  - Christel Stalpaert, Robrecht Vanderbeeken, Boris Debackere (eds.); Bastard or Playmate? Adapting Theatre, Mutating Media and Contemporary Performing Arts , Amsterdam: Amsterdnam University Press, 2010. (Theater Topics)
- screening films Film-Plateau
Cost: approx. 100 EUR

**References**

**Course content-related study coaching**
Gradual co-ordination of the implementation of theory by means of reflective moments in lectures on the one hand (interpretation of audiovisual examples) and the interactive learning environment on the other hand (discussion about individual reading assignments with regard to philosophical and aesthetic concepts).
Support via Minerva (PPPs, audiovisual material, reading material, e-mail)
Intermediate feed-back on the paper is possible at fixed speaking hours.
Constructive feedback on the paper is possible at fixed feed-back moment after the exam period.

**Evaluation methods**
end-of-term evaluation and continuous assessment

**Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period**
Written examination

**Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period**
Written examination

**Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation**
Participation, assignment

**Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation**
examination during the second examination period is possible

**Extra information on the examination methods**
Periodical evaluation (50%): written exam with questions about media-archaeological method, visual culture studies, and visual strategies of old and new media. Examples of...
questions can be downloaded from Minerva.
Non-periodical evaluation (50%): paper in which a theory is implemented by means of one artefact from contemporary audiovisual and digital culture (5 pages).
The student has to pass every evaluation form to pass the exam.

Calculation of the examination mark

The periodical evaluation counts for 50% and the non-periodical evaluation counts for 50%.
The student has to pass every evaluation form to pass the exam.