

CMST 4144: Performance Art

PERFORMANCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Spring 2019
Performance Studies
Department of Communication Studies
Louisiana State University
Wed 3.30-6.20pm
Coates

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Office Hours: Wed 2.45-3.30
Wed 6.20-7.35
Office: 227

In the 1960s, Marshal McLuhan declared technology to be the external organs of the body. If, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty proposed, our senses are not limited to the boundaries of our skin, then our bodies are as big as we feel them. Our sensoriums can expand through tools such as cars, canes and prosthetics. What, then, does it mean to be human? In this course, through cultural theory, phenomenology, and neuroscience and artistic practice – of other artists and our own -- we will consider questions surrounding technology, the body, and “super-powers” such as empathy. How do we differ from other organisms such as aliens, robots, androids, cyborgs, and automatons in humanoid forms? We will discuss phenomena such as mirror neurons and phantom limbs as described by V.S. Ramachandran from a humanities perspective. We will also discuss the technologies of becoming woman and becoming the other. We will examine post-apocalyptic, science fiction, or technologized works of art and popular culture such as the film *Blade Runner*, the novel *Alchemy of Stone*, and performances by artists such as Orlan, The Wooster Group, and Stelarc. Finally, participants will inquire into philosophical, political, or cultural issues of the self or society through either critical, analytical work that tackles these themes or a work of

their choosing that involves the creation of “bodily extensions” via electronic or other additions to the human body. Alternatively, you may create performances or works of fiction featuring such concepts and write an artist’s statement.

This course emphasizes the relationship between theory and practice. Class meetings will be composed of a combination of lecture, discussion, in-class viewings, and student presentations/performances. You will contribute to the class blog throughout the semester.

Class Blog URL: <https://performanceandtechnology2019.blogspot.com/>

Course Schedule

(I may make adjustments to the syllabus depending on the students’ interests and the current events in the next couple of weeks.)

In addition to the below each week we will view works and discuss previous week’s practices and have short performance exercises.

Week 1

Jan 9th Wed.

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Introductions

The object exercise

In-class viewing and discussion: “The Ghost Inside” by The Broken Bells

Discuss the assignments for the semester.

Blog: Post-class discussion.

Week 2

Jan 16th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Presentation A

Marshall McLuhan, “The Medium is the Message” (from *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*), 1964

In-class viewing: *Twilight Zone*

Blog notes

Week 3

This week please see *(dis)embodied in space* at the Hopkins Black Box, see here for details <https://www.facebook.com/LSUHBB/>

Jan 23rd Wed.

Class will be in a different location today. Check your emails to see which smart classroom we will be in.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Dedicated Library Research Session with Mitchell Fontefont, specialty librarian

Presentation B

Peggy Phelan, “The Ontology of Performance,” in *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, p. 146-66 (notes 191-92)

Kozel, Susan. *Closer* (Excerpts)

In-class viewing and discussion: Laurie Anderson

Performance Assignment: The Dream (Max 1 double spaced page, bring to class).

Blog notes

Start reading *The Alchemy of Stone*

Plan which performance you will see by February 10th

Week 4

Jan 30th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Assignment: Identify two journals in the field (performance studies) that would be a good venue for your artistic/academic research topic. Identify two articles that engage your areas of interest from these publications and that speak to your research. In other words, these might be resources that might support your work as you unpack/cite/analyze/critique them to support your argument.

Also identify two journals, interdisciplinary or in other fields, using the same guidelines.

Identify two books that relate to your artistic/academic research topic.

Presentation C

Susan Broadhurst. "Troika Ranch : Making New Connections A Deleuzian Approach to Performance and Technology." *Performance Research* 13 (1), 2008 (New York: Routledge).

Iacobany, Marco. *Mirroring People: The New Science of How We Connect with Others*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008). (Excerpts)

Discussion: *(dis)embodied in space*

Blog notes

Week 5

Feb 6th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Reading Due: *Alchemy of Stone Part 1*

Assignment: Proposals of final projects due. We will discuss these in class.

Discussion: Performance Review

Blog notes

Week 6

Feb 13th Wed.

Assignment Due in Hard Copy and email: Performance Review (3 double spaced pages).

Reading Due: Elizabeth Grosz: *Volatile Bodies* (Excerpts)

Viewing Due: Ramaschandran (Presentation next week)

Share maps

Field Trip:

Blog notes

Week 7

Feb 20th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Presentation D

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. (I & F Books UK, 2007)
(Excerpts)

Rizzolatti, Giacomo; et al. *Mirrors in the Brain: How Our Minds Share Actions, Emotions, and Experience*. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2008) (Excerpts)

& Grosz and Ramaschandran (reading from last week).

Performance Assignment: The Photograph Part 2.

Assignment: Outlines of final projects due. We will discuss/perform these in class.
(Part 1)

Blog notes

Week 8

Feb 27th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Presentation E

Hayles, Katherine N. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. ((Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1999)

Final Projects Drafts

Blog notes

Week 9

Mar 6th Wed.

Field Trip TBA

Share maps

Reading Due: Jones, Caroline. *Sensorium: Embodied Experience, Technology, and Contemporary Art*. (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2007) (Excerpts) – Presentation on Week 10/next week

Blog notes

Week 10

Mar 13th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Viewing Due: *Bladerunner*

Presentation F

Smith, Marquard; Clarke, Julie; et al. *Stelarc: The Monograph (Electronic Culture: History, Theory, and Practice)*. (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005)

&

Jones, Caroline; *Sensorium* (reading was due last week)

Blog notes

Week 11

Mar 20th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Presentation G

Banes, Sally; Lepecki, André. *The Senses in Performance*. (New York: Routledge, 2006).

Blakeslee, Sandra and Blakeslee, Matthew. *The Body Has a Mind of Its Own*. (New York: Random House, 2008) (Excerpts)

Blog notes

Week 12

Mar 27th Wed.

Share maps

Exercise: 10 minutes words

In-class viewing and discussion: Bill T. Jones/ Stelarc

Presentation H:

Reading Due: *Alchemy of Stone Part 2*

Pat Hartigan, *Second Person: Role-Playing and Story in Games and Playable Media* The Mit Press: 2010 (Excerpts)

Blog notes

Week 13

Apr 3rd Wed.

Exercise: 10 minutes words

Presentation I:

Massumi, Brian. *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2002) Excerpts.

Projects and Prep

Blog notes

Week 14

Apr 10th Wed.—Projects Rehearsals and Performance Night

Blog notes

Week 15

Apr 17th Wed. – Spring Break

Week 16

Apr 24th Wed. – Evaluation and Wrap up

Performance Review Assignment

You are all expected to see a performance during the last week of January. The performance will be seen together. Each of you will write your own performance analysis. The nature of the assignment will be discussed in further detail in class. The review will be 3 (double- spaced) pages.

Presentations

Each week a student will give a seven minute presentation on that week's reading. You are expected to think critically on the readings and prepare for a conversation.

Final Project

Ideally, you will start thinking about your final project immediately. Your final project may be a 5 minute performance (broadly construed) accompanied by a 4 page artist's statement, a lecture performance, or a paper.

Blog

<http://arttechnologyandmediathesixthsense.blogspot.com/>

Map of the reading: Before 11pm every Tuesday, you will prepare seven to ten points from the reading and viewing due that week that seem significant to you and that outline the material (we'll call this a map of the material). You will write these/make your maps by hand (not typing). Typing is acceptable if you have a condition that makes writing not possible. Discuss the significance of these points in your post. You will take a pic of these maps and post the link of your photo (as a dropbox, google drive, or icloud file) on the blog. You will start a folder, bring a hard copy of your maps to class every Wednesday, and file these copies in the folder.

Post class discussion: After every class, before Friday at 11 pm, you are all expected to post at least one response (between one to three paragraphs) to the previous week's readings, presentation, class discussion, and the viewings. Think of this as a space where the conversation continues after class.

Office Hour

Office hour sign up sheets will be posted on my office door. Please sign up for slots here and then email me with this information: Subject: "Office Hour, signed up, Day, time."

Also, feel free to contact me on email for any questions you might have. I will get back to you asap. You may not get a response to your email for up to two business days or over the weekends.

Academic Integrity

I fully support LSU Academic Integrity Policy.

Please visit the website and read this policy:

<https://www.lsu.edu/lsonline/docs/Academic-Integrity-Orientation-Moodle-Module.pdf>

I also suggest this tutorial:

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/services/copyright/tutorials/plagiarism>

Grading

This is a participatory and interactive course. You are all expected to attend each session. If you are ill or experiencing another emergency that is preventing you from attending class please email me in advance as your absence will effect the planned activities.

Performance Review 14%

Presentation 14%

Final Performance and Artist's Statement 24%

Participation 24%

Blog 24%

I will welcome any positive attempt from participants to learn better and get a higher grade. This means that I will give you a chance to rewrite/redo your assignments if you can make an argument for it. I will take an average of the two grades. If your grade is higher, your conclusive grade will be higher.

Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation.

Plus/Minus Grade Policy

- I will discuss grades only in person.

According to the Office of the University Registrar, "Plus/Minus Grading is required for all undergraduate, graduate, and professional courses using the A through F letter grading system. The letter grades A, B, C, and D have the suffix plus (+) or minus (-) included to distinguish higher and lower performances within each of these letter grades. The letter grade F does not include the plus/minus distinction." For determining mid-term and final grades, the following scale will be used:

100-97=A+	89-87=B+	79-77=C+	69-67=D+	59 and below=F
96-93=A	86-83=B	76-73=C	66-63=D	
92-90=A-	82-80=B-	72-70=C-	62-60=D-	

Diversity Statement

See http://www.lsu.edu/diversity/about_us/mission_vision.php

Diversity is fundamental to LSU's mission and the University is committed to creating and maintaining a living and learning environment that embraces individual difference. Cultural inclusion is of highest priority. LSU recognizes that achieving

national prominence depends on the human spirit, participation, and dedicated work of the entire University community. [Flagship: 2020](#) will be realized by bringing together diverse ideas, perspectives, skills, and talents of the nation's pre-eminent scholars, brightest students, and leading higher education professionals. Through its Commitment to Community; LSU strives to create an inclusive, respectful, intellectually challenging climate that embraces individual difference in race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, spirituality, socio-economic status, disability, family status, experiences, opinions, and ideas. LSU proactively cultivates and sustains a campus environment that values open dialogue, cooperation, shared responsibility, mutual respect, and cultural competence— the driving forces that enrich and enhance cutting edge research, first-rate teaching, and engaging community outreach activities.

Note about **Practicum Credit:**

Performance Studies work in the Hopkins Black Box:

During each semester, the Department will offer several performance hours and productions here in the HopKins Black Box directed by faculty and graduate students. The practicum course in performance studies is used for students who are working on a specific faculty-led project, like a performance in the HopKins Black Box. Alternatively, you could complete the practicum hours by working on several shows, spread out over the semester, doing things like running the box office on show nights, or working on technical elements (props, costumes, lights, projections, etc.). Sometimes practicum students perform, serve as stage manager, or assist the director.

As students in a performance class, you are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to see and participate in these productions. Check the bulletin board outside the Black Box for announcements of upcoming events and visit our web pages at www.lsu.edu/hbb or on Facebook. Students **may earn credit** (CMST 4200) for working on productions in the HopKins Black Box. If you are interested in that, please come and talk to me in the first few days of the semester or get in touch with the HBB Manager Eda Ercin nercin1@lsu.edu.