

# FI211-15 Audio-visual Avant-gardes

**21/22**

**Department**

SCAPVC - Film & Television Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Michael Pigott

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

9 weeks

**Assessment**

50% coursework, 50% exam

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

N/A.

### Module aims

This module will explore the history of avant-garde sound, film and video work from the early twentieth century up to the present day. It will allow students to engage both conceptually and practically with a range of forms, movements and practices, and to explore the persistent currents of interaction and exchange between avant-garde and popular cultures. It will operate both as a broad survey that will allow students to make connections amongst a variety of disparate movements and trends, while also providing the opportunity for detailed analysis of a number of key works. In this sense it will adopt a comparative approach informed by the detailed analysis of individual texts. There will be a number of practical projects each term for students to choose from, which will involve them in the recreation of key sound, video and performance works. These projects will then be presented to the group as a form of practical research into the decision-making process behind the work in question. The Autumn term of the module will introduce the complex network of audiovisual art in the twentieth century, and the Spring term will include an extended case study of a particular form, movement or moment in the history of the audiovisual avant-garde.

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Dada and the concept of the 'Avant-garde'

Screening: Entr'acte (René Clair, 1924, 22 mins)

Reading: 'Modernism and the Idea of the Avant-Garde' in Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde (eds), *A Companion to Art Theory* (Blackwell, 2002)

Week 2: Found Footage and Appropriation 1

Screening: Rose Hobart (Joseph Cornell, 1936, 19 mins) / A MOVIE (Bruce Connor, 1958, 12 mins) / Jack's Dream (Joseph Cornell, c1938, 4 mins)

Reading: Rob Yeo, 'Cutting Through History: Found Footage in Avant-garde Filmmaking' in Stefan Basilico (ed.) *Cut: Film as Found Object in Contemporary Video* (Milwaukee, WI: Milwaukee Art Museum, 2004).

Week 3: Found Footage and Appropriation 2

Screening: The Strokes vs. Christina Aguilera - A Stroke of Genie-us (Freelance Hellraiser/Brian Mazzerella, 2001)/ Paganini's 5th Caprice (Cory Arcangel)/ Cassetteboy Vs. The Bloody Apprentice (Cassetteboy, 2009) / Alone, Life Wastes Andy Hardy (Martin Arnold, 1998)

Reading: Eduardo Navas, 'Regressive and Reflexive Mashups in Sampling Culture' in *Mashup Cultures*, ed. Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2010).

Week 4: Expanded Cinema

Screening: Selected film documentation of a performance of Malcolm Le Grice's Horror Film 1 / Andy Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable (Ronald Nameth, 1966, 13 mins)/Gill Eatherley's Aperture Sweep and Chair Installation

Reading: Brandon W. Joseph, "'My Mind Split Open": Andy Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable' in *Grey Room*, No. 8, Summer, 2002

Week 5: Projection and Objecthood

Screening: in class recreation of Anthony McCall's Line Describing a Cone

Reading: Chrissie Iles, 'Video and Film Space,' in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Video as Medium/Video as Performance

Screening: Three Transitions (Peter Campus, 1973), Two Dogs and a Ball (William Wegman, 1972), Vertical Roll (Joan Jonas, 1972)

Reading: Rosalind Krauss, 'Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism,' in *October*, Vol. 1 (Spring, 1976), pp. 50-64.

Week 8: Video as Object

Screening: in class recreation of Bruce Nauman's Live-Taped video Corridor, and Nam June Paik's TV Buddha.

Reading: Janet Kraynak, 'Dependent Participation: Bruce Nauman's Environments,' in *Grey Room*, No. 10, Winter 2003, pp. 22-45.

## Week 9: Outdoor Projection

Screening: Selected documentation of work by Jenny Holzer and Krzysztof Wodiczko.

Reading: Abigail Susik, 'Sky Projectors, Portapaks, and Projection Bombing: The Rise of a Portable Projection Medium' in *Journal of Film and Video* Vol. 64, No. 1-2 (Spring/Summer 2012), pp. 79-92.

## Week 10: Digital Video

Screening: *Chicken Scanner* (Micah Harbon, 2009), *Monster Movie* (Takeshi Murata, 2005), *Glass* (Antonio Roberts, 2014), *Holly Herndon, Chorus* (dir. Akihiro Taniuchi, 2014)

Rosa Menkman, *The Glitch Moment(um)* (Amsterdam: Colophon, 2011). Read sections: 'Glitch Studies Manifesto' (pp.11-12), 'The Other Noise Artifact: Glitch' (pp.26-27), and 'The Perception of Glitch' (pp.28-31).

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the variety and complexity of avant-garde audiovisual work in the 20th and 21st centuries.
- Identify, analyse and critically examine experimental film and video art texts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the decision-making process that underlies a number of key video, performance, and installation works.

## Indicative reading list

- A. L. Rees, *A History of Experimental Film and Video*. London: BFI, 2011.
- Chris Meigh-Andrews, *A History of Video Art*. London: Berg, 2006.
- Jeff Chang (ed.), *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*. New York: Basic Civitas, 2006.
- Jamie Sexton (ed.), *Music, Sound and Multimedia: from the Live to the virtual*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.
- Barbara Pichler and Claudia Slanar (eds.), *James Benning*. Vienna: Synema Publikationen, 2007.
- Tzara, Tristan. 'Dada Manifesto', available at: [http://www.ubu.com/papers/tzara\\_dada-manifesto.html](http://www.ubu.com/papers/tzara_dada-manifesto.html)
- *The Blind Man*, Issue No. 2, May 1917, available at: <http://www.ubu.com/historical/dada/blindman.html>
- Fried, Michael. 'Art and Objecthood' in *Art in Theory 1900 - 2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. Ed. Harrison and Wood. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.
- Cage, John. 'Experimental Music'. *Silence: Lectures and Writings*. John Cage. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973.
- Uhlin, Graig. 'TV, Time, and the Films of Andy Warhol'. *Cinema Journal*. Vol. 49 No.3 2010. pp. 1-23
- Mekas, Jonas. 'Movie Journal: Warhol Shoots Empire, 30 July'. *The Cinematic*. Ed. David Company. London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2007.
- Crimp, Douglas. 'Appropriating Appropriation'. *Appropriation*. Ed. David Evans. London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2009. pp. 189 - 193.

- Graw, Isabelle. 'Fascination, Subversion and Dispossession in Appropriation Art'. *Appropriation*. Ed. David Evans. London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2009. pp. 214 - 218.
- Corman, Catherine. 'Theater of the Spirits: Joseph Cornell and Silence'. *Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008.
- Rogalsky, Matthew. "'Nature" as an Organising Principle: Approaches to chance and the natural in the work of John Cage, David Tudor and Alvin Lucier'. *Organised Sound*. Vol. 15 No.2 2010.
- Joseph, Brandon. 'The Tower and the Line: Toward a Genealogy of Minimalism'. *Grey Room*. No. 27 2007, pp. 58-81.
- Hopkins, David. 'Modernism in Retreat: Minimalist Aesthetics and Beyond'. *After Modern Art: 1945 - 2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. pp. 131 - 159.
- Russolo, Luigi. 'The Art of Noises'. Manifesto available at: <http://www.ubu.com/papers/russolo.html>
- LaBelle, Brandon. *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art*. London: Continuum, 2006.
- Toop, David. *Ocean of Sound*. London: Serpent's Tail, 2001.
- Toop, David. *Sinister Resonance: The Mediumship of the Listener*. London: Continuum, 2010.
- Paul D. Miller, 'In Through the Out Door: Sampling and the Creative Act,' in *Sound Unbound*, ed. Paul D. Miller (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008).
- Holly Rogers, 'Acoustic Architecture: Music and Space in the Video Installations of Bill Viola' in *Twentieth Century Music*, Issue 2 (2005), pp. 197-220.
- Malcolm Le Grice, 'Time and the spectator in the experience of expanded cinema' in *Expanded Cinema: Art, Performance and Film*, A. L. Rees, David Curtis, Duncan White, Stephen Ball (eds.), (London: Tate Publishing, 2011).
- Barbara London, 'Time as Medium: Five Artists' Video Installations,' in *Leonardo*, Vol. 28, No. 5, Third Annual New York Digital Salon (1995), pp. 423-426.
- Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, The Archive* (Harvard University Press, 2002)
- Catherine Elwes, *Video Art, A Guided Tour*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2006, Chapter 7 – Video Art on Television, pp. 117 – 140
- Lynn Spiegel, *TV by Design: Modern Art and the Rise of Network Television* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) Chapter 7: Warhol TV and Epilogue: Framing TV, Unframing Art.
- Janet Kraynak, 'Participation: Bruce Nauman's Environments,' in *Grey Room*, No. 10, Winter 2003, pp. 22-45.
- Johannes Birringer, 'Video Art/Performance: A Border Theory,' in *Performing Arts Journal* Vol. 13, No.3, 1991.
- Rosalind Krauss, 'Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism,' in *October*, Vol. 1 (Spring, 1976), pp. 50-64.
- Richard Lorber, 'Epistemological TV,' in *Art Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Winter, 1974-1975), pp. 132-134.
- Birgit Hein, 'On Performance : expanded cinema work in the 1970s' in *Expanded Cinema: Art, Performance and Film*, A. L. Rees, David Curtis, Duncan White, Stephen Ball (eds.). London: Tate Publishing, 2011.
- Malcolm Turvey, "Ken Jacobs: Digital Revelationist" in *October* 137, Summer 2011.
- Michelle Pierson, David E. James, and Paul Arthur (eds.), *Optic Antics: The Cinema of Ken*

Jacobs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

- Maeve Connolly, *The Place of Artists' Cinema : Space, Site and Screen*. Bristol: Intellect Books, 2009.
- Malcolm Turvey, Hal Foster, Chrissie Iles, George Baker, Matthew Buckingham, and Anthony McCall, 'Round Table: The Projected Image in Contemporary Art,' in *October*, Vol. 104 (Spring, 2003), pp. 71-96.
- Chrissie Iles, 'Video and Film Space,' in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Erika Suderburg, 'Introduction - On installation and site specificity,' in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

## Interdisciplinary

This module examines the hybrid and liminal works produced in between the mediums of the moving image, installation art and live performance. As such it draws upon, and engages with the disciplines of Film and Television Studies, Performance Studies, History of Art, and Visual Culture, and Sound Studies.

## Subject specific skills

Exploration through practice

## Transferable skills

Critical thinking  
Problem solving  
Communication (verbal and written)  
Teamwork and working effectively with others  
Information literacy (research skills)  
ICT literacy  
Professionalism

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 4 hours (24%)
Other activity	2 hours (1%)
Private study	112 hours (75%)
Total	150 hours

## Private study description

Class Preparation, viewing and reading  
Exam revision

## Other activity description

Revision session.

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group C

	Weighting	Study time
Essay 3000 words	50%	
Online Examination Standard exam	50%	1 hour

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- Online examination: No Answerbook required

## Feedback on assessment

Use of standard departmental feedback form for assessment as well as oral feedback by appointment.

[Past exam papers for FI211](#)

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## Availability

### Pre-requisites

n/a

## **Courses**

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UFIA-W620 Undergraduate Film Studies
- Year 2 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature
- Year 2 of ULPA-P301 Undergraduate Media and Creative Industries