MAT200A Syllabus

MAT 200A ___ FALL 2014
Instructor: Marko Peljhan peljhan@mat.ucsb.edu

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Office hours: Monday 3pm-4.30pm or by appointment

Class meets: FRI 10am-2pm (except FRIDAY OCTOBER 10, class meets at 6pm)

The M200A course “Intersections of Art & Technology” is designed for arts-engineering interdisciplinary collaborative work with a focus on a synthesis of creative arts-engineering problem-solving within a media arts context. Students are introduced to the history of the field and to a set of strategies to conceptualize and plan out the realization of a media arts project ready for submission.

The course begins by formulating artistic practice as a research activity, a form of prototyping of ideas that address materials, systems, processes, structure and content. For engineers and musicians, the course functions as an introduction to the discipline. For artists who come from a wide range of backgrounds, the course provides common ground and a platform where they can contribute their specialized knowledge.

Special focus will be given to the development of the field historically and to the role of the artist/engineer collaborative matrix in society.
Key topics:

- Art/Technology/Society/Nature,
- from Machinic to Computation,
- 2 ND order Cybernetics,
- overview of the formative avant-garde years,
- formative theory of media arts and technology,
- from Investors/Exploiters to Inventors/Explorers,
- Experiments in Art and Technology,
- artists in research labs,
- bio/endo/nano paradigms,
- the Sixties and beyond,
- Big Data,
- Computation/Visualisation/Tactilization

The lecture plan will include readings from the New Media Reader and writings and discussions thereof as well as presentations of writings by students and occasional readings and visits to other labs in the Department and at the University. The reading schedule and assignments will be given throughout the quarter with occasional changes if new material focus will be needed.

Four co-laboratories will be part of the class during the quarter.

1. CO-LABORATORY 1 – OCTOBER 10 – CULINARY EXPERIMENTS
2. CO-LABORATORY 2 – OCTOBER 31 – TEACH ME
3. CO-LABORATORY 3 – NOVEMBER 21 – CONCEPTS FOR FINAL
4. CO-LABORATORY 4 – DECEMBER 19 – FINAL PERFORMANCE

The second co-laboratory will happen on October 31 and will be devoted to skill and knowledge exchange, the third one will be devoted to a conceptual discussion for the final collaborative project and the final will be an event, co-created by all of the students.

SCHEDULE

OCT 3: Objectives of the course, screening DAS NETZ, discussion

*Material: PERCEPTION OF THE FUTURE AND FUTURE OF PERCEPTION, Heinz Von Foerster*

DAS NETZ, screening

*Assignment for Friday, OCT 10: 15 minute presentations (1 and 2 together)*

- Present a historical artwork, a concept or a set of ideas that you feel close to.
- Present a concept of a media arts or related field research work that you have been thinking about (it can be a powerpoint presentation or online presentation with visuals and sketches)

The number 3 assignment is already a collaborative one, your first class co-laboratory:

Organize and plan a dinner that will be part of the session on Friday October 10. The session on October 10 will start at 6pm.
Rules:
1. you have to self organize and discuss what the meal with be
2. you have to prepare the food yourself, not buy prepared food
3. you have to contribute something that you create and that you want to share with others
4. you have to know your meal both in the culinary, spiritual, aesthetic and scientific dimensions
5. you have to collaboratively document the process
6. You have to be able to talk about your contribution during the event itself

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

OCT 10: CO-LABORATORY 1 – MEETING STARTS AT 6PM!

OCT 17: THE AVANT-GARDE, FORMATION OF THE FIELD

OCT 24: THE MODERNIST REVOLUTIONS-ART AND TECHNOLOGY phase 1

OCT 31: TEACH ME CO-LABORATORY

NOV 7: THE MODERNIST REVOLUTIONS-ART AND TECHNOLOGY phase 2

NOV 14: THE COMPUTER

NOV 21: CO-LABORATORY 2 – CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FINAL PROJECT, CLASS PRESENTATIONS

DEC 5: ARS ELECTRONICA, LEONARDO AND THE BASIC HISTORY OF NOW

DEC 12: STATE OF THE ARTS

DEC 19: CO-LABORATORY 4: THE FINAL PROJECT

FINAL PROJECT:

The final project will be a collaborative media art and technology event/performance/situation, created by the whole class during the quarter.

GRADING
Readings and essays 30%
Final project contribution 30%
Co-laboratory contributions: 30%
Class participation: 10%

READINGS
MIT New Media Reader and other reading assignments that will be given during the quarter.