UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Digital Storytelling

2627-1055-Storytelling

Course title

Topics and course structure

The course aims to present forms, genres, and occurrences of digital storytelling. Starting from a critical and theoretical distinction among the notions of tool, device, and strategy, the course interprets the narrative structures developed by storytelling as a trans-disciplinary platform on which heterogeneous forms of knowledge and languages converge.
On these theoretical grounds, the course examines how the subjects, contexts, and narrative practices give rise to hybrid — often remediated — forms of exchange among literature, cinema, advertising, social media communication, and web-based interactive narratives. Within this framework, particular attention will be devoted to narrative understood both as a form of self-narrative and as a narrative of consumption, a fundamental tool for understanding the cultural, social, political, and aesthetic expression of individuals and communities.
These theoretical perspectives will be explored and tested through case studies and workshop activities. The course also introduces several applications and software essential for the development and dissemination of digital storytelling products, translating theory and critical reflection concretely into practice.

Objectives

– Understand the theoretical elements of digital storytelling, recognizing its practical applications;
– Identify affinities and differences among the writing modes of personal, community, brand, and character, identifying and analyzing their target audiences;
– Acquire specific skills in managing the writing, selection, and design of digital content;
– Critically analyze digital storytelling contents, assessing their narrative effectiveness and communicative/cultural impact;
– Become familiar with the software, applications, and digital channels used for the construction, implementation,

and dissemination of a narrative.

Methodologies

The course adopts a practical and interactive approach, based on:
– Lectures, including presentations and discussions of the main theoretical frameworks of reference
– Analysis and discussion of case studies
– Workshop activities
– Design and presentation of a digital storytelling project

Online and offline teaching materials

- Handouts and worksheets
- Suggested readings available online

Programme and references

– Introduction to the notions, definitions, and methodologies of storytelling and digital storytelling
– Narrative modes and digital storytelling: communication, narrative contents, sound, images, and video
– Defining the postmedia condition
– Identifying and analyzing narrative structures and archetypes through case studies
– Narrative, writing, and communication: the shape of stories in the digital context
– Exploring the notions of intermediality, transmediality, and crossmediality
– Prosumer culture: the forms, development, and sharing of audio and video content
– Social communication, virality, spreadability, and digital content (gifs, memes) in digital storytelling
– Interactive digital storytelling: dynamic elements of narrative, sequencing, and content display

Bibliography
Alexander Bryan, The New Digital Storytelling. Creating Narratives with New Media, Bloomsbury, 2017.
Bolter David J., Grusin Richard, Remediation. Understanding New Media, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2000.
Denisova Anastasia, Internet-memes and society. Social, cultural, and political contexts, New York, Routledge, 2019.
Eugeni Ruggero, La condizione postmediale. Media, linguaggi e narrazioni, Brescia, La Scuola, 2015.
Finn Ed, Beard Bob, Eschrich Joey, Wylie Ruth (eds.), Imagining Transmedia, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2024.
Friedmann Joachim, Storytelling for Media. Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Narrative Design, Munich, UVK Verlag, 2021.
Jenkins Henry, Convergence Culture, New York, Columbia University Press, 2006.
Jenkins Henry, Ford Sam, Green Joshua, Spreadable Media, New York, New York University Press, 2018.
Manovich Lev, The Language of New Media, MIT Press, Cambridge 2002.
Salmon Christian, Storytelling. La machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits, Paris, Éditions La Découverte, 2008.

Assessment methods

– Creative writing exercises, connecting to the practical application of the theoretical frameworks addressed;
– Critical analysis of a digital storytelling project

Office hours

Programme validity

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION