ASTU 4460.503
Advanced New Media Art
Tuesdays and Thursdays
2:00pm-4:50pm
GAB 112 and other locations TBA
Professor: Martin Back
Office: GAB 117A
Office Hours: Mondays, 10am-1pm
(or by appointment)
martin.back@unt.edu

DESCRIPTION
ASTU 4460 is a laboratory for the exploration of advanced ideas, theories and sophisticated techniques located at the intersection of art and technology delivered in a studio art context. Students in this course will be required to engage in new and innovative methods of research, art making, art-thinking, and collaboration toward the design and implementation of an end of semester group exhibition of original and critically engaged artworks.

COURSE STRUCTURE
The content of this course will be delivered through lectures, screenings of films and videos, museum visits, visiting artist presentations, listening sessions, hands-on demonstrations, investigative technical exercises, readings, presentations and assignments. Due to the sometimes highly theoretical nature of New Media Art/Art and Technology you must exercise due diligence and complete all readings and thoughtfully participate in all class discussions.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
You will get out of this course what you put into it. This means that you must accept the challenge of taking responsibility for your own success. My role is to provide motivation in the form of a grade; historical and theoretical context; guidance with regards to the usage of the tools introduced to complete each project; and feedback as you are in the process of creating your projects and during the final critique for each project. However, you must attend all class sessions, complete all projects as assigned, and make the individual effort to master the digital studio art techniques and concepts presented during the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR
You are expected to be prepared for class. This means being prepared to participate in discussions, ask questions about content presented during lectures and being pro-active about project deadlines. Reading
unrelated materials, excessive talking to neighbors, and any kind of phone use are all unacceptable during class time. This activity will be noted and reflected in your grade.

Turn in assignments on time. Late assignments will be graded, but not critiqued. Late assignments will be docked a full letter grade for each day they are late. Excessive absences and late arrival to class will be noted and reflected in your grade. Participate consistently and thoughtfully in all class discussions and critiques, especially for those of which are not your own. This is part of your participation grade.

Respect your peers’ opinions, orientations, histories, beliefs, and experiences.

Pay attention, ask questions and work hard.

PROJECTS
There will be three areas of concentration for this course. The first area of concentration will be focused on art and art-making as a social, collaborative, and investigative activity. The second area of concentration will be focused on your group exhibition in November in the Cora Stafford Gallery. The work you make for this exhibition may be a solo project or a project that is informed by your group activities from the first area of concentration. The last and third area of concentration will be concerned with presentations and—back by popular demand—artist problems. The projects you complete in this class will be largely self-directed. This is a senior level class and nobody should be holding your hand. With this being said my role will be to assist you with whatever element of your project necessary be that theoretical correlation to art history and culture, technical advising, or specific research topics. In addition to the aforementioned creative projects you will periodically engage in artist statement and Curriculum Vita writing exercises. I also require that you submit work to one show, festival, etc. Artist statements, CV’s and proof of work submission will be due the last day of the course.

EXHIBITION
Our exhibition dates are November 15-18, which is Wednesday through Saturday. Install takes place Monday and Tuesday of that week with de-install occurring on Sunday. We will be meeting with a representative from the CVAD galleries department a few weeks before our install in order to go through an orientation regarding safety and best practices. I expect you to follow the guidelines for install as established by the Galleries department to the letter.

READING ASSIGNMENTS
You have two textbooks for this class. The first is ‘Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature,’ by Alva Noe. It is available as an inexpensive (< $20.00) hardback from various online booksellers. The second is ‘Art as a Social System,’ by Niklas Luhmann. I will provide this text to you in its entirety on Blackboard. I will also provide other readings as .pdf documents to you on Blackboard as well.

Each time we discuss a reading in class I want you to come to that session with at least 1 page of typed notes with 10-point font, single spaced. You will collect all of these notes and turn them in at the end of the semester as a folio with a binding.

GRADING
Students will be evaluated on the basis of completed projects (50%), attendance (20%) and participation (30%).

Project 1: 12.5%
Project 2: 25%
Project 3: 12.5%

A= Superior. The grade of A indicates that work is superlative and surpasses expectations for the assignment, attendance is exemplary and the student participates in discussions in a manner that is respectful toward fellow students and which contributes to productive class discussions.

B= Above Average. The grade of B indicates that work is extraordinary and goes beyond the minimal requirements of an assignment. Attendance and participation are exemplary.
C= **Average.** The grade of C indicates that work is completed as assigned and submitted by deadline. Attendance and participation are lackluster.

D= **Below Average.** The grade of D indicates that work is completed, but is not completed as assigned. Attendance and participation are poor.

F= **Fail.** The grade F indicates that work is not completed as assigned according to deadline and that attendance and participation are minimal.

NEW MEDIA ART MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the New Media Art program at the University of North Texas is to cultivate new methods of performance and media art practices in contemporary art. Through creative and critical inquiry, we emphasize artistic excellence, interdisciplinary learning, socially engaged practices, and welcome collaboration.

We see our mission as the study and practice of visual culture, past and present, in order to understand how the convergence of performance, storytelling, and media can illuminate and expand, or conceal and limit the worlds they represent. Finally, we recognize that example is the best teacher and strive through our own creative research to embody the values we wish to impart. Pursuing research and creative opportunities, both locally and internationally, we draw upon and engage with the current critical discourse around Media and Performance Art.

*This mission is fulfilled:*

- Through innovative active learning curricula that contributes toward and engages with current practices and theoretical structures
- By continually investigating emerging media and technologies, as well as traditional approaches, as a way to open new channels of research and practice
- Through a belief that diversity—in background, status, culture, and viewpoint—is essential to a vital and creative community
- By expecting academic excellence as a fundamental part of a professional education in the visual arts
- Through a commitment toward rich engagement within our communities through community based learning experiences and service related activities
- By fostering an intellectual community within which experimentation is key

ATTENDANCE

You are allowed only **THREE** unexcused absences. After the **FOURTH** absence, your grade will drop a full letter for each subsequent absence. If you miss class it is your responsibility to acquire the information you missed on the day you were absent. If you are aware that you will be absent prior to the date of an absence you must notify me. Excused absences are granted in the case of illness accompanied by a doctor’s note and documented personal and/or family emergency. You are allowed **TWO** unexcused absences. Attend class on time. Two tardies (10 min. after class begins) will result in one absence.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

In order to provide a campus environment that is conductive to academic endeavor and growth, the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline provides regulations and guidelines governing student behavior. The code provides penalties for misconduct, including academic dishonesty, which includes all forms of cheating and plagiarism, including attempts to circumvent attendance procedures.

*The term cheating includes, but is not limited to a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; or d) any other act that is designed to give a student an unfair advantage.*

This policy protects honest students from unfair competition with dishonest students who seek to gain advantages by cheating. Students who become aware of suspicious activities should notify me as soon
as possible. Acts of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of ‘F’ in the course as well as disciplinary action.

UNT PLAGIARISM POLICY
Plagiarism is a serious violation of UNT’s code of academic conduct. The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, Policy Manual, Graduate Catalog, and Undergraduate Catalog explain specific policies, penalties, and the appeals process. The UNT Policy on Academic Misconduct provides definitions of plagiarism and states that the instructor can assign penalties for violations of the policy.

*The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.*

The UNT policy further states that all students:
*are responsible for making themselves aware of the definitions and implications of academic misconduct. For further information on academic misconduct, penalties and appeal procedures, the student should refer to the "Code of Student Conduct and Discipline."*

Penalties are assigned by instructors and can range from reducing the grade for a test or assignment to revoking an academic degree already granted.

DISABILITY STATEMENT
The College of Visual Art and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In Keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to fandom me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at [www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda), and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You may also call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

COURSE RISK FACTOR
This course recognizes that there are certain risks inextricably associated with certain activities within the lab, and categories are assigned to those risk factors. Working with computers in a lab environment such as this class is considered a category 2 risk. I ask every student to be especially mindful of these risks. Be concerned for your safety and the safety of those around you, specifically as it relates to how you use your computer equipment.

BUILDING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
In case of an emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of a tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related severity, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your faculty and act accordingly.

CENTER FOR STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Each University of North Texas student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information. The faculty retains the right to change the syllabus with or without notice.

**SCHEDULE**

Week 1: Course overview, introductions, Scratch Orchestras  
Week 2: Drafting constitutions, setting ‘research’ agendas, topics and timelines  
Week 3: Feedback and approval regarding ‘research’, open studio  
Week 4: Open Studio  
Week 5: Scratch Orchestra presentations/critique  
Week 6: Exhibition planning: committees, gallery orientation, presentation of project ideas  
Week 7: Individual meetings with Faculty regarding projects  
Week 8: Studio visits/Guest speakers  
Week 9: Studio visits/Guest speakers  
Week 10: Open Studio  
Week 11: Open Studio  
Week 12: Group Exhibition, gallery walk-through/critique, reception  
Week 13: Editing of exhibition documentation materials and Thanksgiving  
Week 14: Presentations of Artist Problems  
Week 15: Presentations of Research  
Week 16: Finals Week  

*note that open studio means you are to be working in our spaces on campus on your projects.*

**DEADLINES**

- August 31: Printed syllabus, liability form, student work form  
- September 26 & 28: Scratch Orchestra presentations/critiques  
- October 10 & 12: Project proposals  
- October 26 & 28: Projects in progress in New Media Labs  
- November 13 & 14: Install  
- November 16: Exhibition reception  
- November 28 & 30: Artist problems  
- December 5 & 7: Research presentations  
- December 12 & 14: Wrap up/Exhibition documentation online/CV/Artist Statement/Proof of submission  

**READING SCHEDULE**

- September 7: *Art as a Social System* Chapter 1: *Perception and Communication--the Reproduction of Forms*  
- September 14: *Art as a Social System* Chapter 2: *Observation of the First and the Second Order*  
- September 21: *Art as a Social System* Chapter 3: *Medium and Form*  
- September 28: *Art as a Social System* Chapter 5: *Self-Organization: Coding and Programming*  
- October 5: *Strange Tools*, Part 1: Chapters 1-4  
- October 12: *Strange Tools*, Part 1: Chapters 6 and 7
October 19: *Strange Tools*, Part 2: Chapters 8-11

**SYLLABUS CONTRACT:** You are required to sign the syllabus contract. The attached art waiver form is optional (but strongly suggested).

**LIABILITY RELEASE (REQUIRED)**
I understand that there will be some danger in connection with my participation in this New Media Art studio class because certain injuries may occur in carrying out these activities. After good and valuable consideration, I assume responsibility for all possible injuries resulting from my participation and hereby voluntarily agree that in the event of any accident, injury, loss of property, or other difficulty incidental to the activities or transportation to and from the activities, I will not make any claim of any kind against UNT or its agents, employees and representatives and/or students, and agree to hold said UNT, its employees and representatives and/or students harmless from any and all liability and legal responsibility. I recognize that I alone am responsible for my safety and health and based on my present knowledge of the correct methods and being of legal and adult age, I accept the responsibilities and possible injuries involved in these activities. I further agree to become familiar with the rules and regulations of UNT concerning student conduct and to not violate said rules or any directive or instruction made by the person or persons in charge of said activities and I will assume the complete risk of any activity done in violation of any rule or directive or instruction.
I understand that I am urged by UNT to obtain adequate health and accident insurance.

**BACK SYLLABUS CONTRACT AGREEMENT: ASTU 4460 Fall 2017**

Printed name___________________________________

Signature______________________________________

Date__________________________________________

*A parent or legal guardian must sign for persons under age 18.*
I, the undersigned, am a student at the University of North Texas (UNT) and I am enrolled in __________________________ (name of course). By my signature below I hereby grant permission to UNT to use, copy, reproduce, publish, distribute or display and all works created to comply with the requirements of this course in accordance with the terms set forth below. Additionally, I consent to the disclosure of the work created in this class as may be accompanied by my name and other personally identifiable information for purposes as set forth below.

2. Scope of permission. This permission extends to the use of the described work and images of such work: 1) for academic purposes in order to demonstrate examples of student work to current and future UNT students; 2) for public display in the galleries or on the campus of UNT or on the UNT website; 3) for promotional materials created by UNT in all forms of media now known or later developed, including but not limited to exhibition catalogues, direct mail, websites, advertising and classroom presentations. My permission is on-going and will continue until such time as I revoke it by giving UNT three months written notice of revocation to the professor of record for this course. UNT will have three months from the date of my notice to stop all use in accordance with this permission.

3. Certificate of ownership. I am the owner of all the work submitted in accordance with the requirements of the named course and the work is not subject to any grant or restriction that would prevent its use consistent with this permission. All aspects of the work are original to me and have not been copied. I understand that as owner of the work I have the right to control all reproduction, copying and use of the work in accordance with U.S. copyright laws.

4. Privacy release. I hereby authorize and consent to the release, maintenance and display of my name if necessary and any other personally identifiable information that I have provided in connection with the work and its use in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.

5. Signature. By signing below, I hereby grant the permissions indicated above. I understand that this grant of permission relates only to the use of the described work. This is not an exclusive right and I may sell, give or otherwise transfer the rights to such work to others on a non-exclusive or exclusive basis. However, in the event that I do sell, give or otherwise transfer ownership or the exclusive right to use my work to another party, I will notify UNT immediately in writing through the professor of record for this course. UNT will have three months from the date of my notice to stop all use in accordance with this permission.

Printed name:_____________________________________

Signature:________________________________________

Date:____________________________________________