

Syllabus
Course description

Course title	STUDIO IMAGE WORTH A 1000 WORDS? Image and Text: From Representation to a New Politics of Seeing
Course code	97121
Scientific sector	Module 1: ICAR/13 disegno industriale Module 2: ICAR/13 disegno industriale Module 3: M-FIL/04 estetica
Degree	Bachelor in Design and Art (L-4)
Semester	Winter semester 2020/21
Year	2 nd , 3 rd
Credits	19 (Module 1: 8 CP, Module 2: 6 CP, Module 3: 5 CP)
Modular	Yes

Teaching language	Module 1: English Module 2: Italian Module 3: English
Total lecturing hours	180 (Module 1: 90, Module 2: 60, Module 3: 30)
Total hours of self-study and / or other individual educational activities	About 295 (Module 1: about 110, Module 2: about 90, Module 3: about 95)
Attendance	Not compulsory but recommended
Prerequisites	For students enrolled before 2018/19 to have passed the WUP project and all WUP courses; for students enrolled from 2018/19 onwards to also have certified the language level B1 in the 3 rd language

<p>Studio description and specific educational objectives</p>	<p>The course belongs to the class “caratterizzante” (module 1, 2 and 3) in the curriculum in Art for students enrolled before 2018/19. It belongs to the class “caratterizzante” (module 1 and 2) and “affine o integrativa” (module 3) in the curriculum in Art for students enrolled from 2018/19 onwards.</p> <p>STUDIO DESCRIPTION Course description module 1 – Photography/Video:</p> <p>The same photograph can be found online with a variety of captions: one describes male skincare routines, others refer to ex-gang members, highlight the guidelines of a university or deal with cannabis consumption. The image itself shows the silhouettes of a group of people during sunset.</p> <p>Since the advent of photography, the complex relationship between photographic image, text and politics has been embedded in photographic and artistic practices as well as critical discourses of photo theory. During the winter semester 2020/21 Studio Image will explore the relationship between image, text and politics of communication. We will examine a series of examples on a timeline running from the heyday of humanistic photography to the implications of today’s digital technologies.</p> <p>Edward Steichen’s landmark exhibition <i>The Family of Man</i>, curated for the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1955, featured a total of 503 images taken by 273 photographers and was shown in 69 countries to ten million viewers. Steichen believed strongly in the communicative power of the humanist photography of the post-war years as a “universal language” that could unite mankind by representing situations and events that would be understood beyond cultures and borders. (https://steichencollections-cna.lu/eng/collections/1_the-family-of-man)</p> <p>One of the first major projects to critically reflect on key issues of humanist photography is <i>The Bowery</i> in two inadequate descriptive systems, conceived by the American artist Martha Rosler around twenty years later. It</p>
--	---

comprises 45 black-and-white photographs, each accompanied by text on white paper. The images show empty doorways, abandoned shop windows and deserted street corners in a neglected neighbourhood. The accompanying text fragments consist of statements referring to drunkenness. With her groundbreaking image-text work *The Bowery* in two inadequate descriptive systems, Martha Rosler not only radically questions documentary photography's claim to representation, but also addresses the inadequacy of the media with which we describe experience and thought. By demonstrating the vulnerability of images, Martha Rosler refutes the notion of photography as a universal means of communication, opening up a fundamental discourse on how meaning is constructed through the contextualisation of images.

<http://foundation.generali.at/en/collection.html#work=2378&artist=184>

A very contemporary example of a critical exploration of image-text relations is the work *Just Like Arcadia* (2015) by the Italian artists' collective *Discipula*. The work reflects the vulnerability of a digital image through the manifold possibilities of manipulation of its JPEG code. Repeatedly inserting parts of a poem into the code, increasingly corrupts the photographic image.

https://www.discipula.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/D06_JUSTLIKEARCADIA_print_low.pdf

The heart of this semester's project is artistic projects that innovatively relate to text layers. The production of text and images is understood as exploratory activity, as knowledge-generating, self-resonant modes of exploration of the world. One central issue that will be explored is how the convergence of private and public spaces for thought, communication and action changes the relation of photographic image and textual information and thus contributes to new politics of seeing and communication.

The aim of this semester is to develop an image-text-based body of work that considers and critically questions the interplay of image and text in the processes of generation of meaning. *WORTH A 1000 WORDS?* will offer the opportunity to intensively research into the thought and image worlds of photographic contexts. Through the lens of diverse topics we will investigate

how art processes can set in motion, subvert and transform social, political and media discourses. Historical and contemporary image-text strategies, intense theoretical explorations, a film program and discussions with invited artists and curators supply studio inputs as participants develop their own artistic ideas and concepts. In the course of the semester students will realize these in a photo/video/text-based project for the exhibition space as well as in the form of an individual artist's book. The semester WORTH A 1000 WORDS? will be closely tied to the studio's research activities Image. Text. Politics. (TIP).

Educational objectives module 1 – Photography/Video

Creation:

- ï Advanced ability to transfer individual concepts into strong, surprising works of art
- ï Inventiveness concerning subject, approach and materials
- ï Playful and sophisticated use of language/text/sound in relation to images
- ï Profound knowledge of contemporary technical skills such as (digital) photo, video, light and sound systems and development of personal formal criteria in relation to each project
- ï Refined artistic practice of different forms of analysis, expression and presentation

Contexts and concepts:

- ï Strong awareness of socially relevant discourses, their contexts and implications
- ï Advanced ability to develop a personal idea into a concept
- ï Advanced understanding of the coherence of intentions, choice of means, process and result
- ï Advanced ability to relate conceptually to the public/viewer as well as different communities
- ï Refined ability to locate personal work/strategies/methods within larger contexts
- ï Growing ability to theoretically explore own and others' ideas and concepts
- ï Development of an independent and challenging study path

General skills:

- ï Ability to give, receive and process constructive criticism
- ï Ability to integrate reviews and critique in the work process
- ï Assumption of responsibility
- ï Investigative attitude
- ï Development of long-term interests/endurance
- ï Communication/presentation skills
- ï Proactive attitude/behaviour

Course description module 2 – Visual Communication

As El Lissitzkij said: "Die Wörter des gedruckten Bogens werden abgesehen, nicht abgehört". So assuming that writing is always and in any case an image, when and to what extent can the image be treated as writing? Referring for example to the Latin alphabet, in the beginning the letters were pictures. The word "alphabet" was formed by the letters aleph and beth, which represent respectively, in their ancient handwriting, a bull's head (upside down) and a house, whose arrangement borrows an Egyptian hieroglyph where we can recognize our b. A fundamental element of writing is its multidimensional nature. All written formulations have an articulation on at least two spatial dimensions. In what we are accustomed to consider our current writing, the vertical dimension appears to be atrophied. But in reality for most written production the text is consciously organised in space. When in 1974 the French writer Georges Perec published "Espèces d'espaces", the blank page was the first of his spaces of reflection, the one that Perec has constantly present when he writes because it is the material support on which he works. A space identified by words and punctuation marks, which only starting from a delimitation can be configured as an expandable dimension. "I write: I inhabit my sheet of paper, I invest it, I travel across it": writing manifests itself as a generative act of the spatial dimension, which springs forth as something concrete and manipulable. Writing identifies boundaries, an above and below, a left and a right. Perec plays with these conventions, using them consciously and emphasizing all the aspects that delimit, and therefore define, the act of writing: blank spaces, spacing, text formatting, margins, notes, references, punctuation. Structural elements that the reader normally forgets in the course of reading, because they are usual and intended to perform a passive function, to guide rather than give meaning to a page. Likewise typography characterizes and permeates in a - more or less - anonymous way every aspect of our daily

life but influencing the communication of them. Every graphic or artistic artifact with which we interact provides us a message. The effectiveness of the result depends on how this information has been treated and translated. Following the main concept of the “WORTH a 1000 WORDS?” project, this module will confront students with a series of practical exercises that will force them to reflect on a conscious use of typographic tools, the relationship between text and image, the relationship between visual representations and the process of meaning production.

Educational objectives Module 2 – Visual Communication

- ï The acquisition of the essential basic knowledge to carry out a project in the field of visual communication, with a focus on typography and editorial design.
- ï Correct use of graphic design elements and graphic syntax.
- ï Ability to analyze, design and develop visual and textual outputs.
- ï Ability to communicate and argue the reasons of choices and justify them from a formal, technical, scientific and theoretical point of view. Advanced understanding of the coherence of intentions, choice of means, process and result.
- ï Aware attitude to articulate and argue well-structured projects and to build relationships between different topics and subjects.
- ï Advanced ability to transfer individual concepts to develop a personal idea into a concept.

Course description module 3 – Media Theory:

Media Theory, as a field of studies, is grounded on a multidisciplinary approach to the complex and problematic relationship between society, technology and mechanism of production of social imaginary, which means, mechanism of production of narratives. Media Theory, indeed, embraces different traditional academic fields: from Communication to Philosophy, crossing through Informatics, Arts and Politics. Thanks to its multidisciplinary nature and its capacity to conciliate terminologies, visions and academic traditions, Media Theory represents a privileged discipline to analyze complex phenomena deriving from the ways society construct narratives within precise technological context. Above all, its well articulated interest in the whole universe of media technologies and practices represents

an asset when the interest focuses on the way different media and their respective mechanisms of production of meaning interact.

This course proposes a survey on the technological context from which emerged the phenomena, first, of fragmentation and, then, of convergence of mass media. In fact, it is from these technological contexts that derived both the Intermedia approach, characteristic of the video-electronic era, and transmedia, which corresponds to the beginning and popularization of the digital age. However, since the introduction of the concept "intermedia", introduced by Dick Higgins in 1966, it is possible to note a wide awareness of being in a fragmented media universe that, in Higgins words, exerts a radical change of sensibilities. Higgins considered the intermedia approach as a human necessity imposed by the technological context, as an episteme that deeply transforms artistic creation and, of course, human expression. Through this social phenomenon, we will deal with the transition from the intermedia approach to the transmedia approach, both seen as a result of a technological change during which the technological component entered, in an active form, into the process of artistic creation. We will also analyze, through the notion of adaptation and remediation, the effects that this transformation have had on the organization or fractalization of narrative spaces and the way these new narrative spaces developed complex social processes expressed by means of the use of different media. Particular interest will be dedicated to the way different mechanisms of creation of meaning, coming from traditional media, started to co-exist, and the way their coexistence represented a tool to strength democratic systems.

This course will provide students with the fundamental notions to approach the analysis, the history, and the criticism of media. During the lessons, we will compare and discuss diverse theories and the socio-technological context that generated diverse ways of constructing collective imaginary. Every theory will be examined as the product of a specific socio-political, technological and cultural context in order to better understand the close-knit relationship that exists between media, technology, culture, ways of production of value and social structures. Particular emphasis will be placed on the generation of social imaginary and the contemporary phenomena that transformed this into a collective act.

Educational objectives module 3 – Media Theory:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The acquisition of the essential basic knowledge of looking critically at their own work and to deal with the complexities of the contemporary media society • The acquisition of the knowledge and understanding of different media context as well as theoretical subjects • To have the ability to grasp the main phenomena that characterizes our hypermedia society and to analyze them from a social and ethical perspective • The acquisition of the basic knowledge concerning the culture of design in all its aspects • Knowledge of the important aspects of the history and analysis of Media Theory • Know how to apply the research methods and results in the project and to the various areas of the project itself • To develop independent judgments in the critical evaluation of their work by using appropriate interpretive tools with respect to different contexts <p>Communicate at a professional level and argue the reasons for their choices from a formal, technical scientific, and theoretical point of view.</p>
--	---

Module 1	Photography/Video
Lecturer	Prof. Eva Leitolf Eva.Leitolf@unibz.it , Tel. +39 0471 015327 Webpage: https://www.unibz.it/de/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/37228-eva-leitolf
Scientific sector of the lecturer	ICAR/13
Teaching language	English
Office hours/Assistance	Mo 14:00 – 18:00 via Teams
List of topics covered	Artistic practice; conceptual and theoretical framework for individual projects
Teaching format	Frontal lectures, assignments/exercises, group and one to one critiques, presentations

Module 2	Visual Communication
Lecturer	Giulia Cordin Giulia.Cordin@unibz.it , tel. +39 0471 015333, webpage: https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/31248-giulia-cordin
Teaching language	Italian
Office hours/Assistance	From Tue to Wed 09:00–18:00
List of topics covered	Graphic and editorial design
Teaching format	Exercises, in-group discussions, frontal lectures, workshops

Module 3	Media Theory
Lecturer	German Duarte Peñaranda GDuarte@unibz.it , tel. +39 0471 015108, webpage https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/37717-german-a-duarte
Scientific sector of the lecturer	M-FIL/04
Teaching language	English
Office hours	Mo – Tu: 12:30 – 14:00 via Teams
List of topics covered	Media Theory, Media History
Teaching format	Frontal lectures, in-group discussions.

<p>Learning outcomes</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for module 1 – Photography/Video</p> <p><u>Knowledge and understanding</u> Students will understand the photographic image as a medium related to different historical and contemporary contexts within a changing framework of politics of representation. They will deepen their understanding of different forms of image narratives as well as comprehend various visual strategies. They will acquire an individual project methodology in the field of visual art.</p> <p><u>Applying knowledge and understanding</u> Students will be able to apply their acquired technical, theoretical and practical knowledge to produce own strong artistic projects from concept to realization as well as to develop methods to document their own formation processes. Students will acquire the ability to recognize and critically evaluate socially relevant phenomena and transfer them constructively into an individual artistic project.</p> <p><u>Making judgments</u> Through constant constructive critical discourse, students will be able to critically question own concepts/work as well as the concepts/works of others and start to develop individual criteria for quality. Students will learn to experience and evaluate their own artistic approach in relation to historical and contemporary artistic practices.</p> <p><u>Communication skills</u> Students will learn to give and receive constructive critique as well as to explain and defend own ideas and decisions from a conceptual, formal and technical point of view in plenary presentations and discussions. They will be able to present their personal project orally, in writing as well as in the form of a spatial presentation.</p> <p><u>Learning skills</u> Students will be able to independently research and conceptually follow own interests/ideas and represent them within a personal artistic process. They will develop an individual creative methodology to identify, explore and realize artistic solutions for complex formal and conceptual challenges.</p> <p>Learning outcomes for module 2 – Visual Communication</p> <p><u>Knowledge and understanding</u> Students will understand visual communication as a medium related to different historical and contemporary</p>
---------------------------------	--

	<p>contexts in order to acquire an individual project methodology in the field of visual art.</p> <p><u>Applying knowledge and understanding</u> Students will be able to apply their technical, theoretical and practical knowledge to produce own projects from concept to realization as well as to develop methods to document their practices.</p> <p><u>Making judgements</u> Students will be able to critically question own concepts/work as well as the concepts/works of others in order to develop individual criteria. Students will acquire the ability to recognize and critically evaluate relevant phenomena and style and transfer them constructively into an individual project.</p> <p><u>Communication skills</u> Students will learn to present, explain and defend own ideas and decisions from a conceptual, formal and technical point of view. They will be able to present their personal project orally, in writing and in the form of a spatial presentation.</p> <p><u>Learning skills</u> Students will be able to independently research own interests and develop ideas and projects.</p> <p>Learning outcomes for module 3 – Media Theory</p> <p><u>Knowledge and understanding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To acquire a critical approach to historical-media phenomena - To analyze mass media, social media, and communication through the basic knowledge acquired in media theory and cultural studies. <p><u>Applying knowledge and understanding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ability to grasp the socio-political role played by media and to know how to look at these critically. - To apply this knowledge to any professional situation that requires a theoretical expertise as well as to develop appropriated solutions in terms of the proposal/response of the project. <p><u>Making judgments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop an independent judgment both in the critical evaluation of their work and in the ability to use the appropriate interpretive tools with respect to the context where they are going to apply their own
--	--

	<p>artistic practice and/or continue their studies, assessing also the social and ethical aspects.</p> <p><u>Communication skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to clearly communicate, at a professional level, projects, information, concepts, and solutions related to the questions of media society and artistic practices. <p><u>Learning skills</u></p> <p>To improve their research methods, as well as how to pertinently apply them during the development of projects and research projects concerning different fields of media and art</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Assessment details for module 1 – Photography/Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of artistic work (e.g. photographic prints, video, digital formats etc.) • Several presentations of own artistic work in plenary critique sessions as well as one to one meetings with teacher that show an extensive artistic process • Presentation of researched topics to class • End of semester presentation in individual form of presentation/exhibition, (self-)/evaluation of results <p>Assessment details for module 2 – Visual Communication</p> <p>Students will be asked to develop three different assignments in relation with the main project. Reviews will be held on a weekly basis and the conclusion of the project will coincide with the exam date.</p> <p>Assessment details for module 3 – Media Theory</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short essay (max. 5 pages) 2. Oral examination at the end of the semester.
<p>Assessment language</p>	<p>The same as the teaching language</p>

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks

The evaluation of the single modules does not result in three separate marks but will add up to the overall studio evaluation. There is only one final overall mark for the studio which is agreed by the three professors, who evaluate the studio according to the following criteria:

By the end of the semester, each student must upload on the Microsite of the faculty detailed documentation of the semester work.

<http://portfolio.dsgn.unibz.it/wp-admin>

Documentation is an integral part of the exam. The documentation must include visual documentation and an abstract of the project.

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks for module 1 – Photography/Video

- Strength and clarity of artistic concepts
- Coherence of concept, choice of means and resulting art work
- Innovativeness/inventiveness concerning subject, approach and materials
- Virtuosity of technical skills
- Mastery of oral presentation: ability to summarize, evaluate, and establish relationships between topics and own artistic practice
- Ability to work in a team
- Capability of integrating reviews and crits in the work process
- Skills in critical thinking and adequate communication to peers
- Comprehensive artistic processes and presentation of results
- Proactive attitude/behavior
- Taking on responsibilities
- Development of long-term interests

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks for module 2 – Visual Communication

- Strength and clarity of concepts
- Completeness and coherence of concept, choice of means and resulting art work.
- Clarity in the presentation of the process that leads to the final choices.
- Inventiveness concerning subject, approach and materials.
- Correct use of new tools and competences.
- Ability to summarize, evaluate, and establish relationships between topics and own practice.
- Capability of integrating reviews and crits in the work

	<p>process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills in critical thinking. - Taking on responsibilities. - Active participation and quality of contributions. <p>Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks for module 3 – Media Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to summarize and present concepts and theories presented in the required readings - Ability to establish relationships between theories and socio-technological contexts - Clarity in presenting and structuring ideas
<p>Required readings</p>	<p>Module 1 – Photography/Video</p> <p>-</p> <p>Module 2 – Visual Communication</p> <p>Readings will be made available during the course in the reserve collection</p> <p>Module 3 – Media Theory</p> <p>Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin, Remediation: Understanding New Media, MIT Press, 2000.</p>
<p>Supplementary readings</p>	<p>Module 1 – Photography/Video</p> <p>Module 2 – Visual Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringhurst Robert, The Elements of Typographic Style • Coles Stephen, The Geometry of Type • Falcinelli Riccardo, Guardare, Pensare, Progettare • Hochuli Jost, Detail in Typography • Kinross Robin, Modern Typography • Lippard Lucy, The Artist's Book Goes Public • Lorusso Silvio, Digital Publishing • Noordzil Gerrit, The Stroke: Theory of Writing <p>Module 3 – Media Theory</p> <p>- Supplementary readings will be informed during the semester.</p>