

Module Title: Forms of Film Practice

Module Code: FLM6038

Credit Value: 15

Level: 6

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

Mainstream narrative cinema and factual filmmaking have always benefitted from the innovations taking place at the margins of film practice. The formal, aesthetic and technical experiments conducted by artists are routinely appropriated by the commercial film industry. Risks taken in the documentary field lead to new attitudes towards objectivity, truth and the depiction of others. Daring new visual language and image manipulation within the avant-garde finds its way into advertising, music promos and more. This module focuses on what unorthodox forms film practice can take, across and beyond the traditional categories of fiction and non-fiction. The class aims to broaden the student's skills-base and conceptual framework by encouraging formal experimentation and an active critique of the ways in which the cinema, and other moving image formats, construct meanings and representations.

The module covers a range of practices, production procedures, technologies and techniques for concept development, and is structured to enhance creative thinking, collaboration, group dynamics and practical abilities. It is designed to ground the student in appropriate research and development methods along with practical and aesthetic skills to produce a short experimental moving image work or multiscreen installation. Each week a feature length screening or a selection of short films will be followed by either seminar discussion, peer critique on evolving film productions, or practical workshops.

Over the course of the module students will consider and work with: the long take; the embodied camera; space/site; the physicality of performance on camera; sound and voice; text and inter-text; anti or counter forms of narrative telling; sampling and image collage; and multiple screens.

Rather than the conventional pre-production research, development and planning phase, the module favours action research, in which process is privileged over product. This involves a series of weekly short-turnaround practical assignments acting as prompts for generating new material to factor into the final moving image submission. UG students are to work in small collaborative groups of 3-5. MA students are encouraged to work collaboratively in groups, although solo projects are permitted, by arrangement with the module leader.

Module Aims

The Module is organised around the following elements:

- A series of structured short film challenges, taking the form of a brief, each with technological, procedural and temporal limitations.
- A series of technical and conceptual workshops introduced by way of seminar presentation and focused lecture content.
- A set of screenings, lectures and seminars appropriate to the film briefs.
- Group tutorials with tutor(s) working on the Module, as appropriate.
- Presentations by students of their projects in development.

Specific Aims:

1. To critically examine production practices associated with factual filmmaking and avant-garde/artists' moving image, using the theoretical models and practical methods developed on the programme.
2. To survey key films and filmmakers who work specifically with experimental narrative, documentary and with moving image for the gallery or non-cinematic context.
3. To utilise a range of production practices, techniques, technologies and procedures in the service of your film production needs.
4. To develop and undertake detailed analysis of own practices and procedure.
5. To produce a short film or moving image installation.

Learning Outcomes:

1. To have a critical understanding and knowledge of production skills and practices in documentary and experimental filmmaking.
2. To be able to use the theoretical debates, workshops and seminars on the programme, in improving and sharpening own production process, and the resulting films/artworks.
3. To be in control of the various elements and stages of the creative process, so as to assure the quality of the resulting films/artworks.
4. Develop own process of work, keep notes and be able to critique and learn from the process.
5. To develop the skills of working with documentary subjects/non-actors and with site, context, form and process, and appropriate industrial and creative procedures.

