

Immersive, Participatory Live Performance

TPA4930 & TPA6930, Sect 150F (3 credits)

Fridays: 3-6 pm ET

Professor: Dr. Heidi Boisvert

Location: Constans Theatre, 217 & 219

Email: hboisvert@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 3-5 pm (or by Appointment)

Office Location: Nadine McGuire Theatre & Dance Pavilion,

Room #233

Office Phone: 352-273-0513 (email is best)



Course Content —> Canvas Site: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/447566>

Course Collaboration —> Slack Workspace: immersiveliveperform.slack.com

Course Description:

In this course, students will devise experimental live performances for unconventional places such as escape rooms, immersive theatre, transmedia storytelling across the web and mobile devices, mixed reality, telematic performances, and experiential entertainment. Students will interrogate how digital technologies inform hybrid practices in contemporary performance and will invent new relationships between technology, performers and the audience. Students will gain knowledge of immersive, participatory performance techniques through assignments, readings, short performances, critiques, demos, workshops and guest presentations.

Prerequisites: None

Course Goals:

To give students an introduction to:

- the field of immersive, participatory performance and how it can be harnessed for social change.
- live performance processes and collaborative strategies between people with different skills and backgrounds.
- diverse design & development methods across various technology platforms and media touch points.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- learn correct terminology for technical and design aspects of the field.
- incorporate immersive and participatory live performance into their artistic practice.
- explore different interdisciplinary methods of collaboration in order to function as part of a team.
- understand and employ different modalities of design and production and integrate those modalities into a live performance experience.

- clearly communicate ideas using contemporary methods and critique the work of their peers.
- discuss the evolving technologies and innovative approaches used by professionals in the field of immersive and participatory live performance.

Course Materials:

- Canvas
- Slack
- GitHub
- Flash drive & other portable drives or DropBox account to back up files
- Required Readings - Provided as PDFs
- Software Tutorials - Links will be provided
- Journal (Digital or Physical)
- Laptop (Mac or PC)

Relevant Hardware & Software:

- Max/MSP (<https://cycling74.com/>)
- PureData (<https://puredata.info/>)
- Processing (<https://processing.org/>)
- Isadora (<https://troikatronix.com/>)
- Mad Mapper (<http://madmapper.com/>)
- QLab (<https://figure53.com/qlab/>)
- TouchDesigner (<https://www.derivative.ca/>)
- Magic Leap (<https://www.magicleap.com/>)
- Medialon (<https://medialon.com/>)
- Unity (<https://www.unity.com/>)
- Unreal (<https://www.unrealengine.com/>)
- Maya (<https://www.autodesk.com/products/maya/overview>)
- Rokoko (<https://www.rokoko.com/>)
- Faceware (<http://facewaretech.com/>)
- Oculus (<https://www.oculus.com/>)
- Vive (<https://www.vive.com/us/>)
- Scrivener (<https://www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener.php>)
- Conducttr (<https://my.conducttr.com/>)
- RaspberryPi (<https://www.raspberrypi.org/>)

Recommended Reading List:

Allston, Adam. Beyond Immersive Theatre: Aesthetics, Politics and Productive Participation. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017.

Biggen, Rose. Immersive Theatre and Audience Experience: Space, Game and Story in the Works of Punchdrunk. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017.

Benford, Steve & Gabriella Giannachi. Performing Mixed Reality. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011.

Freize, James. Reframing Immersive Theatre: The Politics and Pragmatics of Participatory Performance. Liverpool: Palgrave MacMillan, 1st ed. 2016 Edition.

Markus Montola, Stenros, J. & Waern A. Pervasive Games: Experiences on the Boundary of Life and Play. Burlington: Elsevier, 2009.

Kozel, Susan. Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.

Machon, Josephine. Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performance. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013.

Machamer, Josh. Immersive Theatre: Engaging the Audience, Common Ground: Arts in Society, 2018.

Massumi, Brian. Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002.

Immersed in Technology: Art and Virtual Environments, edited by Mary Ann Moser. Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1996.

Munster, Anne. Materializing New Media: Embodiment in Information Aesthetics. Lebanon, NH: Dartmouth University Press, 2006.

Noland, Carrie. Agency & Embodiment: Performance, Gestures/Producing Culture. Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Penny, Simon. "Desire for Virtual Space. The Technological Imaginary in 1990s Media Art." Space and Desire Anthology, edited by Thea Brezjek. Zurich: ZHDK, 2011.

Phillips, Andrea. A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling: How to Capture and Engage Audiences Across Platforms.

Salter, Chris. Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010.

Warren, Jason. Creating Worlds: How to Make Immersive Theatre.

Industry Essentials:

No Proscenium - Reviews of Immersive Work
<https://noproscenium.com/>

Future of Storytelling
<https://futureofstorytelling.org/>

Immerse
<https://immerse.news/>

Game Development Conference Vault
<https://www.gdcvault.com/>

Well-Played
<https://press.etc.cmu.edu/index.php/publication-tag/well-played/>

National Film Board of Canada - Interactive
<https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/>

Grading Policy*:

- 20% in class exercises
- 10% reading/experience responses
- 10% design document
- 40% final execution
- 10% documentation
- 10% participation & attendance

* University grading policy can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

Grading Rubric:

VALUES	Excellent (90-100)	Good (80-89)	Fair (70-79)	Poor (60-69)	Unsatisfactory (0-59)
Concept	Core concept is intriguing, original, and well- explored	Core concept is intriguing but lacking in examination	Core concept is present and supported by the work	Core ideas are scattered without consideration	No clear concept, or work doesn't reflect it
Progress	Clear and consistent progress from ideation to execution	Progress was made, but was not consistent	Evidence of procrastination, "last minute" pushes or crunch	Lack of progress in 1-2 areas resulting in project deficiencies	Little to no progress shown on the project
Presentationn	Concept is clearly presented and strongly supported through audio, visuals, interaction, and narrative (if applicable)	Concept is supported through presentation, but 2 or more areas of the design are lacking or distracting	Concept is weakly supported through presentation, project requirements met at a "bare minimum" level	1-2 presentation requirements are not met.	3+ presentation requirements are not met.
Skills	Clear demonstration of skills in all development areas (visual, text, audio, interaction, programming)	Clear demonstration of skill in 2+ development areas	Demonstrates skills, but omits topics covered in class.	Evidence of skills, but underutilization of techniques learned in class	Does not use any techniques learned in class.

VALUES	Excellent (90-100)	Good (80-89)	Fair (70-79)	Poor (60-69)	Unsatisfactory (0-59)
Collaboration	Consistently provides honest, supportive feedback to peers, responsible in meeting team goals, communicates effectively.	Generally supportive, responsible, and good communication, with a few issues	Multiple issues/problems with collaboration, meeting goals, or communication	Little to no evidence of communication, goal setting, and collaboration in a team setting.	Disrespectful to fellow students work, with negative impacts to class/team dynamics.

Expectations:

- **Arrive on time** and attend all classes— see below for attendance policy.
- Spend at least **2-4 additional hours a week** (outside of class) on class projects, readings, experiencing experimental work & writing in journal.
- **Check Canvas** for assignments and materials (typically announced and posted at the end of class on Fridays).
- **Check Slack** regularly for group and private messages.
- Post weekly reading/experience responses to Canvas **by midnight on Thursday** unless otherwise specified in the assignment.
- **Actively participate** in class discussions & group critiques.
- **Back up your work** regularly.
- **Follow good device etiquette:** No cell phone use during class. Laptops only used for lecture note-taking and related class activities.
- **Thoughtfully contribute** to a positive classroom environment, while actively supporting and challenging your classmates' ideas.
- **Push yourself creatively and technically.** Be ambitious. Work hard. Stay open and curious!

Communication:

- To contact your instructor with a brief, private question or message, **send a DM (Direct Message) through Slack.**
- If you have a question that may be relevant to the group (about homework, etc.), **post in the #general channel** on Slack for all to see and comment on.
- Use Slack for easy communications with your classmates as well—you can DM individuals or selected groups.
- To discuss a longer matter with your instructor, DM to set up an appointment for office hours.

Attendance Policy:

- Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, and actively engage/participate.
- **If you will be absent, or if you are running late, DM your instructor ASAP .**
- In the case of an absence, contact a classmate for notes and what you missed, check Canvas for assignments, and contact the instructor if you have additional questions.
 - Lateness and absences will impact your grade. Worse, not showing up will impact everyone else in the class. As most of our projects are collaborative, we are dependent on everyone's presence and full participation.
 - All in-class activities are graded for participation. Unexcused absences will result in a 0 for participation for the day.
 - Unexcused lateness counts as 1/3 absence when up to 25 minutes late, 1/2 absence when 26-50 minutes late, and a full absence beyond that point.
 - Absences may be excused in the following cases: documentation of illness provided by a doctor, religious observance with advance notice, official school-related activity (with documentation and advanced notice), and on a case-by-case basis for other critical events.
 - Project critiques are mandatory and cannot be made up. Missing a critique will result in a deduction of one letter grade for the corresponding project.
- For University Attendance Policy, please refer to this link: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Academic Integrity Policy:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Instructor Note: Code borrowed from another source at more than four lines in length must be attributed as a //comment within the code itself. If you are unsure of whether or not your work may constitute plagiarism, please check with your instructor before submitting.

In-Class Recording:

- Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Course Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center here: <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Student Evaluation Requirements:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://>

ufl.bluer.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Course Structure:

Lecture/Demo - Context setting and introducing tools & techniques

Lab/In Class Exercises - Scaffold development pipeline and experimentation

Read/Watch/Respond - Critically engage with readings/videos by writing up a short reaction to key points in preparation for discussion

Experience/De-construct - Research new immersive works & identify narrative devices, experience design strategies and technology employed to build a collective toolbox

Studio - Hands-on, collaborative project development

Course Schedule:

// Week 1 - January 7th - Overview of Course, Structure & Ideas

Lecture/Demo: Brief History of Early Immersive & Participatory Performances

In Class Exercise 1: Deconstructing Case Studies to Build a Toolbox

Read/Respond: Birringer, Johannes. *Kinetic Atmospheres: Performance & Immersion* - Chapter 1

// Week 2 - January 14th - Story Thinking & World Building

Guest: Tony Patrick - World-builder, Writer & Immersive Creator

Lecture/Demo: Speculative Design & World Building

In Class Exercise 2: Futurist Writers Room

Read/Respond:

Cheng, Ian. "What is a World?"

Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old & New Media Collide*, Chapter 3, Searching for the Origami Unicorn: *The Matrix* and Transmedia Storytelling

Watch: Transmedia Storytelling: narrative worlds, emerging technologies and global audiences (series)

Experience/Deconstruct (Film): *The Matrix*, *Black Panther*, *Game of Thrones*, *Star Wars* (Pick One Choose Your Own)

// Week 3 - January 21st - Narrative Architecture & Experience Design

Guest: Mikhail Garver - Founder, EXP13

Lecture/Demo: Non-Linear, Cross-Platform Narratives

In Class Exercise 3: Mapping Storytelling Ecosystem & Narrative Beats

Read/Respond:

Borges, Jorge Luis. *Garden of the Forking Paths*

Bearskin-Winger, Amelia. *Before Everyone Was Talking about Decentralization, Decentralization Was Talking to Everyone*

Watch: Mikhail Garver, Experience Design series

Listen: Chris Nichols, Walt Disney's Disneyland (podcast)

Experience/Deconstruct (Game): *Elders Scroll 5: Skyrim*, *Braid*, *Stein's Gate*, *Fall Out 3*, *Bioshock*, *Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*, *Revolution 1979: Black Friday*, *Gone Home* (Pick One or Choose Your Own)

// Week 4 - January 28th - Games & Interactive Engagement

Guest: Nathan Allen - Writer & Director, The Last Defender

Lecture/Demo: MDA Framework & Playable Theatre

In Class Exercise 4: Puzzle Design

Read/Respond: Hunicke, Robin et al. "MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design & Game Research."

Watch: Pierce, Celia. Game Design for Playable Theatre.

Experience (Escape Room): *Crisis of 1600*, *Asylum*, *Pandemic* (@America's Escape Rooms) (Pick One)

// Week 5 - February 4th - Environmental & Dramaturgical Immersion

Guest: Winslow Porter - Creative Director & Immersive Producer

Lecture/Demo: 5D Multi-Sensory Engagement - Set, Sound, Lights, Smells, Haptics

In Class Exercise 5: Designing an Interactive Installation - Unity Mock-Up

Read/Respond:

Bouko, Catherine. *Dramaturgy and the immersive theatre experience*.

Warren, Jason. *Creating Worlds: How to Make Immersive Theatre*. Chapter 2, Living Spaces.

Watch: Secret Cinema, Sandbox Full Body VR & War of the Worlds Trailers

Experience/Deconstruct (Interactive Installation/Expanded Reality): Tree (New Reality Company), Fire Escape (iNK stories), Changing Same (Rada Group), NeuroSpeculative AfroFeminism (Hyphen Labs) (Pick One or Choose Your Own)

// Week 6 - February 11th - Audience, Direction & Emergence

Guest(s): Annie Saunders - Wilderness, Artistic Director &/or Michael Rau, Director

Lecture/Demo: Strategies for Facilitating Human Experiences

In Class Exercise 6: Casting & Directing Guides

Read/Respond:

Adrienne Maree Brown, *Emergent Strategy*.

Phillips, Andrea. *A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling: How to Capture and Engage Audiences Across Platforms*.

Frieze, James. *Facilitating Immersive Performance: Ethics & Practicalities, Part I*.

Experience/Deconstruct (Immersive Theatre): Sleep No More (Punch Drunk), Then She Fell (Third Rail Projects), The Hairs on Your Head are Numbers (Double Lucky), Project Assemble, (Pick One or Choose Your Own)

// Week 7 - February 18th - Tools & Platforms

Guest(s): Lance Weiler - Director of Digital Storytelling Lab, Columbia & Nick Fortugno, Playmatics

Lecture/Demo: Technology Design & the Internet of Things

In Class Exercise 7: Input/Output Diagram

Read/Respond: Weiler, Lance. "An Introduction to Immersive Tech-Driven Theatre" & "The Future of Immersive Theatre."

Watch: Lance Weiler - Storytelling Innovation

Experience/Deconstruct (Tech-Driven): The Raven (DSL); Dream (Royal Shakespeare Company), One Day, Maybe (dreamthinkspeak), The Last Defender (Nathan Allen), Temping (Wolf 359) (Pick One or Choose Your Own)

// Week 8 - February 25th - Pre & Post Experiences & Fostering Community Engagement

Guest(s): Wes Taylor &/or Carlos Garcia - Complex Movements

Lecture/Demo: Preparing Audiences for Narrative Transportation

In Class Exercise 8: Designing Pre & Post Experiences

Read/Respond:

Green, Melanie. "Transportation into Narrative Worlds"

Irimias, Anna. "Narrative transportation and travel: The mediating role of escapism and immersion."

Alston, Adam. "Making Mistakes in Immersive Theatre: Spectatorship & Errant Immersion."

Experience/Deconstruct (Hybrid): Privilege of Escape (Risa Puno), War of the Worlds (Jeff Wayne), Beware of the Dandelions (Complex Movements), The Home (Wilderness) (Pick One or Choose Your Own)

// Week 9 - March 4th - Concept Ideation & Development

Guest: Kat Cizek, Director Co-Creation Studio, MIT

Lecture/Demo: Co-Design Session, Rapid Prototyping & Pitching

In Class Exercise 9: Concept Document Development & Paper Prototype

Read/Respond:

Cizek, Kat. Collective Wisdom: Co-Creating with Media within Communities and Across Disciplines and Algorithms.

MID-TERM - IMMERSIVE REVIEWS DUE - MARCH 6th EOD

SPRING BREAK - March 7th-13th

// Week 10 - March 18th - Design Document & Tech Spec Development

Lecture/Demo: Conducting Experience Design & Technology Research

In Class Exercise: Devise Design & World Building Documents and Tech Spec

FINAL DESIGN DOCUMENTS DUE - MARCH 21st EOD

// Week 11 - March 25th - Studio - Design

// Week 12 - April 1st - Studio - Design - Feedback Session with Mentor

// Week 13 - April 8th - Studio - Development

// Week 14 - April 15th - Studio - Development - Feedback Session with Mentor

// Week 15 - April 22nd - Studio - Development

// Week 16 - April 29th - Showcase the Work for the Public - Location TBD

FINAL DOCUMENTATION DUE - APRIL 29th EOD

PROJECTS:

MID-TERM - WRITE A REVIEW of an immersive, participatory experience (2-3 pages)

Select a show

Research it

Interview creators

Write a review

FINAL - CREATE AN ESCAPE ROOM (15-20 minutes long) to Escape the Future of Technology

Additional Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)