

Course description (topics)

<b>Course title:</b> Emergent and experimental design: Biosphere & Technosphere – Speculative Transgressions in Contemporary Design Culture				
<b>Course instructor(s), contact details:</b> Dr. Ákos Schneider, schneider@mome.hu				
<b>Code:</b> M-ID-301-BIOSP-TECHNOSP	<b>Related curriculum (programme/level):</b> Interaction Design MA	<b>Recommended semester within the curriculum:</b> 2023/2024/1 // 3rd	<b>Credit:</b> 3	<b>Number of class hours:</b> 20  <b>Student working hours:</b> 40
<b>Related codes:</b>	<b>Type:</b> seminar	<b>Can it be an elective course?</b> no	<b>In case of elective what are the specific prerequisites</b>	
<b>Course connections (prerequisites, parallels):</b>				
<p>The subject is only considered completed, if the following courses are also completed:</p> <p>Csernatony_Emergent and experimental design: Participative Design and Co-Creation, 2 credits</p> <p>Wärenstål_Emergent and experimental design: Design of AI, 3 credits</p> <p>Molnár_Banga_Emergent and experimental design: Designer self Assesment / Speculative Futures, 3 credits</p> <p>Ferenczi_Emergent and experimental design: Speculative and Critical Design – designing futures and alternative presents, 3 credits</p>				
<b>Learning outcomes (professional and general competences to be developed):</b>				
<p><b>Knowledge:</b> Throughout the course students will gain insight into speculative, critical, experimental registers of contemporary design culture, while exploring ecological, technological and social trends that hold the potential to shape our future and challenge conventional notions of the designer’s role and position.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> Students will develop their argumentation, debating and presentation skills. They will also increase their ability to think in complex systems.</p> <p><b>Attitude:</b> Students will cultivate their critical and analytical thinking abilities, while fostering their collaborative skills and openness to inter- and transdisciplinary work.</p> <p><b>Autonomy and responsibility:</b> Students will carry out independent research and apply methods of design and artistic research. Subsequently, they will present their findings either individually or in pairs.</p>				

In addition, they will have the opportunity to assess each other's work and provide mutual feedback.

### **Topics and themes to be covered in the course:**

Given the current scientific, technological, and ecological shifts, the line between the "artificial" and the "natural" is becoming increasingly blurred. This course seeks to explore speculative and critical design approaches that venture into the realm of the biological and the technological, often resulting in intriguing interactions between humans and non-human entities. These non-human agents can range from microorganisms and animals to machines and software. A central theme that unites the topics covered in this semester is co-creation with these entities and challenging the conventional user-centric perspective.

The course will delve into various subjects, including atypical interfaces, interactions between different species, biodesign, body hacking, wearable technologies, artificial intelligence, robotics, and space design. The analyzed projects will be discussed within a broader philosophical context. By elucidating related intellectual trends and concepts, such as posthumanism and transhumanism, the course aims to present a cultural cross-section that motivates students to contemplate their own design practice and research.

### **Course schedule, learning process:**

1. week: *Intensive course w/ Pontus Wärnestål (no seminar this week; 4/9/2023)*
2. week: Introduction (11/9/2023)
3. week: Speculative design, design fiction, critical design (18/9/2023)
4. week: Design beyond the user scale: hyperobjects and posthuman perspectives (25/9/2023)
5. week: Capitalist realism and circular design futures (2/10/2023)
6. week: Atypical interfaces: biomedica and biodesign (9/10/2023)
7. week: *National holiday (no seminar this week; 23/10/2023)*
8. week: The body as designed object: cyborgs and transhumanism (30/10/2023)
9. week: Generative design: visions of the Singularity (6/11/2023)
10. week: Robotics and anthropomorphic interfaces (13/11/2023)
11. week: Terraforming and space design (20/11/2023)
12. week: Summary and reflections (27/11/2023)

*Topics and discussed projects might be subject to change.*

### **Students' tasks and responsibilities:**

During the semester, each student is required to carry out research once on a given design project and present the results in a presentation. As part of the presentation, students will be asked to formulate two open questions that can serve as discussion starters for the whole group. Students will give direct feedback on each other's presentations along defined criteria.

Students are expected to actively participate in the seminar discussions (in most cases using the think-pair-share, the pro/con arguments or the Jigsaw-method).

By 1 December, students are required to concise a brief essay (1-2 pages), which connects at least three concepts discussed in class and includes four references cited according to academic standards.

**Learning environment:** classroom.

**Requirements to be met, assignments:**

- Attendance (maximum number of absences: 3)
- Active participation in the seminar discussions
- Presentation of the project research and analysis
- Submission of the short essay (1-2 pages, by 1st December)

**Assessment criteria:**

- Active engagement in the seminar work.
- Depth and complexity of the analysis of a given design project. The appropriate choice of research criteria.
- Clarity, comprehensibility and aesthetic quality of the presentation.
- The logical structure, argumentation, critical and analytical quality and rhetorical form of the essay.
- The essay must connect at least 3 concepts and use at least 4 references.

**Method of assessment:**

- Evaluation of the seminar work/activity.
- Evaluation of the presentation.
- Evaluation of the submitted essay.

*Student work will be assessed until 15 December. Individual consultation and feedback will be available during the exam period (27 December to 19 January).*

**How the grade is calculated:**

- Activity during the seminar sessions (30%)
- Presentation (40%)
- Essay (30%)

*To complete the course, none of these elements can be 0%!*

Overall results:

Excellent (91-100%)

Good (81-90%)

Satisfactory (61-80%)

Less than satisfactory (51-60%)

Unsatisfactory (0-50 %)

**Required literature:**

- Bratton, B. H., 2016. On Speculative Design. Dis Magazine. <http://dismagazine.com/discussion/81971/on-speculative-design-benjamin-h-bratton/>
- Dunne, A., Raby, F., 2013. Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming. Cambridge, Mass.–London: MIT Press.

**Recommended literature and other media:**

- Bauwens, T., Hekkert, M., Kirchherr, J., 2020. Circular futures: What Will They Look Like?. Ecological Economics, 175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2020.106703>
- Berardi F., 2017. Futurability: The Age of Impotence and the Horizon of Possibility. London – New York: Verso.
- Bleecker, J., 2009. Design Fiction: A short essay on design, science, fact and fiction. Near Future Laboratory, [https://drbfw5wfjlxon.cloudfront.net/writing/DesignFiction\\_WebEdition.pdf](https://drbfw5wfjlxon.cloudfront.net/writing/DesignFiction_WebEdition.pdf)
- Bostrom, N., 2003. The Transhumanist FAQ. World Transhumanist Association. <https://nickbostrom.com/views/transhumanist.pdf>
- Braidotti, R., Hlavajova, M. (eds.), 2018. Posthuman Glossary. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Coles, A. (ed.), 2016. EP Vol. 2: Design Fiction. Berlin: Sternberg.
- Colomina, B., Wigley, M., 2016. Are We Human?: Notes on an Archeology of Design. Zürich: Müller.
- Dunne, A., Raby F., 2001. Design Noir: The Secret Life of Electronic Objects. Berlin: Birkhäuser.
- Fisher, M., 2009. Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?. London: Zero Books.
- Forlano, L. 2017. Posthumanism and design. She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation, 3 (1), pp. 16–29.
- Haraway, D., 2016 [1985]. A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. University of Minnesota Press. <http://bitly.ws/M4t6>
- Harris, T., Raskin, A., 2023. The A.I. Dilemma - March 9, 2023. Youtube: Center for Humane Technology. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoVJKj8lcNQ&ab\\_channel=CenterforHumaneTechnology](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoVJKj8lcNQ&ab_channel=CenterforHumaneTechnology)
- Joler, V., Pasquinelli, M., 2020. The Noosope Manifested: Artificial Intelligence as Instrument of Knowledge Extractivism. AI and Society. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-020-01097-6>
- Lindley, J., Coulton, P., 2015. Back to the Future: 10 Years of Design Fiction. Proceedings of the 2015 British HCI Conference, 210–211.
- Mitrovic, I., 2015. Introduction to Speculative Design Practice. In Introduction to Speculative Design Practice, eds. Mitrovic, I., Suran, O., Golub, M. Zagreb–Split: HDD & DVK UMAS, 8–23.
- More, M., Vita-More, N. (eds.), 2013. Transhumanist Reader. Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell.
- Moreno, M., De los Rios, C., Rowe, Z., Charnley F., 2016. A Conceptual Framework for Circular Design. Sustainability 8 (9). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su8090937>
- Morton, T., 2013. Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Myers, W., 2018. Biodesign: Nature + Science + Creativity. New York: Museum of Modern Art, Thames & Hudson.
- Nayar, P. K., 2014. Posthumanism. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Norman, D., 2005. Human-Centered Design Considered Harmful. Interactions, July-August, pp. 14–19.
- Oxman, N., 2016. Age of Entanglement. Journal of Design and Science.  
<https://doi.org/10.21428/7e0583ad>
- Pepperell, R., 2003. The Posthuman Condition: Consciousness Beyond the Brain. Bristol: Intellect.
- Read, L. E., 2018 [1958]. I, Pencil: My Family Tree as told to Leonard E. Read. Econlib.  
[https://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/rdPncl.html?chapter\\_num=2#book-reader](https://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/rdPncl.html?chapter_num=2#book-reader)
- Scharmen, F., 2019. Space Settlements. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Schneider Á., 2022. Az emberközpontú tervezés határai: spekulatív design és poszthumán állapot. Budapest: Typotex.
- Slavin, K., 2016. Design as Participation. Journal of Design and Science.  
<https://doi.org/10.21428/a39a747c>
- SpeculativeEDU. <https://speculativeedu.eu/>
- Sterling, B., 2005. Shaping Things. Cambridge, Mass. – London: MIT Press.
- Wakkary, R., 2021. Things We Could Design: For More than Human-centered Worlds. Cambridge, Mass.–London: MIT Press.
- Wizinsky, M., 2022. Design after Capitalism: Transforming Design Today for an Equitable Tomorrow. Cambridge, Mass.–London: MIT Press.

**Other information:** On Mondays between 11.30am-12.50am in room B\_101 only on 11<sup>th</sup> September, then in room B\_106

**Recognition of knowledge acquired elsewhere/previously/validation principle:** No exemption from attending and completing the course.

**Out-of-class consultation times and location:** Mondays (14.00-16.00) and Wednesdays (16.00-18.00), Masters building, room -131 or online. Prior arrangement by email is required ([schneider@mome.hu](mailto:schneider@mome.hu)).