VR ART INSTRUCTION:
Transformative Learning and Enhanced Creativity Through the Use of Virtual Realities

Fabio Montella
Assistant Professor of Library Services
Suffolk County Community College
montelf@sunysuffolk.edu
Virtual Reality and the MLRC Lab:

A SHORT INTRODUCTION
“A virtual reality system is an interactive technology setup (software, hardware, peripheral devices, and other items) that acts as a human-to-computer interface and immerses its user in a computer-generated three-dimensional environment. Virtual reality is the environment or world that the user experiences while using such a system.”

DEFINITION

MLRC’s Virtual Reality Lab

- Began in Spring of 2018.
- Based on extensive research (Internal, SUNY, Literature).
- Evolves with technology.
VR Lab Hardware

2 HTC VIVE VR Systems
"Room scale" tracking technology

8 Spectra VR Goggles
No electronic components

1 Oculus Go
Stand alone
VR Digital Distribution Platforms
Virtual Reality and Curriculum

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES
“I want to ask the world, how will they give us our basic rights? How will they ensure the rights of the Rohingya community?”

FORCED TO FLEE: a 360 documentary on the Rohingya refugee crisis.
Faculty Collaborations:

ART 133 & ART 130
Professor Meredith Starr
Fall 2018 and Spring 2019
Drawing I
2D Design
OBJECTIVE: COLLABORATIVE DRAWING IN A 3D SPACE

Tilt Brush
by Google

Hardware: HTC VIVE
Specifics

Tutorials

Practice!

Finished Product!!
Results
OBJECTIVE: CREATING ARTWORK FOR SOCIAL COMMENTARY

- Application 1: Rachel Rosin: Man Mask
- Application 2: Ali Eslami: Death Tolls Experience

Hardware: Spectra VR Googles and HTC VIVE
Rachel Rosin: Man Mask

Rhizome Art Organization:

“Rachel Rossin’s ‘Man Mask’ is a guided meditation on happiness through a soldier-populated ethereal dream world” (Rhizome.org).
“With DeathTolls Experience, virtual reality artist Ali Eslami is seeking to resensitize the general public to the reality behind the abstract statistics on the hundreds of thousands of deaths in the Middle East” (Steam).
“At a community college it’s our responsibility as educators to introduce and incorporate the idea of the global community. Having access to and the opportunity to work in Virtual Reality where we can expose students to artists who have created socially engaged artworks in this new media can be a transformative learning experience. Students can think about issues they might want to address in their own artwork and reflect on using not only traditional media but new media that would help them convey their message to a larger audience.”

Source: Professor Meredith Starr
Student Quotes:

“Using VR allowed me to become a part of the artist’s experience. Virtual Reality has a much greater impact on a person since they now get to “live” in the film.”

“In the VR you can examine and feel almost all elements of the 5 senses. The sounds and interactivity make it so much more personal.”

“Seeing these socially engaged artworks in Virtual Reality gave me a much more realistic idea of the artist’s message, than other forms of art that could have been presented.”
Information Literacy for a Virtual World

HOW TO APPROACH THIS NEW MEDIUM
Information Literacy Instruction… Where do I Begin?

- View virtual environments as sources of information
- Adhere to the information literacy standards
- Frame your instruction around core concepts
- Essentially, your approach will remain the same
Social Commentary

App:

Death Tolls Experience
Starting point (Death tolls in the Middle East)

- VR app is our research Starter (Inquiry)
- Raises awareness (very effectively)
- Needs to be expanded upon (conversation) (Authority)
- Citations (value of Eslami’s work)
Inquiry: **Death in the Middle East**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Death Tolls</th>
<th>Islamic Nations (religions)</th>
<th>War crimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genocide</td>
<td>Arabs (Ethnicities)</td>
<td>Government Regimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>Afghanistan (Nations)</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass killings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Radicalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finding Alternate Sources
(Information Creation)
Ask Students…

- What is being said (conversation)
- Who’s saying it (authority)
- How are they delivering it (information creation as a process).
- Relate this to Eslami’s work. What similarities or differences do you see?
Similarities

- “Social awareness”
- ”Freedom of expression”
- “Select or limited audience”
Differences

- "Access"
- "Creation"
- "Impact on audience (good or bad)"
“Research is showing that VR can be a powerful tool for impacting people’s perceptions and actions in the real world.”

STEPHANIE MOFFET
Spokesperson
FEMA
Thank you!

Questions? Contact me! Email: montelf@sunysuffolk.edu