

MA Creative Practice for Narrative Environments

Narrative and interpretive planning

<i>Project Title</i>	Mapping Ideas and Space
<i>Project Tutors</i>	Tim Gardom and Alison Grey
<i>Learning outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate advanced skills in research, and strategic project planning and management • Demonstrate the application of critical and reflective skills to generate creative proposals • Demonstrate the ability to use advanced and mature interpersonal skills and social skills in conducting complex negotiations • Demonstrate the ability to evaluate your own personal and professional strengths and weaknesses
<i>Brief set</i>	16 October 2008
<i>Background</i>	<p>The process of researching and developing a clear interpretive plan is essential to any major project for cultural and commercial environments. Tim Gardom Associates (TGA), content providers, will describe how the writer interfaces with the design process, working with clients, curators, designers and specialist suppliers. TGA will discuss how the interpretive plan is used as a tool to evolve ideas and establish narrative structures for different kinds of spaces. TGA will do a lecture on Wednesday afternoon that will cover the following topics:</p> <p><i>Language, meaning and interpretation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shift from traditional Western views of universal and timeless truth expressed in unified narratives <p>The <u>single, accepted truth</u>...</p> <p>“Our primary professional responsibility is to keep clear and untainted those springs of knowledge that ultimately feed the great public reservoirs...”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Prof. Michael Howard</p> <p>Leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-down approach • Expert curators \ historians pronounce • Grateful visitors learn • Passive visitor role • You bring nothing

- You make no choices
- **To the perception of narratives as parallel and contingent on cultural and social factors, taken together to express different views of the truth**

“...scholars replaced the search for a fixed and unified meaning of a text with the exploration in a text of multiple, contested meanings that reproduce the class, gender and other conflicts in society...”

Robert Berkhofer Jr, *Beyond the Great Story*

Leads to:

- History from below, seeing and hearing the experiences of ordinary people
- Many voices not one all-knowing narrator
- Stories not story
- Dialogue, investigation, questions
- Interactivity
- **Post-modern emphasis on the role of the reader /visitor in becoming part-author of their own encounter with any narrative. Both the author and the audience make meanings.**

“...each visitor, according to their own lives and priorities, will accept or reject, engage and disconnect from the ‘histories’ (narratives) on offer...”

Gaynor Kavanagh, *Making Histories in Museums*

Leads to:

- Creativity and participation
- Access to information
- Experimenting
- Feedback
- Multidisciplinary approach
- Open ended narratives
- New media

What is a narrative for an environment?

- Your Concept: What are you? Who are you for? What are you saying?
- Narrative: Communication that engages identified audiences with your concept in a given location.
- Story: Expressions of your narrative using specific events, people, places, facts.

For the interpretive planner or designer this has very specific implications. The concept of narrative as a structure to organise ideas and information and inform experiences – let alone as the driver for environments - has some very particular characteristics.

Establishing a narrative structure

- Who is speaking?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is being addressed? What do they know? What do they want to know? • Whose narrative? How many narratives? • What is the information, What are the sources? • What have you got to show? • What tone of voice? • What narrative form are you using/referencing? • What is the overlying structure of the story? • What are the story sections? What is their priority? • What is the desired visitor takeout? • How do you measure success/failure? <p><i>Space and the Narrative Experience</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free flow • One route • Pulsed flow • Led group • Ride • Art gallery • Central hero item • Inner sanctum • Outward facing space • Long thin space in one end out the other or there and back • Matrix • Petal • Ground level and overview • Room to room set • Trail (Stately home) • Lilly Pad • Multilevel connections
<p><i>Brief</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Captivity</p> </div> <p>Captivity – imprisonment, bondage, servitude – being in a confined space from which it is impossible to escape.</p>

To captivate
To take captive
To capture, to enchant, to enthrall, to enslave
Asylum, prison, hospital, ideology, circumstances, belief, prejudice
Each definition implies its opposite, or combines with its to create a new perspective, challenge assumptions, interrogate reality

Group 1

Captivity: a site-specific event and communications campaign

Location: Centred around the slavery Gallery at the museum of docklands

This Museum is dedicated to the trade that made London a world city and to the memory of the people who lived and worked in the docklands of London. Its site, on the quay where sugar was unloaded, links it to the enslavement of Africans and their transportation into slavery for the sake of profit.

It also stand on the edge of the newest financial district in London, Canary Wharf This project is aimed at the workers in Canary wharf and seeks to create a new and exciting ink between the past and the present. This project will to examine the captivity of the past, its legacy and the hidden captivity of trade and money in the modern world enslaved by consumption and commodification. Whether it is the price of commodities or the web of international debt, the slavery of subsistence farming or the captive consumer- Docklands London becomes the locus of this captivity.

Create an event lasting from 6-7pm on 4 December 2008, and invite the workers of Canary Wharf.

How will you make them care and make them come?

Group 2

A campaign to raise the profile of bus travel in London – using the No 168 bus route

Location: the 168 bus route from Hampstead Heath to the Old Kent Road.

This bus runs North South across the capital: *Hampstead Heath, South End Green, Royal Free Hospital, Belsize Park Station, Haverstock Hill, Chalk Farm Station, Chal Farm Morrisons, Camden Town Station, Mornington Crescent Station, Eversholt Street, Euston Station, Tavistock Square, Russell Square, Holborn Station, Aldwych, Waterloo Bridge, Waterloo Station, St George's Circus, Elephant & Castle, Bricklayers Arms, Old Kent Road*

TFL are running a campaign – **It's my bus** – to encourage Londoners to take a bus eye view of their capital, get out of the car – go somewhere new or just se their city with fresh eyes. The regular users of the 168 bus are your captive audience –their likely to be reading, talking, listening to an Ipod or sunk in thought.

Free the bus user from the captivity of the commute! Use the bus the street furniture and the route as your canvas to change their perception of the traffic jams, work and travelling.

How much do they know about their route? What new and liberating interventions along the bus route could set free the hidden identities and histories of the familiar streets and buildings and bus stops?

Everything must lead up to the experience at the location moment. What happens there? What's the experience? What's the narrative? How does it work in the environment?

Group 3

Captivity: the influence of Freud in the twentieth century

Location: Freud museum

The animated movie *Antz* (DreamWorks/PDI) begins with a psychoanalytic session in which the main character, an ant called Z-4195 (with the voice of Woody Allen), says: "Maybe I think too much. When you are the middle child in a family of five million you never get too much attention. What about my needs? What about me? I feel so insignificant." The psychoanalyst interprets: "You ARE insignificant." And the puzzled ant replies: "I am?" Knowing how insignificant he truly is, Z then goes to the ant colony and successfully struggles for his personal freedom.

Design an exhibition entitled 'Captivity' relevant to 16-18 year olds studying for their A levels that looks at the influence of Freud on ideas of self esteem and personal freedom. This is a popular culture based exhibition seeking to introduce teenagers to Psychoanalytic theory. It is based around Freud's London house.

Focus: local tertiary education colleges and wider students studying Psychology.

Group 4

Captivity: the poverty trap

Location: Building Centre, Tottenham Court Road

Travelling exhibition using the XXX collections from the London Metropolitan archive exploring the link between housing, poverty and criminality in London.

Group 5

Captivity: a London fairy tale

Location: Rupert Street

JRR Tolkien suggests that fairy stories (can) provide moral or emotional consolation, through their happy ending, which he terms a "eucatastrophe."

Tolkien asserts that a truly good and representative fairy story is marked by joy: "Far more powerful and poignant is the effect [of joy] in a serious tale of

	<p>Faerie. In such stories, when the sudden turn comes, we get a piercing glimpse of joy, and heart's desire, that for a moment passes outside the frame, rends indeed the very web of story, and lets a gleam come through."</p> <p>Between Soho and theatre land Rupert Street is a fairy tale location that is little known by the visitor it hangs between two worlds – waiting to be discovered. Locals know it houses vibrant street market and ethnically mixed population – but it is usually just a short cut to somewhere else. Create an event that will captivate and enchant the visitor with the stories of this place and make Rupert Street Market a destination. Unlock the magic of the fairy stories and weave a modern urban enchantment to draw people to Rupert Street Market to find their heart's desire.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Group 6 Captivity: the cage</p> </div> <p>Location: London Zoo</p> <p>The architecture and creating spaces for animals and humans to interact is the theme of this visitor attraction at London Zoo. It explores the theme of safety and conservation and captivity. Drawing on the history of zoos and their architecture it will create a fun event for family audiences that raises key questions about freedom, sharing space and the role of zoos in conservation in the 21st century.</p>
<i>Consider</i>	Documentation, presentation techniques, achieving consensus, concept development
<i>Research</i>	<p>Address the questions in “<i>Establishing narrative structure</i>” above to provide visuals, description and rationale to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The client: analysis of their communications needs, strengths, weakness • The audience: Assess nature of audience. Their entry knowledge and perceptions • Purpose: key messages and desired outcomes of the display. • Narrative structure: What is the overlying structure of the story? What are the story sections? What is their priority?
<i>Research presentation</i>	<p>21 November</p> <p>This should consist of at least 4 A2 sheets or the equivalent. A rich variety of media should be used e.g. drawings and sketches, 3D sketch models, samples of materials, sound samples, photos, video... 10 minutes per group</p>
<i>Design development</i>	<p>Develop a scheme to address how the experience is expressed through layout, visitor flow, spatial drama, highs/lows, choice of media and exhibits.</p> <p>Measurements: What is the visitor takeout? How will you measure success?</p>
<i>Final crit</i>	<p>5 December</p> <p>Documentation, presentation techniques, achieving consensus, concept development</p>

<i>References</i>	<i>Critical Mass - how one thing leads to another</i> , Phillip Ball <i>The Meme Machine</i> , Susan Blackmore <i>Thought Contagion - how belief spreads</i> , Aaron Lynd <i>Purity and Danger</i> , Mary Douglas <i>The National Curriculum</i> , HMSO <i>Story</i> , Robert McKee <i>The Selfish Gene</i> , Richard Dawkins <i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i> , Victor Hugo <i>Frankenstein</i> , Mary Shelley <i>La Peste</i> , Albert Camus <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> , Margaret Atwood <i>The Elementary Forms of Religious Life</i> , Emil Durkheim
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