

PhD course June 10-16, 2015, Aarhus University:

Visual culture, visual methods

Exploring the aesthetics of possibilities



Graze Jones is coming to *Northside* 2015.

Confirmed lecturers include:

- **Sarah Pink**, Professor in Design Research Institute and the School of Media and Communications at RMIT, Melbourne, Australia
- **Annette Markham**, Affiliate Professor of Digital Ethics & Communication, Loyola University, Chicago, and Associate Professor in Information Studies, Aarhus University
- **Anne Marit Waade**, Associate Professor, Media studies, Dept. of Aesthetics & Communication, Aarhus University, Denmark

Date(s) and time: June 2015

June 10, 11, 12, at Aarhus University (09:30-16:45)

June 13, 14 Fieldwork at the Northside Festival (variable)

June 15, 16 Analysis and production (09:30-16:45)

Course description

This is the second time we organise the popular and interdisciplinary Ph.D. course *Visual Culture, Visual Methods* at Aarhus University. The first time was back in 2012. As last time, we invite Danish and International Ph.D. students from anthropology, media studies, visual studies, art history, aesthetics, digital design, information studies, participatory design, archaeology, museology, or related disciplines who study visual practices in different contexts, e.g. media communication and online practices, everyday culture, art and museology, marketing, domestication of technologies, environmental design and teaching & learning. Leading scholars within visual ethnography, interpretive methods, digital culture, visual studies, aesthetics and curative culture will take part in the course and give talks and lead exercises to improve the participants empirically and analytically approaches and ideas.

Visual culture encompasses more than the study of images or the use of visual methods. It takes as its premise the idea that the way people experience their reality goes

well beyond the material or the textual. The perspective of visual culture turns our attention toward the centrality of visual experience in everyday life. This course considers the conceptual premises for visual sensemaking and focuses on methods of analysis and interpretation that challenge text-centric approaches. Particularly in contemporary media-tized contexts, seemingly endless streams of images, sounds, and fragments of information characterize and constitute social life. How do we make sense of visual expressions or visual aspects of culture? How do we use visual methods or more broadly, how do we challenge methods that rely on (or were designed for) the analysis of texts? What does a 'visual culture' approach look like in practice? The goal of this course is to explore these questions theoretically, discuss case studies, and also practice methods through experimental exercises and assignments.

The course will introduce participants to established and traditional visual methods and visual material (e.g. Gillian Rose 2007), but also invite the participants to challenge some of these ideas and methods by working in remix laboratories (Markham, 2013), designing ethnographic interventions (Sarah Pink, 2012, 2013) and developing the link between images and future visions - what we understand by "exploring the aesthetics of possibilities". Future visions include for example imaginations, dreamscapes, third places, the temporal elements of nostalgia and creating future memories.

Music festival *Northside* 2015

To enact and explore ideas about visual culture, visual methods, and aesthetic futures, we will build the course around the *Northside* music festival in Aarhus. The course begins two days prior to the festival, when we'll meet in a classroom environment. Then, during the festival we will use the festival as a laboratory for different types of empirical studies. We will focus on the exploration of how visual impressions and expressions, including digital visual media (such as Instagram, mobile camera, website) interweaves with (maybe reinforces, maybe contradicts?) the participant's experience of the music festival. The field study at North Side will be framed as an applied research assignment made for *re-thinkIMFACTS2017*¹ in collaboration with *Northside* festival² to develop methods for future event research and evaluation. During the post-festival analytical workshops, small groups will have the opportunity to create a series of digital, physical, or multimodal exhibitions as in-progress research products.

Aims

- Greater understanding of the links/disruptions/challenges between concepts of visual culture/methods and practices of inquiry
- Exposure to new ways of looking at visual culture
- Guided experience in applying methods practically within a real-time empirical environment,
- Experience working with practiced researchers, getting feedback from experts and colleagues.

¹ <http://projects.au.dk/2017/>

² <http://www.northside.dk/en/>

Content

Leading scholars within visual ethnography, interpretive methods, digital culture, visual studies, aesthetics and curative culture will take part in the course and give talks and lead exercises to improve the participants' empirical and analytical approaches and ideas.

- Visual and sensory ethnographic practices
- Generative, playful research experiments to explore digitally saturated social contexts
- Visual media, visual aesthetic and visual production
- Experience economies and festival cultures

Target group/ Participants

- PhD candidates: We invite International and Danish Ph.D. students from anthropology, media studies, visual studies, art history, digital design, information studies, participatory design, archaeology, museology, or related disciplines who study visual practices in different contexts, e.g. media communication and online practices, everyday culture, art and museology, marketing, domestication of technologies, environmental design, teaching & learning.
- Also suitable for post docs and faculty researchers.

Form

- The course will include presentations by the instructors on core concepts and debates underlying a visual culture approach, different ways of conducting research within this framework, and exemplar projects.
- Prior to the in-person meetings, participants will engage in self-guided learning through readings and assignments.
- Participants will participate in hands-on exercises and present specific methodological issues related to their research projects for feedback.
- A significant part of the course includes the annual Aarhus music festival, Northside. This event will be a field site for experimental engagement with visual culture and visual methods.
- More information on this will be provided in upcoming weeks on the website associated with this (link tba).

- **Language:** English
- **ECTS credits:** 5
- **Maximum number of participants:** 25
- **Venue:**
Aarhus University, It campus,
Bld. 5335 Nygaard, room 091
Helsingforsgade 14, 8200 Aarhus N

Teachers

- **Sarah Pink**, Professor in Design Research Institute and the School of Media and Communications at RMIT, Melbourne, Australia, Sarah.pink@rmit.edu.au
- **Annette Markham**, Affiliate Professor of Digital Ethics & Communication, Loyola University, Chicago, and Associate Professor in Information Studies, Aarhus University, amarkham@dac.au.dk

- **Anne Marit Waade**, Associate Professor in media aesthetics, visual culture, mediated tourism and experience economy, at the department of Aesthetics & Communication, Aarhus University, Denmark, amwaade@dac.au.dk

Side 4/4

Registration

April 1, 2015:

- See the course description online: <https://phdcourses.dk/Course/38917#>
- To apply, participants should submit a 2-page project description, a specific description and list of methodological questions and concerns (2 pages maximum), and a statement of personal interest in the course. This will enable us to best evaluate the applications and will also provide background information for the lecturers and other participants.
- Send your application as a single PDF file to Marianne Hoffmeister, mho@au.dk
- Seats in the summer school will be granted after the deadline.

May 15, 2015:

- Please confirm - no later than May 15 - your participation by registering for the course via <https://auws.au.dk/visualculturevisualmethods>

April 15:

Course fee

All participants should plan to spend 1395 DKK for a 3-day *Northside* Festival ticket pass: <http://www.northside.dk/en/>

Graduate programme and Course directors

Course Directors:

Anne Marit Waade, Associate Professor, Media Studies, Aarhus University,, e-mail: amwaade@dac.au.dk

Annette N. Markham, Information Studies, Aarhus University, DK, e-mail: amarkham@dac.au.dk

Programme Director: Anders Albrechtslund, DAC