

Phil Taylor - Research interests & Biography

Research interest: Sound, moving image, photography & auditory culture

Taylor's research is focused on both ongoing practice-led activity and recently, Auditory Culture.

His practice-led research explores the synthesis of different disciplines and media where the artistic concept and form of expression are centered upon sound and moving image within the themes of identity, location, culture and history.

At the culmination of his MA in 1999 he produced an interactive work that explored the phenomenon of the Media sensationalist treatment of the predicted Millennium technological meltdown, for which he was awarded a distinction

An interactive work, 'The Last Best Place' (2001), explored these themes through documenting and responding to the cultural and political life of the North American state of Montana. Montana's self image is embodied in the phrase: 'The Last Best Place', and many 'traditional' (non-Native American) inhabitants of the state have held on to, or adopted, an archaic, nostalgic vision of pioneer frontier life. A healthy disrespect for federal law and interference (taken to extreme by the 'Freemen' of Justice Township in 1996) is coupled with a stubborn adherence to a traditional cowboy/cowgirl lifestyle, albeit with a brand new Ford pick-up and satellite CMTV. Many of these beliefs in a 'traditional' lifestyle have dangerous undercurrents in the extensive white supremacist organisations that exist throughout America. The work presented a personal interpretation of these themes that revealed stark contrasts from nostalgic melancholy for an idealized lifestyle and the pursuit of unadulterated commercialism embodied in corporate America.

Auditory Culture concerns the phenomenon that our understanding and interpretation of our environment is dominated by visual stimuli where sonic elements are often subjugated by the prevailing visual experience. The way in which we relate to and 'read' our everyday world is influenced by this emphasis on sight over sound. Often we disregard or take for granted the nature of the sonic landscape we inhabit. As technology becomes ever more prevalent in our world our social and public environment has become a place cluttered with noise generated by the increasing application of technology (mobile phones, public safety announcements etc.), irreversibly altering our auditory experience. He has worked in collaboration with the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, Leiden University, The Netherlands, on research into Auditory Culture.

Biography

Phil Taylor is a Principle Lecturer in screen-based digital media in the Faculty of Arts & Communication. He teaches on the MDes Graphic Design & Illustration and MA Sequential Illustration courses, and leads the Digital Media Design Consortium consisting of a Foundation Degree and a BA (Hons) Top-up delivered at partner colleges in Sussex.

He completed a Fine Art Honours degree (Printmaking) in 1987 and a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education from the London Institute in 1988. He was awarded an MA in Electronic Media from Oxford Brookes University in 1999.

He has extensive experience of teaching within education across a range of levels. He taught art & design in secondary schools and graphic design, illustration, animation & photography in Further Education before being appointed as senior lecturer at the University of Brighton in 2002.

In 1995 – 96 Taylor undertook a Fulbright Teacher Exchange with Montana State University, USA, teaching graphic design and digital media.

In addition to teaching practice, Taylor has also developed and managed art and design courses in both Further and Higher Education. He was course leader for Foundation Diploma (Graphics & Illustration) at City College Brighton & Hove (1993 – 2002), and led course development teams for Digital Media Design FdA & BA (Hons) Top-up courses at the University of Brighton (2006-07).

He has regularly worked with other institutions, both as a lecturer and a consultant. He was a visiting lecturer on the BA (Hons) Graphic Design at Kingston University (2002-04) & BA (Hons) Media Production at Bournemouth University (2000-02).

He has held consultancy and advisor positions on curriculum and course development including FdA Digital Design at Bath Spa University (2007), Graphic Communication at Hasting College of Arts & Technology (2007) and MDes Visual Communication at Derby University (2009).

Since graduating from his first degree, Taylor has combined his commitment to teaching with continued practice as a fine artist, exhibiting in the UK and internationally (see research interests). He has also worked commercially, as an interactive web designer for various companies from 2001-08, including Norwich Union, Voyages Jules Verne, Epic, Victoria Real, and Channel 4.

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