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**SCHOOL OF ARTS,
MEDIA, PERFORMANCE
& DESIGN**

Cinema and Media Arts

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Verging: Technologies/Practices/Aesthetics in Contemporary Documentary

The PhD program in Cinema and Media Studies at York University, Toronto, in conjunction with the Department of Cinema and Media Arts' Future Documentary Lab, welcomes papers and panels discussing the current landscape and changing language of documentary practices across technologies, aesthetics, and audiences. We invite scholars, practitioners, curators and media workers to present. The Symposium intends to interrogate the evolution of documentary in our wired and digital world. We will gather work from traditional documentary, across interactive storytelling, and through augmented and virtual realities. We will ask how and if commercial, artistic, activist, and educational practitioners can and are working together.

OUR ENDEAVOR:
Through workshops and panels, our symposium will examine current, completed, or in-progress projects to understand how to incorporate emerging technologies in both documentary making and consumption. How do we learn, practice, and teach today's documentary language?

CONFERENCE STRUCTURE:
This symposium will take place over the course of two-days in downtown Toronto and is free to all participants and attendees. The first day will involve two speakers renowned for their work in the documentary field.

We are privileged to announce our keynote speaker is **Jonathan Harris,** artist and computer scientist, known for his work with data poetics and storytelling**,** will present his latest work Network Effect and will address the attendees in a Q&A session. Harris is an award winning interactive artist and computer scientist, known for his work with data poetics and storytelling. The co-creator of We Feel Fine, the director of The Whale Hunt, I Love Your Work, among many others, Harris's works have redefined documentary storytelling in the digital age. The winner of three Webby awards, his work has also been recognized by AIGA and Ars Electronica. Finally, Jonathan's projects have been widely covered by *The New York Times*, CNN, BBC, NPR. *TIME Magazine* named his online storytelling library, Cowbird, one of the fifty best websites of 2012.

The second day will comprise of student scholars and artists, who will present twenty-minute papers in a panel of 3-4 presenters chaired by an invited moderator. In addition, throughout the day, invited guests and artists will hold workshops and demonstrations.

(Plenary) **Keynote Speaker**:
- Jonathan Harris (number27)

Possible presentation/panels include:

- Individual Presentations
- Panel Presentations
- Mini-Workshops and Demonstrations

The conference organizers welcome, and highly encourage, alternative presentation formats. Our symposium would like to offer and facilitate a venue for artists and image-makers to demonstrate their work to the public and scholarly community. If necessary, we will accommodate external presenters via videoconferencing. Audiovisual support will include a projector, screen, and audio. Participants are required to provide their own laptops and any additional equipment necessary for their presentation.

POSSIBLE THEMES INCLUDE [not limited to]:
- Projection spaces and/or spaces onscreen; questions of installation
- Questions of distribution of emerging documentary technologies
- Technological influences and changes to the documentary form
- Cost, accessibility and logistics
- Why (or why not) to choose virtual reality
- Histories and futures of virtual reality
- Cross-disciplinary use of virtual reality (i.e., sciences, medicine, artillery technologies) in artistic and cross-artistic practice (i.e., fine arts, dance, theatre)
- A pedagogy of virtual reality
- Evolution of the interactive media and virtual reality
- Classical narrative storytelling vs. non-representational forms
- Use of photography within interactive documentaries
- Temporality and spatiality
- Interactivity and education
- Longevity and lifespans
- Programs and coding
- Questions of distribution: How do you exhibit for a collective audience? Influence/responsibility of private and/or public funding
- Historical events' effects on the cultural & aesthetic standards of documentary practice
- The praxis and ethics of documenting refugees across borders
- Addressing the demarcation between documentary filmmaking practices and pedagogy
- Questions of involvement: the filmmaker as a subject within their film
- Exploring the self and personal narratives in auto-ethnographic films
- Hierarchies of screens (Film, TV, Computer, Phone)

SUBMITTING AN INDIVIDUAL PAPER PROPOSAL:

Please send the following:
- An abstract (.pdf format) of no more than 300 words (introducing your research objectives, theoretical framework, and methodology)
- A brief bio of 100 words. Be sure to state your name and affiliation
- Please include a working title and partial bibliography of 2-3 sources

Submissions must be sent by **Friday, February 19th by 5PM** to verging2016@gmail.com, **with the required subject line "Proposal [last name] [first name]"**.

SUBMITTING A PANEL PROPOSAL:

Only complete panel suggestions will be accepted, as panelists must be formed prior to acceptance.

Please have the panel-leader submit the following (.pdf format) to verging2016@gmail.com **with the required subject line "Panel Proposal [last name] [first name]"** by **Friday, February 19th by 5PM:**

- The panel title, including each participant's name and affiliation (3-4 panelists max.)
- An abstract (300 - 400 words) describing the research object
- If applicable, individual papers are subject to the same requirements as stated in the single proposal section
- If sending separately, please state the panel you wish to join

SUBMITTING A WORKSHOP/DEMONSTRATION PROPOSAL:

- The workshop/demonstration title, including your name and affiliation
- A 300-word description of the activity you would like to present
- Audio-visual equipment needs (requests for AV equipment must be submitted with a proposal)

Submissions (.pdf format) must be sent by **Friday, February 19th by 5PM** to verging2016@gmail.com, **with the required subject line "Workshop/Demo Proposal [last name] [first name]"**.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES/INFORMATION:

Notification of accepted abstracts/panels will be sent by **Friday, February 26th.**

Travel and accommodation will be covered by participants.

All accepted proposal abstracts agree to the publication of their abstract on our website. We encourage the submission of completed papers and presentation for website publication, following the Symposium.

About York University's Cinema and Media Arts Program:
York University's Graduate Program in Cinema and Media Arts is recognized internationally as Canada's most innovative and dynamic film program, providing students with a unique integration of film studies, hands-on skills, critical theory, and state-of-the-art production resources and pedagogy. York's Graduate Program in Film was the first of its kind in Canada. The faculty includes eleven full time core Cinema & Media Studies members, including two Canada Research Chairs. York Film faculty run respected journals *CineAction* and *Public: Art/Culture/Ideas*. In addition, 12 full-time faculty teaching Production & Screenwriting make our MFA program the most innovative in Canada. Finally, Toronto is the film capital of English Canada, home to more than 100 film festivals, cinematheques, film and video archives, distributors, resource centers and film industry personnel and studios.