

Jeff Watson

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Areas of Interest

Transmedia interaction design, pervasive games, applied game design, mobile and environmental media, participatory media, urban interventionist art practice

Education

PhD in Media Arts and Practice, University of Southern California, May 2012 (expected).

Committee: Tara McPherson (chair), Steve Anderson, Scott Fisher, Tracy Fullerton, Henry Jenkins.

Dissertation: "Reality Ends Here: Remaking Space Through Play."

Examination Fields: "New Media Spaces," "History and Theories of Participatory Culture and Art Practice," "Interaction Design for Social Media and Pervasive Computing."

Alliance Atlantis Film Residency, Canadian Film Centre, December 2005.

M.F.A. in Film and Video, York University, May 2002. Advisor: Amnon Buchbinder.

B.A. in English (Communications & Cultural Studies), McGill University, May 1997.

Experience

Creative Director/Design and Research Lead, *Reality Ends Here*, USC School of Cinematic Arts (USC Game Innovation Lab/Institute for Multimedia Literacy). March 2011 - present.

Researcher, Intel People and Practices Lab/IXR. Mobile media and civic engagement commission. February - April 2011.

Interaction Designer. BMW/Mini. Ambient Storytelling for Vehicle-Driver Interaction. August 2010 - August 2011.

Research Assistant/Designer, USC Mobile and Environmental Media Lab. October 2008 - present.

Research Assistant, USC Interactive Media Division. August - December 2010.

Chair, IndieCade Big Games Exhibition. With Colleen Macklin. March - October 2010.

Founder and Organizer, Pervasive and Environmental Gaming Los Angeles (PEG-LA). With Sarah Brin and Celia Pearce (Georgia Tech). June 2010 - present.

Screenwriter and Filmmaker. Freelance. Clients, funders, and partners include Telefilm Canada, January Films, Canada Council for the Arts, BRAVO, and MuchMusic. January 1999 to July 2008.

Membership Coordinator, Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto. January 2002 - July 2003.

Awards, Grants, and Fellowships

Fellow, University of Southern California Annenberg Graduate Fellowship. 2008-2012.

Recipient, USC University Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, USC Center for Excellence in Teaching. Fall 2011.

Educational Technology Grant, Center for Scholarly Technology. Fall 2011.

Intel People and Practices/IXR Research Grant. Spring 2011.

Canadian Feature Film Fund Script Development Award Recipient, "Make Believe." Telefilm Canada/January Films. 2005.

Production Grant, "Bran Van 3000: Shopping." Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent (VideoFACT). 2002.

Media Arts Grant, "Black Mash." Canada Council for the Arts. 2002.

Scholarship, York University Graduate Department of Film and Video. 2000.

Best short, "Panic." Montecantini International Short Film Festival. 1999.

Publications

“Games for Direct Action: Local Scale and Social Impact,” by Benjamin Stokes and Jeff Watson. *Ideas for Impact Games: I4IG* (White House Office of Science and Technology Policy). Forthcoming.

“Civic Tripod: Activism, art, and learning at the intersection of mobile media, civic engagement, and game mechanics,” by Susana Ruiz, Benjamin Stokes, and Jeff Watson. Sponsored by a grant from Intel People and Practices Research. *International Journal of Learning and Media* (MIT Press). Forthcoming.

“Ambient Storytelling for Vehicle-Driver Interaction,” by Jeff Watson, Scott Fisher, Emily Duff, Joshua McVeigh-Schultz, and Jen Stein. Commissioned white paper (BMW/Mini). January, 2011.

“Fandom Squared: Web 2.0 and Fannish Production.” *Transformative Works and Cultures* no. 5. [doi:10.3983/twc.2010.0218](https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2010.0218). 2010.

Panels and Invited Talks

“Reality Ends Here.” On the panel, “This is Not an Orientation: Gameful Layers for the Freshman Experience.” Game Developers Conference, San Francisco, California. March 6, 2012.

“Reality Ends Here.” On the plenary panel, “Featured Session RML: This is Not an Orientation: Gameful Layers for the Freshman Experience.” Digital Media and Learning Conference, San Francisco, California. March 2, 2012.

“Pervasive Games for Experiential Media Arts Education.” Invited Talk. Parsons The New School for Design, New York, New York. February 27, 2012.

“Transforming Community Through Pervasive Play.” Invited Talk. Berkeley Center for New Media, Berkeley, California. February 2, 2012.

“Cross-platform Interaction Design Case Study: Placemaking, Data Visualization, and Alternate Reality Games.” On the panel, “Playing With Reality: Alternate Reality Games, Urban and Serious Play.” IEEE International Games Innovation Conference, Orange, California. November 2, 2011

“Collaborative Production Game Design for Media Arts Education.” On the panel, “Reports From the Cutting Edge of Storytelling.” Digital Hollywood Content Summit, Marina del Rey, California. October 19, 2011.

“Ambient and Environmental Interaction Design Across and Beyond Screens.” On the panel, “No Screens.” IndieCade International Festival of Independent Games, Culver City, California. October 8, 2011.

“Sensor- and Profile-driven Experience Design in Urban Space” on the panel, “TransGenre: City Gaming and Public Art.” ARG Fest, Atlanta, Georgia. July 16, 2010.

“Out of the Box and Onto the Block” and “ARG Finalists Panel.” Moderator, with Colleen Macklin. IndieCade International Festival of Independent Games, Culver City, California. October 2010.

“Digital Storytelling: Purpose, Practice, and Potential.” On the panel, “Digital Storytelling.” HASTAC Scholars Forum. December 7-12, 2009.

“Transmedia Storytelling and Alternate Reality Games.” Invited talk. Annenberg Fellows Symposium, University of Southern California. October, 2009.

“Transmedia Storytelling and Alternate Reality Games: A Primer.” Invited talk. University of Lethbridge Guest Speaker Series. November, 2009.

“CityStory: An Experiment in Crowdsourced Cinema.” On the panel, “The future of the story.” Cinegrid Workshop. Calit2, University of California-San Diego, La Jolla, CA. December, 2008.

Selected Interviews, Reviews, and Blogging

“Reality Ends Here: A (trans-)media-making Alternate Reality Game for Cinema Students,” 21st Century Scholar, September 23, 2011. <http://21stcenturyscholar.org/2011/09/23/4856/>

“Serendipity, ubicomp, and ‘over-coded smart cities’: an interview with Mark Shepard, creator of Serendipitor,” Transmedia Interaction Design and Other Interventions, June 21, 2011. <http://blog.remotedevice.net/2011/06/21/serendipity-ubicomp-and-over-coded-smart-cities-an-interview-with-mark-shepard-creator-of-serendipitor/>

“Serendipity with an edge: A chat with Benrik about Situationist App,” Transmedia Interaction Design and Other Interventions, June 8, 2011. <http://blog.remotedevice.net/2011/06/08/serendipity-with-an-edge-a-chat-with-benrik-about-situationist-app/>

“Jeff Hull on The Games of Nonchalance: a guerrilla street war against banality and routine,” Jawbone TV, December 20, 2010. <http://www.jawbone.tv/articles/item/505-games-of-nonchalance-art-transmedia-and-args-in-san-francisco.html>

“The Games of Nonchalance.” In Media Res, October 15, 2010. <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/imr/2010/10/15/games-nonchalance>

“Transforming space with play: an interview with David Fono of Atmosphere Industries.” Transmedia Interaction Design and Other Interventions, October 6, 2010. <http://blog.remotedevice.net/2010/10/06/transforming-space-with-play-an-interview-with-david-fono-of-atmosphere-industries/>

“ARG 2.0.” Confessions of an Aca/Fan (henryjenkins.org), July 7, 2010. http://henryjenkins.org/2010/07/arg_20_1.html

“Trans-Canada transmedia: Christopher Bolton’s multi-platform search for identity, sound, and story.” Workbook Project/Culture Hacker, April 12, 2010. <http://workbookproject.com/culturehacker/2010/04/12/trans-canada-transmedia-christopher-bolton%E2%80%99s-multi-platform-search-for-identity-sound-and-story/>

Exhibitions and Curatorial Work

New Media/Installation

“Reality@DIY Days.” Alternate Reality Game. Invited installation. DIY Days LA. Los Angeles, California, October 28, 2011.

“Reality@IndieCade.” Alternate Reality Game. Invited installation. IndieCade International Festival of Independent Games. Culver City, California, October 8, 2011.

“Your Honest Feelings.” Ambient cell phone game and video installation. iMAPpening. Los Angeles, California, May 6 - 8, 2011.

Curator, pervasive and environmental gaming. Multiple events. PEG-LA, Los Angeles, California, June 2010 - present.

Co-chair and curator, Big Games Program. IndieCade International Festival of Independent Games. Culver City, California, March - October, 2010.

“No File: Brown.” Location-based iPhone experience employing embedded media artifacts triggered through geolocation. Electronic Literature Organization: Archive and Innovate, Providence, Rhode Island, May 3 - 6, 2010.

“Million Story Building: Lisa’s Story.” Embedded media/alternate reality game demo. Mobile and Environmental Media Lab. Los Angeles, California, April 8, 2010.

“Annenberg Research and Creative Project Symposium. Los Angeles, California, April 27, 2009.

“Presence.” Storefront installation. New Communities/Communist Wine. Toronto, Ontario, December 2007 - June 2008.

Film and Television

Co-curator and coordinator, film and video. LIFT Ward’s Island Summer Screening. Toronto, Ontario, July 2003.

“Panic.” Cinematheque Ontario. Toronto, Ontario, September, 2002; Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, 2000; Montecantini International Short Film Festival, 1999; Rotterdam International Film Festival 1999.

Broadcasters

“Panic.” BBC Channel Four, Film Four. 1999-2001.

“Shopping.” Bran Van 3000 music video. Muchmusic, MusiquePlus, MTV. 2004.

Teaching

USC School of Cinematic Arts

CNTV-499: Reality Starts Here/Reality Ends Here. Experimental Course Design and Instruction. Open-ended alternate reality game and collaborative production framework for students at the USC School of Cinematic Arts. Fall, 2011.

CTIN-532: Introduction to Transmedia World-Building. Guest Lecturer. Graduate seminar on multi-platform/multi-context world design. Fall, 2010.

USC Institute for Multimedia Literacy

COMM-450. Teaching Assistant. Fundamentals of visual communication; introduction to visual argumentation, critical theory, and the history of image-making; exploration of new media forms and transmedia storytelling.

ARLT-100. Teaching Assistant. Introduction to video production techniques; documentary filmmaking; nonlinear video editing with Adobe Premiere

FREN-351. Teaching Assistant. Fundamentals of visual communication; introduction to visual argumentation; image manipulation; sourcing materials online; nonlinear video editing with Adobe Premiere and iMovie

You, Online. Instructor. Introduction to WordPress; social media tools for scholars; creating an online presence.

Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto

Dramatic Choices. Fundamentals of narrative theory; constructing the short screenplay; planning the feature film; story editing; writing powerful scenes; building characters. May 2003 - March 2008.

New Media Consulting

Groundcrew/Revel

July 2011 - present

Advisory board member and locative media/participation design consultant.

MINI

January – July 2011

Concept and design for vehicle lifelog system and alternate reality game for MINI Connected-enabled vehicles.

Getty Research Institute

January - April 2011

Design brief for “Collective,” a mobile phone application to augment and extend Pacific Standard Time, a retrospective of art in Southern California involving over 40 concurrent exhibitions.

BMW

July – November 2010

Designed sensor-driven location- and context-sensitive user interfaces and games for next-generation BMW vehicles.

Take Action Games

May 2008 – July 2010

Provided strategic advice for cross-platform initiatives related to “serious games”

Los Angeles World Airports

August 2008

Consulted on the role of mobile and ubiquitous technology in the development of interactive public art installations for the Tom Bradley International Terminal

BiblioCommons

May – September 2007

Assisted in development of user interface and media strategy for “library 2.0” social networking startup

Screenwriting and Story Editing

Blue Blouse Projects

May – July 2007

Co-writer with Liane Balaban and Brett Stabler of feature screenplay, Crystal Beach

Industry Pictures

March 2006 – January 2007

Co-writer with Amnon Buchbinder of feature screenplay, The Pit

Triptych Media

June 2006 – July 2006

Development consultant for Chris Abraham’s adaptation of A Scientific Romance

January Films

April 2005 – July 2007 (multiple contracts)

Story editor/script doctor for Darren O’Donnell’s adaptation of his play, A Suicide Site Guide to the City; Translator and screenwriter for adaptation of Marco Nicoletti’s feature screenplay, Revenant; Screenwriter for original feature screenplay, Make Believe (recipient of Telefilm Canada project development financing, Winter, 2006)

Canadian Film Centre

February 2005 – July 2006

Provided coverage and script analysis for the Canadian Film Centre’s AAFRP application process

Universal Studios Short Film Project

January 2005

Story edited Saved, a short film directed by Canadian Film Centre alum Sarah Bachinski

Bran Van 3000/MuchMusic

January 2003

Concept and direction for music video “Shopping” featuring Liane Balaban, Momus, and Eek-A-Mouse.

ON1BTO/Lab Productions

January 2002

Concept, screenwriting and direction for Black Mash, the film component of The Black Sea Tapes, an ongoing multiplatform transmedia storytelling project funded by a media arts grant from the Canada Council for the Arts

Sunrise Productions (UK)

March 2000 – February 2001

Researched and developed feature film screenplay for Canyonlands. Traveled to Utah, Nevada and California on extensive research road trip. Conducted interviews and shot video. Paid under UK Writers Guild contract, with expenses. Film currently in preproduction under working title Foundation

New Screen Elite (UK)

September 1998 – January 1999

Wrote synopsis, treatment, and shooting script for award-winning short film Panic

Web Design

Corporate/Institutional

USC Mobile and Environmental Media Lab, USC Institute for Transformative Scholarship, USC Interactive Media Division, USC Interdivisional Media Arts and Practice, Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto

Individual

Piper Anderson, Steve Anderson, Kiki Benzoni, Jeff Watson