

"Media Arts for Social Improvement and Cultural Inclusion".

Bip 2026 05 18 – 22.

Media Arts for Social Improvement and Cultural Inclusion

"Media Arts for Social Improvement and Cultural Inclusion" is a practice-based and research-oriented course that explores how media art—especially photography—can be used as a tool for observing, understanding, and improving social environments. The course invites students to investigate how visual media shapes public perception, supports community engagement, and helps reveal hidden or underrepresented cultural narratives.

Throughout the course, students will critically examine the role of media arts in contemporary society, focusing on how creative practices can promote social and cultural awareness, empathy, and inclusion. Photography is treated not only as an artistic practice but also as a method of visual inquiry: documenting everyday life, analyzing public spaces, and interpreting diverse social and cultural realities.

Students will learn to combine theoretical perspectives with hands-on creative work, developing both conceptual understanding and technical skills. The course encourages students to reflect on ethical issues, the politics of representation, and the responsibilities of the artist when working in public spaces.

Key Themes of the Course

- Photography as a tool for social observation and visual storytelling
- Media arts as instruments for community engagement and social change
- Representation, identity, and the visibility of marginalized groups
- Ethical considerations in photographing people and public spaces
- Cultural diversity, inclusion, and the role of the artist in society
- Visual research methods in media arts
- Critical analysis of contemporary photographers and media artists

Course Activities / Studying Methods

- Lectures on visual culture, media theory, and documentary practices
- Workshops on composition, ethics, and storytelling in photography
- Fieldwork: photography sessions in different urban environments
- Individual work on photo essay or a visual research project
- Group discussions and peer review sessions

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of media arts as a platform for cultural inclusion and social improvement.
- Analyze and contextualize media artworks within social, cultural, and ethical frameworks.
- Apply visual research methods through photography projects.
- Produce photographs that reflect social issues, cultural diversity, and public life.
- Present a final photographic project that communicates a meaningful social narrative and expands cultural awareness.

On-line lectures:

- Assoc. prof. dr. Tomas Pabedinskas. Building Community through Creative Documentary Photography in The Context of Kaunas Subcultures.
- Prof. dr. Rimantas Plungė. Human Geography: Experiencing environment through movement with a camera.
- Prof. dr. Titas Petrikis. Natural and Urban Sounds as A Cultural Soundscape.

Lectures during BIP in Kaunas:

- Assoc. prof. Gintaras Česonis (guest lecturer from Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius Academy of Arts). Kaunas as A Modernist City through The Eyes of A Photographer.
- Assoc. prof. dr. Tomas Pabedinskas. Composition, Storytelling and Ethics in Photography.
- Prof. dr. Rimantas Plungė. Media Arts: Between creativity, documentary and activism.

Cultural programme:

- Guided tour to M.K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art
- Visit to Christ's Resurrection Basilica.
- Visit to Pažaislis Monastery and the Church.
- Guided tour to Art Deco Museum.

Recommendation for individual sightseeing outside Kaunas:

- The ethnographic Open Air Museum of Lithuania (Rumšiškės), <https://lemu.lt/en/home/>
- Trakai Island Castle (Trakai), <https://trakaimuziejus.lt/en/>, <https://www.trakai-visit.lt/en/>
- Vilnius baroque old town. (Vilnius), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0PmNtsqCzA&t=310s>

Sources for individual study before physical mobility:

- French Artist JR, <https://www.canartchangetheworld.net/>
- The initiative of British artists in Kaunas penitentiary house <https://www.insideoutproject.net/en/explore/group-action/made-corrections>
- Maurice Blackburn „EXHIBIT A-i“, <https://www.exhibitai.com.au/statements#about>
- Michael Cristopher Brown „90 Miles“, <https://www.michaelchristopherbrown.com/artificial-intelligence/90-miles>