

INTRODUCTION STIFO@SANDBERG BOOK

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The Stifo@Sandberg master class is an annually recurring workshop that tracks, fosters and deploys digital developments in the world of the arts. The master class is a joint project of the Dutch Cultural Broadcasting Fund (Stifo) and the Sandberg Institute, the master's programme in art and design connected to the Gerrit Rietveld Academie.

The master class method

Each master class consists of teams of renowned filmmakers, radio producers, artists, interaction designers and other creatives who work together on new cross-media projects for three months. Some of these grow out of existing films or concepts; others are autonomous projects. Each week during the class, participants receive information and inspiration from visionary thinkers, artists, designers and media specialists from the Netherlands and abroad who are invited to give presentations. Set up seven years ago, the master class has developed into a popular workshop that has given rise to many exceptional new media productions.

New networks

For designers as well as filmmakers, the new-media world is no longer new. As the position of the public broadcasting organisations changes in the Netherlands, filmmakers are becoming less insular; designers regularly post films and animation on YouTube. New opportunities for international distribution are arising. Online methods of publishing and commenting such as vlogs and blogs are leading to new forms of collaboration and networking. Now, wherever you are in the world, you can find the specialists you need to realise your ideas. Boundaries are not only blurring between disciplines but also between content and context and between creators and audiences.

The position of broadcasting companies is changing, making it important for creators to discover and design cross-media platforms. The activities of documentary makers, artists and designers are coming to resemble those of concept developers, moderators and debate leaders. Creative people do their own publicity and promotion. New networks for presenting and distributing various forms of cultural expression are coming into being.

Quality, experiment and debate

Dutch television was behind the curve for a while but is catching up, with portals, digital channels and services such as the streaming of recently aired programmes. Yet few surprising new cross-media productions are being made, and there are too few financial

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resources for true experimentation. In the Stifo@Sandberg master class, it's important that projects arise out of content. It doesn't matter whether you're a filmmaker, designer, journalist or artist. To create a complex media production, you need people with different training, experience and expertise. New media will continue to evolve, and producers must adopt an open, curious, flexible attitude toward media. There are still hardly any genuine collaborations between traditional TV producers, designers, broadcasters' digital departments, and cultural and social networks.

Stifo and the Sandberg Institute see it as their task to encourage such connections. As long as these collaborations do not arise of their own accord, the Stifo@Sandberg master class will remain indispensable.