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Sony Electronics 3D Imaging Equipment Coming to SAIC Campus

Chicago, IL—A new industry partnership between the Sony Digital Media Academy (SDMA) and the Earl and Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) will facilitate innovative and expressive applications of digital media technologies next fall on the largest school-museum campus in the United States. SAIC’s participation in SDMA brings cutting-edge Sony equipment to two projects, impacting both undergraduate and graduate curricular opportunities.

SAIC’s Master of Science in Historic Preservation program will utilize equipment including Sony 3D Digital Recording Binoculars and Sony’s HD 3D Camcorder to create stereoscopic documentation of architectural features on some of Chicago’s landmark buildings under the leadership of Anne Sullivan, Chair of the Historic Preservation program. A studio class will experiment with generating archival photographs of historic architectural structures for this project, with the ability to focus on details at great heights not visible to the naked eye from the street. The goal is to make resources available to fellow researchers at organizations including Landmarks Illinois and the Chicago Architecture Foundation.

Simultaneously, an unprecedented collaboration between SAIC’s department of Visual Communication Design and the first-year Contemporary Practices curriculum will create SAIC’s Augmented Reality and Three Dimensional (AR3D) Study Lab. Sony’s support of the AR3D Lab will facilitate both the production and presentation of projects as students employ the uncomplicated interfaces of consumer electronics to focus on expression and invention while exploring virtual and 3D spaces. Geoffrey Alan Rhodes, assistant professor and director of 4D curriculum in the Visual Communication Design department, will lead the AR3D lab with assistant professors Adam Trowbridge and Jessica Westbrook in the Contemporary Practices department.

"The Shapiro Center facilitate partnerships embedded within the themes of Civic Engagement, Learning in the Arts, and New Forms and Materials," notes Pamela Jennings, Director of the Earl and Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration. "Sony’s Digital Media Academy is an excellent fit with this initiative—as well as the goals and interests of our faculty and students—and we are excited to be a part of this new program."

SAIC joins eight other institutions in the inauguration of the SDMA program: American University, School of Communication (Washington, D.C); Drexel University, Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts and Design (Philadelphia); New York University, Tisch School of the Arts; the Florida State University, College of Motion Picture Art (Tallahassee); UCLA, School of Theater, Film and Television (Los Angeles); UCSD, Division of Arts and Humanities (San Diego); University of Central Florida, College of Arts and Humanities (Orlando); University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts (Los Angeles).
“The Sony Digital Media Academy is designed to expose students to the latest Sony technologies and equipment, building on mutually beneficial goals, in order to help education to stay ahead of the curve and evolve with the ever-changing landscape of technologies,” said Steve Zimmer, Business Development Manager at Sony Electronics. “There is a shared commitment and investment with the schools and we will help facilitate the development of production, research and curriculum with new Sony products.”

About the Earl and Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration
The School of the Art Institute of Chicago Shapiro Center provides support for faculty to pursue sponsored research opportunities and partnerships with external organizations. The Shapiro Center assists faculty from early project concept development to subsequent research and project dissemination, and invests in SAIC students’ futures by broadening the impact of faculty professional practices. For more information about the Earl and Brenda Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration, contact shapirocenter@saic.edu.

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About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.