

TESTING GROUND

An **EXTREME MEDIA STUDIES.ORG** field trip

media-based field experiments in looking, sensing, and making sense of environments and human actions within them.

WHO:

ExtremeMediaStudies.org and *Testing Ground* are projects of New York based non-profit smudge studio inc., a collaboration between Elizabeth Ellsworth and Jamie Kruse.

WHAT:

ExtremeMediaStudies.org (EMS) is an online environment that gives form to interdisciplinary exchange.

Testing Ground is the first field trip of EMS. This project takes the contemporary intersections of art and science as its point of departure. It explores how these intersections can lend new and urgently needed modes of creative human response to land use in the American Southwest.

Testing Ground will:

- Involve college students in the Nevada Museum of Art's conference entitled "**Art + Environment**" through live blogging on **ExtremeMediaStudies.org** (see www.nevadaart.org/theconference for conference information).
- Conduct interactive "field testing" (with students) of selected new ideas and perspectives generated at the conference. Immediately following, we will take these new ideas and perspectives "on the road." We will use these ideas to explore how intersections of art and science inspire new and different creative responses to the particular conjuncture of humans, the landscape and built environment currently unfolding in the American Southwest. We will do this at sites chosen because they have been, or presently are, places where humans have "tested out" their relationality with landscape and land use. Our purpose will be to extend ideas generated at the conference "into the field" by "testing out" what they might now make possible and thinkable in ways not imagined before.
- Produce and post a hybrid web exhibition/"unit of study" on **ExtremeMediaStudies.org** from the results and documentation of the field tests.

WHEN:

Conference and live blogging: October 2-4, 2008

Field tests: October 5-17, 2008

WHERE:

Conference: Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV

Potential field test sites: Reno, NV ("Art + Environment" Conference, Nevada Museum of Art); Las Vegas, NV (The Atomic Testing Museum, Liberace Museum); The Nevada Test Site; Hoover Dam/Lake Mead; Joshua Tree National Park, CA; Salton Sea, CA; Sun City, AZ; *The Lightning Field* (Quemado, NM); Santa Fe, NM (SITE Santa Fe), Los Alamos, NM (Los Alamos National Laboratory's Bradbury Museum); Albuquerque, NM (National Atomic Museum).

HOW:

- Participate in the Art + Environment Conference, document it and create "outreach" content that is useful to the conference organizers.
- Live blog with students enrolled in The New School's Extreme Media Studies University Lecture course and courses at the University of Nevada-Reno. Invite students to pose questions to us and to conference presenters ... report responses back to students.
- Creatively document the conference via interviews, visual essays, and documentation of artworks and desert tour.
- Extract/curate ideas and perspectives from the conference relevant to a concept that is at the center of **ExtremeMediaStudies.org**- namely, that creative response can become our most essential skill for navigating the future.
- Test out selected ideas through **media-based field experiments in looking, sensing, and making sense of environments and human actions within them**. The exact nature of the experiments will be determined in response to what emerges at the conference. We will then carry them out during the ten days following the conference, at sites throughout the Southwest.
- File field notes on the experiments in the form of blog entries, images, video and audio.
- Creatively document the field tests and post their results, along with documentation of the conference, on **ExtremeMediaStudies.org** for students and teachers to use worldwide.

WHY:

With this project, **ExtremeMediaStudies.org** joins the Nevada Museum of Art in actively exploring the question: what urgently needed ways of knowing become possible when we think and make from the spaces between art and science, and when we use media creatively to fuse knowledge-construction with aesthetic experience?

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