\textit{Infinity Digital Story}

The \textit{Infinity Digital Story} offers you one last opportunity to tap into your creative side, to tell a story—your story—about infinity. Though you have complete freedom to choose the theme you wish to explore, you will capture it through digital storytelling.

British photographer, educator and digital storyteller, Daniel Meadows defines digital stories as "short, personal multimedia tales told from the heart." More specifically, digital storytelling is the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories. As with traditional storytelling, most digital stories focus on a specific topic and contain a particular point of view. However, as the name implies, digital stories usually contain some mixture of computer-based images, text, recorded audio narration, video clips and/or music. A great way to begin learning about digital storytelling is by watching a few examples:

- [http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/](http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/)

To complete the project, you will produce a 3-5 minute digital story which includes, at a minimum, a mixture of computer-based images, a soundtrack, and recorded audio narration. The topic of your story should center around one of the many themes we’ve discussed throughout the semester. A good source of inspiration might be the questions that have guide our weekly conversations (see the Course Schedule). \textit{Regardless of your choice, your digital story should explore this theme in ways that are meaningful and personal to you.}

Assignment: The following list describes the different stages of the project. These general guidelines indicate the minimum work you should complete for each stage. Clearly, the more you do during early stages, the less you have to do later.

- **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15:** Send the instructor an email describing the focus of your story and the general direction it will take.
- **WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20:** Come to class with a general outline of your story. The outline should contain at the very least details about your story’s beginning, middle, and end; and general details about the images you plan to use as well as the soundtrack(s). You will have time in class to develop these ideas. You should also come to class with a working knowledge of the software you plan to use, understanding its capabilities and limitations.
- **MONDAY-TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25-26:** You must meet in person with the instructor for 10-15 minutes. You should come to that meeting with a near final storyboard; i.e. a rough draft of the narrative and a description of the images you plan to use.
- **WEDNESDAY, DEC 4:** The final project is due in class; plan on showing your project in class.

Resources:

- The Robertson Media Center (third floor of Clemons Library) offers a range of digital media services, including equipment and applications for the digitization, post-production, and delivery of media-related projects. Equipment available for checkout includes video and audio recorders, light kits, microphones, and other items available on a first-come, visit [https://www.library.virginia.edu/rmc](https://www.library.virginia.edu/rmc).
• UVA has a subscription to lynda.com, an online training video library for courses and tutorials on hundreds of topics. You might find the tutorials for iMovie and other moviemaking software especially helpful. Get started here https://www.library.virginia.edu/lynda/.

• Free Media Library offers sounds, songs, images, videos and other free and openly-available media resources. For details, visit here https://mediacommons.psu.edu/free-media-library/.

Guidelines and Assessment: To create an effective digital story, you should carefully consider the following guidelines (adapted from www.storycenter.org). These guidelines describe the specifications for your project.

Theme
Stories have themes. Your theme should center around some aspect of infinity discussed in the course, it should be well-developed, explored in novel ways, and made personal. The theme should be supported by texts we’ve read, images we’ve viewed, etc.

Point
Stories are not simply a list of what happened (“This happened, and then that happened, and then the other thing happened”). Instead, stories are told to make a point. Stories help us find meaning that transcends a particular situation. Make sure the point of your story is clear.

Dramatic Question
Making a point, however, doesn’t necessarily grab and hold people’s attention. A story also should hook the reader/listener/viewer to want to keep going – why did something happen, what did it mean, who cares? Your story should pose a provocative question that raises curiosity and emotion, making the story worthwhile not only for the storyteller but also for the audience.

Distinct Voice
Every story is told from a perspective; it has a point of view. This perspective is part of “voice,” but so is the sound of a person’s voice (or several people’s voices). The voice of the storyteller is crucial in shaping how the audience experiences the story. Carefully consider your choice of voice.

Power of a Soundtrack
A soundtrack can establish the mood, meaning, and rhythm of a story, transforming the way an audience perceives everything about the story. Choose music that is evocative, that compliments—and complicates—your story.

Images that Matter
Images can serve as a background, doing little more than illustrating the story. However, you should thoughtfully select images that can move your story beyond its text and soundtrack – illuminating the meaning in a way that the words and music do not.

Economy
Your story should use as few words, images, and sounds as possible to effectively convey its meaning – less is more.
Pacing
The rhythm of the words, images, and sounds shape and reinforce a story’s point. Storytellers often use pacing to help the audience feel a part of the story – for example, a quick pace feels exciting and urgent, while a sudden change in pace can feel disorienting. Choose a pace the supports, rather than detracts.