

**Application for New Media Literacies / RFKLab Project  
PLAY (Participatory Learning and You) Fall 2011**

KCET *Departures* is seeking an opportunity to partner with USC's New Media Literacies and present a series of multimedia literacy workshops for students and professional development sessions for educators based on its' successful Youth Voices project. The two components of the program would be introduced during the PLAY Summer Sandbox and implemented during the 2011-2012 school year. The Youth Voices student workshops and the professional development sessions for educators, are designed to connect students and teachers to their personal and community history, examining issues in social science and civic engagement. Creating a process where they become knowledgeable in the history, culture, geography, and socio-political issues in their community, while developing life and professional skills, and learning technology and multimedia production. Educators will gain the skills and confidence to integrate this project and other multimedia activities into their curriculum and enhance their professional networks with new resources and like minded educators exploring and applying digital media and the New Media Literacies\* (Jenkins et al., 2006) in the classroom.

Youth Voices follows and expands upon the core cultural competencies and social skills defined by New Media Literacies and the goals of the PLAY program. Creating a structure that promotes and advocates for participatory learning, in the classroom, home, and in the community, through the exploration, creation and dissemination of digital media. The project becomes a vehicle for both students and teachers to share, learn and connect to their community while attaining a set of valuable skills.

***About KCET Departures***

*Departures*, is a unique, award-winning multimedia documentary series, community engagement tool and digital literacy project about the cultural history of Los Angeles' diverse neighborhoods. Housed on the KCET website at [www.kcet.org/socal/departures](http://www.kcet.org/socal/departures), KCET New Media producers create each installation in close collaboration with community partner organizations, as well as with local high school students, who undertake a comprehensive multimedia literacy curriculum. Past installations have included Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles; Watts in South LA; Eagle Rock, northeast of Downtown; the Los Angeles River, which winds 51 miles through the Southland; Richland Farms in Compton; the beach community of Venice; and historic Chinatown, near Downtown LA. A new installment on Highland Park is currently in production.

The stories of each neighborhood are captured in a series of richly detailed, navigable multimedia murals, featuring individuals, businesses, sights and sounds that make the neighborhood distinctive. Each installation also features audio and video interviews and portraits, and essays by historians and leading cultural figures. Every individual and location featured in a given installment is tagged as part of a central citywide map, allowing site visitors to interface with multiple neighborhoods and themes at once and gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the city as a whole.

Funding for *Departures* comes from Adobe Youth Voices, Boeing, Department of Cultural Affairs City of Los Angeles, and the California Council for the Humanities.

***Youth Voices - Student Workshops***

Beginning with *Departures: Los Angeles River*, we built on our experience from the previous installations and designed an extensive educational multimedia literacy curriculum for our student partners. The

\* All mentions of New Media Literacies, or literacies, refers to, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Jenkins et al., 2006)

general goal of *Departures* Youth Voices is to examine how multimedia theory and application can link students to their personal and community history, examining issues in social science and civic engagement. This will allow students to become knowledgeable in the history, geography, and socio-political issues in their community while simultaneously develop life and professional skills. The students come away with new technology and multimedia production skills that gains them access into the global digital culture. The project and acquisition of these skills meet and/or address several of the California Common Core Content Standards as well as builds key foundational skills in the new media literacies both of which are essential for students to succeed in school and in their future endeavors.

The program offers a deep and structured experience for students, who are exposed to digital and multimedia skills (audio, photography), storytelling techniques and structure, creative mapping strategies (i.e., by geography, language, age, etc.), and a brief history of collage art and muralism. They also learn to employ social networking strategies to promote and share their *Departures* installations and receive feedback from their peers. Students are encouraged and motivated to take part in the project as producers; researching the people, places and stories of their community and creating content that will introduce and guide visitors through key locations in their neighborhood. Throughout the process they are learning and reflecting on their use of new multimedia skills, through presentations and dialogue with their classmates and teacher(s). Students develop a collaborative relationship with each other that builds trust, confidence and possibilities.

The proposed *Departures* Youth Voices student workshops consist of three two hour sessions per week, for eight weeks, each facilitated by KCET's New Media Team. The introductory sessions are held in a classrooms, with subsequent sessions focusing on field work. Students ideally will have computers available to them (the ratio can be up to 3-to-1), equipped with internet access and multimedia editing software, much available for free on the web (Audacity–Audio, Pixlr–Pictures), point and shoot cameras, and their own cell/smart phones for picture and sound recording. Student cell phones are redefined as a multimedia tool, used to acquire a variety of media assets. The workshop will take place after school and be open to fifteen to twenty students.

The workshops are divided into 3 phases: the personal, the collective, and the politico. Each phase builds upon its predecessor, allowing students to attain all of the multimedia skills and content knowledge to build a complete project.

Below is an overview of the student workshops:

**Overall Goal:** To examine how multimedia theory and application can link students to their personal and community history, examining issues in social science and civic engagement. This allows students to become knowledgeable in the history, geography, and socio-political issues in their community while simultaneously develop life and professional skills.

**Introduction – Objective(s):** Explore and answer the following questions; What is *Departures*? Why is it important? Why are we doing this project? What goes into the process?

1. **Introduction to *Departures*** – The students share information about their neighborhood and present objects that represent where they live. The KCET New Media team describes the concepts behind *Departures* and details what will be accomplished over the following eight weeks.

A questionnaire/pre-assessment will be given to the students to find out their digital capabilities, from the ability to use multimedia equipment to the use of software applications, as well as particular content program learning objectives, such as history, geography, life skills and civic engagement. The

questionnaire will influence the speed at which the curricula are given to the students and will inform where expansion or reduction of particular elements in the curricula will be needed.

2. **Introduction to Project** – Students are introduced to the “My Neighborhood” project. We review the basics of computer literacy and research techniques. Students create a “Meet Me” PowerPoint presentation to tell us more about themselves and to learn a new application.

**Personal – Objective:** Students brainstorm ideas about their neighborhood using traditional tools – paper, pencils, and markers. Students critically examine their neighborhood on geographical, social, and personal levels.

3. **Map Building** – We detail different kinds of mapping techniques, such as 3D, representational, topographical, etc. Each student then draws a map of her neighborhood and identifies ten to fifteen locations/hot spots that are meaningful to them.

**Collaborative – Objective:** Students become familiar with annotating Google Maps. Students will be introduced to online researching tools and learn how to effectively search for sites, articles, images, sound, and video. They will also be introduced to social bookmarking sites, fair use principles, and citation guidelines. During the two multimedia workshops, students will learn about and take part in the three stages of production (pre-production, production, and post-production) as well as the technical and creative processes and tools/equipment involved.

4. **Map Building Through Google Maps** – We introduce the students to Mapping 2.0, a user-generated online mapping system. The students take their personal maps from the previous session and begin building a group/collaborative Google Map.
5. **Multimedia Workshop I** – This session focuses on the basics of interviewing, audio recording and sound editing. Students learn do-it-yourself tools such as SoundCloud (freeware), which allows one to record audio on a cell phone and upload it online.
6. **Multimedia Workshop II** – The students learn the basics of still photography and the best way to capture images for the murals that we will be building. We also teach the students basic image manipulation using Photoshop and Pixlr (freeware), as well as collage-making techniques.
7. **Field Data Capturing/Content Development** – While out in the field, the students utilize the media tools they have learned (audio, photography) to collect material for their collaborative map. Working in small teams/crews, they learn to approach potential interviewees, establish shots, execute interviews and capture photos for their murals.
8. **Map Building with Assets** – Students download pictures and audio from their media devices and use editing software (Photoshop or Pixlr and GarageBand or Audacity for audio) to format and prepare the media assets. They then take these formatted assets and begin adding them to their collective map.

**Politico – Objective(s):** Students transform the collective Google map into a panorama. Students explore how panoramas function in general and how a *Departures* panorama integrates these principles but also stands apart. Through these discussions students will be able to identify panoramas’ core elements and how they relate with the collective map that was already built. Students will utilize social media sites to distribute and share their projects with the public, witnessing the effects of outreach through traffic results, comments and other results of interaction.

9. **Community Member/Expert** – The KCET New Media team and the students build relationships with community leaders, historians, artists and other specialists who can provide a range of perspectives on the neighborhood. These community experts can lead us on tours, give lectures and provide feedback to our ideas. On-going throughout the course of the workshops.

10. **Design & Panoramas** – The students learn to create the multimedia murals that are at the core of each *Departures* installation. For the murals, they learn the application VUVOX, an easy-to-use production and instant sharing service. Students learn how to create street-view collage murals and imbed hotspots with links to related sites.
11. **Students Create & Extend Outreach & Community Engagement** - Using outlets the students are comfortable with, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and other social sites, students can witness the effects of outreach through traffic results, comments and other results of interaction. They can continue to own the project, as they have from the beginning, by seeing it shared and distributed into the public space and culture.

[note: Some of these workshops can be combined, condensed or repeated throughout the eight weeks as needed.]

A questionnaire/post-assessment will be given to the students to investigate if their media literacy skills, digital capabilities, and knowledge about their community increased, or shifted in any way, over the course of the workshops.

At the end of the project, students will have gained greater knowledge of the history, geography and socio-political issues of their neighborhoods; developed valuable life and professional skills; learned new technologies and multimedia production; and become empowered as chroniclers and cartographers for their communities.

### ***Youth Voices - Online***

The *Departures* website features a “Youth Voices” page with its own citywide map that geo-tags all of the student-generated media from various installments. Site visitors can also find the entire *Departures* curriculum, which classrooms and community centers can utilize and adapt to create their own community documentaries. The “Youth Voices” page links to the *Departures* Youth Voices Wiki, which features detailed student assignments and project schedules. By sharing our methodology and pedagogy, we are conceptualizing the Los Angeles template of *Departures* as a local and a future national model.

On the central citywide *Departures* map, all student-generated content is tagged with a “Y.” By being able to easily identify and select student-generated content, site visitors can see Los Angeles’ neighborhoods through the eyes of its young inhabitants. Student producers can also take pride in seeing the evidence of their work and can direct their friends and family to the website.

### ***Youth Voices - Professional Development for Educators***

Seeking to augment the accessibility and sustainability of the project, *Departures* Youth Voices proposes to offer 3 professional development sessions for middle and high school educators. The general goal of the sessions is to expand multimedia literacy, technical knowledge and the confidence level of educators so they will incorporate the new media literacies and digital media into their classroom. The professional development sessions will emphasize new educational practices that prepare teachers and students to become active participants in the new digital culture. Following the core concepts and activities outlined in the Youth Voices student curriculum, educators will have an opportunity to experience each of the workshop topics in a hands-on approach, collecting, creating and distributing their own media to colleagues and students. Participants will further explore how media literacy, digital media skills and their own conversations can be utilized and repurposed in their class, creating new ways to introduce and delve into various academic subjects. A portion of each workshop will be designated as “Connections,” where participants brainstorm and identify connections between *Departure* Youth Voices and the California Common Core State Academic Standards.

Each workshop will run 4 hours and take place one Saturday per month over three months. It will be open to 15-20 educators who work with middle and high school aged kids. Each will be facilitated by KCET's New Media Team. The workshops are held in a classroom, but will have a small component of field work. Participants ideally will have access to computers (the ratio can be up to 3-to-1) equipped with internet access, multimedia editing software, much available for free on the web (Audacity–Audio, Pixlr–Pictures), point and shoot cameras, and their own cell/smart phones for picture and sound recording. Just as the student workshop redefined cell/smart phones as a multimedia tool, teachers will have an opportunity to reevaluate their views towards this technology and develop strategies to bring the cell phone into the classroom as a tool and not a nuisance. Participants will be encouraged to take the entire series of workshops but the first two workshops will be available as stand alone sessions.

Below is an overview of the sessions that will be made available during the 2011-2012 academic year:

**Professional Development Series Goal:** Using the *Departures* Youth Voices model, expand multimedia literacy, technical knowledge and the confidence level of educators so they will incorporate the new media literacies and digital media into their classroom curriculum.

### 1. *Departures* Youth Voices: An Introduction to Media Literacy Education

**Objectives:** Participants will explore how to communicate competently in key media forms as well as to access, understand, analyze, evaluate and participate with powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary culture. Teachers will have an opportunity to experience the introductory activities of the Youth Voices project and brainstorm how to successfully implement the project in collaboration with their students and their colleagues through the *Departures* Educational Support Network.

Using the *Departures* Youth Voices “My Neighborhood” project as a model, participants will take part in individual and group activities creating PowerPoints, Blogs, Wiki pages, and utilizing social media as a means to develop and communicate new strategies on how best to incorporate the new media literacies into their existing curriculum, utilizing critical inquiry and new technologies throughout the process. Participants will use their Blog to upload and comment on the workshops assignments. They will be encouraged to continue it as part of an on-going dialogue on the challenges and successes of implementing Youth Voices in their class.

It is a difficult task for a teacher to rethink the content they are teaching and, even more so, the way they are teaching. Developing a support network of learners/teachers will be key to fostering successful implementation of the Youth Voices project and the new media literacies. The *Departures* Educational Support Network will provide models for implementation, multi-media and media literacies educational resources, and sympathetic ears. The network will initially be facilitated by the KCET New Media team but be open to taking on new facilitators from the ranks of the workshop participants.

### 2. *Departures* Youth Voices: Mapping Our Community, Redefining Our Place

**Objectives:** Continuing the hands-on exploration of participatory culture, educators will delve into maps and map making. Key questions that will be addressed are, “How are maps created and referenced to define people, locations, and time?” How does the ability and action of creating and sharing one’s own map encourage participatory learning? How can assigning a collaborative map for any lesson, give students the ability to direct the trajectory of the class discussion?

A variety of maps and mapping techniques will be offered, such as 3D, representational, topographical, developing questions around their design and the purpose(s) of each. Each participant will draw a two dimensional map of their school's neighborhood and identify locations, "hot spots", that are meaningful to them. These "hot spots" will take the participants to their next endeavor, Mapping 2.0. Using Google Maps, the participants will take their personal maps and build a collaborative interactive map featuring a sampling of their hot spots. They will add text to the hotspots and research for related material on-line to link to their hotspots.

As is the case with many teachers, they may not live in the same neighborhood as their students, and may not have the first hand knowledge of the people and places in the community. This provides an opportunity for teachers and students to pool their skills and knowledge and share in the tasks of teaching and learning. This is a major rethinking of the pupil/teacher relationship and one that will be supported, with tools and resources, by the *Departures* Educational Support Network established during the previous workshop.

[note: If participants plan on attending the third workshop they will be asked to complete a photography and audio assignment prior to the next session.]

### **3. *Departures* Youth Voices: Multimedia in the Classroom and the Community - Participatory Learning in Action**

**Objectives:** Participants will enhance the collective Google Map with new media assets they have acquired through their take home assignment. They will learn how to reformat the media with photo and audio editing software. They will then transform the map into a panorama. Participants will explore how panoramas function and how their creation and use can redefine the role of the students from learners to producers of content and knowledge. Through this dialogue and the presentation of their own murals, participants will brainstorm how they may implement the *Departures* Youth Voices project in their classroom and further incorporate the new media literacies and digital media into their curriculum in collaboration with their students.

The participants will build up their collaborative maps adding audio and photos from their take home assignment. They will edit their media using Garage Band/Audacity for their audio and Photoshop/Pixlr for their photographs. Participants will then use their collaborative map and media assets to create the multimedia murals that are at the core of each *Departures* installation. For the murals, they learn the application VUVOX, a free and easy-to-use production and instant sharing service. Participants will learn how to create street-view collage murals and imbed hotspots with links to related sites.

Everyone will present their finished mural and share their thoughts on how they may bring the project into their classrooms. The participants will post their murals and ideas/strategies for implementing Youth Voices on their Blog. They will be encouraged to share their mural and their experiences from the workshop with colleagues to extend the conversation beyond members of the workshop, perhaps identifying other teachers who may be interested in learning more about multimedia literacy, *Departures* Youth Voices and the new media literacies.

*"Schools and classrooms must be transformed from being storehouses of knowledge to being more like portable tents providing a shelter and a gathering place for students as they go out to explore, to question, to experiment, to discover!"* E.Thoman & Tessa Jolls, "Literacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," Center for Media Literacy

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