



# Digital Storytelling

## Introduction

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### OVERVIEW

#### DIGITAL STORYTELLING 'Empowerment through personal expression'

Digital Storytelling is a process of using scraps of multimedia materials such as snapshots, music clips and other memorabilia from our lives, and combining them with our own words on a computer to create a unique story. Instead of listening to stories constructed and told by media professionals, everyday people can now tell their own story. Each digital story is a three to four minute media clip that is typically viewed on a computer screen, a television or movie screen. In a conversation with Thenmozhi Soundararajan, *Digital Storytelling, Capturing Lives, Creating Community*, she states, "Perhaps more than ever in the current context of globalization and the globalization of culture based on U.S. medias' depiction of the world, we have to battle for cultural and political self-determination". We have found that the art of digital storytelling creates a profound shift from being externally directed by world media to an experience of empowerment that involves the sharing of stories using state-of-the-art technology. This process gives value and voice to personal experience as a microcosmic view of global experiences that we all share. We are all aware of the evolution of storytelling from oral cultures, to a world where the written word was the primary form of communication, and on to the current culture of media empires empowered with the role of telling the stories that define our lives. This transgression in our form of communicating, and the globalization of culture, are just a few of the many ways that we are personally and globally experiencing a changing world view. Through Digital Storytelling we explore old and new ways to communicate with each other, as we define and redefine ourselves, passing on the stories that preserve our past and shape our future.

#### Digital Storytelling provides



- a means of expression that is largely free of corporate filters.
- an environment where people can express, as opposed to being entertained.
- opportunities for people who have not been heard.
- a way to honor and preserve diversity among individuals and cultures.
- a new medium to convey the universal within the personal.
- a profound vehicle for understanding and compassion.

#### STORYTELLING

The ancient custom of storytelling, sometimes employing art and ritual, has been our primary means of education for thousands of years. The telling of stories has provided us with a way to teach values, share customs, preserve culture and develop personal, familial and tribal identity. Storytelling has also given us drama and entertainment as well as access to subconscious realms and profound spiritual experience.



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### Storytelling teaches us



- about how to behave in social context.
- about how to overcome obstacles.
- about exceptional courage and sacrifice.
- about our culture and how we, as humans, are to interact with it.

### Personal storytelling



- empowers the storyteller in a way that is natural and non-violent.
- can give the storyteller a greater sense of identity and pride.
- can bridge gaps between class, culture and other forms of diversity.
- can provide the audience with understanding and compassion.

## TECHNOLOGY

The advancement of computer technology has been as predictable and natural as making fire. Human beings have continually sought more complex and empowering means of utility and expression. Some have said that computers are a very crude representation of how our minds work and how creation occurs. One thing is certain, they are not outside nature but belong to the earth as surely as a spider web or a stone ax. The challenge, of course is, in how we choose to use these new tools. The computer, and particularly multimedia technology and the Internet, provide us with phenomenally increased opportunities for connection among individuals and cultures and an increased potential to realize our global relationships and responsibilities.

## THE DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROJECT

Artists, teachers, ranchers, and curanderas, are just some of the participants of the Digital Storytelling Project, that has taken place over the past 3 years in New Mexico, Mexico and Spain, sponsored by the National Hispanic Cultural Center and the BLM. The project was based on the goal of collaborating with individuals and communities to find new ways to preserve cultural and ecological diversity through education and awareness building. Each participant attends a 3-4 day workshop taught by artists/writers, where they learn how to create a 'Digital Story'. Some go on to teach classes on their own, inspiring others to create yet more powerful digital stories. In the near future the National Hispanic Cultural Center will host an International exhibit where the best digital stories produced from the project will be presented, that most powerfully convey the theme of the exhibit; Art, Culture and Digital Media. We will also have an archive of all digital stories produced available for viewing via our web site and at a computer station at the exhibit.



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### ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

This workshop has been designed to empower you through the process of making a Digital Story, so that you may then successfully teach this process to your students, employees or co-workers. The workshop manual breaks down the Digital Storytelling procedure so that you can use it to go back to your classroom or workplace and easily teach a class on your own.

The workshop is an intensive introductory course designed for a PC/Windows environment. It covers the main features of Windows Moviemaker2, Adobe Photoshop and Goldwave 4.26, the programs we use to make a digital story. All of these programs have many more advanced features that we will not have time to explore. You will discover these features on your own, as you begin working with the programs. If you would like to learn more, you can find manuals online for Moviemaker and Photoshop. We will also be making references throughout the workshop to the book, *Digital Storytelling; Capturing Lives, Creating Community*, by Joe Lambert, which you can purchase at the workshop. This book provides an in-depth look at the Digital Storytelling process. You will find specific reading suggestions throughout the manual.

### TIME AND COMMITMENT

The workshop requires your commitment to three full days, from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm. This may seem like a lot but don't panic! We would like to add that all of our participants have come in to the workshop with hesitations about the time requirements, and they all complete the class feeling empowered, gratified that they took the time, and many times working more hours than expected! The process is challenging, stimulating and enjoyable. Most importantly, the training received can be applied in your own life, as well as in your classroom with your students. We have had teachers that completed the workshop, go back to their schools to create a new Digital Storytelling objective. We are committed to your success, and provide ongoing support after the workshop to help you through the process of applying or teaching digital storytelling in your classroom or workplace.

### PREPARING FOR THE WORKSHOP

It is recommended that you come to the workshop with an idea for a story and some related photos, magazine clippings, objects or anything that relates to your story. We suggest that you do not write out the story in any depth before the workshop. It is most important to come to the workshop with an open mind and ready for a creative process!



# Digital Storytelling

## Agenda 2005

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Location: National Hispanic Cultural Center, Intel Lab

### May 19 Thursday

**9:00am** Welcoming Introductions/Workshop Overview  
Showing of digital stories

**9:30am** Story Circle  
Group discussion on story concepts  
Begin Typing first draft on stories

**12:00am** Lunch

**1:00pm** Showing of digital stories  
Group discussion/Final printing of stories

**2:30pm** Moviemaker Overview  
Begin recording stories in Moviemaker

**5:30pm** Complete recording  
Showing of digital stories

Home Prep: Select and bring images  
and soundtrack options to next class

### May 20 Friday

**9:00am** Showing of digital stories  
Creating project folders  
Discussion on storyboarding and sound script

**9:30am** Begin Storyboards and sound script

**11:00am** Photoshop Demonstration  
Begin sizing and manipulating images

**12:00pm** Lunch

**1:00pm** Continue image preparation

**5:00pm** Showing of digital stories

Day 2 Goal: Complete story and image preparation



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## Agenda 2005

# 2

### May 21 Saturday

- 9:00am** Showing of digital stories  
Goldwave demonstration  
Begin extracting soundtrack
- 9:30am** Moviemaker demonstration  
Importing music and dragging to timeline
- 10:30am** Moviemaker editing demonstration  
Importing images, creating title page,  
adding transitions and effects
- 12:00am** Lunch
- 1:00pm** Complete and view a rough draft of story  
  
Final editing and completion
- 4:00pm** Final showing of all stories for group viewing
- 5:00pm** Final comments and recognition
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**For more information please  
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**For viewing samples of Digital stories visit:  
www.storycenter.org  
www.bbc.co.uk/wales/capturewales**