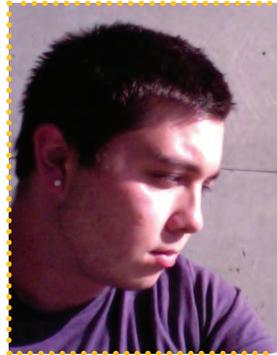


Since 1996, the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree has offered ASU students an opportunity to apply knowledge in new ways to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world.

## BIS Student Arie Mittman Joins the InnovationSpace Program

By CJ Stewart

Unlike many of our interviewees—who mainly consist of BIS alumni—Arie Mittman hasn't yet graduated, nor has he really begun his career. Yet, as the first BIS student to be accepted into the [InnovationSpace](#) program here at ASU, Arie has already accomplished much in his college life. This distinction is truly remarkable.



Arie invited me to come and watch his group in action before we got into the actual interview, but when I walked into the classroom on the third floor of the Design Building, I was overwhelmed by the chatter as several groups of four to five students discussed their various projects. I just couldn't bring myself to interrupt and ask where Arie was. Who would I ask? Would I be disruptive to the creative process? Would my interruption completely destroy a semester's worth of work? Okay, maybe I'm exaggerating somewhat, but the work on display really was quite amazing with the concept art, the mockups and the little diorama models! I had no idea that a program of this magnitude was going on here at ASU. It truly was impressive, and I suddenly felt as though my pursuit of an interview suddenly became mundane and unimportant. Luckily, though, I was shaken out of my stupor as Arie emerged from the crowd to shake my hand.

He took me over to his group in the far corner of the room. Their name is Team Forj, chosen not just because of its interesting spelling but also because of its insistence on moving forward. The company he and his team have been working for since last fall is Herman Miller, the innovative furniture company best known for its beautiful, ergonomic designs. For example, ever notice that fancy chair that Dr. House has in his office on the show *House*? That's their most famous product, the Aeron chair, which was designed in 1994. It can sell for more than \$1,500 and there has even been a book that includes the story of the chair's development titled *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* by Malcolm Gladwell. Arie later told me that he's working on the admittedly doubtful prospect of getting himself a free one. (Good luck on that, man!) Other companies involved with the program are Major Toy, who are looking to develop toys for autistic children, and Dow-Corning, a major supplier of silicone and silicon-based products worldwide.

Arie revealed to me that Herman Miller is now looking to expand beyond everyday furniture (well, "everyday" if you're used to buying \$1,500 desk chairs) and into medical equipment. Team Forj is apparently the first team at ASU

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Original artwork in the *Kaleidoscope* masthead was created by BIS student Rebecca Soltis.

## Are you a creative BIS student

Interested in having your work featured in an upcoming issue of *Kaleidoscope*?

Any type of creative work will be considered, such as poetry, short stories, art pieces, or photography.

Please send submissions to  
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that Herman Miller has shown significant interest in actually developing their products. Team Forj's current focus is Lumia, a sleek-looking illuminated walkway that will help hospitalized patients move about their rooms in the middle of the night without the need for a traditional light switch. It will pair nicely with Vela, their space-saving, collapsible toilet. Lumia will provide an economical means for lighting a pathway without traditional light bulbs and Vela will allow doctors to measure and examine waste material collected in a reservoir while providing the patient with a more private experience that the antiquated bedpan can't provide. Perhaps one day Team Forj's projects will also be mentioned in a sequel to *Blink!*

After a half hour of frenzied discussion, Arie and his group called it a day and we decided to begin the interview.

**Q** *Where are you from? What brought you to Arizona State University?*

**A** I was born in Portland, Ore. My parents went to medical school there, and that was how they met. Then we lived in Mystic, Conn. before we moved to Mesa in 1997 when I was 11 years old.

I actually applied to go to college in Hawaii, but after some of my friends were in a really bad car accident during my senior year, and two of them passed away, I didn't really want to go that far away from home, so I stayed here.

**Q** *Why did you choose the BIS major?*

**A** Well, I started in business. My concentrations are in business and biology. My business classes weren't my favorite. I kind of looked at the BIS requirements, and I was already done with them so I declared BIS to branch out instead of starting over. I was always interested in medicine, especially since both my parents are doctors.

**Q** *How have you progressed since joining the BIS program, and how are you going to put that degree to use?*

**A** The internship that I completed set me up. I have a pretty good job there. I'm the administrator of multimedia at a nutritional company. It's a cool company.

**Q** *What is the name of the company?*

**A** Natural Partners, Inc. They supply nutritional supplements.

**Q** *What advice do you have for students of the BIS program?*

**A** I would say that the internship is the best part of the program in my eyes because it's your best chance of getting a good job after college. Choose something that you are interested in and do it well.

**Q** *Could you summarize what InnovationSpace is all about?*

**A** InnovationSpace is a transdisciplinary program of teams with corporate sponsors who take on challenges and use design practices that cause limited damage to the environment. It's all about sustainability.

**Q** *What have you accomplished so far and what are your plans for the future here?*

**A** I finished my internship and I got a job offer out of it. There are talks about starting my career there. My internship mentor invented a new product for the iPhone that is a case that has lenses on it that increases the capability of the camera. He needed an industrial designer and it just so happened that I was in InnovationSpace. We've been working on that together and now we're also designing stuff for the iPod Nano. We're even thinking of starting our own design firm. We designed the logo for the F-1000 Pro Series. We're already branching out from class.

Arie also told me about how his girlfriend introduced him to the concept of biomimicry when she invited him to a seminar on the concept. Biomimicry is the relatively new idea of examining nature and emulating it in designs with the goal of sustainability in mind. It just so happens that InnovationSpace follows the same principles, and Arie was therefore immediately attracted to it.

As our conversation became more casual, I realized I had to ask him one final, personal question:

**Q** *So what would you say is your favorite film?*

**A** My favorite film? That's hard ... I really like *The Shawshank Redemption*. It's just one of those movies that my dad showed me, and he's a really cool guy, and I've always admired him. It's such a touching story, and I like when the little guy wins.

Arie is the first of what will hopefully be many BIS pioneers to enter the InnovationSpace program. If Team Forj's projects for Herman Miller are ever picked up, and if the design firm he and his team hope to start one day takes off, perhaps Arie won't have to go on hoping for Herman Miller to give him an Aeron chair – he'll likely be able to *buy* one for each of his team members!

## Catching up with BIS Alum Zac Brandt

By CJ Stewart

Zac Brandt was supposed to come on campus to do some recruiting for EMC, the company he works for. Unfortunately for both of us, he was unable to make it on this trip. While I didn't have the privilege of meeting Zac Brandt in person, however, even from our interview over the phone I could tell that Zac is a thrill seeker at heart. Want proof? Do a search on YouTube for a video titled "Bridge Jump (500 ft)" and you'll get an idea of what kinds of activities Zac is into.

The young man in the video is, in fact, Mr. Brandt. The amazing jump was performed with nothing but a rope separating him from the ultimate thrill and certain death. He explained to me that the rope he was tethered to was looped from one side to the other, which is why his body disappears from view beneath the bridge, rather than being bounced back up as in bungee jumping. The amount of force the drop put on his body actually caused him to blackout! While I can't imagine the feeling his friends must have had as they pulled his limp, unconscious body up at the other side, not knowing whether he was going to wake up, I can also imagine that, if they're anything like him, they were probably still overwhelmed by the sheer awesomeness of the stunt.

When he's not performing extreme stunts Zac is busy rising in the ranks in the world of business. The BIS graduate (2008) is now the fastest promoted salesman-in-training at EMC, the information technology giant, and he has no plans to settle down. "I'm planning on building a career here. In the next year to year and a half, I want to go out into the field and do field sales in California." The passion and dedication he brings to his career is also what got him through his college years. Zac was an enthusiastic interdisciplinary studies student, and he remains an enthusiastic supporter of all interdisciplinary studies programs. Zac explained to me that the program offered him the opportunity to gain the multifaceted perspective on life and business that got him to where he is, and he believes strongly that all students shouldn't just consider the BIS major when they get to college – it should be their top choice!



**Q** *So, where are you originally from?*

**A** I'm from San Jose, Calif.

**Q** *And what brought you to Arizona State University?*

**A** I wanted a large school with large school spirit and decent sports teams.

**Q** *Why did you choose the BIS major?*

**A** I wanted a more freethinking major. I was thinking about engineering because I wanted to do technical sales, but I took a few engineering classes and they weren't for me.

**Q** *What were your two concentrations?*

**A** History and communication. I also took business classes, real estate, high-level math and religion classes. I took a little of everything.

**Q** *Why did you choose them?*

**A** I wanted to expand my horizons, understand people.

**Q** *Why's that?*

**A** I would say for the problem-solving skills – the BIS program develops them a lot more. You can look at things from different angles instead of having a tunnel-vision view. You can take different ap-

proaches. A mathematician will see just the numbers of a problem, but an interdisciplinary studies major has more tools and learns to see from different angles.

**Q** *How have you progressed since earning your BIS degree, and how have you put that degree to use?*

**A** I've marketed it towards sales since a salesperson deals with all kinds of people during the day. I need to know how to relate to different personality types.

**Q** *What is the most important thing you took away from the BIS program?*

**A** Most important thing I took away? I would say to create your own weather. If it's raining you can sit and complain about the rain, or you can get an umbrella. Be proactive. I learned that from a class I took from Dave Thomas. He was the best teacher I ever had. He made a big impact on my life. That concept of "create your own weather" is from Stephen Covey.

**Q** *What advice do you have for students of the BIS program?*

**A** Do not look at the major as a second option, but rather look at it as something that's very marketable, and really, I feel like a lot of students fall into BIS, but they should be actively choosing it as their major. It gives you a lot more choices. Don't focus on just two concentrations. Leverage electives. Think of it as building your own major rather than just following the program.

As our conversation began to wind down, during which time he showed me the YouTube video and we discussed my own experiences in the BIS program, a final question popped into my head to ask him, a question that I have decided will become a signature of sorts for all my interviews (So take notice future interviewees!):

**Q** *What is your favorite film and why?*

**A** My favorite film is *Pulp Fiction*, because I would say it's just the right amount—a blend of intelligent creativity, humor and suspense.

## Meet the writer

### CJ Stewart

I've always been fond of writing. I was famous in my various schools for my many binders full of writings – most of them storylines for video games I had once hoped to create as an adult. And here I am, a few years shy of two decades later, and I'm in my final semester at ASU. I'm not a video game developer, nor am I a creative writer (my first major), but I still have a passion for writing. I was introduced to the BIS program by Elizabeth McNeil, Ph.D., who sympathized with my disillusionment with creative writing and another year of taking a difficult foreign language, Korean. My concentrations are in English and communication, which I'm hoping to put to good use as a film critic one day. For now, I'm just a 23-year-old former military brat interning for the *Kaleidoscope* newsletter as well as [TheCelebrityCafe.com](http://TheCelebrityCafe.com). I'm a huge nerd, having named both of my cats after video game characters ("Zelda" and "Kairi" if you must know), and when I'm not busy being a student or working, I'm likely writing or talking about movies, television, or food – which I also love to prepare. I look forward to writing for you all, and I am certain that my experiences here will be beneficial!



## Roger Ebert & Me: In Defense of Video Games as Art

by CJ Stewart

### Here comes a new challenger ...

Back in 2007, Pulitzer Prize-winning film critic Roger Ebert published an article titled “Games vs. Art: Ebert vs. Barker” on his Web site. Mr. Ebert wrote the article in reaction to horror author, filmmaker and artist Clive Barker’s rather agitated remarks regarding Mr. Ebert’s criticism of video games as an art form – a medium in which the *Hellraiser* creator has also had his busy hands in. “It’s evident that Ebert had a prejudiced vision of what the medium is or, more importantly, what it can be,” the director said at the 2007 Hollywood and Games Summit. “We can debate what art is, we can debate it forever. If the experience moves you in some way or another ... even if it moves your bowels ... I think it is worthy of some serious study.”

In response to his crudely stated opinion, Mr. Ebert acknowledged that “Anything can be art. Even a can of Campbell’s soup.” He expounded on his position on video games by laying out the basic reasons why he believed video games, by nature, could not achieve the distinction of being considered “high art”:

How do I know this? How many games have I played? I know it by the definition of the vast majority of games. They tend to involve (1) point and shoot in many variations and plotlines, (2) treasure or scavenger hunts, as in “Myst,” and (3) player control of the outcome. I don’t think these attributes have much to do with art; they have more in common with sports.

Sadly, his perspective of video games is quite narrow-minded – yes, even “prejudiced.” His is, unfortunately, a mindset that is somewhat prominent among the many that remain critical of the interactive medium, despite all the creative work that goes into designing each one. Even after decades of evolution, video games are still often seen as, at best, creatively imagined child’s playthings. At their worst, they have a reputation for supposedly inspiring violent actions in the impressionable minds of those who play them.

Now, I admit that many video games are exactly the types of explosion-filled scavenger hunts of some sort that Mr. Ebert describes – but if one were to scrutinize the film industry, a surprisingly similar infestation of mindless explosions and MacGuffin-driven storylines would also become apparent. For every *Citizen Kane* or *The Godfather*, there are about ten more movies like *Armageddon* or *Batman & Robin*.

What critics like Mr. Ebert don’t know is that there have been several exemplary video games, which have already achieved great feats of artistry—visually, audibly and emotionally. Many even have a message to promote that is best delivered by immersing players in worlds where they are presented with moral decisions that have a significant impact on the characters that reside in these worlds. By examining how even just a few of the important creative processes that go into a game’s development provide evidence that video games are a viable art form, I hope to dispel Mr. Ebert’s prejudices and prove that video games actually *do* have the potential to be “high art.”

### Bust a Move

As Clive Barker’s comments demonstrate, many who have tried to define what makes something “art” would argue that the basic tenet of any medium’s qualification is that the work must “move you.” A painting must “move you.” A sonata must “move you.” A film must “move you.” This is a vague and oversimplified explanation. Mr. Ebert even took issue with this description when he stated, “Many experiences that move me in some way or another are not art. A year ago I lost the ability (temporarily, I hope) to speak. I was deeply moved by the experience. It was not art.” Clearly, by Mr. Ebert’s reaction, it can be concluded that art is at least something that is tangible.

When it is said that something “moves you,” it is usually meant that the thing in question must convey unto the observer the perspective of and the emotions relayed to them by the creator of the work. Art, in both its “high” and “low” forms, must, by this expanded definition, put the person observing the work in the creator’s shoes and feel either what it is that the artist wants them to feel or even discover that it makes them feel something different entirely. This expanded definition, then, means that the person observing has more responsibilities than just looking at something or even acknowledging the author’s perspective – they should be *experiencing* the situation *for themselves* as a result of the artifact, too.

In his book *What is Art?*, author Leo Tolstoy would seem to support this perspective:

Art begins when one person, with the object of joining another or others to himself in one and the same feeling, expresses that feeling by certain external indications. ... [It] is art if a man, having experienced either the fear of suffering or the attraction of enjoyment (whether in reality or in imagination), expresses these feelings on canvas or in marble so that others are infected by them (42).

Art, then, includes paintings, which use color and form to relay the painter's feelings. Music also qualifies, with the arrangement of notes and selection of instruments deliberately chosen to relay the composer's. It also includes stories, such as Mr. Ebert's recent accounts of his experiences in suffering through cancer, losing his ability to speak, and his triumphant return to keep doing what he does best: reviewing films. Films themselves are collaborative, multifaceted works of art where many crafts unite under a synchronized expression of emotions. Given a proper (and civil) demonstration, I would hope that Mr. Ebert could be convinced of how much video games have in common with films, too.

## Painting with Pixels

Like painting, architecture, sculpture and film, video games are primarily a visual medium. Like all visual mediums, video game artists have employed many visual styles. Some are more obvious than others, while many are subtle in their design choices. Visual design in video games, as one would expect, is used to create atmosphere, recall memories, invoke concepts and generate emotions in the player.

Video games have employed many visual styles. One of the most famous is the artistic styling chosen by video game artists is the *animé* style, influenced by Japanese animation, which itself is inspired by comics known as *manga*. Its influence can be seen in the design of several iconic characters in the industry, including the cast of the fighting game series *Street Fighter* and that of the epic role playing games in the *Final Fantasy* series. Though by no means the only characteristics of animé, the character designers often employ the common wide-eyed, big-haired, and exaggerated art style, which remains a staple of many game series to this day, despite the strong desire by many gamers who desire photorealism.

The games in the *BioShock* series use the famous and opulent art deco style to great effect, using it to provide the game with a bizarre, dystopian atmosphere. The story is set in an underwater city called Rapture, a supposed utopia which had been brought to the brink of total destruction when the mutated lower class rose up against the men who swore they would find happiness and equality in their new home. As the player explores this decaying world filled with mutated lunatics, artifacts indicative of the hope the city had promised its citizens are littered throughout the settings, as with the convenient vending machines filled with performance enhancing serums. With the revelation of the truths behind Rapture's foundation, the fanciful choice of art direction causes these artifacts to contrast strongly with the reality of the world.

Some video games have also experimented with newer creative techniques, too. In the early 2000s, Sega released *Jet Grind Radio*. The objective of the game is to tag certain locations with graffiti while riding on rollerblades and performing largely impossible tricks. To enhance the pop/hip-hop tone of the game, Sega and developers Smilebit used a new graphics technique dubbed "cel-shading," a surprisingly complicated process that renders a 3D object to appear to be a two-dimensional drawing – flat, limited shading, and even black outlines, allowing the benefits of a 3D environment while providing a hand-drawn appearance. The technique draws its name from its mimicry of the hand-painted cels which were once the industry standard method of animation. *Jet Grind Radio* became legendary for its artistic direction, using the new style to great effect by making the game itself appear to be a colorful work of graffiti art come to life.

The technique has since gone on to be used in several other games, notably *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker*, which had ditched its predecessor's darker, anime-inspired art style for a warm cel-shaded style that made the world look as though it were made of construction paper cutouts. Some found the "cartoony" style to be too "childish" and therefore unappealing. Some even swore the series off because of the artistic direction. By and large, however, when the time is taken to use the technique effectively, as *The Wind Waker* proved, they often end up coming out on top, as proven by this enthusiastic review:

“The game’s characters are extremely expressive in their motion and appearance, and this adds emotional weight to the game’s text-based story line. [...] Artistically, *The Wind Waker* is nearly unmatched [...]” (Gerstmann 2).

## Top Scores

Like films and plays, video games almost always have a musical score to accompany the action. Game music has obviously changed since the “bleeps” and “boops” of early video games, but even then composers used what they could to great effect. Thanks to newer technology, of course, modern game scores now have much more in common with those found in films. As with film scores, the musical score in video games accentuate the actions on the screen. Notably, the music in games is no longer limited to repetitious track loops. As an interactive medium, the music track is often choreographed to keep in sync with the player’s unscripted actions and reflect changes on screen in order to maintain immersion. The music may be a subtle and contemplative piece while the player sneaks around an enemy base, but, when spotted, the game can dynamically alter the track by changing the speed and introducing other elements, such as rolling drums, shrieking horns and panicked strings.

The previously mentioned *Wind Waker* even integrates dynamic musical cues as part of the combat by alerting players to nearby threats. The music grows more sinister as they approach their target and, in certain battles, will emit a quick musical cue that alerts player when the optimum time to strike has come. By paying attention to the music, players are rewarded for their efforts by dishing out a devastating counterattack.

Composers for these games have even become celebrated for their contributions to game soundtracks. The composer of some of Nintendo’s most iconic themes, Koji Kondo, and the composer of many of the eclectic *Final Fantasy* compositions have become as celebrated in the game industry as John Williams and James Newton Howard are in film. So celebrated are their works that they are routinely featured in orchestral concerts like Video Games Live and Play! A Video Game Symphony, and many games have soundtrack albums for purchase, too. It is also worth noting that recent Oscar winner and frequent J.J. Abrams collaborator, Michael Giacchino (*Up*, *Star Trek*, *Lost*), was discovered by Abrams thanks to his work on the game adaptation of *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* and the World War II-set *Medal of Honor* games. Abrams admired his style so much that he offered the composer the opportunity to compose music for the TV series *Alias*, and the two have stuck together ever since (Burlingame).

## Story Mode

So far, we’ve only explored a few of characteristics that video games have in common with films. None of these elements, however, would amount to anything without some form of structure for them to be applied to. The more straightforward, goal-based games like *Tetris* and *Bejeweled* notwithstanding, most video games typically follow some form of narrative. While there may be objectives to complete along the way, the “missions” or “levels” in a game also serve a narrative purpose. They exist not just to provide something to do but also to move a story forward, much like any event in a book or film. A game’s story may move the player forward to a definitive end in a linear fashion or, as the medium’s most distinct feature, a game can take into account a player’s actions and evolve the plot based on what they are doing.

It is this aspect, in particular, that Mr. Ebert seems to have the most difficulty reconciling with. It is a characteristic that in his eyes separates a gaming experience from a true artistic experience delivered by an artist. “I believe art is created by an artist. If you [the player] change it, you become the artist.” He illustrates his view by pointing out that two of Shakespeare’s more depressing plays, *Romeo and Juliet* and *King Lear*, have both seen edits and rewrites in order to make their endings less of a “downer” for sensitive audiences. The problem with his illustration is that changing someone else’s work to have a happier ending equates to censorship, while a player’s choices in a game impact the story only so far as the game’s designer has allowed. (There are actually ways players can modify games with player-created content; however, this goes beyond the original product and, thus, is not relevant to a discussion about whether the original game has artistic merit.) Saying that the role of the designer and all the other collaborators who have contributed to the final product is negated by player interaction is at best incredibly shortsighted. Apart from the occasional programming glitch (all works of art have their flaws), there is almost nothing a player can do in even the most open-ended game that wasn’t intended by the developer.

Video games are unique among artistic formats through their connection with an audience. Most fictional books, plays, and films require their audiences to become familiar with a character or set of characters based almost solely through intimate observation and disclosure provided by those characters' creators. (This is not a criticism, but an observation.) Video games, however, provide the opportunity for creators to place their audience within the story itself, as participants. This audience participation does not, as Mr. Ebert suggests, negate the artistic merits of the medium. Going back to Tolstoy's statement about "infecting" others with feelings, it could justifiably be argued that video games are the ultimate method of doing so.

For example, there is a trend in modern video games to give players moral choices. *BioShock* tasks players with escaping from the city of Rapture, which has been overrun by psychotic mutants called Splicers. Along the way, they also encounter characters known as Little Sisters and Big Daddies. Little Sisters are possessed-looking little girls who have been programmed to collect stem cells known as ADAM from the bodies of deceased Splicers, who it later turns out were the lower class driven mad by the genetic engineering they had performed on themselves. Big Daddies are the genetically mutated adult men who have been sealed inside a large armored diving suit and are tasked with keeping the Little Sisters safe.

One developer in particular is known for their effective use of dynamic storytelling and moral choices, however. BioWare has developed many role playing games (RPGs) which allow the player to interact with the cast of characters around them through a thread of multiple dialogue choices. BioWare's early use of this technique was in *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, which presented the player with full dialogue choices that determined whether they and their teammates fell on light side or fell to the dark side of the Force. One of their more recent releases titled *Mass Effect*, however, presents players with brief snippets of similar responses that provide the player hints of what tone the interaction will take on, rather than the exact dialogue that will be spoken. This ambiguity better simulates the subtleties of language and human interaction, since the player never knows for sure how a character might react to their choice of words.

Multiple excursions through the game's narrative may reveal different developments or previously undiscovered secrets about the world based on different choices. However, the developer's basic storyline remains the same, and the message is able to be kept intact, even with multiple endings. The interactive features and dynamic storytelling of *Mass Effect* and games like it ultimately provide the artist with the ability to tell different sides or even different possibilities of the same story. A character's affiliation with the heroes would not be the same as if he had instead sided with the villains. This would be the interactive equivalent of exploring the nuances of good and evil. The great thing about video games is that they can provide the means by which artists can explore multiple possibilities of their story while presenting the same overall messages. Think of it as being a director's cut or alternate take of a film, only it doesn't take the studio double-dipping on the DVD releases to get to them.

## Game Over

Early on in his article, as I have already mentioned, Mr. Ebert claimed that, "Anything can be art. Even a can of Campbell's soup." He clarified this at the end of the article, stating, "I was imprecise. Actually, it is Andy Warhol's painting of the label that is art. Would Warhol have considered Clive Barker's video game 'Undying' as art? Certainly. He would have kept it in its shrink-wrapped box, placed it inside a Plexiglas display case, mounted it on a pedestal, and labeled it 'Video Game.'"

I hope I have shown you that Ebert's suggestion that there is little value to video games beyond their ironic stature amidst a wide range of other apparently more valid formats is evidentially wrong. Is it ironic to find beauty in the styling of computer-rendered imagery? CGI movies, like those from Pixar, have been making grand strides in aesthetic beauty since *Toy Story* came out in 1995. What makes a video game any different? Is it then ironic to find value in a piece of music that originates from a video game rather than a film or play? And is it ironic for an interactive experience to ask you to examine morality and the social institutions of your society? Perhaps if you see a video game as just a toy, it is.

Video games have the potential to be just as effective storytellers as other forms of media, including books and films, perhaps more so with their ability to impact the player personally thanks to the medium's

interactive nature. Mr. Ebert, unfortunately, refuses to acknowledge the potential value of video games as a serious artistic medium and instead chooses to view the assertion that they could be anything more than kitsch entertainment as ridiculous. It is my hope that I have helped to shed some light on the potential of video games as “high art.” Technological limitations are constantly being overcome in the industry, and games will only become increasingly more immersive experiences as time goes on. Perhaps, it's only a matter of time, then, before those who hold the medium in contempt discover the error of their views.

Mr. Ebert, I hope you will one day come to understand the value that gamers see in the interactive art form that is the video game.

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## Scholarship and Internship Opportunities

The Margaret M. Feather, Augustus S. Feather, Jr. and Bette F. DeGraw Endowed Scholarship for Working Adults provides annual cash awards to eligible students who are degree-seeking working adults enrolled at ASU on a part-time basis. Eligible students must be currently enrolled in 6 credit hours or fewer and maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.5. Financial need is a consideration for awards, and scholarships are renewable, but previous award recipients must reapply for future consideration.

Apply at [uc.asu.edu/scholarships.html](http://uc.asu.edu/scholarships.html).

# Superstition Review

The Online Literary Magazine at Arizona State University

## Call for Student Interns, Superstition Review

We are seeking student interns for fall 2010 for the online magazine *Superstition Review*. Interns will register for a 3-credit ENG 484 course, or a similar course in their department.

- The online literary magazine *Superstition Review* is published completely online with two issues per year, fall and spring.
- We publish poetry, creative nonfiction, fiction, artwork, photography and interviews. It is a national magazine and we take submissions from established and emerging writers from across the country.
- We welcome interns from all fields, but especially from creative writing, literature, web design, art, music, film and business.
- All work and communications are completed online through a Blackboard site. Weekly meetings are held online through [ustream.tv](http://ustream.tv).
- E-mail your application in the body of your e-mail message to [pcm@asu.edu](mailto:pcm@asu.edu). **No attachments will be opened.** Applications will be accepted until all positions are filled.
- Available roles are: Art editor, poetry editor, fiction editor, nonfiction editor, advertising coordinator, blogger, content coordinator, Web designers, Photoshop designers, interview coordinator, reading coordinator, submissions coordinator and solicitation coordinator.
- Section editors in poetry, fiction and nonfiction are required to complete the 400-level creative writing courses in their field.
- Design editors should have 1+ years of experience with Dreamweaver or Photoshop.
- Interns will perform the following tasks: solicit work and interviews, write site content and press releases, research grant opportunities, choose work for publication, communicate with authors, organize a reading series, maintain and design the site, and update social networking sites such as our [blog](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).
- Before completing the application, please review several online literary magazines: [www.newpages.com/npguides/litmags\\_online\\_complete.htm](http://www.newpages.com/npguides/litmags_online_complete.htm)
- Also review our site at [www.superstitionreview.com](http://www.superstitionreview.com)

## Mark Your Calendar

### Academic Dates

Mar. 29 – Apr. 5	Academic status report #2
Mar. 31	Graduation filing deadline
Apr. 9	Course withdrawal deadline—in person
Apr. 11	Course withdrawal deadline—online
May 4	Complete withdrawal deadline
	Beginning the first day of classes, undergraduate students must request a complete withdrawal in person.
May 4	Last day of classes and last day to process transaction
May 5	Reading day
May 6 – 12	Final exams
May 13	Commencement
May 10 – 17	Final grades due
May 18	End of semester processing
TBD	Tuition/fee payment deadline for summer 2010
	Students with unpaid tuition charges are automatically enrolled in tuition installment plan.

The ASU academic calendar can be found at [students.asu.edu/academic-calendar](http://students.asu.edu/academic-calendar)

### Spring 2010 Cultural Events Calendar

- Jan. 9 – Apr. 10 **Altered States: Paintings by Gordon Cheung from the Stéphane Janssen Collection**  
First solo exhibition by British artist Gordon Cheung in a U.S. museum. Cheung's work "explore[s] our world in fantastic landscapes," combining "collage, Japanese ink brushwork, photographic transfers," and will also present four new video works by the artist.  
ASU Art Museum in Tempe  
Tuesday, 11am – 8pm; Wednesday – Saturday, 11am – 5pm  
Price: Free!  
[asuartmuseum.asu.edu](http://asuartmuseum.asu.edu)  
[diane.wallace@asu.edu](mailto:diane.wallace@asu.edu)  
(480) 965-2787
- Feb. 6 – Mar. 28 **The Annual Renaissance Festival & Artisan Marketplace**  
12601 E. Hwy. 60  
Apache Junction, AZ 85118  
Saturdays and Sundays, 10am – 6pm  
Prices: \$19, ages 13+ and \$9 ages 5 – 12; Save \$1 by printing tickets online.  
Season passes and "Pleasure Feast" packages are also available.  
[www.royalfaires.com/arizona](http://www.royalfaires.com/arizona)  
(520) 463-2700

Mar. 6 – 21

### **The Immigrant**

The play tells the true story of two Eastern European Jews who immigrated to Texas in the early 1900s. It also explores the Galveston Movement, an organized movement that occurred between 1907 and 1914 to bring Jewish persons to cities in the U.S. that were less crowded than places like New York City.

Paradise Valley Community College

18401 N. 32nd St.

Phoenix, AZ 85032

Thursday, 7pm; Friday, 8pm; Saturday, 8pm; Sunday, 2 and 7pm; 2pm only on Sunday, Mar. 21

Prices: \$32 – \$42; discounts are available for seniors and students

[www.azjewishtheatre.org](http://www.azjewishtheatre.org)

(602) 264-0402

Mar. 26

### **Best of Broadway: Featuring the Songs of Andrew Lloyd Webber**

Featuring excerpts and performers from “Jesus Christ Superstar,” “Evita,” “Cats,” and “Phantom of the Opera”

Pinnacle Presbyterian Church

25150 N. Pima Rd.

Scottsdale, AZ 85255

Friday, 7:30pm

Prices: \$5 – \$35

(480) 585-9448, ext. 701

Mar. 27 – 28

### **Symphonic Star Wars**

The Phoenix Symphony Orchestra performs the music of Star Wars with guest conductor Robert Moody.

Symphony Hall

75 N. Second St.

Phoenix, AZ 85004

(602) 495-1999

Saturday, 2:30pm (Target Family Series)

Prices: \$10 – \$18

Sunday, 2pm

Price: \$26 – \$76

[www.phoenixsymphony.org](http://www.phoenixsymphony.org)

Mar. 27

### **Phoenix Coyotes vs. Colorado Avalanche**

Jobing.com Arena

Saturday, 6pm

Mar. 28

### **Remembering Chopin: A Musical Conversation between George Sand and Frederic Chopin**

Special guest artist and pianist Pamela Howland weaves Sand's autobiography through Chopin's compositions.

Katzin Concert Hall, ASU Tempe campus

Sunday, 5pm

Price: Free!

[music.asu.edu/chopin](http://music.asu.edu/chopin)

[walter.cosand@asu.edu](mailto:walter.cosand@asu.edu)

(480) 965-6447

[go back](#)

- Apr. 8 – 11      **The Great American Flea Market**  
Peoria Sports Complex  
16101 N. 83rd Ave.  
Peoria, AZ 85382  
Thursday – Sunday, 9am – 6pm  
Prices: \$3, free for kids 12 and younger  
[www.thegreatamericanfleamarket.com](http://www.thegreatamericanfleamarket.com)  
(602) 412-8997
- Apr. 9            **Muse**  
The British rock trio comes to Phoenix to promote their new album, *The Resistance*.  
US Airways Center  
201 E Jefferson St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
Friday, 7pm  
Price: \$49.75  
[www.usairwayscenter.com](http://www.usairwayscenter.com)
- Apr. 9            **Elvis Costello**  
Intimate solo acoustic performance with the musical icon.  
Scottsdale Civic Center Amphitheater  
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
Friday, 7:30pm  
Price: \$58  
[www.scottsdaleperformingarts.org](http://www.scottsdaleperformingarts.org)  
(480) 994-2787
- Apr. 20 – 21    **Rain: A Tribute to The Beatles**  
Multimedia tribute, from Ed Sullivan to the Abbey Road rooftop, featuring live performances.  
Mesa Arts Center – Ikeda Theater  
1 E. Main St.  
Mesa, AZ 85211  
Tuesday – Wednesday, 7:30pm  
Prices: \$25 – \$49.50  
[www.mesaartscenter.com](http://www.mesaartscenter.com)  
(480) 644-6500
- Apr. 20 – 25    **The 39 Steps**  
Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python and you have ... (mystery chords!) *The 39 Steps*, Broadway's most intriguing, most thrilling, most riotous, most unmissable comedy smash! The mind-blowing cast of 4 plays over 150 characters in this fast-paced tale of an ordinary man on an extraordinarily entertaining adventure. Winner of two Tony Awards.  
ASU Gammage Theater  
Tuesday – Saturday, 7:30pm; Saturday – Sunday, 2pm; Sunday, 7pm  
Prices: \$19.75 – \$61  
[www.asugammage.com](http://www.asugammage.com)