

RCAH 291 | 'CREATIVITY + HORIZONTALITY': ART AS SOCIAL JUSTICE

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS & HUMANITIES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2008 | RCAH 291 SECTION 003
TR 3:00 – 4:50
CLASSROOM | C203 SNYDER

PROFESSOR | DYLAN MINER
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OFFICE HOURS | TR 10:00 – 11:00
OFFICE | C230J SNYDER HALL
PHONE | 884-1323

DESCRIPTION |

According to Mujeres Creando, a Bolivian anarcho-feminist collective, '*No hay un cambio social radical, que nos haga felices, que no sea creativo.*' With that in mind, this creative workshop will destroy the myth of the autonomy of art by demonstrating the relationship between art and the creation of an egalitarian society. As such, we will investigate how art functions to transform the inequities of contemporary society. What role does art play? How and where does it function? Who makes art and for what purposes? Focusing on non-elite artforms, students will begin to formulate a theory for how and why art is needed if, as the Zapatistas maintain, '*otro mundo es posible.*'

TEN THESES ON ART |

- 01 | Art is an alternative to the mechanization of contemporary life.
- 02 | Art offers a specter of humanity in an alienated existence.
- 03 | Art cannot be learned. Art must always be made.
- 04 | Art is the questioning of 'traditional' models.
- 05 | Art is the production of human relations.
- 06 | Art generates transformation.
- 07 | Art enables heterodoxies.
- 08 | Art is social justice.
- 09 | Art is resistance.
- 10 | Art challenges.

OBJECTIVES |

Due to the interdisciplinarity of this workshop, the goals and objectives are likewise multiple. By discussing, analyzing, and making art, students will accomplish the following:

- Examine the complex role that art plays in contemporary society.
- Investigate the history of art and visual cultures.
- Explain how and why we create meaning through art.
- Interpret the multiple meanings of art (visual, performative + collective).
- Recognize the potential to transform the world through art.
- Construct a vision that connects the past, present, and future.
- Produce avant garde art.

TEXTS |

- Scott McQuire and Nikos Papastergiadis, eds. *EMPIRES, RUINS + NETWORKS: THE TRANSCULTURAL AGENDA IN ART* (London: Rivers Oram Press, 2005).
- Reinaldo Laddaga, Charles Esche, Gertrude Flentge, and Edith Rijnja. *SHIFTING MAP: ARTISTS' PLATFORMS AND STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2004).
- Josh MacPhee and Eric Reuland, eds. *REALIZING THE IMPOSSIBLE: ART AGAINST AUTHORITY* (San Francisco: AK Press, 2007).

ADDITIONAL READINGS > available as PDFs on angel.msu.edu. Log on with netID and password.

WORKSHOP REQUIREMENTS |

project 1 > political poster	15%
project 2 > public work	15%
project 3 > relational work	15%
project 3 > collective work	15%
sketchbook	15%
participation	20%
paper presentation	5%

DEMOS |

There are a small number of demos scheduled throughout the semester. These demos will give a brief 'how-to' on a particular artform. If you are interested in having me demonstrate additional media, supplementary demos may be scheduled as needed. Moreover, you are obviously welcome to share your artmaking knowledge with others (including me), through either an ad hoc interaction or through a more formal demonstration. In this class we will all envision ourselves knowledgeable artists. Therefore, we will be working collectively on various projects.

CRITIQUES |

After each of the four projects, we will conduct a formal workshop critique. Everyone is required to participate in these activities. Without your participation, critiques will be neither fruitful nor helpful. Remember that when commenting on others' artworks, criticism must be constructive. However, we must recognize that critiquing someone's art is not a critique of that person. These are intended to help in your individual artistic growth.

OPEN STUDIO |

Many workshop sessions have been intentionally left open so that you may actively work during the class period. Additional open studios outside of allotted workshop time may also be established if there is sufficient demand and interest. Since this is a creative workshop with a focus on non-hierarchical peer interaction, attendance is compulsory to allow for equitable interaction. Envision ourselves a collective where individual responsibility is also a communal one.

ATTENDANCE |

As part of the Residential College in the Arts & Humanities, attendance is mandatory!! Although I will not be actively 'taking roll,' you will be obliged to actively make and discuss art within the workshop. Therefore, continued absences will alter your ability to comprehend the overall themes of the workshop. Moreover, your presence in the workshop is needed for full participation credit. As such, your attendance may positively and/or negatively affect your final grade through multiple venues.

SUPLIES |

Unfortunately, art costs money! Therefore, you will be required to purchase (or find) certain tools and materials for your projects. Luckily, most of our projects are not extremely cost prohibitive and can be made using recycled or found materials. In other cases, however, I can direct you where items may be purchased.

SYLLABUS

PUBLIC ART |

08 JANUARY 2008

T | The Role of Art

R | Art as an Organizing Tool

15 JANUARY 2008

T | Art's Publics

R | *Stencil Demo*

22 JANUARY 2008

T | *Wheat Paste Demo*

R | Open Studio

29 JANUARY 2008

T | Open Studio

R | Critique

RELATIONAL AESTHETICS |

05 FEBRUARY 2008

T | Against Objects

R | Art as Activism

12 FEBRUARY 2008

T | Open Studio

R | Open Studio

19 FEBRUARY 2008

T | Open Studio

R | Open Studio

25 FEBRUARY 2008

T | Open Studio

R | Critique

03 MARCH 2008

SPRING BREAK

POLITICAL PRINTMAKING |

11 MARCH 2008

T | Print as Democratic Form

R | Art as Activism

18 MARCH 2008

T | *Relief Print Demo*

R | Open Studio

25 MARCH 2008

T | Art as Community Building

R | Open Studio

01 APRIL 2008

READINGS + PROJECTS

introductions.

Shifting Map, Questions + Answers (see 6-8).

Empires, Ruins + Networks, 2-10.

Shifting Map, 15-32; *Realizing the Impossible*, 104-119.

project idea 1 due.

Realizing the Impossible, 76-103.

project 1 + sketchbook due.

Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, PDF;

Bishop, 'The Social Turn,' PDF.

Realizing the Impossible, 220-235.

Kaprow, 'Just Doing,' PDF.

Watch *Retooling Dissent*

project idea 2 due.

Guest lecture: Edgar Heap of Birds

project 2 + sketchbook due.

Realizing the Impossible, 8-19; *California Printmaker*, PDF.

Douglas, *Black Panther*, PDF; Cushing, *¡Revolución!*, PDF.

project 3 idea due.

AgitProp exhibition, see londonprintstudio.org.uk.

Lipsitz, 'Just Another Poster,' PDF.

T | Favianna Rodriguez
R | Favianna Rodriguez

See favianna.com + justseeds.org

COLLECTIVE ARTMAKING |
08 APRIL 2008

T | Favianna Rodriguez
R | Favianna Rodriguez

Empires, Ruins + Networks, 266-302.

15 APRIL 2008

T | Open Studio
R | Critique

project idea 4 due; *Realizing the Impossible*, 180-209.
project 3 + sketchbook due.

22 APRIL 2008

T | Open Studio
R | Open Studio

Realizing the Impossible, 297-307.

28 APRIL 2008

Critique |

3:00-5:00 | THURSDAY, 01 MAY 2008 (MAY DAY)
project 4 due.
portfolio due.
sketchbook due.

NOTE |

This is a working document. Additional readings | assignments may be inserted as this workshop organically develops. This will, of course, depend on the interests and needs of the workshop.