ARST190: Digital Arts | Winter 2020
Chris Chenier

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Credits: 1. Prerequisites: None.
CA: Charles Allen and Jake Abraham

Course Description

This foundations-style course engages core topics in the production and critique of digital and electronic art. Project development, creative problem solving, and experimentation are taught through a series of assignments combining the software and tools most frequently employed in the digital studio. Students will learn to use Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator in conjunction with cameras, inkjet printers, scanners, and a laser cutter. While developing a range of procedural skills such as compositing, animation, and projection, students will search for new ways to employ digital tools across the visual arts.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will learn to conceive, plan, execute, and present original digital artworks.

2. Students will become independent agents in learning digital skills and processes.

3. Students will think creatively and critically about the role of digital technology in art and design today.

4. Students will become *critical makers* through an iterative, hands-on learning process that holds *making* and *doing* as vital forms of intelligence and conversation today.

Requirements

Participation

Active participation throughout this course is necessary for the successful completion of assigned work. Students are expected to maintain sustained and rigorous studio practices throughout the term. In addition to art production, students will encounter reading and research assignments, discussions, and critiques.

Students are expected to be present for all class meetings. **Please email me with at least 12 hours notice if you must miss a class**. Chronic lateness and/or absences jeopardize your grade. Following 1 late arrival, student grades are docked 1/3 letter grade increments. Following 1 absence, each absence is calculated against the final grade in 10 point increments (I.E. if you miss 2 classes, an "A" grade becomes a "B"). Students with 3 absences will not successfully complete this course. No matter the reason.

Students are evaluated based on the following: Participation/attitude, creative/conceptual work, technical dexterity, and personal growth over the term.

Statement of Commitment

This course is aggressively structured. For every hour spent in class, you must expect to spend at least three hours in the studio and library. This work includes in-depth research, creative project development, revision, and experimentation. Because we move quickly, **late work is not accepted.**

Please commit yourself to the following this term: Put in the time. Be respectful of your peers' time and mine. Work your hardest, be self-motivated, and learn through trial and failure. Share what you learn and know freely with all. Push yourself beyond your comfort zone. Be brave, adventurous and surprising!

Presentations

Students must submit presentation subjects and date proposals for approval by January (tba). Late submissions will not be accepted.

Assignments and Grading

Exercises: 30%
Projects: 60%
Presentation: 10%

Calendar

1/7 Day 1:
      Morning: Welcome, Syllabus Review, Pre-Session Assignments Review
      Afternoon: Photoshop workshop, pt. 1
      Assignment: Exercise 1

1/8 Day 2:
      Morning: Exercise 1 review, Photoshop, pt. 2
      Afternoon: Photoshop GIFs
      Assignment: Exercise 2

1/9 Day 3:
      Morning: Exercise 2 review
      Afternoon: Illustrator workshop
      Assignment: Exercise 3

1/10 Day 4:
      Morning: Student Presentations, Exercise 3 review
      Afternoon: Laser Cutting Workshop - Sarah Pike, FreeFall Laser
      Assignment: Project 1

1/13 Day 5:
      Morning: ==Critique Project 1 with Guest Critic, Sarah Pike==
      Afternoon: Student Presentations, Project 2 Lecture
      Assignment: Project 2

1/14 Day 6:
      Morning: Reading discussion, Student Presentations
      Afternoon: Work in studio, desk crits (WIP), Student Presentations
      Assignment: Work on Project 2

1/15 Day 7:
      Morning: Student Presentations, Work in studio
      Afternoon: Student Presentations, Work in studio
      Assignment: Work on Project 2

1/16 Day 8:
      Morning: Work in studio
      Afternoon: Student Presentations, Work in Studio
            Theo - James Bridle
      Assignment: Project 3

1/17 Day 9:
      Morning: ==Critique Project 2==
      Afternoon: Student Presentation, Project 3 Lecture
      Assignment: Work on Project 3

1/21 Day 10:
      Morning: Student Presentations, Work in studio
      Afternoon: Work in studio
      Assignment: Work on Project 3

1/22 Day 11:
      Final! Critique Project 3 - 10AM-1PM

Resources

- Rhizome: http://rhizome.org/
- Art F City: http://artfcity.com/
- e-flux: http://www.e-flux.com/
- Ars Electronica: http://www.aec.at/news/
- Leonardo: International Society for the Arts, Science, and Technology
- DIS Magazine: http://dismagazine.com/
- BitForms Gallery: http://www.bitforms.com/
- Electroboutique: http://www.electroboutique.com/cont/
- Mute: http://www.metamute.org/
- VVork: http://www.vvork.com/
- Vdrome: http://www.vdrome.org/
- Net Art: http://www.net-art.org/
- Elephant Magazine: https://elephantmag.com/
- Eyebeam: http://eyebeam.org/
- eyeo Festival: http://eyeofestival.com/
- FAT (Free Art Technology Lab): http://fffff.at/about/
- FORM+CODE: http://formandcode.com/
- We Make Money, Not Art: http://we-make-money-not-art.com/
- Moma | Architecture and Design: here
- The New Museum: http://www.newmuseum.org/
- Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum: http://www.cooperhewitt.org/
- Creators Project: http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/en_us
- Artsy: https://www.artsy.net/
- Transfer Gallery: http://transfergallery.com/
- Art Forum: https://www.artforum.com/

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Pre-Winter Session Assignments, 2020

Training:

Download all tutorial files and follow along in the training step by step. Don't just gloss over this: there will be a test at the beginning of term.

Photoshop:
- • Digital Foundations Chapters 8, 9. 10, 11
- • Motion Graphics Loops
- • BONUS: Photoshop: Masking and Compositing

Illustrator:
- • Digital Foundations Chapters 3, 5, 6
- • BONUS: Illustrator Fundamentals

Read:

Malcolm McCullough: *Abstracting Craft*: Chapters 1, 7, 9.

Prepare Artist Presentation:

Submit presentation subjects and date proposals for approval by January (tba).
Late submissions will not be considered. Assignment is detailed below.

Acquire:

If possible, please purchase an external hard drive (100-200GB should be OK).

Do:

Make a folder with your name on it in the Student Work folder of the class Drive. Store your work and other important things here.

(Paul Ramirez Jonas, 5 Props for a Speakers Corner, 2008)

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Artist Presentation Guidelines

Select an artist from the list provided in the syllabus. Craft a formal 15 minute oral presentation discussing this artist's biography, exhibition and writing work with special emphasis on the major themes, techniques, and art historical conversations with which they are engaged.

Presentation materials such as slideshows, texts, images, links, etc., must be uploaded to the class Google Drive in your student work folder the **evening before** your presentation.

- Wesleyan's guide to academic citation: here

> **NOTE:** We are primarily interested in your words, ideas, and interpretation of this artist's work. Video and other time-based media may not exceed 4 minutes of your total presentation!

Biography

Briefly Outline:
- Where the artist is from
- How old the artist is
- Where the artist studied (if anywhere)
- Summarize their career (exhibitions, books, teaching, residencies, etc...)

Themes

Discuss the major themes and undercurrents present in the artist's work:
- What is the artist's medium? If multiple, provide a survey
- How would you describe their practice?
- What are the artist's influences?
- If any, what community or movement is this artist associated with?

Selected Works

Present **4-6 artworks**. When showing this work, high quality still images and/or video must be used. Include the following information:
- The artwork's medium, title and date of production
- Date and location/context of exhibition
- Themes, form, and content of the artwork
- Situate these works within the artist's overall career
- How this work connects with other artists and art historical concerns

Documentation

You must provide a bibliography. As in all other academic work, your citations must be accurate and easily located. Hyperlinks to websites represent only minimal effort. There are many other sources available. Find published material about the artist and contemporary art. Use the library to find:
- Books, chapters, and journal articles by or about your artist
- Lectures, interviews, and talks given by the artist

Additional Concerns

- What first interested you in this artist?
- What does this artist have to say about digital technology, contemporary art, media, society or culture?
- Once you learned about this artist, did your understanding of these issues change?
- What do you find challenging about this person's work?
- What about this artist inspires you?
- What other artists, media, or issues did you encounter in your research?

Suggest Presentation Subjects

Amalia Ulman	Golan Levin	LaTurbo Avedon
Angela Washco	Hasan Elahi	Lawrence Abu Hamdan
Anthony Antonellis	Luke DuBois	Penelope Umbrico
Artie Vierkant	Heather Dewey Hagborg	Petra Cortright
Bani Abidi	Hito Steyerl	Rafael Lozano Hemmer
Bogosi Sekhukhuni	Ian Cheng	Rafael Rozendaal
Brenna Murphy	Jacolby Satterwhite	Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Fitch
Casey Reas	James Bridle	Sara Ludy
Cecile B Evans	Jason Salavon	Stefanie Posavec
Constant Dullaart	Jennifer Steinkamp	Katja Novitskova
Cory Arcangel	Jesse Darling	Trevor Paglen
Dina Kelberman	John Maeda	Tyler Coburn
Ed Atkins	Jonathan Monaghan	Walid Raad
Ed Fornieles	Kate Cooper	Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries
Erica Scourti	Katie Torn	Zach Blas