

San Jose State University
Department of Art and Art History
ART 2, Section 02: The Artist in Contemporary Culture

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Léonie Guyer
Office Location: Art 331
Email: leonie.guyer@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12-1 pm
Class Days/Time: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 9:00-10:15 am
Classroom: Art 110

For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: <http://www.sjsu.edu/art/> or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, 408-924-4320, art@sjsu.edu

Course Description

This is an introductory course examining the roles that artists play in contemporary culture. Through critical reading, writing, discussions and problem-solving, students will consider principles of form, theory and research as they are applied to real-world situations confronted by contemporary artists.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Artists think creatively and visually across media, and have many roles in society. Roles to be considered (but not limited to) include philosopher, cultural anthropologist, archivist, environmentalist, activist, healer, trickster. This course will expand notions of contemporary art practice – the myriad ways in which artists work and contribute to culture and community life, intellectual and social discourse, and history.

This course is a seminar with readings and studio-practice homework to be done both during and outside of class time. Students will also be expected to attend at least one art lecture and one museum and/or gallery exhibition.

To successfully complete this course, students will:

1. Be attentive to image presentations; read assigned articles / view videos; research art and artists as recommended; and participate in class discussions;
2. Develop a daily practice of working in your sketchbook / journal;

3. Complete written assignments, including a critical response to “Recoleciones”, a public art project by Mel Chin located in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library; a critical essay in response to a current exhibition; and a “Proposal for an Imagined Site-Specific Work on Campus”;
4. As a final project, create an artist multiple in limited edition. Edition size will be determined by total number of students in class. Multiples will be distributed to class during final critique.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) (Required)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Build on skills in creative problem-solving, brainstorming, and visual communication
2. Deploy their skills in visual research and in applying theory to new situations
3. Demonstrate familiarity with the language of visual critique
4. Expand skills in writing and speaking to include formats of written proposal, formal description and analysis, and critical essay
5. Decipher the cultural roles played by various contemporary artists

Required Texts/Readings

Required readings and videos for the semester will be drawn from a variety of sources, including (but not limited to) critical essays, artists' writings/interviews, art periodicals, and reliable internet sources. These documents will be made available through hand-outs and on Canvas, either as files for download or as web links, and will be presented in conjunction with Course Topics. In addition to assigned readings, a suggested reading list will be provided.

Other material requirements:

Each student is required to procure a sketchbook (8 x 10 in., 9 x 12 in. or similar size) as well as basic drawing tools (pencils, pens, erasers, etc.) to be used in and out of class. This sketchbook will be used for assignments and self-directed work, and will be turned in to the instructor for review twice during the semester. Students will be required to procure their own materials to complete studio assignments; specific materials needed will depend on how they approach the project(s).

Library Liaison

The Library Liaison for Art & Art History is Elisabeth Thomas. She can be reached via email at elisabeth.thomas@sjsu.edu, and by phone at (408) 808-2193. Her office is located on the 4th floor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library and she welcomes students to contact her with research questions. Art & Art History Library Resources are available online at: libguides.sjsu.edu/art. All of the University Library Resources can be accessed at: libguides.sjsu.edu/az.php

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details

about student workload can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Project Deadlines

Deadlines are listed in the Course Schedule. Any work not turned in on the date it is due is considered late, which may impact your grade.

Special circumstances will be taken into consideration (e.g. illness, court appearance, death of relative). The instructor reserves the right to alter assignments and change project due dates with sufficient notice to the students.

Determination of Grades / Grading Policy

Students are expected to be present and engaged for the duration of every class period. If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact me and make arrangements regarding work you have missed. All assignments must be completed and submitted according to ascribed deadlines and instructions.

Your grade will be based on my assessment of your work, your participation in class, and development of skills throughout the semester. Grading determined as follows:

10% Studio Project 1 (details on Canvas)

25% Studio Project 2 (details on Canvas)

25% Studio Project 3 (details on Canvas)

30% Writing Assignments (details on Canvas)

10% Class Participation

Involvement in class discussions of art and ideas presented, readings, group discussions of projects in progress, participation in field trips, participation in project critiques.

NOTE: University policy F69-24 states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

I will assign letter grades; letters correspond to numerical values as follows:

A+ = 97-100, A = 93-96, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66, D- = 60-62, F = below 60

Classroom Protocol

Lectures and image presentations will occur at the very beginning of class – *it is essential to be on time*.

Cell phone use is not allowed and your cell must be placed on silent mode when class is in session.

Cell phones, laptops and other devices must be put away during all lectures and videos.

The use of technology outside of the class's purpose is not allowed.

Participation in discussions and group critiques is required to pass this course.

Contact Information and Communication

Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions or concerns regarding an assignment, the course in general, or any other relevant topic. If you have any problems that impact your participation in class, it is essential that you communicate with me as soon as possible, directly or by email:

leonie.guyer@sjsu.edu

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

“Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”

In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.

“Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>”

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The instructor reserves the right to make adjustments at her discretion; schedule is subject to change with fair notice.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	08/24/17	<p>Introduction to course & syllabus review; student & professor introductions; Project #1 - Daily Practice: Sketchbook / Journal - project includes sketchbook assignments and self-directed work continuing throughout semester. Note: Sketchbooks will be turned in for review - DUE 9/26 and 11/07 Assignments: Review course materials; work in sketchbook</p>
2	08/29/17	<p>Topic I: Materia Prima Abstract Artist as philosopher, contemplative Lecture: Tantra paintings, the Zen <i>ensō</i> (circle), Hilma af Klint, Mondrian, Agnes Martin, Ad Reinhardt, Myron Stout, Forrest Bess, Gee's Bend Quiltmakers, Ryman, Fred Sandback, et al. Assignments: Read selected writings by Franck André Jamme and Lawrence Rinder from <i>Tantra Song</i>; continue work in sketchbook</p>
3	09/05/17	<p>Topic II: Materia Prima Object Artist as alchemist, cultural anthropologist, archivist Lecture: Duchamp, Kurt Schwitters, Hannah Höch, Anne Ryan, Cornell, James Castle, Bruce Conner, Eva Hesse, El Anatsui, Jimmie Durham, Ai Weiwei, et al. NOTE: On 9/07, class meets at MLK Library to view "Recolecciones", a public art project by Mel Chin comprised of 34 artworks sited throughout the library. Assignments: Read "On Anonymity and Failure" by Mira Schor; continue work in sketchbook; write critical response to "Recolecciones" - locate 5 of the 34 artworks and discuss 3 works (2-3 pages) DUE 9/19</p>
4	09/12/17	<p>Topic II (cont.): Materia Prima Action Lecture: Artist as environmentalist, activist - Land Art, ecofeminism, social practice Lecture: Jo Hanson, Agnes Denes, Robert Smithson, Michelle Stuart, Gordon Matta-Clark, Marjetica Potrč, Mierle Ukeles, Ricke Lowe, Theaster Gates, et al. Assignments: Read "Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings" by Eileen Myles and selections from greenmuseum.org, an online museum created by environmental artists; continue work in sketchbook</p>
5	09/19/17	<p>Topic II (cont.): Materia Prima Action View excerpt of "Waste Land" a film by Lucy Walker about artist Vik Muniz.</p>

		<p>Project #2: Proposal for Imagined Site-specific Work on Campus - proposal will be comprised of: project summary (150 word limit); project description (500 word limit); timeline; materials budget; visual support. I will present sample proposals in class. Proposal draft DUE 9/28 Complete proposal DUE 10/24 Assignments: Draft Project #2 proposal synopsis (summary, outline, rough sketches and/or photos) for discussion with Léonie on 9/28 and/or 10/05; continue work in sketchbook</p>
6	09/26/17	<p>Topic III: Art, Ritual and the Body Lecture: Artist as shaman, healer Lecture: Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, Allan Kaprow, Carolee Schneeman, Tehching Hsieh, Bruce Nauman, Terry Fox, Marina Abramovic, Ana Mendieta, et al. DUE 9/26: Sketchbooks - for review DUE 9/28: Project #2 draft (synopsis) – individual meetings Assignments: Read “Art in the Dark” by Thomas McEvilley; continue work in sketchbook and Project #2</p>
7	10/03/17	<p>Topic III (cont.): Art, Ritual and the Body Artist as shaman, trickster - art, identity, community Lecture: Adrian Piper, Eleanor Antin, Valie Export, James Luna, David Hammons, Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Tania Brugera, et al. 10/05: Project #2 draft (synopsis) - individual meetings (cont.) Assignments: Read “Art on My Mind” by bell hooks; continue work in sketchbook and Project #2</p>
8	10/10/17	<p>Topic IV: Mark making and Text Artist as scribe, scholar, poet Lecture: Cy Twombly, Sol LeWitt, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Tim Rollins and K.O.S., Tracey Emin, Glenn Ligon, Ellen Gallagher, Julie Mehretu, et al. Assignments: Read “Sentences on Conceptual Art” by Sol Lewitt; continue work in sketchbook and Project #2; visit a current museum &/or gallery exhibition (list will be provided) and write a critical response - include consideration of 3 specific works in the exhibition (approx. 2 pp) DUE 11/21</p>
9	10/17/17	<p>Topic IV (cont.): Conceptual Art and Text Artist as philosopher, poet, activist Lecture: Concrete Poetry, Yoko Ono, Hans Haacke, General Idea, Guerilla Girls, Lawrence Weiner, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Jenny Holzer, Mark Lombardi, et al. View: “Baldessari Sings LeWitt” (1972) Assignments: Read excerpts from <i>Grapefruit</i> by Yoko Ono; continue work in sketchbook and Project #2</p>
10	10/24/17	Project #2 DUE

		Class critique - verbal / visual presentations of proposals
11	10/31/17	Project #2 Class critique continues - verbal / visual presentations of proposals
11	11/07/17	Project #3, Artist Multiples - for our final project you will create an artist multiple in a limited edition. Processes may include (but not be limited to) drawing, printmaking, stenciling, stamping, collage, casting (for sculpture edition), photography, writing. Edition size will be determined by total number of students in class, and multiples will be exchanged amongst students. Multiples will be gathered in envelope, box or other container. Use your sketchbook as a source for ideas / images. As inspiration and research for this project, we will view artist multiples and printed matter e.g., <i>Semina</i> , Wallace Berman's mail art publication. DUE 12/05/17
12	11/14/17	Visiting Artist (TBA) DUE: Sketchbooks - for review Assignments: Continue work in sketchbook and Project #3
13	11/21/17	Topic V: The Figure and Identity Artist as observer, constructor/de-creator of identity Lecture: Claude Cahun, Beauford Delaney, Alice Neel, Romare Bearden, Phillip Guston, Lee Friedlander, Lucas Samaras, Wangechi Mutu, Mickalene Thomas, et al. Assignments: Read "Travels with Guston" by Bill Berkson; continue work in sketchbook and Project #3
14	11/28/17	Topic IV: The Figure, Archetype and Narrative Artist as storyteller Lecture: Jacob Lawrence, Florinne Stettheimer, Nancy Spero, Gerhard Richter, Marlene Dumas, Sophie Calle, Kerry James Marshall, Kara Walker, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Nicole Eisenman, et al. DUE: Critical writing - exhibition review Assignments: Continue work in sketchbook and Project #3
16	12/05/17	DUE: Project #3, Artist Multiples Class critique - presentation of artist multiples
Final Crit	12/14/17	Note: December 12 - Study/Conference Day (no classes) Class critique continues - presentation and exchange of multiples