

Discover and Go Program. This requires you log in with your SJPL id and pin. I have linked to it on my main libguide, but please promote it to students as it includes big venues like the Asian Art Museum, Contemporary Jewish Museum, Museum of the African Diaspora, and many others around the Bay. The direct link is <https://sjpl.discoverandgo.net/>

San José State University
Department of Art & Art History
ART 002, The Artists in Contemporary Culture, Section 2, Spring 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Robin Lasser
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Office Hours:	Tu. and Thurs. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Class Days/Time:	Thurs. evening 6-8:50 PM
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 Format/Description

This is an introductory course for those new to studying art. This course offers critical readings and problem-solving: principles of form and theory and research applied to real-world situations frequently confronted by contemporary artists.

A question that most of you are probably familiar with is “What is Art? This course is not interested in answering that or finding new ways to ask that question. There are plenty of opportunities to figure that out in your career as an art student and artist. What this course asks is, “What or who is an Artist?” The title of artist is thrown around a lot for so many different reasons. We call someone who is groundbreaking in their field, (even for a non-creative field), an artist. There is a parallel people use to equate artistry with genius or ground breaking. But are they really artists? How do we define the title of artist in contemporary culture if the lines that define an artist are eroding or evolving? In this course, we will look at the different roles artists have played in contemporary art history and culture. We will look at the artist as activist, environmentalist, community organizer, cultural diplomat, identity explorer, and space shaper, place maker. Do you consider yourself an artist? Maybe at the end of this course, you would be able to answer that question for yourself.

This course expands notions about roles that artists play in contemporary culture, how their practice and productions may include and or move beyond traditional mediums like painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture, and how the arts may align with other disciplines including architecture, engineering, urban planning, ecology, community, and civic service.

Course Goals

Artists think creatively and visually across all media, and they have many roles in society. Roles to be considered will include (but are not limited to) the hero, rebel, witness, cultural interpreter, culture-jammer, and cultural healer/ record-keeper. Roles may align with other fields of study such as biologist, naturalist, anthropologist, archeologist, sociologist, and environmentalist.

To expand our imagination and develop some breadth of scope concerning the narrow way we traditionally

think about art, artists, and their practice. In this pursuit we will discuss and write about a diverse set of contemporary artists and how they survive by creating unique jobs and projects that are sustainable in contemporary society.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. You will read assigned articles/view videos and come to class prepared to participate in discussions. Aligned with learning objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.
2. You will write reviews about visiting artists and how their work relates to the slideshows of artists presented in class and the roles they play. You will also write a reflection on each of the three class topics, Identity, Community, and Environment and the roles each artist plays within that theme. This is aligned with learning outcome 2, 3, 4 and 5.
3. You will create a final art project and proposal aligned with learning objectives 4 and 6.
4. You will create an idea archive aligned with learning objectives 1 and 2.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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 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.
5. Decipher the cultural roles played by various contemporary artists.
6. Edit and manipulate images, (basic digital darkroom workflow) compose a working budget and timeline.

Required Texts/Readings (Required)

Textbook

No textbook

Other Readings

Readings will be distributed at the beginning of each topic section. The readings will be sent to students by e-mail prior to the introduction of each topic. Students will be asked throughout the semester to look at the work of artists in relation to each topic we will cover. A suggested reading list, with books related to the topics covered in class, is provided below:

Sarah Thorton, Seven Days in the Artworld

Linda Weintraub, In The Making

Ted Orland, The View from the Studio Door: How Artists Find Their Way In An Uncertain World

Osha Neumann, Doodling on the Titanic, The Making of Art in a World on the Brink

Beverly Naidus, Arts for Change Teaching Outside the Frame

Bell Hooks, Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom

Guillermo Gomez –Pena, The New World Border

Fusco and Wallis, Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self
Sue Spaid, Ecovention: Current Art to Transform Ecologies
Robin Lasser, Refuge in Refuse: Homesteading Art and Culture

Websites/Blogs:

The Nature of Cities: <http://www.thenatureofcities.com/about/>
Art Net News: <https://news.artnet.com/?pg=2>
WEAD Women Environmental Artists Directory: <http://weadartists.org>
KQED Art21: <http://www.pbs.org/art21/>
KQED ART SCHOOL: <http://ww2.kqed.org/artschool/artists-a-z/>
TED Ideas worth spreading <https://www.ted.com>

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final examination is your project proposal and the work produced for this proposal

Grading Information

Grade Breakdown:

Final Project: 30% (written proposal 15 percent, project installation 15%)
Each paper equals 10 points. Three papers, total =30%
Weekly idea journal to be turned in midterm and final 20%
Class participation 20%

Grading Criteria

The work created in class will be evaluated based on the following criteria. Extra credit papers about a lecture on art, or field trip to an art institution is possible. Grade goes down half a grade, for each day a project or paper is late.

- A Outstanding: thoughtful and intelligent ideas presented in a clear, organized, and engaging manner; among the very best.
- B Above Average - Good: the ideas are interesting and successfully presented; shows potential, but not necessarily distinctive; roughly equal in quality to the majority of work completed by other students.
- C Average - mediocre: achieves minimum requirements of the assignment, but not particularly clear, nor ambitious. Quality of work is below that of most other projects submitted. May be above average idea presented in incomplete state.
- D Unsatisfactory: does not satisfy the minimum requirements of the assignment; generally unsatisfactory in terms of quality and clarity.
- F You didn't submit an assignment.

Classroom Protocol

It is expected for students to attend each class period since a lot of this course is based on participation. Absence of any class period is not an excuse for turning in assignments late. Students are encouraged to use any technology that will help facilitate the production of projects and assignments. The use of technology outside of the class's purpose is not allowed. Cell phone use is not allowed and your cell must be placed on silent mode when class is in session.

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](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to



scan this code.)

ART 002/The Artist in Contemporary Culture, Spring 2017, Course Schedule

List the agenda for the semester including when and where the final exam will be held. Indicate the schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan. 26	Introduction to course and review the syllabus, student and professor introductions. Create a list with names, e-mail and phone numbers. TA will take care of this task. Film, Waste Land a film by Lucy Walker follows artist Vik Muniz. Assignment: - Read articles: <i>Our Lives In This Place</i> Metro, <i>Refuge in Refuse</i> Street Spirit, <i>Albany Bulb</i> Boom. Click onto: www.refugeinrefuse.weebly.com
2	Feb. 2	Topic 1: Art and Social Practice: Artist as cultural anthropologist, community engager, and spectacle producer for social transformations. Lecture: <i>Our Lives in this Place</i> , (Genevieve Hastings, Trena Noval and Robin Lasser) Talk about post cards and use for social engagement to call awareness to topical issues such as Climate Change. Potential final project asset. <i>Refuge in Refuse: Albany Bulb Landfill</i> , (Robin Lasser, Barbara Boissevain and Danielle Siembieda) Assignment: Read articles about Candy Chang and Jon Rubin
3	Feb. 9	Lecture: Candy Chang, Jon Rubin, Suzanne Lacy Assignment: Art in Transit proposal
4	Feb. 16	Guest Speaker: Arzu Mistry- <i>Art in Transit</i> (between identity an social practice.) Assignment: Turn in a 3-page reflection on Art and Social Practice. Include commentary from each class lecture, site examples from readings for each lecture, and reflections on guest speaker(s) Reflections can include but are not limited to

		descriptions of art presented, interpretations and evaluations of artworks and the roles sited artist play in contemporary culture. Ten points total-3 for each lecture/reading and 1 for general creativity in your writing.
5	Feb. 23	<p>Topic 2: Art and Identity- Role of artist as witness , shape shifter, instigator, and interrupter. Artist as interventionist and revolutionist.</p> <p>Lecture: JR and Krzysztof Wodiczko</p> <p>Assignment- Turn in paper on Art and Social Practice Read <i>Can Black Art Ever Escape The Politics of Race?</i></p>
6	March 2	Lecture: (African Diaspora)-Adrienne Piper, Carrie Mae Weems, David Hammons, and William Kentridge.
7	March 9	<p>Lecture: (African Diaspora) continued- Nick Cave, Yinka Shonibare, and Kara Walker</p> <p>Assignment- Write a 3-page reflection on Art and Identity . Include commentary from each class lecture, site examples from readings and reflections on guest speaker/. Reflections can include but are not limited to descriptions of art presented, interpretations and evaluations of artworks and the roles sited artist plays in contemporary culture. Ten points total-3 for each lecture/reading and 1 for general creativity in your writing.</p> <p>Read article on Steven Siegel</p>
8	March 16	<p>Topic 4. Artist as place maker/environmentalist</p> <p>Turn in paper</p> <p>Lecture: Olafer Eliason, Steven Siegel, Adrienne Pao with Robin Lasser, and Marguerite Perret with Robin Lasser</p> <p>Assignment: Read articles related to Topic 4. Artist as place maker/ environmentalist (Lasser, v.6-1 (Gonzalez) Click onto www.barbaraboissevain.com and review her website. Come prepared with questions.</p>
9	March 23	<p>Guest Artist Barbara Boissevain</p> <p>Assignment: Write paper on environmental artists and guest artist Barbara Boissevain. Turn paper in on March 30. Think about your project proposal</p>
10	March 30	Spring Break
11	April 6	<p>Turn in paper and discuss project/proposal ideas with Robin and Rebecca. I will show some sample proposals in class. Once approved, begin to write proposal.</p> <p>Proposal should include 75 word summary, 350 word project description, timeline, materials, and budget. Send proposals to Robin and Rachel by midnight, Saturday April 8. We will return them to you in class on April 12.</p>
12	April 13	Work on fabrication of project. Confirm site agreement. I will individually go

		over grades thus far. Please send your finalized edited proposal to Rachel and I by Midnight, Saturday April 15.
13	April 20	Work on fabrication of project.
14	April 27	Group 1 and 2 Present installed projects
15	May 4	Group 3 and 4 Present installed projects
16	May 11	Group 5 and 6 Present installed projects
Final Exam		Venue and Time