

San José State University
College of Humanities and the Arts / Department of Art and Art History
Art 3, Section 4
Medium and Message
Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Irene Carvajal

Office Location: Art 315

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Office Hours: T, TH 9:30am - 10:30am, (by appointment) 6pm-7pm

Class day and time: T, TH 10:30-11:45 am

Classroom 108

Units: 3

Department Office: ART 116

Department Contact: Website: www.sjsu.edu/art Email: art@sjsu.edu

Additional Contact Information

- text me at 650-787-1427 this the best method of contact during non-office hours.
- Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.
- Emergency: 911
- Campus Escort: 42222
- Individuals with disabilities may contact the Accessible Education Center (AEC), Administrative Building 110, 408/ 924-6000, <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/> for a variety of formats such as Braille, large print, sign interpreters, assistive listening devices, audio tape and accommodations for physical accessibility.

Communication

We will communicate via Canvas, where all course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found. Students are responsible for checking weekly.

<https://sisu.instructure.com>.

Your Username is your 9-digit SJSU ID number, and your password is your SJSU-One account password.

Course Description

This undergraduate seminar introduces intermediate level artists to seminal writings and ideas surrounding materiality, communication and message and the importance of art in culture making. The goal is to create a foundation for critical thinking and an art practice based on research. We will explore and discuss historical as well as contemporary, thoughts about materiality and message.

This course will introduce multiple approaches to thinking about medium, authorship, communication and the relationship between materiality, process and project. We will analyze the role of art and the artist in society. Students will write and prepare presentations based on the assigned readings. Students will critically reflect, analyze, and write about their own and other's art work. This course is a seminar with readings and studio practice homework to be done largely outside of class time.

Course Learning Outcomes for ART 3

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

CL01: demonstrate knowledge about different media

CL02: demonstrate and apply knowledge about the relationship of medium and content

CL03: demonstrate fluency in the language of visual critique

CL04: demonstrate sensitivity to a variety of media and cultural modes of representation

CL05: track their own iterative working process

Library Liaison

Gareth Scott, email: gareth.scott@sjsu.edu

phone: (408) 808-2094

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library

4th Floor Administration Offices

Art and Art History Resources: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/ArtReference>

Project Deadlines

Deadlines are listed in the Course Calendar. Any work not turned in on the date it is due is considered late. Ten percent will be deducted from the grade for every class period it is not turned in. In addition, it is important to participate and engage with class critiques – you will learn as much from your fellow students as from your instructor in these activities, as the dialogue and discussion is essential to an artist's growth.

Special circumstances will be taken into consideration (e.g. illness, court appearance, death of a relative.) 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.

Assigned readings are not easy, don't leave them for bedtime reading! Everyone has the responsibility to read all assigned readings and write a critical response.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The Final Examination requirement will be met by completing a final project. To give each student time to present we will have final presentations over the course of the last two weeks of school.

Grading Information

Grades will be based on a culmination of all projects and reading responses (90%), class participation in critiques and in-class clean up duties (10%).

Projects will be graded based on the rubric for each project. Rubrics will be posted on our CANVAS site. You will be evaluated on your grasp of essential processes, resolution of ideas, level of craftsmanship and presentation, and completion and timeliness of the projects and assignments.

Grades will be assigned according to University policy from A to F as outlined in the SJSU catalog. All work must be finished and turned in according to ascribed deadlines and instructions.

Your grade will be based on my assessment of your work, based on the criteria and rubric listed for each project. The assignments are designed to test your ability to creatively apply the concepts from lectures and demos to specific problems. These skills will improve as you apply them to solving incrementally more difficult problems over your college career and beyond.

Rubrics will be posted to Canvas and can be reviewed at any time during the development of a project.

Note that "All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades." See [University Policy F13--1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13--1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13--1.pdf> for more details.

Classroom Protocol

General

- You are absolutely expected to be in class, on time, ready to work
- Important announcements, changes to the schedule all begin in the first 5 minutes of class time. Being late to these announcements negatively affects your participation grade
- Lectures and discussion are dynamic and benefit from everyone's participation. Failure to prepare and participate in them will affect your grade.

Laptops and cell phones

- Laptops and cell phones are to be used for research ONLY. Your social life can wait.
- Put your cell phone away. This is about being respectful to your professor and fellow students. I do my best to make discussions and lectures informative, humorous and succinct. You will do your best to give 100% of your attention and participation to making them interesting and dynamic

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Can be found at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#), requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- You may record my lectures. We will discuss as a group how people feel about being recorded and we will respect and follow presenters wishes.

- “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.”

Attention!!! Recycling projects already turned in in another class counts as cheating. All work made in this class must be new work—a “customized” response to each assignment. It is essential that I see your work in progress in the weeks prior to each critique, for your piece to receive credit. Work that appears completely out of the blue will be considered highly suspect. I will invite other instructors from the department to view photographs from our class critiques in Dropbox, in order to make sure no project is recurring from another class.

Glossary for Medium and Message

Abstract: (adjective) referring to art that simplifies, emphasizes, or distorts qualities of a real-life image rather than art that tries to represent its surface details accurately. In some cases, the intent is to present the es

Craft: the tradition of the manipulation of a given material; the act of “working” a given material using time-honoured techniques.

Critique: any means by which strengths and weaknesses of designs are analyzed.

Craftsmanship: aptitude, skill, or quality workmanship in use of tools and materials.

Cultural critique: Artists engage in cultural critique when they use their artwork to question societal norms and expectations.

Decorative: pertaining to elements which enhance the surface of a designed object but which are not integrated into the structure of the object.

Disparate: separate, distinct, dissimilar (often applied to objects or elements placed together in a composition).

Economy: the use of only the bare essentials needed to perform the intended task.

Elegant: with respect to design (or mathematics): ingeniously simple and effective, free of extraneous detail.

Emotive qualities: the qualities of an object or an image that arouse feeling or emotion in the viewer. **Fabrication:** the action or process of manufacturing or constructing something.

Figurative: drawing, painting and sculpture based on the human form.

Form: “The means by which one gives substance to an idea”—Kendall Buster and Paula Crawford. The embodiment of a concept in a material state. “Form” can also be used in place of the word “shape” when describing a three-dimensional object.

Formal: concerning the form, shape, appearance, arrangement, or external qualities of an object (as opposed to its “meaning”, for example.)

Found Object: in an artwork, any object that was not made “from scratch” by the artist. The term usually refers to a recognizable “thing” more often than a “raw material.”

Function: the goal that must be achieved by a design, or the work to be done by a designed object (a chair’s function is usually to seat a person more or less comfortably.)

High-Profile Materials: in a piece of artwork, materials that maintain a clear identity even after being manipulated to form the artwork. An example would be Tim Hawkinson’s use of orange extension-cords as a material from which to crochet a pair of shorts.

Hybrid: a fusion of two unlikely or incongruous elements; the new, unnamed form created by the blending of two recognizable forms. **Illusionistic space:** the illusion of “real”, three-dimensional space created on a two-dimensional surface by painting, drawing, photography etc.

Installation Art: "A kind of art making which rejects concentration on one object in favor of a consideration of the relationships between a number of elements or the interaction between things and their contexts."

In-the-round: viewed from all angles. When we say that a piece of sculpture or a designed object functions well in the round, we usually mean that it doesn't have an obvious "front" or "back"--- it is equally interesting from any angle.

Juxtaposition: placement side by side; relationship of two or more elements. in a composition.

Kinetic: construction that contains moving elements set in motion by air, motors or gravity.

Kitsch: "Kitsch" artworks are artworks designed to have mass appeal, often through the use of "cute" or sentimental imagery. Kitsch is associated with cheapness, marketability, and gaudiness.

Lamination: the connection of two or more layers of a given material into a larger unit, by means of glue. The process of gluing multiple "plies" of wood into a curved form is known as "bent lamination."

Low-Profile Materials: materials that seem to lose their distinct identity as they are manipulated to become a piece of artwork. Clay is a low-profile material, which is often used to mimic the textures of a variety of other materials.

Maquette: a small, scale model for a work intended to be enlarged.

Material: the substance that an object or a work of art is made from, whether steel, stone, wire, wood, etc. In the past century, artists and designers have often "celebrated" materials by designing for a given material, rather than hiding it under surface treatments.

Meaning: the idea that a piece of art conveys, or aspires to convey. Often, viewers will see a variety of meanings in the same piece, based on their differing experiences.

Mechanical fastening: connecting two parts using hardware or interlocking joinery, instead of adhesives. Medium, media (pl): The material(s) and tool(s) used by the artist to create the visual elements perceived by the viewer.

Minimal: in art, characterized by the use of simple or primary forms, structures, etc., often geometric and massive.

Modular: involving the systematic use of a single unit of design, repeated and varied in position, angle, or combinations creating larger forms or units.

Multiple: a single unit repeated many times to form an artwork. A multiple may be produced by a moldmaking process, printmaking process, or by another means of mechanical reproduction.

Nonrepresentational: works of art that are purely self-referential, as opposed to those that allude to known things in the world.

Object: anything that is visible or tangible and stable in form. A thing. Objective (adjective): an objective description of a piece of art refers to undisputable "facts" about the artwork, as opposed to opinion. "The sculpture is made of stainless steel and is six feet long" would be an objective description.

Presentation: The way a piece of art is displayed to the viewer, including its method of support. Methods of presentation include mounting a piece of sculpture to the wall, "plopping" it on a pedestal, or hanging it by fishing line.

Methods of presenting a two-dimensional work like a drawing include framing it or pinning it directly to the wall.

Process: In art, the means by which an object is produced. Sometimes, the obstacles posed by a particular fabrication process influence the look and even the meaning of the final work of art.

Representational: forms that resemble other known objects, figures etc (as opposed to entirely abstract, non-representational forms.)

Self-supporting: In sculpture, an object's ability to present itself to the viewer by standing directly on the floor or ground surface, rather than relying on a pedestal or other external means of presentation to support it.

Scale: the relationship between the size of an object and the size of its surroundings.

Sculpture: the art of expressive shaping of three-dimensional materials.

Site: "a particular place or location in the world at large".

Site-specific: a site-specific project is one that was conceived and fabricated specifically for a given site. The piece may or may not still function if moved elsewhere (and will probably not have the same meaning once moved.)

Subjective: dependent on interpretation, not clearly quantifiable or easily verifiable. (“The sculpture is beautiful”, is a subjective statement, as opposed to “the sculpture is shiny and red,” an objective statement.)

Structure: The means by which an object is put together; a system of connections of parts.

Style: the specific artistic character and dominant trends of form noted during periods of history and art movements.

Style may also refer to artists' expressive use of media to give their works individual character.

Stylization: The simplification of a form to emphasize its design qualities. In representational drawing or sculpting, stylization can mean working from preconceived ideas about the figure as opposed to drawing or sculpting “what is there.”

Symbol: “conventionalized images that convey commonly held cultural values” (Stephen Luecking). An example is the flag of the United States.

Tableau: In O’Doherty’s use of the term, a tableau is like a perspective picture made three-dimensional—or like a self-contained diorama which, according to O’Doherty, “impersonates” other spaces. In most tableaux, the viewers do not have access to wander among the objects and figures as in some installation art.

The instructor reserves the right to alter assignments and change project due dates with sufficient notice to the students. The Syllabus is a work in progress, subject to change.

READINGS and PROJECTS

Critical readings and short essays: (20pts)

1. Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium is the Message*, Gingko Press, 1967 (10pt) Due 2/6
https://sisu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1cue0e3/01CAL5_ALMA71426862770002901
2. Guerilla Girls Manifesto **Due 3/12**
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/guerrilla-girls-the-advantages-of-being-a-woman-artist-p78796>
3. Shepard Fairey, by Iggy Pop, *Interview Magazine* Due **2/20**
4. <https://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/shepard-fairey>
5. Judy Chicago **Due 2/25**
<https://www.artsy.net/article/christine-in-conversation-with-judy-chicago-icon-of>
6. Julia Bryan Wilson, *The politics of Craft*, *Modern Painters*, February 2008 **Due 3/30**
<http://libaccess.sjlibrary.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asu&AN=505280421&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
7. Walter Benjamin’s “Art in the age of Technological Reproducibility” (10pt) **Due 4/16**
https://monoskop.org/images/6/6d/Benjamin_Walter_1936_2008_The_Work_of_Art_in_the_Age_of_Its_Technological_Reproducibility_Second_Version.pdf

Projects (60pts)

1. Multiplicity Project (10 pts) Due 2/11
2. Installation Project (10pts) Due 3/3
3. Collage Project (10 pts) Due 3/19
4. Craft Project (10 pts) Due 4/2
5. Video Project (10pts) Due 4/21

Contemporary Artists (20pts)

Choose a contemporary artist to present, analyze and critique. You will meet with me one on one before hand to share who you are presenting on. Due 4/28

Participation (10pts)

Active usage of class time/studio time for at least 12 sessions

Present for all presentations and lectures

Active participation in critique

Art 3, Section 4/Medium and Message, Spring 2020, Course Schedule

week	day	date	activity
1	TH	1/23	Syllabus, Introductions, expectations. Introduction to critical language
2	T	1/28	History, Medium and Message Video: Kerry James Marshall on Art History Active reading analysis example
	TH	8/30	Multiplicity The Medium is the Message introduction Guerilla Girls video Andy Warhol video
3	T	2/4	Active reading (in groups) of the medium is the message
	TH	2/6	Class Discussion on McLuhan's "the Medium is the Message" Your essay on McLuhan is due TODAY <u>BEFORE</u> class
4	T	2/11	Multiplicity Project critique
	TH	2/13	Multiplicity Project critique
5	T	2/18	Installation presentation (video) William Kentridge (video) Ana Fernandez

	TH	2/20	Sherpard Fairey, by Iggy Pop, Interview Magazine Class Discussion Essay due BEFORE CLASS
6	T	2/25	(video) Kusama Class Discussion on Judy Chicago
	TH	2/27	(video) Ann Hamilton, Art as play and pleasure
7	T	3/3	Installation project critique
	TH	3/5	Installation project critique
8	T	3/10	Collage Presentation (video) Tara Donovan, Everyday materials (video) Cornelia Parker (video) Dolores Salcedo Discuss Guerrilla Girl Manifesto
	TH	3/12	Guerilla Girls Manifesto project due (video) Tara Donovan, Everyday materials (video) Dolores Salcedo Collage class discussion. Run your ideas about your project by your peers
9	T	3/17	Collage Project Critique
	TH	3/19	Collage Project Critique
10	T	3/24	Craft Presentation (video) Mark Bradford
	TH	3/26	Essay due Before Class Class Discussion on the Politics of Craft
11	T	3/30	SPRING BREAK
	TH	4/2	SPRING BREAK
12	T	4/7	Craft project critique
	TH	4/9	Craft project critique

13	T	4/14	Video/Film presentation (video) Nicola Constantino (video) TBD
	TH	4/16	Class Discussion on Walter Benjamin's Art in the Age Benjamin Essays due today
14	T	4/21	Video project critique
	TH	4/23	Video project critique Irene's Demo on Artist Presentation
15	T	4/28	Artist Presentations and Discussion: 4 15min presentations
	TH	4/30	Artist Presentations and Discussion: 4 15min presentations
16	T	5/5	Artist Presentations and Discussion: 4 15min presentations
	TH	5/7	Artist Presentations and Discussion: 4 15min presentations
	M	5/18	Final 9:45-12 noon Artist Presentations and Discussion: 4 15min presentations