

# FA21: ART-3 Sec 04 - Medium and Message

San José State University

Department of Art & Art History

Art 3, Medium and Message, Section 04, FA, 2021

## Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Lance M Fung

Office Location: by appointment via zoom

Telephone: (Email only)

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[and lance@fungcollaboratives.com](mailto:lance@fungcollaboratives.com) (please use this address  
if you need to notify me you are running late or will not  
attend class)

Office Hours: Monday / 1:00 - 4:00 by appointment

Class Days/Time: Tuesdays & Thursday / 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM

Classroom: Via zoom

Department Office: ART 116

Department Contact: Website: [www.sjsu.edu/art](http://www.sjsu.edu/art) (Links to an external  
site.) Email: [art@sjsu.edu](mailto:art@sjsu.edu)

## Web Access to course materials

All materials such as the Green Sheet, required reading, announcements, class assignments, deadlines, grades, etc. can be found on the Canvas Management system course website: <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You should visit this site often to be up to date with information. Log in and with your SJSUOne information for access.

# Course Description

This undergraduate seminar introduces beginning and intermediate-level artists to a research and project-based approach to art-making with a focus on contemporary, idea-appropriate media and methods / material choice.

## Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Contemporary artists choose or invent the media that will best convey specific ideas. When their chosen medium lies outside of their previously acquired skill-set, they either "farm out" aspects of a project or collaborate with others with skills appropriate for the project. In the case of extremely ambitious projects, an artist may function more as an art director than a sole author and maker of their work. This course will introduce multiple approaches to thinking about medium, authorship, the relationship between process and project, and the roles of the artist, community and audience in the development of public art projects.

This course is a seminar with readings, conceptual assignments, and studio-practice homework to be done outside of class time. There will be at least one field trip to an art museum or public art venue (if allowed by Santa Clara County and SJSU).

## Course Content Learning Outcomes

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

CLO1: demonstrate knowledge about different media

CLO2: demonstrate and apply knowledge about the relationship of medium and content

CLO3: demonstrate fluency in the language of visual critique

CLO4: demonstrate sensitivity to a variety of media and cultural modes of representation

CLO5: track their own iterative working process

## Required Texts/Readings

### Textbook

The main weekly reading will consist of subscribing to the free service [e-flux.com](https://flux.com). Additional reading assignments will be assigned on an as needed basis from a number of resources such as art publications, art websites, and theoretical texts. The goal is to read about current trends more so than historical text.

## Required Materials

Each student must have a notebook for each class and a laptop. A functioning camera to be used for zoom classes. All materials required to complete the artwork assignment 4 will be at the student's expense.

## Department Advising

For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for a change of major/minor forms and a list of

advisors: <http://www.sjsu.edu/art/> (Links to an external site.) or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, 408-924-4320, [art@sjsu.edu](mailto:art@sjsu.edu)

### **More Faculty Information:**

**MySJSU Faculty Center Tutorials:** [http://my.sjsu.edu/employees/employee\\_tutorials/faculty\\_tutorials/index.html](http://my.sjsu.edu/employees/employee_tutorials/faculty_tutorials/index.html) (Links to an external site.)

**Canvas:** <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/> (Links to an external site.)

**Canvas Faculty Resources:** [http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/faculty\\_resources\\_new/index.html](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/faculty_resources_new/index.html) (Links to an external site.)

## Library Liaison

Gareth Scott can be reached at [gareth.scott@sjsu.edu](mailto:gareth.scott@sjsu.edu) or found on the fourth floor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library. His phone number is (408) 808-2094. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 4th Floor Administration Offices

You may also visit the library website

at: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/collectiondevelopment/CDhumanities> (Links to an external site.)

## Course Requirements and Assignments

The SJSU expectation for out of class work is three hours per week for this course. Although students will be given time to work on their final projects in class, it is anticipated that time outside the class will also be required. Additional work outside of class may be contemplation and reflection on class lectures, discussions, critiques. Time to research and complete the writing assign as well as class preparation may also be required.

## Grading Information

Although this course will embrace flexibility and experimentation which are some of the benchmarks for success, there will be three projects that will be reviewed and evaluated throughout the semester. Each student will have ample time to submit their best possible submission to receive the desired grade.

However, quality and meeting deadlines will be paramount. Each assignment will comprise 20% percentage of your overall grade. A full grade deduction will occur for every week any assignment is turned in late. Assignments will not be accepted after the second week past the due date. In that case, the assigned grade will be 0 points.

For the 3 projects and the Final, the student will make the decision of which medium to use to create an artwork based on the professor's theme. The goal is for the student to think like a professional artist and determine how best to create an aesthetic artwork but most importantly in the case of this course, select the most appropriate materials to push forward the conceptual content.

Each student will need to make a project from all of these categories so that by the end of the semester they will have made a drawing/painting, sculpture, video/film/media, and photograph proposal or artwork.

**However, each "artwork" for projects 1 - 3 will not need to be a fully realized artwork. Rather, you may make a model, rendering or proposal to illustrate your concept and the materials you envision. Budget and practical issues will no longer hold back any idea because you can fantasize and deliver an unrealizable concept. This will also eliminate any fears of working in a medium you do not have the skills or budget to support your concept. In other words, this will provide you a glimpse into how an artist like Damien Hirst actually works by conceiving his artwork, without limitations, and then realizing it in any way possible.**

#### **Class participation:**

Each class will be very interactive, reactionary, and fun. Participation and the ability to share your thoughts in an unedited and constructive yet respectful fashion will help cut to the chase and get to the true substance of each lecture, discussion and idea. Each class will be divided into lecture and process time. The teacher will lead the lecture portion of the class followed by a Q & A period. In this period, it is anticipated that you will come with thoughts, images, and questions to further the discussion.

#### **Final:**

Your fourth project will be presented and critiqued as your final and will represent 30% of your overall grade. Unlike the 3 previous projects, your final project must be a fully realized artwork along with your full documentation. Materiality and process will be of the students choice but based on the 4 media choices mentioned above. The quality and time

commitment for the artwork will be paramount to your best outcome so a big effort in making an accomplished artwork will be expected to receive a high grade.

### **Grades**

All grades will be available on Canvas and as quickly as possible. Any assignment turned in with one week late will automatically receive a full grade deduction. A second week will result in 2 full grade deductions. No assignments will be allowed past the second week,

### **Grade Breakdown**

Project 1: (20%)

Project 2: (20%)

Project 3: (20%)

Final (Project 4): (30%)

Participation: (10%)

### **Extra Credit Assignments:**

Upon occasions there may be extra credit assignments offered. However, students have the opportunity to present individual extra credit assignments that are directly related to this course for the teacher's discretion. 10% is the total maximum credit that can be earned and should be commensurate with the workload and required skill of the normal class assignments.

## **Grade Scale**

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	=	59 and below
A	=	Excellent work
B	=	Above average work
C	=	Average work
D	=	Below average work
F	=	Unsatisfactory work

## Classroom Protocol

The class should be a safe space for every student to learn, express and grow. The environment should be a medium for self-discovery, doubt, experimentation and new challenges. Through basic empathy and respect, deep conversations about philosophy, artistic concept and content, and visual communications should be at the center of every interaction and conversation.

You should be on time, prepared for class and prepared to give your full attention. It is equally important that you have eaten, used the facilities and have had proper sleep the night before so that you can fully engage with the teacher and your fellow students. If for any reason you miss a class or any portion thereof, it is your responsibility to review Canvas, speak with your fellow classmates, or come to my office hours to understand what you need to do to remain current with all lessons.

Cell phones, music devices and any other distractions to yourself and others around you are not permitted unless approved for class purposes. If improperly used your participation grade will be affected.

**Each student needs to have their camera on, microphone off when not speaking, and be engaged. This is a professional educational setting, so attire and actions during class should be commensurate. In other words, no drinking of alcohol, looking at other technology (telephone, TV, etc.) or inappropriate behavior will be tolerated. You are attending a collage course, even though we are not meeting in a classroom, so please maintain respect for the institution, yourself and fellow students, and the professor.**

# 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> (Links to an external site.)

## 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 essence of an object rather than its outer form.

**Abstract:** (verb) to simplify, emphasize or distort qualities of a real-life image. “The verb *abstrahere*, from which *abstraction* is derived, literally means to pull or draw away. Thus *abstraction*, in the purest sense, begins with reality and draws away from it, revealing the underlying lines and geometric shapes, transforming a figure or potted plant into something hardly recognizable.”—Kendall Buster and Paula Crawford

**Allusion:** a reference made by an artwork to a recognizable thing from the world, or to another artwork, literary work etc. Jean Arp's abstract biomorphic sculptures allude to the human body without literally depicting body parts.

**Assemblage:** a work generated from a variety of objects and/or forms originally intended for other purposes.

**Cliché:** an overused expression or a predictable visual treatment of an idea.

**Content:** the substance of a work of art, including its emotional, intellectual, symbolic, thematic, and narrative connotations.

**Craft:** the tradition of the manipulation of a given material; the act of “working” a given material using time-honored 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 favour 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 that is produced by a mold making 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 indisputable “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.

# Art 3 / Medium and Message, SP 2021, Section 04

*Below is week-by-week guide to the class however some minor alterations may be made on an as needed basis. In the unlikely event of a schedule change you will be give ample warning for the change. This class will also be meeting twice a week – on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 - 11:45 AM.*

## Course Schedule

WEEK	DATE	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 19 - TH	Introductions, review of Green Sheet, description of class learning objectives and grading procedure, review of class and school policies, discussion of all the class assignments and deadlines.
2	Aug 24 - T Aug 26 - TH	Lectures on the Conceptual art. Theme 1 presented / discussion
3	Aug 31 - T Sept 2 - TH	Lecture on art w/emotions: Cindy Sherman / Cai Guo-Qiang Lecture on how to create a proposal
4	Sept 7 - T Sept 9 - TH	FREE WORK TIME One on One with professor
5	Sept 14 - T Sept 16 - TH	Project 1 due, class critique class critique
6	Sept 21 - T Sept 23 - TH	Theme 2 presented / discussion Sharon Singh, Program, Coordinator for Mosaic Cross Cultural Center
7	Sept 28 - T Sept 30 - TH	Lecture on Ana Mendieta Lecture on Allora & Calzadilla
8	Oct 5 - T Oct 7 - TH	Lecture on Installation Art Project 2 due, class critique
9	Oct 12 - T Oct 14 - TH	Class critique Theme 3 presented / discussion
10	Oct 19 - T Oct 21 - TH	Lecture on Kiki Smith Yinka Shonibare

11	Oct 26 - T Oct 28 - TH	One and One with Professor Lecture on Kara Walker
12	Nov 2 - T Nov 4 - TH	Lecture on Xu Bing Project 3 due, class critique
13	Nov 9 - T Nov 11 - TH	class critique - Theme 4 presented (for Final) / discussion Veteran's day – NO CLASS
14	Nov 16 - T Nov 18 - TH	Lecture on Doris Salcedo Lecture on El Anatsui
15	Nov 23 - T Nov 25 - TH	Lecture on Shirin Neshat THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
16	NOV 30 - T DEC 2 - TH	Open Discussion Work Time
17	DEC 9 - TH	Show artwork and final documentation

## Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Sep 14, 2021	Assignment <a href="#">Assignment 1</a>	due by 10am
Thu Oct 7, 2021	Assignment <a href="#">Assignment 2</a>	due by 10am
Thu Nov 4, 2021	Assignment <a href="#">Assignment 3</a>	due by 10am
Thu Dec 9, 2021	Assignment <a href="#">Final</a>	due by 9:45 am
	Assignment <a href="#">Roll Call Attendance</a>	