

Art and Anthropology

Graduate Seminar in Cultural Anthropology

Course Description: Recently some artists have embraced ethnography even as many anthropologists have adopted a greater diversity of media to enhance their fieldwork and the presentation of their findings. Participatory forms of art have taken center stage in art worlds while anthropologists have developed new ways of engaging their subjects by a critical rethinking of their signature method of participant observation. Discussions of what collaboration might imply and what issues or groups it might engage or create are common concerns of those involved in these currents of anthropology and art. This course follows this confluence of the two domains without seeking to define, distinguish, or oppose them. Each class will be organized around a key word that draws out fundamental issues with which artists, anthropologists and artist-anthropologist are grappling. Mimesis, media, participation, experience, design, technique and collaboration will be the highlighted session topics, and each session will include readings, analysis of artworks, performances, and experiments (inside and outside of the classroom).

The organization of class meetings will draw on both on the tradition of academic seminar and the studio art critique, associating close readings of texts and artworks with hands-on projects, lectures, and performances by guest anthropologists and artists. Students will have the opportunity to explore media new to them, to practice collaboration with their colleagues, and to participate in an exhibition and experimental seminar/studios on art and anthropology that Professor Ossman will organize at La Sierra University's Brandstater gallery, in conjunction with her exhibition "On the Line" in February-March 2013.

Assignments

Students will write weekly "reaction papers" (1-2 pages) or "reaction works" on readings, lectures and coursework, do one presentation on a particular set of readings or artworks, and write one 8-10 page review based on this presentation.

Students will also develop a final artwork or performance for the exhibition in response to the artworks and curatorial "proposal" set out in the initial exhibition. They will then collaborate with one another and with the invited artists and faculty who will take part in this experimental response exhibition.

Finally, they will speak about their research process at the "walkthrough" of the exhibition and final seminar.

Students should also take "fieldnotes" throughout the research, publication and discussion process.

*****Materials:** All students should have a sketchbook or drawing pad and drawing media such as ink, charcoal, pen, or pastel and bring their cameras (or phones), computers and

other recording devices to class. Wear comfortable clothing for movement exercises and closed-toe shoes for work in the gallery.

Reading:

Benjamin, Walter, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*,
<http://design.wishiewashie.com/HT5/WalterBenjaminTheWorkofArt.pdf>

Berger, John, "Drawing on Paper," From Selected Essays, Vintage, 2001.

Barone, T. and Eisner, Elliot W. *Arts Based Research*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage, 2012.

Bishop, Claire, *Artificial Hells, Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London, Verso, 2012.

Collaborative Anthropologies, vol. 1, 2008 (Available online)

Dewey, John, Art as Experience
http://www.ebook3000.com/artbooks/Dewey--Art-As-Experience_41093.html

Elkins, James, *Why Art cannot be Taught*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2001.

Graves, Michael
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/02/opinion/sunday/architecture-and-the-lost-art-of-drawing.html?emc=eta1>

Hendrickson, Carol, Visual Field Notes: Drawing Insights in the Yucatan
http://www.marlboro.edu/academics/faculty/hendrickson_carol/documents/var-visual-field-notes-article-11-08

Kwon, Miwon, "One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity". MIT Press, 2002.

Marcus, George E. "The Legacy of *Writing Culture* and the Near Future of the Ethnographic form, a Sketch", *Cultural Anthropology*, vol 27, Issue 3, 2012.

McMullen <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/category/line-by-line/>

O'Neil, Paul, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Cultures*, Cambridge

Mass, MIT Press, 2012.

O'Neil, Paul, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Cultures*, Cambridge Mass, MIT Press, 2012.

Potolsky, *Mimesis*, London, Rutledge, 2006.

Schneider and Wright, *Between Art and Anthropology*, London, Berg, 2010.

Taussig, Michael, *I Swear I Saw This*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Program

Week One

Introduction: Art and Anthropology

Reading: Schneider and Wright

Drawing Studio: Beatriz Mejia-Krumbein and Susan Ossman

Week Two

Mimesis/ Copies/ Objects

Reading: Benjamin, Berger, Graves, McMullen, Potolsky

Studio: drawing / dance, led by dancer and dance scholar Natalie Zervou

Guest Speaker: Adeline Wrona, CELSA-Sorbonne, Paris, "Portraits across media: Crossing words and images in traditions of national portraiture."

Week Three

Art Based Research/Ethnography

Reading: Barone and Eisner, Elkins

Studio: Fieldwork Exercise: Develop a portrait of someone in a Media new to you

2pm: Guest Speaker Professor Christine Ward Gailey: Anthropology and Poetry

Week Four

When Artists work with ethnographic evidence (and vis versa)

Reading: Hendrickson, Taussig

Guest Performance and discussion: Artist Noah Angell, "Crying in Ethnographic Recordings"

Week Five

Locations/Participations

Reading: Collaborative Anthropologies, Kwon

Studio: maps/ locations/ interventions:

Fieldwork exercise: Study the "opening" of "On the Line"

Week Six

Experience, Participation, Politics

Reading: Bishop, Dewey Chapters I-V

Project: Preliminary presentation of final artworks/ performances

Week Seven

Reading: Barone, O'Neil

Studio (Individual): Meetings to discuss progression of final project with artist and curator Beatriz-Mejia Krumbein

Seminar: Discussion of proposals for curating "On the Line; A Second Look"

Week Eight

Collaborations and Curating

Discussion: Curating the "Second Look" exhibition using fieldwork design methods

Studio: Session in the Gallery with artist and curator Beatriz-Mejia Krumbein and participating artists and anthropology faculty

Week Nine

Studio (on location): Install exhibition

Opening of "Second Look" exhibition

Week Ten

Studio/Seminar: Artists'/Anthropologists' walk-through of the exhibition followed by seminar with all participants and invited critics, anthropologists and artists.

Exhibition Take-down