

# THE SEA PLAYS ITSELF

## ways of seeing the sea

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Photography and film/video are generators of epistemological dilemmas. The sea is a vast forgotten space where capital and global trade flourish. The reproducible image ranges from mimesis to self-reflexivity, from document to construct, from aesthetics to sociology, from technical program to apparatus, from production to reproduction, from freeze frame to filmic montage, from auratic image to society of the spectacle, from indexical to virtual, from performative address to mass-media dissemination, from analog to digital, from amateur to professional, from local to global, from analytical study to interdisciplinary, etc. These dilemmas need no longer be mutually exclusive. Rather, they are engaged in a distinctive relationship of entangled indebtedness. An impure medium, photography and film/video both disclose themselves as a models of contamination. They thus touch every aspect of the world. Using the horizon of the sea as our frame upon the image, how do we critically unpack the practices of filmmakers and image producers in the ways of seeing the sea?

This studio and critical theory course is open both to first time practitioners as well as seasoned artists and thinkers. We will begin with an overview of the camera and its socio-historical development followed by a basic overview of both analog and digital techniques. This course will also give a comprehensive overview of artists, curators, philosophers, and writers who work with the sea/ocean as their medium. Students will work on one film/video or photographic project; critiques will occur throughout the course. Readings and encouraged gestures will be given weekly.

### *MODULE 1: THE OCEAN AS MEDIUM (artworks)*

*Fish Story* (1989) - Allan Sekula (Photographic works)

*To the Sea* (2019) - Jacob Jonas (Dance Performance)

*Penelope* (2017) - Noor Abed (Video, 4mins)

*Half Away and Half Asleep in the Water* (2003) - Asako Narahashi (Photographic works)

*an elegy for the end of the world, Antartica* (2012) - Vivian Sming (Video, 2min 37 min)

*Nummer acht (Everything is going to be alright)* (2007) - Guido van Der Werve (Video, 10hrs)

*Panoramic Sea Happening* (1967) - Tadeusz Kantor (Performance, book project, MoMA)

*Seascapes* (1995) - Hiroshi Sugimoto (Photographic works)

*Twelve Miles to the Horizon* (2010) - Catherine Opie (Photographic works)

*At Sea* (2017) - Anna Beeke (Photographic works)

*Sea Change* (2005–2012) – Zoe Strauss (Photographic works, + NYTimes / BP Oil Spill images)  
*Europa* (2016) – Emily Jacir (various works, exhibitions)  
*Double Tide* (2009) – Sharon Lockhart (Video)  
*Lunch Break* (2008) – Sharon Lockhart (Photographic works)  
*Homeland* (2014) – Jimena Sarno (Installation)  
*In Advance of a Storm* – Gabriella Salazar (Installation, Lighthouse works residency)  
*The institute for Inverted histories (ilh)* – Rebecca Sittler (2015) (Newsprint, installation)  
*Re-Current* (2016) – New Draft Collective (Installation)  
*The Sea is Mine* (2012) – Dictaphone Group (Site specific performance)  
*The Last Lamentation* (2017) – Valentina Medda (Performance)  
*Bury Me At Sea (in 5 shades of blue)* (2010) – Jean Marie Casbarian (Performance and video)  
*Ocean Bird (Washup)* (1974) – Ana Mendieta (Super 8mm film transferred to HD video)  
*Gulf Labor* (2014), MTL (Text and photographic works)  
Shipping Container Residency Program  
*Ship of Fools* (2010-13)- Allan Sekula (Book)

#### **MODULE 2: THE SEA PLAYS ITSELF (films)**

*Science Is Fiction: 23 Films* – Jean Painlevé  
*Forgotten Space* (2010) – Allan Sekula & Noël Burch  
*Lottery of the Sea* (2006) – Allan Sekula  
*This Changes Everything* (2015) – Naomi Klein  
*My Marshall Islands* (2011) – Arjuna Neuman  
*The Radiant* (2012) – The Otolith Group  
*Tsukiji* (2001) – Allan Sekula  
*Crossroads* (1976) – Bruce Conner  
*Dream Away* (2018) – Marouan Omara, Johanna Domke  
*Electrical Gaza* (2015) – Rosalind Nashashibi  
*Bachelor Machines Part 1 & 2* (2007) – Rosalind Nashashibi

#### **MODULE 3: WRITINGS**

*The Veneration of Water Reflects Celtic Soul* (2007) – Austin, C.  
*Memory for Forgetfulness* (August, Beirut, 1982) – Mahmoud Darwish  
*Sea and Fog* (2012)- Etel Adnan  
*Okeanos* (2017) – Allan Sekula  
Excerpts – Globalization Class, San Pedro Port, Los Angeles (2006) – Allan Sekula  
Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics* 16: 22–27 (1986) – Foucault, M.

#### **MODULE 4: WATER IS NEVER STILL**

between apocalyptic apprehensions, and dreams of deliverance (2014) – Heather M. O'Brien

less gold, more blue (2017) - Heather M. O'Brien

Where water touches land (2015) - Heather M. O'Brien & Jonathan Takahashi

I see in the sea nothing except the sea. I don't see a shore. I don't see a dove. (2015) - Various artists

The sea, is walking in the streets (2015) - Heather M. O'Brien

Water is never still (2020) - Heather M. O'Brien & Jonathan Takahashi

### *MODULE 5: GESTURES, CRITIQUE & FINAL PROJECT*

Weekly studio assignments/gestures TBD

Final project to be discussed in class (short film/video or a series of photographic prints)

Critiques to follow the Mary Kelly phenomenological approach

*Sample weekly gesture: Photographing Atmosphere*

There's a difference between atmosphere and space within a picture. Atmosphere is a kind of charged space. Can you photograph water and make the picture feel wet, rather than just look like a picture of water?

