

Art 206 / Lecture portion – UH Manoa

## **Understanding Photography (3)**

**Wed/Fri 2:30pm-3:45pm ART 132**

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### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of Art 206 students will

- Understand and apply basic photographic techniques such as single lens reflex camera operation, black and white film processing, and darkroom print enlargement and manipulation.
- Understand fundamental skills and concepts relative to the practice of photography as a means of visual communication and self expression.
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of the history of photography and the traditions which inform present approaches in the visual arts.
- Acquire basic theoretical skills to analyze photographic imagery and visual art in general.

### **Intro**

Art 206 is a beginning photography course. Students must enroll in a lab as well as the lecture. While realizing this is probably a naive assumption, this course presumes no previous knowledge of, or literacy in photography.

There will be 4 projects, 2 quizzes and no examinations. The projects are designed to cover basic photographic techniques (single lens reflex camera operation, black and white film processing, enlargements, darkroom manipulations, retouching, presentation, etc.), and cultivate understanding and exploration in the language of photography and the process of image-making. Our aim is to expand beyond the common notions of what photographs should look like and what beauty is.

We will not be interested in making pretty pictures, particularly pretty pictures of pretty things. This course will focus on visual culture beyond images produced for mainstream market consumption.

As art and photography draw inspiration from and reflect upon all facets of our lives, experiences and histories, many topics, including but not limited to, politics, religion, sexuality, will be discussed during the duration of this course.

### **Recommended text**

"Photography" - 8th & 9th edition, by Barbara London & John Upton. This text is available at the bookstore - \$65 new and \$47 used. Copies of earlier editions are available at the photography lab. These can be checked out for overnight loans. Second hand copies of earlier editions can often be found at used bookstores at reasonable prices.

### **Grading Criteria:**

Project 1 - 20%

Project 2 - 20%

Project 3 - 20%

Project 4 - 30%

Quizzes and class participation  
10% of semester grade\*

### **IMPORTANT!!**

\*3 absents are allowed (total from lecture and lab). If total exceeds 3; grade or grades will be dropped accordingly. More than 15 minutes late to class or failure to complete assignments on time

will be considered absents. Papers can be written to make up absents exceeding a total of three. However, this option is only available for special circumstances and no more than three make-up papers are allowed. Topics for make-up papers must be pre-approved by lecture instructor. A handout of make-up paper topics is available at the Photo Lab. All papers are due the same time as the final project.

Grades are determined jointly by your lab and lecture professors. It will be based upon your understanding and fulfillment of project objectives, technical competency, creativity in problem solving, effort, commitment, and growth.

## **Syllabus**

### **WEEK 1**

lab

Introduction of Lab and distribute supplies list

W

1.14

Introduction to Contemporary Fine Art Photography  
lecture + discussion in groups

F

1.16

Camera Operation  
(bring camera and operating manual to class)  
Shooting exercises for first roll of film

SLR camera mechanics and optics

Camera Operation Exercise

[use one roll of 36ex TRI-X Pan film]

1- rendition of movement

photograph a moving object with three different shutter speeds. <remember to compensate exposure with aperture>

2- depth of field

Photograph a situation with three subjects of different distance from you (foreground, middle ground, background). Focus on the middle subject. Make three exposures by changing aperture. <remember to compensate exposure with shutter speed>

3- negative density in relation to exposure

bracketing - photograph the same scene with three different exposure, one stop difference between each.

### **WEEK 2**

lab

Film processing  
(bring exposed film of shooting exercise to process)

W

1.21

Modernism  
lecture, in-class reading, group discussion

F

1.23

Camera mechanics and optics II  
Introduction to Project 1

\* Assignment: Create four 8x10 images that foreground the following visual elements- Line, form, texture and combination. Student will expose approx 6 rolls of film, working closely with lab instructor in selecting and printing.

### **WEEK 3**

lab  
Darkroom demonstration  
(bring 2 rolls of processed negatives for project 1)

W  
1.28  
A Short History of Fashion Photography  
Concepts introduced: Modernism, Formalism. Symmetry, Composition, Point of View, Scale, Subject/  
background relationship, Placement within frame of view Types of lighting (direct, diffused, rim,  
silhouette)  
Quiz on Camera Operation

F  
1.30  
Continuation of Project 1  
Lecture: Modernist fine art photography  
Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Weston, Paul Strand, Dorothy Norman, Andre Kertesz, Manuel Alvarez-Bravo,  
Flor Garduno, Aaron Siskind, et al.

### **WEEK 4**

lab  
2 new contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W  
2.4  
Elements of time and movement, street photography. Possible artists to introduce and discuss-  
Henri Cartier-Bresson, Sylvia Plachy, Roy DeCarava, Helen Levitt, Robert Frank, Gary Winogrand, Lee  
Friedlander et al.

F  
2.6  
Quiz on darkroom techniques  
Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog) by Luis Bunuel and Salvadore Dali  
Discuss briefly surrealism's formative years and its relationship to the subconscious and its politics  
&  
Der Lauf der Dinge (The Way Things Go) by Peter Fischli and David Weiss  
Performance art and performance art documentation, the tradition of deadpan style of imagery.  
Photographic examples: Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall

### **WEEK 5**

lab  
2 new contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W  
2.11  
Tues lab students bring 2 or more 8 x 10" prints to class  
Lecture on Frank: The Americans & recent street and travel photography  
Critiques

F  
2.13  
Thurs lab students bring 2 or more 8 x 10" prints to class  
Critiques

## **WEEK 6**

lab  
2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W  
2.18  
Continuation of project 1  
How photographs "mean": Lecture: Foto-Manipulation: Heartfield, Uelsman, Duane Michals, Pedro Meyer  
Critiques

F  
2.20  
Project 1 due at the beginning of class  
Introduction to project 2  
Mini-lectures: Aesthetic- Josef Sudek  
Symbolic- Clarence John Laughlin  
Metaphorical- Rosemond Wolff Purcell  
Conceptual- Laurie Simmons  
Narrative- David Levinthal  
Poetic- Olivia Parker

## **WEEK 7**

lab  
1 contact sheet due. Be prepared to print  
Demonstration on retouching, and color filters

W  
2.25  
Street of Crocodiles by Brothers Quay  
Discuss the work of Bruno Schultz in context of Nazism in Poland and the use of deliberately opaque political symbology

F  
2.27 - no class

## **WEEK 8**

lab  
2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W  
3.4  
How photographs "mean": Short lecture on Appropriation art: Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman, Thomas Ruff  
Critiques

F

3.6

Work in progress. All labs bring 3 - 8 x 10" prints to class  
Group discussions & Critiques

## **WEEK 9**

lab

2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W

3.11

Lecture on Contemporary Documentary Photography  
In-class reading (TBD) + discussion on the relation of photography and reality

F

3.13

Project 2 due at the beginning of class  
Introduction to project 3  
Short Lecture on Portrait and Self-Portrait

## **WEEK 10**

lab

1 contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W

3.18

Lecture: Avdeon, In The American West  
Group discussion

F

3.20

Lecture: Diane Arbus & Nan Goldin  
Group discussion

## **WEEK 11**

Spring Break

## **WEEK 12**

lab

2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to print

W

4.1

Continuation of project 3  
Preparation for project 4: In-class reading from Occam's Razor (Billy Jay)  
Group discussions

F

4.3

Work in progress / bring 3 - 8 x 10" prints to class  
Critiques and technical questions

### **WEEK 13**

lab

2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to work in class

W

4.8

Continuation of project 3

Critiques

Introduction to Project 4 (Week 13-16) Explore the process of developing a body of work based upon a consistent theme.

Assignment:

Step 1 – Student decides a personally relevant entry point into an overriding theme provided by the instructor - "Body in Crisis".

Step 2- Shoot two rolls of 36ex film to experience with different formal and material choices.

Step 3- Determine which choice is best suited for student's idea and yield most evocative conceptual and aesthetic potential

Step 4- develop and finalize

F

4.10 - Good Friday - no class

### **WEEK 14**

lab

2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to work in class

W

4.15

Project 3 due at the beginning of class

Lecture: Body In Crisis

F

4.17

Re-visit: In The American West

In-class reading: excerpts from R. Bolton: Avedon Incorporated

Discussion: Representation

### **WEEK 15**

lab

2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to work in class

W

4.22

Continuation of project 4

How photographs "mean": Lecture on Contemporary Chinese Photography re. the Body

F

4.24

Work in progress / bring 3 works in progress to class

Group critiques

**WEEK 16**

lab

2 contact sheets due. Be prepared to work in class

W

4.29

Continuation of project 4

F

5.1

no class

**WEEK 17**

lab

tuesday lab is last lab

W

5.6

Project 4 Due at the beginning of class

Discussion and feedback