

Intermedia & Aesthetics

Semester: Fall 2010

Course: Intermedia & Aesthetics (Ant 394M)

Unique course ID: 30385

Instructor: Craig Campbell

Time: Wednesdays 9am - noon

Office hours: By appointment

Please note that this is a preliminary syllabus and that additional information critical to success in this course will be posted on the course website:

<http://metafactory.ca/intermedia>

“All the problems that we have with metaphors raise their head in a new guise when we identify objects. We do not escape from the predicaments that language prepares for us by turning away from the semiotics of words to the semiotics of objects. It would be illusory to hope that objects present us with a more solid, unambiguous world.” (M. Douglas 1992: 6).

Course Description

Intermedia and aesthetics explores the theoretical foundations for arts of immediacy and for encounters with sensible and sensuous worlds. This theme explores ways of knowing and representing as they originate in the academy and from the art world and in the way these formations relate to their objects of study. The key words here (intermedia and aesthetics) are sites of current and increasing attention and coalescence in cultural studies and associated disciplines. Readings will include selections from Jacques Ranciere, James Clifford, George Marcus, Susan Hiller, and others. Studio practices will include hands-on and DIY inspired techniques of photography and collage. You will also have the opportunity to learn and develop skills in digital media production.

Half the classes will be spent actively workshopping projects directly (or indirectly) related to your own research. The other half will be dedicated to a few select readings that help to feel out the edges of emerging discourses on arts-based research, politics and aesthetics, and multi-sensory anthropology.

Small Assignments: 30%

Students are required to lead three in-class critiques by preparing and presenting the work of artists (regardless of research-based work). Basically you have to do some quick research on the artist/work and present it to the class in some coherent way.

Participation: 15%

The unique character of this class requires regular participation.

Final project: 55%

Students are required to submit a short written proposal for the final project by September 15th. Full description of the final project will be given in a separate document.

Readings

Reading in this class will be limited. You will be expected to spend at least half the time normally dedicated to reading, in self study and experimentation. In the first half of the course you will be required to read selections from the books listed below. In the second half of the course you will be required to participate in and read articles selected by you and your class mates in the *Theory Surge* section.

Books to Purchase (will read in October)

Rancière, Jacques. 2006. *The politics of aesthetics : the distribution of the sensible*. Pbk. ed. London ; New York: Continuum.

Rancière, Jacques. 2009. *The Emancipated Spectator*. London: Verso.

We will read selections from (most of) these books:

Clifford, James. 2002. *The predicament of culture : twentieth-century ethnography, literature, and art*. 10th ed. Cambridge Mass. [u.a.]: Harvard Univ. Press.

Gell, Alfred. 1998. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford ; New York.

Marcus, George E, and Michael M. J Fischer, eds. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Ravetz, Amanda. 2004. *Visualizing Anthropology: Experimenting with Image-Based Ethnography*. illustrated edition. Intellect Ltd, October 1.

Schneider, Arnd, and Chris Wright. 2006. *Contemporary art and anthropology*. Oxford; New York: Berg.

Westermann, Mariet, ed. 2005. *Anthropologies of Art*. Clark Art Institute, July 8.

Note:

All information in this syllabus is subject to change. Students will be given reasonable and explicit notice for all changes to the syllabus.

Classroom Policies

Information about plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarizing.

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/faculty/plagiarism/preventing.html>

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

University Notices and Policies

University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin

- The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning.
- The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>
- Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>
- Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>
- Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>
- Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—I recommend daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”